

Sport
CLASS OF 2011

T H E B E A V E R

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SPOOF, FROM ANOTHER ERA... Inside!

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22 March 2011

Newspaper of the LSE Students' Union

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The Beaver

Victory for Palestine Society's Eden Springs boycott campaign

Oliver Wiseman

After a term-long campaign by the LSE Students' Union Palestine Society, water coolers provided by Eden Springs UK will be a rarer sight on campus next term.

Speaking to the Beaver, Palestine Society president Zac Sammour said he was "delighted with the pace and success of the campaign."

"I believe the success of this campaign demonstrates the deep commitment of LSE staff and students to ethical investment and global justice," Sammour said.

Over the course of the Lent Term all but one of the academic departments believed to be using Eden Water responded to the Palestine Society's demands and committed in writing to no longer use water supplied by the company.

Eden Springs is part of Mey Eden, an Israeli company that operates sources and plants in the Golan Heights, Syrian land occupied by Israel since 1967. The extension of Israeli law and administration throughout the territory has been condemned by the United Nations Security Council and widely denounced in the International Community.

Though the LSE has no central contract with Eden Springs, the company appears on a list of suppliers the London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) offers to individual departments at the School. The Palestine Society's campaign began in January when members of the society learnt that a number of departments at the School used water supplied by Eden Springs.

A spokesperson for the School told the Beaver in January that the LUPC list offers a choice between six suppliers. The spokesperson also noted that, while Eden Springs does operate in the Golan Heights, the water supplied to departments at the LSE originate from West Hyde, Herefordshire.

Sammour said though he was "pleased" about the prospect of no Eden Springs water on campus, the Palestine Society would also lobby the School to remove the company from the list of suppliers on offer to departments.

The campaign consisted in a number of events including the unfurling of a banner on the steps of St Clement's Building by campaigners dressed as Israeli soldiers with over-sized guns and bottles

filled with fake blood and labelled "Eden Water". Members of the Palestine Society also garnered signatures for a petition on Houghton Street and contacted the heads of the departments they believed to be using the services of Eden Springs.

LSE Students' Union Education Officer, Ashok Kumar said, "This is a monumental victory for human rights because it understands, as with South Africa, the direct linkages between profiteering companies and a State that violates international law. Indeed, this is the first step in a long journey for the LSE."

Kumar noted this was his personal opinion.

Aimee Riese, an LSE Students' Union Israel Society committee member, criticised the campaign in a statement sent to the Beaver that described some campaigning tactics as "inappropriate".

A statement released by the Palestine Society said, "The development is being hailed as a landmark victory for the wider Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) against Israeli companies, a campaign aimed at undermining the structural mechanisms that make the illegal Israeli Occupation possible."

"The Israel Society believes in building bridges not boycotts", said the Israel Society's statement, "We are against the BDS campaign which opposes the internationally accepted consensus to a two-state solution for peace in the region."

"BDS is an ineffective and misdirected campaign which shows limited understanding of the real issues in the region and does not work towards promoting peace," said Riese, "LSE students, when asked to vote on a BDS-advocated academic boycott of Israel at a recent debate, rejected it."

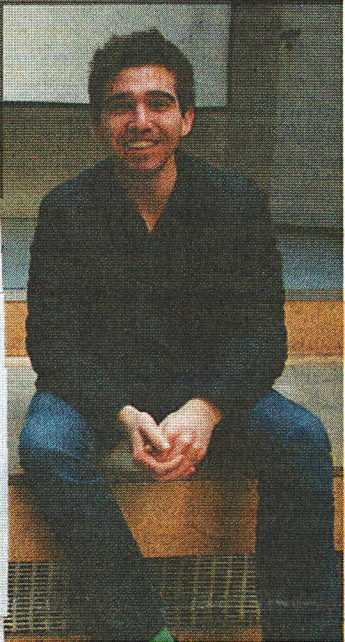
The Israel Society's statement also criticised Kumar's support for the campaign, claiming he had no mandate to do so.

"The prioritisation of this campaign by our Education Officer is strange", said the statement, "Given that the Sabbatical Officers wade into complex international issues without a mandate from students, we invite them to publicly endorse the Israel Society's campaign for a 'Two State Solution' that provides a lasting and secure peace for both Palestinians and Israelis."

Defending Global Education heats up

Postgraduate Officer Daniel Kroop sits by the 'I am International' wall, part of the Students' Union's 'Defending Global Education' campaign. The campaign was launched to assist LSE's many foreign students in securing visas to work and study in the UK. Kroop has worked with International Students' Officer Michael Lok to speak directly to Matthew Coates, Head of Immigration at the UK Border Agency. Kroop said, "The campaign is going to keep the heat up and explore new actions and options contingent on the Government's more detailed forthcoming proposals". The UK Border Agency will provide new guidance as to the application process on April 6th.

Photo: Aisha Doherty



Campus gears up for industrial action

Alexander Young

LSE staff affiliated with the University and College Union (UCU) are set to engage in strike action on the 22nd and 24th March, with the first day of protests concerning changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), and the second day of striking concerning changes to pay awards and job security.

Changes to the USS scheme, which are set to be implemented in the coming months, will increase the Normal Pension Age for new entrants to the scheme, as well as future contributions of existing members.

Members retiring between the ages of sixty and sixty-five will receive lower remuneration for their work, with such a reduction applying to service following the changes; payouts for prior services will not be reduced if employees retire at their

previously-contracted retirement ages.

Contributions toward the scheme will increase from 6.35 per cent of individuals' salaries to 7.5 per cent. The method of calculating the year-on-year increase in the pension will also change under the new agreement, with the UCU forecasting that a maximum of a 5 per cent annual increase will amount to a loss of around £36,000 for an average higher education lecturer over the course of their retirement.

Faculty members have already seen an effective decrease in their pay, as a result of the changes to the pay award for the new year.

Concerns about job security, meanwhile, are rooted in negotiations between the UCU and the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA). The UCU demanded an earlier and improved consultation with them before formal redundancy plans were made a reality and an improved minimum procedures for

consultation with staff when redundancy proposals are made.

In an email sent to all staff members on 18th March, Adrian Hall, the LSE's secretary and director of administration, wrote that the School "regrets that the UCU has decided to call for industrial action".

Adding that the UCU has "failed to engage in the established process for agreeing scheme changes", Hall wrote that "strike action that is damaging to students, colleagues and the School is not the answer".

The email insisted staff inform the School if they "intended" to partake in strike action.

>> continues on page 5

Interim Director – "I'm not easy to drown out"

Lauren Fedor

Professor Judith Rees CBE, a former pro-director of the School and current director of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, has been appointed interim Director of the LSE, according to a statement released by the School last Thursday, 17th March.

On Thursday, the LSE Council, the School's highest governing body, asked Rees to accept the position from 2nd May 2011, until a permanent Director can take up the office, according to the release.

Sir Howard Davies resigned as Director of the School at a meeting of the Council on 3rd March, after more than two weeks of heightened controversy over the School's links with Libya.

Earlier this month, the Beaver reported that Davies has been asked the to stay on until "arrangements for a succes-

sor have been resolved".

Davies will remain as Director until Rees takes over in May, according to the School's statement.

Rees was a pro-director of the School from 1998 to 2004. An expert on climate change and environmental risk, Rees has acted as an advisor to the World Bank as well as numerous national governments.

According to the statement, Rees said it "will be an honour to help steer the School during this interim period when we will have a number of major issues to deal with including the important work of the independent Woolf inquiry, the changing nature of higher education funding and the appointment process of a new, permanent Director."

Rees said the School's "core business" is "world-class research" and "outstanding teaching".

"I will do everything I can to ensure this very special institution remains in the first rank of the world's universities", Rees

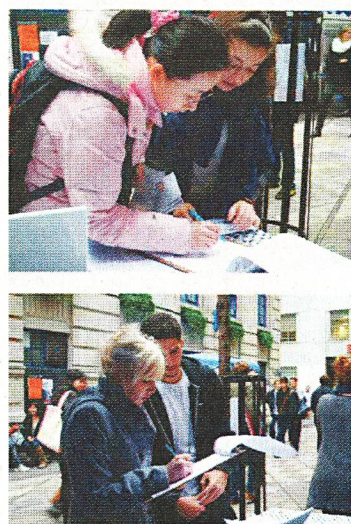
said, adding, "Howard Davies has been an outstanding leader in this and other respects and will be a hard act to follow."

In an email sent to the Beaver after Thursday's meeting, Rees wrote her first challenge as Director will be to "restore LSE's reputation in the outside world", adding it "will also be essential to ensure that the School runs smoothly".

"The pro-directors and other directors of the School know me well and they will be the first to tell you that I am not easy to drown out", Rees wrote.

Rees wrote there are "bound to be differences" between her and Davies's approaches to running the School, as they are "very different people with different styles".

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The Beaver would like to thank the LSE students who contributed to this issue.

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Correction

In the article, "Rosebery set to splash out over bathroom debacle" (15th March 2011), we incorrectly spelt the name of Rachael Elliot, who heads the LSE's Residential Life department. We apologise for any confusion caused by this mistake—we were not referring to the celebrated Edinburgh-based glass artist, nor to the Aldershot-based athlete.

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The Beaver

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Loose ends and new beginnings

Consider this closure. This year the LSE has seen the dramatic end of an era. However, as the pages of this issue make clear, anyone looking for a clean cut and fresh start to a new term, will be left deeply unsatisfied. Still left lingering are the loose, frayed ends of a Libyan scandal, a vacant directorship and unfrozen fees.

Over the next few months, Lord Woolf's independent report into the LSE's relations with Libya will either confirm Davies a saint or a sinner. The majority of active support in the School is on side with Davies, student and otherwise. The loyalty of academics to our institution at this turbulent time is indicative of the support that Davies has inspired. Whether this will hold over the Woolf revelations remains to be seen. However, were the Woolf report to find that some cagey business had gone down, the wider implications would be far more serious than just our modest, 87th rated, intuition. The report could essentially blow open a treasure chest of foreign coins that has kept some of the top universities across the UK, and overseas, fat for decades. The buck will not stop at the LSE.

Judith Rees has stepped into the scorching spotlight in time to weather the media beating that we should not naively

assume will fizzle. Although Professor Rees is only our caretaker Director (see page 1), this is a valuable time for a fresh set of eyes to scrutinise the weaker aspects of our university. With our international reputation ranking fifty places above our overall ranking as a university, someone at the top needs to ask serious questions about teaching at the School. Moreover, a decimal increase in student satisfaction for the LSE is not cause for the powers that be to celebrate. Consider the increase in student satisfaction human error. This newspaper would rather not print a first-week front page story about declining rankings, for the third year in a row. This is one of the foremost priorities for any Director seeking to fill Howie's shoes.

We turn to the incoming Students' Union executive to ask that this priority does not get overshadowed by the fee setting agenda. Equally though, the changes in fees could mark the Directorship of any courageous soul stepping up to the plate. The first meeting to discuss the future of

fees has apparently passed with the tense nature that will perpetuate these gatherings. LSE-ers will need active advocates from the earliest stages of these meetings, for, as all the student protesters silently acknowledge, nothing can be done once the law is written. If the laws of physics teach us anything it is that the largest bodies gather better inertia. Students cannot compete with the administrative powers in size, but we can lobby rationale, persistent advocates. The Students' Union will have to know the limits of their power and put their pride aside, if it is necessary, to recruit the big boys.

We look to the new era to offer us more to be proud of as a campus. Professor Rees and her successor would do well to learn from Davies' approachable nature which many a student has appreciated. However, we also call on you—Tony? Nicholas?—to seek to improve the flailing platform upon which this institution was built: quality education. ☛

Union Bashō

A lotus, rising from the mud, to the blooming of cherry blossom.



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The Collective is The Beaver's governing body. You must have contributed three pieces of work, or contributed to the production of three issues of the paper (editorially or administratively), to qualify for membership. If you believe you are a Collective member but your name is not on the list above, please email

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NOW

(that's what I call music!)

E204

"Boy From School"

Hot Chip

"Ride On Time"

Black Box

"Juicy"

The Notorious B.I.G.

"Supa Emcees"

De La Soul

"A-So"

The Willows

"More News From

Nowhere"

Nick Cave & The

Bad Seeds

"Home"

LCD Soundsystem

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ELECTIONS

24TH MARCH, 6PM

NAB.206

News Editors (2), Sports Editors (2), Social Editor,
Managing Editor

Sabbs' Self-Assessment

Words: Beth Clarke, Shirina Poojara, Alex Haigh

Charlie Glyn
Activities & Development

"There are many things that I have counted as successes this year: running the first Media Group development sessions, making progress getting indoor Sports facilities, running a Give It A Go scheme and finally getting the undergraduate Wednesday Law lecture recorded! The crowning achievement—with huge efforts from the SU Activities team and AU Exec—was the Tri-London Championships where LSE took home the trophy!"

Ashok Kumar
Education

"I ran on an explicitly political platform against the cuts and fee hikes. I ran to make the SU a campaigning, participatory and national activist hub against the cuts. There was no ambiguity about that. This year has seen the largest student demonstrations in over 40 years. LSE has been in the centre of that, and I'm proud to have been crucial to making that happen. NUS officials named our Students' Union 'the most successfully organising campaign on any campus in decades'."

Charlotte Gerada
General Secretary

"This year has been one of the most challenging and intense years that the student movement has seen for decades. When I was elected a year ago, I didn't anticipate how monumental the external pressures would be, from deep cuts to education and tuition fee hikes, to restrictive and draconian immigration policy reforms, to the debate regarding ethical financial policy. Despite all of these challenges, I've still been able to develop and work on local LSE fights, and I've managed to contribute a considerable amount to many areas of the student experience, whilst also building strong and lasting links with unions in London and nationwide. "This has been the most challenging and rewarding year of my life so far, and I can only owe a lifetime of thanks to the people who ensured I was elected to this position."

Hero Austin
Community & Welfare

"Overall, I have met the vast majority of my manifesto pledges and have gone beyond many of them. The two greatest successes would be, firstly, Widening Participation work—despite it facing setbacks, it will happen as planned by the end of the academic year, and more than that, it is now an area of collaboration between the SU and the School (it wasn't before) and it is now part of the long term strategy of the SU. Secondly, campaigning—it is fantastic that we have re-established LSE as a political, active Students' Union that runs grassroots, engaging campaigns."

Daniel Kroop (not pictured)
Postgraduate

"I think this year has been very successful. With the leadership of a top-notch Assembly, we have attained many of the results outlined in my manifesto. Perhaps most notably we've piloted the first SU-led mentoring programme, TIPS, linking postgraduates and finalists. Working collaboratively with the School, students including myself lobbied the Head of Immigration of the UKBA directly. And despite everything, as of right now, the Post-Study Visa route remains. Finally I think the success of The Graduate socials, as well as the forthcoming Gala, are attributable to a strong social events team that can attract hundreds of students and raise money for charity—Ghana, Libya, and Japan. Because of this year's leadership, I am confident next year will engage more postgraduates than ever."



Farrell reveals Libya concerns at UGM

Alexander Young

Director of Finance and Facilities Andy Farrell shared his personal take on the School's now-concluded relationship with Libya at last Thursday's Union General Meeting (UGM).

Farrell offered his opinion on the acceptance of £300,000 from the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF) to support LSE Global Governance, and the £1.5m for the provision of LSE Enterprise's executive education programme to members of Libya's Economic Development Board.

Farrell said he had concerns about the signing of the contract concerning the executive education programme, sharing the process by which he justified the signing of the contract to himself. Citing the Libyan regime's funding of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and his personal experience with the 1974 Birmingham pub bombings as reasons for caution on the deal, he said the money would be "better [at the LSE] than in Libya" on the basis it

would not be able to be used for funding terrorist organisations at home or abroad.

He said that, as he does not sit on the Council, he had no role in the decision process as to whether to money should be accepted.

But Farrell also cited the fruits of government negotiations with the IRA as reason for the optimism felt at the time regarding increased collaboration with the Libyan regime of Muammar Gaddafi.

The "Facilities" element of Farrell's job description was not left untouched, as he went on to discuss Rosebery residents' concerns about the refitting of bathrooms.

When challenged by Eden Dwek, a first-year geography with economics undergraduate and resident of Rosebery, as to the legality of the current provision of bathrooms during the refurbishment under the Housing Act of 1988, Farrell said he was "no expert in that field" and legislation may not have applied to shared dwellings. He referred Dwek to Julian Robinson, the director of estates, for further comment.

Rosebery issues were pushed further by a question from John Peart, a first-year

government and economics undergraduate, enquiring as to the reasoning behind the £150 compensation figure offered to the residents of Rosebery. Farrell was unable to provide a full answer, saying he was only asked to "authorise" the payment, and did not sit on the committee charged with coming to a decision concerning the level of compensation to be paid.

Sachin Patel, executive editor of the Beaver, asked as to the rationale behind the asymmetry in pay for Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) between their roles in teaching and invigilation of exams, as first-year GTAs earn less per hour for fulfilling their teaching duties than they do for invigilating exams.

Farrell answered, saying there was a "substantial change in GTAs' pay two years ago," adding he didn't "take part in the remuneration committees, so I don't know about the deliberation process involved." He then stressed he felt it important that GTAs be fairly paid, but also said that action "had been taken in this regard."

Democracy "less than perfect" at society elections

Heather Wang
Senior Reporter

Charlie Glyn, the Students' Union Activities and Development Officer, has told the Beaver that while society elections should "be restricted to members of the society only", most elections held this term have not been held to such standards.

Many students have alleged that elections have turned into popularity contests, as candidates often recruit friends, who are not society members, to vote for them.

While only society members can stand for a leadership position in the Students' Union Economics Society, voting is open to non-members.

The Students' Union Finance Society held closely contested elections, and the results for the presidency of the society proved controversial.

The society first held elections for the presidency on 2nd February, but even after four rounds of voting an election winner could not be announced. Over fifty students voted, including many who were not members of the society.

The decision was therefore taken to hold a second set of elections on 18th February.

But at these elections, students did not vote for a society president, and were told

a president had already been chosen.

Several students told the Beaver they did not know how the president had been selected. The recently elected committee did not reply to the Beaver's requests for comment.

According to the Students' Union website, "Sometimes elections are not plain sailing and some members may want to dispute the results or integrity of the election".

"If this is the case they must send a complaint in writing to the Activities & Development Officer, within three working days of the election", according to the website.

Glyn told the Beaver she has received no official complaints about the Finance Society contests.

Many societies were reluctant to tell the Beaver about detailed election process. E-mails were largely ignored by the committees.

"I really don't think this is fair," one first-year student who attended the election told the Beaver. "All the speeches, answers to the questions and work done during the year become irrelevant. Who has the most friends wins".

The Students' Union told the Beaver it was aware of the issue, and was taking measures to prevent unfair voting practices. The Students' Union has put forward

other suggestions for ensuring election fairness. For instance, societies could require voters to sign a membership list before attending elections.

However, as last Thursday's Students' Union Law Society elections make clear, this system may be equally flawed. The Law Society asked each candidate to include their student number or name on each ballot, thus violating the secret ballot requirement.

Kane Daniell, recently elected Law Society President told the Beaver, "No society election is watertight".

Last week also saw elections take place to elect the new Executive Editor of the Beaver, in a contest which was verified by Jack Tindale, who sits on the Democracy Committee. Over sixty members of the Beaver's governing body, the Collective, voted in the election.

Last year, the Students' Union tried to send a representative to all society elections, but Glyn told the Beaver this week such a strategy became "unfeasible" this academic year, with "over 150 elections happening in the first few weeks of term, as well as the pressure of Orientation Period".

The Students' Union continues to work closely with the Democracy Committee, Glyn said, to tackle such problems and improve voting practices for next year.

Union Jack

Andy Farrell seems like a nice man.

He eventually got to the top of the stage after slowly milling around the Old Theatre for a while. He got to the lectern and looked, for want of a better word, sad when Lord-Sir-future Professor Tindale, of the Old Theatre and Bamsley, told him that he must walk another five metres to the centre of the stage and to the pre-prepared microphone. He got there eventually.

And then it seemed as if his visit had been all in vain for anyone who is not in Rosebery Hall: the vast majority of the questions directed at Farrell were from the Great Unwashed at that halls of residence. As it turns out, the GU are getting £150 for their troubles. What about Union Jack of nearly three years ago, when, in taking his first shower in a halls of residence, he had to tease compacted pubic hair from the clogged shower plug with his bare hands because water was reaching his ankles? Nothing is the answer to that. Nada.

On a solemn note, Farrell talked of his regret in playing a part, albeit administrative, in the Saif Gaddafi think tank—his donation—he very eloquently pointed out how Colonel Gaddafi was a bastard and hated the UK. Jack was surprised that there wasn't some sort of protestation from the lefties seated to Jack's right, who were so concerned about the Libyan donation and the ticking time-bomb that was the LSE's, Howard Davies' and the Council's reputation that it took them, what, thirteen months or longer to occupy the Senior Common Room. They did get a question in: one of them asked why Farrell didn't know his history. What relations did Gaddafi have to the IRA? This question brilliantly proved that the questioner ironically needed to go and do some history reading of his own.

Other members of the audience who had no interest in showers snoozed through the rest of the meeting.

Polly McKinlay was there again, though, asking about "the doors". At this rate, the university won't have any doors left after her crusade; instead, just rice paper that anyone can simply walk or wheelchair (is that the verb?) through rather than be pestered by their massive weight.

When Professor Judith Rees takes over from Howie D in early May, one thing's certain: McKinlay'll be prowling around her office to ask about "the doors".

News in brief

WE BE REPPIN'

According to the Times Higher Education Supplement, the LSE ranks 37th in terms of reputation among academics. In the first ever World Reputation Rankings, THES interviewed 13,000 academics to carry out what the compilers call the most comprehensive survey on university reputations. Oxford, Cambridge and Harvard all made the top ten of the international rankings. The reputation rankings puts the LSE over fifty places above its overall THES ranking.

DISCOVER ISRAEL IN WC2A

LSE Students' Union Israel Society held both political and cultural events during last week's 'Discover Israel'. A 'Two State Solution' campaign was hosted on Tuesday and Thursday of last week. A representative from the society said, "The overwhelming response to this campaign was very positive and it was encouraging to be able to engage in constructive conversations with a huge mix of students". To conclude the week, the society turned Houghton Street into a 'Shuk'—an Israeli market. Money raised went to the Israeli charity, 'Save a Child's Heart'.

THE KROOP SHOW ROLLS ON

Daniel Kroop, Postgraduate Officer, hosted the final Postgraduate Assembly last Friday, 18th March. The students discussed the upcoming Postgraduate Ball, to be held in June. The main issue on the agenda was progress on the Defending Global Education campaign. The assembly had low attendance relative to the other assemblies. Kroop said, "This year has been really successful, especially in terms of the number of things that we've got done." Kroop has said he is intent on helping to set up a Postgraduate Society which will help improve communication between postgraduates.

LORD JUSTICE DEFECTS

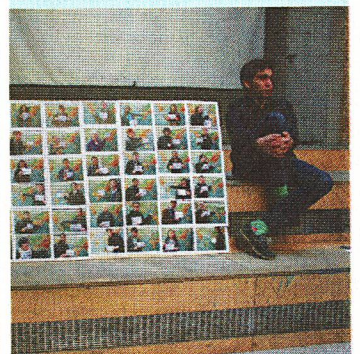
Lord Justice Robin Jacob, a judge on the Court of Appeal, has agreed to take up a teaching position in UCL's Legal Department. Lord Justice Jacob completed his LLB at the LSE and is one of the foremost leaders in the field of Intellectual Property Rights. Although, there are no positions available in the LSE's law department, students have expressed their upset at the fact that the School did not work to secure his top legal mind for a position at his alma mater.

I'D LIKE TO THANK MY DAD...

The Beaver was garlanded at the London Student Journalism Awards, held last Saturday at ULU. Oliver Wiseman, Managing Editor, won work experience with the Camden New Journal—his prize for winning News Reporter of the Year. The awards brought together journalistic talent at all London student publications. Nathan Briant received an honourable mention in the Features category, while both Luke Smolinski and Stuart Smedley were acknowledged as runners-up in the Comment and Sports categories respectively.

SOLOMON DE-THRONED

The University of London Union (ULU) has a new President. The incumbent, Clare Solomon, 37, lost the recent ULU election to Vratislav 'Vraj' Domalip, a former Queen Mary student. Domalip won the election under the STV voting system, with 1,182 votes to Solomon's 1,004. Re-Open Nominations received 130 votes. Solomon had attracted criticism for her calls for direct action amidst recent student fees protests. Sean Rillo Raczka, from Birkbeck College, was elected as the new Vice-President, beating second place candidate Emilie Tapping by just 33 votes.





Students gather in the Hong Kong Theatre to make traditional paper cranes to distribute on Houghton Street
Photo: Rita Korniya/LSE Students' Union Japan Society

School community is 'with Japan'

Duncan McKenna

Students at the LSE are making efforts to aid those in Japan who have been affected by the recent earthquake and consequent tsunami off the coast of Honshu, Japan's mainland island.

In response to the widespread collateral and humanitarian damage that Japan has suffered, groups of LSE students have begun campaigning to raise money to contribute to relief efforts. Last week, students from the Students' Union Japan Society were on Houghton Street, collecting charitable donations from staff and students in association with the "We Are With Japan" campaign. Donors received origami cranes, which are a symbol of peace in Japan, that LSE students made earlier in the week.

Also as part of the campaign, the School hosted an event to raise awareness last Thursday, 17th March, entitled, "Uncovered issues: Perspectives of natural disasters that get left behind". The three-part event included a talk from Professor Janet Hunter of the Department of Economic History, offering an historic overview of economic recovery following natural disasters, as well as insights from Japanese students giving their own personal accounts of encountering natural disasters. Attendees also heard stories of



German Society Treasurer Niklas Röhling makes a donation to the Tohoku Earthquake Relief Fund, for which Japan Society members have been raising money on Houghton Street
Photo: Rita Korniya/LSE Students' Union Japan Society

ongoing disaster relief effort in Japan were shared with the room in an attempt to bring home the realities of the events in a more heartwarming light.

Future events to aid Japan are set to include "Help Japan!", a live charity gig, to be held on Thursday 24th March, in order to raise money for the Japan Society's Tohoku Earthquake Relief Fund, and other charitable causes aiding the recovery.

Jen Wilkins, RAG president-elect, told

the Beaver, "Whilst the events in Japan are a total catastrophe, and all our thoughts are with those who have suffered, the response at LSE has been more than impressive.

"On a campus that has, on occasions, been accused of lacking a sense of involvement, it's amazing to see how our community can come together in order to help those in need, regardless of nationality," Wilkins said.

Speakers 'AV a good ol' debate

Nathan Briant
Senior Reporter

Professor Simon Hix chaired a public debate "Should We Say Yes to AV?" in the New Theatre last Thursday evening, 10th March. Hix said the upcoming referendum on electoral reform is "potentially the most significant change to British politics since the 1832 Reform Act".

Hix was joined by Katie Ghose, chair of the campaigning group "Yes! to Fairer Votes"; Mark Wallace, a political blogger; and two academics, Helen Margetts and James Forder, both of the University of Oxford.

Ghose said change was necessary to ensure "nobody's vote goes in the bin".

"Your university is being affected by politicians' decisions," Ghose told Thursday's audience, adding that although MPs don't need majority support from their constituency, "an MP can get a job with one vote in three". Ghose said the current electoral system "breeds complacency", whereas the Alternative Vote (AV) is better because more support would be required for a candidate to win an election.

She also said she had "heard about an MP who hadn't held a constituency

meeting for thirteen years," adding the AV system would be able to create a different atmosphere in politics. She said AV would act as "protection against extremism", and extreme parties like the BNP would lose support if the AV system was adopted.

Mark Wallace started by saying the Electoral Reform Society, an independent campaigning organisation, opposed the AV system last year, claiming the system is not suitable to elect a parliamentary system. Wallace said such a stance has since been taken down from the organisation's website.

"Alternative Vote is not the system that will make things better," Wallace said, adding the choice of AV was "like a year ago, when most of the country were sitting round saying, Gordon Brown's a pretty crap Prime Minister, suddenly popping up...and I can replace him with Dappy from N-Dubz".

He said arguing that changing the system was likely to change the political culture was misleading. He raised the case of Australia, a country which uses AV, which he said "spent a week laughing over the fact that one of the candidates wore budgie smugglers when he went on the beach".

"Candidates still go jogging to show

that they're really fit," he said.

