

The Beaver

The Newspaper of the LSE SU

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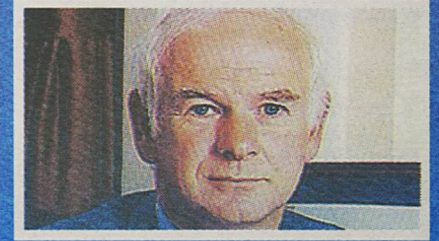
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Issue number 583



blink focus: Top-up fees debate, Page 8

Howard Davies picks his Top Ten Films in b:art, Page 17



The Price of a meal - Aramark under fire page 3

The Numbers Game

Students Still Packed in as LSE Fails to Ease Congestion



Mark Power
News Editor

Concerns have again been raised over the perceived overcrowding of the LSE with the new term underway with packed lecture theatres, classes, and school facilities.

With students struggling to use packed facilities around the school fears have been voiced that academic standards are being undermined by a revenue driven surge in student numbers.

These worries have been strengthened by the widely circulated rumours that the School policy is to recruit an extra 500 students per year. Responding on behalf of the School, Andrew Farrell, Director of Finance and Facilities denied this, attributing it to what he termed a "misunderstanding." He continued by saying that "current forecasts assume that student numbers on existing programmes will remain more or less the same for the next five years." He added that the numbers will grow from the 7952 currently registered for this academic year, as at the 17th October, to 8,500 by 2011-2012. However, Farrell did concede that the school would expand in addition to this, on new programmes, but that this was likely to

represent only 300 extra students over the five-year period.

In relation to this Academic year's forecasts, the current number of registrations stands at 108% of the forecasted number, according to Mark Maloney, Head of Student Administration. Farrell explains this in terms of an overshoot in undergraduate admissions, largely offset by an under-shoot in postgraduate admissions.

Last year, the School administration attracted criticism over the accidental recruitment of 500 extra students beyond the forecasted targets. This year's figure of 7952 is down on last year's total number of students which was 8347, but still up on the 2001-2002 session's figure of 7644. This means that the school has, over the past two years recruited an extra 308 students, based on current registration figures. Maloney expects this to fluctuate slightly, but that most students who are arriving will have registered by now. However, according to Maloney's information on targets, the school had been planning to recruit 7306 students this year, inferring that the administration has conservatively estimated its target's in order to ensure that there was no repeat of last year's unexpected deluge of new students.

Speaking to The Beaver, LSE SU Advice

Centre counsellor Schimph Carruthers said that although the Centre was not experiencing any particular problems with overcrowding, his general impression was that the School was busier than he had ever seen it and that facilities did seem crowded. He added that the Centre was very busy for other reasons at the moment and that problems specific to overcrowding would not become apparent until later in the year. He stated that "it will have a serious impact on all services if there is a problem with overcrowding."

On behalf of the Students' Union, Treasurer Jo Kibble confirmed that he thought the "School must keep a watching brief on this situation so that we don't have a repeat of last year's debacle." In terms of a Students' Union position on increasing numbers, Kibble stated that he "would not like to think that the university authorities would consider making a fast buck out of recruiting before they put in place the necessary infrastructural investment to cope with the influx."

Andrew Farrell reiterated the School's commitment that increasing numbers would not be allowed to harm student quality at the LSE. He emphasised that he

Continued Page 2

The Beaver Campaign Against Top-up Fees

This week, thousands of students from across the UK will travel to London to demonstrate against the government's proposals for top-up fees outlined in the White Paper for Higher Education.

The demonstration will take place this Sunday, October 26th, starting at the LSE on Houghton Street and finishing in a rally in Trafalgar Square. This will show the government that the student body believes top-up fees will damage university access and make the higher education system even more elitist than it currently is.

LSESU Sabbatical Officers have spent weeks cultivating student support by encouraging everyone to sign a postcard in protest against the proposals. So far, over 1,100 postcards have been signed and these, along with the others signed this week, will be taken to Downing Street on Friday to show Blair exactly what the LSE's students think of his policy of allowing universities to hike up fees to as much as £3,000 a year.

The LSE's Director, Howard Davies, has already indicated that he is in favour of implementing the proposals at the LSE. If the law is passed the market will have a free reign at this institution. Different courses will cost different amounts, fees will rocket and all the noble work done by staff here to encourage students to apply to the LSE on the basis of their ability and not their bank balances will be severely undermined.

There will be a variety of events taking place this week to raise awareness of the issue. Moreover, the LSE will be taking a banner on Sunday's National Demonstration and everyone will be able to contribute to its construction today in the Quad.

If MPs do not think that passing this law will affect their vote share at the next General Election and beyond, most will have no qualms about shuffling through the 'Yes' lobby. It is vital to show them we care, and that we strongly disagree. Attend events this week, add your signed postcard to the 1,100 already collected and above all - come on the march! The government will price students out of university unless we stop them. We have an opportunity now. Don't waste it.

Turn to Page 5 for our spectacular new STA Travel Competition

Course Collection Changes

Michael Scott

News to cheer all students who use the course selection in the library, particularly the set texts.

Under last year's system, set texts had to be returned the following day by 12pm. However, after student feedback, the library has changed this policy since the beginning of the academic year. The new system still requires students to return their books the day after withdrawal, but students now have the luxury of being able to return the books by the time the library closes at 11pm.

However, the library recommends that books students return books before 10pm, as after this there are no returns staff so students will not see their books returned but will have to deposit them in the book returns, which is near the library reception.

A word of warning: the fines system remains in place with the same fine - £1 an hour - if the books are returned late.

The library says that it is "Piloting the system to see how it goes, if the students are happy then obviously the library may keep it. It depends on whether the students are happy". Students who wish this system to remain or wish to add any other comments on the library service, should fill in a feedback card on the service counter.

Student's reaction to the change was generally positive if a little muted. One student said: "It seems alright but I don't really mind", while another said "it will be very helpful...yeah definitely that would be helpful."

LSESU General Secretary, Elliot Simmons said: "That sounds really positive. It's great news to hear that students will have more time to use the necessary books.

"It shows the library is listening to student concerns about the provision of set texts."

Continued from Page 1

Numbers Up

could not "envisage a time when LSE compromises on Student quality for short term financial gain. It would be counter productive: people come here because of the quality."

Farrell added that student quality was the key constraint on a numbers increase and that from next month the school would begin a consultation process on ways in which to add to the LSE's capacity through expanding services and more physical space.

However, the Director of Finance and Administration went to add a cautionary note about he potential impact of any plans. He told The Beaver "while I think we can all agree on the need for a better site, we do not want to live on a permanent building site." But, the School's reassurances are likely to be of scant comfort to those students struggling to cope with the Library's over-stretched resources, where demand for core texts far exceeds supply. Likewise it is unlikely to redress student grievances regarding lecture theatres with inadequate seating, students unable to take courses because they are full, and classes spilling over the maximum number of fifteen, set down by school regulations.

Philosophy Fiasco - Laments over Lakatos

El Barham

News Editor

The impartiality of the distribution of graduate scholarships and teaching jobs at the LSE has been called into question due to the perceived lack of transparency in the system.

An insider in the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method revealed to *The Beaver* that there are concerns the decision-making personnel in the Department, alleging that they allocate funds and teaching jobs on the basis of sociability rather than academic merit.

They said: "Money is being handed out to people who get on with the professors, not to those with intellectual ability. Some exceptional students at PhD level have been refused research funding in favour of departmental pets.

"This has meant that one outstanding student has had to give up his PhD. He's got a brilliant mind, but absolutely no networking skills, and this has got in the way of him completing his degree. It's absolutely appalling."

The anxieties particularly concern the Lakatos Award, a £10,000 fund established in memory of Imre Lakatos. Lakatos was a German philosopher whose works particularly focus on the philosophy of science, and was a professor at the LSE from 1959-74. According to the department website, the scholarship is 'given annually for an outstanding contribution to the philosophy of science.'

However, according to the insider: "The person who was awarded the scholarship is researching into social class, not the philosophy of science. This means that the department is not using the resources it has in the way that it advertises.

"This lends plausibility to the fact [sic] that funds are being shifted around in accordance with professors whims and fancies as a means of patronage instead of regulations."

The regulations of the award allocation require that the decision be made by a com-

mittee composed of, amongst others, the School's Director and professors within the department and the recommendation of an independent and anonymous panel. However, there are no means by which students or the School can check whether these regulations are adhered to.

Dr John Carrier, Dean of Graduate Studies, said: "The amount of transparency for the awarding of internal scholarships is up to the department concerned and I trust the departments and convenors to act fairly. I believe this is a reasonable trust to have."

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Professor John Worrall, Philosophy Departmental Convener and a member of the Lakatos panel from this year strongly denied any problems with the allotment process.

He said: "Funds are given strictly in accordance with the criteria which is in the public domain and follows the School's precise guidelines. Awards are distributed entirely on intellectual merit.

"The Lakatos Award can be given to anyone studying in the broad area of the philosophy and there are no restrictions whatsoever. The person who currently holds the scholarship is an outstanding student in this field.

"The allocation of the award is decided by a group and I believe that the general guidelines laid down by the school were followed. In that sense the process was completely transparent, but of course we have to use our judgment."

However, Professor Worrall did acknowledge that there had been problems with the publicity for the award, which may have led to the belief amongst some students that the prize had been inappropriately distributed. He said: "The information about the scholarship released after it had been awarded was misleading.

"Also, there is a problem with how the award was publicised. It is conceivable that some students were unaware of the existence of the prize and so did not apply for it until after the deadline. We do ask the school to consider late applications but we

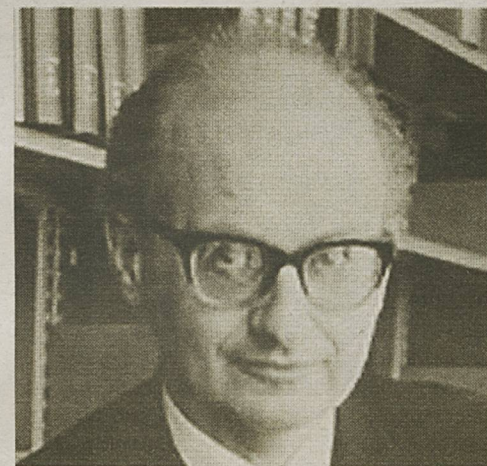
don't know how much of an effect this has on the way submissions are viewed.

"It's shambolic the way the lack of publicity is adversely affecting students."

This view is supported by the fact that the information on the Department website regarding the Lakatos Award is not wholly accurate. The prize is not distributed annually, contrary to the published information, but is given every two years unless the holder of the award is deemed to have made insufficient academic process.

In the past, allegations of this nature have resulted in procedural changes in some departments. Joyce Lorinstein, Manager of the Sociology Department, said: "We now have one of the Departmental Managers sitting on the relevant committees to make sure the process completely fair and transparent as we received some complaints about the distributions of departmental research funds in the past. However, since the changes we have received no further complaints."

Dr Carey also stressed that any perceived problems with the allocation of funds should be reported. He said: "If any student believes they have been treated unfairly they should certainly draw the attention of the school. I am here for the students and will chase up any complaints."



Fund creator Professor Lakatos

Former Honorary SU President up for Release

Dave Cole

Former Honorary President of the LSESU, Winston Silcott, who was twice convicted in 1987 of murder, is to be released from Blantyre House open prison this week after serving almost four years more than his fourteen-year tariff.

Silcott was convicted of murdering boxer Anthony Smith and Police Constable Keith Blakelock in 1984 and 1985 respectively but acquitted of the murder of PC Blakelock in 1991. He was wrongly convicted of being part of the gang that killed PC Blakelock on the evening of 6th October 1985 in the Broadwater Farm riots in Tottenham along with Mark Braithwaite and Engin Raghup, the so-called 'Tottenham Three'.

The Broadwater Farm riots started following the death of Cynthia Jarrett, a West Indian woman, during a police raid on her home the previous day. In response to protests at Tottenham Police station, a large contingent of police were drafted onto the estate. In the ensuing riot between police and local youth, PC Blakelock was stabbed to death.

The Tottenham Three were acquitted in



Winston Silcott

Former Honorary SU President

1991, although Silcott remained in prison as by that time he had been convicted of Smith's murder. At his appeal, the Crown said Silcott had been jailed solely on the weight of an unsigned, uncorroborated statement police took in the absence of a solicitor.

Government scientist, Robert Radley, testified that his analysis proved some pages of the document had been replaced at a later stage. The court also heard the accused man had not appeared on any police photographs of the riot and his fingerprints were not found on the weapons

recovered from the scene.

Silcott has always claimed that he killed Smith in self-defence, although he did not enter such a plea at his trial on the advice of his lawyers.

In 1991, several students' unions came out in support of Silcott, including the NUS, which made him an honorary vice-president, and the LSESU, which made him honorary president. This support found the LSESU back on the front pages after the famous 'Troubles' of the late Sixties, with widespread criticism in the media.

Although there was widespread support among the student movement, some students' unions wrote to criticise the LSESU's decision. The SU received a barrage of written complaints, much of it of a racist nature, including death threats against the then General Secretary, Amanda Hart.

The School fined the SU £2,000 and eventually Silcott resigned as honorary president, citing a desire not to see the SU unduly punished.

It remains to be seen if the next elected honorary president of the SU will cause as much controversy.

The Beaver News

"AraMark-up" - protest over hall food price hikes

Simon Chignell

Aramark, the \$8 billion American catering company which was sold the £4 million catering contracts for LSE residences, has come under increasing pressure from students disillusioned by the service it is providing.

The combination of high prices and arguably little change in quality or quantity, have led to complaints from a number of students, especially those living for the second year in halls. Alarming, many students in the residences of Rosebery, Carr-Saunders and Bankside are finding it cheaper and easier to eat a full meal at local bars such as Wetherspoons than use the canteens in their halls. This has led SU Education and Welfare Officer, Rowan Harvey, to voice her concerns about student nutrition.

Rosebery and Carr-Saunders are defined as "catered halls" therefore the size and availability of the kitchen facilities, where in one hall over 30 residents share one small kitchen containing a normal sized fridge and just two hobs for cooking, are not designed for the amount of people wanting to cook every night due to the increased canteen prices. It would seem that students have very few options available to them.

Earlier this year, it was announced that Aramark had won the five-year contract, and in a press release at the company stated that they "will be providing a bespoke food service solution designed to meet the specific needs of the students". However this appears not to be the case.

Rosebery Committee President Stephen Terry, who experienced life at a pre-Aramark Rosebery Hall, is one of the main protesters against Aramark. He said: "We just want them to go. Under Aramark in the last year prices have increased by approximately £1 per meal, which comes from the new process of having no set vegetables included in your meal price."

Terry also voiced concerns over the inconsistent quality and quantity of the food available. "It varies drastically from one day to the next."

However Glen Sparks, Aramark executive chef for the LSE residences, defended the higher prices. He said the new pricing system had been agreed with the LSE before the start of term, and argued that Aramark had to have some price margins set out. There was no mention that the food in LSE residences was already subsidised through rent.

However he did concede that food at Carr-Saunders and Rosebery was not at the standard it could be. He explained: "I have just moved on from Bankside where I was able to sort things out and improve the set up [of the kitchens]." He pledged to do the same at Rosebery and Carr-Saunders.

Many feel that an improvement in the quality of the food cannot come soon enough. Problems in the variety and diversity of the menu for such an international clientele were brought up at the Rosebery Hall General Meeting and one high-up source was heard to comment that "the head chef seems to think he is running an industrial kitchen in the North of England serving on a regular basis such delicacies as spotted dick".

Rishi Madlani, SU Residences Officer, despite having some concerns over quality, defended Aramark and stressed the need for a system of consultation and dialogue to be put in place. "There is no need for an antagonistic relationship between students and Aramark. Both Aramark and the LSE benefit mutually from the success of the contract so it is everyone's interest to find a system that works." However he did state that the LSE had misunderstood the pricing arrangement of the contract over the inclusion of vegetables in the meal price, which is one of the main reasons for student's complaints, and there was a possibility that prices could come down in the future.

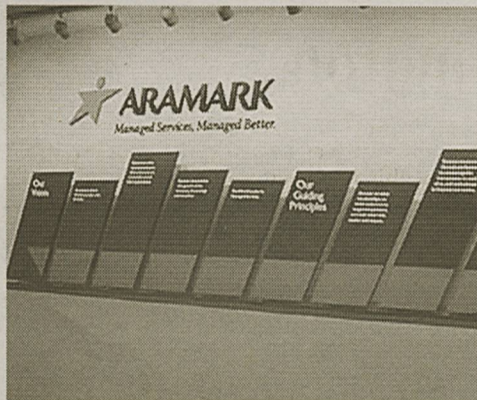
Ian Jones, deputy director of the LSE Residential and Catering Services stated: "Our aim is always to offer best value food to students in our catered halls. We believe the prices are still very competitive. The catering facilities we provide in our self catered residences are of a high standard and more than adequate for the purpose."

Despite this many now feel that the sale of the catering contracts was a mistake and that the old "in-house" catering system worked better for students. This has led to further questions over the policy of the LSE in privatising many of its facilities.

Stephen Terry has fond memories of 2002, when catering at Rosebery was "in-house" under the management of Sharon Hagan, who is now successfully running the catering services at Passfield Hall. Terry also moved to praise all the staff seen working in the canteen at Rosebery, saying that they were "doing an excellent job in difficult circumstances".

Terry has outlined a three-point plan for students disgruntled with the catering in their halls. Firstly, he recommends that students complain at the counter if they do not think they are getting their money's worth. Secondly he asked for students to write an email to i.r.jones@lse.ac.uk and him, s.p.terry@lse.ac.uk detailing why they are unhappy with the catering. If no improvement comes of this, students will be asked to take part in a total boycott of their canteens to "hit Aramark where it will hurt them, their pockets".

This is not the first time that Aramark has been under fire for high prices for student catering. In the past students at American Universities such as Yale, MIT, Mississippi, Houston, Minnesota, Tennessee, Oakland and Arizona have seemingly been hard hit by the Ara"mark-up".



Aramark: really managing better?

Any Questions? Howard Speaks Out

Jens-Ulrich Poppen

Howard Davies wasted no time in continuing to engage in a public dialogue as the new director of the LSE when he addressed a critical audience on the Any Questions programme chaired by Jonathan Dimpleby last Friday.

With him on the panel were Shadow Deputy Prime Minister, David Davis, the theatre director Jude Kelly and the newly appointed International Development Secretary Hilary Benn. Introduced by Dimpleby as "famously informal in style", when on the first day in his new job he urged his students to call him 'Howard' instead of Director, Davies impressed the audience in the Gulbenkian Theatre at the University of Hull with a distinct sense of humour and several astute comments on a broad range of topics.

Being questioned on the ongoing theological dispute within the Anglican Church over the ordination of gay priests, the former Chairman of the Financial Services Authority admitted to being only a "Christmas Day Anglican" and expressed his concern about the ambiguous stance of the organisation vis-à-vis its homosexual clergy, which might "pull people away from the church". Davies lamented an "extraor-

dinary lack of leadership" in the Anglican Church, which "papers over the cracks" and follows an "odd set of priorities" rather than initiating an honest debate within the Anglican community on controversial issues.

On the question of the BBC's overly anxious post-Hutton editorial policies which caused Radio 4's Today programme to edit out remarks of the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning the morality of the Iraq War on the grounds that Lambeth Palace was not given advanced notice of the questions the LSE boss argued that such an uncourageous attitude was a "deplorable" fallout of the Gilligan Affair.

After having impressively displayed his intimate knowledge of the banking sector by elaborating with his co-panellists on the question of credit card debts, Davies then went on to present his views on the pros and cons of university top up fees. The question of why Labour insisting on charging the educated rather than the rich came from the audience and the man who once appeared on the 'Must-Lunch-List' of Time Magazine as one of Europe's most powerful financial regulators, made abundantly clear that he deemed the government's proposals to be "reasonable".

Although he welcomed the approach of improving the financial situation of universities by raising taxes, he acknowledged that the governing party had not offered such a proposal and that a generally higher income for university graduates in the labour market would justify the introduction of top up fees. He refused to accept the argument that higher tuition fees for academic degrees would deter people from lower income backgrounds from seeking tertiary education. An average income earner would pay approximately £850,000 in taxes throughout his working life yet looking at such a bill would not "put people off working".

Therefore it could be assumed that "misleadingly called" top up fees, as a "smallish addition to the tax burden" would not keep potential students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds off campus. Davies pointed out that this was unlikely to happen, especially since graduates would be obliged to repay the money only if they earn a sufficiently high income.

Davies remarks come against a backdrop of huge student opposition to the introduction of top-up fees, and it remains to be seen how his beliefs will translate into the LSE's policy.



Union Jack

Last week's UGM was, again, a lacklustre affair, despite the saccharine joys of an outside speaker sent from on high to whip up interest in the faraway place that is the NUS Junta. The Treasurer, our Treasurer, managed to reaffirm that we are collectively ticked of about certain things, and their Treasurer won a cheap round of applause by being a little bit rude about McDonalds. Ground breaking stuff indeed. In addition to these delights, K revealed an impressive new interpretation of the traditional format of the UGM, sending Jelleyman and the Cn'S pit crew into spasms at his feet.

More Jack's cup of tea was watching the perma-grinning editor of this very paper being made to sweat publicly, initially by a budding moralist whose only failing was his confusion of Fascism and Nazism, and then by the front rows of sabbs and wannabe sabbs who are demanding Jack's head on a plate - or at the very least a photo-fit so he can be hunted down and made to pay for his crimes. Jack can see it now - a lynch mob of hacks in hoods, with the mighty Kibble at the helm, all screaming for blood and accountability.

Now preaching is best left to Patronising Dave, but here is a very brief reminder.

