

the Beaver

13 November 2007 Issue 671 The newspaper of the LSESU



A Brutal Embrace?

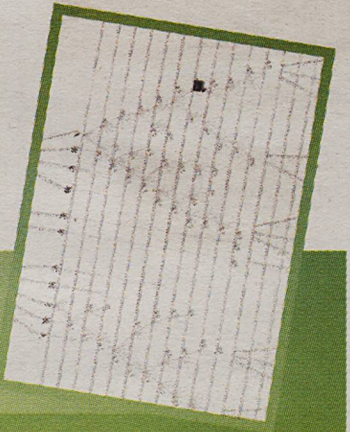
Are Mearsheimer and Walt right about Israel?

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Steve Buscemi

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Locker break-in crime spree

SECURITY DECLARE LOCKERS NO SAFER THAN "A PUBLIC TABLE" AFTER TEN BREAK-INS IN ONE DAY

Subash Viroomal

Last Monday, multiple lockers in the basement of the Old Building were broken into, with valuables such as watches and wallets stolen.

LSE Security's figures place the number of break-ins at ten and the number of reported thefts at six, but *The Beaver* has obtained photographic evidence suggesting that many more lockers have been broken into and still cannot be securely closed.

The LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Executive Committee reacted promptly to the news, contacting Andy Farrell, the Director of Finance and Facilities, and Kayt Berry, the LSESU Communications Officer. Berry placed a School-issued warning at the top of the Houghton Street Review, a weekly email sent to all LSE students.

The LSE's response, led by Head of Security Paul Thornbury, saw a team of security guards sweep the basement of the Old Building for signs of break-ins. The contents of every locker broken into were bagged and stored in Lost Property, a response praised by students who feared that their exposed rucksacks and course texts could have been easily accessible to "more unscrupulous characters".

However, the incident has set off a storm of protest. Firoz

Noordeen, LSESU International Students' Officer, called the loss of secure lockers in the Old Building a "massive problem for students", citing the inability of students with gym clothes and heavy books to keep their belongings safely.

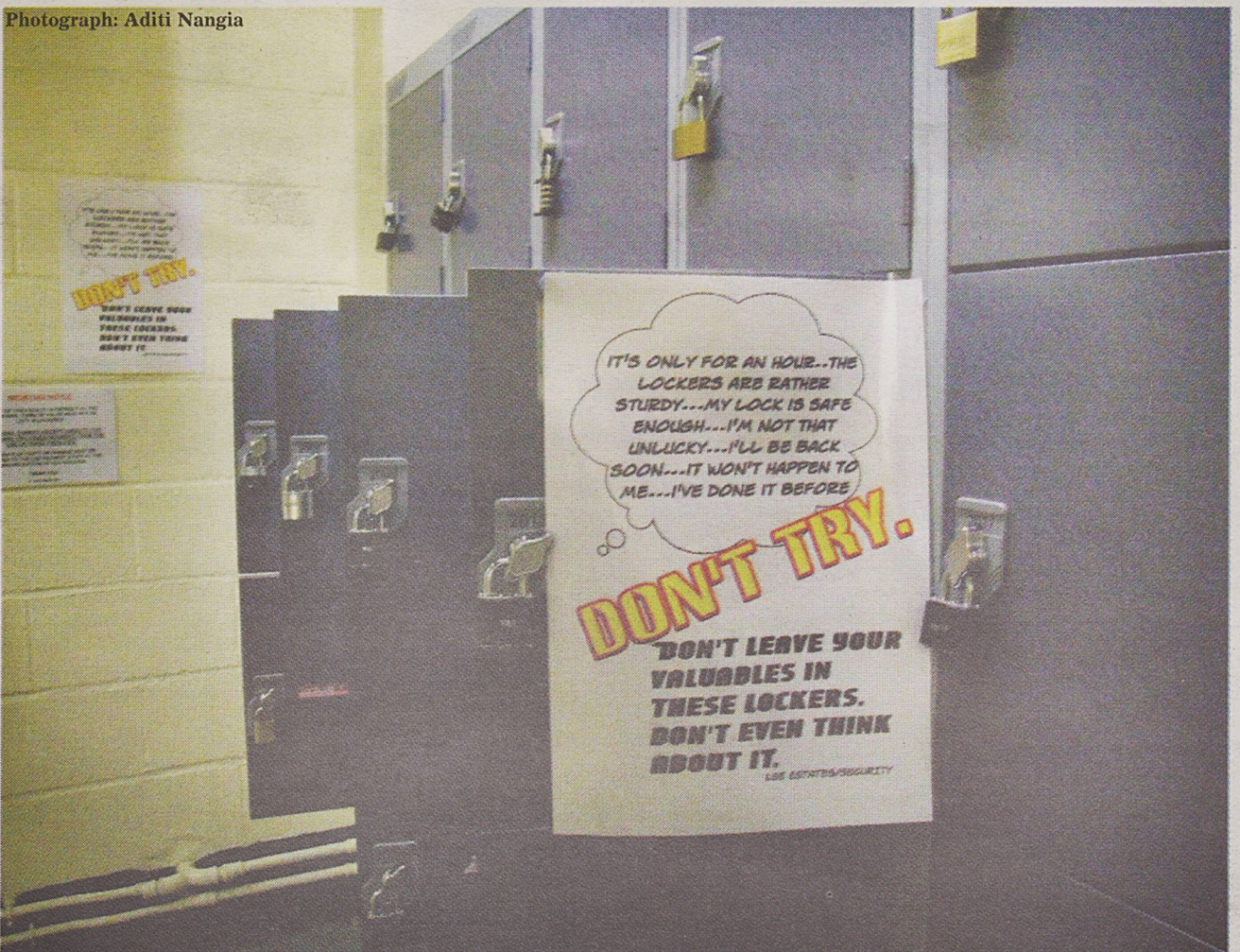
Alexander B, a second year Economics undergraduate and a victim of the crime spree, accepted that poster warnings were clear but added that "the LSE should have told us it was that easy to break into the lockers".

Charing Cross Police were called in that evening and "recommended that these [non-coin-operated] lockers be upgraded". An LSE security guard went further, claiming that anything placed in a locker is no safer than an item on "a public table".

An LSE spokesperson has confirmed that "there is no CCTV equipment installed in the locker rooms" and that the lockers' design means that "they are unlikely to delay a determined thief for long". The School refused to confirm that the purchase of new and secure lockers would be their response.

On behalf of the LSESU, Berry has called for new lockers, "preferably with some sort of swipe system and CCTV". In the meantime, "students must remember that we are an open campus - you leave your belongings at your own risk and you must be vigilant!"

Photograph: Aditi Nangia



Thieves have targeted lockers in the basement of Old Building

Suspicious packages cause two campus bomb scares

Erica Gornall

LSE Security felt the strain last week as "suspicious packages" caused at least two disruptions at the School.

With Security already investigating a spate of locker thefts, Houghton Street had to be cordoned off to students, staff and the general public last

Tuesday.

At around 12.45pm, at the peak of the lunch hour, the area between the Old Building and the bottom of Houghton Street was cut off. Police closed the Aldwych from Kingsway to the Strand for about 15 minutes.

When Pulse radio and reporters from *The Beaver* questioned officials and police officers about the disruption,

they were told that the area was inaccessible due to a "suspicious package". Students watched as police scanned the area but the area was opened again soon after.

A School spokesperson later stated, "a package had been left on a bus in the Aldwych. This was cleared by the police - the package contained no device."

Later on the same day, an

LSE steward working at an event in the Old Theatre alerted Security to another suspicious package. The suitcase was left at the end of what had been a heated and controversial lecture about Israel.

The steward, Mark Harrison, described how he had noticed the package and the seriousness at which LSE Security took the threat. "As people were leaving the the-

atre," he said, "I noticed that a small suitcase had been left by the back row of seats. We'd been told to look out for anything suspicious so I told Security straight away."

"The head of Security very quickly and calmly checked out the contents without causing any panic."

According to Harrison, LSE Security staff were "incredibly fast at dealing with

the potential problem". The incidence of two potential threats on the same day has raised concerns of an increased threat on campus, which the School has denied. Stewards had been told to look out for any threats.

Both reported threats were false alarms and in both cases, the areas were back to normal within minutes. Students are encouraged to remain vigilant.

Features: *Fairtrade*

The True Price of Coffee
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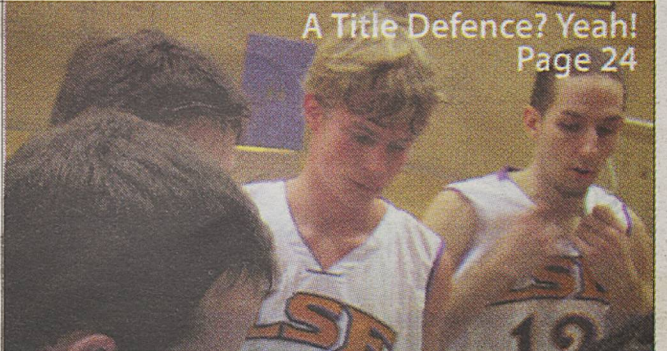
PartB: *Identity*

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Alphastyling



Sports: *Basketball*

A Title Defence? Yeah!
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In other news

HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS



Oxford pitches at black students

Oxford University has launched a new scheme, Aspire, aiming at encouraging black students to apply. It will investigate why applications by black students are relatively low and less likely to be successful. American civil rights activist Jesse Jackson, who launched the programme, pointed out that a similar problem exists in the US.

EducationGuardian

Academics earn more than most

Academics now earn more than most other professionals, according to government statistics.

The Annual Study of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) found that academics earned an average £42,620 in the year to April 2007.

The University and College Employers Association said higher education academics had seen their earnings rise by more than a quarter (25.8%) since 2001.

Higher education staff received an additional 3% pay increase from August 1 2007 as part of the three-year pay deal negotiated last summer.

There will be an additional 3% increase in May 2008 and a further 2.5%, or inflation rate, rise, whichever is greater, from October next year.

EPIGRAM online

Bristol Halls rent up by 18%

Rent for Bristol University Halls has risen by 18.7 per cent, roughly ten times the rate of inflation. The increase was mainly justified by improvements in halls, Junior Common Room fees and insurance. This adds to claims that some halls are more likely to house relatively wealthy, private schooled students

theoxfordstudent

Oxford SU finances in chaos

Charlotte Fisher, contender for the Oxford Students' Union (SU) presidency, has been accused of throwing the SU's finances into crisis by securing sponsorship from a Chinese car company which was not paid for. The SU spent the expected money on a ball and social events before actually receiving it.

Picture of the week



Photograph: Felipe Jacome

Please send your submissions for 'Picture of the Week' to photos@thebeaveronline.co.uk to be featured here

NEWS IN BRIEF

RAG Rock gig and Krispy Kreme sale on Fridays

The LSE Raising and Giving (RAG) Society will be having a rock concert on Thursday November 29 in the Quad Cafe. The event will be for St. Mungo's Homeless Shelter. Tickets will be sold on Houghton Street and in the Quad next week. The Society will also be selling Krispy Kreme Donuts every Friday on Houghton Street, in a further attempt to raise funds for various charities.

Careers Service website still having technical problems

Students are still complaining about the Careers Service website having recurring technical problems. The Careers Service, although recognising these problems occurred that last week, claimed that apart from 20 minutes on Wednesday when certain skill session slots were released, the booking system has been working.

They advise students who are not able to get to one of these sessions to contact them directly - they will try their best to accommodate them in their 'emergency' skills slots at the end of the week.

Although many events by certain popular employers are constantly overbooked, other events which could still be useful to students, such as the Law Fair on November 12-13, are surprisingly under-booked.

BP's Lord Browne to give public lecture at LSE tonight

Lord Browne, the former chief executive of BP, will speak tonight in a public lecture at the LSE.

The event, entitled 'Past, Present and Future of Oil', is at 6.30pm in the Old Theatre. Lord Browne will discuss the current state and future prospects of the global market for oil.

All tickets for the event have been allocated, but a returns queue will be in operation at the Old Theatre before the event.

We Are Scientists to visit LSE Students' Union

As part of their 'Lunchtime Lecture Tour', the American band We Are Scientists will pay a visit to the LSE Students' Union (LSESU) on 14 December.

We Are Scientists are in the UK for a sold out tour of major venues, but their free lunchtime lectures - which will be held at students' unions across the country in association with NUS Extra - promise to offer students "something totally different".

Seminar tickets are available for free from the LSESU. NUS Extra cardholders have ticket access 48 hours before general release to other students.



This week in 2001

LSE to jam 1,500 more students in

Anyone who's been around Houghton Street, the library and any of the computer rooms this term is sure to have noticed something - it's much busier. Compared to this time last year when the deteriorating weather seemed to make going into school a non-starter, this term has seen LSE bulging at the seams. In part due to the opening of the on-site library during the summer term, it has also been the result of a shift in LSE admissions policy that hopes to raise the number of students to 8500 by 2006 at the latest. The policy began over the summer with the school admitting 500 more students than usual, taking the tally of total students from 6500 to 7000.

The apparent difference made by these extra 500 students already appeared to be immense.

IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS

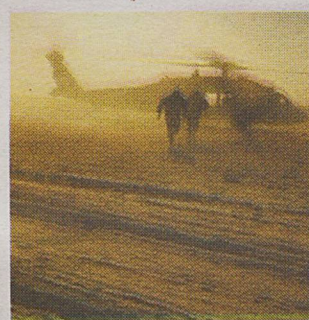
LSE falls to 59th in Times' world rankings, Students boycott Davies' reception over sabbatical, Halls management still has a long way to go, Facebook is our space, says students

Howard Davies on judging the Man Booker Prize, LSE remembers Dina Rabinovitch, Brunch Bowl and Beaver's Retreat to get revamp, Capitol Hill Israel lobby "as American as apple pie"

Queen's Speech used to announce sale of student loan debt, LSE students rally for Kareem, Human rights activist talk at the LSE, LSESU LGBT Awareness Week

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Calling the shots, Driven up the wall, No bang for big bucks, Oh, Great Scot!, Narcissists' politics, Democracy inaction



FEATURES

Notes on Nothing, Red isn't Dead, Blue is True, The true price of coffee, A Brutal Embrace?, Inside Kim's Kingdom, Eyewitness: Pakistan

LISTINGS

Win a trip for two to Singapore, Office hours, RISE against racism, Join The Beaver

SPORTS

Five years to go, but still a lot to do, LSE Sheilas run over by Pompey, The Punter, WFC show some balls, LSE crush Valley boys, A title defence? Yeah!

PART B

Transient in London, The Blogboard, Clear Your Tubes, Waxin' Off, Steve's World, New Academic

Building 2010

Iron and Wine, Devandra Banhart, Fighting the Rat Race, Alphastyling, Apple Hac..., Bath: the Jewel in Somerset's Crown, Part Bestiary



LSE falls to 59th in Times' World University Rankings

The School is the world's third-best social science institution, behind Harvard and Berkeley

Patrick Cullen

With the release of the *Times Higher Education Supplement's* (THES) latest World University Rankings (2007), the LSE has fallen from 17th place in 2006 to 59th – a drop of some 42 places. This is, as the THES says, “particularly chastening” for the School. However, the LSE remains in third place in the league table for the world's best social science institutions.

By contrast, Imperial College has risen from ninth place to fifth, University College from 25th to ninth, and King's College from 46th to 24th place. This, the THES says, confirms “London's standing as a global academic centre”.

Howard Davies, the School's Director, said: “The LSE, as a purely social science college, always fits uncomfortably into the league tables of across-the-board universities, and we have yo-yoed up and down them. We concentrate most, therefore, on our position in the social sciences table, where we remain consistently right up at the top, which reflects where we think we should be, and are.”

The School stated that alterations in the statistical methodology of the THES were responsible for LSE's lower ranking. A School spokesperson said, “It appears that our exceptional level of internationalisation has been taken less into account than previously; and that more emphasis

than previously has been given to citations, which are used less in the social sciences than some other subjects.”

The School added that the LSE's position remains “very high” in the social science table, coming after only Harvard and Berkeley, and is “an accurate reflection of our strengths”.

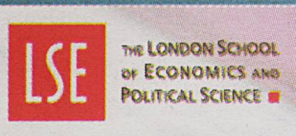
The THES points out that “the tables that make up these rankings differ in two important respects” from the previous editions. The paper cites the School as a case where the elimination of single outliers had a “disproportionate effect” on the result, saying that “the method has reduced the disproportionate effect of the LSE's high percentage of international staff and students”.

The LSE remains the world's best university for international students, with the THES commenting that the School's appeal is “not hard to discern. Few future economic and social scientists could resist being at a research-based elite university in the heart of one of the world's most diverse and successful cities, close to many of the world's top financial markets”.

The LSE has also moved up a place to third best in the world for graduate recruitment, after Oxford and Cambridge. Davies commented that students should “be pleased that we are close to the top of the league of recruiters' assessments”.

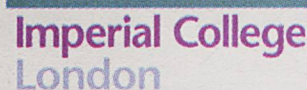
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LSE's rankings slide revealed



Last year: 17th

This year: 59th

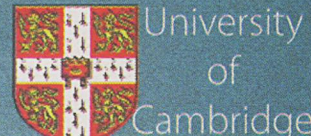


Last year: 9th

This year: 5th

The Times Higher Education Supplement assessment of the world's top 200 universities is based on peer and employee review, staff student ratio and international student and staff scores.

Whilst other London universities scaled new heights, the LSE sank to a lowly 59th globally.



Last year: 2nd

This year: 2nd



Last year: 25th

This year: 9th

University	Ranking this year	Ranking last year	Country	Overall score
Harvard	1	1	US	100.0
Cambridge	2=	2	UK	97.6
Oxford	2=	3	UK	97.6
Yale	2=	4=	US	97.6
Imperial	5	9	UK	97.5
LSE	59	17	UK	75.7



Union Jack

Jack is depressed. The past two weeks had been his prolonged spell in purgatory before the final descent into the hell of abject boredom. His heart had sank like a rock, his morale plummeted into hellish depths, his spirits dissipated into the frosty autumn air. His panacea for all that was wrong with his life of shame, sex and sin – the UGM – is no longer the glorious spectacle it used to be.

Once the toast of the SU and pinnacle of student shamocracy, the weekly political colossus has died successive ignominious deaths at the hands of apathetic inquiry. The drama onstage was also a shade of former glories – gone were the days of lethal allegations and savage verbosity.

But Jack lives in hope. Ever the optimist, he knows a better tomorrow awaits. Despite the abysmal gate receipts, the UGM still retains some colour and controversy yet. And why not? Political animals still prowl the Union floor in their dozens, baying for blood. The still air of the Union Reichstag reeked of the carnage from power struggles of old.

Jack didn't have to wait long for the resurgence. For absolute power corrupts absolutely, and so it proved with UGM Commissar Tarzan Marwah. Saved only by a mix of constitutional loopholes and pedantic defence, Tarzan's skin-of-his-teeth survival in last week's Thermidorian reaction only served to embolden. Well aware of Union Fuehrer Baker-Maker's incapacitation with a deadly strain of Teytelboymitis and the absence of grey matter in Hamlet's cranium, Tarzan tested the waters of Union dictatorship with a perfidious suppression of the Committee of Union Safety.

The Committee of Union Safety erupted with fury. Hamlet and his clueless cronies would never stand for such brazen usurpation of their God-given right to govern the Union. Rachael O'Righteous, eager to impress the martyred Kettle-in-ham, struck quickly with great vengeance and furious anger, rattling off a flawlessly vindictive tirade at the felonious Tarzan.

While the war of words unfolded, DJ Smelldon sniffed a potential coup. With the Commissar's credibility no better than the lawyer's degree he's amorally lying towards, there could no better time to strike. Smelldon's cry for Tarzan's head was rapidly drowned by calls in unison. The Committee of Union Safety rose as one, storming the stage like bloodthirsty Jacobins, ready to guillotine the treacherous Judas that was Tarzan.

Even the savvy Tarzan had no answer to Smelldon's sneaky broadside. Forced off his pedestal of power, the Commissar was made to stand trial. Smelldon sensed victory. His mesmerising rhetoric appeared to have worked its magic on the bewildered Convention. But Tarzan, a five-year veteran of Union treachery, still had triumph cards left to play. As the hands rose to either condemn or spare, Tarzan revealed his hand – the horde of sympathetic UGM junkies was a royal flush.

Students boycott reception at Davies' house over £55k sabbatical

Michael Deas
News Editor

Five students have declined an invitation to a reception at the home of LSE Director Howard Davies in protest at the three month paid academic sabbatical leave of absence, worth £55,000, he is due to take next summer.

LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Mature and Part time Officer Ziyaad Lunat; Women's Officer Daisy Mitchell-Forster; Environment and Ethics Officer Aled Fisher; Students with Disabilities Officer Lizzie Fison and Constitution & Steering Committee member Elle Dodd have made it clear they will not attend the reception. It is traditional for members of the Students' Union Executive Committee, the Athletics Union Executive, student Governors and heads of the Media Group to be invited to the Director's home once a year.

In a letter to Davies' assistant, Clare Taylor Gold, the officers said they were declining “due to objections we have concerning the marketised direction that he [Davies] is

taking the School and, more specifically, the decision taken by the School's administration to grant him a three month sabbatical leave in 2008 whilst retaining his full salary”.

Davies was awarded a sabbatical following the decision to re-appoint him in April last year. However, concerns have been raised that as Davies is an administrator, not an academic, the decision to award him a sabbatical is inappropriate.

The LSE website states: “The general purpose of sabbatical leave is to enable members of the teaching staff to have the opportunity to pursue research upon which they might be engaged; to undertake preparation of new courses and to retrain in fresh areas of academic activity.”

At the time of Davies' re-appointment last year, *The Beaver* asked Davies if he would be using his sabbatical for academic purposes. He replied, “I shall be writing a book.”

LSE Chairman Lord Grabiner claimed last year that such a sabbatical is the precedent set for continuing Directors.

Davies is the first LSE director without a background

in teaching. When asked if the sabbatical was intended for purposes of academia or as a reward for good service to the school, Grabiner refused to comment.

The students also complain that sabbatical was “not fully and adequately discussed by LSE Council”.

Perhaps Howard Davies would like to donate his luxury holiday pay to fund decent library services to LSE students?.

Ziyaad Lunat
Mature and Part-time students officer

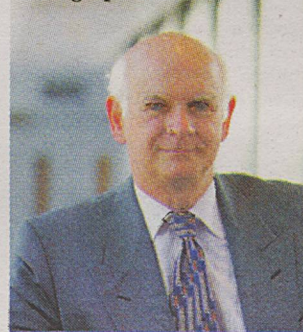
Lord Grabiner told *The Beaver* last year that the sabbatical had come about during negotiations over Davies' re-appointment as a result of “express agreement between me, on behalf of the LSE, and Sir Howard”. It is claimed that the this agreement was “announced informally” rather than discussed or sanctioned by the Council.

Davies was reappointed last year and was given overwhelming support in a Students' Union ballot on the reappointment. However, the fact that he would receive a paid leave of absence was not mentioned at any point during the consultation process.

Ziyaad Lunat, one of those refusing the dinner invitation, said, “The sabbatical was undemocratically announced to Council and it is paid by our extortionary tuition fees. There is a stringent criteria for staff sabbaticals and Howard Davies should have no special treatment. The school has refused our right to 24 hours library allgeding lack of funds. Perhaps Howard Davies would like to donate his luxury holiday pay to fund decent library services to LSE students?”

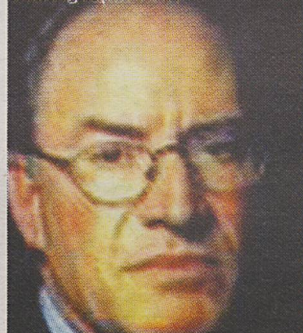
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Photograph: LSE



LSE Director Howard Davies was reappointed in April

Photograph: LSE



LSE Chairman Lord Grabiner QC is accused of granting Davies a sabbatical without fully consulting LSE Council

Halls management still has a long way to go

Simon Wang

Electricity meters will be trialed at the Grosvenor House hall of residence, following debate at the most recent meeting of the Residences User Group (RUG).

Consumption of energy has been found to be particularly high in Grosvenor House. Consequently, an electricity meter trial will be introduced to prevent wastage of energy and prevent further cost increases.

Louise Robinson, the LSESU Residences' Officer and a member of RUG, described the trial as "worthwhile" and hoped that it would lead to "positive changes in behaviour" on the part of students.

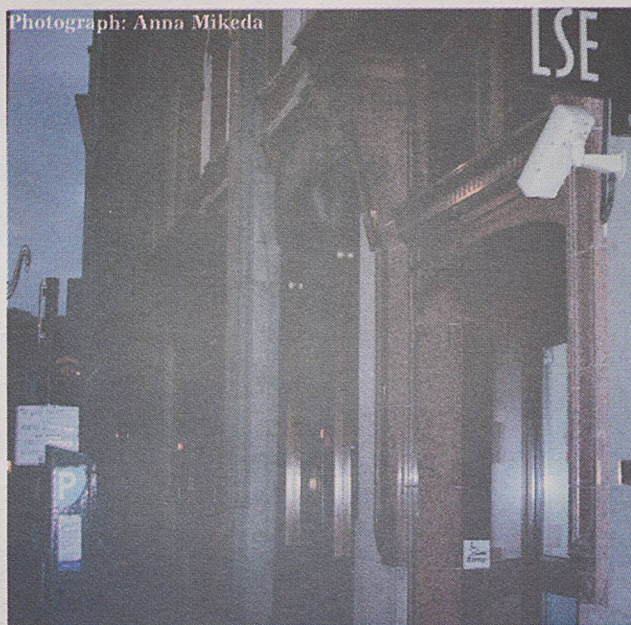
However, there are concerns that additional "complexities" need to be accounted for. Robinson observed that some students "might naturally have to consume more energy for health reasons", but as yet, the particular needs of certain residents have not been accounted for. A progress update is expected at forthcoming RUG meetings.

Also this week, some students have challenged the charging system used to penalise for poor conduct in halls. Students have complained that sometimes the fines they pay directly to halls' committees bear little resemblance to the direct cost of damage to facilities.

Robinson said that neither wardens nor students have been consulted about the latest changes to the charging system and was highly critical of the

“There are some ludicrous examples of charges, £100 is charged per bodily fluid, for example.”

Louise Robinson
LSESU Residences' Officer



The LSE's Grosvenor House hall of residence

fine structure. She said, "there are some ludicrous examples of charges, £100 is charged per bodily fluid, for example."

Most of this revenue is "sucked backed into LSE and the Ocean cleaning company bureaucracy". In reality, only a small percentage of this amount is needed for cleaning services.

The RUG is also addressing the issue of halls security, suggesting that the LSE establish a continued dialogue between those working within Residences, local community officers and the police force. The new head of LSE Security, Paul Thornbury, has residences under his remit to coordinate the School's management of residences more effectively.

Facebook is our space, say students

David Woodbridge

Students are wary of attempts by universities to engage with them on social networking websites such as Facebook, according to a new study.

Research conducted by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) has concluded that students are uncomfortable with lecturers and other academic staff extending the classroom in this way. Lawrie Phipps, the JISC project manager, said, "students really do want to keep their lives separate. They don't want to be always available to their lecturers or bombarded with academic information."

This view is consistent with those of many students at the LSE and elsewhere. One first-year anthropologist claimed the activity seems "strange" and expressed concern at the blurring of the lines between the academic and social lives of students. "It's as though they're forcing their way into our personal spaces," he said.

A student at Sussex University wryly commented that "we can't talk about any misgivings with our lecturers in a secure environment if they're there too". On the other hand, some see this move as simply the next logical step in the increasing proliferation of

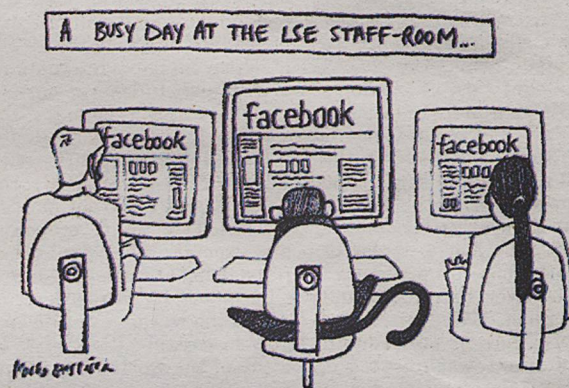
the use of technology in teaching, and not necessarily an undesirable one.

One of the highest rated undergraduate courses in terms of student satisfaction is EH101, of which a large proportion of the course materials such as videoed lectures are already on WebCT. One first-year Economic History student said that it would be "interesting to see how academic staff utilized such methods of teaching. Most young people today are comfortable using new technology and sites such as Facebook. I certainly don't see it as a bad thing".

Facebook is the most popular social networking website amongst university students,

with some seven million active users in the UK alone. MySpace has a larger overall userbase but is arguably less popular amongst university students. There have already been concerns raised about invasions of privacy by academic staff into students' social networking websites, an area many students previously perceived as sacrosanct.

Students at Oxford University were recently involved in "poor conduct" during after-exam celebrations were identified by university authorities using photographs on Facebook, leading many to believe that the intrusion of universities into social networking is an inevitability.



Howard Davies on judging the Man Booker Prize

Kevin Perry
Executive Editor

Howard Davies spoke in the Hong Kong Theatre last Tuesday about the themes being discussed by contemporary novelists, drawing on his experiences as Chair of the Booker Prize judging committee.

In his talk, entitled 'Judging the Booker Prize: what concerns novelists in English today (and what does not)' he noted

that of the 110 novels competing for this year's award, war and immigration seemed to be the most prevalent themes. In particular, World War II has become a common setting for a large number of contemporary articles.

Davies expressed some discomfort with this fact, suggesting that the War was simply being used as a "laboratory" in which to test human relationships, rather than being dealt with fully on its own terms.

In total, 37 of the novels

were historically based, with 69 contemporary novels and four set in the future. He estimated that the 110 competing books represented around a quarter of "literary novels" published in the year.

He also highlighted notable areas which he felt novelists were neglecting to discuss, citing UK politics, campus romances, China and the world of business. He pointed to Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities* and *Glengarry Glen Ross* (reviewed in PartB on page 9) as examples of the business world being critically mirrored in the literary world.

He also took the opportunity to highlight the fact that the LSE has more in common with the Booker Prize than many might think. Two of the authors competing were alumni, while Hari Kunzru's *My Revolutions* features a memorable sex scene set in the corridors of the School.

