

# The Beaver

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## Pink Plaque comes out again

### Fresh attempts to commemorate the founding of the Gay Liberation Front at LSE

by Sarah Eglin

The second unveiling of a Pink Plaque took place in the Quad last Friday lunchtime. The plaque commemorates the founding of the Gay Liberation Front at LSE 21 years ago and it replaces the one unveiled on May 2nd of this year which was stolen only two days later.

Head of the Gay Soc. Eugene Isaac explained that supporters had decided to have a second ceremony as an act of defiance against whoever the homophobic thieves were. This was a view echoed in many of the speeches given by the gay and lesbian activists that attended. The Labour MP Tony Banks, for example, claimed he was glad he had been given a chance to attend this unveiling since he had missed the first and promised that if necessary he would be prepared to come everyday and unveil new plaques to prove that the movements, "determination and moral position is greater than any bigots within the school."

Many observers expressed their disappointment at the poor turnout compared to the May event which had been a very packed and noisy gathering. Those spoken to felt that this was probably because there had not been much chance for publicity around the school with the unveiling being held so soon into the term. However, ex-Senior Treasurer Mel Taylor, who championed the publicity surrounding the last plaque, expressed her delight that the replacement also marked the anniversary of the founding of the GLF on the 13th October back in 1970. She and Eugene Isaac stressed their gratitude to the new sabbaticals Fiona MacDonald and Toby Johnson for all their work in making the day possible. Mel told the Beaver, "it is good to see straight sabbaticals taking up the pink plaque cause and making it a wider issue."

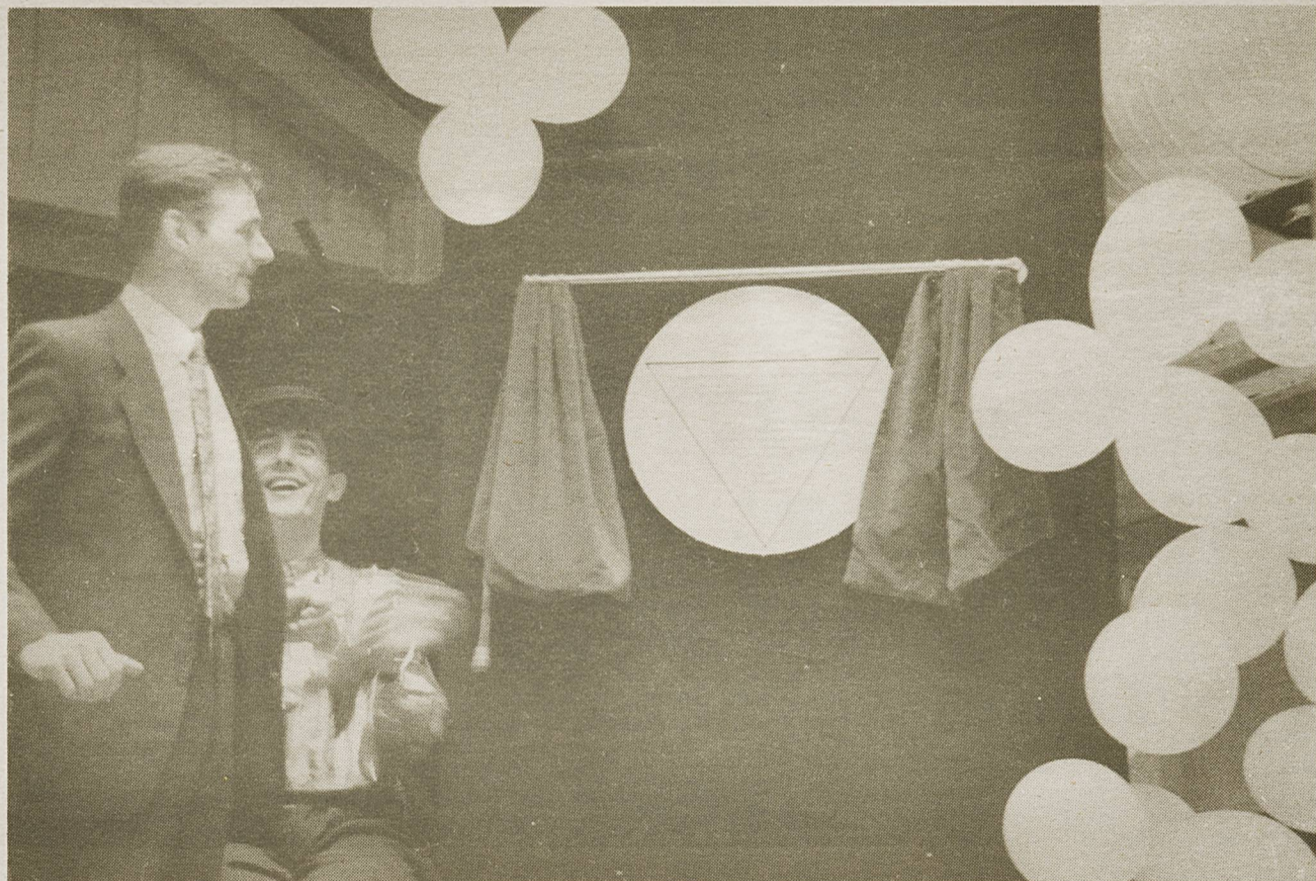
Mel Taylor initiated the May plaque but told the audience gathered in the quad that the idea dated back three years to the time when Peter Tatchell and Amanda Hart tried to persuade the school itself to set up a plaque. The school always

refused on the basis that it would lead to a proliferation of similar requests. However, Taylor believes that the Union persistence and decision to erect a plaque themselves has successfully put pressure on the school to expand its equal opportunity policy to include gays and lesbians. The audience was certainly surprised to see the Director John Ashworth make a brief appearance among them but when asked by The Beaver what his reasons for attending were he opaquely replied that he, "just wanted to see what was going on following the great deal of controversy there had been in the school."

Audience reaction to the event was positive; a first year student interviewed said, "all power to them, but it's a shame that it's because gay sex isn't acceptable that it has to be such a big issue." However, a third year gay student was critical of the poor turnout and the LSE Lesbian and Gay Soc. in his opinion, "it should get its act together. I've joined the North London group instead because the LSE lot are too political and ignore all the other facets of gay life."

Speakers on the stage included Peter Tatchell, the gay activist; Kevin Hunter the leader of Pride marches, Lisa Power of "Stonewall", Chris Smith MP (Labour); Brian Stone Chair of the Liberal Democrats Lesbian and Gay Group; Julian Hows of the GLF and Martin Corbett one of the founders of GLF - he unveiled the plaque. The comper was comedian Bob Boyton who had volunteered his services as a sign of solidarity, "I'm bisexual with some politics", he explained to The Beaver.

All stressed the importance of the GLF as the first public gay and lesbian group to be formed in Britain. Lisa Power summed the feeling up when she said that every gay and lesbian group owes the GLF a huge debt since, "it taught us never to apologise and to be ourselves". Peter Tatchell had recounted at length his experiences in the early days of the GLF attempting to highlight the wit and outrageous style of the movement. This was epitomised on the day by Julian Hows whose camp poses and brilliant gold lamé outfit added more than a bit of glamour to the



Martin Corbett, an original member of the GLF unveiling the Plaque with Julian Hows who described himself as a visual aid Photo: Toby Johnson

proceedings. Interviewed by the Beaver he said the LSE had been important because it had given the GLF the material space to grow. Asked what the difference between the climate back in 1970 and now was he said, "it is much easier now to pretend that being gay or lesbian can be just a private act and not a political one, but coming out will always be political until it is totally accepted by society."

Chris Smith, who was the first gay MP to come out when he did so in 1983, made a similar point in his speech. The gay movement had come along way from its beginnings 21 years ago, as commemorated by the plaque, but there was still a long way to go he claimed. In fact, Brian Stone of the Liberal Democrats was keen to make the point that his party had drawn up an eight point programme for lesbian and gay liberation. As he elaborated to The Beaver, this included an equal age of consent, the incite-

ment of hatred on the basis of sexual orientation to be made illegal and child custody to be made non-discriminatory. Social Secretary Fiona explained it was just really the Conservative Party who were not represented - John Major's reply to her letter had said that he didn't know enough about the issue. Some observers readily volunteered that because of the attitude shown in Article 28 this was hardly surprising.

This time the pink plaque will be fastened to the wall of the top floor of the cafe, rather than outside The Tuns, using special chemical compounds to seal it to the wall. To quote Toby Johnson, "If anyone wants to steal it now they're going to have to use a pneumatic drill."

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# LSE Student released after 10 weeks in Prison

Newly arrived Phd student held without charge after being accused of "instigating international terrorism"

By Beaver Staff

Muhammad Mahjoub Haroun, a Sudanese national at the London School of Economics, was arrested by police in London on July 25th. He was held without charge but on suspicion of terrorism in Wormwood Scrubs jail until his release four days later. He was then immediately sent back to Wormwood Scrubs while deportation proceedings against him were set in motion.

Previous to his studies at the LSE, Haroun was a lecturer in Psychology at Khartoum university, a freelance journalist and the former editor of a Sudanese monthly cultural magazine. Upon his arrest, Haroun informed Sudanese Embassy officials that he had been arrested on suspicions of involvement in "instigating international terrorism".

The whole incident began when Haroun paid a visit to the flat of a senior Sudanese official,

Matthew Obur. Obur is believed to be a former member of the Southern Sudanese rebel organisation, the SPLA. However, Obur left this organisation in order to join the military government, currently in power in Khartoum. The Sudanese embassy maintains that Obur was on a private visit to London when he was approached by Special Branch officers. Scotland Yard had received information that Obur's life was in danger and, upon enquiring as to any expected visitors that Obur was to receive in the near future, the name of Haroun was mentioned. When Haroun and a friend, a Sudanese diplomat, visited Obur's flat in the evening, police were already there to arrest them. His colleague claimed diplomatic immunity and Haroun was detained in Paddington police station.

Initially, police denied that they were holding Haroun. Upon repeated attempts by Sudanese diplomats to contact him, the

police admitted they were holding him but refused to discuss the evidence against him. However, they later searched his flat and were said to have incriminating documents, leading to the detention on suspicion of terrorism. Personal letters and Haroun's address book were then used to question him further. Haroun has maintained throughout the affair that these documents only related to his journalistic and political activities and did not on any way violate British law.

Throughout the proceedings, Haroun's defence was funded by the LSE, using the Director's personal 'slush fund'. The decision to pay for legal assistance for the Sudanese student came after his friends contacted the School authorities following his arrest.

Scotland Yard concluded that no charges could be filed against Haroun and decisions were referred to the Home Office where a decision to deport him was

agreed upon. Michiel van Hulsten, the Union General Secretary, was informed by the Home Office that this decision had been taken as Haroun's presence in Britain was "not conducive to the public good". An appeal against such deportation was initially delayed as such an appeal results in continued detention in prison under British law.

There was some disagreement as to how best to help Haroun's case. The School put pressure on the Union to ensure that there was no campaign to release him, as it feared such action would "put the Home Office on the spot" and possibly prejudice their decision against him. Similarly, the Beaver was requested not to print the story in their Fresher's Issue.

Until the point of appeal, Haroun was detained in Paddington police station but following this move, he was transferred to Wormwood Scrubs prison. He remained here until his release

on September 29th after a ruling by the Court of Appeal reversed the decision to deport.