The anonymous nature of Jack allows for a certain poetic licence, and more importantly, means that if someone is a buffoon or a charlatan, or both (Bellendi), the people will be informed. It is a public service, like The Beaver as a whole; and at least partial independence from the Union Exec. is necessary for Jack and The Beaver to achieve anything at all. The last thing anyone wants is a schism between those who make the news and those who report it, but the sort of petty political muscle flexing demonstrated by Righteous Rowan and the So Stolid Crew will achieve blessed little and do even less to persuade the already largely apathetic student body that there is a coherent nucleus at the centre of the SU. Bad enough that the wholly redundant Bellendi seems intent on wasting his own and everyone else's time in the pursuit of his own satisfaction, without seemingly well intentioned people joining in and giving the SU yet another slap in the chops.

But enough of this, and on to the vastly more important matter of posters. Jack knows we all felt a little pang of guilt as we were chided for our unauthorised pin ups - or perhaps it was more than that; a trace of regret that 'the most dangerous man on campus', Friends of Palestine's Omar Srouji has apparently given up on politics and become a bureaucrat. This should act as a warning to anyone who thinks that it will not happen to them.

Next week may see the first official appearance of Howie D, so turn up, and give him hell. In the meantime Jack will be taking 'special' K under his wing and going over the trivial piece of work that is the Union Constitution. Now, once more from the top K, and this time with feeling...

The Beaver News

Bring on the Bac - Secondary Education Reforms

Emmeline Kuhn

A newly formed group of educators and leaders is calling for the ditching of GCSEs and introduce the English Baccalaureate, discarding the GCSEs stiff penalties for failing to integrate fully into its system.

A recently published report by the Tomlinson Working Group on 14-19 reform proposes a system of diplomas for 14-19 education to subsume and replace existing qualifications in the longer term. Mike Tomlinson, the reviewer of 14-19 qualifications in England, says a Baccalaureate is becoming an increasingly likely option but that it would probably take place in about five to 10 years time. The idea focuses less on punishing students that fall short and more on prescribing specific steps that could help them improve.

Ann Hodgeson and Ken Spours of the UCL Institute of Education agree with the plan. They explained: "We believe there is a strong case for reform of this type to address a number of current problems in 14-19 education - the way in which GCSEs can result in disaffection for those who are not likely to gain 5 A*-C grades; the low status of vocational education and the problems of over-assessment associated with GCSEs and Curriculum 2000.

The aim of an English baccalaureate system is not simply to funnel more young people into higher education, but also to improve vocational education so that more 14 to 19-year-olds will want to become the highly skilled workers our economy needs."

The new proposal has run into opposition as local education authorities fully grasp the demands it will place upon them, particularly with the knowledge that change can be a long and sometimes expensive road. The Professional Association of Teachers (PAT) announced last July that Ministers should keep faith with A-levels rather than pursue plans for a radical shake-up of the sixth-form curriculum.

Barry Matthews, vice-chairman of PAT, said A-levels were "recognised and understood by the majority of society" and Ministers should learn the maxim "if it ain't broke, don't mend it". He went on: "Ask anyone in this country what the A-levels are and they will have some degree of understanding. Ask people about the baccalaureate and the majority will look blank."

The Institute of Education's proposals for an English baccalaureate system of curriculum and qualifications for pupils aged 14 and above, plan to construct a comprehensive system furnishing all levels of learning. It is a flexible system offering the

students choice and it represents a test that is somewhere the IB and A- Levels. This system would include a number of compulsory subjects and some optional ones.

From the age of 14, young people would be able to work through four levels - entry, foundation, intermediate and advanced. Most learners would be expected to be working towards either an intermediate or foundation diploma between ages 14-16. After the age of 16, there would be the choice to proceed with a more general education or to specialise in a one subject.

Hugh Lindley, a first year studying Sociology at LSE, believes this is a good idea but could have its drawbacks. He said: "Although it looks good in theory and it seems to open up choices, there are still vocational courses and technical schools which allow specializing in learning for career skills... so I'm not sure it would offer that much more."

"The baccalaureate is far broader so it might improve career opportunities and it seems to suggest that it would open the university doors to more people."

The Institute of Education sees these proposals as highly compatible with the system described, but the actual design of the diploma system has yet to be decided. Speaking to *The Beaver*, a spokesperson for the Department of Education made it clear that it is too early to assess the mat-

ter. An independent study was being conducted and they are waiting for the results of Tomlinson's independent review.

Mike Tomlinson, former chief inspector of England's schools, will give a final verdict on the government's idea of an overarching qualification next year, but he gave a progress report to sixth form and further education colleges.

He said: "It doesn't mean that the specification and demands of GCSEs and A-levels disappear, if anything disappears it is the free-standing qualifications. It is not the decision that we abandon GCSEs and A-levels. We aren't at that point."



GCSEs or Bac - hands up please

Round Two - the Second Lecture Lord Carrington

Adrian Li

In a speech at the LSE last Thursday, former Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington defended his time in office whilst offering his view on recent developments in international relations.

Lord Carrington addressed a packed Hong Kong Theatre in the second lecture of the lecture series entitled "Developments of British Foreign Policy".

Despite obvious party political differences, Lord Carrington was introduced by Lord William Wallace, the Liberal Democrat Foreign Policy Spokesman in the House of Lords and LSE International Relations professor, as 'the best of the old Tory Party.'

Lord Carrington dealt with three issues from his career. He consistently defended his record, despite contemporary criticism which places him in the midst of one of the most controversial periods in recent British foreign policy.

The hereditary peer was quick to defend his record in Zimbabwe, claiming that the Lancaster House Conference that he organised was key to the successful resolution of the situation surrounding decolonisation in the region. He explained the current situation in Zimbabwe and Mugabe's expulsion of the white landowners, as an act of diverting attention away from the real causes of the country's economic problems, rather than a failure in the dispute resolution process. The peer also acknowledged that current British engagement in Zimbabwe has the unfortunate appearance of "a former colonial master interfering."

His Lordship's most controversial actions throughout his career were those surrounding the Falklands Conflict of 1982. In his defence, Lord Carrington claimed that the solution he proposed, a long-term lease agreement similar to that between Britain and China over Hong

Kong could have safeguarded Britain's interests. He explained that he was unable to enact such a policy because of parliamentary opposition but that he remained convinced it could have averted the subsequent war.

Finally, Lord Carrington made some comments on the current state of trans-Atlantic relations and the war in Iraq. He felt that both sides need to accept what has already happened and move on to repair the rift between them. His message for both sides was that no country can go it alone indefinitely and that friends and allies are important. He also stressed that Europe must accept American frustration at the dislike and jealousy of the US's pre-eminence and role as a "global policeman". However, he also made it clear that he feels "regime change is not legitimate".

Lord Carrington was the first Foreign Secretary of the Thatcher government from 1979-1982. After serving as British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington became secretary-general of NATO (1984-1988).



Former Tory Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington

New MSc Launched in Style Ulf Hannerz Communicates

Karla Adam



Professor Ulf Hannerz

A new MSc in Culture and Society was launched with a talk given by Professor Ulf Hannerz which shed light on profession chosen by foreign correspondents.

As Stockholm University's anthropology correspondent, Professor Hannerz struggled early on with the image of a foreign correspondent as a pop culture hero. When they first heard of his multi-year research project, Hannerz's colleagues' joked: "I suppose this means you'll be spending a lot of time at the bar."

Not just any bar. If the stereotype holds up, the bar is situated in a hotel shared by several foreign correspondents located in a dangerous area. While Hannerz did find evidence of the stereotype - "I saw it in Johannesburg" - he also noted that the heroic imagine is based on antiquated notions. The vision of a James Bond-like figure rushing to reach the one telephone or telex machine in the country no longer fits. Mobile phones, satellite phones, and laptop computers have irrevocably altered the medium of reporting, sometimes creating tension.

Hannerz said: "Now that information is everywhere, the head office has more control." Editors can use their own access to

information to check the quality of correspondents' work, creating a "huge strain" between foreign correspondents and their editors.

Reliance on technology has helped to provide the basis for a second stereotype: foreign correspondent as Puppet, with head office playing puppeteer.

Hannerz's account of story selection in Africa suggests agencies do exert influence. Hannerz found that foreign correspondents covering Africa were normally allowed to leave their base in Johannesburg only when disaster struck. A trip outside Johannesburg was generally precipitated by hard news, not feature stories.

The distribution of foreign correspondents also had traces of agency influence. Tokyo may not be the most volatile of cities, but Japan is the world's second largest economy, and agency rationale says they must have a correspondent there. "It is a source of pride," said Hannerz.

However, agencies don't make all the decisions. Hannerz's tale of the New York Times foreign correspondent based in Jerusalem reading the Bible for cultural clues lent insight into the initiative taken by correspondents.

While Hannerz's work didn't scream either Superman or marionette, it did relay the importance of foreign correspondents in helping us to make sense of the world.



"I saw it in Johannesburg" - the city itself

The Beaver News

Anti-Racist Discrimination

El Barham
News Editor

A motion passed by the Nation Union of Students (NUS) to combat the effects of racism both on and off campuses has come under fire for its perceived failure to address the concerns of Muslim students.

The motion, passed by the NUS National Executive Committee (NEC), was intended to reinforce the message that intimidation and discrimination arising from racial and cultural differences will not be tolerated in universities. In particular, it was proposed to sooth the recent tensions between Jewish and Islamic students, which have been heightened as a result of the conflict in Israel and Palestine and the second Gulf War.

However, the motion entitled 'Opposing Racism, Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in the Academic world and beyond' has been criticised, as it does not appear to tackle the problems faced by Muslim students, the word Islamophobia mentioned just once in the main body of the text.

Further, some see the motion as innately biased towards Zionism as there are clauses which mandate the NUS President, Mandy Telford, to write a joint letter with lecturers' unions to institutions to 'specifically address recent incidents of academic

anti-Semitism/anti-Zionism' and names only Islamic groups Hizb-ut Tahir and Al-Muhajiroun as examples of terrorist organisations.

It is feared that the imbalance of the motion will foster further distrust of the NUS, as Muslim students will feel alienated since their anxieties have been displaced. Omar Srouji, LSE Communications Officer, said: "I believe that this motion will deter Muslim students from becoming involved with the NUS and am disappointed that an opportunity to address their concerns has been lost."

Also, the motion appears to rob Palestinian students of their means of fighting against the occupation of their territory in the Middle East. A clause in the 'NEC Resolves' section of the document particularly condemns as racist academic boycotts against Israel, a method sometimes used as an expression of student disagreement with the policies exercised by the Israeli government in the region.

Srouji said: "The NUS has consistently failed to support a just peace in the Middle East and to support the Human rights of the Palestinian people.

"Instead, it labels as racist those who campaign for the rights of the Palestinian people which are being denied through the illegal Israeli occupation."

SU Treasurer, Jo Kibble, said: "I share the NUS's concern regarding

incidences of Anti-Semitism and I condemn outright anyone who does adopt this stance. However, the vast majority of criticisms of the actions of the Israeli government are not Anti-Semitic.

"Despite a brief mention of Islamophobia at start of the motion, there are no concrete proposals within it to tackle rising tide of Islamophobia as a result of the war in the Middle East. Anti-Semitism, whilst serious and deplorable, does not represent the most dangerous face of racism today and the NUS must make serious moves to tackle Islamophobia and institutional racism in society."

Speaking at last week's UGM, Ross Renton, NUS Treasurer said: "I am aware that there have been some concerns with the motion. If you believe that it does not adequately address the problem of racism then you can try and change the policy at the next NUS Annual Conference."

However, Daniel Freedman, SU Equal Opportunities (Male) Officer, believes that the campaign needs to be brought closer to home. He said: "All forms of racism are deplorable and I think that the problems need to be resolved through education.

"There is nothing more deadly than the combination of intelligence and ignorance, and we need to remove the ignorance in order to make sure there is racial harmony on campus."

Union Wrangle

The failure of unions to agree over the latest pay offer could lead to a breakdown in national bargaining, with universities reaching their own deals with staff without reference to a national framework, according to Universities' Employers Association chief executive Jocelyn Prudence.

The long running dispute affects over 300,000 staff in universities across Britain, ranging from senior lecturers to cleaners. Seven Trade Unions are involved: of this seven, all except the Association of University Teachers (AUT), which represents lecturers and academic staff in so-called 'old universities' look set to accept the deal.

The proposal promises pay increases between 3.5 and 8.1% in the first year after implementation, followed by a further 3% in year two. The AUT had originally demanded 28%, but later moderated this to "a reasonable amount".

AUT General Secretary, Sally Hunt, denounced the current offer made by Universities UK as "unacceptable". She also voiced fears that the proposals would mean a watering down of the national scale and the introduction of local bargaining. She said: "Pay would be based on where a member works, not what he or she does."

This could be the outcome if talks continue to stall as several Russell group universities including have already signalled a willingness to negotiate private deals.

Natfhe, the University and Colleges Lecturers' Union, also has reservations and is seeking a guarantee of higher rises in the event of an increase in inflation. However, Chief Executive Paul Macknay has indicated his willingness to support the settlement.

The reticence of the two unions representing higher paid academic staff may be due to the perceived bias towards lower paid staff, as the settlement is widely seen as being more generous to manual and clerical employees. Speaking to The Beaver, one library employee and UNISON member confided that she voted in favour of the deal primarily because it will merge clerical and academic pay scales.

With the AUT set to ballot members on further strike action, there seems to be no speedy end to the dispute.



The Beaver

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The Beaver

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The Beaver Comment and Analysis

Bird's Seeds

Little Nuggets of Wonder



So we are well underway then in yet another year being academically nourished at the very prestigious LS of E.

Always intrigued by the new delights London offers around the time its students return... especially this year by the opening of the flag ship 'New Look' in Marble Arch. Having been brought up in a veritable shopping desert, and New Look being the only shop where humans could go to purchase material, passed through with thread, called 'clothes', and avoid being naked (the only clothes shop in walking distance anyway) - you can tell why I was surprised to find the underground plastered with adverts proclaiming that New Look has 'gone all gorgeous'! So I investigated. Yes, it has 'gone all gorgeous'...for slappers. They've made the floor out of a solid form of bubble wrap...this wouldn't be such a cretinism were it not for the fact that the only buyable range of items they offer (in terms of being able to wear anywhere except Lewisham or Peckham) is their pointy stilettos...WHICH ONE CANNOT WALK IN ON BUBBLE WRAP...They do, however, boast an ample

range of sexy, sassy, revealing club wear...for children. My warning ladies is this...don't fall for it...surprise surprise...New Look is still crap.

Onto a more serious, worrying and delicate issue...Arnie won the vote...Elliot is our General Secretary...I mean Arnie won the vote...sorry...I got confused there...the thing is that as an infant I had to ask Mum for 50p and walk all the way down the beach to sit and watch Punch and Judy with my friends.....now I have to watch the puppet show whether I like it or not...but at least it's free!

The vice-chair of the UGM gave me a mushroom this week...apparently it's really good friends with the aubergine. I was going to call it Elliot but then I decided that it had too much character, so I've named it Dave. He has high hopes for the future of the LS of E!

I've recently overheard a number of you, LS of E students, saying the words "I hate smokers". In the climate of political sensitivity that our University positively reeks of (not a bad thing), we're not free to make sweeping generalisations like this....you are categorising intelligent per-

sons in a negative fashion. Unless it is ok to say "I hate people with dirty great sweat patches, medieval breath and ginger hair" (equally as offensive and potentially disastrous for public health)... then one cannot justify a general hatred of smokers. It might be worth mentioning that our economy would collapse without them. There you go smokers, you can feel better now.

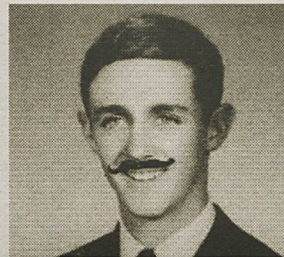
Anyone who has taken offence to anything in this column...I am fully accountable and available for consultation...I'm not really 'bird'...I am Joe King.

All that's left to say for now is that I wish you a pleasant week...don't forget how smashing SE4 is...it's the way forward...



Delaney's Diary

A sidelong look at headline issues



Good day good readers. It's that time of the week again when I trawl through the hectic darning do of the last 7 days and synthesise all the giddy goings and comedique capers that have reached my ears into one silver bullet of truth, load that cartridge of integrity into my trusty copy of Microsoft Word and take aim at those who should know better. Buckle up and keep you head down.

And the first scoundrels who should be ducking for cover are the people at NUS Ents. Their most recent 'update' reaches me. The cause of my ire is not their vapid promotions and poor command of the English language. As the sort of guy who quite likes a little bit of tradition I'm strangely reassured that they're still as bobbins as they always have been. No the thing that vexes me is that at the end of their moronic little missive, complete with the tantalizing offer to take part in a Walkers Crisps competition or get a free SponeBob talking doll, they've decided to insert (geddit?) a joke about porn actresses and a light bulb. Presumably the zany gig fixers haven't yet worked out that they supposedly work for an organization that sup-



Solving arguments the old way

ports, inter alia, feminism and has strong policy against the, erm, the objectification of women, through, erm, things like porn...

On a lighter note, a tale of rumbustious behaviour from one of our sabbatical officers. 'Uncle' Jo Kibble, who I'm reliably informed is the proud possessor of at least one Communist poster, was to be heard singing some fine protest songs at a party last Saturday. Comrade Kibble was apparently putting great gusto into renditions of some of the best left wing lullabies you could hope to hear. Any chance of a repeat performance Jo? Say, Thursday. Around 1.50pm? Suggestions about what Uncle should sing for the UGM's delectation should be sent to Special K.

If only all members of the SU Exec could conduct themselves so harmoniously. Sadly, it appears that some of them are a rather more discordant addition to any convivial social gathering. At another soiree, International Officer Andrew Schwartz was being mighty piquey with a member of the Beaver's staff. Our man for all things global brought an embarrassed hush to the Docklands gathering by demanding an apology for a perceived

slight at last week's UGM. In a tone that suggests Andy has been inspired by IDS's recent gun obsession and the election of the Govenator stateside, he didn't let up. I'm proud to relate that the Beaver staff took the honourable course of action, refused to be spoken to in such a manner. And repaired to the garden for a beer and a fag.

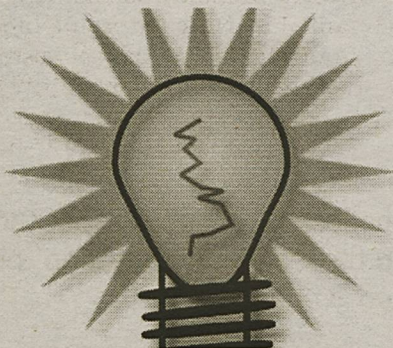
And now for some sad news. Brace yourselves, this is going to be tough. This is the last edition of Delaney's Diary for some time. Twinkling the alphabetical ivories has been a laugh to say the least. But every bright young lad needs to sample the full range of pleasures available to him so I'm setting course for pastures new and laying my journalistic ambitions aside for a while. Who knows where I'll end up? PsyTrance? The Scandinavian Society? The Script? There was no badger's head on my pillow. No midnight knock on the Passfield door from Howard's Hard Ladies of the Press Office. It's not even that I've found love (though there's been a marked outbreak of that in the Beaver Office lately). It's just that all good things come to an end. And on what to many must seem an unrelated note, so does this Diary. I'm switching off my torch of truth and hanging up my bandolier of cartridges of integrity.

Delaney out. And over.

Bids for my brilliance from societies seeking a new member (modesty forbids me from suggesting a starting price) should be sent to:

Theworldismyoyster@hotmail.com

If you have a burning ambition to take over the sacred mantle of Delaney's Torch of Truth, then send a 500 word submission to thebeaver@lse.ac.uk ...



You guess the punchline

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If you have written three or more articles for the Beaver and your name does not appear in the above list please email thebeaver@lse.ac.uk and we will add your name on for next week

The Beaver Comment and Analysis

Editorial Comment

Shut the open door

The Union General Meeting (UGM), the sovereign decision making body of the LSE Students' Union is a unique feature of student democracy in this country. Most Students' Unions in the country function in a similar way to democratic governments. They elect representatives who then take decisions on behalf of their constituents. Our system has much more in common with Athenian style democracy. Any student can turn up and vote on the various motions put forward for the UGM's consideration.

Whilst in principle, this system is fair and democratic, this is not so in practice. Many students do not know that the UGM exists. Others do, but because of their limited understanding of what it entails they choose not to pay any attention to it. Consequently the meeting ends up being dominated by the same group every week. Thus the political opinion of the meeting stays the same every week. It comprises heavily of home undergraduate students who are to the left of centre of the political spectrum. Unless a radical change in the composition occurs, it is unlikely that the balance of power will shift.

The UGM is clearly unrepresentative.

Packed In

This week, the Beaver reports that overcrowding at the LSE is still rife. Our findings show that though the total number of students recruited this year falls below that of last year, the figure is still below that which the School predicted, and indeed, can accommodate. Of course, the School should be commended for this feat. That they are actively trying to bring down numbers is reassuring. However, students are still suffering.

Due to the overshoot of last year, and the resonating effect that carries on to this year, there are still serious issues to do with space. There are far too many students packed into this small institution. Many freshers missed out on halls places last year causing them much

Many important decisions that affect students take place without their endorsement. In fact, many motions pass even if they are contrary to the belief of most students.

There is a more fundamental point though. The state of the nation's interest in politics is dire. Apathy reigns supreme. As individuals studying in one of the most prestigious and influential universities in the country, we should be prepared to set the bar higher. To make sure more people understand and appreciate the importance of being involved in the political process. Such changes should begin at home. By making students more aware of the political structure that governs their Union, they become more aware of decisions that affect them, and make them want to be more involved in those all important discussions.

To combat apathy, the SU must launch a campaign to raise awareness of the UGM, and in doing so, strengthen it. There is currently a huge campaigning zeal in the Union due to its opposition to top-up and visa extension fees. The Union's own institutions must not escape this spirit of reform. The Exec. should lead the way.

anguish. But it is not just accommodation that suffers. Lectures and classes have suffered as well. Many students attending popular lectures have been unable to find seats and thus have had to sit on the floor. The library is always filled to the brim and it is next impossible to find a computer, let alone a set text.