After the talk he was questioned about his public spat with Jeanette Winterson and the importance of the award on a global scale. Fellow judge Wendy Cope, who was in the audience, aided him in answering a specific question about getting published.

Photograph: Rajan Patel



Howard Davies giving his talk on the Booker Prize

LSE remembers Dina Rabinovitch

Philip Pacanowski

Dina Rabinovitch, a former LSE student and *Beaver* journalist, died last month after a long struggle against breast cancer. She was 44.

Rabinovitch, the daughter of a rabbi and a practising Orthodox Jew, studied International Relations at the LSE and wrote about the arts, especially theatre.

After graduating from the LSE, she began work on a short-lived arts and culture magazine and later wrote for the *Independent*, the *Guardian* and *Jewish Chronicle*. Her friends at the LSE remember

her as being ambitious, bright and certain to do well. While a journalist for *The Beaver*, Rabinovitch was runner-up in the *Guardian's* Student Journalist of the Year award.

She joined the newly launched newspaper the *Independent* in 1986 as deputy features editor, leaving to become a freelance journalist due to family commitments.

As her health deteriorated due to breast cancer, she wrote columns for the *Guardian* and the *Jewish Chronicle* about her health challenges. Her blogs would detail news of her breast cancer treatments, as well as snippets about her family life and personal anecdotes.

Rabinovitch's writing on

cancer was described in her *Guardian* obituary as "remarkable". The *Independent* noted that "what marked out her writing was an absence of self-pity". Her frank and warm accounts of living with cancer won her a huge following, with Cherie Blair an open admirer.

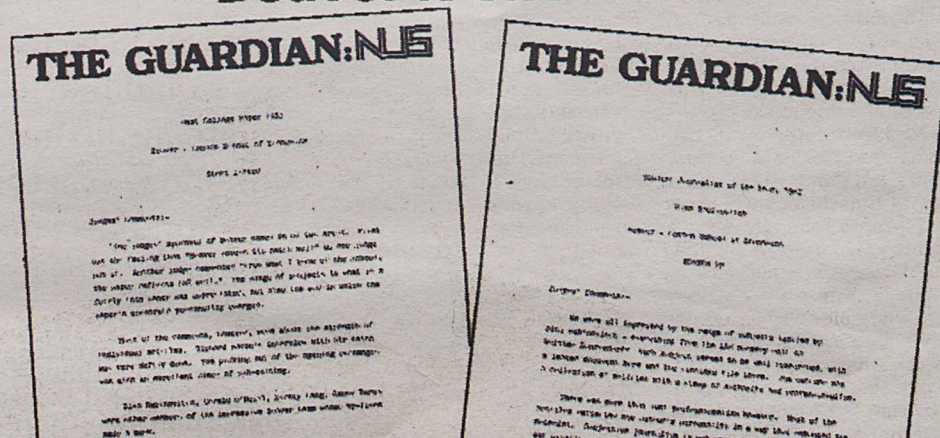
This year, she published a book called "Take Off Your Party Dress: when life's too busy for breast cancer". Proceeds from the book raised more than £70,000 for a cancer research centre.

Rabinovitch is survived by her husband Anthony and her eight children.

Best College Newspaper and Student Journalist of the Year 1983

Rabinovitch is runner-up – Beaver is short-listed

Graphic courtesy of LSE Archives



Brunch Bowl and Beaver's Retreat to get revamp

Vishal Banerjee

The LSE has announced plans to redevelop the Brunch Bowl restaurant and The Beaver's Retreat bar.

A "Concept Document" obtained by *The Beaver* outlines the proposed plans for the project, which will see a "central Food Hall and Café Bar" replace the Brunch Bowl and Beaver's Retreat. The finished facilities will open at the end of September 2008.

However, the plans met with harsh criticism from several members of the LSE's Students' Union (LSESU) Executive Committee. Louise Robinson, LSESU Residences Officer, said that the running of the project showed "an inherent contradiction in participation school governance structures".

An initial project meeting was held on Thursday 27 September. Since then, the School has developed an "architectural tender package" and issued the project plan to selected architects. The School's elite decision-making body, the LSE Council, will meet on Tuesday 27 November to debate proposals received by architects, but no date for commencement of the project has been finalised.

According to the concept document, papers will be issued for the Council meeting on 20 November, but the meeting with the Catering Services Group to discuss the proposal



Students in the Brunch Bowl

will be held only the day after. The tender responses will be received on November 23, which gives very little time for consultation with the student body. Robinson went on to state that the LSESU was disappointed by the lack of student consultation on the redevelopment and that "School forums are becoming more and more like rubber stamp mechanisms".

The Brunch Bowl currently serves around 1000 lunches on

an average day, with a seating capacity of 390. This figure increases to 1250-1350 on its busiest days and the redeveloped facilities expand capacity.

The proposed Food Hall will be "the primary foodservice outlet on campus", offering "low tariff, nutritious hot meals for students" and "a central social space for staff and students to meet and study". During off-peak periods, a reduced menu will be available to students and the venue may

be used for events and functions.

An adjacent Café Bar will provide light refreshments throughout the day.

Students can expect a menu with a "strong international flavour", providing quick and simple meals with an emphasis on healthy options. A breakfast and salad bar and a "Grab & Go" range of sandwiches will also be on offer.

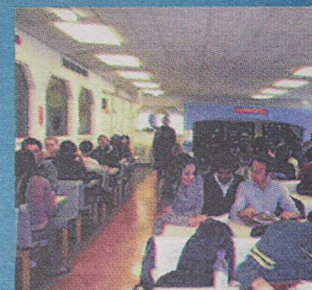
The LSESU, however, has

New and improved

Food Hall and Café Bar to replace Brunch Bowl and Beaver's Retreat

"All-day grazing" menu will reduce demand at peak times

Expect to pay £2.00 - £3.50 for an "all-in-one" bowl meal of pasta, £2.50 for a jacket potato and £1.50 for a hot drink



WiFi access will be available throughout the Fourth Floor, but may be turned off during peak times

As many as 1300 lunches are served in the Brunch Bowl each day. The new proposal aims to increase capacity

All packaging used will be recyclable and customer recycling stations will be provided. Low-energy lighting will also be used

raised concerns about the School's commitment to providing students with real options. Robinson noted that not enough thought had gone into diversifying food, particularly the consideration of vegan, allergy or religious food. The document also contains no explicit reference to providing Fair Trade or organic choices.

Tariff levels will be no higher, in real terms, than current prices in the Brunch Bowl - students can expect to pay up

to £3.50 for an "all-in-one" hot meal and a maximum of £1.50 for a hot drink.

The document outlines a number of environmental procedures in place as well, for example to "encourage the recycling of all products where possible" and for "all packaging to be recyclable or made from recycled materials where feasible". These will be accompanied by "the use of low energy lighting" and "alternative cooking methods".

Queen's speech used to announce sale of student loan debt

Estee Fresco

The government proposes to sell student loan debt, it was announced in the Queen's Speech. The bill would allow the Minister for Students, Lord Triesman, to sell a portion of student loans to a third-party purchaser, raising £6 billion for the government. The plan was first outlined during Gordon Brown's 2007 budget speech.

The President of the National Union of Students (NUS), Gemma Tumelty, responded to the proposal by saying that the NUS' most pressing concern is that "individual borrowers - students and graduates - who have received loans, will not be affected by these proposals through changes in terms and conditions or increased interest rates." The NUS also hopes that the confusion graduates experienced last time the Government sold student loans can be avoided this time.

Nicholas Barr, Professor of Public Economics at the LSE, is an expert on higher education finance. He claimed that the proposed bill will not affect students in any way. "Students' loan repayments will not change," he said. "Their repayments will still be taken out of their pay packets by employers and passed on, via the tax authorities, to the student loans administration."

Both Tumelty and Barr, however, voiced greater concerns with selling off student debt. Tumelty questioned the sustainability of the student loan system. "The fact that the Government is yet again selling

off the student loan book raises questions about the long-term sustainability of a funding system that encourages long-term debt," she said. She referred to the recent economic crisis in the US related to selling off debt, observing that there are risks involved in this kind of financial transaction that can have consequences for the wider economy.

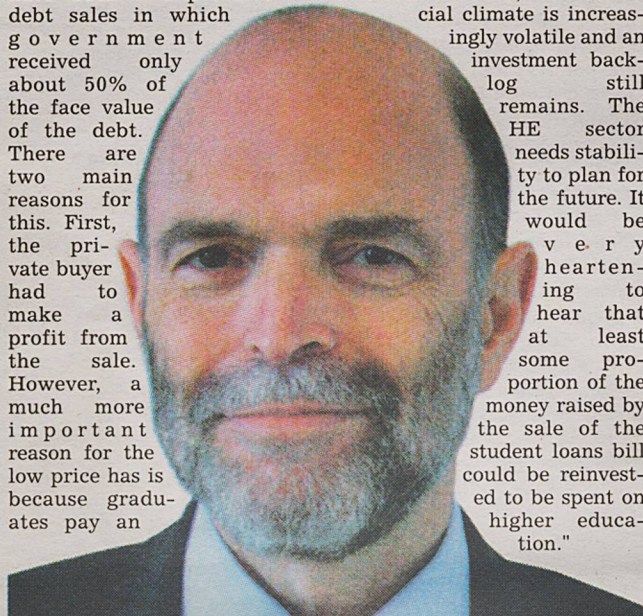
Professor Barr said that, from a public policy perspective, selling off student debt is questionable and that the Government has a bad track record when it comes to debt sales. According to Barr "there have been two previous debt sales in which government received only about 50% of the face value of the debt. There are two main reasons for this. First, the private buyer had to make a profit from the sale. However, a much more important reason for the low price has is because graduates pay an

interest rate that is below the market rate - an interest subsidy that is hugely expensive and, ironically, benefits only the best-off graduates." Barr sees the same problems occurring with the current proposal to sell off student debt.

The debt sale will not effect the way in which students pay back debt, or the amount they pay.

The chief executive of the vice-chancellors' umbrella group Universities UK has called on the government to reinvest the money generated from the sale.

In a debate in the House of Lords she said, "The financial climate is increasingly volatile and an investment backlog still remains. The HE sector needs stability to plan for the future. It would be very heartening to hear that at least some proportion of the money raised by the sale of the student loans bill could be reinvested to be spent on higher education."



Nick Barr, Professor of Public Economics, has repeatedly called for the scrapping of the student loan interest rate subsidy. He argues the £1.8bn it costs the government should be used to widen access and improve teaching quality instead.

Capitol Hill Israel lobby "as American as apple pie"

Joseph Cotterill
Features Editor

The activities of Capitol Hill's Israel lobby are "as American as apple pie", Professor John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago said last Tuesday. He and his fellow International Relations scholar, Professor Stephen Walt, spoke at a public lecture, held to promote their new book, at the LSE.

Mearsheimer's remarks were in marked contrast to the pair's original and highly controversial 2006 London Review of Books article, which referred to the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) as a "de facto agent for a foreign government".

As the lecture began, both professors presented their thesis in as moderate and qualified a light as possible. Walt, speaking first, distanced himself from extremist interpretations of the book's findings. The Israel Lobby was emphatically not, he said, "a modern Protocol of the Elders of Zion" exposing a "cabal or conspiracy."

Powerful and persuasive pro-Tel Aviv groups - not all of them Jewish, he was careful to add - nevertheless operate within the Beltway, successfully maintaining American military aid for Israel equivalent to \$500 for every Israeli citizen.

Mearsheimer argued, as gently as he could, that this continued support ignores the extent to which Israel has become a "strategic burden" for the United States. The influ-



Professor Stephen Walt, speaking at the LSE last Tuesday

ence of groups such as AIPAC have prevented the United States from facing up to reality in its post-9/11 Middle East strategy. Particularly, AIPAC had been "one major driving force" in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war. The lecture began to become heated at this point.

The controversy that has stalked the two professors since last year's article was published manifested itself during the questions and answers phase. Fielding a question on whether Israel could survive without US aid in the face of Iranian President

Mahmoud Ahmedinejad threat to "wipe it off the face of the map", the professors quibbled with the exact translation of the president's words.

Catcalls began, but order was quickly restored by the Chair, Professor Michael Cox of the LSE's International Relations Department. Another questioner called the professors' revised book "dull" after the previous furore over their ideas. It was, Professor Walt said, "the nicest thing we've heard about us in a long time".

LSE students rally for Kareem

Photograph: James Pugh



Rally organised by LSE students to protest against Kareem's imprisonment

James Pugh

Last Friday, two LSE students organised a rally outside the Egyptian Embassy in a protest to mark the anniversary of Abdul-Kareem's arrest. The rally brought together students from a variety of universities, including UCL, Queen Mary, and Oxford, as well as non-student members of the public.

Armed with placards in English and Arabic calling for "Free Kareem" and "Blogging is Not a Crime", the small group stood peacefully outside the Egyptian Embassy in a relatively quiet street of Mayfair.

Last Tuesday was the first anniversary of the arrest of the Egyptian blogger, Abdul

Kareem Nabil (often known as Kareem Amer). The arrest last year was followed by a sentencing of 4 years imprisonment for "insulting Islam and sedation" and "insulting Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak", in February this year.

Abdul Kareem was a former Law student at Egypt's prestigious Al-Azhar University until early 2006, when he was expelled for views expressed on his blog deemed incompatible with the University's Islamic ethos. These included explicitly secularist viewpoints, discussions on women's rights, and a denunciation of the University's attitude to free thought and its promotion of strict interpretations of Islam. The expulsion from Al-Azhar

University set off a cascade of events that eventually lead to his arrest on November 6 last year.

Since his arrest, groups of concerned individuals have organised to form an action group, FreeKareem.org, campaigning for Abdul-Kareem's release. Starting in Bahrain in December 2006, various rallies have been taking place outside Egyptian embassies across the world, with the first international coordinated rallies held in February of this year in response to his sentencing.

Individuals from the rally put forward the case for Abdul-Kareem, claiming that his imprisonment was indicative of a lack of freedom of expression in Egypt. Following a civilised Wimbledon style debate, an

embassy staff member put across that in Egypt, the media is often very critical of the government, and thus does tolerate freedom of expression. He then, however stated that Egyptian culture is different from that of the United Kingdom and that certain qualities are required by individuals before they can be allowed to express opinions on certain matters.

After the debate, the embassy staff member returned to the embassy agreeing that he would read Abdul-Kareem's blog. Rally attendants went home feeling satisfied that some debate on the matter had been stimulated, and that their concerns had been heard, even if not agreed with.

Human Rights Activists talk at the LSE

Douglas Oliver

A discussion about the work of human rights activists took place at the LSE last Tuesday. Approximately sixty students, academics and members of the public attended the event, which was led by the LSE's Centre for the Study of Human Rights.

The panel event centred on the participants' various experiences of working in Nepal and Zimbabwe. The discussion considered the geo-political context which allows human rights abuses to occur.

Chaired by Dr Jenny Kuper, a Fellow in the Law Department, the event emphasised the importance of the separation of political power between various branches of the state.

Arnold Tsunga, who has been threatened at gun-point and beaten in Mugabe's Zimbabwe for his legal defence of those who seek to promote

democracy, stressed this point. Tsunga pointed out that Mugabe was widely considered a hero following the country's full independence in 1980.

However, he noted that things began to go wrong for the country in 1987, when Mugabe combined the positions of Prime Minister and President. Since then, there had been a constant "erosion of civil liberties and socio-economic prospects."

Mandira Sharma and Sam Zia-Zafiri spoke about the difficult situation for human rights in Nepal during the decade-long Civil War between the country's monarch and Maoist rebels. Zia-Zafiri, a Washington advocate at Human Rights Watch, highlighted the difficult situation in the country, "particularly since 2001, when the military got involved in a significant way".

Sharma, who has worked as a civil rights lawyer in the country, identified the "real need to find justice...and to speed up the search for those

who have disappeared during the conflict". She cited the "hundreds of cases of torture" which have been recorded.

The panellists emphasised the difficulty of finding solutions to the human rights abus-



...it was shocking to hear of the atrocities and in particular the way in which they are condoned by countries like India and South Africa.

Kevin Heutschi, a third year LSE undergraduate

es in these countries, stressing the difficulty of foreign involvement. According to Zia-Zafiri, Mugabe is known to use the "spectre of imperialism as a useful political tool" whenever he faces criticism from outside governments for his human rights record.

Responding to a question from Conor Gearty, Director of the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, the panellists commented on neighbouring countries' reticence in speaking out against human rights abuses, with South Africa and India receiving particular criticism.

The event was well received: final-year undergraduate Kevin Heutschi described the discussion as "very interesting and inspirational - but it was shocking to hear of the atrocities and in particular the way in which they are condoned by countries like India and South Africa".

UGM update

UGM Emergency Motions
8 November 2007



NUS Governance Review



Action on Pakistan

Rajan Patel
News Editor

The Union General Meeting (UGM) dissolved once more into farce last week, with no motions on the order paper actually debated.

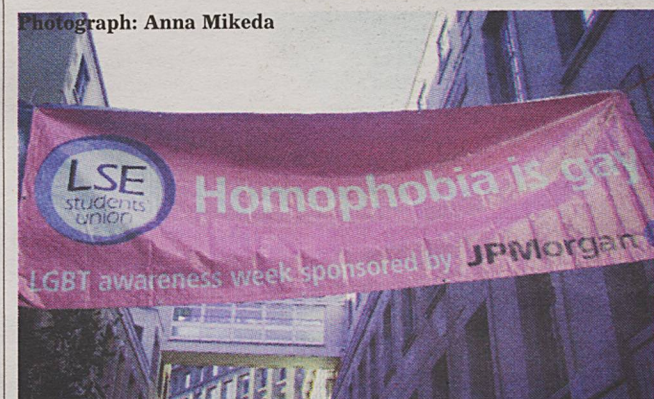
Two emergency motions were considered by the UGM. The first, relating to a National Union of Students (NUS) Governance Review, fell. The second, which mandated the

LSE Students' Union (LSESU) to write to the High Commissioner of Pakistan expressing their opposition to the suppression of democratic protest, passed.

Howard Davies, Director of the LSE, was due to appear at UGM to answer students' questions, but surgery on his hand kept him away. He has yet to confirm when his rescheduled appearance will take place.

LSESU Awareness Week: LGBT

Photograph: Anna Mikeda



Philip Pacanowski

The LSE's annual LGBT Awareness Week took place last week. An event was planned for each day, ranging from an LGBT careers event to a Female Only Social.

The week began with a Mind the Gap social event, and was followed the next day by a lecture on homophobia in Zimbabwe under Mugabe. A sex workshop was organised for Wednesday called 'Between the Gay Sheets'. The careers event 'LGBT in the Workplace' followed on Wednesday. A mini-public lecture was held in the Underground Bar on

Thursday, with the Chief Executive of the UK LGBT pressure group Stonewall, Ben Summerskill, in attendance.

The lecture was entitled 'Anglicanism and Homophobia: The Sexuality of Religion, Lesbianism and Feminism'. The week concluded with a female only social.

Members of the society have told *The Beaver* that the events were not well-attended. Others have said that the sponsorship of JPMorgan was an effort to increase the number of potential LGBT candidates for internships, thereby satisfying sexual equality legislation requirements.

Photograph: Anna Mikeda



LGBT Public Lecture: 'Anglicanism and Homophobia'

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Calling the shots



Sanjivi
Krishnan
Honorary Student

After more than a year of trying to make sense of media-spun scraps of information, we are now able to cast our own judgements on the police operation that led to the unfortunate death of Jean Charles de Menezes on July 22 2005.



The Met may not be suffering from systemic failures, but de Menezes' tragic death warrants closure that only Blair's resignation would bring

Last Thursday, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) finally made public its 'Stockwell One' report, which had been withheld from publication 'pending all legal processes', including the Old Bailey trial that on November 1 convicted the Metropolitan Police of failing to meet its health and safety obligations.

What emerges from the report is a combination of errors, delays, omissions and miscommunications that resulted in the death of an innocent man. The police traced the 21/7 failed bomber Hussain Osman to the same block of apartments as de Menezes and set up surveillance with the expectation of intercepting and arresting Osman, for which purpose a firearms team was requested. De Menezes was seen to leave the building and,

since the firearms team had yet to arrive, was followed by the now-famous surveillance officer 'Ivor' on a bus. At no time did the police attempt to stop him from getting onto the bus, likely because they never positively identified him as the suspect. However at some point their inconclusive judgment was communicated to their commanders – and the firearm squad – as a belief that he was a 'good possible' match, despite explicit contentions by certain officers to the contrary. The inexplicable delay of the firearm squad forced 'Ivor' to follow de Menezes down to Stockwell tube station's Northern line platform with the intention of stopping him. What followed was the culmination of a series of tragic errors.

The aftermath has revealed contradictions: did the armed officers yell 'armed police' after they stormed onto the train, as they claim but passengers deny? And misidentifications: the 'Asian

man' who 'vaulted over the barrier' was not de Menezes but the officer in pursuit. Indeed 'Ivor's' ethnicity and appearance nearly got him killed by an apprehensive fellow officer. While the two officers who carried out the killing may have honestly believed it was necessary to use lethal force to prevent a bomb threat, the IPCC is right to say that those beliefs were formed by circumstances of unclear policy. What did Commander Dick's order to 'stop' him mean? Was it clear to them that this was not an official Kratos operation? And then there was poor communication: did they think the other teams had concluded he was Osman? When 'Ivor' said 'there he is', did he mean the bomb suspect or just the man they were trailing? No doubt their late arrival exacerbated the urgency of the situation in their minds. The implication is that this could, and should, have been avoided.

We're constantly reminded that these were split-second decisions, but as a whole, the unwieldy operation was clearly saddled with flaws. It may have been an accident, but an

innocent man was killed, and with that must come the responsibility to account for what happened and to prevent it from occurring again. The IPCC report seems to stress the very high thresholds needed to press charges of gross negligence manslaughter. But perhaps this creates an unrealistic and insurmountable standard, particularly if it means catas-

a more 'serious' prosecution might have failed. The avenue pursued ensured that the police were held legally responsible in some way.

But that's not enough for some. The trial did not result in humility and seriousness on the part of the Met. Instead, a general perception of arrogant nonchalance, particularly on the part of Commissioner Ian Blair prevailed. It turns out he initially attempted to exclude the IPCC in the aftermath of the killing, despite it being mandatory to refer all cases involving the use of lethal force to the complaints body. A letter reveals this was to prevent disclosure of sensitive information about ongoing counter-terrorism operations.

In the eyes of many, justice means firing Blair. Now, even after the passing of a no-confidence vote by the Greater London Assembly against him, he refuses to step down. He does have a point; this wasn't an indication of systemic police failure. But that doesn't sate our appetite for accountability by rolling heads, a preference that stems all the way back to the Tudors. It is not logical – ministerial sackings in particular never solve the problems that spark them. They are predominantly symbolic. But even so, that symbol would very much mean something, if not to de Menezes himself, at least to his family.



It may have been an accident, but an innocent man was killed, and with that must come the responsibility to account for what happened and prevent it from occurring again

trophes like this fall outside the reach of the criminal law of homicide. It sounds almost insulting to trivialise the issue to one of 'health and safety' and slap the police on the wrist with a fine. Given how complex all the facts here are,

Driven up the wall



Charlotte
Galvin

Israeli proponents of the ludicrously-labelled 'security fence' assert that its construction is solely a means of combating terrorist attacks from West Bank residents. The wall is in fact nothing more than a means of facilitating an illegal land-grab of Palestinian territory for Israeli settlements.

This week is the fifth national and international week against the Apartheid wall. It also marks the failure of the international community to halt its construction, destroy the existing wall and recompense those Palestinians who have suffered from its construction. Similarly, this week should be used to consolidate opposition to the wall, for the curtailment of a people's movement and human rights should never be accepted. Supporters of the wall will repeat the rhetoric of 'terrorism' and 'security' but is it not glaringly obvious that the wall is only serving to further frustrate, radicalise and humiliate Palestinians? Only with the wall's complete demolition can there be any hope for peace.

The ruling by the International Court of Justice in 2004 stating that 'the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying

Segregation can never provide a lasting solution to a conflict, and cannot be justified as a nominal provision of security and protection

power...and its associated regime, are contrary to international law' underlines Israel's flagrant disregard of external opinion. The ICJ's decision to call the structure a "wall" also indicates Israel's



Supporters of the wall will repeat the rhetoric of 'terrorism' and 'security' but is it not glaringly obvious that the wall is only serving to further frustrate, radicalise and humiliate the Palestinians?

duplicity: referring to it as a fence will not change how it is viewed nor make it more attractive, in the eyes of the law.

Israel's unashamed annexation of Palestinian land was

also noted by the ICJ's findings. The security fence does not adhere to the Green Line, which indicates the pre-1967 borders of Israel-Palestine. Then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated in his report that when the separation barrier is completed, 975 sq km of land will fall between the Green Line and the wall. More alarming is the demographic impact of the separation barrier. The Secretary-General predicted that 237,000 Palestinians will be trapped within this politically ambiguous territory. Another 160,000 Palestinians are predicted to live in completely encircled neighbourhoods as a result of the wall's construction.

The role of the wall as a tool of Israeli expansion and colonisation of the West Bank is underscored by Israel's demographic aspirations. Israel's Ministry of Defence argues that 'the Security Fence does not annex territories to the State of Israel', yet with the completion of the barrier the Secretary-General predicts that approximately 320,000 Israeli settlers (settlements being illegal in themselves) will also fall onto the Israeli side of the wall, tantamount to de facto annexation. To reduce the role of the wall to a securi-

ty structure is naïve and simplistic.

The Israeli Ministry of Defence website appears at first glance to portray the security fence as a noble cause with 'minimum disruption to the daily life of the populations residing on both sides of the Security Fence' and incorporates subheadings such as 'Protecting Palestinian Property Owners.' The sheer audacity of these contrived and redundant statements is most evident in the Palestinian town of Qalqiliya. Here the Palestinian residents find themselves completely entrapped by the separation barrier. One gate provides access in and out of Qalqiliya for fifty minutes a day.

By its own admission, the Israeli Ministry of Defence describes the separation barrier as a 'multi-layered fence system'; we are not simply talking about a small-

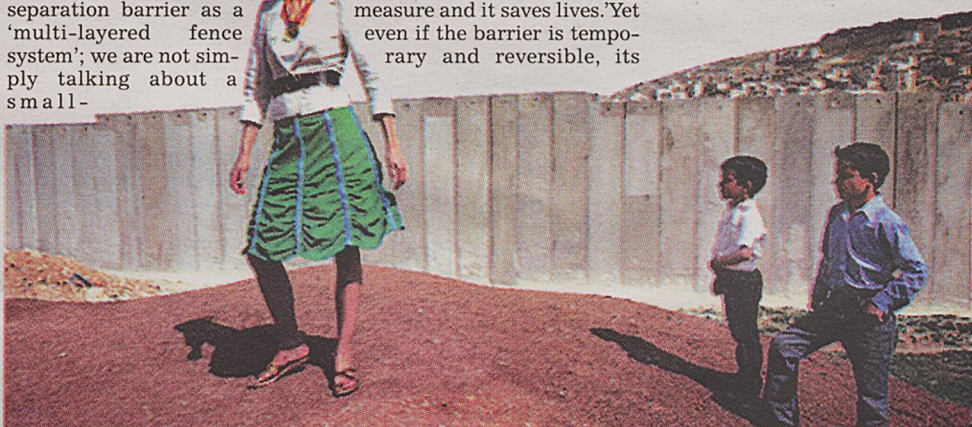
scale fence construction, but a complex militarised zone. Upon completion, 30km of the wall will be an expanse of concrete, with a maximum height of 8m, supported by floodlights, watchtowers and electronic detectors. Other locations along the length of the planned 730km wall will be equally multifaceted in their construction, with parallel barriers of electric fencing and/or barbed-wire and a 70-100 metre buffer zone consisting of military patrol roads, trenches, cameras and intrusion tracking dirt roads.

The separation barrier may not always be constructed of soaring concrete, but this is irrelevant when one looks at the houses, villages and university campuses which have been cut in half or demolished to make way for the vast buffer zones. The wall has separated farmer from farmland, pupil from school and worshippers from their holy sites. The Israeli Foreign Ministry argues 'the fence is reversible...a temporary, non-violent security measure and it saves lives.' Yet even if the barrier is temporary and reversible, its

impact on people's lives is not. It has destroyed homes and livelihoods and more often than not violently uprooted Palestinians. The Israelis claim the wall saves lives, but whose lives are they talking about? Are they talking about the now homeless Palestinians or the Israelis who will suffer at the hands of the very people they have dispossessed?

Behind the facade of security measures, Israel is putting to bed any notion of a viable Palestinian state, with the West Bank now resembling Swiss cheese rather than a sovereign homeland for the Palestinians.

As far back as 1923, the ardent Zionist Ze'ev Jabotinsky espoused the notion of settlement in Palestine 'behind an iron wall which they will be powerless to break down.' Today the separation barrier is a physical manifestation of Jabotinsky's colonial ambitions. The wall is no longer a pipe dream, but just another strand of Israel's divide and rule ideology.



COMMENT & ANALYSIS

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No bang for big bucks



Firoz Noordeen

You should not consider anything left in these lockers safer than if they were left on a public table.

This was what an LSE security officer was telling students last Tuesday, with regards to the recent locker break-ins. I, and many others within earshot, quickly cleared our lockers and proceeded to carry the contents along with us for the rest of the day.

Later on, as I was lugging my three bags of random stuff down to Temple to catch the tube, I thought to myself: "This is not the first time that students have lost what was previously thought of as an essential facility, through no fault of their own." In my first year, students were barred from registering at St. Phillips Medical Centre. Granted, that was more to do with the govern-

From the lack of computers to the recent locker break-in, symptoms of the School's failure to provide adequate resources to students are abound

ment than the LSE, but that doesn't reduce the inconvenience caused, to students. Many students' lives revolve around their university rather than their residence, and due to this inconvenience, some students, myself included, did not register at the NHS for months, and also caused others (mainly home students), not to register in London at all, preferring to go back home to their familiar GPs. When asked, one student remarked, "If St. Phillips was available when I was a fresher, I would have registered there, but why would I go through the trouble to register at a new GP, who would not even be specialized in dealing with students, when I could just go home?" My sentiments exactly.