Helen Margetts went on to outline the way in which first-past-the-post is no longer useful as it was in the past, when there was a two-party system, as there is now a multi-party system. Margetts said electing more seats that "gets closer to the majority" would be beneficial for British democracy.

James Forder said one reason for why AV would not be preferential is because "AV means a lot more Liberal Democrats!" He also said that although other smaller parties have increased in size, AV "will not do much" for them. He added he felt "elections are for electing a government, like it or not".

At the end of the event, there was an informal vote about how the audience planned to vote in May. Hix announced that the "noes" won the vote.

In an attempt to sum up, Mark Wallace gave a defence of his position.

To describe his opposition, Wallace said: "You're feeling ill, you go to the pharmacy, they've only got one drug, despite the fact that it's not the one that's going to cure you properly: go to another pharmacy, don't just take any drug."

Check-moot!

Beth Clarke
Senior Reporter

LSE students Adam Burk and Tor Tarantola came in first place in the 2011 Oxford International Intellectual Property Moot, held at St. Catherine's College, Oxford last Friday and Saturday.

In the Grand Final, the LSE duo beat a team from the University of Hong Kong, after facing a panel including Lord Justice Mummery, Lord Justice Jacob, and Mr. Justice Floyd.

"It was exciting to speak before a distinguished panel of judges in the finals," said Burk, a second year LLB undergraduate.

Postgraduate student Tarantola added, "we were extremely privileged to argue our case before such a distinguished panel of judges".

Held annually by the Oxford Intellectual Property Research Centre (OIPRC), the competition invites twenty-two of the top universities from Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, France, Canada, the US and the UK to participate in the moot, which is open to all undergraduate and post-graduate students. Dr. Dev Gangjee, a lecturer in the law department, held trials to select students for this year's LSE team.

The OIPRC "invites teams from universities around the world to prepare written submissions and present oral

argument on each side of a hypothetical intellectual property law problem set by experts in the field".

This year, the ninth year the competition has been run, the problem focused on the issues of unfair competition, patents and trademarks.

Burk said, "one of the most enjoyable, albeit nerdy, aspects was mixing with the other students and talking about intellectual property law in their countries".

"It was great to meet top mooters from all over the world, and it was interesting to see other styles and approaches", said Tarantola.

Since receiving their problem question last October, Tarantola said both he and Burk had completed around 100 hours of preparation for the competition. The pair reportedly met for between three and six hours per week to work throughout the Lent Term, and around ten hours per week as the competition approached.

Tarantola and Burk worked under the guidance of renowned intellectual property scholar Dr. Gangjee. Tarantola described Gangjee as having been "very supportive". He added the Law Society's moot training programme also helped him greatly in his preparation, as he had no previous experience in the pursuit.

The first-place prize, awarded to Tarantola and Burk, included a trophy and £250 vouchers for Oxford University Press books.

LSE thespians granted wish to head to Fringe

Phyllis Lui

The LSE Director's Fund has awarded a grant to the LSE Students' Union Drama Society to take a production up to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this summer.

The LSE Theatre Company will take an original play, entitled "Thistlebrook", written and directed by third-year law undergraduate Alex Rodin, to the international arts festival for two weeks this August.

Lizzy Fergusson, the finalist who is president of Drama Society, and Rodin applied to the Director's Fund earlier in Lent Term to secure a grant to take an eight-strong cast, including a violinist, to Edinburgh for the first two weeks of August. Fergusson and Alexandra Kane, a third-year anthropology undergraduate, are also producing the play, with Shou Jie Eng, a third-year law undergraduate, composing the accompanying music.

"Fringe is a big melting pot of ideas and LSE, for some unknown reason, has been conspicuously absent from that pot

for far too long. There is a lot of talent at the LSE, which isn't all going towards banks and bonuses," Rodin said, adding, "I think that it is the right time and right place for LSE students to be developing their ideas, meeting people, finding out new things and theatre is part of that."

Based on the real ethnography of a Gypsy community, the play will "examine the challenges affecting a Gypsy family living in East London", Rodin said. "Through dialogue, physical theatre and live music, the show explores the loveless and often brutal relationship between the Gypsy and the state".

Earlier this term, Fergusson and Rodin directed "The Cripple of Inishmaan", at which time they came up with the idea to take an LSE production to Edinburgh.

"There have been so many literary giants at the LSE," Rodin told the Beaver. "I believe that there is so much critical reflection through theatre, and that theatre is a giant political tool."

Auditions for Thistlebrook were held last week, and the cast will be announced this Friday.

Stern calls for "industrial revolution" to tackle climate change

Bethany Clarke
Senior Reporter

Lord Nicholas Stern delivered a public lecture at the School on "The Low-Carbon Industrial Revolution" last Thursday, 17th March, as part of the events series, LSE Works.

Lord Stern is chair of the School's Grantham Research Institute of Climate Change and the Environment, and author of the Stern Review on Climate Change.

He opened the lecture by outlining the magnitude of climate change, which he cited as one of the defining problems facing our generation.

"This isn't a small probability of something uncomfortable, it's a high probability of something catastrophic", Stern said, adding climate change has the potential to cause mass migration and "extended global conflict".

"High carbon growth is not a serious option", he argued, as "business as usual will create a situation so horrible that it will halt and reverse human development".

Stern called for an "industrial revolution", while condemning sceptics' arguments as "logically, obviously flawed".

Michael Jacobs and Gerard Lyons

also spoke at the event. Jacobs, a visiting professor at the LSE, reinforced Stern's statement, saying, "the evidence for climate change is now pretty unequivocal" and "there is absolutely no question given the impact of climate change that we have to go down the low carbon path".

Both Stern and Jacobs said politics of this issue are unavoidable, which Stern said is problematic given governments tend to be more concerned with getting reelected than making difficult choices regarding the environment.

Both Stern and Gerard Lyons lauded China for taking the right steps to combat climate change. Lord Stern said "they will be teaching us a lot in the next ten years".

Lyons agreed China is "doing the right things" in respect to climate change, but questioned whether it is "doing the right thing for the right reasons".

In a question-and-answer session following the lecture, audience members raised questions on the topic of nuclear energy in relation to recent events in Japan. The speakers agreed it is impossible to look at what has recently happened there and not raise questions about nuclear energy, adding there will certainly be implications, though it is too soon to know what exactly they are.

Media criticism “like going through a car crash”, says Held

Informal adviser to Saif Gaddafi tells the Beaver controversy was “a profound learning experience”

Aman Sahni

Professor David Held, a co-director of LSE Global Governance, spoke with the Beaver this week, appealing for more balanced reporting on links between the LSE and Libya.

Held has been widely criticised for his past associations with the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF).

Last month, the LSE halted a global governance programme funded by the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF).

The GICDF is chaired by Saif al-Islam al-Gaddafi, a son of Libya's longstanding dictator Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, and alumnus of the School.

In 2009, the Foundation pledged £1.5 million, to be paid over the course of five years, to support the activities of LSE Global Governance, specifically the development of a “research programme on North Africa, focused on politics, economics and society”, according to a statement from School. To date, the School received £300,000 from the Foundation.

But last month, in light of “current difficult circumstances across the region”, the LSE released a statement saying it will “stop new activities” within the programme, pending further review from the LSE Council, the School's highest decision-making body.

In 2009, when the School initially accepted the Foundation's donation, Held, a pro-director of LSE Global Governance, maintained Saif was a reformer in his father's oppressive regime.

The LSE Council, the School's highest governing body, cited the opinions of Held when it approved the acceptance of the donation.

Held joined the GICDF's Council of Trustees in a personal capacity, but resigned after members of the Council

raised concerns about a perceived conflict of interest during a meeting held on 20th October 2009.

In a statement published last month, however, on the website of LSE Global Governance, Held retracted his support for Saif.

“My support for Saif al-Islam Gaddafi was always conditional on him resolving the dilemma that he faced in a progressive and democratic direction”, Held wrote, adding Saif's “commitment to transforming his country has been overwhelmed by the crisis he finds himself in”.

“He tragically, but fatefully, made the wrong judgement”, Held wrote. “As a result, the LSE has stopped new work on the North Africa Programme”.

Even so, Held has continued to come under sharp public criticism for his mentoring and informal advising of Gaddafi during the years at LSE.

Held responded by stressing that his decision was “neither naive nor complicated”. Calling the termed the consociation “a risk worth taking”, given the potential benefits of what is now clearly a failing link.

Held told the Beaver the association was a “cautious form of engagement”, portrayed in an “utterly preposterous way”.

Held said he wants people to understand “the LSE doesn't deal in arms, oil, construction, contracts in making money out of Libya”.

“We are engaged in the business of ideas”, Held told the Beaver.

“The aim was a democratic reform of the country”, he said, adding, “if only it was successful”.

Held has been quoted as saying the funding was used to “pursue research on changing governance patterns in North Africa, economic diversification, oil and sustainability, developing civil society, and the status of women”.

Commenting on implications of the media coverage on his personal academic reputation, Held said recent media

criticisms have damaged his academic reputation.

“It has been very, very damaging”, Held said. “A bit like going through a car crash that allows two circumstances—to learn and move on, or give up and end it all”.

“There are lots of people who like to see someone fall”, he added.

Held said he now sees the controversy as “a profound learning experience”, “an opportunity to self-reflect”, and a chance to “take his academic work forward on a stronger, clearer basis”.

Held also said he felt the press was responsible for “pushing” Howard Davies toward his decision to resign as Director.

“[The] LSE has lost an excellent Director, one who grew into LSE as the LSE grew into him”, Held said.

Held reinforced the role of Global Governance, saying it would continue its “fantastic” research. On studying North Africa, he said “research on the area is more important than ever”.

Held said he was “sceptical of the Western military response sanctioned by the UN, because it is these very powers that colonised Africa, and supported these regimes”, adding favoured “limited military effort to degrade Gaddafi's military capacity”.

Held quoted the Evening Standard's Jenni Russell, who wrote in a column earlier this month that the “LSE is being punished for its failure to predict the future”.

“Who knows how many of the protesters on Libya's streets were educated abroad”, she wrote, “adding selling education is not the same as selling arms”.

Held told the Beaver the press has “behaved shamefully, showing blatant disregard for the truth”.

Held called for “highly informed people to be more sceptical about the claims often made”.

Photography without borders



Vivek Kotecha

An exhibition of this year's submissions for the annual LSE Photo Prize is currently on display in the Atrium Gallery of the Old Building.

This is the fifth year of the prize, organised by LSE Arts, in which a judging panel comprised of arts professionals and LSE staff select the best photos submitted by LSE staff and students.

This year's theme, “Crossing Borders”, carries on from the LSE Space for Thought Literary Festival, which took place in February this year.

“The idea was to link one of the largest arts events we have here at LSE with the largest LSE Arts-owned exhibition”, a spokesperson for the School told the Beaver, explaining the choice of theme.

The first prize in this year's contest

went to postgraduate student Xiaoyue Zhao for her photo, Portraits, taken on a ferryboat on the Yangtze River. Other commended photos ranged from refugee camps in Africa to the student protests at Millbank.

The photo prize attracted over 190 submissions this year from seventy entrants, an increase from last year's contest. Since 2010 the prize has had a theme and there has been a limit on the number of submissions per entrant.

“The reason for this was [because of] the sheer quantity of photos we received in 2009, we wanted to make the exhibition more specialised and adding the theme and limit on submissions has certainly helped to do that, resulting in a more creative exhibition for everyone to enjoy”, the spokesperson said.

All LSE staff and students are invited to view the exhibition, for free, until 15th April.

continued from page 1

Mike Cushman, the School's secretary for UCU, told the Beaver the School's handling of the strike, as exemplified by an email to all staff members, was unsatisfactory.

“It is not our job to minimise disruption”, Cushman said.

“Pensions are our main concern”, he added. “If we lose pensions, we'll never get them back”.

“The same goes for jobs, but at least the pay issue could feasibly be addressed at better times”, Cushman said.

Concerning the School's claims that the UCU has not been engaging in the proper “established process”, Cushman said “it was the employers that walked away”, referencing the UCU's failed attempt to take the Employers Pensions Forum for Higher Education to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in order to have the dispute over pensions resolved.

This was the favoured course of action as the UCU deemed there to be “no possibility for resolution within the USS machinery.” The School's claim that “pressures on USS have arisen from issues prior to the volatile investment market, including increasing life expectancy and pay increases over the last decade” was also met with scepticism.

Cushman told the Beaver that “[the UCU's] actuaries have shown there is no USS pensions black hole”, adding “nationally public sector pensions are predicted to take a declining share of GDP”.

LSE Students' Union Education Officer Ashok Kumar told the Beaver it seemed “odd” that the School called the strike “damaging to students”, as students “voted by a large majority to support lecturers with a student strike”.

“This university is a community, and clearly the vast majority of campus support lecturers through the democratic process of the lecturers union as well as a vote in an EGM”, Kumar said, adding, “students respect picket lines and refuse to attend lectures.”

Rees will “restore LSE's reputation”

continued from page 1

“Howard has done a great job as Director”, she wrote. “My objective is to do just as good a job and to leave LSE in great shape at the end of my tenure.”

Adam Connell, a second-year social policy with government student who, along with Students' Union General Secretary Charlotte Gerada, represents students on the Council, told the Beaver after Thursday's meeting he is “confident” Rees will be a successful interim Director.

“Professor Rees is clearly a highly talented academic with a history of manage-

rial experience at the School that has led to her being greatly respected by academics, staff and students alike”, Connell told the Beaver. “I am absolutely confident that she will prove to be an excellent interim Director during this difficult time before the next permanent Director is appointed.”

The Beaver reported this month that School officials do not expect secure a permanent Director for at least nine months. Such a search will likely take close to a full year, a spokesperson for the School told the Beaver, as is standard for appointments of vice chancellors.

The Council has designated a sub-committee, the directorship selection committee, to decide who will take over as Director. The committee includes lay governors, staff members and the General Secretary.



Professor Judith Rees, the LSE's interim Director
Photo: LSE Press Office

Rees told the Beaver she is “pleased to help on a temporary basis” but will “not be a candidate in the longer term”.

FT's Wolf talks about the pests of the financial food chain

Aman Sahni

Martin Wolf, an associate editor at the Financial Times, spoke about global financial instability in a public lecture entitled “Grasshoppers, Ants and Locusts: the future of the world economy” last Wednesday, 16th March, at the LSE.

Wolf has been a leading commentator on the recent financial crisis, which he claims is far from over. In the lecture, he provided a grim overview of the functional challenges facing global financial interaction.

Drawing parallels to one of Aesop's fables, Wolf identified excessive savers as ants, excessive borrowers as grasshoppers, and intermediaries in the financial system as locusts.

In the lecture, Wolf first pointed out

that the assumption made by Western intellectuals, that macroeconomic risks would be moderate, was a mistake. He argued the rise of imbalances, with sustained foreign currency intervention that has allowed states like China and Japan to triple their United States dollar reserves, has been the major factor. The United States has been the primary benefactor in this system, allowing its household sector to run huge deficits, even as non-financial corporations saved.

Wolf said re-balancing is crucial in dealing with the damaged financial system, an over-leveraged household sector, and large fiscal deficits. This is particularly true since the advanced countries are no longer in a position to absorb net exports of capital from emerging economies.

He then went on to analyse the impact of the crisis in the euro zone, calling it the “world in miniature”. Wolf concluded the

euro zone experience has been very similar to the global experience, except being tougher to recover from due to missing exchange rate measures.

Wolf concluded with the warning that the locusts have to “behave themselves” for future stability, and especially in the process of these adjustments.

The large audience subjected Wolf to a wide array of questions, traversing country specific speculations and theoretical outlooks.

Max Kelis, a master's student, said Wolf's insight was “phenomenal”, adding “there was passion, wonder and authority in the analysis”.

Maria Lili, another master's student, said the talk helped “identify clear lines of accountability, even as it left us with grim prospects for future growth”.

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Comment

Sam Vams?

MARCH FOR THE ALTERNATIVE *Redundant radicalism (as both Sams surmise)?*



LANGTON

Although it's hard to believe, beneath all the mediocre jokes and arguments put forward on this page over the past term, there has been a serious and profound debate. Most ranting and debating between left and right revolves around whether your heart lies between altruistic or self-seeking behavior.

As far as the University and College Union action goes, it appears to have two sides. On the one hand, it is hard not to support the strikes purely on the basis that unions are one of the few real "power to the people" organizations left in this country, while they are fighting against cuts most of us have come to loath. On the other hand, however, it's hard to ignore the fact that the UCU figures show a low turnout, and of the one's that voted, nearly 50,000 voted against industrial action. I want to say their action has its roots in justice, equality and altruistic behavior, and so we should support unions whatever the cost, but instead I cannot stop thinking: these people do not just teach, they inspire generations and in many cases become people youth look up to and aspire to be. The action has its roots in traditional left-wing attitudes, but to the public, and to students, the image it portrays is one of self-interest.

This is an example of something that often threatens my support for unions. Is this really behavior that mirrors the selfless attitude of left-wing philosophy? The mechanism seems entirely socialist and wonderful, but the objectives and repercussions of the UCU action have this insidious subtext of selfishness. Don't

get me wrong, I fully support the reasons behind the strikes, but the consequences of the strikes you'd think were caused by people more akin to Thatcher's individualistic attitudes than people campaigning for greater public expenditure.

Not only this, but this seems like yet another occasion where the people that were heavily involved in the decision-making process decide to criticize the result once it's over. The pension scheme that is being protested was discussed for three years beforehand, with the UCU being part of the committee that made the decision. This seems reminiscent of the students who bummed off the Liberal Democrats for the entire General Election, voted for them, and then spent the next 6 months protesting against them. If you take part in deciding something, your legitimacy in turning round and condemning it is lessened dramatically.

One of the main themes that this column has tried, and probably failed, to put across in the past, is that you do not have to support or disapprove of something just because your ideology says so. With the UCU case, the left-wing philosophy in you may well be crying out in pleasure at the thought of unions taking action, but the shy and often ignored pragmatic part of you is quietly reminding you that thousands of students will suffer due to the action: most significantly due to the image lecturers and teachers project to younger generations. And yes, you might be thinking "Ha! We don't suffer, I get the day off!" - but in that case you should never be allowed to open your mouth about tuition fees ever again.

So, to close the curtains on my shoddy excuse for a column: although I may ask for my picture to be pixilated after criticizing the strikes, I stand by left-wing pragmatism, not disillusioned socialism. Those who have true belief in their philosophy formulated their views before choosing their ideology, not selecting an ideology on a whim and sticking by it throughout both genius and idiocy. ☛

Is this really behavior that mirrors the selfless attitude of left-wing philosophy?

These people presided over a catastrophic loss of credibility for the Students' Union

We are lucky enough at LSE to have studying alongside us a tireless band of people who, with unfailing vigour and passion, stand up for the perennially vulnerable causes of fairness, responsibility and social justice. The efforts of these people - the shouting, complaining, swearing, placard-wielding, lecture-disrupting, office-occupying, and meeting-holding - are keeping all of us safe from the horrid onslaught of Conservative cuts and other such mean and nasty things.

But for all their industry and zeal, it is probably time they called it a day. We have reached the end of an era. The current sabbatical officers are on the way out, and with them (hopefully) the extreme and polemical culture of politics that has suffused our campus for the past year. The generous leash given to our untiring protectors has enabled the completion of all their most important tasks. The Vera Anstey Suite has been well-and-truly occupied. Jeremy Hunt has been called a culture. Chris Huhne has been booed. Howard Davies has been given a good telling-off in the Evening Standard. Is this not unequivocal success?

Yet it seems that our keffiyah-clad guardians are unsatisfied. I know this because I saw a flyer in the Quad for a 'March for the Alternative', taking place in London on 26 March. Just when I dared to suppose that our safety from the predatory Tories and pusillanimous Lib-Dems had been secured; I was reminded that we are, apparently, all still in grave danger. According to the flyer, the cuts are 'unfair' and 'unnecessary', threaten 'universities, jobs, growth and justice' and must, therefore, be marched against. Undoubtedly put there by one of our very own socialist sentinels, it appears that we are in for one last thrust of resistance against the barbaric injustice of the government's budgetary revolution. Our indefatigable protectors will come to the rescue again!

But for all their energy, these people do not deserve to be thanked. They placed the LSE Students' Union at the heart of a national movement against tuition fee increases. This was a poorly thought-out campaign that, although slickly organised, demonstrated a laughable ignorance of its



WILLIAMS

own implications. Fortunately it failed, and a generation of students has escaped the unpleasant prospect of living in a society wherein higher education has no meaningful value, degrees are flimsy and ubiquitous, and universities are treated purely as tools of social mobility. The facile and simplistic egalitarian arguments that motivated the opposition to fee-increases were exposed as the hare-brained claptrap that they were. But despite the ultimate failure of the protests, these people still implicated the LSE in a movement that was grounded in a fallacious interpretation of the Browne Review and that culminated in vandalism and violence on the streets of London. They claimed to be servants of justice and fairness, yet illegitimately mobilised the resources of the Students' Union to pursue a project that promoted neither justice nor fairness. This is something that no one should be grateful for.

These people presided over a catastrophic loss of credibility for the Students' Union. Their positioning of the Students' Union at the centre of the anti-fees movement; their infantile and invidious treatment of Jeremy Hunt, a democratically elected politician, at a public lecture; and their shady role in the public vilification of Howard Davies during the Libyan furore have, amongst many other things, served to polarise and radicalise political discourse on campus. The sooner that the Students' Union and its associated 'justice-vigilantes' perceive the fundamental disjunction between their politics and those of the rest of us, the sooner the Students' Union can start the vital process of reclaiming its place in the affections of students. ☛



Lost causes

Photo: flickr user lewishandreamer

More news from nowhere

The outgoing Executive Editor is Shaw this has been a dam fine year

Sachin Patel



I was elected as Executive Editor of the Beaver at a time of great trauma for the newspaper. It is no understatement to say the credibility of the paper had been rocked by a series of relational breakdowns between us, them, and everyone in between. Consequently, I knew my tenure ought not to be an exercise in holding-pattern damage limitation.

But the grand ideas of le petit general will fall upon their creator's head without the support of others. And so, in a break with the tradition of these self-congratulatory, faux-self-deprecating farewell pieces, I shall begin with an expression of gratitude. Gratitude to the editorial staff who have endured (read: loved every minute of) extended weekends in E204, compiling the six sections that the paper consists in. Gratitude to the scores of writers drawn from all strata of the LSE—from the internship-seeking library junkie to the hardened union hack, via the society event organiser and public lecture attendee.

And gratitude, above all, to our readers, who breathe fresh life into the Beaver every Tuesday, tucking in to the assortment of content on offer, and using articles as a catalyst for rational and enlightening debate.

Whether you have been an occasional dabbler or a certified addict, I hope you'll agree that the Beaver this past year has justified its existence.

I really do believe we have acted as a vital antidote to the onslaught of propaganda, press releases and undemocratic madness that has characterised student life this year. Even before the year started we knew about Freeze the Fees and, thanks to the united front the Editorial Board maintained from the off, we were able to arrive at a considered editorial stance, after careful deliberation and rigorous analysis of the facts. This was to be a recurring theme: we never placed ourselves intentionally in opposition to the Sabbatical Officers; we just ended up thinking differently from them because

we approached thorny subjects from first principles.

For their part, the Sabbs were a continual source of pleasure (and occasional frustration) to work with. The phrase "love to hate" should not be the default position in E204—Kingsley Rooms relations, and I'd like to think we defied expectations by giving qualified support to them on several occasions. When the School discussed private universities at Council, our coverage of the debate played a part in Howard Davies putting any speculation to bed by announcing the School's steadfast desire to remain a public institution. When the Palestine Society launched its campaign to rid department offices of water from Eden Springs, an Israeli business with dubious morals, we highlighted the evidence pointing to the company's profiteering from allegedly illegally occupied land. And most recently, when the gross tragedies occurring in Libya landed on our doorstep thanks to the LSE's former infatuation with the North African dictatorship, we were so impressed by the truly grassroots movement that developed organically in opposition to the School's actions that we threw our weight behind it.

So, as you can see, ours has not been a year of militant, mercenary tendencies. But in the case of Libya, something we have been involved in has claimed an accidental victim—our Director, Howard Davies. My predecessors were far more sceptical of Howard than I, confused liberal, have been: I believe the School will be a poorer place without him. His departure was expected, thanks to modern society's curious obsession with martyrdom, but no cause for celebration. Howard made necessary changes to the School's strategy which pre-empted the funding cuts we now see, and put it on the road to a degree of financial security which will hopefully ensure our fees do not touch the £9,000 ceiling. To say this likely policy is a consequence of Students' Union gimmickry would be to kid ourselves: in fact, students in years gone by have consistently opposed the School's transformation into 'a business'—a transformation which gives us steady surpluses year on year. Thus, we have a lot to thank Howard for.

I was immensely grateful to Howard for letting me interview him near the start of the year—a high point, for sure. I was accused of sycophancy and brown-nosing, but his opinions and arguments did a lot to resolve my state of mind, and that of

the newspaper. As I hinted at before, unity and consistency have been touchstones of the Beaver this year.

But enough of internal justifications. We dealt with several external challenges this year—swinging budget cuts stemming in part from the perceived reputational damage suffered in the previous year, and the consistent catcalling from the socialist tranche of the student body—and came out with an increased readership, overwhelmingly positive feedback from other portions of the student body who had never previously engaged with the paper, and even recognition from international publications. I suppose we were lucky to have so many big stories fall into our lap; then again, these stories could easily have been dealt with in a half-hearted way, which would have been such a shame. Instead, thanks to the tenacity of our ever-growing team of news writers, our coverage of major goings-on was a source of immense pride to us, and of significant educational value to our readers.

Strides made elsewhere in the paper were similarly successful. Regular columns were instated in every section, from our two Sams' weekly political joust in Comment to the perpetually incisive Smedley's Corner in Sport. Features attracted more articles on science and international relations—two areas close to my heart—and fewer lazy re-writes of pieces in the Economist. The section also took a tentative step towards a more flexible layout, with fact-boxes and infographics replacing the tired formula of 'big picture + article + two full-height pull-quotes'. Most obviously, PartB stopped being a half-size pullout. In this case, a financial necessity was turned into an invitation to redesign the supplement whilst maintaining its fresh tone and distance from the rest of the paper. PartB has become a well-oiled machine, securing press screenings for films and interviews with rising artists. I hope the teamwork on display in PartB continues to give it bite and relevance.

Online, we again managed to snatch victory of sorts from the jaws of defeat. Under the stewardship of two successive web editors, our website has better fit and finish, more closely mirrors the structure of the print issue, and plays host to eight fascinating blogs which stretch from musings on literature to international politics. The future of the newspaper must surely reside online, and I expect a greater

allocation of resources to be devoted to increasing our presence next year. This investment may come at the expense of such an expensive print commitment, but to my mind this is the correct ordering. Running a weekly print newspaper is fast become an unsustainable ideal, and steps must be taken that capitalise on the proliferation of physical brands in the ether, and lessen the budgetary stress.

Some people question the necessity for the Beaver to have an editorial voice. Many people will doubtless see this article as a last-gasp vanity project. But I truly believe we have given a voice to the silent moderates on Houghton Street (or in the library, probably), who would otherwise have been drowned in a monsoon of baying protesters. Our reporting on the invasion of the Jeremy Hunt lecture in January only galvanised these beliefs of mine: such idiocy, such contradiction. I don't necessarily think people who work on the Beaver are intellectually superior beings, but I do think they have a clarity of judgement that is unfettered by ideological war and television appearances. That probably sounds terrifyingly inflated, but when you consider how diverse a pool of writers the Beaver draws upon, and how little bearing I have on what gets printed, I hope you'll see it more as gushing praise for our army of eager beavers.

Any regrets? A few, predictably. I thought Comment got a bit shouty at times, providing a performance space for LSE's biggest showboaters. I still think News prints too many gushing public lecture write-ups, and that these can often draw the reader's attention away from weightier matters. And as for my purportedly light-touch approach to Sport, I confess, I could have done more.

But these are minor quibbles: this has been a vintage year for student noisemaking, which has translated into an equally vintage year for the Beaver. I hope that next year, even if the louder voices on campus have calmed down, the paper continues to tell the best and truest stories.

I gave three years of my life to the Beaver: I hope the ground we've made up this years means many more students will feel compelled to do the same. All the best of luck!

Quick COMMENT

Did you enjoy reading the Beaver this year?

Of course. Especially the Comment section—but I might be biased.

—Mirza Shahmeer Agha, 2nd year, BSc Management

Definitely improved than last year—the Social and Features sections are high quality. I would love to see "Overheard at LSE" back.

