

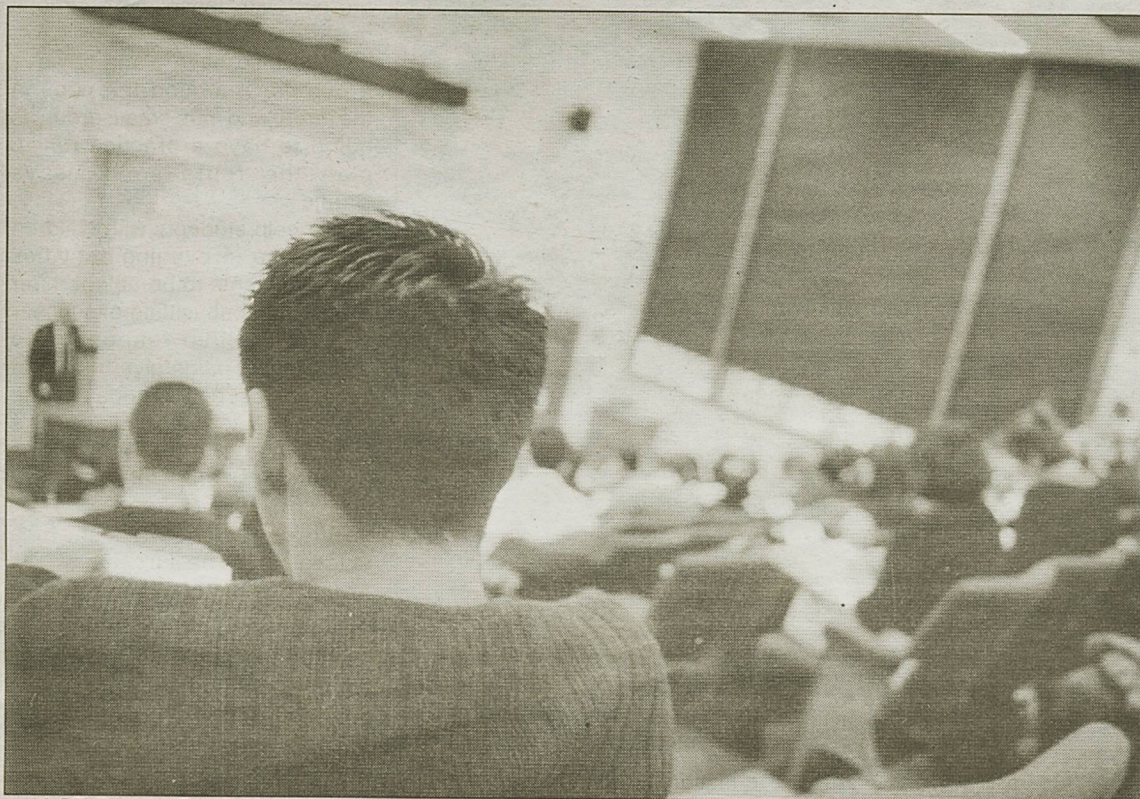
Library Good, Food Crap: The LSE speaks

Anna Foster

In February and March last year the opinion research specialists MORI were commissioned by the school to report on the current status of the LSE. Completed by staff, alumni, directors of companies, education journalists, personnel directors, schoolteachers and most students it sought to evaluate LSE's current status, public image, strengths and weaknesses. Whilst only 540 students filled out questionnaires (that's a disappointing 33%), the results were taken seriously by the school and action groups have been set up to target and improve areas which were highlighted by the survey as problematic. So what do the students really think? Does the Brunch bowl wet your culinary appetite? Does the gent's toilet in the old building really resemble that toilet in "Trainspotting"? Did anyone actually notice that "PizzaBurger" had been turned into offices?

Academic facilities rated most highly were the library opening hours with 81%, yet the availability of course books was poor with only 35% saying that they were satisfied. Frequency of lectures was also thought of favourably (70%), however only three in ten (28%) rate the quality of classes and seminars as good. Lee Federman, on behalf of the student experience working group, speaking about students academic experience said: "A priority of the Union this year been to develop the teaching and learning experience - this involves investing heavily in teacher training and reducing staff-student ratios. This needs to be a priority for the school - teaching should not continue to subsidise research to such an extent."

The facilities of the LSE had, not surprisingly, a less positive result. Whilst 91% of those surveyed thought that the location of the LSE was good, only 17%



LSE Report Card: Must do better

thought that the LSE buildings were in good condition. Similarly LSE sports and fitness facilities were again only thought of as good by 17% of students. Bottom of the list were the availability of scholarships with only 12% answering most favourably. As for the catering facilities, the Union Cafe was rated as top, with the Robinson room coming a close second. Unsurprisingly the Brunch Bowl was voted as poor by 37% of students surveyed, what is also interesting to note here is that it is also the most used catering facility with only 8% of students having never used it. Does this mean that students stomachs are suffering in silence? Lee Federman commented, "Many of the recommendations look to be real possibilities - refurbishments are certainly needed in the St. Phillips Building and the Brunch Bowl, both of which fit nicely into the school's priorities for the next two years. LSE's reputation should match its campus".

Of pastoral care within the school, students felt that whilst tutors and supervisors were available in their office hours (83%), were approachable (75%) and knew their subject well (72%), only 23% felt that they were helping them with personal issues and problems. The general secretary, on behalf of the student working group said "Students reported a patchy experience across the board. It is clear that students value to one-to-one contact and in many cases they are not receiving it. Students should not be given misguided information on the level of service they should expect to receive".

The Student Experience Working Group, chaired by Lee Federman, was set up to put forward recommendations drawn from the survey, on how to improve students experience of life at the LSE. So what improvements can students look forward to seeing over the coming months? Among the key recommendations of the group,

the following were highlighted as urgent concerns:

Training for tutors and the introduction of a method for monitoring its quality.

More resources for teacher training and more reward for those undertaking it.

Greater use of the web for providing students with the latest information on their courses, particularly the posting of lecture notes on the Internet.

Improving the environment of the Brunch bowl and finally, the refurbishment of those long term sub-standard areas of the school.

There is then a serious message hidden amongst all these statistics, particularly in light of the recent threat of top up fees, as fee paying students we should receive quality of service. Whether undergraduate, postgraduate, home or overseas students we all have the right to demand value for money and it seems that the SU is doing its best to ensure that we receive it.

Mind the Gap

Mark Ready

Taking a gap year? Whether you hope when you end your degree to emulate Prince Willy's beneficent activities in an isolated Peruvian village, or simply to indulge your complete hedonism in places you can leave forever the next day, bear these helpful hints from Mark Ready in mind.

Purpose: unless you're searching for the world's most licentious lifestyle ever, a plan tends to help. You don't have to lose the spontaneity of deciding not to travel into areas recently engulfed in civil strife or going for meals with strange people. But do have some idea about why you want to go to the countries you have chosen.

Particularly after university, connections between your interests or your career plans and your destination are profitable. I went to Nepal thinking that teaching English would be 'charitable'.

I dismissed considerations that so few of the students would find English exciting and that few of 'excited' ones would ever be good enough to use their new language skills. I could have chosen something more worthwhile.

Comfort: remember that many people have different expectations about the hygiene and environment than many 'Westerners' sterile and senseless environments. Water is an obvious problem.

Teaching seems even more onerous when the purifier-resistant water gives you 'bowel movements' like earthquakes. Some medicines are health hazards in themselves; I wolfed down far too many carcinogenic pills for giardia.

Furthermore, I shalln't be having chemotherapy in Nepal. One of the best hospitals is called the Beer hospital, a coincidental but somehow appropriate comment on the standard of Nepali health care. Much of Nepal stank of rotting vegetable matter and worse, and,

Continued Page 3
continued from Front Page

Wrinklies Fight For Their Right To Party

Julia Giese

Life at LSE could soon be changing for the self-proclaimed 'old fogies' who play such a quiet part in our studies.

Mature students make up the rich tapestry of LSE life and yet amongst their number there is a strong feeling that they have been for too long ignored, and now they're fighting back.

A push for greater socialising among the senior members of our student body is being co-ordinated by Carole Bonner, the SU Mature & Part-Time Officer, who is forming a general campaign to get mature

students to play an increasingly active role in the Union.

The campaign focuses on establishing links between the mature and part-time students who seem to find it hard to get in touch with their lot.

"It's good to know there are other mature and part time students at LSE. It does seem a pretty young crowd!" was one student's reaction to the e-mail introducing the new approach.

Such positive feed-back has led Carole to move towards the creation of a mailing list of all mature students and organise drop in sessions and forums for them.

Here, the more special needs and interests of mature and part-time students can be discussed, e.g. "the problem with trying to run a life (not to mention job) and a degree".

Moreover, a mature students' society is in the process of being set up and attempts are made to establish common room, Carole indicated.

She also told us: "I have a small group of people willing to help organise events and we have provisionally said we would like to have an evening social event around the end of Jan."

"I fit in your description of 'mature student' (it's terrible to

accept, but it's true)", one mature student commented.

"I indeed feel concerned about being the veteran in my class, so I definitely would like to get in touch with other veterans."

This statement alone shows that these older generation learning at LSE too often feel ignored and intolated by the rest of the student body.

"I certainly feel as though the LSE is not really set up for either mature or part-time students."

Such feed-back has led Carole to discuss addressing the issue of the social exclusion of these people during the Student Union's equalities week.

However, the campaign does not end with those more serious matters.

"We also have plans to have a pub crawl around the pubs in the area and our small group is going to have a practice run to plan the route soon", says Carole.

To help students with children participate in evening activities she also wants to be able to offer payment of babysitting expenses.

The positive responses to Carole's campaign give hope that it will not just be a one-day event: "Thank you for your initiative; it's a good idea and I look forward to meeting you and all the other wrinklies."

Whoever said mature students were past it?



A solitary life for LSE mature and part-time students

Pic: Archives

Busy New Term

News Team

Resignations and Union Council

Over the Christmas vacation, two resignations from the Union Council were received. Anna McElligot (Environment and Services) and Laura Taborn (Equal Opportunities-female) will be standing down. These two posts will be contested in a special Union Council on Tuesday 23rd January at 1pm in the Old Theatre. Anyone wishing to stand should prepare a manifesto and pick up a nomination form from the Union Reception (East Building) by 5pm on Thursday 18th January.

Fee Fighters

The formidable Fee Fighters campaign will get truly underway this term. It is expected that the Human Chain (see exclusive report in next week's issue) will see the spirit of protest truly returning to LSE. The Human Chain will be accompanied by the Fees Carnival which is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 17th January at 12pm in Houghton Street.

UGM line-up

The provisional schedule for the UGM is as follows:

18th Jan: Scott Rice- ULU President

25th Jan: Elections for Environment and Services Officer and Equal Opportunities (female) Officer

1st Feb: Michael Kelly - LSE Alumnus

15th Feb: Valentines UGM

22nd Feb: LSE Elections Hustings

1st March: ULU Elections Hustings

8th March: Acting Director- Steven Hill

15th March: Annual General Meeting

The UGM takes place on Thursdays at 1pm in the Old Theatre. If you've never been before, don't miss this unique opportunity to be part of the democracy in action at the LSE.

Debate and Forum

Also taking place this week was the 'Should LSE Merge with Imperial' debate featuring the president of Imperial Colleges Student's Union.

The World Economic Forum held a recruitment presentation at the LSE this Monday. To learn more about them, visit their website at www.weforum.org/careers.

Teaching surveys - should we mail it?

Louise Proudlove
Education & Welfare Officer

Teaching quality questionnaires - how do you feel about a compulsory on-line version?

Not exactly a thrilling topic, I'll admit, but the questionnaires you currently fill in during class time about how you rate your various teachers are your main opportunity to let the school know how satisfied you are with teaching standards.

Over the last few months LSE's Teaching Quality Assurance Committee has been reviewing the way these questionnaires are carried out.

In the past, teachers and students alike have indicated that they would rather not waste valuable teaching time on filling them in.

Instead, the suggestion is that the entire process should be done on-line, with questionnaires emailed to everyone's individual account for completion.

However, on-line trials show that the response rate is not high enough (less than 30%) and the idea of the Committee is to make filling in the on-line version of the questionnaire compulsory.

After an initial period (probably three weeks) you would be unable to send external mail from your account until you had filled the questionnaire in - in the same way that you email account is blocked from sending external mail if your mailbox size is over its limit.

But what do you think? Do you value your right to have your say enough to put your email account if you fail to fill in your

questionnaire?

I know what I think - that the opportunity to have your say is precious, and I would much rather fill in a questionnaire in my own time than in a rush during a class - but I'm not just here to represent my own opinion.

I need your opinions on this one, if I'm going to be able to do a proper job of representing you. So on this issue, or any other...



The end of hand jobs?

Pic: Archives

Email me!
su.edwelfare@lse.ac.uk
Come and see me! E299,
10am-12noon daily
Or just stop me in the street
and rant at me!

Fill your boots boys: LSE Grads set to rake it in

Iain Bundred and
Laura Hales,
News Editors

According to a new poll today's graduates are a powerful, demanding group who are holding employers to ransom in order to fulfil their expectations.

A survey of over 2,000 final year students found that 7% of graduates now expect a 'golden hello' and 1 in 5 who received a job offer felt sufficiently confident to turn it down.

Furthermore, the poll found that today's money-grabbing mercenaries feel obliged to commit no more than two years service at whichever firm they do entice into employing them.

These findings, part of The Guardian's Grad Facts 2000 survey (in association with the Association of Graduate Recruiters), may come as a surprise to those 3rd Year LSE students who are currently navigating their way through

arduous interview processes, but it would seem that power lies with them.

This is quite lucky given the survey's finding on application procedures: 51% of graduates said having to perform some kind of test would discourage them from applying for certain jobs. Being asked to do role play exercises or give a presentation were considered the worst options, closely followed by giving handwriting samples, writing essays/reports and being interviewed over the phone.

In the end, 57% confessed that doing anything other than supplying a CV, filling in a form or having a straight-forward interview would put them off.

Similarly, 60% of Beaver writers agreed that to do anything more than lift from a straight-forward press release would constitute something resembling work and therefore is to be discouraged.



Graduates: in the driving seat

Pic: Archives



Union Jack

As Jack walked in from the cold and into the Old Theatre a terrible thought struck him. The start of a new term meant a new UGM Chairman and with the excitement of change always comes uncertainty. Chairman Mo had led with an Iron Fist, dissidents were quelled without hesitation and it was on more than one occasion that Jack looked up to see the balcony boys cower at a dressing down from him. Yes, he knew a thing or two about discipline did Mo. Could the new incumbent survive in his shadow?

Feders played an enduring role as Cilla and our Graeme showed a decidedly unpleasant face in the form of Oscar Kent. It is here that Jack must have a rant. Along with respectable murmurings from Tory Sleaze Hartley and La Taborn was something quite distasteful. Readers should note Jack was not impressed by La McElligot's seeking election by playing to the Neanderthal desires of the balcony boys. It was demeaning. If she wanted to impress them she should have cooked pasta or read a short story, not whipped Oscar Kent on stage in a sad show of sexual depravity.

Tory Sleaze won the day by impressing the Union with her knowledge of vital details on recounts and was soon joined by a surprising face. Intoxicated by the roar of the crowd Blackwell took to the floor. Jack enjoys Blackwell outbursts and only hopes he will still be able to hear him speak while he holds the vice-chair. A Tory ascension now in place and the Fourth Reich soon to follow, we turned to the main business of the day.

Yet tragedy nearly struck. Before long a young boy from the valleys with an arm strong from fending off his family's sexual affections sent a wild paper missile straight into our new chairman's face. Her glasses flew and her head fell back. Jack was, and still is, angry. Paper throwing used to be a tool of dissension but the brick like missiles now seen emanating from the balcony are bloody dangerous. Save your strong arm for when Giddens visits the UGM young man.

With order resumed the lad from Wales was voted out the meeting and into his new role as Union pariah. The motions passed uneventfully as Kent was joined by his apprentice in filth Charterhouse and the meeting voted to punish misbehaviour with the birch. A sad note in leaving, part of the fun in having Tory Sleaze as chairman was the thought of her singing the Red Flag. Jack hopes that those integral to the Union will adhere to the standing order passed last year and sing for him at close.

2001 : A Gap Year Odyssey

well, you should find out whether contact with people's left hands is a hygienic and social faux pas.

Travelling abroad can also entail cramped conditions. Try to avoid police cells, and remember that seats on buses and trains may have leg room only for amputees. I have nothing against pygmies, but don't complain when their beds aren't long enough.

Cultural assumptions: the most obvious difference that many of you would find will often be attitudes to women. London, despite some people's latent prejudices, is comparative to many places a haven of sexual equality.

Visitors to India, where some men view Western women as promiscuous, often experience far more intimate contact than they would wish.

Encroachments upon personal space are not only sexual: Nepalis and Indians often live in cramped conditions, and holding hands amongst men is nothing more than a sign of friendship.

They are so forthcoming and interested in getting to know everyone they meet that they often ask details about personal issues, especially the younger men.

Vegetarians may also have problems in some countries, not only in finding enough nutrients, but also socially. The Nepalis, despite being forbidden to eat meat as Brahmins in some of the Hindu shastras, told me that I would be ostracised if I did not eat goat at a wedding.

Attitudes to animals can be less



Faith off: there are more pygmies than you think

Pic: Archives

than caring. Playing football one day I saw two young boys 'skipping' towards the pitch. It was only when they came within hurling distance that I realised they were not skipping at all, but whirling rats held by the tails in either hand. They then decided to play 'keep-uppies' with the rats as balls. Too much detail? Then think about where to avoid.

Expense: take travellers' cheques and credit cards where possible. If you're going somewhere with a soft currency you may find dollars helpful in getting around more quickly, and you can deceive yourself into believing the government will

spend them on development projects which require materials and advisers from 'the West'.

Budget for insurance, transport, accommodation, clothes, vittels, and a small pharmacy's worth of medical supplies.

Whatever outpost you want to impose yourself upon always plan for more than a shoe-string budget.

Cultural sites and 'experiences' cost something in every country, unless they're either 1. religious (established or cult differences miraculously vanish when the possibility of converting the uninitiated rises up), or 2. a scam involving risk to person or property or both. 1. and 2. are not mutually exclusive.

