

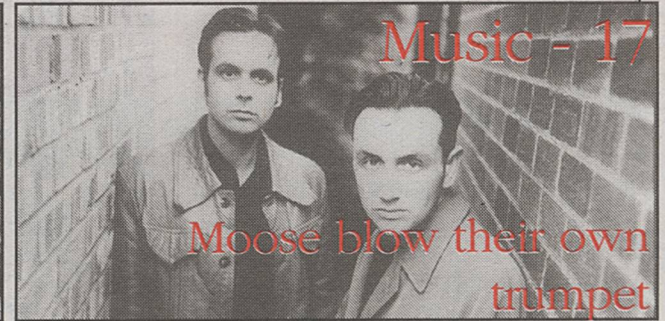
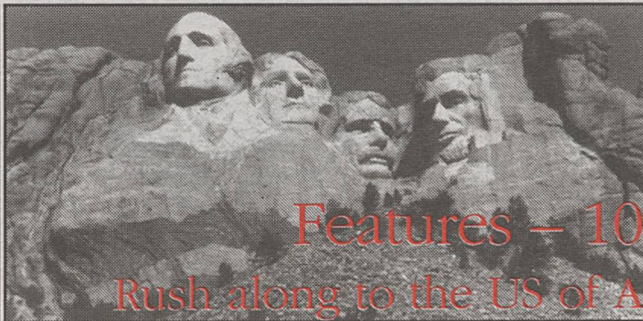
The BEAVER

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS' UNION

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Lilley in the pink

Richard Hearnden

The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley MP, Social Security Secretary, was the guest of the LSE Conservative Association last Tuesday. In a wide ranging policy speech, Mr Lilley defended some of the Government's most controversial proposals including his "attack" on single mothers and the Immigration and Asylum Bill.

Speaking at the Royalty Theatre, Lilley denied accusations that his department's desire to cut spending would adversely affect those in most need. Defending his remarks about single mothers being given priority on council housing lists, made at the 1993 Conservative Party Conference, Lilley stated that "temporary council housing is still prioritised in favour of single mothers; only permanent housing is affected".

In response to questions, the Secretary of State refused to comment in detail over allegations that his crack-down on welfare fraudsters, as opposed to rich tax-dodgers, were "politically expedient", saying only that the £6 billion in undeclared taxation whilst "blatantly unfair is a matter for the Chancellor".

The most controversial part of the social security shake-up, the Immigration and Asylum Bill, has attracted much attention from politicians, pressure groups and the media in light of a

number of high-profile deportations.

The Bill, which is being introduced by the Home Office but will have a huge impact on the welfare budget, is expected to save the Treasury £200 million a year by withholding benefits from ninety percent of asylum seekers who enter Britain each year.

However, more controversially the Bill has been attacked for playing the "race card" (an attempt to make immigration an issue at the next election), a subject on which the Tories regard Labour as being "soft".

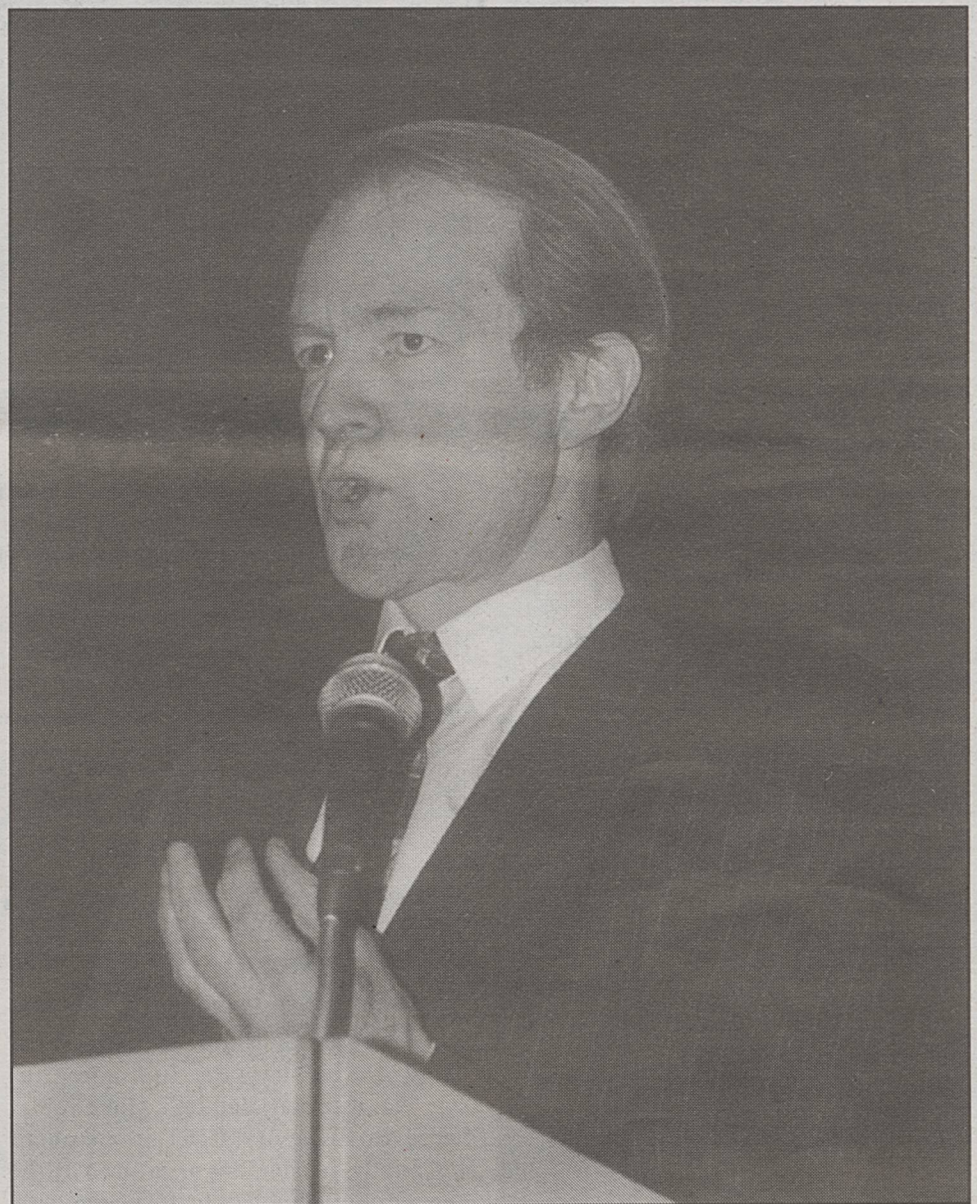
Despite remarks from one of the Conservative party's own research directors that the "race card" was a good election strategy. Mr Lilley refused to be drawn, saying that the policy was "right and sensible".

The strong feelings aroused by the Bill were evident in some of the heckles aimed at Mr Lilley in the Royalty Theatre, but as meeting chairman, Dr David Starkey, commented "[they were] so completely ineffective".

Indeed the poor turnout of left-wing activists disappointed many, not least LSE Conservative chairman Sam Means, who was expecting a vociferous fracas for the TV cameras. Left-winger Denis Russell, who was leading a meagre picket of half-a-dozen outside the theatre, did not seem to mind; "We all know the government is on the way out, so it's a waste of time demonstrating."

Interview

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Lilley grasps the issue

Photo: Katrin Hett

Debate on funding reaches stalemate

Jame Brown
News Editor

The future of higher education funding hangs in the balance after the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) stepped back from voting on a £300 registration fee for new students. A decision about the proposal has been postponed to allow heads of universities to consult opinion at their institutions.

However, the CVCP have maintained the threat of charging students in order to pressure the government to serious con-

sideration of the issues raised by the reduction in university funding. Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, agreed before the meeting of the CVCP to talk with university leaders to discuss the situation. Their meeting, last Tuesday, did not resolve any of the issues, although Mrs Shephard did offer another funding review.

Matters were further complicated last Wednesday by the publication of a report by the Conservative Political Centre's National Policy Group on Higher Education.

The report calls for increased numbers

of students in higher education funded by a system of privatised loans. It even goes as far to suggest that income-contingent loans, covering all student maintenance and, possibly, "top-up" fees, would be a vote-winner, particularly with middle-class voters who give money to students. The proposals also recommend the incorporation of part-time students into the loans system.

But Eric Forth, the Higher Education Minister, was not impressed. He stated that income-contingent loans were not a panacea and criticised the CVCP for ignoring the practical difficulties with their

plans for entrance fees. He also disagreed that there was a need for an increase in numbers, given that one third of young people already go into further education.

Pressure is, however, mounting for the government to implement radical proposals. The Association of University Teachers have indicated their support for income-contingent loans, and welcomed the Policy Group's report for breaking the conspiracy of silence among political parties.

The NUS is also expected to vote for an expanded loans system at its annual conference at Easter.



UNION JACK

It's amazing what a bit of radicalism can do to liven up the otherwise stilted proceedings of our UGMs. There is nothing quite like the cut and thrust of debate provided by young rebels taking the floor to challenge all our deepest held prejudices and put to flight our firmest beliefs. It's what politics is all about, it makes you feel alive. Win or lose, there is something invigorating about a public fight that quickens the blood and sharpens the brain. Doctor Jack would recommend it to anyone.

This week's UGM was indeed nothing like cutting, thrusting or invigorating, despite the best efforts of Dan 'slam in the' Lam. It started well. The Exec were asked why they hadn't attended the CVCP meeting. The dapper than ever Omer Soomro didn't get up in the morning, nor did Nick Fletcher, Katrin forgot and Baljit, Communications Officer non pareil, failed to remind himself, for which crime he was, he said, 'not proud'. The others had work and Kate Hampton got there late.

Jack was a bit disappointed that none of them even tried to lie. Do these people have political aspirations or not? Students' Unions used to be golden ladders to Westminster. Now they seem to be just a cobbled by-pass to Newbury.

The real reason they were all so honest, Jack knows, is that there will be absolutely no consequences for their skiving. That was the opportunity for some cutting gone, so what about the thrusting.

Damian 'the beast' Thwaites muscled his way up to the podium and tried to force through a number of changes to the constitution limiting the money available to candidates to spend on their campaigns. He also wanted to stop ballot boxes going to halls of residence on the grounds that it was too much bother and he might lose the ballot box. Not much thrusting there.

A brief frisson of excitement came as ever from the stout defender of standards in the UGM, Jonathan Bennett. Some scallywag shouted 'shit-stabber' at Adam Morris. JB stopped the proceedings and told him to 'shut the fuck up'. Crude but effective. Jack thinks it a shame that these days some people think all you have to do is shout shit-stabber or fat slag to be witty.

But wait. To cheers at almost every word he uttered, Dan 'the man' Lam rose statesmanlike to the occasion and delivered a bruising broadside (despite three direct hits from the balcony) against the sheepish Thwaites. It was all there, cutting and thrusting all over the place, he put Thwaites to shame and won.

The upshot of which high drama is that ballot boxes will be in your hall. No, not exactly earth shattering news but nice one Dan even if it did take him three days to rehearse his speech. Jack apologises for the hype there but the best really was to come.

Step forward the radicals. Garth 'monster' Mullins and comrade, defending the welfare state, the minimum wage, the full grant (circa 1979) and every other leftwing relic from the seventies. They failed to invigorate, however. Still, they achieved what many have failed to do. They silenced the balcony boys, they silenced the entire meeting. Everyone was so invigorated they left. Shame.

Clarke balances left and right



Photo: LSE Photo Unit

Kenneth Clarke, speaking at the LSE at the same time as Peter Lilley, delivered a speech at the fifth anniversary party of the Centre of Economic Performance. The widely publicised speech focused on his belief that cuts in government spending and the preservation of the welfare state are compatible. His presence at the LSE was kept secret until the last minute to ensure that any student protest was directed at Peter Lilley. Clarke was later overheard saying that he had taken to calling Lilley his "human shield", a reference to the messy demonstrations both ministers have encountered on previous visits to the School.

Canadian constitutional crisis considered

Peter Udeshi

"Canada's national sport is not ice hockey, but constitutional debate", joked Mr. Serge April, Deputy High Commissioner of Canada, in a lecture organised by the Francophone Society last Tuesday.

The talk focused on the recent failed referendum for independence in the province of Quebec.

He explained Quebec is the "most distinct province" in Canada, but not only because of language. It also has a unique history, legal system, economic structure and culture that has evolved differently to that of France. Quebec is recognised by law as a "distinct society".

He admitted Canada suffers from a lack of history, but also from an excess of geography. This has led to highly decentralised political structures which he claims allow each Canadian province to develop strength.

He assured listeners that a lot has been done since the referendum. For example, the right to veto over

constitutional affairs has been reinstated and the overlap on the country's economic front is being reduced.

He proposed, "Let's put our house in order from a financial stand-point first. Ahead of us is stormy weather.

Another referendum could be called after the next provincial election, but Mr. April predicts that no side would win as easily as in the referendum of 1980.

He warned that if Canada can be partitioned, so can Quebec. He stressed that the Inuit have a very well-defined territory within the province, which could lead to territorial claims on their behalf.

He questioned the morality of a simple majority in a referendum necessary to make a succession legitimate. He thinks that a qualified majority vote would be more appropriate for such a move.

He summed up by saying Canada is a "model society" and like in any good family, there are bound to be arguments. But he does not think that an ethnic group necessarily has to control the territory where it is in majority.

MACHIAVELLI

The time of year is upon us when Machiavelli returns from exile (in Hades). Using all his renowned political acumen, he presents the annual form guide to the rimmers and riders (aka SU hacks). Great care has been taken whilst writing this column not to break 16th Century libel laws. Any similarities to persons living or dead are a purely accidental slip of the quill.

GENERAL SECRETARY

Tom Smith 2/1

Fat lardy Northerner with ginger hair. Denies attempts at climbing the Greasy Pole, but there are rumoured to be explicit photographs. The acceptable pink face of New Labour. **Most likely to say:** "I wish I was still in the RCP" **Least likely to say:** "Leave Baljit alone"

Baljit Mahal 4/1

Enough said. **Most likely to say:** "Just because everybody hates me doesn't mean I'm paranoid" **Least likely to say:** "I love James Brown - he's a sex machine"

Ali Imam 10/1

Can never say enough, especially when drunk. Will kiss babies until he is sore (or gets arrested). Guaranteed the alcoholic S&M vote. **Most likely to say:** "No pain, no gain" **Least likely to say:** "Relax, this will only take a minute"

Dennis Russell 20/1

The "drinking man's communist." Bit of a wimp - say boo! and he'll run a mile (but will defend your right to say it). Rumours that his lumberjack skills have been put to use in Newbury are completely unfounded. **Most likely to say:** "Fire up my chainsaw, I'm going hunting" **Least likely to say:** "I want to be a tree"

Samantha Means 2,000/1

Tory no-hoper. Does not even have looks on her side, whichever way she lies. Known all-too well (by a select multitude). **Most likely to say:** "My jodphurs are on fire, minister" **Least likely to say:** "I am a virgin"

Daniel Crowe 60,000/1

Militant with luvvie tendencies. **Most likely to say:** "Fancy a trip to Cable Street?" **Least likely to say:** "fuckin reet man"

TREASURER

Adam Morris 5/1-on

Bleached-blond yellow rose of Texas. Gives good press. Darling of the tabloids - a real charmer. Will go further than most to get on top. **Most likely to say:** "Yes, minister" **Least likely to say:** "No, minister"

Nick Sutton 150/1

Dark-eyed horse from the Liberal Democrat stable. Cute looks and flowing mane bound to appeal to all ages, sexes and denominations. However, close links with Paddy Ashdown could be a problem. **Most likely to say:** "Your house is on fire, Paddy" **Least likely to say:** "Bomb-on, Paddy"

WELFARE

Garth Mullins 3/1

An inspiration for millions (or is that Mullins?). His skin tone is Michael Jackson's dream: let's hope it doesn't snow in election week. **Most likely to say:** "This is a white-wash" **Least likely to say:** "I blame the bourgeois student press"

Chris Cooper 100/1

Sensitivity is the keyword here. Holds the interests of all minorities and foreigners very close to his heart. **Most likely to say:** "I only want a cuddle" **Least likely to say:** "You're the fox and I'm the farmer"

ENTERTAINMENTS

Darrell Hare 3/2

Rapidly losing his. Known by some as the "bouncing bunny". Often transfixed by bright lights. **Most likely to say:** "What's up doc?" **Least likely to say:** "My best friend is Elmer Fudd"

Fran Malaree 4/1

Red-hot Chile. Red-hot receptionist. Red-hot politics. Red-haired lover. **Most likely to say:** "I'll do it if no-one else will, Tom" **Least likely to say:** "Why do you keep phoning me - piss off"

Lilley rattled by Retallack

Simon Retallack asks the Secretary of State some piercing questions

Do you belong to a particular religion, Mr Lilley?
Yes. I'm Christian.

Do you have a political mentor?
Living – Enoch Powell. Dead – Edmund Burke.

Are you not a follower of Margaret Thatcher?
Yes I am.

Would you agree with her that much more of the welfare state needs to be privatised and shrink in size?

I believe we should try to reduce the growth of the welfare state so that the economy can grow more rapidly, and that will mean it takes a smaller share.

But how will you be able to significantly reduce the social-security budget without either causing a lot of suffering, or finding new jobs, which we know are disappearing to new technology and to lower-wage economies?

Since the welfare state was set up it has grown by 5 per cent per year in real terms, and that's twice as rapidly as the economy. Because of the reforms I have introduced it is set to grow at little over one per cent a year, which is barely half the rate of growth of the economy. So you will still be increasing the welfare provision, but in a way that instead of driving up taxes, taxes come down. As for jobs, though jobs are being destroyed, they are being created more rapidly and that's why unemployment falls every month. It's still very high, but it's lower than any other major country in Europe and it's falling, because of the policies we have pursued. You don't get unemployment down by burdening your industry with excessive costs and charges and creating a situation where people are supported out of work in a way that discourages them to return to work.

So is your policy to abolish as much regulation as possible in order to compete on a fairly level playing-field with the countries of the Far East for example?

We certainly want a minimum burden of regulation, a minimum burden of tax and charges, so that industry can generate more jobs and opportunities for people to work instead of relying on benefit.

But taken to its logical conclusion, wouldn't that mean that the social and environmental benefits that we enjoy here, but which people don't enjoy in countries like China, would have to go?

