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TheBeaver

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Chain Reaction

Julia Giese

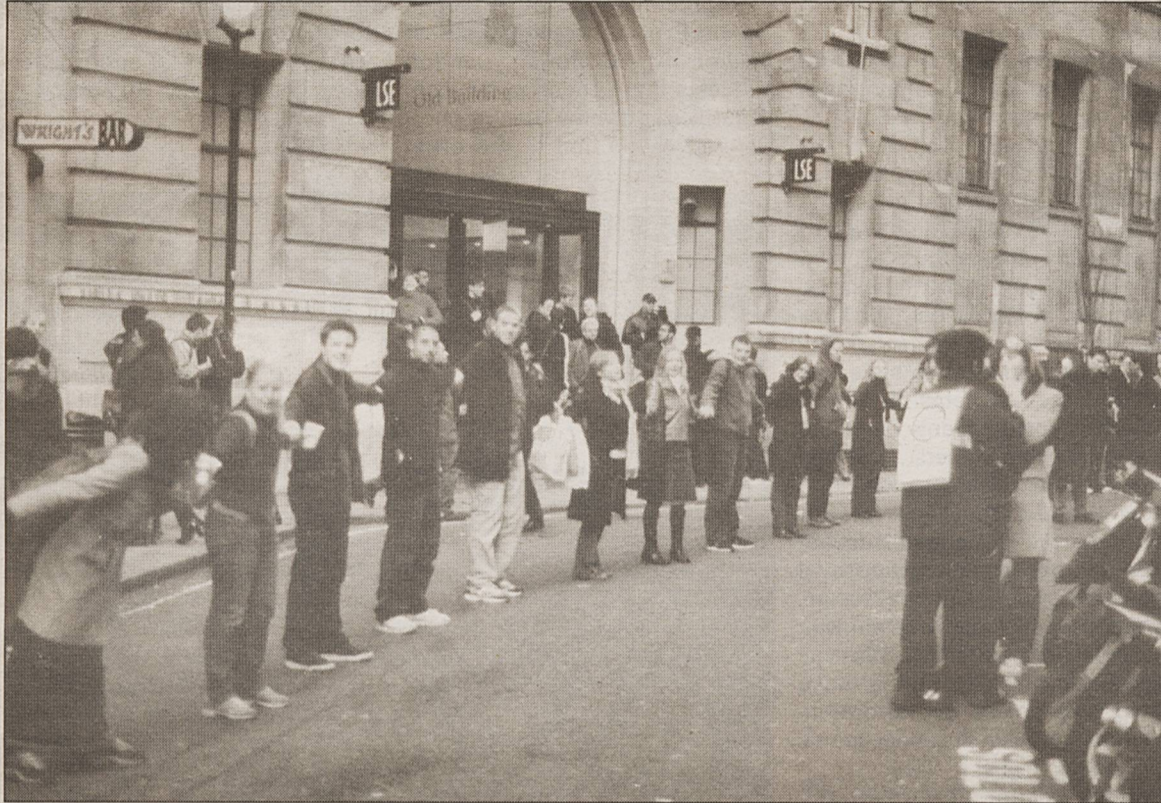
Over 400 LSE students, last Tuesday took part in a dramatic show of unity against the LSE's failure to rule out top-up fees.

Chanting protesters encircled the School's main buildings in a human chain of protest whilst LSE security staff rushed to seal off their administrative buildings.

As more and more students joined the protest, a complete chain was formed, spilling out into Kingsway and the Aldwych.

The LSESU Treasurer, Charlotte Knowles, asked students on the protest to declare how much debt they were in - the total debt for the chain was over £1.8 million. According to Lee Federman, LSESU General Secretary "students felt part of something really special. Generally LSE students are realising that they can make a difference. Nobody can ignore such a show of mass educated opinion."

The event was organised by the LSESU Fee Fighters, a campaign group where 400 students had signed up in a three-hour recruitment blitz at the end of last term. The organisation's purpose is to rally LSE students into action. Lee said: "LSE students have been sleeping in recent times. However Union activity this year has so far been dominated by the core campaigns of value for money in teaching and learning, and fighting against the very real threat of top-up fees." A motion at the UGM of the 23rd November mandated Lee to seek a firm commitment against the imposition of top-up fees at LSE



LSE students: not just unity of spirit

from Anthony Giddens. The reply stated that "the LSE has no plans to introduce top-up fees at the moment."

Proposals made by the Russell Group, which consists of the top twenty research institutions in the UK, include plans suggesting that universities could charge different rates according to their status. This could be anything up to £6,000 a year.

The government so far has failed to rule out these proposals. Given the state of Higher Education funding at the moment,

it is most probable that LSE could be one of the first to 'go it alone'. The price of a top class degree could thus rise to somewhere near £35,000 including living costs.

Such a system clearly discriminates against students from low income groups and will make those lucky enough to get their hands on grants end up heavily indebted.

"Top up fees are both elitist and encourage a culture where students will be increasingly accepted to university based on financial rather than academic

qualifications", criticises Lee. "LSE was founded on the principle of social equality - this is a tradition that the Union will continue to fight for."

However, the Union has one main problem in motivating students to fight for their cause: With a very high percentage of international and postgraduate students who are already paying high fees, the debate over top-up fees does not directly concern many LSE students.

Perhaps this is why some students (as in the National March in November) failed to show their support for the human chain. This is in spite of a CVCP survey conducted in May 2000, which showed that the cost of an undergraduate programme at LSE for overseas students is £9,384 - nearly £3000 above the national average of non-laboratory based courses. Only the University of Buckingham currently charges more per year than LSE and UMIST is the only other institution that charges a fee in excess of £9,000.

The question which remains is if the quality of teaching at the LSE justifies these high prices. If you don't think so, then get involved in the campaign!

At least then, you might have some chance of getting back what you paid for.

Pics: Sam Goodchild



"FREEDOM!" Feders fights fees

Apathy
rules at
PESANTS

Last Monday the SU organised a debate: "LSE should merge with Imperial". Among the audience was James Sharrock.

What a turnout! It may have reached double figures. Just. You missed an (almost) titanic struggle between conservatism and other people who happened to walk past A85 and were forcibly dragged in by the ginger one.

Despite the lack of atmosphere the debate was (sort of) animated.

Mr Blackwell and Mr Chapell seemed to need no crowd to inspire them. The Tories represented the government (insert own joke) and argued for a merger, suggesting a university entitled PESANTS or Political Economic Social and Natural Technological Sciences.

Better value for money, self-interest and greed seemed to form the basis of their arguments. Ideological differences meant they were never going to win the house's vote. Many hours spent in the debating society had clearly helped their cause though.

Initially the opposition seemed unable to respond. A lazy argument about frightening late-night tube travel seemed to strengthen the dark side.

Tory humour (!), biting wit and general debating prowess proved that the devil does indeed have all the best tricks. For a brief moment the pro-merger minority had the upper hand.

Eventually good triumphed over evil. The opposition regained strength from the founding fathers. An appeal to the historic and ideological independence of the LSE went down better than the Tory argument of self-interest and revenge on Oxbridge.

The intervention of Julius and Duncan Adams from the audience further condemned the government argument into the intellectual dustbin.

So-called PESANTS university would never exist. And nor would a stupid acronym.

So on Monday 15th of January at 4pm in A85 a few people discussed something that was largely fiction, might never happen and had a few laughs. That's it. Any further extension of the good versus evil metaphor would be crap. But there were some serious issues the debate could've raised.

Do you care anyway? Apparently not judging from the turnout.

Continued Page 2

NUS shutting down

Julia Giese

Now it is official: The last week of February is to be the date for the NUS' activities units against fees.

The climax will be on Thursday March 1st with this year's National Higher Education Shutdown while many other activities like lobbying MPs, working with lecturers, schools and the public are planned for the rest of the week.

The NUS hopes that as many institutions as possible will join them and simply shut down for the purposes of that one day.

Anyone with a hectic schedule on that day of the week may be licking their lips, but the aim of the whole event is to highlight student opposition to the introduction of tuition fees and abolishing of maintenance grants.

However, it is questionable if the date is well chosen. The NUS itself acknowledges that some institutions might be on half term leave while the LSESU elections are to be held just that Shutdown Thursday.

Lee Federman, SU General Secretary has said: "The LSE Students' Union will support these actions by NUS, although they clash quite unfortunately with the LSE elections. Something like a Shutdown would require the full consent of The Union."

This might mean that we shall have to express our anger on a different day and that the SU organises our own shutdown but "whatever happens, you can be certain that the Fee Fighters will be there or thereabouts", Lee assures.

The action comes in the run up to the General Election. Student debt and hardship continue to rise and funding remains a fiasco. The DfEE's own research is a damning indictment of students funding, showing that over 87% of students are experiencing financial difficulties.

This survey, from December 2000, also showed that student debt has trebled between 1995/6 and 1998/9 and that 61% of students felt that funding had deterred friends from entering university.

Lee added: "There is no doubt about the urgency of the question of student hardship, and this ties in closely with the issue of term-time working. Both severely impact on the quality of a student experience."

We therefore have to raise the issue to a level of public debate to make politicians from all parties take the matter of Higher Education seriously and to make it part of their agenda.

You've got to accentuate your accent

Fatima Sonawar

Does the way we speak really matter?

According to recent research, attitudes to accents are changing. Paul Coggles, senior lecturer in modern languages at the University of Kent, argues that society is far less class conscious than it has been in the past.

The new generation of people are far more open minded and they feel that the way one talks isn't really an issue. Since we are constantly in contact with a multicultural and multilingual range of people, we supposedly don't feel that any accent is a barrier.

Coggles goes on to state that accents are like items of fashion and that 'some accents are more marketable than others... they go in and out of fashion according to how 'trendy' the area is. For example the Manchester accent has gained enormous approval since the city became the 'scene'. In addition, TV role models with accents such as Robbie Williams and Craig from Big Brother have helped promote variations in pronunciation and dialect hence giving them higher profiles.

The accents of Liverpool, Glasgow and Birmingham have been generally regarded as negative. The Scouse accent has been described as 'whiney' whilst people with Brummie accents have been described as sounding

stupid.

But as media 'personalities' with regional accents become more prolific, attitudes change and this ensures that formerly 'negative' accents gain status.

Furthermore, research carried out by Professor John Wells at University College London suggests that London is far more linguistically diverse than Paris or Tokyo. In addition to the great range of accents used by

Londoners, it is estimated by the School of Oriental and African studies that 275 languages are spoken within the Capital alone. Says Professor Wells, our multilingual society 'adds to life's rich pattern and improves the notoriously narrow minded attitudes of British people to languages other than English.'

Fatima Sonawar, a Year 13 student from St Marlybone Sixth Form School, is taking part in the LSE's Saturday School project. Organised by the LSE Centre for Educational Research, the project aims to improve access for comprehensive school students to the LSE and other leading universities. Upon completion of her A levels, Fatima hopes to go on to study Speech Therapy.



A world of difference

Pic: Archives

Fighting the fees - students hold their ground

Continued from cover

Another agenda of the fee fighters group directly addresses student's concerns regarding the threat of privatisation. In countries where the cost of Higher Education is determined by market forces, fees have been rising to more than double the level of LSE - for example, \$120,000 in Georgetown, USA. A privatised system would also put an end to government regulation and the availability of independent evidence of the quality of education offered by a particular university.

Lee commented: "The privatisation of our universities is not in the interest of students. It all comes down to whether you

" Given the state of Higher Education funding at the moment, it is most probable that LSE could be one of the first to 'go it alone'. The price of a top class degree could thus rise to somewhere near £35,000 including living costs"

believe education is a right or a privilege. I believe everyone should have access to this right, not just the privileged."

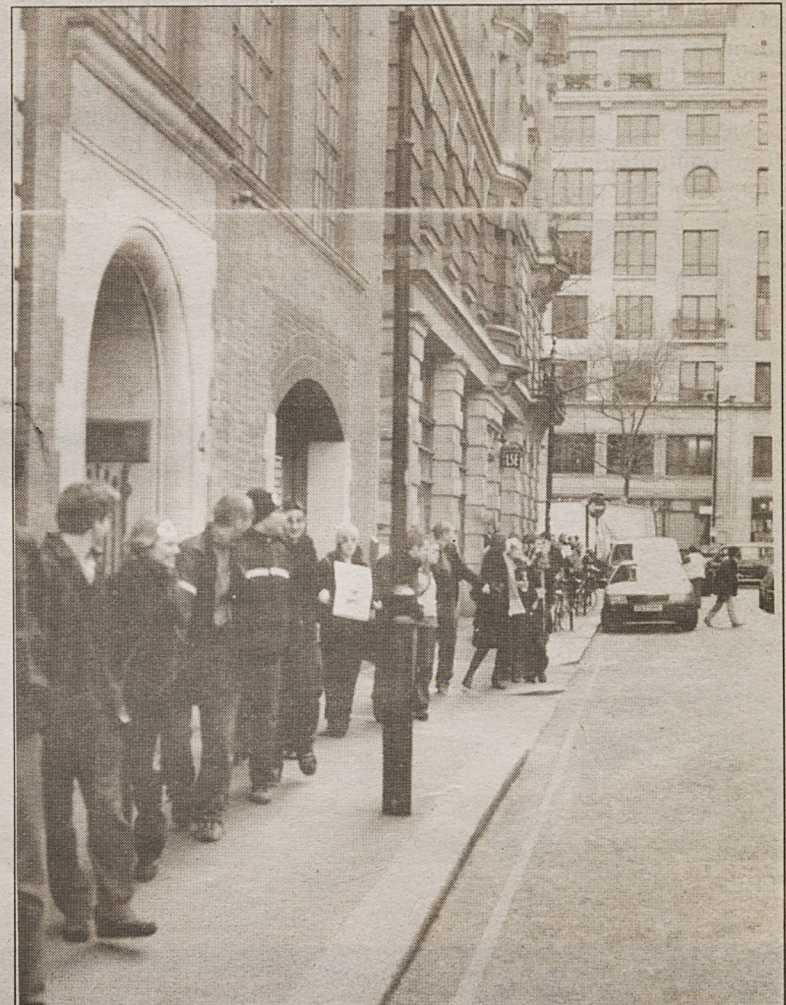
Last but not least a word has to be said about LSE's hypocrisy. We are constantly told that LSE tries to attract students from all backgrounds. Somehow this does not sound consistent with the above.

To add further insult to injury, the LSE Student Tutoring campaign sends students into schools in the poorer parts of London. The aim is to help with the teaching but more importantly, LSE students are encouraged to become role models for these underprivileged children.

Thus the children should be encouraged to work hard in school in order to be able to go on to Higher Education.

But can we really guarantee them that they will have a choice once they have grown up? I do not think so, at least not if we (all students!) do not get involved in the fee fighting - now.

Join the weekly campaign meetings on Fridays at 12 in the Societies meeting room. Do not leave the job to others!



Hill takes the helm

News Team

Last week, our esteemed leader Professor Antony Giddens began a three-month sabbatical from his job as Director of the LSE.

Whilst the Prof has his Lent term time-out, Professor Stephen Hill is to step into the proverbial Directorial breeches.

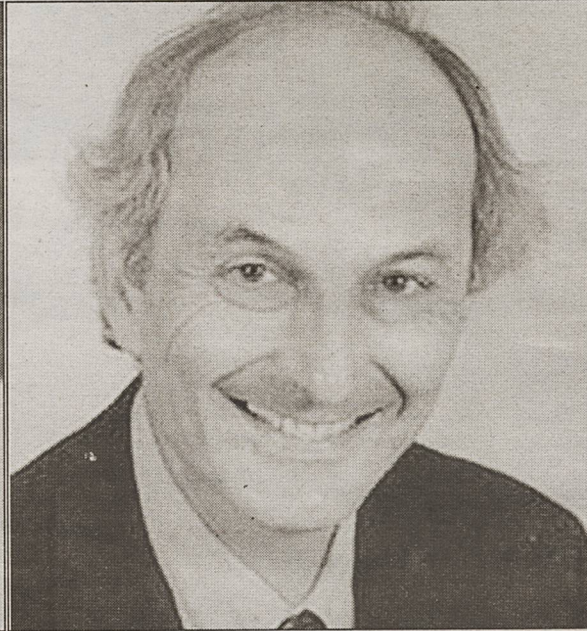
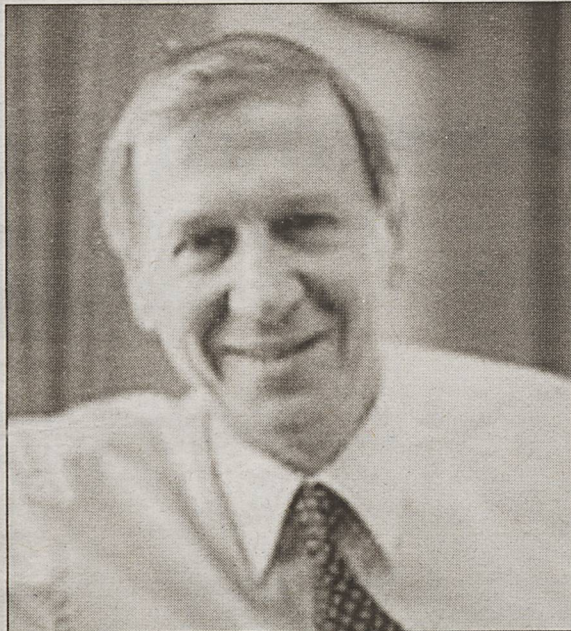
Many of you may well have heard of this dramatic and exciting development through a login message that keeps on appearing and irritating us all when we try to access our LSE computer accounts.