Most of all, just be realistic about you aims and abilities, and keep your wits about you, especially in public places.

"Try to avoid police cells, remember that seats on buses and trains may have leg room only for amputees and that beds are pygmy size."

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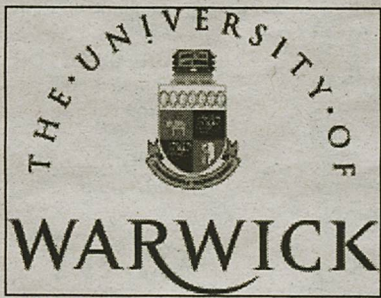
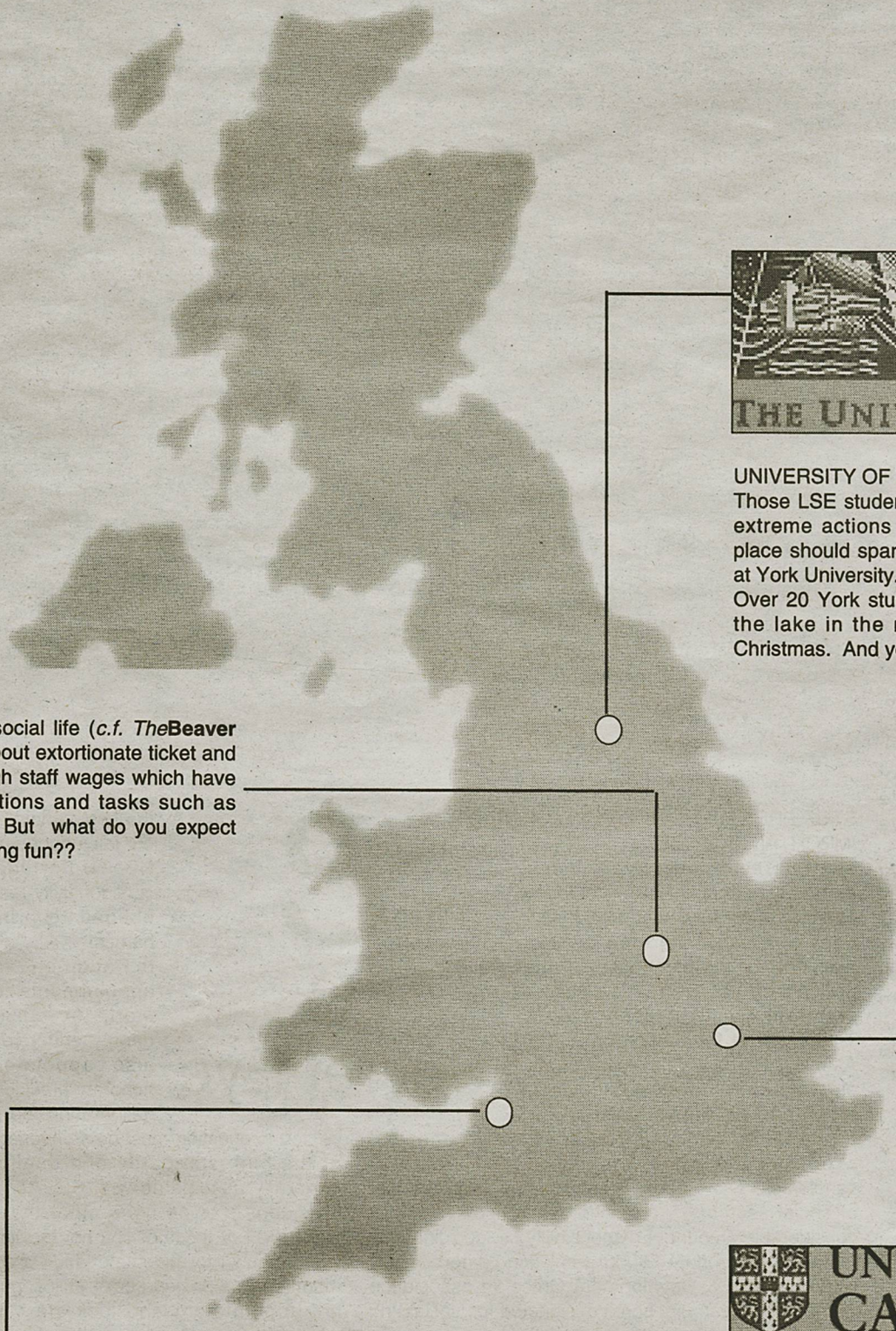
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Deadline for entries is 2nd April 2001.

The Beaver's weekly round up of student news from around the country

with Ruth Molyneux



UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Having recently discovered that it is OK to have a social life (*c.f. TheBeaver* passim)...students at Warwick are now complaining about extortionate ticket and drinks prices at their union. The union blames the high staff wages which have to be paid due to "stressful and dangerous conditions and tasks such as separating broken bottles covered in vomit". Nice. But what do you expect from children discovering alcohol, cigarettes AND having fun??



UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Those LSE students who have ever contemplated extreme actions in order to get away from the place should spare a thought for those poor souls at York University.

Over 20 York students were spotted jumping into the lake in the middle of campus just before Christmas. And you thought LSE was depressing.



University of the West of England

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND
Top quality, amusing news found in UWE's student paper this week. Clearly a highly important matter amongst students, if anything to fund their obvious need for alcohol...
"Me is want a cahpoint in bower as a lot of my friends want as well instead of having 2 trapes into town 2 get cash out"
Always at the helm of quality yet entertaining student journalism, perhaps UWE should consider running a series of workshops in which they could share their skills in this department with us at *TheBeaver*.



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

Once again Cambridge students seem to have a problem with the democratic, free for all part of their university. Those Cambridge students who actually know what CUSU is (it's their student union, by the way) have a poor view of it. CUSU is seen as a bureaucratic, 'meddling' institution that attaches itself to whatever 'politically correct' cause is apparent that particular week, doing nothing of any use to anyone. Maybe this is because it is free and doesn't charge an extortionate amount of money to get like the more popular Union at Cambridge. When will they learn?

Do you know of any funny stories from the world of academia? Friends passed on some tasty titbits from our rival institutions? E-Mail us the best stories from around the country and share their embarrassment with the whole of the School!

Letters, Editorial and Comment

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All letters for printing should be received by Noon on the Thursday preceding publication.

Editorial

Hi, my name's Chris Wills.

You may remember me from such articles as "political correctness - kill those pygmies" and "Alcohol and violence - death on the rocks". To many of you I'm the man without a face. I resolve to correct this in the coming week.

Sorry to all those at last week's UGM who were gasping to see the Beaver's fresh blood. Needless to say the Ebola virus has come and gone - thank god for calpol - and I'm ready to step into the illustrious stilettos left by Big Bucks Muks and Red hot Curry.

Rest assured, dear readers, I love you all. You are all important, each and everyone of you. And while I strongly disagree with your objections for my absence, I accept it.

And so from this day forth I will rise to meet these challenges; like a white Mr Motivator I graciously step up.

Moving swiftly on, I encourage you, dear readers to appreciate and love the Paul Daniels article on the back page of Blink.

I too know of the midget magician's devastating paranoia. Once, while my friends and I were harassing Debbie McGee, we offered Paul a piece of conciliatory chewing gum. He bluntly refused saying that we were trying to poison him.

No sir, it was merely a stick of Wrigleys - something Debbie has become very familiar with over the years.

And now like Paul Daniels himself I will magically move on to another tale of showbiz highs and lows, climbs and falls - that of the 'comedian' and 'child entertainer' Rod Hull.

My nightmares are still haunted by this mystic figure long since Hull went down to Man Utd at half-time. I was merely a nipper when emu stole my coat at the Hexagon in Reading. It was the first and thankfully the last time I saw Rod fisting a bird, yet the memory has stayed with me.

No fear readers, my coat was returned after I, in my ornithological innocence, decked emu with a swift upper-cut. I'm told emu never flew again. Pity the same couldn't be said for old Rod.

More tales from the crypt next week. Enjoy the paper and remember:

New Year, Fresh Beaver

Feel free to contact me anytime - night or day - on c.d.wills@lse.ac.uk

Comment & Announcements

Baker's Mullet

SO THE Director is taking a sabbatical. Good on him I say, he clearly works too hard and with a general election coming up I'm sure he has better things to do than concentrate on his job. up North already and has taken to the old habit of drinking Guinness again, but at least it's keeping it regular.

The Mullet might write to the board of governors and see if it can get a sabbatical week to do some research into tanning products, foreign cuisine and Spanish ale. No, fair play, if El Tone has got a manifesto, whoops, book to write, he should have some time off. He is a good director and all credit to him, although this Mullet prefers Michael Winner. Dirty Weekend was fantastic, if not a little tame.

Not much has been going on recently. We have Laurel and Hartly as vice chair and chair of the UGM. Crush had the unsurprising fire alarm and after rehab Louise Proudlove has started snacking on the sugar snap peas again.

It's all a bit of a let down after the holidays. You can't wait to get back to London after Christmas and then once you're here you can't wait to go back home. The Mullet is missing the beer from

One of the problems with coming back to school after Christams is meeting the clowns, there's one in every class, who can't wait to flop their nob out and masturbate over the next topic of your course.

After seeing all of your old mates at home and having a good knees up, the sight of these workaholics can sap all of your life's spirit. This Mullet doesn't want some fool mouthing off in class pretending that he knows more than the might of the Mullet and telling us that so-and-so's study is the best thing since Jim Henson created the Muppets.

One of these days, after one too many clowns have piped up with some pretentious rubbish, an American Psycho type incident may occur in one of the rooms in the sociology department, where somebody may be bludgeoned to death with a Mullet. "Is that a raincoat you're wearing?" "Why, yes. Yes it is."



STOP PRESS!
IMPORTANT NOTICE!

The SE Team would like to hereby declare their annual Newsletter for the attention of our esteemed readership. Last week saw the long awaited elections for the highly sought after positions on the Secret Eye editorial staff similar to those held for TheBeaver at the beginning of term. As many of you will have noticed, the elections were advertised in several recent editions of TheBeaver and the current SE administration were somewhat

overwhelmed with responses from potential candidates. The most keenly contested post was that of social secretary - a position which comes with a considerable amount of responsibility i.e. deciding how to spend the annual £3000 grant (kindly donated by LSE's 'Alumni & Development Office' in association with CFSB investment bank) designated for 'socialising and extra-curricular activities'. After much scrutiny and debate the candidates were whittled down to three for each of the posts of editor, social secretary, photographer, chef, mini-bus driver and chief strategist. Amongst the surprise applicants were Anthony Giddens BA(Hull) for chef - apparently he is a budding Jamie Oliver, and failed mayoral candidate Frank Dobson BSc(Econ) MP for the post of mini-bus driver (apparently he thought he should at least be driving something even if it's wasn't the capital). Needless to say both aforementioned men were largely under qualified for the posts in question and their application forms burned amid much derision and laughter.

Anyhow, after a brief oversight of the application forms the candidates were called in and asked to give a short speech in what turned out to be a packed Old Theatre, justifying why they should be appointed. Unfortunately, Messrs. Giddens & Dobson could not grasp this concept without having to mention 'The Third Way' or 'globalisation' and as a result both were swiftly ejected from the stage and barred from attending any further SE events. Yet amid all the confusion the SE team managed to orchestrate a successful election in which



Secret Eye

the best candidates (according to our fair judgement) prevailed.

NB: Unfortunately, due to confidentiality reasons we are not obliged to print any of their names.

In addition to the recent appointments for our editorial staff, the current editor and deputy editor respectively have also appointed this year's honorary president. After hours of deliberation the two felt that the

person in question must be someone who is indicative of the high standards and quality presentation generally associated with SE. As such this year's president is to be none other than 'George' from Rainbow. For those of you not familiar with him, he is world-renown for his stupendous oratory skills, not to mention a respected social philosopher. To celebrate his appointment and kick-start SE's 'month of madness' George will be giving the first in a series of 'President's' lectures on 'Market Capitalism and Social Dislocation in The Solomon Islands.' It should be a fascinating event - book now to avoid disappointment. May we take this opportunity to remind Anthony Giddens and Frank Dobson that they are not permitted to attend these lectures.

In other news this week, the annual budget announcement was made. Thanks to our sponsorship and extended readership the SU has allocated a grand total of £0 to the SE coffers. We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude for this generous donation. Every effort will be made to spend the money wisely i.e. by investing in our team (perhaps a trip to Blackpool next year - maybe we might see some of you there!).

This brings to an end the annual newsletter, if you have any comments (or suggestions!), or tickets to any of the forthcoming events (which incidentally are free) please write to the SE Team at secret_eye@hotmail.com

A belated Happy Christmas and New Year! God bless you all!

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it's time to pause and reflect."
Mark Twain

B:LINK

beaver link

politics/culture/life

who would go to a university like this?

interview with an LSE alumnus
this week: Loyd Grossman, TV Food Connoisseur

words by Seniha Sami and Saphira Isa

We know you studied at the LSE, where you did your Masters. What exactly did you do it in?

"I did Economic History, Fisher, who was a professor at the time, was really terrific; he was my first mentor."

Why did you choose LSE?

"I chose The LSE because I'd read quite a bit about them in the Economic History review. I'd read some key stuff by Jack Fisher and I knew he was getting to retirement age, so I wanted to have a go with Jack. The LSE of course had a phenomenally high reputation in the United States because people like Kennedy and Rockefeller had studied here. It seemed like a very solid, high achieving, probably rather CONSERVATIVE institution. Of course, I had no idea what it was really like. I came as an undergraduate from a very radical university in Boston, where we spent more time out of class than in class and we were always having vigils and masses- they were fabulous. When I used to say to people I was at LSE., they used to virtually draw back, because the LSE seemed to be a hotbed of radicalism; which I must say I found very attractive."

Were you politically active during your time at LSE?

"No! The only thing I joined at was The LSE Wine Society!"

Did you ever write for The Beaver?

"Nooooooo! I wrote for Harpers and Queens so I only had a certain amount of time to write, and Harpers was a more interesting outlet. If I'd had the time and the opportunity I would have done."

During your time at LSE, what did you think of the food?

"There was no Brunch Bowl in my time! In those days, when security was more lax, I used to eat in the workers cafeteria in India House! Also, I liked working at Senate House. That was terrrrrrrrrrrrrrific as it was next to SOAS and SOAS had a really good cafeteria. I lived on curries."

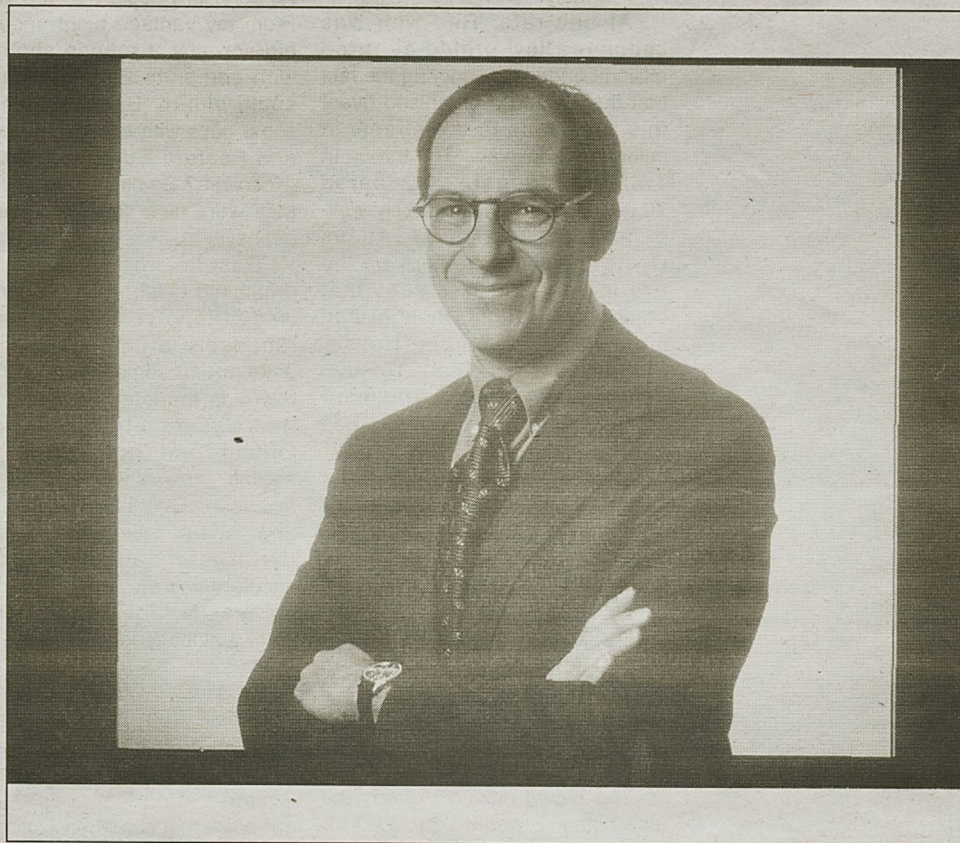
So, you didn't really eat at LSE?!

"No, I think might have had two or three lunches during my time there!"

Has the LSE helped you in any way?

"It hasn't helped me with my career, but as an individual, yeeeeeeeeesssssss! It was a remarkable institution, and it still is a remarkable institution. You are taught very rigorously. And I think in terms of developing clear thinking, it's absolutely wonderful!"

What do you think is the



worst part of LSE?

"Well, the best and the worst is where it is located. On the one hand, it's in the mind-blowing centre of London. It is the most incredible city in the world. So that's great, but the down side is that on a hot spring day you can't really put out your picnic blanket and open a bottle of champagne! It offers limited opportunities for posing!"

As Governor what exactly do you do?

"I think we really contribute to the life of the school. The slogan is that Governors are asked to contribute by their 'work, wisdom or wealth' or all three if possible! The Court of Governors are a fantastically dynamic body. The Governors are this reservoir of talent."

How would you see the role of the LSE in the future?

"The most important thing is for LSE to retain its pre-eminence in its field. Of course there's now a lot more competition, but the most important thing is for us to retain our leading intellectual role. If we do that, then there are the most enormous number of beneficial effects that LSE can have both on the UK and the whole of Europe. The subjects that we are good at are the subjects that we as British citizens, as Europeans, are going to have to face. How do we cope with inequality or the huge rise in xenophobia and racism? These are questions we have to face."