—Michael Nguyen, 2nd year, BSc International Relations

It's been my first point of call when it came to wanting to find out what was going on or when I just wanted to read something entertaining.

—Shrina Pooljara, 2nd year, BSc Economics

Despite the lack of a Pelton-esque sex column, yes.

—Louise Helferty, 2nd year, BSc Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method

I loved reading it this year. It really has set the precedent for student journalism.

—Vidhi Doshi, News Editor of the Cherwell (University of Oxford Student Newspaper)

It's an entertaining read, it's just that I don't always think of grabbing a copy unless I've written that week.

—Hannah Payne, 2nd year, BSc Government & Economics

Immensely. Tuesday afternoons will never be the same without a quintessential weekly dose of AU politics...

—Fahd Humanyun, 3rd year, BSc International Relations & History

It's interesting but it won't be the first paper I'd pick up.

—Raj Rebheru, 3rd year, BSc Economics

I spend my week in anticipation of Private B. Pure satirical genius.

—Usha Patel, 2nd year, BA History

Thank you for your contributions and quick comments this term. It's been... interesting!

See you next year...



How to get the officer's attention

Be careful when you criticise politicians – one day you too might be insulting your voters

Chris Moos



Gordon Brown ("bigoted woman") has done it, Nicolas Sarkozy ("poor dumbhead") has done it, and others have done it, too. Once elected, some politicians will lose their poise and start telling their voters what they really think about them. That is hardly news, and one probably has to understand that from time to time politicians feel the urge to express their true feelings about those they are lordng over.

Anyhow, this hardly concerns LSE students, who from the safety of the lecture theatres are able to make sharp moral judgements about politicians, and

of course on what the political class ought to be doing anyway. After all, "these politicians" are sufficiently far away from the average LSE student for him to safely say that once "up there" he would – of course – never give in to the temptations of power and arrogance. Right?

Something that is not that far away for us though is what elected LSE Students' Union officers are doing at the LSE. Of course, someone who is in touch with the students, his constituency, on a daily basis would not possibly be losing his cool over some other student having differing views on a controversial issue. Or so we'd think.

ASHOK KUMAR—REPRESENTING STUDENT VOICE AND BEHAVIOUR?

At least until the day Ashok Kumar chose to interpret the limits of his role as elected LSE Students' Union Education Officer a little too creatively, at least for my taste. To be fair, when he first called me and other supporters of free speech

"trolls" in the "Protest against xenophobic speaker Thilo Sarrazin at LSE" Facebook group, I initially felt almost flattered, given that such an illustrious man would give such a humble person as myself so much of his attention. But when he went on the call defenders of Sarrazin "racist", I started to become worried that Ashok might have actually gotten something terribly wrong about me. When finally some posts later he termed another student as "the dumbest persons I've ever come across", I somehow could not help feeling that Ashok sometimes might lack the respect for students who might have an opinion different to his own.

What had happened? Me, and other students had dared to ask what exactly makes former Bundesbank director Thilo Sarrazin who participated in a panel discussion organised by the Students' Union German Society, a "xenophobic" and "a racist", as Ashok and others were so diligently divulging. Of course, it does

not matter that this man has never said anything that an honest person would ever describe as "xenophobic" or "racist". And of course, not even Ashok was able to explain what exactly was "racist" or "xenophobic" about Sarrazin. No matter. After all, anyone who believed Sarrazin was a "racist" now, too, whereas others were just "dumb". At least according to our student representative.

To be sure, one has to know that Ashok seemed to be quite worried about this event from the very beginning. After all, as he later declared in the Guardian, "there would have been hundreds of students rushing the stage" if the German Society was going to proceed with the podium discussion. Probably because of these very concerns and just to make sure this scenario was not going to take place, he took an active part in the public mudslinging of an event that the students he is supposed to represent had organised. And this not only in the Facebook group,

but also by taking part in the protest in front of Clement House, thereby forming part of the "security risk" he appeared to be so worried about, and which the LSE administration later used to justify the cancellation of the debate.

Well, I am not sure that when students gave Ashok their vote and trust, they knew they would run the risk of getting the favour returned by being called names and having the events they are organising publicly misrepresented.

CRITICAL ADVICE FOR THE FUTURE

So what can we learn from that episode, especially given that some of us will inevitably feel the urge to bestow themselves upon the electorate one day? Next time you (rightly) criticise "these politicians up there" for their blatant or alleged mendacity, arrogance, abuse of power and disrespect for their voters, think about the LSE and how you are represented here first. ☛

Education equals exams?

Why studying at the LSE should not just be about getting a grade

Sam Shirley



I was under the impression that a Master's degree at the LSE was taken seriously and that students came to this University to broaden their minds and expand their knowledge in their subjects. So, forgive my annoyance at the fact that this concept seems to be lost on certain members of the School. Indeed, whilst it seems that other universities are taking up more continuous assessment, the LSE is doing the opposite. At least, the Economic History department would rather students be assessed solely in exams, it seems to me. In some seminars, the focus is upon what you need to know for the exam, not the subject matter in question – a shopping list of unsubstantiated points.

The economic history department would rather students be assessed solely in exams

During years at school, as opposed to the School, it was expected that many pupils (compelled to be there by law to study subjects they did not necessarily want to do) would want to focus on passing exams. Their aim was to acquire the ability to continue up the ladder of achievement to greater things. But, this ought to have a limit. The end of GCSEs should have been this watershed. Apparently, not. At A-levels and even undergraduate stage, some would ask, "Do we need to know this for the exam?" Admittedly, I was not the most diligent of students throughout my pre-Masters education, but neither did I expect to be handed marks on a plate or to

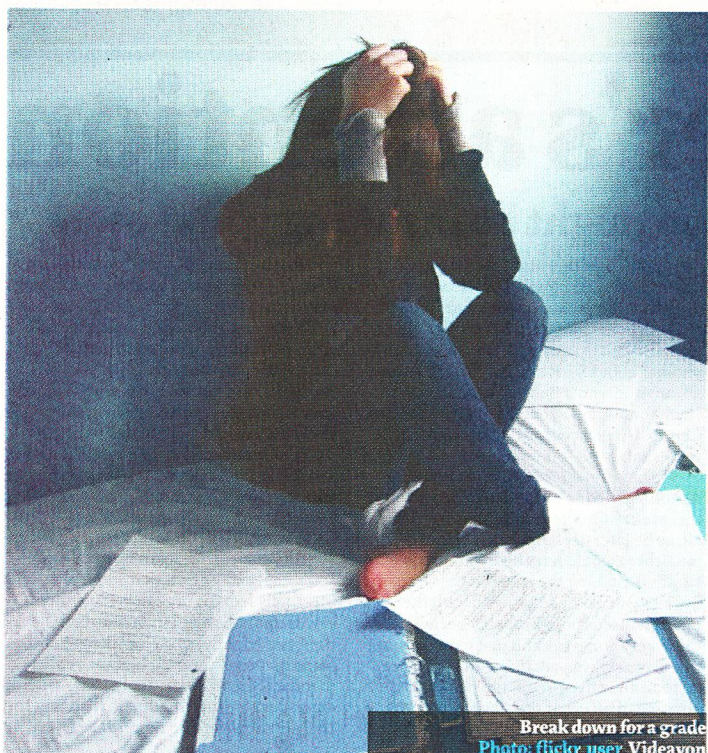
have fluked by way through I subject upon which I should have demonstrated a command of knowledge.

If it were the case that the only reason for going to university was to improve job prospects and that the choice of degree was tangential to this decision, it clearly demonstrates the futility of what university offers. Upon this premise, students ought to have a lottery of courses, especially in the less-focused social sciences where the vocational transferability is less clear. It might come as some surprise to a certain generation of teaching staff that applying to study Economic History did not come about from a desire to take up public speaking, or to "get ready for industry". Had that been true, I would have studied business management.

Rather, studying Masters-level Economic History was about understanding how economies developed and how this will affect policy making in the future. In this regard, the aim would be to "know the causes of things"; funny that. It's funny, that exam technique might not be the aim of the game of seminars. It's funny that a substantial discussion on the subject matter might be of interest.

Fortunately, many members of the department do not subscribe to the view that all roads lead to reference-padding in the exams, or shopping lists of points. Disregarding the teaching regulations, they actually challenge people's views in seminars and get students to think – heaven forbid! What is the point of producing students that have little independent thought or add nothing to society? I'm sure that parrots could trot off reasons why economies diverged if they remembered that author x said y. I'm not so sure that that they could argue why this is relevant to decision-making today or how it broadens their mind.

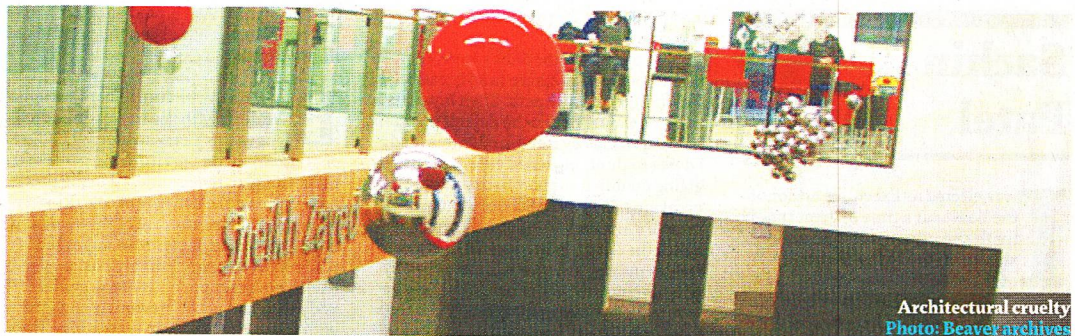
Nevertheless, LSE lecturers are very good and the subjects have on the whole been challenging. Keeping this in mind, one has to wonder though whether the enthusiasm for their different subjects will be transmitted to students, or whether the School has resigned itself to the sausage-churning mentality which seems to pervade some institutions. It must be remembered that exams are a tool to test our knowledge and to prove to others that we might have something contribute from our subject area. They are not there to test or create a façade of ability.



Break down for a grade
Photo: flickr user Videavon

Blood money buildings

A call to stop naming lecture theatres and research centres after such controversial figures



Architectural cruelty
Photo: Beaver archives

Lukus Slothuus



Children's brains splattered around the pavements of Bahrain have become a worryingly ordinary sight during the last month. But amidst the massacring of pro-democracy protesters, we must ask ourselves: Who is behind this crackdown? Why does it matter for the LSE?

Behind the crackdown are not only Bahraini troops but also the Peninsula Shield Force, a joint military cooperation force between the Gulf States. This includes the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that have deployed police officers and soldiers to gun down civilian protesters. The army of the UAE was established by the late Sheikh Zayed, and if that doesn't ring a bell then here we go: Sheikh Zayed

was the dictatorial ruler of the UAE until his death in 2004. Apart from sponsoring holocaust-denying conferences and permitting the gross exploitation of workers (many from India and Pakistan) reminiscent of slavery, he also outlawed homosexuality. But the central problem rests with his links to the LSE: accepting a £2.5m donation from Sheikh Zayed and the administration thanking him for it by naming the most pompous and modern lecture theatre on campus after him is repulsive.

I would like to hear someone tell our Bahraini and Emirati students on campus that Sheikh Zayed was a good guy, and that the legacy he left was one of human rights promotion, democracy and equality when his family regime is currently slaughtering innocents in the streets of the capital Manama and beyond. The hypocrisy is immense, and it is no wonder that Harvard University turned down a donation from the very same ruling family and closed their Sheikh Zayed Centre.

It saddens me to enter the New Aca-

ademic Building on early mornings and see the Sheikh Zayed Theatre in all its glow and glitter when I can read on Al Jazeera that dozens of pro-democracy protesters in Bahrain are gunned down and thousands of others are wounded. Little does it matter that we have a Centre for the Study of Human Rights when we are perpetuating the power structure in the Gulf and Libya by humanising their dictators.

There has never been a financial case for taking the donation from Sheikh Zayed. The New Academic Building was fully financed before the donation was offered. If the LSE had any sense of humanity left it would rename the theatre. If not, what can we expect next? The Kim Jong-Il Centre for Free Speech? The Hosni Mubarak Theatre? The Berlusconi Gender Studies Institute? While it is commendable that the LSE attracts large donations, there seems to be no limits to the shallowness of the administration's ethical etiquette. If Harvard can shut down their Zayed Centre, its not asking for much to rename our lecture theatre.

It's the LSE, not £\$€

Why we need to make room for ethics in our economics

Mira Hammad



"Vanity Fair" is not a novel about the disintegration of morality. As Thackeray's characters enmesh each other in swirls of betrayal and duplicity, questions of morality are still important to them. The nightmarish absence of ethical constraint which wreaks havoc throughout the novel results from the subversion of those questions into questions of reputation rather than substance. In other words, morality still exists as a semantic concept but its outward focus on appearance transforms its essence into hypocrisy with a halo.

The popularity of Thackeray's satirical portrayal of the underbelly of human nature is not simply due to its capacity to shock and entertain. Its real attraction lies in the reader's uncomfortable recognition of this inclination towards two-facedness in themselves. Despite this, there is no society, ideology or belief system that endorses hypocrisy. I am not here suggesting that no ideology creates duplicity or that no society is based on it, rather the striking fact is that nobody admits to it. Its formal rejection seems to be a moral constant. Our revulsion of hypocrisy seems to be just as inherent a part of us as the selfishness that creates it.

This moral value therefore has as much potential to unite people as does its antithesis to divide. We can see this in the microcosmic world of our university. The diversity of views about what the LSE is and what it should stand for as an institution is as wide as its membership. All of us, however, agree that whatever direction the LSE takes, it should not be a hypocritical one.

It is from the perspective of this common value that we should consider the LSE-Gaddafi debacle. Indeed, in our reaction to the media furor we have already been very quick to see hypocrisy and to criticise it. But our perception in this

regard has been limited to acknowledging the duplicity of members of a government that itself built links with the Gaddafi regime criticising the LSE for doing so and that of the media, who did not care about the donations when they happened criticising us for taking them.

Our consideration of the part that the LSE played in the affair seems to miss this morality-based analysis. From Howard Davies' resignation statement, to the EGM motion subsequently passed, to student discussion in the Beaver, the main concern with the Gaddafi-LSE links seems to be portrayed as a reputational one, necessitated by unwelcome media attention. The real question, however, surely revolves around whether the LSE should be trading on a reputation that it does not deserve.

Perhaps the reason we have failed to appreciate this is because we have bought into the paradigm presented by the media that focuses narrowly on the Gaddafi-LSE links simply because it is newsworthy to do so. In order to really learn lessons from what has happened, we need to refocus our lens and realise that the issue is much wider. It is not just the issue of promoting democracy and academic freedom while building links with ruthless dictators, it encompasses the hypocrisy of hosting lectures about human rights in the Sheikh Zayed Theatre. It is an issue of establishing human rights centres while at the time holding investments in arms companies.

In short, the real issue here is a truly moral one, not simply a reputational one and it revolves around the hypocritical way in which the LSE manages its financial transactions. The LSE outwardly trumpets its adherence to a Socially Responsible Investment Policy (SRIP), as a sign that the principles it promotes govern its financial transactions. This is strikingly disingenuous because the SRIP is in actuality so vague that it is rendered meaningless. The only real constraints that the SRIP imposes are those found in the 6 UN Principles, established in 2006. That the SRIP has been motivated by reputational, not ethical concerns becomes evident when we consider the fact that these principles have been so widely recognised as being unacceptably vague by

the academic community and NGOs that the UN has itself been moved to introduce new principles, the Ruggie Principles. General requests that companies take into account, environmental, social and corporate governance issues in their financial management is about as far as the original six principles get and according to recent events, the LSE appears to have taken full advantage of the flexibility of this. Even though the LSE could not have foreseen the Gaddafi scandal emerging, signing itself up to such a lax SRIP was an inherently hypocritical act and its hypocrisy is not diminished or increased by whether or not it receives media attention.

But, returning to the point of analysis with which we started, we find that looking for hypocrisy with a self-critical eye necessitates widening our focus even further. Looking candidly at the issue of financial management confronts us with the uncomfortable truth that responsibility for the direction of our university lies not only with Howard Davies, the Senior Management of the school or the school's governing bodies. Rather it also lies with the students themselves. Before criticising the LSE's SRIP we need to recognise that our own Student's Union, despite paying lip service to environmental and ethical causes does not have any form of ethical restriction on its financial transactions. The first port of call, then, in any attempt to resolve these issues, is to amend the LSE Students' Union's own approach to financial management.

It is clear that there is an increasing appetite not only in the student body, but in the university as a whole, to reassess our approach to ethical financial management. The recent success of the campaign to remove Eden Springs from our campus serves as a powerful indicator of this and the support already shown for the motion calling for ethical financial management, which is being presented at the UGM this Thursday, is also heartening. We now need to take successful ethical financial policies as our example and realise, like the characters in Vanity Fair, that hypocrisy does not necessarily lead to victory.

SCOUNDREL APPREHENDED



REPROBATE ASHLEY STANDS IN THE WAY OF PERPETUATING NARRATIVES

Sucha Petal brands rights for women "liberal twaddle"

Athletics Union President performs citizen's arrest on "walking threat to the status quo"

Student activist loons commit new terrorist atrocity!

LSE students calling themselves "suffragettes" - but whom this paper calls "terrorists" - faced fresh allegations of threatening the life of the nation yesterday. At 2pm, one radical actually picked up a rock and actually smashed a window.

This paper can confirm that no men were hurt, this time at least, but a man had to come the next day to fix the window and - even more seriously - sweep up the glass. Effigies of Herbert Asquith were burnt, and a fire blanket was thrown off a seven-storey building. Fortunately no-one was killed.

The riot comes at a time when many are questioning the tactics of these so-called "women". Already, several have blown up postboxes and one suicide bomber has thrown herself in front of a horse - almost killing the horse. Several women - and this paper can only ap-

plaud this - have starved themselves, slimming themselves down a much finer figure.

Many are still questioning their tactics, however. Manager. Oliver Wisechap said, "I have no qualms about conducting a debate about the electoral rights of citizens in this country, but who will do the washing up? I ask you. I think many in this nation have been listening too closely to the morally corrosive wireless programme, Loose Women."

Medical man and knee-specialist, Sucha Patella said, "They are silly, inappropriate, ridiculous, they do not engage in rational debate and frankly they are dangerous. What we need is a rational discourse; anything outside of that is anti-democratic."

- Pvt. Luke Smellyundkinky

Ashley Kumar speaks out!

The persons leading this revolt can only be described as female. They mostly come from the Students' Union of Evil-doers, LSE SUE. The leading advocate of a change to the voting system is crazed revolutionary Ashley Kumar.

Defending her tactics, Ashley said, "People have to learn that what the Liberal-Tory Coalition government is doing is wrong.

"We are caught up in a war that no-one asked for and no-one understands. The poor stay poor and the rich stay rich and there is nothing politicians can do to stop it. We have invaded Iraq and Afghanistan, leaving them in ruins. Europe is fucked. Ireland is fucked. The Liberals are fucked.

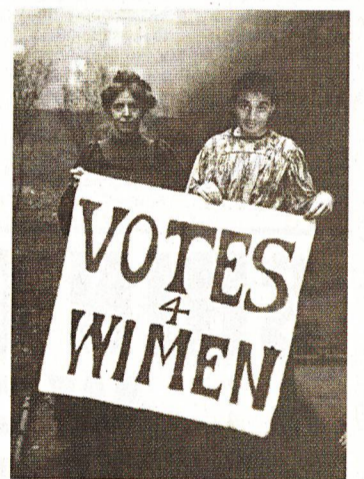
"The least we can do, the thing we

can do to solve everything, is have a fairer voting system! One that more accurately represents the people of this country. Once that happens I'm sure everything will be hunky-dory!"

It is likely that no-one will turn out for a fairer voting system. Even so, everything will still be fucked.

Kumar is 42.

- Pvt. Luke Smellyundkinky



LINKS WITH KAISER BILL THE "SHAME" OF THE SCHOOL



Director of LSE, Howard "still alive" Duvers yesterday apologised for links the LSE had built with Germany. This follows a week of intense media scrutiny of the School, in which Lord Northcliffe branded the LSE, "London Schule auf Evil Scheissenkopfs".

On Monday, it was revealed that Kaiser Wilhelm II's son, Kaiser Wilhelm II½, had donated £1.5/- (1 pound, 5 shillings) to the School. On Tuesday, it was alleged that Kaiser Wilhelm II½ had gone to LSE and plagiarised his PhD, "I love civil society and democracy especially, and will never ever go to war" ("Ich lichte Sözischiesse sympathisch und das

Parlamentskraft, und die Kartoffels sind delizösische").

On Wednesday, it was uncovered that LSE had accepted 2s. 5d. (two bob, thrupence and tuppence) to "train Germany's future leaders". Sir Howard apologised for tarnishing the reputation of the LSE, saying, "Though I apologise for the decisions in general, I do not apologise for any decision in particular".

"I stand by the decision to train Germany's future leaders for example. When we went over there, we trained up this wonderful painter called - what was it? - Adolf, who I'm quite sure will be democratically elected soon. We taught

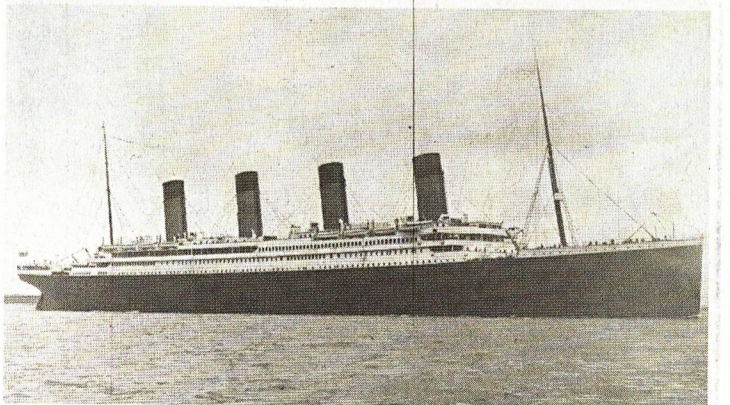
him public speaking, behavioural psychology, genetic engineering - which will all come to good use - and even some scouting. Yep: marching, saluting, setting up camps (you know, how to deal with the poles and so forth). All useful skills.

"We even taught this nice young boy called Goebbels some of LSE's 'reputation-management' skills. Er, not that you call them skills any more. Ha!"

Kaiser Wilhelm II½ said, "Ich bin entschuldigung. Ich habe zwei katzen. Ich habe Sauerkraut in meine Lederhose. Ja, ja, das ist gut!"

- Pvt. Luke Smellyundkinky

An award for readers TWO TICKETS TO RIDE "THE TITANIC"



A Beaver reader deserves nothing less than the top deck of this fine and unsinkable liner

A LETTER FROM GEORGE BERNARD SHAW...

Sir - Shun your fellow students who will sell their souls to financial institutions and, ultimately die empty. I look to you, doe-eyed LSE student, to pursue the noblest of calls. Turn to journalism to stoke the fire of public debate; turn to poetry or drama to give voice to the soul; and turn to politics, if you are illiterate (or a current member of the Students Union). We have selected you for this novel institution, content in the knowledge that when that day comes that Goldman sends you that shiny envelope stuffed with crisp notes you will say Nay, Goldman. Nay, Sir. You cannot put a price on my liberty. I will not accept this gluttony while my fellow man perishes in the gutter.

And when that day comes, and this day may never come, when your brother in arms turns to you and says, comrade let us start a society that will deal with all things monetary, financial and corrupt. You must turn to him and say, no finance society, investment banking society, hedge fund society, management consulting society, business society, entrepreneurship society, Russian banking society will live on this campus sir. You must squash this at its roots. Though this student will be a rare rogue, most likely from the Orient, he must not go unwatched. You must take him and teach him in the ways of the socialists. For that is what we are. That is what we at the LSE all are.

You will need to train yourself in how to spot a capitalist.

You will become eminent thinkers. You will become socially valuable. You will study the social sciences and ways that the mind and soul can best work in harmony.

Go forth LSE-ers, protest, occupy, burn and destroy if necessary. Let's shake these capitalists until they go are forced behind their banking strongholds and learn that they will perish on coins alone.

"A new work of fiction, Jeeves?"

The latest comic creation from the scribe capturing the zeitgeist of our younger generation, please find an excerpt from Mr. P. G. Tanned Ale's latest novella, 'What Ho, men of the Aldwych', in which our unlikely hero finds himself in a predicament over the rum affairs affecting all members of the Union of Undergraduates!

As I sat in the foyer of the new Old Building, mind a-tither over my innumerable contemplations on the descent of the Russian Empire from her post-Napoleonic greatness, I found solace in the view that, following the drafted exams, a future career of capitalist credence in the city beckoned.

Throwing the archaic tomes to the fore-wind, lest they somehow corrupt my mind with the perils of academia, I hastened outside in search of the fine Italian food from the newly founded 'Wright and Son's Sandwich and Panini Emporium', a fine

establishment in which the delights of delectable and delicious Tuscan cuisine were calmly set out and dismissed in favour of the heavy soups and fried potato so demanded by the proletariat.

Omitting these brazen views from the steely eyes of the burger butler. I hurriedly drank my fill of coffee and left, narrowly avoiding being drawn into discussion with Dr. Deks, the noted opponent of the German Unification. A not-dissimilar meander was made around Professor Lieven, for whom I feared would challenge anyone who expressed sympathy for the somewhat inconsistent junior politicians of the International Marxist League, already crowing for the overthrow of his relatives in Petersburg.

A rousing whistle of 'Mac the Knife' brought jeers and cat-calls from the host of pseudo-Olympians regaling each other with tales of their Aphrodi-

tian conquests outside 'Ye Tunnes Three', the favoured haunt for their kind. Blushing without inconsistency, I sought to flee to the International Relations Department, only to remember that the discipline was yet to develop as a separate social science. Tutting at my own anachronistic tomfoolery, I instead found myself troubled by the spectre of Sir Horatio Dworkin, our unfortunate Director, fleeing from an not-inconsiderately sized lynch mob.

Fleeing the scene, fearful that I too would meet the wrath of the masses, I instead chose to devote the rest of the day to prepping for my internship with Messes Merrill and Lynch as well as organising a response to the proposed boycott of the Ottoman Empire over human rights abuses of Jewish settlers in the Holy Land.

- Tanned Ale

SCHOOL COUNCIL MOOTS NATIONALISATION

In the minutes of an LSE Council meeting leaked to the Beaver, the issue of nationalising the School has been discussed, concluding that the costs and benefits of such an arrangement should be assessed in a calm and measured manner before the "campus rag has an opportunity to sensationalise a single conversation had within the governing body of the School and ruin the chance of the School doing what is best for its future."

The details are not yet public, but if the School became a charity supported by government funding, it could not charge fees for tuition and would be expected to provide for its students' welfare while they are studying at the

university. As well as this, quotas could be enforced compelling the School to take students from poor and ethnic backgrounds: a move which could serve to undermine the strong meritocratic traditions of the School.

Students would also be eligible for state hand-outs if the School were to adopt this status: something bound to limit the ability of people to work to better themselves. At present, private status protects the exclusive

nature of the LSE and several of its services: it protects the School from organising unnecessary events and services for the less motivated amongst students and the simply lazy. Public events and a library would

come to serve as a large financial drain upon the School, necessitated by this change in status. The LSE would also be unable to use its yearly surplus as it sees fit: surpluses would have to be funnelled back into teaching, rather be-

ing used for capital expansion. When asked as to the veracity of these documents, the LSE's Director William Beveridge stated, "I might be a Fabian, but it's ridiculous to think that the School could carry on in

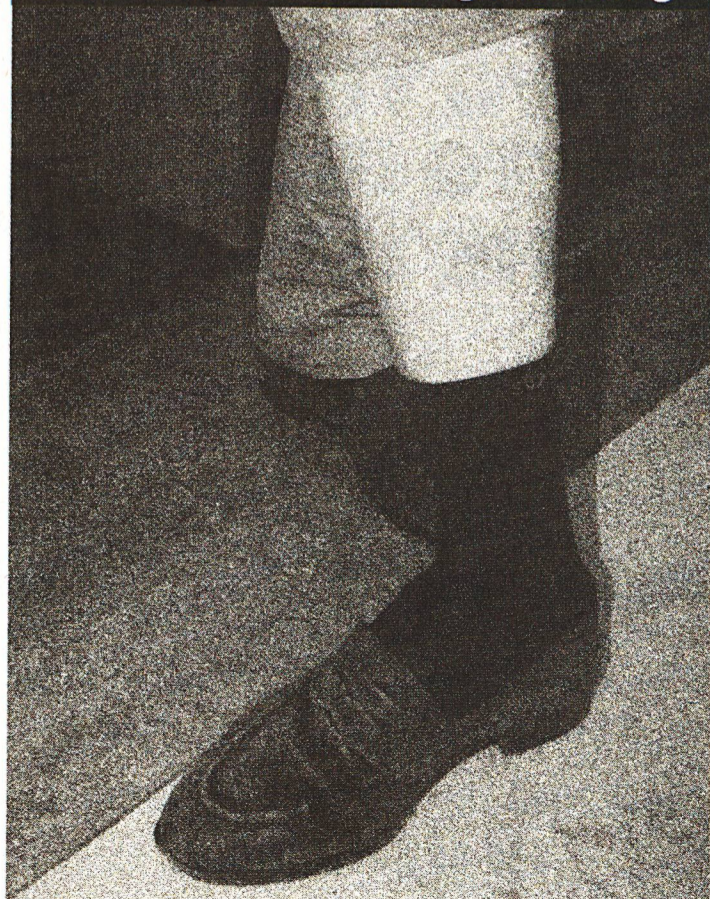
any meaningful capacity if we become a charity. We must buck the trend and carry on resolute, doing whatever we want with no care for our students. The institution must go ahead at all costs: come the turn of the next century,

we might decide that we actually need to look after the students rather than ourselves. Time will tell."