We recognise that there is no short term solution to this problem. The School is trying to seek out new buildings but it is unclear how successful it will be at this. It is also highly unlikely that another location will be found for the School to move. It is up to the administration to ensure that it makes the best use of the space it has and that next years intake meets the target set.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,
A shocked friend kindly drew my attention to the Union Jack column on page 3 of this week's Beaver. I am very flattered that your paper has given me reference in an article about the SU when I am no longer in attendance (I can't remember this happening for any other non-Sabbatical).

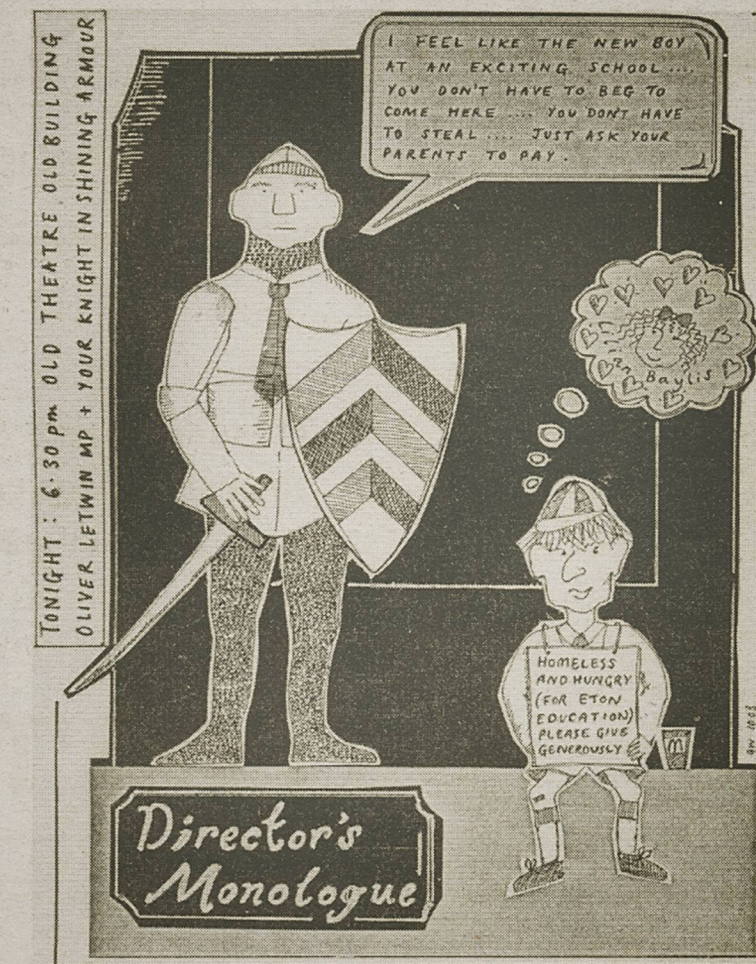
I must say I am rather annoyed by the reference to my claimed "fascist" views by 'Jack.' I am even more annoyed by the failure to even answer straight questions about this at this week's UGM by your editor. The fact is that I loathe and detest the views of National Socialism and all its ideological cousins. Numerous individuals at my school lacked an extended family thanks to the practitioners of that vile ideology and I have also been a firm indeed fervent opponent of it and even its ideological sympathisers, such as the Bathist party in Iraq. I would like to know what in my extensive involvement in the union, lends even the faintest shadow of support to this assertion-even if supposedly a "joke". As a believer in Liberal Democracy and individual liberty I also oppose other 'fascist' regimes such as those of Salazaar and Franco. Fascism is not a laughing matter, nor is it a matter for trivialisation of this sort.

Yours,
Tom Packer

Dear Sir,
Fascists actively participated in sending Jews to Nazi death camps where they were gassed, starved, and subjected to heinous experiments. Even half a century after the Holocaust, the crimes of the fascists have lost none of their evil. So I was disgusted, to say the least, when Tom Packer was referred to in Union Jack's column as a "fascist."

Packer spent his time within the LSE SU lobbying for disabled, post-grad and international students' interests, eliminating waste from the SU and taming the constitutional review busy-bodies. The Students' Union acknowledged his contribution by awarding him an Honorary Studentship - a telling reminder of his enduring legacy within the school.

What has Packer done that measures up in any way to the Holocaust? If you can't answer that question - and you can't - then it is offensive to call him a "fascist" because you are in



effect likening him to Hitler. You are moreover demeaning the utter severity of the Holocaust, and are thus trivializing the suffering endured by its victims. The current Union Jack is guilty of a new form of Holocaust-denial: playing down the fascists' crimes.

Yours very angrily,
Alykhan Velshi.

Dear Sir,
Firstly, I would like to pass on my congratulations to whichever think-tank is responsible for the new look Beaver. I know that I and many others have always held that there were just too many pages to cope with in a blustery climate such as London, where at any moment a small breeze could pick up and whip out the middle ten-or-so pages and send them spiralling off down Houghton street. It must have taken many hours of smoke filled rooms and late night meetings to finally reach the absolute gem of a plan to just remove them from the off! The new 'pamphlet style' beaver is a publishing wonder, at least equal in ingenuity to the Tabloid Independent, although while the Independent has naively chosen to keep the word count the same, you, Mr Editor have taken the bold step of losing half the content, while (and this truly is a master stroke), filling the rest up with full-page colour adverts! Bravo, sir, and a hearty slap on the back to all of your gifted, gifted writers (four?) who make the Beaver what it is today. While it is clear that Matt Sinclair is an idiot, and Spurrell is a malevolent little shit, there should be a certain amount of

gratitude displayed by those at Beaver Heights, for without such clowns there really would be very little to say about the first UGM of the year- don't misunderstand me, I have no time for either dullards or extremists, but at least the handful of freshers present have been introduced to something of what the UGM can be, but unfortunately wasn't. I only hope that everyone's buddy K can speed up proceedings to allow for at least some form of debate, and the occasional humiliation of any one of the many careerist little tits that the SU belches out.

The duly noted absence of both the balcony boys, and decent paper throwing is certainly a worry, and harking back to my first point i can't help but think the Beaver is partially responsible, having dramatically reduced the supply of readily available ammunition. Or perhaps you just can't get the staff these days, and the AU is doomed to eventual obscurity under the leadership of...who?.. It is a sad day indeed when thoughts drift back to the heady days of barely restrained misogyny with anything less than pity, but it would seem that the balcony is a duller place with its new found timidity, and I can see little hope of redemption in those that remain.

But nevermind, it's not important. Let Nick 'rivers of blood' Spurrell be the only opposition to the loony left and pissy liberalism for all I care, and soon we can all read about it on both pages of this illustrious publication, and we may all be happier people for it.

Yours
Ed James

Are you aghast or amused by anything you see in The Beaver or on campus? Write to the editor at: thebeaver@lse.ac.uk

blink

Features and Politics

A Project for Unilateralism?
A world in crisis and American ideology
in the spotlight. Any connection?
pages 12 and 13



Edited by Ben Chapman (b.chapman@lse.ac.uk)

Musings

Falling over in Florida

Matthew Sinclair
blink Columnist

Imagine falling over, getting buried in an avalanche and suffocating. You would already be a little upset with your lot. Looking down on your mortal coil a few thousand years later and listening to scientists describe you as well preserved must be positively infuriating; poor Pittdown man.

British weather is soft. It doesn't get very cold, the Gulf Stream keeps our cold patches really quite warm, and, for now, it rarely gets hot enough to justify celebration. If you happen to fall over you are more likely to get back up, muddily, than wind up on display in the British Museum a few thousand years later.

The same is true of our wildlife. Anything large enough to kill you was probably wiped out by Henry VIII, colourful character that he was. Only the fox outwitted the king in an act of impudence that the British aristocracy has never forgiven the poor creatures.

All this means that a Briton can put his castle just about wherever he chooses without fear of entombment or bears. Those in Florida have a harder time. With impressive determination Americans are building homes, hotels and golf courses in the Florida everglades.

Introducing Oriental swans, as one hotel did, into an environment where the "most dangerous animal" sobriquet is quite so hotly contested is doing your bit for the environment in a desperately costly manner.

Alligators were the first on the scene and created quite a mess. Eight hundred dollar swans unsurprisingly failed to last long enough for trappers to arrive.

Florida will continue to build on the Everglades and she will continue to see them bite back. In order to "control" numbers people will turn to hunting. When futuristic medical science awakens you from a thousand year slumber under ice Americans on jet skis will probably be hunting raccoons.

I found out what it was to be on the wrong side of a funny headline this weekend after years spent finding hilarity in headlines like "Monkey gives Hope to Childless Couples".

The trick to finding a truly hilarious headline is to find a deadly serious story, forget about it, and read the headline without context.

"Garden Thieves Ruin Christmas" from the Norfolk News is great but it is Medway's contribution to literature that really shines; "Toddler Group Plagued by Rats" was all over news stands for a week. My only experience of the Medway Messenger suggests a proud tradition of reporting.

Karmic revenge has now been served. Around a week after I moved into the area I was greeted by the Willesden & Brent Chronicle announcing "Cricklewood: A Town called Malice". Explains the Liberal Democrat vote.

blink Focus: Top-Up Fees

As students across London and from around the country prepare to march on Sunday against the Government's proposals for top-up fees, we examine the debate from three sides: on page 9 we get the perspective of an international student at the LSE, while on page 10 LSE professor Nick Barr presents his rationale for higher fees. First, the reasons why so many students plan to take over the capital this weekend.

DON'T PRICE STUDENTS OUT

El Barham

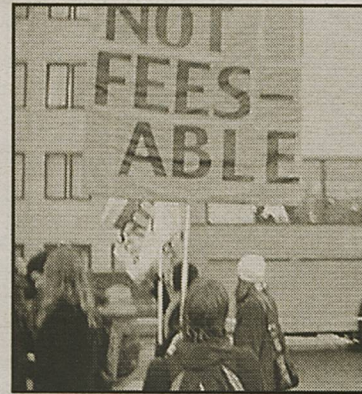
The government's White Paper on Higher Education presented last January proposes to introduce £3,000 extra fees each year for UK and EU students at the discretion of higher education institutions. The philosophy behind this is that universities are currently suffering due to a lack of resources - promising academics are relocating to the United States because the salaries they can expect here are so paltry. The estimated backlog in teaching investment stands at £8 billion and funding per student has fallen by 36% since 1989. Universities do need more money and it has to come from somewhere.

However, the proposals in the White Paper are not the answer. The repercussions of increasing the amounts students have to pay for their education are wide reaching and extremely damaging, not just for those coming from the UK or EU but for international students as well.

The fact that the introduction of top-up fees is voluntary will also see some universities adopting the scheme whilst others would not be able to do so. This is because prestigious institutions know that prospective students will flock through their doors regardless of price, the benefits of acquiring a degree from a university of good repute overcoming the high cost of the course. Not all universities have such a reputation so will be unable to charge the higher rate of fees as this will mean they are unable to attract the requisite number of students. Therefore, students from lower income backgrounds will be discouraged from attending the so-called best universities, like the LSE, because to do so will cost them more money that they cannot afford.

Another troubling aspect of the changes is that universities would be able to charge different levels of fees for different courses. This would mean that, due to the laws of supply and demand, the most popular and oversubscribed courses would become more expensive. Students who do not have immediate access to large sums of cash will therefore feel obligated to choose their course on the basis of price. There will no longer be the option of studying a subject simply because you enjoy it and wish to know more.

The government does not wish to return Britain to the state where higher education is elitist. The current aim is to get 50% of school leavers into a higher education institute. Therefore, to combat



the problems incurred by introducing a market into higher education, universities will only be allowed to levy the excess fees if they are deemed to be meeting the government's requirements to accept large numbers of students from less affluent backgrounds. An independent Access Regulator will decide if the student body of a university is acceptably diverse in terms of its class makeup before granting the powers enabling the institution to charge the extra £3,000 from students each year.

So how are students going to be able to come up with the cash if it is not immediately available? The answer is loans: lots of loans. Undergraduates will leave university saddled with up to £30,000 of debt. Student loans have an interest rate of 3.1%, so this amount will increase year by year, meaning that graduates will be paying off their debts throughout their working lives. Examples given in a government handbook to elucidate the effects of top-up fees upon the student body shows that some people will only be able to free themselves of the outstanding amounts when they have reached their late 30s after nearly 20 years in the job market.

To ease the pain, the government has decided that these loans need not be returned until the student is earning a salary of £15,000 a year and this holds for anyone graduating after 2004 when the new law is scheduled to be passed. This should mean that students will not be deterred from accruing large amounts of debt as they will not be asked to pay it off until they are financially able to do so. This works from a strictly theoretical perspective, which is why many brilliant academics including Professor Nicholas Barr of the LSE wholeheartedly support the scheme. But real human beings do not live by economists' models - the idea of accumulating huge debts is a psychological deterrent, particularly to those from less

affluent backgrounds. In practice, the necessity of debt will stop the very people the government is trying to encourage into higher education from embarking upon a degree.

This increase in fees will not only affect home and EU undergraduate students. Differential fees between courses will not be exclusively for home undergraduates but will extend to all sections of the universities' courses for all students. Also, once the government has opened the floodgates to increase home fees, international and postgraduate fees will be next on the list. It will certainly not be the case that universities' increased balances will mean that the much higher international fees will be lowered - universities like all organisations can always find things they need to spend money on and are constantly searching for a way to raise the funds to enable them to do so.

We are now at a critical period - the White Paper will be voted on in Parliament next year and if passed, these abhorrent proposals, which will prevent some of the brightest and most deserving minds in the country from being able to enter higher education, will be swiftly implemented. As students, we know the benefits and advantages of a university qualification and we have to make clear our opposition to the White Paper. As future and current voters, we can influence the actions of Britain's politicians, who will not wish to alienate our support, by making our dissent clear for them to see.

The demonstration next Sunday, October 26th, is our chance to show our opposition and prevent the White Paper from being made law. Go on the march - we must fight against the proposals and this is best way to start.

El Barham is a second year Government and History student and is Beaver News Editor.

If you're interested in writing for blink or have an article that you would like to get published, simply email b.chapman@lse.ac.uk

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blink Focus: Top-Up Fees

Should international students care about top-up fees?



So what's it all got to do with me?

Adrian Li

Come next Sunday afternoon, October 26th, the NUS will hold a national demonstration against top-up fees. I know what I'll be doing, and it won't be joining in the march. Why? Because up to now, no one from the executive committee of the Student's Union has convinced me of its relevance.

I'm a first year international student and I pay full fees up front. This year, I have to pay upwards of £10,000 for tuition fees alone. At the school induction on October 1st, when Elliot Simmons mentioned the campaign against top-up fees, I didn't really listen to what he said. At Freshers' Fayre and at the queue for Crush that Friday, I didn't even look at the postcards. While I do not have empirical evidence and have not conducted a Gallup poll, I can claim that most international students feel the same: that it doesn't concern us.

Let me get some things straight. I do agree in principle that higher education should be made accessible and it should be needs-blind. I think that it'd be a crying shame if students from lower income groups do not have access to a university education necessary to become upwardly mobile in a social class sense. However, I will only make a big hue and cry over it if that happened in my country.

I am not a citizen of this nation and will never enjoy the comparatively lower tuition fees that UK and EU students enjoy. I accept that, because there is a snowflake's chance in hell that any government in this world will give foreign students the same form of subsidy for university students that its own citizens enjoy. You ask me to send a postcard to Tony Blair to tell him to ditch the motion to impose top-up fees. Well, I think he doesn't care about my views since I can never vote for him. (Not that I would in any case, but that's for another article.)

Frankly, part of me feels that you all should stop complaining and bear more burden in paying top-up fees. And honestly, there are other international students out there who feel the same. Trust me, that is what they tell me when they talk about your big demonstration next Sunday; that it's irrelevant. What I don't appreciate is that the current level of disparity between fees for foreign students, which I assume is the full fee, and those of UK students, who pay about 10% of what I pay.

What makes me more unnerved about this whole issue is that in the Sunday Times on Oct 12, it was reported that Oxford would go private if the top-up fees motion is defeated and start to charge full fees to everyone, much like the Ivy League system in the US. This would mean everyone, including foreign students, could suffer. If this threat were carried out, it would set an unwelcome precedent and universities like the LSE might follow suit. That there is even talk of differential fees for different courses being proposed makes the outlook for future students look bleak. In an email to me, Jo Kibble, the convener of this campaign, tells me that such talk from Oxford is mere scaremongering on the part of certain officials. Yet, the fact that such a possibility does exist remains a scary proposition.

Furthermore, no matter what the outcome of the top-up fees debate, international students will bear the cost of it. This is a view I take and it is shared by others. If the top-up fees motion is defeated, then universities will milk us international students like the cash cows that we probably are and we will end up paying more. Sorry for the crude analogy but it's an opinion shared by others. My debate team partner from school back home, who is currently reading Law at Bristol University, tells me that universities probably want to take in more international students because they can get more money upfront from them.

'The committee running this campaign has yet to make the case why international students should be involved in it.'

If the motion passes, nothing changes because fees for international students at best would remain static. They could even rise because, as Jo Kibble in the same aforementioned email pointed out, the HE sector will become privatised and fees will be increased under the guise of market forces. So once again, we're caught between a rock and a hard place.

Even if the situation were to arise of a two tier system of universities and courses, international students who can afford the full upfront fees right now probably will be able to afford the so called "upper-tier" of university courses that only the rich can then afford. This could lead to a backlash against international students who are perceived as taking away university places from the UK's own citizens.

Kibble rightly points out that this is a campaign about principle: that the current batch of students won't be affected and in any case international students won't enjoy significant gain. I thank him for doing so. However, the fact still remains that the committee running this campaign about principle has yet to make the case why international students should be involved in or even aware of it. The international student body here at the LSE is about 50% and the voice for such a campaign would be diminished if this group were to tune out en-masse. Kibble and his followers have their work cut out for them if they want to enlist the help of international students like me. I urge them to make the case more clearly to students like myself. Otherwise I'll be at Ray's Jazz Shop in Foyles on Charing Cross Road after morning church service, looking for a Wynton Marsalis CD.

Adrian Li is a first year undergraduate from Singapore. He is studying for a degree in International Relations and History.

OneEyeOpen

Perhaps it's no coincidence that as the shape of international politics begins to change before our eyes, with old friendships and alliances threatened by the incumbent political elites, so great symbols of recent history also find themselves consigned to memory and nostalgia.

The thorny relationship between France and the UK since the war in Iraq is a far cry from November 1962 when the two countries sat down to sign an historic treaty: one signalling co-operation and collaboration on a radical and ambitious project - supersonic flight. A product of a time when great minds committed themselves to great purpose for its own sake, the end result remains as impressive today as when it first took to the skies nearly 34 years ago.

But alas, Concorde's last intrepid voyage will be this Friday.

The decision of British Airways to ground the plane is the final event in a chain leading directly from the crash of an Air France Concorde just outside Paris three years ago.

But the criticism the plane has suffered since has been unwarranted. The accident itself was caused by runway debris that could have strayed into the path of any plane taking off that afternoon; the fact that it was Concorde ensured unprecedented press scaremongering over the plane's safety. What is to be borne in mind is that the aircraft still boasts only one major incident in its 27 years of commercial flight and a full safety certificate.

So not matter what BA may throw out in terms of justification for its decision to pull one of this country's, and the world's, great technological icons out of service, the reason this plane is being grounded is not one of safety. It is a purely commercial decision which reeks of an utterly shameful level of selfishness.

One could understand BA's claims that Concorde has been unprofitable, flying with empty seats and making a loss on every flight. What the airline did not try, however, was reducing ticket prices to encourage more of the general public on board. When Virgin's Richard Branson offered to take over the running of the planes from BA to save them a future eternity in museums, BA turned him down, presumably in the interests of prestige and competition.

This is completely unacceptable when you consider that the planes were designed and manufactured with public money and sold to BA for just £1. The present government is as much to blame on this issue and should have put pressure on the airline to sell them back for the same price, to be passed on to someone willing to keep them flying.

This great institution, this majestic symbol of mankind's ambition, creativity and ingenuity - a representation not only of national pride but of the merits of international friendship and co-operation - has been sold out by rampant commercialism and that is wrong.

So, while hundreds will flock to Heathrow to see the last graceful landing, millions more will mourn the loss of not just the ultimate example of a technological work of art, but also of the single greatest aspiration of everyone trying to make it in life: to fly Concorde.

blink Focus: Top-Up Fees

NICK BARR: Top Dog on Top-Up Fees

Active in the debate on higher education funding since 1988, Nick Barr is an expert on (and advocate of) 'top-up fees'. blink decided to consult our in-house expert to get the lowdown on an issue the NUS is trying to shoot down from the hip. He talked to Nick Kirby.

Why are top up fees the best way to finance UK higher education?

There are two objectives: to increase the quality of university education, and to improve access. Tax funding has failed on both counts. Quality has fallen for lack of resources, while a regressive system of tax funding has failed the poor. Britain's record on access has been shameful. Variable fees, in contrast, bring in resources to improve quality and, by reducing the subsidy going to people who don't need it, free resources to improve access through grants.

Won't these fees discourage poor people from applying to university?

Tax funding means that there's not enough money for grants. Trying to increase access by subsidising everyone equally doesn't work. If we charge higher fees for those who can afford it, there are

more resources for grants.

What are the roots of exclusion? The first is lack of money, hence the importance of grants at university level and Educational Maintenance Allowances to keep people in school. The second root is lack of information - particularly among those for whom access is most fragile - about higher education and its benefits. Thus it is vital to increase outreach to schools. The access problem is not at 18 but at 16.

The numbers are appalling. If you take 100 children with professional parents and 100 whose parents are manual workers, 81 of the first group go to university while only 15 of the second. Yet of those who get good enough A-levels to go to university, the participation rate of both groups is about 90 percent. Thus access fails when someone leaves school at 16. Shouting about fees is missing the point.

We need to offer better information, better secondary education, and more

focus on early child development. To say fees are wrong is shameful - it simply lets the middle class keep their perks.

If a general tax is regressive, why not focus on the highest bracket of earners?

A tax on the best off might raise £5 billion pounds. The question then is, why should we spend this on the best in the brightest, rather than on the under-fives, on increasing the staying-on rate post-16, on vocational training, and on larger grants?

Is £15,000 a high enough level to start demanding repayments?