What position do you take on the whole tuition fees debate?

"We live in a society where people aren't supposed to pay extraordinary taxes. We are living with a level of taxation at which most people feel, however grudgingly, that more money is needed. But where from? Obviously not from higher taxation as people do not want this. It can't come from diverting money away from the Department of Health or something. Basically, some students are going to have to pay something. It's just a matter of working out who pays what in an equitable way."

How did you move from Economic History to Food?!

"When I left here, I was just about to start my Phd. I just thought, I can't do this anymore. I was very lucky because I was writing for Harpers and Queens. They offered me a job So I went to work for Harpers. They didn't have a restaurant critic, and for me it was just a hobby. The editor asked me to fill in for a month and I ended up doing it for 13 years!"

What are you working on at the moment?

"I'm doing a little less broadcasting and working for a few charities so that's very time

consuming. I'm starting my own food business. In terms of television, I am going to deliver another series of 'Through The Keyhole'. Last night, I did get a chance to wear my LSE scarf on the BBC! There was a programme about The British Museum and they asked me if I'd do the reading for it, so I dug out my scarf. Amazingly enough, I am convinced the LSE scarf is going to be hip and trendy! The time has come for me to really make this an object of fashion. Even my 11 year old daughter said 'That's a really cool scarf daddy!' which really says it. Purple's a great colour." We agree with the purple thing, Loyd.

Would you like your daughter to come to The LSE?

"I'd be thrilled if she did! If she wanted to I'd be extremely happy."

At this point, we tried to engage our new friend Loyd into a little chocolate tasting test....Unfortunately he was due for a dinner date and politely declined leaving us [and our trusty photographer Nick] to consume the Cadbury's goodies. However, Loyd was willing to give his opinion on our selection: "English people love Dairy Milk - but as an American, it does not make the Earth move for me! I like Maltesers but they're meant to be eaten in the cinema. I like Aero as well, but my favourite is the Galaxy."

Again, Loyd, we agree wholeheartedly.

Seniha Sami and Saphira Isa are both second year sociologists.

They are both good cooks and both live in nice houses, but neither are balding.

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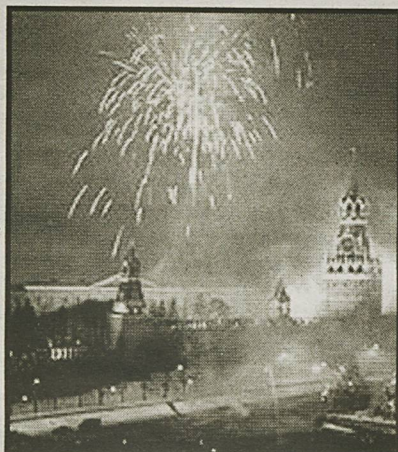
loyd grossman, a man with awkward voice
in new years london, we had no choice
the whole city needs to stop and think
a reclusive genius this week in b:link
libya and the west set up two men
america's system messed up; and then...
...we made up some funny stuff
about paul daniels.

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unhappy new year

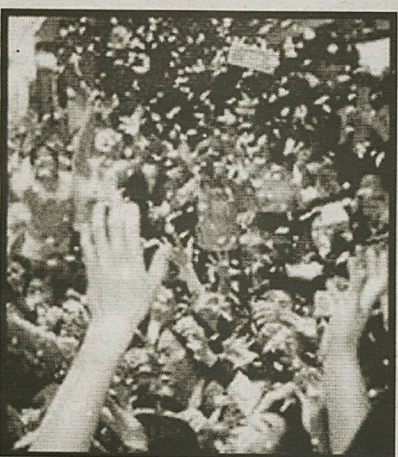
words by mukul devichand



moscow: city alight



sydney: fireworks



tokyo: its raining \$1 bills



london: making do

As Big Ben pumped out the twelve deep bass thumps that signalled the (real) arrival (finally) of the third millennium, London Mayor Ken Livingstone slumped low in an armchair in his Brent front room, his head hung low in shame. Probably.

At any rate, Red Ken was keeping a low profile as three million Londoners, ignoring the fact that there was no organised event this year, took to the streets in celebration anyway. The throng in Trafalgar Square numbered 70,000 - largely male, largely well-behaved - watching Angus Deaton's comedy frolics on the two large plasma screens that someone (not Ken, though) had mounted on Canada House. Further down the road, 100,000 more crowded into Parliament Square, in the shadow of Big Ben itself, to await the "real" millennium. As the midnight hour approached, the sense of anticipation grew enormous and the cold night was punctuated only by the shrill whistle of the novelty horns being sold by an impromptu network of street vendors.

Midnight came. The tension snapped, and many in the crowd glanced expectantly skyward.

Nothing happened.

Nothing at all.

The crowd moved towards the tube stations, where they queued for two hours, then got the train home.

This was London's new years story.

It hadn't been like that in Sydney. The Pacific midnight had been marked by a host of fireworks lighting up Sydney Harbour Bridge.

It hadn't been like that in Kuala Lumpur, where the City had organised for the midnight chimes to be accompanied by 15 skydivers, watched by thousands, jumping from the top of the world's two tallest buildings, the Petronas Towers.

It hadn't been like that in Beijing. There, lasers had painted the midnight sky as Lion Dancers displayed in Tiananmen Square below. 500 Couples had gotten married together at midnight outside the city, at the ruins of the Great Wall.

It hadn't even been like that in Edinburgh or Cardiff. Britain's 'other' capital cities had both put on the biggest shows in their histories. Belfast, too, had beaten the elements and held an indoor event, in spite of torrential rain.

London's new year failure was made all the more poignant because, as three million of them showed on the night, it wasn't as if Londoners didn't want a party. The people were there en masse in London, out on the streets and getting soaked in the rain. But no fireworks. No lasers. No parachutists. Not even a sodding Millennium Dome: the building especially designed for New Years celebrations had already closed its doors for the final time. According

to some reports, workmen had already started stripping to dome of its elevators and displays as 2001 began.

In Trafalgar Square, the people partied on anyway, crowding under eachothers' umbrellas and sipping on eachothers' champagne bottles. All sorts of people had turned up. From my vantage point under the big screens, I rubbed shoulders with complete English families, some elderly Bengali men and some guys with torn denim jackets and Eastern European accents (Kosovars? Serbians? At any rate, they were nice so I hope they do get asylum).

Despite the lack of any organised celebrations, the mood was friendly. There was, reportedly, a fight at Temple at 9:30pm and some pushing-turned-rowdy in the late night ques, and that was about it. The Police Officers on horseback were smiling. Arrests were down 6% on last year. Only three people died, and none of them were murdered (two heart attacks and an accidental drowning). Indeed, in many situations the drunken youths actually lent Police a hand this year - helping a man who collapsed some way down Whitehall, protecting a 10-year old girl from breaking glass outside a Chemists Shop in Trafalgar Square. In all that chaos, I only got scared once, when I glimpsed a man brandishing a gun. To my knowledge, however, there were no shootings on the night: he was just a poser.

Beyond a few policemen, though, the crowds were left mostly to themselves. What few organised events there were turned out to be failures. There was no 'river of fire' display on the Thames as was promised. The London Eye broke down. There were hardly any 'portaloo's for the desperate revellers, and what few there were didn't work. Londoners carried on and had fun regardless - but why did they have to?

Because Mayor Ken couldn't get his act together?

The Mayor's failure to organise the party which he himself had banged on about for so long - the spectacular fireworks display which was to attract a million people to the Thames' banks - was perhaps the most pathetic thing to happen in the capital's politics in years. We had been expecting a great bash since June, when Livingstone had appointed Bob Geldof (organiser of Band-Aid, the world's biggest ever charity event) as Chief Party Organiser.

Come November, however, and it all collapsed in the typical way that such things collapse - with everybody blaming eachother. London Underground blamed Ken: not enough notice, too little money, they said. Geldof blamed the bureaucrats. The bureaucrats blamed Ken. Ken, in turn, blamed John Prescott, the deputy Prime Minister, for handing him the job

too late.

"I am sick of the can't do, won't do culture," said Ken in his speech admitting his failure (this despite the fact that he himself *couldn't* do it).

So it is unclear where exactly the blame lies for London's non-event. Inevitably, the politicians will carry on tussling over the issue until everyone forgets about it, because they all fear looking silly.

But look silly they all did, because *there were no fireworks*.

Indeed, it is not only them but London's entire system of government which appears incompetent. In the end, the blame (it seems) comes down to an awkward system, where the Mayor is an irritant to the Central Government who bully and discredit him as they please, where the transport system of the city doesn't quite know which political office to answer to and where the Mayor himself has talked a lot and delivered little. The only spectacular thing about London's New Year was this spectacular failure.

The good-humoured crowds who filled the streets on December the 31st remained good humoured, because that is human nature. The politicians, both at the Mayor's Office and in Whitehall, should be on their toes, however, because the crowd will only stay good-humoured up to a point. The embarrassment of Londoners, not only in front of other 'world cities' but in front of the capitals of Wales and Scotland, will soon take its toll. Unless a (much) better show is put up next year, London will lose its reputation, and may no longer attract the crowds it does on New Years Night.

If that were to happen, an old tradition of the 'best new years party in the world' would be sadly lost and London's morale would sink tragically lower.

As I overheard one disgruntled Londoner mumble in Trafalgar Square shortly after midnight, as we stood under an empty sky and watched the big screens show us pictures of better parties in Edinburgh, Cardiff, Rome, Sydney, even *Streatham* for Pete's sake:

"I think I might give this Trafalgar Square malarkey a miss next year.."

Mukul Devichand was formerly Editor of the Beaver, and knows all the words to "Auld Lang Syne". He spent the 1999/2000 new year halfway up a fake Eiffel Tower in a southern suburb of New Delhi.

Ken Livingstone was his second-choice for London Mayor, mainly because he appealed to his post-adolescent rebel angst.

what is to be done?

words by tariq qureshi

back in the nineteen-nineties, when London seemed to be the centre of the planet, and the womb of Cool, there were no worries about life in the capital. The publication of the Macpherson report, following the tragic death of Stephen Lawrence, a black teenager, forced open the eyes of a nation to the reality of racism. As the report concerned London and its law enforcement force, the Metropolitan Police, the strongest reaction was felt there. The report's damning conclusion, that the force was 'institutionally racist', has become a soundbite of the utmost importance and influence. It has confirmed in the mainstream the undercurrent of resentment and hostility felt towards the police by the ethnic communities (particularly black people) of the capital on account of the fact that the police were often felt to treat non-white people with less respect and more suspicion.

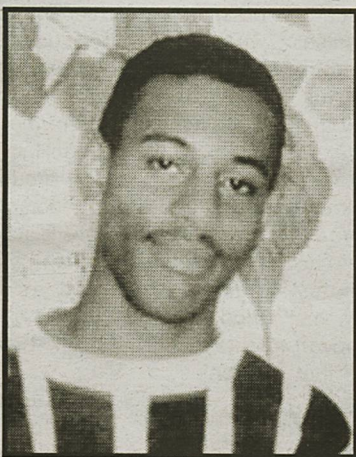
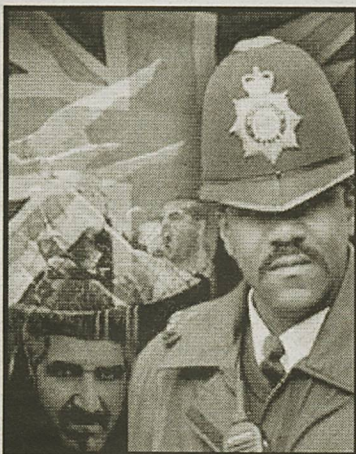
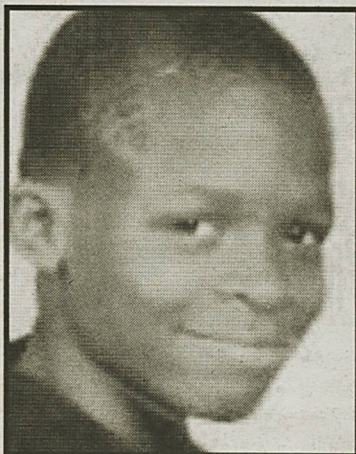
The report was accepted by most people with a degree of diplomatic caution, in respect for the victim's family if nothing else. Indeed, a cross party consensus was established not to attack the report and to accept its findings. It was regarded as a breakthrough in officialdom, for the mistreatment of ethnic minorities. This balance was rocked last week when William Hague, leader of the Conservative Party, who stated 'the next Conservative Government will take on and defeat the attitude of a condescending liberal elite that has never trusted the police and now wants us to believe that they are all racists' in a widely criticised attack on the findings of the Macpherson report. He sought to blame the low police morale caused by the report as the reason for increasing lawlessness on the streets of London, highlighted in the past month by the horrific murder of 10 year old Damilola Taylor. Within this conundrum, it is worth considering whether Hague has a point. London may well have lost its cosmopolitan gloss and smooth curves of globalised harmony and intrigue.

However, to distinguish this issue as Hague has done in a populist and ill-informed manner is wrong. His attempt to politicise the death of Damilola has greatly angered the boy's parents who

accused Mr Hague of using their son as a 'political football'. In attempting to blame directly the Labour government for the murder, Hague is beginning to demonstrate the growing marginalisation of the Conservatives under his tenure. LSE student Joel Smith insists 'Hague's refusal to treat this issue as anything other than racially based is offensive and demeaning. He is polarising politics simply because he is unable to assert himself on the centre'. This opinion

is reflective of much resentment of Hague's refusal to understand the true relevance of urban decay in London

The London in which Stephen Lawrence lived is a different kind of London to the one in which Damilola Taylor lived, even in the relatively short space of time between the tragic deaths. Their deaths should be compared not because they were both black, that is a manifestation of great ignorance and great insensitivity,



but rather for what they represent as watersheds in a particular state of affairs. Only after the death of Stephen Lawrence and the publication of the Macpherson report did the mainstream media fully embrace the idea that ethnic minorities were being treated unfairly by police officers. Only after the death of Damilola Taylor have people looked away from the prosperity of the centre to look at the deprivation and hopelessness of the weary belt of estates that surround the fat belly of London.

In the mid-nineties London represented the height of all interest in the world, the buzzwords were 'Cool Britannia' and 'Swinging London'. This massaged the ego of a depressed nation, people started using their credit cards again, and the culmination of the new euphoria and adventurous spirit was the election of a Labour government with an immense majority in parliament. This image of Britain as a bastion of hipness has not been sustained. There have been too many sporting humiliations and public demonstrations exude any false confidence.

London has always represented the biggest and most important part of the Nation. It is the story of Dick Whittington and opportunity. More things are available to buy in London, as are the same things as in the provinces, but one thing is for sure, they are almost always more expensive, and this is especially the case during the last six to seven years. Finding rental accommodation in the capital is almost certainly more stressful than moving into it. House prices are at astronomical levels and the cost of living is, according to a recent survey, the tenth highest in the world. This, the situation next to some of the most deprived areas in western Europe, where most of the rental housing is supported by the local council and the overwhelming majority of school children cannot afford school meals.

Tariq Qureshi is a third year law undergraduate who grew up just outside London.

One of the great problems of society is making conversation. High-density living throws us into daily contact with people who we don't really know and yet feel that we ought to make light conversation with. The classic example is your parents' friends' children. Think about it. Almost all of us have memories of being herded into some foreign living room and being offered a Coke, and then being expected to talk politely about such irrelevances as "your studies".

"So, er, when are your A-levels?"
"Four years"
Luckily, we have invented lots of little things to help us in this. Football and Current Affairs exist for this very reason. And, more relevantly, New Years Resolutions, which are there - as far as I can see - simply so that January can be made more conversationally buoyant.

It's time to change things for the better, and so I've decided on three quick-n-easy New Years Resolutions. Not just to fill my column up, you understand.

Resolution 1: Stephen Hill, our temporary-Director, resolves to theorise a 'fourth way'.

The best thing about being in the University where your Director invented modern social thinking is that it makes you look good. This is a good thing for us LSE students, marginal as we are when rubbing shoulders with such undeserving dwarfs as Cambridge students.

"Cambridge is great, ra ra ra"
"Shut up." [Head Butt]

With this in mind, I request Stephen Hill to preserve our social superiority complex and make a New Years Resolution to redefine the social sciences. As to what 'the fourth way' should be, it should involve a break from quasi-corporate self-conceptualisation and also involve bouncy castles.

Resolution 2: Tony Giddens resolves to clean up LSE

Last year, our venerable leader revealed his grand plan for improving the world: "ground floor cafes on Houghton Street."

They call this man a genius. He probably is a bright spark, but only in post-modern sociology. I propose that he resolve to take a course in Urban Planning and turn Houghton Street into a city-centre utopia. My personal suggestion is a gate on the Houghton Street/Aldwych junction, like the one they have in Chinatown, in the shape of Sydney Webb's beard.

Resolution 3: The sofa industry resolves to make sofas for all

No matter what your point of view, I think we can all agree that sofas are wicked. So very much better than chairs. You must all share my angst, therefore, at the way so many sofas are placed in the waiting rooms of corporate HQs. The greatest torture in the world is walking past one of these at night, when they leave the lights on and display these wonderful sitting-devices in all their empty glory.

The sofa shortage is capitalism's worst failure.

I propose, therefore, that the sofa lobby change their tack and make sofas for the common man and place them everywhere. Even in toilets.

So there you have it, LSE. If we pull together, we can make it happen.

Let's all discuss it at the fee-fighters campaign on Tuesday.

Happy 2001,
Mukul Devichand, b:link editor

(ambitious i know)

for jerry,



cornish hills
by willard metcalf (1911)

words by james corbett

There is a town lying on the western edge of New Hampshire called Cornish. It's a small unremarkable place with a population of less than 2,000 residing in rural semi-seclusion. Nothing about Cornish would set it apart from anywhere else in small town America: it's an almost entirely white, middle class family conurbation, just down Auto route 5 from its more famous neighbour, Woodstock, scene of the legendary music festival. Cornish harbours a badly kept, but initially unremarkable, secret: an old man living at the top of a hill with his young wife. He is Cornish's most celebrated citizen, a man described by one writer as 'the most private man in America. Perhaps the last private man in America.' The locals, ever anxious not to break the thin layer of trust their neighbour invests in them, are wary about talking to the flurry of curious fans and journalists who each year converge on the town seeking him out. He is a writer who hasn't published for 35 years, yet the small library brought out before his semi-retirement each year net more than a million sales. His reclusion and most famous book have earned him cult status. The writer is JD Salinger and this year that book, *The Catcher In The Rye*, is fifty years old.