Many, indeed, may have turned to yourselves and thought, "Eh? Who's this Stephen Hill fellow when he's at home?"

In fact, Professor Hill has worked at the School for many years and at different times has been a member of the Departments of Industrial Relations and Sociology, and the Interdisciplinary Institute of Management.

He has also held one of the Pro-Directorships for just over four years, carrying out administrative work involved in running the university.

Those who fear that the LSE could become directionless in the absence of our fearless leader should take heart in the judgement of our other, slightly more fearful leader: Lee Federman the SU General Secretary (who is to make his first meeting with the acting



Out with the old and in with the new, for a term at least: Professors Giddens and Hill Pic: Archives

Director this week).

He has confidently pronounced, "We are in safe hands with Professor Hill." We shall see, shan't we Lee?

Hill trained first as a historian at Oxford and then as a sociologist at LSE.

He specialises in the study of work and employment, including the management of organisations and has written and published numerous books and articles, one of which is The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology.

When not at LSE, he enjoys the cinema and mountain walking.

Giddens

Meanwhile, rumours have abounded as to what exactly Professor Giddens 'is up to'.

Speculation has been rife that the man often described as the intellectual father of New Labour and the 'Third Way' is to work at the No. 10 Policy Unit during the months preceding a general election.

Whilst the timing of his sabbatical would seem to support this - why after all could he not have taken time off during the summer term, when little goes on except examinations - the LSE

has rigidly stated that Professor Giddens takes leave purely so that he can complete research and book commitments.

Giddens is set to return to the LSE in all his glory on the 31st March this year.

But fret not students: in the meantime, he will still be continuing with his LSE lectures and other public activities.

So, effectively we will be blessed by two Directors parading around campus. Bonus.

So, what is Professor Giddens doing during his sabbatical? Turn to page 5 of B:LINK for an irreverent guess.



Union Jack

After the excitement of last weeks instalment of Blind Date Jack wondered how the two contestants Blackwell and Tory Sleaze Hartley had coped with their dream holiday in Bognor. No answer was ever given but the smiles on faces showed that Mickey B had clearly enjoyed 'working under Alex'. With the Fourth Reich fully underway its efficiency could clearly be seen in a fully comprehensive set of minutes.

The main business of the day was however the arrival of Scott Rice ULU President. UHU!! Well none of you voted for him, but today he brought us exciting news apparently we can vote for his successor as long as its 'the right candidate for the job'. Jack was left in no doubt at the end of the guess the length of the speech competition that listening to 'Captain Ricicle' wasn't worth it and that for a change we should have listened to Oscar, if only we'd known he was from Strand Polly to start with!

Sabbs reports told us of the great protest that was the human chain. Designed to help student debt and gain media attention it did both. This fine organ - as the mass publication - has taken up the story and as far as helping student debt many students were unable to get to NatWest to renew their overdrafts on time!

It seems that even charity alone won't get Claire into bed with Charterhouse, but if she won't do it for the sorry syphilitic man that is Munterhouse then surely for the starving millions. Jack proposes the Rag Shag for Rag Week live on stage in the old theatre; tickets at a fiver and a live feed to the tuns, all proceeds to charity. Not that I've thought about it much!

The motions rolled on with a notice of a constitutional amendment passing by for weeks ahead. The only interesting thing about it was the switching of Grt Dover St with Butlers on the ballot run. Jack wonders if this is so Super Hack 'My Name Is' Ritesh Doshi can get his Post Grads out to vote before they go to bed.

Then came Slackwells motions he emerged as promised from his chair and produced two motions asking for reports or 'work' in Sabb speak. The first went unchallenged but the second on NUS services was a bit more controversial. Apparently Trots at NUS make you sign a confidentiality clause sounds like a closed shop to me, and that's apparently what we'd get if we left! Well it was worth it just to see Blackwells pelvic thrust: it may not be a jump to the Left but it's certainly a step to the Right!

Is LSE leading an apathy attack?

Iain Bundred
News Editor

Call me crazy, but has the LSE suddenly become active again?

The LSE was made famous for its activist past; there was a time when students flocked to Houghton Street in a search for something to fight for - and there was always something that they could come up with to march/fight/sit-in against.

When we signed up for the LSE, that was all in the past.

Who now would seriously consider storming the Tower of London for an hour and hanging banners outside advertising it for sale, as they did in 1955. And that was even before the 1960s, when they got really crazy!

This year, though, there has been evidence of a growing fighting spirit among LSE students.

The 90s across Britain saw a decline in even interest in politics and current affairs - the fall in popularity of TV news and the rise in gameshows is indicative of that.

These days, even Government students at the LSE (and this is me and my mates I'm talking about) would probably pay more attention to *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* than the Nine/Ten/Eleven/whenever-the-hell-its-on O'Clock News.

Maybe this has always been the case, but it seems certainly that



Last term's march - the first step on the road towards an re-activated LSE union? Pic: Mark Simpson

apathy rules.

And yet, twice this academic year, LSE students have been asked to stand up and be counted - to step into the sandals left by their hippy ancestors.

They have whole-heartedly answered that bugle call.

The march through central London was packed by LSE members who were prepared to trapse through the city on a Wednesday afternoon.

The Fee Fighters' organisation has over 400 members - making it

one of the largest societies in the union.

And of course, last Tuesday, hundreds were happy to turn-out for the human chain publicity stunt.

However, maybe I'm just a first year news editor getting carried away by a couple of big photo opportunites. Maybe no-one really cares.

Many people at the LSE turned out for the march so that they could skip Wednesday classes and go to a piss-up in Brixton.

Many people at the LSE sign up

to the Fee Fighters simply because they are self-interested souls who are merely worried about their own finances.

But then there are some people at the LSE who value free education - 'as a right not a privilege' - who are ideologically devoted to the current campaign.

Because there are some people at the LSE who truly care about the future - in the words of Feders outside the Tuns last Tuesday - "of our children and our childrens' children".

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We will also be conducting a presentation on 12 Feb 2001, Monday, 6.00pm at the Graham Wallas Room, 5th Floor Main Building, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). We look forward to seeing you!



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

with Ruth Molyneux



MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY

Dull scientists at Manchester University reveal the obvious.....It's time for bed. Don't you all just love the way that scientists spend thousands of pounds investigating things that we all know anyway? Well, Scientists at Manchester University have decided that staying up all night studying doesn't actually do you any good. If you learn things over a long period you're much more likely to be able to recall them. Well whoop de doo.Well done! But what happens when you have a life as well? Watch out Manchester students...they'll be coming after your pubs and bars soon....



DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Students at the University of Durham have taken to tracking each other down in a bloodthirsty pursuit for enjoyment. Members of the Assassins society are allotted a target each week and have to "kill" their victim, while avoiding being assassinated themselves by another member. Some students have expressed concern about the nature of the society, but the two founder members say it is "really good fun." Really? Honestly?



BRISTOL UNIVERSITY

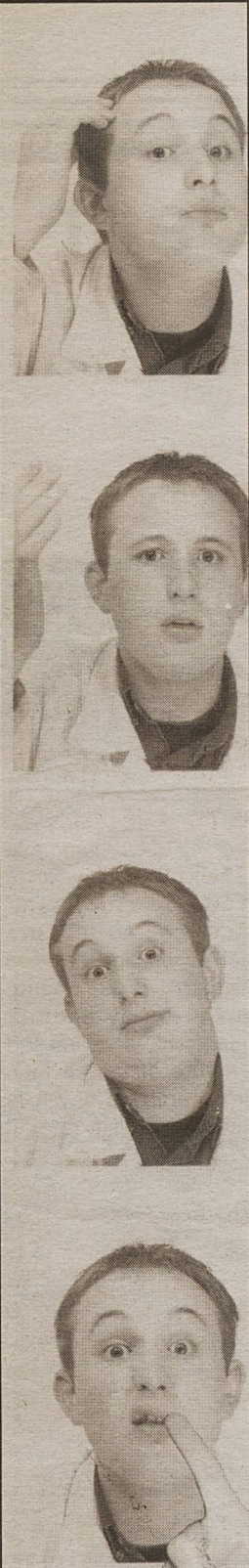
A Bristol graduate who tried to join a Steps tribute band on stage needed nineteen stitches after he was thrown out by bouncers. Gez Smith claims that he was beaten up by the bouncers even though he showed no signs of aggression towards them. Just being there was probably his crime.....



SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY

A suspect two foot long python has been spotted at the University of Sheffield. One student saw what she described as a "slithering creature with no legs" in the cacti garden outside the library. Another student was surprised to see the creature slithering around the university beer garden later on that week, saying "It was definitely a snake; I saw one like it on Animal Hospital once." Hmmmm. Sounds suspiciously like a male student trying to pull.....

Baker's Mullet



THE MULLET took a rare trip out yesterday to High Street Ken to visit ex-Rolling Stone, Bill Wyman's restaurant, Sticky Fingers. Accompanied by a bevy of television personalities including Fletch from Porridge, Mr Benn, Fred Elliott from Coro and Trigger, the Mullet et al attempted to paint the posh end of London the proverbial red.

Unfortunately Bill wasn't available to greet the Mullet and pals but rumour has it that Keith Richards was frying the chips and Mick Jagger was washing up.

The cheeky buggers in Sticky Fingers though have screwed all of the Rolling Stones memorabilia to the walls which meant that all we could nick was a few books of matches. Rumours that Mr Benn stole Bill Wyman's gold disc of Exile On Main Street have been unconfirmed.

After struggling to find a tube to go anywhere after the meal, the Mullet lost five quid, five bloody quid, to Trigger who made a bet about where the tube was going. Ending up in Notting Hill after the meal, it was a case of diving into the nearest pub, then on to Earl's Court.

It must have been a good night as the Mullet woke up fully dressed with one shoe on and with a wet tissue in hand.

Ahh, the LSE still haven't got the better of the Mullet yet. Basically if the Mullet didn't go to all of his classes before Christmas he was going to get thrown out on his ear and would have to go to the Strand poly to do a BTEC national

diploma in soil studies. "...the committee, although not entirely satisfied that the Mullet has met the conditions, is prepared to let you stay on for another year of pissing your student loan against the nearest wall."

Not entirely satisfied? Bloody hell. I can't win. Not only did the library run me up a fine of 921 quid for a book that was on the bloody shelf. Not only has Giddens decided to take a sabbatical just when we were getting along so well, but the committee is not entirely satisfied!

The Mullet thinks that he might have to start writing his essays in his own blood in order to get anything over a pass and present his head on a stick the next time he has to do a seminar.

Don't they realise that some of us have to work in order to fund our way through university? We don't all have mummy and daddy wiping our arses every time the kitty is a bit low after a Friday night out at Crush.

Should be grateful really that they're letting the Mullet stay, otherwise it would be straight down to McDonalds to check out their "management opportunities."

On to the picnic table episode of Saturday. Upon arriving home at 4am after a night working in the Tuns. This Mullet was shocked to discover a Yogi Bear style picnic table blocking the way into the living room.

As it turns out Ronnie Barker and his dodgy Spanish mate thought it would be a good turn to steal a picnic table from the local pub and

attempt to put it in the back yard. However the only way to get the bloody thing outside is to take the whole of the back wall of the house off.

Most people will steal ashtrays or traffic cones. Only the Mullet could live with people who pinch garden accessories when we don't have a garden.

Never mind, it can be added to the collection of the National Lottery sign, the Budweiser fridge, several ashtrays and the pit bull terrier puppy.

I think the Mullet should become a stand up comedian. I'm in the process of swapping gags for pints of Guinness with the would be Frank Skinner in the conferences office. I've got a great new one Frank, bit rude to repeat here but the punch line is "and then I woke up realising that I was wanking into a dirty sock." You can probably guess the rest.

And Clare, you said you wanted a mention in the Beaver's best loved column. So there you go. For those not in the know, Clarence is the (normally) pissed up scouser who runs the lectures you may or may not go to in the old theatre. A close friend of Anthony Giddens, she enjoys Smirnoff Ice, Russian literature, fighting and stealing hub-caps. Occasionally known to chase people with a high heeled shoe aloft, you do not want to mess with this babe.

All that it leaves me to say this week is Cock. Piss. Partridge. Bob's your uncle, Fanny's your aunt and I'm off for a shit now.

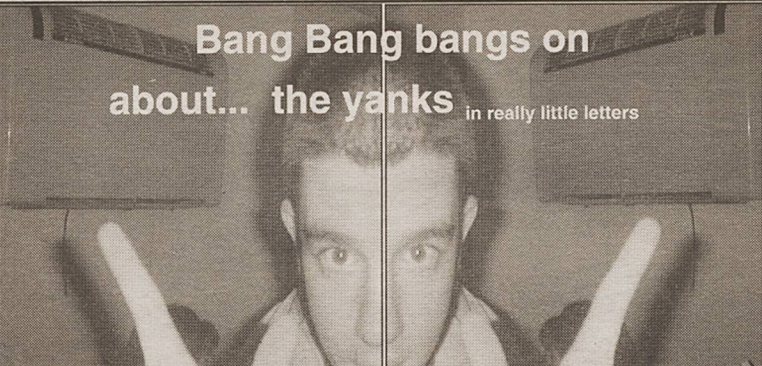
"I don't mean no disrespect but, you're all physically challenged (fat), repetitive consumers (greedy) and vocally expressive (loud), shouting: 'love me, love me, define me define me!' on Riki 'used to be fat but now I'm not, so aren't I great!' Lake" - slurred my mate Davey 'Ratboat' Summers. Now loyalty is very important, but when 'Ratboat' just turned on a coach load of Americans for no apparent reason the other night in the pub I thought, "steady on - they're not all that bad". Having calmed him down a bit, and having apologised to the visibly shaking American Tourist Collective of Alabama, 'Ratboat' then proceeded to debate with anyone willing to listen, the current status of America. Now Davey isn't the sharpest knife in the draw but he came up with some pretty interesting points. So, only to willing to share wisdom where I find it, I noted down some of Ratboat's observations concerning what he called 'America's Empire'.

First off, America was founded by quite a gathering of righteous individuals. They started hoping to create as near a perfect nation as men could build on earth with a whole host of inalienable rights and promised themselves that they would not make some of the mistakes their ancestors back over in Europe had made; like going to war all the time. They set America up as a republic and as the property of the citizens of the United States. But like all good things, and remembering that nothing ever lasts forever, America forgot her roots and became an Empire and as it continued to do so, America became what it had professed to so genuinely hate. To quote Rat himself: "Bang Bang, in the name of progress America departed from the truth, and on such a departure there is no place for progress."

In the early days, they told themselves that they would respect one another's Liberty. 'Rat' says this has now evolved into granting people a government that watches and subversively coerces their almost every move and has bred cities where getting shot by a school kid is seen as 'just another all to common household accident'.

They said they would cherish Justice. According to 'Rat', that now means a man can kill who ever and how ever many people he likes and get away with it so long as he has enough money to buy the best morally corrupt legal team; if not a judge or politician or media mogul or whoever else has some 'weight' behind them. They also proclaimed they would live by the standard of Equality. That went the same way as the other two pillars of the American way.

To quote 'Ratboat' himself, "The real America really has gone the way of the Dodo". Once it was a



land of opportunity, now it is the single biggest monopoly on earth. Once it was the land of the free, now you can't smoke in the street and you have to hide your 'shameful' drinking habits in brown paper bags in case you cause insurrection whilst those on Capitol Hill snort as much cocaine as they can get their hands on. Once you had the right to bear arms, now they want to rob the citizen of that constitutional right. Once it was the land of democracy, now you get tear-gassed and shot for pointing out the fact that power and decision making really isn't that equitably spread out.

And another thing, if American democracy really is 'all that', how come the privilege and ability to become President revolves around how much money you have and what 'secret' societies you belong to? 'Ratboat' said that nearly all the past presidents of America belonged to the Masonic 'Skull & Cross Bones' clan and all of them have always come from rich, corporate or establishment backgrounds. (At which point I said to 'Rat' that there isn't always anything wrong with being rich or aristocratic, it's the way you use it) Nevertheless, he retorted that the place was so corrupt that the outgoing President practically gave the nation 'the finger' and they loved him for it, whilst the Millennium elections stumbled over a democratic process that an elephant and a donkey could have managed with more integrity. Still, he also remarked that they had 4.666 million lawyers over there to sort it all out for them.

The point is, and I'll tell you what gets Rat's blue blood boiling, that despite America having the greatest number of fat people on earth (on average

gangs, outlaws and fruitcakes. They also overlook the fact that they are divorcing and degenerating all over the place with the single most important commandment being "its ok to do what you want cos you're an individual". 'Ratboat' almost shed a tear when he considered how different 'Happy Days' would be if they made it today, commenting: "boy would we be watching a different TV show Bang Bang".