That's not all. How many of us have grumbled, moaned and bitched about the lack of

computers this year? I have, and almost everyone I know has too. It's a challenge to find one and even then, you need to be a little crafty to get it. But this lack of computers didn't occur because our lives are becoming increasingly dependant on Apple, Google and Facebook, but rather due to the fact that there has been a net increase by 400 students this year. Although the LSE maintains that they have the resources to cope with the extra demand, student experiences beg to differ. How about Library study space? It's only November and I'm finding it difficult to find spaces on the first and second floors during the day. How are we expected to study and perform well academically, when the LSE Library is overcrowded? Having to share study space with so many people results in students becoming less productive while studying. This then leads us to study for longer to get our work done, aggravating the overcrowded situation. The alternatives are either home, or other locations away from the LSE. I cannot even imagine how it will be during the summer term! I avoided the Library last May, this year I may just avoid the School completely.

Now with the locker break-in, I am incensed. The lockers were greatly beneficial

to hundreds of students. Firstly, they were a safe place to store stuff, from textbooks and notes to sports gear and even cosmetics. It provided students with a lot more freedom as they did not have to constantly carry everything around with them, possibly even leaving a few things overnight. Were they right in

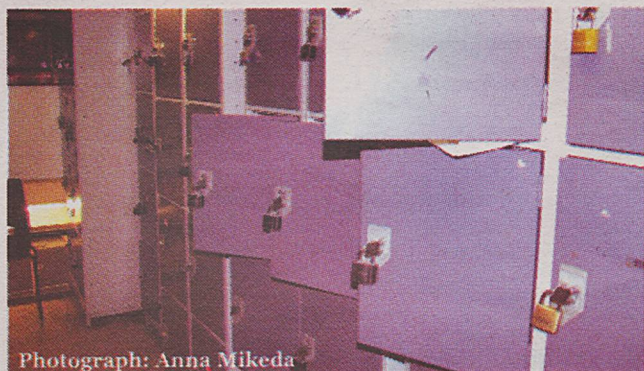
Furthermore, many people use lockers to store society equipment. As the Students' Union storage space is relatively limited, societies have long used these lockers to store anything from drinks to marketing materials. As some societies have found out, break-ins to those lockers can potentially be crippling. For events like Monday's International Food Fair, these lockers have frequently been used to store plates etc used for that day's event.

To top it all off, it does not cost a bomb to replace these lockers. I am not aware of how old those lockers are, but I do think it is high time they be replaced with more secure ones. 600 new lockers would cost the school between £10,500 (basic) and £20,000 (combination), which is still less than two international students' annual tuition fees!

The LSE is a world-renowned university. To study here is the dream of thousands of young people around the world. However, the School is banking on the brand name way too much, and not doing enough for its students, who are getting lesser value for money. Is that fair to us? We all pay a good deal of money to the university not just for a quality education but for the resources that it offers. I do not know about you but I never quite imagined myself prowling the lower ground floor of the famous LSE library just so I can find out where my next class is.

The School is banking on the brand name way too much, and not doing enough for its students, who are getting lesser value for money

assuming the lockers were safe? I believe so. There were signs warning students not to leave valuables in the lockers, and I agree that leaving jewellery, passports etc in those lockers would be unwise. Are study notes and textbooks considered valuables? Probably not. Yet how many of us would sacrifice their watches, shoes and other 'valuables' to get back all the Math, Law or IR notes that they had done over the year?



Photograph: Anna Mikeda

Oh, Great Scot!



David Woodbridge

I am writing in response to Charles Hodgson's feature article in the November 6 issue of *The Beaver* regarding Scottish independence. This is a very emotive issue which I do not feel was particularly well dealt with in the article, with rather too much emphasis placed on simplistic economic factors to the detriment of the many other issues involved, and written in a somewhat patronising manner, albeit probably unintentionally (after all, the Sassenach does claim at the start to have a 'Scottish friend').

But hasn't that always been the attitude of the English towards Scotland? A curious, cold nation lying up north somewhere containing strange, bearded, ginger people, who eat nothing but haggis and deep-fried Mars Bars, play bagpipes and wear kilts; nice vacation spot (well, at least until the advent of cheap international airlines brought the joys of 5.15am flights to Mallorca to our decadent and failing society) with beautiful mountains and rugged land-

As much as we today are accustomed to a united Britain, the Anglo-Scottish cleavage runs deep throughout the histories of both nations

scape and the lochs and the heather etc. But not a place they particularly want to concern themselves with much. Maybe it was this sort of attitude that led Renton to explain in *Trainspotting* that "some people hate the English, I don't. They're just wankers."

The Scottish independence is not, as Hodgson seems to believe, a petty and nonsensical rebellion against an obvious and established order

So, how did we end up in this situation? England and Scotland were formally united into the Kingdom of Great

Britain by the Act of Union in 1707; this was not due to any mutual love between the two nations, with the bells of Edinburgh's St. Giles Cathedral ringing out the tune of 'Why Should I Be So Sad On My Wedding Day?' on the day the Act was signed, but rather Scotland's contemporary economic problems and England's fear of an alliance between Scotland and France leading to a possible Jacobite restoration. Today, even the most Franco-phobic readers of *The Sun* would be hard pressed to believe such a situation still exists, and Scotland is now confident enough to survive, economically, as a separate nation. Although the point is made in Hodgson's article that perhaps the Scots would be less well-off in this situation, no one is denying that it would nonetheless be a viable state. Salmond is a nationalist; he is not about to run his own country into ruin. When oil runs out, the entire way the world economy operates will have to change, not just Scotland's, and Scotland has produced

more than its fair share of great leaders and thinkers (I believe Adam Smith is a particularly sacred cow to many at the LSE) and will continue to do so and will adapt to changing conditions more than adequately in the future.

Yet history cannot be explained solely in fiscal terms. There is a great deal more to this story and, whilst Scotland may have gained economically from the Union, it lost out in many other, arguably more significant, ways. As with its initial response to the Irish Potato Famine, the British government was utterly impotent to prevent a brutal aristocracy from initiating the mass forced displacements of the 18th century in the Highlands that became known as the Highland Clearances and resulted in untold numbers of Scots having to emigrate to Canada and the United States as economic migrants - not a subject discussed much in history classes today. In addition, perhaps globalisation and the proliferation of English-language media would have made it inevitable eventually, but the decline of the Gaelic and Lowland Scots languages undeniably began with, and were exacerbated by, the centralisation of political power in London in the 18th century. Gaelic especially suffered after the Battle of Culloden in 1746, when the ancient clan system

was suppressed, Highland dress was outlawed, and the Gaelic language suffered immense persecution. Donnie Munro, a native Gaelic speaker from Skye, commented after his election as Rector of Edinburgh University in 1991 that "it is something of a miracle that the 43rd Rector of Edinburgh University is still at all capable of speaking Gaelic, given the history of institutionalized vandalism perpetrated against it through the unspoken conspiracy of, at best, indifference; at worst, neglect." Today, less than two per cent of the population speak it. As for Lowland Scots, it is now seen as nothing more than a regional dialect of English - a final insult to the language of Robert Burns.

The Scottish independence movement is not, as Hodgson seems to believe, a petty and nonsensical rebellion against an obvious and established order. Many are tired of the way in which they perceive English interests as superceding Scottish ones, whilst others look at a history which shows the two nations being at odds with each other even after the Union and wonder why these strange bedfellows continue to lie together. Scotland and England existed separately for far longer than they have existed as a unified state, and there are many who are convinced that it is this which is the natural order of things.

the Beaver

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The views and opinions expressed in *The Beaver* are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors or the LSE Students' Union.

the Beaver

Established 1949 - Issue 671

Letters to the Editor



The Beaver offers all readers the right to reply to anything that appears in the paper. Letters should be sent to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk and should be no longer than 250 words. All letters must be received by 3pm on the Sunday prior to publication. The Beaver reserves the right to edit letters prior to publication.

Ranking slip not fatal...

...but more than a drop in the ocean

The announcement that the LSE had slipped to 59th in the *Times Higher Education Supplement's* annual rankings of world universities was greeted with surprise and great concern by many students. For an institution which banks so heavily on its reputation and prestige, the figure is indeed initially embarrassing, and while further reading does bare out much of the School's interpretation of the figures, there is progress to be made.

The positive news was of course the high standing the School still retains in terms of social sciences institutions.

More heartening perhaps is the news that we remain close to the summit when it comes to employer's assessment of a university's worth – perhaps the real acid test for many students will be the perceived worth of a degree in the job market.

Postgraduate fees remain well above those offered at many other UK universities – including those with stronger positions on the league tables. UCL provides perhaps the most intriguing example – they have leaped to 9th in the world overall. While they are standing at a mere 32nd in the social sciences rankings, they have the highest number of citations in that field of any university – 7.6 compared to LSE's lowly 2.2. The cost of postgraduate studies there is much lower across the board – to take one example, an MA in History at UCL will cost a UK student £3,240, while an MSc in Global History will set an LSE postgraduate back a cool £13,452. It cannot be long before students begin to question what exactly they are paying for.

Davies' sabbatical still rankles...

...leaving students once again feeling shortchanged

One place that money certainly is being spent is in the top echelons of management. This is understandable – an institution such as this one expects to have highly experienced staff at its helm. However, the need to give our Director a paid sabbatical is less clear.

While it is the norm for academic staff to take time off from other academic duties to undertake their own groundbreaking research – the very research which is so important to maintaining our position as a leading academic institution – it is unclear how Howard Davies' forthcoming tome will benefit the field of social sciences. The sharpest irony of course is that few of the academic staff can expect to receive the £55,000 that Davies will receive on his three-month sabbatical – a figure equivalent to 17 ½ UK undergraduate's annual tuition fees.

Just as with the decision to grant him the sabbatical in the first place, students are once again being kept in the dark. *The Beaver* awaits with bated breath the subject of Davies' tome – will it be a late first stab at academia, a memoir of his experiences as a jet-setting University director or, dare we say it, a potential Booker Prize winner?

Wish to voice your concerns on a burning issue?

Email c&a@thebeaveronline.co.uk

"tin pot"

Dear Sir,

I just wanted to write to inform you that your editorial of November 6 regarding the wearing of white poppies had quite an effect on me. Its sanctimonious, self-righteous tone and sickening moral certitude induced me to go out and get not one, or two, but three red poppies to wear to show my support for this nation's veterans and armed forces. The extra two red poppies will make up for the one or two people who were actually convinced by your vapid excuse for an article to wear white poppies.

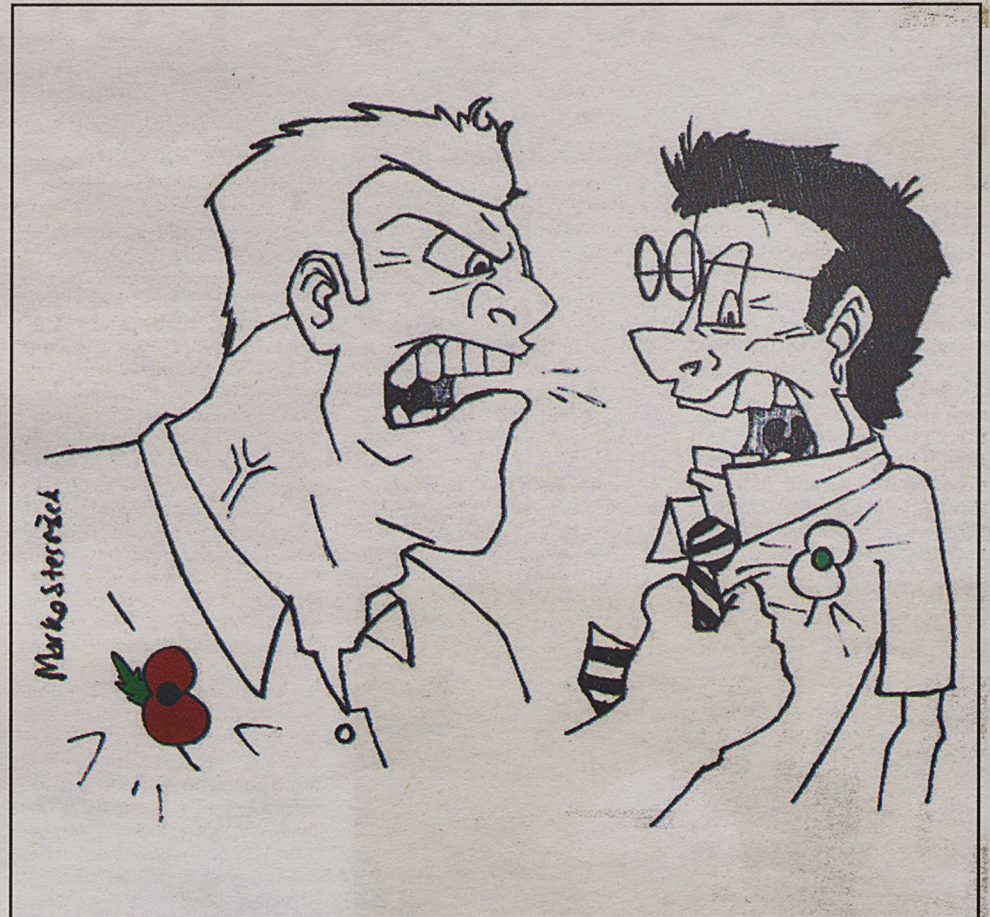
Only a keen misreading or utter ignorance of history could lead one to believe that, unequivocally, "war is not the answer." Tell that to starving Sudanese refugees who, even now, would love to see violence meted out on their behalf by the armed forces of the Western world. Or tell the Rwandan dead that while their homes were being taken from them and their families murdered, we were "looking for better ways to resolve conflicts than killing strangers." Sometimes, violence is the only way to resolve conflicts equitably. Why should a tin pot dictator stop killing people if no-one puts a gun to his head and says "stop?" Would Hitler have stopped gassing Jews if he hadn't been defeated in war? War and violence can be used in just ways, and to imply otherwise is ignorant, misleading and immoral.

J.P. Medved

"massive scale"

Dear Sir,

Perhaps I should apologise to Christine Whyte for my 'lack of understanding of popular revolt and class struggle' (letters, 6th November). One thing I am struggling to understand is why someone so concerned about the fate of one individual in the US who was convicted of murder and is therefore facing the threat of 'state-sanctioned murder' should be so supportive of the October Revolution, which used state-sanctioned murder against political opponents on a massive scale. When I consider that in two months in 1918 the Bolsheviks executed more than ten times as many people as have been executed in the US in the last thirty years, I fail to understand why the latter system should be regarded as 'oppressive' while the former should be regarded as 'admirable'.



One thing which I will not apologise for is wearing the red poppy of the Royal British Legion, and saying that I consider the editorial in *The Beaver* last week criticising the Poppy Appeal and the British Legion to have been a disgrace. To criticise this organisation which represents and cares for military veterans for 'militaristic rhetoric' and 'glorification of war' is ludicrous, and suggests a disconnection from reality as well as being an insult. Is the British Legion supposed to be ashamed rather than proud of those whose sacrifices it is remembering? And to attempt to smear the organisation due to some connection with BAE was very low indeed. I thought everybody knew that the red poppy was a symbol of remembrance, not 'dogmatic glorification of conflict'. Sentiments such as 'war isn't worth fighting for' are all very well, but where would your freedom to express such views be if past generations had taken such a dogmatic line?

Peter John Cannon

"spontaneous mass"

Dear Sir,

I would take strong issue with the accounts presented by Christine Whyte and Vladimir Unkovski-Korica of 'revolution' in Russia in 1917.

In stark contrast to the spontaneous mass action of February 1917, Red October was executed by a small number of determined men. Though such a vanguard action might have sought to bring about the "rulership" of the "masses" over their "destiny" (Unkovski-Korica quoting Trotsky), many of the developments that followed October 1917 – and which predated the rise of Stalin – seem hardly reflective of a sustained effort toward these ends, or even one "against oppression and exploitation" (Whyte).

Consider Alexandra Kollontai's calls in 1920 for what she called the dictatorship of party leaders to be replaced by a proletarian dictatorship, citing Marx and Engels' proclamation that the "creation of communism" is "the work of the toiling masses themselves." Lenin's dismissals of such criticisms as "syndicalist and anarchist deviations" and his subsequent tabling of discussion on "industrial democracy" hardly seem motivated by concern for workers. The Bolsheviks' efforts to violently put down the Makhnotvsty's struggle for a Ukraine "without masters or slaves" once they had served their purpose – helping against the Whites in the Civil War – also seems highly dubious, as of course was the suppression of the 1921 Kronstadt rebellion, a movement that sought the destruction of Lenin and Trotsky's "comisarcocracy" and the ushering in of a true social revolution – a Third Revolution – in which the workers of Russia were not

to be the slaves of the state.

Javier Sethness

"reading more"

Dear Sir,

I was greatly saddened to learn from the World Service about the unfortunate and profoundly tragic passing of your esteemed PartB columnist Auntie Shaw.

In her time as the resident agony aunt of *The Beaver*, Auntie Shaw waxed salacious prose and suggestive literature. Her lewd antics and outrageous answers to the multitude of student problems that are cast her way never failed to bring a smile to my otherwise stone-dead mug.

I recall Auntie Shaw's distinctly vulgar and rude tones in her responses to my many letters to her, each and every one of them leaving a marked and indelible impression on my tortured psyche. However, despite the occasionally harsh ripostes she delivers, I found myself drawn to her unsung wit and under-appreciated charms.

I beseech fellow readers of *The Beaver* to join me in prayer for the wretched soul of our beloved Auntie Shaw. May she be blessed with endless sexual bliss and tantric pleasures in paradise.

Kimberley McAddams

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

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Students' Union



Narcissists' politics



Douglas Oliver

The radical stance certain students have taken on the Israeli-Palestinian is rashly polemic and damages constructive measures towards peace

In his op-ed in the November 6 issue of *The Beaver*, Joseph Brown claimed inheritance of the progressive legacy of LSE's Fabian founders.

He painted a simplified black and white political picture of the School and the Students' Union: those who supposedly "reject our [the School's] foundations of social justice" and those – like himself – who the Webbs et al "would be certainly proud of".

He claimed that all those who opposed ill-considered actions such as the storming of the LSE Council and the crude letter sent out to first-years in the name of Palestinians are "anti-justice" or pro-Israeli. His polarising agenda has nothing to offer the causes he claimed to speak for, and his conception of politics has little in common with the enlightened pluralistic principles of the Webbs, with whom he likes to claim association.

Brown cited a series of electoral triumphs as a victory for the "progressive" forces within the School. He also claimed that the twinning with An-Najah University was a victory for the same. Fostering links with a Palestinian university and supporting the universal right to education is unquestionably a worthy cause. However, it was undermined by the recognition of one group of people while ignoring the other – the Israelis. The concept of the universality of human rights is worthless if we choose to make exceptions: whatever our political views are of Israel, we ought to recognise the fact that Israelis are humans also. The motion, passed at the UGM was self-contradictory: declaring the "universal right to education" whilst ignoring the opportunity to promote educational links with other students because of the country they were born in did nothing to promote the Palestinian cause.

Brown also suggested that those who were opposed to the crude letter written by Fadhil Bakeer-Markar and Ziyaad Lunat were "anti-justice". The one-sided letter showed no understanding of the immense

complexities of the issues which have made progress so intractable. More seriously, it failed to reflect the hope, shared by the majority of LSE students, that the path to peace can be found through discussion and mutual understanding.

It is similarly absurd that the students at the recent demonstration at the School Council meeting claimed that Howard Davies' stance against a possible University and College Union (UCU) academic boycott – declared recently to be illegal – somehow amounts to "implicit support for the Israeli State". By supporting such a boycott, the voice of some of the most progressive voices in Israel – such as those who called for freedom of movement between Gaza and the West Bank the day before the UCU motion was passed – are made weaker. Meanwhile those elements with less sympathy for the Palestinians – led by Netanyahu's already resurgent Likud – gain ever more strength as it gives credence to those in the country who make the facile equation of European anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. Davies' stance – endorsed by the Court of Governors – reflects the need for communication and understanding as well as respecting LSE's fundamental respect for freedom of academic thought.

Irresponsible demonstrations like that on October 30 only make the student body look reactionary and politically unsophisticated to the School even as we seek to get a better deal on the "bread and butter" issues of teaching improvements. More importantly, it offers nothing to the people of Gaza and Palestine.

conditioned in an atmosphere which respected freedom of speech and heterodoxy of political outlook. As such, they were keen to balance the radical component of the School – the likes of Shaw – with those of other more conservative political tendencies. And so it has been, as the LSE has welcomed leading 20th century thinkers of all political perspectives: from Laski to von Hayek, from Giddens to Sen. Were the Webbs with us today, they would certainly not be proud of Brown's scorn for academic freedom and debate and would certainly cringe – like the rest of us – at his simplistic representation of political good and evil.

The George W. Bush-style "with us or against us" mentality which has inspired the recent approach to the Palestinian situation is wholly counterproductive and dangerous for the Students' Union. There are many at the LSE who actively seek to promote a better deal for the Palestinian people. However, we understand that the grandstanding tactics of those who polarise the debate to gain a moral monopoly offer nothing to the real campaign for justice. The progressive forces in the LSE and beyond are those seeking real progress rather than to be seen as the most visibly radical. Though the methods that encourage debate and discussion are not always the most sexy, it is time they are utilised and respected by our SU. It is time that the silent majority, dismissed as being "anti-justice", stand up for the principles which have made LSE what it is.

The George W. Bush-style "with us or against us" mentality which has inspired the recent approach to the Palestinian situation is wholly counterproductive and dangerous for the Students' Union

Brown claimed that the Fabians would be "proud" of his approach today. The School's motto is *rerum cognoscere causas*; the aspiration to "discover the causes of things" in order to improve the world. Whilst they hoped that the LSE would help promote their ideas of gradualist democratic socialism, they were also aware that such an institution could not be didactic in nature and could only endure if it was

Photograph: Pooja Kesavan



Democracy inaction



Laura Parfitt

The token gestures of solidarity and support take precious time and effort away from pertinent student issues that can be realistically acted upon

In the Union General Meeting (UGM) on October 18, a motion entitled "Support Human Rights of Burmese & Protesters" was discussed. Under "Union resolves", the motion called for the Students' Union Executive Committee to 'support' human rights campaigns "by sending a letter...to the Burmese authorities...calling for the release of political prisoners."

Putting myself in the shoes of a Burmese government bureaucrat, I would bin the letter immediately upon receipt. Harsh but true, and something I firmly expect will happen.

In subsequent UGMs, more motions were proposed in a similar vein, regarding some of the pressing happenings around the world. All called for similar actions to be taken: more "support" in the form of letters to officials and other forms of unexplained "sup-

port". One inaptly named "Don't Attack Iran" wasn't discussed on the 8th November due to lack of time,



You wouldn't want your right to speak and vote on issues directly affecting you be hijacked by misplaced concerns

but I seriously doubt the SU are going to attack Iran. It also proposed to mandate the SU to partake in "direct action" – what this could mean I can

only imagine.

Seriously though, the point I'm trying to make is that while showing concern for important international issues is admirable, I think we are losing sight of the true purpose of the UGM.

The UGM should primarily be used for discussing Union policy on issues directly affecting its members, i.e. LSE students' welfare, finances, studies and hobbies. Now, please don't misinterpret what I'm trying to say: I am certainly not condemning support for some very worthy causes, I'm simply saying that the motions on these issues should not take precedence over motions concerning the School and the SU. It may sound selfish, but if we want SU reforms and improvement of the School services, then this is our channel through which to do so. This is how we get the School to listen to us. It is how we have a say in

the way the SU's money is spent. You wouldn't want your right to speak and vote on issues directly affecting you be hijacked by misplaced concerns – it contradicts what the UGM stands for: democracy.

Personally, I believe mandating the General Secretary to write letters to different officials is a pointless idea; you can't help but doubt the effects on their reader. Maybe I'm verging on the cynical side of realism, but I doubt ruthless

government officials will entertain the opinions of a Students' Union when the whole world already opposes them. It is therefore a waste of the sabbatical officers' time and the SU's money, money that could be put into making a real difference to students at the LSE.

It would be great to see more motions to mandate action on current issues concerning students, for example the severe lack of computers available on campus, post-graduate students being unable to partake in Wednesday afternoon activities, and the awarding body of our degrees. All of these issues affect us now. We can have a

say on all of them, and have a very real chance of making a difference.

Defeatist it may sound, but as an SU there's not a lot we can do about the state of affairs in Palestine, Pakistan, Iran and Burma. Though we can take a stand, we don't have the funding, resources and contacts to make any real difference. If you want to help make a difference, support an organisation that has the resources to do so. Claiming that verbal approval of an organisation is "support" is a very passive interpretation of the word. These organisations want active support: Oxfam ask for £2 a month, not a Christmas card every year.



Photograph: Anna Mikeda

Features

Red isn't Dead

Pakistan has reached endgame - for both Musharraf and the US

Vladimir Unkovski-Korica



Last weekend, General Pervez Musharraf, who took power in a coup in 1999, declared a state of emergency in Pakistan in a bid to retain power. He has suspended the constitution, postponed elections and begun a crackdown on the opposition. Up to a thousand lawyers across Pakistan are in jail; five hundred members of former premier Benazir Bhutto's party have been arrested; and trade union militants and grass roots activists have also been imprisoned. Musharraf has taken Pakistan to the verge of revolution, and all to get his dodgy October re-election approved by a new Supreme Court filled with loyal stooges. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to follow by February at the latest, but Musharraf is not known for keeping his word.

Yet throughout, Western reaction has been quite muted. It's not difficult to guess why. Musharraf has been a crucial ally in the US-led 'war on terror'. Since 9/11, the US has given Pakistan \$10 billion in aid - three quarters of which have gone to the military, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Although Western leaders have issued the customary condemnations of the suspension of the constitution, the Bush administration has admitted that it will keep the flow of funds to Pakistan's military going. In carefully calibrated public statements and much blunter private acknowledgments about the limits of American leverage over General Musharraf, officials argued that it would be counterproductive to let Pakistan's political turmoil interfere with their best hope of ousting Al-Qaeda's central leadership and the Taliban from the country's mountainous tribal areas.

To lose Pakistan in the 'war on terror' would be tantamount to catastrophe for the US. It would directly threaten NATO's presence in Afghanistan, and it would close off the only reliable route to the country. Such a blow to the US would be double-edged: it would leave Iran more pushy than it already is thanks to the quagmire in Iraq, and only India and Japan would be left as relatively reliable great power counterweights to China. In other words, the US would be faced with failure in what Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Adviser and author of *The Grand Chessboard*, calls one of its absolutely central goals: "to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together." Though the neo-cons differ markedly in terms of their methods to maintain US supremacy, they all agree that losing Pakistan would be disastrous.

But they would probably talk more of the failure of 'democracy' against 'Islamofascism' or 'terrorism' instead of Brzezinski's preferred US 'interests' against 'the barbarians'. The trouble in Pakistan is that the US has been visibly backing military dictatorship for almost a decade. The more intelligent right wingers would probably explain that, just as in the days of the USSR, it's better to have Pinochet or Musharraf in power than blood-drinking 'commies' or 'terrorists' (respectively). Hence US support for Bhutto, who, ever the opportunist, hopes to profit from Musharraf's coup. She told *Time*, in an interview headlined 'Bhutto to Musharraf: We Can Still Deal', that she's still prepared for (US-brokered) power-sharing with the military dictator.

It appears we are living in a darkening world. We get to choose between the 'Free World' and its supposed allies (Musharraf, The House of Saud, and Apartheid Israel) and 'Islamofascist' irrationality. Thankfully, most of us can differentiate between the threats posed by a nuclear power with international military reach seeking to retain its global dominance, and small terrorist networks that feed on the helplessness and sense of injustice understandably felt by the millions of the poor across the Muslim world. Our main enemy remains at home: it is global injustice defended by the British state as a junior partner of US imperialism. Fighting this is the most concrete way to embolden the Pakistani masses to take matters into their own hands, and get rid of General Musharraf for good.

Blue is True

Fair trade doesn't mean much without free trade too

Annette Pacey



How does the sight of the Fairtrade logo on the coffee machines dotted around the LSE campus make you feel as you select your coffee? Informed? Principled? Just a little bit smug? The claim that we can change the world with our consumer choices is seductive, and a touching compliment to the free market liberalism we too easily pillory. The Fairtrade story turns out to be a little more complicated, however.

The intentions behind the Fairtrade movement are certainly worthy. Few would be unmoved by the stories of banana growers in the Dominican Republic who, after years of living hand to mouth, now have a stable and decent income which they are using to improve their living conditions. That these farmers benefit from higher prices is obviously true, but the economics behind Fairtrade is flawed, and in the long run it does commodity producers in the third world no good at all.

Commodities like bananas, coffee and cocoa are already overproduced, which means prices are low. Part of the reason for the overproduction is that third world producers are prevented from diversifying into other products by trade barriers protecting farmers in the rich world. The US and Europe shamefully continue to subsidise their beef, grain and sugar producers. This means that farmers in poor countries cannot compete in these products and are left to produce unprotected commodities, which cannot sustain them all.

The Fairtrade premium does help third world farmers in the short term, but it also encourages new farmers to start producing crops that are already oversupplied, thereby perpetuating the cycle of poverty they aim to diminish. A better solution would be for the farmers to move away from these volatile crops and grow something else. Granted, alternatives can be hard to find, but campaigning efforts would be better directed at rich world governments and their agricultural subsidies. Paying third world farmers to continue growing crops like coffee and bananas will never help more than a few of them escape poverty.

Perhaps it's just me, but I detect a certain left-wing agenda behind the Fairtrade movement. In some cases, only small scale co-operatives can get Fairtrade certification, while plantations or larger family run operations can be excluded. This not only defeats the stated aim of the movement, as most workers work on large-scale plantation and so would miss out on any benefits, but is also rather patronising. Why should there be a bias towards small-scale farmers and co-operatives? Could it be that left-leaning campaigners find co-operatives somehow more morally palatable and the idea of farmers who want to get rich (if only they could) off-putting? The contractual requirement that farmers spend their Fairtrade premium on community development has a similar overtone. It ought to be entirely up to the farmers how to spend the extra money. Politically-inspired restrictions are condescending to say the least.

Questioning the economics of Fairtrade, and being suspicious of the motivations of campaigners and retailers who promote it, does not imply a lack of concern for the plight of third world producers. It's tempting to think that by paying a bit more for our daily coffee we are helping to change the world, but all we are really buying is a brief feeling of self-satisfaction. Worse still, by distracting ourselves with well-intentioned but ineffective solutions like Fairtrade, we neglect to pursue solutions which would really make a difference to third world farmers, like the elimination of rich country agricultural subsidies.