However, on his release Haroun was detained by Immigration officials in the same institution pending deportation. When asked for the reason, the Home Office replied that his presence was "not conducive to national security." Haroun then faced a 10 week wait while his appeal was heard and decided upon in camera by the 'Three Wise Men' immigration panel.

Sources close to Haroun say that his original intention was to return to Sudan permanently as he was tired of the treatment that he received at the hands of the British government. However, Haroun has since considered the help and support that he received by the LSE and has decided to return to complete his PhD following a short holiday in his native country.

Confusion still remains in and around the LSE as to the reasons why Haroun was detained

in the first place. "I am still stunned by it", says George Binette, a postgraduate student in Industrial Relations and prominent member of the SWSS who tried to mobilize public support for Haroun.

Sudanese officials still maintain that the whole incident was a "police cock-up". In their eyes, "the police acted wrongly and then later tried to cover it up". They cannot understand why the Home Office would have wished to deport him. He was in possession of a valid passport and visa. On contacting the Home Office, we were informed that they were unavailable for comment.

Catherine Manthorpe, Assistant Registrar to the Graduate School, also declined to comment. She believes that it would not be fair to reflect upon these recent events whilst Haroun is out of the country. It is believed that he plans to return to his studies at the LSE in three weeks.

## NUS London Disaffiliation proposed

By Justin Harper and Pernilla Malmfalt

In next Thursday's Union General Meeting a financial motion proposing the LSE's disaffiliation from the National Union of Students-London will be put forward by Toby Johnson, LSE's Union Senior Treasurer and seconded by Michael Van Hulsten, General Secretary.

The main reason for this, say the proposers, is financial. When Toby Johnson took office at the beginning of the summer, he found the Union facing a debt of £40,000 for this financial year.

"The way I see it is that I have a choice of either continuing to spend at the level of the past or start making cutbacks and think of the Union's long-term future instead of passing its financial problems on".

Our Treasurer is hence facing a dilemma when this year's affiliation check to the N.U.S. London is due to be paid in. As the Union already faces an increase of over £50,000 in expenditure due to staff additions and also needs to find funds to expand their services, the £2,100 N.U.S. London affiliation fee is likely to be only a small part of

the reductions in costs. Other victims of the cutbacks are likely to be the Union's lump sum contribution to the Housing Association and possibly the number of observers sent to the N.U.S. conference. This is because, according to Johnson, "They just go there to get pissed and take the mickey out of the people who have to speak". These observers cost £300 per head to send.

The question still stands however of how such a disaffiliation will affect the LSE and its Union. Van Hulsten does not believe that the N.U.S. London provides the Students Union with appropriate services to make the LSE's financial contribution worthwhile. He criticises it for being inefficient and not relating to student issues.

Some of the campaigns now being undertaken by N.U.S. London include the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism; "Boycott Israeli Produce" and the "Free Martin Calvert" campaign (a campaigner allegedly arrested and jailed for retaliating against a racist attack). In addition, a march for student benefits is scheduled to take place later this month. Van

Hulsten, who is a strong advocate of reform in the National N.U.S., though not disaffiliation from it, believes that the roles he would like the London body to play can be fulfilled by the University of London Union and N.U.S. National. He also thinks that the "political wing of the N.U.S. should be dropped and replaced by a number of organisations' such as the National Organisations of Labour Students, the Conservative Collegiate Forum and the Student Liberal Democrats.

Stephen Twigg, N.U.S. National President, strongly opposes LSE's move to disaffiliate from their London body, as he sees it as an integral part of the National Union. "It provides a London perspective and London priorities to N.U.S. campaigns which the National Union Executive... does not have the time to do".

Kevin Blowe, N.U.S. London's Area Convenor, further commented on the issue by arguing that the London perspective which is needed is not fulfilled by ULU. He believes that as N.U.S. London co-ordinates campaigns between all London colleges, polytechnics and uni-

versities, they play a key role in campaigns such as "Target 70" which is a national attempt to get students to vote in 70 key marginals across the country as well as obtaining commercial goods and services at discount prices for students.

Whatever the outcome of this Thursday's motion, it is likely to be the first of many clashes between the Union's hard left and the General Secretary.

A debate has been scheduled to take place on Wednesday 16th October. Speakers on the issue of whether or not to disaffiliate from the NUS-London are Toby Johnson and Michiel van Hulsten in favour and the London branch of N.U.S. This is being done in response to a letter from Kevin Blowe asking Van Hulsten for an opportunity to come to LSE and explain why he believes that they should stay within the London network of the National Union of Students. The location of the debate is, for the moment, to be in room A698.

## News in Brief

### Fire at Commonwealth

Three fire engines were called to the scene of a potentially dangerous situation at the Commonwealth Hall of Residence in the early hours of Monday September 30th.

Reports indicate the cause of the fire to be a burning cigarette discarded by a new female resident (name withheld) as she lay in bed. The alarm was raised by a senior member of the hall who detected the smoke and dragged the girl to safety. He then proceeded to call the fire brigade after alerting nearby residents. Doubts have arisen over the effectiveness of the alarm system which failed to alert many of the remaining two hundred residents.

Fortunately there were no injuries and damages were minor. Suggestions that some residents were tampering with electrical equipment have been discounted by the bursar Liz Parkin who refused to comment on the cost of repairs.

On a similar note, breakfasters at Passfield Hall were surprised by the sudden arrival of a

fleet of fire engines to deal with a piece of burnt toast which activated the alarms on Saturday.

By Duncan Needham and Paul Bou Habie

### Still hope for County Hall

The LSE has spent around £10000 on exhibition stands at all the Party conferences over the past month, the Times Higher Education Supplement has reported. The conference stalls are said to have seen appearances by Press Officer Iain Crawford and are part of a campaign for the County Hall site to be sold to LSE.

John Ashworth, the School's director has also been involved. Ashworth had an informal meeting with Tony Banks MP, the last chairman of the Greater London Council at the Labour Party conference on the subject. Fears that a Labour victory at the next general election would destroy the LSE's hopes have receded following Banks' comment that "I think we can do business" made after the meeting.

# SU hit by spate of thefts

Series of break-ins to Union offices prompt renewed concerns about security

By Benjamin Accam

A series of thefts over the last two weeks have resulted in losses of about £250 as well as equipment vital to the welfare of many students. These thefts culminated on the first day of Freshers' fair and have become an issue of growing concern to the Students Union.

The reported incidents occurred whilst Sabbaticals were busy organising the Fair. Fiona Macdonald, Social Secretary, reported the loss of a cash box from her office containing £200.00: the day's takings for Ents. Another member of the Executive lost his jacket from the Senior Treasurer's office.

This was later recovered from one of the men's toilets on the LSE campus, although £40 in cash had been stolen from the pockets.

After lunch on the same day, intruders forced open the door of the Welfare Office with a crowbar and removed a number of tapes intended for blind students of the School. It is suspected that the same individuals were responsible for the breaking into of the Careers Office although it is not known whether any items of significant value were stolen.

Toby Johnson, Senior Treasurer finds it irritating that the School's Administration does not appear to be taking this issue too seriously. Further concern

has been voiced over what seems to be a grey area within the School's security arrangements. This occurs as Security Officers are only employed during the night and begin their shifts at 9.00 pm. Prior to this period of time the Porters assume some of the duties of Security Officers and although they are very helpful, they have not been given the necessary training to assume security roles. As a result, problems have been known to arise.

Fiona Macdonald has expressed concern at this and would like to see a 24-hour security policy implemented with regular patrols around the School day and night to help prevent crime. The issue of

safety she believes is of utmost importance especially considering the central location of the School. She has therefore urged the Administration to consider the issue fully before giving financial reasons for not upgrading the present system.

The Union's advice to students is to keep a watchful eye and to insure any items of value they may possess. In the meantime, the Sabbaticals are practising what they preach. An open door policy is now not always possible. In order to prevent crime of this sort, Sabbaticals are now keeping their offices locked whenever they are out.

# Housing offices to merge

First steps taken towards an integrated welfare service

## Disabled access issue resurfaces

By Beaver Staff

The LSE's perennial problems with disabled access were highlighted by the visit of a disabled potential student last Friday. Saman Palihawadana, in the second year of his A-levels, said after seeing the site that he while he would prefer to study in London, the lack of disabled facilities at the School meant that he would regard LSE as a second-best choice, behind universities such as Essex.

"LSE does not offer full disabled access. At Essex and Manchester, I can get everywhere in my wheelchair."

Mr Palihawadana, who is applying for a Law degree was shown around LSE by the Advisor to Disabled Students, Dr. Appa, and Michiel van Hulsten, the Students Union General Secretary. He complimented the LSE on the many access points to pavement in Houghton Street and Portugal Street. However, when he tried to enter the New Theatre, he found that the space supposed to be reserved for wheelchairs was blocked by a table and chairs.

Similarly, he was unable to visit Sabbatical offices and the Student Union Print Room due to the lack of access to the corridor that they share.

Both Dr. Appa and Van Hulsten reaffirmed their commitment to improving disabled access. "Disabled access has got better in recent years. But we still need convenient and clean wheelchair entrances to the Old Building, as well as to the back of the East Building and King's and Lincoln's Chambers," said Van Hulsten.

**Beaver collective meetings, every Monday in E197.**

**There will be an election for the post of Managing Editor at the collective meeting next week. All nominations must be in at least 2 hours beforehand**

By Emma Bearcroft

Plans are in progress for the SU and LSE housing offices to merge. This will result in a centrally controlled and located Student Accommodation Office and will provide the pooled services of the Schools Halls of Residence and the Student Unions' private accommodation schemes.

The merger comes in response to the recommendations proposed last year by the Working party on the Establishment of a Central Student Accommodation Office (WPECSAO). The previously existing system gave students the option of applying for housing through two channels. The two systems worked independently, resulting in a more complicated procedure for applying students, and it was believed that a joint aim of convenient accommodation provisions was not being met.

As early as 1987, the Peter Glanfield report suggested the coordination of these services and that the School deal formally with the Student Union Welfare Services. This proposal to facilitate and make more efficient the Student Accommodation Office became the motivation behind the setting up of the WPECSAO.

This new system is designed to minimise the gap between related offices and to lessen the work burden for staff in admissions offices, who originally were working in excess of required hours. In addition, it will ensure the allocation of all accommodation, that all applications to Intercollegiate halls are taken up, and provide information and advice on private lettings and tenancies. Although company lets and subletting by the School are declining in popularity, the new scheme will enable their

continuation. Also on offer is general accommodation advice. Robert Smith, the Assistant Secretary responsible for the Halls, is enthusiastic: "The new service is a very good thing, and is working out very well."

Despite being reliant on the existing machinery, the current phasing in of work and the arrival of a detailed Student Accommodation Handbook, will mean that students can be provided with substantial help during the coming year.

The benefits that arise through the pooling of expertise have been welcomed by the General Secretary to the Students' Union, Michiel van Hulsten: "Once again the Student Union and the School are working together to provide a decent welfare and housing service for students. I hope that there will be moves in the future to integrate our services even further, so that there is a one-stop shop for all School and Students' Union welfare services." The implementation of the report has been strongly supported by Peter Harris, Student Union Housing representative.