Well, that's not necessary. The amount people are paid in China reflects their low productivity. The way we are able to pay our people reflects higher productivity. We don't have to reduce either wages or social provision to the level of less productive economies.

But aren't you opposed to a minimum wage?

Yes I am because I think it's better to help people into work through in-work benefits such as we have done with family credit, for example, than to destroy jobs.

Even if they are earning a pittance?

I would certainly not want to destroy jobs. We top people's wages up through company credit. That's how we help them.

Why are you effectively ending social-security benefits to asylum seekers?

Because we at present hand out something like 200 million a year and rising rapidly, to 57,000 people last year who entered as asylum seekers, over ninety per cent of whom turned out not to be genuine refugees. That can't be a

tion card was a 'good one' to use against Labour, was he stating party policy?

No. My policy is to do what is right and sensible. I have not heard any reason for suggesting that we should treat asylum seekers in

But you haven't answered the point about selling arms to Saddam Hussein. Isn't that immoral?

We didn't sell arms.

OK, arms-related equipment then.

I published the details of everything that had been exported. As you know, I was only appointed Secretary of State for Trade and Industry a fortnight before Saddam invaded Kuwait, but I published all the previous stuff. If you think that there were any arms that we shouldn't have exported, then you can go through those ninety thousand documents. But the criticism, as I understand it, is that an independent prosecuting authority in the shape of the Customs and Excise, prosecuted people who were alleged to have been involved in this trade.

But there are different levels of criticism here. I am talking about the morality of selling arms, or arms-related equipment, to very unscrupulous regimes. Is that fair game?

But, no, well, you know what the guidelines were. [Long silence]. We didn't sell offensive weapons.

They were arms-related.

There were strict limits on that, stricter in this country than almost any other country in the world, as I recall. But I'll hold my tongue because you will get to know all about this when the Scott report comes out.

If you are criticised in the Report, will you resign?

I have no reason to suppose that I will be criticised and certainly don't answer hypothetical questions.

Your government's policy on Europe is very unclear. Do you believe in principle in having a Single European Currency?

We are retaining for ourselves the option to take a decision nearer the time if and when there is a move actually to implement a single currency. But we are certainly not committed to do so.

But surely principles don't come and go. You either have them or you don't.

No, you have to keep your options open.

Is it your personal opinion that we should not have a single currency?

[Silence]. The view of me as an individual and that of the Government collectively is that we should keep our options open.

Why does your party have no moral scruples about electioneering in the gutter - putting about the absurd notion that the Labour Party is somehow the 'villains' friend'?

Well they have opposed all measures we have put through.

Painting things in black and white like that though is rather puerile and simplistic is it not?

Coming from you after your questions, the idea that painting things in black and white is puerile is perhaps a line you would wish to withdraw.

Are you in favour of negative campaigning?

I believe that one should be positive about one's strength and expose the dangers of the opposition.



Photo: Erik Wernevi

good use of public money. So we are saying that anyone who comes here claiming to be a refugee when they arrive, will continue to be entitled to benefits. So we are not removing the right to benefit; they continue to be entitled to benefit while their claim is being assessed. If however they enter the country claiming to be a student, or a businessman or a visitor, and thereby have to convince the immigration authorities that they have the means to support themselves and a place to stay, then in those circumstances of course they won't be given benefits, just by suddenly changing their story and claiming to be given asylum.

But you must know that when many of these people arrive they may be in a state of confusion and don't quite know what the regulations are?

It's not a question of what the regulations are. No one has to know the regulations - they are asked what their reasons are for coming. They have to have the means of convincing the immigration authorities that they have got the means of supporting themselves. They can still, if they want to, claim asylum, but they can't suddenly undo the story that they have convincingly told the immigration authorities.

Does it have nothing to do with partisan politics? When your former Director of Central Office Research said that the immigra-

the matter of appeals different from British people. Nor for treating people who tell untruths to the immigration authorities as if that didn't matter.

Is the perception that you intend to target single mothers by ending certain benefits that they currently enjoy an accurate one?

There are circumstances in the benefits system which anybody must think is slightly strange; where a married couple, given no working income, will actually receive less help than a single parent even though they have got an extra mouth to feed. So we're changing the balance.

Turning to your party's favourite theme of hypocrisy - do you not feel ashamed about the part you played, not only in allowing tools to make arms to be sold to a brutal dictator, but also in signing PII's to try to cover up the fact that your government had secretly changed its export guidelines on selling arms-related equipment to Iraq?

You don't want to make assertions which are not founded in fact. You will be able to read the Scott Report very shortly and you will know what did or did not happen. I'll just remind you that I was the Minister who published the details of every export license involving trade to Iraq and that isn't the sort of thing that someone who was involved in a cover-up would do, is it?

Less rhetoric, more research

Final part of an article taken from
London Student

Ghassan Karian
ULU President

We have to question why we expect students to have to attend meetings or stand for election to make their views known and voices heard. These are important aspects of our democratic system and, in certain cases, they work well. But, they should not be seen as the be-all and end-all of involving students. Current structures are too exclusive, they do not allow for full accountability, and encourage a monopoly of power to be held by a few groups within the student body. Consequently, there exists very little input from the mass membership.

We need to look at new ways of engaging students in their democratic process. Effective surgeries that take students' union officers to their members should be complemented by 'computer democracy' – using modern information technology to fully enfranchise union members. Regular consultation and the use of referenda, through college e-mail would be an effective and cheap way of reaching a large number of

students.

Students' unions also need to be more open and accountable. A questioning, informative and independent (yet responsible) student media is crucial if students are to know what their elected representatives are up to. Student politicians (like the grown up version) cannot complain when they are criticised by nappy wearing Fleet Street would-be's. Healthy scrutiny of the activity of students' unions can only be achieved through an independent student media.

Nothing short of a revolution (not necessarily of the red flag variety) in the way unions operate can ensure the delivery of the services that students want. Abolishing large student executive hierarchies (that are often ineffective, if not patronising) can help clear the way for a core of student officers are supported by staff who have the experience to give professional advice. Sectionalism run riot has created executive teams which have officers for every minority interest. They often serve no purpose other than soothing the consciences of right on middle class kids. Student officers should work on projects that are relevant to all students, dealing with the interests of all, irrespective of background or belief.

Your union views?

If you would like to contribute or reply to anything on this page please get in touch with the LSE SU Communications Officer, Baljit Mahal, via SU Reception or Beaver Collective Meetings.

Is ULU serving LSE?

Francesca Malarée
Postgraduate Officer

Do any of you know who your other union president is, apart from the divine Miss Hampton? Until his name appeared in *The Beaver* last week, I am sure few LSE students had heard of Ghassan Karian, President of the University of London Union. The only contact most of us have with ULU is using the pool or drinking in the bar but few know anything about its representative structure. In his article the President wrote of how many college unions were 'run by cliques with their own interpretation of what their students want'.

This is no doubt true, but is the answer to emulate a union where the president is not directly elected by you the students, but by a politburo of hacks-the General Union Council. The members of the GUC are directly elected representatives from the colleges, and may indeed be qualified to articulate the wishes of students, but the

problem is no-one is consulted regularly enough on issues coming up for debate at this committee.

For example, Ghassan Karian and other London sabbaticals have recently been engaged in rewriting the ULU constitution, according to a memo sent with the first draft 'ULU has undergone the widest consultation conducted'. Many would beg to differ from this, as far as I can recall, no mention of ULU constitutional change was even made at a UGM.

Not enough has been done by ULU, politically in terms of campaigns and on a practical level to consult its members-all the students in all the affiliated colleges. If there cliquishness in the LSE SU, there is a real lack of accountability and representation in ULU. It would be practically impossible to hold a London wide UGM, but more could be done to make students aware of their representatives on the GUC. Then we might not end up with Presidents who are loath to defend students against government cutbacks, have done little to coordinate a response to top-up fees and have been absorbed in navel gazing instead.

Say no to top-up fees

An opinion piece by
Sam Parham, Chair of
LSE Labour Club

Despite the CVCP's decision not to vote on top-up fees last Friday, the issue remains very much on the agenda. The Vice-Chancellors have merely delayed a decision on top-up fees until after the November Budget, and reiterated their threat of a possible "crisis-levy". We cannot rely on any favours from a Conservative Government committed to tax-cutting, low-spending policies in the run-up to the General Election. If we want students to remain part of this debate then we must act now.

Therefore, this week the Labour Club is going to start an active campaign against top-up fees and will push for improved access to HE for students from all backgrounds. We will be holding a petition around the LSE and furthermore we will be organising a network against top-up fees which will include students from universities across the country. As Dan Crowe, Secretary of the LSE Labour Club said, "This issue isn't going to suddenly disappear... we must be united and organised in this fight from now onwards".

I believe it is essential for us to start the campaign now, and, on behalf of thousands of students who will follow us to the LSE, I urge you to join us.

After a meeting held two weeks ago, the following draft of a Societies Constitution was approved by the societies present

Ali Imam
Societies Officer

This constitution is only for those societies which do not possess one of their own. If any society feels it can manage its affairs more efficiently under a different constitution, it may do so.

1 Aim

- 1 This constitution proposed to act as a general guideline in addition to the Societies Information Pack.
- 2 To promote the objectives of the society.
- 3 To observe the LSE SU Constitution and Codes of Practice.

2 Membership

- 1 Membership shall be open to all full and associate members as defined in the LSE SU Constitution.
- 2 The Chair (or equivalent) shall keep an up-to-date record of full and associate members of the society. A member is entitled to inspect any membership details held with the Chair on him or herself upon giving

reasonable notice. The full records of members details will be open to inspection by an Executive Officer of the Students' Union.

3 General Meetings

- 1 There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) during term-time at which the committee members of the society shall be nominated. Elections may be held either during the AGM or within five weeks of the AGM on a weekday.
- 2 Ordinary General Meetings (OGM) should be held at least twice per year. They shall be called by the committee of the society or by a petition which shall be presented in writing to the Chair/President of the society and shall be signed by not less than 10% of the membership. At least two working days notice shall be given for a general meeting.
- 3 All elections should be fair and impartial. The SU Societies Officer must be requested to be present at the time of the elections. Failure of the Societies Officer to attend the election will not itself invalidate the results of those elections.
- 4 General Meetings should not be called to clash with lectures, classes and other academic related meetings, **if possible**.
- 5 Notice of the General Meetings should

be publicised to the members of the society and college publicity should be undertaken at least two working days prior to the meeting.

6 All members of the society shall be entitled to full voting rights immediately upon paying their signed subscription.

4 Officers

- 1 There shall be a Chair (or equivalent), a Secretary (or equivalent), a Treasurer, Safety Transport Officer (or equivalent), and any other such officer as shall be determined by the society at its Annual General Meeting or Ordinary General Meeting. The Committee shall be responsible for the day to day running of the society.
- 2 All officers of the society must be individual members of the society.
- 3 An elected officer of a particular society may be censured by a Motion of Censure, if he or she fails to perform the duties defined by their remit or by criteria decided thereof. For this to happen a constitutionally convened General Meeting must be called where a vote shall be taken. This may be followed by a Motion of No Confidence which shall require at least two working days public notice and on passing shall constitute the removal from office of the officer in question.

5 Finance

- 1 Each member shall pay an annual subscription as shall be determined by the current committee of the society.
- 2 The members may request a Statement of Account at the AGM or OGM. The Treasurer shall be responsible for producing this report.
- 3 The society shall observe the financial procedures and duties laid out by the LSE SU Constitution and Codes of Practice and the Societies Information Pack.

6 Affiliation

- 1 The society shall be an affiliated constituent of the LSE SU and shall observe the procedures set out herein and in related documents to achieve and maintain recognised status.
- 2 De-recognition of an LSE SU society may result in the withdrawal of union funds, services and facilities to that society.

7 Amendments

- 1 This constitution may be amended by simple majority vote at a constitutionally convened general meeting of the society, subject to ratification by the LSE SU Constitution and Steering Committee.

The Beaver

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Malaysian-Singaporean Society
presents
the Singapore Trade Development Board Jobs Available
for S'poreans & PRs Tuesday February 13
Graham Wallace Rm, 10am

Debating Society
"This House Believes that Feminism Killed Romance."
Wednesday February 14
1.00-2.00 pm, C120

CEED
presents
'Market Economy versus the Romanian Welfare State'
Ambassador of Romania, Mr. Serjiu Celac
Thursday, February 15
5.00 pm, Vera Anstey Rm

LSE Lawyers Group
"A Legal System in Crisis?"
Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls
Chair: Sir Michael Mann
Monday, February 19
6.00 pm, SCR(Old Bldg)

Catholic Society
Film Screening:
"Jesus of Montreal"
Tuesday, February 13
5.30 pm, Chaplaincy

Latin-American Society
invites you to
"Like Water for Chocolate"
by Alfonso Arau
Wednesday February 14
7.00pm, New Theatre
Mem:£1 Non-mem:£2

Amnesty International & Brazilian Society
present
Paulo Sergio Pinheiro
"Human Rights after the Vienna Conference"
Head of the Centre for the study of violence at University of Sao Paulo
UN Special Rapporteur on Burundi.
Thursday February 15
6.30 pm,
Graham Wallis Room

Earn Up to £7.50 Per Hour making phone calls.
Telephone interviewers wanted for research project. Interviewers must be totally fluent in English. To find out more, ask for an info sheet from S406 (Geography)

African-Caribbean Society
Pre-Valentine's Party
Tickets outside East Blding Club Koo, Leicester Square
Tuesday, February 13
Weekly General Meeting
every Monday 5-6 pm,
A68

Conservative Association
presents
Rt Hon. Roger Freeman MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster speaking on Open Government & Public Service
LSE id cards reqd.
No bags, coats or banners
Monday February 19
1.00pm, A42

LSE Fabians & Labour
present
Alan Howarth MP
Hero or Traitor?
Monday February 19
1.00-2.00 pm, S075

LSE Health Centre
Thinking about giving up smoking?
A group for staff is starting February 29. Info from Ms Roberts at St Philips Health Centre ext 7016. Meeting times: Thursdays 11.45-1.00 pm.

Fabian Society
Austin Mitchell MP
Tuesday, February 13
11.00 am, A144

BLOOD DONATING NEW DONORS WELCOME
Refreshments Provided
All Day Thursday February 15 Sports Hall, Old Building



Filippo: I want to have your children. And you mine. *J.M.*
Bob: Penis! *Anonymous.*
Coops: I'm going out of my mind. I love you so much! *Honeybunny.*
Leila: You drive us to distraction. *The quiet boys behind in New Theatre*
Nicola: You are the best. *Love, Exec Ed*
Faj: I don't want to cause a scandal, but Happy Valentine's Day anyway. *Love, your babe.*
Haya Haj-Hassan: Darling Habibte, Happy Valentine's Day. *My eternal Love, X.*
Scott: the universe DOES revolve around me. *Love always, The Yogurt Goddess.*
Liz: You're the best, Moshe is bad, Go out with Bond, & he'll be glad.
S.G.: Ya tebia lubliv. *I.Y.T.P.*
Stallion C: I love you. *M.*
KP: Sexually yours, *Anonymous.*

M67: We want our tree back! Luciano's Restaurant.
Emma: Roses are Red, Violets are blue, Dump this blooper, Big Bond wants you.
Maria Abreu: If only I could tell you... All my love, ???
Simon: "It's an absolute disgrace!" To tell it to your face, But you'll go far with me, Mr. Retallack M.P.
Chris: So... When do we go to Australia?!- *Ivonka.*
Ceri: Hopewell you're great with hair so fine, On Valentine's Day please be mine.- *Bond.*
Maria: To Miss Venezuela Maria, With her pint of Guinness beer, With your tempting long hair, Invite me to your lair, Without anyone there.
Chris: All the lying I've had to do for you has provided excellent training for a career in politics. *Your loyal roommate.*

Dear Dan: Your clown face makes me smile. *Love, a friend.*
Liz: Remember the first time? Don't let Moshe know.. *Love, Guy.*
Stubble: My heart grows fonder with the days: I love you for your Spanish ways. *Muppet.*
Scott: Don't worry. When I'm PM, I'll always have a job waiting for you. My racketball court will need regular cleaning! *I.*
To my cute little bunny C: Your bald patch really turns me on, *Love Fox.*
Stallion C: C. I love you. *M. Foxy E*
To the M-Man: Happy Valentine's, sweetheart. *I love you. LZBZ.*
To my eternal softie: Smile! Happy Valentine's! *Love, the SPG.*
To an ex-editor: The office isn't the same without you. *Love, an arty person.*
Noble: I need my strap-on breasts

ARTS WEEK
Interested in performing or exhibiting poetry/ plays/ drama/ music/ art on February 23?
If so, contact Martin Benedek at 0171 580 6338 (ask for F32)

& red dress back. I've got a hot date tonight. *Kaylesh.*
To the ice-skating Rhino: You can knock me down anyday, love? *Tamburri.* Happy V's! *Love, the troubled girl..*
To my e-mail lover: Don't stop sending them. *Kisses, M.*
Chrissy: su...su...sucks B's pi..pi.. Love, ????
Agneta: My fellow idealist.. Happy valentine's. Hope this makes you smile! We'll get through this...& won't need them anymore one day... *You-know-who.*
MI: I still fancy your pants off. *Love, you're not so secret valentine*
Chris, Noble, Scott: I love you guys! ps. When's our next mystery trip? *Ivonka.*
Neil: Happy Valentine's. *Love, Anonymous*
Hayah-Yah: Happy Val's, Yah.
Kay: What can I say? Thanx. *LC.*

Yasser Arafat: Palestine's democratic leader?

Graeme Trayner

Forget Bill Clinton, Yasser Arafat is the real comeback kid. Continually written off as a faded political leader with Zbigniew Brezezinski, the former US National Security Advisor under Carter, contemptuously proclaiming "Bye, Bye PLO". Often regarded as an international pariah – driven from the West Bank in 1967, from Jordan in 1970 and Beirut in 1982 – Arafat has suffered more setbacks and failures than any other contemporary political figure. But last month he finally achieved his aim of convincing the world, and Israel, of his people's right to self-determination.