Notes on Nothing

How long can any debate or discussion dealing with the Israeli and the Palestinian conflict last without turning into an ideological battle? How do we exorcise ourselves from the dominant discourses that have histrionically conditioned our opposing views? In this issue we explore the function of the **Israeli Lobby** within the United States' internal political structure and meditate on the fine balance that one needs to reconcile between critical analysis and ideological scrutiny.

In the spirit of critical analysis we will also take a closer look at the larger implications of **Fairtrade** practices within the global market. The wide reaching exposure of such programs and their popular appeal has unfairly antagonised any serious analysis that makes the slightest attempt in engaging with the topic a critical way. The 'True Price of Coffee' article strives to dispel the myth of fairtrade and expose its problematic aspects.

Furthermore, Polina Levina reflects on her recent trip to **North Korea** and recounts her experience as a foreigner inside one of the world's most secretive states. Her exposure to the North Korean society, engagement with the local population, and access to information were severely restricted by the ubiquitous control of the Kim Jong Il's regime. So close and yet so far away. Polina attempts to break through the enforced distance and envision the future of the communist state and its people.

Finally, we will take yet another look at the ever-changing state of Pakistani politics and the dreams, hopes, and lives that are hanging by a thread from the feral claws of the totalitarian agents of power. Luke Cooper, a LSE student stationed in Pakistan, reports on the valiant demonstrations of the dissenting lawyers and other opposition fractions, and examines the political prospect of a volatile movement marginalised by repression, betrayal and **Emergency Law**.

Professors John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt are definitely not the anti-Semites of their wilder critics' imagining, and they are supremely polite and softly-spoken scholars. They are, however, supposed to be realists.

In the labyrinth of international relations theory, realists care very little for what goes on inside states. They prefer a grim, parsimonious world run by the balance of power, where states go to the wire in a self-help fight for survival. Indeed, Mearsheimer and Walt are best known for being 'neorealists', particularly austere acolytes of the international law of the jungle. The title of one of Mearsheimer's previous books, 'The Tragedy of Great Power Politics', is fairly self-explanatory. Even if the Israel lobby operates at the heart of the most powerful state on the planet, isn't it somewhat beneath Mearsheimer and Walt to write a book on the relative fluff of domestic politics?

Mearsheimer is clear that the pair's collaboration started out with a typically grand realist vocation. "We decided that we were going to study US Middle East policy. What we quickly discovered", however, "was that the Israel lobby was a powerful influence shaping that policy." As far as he is concerned, "there's no question that the Israel lobby's influence on US foreign policy contradicts our basic realist theories about how the world works", although Walt seems keener to reconcile their recent research interest with their intellectual pedigree. "No theory explains everything. There are always going to be exceptions

and the impact of the Israel lobby is the main exception. It doesn't contradict the theory: it's an exception that lies outside the theory." Walt's realist instincts are otherwise haughtily intact. "The current wreckage of US Middle East policy has been due to allowing domestic politics to have too large an impact, with all sorts of negative consequences." Both he and Mearsheimer consider the 2003 Iraq war to have been an unmitigated disaster for the United States, which it has been able to get away with because of its immense military power.

"We don't make the argument that all the United States' problems in the Middle East derive from the influence of the lobby."

It is a little puzzling that the recent controversy around Mearsheimer and Walt has centred on the "exception", the coterie of pro-Israeli groups on Capitol Hill who seduce and cajole politicians from both Houses into channelling funds to Israel, and not the pair's wider strategic vision for the United States in a region that has received almost undivided geopolitical attention from America since 9/11.

It is true that, according to Walt, political action committees for the Israeli cause have made campaign contributions of "about \$55 million over the last fifteen years or so in various congressional and other elections", not counting individual

contributions. The largest and most successful Israel lobbying organisation, the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) does not itself donate to elections, but is well known for its slick media and networking practices. As the two professors made clear in the 2006 'London Review of Books' article that kicked off their association with one of the great taboo subjects of American politics, Israel has been the largest annual recipient of American aid since 1976, having received around \$140bn in support from the US since its founding in 1948. Is there a link?

Permanent interests

Perhaps not, actually. What Yitzhak Rabin called the alliance "beyond compare" in fact reached its turning point in 1973, long before AIPAC's zenith. After Israel survived its darkest hour in the Yom Kippur War (and the most plausible threat of Soviet intervention in the Middle Eastern Cold War) US aid quadrupled. The United States had begun arms shipments to Israel only a decade previously, despite the USSR, France and Britain having made the Middle East arms controls agreements restraining American administrations a dead letter long before.

In that case, the neorealist story of a swingeing balance of power directing state behaviour might have some meat to it. Mearsheimer and Walt's book on the Israel lobby could therefore be read as a relative chamber piece, intended to explain why a rigid strategic rationale for US-Israeli relations well suited to an earlier period has been allowed to survive in a much more fragmented and flexible era. Realists would much prefer Lord Palmerston's dictum that states have "no permanent friends; only permanent interests." Walt makes the good point that 9/11 brought the United States' varied interests in the Middle East - from terrorism and a good oil supply to nuclear anti-proliferation - back to the fore. His strategy for achieving them, however, should if anything provoke more uproar than the pair's taboo-breaking on AIPAC's doings in Washington.

A "realist" US strategy

"All those interests are best met by trying to preserve a balance of power in the region and keeping the American role in the region as small as possible, which was American policy from 1945 to 1991. We were an offshore balancer in the Middle East and Persian Gulf. We didn't send our army and air force there - we let other actors do it, we switched sides. So we backed Iraq against Iran in the 1980s and we kept our armed forces over the horizon."

Ah, yes: the small matter of the Iran-Iraq War. This "tropical Somme" (as LSE history professor Macgregor Knox has called it) devoured around one million lives during eight years of trench warfare. Saddam Hussein's vicious little WMD programme

took a great leap forward here, as the Iraqi army worked to break the desert stalemate. The deadliest industrial war since World War Two also gave Iran's Revolutionary Guards their chance to lock the Islamic Republic down into a paranoid garrison state. We are still living with the consequences.

United States forces did not stay "over the horizon" but were repeatedly forced to intervene as the two warring sides shot down civilian airliners, blew up tanker ships and wrecked Gulf oil platforms in a mutual attempt to internationalise the conflict in their favour. The whole sordid experience having merely whetted Saddam's appetite for vain-glory, within a few years of the war's end, Iraqi tanks rolled over the Kuwaiti border and decidedly off the "offshore balancing" schedule.

It is thus just a little bit disingenuous for Walt to claim that it is "only since 1991 that the United States has started to have large military forces of its own in the Middle East" as if Israel's "strategic burden" has something to do with it. The United States may have had to divert precious military resources like Patriot missile batteries to defend Israel from Saddam's SCUDs during the Gulf Wars period, but it is rather more true that the first Gulf War arose in large part out of the same faulty balance of power politics to which Walt would like to return the region.

At least Mearsheimer and Walt do not expect the United States and the Middle East to revert in lockstep to the realist behaviour outlined by Walt as soon as the Israel lobby is taken out of the picture. Mearsheimer in particular takes great pains to point out that even if AIPAC and its fellow groups went out of business tomorrow, and "the United States was able to conduct a smarter policy, it would still have problems in the Middle East. We don't make the argument that all the United States' problems in the Middle East derive from the influence of the lobby."

Two non-state actors

All the same, the two professors' worrying strategic myopia returns when I put it to them that the Middle East is awash with non-state actors (another blind-spot for many realist theories) that all stand ready to throw a spanner into the works of the United States' grand strategy to rebuild, maintain and extend its influence in the region. Walt's reply is simple enough - but not in a good way. " Hamas and the Kurds are groups that are aspiring to get their own state. They are essentially national liberation movements. Whatever you want to call them, what they're trying to do is establish their own state. We would argue that once they got their own state, they'll act pretty much as other countries do and become amenable to the arguments of realism."

As an analysis of the complex ideological creature that is Hamas on the one hand, and the biggest stateless actor in the region on the other, you can take this analysis or leave it. (I would rather leave it.) Walt surely cannot argue like this, however, without wondering how these two actors' drive for statehood (out of a panoply of similar groups waiting for their day in

US grand strategy and Israel



A good argument can be made for renovating the United States' grand strategy. John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt's book is not it.

Joseph Cotterill

"The current wreckage of US Middle East policy has been due to allowing domestic politics to have too large an impact, with all sorts of negative consequences"

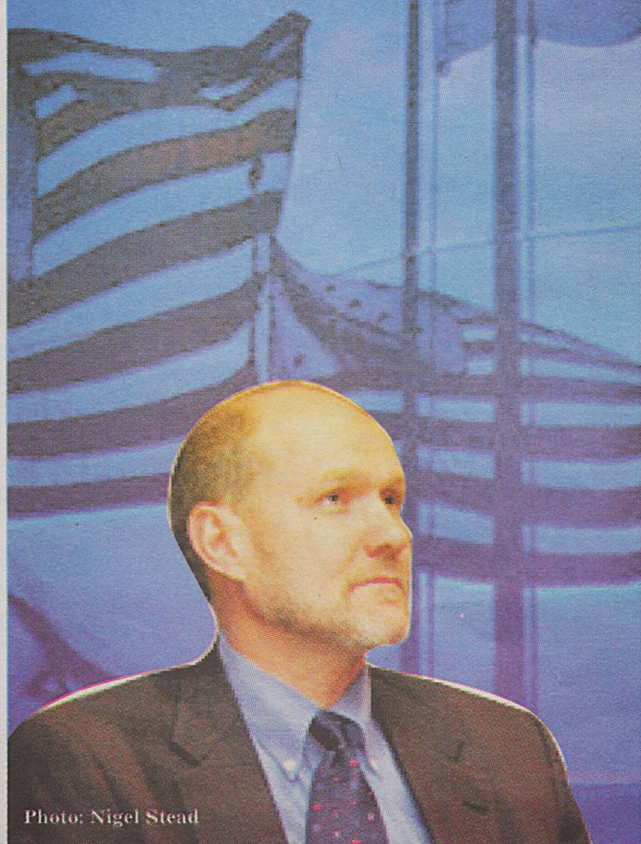


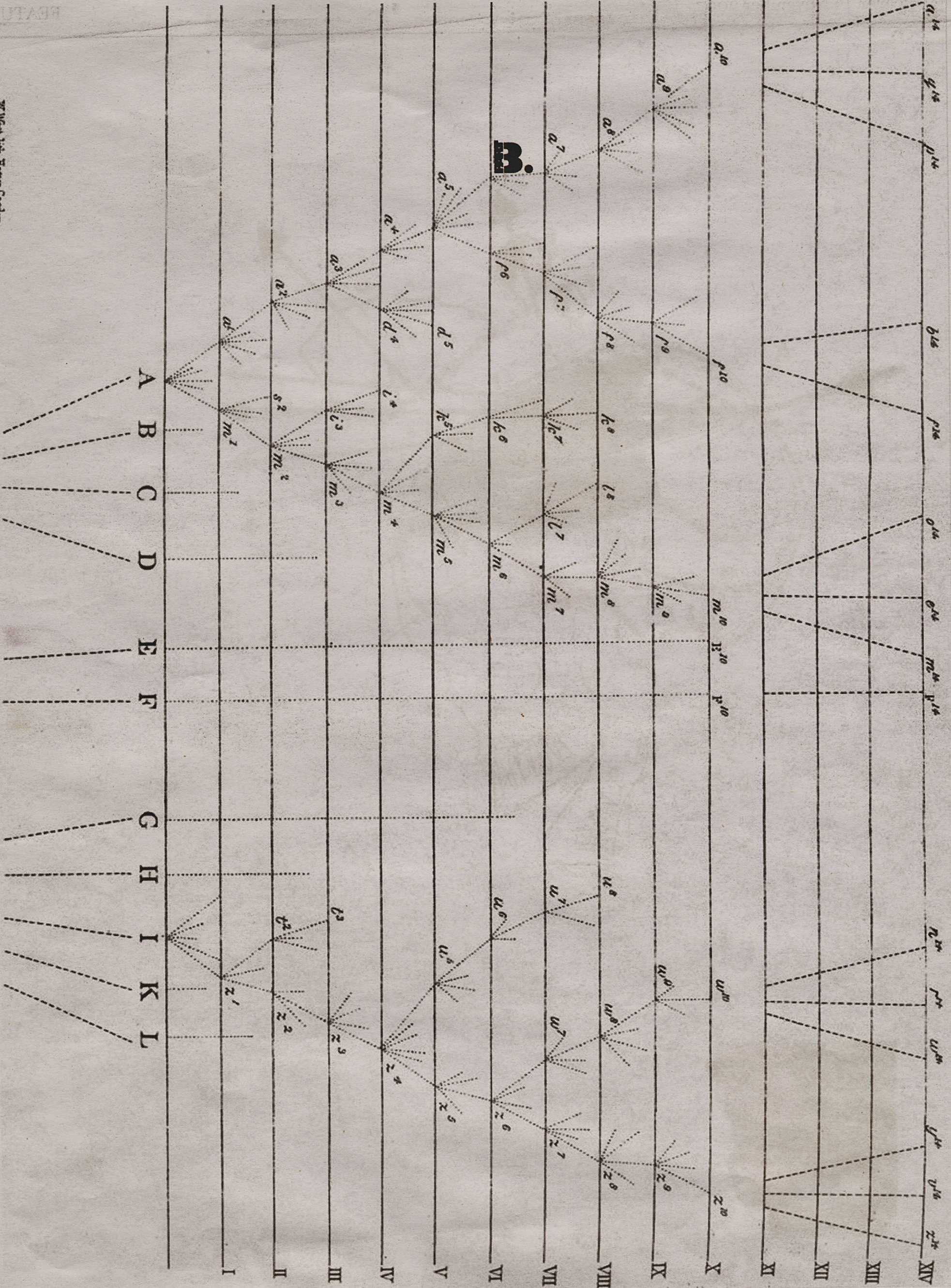
Photo: Nigel Stead

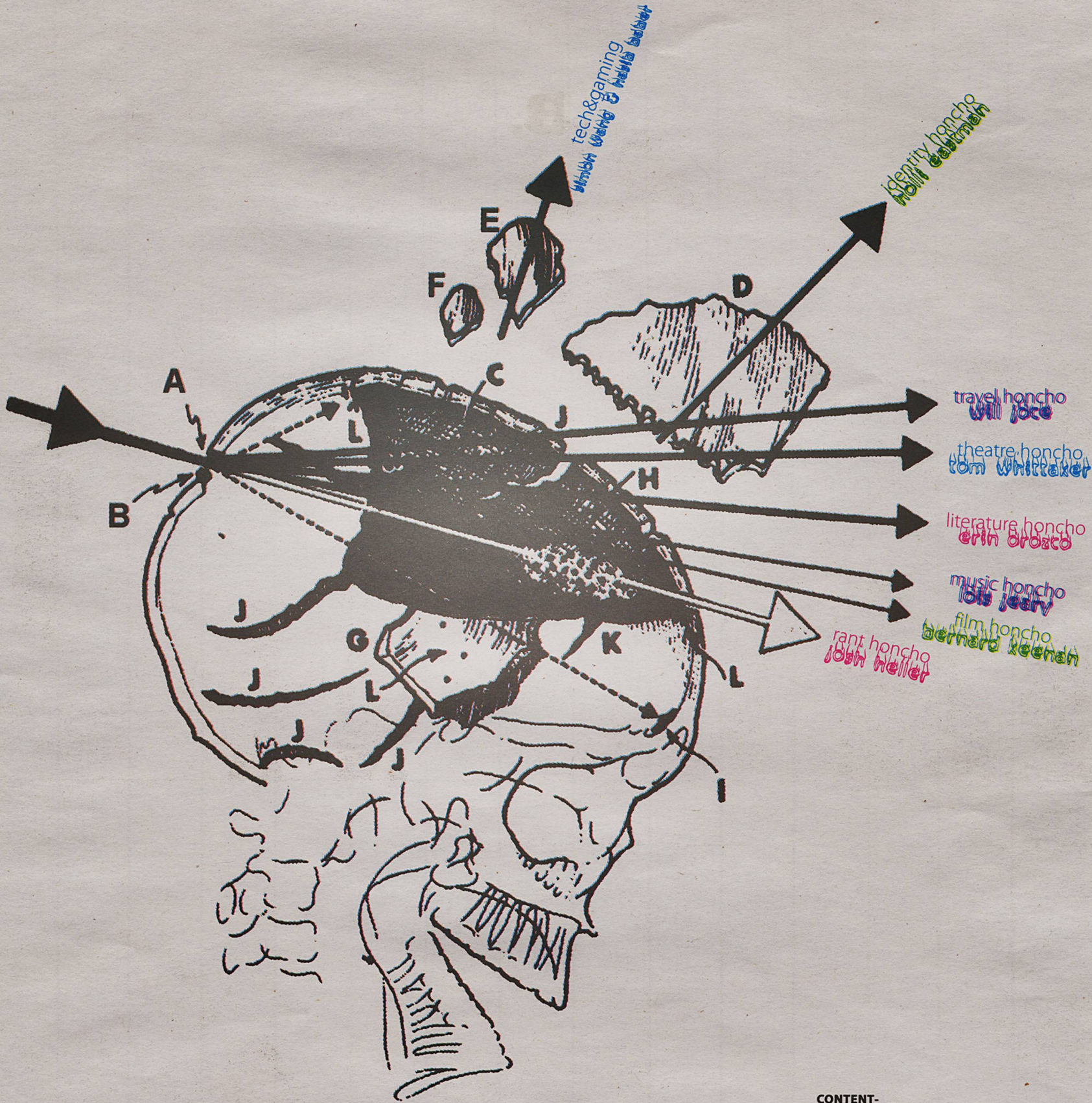


IDF armour moves through Beirut, 1982. Out of the frying pan...



... Into the fire? Soldiers of the 82nd airborne conduct a house search in Mosul.





CONTENT-
page 3 is an inoffensive shambles, it has some funny things and some hints
page 4 has a Steve Buscemi special, with the distinctive flavour of press conference and private screening **page 5** is a picture of Steve Buscemi we had commissioned at great expense (thanks to J. Mascis and Mrs Buscemi for that) and some found-text **the centrespread** contains the secrets of the universe in a neat wrap of dirty matter, it is the real totally auferentic leaked plans of the new new academic building, **page 8** is a monstrously deformed creature, moving in upon your children with hopeful eyes and a club, it's also about music **page 9** is leering at women from the broken window of a white van, it has some beer on its breath and is about theatre in the form of a review of glengarry glen ross, and some stylish alphabet **page 10** contains some rather sad news about Auntie Shaw, we all wish her well, it also has something about fossing in a PC and turning it into a Mac **page 11** is a travel monster, lots of travel and some sad man's begging.



← Daniel

Having spent the past two weeks announcing my imminent retirement at least twice every sentence, it has come to pass that I am still here. Kevin has been offering me golden handshake after golden handjob just to keep me functioning as the office watercooler, but it was the offer of the Monarchy that really swung it. I am now King of PartB and have decided to declare martial law and withhold favours in the night. If you are my course convenor reading this, i'm sorry, I tried to quit, I'm still clinically depressed, my degree is my priority but there are people with various things on me, and some death-threats and a pyramid of PartB power to straddle uncomfortably. This issue is a genuinely appalling thing to behold, and I have to stop writing now because it's off the printers... enjoy.

RETROACTIVE OUTINGS

dumbledore's out, now josh heller asks what other characters were playing with wands

So the greatest wizard of our time has been spectacularly outed. The outcry of idiots on internet message boards ("why does faggy JK Rowling have to fag up her books now?") is hopefully outweighed by the positive response of gay rights groups and smart people everywhere. A spokesman for Stonewall said, "It's great that JK has said this. It shows that there's no limit to what gay and lesbian people can do, even being a wizard headmaster." Surreptitiously placing a prominent gay character in the bestselling books ever and only telling people afterwards. Some have argued that she should have made it more "explicit" in the books themselves, but outing him afterwards was a good thing. It has no bearing on the story whatsoever, he's just a character that happens to shag men. She didn't do it sensationally or pointedly, it was just in response to a question.



the apostles

All men (probably). all hanging out drinking wine. also I heard judas totally kissed jesus.

This may not be the revelation that Dumbledore's outing is, but the potential for innuendo involving Frodo's ring are limitless. Also Gollum is a gimp that Sam feels is coming between the two of them. Frodo likes it like that.

sam and frodo



bert and ernie



sesame st. it's unspoken. generally not talked about. not discussed. barely mentioned. rarely a topic of conversation. but known worldwide. the only question that remains is who's the top and who's the bottom?

sharky and george



Crimebusters of the sea. it's hardly a stretch to imagine Sharky in Heaven on a monday night. Big and pink with that hat. It's a wonder they solved anything with all that inter-species aquatic loving.



tintin



Dog, quiff, hairy bearded sailor man fetish

raskalnikov

all that inner turmoil, ooh I've got a secret. nothing to do with that murder thing. just confused about his sexuality.



asterix and obelix



We're supposed to believe that a bear who makes big willies out of stone is just good friends with his short also moustached friend who's super buff.



the entire cast of top gun

Quentin Tarantino called it "the most touching love story of the twentieth century." The action shots with the planes and flying are intensely erotic.



Ms. Rubella Valve reviews p0rn

"Hello how are you?" says Kirsty brightly to camera. "Hello how are you?" comes the strangled reply from behind the camera, followed by an overwrought gurgle of nervous male laughter. The niceties are mangled, the camera tilts away as if it's shy and confused. This is Conysgirls.com, a seedy video diary chronicling one man's voyage through loneliness, sexual inadequacy and a series of anonymous british motorway hotels. Inside the hotel room, with its cheap fittings and yellowing prints, we are treated to a lengthy scene of Cony's setting up his AV equipment. Cony has a lot of equipment. Multiple cameras, bits of wires, what look like spare cameras, a series of carefully placed microphones, a mixing desk, a waterfall of cables and wires. Kirsty picks her way through the equipment looking bored. Cony is not paying attention to her - this is all about the gear, Cony is a porn engineer, relishing the inhumanity of the apparatus. One wonders if he's going to keep his utility belt on all the way through, perhaps leaving some gaffer tape close at hand in case anything comes unfixed in the ensuing action. Soon the room is filled with bad-sex. What's unnerving about Cony's performance is that instead of holding the narcissistic camera-angle-friendly poses of the traditional male porn actor, he is clinging to Kirsty like she's his dead wife. His arm is half-way over her face, the camera's view is obscured, the painstakingly set-up equipment is seemingly forgotten. Cony ruts and clings, Kirsty seems unsure what is required of her. Emotionality is creeping into the porn but it's a desperate, horrible emotionality, a product of a quite palpable loneliness. Now he's rubbing his red-face over her arm, it looks for all the world like he's weeping. She's not sure whether she should be looking at the camera or recommending this guy for counselling. His head is going even redder, he looks like a meat-lollipop. After he finishes he cannot look her in the eye. Her face registers pity. They chat awkwardly about her work, then she leaves. Cony sits on the bed, another hollow notch on the anonymous bedpost.

MR. WLEFT'S TOP RECIPE

The Russell Group. It doesn't really evoke the image of Britain's supposedly shiniest top twenty universities, more that of a group of middle aged alcoholics who deliver the post and play for crap Sunday league football teams. My driving instructor was called Russell, so for me it rekindles memories of driving a clapped out Ford Fiesta with breaks that worked at six minute intervals. On this basis alone it should be scrapped.

But what of the Russell Group's policy? Well you'll be please to know that it's a passionate advocate of tuition fees and was successful in arguing for the introduction of top up fees. Whilst the academics behind the Russell Group, Mr Davies included, enjoyed paying absolutely zero for their university education it's perfectly acceptable for them to expect us to dish out at least £9,000 for the right to further education. As if the cost of independent living at university wasn't enough anyway to tame our bank balances for just about the rest of our miserable lives.

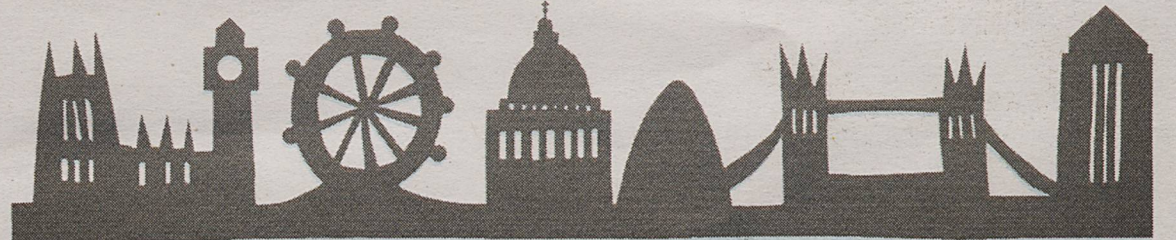
If that wasn't enough the Russell group website states that "The aims and objectives of The Russell Group are to promote the interests of Universities in which teaching and learning are undertaken within a culture of research excellence." In light of 'The Beaver's' article last week by Jamie Mason, which sights that the LSE's social science department is ranked a dismal 51st in terms of, yes, you guessed it, research impact, it would appear Russell is already a failure. Probably best to stick to the Sunday league football and deliver the post then, eh?



London Appalling

As great as our LDN is, it is also a big tourist-loving whore, selling its soul to millions of visitors throughout the year. Here Part B helps you avoid them by pointing out what not to do in the Big Smoke.

I ended up in a rough part of town the other night. Knightsbridge. Wealth was everywhere except in my pockets. It was on the wrists of the coiffured gentlemen and the décolletage of the perfumed ladies. I bought a drink. Just the one. I couldn't afford more. I couldn't afford one, but the well dressed security was eyeing me while shifting his weight between his feet. The drink cost eleven pounds. It was mostly water. The barmaid smiled at me and gave me a plate of kettle chips by way of recompense. I crunched them awkwardly. Nearby, my friend was hitting on a married woman, while another friend restrained his husband. Women were outnumbered six to one, and each was being fought over by slaving neanderthals wearing brown brogues. Another drink was out of the question, so I tried to kiss the married woman. The husband's clenched hand brought hebetic bliss.



Steve's World

benlamy sits in with one of the heroes of american indie cinema as he talks about his new film, interview

“Don't lean forward, don't lean forward, they told me not to go like this,” he says, as he leans forward. Steve Buscemi has arrived at his Master Class, hosted by BFI for a select group of reporters, and is buzzing with a haunting energy that is present in all his film roles – even the one where he doesn't speak.

Best known as Mr. Pink, the criminal who refuses to tip waitresses in **Tarantino's** iconic *Reservoir Dogs*, Buscemi has acted in over one hundred movies including greats such as *Fargo*, *Con Air* and *The Big Lebowski* to name but a few, and he is in town to promote his new film *Interview*, which he not only wrote and directed, but also starred in. Although he has already popped his directorial cherry with feature films including *Animal Factory* (2000), and has episodes of HBO hit *Oz* under his belt, he has spent significantly more time on the other side of the lens. It seems obvious to first ask if he still sees himself purely as an actor.

“I see myself predominantly as a tree.” There is a pause for the laughter to die down. “It is funny though, I haven't directed all that much but I do think it's what I want to do next. And I do think myself as more of a director these days, or somebody who wants to direct more – not that I don't want to act. In the beginning, directing was really intimidating for me, it still is, but I think I've learnt to enjoy it more and I want to do it more. In the States I'm never introduced as actor/director – only actor.”

That might be about to change. *Interview*, a remake of a 2003 **Theo Van Gogh** film now set in New York instead of The Netherlands, is a masterpiece of direction, with a tight screenplay and pitch-perfect performances by both Buscemi and **Sienna Miller** who alone make up the entire cast of the film. This was typical of **Van Gogh** who, before his murder in November 2004, was known for putting two people in a room and leaving them to thrash out their differences, creating an exposed and intimate portrait of the human mind at work.

In Buscemi's remake, Miller plays Katya, the world's most famous soap star (based on Katya Schuurman who played herself in the original). Katya is to be interviewed, somewhat reluctantly, by journalist Pierre Peders (Buscemi) – a serious and ambitious man who, with a storm breaking out in Washington, is desperate to be in the thick of the political scrum and is not afraid to show his disdain for the cult of celebrity that Katya is spearheading. What takes place next is a psychological battle of wits cleverly played out with bundles of intellect and energy, pointing the finger at contemporary stereotypes of men and women which will leave you smiling to yourself as you exit the cinema.

Considering Miller's somewhat suffocating relationship with the British tabloids, her casting is both ironic and inspired. Presumably drawing on her own experiences with the media, including her innumerable encounters with the intrusive paparazzi, she puts in what I believe to be the best performance of her (admittedly limited) career to date, taking her place as a great English actress of the younger generation, giving stars such as **Keira Knightley** some needed competition. But enough about the eye candy, let's get back to the interview.

Buscemi has worked with many famous directors throughout his career, but is perhaps most celebrated for his relationship with the **Coen brothers** (Joel and Ethan). As an actor, Buscemi has contributed to six of their films, the last of these being a short story in *Paris Je T'aime*, and of course *Fargo*, the must-see classic which snagged two Academy Awards.

“I auditioned for *Miller's Crossing* [another **Coen Brothers** film]. There's a character named Mink who talked for like, five pages, and so I thought ‘Well, he's probably a fast talker’ and so I rehearsed it, went in there, did the audition, and I had them laughing. They called me a month later and I did it again, afterwards they said, ‘Well...you still say it the fastest’, and so they hired me. Since then, just once in a while, they've offered me a role which is great. I love working with them and they really do both direct – there's never conflicting direction, they're both always together, they're pretty low-key and they like to giggle...which can sometimes be distracting.”

One key characteristic of many of Buscemi's performances, especially with the Coen brothers, is that he either plays a creepy psychopath, or gets beaten up. “The last thing I did with them, *Paris Je T'aime*, was a short film. So I went from doing a five minute thing where I don't stop talking in my first film with them, to this film where I don't say anything...but I still get beaten up. Yeah, I haven't been able to break them out of the habit of abusing me.”

Not many people know that before breaking into the movie scene, Buscemi tried his hand at stand-up, often doing the rounds at comedy clubs on the New York circuit. But it's a different world to acting.

“I don't know if it's helped me as an actor. I think it helps me more in these kind of situations, or if I'm hosting something, but being a stand-up is like one of the hardest things anybody can do and I stopped doing it because I just felt like I couldn't find my own voice. I used to watch a lot of comics and there were only three or four that I felt were really original, and I thought if I can't be like that then I don't want to do it.”