Moves to coordinate School services with those provided by the Students' Union will be welcomed by many: the complicated process of applying throughout the School channels and seeking advice from the Students Union having been eliminated. There were previously complaints raised by students that they found the Students Union accommodation office hard to find. Problems of this sort for the new combined service are planned to be eliminated with a substantial advertising campaign to tell students that the new service will be available in E296.

Commentary

# Union Jack

Leafing through his copy of the Freshers Ents diary, Jack was mystified to find a curious omission. Laser Disco, Karaoke, these are all fun. But no mention was made of the regular cabaret slot which has been a feature of the LSE circuit. Yes, the UGM. Staging shows every Thursday in the Old Theatre, this well-established troupe has seen a lot of players come and go, but it's still going strong years after being founded.

This being the first performance of the term, it was necessary for a comper to be found, to come forward and host the acts. Michiel, the big Dutch Strongman leapt on to the stage and cried out "Are there any nominations for Union Chair?". Two brave souls stepped into the limelight.

Bob Gross, American pinball player extraordinaire has been in the company for so long that he was now taking the logical step up to Actor-Manager. He felt he could "do the job". His manifesto was equally simple; "Elect me". Sadly, 'twas not to be. Razia Shariff, the Indian mystic from Amnesty appeared on the stage and stressed that she was a member of "the fairer sex". Fairer to who? Than who? It didn't matter. Aided by a timely intervention from Woody Bild, the Marxist with a sense of humour, the meeting gave Bob the big thumbs down. "So, are there any nominations for vice chair?" rumbled the Aryan giant. All eyes turned to Bob. Sure enough, he bounded up to take his place at her right hand.

Now the fun could begin. The first act up was the man himself, Michiel. I'd better point out the LSE's spy, he thought, and so he did. One wondered whether Mr. Neil Plevy had thought to take out life insurance as all eyes swiveled to his position. All that was missing was a big red arrow pointing down at him. "We've got a new general manager!" announced Michiel. Sure enough, leafing through his freshers issue of the Beaver, Jack found an interview with what was, to judge from the photo, a pair of disembodied eyebrows.

There were other things on Michiel's mind as well. "We intend to disaffiliate from NUS London" he told the audience. Good for him. "Right, now we move on to Toby Johnson" said Razia. "Oh no we don't" chorused everyone. No, Michiel had said his piece and deserved applause, explained Bob. Everyone then waved their hands in the air to show their appreciation.

Next up was Toby Johnson, the clown. Cries of "resign!" were already being directed at the chair. Johnson was obviously feeling nervous, as on hearing this he began to sweat visibly and mumble an apology into the microphone. He did have something to say, however. There was a new scheme where one could share cars to far-flung places such as Aberdeen. Looking at his expression, Jack wondered whether he was planning to invest in a one-way ticket to the same destination. Now we had to ratify him as well- or did we? Yes, that was okay with Bob.

Next, it was time for "Dave from Welfare" - or was it? Our chair seemed unsure. Bob promised her it was. Dave from Welfare cruised moodily onto the stage. There were still some places available in the nursery, he said, looking at the Conservatives. Oh, and we needed readers for blind students, so if any of the meeting could read, please could they go to the Admin office.

"Now we have Stew from Academic Affairs" the host announced. Bob nodded sagely. Stew? Oh, Stu, the Academic Affairs officer. Stu felt a need to tell us how good it was to learn study skills. Also, he'd be sorting out everyone's exams. Never mind about all those lectures you missed, Stu will be looking after you.

But now the gothic horror section came up. Martin Raiser, the Overseas officer looks so much like Dracula that Jack wondered whether his friends wear neckguards. Never mind. Martin wanted all the overseas societies to "get in touch with me". It must get lonely up in that castle.

Up came Peter from Housing. He had obviously taken the jokes about the DSG blending into the background a bit too seriously, as he had cunningly arranged for his hair to be the same colour as the curtain behind him. This temporary baldness coupled with his jumper, led to a worrying resemblance to Charlie Brown.

Now it was time for Stew from Welfare. What? Was Jack getting Deja Vue? No, said Bob. We already had that act earlier. All that was left now was for a traditional song and dance act. Sujata Aurora duly obliged by wheeling on a speaker from NUS London. But stop! We were out of time! "Okay, we need a 2/3rds majority" yelled our chair at the disappearing backs. It didn't matter. Everyone had already voted with their feet.

# “What A Load of ... ‘BULLSHIT!’ ”

This is a direct quote from one friend after an illuminating evening demonstrating the powers of the human mind. This is more commonly referred to as being hypnotised or making a total prat of yourself.

Mr. Martin Taylor, a professional hypnotist, came to Carr-Saunders Hall and convinced at least two previous sceptics that hypnotism is more than a cheap scam.

We volunteered believing that hypnosis would not be able to affect such arrogant individuals as ourselves. We were embarrassingly wrong. Within five minutes our concious minds were dead to the world and were in fact puppets in Martin's hands.

It was an evening of diverse entertainment. Two young gentlemen gave a beautiful rendition of Gene Kelly's "Singing in the rain", complete - need I say it - with umbrellas. An-

other volunteer developed an odd fetish for rather repulsive ties. Everytime Martin tapped the microphone Raul found it necessary to don yet another polyester wonder. Why Raul? The strength of the compulsion was such that despite 150 radical L.S.E. students (man!) shouting "No Raul please don't, not another." Raul could not say "No."

Have you ever laughed hysterically at something remarkably boring? We did. As Martin read out an article about Sir Paul Pinder's pub in Broadgate none of us could control our laughter. This was due to Martin's hypnotic suggestion that the article was cunningly riddled with jokes. The evening carried on in much the same vein as we forgot our names, could not bend our arms, had a sound triggered facial itch and our hands locked convulsively.

We thought that the evening had come to a 'climax' when

Simone and myself started to converse in fluent Martian. Through Hans our interpreter we quite happily discussed various aspects of Martian life; including some rather telling and descriptive hand gestures when asked about sex on Mars!

Martin thought it necessary to demonstrate the medical uses of hypnosis. Chiefly focusing on its anaesthetic effects he called me, Mine, to the front. Slightly perturbed by this I held my left hand out as a square was drawn onto it. Slightly more perturbed I listened while Martin described to the slaving audience how I would in fact be stabbing myself with a needle within the square. Then he told me it would not hurt - hmmm! Being the naive gullible first year that I am who was I to query. I did in fact stab myself in the hand - repeatedly!

Despite the blood oozing from the pinpricks I felt nothing, 'til I stabbed myself outside the square by mistake. A masochist

in the making I do fear!

Martin's gratitude to his loyal experimental guinea pigs was every student's dream come true. From then until 11:00 pm water would taste and have the same effect as our favourite drink. As Martin passed a glass of water around, the range of drinks varied from Jack Daniels to Peach Schnapps. Heaven! All we had to do in return was watch a hallucinogenic strip / sex show. While seated we watched appalled, but then Mar-

tin pulled us to our feet and we had to partake in the erotic display ourselves. We would like to take this opportunity to apologise for our disgusting and morally deviant behaviour. For while being completely aware of what we were doing we were having too much fun to stop (ooh no, could you tell?)

The next half hour was mainly spent on the floor of Carr-Saunders bar as kindly people passed us pints of water. The ensuing result was rather similar to a

day at the zoo from the inside. The least you could have done was chucked money! As everyone peered at us over their pint, we sang, we danced, we rolled, we got up and we fell. Possibly the most distressing part of the evening was when this wore off and we looked out from the little circle we had cleared for ourselves to find everyone staring at us, oddly.

We spent the whole of the next day with many people shooting knowing glances at us and previous friends looking altogether worried.

Overall it was a wonderful experience and we would like to thank Martin for his visit. I think I speak for all the volunteers when I say, "THIS WAS NO BULLSHIT."

written by Mine and Faz Dare.

Despite the blood  
oozing from the  
pinpricks I felt nothing,  
'til I stabbed myself

## Turning Tables on Your Tutors

Adam Ostaszewski writes on how to spend your spare time improving your C.V.

How would you like to improve your self-assuredness, increase your powers of explanation and give pride of place to some public-spirit-edness in your CV? If so, then here's just the ticket for you.

The "Student tutoring scheme", which has been in operation now for a few years, draws on the help of students in a number of colleges in the University of London. It involves first and second year undergraduates visiting a secondary school in London regularly in Michaelmas and Lent terms to help in the teaching of mathematics at various levels. You don't have to be a budding wrangler to join in, numerate confidence will do. The teaching is in small groups, often on a one-to-one basis, and travel costs are refunded by BP who devised the scheme.

It seems at first that you're being asked to provide some

thing for next to nothing. Yet, there really is something in it, as witness the growing numbers of students participating - so many at Imperial College that IC has its own full-time co-ordinator.

So what is in it for you? Almost the first thing you discover is that explaining something you take for granted to a school-kid who happens not to understand will be quite an exercise. In fact you begin to question the basis of your own understanding and will wind up seeing things more clearly yourself. The art of questioning is part of the general scholarship you're supposed to acquire at university. You will learn the art of explanation, an art that you will be called upon to practice many a time in your professional career. Oddly enough the pupils are prepared to be more frank about their difficulties to you than to their school-teachers. Indeed, the

kids identify more readily with you, your presence adds a pleasant bit of variety to their daily mill and the "positive role model" they see in you raises their aspirations and motivation for staying on in education and training beyond 16. Doesn't that make you feel good?!

The co-ordinator for North London is PEARL DARKO, herself a graduate of LSE, who will be plugging the scheme in person when she drops in on some lectures at the beginning of term. She will be organising briefing sessions and arranging contacts with schools. If you miss her spiel, and want more details... or an invitation to talk it through over a glass of sherry (also funded by BP), the anchor-man at the LSE end is the undersigned (Maths, Room S468)... so drop by.