- Standing ovation for Danny Ayalon

SHIN OF THE WEEK

Oswald, 21: "I do hope the boys in the trenches give the Hun a good kicking"



Plumbing bungled at Gray's Inn Road residence

In an attempt to solve the problem of increasing homelessness for students at the LSE, it has been decided by LSE Director William Beveridge to put up wooden boarding chambers numbering around fifteen in the library for the purposes of rent to students. This will be undertaken by the university's handyman, Mr Spink, and will take around three weeks to complete. He apologises for any noise and sawdust that may cause inconvenience to students.

In Gray's Inn Road's housing facility accommodating around ten students at university, in two freak occurrences the communal washbasin has broken and the

silver bathtub stolen by a young ruffian, leaving students without washing facilities. This has been the case for two weeks; the staff at the accommodation have not yet been able to replace these items, due to lack of funds. The Beaver spoke to the manageress and matron of the accommodation, Mrs. A. Nazeby. She said, "We apologise to all the young men who are unable to wash. It is of much inconvenience to them, milord, I understand. I pray forgiveness," before rushing back to the accommodation to prevent a common lout of Holborn running in and stealing one of the accommodation's currant buns.

The students at the accommodation were not pleased with the circumstances, but understanding with Mrs Nazeby's plight to an extent. After all, she is a woman, and this must be factored into her general incompetence. One Wilf Cannon said, "It's not good, not good at all, but when I'm at home with my pa and ma I only use a flannel at all times for all of my body, so it's not as bad as other people are suggesting. Bit of elbow grease and you get everywhere. And I mean everywhere: I'm a miner's son."

- "Beelay"

STUDENTS AND STAFF ALIKE ENJOY THE SHAW LIBRARY AND ITS MODERN CHATTELS!

The government and economics departments' tea dance will take place in the Shaw Library next Saturday, 3pm. Thomas Bill, aged 20 and 2 months, will be playing his famous (or some say infamous!) paper and comb 'instrument' which many of the LSE students are now acquainted with. It is really very humorous and there will be a bingo game after Mr Bill has performed his

performance. One token for a shandy or a lemonade per student and another for a slice of toast per student will be distributed to students by their tutors by Friday. This event will close at 6pm sharp. The Director has made it clear that he wants no repeat of the event last year, when excitable students drank more than two lemonades. To prevent this, only one lemonade will be consumed per student

throughout the afternoon.

Captain Scott will be giving a talk at the university in a month's time, before he leaves for the North Pole to defeat the Norwegians for our pride and show the Lord that this nation is the best in the world. The subject is: 'Why British people know best: my trips walking without a jacket in cold places when it was recommended by a French foe but because I'm British I

knew better even if I did need a trip to a sanatorium for a number of weeks, and other subjects.' It will take place in the Shaw Library, 23rd April, 2:32pm precisely, at Capt. Scott's wishes, for he has another meeting later in the afternoon. Admittance will be free.

- "Beelay"

LEIPZIG SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

LONDON: In a statement to the House of Commons this afternoon, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, confirmed that the London School of Economics had accepted numerous donations from senior figures within the German Empire over the past decade. In a speech at Methodist Central Hall, Mr. Balfour claimed that the sons of various members of the Central European nobility had received education at the School, most notably of all being Kronprinz Friedrich Wilhelm Victor August Ernst von Preußen, the German Crown Prince.

Condemnation of the move has been highly vocal, with all elements of the government expressing dismay at the move. Mr. Henderson denounced the so-called "Imperialist" measures on behalf of the Labour Party. Mr. Bonar Law accused the LSE of representing "Socialist

Spendthrift" at a meeting of the Conservative and Unionist Parliamentary Party whilst in Dublin, a brief uprising at the Post Office in support of the donation was met by limited and patriotic gunfire.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves supported the donation by Kronprinz Friedrich as well as the controversial work that the Heir to the Prussian Throne completed whilst at the School, in which he received a Doctorate for his thesis on "Limited Militarisation in Protecting the Westphalian Sovereignty and Democratic Rights of the Kingdom of Belgium".

The resignation of the Director has not yet been forthcoming, although it is understood that the Defence of the Realm Act may be amended to prevent a repeat of such actions.

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi is -57 years old.

- Tanned Ale



Foreign delicacy reviewed by the Beaver

The Beaver was recently privileged with a preview of an intriguing culinary proposition which has sauntered onto our campus. Wright's Bar, an eatery whose proprietors have travelled across the Dolomites from northern Italy, promises to fill the stomachs of hard-up students with a delightful selection of exotic fare. But your correspondent confesses to being perplexed at first by some of the produce on offer. Pictured above is a slice of the curious delicacy, "pizza"—imagine, if you will, a cloying layer of melted cheese atop a crispy bread base, finished with healthy toppings such as "tomato". It reminded this author of an underwhelming, deflated pie.

Other items on the menu were more pleasing, if innovative: a patty of beef, placed between two floury baps; an oily Gallic invention known as "French fries"; a "salad" comprised of a single lettuce leaf and a portion of cured meat.

The Beaver encourages students to sample Wright's Bar—not least because of the fine philly who is there to serve patrons.

Whiney - "I'm bloody marvellous"

This article is supposed to be about General Haig but mainly I'm going to talk about me, Porn How-Whiney (Big name on campus. Ask the AU.). In a personal, one-to-one, interview conducted with Uncle Haigy himself* he told me (reminder: I am PORN HOW-WHINEY. You may have seen me in a Mayfair Ballroom.) that he personally thinks the AU drinking culture is, "abominable" and that he thinks that we should "bomb" all perpetrators. FACT: One glass of wine kills over 6 billion athletes every Wednesday (source: random Strand Polytechnical College student).

I think that the AU Ball was the best team-foresteering event known to man kind. As someone who did not personally attend I am completely ill-informed on all the facts, but this

is what happened in my dream. The beautiful dresses, the delicate china and vegetarian options did much to persuade me that the AU is the Brotherhood of Angels and Saints. They all said grace before, during and after their meal. Frankly, I find nothing to complain about. Lovely bunch, really.

I realise I have completely conter-quantra-kontradick-contradicted myself but I won't proof-read this so I won't care as the Beaver Ed board has nothing better to do than basically re-write my pieces.

You will take this fact as God's own written commandment for I am after all, PORN HOW-WHINEY and you may recognise me from:

1. My Social Fallacy Society
2. Summer school at a

liberal-arts college in Massachusetts.

3. My numerous Facebook networks/statuses—God, I'm such a good stalk

4. I'm Porn How-whiney, don't you know—you can find a picture of me on page 58 of the Dependent

If you want to see more Porn, then don't look in the News section. Apparently, it's meant to be neutral.

* By "interview with Haigy himself" I mean that I have taken individual words that he has said in over 200 speeches and placed these unrelated words together liberally to construct sentences of my own, so as to further my baseless argument.

- Porn How Whiney

HUZZAH! Bigotry, Bigotry and more Bigotry at Students' Union

LSE appoints the Wright Director

The highest governing body of LSE, the school Council, today announced the successor of Howard Davies. In a logical move that was expected from many, Gio from Wrights bar will be taking over from acting director Judith Rees next month. Also known as 'Papa Wright', Gio's first decisions will be tough in the current climate of education cuts, strikes and protests. However, The Beaver can reveal that Gio will be taking a liberal position on tuition fees, and all fees for students will be arbitrarily decided on the spot, ranging from £1.85 per year for the least well-off students and a maximum of £2.20 for better-off students.

Furthermore, Gio will be enlisting top executives to ensure the smooth day to day running of LSE. It is rumoured that his wife, Mama Wright, will personally be hosting the graduation ceremony in July, and each graduate will receive a heartfelt message from the Director's wife along the lines of "Daahling, schalt, pepper, mai-hyoonaise?"

Gio has also announced that he will bowing down to significant Student's Union pressure following the "Freeze the Fries" campaign, and will be capping the price of chips on campus at £1.85 for less

well-off, or female, students and a maximum price of £2.20 for better-off students. The leader of the campaign, Alexander Smedley, announced that "he was pleased the LSE Council have finally appointed a leader who is prepared to listen to what students want. We are now ready to commence our next campaign, 'Freeze the Fried Foods'."

But the controversy surrounding the LSE regarding its involvement with dictators will be a particularly heartfelt issue that Gio will want to handle personally. Having single-handedly brought down Austrian despots The Hapsburgs in the 1870s, unifying Italy in the process, Gio and the Wrights bar team have made it clear they have no time for such individuals and as Director will make sure that the LSE is never embroiled in such scandals ever again. In order to make up for the opportunity cost of rejecting donations from dictators, Gio has promised to cut down the electricity costs of LSE campus using the same technique that the Director used when governing Wright's bar. Namely, by hooking up the LSE circuitry to the power supply of Holborn tube station.

-Maatyuuw Boh-K-aaa

Overdone it at Xmas? Looking for a healthier option?
Why not dine at the newly renovated...

Restaurant de Wrights

All your favourite early-death-inducing meals - now written in French!

Maintenant serving:

- le pain chaud avec le delicatessen de fromage (cheese on toast)
- deux pains avec le jambon mais ce n'est pas le jambon, c'est le boeuf! (bamburger)
- les monches de monstrosite (Monster Munch)
- les frites de Jacques Tindale (cheesy chips)
- le salade du jour (one lettuce leaf)
- oeuf (the noise you make when you finish)

Gents, it is election time again, and candidates have duly been strolling up and down the street for the last couple of hours before the vote.

This edition went to press three days after the vote, but the ballots are still being hand-counted and supervised to prevent corruption, and are about 50 per cent of the way through. This newspaper was not permitted into the counting room and so as of this moment, we are unsure of the leading runners. But we know there have been some radicals who have managed to break their way in to the mainstream and look likely to take one or two positions. This paper certainly fears for the future of the Union if this is so, not that this paper take sides in any way shape or form.

Campaigning certain become heated shortly before the vote in the race for President, when both candidates, facing each other down, and one having his hat taken clean off, had to be restrained and taken away for a good talking to.

Though the race is almost over this paper would like to remind students of some of the most interesting races:

RACISM OFFICER

The race for Racism Officer has certainly been a tough one this year, both candidates spouting advanced rhetoric; however, on a policy platform neither sought to distance themselves from the mainstream position, both pandering to the majority view. Despite rumours circulating that the far left candidate Horace Finley would stand on a platform of equality, he promptly denied his candidacy, seeing the overwhelming disagreement with the rest of the student body.

An incident did occur on the day of the vote, with one candidate, Cornelius Bedford, shouting down a voluntary member of the Metropolitan police for being far too immigrant friendly, and refusing to use his powers to stop and search minorities, and

even accusations of preferential treatment. The officer in question denied these allegations asserting such allegations were salacious lies, and that he would be launching a formal complaint against the School.

CHAPS OFFICER

Both candidates appear neck and neck, each with a rough balance of societies backing each of them. Both candidates stood on a positive platform, and in public certainly seemed to praise one another as 'decent chaps'. However, the race has been accused of, behind the scenes, being one of the dirtiest in the history of the union.

Allegations have been anonymously levelled at Gideon Hunt that he was seen in the company of rapsallions from UCL or King's or another of those overtly pretentious universities, rather than down to earth students like ourselves.

Meanwhile, highly charged leaflets accusing Dante Bishop of being 'unsound' have been criticised by Bishop of being a personal ad hominem attack, breaking the first law of 'Lacero libellus', and issued demands for an immediate apologies. Rumours circulated that a duel was first proposed, but both backed down after advice from their seconds that it would be raining at dawn.

WOMEN'S OFFICER

The two men standing for Women's Officer could not be more different. The mainstream candidate Asher Lowin has stood on the quite reasonable platform that women are perfectly well represented by men, and have no need to the vote themselves. He has proven this by putting forward several proposals for women's social activities such as knitting and sewing.

His maverick opponent Lord Fitzgerald, however, advocates voting in the Students' Union election for women, and that women should be able to actually stand for elected

office in the union themselves. But perhaps even more radically he suggests joining the union's voice to the radical Suffragettes who are a burgeoning force in politics today.

PLEBIAN OFFICER

Of course, as an institution founded on the ideals of improving access for the poor, the would-be Plebeian Officers both promised to use their position as a voice for the poor and disadvantaged.

When searching for a member of the working class to ask their views, unfortunately the paper was unable to locate anyone from such a background, which each candidate promised to use their power to remedy. One candidate, Erasmus Harrison, explained quite reasonably that it was the fault of the poor themselves if they chose not to take part in University education or union elections, whilst the other, James Stanton (referring to himself as a communist—a follower of a dead philosopher buried in North London) explained that it was the whole economic system that was at fault and needed replacing to allow disadvantaged students a chance.

PRESIDENT

Strangely for union politics, the Presidential race has been dominated by factional society politics over foreign affairs. The German Society has been engaged in a silent war with other European societies, notably the French and Russian Societies over issues across the Channel, and both Presidential candidates have been drawn in to the fray.

Though this paper doesn't take sides, it does hope that such disagreements are confined to societies themselves and not to spill over into the domain of English Union politics

- Kester "What's the point in the state? We've got God!" Rabbit

LAGER? NOT ON THIS CAMPUS, SAYS THE BEAVER

Last week the Three Tuns saloon started to stock another drink. After constant lobbying, 'lager' is being brought onto the LSE's campus. No longer do the British Isles' traditional drinks, port and whisky, satisfy the wants of the university's 'scholarship boys' apparently. Presumably it is because of the fact that they have lived inside or near Big Smokes which are thankfully so dominant in this country. These 'scholarship boys' go into Britain's cities for their kicks; they like that new

'nancy-boy' game 'foot-ball'; they travel on the omnibus; they do not regularly bathe. It is a common drink, a glass for 2d, drunk at something called public houses outside urban centres, which commonly leads to rowdiness amongst the youth and the unemployed navvies of Britain.

Initially, this newspaper said NO to the introduction of this drink in our saloon. We did not want to lead this university into chronic destitution as our more common brothers may lead their

lives, drinking at all hours. Having tasted it, we still believe the same. After two of the drinks, this writer felt very light headed and started to talk nonsense: this is plainly a drink that we cannot allow on this campus. And this newspaper will lobby the appropriate persons until this evil with its low alcohol content and lowly, working-class reputation is removed. The taste of the lager was quite simply foul. It tasted of, for want of a better word of descriptive quality, dishwasher and will lead

to the disintegration of our fine standards and reputation. We will campaign to rid this drink from our union until port and whisky have been reinstated as this union's favourite drinks. If you support us, please send us a telegram to our office as soon as is feasibly possible. God Save The King.

-“Beelay”

Gossip Governess

Which Director of the LSE has been seen canoodling with a certain author of a certain book about rabbits? The two were seen exiting the transgender toilet looking rather flushed. Ms Potters raised skirt, raised several eyebrows.

Several students belonging to the Palesine-does-not-yet-exist-and-neither-does-Israel-but-we-like-a-cause-bruv Society were seen occupying Houghton Street. Despite the fact that they had no cause to speak of yet, the President of the society said, “As long as there is water/a wall somewhere to be represented, we will protest”.

LSE Professor Kathy Hacker has released research saying that women are not real humans. The survey also shows that not only are they unlikely to ever be capable of work, outside of the kitchen obviously, but that they will never ever want to do any kind of work or learn to read, write or count.

Rosebury Hall has just received it's first bathing hose. The residents are ecstatic at the fact that they will be each allowed 120 seconds of 'showering' time under the communal hose. Several residents have expressed concern over the lack of privacy - students will have to shower naked in the refectory area, since there no garden. One resident, Jacque LePéare said, “I feel violated. We deserve at least a hose door.”

Two presenters on Pulse, the wireless station, has been accused of being misogynists after reportedly regaling tales of their conquests live on radio. “They were jiggling about everywhere” said one of the presenters, referring to the fat underneath a woman's upper arm. “She flashed me her bare wrist and I just knew that she wanted me”, said the other. A full investigation is underway.

You know I'm peeping,
200 200

Readers' Digest

Pointless Philippe Celeb Chair given to egotistical imperial apologist here just to promote a book!

The new Pointless Philippe Celeb Chair for a 10-hour lecture course (possibly 9-hour, depending whether he decides to go to Davos or not) has been given to unknown Clement Attlee, who will teach social science at LSE.

On an entirely unrelated note, Clem Attlee has a book out. The new book and wireless series, called Civilisation: How the Whites beat the Sh*ttes, will be out in March. Only ½d.

Israel-Pal-Soc row five minutes after Balfour Declaration!

At 3pm, Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour signed a statement issuing his support for a national home for the Jewish people. By 3.02pm, the Israel and Palestinian Socs were founded. By 3.04pm, they had started to row. By 3.05pm, they had both written in to the Beaver. [cont. p97]

RETURN OF THE CARBOLIC SMOKE BALL

£100 reward will be paid by the Carbolic Smoke Ball Company to any person who contracts the increasing epidemic influenza colds, or any disease caused by taking cold, after having used the ball three times daily for two weeks, according to the printed directions supplied with each ball.

£1000 is deposited with the Alliance Bank, Regent Street, showing our sincerity in the matter.

During the last epidemic of influenza many thousand carbolic smoke balls were sold as preventives against this disease, and in no ascertained case was the disease contracted by those using the carbolic smoke ball.

One carbolic smoke ball will last a family several months, making it the cheapest remedy in the world at the price, 10s. post free. The ball can be refilled at a cost of 5s. Address: “Carbolic Smoke Ball Company, “27, Princes Street, Hanover Square, London.”

BEAVER EXCLUSIVE - A PREVIEW OF CINEMATIC VISIONARY ARMIN TAMAZARIAN'S FORTHCOMING SILENT PICTURE EXTRAVAGANZA, ARABIAN NIGHTS

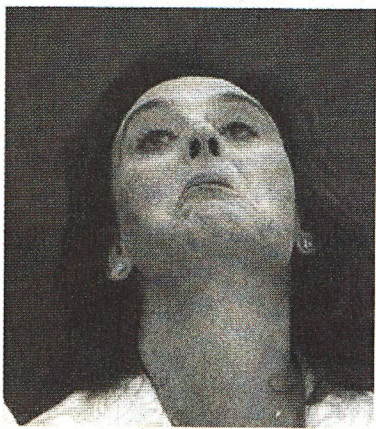
The exotic tale of a passionate desert sheikh

ARABIAN NIGHTS

“SLEEPING”
(British) Empire magazine

After two score and ten Tony still manages to excite in the boudoir!

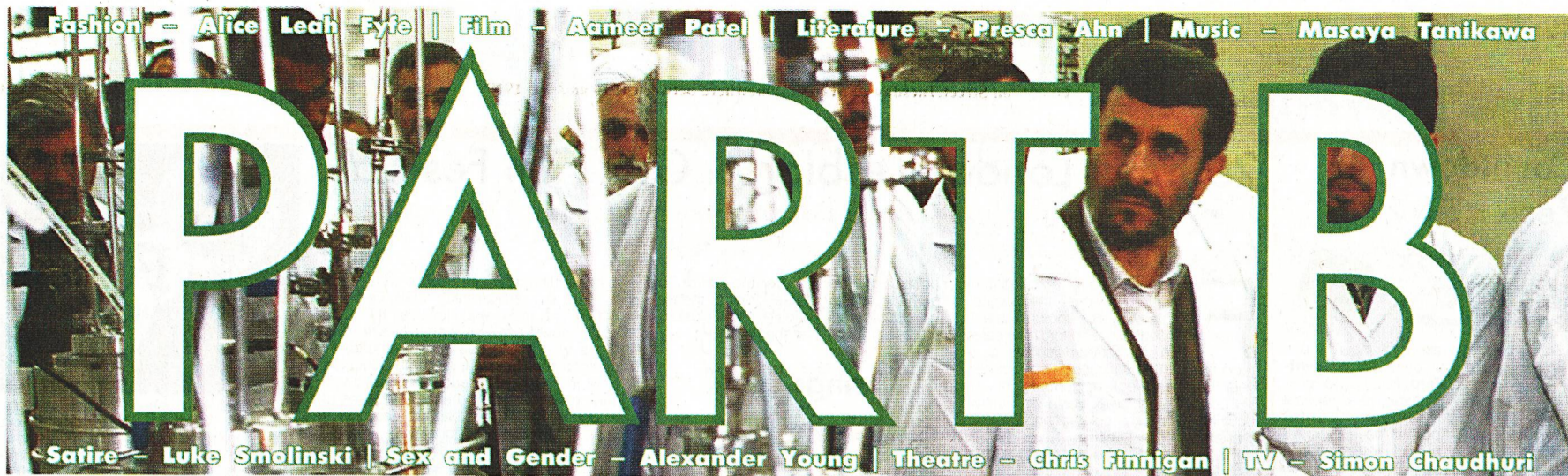
“That night he devoured me; he amused my bouche, no less!”



“What's this? Foul play with the Musselman? In more than one way, methinks!”



“you might say he's made his “bedghazi” and “surt” to lie in it!”



Fashion - Alice Leah Fyfe | Film - Aameer Patel | Literature - Presca Ahn | Music - Masaya Tanikawa

Satire - Luke Smolinski | Sex and Gender - Alexander Young | Theatre - Chris Finnigan | TV - Simon Chaudhuri

Editor's Picks of the Month

Fa

Looking Twice - Fashion and Illusion
3rd - 6th April
The Collective

Susheela Raman
14th April
Rich Mix

Mu

Fi

Human Rights Watch Film Festival
March 23rd - April 1st
Curzon; ICA; The Ritzy

The Soviet Dream
13th April

Li

Th

Moonlight
7th April - 28th May
Donmar Warehouse

Kayde Anobile - Simulacra
Until 9th April
Tintype Gallery

Vi

Film.

Birds Eye View film festival 2011

We continue our coverage of the only festival celebrating women filmmakers



I recently read that America is still 'Amerika'. Plenty of statistics, whether prisoner numbers, likelihood of arrest, or average sentence duration, suggest the dream isn't realised. A great man delivering a wonderful speech and a heavily polished man being elected to the Oval Office are no more than symbolic moments in a much longer, harder, bloodier struggle. **Night Catches Us** takes place when the Black Panthers, a group who perhaps receive insufficient credit today, were no longer 'in full effect' but still nationally significant. This struggle drives the main story and determines much, but the film is fundamentally more personal.

It revolves around Marcus (Anthony Mackie), a former Panther who returns to turbulent 1976 Philadelphia after a period of self-imposed exile and imprisonment. Having disappeared under mysterious circumstances amid which his best friend was killed by the police, his return leads to tension both with the new supposed 'vanguard' of the Panthers and also with what remains of his own family. The complicated relationship with his Black Muslim brother (Tariq Trotter) promises much, but is passed over.

This loss is more than compensated for by Patricia (Kerry Washington), widow of the best friend and, despite her youth, a motherly figure to the community. Mackie delivers a forceful performance, following his notable turn in *The Hurt*



Locker, but Washington is more emotive. Her daughter Iris (Jamara Griffin) is equally strong, and though some of her scenes veer close to cliché, others are the strongest in the film.

A dark, hidden past weighs heavily on all three. Patricia cannot bear to leave

the home in which her husband was killed. Ten-year-old Iris recognises this peculiarity but does not receive an explanation because it is gripped too tightly by pain and seemingly, regret. Mackie, despite implications that revealing the circumstances of his disappearance would

exonerate him, is unable to do so.

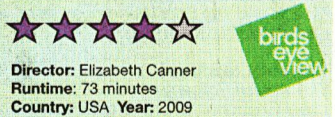
While the film centres around individuals, their lives are in many cases defined by a larger social movement and a tense political climate. To her credit, Washington avoids using this to carry the film, and where it is used, she does so



carefully. The film is about the past and how it simultaneously drives and handicaps the present. To leave, whether it is a house of painful memories or a community onto which the past continually casts shadows, is difficult.

The film needs a message, but for all the boldness of the soundtrack by *The Roots*, one is not clearly audible. Tanya Hamilton shows more than just glimpses of promise in her debut, but several aspects, such as her pragmatic-or-corrupt black police officer, although well executed, are tiresomely familiar. However, her scenes are unusually patient and she refuses to rush through the emotions and reactions of each character. In the way that Mackie knows that matters are always more complicated than the simplistic good versus evil propaganda spewed on both sides, she appreciates the depth of her principal characters.

Tanya Hamilton will become an important filmmaker. Her sensitivity and subtlety, though in places requiring refinement, are quite clear. Her vision is impressive and her recreation of Philadelphia, particularly the mood, is excellent. If I were lazy, I would proclaim her the new so-and-so, but I am sure she would quickly outgrow any such tag.



In **Orgasm Inc.** documentary filmmaker Liz Canner takes a job editing erotic videos for a drug trial for a pharmaceutical company. Her employer is developing what they hope will be the first Viagra drug for women that wins FDA approval to treat a new disease: Female Sexual Dysfunction (FSD). Liz gains permission to film the company for her own documentary. Initially, she plans to create a movie about science and pleasure but she soon begins to suspect that her employer, along with a cadre of other medical companies, might be trying to take advantage of women (and potentially endanger their health) in pursuit of billion dollar profits.

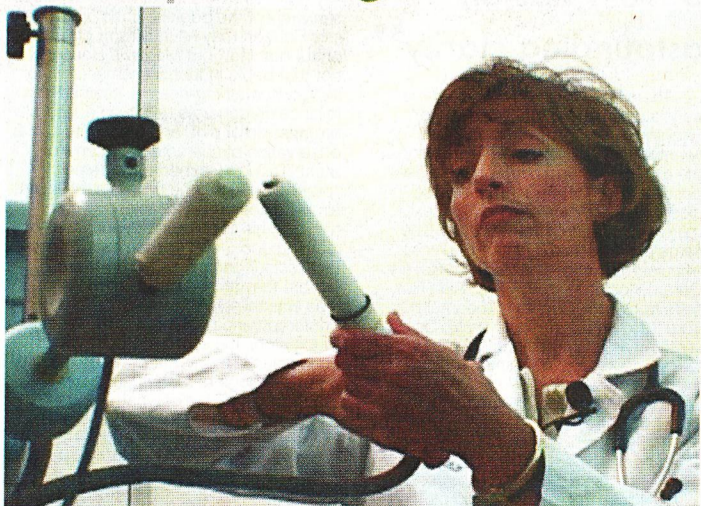
The focus of the film quickly shifts to a detailed exploration of the entire female sexual health industry, with numerous interviews given with gynaecologists who suggest that FSD is a fictitious disease,

drug company executives who insist to the contrary, as well as laypeople convinced they have something wrong with them because they cannot achieve orgasm. All of this takes place under a backdrop of a medical 'race' to legalise the female Viagra.

All of this is extremely potent; Canner admits naivety in the early stages of the film, but her explorations are thorough and the whole documentary is filmed with more than just a tinge of scepticism. Fortright without being polemical—a tricky tightrope to walk in documentary filmmaking—the film is powerful enough on its own merits.

Yet, Canner undercuts her potency through a variety of gimmicks such as a CGI-animated race of all the potential drugs to a proverbial finish as well as overbearing music (and sometimes over-obvious narration). The most powerful scenes in the film are when Canner just uses editing to create drama, rather than forcing it upon the audience. As it is, *Orgasm Inc.* is a very good portrayal of a very sticky industry.