The world is now expecting to see a democratically elected statesman Arafat, shorn of his terrorist past. Yet the behaviour of his party Fatah was highly questionable. While the 17 nation strong observer team

The world is now expecting to see a democratic Arafat, shorn of his terrorist past.

saw the elections as free, they turned a blind eye to some of Fatah's more violent tactics. In the weeks before polling day squads of Arafat's rent-a-thugs from Force 17 toured

Palestine meting out summary violent justice to their leader's enemies. Equally, on polling day, Palestinian security forces were much in evidence, some of them inside polling stations where they had no right to be. According to the European observer force, this occurred in 10% of locations in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

More alarming was Yasser Arafat's attempts to control the Palestinian media which went beyond mere spin-doctoring. On Christmas Eve a Jerusalem news editor, Maher al-Alami, was summoned to Jericho and detained for six days by the Palestinian Authority security services for the offence of failing to give "due prominence" to the PLO leader on the frontpage of his newspaper. Indeed during the past year Arafat has sought to curb the previously plural Palestinian press. Last August, Al-Quds newspaper was closed for a day because it was to carry a letter from the dissident Palestinian leader Farouk Qaddumi criticizing Arafat. For a leader who has spent decades attacking Israel's refusal to grant the Palestinians democracy, his actions have to be perceived as hypocritical.

Palestinian intimidation of course has been equalled by Israeli heavy-handedness. Undoubtedly there was a concerted attempt to prevent voters from going to the polls in East Jerusalem. The turnout was a pathetic 30% in the city, a figure explained by the huge presence of Israeli soldiers and police around the polling stations. On the Saturday morning outside a fairly empty post office on Salahudin street voters were being told by Israeli soldiers that there were too many people inside already, and they should come



back later. Ex-US President Jimmy Carter who was leading a team of monitors in East Jerusalem reportedly objected to the arrest of Palestinian observers and the Israeli Shabak agents filming voters. The motive behind the Israeli attempt to deter voters in East Jerusalem was to try and show that as people did not vote, they obviously approved of Israeli rule in Jerusalem. The attitude of the Israeli military and security services demonstrates how complex and difficult it will be to arrive at any kind of consensus concerning the status of Jerusalem.

So why has the international community politely turned away from looking too deeply into the bully-boy tactics which have marred the elections? The reason is that it would not simply not be worthwhile. There is a greater prize at stake – eventual peace between Israel and Palestine – and to jeopardise the path to that outcome by worrying over relatively minor problems, would indeed be foolish. Certainly the PLO leader's behaviour has veered from the unfair to the arrogant, but if the West refused to recognise the legitimacy of the elections then the Oslo peace process would be in ruins. The only winners would then be the Yigal Amirs and Yehiye Ayyashs of the region.

Indeed certain fears were diminished by the outcome of the first Palestinian elections. Arafat's version of democracy had led many to fear that the new Palestinian Authority would not only become a one-party state but also, a one-man fiefdom. However despite winning the Presidency with an overwhelming 88.1%, the voters elected a number of non-Fatah representatives to the Palestinian Council demonstrating they want more than one-party rule. Across the West Bank, in Gaza and East Jerusalem the electors rejected

Fatah candidates, and voted instead for proven candidates who have promised to resist Arafat.

Arafat's autocratic tendencies have spawned a number of critics. Among the independents are Hannan Ashrawi, the former spokeswoman for the Palestinian peace negotiators, and Haider Shafi, a founding member of the PLO who has been a critic of Arafat's dictatorial tendencies.

Now that the Palestinian elections have

the international community has turned away from looking into the bully-boy tactics which marred the elections

been held, Israel will be expecting more from the first Palestinian President. Most importantly, he will be expected by Peres and the Israeli government to keep his Oslo pledge that he would recognise the State of Israel after free Palestinian elections. Mutual recognition is vital for the continuing success of the negotiations, without it the Peace Process will wither. Arafat must fully recognise Israeli's legitimacy by June or it will be untenable for the Jewish state to continue negotiations, especially on highly contentious issues such as Jerusalem. The Israeli people have had to try and accept Arafat as a democrat after he spent years trying to destroy them. Now the Palestinians have to perform a similar leap of faith and recognise that the the Israeli people also have a right of statehood.

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Nigeria: the crisis still not over

Chi Kaitano speaks to Olaoye Abiola on the past troubles and on his views on the future of Nigeria

In 35 years of independence has experienced the kind of seismic upheavals that would bring a lesser nation to it's knees. The question is no longer whether Nigeria is close to the edge – it is, and dangerously so. The question now is, who or what will save this country?

There is little in the western press about Nigeria that is positive. Most recently, the government ordered executions of environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and others led to an international uproar that succeeded

“only civil unrest will save Nigeria”

in getting Nigeria booted out of the Commonwealth. But Nigeria's military regime remains remorseless. Chief Mashood Abiola is currently awaiting trial for treason, for declaring himself President after the annulment of the 1993 elections which he was universally believed to have won.

These political problems are but the tip of the iceberg. Speaking to Olaoye Abiola, son of Chief Mashood Abiola, I had the opportunity to see what an insiders view of

“Nigerians are ignorant as to what is happening in their own country”

the Nigerian situation is.

According to Olaoye, no member of his family has seen Chief Moshood Abiola since January 1995, although he has been visited during his incarceration by luminaries such as Revd Jesse Jackson, Carter, Mandela and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. His continued detainment is yet another bone of contention amongst the international community. It was thought that dictator Sami

Abacha would release Chief Moshood Abiola before 1 October 1995. Instead, on this day, General Abacha announced his ‘Abacha plan’ as a blueprint for Nigerian development. He also announced that he did not intend to hand over the reigns of power to a civilian president until October 1998. Even in this Abiola, amongst others, is not willing to trust the generals word. But what will happen to Nigeria in the meantime?

Economically, Nigeria is classified as one of the twelve poorest countries in the world. This is despite the fact that it produces 2 million barrels of oil a day, making

The question is no longer whether Nigeria is close to the edge – it is, and dangerously so. The question now is, who or what will save this country?

it a major oil producing country. Moreover Abiola contends that of the money generated by this oil, only 5% of Nigerians are able to benefit. This has created a ruling class of the ‘black elite’, and an enormous underclass who live in unimaginable poverty. Corruption is rife at every level of society. Socially, the mix of several hundred tribes and languages has already caused a three year civil war.

Politically, Nigeria surely has a long way to go towards democracy. In 35 years of independence, only three out of ten Heads of State have had no affiliation to the military. Commenting on this fact, Abiola said that although the Nigerian people do want de-

mocracy, they are not prepared to die for it!

Speaking about the Nigerian peoples response toward the international outrage, at their governments actions, Abiola said, “Nigerians are ignorant as to what is happening in their own country”, explaining that this was due to the heavily censored media in Nigeria which leaves Nigerians with little or no access to events which are deemed “politically dangerous”. For example, few in Nigeria were aware of the struggle between Nigeria's Ogoniland people and giant multinational Shell BP, which was recently highlighted in the British press. Even

when Ken Saro-Wiwa, the activist most strongly opposed to Shell's environmentally dangerous actions, was executed by the Nigerian government, hardly a murmur was heard within Nigeria.

Olaoye Abiola is pessimistic about Nigeria's future. In the short term, he sees further decline for the country. The measures adopted by the international community to try and bring Nigeria's military regime into check have been “completely ineffective”. Ultimately, Abiola believes that



General Abacha

“only civil unrest will save Nigeria”.

A top political journal, Africa Today, wrote in a pensive editorial that many Nigerians “believe in a mystical provenance that shapes the destiny of their nation and spares it from terminal evil. Despite its tendency to live dangerously, the nation always manages to pull back from the brink in the nick of time.” Perhaps then, for Africa's Pariah State, this time of upheaval is a momentary unfortunate blimp in a brief but bloody history.

Are British newspapers biased?

**Nicola Hobday
Executive Editor**

The Beaver is a newspaper that represents the students at the LSE and, although they are a diverse bunch, the limits of this market means that we can allow ourselves to show support for certain issues or at times be, dare I say it, biased. Having said that, we do usually try to get a balanced view on most subjects publishing replies to articles that may have presented a one sided argument.

However, what kind of precedent should be set by national newspapers? Should they feel obliged to show both sides of an issue? Most national newspapers have some kind of political bias and readers are aware of this before they read the paper. For example, the *Daily Telegraph* is a well known Tory newspaper whereas *The Guardian* is known to be rather more left wing. However, should these papers be expected to show a balanced argument along side an acceptable level of po-

litical imbalance.

Perhaps this is unreasonable in matters of British politics where the average reader would already know the basic argument and would probably want to know what the newspaper's opinions on subjects like Harriet Harmon or Fat Cat pay. If we take into consideration articles about highly sensitive issues that aren't in British politics then perhaps newspapers should be a little more careful.

The example to which I am really alluding is an article written in the *Daily Telegraph* on January 23 by General Ariel Sharon, ex-defence minister of Israel. This article was found to be one-sided and controversial by LSE student Lu'ayy Minwer Al-Rimawi, who is also President of the LSE Jordanian Society. He claimed that he and others found the article “non-objective and even offensive” and that it would not help the cause of peace as “it completely denied Palestinians' rightful claims to Arab East Jerusalem”.

He wrote a reply to the article putting across the other side of the argument and

this letter later received the support of the official representative of the PLO. However, this reply was not published even though it was the only reply received about this article. Lu'ayy believes that the *Daily Telegraph* has stifled the debate by not printing his or any reply to the article. Lu'ayy has had his views on Arab-Israeli problems printed in other western media including the *Independent* and the *Guardian* and the *International Herald Tribune*.

His case is that when a national newspaper publishes a controversial article it comes under an implicit duty to publish some of the responses that the article provokes. When Lu'ayy raised the matter with the Editor's secretary she acknowledged having received the letter but nothing was done to remedy the situation.

In the name of unbiased journalism I endeavoured to find out the views of the *Daily Telegraph* on the subject. The Letters Editor spoke to me and claimed that he had received many phone calls from Lu'ayy Al-Rimawi and that he was waiting to hear back from him. The *Daily Telegraph* receive about

one hundred letters per day and therefore only about five percent get printed. The Letters Editor revealed that he had been “pestered” by Lu'ayy but that they had been about to print his letter, they were, however, waiting for him to call them back as he had been asked to do. When asked whether his reply would now be printed I was told that as the article was a long time ago they would have to consider whether the letter was still relevant.

Is this a devious plot by the *Daily Telegraph* to stifle debate over the Arab Israeli issue? Are they being irresponsible by not printing a reply by a response to a controversial article on a particularly volatile subject?

I remain unbiased and impartial as ever. However, Lu'ayy hopes that you will take this matter seriously, that of “denying moderate Arab voices being aired, while simultaneously giving a free hand to nationalist Israeli authors with prejudicial views”. He is planning to boycott the *Daily Telegraph* and encourages others to do so.

Responses to this article will be published, honest!

Letters to the Editor * * * Letters to the Editor * * * Letters to the Editor * * *

The battle of the sexes rages on

Dear Beaver,

This is a letter in reply to "one of the lads" (meaning all of the lads seeing as you all share one brain cell between you) issue January 30. If the women at LSE "suck shite" I don't want to know/ what you guys suck. If your IQs were any lower - you'd all trip over. It looks like God not only took away Adam's rib, but also his brain. The definition of tragedy is to shag a lad at LSE and find out he has no money (- sorry to burst your bubble guys, but don't think it is your personality and good looks that get you laid - 'coz you have none, it's the cash we're after) We need some form of compensation!

What's the famous saying! Where there is trouble, you can always count on a man. Yeah, you can count on him to be somewhere else (probably trying it on with your best friend). You're complaining you don't have any choice, how do you think you guys match up to Keanu Reeves? I mean you have everything he has, except his looks, charm, talent and money. If life's a highway, what

are men at LSE? A dead end.

You say you haven't noticed "the Utopia of permanently randy, oiled up, wet and ready cleavages floating around Houghton Street" - NOTE: you have to actually be in Houghton Street to notice this and not in The Tuns on a Friday night drinking until under the table. That's the reason you guys are not good eo communicators. It's hard to drink beer and talk at the same time.

If we are the "fleas on the orang-utan's left gonad", what does that make you? - The Orang-utan? What exactly do you guys think you are capable of pulling or more to the point when did you start becoming fussy about what you pull?

And finally before you hit us with "They're a bunch of dykes" or "budding Feminist" crap (as it takes too much imagination to come up with anything original) - we **do like men**, not cheap limitations ie "lads" at LSE.

Yours
The Gals

Lib Dems show their true colours

Dear Beaver,

I am surprised that Tom Smith knows so little about the policies of the other parties.

In a recent letter to *The Beaver* he suggests that a Lib Dem student might like to outline the case for Graduate tax.

As most people know, the Liberal Democrats have consistently opposed a graduate tax and at the last election were the ONLY party to propose a return to 1979 grant levels as part of their fully costed programme.

Perhaps *The Beaver* could instead invite a Labour student to explain why their party abstain last year on a Lib Dem bill to reintroduce a benefits rights to students during the summer vacation; or why the Labour leadership continues to fail to commit itself to any extra support for students. Take a look at some of our policy papers Tom - maybe you'll find you're in the wrong party mate!

Yours
Yuan Potts

Marxist Schmarxist

Dear Beaver,

It has come to our attention that an esteemed member of the SWSS (ie one of



Garth's Storm-Troopers) is partaking in the vices of the Capitalist economy. The revolutionary Rosebery resident is currently attempting to work his way up the class ladder by applying for the dictatorial position of Bar Manager over the Easter vacation. We believe that he has never been a member of the proletariat. Furthermore we are concerned by his attempts to remain a member of the petty bourgeoisie.

When the revolution comes, and believe us it will, we will seize his property and his means of (re)production.

Residents of Rosebery Unite, we have nothing to lose but our halls

PP Karl Marx

.....
 • Letters deadline is •
 • Thursday at 12 pm. •
 • The Editor reserves •
 • the right to edit •
 • letters •

Lilley white: is it right?

Dear Beaver,

LSE was honored by a visit from Peter Lilley, Tory Minister of Social Security. He managed to squeeze in this gig between chucking asylum seekers into the streets by denying them benefits while their claims are being heard. This acts to discourage refugees from seeking asylum in the UK as well as making up to 30 000 who are already here destitute. It is all a part of the Tory's package deal to scapegoat those most victimized by their brutal society, for its current crisis.

However, people are so fed up with the destruction reaped on Britain by 17 years of Tory rule that Tony Blair is widely consid-

ered to be the PM in waiting. This is probably the reason why our Peter Lilley Picketers were equally matched by Peter's Pigs. The Picket was called hastily but the police seemed more organized than we were - they had a whole little posse, with crash barriers, scowls-a-plenty and much stomping about...

However, students did not sit by quietly while the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) met on Friday, Feb 6 to propose a £300 "top-up?" fee. Their meeting to make education even less accessible as disrupted and occupied - showing that students were not prepared to sit by and watch higher education be completely gutted.

The problem is that even if the imminent

booting out of the Tories seems a sure thing, will Blair, Harman and Jack Straw do much better? Blair and New Labour have refused to condemn the Tory's new and racist Immigration and Asylum bill. As well, they are in favour of a graduate tax and continued cutting back grants.

I will be happy on election night when Major and his greedy gang get tossed out, but the next day we must be prepared to act up and occupy, when Labour tries to carry out the rest of the Tory's unfinished business.

Garth "skinny" Mullins
SWSS

We know we're not perfect, but...

Dear Beaver,

The content of *The Beaver* is getting worse and worse with every issue. In fact, it's cack with a capital C. It reflects the clique that seems to dominate the AU, especially the rugby lads (who minge more than the women here do), who seem to spend their time swigging gallons of shandy and bragging about how "endowed" they all are. Frankly, I'd have to see it to believe it, and if you believe the crap these men spew (and I use "men" in the broadest possible sense), you can knit fog.

The views we are force-fed every week are blatant displays of the writers' narrow-mindedness and plain ignorance of things outside the walls of the LSE (eg. Hobday's awful article

about working in Greece). Obviously the people who churn out this pseudo-journalistic shite need to get out more and experience what they feebly attempt to write about instead of relying on their so-called friends' experiences. Baljit's endless ranting about totally pointless issues makes John Major's speeches sound incredibly interesting and infinitely more intelligent. I don't give a monkey's if he does want to run for a sabbatical post if he ever finishes his degree, the man's a fuckwit and needs to sit down and think about what he writes: maybe he should consider a topic other than himself.

The Beaver deals only with the views of about one percent of the students here at LSE. And considering that 50 odd of us are foreign, maybe it's time for a rethink

and a concerted attempt to broaden the scope of *The Beaver* to include the other half of the student population here by giving us quality articles about the issues that interest us - and that means leaving out references to parts of Femi Adewale's anatomy and Kate Hampton's fellating bananas.

The limited scope of *The Beaver* makes it dull. Even Houghton Street Harry has completely lost his distasteful sparkle. Political correctness appears to be infusing each and every shitty contribution to this travesty of journalism.

Why doesn't the editorial team scrap the whole thing and start again? **YOU'RE CRAP. GIVE UP.**

Yours,
R.H.Singh

Dear Rachel,

I feel that I must respond to your letter. I have to admit that I found it very insulting, not only to myself but to all the others who put so much hard work into *The Beaver*.

If you have any constructive criticism to make then of course we would always accept it. Similarly we always want new writers.

However, I suspect that you are another one of those people who like nothing more than a good moan without any intention of usefully contributing. Please prove me wrong. From your letter I have no idea exactly what you think is wrong with *The Beaver* or what you want to change.

If we all gave up now then it would mean that I would no longer have to spend all my time in the *Beaver* office and everyone here could have a well deserved rest. However, if *The Beaver* stopped printing then what would individuals like yourself have to complain about? And so we struggle onwards.

Cheers anyway
Nicola Hobday (Exec Ed)
PS The word is minge not minge.

STA TRAVEL

far out

BUT WITH OVER
120 BRANCHES WORLDWIDE
WE'RE NEVER FAR AWAY



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LONDON, NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, TOKYO, BANGKOK, SYDNEY, AUCKLAND... **STA TRAVEL**

Indefinite Article

Why is it that the English have such a superiority complex about service? You ask politely for a napkin and the waiter/waitress often scowls back with a snarl that says "I'm not doing this for the rest of my life you know. I graduated with a 2:1 last summer and this is only a fill-in, so **don't** think you can expect decent service because in a few years it might be **you serving me**".

In Spain, I worked in an 18-30s bar for a season with a waiter who had been trained for seven years to get to where he was. Even in the midst of a tyranny of geordies, he still kept his cool and treated them with respect. Drinks were on the table before their legs were crossed, orders were taken without a pen or pad and his stiff penguin uniform gleamed with pride. His friends in the profession worked to the same etiquette. All had attended night schools in customer charm and care so that wherever they were earning their living, the Ritz or "Sunshine Calypso", the customer got their money's worth.