### LEHMAN BROTHERS INTERNATIONAL

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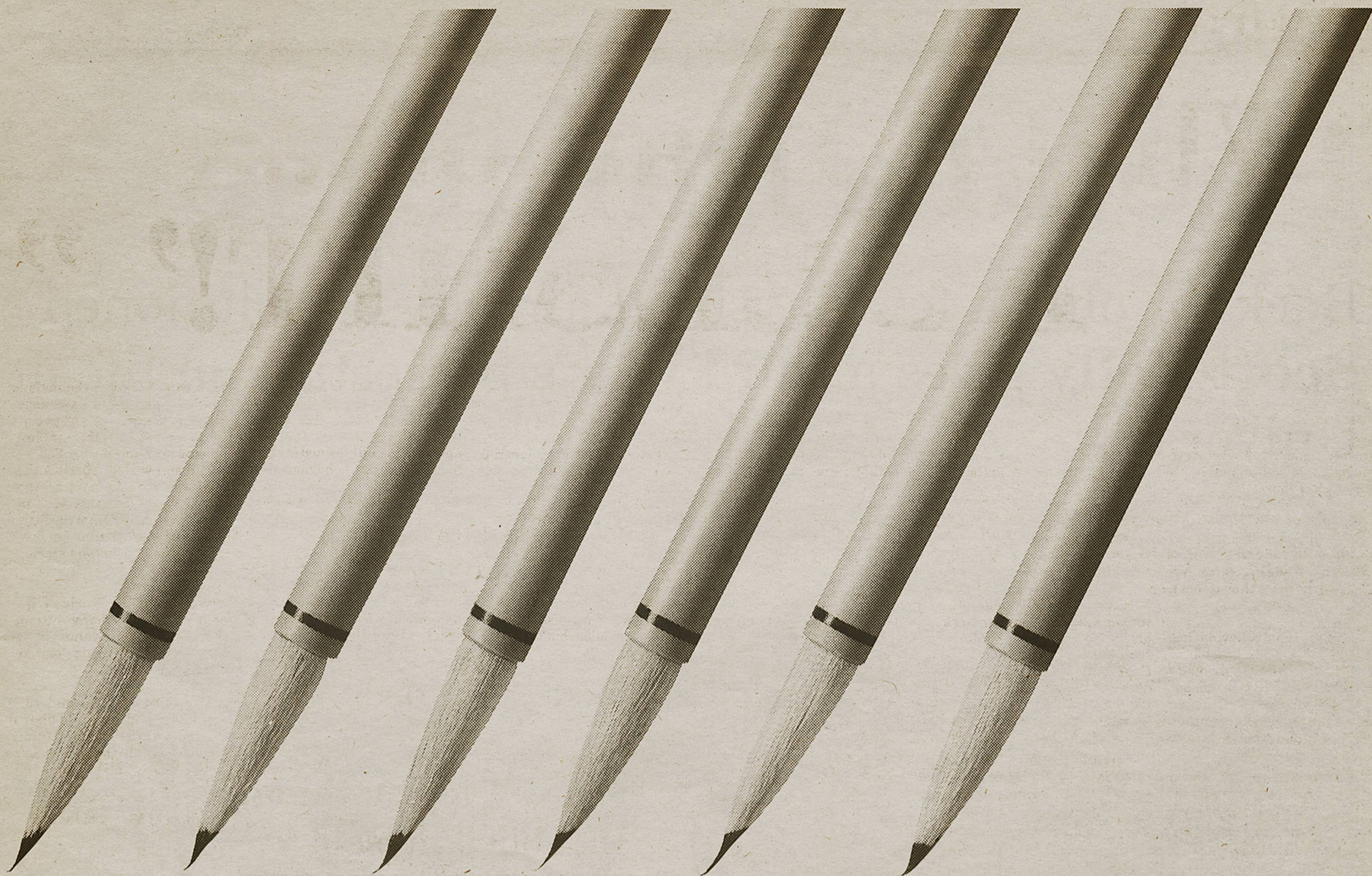
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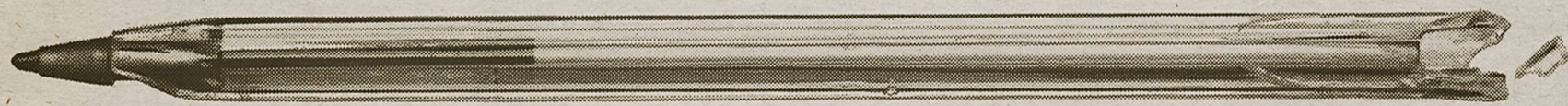
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**The Daily Telegraph**

# Pseud's Paradise

Back for only a few days and already dissolutioned **Scott Kelly** gives a third year's perspective on life at University.

So here we are at the beginning of a new year, hopes and spirits are high. The university is full of the fresh faces of young first years about to take their first tentative steps along the road to enlightenment. Social and academic success beckons as a future of infinite possibility and prospects opens up ahead of us.

This is what certain unscrupulous people would like you to believe but the truth is far more sinister. I've only arrived back at college in the last few days and already cracks are beginning to appear behind the facade of the old building's new entrance.

I spent the first weeks of my vacation on what is innocently described as an inter-railing holiday gaining a far deeper understanding of what exactly is meant by the term body odour. Crushed inside a train compartment

surrounded by backpacks and grim faces, I actually began to miss the LSE and the delights that the library held in prospect.

Back home I used the opportunity to do whatever I wanted to do (nothing) safe in the knowledge that there would be plenty of time to do something once the new term began. However my dreams of the many wonders of student life were nothing more than the most unlikely moments in the constant fantasy that surrounds an inveterate day dreamer.

The LSE is a pseud's paradise. It's full of people pretending to be what they're not or hoping to become something they never will be. Houghton Street brims with various two-dimensional stereotypes: wannabe yuppies, wannabe party

Please see **Pseud**, page 7



Photo: Steve East

## An American Student in London

What is it really like for an American student when he first arrives in London? **Joe Lavin** writes about his first impressions of life at the LSE.

Being an American at LSE has not been a lonely experience. Somehow, I thought it would be. I had expected to be totally immersed in a foreign culture that conveniently spoke the same language as I.

Yes, I was going to broaden my horizons, expand my sights, and do all those other things that one does when he studies abroad. It's not that I dislike Americans. It's just that I expected to be meeting approximately the same number of Americans as Neil Armstrong did on the moon.

It seems though that Neil has been here before and his American flag has already been planted firmly within the cobblestones of LSE. Everywhere I venture, there's an American. I feel like I'm at a Halloween party, and everyone came dressed American.

On those few occasions when I do meet British

people, I am overjoyed. It seems to be such a novelty, but sadly conversations between Americans and the British tend to go something like this:

**AMERICAN:** So like where are you from?

**ACTUAL BRITISH STUDENT:** York.

**AMERICAN:** Oh, sweet! You're from New York. Which borough?

**ACTUAL BRITISH STUDENT:** No, from York.

**AMERICAN:** Oh, yeah, York. Where in the States is that?

**ACTUAL BRITISH STUDENT:** No, York, England.

**AMERICAN:** Really, you're an actual British student. Wow. That's really cool.

**ACTUAL BRITISH STUDENT:** Well, no. Actually, I'm American. You see, the writer couldn't find any actual British students, so he hired me to do the part instead. I'm from Chicago.

**AMERICAN:** Oh, really.

**I can usually sense a groan creeping through their throats as I announce that I'm American. There is this quick expression of "Oh, no! Not another one!" that flashes across their face right before they utter, "Yes, I could tell by the accent."**

My cat Muffy used to live in Chicago. Do you know her?

It's not that Americans are stupid. We've just been talking to other Americans all our lives, and now that we've landed at the LSE, we're still talking to them. That's what we do.

To be truthful, I have met some British students. In fact, many members of this paper's staff are British, and they gave me free food, so I

can't complain. But whenever I'm talking to this minority, I always feel guilty. Most are polite, but I can usually sense a groan creeping through their throats as I announce that I'm American. There is this quick expression of "Oh, no! Not another one!" that flashes across their face right before they utter, "Yes, I could tell by the accent."

This, by the way, is very disconcerting to an Ameri-

can. We, after all, have grown up with quite an ego, firmly convinced that we're number one. We even have the audacity to believe that we have no accents and that it's the people with the same name as the language who have the accents. We also think you drive on the wrong side of the road, but that's another story.

I don't intend to bitch, whine, moan, and complain the whole time, even though

I'm having fun doing so. It is nice to be attending an international school. I've met people from all over the world — Japan, Cyprus, Germany, Hong Kong, Columbia, and oh yes England. You start to wonder why there is no British Students Society for the few British people who have decided to attend the LSE.

Of course, the problem is that the only people showing up would be Americans. All the wise English students would probably skip it to go to the pub, which is precisely where the Americans would need to go after a couple hours discussing British culture with representatives of the entire Ivy League.

And perhaps I've stumbled upon it — the pub. Maybe that's where all the British are hanging out. It's worth a try. In fact, I think I might check it out now, as someone with a New York Yankees cap is quickly approaching me. I didn't feel like finishing this article anyway.

**Pseud**, from page 6

animals, wannabe radical politicians and, worst of all, wannabe students. In the 1980s the phrase fashion victim came into common use, well if there is such a thing as a fashion victim there is surely a student victim as well. In the '60s they sat in their drab rooms listening to Leonard Cohen, in the '80s they wept along to the Smiths, but essentially the student victim hasn't changed. They wear black to show that they're depressed and the reason they're depressed is always somebody else's fault, usually the governments.

The LSE gives the various pseuds a perfect opportunity to appear as they would wish to be perceived. The crowds

**The LSE is a pseud's paradise. It's full of people pretending to be what they're not or hoping to become something they never will be.**

and the hectic nature of the school allows the pseud to constantly move around never pausing long enough to found out for what he or she really is. They can speak in easily digestible sound bites meaning about as much as the average speech by Dan Quayle.

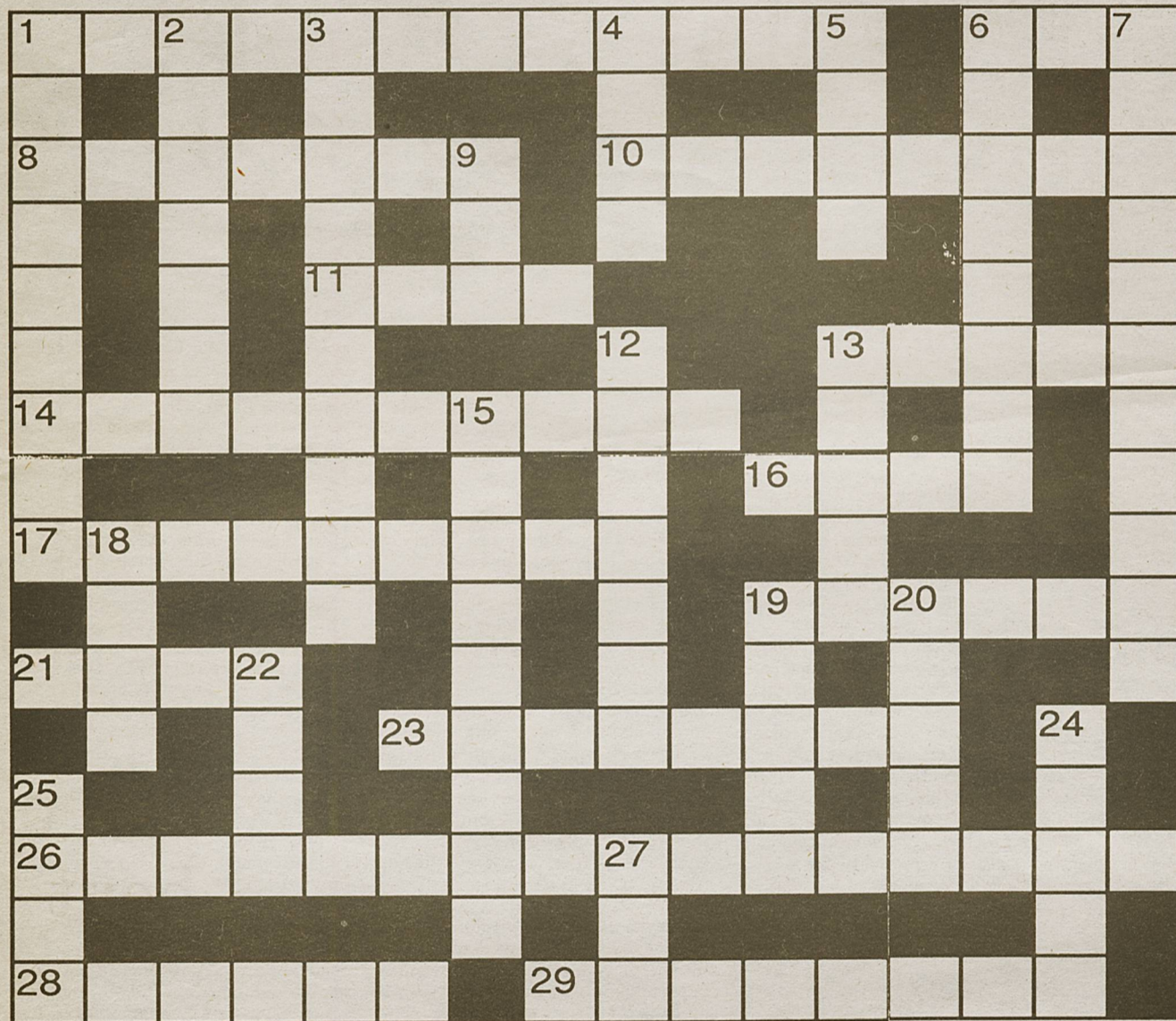
When I'm away from the

school, the constant company of others can appear enticing during my weaker moments, but I'm now coming to realize that I might well be something of an outsider. The term started promisingly enough with freshers fair but among the hustle and bustle reminiscent of Southend Market on a Sat-

urday afternoon it soon became apparent that the fresh intake of the new year shared the bad habits of the old. Any confusion or bewilderment was hidden behind the disdained glance and the annoying smirk as everybody tried to impress everybody else. By Carr-Saunders party on the first Friday the real pretending had begun. There wasn't even the need for pointless conversation above the racket of the repetitive beat.

