

The Beaver

27 January 2009
Newspaper of the
London School of Economics
Students' Union
thebeaveronline.co.uk

Campus divided as Old Theatre occupation ends

**Gaza war protesters declare victory
after agreement on demands reached**
**School costs currently estimated at
£10,000; students: 25% for, 54% against**

Marie Dunaway
& Joseph Cotterill

Students protesting the war in Gaza have claimed victory in their week-long occupation of the Old Theatre, announcing that the occupation was over after negotiations with the School over their demands concluded late on Wednesday evening.

The School made a joint statement with the protesters on Thursday announcing the end of the occupation and an agreed settlement of the demands raised.

The costs of the occupation began to emerge by the end of the week. "I would guess a bit more, but not much more, than £10,000," Andy Farrell, the School's director of finance, said. "There are no plans to charge the Students Union or anybody else, so the cost will mean a corresponding reduction in the funds available for future academic, service, student support or facility improvements," he added.

Student reaction was also gauged in a Beaver survey on Monday, revealing that a quarter of five hundred students surveyed supported the occupation.

Joseph Brown, LSE Students' Union's Anti-Racism Officer and an occupation spokesperson, said that the protesters had "achieved what we wanted to achieve" and that there was nothing more to be gained from the occupation. "A mutually beneficial accord with the School" had been reached, he said. Brown added, "it is a victory."

The occupation ended six days after twenty-one activists entered the theatre in the first week of term, at the start of a Development Studies lecture. Protesters took to the stage and unfurled a banner as postgraduate students in the audience looked on.

LSE security introduced ID card checks for students and staff entering the Old Building on the Monday after the start of the occupation.

In a closing speech on the Old Theatre stage after the announcement of the ending of the occupation, protester Charlotte Galvin said that the occupiers were "not just a load of hippies" and it was "not us who caused so much disruption."

"We weren't the only people who cared about Palestine, but we were the only people who took action," she said. Galvin said she wished to make clear that the occupation was not to blame for the disruption or the security. "This was not us," she said.

Twenty-two protesters gathered on stage to sing "we are the champions, my friends," and chanted "free, free Palestine," before ending in a round of applause.

Students' Union officials mediated between the protesters and the School throughout the occupation. The Union's sabbatical officers also managed rising

Occupation aftermath

The demands

- Official LSE condemnation of war
- Arms company divestment
- Five Palestinian scholarships
- Official fundraising day
- Old books and computers to Gaza
- Amnesty for protesters

The results

- Personal statement from Director
- Discussion on divestment
- Discussion on scholarships
- Official fundraising day
- Old books and computers to Gaza
- Amnesty for protesters

Student survey Analysis of results Beaver 'bias' 6-7

tensions on campus during the second week of the protest.

"We are pleased the occupation has come to a peaceful end, and normal teaching and learning can be resumed for all students," said the Union's Communications Officer, Dan Sheldon.

Questions had been raised during the occupation over Joseph Brown's status as Anti-Racism Officer while joining the occupation. Speaking just after the announcement that the protest was ending, Brown said that his role had not been infringed. "However, bridges need to be rebuilt, fences need to be mended and people need to be re-engaged," he said.

As well as an official statement condemning Israel and calling for a ceasefire, the protesters' demands included immediate divestment of LSE money from arms companies, five fully paid scholarships for Palestinian students, an official fundraising day for Medical Aid for Palestinians, and for old computers and books from the School to be donated to universities and schools in Gaza.

Occupations in protest at the Gaza war at Kings College London and Sussex, Essex, Birmingham and Warwick universities began during the LSE occupation. The Sussex, Birmingham and Warwick occupations continue.

Speaking as the occupation ended, protester Estelle Cooch said that the "vast majority" of demands had been met and the occupiers "still had the support of the student body."

"We hope to have started a more mobilised student movement," she added.

"I think they could have got what they wanted in a non-disruptive way," Ravi Mistry, a third-year student, said of the protesters. "I didn't appreciate the girl with the megaphone on Houghton Street either," he added.

新年快乐 | Capital and campus celebrate Chinese New Year



Lanterns hung in Chinatown yesterday morning before Chinese New Year celebrations. LSE students including the Chinese, Hong Kong and Singapore societies planned to welcome the Year of the Ox with a week of festivities Joseph Cotterill

Parents jubilant as nursery saved

Marie Dunaway

Closing LSE's nursery has been ruled out, the School had said after a consultation process and a Students' Union campaign to lobby to keep the facility open began last term.

While this outcome seemed likely after several weeks of Students' Union pressure, the official School decision to keep the nursery open was announced to students at the Union General Meeting on Thursday.

A School study had raised concerns over the financial future of the nursery over the summer, prompting a consultation process at the start of this academic year to "take soundings on the most appropriate form of pre-school provision for the children of staff and students."

After the issue of closure was raised at a UGM during the Michaelmas term, the Students' Union set up a campaign to save the nursery. The campaign collected

approximately one thousand signatures in support of keeping the nursery open. The signatures were submitted to the nursery consultation group.

Union General Secretary Aled Fisher said: "After such a fantastic campaign involving parents and staff at the nursery, I am very happy that a high quality welfare service for students has not been sold off."

Parents who used the facility, located in Grosvenor House Halls of Residence, said they had been deeply concerned last term over the prospect of the nursery closing.

Maryam Ali said: "I was very pleased to hear [Pro-Director] George Gaskell tell us last term in the open consultation meeting that closing the nursery was not even an option from the beginning. I think the whole issue has been very badly communicated and managed. It caused much anxiety for the staff and students of the school and the nursery itself that could have been avoided."

"The nursery currently has a wonderful team of staff that make it a great place for my daughter, but there are management issues that can be improved," she added.

Bola Adetona, the nursery's manager,

said she wanted to say a "Big Thank You" to the nursery campaigners. The Union's sabbatical officers had raised awareness of the nursery throughout the School, she added.

"We have had lots of positive feedback on the service the nursery provides and endeavour to continue to offer an excellent care and education service," Adetona said.

Adetona also thanked Gaskell and Professor Anne West, the chair of the nursery users' group.

The Students' Union Education and Welfare Officer Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang said: "The campaign was successful. I am extremely happy that the nursery is certain to remain open. It is a vital resource for students and staff parents and I look forward to working with the nursery consultation committee to deliver a nursery of which students can feel truly proud."

The Consultation Group noted that "a core theme of the submissions is widespread support from academics, support staff and students for the school to provide a high quality, subsidised nursery."

"Drawing on the results of the consultation the school will be taking forward plans for the continuation and improvement of the nursery," the group reported.

The Beaver is printed on 100% recycled paper. In 2006, recycled paper made up 79% of UK newspaper raw materials. Please recycle your copy

Contact the Beaver
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk
0207 955 6705

East Building
LSE Students' Union
London WC2A 2AE

Collective

Raidev Akoi; Hasib Baber; Fadhil Bakeer-Markar; Vishal Banerjee; Wil Barber; Peter Barton; Ramsey Ben-Achour; Julian Boys; James Bull; Rochelle Burgess; Sam Burke; Mike Carlson; Jess Cartwright; Victor Figueroa-Clark; Joseph Cotterill; Peter Currie; Marie Dunaway; Holli Eastman; Ossie Fikret; Aled Dilwyn Fisher; Lizzie Fison; Charlotte Galvin; Justin Gest; Charlie Gluckman; Erica Gornall; Lucie Goulet; Aula Hariri; Yisum Heneghon; Charlie Hodgson; Emiliano Huet-Vaughn; Tahiya Islam; Felipe Jacome; Daniel Jason; Lois Jeary; William Joce; Yisum Heneghon; Naeem Kapadia; Bernard Keenan; Pooja Kesavan; Sadia Kidwai; Helen Roberts; Bea Long; Phyllis Lui; Ziyaad Lunat; Eric Lundquist; Fiona Mackay; Zeeshan Malik; Nada Mansy; Jamie Mason; Al Mansour; Nitya Menon; Irfan Merali; Libby Meyer; Anna Mikeda; Ravi Mistry; Ali Mousavi; Deotima Mukherjee; Utsa Mukherjee; Aditi Nangia; Rachael O'Rourke; David Osborn; Aba Osunsade; Erin Orozco; Phil Pacanowski; Anup Patel; Rajan Patel; Will Perry; Chloe Pieters; Alice Pfeiffer; Danielle Priestley; Joe Quay; Rahim Rahemtulla; Dominic Rampat; Anjali Raval; Ricky Ren; Joe Rennison; Sacha Robehmed; Charlie Samuda; Thienthai Sangkhaphanthanon; Amrita Saraogi; Dan Sheldon; Andre Tartar; Sam Tempest-Keeping; Kerry Thompson; Meryem Torun; Angus Tse; Molly Tucker; Gregor Ulm; Vladimir Unkovski-Korica; Subash Viroomal; Simon Wang; Tom Warren; Jonathan Weir; Greg White; Tom Whittaker; Sean Whittington Roy; Christine Whyte; Chris Wilkins; Chun Han Wong

The Collective is The Beaver's governing body. You must have three articles or photos published in the paper to qualify for membership. If you believe you are a Collective member but your name is not on the list above, please email

Collective Chair

Lucie Goulet
collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Editorial Board

Executive Editor

Joseph Cotterill
editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Managing Editor

Michael Deas
michael@thebeaveronline.co.uk

News Editors

Ali Moussavi
Zeeshan Malik
Joe Rennison
news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Comment Editor

Sean Whittington Roy
comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Features Editors

Chun Han Wong
Shibani Mahtani
features@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Social Editor

Madeeha Ansari
social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

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

The Beaver is published by the London School of Economics' Students' Union, East Building, Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE. Printed at Guardian Print Centre, Rick Roberts Way, Stratford, London E15 2GN.

Sports Editors

Sam Tempest Keeping
Alice Pelton
sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Part B Editors

Julian Boys
Sachin Patel
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Design Editor

George Wetz
design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Photo Editor

Cherie Leung
photo@thebeaveronline.co.uk

General Manager

Sanjiv Nanwani
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Web Editor

Srikanth Narayanamohan
web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

The Beaver uses pictures from flickr.com which have been issued under a Creative Commons license.

We would like to distribute the Beaver under a similar license - we'll keep you posted. You can browse through the pictures we post to flickr at: flickr.com/photos/beaveronline.

LSE events

Highlights of this week's public lectures and talks

The Shifting Distribution of World Economic Activity: China and global imbalance

LSE Professor Danny Quah speaks on the rise of China
Tonight SZT

Liberal Fascism: the uses and abuses of the F-word

Jonah Goldberg discusses his new book.
Tonight, HKT, 1830-2000

Is Global Democracy Possible?

Profs Daniele Archibugi and Michael Cox debate with George Monbiot.
Wednesday, OT, 1830-2000

Bad Science

Guardian columnist Dr Ben Goldacre tells you how to spot it.
Wednesday, SZT, 1830-2000

From Atrocity to Redress: Civil Society Mobilisation in the Former Yugoslavia

Film and talk with Natasa Kandic.
Thursday, Wolfson Theatre, 1830

An Audience with Ken McDonald QC

The former DPP in conversation with the Students' Union Law Society.
Thursday, Room 2.04 (NAB), 1930

Positions of the week

LSE careers service's pick of the best jobs

Working Title Films - Training programme

Programme invites outstanding individuals seeking a career in film to apply for 3 one-year positions at our London office

One World Trust

Research internships in climate change governance, parliamentary oversight project, NGO self-regulation

Pearson PLC

Diversity Summer Internships in media and journalism

Teach First

Recruiting for the following subjects: Maths, Science, ICT, D&T and Music

Korn/Ferry Futurestep

Trainee Recruitment Researcher for high-performance global provider of innovative, scalable recruitment and people solutions

African Development Bank

Young professionals programme Work across the continent, and be at the forefront of exciting Bank initiatives that are helping to shape Africa's future

Mazars LLP

Audit Junior early increasing levels of responsibility

Cambridgeshire County Council

Research Officer - Consultation Research and information services for the County Council and partners in business information, economy & labour market, housing, population, Health, Crime and GIS

Catlin Group Graduate Programmes

Actuarial, Catastrophe Aggregate Management Programme, Finance, Underwriting

New Energy Finance

Economists, quantitative market analysts World's leading independent provider of research to investors in renewable energy, biofuels, low-carbon technologies and the carbon markets

Morgan Stanley

Emission Scheduler The European Commodities group trades physical and financial products in the commodity markets: including metals, energy and agriculture.

OECD

Full time consultant Arabic native speaker who will work as Policy Analyst on public governance reform in the middle East and North Africa

NATO

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly usually employs eight paid Research Assistants from NATO nations each year. In general, four of these start in late January and finish in June.

Interested?

For details of these posts and over three hundred more, log in to My Careers Service and click on 'search for opportunities' at www.lse.ac.uk/careers

The Beaver

thebeaveronline.co.uk



Be a digital beaver.
Check our website for daily updates throughout this term - and find out how you can get involved

info@thebeaveronline.co.uk

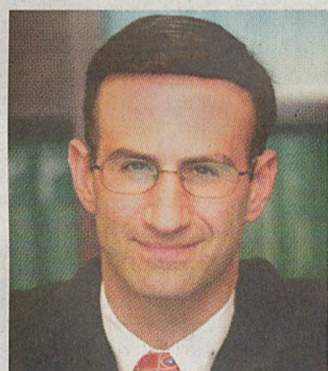
“Obamamania” hits the LSE



Zeeshan Malik

Over 200 LSE students gathered in the Quad and Tuns to watch the inauguration of President Barack Obama last Tuesday. CNN's coverage of the inauguration ceremonies were broadcast on the Students' Union's internal television system SubTV.

Among the first 15 cabinet and White House appointments of President Obama's administration, three were educated at the LSE.



Peter Orszag

Peter Orszag has been appointed as the Director of the White House's Office of Management and Budget.

As the President's budget director, Orszag will assume a cabinet-level position. Orszag, 40 was described by the National Journal as being an "unusual economist who blends an understanding of politics, policy and communications in ways that wrap zesty quotes around complex ideas."

Orszag earned his MSc and PhD from the LSE.



Pete Rouse

Pete Rouse was the Chief of Staff to then Senator Barack Obama. As a political strategist, Rouse was responsible for planning Obama's short Senate career in preparation for his running for President.

Described by the Washington Post as the "Outsider's Insider", Rouse serves as a Senior Adviser to the President. He was also a co-chairman of the Obama administration's transition team.

In President Obama's own words: "Pete's very good at looking around the corners of decisions and playing out the implications of them."

Rouse earned his MSc from the LSE.



Mona Sutphen

Mona Sutphen has been named as the President's Deputy Chief of Staff.

Sutphen was a foreign-service officer who served on Bill Clinton's National Security Council, as a foreign-policy expert. She was also an aide to New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson when he was ambassador to the United Nations.

Sutphen earned her MSc from LSE.

Other LSE alumni at the heart of the US government in the past few administrations have included:



Paul Volcker

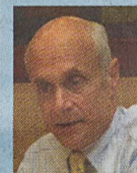
Under-Secretary of the Treasury, Nixon Administration
Chairman of Federal Reserve, Carter and Reagan Administrations, Photo from public domain, US Federal Government.

Robert Rubin

Secretary of the Treasury, Clinton Administration
Director of the National Economic Council, Clinton Administration

Elliott Abrams

Assistant Secretary of State, Reagan Administration
Senior Director of the National Security Council, Bush Administration



Michael Chertoff

Secretary of Homeland Security, Bush Administration, Photo from Flickr user Stormz.

Marc Grossman

US Under-Secretary of State, Bush Administration
US Ambassador to Turkey, Clinton Administration

William Gale

Council of Economic Advisers, Bush Administration

Janet Yellen

Council of Economic Advisers, Clinton Administration

David Welch

Assistant Secretary of State, Clinton and Bush Administrations
US Ambassador to Egypt, Bush Administration

Alan Blinder

Council of Economic Advisors, Clinton Administration

Resign demand for LSE official in free speech row



Ali Moussavi

A high-level LSE official has been asked to resign by a civil liberties pressure group for her decision to not have the right-wing commentator Douglas Murray chair a debate last week entitled 'Islam or Liberalism: Which is the Way Forward?'

Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning Professor Janet Hartley, who is a member of the School's senior management team and reports directly to LSE Director Howard Davies, was asked to resign by the Libertarian Alliance.

The organization's Director Sean Gabb said: "As a publicly funded body, the LSE should have a commitment to free speech. It is wrong that Janet Hartley has undermined this and, if Douglas Murray is not reinstated, she should resign."

Murray had initially been asked to chair the debate between LSE academic Dr Alan Sked and activist Hamza Andreas Tzortzis from the Hittin Institute.

Tzortzis has frequently lectured on his opposition to secularism. He recently spoke at an event for the controversial Hizb ut Tahrir organization.

The LSE has denied the allegation that Douglas Murray's freedom of speech was curtailed, making the point that Douglas Murray has spoken at the LSE twice in the past and that he himself had offered to withdraw from his position as chair of the event.

An LSE spokesperson said: "A member of the faculty of The London School of Economics and Political Science invited Douglas Murray, director of the Centre for Social Cohesion, to chair a debate tonight on 'Islam or Liberalism: Which is the Way Forward?' Earlier this week LSE understood that he had agreed to stand aside."

The School also said that the offer was still open to Murray to chair the event. He was only asked to withdraw after he offered to do so, and if this is not the case, "the School [was] happy for Mr Murray to resume his role as chair. Although Mr Murray was not able to take up this offer, the event took place successfully in his absence."

The spokesperson went on to say: "Douglas Murray has not been 'banned' from speaking at LSE. Mr Murray has spoken at the School on two recent occasions and would be welcome to speak here in future. A few people objected to Mr Murray's presence in advance of his previous appearance but LSE upheld his right to speak."



Above: Howard Davies joins dancers on Houghton Street in disguise



Timeless '09 sneak peek on Houghton St

Zeeshan Malik

Organisers for the upcoming LSESU Cultural Show Timeless set up a "live trailer" on Houghton Street last Friday. The performance included snippets from segments such as break-dancing, beatboxing and theatrical dance.

LSE Director Howard Davies was among the hip-hop dancers making a special guest appearance to help promote the event.

This will be the second annual show organised by the LSESU and its various cultural societies.

A spokesperson for the organising committee described Timeless as "bringing together cultures and bringing together humanity" through "various culturally-themed acts" and charity fundraising.

The show will take place on Sunday, 1 February at Sadler's Wells Theatre. Tickets are currently on sale.

School and Union call for calm on campus

Ali Moussavi

The School and the Students' Union issued a joint statement on Wednesday night, just as the occupation of the Old Theatre was ending, addressing tensions on campus in the wake of the occupation, and warning students of disciplinary action if any engage in "intimidatory behaviour or harassment in any form."

Some Jewish and Israeli students have made claims about a rise in anti-Semitism on campus in recent weeks. This has included an incident in which a speaker

against last week's UGM motion condemning Israel was spat at.

Furthermore, one of the students on the occupation said that she felt intimidated after her comments which compared Palestinian refugee camps to the Warsaw ghetto, were said to be "latent anti-Semitism."

The statement, which was signed by Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning Professor Janet Hartley and Students' Union General Secretary Aled Fisher, made reference to students "who are reluctant to come to campus at all."

Students' Union Anti-Racism Officer Joseph Brown came under fire at the UGM for his alleged failure to take in to account the claims of anti-Semitism after taking

part in the occupation of the Old Theatre.

Critics levelled a charge at Brown that his actions produced a conflict of interest with his role as Anti-Racism Officer.

As part of an effort to maintain "good campus relations", a meeting was held last Friday to discuss the establishment of an LSE Students' Union Dialogue.

Hartley and Fisher said in the statement: "The School is committed to a working and learning environment where all students can achieve their full potential. We would ask that all members of the student body continue to respect that so the experience of every student here can be positive and enriching."