Ironic, considering how easily he has found his 'voice' in screen writing. Perhaps in the back of his mind is the famous dictum of **Hitchcock's**: “To make a great film you need three things – the script, the script and the script”. In any case, with *Interview* Buscemi has created a masterpiece that will be a good lesson to any aspiring film maker. Buscemi, like **Van Gogh**, employs the 'three camera' system, whereby one camera is focused on the male lead, one on the female, and the other on them both, creating a sense of intimacy and abstraction. This technique allows tight-budgeted films to be shot in days.

The only drawback to the film is that being eighty-five minutes long, and based around a conversation between just two characters, it's not exactly going to be a life-changing epic. But it's still a great eighty-five minutes of viewing pleasure. **Theo Van Gogh**, I'm sure, would have been delighted with the result.

Interview is in cinemas now.

The wonderful faces of Steve Buscemi

The films you must see



Miller's Crossing (1990)

The Cohen brother's pastiche of gangster movies is one of the genre's finest. Buscemi is part of a fantastic ensemble cast stuck in a weird and amoral world. Perfect cinema.

In the Soup (1992)

A cult favourite, Buscemi stars as Adolpho, an aspiring movie maker living in a run down New York apartment. Along comes Joe, a 'made man' who offers to finance Adolpho's vision (**Seymour Cassell**, above), and things take a turn for the very, very weird.

Reservoir Dogs (1992)

“I need you cool. Are you cool?” Mr Pink is cool. Steve steals the show in **Tarantino's** break-through classic, a remake of the Hong Kong heist-gone-wrong movie *City on Fire*. If you haven't seen this film, you've probably been living under some kind of prehistoric rock since 1992... Welcome back.

Fargo (1996)

When Jerry Lundegaard (**William H Macy**) gets into financial trouble at his father-in-law's car dealership, he hires two inept losers to kidnap his wife for ransom. Enter Buscemi with his partner-in-crime, who happens to be psychotic. A very black comedy from the Cohens.

Tree's Lounge (1996)

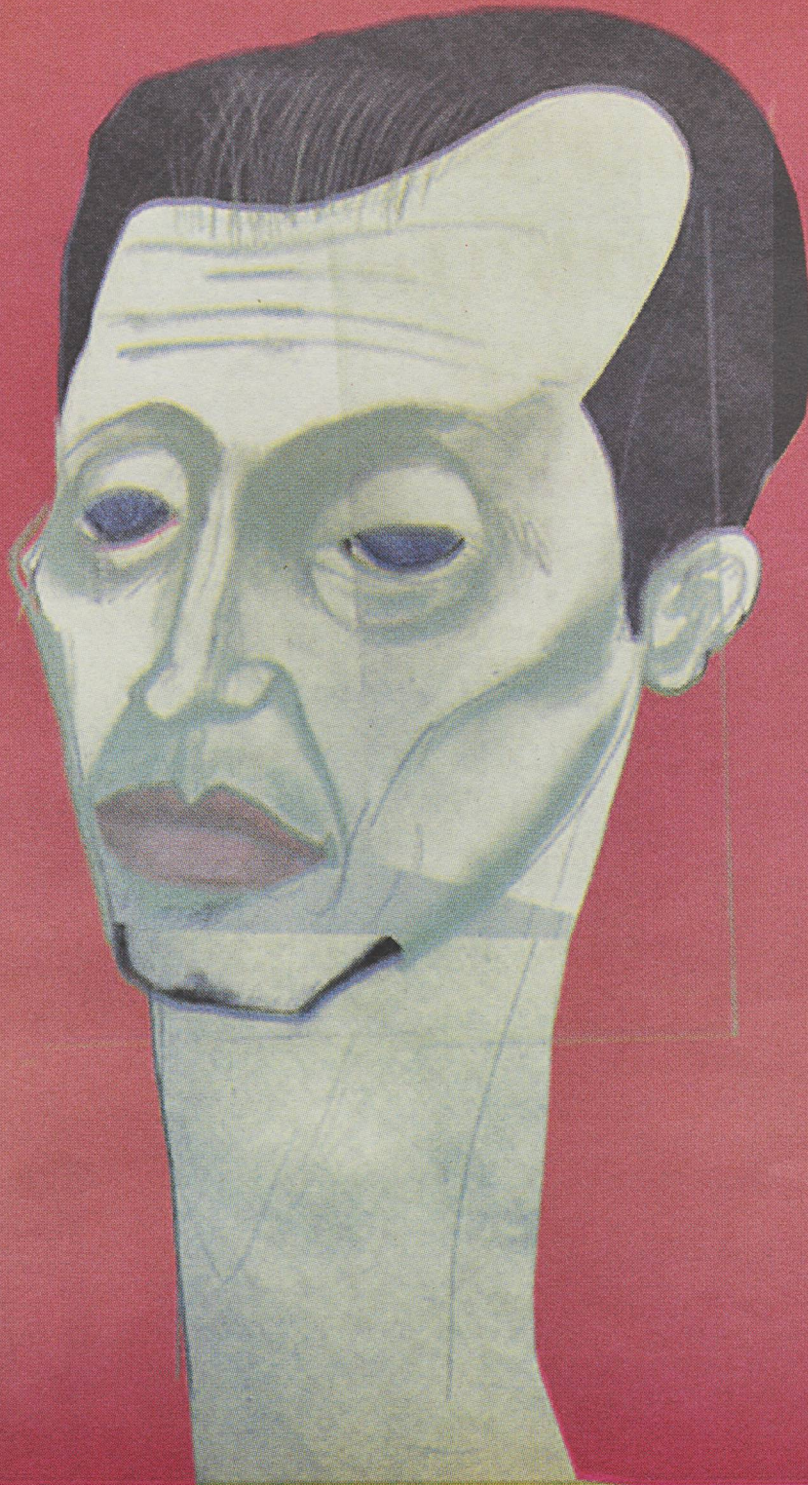
Steve writes, directs and stars in this under-rated low budget indie flick. The spirit of **John Cassavetes** is in the air as we watch Tommy, an out of work mechanic, slowly drink himself to death in his local boozery. Taking a job as an ice cream vendor, he gets involved with a younger woman. But nothing ever goes right for Tommy...

The Big Lebowski (1998)

This Cohen brother's comedy has inspired conventions, books, halloween costumes; its dialogue is now part of our cultural lexicon. The simpleton bowling partner of **Jeff Bridges** and **John Goodman**, Buscemi spends the entire film being told to “Shut the fuck up, Donnie!”

Ghost World (2001)

Buscemi has a co-starring role as Seymour, a lonely middle-aged geek who works in a Fried Chicken outlet and has an obsessive interest in Depression-era American folk records. When Enid (**Thora Birch**) decides to play a prank on him, they become unlikely friends. This faithful adaption of the **Daniel Clowes** graphic novel is required viewing for anyone who ever felt like the grown up world is run by, and for, idiots.



ras says on 19/Oct/07
I think he's right on the line of 173 cm, half way between 5 ft 8 and 5 ft 8.25 lol, so listing him at 5 ft 8.25 is okay with me.
Maybe a weak 5 ft 8.25 but who would argue on a quarter?
the shredder says on 2/May/07
I still don't see him passed 172 , 173 cm !
glenn says on 2/May/07
just got another tonight.my 5th in 14 years.3 in 5 weeks.the new one sucks for height judgement.we are both hunching under an umbrella i think.

sam says on 1/May/07
He has bad posture. It does look like he'd have an inch on Glenn if he was standing straight...unless this was time Glenn thinks Buscemi was wearing lifts. I'd be surprised by that, though.
Franco says on 27/Apr/07
looks 5'8 in that pic.....almost eye 2 eye.

glenn = 1.73 / Buscemi 1.72 (dont be fooled by his hair).
Drew says on 26/Apr/07
He looks taller than Glenn in both those pictures.
the shredder says on 25/Apr/07
Glenn is not 5'9 ... I think you mean 5'8 .
Cat Stevens says on 25/Apr/07
He is exactly 5'9, same as Glenn
the shredder says on 25/Apr/07
5'8.25 ??? ... He looks 171cm-ish and his posture is not that bad with Glenn ... 172cm-ish can be more like it ? ... 173cm or just 5'8 tops .
Antron says on 2/Feb/07
thelasttiger- I think its funny that if you are below 5'9" you are short; does that mean if you are above 5'9" you are tall?
Doubtful you'd say yes...
anonymous says on 7/Jan/07
I worked with steve buscemi. He is a really nice guy. Very skinny that is why he appears taller. We did a scene together and he is around 5'7
G-unit says on 29/Dec/06
5'9 imo, he looks kinda tall in resorvoir dogs, especially in the begining of the movie when they're walking down the street.
Glenn says on 6/Nov/06

Moby is 5-7ish.Reed is a surprising 5-9ish, 5-10.considering you here 5-4 to 5-8 for Reed.
Glenn says on 4/Nov/06
There is no way this guy is as tall as Sandler.Sandler is near 5-10.Buscemi is 5-8 tops.and a lift wearer.
Aussie Bloke says on 3/Nov/06
The only reason the legendary Steve appears shorter is because of his extremely thin physique! He appears Adam Sandler's height in "Air-heads" but if you look at the two of them out in the open, you would think Sandler is much taller. However Steve would have to be around the 5ft9 height, coz he is no different to Sandler in Airheads
Glenn says on 3/Nov/06
First time the guy looked short period.yeah,a bad slouch.2nd time standing straight as can be and taller than me.thats called lifts.
sam says on 3/Nov/06
Was he slouching a lot, Glenn? Because from 5'6" to 5'9" is pretty diverse. Did he generally seem to be taller or shorter than you if he was standing straight?
Glenn says on 2/Nov/06
I've seen him look 5-6 to 5-9.and have the photos to prove it.
Franco says on 2/Nov/06
never take what you see on tv for granted. they can use boxes, tricks etc.

1.74cm max.
Azarea says on 7/May/06
He is taller than this. There is no way the height difference between buscemi and gandolfini is 11 cm. Second episode from fifth season, they have a scene together, maybe an 8 cm difference is correct, so 175 would be more accurate i would think.
trueheight says on 14/Mar/06
Keitel wears lifts. fyi, ever seen taxi driver? I'm not comparing him to the kids, but to Hardy Rawls(who I have met), who is 5'7, and a large man. Buscemi is clearly taller
Mr. Awesome says on 10/Feb/06
any adult appears "tallish" in a kid's show...unless that adult is emilio estevez...he looks at best as tall as the 5'7" and change harvey kietel in reservoir dogs
trueheight says on 9/Feb/06
he's definately 5-8 if not a little over. He was "tallish" in his guest appearances in Pete and Pete playing Mr. Hickie
bruce says on 17/Nov/05
he's 5ft 8in for sure, no doubt
Mario Nariano says on 14/Sep/05
In Desperado he is an inch taller than Antonio Banderas. Watch the scene before he got killed by Danny Trejo.



**NEW NEW
ACADEMIC
BUILDING 2014**

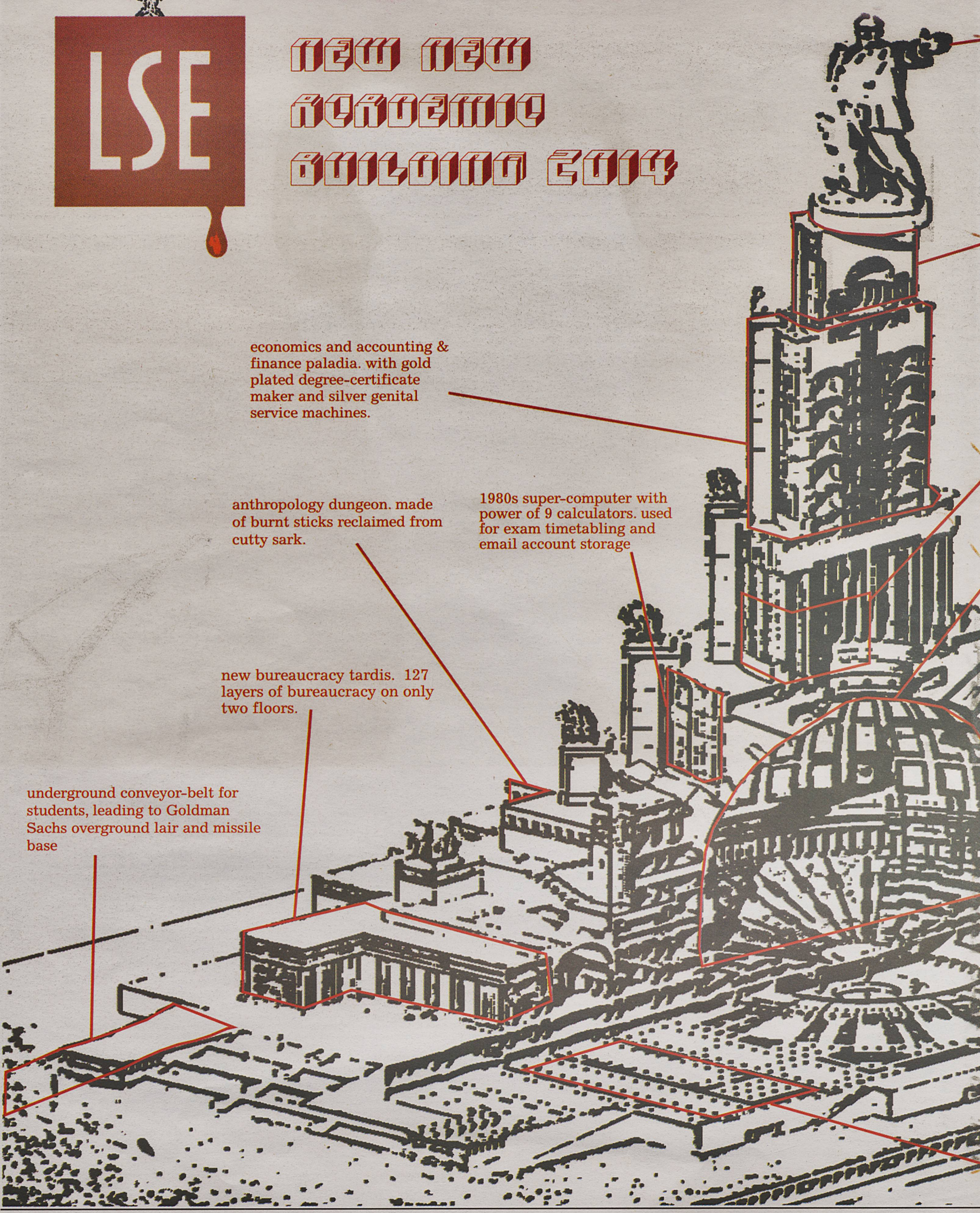
economics and accounting & finance paladia. with gold plated degree-certificate maker and silver genital service machines.

anthropology dungeon. made of burnt sticks reclaimed from cutty sark.

1980s super-computer with power of 9 calculators. used for exam timetabling and email account storage

new bureaucracy tardis. 127 layers of bureaucracy on only two floors.

underground conveyer-belt for students, leading to Goldman Sachs overground lair and missile base



300 foot statue of Sir Peter Sutherland OBE, the future of LSE. Or a c*nt. Probably both. But most definitely a c*nt.

Director's Pimp Muscle Pad. Warm leatherette throughout. Auto-fellatio units for all visiting business-leaders, controlled centrally by the director's pragmatic mind. Living quarters for team of 30 gimps to read Booker shortlist and perform bi-weekly 'trooping of the gimp'. Gimps are to be recruited from cleaning staff and sociology undergrads. They are not permitted access to the crack-pipe cache or armoury, but may rim the director's wife on her birthday.

Peter Sutherland OPEC Room, replete with a dying swan strung up in a corner like an oil painting.

new Book Zone, with 430% more wasted airspace, twenty computers, new staff recruited from local Waffent SS regiment and centre-piece staircase designed by M.C. Escher Jnr. and Mr Soft.

designated protest room. with a door leading to a ten storey drop to Kingsway.

LSE permanent crane compound. Future use - to annexe Greater London with mounted machine guns. Current use as safer residential alternative to Sydney Webb House

costa coffee
starbucks
x-ploit coffee
BP forecourt (serves coffee)

overseas post-graduate holding bay. fitted with 75 cashpoints.

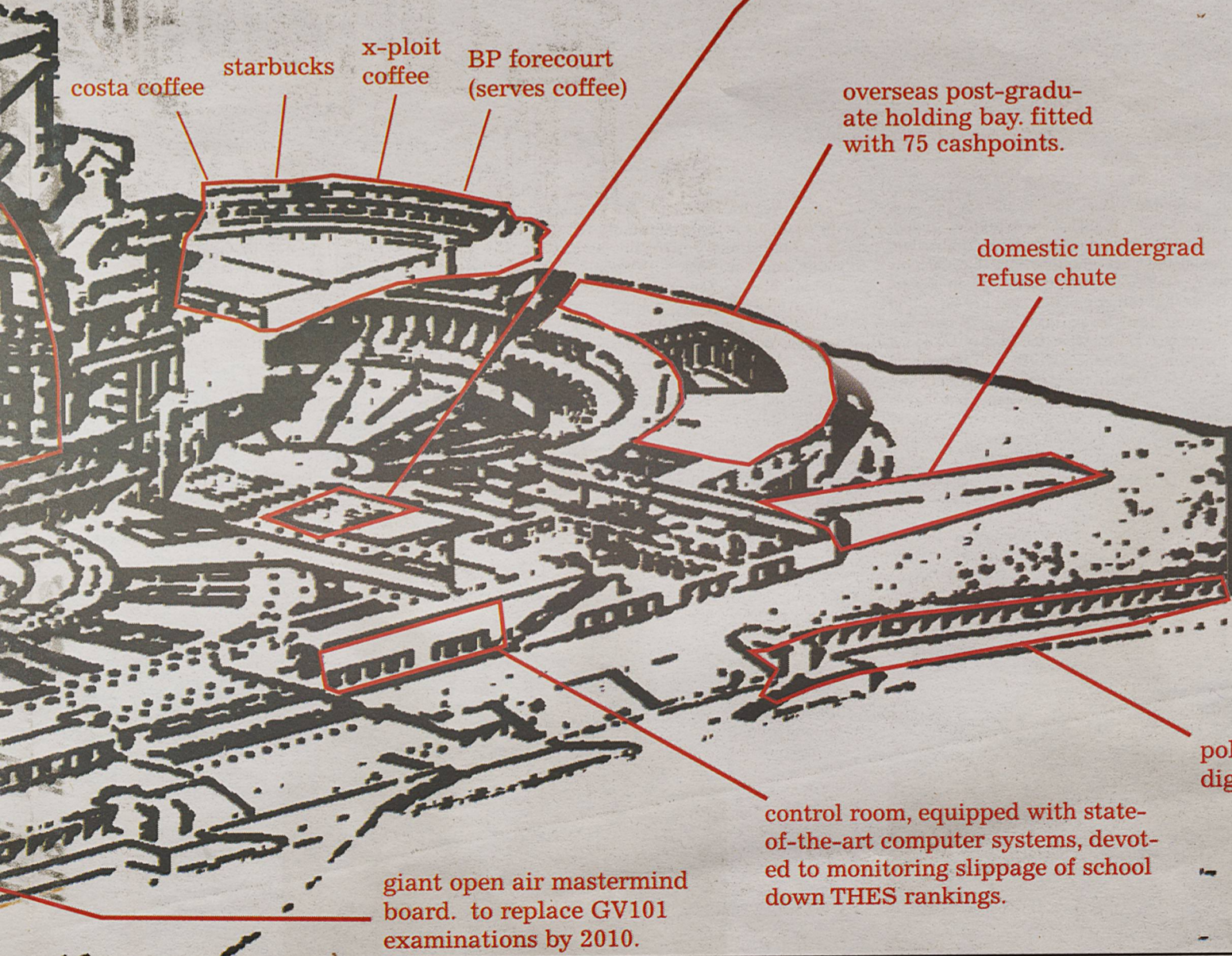
domestic undergrad refuse chute



politically-dubious foreign dignitary escape funnel

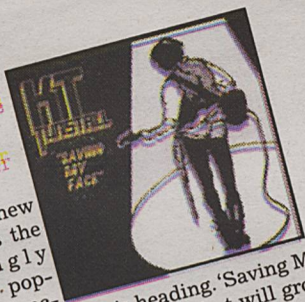
control room, equipped with state-of-the-art computer systems, devoted to monitoring slippage of school down THES rankings.

giant open air mastermind board. to replace GV101 examinations by 2010.



NEW RELEASES

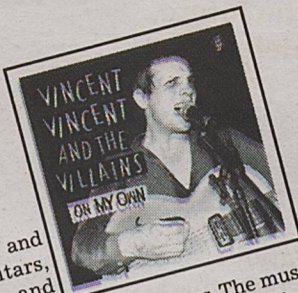
KT Tunstall
Saving My Face
19th November



KT Tunstall's new single reflects the increasingly upbeat and pop-orientated direction in which her music is heading. 'Saving My Face' is a pleasant, catchy song that will grow on you with persistent listening, and its up-tempo beat proves that Tunstall has not pigeon-holed herself into the (boring) 'chilled-out acoustic-hippy' genre. While it does not have the same anthemic potential as some of her earlier work, it carries all the trademarks of a typical Tunstall song and die-hard fans will not be disappointed.

kemhompson

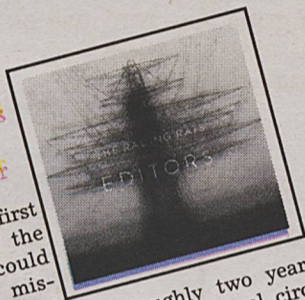
Vincent Vincent and the Villains
On My Own
5th November



The bass line and jangly guitars, hand claps and finger clicks in 'On My Own' are thoroughly infectious. The music is pure retro, and the independent, rebellious lyric perfectly embody the spirit of rock and roll in all its glory. As Vincent Vincent wails into the microphone and his villains throw themselves into a rollicking jive I dare you not to start wiggling those hips.

loisjeary

Editors
The Racing Rats
26th November



When Editors first appeared on the scene, one could easily have mistaken them for an Interpol tribute band. Roughly two years later the tables have turned. Interpol circa 2007 are best forgotten, which conversely (and perversely) makes our four lads from Birmingham a rather attractive choice. In all honesty, I would have loved to dismiss 'The Racing Rats'. Yet, I have to admit that it is an excellent track and it outshines anything Interpol have ever written - one cannot possibly give a better compliment. (And I still feel sad about it.)

gregorhm

Make Model
The Was
19th November



'The Was', by Glasgow's Make Model, is a swirling, colorful wall of sound. The distorted vocals weave wispily among layers of guitars, vibras, phones, horns, synthesizers, harps, and of course, a steady beat. All of which raises the question: is Phil Spector back in the business? For a single by an indie folk-pop band, 'The Was' is far too densely orchestrated to be a folk song, and far too cryptic to be a pop song; the vocals are buried among the many layers of instruments, obscuring the lyrics. No, we must take this song on its own terms: as a three-minute indie symphony. And a highly successful one at that.

charliecurrow

THE LISTINGS WAR

judged by loisjeary

19th NOVEMBER
The Raveonettes
King's College

vs.

Kate Nash
Shepherd's Bush Empire

The Raveonettes are gorgeous, arty and angular, both physically and musically, whilst Kate Nash is a bit more scruffy round the edges.

19th NOVEMBER
Make Model
Barfly

vs.

Two Gallants
KoKo

If our review of Make Model's new single gets you going then head to Camden to catch them live. Alternatively, down the road there is Saddle Creek's blues-rock duo.

19th NOVEMBER
Air
Hammersmith Apollo

vs.

Groove Armada
Brixton Academy

The chances are you will have heard umpteen songs by these bands, whether you know it or not. But don't let the advert-friendliness put you off from seeing these big names.

19th NOVEMBER
Foo Fighters
O2

vs.

Arcade Fire
Alexandra Palace

Bringing out the big guns. Both bands have huge sounds and create impressive live shows.

19th NOVEMBER
Rilo Kiley
Shepherd's Bush Empire

vs.

Hot Hot Heat
Scala

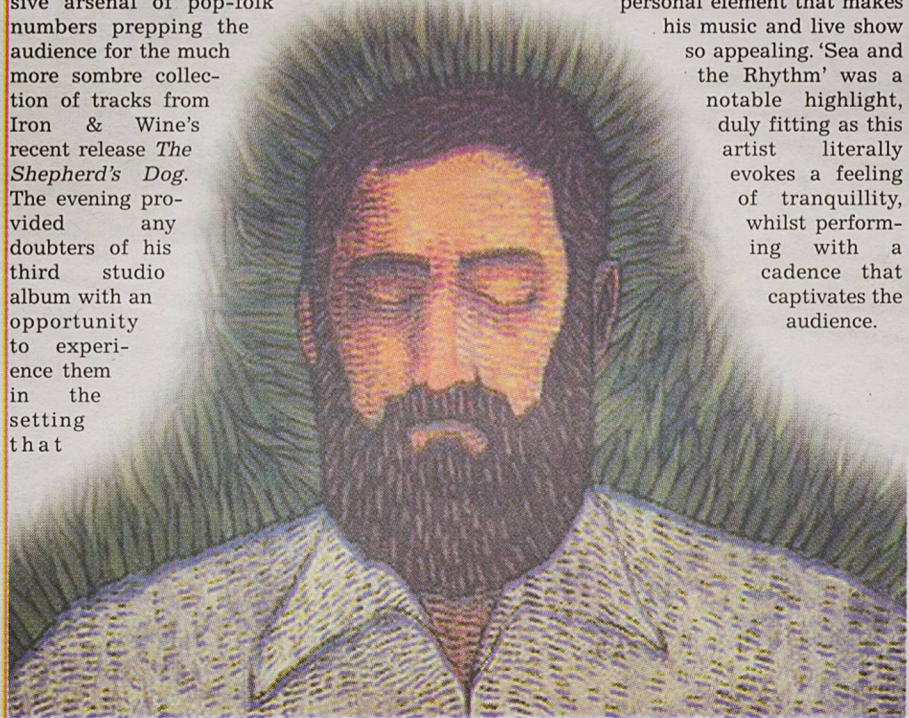
Rilo Kiley's frontwoman Jenny Lewis is quite probably the hottest thing on this planet. Much hotter than Hot Hot Het anyway.

IRON AND WINE

LIVE AT SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
davidgray is captivated by the songs of Sam Beam

Iron and Wine is the pseudonym of Sam Beam, but before the Texas resident took to the stage the audience witnessed the forthcoming rise of Johnny Flynn. The young singer-songwriter is comparable to Willy Mason, though plays with a larger ensemble which included his vocally blessed sister, who later contributed something magical to Iron & Wine's set. The performance was strong, his upbeat and impressive arsenal of pop-folk numbers prepping the audience for the much more sombre collection of tracks from Iron & Wine's recent release *The Shepherd's Dog*. The evening provided any doubters of his third studio album with an opportunity to experience them in the setting that

he intended - live. Sam Beam has the look (like that of a dishevelled hippie, though ironically dressed in a pair of Timberland boots), the voice, and the songs that immediately make one forget they are in a vast venue, but rather feel like they are sat round a camp fire, being intimately serenaded. Beam is a talent with the ability to win a plethora of new fans, whilst also being able to retain the thought provoking and personal element that makes his music and live show so appealing. 'Sea and the Rhythm' was a notable highlight, duly fitting as this artist literally evokes a feeling of tranquillity, whilst performing with a cadence that captivates the audience.



DEVENDRA BANHART

LIVE AT THE FORUM
loisjeary contemplates throwing it all in and going to live in his beautiful world

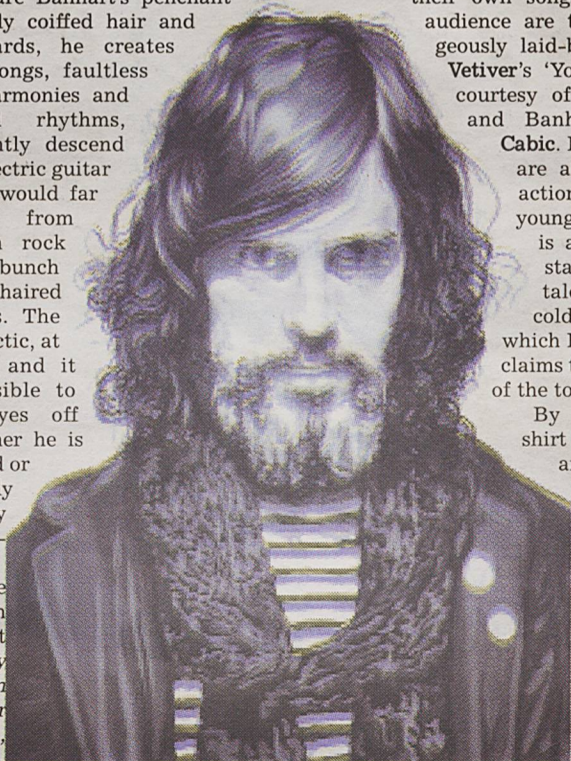
Devendra Banhart is not of this world. In his bell-sleeves and flared trousers he slinks across the stage like a young, camp warlock, all flowing locks and snaking hips. Although a founding member of the neo-folk club, Banhart's live set is impressively varied and displays a wide-dimension of influences. Along with his band, who share Banhart's penchant for impressively coiffed hair and elaborate beards, he creates quirky folk songs, faultless West Coast harmonies and samba-infused rhythms, which frequently descend into wailing electric guitar riffs that you would far more expect from some stadium rock outfit than a bunch of skinny, long-haired time-travellers. The evening is eclectic, at times surreal and it proves impossible to take your eyes off Banhart whether he is dancing around or telling a barely audible story about a character in his song.

Most of the set is taken from his latest release *Smokey Rolls Down Thunder Canyon*,

including the lovely and epic 'Seahorse'. Tracks from his earlier releases are equally impressive. 'Long Haired Child' is a full-on electric rock song, whilst 'Hey Mama Wolf' comes complete with howls.

Life in Banhart's musical world is as close to commune living as you can get. Members of his band are invited to play their own songs, and the lucky audience are treated to a gorgeously laid-back rendition of Vetiver's 'You May be Blue' courtesy of guitarist, singer and Banhart's pal Andy Cabcic. Even the audience are allowed in on the action, and a nervous young lady called Layla is allowed on to the stage to sing a pretty tale of love in the cold, entitled 'Winter', which Banhart later proclaims to be the best song of the tour.

By the encore, his shirt is off and his hips are loose, turning 'I Feel Just Like a Child' into a maraca-shaking groove on. Banhart wiggles around in a musical euphoria and all who watch are enchanted. He is strange indeed. How wonderful.