Students love to wear badges and T-shirts with simple statements or images easily understood by the casual observer. The reason for this is clear enough: it's easier to be what you think others want you to be than to be yourself.

# In the Movies



**Across**

- 1. Rik Mayall creates the havoc, Phoebe Cates gets the blame (4,4,4)
- 6. (see 28 Across)
- 8 & 22d. Ken Russell's Sci-Fi journey through William Hurt's mind (7,6)
- 10. Japanese Samurai film remade as a Western starring Paul Newman (8)
- 11. '\_\_\_ of Living Dangerously' (4)
- 13 & 5d. Screenwriter of the James Bond film 'You Only Live Twice' (5,4)
- 14 & 12d. Audie Murphy Film from 1951 in which he played a coward fighting ion the US Civil War (3,5,2,7)
- 16. 'The Big \_\_\_'; '\_\_\_ Rider'

- 17. 1985 Western starring Clint Eastwood as an avenging angel (4,5)
- 19. "The Big \_\_\_": a classic Tom & Jerry cartoon (6)
- 21. 1975 Amity Island found life rather unappetizing (4)
- 23. (see 25 Down)
- 26. Woody Allen's film debut with a neat soundtrack by Tom Jones (5,3,8)
- 28 & 6a. Laurel & Hardy decided to become sailors (4,2,3)
- 29. Classic Sci-Fi Tv series which eventually reached the big screen in 1978 (4,4)

**Down**

- 1. Christopher Reeve and Michael Caine try to commit the perfect murder by killing Dyan Cannon (who can blame them) (5,4)
- 2. 'High Noon' in space starring Sean Connery (7)
- 3. "Go ahead punk, make my day" (5,5)
- 4. John \_\_\_, probably the greatest director of westerns ever (4)
- 5. (see 13 Across)
- 6. (see 27 Down)
- 7. Western with a Heroine, made in 1935 & remade in 1985 (6,6)
- 9. Thriller starring Dennis Quaid from '87 (1,1,1)
- 12. (see 14 Across)
- 13. "\_\_\_ For The Sky" starring Kenneth Moore

- (5)
- 15. Marlon Brando, James Caan, Al Pacino and Andy Garcia (9)
- 18. Arkin or Alda (4)
- 19. Brat-pack film from '85 starring Rob Lowe and Andrew McCarthy as two private school-boys in America (5)
- 20. "\_\_\_ Mine"; "Sleeping With The \_\_\_" (5)
- 22. (see 8 Across)
- 24. Where did that creature come from again? (5)
- 25 & 23a. "\_\_\_ \_\_\_" "\_\_\_ Frankenstein" starring Michael Landon (1,3,1,7)
- 27 & 6d. Stephen King Horror about dead animals (3,8)

compiled by Neil

# diary

The second week of term and I'm already running out of things to put in the diary, surely there must be more going on? So if you want to see more than just an empty column appearing on this page of the Beaver each week please put any information about events organized by societies in which you are involved in the Campus tray in the Beaver office E197. However there are still plenty of interesting events taking place around the LSE during the week.

**On Monday the 14th** there's the Strongbow Cider Pub Quiz in the Three Tuns. If Previous Three Tuns' pub quiz nights are anything to go by I would give up any hope of winning, however if the prizes have anything to do with Strongbow that's probably a good thing. The LSE Malaysia and Singapore society are also holding a disco at the Limelight club on Shaftesbury Avenue. Dress must be smart but casual and tickets cost £4 for members and £5 for non-members.

**Tuesday the 15th** is French day. The excitement starts on the top floor of the Cafe at 1pm when Lynn Holland sings Edith Piaf, whether or not she will sing more than just these two words remains to be seen. At 6:30 pm two french films are being shown in the Old Theatre. The first is 'Trop belle par toi' starring Gerald Depardieu and the woman in the Channel ads. The second offering is the excellent thriller 'M. Hire'. The LSE Music Soc is also holding its first choir rehearsal on Tuesday. The History Soc presents 'Henry the 8th Renaissance Prince after all?' A talk by Dr D. Starkey in room A506 at 6 p.m.

**On Wednesday** apparently nothing is happening whatsoever.

**On Thursday** 'The Wheel' a band I have never heard of (which is probably a recommendation) are playing in the Tuns and it's absolutely free folks.

An Amnesty International benefit takes place on **Friday the 18th** it features 'a live Salsa band' but I Don't have any other details.

Another 70's disco takes place in the Quad on **Saturday** if you go it's your problem.

Around the LSE I've spotted posters asking if one is interested in parachute jumping from 2,000 feet. It might be a bit early in the term for you to feel the urge to jump from a great height but if you do you can call John on 071-667-7489.

Anyone interested in writing for the Campus section of the Beaver can see me between 12 and 1 on a Tuesday in E197.

# India- A View From The West

Following her visit this summer, Sandrine Bretonniere gives a personal account of her perceptions on India, foreseeing possible giant economic status for the country.

Some countries or regions fascinate Westerners- the mysterious "exotism", the unknown (or distorted vision of a) culture and its people exert a powerful attraction. India is one such place, particularly for the English (no need to expound on that).

I travelled through India during the summer with a couple of friends. We bought a train pass, malaria pills and a guide. We had been warned of the particular character of the country and its people. The trip? A combination of shocks, wonders (the sites, of course), partial frustration, stress, and fun. Nothing that unusual, really, for this type of travel. But the impression I left with was definitely different from other trips in the Third World.

As one would expect India is a crowded place. Yes, the cities are human anthills; yes, there are a great deal of very poor people; yes, there is corruption. But, no - it is not quite like any other third world country.

What makes the difference is the impermeability of the Indian culture, and by this I mean the strong nationalist grip the State maintains on the country. Outside influence has been banned in India since Independence. Legally, it has only been restricted. Until recently, a foreigner could thus only hold 49% of an Indian company.

Then again, Coca-Cola and IBM were asked to leave in 1977-8. But the absence of outside interference is also noticeable in the social sphere. There are practically no foreign films or music in India. What I found extraordinary, in comparison to other developing nations, is the actual lack of demand for these foreign products. People are quite happy with Indian films and Indian sex symbols- very different to countries like the Philippines or Mexico, or even Russia. The cultural shock is

therefore complete; absolutely everything is "made in India", from the sink to the car to the porno film. For a country composed of numerous foreign influences this sealing off is rather ironic. Actually, the country is far from being homogeneous. The cultural divide between the North and South is quite stunning, for instance.

North Indians are quite aggressive and don't care very much for women as equals (my very specific perception)- foreigners are looked upon as intruders and treated correspondingly. They are only valued in monetary terms (by how much can we rip them off?!). I certainly did not feel at ease.

Harsh faces are replaced by smiles and an inexhaustible eagerness to talk in the south. Also, the medium of communication is English since most people don't speak Hindi. Here at least, the foreigner is on the same footing as the North Indian (although that does not necessarily mean a good one!).

India also suffers religious divisions. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists: you name it, they are all represented, and generally throughout the country. They don't all live harmoniously, as violently exposed by the bloody fighting in both Kashmir and, to a lesser extent, in the Punjab.

History can recall the magnificence of the Indian kingdom, vestiges of which are still demonstrated. Pride certainly has not been damaged by centuries of foreign rule- on the contrary. Moreover, each region has its own source of pride: the Mogul Taj Mahal and other sites in the North; the Hindu temples in the South; the mixed culture in Kerala and Goa or the unique and fascinating Bombay with the largest film industry in the world.



Photo: Sandrine Bretonniere

Faced with the foreigner, the Indian identity consolidates, crystallises. Who are we foreigners, whether Westerners or Chinese, to teach India? It's not an unwelcoming country, far from it, but there is an impalpable element of aloofness among the people. I mean, let's face it- in a lot of places the Westerner is seen as a curiosity, something exotic worth catching and examining for a while. In India the curiosity is mainly of a physical nature. Blond hair and blue eyes, and exposed legs and arms are certainly interesting - especially in the predominantly Muslim influenced Northern region where people are not interested in knowing where the 'intruder' is from, or what he is like. This very visible indifference from most people is hard to cope with. The validity of concepts commonly encountered in the West, and elsewhere, are silently ques-

tioned. Eurocentrism? American hegemony? These ideas are quickly put into perspective. After all, India is one of the founders of the non-aligned movement.

This amazing self confidence is probably a key to the future. India is changing. It needs to for economic survival. Lack of competition, has put some sectors of industry, the car industry for example, under virtual anaesthesia. The new Government, in its July budget, has thus allowed foreigners to own 51% of companies operating in India. That measure should attract foreign companies- labour is cheap and the home market is huge. The country is opening up. The Indian Government has asked and was granted loans from the IMF, the World Bank and the US, Germany, France, Japan and the UK. This reflects a basic change in attitude- the Government is now willing to ask for financial help from outside to introduce new economic measures. From the foreign business point of view, this represents the opening up of a gigantic market. Converging interests are a sound basis for collaboration.

Attitudes remain to be changed but the entrepreneurial spirit of Indians abroad can lead one to think the possibilities are enormous. The political system, known as the biggest democracy in the world, suffers from a paralysing bureaucracy (a combination of Mogul and British legacies). Governing is a difficult business, and it is prone to large vested interests.

Democracy makes it difficult for politicians to implement vital economic reforms which have unpopular short term effects for the great majority of the population. For instance, a restructuring of the car industry will necessarily involve greater mechanisation, and therefore temporary structural unemployment. In the past, opposition parties would have taken advantage of people's dissatisfaction and offered to reverse the policies to get into office. Apparently, there is a new awareness among the intelligentsia and party leaders- reforms are seen as unavoidable, a necessary evil. Considering

the foreign aid, and this new, but fragile consensus, it seems reforms do have a better chance of being carried through.

There is yet another obstacle to progress. One very noticeable feature of India is the omnipresence of these Central Authorities. Interestingly, they are never referred to as the 'State' but rather the 'Government'. This is a translation of the very personal and unfortunately nepotist nature of the ruling strata. One feels straight away the relation with the Soviet system of government.