£15,000 is too high! I believe that repayments should start at the income tax threshold (about £4,700), but at 3 pence in the pound rather than the current level of 9 pence. A lower threshold and lower repayment rates makes it much clearer that loan repayments are not credit card debt, but a payroll deduction based on ability to pay.

As we move towards a free market in university education, how are we going to fund courses in science and engineering, which have high running costs? One for our friends at UCL to lose sleep over perhaps!

Nobody in their right mind is suggesting a totally free market. For these courses, the taxpayer contribution should be larger than for cheaper courses.

Why don't postgraduate courses have a similar system of funding?

I wish! The current system for postgraduates demands payment upfront, with little or no support for living costs. There should be an income-contingent loan system for postgraduates covering tuition fees and realistic living costs.

If top up fees are a non-issue, what do you consider should be students' main concern regarding university education?

Students' main concern should be with the quality of what they are getting. Variable fees help here as well by creating competition between universities. Competition is beneficial where the customer is sufficiently informed about the goods on offer:

- 1) It enables all stakeholders - students, universities, employers, and the state - to express their views, rather than the state acting as central planner.
- 2) It improves the quality of education. LSE was abruptly faced with international competition in 1980: the effect has undoubtedly been beneficial for our students.
- 3) It broadens choices - consumer responsiveness will improve the range of subjects, the mixtures available, the type (academic, vocational, or mixed), and the mode of delivery (part-time, accelerated, and evening class degree options).

Faced with escalating rents and other living costs how can students be expected to make ends meet?

Loans should be large enough to cover all tuition fees and realistic living costs.

At the moment maintenance loans are too low, forcing students to depend on their parents, or to work long hours earning money, and/or to take on excessive credit card debt. The new system includes loans to cover fees, which is great news; but the maintenance loan should be larger, and so should grants.

If top-up fees are such a good idea, why are so many people opposed to them?

There is still a lack of understanding. Most people don't realise that upfront fees will disappear. Under the new system, the Student Loans Company will squirt money into the student's bank account to pay much of their living costs, and into the university's bank account to pay their tuition fees. And loan repayments are not credit card debt but a payroll deduction. The Government has been woeful in getting this message across.

Secondly, people have strong emotions. There is a gut feeling that it is immoral to charge for higher education. This is understandable but misplaced. The moral focus should be on the fact that poor people cannot get into higher education and the rich are heavily subsidised.

Any other comments?

Consider this. A graduate leaves university at 21 and works for 40 years paying income tax and National Insurance contributions at the current rates. With conservative assumptions about earnings growth he or she will pay £850,000 in income tax and National Insurance contributions. An extra £15,000 is a pimple on an elephant's backside.

Second point: students get their higher education free; it is graduates who make repayments - and those repayments are an income-contingent payroll deduction, hence automatically based on ability to pay. While on the subject, 10% of the debt of new teachers is written off for each year of service; hence someone who teaches for 10 years is entirely exempt. This should be extended to other public sector workers.

The NUS is misrepresenting students here - this is a matter for the NUG(raduates)! My message to the NUS is: if you *really* want to improve access, beat the hell out of the government to increase grants in return for grumpy acquiescence over variable fees.

For more information please visit http://econ.lse.ac.uk/staff/nb/index_own.html

There is also a LSE Students' Union debate; 'Are top-up fees the answer? A debate on the future of higher education funding' today (Tuesday 21st October), from 5.30 to 6.30 in the New Theatre (E171).

Nick Barr is Professor in Economics at LSE and has in the past submitted evidence to the Dearing Committee and the Education Select Committee.

Nick Kirby is a postgraduate student at the LSE.



The Association for Dead People

Archana Sankaran

Lal Bihari started the Association for Dead People in India in 1999. Not to say that India, in her unique democratic way (!), legalized the 'rights of the dead'; in fact the people in the association are not really dead, just legally so. What it is is just that there are around 10,000 people around in the north of India who have been declared dead by their respective local governments.

Once you are declared dead then what happens is that it goes into all the government records surprisingly quickly that you have ceased to exist, even when you are talking to them trying to explain that there is a technical hitch in their deduction. You lose your properties because - surprise! - you didn't leave a will. Another surprise: the properties go to your nearest kin with the deepest pockets.

Now there are a few advantages if you ever have to belong to the Mritak Sangh or the Association of Dead People. If you had already committed a couple of murders and were going to hang for it in a week, it becomes much simpler for you to be already declared dead. Or if you didn't like your name and didn't fancy getting through the whole Indian bureaucratic nonsense to get that changed, just get yourself declared dead for 100 Rupees (£1.50, that's honestly all that it takes).

But mostly if you are a farmer with a little land and no money, you just want your name back. Lal Bihari tried publicity - tried to get arrested, stood for the

Parliament, tried to attract contempt charges by courts, wrote pamphlets, organised his funeral, demanded a widow's pension for his wife, started an organization and finally added the word Mritak (Dead) to his name.

Luckily for him, after 19 years of furious campaigning from 1975 to 1994, the District Magistrate decided to 'humanize' him. Now he is trying to help others out of similar predicaments.

So how successful has the Association been? From the data that's available, the ADP looks like it has a very vague membership. Only around 20 people are registered out of 10,000 suspected cases. The reason why such a thing would be is not too difficult to derive. The rich relative who had the poor farmer declared dead in the first place, is rich. The farmer, if he openly protests for his rights, will soon prove beyond contestation the veracity of his death certificate.

Still, it is interesting to go into two more such bizarre incidents.

Bhagwan Prasad Mishra, 75, is not afraid to fight. A pillar of the Azamgarh community, he has been officially dead since 1977, when four young nephews who managed a family property transferred a half-hectare of his land to their name. Armed with a rifle, Mishra visited the boys and got them to sign an affidavit admitting they committed fraud and had no claim to the land. After all that drama, the affidavit was filed with the Land Court and forgotten. With a judiciary that has more court cases than there are people

in the country, such an incident can probably be condoned.

Paltan Yadav was pushed off his land in 1988. His relatives mockingly told him, "Paltan is dead. Who are you tilling his land?" Penniless, he became a holy man. Once he gets his land back, Yadav says, he will drop his saffron robes of celibacy and find a bride.

But all is not lost for these people, for one because they make a great story. A movie director, Satish Kaushik is going to direct a movie on Lal Bihari soon.

And Lal also won the IgNobel Prize for Peace this year.

Archana Sankaran is an Indian Masters student studying Operational Research. This is her first article for blink.

'There are a few advantages to belonging to the Association for Dead People. If you are going to hang in a week, it becomes much simpler for you to be already declared dead.'



No coffin up: deceased but not yet dead.

Milkin' It



Moo. Milk's so complicated these days, even Daisy's perplexed.

Olivia Mantle

Milk. Yes, the white stuff. The stuff you've had since you were two hours old and nourished you pretty much single-handedly for the early part of your life. How complicated can it be? Very, it would appear.

I walked into my local Starbucks and was confronted by a carefully hand-writ-

ten notice informing me they now provided a selection of milk with which to grace the habitual Latte: whole, semi, skim, soy, goat and "the one that's between semi and skim that no-one can name." Add to this the fact you can also choose the temperature of your milk, and you have a half-hour task just to work out what you want to accompany the coffee of your liking.

And it seems to me that this is just part

of an ongoing trend of making more and more complicated what could be simple. Take for instance the ubiquitous banana. Not content with the fruit as it is, manufacturers (no doubt under pressure from the head honchos at Tesco et al) are now trying desperately to make them ever straighter, more yellow and more firm. They no longer taste of fruit? Who cares!?! They look good!

For this is what it all boils down to: how things look. Oh how powerful it feels to walk into said coffee shop and order a triple mocchacino with soy milk: over heated, with extra froth and no cream. The more specifications, the higher up you are in the social food chain. He who dares order but a lowly Latte must surrender to the hierarchy that puts him way below the others.

The code used is also of great importance. He who knows will use the coffee-shop-approved language that you may overhear the "baristas" use themselves. (I personally believe they make it up on the spot to impress the clientele, but that's another kettle of fish...) It is the modern-day equivalent to the peacock spreading his tail feathers to show off to, and warn off, the other males in order to get the female. It says: "I command this place as my own as I know the lingo." It doesn't matter that it takes twenty minutes to get the order across, and that the underpaid, shattered bloke the other side of the counter is going to put whatever he feels like in it anyway. The truth is the customer will never know the difference because even he doesn't know what he's on about. He's just putting on the airs.

The other thing to remember is that all these complications have only arisen since the Yanks have made coffee, and business

that goes with it, their own. Up until the Starbucks chain came to London, it was either the independent British café that served glorified puddle water as an excuse for coffee, or the snooty Italian joint that demanded a membership card before you could enter onto the hallowed territory. But at least then you knew what you were getting: if it looked like it had been strained through a sock, chances were it had been. Likewise, if it were less than a thimble's worth and nearly took your head off, you wouldn't sleep for 48 hours. Coffee had a point to it: a fact which has been completely forgotten. You had one because you wanted a boost, or because you were a weird Englishman and didn't like tea. Nothing to do with your compensating for a lack of authority elsewhere, or fussy eating habits that should not be tolerated.

Let's face it: a coffee is a coffee, and milk is milk. Bring back the cow, get its wares, drink it, and then forget about it. Are there not more important things to be researching than how to make ordering your morning refreshment even more complicated?

Olivia Mantle is a second year undergraduate studying International Relations.

'You now have a half-hour task just to work out what you want to accompany your coffee. It is part of an ongoing trend of making things more complicated.'

As the world mulls over the aftermath of American unilateralism in Iraq,

THE WORLD IN CRISIS

Beyond
Democracy

In the first of a series of articles examining a world facing increasing turmoil, blink looks at the problems of democracy, both at home and in Iraq.



Sophia Hoffman

The world is in crisis - no one who follows the news will deny it. Turmoil in Iraq, chaos in Afghanistan, escalation of violence in Israel, Palestine and Congo, breakdown at the WTO, all overshadowed by the looming collapse of the Dollar. Inherent in crisis lies change and what we might be witnessing at the moment is an accelerated movement towards an entirely different social organisation that is less democratic, more cynical and possibly more honest.

Among the populations of Europe several events in recent months have initiated a growing sense of alienation from their elected leaders. The war against Iraq and the continuing occupation are of acute relevance for this development. Increasingly obvious, the lies surrounding the build-up and justification of the war by the political leadership of the pro-war states are oil on the quenched fire of a population that did not want the war in the first place. All arguments and observations of anti-war protesters are proving correct and the feeling of having known this in the first place and the realisation that the government also knew is incensing. Furthermore, it brings home the realisation that all popular protest does not matter and that the public's voice was nil existent on this occasion.

The government wanted war for unsound, selfish and only partly understood reasons and it was neither honest about this nor was it prepared to adhere to the opinion of the majority. Continuing along this line of thinking and behaviour, it was in fact even irrelevant and unnecessary for the government to be dishonest about its reasons to go to war - everybody knew what was going on anyway.

Realising that "the government knew that we knew and knew we were right and now we know this" - in the face of the exemplified futility of protest is a huge disillusionment. In future, why should the government even bother to lie and deceive? As this experience has shown that nothing can be done and protest is useless, an apathetic population will simply not care. A withdrawal from political leadership and participation - a trend of the last decade - has been exacerbated by the government's handling of the Iraq crisis.

However, the other possible popular reaction that others involved in student politics may have witnessed as the author did among students at Sussex, is a radicalisation into embracing anti-democratic, violent politics and political groups. In the course of the events after September 11th, vaguely anarchist, free-spirited undergraduates not only turned towards Hamas, celebrating their suicide bombers, but were consciously embracing Stalinist politics (which among other things manifested itself in unconditional support to North Korea).

It need not be explained here why lauding Stalin as the great defyer of Western imperialism and brushing away the gulags as partly propaganda lies and partly necessary to deal with the reactionaries is an unfortunate political development. What should be realised though is what Campbell and Co failed to think about when concocting their media bonanza: that disaffecting and disowning the masses of the political process in such an obvious manner ultimately threatens democracy itself. The flipside of the Stalinists at Sussex can be observed in the steadily growing popularity of the British National Party and its anti-democratic whites-only slogans.

From a very different angle, the reporting from the streets of Iraq just after the invasion up until now is contributing to an 'ideational' undermining of the hegemony of the democratic ideal, i.e. the firm belief in the West that democracy is the 'only way of doing things'. The images and voices from Iraq, whose society and state were built up in bleakest colours before the war, show that life went on there as well; people lived a life that they perceived as normal and in which many things were perceived as better than the present situation. The talk of 'liberation' is questioned: was it better to have functioning hospitals, water, food and security than being able to complain about Saddam? Many Iraqi people seem unhappy with the situation now and is the vying for power between the different factions not going to end in corruption (or even murder as in Afghanistan) anyway?

The shock that life in Iraq under a dictatorship might not have been as bad as the hell it was portrayed to be is a taboo that is cushioned by the regularly-appear-

'The talk of 'liberation' is questioned: was it better to have functioning hospitals, water, food and security than being able to complain about Saddam? The shock that life in Iraq under a dictatorship might not have been as bad as the hell it was portrayed to be is a taboo.'

ing reminders of torture, exile and other crimes of the regime. But its effect is there, namely an implicit realisation that democracy is possibly not the only imaginable way of ordering society. In a similar way, the strong focus of attention on Arab/Muslim societies, especially radical Islam and its assertion of power not only via terrorism but also through elections in which Islamic parties have popular support, contributes to this undermining. Although the reporting of radical Islam receives is practically always negative, its heightened presence in the political discourse already provides it power: there is no such thing as bad publicity. As undemocratic movements and societies become more prominent, the more democracy loses its sacral, enlightened, 'only-way-of-doing-things' status.

Finally, US foreign and domestic politics must be added to the picture of disillusionment. The Bush administration is fulfilling all the bad expectations of the European left - fear of expanding neo-liberalism to the cost of the majority of the

population, environmental degradation, war, insecurity and economic turmoil. Again, the feeling of having known this would happen and not having prevented it is one of powerlessness and, as corruption and fraud has been so clearly revealed without consequences, again there is the feeling of having known and still having been duped. The connection between business, politics and the ruling networks are very clear in the US or have been thoroughly revealed in the last years, beginning with the 'oil-connection' of so many high members of the administration, continuing with the Auditor-Scandals (Enron) and now showing in the contract allocations for the 're-building' of Iraq. The whole appearance of the US administration in Europe is that of extremely powerful and rich individuals that are doing everything to consolidate their interests. Donald Rumsfeld as the elegant Emperor might be a success in the US, where popular support depends on looking strong, healthy and victorious, but in Europe the effect of these pictures was only to confirm prejudices of arrogance, immorality and corruptness. These impressions are continuously re-affirmed by the reporting about the sums to be spent on election campaigning, by the occasional blips about Guantanamo Bay, by the news-item that Iraq's communication minister had just been captured for the second time (the first time round actually did not occur), or by the rare reminder that all this had in fact once to do with September 11th and a guy called Osama bin Laden and how far we have swerved from there.

To cut a long article short, the culmination of events of which the above mentioned are only a selective list is the acceleration of a long-run trend that could result in forms of social and possibly economic organisation that are very different from now. Although things look rather set to develop for the worse, one has to remember that change always provides for many options and that it is a time of potential and possibility. Trying to avoid pessimism and apathy therefore is the attitude of the hour - even though, in the current circumstances, it might be hard.

Sophia Hoffman is a postgraduate student at LSE studying International Relations.

it can perhaps be explained by a sinister ideology taking hold in the US.



Open Conspiracy

Endorsed by senior members of the Bush administration, the Project for the New American Century is an alarming development in US ideology and foreign policy that is rapidly gaining influence in Washington.

Ibrahim Rasheed
Executive Editor

Do you trust your government? It is a fair question to ask. Most of us in the Western world enjoy the freedom that comes with living in democracies. We elect our leaders and are able to ensure that they represent our beliefs through term limits and elections. Yet is it wise to just leave it at that? After all, historically, there have been instances where governments have been known to blindside their people and cover up what they do not want widely known. Think of what is happening today with the war in Iraq and the failure of weapons of mass destruction to emerge. Both George Bush and Tony Blair went to war on the premise that there was clear-cut evidence showing that Saddam Hussein's regime possessed such weapons. Despite this, they manage to cling on to power and avoid any sort of popular outrage against this obvious deceit.

There are groups in the United States that believe that their government is party to an international conspiracy to curb individual freedom and establish authoritarian rule over the world. The two most cited examples of what is termed the 'New World Order' are the Illuminati and the Bilderberg group. Proponents of conspiracy theories based on these groups are often white supremacists. Their mindset smacks of what would have been expected of rulers of Nazi Germany in that they believe a small group of elite Jews control the world. A euphemism that is often found in such literature is 'international banker'. One website I visited seemed to suggest that there was a distinct hierarchy operating in these movements. "The Illuminati are elite men, those at the top, who control the International Bankers to control, for evil purposes, the entire world" it says.

Such opinions are abhorrent and not worthy of consideration. However, even when the racist language is set aside, it is hard to believe that a group of shadowy men, working behind the scenes, mould government

policy to their liking for the purposes of taking over the world. Such claims just cannot be taken seriously.

Just because those in the extremes of the political spectrum propagate a lot of these views, does not mean that we should not question whether our leaders have sinister motives, or indeed whether men with such motives guide them. One mainstream think tank, whose views contain much to cause alarm, is the Project for the New American Century (PNAC). Founded in 1997, this organization's goal is to promote American global leadership. Their membership consists of very conservative figures and they are collectively known as neo-conservatives.

So, what is the problem? The Project aims to establish and maintain an American empire and is very open about this. Many commentators write about The USA's 'imperialist' foreign policy, but this is scoffed aside as Marxist paranoia. That should not be the case.

The Project's statement of principles warn that the following must be achieved: "a military that is strong and ready to meet both present and future challenges; a foreign policy that boldly and purposefully promotes American principles abroad; and national leadership that accepts the United States' global responsibilities."

It is one thing to be concerned about potential terrorist threats abroad, but when it comes to believing that the way forward is by vigorously promoting American principles abroad, the line has to be drawn. This is more than just protecting the national interest. It is about projecting alien values to a diverse world. It is both patronizing and racist.

A report drawn up by the think tank and published in September 2000 contains more detail about their thinking. The main thrust of it is that the American armed forces need to be expanded. Yet, the reason given is not just for homeland protection. A lot of the material centres on ensuring that no country develops the capabilities to challenge the USA in the future. "At present the United States faces no global rival. America's grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position as far into the future

as possible." What on earth does this mean? The language is extremely worrying. If other countries, say China or even the United Kingdom, were on course to challenge US hegemony, would their attempts be sabotaged?

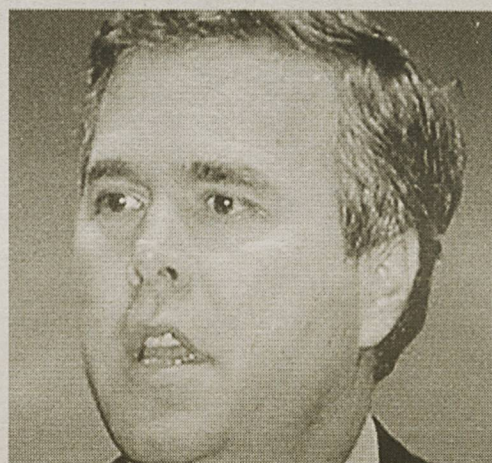
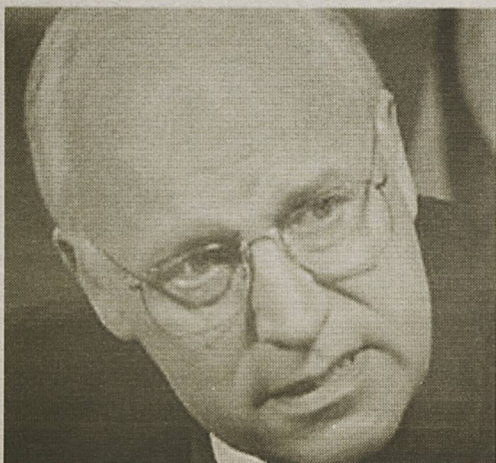
It is understandable that conservative elements in the US want strong armed forces for reasons of protection. However when it is made abundantly clear that the military build-up proposed should occur to proceed with an interventionist policy abroad, based on a morality that dictates that American national interest rather than that of the whole world is upheld, these values descend into farce.

The Project's statement of principles is signed by a distinguished list of characters. They include Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz. Worried? You should be. These are some of George Bush's most influential advisors. It is evident that the Bush Administration is following the Project's policy. The intervention in Afghanistan was to neutralise the threat of Al-Qaeda. The one in Iraq however, was a pre-emptive attack to ensure the country never developed the capability to be able to attack the United States. When Liberia was falling apart at the seams, there was no American intervention to help restore the peace. An anarchical Liberia was a threat to its own people, not to the United States.

Thus, it is a dangerous situation when a country decides to take it upon itself to sheriff the world, but only according to its own principles without regard to any one else. What the Project's founders want is an American Empire with a free reign to control the world. This is not a conspiracy theory: this is a fact.

The world should wake up to the threat posed by the neo-conservative elements in American politics and ensure that this is not allowed to go unchecked.

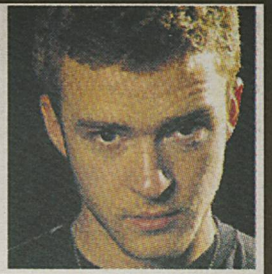
Ibrahim Rasheed is a third year undergraduate studying Economic History.



b:art

edited by Justin Nolan

eyes like a shithouse rat



EDITORIAL

You know who I really hate? People who think music is only good if it contains a guitar, a bass and drums. People who listen to a blinding piece of dance music and say, 'Well he/she only did it on computer, so it's rubbish'. People who think Orbital and DJ Shadow are exactly the same as Fragma and Ian van Bastard Dahl. They're the same people who think that a piece of art isn't any good unless it's a painting of some rural scene in the Yorkshire Dales, and occupies roughly the same amount of space as a small bungalow. Jake and Denos Chapman's visually stunning 'Great Deeds against the Dead', no. Some bleedin' bastardised Turner rip-off called something like 'Clouds Moving really slowly over Kinder Scout at Dusk', yes.