Jonathan Storey Orgasm Inc.



It's the end of the road for some of our wonderful editors, and PartB will be undergoing exciting changes next year, so we're on the lookout for people to fill the following positions:

- Food editor
- Literature editor
- Music editor
- Satirist (Private B)
- Theatre editor
- Visual arts editor
- Web editor

We'd also love to speak to you if you're interested in helping with design.

Email: partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Film. Literature.

Countdown to Zero Aameer Patel

★★★★★
 Director: Lucy Walker
 Runtime: 90 minutes
 Country: USA Year: 2010

You might ask 'why now?' upon hearing the premise of *Countdown to Zero*, but the real possibilities it explores are as relevant now as they were in 1962. For many years, major powers have been reducing the number of nuclear warheads in their arsenals, but their reduced status in relations between countries has led to reduced security.

The danger in some ways is even greater now. Walker uses John F. Kennedy's speech from 1961 to good effect, as it outlines the extensive dangers posed by nuclear weapons, not only in deliberate attacks. Since 1945, we have chosen more crude methods of killing ourselves, but there are some today who are not so principled. The film stresses that in the event of an attack, even if relatively weak, implications are just as terrifying. One interviewee highlights the inevitability of a theme often found in dystopian fiction: "The Bill of Rights will be put on the shelf... people will demand draconian measures."

Most people are aware that the collapse of the USSR opened up access to the highly enriched radioactive material needed to produce a bomb, and this is underlined, but one of the strengths of the film is its focus on the weaknesses inherent in even the most secure and careful of nuclear countries, the USA. An attack on the mainland is deemed "unlikely" by a security expert, but he notes that "low probability events happen all the time".

In addition to its narration, sharp editing and efficient use of archive footage, a strength of the film is its simplicity. A nuclear weapon is available not only to bogeymen, but also to 'you'.

The solution, as we have long known, is zero. This would invalidate the 'me too' argument put forward by Ahmadinejad and others. Of course, Iran maintains that its intention is merely to generate power, and since this capacity is vital to the satiate the world's energy hunger, it presents a paradox, at least based on the film. It takes pains to point out how simple producing a nuclear weapon is, assuming possession of highly enriched radioactive material, but producing such material is possible at facilities used to produce the less enriched material used for power.

The sword of Damocles, while not as sharp now, nonetheless hangs by a slender thread. Today, there are numerous forces attempting to sever this thread, but few attempting to strengthen it. This thread must be strengthened before the sword can be removed.

25th BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

Pearl Wong and Gianfranco Bettocchi preview one of the most eye-opening festivals on the world circuit

Film festivals are exciting—they present the risqué, the compelling, and the little-known subjects too controversial for a watered down mainstream audience. A good one can be difficult to find, but next week you need look no further than the BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival (LLGFF). Currently celebrating its 25th anniversary, The LLGFF's lineup delivers nothing short of mind-boggling, unconventional eye-openers.

The festival's offerings are as delicious and varied as the cupcakes you will see on its programmes and flyers. In a mix of touching documentaries and experimental pornos, the LLGFF will take audiences through a whirlwind of topics ranging from mid-life epiphanies, FtM transitioning, historical narratives, pornography as political art, and the advent of modern queer cinema. Indeed the name of the festival is actually somewhat misleading.

The terms 'gay' and 'lesbian' call to mind a static, Western ideology in which sexual identity fit neatly into a male or female, hetero- or homosexual framework. The LLGFF does not adhere to this reductive sexual and gender binary system. Rather, it explores a seemingly endless variety of sexualities and how they are embodied and lived all over the world. This, perhaps, is the greatest draw of the festival: its constant curiosity and inclusion of material from all over the world.

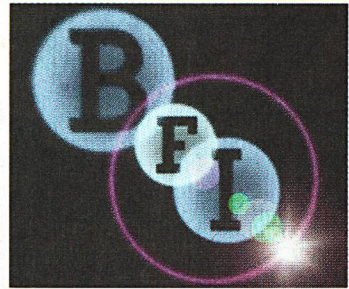
"It brings LGBT issues and lifestyles down to earth"

What's more, this year the festival is celebrating its longevity by featuring a retrospective of previous years' successes, such as *Mysterious Skin* (2004), *Rise Above: The Tribe 8 Documentary* (2003), and *We Were Here* (2010), as well as some classics like *Michael* (1924). Alongside more than thirty feature film screenings, it includes educational workshops and discussions ranging from a unique academy for young writers and filmmakers to performances by Bird la Bird and interactive talks on feminist porn. While the festival may have been reduced from its traditional two weeks to a one week celebration this year (due to budget cuts), "the UK's longest running queer film event" is not cutting down on quality.

For any self-defining LGBTQer, the LLGFF is a must-see. However, the audience should not limit themselves to only those who are 'genderqueer'. Instead, all straight allies and supporters should attend in order to broaden their horizons. Take part in the documented struggles of *Becoming Chaz* as he experiences his first year of publicly transitioning from female to male. Join the extraordinary discovery of a 50-year-old woman makes in *Jan's Coming Out*, and push the boundaries of societal norms with the debut of non-professional actors in *Open* that explores "new territory in gender, sexuality and identity".

Far too often the only narratives available about the LGBTQ community are those that focus on its marginalisation – suicides, violence, homophobia, bullying and hopelessness. Stories of ordinary and extraordinary lives – stories of possibility – are so rare that people forget the LGBTQ are made up of living, breathing human beings who are just like everyone else. The LLGFF however fully embraces its "cultural and social function" by bringing LGBT issues and lifestyles down to earth, and celebrates this unique and diverse community.

So join the celebration on 31st March



as the festival launches its Opening Night Gala with *Kaboom*, directed by Gregg Araki, which follows your average sex-obsessed teenage boy who eats some hallucinogenic cookies and finds himself in a twisted murder mystery where he must race against time to save the world. As the programme describes it, "In Araki's assured hands, youthful existentialism has never seemed like more fun."

Certainly, the LLGFF is a festival that will bring films and people from every walk of life together; the festival offers something for everyone and you may be surprised by what you will find.

The 25th BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival takes place between 31st March and 6th April at the BFI Southbank.

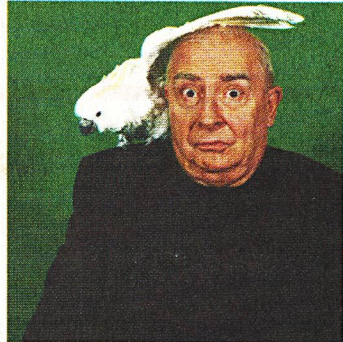
Visit bfi.org.uk/llgff

Claude Chabrol Directorspective

Allie Fonarev looks at the works of the French New Wave great

Claude Chabrol, one of the most prolific members of the French New Wave cinema movement, brought several thrilling depictions of French society to the screen. One of his most popular works, *Madame Bovary* (1991), is a portrait of provincial existence in the nineteenth century and is based on Gustave Flaubert's 1856 eponymous novel. The story paints an interesting portrayal of the difficulties and banalities of the life of a rural middle class doctor's wife. Bored with her present condition and dreaming of excitement, she toys dangerously with secret lovers and buys extravagant objects which are beyond her means. After much adulterous heartbreak and disappointment, she tries to salvage her family fortune but fails, ultimately taking her own life in excruciating desperation. Perhaps the saddest thing through all this time is that her ever-loyal husband remains woefully loving at her side.

Even though excellent French actress Isabelle Huppert is cast in the leading role and the story's message is poignantly clear, the film is at times painfully slow and almost humorous in its over-dramatised acting.



Though this is typical of cinematic adaptations of older novels, it is better to call the screen version an antediluvian *Desperate Housewives* and read Flaubert's magnum opus instead (see below).

On the other hand, Chabrol's acclaimed *La Cérémonie* is not to be missed. Huppert, a favourite of the director, is cast again as the wild companion of the protagonist, played by Sandrine Bonnaire. She plays a secretly dyslexic maid hired by the wealthy

housewife (Jacqueline Bisset) of a business-man to work for their family in the countryside. Her friendship with Huppert, the dangerously unrestrained postal worker, slowly leads to a destructive conclusion for the lives of all involved.

"La Cérémonie is brilliant, exciting and one of the best examples of Claude Chabrol's mastery"

The acting is superb, and the film is tense, thrilling, and underlined with a certain aloof existential tone. While the two friends seem apathetic and the action is set in

every-day events, the audience is left feeling a heavy and intense undertone until the final climax. In this way, the film is reminiscent of Camus' *L'Étranger*. Also running through the story is again a theme about French class-based and social animosity – this time in the latter half of the twentieth century. Conflicted between disdain and jealousy for the lives of the wealthy family, the postal worker slowly pulls the indifferent maid's loyalties away from her employers to a final impassioned revenge. Yet fate or circumstance for all the characters is unforgiving in the end, and the film concludes with a piercing and intense end. *La Cérémonie* is brilliant, exciting and one of the best examples of Claude Chabrol's mastery. Both films, however, satisfy those interested in cinema with inner meaning—a social commentary to analyse, rather than simply an entertaining plot.

Madame Bovary and *La Cérémonie* were screened as part of the Claude Chabrol Directorspective at the Barbican Centre.

Visit barbican.org.uk/film

Review: Lydia Davis's new translation of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* Presca Ahn

In *Madame Bovary*, Gustave Flaubert wrote in a highly controlled and economical prose style that was, in 1856, something quite new in European fiction. As he was drafting what would be his most famous novel, Flaubert toiled under the belief that a line of prose should have the rhythm, the sonority, and the unbreakability of a line of verse. The result, as critic Michael Dirda has quipped, is that "you can shake *Madame Bovary* and nothing will fall out."

For a book so carefully constructed, it's hard to think of a happier choice of translator than the eminently precise fiction writer Lydia Davis. Though she's been acclaimed recently as a translator of Proust, Davis's pairing with Flaubert seems even more apt. After all, Proust's lush, expansive narration (lengthy, too – many translators of *In Search of Lost Time* have died before completion) has little affinity with Davis's characteristic fiction: compressed, scrupulous short stories, some a mere sentence or two long, that often evince an ironical sensibility. A good match, then, for the exacting Flaubert, who drafted so many more pages than he published, and who saw

irony even in his most serious aspirations and sentiments.

Lydia Davis is a virtuosic restoration artist, and her *Madame Bovary* has an astounding clarity. To say that her translation is excellent is not simply to say that she has performed well by such and such technical criteria that matter primarily to translators and literary critics. It is to say something more fundamental: that Davis has decisively reanimated this novel, which has been slowly obscured, over the last century and a half, by translators who were only good enough.

"Davis is a virtuosic restoration artist... her *Madame Bovary* has an astounding clarity"

There have been at least nineteen translations of *Madame Bovary* into English; Davis's new version makes twenty. Hers is a very close translation, the closest yet, and perhaps the closest possible. But though she cleaves so closely to the nineteenth century text, there's no stuffiness to her prose. The same can't be said even for the most popular translations of *Madame Bovary*: Gerard Hopkins's from 1948, Alan Russell's from 1950, Francis Steegmuller's from 1957. More impressive still, Davis's version has an immediate feel without taking recourse to odd anachronisms, for example phrases like "No way!" (Margaret Mauldon, 2004) and "the damage was done" (Geoffrey Wall, 1992).

In a move bolder than it may seem, Davis has retained practically all of the flaws and quirks of Flaubert's prose. His little slips in calculation and plotting (chronological implausibility in Emma's assignations, an odd-number amount

counted out in even-number coinage, etc.) remain intact in Davis's version, as do certain crucial grammatical idiosyncrasies: italicised phrases, comma splices, non-parallelism. These are quirks that many previous translators have seen fit to erase or 'correct'—with the effect of stilted the cadence of Flaubert's lines, and deadening his ironies.

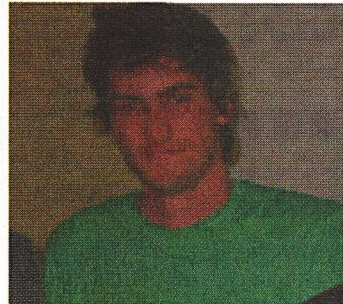
Davis brings a deft and tasteful sensibility to the rendering of Flaubert's images, a quality that's essential in translating this particular work. Flaubert was famously obsessed with style. Of the nineteenth century prose writers, no one was more discriminating about the words he put on the page; no one's details more carefully chosen, no one's images so meticulously drawn. In an 1852 letter to Louise Colet, Flaubert even expressed a desire to write "a book about nothing, a book without external attachments, which holds itself up by the internal force of its own style, as the earth, unsupported, holds itself in mid-air..."

But a writer's aspirations don't necessarily reflect the book he ends up producing. Flaubert may have dreamt of "a book about nothing," but *Madame Bovary* is not that book. In fact, it's remarkable for its very *something-ness* — its absolute reliance on concrete detail, on a steady progression of plot, and on minute social observation of characters and environment. Though Flaubert considered "provincial ways" (the novel's subtitle) as simply an occasion for the practice of his style, his finely tuned descriptions of clothing, food, and speech are not just local colour garnishing bigger themes, nor are they an exercise in ethnography — as was the case for many of Flaubert's contemporaries. They are the very engine of the story, the source of its studied anti-romanticism. What previous translators have done to *Madame Bovary* is craft it in the image of what a nineteenth century novel 'ought' to sound like. But Flaubert's novel didn't sound like that; it didn't sound like a typical novel then, and it doesn't sound like it now. A translation like Davis's helps us see that.

£20, Hardback, Penguin Classics

Non-Required Reading

We speak to members of the LSE community about the books they read out of hours

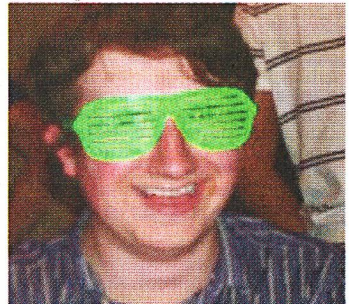


Name: Calum Young
 Programme: BA International History

Favourite non-required books:
 J.S Mill's *On Liberty*, because its arguments affect my day to day existence. Whether buying coffee or trying to avoid passing out in the street, one thought runs through my head: what would Mill do in this situation? Also *Landscape and Memory* by Simon Schama, a masterpiece about how societies interact with their surroundings. Additionally, *Black Sea* by Neal Acherson — its scholarship comes out of curiosity rather than a quest for academic applause. I could choose any Graham Greene book to add to the mix, but the one I have read most recently is *The End of the Affair*.

Currently reading:
Travels with Herodotus by Ryszard Kapuscinski. Read it, it is very good.

If I were a fictional character I would be:
 On a good day I would be Magnus Pym from John le Carré's *A Perfect Spy*. On a bad day, Charles Highway from Martin Amis's *The Rachel Papers*.

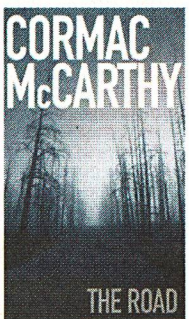
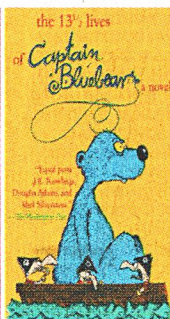
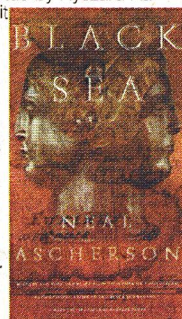
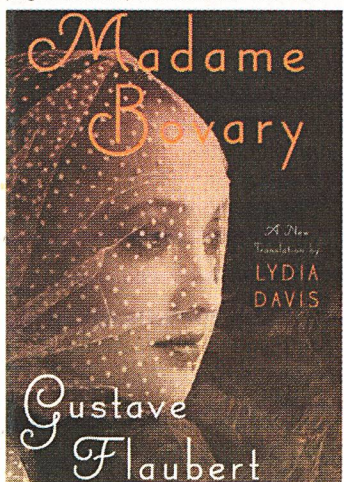


Name: Jonathan Storey
 Programme: LLB Law

Favourite non-required books:
The Road by Cormac McCarthy; *Norwegian Wood* by Haruki Murakami; *The 13 1/2 Lives of Captain Bluebear* by Walter Moers; and *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz.

Currently reading:
The Yiddish Policemen's Union by Michael Chabon. It's hard to get into; you need to get into a rhythm to read it, I find. And it's got loads of words in Yiddish whose meaning I don't know...

If I were a fictional character I would be:
 In school people said I looked like Harry Potter. That's all I can think of.



In a Forest Dark and Deep, Vaudeville Theatre

Priya Kale reflects on the dynamics of sibling rivalry

One of the biggest downsides to watching good TV or film actors on stage is wondering whether or not they would recreate the same magic in person. When one of the performers is someone like Olivia Williams, who is known for her intense and brooding performances, the apprehension is even more so. But neither Williams nor her co-star, Matthew Fox disappoint in this dark, psychological thriller.

Betty calls on her younger brother Bobby to help her with clearing up her cabin in the forest after the tenant is suddenly called away. However, Bobby is more interested in exhuming Betty's past than he is in packing away an important part of her life in neat boxes. There is an undercurrent of tension to the play starting from when the first lines are spoken. At first it's nothing more than unresolved sibling rivalry gone a bit too far, but pretty soon it's apparent that it's more than jealousy over Betty's post as a dean at the local college and her better salary that pushes Bobby to constantly tether on the edge. I can't say much more than that about the plot, as it would be unfair to let on more to anyone who intends to see the play while it is still on its twelve-week short run.



Some plays take you out of your comfort zone, this one wants to hit you on the head with a brick and knock your breath

and wry humour however, has been severely underused in the play. Both of them manage to sway your emotions; there are times when you want to slap Bobby and hug Betty and vice versa.

The best part about the play though, is its literary merit. Labute perfectly captures every aspect of sibling rivalry, from exasperating annoyance to unconditional love. You hear all of the familiar refrains; "you don't know what my life is like", "it's all your fault", "you started it". At the end of it, there is a message which comes through pretty well: no matter how much you 'hate' your sibling, he/she is the only

one you can really turn to.

The icing on the cake is the way Labute has juxtaposed Betty's veneer of respectability in society as an academic with her utter and wanton promiscuity in the past. To a literary critic, this paradox is nerve tinglingly delicious. The plot could have worked even if she were a financial executive, but making her a teacher was a stroke of pure genius.

Finally, don't go to watch the show for an evening of fun and music... there's the Savoy across the road playing Legally Blonde for that. Don't go if four letter words offend you, or if your sense of mo-

“The play has some of the best dark and situational humour I have come across”

For those of you accustomed to seeing Fox as the nice doctor on *Lost*, this is going to be a bit of a shock. He plays the tormented, twice divorced, gutter mouthed, blue-collared handyman to the hilt. His performance has you on the edge of your seat a fair many times during the show. Williams too, matches him step for step. Her portrayal of the snobbish college professor with a promiscuous past is absolutely splendid. Her talent for dry wit



Matthew Fox makes his West End debut alongside Olivia Williams

rality is easily upset. Go for the emotional tightrope that Betty and Bobby make you walk, go for the grim chuckles, go for the fact that Williams can chest bump Fox and still manage to look as elegant as ever, go if you want to be shaken rather than moved. For all of its faults, it's an incredibly watchable play. Go, before the twelve weeks end.

In a Forest, Dark and Deep is showing at the Vaudeville Theatre until 4th June.

Visit inaforestdarkanddeep.com

Entourage

Why Simon Chaudhuri loves Entourage (and Ari Gold)

I was introduced to *Entourage* at the start of the year by a fellow student at LSE, no doubt attempting to sabotage my studies so that he'd stand a better chance of getting into 'the Goldman Sachs'.

During the past ten weeks, I have somehow managed to decimate all seven seasons. This equates to approximately 36.67 hours of television. Such a feat did require cutbacks on non-essential pursuits, such as sleeping and eating, but truth be told, this was no hardship.

For the uninitiated, *Entourage* follows Hollywood's rising star Vincent Chase (Adrian Grenier) and his hangers-on (Kevin Connolly, Kevin Dillon and Jerry Ferrara) as they navigate the social and professional dos and don'ts of Tinseltown. The Telegraph's moniker of 'Sex and the City for Men' seems to be pretty accurate – *Entourage* is a celebration of everything manly – fast cars, banter and the 'sewing of one's wild oats' (to put it mildly).

As such, the show is a hedonistic feast of Dionysian proportions, all at the expense of Vincent, as the breadwinner of this makeshift family. *Entourage*, while at times equally vapid, is mankind's answer to the hordes of *90210s*, *One Tree Hills* and *Gossip Girls* that clog up the internet. While it may not be as gritty or pretentious as other hit shows, it is appreciated for its honesty about the nature

of male friendship. Male camaraderie is a central theme of the show, with the nature of the group's relationships as the forefront of most episodes.

More generally, the writers' acerbic take on the Hollywood lifestyle forms the backdrop for the plot. The town is portrayed as nothing more than a cesspool of nepotism, bribery and blackmail. It is these things that seem to form the lifeblood of the city. No one is more in

“Entourage is a celebration of everything manly”

love with this aspect of Hollywood than Vincent's inimitable agent, Ari Gold (played by Jeremy Piven). Ari is probably the world's worst boss – homophobic, xenophobic and chauvinist all at the same time. However, he's also the most lovable character out of the whole cast. Some of Ari's more tame quotes include: "Get Vincent Chase's brother, Johnny Chase, a job. Any job! I don't care if it's a porn shoot in which he is being gang raped by a gaggle of silverback apes" and "Lizzie's

little work of fiction journal proves that I'm guilty like Lindsay Blowman proves that fame is fucking healthy".

In conjunction with the Hollywood backdrop, *Entourage* explores the dislocation that the boys feel as East Coasters in California. Their history in Queens seems to haunt them, leaving them with a permanent inferiority complex fed by splashing out on a huge mortgage, ridiculous cars and custom made sneakers. As an avid consumerist this is great to watch, but the real message is that none of this makes the boys happy. None of this fills the void in their lives – whether this is self-doubt in their professionalism or simply girl troubles.

Many viewers might miss this, but what is readily apparent when you digest all of the seasons in a matter of weeks is the extent to which the show's creators have their fingers on the pulse of modern culture. *Entourage* is one of the few television shows that revel in all of the trappings of Generation Y. During the course of the show's history we see: the rise of Facebook as the leader in social networking; Apple's role as a trendsetter and similarly, the power of the online world in shaping Hollywood.

So, if you want to languish in the past – watch something else. If you're in the here and now, then *Entourage* is the show for you.



Glee Series Blog

Shrina Poojara previews 'Silly Love Songs'

Anyone else shocked by last night's lip-lock between old flames Finn and Quinn? The drama continues in next Monday's *Glee* instalment, "Silly Love Songs" as it's Valentine's Day (and you thought you wouldn't have to think about sappy greetings cards and heart-shaped candy for another year...). That's right, folks, love is in the air at McKinley High. Strangely, Will seems oddly excited by Valentine's Day but his love song assignment wrecks havoc among the glee club.

“Will Quinn realise that Sam is the one for her, or will her rendezvous with Finn at his kissing booth turn into something more?”

The episode starts with possibly the strangest Valentine's couple possible - Puck and Lauren Zizes? Who saw that coming?! It turns out Puck, our resident bad boy, has had the hots for Lauren ever since she cut short their seven minutes in heaven after Puck's make-out skills didn't quite match up to her expectations. It seems Puckerman needs to work on his puckering up skills... who'd have thought? In the run up to the big day, Puck seems willing to try just about anything to win over the reluctant, "I don't

think you're ready for this jelly" Lauren. But did no one teach the boy the key rule when it comes to dealing with women? You should never, under any circumstances, call a girl fat. Choosing to serenade Lauren with Queen's "Fat Bottomed Girls" is probably not the smartest move.

Meanwhile, fans waiting for something to finally happen with Kurt and (Harry Potter lookalike Blaine), may not have to wait much longer. Blaine seems to have caught the love bug as he lets slip to Kurt that he has a certain someone in mind for his Valentine's squeeze. You can just see Kurt's excitement, but someone should have told him not to count his chickens before they hatch. Be prepared for a serenade like no other: it turns out being asked out by a Warbler makes for a musical performance awesome enough to be a new Gap commercial!

So the question you've all been waiting for... what the heck is going on between Finn and Quinn? Since winning the championship football game, quarterback Finn's ego seems to have inflated more than Santana's chest after her not-so-secret boobjob. In an attempt to entice Quinn to kiss him again, he opens up a kissing booth in the school hallway, claiming its purpose is to raise money for the glee club. (Oh, the irony that Finn has dumped both Quinn and Rachel in the past for cheating on him... I guess he'd much rather play the mistress than the fool again.)

They say hell hath no fury like a woman (scorned) rejected by Puck in place of a "white rhino" (Santana's words, not mine). The furious ex-Cheerio certainly does little to dispute this view: having been called a bitch by everyone in glee club, how will she get her revenge when she clocks that something odd is going on between Finn and Quinn? And will Quinn realise that Sam is the one for her, or will her rendezvous with Finn at his kissing booth turn into something more, leaving Sam and Quinn Finn-ished for good?

Simon Chaudhuri's TV Tips for the week

Women In Love
BBC4, Thursdays, at 21:00

This two-part drama is part of the BBC's Modern Love season and starts this Thursday. Based on DH Lawrence's novels, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*, starring Rosamund Pike and Rachael Stirling, this drama explores the lives of two sisters just before the start of the First World War.

Spartacus: Gods of the Arena
Sky1, Mondays, at 22:00

This prequel to *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* promises more of what made the first series so popular – gore, and lots of it.

The first episode was aired last week but is available via Sky Player.

Fashion. Visual Arts.

Born to be wild

Alice Leah Fyfe and Chu Ting Ng find where the wild things are

This season, natural elements run wild as designers look to all manner of creatures and flora for inspiration. However, this isn't new: it has been a while since nature has taken the spotlight, and recently it has done so spectacularly.

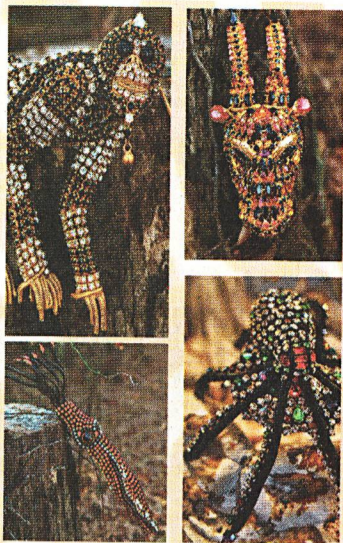
GUCCI AUTUMN/WINTER 2011

Gucci's 2011 fall line is overflowing with the luxuries of nature: gems, fur, flowers, feathers and leather. Frida Giannini confidently sent slim silhouettes bearing all manner of textures down the runway, somehow managing to combine an impossible array of colours without disaster. Feminine blouses and tailored bottoms cut smartly across indulgent accessories, creating an emphasis on simplicity despite the riches of autumn embodied in the line's dramatic 1970s look. In this bold burst of flora, fauna and colour, we naturally stray toward the accessories: eye-catchers of the season include jewel-toned fox stoles, flower shrugs and snake-skin waist belts. The riches of this earth made their presence strongly felt with hard skins and prints played alongside the softest furs. Though this might be too much for some, it is definitely a skilful balance of elegance and luxury. An olive leather trench coat, tempting purples and all manner of flower-collared gowns: seriously, what's not to love?

HANNA BERNHARD

Run by a Parisian couple, Hanna Bernhard specialises in creating elaborate hand-made animal jewellery. Each jewel-encrusted piece is lovingly detailed, influenced by the stylings of art deco and art nouveau. Famous fans of Hanna Bernhard pieces include American fashion icon Iris Apfel, renowned costume jewellery collector Barbara Berger and young fashion blogger Jane Aldridge of Sea of Shoes.com. Hanna Bernhard remains elusive press-wise, but probably not for long. In the age of cheap and fast fashion, here is something truly worth paying for in terms of craftsmanship and originality. A nod to nature and all things wonderful, Hanna Bernhard's one-of-a-kind creations are definitely statement pieces to lovingly keep for generations to come.