Fighting the Rat Race

naeemkapadia reviews glengarry glen ross

Like a good cup of espresso, David Mamet's plays are sharp, strong and leave one with a fantastic aftertaste. *Glengarry Glen Ross* stands at the very heart of Mamet's impressive canon of works and since its first staging in 1983, has been acclaimed by critics worldwide and gone on to win the 1984 Pulitzer Prize for drama. James Macdonald directs a brilliant revival of this all-male play at the Apollo Theatre this autumn with a stellar cast.

What makes Mamet one of the foremost American playwrights of his generation is the brusqueness he injects into his work. Instead of embracing poetic language or uplifting, feel-good themes, he confronts the cold, hard reality of human failings that lurk behind the ostensibly glittering lives we lead. Mamet is essentially a moralist and his plays dissect individual identity and the emptiness that lies beneath the so-called American dream.

Glengarry Glen Ross explores the uber-competitive world of real estate salesmen in Chicago, desperate to close the next available deal and land themselves a prime spot on the company's hall of fame.

Pitted against each other in a cut-throat sales competition where the winner gets a Cadillac, the runner-up a pair of steak knives and the loser gets fired, the pressure to succeed is palpable. The sales competition amongst the men can be seen as a microcosm for modern society, engineered for the survival of the fittest.

Act One introduces us to the various characters in three separate scenes set in a restaurant. Veteran stage and film actor Jonathan Pryce plays Shelly Levene, the pathetic 'has-been' salesman desperate to make a comeback and who is not beneath bribing the company secretary (Peter McDonald) to get the best possible leads to close a deal. Like Miller's tragic anti-hero Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*, Levene seems to be aware that he has lost his touch but yet valiantly clings to his profession, declaring "A man's his job." Pryce's transformation in the character is admirable and in the touching denouement, we see the utter collapse of a man who used to set himself up on a pedestal.

From desperation, we switch to resentment

in the exchange between the motor-mouthed Moss (Matthew Marsh) and taciturn Aaronow (Paul Freeman) about the mercenary world they're in and a plan is hatched to revolt against the company rather than succumb to its relentless demands. Aiden Gillen pulls in a fantastic performance as smooth-talking 'Top Gun' salesman Richard Roma, engaging in an existential tirade about life to a fellow diner and then, ever the calculated sales machine, swooping in to sell him some property when he gets drawn into the conversation.

The amazing set of Act Two, designed by Anthony Ward, recreates a real-estate office so well that it seems almost surreal to see it on a stage. A crime has been committed in the office and a sullen police inspector interrogates the salesmen one by one. We seem to think we know who is guilty but the ending takes us all by surprise.

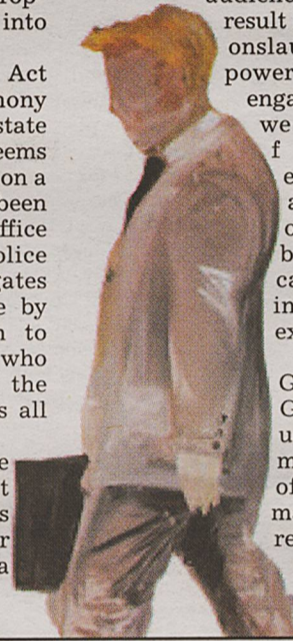
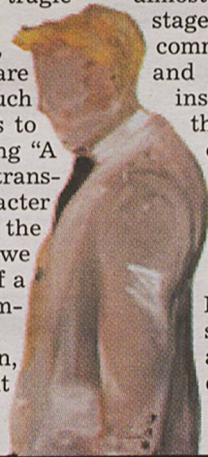
One of the Mamet's great strengths is his amazing ear for dialogue and a

critic has rightly remarked that "no one alive writes better American". The characters in *Glengarry Glen Ross* interrupt each other with staccato replies, their cadences are harsh and their language coarse. (In fact, the word 'fuck' is so liberally splattered in the dialogue that it seems more a preposition than a profanity!) What Mamet achieves is in recreating speech as it is actually spoken amongst the everyday working man without being sugar-coated for a theatre audience. The result is a verbal onslaught so powerful and engaging that we almost feel exhausted at the end of a scene, being so caught up in the exchange.

Glengarry Glen Ross uses the metaphor of a salesman to represent life as a con-

stant meaningless consumerist race, one which is bound to overcome us in the end. It may be a bleak indictment of the modern world but a telling one indeed. Even as we feel sorry for the characters we know that deep down inside, we really are sympathising with ourselves.

Where: Apollo Theatre, London (tube: Leicester Square/Piccadilly)
When: Mon-Sat: 7.45pm; Wed 3pm



THEATRE

Alphastyling

Green: eco darling. Green stuff, you know, greenery.

Apple products: okay, so they're pretty much guaranteed to break as soon as the warranty is over... but they're so beautiful that you do not (and should not) care.

Bangers and Mash: it's winter now, the nights are drawing in, the clocks have gone back, comfort food is needed. Scurry on down to **S and M** behind Liverpool Street Station or **Banger Bros** on Portobello Road for some feel good grub.

Capes: **Sherlock Holmes**-inspired, or fur with Pom-poms, a winter wardrobe staple. Go for a short elbow length one to avoid looking like **Count Dracula**. **Topshop** has awesome check capelets. Check out www.topshop.com.

Dance: to the new Bloc Party song. A lot.

Enjoy: **Hairspray!** Released on DVD at the end of the month, twist away those winter blues with a sing along from the sixties.

Facebook: if you're not on it, where are you? Detagging has become a daily habit, your mini-feed has substituted BBC news as your source of information and the new video application means hours and hours of fun, fun, fun.



Head gear: Get yourself a raspberry beret, or any kind of oversized knit and shove it on your head. The closer to a tea cosy the better.

Ice Skater chic: **Stella McCartney** has just released a line of skater inspired skirts, perfect to wear to the outdoor rink opening up again soon at **Somerset House**. Best get your skates on now!

Joy Division: The biopic **Control** has stunned all. Go and see it. Punch in www.odeon.co.uk.

Kazakhstan: go there, it's funny.

Layers: the best piece of fashion advice this winter, also probably the most practical. Layer with caution, the look is meant to be Boho not **Michelin man**.

Military chic: navel coats with **Sgt Pepper** inspired tassels.

Nu grave: is the new nu rave. Neons are dead. Blacks, greys and misery are in. Do not smile.

Open your heart: to minimal techno. mille plateaux and kompakt.

Prêt e Moi ta Main: fantastic for a rainy day French film, guaranteed to make you feel warm and fuzzy inside. Starring **Charlotte Gainsbourg**.

Quinn: as in Mark. Check out his **Kate Moss** statue.

Rivington Place: a new centre for visual arts that has just opened up off of **Old Street** devoted to culturally diverse contemporary art and photography. Get on www.rivington-place.org to get with the program.

Sequins: are everywhere right now. Add a sequin waist coat, belt or beret to any outfit to sparkle with the best of them. For the closet exhibitionists hunt out **H and M's** sequin dresses, and for the not so closet go for **Urban Outfitters** sequin Hotpants in gold or silver. www.urbanoutfitters.com.

Tea: the good old British solution to just about everything. Whether it's afternoon tea at the **National Portrait Gallery** or a cuppa for the **Quad**. **Marc Jacobs** has just released a tea-set, so it must be cool.

Umbrellas: drizzle and grey are here to stay for the foreseeable future, whether it's a psychedelic **Paul Smith** print or a **Primark** one with rainbows, it's always the best way to stay dry.

Vand A: their current **Golden Age of Couture** focuses on British and Parisian couture between the 1940's and 50's has amazing displays of beautiful

clothes that you could never afford from **Dior** and **Givenchy** (book tickets at www.vam.ac.uk). There is also an exhibition on fashion photography from **Vogue** and **Harpers Bazaar** (admission free).

Walks: in the winter, wrapped up and lovely. Go for a stroll on **Primrose Hill** for the best view of the city, then pop down to the **Honest Sausage** in **Regents Park** for some food and a bevvie. Google **Regents Park** for a map and further inspiration.



X-rated: **Seduced: Art and Sex from Antiquity to Now** at the **Barbican** has been described as the hottest ticket this autumn... for more reasons than one and features works from **Warhol** and **Bacon**. Check out a review on the **BBC Radio 4** website www.bbc.co.uk and feel the heat.

Yule tide: beverages, yes, yes, yes the red cups are here. **Starbucks**, **Costa** and the rest have dragged out their festive fancies, bastardising the regular cup of joe with syrups galore, not that I'm complaining...

Zoom: to Paris on the brand spanking new **Eurostar** when it starts leaving from **St. Pancras Station** on the 14th of November. London to Paris in two and a half hours, who can resist? Youth tickets start at £50, go to www.eurostar.com to plan your escape.

IDENTITY

LSE in shock as favourite Auntie vanishes without trace

The global Social Science community is in shock today following the news that the personal effects of one of our most celebrated public intellectuals had been found by a New Zealand fishing vessel off the coast of Vanuatu. The noted Anthropologist, Philosopher, Poet, Sculptor, Sociologist and Impresario was as famous throughout the world for her scandal ridden private life as for her impressive academic and artistic credentials, though amongst LSE students she was best loved for her long running student advice column that she always found time to write amidst her busy schedule. Despite being missing for over four months, rescuers had been holding out in hope that Shaw would be found alive. However, with the discovery of her assorted personal effects floating deep in the Pacific Ocean, including notably her most treasured possession, the coral ankle bracelet famously given to her by Ibn Saud, 'Auntie' Shaw, as millions around the world knew her, was officially declared 'missing, presumed dead' by the British Foreign Office late last night.

It is perhaps fitting that the presumed end to Auntie Shaw's life is to have taken place so near to the site where she first made her name in Academia. In 1927 Auntie Shaw journeyed to the remote Pacific Island of Pau'toa to undertake an ethnography of the Vileasian people, inspired by the work of Bronislaw Malinowski who was her tutor, and some have claimed lover, during her initial studies at the LSE. The events that followed have long passed into legend - revered amongst her hosts for her formidable sexual techniques, she became the subject of a notorious cargo cult

which spread like wildfire throughout the Polynesian communities. The colonial authorities in Auckland declared her an 'unlawful agitator' due to the politico-sexual revolution she was stirring in the Pacific, at the time a frontier land in the anticipated conflict with Japan. She was forcibly deported and imprisoned at St Helena, ordered by a unique League of Nations ruling never to return to Polynesia for the rest of her life, or the next 80 years, whichever might prove the longer.

Her intriguing life story might have ended there on that remote island in the South Atlantic, had she not contrived to have her research notes published in the notorious bestseller 'Sex and Liberation in Savage Society'. The account of her stay amongst the indigenous people of Pau'toa led to fierce debate amongst society of the time. Her academic peers vilified for her transformative effect on the culture she was supposed to be researching (as she said when the scandal of her sex tape with John Holmes broke in the early 1980s, she always believed in participating not observing), although she was lauded amongst the public who eagerly snatched up copies of her publication 'Sex and Liberation in Savage Society' in the two weeks before the judiciary became aware of its salacious content. Shaw's imprisonment in the South Atlantic was broken off to report a special



House of Lords committee in London to account for the lewd and indecent content of her research. However, following her performance of the traditional Vileasian fertility rite at the tribunal she received an official pardon from the assembled peers, provided she abided by the League of Nations ruling.

In the many years following her ascension the public eye Auntie Shaw continued her twin mission to spread scientific enquiry and sexual liberation to the world, following a punishing publishing and traveling schedule throughout the Globe. Despite traveling through all six continents, Shaw never lost her passionate longing for what she termed her seventh continent, the oceanic islands of the Pacific where she was revered and adored but which she was forbidden to return to. Her desire to return to what she viewed as her spiritual homeland of Pau'toa led to a twenty year legal dispute with the global legislature. Despite the events that led to her banishment being a distant memory in recent years, an administrative error in the handover from the League of Nations to the new United Nations meant that there was no way to overturn the ruling against her return. However, following her recorded clinical death in 2004 during a charity mescaline trip, she successfully argued at the court of Geneva that the ruling that she

could not return to Polynesia until her death had been legally fulfilled, and that the only barrier to her return was the 80 years prohibition which was soon to expire in 2007.

Following this seismic legal upheaval, Shaw was given leave to return to the island of Pau'toa on the 23rd April 2007. The indigenous people of Pau'toa have been fiercely hostile to outsiders since Shaw was snatched from them 80 years ago, and she undertook the journey alone in a drift canoe from Fiji, hoping to reach the people who still viewed her as the daughter of the moon. It is known that she arrived, as she sent letters by bottle message updating on her progress. As the months passed, her letters became more cryptic and infrequent, speaking of the final prophesy and the coming voyage. It is believed amongst scholars that this may refer to the Vileasian prophecy that the 'moon daughter' would set sail on a 'great raft' to the 'fire island in the west' carrying 'two score of her sons' with whom she will indulge in 'nuptial congress' until the end of the world. Some have conjectured that Shaw may have attempted to fulfill this prophecy by undertaking a dramatic voyage and has been lost at sea, others that the Vileasian people refused to tolerate her presence and had killed her themselves. Whatever the circumstances of her death, it now seems certain that Shaw has come to her death in the very place she spent her life trying to return to.

Dr. P.P. Currie is a former student and official biographer of Auntie Shaw. He is currently working the fourth volume of her official biography, following the bestselling 'From Grace Kelly to John F. Kennedy - The Life and Times of Shaw, 1949 - 1963'



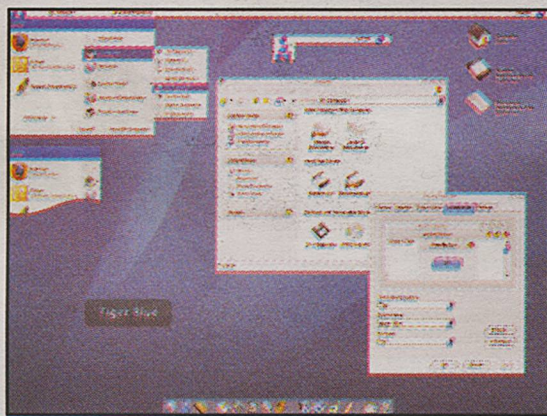
Apple Hac...

hasibbaber is all excited about his new OS. Windows XP.

It's a well known fact that some Mac owners are exceptionally smug twats; "My computer never crashes and looks fucking great". They might not say these exact words, or even words to that effect, but you can rest assured that they're probably thinking them, whilst also assuming that they are better than you in every way. Well, you can try wiping that self-satisfied look off their pasty hipster faces with my step by step guide to making Windows XP look and feel like an OS X Mac! You should be advised against gloating about this endeavour to Mac users though; some simply won't care and most will definitely think you're at least a bit of a cock.

1 To start off with, google "UXTheme patch" and download that. This patch allows you to use third-party desktop themes for Windows XP. After that go and have a hunt around for a desktop theme that looks suitably Mac-like (there are a few nice ones on studiotwentyeight.com, click on "Visual Styles").

2 Next up is the dock. For those of you not too au-fait with Macs, it's a bit like the Windows taskbar but a bit more flamboyant. There are a number of apps out there that do this but YzDock is the best. YzDock is a perfect emulation of the Mac's dock, so much so that the developer was issued with a cease and desist order, so downloading it is probably illegal in some way. If this kind of thing concerns you, you should download ObjectDock or MobyDock then cry yourself to



3 The flashy icons are one of the great things about Macs and you can find them online at www.osx-e.com. Download them then extract them to the either the Icons subfolder or the main program folder of whatever dock program you're using.

sleep while wondering why you care so much about copyright law.

4 Download and install ObjectBar. This will give you a Mac-style Finder bar at the top of your screen. The default skin for this app comes with an Apple logo but if you can be arsed to hunt around online you should be able to find one with a Windows logo on it if you prefer.

5 To get explorer to look more Maccy, download YzToolbar and YzShadow. YzShadow is worth getting on its own, even if you can't be bothered with the rest of this stuff, it adds a pretty drop down shadow to windows being dragged around the screen.

6 If you're feeling adventurous, you might want to download Samurize and get a swish transparent clock on your desktop and a few other extras.

There you have it. With a bit of careful tweaking, you can have your PC desktop looking like the one in the image. Sure, your PC will still outwardly resemble a ragged heap of nasty plastic built by a blind Soviet, but at least you can be a bit nicer on the inside, which is sort of what counts. I'll bet you can't wait to go and try it out, eh?



weichaowang warns the unwary about apple's recent update to their mac operating system

After the release of the new Macintosh operating system, MacOS X Leopard, there have been reports of problematic bugs within the operating system that made Apple look like the Microsoft operating system development team. A report from the German IT magazine, Heise Security, states that there are fundamental problems with the OS X firewall.

The report stated that the inbuilt firewall would automatically switch itself off when the new operating system is installed onto the computer. Initial testing by the magazine revealed that automated port blocking failed to function, with the firewall finding no reason to block unauthorised access from other networks. Even with "block all incoming access" function enabled, computers on other networks were able to communicate freely with the MacBook that was being tested.

Apple's recent gaffe has been compared with Microsoft's XP firewall when it was first released, bug ridden and easy to penetrate. Viruses, worms and Trojan Horses have been plaguing Internet users since the expansion of the World Wide Web and inside LSE itself. However with the growth of users with high-level anti-virus programs and separate firewalls, such as the LSE provided McAfee Anti-Virus and ZoneAlarm, coupled with the increase in Apple Computers around campus, infection and intrusion rates have fallen in the past few years.

Despite the potentially damaging news, 2 million copies have been sold or delivered according to Apple. Compared with Microsoft's new operating system, Vista, experts still say that if you want a safe computer, go with Macs.

Bath: the Jewel in Somerset's Crown

willjoce gets highbrow in one of Britain's most beautiful cathedral cities.

London at this time of year can be grey, wet and quite frankly depressing. It is the ideal time, therefore, to think about taking a day trip or maybe even a weekend out to see where the green and pleasant land you have heard so much about actually is. The city of Bath, situated in the rural county of Somerset, could have been designed precisely for this purpose. With wide Regency avenues, Roman remains and more culture than you could shake a stick at, Bath is the best bits of England served in one bite-sized piece.

Bath's appeal does veer wildly at times from the simply high-brow to the disturbingly twee. The architecture is stunning and the history of Britain from Roman times to today can be traced in various striking buildings around the town. The most impressive of these are, of course, the Roman Baths, which can be seen almost as Caesar left them, simmering and steaming away. Similarly, the Royal Crescent, a huge imposing design layout near the edge of town, brings the Regency period to life in a way few museums can manage. Tragically, however, the 1960s and 70s are also represented by a few concrete monstrosities but thankfully not too many since a concerted local campaign halted the wanton building and associated destruction of architectural masterpieces.

Once you have wandered around and marvelled at the architecture, the next major attraction is the museums. The one attached to the Roman Baths is arguably the best and definitely the most popular, so be aware that it can get very crowded at times. There are a variety of more obscure museums, though, which are just as interesting. The museum of East Asian art is fairly self explanatory but surprisingly extensive, and a brilliant way to spend an afternoon forgetting that you in an English town and not some far flung part of the Orient. Just outside Bath is the American Museum in Britain, which aims to give visitors an idea of what life was like for generations of Americans from the first settlers to the Civil War by recreating their houses, workplaces and even a 'Massachusetts

Tavern'. Visitors should be aware, however, that because much of it is open air the American Museum will close for the winter at the end of this month. Then, for any literature fans, there is the Jane Austen museum, dedicated to the author who lived much of her life in Bath and wrote many of her most famous works here. In

their own.

As outlined above, there is more than enough in Bath to keep visitors entertained for a day, but when you arrive you will probably want to make an entire weekend of it. This gives you the opportunity to explore the town on one day and on the other venture further afield. Top of my list of recommendations is Longleat safari park, the

infinitely better than them being cooped up in a zoo cage. If, however, that does not take your fancy, then there is always Cheddar Gorge for a cream tea or a bit of caving, depending on your preference. This gorge was formed over a million years ago and is now an interesting and informative interactive museum about the area's geological history where you can either penetrate deep underground or settle for a spot of cheese tasting.

In terms of food, Bath has a wide variety of restaurants; it may not be able to match the sheer diversity of the culinary experiences available here in London but the quality is very good and the prices considerably more agreeable to a student's wallet. The quirky and cheaper options tend to be out near the university while the restaurants in the centre lean more towards the tourist market, but, generally speaking, if you use your common sense you will have to be very unlucky to be either disappointed or ripped off. It would be a shame for anyone to come away from a visit to Bath without having tried the 'world famous' Bath buns, a bakery confection involving lots of dough and sugar. It's hearty, sweet and quite tasty, although the tourist emphasis on the 'delectable treats' can seem a little overdone.

As with any tourist hotspot, Bath's busiest season is in the height of summer, when the visitors come in hordes and any right-minded person runs for the hills. However, the best times to visit, in my opinion, are in fact autumn and deepest winter. This is because the beauty of Bath is best seen not through a heat haze but in crisp, clear air, with either falling leaves or a blanket of snow giving the town an air of peaceful majesty that befits its age and beauty.

Bath is best reached from London by train. First Great-western tickets start from £12.50 return with a young person's rail-card and the journey takes a mere ninety minutes from London Paddington. Book online for the cheapest fares at www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk

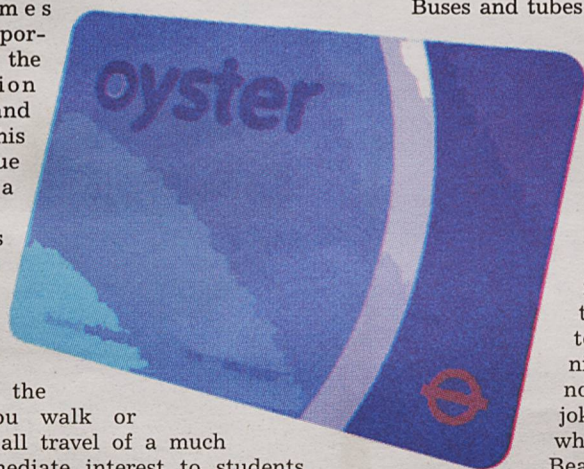


my opinion this is where Bath takes a turn for the excessively quaint. Women in period dress roam around saying things like 'Forsooth, I find him deeply disagreeable', needlework displays are considered interesting and coach-loads of elderly women swarm through the gift shop fighting over Jane Austen tea-towels. However, each to

most English of country houses accompanied by the least English of wildlife. Here lions, tigers, giraffes and a whole range of other exotic creatures roam free across the land belonging to the mad as a hatter Marquis of Bath. Easily reached from Bath this gives a pleasant view of animals in a habitat that, while far from 'natural', is

London Transport: AN OXYMORON?

Travel does not just involve 747's to far flung parts of the world where scantily clad bar-people will tend to your every beverage need. The travelling is sometimes more important than the destination itself and never is this less true than a commute. The buses that run past you, the tubes that run beneath you and the routes you walk or cycle are all travel of a much more immediate interest to students here at the LSE.



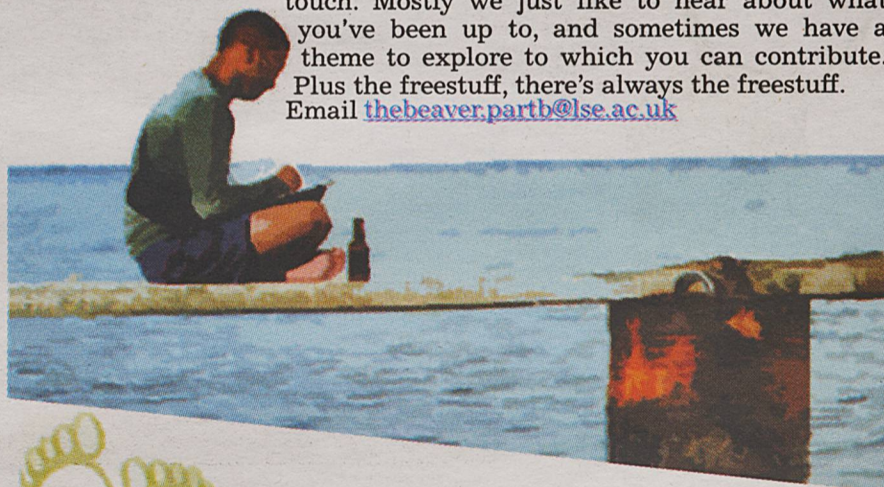
should be balanced by a contrasting opinion the next. Unanimity is not what we are wanting or expecting so if something is written that annoys you then get back to us and explain why.

Buses and tubes seem to generate a fair amount of heated opinions, but why is most people's venom reserved for cyclists? What is the most interesting thing to happen to you on a nightbus? Is the northern line a joke? Is the person who contacted the Beaver with an idea for a story in the travel section

about how he takes day trips around 'poor neighbourhoods' a complete freak? Is walking the way forward or as out-moded as the Sedan Chair, and just as practical? Are Oyster cards another way for the government to keep tabs on us? Get involved, this is your paper. Ride, write, read and rant.

Part B Travel would like to expand its pool of writers.

Most of you must have some travel experiences you want to share and we want to hear about them. If you have one story or many then get in touch. Mostly we just like to hear about what you've been up to, and sometimes we have a theme to explore to which you can contribute. Plus the freestuff, there's always the freestuff. Email thebeaver.partb@lse.ac.uk



LSE Itchy Feet society are hosting a talk by Quintin Lake from the Royal Geographical Society.

This will be on Thursday 15th November in D202.

Quintin has been to some interesting places, like Greenland, and some scary places, like Chernobyl, and is expected to give a variety of insights into the places he has been, the people he has met and the motivations behind travel. All are welcome so please come along.

Part Bestiary

This taxonomy of creatures has been submitted in full to UNSCEAR, the CNRS, ISN and AAAAS. We would like it recognised as the definitive classification of the animal world, and anything that does not fall under its scope be treated as hostile and neutralised with force. Thankyou.

Behold, the animalia. Buy them please. All proceeds will go to the Linneaus Fund for lonely scientific racists at Christmas.



no. 567483.
Behold. a crow. with the head of a raven. subtle.
Belongs to the emperor.

only \$4095



Behold.
no. 567483.
An Osprey with the head of a criminal. Serve with Gannet on a bed of Panda shavings.

\$7897.99



Behold no. 567483. A canary with the anal sphincter of a rhino. Ingenious. inventive ... white, sanguine ... He is governed by law.

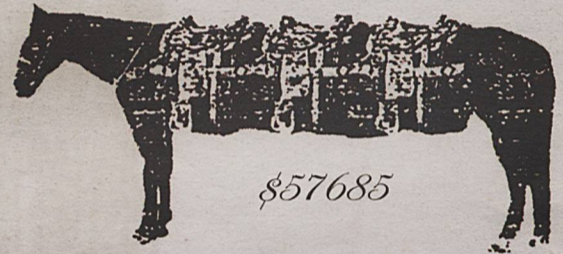
\$7599.99

Behold. no. 458695
A Chaffinch with the pride and shoulders of a Buffalo. Crafty. lazy, careless ... apathetic ... he is governed by the arbitrary will of his masters.



\$57685

no. 567483.
Americanus Rubescens ... happy with his lot. liberty loving ... tannedskinned. irascible ... He is governed by custom.



\$57685

Behold no. 567483. a Common or Garden Mole with the shining eyes of a Golden Eagle. He has seen too much.



\$7599.99

"This society is no more than a physical assembly controlled by nature, deprived of sight, of knowledge and of reason. I own three Fox-Mandrills and they make for excellent post-it surfaces and hardy physical-abuse recepticles"

Howard Davies, Jr

no. 567483.
Behold. It appears to be nothing more than a degenerate horse. But it is Muscuscis Malvalva. an Okapi with the head of a Model 4 Browning 45mm stills camera MkII.



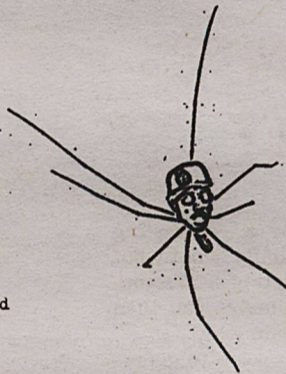
\$57685



Behold. no. 765483. A manatee with the hornappa ratus of a Watasi. Also has the compassion of a astronaut. Is over friendly.

\$7599.99

Behold. no. 567483. Lies somewhere between Yes and No. Closer to no. Someone told me it was a DiddyLongLegs but I refused to acknowledge that a pun like that could exist.



\$1.99

no. 19865.
Behold. A Peter Sutherland with the wings of a cleaner.

\$9.99



We are proud to unveil our bestiary associate. BP, who are happy to associate their money with us in the name of cultural appropriation.



no. 567483. a child with the slightly stale taste of a bishop, the scent of a woman, gills, a sten gun and the ethics and avuncular good humour of a dirty pound.

\$9789.99

Behold. A Puffin with the head of an oilslick (courtesy of BP)



tal nce?

ing the United States' relationship with Israel.
ok is not it



...
e search in Mosul, 2005

the sun) will affect American relations with the Middle East's all-important great and rising powers, like Turkey and Egypt. Along with a healthy respect for the fog and friction of any strategy's implementation, these considerations should take pride of place in a 'hard' theory of the prospects for international stability. However, Mearsheimer and Walt often veer close to the shortsightedness which they decry in proponents of an unchanged US-Israeli special relationship.

Pacto de controhendo

For realists, Mearsheimer and Walt are distinctly unimpressed when I raise the argument that one reason the United States has shown such diplomatic fealty to Israel (It has vetoed thirty-three UN security council resolutions on its behalf) is not because of savvy interest groups in the imperial capital, but because of a much more sombre factor: Israel's long-standing possession of a nuclear arsenal.

Mearsheimer dismisses this out of hand. "There's no danger of Israel using its nuclear weapons. It has the most powerful conventional military in the region. Israel doesn't need nuclear weapons at this point in time. Remember that the Israelis have fought Arab armies in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, and they won decisive victories in every one of those cases. They've only had trouble with terrorist organisations like Hamas and Hezbollah. Those forces are not an existential threat to Israel. So they're not going to use nuclear weapons, and therefore we don't have to worry about keeping Israel close to our bosom."

Never mind that: look at the dates. American support for Israel hit the big time in the early seventies, the same period in which it is believed the Israeli bomb went online. Granted, this was in the middle of the Cold War, when any loose nuclear exchange could provoke massive Soviet retaliation. Nevertheless, Israel's incentive to use the bomb was always as a last resort against catastrophic Arab attack or an overwhelming correlation of forces. As Ariel Sharon is believed to have said, "the Arabs may have the oil, but we have the matches."