Fisher made similar comments to students at the UGM last week. In his report,

he acknowledged the importance of students' rights to peacefully protest, however recognized that tensions on campus were high.

Fisher also said that the current tensions were more significant than the tensions on campus last year in the wake of a motion which called for the LSE to divest from Israel.

Fisher said that "harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The Students' Union will push for the strongest possible discipline" for any student, member of staff or outside individuals found to be abusive.

NUS governance reforms passed amid stage storming

Jonathan Damsgaard

Delegates of the National Union of Students voted to approve the NUS Governance Review at an extraordinary conference last Tuesday after a last-minute occupation of the conference stage by Gaza war protesters.

Three protesters, including members of the NUS national executive committee, took to the stage minutes before the final vote.

Constitutional changes were due to be ratified after achieving a two-thirds majority at the NUS conference in November. "This is a peaceful protest," the stage occupiers said to shouting and booing from delegates in the audience.

The NUS Disabled Students Officer was unable to leave the stage in his wheel-

chair as the occupation continued.

Jewish delegates moved to a "safe space" as negotiations to end the occupation began, led by Wes Streeting, the NUS president.

The protesters declined to leave the stage and opted to abstain while the vote was held.

Aled Dilwyn Fisher, the LSE Students' Union's General Secretary and the official Union representative to the conference, said that the protest "embarrassed students who sympathised with the cause, like me, and those of us who opposed the reforms and wanted the chance to vote against them."

Fisher voted against the motion in accordance with mandate from the Union General Meeting. It is Union policy to oppose the NUS reform agenda.

"It was utterly hypocritical of the protesters to claim that the conference was 'undemocratic' and 'stitched-up', when

they were the ones who tried to block a vote," Fisher added. "The obstruction of the Disabled Students' Officer was nothing sort of a disgrace," he said.

Constitutional reform had been on the NUS agenda for two years, failing at the Annual Conference in 2008 by only 25 votes short of the 717 needed. The Students' Union's NUS delegate Dan Sheldon praised the reforms saying that they "were necessary to ensure the long term viability of the NUS."

Sheldon said that he was "in favour of a better NUS, relevant to students, rather than an inward organisation distant from real students needs."

The reform highlights five policy zones. These include further education, higher education, union development (including governance) and society and citizenship (issues such as transportation or the environment).

Further changes have been made to

It is Union policy to oppose the NUS reform agenda.

NUS' structure to allow for 15 Executive Committee members rather than the current 12.

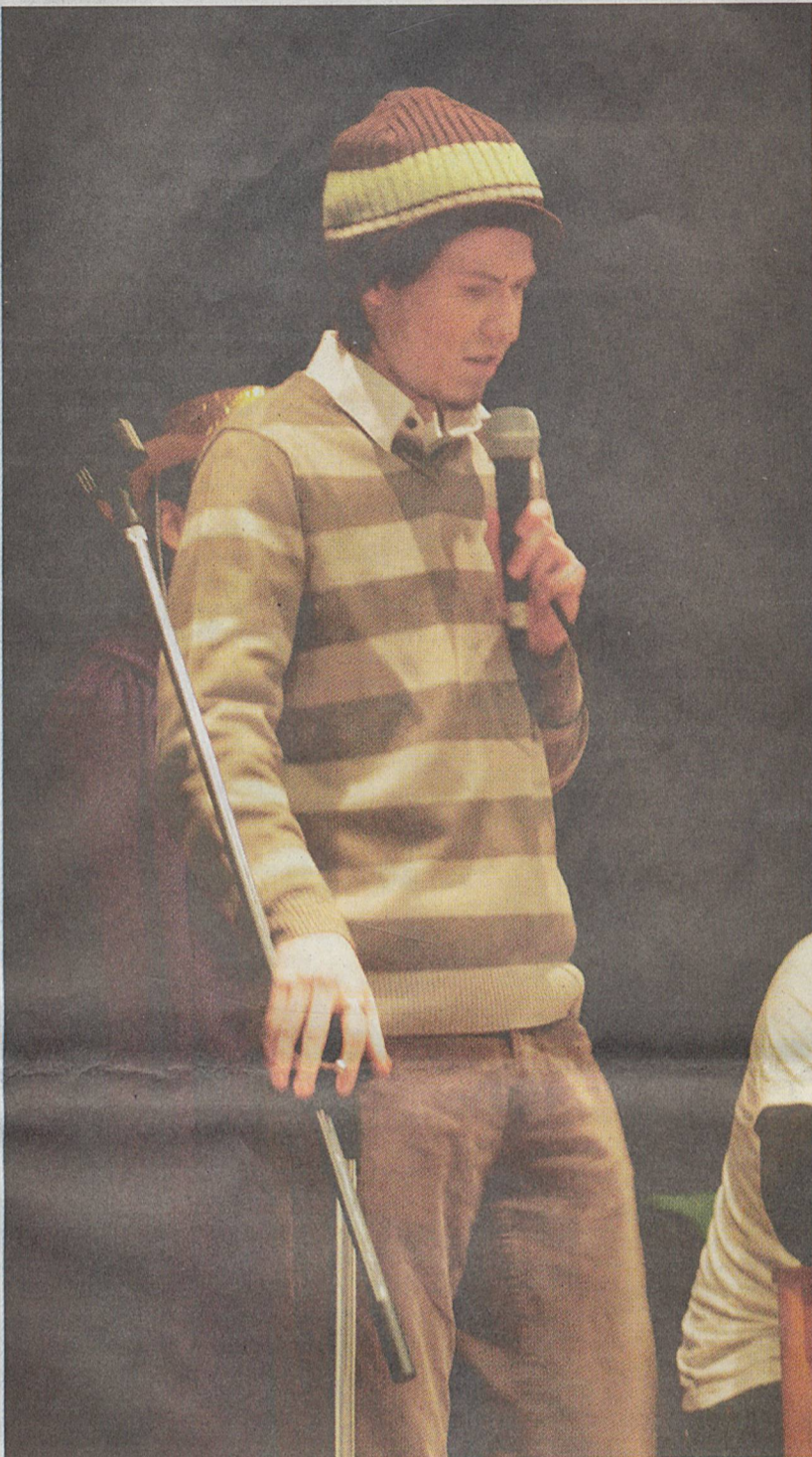
Controversial plans for the Trustee Board have also been ratified.

The powers of the board were limited by amendments after several NUS delegates expressed concerns about the ability of external officials to overrule NUS decisions.

According to the NUS, the power of the trustees has been restricted to "dealing with financial and legal matters." The trustees will be elected by the NUS delegates at annual conferences.

Students' Union Education and Welfare Officer Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang said that while he was against the reforms, "the NUS needs to stop looking inward, and start looking forwards, addressing the needs of the students they are elected to represent."

Anti-Racism officer comes under fire for occupation involvement



UGM dominated by aftermath of occupation and campus tensions

"I apologise for offence but won't back down from protest"

Marie Dunaway & Phyllis Lui

Students' Union Anti-Racism Officer Joseph Brown came under fire at the UGM and from an Executive Committee colleague for taking part in the occupation of the Old Theatre and for speaking in favour of a motion to condemn Israel.

Critics said that Brown's actions on the occupation resulted in a conflict of interest with his role as Anti-Racism Officer.

In his regular report to the UGM, Brown said that "I have worked tirelessly in my role as Anti-Racism Officer," adding that "being a Palestine officer is close to my heart." Brown is the public relations officer for the Students' Union Palestine society.

Brown said one of his first acts as Anti-Racism officer had been organising a recent joint event with the Israel and Palestine societies and the One Voice organisation to discuss peace in the Middle East.

Brown said that he had established friendships with the Israel and Jewish societies in his eight months as Anti-Racism

Officer. "I want to work with the Israeli and Jewish society in the future," he said.

"I have let them down and apologise for offence but won't back down," he added. "I won't stand for a government that persecutes a whole nation of people," he said, to applause from the floor.

In response to claims that he is unable to carry out his role as Anti-Racism Officer, Brown said that he was "constantly available online" and he had taken time off from the occupation to attend his office hour in Quad.

Brown said that the "occupation was positive" and did not mean to cause divisions on campus.

By the end of the week, Brown also faced criticism from Communications Officer Daniel Sheldon. Sheldon expressed concerns that Brown has been "compromised" in his role as Anti-Racism Officer and that "he has not been conscious of the views of Jewish and Israeli students."

Sheldon also said that Brown should take steps to address these concerns directly and that Jewish and Israeli students did not feel that he took the necessary steps to address their concerns in his UGM report.

Joseph Brown, the Students' Union's Anti-Racism Officer, said that taking part in the occupation of the Old Theatre had not conflicted with his official role. Zeeshan Malik

Higher Education & Research News

Serb defence minister
Serbian defence minister Dragan Sutanovac will be giving a talk at the LSE on Monday as part of his visit to the UK. It is reported that while he is in the country he will also sign an agreement on defence cooperation with Defence Secretary John Hutton.

Interview inconsistency
A reader of the Times recently commented that there appears to be an inconsistency between universities that accept students based on interview and those that don't. They felt it strange that someone "can be accepted into either Oxford or Cambridge and be rejected by Durham or the LSE".

Top up fees
Professor of Public economics Nick Barr has said that the cost of top up fees does not put people off higher education but that people decide not to go onto higher education because of poor exam results at earlier stages, such as GCSE.

Climate "overselling"
Lenny Smith, a statistics professor at the LSE, believes human activities are changing the global climate but that climate scientists are "overselling" their results and that some climate models are "uncertain".

Castro book
Emeritus Professor of Contemporary Spanish Studies Sebastian Balfour has just released his new book, 'Castro: Profiles in Power series'. The book offers reader, "the first full retrospect of Castro's remarkable career right up to his illness and withdrawal from power in February 2008."

UGM Events at this week's meeting



New UGM Vice-chair elected



Communications Officer Dan Sheldon announces a £30,000 budget for the new SU Website.



Motion Passed: "Vote in the EU elections, Stop the BNP"

Men's officer proposal rises out of Mr LSE motion ashes

Keiren Buchanan & James McGibney

A motion calling for the establishment of a Students' Union 'Men's Officer' will be submitted to the Union General Meeting this week.

The proposer of the motion, Olly Townsend had initially planned to resubmit a motion to mandate the Students' Union Women's Officer Ruby Buckley to demonstrate against the Mr LSE event. The motion had been withdrawn the previous week.

Townsend had promised to reintroduce the motion at next week's UGM and spearhead the protests. He said: "We'll fight to the death for LSE's objectified men".

However, late last week, Townsend decided to not resubmit the motion. He said: "Seeing as we don't want the event cancelled, and don't want to be too personal to Ruby, we aren't going to resubmit the motion, but however are going to submit a motion mandating the Union to appoint a men's officer and to organise an oppressed men's forum."

The initial motion to mandate Buckley to protest against Mr LSE was proposed by James Bacon and seconded by Chris Hare.

The motion declared that because Buckley "organised a protest on Miss LSE... denouncing its objectification of women", she should organise a protest against Mr LSE and use her status as Women's Officer to prevent the event taking place.

The motion maintained that "Mr LSE objectifies men," and Buckley "should con-



Graphic from the AU Calendar

sider the...objectification of men on campus more important than running a few sessions on moon cups", an apparent reference to her role in Women's Week.

Bacon and Hare demanded that "Louise Ruby Jennifer Buckley convene a meeting of all men on campus who feel objectified", "minute the meeting of objectified men", and "issue a formal apology to all objectified men" if she failed to do so.

The motion, however, was withdrawn at the eleventh hour because of Buckley's angry response. Bacon told the Beaver, "when we got news of how upset Ruby was, we decided to pull the motion. It was an amusing, tongue-in-cheek way to draw attention to the double standards of the anti -Miss LSE lobby. We never meant to cause offence."

Buckley said that "the whole issue rests on semantics. Women are and have

been objectified in many different ways as the object of the male gaze. Men have over the decades controlled the media, fashion, art, music and most other industries. Men have not been exploited in the same way, but they can still be objectified in others."

Buckley also took issue with the personal nature of the motion. "It implies an attack on me as it refers to my full name and not once to my official capacity as Women's Officer." She added: "if James had serious concerns I'm sure he would have raised them with me in person."

The Mr LSE competition is still set to take place in week four. "The AU Exec came up with the idea of Mr LSE as an amusing riposte to the sensationalism that surrounded Miss LSE," Tom Jackson, the AU Events Officer, said. "I'm just waiting for the LSE Men's Officer to make an official complaint," Jackson added.

Student reaction

Anger and apathy outnumber acclaim for 'new student movement'

After a week of turmoil on campus and the ending of the Old Theatre occupation, the Beaver has surveyed over 500 students on their views of the protest. The results indicate a strong lack of support for the student occupation, with 54% stating they do not agree, and a further 21% expressing that they do not know what to

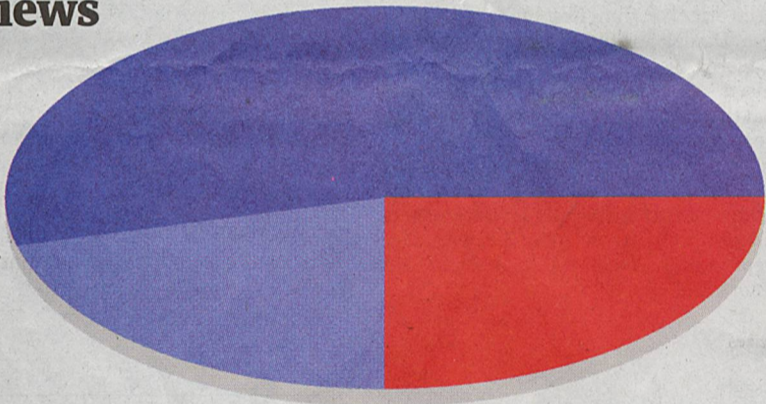
think. The large proportion of students not wishing to take sides could signify a general desire to make a distinction between the student protest and the conflict itself, or student apathy towards the Old Theatre occupation in particular.

Jonathan Damsgaard

54% of students disagree with the occupation

25% of students agree with the occupation

21% of students don't know what to think, are impartial or have mixed views



Analysis What did the protesters demand and what did they get?

Six days, six demands - behind the scenes of the occupation, protesters became involved in a complex negotiation process with the School, up until the final joint statement that officially ended the protest last week. The protesters' demands, and the negotiations that led to the final statement, are listed below.

Joseph Cotterill and Joe Rennison

Statement of condemnation

There is some confusion over what the protesters' first demand originally was. The occupiers called on the School to "release a statement condemning the Israeli attack on Gaza and demanding a ceasefire" in their original list of demands, and in flyers which were handed out to students on the Thursday the occupation began.

In an interview with activist video collective Reel News the next afternoon, occupation spokesperson Seph Brown said that the demand had been for the School to condemn attacks on educational institutions, including two UN schools and the Islamic University of Gaza.

In a letter sent that day responding to the protesters' demands, Howard Davies said that the School's Council had reiterated in December 2007 that LSE would not take a position in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Davies offered in this letter to make a personal statement on the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Responding to Davies in turn, the protesters said that LSE was "complicit in Israeli aggression because of its failure to issue a statement condemning it." They then proposed a compromise of Davies making his views "public in a personal capacity, rather than an official school statement."

Davies said in reply on Monday afternoon that he was "deeply distressed by the reports of conditions in Gaza" and that he believed that the integrity of scholarship should be respected wherever scholars or their institutions were threatened, or their lives were disrupted by conflict. Davies reiterated that he was content for his personal views to be known.

The protesters wrote to George Gaskell later that day. "As opposed to a statement condemning the attacks themselves we would be willing to accept the publication of a statement condemning the bombing of Gaza's Education infrastructure," the occupiers said. "The statement should be displayed on the front page of the LSE website," they added.

A personal statement from Howard Davies was included in the joint statement announcing the end of the occupation last Thursday. "Wherever in the world scholars or their institutions are threatened, or their lives are disrupted by conflict, I believe all parties should respect the integrity of scholarship and intellectual and academic freedom and should work to minimise suffering," Davies said.

Divestment

The original statement of demands released on Thursday 15 January said that "the LSE currently holds investments in BAE Systems, a firm that the Campaign against the Arms Trade states provides weapons and ammunition for the Israeli military." The protesters called on LSE to divest from BAE immediately.

Davies replied in his first letter that "the School has no direct investments in BAE, either in stocks or bonds." The School invested its own surplus in cash, he added. Davies said that LSE maintains some en-

dowment funds holding donations from outsiders, mainly to pay for scholarships, and that some of this money was invested in index funds, including for the most part a fund called Charittrak run by Barclays bank for charities.

This fund was indexed to equities, "which change all the time," he said. "Barclays have today confirmed that Charittrak fund does not hold any BAE shares," Davies added. A Council working group had been looking into ethical investment, he said.

In reply, the protesters said that Council documents showed the School held investments in BAE in March 2008. "We are concerned that the LSE could hold BAE shares once again in the near future," they added. "We wish to point out that the fact that BAE shares were held 'indirectly' by LSE through a tracker fund does not negate the ethical ramifications involved," they said. "We request a guarantee from the LSE that it will never allow its fund managers to invest LSE cash in BAE," the occupiers said.

In his further reply, Davies said that it would be wrong to "prejudge" the outcome of the working group's findings on ethical investment. The protesters said in their letter to George Gaskell that their concerns had been "sidelined". Council had been investigating investment strategy for four years, they said. The occupiers said they should be allowed to submit a statement to Council on the issue, and that Council votes on the matter should be held using a secret ballot.

The final joint statement said that a Council working group had been set up on socially responsible investment, and that it would be "content to receive proposals from the student body concerning divestment from companies implicated in the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian ter-

ritories". Students' concerns on ethical investment would be reported to Council, the statement added.

Scholarships

The protesters demanded five fully paid scholarships for Palestinian students on the day they occupied the Old Theatre.

Davies said in his first letter of response that Palestinian students were eligible for several external scholarships, one of which was exclusive to them. The School cannot make its own scholarships available on a national basis, as opposed to need, he said. "We have said that we will waive application fees for all students caught up in the current crisis," Davies added.

The applications fee waiver was extended to the West Bank on 19 January. In response, the protesters said that applications should be discussed among LSEPSI, the Students' Union Palestine society, the School's director of administration Adrian Hall and the Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

The final joint statement said that "a Palestinian Territories country page on the LSE website will detail all relevant scholarships and advertise pre-departure events for offer-holders" and that the Financial Support Office, ODAR, and the Palestine society would discuss recruitment strategy.

Fundraising

"The LSE administration should facilitate a 'fundraising day' where buckets will be in every lecture and seminar to collect money for the charity Medical Aid for Palestinians," the occupiers demanded in their original statement.

Davies said that he had "no difficulty"

about a MAP collection being organised in the School.

According to the joint final statement, "a high impact and widely publicised fundraising day in support of Medical Aid for Palestinians will be held, jointly sponsored by the Students' Union and the School".

Books and computers

Howard Davies said he "would personally have no problem" with old books and computers being sent to Gaza, the fifth demand of the protesters. The protesters subsequently demanded that LSE cover reasonable costs of shipping for the items. "If fee-paying students are asked to pay for the shipping of books and computers, the initiative will be unfeasible," an occupation statement said.

"The LSE will work with the students to exploit the disposal of books and computers either by School-funded direct shipping or through recycling companies that support charitable aims whichever is most beneficial," the final joint statement said.

Amnesty

The protesters' sixth demand was for an amnesty for the students involved on the occupation. Davies said no disciplinary measures were under consideration. "We aim to be a tolerant community and I cannot see any case for discipline," he said.

Online

Brown's Reel News interview
tinyurl.com/cy5paj (from 01.45)
School-occupier correspondence
tinyurl.com/apj44q

Other occupations Students across UK protest Gaza war



Since the occupation of the Old Theatre ended, students from universities around the country have been protesting and have held other occupations. The LSE occupiers gave messages of support and solidarity to these students: "We would encourage other students to take this sort of action and have the confidence to do so."