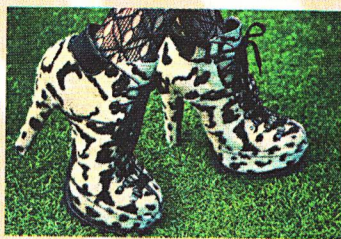
For online orders and further information on Hanna Bernhard, visit french-bake-lite.com



SEA OF SHOES

Blogger Jane Aldridge is younger than most of us here at LSE, but probably has it made in a more glamorous fashion than any of us aspiring investment bankers or lawyers could dream of. Hailing from Trophy Club, Texas, what had begun as a hobby for the now nineteen-year old has become a veritable force in the sphere of fashion bloggers. Besides serving as inspiration, Sea of Shoes is both a creative business and a platform for appreciating what we often neglect nowadays: nature.

As its name suggests, Sea of Shoes features Jane's, and her mother Judy's extensive collection of footwear from brands such as Margiela, Comme des Garçons, Prada and Dries van Noten. Besides shoes, Judy and Jane style a mixture of modern ready-to-wear and vintage pieces for a delightfully refreshing takes on familiar themes. Mother and daughter are fond of animals mythical or real, their collections ranging from toys such as Jane's stuffed cat and other Tokyo acquisitions to these coveted Alaïa snow leopard hiking boots.



Hanna Bernhard also makes regular appearances on Sea of Shoes with new marine and insect additions to the family's growing collection. Career-wise, this girl has it all sorted. Recent collaborations include Urban Outfitters' Sea of Shoes by Jane, a line of shoes designed by Jane herself.

We're not all this lucky, so if you can't live it at least read it at seaofshoes.com

CTN



Laden Showroom tights £6

Miss Selfridge zebra ring £8.50

Topshop Blouse £25



Dearest Library Leopards and Beavers of the Book,

Animal and tribal prints are on trend this spring; they never really seem to leave the runway, but this season's distinction lies in the variety of prints available to us and à la Rihanna, the key is to mix and match them all! From Aztec to Masai, Snakes to Butterflies, prints are being celebrated this season in a colourful carnival of clothing, the latter, a summer ode to the Fair Isle knit. And they needn't be in natural colours either; this season's Matthew Williamson has some stunning dresses and kaftans in brightly coloured leopard chiffon. Here is a taster of the high street's offerings. To you all, I wish a very Happy Easter and the best of luck for exams; go get 'em, tigers!

Yours faithfully fashionably,

ALF

Stephanie Oula, this year's Fashion Show host, shares her experiences of trend forecasting in Manhattan.

But you wouldn't know it, for trends appear to be the fundamental basis of the industry. Pick up a magazine, walk into any clothing shop, open up a

"Fashion, contrary to popular belief, is different from trend"

fashion blog, and it's all about the latest look: Studio 54 glamour, floral, Seventies' bohemian, the list of newly-coined phrases just goes on, as it does season after season, once the industry's fickle and fleeting glance happen upon another independently-existing body of work to be reduced to a catchphrase and a collage of pieces. It would appear that the fashion industry itself exists to promulgate trends—and from a financial standpoint, this is absolutely correct. Trends are products of the fashion industry, but they do not constitute fashion...

The rest of Stephanie's article can be found at thebeaveronline.co.uk

Topman vest £15



Topshop suede slippers £55



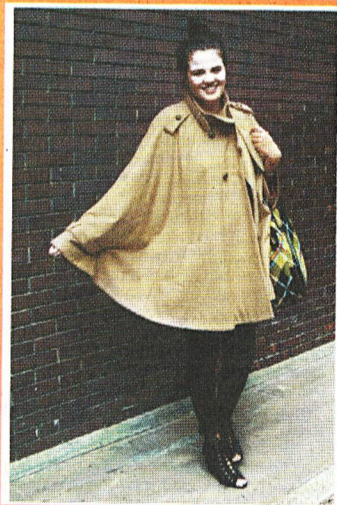
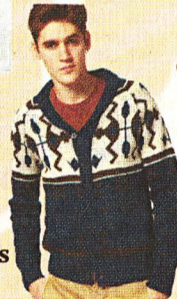
Nail Rock Nail stickers £6.50



YourEyesLie T shirt £20



Junk de Luxe Cardigan £90 from ASOS

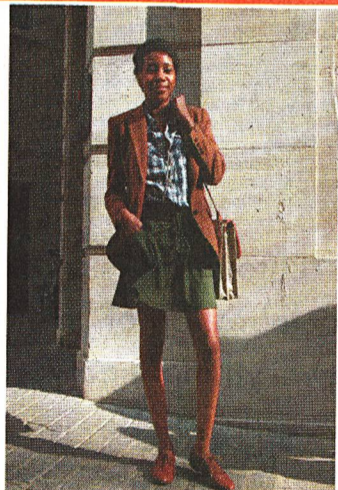


Maaike Mossel & Yan Giet scout Houghton Street's Best dressed

FANTASTIC FOUR

Kate, Glenn, Erica, Rory

As exams are fast approaching, we are laying down our cameras and direct our watchful eyes to our revision notes. But we've had a great run! Keep it up. See here a selection of our four favourite style icons of this year. Happy revising!



The age and culture of protest

Aameer Patel looks at how the LSE is tied to a student protest exhibition

From when I was growing up, I remember university students on the whole being linked to protests. The view was that students are easy to outrage and that they would protest for causes otherwise dismissed as futile, but on the whole, they were correct in principle. They are compelled to protest.

The LSE, with its history of protest, was at the forefront this year, as it was in 1968 (the year in which **Street Fighting Man - 50 Years of Youth Protest** begins). In the way that many lost confidence in the careerists at the NUS this year, the LSE left the organisation in 1969. I could have told you how Aaron

Porter would turn out a long time ago. Marching peacefully to whisper a point that has already been acknowledged and dismissed will not work. But we have had more active, angry and effective protests quite regularly this year. Some ended in success and some did not. For many though, even campaigns doomed to fail are worthwhile.

Protest has historic ties to youth culture, especially music. This is explored in the exhibition, with iconic photography including works by Caroline Coon, capturing bands that came to personify rebellion, such as The Clash, The Sex Pistols and The Buzzcocks, alongside snapshots of historic protests.

In addition to students in Paris, it was an LSE alumnus who inspired Mick Jagger to write the song behind the name of this exhibition. Tariq Ali is still around and the Left continues in vain their attempts to exploit the momentum protests generate, whether at Millbank or in Madison. Looking back at fifty years of causes we have rallied against, little appears to have changed. The iconic protests against the Vietnam War were eclipsed in 2003, but the bombs still fell and Iraq is already being compared to Vietnam.

The precursors to the street protests of the late seventies are also explored. Movements such as the CND marches and home rule in Ireland are not typically associated with students or youth, but they were movements with which this

paper, as a representative of student opinion, strongly sympathised. The twentieth anniversary of the Brixton riot is in a few weeks, but a few days ago we learned that a black man had apparently stabbed himself in the heart while in police custody.

Punks on the Rock Against Racism demonstration Caroline Coon, 1978



Street Fighting Man - Fifty Years of Youth Protest interestingly chronicles an entire riot too, this time at a Rolling Stones concert. In addition to exposing

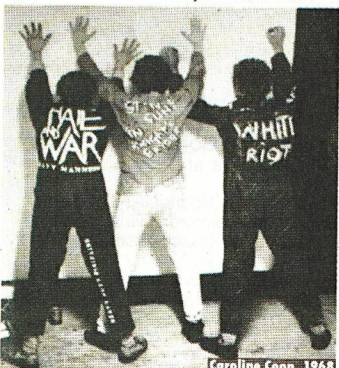


On a similar note...

Potential Damage, produced collaboratively by The Invitators and Tania El Khoury, is an exhibition in which themes such as collective memory and the basis of reality are explored. The exhibition is both an archive of the recent London protests and an investigation of their wider social implications.

Potential Damage is at Rivington Place between 23rd March and 14th May. Visit rivingtonplace.org

Street Fighting Man - 50 Years of Youth Protest is at Flash Projects, 5 Savile Row between 28th April and 4th May. Visit flash-projects.co.uk



Caroline Coon, 1968

Indie Week Masaya Tanikawa sits down with talented independent song makers from around the globe

Pale Young Gentlemen **Madison, Wisconsin**



The Wisconsin outfit self-released ten songs of organised chaos to the world on their eponymous debut record in 2000, drawing a strong following for distilling festive stomps, cello plucks and rowdy piano jams into a quirky, charming sound that embraces all the nice bits of pop, folk and rock. Marked by reviewers for having 'more than enough reason' to anticipate their future, the seven-piece refined their craft and returned a year later with 'Black Forest (Tra La La)': packed with tight orchestral strings and trembling vocal croons, the follow-up sees a band matured by colourful experiences both in life and on the road. It also showcases the songwriting talents of the band's frontman and primary composer, Michael Reisenauer, and the passion for music he shares with his brother, Matt, who handles promotion for the band and helms percussion on-stage.

"My brother is very important in the band. People say music should speak for itself, which is true to some extent, but his work is probably the main reason we have the modest fan base that we do. It's great having him be part of the music process," says Mike. "Being family, we're probably harder on each other than anyone else, more truthful. Also bitchier, less courteous."

Like most music acts, PYG had modest beginnings. "Matt and I were living together in an apartment - I'd been writing and playing by myself for some time. But you don't have a band until you have a drummer. So we went out and bought the cheapest drumset we could find for Matt to start banging on and then we played open mic's until we could get a show,"

says Mike.

His brother chimes in, noting they had larger ambitions after being picked up by Internet reviewers and bloggers. "We were doing really well. We thought we should document what we were doing week in and week out, hopefully getting us better shows at larger venues with better bands. We booked a couple days of studio time and thought we'd record the equivalent of an EP, but we got a lot more," explains Matt. "The music was all recorded live and in some cases in just a few takes, sometime in Spring of 2007. I think we all began to have larger ambitions than just playing locally, and Mike already had an extremely ambitious album in the works."

"Black Forest... is more of an anti-pop record"

Their efforts have paid off. The past few years have seen a busy tour schedule for the young gents (and women). "Life on the road is good and bad. I enjoy travelling to new places, crashing with the people we just met and finding out what city has the best burritos - San Fran - or the best drinking water - which might actually be Houston," jokes Matt.

As part of a seven-piece group, there are few dull moments. "Logistically, travelling with all of us would've been a nightmare. We had a huge van and it was still tight with the five of us. We had a

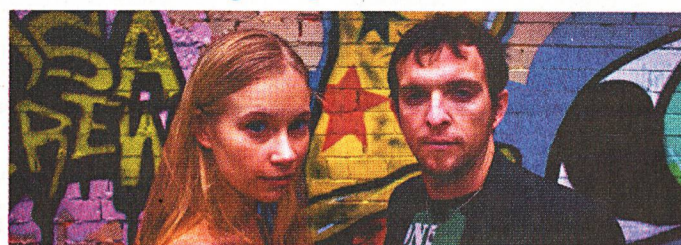
great group of people - but living, working and traveling with four other folks for long periods of time is sometimes hard. You have to adapt - but you also get experiences that are totally new. Hagging the admission price for an action figure museum, checking out the supposed burial place of Billy the Kid, two car accidents in Washington D.C., things like that. Good and bad."

There seems to be more of the former for the band, with Black Forest garnering consistent praise from fans and critics alike. "The band has changed quite a bit over the years. In the beginning it was Mike, Brett and me. We've had three cellists, two violinists and we lost Andy Brawner, our bassist, to his own project. With great respect to those who have played as 'gentlemen', I like to think of PYG as Mike and the bunch of folks who play the music he writes."

Drawing from the likes of Amy Winehouse to poetry and novels, Mike's influences are as varied as the seven members that make up the band. "I wanted to use natural, elemental, sometimes surreal language to describe things I had found to be important in life. What if a grown man and not a child was stuck in the forest that provide the setting for so many fairytales?" ponders Mike. "So for Black Forest, I didn't start out with a theme per se, but I did have a setting in mind the whole time. I was reading about self-reliance and Whitman and Thoreau - I wanted to write music that conveyed and suited these emotions."

"I guess Black Forest was written more as a personal catharsis. Songs about small daily victories, ideas of what 'home' is, repeating the successes and

Hi-Life Wedding **Taipei, Taiwan**



Kate Boehms and Davos Brozmanoid share a passion for music: it's what brought them together to form the happy-go-lucky band that is **Hi-Life Wedding**. A quick visit to their Facebook page and the quirkiness of the duo becomes apparent: their miscellaneous adventures around the world are documented as obscure Franz Kafka quotes.

Drawing influences from the likes of The Postal Service to Kanye West, their sound is spangly, bright and accessible with a slight touch of lo-fi-pop. Clearly, they are all too fond of the MPC drum machine. The name was inspired by a convenience store in Taiwan called 'Hi-Life'. "Once we get more established there might actually be copyright issues," jokes Kate. According to Davos, he saw a couple standing in front of a Hi-Life store having their photos taken. "It was their wedding and there was this entire entourage gathered around the store. I was like dude, I have to get a picture of this," he says.

Taiwan is the perfect home for their signature sound; the city's vibrance reflects both the duo's wide views on life and their penchant for cosmopolitan adventures. "Taiwan makes us super-happy. It's a real party town where there's a lot open even after midnight. There's always something going on and there's bound to be a local act playing the kind of music you'll dig," laughs Davos.

It's a far cry from the slightly quieter streets of Melbourne, where the band was originally formed. Davos is Australian, but Kate's native home lies all the way in the middle of the United States in Missouri. "I miss it sometimes, I do get homesick. It's quite cool being able to travel around the world, meeting people and playing music at all sorts of venues," chirps Kate. "I minored in music with International Business as my major, so I have a bit of background in music theory. Davos might whip something together and check with me to see how it sounds, we're a great team."

An Asia-wide tour is planned in the coming year.

mistakes of your parents, being alone, waking up in bed next to a woman, re-connecting with family members after loss, those kinds of things," he says. "And for the same reason you put on a tie to look professional, I wanted to dress the music in a way that suited the subject matter and gave it an honest chance. I was afraid that anything 'pop-y' would discount the strong emotions I was trying to convey - people might consider it a 'folk' record, but I wrote it more as an 'anti-pop' record."

Is validation and 'success' a non-issue for the Madison Seven, then? "Being a successful musician comes down to how you gauge 'success'. For a lot of folks, this comes down to album sales. That's why we have the Billboard Top 100, right? A band's ability to survive, then, comes down to how they gauge success for themselves. In terms of Billboard Top 100, PYG is inconsequential. By this standard, we're epic failures," he says. "If 'success' is the ability to cover our recording costs and new gear and thus be more creative and develop new tastes and abilities, then I'd say we're doing alright. Better than most, at least."

PYG hasn't played a gig in some time. Mike is woodshedding, working on his next project in his basement. "Five of us toured on Black Forest for a couple months playing mismatched shows that mostly paid shit. We'd play after a hardcore punk band or someone that just screamed poetry on-stage. It was trying, playing our music in those settings," he says. "I have no idea when my next project will be finished, but I like to think it'll be worth the wait."

Visit paleyounggentlemen.com

Visit hi-lifewedding.com

The Riot Tapes **Dublin, Ireland**



With three record deals turned down and a slew of singles lined up for independent release alongside extensive radio play, the Irish five-piece emerged from the streets of Dublin as one of the most promising indie bands making their debut this year. They have been touted by press as being 'in the higher echelons of guitar-driven bands' and rightly so: they're a real riot.

Lead guitarist and songwriter Chris O'Brien is with lead singer Elaine Doyle in a giant 'urinal alley' amidst blazing police sirens and green wig-wearing drunkards as the country celebrates St. Patrick's Day with all inhibitions let loose. Minutes ago the band was on-stage at The Mercantile, unleashing their crunchy rock anthems to a particularly rowdy crowd.

"It was early but everyone was three pints into a good afternoon. It's been really good fun. On my way here to the gig tonight, there were kids literally lying on the road from having a few too many. It's really mad, but that's the thing about Ireland - it's a mixed bag," laughs Chris, joined by cheers in the background. "It applies to any city really - if you have money, cities can be all nice and happy like Disneyland but if you're poor and struggling, there are lots of opportunities you can't take advantage of."

Chris knows all too well how quickly

doors can open and close, having been born and raised in the 'land of opportunity' known as Little Rock, Arkansas. He attended Little Rock Central High, the first high school to be segregated in the US. His childhood was rocky. "I didn't grow up poor, but it was tough. Back in my sophomore year at Central, there was a guy standing right next to me who was shot in the head. It felt like someone punched me in the ear," recalls Chris.

"It was almost a physical thing. It was a really loud noise with so much pressure. One moment he's there, then suddenly the guy was totally not even dying, just completely dead on the ground."

Chris says the high school is a "good microcosm of the world". Though the neighbourhood was impoverished and tainted by drugs, gangs and guns, working hard meant plenty of opportunities to succeed. A passion for music, a musical prodigy for a best friend and some luck set him on the path to where he finds himself today. "His name was Nolan. We put together a band when I was fourteen, and we seriously did have some dumb luck. We figured out that if we had fake IDs, bought cans of beer and threw giant parties charging admission, we would make a killing. And we did, making something like 14 grand from one of these," he laughs. "It attracted a lot of attention and we were offered a major label deal two

years later. They loved us and everything about us, but they hated our singer!"

"Naturally we said hell no, because even if we did think we should've kicked him out years ago, he was our friend. I went to base camp with him, no way I'm going to bow down to the labels. To make a long story short, the group fell apart after an incident involving the police - I got hooked on the songwriting stuff though, so I moved to Boston and started another band. Then, I found myself in London a few years later."

It was in his nature as a human to work with others. After being signed to a major label, Chris sought out the right members for his band by hosting auditions that spanned three countries and some seventy musicians while juggling a full-time day job. "As much as I like working with people, I found my songs getting watered down every time I tried to do so. There were always compromises to be made - the material was lukewarm," says Chris. "So it was a very bad time. I couldn't deal with it so I quit two bands in a row. I kept expecting things to get better, and it did for a while after I found a good singer I could work with."

Their material was well-received and the duo were signed to Sony. Just as the press was starting to catch on, the project suddenly collapsed. "We were doing fifty interviews a day and spending time with producers doing this crap and that crap on top of our day jobs. One day she called me and said she can't do this - turns out she was literally underneath her desk at work all freaked out," he recalls. "The label kept pushing different singers on me to try and find different singers since the ink was still drying on the whole thing. After going through thirty people I said look, this isn't going to work, until they convinced me to fly over to Ireland because my wife's Irish. I came to Dublin for a week to hold auditions in my brother-in-law's kitchen and found nobody. That is, until I was at a pub called Prophet on a Friday night doing more auditions in 2009."

Chris doesn't believe in fate, but the chance encounter with Dublin-born Elaine that night would change both of their lives forever. Influenced by the likes of Debbie Harry and Pink, her confident vocals would go on to characterise The Riot Tapes' signature sound. "I bluffed to him

a bit that I was a singer, I wasn't professional or anything but I think we got along really well. Then when I heard his music for the first time, I remember just thinking oh my god, this is amazing," says Elaine. "I've always been involved with music since a kid. When I was five, I asked for a guitar and my parents got me this toy one - apparently I was disappointed. A year later they finally gave me proper lessons and then I got playing guitar."

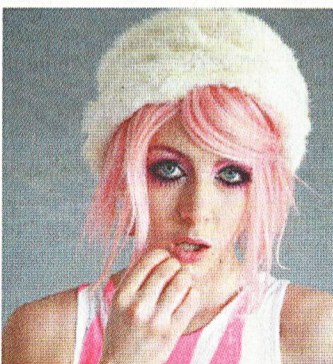
Though Chris handles most of the songwriting, Elaine pitches in with writing the lyrics and fleshing out guitar parts. Her face has come to represent the band, and she doesn't mind it. At all. "I'm more than willing to represent the band, but I try to encourage the press and whatnot to pay attention to the rest of the band members too. It just sort of happens that way since I'm the only female in the band," she says. "I never feel like that's a problem though. I've never thought, oh god I need another female. We all get along perfectly - things don't get disgusting or anything like that."

Rather than releasing an album followed by singles, the band plans to release a series of singles with an album compiling them together near the end of the year. "It's all being done independently. We've turned down three deals so far - if they aren't willing to work as hard as we are, then I'm going to say no. I've seen it happen too many times to my friends where they'd be slaving their butts off for a record that might not even get released," explains Chris. "You gotta find the people who're nice to you. For the ones that aren't, you never talk to them again! We refuse to be pawns in the 'idiot lottery'. We're hard grass, we've sacrificed a lot for this to work. Sure, we might indulge in the odd Bon Jovi cover for a Battle of the Bands contest and talk about our favourite fish ('Piranhas!' shouts Elaine), but we're really serious about it."

Visit soundcloud.com/the-riot-tapes for more details in the coming month, including details on a remix EP featuring UK artists Reina Lamour and Rockshamrover.

Look out for their new single "Photograph" in April.

D&C - Let You Go



The UK-based songstress **Dimpleby & Capper** released her new single "Let You Go" yesterday, available for download at taperec.com, a small indie label based in East London.

Taking her rumbling tribal sound to new heights, "Let You Go" sees de-tuned electric guitar, crushed warehouse drumwork and abrasive basslines sitting neck-to-neck with lyrics about the darker shades of love. Hoping to release an album this year, Laura says: "I've been doing lots of shows and gigging. It's helped to refine my sound and I'm looking forward to what the future holds."

Spotify Spotting

Song picks from **Robin Sutherland**, postgrad student in Health, Community & Development.

Caribou Found Out

The National Abel

The Wilderness of Manitoba Evening

Band of Horses No One's Gonna Love You

Features

Nuclear energy or climate change Andreas Kuersten claims that nuclear energy is the best we have

With the recent natural and now, as of the writing of this article, possible nuclear disaster afflicting Japan, the debate over nuclear energy has once again received front-page status. Yet it is one which has been framed completely incorrectly up to this point with a focus on caricatures and popular myth rather than history and science.

Nuclear energy must be seen in the wider context of global climate change and the ever growing energy needs of an increasing and developing world population. It must be seen next to the alternatives: green energy sources (solar, wind, and hydro-power) and fossil fuels. Through such a comparison the substantial merits of nuclear power become quite clear and the anti-nuclear energy movement can be seen to be incredibly reactionary and ill-informed.

Taking a look at green energy sources, it's true that they would be the world's ideal source of energy. This statement, however, faces one glaring and totally defeating argument: the fact is that these sources are nowhere close to being able to satiate the energy demands of the contemporary world, much less future needs which will steadily increase. This can be seen by looking at the European Union (EU), whose members have invested relatively heavily in green energy sources over the last few decades. According to a 2009 report by the Danish Energy Agency, these sources still only provide 8 per cent of consumed energy. It's true that some members have achieved higher percentages (Sweden's 32 per cent, Finland's 25 per cent and Denmark's 18 per cent being examples), but these nations have relatively small populations and these increases have still required an incredible amount of government investment and subsidisation.

Green energy sources also cannot be ramped up or down in order to meet demand. If more people turn on the lights one cannot simply order more wind to blow, sun to shine, or water to flow to power these actions. In addition, there are currently no good ways to store energy from these sources during periods of low demand in order to be used during periods of high demand: in the near and even somewhat distant future green energy sources are simply not viable for powering mankind. They are currently too costly and too unproductive.

But let us not judge nuclear energy by standards we do not apply to other energy sources and against which these others would fail miserably.

Turning now to fossil fuel energy, since this is the true standard against which nuclear energy should be compared since it is, in terms of cost effectiveness and productivity, leagues ahead of green energy sources, there is another glaringly powerful argument: fossil fuel energy is far more unsafe than nuclear energy both directly and indirectly.

In comparing deaths directly attributable to these two energy sources, one

must note that there has only been one directly fatal nuclear incident in the last forty years: Chernobyl in 1986. Thirty-one people were directly killed by this incident. Yet according to Switzerland's Paul Scherrer Institute, from 1969 to 2000 over 20,000 people have died in accidents occurring in the oil supply chain, over 20,000 in accidents in the coal supply chain, almost 4,000 in the liquefied petroleum gas supply chain, and almost 2,000 in the natural gas supply chain. It is estimated that China's coal mines kill between 2,000 and 3,000 workers a year. In terms of direct risk to human life, then, nuclear energy is far safer than fossil fuel energy.

But what about these energy sources' indirect harm? Didn't Chernobyl release an immense amount of radiation thus creating an incomparable indirect impact? Didn't Three Mile Island do the same in 1979?

These arguments are false. Three Mile Island did indeed release radiation into the environment, but in an interview for the New York Times, Dr. David J. Brenner, director of the Center for Radiological Research at Columbia University, states, "There is no evidence that anybody at all got sick, even decades later". The radiation humans were exposed to was not at a dangerous level.

With regards to Chernobyl, this event did indeed contaminate a substantial area with dangerous levels of radiation, but its indirect impact is far from incomparable to that of fossil fuel energy. The Chernobyl disaster will be related to 4,000 to 31,000 deaths (depending on if one accepts low or very high estimates) before its impact on humanity disappears. This must be compared to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) 2008 Environmental Outlook which found that fine-particle outdoor air pollution caused nearly 1 million premature deaths in the year 2000 alone.

30 per cent of this pollution was found to be related to fossil fuel energy production. According to William Saletan of Slate magazine, "You'd need 500 Chernobyls to match that level of annual carnage".

What's more, fossil fuels are unarguably linked to global climate change which has the potential to exact, and may have already exacted, incredible human and economic costs. Framed in this way, the arguments against nuclear energy are seen to be motivated by delusions as to its true nature and short-sightedness.

A reduction in nuclear energy would necessitate an increase in fossil fuel energy. It would be incredibly counter-productive in terms of the fight against climate change and would replace the market-share of a mercilessly scrutinised and regulated energy sector with more production from a much more directly and indirectly dangerous sector.

It's true that Japan's recent disaster has once again shown the dangers of nuclear energy, but these are dangers which must be dealt with intelligently and methodically. If a large dam had instead ruptured as a result of the recent unprecedented earthquake leaving a wake of physical damage and death there would not be a massive clamouring for the elimination of hydroelectric power. The problem would be assessed and new precautions and design requirements introduced.

Saletan suggests numerous upgrades. These include the production of robots, much like those used to patch up BP's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, which could be used in high radiation situations. These could be used in emergencies so as not to expose humans to harm as well as during normal operations. Diesel power generators should also be put on higher ground, longer-lasting batteries required to power coolant systems should the grid go down, and water stored above reactors

so that, failing power, it can be released simply using gravity.

In an analysis done by the OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency last year, nuclear power plants built today were found to be 1,600 times safer than earlier plants. Major progress has been made on an already comparably safe energy source. These sorts of advances must continue and be universally applied.

In this sense China is reacting in the perfect manner. According to the BBC, China has suspended approval of new nuclear power plants and is carrying out inspections of existing reactors.

This is in comparison to the loud, hysterical, and ill-informed cries coming from actors in Germany demanding an end to nuclear energy. By no means should Japan's nuclear accident, other such situations, and related deaths be considered 'acceptable', but let us not judge nuclear energy by standards we do not apply to other energy sources and against which these others would fail miserably. People must decide to become informed and to approach this subject with a broad perspective not allowing caricatures and ignorance to blind them to the substantial benefits of nuclear energy and the consequences if it is eliminated.



An aerial view shows the quake-damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant in the Japanese town of Futaba, Fukushima prefecture on 12th March 2011.
Flickr user: Beacon Radio

Attached to social media

Nathan Briant evaluates the effects of Facebook and Twitter

I glean the following from using social media on Thursday evening: on Facebook, from 'friends' updates, that someone seems to be encouraging tax evasion ('i like my money right where i can see it, in my closet'); that a friend of a former colleague who I've never actually met is enjoying himself ('Yes! Two of my favourite things combined into one. Dubstep and Alan Partridge!'); that an ex-classmate is unhappy (:()); another is a bit emotional and incoherent and in need of a question mark ('is it really too much to ask').

On Twitter—something I much prefer over Facebook—I find out from the Birmingham Post's Twitter feed that a '1,700 year-old skeleton of African man [has been] found in Stratford-upon-Avon' even though I looked at the story and all that was found was actually a skull, so that was a bit disappointing.

That's just one fleeting look at social media recorded just for you. I have probably done that ten or fifteen times already, will do it three or four times before tomorrow morning, and it's not yet 9PM. It's now gotten to the stage that when I'm watching a TV programme, I check people's tweets to see if they're watching and assess their reaction. Some programmes, like BBC One's Question Time, actually encourage their audiences to stop watching their show with their undivided attention and start tweeting along instead. It was quite enjoyable at the start—it was a bit of a cult when I started two years ago. Now it's a curse, seemingly everyone's at it. David Cameron's negative opinion about Twitter—that too much of it 'makes a twat'—could be correct.