It is therefore difficult to share Mearsheimer's insouciance when it comes to nuclear restraint in the modern Middle East. For starters, because it is such a small geographical sliver of land on the Levantine coast, Israel has no second strike capability. Indulging in MAD restraint is therefore a luxury it cannot afford. Most serious nuclear powers have had extensive hinterlands in which to hide their arsenals and bear the brunt of a first strike with a good chance of hitting back. These include the United States, Russia, China, India, Pakistan - and now Iran. The contemporary Middle Eastern military balance of power also favours the offence rather than the defence, always a bad sign for stability. The advanced rocket technology that gave Hezbollah such teeth in the 2006 Lebanon war is a case in point. These developments could lead the region's powers into a security dilemma, with each country tooling up its military only to find its neighbours arming all the more in fear. Many people are wary of the region's

unstable low politics of non-state actors and insurgents, for good reason; however, we have just as much to fear from the Middle East's high politics spiralling out of control. This is a very good reason for the United States to keep a watchful eye on Israel, with military aid a small price to pay in return.

Walt is similarly derisive when I suggest that a 'pacto de controhendo' - international relations speak for an alliance you make to consolidate your position against your ally, rather than your enemy - characterises US-Israeli relations far more than a flimsy interest group structure. "It's a really bad argument for an alliance that you have to support someone because they're threatening or because they might use nuclear weapons. If we thought the Israelis were that likely to use nuclear weapons, we should be distancing ourselves like crazy, so that we don't get blamed for something that they subsequently do." Walt is the acknowledged realist expert on alliance formation, so he is worth listening to. There remains the similar counterexample of US-Japan relations, nonetheless.

Israel's rational war in Lebanon

I see more short-sightedness when I ask Mearsheimer why, if AIPAC's aim is to achieve the maximum international latitude for Israel, the country did not fight a second war in Lebanon this summer, as had been widely expected. Israel's war aims - the dismantling of Hezbollah and the repatriation of captured Israeli soldiers - remained unfulfilled. 'The Israel Lobby' also argues that the American embrace has enabled Israel to leave off tough but necessary diplomacy like a peace treaty with Syria. This keeps the Lebanese front open. His reply is briskly realist in its analysis of Israel's clear perception of its national interest and its ability to learn from a hostile international military environment.

"Israel had no interest in starting another war with Lebanon this summer because it lost badly in Lebanon last summer. It had not in the meantime found a magic formula for winning another war. The Israeli Defence Forces spent eighteen years in Lebanon between 1982 and 2000, and finally left with their tales between their legs, so they had no way of winning a war in 2006, and they had no way of winning a war in 2007 against Hezbollah. And therefore, there was no real interest - no real appetite - on the Israelis' part, for fighting another war." But if Israel can make an honest mistake and quickly learn from it, why do Mearsheimer and Walt deny this for the United States' entry into Iraq and its conduct of the occupation there? After all, they select Iraq as a case where AIPAC and other groups pushed a policy that harmed Israel as much as it hurt United States interests in the Middle East.

And another war

Although the Israel lobby was "not solely responsible" for beating the drums of war in 2002 and 2003, the two professors contend that together pro-Israeli interest groups and (ever the villains of the piece) the neoconservatives "were eventually able to sell it to Bush and to the American peo-

ple." As Walt tells the story, "they thought it would be good for both countries. They thought it would be good for America, and they thought it would be good for Israel; but it was a disaster for both. Iran's position has improved dramatically since the war, and the Israelis have been really worried about the Iranians. So here's another case where the lobby sold a particular policy - not intentionally trying to harm us or to harm Israel - but it had the effect of doing just that."

Both Israel and America, it seems, can be hoodwinked by a few pressure groups into a vast strategic failure. Israel itself, however, with a much more polarised society, (take settlers in the captured 1967 territories, for example) can steer clear of its own quagmires and even pull off a few daring feats of accomplishment, like the 2006 IDF withdrawal from the West Bank. It is, to say the least, an ambivalence in Mearsheimer and Walt's argument.

IAPAC?

This is all the more striking because their views on the provenance of pro-Israeli interest groups within US politics are moderate to the point of dullness - a paean, almost, to the variety and strength of American civil society.

Mearsheimer argues that "the American political system from the beginning has been built around interest group politics. Going back to the founding of the United States, interest groups have had a formidable influence on the policy process, and this is not going to change any time soon." As far as he is concerned, this comes right down to the fact that "America is an immigrant society. What happens over time is that you have these different immigrant or ethnic groups come into the

country, organise - and then try and affect American policy in particular regions in particular ways. And we now see for example that Indian-Americans are modelling themselves on the Israel lobby. Many Indian-Americans who want to put US foreign policy in a pro-Indian direction have looked to how AIPAC does its business."

When I ask whether we will one day see an Iraq lobby to rival the Israel one on Capitol Hill, Walt prefers to answer in general terms of whether an Arab-American grouping will ever establish itself in Washington. "You wouldn't just want to put it as an Iraq lobby. You would want to see it as a countervailing Arab-American lobby. There are some Arab American political action committees and lobbying groups, yet they're much weaker. For a variety of reasons, the Arab-American groups will become more influential over time, as they assimilate more, as they grow wealthier in American society, and as they become more comfortable operating in the American political system." However, they have a long way to go. In the same period that pro-Israeli groups stumped up \$55 million to fund amenable congressional campaigns, Arab-American donations came to around \$800,000. All the same, Arab-Americans are one of the fastest growing groups in US society. AIPAC may have some competition on its hands.

Mearsheimer and Walt are therefore good at arguing for the lobby's influence on American domestic politics. When it comes to registering the lobby's power in a foreign policy crisis or up against the exigencies of the balance of power, their argument does less well. In the final analysis, 'The Israel Lobby' is not a realist's proposition - in both senses of the word.

"Indian-Americans are modelling themselves on the Israel lobby. Many who want to put US foreign policy in a pro-Indian direction have looked to how AIPAC does its business"

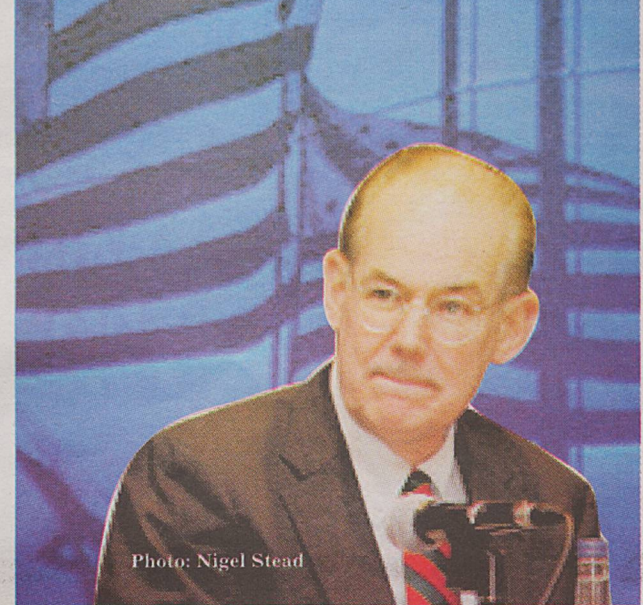


Photo: Nigel Stead

The True Price of Coffee

How fair is Fairtrade?

Annette Pacey and Ali Mansour

Does buying Fairtrade coffee help to redress the injustice of the world trading system and give producers in the developing world a better deal? The worldwide Fairtrade movement claims it does, but critics argue that it perpetuates the very problem it aims to solve, ripping off consumers for good measure. Is Fairtrade really the ethical choice for consumers?

The Fairtrade movement aims to use consumer choice to give a better deal to commodity producers in the developing world. Often, small producers of commodities such as bananas and coffee find themselves entirely at the mercy of wildly fluctuating prices for their produce on the world market. In 1995, when a severe frost in Brazil destroyed much of the coffee crop, world coffee prices boomed; by 2001 they had fallen to a 30 year low (Milford, 2004). For the many coffee farmers living close to absolute poverty, rapid and drastic decline in prices ruthlessly jeopardises their already dire living conditions (ibid).

Concern in rich countries for the plight of third world producers led to the idea of Fairtrade labelling. Consumers in the rich 'North' could choose to support farmers in the poor 'South' by paying more for a product which carried a guarantee that the farmer had received a premium on top of the market price for his or her produce. The system works by certifying producers who meet Fairtrade requirements according to standards laid down by the Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO). Fairtrade certified products are guaranteed both a minimum price for their produce, plus a premium which must be invested in local development projects.

By guaranteeing a minimum price the system aims to give producers economic independence and control over their lives. The minimum price is calculated to take into account the costs of sustainable production. The essential objective of this method of pricing is to protect the farmers should world prices fall below the cost of production. The premium above the minimum price aims to empower producers to improve their communities through additional

funding of development projects. The Fairtrade logo aims to function as a guarantee to consumers, assuring that they are contributing to the social and economic development of the producer by buying the product.

The Fairtrade foundation gives the example of a banana producer called Alfredo Martinez in the Dominican Republic. Previously restricted to the local market, Alfredo suffered from wildly varying prices and his family was at times driven to starvation. Since he began selling his bananas to the Fairtrade export market he has enjoyed a guaranteed and regular income, leaving him much more secure. Alfredo is part of the Juliana-Jaramillo group of farmers which have been certified Fairtrade producers since 1996. The group meets annually to decide how to spend the premium paid on top of the Fairtrade price. Recent projects have included the provision of toilets and improved housing for local people. The Fairtrade foundation claims workers on larger plantations also benefit from the scheme, because Fairtrade farmers can afford to compensate their workers with higher wages and provide them with benefits like sick pay.

Despite its noble aims, the Fairtrade movement is not short of critics. The Economist is quick to point out serious concern over the economics of Fairtrade, namely the problem of overproduction. Fair trade minimum prices aim to rebalance the 'injustice' of low prices, but the critics assert that this policy fails to recognise the underlying foundation of the problem: that prices are low because there are too many producers.

The Problem of Overproduction

Coffee production gives an example of how this can happen. Coffee trees take two years to mature and then produce berries for up to 40 years. The unusual time span of this crop means that it is impossible for farmers to adjust production levels in accordance with demand and price (Milford, 2004). Price elasticity of demand is also low, which means that demand for coffee does not decrease significantly when prices rise. Unexpected frosts or disease can

therefore cause significant price booms which encourage farmers to enter the market. Two years later when the trees mature and there is an oversupply of the product, prices once again drop. As the cycle of price of fluctuations continues, farmers are increasingly marginalized in an uncertain market (ibid).

Paying producers above the market price is effectively a subsidy which prevents the price signal from reaching the farmers. This actually encourages new farmers to start producing coffee, driving prices down further. This situation will severely degenerate the welfare of farmers who function outside of the Fairtrade system. On the other hand, if everyone were to join the Fairtrade production scheme, the organisation will no

increase production. Instead, it argues that it gives farmers other options, such as diversifying away from producing the crop, or investing in quality improvements. But why would a guaranteed higher price encourage a farmer to stop producing, and why bother improving quality when your price is guaranteed? The FLO argues that Fairtrade is a market-based model, not a subsidy. Producers only receive a premium if there is a buyer willing to pay it, and many farmers within the system continue to sell to the regular market as well.

Shifting Business from the Very Poor to the Poor

The more serious critiques of the

... farmers who are most marginalised and subjected to exploitation in trade, are in extremely poor countries where the basic level of governance fails to meet the minimum standards required by Fairtrade to implement their system. Therefore, the Fairtrade organization is more likely to move its operations to a slightly less poor country...further isolating farmers in extremely improvised environments who do not have the systematic capabilities to comply with the Fairtrade model.

longer be capable of sustaining the artificially evaluated prices, causing the entire system and its dependent farmers to collapse. In this sense the fair trade premium actually worsens the problem it aims to solve.

The Fairtrade movement is often subjected to this criticism. The websites of the Fairtrade foundation and the FLO attempt to address this concern in their FAQs. The Fairtrade foundation dismisses the claim that the fair-trade premium necessarily

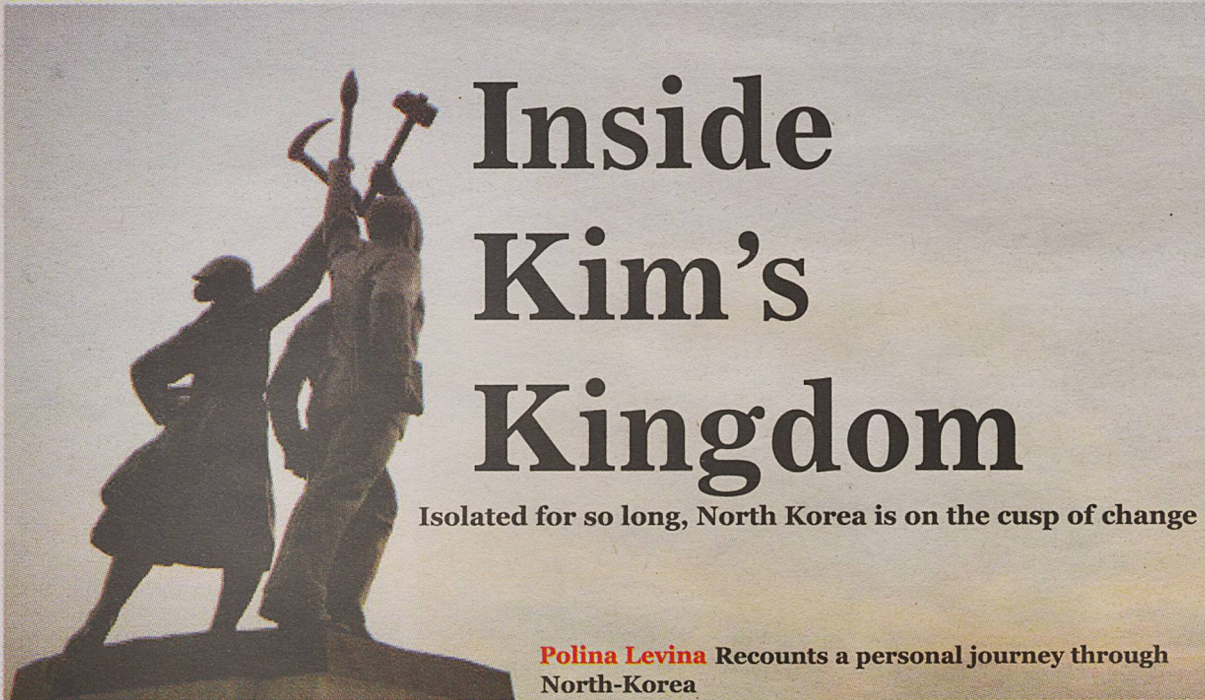
Fairtrade system focus on its misguided efforts, which are exclusively concerned with containing the symptoms of a much more fundamental problem of exploitation. Fairtrade products are verified through a thorough certification process. As such, they demand a certain level of competence and cooperation from the local governments of the countries in which the organization is active. The problem is that farmers who are most marginalised and subjected to exploita-

tion in trade, are in extremely poor countries where the basic level of governance fails to meet the minimum standards required by Fairtrade to implement their system. Therefore, the Fairtrade organization is more likely to move its operations to a slightly less poor country, such as Costa Rica instead of Guatemala, where the system can be installed effectively. In this manner, not only does Fairtrade not address the root of the problem but does more damage by shifting its business apparatus from dirt-poor countries to poor countries, further isolating farmers in extremely improvised environments who do not have the systematic capabilities to comply with the Fairtrade model.

Another criticism is that Fairtrade products do much more to benefit retailers than producers. While the Fairtrade premium can double a coffee producer's income, the extra cost of Fairtrade coffee to the retailer can be less than a penny per cup (Harford, 2006). The consumer is led to believe that the extra 10p or so they pay for Fairtrade coffee is going to the coffee grower when in fact almost all of it goes directly to the retailer (ibid). FLO acknowledges that retailer premiums are a cause of concern, but predicts that as the demand for Fairtrade products increases and competition between retailers intensifies disproportionate retailer margins will become less significant in future.

So how fair is that Fairtrade cup of coffee? There seem to be real benefits for coffee growers like Alfredo Martinez who get a higher price for their coffee, but the real problem is that too much coffee is being produced. A guaranteed price encourages new farmers to start producing, and prevents farmers from getting out of coffee production when it is not profitable. The benefits to individual farmers of getting a Fairtrade premium need to be balanced against the potential harm of encouraging more farmers to grow a product which is overproduced. Consumers should be cautious about the Fairtrade guarantee and bear in mind that if anyone is getting a better deal, it is not always the poor farmer.

Travels in North Korea



Inside Kim's Kingdom

Isolated for so long, North Korea is on the cusp of change

Polina Levina Recounts a personal journey through North-Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is the most isolated, backward, and oppressive state in the world. It is also run by the sole communist dynasty in history. This is the cult of Kim Il Sung (known as the Great Leader) and his somewhat unhinged son, Kim Jong Il (the Dear Leader). We are probably lucky that political succession DPRK-style never caught on in other communist states. What if Stalin's offspring had taken power instead of Khrushchev, or if there had been a Little Mao or Pol Pot Junior?

Is Kim Jong Il really just Korea's Marie Antoinette? Stories of his excesses abound. Rumour has it that he orders more Hennessy's cognac that anyone else in the world, employs 'pleasure squads' of Swedish blondes, and is an obsessive-compulsive germophobe. Unfortunately, the Dear Leader was (and remains) unavailable for comment. The only time he has ever spoken in public was in 1992, at a celebration of the North Korean army ("Glory to the people's heroic military!"). But the party might soon be over. It is further rumoured that he suffers serious liver disease. Perhaps watching Team America is the closest we'll ever get to this fascinating fixture of world politics.

Compared to Kim, the current state of the country is actually looking quite rosy - relative to the famines that blighted it just a few years ago. The North Korean people haven't had such a plentiful harvest in decades, and the regime has finally agreed to trade some enriched uranium for aid. This was my chance to visit Kim's strange and sinister land.

Air Koryo (the national airline of the DPRK) flies from Beijing to Pyongyang every two weeks. My mother and I decided not to risk our lives more than absolutely necessary, and took the train from Moscow. This involved standing at the Sino-Russian border and then again at the Sino-DPRK border for a dozen hours each time, while soldiers blocked the doors and ravaged through our luggage to make sure we weren't bringing in any subversive literature. They spent an

hour looking at the latest Harry Potter instalment. It turned out they thought it was the Bible.

Whether Pyongyang having no electricity is a well thought-out strategic manoeuvre, I shall never know. Arriving in the capital city in the middle of the night, I thought we had just stopped in yet another rice field for yet another round of questioning. As our tour guide later informed us, the Korean people are happy that they have electricity shortages, because they know that their sacrifices mean that they can have nuclear weapons.

Aside from the colossal monuments and omnipresent likenesses of the two Kims, the weirdest aspect of their



socialist paradise is the extent to which manual labour runs the country. An army of broom-wielding street cleaners sweeps the empty streets every morning. Instead of traffic cones, large boulders painted white are used to divert the non-existent traffic. Lanes on the roads are separated by kilometres of carefully laid out pebbles, which school children paint white after every rainfall. The asphalt, when damaged, is uprooted using rudimentary tools, then melted on a metal sheet above some coals and re-applied.

The only cars on the roads of North Korea are those of diplomats, tourists and their entourages, and the military. All other members of the society are transported using old Soviet trains and buses, and, in the rural areas, in massive 1930s pick-up trucks that billow black smoke and cover the passengers in soot. In a country that has severe shortages of everything, including fuel, creative approaches to life are crucial. Some of these vehicles are fuelled with coal and wood. The

steam engine has, indeed, made a comeback. Not that the Korean people mind. As the secret service lady made clear, "the Dear Leader knows how much the Korean people value clean air, and so doesn't let us own cars." I wonder whether he also knows how much the Korean people love exercise and useless manual labour.

As horrifying as this existence is, North Korea does not quite approximate the ninth circle of hell. True believers may still live in an alternate universe where American Imperialism is the archenemy of the proletariat; nevertheless, the regime is slowly but surely ebbing away. The Kims' portraits are being replaced by pictures of orchids and gardenias (also known as the Kimilsungia and Kimjongilia flowers) and the main streets of Pyongyang are lined with small kiosks selling fruit drinks imported from Singapore.

So what happens when the regime does fall? Will it be the next cheap no-standards labour capital of Asia, taking the "shock therapy" route of corruption and oligarchy pioneered by Russia? If so, a Putin-esque iron-fisted president could take the reins all too soon, and antagonise the world once more. Or will the DPRK take the Chinese route to oppressive market-Leninism and slowly disintegrate socialism? The regime has already begun a few free market experiments along the lines of China's Special Economic Zones, but North Korea awaits its Deng Xiaoping. Reunification, snail's-pace as it is, may yet bring the South's industries beyond the 38th parallel, eventually reconciling the two Koreas. As happy as that scenario would be, Seoul would probably have to subsidise its poor Northern cousin for decades to come. Russia, China, or Germany: the post-Cold War world has lessons aplenty for the peninsula's future. Unfortunately, in today's North Korea, the Cold War is still being fought.

All photos and captions by Polina Levina



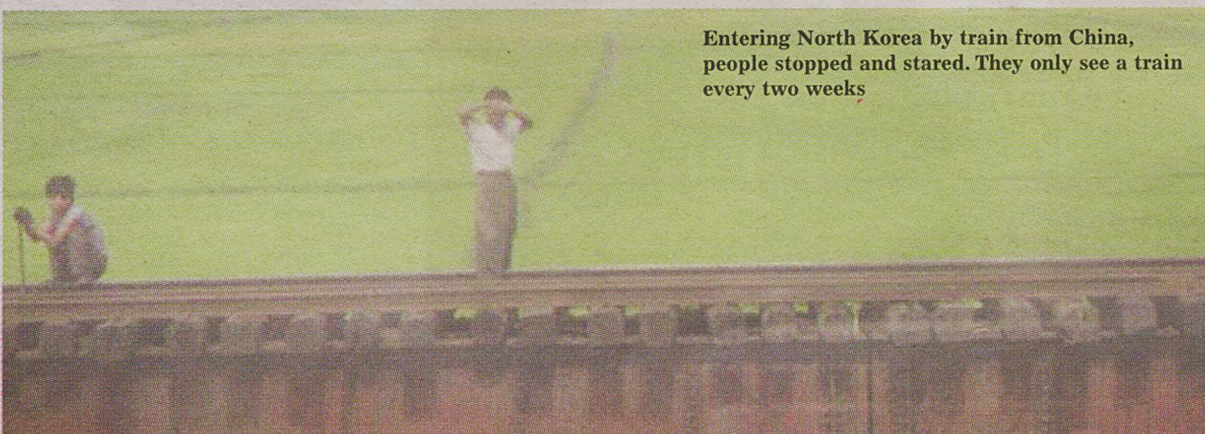
Kim Il Sung. All portraits of the Great Leader are based on the same template. The likeness is not unlike Leonid Brezhnev



The tomb of the first Korean king, Taedung. Although most historians agree Taedung never existed, North Korean archaeologists recently discovered his grave conveniently near Pyongyang. "Advanced DNA testing" has established that the Kims are his direct descendants



A coal-fired truck carrying North Korean peasants. Note the billowing smoke



Entering North Korea by train from China, people stopped and stared. They only see a train every two weeks



And so it happened. On Saturday 3rd November after a year of political strife General Pervez Musharraf declared a state of emergency. On that afternoon the military moved to shut down all private television channels and began patrols on the streets of Islamabad. Military personnel occupied the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice. The terms of the state of emergency were clear and unequivocal. The constitution was to be suspended and a "provisional constitutional order" (PCO) passed all power in to the hands of Musharraf. In the absence of any constitutional rights or liberties, it gave a free reign to the military, police and governments agencies to crush any opposition to their rule – martial law in all but name.

On the surface the streets of Lahore have bustled in just the same manner as they did in the days before this move. There is, as yet, no curfew, nor does the army yet patrol the streets. But under the surface a feeling of fear and trepidation prevails. Talk to any Pakistani and the subject quickly moves on to the "emergency". If you were a western tourist in Pakistan, although few come these days, the only visible sign of the new situation would be the large congregations of police officers on the street corners. But for the country's political opposition the state of emergency has been keenly felt. It is hard to say exactly how many arrests there have been, but from reports of the opposition parties and the lawyers' movement a figure of 10,000, perhaps more, is no exaggeration.

In heroic scenes at the Lahore High Court yesterday over 2,000 lawyers launched what was planned to be three days of action in protest at the state of emergency. As they took their protest from the High Court grounds onto the streets, they unceremoniously ejected the undercover police officers that had swamped the courts that morning. Fighting broke out as the police stopped the march

Pakistan's slow-moving and conservative main opposition forces have left the lawyers' movement to fight alone against the state of emergency

from leaving the court. Many lawyers were determined to fight and showed the police with stones. In the initial scenes, one older man was so badly beaten by police that he collapsed unconscious with blood pouring from a head wound. Three hours of pitched battles ensued in a courageous stand. The police eventually cleared out the court house leaving only the bitter stench of tear gas.

For the second day of protest the police had already occupied the court house and proceeded to arrest the lawyers that had returned for a second day of protest. In Lahore alone, 1,000 lawyers have been put behind bars. Similar scenes were reported in every town in Pakistan. The legal system has been effectively shut down here. Indeed, the aim of the coup, for Musharraf, is the crushing of his opponents in the judiciary and the mass movement they have inspired.

In March, Musharraf suspended the Chief Justice Chaudhary on trumped up charges. The protests against his suspension were organised at first by lawyers, but drew in many ordinary people, even Pakistan's slow

The Law Fought the War...the War Won

Luke Cooper provides an eyewitness account of the struggle of the opposition in Pakistan



moving and conservative opposition parties. At its high point in May, armed clashes took place between the movement and Musharraf supporters, crippling the whole country.

Musharraf: Loss of Control and Power

The Chief Justice was reinstated by the Supreme Court in July, and at the time Musharraf accepted their

verdict. The Supreme Court was due to rule this week on whether Musharraf's re-appointment for another five year term, by bodies last elected in 2002 (in allegedly rigged elections), was constitutional. It seems likely that Musharraf had it on good authority that they would rule against him and so made his move. In fact, all his manoeuvres this year regarding the judiciary have been done with one objective: to retain his personal power and that of the military. With his new powers under the PCO Musharraf has placed the dissenting judges under house arrest. Their last act had been to declare the PCO illegal.

In his address to the nation late on Saturday night, Musharraf emphasised an altogether different motivation. While he made passing mention to the "disloyal" and "disruptive" elements in the judiciary, he argued it was the growing jihadist insurgency that demanded he centralise power completely into his own hands. In his "message to his friends in the west" he went out of his way to emphasise this factor. America has, after all, funded Pakistan's treasury to the tune of mil-

lions of dollars in aid and loan credits since 2001 – on the condition that Pakistan carries out a "war on terror" against Islamic forces in the country.

In the major conflicts, the Pakistani army has waged, they have been defeated. Moreover, Pakistan's military has a long history of funding and supporting jihadist militants, stretching back to the role it played in developing these forces to fight the Afghan-Soviet war in the 1980s. To ask them to wage war on these groups is to ask them to break with a central pillar of their domestic political support. Sure enough though, when under tremendous pressure from democratic forces Musharraf did move to crush the militant jihadist forces stationed at the Red Mosque in Islamabad this summer. His motivation was political expediency. He hoped to prove his pro-western, modern credentials while also splitting the forces who have opposed him, notably the pro-western Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Since the Red Mosque massacre Pakistan has been beset by waves of terrorist violence carried out by Islamic extremists,

which have not just targeted the military but also ordinary people. In the Afghan border regions, Pakistani forces, fighting a reactionary war, have suffered enormous casualties, with a thousand soldiers dying in just two and a half months. This defeat has forced the government into another ceasefire, which it signed just last week.

Taking Advantage of Repression

While the military campaign may have proved disastrous, the PPP, cheered on by Washington, have gone out of their way to secure the position of General Musharraf. In October they agreed to a power sharing deal with him that meant they did not oppose his presidential re-appointment. This was done on the condition that he resign his position in the army, drop corruption charges against PPP leaders, and amend the constitution to allow PPP chairperson Benazir Bhutto to stand a third term as prime minister. The move by Musharraf to a state of emergency and the crushing of opposition exposes the hopeless character of these compromises – if, that is, the PPP ever aimed for a real democratic change.

The PPP, like all Pakistan's major opposition parties, is fraught with corruption. The Bhutto family is part of Pakistan's tiny landowning elite, and the party has a history of patronage in government. Bhutto initially came out to condemn Musharraf's "second coup", but on Tuesday she announced the deal with Musharraf was still possible. She is said to be going to Islamabad for talks with the general. The suspension of the constitution actually opens the door to her taking a third term as prime minister, which would otherwise be unconstitutional.

Musharraf's second coup was in many ways a tacit admission that he had lost control of the country in the face of demands for democratic reforms, rising workers' struggles and serious defeats for the military in the Afghan border regions. In this fast moving political situation it is impossible to predict what will happen. What we can be sure of is that Pakistan has much more political instability and turbulence ahead. So far, Pakistan's slow moving and conservative main opposition forces have left the lawyers' movement to fight alone against the state of emergency. While fear and uncertainty currently rule amongst the masses, there can be no doubt that they detest Musharraf more than ever, and would respond decisively to a call for strike action by the large opposition parties. There is also the big question of what kind of government replaces the military junta. Amongst many ordinary people I talk to, democratic change is not actually at the top of their priorities. The democratic governments of the 1990s were just as corrupt and inefficient as the current regime.

In this spirit, the case of Pakistan illustrates the systemic crisis in world politics. None of the major Pakistani opposition parties propose a fundamental break with the US relationship and the hugely destructive "war on terror" and neoliberal economic programme that come with it. The continuation of these policies will only deepen the catastrophic, indeed revolutionary, proportions of Pakistan's crisis. In such times, great opportunities and great dangers co-exist.

Luke Cooper will be giving an eyewitness report at the LSE Revolution Society launch meeting at 1700 Wednesday 14th November, Room K105. He will also be speaking on Pakistan at the "90 Years of Revolution" event in Leeds. For details of the minibus to this event from London contact Jo on 07748044216.



Lawyers shout slogans after police thrashed their colleagues during a protest against emergency rule for the second consecutive day

Listings

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HELLO FOLKS! Xmas is getting nearer and so CRUSH! is starting to just keep on GIVING!

From 8PM - 11PM Reef is just £1.50 a bottle and Carlsberg £1.50 a pint !!!!!