London's newer restaurants, hosted by the Terence Conrans and Oliver Peyntons - Mezzo, Coast, Atlantic - emphasise the egalitarian. Equal in what though? I'm all for it but when I am faced with a large bill at the end of a night, I would like to feel that everyone has been nice to me. Not just the waiters, but the manager if he deigns to say hello, the coat girls and the babes at the front desk who allocate my table. They don't have to ingratiate me, but on the other hand, just because these restaurants are onto a good thing, it doesn't mean that they have the right to sneer at me. I work hard for my money and like to think that they are working hard for theirs too.

I did eat at Coast (Albermarle Street, Green Park) recently with a girl friend. Both the food and waitering were excellent but the manager and door-babes (failed models) had a lot to learn. Surprise, surprise, the waiters had come from Europe and had made this a career whilst the last two categories had not. The Manager asked why I wanted to keep my bread pieces till my coffee - "That's an unusual thing to do" (yes, because I'm paying for it and intend to finish it all off, scumbag) and became annoyed when we returned the scotch because it was 'on-the-rocks' when it should never be served with ice. Okay, I'm not famous yet, but someday I might be and I won't be eating there again, but not because of table service.

Meanwhile, I did not feel sorry for the family and friends who headed off to the five star hotel abroad a couple of weeks ago after winning the jackpot, who got kicked out for their man-of-the-people behaviour. Drinking the bar dry and being dressed inappropriately, they were quickly removed from the hotel and complained that this was because they weren't of the 'right class'. I think that they were wrong. They had disrespected both the people that worked there who take pride in their work and people who were staying, of which some had probably saved up and were staying for a once in a lifetime experience. Whilst expecting decent service one must give the same kind of respect back. Money is only money after all. Cleaning, barwork, waitering or temping, it's all the same to me; something to pay for my rent when my bank-balance is zero. But I know that when I have to do it when I leave the LSE for a short while, I'll remember who's paying who to have a good night out.



TRAVEL



Sweet Home Chicago

Anna Hermekin tells of her 'Work America' experience

I had a choice: I could either spend yet another summer in Windsor going to the same old pubs and seeing the same old people (as nice as they are) or I could take the plunge and do something completely different. I chose the second option and had the best summer of my life; as cliched as that sounds.

It was all made possible by the British Universities North America Club (BUNAC), which gives students the opportunity to work legally in America, Canada, Jamaica or Australia for between three months and a year. I arranged a job before I went out although it is also possible to wait and find one when you get to your chosen country. I had decided on the WorkAmerica summer programme and found a job in a theme park outside Chicago.

The process of finding a job and applying for a visa was so simple that the nerves didn't start until I was standing at Heathrow airport with a rucksack on my back. There was no need to worry though as you aren't thrown in completely at the deep end. There were a whole group of us on the flight to New York and on arrival we were all provided with accommodation at Columbia university for the first night.

The next morning we were given an orientation during which we were given all

sorts of useful bits of information, such as how to avoid arrest and deportation! After the orientation though, you're on your own. Should things go wrong, or if you just need a bit of advice, the BUNAC offices in New York are open throughout the summer.

I headed straight out to my employer to

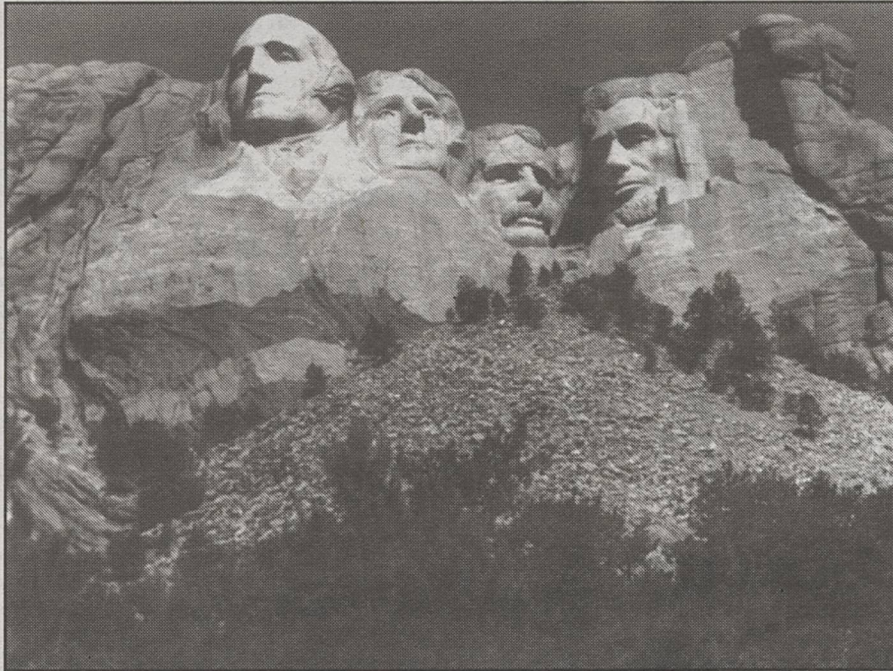
beach, caused havoc in the Chicago night-clubs and bars and had parties in the college dorms where we were staying, to rival anything that Club 18-30 could organise! I came back with books full of addresses and there has already been one reunion weekend in Dublin, proving how well we all really did get on.

The money earned was enough to cover living expenses while there and the cost of travelling afterwards. For many people this was one of the highlights of the summer as shown by the reams of photographs brought back of the Grand Canyon at sunset, packed Miami beaches, the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and countless other towns and cities.

I really can't get across enough how good an experience it was; I have yet to find anyone who didn't enjoy themselves and it

really does give you an insight into another culture that is impossible to get when on a two-week holiday. If this isn't persuasive enough just think how much mileage you could get out of it on a CV, it shows your independence, confidence and allows you to develop those all important 'people skills'!

If you want to know more come and see your LSE BUNAC representatives at our stall in Houghton Street on Tuesdays, or phone me, Anna Hermekin, on (0181) 889 7196.



See the sights

Photo: Esther Tripp

find out exactly what was in store for me. I worked in a restaurant on a huge theme park and although the work was hard and I sometimes felt like screaming after being asked for the millionth time if I knew the Queen, the fun I had with the other employees made it more than worthwhile.

The theme park employed over two hundred Europeans, together with a couple of thousand Americans, so there was ne'er a dull moment. On our days off we went to outdoor jazz festivals, sunbathed on the

The true face of Singapore

Liz Chong looks behind the scenes of Asian values

It cannot be disputed that Singapore, Malaysia and Taiwan have experienced considerable growth in their economies. Post-war Singapore after its split from Malaysia, had no economic prospects, it seemed, to onlooking sceptics. The tiny island state had no natural resources to speak of, save its people. But Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew led Singapore to its current status as one of the most prosperous nations in the world. It is this remarkable economic expansion which Blair supposedly desires that Britain emulate.

One wonders, however, if Blair ever saw what was exactly behind Singapore's clean sanitised facade of the 'orderly society'. Granted, the materialistic part of the picture he saw was aesthetically pleasing, but did he ever question the hidden part of Singaporean society that Kuan Yew and his 'successor' Goh Chok Tong have tried so hard to stamp out? Had he even considered the hypocritical rhetoric of both leaders in advocating the superior 'Asian values' as the only viable alternative for any proper society, as opposed to the 'corrupt' and 'immoral' Western values systems. But what are Asian values? Are they a return to the days of foot-

binding, nepotism, female inferiority and the concubine system?

The demagoguery of the South-East Asian leaders has led to the parroting of their stances by their peoples, without any questioning of what truly lies behind the endless talk. Asian values, they say, are respect for the family, and respect for society. Rubbish. I find it illogical that it is argued that family values do not exist in the west. What has happened instead in Western nations is that many have refused to allow others to dictate for them how a family should be defined. In South-East Asia, however, people have accepted this imposition. And few have spoken out, for fear of ridicule in the government controlled press. Also, however, because the shaping of the post-war South-East Asian nations has been engineered in such a way that dissent is frowned upon... and punished.

This form of 'indoctrination' is one which begins from the very start. Asian education systems are hardly renowned for their encouragement or nurturing of independent thought. Silence is the golden rule in class, and acceptance, not challenge, is the way to go. It is not only this which has contributed

to the obeisance dominant in South-East Asian societies, it is also the regime's reactions against dissenters. It is a well-known fact that constituencies voting for the (almost non-existent) opposition party in Singapore experience a substantial drop in the amount of any government funding remotely connected in any way with the constituency. With the endless drive for money dominant in Chinese society, it is the lack of outlets for expression that have spurred Singapore on to its economic success. For it is the absence of political outlets for society to pour its energies into, that has led it to focus on money instead. Voter intimidation, the 'rule of subordination', the litigious tendencies of the leadership and the lack of freedoms of expression have all combined to create a nation in which conformity is the only way of life.

Caution, therefore, should be exercised by all interested in the functioning of the Singaporean nation. Perhaps Blair himself should decide whether it is Britain's status as a liberal democracy which he would wish to maintain, or the endless and tireless chase for the god of mammon which he would choose to pursue.

In pursuit of happiness

Andy Sheah offers a Christian type of religious experience

This article is really about the meaning of life because I believe that knowing the meaning of life is the essence of true happiness.

Last week, my friend brought up the question 'What is the meaning of life?' The question has special significance for me as it was something that truly baffled me throughout my teenage years. I spent much time rationalising about it but never came to any really helpful conclusion.

I have been a Christian in name for most of my life but I never really took the step to put my trust fully in God until last year. Nothing miraculous happened; it was more a step of faith and I felt it was about time I knew for sure what I claimed to believe in. Since then, the question never really came back to me, until last week. As a budding economist, I began to wonder if religion and rationality ever mixed. So I started thinking like a rational person and on that basis, I wrestled with 'the meaning of life'.

I do not claim to know THE answer to the question and if you disagree with what I think by the end of the letter, at least we can agree to disagree.

I am not advocating that everyone should believe in God like taking up an insurance policy

Fundamental to the 'meaning of life', I feel, is the question of the existence of a higher being. Let's assume that His name is God. To make things easier for myself, I shall start off with the proposition that there is NO God. This simply means that we are all creatures of chance, able to rationalise, able to have emotions, maybe possess a 'soul', and able to make our lives more comfortable, interesting and purposeful, but essentially no different in the eternal scheme of things when it comes down to the question of 'the meaning of life' from the so-called 'lesser' creatures that roam this Earth with us.

There are two ways of looking at this situation and it is a fine line that separates them both. Firstly, we can take the view that since there is NO meaning to life, we can continue with whatever we are doing as long as we are happy doing it, and believe that that is the be-all and end-all. That will be our happiness. We can do whatever we want because the TRUTH is NOTHING REALLY MATTERS. This world view is appealing because it gives us the license to do whatever we want with our lives.

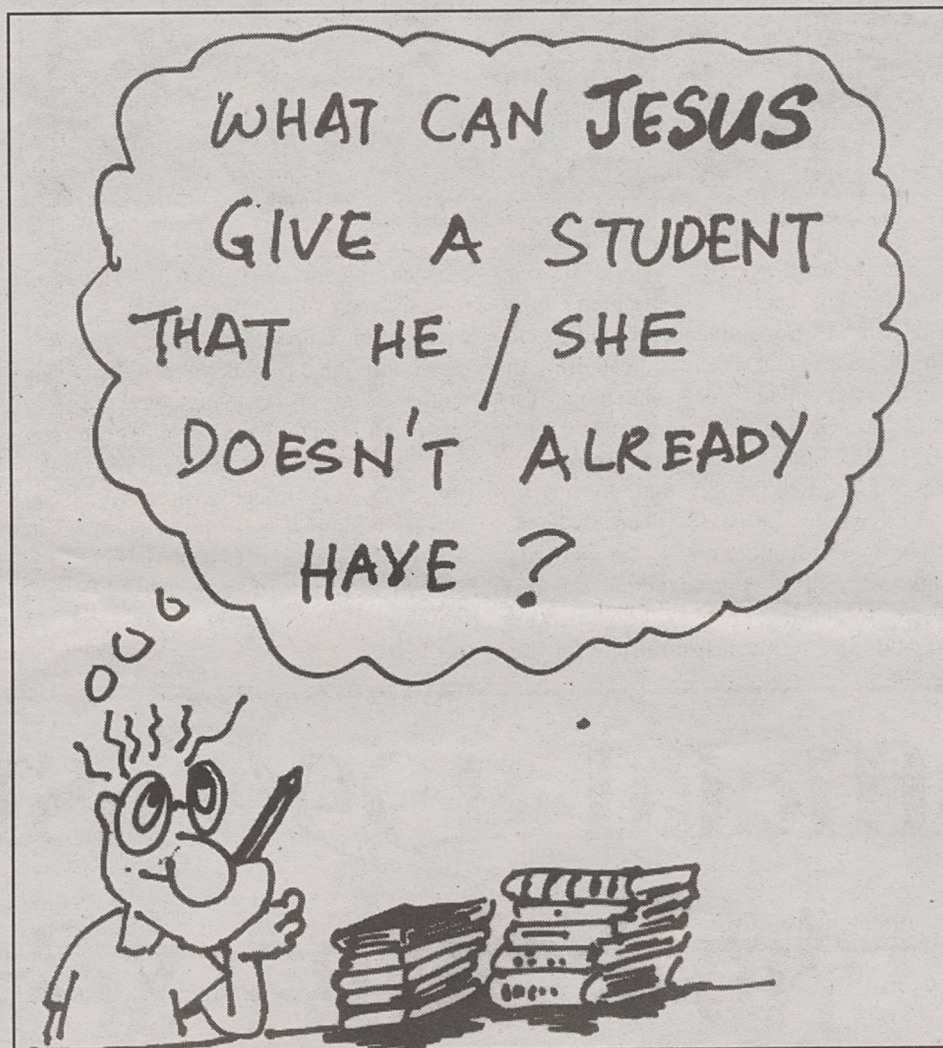
The second view is that since there is NO real meaning to life, what gives our lives meaning is what each of us believes within the framework of a society. If one believes in democracy and is willing to die for it, then one's meaning of life is defined by democracy. Again the end result is the same, it doesn't really matter. It doesn't matter what one believes as long as one is happy believing it, even if it is not true. So if one believes in a religion, and in reality, there is no God, who is to say that the person is foolish? He is no more foolish than the person who

fights for democracy or slogs for money or plays football for a living, because his meaning of life is what matters most to him and him alone. Under this world view, what we believe accords meaning to our lives, and that is our happiness.

So what about the proposition that there is indeed a God or at the very least, some higher plane of existence? The reverse of what was mentioned about the case when there is no God is probably true; that man is NOT a creature of chance, but is created in some way or another to fulfill a higher purpose. This purpose, if known, will determine the meaning of our lives. This is where

Him, you WILL dedicate your life wholeheartedly to Him because He has now become THE meaning of your life and your happiness comes from being with Him.

As a budding economist, I began to wonder if religion and rationality ever mixed.



religion comes in. Religious people believe that their respective religions are revelations of God and through this revelation, His divine purpose for us is known, at least for this life.

As a Christian, I believe that I am created to have a relationship with God, as all men are, but we have all turned away from God in a bid to fulfill our own desires and find our own meaning in life in this world. God gave us a choice to be with Him but we chose otherwise, and the result is an imperfect world as we know it. But He has given us another chance; He sent Jesus Christ His Son, who is essentially God in human form, to die on the cross for our imperfection. He now gives us a new chance to be with Him, if only we believe that Christ has reconciled us to Him through his death and resurrection. For Jesus said, "I am the WAY and the TRUTH and the LIFE. No one comes to the Father except through me." Again the choice is ours; God does not impose His will on you, you can choose to ignore Him, or you can choose to be with Him. If you do not believe in Him, or in any God for that matter, then His judgement and love does not matter to you and life goes on, but if you believe in

In a world without God, nothing really matters. In a world with God, nothing ELSE really matters other than Him. If you are rational, you will see that in a world without God, you are rational if you believe in God

and are happy with it. In a world with God, it is rational for us to agree that nothing else is as important as Him. I am not advocating that everyone should believe in God like taking up an insurance policy. God is not someone you believe in and if He really exists, you can say, "Thank God I believe in God!" and if He doesn't exist, it doesn't really matter. Following God requires total commitment; it doesn't mean giving up your studies, or your job, or your favourite dish, but it does mean that you put Him first in your life and allow Him to guide you as you carry on with this life, with renewed vigour, purpose and joy.

Being a Christian is not easy, it is a challenge for me to commit myself daily to Him, and sometimes it can be a struggle because my human desires clash with what He requires of me as revealed through the Bible, and it requires sacrifice. I am no saint; you can ask my friends; some of them may not even know that I am a Christian! But I try my best to obey the Lord each day like an athlete that runs his best to win a race. Sometimes he stumbles, sometimes he falls, but he never gives up trying to finish the race because he has a goal and purpose in sight. I am happy even though I struggle because it is a challenge I relish and because I know that I know the meaning of my life, just as the athlete who is happy just to run in THE race and is even happier to win the trophy, knows the reason for his running. You can disagree with what I believe, but you cannot stop me from being happy because of it.

Knowing Christ is a profound and spiritual experience. 'Profound' because it has an immensely great life-changing effect, and 'spiritual' because I feel God touching my life. I cannot describe to you the marvel of having a personal God; it is an experience you have to seek for yourself, if you do choose to believe.

Some may say that I am foolish to seek something so intangible; that is because they have not seen God working tangibly in people's lives. To the atheist, it doesn't really matter, I am just an irrational looney grasping at intangible straws. If tangible things alone can satisfy me, I wouldn't be writing this. And if spirituality is what makes me truly happy, then I would be a fool not to seek God.

What about you? Do you know the meaning of life? Are you truly happy?

Christianity Awareness Week

Tuesday, February 13 at 1 pm in A144

"Marx, Cantona and Jesus - Who's done the most for the world?"

Speaker: Russell Rook

Wednesday, February 14 at 1 pm in A144

"Sex, Love, God: Like it? Love it? Need it?"