The Americanisation of the world is perhaps what vexes 'The Ratman' the most (He is terribly vexed!). He holds that they re-write history in their Holly 'swell apple pie mom' Wood films to suit their agenda. They swamp the international market place with their 'cultural' re-hashes (WWF wrestling being their only genuinely quality export). They ruin other people's languages and bombard people with so many material temptations that people all across the globe are now losing their identities. 'Rat' firmly believes that America just wants us all to be good 'consumers' as she builds her economic empire on the basis of "I'll loan you a trillion dollars Mr African country if you agree to pay us what ever level we want in return and give us all your resources and entry to your markets, and while we are 'negotiating', if you also throw in some cheap child labour."

As more and more Americans came over to hear Rat's rant, he drew their attention to the recent Earth Summit about global warming. He pointed out to them that everybody else was prepared to clean up their act to even limited extents (even poor nations who can't really afford to because they owe America so much in loan repayments) so that future generations might actually have some air to breathe, but not them! The biggest polluters and consuming capitalists on the planet put their foot down and told us all to go to hell "cos they weren't gonna do nothing for no one else but themselves!"

I could go on all day writing down what 'Ratboat' had to say about America. But then I'd have to use up as much paper and cut down as many trees as America does just to make a billion burger boxes a day (that's 48 million trees a day!) - so I won't! (Am I not merciful!). I don't think he blames all Americans though. He thinks a lot of them are ok, and a lot of them are 'swell'! He really likes McDonald's. I mean, He wouldn't wish to stereotype anyone would he? I mean, what would the State of California do if they were to read stereotypical stuff? Bum it? So, "God Bless America", Davey 'Ratboat' Summers says they're going to need all the help they can get sooner or later before it all goes BANG BANG!

TheBeaver

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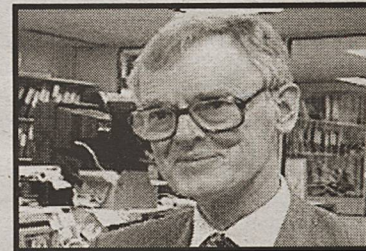
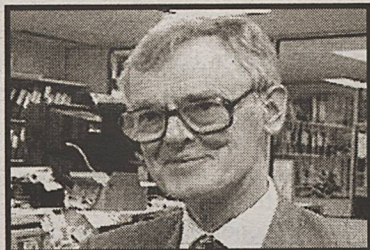
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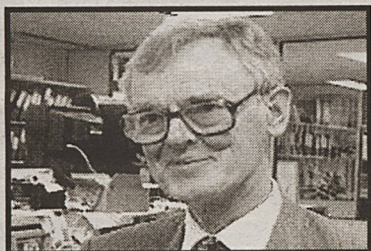
politics/culture/life



back

words by james corbett

buying



for a man who made his millions on the back of others getting their bets wrong, £5million intended to give the Conservative Party 'the very best chance of winning the election and not just putting up a good show' could just be one punt too many for the millionaire businessman Stuart

Wheeler. Last week's record donation to the Tory Party came in the wake of the Labour Party having £6 million added to their own coffers in the form of three £2 million donations from Lords Hamlyn and Sainsbury and (one would expect the soon to be ennobled) Christopher Ondaatje.

These four sizeable donations have again brought to prominence the issue of political funding in this country. Although no serious question-marks have yet been raised about these particular donors – Hamlyn and Ondaatje are both well-known philanthropists; Sainsbury a long-standing

benefactor of the Labour Party; Wheeler a well known city gent of the 'old school' – the sheer size of the sums involved invariably draws a degree of suspicion, however seemingly pure their motivations, about the donors. As a recent House of Commons motion calling for the imposition of a £100,000



upper limit on individual donations said: 'there is always a danger that parties reliant on millionaire funding will feel beholden to their donors, nervous of offending them and anxious not to jeopardise the chance of further donations.'

continued page eight >

B:LINK CONTENTS

the second week of term, and we all want the holidays back. we think it's about time we visited the library; but when we get there we find that the sad people have been there first and have taken all the books-out. crush seems like exactly that: the scents of sweat and vodka mix-up our nostrils.

no more! rise, young lse student, from the misery-hole of self-pity. behold all the good stuff in this week's b:link can too much money stifle democracy? pages one & eight blowing the world to bits page two pinochet on the run page three the secret life of tony giddens page four slobodan on trial (not) page five george dubya who? page six non-governmental... orgies page seven



is this the son of

star wars?

words by faisal khan

Whilst most people assume that the Cold War is yesterday's news and that the political agenda, at least in developed countries, is dominated by technical and economic concerns, the incoming American administration (that of George Bush Jr.) is challenging that perception, to say the least. The Bush administration is more than likely to push ahead with the already controversial programme for National Missile Defence (NMD) when it assumes power. NMD, nicknamed 'Son of Star Wars', would deploy thousands of air defence missiles to shoot down Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles fired by the so-called "rogue states" or international terrorists.

NMD is both an essential component of, and symbolic of, Bush Jr.'s foreign policy style. As set out by Condoleezza Rice, tipped to become National Security Adviser, Bush's foreign policy is firmly rooted within the 'realist' school of International Relations, with a strong emphasis on putting US interests first. Rivals and partners are to be dealt with on the basis of such interests, rather than the ideology of 'Democratic Nation-building' which dominated the rhetoric of the Clinton administration. There is considerable hostility to military intervention except where there is clearly a vital US interest, and this reflects the beliefs not just of Colin Powell, a likely Secretary of State, but most of the armed forces as well. For instance, in one of the rare foreign policy clashes of the election, Bush called for the withdrawal of US forces from Kosovo and Bosnia and for European Nato members to take on the full burden. NMD similarly reflects an attempt by the incoming administration to assert US interests in the face of considerable opposition to, and criticism, of such a line.

To be effective, the US would have to be allowed to use the early warning station at Flyingdales in

Yorkshire. Peter Kilfoyle, the former Minister of Defence writing in the Observer on Sunday, has warned Tony Blair against the scheme saying it is a dangerous "flight of fancy" that would leave Britain vulnerable to attack.

The prospect of renewed international tension came as Moscow and Beijing announced the forging of a treaty and strategic alliance over arms and space programmes which could rupture the new, post-Cold War world order. Whilst the French government quite clearly opposes the issue, the British government is split on NMD; although privately it has warned that it should only go ahead with NMD only if it can secure international agreement.

However, both sides of the debate accept that the US is not going to back down on the idea. Bush's choice for foreign policy chief, Donald Rumsfeld, has called for a total overhaul of US defence strategy and weaponry, with vast spending increases and the missile defence screen at the core of this new strategy. Rumsfeld, who also held office under President Ford, is heir to the hawkish wing which pushed Star Wars and is understood to have dismissed the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty) with Russia, pivotal to halting the arms race with Russia, as 'ancient history'.

The aggressive signals from Washington have alarmed the Foreign Office in London.

Although the government is keen not to offend the Americans, insiders say opinion is divided on whether Britain should allow its base to be used in what could be the echo of the Greenham Common debacle; inspiring public protest and a likely rebellion on the Labour backbenches. NMD was further pushed to the domestic spotlight by William Hague's announcement that a Tory government would espouse it.

Despite Hague's opportunistic posturing however, many believe

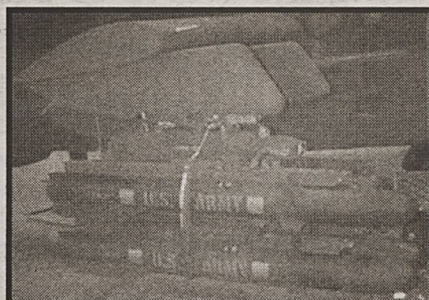
the NMD is both unnecessary and potentially dangerous. Opponents resort to at least four main counter-arguments. First, that the system has failed on each of the three attempts to knock out a target missile. Second, the American plan does not protect the UK, although Flyingdales would become the first target for those supposed Korean or Iranian missiles. Third, the programme would be costly and the money could be better spent in other more necessary areas. Finally, the US is at greater risk from other threats than those that NMD is supposedly guarding against. Thus, for example, Robert Walpole the National Intelligence officer for Strategic and Nuclear programs in the current administration said to a senate committee in September last year;

"In fact, we project that US territory is probably more likely to be attacked with weapons of mass destruction from non-missile delivery means (most likely from non-state entities) than by missiles, primarily because non-missile delivery means are less costly, and more reliable and accurate. They can also be used without attribution."

Similarly, Graham Singh, International Relations student at the LSE, believes that not only is the Bush's policy in this respect irrational but also extremely dangerous, since it is likely to empower Anti-Western and

chauvinist elements within countries like China and Russia. Christopher Hill, professor in European Security at the LSE also believes that NMD is essentially flawed and could have divisive implications for European Security, without actually achieving anything concrete. It seems, that the United States in seeking to protect itself against 'Rogue' states, is itself, by not listening to its allies and responding to sensible advice, behaving much like a Rogue.

Faisal Khan is an International History Student at the LSE



pinochet to go down

words by eve parish

mad dictators of the twentieth century, in general, have often seemed to get away with it. Hitler and Stalin, top of the dictator league, both managed to die before anyone could make them answer for the terrible acts for which they were responsible. More recently, Slobodan Milosevic, though ejected from office rather suddenly, has as yet avoided having to explain himself at the Hague, and Saddam Hussein celebrated the tenth anniversary of his "victory" in the Gulf war last week, his grip on power in Iraq none the worse for the experience. However, last week it seemed that the former dictator of Chile and tea-sipping friend of Mrs. Thatcher, General Augusto Pinochet, will in fact answer for his crimes. As more gruesome evidence emerged of the human rights abuses that took place under his sixteen year regime, including the dumping of 120 bodies from army helicopters into the Pacific, the lakes and rivers of Chile, time is running out for Pinochet.

Since his arrest in London in October 1998, and eventual return to Chile last year following lengthy legal battles here, it has been unclear whether Pinochet would ever face trial. Reports that he was brain damaged and close to death, which prompted his rapid ejection from the UK in case he died here,

ever make it to the courtroom alive. If he did live, it seemed that he might avoid trial on the grounds of being mentally incompetent. Since then, his legal team has been stalling for time, claiming the defence of an Amnesty law for former heads of State, which was enacted under Pinochet's own regime in 1978. Most recently, the General refused to turn up to hospital to undergo medical tests that would establish his fitness for trial.

However, last week the former dictator finally agreed to submit to those health tests, after he was effectively threatened with arrest by Judge Juan Guzman, in charge of the trial in Chile.

Pinochet faces 202 criminal charges, and if, as is likely, he is declared competent to stand trial, Judge Guzman is due to begin his interrogation shortly. However, in defiance, Pinochet may still refuse to answer the Judge's questions.

Even if the former dictator is found to be mentally incompetent, he still faces attempts to freeze his assets of over \$1m, which may well be linked to the huge amount of drugs that his regime was responsible for smuggling to the West in the 1980s. A Parliamentary investigation continues into the massive cocaine trafficking activities of the military regime, in which it is alleged,



Faisal Khan is an International History Student at the LSE

added to speculation that the frail 85 year old wouldn't

twelve tons of the drug was shipped to Europe between 1986 and 1987 alone.

The issue of what to do with the former dictator of Chile has been a headache for the governments which have followed his regime since 1990. In 1992, a truth and reconciliation commission began to uncover the horrific extent of human rights abuses since 1973, when Pinochet took power in a military coup. However, pressure on Chile mounted after the maverick actions of a crusading Spanish Judge, who issued a warrant for his arrest, and Pinochet was held in London in 1998. He now stands accused of being responsible for murder, torture, "disappearance", illegal detention and forcible transfers.

Presidents following Pinochet, who left office peacefully and in accordance with the constitution in 1988, and whose economic legacy has remained quietly in place despite over ten years of opposition government, have been unwilling to speak publicly of the victims of the dictator's regime, fearing the provocation of extreme forces on both the Right and Left of Chilean politics. However, President Lagos, elected in January 2000, seems more inclined to expose some of the dark secrets of Chile's past.

Revelations such as the mass dumpings at sea, the use of dynamite to dismember prisoners, as well as the discovery of a "mass grave" containing 20 bodies in Santiago, were made by President Lagos in a nationally televised

address, and with the grim promise of more to come.

Lagos spoke of the events of the Pinochet era as "this tragic, dark episode of our national history", a bold break from previous administrations which have tended to avoid the issue of the hundreds of "disappeared" persons, referring to them at most as unfortunate victims of a fictitious civil war.

Instead, Lagos praised "the recognition by the armed forces high command, who have accepted that Chile can't look forward without clearing the debts of the past."

These latest revelations have arisen from six months of round table discussions between human rights lawyers, religious leaders and military commanders. Although the dictator left office over ten years ago, the suffering of the victims' families is daily renewed with each further detail of what happened to their loved ones.

Vivianna Diaz, President of the Family members of the detained and disappeared, whose own father was taken prisoner in May 1976 along with his companions, revealed how President Lagos had privately told her that her father had been thrown into the sea into the sea in the mid-1970s.

"After fighting so long to find him, I know tonight that I will not...to discover that he is in the depth of the ocean is terrible and distressing", said a tearful Miss Diaz.

Others do not believe Lagos has done enough. Tito Tricot, whose brother became one of the "disappeared", asked why Lagos has granted the military immunity in return for information about the crimes. Criticising the current President for saying that he "values the strength and courage of the armed forces at a time like this", he asks of Lagos, "Is he so afraid of the military that he feels obliged to commend murders?"

It would seem that only when the truth has been answered by those responsible, will Chile be able to lay its past to rest. It is

This is Eve Parish's first article for TheBeaver.

the **MUKUL** empire

editorial

LSE plc

On 13th November last year, a group of posh people sat in a spotlight-adorned room on sleekly-fashioned wooden chairs and smugly munched on canapes, thinking to themselves "aren't we great," while they welcomed us - the LSE - into their exclusive club.

They were the Business Superbrands council, and they were being nice to LSE that day because, in their eyes, LSE had (finally) attained the esteemed status of 'Business Superbrand'. This group of "prominent and influential individuals in the business world" were rewarding us for being what they wanted us to be: a branded success story.

And us: we loved it.

I don't just mean that the LSE administration loved it, although there is little doubt that they were creaming themselves in delight. I mean that we *all* loved it. Me and you and the greasy unshaven guy who sits next to you in lectures. We all brimmed with institutional pride, hoping that being in the Superbrand 'club' would increase our employment prospects, and we happily scurried off with our copies of the FT to consume more branded advertising.

And what's so wrong with that, you may ask?

Well, from the employment perspective, I think we can all agree it's probably a good thing. Somehow just by being at LSE we are in the same secret society as the people who will give us job-interviews at 'Accenture' (assuming that IS their real name), Goldman Sachs, Linklaters and the like. We all hope to pass from one City powerhouse to another, a smooth transition that graduates of such 'lesser' Universities as Warwick, Edinburgh and UCL simply cannot compete with.

The problem is that we are not meant to be in a capitalist powerhouse. We're meant to be in a University.

Universities are, at their core, about learning in an objective way and about finding out new things. It's true that this knowledge is very useful in the world of work - and there's certainly nothing wrong with an employer (whether an Investment Bank or a Charity) tapping on the things its employees learned at University. After all, that's half the reason most of us bothered trying to get a degree in the first place.

But when the University itself becomes a corporate institution, hiding behind a brand-image and a slick logo, and thinking in terms of supplying "products" to its "customers" - am I the only one thinking that something has gone horribly wrong?

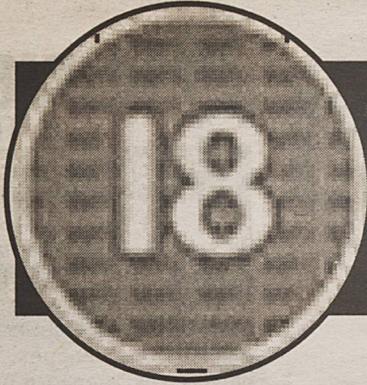
The spirit of free inquiry which is so essential to furthering our knowledge (a freedom which is doubly important in the social sciences) must surely be hampered in such a business environment. A University that thinks of itself as a corporation no longer thinks of us as its "students", the people that make it what it is. We are merely "consumers" to be wooed by advertisements and then charged for profit.

So let's stop the ever-increasing promotion of the LSE Superbrand, and just think for a minute. After all don't we want to remain an objective, publicly-funded centre of learning? Do we really want to be LSE plc?

And... cut.Join me next week.

Mukul Devichand, b:link editor

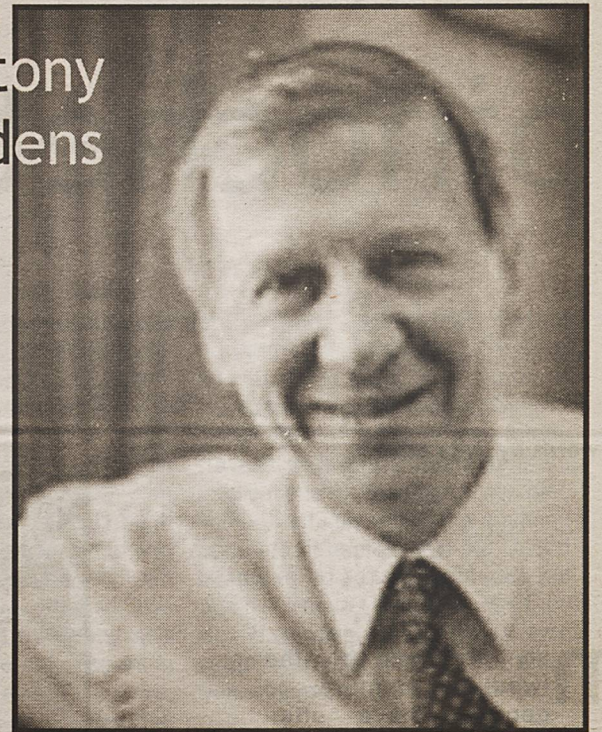




Malice through the looking glass... an irreverent and untrue look at our spiritual leaders

this week:

mr tony giddens



We were cold, we were hungry, was he there? Was he there? Was he bollocks! Was he bollocks!