If you really want to know about him, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where he was born, what his lousy childhood was like, and how his parents were occupied and all before they had him, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, Jerry Salinger would have a haemorrhage if I told anything pretty personal about him. He's quite touchy about anything like that. He's *nice* and all – I'm not saying that he's not – but he's also touchy as hell. Besides I'm not going to tell you his whole goddam biography or anything. Wait, wait, wait. You know I'm lying, don't you? This isn't some pseudo-Catcher rant about all things and all men where I vainly take up the role of Holden Caulfield and complain bitterly

about the stresses and strains of life, it's me, James Corbett, trying to get to grips with the mystery that is JD Salinger. That book, and Holden, its hero, who I've just tried to crudely ape, provided a turning point in twentieth century western culture. Holden Caulfield was the first teenager. He was putting the world to rights, rebelling against his teachers and parents and finding himself unable to keep up with the pace of modern life long before The Beatles had sung a word, before Elvis had wiggled his hips or even before Jimmy Dean had ever pouted at a camera over the handlebars of his Harley.

The Catcher In The Rye is a short but monumental book in its depth and intensity. It recounts a few days in the life of fifteen year old Holden Caulfield as he runs away from his school, sets himself loose on New York City and slips ever closer to the chasm of a breakdown. He rants against the 'phonies' who exist at every point in his world and yearns for the simplicity and solitude of a rural life where he can be free from the pressure of his teenage existence, where he can be, quite literally, A Catcher In The Rye. Most people I know have read *The Catcher In The Rye*, many more than once. It is one of the best-selling books of all time, still sitting proudly in the top 300 of the Amazon.com sales ranks. What's more it is on most High School English syllabuses, rightly acclaimed as being a modern literary classic by the very teachers the book trashes as 'phonies'.

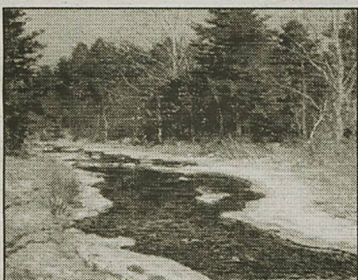
Around Salinger's book and, moreover, around Holden Caulfield a cult of personality has grown. On the one hand he provides a point of empathy for teenagers stuck in the solitary confines of their bedrooms and the boring rigidity of their school-centred lives. In an existence where nobody understands you, Holden is a guy who's been through it all, knows what it's all about, hell, he might as well be you. More ominously though, *The Catcher In The Rye* has become a bible for the disaffected, the lonely and the downright crazy. John Lennon's killer Mark David Chapman, a disturbed loner,

believed he was Holden Caulfield and killed the former Beatle because he had become 'corrupted by commercialism.' In other words Lennon had become 'a phoney.' Chapman later wrote to the New York Times: 'My wish is for all of you to someday read *The Catcher In The Rye*... All of my efforts will now be devoted toward this goal, for this extraordinary book holds many answers.' Less than four months after Lennon's death, another deranged Holden Caulfield devotee, John Hinckley Jr., tried to assassinate Ronald Reagan. Hinckley and Chapman were not isolated incidents; there is a whole catalogue where Salinger's book has acted as a subliminal inspiration for violence for a disturbed or deranged minority.

Around the reclusive Salinger himself a cult of personality has also developed. He has become almost as famous for living out the teenage ideal extolled by his most famous creation, to: 'build me a little cabin somewhere with the dough I made and live there for the rest of my life. I'd build it right near the woods, but not right in them, because I'd want it to be sunny all the time.' With the publication of *The Catcher*... he almost completely vanished into the seclusion of his Cornish hideaway writing intermittently for the *New Yorker* until 1965 and periodically publishing anthologies of these works along with some other short stories. These largely centred around the Glass family, another Salinger creation but without the distinctiveness and clarity of anything he wrote in *The Catcher*... The Glass stories merit some importance as a social commentary of a WASP family a couple of generations ago, but based on their literary merits they are unimportant, mediocre and rambling. Salinger's nadir was his last published piece of writing *Hapworth 16, 1924*, a 20,000 word fictional letter written by the youngest of the Glass siblings, the seven-year-old Seymour, which filled an entire issue of the *New*

continued>

the first thaw
by willard metcalf (1913)



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Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Starring: Chow Yun-Fat, Michelle Yeoh, Zhang Ziyi
 Directed by: Ang Lee
 Release date: Out Now

Review by: Tom Whitaker

And so it has been decided that any film which features scenes of gravity-defying kung-fu must be compared to *The Matrix*. With the actors suspended on wires, seemingly impossible feats of acrobatic head-kicking have been making their way onto screens in the Far East for years now. The interesting thing about *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, then, is not that it features these *Matrix*-like martial-arts sequences, but that it is directed by Ang Lee, who previously brought us films like *Sense and Sensibility* and *The Ice Storm*. With *Crouching Tiger...*, he has managed to serve up a film as emotionally rich as either of those, whilst also providing a level of gob-smacking chopsocky not yet seen in the multiplexes of the West.

Set in 19th Century China, Chow Yun-Fat (*Hard Boiled*, *The Corruptor*) stars as Li Mu Bai, a warrior devoted to justice, and guardian of the mythical Green Destiny, a sword with legendary powers. Burdened by the weight of this

responsibility, he entrusts the sword to Yu Shu Lien (Michelle Yeoh, *Tomorrow Never Dies*), and she is given the task of delivering the sword to its new owner, in Beijing. After a slow start, the sword is stolen. Li and Yu, who have never declared their love for each other, team up to investigate the theft, and the trail leads to a young girl named Jen (Zhang Ziyi). Trapped by tradition and headed for an arranged marriage, Jen envies the freedom of travelling warriors like Li and Yu, and sets out to prove her worth as one of them. In doing so, she causes Li and Yu to confront not only her, but

"Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon provides a level of gob-smacking chopsocky not yet seen in the multiplexes of the West."

also their feelings for each other, which are undeniable yet prohibited by their traditions.

Riding in on a wave of hype and outstanding advance word from critics and audiences in the East and the US, this is a refreshingly different experience to both the action films and love stories we're used

to in the West. At its best moments, it's a thrillingly transcendent fantasy flick, crossed with a compelling tale of forbidden romance. The fight sequences ditch the thrill-a-minute violence of so many blockbusters, managing to be both essential to the plot and also succeeding as jaw-dropping displays of skill and grace. This filters throughout the film as a whole, which boasts stunning visuals backed up by an achingly beautiful, perfectly

judged soundtrack. The performances, from Chow Yun-Fat (proving here that he's equally deft with his bare feet or a sword as he is with a pair of semi-automatic pistols) right through to Zhang Ziyi as the beautiful, troublesome Jen, are good enough to make you forget that you're actually reading subtitles. Despite all this, the film falls down on its overlong middle-section, which drags us off into seemingly unimportant territory, as we leave Li and Yu behind to follow the story of Jen, told in one drawn-out flashback. Whilst essential to the story later, it seems desperately unnecessary and out of place at the time, damaging the

audience's fantastical awe and suspended disbelief. These are thoroughly important elements in a film that features characters who can not only perform a *Matrix*-style flying kick, but also run up walls, over rooftops and even fight in treetops.

I must admit that as a Westerner unversed in the genre and the legendary setting of the film, I feel that I can't quite do it justice. Some of the more bizarre moments passed leaving me slightly bewildered, and I'm sure I laughed in a few of the wrong places. Still, if you're prepared to accept the premise that these people can fly like Superman whilst fighting like Bruce Lee, then you'll enjoy a lot of what's to offer here. It's a shame, however, that the film would have undoubtedly benefited from either some judicious editing or more focussed plotting. As such, *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* is a sumptuous epic, but one that sadly didn't quite live up to my high expectations. In spite of this, it still has to rank as the first unmissable film of 2001. Films like this don't come around too often, and its successful combination of themes of emancipation and striking sequences of superhuman scrapping leaves the 'feminist' trash that was *Charlie's Angels* standing.



Chow Yun-Fat, without two guns for a change

movie of the moment

Zhang Ziyi: Now you see her point.



Quills



Starring: Geoffrey Rush, Kate Winslet, Joaquin Phoenix
 Directed by: Philip Kaufman
 Release date: Out Now

Review by: Doug Hancock

Hotly tipped for Oscars, *Quills* is a movie about the life and times of the Marquis de Sade from the director of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, Philip Kaufman. Set in a grand converted country house-cum-mental hospital in Napoleonic France, *Quills* tells the story of the last months of the sordid scribe's life. Geoffrey Rush plays the Marquis de Sade, and Kate Winslet takes the role of Madeline, a laundry woman at the mental hospital, secretly smuggling his last writings out to an eager public audience. Joaquin Phoenix also appears as the priest who runs the asylum.

Disappointingly, we don't really learn about the Marquis De Sade. It seems that Kaufman could not decide what he wanted the Marquis to be. At certain points it seems like he was hated just for being a wicked gossip, while at other times he came off as a dirty old man. In reality, the Marquis De Sade was a complex figure; his ideas were perverse to the extreme and yet his statement of those ideas was utterly brilliant. The film makes little of those qualities. Why couldn't this film simply have told the life of the Marquis De Sade as it was, rather than changing the true story into a fictional (not to mention less interesting)? At times I almost felt like I was watching *Disney Does De Sade*; light and fluffy when it ought to have been provocative and erotic.

Still, the writing was top notch, with first time screenwriter Doug Wright proving that he has a solid pen and a witty touch. The performances from the actors were all very good, and if anything is going to win an Oscar in this film it will be Geoffrey Rush's turn as the original sadist himself. Michael Caine, as a doctor sent in by the central government to stem the flow of the Marquis' illicit yet popular writings, has a couple of scenes that are absolute gems. *Quills* manages to raise pertinent questions about modern controversies, yet also succeeds as a compelling costume drama.

Not just content with cramming five reviews into our two measly pages, we're so eager to please that we've got a shedload of free stuff to give away this month. So, without further ado...

Vertical Limit: To win a fantastic *Vertical Limit* rucksack stuffed with a long-sleeved T-shirt, fleece and a pair of binoculars(!), tell us:

For which 1992 film did Chris O'Donnell receive a Golden Globe nomination?

Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon: We've got two copies of the translated screenplay and the awesome soundtrack CD to donate to lucky film buff who can answer this:

Who choreographed the stunning fight sequences in Crouching Tiger and The Matrix?

Requiem For A Dream: Out now, this is Darren Aronofsky's highly controversial follow-up to the critically acclaimed *Pi*, starring Jared Leto, Jennifer Connelly and Marlon Wayans. We'll be reviewing it next week, but for now we have two copies of the book on which the film is based for our runners-up, and the winner will take home a director-autographed copy of the screenplay! Just tell us the name of the book's author.

All answers need to be emailed in to us on beaverfilm@yahoo.com, and we'll announce the winners of this week's competition, and those left over from last term, in next week's issue. Good luck!



Vertical Limit ★★

Starring: Chris O' Donnell, Robin Tunney, Scott Glenn
 Directed by: Martin Campbell
 Release date: January 19

Review by: Tom Whitaker

expecting a worthwhile two hours of thrills. Maybe I should have looked further down the cast list to see New Zealand actor Temuera Morrison. Star of the powerful domestic violence drama *Once Were Warriors* in his home country, his move to the US has been less than successful, taking roles in such turgid action pap as *Barb Wire*, *From Dusk Till Dawn 3* and, lord help us, *Speed 2*. In terms of Chris and Temuera's blockbuster careers, this may be a step up. Everyone else, from Bill Paxton through Scott "Silence Of The Lambs" Glenn to Izabella Scorupco should hide for now and hope that this disappears sharpish.

Chris plays Peter Garrett, son of a renowned climber, and when his sister is trapped atop K2 in the aftermath of an avalanche, he must set off with a motley crew of idiots to save them. Ignore the fact that the six split up into three groups for no good reason; it just means that we can three times as many action scenes, as avalanches tumble, cliff edges crumble and vital

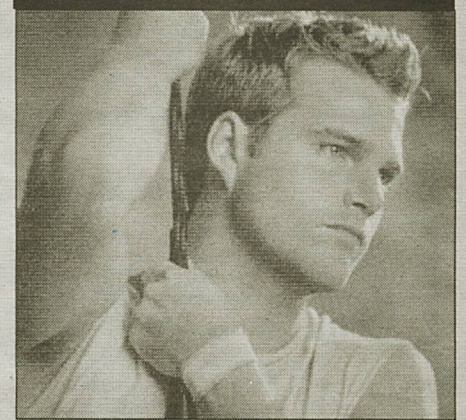
safety ropes fray. You're probably best not to question their motives for taking nitro-glycerine up to the summit, not really to blast their way down to the survivors, but actually so that it can prove laughably unstable and explode at inopportune moments. Things like that aren't a problem; this is an action film after all, and if it provides the thrills, who cares if the plot makes sense?

The real problem is that the film takes a good hour's worth of dull exposition to get to the action, during which all of the team members' have their issues spelled out for us. Chris O'Donnell hasn't climbed since he killed his dad, and Scott Glenn only climbs alone since his wife died on the slopes, her body never found. But once we do get to the thrills and spills of the final hour, impressive as they are, the film still gets bogged down in trite, uninteresting (and often hysterically funny) heart-to-heart resolutions, as Chris learns to forgive himself, and Scott Glenn is reconciled with his

frozen, porcelain-doll wife-corpse. I shit you not.

If it's big stunts and bad dialogue you're looking for, *Vertical Limit* might be worth a look for the final hour. But your time would be far better spent watching the trailer to see all of the best bits, and renting *Cliffhanger*, which most of them are stolen from.

Snow-bored: Chris O'Donnell



Hollywood pretty-boy Chris O'Donnell has been a bit quiet of late, since starring in easily the worst film of the past decade, *Batman And Robin*. So, when it was announced that he would take the lead in this multi-million dollar alpine action thriller, I was surprised to say the least. One mighty-fine, stunt-packed trailer later and I was actually

Unbreakable ★★

Starring: Bruce Willis, Samuel L. Jackson, Robin Wright Penn
 Directed by: M. Night Shyamalan
 Released: Out Now

Review by: Antny Rankin

Director M. Night Shyamalan has a few tricks up his sleeve, and believe it or not he didn't use them all in *The Sixth Sense*. Still, it seems clear that Shyamalan has grown rather attached to his winning formula, and Bruce Willis. So it isn't really a criticism to say that he is working from the same easel of emotions that worked so well for him before. Dark, crisp pictures of urban squalor with tenement greys and moody hues fill the setting. The colours never seem healthy; the greens are faded and rotting, the shadows are dark and ominous cutting through settings and people like knives, and the actors are sad even when smiling. What this depression does, though, is makes the impossible seem plausible because the audience gets the feeling that only with the world in such a state of disarray could the supernatural really exist.

Bruce Willis is a mid-thirties man, with a failing marriage, one kid, and a house with no lights (or maybe just one light, but basically it always hits the family from a side angle). He is a security guard, good at his job, but not happy with anything about his world. Oh, and did I mention he has just happened to be the sole survivor a catastrophic train crash, and he doesn't have a single scratch on him? Willis, you see, is as unbreakable as a gangster's goolies.

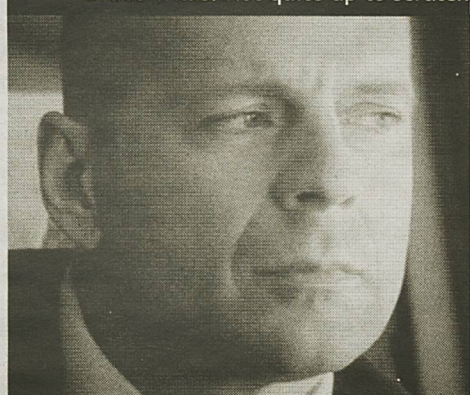
Don't get excited yet, though. Unfortunately, Shyamalan pulls his hamstring on the opening stretch and is forced to limp through the rest. He tries,

god does he try, but the pervasive atmosphere remains the focus of the film not just style over content, but style as content. *Unbreakable* wants to have a purpose (see the movie's attempt at bringing comic book lore into the mix) but the explanation it drives towards is almost offensive in its simplicity. The ending feels like Shyamalan came to a place where he felt he should end the movie and since he was already over his time limit he only had two options: end quickly and painfully or continue without a climax. I won't tell you which route he chooses.

The intriguing trailer made me lick my lips with excitement, but *Unbreakable* wastes Samuel L. Jackson's talent and leaves Robin Wright Penn (*Forrest Gump*, *The Princess Bride*) floundering in a token-wife role. *Unbreakable*, then, is an ultimately unsatisfying experience, which loses the audience's interest way before reaching the end of the line.

"an ultimately unsatisfying experience."

Bruce Willis: Not quite up to scratch



Beautiful Creatures

Starring: Rachel Weisz, Susan Lynch
 Directed by: Bill Eagles
 Released: January 19

★★★

Review by: Piers Cumming

"Do you have an easily accessible back entrance that I can make use of?" says the fat balding copper to peroxide sexpot Petula (Rachel Weisz). Yes, it is a double entendre, yes it is the funniest line in the film and no, I will not give you the context because then I'd be spoiling the story for you. To give you the gist of it, Dorothy (Susan Lynch) stumbles upon a man in the process of beating up his girlfriend, tries to break them up and accidentally kills him. This results in an hour and a half of girlie bonding stuff, *Thelma and Louise* style, pretending the dead boyfriend is still alive so that they can extort a ransom from his father. Pretty perverse, I know, but it does seem sort of justified when you're watching. Not that this opposites-attract relationship is particularly convincing: Wrong side of the tracks Dorothy has a wardrobe bigger than her council flat, and as for Right Side (Petula)... what can I say? I wasn't really listening to her if you know what I mean.