SOAS was the first university where students held an occupation. The occupation took place in the Brunei Gallery Suite. 20 students entered the gallery and locked themselves in on the 14th January. The occupation was sparked by the 'We Were There' exhibition by the Ministry of Defence in the Brunei Gallery. The exhibition highlighted the historical contribution of ethnic minorities to the British armed forces. The exhibition was removed within 24 hours and the occupation ended.

King's College London students have occupied a lecture theatre in their main Strand Campus in response to King's College Council's decision to award President Shimon Peres with an honorary doctorate. 40 students started the occupation on the 20th January. Their aims are similar to those of the LSE occupiers but also include the revoking of Peres' doctorate and the College issuing a formal statement condemning Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip, acknowledging particularly the effect on educational institutions. Students remain in occupation and are still planning programmes of activities and protest for the coming week.

Around one hundred **Oxford University** students declared victory after less than 24 hours in occupation of the historic Clarendon building at the Bodleian, Britain's largest university library. The occupation began at 12 noon and ended at 7pm on Thursday January 22, following negotiations with the Proctors of the University. Demands included that the university should release a statement in support of the right of Palestinians to education and its support to the Palestinian Academic community. The University should condemn in particular the attack on the Islamic University in Gaza.

Manchester Metropolitan University held an occupation that lasted just over a day, ending on Friday. Manchester Met Management Security had put a food blockade on the building where the occupiers were based, not allowing food and drink into the building.

Birmingham University students said they were laying "siege" to part of the campus' Arts Building for around 12 hours until they were forced to leave the room at about 9pm on Wednesday 21st. The University of Birmingham threatened to remove the occupants with force forewarning them that they would be in "breach of the peace" if they did not leave the building. Demands were similar to other universities and also asked for there to be a university Birmingham-Ramallah Twinning Initiative. Birmingham University was not prepared to condemn the actions of Israel as in original demands.

Other universities including **Cambridge, Essex, Sussex and Leeds** have also been in occupation. Demands have mostly asked for condemnation of attacks on Gaza's educational infrastructure, fundraising days for Medical Aid for Palestine, extra scholarships for Palestinian students and old university books and computers to be sent to Gaza educational establishments. As yet no UK university has openly condemned the attacks on Gaza by Israel.



Media Questions over Beaver editor's impartiality

Joe Rennison
Ali Moussavi

The executive editor of the Beaver came under fire last week when criticisms regarding the objectivity and accuracy of the the Students' Union newspaper were heard at last Thursday's UGM.

Joseph Cotterill gave his report at the UGM which was then followed by questions from the audience.

Particular concern was raised, over a letter printed in last week's paper. Part of the letter commented on a quote by one of the protesters who had likened Gaza to the Warsaw Ghetto. The letter writer said that "something about that comment just smacks of... latent anti-Semitism".

Audience members argued that the comment was libellous and that a front page apology should be printed in the next issue of the Beaver.

Cotterill and the Union's sabbatical officers have affirmed their view that the content was not libellous. As publishers of the Beaver, the Sabbatical Officers conduct a libel proof-reading of all content before the paper is printed.

Cotterill said that the letter was printed because it, "wasn't libellous. I took it to be fair comment and I took the European Union's rules on antisemitism into account."

"For now I'm confident that we don't need to apologise or make a retraction for the fair comment," he said.

Cotterill added that outside the official position of the paper on the issue he would make a personal apology to the protester if she had been offended by the letter.

Michael Deas, the Beaver's managing editor, did not edit the paper during the week of the occupation. A member of the audience who was also involved in the occupation asked why he had been "barred" from reporting.

Deas, who had also been involved in the occupation, answered this himself, saying, "the Beaver didn't ask me not to report. It was a decision me and Joseph made together."

Cotterill explained that Deas could not report "because he was on the occupation and in most media ethics it's highly wrong for someone who is on an event so highly to be reporting on it."

The front page of the Beaver last week consisted of two articles and one editorial, all of which reported on the protest and campus opposition to Israeli actions in Gaza.

"Why do all three pieces effectively have your name on it?" a student who had been involved on the occupation asked. "Do you think this is unbiased reporting?" the student continued, adding that Cotterill had previously "taken a very strong public stance calling people who want to divest from Israel ' Hamas's puppets'."

Cotterill was also accused of using The Beaver to advance his own views in the form of an editorial about the occupation and the motion written on the front page.

Cotterill said that "it shouldn't really matter who writes a news article," and that "the editorial was written by the editorial board as a whole." Cotterill pointed out that he had contributed to and not written one of the stories. The actual writer "incorporated my reporting from my website story earlier in the week - so that's why it's credited," he said.



He continued, "in reference to my activities last year, again I repeat that was last year... when I took on the role as executive editor I always knew I would have to minimise my political views."

Cotterill took part in a delegation of student journalists invited to Israel by the Britain and Israel Communications Research Centre, a press lobby group, in December 2007.

Cotterill's front page news article on the occupation of the Old Theatre by protesters received complaint because it "had statements from the school, from the Israel society, but not a statement from anyone in the occupation."

Cotterill responded saying that the article "incorporated your [the protesters] demands. I felt a direct quote wouldn't add anything to the actual news piece."

Criticism moved away from the reportage of the protests when Zoe Cooke, the Union's Societies Officer, asked Cotterill, "Why don't you ever report on anything the executive do which is good, like refreshers fayre?"

Cotterill apologised, adding that it was his intention to include an article on

the Freshers Fayre, however "the enormity of events this week" took priority over an event at which "nothing really happened."

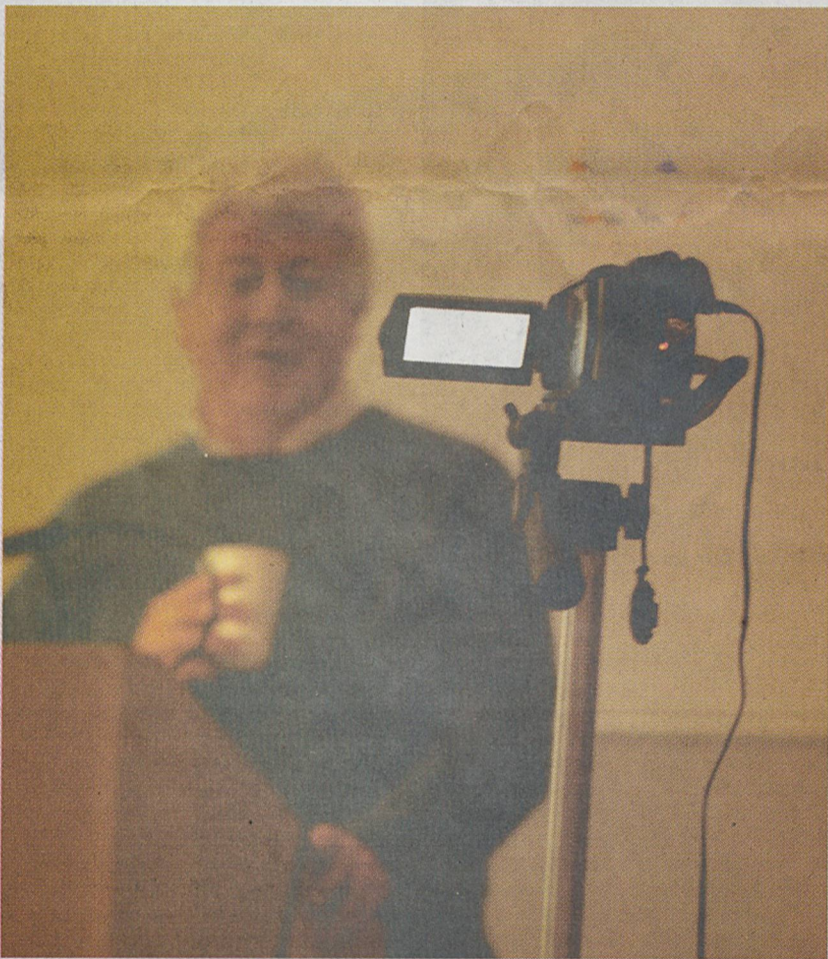
Helen Roberts, the Union's Residences Officer, said that the Beaver had "really, really misrepresented" her in a reported statement by her in the UGM article. The part of the article in question was removed from the website when she complained directly to Cotterill earlier in the week but the article still appeared, unedited, in the paper the next week.

Cotterill explained that there was "dispute whether we really had misrepresented you" among the editorial board and that the piece was originally removed from the website as a matter of "precaution" but was later deemed acceptable for print.

The chair of the UGM had to move proceedings on before all the audiences questions could be answered.

Similar criticisms were discussed when protesters and members of the occupation attended the Collective meeting of the Beaver later that evening. The collective is the electoral and decision-making body of the Beaver.

Battle of ideas joined at Islam lecture



Chun Han Wong

The ontological flaws of liberalism, claimed Islamic intellectual activist Hamza Tzortzis, are responsible for the breakdown of Western liberal societies.

Tzortzis, speaking at the Hong Kong Theatre last Friday, argued that liberalism's misplaced emphasis on the primacy of individual freedoms gave rise to social atomism, with highly undesirable consequences on social behaviour, economics and foreign policy.

Islamic political philosophy, he offered, would provide the effective justice processes and social cohesiveness that liberalism could not.

Tzortzis made these comments in his opening speech for the public debate entitled 'Islam or Liberalism: Which is the way forward?' The event, chaired by LSE pro-director Janet Hartley, was attended by over 100 students and members of the public.

LSE academic Dr Alan Sked, the opposing speaker, countered Tzortzis' arguments in an indirect manner.

The senior lecturer in international history framed his argument by assert-

ing, with references to the Koran, that the Islamic holy book was a "book of religious pluralism".

According to the Koran, he said, God wished for Muslims, Christians and Jews to compete in doing good. The notion of a singular religious community therefore runs counter to the wishes of God.

Sked then asserted that liberalism, with its emphasis on the protection of individual rights, would provide the best political framework under which the various religious communities could co-exist and flourish.

The event became confrontational during the questions and answers session. The majority of the audience questions were directed towards Sked, challenging various assertions he had made in his speech.

Tzortzis added more criticism, saying that he felt "patronised" by Sked, as he has failed to address the central premises of the debate.

Sked, however, dismissed Tzortzis' claim and countered that a debate need not be confined by the premises dictated by one side of the argument.



This week is LSE UN Week

Monday 26th: Debate Night - 6pm in NAB 2.04

Tuesday 27th: Mini Model UN - 6pm in H102

Wednesday 28th: Lecture by Sir Richard Jolly - 4:30pm in NAB 2.06

Thursday 29th: Networking Night - 6:30pm in the Shaw Library

Friday 30th: Human Rights Stories Movie Night - 6:30pm in NAB 2.06

TIMELESS: THE LSESU CULTURAL CHARITY SHOW

TIME
LESS

brought to you by
PRINCIPALS AND STUDENTS

TIMELESS
SHOW.

Sunday 1st
February 2009

19:30
Sadler's Wells Theatre
Rosebery Avenue
London
EC1R 4TN
Nearest Tube Station is
Angel (Northern Line)

18:30
Doors Open

Tickets: £15, £20, and £25

For tickets or more info
please contact Raj Mirpuri:

email: sales@lsetimeless.co.uk

mobile: 07939 259 585

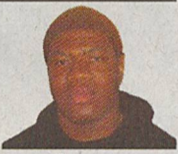
www.lsetimeless.co.uk

Comment

ID cards for students don't make us any safer

The flawed ID cards system is being forced on vulnerable groups. We must fight to stop it.

Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang
LSESU Education and Welfare Officer



The government believes it has a new weapon in its arsenal that will keep us safe, and aid it in the fight against terrorism. What better way to dissuade a suicide bomber from blowing up a bus or an underground train than... an ID card?

In December, the government quite suddenly announced that all non-EU students and marriage visa holders will be required to pay £30 for the privilege to obtain one of these cards and surrendering the information to the National Identity Register.

The problem with the ID card scheme is not only the card itself, but also the National Identity Register that the biometric data is stored on. The ID cards, the NIR and any reliance on single identity verification is costly, dangerous, and unnecessary. Ultimately and inevitably police will demand to see it when you are stopped, you will not be able to buy or sell in the UK without it and if you refuse to carry it you may find yourself behind bars.

Unfortunately, in the implementation of the scheme the government played on the lack of public sympathy towards foreigners and the country remained largely silent. Few cries of outrage were heard.

What many failed to notice is that this was intended to wear down those who opposed the move: to soften us up and normalise the concept of compulsory ID cards - first they came for the international students and I did not speak out, because I was not an international student.

Next on the list of targets is another vulnerable group in our society - students applying for their loans will soon be required to obtain an ID card.

As an international institution we owe it to international students and British students alike to not allow the government to target and use us as a pawn in its erosion of civil liberties.

Some have argued that those who are concerned with the scheme are merely paranoid and the cards are in effect no



Biometric information, such as fingerprints, will be stored on ID cards and the National Identity Register
Photo: flickr user manon.paradis

different many other accepted forms of identification such as, for example, our passports.

However, passports, as far as I'm aware, only contain a digital version of my passport photo and some other basic information. It doesn't contain my fingerprints, iris scan, DNA or what I had for tea last night, nor do I need to carry my passport everywhere I go, produce it on demand or use it to buy a loaf of bread from Sainsbury's.

On top of this, when they inevitably hand all of my information over to some absent minded intern who subsequently downloads it onto a USB stick and loses it on the bus, some criminal could know my life story. Our government has an awful track record for upholding people's personal privacy and implementing big IT projects.

So far the Home Office has managed to lose the information of 25 million child benefit claimants and their parents, the details of three million learner drivers, and it has misplace about eighty passports a month. So what are the chances of them losing our details? As if to add insult to injury, they want us to pay for the privilege.

Why on earth should we forego our civil liberties, surrender our biometric data and be forced to sign up to a database where all of us are reduced to a number and are at the mercy of Home Secretary Jacqui Smith's incompetence? What the government seems to have forgotten is that we are individual human beings and not their herd of cattle that can be branded and sorted as and how they choose.

Some on the continent may wonder what on earth the big deal is. They have had ID cards for years and it's about time we did too. But in fact we have had ID cards in this country before. During the Second World War the ID card was seen as a way of protecting the nation from Nazi spies. But in 1952, Winston Churchill's government scrapped the cards. The feeling was that in peacetime they simply were not needed. In fact they were thought to be hindering the work of the police, because so many people resented being asked to produce a card to prove their identity. This has not ceased to be true. If this scheme is to be fully realised then we will be subjected to the 'tap on the shoulder', commanded to verify our legitimacy. We will all be guilty until proved innocent.

Why on earth should we forego our civil liberties and be reduced to a number?

Although we now live in a stable liberal democracy, there is no guarantee of how this information will be used in the future. Although there are currently no plans for group classification there is no guarantee that the NIR will not be used for such purposes in the future. Group classification on ID cards or other official personal documents (passports, residence permits, etc.) force a person to be affiliated with a governmentally-defined group and expose persons to profiling and human rights abuses based upon their group identity. In times of crisis such classifications facilitate the targeting of persons on the basis of group affiliation, making individuals readily identifiable for possible detention, deportation, or death.

At the start of the process there was no serious discussion about the identity card scheme and a complete lack of engagement. This scheme needs to be dropped. And the government should develop a more coherent strategy around personal information use, which clarifies the links between how government will use personal information and the potential benefits or costs to individuals.

This will make me feel a lot safer.

The Union will be running a campaign against ID cards. There will be a planning meeting at 11:00 in room H616 on Thursday 29th January.

Excuses are no good

Howard's response to demands of LSE: Not for Profit demonstrate a lack of values

Joe Sammut & Sadia Kidwai

We welcome Howard Davies' apology in these pages for calling students 'loss making', but the way in which he dealt with the other concerns raised by the LSE: Not for Profit group show the importance of the campaign. The LSE has lost sight of its founding principles and the non-academic bureaucrats in charge refuse to listen to students' concerns.

Davies claims that it is "emphatically

not the case" that LSE's business ethos has caused a decline in research and teaching. While the results of the recent Research Assessment Exercise show that the LSE remains a top class research centre, results of teaching quality surveys and some of the testimonials submitted to our campaign show that teaching is a real concern that is not being properly addressed. Davies' attempts to ignore such concerns do not satisfy the students who contacted the LSE: Not for Profit campaign to say, "I have lost sleep over the last few days because my deep dissatisfaction with the LSE has forced me to consider withdrawing. I have thus far paid about £5,000 for a reading list, and I imagine that after a fur-

ther £10,000 I will be no better prepared to conduct primary research or enter the job market than I had been before I undertook this course."

So far the School has pledged £2.5m to improve teaching quality, but most of this money will go towards hiring the teaching staff necessary to keep up with dramatic increase in student numbers. Such investment will do nothing to address a culture in which research comes first, teaching second.

Davies spoke of the need to defend and uphold LSE's values. We agree entirely, but are somewhat surprised that the School is playing dirty in discussions over ethical investment and the Shiekh Zayed theatre.

Section 4.6 of a Council paper Dated 4th March 2008 states, "The School has no direct holding in equities, but will have indirect holdings through Barclays Global Investors in companies identified for divestment by Campaign Against the Arms Trade, particularly Rolls Royce, British Aerospace and Boeing." The Director has since denied that the School invests

in BAe, but has refused to clarify when the Barclays fund sold its BAe shares, reveal what other arms companies the tracker fund holds shares in or even acknowledge the March 4 Council meeting. That the School refused to issue regular updates on which arms companies its tracker funds invests in speaks volumes. They know that they were lucky that the tracker fund did not happen to hold BAe shares at the time at which they asked, and the fact remains that while the LSE does not have an investment policy based on divestment, its fund managers will invest in BAe and other arms companies.

On the Zayed theatre, Davies' claim that a code of ethics was applied is also misleading. Members of the committee responsible for sanctioning the commemoration of a dictator have confirmed that they were not aware of Zayed's record before approving the donation. What sort of code of ethics does not require those in charge of sanctioning a donation to be in command of the full facts before making such a decision?

Davies speaks of trade offs. While

nobody who supports the LSE: Not for Profit campaign would deny that tough decisions must be made if the LSE is going to remain a top class university, some of the trade offs currently being made are in the wrong direction. The School's Fabian values have lost out in favour of unabated and unethical fundraising practises. Services have lost out because of financial 'prudence'. Students are losing out at a University that no longer values them as the important part of the community that they are.

Over the coming weeks, Howard Davies and the LSE administration will attempt to mislead students, claim that the issues at hand are too complex for students to understand and deny the fundamental claim that the LSE has left behind its progressive, Fabian foundations. They will say that the LSE has not lost its sense of purpose and left students feeling ripped off. Four hundred signatures on a letter to be submitted to Howard Davies suggests otherwise, and the LSE: Not for Profit campaign will continue to fight for an ethical LSE that cares about its students.



The Beaver

Established in 1949
Issue No. 699

Telephone: 0207 955 6705 Email: editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Moving on from a turbulent start to term

Last week, the Beaver called for calm and closure to be restored on campus. In the wake of the Gaza war, Lent term had started in a highly politically charged atmosphere. We thought the message was so important that we put some of it on our front page.

The next seven days weren't exactly what we had in mind.

On the one hand, the atmosphere on campus has improved immensely. A turning point really was reached in the joint statement that was made by Professor Janet Hartley and the Students' Union's General Secretary Aled Dilwyn Fisher last Wednesday. And it is important to remember that LSE is still an overwhelmingly welcome campus in which to live and study. The events of a single week would never change that.

On the other hand, there is something wrong in the public conversation at LSE that we have seen before and has reared its

ugly head again. It is emphatically not the fault of any one side, either on the issue of the Gaza war, or the Israel-Palestine conflict, or between any student societies. The occupation that ended this week, and which was surrounded by so much anger and fear among students, did not cause this atmosphere, it is in fact just the latest symptom.