People like that think that Jane Eyre is a feminist, gothic masterpiece rather than the sub Mills-and-Boon-pulp-novel-shite that it really is. They probably didn't read Fear and Loathing because it has too much 'coarse slang' and 'references to drugs that aren't socially acceptable like valium'. When asked about their favourite films, 'Citizen Kane' is the standard response. Though that piece of film

masturbation called Russian Ark is also very popular. A two hour continuous take of the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg? I rather stick my penis in a liquidizer whilst simultaneously nail gunning my eye lids to a wall of asbestos.

We all know these purveyors of 'real' music, 'real' film, 'real' art and 'real' books. Some of them are our friends, our colleagues, our parents even. (Though it's okay for your parents to hold these views. In fact it's a legal requirement.) So what is the treatment? I always find that strapping them to a chair and bombarding them with an audio and visual assault of the Aphex Twin, Damien Hurst, Brass Eye and Cocaine Nights usually helps. Will it convert these philistines to modernity? Will it bollocks, but it will still give you the enjoyment of watching this poor soul's brain fry under the strain of far too much surreality. Go on, the sad bastards deserve it.

The point of this? Why does art have to have a point? Who are you? Brian Sewell?

HOPE OF THE STATES

Are they really the new Sigur Ros? Ben Howarth meets up with the band at ULU for an interview and watches the show...

Hope of The States have come home. Although the 7 piece hail from Chichester, they feel happier here in London, in spite of the fact they're about to play their biggest ever headlining gig. Considering they describe Chichester as 'one of the few places that is completely sceneless' it is understandable why they prefer the capital and the media attention which comes from being one of the most highly tipped new British bands.

Physically and mentally they seem tired. It's the end of the tour and the band still wears the souvenirs of a gruelling schedule. They arrive fresh from a Top of The Pops performance, which they found 'weird and surreal'. Happily they have new pop star friends including the truly bizarre 'S Club Juniors/S Club 8/S Club soon to be too old for paedophilic dirty old men'. Just how well they got on is somewhat worrying as singer Sam Herihly claims they got on "like this", linking his fingers together. Let's just assume they swapped phone numbers.

It might be a cliché but success has come easily and quickly for this band. Their first single sold out after 3 days; it now trades for over £50 on ebay. Following this success they were then at the centre of a bidding war by various high profile record labels, culminating in them signing for Sony for a reported half million pounds. Shortly after releasing their second single they appear on Top of the Pops. Understandably they seem pretty pleased, guitarist/keyboardist/Johnny Greenwood lookalike, Anthony, extolling the virtues of their record label, claiming they allow complete artistic freedom.

This is not a band easily satisfied though. Nor is it easy to pigeonhole them. They have seven members including a violinist and two permanent 'non-musical' projectionists concerned with both live visuals and the bands music videos. Herihly claims that the visual side of the band is as important as the musical side, comparing the projectionist's importance with that of the bass player!

Despite their rather unique composition the music press have managed to find a comparison. Radiohead. Yes Radiohead, that little known band with which no bands are compared. Ever. Despite this rather lazy and somewhat predictable comparison the band are 'flattered, they are one of the few bands that everyone in the band agrees on', although they reject the claim that it influences them musically. Indeed, HOTS do share a similar ethos with Radiohead. They too are judged to have a political agenda, although much of this has stemmed from their first single title 'Black Dollar Bills' and the name of the band itself. Hope of the States was a report published proposing solutions for the USA's fledgling mental health provision (following an earlier damning report titled Shame of The States), and was a name chosen without a political motivation behind it.

The band are, it transpires, in the current climate of prosecuting music downloaders, firmly in favour of internet downloading as a way of obtaining rare songs and 'trying before you buy'. Upon mentioning ebay, however, the mood of the band changes. Even independent record shops (predominantly Sister Ray Records) have taken advantage of HOTS's emerging popularity by selling £2 singles for £10, a move which shocked the group.



Later that evening however £10 seems a small price to pay to hear music as exciting and exhilarating as this. For a group so young they produce an exceptionally mature and developed set. Swirling harmonies fly out of with immense velocity. They are post rock but in a listenable way. They manage to condense all the great things of this genre whilst managing to leave out all the horrible protracted bits. Underneath the gushing, textured and layered sounds are glorious pop songs, breaking out from their shackles and infecting the hearts of everyone in the building. People are grinning. Not only are they post-rock but they are also ROCK! in the very best sense of the word. They have eye catching stage presence from the flailing violinist to the Johnny Greenwood guitar slashing, hair in the face style of Anthony. He even uses a cello bow! The crowd loves it too and will them on through omnipresent technical difficulties. After the first song Sam Herihly throws his guitar across the stage at his roadie before announcing to the partially stunned audience (well at least one member of it) that his 'roadie wants to apologise for not being able to tune a fucking guitar.' The strange thing was that it didn't sound arrogant and the crowd shared his rage. Stupid roadies. Everyone laughs, comic rock style laughter at its best.

Despite the problems, despite their tiredness, HOTS perform majestically. When they return to the stage to perform REM song "Madworld" the crowd roars its approval. As the encore ends the stage is comprehensively trashed and the audience clamour for a souvenir of a band destined for great things.

BEN HOWARTH

b:music 15-16 b:film 17-18
b:literature 19 b:about 20-21 b:feature 22

b:intro

Live: Plastic Heroes Strokes producer Gordon Raphael's new project Parisian band Plastic Heroes play at the Buffalo Bar. James Kent pops along...

Fresh from a 14 date tour of New York City and inspired by an eclectic mix of classical & 70s rock come this Anglo/French guitar rock group. Led by the stylish and somewhat French Marc Olivier, they take a stroll through their repertoire for the benefit of some twenty lagered up Metropolitan students.

Songs varied from the heavy guitar styling of "The Boy" (out 3rd Oct on vinyl) to modern electronica in "Got Good Real Fast", and everywhere in between. Lyrics are refreshingly simple throughout their performance.

Whilst really their first proper tour gig in the UK, they sounded tight and yes, a bit like Bowie. At times, they were trying too much and ended up reminding me of Dex's Midnight Runners.

At the end, the audience had either genuine interest in the band or the snare drum smashed over the drummers head. The same can't be said for the warm up, Daniel Rachel, unably assisted by his lone electric guitar (think Ocean Colour Scene minus the band or talent).

Plastic Heroes are back in London on the 8th and 29th of November, and are definitely worth checking out. www.plasticheroes.net

JAMES KENT



MODEY LEMON: MATT BOYS becomes rock roadie for a weekend with rising stars Modey Lemon...

Rewind about two years. A boy had just passed his driving test and took a girl to see one of his favourite bands play in a nearby town. But then the support band came on, and nothing was the same again. Just a two piece, but with the sound of a blitzkrieg drummer moving so fast his limbs blurred; a frontman singing, playing guitar, bass and moog synth. A band with such overpowering energy that they told venue staff to turn off half of the stage lights mid-gig as they were too damn hot.

Two records later, back in the present day, and the band, Modey Lemon, are back. Expanded to a three piece, and with significantly more facial hair, I caught up with them at some London shows recently...

The new record is a definite development on their style. The first record was a raw-and-ready 45-minute blast of riffing, moog squawks, Paul's lightning fast drums and Phil's visceral, blood-curdling voice. A first spin of the new disc reveals a more confident, mature band: there's a lot more in the way of dynamics, song-writing and integration. Their music, while it has always been more than the sum of its parts, has grown into something more readily accessible, more involving, and ultimately more rewarding.

Phil: Yeah, there's a lot more hooks in the songs. I concentrated a little more on vocal melodies, as well as just kinda working on speaking in our language we've been trying to create, as far as rhythms and imagery and things are concerned...we're just kind of a natural group, exploring things we want to explore - things we talked about and stuff.

They go on to play two gigs that night. I catch up with them again on their way to their second show at the Garage in Camden and ask them just where that electricity comes from:



Paul: That's a good question - it's just some indescribable urge...every time we get on stage we just want to pummel people with sound. I think it's something more primal - it's not like we sat down and.....

Phil: We can't really describe it...it's not a conscious decision, you either feel energy or you don't. You feel like your time on stage wasn't really worthwhile if you don't really release as much as you can.

Jason: Playing live is such a positive process - it's an opportunity to excel. Everybody has a platform to excel, it's just happens that ours is on stage, in front of a few people who paid to get in.

Playing (for reasons of time & space) on the previous band's equipment, they swallow red bull and proceed to kick out the jams. Midway through a song, the bass drum flips 360 into the air as Paul rips straight through the skin. He doesn't even bat an eyelid: he's swept up in the compulsive beating and pounding that he and his bandmates are managing to create.

After the show, a pretty blonde started talking to me. She felt they were putting it on. Over the top. And a little too loud....

Paul: What?? What a twat!! How do you make that shit up?!

Jason: Too loud? That's a compliment!

Paul: We're not some fashionable, whole-point-is-to-play-like-you-don't-care band, so when they see a band go all out they don't really know what to do with themselves. Fuck em. They can go see a band play songs exactly like they sound on the album. If they're into boring bands they're into boring bands; that's their problem, not mine.

Two days later, they're back in London, at the Spitz. The sound quality here is incredible for such a small venue. Once again, Modey Lemon hit the ground running, kicking and squealing. They play seemingly possessed by the demon bastard offspring of a century of blues slowly distilled through a coarse punk filter. Old numbers have the crowd barely containing themselves. New songs are played to a hushed awe that quickly mutates into a vicarious energy barely containing itself within trendy haircuts and tight vintage clothes.

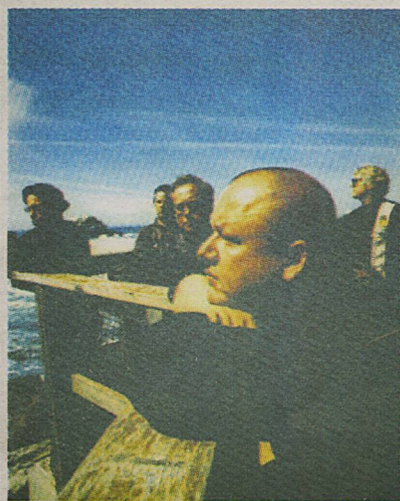
Backstage, I want to make the band spill their guts about their new material. I insult them. First they get angry, then they start to talk: boxing metaphors, comparisons to other bands, and a metaphor using me as an example. Any last words?

Paul: Well, the other night you were asking, a lot of people reading this are listening to pop music, and you asked me what I'd say to them and I said something stupid like 'stop being lame; get with it' but, y'know, people are gonna listen to what they're gonna listen to - a lot of music's just background music. They'll just copy others: 'oh that's what I'm supposed to be listening to' I don't really think they're going to seek out a band like us, but, um, we, we dare them to try and listen...they might just like it.

MATT BOYS

FRANK BLACK AND THE CATHOLICS:

PAUL KIRBY CHECKS OUT THE EX-PIXIE AND ALL ROUND LEGEND'S MUCH ACCLAIMED BAND..

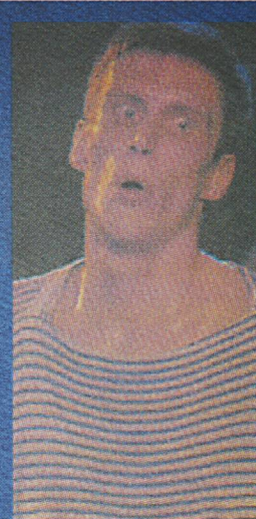


Frank Black towers before me, sweat soaking his black cowboy-shirt, the strings of his acoustic guitar a-blur as he rips into them, his face creased with emotion as he growls into the mike. Black's previous band, the Pixies, re-defined alternative rock and spawned countless lame facsimiles [Kurt Cobain once said that he came up with the riff to Smells Like Teen Spirit by "ripping off the Pixies"]. Everyone loved them. Most of the people here tonight are here to hear the old songs - and Black delivers Veloria, Cactus and Caribou to appease the masses. Which is a shame in a way because the Catholics are a masterwork in themselves. Scrap that, they're better

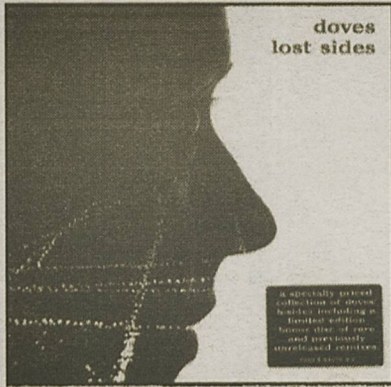
than the godamn Pixies. Despite some low volume vocal/lead guitar issues at the start of the set the band manage to win over those sections of the crowd just here in the hope of hearing Where Is My Mind? with the sheer strength of their material. What begins as moshing only during Pixies numbers becomes a constant crushing, rib bruising in its enthusiasm. Much of the material is culled from the latest album Show Me Your Tears [go buy it now kids!] - songs of loss and regret made stronger by the sardonic humour of the lyrics and the refusal to come across as whiney or self-obsessed. Frank Black [giant of voice, giant of body] was made for live performances and the Catholics play with palpable punk rock energy, flourishes of blues and country [not to mention the tonal joy and creative use of pedal steel guitars] adding a vibrancy and originality without comparison in any music I have ever heard. If I picked out my favourite moments [which I can't because it was all so fucking orgasmic] you wouldn't know the tunes I was talking about anyway so I won't bother. Just check them out. If you're disappointed its not because I'm wrong - it's because you've got no taste.

PAUL KIRBY

b:music edited by jazmin burgess and neil garrett



Album Reviews



DOVES
LOST SIDES

The Problem with B-side albums is, with the exception of Oasis' Masterplan, you can't get through a review of them without saying the phrase 'for completists only'. See, I've done it already. But you see much of the songs on this album are b-sides for a reason i.e. they weren't good enough to either feature as a single or an album track.

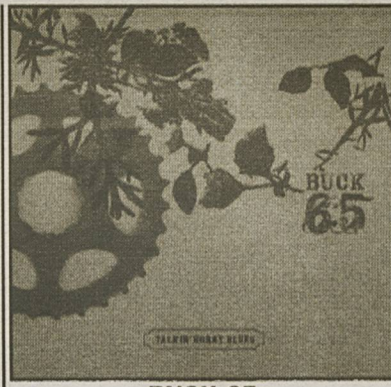
That's not to say the tracks here are bad, they're just not that great. A few of them are instrumentals as well. Quite frankly if a vocal rock group is going to produce instrumentals they had better be good, or else they seem just like extended jam sessions. How many memorable instrumentals have any of the great bands of history produced in the past? Exactly.

So a lot of these songs are a much of a muchness. 'Your Shadow lay Across my Life' would be, to be fair, quite excellent had the band not already done a similar song, the magnificent 'Catch the Sun'. 'Down to Sea', 'Valley' and 'Northenden' are all Doves-by-numbers. 'Crunch' is the best of the instrumentals, but still lacks that certain something called singing.

Also, if this is possible, there is one glaring omission on this album of Doves-songs-not-on-any-album. That is 'Spaceface', their magnificent live version of a song by the bands previous incarnation, Sub-Sub. Not as b-side admittedly, but it would have been a superb addition.

Worth getting? For completists only.

JUSTIN NOLAN



BUCK 65
TALKIN' HONKEY BLUES

Buck 65. No? I'd not heard of him either, until that is a Blackalicious show last year where he opened and kicked ass. One guy, an MD player and the 1s and 2s. He's from Nova Scotia, and he tells funny stories about Centaurs with large members or tales about his ill-behaved dog. All this thanks to a typographical error and a malicious printer (he would have been Buick 65 otherwise.)

On from introducing our Canadian beat/hip-hop/storyteller, what of this new offering for 2003? The album is seriously eclectic, ranging from straight-up hiphop beats and scratches to orchestral pieces of Spanish guitar and xylophone. The music has a consistent element though, its understatement. In fact you could say he's made understatement his art. Stand out tracks include Riverbed 2 which has the tastiest hook on the album. That said, in the same way that the anti-solo was the right of the dispossessed in rock, Buck may have stumbled on the anti-hook. Often the tracks don't settle, opting for unease over straight groove.

The first two tracks bode well for the album. But the initial pace doesn't last as he heads into the River Bed tracks (there are seven spread through the album) which drag a little.

His style is original, anti-hiphop hiphop, for want of a better phrase. Check him out live if you can, otherwise his earlier demos are still floating around which are more up-beat than the personal Talkin' Honkey Blues.

ANTHONY STAVRIANAKIS



STARSAILOR
SILENCE IS EASY

What is it about Wigan? I've been there many times myself, and while its quite clearly not Barcelona, its not too depressing. I know George Orwell didn't like it, but the only thing he ever did was a book about animals which was remade into a quite explicit porno and a dystopian vision of the future which is out of date anyway.

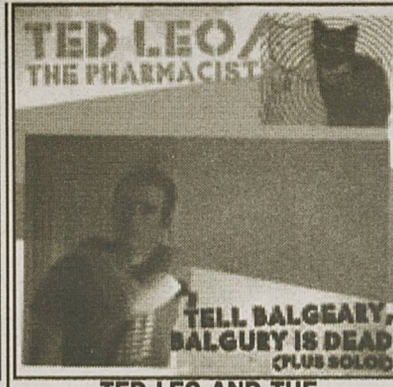
So why do bands from the Central Park area make such miserable and self-satisfied music? It worked for the Verve, because they were the, er, the Verve. Now Richard Ashcroft, because he doesn't have a band around him to reel in his enormous ego, makes self satisfied music about how much he's in love. Wow. Starsailor are trying to steal his thunder by doing songs about being self-satisfied, and well, being in love.

There wouldn't be anything wrong with this, if the band had what the Verve had i.e. an eye for a tune, a charismatic frontman, and a certain style that all great bands have. Satarsailor have none of these. Sure they're talented musicians, and James Walsh sings like a girl, but their faux emotional schtick has been done a million times before and a million times better. Try someone called Jeff Buckley for a start.

As for the album itself, who gives a shit? Substitute the song titles from the first album, and you get Silence is Easy. Apart from the one Phil Spector produced, which by no coincidence is the best track on the album.

Do they care? No they're far too busy being in love and self-satisfied.

JUSTIN NOLAN



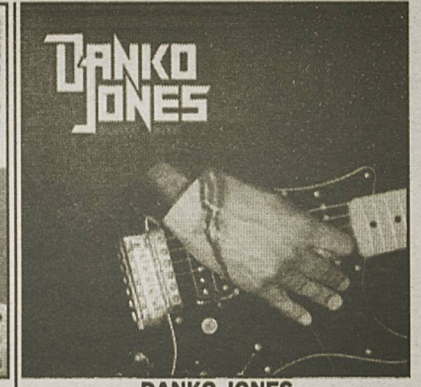
TED LEO AND THE PHARMACISTS
TELL BALGEARY, BALGURY IS DEAD (PLUS SOLO)

Ted Leo and the Pharmacists, the DC-based indie rock band, are back with a new EP on Lookout! Records. Tell Balgeary, Balgury Is Dead is the follow-up to Ted Leo's recent solo tour, which immediately succeeded his Hearts of Oak tour with the Pharmacists after that album's release early in the year. The EP's title track is the only song pulled directly from Hearts of Oak; "The High Party" appears as a solo version recorded at a DC radio station. The Pharmacists' contributions on this release are minor; this is essentially a solo effort.

The EP includes three new songs: "The Sword in the Stone," "Bleeding Powers," and, closing the record, "Loyal to My Sorrowful Country." As usual, Leo's songwriting is catchy and intelligent, in both its lyrics and its riffs. Lyrically, these songs are particularly distinct for their abrasive edge. Leo has always asserted his political dissent, but never as plainly as he does in this disc's final track. Leo also does listeners a service by allowing the EP's beautiful title track its own spotlight, after its appearance on Hearts of Oak in the shadow of more obvious hits.

Lastly, Leo speaks to his influences with his eclectic choice of covers: Ewan MacColl's folk classic "Dirty Old Town" (a crowd favorite at Pharmacists shows), The Jam's tight, introspective "Ghosts," and "Six Months in a Leaky Boat," the forgotten Split Enz single of 1982. Altogether, this EP indicates the beginnings of another terrific album for Ted Leo and the Pharmacists.

BONNIE JOHNSON



DANKO JONES
WE SWEAT BLOOD

The first thing you notice about this album is the rather disturbing photo of the band on the back cover. Trying to look as aggressive as possible with their furrowed eyebrows and snarls, they come across not so much intimidating, but as a bit desperate to look so. Maybe it is because of the trials and tribulations encountered on the Toronto rock circuit from which they emerged.

Yet, having expected a Scandinavian Death metal wannabe, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that Danko Jones was not as bad as I thought it would be. It could have been worse- some new breed of neo-metal may have just sent me over the edge.

Any way, Danko Jones' band plays stoner punk rock music tempered by Fu Manchu style vocals- but more high pitched. The lyrics are a heady mix of sex and violence, though to their credit, the two are not (at least as far as I can tell) mixed on the same tracks. Does it sound like a recipe for a disaster? Or perhaps a potential landmark album for the genre?

The word that describes the album best is 'average'. In a favourable setting, it can be immensely listenable. You could even find yourself nodding your head along to it. The press release describes the album as being 'metallic blues-punk power'- whatever that might mean.

It certainly has attitude, but do not expect them to make a big impact. Hopefully their next outing will be more adventurous

IB RASHEED

ALBUM OF THE WEEK: OutKast - 'Speakerboxxx/The Love Below'

BONNIE JOHNSON reviews the long-awaited new album from Atlanta's most innovative Hip-Hop Collective....