There are high points that pick the film up, but too few and generally the film does not have



the strength to really carry itself properly. With this kind of comedy-thriller you expect nice twists but it was all fairly predictable, rapidly heading towards the obligatory all characters in a room with guns ending. First time director Bill Eagles tries various tactics to keep the audience interested, like using jazz music

"Using jazz music as backdrop to comedy domestic violence is pretty fishy scheme in my book"

as backdrop to domestic violence for comedy effect. A pretty fishy scheme in my book, although with that in mind, those with a taste for the brand of humour you know you shouldn't be laughing at may get there kicks here. But if you've seen *Thelma and Louise*, *Lock Stock...* and even *Bound*, there's sadly little new for you here.

The Young Ones

Vic Rattlehead sees the Swiss noiseniks celebrate their 15th anniversary

The Young Gods
@ Queen Elizabeth Hall
04:12:2K

Like witches in a coven celebrating a black mass, here we, faithful replicants, robot-goths, teutonic man-machines (or whatever post-Blade Runner term you can come up with!!!) are, assembled for the 15th anniversary of The Young Gods. Slightly bemused at the choice of venue (seated!), considering that The Gods have been inspiring many a moshing Mongoloid metalhead and electro-wizard throughout their illustrious career.

The show is split into two parts. With no support band on the bill, the first part turns out to be in fact a live presentation of the "other side" of the Young Gods' work. It features the Gods' sampling whiz Alain Monod's new customised "sitar" project: a breathtakingly mesmerising work that would make even sitar god Ravi Shankar green with envy!!! Then follows a musical collaboration in the form of a modern nude ballet with dancer Nuria de Ulibarri and choreographed by Gilles Jobin, combined with live excerpts of Heaven Deconstruction—the Young Gods' last side-project venture—and frontman Franz Treichler's solo Braindance project. A visual and aural delight (including the gorgeous nude ballet girl!!!).

One could smell though the burning anticipation in the crowd for the band to appear onstage. They soon do, however, to the roar of this—unusually—seated

bunch. *Attends* is an odd, though intense, choice of an opener from new album *Second Nature*. *Lucidogen* however gets the crowd going with its ultra-fast beats and sampled riffs.

The stage gear is, as you'd expect, quite minimalist. You hear a voice, a drummer, and everything else you hear is sampled! Franz seems in great shape and as usual confuses the audience with his mock-madman antics during song intros, while new drummer Bernard Trontin is a

cross between renowned pianist Evgeny Kissin and the big-haired character from David Lynch's *Eraserhead*! Hmm...is there a tradition of having Afro-style drummers in the band? (Remember

Uzi???)

From *Supersonic* and *The Sound In Your Eyes* to *Stick Around*, the band go through most of the songs from the new

Ambient-influenced *Laissez Couler Le Son* instantly win over the crowd, by then already tripping to this clinically narcotic sound.

After 15 years it would be injurious, even defamatory, for The Young Gods to leave without a Kurt Weill cover. *Seerauber Jenny* is the set closer, to the bewildered look of some, who had never heard of the German crooner before, or worse, never heard Franz Treichler sing in German!!!

"We don't come here very often," says Franz as they do their curtain call to a standing ovation. Well, following this display of disproportionate amount of power in such a volatile panorama of sound, oh how I wish you could, Franz... how I wish...

Vic Rattlehead



album, interspersed with old classics such as *Skinflowers*, *L'Amourir* and first single *Envoye*, which is greeted with a huge roar from the fans. The intensely hallucinogenic *In The Otherland* and

sound, oh how I wish you could, Franz... how I wish...



Frontman Franz Treichler

The Young Gods *Second Nature*

Alongside Einsturzende Neubaten, Ministry and Skinny Puppy, The Young Gods have helped shape the sound and overall concept of industrial over the last 15 years. They have created a revolution in rock music, their incorporation of sampling technology into the rock format has opened up whole new possibilities for the tired old beast. Where most other bands use samplers to add a few extra thrills to the standard cliches, the Gods have made it the very basis of their music.

Whereas *Heaven Only* - the band's last outing five years ago, was very much a follow-up to the feral blast of *TV Sky*, this new offering from Franz Treichler & Co is a return to the experimentalism of their first LP, but from a different perspective. *Second Nature* slightly oversteps the band's traditional rock musical boundaries, drawing influences from the ambient scene and industrial dance beats.

Less sample-guitar-driven, more electronic and multi-layered with an emotive edge to it, this album will literally send you tripping, from opening track *Lucidogen*, with its intense sonic assault, through the moody, brooding *Laissez Couler Le Son* to the Depeche Mode-esque instrumental *Love 2.7*. Couple these with Franz Treichler's otherworldly, effects-laden vocals in *Attends* and *In The Otherland* and you're suddenly impregnated with a sense of the ethereal which sends you flowing on your "Bateau Ivre"...

No other band has utilised the sampler with quite the same precision as The Young Gods, taking only the essence from their sources, casting off their historical baggage and recreating them anew. They liberate the properties of their sound, the ways in which they affect the mind, the heart and the body. What comes out is a matter of revelation. Now, this is what I call avant-garde...

★★★★☆

Vic Rattlehead

Crock Piss Partridge

Peter Davies sees the Crocketts storm his home town

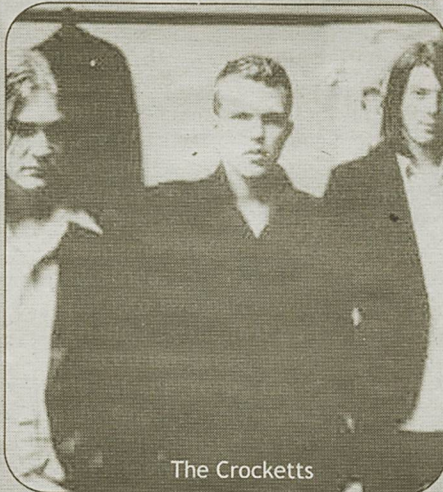
The Crocketts
@ Pontardawe Arts Centre
17:12: 2K



Davey in action

Deep in the Swansea Valley, rising Britrock hopefuls the Crocketts are tonight in the home town of drummer Owen Cash in support of their recent *Great Brain Robbery* album. Formed in Aberystwyth, the Crocketts schizophrenic sound is reminiscent of both the Pogues and the Clash, and having done regular support slots for both the Levellers and the Stereophonics, the quartet have been causing a big stir in rock venues up and down the country.

Following an abysmal support slot from Welsh ragga-metallers Skindred, the Crocketts take the stage, and all night they dish out highlights from their sophomore album and their promising debut *We May Be Skinny and Wirey*. The focus of the band and the star of the show, however, is raving lunatic and frontman Davey Crockett, a man whose vocal chords sound as if they've been put through a mincer. Vocally, he incredibly manages to effortlessly switch from a melodic croon on *1939 Returning* to Cobain style screams on *Strong Guy*. All night he headbutts



The Crocketts

the microphone and mumbles about such choice subjects as Gary Glitter in between songs, generally giving the impression that he might be an epileptic continually experiencing violent seizures.

The Crocketts have the small crowd in a frenzy tonight, the blistering opener *Lucifer* (with its superb singalong chorus of 'just because you've blown me, you think you fucking own me!'), the anthemic single *1939 Returning* and the emotive *Would You Still Care* all highlighting the vast potential of the band. They finish on the mentally deranged *Strong Guy* and duly appear for an encore, ripping through an insane punk rendition of Dirty Dancing theme tune *Time of My Life*.

Despite the poor turn out and the fairly short set, tonight's display shows that the Crocketts may finally be on the verge of attaining the commercial success that they thoroughly deserve. Their eagerly anticipated forthcoming album should firmly establish them at the forefront of the Britrock pack.

Peter Davies



The Great Brain Robbery

Ash
Shining Light

New single by the gradually becoming less famous despite getting better and better four piece. As usual a catchy classic. As usual a piece of rock/ indie genius. Shame about the cliched title and the stupid fact that they released it as a computer download around christmas, thus undoubtedly reducing record sales and thus recognition of what is a sublime work of genius.

★★★★☆

Andrew Swann

My Vitriol
Always

Up-and-coming London rockers My Vitriol continue to show their promise with this sparkling gem from their forthcoming debut *Fine Lines*. This rip-roaring effort combines punky guitar work with Foo Fighters style melodicism that will please Radio 1 listeners as much as your hardened mosher. Nice!

★★★★☆

Peter Davies

Birdy
Such A Sound

With News Years Eve still rattling round the reviewer's head this piece of 60/90s bubblegum offers some welcome relief. Not least in it's, 'Hey man, all you need is love and Major 7 chords to get high in life' vibe. Imagine Stereolab arguing with St Etienne over the last box of Sushi in a Hoxton supermarket. Nice.

★★★★☆

Dan Cumming

The Doctor Factor

- ★★★★★ Dr Who
- ★★★★☆ Dr Doolittle
- ★★★☆☆ Dr Dre
- ★★☆☆☆ Dr No
- ★☆☆☆☆ Dr Shipman



Faster Grace
Custom

Its rock but without the scary bits, it's the Foo Fighters without the lyrical depth. Custom's name is an indication that this single is not going to venture away from well-trodden ground but for three minutes of power chords (yes like all good songs there are three) and police siren backed guitar solos your £3.99 could be spent in worse ways.

★★★☆☆

Charlie Jurd

The Tindersticks

The Tindersticks are the archetypal 'career band'. They find a sound which it seems enough people kinda dig and just trudge with it. For years. Wars begin and end. Tectonic plates shift. Galaxies implode into cosmic dust. The Tindersticks release another single featuring lots of strings and a bloke mumbling about love.

★★★☆☆

Dan Cumming

Feeder
Buck Rogers

As usual, harmless uneventful fairly tuneey rock from the fake-Welsh three piece. Dodgy unoriginal lyrics and no real REAL depth should confine this to the bin. But hang on, this is good - somehow they've done it again, putting together a complete load of bollocks and coming out with something that's really not bad!

★★★☆☆

Andrew Swann

Elbow
Any Day Now EP

After having balanced romance with realism in their previous *Noisebox* and *Newborn* EPs which revealed them to the general public, Bury 5-piece Elbow seems to delight in gloom. The *Any Day Now EP* is pleasant melancholy, their atmospheric rock - close to the last efforts of Mogwai and Chokebore - slipping insidiously into your mind and haunting your daily thoughts. You are warned now.

★★★★☆

Guillaume Pfeiffié

Glow Your Own Way

London Astoria, Decenber 5th, Reef are flying high with a new single *Superhero* soon to be released; trust us to gatecrash the party! Riyan Itani speaks to drummer Dom. Did he *ride* with it or just want to *getaway*?

Q. So, how's the tour going? Is it a welcome change of scene or just a hassle?

A. It's not a hassle at all, it's a pleasure!

Q. What's this tour in aid of, album promotion or just for-the sake of it, as the album's been out for a while now?

A. It's the album tour, we were meant to be touring a month ago but got postponed because Gary {Stringer, lead singer} hurt his leg; its a relief to play live , it's been a while.

Q. Is there one place you most enjoy playing when touring?

A. Bristol is always good, near our home towns...and we have good ones in Scotland, but they can change. Sometimes you expect it to be good, because it was last time, but it doesn't work like that.

Q. They make a big thing of you being from the South West, do you ever feel being from that area could hold a band back, as opposed to say Liverpool or Manchester?

A. I don't know...well, there have been a lot of good

bands from Bristol, they take the piss a bit, but no i don't think it's affected us badly!

Q. So, sum up the feeling of the album (*Getaway*).

A. Good solid songs, that play live easily, 'cause that's what we love doing. The last album was more heartfelt and a lot more difficult to translate to live.

Q. So, what about the new video? You must have had a laugh making it...

A. Yeah, all those crash mats and wires, it was cool. We like to have a good jump around and get stuck in. We love playing music and you've got to have a good jump around!

Q. Do you get much time to go to gigs yourself?

A. Wellyeah, since we did the album and waiting for Gary's leg to heal, we've had free time to go home and do what we want.

Q. So what do you get up to in your free time?

A. Well, I've always enjoyed photography, just taking photos wherever we go. I had an exhibition last year and would like to do that again. Oh yeah, and golf!

Q. Where are you taking the tour next, abroad?

A. Yeah, Australia next, a bit of a holiday, then Japan.

Q. How do they recieve you in Japan, they seem huge fans of British guitar music?

A. Yeah, they're wicked people, brilliant. They're honest and understand what to appreciate. You can tell they've heard the music and thought about their interview questions. {is this a hint?!}

Q. Have you felt the pressures of moving your music to the States?

A. Well, it would be nice to be big in America, conquer the world and play Madison Square Gardens, but it's no pressure.

Q. Does being on Sony help out a lot?

A. Yeah they can be great, but can be a pain in the arse sometimes, but that's true of any label.

Q. If you had to be remembered for one song what would it be?

A. I'm a bit of a sucker for the slowies, I love *Replenish* from the first album.

Q. And if you had to work with another artist or group, who would it be?

A. I'd love to work with loads of people, there isn't one that stands out. Majorly, I did some drumming for Peter Gabriel recently and that was fantastic, really special.

And with that he was gone, leaving your interviewer to reflect on 'The Japanese method' and joining Reef to play to a riotous crowd. If the rest of the tour is this good, then Madison Square Gardens isn't far away for everyone's favourite minidisc advert band...

Edited by Andrew Swann



The Popwire.com Showcase
@ the Monarch
30:11: 2K

Fantastic all-round prospect this. Being locked in one of the best venues for new music, surrounded by other like-minded people and witnessing sets by no less than three 'new' bands. Oh yeah, and being the launch party for a new internet music channel, it was of course filled with an ice bar serving free vodka in ice glasses downstairs, whilst tokens were provided allowing one a few free pints whilst watching the showcase itself.

Being a Scandinavian channel, it was unsurprising that two of the three bands heralded from the aforementioned territory. First up, Garbo from Denmark. A three piece in the vein of the Stereophonics to some extent, although looking and sounding better. A few catchy tunes and nothing really offensive means they will carry on grinding down the middle of mediocrity road with perhaps the odd hit.

Next we were faced with Chalk. Hmm. Not really my cup of tea, although i'm sure someone likes them. All dressed up in suits, they at least made the effort, but when your dodgily moustashed guitarist seems intent on looking like he is stuck in perpetual vinegar stroke purgatory, there's not much hope for you. So, on to Grass Show.

Currently deal-less, but having released a string of what should have been hits in 1997, this Swedish outfit dropped their poppy classics such as *1962* and *Out of the Void*, instead reinventing themselves for an almost Coldplay-like assault on our shores. Having said that, there's a bigger sound here than Coldplay, something more subtle and definitely sublime. The track *Vertigo* sums it all up, a piece of beauty that really deserves at least seven weeks in the top ten. Oh well, I can dream on, maybe I'm cynical or perhaps the charts really are only for wankers.

With the finale, I headed off into the night, safe in the knowledge that popwire were helping the few to make a difference for the few. With calls for a popwire label, you never know... you just never know.

Andrew Swann

Common

@ Shepherd's Bush Empire
13 : 12 : 2K

A nice lad, sticks his mum on the cover and lets his dad do his thing on each LP plus he dates Erykah Badu; he's far from average. His relatively slept-on *Like Water for Chocolate* inspired apparently from the...er weird Mexican movie of same name, was one of the more memorable moments in another boring musical year. However after 2 no-shows this year and the infamous Mud Family schizm at the Jazz Café, the crowd might be forgiven for some vexed-like-FannyPrice-ness.

Things start a little ominous with (kill) the soundboy sporting a Hootie and the Blowfish T. Consequently the UK's own 57th Dynasty are running a few Fisher-Price "my first mics" short, which is a shame as their *Spoken World* album deserves a bigger audience, nicely blending chatting with emceeing. Despite obvious Lucozade abuse their performance is washed out by a crappy PA...baffle.

With-a-wait-a-while-dodgy-deejay break and...his A Black Girl Named Betty (?) band take the stage. Throughout the night these boys are seriously tight, soloing with real funkiness (as in not Tapness). Betty begins by laying down the groove to *Time Travelin* and from the moment Common steps to the stage he has the crowd lapping it up-nice.

Common has the night themed, around eras of music, performing *A Song for Ass Ata* combat'd up like Huey Newton and later rocking the Addidas fresh for headspins, windmills, pops and stuff, *Word!* Knitted out like George Clinton he has us doing the "Who-oh-oh" chorus thing. As remembered the best bit was his *I used to love her* which had the crowd nodding like Rentaghost's Dobbin to his metaphorical girlfriend-as-hip-hop story thing.

Closing the night/tour with a raise-the-roof encore and its all over with the crowd spilling out onto the beautiful Bush Green looking all happy and blessed. He might get out-grammied by Eminem but sure, one day it'll make sense.

Ross Sheil

It's a Scream

Vidadelica sees the year out in style

Resolution
@ Alexandra Palace
31: 12: 2K

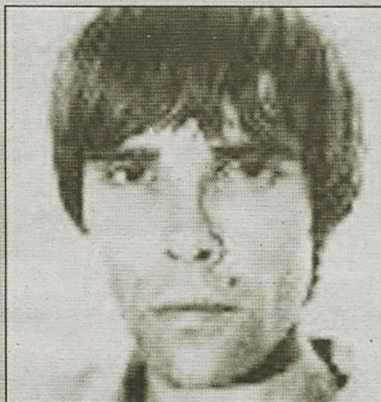
With a line up including not only Primal Scream and Ian Brown, but Asian Dub Foundation, Liam Howlett (ex-Prodigy), James Lavelle (UNKLE), Luke Slater and The Psychonauts, it was bound to be a good night. The ticket price- £49 not including the booking fee-was a bit steep, but considering it kicked off at 8pm, and didn't finish till 6am, it was well worth it.

The venue had two warehouse style spaces and one, more intimate (read 'small') room. The largest area housed the main acts - Ian Brown was better than normal, more Empress Ballroom 2000, than Reading Festival circa 1996. The trademark harmonica and imaginary tambourine were all there, along with the *My Star* encore and the *Moonwalking*.

Liam Howlett - who also played the main room - was great to watch, not only because of his skill, but also because of the brilliant images projected onto two huge screens at the side of the stage. This was the set that straddled the years 2000 and 2001. Surprisingly, with a reported 12,000 capacity, there weren't that many

people who were interested in the big countdown, and although people did clap a bit at midnight, most were more interested in his *Dirtchamber Sessions* material.