As the students of this university faced the prospect of turning to prostitution, crime and suicide to pay the bills, our supposedly benevolent leader was nowhere to be seen. In this of all times, we could have expected the man many refer to as Mr T, "Giddo" or, in the case of a certain group of what (for legal reasons) we are calling "like minded adults", Shindunah Goddess of the Thrusting Sword, to be at our side, facing life, and the hazardously driven builders trucks around the new library, face on. This inevitably leads us and every rationally minded person at the LSE to question: What is the Director doing on his 3 month sabbatical?

The critics soon emerged. Even in LSE's own newspaper doubts were cast upon Giddens' intentions. Even the *Baker's Mullet* diverted its wrath from highbrow socio-economic political commentary and alleged that with an election coming the Director "had better

things to do than concentrate on his job". Other cynics have intimated that Giddens needs to take sabbatical to help Labour win the next election. This argument is surely negated by the fact that in order to help Labour win the next election Giddens need not to take a three month sabbatical when, in reality, a lunchtime chat over Fanta and Nik-Naks will probably suffice.

Contrary to the rumours about his admission to the Betty Ford clinic it actually emerges that, like most others at LSE, in an attempt to secure himself a better job at UBS Warburg in the future he is investing his time in a work experience scheme to "beef up" his CV. An insider at the hush-hush Board of Governors meeting revealed exclusively to 'Malice Through the Looking Glass' that in fact two weeks of the 3 month period will actually be spent at the Shoreditch outlet of Blockbuster Video. Apparently Tony performed especially well in their film classification test, although dropped marks after advocating the supply of 18 certificate skin-flick *Opportunity Cocks* to 13-year-old Londoner

David Cresswell who had used the products of his increasingly hairy rear cheeks to fashion a moustache in the style of his idol Tom Selleck with which to aid his deception. Subsequent weeks are planned touring Women's Institutes around England and a week repainting the Forth Bridge.

Of course Giddens has not always been part of the showbiz of steel superstructure replenishment. At his most candid Giddens revealed that he actually came to the directorial interview out of hope more than real expectation. He arrived in London for the first time on the day of his interview and, as a pragmatic stand-by, he also went to interviews at HMV (Oxford Street) and Sparta Sports. His success at the LSE was not matched elsewhere; at Sparta Sports the interview was "f*cking solid" and at HMV his unorthodox approach to racking CDs was to be his downfall (sorting CDs by spine colour so as "to create a rainbow pattern").

For the previous few years, he had been bumming around, getting oddjobs and giving occasional street lectures for any spare change the sociology hungry residents of Aberystwyth could toss his way. Having been

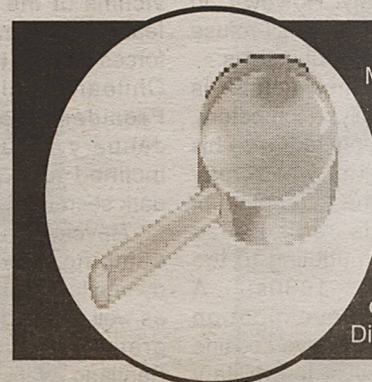
arrested a few times by the local constabulary for busking without a license, Giddens took a chance after seeing the post advertised in *Loot* and hitchhiked to London with only the clothes on his back, an 'I Love Structuration' T-shirt and a guitar with three strings with which to add melody to his 5-minute monologue *Objectivism* which failed to make more than a marble sized impression on the hit parade on its 1992 release by folk label "Fiddling Banjo".

Giddens confided to us that he really didn't think he had a chance - "It was mad like, all the other people there were dead clever, talking about globalisation or something and not letting me join in. And they all had degrees from these universities I'd never ruddy well heard of. I swear I thought I didn't have a chance and I almost climbed out of the toilet window. But you know, somehow I got it. I was well chuffed....I think they must have liked it when I started talking about the Ipswich team of the 70's and early 90's. Basically, I was having a bit of a go at the over-defensive style of Ipswich during early 90's but I was also upset at the frankly cavalier attacking style of

Ipswich during the 70's. Essentially, I think George Burley has found a halfway house, a compromise between the two styles, a 'Third Way' if you will. When I said this, their eyes lit up and they asked me to explain it to them in greater detail. I did and I got the job, but honestly, I think they've made a bit of a fuss over what's basically just a football formation. Still, pays the bills. I've even met the Prime Minister you know, he's a bit of a twat". But Giddens was in for an even bigger shock when he started work - "I couldn't believe it. They wanted me to do loads of paperwork and give these mad speeches. I just told them to stick it up their arse and so I've gone on a sabbatical to American Samoa to write my book, "Bobby Robson - The Living Legend". I think I'm gonna have another crack at Sparta Sports when I get back, there's more job satisfaction."

a world of untruths by
kerron rohrer and charlie jurd

ms myra hindley, another person of whom only one picture exists.



DISCLAIMER

Malice through the looking glass is not based on fact as far as the writers are aware and any resemblance to persons, living or perhaps dead, is purely accidental. As far as we are aware no Stephen Hills have been harmed in the making of this article and we have no evidence that a man/person called Anthony Giddens was ever a Director at LSE.

Kerron Rohrer is going to American Samoa on holiday this year and promises to harass Tony.

Charlie Jurd was also rejected at interview by Sparta Sports.

b:art

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**b:art comedy - shrinkwrapped
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b:cultured - fine arts on page 3

b:film - pages 4 & 5

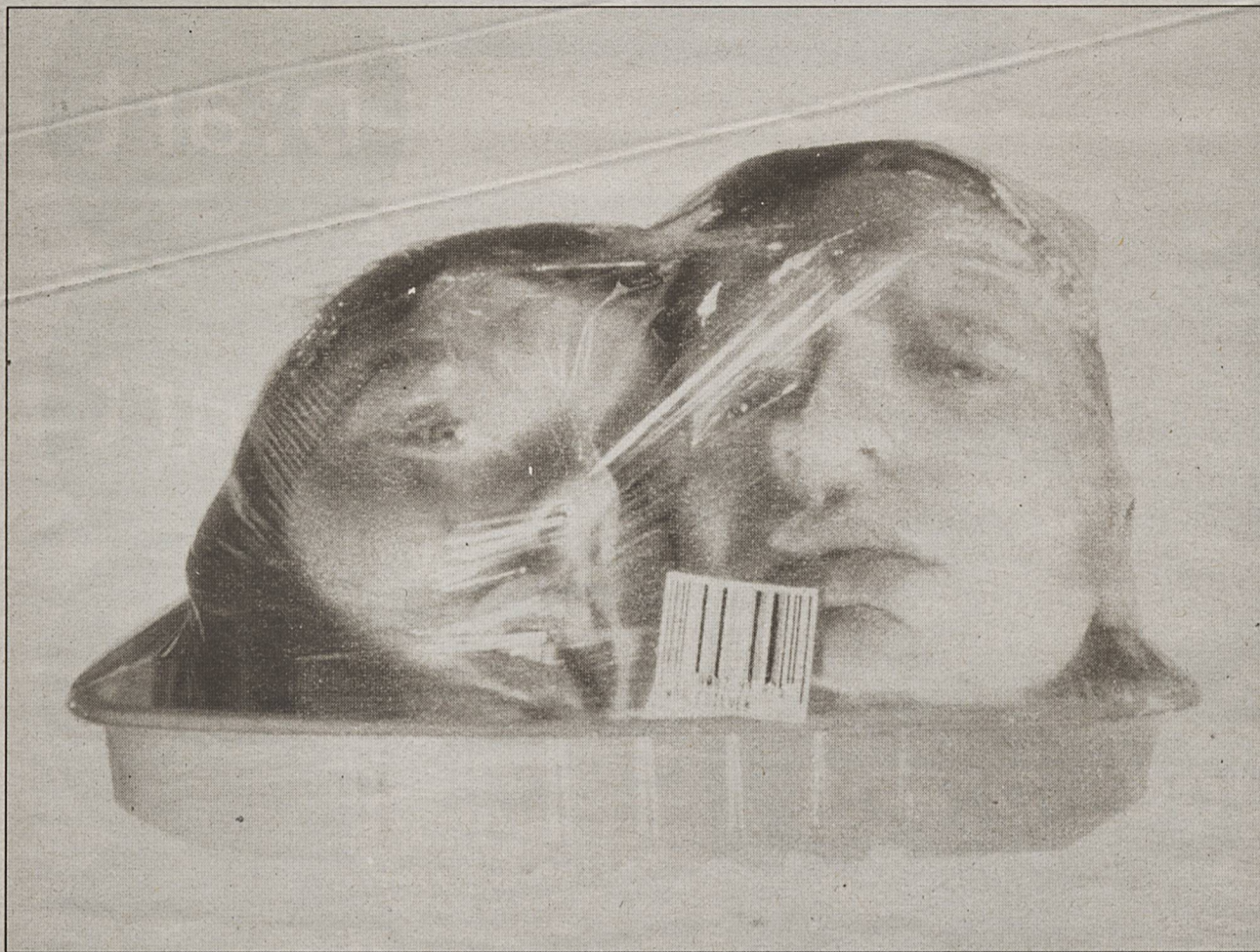
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b:music - pages 6 & 7

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Welcome to the World of Camp Adolf



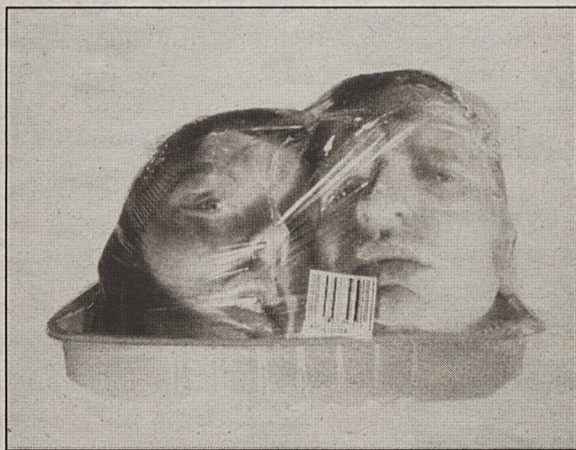
Noble & Silver
The Soho Theatre, WI
 16 : 11 : 2K

In a setting so intimate you can almost smell Stuart Silver's ample sideburns *The Beaver* is confronted with two screens and two mics. On one are Stuart Silver and Kim Noble, who bizarrely chip in with opinions whilst Kim Noble has with him a TV on which Stuart Silver's head dispenses words of wisdom whilst Kim Noble prepares a meal for a woman in the front row. At this point a number of things could've happened: (I) those pills I got from the doctors were meant to be taken 4 times every 24 hours and not 24 times every 4 hours as I had thought; or, (II) I was witnessing a five man two man show. Indeed, it was the latter, but it's hard to know how. In the following 45 minutes it is easier to understand just why Noble and Silver were this year's *Perrier Best Newcomers* at the Edinburgh Festival and have been described as "schizophrenic pioneers of the multi-media gag".



Noble and Silver have been criticised in the past, as comedians, for being too arty; they met on a fine art course at Sheffield Hallamuni and the show began touring galleries rather than Chuckle Clubs. It is more akin to Dom Joly's *Trigger Happy TV* or, on occasion, the work of Chris Morris, but comes from the other side, from art to comedy. Thus it is less original in terms of humour, based largely on well used jokes but unbelievably original in execution and breathes new life into the art.

It's not so much the consistency of the humour, some of which is more miss than hit, but it is the way in which Noble and Silver's surreal comedy, because it surprises, has the constant ability to go anywhere. When a poster for *Swan Lake* "See It or You'll Regret It" is shown on screen Stuart Silver begins to torment Kim Noble as he hasn't yet seen *Swan Lake*. After initial indifference Silver's gentle probing Noble until he snaps, picking up a loudhailer he shouts "OK, I haven't seen *Swan Lake* and of course I f*cking regret it you c*nt". We next see him on screen invading a theatre whilst *Swan Lake* is on stage with loudhailer in hand admitting his regret... until he is bundled out by security.



Take for example this moment; Kim Noble produces a picture of a middle aged woman with a dog sitting on a garden bench, "Here's a photo of my mum," he says pausing (for comic effect) "I've got no idea who the old woman is though." Stuart Silver brings up a picture on screen of another middle aged woman and a dog in a garden by a shed, "Here's a photo of my mum," he says pausing (for comic effect) "And I've got not idea who the woman or the dog is... that's right my mum's the shed." Not only a shocking example of why you should never try to write down comedy, this it shows that, although it now sounds a bit cliched given the work of post-alternative surreal comedy of Harry Hill et al, by keeping open to you the avenue of surreality you keep open to you a whole town of laughs.

Charlie Jurd



Opera @ ENO: Berio's Folk Songs; Rota's La Strada; Dallapiccola's The Prisoner

I must be honest, for the first time I will advise you not to go to this ENO triple show production, unless you have time to spare and £3 tickets way up top of the Coliseum. The first feature was Berio's Folk Songs. Don't get me wrong, Susan Parry, truly proved she has an awesome voice in her solo act, but it

did get pretty boring pretty quick. Berio's songs were as random as it gets - from all over the place: USA, Armenia, France, Italy, Sardinia and Azerbaijan.

I may sound like one cruel son of a bitch but this one sucked you know what. Am I heartless to find little kids simply acting like little kids not to be worth a visit to the opera? Maybe I am. The music of La Strada is excellent: I enjoyed the show once I closed my eyes. When the show finally ended the crowd reacted with unbelievable enthusiasm, clapping like mad, yelling, etc. I right away asked the once sitting to my right whether I missed something. The response I got was exactly right: 'I think they're the parents...'

The third opera, The Prisoner, was actually very good. But why did they make us wait so long? This work by Dallapiccola involved some interesting concepts. Its anti fascist feel was obvious. Especially interesting was the appearance during the last scene of a boy sleeping in his bed, having nightmares. He explained in an interview that when he was six years old, a woman killed her husband. One evening his father returned home with a newspaper tucked under his arm, and whispered into his mother's ear: 'Mrs Volpis has been sentenced to six years in prison.' Counting to six on his fingertips, he was horrified that a human being could be shut in a cell for period of time which to him seemed endless - his entire life until that day.



Rossini's La Donna del Lago @ St. John's, Smith Square

by fitzroy malkovich

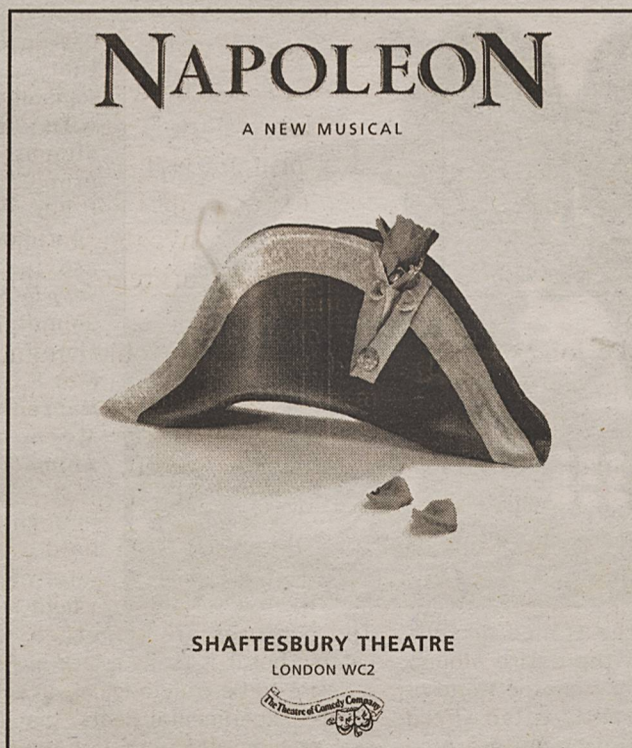
This was a great night for opera lovers at St. John's. A one off production, this opera reminded anyone that managed to forget that this venue features a wide range of classic-related stuff. La Donna del Lago (i.e. The Lady of the Lake) is based on Sir Walter Scott and tells the story of love triumphing against a backdrop of clan conflict in the Highlands. The cast of this production was excellent. Larger than life props are owed to David Roblou - a growing name in the world of bel-canto - who conducted and masterminded the event. Who else? The title role sang by Emma Dogliani: she was unreal! She was supported by Peter Bingham-Best and John Upperton's (tenor). The rainy evening was very entertaining, notwithstanding the fact that I was a little pissed off over the French (idiot) Secretary of the Environment that called John Prescott a male chauvinist because he spoke truth about her being too tired to comprehend the compromise deal that he worked out in The Hague. With a twitch: John Prescott, John Prescott, John Prescott, I dedicate this opera to you! In conclusion, don't forget to check out the future events at St. John's. Being an old cathedral, the place has an awesome acoustics. Check the info out at www.sjss.org.uk or call them at 7222 1061.