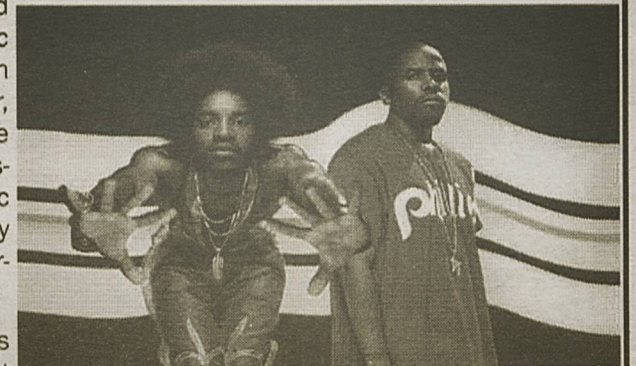
Amid rumors of imminent break-up, Speakerboxxx/The Love Below finds OutKast embarking on an epic venture: a double album in the form of two solo discs. Speakerboxxx is Big Boi's work, The Love Below is that of André 3000. The project is a far cry from the carefree Dirty South rowdiness of Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik and ATLiens. Rather, Big Boi's disc gives the impression that he wants to be taken seriously, Dré's, that he has grown too eccentric to care.

Speakerboxxx is a stellar album. Big Boi has always been the better rapper, and here he waxes on partying, politics, and spiritual alienation. The songs are built upon tight horn sections, soulful harmonies, and electronic grooves. Big Boi's experiments create jubilant funk reminiscent of Parliament, with his production style on many songs recalling Prince's best work. The many song highlights include "Unhappy," "Bowtie," "The Rooster," "War," and "Church." Numerous guests appear on Speakerboxxx, most notably, Ludacris. The record's only weakness is that some of Big Boi's guests do not match his own lyrical brilliance.

The Love Below is not really a hip-hop record. Focusing lyrically on love and sex, Dré's disc showcases lounge-style piano, jazz arrangements, synthesizers, acoustic

guitars, and smooth falsetto vocals, but little rapping. Unfortunately, Dré's free-form style, which at best resembles the languid sexiness of "Spottieottiedopaliscious," starts to sound rambling and feeble after a while. The disc is also particularly heavy on drawn-out interludes. However, this is not to say that The Love Below is not a worthwhile listen; there are several terrific tracks: "Hey Ya!" "Happy Valentine's Day," and the hilarious "Roses."

Aquemini stands as OutKast's strongest release to date, but Speakerboxxx/The Love Below is a monumental project certainly worth hearing. And whether OutKast stays together or not, expect more excellent solo work from Big Boi in the future.



BONNIE JOHNSON

Release Of The Week...

Intolerable Cruelty

Director: Joel & Ethan Coen
Starring: Catherine Zeta-Jones, George Clooney, Geoffrey Rush
Running Time: 100 min
Certificate: 12A
Release Date: 24th October

After *Fargo*, *The Big Lebowski* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, can the Coen Brothers' latest live up to the comedic standard they have worked so hard to set for themselves? DINESHPANCH finds out...

George Clooney is Miles Massey, an LA divorce attorney who always wins and has created the unbreakable Massey pre-nuptial agreement, which is so iron-clad that a whole semester at Harvard Law is dedicated to it. When he represents habitual philanderer Rex Rexroth (Edward Herrmann), who was caught on camera with a prostitute by private investigator Gus Petch (Cedric The Entertainer), he still manages to prevent Marilyn Rexroth (Catherine Zeta-Jones) from achieving the large settlement she felt she was entitled to. This is where the fun and frolics are supposed to begin. I was to find, however, that it was I who was to be cheated, cheated out of the laughs falsely promised.



What ensues is a mishmash of poorly executed visual comedy, which is more the Chuckle Brothers than Cosmo Kramer. Repartee in places is sharp with some glorious double entendres such as "I hope you're a carnivore, Mrs Rexroth", "Oh, Mr Massey, you have no idea." However, the script is below the standard that is expected from Joel and Ethan. An explainable situation is that the screenplay was adapted rather than written by the brothers. But this does not make up for the fact that the plot development is painfully predictable. The

cameos by Geoffrey Rush, Cedric The Entertainer and Billy-Bob Thornton provide brief comic interludes but unfortunately also highlight the poverty of Catherine Zeta-Jones' performance. She was unable to perform the role which does so well in real life - that of a gold-digger - with any panache on screen.

The film fails in its primary objective; to reinvent the Howard Hawks movie for a modern audience. But what remains is which is above average for the romantic comedy genre, with polished production and despite its flaws, conveys Howard Hawks' style effectively. So in this respect the film is a cinematic success. The Coen Brothers have, however, produced some far better homages to great directors, (watch the Frank Capra inspired *Hudsucker Proxy*).

Intolerable Cruelty may be considerably better than

this week's other new releases, but it still does not deserve to shine Waring Hudsucker's shoes.

In all, it's a disappointment.

3/5

Also Out...

Time of the Wolf

Shocking social drama or just plain shocking? JAMESALLEN gives his verdict...

Director: Michael Haneke
Starring: Isabelle Huppert, Anais Demoustier, Lucas Biscombe
Running Time: 113 min
Certificate: 15
Release Date: OUT NOW!

Set in an undisclosed country at an undisclosed time, *Time of the Wolf* tells the story of a family fleeing from the city to their country house to find it already occupied by strangers. After a disastrous confrontation, the family flee to the woods where they join others with a similar predicament and embark on a violent journey of survival, searching for the 'next train' which will enable them to escape.



strange, as opposed to the cheap and easy eye candy we all watched and bitched about over the summer). It is also subtitled over French, the pros and cons of which I will leave for you to decide. Michael Haneke (Directing) has opted for a more 'realistic' alternative to an end-of-the-world scenario, focusing on non sci-fi effects, which is a welcome, if not entirely effective, alternative.



The group begin by wandering around and sleeping rough. The son of the family takes a turn for the worst by going off alone at night, and then later getting naked and trying to jump into a fire. All very bizarre. There's also an unnecessary part where you see in close up a real horse having its throat sliced, which didn't impress anyone. More like cheap shock-tactics.

To be honest, this all seemed very unthreatening and much like a family holiday in the country, with no coherent feeling of disaster (apart from the poor weather) and their car stuffed full of provisions, not adding any sense of tension to the proceedings.

Stagnating around the promise of escape and delivering little, this is pretty uninspiring stuff.

2/5

No prizes for guessing that this is not a Hollywood-style movie, (and by that I mean that it is both boring and rather

Classic Review...by IONMARTEA

Schindler's List

Director: Steven Spielberg
Starring: Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley, Ralph Fiennes, Caroline Goodall
Running Time: 197 min
Release Date: 18 February 1994

Spielberg's craftsmanship in direction had to wait for the ultimate praise until 1993, when he produced the extraordinary epic *Schindler's List*. It was the film that brought him his first Oscar, Golden Globe, David Lean (BAFTA), and most of the directing awards that existed at the time. And yet, the king of blockbusters produced a work that was greater than him, a work that rose above humanity. Even John Paul II considered it as the second best film of all time, losing only to Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth*, in what was to be known as the Pope's Oscars.

Schindler's List is the adaptation of Thomas Keneally's novel about Oskar Schindler, who during World War II saved the life of more than 1000 Polish Jews. The film exposes us to horrific cruelty and absolute selflessness, both touching each other and dismissive of any contradiction. The black and white negative is what truly gives *Schindler's List* its charm. We are transported to the forties so elegantly, and so passionately, that we become at one with the setting. We feel the coldness of the concentration camps, the smell of burning bodies, the breath of hiding children in the communal toilets. Everything is captured as if by our own eye, when we suddenly get to notice a yellowish flame of a candle, the little girl dressed in a red coat hiding from the SS. A masterful work of cinematography under the eye of Janusz Kaminski (*Minority Report*, *AI*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *Amistad*, his collaborations with Spielberg have all been effortlessly memorable).



It is not a film you watch for the end, but one you absorb and regurgitate. The time passes as passionately as the events of the film, so boredom is the last thing on one's mind. And how can you be bored with such an impressive cast, most giving the performances of a lifetime? Liam Neeson is the perfect Herr Direktor Schindler, full of charisma yet capable of immense cruelty. A young Ralph Fiennes plays the sadistic SS Commander Amon Goeth. We have a total transformation towards brutality, inhibited lust, sado-masochistic alcoholism, the complete loss of power and humanity - all characteristics of one of the best supporting performance the screen has ever witnessed. Ben Kingsley is the tender, honourable, devoted Itzhak Stern, Oskar's right hand throughout the entire war.

Schindler's List is quite simply an excellent and harrowing glimpse of the most horrid period of the last century, an insight into the best and worst capabilities of humanity during the world's darkest hour. A must-see for any film fan.

edited by simon cliff and dani ismail
b:film

Howard's Choice...

After the interview with our new Director printed in the pages of blink in this paper a fortnight ago, what did we learn about the Head Honcho that we didn't know already? Nothing much actually, and certainly nothing interesting: he supports City, understands money and thinks the view from Tower One is pretty poor. Bored? Yes? Then Rejoice! For, in an all-new and totally exclusive interview with Howard 'The Daddy' Davies, he reveals his **Favourite Films of All Time** to b:film editor SIMONCLIFF, and thus gives us mere minions an idea of what keeps him entertained between his riveting Dialogues and other important Director-type business...

- Il Caso Mattei (The Mattei Affair) (1972) - Gian Maria Volonte, Howard's favourite film actor, stars in this Italian fact-based drama, which chronicles the life of Enrico Mattei and his influence on the Italian nation from his days as a freedom fighter against the Nazis to his untimely death in a plane accident on 27th October 1962.

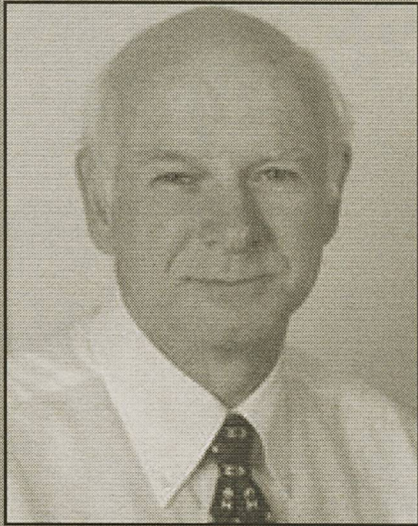
- Le Genou de Claire (Claire's Knee) (1970) - "Rohmer's my favourite director" says Howard looking back at this French romantic drama, in which bachelor Jerome (Jean-Claude Brialy) develops an unhealthy desire for the teenaged Claire (Laurence de Monaghan) or, more specifically, her knee. Sounds like abstract Franco-Porn to me.

- Britannic (2000) - This made-for-television drama, starring John Rhys-Davies and Edward Atterton, gives a 'fictual' account of the sinking of the H.M.H.S. Britannic off the Greek island of Kea in November 1916. "Dire film," says Howard, "but my younger son has a part in it opposite Jacqueline Bisset."

- Citizen Kane (1941) - The Director describes this choice as a "cliché". But, with regard to this masterpiece, Davies' selection is both informed and a clear sign of filmic taste. Widely regarded as the best film of all time and certainly among the most innovative of its day, Orson Welles writes, directs and stars in the story of fictional multimillionaire newspaper tycoon Charles Foster

Kane. Aesthetically brilliant and dazzling in its complexity, this is a classic in every sense of the word.

- Life of Brian (1979) - In choosing this British comedy gem for his list of cinema favourites, Howard proves unequivocally that he has, unlike many embarking on a career in financial services, an evidently sharp sense of humour. At once controversial and hilarious, the Monty Python team tell the story of Jesus' lesser-known next door neighbour, Brian, and his riotously funny political revolution against the Roman oppressors of his people.



French society.

- Le Charme Discret de la Bourgeoisie (The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie) (1972) - French Cinema is represented again here with yet another favourite from Howard's days in Paris. This comedic drama by the prolific French director Luis Bunuel charts the surreal tale of several bourgeois friends planning to have dinner together, with a surreal set of incidences involving adultery, drug dealing, military coups and the paralysis of boredom interfering with their posh nosh supper. A wonderful film satirising the upper-strata of

- Belle de Jour (1967) - Another French choice, again Directed by Luis Bunuel, and another bourgeois-bashing critique of the French social elite. The story here is focused on a destructive chastity between husband and wife, and the lows to which the latter is prepared to sink in order to

fulfil her sexual appetite. Catherine Deneuve is the wife-turned-prostitute who sells herself to everyone but her husband (Jean Sorel).

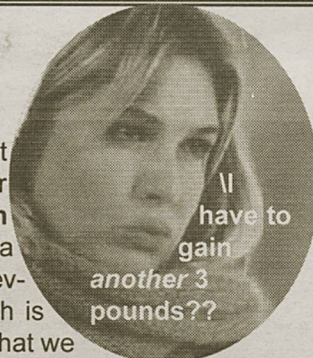
- Kind Hearts and Coronets (1949) - Alec Guinness assumes a total of eight separate roles in this Ealing-produced black comedy, in which Louis Mazzini (Dennis Price) attempts to murder his way to the Dukedom of an aristocratic family. A real must for those nostalgic Brits remembering when the UK used to make films and make them well.

"I'm a list person," reflects Howard, "so I have that sort of thing in my head, just in case I get invited on to *Desert Island Discs* at short notice." Indeed. So are there any others that you'd take with you? "*The Conformist* because I'm a big fan of [Jean-Louis] Trintignant, oh, and *The Working Classes go to Paradise*. Actually I'm not really a film buff these days, which is why most of these date from my days as a student, and in Paris. Happiest days of your life, and all that."

Many thanks for that Howard. One more thing: Where would any **James Bond** films feature down your list, if anywhere? "Of course! The next ten would **all** be James Bond!" I didn't see that coming.

Dani's movie matters... Blockbusters Galore...

There's so much to tell this week, and so little space! Let me just throw all this movie mania at you now. Filming for *Bridget Jones 2* has started! This means more of **Colin Firth** in suave and sexy role as Mark D'Arcy. Such a pompous, arsey name, but who's to complain? I do, however, appreciate that he's not everyone's cup of tea. Which is why you'll all (birds and blokes alike) be pleased to know that we



can all soon lustily delve into a second helping of ghostly pirates and men in eye make up (and what a come back! Here's to you Brian Molko!), with **Johnny Depp** and **Orlando Bloom** both signed up for the sequel to *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Oh yeah, and **Keira Knightly** too.



For those of you familiar with director Gus Van Sant's previous work you will only expect yet more masterful and affecting material from him. His movies might be considered indie (*Good Will Hunting*, *To Die For*, *Drugstore Cowboy*) but this allows him to tread on thin ice and push boundaries and it is in this vein that his latest effort, *Elephant*, runs. Violence in an American high school. Homoerotic explorations and a fascination in Nazi iconography. Guns and planned school ambushes. You'll find all this and more coolly exploited in *Elephant*, and if his previous films are anything to go by it will have devastating results. Catch it at the end of January next year.

You may have seen the ads plastered all over the tube about **Meg Ryan's** new movie, *In The Cut*. Does it not make anyone else sad that she is no longer the cute and perky blonde from *Sleepless In Seattle* or *French Kiss*? Meg is just not the sort of woman you want to see in an erotic thriller (which this is) and while you *may* want to see her get naked (which you will) it's all about the demise of Hollywood to me.



Finally, a quick acknowledgement – last week I made it sound like I came up with the figures for the atrocity that is Arnold Schwarzenegger becoming governor and the number of movie-goers all by myself. I did not (I don't even know the margin by which Bush became president, let alone specific facts for the governor of California) – I found the information on www.slate.com, in an article, Chatterbox, written by Timothy Noah. I meant no wrong.

the editor's cut



The Director divulges his filmic favourites, the curse of the sequels continues in earnest and an appeal to all film fans...

With the nastiness of last week's unwarranted UGM criticism dead and buried, this week we bring you the Top Ten Films (yes, there are ten) according to Howie D, who is now well and truly settled into his Penthouse Suite atop Tower One. You can tell a great deal about him from this selection; culturally diverse, socially satirical and often very, very funny. *Monty Python* even got a mention, as did the Bond franchise. I hope for his sake it was *Goldfinger* he was thinking of, and not *Die Another Day*, for his sake and ours; any lover of the latter shouldn't be in charge of anything more important than a paperclip, let alone the LSE. I have faith in Howard, somehow.

So, and be honest, were any of you actually surprised to hear the news that *Pirates of the Caribbean* was returning for a sequel? Nor I. Hollywood, officially, has no soul. My only recommendation for the scriptwriters is to get Bloom and Knightly into a 'compromising situation' and for Jack Sparrow to walk in on them in a drunken frenzy to fillet them both using lightsabres. It's the romantic in me. Think about it though: you'd get to see Bloom/Knightly getting busy (which you wanted but didn't get in POTC), you'd get Depp doing inebriated like only he can (genius) and, yes, you'd get lightsabres (the best weapon in the world ever bar none). Questions?

One more thing: any of you lovely people wanting to get your words on this page? This is your moment, dear friends! We're looking for articles to run in the next few weeks on anything film related. Foreign cinema, Independent films, Hollywood Blockbusters or The London Film Festival - whatever you've got burning a whole in your skull, let me know and I'll make you an offer you can't refuse. Plus, we're always on the lookout for Classic reviews, film news and things for me to rant about, and I'm always available for a random pint to discuss cinema and stuff. So get in touch to the address below! Until next week, get busy living and behave yourselves...

Si, b:film editor

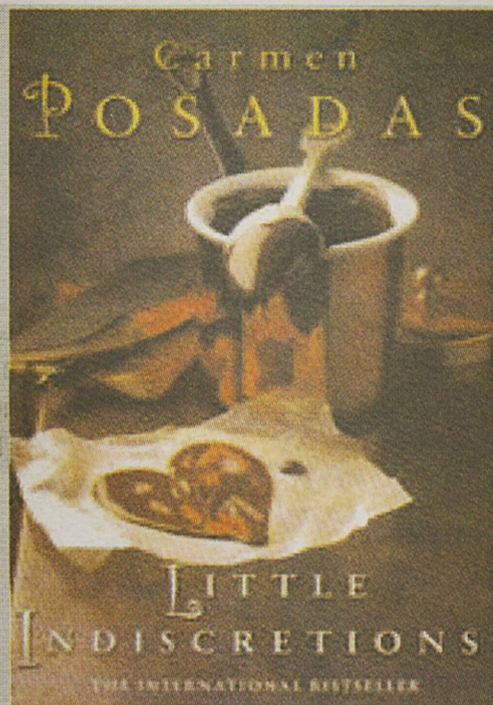
Get in touch with any comments, ideas or humorous beaver-themed anecdotes:

Little Indiscretions

Make sure you're not a hunted man before you enter cold storage on your own...

Just The Facts...

Author: Carmen Posadas
Publisher: Black Swan
Date: October 2003
Price: £6.99



If renowned pastry chef Nestor Chaffino had just minded his own business and kept himself to himself, he'd still be whipping up chocolate fondants to the masses of rich and famous today. Instead, at 4:00 am in the morning he faces death by freezing after someone locked him in the cold storage with his truffles and the frozen carcasses of some unfortunate wild animals.

So, whodunit?

After one lucky employee finds Nestor when what they were really after was some Haagen Daz, the unravelling of the mystery into his death begins. Any one of the characters in the house could have killed the chef; not because he was a nasty boss or a mean man, but because, after years of being the perfect chef and working in the kitchens of the wealthy, Nestor has compiled more than just a list of great recipes in his little moleskin book. He is the holder of their naughty little secrets. So, from the owner of the house or his ageing wife to Nestor's Czech body-building assistant who loves to sing Caribbean tunes with his Bratislava accent, who could have topped Nestor is as much your guess as mine.

'Little Indiscretions' is an enjoyable murder-mystery of a tale with lots of sardonic humour and intelligent social satire. It set out on its (now acclaimed) literary path as 'Pequeñas Infamias' in

1998. Since then it has won the coveted Planeta Prize and has gone on to sell over half a million copies worldwide.

Christopher Andrews was given the job to relay as it were, not just Carmen Posadas's story on to us, but to stay as true as linguistically possible to her writing style. I always wonder, with novels that have been translated from their native language into English, whether the final product that I get is really as good as if I'd known enough Spanish/French/Arabic to read the original myself. Apart from the fact that certain phrases simply don't exist in some languages when they do in others, literary devices such as alliteration just wouldn't work when translated.

Though I've never had the opportunity to test my Spanish skills on any previous Posadas novels (with my Collins English-Spanish at the ready por supuesto), I'll assume that Andrews got it right and Posadas simply possesses that impressive knack for spinning a good yarn.

THE DOG-EARED SECTION

Happiness TM

God help us all if one of those self-help books ever works...

Just The Facts...

Author: Will Ferguson
Publisher: Canongate
Date: January 2003
Price: £10.99



Okay, so I haven't had this book long enough for it to be lovingly dog-eared (down with bookmarks - all they do is get lost anyway) but it's still a new favourite of mine; a true Desert Island Keeper. For anyone who has ever bought or read a self-help book and isn't the sensitive 'you've hurt my feelings' type or if you've always thought that the self-help industry is a load of shite, 'Happiness' is something you must read.

Edwin de Valu is a hapless book editor desperate to save his flagging career in the self-help publishing industry from almost certain doom. In a make or break moment, Edwin promises his boss the self-help book of a lifetime which in reality is nothing more than a huge manuscript plucked from his slush pile. Edwin thinks it's one thousand-plus pages of crap filled with silly promises of endless wealth, effortless weight loss and everlasting happiness. The author rambles on about everything and nothing and it really seems to be a lost cause. But surprise, surprise, the book actually goes to press and instead of bombing out with one sale at most, it becomes an international success. Why? Because this is a self-help book that really works.

'Live! Love! Learn!' delivers on all of its promises and soon, thanks to one Edwin de Valu and the

author, Tupak Soiree, the world as we know it - full of thieves, murderers and greedy investment bankers has come to an end. With the self-help book to end all self-help books leading the way, we enter in to the Age of Nice. Misery, hunger, hatred, beer - all the things that make the world go round are no more. People walk about with smiles on their faces, absolutely content with their life. It's hell.

Weirdly enough, it seems that only Edwin is not touched by the spell of the book and so, free of the overwhelming tendency to engage in impromptu group hugs, he sets out to save the world from the tyranny of the self-help novel that actually works.