Speaker: Mia Hilborn

Thursday, February 15 at 6.30 pm in A86

"The Meaning of Life" - Monty Python, LSE students and Matt Frost give their views. Features video footage of interviews with deep thinking LSE students harrassed in Houghton Street

Throughout the week: Bookstall and presentation in the Quad
11am - 3 pm Monday to Friday

Good clean fun – LSE Rag week

Imogen Bathurst, Rag Chairperson, gives us a rub down on this year's fun and frolics

Yes, it's that time of year again. RAG IS HERE and it guarantees to be a fun filled week. Rag week, as I'm sure you know, is a fundraising week involving all of you lot getting involved in countless japes and larks in order to raise some money for other people (yes I know it's against student principles to give money away but it's only once a year and it is to excellent causes)!

Unfortunately other Universities outdo LSE with their money making, with such 'institutions' as Leeds and Manchester raising over £250 000 and LSE coming close with a record of £10 000. Are you going to help? I hope so because I promise you will enjoy yourself. All you have to do is turn up and have loads of fun.

This year's RAG WEEK is during week seven which, for all of you who can't remember what week we're in, is February 18 to 24. Events this year include the now legendary Blind Date (as copied by Cilla) on Thursday 22. There will be a special star appearance from the one and only Bond Girl Barbara (as seen on TV). There will also be a star presenter so when someone comes and asks you to take part in the show then do not hesitate to agree and enjoy your fame.

Wednesday is LSE Dog Day where you will be able to witness the world's one and only canine hypnotist (seeing is believing). So come and watch hypno-dog mesmerise a six foot rugby player into dancing with a broomstick. There will also be a chance to watch the most famous film with Dogs in the title and a promotion on Two Dogs in the bar.



Who's going to be the lucky man to be Barbara's blind date?

Photo: Erik Werneni

For those of you who idolise BJ our beloved rugby captain and his merry men there will be a London Underground Circle Line Treasure Hunt where you can drink to your heart's content while raising money for charity and answer questions on the way for prizes. On Friday 23 the Three Tuns Club (classy joint) will be open until 1am (definitely, as we already have the licence). There will be huge reductions on all your favourite drinks with all of your £1 entrance going directly to charity. There will be celebrity guest DJs playing music from all eras for you

to dance your socks off to and in the Quad all you 'ard men can compete in the LSE Mr Strong Man competition.

All through the week there will be loads of other events going on including the 1996 Student Quiz on the Monday, where you can win loads of special prizes. Look out for the 1996 Rag Mag where you can find *The Beaver's* Campus and Sports editors' review of the year and also the unique LSE Rag '96 T-shirts will be on sale (they're a limited edition so get them while they're hot).

The piece de resistance will be the Rag Ball on Saturday 24 on the historic HMS President on Victoria Embankment (near Temple tube). The tickets are £35, which is the same price as the previous four years, for a champagne reception, a three course meal including wine, entertainment and bar and dancing until 2am. Tickets will make a great Valentine's present and it's not much to pay compared to the £90 plus which Oxbridge charge for their May Balls. Tickets are going fast so if you haven't bought yours yet you'd better hurry to the stall in Houghton Street so you can get your tables of friends together. **GO BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

The charities that are supported by this year's Rag were chosen at a special meeting of the Rag Committee, but nominations were made from anyone who had an interest in a particular charity being nominated. This year the first two chosen charities are both international well known charities - UNICEF and OXFAM. The third is a smaller charity called WIZZ-KIDS which provides motorised wheelchairs for disabled children who otherwise would not be able to afford them.

And, of course, it's not too late to get involved. There is still plenty to do and we have a lot planned for next week, when we will need all the help we can get. Anyone who would like to get involved and do their bit for the charities mentioned and have some fun at the same time will be welcome at the Rag Committee meetings which are held at 5pm on the top floor of the Veggie Cafe every Thursday. If anyone has any good ideas for more events next week please come along as well.

The Official 1996 LSE Ball

Saturday February 24th

All aboard the HMS President

Permanently moored on Victoria Embankment

Tickets £35

Champagne Reception

Three Course Meal

Dancing until 2am

Roaming Magicians

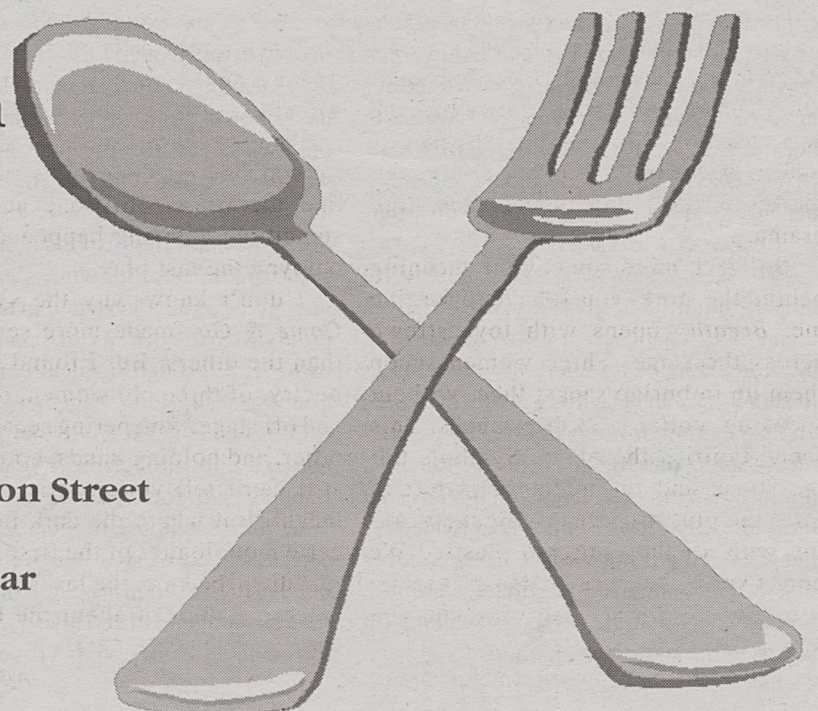
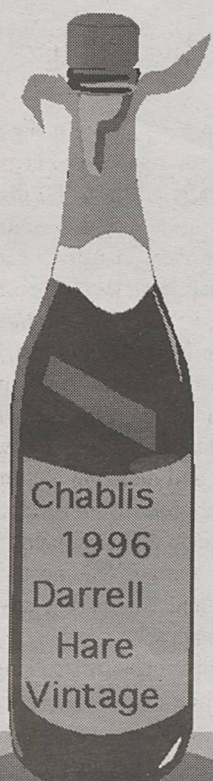
and lots more

Tickets available from stall in Houghton Street

All profits go to charity

LSE's only official ball of the year

Dress: Black Tie



Camden Etcetera Theatre The bitter tears of Petra von Kant

When I first heard that I was to review a lesbian play" this week, my reaction was, mmm.... interesting, so with curiosity in my soul I went to Camden.

The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant by Rainer Werner Fassbinder is not your usual cup of tea and thank god for that. The play is about an aristocratic fashion designer, Petra (Sandra Grant), falling in love with an ambitious young woman Karin (Rowenna Mortimer) and the pain and despair that Petra slides into as the relationship sours.

The relationship is seen through the eyes of Marlene (Charlotte Winner), Petra's silent and enigmatic assistant, and due to the intimacy of the theatre, where the stage is no bigger than a bedsit, the audience is able to feel like a fly on the wall.

Sandra Grant is excellent as Petra. She has the kind of Bette Davis quality, essential for any sort of melodrama, as

she becomes completely domineering and possessive of Karin. As her world crumbles, she spits venom at all those around her, calling her mother a whore and her daughter an abortion! This leads to the point when Karin calmly leaves her for her own husband, after Petra had made her famous.

There was very little wrong with this production, although the early Buddy Holly songs did seem rather out of place. Most surprising of all was that the play was written by a man and yet managed to touch upon some very sensitive feminine feelings. However, the play does centre more on the love between two people, rather than the love between two women.

So as you sit there, reading this while you munch on a hob-nob, remember in Fassbinder's own words, "*Love is the best, most insidious, most effective instrument of social repression*" and then go and see this play!

Mimi Stone



A lesbian embrace?

Photo: Piers Allardyce

The Samuel Beckett Season

After watching the series of Samuel Beckett one acts, *Breath / Rockaby / Footfalls / Not I / Come & Go* at the Etcetera Theatre in Camden Town, I'm not sure what Beckett was trying to say. The only thing I'm certain of is that he wrote the acts while on hallucinogens. However, I come from the land of Jim Carey, and therefore can't understand such high drama.

So, if I miss some vital meaning behind the work, you'll have to forgive me. *Breath* opens with toys strewn across the stage. Three women scoop them up in burlap sacks; then, without speaking, collapse to their knees. This scene typifies the plays. Symbols tell the story, and the audience is left to infer the plot. But what is Beckett saying with all the scattered plastic? We don't know, because he doesn't relate it to any story line. And what can you take from a play like *Not I*?

The scene opens with a black robed

figure standing in the foreground, and a phosphorescent ghostly face on the wall. The face hurls a stream of consciousness at the audience. She repeats phrases and incomplete broken sentences that go on without a point. By the end you feel like you're having a bad trip. That scene scared me, and I didn't feel enlightened at all. Then I was just relieved that there was only one act left but something amazing happened; I really enjoyed the last play.

I don't know why the symbols in *Come & Go* made more sense to me than the others. But I found the visual poetry, of three old women, moving on and off stage, whispering secrets to each other, and holding hands, compelling. I still can't tell you exactly what it all meant. But where the dark images and eerie monologues of the first four plays just disturbed me, the last scene made a sincere statement about the brevity of life.

Adam Glynn

Fields of Ambrosia Scouse 'Rhino' Gardiner gets cultural



Christine Andreas finds herself caught in a trap with lots of men in pyjamas Photo: Henrietta Butler

Being a regular member of the more classic musical circle I decided it was about time that I gave new talent a chance with a Martin Silvestra production, the fact that the tickets were free was irrelevant. *Fields of Ambrosia* is a new musical to these shores however it has toured around America but according to our American correspondent only receiving modest reviews.

The plot centres around an executioner played by Joel Higgins who falls in love with one of his prospective clients played by the delightful Christine Andreas in mid-America during the Second World War. Even though you always feel confident in your prediction of the proceedings there is a twist in the penultimate scene that captures your eye for more

reasons than one.

At times I felt the presentation of this production was rather amateurish. However, perhaps this impression was taken from the fact that the talent in the cast was thinly spread. Too much reliance is put on Higgins and Andrea to carry the music when perhaps he wasn't really up to the task.

The songs are basically sound but the lack of a 'catchy' signature tune is a bit of a turn off. However, in their own right they provide sorrow, comedy and occasional boredom.

On the Rhino Scale™ I'd give it 6 out of 10 but don't make too much of an effort to go and watch it unless you are a member of the cultural elite like myself.

Venue: Aldwych Theatre

Strip Poker

Kabo Morley lays his cards on the table

The cosy venue of Jermyn street is currently playing host to Strip Poker by Malcolm Needs. This is a blackish comedy of sexual manners about a group of close friends who throw caution (and indeed some of their clothes) to the wind and decide to play strip poker. The cast holds a few faces from the less trying regions of BBC programming, including Pete Beale from Eastenders, minus his stall.

The capable, if unspectacular, actors go through the motions with a script that fits a similar description. The characters are clearly designed to be typical English couples with their aspirations of loft conversions, automatic garage doors and french windows. They laugh at jokes about impotence and cottaging; leer and slaver when the women have their backs turned and of course they have their typically English hang-ups about sex and "dangly things poking out". Where the script could easily have fallen into a trap of creating caricatures for our pleasure, it is instead pretty cleverly observed and sharp

in places.

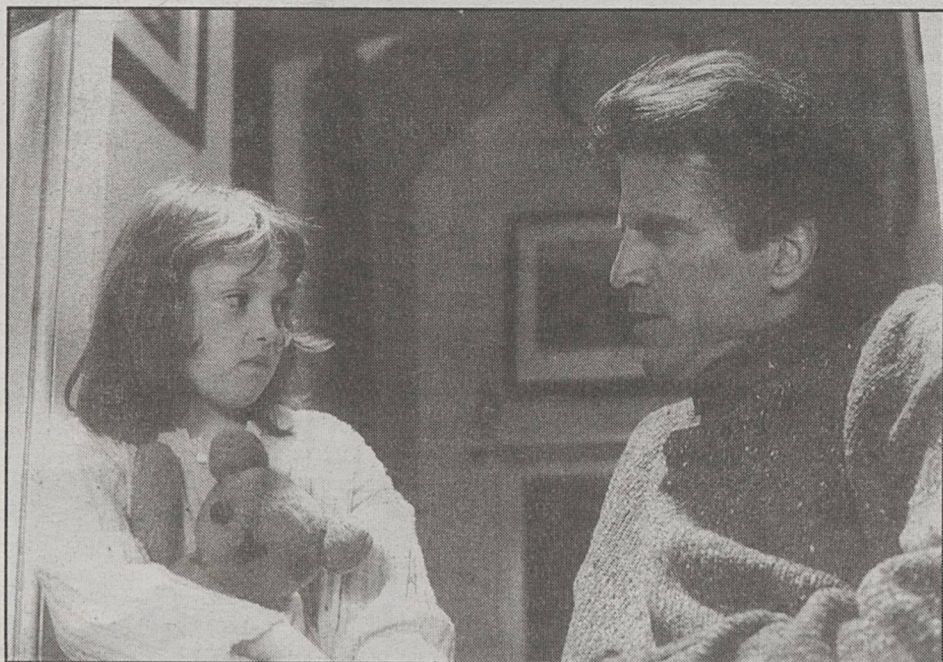
Once underway, we are regularly surprised by new revelations as dark clouds begin to gather over a once friendly group. There is an abundance of one-liners which have a fair hit-miss ratio, but importantly, many of the jokes have more than a hint of darkness at their core. We are not lectured to on sexual morals, instead there is a confusing soup of lust, love and the compulsion to do the right thing. Perhaps this is art imitating life but the overall effect is cliched and unconvincing. Plotwise, the solid characters and dialogue are undermined by an overambitious list of revelations too keen to be dramatic and surprising. Predictability hangs in the air, leaving us distinctly unsurprised and scuppering any attempts to generate pathos.

If you are looking for an unchallenging evening there is much enjoyment to be gleaned here as the enthusiastic audience could attest to, but remember that there is an obvious sense of ambition here that deserves merit.

Venue: Jermyn Street Theatre

Loch Ness

Nick Atkinson meets this infamous Monster



Izzy MacFetridge as Kirsty Graham gives Ted Danson the once over

Photo:Library

Ted Danson plays the part of Dr Dempsey, a zoologist with a fading reputation, discredited by a Yeti fixation sometime in the past. When offered the chance to investigate the Loch Ness Monster, after the death of the previous scientist in charge, he's loath to accept, since this could finish his career for good. Faced with bills and alimony to his ex-wife, Dempsey finds himself heading to Loch Ness with several tonnes of military spec sonar equipment hoping to leave within five days after disproving the Monster's existence. During the search Dempsey must put up with the hostile natives who would rather preserve the myth that brings in the tourists each year.

Despite setbacks, Dempsey and research assistant Adrian Foote (James Frain) complete the scanning of the Loch and Dempsey prepares to depart having found no evidence of the Monster. Leaving is complicated by the fact that Dempsey has fallen for local landlady Laura MacFetridge (Joely Richardson) and befriended her daughter Isabel (Kirsty Graham).

Before leaving Dempsey checks through his predecessor's belongings and finds photographic evidence forcing him to resume the search. When the boat is capsized by an unidentifiable object, Dempsey is convinced, and back on dry land he discovers Isabel

knows the whereabouts of the Monster and therefore where evidence may be found to revive his career.

Under competent direction, the two leads (Danson and Richardson) perform well and are ably supported by Ian Holm as the Water Bailiff, James Frain and an impressive performance by 8 year-old Kirsty Graham. This is director John Henderson's debut movie. Previous work includes *Spitting Image*, experience which must have helped in directing the Monster, I guess. Writer John Fusco has several films under his belt including *Crossroads*, and *Young Guns*.

Scottish scenery was put to good effect and was well complemented by the score. Special effects were in the Jurassic Park mould and although it must have been tempting they were not over the top. *Loch Ness* is not the best film in the world and probably won't be a huge success. Not surprisingly I expected it to be bad, but it is a fairly enjoyable film (I didn't find myself looking at my watch halfway through anyway). I also found myself able to take Ted Danson seriously after his previous comedy roles. Having said that he did try to work the odd joke in.

Director: John Henderson

Released: February 9

☆☆☆

Johnny Mnemonic

Caroline Hooton is not impressed by Keanu

Johnny Mnemonic (Keanu Reeves) is a data courier in the 21st century able to transport important information via a mnemonic chip implant in his brain (an implant made at the cost of his childhood memories). To pay for an operation to remove the chip and so regain his childhood, Johnny agrees to take on one more delivery, but he uploads too much information and has only 36 hours to download it before it seeps into his brain and his head explodes. As if Johnny didn't have enough problems, the information belongs to a company called Pharmakom who would like it returned, preferably via Johnny's cryogenically preserved head. Added to this unpleasant equation is the technologically enhanced Street Preacher (Dolph Lundgren), a bounty hunter whose crucifixion fixation ensures that he isn't invited to too many Christian Union cheese and wine parties. Preacher is charged with bringing in Johnny's head and kills a lot of people in order to do this.

Set in an apocalyptic future where the LoTeks (led by Ice-T) fight big Japanese companies, *Johnny Mnemonic* is simply a bag of shite - it's so bad it's hysterical. Once again poor Keanu 'Canoe' Reeves demonstrates that he can't act (outperformed by the good computer graphics). Particularly amusing are the scenes where he uploads data, because to be crude he looks like he's taking one Fruit 'N' Fibre of a dump. Equally dire is Dina Myer as Jane, a bodyguard cum

sidekick who Johnny picks up while searching for the code that will save what's left of his mind. The fact that Dolph Lundgren proves to be the best thing in it demonstrates how bad it really is, but this is because Dolph sticks to doing what he does best - rolling his eyes and killing people.

There is no excuse for the poor, awful, script from William Gibson who, despite having written the original short story, proves to have no talent when it comes to the big screen, producing dialogue so stilted it makes commercials for the Remington Fuzz Away seem like Oscar material. While the look of the film is very good (designed by Nilo Rodis Jamero who was responsible for *The Empire Strikes Back*), once again we're back to the old chestnut of a society dominated by Japanese influences, an idea which was done better in *Blade Runner*.