But people are rather optimistic about the new reforms. I personally wonder how cooperation with "outsiders" will work out! Culturally, I am convinced India will remain self sufficient. Economically, exchanges can only prove beneficial for all and will be a boost for India. Socially, problems are immense, starting with poverty and the seemingly eternal caste system. Regarding the conflicts involving minorities and different religions; more autonomy, less state control in the private sphere as, indeed, in the public sphere might be a solution.

India's social and political problems are much publicised, but having realised the importance for its economy of the international network - self sufficiency at all costs has become synonymous with bankruptcy - changes, in my opinion, are definitely on the agenda.

Many predict an increasingly dominant economic and political position for the East in the future. In which case, I'll bet this rise will not just centre on Japan and the small economic miracles of Asia, and that China, customarily pointed out as the unpredictable giant will face competition from a democratic India.



Photo: Sandrine Bretonniere



# The Beaver

Is all the promotion of County Hall as a new site for the school a doomed exercise? How can the school pretend to have any faith in the project if they spend half a million pounds on superficial refurbishment of the Old Building over the summer? One wonders if the school knows something the students don't.

This vast sum of money came from the schools' budget which they set aside for building. A budget which is raised via student fees and the government university grant.

No one at the LSE would wish to see the it looking shabby and its true the Old Building is mostly likely to be the first sight for a visitor but the previous decor was, as all students spoken to agree; perfectly adequate.

It was not in particularly poor condition and what's more it was functional. Now the new "improvements" mean that students can not eat or drink in the old theatre, a major incumbrance for students who use up their lunch hour to go to UGMs or lunchtime lectures. Furthermore, students have been forbidden from setting up stalls outside the Old Building for fear that they will damage the paintwork!

Is the school more concerned about the appearance of a building than the students accommodated therein? The shiny new exterior even cynically stops by the time you reach the second floor. What kind of visitors are the school concerned about anyway if they are likely to be more impressed by flower arrangements and polished wood panelling than the school's academic reputation?

The school should set aside money for the maintenance of the buildings but it would be far better if they did so with a view to the safety and well-being of the students and staff than the vanity of the powers that be. It is hard for them to argue that this is already the case when the half million spent did nothing to improve disabled access around the school.

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## THE CASE FOR:

Last week we submitted a motion to the Union General Meeting order paper calling on this Students' Union to disaffiliate from the National Union of Students London Area.

First of all, let's be clear about what NUS London is. NUS London is a confederation of Students' Unions in London, all of which are also members of NUS. Although it is part of the structure of NUS National, it plays a very different role.

Whereas NUS provides a range of services - from cheap booze to legal advice, consultancy to welfare support - NUS London's sole purpose is to coordinate and help initiate the political campaigns of London's higher and further education colleges.

Therefore, disaffiliating from NUS London would have no implications for our membership of the National Union of Students, the University of London Union (ULU), or any other organisation.

Our proposal to disaffiliate, which is supported by a majority of members on the Student's Union executive, is based on two related reasons. First, the Students' Union is facing a budget deficit of £28,000 this year.

Because a vacant post - that of General Manager - was finally filled this summer, the structural deficit which existed for two years under previous Senior Treasurers is now a very real one. This Union has to stop looking at the short-term, and to begin considering the long-term implications of its budget.

We are therefore faced with a situation where the UGM will need to cut some expenditures, in order to preserve the core services which are at the heart of the Union. Compared to other expenditures the £2,000 (plus conference fees) which NUS London costs is not such an investment in the future.

Which brings us to the second reason.

NUS London does not provide a tangible benefit for the students. Sure, they campaign on issues which are important to Student's Unions. However, most of the time, NUS London is divided into warring factions, arguing whether to vote for Socialist Organisers or Socialist Workers as their leaders. Their demonstrations end up as fights with the police.

NUS London conferences, as many past LSE delegates will testify, are a waste of time. Their work is often, in other words, counterproductive. Campaigns which target the outside world are useful, and we should continue affiliating to organisations which fight racism, homophobia and sexual harassment. Being a member of NUS London is not the most effective way of doing that.

We would like this Union to continue to campaign on the issues highlighted by NUS London. We continue to be firm supporters of NUS National - other colleges, including King's, are members of NUS but not of NUS London. It is our job to ensure that the Union budget is spent responsibly.

We asked the President of NUS, Stephen Twigg last week whether he could give us one good reason not to disaffiliate. He admitted that he was hard put. "Solidarity with Further Education Colleges", he said. Of course there is a need for solidarity, and we actively demonstrate it as a Union by being affiliated to NUS. Membership of NUS London is harder to justify.

By **Michiel van Hulten**, General Secretary and **Toby Johnson**, Senior Treasurer

## THE CASE

### AGAINST:

To begin with I think it is worth stating the views of NUS nationally. In a letter to all London Student Unions, the National President Stephen Twigg says the following,

Union we are seen as vital to the effectiveness of those campaigns. Not only that, but you have an influence through:

Democracy - this term there are four conferences on specific areas of our work, including a

# NUS London: to disaffiliate or not to disaffiliate...

"NUS London, along with the other Area organisations plays a vital role in the work of the National Union of Students ... (it) should therefore be seen as an integral part of, rather than separate from, the National Union..."

"NUS London, the largest of the area organisations, has a massive task in promoting and defending the interests of London students and students' unions. It needs your support. I would therefore urge you to affiliate to NUS London Area and to get involved in its activities."

How does NUS London respond to this "massive task"? The service we provide to London students' unions includes:

Campaigns - NUS London is working closely with NUS on the Target 70 Campaign, designed to put pressure on the political parties to properly fund education. The march against student poverty on 23rd October is very much a part of that campaign and is being promoted by NUS and supported by ULU and AUT London Region.

We provide a London perspective on all NUS campaigns and given the workload of the National

London wide Conference on 23rd/24th November. If LSE is affiliated it can have an input into London campaigns. It can also get:

Support - from the London student movement. When PNL wanted support for their protest against Hackney Council's refusal to pay grants on time, NUS London sent information to every college in London.

Aside from these practical ways of representing London students, NUS London Services, its commercial wing which will provide everything from cheap printing to management consultancy work.

We are the only NUS area to offer such a service, which will enable your SU to save money and provide benefits for you.

All of the work that NUS London Area does for you and your Union costs only about 50p per full-time student per year. Spend your 50p wisely, vote against Disaffiliation on 17th October and support the march on 23rd October.

By **Kevin Blowe**, NUS London Convener

## Post Haste

Letters due to E197, by hand or internal mail, by 3 p.m. Thursday

## SCHAPIRO CLUB

We are writing to correct the misconceptions (highlighted in the tongue-in-cheek write up in the LSESU handbook) held by some members of staff and student body regarding the Schapiro Club.

Rather than fearing to tarnish the "international reputation" of the government department, the Schapiro Club has supplied and will continue to supply many opportunities where leading department figures are open to challenge and criticism: what the LSESU Mag has missed is that, so far, the challenges have not succeeded - is this to be

considered a fault or an asset?

On the issue of our "exclusive membership", to date our society has 91 members from across the student body, representing many different departments. This is a situation which we aim to maintain and a privilege for which we competed at fresher's fair. Thus, we do not exclude, but surely those who denounce us, without full knowledge, do.

For those who are interested in what the Schapiro club is about: in brief, we are a politically unbiased society designed to make politics accessible to all; we do not impose party propaganda (from any party) on our members, nor do we concern ourselves solely with modern politics, arranging debates on the history of political thought.

Finally, as regards the claim that leadership of the club is carried out by those who wish to do a masters, but whose grades may not

warrant it ... please do not underestimate our machiavellian instincts - we are aiming for the PhD courses!

**Sophie Green** and **Bridget Edminson**

## FOR THE RECORD

I enjoyed reading your editorial last week - outspoken as usual. May I just pick up on a few of the points you raise in it?

First of all, the DSG and the Greens never had an "electoral pact" at the last SU elections. The Chair of the Greens, Tim Rayner, wrote to the Beaver announcing his group's retirement from active politics. He implied support for the DSG, but this was an unilateral move, not the result of discussion or negotiation.

Second, the DSG never said it wants to focus only on student issues. Some of our members have been actively

involved in outside campaigns, and the DSG has worked closely with Charter 88 in the last year to highlight constitutional issues.

As far as the honorary presidency is concerned - this year we nominated John McCarthy (we withdrew the nomination only when we discovered the Tories had already done so), and two years ago I went in TV in a panel discussion to defend the election of Winston Silcott.

Finally, you state that the DSG "benefited more from the general disillusionment with Labour than any profile they themselves displayed". If this is to be true, disillusionment must have been very great indeed. We achieved a lot over the last year - improved supervision for research students, centralised hall admissions, exchanges to Eastern Europe, the studentship fund - and will continue to deliver.

**Michiel van Hulten**, SU General Secretary

# Bring The Noise

Singles reviewed by Neil.

**Single Of The Week**  
**Intastella: Century**  
**(MCA)**

This is an awesome record. It contains everything that's needed to make a hit record. A pounding bassline, various jangly guitar breaks, a good drum beat and a singer with a decent voice. All it needs now is a "Top of the Pops" appearance with Stevie Wonder driving a car across the U.S. of A. This is an Indie-dance crossover single if ever I heard one. It'll probably be big in the clubs before it enters the chart but once it does its likely to stay there for some time. The B-side, 'Strawberry Jam', is not bad either. Stella, Love Goddess of the future, probly.

**Mega City Four: Words That Say (Big Life)**

Once upon a time, Big Life records only had one band who was half decent and that was the Soup Dragons when they sounded like a cross between the Buzzcocks and the Monkees with a bit of The Who thrown in for good measure.

Then they discovered De La Soul and reinvented themselves as an Indie Dance label. Nowadays, the Mega's are probably Big Life's only non-dance act. Falling into the shadow of their one time gigging partners Neds Atomic Dustbin, the Megs have released this record in the hope of appearing on The Chart Show. Unfortunately, they've cocked things up a bit. 'Words That Say' is rather a frustrating piece of work. It promises to burst into life at any moment but never does. What it really needs is a shot of adrenalin to get things moving then it would be a bloody master piece. 'Untouchable', however, is excellent. The Megs appeared to have shoved a firework up it's behind and then sat back and watched it run riot. The B-side is exactly the same but in reverse. 'Lipsar' runs at 100mph while 'Mansion' trots along at about 25 mph. Definitely a game of two halves.

**The 25th of May: What's Going On (Arista)**

Give me a break. Three different mixes of the SAME song on one twelve inch! What makes it more remarkable is that they all sound exactly the same. Fortunately, the song ain't that bad. But then again, it's nothing new. The relentless drum machine and Italian piano are not exactly new to the world of popular music but the subject matter ("the hypocrisy and viciousness that homeless people are subjected to") is. Far better than Phil Collins' attempts to help the homeless but because of their political stance it's unlikely to win any friends at

Radio One.

**Ariel: Rollercoaster/ Mustn't Grumble (deConstruction)**

According to the press release, Ariel are named after "a spirit of the air in Shakespeare's Midsummer's Nights Dream". 0/10 for English Lit guys, because Ariel appears in 'The Tempest'. Quibble over. 'Rollercoaster' is rather a jolly little number. Although they refused to be branded into anyone category ("Our Music is in the spirit of Ibiza!!!!!!") this 'Knees Up Mother Brown' mix is clearly an Indie-dance crossover single in the St Etienne vein. A charmingly light ditty, it probably won't chart, because life's a bitch. It never-the-less remains as soft and fluffy as an infamous brand of washing powder whose name I cannot seem to recall. C'est la Vie.