ALL NIGHT: ANY A.U. CARD HOLDER FROM ANY UNI GETS IN AT THE SPECIAL PRICE OF JUST £3 !!! The Quad will Rock with the best party anthems and the Underground will be sexed up with hot RNB-HIPHOP!

NEW: The 3 Tuns wants you to be the DJ! Just bring your ipod along and email the CRUSH! Team your name before doors open and you can play your 3 tracks!

PLUS: As always - if its your birthday in the week, YOU GET IN FREE AND YOUR MATES ALL GET A DISCOUNT! Just email before doors open!

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China Development Society Tea and Knowledge Seminar

China's peaceful rise and Taiwan's place in this strategy

Date: Wednesday 14 November 2007

Time: 2 - 3pm

Venue: Room G108, 20 Kingsway

Speaker: Dr Steve Tsang

What does China's 'peaceful rise' policy or its most recent permutation, the promotion of a harmonious world, mean in reality? Is such a policy compatible with China's determination that it would use force if necessary to ensure Taiwan would return to mother China? Indeed, what would be the best way for the world to deal with the rise of China? These are some of the key questions that Steve Tsang will address in his talk.

Dr Steve Tsang, Louis Cha senior research fellow in Modern Chinese Studies, University Reader in Politics; director of Taiwan Studies Programme; and director of the Pluscarden Programme for the Study of Global Terrorism and Intelligence, St Antony's College, Oxford University. He specialises in the politics and international relations of China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Dr. Tsang is

the author and editor of over ten books including Peace and Security Across the Taiwan Strait (2004), The Cold War's Odd Couple: The Unintended Partnership between the Republic of China and the United Kingdom (2006), Governing Hong Kong: Administrative Offices from the nineteenth century to the Chinese handover, 1862-1997 (2007)

LISTINGS

TUESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER

KNITTING
Knitting
Quad, 12.00 PM

HEDGE FUND
Interview Workshop
New Theatre, 12.30 PM

LOOSE TV
Elections
G212, 6.30 PM

DANCE
Modern Jazz (Open)
Parish Hall, 7.00 PM

WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER

CATHOLIC
Mass
Chaplaincy, 1.15 PM

CHINA DEVELOPMENT
Tea and Knowledge Seminar
G108, 2.00 PM

SWING DANCE
Beginners Swing Dance Class
Parish Hall, 7.00 PM

CITIZENS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE
Telco's 11th Annual Assembly
Round Chapel Hackney, 7.15 PM

THURSDAY, 15 NOVEMBER

LSE SU
UGM
Old Theatre, 1.00 PM

LITERATURE
Book Club - Mrs. Dalloway
G120, 5.00 PM

DANCE
Hip-hop (Beginner)
Parish Hall, 7.30 PM

DANCE
Hip-hop (Advanced)
Parish Hall, 8.30 PM

FRIDAY, 16 NOVEMBER

LSE SU
Crush!
Quad, 9.00 PM

MONDAY, 19 NOVEMBER

DANCE
Ballet (Beginner)
Parish Hall, 6.00 PM

DANCE
Ballet (Intermediate)
G1, 7.00 PM

SWING DANCE
Improvers Swing Dance Class
Parish Hall, 7.00 PM

SU Executive office hours

General Secretary,
Fadhil Bakeer Markar
Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Treasurer,
Libby Meyer
Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Communications Officer,
Kayt Berry
Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Education and Welfare,
Ruhana Ali
Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Women's Officer,
Daisy Mitchell-Forster
Thursdays 12PM, Quad

Environment and Ethics,
Aled Dilwyn Fisher
Thursdays 12PM, Quad

LGBT Officer,
Dominic Rampat
Wednesdays 10AM, Quad

Societies Officer,
Carys Morgan
Thursdays 3PM, Quad

Students with
Disabilities Officer,
Lizzie Fison
Tuesday 10.30AM, Quad

WIN A TRIP FOR 2 TO SINGAPORE

'Your Singapore Experience'

'Your Singapore Experience' is a unique contest offering non-Singaporeans a special opportunity to take a 5 day all-expenses paid trip for two to the island state and experience first hand the exciting new developments the country has to offer.

The unique feature of the competition is that the winner will get to meet up to two prominent Singaporean residents of their choice from a variety of fields, ranging from scientists and captains of industry to artists and other public figures.

'Your' Singapore Experience seeks to enable those who are keen to find out more about Singapore beyond the traditional tourist sights to gain authentic insights into the many ongoing dynamic changes in the country.

To be in with a chance of winning this unique experience, contestants must submit a text essay, photo essay or a video clip that illustrates an aspect of Singapore that they admire or find interesting.

The deadline for entering the competition is Thursday 27 December 2007 and it is open to everyone above the age of 18 who is not a Singapore citizen or Permanent Resident, and who does not currently reside in Singapore.

For further information on the competition go to: www.your-singapore-experience.sg

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NOVEMBER
Wed 7th, Harriet Watt Students Association - Thurs 8th, Leeds College of Music
Mon 12th, Staffordshire University Students Union
Thurs 22nd, Bournemouth University Students Union - Sat 24th, Cardiff Students Union

DECEMBER
Thurs 6th, Strathclyde Students Union - Mon 10th, Northumbria Students Union
Fri 14th, Earl's Court, LSE Students Union

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Vacancies

Part Careers Editor

The opportunity to edit an exciting and widely-read Careers pullout. PartC enjoys close links with the LSE Careers Service and many corporate employers, as well as a wide variety of LSE alumni.

Candidates do not need to have previous experience on *The Beaver*, but should be enthusiastic and interested in the job market. The editor will be elected by the collective, email thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk for more information.

Web Editor

The chance to develop and manage the online edition of *The Beaver*, which attracts over 200 unique users per day.

Some previous web-design or HTML programming experience preferred. The editor will be elected by the collective, email thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk for more information.

Listings Sub-Editor

Play a vital role in the SU's communication with the student body and gain valuable experience in graphic design and layout using industry-standard software.

No previous experience required. The sub-editor will be elected by the collective, email thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk for more information.

C&A Assistant

Assist with editing and laying-out articles for the Comment and Analysis section. This is your chance to play a key part in generating and shaping debate amongst the student body.

No previous experience required. Email c&a@thebeaveronline.co.uk

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Pitch ideas for stories, manage a pool of writers and edit articles.

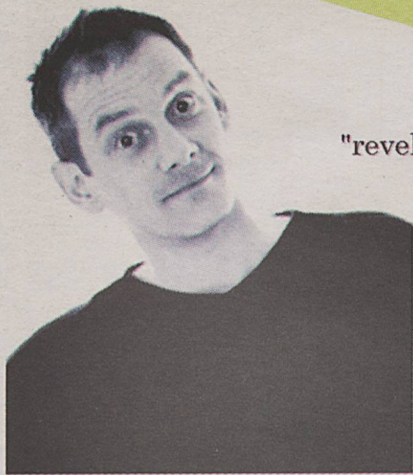
Email thebeaver.features@lse.ac.uk

For more information about writing for any part of *The Beaver*, email thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk

DAW

COMEDY NIGHT

with **Steve Day**



"revelatory and very funny"
The Guardian

Warm, witty and engaging. Steve is a favourite at many venues across the UK and abroad, and is quickly establishing himself as one of the most popular and respected acts on the circuit.

"absolutely wonderful...Day has moved up to the premier league of stand-up"
The Stage

"insightful and illuminating"
Three Weeks

8pm Monday 19th of Nov in the Underground
Limited number of tickets (£4) so get them early!
Get your ticket on Houghton Street:
Tues 13th - Thurs 15th 11-2pm,
Fri 16th 12-5pm

Chat with Steve after the show!

BATTLE OF THE BEAVERS

The Ultimate Entrepreneurial Charity Challenge:
Can you create a solution that will stun the judges?

The Challenge in Brief: teams will have 2 weeks to:

Create an enterprise or project that incorporates awareness of **disability**

Market research the 'enterprise'

Design an innovative solution and a creative means to advertise/sell the solution

Teams will **present** their projects and solutions to a panel of judges at the end of the 2 weeks from 7pm on Tuesday November 27th 2007

Are you up to the challenge? Do you have the competitive and intuitive edge necessary to secure the all-important prize?!

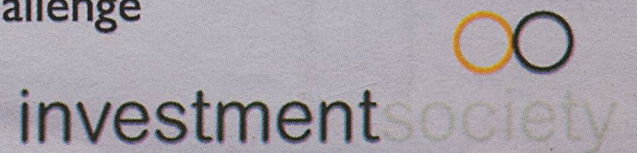
Money will be raised through the entrance fee (£15/team)

Maximum team size is 5 people

Sign up at the Disability Awareness stall on Houghton Street:
11-2pm Tues 13th - Thurs 15th and all afternoon Friday 16th

Demonstrate your innovative and creative talents to a panel of entrepreneurial judges!

www.lsesurag.com/Entrepreneurial-Challenge





RISE AGAINST RACISM

Tuesday, 13 November

An Interfaith Panel Discussion; WHO NEEDS GOD?! at 6pm, S421
Is religion make believe? Is 'God' made up? Does belief rest on rational or a leap of faith?
Does anyone actually need God?...
Chair: Alex Voorhoeve, LSE Philosophy Department
Speakers: Rabbi Daniel Rowe- Jewish Society, (TBC) - Islamic Society,
Rob Scott- Christian Union Speaker

Wednesday, 14 November

Student Action for Refugees and the Drama Society present: 3 Asylum Seekers, 3
Monologues at 4 pm, S50
Meet Kenan from Turkey, Faten from Lebanon and Marjorie from Uganda.
A moving play, which is a first-hand account of asylum, told in the words of the people
who have experienced it.

Discussion afterwards hosted by Guinah Houssein, STAR volunteer and Refugee from Togo

Diversity Careers Forum at 6pm, S50
Get all the motivation and inspiration you need with a Panel Discussion where Black and
Asian professionals tell you about their career experiences. Followed by reception with
refreshments and snacks.

Come and meet Shaun Bailey, Conservative Party candidate of Hammersmith.
The Head of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion at the Civil Service.
Founder of the Windsor Fellowship-a leadership scheme for Black and Asian students.
A representative from Deloitte and more!

Thursday, 15 November

Votes for Power! Simon Hughes MP Guest Speaker at 6:30pm, D302
An evening of political engagement and debate to explore the themes of voter power, anti
racism and diversity in Britain today with Operation Black Vote and special guest speaker
Simon Hughes MP as well as Ruqayyah Collector, NUS Black Students' Officer and Melody
Hossaini, UK Youth Parliament Co-Founder.

The genius of Ira Aldridge: Drama theory, technique, and practice at 6 pm, E304
A Free workshop given by Shango Baku on the Black actor-abolitionist Ira Aldridge - fund-
ed by the Heritage Lottery. Register at su.soc.drama@lse.ac.uk

Through this drama workshop learn about and discuss: The Black Historical Presence in
Britain, the Abolitionist debate, prejudice and perceptions about theatre arts and equal
rights and multiculturalism

Friday, 16 November

"500 Years Later" at 5pm, H103
Crime, drugs, HIV/AIDS, poor education, inferiority complex, low expectation, poverty,
corruption, poor health, and underdevelopment plagues people of African descent global-
ly. Filmed in over twenty countries and on five continents, 500 Years chronicles the strug-
gle of a people from enslavement who continue to fight for the most essential human right
- freedom.

Released in 2005 "500 Years Later" won 5 international film festival awards, it has been
heralded as one of the most powerful African and African-American documentaries of this
century. Come along to this chilled out film night with food and discussion

The Punter



Matthew Partridge

The European qualifiers taking place present plenty of opportunities to pick up some money. Most of the bookies are not accepting bets on this weekend's matches but the betting exchange Betfair.com is open for business. I'm going to advise betting on Belarus (3.88) to beat Albania, Romania (2.56) to beat Bulgaria, Croatia (1.65) to beat Macedonia, Turkey (3.55) to beat Norway or draw (3.3) (I'm suggesting you bet on both outcomes). You should also bet on Belgium (5.8) to beat Poland and the Republic of Ireland (2.52) to beat Wales. Betfair also offers some markets on this week's NBA games. My suggestion is that you bet on Portland (2.08) against Detroit and Memphis (2.52) against Houston.

Use any advice given here at your own risk and don't gamble what you cannot afford to lose. Columnist(s) may have positions in wagers mentioned. Prices quoted are correct at time of going to press.

The Olympics

Five years to go, but still a lot to do



Tom Patterson

When London won the bid to host the 2012 Olympics on July 6, 2005, thousands in Britain and elsewhere must have pondered how the London Olympic Bid Team managed it. Thanks in no small part to Lord Coe's slick marketing campaign and President Chirac's rhetorical digressions on the merits of Finnish cuisine, it was the thousands in London, and not Paris, that erupted in disbelief when Jacques Rogge, the IOC president, opened that white envelope.

Unfortunately for Lord Coe, Mayor Livingstone and indeed London and the country itself, the euphoria was to be short lived. The next day the

city was attacked by suicide bombers on tubes and buses, killing 52 people and wounding many others. The London Olympic Bid Team arrived home to a sombre reception.

Nevertheless, the Olympics promises to be the most significant sporting event hosted in Britain since the FIFA European Championship in 1996 and brings with it its own badge of international sporting prestige. Contrary to some pessimistic voices, English sport is not all failure and futility. Recent notable achievements include the heroics of the English Rugby Team in the recent World Cup in South Africa, the ascendancy of Lewis Hamilton in Formula One and the continuing successes of athletes such as Paula Radcliffe.

Yet, as was perhaps to be expected, the Olympic honeymoon is starting to wear off.

Media and public scrutiny over everything from the official logo, increased taxes, and more recent concerns over leaky stadiums has overshadowed the initial excitement. A YouGov poll conducted on behalf of the TaxPayers' Alliance in September 2007 found that almost two-thirds of the public are opposed to the expense of the 2012 Olympics and would rather see the cash spent on tax cuts or public services.

Whilst it might be said that recent sporting achievements serve to prove that English sport is not wholly inadequate, England's failure to win a substantial sporting event in recent years shows that there is much to be done. Sir Trevor Brooking, the FA's Director of Football Development, alluded to the greater problem when he pointed to the lack of infra-

structure in youth football - England is falling short in producing the stars of tomorrow. Across the board, England simply cannot compete with the sporting powerhouses like the United States and Australia.

Football, it will be noted, is not one of England's recent successes. While the Premier League can claim to be one of the best leagues in the world, this dominance has not translated to medals on the international stage. England has not won a major trophy in its favourite sport for over 40 years.

So, while the 2012 Olympics are undoubtedly a positive thing for London and British sport in general, leading to the redevelopment of vast neglected areas of East London, providing a focal point for national pride and catalysing British sport, it says

a lot about a country that it is seemingly more interested in hosting major international sporting events than actually winning them. I would tend to agree with Sir Trevor Brooking that we should concentrate on getting the sport right, before hosting the tournament.

Only this month the English FA announced their intentions to bid for the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Two major international tournaments in six years would no doubt sit well for English prestige in the capitals across the world, though a great deal of their success must surely rely on a strong British presence on the podium. If hosting international sporting events can galvanise a new belief in British sport, then the tournaments will be well worth it. Five years to go...and counting.

Women's Hockey

LSE Sheilas run over by Pompey



Laura Parfitt

LSEWHC 0
Portsmouth Uni. 3

It was going to be another two-hour trek down to south coast for the LSE-WHC ladies, but surely it couldn't go as badly this time round as it did the last time. Mint Travel provided us with not quite the Turkish delight we would expect from the AU's trusted chauffeur service; instead we got a driver more wound up than Jeremy Kyle in an abortion clinic, who proceeded to stop on a roundabout to have a fist fight with some bloke in a van. The bloke just happened to be on a journey to Portsmouth too. Great. An hour and a half later the chase was still on. A bullet hole in the rear windscreen and cries of "I've got kids! I've got kids!" from the driver really didn't fill us with confidence.

Anyway - back to this week. We were reassured that our driver was Mint's least psycho employee and he actually turned out to be Alison's uncle Bob. So we were good on the driver front but ridiculously bad on the numbers front. A grand total of nine girls showed up. Eight and half really because Betty is an amoeba and Gabba had lost two pints of blood through her gums already. But we went for it anyway; we weren't going to be put off by a load of Pompey tarts.

We wore white, as did they, but only to match their white shoes. So they had to don some fetching yellow bibs - wasn't too bad though because they matched their hair. We took first pushback and were off, even if it was to a slow start. From the outset, the number difference was apparent. We did however have a little support from the umpires after

one mouthy Pompeyer pissed one off - and he held grudges. The other one looked like a Welsh terrorist but wasn't bad underneath the facial hair. However, Pompey soon got frustrated when what should have been a complete white-wash didn't go the way we all admittedly thought it would. Our defence remained relentless and our amazing goalie

which proved difficult since making a good impression wasn't their forte. That was down to their slightly more attractive 2nds who use hockey as an excuse to run around in short skirts. The 1sts really shouldn't have been wearing short skirts - especially their back line - the only thing it put me off was my dinner.

Back to the unsporting tac-

rather than aiming at goal, they aimed straight for our defence's feet. After a few tries, Pompey finally opened the scoring.

We went into the second half in good spirits due to the low goal count, and despite being on the receiving end of boos from the sideline, we stuck it out. Shot after shot came in and only one more

rest of the team didn't lower themselves because of our Club Captain's shoddy example.

Disaster struck when Warrior Betty somehow got in front of a dangerous shot and blocked it with her arm. And then there were eight. Pompey didn't take advantage of our depleted squad and I honestly thought we could walk away

returned and Claire "I used to be a forward" Pickles had a stab down the right but we couldn't finish. Pompey slipped one more past Serene before the final whistle blew, leaving us 3-0 down.

We left with our heads held high, confident in the knowledge we will thrash them in the home rematch. We also left with a rugby ball, lacrosse ball



Serene, who has been named the hockey world's answer to Peter Schmeichel, didn't let a single shot past her. Pompey's 1sts had to resort to unsporting tactics to make an impression,

tics. Knowing Vicki's propensity to have a bit of a kick around in the D, the opposition decided multiple short corners was the only way they stood any chance of scoring. So

went in, due to the combined efforts from the backs. Turnips did admit to me after the match that there was one point when she actually walked rather than ran, but luckily the

only conceding two goals. I even managed a couple of good runs up to the distant land that was their half and around humpty dumpty sweeper but failed to convert. The Warrior

and the eternal mental image of what we saw when we accidentally burst into the male showers. Hopefully no long-term damage was done!

Women's Football

WFC show some balls



All the wenchies

The LSE WFC emerged this year with an impressive turnout of around twenty dedicated women. A pizza night and inflatable (arm band) fun started off the social calendar and a Mexican margarita night is soon to follow. The team has grown very close and our efforts in training have been reflected on the pitch, with 2-0 and 10-0 wins against SOAS and GKT respectively.

The sun was shining brightly for the LSE WFC this past Sunday in the Berrylands, as the team had a record breaking match against GKT on their home pitch. The Women's 1st team, led by Chioma "I'm-not-coming-out-with-you-as-I-prefer-to-go-and-party-in-the-West-End-with-Hleb" Patrick and Asha Santchurn defeated GKT 10-0. The first goal was scored by Heather Roberts, who punished the ball into the net from a corner kick. Heather was unlucky to miss out on a hat-

trick later on in the match when the ball spectacularly hit her in the face and headed towards goal. Unfortunately it was one of few saves made by the GKT keeper.

This seemed to be a day for face-battering and hat tricks, as Katee Hui later received a ball to la visage but play continued despite the obvious pain caused. However, this did not deter Katee, who netted three goals in the match, a valiant effort. Other goals came from Avery Hancock, two from Mariam Morshedi (who, by the way, has such skills that they baffle her own teammates and thus her clever back-heels are never met as no one has a clue where the ball has actually gone) and two from Astrid "oh-my-gosh-that-was-with-my-right-foot-yes-that's-right-my-right-foot-did-I-not-tell-you-that-already" Brown. A solid defensive line of Laura Ellis, Alice Pelton, Jade Buddenberg and Astrid Brown prevented GKT from having any shots on goal in the first half. Half-time resulted in much jubilation and substitutions were made with Chioma, Shamara and Heather making way for Julia, Abi and Avery. Julia Kite and



Abi Uglow were making their debut performances of the season although they had both made themselves more than known the previous Wednesday with much karaoke screeching.

In the second-half GKT were able to sneak two shots by us. However, no goals were scored. Honourable mention goes out to Asha Santchurn, the team's goalkeeper who took on GKT by charging out of her box, chasing down a

player, dribbling a bit and then booting the ball away. That's how good she is, she who has also maintained two, consecutive, shutouts.

Last week's match saw SOAS defeated 2-0, and it is safe to say communication is our biggest asset. Precious gave a quick team talk on staying positive, and throughout the match players encouraged one another and worked together well. The first goal of this match was scored by

Danielle Tappitake who pretty much seems to be all over the pitch at the same time - it isn't even humanly possible, but she manages it - and it was with continued high spirits that we kept possession for the majority of the match. Within the final two minutes Laura Ellis appeared from nowhere with a very stylish lob, placed just so in the top of the net, which sailed over a completely static mass of players from either side as their jaws dropped in

disbelief. Apparently she got bored in defence. This was met with riotous celebrations and a quick, arrogant, outburst of "que sera sera...you'll never beat LSE".

Despite not having a coach for the team (yes, that is a hint) we have great players that are passing on their skills with different exercises and advice. So we have had a promising start to the year, and let's hope the remaining four matches follow the same winning streak.

Men's Football

LSE crush Valley boys



Louis De-Ste-Croix

LSE 3rds 2
Thames Valley 1

As we took to the hollow turf of a somewhat deserted Berrylands, there was a feeling of optimism in the air. It was clear however we were going to be in for a battle as we had to push forward the kick off so that the Thames Valley rabble could meet the conditions of the numerous ASBO's that they had collected.

The game started well. The 3rds were on top from the off and Thames Valley could not get near the ball. After about five minutes Thomas 'Wake&Puke' played a nice ball into Alcholness who managed to slide the ball through to Ursino who turned slower than a 40ft crane, yet due to the sheer ineptness of the Thames defence was able to fire home to take the lead for the 3rds. This was followed by the traditional Soulja Boy dance celebration, which Thames Valley's numerous G-Dogs clearly knew inside out.

The 3rds continued to press on. Thames' should have been a plummer' Valley didn't even have a shot. Victor 'Draft #1' Sonier was getting groped by the opposing centre forward who clearly liked the look of

the young Frenchman's indecent area. It seemed like this was going to be our day. The midfield duo of Lynes and Judas was looking stronger than ever. However, it was clear that we needed to score more goals. We were creating chances, but just couldn't convert, much like the mercurial 4th team legend Andrew Rogers (actually a virgin). With Ursino curling a majestic free kick after about 20 minutes only to be denied by the woodwork the 2nd goal remained elusive. This was shortly followed by a blunder from the Thames goalkeeper which resulted in Holness picking the

ball up on the half-way line, the goalkeeper was stranded; luckily for him Holness decided to pick-out the linesman with his long range effort instead of the back of the net.

It has often been said that Joe Butler-Biggs is 'rapid', however it was his speed of thought which led to the second goal. The ball went off for a throw-in just by the half way line, JBB decided to go for a quick throw down the wing (which was lucky because everytime the LSE 3rds left-back got the ball he messed it up), which Ursino flicked on, in to the path of El Presidenti...Dan fired a well-

hit volley goalwards. However, the Thames goal keeper had clearly awoken from the coma he had been in for the first 40 minutes of the game and pulled off a stunning save. Dan was on to the rebound quicker than Victor on a Tuns barmaid.

The 3rds went into the break with a 2-0 lead...our first 3 points of the season seemed within touching distance. After an inspirational half-time team talk by the Crow in which he stressed that we should press on to try and score more goals and maintain a clean sheet, the scene was set. We started the second half as we finished the first...in con-

trol. We looked solid all over the pitch, with the defence looking stronger than ever; Miguel the 'Essex Slag' and Banfi winning everything. The 2nd half looked like it was going to be a doddle. Queue the Crow. After a long throw-in from the right the Crow outpaced his man to get to the ball first. However instead of clearing it he decided to just look at the ball (it was ever so shiny), which allowed the Thames striker to get one of his little poly toes to the ball and knock it past the stranded keeper. Bullet left foot though.

Thames seemed to gain confidence from this and LSE

started to panic. Shortly after the Thames goal Lynes 'Draft #2' had to come off with a bad hamstring. This meant the introduction of Mr.Calella himself Gabs Butu, who had an immediate impact, the combination of Oliviero, Gabs and Dan created many chances; however we failed to seal the victory with a 3rd goal.

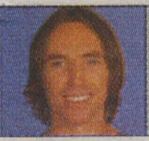
We were put under a lot of pressure for the last 20 minutes, however, with Scott Jarett in goal commanding the back four and picking up any loose balls, Thames couldn't get close. Sonier, who was clearly enjoying his new role at centre-back was dominating, even though he had by this time pretty much been tossed off by the Thames striker.

The end was near. We knew all we had to do was hold out for a few more minutes. After claiming a ball over the top, Scott was prevented from kicking the ball out; therefore the Referee gave LSE a free-kick. That was it...the Thames striker lost it...with a four letter tirade directed at the Ref, he was sent off. When asked his name he responded with the wittiest of quips to the official concerned, and on that comical note the final whistle went. The 3rds celebrated in style...didn't we, Neil? I hear Thames Valley were picked up on the Welsh border after hijacking their team mini-bus. All in all its great to see the 3rds back to winning ways.





A Title Defence? Yeah!



Justin Gest

Eleven new players, one new coach, many new forms of self-imposed adversity, same cracking results.

With a second-half comeback over the University of Surrey, the defending Division II National Champion LSE Men's Basketball team extended their winning streak Wednesday to an astonishing 25 straight victories dating back to last season's undefeated record.

With four consecutive wins in a higher division this year, one is flooded with questions to ask Head Coach Ronnie Baker: How do you do it? How far will the team go? Explain your philosophy. Can this streak continue, Ronnie?

"Yeah." Genius. What eloquent efficiency. That man is a legend.

Indeed, Baker and new assistant coach Darren Johnson were only left with four players from last year's team and a few tins of former-Head Coach Torbjorn Gehrke's dipping tobacco. And they have brought the lads up to potential championship level again.

With wins against division rivals Sussex (58-41), Brighton (73-66), Brunel (66-49), and Surrey (89-66), the Beavers are one victory (against Kingston) away from a sweeping first run through their Division I Southeastern conference foes.

The Kingston team is one win behind LSE, and has no doubt circled the Wednesday 14 November date on their calendars in red ink.

Will the Beavers be ready? How will they stop a Kingston offensive juggernaut that has scored 110 points in each of their three wins? Are they up for the challenge, Ronnie?

"Yeah." Erudite. So assured. Sheer brilliance on the bench.

Indeed, it appears that only the inane antics of a clearly troublesome bunch can stop their title defence. And sadly, the Beavers' on-court success has not been without off-the-court tomfoolery.

6'5" centre Lee "Chou" Hoytt was the team's leading scorer against Surrey with 23 points, but he has struggled to

embrace role-model status among South London youths who have understandably mistaken him for the Houston Rockets' 7'5" centre Yao Ming. Both men are right-handed.

"I'm not Yao Ming, man," said Chou, viciously shattering the children's hopes on a walk through Brixton.

"Yeah you is, innit!" they cried.

"Back off, bitches!" Chou has encountered legal trouble for his subsequent attempts to sell forged Yao autographs to the children.

Earlier in the year, he unsuccessfully brushed off police reports of public urination by suggesting that "Yao did it."

Teammate Dave Shuttleworth has come to Chou's defence.

"See, that's fucked up, dog," Shuttleworth told The Beaver. "Why's errbody gotta be hatin' on the Chinaman. It ain't like he be strapped wid a Magnum or some'n. Shoot."

In other legal news...

Shooting guard Padraig Foran infuriated animal rights activists when he brought his "compound bow" to Richmond Park in search of deer last weekend.

Foran is from Oregon.

Wingman Mike Kessenick, who chipped in 17 points against Surrey, was thumped by a Walkabout Bar bouncer with a large phone book last Wednesday. Little more is known about the incident, however, because the



Eleven new players, one new coach, many new forms of self-imposed adversity, same cracking results.

only witness was forward Chris Marcinkiewicz—who was caught on CCTV footage fleeing the scene.

"Walkabout? I don't know what you're talking about,"

Marcinkiewicz said the next morning.

And team elder Michael McMahon is under investigation by child exploitation authorities for

allegedly "nicking" a lock of captain Nick Broadway's hair while the boy slept.

Broadway questioned McMahon after the team's Saturday training session:

"You'd never do that, right Daddy?"

Other teammates have avoided encounters with the law for a variety of reasons.

Forward Steve Smith

is usually in bed by 8pm.

Wingman Giovanni Graglia lives in a church. No shit. He really does.

Fresher Andreas Ferstad is the nicest guy ever. It actually makes people sick.

And guard Alex Rosner has assembled a powerhouse legal team of £400/hour solicitors to combat various accusations of coffee smuggling, GoCard counterfeiting, metrosexuality, and rubbing menthol IcyHot topical cream on his "naughty bits."

Off-the-court habits aside, the team feels generally confident that they are in a strong position to build on their early success, though levels of optimism vary.

Said Welshman Ben "Beej" Tumelty: "Rydw i allan o'm dyfnder yn fy ngwaith." Whatever the hell that means.

Greek point guard Giannis Psyxogiopoulou remains dissatisfied: "Sometimes we play like little girls. None of them have as much hair on their chest as me." (A quick poll of the team showed agreement.)

"Personally," crowed Chou, who is hairless, "I think we should be able to take this streak to negative infinity."

Let's just think about that one for a moment.

Rrrright. And Head Coach Ronnie Baker? Do you think this team can be successful?

"Well, it depends on how you evaluate success, my boy," he said. "I'm quite the discretionary chap, after a bevy of experiences competing at the professional and international level. So I can unequivocally state that we would be well-satisfied with a second national championship, particularly at such an elevated level. But to demand the accommodation of such celestial expectations is incontrovertibly premature. Besides, I subscribe to Patricia Neal's musing that, 'A master can tell you what he thinks of you. A teacher, though, awakens your own expectations.' I think that's quite sensible. So do I think they'll succeed in that manner?"

"Yeah."

This week's home game, and all others, take place at Brixton Recreation Centre at 2pm. Admission is free. (So you have no excuse.) Direct questions to captains Nick Broadway (n.m.broadway@lse.ac.uk) and Justin Gest (j.gest@lse.ac.uk).