'Happiness' is scathing satire at its very best. It is one seriously funny novel with a zany, unbelievable premise and plot that never lets up. Almost everyone is after the perfect world; their idyll, and most buy self-help books to get them there. But as Ferguson reveals, the end result of a self-help book that works may be more of a hell than heaven.

Also by Will Ferguson:

Hokkaido Highway Blues: Hitchhiking Japan; How to be a Canadian: Even If You Already Are One; Bastards and Boneheads: Canada's Glorious Leaders Past and Present





b:interview

KATIEDAVIES takes the reins of b:about as Sarah enjoys 22 days of birthday fun (greedy!) and lays bare the world of celebrity, starting with her exclusive interview with Pop Idol's Michael...



This week B:ABOUT interviews Michael Morrison a semi finalist in this years pop idol. His mum famously referred to the judges as a bunch of w**kers and Michael was the only contestant who had the intelligence to answer his general knowledge questions correctly (No New Zealand is not the capital of Australia)

He has already been in several teen magazines as their tip for the top and he is certainly ours as well. What's more, when being interviewed by B:ABOUT, he sat in the Tuns and then headed down to limelight, testimony to the fact his feet are firmly on the ground and that Reef is a

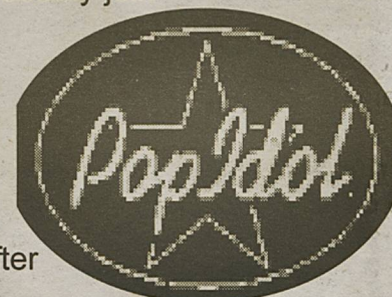
drink for the rich and famous

What have you been up to since Pop Idol?

I'm an actor as well, so I've been doing a bit of acting work. Mostly extra work and stuff, and little bits of semi-feature and walk-on, but I'm putting a band together with some of the rejects from Pop Idol, which isn't a nice word but everyone will be saying it. I'm not sure what will happen, but I've got Rachel coming down next week - she's the mad bingo caller - and Suzanne, who was in my heat. We're trying to get hold of Jamie Tinkler, as we think he might want to join too, but it all depends who gets through this week. If Rebecca doesn't go through she'll probably join and maybe Kieran or Sam, they're both up for it. I guess we'll just have to see what happens...

So now you're a bit of a celeb, do you get recognised a lot?

The week I went out I got recognised quite a bit - I saw Sid Owen, who plays Ricky Butcher in Eastenders, and he was more starstruck than I was! As time goes by it happens less and less; last week I was only recognised a handful of times, but the Sunday after the show I went to see David Blaine and got recognised non-stop.



Is it weird having strangers shouting at you on the street?

Being in the band 4 years ago (Michael was in Word On The Street, who toured with Liberty X) I was recognised all the the time, but since then all our groupies, who were 13 or 14 at the time, have grown up and forgotten about us. But I know what it's like because of that, so it wasn't such a shock this time around.

As an insider, who do you think will win Pop Idol?

Hmmm... whoever wins the Wildcard Week has a very good chance of winning the whole thing. I think Suzanne has a good chance of going through, and if she does she'll go far. But I think it's a bit like Underdog Idol this year - the winner will be someone who's overweight or looks like a vicar or whatever, although I think Chris has the most amazing voice. If I didn't know any of the contestants myself, I'd be voting for Chris.

Has being on Pop Idol, and seeing you best friend Carolynne on Fame Academy, changed your perception of Reality TV?:

I'm not really a big fan of reality TV, although I like Big Brother and Wife Swap, but it's a bit weird for the music industry. In the last couple of years it's changed it all completely. Two years ago, if you wanted to be a success, you had tour the country and all the clubs, whereas now a TV show is like a quick way to fame. I don't agree or disagree with it, it's just something we all have to do.

How do you feel about recent reports that Marc, the winner of your heat, was imprisoned for attempted murder? Should he have been allowed on the show?:

I knew of Marc before the competition; a friend teaches at the school his girlfriend teaches at. To be honest I thought that for that reason, he wouldn't stand a chance of winning, but obviously I was wrong. I suppose everyone's entitled to a second chance, and he seemed like a nice, decent bloke on the show. Everyone messes up, but some of us are just fortunate that it doesn't make it into the papers.

So, Michael, where do you go from here?

Well we've got an agent who's interested in the band and a few producers too, so we'll probably do the old school

b:dating

HOT DATE

This members only bar is for blaggers only but if you cheat your way through, **The Phoneix bar** is a celebrity haven. The likes of Jarvis Cocker can often be seen supping on a pint of snakebite and black in this trendy bar, but A.listers as we are on the b:about outing we managed to see Nigel from Eastenders-



FAILING THAT...

If you want tickets to see big name stars such as Des and Mel in person, you can simply apply to be an audience member at <http://www.tickets.granadamedia.com> or <http://www.clappers-tickets.co.uk> And if you think you may have a problem with stalking minor celebrities and you think a patronising amateur psychiatrist might be able to help, you can be an audience member at Trisha, contact <http://www.angliatv.co.uk/trisha/tickets.html>

edited by sarah warwick and katie davies

b:about

Walk:about

In keeping with this week's theme of all things celebrity, Walkabout dons its Converse All-Stars to stomp its way through the ultra cool celeb-haven of Notting Hill.

Notting Hill has become one of London's favourite celebrity haunts without acquiring the pretentious air that hangs heavy over celeb snagging counterparts such as Chelsea and Mayfair. Although some may argue this uber-stylish area can be intimidating to Joe Average, it's better than watching the Sloane Clone tottering down the high street ready to strike down the next passerby with a Louis Vitton bag. The thing is, Notting Hill remains fashionable because its visitors have no uniform style, making it a fantastic place to take a look at, even if you're not interested in bumping into residents such as Damon Albarn or Stella McCartney.

The best tube to take for Notting Hill is Notting Hill Gate on the Central Line, which puts you on Pembridge Road which can easily be followed to reach Portobello Road or Westbroke Grove. Things to do in the day are limited to eating, shopping, seeing a film or just resting in the nearby parks but the bars are open if you fancy making an early start.

Portobello market

No one can refer to Notting Hill without mentioning the Portobello Mile in the same breath. Stalls vary from retro clothes to antiques to fruit and veg. It's best to go on Fridays as Saturdays can be a little manic, even for the most avid of bargain hunters.

The Travel bookshop 13 Blenheim Crescent London W11 2EE

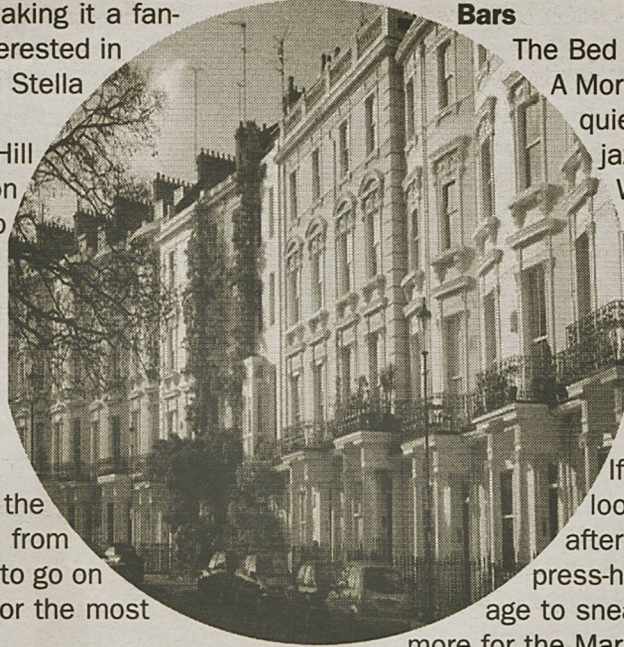
No celebrity pilgrimage to Notting Hill can be complete without taking a look at the bookshop that was the basis for the film Notting Hill. But don't worry, there won't actually be some jibbering puff-haired nob trying to sell you a travel guide (actually we can't guarantee that).

The Dispensary 25 Pembridge road W11

Favourite with the stars (or so the fashion mags say), outfits may be a little too SJP fabulous for an airing at Crush but worth a browse nonetheless.

Electric Cinema 191 Portobello Road, Notting Hill, W11 2ED

Its spacious seating and edwardian décor makes it one of the best places in London to catch independent films. It's best to book tickets as it gets quite busy.



Restaurants

Celeb eating spots tend to be quite pricey, as those of you who have ever considered The Ivy may know. However if you're willing to spend those pennies you should head either to 192 where the food is great and the crowd are generally young and trendy or Notting Hill's most famous eaterie, The Pharmacy, a creation from the cow chopping madman himself, Damien Hirst. This offers dinner straight from a typical Boots pharmacy - you are served by a waiter in surgical dress (think Steve Martin in Little Shop of Horrors) - which can be little bit creepy but extremely entertaining.

Bars

The Bed Bar Portobello Road, W10 5TA

A Moroccan-style bar, replete with little nooks and crannies for quiet "tete-a-tete"s and the like. Music is varied, with acid jazz on Tuesdays and traditional Moroccan music on Wednesdays, but its comfort and almost horizontal pace proves its name is well deserved.

Elbow Room 103 Westbourne Grove, Notting Hill, W2

Crowds flock to this bar-cum-snooker hall, but were not talking those of the John Virgo wacky-waistcoat variety: this is the place for the cool and beautiful to bust some balls whilst sipping on a tall JD and coke.

If you're thinking of really pushing the boat out to catch a look at a celeb, try Mas Café. This is a members-only bar after 10pm which means it's a safe haven for all those press-hunted millionaires (awww poor rabbits). If you do manage to sneak in, take your Polaroid, but this kind of desperation is more for the Mark David Chapman types. If you've come this far, be worried.



b:football

Home to 12 teams, London is without doubt the place to watch your football. But where to while away those Saturday afternoons? Well, if, like B:about, you're tired of those Premiership prima donnas and their trail of sleaze allegations (from Rio-gate to roastings), but you still want a bit of glam from the Beautiful Game, perhaps West Ham are the team for you. Everybody's 'second team', the Hammers have a long and proud history, although curiously enough not much of this involves the actual winning of trophies. West Ham's biggest claim to fame is as a producer of some of England's most talented footballers. From Bobby Moore and Trevor Brooking to Joe Cole and Jermain Defoe, West Ham's Academy of Football has seen many a star player. And then flogged them to Chelsea. So be warned: don't become too attached to any of the current heroes (they'll be off before you know it), though rest assured they'll be replaced soon enough. And for those glory seekers still unconvinced - and still contemplating supporting Man U despite never having ventured further north than Watford - things might just be about to change: West Ham are currently the bookies' favourites for promotion. And besides, who needs trophies when you've got the West Ham soap opera? Already this season they've sacked their manager after letting him recover from a brain tumour, been taken to the High Court for trying to poach his replacement, and refused to change in the Rotherham dressing-rooms, claiming they were unfit for a team of West Ham's standards. Before getting beaten 1-0! Even Sky One's Dream Team would struggle to match the behind-the-scenes shenanigans going on at Upton Park these days. Sure to be in the media spotlight for the remainder of the season, and with tickets cheaper than in the past, as far as B:about is concerned at least, this is the place to get your footy kicks.

West Ham United play at Upton Park (Upton Park station on the District Line). Tickets from £22.





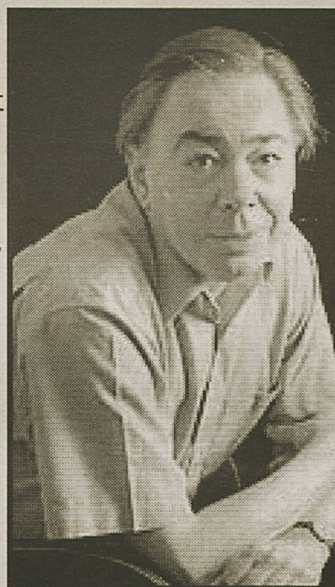
Royal Bad Taste

With the imminent launch of b:art's fine arts page, we thought we would give a bit of a taste of what to expect. So, **RODRIGO CANETE**, former vice minister for culture in Argentina, columnist for the La Nacion (Argentina's most important newspaper) and current postgraduate student at LSE, casts his beady eye over the Andrew Lloyd Webber Victorian Art exhibition at the Royal Academy. Did he like it? Was Maradona's first goal against England legal?

Going to the Royal Academy to see the Andrew Lloyd Weber's Collection of Victorian Art was a dual challenge for me, as a man from the former colonies. First, I had to deal with my own prejudice, that actual Victorian genius was absorbed in its totality by literature, poetry, science and engineering. As artists, I consider the Victorians horrible. What passed for creative production was sincere, passionate, ingenuous, yet lifeless. It was not art, it was mere propaganda through maneuristic craft. Secondly, I wanted to understand ALW's mind. As an Argentine, I wanted to find out why this man delved into the Evita myth with such an effective naïveté. Thus, the exhibition is a fine way to see how could he reduce this utterly complex creature into an ambitious woman that insults her own gender by using sex as a proficient tool for political action.

It was the catalogue that gave me the first key to understanding what was behind such unnecessary display of wealth and brightness. There ALW states that his grandmother, a founder of the Christian Communist Party, hated Victorian art because it represented "the apotheosis of a set of values she detested". Of course, he talks about it with certain contempt. However, we would have to agree with the poor old lady, though. His taste is imperial in the worst sense, he has a maddening fixation on detail. In one of the early rooms stands a remarkable piano designed by Kate Faulkner in the William Morris style that is maniacally decorated with gilded gem work, vines, and golden frames. Nobody could ever dare to play it, if not the Queen herself, but she would not. So, what's the point?

This exhibition has nothing to do with art. It is about how far you can go to fulfill your immediate dreams and make them work for you. It's about the dynamics of the world of entertainment which can meddle high Romanticism with drips of lurid sentimentalism. Music is all over the place. For God's sake, he is the father of musicals. Thus, one cannot look at the Burne Jones whose Christ rests a globe on his knee and who sits flanked by massive roset-winged angels without listening to the Jesus Christ Super Star music. I have to confess that I was looking for the felines all along the exhibition. I wanted to actually see the "Cats" hung on the wall, but there weren't any. Instead of that, an entire room is dedicated to animals, governed by outstanding Munning horses. There you find out that this guy wants to legitimize his money in the most melodic way. However, his musical taste in paintings get much better in the room with four tapestries of the Holy Grail that are a veritable mise-en-scène of Wagner's Parsifal.



ALW's dream or obsession is XIXth Century Britain and its social order. He adores its pianos, parlors, dolls-faced girls, and those greyish sunsets. It is too kitsch to be true, but it becomes true as a political wish. As Italians wanted to get their empire back, so do the British of Weber's generation. However, the incoherence of the collection shows how anachronic that wish may appear. ALW goes beyond politics, he wishes to live in Victorian times and that is sad, due to the fact that bad taste remains bad taste, however brilliantly lit.

This collection is not about art but about craft, as Burne Jones 1890s Tapestry for William Morris and Co. illustrates. ALW has rebuilt the Victorian world, and he lives there. He is the Phantom of the Opera, always obsessed with domination through classification. His taste is colonizing, as well as his commitment to this kind of "art". In one of the main rooms, Sir Edward Coley Burne Jones recreates the Arthurian legend with the precision Victorians brought to imperial administration, and it is tiresome.

But suddenly, incoherence arises: Tissot and Sir Manuel Luke Fields. Those were social realists, the first one, a survivor of the Paris Commune. What are they doing here? On the other hand, pre-Raphaelites, Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Millais, and Picasso make the tube ticket worthwhile. Actually, Picasso's portrait of Angel Fernandez de Soto, one of his early masterpieces, represents a neutron bomb of not only taste but complexity among so basic an entourage. It, actually, blows everything away and, suddenly, art speaks for itself.

Victorian art gives us an idealized world, drawn from pastoral myths, Shakespeare, heroic legends, the Bible and Imperial England. The problem appears when that idealization wants to get real. With this kind of imperial reductionism, you cant have complex people or depth in history. In this world, you can only have Madonna's Evita, and the only chap that can embody the spirit of the revolution is Antonio Banderas.

This exhibition may be appreciated from two points of views: the first one, as a monument of pop culture in sad shape, secondly, as an eleven room musical, offering an escape from the world, a hidden door to fantasy, a kitsch and man eristic version of Star Wars or The Lord of the Rings, if you fancy.

Pulse Radio is returning!

Shows Start from 12.00pm every week day from this week !
if you want to be involved mail either station manager Aqeel, at
A.S.Kadri@lse.ac.uk, or Programme Controller Az, at
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So Turn on, Tune in and Kop Off! H'Rrespect! Sorted!

The Beaver Listings

Your guide to what's on at LSE this week

<p>Liberal Democrats Society Charles Kennedy re-launches Lib Dems' Higher education policy. Monday 1pm, HK Theatre</p> <p>SU Anti top-up fees Speaker Event featuring Alan Johnson MP and Professor Nick Barr Tuesday 21, 5.30pm New Theatre</p> <p>SU Environment Week Planning Meeting Tuesday, 6.30pm New Theatre</p> <p>Director's Dialogue with Oliver Letwin Tuesday, 6.30pm Old Theatre</p> <p>Foreign Secretaries Reflect Lord Howe, Foreign Secretary June 1983- July 1989</p>	<p>Tuesday, 6.30pm STA Travel Quiz Tuesday, 7.30pm Three Tuns</p> <p>Law Society Law Society Party 2003 Tuesday night, Embassy London</p> <p>Chess Society Re-launch stall Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, in the Quad</p> <p>Shaw Library Concert Helen Radice (harp), Florica Grigora (violin) Thursday, 1.05pm</p> <p>Israel Society Public screening of the film</p>	<p>'Relentless' Thursday 6.30pm, D602</p> <p>Centre for Economic Performance Queen's Prize Lecture Adair Turner, Vice-Chairman, Merrill Lynch Holdings Ltd Thursday, 6pm</p> <p>Union General Meeting Thursday, 1pm Old Theatre</p> <p>SU Anti top-up fees Speaker Event featuring Frank Dobson MP, and NUS President Mandy Telford Thursday, 4pm Quad</p> <p>CRUSH Friday night Three Tuns, Quad, Underground Bar</p>
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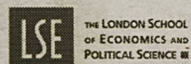
Get more involved with your Union!

There is still time to take part in the Michaelmas elections - nominations for positions will remain open until 5pm on Wednesday 22nd October.

Posts to be elected include: Honorary President and Vice President, Postgraduate Students' Officer, LGBT Officer, Anti-Racism Officer, General Course Representative, Representatives on Schools Committees and Delegates to NUS Conference and ULU Council.

Nomination forms and election regulations booklets are available from SU reception.

Vita Maynard
Returning Officer
(aka The Holder of the Badger)



Careers Service

Event	Date	Title	Starts	Ends	Registration	Location
Presentation	21st October	Work Permits	1.00pm	2.00pm	No need to register	D602
Presentation	21st October	UBS	6.30pm	9.00pm	register on line- www.ubs.com/graduates	See Careers Service website
Presentation	21st October	BBH	6.00pm	9.00pm	e-mail lorraine.thornton@bbh.co.uk	D202
Seminar	22nd October	Application Forms	1.00pm	2.00pm	No need to register	S50
Presentation	22nd October	Morgan Stanley	6.30pm	9.00pm	http://www.morganstanley.com/careers/recruiting/	See Careers Service website
Psychometric Test	22nd October	Aptitude Test	2.00pm	4.30pm	Register at Careers Service	E168
Presentation	22nd October	Monitor Group	6.30pm	9.30pm	recruiting_eera@monitor.com	See Careers Service Website
Presentation	22nd October	Freshfields Brukhaus Deringer:	7.00pm	9.00pm	graduaterecruitment@freshfields.com	See Careers Service Website
Presentation	22nd October	SEO	6.30pm	8.30pm	See Careers Service Website	Columbia Bar, Houghton Street
Presentation	23rd October	Deloitte - Graduate Presentation	6.30pm	9.30pm	Register at gradrec.uk@deloitte.co.uk	180 The Strand, London. WC2R 1BL.
Seminar	23rd October	CV seminar	1.00pm	2.00pm	No Need to Register	E304
Skills Session	24th October	L'Oreal Creative Marketing	12.00pm	3.00pm	recruitment@uk.loreal.com	See Careers Service Website
Skills Session	24th October	Mock Interviews (Deloitte & Touche)	9.00pm	5.00pm	Register at Careers Service	D302
Careers Information Talk	27th October	Effect of Disability on Job Applications	1.00pm	2.00pm	No need to Register	D209
Presentation	27th October	Presentation: Bank of America	6.30pm	8.30pm	Open	D202
Presentation	27th October	Presentation: Diageo Plc	7.00pm	8.30pm	Open	See Careers Service Website

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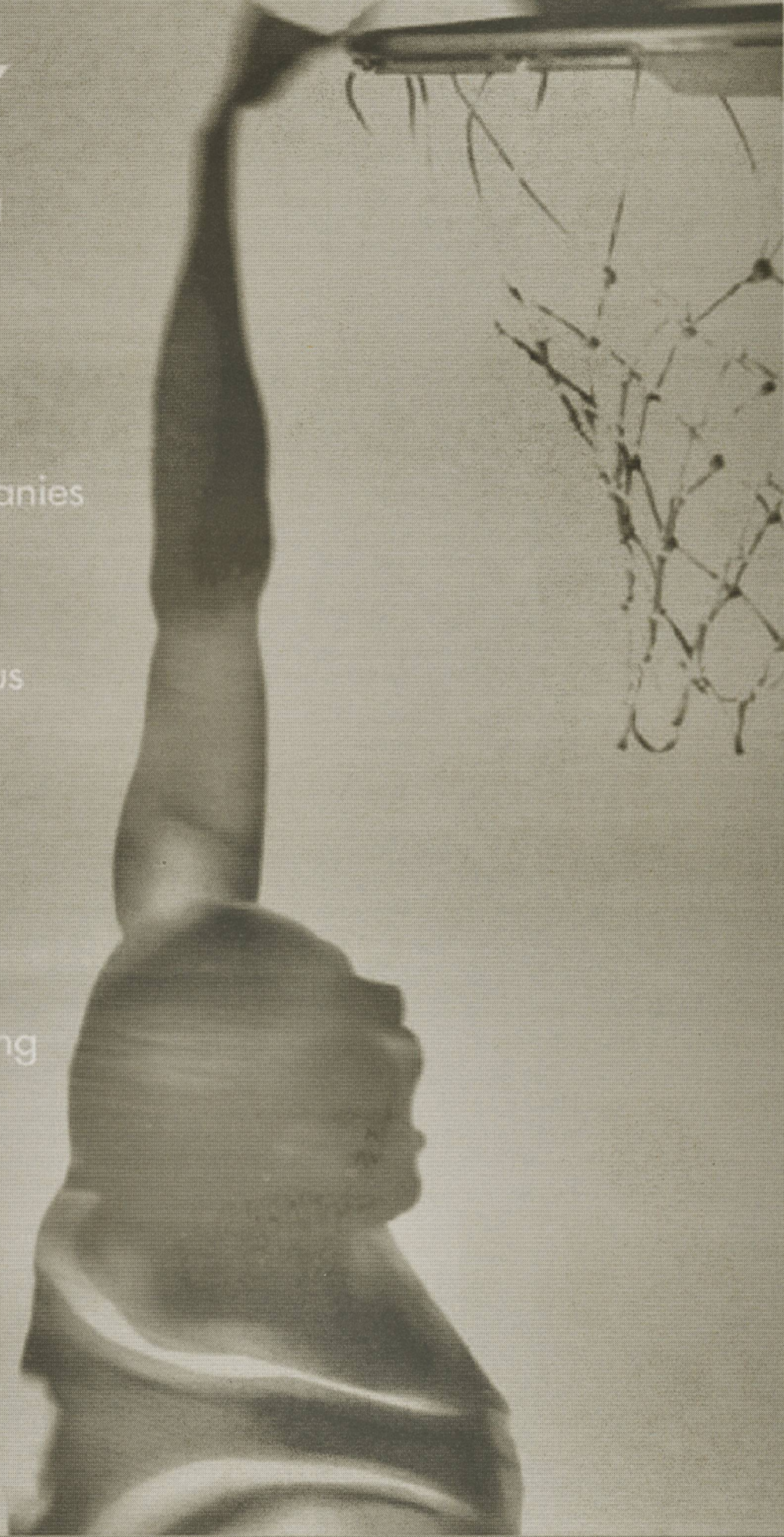
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Dudu Is A Bully, And Four Up Gimperial!