A Night at the Shaftesbury...

by jon doe

If you want to laugh then go to see Napoleon at Shaftesbury (you know, right in front of Oasis, the gym that only the Americans from Holborn can afford/not lazy like the rest), preferably on a Monday evening. I went with my girlfriend - a French woman - and laughed like there was no tomorrow (but there was a tomorrow, which wasn't yesterday, but one yesterday before yester-week. Confused? So am I). Let's cut the bullshit. The reason to go to this one is Paul Baker, a pooshtie acting as Napoleon. Whilst undoubtedly being a very talented actor, I must question how much did he have to swallow after sucking in order to get this role. He is as far from the character as possible. But don't get me wrong, I have nothing but love to Paul, especially after reading that he recently been seen in the production of Disney's The Lion King playing Zazu and Timon. Each time I saw his jaw going nutty on stage I thought of a Zazu - not a Bonaparte.

Other than Zazu, I mean Paul, I was real



impressed by the setting. Never in my life did I see such a high technological level of stage-craft. The Shaftesbury theatre's stage has enough hydraulics to make every ghetto car in California bounce. Stages going up and down, side-ways, etc. I guess these guys had

every Holborner during the last two years go to see Rent (the previous production which Shaftesbury featured), cause they have more money than the bank. One expensive operation. Socialists, demand to enter for free.

Anastasia Barzee took on the role of Josephine. I'm sorry Anastasia, you must be French (and with a strong Parisian accent) to capture that role of the seductive French biatch. You just failed. Not a bad singer, but an English accent. Calling you Rose in the musical said it all huh...

Oh, and the music? What music?! This musical had the most unoriginal music I've ever heard. The tunes were trying to copy just about every Broadway thing since 1972. You can always judge the true value of a musical on your way out: if you are humming away a certain tune while going home then they succeeded. Otherwise, as is the case in point, they failed. Ice cream during interval: Hagen D (£2 for quantity that even a starving child in Somalia would consider to be pathetic).



Massacre at ULU

Vic Peckett tells us what's what.....

...And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead
@ ULU
8: 12: 2K



As any discerning music fans among you (or anyone who reads the NME) may well know, Trail of Dead have been hailed by all and sundry this year as 'the new saviours of rock', lumped in with an all-American star cast which also includes the likes of At The Drive In and Queens Of The Stone Age. Far be it for me to criticise the critics' need to categorise bands in such a manner... But I can't help but think that all of these bands they mention are completely different. None more so than Trail of Dead, whose music in fact seems to defy description at every turn.

This is one complicated band we're talking about here. Notorious for their live shows as much as their records (which no doubt annoys the hell out of them), I hardly need mention the litany of broken equipment, injuries and run-ins with the police which hangs round their collective neck like an albatross. Suffice to say, their reputation preceeds them. Let me just add that the show was chaotic and incendiary, and leave it at that.

I'd rather talk about the music, because I feel that's the only way to do justice to a band who are clearly so passionate about it themselves. I suppose that's one thing they have in common with At The Drive In - that powerful belief that what they are doing means something, that music should be so much more than empty words and regurgitated tunes. They are also a band who seem to feed on anger, and this is manifested in the intensity of the lyrics, especially on *Mistakes and Regrets*, the standout track on *Madona* and the band's latest single. I'm not really sure why, but the words 'sprawling' and 'baroque' always come to mind when I hear this song, and the gig was no exception. It fairly exploded into life, before imploding with so much pent-up energy and frustration.

I was told by someone who knows about these things that Trail of Dead are a cross between The Stooges and Mc5. Well, that's all very well, but to me Trail of Dead are just Trail of Dead. There are no comparisons. You either feel it or you don't. As Conrad rages on *Mistakes and Regrets*, "If you forget how to feel/ Reach inside your chest/ Is there a heart beating?/ Is there just emptiness?"

Victoria Peckett

26 of the Best

Apartment 26 *Hallucinating*

As a great Faith No More review once said, "the words 'crossover sound' are tossed at anyone with a sampler next to a guitar". Although the amount of 'crossover' bands failing to live up to the Faith No More legacy at the moment is enormous, it is difficult to conceive of anyone making such a bizarre attempt at an original sound as Apartment 26.

Eschewing the Limp Bizkit mixture of more conventional beats and a shouty loud mouth, Apartment 26 have opted for a more unusual approach. The first track, *Backwards*, combines frenetic electronic beats with standard metal guitar thrashing. The vocals are synthesised, although not in your sexy Britney Spears manner. And although the lyrics (on this track and throughout the album) are thoroughly uninspiring, it actually combines to create quite a damn catchy tune. It's at this point however that things start to get weird.



Doing It Anyway starts with an ominous guitar build-up, but then fuses it with a distinctly trancey beat. Yes, it's as if Max Cavalera had started going to Gatecrasher and munching pills by the

handful. Ok, so the trance doesn't persist throughout the entire album, but we are never far from the world of dance music, the aptly titled *Sliced Beats* for example uses quite a nice minimalist techno beat. It is important to remind you at this point that this is ostensibly a metal album. This weird juxtaposition can only be explained by the way they create their songs, as described on their website, which

involves laying the drum beat down first with a sampler, then working the rest of the tune round it.

The other songs are all done in a pretty similar vein, although there is a nice variety, and no sense of déjà vu that you sometimes get with metal albums. The problem is that Apartment 26 are just not very inspiring. Sounding at times like Marilyn Manson circa *Mechanical Animals* is just not enough to hold your interest for a whole album.

The choruses are sometimes quite catchy, but it is really a lack of flair or a desire to be truly original, in spite of all the experimental beats, that is the real problem. Just one last thing, is it just me or are there really references to the Marxist dialectic on track five, *Apartment 26!?!?*

Matthew Morgan
★★★★☆

Keep the Faith

See the LSE's very own Your Faithful X headline Camden's Dublin Castle this Thursday (25th January). Having stormed the prestigious venue last term, the five piece, pictured below, aim to continue their rapid



ascent, with more of their infectious brand of melodic guitar pop. Maya Hawie, front-woman and LSE student typifies their sound as 'think Garbage, Cardigans, but harder AND softer than them both'.

Your Faithful X, however, are no strangers to success. Under their previous guise 'Zaylie', they were the winners of a competition, the prize being support slots with Beverly Craven at both Wembley and Manchester Arenas. So get your arse down to Camden on Thursday (tickets are £4 at the door)!

For further information about the band, look no further than their website at yourfaithfulx.com

House of the Rising Sons

Rising
@ The Monarch, Camden
31: 11: 2K

It was a rainy Wednesday evening, I felt like shit, but I was bored so trotted along anyway.... thank God I did! What was witnessed here was what would be described as a very important gig if the industry was functioning properly. This should be placed on a par with Oasis that fateful night at King Tut's.

With the ex-Shed Seven guitarist, Seahorses bassist, Audioweb drummer and an as yet unknown Glaswegian frontman, this seemed a musically enticing prospect. But what materialised was something far, far greater than this. Take the Verve with more passion, the Stone Roses with bollocks and add a dose of real rock credibility in styling, a la early Rolling Stones and even then you're not there because the sound here is original. Not raw but with depth, yet retaining a heavily jagged edge. The band looked and sounded like they really meant it, and the newness of it all was plain to see. They did not look tired like many bands do and you could sense they knew something special was happening there, as did the crowd.

An intimate venue, even so the energy was bouncing off the walls. Rarely does an audience react to a new band like this; rarely is there a new band like this to react to. It may have been the musical togetherness and power with which the whole band played, but the charisma and passion of the lead singer was blistering. Putting everything into every word and not managing to get tied up in his mic cord like Ashcroft did at Heigh Hall, or look a complete tit like the 'singer' from Terris (touted by the NME as a fantastic new band), this man is in the league of the greats, Jagger, Daltrey and the like.

What I saw there that night should be the birth of something great; Rising, along with those such as Johnny Marr's Healers should be leading the rock and roll revolution and bringing real music back to where it belongs...the forefront. Whether this will happen is doubtful, but there is definitely something stirring out there. Rock is dead they say? Long live Rock!

Andrew Swann

Emiliana Torrini *To Be Free*

Me agreeing with people on the subject of music is not a usual occurrence. However, just about everybody has been telling me recently that Emiliana Torrini is the 'new bjork', and for once i have to say they're right. She's from the same Iceland, she has that same kind of swooping vocal range, and, if *To Be Free* is anything to go by, she writes the same kind of hauntingly gorgeous melodies accompanied by mad Icelandic lyrics.

To be honest, though, there are differences. Emiliana is a lot less in-your-face than Bjork, content to let her songs speak for themselves. Whereas Bjork sometimes strikes me as being too madcap for her own good, Emiliana is less experimental but altogether more palatable. The result is demonstrated here, in a delicious pop/dance song which actually works.

★★★★★

Victoria Peckett

Alpinestars *Interlaken*

Seemingly based on the intro-sample of the theme tune to BBC "For Schools" programme "Landmarks" (its either that or the music in between on Channel 4's Schools programmes) this Kraftwerkian melodic electronic keyboard-driven track is nice: direct; unchallenging; typical Alpinestars. It's music you can really enjoy at certain times, only to drive you to commit acts of self-harm at others. Luckily for me, and the nib of my fountain pen, now it's a case of the former as I write.

★★★★☆

Charlie Jurd

The Gary Factor

- ★★★★★ Gary Lineker
- ★★★★☆ Gary Wilmots
- ★★★☆☆ Garibaldi
- ★★☆☆☆ Gary Barlow
- ★☆☆☆☆ Gary Glitter



The Webb Brothers *I Can't Believe You're Gone*

Although the history of brothers in bands has always, at the very least, been an interesting one the Webb Brothers are a let down from the outset. For starters brothers Justin, Christian and James are less Oasis and more Hanson with this nonsensical tune that doesn't seem to grab you either way. Lyrically completely lacking in content, the brothers simply repeating 'I can't believe you're gone' with obvious incredulity quickly runs out of steam and the fact that they are descendants from 60's songwriter Jimmy Webb just adds to the whole feeling that you should be getting more for your money from this lot. My guess is he probably got bored boys.



★★☆☆☆

Sarah Peet

57th Dynasty *Ghetto Gold*

Ghetto Gold is another hard-hitting track from the group that's representing for all the Brixtonites. Their rhymes flow well and the lyrics are tight. Tough background beats compliment and add dimension, which gives this track more impact than a Tyson uppercut. This track should hopefully raise the profile of independent UK hip-hop, and give it the exposure and respect it deserves.

★★★★☆

Antonio DiAngelo

Etienne De Crecy

Am I Wrong

The Gallic funkster's millennial album *Tempovision* was received about as well as a phone-call from your long-term girlfriend telling you she is pregnant not with your child but that of your father (32 years your senior) and plans to move in with your parents after they showed her that with an adequately sized bed can disprove the theory that "three's a crowd" (ie. badly). I always liked the chap though and although *Am I Wrong* is not going to see him emerge from the onion-necked shadow of Daft "lets not release anything for 4 years and then put out sub-Cher vocoder toss" Punk, Air and Bob Sinclar, this is a strong, if sluggish, vocal house tune that deserves attention. B-side *Duke* even attempts a funk-Apex Twin Windowlicking-UK two-step garage crossover- but fails.

★★★★☆

Charlie Jurd

Orb *Once More*

The musical equivalent of a character from Aladdin with a plug coming out of his arse this is what I am creatively calling "electro-wishy-washy". The *Bedrock Edit 2* gives *Once More* a much need heart and lungs transplant ditching the frankly embarrassing lyrics of the original and thanks to what sound like (but isn't credited as) healthy portions of Chemical Brothers tracks (allegedly). When will people stop sampling running water onto records, it's not clever, it just makes you need a piss.

★★☆☆☆

Charlie Jurd

AM I WRONG

Requiem For A Dream ★★★★★

movie of
the
moment

It seems a shame, and maybe a tad irrational, to write off an entire year's worth of upcoming film releases. Oh well. *Requiem For A Dream* is quite probably the best film you'll see in the cinema this side of the next New Year celebrations. Better make sure you see it then.

Jared Leto (one time star of *My So Called Life*, and the blond beauty who took a bloody battering in *Fight Club*) plays Harry Goldfarb, a happy-go-lucky junkie. Teaming up with his best buddy Tyrone (Marlon Wayans), he moves into dealing out Class As, saving up the dirty cash to help his girlfriend Marion (Jennifer Connelly) open up a fashion shop to display her designs. Meanwhile, his mother Sara (Ellen Burstyn, *The Exorcist*) is hooked on her TV, which spews game shows and wise words from self-improvement gurus. When she's invited on to her favourite programme, she turns to diet pills to lose the extra pounds and look good for her appearance.

Given a set-up like this, you'll get no brownie points for guessing that we're on downward spiral territory here, and in terms of the plot, you'll have seen this brand of drug-hell drama countless times before. Clearly distancing itself from the likes of *Trainspotting*, the film is devoid of

pop-culture references and slapstick humour. It's also pretty lacking in terms of a hopeful outlook, so it's testament to the film that it succeeds in being poignant and engaging as well as devastating.

Whilst other films in the same vein (the likes of *Another Day In Paradise*) fail to make us care enough for the destitute druggies, director Darren Aronofsky (*Pi*) draws us in, showing us characters with

Harry (Jared Leto) and Marian (Jennifer Connelly)



something to live for in spite of their addictions, then tearing it away piece by piece. The younger cast members all acquit themselves brilliantly, with Leto confirming his talents as an actor, leaving his TV days well behind. Moreover, Marlon Wayans puts in a truly surprising performance, more than making up for the pointless stupidity of last year's *Scary Movie*.

Still, it's Ellen Burstyn that truly makes the difference, with a turn as Harry's lonely mother that

ought to earn her the Golden Globe she's been nominated for. She brings a staggering weight to the film's most important role, one that lifts *Requiem...* above other narcotic nightmares. It's not just a film about drug dependence, but (as the name suggests) one that takes a look at the life-destroying consequences of addiction in its many forms.

Aronofsky more than lives up to the expectation created by his stunning debut *Pi*, delivering a visually stunning, thoughtful film despite snappy pacing and cutting shots together with the kind of hyperspeed edits you'd expect from MTV or Michael Bay. Powered by a desperately moving score that often drowns out or replaces the dialogue, *Requiem...* delivers in a way that makes me regret dishing out undiscerning five-star ratings so readily, for this is truly a cut above.

Just The Facts...

Starring: Jared Leto, Ellen Burstyn, Marlon Wayans

Directed by: Darren Aronofsky

Release Date: Out Now

Certificate: 18

Website: www.requiemfordream.com

Rumour has it that in preparation for the role, Jared Leto went two months without 'indulging in' his lady friend (and owner of the world's largest mouth) Cameron Diaz. Whilst I'd prefer to believe that he was punishing her for *Charlie's Angels*, I can't deny the quality of his portrayal of Harry's longing. If that's what it took, then this selfless sacrifice was worth it. This is a gritty, urban symphony of despair; an emotionally engrossing, stylistically inventive cliché-busting masterpiece which, in a just world, would gain a few nods for its supporting cast and walk away with Oscars for Best Actress (Ellen Burstyn), Editing, Score, Director and even Picture.

Tom Whitaker

Pier Pressure: Jared the Junkie



The Low Down ★★★

"I've been there!": Aiden Gillen and Kate Ashfield



There is something so refreshing about British films. I love the fact that not all actresses are stunning models, pencil thin and gloriously glam. It's hardly like we get to see Cameron or Catherine looking rough in Hollywood blockbusters. Movies stars

are great for action movies, but romance is so much more believable between real people. So if you like that down-to-earth style, this could well be a film for you.

Frank (Aidan Gillen, *Queer As Folk's* queen bitch) is a restless young

man. His life is rather repetitive and whilst he feels he has to grow-up like all his friends have managed he is not sure whether he wants to, and wouldn't know how if he tried. Then Ruby (Kate Ashfield) appears on the scene, boasting a very different approach to life. Optimistic, decisive and straight to the point, her optimistic approach to life has a dramatic effect on him. I don't want to give away too much of the film's storyline (it's not its strong-point), but there are few surprises. You can probably guess the rest.

The acting was first rate, the script was witty, and the handling of the film's themes seemed clunky at times. Certainly, the

introduction in the press notes helped me a great deal with understanding what the director was driving at. I understand that I may not be the twenty-something professional at whom the film is aimed, but that doesn't constitute a

success on the director's part in my mind. Still, I really enjoyed the movie, and if you're not expecting some life-changing (or affirming) philosophical kick from it, it's a suitable choice as a romantic drama.

Hye-Young Lim

Just The Facts...

Starring: Aiden Gillen, Kate Ashfield, Dean Lennox Kelly

Directed by: Jamie Thraves

Release Date: 26 January

Certificate: 15

"I'm dead hard, me. I can punch fires."



Traffic ★★★★★

Late in the eighties, Steven Soderbergh made a film that shocked the world to its core. *sex lies and videotape* redefined the erotic drama, and was notable primarily for the inability of punters to crack one off whilst watching it. There was no actual sex; so sitting down to watch his film on drug trafficking, I could only pray for explicit substance abuse. And apart from one guy cleverly using freebase to pull, there wasn't much of that. But I realised that a film can survive on its own merits, without having to resort to drugs, sex, or hilarious decapitations. Only just, mind.