**Single of the Week by an Overrated band**  
**Carter USM : After The Watershed (Chrystalis)**

I can never understand why certain people rave on about Carter. They're not THAT good. True, 'Sheriff Fatman' was an excellent record but that's about it. Their other singles were way below decent standards and seemed to be revamped versions of old Halfman Halfbiscuit numbers, especially 'Rubbish' and 'Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere'. Even their attempts at silly cover versions wore thin after a while. Anybody who covers a Pet Shop Boys record MUST be sad. Fortunately, though, they've stopped the rot with this single. They pull no punches in dealing with the subject of child abuse but for me the highlight must be the line "Goodbye Ruby Tuesday/ Come on home you silly cow". Even the version of the Inspiral Carpets' "This Is How It Feels" is decent. This is a sound record. Number One for fourteen weeks, probably

**Pretentious Single of the Week**  
**PM Dawn : Paper Doll (Gee St)**

"Imagine yourself as a cloud in the sky/You pass me by/And I blow a kiss"- Oh, piss off. Anybody who samples an ancient Spandau Ballet record in order to get into the Top Ten really needs to get a life and, furthermore, have a bath. This is a SAD record. These two really need to listen to Birdland once in a while so that they realise that pop music isn't for intellectuals. There is no room for pretention and false intellect in the world of Kylie and Jason. This sort of stuff went out with Led Zepplin. I hon-

estly can't stand these two. If you want a decent dance record by the Definition of Sound's debut album, it's much better than this load of old twiddle.

**Comeback Single of the Week**

**Voice of the Beehive: I Think I Love You (London)**

Ah, The Partridge Family. I used to watch them on 'Night Network' (sniff). The band that gave birth to David Cassidy, Susan Dey and Danny Boniface (who grew up to become a sexual pervert) as given new life to Voice of the Beehive. For some unexplained reason, I like the Beehives. Their debut album, 'Let It Bee', was a lesson in how to write jolly little pop songs with a nice melody, three verses and a chorus. Their new album is just the same and this track is excellent. It begins nice and innocently but then bursts into the chorus at a tremendous speed to prove that the Beehives can cover songs just as well as they can write them.

**Awful Single of the Week**

**Don McClean: American Pie (EMI)**

Don once wrote a song about Vincent Van Gough called 'Vincent'. Now you know why he cut of his ear. Follow his advice and cut off your ears before you hear this truly awful record.

**Greatest Song Ever**  
**Bryan Adams: (Everything I Do) I Do It For You (A & M)**

Every time I hear this record I have a orgasm. This is such a great record, words cannot describe it. Bryan must be one of the most talented people around today. It'll probably be Number One for Fourteen weeks. In fact, it already has. Asta la vista, baby.

**Last Single of the Week**  
**Lush: Black Spring EP (4AD)**

Lush. There's nothing much really to say about Lush except guitarist Emma once murdered her pet rabbit by accident and that drummer Chris frequently suffers from piles. Plus they support Tottenham. But hey, we all have our crosses to bear. Miki's not bad looking, though. The single ain't bad either. I would think of something funny to say about the bassist Steve, but I can't. Oh well. The new ABBA? Nah, I can't see it somehow. Can you imagine Jimmy Somerville singing a Lush track? Doesn't bear thinking about really. No harm in it, though.

# The Sound Of Confusion

The End are blowing in the wind

The sleeve of this album looks like a comic version of a Napalm Death cover. Flip over the cover and you'll find a picture on the back. They look like Loop, ie long-haired scruffy leather jacketed grebos. They're called The End. Erm, the Doors had a song called 'The End'. 'Gusto' is a crapname for an album though. It sounds like it should be a Telstar compilation of Heavy Metal tracks all given a dance remix.

The End can play, that much is for sure. They display here a wide variety of styles and if I was going to start this review by saying "This record reminds me of....." I would need more than one music page. Here's a few names in any case; Inspiral Carpets, Prince, Echo & the Bunnymen,

Iggy and the Stooges, and the Wonderstuff.

Sound Interesting so far? Well its not. The problem is that this band lacks any individual identity. It doesn't know what music it wants to make. They seem to have made an album simply because they know how to play music, but then the same could be said for Dire Straits. Some musicians are able to mix styles to come up with something uniquely their own but this album never gets past the stage of mixing styles. Essentially it sounds like a bunch of skilled session musicians playing pub rock, ie there's not a lot of inspiration in these songs or in Rook Randle's voice. 'City of Lost Souls', for example, sounds like a title Fields of the Nephilim

would have rejected and that's the problem, everything here sounds like it's second hand.

'Weapon' is an L.A. rock band playing what I think could be called sexist trash, though I'm not really sure (by this time I was too bored to care). Sometimes Randle's voice even takes those little turns in the middle of a note like all rock singers are supposed to. It really is yawning stuff.

All this said, I'm sure some people out there might like this. These are the same people who might like the "Rock" record Aled Jones has made in an attempt to release himself from his choral chains (It's true, I've heard the tapes)

Justin Harper



The End is near. (Well, almost)

# Urban Mayhem

Urban Dance Squad :Life 'N Perspectives of a Genuine Crossover

There are two things that you'll immediately notice about this album; a) It's not really a genuine crossover and b) It's not really a dance album either. The main problem is that it is too diverse in its musical content to please everyone. No matter how hard one tries, you cannot record a heavy metal-Indie-dance-c & w-world music album without there being some major faults. A brave attempt it may be, but it never quite reaches the mark.

The faults of this album lies within the band itself. As they strive to create a "Kaleidoscope" of musical styles they seem to lose the plot half way through each song and each band member goes his

own way. The singer, "Rude-boy Remington", is a prime example of this. He raps well enough, but seems to break into singing the words when ever he feels like it, as if he's trying to be the next James from EMF. The fact that the band produced themselves on this album is evident. There is no real coercion between each track and the whole album lacks continuity.

There are, however, some redeeming features on this album. 'Routine' is a fine attempt and probably the best track on the album. It sounds remarkably like the Stone Roses' 'Bye, Bye, Badman' and seems out of place with the rest of the album. Other highlights include the Defini-

tion of Sound-esque 'Thru the Eyes of Jason' and 'For the Plasters', which has a distinctly World Music edge. But in the long run these three tracks are not enough to save the album from the confused mess that it is.

Compared with more successful crossover albums, such as EMF's 'Schubert Dip' and De La Soul's 'Three Feet High And Rising', it begins fade. One feels that if they stuck to just one style instead attempting to appeal to everyone, they might have recorded a half decent album. Instead, its just a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth.

Neil A.

# Holy Doubts Wholly Overcome

The Band of Holy Joy/ Faith  
Over Reason/ The Great Divide  
New Cross Venue

If the Band of Holy Joy are headlining, then the Great Divide must be supporting. They've still got the one called "Yahoo", and the one introduced as being "All about sex ...", and they're still moderately good. The singer tries desperately to become a star overnight by jumping around, hanging off things (ooer, missus), throwing the mike stand around and playing the spoilt brat. He has a few problems though: one) he's wearing a "Sky" shirt and striped shorts, two) he's not quite pretty enough, and three) he grins too much. Its a well known fact that you can't be a sex symbol if you grin. That's why Marti Pel-low and Paul McCartney will forever be the cute mopheads who wrote silly ballads for teenage consumption. Some believe he's trying to be the next Miles Hunt and the fact they sound quite like the Wonderstuff doesn't exactly help. Who Knows? Give them a couple of tartan waist-jackets and they might begin writing songs like "Size of a Cow". But this might not be a good idea in the long run. One Miles

Hunt is enough thank you (Is that rhyming slang? - Cockney Ed.)

To be honest, apart from 'Can't Be Sure', I've never really liked the Sundays and so Faith Over Reason, who seem to be a pale imitation of Harriet's band, did not inspire me at all. I therefore switched off (Your fired - Ed.) Oh well, that's music for you!

I was already composing the Band of Holy Joy piece before they came on. I was just going to say "Absolutely Magnificent" and left it at that, with just a plea for everyone to buy their stuff. However, for the first hour I began to have my doubts. Basically, they were not very good tonight. Why? Why are they worrying me like this and putting my faith on the line? I'd sooner have believed that the world is flat and Neds Atomic Wotsits to be talented than believe that the BOHJ were not living up to expectations.

There are a couple of factors I can put my finger on. For a start, Karel, the man who never smiles but who

plays the bongos quite well, has left and doesn't seem to have been replaced, which can't be a good thing. Secondly, the bass player has suddenly taken it into his head to become a mad axe guitar hero, strutting about the stage and thrusting his bass everywhere. He failed to see the all-important fallacy in this though: he's a bass player. He cannot become an axe-wielding mutha like Jimi Hendrix. You'll look like a pratt.

Its not really that Johnny Brown and the lads are particularly bad tonight its just that they were pretty average instead of being their usual superb and stunning selves.

Then suddenly, like the most unexpected summer rain storm, they rediscovered their old magic with a collection of new songs. If only my favourite football team could make such a comeback on a Saturday afternoon when they're 5-0 down with only five minutes to play.

The Band of Holy Joy. You know it makes sense.

David Price

# Wanted

Fancy writing a review of an album or a gig? If so, contact Neil or Justin in Room E197

# Noise Annoys

Music is shit. I believe this was the title of Ned's Atomic Dustbin's first E.P. At least I think it was them, though it could have been someone else.

The aforementioned title is, to a large extent, true, especially when considering pop music. When teenage or youth culture was invented around about 1955, it was supposedly as a rebellion with pop music as it's anthem. Boys and girls danced together in a more rowdy fashion than perhaps their parents would have liked and Elvis Presley thrust his hips to the world. From this we may conclude that pop music is all about sex and rock music in its' early days was specifically about teenage sex, though the same couldn't be said now.

Just look at what happened to Elvis. Twenty years after he 'broke the scene', he was a fat Frank Sinatra in Vegas with glittery flares, but he was still the 'King of Rock'n'Roll' simply because a lot of wrinkly middle aged mostly American housewives still thought he was sexy. Oh and the men thought he was sexy too. You better believe it. If they didn't all want to be inside him, they certainly wanted to be like him or even thought they already were like him.

If you doubt that sex appeal attracts even 'straight' men to male performers then go to a Morrissey gig (except at Wembley) where you'll see lots of them climbing up and grasping at him desperately, or perhaps simply throwing him flowers.

Alas sex changes as music changes which partly explains why about as many of 'the kids' listen to Elvis records now as want to have sex with Liz Taylor.

Having established that sex and pop are inexorably linked, I'd like now to throw a spanner in the works and break a few spokes. Punk was anti-sex. Punks would go to great lengths to de-beautify themselves, like being on constant watch to make sure their mums never washed, repaired or threw away any of their clothes. The song that explains the motives behind punk (and probably just about everything else) most bluntly is the (oh irony upon irony) Sex Pistols 'I wanna be me'.

There were, of course, distinctly unsexy rock groups before punk came along, such as Black Sabbath, but even this was related to sex, though it perhaps said more about sexual frustration than actual sex.