Last week this newspaper said that the occupation in the Old Theatre had already gone on too long to be effective or right any more. We do not think any better of it now, after its ending last Wednesday.

To be blunt, the Old Theatre occupation was leaderless, internally divided and far too confused in its demands. It outstayed its welcome even among some students who supported it from the outset, and support the principle of direct action when the need is grave and the authorities just will not listen otherwise.

The final joint statement that the occupiers eventually agreed

with the School is a testament to this ultimate failure, and it is emphatically not the victory that the protesters themselves have declared.

In the first place, the protesters chased a political statement from the School on the war for far too long, to no good end. They sought a statement that would have been deeply wrong for an international academic institution to have made, would never have been forthcoming, and would have added nothing to ameliorating the suffering Israel has unleashed on Gaza even if it had been secured.

Moreover, Howard Davies offered to make a personal statement on the war barely a day after the occupation began. Almost a week later, the protesters decided to accept a practically identical statement. There was nothing in this statement that warranted holding out for future concessions. This situation hardly made staying on in the Old Theatre for a second week proportionate or fair to

the students who were affected by the occupation. In the view of the Beaver's editorial board, this seriously undermines the occupation's legitimacy.

The protesters also manifestly failed to engage with the wider student population. The survey this newspaper publishes today surely reflects the divided state of campus opinion on the occupation itself, and the wider issues of war and peace that lie behind it. But it undeniably shows first of all significant dissatisfaction with the occupiers, and secondly a sizeable sector of student opinion that simply does not know what to think of the taking over of one of the most high-profile lecture theatres on campus.

Again, that only shows how divided campus has been under the surface for a long time.

These two failings are doubly disappointing because so many of the other demands would be agreed to by almost all students. We think, for example, that a fundraising day for Medical

Aid for Palestinians should be organised as soon as possible to take account of the devastation that has enveloped the unhappy territory of Gaza. It's important for all of us to remember that this campus is at the end of the day a small place, and whatever tensions that exist on it are nothing like what is currently going on in the region now.

Keeping current events on campus in perspective is one part of moving forward from the fug of accusation and counter-accusation that has almost drowned our Students' Union, and come very close to damaging the heart of the wider School community.

We should also let go of clinging to LSE's radical past as something to be emulated for its own sake. The protesters did have serious demands based on established grievances, even if this newspaper did not in the end believe justified the time and disruption that was generated to secure them.

In search of pragmatic solutions to conflict at LSE and beyond

We have to move beyond the history of the conflict and focus our energy on building a future

Michael Pelz



I would like to begin by stating quite openly that I am no expert on Middle East history. The subtle nuances and critical moments which have shaped this tortured region are all crucially important to understanding the antagonisms and hatred that continues to exist between Palestinians and Israelis. Yet, while history does provide us with explanations about where grievances arise from, looking to the past provides precious little advice about how to overcome the current impasse. Moreover, we cannot expect Israelis and the Palestinians to negotiate with each other if we cannot get along on our own campus.

Loosely throwing around accusations of Israeli genocide, or comparing Israel's actions to Nazis, or alternatively, viewing Hamas as an 'evil' terrorist organization shows how far we are from any lasting peace. If aspiring academics such as ourselves cannot detach ourselves from harmful ideological statements about good and evil, and feel the need to assign blame in a crisis with enough blame on each side to spread itself numerous times over, we are doing nothing to help resolve the problem.

To move forward, I suggest that we check our ideological predispositions at the door, and end the blame game. Pragmatic solutions are needed to begin a path towards peace, something which this region so desperately needs.

The current conflict was entirely unnecessary, but it is easy to see why it occurred. Every death, both Palestinian and Israeli, is a tragedy. To stop the conflict now, and prevent it from happening in the future, we must understand the precarious position Gaza sits in. Owing to the Israeli blockade, Gaza is not a viable political or economic entity. Rather, it resembles an overflowing refugee camp, which is all too



Photo: flickr user hoyasmeg

easily ignored by the outside world. We can debate indefinitely whether Hamas' rise to power was legitimate or not, but it nevertheless brought some semblance of order to strip, something which corruption-plagued Fatah had failed to accomplish.

The continuing blockade has paralyzed Gaza, and combined with endemic poverty and a lack of future prospects, provides a captive audience for Hamas' ideological warfare against Israel. However, if Hamas truly wanted to improve the living conditions for everyday Palestinians, or take the moral high ground which its advocates claim it has, it would renounce its goals of the destruction of Israel, and realise that firing rockets into southern Israeli towns is both shameful and prolongs the crisis. Quite rightly, Israeli citizens and politicians argue that no nation would indefinitely allow rockets to be fired into its towns and cities on a regular basis.

Israel also needs to be taken to task over its response to the rockets. First off, the leadership in Israel should have asked why the rockets were being fired in the first place. Is it because, as some argue, Hamas seeks to destroy Israel, or is it simply in response to the stifling blockade the Knesset imposes on the Palestinian people? Israel's response to rocket fire in Sderot or Ashkelon was entirely disproportionate to the destruction it has caused to the Palestinian people. Israel cannot seriously be supportive of peace if this war was designed simply to re-establish

its power of deterrence. Crucially, by causing such massive casualties, the trust needed between Israelis and Palestinians to achieve peace agreement has been shattered. Is Israel really serious about wanting peace, or will it only accept peace when it holds all the cards?

That being said, it must be recognised that Israel has a legitimate right to exist, which is something that Hamas needs to acknowledge. Its legitimacy would be improved, moreover, if it returned to its original borders, a key Palestinian demand. However, debating the legitimacy of the Israeli nation-state, which some Palestinian activists continue to do, is time wasted. If we feel that it is necessary to critically review the way Israel came about, blame shifts quickly to the West, and why there needed to be a Jewish state in the first place. Those discussions do nothing to resolve the current conflict, and only create more tensions.

Surely it is more appropriate to stop using historical arguments, or ideological positions, to assign blame to the current conflict. Rather, we must look at the future. Palestinian groups must make it abundantly clear that they are not calling for destruction of Israel, but rather are criticising the unnecessary use of force in this conflict. Questioning the legitimacy of Israel only provides hawks in the Israeli cabinet with more reason to launch attacks.

Ideally, the easiest way to bring

If we cannot detach ourselves from ideological statements about good and evil, and feel the need to assign blame in a crisis with enough blame on each side to spread itself numerous times over, we are doing nothing to help resolve the problem.

about an end to this conflict is through confidence building measures between Israel and Gaza. Israel needs to feel secure within its appropriate territorial boundaries, and has the right, as does every other nation, of relative normalcy within its borders. This security will not be reached so long as it continues to prevent the West Bank, and especially Gaza, from becoming viable political, economic, and social entities.

Furthermore, invading Gaza, while it may have temporarily stopped the rocket fire, does not address what caused the rockets to be fired in the first place. Similarly, Hamas must show the world that it truly wants peace, and not engage in reckless attacks against Israel, knowing well what the response will be.

Finally, the various positions taken by advocates on our campus are unfortunate. The vigil for those killed in Gaza was heartfelt and moving, but the highly-politicised occupation of the Old Theatre only rose tensions further. The Palestinian students association motion which failed to mention the rocket attacks, or Israeli groups that refuse to be critical of the Olmert government indicate just how entrenched and distant the two sides are from cooperation.

At LSE, as a school founded on promoting human rights, we must condemn the invasion, but crucially, also the rockets. If our own student organizations cannot cooperate, there little chance that political leaders in the Israel-Palestinian conflict will feel the need to either.

Debates must focus on ideas, not identity

Confusing criticism of a government with its people stifles debate

Peter Barton



In order for future debates on the Israel-Palestine conflict to be productive, and for relations on campus to relax, we need to be able to distinguish between the actions of a government and the students and citizens of that nationality, ethnicity or religion.

We must do this firstly to make our stand against racist acts clear. Secondly, we need to stop students creating a feeling of intimidation by wrongly claiming that criticism of Israel's actions is directed against Israeli and Jewish students. Thirdly, we need to allow legitimate debate of government actions, without the discussion deteriorating into a racial divide. A person's standpoint on any issue should be decided by their opinion - not by their religion or ethnicity.

A lot of the recent debate on campus around Israel and Palestine has been focused on a statement criticising the Israeli

government's actions in Gaza, which has been interpreted as being directed against Israeli or Jewish Students at LSE. The implicit claim is that they are indistinguishable. This is clearly not the case.

Everyone makes judgments about the actions of states all the time. This opinion is not determined by race, especially not for those people lucky enough to be educated at LSE. Instead, it is a choice you make, and one that you can change at any time. This is why so many Israelis were able to join the march in London against Israel's actions in Gaza. Their opinion was not defined by their nationality - something which is essential in a democracy. So a criticism of a state's actions is not a criticism of their people, as each person has the option to agree or disagree with that critique irrespective of nationality. Disagreements on a state's policy are no different than any other political disagreements. It is important to realise that the criticism may not have been made on the basis of race.

This issue is further complicated in the case of Israel. Some people do not see any difference between criticisms of the state of Israel and antisemitism. In an article in the Guardian on 16 January, Elisabeth Wurtzel dismissed the distinction as "false", claiming that since Israel is

"the only [Jewish] homeland", any critique of it equates to criticism of Jews - to racist antisemitism. By the same logic, any critique of, say, statements from the Vatican, should be seen as racist criticism of Catholics. If we are antisemitic in criticising the heavy hand of the Israeli government and military in Gaza, logically we would be anti-Palestinian when criticising Hamas's rocket attacks and targeting of civilians. Yet virtually no-one in the West would make such a claim, and it would be harmful to do so.

So why is it harmful to blur the distinction between nationals and their government? Firstly, this is the same premise used to justify antisemitism, nationalist xenophobia and terrorist attacks, which we can't condone. The moment you start equating criticism of individuals with criticism of their states you stop seeing them as individuals and start blaming them collectively. This is something we must stand against. However, this works both ways - individuals should not take criticism of their government as a direct attack on their nationality or religion. We must also allow actual complaints against governments to be voiced effectively, to stop extremists hiding behind legitimate complaints against a state in order to commit acts of anti semitism or racism.

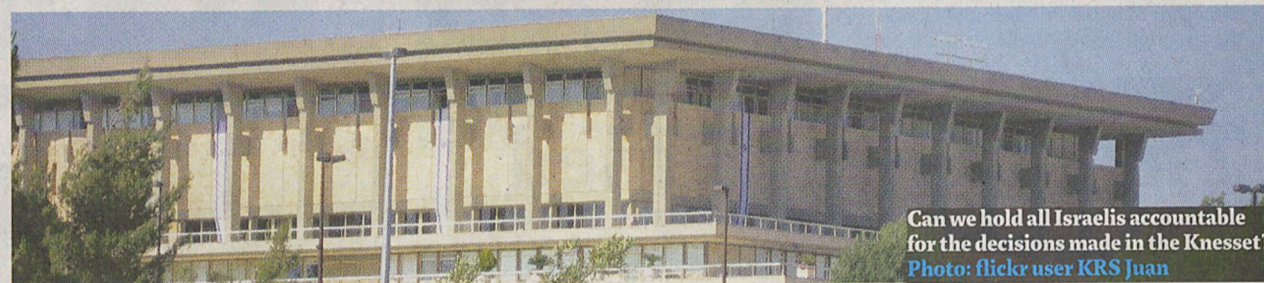
Secondly, to claim that criticism of the Israeli government's actions is criticism of Jewish students wrongly makes them feel threatened. The motivations of the motion at the Union General Meeting two weeks ago, however badly worded it was, were to make a statement condemning an action that they thought was wrong. It was a political message, not a racial, national or even antisemitic one. This has been misrepresented by groups at LSE. When you tell people that a motion is motivated against them they will feel threatened by it, when in reality no harm is meant to them. This is not to deny that there have been incidents at LSE. But this was not the intention of most of people who voted for the motion, rather the actions of small minority. They are not condoned by anyone on the campaign. We should not let these incidents overshadow or devalue the points made by the motion and occupation of the Old Theatre.

Thirdly, there are useful debates that can come from this topic, but they are hidden due to the polarising nature of claims being made. Taking a certain viewpoint is not a criticism of a certain ethnicity or group of students. The political nature of the student body is one of the best experiences an LSE education can give you. The students body's diversity gives everyone

a unique opportunity to understand why others hold different viewpoints. This is why raising the issue of Palestine is so important: it forces people to think about this terrible conflict. We lose this opportunity if people think they have to defend their nationality rather than their opinion - because then you can't understand other perspectives, and dialogue soon degenerates into abusive yelling. We need to discuss the issues, not ethnicities.

The LSE Students' Union has taken stances during the both the world wars, on slavery, apartheid, Rhodesia, Burma, Sudan and even the war in Iraq. The Union has stood against actions that the majority of students think are wrong. Equally, as a very international institution, it seems that we will always have students from those countries concerned at LSE. But it would have been a shame if we had said we would keep silent on apartheid simply because we had South African students. Just because we say an action is wrong does not mean our silence condones others, as is obvious in the case of Hamas rocket attacks. The Union is democratic, and anyone can pass any motion they want.

We should not inhibit debate because there are different perspectives - that is the very reason for having debates.



Can we hold all Israelis accountable for the decisions made in the Knesset?
Photo: flickr user KRS Juan

Letters to the editor

Concern over claims in last week's letter

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to the letter from Ariel Rubin last week, in particular regarding the comments that were made in the letter about my friend. Firstly I would like to say that my friend is a lifelong UAF (Unite Against Fascism) campaigner and internationalist, and to accuse her of racism of any kind is an injustice beyond description in words. Secondly I would like to level the opinion that maybe it is you who is being latently prejudiced by throwing around such severe accusations as anti-semitism so lightly; my friend is by no accounts an anti-semitic.

I am also worried that the Beaver throws around the names of students so lightly in a time when welfare is supposed to be of utmost importance. It seems hypocritical to offer anonymity to some students at request, and then to publish a letter regarding a student, voicing a controversial accusation (that may put that student's welfare at risk), without consultation.

Yours,

Mark Twyford
BSc '10

Fim Kryt
BSc '10

Integrity of the occupation

Dear Sir,

The occupation of the old theatre for one week was a momentous occasion and hopefully a revival of student activism they may or may not necessarily relate to us. Many have compared it to the protests against Apartheid South Africa seen in the LSE. Though the comparisons are positive and we are glad that our occupation has led to many other universities taking the same stance, we must not get lost in the novelty. Many students have opened the doors of the old theatre to take peeks at us during the week. We urge those who didn't come in when we invited them to, or have only heard about the occupation not to get lost in this idea that those taking part in the occupation are left wing radicals or naive idealists doing it for the student experience. Our aims are clear, as our reasoning behind them legit. Many may have seen it as a publicity stunt, thinking we are hoping to achieve some sort of butterfly effect and change the situation in the Middle East. Though

we are happy that 16 other universities have joined in, I reiterate that we had specific demands that were realistic and yet substantial, which included sending old books to Palestine and divestment from arms companies. Too long have we rested on the excuse that we have no power to change a situation far away, but I hope that our occupation of the Old theatre demonstrates that we should do what we can when we witness great crimes against humanity.

Rawan Abdulla

Supporting the occupier's victory

Dear Sir,

We would like to express our unconditional support for the victorious occupation of the Old Theatre by the LSE community in solidarity with the plight of the Palestinians. We understand that hundreds of students, staff and academics gave their support to the occupation at various points throughout the week and reignited the revolutionary tradition of international solidarity and direct action at LSE and across the UK.

Whilst the recent atrocities committed by the Israeli state have brought renewed attention to the inhumanity of the Occupation, the systematic denial of the Palestinian right to education goes back decades. For this reason it is all the more important that LSE waives application and deferral fees for anyone born or resident in the Occupied Territories, as it has now agreed to do.

We welcome this position and congratulate those principled students who facilitated the militant and democratic direct action that has brought about this agreement.

In solidarity,

James Caspell

Ziyaad Lunat

Co-Founders, LSE-Palestine Solidarity Initiative
LSE Students' Union Honorary Students
Former Members LSE Court of Governors



Photo: Zeeshan Malik

AU calendar was a good cause

Dear Sir,

This is a response to the letter written by Ariel Rubin entitled "The Beaver's poor reporting". Mr Rubin commented that maybe the paper should focus their reporting on issues like 'the volleyball team posing naked for a calendar', implying that this is a 'tabloid' type story. I'd just like to point that the naked calendar was organised by a diligent, conscientious student who wished to contribute to the annual raising and giving event organised by the students union. Trivialising her efforts is, in her own words, "embarrassingly reductionist". This is also a student issue which should, in my opinion, be the focus of a student run newspaper. Let's leave the global conflicts to the professionals who themselves struggle to always give a fair and balanced view. In addition it should also be noted that no volleyball team members actually posed for the calendar. From this fact I shall assume that Mr Rubin has never in fact read the sports section of the paper so is about as well placed to comment on its content as Estelle Cooch was to cite the scene of a Warsaw ghetto. The phrase 'pot calling the kettle black' comes to mind.

Sam Tempest Keeping
BSc '09

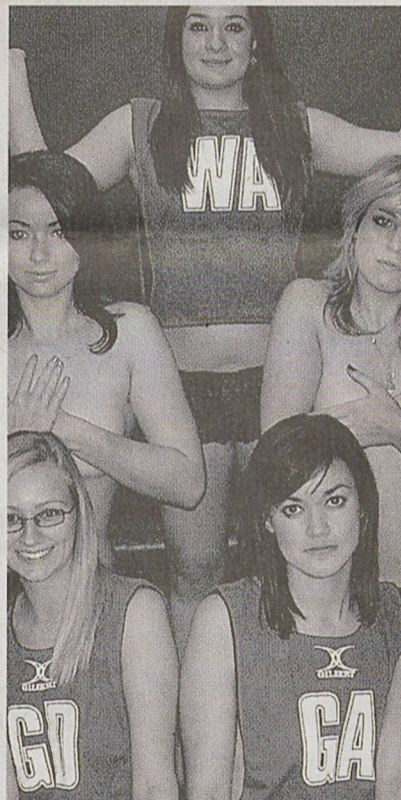


Photo: Erik Lang

Focus on teaching quality

Dear Sir,

Louisa Clare Evans provided a thoughtful discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of seminar versus lecture and class teaching in The Beaver last week ('More Time for Seminal Studies'). Most of her comments are based on observation of the International History Department and we hope Louisa will feed her views into our staff-student liaison committee.

The Department's experience is that lectures remain an efficient method of providing information and a framework for interpretation, and for this reason we use them in our larger survey courses as a groundwork for classes and for written assignments. Seminars work best for more specialized teaching, and they are the norm for all of our third-year and Masters' courses. We keep our teaching arrangements under regular review, and

we will, for example, be taking part this term in a pilot project on revised feedback procedures organized by the School's new Teaching Committee.

The Department has a convention that all its permanent members of academic staff should do undergraduate class teaching. In addition we use GTAs, all of whom have to attend training sessions organized by the School and the Department before they can give classes. We pay close attention to the student surveys of class teaching and these suggest that our GTAs are performing well. In the Michaelmas Term survey our undergraduates were asked to rank their satisfaction with the class teaching for their courses on a scale from 1.0 (very satisfied) to 4.0 (not at all satisfied). The average satisfaction rating for GTAs in International History was 1.63.

Yours sincerely,

David Stevenson
Head of International History Department

The Beaver's biased reporting

Last week's coverage of events on campus was not good enough

Khadijah Asaria &



Aliabbas Virani



It was the straw that broke the camel's back. Having read the Beaver throughout our time at the LSE, we knew that its journalism did not have The Times quaking in its boots. However we did expect balanced, unbiased coverage of campus issues. Last week's coverage of the occupation of the Old Theatre lacked balance, creating in print a reality that did not exist on campus.