Next up was Primal Scream, who were the best I've EVER seen them. Bobby Gillespie managed not to be too fucked to get the words out, and even managed to focus on the audience. But Gary Mounfield, what can I say? He is The Don. As well as being on top musical form he looked like he was enjoying himself - which led to a lot of banter with the audience and the band, making the atmosphere fantastic. The band played older stuff like *Rocks* and *Kowalski* as well as tracks from *XTRMNT* but best of all was the funk-up version of *Higher Than The Sun*. Gillespie excelled himself when he confused not only the rest of the band but the masses too, by stating that the next song they would play was new, and



Ian Brown

then launch into old material, but what can you do?! The whole set was phenomenal, and a good two hours long. One of the major things about the gig was that many of the acts were supporting the Satpal Ram case, with the slogan that "Black Self-Defence Is No Offence". Along with Primal Scream, Asian Dub Foundation

are calling for an end to his 13-year imprisonment for murder. The case is currently being considered by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. The A.D.F set kicked off with huge images of Ram projected on the screens whilst they played their single *Free Satpal Ram* and then launched into their typical hour and a half of bass and percussion fuelled set.

The Psychonauts, who followed A.D.F were, as always, exceptional. Although they're ultimately a couple of blokes playing with some decks and a mixing

desk, they have the ability to completely draw your attention when they're playing - not only because of their technique, but because the music is totally unique, and you can spot their sound a mile off.

What seemed to surprise a lot of people was the sound quality. Alexandra Palace, notorious for the reverb that hits you like a sledgehammer off the back wall, had none of the problems on NYE, or if it did, it wasn't obvious enough for people to notice

Another bonus was the 'Poptones' room- Alan McGee's (ex-Creation records) latest musical outing. With Poptones' own, as well as guest, DJs playing a somewhat eclectic mix of stuff (Oasis, Young MC, AC/DC, Aerosmith and Lee Perry) this room was always full to the brim with people who needed a break from the other areas. Dimly lit by fairy lights that were hung on the black felt curtains that draped the walls, along with various lasers and lighting equipment, the room had quite a strange feel. This was the definitive chill out area.

So all in all, a fantastic night. Best NYE I've ever had. There's rumours about a similar event next year, so get your tickets early kids!

Vidadelica

Drive-In Miss Daisy

At The Drive In
Camden Electric Balroom
7: 12: 2K

It's not surprising that most rock gig-goers are male. We're talking about an industry which is dominated by men, from the A& R idiots to the record company execs to the bands themselves. The problem is that most of these male gig-goers are also at least six foot four, built like brick shithouses, and seemingly intent on beating the crap out of each other. This is all under the cover of 'the mosh pit', that area in front of the stage where you could stand, if you really fancied being crushed to death, spat on, mauled about and whipped by the hair of the bloke headbanging in front of you.

Little wonder that I was slightly apprehensive before this gig. Not that I haven't been to plenty of rock gigs and endured plenty of moshpits before, you understand. I am a seasoned gig-goer, trust me. It's just that I'd seen them on Jools Holland a couple of days before hand, throwing chairs around and generally exerting lots of energy, and I wondered what I was letting myself in for.

Arriving at the Electric Ballroom the tension was electric, almost literally electric, and I thought I was in for a severe bruising. Plenty of huge blokes in attendance. The support bands lived up to all expectations too. Murder City Devils, despite having the geekiest looking singer of all time, rock like...well, things that rock very hard. And very fast. They have that kind of dirty American rock'n'roll quality which Rocket From The Crypt employed. Only this lot do it better.

Then on to At The Drive In, who of course are also American, but I'm not sure whether they'd thank you for pointing it out to them. You see, this is where I was wrong about them, because they are as far from that whole frat boy let's-beat-each-other-up-for-fun attitude as you can get. Sure, they have energy. So much of it, for four skinny guys from El Paso. But they use it in a positive way, rather than direct it into anger to take out on the audience and each other. So in fact, whilst I was expecting a beating, they had other ideas. So much so that when the moshpit showed any signs of becoming too rowdy, they would stop the whole gig and remind us to take care of each other. It sounds cliched when I write it down, but it was a godsend to people like me.

And their enthusiasm was infectious, with even the moshers getting into the caring spirit. I have never enjoyed a gig so much, simply because it was so obvious that At The Drive In are a band who really and truly live for their music. They feel it. They are so taut, so angular, so precise, and yet so totally lost in the songs, it's a wonder they don't implode with the sheer tension of it all. Tracks like *Rolodex Propaganda* and *One Armed Scissor* are just meant to be heard live - such is the intricacy of the stop-start rhythms and the force of the emotions behind them. There were so many moments, during this gig, when I wished I could have taken a snapshot in my head for future reference; 'this was a seminal moment of my gig-going life', 'I have never seen a band play with this much passion before'. Watching the afros shaking, the skinny legs twisting and jumping and jerking all over the stage, the faces twisted under the weight of concentration, my whole belief in music as a way of life was reaffirmed. And if that sounds over-dramatic, then so be it. At The Drive In are not a band for half-measures of any kind. It's all or nothing, your choice.

Victoria Peckett

Level Pegging!

The Levellers
@ Brixton Academy
7: 12: 2K

Along the last decade the Levellers built a solid reputation with their anti-establishment attitude and mainly thanks to their rootsy music, a quite original mix of Celtic and punk influences. Thus the faithful fans through all these years came in droves to celebrate the band from Brighton. The night was promising... till the start of the concert.

Concerning the visual aspect, the decoration of the stage conveyed certain "good" taste, a herd of fake pigs adorning the stage in reference to the title of their last insipid album *Hello Pigs*. A most hackneyed metaphor. Pretty ridiculous.

As for the performance itself, the Levellers remained true to themselves by playing their melodic punkfolk, rather heavy and lively thanks to a demonstrative bassist (with an amazing red rasta haircut) and a bouncy spinning violinist. Most of their classics were offered to the audience who responded by slamming joyfully. The fans definitely got their money's worth. However, for the novices (like myself) the show was dull, not to say boring: a profusion of repetitive melodies and facile lyrics. Even if the musicians were frenzied and seemed to have a really good time on stage (which is not always true of other bands), these facts didn't excuse the relative triteness of the gig. A forgettable concert.

Guillaume Pfeiffle

Peer Gynt at The Royal National Theatre

as seen by Shumi Obrasky

Without doubt the level of acting is impressive, but this production of Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* (a version by Frank McGuinness) is way too long. Running at over 3 hours, I would cut down the script by approximately an hour - if it would have been up to me, that is. To quickly summarise the plot: a Norwegian teenager, Peer Gynt, lives a life of carelessness and instantenous joy. He leaves his country to Africa, and continues roaming the world, never caring much for anybody but himself. By the time that he realises what character he is it is far too late for him to change. Ibsen's work comprises interesting Christian ideas clashing with existentialist-like themes.

I must admit that this production confused me a bit. Getting used to the fact that *Peer Gynt* is black while emphasizing a traditional Norwegian setting took me couple of minutes, but what I could not cope with was the plethora of Irish, Scottish and Northern English accents. It seems that McGuinness was not sure to what extent he wanted the play to be similar to the original 19th Century Norwegian version versus a more modern approach. At times the script was almost a pure translation of Norwegian;



at other instances the script was very modern Londonish. When *Peer Gynt* meets the trolls in the mountains, a Northern European notion of the agents of the devil, the production was as modern as possible. The trolls basically resembled an average Friday night at the Electric Ballroom in Camden or a Saturday night at the Slimelight at Angel.

Three different actors acted as *Peer Gynt* as he gets older through the play. The first was for my money the most impressive actor of the entire production: Chiwetel Ejiofor was absolutely fantastic. But then the mid-aged *Peer Gynt* (Patrick O'Kane)



was absolutely awful. Trying to mimic an American accent (which for itself was terrible), after the first five minutes of his role he completely forgot about the fake American accent, reverting instead to his original Northern English accent. The third *Peer Gynt* (Joseph Marcell) was quite good. Finally, a good word must be extended to Conor Linehan and Paul Groothuis for ensuring a phenomenal musical performance. *Peer Gynt* is playing at Olivier, National Theatre, until 9 December.



EDUCATION

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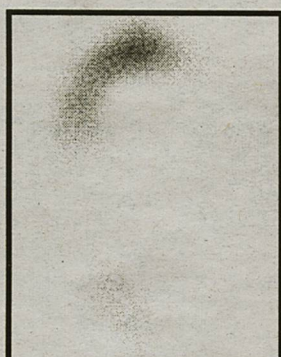
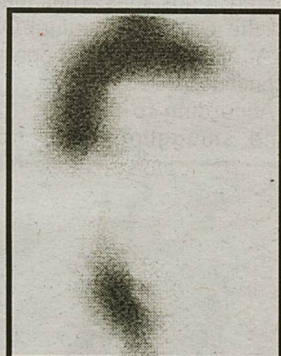
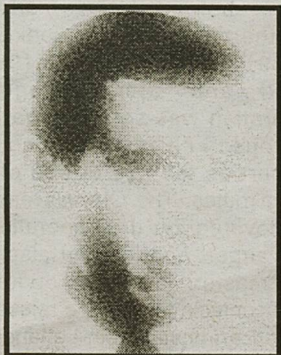
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Yorker in June 1965. It is a mumbling, bumbling piece without any hint of a plot or reality (could a seven year-old really write a 20,000 word letter?). At one point Seymour appeals, 'Please, please, PLEASE do not grow impatient and ice cold to this letter because of its gathering length.' And then later: 'If you are tired or frankly bored reading, stop instantaneously, with my heartfelt permission.' Then later still: 'It is saddening and exhausting to realise what a young bore I am.' Very true.

Salinger has never published since. *Hapworth 16, 1924* is almost an apology to the reader from Salinger via Seymour. It is as if he had come to realise while writing it he simply could not replicate the arrogant brilliance of *The Catcher...* Since then his life has seemingly become a mission to protect his privacy, something he has embarked upon with an increasingly obsessive zeal. He desecrated a 1988 biography of him by the English writer, Ian Hamilton, via a convoluted and hugely expensive legal process that spanned both sides of the Atlantic. Other attempts to seek him out have met nothing other than a wall of silence. Various biographies – the remnants of Hamilton's, one by Paul Alexander and another from his former lover Joyce Maynard – have put some flesh on the bare bones of what was previously known about Salinger. However the recent publication of a memoir by his daughter (*Dream Catcher, Margaret Salinger, Washington Square Press*), Margaret, tells us some more about him. This is admittedly a largely self-obsessive cliché ridden and boring rant about how fucked up her own life is (abortion, suicide attempt, breakdown, yawn, therapy...pass the pillow) and how her parents are the main culprits for all of this (in actuality, although she came from a broken home and had to grow up with a famous father the picture she paints of her upbringing is quite a happy, if slightly unconventional, one). But cut through this and the stupid allusions to her father's and just about every other vaguely highbrow writer's work and one

sees an elderly man, obsessive about his work (which he files away, apparently to be published posthumously) and about his other passion: meditation. True, 'he is a dreamer who can barely tie his own shoelaces in the real world,' but equally true that he is just an eccentric old guy who, fifty years ago published an extraordinary book and quite possibly never came to terms with the fact that he would never again reach such heights.

Will he publish again? Probably not while he's still alive. There was a brief flurry of interest three years ago when it was announced that *Hapworth 16, 1924* was going to be published as a book by a small Virginia publisher, Orchises Press. Then that was delayed first for six months, then eighteen. November 2000 was given by Amazon.com as a possible publication date, but when I contacted Salinger's published Roger Lathbury last year he was equally vague: "I do not, alack, have a specific or an approximate date for the release... The book has not been cancelled, but I don't know when it will come out. I suppose November is possible, but I somehow doubt it... when the book does come out, I am sure you will hear somehow... sorry to be so vague..." A further two months on there is still no sign of *Hapworth 16, 1924*.

That's all I'm going to tell you about. I could probably tell you about how Jerry's one time girlfriend left him for Charlie Chaplin, and how he had a breakdown after the war, and about the time he met Hemmingway, and about his affairs with women alternatively 30, 40, 50 years his junior. I could also tell you about his cats: Kitty 1, Kitty 2 and Kitty 3, or about when his second wife Claire went mad and tried to burn herself alive, but I don't feel like it. I really don't. That stuff doesn't interest me too much right now.

James Corbett is the former political editor of The Beaver. You can find a copy of Hapworth 16, 1924 in Westminster lending library in the June 19, 1965 issue of the New Yorker.

the case of the magic suitcase

words by maidah ahmad

Pan AM Flight 103? Oh yes, Christmas time 1988, those two Libyans did it. Right? - Or maybe not. Without the proprietors being brought to justice, it is necessary to discuss the politics behind the disaster of 270 people. The evidence against the Libyans, who worked for Libyan Arab Airlines at Air Malta airport, is thin to the point of transparency. There is no forensic evidence to support the charge that they placed the bomb in an Air Malta plane in Malta, tagging it so it would eventually be transferred to Flight 103 in London. No witnesses, no fingerprints. Nothing to tie them to that particular brown Samsonite suitcase. No past history of terrorism.

Limited evidence is presented by the prosecution of which includes a diary entry; clothing found in the suitcase, and the type of bomb. A question you have to ask yourself is, If they were actually planning a murderous operation, why mention it on paper and leave the diary in a public place? Another piece of evidence presented by the US/UK investigators is that the type of timing device used in the bomb was sold only to Libya. It was later revealed that, in fact, the investigators were told in 1990 by the Swiss manufacturer that it had also sold same timers to East German intelligence, which had close contact with the Popular Front for the Liberation of

Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) and numerous other "terrorist" groups. Similarly, clothing found within the infamous suitcase was said to be sold only on Malta and the shopkeeper of the exclusive store apparently identified the suspects as the purchasers. However, it is learned that at least one of the items was sold at dozens of outlets throughout Europe and the shopkeeper has never been shown any picture of the suspect. Another important question is how the suitcase containing the bomb was put onto the Air Malta flight destined for Frankfurt without an accompanying passenger, on the first leg of its fateful journey. Air Malta itself made an exhaustive study of this matter and has categorically denied that there was any accompanied baggage on KM180 or that any of the passengers transferred to the Frankfurt to London flight. A report sent by the FBI from Germany to Washington in October 1989 reveals profound doubts about this thesis. The report concludes: "there remains the possibility that no luggage was transferred from Air Malta 180 to Pan Am 1903". Three years after the indictment of the Libyans in 1995, the FBI still held the view that the baggage records of Air Malta were misleading and that there is a strong possibility that the suitcase came from another flight, or was simply a rogue bag inserted into

the system.

To accept the Malta scenario is to believe that the suitcase itself led the following charmed life: 1) loaded aboard the Air Malta flight to Frankfurt without an accompanying passenger; 2) transferred in Frankfurt without an accompanying passenger; 3) transferred in London to the Pan Am 103 flight to New York without an accompanying passenger. Hence, it was no ordinary suitcase, rather a magic suitcase! Under international airline rules, baggage unaccompanied by passengers should not be allowed onto aircraft without being searched or x-rayed. Actual practice is of course more lax, but how could serious professional terrorists count on this laxness occurring three times in a row for the same suitcase?

There is moreover an alternative scenario, laying blame on Iran and Syria, which makes a lot more sense, logistically, politically and technically. Indeed, this was the original official case put forward, until that is the Gulf War came along and the support of Iran and Syria was needed, and Washington was anxious to secure the release of American hostages held in Lebanon by groups close to Iran. Suddenly in October 1990, there was a new official version: It was Libya, the Arab state least supportive of the US build-up to the Gulf War and the sanctions imposed against Iraq, that was behind the bombing after all. In fact

20 days after the US State department declared the sole involvement of the Libyan government, the remaining hostages were released.

The original official version accused the PFLP-GC of making the bomb and placing it aboard the flight. The PFLP-GC is led by one of the world's leading terrorists, and was headquartered in, financed by, and closely supported by Syria. The bombing was done in revenge for the US shooting down of an Iranian passenger plane in 1988, which claimed 290 lives.

Support for this scenario was widespread, in fact The Times of London reported that "Security officials from Britain, the United States, and West Germany are totally satisfied that the PFLP-GC are behind the crime". Furthermore, a report leaked in 1989, stated that in mid-1980 a drug and arms smuggling operation was set up in various European cities, with Frankfurt airport as the site of one of the drug routes. The CIA in Germany discovered the drug operation at the airport and learned also that the mastermind of the operation had contacts to gain the release of American hostages in Lebanon. In fact he had already done the same for French hostages. Thus the CIA and the German Criminal Office (BKA) allowed the drug operation to continue.