In short, within this big budget action movie is a science fiction B movie straining to get out. Poor acting, poor dialogue, complicated and excessive techno-babble and a leading man with the charisma of a concrete breeze block all combine to make this movie a total and utter waste of time and explains why its release has been delayed since November. If someone asks you if you want to see *Johnny Mnemonic*, for the sake of your sanity, just say forget it.

Director: Roberto Longo

Released: February 9

☆



Keanu Reeves tries out a new type of supersonic headband

Photo: Takashi Seida

The Harvest

Sruti Patel is engrossed by an action thriller about stolen kidneys

For those of you out there rejoicing at the prospect of a film finally exploring the inner depth of farming ... disappointment awaits. *The Harvest* has about as much to do with tractors, as *Goldeneye* has to do with bimbos (ok, the odd one crops up now and then). The title may be dreary, but the action encountered in this gripping thriller certainly isn't.

Disillusioned scriptwriter, Charlie Pope, finds himself torn apart by the pressure of writing to please his Hollywood producer, whilst remaining true to his own ideas. In researching a mysterious death that took place in a small Mexican seaside resort, Pope, played by MF (of Robocop and Twin Peaks fame) finds that truth is stranger than fiction, as he enters a nightmare world of violence and seduction. During his mission,

Natalie, an attractive young woman (ie babe) entices him to the beach for a midnight swim. The night's romance ends suddenly though, as Pope is assaulted and abducted only to wake up days later in a sleazy down town clinic with an IV tube firmly attached to his arm. Escaping his captors (having fought off the tube), he arrives at the local hospital, only to be told that he has been the victim of surgery in which one of his kidneys has been stolen. The tale continues as he searches for Natalie, who may hold the clue to the identity of the assailants. Finding himself stranded between reality and illusion, he gains inspiration from the mysterious babe who teaches him that true creativity only comes from experiencing life in all its frightening reality and complexity.

The Harvest is more than an action

thriller. The bizarre events around Pope cleverly mirror his internal conflict by reflecting the ironic similarity between the theft of his kidney, and the soul destroying Hollywood system which robs his artistic integrity. Switching from scenes in Mexico City and Puerto Vallarta to the tropical jungle accentuates the exotic flavour of the film conveying the ambience of Mexico with powerful intensity. The clashes faced by Pope are visually conveyed as we swiftly move from the sinister darkness of the underworld to the serene tropical landscape.

MF exudes charm and relates Pope's internal struggle with much conviction. Leilani Sarelle (of Basic Instinct and Days of Thunder fame) captures Natalie's wisdom and natural innocence, with touches of a temptress. The Harvest, under David Mar-

coni's direction, takes you on a ride through action and thrills while also hinting at the, frightening reality of the way organs are today "harvested". Its unique plot, exceptional performances and mesmerising scenery make this a movie not to be missed.

Director: Roberto Longo

Released: February 9

☆☆☆

☆☆☆☆☆ Cool

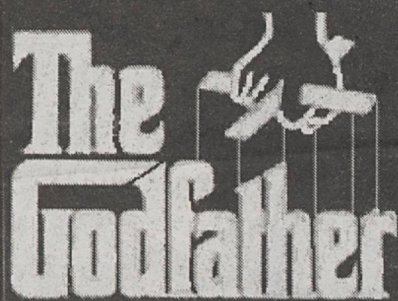
☆☆☆☆ Hip

☆☆☆ Trendy-ish

☆☆ Not so chill

☆ Erm...

Beaver Golden Oldies



Without a shadow of a doubt parts one and two are the ultimate Mafiosi movies and it's no overstatement to say that Francis Ford Coppola has created a modern day epic out of Mario Puzo's best-selling novels.

These Oscar laden films really constitute two parts of one absolutely brilliant picture and are best viewed in a whopping six hour and fifteen minute sitting. Coppola himself realised the awkwardness of split-

ting the story and in 1977 re-edited the films into a chronological whole (no trendy flashbacks). It was called The Godfather Series and shown on T.V. It included an extra hour of unseen footage - so make that a seven hour and fifteen minute sitting!

Depicting the rise and fall of the Corleone family in forties New York the first instalment deals with Marlon Brando's rule as Vito Corleone, otherwise known as 'The Godfather'. He runs a tightly knit 'business' dealing in corruption and extortion and hires hit men to safeguard the enterprise. This was a time when contracts were written in blood and offers made that could not be refused. Even Hollywood directors were coerced into the Mafia's way of thinking, albeit with their favourite horses head cut neatly into the binding contract.

Vito's youngest son Michael, played by Al Pacino, is the white sheep of the family who we see drawn into their affairs. Ini-

tially, when his father barely survives an assassination attempt he blasts the culprits brains out over their fettuccini, and then when his hot headed older brother Sonny is gunned down he is left to take over the reins.

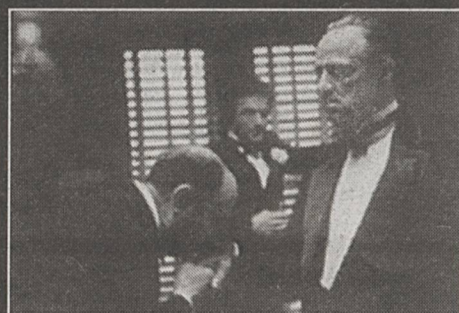
Michael Corleone adapts to his new role over both instalments with ruthless precision but at great cost because his personal relationships bear the brunt of his blind ambition to make the Corleone family legitimate. He also finds that old enemies die hard and in order to eradicate them he is forced to become what he most despised about the mob - a ruthless power hungry individual, capable of killing anyone (family notwithstanding) that gets in his way.

The two movies are bursting at the seams with great actors such as Robert De Niro, James Caan, Robert Duvall and Diane Keaton. De Niro makes a lasting impression as the younger Vito in those trendy flashbacks which outline how the whole saga

begun when he arrived from Sicily at the turn of the century. However, you should know that he never actually appears in the same scene as Pacino and we have had to wait two decades to witness this cinematic realisation.

EJ

Priced at £11.99, both videos are available from Virgin Megastores



Othello

Anita Majumdar contemplates the Bard's tragedy

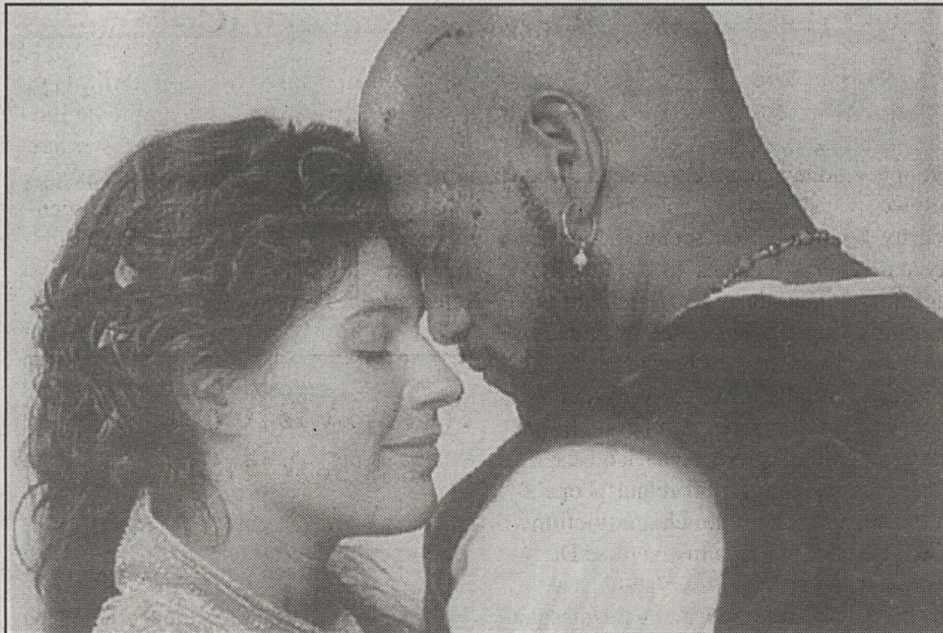
Othello, the classic Shakespearean tragedy, is the type of play everyone has seen or knows about, and it has had countless books written on it. When I heard that it was made into a movie with Hollywood actors in it I thought why can't Hollywood leave Shakespeare alone. However, as I went along to the preview, I found that it was mainly a British movie, with that stalwart of Shakespeare on film - Kenneth Branagh as Iago. Mmm I thought, no Emma Thompson (not surprising considering their breakup) and no direction by Branagh now this I really have to see.

The movie itself was very good but Kenneth Branagh as Iago was initially quite unbelievable. To have arguably the most Machiavellian of Shakespeare villains played by a guy whose face just shouts out "punch me", seemed rather contradictory. However, as the movie progressed he improved, as Iago turned from an initially honest man who worships Othello to a bitter and vengeful man, genuinely hurt after being passed over for promotion. The central story, however, is the relationship between Othello and Desdemona, which was highly charged

and erotic. Laurence Fishburne was very good as Othello effectively portraying how jealousy spreads through his mind although his bald head and beard made him look a bit too evil at first. The most effective scenes show his torment as he has two epileptic fits as he imagines Desdemona and Cassio in bed together. Irene Jacob is also good as Desdemona as here she is portrayed as a strong woman who is almost Othello's equal. Her slight French accent actually enhances rather than hinders her performance. Among the other actors, Michael Molony as Rodrigo was quite funny as Desdemona's jilted suitor. His scenes with Kenneth Branagh brought elements of humour into an otherwise dark film.

The location of the film gave it some added glamour, especially the scenes on the Venetian canals. The original Shakespearean language is certainly not easy listening, but gave the film a more authentic feel. The only real problem was that the ending was a bit more drawn out than it needed to be. All in all a classic play very classically done.

Director: Oliver Parker
Released: February 16
☆☆☆



Laurence Fishburne and Irene Jacob play the lovey-dovey couple

Photo: Library

Desperado

Nik Morandi enjoys this shoot 'em up

It's official. Desperado is set to be a come yet another showcase for Rodriguez's dazzling directorial ability and Banderas's own undeniable charm. This time, our Latin American friend Antonio stars as the musician turned rebel-with-excessive-amounts-of-ammunition in Rodriguez's remake to his low-budget 1992 El-Mariachi production. This time, though, it looks as if he had rather more than \$7500 to play around with as the Mexican countryside and most of its inhabitants are summarily blown up beyond recognition. It's fast, funny, viciously violent and with a soundtrack to match. On top of that, you get to stare at Salma Hayek's, er, well just about everything actually, for pushing on two hours. And just wait until she smiles.

Rodriguez couples simple, breathtaking explosions with some of the most wonderfully improbable action sequences ever to hit the silver screen. But, heck, better that than the death of our tousle-haired hero. The plot's quite simple really; Banderas is out to avenge the murder of his loved one (armed, quite literally, with a guitar) by attempting to track down her killers and blow holes in all and sundry along the way. He's quite good at it

too. Naturally, he also bumps into the most stunningly attractive woman ever to come out of Mexico, or anywhere else for that matter, whose acting abilities suggest she'll soon be wading through pools of enticing job prospects. Rodriguez's characteristically frenetic camerawork will ensure your attention never wavers, whilst Banderas himself once again demonstrates his ambidextrous shooting technique and guarantees the hugely successful continuation of his own career. Cameos from Quentin Tarantino as the pick-up guy and Steve Buscemi as Buscemi (that's not a misprint) spice up proceedings even further, whilst Joaquim de Almeida is perfectly cast as Buchó, depraved villain of legendary proportions.

If you're looking for an evening of moral enlightenment and in-depth insights into the duality of man, this is not for you. If, however, you're out for a bit of ultra-violent yet light-hearted escapism, this is just the ticket. And next time you see a guy holding a guitar walking down Oxford Street, head for cover.

Director: Robert Rodriguez
Released: February 16
☆☆☆☆



Antonio Banderas is looking suitably greasy with Salma Hayek in tow

Photo: Library

The good son is dead

Alan Mustafa gives us an insight into the dark Cave

You may have seen Nick cave on the cover of 'The Big Issue' or the 'NME' recently. You may remember his duet with Shane McGowan doing 'What A Wonderful World'. You may even be a fan! More likely you will have seen him on 'Top of the Pops' crooning alongside fellow Australian Kylie Minogue. At the climax of the song he crashes a rock down on the pretty head while his deep resonant voice sings "all beauty must die". Kylie stayed close to Nick fully aware he could never put his lyrics into practice. Cue shocked tabloid reports, confused and indignant fanbases and a classic hit single.

It was a dream come true for Nick as he talks of a six year "quiet obsession" for Kylie. In a 'Sounds' interview in April 1990 he said "I must say I would like to write a song for Kylie". He has written a few for her since and 'Where Wild Roses Grow' was chosen as the 'one'. Not everyone approved and when singing live, diehard Kylie fans apparently weren't happy with Nick touching her! Perhaps they feared the soiling of their pure pop princess by nasty old Nick. Of course a beauty and the beast relationship springs to mind. Consider that while a fresh faced Kylie sang 'I should be so lucky' in 1988, Cave was in Heroin rehab and had a song out about a killer on death row.

This unlikely duet can be found on Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds' ninth studio album: 'Murder Ballads' reviewed last week in *The Beaver*. This album seems to be the culmination of some major parts of his work. In its form it is the most confident. Complete and stylish expression and utilisation of the ballad by Cave to date. He admits he feels more confident than ever in his songwriting and no longer distrusts his potential. The content represents the main theme of his songs: murder and violence. Allying such a beautiful song type to such a gruesome subject shows how far he's come since his early days. His first band The Birthday Party (formerly The Boys Next Door) came to London from Australia in 1982. Their primal, raw and violent bastardised punk blues explosions were wrapped in an exaggerated goth image, confrontational live shows, blood, sex, drugs, voodoo and blasphemy. Influential albums like 'Prayers on fire' and 'Junkyard' and singles such as the classic mocking 'Release the bats'.

After The Birthday Party ended in 1983, Nick began to harness the chaos to a more coherent structure. Despite this there is an ever present latent threat that things are to fall apart. Songs such as 'Tupelo' and 'Loverman' tether on the brink of chaos yet never succumb to it. It's this tension that

makes Cave so alluring. Unsurprisingly he finds creative simulation from chaos and confusion. He fills up with ideas at such times which are released when things are ordered. He feels he is coming to terms with his inner demons and making them work for him. He's more optimistic about life in general but still feels the need to release a murder ballads album.

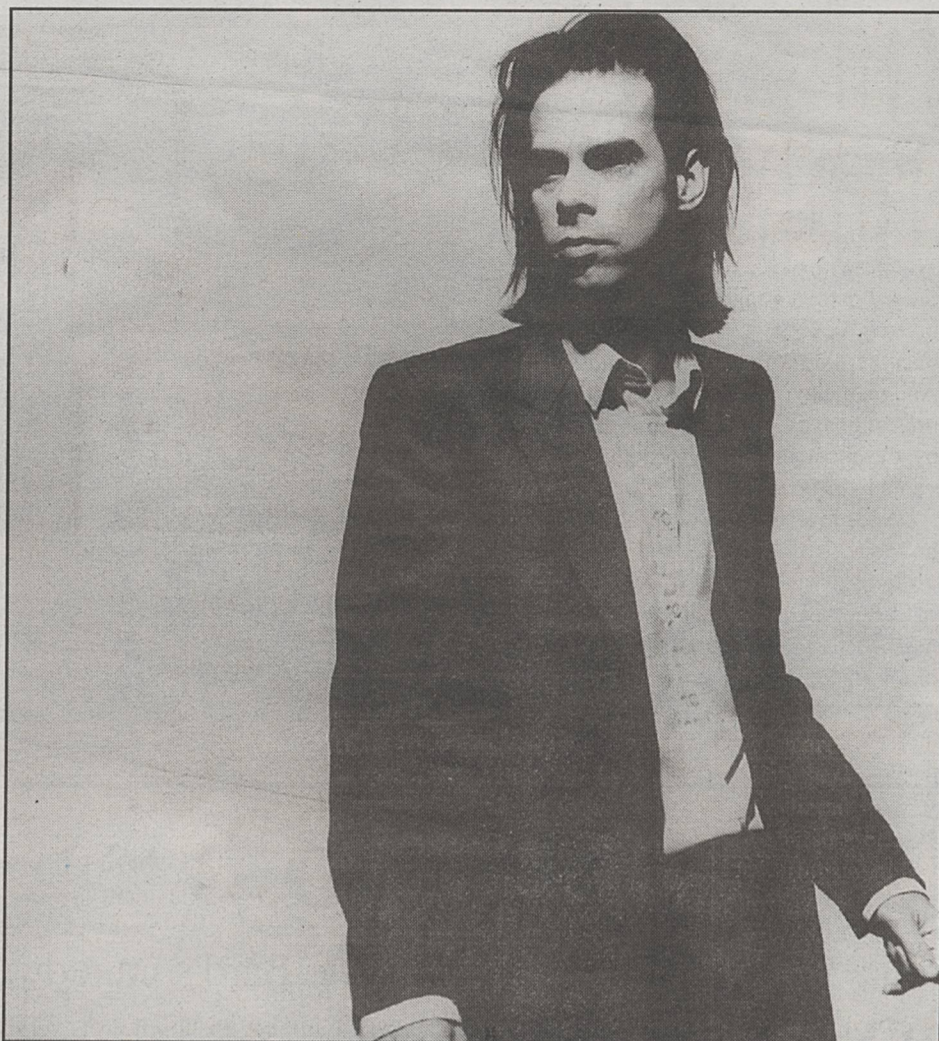
In a way it's a very horrible idea. Society seems to revel in murder and violence from films through to media presented trials.

The true story of a serial killer can go for millions. Into this disturbing arena Cave has released his album. He sees it as standing apart from his own work and everything else. To him it's beyond criticism because you either like it or you don't.

The album began three years ago when he wrote the epics 'Song of joy' and 'Omalley's bar'. These were deemed too long and "strange" to go on a conventional album. Thus an "extra curricular project" developed to accommodate such songs. These "narrative" songs weren't created to play live and so unfortunately there will be no supporting tour.

Nick also wanted a less pressurised, easy going and enjoyable process involving duets and cover versions. The idea of a murder ballad album as a project to 'enjoy' may seem strange. However Nick is aware of his image as being a "miserable bastard" but is not concerned by it. He enjoys making records that "confound and irritate" critics and journalists. He's also aware that hit records aren't likely to become a trend for him. He'll soon go back to making "weird little records that no one will buy". It's true this album won't go global but it will entertain, puzzle and stimulate a lot of people.