The occupation of the Old Theatre

was an issue that divided individuals on the LSE campus but the Beaver's coverage was decidedly one-sided. There were numerous quotes from students opposing the occupation in an article entitled "Occupation faces backlash" and mention was made of an anti-occupation petition.

Where were the quotes from the supporters of the occupation? Why did the Beaver not make any mention of the petition organised to support the occupation? We do not expect the Beaver to take a political stance, because it is not the role of a student newspaper to try and influence its readers politically. However, it is most definitely the role of the newspaper of the Students' Union to report on all issues pertaining to campus, particularly those that excite such strong opinions on both sides of the debate, in a mature, informed and fair manner. Last week the Beaver failed to do this.

Journalists, like most of us, do have personal opinions about political issues. However these opinions should be kept just that - personal. The Beaver should not

be allowed to become the soap box from which individual reporters can peddle their own opinions, principles and beliefs. This is the Students' Union newspaper, and should therefore represent the views of all students on campus regardless of their political or national affiliation. Views that disagree with those of the editor and the editorial team should have equal coverage in the newspaper. We do not read the Beaver in order to discover the opinion of the Executive Editor, Joseph Cotterill, on the conflict in Israel and Palestine. If we wanted to know this, we would have an in-depth conversation with the man himself. How very unfortunate, therefore, that the editor who strongly supports one party in the conflict should decide to write two of the three articles on the front page - with the third article being an editorial. If that is what the Beaver considers to be balanced reporting, we'd like to see what it considers to be unbalanced reporting.

The Beaver's coverage of the occupation did not include any direct quotes from any of the occupiers, or supporters of the

occupation - not one. At the same time, there was a veritable barrage of direct quotes against the occupation - with one in particular, taken from a senior member of the Israel Society, being repeated over and over again. In our opinion, this fact simply serves to highlight a style of reporting which so utterly distorted the truth that it appears as though the editorial board were reflecting last week's events off the back of a spoon. Whatever flimsy excuses are served out in generous portions to critical students for this editorial mishap, the fact remains that it is not the standard of reporting we would expect. Particularly from a student newspaper that professes to model itself more on The Guardian than on the Daily Mail.

We did not actively participate in the occupation, but we did support it. Those who took part were the people on campus who were most willing to stand up to the LSE administration and to insist on human rights for everyone - whether or not they own a hedge fund. They risked disciplinary measures and a confronta-

tion with the police, were the School to have moved to get an injunction to eject trespassers from its property. For the Beaver to berate the accusers for disrupting lectures and allow these students to be tarred with accusations of extremism and antisemitism is rich when educational institutions in Gaza are being bombed and the student activists themselves are open to punishment by their own institution. These brave students didn't hide behind false names, notwithstanding.

So how is it that our student newspaper, a paper that is supposed to be run with our money, for our interests, can report in such a way that we should feel uncomfortable doing what we believe to be right just because the editorial board doesn't agree with us? We have to wonder whether the paper is being run for students like us at all, or whether it is simply a vehicle for the self gratification of the editors themselves. Whatever the case, we've finally lost faith in this age old LSE institution. George Bernard Shaw; we hope you're not watching.



Photo: Erik Lang

Features



Refugees fleeing from Kibati towards the provincial capital Goma, after hearing shots being fired in the distance
Flickr user Julien Harneis

Putting Congo back on the radar

Chiara Bartoletti laments the negligence of the international community towards the DRC

The Israeli offensive in Gaza, Obama's inauguration and his policies and priorities. The news coverage and media commentary are inundated with reportage and speculation over these issues, but perhaps unfairly at the expense of other equally, if not more, deserving matters.

One of the world's worst humanitarian crises is unfolding in the Democratic Republic of Congo without arousing the massive media coverage that it deserves. The lack of international attention is fostering a permissive environment for the perpetuation of the crisis.

Nicholas (last name withheld for professional reasons), who works for a leading NGO in North Kivu, related to me his frustrations with this media silence on the situation in the Congo.

"There was a lot of media coverage back at the end of October and beginning of November when the CNDP (National Congress for the Defence of the People) was only a few kilometers away from Goma," he said. "It was certainly one of the first times since the conflict started in 1997 that it was making international headlines."

"The international interest did not last long and when it vanished, the media coverage followed and the vast majority of journalists and reporters left the country," lamented Nicholas. "I think the media coverage is terrible compared to the gravity of the situation on the ground and it is a pity that the Congolese conflict seems to have no media appeal at all."

The DRC story began in the 1880s, when King Leopold II of Belgium took the reins over the lands initially known as the Congo Free State. It took over 70 years of struggle and turmoil before the country became independent in June

1960. The process quickly descended into political and social chaos – secessionist challenges, assassinations, coups and counter-coups and foreign interferences in the domestic politics of what had become the Republic of Congo.

In 1965, General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu seized power and laid the groundwork for a totalitarian regime. His rule over Zaire (renamed as such in 1966) was characterised by corruption and the systematic exploitation of the country's natural resources. After thirty-two years of economic mismanagement and kleptocracy, Mobutu was finally ousted by Laurent Kabila in 1997. Unfortunately, the change of leadership brought neither peace nor stability to the country.

From 1998 to 2003, the DRC was involved in a regional conflict with Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola, during a period described as "Africa's world war". Since 1999, the United Nations has deployed the largest peacekeeping mission in its history to the DRC, while the European Union has also contributed extensively to the stabilisation process. But the fruits of these efforts have yet to be realised.

Although the war technically ended in 2003, the violence and bloodshed persists. The conflict in North Kivu stems mainly from the 1994 Rwandan genocide, in which many of the current actors were involved. The belligerents include Tutsi rebels (CNDP) led by General Laurent Nkunda, Rwandan Hutu rebels of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Mai Mai, a pro-government Congolese militia. In the north-east the Lord's Resistance Army, a Ugandan Christian sectarian militia under the command of Joseph Kony, are perpetrating a wave of atrocities as well, resulting in the displacement of about

100,000 people.

Another shocking fact about the conflict in DRC is the widespread use of child soldiers. "All the armed actors in the conflict, whether the regular Congolese army, rebel groups or self defense groups, have in the past recruited children and are all believed to be still doing so," said Nicholas. "Children as young as 10 are being abducted by rebel armed groups and forced to join them."

The conflict has burgeoned into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. 5.4 million people have died from war-related violence, disease and hunger since 1998. According to International Crisis Group, more than a thousand people still die everyday. The tragedy of this conflict is perhaps matched only by its complexity; a three-dimensional conflict involving international actors, state and sub-state groups and neighbouring countries. There is also another dimension to the conflict. The different factions are trying to gain land, and vie for the natural resources for which the DRC is known – gold, diamonds, oil and minerals. Ethnicity is also at play, as forces are generally aligned along Hutu and Tutsi lines.

Since 20 January, Rwandan troops have operated in North Kivu with the consent of the Congolese authority to help disarm the FDLR, but the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC) is not involved in this operation. It appears that many armed groups have joined the regular Congolese army and that some men of General Nkunda have given up their arms. Prospects of peace may have received a timely boost with the capture of General Nkunda last Thursday during a joint Congolese-Rwandan operation. However, the road towards a lasting resolution to the fighting remains a long and hard one, as other armed groups are still active,

5.4 million people have died from war-related violence, disease and hunger since 1998

while the plight of internally displaced persons (IDP) worsens.

Nicholas tells me that the situation within IDP camps around Goma is increasingly worrying. There is currently an urgent need for food, after the World Food Program's reduction of rations by half since May due to the rise in food prices. A range of problems have arisen from this shortage. People try to make money through prostitution or hazardous labour, just to be able to buy some food, and children are involved as well. In addition, armed soldiers regularly penetrate into the camps, even though they are not allowed to. Some of them proceed on drunken rampages, raping the refugees or looting the camps.

Precious humanitarian aid is also denied to many within the Congo due to the lack of access to certain areas of the country where people desperately need help. With territory comparable in size to Western Europe and a population of roughly 60 million people, the DRC suffers badly from poor transport infrastructure. Worse still, humanitarian agencies are also unable to work in areas where the conflict is still going on due to the lack of security provision.

The situation is dire, and Nicholas can only hope that the rest of the world pays more heed to the plight of millions in central Africa.

"Hundreds still die every day in the Kivus," he said. "From violent death, hunger, or disease, most of them preventable."

"It is the deadliest conflict since World War II and it should never be forgotten or reduced to a couple of lines in the back of a newspaper, no matter what else is happening in the world, whether it is in Gaza or Washington DC."

COLD CAMPUS, SOLITARY SOULS

**DEVIKA MENON AND
CHUN HAN WONG**
WONDER IF THE LSE
IS TRULY SOULLESS



Photo from the Beaver archive

Socialist, careerist, hedonist?

Social or academic life, campus or city experience, **Devika Menon** says it's all about trade-offs

Getting accepted into the LSE is a big deal. In fact, where I come from, it is huge. The reactions I get are varied, but almost always one of subtle admiration. Eyebrows are raised, names of famous alumni are dropped, and people automatically assume you are one of the cleverest people in the world.

Indeed, the LSE has a reputation for producing respectable, if not outstanding, graduates; heads of state, rock stars, Nobel laureates and what not. Unfortunately, this esteemed reputation does not extend to the, perhaps non-existent, social scene at the university. When asked about their opinions on social life at the LSE, most people would pull a face, give an exasperated laugh and begin comparing it to other universities, or simply say "it's shit". There is surely a marked contrast between the two reactions. Does the competitive nature of our students interfere with their ability to enjoy the university experience and appreciate the diversity they are exposed to in one of the most cosmopolitan educational

institutions in the world?

Some would say so. The terms 'LSE sharks' and 'investment wankers' have been affectionately thrown around to emphasise students' career-oriented focus and hard work. Despite these rather harsh words and perhaps inaccurate stereotypes, there is still no denying that students at the LSE work far more and relax far less than those at the vast majority of other UK universities.

Still others believe that socialising in this university occurs at a rather superficial level. A second year undergraduate believes it is more about 'convenience, self interest and the sake of networking' than for genuine interest in the other person. According to some, socialising at the LSE is all about networking and finding a framework for future contacts.

Many students attribute LSE's deficiency in social life to its lack of a contained, sprawling campus that can be found in other cities around the country. Missing out on a true 'campus experience' is a disappointment voiced by those

Ultimately, your university experience is what you make of it

who have been to visit other universities which do have them. They feel that the congregation of the entire student body in the same area contributes to the unity of the school and provides an ideal ground for socialising. The LSE campus, while ideally located at the centre of London, hardly promotes social interaction between fellow students or those who stay at the various halls of residence which are scattered across the city. This is perhaps the unavoidable reality of studying in a city campus, and there might be a trade off between enjoying a city as exciting and cosmopolitan as London and a more 'homely', contained campus life.

Of course, this opinion is not shared by everyone. There are those who love the social life at the LSE. Those who think our lack of a proper campus is more an advantage than a loss and genuinely believe that if you are looking to have a good time, you have to make it happen for yourself. Some enjoy the relative disconnection of the LSE experience and enjoy tailoring their social activities to their individual preferences; not having a

ubiquitous campus life forced down their throats. There is no dearth of societies to join and events to attend, no shortage of people to talk to, and of course there is the all-unifying, drunken mess that is Crush (Fresh). Ultimately, your university experience is what you make of it.

As much as we like to whine about all that the LSE cannot offer us, the fact of the matter is that a degree from this School is worth a lot more than one from most other campus universities. This comes at a price.

After the first year, the focus for a lot of students turn to career options, internships and a giant workload that never seems to ease. For the lucky few that master the art of time management, the LSE is the best place to be – a prestigious institution in the heart of London with no shortage of things to do. For the rest of us who don't, as a very good friend of mine wisely said: it's all about delayed gratification!

What do you think of social life at the LSE?

The potential is there for a great night life, but the nights offered by the LSE are too repetitive and don't engage the entire student population.

Jack Fellows
First-year BSc Government and History

I just don't think there's much of a feel of community on campus. The campus feels like an American graduate school campus where people are there for classes and go home at night - there's no urge to hang around.

Christopher Lamy
General Course, Economics

The social environment is diverse but people generally don't make an effort to go beyond their course or an initial group of friends. It might be due to the international nature of the School - people need time to adjust.

Jia-Chuan Kwok
Third-year BSc Government and History

It can sometimes feel difficult to like-minded people, but for those who get actively involved in societies and sports, I don't think the LSE is that cold a place at all.

Rajan Patel
Third-year BSc Economics

The LSE's social life varies. Student nights can be fun if people make the most of them!

Lishan Tham
Third-year BSc Geography with Economics



Photo from the Beaver archive

The cold wars within our walls

Chun Han Wong offers an explanation for the chilly social environs along Houghton Street

“This place is just cold.” It was just about freezing out on Houghton Street, in midst of a wintry

December evening. The sun had long set, leaving us staring at our own misty white breath, punctuated by puffs of cigarette smoke and modest sips of cheap alcohol.

“No one talks to each other, and if they do, they just want to know which bank or internship you’re going for.”

I quickly realised that my acquaintance had not been stating the obvious about the miserable weather and offered a meek smile in agreement. Indeed, up to that point, I still wasn’t quite sure who she was, having drifted between conversations and kept a pensive silence most of the time.

“No one says ‘hi’ when you run into them again,” she continued, “or even remembers your name.”

I contemplated asking a friend beside me to save my embarrassment. But I kept my cool and played along. With quick wits and a little finesse, I steered the conversation towards safer ground. Insofar as a contentious discussion on South Africa’s post-Apartheid troubles could be considered as such.

Despite surviving this perilous episode with my pride intact, the close brush with public humiliation nonetheless left me shaken yet intrigued by Fiona’s resounding insights (I learnt my lesson and her name quickly). A pressing question has remained with me since: why are unsociable individuals in such abundance within our School?

With over 8,000 brilliant minds hailing from a myriad of cultures enmeshed in a small academic domain famed for intellectual enquiry and progressive discourse, surely one can expect from the LSE a tightly-knit student community, bonded in mind and boisterous in spirit. Solidarity in ambition, specifically lucrative careers in investment banking, should have gone a long way in fostering a sense of identity and belonging.

But alas, herein lays the catch. To get

ahead and break into the hallowed halls of high finance within the City, one must not be averse to toe-treading or even outright hostility. If all is fair in love and war, then the LSE, replete with austere concrete facades, might just be the Alamo. No quarter is asked, and none is given.

Controversial as this may be, I hazard a telling comparison with our auld enemies at Oxbridge. With an epic blood feud dating back into the remote recesses of history, namely the Thirteenth century, Oxonians and Cantabrigians have an established outlet for their youthful angst and bold ambition. The individual trials and tribulations of mind and body are institutionally externalised into this legendary rivalry and embodied in a collective abhorrence of the Other, with the annual Boat Race and Varsity Match providing ample opportunity for cathartic release.

On the contrary, we Londoners suffer from a dearth of inter-varsity contest. In truth, King’s, UCL and Imperial are often dismal subjects of derision and even physical affray (that heady December day in 2005 when our riotous Athletics Union ploughed destructively through King’s remains notoriously legendary), but such fractious confrontations are almost exclusively sporting encounters, limited to testy sideshows on distant playing grounds. Even in the area where it matters most, not least for pragmatic LSE careerists, academic specialisation by the various London universities mean that competition is to be found amongst peers and not unseen opponents from rival institutions. Regrettably, with the enemy lurking within, LSE students can hardly be blamed for their ruthless skulduggery whilst competing in the vicious rat race to success.

But maybe I go too far in pinning the blame on the inner evils that reside within our hearts. After all, hope springs eternal from the human breast (allegedly). Maybe the communal ills of our School can be attributed elsewhere. Perhaps an easy scapegoat can be found in the uninspiring environs in which we study. If architecture

In a campus that intrinsically rejects warmth while engendering callous competitiveness, is it any wonder that its students are reduced to being aloof, gift-bearing Greeks?

does in fact reflect an institution’s culture and ethos and not merely the lurid utopian fascinations of pretentious draughtsmen, then the drab grey exteriors of our School buildings could possibly be held culpable for our icy social atmosphere.

Back in the day when I was still toiling tirelessly within the Singaporean educational pressure cooker, school campuses never failed to provide a focal point of human activity. It might well be the canteen; the sweet aroma of affordable delicacies so alluring during lunch breaks. Perhaps the basketball courts; occupied by restless students shooting hoops for afternoons on end. Or simply lush greenery; welcoming and tranquil surroundings for meaningful conversation.

The LSE offers a paltry selection of cosy corners in comparison. The only greenery of any appeal lies on the fringe of the campus, and the dingy London weather often renders that option moot. Forced indoors in the quest for comforts, one is driven to further despair by the sub-par fodder served at over-priced catering establishments. Houghton Street too provides little relief; the thoroughfare being constantly swamped by corporate advertisers and hyperactive event promoters. Even our aesthetically-pleasing library has degenerated into a hotbed of ill-will, host to inconsiderate conduct and vindictive struggles for study space. In a campus that intrinsically rejects warmth while engendering callous competitiveness, is it any wonder that its students are reduced to being aloof, gift-bearing Greeks?

But perhaps I descend too easily into disparaging indictment. Surely, one might retort, the LSE campus does afford tangible benefits of some measure. Its location within Britain’s financial and political nexus can’t do us any harm, can it? Cosmopolitan London represents almost all there is good to the nebulous phenomenon of globalisation; an eclectic mix of diverse cultures and, somewhat controversially for a Fabian institution, the sustenance of First World economic

prosperity. For better or for worse, the name of the LSE has become inextricably linked to this force of social and economic integration; its graduates fill the ranks of banks and governments worldwide while its academics play jester to sovereigns of political and economic empires. But what of the Fabian ideals set forth by our founders? One suspects it matters little to the pockets, and concordantly the consciences, of LSE students. Such is the sad corollary of living in financial times.

Moral bankruptcy aside, I return to the social ineptitude that infests our School. The double-edged nature of the globalisation sword, I allege, is driving the proverbial nail into the coffin of the better side of our human nature. The advent of the information age, while revolutionary, had delivered a protracted eulogy for the slow death of interpersonal relations. Social discourse in the flesh is patently overrated; MSN Messenger and Facebook provide easy substitutes. While this demise is not unique to the LSE, the inhibitive composition of internal rivalry and unwelcoming architecture provide the perfect foil for this growing menace to work its evils; the iron triangle of frostiness is complete.

On what grounds do I deliver such scathing accusations? I’d quite like to see myself as a forthright preacher perched on the moral high ground, being all haughty and condescending within realms of reason. But I am sadly not. Be it averting eyes from vaguely familiar faces, mumbling obligatory salutations to acquaintances, or plainly turning tail to flee from social embarrassment; I am guilty as charged. Nor can I offer an exit strategy from this sociological quagmire; I’m but a historian, keenly observant but woefully helpless in the face of the grand narrative. Perhaps such are the just desserts for our exploitative capitalist inputs into society; our retribution for bad karma. But dwell in denial I shall not. Futile it may be, fruitless it could prove, I am stepping out of line to blow the whistle.



Flickr user Andy Howell

The promise before the fall?

Chris Westgarth finds disturbingly much in common between the visionaries of 1997 and 2009

Watching the Obama inauguration, I was filled with a daunting sense of déjà vu. Odd, you might think, considering the unprecedented nature of his rise to the American presidency. The first ever non-white chief executive of the world's most influential nation is an entirely unique achievement. But as Obama smiled and stumbled nervously through his oath, I remembered very acutely the last time I felt this same mix of excitement and hope that things were going to change.

Aged nine, I was already an indoctrinated socialist, despite the lack of any great awareness of the wider political arena. As young as five, I can remember my parents lambasting the cruelties of the Tory government. I also recall watching *Brassed Off*, a film on the forced closure of a Yorkshire mine, and finding myself genuinely invigorated towards politics in a way perhaps I should not have been at that age.