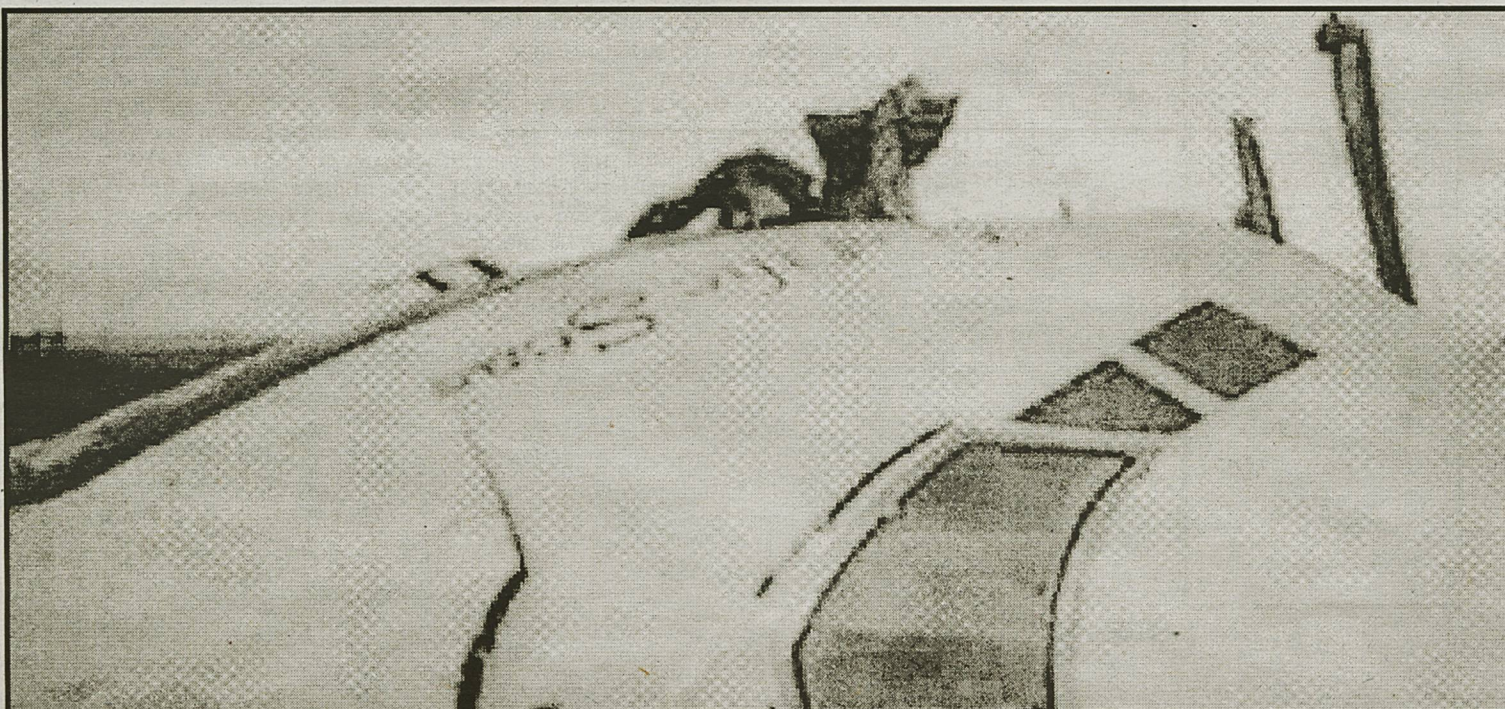
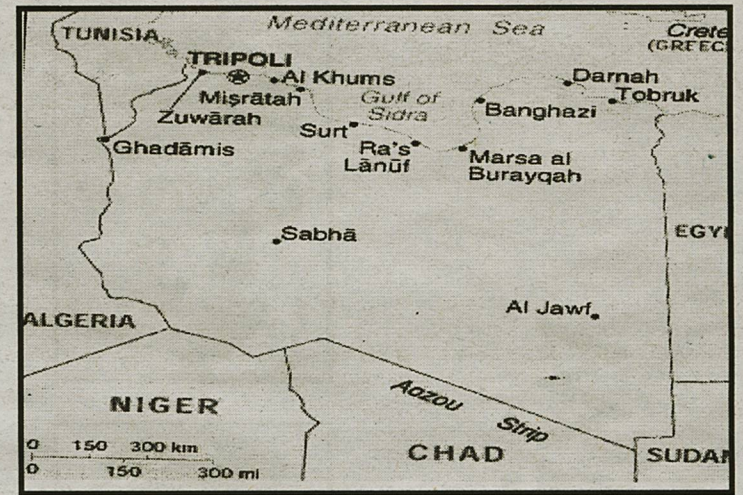
According to the report, this same smuggling ring and its

method of switching suitcases were used to smuggle the fatal bomb aboard Flight 103, under the eyes of the CIA and BKA, in fact it may well have been contained within the drug suitcase as evidence from the crash scene suggests that drugs were found in a suitcase. Why then did the New York Times quote a federal official as saying "no hard drugs were found aboard the aircraft"? Revelations of American involvement in this drug trafficking operation led to a congressional hearing held in 1990. The hearing was undermined by the fact that the DEA and the Department of Justice had not made any of their agents available to testify; that they had not provided requested written information; and that the FBI to this date has been totally uncooperative.

It is blatantly obvious that there is more to this story than recently portrayed in the media. For all those people that have tried to expose hidden agents have experienced suspicious situations. Lester Coleman co-authored a highly revealing book and as a consequence was hounded for several years, across continents, and severely punished including being imprisoned on phoney charges to damage his credibility. In addition, there was Allan Francovich who made a documentary, "The Maltese Double cross". When Channel 4 agreed to show the film, staff cars were sabotaged, office phones were tapped and a researcher narrowly escaped an attempt to force his vehicle into the path of an oncoming truck. Furthermore, if the US were allowed to demand over the two Libyans, then Qaddafi could ask for the surrender of the two airmen who bombed two Libyan cities, as well as other terrorist harboured by the US.

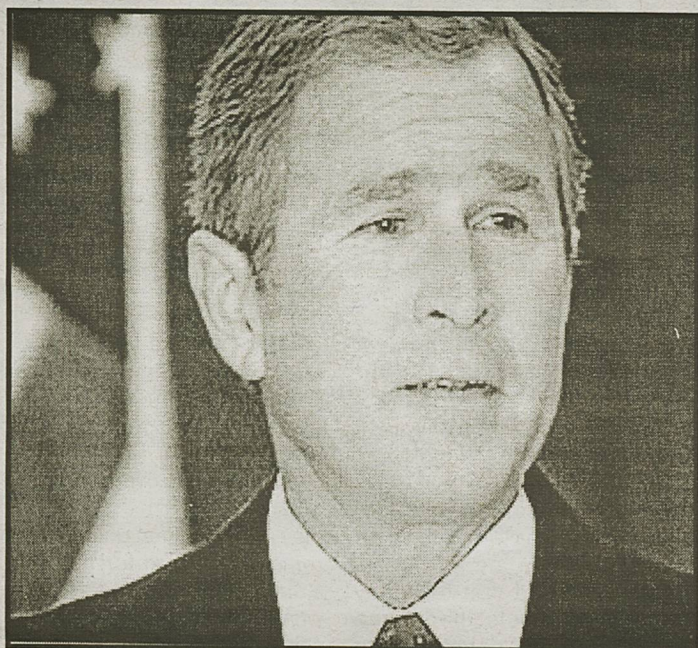
Although it is not my place to discuss the legalities behind the case, what is certain is that politics may play a bigger role in determining the fate of two men and the memory of hundreds.

maidah ahmad is
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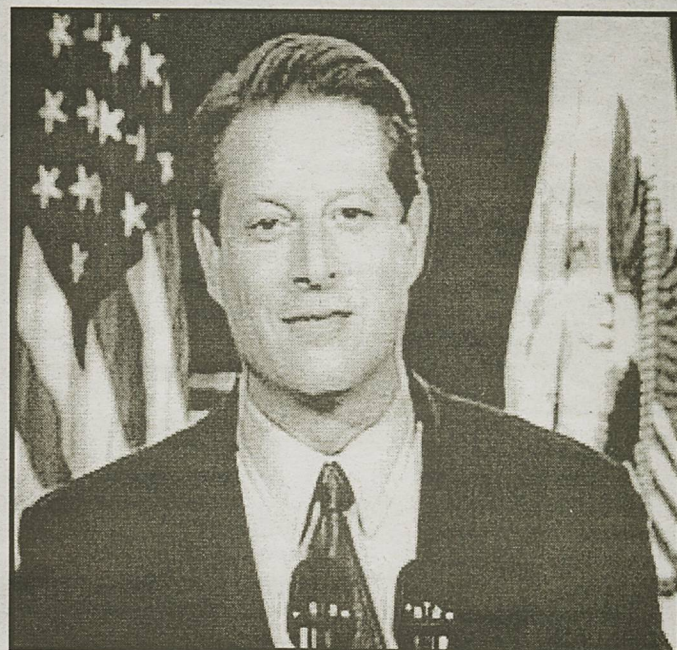
the revolution will not be televised

words by ross sheil



be clearly ahead in the deciding state. It is perhaps churlish to attack the Republicans for contesting the count as the Democrats could be expected to have done the same, although it is worth remembering that as state governor George W Bush passed a Texas law reacquiring recounts.

The most marginalised and angry voices lie in the Black community and activists such as Jesse Jackson who has resurrected his career amongst the controversy. The black electoral turn-out in Florida rose 65%, a concern reflected in their vehement opposition to the result. An investigation by the Washington Post, found that 1/3 of ballots in black sections of Jacksonville, Florida did not register a vote for President. With a curiously high number of faulty counting machines, polling day road blocks and voter intimidation in black neighbourhoods this would appear to be more than accidental disenfranchisement. Perhaps equally shocking were the images of tearful elderly Jewish Floridians, who confused by overcomplicated ballots, had accidentally voted for Pat BuchKKKanan, who freely admitted that he gained thousands of votes from the confusion. And Dubya's brother Jeb, just happens to be Florida Governor.



Elections are essentially about numbers, hopefully the number of votes cast. Most specifically the US election has rested on the political alignments of the supreme court, a 5/4 split in favour of the Republicans. Of more interest is the relationship between George Bush, the elder and the supreme court. Snr, together with supreme court judges Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas and John O' Connor (husband of judge Sandra), belong to the men-only Bohemian Grove Club. Under its auspices, members head into the woods for male bonding sessions which reportedly include communal nudity and urination. Quite obviously, Gore has been pissing

in the wrong Bush with just his Slick Willie for company.

Despite America's great democratic History, the 2000 elections have shown that Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" is still a chrysalis. It takes ordinary people to cast votes but only the ordained to decide them. Snr has had his revenge on Clinton with his son in the White House; his sidekick Cheney who, amongst other things opposed Mandela's release from Robben Island, is now the vice and effective President; Powell, who boosted his fortunes by helping cover-up the My Lai massacre, is now Secretary of State.

It all seems a bit like the old commercial: "Those sure were the good times", "Just you, Dad, and his Smith and Wesson". They lost the vote and yet they possess the Presidency, Congress and the Senate. Whose democracy is this?

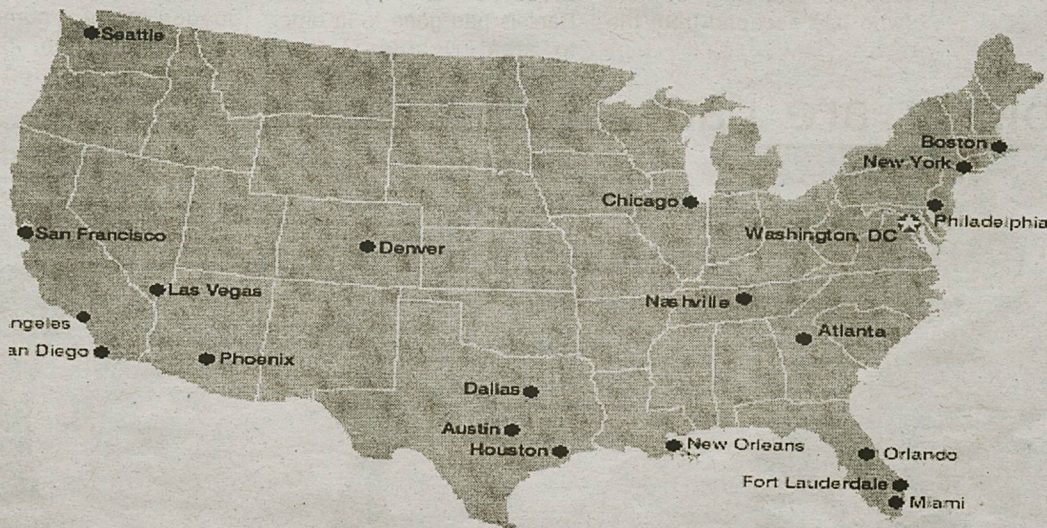
All of us know a little bit about the American democratic traditions and its roots in the War of Independence and the Slave Trade. In years past the US constitution and electoral system has been jealously eyed by reform minded politicians in the UK, who wish to establish proportional representation and an elected second house. The American system has ensured the value of states, however small, to Presidential candidates; resulting in a roughly equal relationship between votes cast and seats in office. No system is perfect, and with much smugness we have observed the sad failure of the American system to reward the popular vote.

serious money and power to play for. Jon Corzine, ex-head of Goldman Sachs, spent US\$60 million to satisfy his dream to be senator of New Jersey. Campaign finance has always been a contentious issue with Clinton and Dole bumping heads over 'soft money' in 1996. The 2000 election goes further, raising questions of voter sovereignty and the ability of those in power to manipulate and even ignore the results.

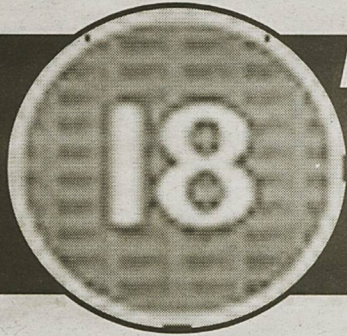
With the official recount halted by the Supreme Court, an unofficial alternative shows Gore to

Gore has won the popular vote, yet his campaign has been lost by a single vote in the supreme court. Gore conceded; the electorate had grown tired and wanted a decision and the Republicans demanded their rights of Manifest Destiny. Gore has done the "proper thing", moving aside to ensure good governance and the stability of the world's greatest nation. As the Economist (November, 11th 2000) hoped their is only one proper choice: "With luck, the loser will show the same restraint" as the rightful heir.

American elections are big events. With a population of over 270 million and with \$US3 billion being spent this year, there is



Ross Sheil is a member of the collective. He was over the in the States for Christmas and is desperately seeking a Bush voodoo doll.



Malice through the looking glass... an irreverent and untrue look at old people

mr paul daniels



paul, relaxing with friends



a world of untruths by kerron rohrer and charlie jurd

If you say Paul Daniels to most people, they will look at you strangely and wonder why you have just said his name without qualifying it in any way. If you incorporate it into a sentence and explain what you mean - that you want them to say what he means to them - they will probably still think you're a nutjob. Once you've cleared up the confusion, calmed them down, and clearly explained the context in which it is set and in what capacity you are asking them, they may say something like "oh, yeah, he's the short, bald magician from the North East".

And they'd be right, but not completely right, as beneath the surface of this amiable trickster lies a character not dissimilar to fellow magician Mandrake from the "Defenders of the Earth". Both are not only masters of magic but also spells and illusion. Unlike Mandrake, Paul Daniels does not Flash Gordon, only unsuspecting residents of the Middlesbrough council estate he owns and collects rent from, dressed only in his slippers and a loosely tied dressing gown which frequently falls open to reveal his crinkled and deformed midget frame much to the chagrin of the residents there, who despite many complaints to the police, have found to their dismay, that Daniels has more than just magical power in the Teeside area. It is these circumstances, and a perverse addiction in pasta products, which have prompted rumours linking Paul to a Sicilian organised crime family.

Of course Paul is merely one leg of the Daniels tripod, completed by the legs of Debbie McGee and his son Martin Daniels. Paul's other sons, estranged Paul Newton (courier) and Gary Daniels (who has escaped from the

world of vice and now works as a computer engineer recently responsible for the introduction of computer hardware into Middlesbrough hospital).

In 1979, whilst at Summer Season in Great Yarmouth Paul Daniels was questioned by the police concerning a protection racket in the Southbank area of Middlesbrough. However, as the enquiry progressed several key witnesses "disappeared". In contrast with the lovely Debbie McGee these guys did not reappear on the top of a cage wearing a sequinned jumpsuit and gravity-defying hair. No, they were dead.

Of recent note, although largely ignored by the papers in the Teeside area, was the very public split from Daniels of his long-term manager and older brother, Barry Daniels. Barry now works as a concierge at a hotel in Bogota, Colombia and had expressed concern at Daniels' spiralling drug use in recent years. After getting his first 'hit' during a break in rehearsals for long running gameshow "Every Second Counts" Daniels' stormy love affair with drugs began. Traces of diamorphine, more commonly known as heroin, H or "butcher's gravy", were found on wands Daniels had used for top-rating "The Paul Daniels Magic Show". Although Paul had reportedly been "clean" after a two week binge in Prestatyn, Cornwall, following the termination of his contract as presenter of daytime quiz "Wipeout" in favour of leather-skinned joker Bob Monkhouse, insiders were reportedly disturbed at his recent erratic behaviour.

Years before, clues about Daniels' disturbing character had arisen after his son revealed the lengths that Daniels had gone to in order to steal Debbie McGee, Martin's current girlfriend, for himself. The diminutive magician had connived and manipulated to get his son fired from his jobs at the BBC

and ITV, knowing full well that the shallow, mercenary, money-grubbing bitch would fall straight into the arms of his more successful, if far uglier father. And like many of his card tricks, he pulled it off without a hitch. All of this was revealed in an article that his destitute son had written for the Daily Star to help pay the rent. Later in the article, his son revealed that for many years, Daniels' had been using his considerable influence in the Teeside area to gain access to the local morgues at the weekend to indulge his rampant necrophilial urges (In case you were wondering, this did involve sexual intercourse with corpses)

Whilst his front as a popular magician of stage and screen has so far remained intact, the recent emergence of an illegal betting syndicate in the Teeside area who use disused warehouses to force farmyard animals into combat with each other has once again aroused the interest of the local constabulary. Eyewitnesses paint a sorry picture of cock-fighting, bear-baiting and squirrel poking goaded on by a number of semi-naked men, one of which was rumoured to be Daniels.

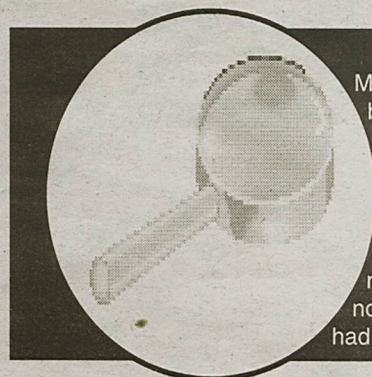
There are apparently no limits to the depths to which Daniels will stoop to get his

adrenalin-fuelled kicks. His perversions probe every depravity and yet he still occupies a place in the heart of the nation. If they only knew what kind of man Daniels is, and that he probably wouldn't even have been allowed to live in Sodom and Gomorrah even if they'd had an open door policy for perverted entertainers. Some of you may say "so what if he likes a bit of scary shit on the side. He tickes my funny bones with his clever mix of magic and light humour" OK, but this is plain wrong. Just imagine those poor bears, taunted and whipped into a aggressive frenzy and forced to fight like, well like bears. And then imagine this man grunting his passion away on your recently deceased grandmother, or as rumours have suggested, grandfather. No dead person deserves to be defiled like this, except maybe Paul when he kicks the bucket.

Kerron Rohrer is the new features editor and he just loves magic...but he warns that it can lead to evil if misused.