My mother always said that my concentration span, in Midlands lingo, was 'naff'. Sadly I've never had the concentration span or capacity to critically dispute it and so I've lived my life in sad acceptance of it.

My academic progress particularly suffers. Essays are a curse, and revision even worse, when I'm at a computer. If I were looking through journals in Senate House fifty years ago, I might be such a better student, though I doubt I can record such problems as mitigating circumstances with the government department come June. Looking through a journal in 2011 usually consists of rummaging around online, not leafing through books. Indeed, the last time I had to look through an actual paper-based journal last week, it wasn't there to take out: someone must have taken it permanently from the library or must have stashed it away. It wasn't there for days; I looked. To try to get away from computers and the constant lure of social media is so bloody difficult in 2011.

Study after study says that social media is wrecking our concentration spans. Take a break from Twitter and Facebook, if possible; log onto the third part of *Triumvirate of the Internet for Dummies*, Google, search 'attention span and social media and Baroness Susan Greenfield', a physiologist from Oxford University has her work plastered all over the front page, like an Internet-age Malthus. Greenfield said in 2009, "We know how small babies need constant reassurance that they exist. My fear is that [social media] is infantilising the brain into the state of small children who are attracted by buzzing noises and bright lights, who have a small attention span and live for the moment." Reading that I fear I'm already near infantilised.

But looking for a get-out clause principally to justify my addiction—if that's what it is—surely can be that everything's like that, though? What about factoring in drugs or smoking or fatty foods—or in Bryan Ferry's case, love? There's something to flick on a light in every person as long as they've got relatively regular accessibility to it; and

their task is to curb that to a practicable level, however normative that is. But curbing social media use is hard. And we're all locked in it. Even my mother has a Facebook page—and even if she has only five friends and hasn't logged on since October 2009 it's still symbolic as to the lure and dominance of social media in modern life.

As far as rating the usefulness or uselessness of the sites goes, it's Facebook that's

It's surely significant that the people who have been said to be the great champions of technology in politics don't actually use it at all.

the must-have and the least useful in my opinion. The vast majority of the apparent friends I have listed on there have absolutely no interest in how I'm doing, and nor do I with them. This is mostly a result of not seeing the vast majority of them since I left my secondary school in 2006. If they did see me slogging away in the local supermarket or on the street it was usually a matter of head down, walk straight past.

There's one particular Facebook friend, a former member of my tutor group from Year 7 to Year 11, who seems to list every thought she has on at least a bi-hourly basis.

I haven't seen her since I was 16; I probably haven't spoken to her for about 7 years. She writes: 'Hehe cheryl coles voice gives me goosebumps'. OK. Half an hour later, 'Gna spend my lunch time lookin for a valentines present' is an unnecessary interjection into my Thursday evening; and then 'I think burton [Burton-on-Trent, where she apparently now lives] has been taken over by lesbians haha' is, I guess, factually inaccurate. Also, she proceeds to like, or join, so many utterly pointless groups that it beggars belief. On one evening she joined, amongst others: 'when someone touches your phone and you automatically [sic] turn into a ninja', 'Being drunk, is Not and Never will be an excuse for cheating', 'CANCEL CANCEL CANCEL! Message Sent. Kill me now', 'When stairing [sic] into each others eyes, you can't help but smile' and 'life is so much funnier when you have a dirty mind'. Problems or qualities we all have, I'm sure, although I can't say I've ever actually 'turned into a ninja'. Why I put up with these things being added to my status feed, I have no idea.

It's surely significant that the people who have been said to be the great champions of technology in politics don't actually use it at all. David Cameron has been said to have used it, but it's unlikely he was fiddling with the unvisited Webcamer website himself (incidentally, on which I appear briefly on an entry from December 2008 when he visited the LSE, if you've free time to look for me) and it so happens that Barack Obama, the apparent champion for blogging, micro-blogging, the Internet, young people and the future doesn't know how to use a lot of it at all. In both cases, the menials fiddle while the leader works—perhaps so they don't get reeled into joining groups like 'When you hear something, and it feels like a massive hole was just punched through your chest', as my case study above seems just to

have done.

Even when politicians do use social media it seems futile and over-the-top. Ed Miliband tweeted in December last year, "Over 8 inches of snow in some parts of Doncaster. Many buses still suspended. Could get to -9° tonight. Hope everyone's OK and stays warm." It manages to be both saccharine and insincere. Still, he's getting better at it—but whether or not his interaction with the 50,000 tweeters who follow him will change the scenery of the 2015 election, I'm sceptical.

Likewise, it's not just politicians trying to appeal to the electorate online. For some reason—probably a lot of spare time—a number of footballers have taken up tweeting. Rio Ferdinand, the former England captain, made his feelings known about Sky Sports' Andy Gray and Richard Keys' comments on women's apparent inability to know the offside rule. Ryan Babel, the former Liverpool forward, now playing for German club Hoffenheim, was fined £10,000 for posting a doctored picture of referee Howard Webb online in a Manchester United kit after Webb refereed his former club's loss to United in the FA Cup. Perhaps Babel was a bit too obsessed with and infantilised by social media to worry about the consequences.

Regardless, I can't kick this bloody addiction. As I've splurged out these words, however many there are here, I've looked at Twitter more than the strictly requisite three or four times I felt I needed when I wrote that. I've still a long way to go until I finish being ludicrously attached to social media. I'm starting from now.

I mean now. ☹

An 'alternative' vote

James Yarde describes the referendum on electoral reform



Flickr user: oiSteven

Democracy is "government of the people, by the people, for the people", as that famed axiom goes. The choice of electoral system, whilst often viewed as being a rather understated element of democracy, is in turn essential as to whether this is, in fact, achieved. In order to make democracy as vibrant as possible, we must be wise in our selection of that mechanism through which our votes translate into representation. Different electoral systems lead to different outcomes. And so it is our task as a country, on 5th May, to decide: do we want to change from political tradition, or to enter an unknown political sphere? Whether it will be an epochal moment in the grand scheme of British politics remains to be seen.

When it comes down to the bare bones of constitutional matters, it will be forever the responsibility of the people to decide the country's course. And this fact is all too right. If we live in a democracy, and government is to be to our ends, we must have the ability to determine the conditions of our "of, by, and for". Having already stressed the importance of this referendum to our political lives, the rarity of such an opportunity to change the electoral system must also be emphasised. Should we vote 'no', it will be taken by our political supremos as saying that there is zero appetite for electoral reform. By contrast, should we vote 'yes', we would be changing the landscape of UK politics completely. Whether this would be for better or for worse is yet to be determined—there is only so much statistics can tell you.

Yet despite the evident importance of this referendum to our political lives, it is extremely worrying that the issue seems to have completely disappeared from the public eye. Given the complex nature of electoral systems, it is of utmost importance that experts can thoroughly debate the issue in a public forum. Whilst it is true that the world has been through a turbulent period recently, if we are ignorant of what is at hand in a couple of months' time, all we will

create is an ignorant response to the issue. In our apathy we should not automatically assume that the status quo is what is best for the UK.

When it comes down to the bare bones of constitutional matters, it will be forever the responsibility of the people to decide the country's course.

The danger inherent to this referendum is that a 'no' vote, in contrast to what it might seem at the face of things—and, in contrast to what it might be portrayed as being in political terms—does not necessarily indicate that there is no need or desire for electoral reform in the UK. The main issue with the referendum is that its terms are the consequence of our current system—it is government which has decided what our options would be. Clearly if we are arguing that first-past-the-post (FPTP) is not the most effective conceivable electoral system, our choices may be limited to what remains not to be the most effective course of action. It seems that those who advocate electoral reform would far rather see proportional representation on the table, as opposed to the Alternative Vote (AV). AV can only conceivably be seen as being a politically acceptable intermediary, as opposed to any proposal to radically change our political system—even if this were to be for the better.

Really, the process by which the choices

for the referendum were determined should have been depoliticised. What would have been the wiser and more democratic thing to do would have been for a Citizens' Assembly, whose members were selected in a similar manner to a jury, to examine evidence given by experts, so as to decide what the best options for electoral reform would in fact be. The British Columbian experience of this in 2004 was that those chosen to sit in the assembly regularly attended, and came to an informed decision at the end of it. Even though the referendum was eventually struck down, it remained a democratic success. Given that we have such a great stake in the success of an electoral system, so long as we realise this and so long as we have adequate enough information and debate in front of us—with the 'best' possible options fighting it out—we can be relied upon to make a well thought-out decision.

As it is, both choices available to us remain flawed and short-sighted; neither electoral system effectively translates means into ends. The political condition of the UK is such that, as individuals, we choose who we are going to vote for largely based on the political party which a candidate belongs to, not the candidate themselves. Neither FPTP nor the AV accounts for this; fully effective vote to seat representation is, in short, impossible. It may be, for now, indeterminate as to whether AV would be any more proportionally representative than FPTP, and this can only possibly be seen once it has been put in place: there is thus an inherent risk involved. However, saying 'no' to AV remains a far greater risk to the UK's political system. If you, like me, believe that proportional representation, as a more democratic system, is the way forward, then voting 'yes' is the only feasible course of action to take. The alternative can only be a setback to us for generations to come. ☹

A meaty issue

KerryLynn Daly walks the line between sustainability and choice

Vegetarianism has grown considerably in the past decade. What was once seen as 'abnormal' is now a widely practiced way of life. So what has changed? Is vegetarianism simply a diet fad followed by the loyal readers of books like *Skinny Bitch* or have books like Donna Maurer's *Vegetarianism: Movement or Moment?* and Jonathan Safran Foer's *Eating Animals* produced a universal movement of environmental sustainability, moral awareness and health consciousness?

When I first became a vegetarian at the age of eleven it was certainly attributed to the 'loving animals' aspect of vegetarianism but when McDonald's *Beanie Babies* collection became part of the Happy Meal just a few months after my eccentric lifestyle change, I quickly diverted back to my meat loving days. Six years later I gave another go at vegetarianism but for reasons which, for me, were more easily sustainable—environmental and health awareness. This is not to say I do not love animals but as Safran Foer asserted when he spoke at the LSE in January, vegetarianism is not just about loving animals and, for some people, it actually has very little to do with being an animal lover.

Articles on environmental and health consciousness are common themes in today's channels of media and the link to vegetarianism is evident. One only need open a newspaper to notice an increasing abundance of articles in the media recognising the detrimental health risks of consuming large quantities of meat. While, like the 'animal loving' aspect, this explains a component of vegetarianism, is it strong enough to explain the global proliferation of vegetarianism in recent years?

Perhaps—vegetarianism may be just a fad diet endorsed by *Skinny Bitch* and the obsession maintained by many people in regard to health and weight—or perhaps its rapid spread can best be explained by viewing the social movement in regard to moral awareness and health consciousness as well as environmental sustainability and the international recognition of the

importance of going green.

As Rajendra Pachauri, a United Nations climate scientist, suggests, "People should consider eating less meat as a way of combating global warming. UN figures suggest that meat production puts more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than transport." The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation have also asserted that the farming and slaughtering of animals is one of the top causes of all the chief environmental problems facing the world today, including land degradation, climate change, air pollution and water shortages. The destruction of agriculture in the developing world, and the increasing antibiotic problem have also been repeatedly linked to meat consumption. Today, healthy animals receive eight times as many antibiotics as sick humans and if the world continues to consume antibiotic-fed animals at the rate we do today, we will undoubtedly experience a shortage which will risk the human ability to fight off minor ailments currently cured by antibiotics.

While the benefits of vegetarianism are obvious (if practiced correctly of course), it is certainly difficult to forfeit the food choices we are accustomed to. Food choices are very personal and for good reason. Just as a vegetarian does not like being questioned continuously on why they do not eat meat, a carnivore does not want to be lectured on what they eat. Campaigns like *Meat Free Mondays* and *Part Time Carnivore* recognise such

Do campaigns like Meat Free Mondays simply endorse a more sustainable world the same way recycling and saving energy do?

cultural sensitivity to food choices. The campaigns are not designed to force vegetarianism on anyone but rather to open up people's eyes to the incredible health and environmental benefits of going vegetarian, even if it is just for one day. In fact, if everyone in the UK gave up meat for just one day, the reduction in greenhouse gases would be the equivalent of taking more than 5 million cars off the road.

The rather lengthy line for free vegetarian food kindly offered at the LSE by the Hare Krishna community may suggest that an overwhelming number of vegetarians attend the LSE. Knowing many people who eat vegetarian food regularly thanks to this service, however, I know this is not the case. The majority of the people are not vegetarians but perhaps part-time carnivores who recognise the benefits of vegetarianism to the environment, their health and perhaps even their wallets.

Whether or not vegetarianism is a fad or a declaration, a diet plan or struggle for animal justice, a reduction in meat consumption significantly benefits the world today and tomorrow. Bearing this in mind, the LSE Students' Union Vegetarian Society has proposed the adoption of *Meat Free Mondays* at the LSE. During *Green Week* in February, the society surveyed students in the quad regarding their opinion on the issue. If the survey, which is still available online via the society's Facebook page, indicates majority approval of *Meat Free Mondays*, the society plans on presenting the idea of some catered halls of residences going 'meat free' once a week. With only some residences following this rule, a student would still be able to eat at other halls if they found themselves craving a cheeseburger.

Is this still somehow obstruction of the liberty of choice? Should each of us be able to choose our meals every day of the week or do campaigns like *Meat Free Mondays* and *Part Time Carnivore* simply endorse a better and more sustainable world the same way recycling and saving energy do? Should *Meat Free Mondays* be adopted or is food a choice that should not be dictated by any society or catering service? ☘



Flickr user: jelles
Bovine cultivation: sustainable?

Too good to give up?

Allie Fonarev assesses the health benefits of vegetarianism



Flickr user: brocco_lec
Maybe healthier, but as appetising?

Recently, a newly pregnant friend of mine confessed her nervousness for her upcoming doctor's appointment. She is a strict raw food vegan and was anxious to find out if her diet would be sufficient for maintaining the healthy development of her baby. Raw food veganism, for those who don't know, is a lifestyle that promotes a diet of plant-based foods cooked to a temperature less than 46 degrees Celsius based on the belief that foods cooked above this temperature are less healthy because they have lost most of their nutritional value. Most nutritionists would wince at the idea of such a diet because common wisdom suggests that prenatal diets include meat and dairy, among other things. So she was pleasantly surprised to find out that her baby had the most balanced and on-target nutrient levels her doctor had ever seen. While she admittedly started to include a bit of dairy in her diet for the remainder of her pregnancy, she largely stuck to raw veganism, and she and her husband now bring up her young son in the same lifestyle because of her beliefs in its benefits. They are perhaps the healthiest looking, glowing, energetic, fit and fresh-faced family I know.

Yet to reap from the benefits of such a diet is not something easily achieved by the average person. It demands a lot of focus on one's eating habits to ensure one is getting the right amount of alternative proteins and nutrients from foods such as seeds, legumes, sprouts and grains that they would otherwise get from meats or dairy and thus it does require one to live a certain all-consuming lifestyle. The above-mentioned friend is an owner of a raw food restaurant with a degree in speciality nutrition and so can embody the lifestyle in her every-day affairs.

On the opposite end of the spectrum

is the friend who'll wake up to a face-sized slab of steak in the morning or go for the meat-lover's pizza at Domino's for dinner. This friend's iron levels are off the charts, he but keeps getting premonitions about cholesterol issues in the coming future. Most of us fit somewhere in between; and I like to believe that the question of veggie vs. meat should be left up to our own stomachs. But if 've' means more than just our selves, and if 'we are what we eat', then should our society be engaging in the debate on meat?

Britain's Scientific Advisory Commission on Nutrition seems to think so. Last week, it released new guidelines to consumers over their red meat intake. In order to lower the risk of developing bowel cancer, they say adults should on average eat no more than 70g of red meat a day, or 500g per week; That's about a palm-size portion of red meat per day. One look at the average London grocery aisle or restaurant fare leaves doubts as to whether most people fit within this guideline, and it seems the Commission hopes their guide will leave people thinking about their eating habits.

Yet a crucial issue for many seems to be the sheer feasibility of a meat-free diet. As my vegan friend demonstrates, it takes a lot of work to stay healthy on a diet without meat. Not only does it take more time and culinary creativity to prepare vegetarian food, but it also requires more of your budget and a venture outside Tesco to find ingredients alternative to meat—tofu, seeds, and legumes. In a fast-paced city like London, it appears that many just find it cheaper and easier to grab that ready-made lamb korma from the supermarket on their way home from campus or work. So while Britain's commissions have in a sense opened up the floor to the topic of meat consumption, grocers and restaurants seem far from providing a playing

field within which to explore alternatives.

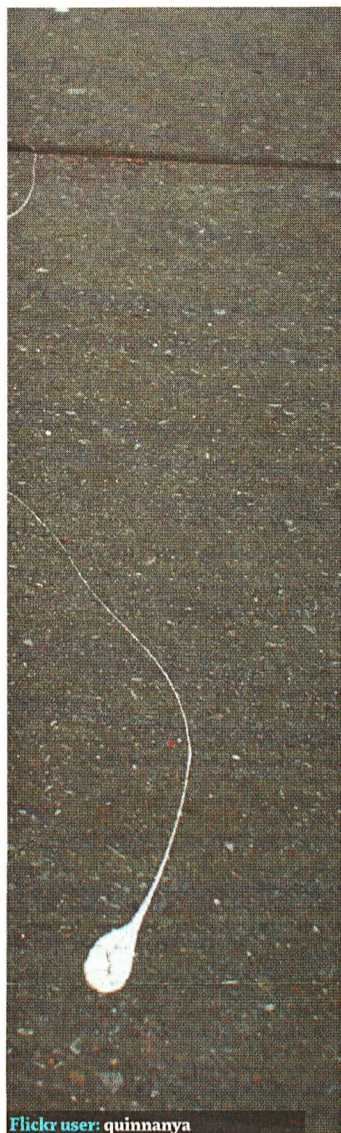
Of course the debate has been alive long before this guideline was released. The question of whether humans are meant to eat meat at all has a substantial amount of literature and impassioned opinion.

One simple Internet search leaves hundreds of pages of evidence for either side, ranging in spheres of biology, history, health, ethic, and sustainability. There is disagreement on whether humans are instinctively omnivorous or carnivorous, on the results of clinical studies, on history and the evolution of food cultivation, on bio-markers of diseases found in meats, and not to mention the moral arguments about eating animals and the sustainability of the meat industry.

Unfortunately, it seems that when the consumer doesn't have both options to actually try, the debate remains only for those already deeply engaged in the issue. What this says about the quiescent dispositions of consumer society is topic for another debate. But on the topic of meat, perhaps this means that we cannot begin to delve into the question until more alternative options become widely available. Before we can seriously discuss the ethics, sustainability, or health benefits of a vegetarian diet, people have to have the option to experiment with it. Because the question of food is one of those things that could hardly get more personal, we have to be able and then willing to get into the question through experience. As it stands for the average busy student living in London, the inconvenience seems too broad. ☘

Sperm alert

Andreas Kuersten worries about men down south



Flickr user: quinnanya

Males, take a look at your junk. Females, take a look at the junk of a male nearby. What you are looking at is slowly becoming more and more ineffective.

In a research project carried out recently in Finland and published in the *International Journal of Andrology* it has been preliminarily posited that sperm quality and counts have decreased while instances of testicular cancer have increased in men born between 1979 and 1987 when compared to those born around 1950 when they were the same age. The project was carried out on Finnish men from these age groups because they have previously been shown to have some of the highest sperm counts in the world.

In general the sperm counts and quality of the younger demographic have been inferior, but what is more startling is the marked decreases over time in these aspects within those born between 1979 and 1987. Those born in 1979-81 had an average sperm count of 227 million, those born in 1982-83 had an average count of 202 million, and those born in 1987 had an average count of 165 million. In addition, these drops are mirrored by a corresponding rise in the incidence of testicular cancer in this younger group.

These findings are echoed by numerous other studies in the developed world which have been conducted over the last two decades and published by journals from *Environmental Health Perspectives* to Canada's *National Review of Medicine*. Two examples are a 1992 Danish study published in the *British Medical Journal* which suggested a worldwide decline in average sperm count of 1% per year and a 1995 study in Paris published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* which found sperm counts in its subjects to have fallen by an average of 2% each year in the previous two decades.

It must be noted, however, that technology for counting and assessing sperm has dramatically advanced over time and that findings could be partially a result of the increasing accuracy of measurements thereby attained. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that, even if it had an effect, this can

account for the totality of the findings.

There are signs, however, that the negative trends found by this study can be halted and even reversed. As written in the research paper for the recent Finnish study, Professor Jorma Toppari, the lead researcher in this project, said, "These simultaneous and rapidly occurring adverse trends suggest that the underlying causes are environmental and, as such, preventable." Echoing this statement in a BBC report, Dr Allan Pacey, senior lecturer in Andrology at the University of Sheffield, said, "The best working theory we have to explain why sperm counts may be declining is that chemicals from food or the environment are affecting the development of testicles of boys in the womb or in their early years of life. However, the effect on their sperm production only becomes apparent when they pass through puberty and eventually try to become fathers."

These environmental materials have been postulated by many studies to be man-made chemicals dubbed 'anti-androgens' which are in everyday products and can find their way into food, water, and other areas of the environment and thereby into males. These chemicals have estrogen-like properties causing them to have similar physiological effects as female hormones on male reproductive biochemistry and inhibit the normal functions of male hormones. The most common sources of these chemicals are thought to be plastic softeners (used in plastic bags and such things), artificial fragrances, agricultural chemicals (such as DDT), and other industrial additives found in common items. With this in mind, additional research involving the identification of these 'anti-androgens' is becoming increasingly important in order to protect future generations.

Further beacons of light with regards to this situation come from two very different sources: a simple change in lifestyle and high-tech genetic research.

In a study completed in 2009 in Australia and presented to the European Society for Human Reproduction and Embryology, it was found that daily sex (or other self-gratifying activities) can significantly improve sperm quality. The study

puts forth that the longer sperm remain in the testicles the more likely they are to accumulate DNA damage by free radicals or be negatively affected by the warmth of that environment which serves to make them more sluggish over time. As sperm counts decrease this lifestyle change could be a method to at least increase the quality of the diminished amount of sperm.

Also presented in 2009 and reported on by the BBC was a study conducted in the United Kingdom which claimed to have actually created sperm. Researchers in Newcastle successfully managed to manipulate stem cells into developing into sperm cells by putting them in a special chemical mixture at a certain temperature, separating the 'germline' stem cells from which eggs and sperm are developed, and making the male, or XY, stem cells of this type undergo the process of meiosis which halves their chromosomes. This process of creating and developing the sperm took four to six weeks. Researchers hope that this sort of procedure will serve to aid men with fertility problems father children by giving them a helping hand in the sperm department.

In this world of industrial additives it does seem, however, that we humans are once again managing to negatively impact ourselves. Yet even though an increasing amount of studies are showing some disturbing trends, an increasing amount are also illuminating and following promising avenues towards possible solutions. It's by no means the end of male fertility in the developed world, but do remain vigilant for the sake of yourself, your future reproductive partner, and your future progeny. ☛

WHAT IF...

...the Empire won at Endor?

Jack Tindale

In 4 ABY, the Imperial forces finally inflicted a decisive defeat upon the Rebel Alliance. The decision by the Emperor to station Felucia-trained Stormtroopers around the Death Star shield generator was sufficient to beat off a failed joint-assault by the Rebel Alliance and the diminutive natives of the forest moon. So absolute was this victory that one member of the 501st Legion was heard to comment "the notion of pseudo-Wookies besting the finest of the Imperial military is laughable".

Defeat on the ground coincided with annihilation in space as the forces of Admiral Akbar were soon placed on the defensive. General Calrissian was one of the many senior members of the Rebel leadership to be incinerated by the flurry of firepower from the Executor, rapidly causing a rout amongst the embittered attackers. The destruction of the Mon Calamari flagship Home One marked the end of the Rebel Alliance as a cohesive body, especially when the fleeing armada heard the news which emerged from the very much active Death Star II.

Luke Skywalker, hero and villain in equal measure, finally gave into the Dark Side after sensing the death of his sister by the Rebel debacle at the shield generator. Furious at his father, Darth Vader died the same way that Count Dooku had, the victor egged on by Palpatine. A broken and corrupted figure, Skywalker took the mantle of his father as junior member of the Rule of Two. Adopting the name Krayt, the son of Vader would become an even more fearsome figure, leading the Empire to victory after victory during the final campaigns against the various anti-Imperial holdouts. The death of Han Solo during the conquest of Dantooine, in which Krayt adopted the attire of the Revanchist Dark Lord Revan, sealed the end of the Alliance as an organised force.

For the Emperor, now safely installed as supreme authority of the entire galaxy, preparations now began for safeguarding the Empire against the threat that had been foreseen by the most experienced Force users since the Jedi Civil War. The Yuuzhan Vong, aggressive and ultra-xenophobic, had first been noted by as wide a variety of figures as Canderous Ordo and Darth Traya. The vast host of warriors had been a major threat to the stability of the Galaxy and were a primary focus for the consolidation of the armed forces under the Emperor. The fortification of the Outer Rim territories and the building of innumerable military installations, especially the notorious World Devastators and Sun Crushers were vital in inflicting early defeats upon the Yuuzhan Vong during the first invasion wave in 25ABY.

Via the actions of the exceptionally talented Grand Moff Trawn, promoted to Supreme Admiral of the Empire during the early stages of the war, the Galactic Empire was able to force the invasion to stalemate after a brief period of retreat. The limited casualties from the invasion were sufficient to greatly increase popular support for the Empire amongst non-human sentiments and by the time of the Treaty of Daluuj, which allowed the free settlement of the Yuuzhan Vong in the former Hutt Space, public opposition to the autocratic rule of the Empire had been reduced to little more than a passing annoyance. ☛

Torturous battles

Gurdeep Chhina fights between rights and necessity

Yet another link between the war on terror and the use of torturous methods on detainees in far distant places has been made. As the thin veneer of morality begins to peel away from US and British tactics in dealing with international security threats, a clear choice materialises. Governments can either stick to principles or abandon all morality in the face of new threats. Somewhere in between is not an option.

Revelations from the former President of Pakistan has brought Britain's record under scrutiny. Pervez Musharraf claims that he was never told of the much asserted British stance, forbidding the torture of British citizens on its behalf. According to Musharraf, in not informing him of this stance he was given "tacit approval of whatever we were doing". Whatever they were doing was partaking in the active use of torture methods in the fight against al-Qaida, if we are to believe Musharraf's admission. These accusations have obviously been denied by numerous officials including the former Director General of MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller, and the former UK security and intelligence co-ordinator who insists that all countries involved were aware of Britain's stance.

These reports are hardly surprising with human rights groups long having reported British complicity in the use of torture in Pakistan. Combine this with President Obama's complete backtrack on promises to close the Guantánamo Bay detention camp, and it certainly does not look good for these two allies. As clichéd as it is, surely there is some truth in the assertion that this example of a breakdown in the rules and conduct of a civilised society, the very thing that Britain and the US are apparently attempting to preserve, spells victory for the terrorists. OK, so it may not be so clear cut, and

there is no denying the mammoth task faced by intelligence services in deciphering and preventing the threat from terrorists. The lines may become blurred, as Baroness Manningham-Buller tried to imply. On relations with other countries that partake in torture she said, "We have to be careful and cautious in those relationships, but to decide that we are never going to talk to the following fifty countries in any circumstances means that you are deciding deliberately not to try and find out information that you need to know". So why bother at all with instating principals to govern the war on terror? Surely the adoption of a pragmatic response in the face of international threats is best.

"Now if you are extremely decent, we then don't get any information... We need to allow leeway to the intelligence operatives, the people who interrogate". If we momentarily overlook Musharraf's endorsement of torture, there is something admirable in his frankness. It is, after all, better than sustaining a false pretence of ethical values only to be involved in the use of brutal tactics in the most underhand way.

In the past, the British government has already had to pay compensation to a handful of detainees raising allegations of torture by Pakistani intelligence agencies whose actions the UK security services were fully aware of. It is one thing to use torture, but then to attempt to recover a sense of respectability by claiming it all in the name of 'necessity' is hypocritical in the most abhorrent way.

There is no point defending 'democratic' and 'constitutional' values, if they do not hold up in the face of difficulty. It would be fine if the Human Rights Act or American Constitution only applied to 'nice people', that would be very convenient; 'Britain is not complicit in the

use of torture against anyone (except for suspected terrorists)". The point of rights and values, is that they are uniform and apply universally. If there was a get out clause, they would not be so spectacular or worth celebrating.