It wasn't just me though, across the country there was anger at eighteen years of social strife and a hope that there might finally be somebody in charge of the country who would value life above money. My dad, from whom I learned most of my political values, had watched as Easington Colliery, where he grew up, plunged to depths of unemployment and despair that someone born in the Home Counties and raised at Eton would never understand. The City boomed but communities crumbled. It was a bleak picture that would lead on to the New Labour slogan: "Things can only get better".

Eighteen years had passed since Margaret Thatcher fatefully stepped through the doors of Number 10 and following the disappointment of 1992, an election

Labour 'couldn't lose', there was genuine fear that it would never again challenge for government. But there was that word, 'hope'. Finally, as voters rallied to remove John Major's government of sleaze, there was belief that change was coming. In homes across the country, families crowded round television screens and watched eagerly as Tory stalwarts fell.

It was an incredible evening as expectations surged but were surpassed again and again – redemption as Neil Hamilton lost his epic battle with independent candidate Martin Bell, smug joy as Edwina Currie too fell victim and downright disbelief as Michael Portillo was trumped by then little known Labour candidate Stephen Twigg. I was perhaps too young to understand the true meaning of the fall of these Tory icons but I had avidly followed as Bell, a former BBC reporter, harried Tory sleaze hound Hamilton into political and public destruction. It was an electoral landslide that was almost unprecedented. Labour won its highest number of Parliamentary seats ever at 418, while the Conservatives were smashed to their lowest share of the vote in nearly a century.

So there it was, a night of passion and excitement, not unlike 4 November 2008. As Tony Blair stood triumphant, he summed up the feelings of a battle-weary nation with the words, "A new dawn has broken". We truly believed that change was here and that the years of Thatcherism had come to an end. To put it bluntly, we were wrong.

We really should have seen it coming and I am sure that some did. Labour's campaigning team was a slick fund-generating machine that did away with the shackles of previous defeats to sell the party as new and ready to reform. Party

In 1997, we were sold a dream that never came true. A nation's expectations were crushed just as they had been many times before

leader Tony Blair had controversially done away with the cornerstone of the Labour party manifesto, Clause IV, which advocated strong socialism, full employment and nationalisation. In its place was put a piece of political meandering, so generalised that its niceties made it entirely ambiguous. This was the price we had to pay for victory – the young, hot-blooded Blair. The left of the party bravely resisted but then caved in, perhaps too tired of trying to win battles through painful industrial action. Blair remained adamant however, and still does to this day, that his new party remained socialist in soul if not on the face of it.

Yet slowly but surely since 1 May 1997 our hopes were dashed. Conservative spending plans were to be kept in place for the first three years and privatisation was no longer the dirty word it should have been. New Labour set about continuing the Tory masterpiece of free market dystopia. There were indeed some silver linings: the minimum wage, the abolition of nearly all hereditary peerage and eventually dramatic rises in public expenditure. But the tapestry of New Labour politics was clear; the world of unregulated finance, greed and the preservation, if not expansion, of the colossal gap between rich and poor.

Did they lie to us? Were we tricked? I don't think so. Until last year, John Prescott remained closely tied to the head of the party. While he was in many ways a bumbling idiot (for some reason that also seems to endear us to Boris Johnson), he still carried the scars of 1980s socialism to prove that he still believed that 'the many' deserve better. Even Gordon Brown appears to yearn for a return to a more regulated economy that helps foster a meritocracy.

So why did dreams flounder so

helplessly? The answer is that political realities proved far too great for Tony Blair and Co. to reverse. The free market and deregulation was embedded in our culture after eighteen years of brainwashing and the fat cats of London weren't about to let it go just because a few million people had expressed a belief that they should. Blair himself began with all the good will of any socialist but was before long hailing messages from God to go to war with Iraq. It wasn't good enough redistribute wealth, he needed to know that his portrait would appear alongside those of Churchill and Thatcher – tough leaders who had led Britain to victory abroad. He became obsessed with shaping his historical legacy. War carried political glamour but it killed off any remaining hope that Labour was going to create a 'better Britain'.

I return to the present, as Barack Hussein Obama ushers in another era in American politics. He undoubtedly genuinely believes in change. I've read his books and listened attentively as he conjures up visions of a better world, but I've heard it all before. In 1997, we were sold a dream that never came true. A nation's expectations were crushed just as they had been many times before. Obama has given not just his own country but the entire world a belief that things are about to get better. He is without question a good man, but does that make him a great president? Only time will tell, but under weight of expectation not seen since the election of John F. Kennedy, the pessimist in me is inclined to think that whatever he does achieve, we will expect more. The optimist hopes that this won't be another false dawn; another instance of change we believed in but not change we saw.

From Right to Left: the political columns

Hayek

Alex
Blance



Obama's Havana outreach

The intelligent and noble face of the first black president of the United States ... had transformed itself under the inspiration of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King into a living symbol of the American dream".

These slightly convoluted words of praise come not from the mouth of a European leader seeking favour with the new President, but from that of the perpetual thorn in America's side - the legendary Fidel Castro. Almost a year since giving up control of the communist Caribbean island he had reigned over since the revolution of 1959, it seems the former dictator may be mellowing in his old age. It also suggests that Obama's victory may mark the beginning of a change in the relationship between these two old enemies, particularly now that Fidel's more progressive brother Raul is in charge.

While Havana may have started fluttering its eyelids at President Obama, it will be down to Washington to make the first serious move in any thawing of rela-

tions. The new US President made a great deal of his willingness to 'extend a hand' to America's enemies in his inauguration speech last week. But whether the Castros are willing to 'unclench their fist' sufficiently to allow Obama to stretch the hand of American largesse 90 miles across the Caribbean, it remains to be seen.

The first thing item on the table for Havana, of course, is the US embargo that has crippled the Cuban economy since its imposition in 1962 by America's last bright new prospect, John F. Kennedy. Those hoping for a relaxation of the embargo should not get their hopes up; President Obama has consistently emphasized that the embargo will not be lifted under his regime. After all, he needs the votes of Cuban exiles in the crucial swing state of Florida if he is to secure his second term in 2012.

However, there are reasons to be optimistic. The president has said that if the country begins to move toward embracing democracy, then the future of the embargo will be up for discussion. Unlike previous presidents, Obama has pledged to engage

directly in talks with the Cuban leadership. This suggests he is hoping for change in Cuba under his watch, and he has let it be known that he hopes his positive advances towards Cuba might help assist in that change.

President Obama has also pledged to ease travel restrictions for Cuban Americans wishing to visit their families on the island or send them remittances, a policy he hopes will be 'our best tool for helping to foster the beginnings of grassroots democracy on the island.'

After the jubilant scenes on the Mall last week, the Obama Effect is at its peak. Even Fidel can't help but sound excited about the new American President. In Cuba, as in many other places around the world, this is the best opportunity in a generation for America to really make some headway on some of the most intractable problems of our time. Cuba has made eyes to the new president; the question is: will they be ready to go all the way?

Viridian

For those in peril beneath the sea

Justus Rollin

Environment and Ethics officer

The world's oceans are seemingly vast and limitless. Human technology is, however, capable of not only harming but also destroying marine ecosystems and threatening human food supplies. Currently, an estimated 75 per cent of fish stocks are either depleted or threatened by extinction because of commercial exploitation.

An example of the government and industry failure is that of the Blue Fin tuna. Once plentiful, Blue Fin colonies have been in constant decline. In the 1950s, the Blue Fin was fished in the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea. However, fish stocks declined so rapidly that now there is hardly any tuna left in the North Sea. Even in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea, the last ten years have shown a dramatic decline in tuna, with record lows being set every year.

Although scientists have constantly been warning governments of the danger, the European Commission has refused to reduce the fishing quota sufficiently, against scientific advice. Up to 22,000 tonnes of Blue Fin tuna may be caught legally every year, in contrast to the recommended 15,500 tonnes. Worse still, illegal fishing is expected to bring actual figures close to 61,000 tonnes.

Every year, there are fewer tuna left, and the remainder are getting smaller and younger. The quota for this year allows for all or nearly all of adult Blue Fin tuna to be caught, with serious implications for the sustainability of the Blue Fin community. Furthermore, spawning grounds are not protected, so the survival of this species is under serious threat. The situation is so grave that at the end of last year, the Bush administration accused the European Union of over-fishing tuna and suggested a ban on the fishing of Blue Fin tuna.

The fishing techniques used to catch tuna are highly damaging to marine ecosystems - at least one kilogramme out of ten is considered a "wasteful" by-catch. This "wasteful" by-catch often includes endangered sharks and sea turtles.

Besides Blue Fin tuna, other tuna species should be looked after just as well. Britain is the world's second largest consumer of tinned tuna after the US. Most of these tuna species are either exploited or threatened by extinction. Clearly, the destruction of marine ecosystems is dramatic and exemplifies the failure of governments and the industry to regulate fishing. It is imperative that the fish stocks be maintained and kept sustainable.

Consumers can have their say too. While "dolphin free" tinned tuna is no guarantee that endangered sea turtles or sharks have not been killed, organic aquaculture and the MSC certification are acceptable labels to follow and should guide consumer choices. The World Wildlife Fund and Greenpeace regularly produce consumer guides to help consumers make informed choices.

As governments and industry fail to act, it is up to us consumers to save the seas.

Laski



Vlad
Unkovski-
Korica

Behold the rising student fervour

No less than sixteen universities across Britain held occupations in solidarity with Gaza in the last two weeks. It is almost certain that the figure will continue to grow in the week ahead. And while the number of core activists has been small - it has rarely exceeded one hundred in any one institution - the latest wave of student struggles has nevertheless marked a qualitative leap in student activism.

Students have been central to the anti-globalisation and anti-war movements that started with demonstrations against the World Trade Organisation ministerial conference at Seattle in November 1999. These demonstrations marked the beginning of a wave of protests that spread around the United States and the rest of the world. Between April 2000 and July 2001, as many as eleven cities, from Davos to Seoul, saw similar mobilisations against capitalist globalisation.

The movement gained momentum following the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11. It reached out beyond the politically active minority that was prepared to fight capitalism to a mass of people who were angered by seemingly uninhibited belligerence of the world's

only superpower. Tens of millions demonstrated on 15 February 2003 in an estimated 600 cities across the world against the invasion of Iraq. Even for those not old enough to have been marching then, the Stop the War Coalition has become a household name.

Since the movement failed to stop the war, however, it has visibly become less active. Still, it managed to rally together hundreds of thousands on the streets when Israel took military action against Lebanon in 2006 and Gaza in 2009.

It is almost by definition that the youth have remained deeply embedded in the movement. They are not constrained by fixed working hours of the daily grind over the long haul. Put differently, they have not had to get a job and "face reality", as any self-respecting, middle-class liberal daily newspaper will tell you.

A report from the Guardian on 23 January states that "the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict has drive hundreds of students to act. But they [are] still a tiny minority. Officials at Warwick - where students have demanded an end to links with BAE, GE Aviation, MBDA, Qinetiq and Rolls Royce - pointed out last week that more than 1,000 students had attended a careers fair where those companies

were represented. Careerists, it seems, outnumber the idealists."

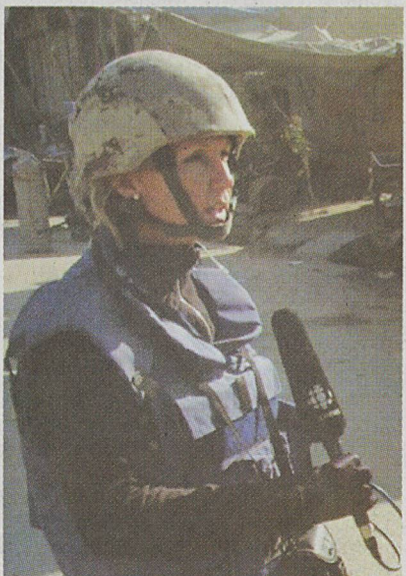
Notwithstanding the logic leap necessary for the acceptance of the notion that all those students who went to the fair were 'careerists', the Guardian, as most champions of the status quo do, is committing an even more serious error in its analysis. It is behaving a little bit like Wile Coyote chasing the Road Runner over a cliff - Wile Coyote keeps running until he realises that he is no longer on firm ground, and only then does he begin to fall.

Similarly, the Guardian seems reluctant to acknowledge or assess the probable impact of the economic downturn on the graduate market and therefore, student activism as a response to this.

So let me offer my own prediction: the more protracted the downturn, the more numerous, militant and effective the student movement will become.

Perhaps then, the Guardian will recognise what is going on: we who took part in a series of occupations are gaining new experiences and forging a new unity of action, starting first on campus. When a crisis strikes, we will be ready to ignite wilder struggles.

Measured musings



From the Economist to the Guardian, the New York Times to CNN, and the Beaver to the Warwick Boar, there are few headlines, be it in daily broadsheets, international news channels or student newspapers, that don't include some form of coverage of the recent Israeli offensive in Gaza.

Given the wave of protests, demonstrations and student activism that we have become all too familiar with, it is hard to imagine that there is no link between the two.

Undoubtedly, issues that involve a greater humanitarian tragedies and are much larger in scale would attract proportionate media attention, which in turn provokes a proportionate reaction from governments and the public. Awareness about important issues of our time is invariably raised through the media. However, it sometimes seems that the

media accords disproportionate amounts of attention to certain issues; all news reporting and editorial judgement are clearly subjective. What makes "news" to some may not have the same effect on others.

Another recent example would be that of the Olympics, which threw China's long-criticised violation of human rights to the forefront with renewed fervour. Many protestors took the streets, demonstrating against the Chinese Communist Party's violation of human rights in Tibet, and disrupting the torch relay in major cities across the world, from London to San Francisco.

Of course, one might argue that an event as high-profile as the Olympics gave people more incentive to once again take to the streets and protest against China's rather atrocious human rights record. But as honourable as these sentiments are, it seems slightly puzzling that other crises,

such as the recent tensions between Hutus and Tutsis in the Congo and the ongoing conflict in Sri Lanka between the government and Tamil Tigers, have received far less media attention. Following this, there has been far less awareness "on the ground", and thus less acted upon by international civil society.

If there is any blame to be accorded in this issue, it should lie on the shoulders of the media and the individual journalists themselves. The journalism industry, gasping and flailing for air as it drowns in financial difficulties, has prioritised saving the banking industry before saving its own credibility and purpose.

Foreign correspondents who report from war zones and crisis regions have earned much respect for their bravery and their commitment to fair and accurate reporting. But perhaps the glamour of the job has gotten to their heads. Attending a talk from Barry Langridge, BBC World

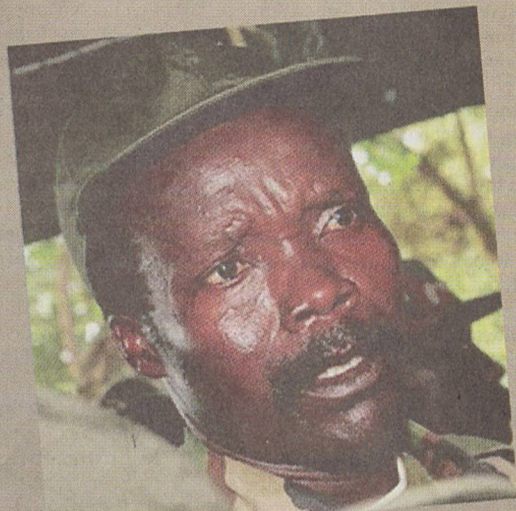
Service Regional Head for Africa and the Middle East, it is hard not to sense that these correspondents wear job titles like "Middle East Correspondent" or "Iraq Bureau Chief" like a badge of honour; more wrapped up with the glamour of high-profile stories, at the expense of a more altruistic passion to report on pressing issues around the world.

Media and the journalists can do so much to raise awareness, stir emotions and galvanise action in the name of very noble humanitarian causes. Perhaps the question every media organisation has to ask itself is what have they not covered today? Perhaps the pressing priority for us, in Charlie Beckett's words, is to save journalism so it can save the world.

Shibani Mahtani
Features Editor

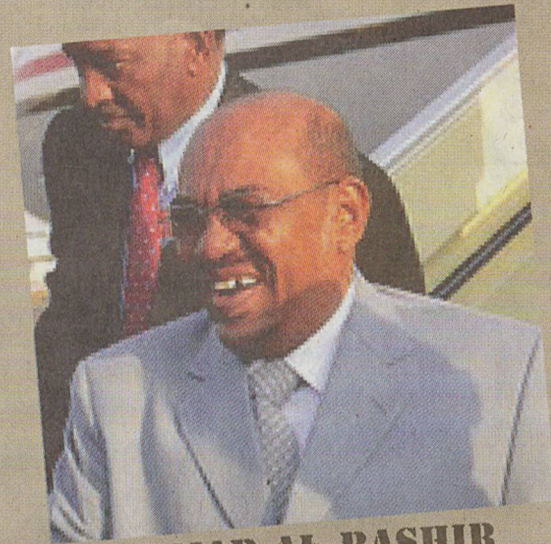
Restoring our faith in journalism

WANTED



JOSEPH KONY
LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

FOR
INTERNATIONAL
JUSTICE



OMAR AL-BASHIR
PRESIDENT OF SUDAN

Please bring them in... Please?
-The International Community

Illustration by Mike Carlson, Kony photo (Flickr user joram jojo), Bashir photo (Flickr user openDemocracy)

Redemption for international justice

Phillip Rushworth offers ideas for change in the struggle for international criminal justice

Most people could probably name somebody brought before an international criminal tribunal.

Whether it is Slobodan Milosevic or Radovan Karadzic, both tried for crimes in the former Yugoslavia, or perhaps even Theoneste Bagosora, recently charged to be the 'mastermind' of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

However, the same probably would not apply for Ratko Mladic, Chief of the Bosnian Serb Army and accused of genocide and other crimes against humanity, or Joseph Kony, the leader of the Ugandan 'Lord's Resistance Army' who is accused of abducting twenty thousand children in Northern Uganda, or even Omar al-Bashir, the Sudan President accused of culpability for the Darfur genocide. All these men are, amongst many more, blood-stained, guilty and yet free.

The concept that led on to the creation of the International Criminal Court was born at the Nuremberg Trials; the horrors of Nazi atrocities shocked the international community into a resolution to work together to deal with crimes of this magnitude. A righteous sense of finality seemed to promise a future – under the aegis of the United Nations – of justice. But in the sixty over years that have since elapsed, too many of the worst perpetrators of crimes against humanity have escaped. Too many remain scot-free.

The international community has let so many people down in times of genocide and war, in places like Cambodia, East Timor and Rwanda. But perhaps the greater travesty is that no international institution has genuinely resolved to take action for these victims; a new system must be made immediately.

There are problems abound in the existing international legal framework. The United Nations does not have a permanent criminal court; it can form ad

hoc tribunals, as it did for the events in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. However these courts are inefficient, ineffective and under-funded.

In Rwanda, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was set-up in 1995, shortly after the genocide. Its mandate was clear, but even then the tribunal managed to delay even the acceptance of the term 'genocide' until 2004. In addition, in the ten years since, only nine of the eighty accused had received a trial.

The inefficiencies of this system are another example of the extent of international disregard for this protracted conflict. These courts also suffer from structural flaws. Whilst indictments can be made by the ICTR, it has no powers of arrest and the court therefore relies on state criminal systems. While there is an obligation for countries to be compliant with the tribunals in the UN charter, their refusals are often not acted upon. France for instance, often seen as complicit with the genocidal Hutu regime, have refused the indictment of 'category one genocide suspect' Agathe Habyarimana, wife to the assassinated Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana. Furthermore, given that these are ad hoc courts, they are only formed under popular pressure. Therefore whilst African conflicts accounted for 90 per cent of all war deaths in the 1990s, with each conflict marred by human rights abuses, the Rwanda court was the only tribunal created. The notion of justice remains a myth for the victims in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola or Uganda.