This film is an expose (a rather lengthy expose) of drug trafficking

and the respective drug policies of America and Mexico. But don't worry, although that sounds shit, the film is actually really interesting. Benicio "I flip you for reeeeeal" Del Toro plays Javier, a Mexican cop faced with the frightening realisation that his country is a corrupt, sand-filled, drug-infested caphole. (Note to Mexican society: this is not necessarily the opinion of the

reviewer, only of Del Toro's character). Elsewhere, Michael Douglas has just been appointed to the office of Drug Czar in America, only to find that there's fuck all he can do about anything. Just to add to his troubles, he finds out that his 16 year-old daughter is a drug-addled ho

"Just to add to his troubles, he finds out that his 16 year-old daughter is a drug-addled ho and she is rapidly spiralling into a narcotic hell."

and she is rapidly spiralling into a narcotic hell. And in the third story, Catherine Zeta Jones discovers her husband is a major league drug baron and is about to be put in jail for the next millennium based on the testimony of one of his underlings. The film is held together by the fantastic lead performances and the solid script. The three stories neatly intertwine although the director has a less-than-subtle and slightly irritating tendency to make this obvious by having the characters from the different stories walking past each other for no real reason. It doesn't help; it's just contrived. Thankfully, though, he didn't feel it necessary to shoehorn all the players into a room together for a violent showdown. It also has a lot to say on the drug

policies of the two countries and on the effects of drugs on all of those that come into contact with them. Still, it does a good job of concentrating on the characters, rather than forcing the issues, leaving them realistically unresolved. The plot occasionally flounders, unsure of which direction to take, but despite being a touch too long this is a film worth seeing.

Kerron Rohrer

Just The Facts...

Starring: Michael Douglas, Don Cheadle, Benicio Del Toro

Directed by: Steven Soderbergh

Release Date: 26 January

Certificate: 18

That token Mexican who's in everything



Dead Babies ★★★★★

Infanticide isn't really a topic for mirth but thankfully that's not what the film is actually about. No, it's much scarier than that.

Quentin is a toff who lives with his new wife and their friends in a big manor castle in an unspecified countryside location. They spend all of their time devising more and more ways of wasting time and having a laugh, financing their lifestyle through the exploitation of their aristocratic housemate Giles, who is the oddest of the bunch. The visit of Marvell, a doctor pushing the boundaries of chemical experimentation for his research into the activities of the brain, prompts a two day binge of revolutionary drugs and spirits which pushes this film into the murky depths of the surreal and starts a chain of events which affects each character in turn. Just to complement the distinct feeling of other-worldliness, a weird existential terrorist organisation have been killing people left, right and centre, driven by a chaotic philosophy of reality rejection that mirrors the lifestyles of the main characters.

The sounds and images flicker and jump, dancing from

Hippy porn star sees a chance for the nob/popcorn trick



"a two day binge of revolutionary drugs and spirits pushes this film into the murky depths of the surreal"

frame to frame, keeping the audience in a perpetual state of unease. The film manages to convey a very real sense of what it might be like to walk the line between reality and a drug-induced dream. This film has a heartbeat. It beats and beats in every moment of the film, quickening at times to almost aneuristic levels only to slow down to a leisurely trot in an instant.

At first, the rather unbelievable nature of the situation that these people were in and the characters themselves was a little bit annoying; people were either pompously articulate or just plain weird, but you soon recover from this and realise that only characters with a few screws loose could realistically find themselves living in a gothic castle, dealing with the hazards of daily life by cracking out the Veuve Cliquot and Mescaline; but hey, by the middle of the film, you actually become rather envious of the almost transcendently hedonistic lives these people have created for themselves. Surrealism is in the air they breathe and the columns that mark the entrance to their Epicurean castle become a kind of gate through which reality can be left at will.

Don't get the wrong idea about the film and think that it's just one long experiment in imagery. It's more of an existential treatise on happiness and where it can be found, with a healthy injection of black humour, gratuitously graphic images of violence and eroticism and characters spinning off on a tangent into insanity and insecurity. Even if you find the eccentric characters rather annoying and unbelievable, you'll almost certainly be carried along by the surreal hydrochloric tide that washes through the characters, stripping off the skin of reality and exposing the vulnerable nature of the self, immersed in a world it isn't built to understand or survive in.

In other words, I'd have to recommend the film, but don't drink or consume pharmaceutical products beforehand. When the film is finished, you'll feel like you've done crack anyway.

Kerron Rohrer

Just The Facts...

Starring: Paul Bettany, Katy Carmichael, Hayley Carr

Directed by: William Marsh

Release Date: 26 January

Certificate: 18

And The Winner Is...

Honestly, you'd have the shirt of my back if I let you. Instead, you've cleaned out my magical movie prize drawer of free stuff. So, without further ado (a list of names hardly deserves half a page now does it?), here are the answers, and a list of winners.

The Way Of The Gun (Issue 527)

Answer: Pete Postlethwaite played Kobayashi in *The Usual Suspects*.

Winners: Lewis Webb

Runner Up?: Knox Peden

Famous Last / Road Trip (Issue 529)

Answer: "I don't listen to soft-ass shit!" were the final words from Captain Darrow's (Tony Todd) evil mouth before he ate a rocket (then landed on a conveniently placed spike) in 1996's best blockbuster, *The Rock*.
Winners: Noshir Homawala, KY Lee

Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon (Issue 530)

Answer: The fight sequences from this film and *The Matrix* were beautifully choreographed by Yuen Wo Ping. "Hiiiiiii-YA!"

Winners: Laura Scarpa, Jamie Roskell, "Saph and Sen"

Vertical Limit (Issue 530)

Answer: Chris O'Donnell garnered a Golden Globe nomination for his role in *Scarf Of A Woman*. Vertical Limit is unlikely to win many awards.
Winner: Jennifer Matthews

Requiem For A Dream (Issue 530)

Answer: The film was based on a book by Hubert Selby Jr.

Winner (autographed screenplay): Iain Davies

Runners-up (book): Doug Hancock, Kuan Ming Leong

All winners will get an email when the prizes turn up, and they can then be collected from the Beaver Office.

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gotcha!

(and about time too...)

words by catherine baker

trips to the Netherlands would probably not be that easy to market in Bosnia - or so it seems, given how hard it's been for the UN war crimes tribunal trying to get any of its indictees to come to The Hague.

Possibly because they're so likely to be given a one-way ticket.

The first few years of the tribunal have been characterised by the relative insignificance of the men in the dock. Perhaps it gives the war reporters who arrived in Bosnia's burnt-out villages a sense of closure to see the local militia chiefs sentenced to longer prison terms than the ages of some of their victims, but so far the generals and politicians who, it's alleged, told them which settlements to erase from the map in the first place are sitting tight with collars resolutely unfingered, even when the court's head prosecutor, Carla del Ponte, knows so much about them that she could tell you their street address. Biljana Plavsic was never quite at the top of the Signora's most-wanted list, a dubious honour that belonged to the triumvirate of Slobodan Milos'evic, Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, jointly accused of genocide for their part in orchestrating the programme of ethnic cleansing. Yet, as Karadzic's deputy during the war in Bosnia, at the very least Plavsic would be able to provide valuable evidence; at most, she could be tried for genocide herself. On learning that she had been secretly indicted, she took a farewell trip to see her brother in Belgrade before turning herself in to The Hague, where she will stand trial alongside Momcilo Krajis'nik, another Karadzic ally during the war. The double act will be del Ponte's biggest names so far.

Sometimes it seems every woman in Balkan politics comes with her own trite but descriptive cliché. Plavsic was 'The Iron Lady' - and not just for that Thatcher-esque helmet of hair (can you get Elnett in prison?) which even outdid the inflatable coiffure of Karadzic, the man she replaced as president of the Bosnian Serb Republic (call it 'Republika Srpska' to impress a Balkanologist) in 1996

when he was forced out of office. The beginning of her career is more mundane: before making her name at the head of a growing tide of Serbian racial rhetoric in the 1980s, she had previously worked as a biology teacher. Of course, we've all had one or two of those who we thought would make good dictators, but Plavsic is probably the only one to go ahead and do it. Perhaps the final word belongs to Milos'evic's wife Mira Markovic (aka 'Serbia's Lady Macbeth' in any newspaper you've ever read, including this one), who called her 'a female Mengele' in a reference to the Nazi doctor. From Markovic, of course, it could very well have been high praise.

On first sight, her sudden surrender to the tribunal may seem inexplicable given The Hague's reputation, thus far, for only snaring the small fry: the results of their trawl for war criminals have until recently suggested they have been using a dolphin-friendly tuna net. Yet now that the prosecution team have had more time to collect evidence and prepare indictments, the net could very soon - to coin a phrase - be closing in. For a woman so conscious of her image that she turned out for her first appearance in The Hague decked head to toe in lavender (not to forget the oh-so-pious crucifix necklace), it might look better to go quickly, especially were there a prospect of a more lenient sentence in exchange for information on Milos'evic, Target Number One. The tribunal officially

denies that plea-bargaining goes on, but less important defendants in the past may have received shorter stretches as a reward for informing on those higher up the chain. The case in her favour, according to her lawyer, will be that she personally was only defending Serbs, and while she won't deny her proximity to those suspected of ordering ethnic cleansing, she will say that she herself had no responsibility in it. Just don't let her say that when Slobodan, Radovan and Ratko got together to pore over maps, she was only there to fetch the coffee.

There's also a more sinister possibility, if one can believe the rumours concerning the murder of the Serb warlord Arkan which have emerged from Belgrade a year

after his death. Six months earlier, Arkan had been negotiating his own surrender to The Hague: the notorious paramilitary commander's evidence could well have given the court the missing link necessary for a hard-and-fast case against the Serbian leaders. Arkan's son Mihailo has now blamed the head of Serbian state security, along with the ubiquitous Madame Markovic, for the killing. If you know too much, then the inside of a cell on the other side of Europe, surrounded by Dutch guards and the eyes of the world, may just be the safest place to be.

Still, Del Ponte will have to wait a while before she can begin the interrogation. As Plavsic flew in, she flew out, to Zagreb for the first leg of a Balkan tour which has

already threatened to open more controversies than it will close: her request to speak to the head of the Croatian army about Operation Storm, with which Croatia won the war against Serbia, provoked outrage from nationalists and even threatened support for the prime minister within his own coalition. Deciding that the priority was to keep the new democratic government onside, Del Ponte withdrew the invitation to the general, only to be told a day later that he would be happy to meet her since it had been his idea in the first place. Do not expect such confusion when she moves on to Belgrade, though only because President Kos'tunica is refusing to talk to her at all, especially on the overriding question of handing over Milos'evic.

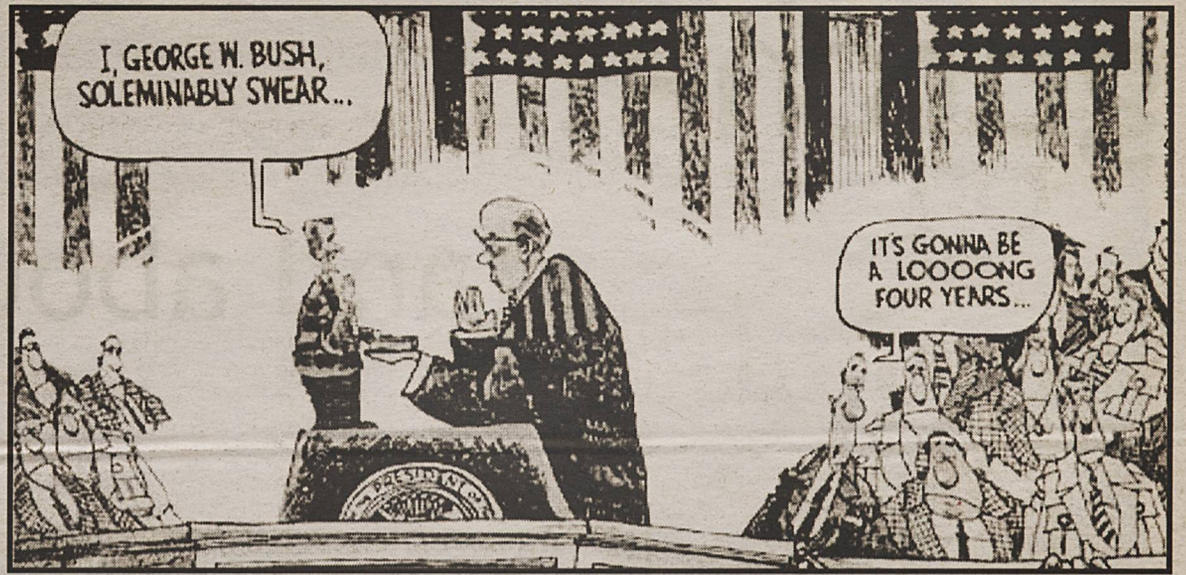
All the same, Plavsic's extended holiday can be taken as a clear signal that the tribunal is finally stepping up its efforts to try those ultimately responsible for the Balkan wars. Not wanting to wish undue misfortune on anyone, even an indicted war criminal, one would hope she remembered to cancel the milk.

Catherine Baker has written a number of articles on Yugoslavia before.



dubya

words by tristan feunteun



and dumber

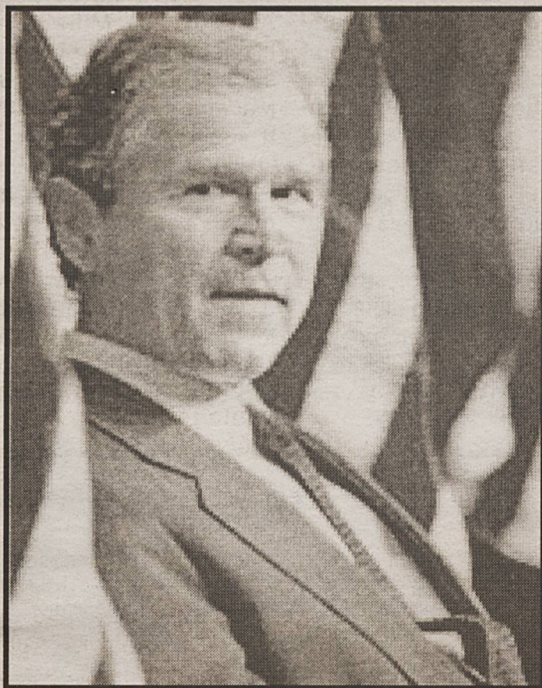
Last weekend, George W. Bush became arguably the most powerful man on the planet. Yet he is also possibly the most misunderstood and underestimated person of the present day. How could such a situation have come about? Barbara Bush has a good idea: "They've spread this rumour that George is not smart. He's dumb like a fox". Opponents would argue that the President himself did a fairly good job of spreading this rumour. With a mild form of dyslexia, Bush is a speech pathologist's dream. With his self-professed love of 'Grecians' and the 'continent of Nigeria' 'Dubya' has displayed an 'astute' grasp of world affairs, striking fear into the hearts of diplomats and governments the world over. Even Time has asked Bush what he makes of claims he is 'intellectually incurious'. Bush being the son of You-Know-Who has led to questions on the validity of democracy in America and aspersions of the Presidency becoming dynastic property. Throw into all this a mind-boggling election fiasco and it is not hard to understand why many shuddered on Inauguration Day. But before you start recalling some 'Dubya' jokes (hilarious as they are) or some of the often quoted 'Bushisms', take a moment to think the unthinkable. Is he really as stupid as most of the media say? And do the qualities that have enabled the man to get this far also position him well for an effective Presidency?

For a man supposedly born to the Presidency, it has not been the smoothest of rides. Scion of a grand East Coast family. Son of a President and grandson of a US Senator. Descended from European royalty and related to 16 previous occupants of the Oval Office (including his predecessor). Yet Bush takes office amid claims his is a bastard Presidency, sired by the Supreme Court and aided by his brother Jeb's manipulation of votes in Florida. This is a humbling path to power, but 'Dubya' knows a thing or two about turning situations around.

In the 1980s Bush commissioned a report on the fate of Presidential offspring. The results were so devastating - alcoholism, lunacy and depression - that he ordered all copies destroyed. As a former drug-taking alcoholic who was once arrested, Bush himself fits into this pattern which illustrates the difficulty of stepping out of the shadow of a famous father. Yet

despite the Harrisons, Roosevelts and Kennedys, Bush is only the second to overcome this 'disadvantage' and to achieve what he has, after John Quincy Adams. Regardless of the weight of democracy on the national psyche, Americans do have a tendency to elect candidates with political 'brand-names'. Dynasties are manifold at state and more local levels. But the fact Bush is only the second Father-Son President in 202 years means the US is far from having a Presidency which is inherited property, as the Founding Fathers feared could happen. And surely in a meritocracy all the best candidates should be considered, regardless of whom their father is...

Being born into a political family is a mixed blessing. Cynics claim the only reason he became President is that he shares his father's name. Realists point out many confused voters chose 'Dubya' in the primaries in the belief he



was his father. Being ill-at-ease with this inherited responsibility led to what 'Dubya' calls his 'irresponsible youth', which lasted his first forty years. An idyllic and normal Texan childhood abruptly ended on his entering Andover and Yale, and the East Coast world of his father. (Incidentally, at Yale Bush's grades were higher than Gore's). After applying (without his

family's knowledge or help) and successfully entering Harvard Business School, 'Dubya' learned the management techniques that will characterise his Presidency. Adding to his own family-instilled belief in the values of trust and loyalty, it was Harvard that taught Bush to delegate - to surround himself with the best and to rise with them.