The varied traditional subtle music sets a haunting backdrop to the fine lyrics. From a variety of viewpoints and atmosphere the songs tell of murder and woe. Characteristic to Nick's work is a world populated by vivid and unique characters who come to life via the songs. The fascination for violence represents a metaphor for the darker and more self destructive side to his personality. He finds this the easiest to write about, given his vast experience in the area. He says he's motivated by the language and imagery of violence. He also has an unwilling fetishist's attraction to murder and an empathy with certain aspects of it. On the other hand he also sees it as a product of a doomed world and a reaction to the search for meaning and justice. He attacks a society that glorifies murder. The songs are said to mask "a genuine rage" and disgust at society. In



"Bad old Nick" (Keep your paws off Kylie!)

the upbeat and quirky 'Curse of Mullhaven' is the following: "so it's Rorschach and prozac and everything's groovy, singing la la la la la lie, all God's children have all gotta die".

The album can be amusing but also intense and disturbing.

Nick's talents don't end with songwriting. He is an accomplished pianist and has appeared in the films 'Wings of Desire', 'Johnny Suede' and 'Ghosts of the Civil Dead'. His personal milestone is his excellent novel, 'And the Ass Saw the Angel' which he hopes to follow up one day. Released to critical acclaim, it is a uniquely written tale with a mass of powerful and compelling images like a ruined church and drunken preacher, community lynch mobs, weird outsiders and (surprise, surprise) murder. My A-level English teacher certainly didn't approve of my in-depth study.

So how does all this place Nick in today's music world. Despite a fashionable and controversial subject-matter he remains an outsider. He's an anachronism creating adult music for those with an appreciation for a crafted song. It makes me think of his

appearance at a muddy 1992 Reading festival, incongruously sandwiched between grungers Mudhoney and headliners Nirvana. Clad in trademark suit he rose above the slack eyed floppy fringed atmosphere. As he launched into another verse of the classic 'Mercy seat', the confusion, boredom and apathy of the 'kids' was clear. I squelched to Nirvana but it's Nick I'll remember.

This is not just a memory - it's a point. He exists for himself, not for fashion or even his fans. His music is beyond category and time. He doesn't speak for a generation but his songs are the voice of a vast array of characters and situations. Some of these are autobiographical and some thankfully fictional. It's a scary world Nick creates in his songs, but perhaps it's no worse than the one we all live in. Nick has always been a messenger for the negative forces of life. Think of Elvis in Vegas dragged back from Hell. Think of a Frank Sinatra for the darkness and dissolution of our age. Even better and more unpleasant: think of Nick Cave and his new album. Revel in his horror, safe in the knowledge it won't kill you.

Ruthless Richard returns...

To review another rap release

Artist: Various

Album: Don't Be A Menace:
Original Soundtrack

No, Mr. G*****, the most violent thing you can do to a person is NOT kill them; first you must crush their backbone, so they are unable to support their fat gut, then pierce their eyes by smashin their NHS glasses, swiftly followed by drawing blood from their mouths by choking them with their dicky bow tie, chop their body

up, let it decompose, and sell it to Mackey Ds. Time to think about renewing life insurance policies. Eat a dick up, and hiccup! [Stop dissin' people and get on with the review, Homeboy! - ED]

Basically, the only reason to buy this soundtrack "Don't be a menace" is for "Winter warz" performed by Ghost Face Killer, Masta Killa, U-God, Raekwon and Cappadonna and produced by The Rza (all of whom are in or associated with the untouchable, unfadable Wu-Tang Clan). On second thoughts it will probably appear on Ghost Face Killer's upcoming album as the

Wu are generally reluctant to lose the publishing rights to their material. Most of the R'n'B tracks are shit, obviously. If I had this on vinyl I would have scratched them off. I don't have a problem with sampling and interpolation, but using the entire score from a song released only six months ago is taking the piss. I am of course referring to "Can't be wasting my time" performed by Mona Lisa featuring the Lost Boyz which utilises KRS-One's bomb-ass track "MCs act like they don't know".

This soundtrack had immense potential with contributions from Erick Sermon, Keith

Murray and Lord Jamar (Brand Nubian), Luniz and Shock G (Digital Underground), Lost Boyz, Doug E. Fresh and Luke (2 Live Crew), but somehow they just don't pull it off.

Mobb Deep nearly got me to bop my head, but with their other material constantly rippin' shit up, "Up north trip" leaves you feeling empty and lost. Only the powerful vocals of Blue Raspberry, who recently made her debut on Raekwon's "Only built for Cuban linx" album, was able to stimulate some enthusiasm.

Conclusion: a very expensive single. The Wu-Tang saga continues...

The devil plays his trumpet

James Crabtree grapples with the horned beast

Artist: Moose

Album: Live A Little, Love A Lot

They're lying to you, kids: fucking with your head. All that sitting on the Sabbath, resting on the seventh day trip; bullshit the lot of it. On the seventh, God lay back, rolled a fat kingskin, and sat back. And then, having enjoyed the earthly pleasures of heaven, he found himself overtaken by the most incredibly tedium. So he invented ... *Music*.

And, low, despite what all the atheists had to say, the Lord became way cool. He grooved. He rocked. He rolled. Very occasionally, when his beard was getting out of hand and his sandals had been left on cloud nine, he even *funked*.

And lo, Satan noticed his own veritable unhipness, and became ever so slightly narked. Merriment and harpsong emanating from the happy skies; and the lord of darkness judiciously plotted terrible wrath. And lo, he moulded from the base metals a new instrument. And lo, he called it; *the trumpet*.

Bastard.

See, trumpets suck. It is not a pretty instrument, nor does it sound good, nor does it groove, rock, roll or even funk. All that stuff about violins was an unholy distortion; this is the red guy's instrument of choice.



Moose: That's not a trumpet under your coat is it?

Photo: Joe Dilworth

Question. What was crap about the Beatles? Haircuts, drummers, and trumpets. Satan; cunning bloke, right.

And still, after all these years, people don't get it. Moose, for instance, are a long fucking way from getting 'it', and getting colder all the time. Once the next big things

of the shoegazing revolution, Moose have returned to earth as the radically reinvented next big things of the shoegazing revival. They try to con the listener right from the start: not that we were fooled. A pleasantly inoffensive mix of the Cardigans and Mike Flowers? Begone!

The third track even has an eminently hummable tune, until... it happens. Sorry, but it is manifestly, utterly and totally unforgivable to plonk a cheesy, gratuitous and downright Satan felling trumpet solo in the middle of any song. And, as if to confirm that sacrificing goats, dancing naked round fires and quaffing the blood of young virgins is no bad thing, they go and do it AGAIN! And AGAIN! Do these people have no shame? Do they not understand that Shoegazing was, and is, tragically unhip? Do they care?

Yet, let us not wax terrible wrath upon Moose, for they have been led astray by calling 0898-666-Damnation. The concept may be tragic, but there are sparks of inspiration poking through the trump... whatever. Lyrically diverse, occasionally tune-ful, certainly harmonious and sporadically endearing, Moose have still created an album whose existence is irrelevant. If Moose did not exist, there would be no need to invent them.

No matter how hard you listen, this remains purposeless. Imagine your dad lifting that old Black Sabbath record out of the cupboard, and explaining how this is "real music". Crap, right? Take a deep breath. Hm... smell that sulphur. Even played backwards, Moose remain Shoegazing poo with trumpets.

Same time for the goat sacrifice, Mr Haxton?

Re-frying tonight

Re-fried Food is a tasty option!

Artist: DJ Food

Album: Re-Fried Food

What was the reason for being rudely awoken? Were we holding the world DMC mixing championships in our flat? No, it was just DJ Food.

DJ Food is a synonym for Coldcut, whom you may recall (if you are pop-musically inclined, or just plain pants) had mild commercial success when they 'worked the boards' for Yazz on "Doctorin' the House" and Lisa Stansfield on "People hold on".

In some respects "Refried food" sounds like an enthusiast wanna be D.J. who has just invested in a beat box, two Technics SL1200 decks, and a sampler and wants to use as many functions as possible, whilst the majority of the tracks give you the feel of rap music without the rap.

This is a remix album, with five tracks originally appearing on their previous effort, "A recipe for a disaster", six tracks from the "Jazz brakes" compilation albums and three previously unreleased tracks. This aspect makes it more difficult to review, (altogether now... ahhhhhhh poor Wichard, is it too hard for you?- Ed.) but luckily

somewhere in the flat lies the highly acclaimed "Recipe for a disaster". (Lettie Lou have you got my DJ Food?)

The quality of the production is impressive. Jungle tracks seem perfectly content to sit next to jazz and ambient efforts. With your brain fully focused, and your eardrums positively ringing, you will find yourself slowly absorbed by the abstract samples reminiscent of The Orb and the funky and jazzy breaks (try Guru's Jazzmatazz albums).

The Dr. Rockitt remix of "Half Step" is disappointing. The original was by far the best effort on the last album as it contained the best of the influencing elements of Latin, dub, techno, tribal, African, ambient, jungle, and jazz hip-hop. In contrast the remix sounds familiar to music from Spectrum 48k computer games.

For more information you can e-mail Ninjatune@hexhq.demon.co.uk Well at least it's better than mailing the person sitting next to you. Don't think you've gone unnoticed you sad fuckers. It's the same people that are saying, "Oh no! One of the 'big six' accountancy firms are coming to LSE. I'd best wipe my arse, just in case I have to be buggered to get my face recognised". Face down, arse up, that's the way they like to fuck!

Ruthless Richard

Singles**Singles**Singles**

Afghan Ruby singled out

Artist: Ruby

Single: Tiny Meat

Silverfish. Ring any bells? Well they were an indie group from a few years back, and Ruby is the project of their ex-vocalist Lesley Rankine. It's pretty standard indie on listening to the first track on the single. Her voice is quiet interesting, but it's hardly exciting stuff. It's the type of song that you really have to pay attention to in order to hear it, otherwise it'll just blend into the background, and you'll probably forget that it's even on within a few seconds.

But wait. What's this? could this be the same song? Yes well in fact there are four remixes of 'Tiny Meat' and it is here that the true potential of Ruby is revealed, with remixes by the likes of Danny Saber, Primal Scream, Monkey Mafia and Mark Walk; they explore the more dancey elements of the music which, much of the time, gives them a Trip-Hop feel not dissimilar to Portishead. Could this be the dawn of a new genre of music: Grunge-Hop, perhaps? Well it has certainly got potential, but at the moment it all sounds a bit too similar to what's been done already. However, probably one to look out for, and if you buy the single (out on February 12) skip the first track.

TS

Artist: Afghan Whigs

Single: Honky's Ladder

So, coming strolling down the street with flies wide open and shirt undone to the navel, come the Afghan Whigs. Perhaps only they can explain the wisdom behind calling your first single (since the last one) by the name 'Honky's Ladder', but this matters little. No more japery, knavery or silliness, for the Whigs (as they are never called) are a serious band. They do serious things. Occasionally they even swear. Amazingly, it isn't embarrassing.

Problem. Track 1 is good to the point of excellence, but it just ain't new. It sounds like it could have been on the last album, or the one before that, or the one before that. There comes a logical point, a re-invention horizon, where doing the same ole thang simply will not do. Change is imperative. Must try harder. So; I have 'em sussed. Track two is track one, but not as good. Even better.

THEN, just as I was about to put on my moralising cap, complain about the lack of originality in music, be a general old curmudgeon and use my rock thesaurus to establish how many different words for boring exist in the English language; THEN, they do the unthinkable. No guitars, no scream, no naughty language. Whadatheydo? Jazz, for God's sake, Jazz. Piano's stinkle! Singerscroon! Moralising caps are placed back in the cupboard! Then, having succinctly pissed on my entire argument, they proceed to piss on me instead. Not Jazz, but a rather fabby cover of TLC's 'Creep' nonetheless. Greg Dulli (brains behind the music) seems to be yelling "GODDAMN, I can do more than this". And, goddamn, he just did. And not a trumpet in sight; praise the Lord.

JC

BLPES Blues: Lost in library labyrinth

Anonymous Campus writer searches for the Blue sky

The library is like a maze. A labyrinth in fact, with minotaurs lurking around every corner. If it wasn't for the books on the shelves I'd never step inside.

Getting in is an ordeal in itself. No bags allowed. This means I have to balance the contents of my bag, removed from my bag, in a towerlike pile of assorted books, pens, reading lists etc. My tower is more Pisa than Eiffel but having carefully constructed it, I rumage around my wallet blindly trying to find my library card. After failing to get in using my Barclaycard (which only vaguely resembles my library card I admit; and resembles a one day travelcard even less, yet I've still managed to shove it in dazedly at the tube station in the past), I finally locate my battered old library card. I've had it a full term now and its taken quite a battering from being pushed into cash points and as an accessory to a locker brake-in. I try to figure out what to do with my card to get the metal bar thing to move. Everyone else seems to be managing it but I keep getting a red light and the bar won't budge. I contemplate climbing over but the security guard is already peering at me suspiciously from the corner of his eye and this skirt wasn't made for climbing anyway. I feel like a criminal. On my fourth attempt I try charging through the metal bar whereby the aforementioned tower of books goes flying narrowly missing the uni's only Johnny Depp lookalike who just happens to be walking by at this moment. This isn't quite how I envisaged getting his attention. I blush profusely as I gather my belongings from the surrounding area and mourn the death of this potential

romance as I catch Depp stifling a laugh.

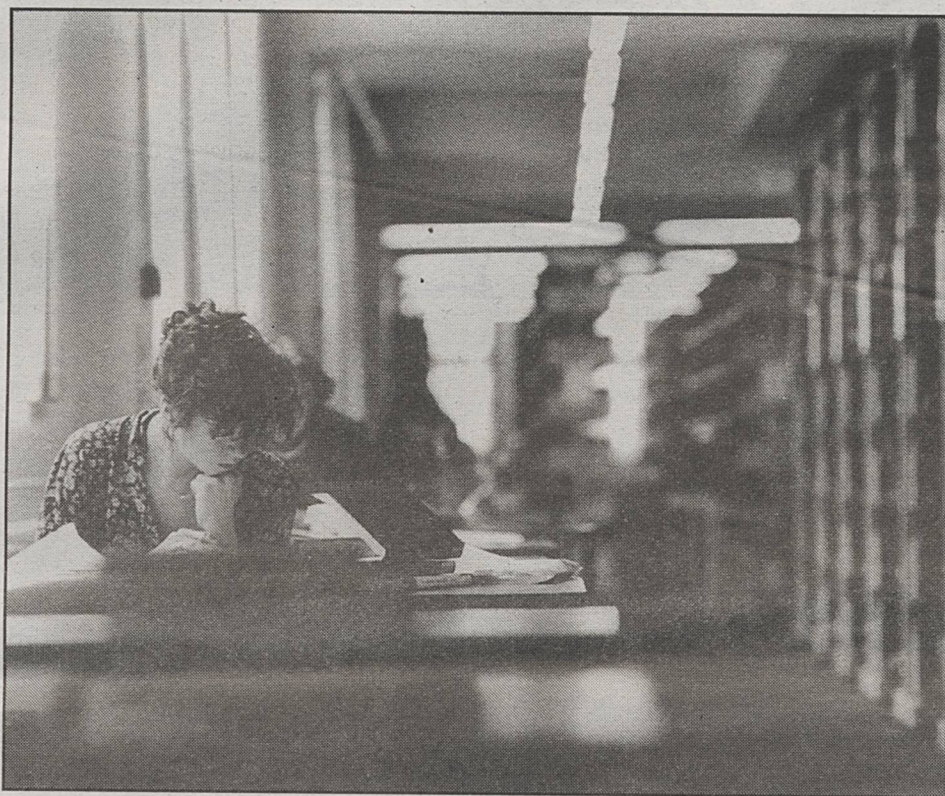
Having retrieved my card I march over to the reception desk to report that it is faulty. A stony-faced lady informs me that it might have something to do with the fact that my card is being held together by sellotape. I remark on my handiwork at glueing it back together after the locker brake-in incident but get only a raised eyebrow from receptionist. She is unimpressed. I wait around for her to sort me out with a new card which she announces I must pay for. I offer to trade in my old card which she

demands anyway so I threaten to withhold my library books if she doesn't hand over my new card, to which she threatens me with a £1 per hour fine for each hour they are late. Needless to say I pay up for my new card but inform her that she is literally taking the food from my mouth and resolve to return tomorrow looking pale, thin and underfed.

I finally get into the library and smirk at the security guard as I walk past towards the computer things that tell you where the books are. As always, they're all taken. Five

minutes pass. Then ten. I'm still standing around waiting for someone to vacate their computer thing. No one's moving, just how many books are they hoping to find? Are they umbilically attached to these machines or what? When I finally get a seat I set my watch to make sure that I spend no less than fifteen minutes at my computer thing even though I have only two books to find. I look over my shoulder at the queue for computer things and mouthe "suffer" at no one in particular.

I search for my first book, a set text, only to find that there's only one, it's gone, and it's reserved for eternity. I type in my next book and am momentarily relieved to see that there are nine copies, until I realise that they've all been taken out and are reserved for eternity. I glare at my computer thing in exasperation and try punching some sense into my keyboard which replies with a high pitched beep. It sounds so forlorn that I apologise to computer thing, assuring it that it's not its fault, and search instead for the Good Sex Guide out of curiosity. "No copies held". Well it's not as disappointing as nine copies all gone. I conclude that this library doesn't like me. It's hostile to my very being. Who takes these books anyway? I see people checking out piles of heavy bricklike textbooks on my way out and wonder when they find time to read them all. Perhaps carrying them around makes them feel studious, perhaps they feel that by clutching piles of books to their chests they might cosmically become imbued with knowledge, I dunno, all I know is labyrinths like the BLPES have too many minotaurs, and lets face it, I'm no Theseus...



Sincerely seeking sabbatical success

Promising potential pollwinners poetically pondered

This week is an extremely important one for the LSE Students' Union. In this week when nominations open, the candidates begin to treat you like their oldest friend. In my three years here I have seen two election campaigns – they tell you in all forums how they are the best person for the job; on Houghton Street, at the hall hustings and to your face with their foot jammed in the door. We thought that this year we would force all the candidates to be more creative and ask for your vote with poetry.

I want to bump you until you are sore
Flares Lorry, please be my whore
I am feeling really sexy tonight
Let me feel your tits Christine Shite
At all the girls, I leech and stare
Vote for me at Education and Welfare.