Charlie Jurd was amused by the "Flash Gordon" joke for 14 hours 38 minutes.

are the cards big or are paul and debbie really small?



DISCLAIMER

Malice through the looking glass is not based on fact as far as the writers are aware and any resemblance to persons, living or perhaps dead, is purely accidental. As far as we are aware no animals or prosecution witnesses were harmed during the research of this article and we have no evidence that Paul Daniels has ever had sex with a dead body.

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MASSIVE BAR SUBSIDY ON NIGHT!

FOR FURTHER INFO CONTACT
GURPREET- 07939 549008
NEETA- 07932 789332
ZAEEM- 07788148188

£2 MEMBERS
£3 OTHERWISE
MORE AFTER 9PM
R.O.A.R

GOAL/People First Events

What? "The Role of A Government Agency".
Who? Barrie Ireton, Programme Director,
Dept. for International Development.
Where? Ashwell House, Shepherdess Walk,
N1 7NA
When? Tuesday 16th January, 6.30pm - 8pm,
followed by cheese and wine.

What? The Role of the Media
When? February
More details to follow.

Who? Anita Roddick
When? March
More details to follow.

Contact peoplefirst@internet.com with any questions.

Grimshaw Club Event:
What? "Global Broadcasting in a Digital Age"
Who? Mark Byford, Managing Director of the
BBC World Service
Where? The Old Theatre
When? Tuesday 16th January, 5pm

U Should Be Dancing

The Modern Dance Society is looking for ENTHUSIASM!!!

We need dancers of all standards to participate in the most fun and funky event of the year. Routines will include: Britney Spears, Saturday Night Fever, Macy Gray, Destiny's Child, N'Sync ... and some sensible ones too!!!

Contact Kirsty on k.a.noble@lse.ac.uk



UGM DOUBLE-BILL

THURSDAY 18TH JANUARY

**THE UGM
WELCOMES**

**ULU PRESIDENT
SCOTT RICE**

ALSO

**DEBATE ON THE
DANGERS OF
DRINKING AND
SMOKING
TOO MUCH,
REVOLUTION IN
THE BRUNCH
BOWL AND NUS**

THURSDAY 25TH JANUARY

**STUDENTS' UNION BI-ELECTIONS
FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

POSITIONS UP FOR GRABS

**ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES OFFICER
EQUAL OPPORUNITIES (FEMALE) OFFICER**

ANYONE CAN STAND

**THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY
TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON UNION LIFE**

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE TAKE A NOMINATION FORM
FORM UNION RECEPTION

NOMINATIONS CLOSE AT 5PM ON TUESDAY 23RD JANUARY
JOB DESCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE AT UNION RECEPTION

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT [SU.GENSEC@LSE.AC.UK](mailto:su.gensec@lse.ac.uk)

EVERY THURSDAY AT 1PM IN THE OLD THEATRE



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We need Activity Leaders - Open to anyone who is patient, responsible and Fun - loving.

We need English Teachers - Our teachers must be studying a PGCE, B.ed with Qts. , TEFL experience or qualifications.

JUNE 2001 - BUT APPLY NOW !
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Tel: 0208 293 1188 Fax: 0208 293 1199 E-mail: kris@isisgroup.co.uk Web: www.isisgroup.co.uk



Gen Sec's Column Inches

New term. New ideas. The LSE Students' Union will become increasingly politicised this week. Should we trade Bunsen burner for laptop and join Imperial in holy matrimony? Who should foot the bill of Higher Education in this country? Some may argue that Unions are now increasingly becoming commercial enterprises, but we must not forget that representation is the key. Students can change things - any form of mass educated opinion cannot be discarded.

Since the National March, the campaign against top-up fees has slowed somewhat. New life needs to be injected. The only way we can win the battle against privatisation is to win over public opinion. Young parents, sixth formers and the rest need to know just what 'top-up fees' are, and what they could do to this country. The government was elected on the platform of 'Education, Education, Education', yet rather than widening participation, they have set in place new barriers for students to overcome. Tuition fees, increasing drop-out rates, falling applications, increasing graduate debt and top-up fees - all show that the government is not paying proper attention to HE.

I believe that the LSE Students' Union should be at the forefront of this campaign. We have one of the most active Unions in the country and a reputation to match. These days everything seems to be getting privatised - the railways, air traffic control. If we are not careful, Higher Education will be next. We need to get smart. The government needs to take note - if we don't act now, we'll pay later.

With a general election set to take place in May 2001, the national student movement is calling on all of the major parties to make manifesto commitments against the imposition of top-up fees, and for the injection of much needed cash into HE.

LSE does not have enough resources. The government has not invested properly in the social sciences, and we are nearing the brunt of this. We need to demand action from the government nationally. Blair needs to be pressured.

Undoubtedly, top-up fees and rising course costs would have a dramatic effect on access to LSE. Talented students should not have to rely on the lottery of the scholarships system. Surely students should be admitted on the basis of their academic ability, not the size of their parent's bank balance? Isn't it about time, the student voice was heard at LSE on a large scale?

We all say we are proud of LSE's founding principle of social equality - let's try to make sure principle become reality.

LSESU FEE FIGHTERS

KEEPING ACCESS OPEN: SAYING NO TO THE TOP-UPS

HUMAN CHAIN

TUESDAY 15TH JAN @ 2PM

HOUGHTON STREET

FEES CARNIVAL

WEDNESDAY 17TH JAN @ 12PM

PLANNING MEETING

EVERY FRIDAY AT 12PM IN THE SOCIETIES ROOM



real life

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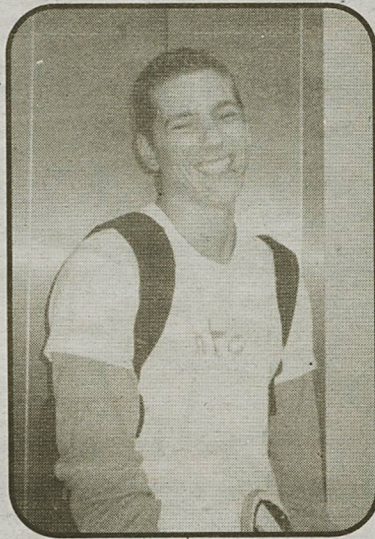
WORD UP

Rumour has it that LSE students are renowned for working too hard and shagging too little. Candice Macdonald goes in search of the truth behind the LSE experience....

A scurrilous rumour has erupted among the lesser London universities (namely UCL and, yes, you guessed it, Strand Poly), tarnishing the good name of the London School of Economics and causing more havoc in Houghton Street than a Socialist Worker protesting about...oh anything really. I accosted members of said student body (no, not like that you dirty sods!) to hear what they had to say about this shocking slur on our reputation...



New Zealand Nick, also known as the Rt. Hon. Nicholas Bryant Forbes is scathing of social activities at LSE, including Blighty slap and tickle. "I completely agree that LSE is too hard working. In New Zealand we drink much more [oh really?]. Admittedly, people do no work either, which isn't good but for the first term...hmm... I'm disappointed. I thought London would be going for it but instead there's Crush, which is crap. [Nick's command of the English language is unsurpassed] More sex I say!"



Andre Laing, skateboarding impresario and worm-counting genius of the Geography department had this pearl of wisdom to impart: "Get laid!"

No...seriously, get laid! Compared to other universities LSE is a convent...of course, what I've done myself is a different story" said the cheeky Norfolkner with a sly wink and a sheepish grin. "The trick is don't do too much work - copy the reading list onto your bibliography and get yourself down to the bar."



Another American, Libby Larson, added: "I've yet to see if English people live up to the reputation of being bad lovers" - it's all good from the American contingent then!



Sam Goodchild, former UCL dosser, now ambitious, hard-working LSE postgrad sums up the difference between the different classes of London university. "LSE students work harder, they're more motivated. First years come here to work whereas they don't at other unis. At UCL the majority just get wasted [that accounts for the huge number of drunken homeless people on the London streets - they're just lost UCL students. Please direct them home!]. And the foreign students pay so much to come here they can't afford a pint at Tuns prices." General Course student Catie Lindmann takes a slightly different view of LSE: "I really would prefer it if instead of pinching my ass English guys would talk to me. It would be quite a novelty..."



I managed to drag bubbly Belgian beauty Anna Clark away from her desk in order to grill her to a light golden brown on the topics of hide the sausage, drinking and work. This is

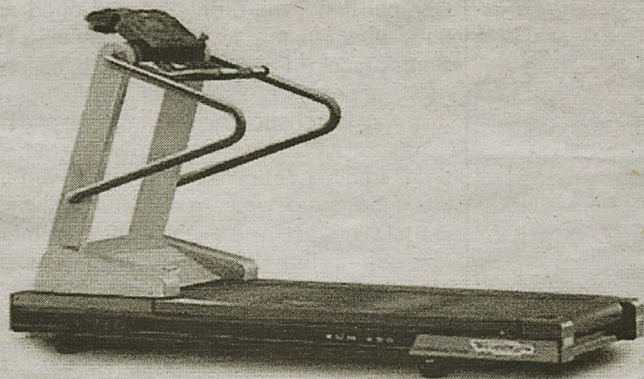
what she had to say: "Yeah, I think people do too much work at LSE. Other people think I work quite a lot [at this point I think it only fair to mention that Anna got up early, with possibly the worst hangover she's ever had, in order to do maths homework that wasn't due for another week - draw your own conclusions] but to be honest work comes a definite second to Scandinavian men...and Belgian men...and Russian men, come to think of it." When it comes to pints and men the lovely Laura Harvey knows how to pull but the west country lass is having none of it: "I've got a boyfriend back home but my friends tell me I've been doing a lot of bottle-peeling lately - this means I don't do a lot of shagging, at least not here, or work, actually, but drinking...."

And so there it is...the truth behind the rumour. So what does go on behind closed doors at LSE? Have you got caught sneaking back to your own room as the cock crows? Do we get too much work to indulge in our favourite pastimes of shagging and drinking? Our survey (of horrendously drunk rugby players in the Tuns last Wednesday) says...yes! I think more research should be done...please do write in if you have empirical findings on this matter...the Beaver will be more than happy to publish it

LSE GYM



NEW AND IMPROVED FOR THE NEW YEAR



New Equipment
New Daily rates
£2.00 Students
£2.50 Staff/Alumni

MTV system
installed early 2001



Memberships are still available this year,
but don't leave it too late!

Confucious Says : "No Sport played = No Sport Reports!"

THE DAWNING OF A NEW ERA

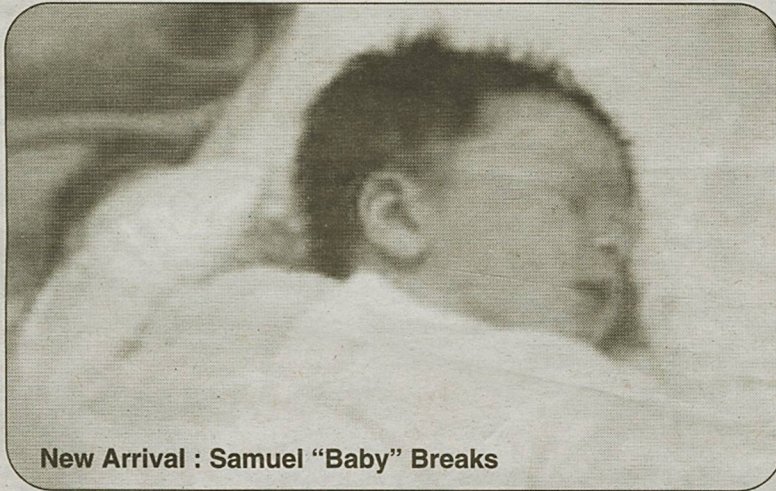
LSE Sports Supremo gives birth to son on Christmas Day!

Christmas day: A day where you wake up late still recovering from the exertions of the previous night. After finding the strength to rise out of bed, and noticing an old, senile woman on the TV waffling on about her family or something, you then sit down to try and eat the largest meal that you will get for the next year, whilst bearing in mind that turkey is going to be your stable diet for the foreseeable future. After accomplishing this task, you make an almost fast dash for the comfy seats and relax in front of the "lastest film" with a can of beer in your hand to go with the massess of stuff currently circulating inside with dinner, causing unlimited stomach problems, and a good workout for your farting organ.

However, this year was considerably different for one of the best known members of the LSE AU. As many of you will already know the Sports and Recreation Manager of LSE, Sarah Breaks, has been on maternity leave since the start of October. News came through in the last few weeks that while we were all tucking in Christmas Pud and the like, she was engaging in

a task that took a little more effort. For those of you that haven't figured it out yet (the headline was a hint!), she was giving birth to a

destined to be a future sports God. But in which area will he excel? Below are some possibilities in which he may be interested:



New Arrival : Samuel "Baby" Breaks

baby son, whom she and her husband Jon christened Samuel.

Family insiders report that Sarah and Jon are both well and that the baby is fine. Sarah reported that labour was "surprisingly easy" - obviously this particular lady needs larger physical challenges than the 'walk in the park' that is having a baby!

Weighing in at 8lbs 10oz and being "very, very long", he is

Rugby - obviously if he has any sense then this will be the sport for him. As close to the ultimate physical challenge as you can get - his Mother's determination coupled with his Father's size?! makes this sport a sure fire winner.

Basketball - could this young lad break the American monopoly on this rip-off of Netball? He could well have the build ("very, very long"), but will he want to be the only one in sports class who can get the ball in the hoop first time?

Cricket - one of the only sports where you get the most points for hitting the ball out of the arena! Should he develop top hand-eye coordination, coupled with the ability to actually hit the ball this could be his forte.

Football - no comment.

BeaverSports and the AU would like to past on it's very best wishes to Sarah and the family. Good luck Samuel for all your future sport.

Welcome Back And Happy New Year

Hello my pretties! On behalf of the AU Exec, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy first year of the new millennium for people who can count. For those film buffs who have noticed that 2001 is nothing like the film, I suggest you spend a few hours in the Tuns and create your own space odyssey. With all the Chrimbo food and grog you've quaffed, you've probably abused your body worse than a 16 year old boy who got a Mayfair subscription from Santa's sack. Fear not however, because you can burn it all off in the newly improved LSE gym. If you thought that attempt to advertise the gym was too subtle, check out the full page ad inside!

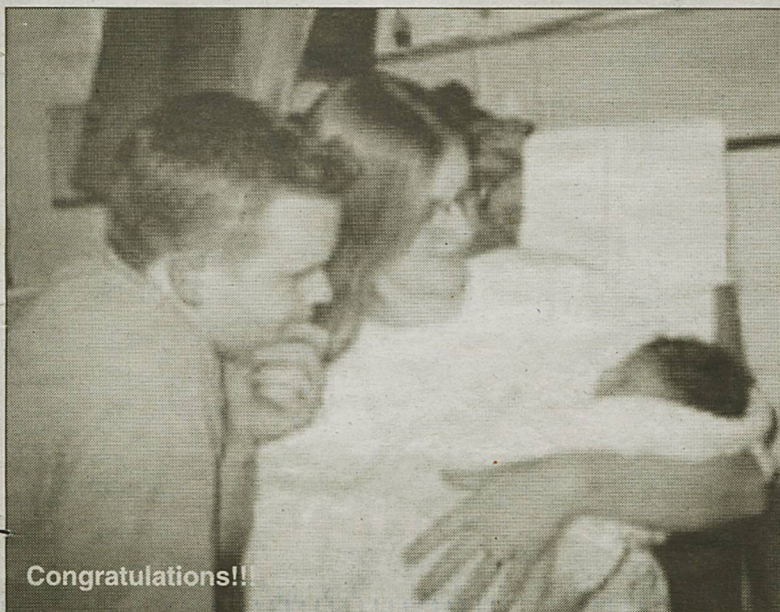
As far as sports teams go, LSE are taking names and kicking booty on all fronts. It's business as usual for our consistently excellent Mens basketball team, who are well on their way to the BUSA knockout stage. I'm told the guys are even better than their nicknames and with people like Lenas 'the slizutts are on my nizzutts' Thomas, they must be awesome. Much as it pains me to admit this, some teams have been enhanced by the presence of Scotsmen. Dean Locherie is leading the football 1st XI through the ULU cup in ruthless style not seen since the days of William Wallace. Ickle Deano, possibly the only person in AU barrel history to appear in front of the Kangaroo court charged with being too good at football, is scoring more regularly than a freebase crack addict. Similarly, Andy Macfarlane's rugby mob are tip top of the table and set to win their league. Apparently, the lads have been doing so well that there's talk of a movie based on the haggis hunter's leadership.

Similarly, the mens tennis team are serving the LSE well (I can't believe I've got the bottle to put in puns that shit!), and are also lined up for BUSA progression. The hockey teams have been banging sticks harder than a psychopathic bunch of morris dancers. Even more impressive is the team spirit- the majority of the side regularly share their stomach contents with each other and anyone else within projectile range for that matter. This is slightly tarnished by the fact that their midfield dynamo Johnny Milsted is responsible for inputting all the results to the BUSA website. This explains how the boys have amassed 275 points from nine games. The hockey birds are currently enjoying a season of scorching success. Sarah Woolnough's wonder women have done the previously thought impossible and actually beat someone. When her predecessors were asked "did you get into double figures?" the natural response was "no, I was too pissed to go to Limelight" However, this year, the girls have tonked a couple of teams 10-nil and still had the energy to boogie the night away. Hurrah!!

And so to the future. This term has plenty of AU stuff to look forward to. Some time in late February, the Frenchies are coming over. Still reeling from their monumental drubbings in Paris last year, we'll be hosting the return fixtures at Fortress Berrylands.

If you're one of the many who lie awake at night bitterly regretting the day you elected a bunch of people who couldn't organise a bunk up in a brothel, fear not because in week 8 you can have your vengeance. Those of you who reckon you've got what it takes (not much, in case you were wondering) can stand for election to the Exec.

With the new guys in toe, we're throwing the biggest bash of the year in week 9. All those who've engraved their name in LSE sporting history are rewarded with their colours at the star studded AU ball. This truly will be a night to remember, although you'll probably need to be prompted by photographs and 20 people telling you about your 'elephant impression' or other such party tricks. Add to this the usual Wednesday night wildness and the future is complete. The four horsemen have a riding companion, it's now War, Famine; Death, Pestilence and Netball Girl!



Congratulations!!!