Bush eventually settled in his native Texas to earn his fortune. When this did not happen, 'Dubya' turned, in spite of his stable and happy family life, to alcoholism. Then, in the mid 1980s, something did happen to Bush. Yet typical of this complex individual, Bush's mid-life crisis occurred in reverse. On finding his faith and becoming tee-total, 'Dubya' became a success.

Late bloomers have achieved the Presidency before. Grant, Truman and Reagan all were, and all had considerable achievements. There is something also admirable about late bloomers like Bush, who have reached their nadir and have worked up the long path to their zenith. It takes an iron-will and a certain inner-strength and moral fibre to achieve that kind of personal transformation. Underestimated in the Primaries, 'Dubya' staged an impressive comeback, staying 'on-message' throughout, learning vital lessons for his first term in office. 'More intelligent' and more experienced, Gore was expected to trounce 'Dubya' in the debates, but it was Bush who displayed humility, a firmer grasp of facts and affected a more Presidential air. After an election Gore should have won (most now agree that he did in fact win), Bush also had a better Endgame. By delegating and remaining away from the fray, Bush starts his term relatively unsullied and almost refreshed.

It is a great irony that the qualities 'Dubya' displayed all his life - charm and getting on with all those he meets - those that in part caused his 'irresponsible youth' and those forming the crux of his campaign, should now be exactly what is needed to heal war-torn Washington. Bush started this process as soon as Gore finally conceded, and there are several examples already of the reaching-out to opponents that should help get the business of his administration done.

A shy, inarticulate man who appreciates silence, traditional values,

his free time and his family's sheltered personal space - Bush is the antidote to the Clinton era. These are traits also found within his staff, and will set the tone for the new Bush era. Anyone who thinks 'to delegate' means 'to detach oneself', and who sees Bush as a pawn of familial and certain economic interests should think again. There is something within this man that is driving him, that made him run for student positions from Andover through to Harvard, and that more importantly helped him learn from and overcome his failures.

Bush loves nothing better than being underestimated, and then proving people wrong. Underestimation in politics often proves a blessing for those it is done to, and the un-doing of those who do it. And so in The President's present situation, in a more challenging role than he has ever faced, and more underestimated than ever, he has it all to play for. This is neither a defence of his policies nor a critique of his record in Texas, merely a retort to the claims he is stupid and unworthy of such office. To paraphrase his father - Read my lips: impassioned by his agenda, smart enough for the job, blessed with the perfect personality, caution and values for the present economic and political climate, and backed by an immensely experienced, gifted and popular team, Bush has all the ingredients for an effective Presidency.

Tristan Feunteun is a 3rd year Geography undergraduate. In 1988 he had the dubious honour of seeing both past and present Presidents George Bush while in Houston on the night of the Presidential election

ngo

society view: this week, the People First Society

Defining NGOs is not for the intellectually squeamish. Definitions are numerous and complex. Although there may be no universal agreement on what NGOs are exactly, there is widespread agreement that their numbers, influence and reach are at unprecedented levels. According to one estimate, some 25,000 entities now qualify as international NGOs. Until recently, NGOs clustered in developed and democratic nations: now groups sprout up from Lima to Beijing. They are changing societal norms, challenging national governments, and linking up to the powerful in transnational alliances. Furthermore, they are muscling their way into areas of high politics such as arms control, banking and trade, areas that were previously dominated by the state.

NGOs have played a vital role throughout history in forcing leaders and policymakers to pay attention. It was NGOs that were the driving forces behind government action on the slave trade. Similarly, the Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade were an influential antidrug movement that culminated in the 1912 Hague Opium Convention.

According to the Secretary General; Kofi Annan, NGOs are

"indispensable partners" of the UN, whose role is more important than ever in helping the organisation to reach its goals. It is primarily the result of hard work and constant lobbying from NGO activists that human-rights language is included within the UN Charter and nearly every major human-rights issue is put on the international agenda. This changing attitude towards NGOs has also developed amongst the corporate world. An example is the Royal Dutch/Shell Group. Stung by fierce NGO campaigns on the Brent Spar episode and its operations in Nigeria, Shell has adopted a new statement of General Business Principles that includes commitments on human rights and the environment. With regard to some of its projects, it now consults with NGOs to ensure that its oils operations take environmental and social factors into account.

Instead of holding marches or hanging banners off buildings, NGO members now use computers and cell phones to launch global public-relations blitzes that can force issues to the top of policymakers "to do" lists. The 1997 Nobel Prize winning campaign by NGOs to ban landmines captured the attention of the public and policymakers by



its innovative media campaign; using the internet, faxes, e-mail, newsletters, even Superman and Batman comic books. Communication between the 350 humanitarian and arms-control NGOs from 23 countries was key to the success, and would not have been possible without the latest tele-communication facilities.

NGOs can also build trust and break deadlocks when negotiations have reached an impasse. It was the works of a sole Italian NGO, the Comunita di Sant'Egidio which started the informal meetings between the warring parties in Mozambique eventually leading to a peace settlement. Similarly, during talks in 1995 to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NGOs from several countries working with the South African government delegation helped forge a compromise that led to the treaty's permanent extension.

NGO judgements can be decisive in promoting or withholding public support. The World Bank was a victim of a high profile campaign demanding greater openness and accountability. Today, partly as a result of this, about half of the bank's lending projects have provisions for NGO involvement-up from only 6% in 1988. The bank has even included NGOs such as Oxfam International in once sacrosanct multilateral debt relief discussions-against the wishes of many World Bank and IMF officials.

NGOs on the ground often make the impossible possible by doing what governments cannot or will not do. They have a natural advantage because of their perceived neutrality and experience. The Red Cross, for example, is able to deliver health care to political prisoners in exchange for silence about any human-rights violations its members witness. Other groups such as Oxfam provide rapid relief during and after humanitarian disaster with or without UN assistance. This has led to the fact that the UN and nation states are depending more and more on NGOs to get things done. Total assistance by and through international NGOs to the developing world amounted to

about \$8 billion in 1992-accounting for 13% of all development assistance and more than the entire amount transferred by the UN.

Despite the demonstrated activities of NGOs to do good, NGOs face serious problems. Intense competition in the relief sector threatens to form an oligopoly that will exclude smaller players, especially local NGOs in developing countries. Eight major groups now control about 50% of the relief market. As NGOs grow in membership they lose the qualities that have made them a source of innovation and progress, mainly their grassroots origins and their neutrality to both governments and the corporate world. Some analysts fear that former independent NGOs may have become more beholden to national governments as they come to rely more on public-sector funding-which now accounts for around 40% of NGO budgets compared to only 1.5% throughout the 1970s.

As people demand greater democracy and accountability, the presence of NGOs are vital. Globalisation has created both cross-border issues that NGOs address and cross-border communities of interest that NGOs represent. National governments cannot do either as effectively or as legitimately.



The People First Society are a part of the Students Union.

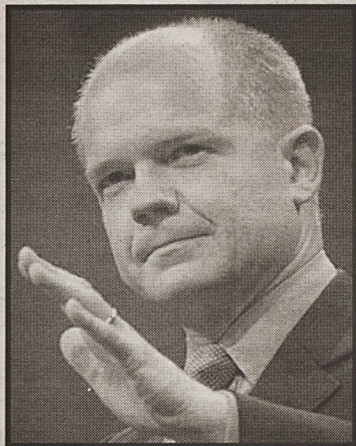
business

as

usual

words by james corbett

<continued from page one



Good intentions aside, such sentiments of self-restraint from a principled few are never likely to come to much in the current political climate. With the exception of the handful of Labour MPs who signed that particular motion, and the Liberal Democrats – who are conspicuous for their lack of funds – most parliamentarians know that reality bites, particularly so on the eve of an expensive General Election campaign. In the twelve months before the last election the Tories spent £20 million, Labour £13 million and the Liberal Democrats just £700,000. Since then, high hopes of raising the party membership bases and, in turn, funding sources, have come to nothing. The Tories' membership has remained stuck at 300,000, as has that of the Liberal Democrats at 95,000, while Labour's has fallen from 405,000 to 387,000. For the Tories the malaise has been even more striking. They received £360,000 from 31 companies last year, compared with £2.5million handed over in the equivalent year of the last parliament and £5million in corporate donations in the run up to the 1992 election. At the same time, the Labour Party has so far only secured £8million worth of pledges from the Trade Unions against a target of £12 million. In such a context it would be foolish for either of the two main parties to call for a cap on large donations.

Yet the forthcoming General Election campaign, tedious though it promises to be, will be rendered even more so by the greater degree of restraint enforced upon it by the findings of the Neill Report on funding political parties. The main stipulation that will impact on the campaign as a whole will be the ceiling, probably of a figure around the £15million

mark, placed on electoral spending. With regard to large individual donations Neill recommended that any donors who have given in excess of £5,000 be named and from next month the size of that pledge, although there will be no ceiling on that figure. That there was no curb on the sums involved was mainly on the grounds of practicality. In the United States where the formal limits are piously severe, an intricate web of fake recipients and shadow givers are constructed by political parties so as to consolidate the enormous sums available within a framework in which it can be legally dispensed. Neill ultimately placed its emphasis on disclosure: so long as the situation is in the public eye, the fundamental democratic interest is protected, albeit very loosely.

The problem that, however, keeps re-emerging is one of big money entering and muddying politics. Whether you are Lord Sainsbury or Stuart Wheeler, investing the odd million or two in a political party, no matter how highly principled your motivation, is ultimately a natural extension of business. It catapults you to public prominence; it gains you the eyes and ears of the people who matter; it normally gains you the kudos, no matter how antiquated, of a title; and, in Sainsbury's case, it arguably gained him a ministerial position. One of the most controversial, maligned and, indeed, reviled benefactors is the billionaire Conservative Party treasurer, Michael Ashcroft, described by the Spectator as 'The Man who Bought the Tory party.' He has given the party more than £1million a year since the last general election, on top of interest-free loans of up to £2million at any one time. He acts as a personal guarantor for the party's

central office overdraft which was pegged at £5million after he stepped in to prevent the Royal Bank of Scotland from reducing it to £1million eighteen months ago. In addition to this he has donated gifts in kind that included staff, marketing costs and the use of aircraft – to the tune of £390,000 in the year up to October 2000. Those who support Ashcroft say that his motivation is no more odious than a desire to get a peerage – something he finally attained in April last year when he became Lord Ashcroft, and so long as the Conservatives are outside of government his influence is limited to within the party. Yet can it really be considered healthy for a single individual with, presumably, his own individual beliefs and interests, not only to put so much cash into a political party's coffers but to have such an all pervasive presence within the party? What separates Ashcroft and Stuart Wheeler was that Wheeler had never even met William Hague before last Tuesday, whereas Ashcroft is treasurer of the party, sits in the Lords and acts as guarantor for its overdraft. Were he, and there is no suggestion whatsoever that he does, to have some personal quirk or prejudice as say, Brian Souter (millionaire chairman of Stagecoach who funded out of his own pocket a pseudo-referendum on Clause 28 in Scotland last year) does over homosexuals, what is to say that Ashcroft couldn't influence the entire course of party policy as the Tories strive to keep their sugar-daddy happy? It has been alleged in leaked Foreign Office documents that the last government bought Ashcroft tax breaks in Belize, where he has considerable financial interests. Of course nothing was ever proven and

it is the conduct of the last Tory government as opposed to its donor about whom the bigger question mark was raised. Nevertheless the implication is clearly evident: that whenever more than two or three zeroes are added onto the end of a donation to a political party, it will buy you influence, perhaps an unhealthy dose of it.

So what is to be done? The Liberal Democrats' call for state funding of political parties is a particularly empty and, if ever seriously considered, unpopular call. The Neill Report introduces a degree of transparency. Increasingly we, as the public, have become aware of the size of donations and, as of the middle of next month, all will be revealed. However, as Hugo Young of The Guardian believes, transparency is 'an imperfect way of improving reality [but] in this field it's the only weapon available for keeping politicians anywhere near the straight and narrow.' In other words we may know whom the donations are from and how much they have donated, but we won't necessarily know what kind of influence it has bought for them. Transparency will only work if we as the voting public continue to ask uncomfortable questions, continue to probe while at the same time retain a high degree of cynicism. If we don't, we may as well write off our democracy and, indeed our futures, to the men with the big bank balances and open chequebooks.

James Corbett is the former political editor of The Beaver and now a full time member of the Hammersmith Liberal elite. He can be contacted at J.Corbett@lse.ac.uk



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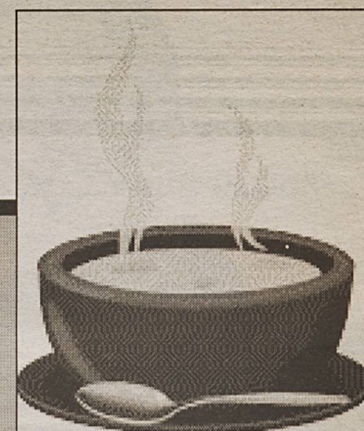
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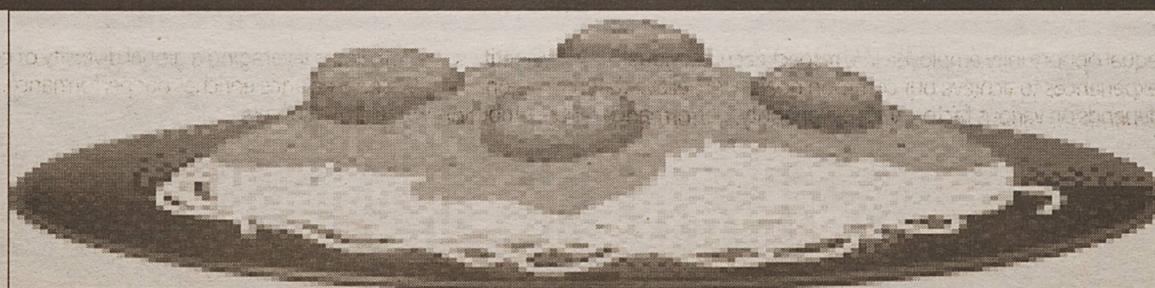
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Gen Sec's Column Inches

So the human chain – did it work? Granted, as a publicity stunt, we may not have got coverage we wanted. Mention in the Guardian, a 'Cheeky Demo' special on Page 3 of The Times Higher (it would be nice to know who the two backsides belonged to),

our first front page on the London Student for some time, and a special to follow on nusonline.

However, in the face of perennial student apathy, this should be seen as a major victory for The Union. A full link around the LSE - there hasn't been such a show of unity, under a common banner, for decades and other Unions have congratulated our initiative. The question of top-up fees affects LSE a lot more than most UK institutions, and I think it only right that we should take the lead - hopefully this can act as a spark for others. LSE Students do not want to see their institution fully privatised now or ever – I think this message came across clearly.

So where to now? 'Terrorising' MPs is a clear option. Surely we have a right to know what the government will do if it is elected for a second term? Surely the MPs have a duty to the electorate? Things are already happening. LSE will be sending delegates to The Mayor of London's forthcoming conference on The Future of Higher Education Funding, while ULU have organised a lobby of the GLA. NUS' Week of Action involves strike activity against the parent institutions and further lobbying. Without doubt, we should be pressuring, 'naming and shaming' those MPs in marginal seats to come out against top-up fees. Intellectual argument is needed – I think in the end the voice of reason will triumph.

Last Monday's debate left me with mixed feelings. LSE pride clashed head on with a sharp realism. In an increasingly global world dominated by mergers and acquisitions, perhaps the concept of 'PESANTS' or an LSE/Imperial super university, may not be such an imponderable 10 or 20 years down the line? We've already seen an alliance formed between Cambridge, Harvard and MIT, Oxford are collaborating with the likes of Princeton, and LSE have entered into a global MBA programme with NYU Stern and HEC Paris. Alliances are the flavour of the month – mergers will be the logical progression.

Of course, no-one wants to be dominated or swallowed up, but if you look at the way law firms have been developing over the past decade, there seems no reason why universities couldn't go the same route.

As many a man will tell you, it all comes back to resources. With the government spending decreasing sums per individual student and the effects this has on teaching standards, one idea for increasing revenue could be the expansion of LSE's portfolio. For example, if LSE branched out into computer science, as an extension of information systems, such a subject could bring in heavy government funding and allow for cross subsidisation. However, if we don't choose to expand alone, LSE may feel it has no choice but to expand with the assistance of others – how would students and staff react? Certainly, any move to merger could have dramatic repercussions.

Money worries, financial pressures and mounting debt have all become buzz words for the student of the twenty-first century. Figures released last week show that 87% of students now suffer from financial difficulties, while student debt has trebled in the three years between 1996 and 1999. Rather than accept this as reality, we need to assert our own agenda and maintain the fight against the fees.

Check out the student union website on:- www.lse.ac.uk/union

ANNUAL ESSAY COMPETITION 2001

WIN £200

This is the prize offered for the winning essay entitled:

“What useful steps might be taken to prevent eating disorders amongst young people?”