Ali Slimemam

Homewrecker? It's just not true
Say it again and I'll wreck yours too.
Ginger or blond hair, I can't decide
Birds go for my tool and boys for my hide

Whichever it is, it's all elementary
When people vote Ginger for General Secretary.

Tom Shit

Flash Harry is my game
Romance is my middle name
I lost last year – oh what a pity
If you are a guy, I'll see you sitting pretty
If you are a girl, you can stroke my coiffeur
When I'm elected Union Treasurer.

Dandruff Hair

She's at it again the second time around
You thought she'd had enough the thieving hound
With an unprounouncable name – mannerism the same
She's an absolute pro at playing the game
If you think she's too small to measure her
Imagine quantifying her skills at Treasurer

Ola Budweiser

I'm a late night prowler at your hall
Your best friend – at your beck and call
A simple union man without pretence
Every issue, I won't sit on the fence
They're all out to get me
Every one at LSE
For it is my quiff that longs to be
Voted in as General Secretary.

Bullshit Mahal

In 1066 they fought at Hastings
1996 – I'll take em on at Hustings
Bald, bland and bottom of the league
Political gossip is my intrigue
Like Brighton & Hove Albion, I have no flair
No hair either, Sam for Ed and Welfare

Sam Hardon

I want to lead the LSE to Cable street
And build a student revolutionary fleet
Newcastle shirt, from Whitley bay
A wanna-be Geordie, my mind's the

Militant way
At UGMs – you'll hear me say 'Fuck'
And to be Gen Sec, I'll need some fucking luck

Dan Don't Know

Piss Pooper in your Rosebery lair
Crazy for any Claire with bleached blonde hair
Such a shame you'll never pull again
Unless you should turn your hand to men.
Going for Ents in your final year
Cos you can't get a job you total queer

Piss Pooper

Up Fletcher's arse every day
Everyone thinks I must be gay
Been here five years not had a shag
Not even mingers sit on my flag
No life bell-end going for Ents
I'll make no changes though, it make no sense

Dave Dicksiton

Kuchanny's rocket steals point for felching Fourths

Watching the Italian football on Channel 4 on Sunday after noon, one could but notice the similarity between the style and grace of Serie A supremos AC Milan and the stunning performance of the LSE fourths that took place but a day earlier. Replace 80000 screaming "tifosi" and the San Siro with a bloke walking his dog and the Chislehurst Sports Ground and the scene was set for our best footballing display to date.

Yet who would have thought it just a few hours earlier as a mere 8 players waited at Charing Cross Station, telephoning ex-players and even Mike's Gran to see if they would be prepared to don the famous yellow and blue jersey? Eventually Guggs and hockey-boy Zaf showed up and we departed with the promise that Sean, Graham and Sean's mate would meet us there as soon as possible.

Arriving late and short of players we made our best efforts to delay the kick off by staying in the Changing Room for as long as possible. Mick kept spirits high by recounting the tale of his encounter with Mad Jane and scousers Jon and Chris taught us the rudiments of twocking cars.

Sean *et al* got there soon after and once on the pitch the Pride of LSE were rampant. Stout defending and strong tackling were complimented by elegant skills and one-touch football, the likes of which has not been witnessed since "Gazza's Soccer

School" on the telly. Jon "no aitch" Simons got higher for his headers than he has ever managed at Club UK and was generally a fine example to all young players watching, Graham only let their striker out of his pocket to get his bit of orange at the turn-around, Dan passed to me once and Chris Kuchanny had a stormer.

How we failed to win I shall never know as UCHMX had just three attacks and managed to convert one of them into the luckiest goal in footballing history though the deputising Guggs' legs. Despite our total dominance in all departments we were a goal down at half-time.

We resumed with new-found conviction and the quality of our play left our opponents in tears as they embarrassingly failed to match us. A goal had to result from the mounting pressure, Mick hit the post from fully 40 yards, Vollbracht failed to cap a memorable afternoon of his near-legendary pace and flair by squandering a number of chances and so it fell to Chris Kuchanny to save the day.

On a surging run from the back, he rounded 4 players before hammering a thunderbolt into the top left hand corner. Recall Yeboah's (as lusted after by tragic Ponytail Steve) Goal of the Month, and you get somewhere close.

With Big Dave back next week the fourths' fortunes can only be going from strength to strength.

Seconds triumph at long last

Raj really is completely shit

On Saturday February 3, the LSE 2nds concluded another chapter in their volatile season. The team travelled to UCL at full strength, owing to the absence of shit ginger William Hague. UCL, doing well in the league, were an unknown quantity. However, not all teams have the vast all-round technical knowledge of the game that B McGraw ("Leader of men") possesses, so the game was in the bag before we even kicked off.

The game began roughly as McGraw had predicted, with LSE going a goal up and Raj Paranandi being the weak link in the team. Roar Husby struck a great shot from the edge of the box, utilising McGraw's advice to cannon it off a defender and into the back of the net.

Calamity then struck on the pitch, as the usually biased UCL ref defied expectations and awarded LSE a penalty. A sense of horror pervaded when Raj stepped up to take the kick. Surprisingly, the bloated Brummie coolly slotted home the ball. The ref, having heard of Raj's reputation was equally shocked, and suspecting a fluke made him take it again. The second shot also hit the back of the net, although only owing to both arms of the UCL pigmy keeper falling off.

The second half began as the first had ended with the LSE dominating. LSE's "fast as fuck" striker Aryn Sajan decided to take a break from doing fuck-all. Obviously his lack of work-rate had been for religious reasons, or was that just the amiable Kenyan's shit excuse for not showing up for games? Sajan did customary damage in the box and drove the ball home with the same finesse that his mingling bird appreciates so

much on a Friday night.

The next ten minutes witnessed something of an UCL revival; they even managed to grab a goal back. However, McGraw knew that the goal was down to bad marking by Raj and his own tactical ineptitude. Looking for a scapegoat, he dragged the talented full-back off, and brought on Cory Tallant to shore up the defence. As if by McGraw magic, LSE scored again, the mighty Roar smashing home a phenomenal shot from fully thirty yards. With Paranandi off the pitch, he tried to influence the game with tactical advice. Of course, at this moment UCL struck again. McGraw, using his ugly head, told Paranandi that the UCL girls rugby game had finished, and that they needed sharking. With Paranandi off like a shot to meet Brendan's best ever pulls, McGraw switched back to dictating affairs on the pitch.

With only minutes remaining, McGraw instructed Danny Fielding to start firing the ball up the other end of the pitch; Trev at first found this a difficult concept hitting shit scuffs which only tested our own keeper. Eventually he succeeded, and floated a beauty to Aryn. The irritating refugee accepted gratefully and wrapped up the game for LSE. Having taken the points and the pies, the mighty 2nds went homeward. Travelling there was pricy, but not nearly as expensive as the bill from Radlett cabs. Their insurance didn't cover carrying a fat bastard like Lowen, nor did it account for the thousands of pounds worth of damage that the impotent one did to their suspension. Next week, the Seconds welcome back Danny "no birds, shit hair" Walker. Any ladies interested? All offers accepted.

AU Elections

The following positions are open for election;

THE PRESIDENT:-

The President shall be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the AU affairs, liason with the school administration and the LSE SU administration, and the external affairs. The president is also responsible for the co-ordination of the Annual AU Open Day.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY:-

The General Secretary shall chair AU General Meetings and the Clubs Council and shall be responsible for publicising meetings and agendas. Also he/she shall be incharge of the New Students Fare and social events for AU members. The General Secretary shall be responsible for the internal administration of Union affairs.

THE TREASURER:-

The Treasurer shall have overall responsibility for all aspects of AU finance, ensuring the effective operation of the clubs and the efficient use of resources.

THE VICE PRESIDENT:-

The Vice President shall be responsible for assisting the President and will act as President in the President's absence.

THE ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY:-

The Assistant General Secretary shall be responsible for assisting the General Secretary and acting as General Secretary in the General Secretary's absence. The Assistant General Secretary shall be Vice Chair of AU General Meetings and the Clubs Council and shall be responsible for taking minutes.

THE ASSISTANT TREASURER:-

The Assistant Treasurer shall be responsible for assisting the Treasurer and will act as Treasurer in the Treasurer's absence.

NOMINATION DEADLINE

FEBRUARY 22, 5pm

ELECTIONS TUESDAY 27 AND WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY

Worse than the Seconds? Yianni lays down the ultimate rimming challenge

Brett Rosen & Oliver Rey

Wow!! 121-53, 112-43, 98-20, 120- 63: Next Mission for the LSE 1st basketball team is a 100 point margin of victory, after crushing UCL(A), Charing Cross and St Georges Medical Schools by an average of 70 points. Who's next? The LSE cocky 2nd teamers perhaps?

Doctor to be Andy Staab's military techniques have shaped the Beaver's 12 into a killer machine. After falling in their first game, the Beavers have posted 6 consecutive easy wins. An overflow crowd filled up Summit gym a.k.a. BeaverDome, for LSE's last 3 wins. Scalpers/Touts even fetched 40 quid for courtside seats at the UCL game.

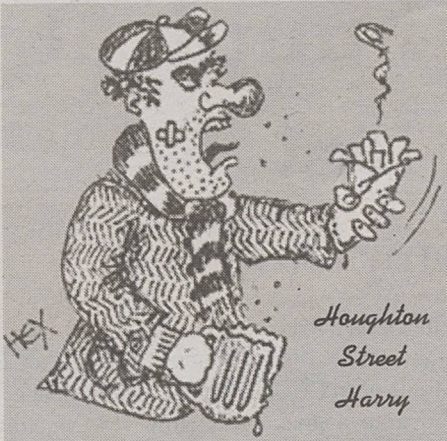
A solid core of returnees have coalesced with an energetic and talented group of newcomers. Down low, our four headed monster of Andy "Liver" Robb, Cristoph "Mahorn" Raatz, "Clueless" Jay and all time LSE legend, Leo Von Bredow terrorize the opposition... though the home crowd has yet to see a thunderous dunk (look after that elbow Andy!)

On the wing position the Beavers are loaded. Andrea Vorloumis, when not boxing

or slugging the opposition's coach, lit up Imperial for 33 points. Fellow returnee Oliver "Kid-Madrid" Rey dropped in 25 against Charing Cross, and is taking the art of cherry-picking to a higher level. Jason Kidd's half brother, Brett "El Nino" Rosen has instilled his CAL style to us Europeans, and has become the team's long-distance bomber, devastating Imperial with his missiles. "Fonzi" Barros gives depth at the wing, though he still insists on shooting from the half court whilst having a UCL 3 foot midget guarding him. "Dirty" Ryan Brady has brought his Big East aggressiveness to the squad, slashing to the hoop with reckless abandon.

On the point, Paris "Control, guys, control" and David "Will you marry me?" Leibowitz provide their PhD brains to our cause. Bill "Mr Nice Guy" Sanford brings his North Carolina drawl to the team, and was Dean Smith's second favourite player.

Upcoming games include Los Angeles Lakers, Oops, excuse us, Strand Poly aka King's College, as well as the annual rivalry battle at Oxford and Cambridge. Las Vegas casinos and Ladbrokes have the Beavers at 1:1 stakes to take the All England title. Your money is safe with us. Contact Liz at the Sports Office for more info!



When Harry first decided to come to the LSE, he was told that he'd be surrounded by the world's great minds. But if LSE students are the best this planet can offer, God help us all.

I knew something was wrong within two minutes of moving into halls, when confronted by various long-haired twats smoking Marlboro Lights and wearing sandals. I soon realised that such deviants were unlikely to be future Prime Ministers and Presidents. And my apathy grows; let's face it, leaders of industrial nations have little need for Mercury One2Ones, flip-flops or Dictaphones, which immediately eliminates 95% of our students. And, of the other 5%, the vast majority choose to shun the political limelight, focusing instead upon activities that will benefit them in alternative careers in the future. Quite what job involves blocking every isle in the brunch bowl while shouting as loud as possible, obstructing every inch of space in front of the old building, or standing and abusing the staff in Wright's bar is a mystery to me - but inevitably they'll all end up as accountants, content with their lives as pompous, overweight, dandruff-infested, humourless Tory arselickers.

Which brings us nicely to the glorious minority, that final 2% that sustain the LSE with their spirit and passion. Of these, half aim at a career in politics... or at least they try - if the truth be told, then socialism is dead in Houghton Street; only the socialist workers remain, and their only achievement is to act as a reminder of the dangers of not showering and attempting to survive on a diet of lentils and cabbage.

So our loveable morons content themselves with jobs on the hall committee, fighting intensely for the right to be appointed to influential positions such as food officer or treasurer, busying themselves in executive level discussions about whether Passfield should get some new microwaves or whether Rosebery should get some decent bog roll.

And what of the remaining few? Well, they lose all trace of sanity as they try to escape the numbskulls that surround them. So they set out on a desperate crusade to get themselves kicked out of halls, and to piss off as many people as they can in as short a space of time as possible.

So, after drinking too much beer, eating too many pies and failing too many exams, they find themselves in a job interview, faced with the question - "What can YOU offer our firm?"

And behold the reply, "Well, after living in halls, I can hold a kebab in one hand, a 12ft traffic sign in the other, and stagger through reception after twenty pints, pelting pensioners with water bombs whilst letting off fire extinguishers, peeping under showers, ordering a pizza and watching the adult channel."

It's no wonder that companies are queuing up to employ them! The heart of the LSE minority beats as strong as ever - have faith, there are still those that refuse to become self-promoting bastard political clones, or dead-end pen pushing gits. See the light, get pissed and eat pies - you know that it's the only way forward.

The Rim Boys show us what they've got.....

...and frankly it's not quite "Magic"

Yianni Hadoulis

Some people in the ULU League must be getting pretty desperate. Take Imperial, for instance. Normally, they should be exempt from criticism, because any University with a female-to-male ratio as low as theirs deserves our full sympathy, really. But one wouldn't expect that the results of their sexual frustration and incompetence could spill over to the basketball court, as well.

Where does one start? From the trek up and down Ladbroke Grove, to which we were subjected before we were able to find Imperial's God-forsaken venue? Well, it would have been very useful for warming-up, had the temperature outside not been 2 degrees above freezing. The basketball/volleyball/badminton/crapcourt we were to play on was a big surprise, too; we didn't know that such shit baskets were still being made, we all thought they had been banned in the 1940s.

One factor which we, and Andreas in particular, thought quite promising (for a change) was that the referee would be a woman;

after all, the Seconds have never failed to impress the opposite sex with their immaculate looks and charm. But what we found at Kensington Sports Centre looked less like Brooke Shields of 'Blue Lagoon', and more like the Creature from the *Dark Lagoon*. She told us that she'd rather watch the rugby on TV than referee our game; we soon wished that she had. During the game she admitted that

ball without being mauled, except maybe Ilias, but that's only because his shoes smell so bad. But we still kicked their posteriors quite effectively.

Once Imperial saw the spectre of defeat raising its ugly head, they even enlisted the father of one of their players to help them; when questioned later he claimed to be a "reeseearch shtudent" - my arse. They still couldn't win, not even when The Bitch gave us two technicals; the Imps were bested by 83 to 49, and Damir The Bosnian Bomber was the top scorer with 26 (he will be signing autographed pictures of himself at Virgin Megastore next Tuesday). 'Party-Boy' Christoyannis was next with 16, and with some pretty impressive 'moves'. Chris 'No-Miss' missed some, but still managed to get 14, while Moshe Merdler scored 11.

Finally, 'TechNical' Latham and 'Moses' Shwartz both had 8; they did not lead us to the Promiseland, but they definitely showed us the proper procedure of how to piss referees off. The team will meet again next week, when we parade along with ten of LSE's girls around Imperial College, and show the fuckers inside how sad they really, really are.



Maggots

Photo: Yianni Hadoulis with his free hand

she couldn't see very far; we believed that, because she wouldn't notice a violation if it hit her in the face.

As a result, none of us could get near the

LSE Hockey lads dick Kings again

It's a great game played by real men....honest!

Matt Marsh

Arif, Matt Roberts, Patrick, Matt Marsh, Zaf, Sam, Leo, Alex, Gary, say these names with pride, admiration and afford them the god-like status they now desire. We were bloody amazing, in fact, we even out-classed the girls team today in all departments, except perhaps in pure sexual attractiveness of which only Leo and Gary can possibly be compared.

The game was a formality before it had even begun, the Strand Poly turned up wearing sponsored sweatshirts and half of them sported University of London track-suits, this was in sharp contrast with the scruffy but loveable appearance so epitomised by Matt Roberts who as per usual was late, slightly hung-over, smoking away and swearing undying love for Sheba (yes it's true we all fancy you babe !!).

LSE had 9 players when the game started, rather logically Zaf asked wonder-goalie Gary to umpire the match thus reducing us to 8. This tactical ploy by our inspirational and now infamous captain meant we were forced to play that famous 3,2,2,1 Christmas-tree formation so lauded by Terry Venables. Frankly, the reason it didn't work Terry is that you played with 11 men and didn't pick Matt le Tissier. We did. He came in the form of Alex who scored another hat-trick against the Strand

Poly, 3 times in 70 minutes must be a personal record (for those of you who are expecting the double-entendre, leave the football team and get a life).

King's took the lead early in the first half, a lucky bounce allowed them to dissect the 3 stout centre-halves and squeeze a rather fortunate shot under the diving Arif. The cocky bastards thought they were in heaven, they seriously believed that they would dick their future employers and romp to victory, foolish shits, this does explain why they are at an establishment hardly given credence in academic or social circles and not at LSE. Noone at LSE would ever appear so openly full of themselves except perhaps the football team (and we all know what their full of,

sticky stuff of the brown variety).

The match was a game of two halves. The first half involved great dominance by LSE and Matt Roberts breaking his stick, the second half was a delightful exhibition of teamwork, Alex scoring and Matt Roberts breaking Joy's stick. All in all a good day. Patrick even offered Gary a second drink in the bar after the match, a precedent which shocked half the team and left the other half in the need of cardiovascular resuscitation as they suddenly realised the full extent of Patrick's generosity.

Basically it was a perfect day, never to be repeated, next week we will no doubt slump back into mediocracy but it was bloody brilliant whist it lasted.

Sporting Poetry Corner

Ode to my darling foxes

Jess and George, on you I'd like to gorge
George and Jess, I'll settle for nothing less
Jess and George, my love is real, I would not forge
George and Jess, please swallow my mess