LSE Footy 1sts.....4

Gimperial 1sts.....0

Fortress Berrylands, Surrey

Gaz Carter



The merry jamboree of talent rolled unstoppably on this Wednesday, as the Firsts ridiculed the lab-coated socially-retarded morons from Gimperial. After another shambolic attempt at sorting out referees (the Pirate is becoming the most dis-organised buccaneer since the day they almost caught Jack Sparrow) left us with a balding half-wit with teeth like a scrap-yard and a slight demeanour, the Fearsome First Team were keen to rape, pillage and plunder. Pucker up, Gimperial.

After sick-note James' horrendous non-injury on Saturday, Andy Gold was left to plough a lone furrow up the middle of the park, with the Pirate, Darius and Shiva packing into a convoluted center midfield. After only seconds Gimperial's tactic of kicking us really

hard claimed its first victim. A wildly bestial three-footed lunge at Mikey T left our Adonis-esque hero prostrate on the ground, with his mangled foot lying in three pieces fifty yards off the pitch. Clearly upset at our superior good looks, intellect and pulling power, the Gimperial

hordes grunted and gesticulated wildly, showing no remorse for our fallen hero.

This clearly couldn't stand, and bringing in Stelios to the central area, and sending Darius out to the left wing, set in motion a battering of almost biblical proportions. Running through Gimperial players as if they were suffering from acute statue-syndrome ('playing at statues', one commentator may have observed), LSE dominated like only we can.

The back four built on the bullying strategies of last week, and mocked the forwards until they cried, and ran to their parents. Dudu was having a protracted war of words with a small rude-boy up-front, protracted because the poor center-forward could only utter words of one syllable. Scouse resorted to simply laughing off the possibly predatory advances of his marker, and John simply kicked, punched and head-butted his way through anyone in a Gimperial jersey. Hide was the Man of Lightening once more, player left-back, left midfield and left forward for the 1sts, 2nds and 3rds all at the same time.



Dom was infuriating the opposition with his silky Persian skills, and infrequent but inexcusable temper tantrums directed at uncouth Imperial knob-heads.

In the end, four goals (two for Andy Gold, one each for Darius and Dom) including a coolly converted penalty after a serious case of GBH in the area was enough (!) to see off the Gimpish troll-boys of Kensington Polytechnic.

Much celebration was called for, and much was got, with hop-along Mikey T leg-less (geddit?) early doors, with only the Cheerleaders Elke and Tammy to support the ailing winger. Scouse and the Pirate led an unconventional pulling marathon in Limeabout, but resorted to searching out

fighters with random students from inferior universities, before paying over the odds for rubbish takeaways. Not entirely sure what else happened to be honest, schoolboy errors being a continuing theme of post-Wednesday celebrations. Next up, St Barts' Medics, and we can only hope they're ready to cry.

If you really, really want to take photos of our brave sporting teams, then e-mail us at g.h.carter@lse.ac.uk or vyras@lse.ac.uk. Seriously, we'll pay your travel fare and everything... cheers.

Queen Mary's Usurped!

LSE Women's Hockey 1sts.....3

QMWank Women's Hockey 1sts.....1

Stepney Green, East London

Chrissy Totty



Last week we hit the ground running but by this Wednesday, we had ditched the trainers for the sports bike of success as we cruised to a comprehensive victory against Queen Mary's.

The team assembled earlier than usual in the Tuns for an educational arts and crafts session, where we customised our

shirts with very slick looking numbers fashioned from masking tape. Ghetto look established (and BUSA

rules met), we felt ready for the trip to Stepney Green and the battle that awaited us... What met us when we arrived was a solitary donkey braying behind the fence and bearded little man in a custard coloured jumper, one of which turned out to be the umpire for the game. After a quick indecent exposure session due to the lack of changing rooms, the match got under way. LSE sprung into action, the attack going straight for the jugular, scoring the first goal in 10mins, being put away by super-forward Charlotte. Our defence was impenetrable, with debutant 'The Wall' Lizzie, the Corrupter and Captain Funky holding up the back, while



goalie Kristina spent the first half pondering over nine down in the Times crossword. The mid-field and the attack put in a Torvil and Dean style performance, threading some very sexy passes up the wings. Our class demonstration was only interrupted when the ball went off the sideline into the mass of greenery that surrounded the pitch. After brief moment of panic when it was thought the donkey had eaten the ball, play continued although LSE made a formal complaint that QM seriously needed to trim their bush.

ruthlessly republican goals, leaving the final score at 3-1. Even the umpire was impressed, remarking to Funky, "You're looking good this year!". At that she flicked her long locks, and replied "I know ;)" The exhausted team then staggered off, heads held high, for some rather greasy teas at the QM union, with the match having taken its toll on the elderly Captain Funky and Gigolo Tamer who limped behind begging for a bum and thigh massage respectively...a cry they were to repeat later on after a few drinks ;)

The second half saw QM attempt to raise their game, coming back with a sneaky little goal they only sort of deserved. LSE, enraged at the opposition's audacity, moved into execution mode. The forwards, consisting of Tara (a.k.a Haydyn's favourite sandwich filling), Melissa and Charlotte, set new girl Meenal up for the final beheading blow to QM's chances of a comeback. She slammed home two

Another game, another humiliation of the opposition, another night of unmemorable licentiousness; just another Wednesday then for the Women's hockey team :-)



LateX Shorts, Speedophiles and Premature Poly!

LSE Women's Hockey 2nds.....	2
St George's.....	0
Battersea, South London	

names) and imitate Andy (sorry Andrew) Cole. Chance after chance went begging as we practiced taking short corners during the match. They say practice makes perfect, but not in our

It is often said that great players such as Zinedine Zidane and to a lesser extent Phil 'son of Neville Neville' Neville, manage to create time and space for themselves. This adage seems to have been grossly misinterpreted by one of our newbies, Bandana Boy. Rather than create time and space, he spent lot's of time standing in acres of space.

Nonetheless, our relentless endeavour to put the result beyond doubt paid dividends, no doubt helped by a 1-5-4 formation. The second goal came five minutes from time, courtesy of our resident lazy bastard. As the opposition tired, Katen found Sach with time and space in the area who 'expertly' lobbed the 'keeper to score his first goal for LSE.

The game ended prematurely when a bunch of social misfits, not to be mistaken for Strand Poly students, invaded the pitch and stole our goals in a vain attempt mimic their fellow inbreds from Millwall's Den. Ultimately it didn't matter since we won 2-0.



Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!!! This is brilliant, the overly-vocal moral minority of self-righteous, sanctimonious (censored) tried to table a motion about censoring BeaverSports at this weeks UGM. Clearly aggrieved at the lack of other 'holier-than-thou' crusades now Iraq has been all but razed to the ground, assorted offended firebrands turned their impotent ire towards LSE's most hallowed of pages. 'Rampant sexism!' they cried, brandishing their Fair Trade coffee, snug in their recycled clothing. 'Offensive to our eyes!' they opined angrily. To be honest, congratulations should go to you dedicated Athletic idols of LSE who contribute to the Sports pages week in, week out. This is great, we have a guaranteed readership of pikeys, as well as the rest of us, our original sins and all. BeaverSports is representative of the sporting community in LSE, (genital) warts and all.

From those who are offended at the very idea of sex, we move to those who couldn't communicate without it, especially last Wednesday. Aside from one specific six-team related example, the rest of us were out sexing-it-up in ways Andrew Gilligan would love to expose. Chant of the night goes to the fifth team, whose point-and-shame chant of [this bit was ruthlessly censored by the moral majority- Ed] echoed through the bouncing Tuns evening and resonated into the cavernous den of debauchery that Limeabout is, was and probably always will be. Pulling technique of the night is shared between Scouse and two Famous Freshers Matt and Freddie from the seconds footy. Scouse wandered around for half an hour, tapping every girl he could, before asking them with a shrug, if they "liked what they saw?". Needless to say, very few, even none, liked the sight of an inebriated Scouse leering drunkenly at them, and he ended up on the N50 back home. Whereas at least Scouse was trying, Freddie and Matt's comedy double-team effort on some Roseberry girl who I think may have been Irish, was just awful. Playing the good cop/bad cop routine, Freddie decided to call into her question her virtue, along with a general piss-taking demeanour, whilst Matt sat on as the Brummie Midlands remedy. Again, they had about as much luck with her as Johnny Vegas did with the Atkins diet.

Anyway, back to the... whisper it, the self-righteous have spies in every corner 'sex'... story. It even involves the threat of handcuffs and violence, but not in the way you'd initially think. You dirty minded perverts, you. A certain sixths player, who shall remain nameless, was half an hour or so behind schedule for his Tuns outing. Deciding he'd be fucked if he was gonna play catch-up with Oyvo's Stella-swigging army, he rather rashly purchased a fifth of vodka for the DLR journey. Having necked that, the Tuns gaped wide and accepted him, lovingly into her womb, at which point four consecutive Tequilas were necked (Justin Nolan's fault), no salt, no lemon. Countless more double vodka lemonades were variously consumed, spilled or thrown at hapless non-AU types. 10:30, and the first whisperings of The Exodus to Shaftsbury Avenue. First attempt at entering Limeabout was unsuccessful, after a comically drunken stumble in front of an unimpressed doorman. To the bouncer's increasing anxiety, said sixth-teamer reverted to the level of dumb beasts and lolled uselessly against the nearby ATM, screaming 'SEX!!!' and 'SLUT!!!!' at the top of his alcohol-addled voice. A second attempt at entry to Limelight was greeted with as much derision as worry from the guards of the Palace Of Limeabout, at which point the Police were gestured over. A hasty inquisition established that the poor kid couldn't speak, and only a timely intervention from a pretty wasted sixth team captain prevented our hero from spending a cold night, and an undoubtedly horrendously hung-over morning in the cells. Right, realizing I'm running out of space, so, until next we're pilloried in the UGM. Bye.

Noshir Homowala



Before we talk about the match, we'd like to (we wouldn't really like to, but feel we have to) make an appeal to the generous nature of our regular readers. It has come to our attention, or rather been forced upon us that a certain member of our team, let's call him 'Rishi', is in dire need of a pair of shorts that don't give the impression of being sprayed on like that liquid latex he seems so fond of. Please email r.madlani@lse.ac.uk for details on how to make a donation to 'The Speedophile Relief Fund'. After watching a match that should have been stopped early

on humanitarian grounds, we took to the field hoping not to be the second (or third if you count [we're not gonna print that, that's libelous, that is... liked it though -Ed] hotel) recipients of a super seven [censored, did you really expect us to print that?- Ed]. However, within 10 seconds our apprehension was laid to rest as we realised that they were fucking shite.

Our fluid 4-3-3 formation turned into an attacking Kevin 'I'm a defensive ignoramus' Keegan style 2-5-3 as we piled on the early pressure. St George's were pinned inside their own half for lengthy passages of play while our forward line took it in turns to hit the post, miss open goals (don't worry John Erwin, we won't mention any

case. It was not all bad however, and after what seemed like our twentieth short corner, a combination of three people faffing



about, yes Rishi was involved, and a goalkeeper who spent more time on the ground than Emile Heskey, Katen finally broke the deadlock, sweeping home the loose ball. Further pressure before half time went unrewarded as the doctors and nurses appeared to have lost their pulse.

Poly Scum 5ths.....2

LSE Footy 5ths.....3

The Dark Side Of Berrylands, Surrey

Fifth Team Pre-emptive Strike On Axis Of Evil Member #1: Strand Poly!

nippy forward, Dave 'Flasher' Gordon decided the best policy was to play dirty

and subsequently rugby tackled him every time he looked like getting the ball. And with him out of the equation, we began to take control. Kings'

defence simply couldn't handle the resurgent Nima 'wishes he was David Beckham' and summer signing Irfan, using pace and skill not seen since the heady days of fat boy Yaz. It was not long before the glorious LSE took the lead. A fine piece of work down the right hand side allowed Nima to once again get behind the defence. He played a pass inside to Irfan who turned and shot into the top corner, at least this would have happened had he not been brutally hacked down by the previously mentioned 'freak of nature'. The Kings c**t masquerading as a referee must have got the whistle stuck right up his arse, farted at the wrong time, and accidentally gave us a penalty. With the captain marvel on the sidelines, injured on Wednesday by an unforgivable tackle administrated by will.will (okay I slipped on a bit of turf), someone had to stand up and be counted. That man was Mina and he converted the penalty.

The back four of A.Pschy, Big Ben, Dave and Luther 'King'

looked unbreachable, however defending comers has never been a strong point within the LSE 5ths, we just don't believe in it, and breached the defence was. After dominating large parts of the first 45, it appeared as though we would be going in at half-time level. Luckily Nima was having none of it and, again after good work down the right by Saif and Irfan, he was through and slotted home his second. Not to be out



done, the left flank burst into action with fresher Sam creating space with skill and playing Francis through on goal. Now Francis does have a bit of a reputation, not just down the docks with the sailors, but also among long serving 5th teamers for a man who can hit the bar from anywhere. Two yards or 30 yards it makes no difference, and when I saw who the ball and fallen to, with a free run at goal, I was riding on hope rather than reason. Advancing on the keeper Franny kept his head and coolly took it round the keeper and now with a complete open goal he couldn't miss.

Obviously the attempted foul by a retreating Kings defender prevented Francis getting under the ball and he put it four foot under the bar. With that the halftime whistle went and we came in 3-1 in front.

The second half was not a classic display of the beautiful game as we sat back slightly on our lead. Still our forwards had the beating of the entire back four with the fresh legs and quick feet of Adam 'John Leslie' Stocker. Perhaps we could/should have extended our lead, but everywhere on the park we were simply better, if slightly fatter, than them. Pete and Francis bossed the central midfield and Saif and Sam on the wings harried the full backs. The back four were immense and good saves from new keeper Vishal inspired confidence in the team and the victory looked certain. A small lapse in concentration allowed Kings the illusion of hope with five minutes to go but the result was never in doubt (although my underwear might tell a different story).

3-2 the final score, and with the empire safe once again the 5ths trooped to the pub for a celebratory drink courtesy of their sidelined Captain. Those who stayed to watch the Engalnd Turkey there had the pleasure of being joined by what looked like members of Blazin' Squad, though I don't remember them being so racist in their pop songs.

Alex Goddard



Not Since Hadrian's Wall has one simple boundary separated two strikingly different cultures like the small picket fence at LSE and King's Berrylands pitches. On one side hope, order, civilisation and general excellence of LSE, on the other the decay and scorched landscape of the shit that call themselves Kings. However, as with the Romans, occasionally a few brave souls must venture over the wall and teach the heathens a proper lesson in battle. So it did happen on October 11th twelve LSE warriors took one more deep breath of clean air and ventured into the foul stench of Kings.

As we arrived the initial signs were not good. Kings had recruited two freaks of nature that towered above even our tallest players. Luckily they also had the footballing touch of Jack Scully, soccer star of 'Neighbours' fame, previously with the fictional Premiership team Barnsford. Basically, as you would expect from Kings, they were crap. With just one half decent player, a



"Asking a working writer what he thinks about critics is like asking a lamppost how it feels about dogs."

-Christopher Hampton

BeaverSports: Thriving on criticism. Keep it up peeps.

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LSE Women's Rugby 1sts.....10

Imperial Oompah-Lumpahs.....7

The Palace Of Berrylands, Surrey

Van 'in need of a man' Lim and Louise 'very tasty' Hastie



A bottle of wine



I think I broke a nail" shrieked the gaggle of virgin rugby girls. Isabelle and co were unimpressed on the way to Berrylands when they were told that their long feminine talons had to go. So out came the manicure set (seriously)! And thus set the tone of the LSE WRFC's first game of the season.

Our beloved Ellis explained what a scrum was during the clueless and chaotic pre-match 'warm-up'. Then the opposition arrived, we directed them to the men's changing rooms before realising they were the gimperial women's team. Their number 1 had a mullet that would put Rod Stewart to shame and number 18 strutted her bubble-butt in tighy-whitey shorts worthy of Jordan. As always we looked phenomenal.



The game began with 15 LSE girls on the pitch and 20 subs on the side. At first Imperial looked like they were gaining ground but that was all part of Hanimal's ingenious masterplan. Initial nerves and apprehension quickly disappeared when the virgins first hit the floor from a tackle, a 'take no prisoners' approach and those early Sunday train-

our first try of the 2003-2004 season. It was an emotional moment and amazing boost to confidence to whip those guys' arses.

(U-G-L-Y THEY HAD NO ALIBI - THEY WERE UGLY)

Thereafter old favourites Ellie and Jojo showed the new'uns what women's rugby is really about (apart from Wednesday nights.) With super human sprints they brought us within metres of the try line, setting the standard for all. Not knowing the rules and most having never played before, didn't seem to effect the girls - the team spirit was fantastic on and off the pitch. Every 15 minutes Hanimal made excellent subbing choices and even though some didn't get to play for very long the enthusiasm remained sky high, aching muscles and extreme fatigue couldn't dampen the general mood.

Shortly afterwards our efforts were rewarded with try number two from our most favourite German fresher Johanna, woooo hoooo! But the price was heavy...

ing sessions finally kicked in. By the 19th minute, Special K annihilated their defence and confidently scored

the Elli-minator had blood gushing from severe 'ER-worthy' injury, she had a split lip. She was a trooper and fought on bravely with intermittent breaks to rinse and spit her mouth guard - and to apply Vaseline. Others also had war wounds but the Imperial Oompah-Lumpahs came off worse. The huge heifers tripped over their own feet until one actually knocked herself out and the game was put on hold as the Ref (the Imperial Coach) tended to his injured beast until an ambulance arrived to take her to the slaughter house.

Meanwhile it wasn't just LSE girls unaware of the rugby rules, at the height of confusion there were 2 balls on the pitch and 2 brawls, both of which we were winning. The biased Ref however blamed us for the mix-up and disallowed what would have been our third try. Before we could ridicule them further, the whistle was blown and we had sealed a magnificent victory. The only LSE Rugby win of Wednesday was as beautiful as Jonny Wilkinson in scrum shorts. Well done us!!

The Tuns and Limeabout The aggression carried onto the night's events where the Hanimal drenched an obnoxious 'We're the X team (blah-blah)' football hooligan with a pint of snakebite for having spilled his drink on her and Hestor. You just don't do it. A Tina Turner karaoke summed up the team - Simply the Best! Unfortunately however, the combined effects of Vodka and Sambouka mean that we -Vanessa and Louise - remember very little of the night. To be sure, the rugby girls once again took the crown as sexiest sports team at LSE. **Bring on Writtle University!**

Team: Hannah, Hestor, Kaye, Jojo, Lauren, Jane, Lizzie, sexy Kate, tall Kate, Ellie, Tanith, Jessica, Vanessa, Louise, Johanna, Allie, Kate H, Kristin, Briany, Eleanor, Suzanne, Isabelle, Aisha, Kelly, Jen, Jen, Jenny, Claire, Laura, Erin, Becca and Audrey.

Really really sorry if anyone has been forgotten xx

Van Lim and Louise Hastie are second year sex-goddesses who enjoy each others company. But not like that.

Munchkin Surfin'!!

The newest craze to take over the AU since Charterhouse's flaming scrotal pint glass, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Munchkin Surfin'... As Claudia so ably demonstrates, Munchkin Surfing can be done anywhere, and at anytime, although whilst inebriated in the Tuns and Limeabout works for optimal Surfing atmospherics. Early converts to the cause allegedly include second team 'pillar of the community' Boz "Wake me up in Romford" Winstone, and Jane Francis Drake Rowson. If you'd like to get more info on the Munchkin Surfing Pro-Tour, get in touch, and we'll do the rest...



If You Want Your Report In t'BeaverSports, Send Them To vyras@lse.ac.uk, or g.h.carter@lse.ac.uk, By Friday 2pm Or Else We Won't Have Space For Them... Sorry