In 1998, some action was taken to mitigate these failings with the signing of the Rome Statute. 108 signatories across the world agreed to formation of the International Criminal Court – a permanent court located at the Hague and with the mandate to end the 'crimes of the 20th century committed in impunity'.

The international community has let so many people down in times of genocide and war, in places like Cambodia, East Timor and Rwanda

Unfortunately, this initiative is weighed down by its own institutional limitations and international disdain.

The US, China and Russia, major powers necessary for a fully viable ICC, have not signed up to the Rome Statute. Since the power of the Court extends to only to member states, it can only make indictments outside of its predominantly European Union membership when requested to by the UN Security Council. Recommendations from a panel of self-interested states armed with veto powers on the UN Security Council, especially the US which had threatened to veto all key peacekeeping operations until the Court offered it immunity, is hardly a suitable mechanism for action.

It is time to generate an international pressure movement to force governments to commit themselves to basic principles as outlined in the UN charter, that the perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes should not be allowed free. All states within the United Nations framework have already agreed to this principle – there is no justification for non-cooperation.

Under the current UN and ICC framework, such a commitment is not achievable. The new system has to reflect the fair and guided principles that it will defend. As such, the dissolution of a higher chamber of 'powerful states' is imperative. The new system should reflect the voting in the ICC, which does have a positive, democratic, one state – one vote system, that ensures action is not prevented with a veto as often plagues the UN Security Council. This would remove the suspicions that shroud current courts as Western-organised and therefore Western-serving institutions. This is fundamental for establishing trust and participation of all countries. This also ensures that judgements will be based on humanitarian necessity rather than political motivations. The difficulties

experienced in the attempts to indict al-Bashir due to Chinese resistance for instance can be avoided under this system.

The Court would also need to be accorded powers of arrest, established on multiple locations, with the composition of its permanent staff made representative of its membership. Member states should commit to immediate donations of funds and trained officials, and the establishment of effective international policing, empowered to arrest anyone accused, regardless of political office and social standing.

Existing national legal systems will not be superseded unless member states decide that a country is incapable of taking the correct action, either because of misplaced loyalties or because the accused has left the state. Also, it would only be applied to tyrants who have committed serious crimes against humanity.

By having a system that is properly empowered and well-financed, backed with international legitimacy, future processes of arrest and prosecution of known criminals can avoid the debilitating phenomena of inaction and negligence that currently exists. Idealistic as this sounds, it is the least that people across the world should come to expect and demand.

We are told the world is shrinking and so is the disparity in international opinion on matters of heinous crimes against humanity. We live in a conducive environment for the demands of such a system. US President Barack Obama himself has declared that "we can meet the new threats, that demand even greater effort and cooperation between nations". With renewed American support and participation, we could mark the beginning of internationalist co-operation never before imagined but nonetheless necessary for the ending of crimes against humanity.

Pulse Radio's 10th Birthday



Flickr user freakgirl

Many happy listen agains

From FM transmission to the internet, the Underground bar to East Building - Pulse head **Mark Harrison** looks over a turbulent first ten years for the Students' Union's radio station

The most exciting thing you are likely to find in the corner of the Underground bar today is a particularly interesting snakebite stain or discarded flyer. Rewind a decade to 1999 and you would have seen a hive of activity as LSE's very own radio station, Pulse FM, got ready to broadcast across London from the basement underneath the Tuns. At midnight on Monday 1st February the very first Pulse team walked up to the roof of the Old Building and switched on a transmitter that sent Pulse across the capital.

As Pulse gets ready to hit the big '1-0' this weekend it seems to be a good time look back at the giddy highs and inevitable lows of a decade on air. As with most student activities writing stuff down for the record has never really been a priority at Pulse and so this somewhat mixed and incomplete history comes from interviews with Pulse members past and present and a trawl through the Beaver archives (an activity which if nothing else proves that

absolutely nothing changes in student politics). For any inaccuracies I am mildly apologetic. The history of Pulse can be roughly mapped alongside that of Britney Spears: from the giddy launch in the late 1990s, through to near meltdown this decade to the womanising powerhouse that exists today.

Starting with what we do know, Pulse FM was the brainchild of Maria Neophytou who put in literally years of work to get the station on the air. Hard work aside it was highly enviable blagging abilities that finally got Pulse going. Neophytou and her team managed to squeeze over £15,000 from the notoriously tight LSE Students' Union and convinced the BBC to part with a fair amount of furniture and equipment during their move to new facilities in White City, an achievement that meant until recently SU gossip and news was broadcast from the desk previously used by Radio 4's Today programme. A makeshift studio had to be built underneath the Tuns as Pulse was squeezed next door to the Beaver, the start of a tumultuous relationship between LSE's print and broadcast siblings.

"You can't imagine how exciting the launch was": Jon Frewin was part of the team that launched Pulse and now works for the BBC World Service. Frewin remains genuinely enthusiastic and proud of the achievements of the launch team and describes the early days of the station with great warmth. In its first year Pulse managed to get hold of a month-long FM license, allowing it to broadcast across the capital. According to Frewin the station could be heard (somewhat illegally) as far away as Brighton. He describes the launch team as a real family, and admits that this may be where Pulse picked up its cliquey reputation. For one month in 1999 Pulse FM broadcast 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 87.7fm.

As London's FM airwaves became increasingly congested Pulse FM struggled to pick up another license and as a result it spent "years in the wilderness of internet radio" according to a particularly dry Beaver article on the early years of Pulse in the time when internet radio had not taken off. Successes in the early days came from the live broadcasting of speeches made at LSE from global figures such as

The history of Pulse can be roughly mapped alongside that of Britney Spears

Nelson Mandela. In 2002 Pulse managed to get back to being FM and once again the airwaves of London were dominated by LSE students.

Following this month on air as Pulse FM came what can only be described as the 'Dark Ages' of Pulse. Station Managers from the time have gone AWOL and there appears to have been some kind of 'the first rule about Pulse FM is that you

do not talk about Pulse FM' pact. Beaver articles from the 2002-2005 period throw little light on Pulse activities with the exception of a robbery of the studios in which nothing was actually robbed, a bizarre Pulse/Beaver football showdown and a move from the Underground bar to our current East Building home. An advert produced at the time quite tellingly comments "too many of you have never heard of us". Pulse members from the time remember equipment disappearing and a general lack of organisation from the team running the station. Listenership was appalling and people seemed to care very little for the station.

This period did a lot of damage to the reputation of Pulse and in the years that followed Pulse was forced to fight hard against these stereotypes. It took the formidable and formidably talented Stacie-Marie Ishmael to whip the fledgling station into shape. Order was restored to the schedule and committee and her year in charge saw Pulse win a Guardian Student Media award for the website as well as the launch of two Pulse **Continued on next page >>**

Many happy listen agains

« Continued from last page

institutions that have continued to this day: Ragathon and live elections coverage with LooseTV and the Beaver. Kayt Berry created a hugely loyal team and her reign as Queen of Pulse saw marked improvements to the sound of Pulse as they kicked off the 2006 academic year, and the arrival of Erica Gornall as Head of News saw daily bulletins finally carrying reliable news from the LSE campus.

The summer of 2007 saw by far the biggest change to the look of Pulse as Dan Dolan oversaw a complete rebrand and relaunch with the 'FM' dropped (a smart move considering it was essentially a lie and there is no way to afford an FM license in this day and age) and a new

cheeky style of marketing launched. Pulse began to think of itself as a real part of the LSE campus and took marketing and image very seriously to get the message out there. Enthusiasm with the station was high and station launched in October of the year with a newfound confidence and style. Listenership improved slightly as Pulse continued to fight off preconceptions. Pulse also took its first tentative steps towards cosying up with its big brother in the form of the Beaver.

So this leads to an entirely objective look at the last 12 months at Pulse as we walk with an ever increasing swagger towards our big birthday milestone. Last summer saw one of our biggest studio

upgrades since launch as every possible penny was squeezed out of the school and almost all pieces of furniture and equipment were thrown out as Pulse was brought into the digital age with a healthy splattering of blue and pink paint. Highly contested elections saw a highly focused team with the major goal of increasing listenership. The introduction of an on demand show archive online and ratings-grabbers such as takeover week has seen listenership skyrocket and what appears to be an increased profile on campus.

With ten years on air we are certainly older, but are we any wiser? The cliquy reputation prevails to some degree, but ever increasing numbers on the committee and various teams is working to open up Pulse to more people within the school. Relations with our media group siblings are without doubt improving as we bandage up our collective wounds from previous spats. The future challenges for



This year's Pulse management team

Pulse remain the same as most student radio stations across the globe: increasing listenership and trying to impress cynical students. The biggest hurdle facing internet student radio is that literally every station in the world is your competitor and so you need to convince listeners to switch off Radio 1 and switch over to Pulse. Picking up around 1,600 listeners during our best week this year at a small and often divided university is a real achievement and a total that we can build on.

The most important factor that has not changed in Pulse's decade on air is that those involved with the station, in nearly all cases, hugely enjoy it. As long as being a part of Pulse remains fun and an escape from the ridiculous stresses of LSE life the next ten years of Pulse look set to shine even brighter.

Online listen again to Pulse shows
www.pulse.dj

Pulse radio in pictures, 1999 to 2009



To listen to anything else would be **Virgin** on the ridiculous

FROM FEBRUARY 1

PULSE RADIO

FM 87.7

pulse. RADIO

PULSE FM

The Official LSESU Radio

Clockwise from left: flyer for the launch of Pulse FM; Pulse's first logo; the logo circa 2005; Pulse today.



The Pulse factor Why students get involved

Yvonne Maingiy and Gbeminiyi – Ade Odiachi, presenters

Our show is a huge relief. When we do our show, we don't have to think about work, classes, homework or bills. It's a two hour escape. we've meet a lot of cool people that we wouldn't have otherwise met. It's a good way to introduce your music to other people. We're going to miss our show and the parties, but most of all we're going to miss getting together and laughing about last week.

It's about being part of something bigger than yourself and being part of a community that's not cliquy at all.

We'd like to give a shout out to Adam, Ify, Dallas, Winnie, Benita, and Tanvi and of course Nicholas, our faithful listeners. We would like to thank our regular listeners, and the people who go to the Quad instead of the Garrick and Brunch Bowl to listen to us.

Lewis Ahlquist, head of music

Pulse is absolutely brilliant; I do a show on careers and current affairs. I didn't start out wanting to have a show, it just kind of happened. I approached Erica and asked for dictaphone, and I approached radio stations' offices and wrote articles about it for the Beaver. I was then asked to host the show, and it's been brilliant. My first show was well planned so I was less nervous about it. Your voice is completely different when you hear it back on the headphones and you feel slightly more removed.

It's the social life that makes Pulse. The studios are a great place to hang out and meet new people. I'll miss all the people I've met and the emotional attachment to the place.

As head of music, my responsibilities are to update the playlist and maintain the musical themes and content of the station. I also maintain the music blog

and if people want to get involved with that, they're more than welcome. I had a memorable time at Pulse and we've had loads of really cool guests.

Matt Lomas, web editor and presenter

I spend two hours a week on Pulse. It's good fun and it lets me be creative. There's good banter flowing and we talk about topical issues on our show.

To get the show, I had to have an interview with the head of programming and tell them what it would be about. I present the show with my friend Adrian, a third-year history student, who I've known ever since I came to LSE.

Pulse is creative fun. It allows me to take a break from studies, which I think is good, having gone to such an academic university.



NO, NO,

NO, NO, NO, NO,

NO, NO, NO, NO,

NO, NO,

(THERE'S NO LIMIT)

**ALL 90s TRACKS
ALL WEEK**



PULSE IS 10!

ADDICTIVE RADIO SINCE 1999

WWW.PULSE.DJ

Fresh Beaver in the Sports office

Clare Pickering
Crippled correspondent

You may not have heard that Ms Alice Pelton was elected the new Beaver Sports Editor on Thursday night to stand alongside the magnificent STK. Seeing as I live with her, have been a shoulder for her to cry on, shared my bed with her, and seen her naked, many times, I think I'm the perfect person to give you a little background info on Pelts.

I'm glad there is a bit of excitement with this election, as I currently write this while bedridden, after breaking my ankle at the roller-disco in Vauxhall. It would have been so much better to have got this injury while playing an intense hockey match, but unfortunately I have to tell everyone that I was at a roller-disco and not even roller-skating at the time. I did have fond memories of roller-discos as I used to go to the local 'Skate and Swim' on a Friday night when I was at primary school. Alas, this nostalgia will never be the same again.

You now get the AU from a cripple's point of view - it's not what it's cracked up to be. Getting around twenty hockey emails a day, I had no idea what the hell they were all talking about as I'd missed the training and Wednesday nights for two weeks. There were boy's names being dropped left, right and centre who I had never heard before - long live adult 'kiss chase'.

However, there is a silver lining as my step-brother told me that there are people out there who have 'cast fetishes'. If there are any cast lovers in the LSE AU then please come forward because I'm going to be in my cast for four more weeks and my cast is single and ready to mingle.

Although, if there is going to be any funny business then you'll have to warn me, as I'm not allowed to get my cast wet Pelts in fact told me that if you boil a condom it would get big enough to go over my cast. Comments like this define the new editor.

Let me get to the point; Pelts is in fact my nominated carer at the moment so if you see me alone and struggling then

please find her, give her a slap, and tell her to return to her crippled Pickles. She kindly spent Saturday afternoon pushing me, in a wheelchair, around the Imperial War Museum - the perfect picture of Andy and Lou from Little Britain. Anyway here is some information about your new editor so you will know how to recognise her on a Wednesday night:

- Pelts is probably one of the only natural blondes in the AU, you will not miss her; look at her eyebrows, even these are blonde.
- In her spare time she studies Anthropology. Don't be alarmed if she wants to know all about your parents; their names, what they do for a living, where they went to university. Its just Alice's way of trying to work out what went wrong, why you are hunting in a pack on a Wednesday night, out of your face, trying to mate with other sports players.

“Look at her eyebrows, even these are blonde”

- Ms Pelton has a bit of a sore spot for the male sex; from her performance this year, some may say that she definitely prefers the male species who play in the 2nd football team. She hasn't always been that lucky in the love department; this summer she had to dump her cheating long term <cough twat cough> boyfriend.

- Alice wasn't really a face that you saw last year on AU night but she has since made up for it. Her first fame this year came from a legendary night when she punched Al O'Brien outside Zoo Bar. Rumour has it that G-Crow shouted that Women's FC were s**t so Alice obviously turned round to defend

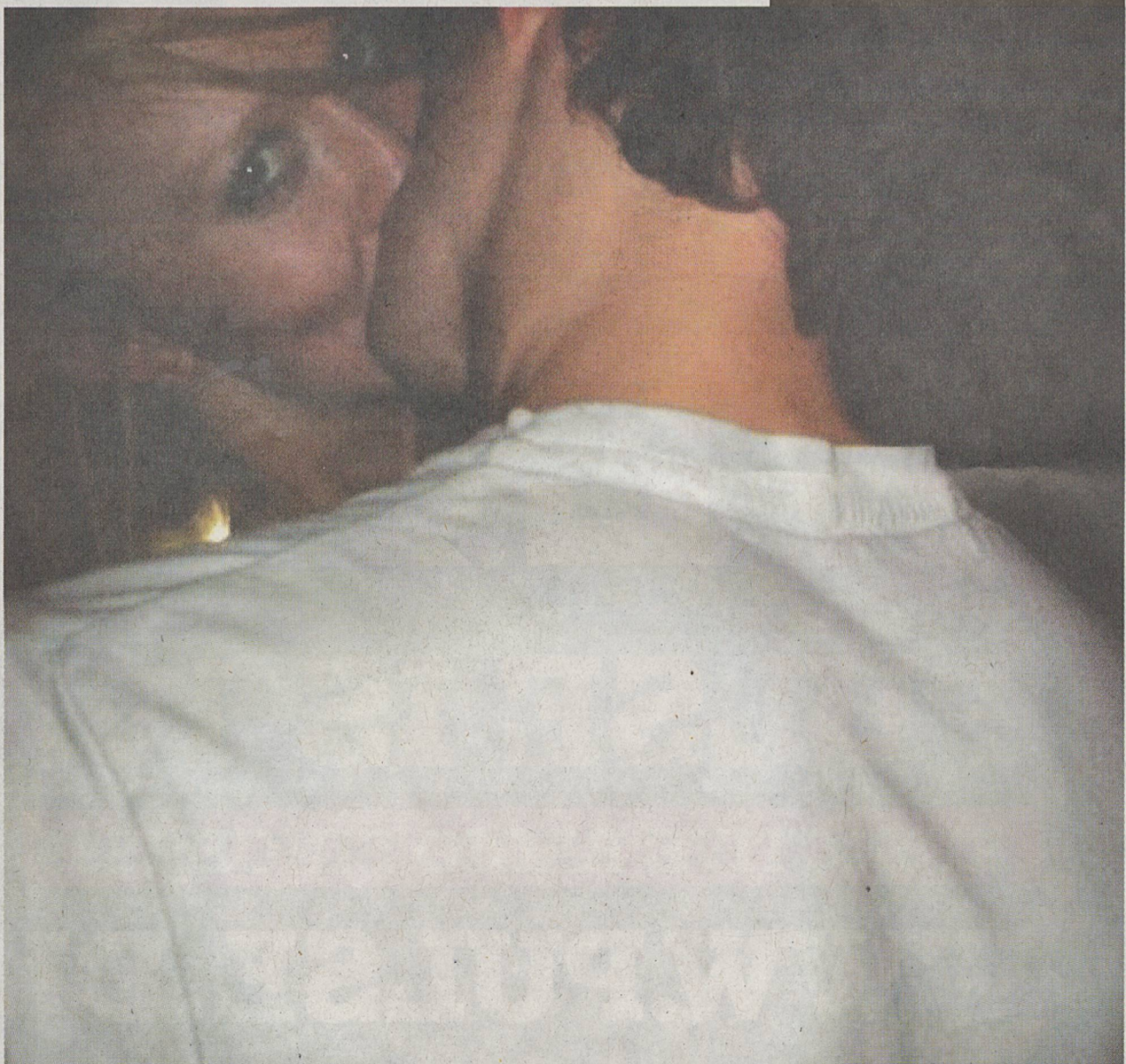
her team and punched poor Al, thinking he had said it. If that's not dedication to your team, then I don't know what is.

- One might remember Pelts's great stack on Halloween. I saw that she was literally 'off her t*ts' so I went over to her, me dressed as a clown, and her dressed as a mime artist, and gave her a good talking to telling her, 'Stop drinking. Stop drinking. You are embarrassing yourself'. I was ignored as she danced away, shimmying against a table in the middle of the Tuns. Due to karmic effects the table collapsed. I'm sure all of you that saw will confirm that it was bloody hilarious - so much for my chat.

- Alice likes to dance around on her own when drunk, throwing her arms around and bending down is the best way to describe this dancing; one Friday night at 'Fresh' her dancing provoked comments from a guy - she stood up to herself and threw her drink over the American who had caused the offence. Being American, he threw his water back, so Alice grabbed a beer and that went over him, and many drinks were thrown... clearly having fun at LSE, comes at a price.
- She spends most of her time sat around our house eating marmite on toast and watching BBC iPlayer.
- She's a lover of the karaoke. Enough said.

This pretty much gives you an idea about what Alice is like, but she's quite a different person when not under the influence of alcohol, claiming that she would rather have a pot of tea than have sex. I've seen the way she drinks tea, it's definitely true. So you should all look forward to some exciting new things appearing in the Beaver as a result of this nomination, rumour has it that there may be caption competitions, a list of people evicted from zoo bar, and possibly a 'Sex and the LSE' article, inspired by Alice's priceless dating history - this is something I definitely look forward to while everyone else in the AU is running around and enjoying the lash and banter.