May I now take the liberty of indulging myself in some inexcusable pretentiousness? Music has always been an amplification of ourselves and can help us to be more honest with ourselves. For example, in the fifties people started to be more open about their sexual desires, the hippies expanded

this by suggesting we were perhaps more loving creatures than many would admit, and punk showed us we perhaps have more hatred within us than we were prepared to admit.

The eighties was a decade in which there seemed to be a rebellion against rebellion. Everyone was self satisfied (except the unemployed!) Princess Di loved Duran Duran and Phil Collins and they loved her back, and people thought Bruce Springsteen's 'Born in the U.S.A.' was the patriot song of patriots, even here. There was only so far mass 'rebellion' could go after all.

We had political groups of course. We had U2, a bunch of middle class white liberals who overstepped the mark somewhat when they started taking their themes away from Ireland. I mean 'Bullet the Blue Sky', a condemnation of the U.S.A.'s involvement in Nicaragua, would have been O.K. if it hadn't been tempered by all that 'I'm so fascinated by this country' crap. I would have admired Bono for getting up the noses of those complacent Americans who really fell for Reagan, but no he had to do the crap thing and be really inoffensive.

From England we had and indeed still have that chirpy cockney, Billy Bragg. 'Tis a pity he's about as talented as a legless turtle. I think he should seriously consider a career in comedy, though.

So we come to the nineties. At last. The nineties is the decade of apathy. I'm serious, this time it's really here. Apathy is in, apathy is cool. Just hangout, maybe take some drugs, go to a club or go to bed. There's dance music, music to feel the apathy to. Let it overcome you. It's message is simple and it's this: 'Ah yeah'. I'm not taking the piss. This time I'm serious. None of your petty musical snobbery for me. It's the most escapist music ever and for all that it's like, deeper man. Like into your sub-conscious inner self.

There is the slight matter of rap music to be dealt with. O.K. so rap music doesn't quite fit in with the decade of apathy. Public Enemy, N.W.A., and Ice T would all suggest that there is some heart kicking, arse thumping, mother wrenching heavy shams going down. Apocalypse '91 say the P.E.. I say this. Public Enemy have mellowed out, N.W.A. have been censored and there's not one raised fist in protest, and Ice T, well what sort of name is that for a gangster rapper!

What has me convinced of 90's apathy though is this year's Reading festival. At this 3 day musical event, the food available consists mainly of instant diarrhea burgers in veggie or meat flavour at two pounds a go, and the toilets are so filled with potatoes,

baked beans, sunglasses, paper, oh and shit too, that people take to dropping their trousers or skirts in full view of every man and his dog. You might think that you'd have to be pretty damn passionate about your music to even set foot on the place, but you'd be wrong. The main attraction about Reading Festival is not the music, but the utter repulsiveness of it all. It's a chance to be totally out of your head all the time and then in turns to be totally ill and disgustingly un-hygienic too. A chance, at last, to just be yourself.

This, however, is not the main point of my mention of the festival. The point is that the band that got what seemed like the most favourable crowd reaction was one Dinosaur jr., a band that personifies apathy. They once split up because J. Mascis, its' leader, decided that he 'couldn't be bothered to write anymore songs'. They once did a cover of the Cure's 'Just Like Heaven' and couldn't find within themselves to end it, so they just cut the tape in the middle. Their latest single was called 'Whatever's cool with me'.

'What has all this got to do with sex?' I hear you ask, or had you forgotten? The answer is this. As we expose ourselves with music, we are in essence, through our self exposure, asking all concerned 'Do ya think I'm sexy?'. The surprising element is how many people carry on when the answer is a resolute 'no!' from everyone.

Anyway, the main point behind this wholesham is that music is shit, especially if taken at face value. It's shite because, unless you're a stupid repressed housewife or secretary, then you cringe every time you hear a Michael Bolton record. It's shite because, unless you're an introverted slightly depressive person who finds yourself at times ridiculous, are completely useless at everything and yet are quite egotistical in a petty snobbish sort of way, then you probably hated the Smiths and all 'Indy' music for that matter. And you yawn at the Rolling Stones unless you're clutching at straws for a way back to the 60's and you laughed at Punk unless your head was boiling over with confused inner aggression and you also laugh at people who write about music because their pretentious and you don't like Ozzy Osbourne unless you're crap.

In the future all musicians will only make fifteen minutes worth of music. The future for rebellious youth? Rebellious youth will exist as long as parents don't want their kids to have sex or at least as long as the police exist.

Justin Harper

## Crossword Answers

- Across  
1. Sheriff Fatman.  
6 & 11a. Ana Ng  
8 & 12a. Meat is Murder  
13. Dream  
20. Pooh Sticks  
22. Ten  
23. Anna  
24. Regina  
25. Ass  
27. Stan  
28. Needle  
29. ESP

31. EMI  
32. CBS  
35. Moose  
40. Buzzcocks
- Down  
1 & 9a & 37a. Some Candy Talking  
2. Erasure  
3 & 18a. Fishes Eyes  
5. Mad

- 6 & 17 d. AC DC  
10. Northside  
14. Actually  
15. Department S  
16 & 21d. Love and Kisses  
19. Start  
26 & 36a & 4d. In Yer Face  
27. Swirl  
30 & 7d. Paris Angels  
33. Bang  
34. Boyz  
38. K.d.  
39. So

# Thunderbirds are Go

The Ambassadors Theatre celebrates the silver jubilee of puppet television



Are you sure, this is the right way to Ascot? (Paul Kent and Wayne Forrester as Thunderbirds 1 and 2 in rescue action)

Bleep, bang, kazoom - if that's your kind of language then this pantomimic adaptation of the famous 60ies tv puppet-show is probably your cup of tea. For me it was certainly an amazing experience - but then again, I'm an old comic buff (take that literally). Should you be familiar with the subject (or similar ones like "Stingray," "Captain Scarlet" and "The Secret Service") then the story does not call for explanation - if not, however, here's a short wrap-up:

The mean "Mysterons" from outer space set out to take over the earth by causing major calamities culminating in attempted kidnapping and assassination of a world president, who bears a striking resemblance to George Bush. Defenders of the human race are the fabulous secret organization "spectrum" (featuring Capt. Scarlet) and the "International Rescue" organization, starring the fabulous Thunderbirds. These are really some highly sophisticated vessels, steered by some highly unsophisticated family clan with even more highly sophisticated ideals. Get

it?

Ok, so the story isn't all that sophisticated, but the combined talents of Englishman Paul Kent and Welshman Wayne Forrester will nevertheless knock your socks off...

They singlehandedly manage to impersonate basically every cartoon-cliche that you can imagine, paired with an unbeatable way of combining sound and visual effects without the help of major props or a gang of technicians in the background. In effect, they merely adapt their facial expressions to appropriate situations that even a skillful cartoonist would find most difficult to copy. Apart from that, you should find it quite amazing how impressively an actor can impersonate a walking puppet instead of doing it the other way around - these particular movements in themselves make the whole thing quite enjoyable. Elaborate use of a compilation of the original tv-series soundtrack give the whole affair just a touch of mocking - after all it is a well-produced rip-off but even so Thunderbirds are F.A.B. Happy 25th anniversary.

## Free Tickets!

If you are interested in the arts and culture, and you want a good way to impress those horny freshers, then contact the Beaver office and forget about Dateline!

## Under Suspicion

The Beaver reviews a film about fifties witchhunts

A fifties-style mystery thriller written and directed by Simon Moore, this film initially threatened to send every member of the limited audience soundly to sleep. Lacking such attractions as the exotic locations associated with a Moore of the 'Roger' variety (it is set in Brighton!) or the frontier breaking special effects of the infamous Terminator 2 screening in the cinema next door, this film had to rely on the more conventional mainstays of plot and character.

Fortunately Liam Neeson and Laura San Giacomo prove themselves well up to it, and the identity of the double-murderer remains as elusive as James Cameron's silvery screen-star until the final few minutes before the well-deserved credits begin to roll.

Neeson's credibility as a private investigator involved in illegal but not necessarily immoral pursuits is helped by his natural Irish charm (a stere-

otype brought to the foreground and promptly done to death by Mickey Rourke in such films as 'Angel Heart' and 'Barfly').

San Giacomo is probably best known for her supporting role in 'Pretty Woman'. For the benefit of home 'whodunit' detectives, the only two clues I could spot to the truth are both revealed by the actions of her character. Watch out for them! Kenneth Cranham as Neeson's loyal friend Frank, also turns in a creditable and enjoyable performance.

Despite being set in the past, 'Under Suspicion's' more serious side raises a very modern topic, and as if to underscore the point, 'Let Him Have It' has recently been released, asking the same questions about the wisdom of capital punishment.

The issue was first brought home to me on a tour of Scotland Yard's Black Museum where I was told not only the stories of Chris Craig and Derek Bentley,

but also Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in Britain. According to the police officer showing us around, if the same situation were to arise again today she would not have been sentenced to death...even if it were still a legal option.

Unfortunately the scene which brings home the chilling reality and injustice of innocent deaths is badly managed and slightly ridiculous, but it is the only dodgy part of an otherwise excellent 100 minutes of entertainment.

I recommend it due to the rare pleasure I got from being genuinely surprised by the ending - an experience not lightly underrated by someone like me who has spent many 'wasted' hours watching blatantly transparent cop videos simply because no-one else I went to the video shop with could agree an alternative!

## A flock of seagulls

Chekov gets a facelift at the Barbican

"The play fell flat and flopped with a bang." Well, not exactly. Anton Chekov, having been thoroughly devastated by the opening night attempt of "The Seagull," would have been delighted and greatly relieved had he seen a recent performance of his play at the Barbican Theatre.

As the curtain call begins it is unnerving to find all characters side by side, holding hands in response to the prolonged applause of the audience. The cast setting is so accurately on target that one quickly becomes lost in the figure eight of love, desperation, confusion, and self-hate continually conveyed back and forth between characters. Though each character, with the definite exception of John Carlisle's calm portrayal of Dorn, the ever so logical, heart-breaking man of medi-

cine, comes off as, at least, somewhat tragic in his or her own way, there are disproportionate concentrations in each. It is Simon Russell Beale's nervous Konstantin and Amanda Root's innocent and naive Nina who suffer most through admitted self-conflict. By combining instability with destined hopelessness, the interpretations of these two characters become undeniably real. When combined with Susan Fleetwood's superb transformation into the annoying Arkadina (Konstantin's mother) and Roger Allan's treacherous Trigorin (Arkadina's lover) the resulting tension is close to unbearable.

"The Seagull" does have several comical moments, however the drama's only really light-hearted aspect is contributed by Alfred Burke's Sorin (Arkadina's unconsciously

humorous brother). The entire plot is set on Sorin's rural estate, mostly occupying the entrancing countryside overlooking a lake. This serene atmosphere seems less dangerous than it is beautiful. Dorn decides, "Oh, the spells woven by this lake!" in trying to explain the hypersensitivity shared by several other characters. Ultimately, however, Konstantin's constant twitches and hesitations reveal the frustration of the determined writer who, while relentlessly ridiculed by his mother, is slowly driven to madness. Likewise, the love triangle trapping Nina leads to her realization that, though she had once offered Trigorin her life, it is he who "quite idly destroys her."

Madeline Gwyon



See my love, this is how you remove nasty hair from your nose!