The competition is open to all medical, nursing, psychology and health studies undergraduates in their second year and above.

Essays should be a maximum of 5,000 words (excluding bibliography) preferably word processed. Please send one printed copy of the essay and include a virus checked disk with an MS Word 4/95/97/2000.doc or plain text .txt copy of the essay

Entries should be sent to:

Essay Competition, Eating Disorders Association, First Floor, Wensum House, 103 Prince of Wales Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1DW.

Or by email to: info@edauk.com

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES : 6th April 2001

Please include your Name, Address, College/University and details of your degree course



Female Voice wanted

Voice teacher is looking for someone with a 'standard English' accent (aka Received Pronunciation, RP, 'well-spoken', BBC English etc.) to take part in an accent project.

If you would be willing to record your voice for educational tape/CD about accents (for payment) please contact

Mary Shand at Voicehelp
Tel: 02077356216

Please - 'native speakers' only
i.e. this should be your first
accent, not just one you can do.

Fives go Mad at UCL

LSE 5ths
UCL 5ths

4
1

After a bright start to the season which briefly had the 5ths at the giddy heights of second in the league (ULU Division 4), results turned against us following the morale-sapping 0-0 draw with the peasant LSE 6th team. The result of this travesty of refereeing, combined with the loss of our tactically inept

(remember that 4-3-3 formation!) but much loved manager Justin Jewell to coursework, and the defection of Jamie "Judas" the Virgin Slayer to the glamour of the 1st team, sent us into a slump that saw us slide inexorably down the table with a succession of poor performances.

Returning after the winter break several stones heavier but a few players lighter, we scraped together a patched-up side (including club captain Jarlath) for the long trip to Euston Tech. Naturally scared shitless at the prospect of another thumping by the Kings of Aldwych™ and as so few other teams were playing that day, the cheating bastards had stuffed their team full of ringers. With the absence

of our manager, team selection was done on a democratic basis and Justin was moved up from centre-back into central-midfield to provide some trademark late-challenges and generally make a nuisance of himself, with loan signing Jarlath slotting in up front.

After a frantic first 10 minutes though, in which the midfield was penetrated more easily than a rugby player in a communal bath, wholesale changes were made to the formation by Captain Ricky. These soon paid off in the form of a magnificent John "Socialist Worker" Beer goal following a twisting run through virtually the entire opposing back line. Ricardo "Classy Girlfriend" Vale claimed the assist despite his final pass happening in our half of the pitch and only going about 5 yards.

The effects of a heavy night out at the Gardening Club began to affect a few members of the team and it was no surprise when UCL's centre forward equalised with a poached goal worthy of his ancestry. With our complete lack of match fitness (or indeed any sort of fitness whatsoever) beginning to show, things looked bad, but Justin Davda's first goal

of the season, having completely fooled the defence with his change of pace from very slow to merely sluggish, brought back our usual arrogant passing game.

Following, Chris the Greek's arrival from the bench, we stepped it up a gear and Jarlath's 20 yd drive and another Steve McManaman impression from Johnny Beer took our goals tally against UCL this season to 17. Despite Stone Cold and little Nick succumbing to cramp and most players virtually being unable to walk due to fatigue, we held on thanks to Simon Drury in goal for the last 15 minutes with our backs against the wall (which would be good practice for the coach ride back with all those UCL bum-

bandits) to secure a hard-fought 4-1 victory.

Man of the Match - Jarlath, for turning up and playing

Wanker of the Match - Ricardo, for turning up and playing



Queen Mary Right Royally Rammed

LSE 1sts
QMWank

5
2

The LSE 1sts were rocked by the news in week 1 of the imminent retirement of The Animal. An integral part of the 1sts for years, he even had his contract extended from a 3-year stretch to four, due to his sublime performances, salmon-like heading as well as bone crunching tackles (Scotty can vouch for that!). However, the 1sts approached this game wishing to give the out-going midfielder a swan song fitting for such a footballing legend. And a swan song he got...!

Despite travelling to the end of the Earth (Chislehurst), the 1sts still managed to arrive before their 'hosts' hereafter known as 'wankers'. This early arrival was made the even more spectacular by the fact that Hospital Dan (who had finally managed to be released from his bed in Great Ormond Street's alcohol rehabilitation clinic) found it nigh impossible to follow the team onto a bus on Houghton Street. Words were exchanged (via mobile) with Hospital asking 'Did you get on the

bus?' to which the remaining eleven of us replied 'yes'. Note to Hospital- if you see the rest of the team getting on a bus, chances are you should be doing the same!

The game started with frost on the pitch harder than Lochrie's knob when he sees his girlfriend dressed as a schoolgirl. The first game back was really important considering the 1sts unbeaten record so far in ULU and the way LSE started certainly reflected this burning, sexual passion. The Animal and Playmaker Lochrie went in like Oscar et al into a foursome as well as Billy Muppet reducing their strikers to quivering wrecks appealing (in vain) to the ref (who was blind).

The 1sts had scored two within the first 15 minutes. The first came courtesy of a flowing move down the left via Tweedle Dee Loz sending the Ginger Monkey Matt Sutton through to cross for The Animal to rise like a salmon...and miss the ball. However, Hospital Dan was on hand to finish with consummate ease (despite not being able to see the ball because

of the size of his considerable belly!). 1-0. The second came soon after via a blockbuster from The Animal after great work by The Lightning Darius and Tweedle Dum Andy on the right.

It was at this time, though that the back four decided to allow QMWank back in the game. Callas had decided, due to the ease of this 2-0 scoreline to make it interesting by allowing every wanker to run past him and flatly refuse to chase after them. Needless to say, in a disastrous five minutes QMWank managed to equalize, despite the rest of the back four's determination, as well as Super Grigg in goal, who had no chance with either goal.

However, QMWank did not count on the Lightning Darius morphing into Darius Cantona. After a quick passing move involving most of the team (except Callas) the ball found Monsieur Cantona in the box who controlled it and rifled a left foot shot into the top left-hand corner. Indeed for the rest of the game, Darius Cantona continued to dazzle us

with his silky skills.

Half time came and went, with Billy Muppet complaining of a pulled muscle around his groin. Heaven knows why because he hasn't pulled for f*cking ages! By the second half, the 1sts had asserted their dominance and the wankers failed to get a shot on the LSE goal for the rest of the game. Very quickly, LSE had scored another two goals.

Hospital Dan, brimming with confidence after devouring a record 24 pies during the half-time break, was put through by the Ickle Wonder and finished with the kind of ease with which Ickle Deano usually does (though not today- hahaha!). Soon after The Animal, after a sublime in-swinging corner from the Ginger Monkey, was able to force the ball home from a yard out through a melee of players to cap off his final game with a brace. His celebration involved smoking his own bodyweight in hash and then informing us his name was now Bora, a dweller of inner city Amsterdam who would return to

his botanic roots just as soon as the game was over.

The remainder of the game passed uneventfully with the Ginger Monkey getting a wanker sent off after being subjected to a kick whilst on the floor and Library Dan, who was very vocal in support for the team, coming on and missing one of the easiest chances you could ever get (until training the day after...!)

A 5-2 victory and a fitting end to one of the LSE's favorite sons- or longest serving one at least! The team are now second in the league and unbeaten and are also in the cup semis against her archenemy Strand Poly. It would be great if LSE were able to bring a long a contingent of die-hard fans to the semi as we like nothing better than to rub the noses of those Strand-Poly wankers in the mud of Fortress Berrylands and watch them tail tucked between their legs, return humiliated to the Strand!

WWF Pay-Per-View

Mens' Football LSE 'The Rock' 2nds Halloway 'Knobbers' 2nd

1
0

Wednesday's cage match was so good that it inspired a bit of poetry. And even a limerick. Goes sumthin' like this: "Shit Shit Shit Tommy C can't score for Shit Shit Shit" (Fortunately, neither could Holloway) and the Refrain: There once was a Lad from the bay / His sideburns they ruined the day / So try as he might / By day or by night / For goals and for birds he shall pay!

Regardless of this mediocre rhyme, the LSE 2nd were able to take care of proper business in Egham on Wednesday. Fortunate to have recovered from the December team dinner that occurred in some far off region of Curry, London, the 2nds began at full strength with a proper starting line-up. This week we'll be talking about league leading scorer Pete Mason, Captain

Scottie's socks, and Jarlath "O.G." O'Hara's flagrant fouls.

The 2nds began the recently new millennium with an absolute bang. At least the second half, anyway, which began deadlocked at 0-0. Literally seconds after kick-off, Pete Mason stormed down the pitch and began to molest the Holloway keeper. Confident that this first date would soon develop into a Shag-O-Rama, Pete and helper Tommy C continued to tease and flirt with the glowing green git goalie. They just had some trouble "closin' the deal" as we say in the States.

Late in the match, it was Mason who scored on a brilliant curving shot that nicked the post and sneaked its way across the goal line. The Holloway keeper's accusation of harassment was dropped and he dropped to his knees in despair for the big 2nd

gang bang. Being the gentlemen that we are, however, we kindly left the score 1-0 for the final whistle.

Afterthoughts: We played quite well despite the fact that most of us dress like flood victims. Captain Scottie's lucky "Poultry in Motion" socks, his only Xmas present from Mama Scott, provided him with enough lucky clears and dribbles to last him at least through 2015. He can be reached at Scott, MR in case you wish to shower him with a further career supply of cartoon signature wear and pacifiers. No mention will be made of regular defender Judge Jules, who could not be reached for further comment on Wednesday. When he's not shopping in that part of Soho...Christ, I bet that's where he was after all!

Also, can we talk about something? Where the hell is

Egham? Any LSE squad that travels there with British Rail and expects to get a match in before July had better pack adequate food, water, and tent supplies in case things "go wrong." Good thing we won, or we might still be in the countryside starting families and breaking windows, though not necessarily in that order.

That's all we have about Holloway FC 2nd, the nauseating assemblage of pricks and fairies that they are. If only the LSE had settled the score beforehand with a simple threatening phone call made prior to the match: You know what I mean. That's The Rock O.G. O'Hara screaming into the handset "ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL?!?!"

Tune in next time as the LSE 2nd rocket towards the top of the rankings and the bottom of the keg. Respect.



BeaverSports would like to apologise for the lack of content in its respectable pages this week and last. Most of the teams have not started playing yet, which accounts for the lack of stories and match reports. Fear not though, as next week is sure to bring some vintage sports for the LSE, with the Footie 1sts playing in their cup semi-final, and rugby teams playing on to win their leagues.

The Adventures of Baron Von MunterHouse

Munterhausen, Lord of Perversion, slayer of virginity and owner of the smallest Penis this side of Bavaria have a secret. The kind of secret that knows no name, in fact it's the kind of secret that everyone already knows because the herald announced it to the whole Tuns. Whilst liasing with a pint of Champers and a few fillys a young and malnourished ruffian walked past me and spilt some of the said tippel! The Cur then refused to apologise and I admonished him with the words "You dirty, thieving, lying, stinking, filthy, gypsy, scoundrel." At which point he became rather irate and ran off before I had the chance to administer the sound thrashing, that I had intended to inflict upon this example of the worst kind of ill educated and sorry piece of human existence. I got back to the job in hand and ordered my valet to purchase some more of my favourite Krug 1883 a vintage of renowned quality and sublime pleasure to the palet. The thug then returned with his mate a dwarf like creature who stood all of 4ft5. The words "I am going to teach you a lesson" emanated from the dwarfs mouth, after a brief moment of raucous laughter I suggested to him that he give it his best shot! Aaaaaaaah the little f'cker floored me and as the whole establishment erupted into hysterical laughter I realised that my reputation as a tough guy with nerves of steel and fists of iron was forever tainted. No longer would I walk head held high knowing that The Sword was leaving and handing his trusty scabbard over to me. Now there are other guys who are stealing a march on me in the loud and obnoxious stakes. Gav Russell my other hero is so cocksure and I'm not sure I have the assets to put him in his place.

On to more important matters, I'm finding that my Marquis de Sade like fixation with crossing and entering both sides of Biffens Bridge is coming unstuck and I'll have to use my tackle more effectively on the current wench, one of the local peasant girls that I'm molesting at present. I tell you if I haven't buggered her rotten by March that's just what I'll do!



IMPERIAL STORMTROOPERS: STAY HOME YOU PEASANTS!

Hockey start New Year with convincing win

LSE	8
Imperial	3

With just five weeks to recover from the exertions of the Christmas dinner, and resulting mayhem, LSE made their way once more to the hallowed turf of Battersea Park. With some players still hauling a few pounds of Christmas dinner around the park our task was not easy. With the opposition warming up already as LSE staggered towards the changing rooms things looked bleak. These were no ordinary Imperial troopers. On the left wing, Afro Thunder, at the back a man who had inexplicably got several tampons caught on his beard, and last but not least their centre forward, Jesus, son of God, not forgetting Ghandi in goal.

The Fuhrer was absent, replaced by 'some South African twat' but as documented at the hockey dinner, his ghost remained. Living up to their reputations, the hairy Fairy arrived in an ambulance, while it took Pistol Pete 3.5 hours to make his way to the ground. Just before the game, Uncle Accenture slipped off with a lady friend, but was back in time for push back.

The force was strong with LSE for the first ten minutes, during which time they secured the match and to a certain extent took the piss. Sharky struck first, after a great LSE counterattack that tore

Imperial's defence apart, slotting the ball home from a narrow angle. Next Psycho fired a powerful short corner at goal which their keeper kindly deflected into the corner. Sharky slotted another home, 3-0 and then perhaps the champagne moment of the season so far. Pistol Pete, receiving the ball on the halfway line proceeded casually to dribble past their entire team and then with a flick of his wrists, perhaps perfected off the pitch, shot the ball with his reverse stick into the roof of the net.

It was a feast of hockey to which Imperial were not invited. LSE having gorged themselves sat back and allowed Imperial to play a little. They scored twice, once from a short corner, and then on the third attempt from half a yard with Rolfie beach having hit the goal frame in a despairing dive 'with considerable force'. Jesus performed a minor miracle and scored Imperial's second. Sharky then completed this hat-trick to make it 5-2 at half time.

The second half began badly for LSE. The Hairy Fairy entered the game, and within a minute had been booked for repeated and blatant deliberate fouls. He then perfected his lumberjack impression with one of the worst tackles ever seen on a hockey pitch, conceding a penalty flick. The Imperial penalty taker was

even worse than that previous tackle, and Rolfie had time to have a cup of tea and reflect on just how bad IC were playing before palming his effort round the post.

JCYC, back from illness, then turned on the style scoring two goals and killing their goal keeper to earn himself Man of the Match. Next, Rastaman put in an unsuccessful bid for Dick of the Day finishing neatly past Rolfie for his virgin (own) goal. Fairy had already secured that dubious honour with his lumberjack impression. Sharky wrapped things up for LSE with his fourth goal, not bad for a midfielder!

It was off to the Mason's Arms, where the Queen reared her head once more. Record fines were recovered after the antics at the dinner, and Rastaman was dragged kicking and screaming to the Tuns. A quick pit-stop at Burger King to take advantage of their Bacon Double Cheeseburger offer resulted in a mountain of burger boxes, with an average round of 3.2 burgers per player. At the Tuns, four drinking games were played simultaneously, carnage ensued and much fun was had by all. Undercover, the King's hockey team had sneaked into the Tuns, to spy before next week's game.

Que Sera, Sera.....

ULU Challenge Cup

Royal Holloway	3
LSE	3

Although LSE took an early 3 goal lead, Holloway fought back to equalise late in the second half. In difficult conditions, LSE worked hard to secure a draw before the home tie on Sunday.

Triumphing over the first obstacle of not having a kit, the game against the reigning champions promised to be a piece of piss. The prospect of not having to play in bibs pleased the Beavers, who strode confidently out in their favoured purple, yellow and gold jerseys. How could we lose when we looked this good? For a while our confidence seemed well founded. Catherine scored the first goal five minutes into the game. Not long after, she followed it up with a second, leaving Holloway to ask, Pierre do we go from here?

LSE continued to attack well, and a brilliant goal scored by Sallie put us 3 goals ahead. However, despite the away teams superior play, a couple of chance goals reduced their lead to just 1 goal. The first was scored after a lucky long distance shot thundered into the back of 'returning for one match only' keeper Dara's net. Similarly, Holloway's second was scored by a complete miss- kick from within her own half (this was

not Beckham-style skill). Solid ground and a frosty LSE penalty box made staying on our feet difficult. K-Dawg was among the injured, but seemed oblivious to the blood that poured down her leg.

Holloway began the second half with a renewed determination not to lose, demonstrated in a general bad temper and attitude. The Beaver's attempts to attack were hindered by solid goal-keeping, although Sallie and Dabney's moves down the right came close to scoring. Kerri and Michi played well in midfield, but Holloway's best players began to cause us a few problems. Jen, Megan and Kathryn played well in defence to retain LSE's lead until 10 minutes from time, when Holloway equalised. Although LSE fought back, moves by Rita down the right and from Kerri through the centre were unrewarded, and the game ended 3-3.

Unknown to Holloway, secret weapon Lightning Lizzie is lined up for the second leg. Her aim is vengeance and she fights dirty! The Beavers await the game on Sunday with the advantages of three away goals and superior football skills.