Rather than face the moral dilemma posed by this situation, Britain and America have tried to have it both ways. They've dodged the situation by conveniently locating detention centres in remote parts of the world, away from the inconvenience of laws, regulations and human rights. As the former President of Pakistan has revealed, foreign intelligence services are apparently willing to do even some of the dirty work.

Moral arguments to one side, the value of torture as a method itself is questionable. Much research has shown that the evidence gained from torture is usually unreliable. Evidence shows that captives subjected to torture will usually say what is wanted of them in order to cut short the procedure. Additionally, the physical and psychological impact left on suspects lessens the value of their witness accounts. So why endeavour to use and justify such methods that not only produce unreliable results, but also compromise the morals and values of any civilised society?

In an attempt to protect our society from the threat of terrorists and extremists, the government is ironically becoming complicit in the use of methods associated with the former. A decision needs to be made, if we are to maintain our current status, as a country that does not engage in the use of torture in Britain, or abroad, then association and links with the use of brutal methods in distant countries need to be broken. If not, we are in danger of losing the values that hold together the very society that we are trying to defend. ☛



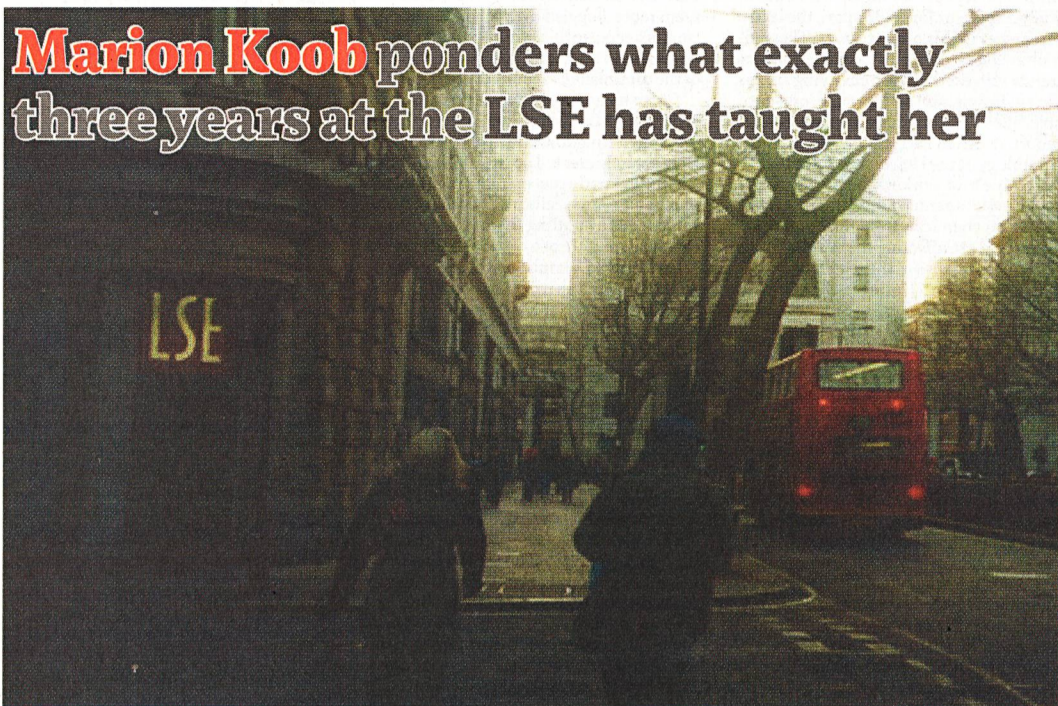
Flickr user: codepinkalert

A big "thank you" to all of our writers for this term.

Social

The LSE conclusion

Marion Koob ponders what exactly three years at the LSE has taught her



Most students have a love-hate relationship with the LSE, and all that it encompasses. It is true that three years onwards, I still can't decide whether the grey-white buildings nestled between the Aldwych and Kingsway will be sorely missed or a welcome departure from my life. On some days, I curse the School for all of my problems (if students can be said to ever have problems, that is). On others, I fondly remember the very first day I walked around the pavement between the Old and East building; a visit forced by what I thought of at the time to be an overenthusiastic parent.

With this in mind, I will list the things that my three years at the LSE have taught me, or the principal questions it has raised—aside, naturally, from the academic. Not that many people actually want to study Economics.

Too many of my fellow Economics students have confided that the LSE course has revealed itself to be very different from their expectations. I blame this on the fact that within A-Level, IB courses, or any equivalent, Economics is taught in a manner diverging from the actual academic approach. Throw in Freakonomics, which frankly, is a silly book, and you find yourself with a generation who thinks they'll be spending their time at university collecting data about first names and drug dealers. For others—and perhaps this is even more tragic for the discipline—economics has become a default option to then move into an A-B-C career. Yet, all of this makes the few individuals genuinely dedicated to the subject matter all the more admirable and enriching to speak to. In some corners of the department there is there a real enthusiasm to learn, research and think about the subject matter, rather than just spewing out derivatives on an exam paper. In other words, an actual academic exchange.

Any LSE student is bound to be thrown into the midst of the professional world much earlier than is healthy. Already, in the Lent Term of first year there are 'Spring Weeks' to apply to. For these, it is a matter of getting an interview to be then shown around a given firm for a week during the Easter break. This is followed by the inevitable summer volunteering trip—for which many will fall into the trap of paying for a 'package'. For a deal somewhat steeper than the worth of a beach holiday, these agencies will organize accommodation, travel, and poor people for you to teach for two or three weeks. It ought to be clear that if you are paying to volunteer, you are not adding any value to whichever community you will be interacting with. I find it shameful that the LSE allows such organizations to advertise and present on campus, let alone be promoted via the Careers Service.

We then reach the meat of the matter: the second-year summer internship.

Before embarking on a criticism, it is fair to say, however, that many students reading non-mathematical disciplines are somewhat spared from the same level of pressure as the rest. The battle among students throughout second year to secure a position slaving away the subsequent summer is fierce. This is one of the harshest reality checks which time at the LSE provides: going to an decently ranked University will by no means red-carpet you to your dream job. Rather, your acceptance was an additional state towards a never-ending struggle to fulfil your devouring ambition. A devouring ambition is, by the way, the only way to survive through an otherwise inhumane yuppie career fair.

This leads me on to a more controversial point: the 'International community' is unfortunately still an idea. One of the more awkward truths that I have encountered. The British and International don't seem to mix much, and the majority within the International cohort stick with those of similar origins. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this (and I find it understandable that while living far

“I still can't decide whether the grey-white buildings nestled between the Aldwych and Kingsway will be sorely missed, or a welcome departure from my life.”

away from home, it is a source of comfort to be among those in a similar situation and who has cultural references in common) I can't help but find it disappointing that there is not more curiosity towards other cultures and points of view. I don't believe that this is the produce of conscious behaviour; but I do wonder whether this phenomenon is revealing of human nature in general or of the atmosphere here. There is however definitely more scope for the school to encourage cultural exchange.

Having a Social life, like going to the gym, requires determination at the LSE. Keeping in touch with friends requires

more energy than would be expected given that the campus is of reasonable size. The LSE is not a place where one might naturally bump into people at lunch or at the beginning of the day. Wanting to keep meeting someone requires agenda coordination, and making appointments. Just like real world adults. Gosh. The library is a realm of doom.

Let's face it, no matter how much time spent there, the Library is just an unhappy place to be. I've longed for comfy chairs, and old wooden desks garnished by small lamps, rather than its current Spartan practicality. I love the openness of its architecture, but the study areas make me feel like a cog in a large and over-performing study machine. Plus, no one ever really seems to remember how to smile.

This leads me on to: those from the teaching staff really are an odd bunch at times. Professors can make or break a course, and in my experience, the variation of teaching attitudes tends to cluster at the extremes. There are several wonderful cases of lecturers enthusiastic and willing to engage with their students, whilst others recite through the material with a stupendous lack of enthusiasm.

For the latter, there is little desire to even be reminded that students are following the course, let alone interact with them. Speaking to anyone devoid of a Master's degree is, for these individuals, a real phobia. Us pesky youngsters are considered as an annoyance to be disposed of to Teaching Assistants as quickly as possible. Very fortunately, those who stake on the interest of their students are exuberant and happily chummy.

Meanwhile, and rather comically for the uncaring outsider, PhD students seem overall to be traumatised by their Doctoral undertaking. The research is either dragging on, not going well, or simply has bored them to death. I've been told more times 'never to do a PhD' than I can count. Public Lectures are amazing.

One thing which I will never be able to criticise is the range of events and speakers which the School attracts. This is the most obvious place in which to find an atmosphere of intellectual pursuit. This added, to the fact that societies each often organize their own speaking events, is pure joy to the curious.

One fact about the LSE that probably doesn't need saying (but I shall say it anyway): Student Politicians take themselves much too seriously. But the UGM is fun to watch, now and then.

These conclusions seem overwhelmingly negative—yet they should not be interpreted solely as so. I am all too aware that some of these issues are not unique to the LSE, or far beyond its control. Each of these 'lessons' have been valuable in their own right. The LSE marries the realities of a globalised world and academic rigour—it is only ever to be expected that this relationship have bumps on its way.

24 hours spent in Rome

Poonam Chopra looks around the Italian capital

The Italian capital, nicknamed the "Eternal City" is a city of layers, contemporary establishments built on thousands of years of history. The sense of history here is extraordinary, so profound and immediate. The city of Rome is a museum in itself, and only 24 hours to spare can hardly do its timeless grandeur and beauty any justice at all, but it is ample time to intrigue your senses and pave your path for return. The city is best experienced by foot or bike, as transportation is not the most reliable and many of the main tourist destinations are walking distance apart. I prefer walking around the city, as it also provides a well-fledged sensory experience. Catch a whiff of the warm aroma of local pizzerias. Feast your eyes on the iconic Colosseum ruins. Sample the Italian goodness of gelato from roadside vendors. Listen to the sweet melody of church bells.

Start off your busy day with a scrumptious Italian breakfast at La Terrazza dell' Eden, nestled in the heart of the city. Reconnect with the Rome of yesterday as you enter the ancient ruins of the Colosseum—the largest amphitheater built during the Roman Empire. It used to be the site of gladiatorial battles, animal shows, and other public spectacles. It is known as one of the finest examples of Roman architecture and dates back to the 1st century AD. Throw a coin in the Trevi Fountain and make a wish! Just don't take a dip in La Dolce Vita; it's prohibited!

If that doesn't satisfy, you can admire the beautiful dome of the Pantheon—a monumental temple dedicated to the ancient gods of Rome. Today, it is used as a church (Santa Maria Rotonda). It also serves as the burial site of illustrious Italians such as the famed artist, Raphael and a popular venue for weddings. A trip to Rome is incomplete without a cappuccino. In the vicinity of the Pantheon is arguably one of Rome's best coffeehouses—Tazza d'Oro. Italians generally consider cappuccino a morning drink, but at Tazza d'Oro, it is served around the clock. Take a break on the Spanish Steps with a serving, or two of delicious Italian gelato. In the summer months particularly, you will find gelato vendors and gelaterias dotted in every corner of the city—grazie!

Erected over the Tiber River is the bridge, Ponte Sisto Stroll. Here, you can catch stunning views of the city as you cross the bridge and find sweet pleasures in the form of quaint cafes and enchanting boutiques along the way. Catch lunch on the go at one of the many pizzerie al taglio (sliced pizza—Rome's version of fast food) in endless varieties, including the standard choices—pizza margherita and pizza al funghi (as the locals say). Make your way over to the Vatican, a landlocked city-state within Rome. One of the main attractions is the majestic St. Peter's Basilica—an example of Renaissance and Baroque excellence dating back to the 5th century. But be warned to avoid going on Sundays when a huge crowd assembles to hear the Pope deliver his sermon. Men and women: be sure to cover your shoulders and legs, otherwise you may not be allowed inside!

For some of the best panoramic views of the city, climb the 320 steps to the Cupola (top of the dome) of St. Peter's or zoom to the top with an elevator. Here you can marvel endlessly at Michelangelo's hand-painted biblical masterpiece on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. It took him almost 5 years to complete it! If that still isn't satisfying, peruse an exclusive display of magnificent Renaissance and Baroque art housed in a sprawling 17th century villa, Galleria Borghese. You can enjoy artwork by Titian, Rubens, Raphael, and Caravaggio and beautiful sculptures by Bernini. Reservations are required and definitely a good idea. This is part of the Vatican museum series. It's hard to avoid art while in Rome, and there is no shortage of museums or art galleries, so prioritize your visits based on your personal interests and tastes.

Wind down after a long day of sight-seeing with a cocktail and live music at the relaxed Bebo do Samba, or head to Via di Monte Testaccio or Trastevere, Rome's nightlife hubs to find some of the hottest and hippest clubs and bars. For the culture vultures, an evening at the opera might be a good option. Check the La Repubblica newspaper for listings of shows and events.

Have fun roaming the beautiful city of Rome. Ciao!

Being Social Editor...

"Au revoir. Auf wiedersehen. Arrivederci." Those were the words of Prime Minister Blair as he wrapped up his final PMQs, pulled on his jacket, and went off into obscurity of life as an 'ex-leader'. Vacating the position of Social Editor isn't quite

as momentous—needless to say I'm not likely to be offered a job in world peace-keeping as a result—but it does bring with it a resignation of responsibility, control and enjoyment. And momentous occasions, I often feel, call for rhyme...

From regular tales of volunteering to the occasional microfinance smearing; Ugandan cultural updates and what to do after a Crush abortion clearing. Social is a varied section of the paper, don't you know, and whether it be Agony Uncle or Jackie O, Social is always ready to read, on the go.

With its tips on overgrown pubic hair, sexuality dilemmas and an incest dare, the resident Beaver counsellor has always been there, nice and fair. But not without controversy and not without question, the Beaver haters' venom Mr Agony Uncle did not lessen. With UGM moans and SWP groans, maybe he should have just talked about the size of tuition fee loans.

If it wasn't for advice—even when nice—there was always Pam Runacles talking about the volunteering sacrifice. And with LSE Green Week and some environmental planting of leek, be clear in your judgement: for Social is never meek. Not when there's sustainable solutions to seek.

From an LSE Bullingdon club to being an African hub. Mixed and varied is this section—and though often without direction, it's never without affection. The Travel Diary, it came and it went, but many nation states it did frequent. From Rome to Mumbai, stories of pizza and poverty that bring a tear to the eye. In Prague and in Milan, different ways to gain a tan. The world is an LSE student's oyster—amidst merrymaking and roister.

But like all great things, March 22nd, the end it brings. With its reddish headers and funky quote boxes, it's a miracle under me, Social didn't go to the foxes. Crazy tales and vocal Poorna Harjani wails—you can hardly blame Alexander Young for asking: what's the point in all these Social fails? But now the time is nigh, the end is near. You may shed a tear, but do not fear, for the Beaver will be back next year.

Alcoholics United

Laura Aumeer turfs over varying international attitudes to drinking

Many of you will have celebrated St Patrick's Day last Thursday. You may have worn green, painted a shamrock on your face, or talked in a dodgy Irish accent. I would be willing to bet though that if you did celebrate it you had an alcoholic drink - perhaps even a Guinness. After all, it is cultural and traditional to do so. Alcohol brings people and societies together, but it can also divide us.

Alcohol relaxes us, loosens our inhibitions, and makes social situations seem less awkward. This is why it is nice to go for a drink in The Tuns after class and why it is such a big part of Freshers week with halls of residences putting on events with lots of available alcohol. It is even suggested that a glass of wine helps you when you are trying to speak a new foreign language, easing conversation.

Just one look at the tabloids though and Britain's drinking culture is doing more to divide us, creating 'Broken Britain'. Britons binge drinking alcohol with the sole purpose of getting very drunk, very fast. Nights out at university involve pre-lashing lots. Inhibitions are loosened

so much for some it doesn't matter what you are (or aren't) wearing, who you pull, who you fight with, and can lead to serious accidents. However, there is a reason many of us - normally respectable, intelligent students - drink a lot: we enjoy it.

In comparison, there is a different attitude in continental Europe. In France, it is traditional to drink wine from a younger age. Many claim that their attitude to drink is much healthier as a result; alcohol is appreciated for its value as a drink, not just as a way of getting drunk. In Germany, beer is respected so much that the oldest surviving law is The Reinheitsgebot, which guarantees the purity of beer. A German student told me that when students go out in Germany, they do not pre-drink as much and the clubbing experience is based on the music and the venue. Although, lots of students will have got very drunk on some occasions, it is not such an integral part of every night out.

In some societies alcohol plays an even smaller role, but there is still a vibrant social scene. When I was travelling in Egypt, I spent nights out with people who drank less or not at all and still

stayed up to 4am, which we then regretted as we tried to get up early the next day. Not much different to university life in the UK. In my group of friends differences in drinking cultures were apparent, but we still socialised together.

In the LSE this is also true. People from different cultures and countries socialise. You only have to look at The Tuns or the Geroge IV to realise this. However, the Freshers' experience of going out and drinking lots can be intimidating for those that are not used to it. In my halls I think it is often apparent that particular groups stick around with people from a similar background. Likewise, I am sure there are a disproportionate number of British students out every Wednesday at Zoo Bar with the AU, compared to in the LSE as a whole.

However, this should not be surprising. People will probably be better friends with those who have similar interests, one of which is what they do on a night out. And at the end of the day no particular culture should be forced to apologise for what they do on a night out as long as they do not harm others.



You're the reason we pay tax

Sarah Long

Everyone understands that polys sometimes need second chances at getting things right; that's why they need resits. This is exactly the case in our last match.

We played Holloway about a month ago and ended up having to reschedule the match after having played three quarters of it. They employed the dirtiest tactics ever: turning up late but just on time to still play, and unhappy with our umpire delayed the start of the match a further thirty minutes whilst we got another. Then ten minutes in one of their players decided that she was sick of standing up so fell over unaided from a stationary position and tore something in her ankle, giving them yet another reason to waste time. Due to her fawning about and constant demands for medical attention, which resulted in us calling an ambulance, they managed to draw out the match so long the lights at Berrylands went off and so we didn't get the chance to tie up what would have been an epic victory.

So this Monday's match was not just our last match of the season, it was a

grudge match we were determined to win but with our centre M.I.A., last seen with her flies down somewhere in Wales, it wasn't going to be as easy as last time.

Yet again they turned up late with a team that consisted of mostly 2nd team players, but we were expecting that - typical poly goers, if you know you can't win, beg, borrow and steal.

The first quarter didn't quite go to plan ending 10-5 against us but losing wasn't an option in this match. Our game still didn't click and the second quarter passed with little avail and we faced defeat at the hands of a fat poly team wearing tight dresses. (Side note - I don't claim to be Gok Wan, but if you look like a rhino in a babygrow, either don't leave the house or stop eating!)

Our comeback in the third didn't go down too well. The poly captain claimed that we were fiddling the score sheet despite our scorers being closely watched by the umpires, her frustration and desperation just boosted our game though. Maybe I'm sadistic but victory is so much sweeter when you know its hurting to lose and they gave us that satisfaction time and time again. One of their players ran into an elbow just so she could go off

court and cry, another gave away a penalty for arguing with the umpire - something I've never seen in a game before. They threatened to walk off court because the umpires were biased.

What I don't think they'd considered was the possibility that maybe they were just shit. With one quarter to play we were just one goal behind and with the shooting partnership of Ainsworth and a borrowed Ody hitting their stride, a midfield that couldn't be caught and a solid defence we were taking the match from under their noses.

They fuelled our fire with more drama in the fourth, another contempt penalty, this time against the captain, was all we needed to seal the deal. A close but well deserved victory of 27-25 over a poly who fielded their second team against us 4ths because we gave them a second chance to beat us. The only thing better than winning is winning against sore losers and to top off the match nicely their captain decided it appropriate to kick the ball over the fence and into the river with 10 seconds left to play. We'd beaten the poly scum in our most satisfying victory of the year - a great end to the season and the end of the 3rd years' era.

per, with Capello frustrated by incumbent captain Rio Ferdinand's continued struggle with injury (and presumably the failure for other squad members to exude the supposedly prerequisite leadership characteristics).

The moral questions regarding whether it is healthy to give such a poor role model and teammate the job back have been dealt with ad finitum elsewhere during the past week. Also, the questioning of Ferdinand's treatment has been vocal.

But one crucial debate has hardly been had: does it matter who the bloody captain is?

While having an iconic central figure - see Bobby Moore - to eulogise when success is achieved (or somebody to round on in times of struggle) undoubtedly makes a great story, in team sports the role of on-field leader is dramatically overestimated.

That players of an international calibre - in any sport - require a designated captain to look to when the going gets tough is just begging for trouble.

Instead, great teams rally around in support of one another and great players take responsibility themselves, rather than bickering like a bunch of teenage girls about who gets to lead the pre-game pleasantries, do the coin toss and wear a pretty little armband.

The most successful England football side since the heroes of 1966 also highlighted how overrated the position of skipper is. In their second game of the 1990 World Cup against Holland, Bryan Robson - nicknamed 'Captain Marvel' - was injured, ruling him out for the rest of the tournament.

Surely if the team's captain was so valuable, those around Robson would have crumbled without his presence and guidance on the field. Instead, they reached the semi-final and wound up a pair of hopeless Chris Waddle and Stuart Pearce penalties short of defeating ze West Germans, the eventual winners.

The captain may be a ship's designated leader, but it would sink quickly without the other crew members taking responsibility and rallying around each other too. Until the England football team, and its followers, realise this, its perpetual underachievement will be bound to continue.

Having been thanked by the editors of this section of the Beaver last term for my contributions, it's only right that I thank Rosie and Boca for being happy to print my drivel throughout the year and designate me a weekly column.

It's been enjoyable writing it. Hopefully, it's been enjoyable to read too.

JACKIE O'S UGANDAN PROSE

Jackline O. Amaguru:

What I'll remember about London

Obviously, there are a couple of things that are done differently in London from the way we do things back home in Uganda. Some differences are negligible but some scream out.

For example, the first time I visited London it was summer. On the Piccadilly line from Heathrow airport, a passenger embarked the train and my jaw dropped. It was a young lady dressed in nothing but a shirt that stopped way above her knees. No one else in the train seemed bothered but me.

More shock awaited me at Euston Station, where there was more skin on display per square metre in a public building than I had ever seen in my life. In Uganda, skimpy dressing would only be socially acceptable at beaches, some night spots and in the privacy of your home. By day three, I couldn't be bothered who was wearing what - maybe because I was busy trying to recover from the second cultural shock that still makes me uneasy: couples who kiss in public.

Sometimes, when I'm in a train and there is a couple kissing, I simply can't concentrate on the Evening Standard or my MP3 player. If a Londoner visited Kampala for five years, chances are that he or she would never see a couple locked up in a kiss in public because we just don't do that in public. However, Uganda's fertility rate of 7.2 children per woman implies that we know a thing or two about physical intimacy but we don't display our skills in public. So, if the gorgeous Idris Elba were to get on his knees with a ring for me, would I kiss him on the streets of London? What's more, I still can't fathom how

my friends eat two slices of bread with a few leaves and meat in-between the slices and that is called lunch. Where I come from, no main meal is eaten cold. Maybe it's because, by their very nature, it is unimaginable to serve cold inyasa, kwon-kal, matooke, atap, kenke or fufu. LSE, now you know why I am yet to run out of excuses when you say, "Let's go grab a sandwich!"

Furthermore, because Uganda's economy relies a lot on non-mechanised agriculture (you probably had Ugandan-grown coffee this morning), we tend to eat large portions of food for energy. So, don't collapse when you look at my lunch. As for weight, forget the legendary size zero. If you ever feel overweight even at the little size fourteen, you are welcome in Uganda, where big is beautiful. What we mean by big is not obese but rather, 'ample flesh'. Why? To most of us, big is a sign of happiness, health, wealth and fertility. It's also one indicator that your spouse is looking after you well. True or false, you decide

In Ugandan public transport and elevators, it is not uncommon for us to greet each other and strike conversations thereafter. However, sometimes when I step into a London elevator, I really feel like saying, "hello", but fear people may think, "what does she want?" Should I let the Ugandan in me free to say "hello" to anyone, anywhere in London?

What unique cultural aspects will I miss when I leave London? It'll be the double-decker buses, Oxford Street, the well-clad police officers, the Museums and art Galleries and my London friends. But also, of course, London's greatest institution: the Beaver.

Sport

Letter from the Sport Editors

As this is the final edition of the paper for both of us we would like to take this opportunity to say a few thank you's to some people very special to us and all of you:

The AU's fiercest critics for their comments - now look at ya!!!

Stuart Smedley for giving the 'Smedley' name a bit of a lift this year, and Alex Smedley for being a sexual deviant and helping us fill column inches.

Fellows for stealing my flowers at the AU Ball this year - hope they managed to help you get lucky.

All of our Torsoes of the Week throughout the year - you all looked amazing in your own special ways.

Megan Protheroe for helping us with content each week.

Ahmed Alani for making sure the section doesn't look like a piece of shit each week.

Zoo Bar for all the special memories and their fantastic pitchers - sorry we tried to look elsewhere.

John and Rudy, for helping us find our hidden superstars.

Wrights Bar - "Bacon forrrr a bap"

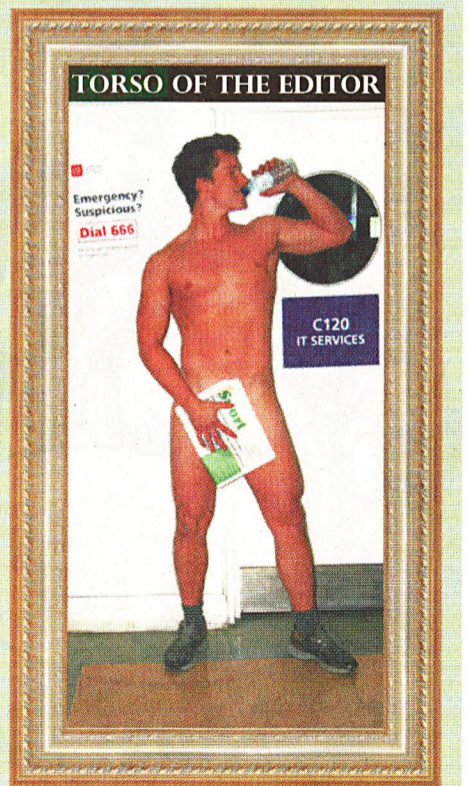
The girls who have worked behind the bar on Wednesday nights and put up with all of our drunken antics.

Fortress Berrylands for helping us to justify the lifestyle we have all chosen during our time at LSE.

Finally, anyone who has ever taken part in any sort of protest, occupation or student politics - thanks for being such bell-ends and giving us something to laugh at while hungover on Thursday mornings.

Lots of Love,
Boca & Boyleem

We've been watching...xoxo



Farewell AUB Class of 2011

It's been messy



Tennis:
 "Our esteemed Club Captain getting kicked out of the Carol this year for Pole Dancing with a rugby fresher"

Men's Hockey:
 "One of hockey's finest moments was when two of our member orchestrated a 'gang-bang' situation with a member of women's rugby in Callela."

Badminton:
 "Beating UCL to win the BUCS championships - take that Poly-Scum"

Men's Basketball:
 "Premier League here we come baby!"

Women's Rugby:
 "My drinking of two bottles of sambuca and falling down the ferry stairs and one of out teammates shagging two boys dresses up as dogs and bears"

Football:
 "Team Spastic performing a citizen's arrest on a Polish perpetrator in the French Alps"

Men's Rugby:
 "The greatest game ever played (LSE 21-18 Essex), returning to The Tuns for Re-AUnion, dominating with a marvellous Empire and greeting The Father with the Old Boys"

Netball:
 "Deevy and Prothers getting restrained by Spanish police, whilst topless and soaking wet"

Dance Club:
 "We are currently in talks with West End and Broadway producers who are extremely interested in franchising our dance show from this year"

Women's Football:
 "Fantastic goals: Jen Fields direct from a corner, Paige Pilotille on her debut and Helena's epic miss from 2 yards out"

Most likely to...

- Become a page 3 girl - **Will Wilson**
- Cause the next Credit Crunch - **Lauren Deevy**
- Get married - **BJ & Strivens**
- Become Tory Party Leader - **Ben Robinson**
- Create peace in the Middle East - **C.Ivanova**
- Join Phil at the Tuns - **Skandha**
- Have a lifetime paying for sex - **A.Smedley**
- Die in Salou - **California**
- Never graduate - **Men's Hockey**
- Stay a Billionaire - **Alexey TephluKin**