Eyes on the Prize: Pelton plays a stunner



Cancellations cause chaos

Sam Tempest Keeping
Sports Editor

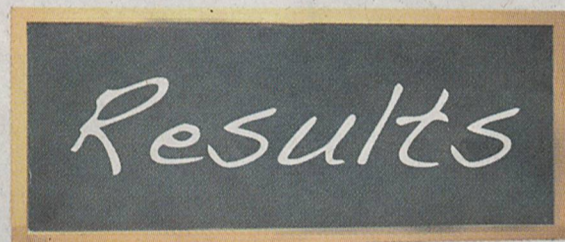
The ULU sports leagues became the latest victims of the recent bad weather as numerous fixtures were cancelled over the weekend. The combination of torrential rain and plummeting temperatures left pitches across the capital either frozen or waterlogged giving groundsmen no choice but to call games off in their droves.

Clubs among the LSE sporting community hit by the cancellations included both Mens and Womens Football, Hockey and Rugby. Teams from the mens football club were due to play important cup games and the rescheduling is likely to wreak havoc among an already packed

fixture schedule.

Two teams who will be hit especially hard are the 4ths and 5ths. Having already had an extended international break and with the ULU Division One table looking tighter than a Glaswegian's coin purse both sides were just beginning to build up a head of steam as the season entered its crucial stage. 5th team Captain Carrig Ryan was quoted as saying "I'm bloody fed up with this, when I was 11 I played on a pitch in Cwmbran covered in broken glass with no boots on. The world has just gone mad I tell you."

The turmoil has even spread beyond the fields and onto the pages of the Beaver Sports section. It has yet to be confirmed whether sub par news stories will be used to fill space left by the lack of match reports resulting from the cancellations.



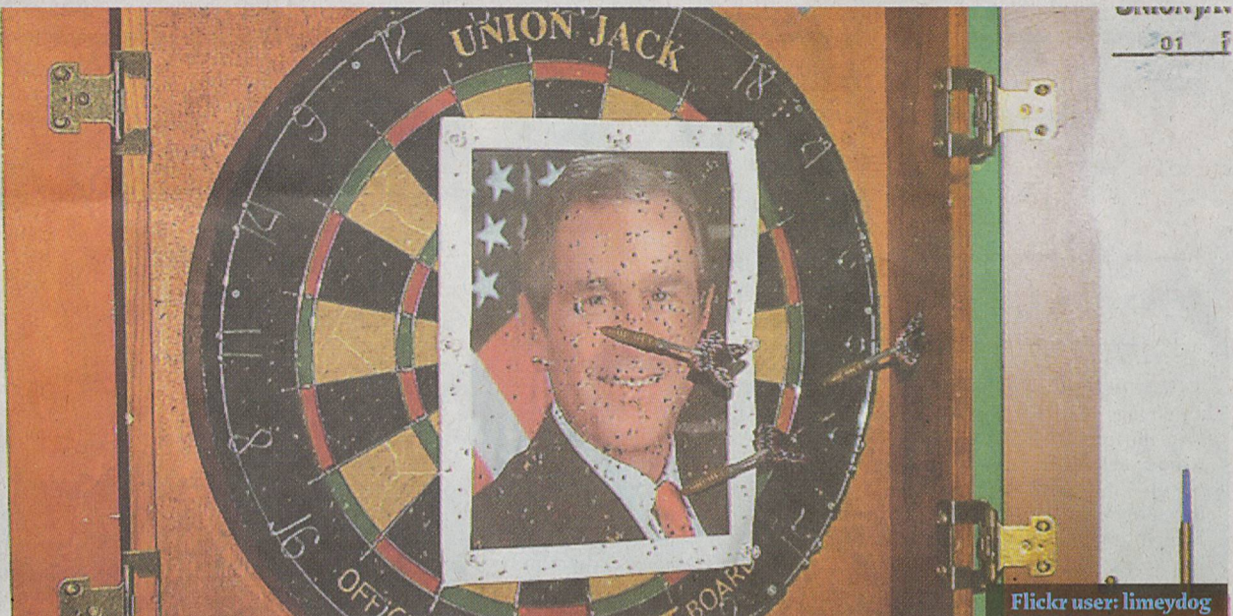
<p>Netball</p> <p>1sts 48-42 UCL 2nds 2nds 27-37 Kings Medics 3rds 4th 26-7 Economicals 2nds LSE 7ths 13-11 Kings 5ths</p>
<p>Mens Hockey</p> <p>1sts 3-2 Royal Holloway</p>
<p>Mens football</p> <p>1s 5-2 Imperial 1s (ULU CUP) 1s 3-2 Imperial 1s 5s 2 - 4 UCL 5s 7s 4 - 0 Poly Scum</p>
<p>Women's Basketball</p> <p>1sts 19:22 St Georges</p>
<p>Mens tennis</p> <p>1st 7-3 ucl 2nd</p>
<p>Boys Rugby</p> <p>LSE 1XV 7 - 12 Royal Vets 1XV</p>
<p>Womens Rugby</p> <p>LSE 35-5 Kings 1st LSE 30-0 Surrey</p>

Sportsmen occupy our affections



Philosophical Barry

301	CRICKET	301
276	20	294
247	19	256
213	18	210
187	17	184
186	16	135
144	15	112
153	Bull	72
120		42
107		11
84		8
50		
31		
3		



Flickr user: limeydog

About a month before Christmas I picked up a copy of our sister paper, The Guardian, to keep me entertained on a trip to the tranquil West Country. As per usual I flipped straight to the G2, planning on testing my wits against the crossword, when I noticed an interesting article written by Michael Billington. For those of you who are unfamiliar with The Beaver 1.0, he is their senior theatre critic, regarded by many to be the foremost authority of stage drama in the UK.

The article in question was part of a series of reports on top-level sporting events by members of the culture and arts desk. Imagine our own PartB music editor Liam McLaughlin writing a report on Wednesday nights at Zoo Bar, and criticising their choice of Sean Paul's 'Burn' for the crescendo of the night. All right, it's not quite the same, but wouldn't that be a funny idea?

Billington had found himself thrust

into a world that he had seldom experienced as he moved between the lavish surroundings of the Royal Court and the National sampling the finest delights that Pinter, Coward and Ayckbourn have to offer. His assignment was the Cardiff International Arena and an exciting match-up from the newly created Premier League. The opening focused upon a conversation with perhaps the BBC's most gifted sports commentator; Sid Waddell.

Famous for lines such as "When he was 33, Alexander the Great cried tears of salt as there were no more worlds to conquer. Bristow is only 27," and "That's the closest thing to a public execution this side of Saudi Arabia," Waddell claims that darts is essentially theatre for the working class. The reason this article comes to mind is that I think the antics on campus last week show a similar schism between members of the student body.

Last Tuesday and Wednesday I

counted over two hundred different people watching the two Carling Cup semi final games, England's third most prestigious football tournament behind the Premier League and the FA Cup. This was at the same time as ten or so dedicated protesters 'stuck it to the man' by occupying the Old Theatre in response to events far away in Gaza.

I think it is safe to say that for many on campus, and for many more from poorer communities in this country and around the world, sport find itself closer to the top of the agenda of the mind than geopolitical crises or human rights abuses.

While the author is the first to admit that the Tuns was packed for the Obama inauguration, this appears to be the exception rather than the rule. People hope that the new president will become a role model to millions of young black men across the States, proof that there is hope for them despite all the obvious barriers to

success. But can he really make congressional rather than dollar bills the focus and replace Michael Jordan as whom they ultimately aspire to be?

Sadly, young minds in this country are brought up bathed in the light of the successes of Beckham and Wilkinson rather than Attlee and Pankhurst. As the world enters a darker epoch, perhaps the level of belief in the efficacy of politics will begin to grow again. However, when events surrounding a deeply religious Brazilian being offered half a million pounds a week to play alongside Craig Bellamy, Darius Vassell and Michael Ball can overshadow a cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe, one has to seriously question whether this will be the case.

What has led us this current state of affairs? The desire for the fame and the concomitant wealth that accompanies success at the highest level? The feeling of physical superiority over your fellow man?

Despair and disengagement with the political process? A combination of the three? The justifications are endless.

Over the ages, there have always been stars with little ostensible power, the Olympians, jousts, gladiators and champions who all eventually managed to turn their strength and popularity into political capital. Perhaps all those looking for success in the upcoming Lent term elections should heed this telling lesson from history. Sportsmen, who have enjoyed the favour of the meek and fickle, are trojan horses when it come to populist contests. Opponents you have been warned.

philosophicalbarry@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Highlands but not high spirits

> Brendan Hamill talks Scottish scepticism in sport

It seems to be a unique feature of the Scottish psyche whereby defeat in competitive sport leaves us pretending that we didn't really expect to win and thus defeat doesn't matter too much. This is as long as our performance has at least been gritty and courageous.

Our great affinity with glorious failure is a product of 'wee man syndrome' whereby we hope for victory but know that generally it won't happen for a variety of reasons that we believe to be out of our control. Resorting to a number of well-worn strategies to explain away our dismal performances compensates defeat.

These range from the facile to the paranoid. It wasn't really our fault after all that we crashed out of Euro 2008 qualifying with a loss against lowly Georgia (despite having beaten France in our last two games), as they had unexpectedly played far better than they were actually capable of, and our keeper was said to have had a bad case of the runs. A favourite excuse is that we are victims of a conspiracy by the bastard English media who somehow manage to damage our performance and thwart our right to glory by being negative and denigrating about our capabilities in their partial and patronising commentary.

Despite this ability to shrug off defeat, the truth of the matter is Scots are fiercely proud and actually love success. When a gold medal was won in curling it brought us all out to the rinks sweeping furiously to the strains of Scotland the brave, as though this minority sport were a national obsession. Andy Murray, although initially thought of as sullen and bad tempered, is converted overnight to a congenial celebrity due to his fervent patriotism and great promise on the court.

But since these success stories are rare and humiliations in team sport, particularly football, more frequent a reality, there are few opportunities to revel in success. We make up for our poor performances by acting like we don't care as long as we participate in our good humoured and



The Tartan Army: WFC Captain Astrid Brown does her best Mel Gibson impression on Friday's Celtic Pub Crawl (photo: Isabel Smith)

unique way. The famous tartan army really epitomise this in that they travel all over the World in droves famously rocking every town that they enter with their drinking, partying and friendly demeanour, even if it is a loss they are celebrating. The "we were only here for the beer anyway" attitude of kilted drunks cheering their vanquished heroes back to their hotel allows them to cope with the losses.

Rather than this being a weakness it could be construed as a strength. It is not a fatalistic outlook but one of realism and putting the best face on the situation.

"Scots are fiercely proud and actually love success"

Collectively as a nation we have learned to huddle together and through a vale of tears become genuinely united in the grief of defeat. Realistically we know we are a very small country and statistically unlikely to vanquish all comers. The fact that we can recover from international humiliation and don our tartan tammies with the attached 'Jimmy wigs' and set off singing nationalist anthems is no mean feat and something that we can be proud of.

Gamblers Anon

Rob's departure has left Gamblers Anon with a gaping hole as wide the gap in class between Manchester United and Tottenham. However his last act as Beaver Sports Editor proved to be his golden touch. From nowhere we scored massive hit with our punt on the Bandy World Championship game between Mongolia and Hungary.

The game was disrupted early on by heavy snow but Mongolia still managed to streak into a 2-0 lead before the Magyars showed their hunger to even things up in the first period. However the snow abated, perhaps due to "a prayer from the Mongolian priest and coach" according to the official cup website, allowing them to secure a 9-2 trouncing and leave their, and our, dignity firmly intact. To say this was well received by members of the office would be like saying Spurs only have minor deficiencies, a complete lie. My head is still sore.

Sticking to the Asian Continent we are going to smack £10 on Mahendra Doni to smash a century in India's One Day International match against Sri Lanka on Saturday 31st January. Hopefully he'll be 'Singh-ing' from the same hymn sheet as Kevin Pietersen who hit three figures today, the object of our last successful bet incidentally.

The final £10 will be spanked on STK's beloved Bristol City, who face the mighty Plymouth Argyle this coming Tuesday. City's form has been indifferent of late but as we all know this counts for nothing when it comes to derby games, apart from those including the Mens Football 2nd team whose only positive scores include a certain WFC member at the moment. Our sources tell us that Nicky Maynard is odds on to carry on his scoring purple patch and bang in the first goal of the game, so that's where our money will be heading.

betfair
sports casino poker

18+ Please gamble responsibly. Visit www.gambleaware.co.uk

Sport



Scottish sporting syndrome

<< Page 23

Tenacious-D here at the LSE

Kathryn Thomas and Jules Radojcin

"What women's basketball team?", "I didn't know LSE had a girls team" - these were the responses the women's basketball team were greeted with when we ventured out on our first AU night last week. Sorry, but enough is enough. We have decided it is high time that our team had an official introduction into the 'extreme' world of the Athletics Union.

Our team is made up of a mixture of postgrads and undergrads from all corners of the world, including Holland, Russia and the USA. Time to name and shame a few of our players: Our hot-shot shooter is Ola, our captain for the past two years. Then there's Ann, who keeps the game flowing fast with her killer drives up to the basket. Guard Kat is another top scorer, but needs to realise that in order to get the shots in during training she has to give up the shots on a Friday night, something which is clearly proving difficult.

One of our forwards Jules is finally back in the game, and after recently becoming single has been very successful scoring both on and off the court. Keep an eye out for her next Wednesday boys. Another forward Thea was injured for all of last term however she has now recovered and had a successful start back on the court last week proving her skills as a talented rebounder, just like the luscious Jules.

We also have Julia who is probably

the most energetic of us all, and loves to engage in a bit of Brazilian dancing on a Thursday night. The rest of the team includes Meghan, Romy, Daria, Sana, Phuong and Howe (no pun intended) who are yet to be shamed in the Beaver.

Last term we enjoyed some relative success, despite being annihilated in our first match by the University of South Bank, who were built like machines. We have beaten Goldsmiths, Imperial medics, and only just lost out to our closest rivals UCL, who beat us by a meagre two baskets. Watch this space for our next match against UCL later this month: we fully intend to get our revenge.

We train together every Saturday as well as having informal practices during the week. However, due to 'unforeseen' circumstances our coach Jason left for the US and has yet to return. So for the last couple of months we have been without a coach and have been coaching ourselves. If there are any budding athletes willing to take his place, then Jules will be willing to put you through your paces.

Despite having a strong and dedicated team understandably, unlike much of the AU, we must prioritise lessons, lectures and teaching. However this means we are often low on players. Teaching on Wednesday afternoons has clearly affected our team attendance levels also. So if there are any girls out there wanting to get involved, it's not too late to come along to a training session and shoot some hoops. That's all for now.



City suffers further losses

Alice Pelton
Sports Editor

LSE 4 CITY 0

After our last match against Kings, Laura was so annoyed that she ended up dumping her boyfriend that evening. We were 2-0 up at half time, but they ended up beating us 4-3. We all wandered off the pitch in a stunned blur, muttering comments about how it was ok because they had one girl who played for Fulham ladies, and how it was only a game. Things were a little below par last Wednesday as well; the bouncers refused to let us in Burger King, and one of our team chose to miss out on some post-Zoo loving, for if things had got too heated, her partner might be caught 'red handed'.

Last Sunday we faced City University, who rudely turned up wearing the same colour kit as us. The ref didn't seem to care; this was the fifth match he would be overseeing that day apparently, and he was 'bloody hungover'. Things got off to a good start and LSE had most of the possession, with Luna and Astrid working really hard on the left wing, leaving their defence in tatters.

Unfortunately I was simultaneously hit by the ball and booted round the head by their captain, and Keina had to come on for Precious, whose calves had become as tight as our formation. American Anna was warmly welcomed back after missing a few games - I like general course students, but they don't half like pissing off around Europe at the weekends.

Normally, as I have told you, I can't even score in group sex. I have never, ever, scored a single goal in my year and a half playing ladies football, and recently I'm meant to be a (sort of) striker. However, last Sunday, something happened to my feet, which has never happened before. For

once I didn't trip up, or stand on the ball. I didn't panic, and lose my cool when facing the goal.

About thirty minutes into our first half against City, I dribbled towards the goal, hit it straight at the goalkeeper - as usual - but then managed to clumsily retrieve it, and actually put it in the back of the net. It might have been disallowed, but the ref had lost his voice and waved away City's protests.

My team were as shocked as I was. I sort of stood there, turned around, looked at the team, and then looked back at the ball in the net, and just sort of went mental. I almost cried. Choking back the tears, I ran towards everyone and clashed into them in the worst bear-hug like celebration ever witnessed.

Spurred on, we knew we might actually win this one, if we kept our concentration. That said, goalkeeper Cheryl spent most of the match making sure she could avoid washing her kit. Luckily Keina scored a beauty which settled us into the second half, and substitute Janelle quickly put us 3-0 up.

Then, with two minutes left, something beautiful happened. Anna swooped in and plucked the ball from a City forward, and squared it out to Astrid on the left. Astrid ran like a gazelle up the wing - her long Scottish limbs enchanting their defence and leaving them in ruins. I was sprinting up the centre of the pitch; things went into slow motion as she gave me the perfect cross, right at my feet. All I had to do was look up and not fall over.

John has been emailing us photos of Beckham when he takes free kicks, to try and show us how we should lean back when we kick the ball. Somehow, I had digested this information, and managed to lift the ball into the air with perfect poise. It was saved, but I picked up the re-bound and put it in the bottom left corner.

In the words of the great Sir Bobby Robson, the women's football team have finally realised that 'the first 90 minutes are the most important'. If only men could apply the same mantra to at least the first 90 seconds.



Precious Hamilton struts her stuff

Sports Writers We Need You!

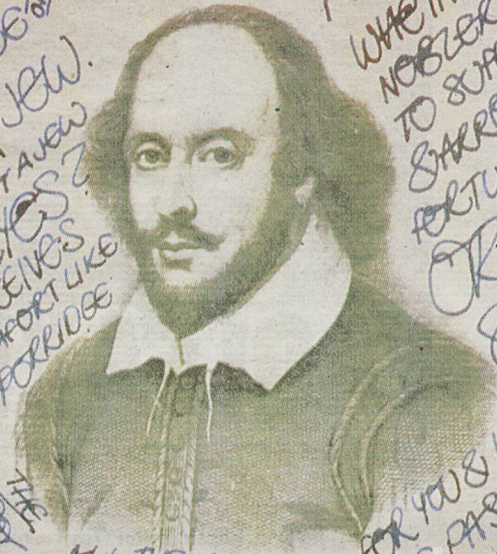
Are you among the 8% of AU members who have a solid command of the English language?

If so, we need your help. Beaver Sports is looking for a team of dedicated tits, fannies, and willies, who can spel, to move us on to the next level. Email us at:

sports@
thebeaveronline
.co.uk

TO BE OR NOT

PART B



A PAIR OF
*STAR CROSS'D
LOVERS*
WHEN BEGARS
THESE NO
*D-CONERS
*N-
EYE OF NEWT, AND TOE OF FROG
I AM A JEW.
HATH NOT A JEW
*EYES?
*HE RECEIVES
COMFORT LIKE
PORRIDGE

NEITHER
*A
*A
*A

WHETHER 'TIS
NOBLES IN THE MIND
TO SUFFER THE SLINGS
OF BARROWS & OUTRAGEOUS
FORTUNES,
OR TO TAKE ARMS AGAINST
A SEA & TROUBLES,
& BY OPPOSING,
TO LIVE
IN THE BANK SWEAT
OF AN ENSEAMBED BED.
STEW'D IN CORRUPTION

I AM
DYING,
EGYPT,
DYING
I AM
DYING,
EGYPT,
DYING

ALL THE WORLD'S
A STAGE
FOR YOU & I
ARE PAST
DANCING
DAYS

AS HE WAS
VALIANT,
I HONOUR HIM,
BUT, AS HE WAS
AMBITIOUS,
I SCREW HIM.

TO HONOURING AND
MAKING LOVE
OVER THE
STY-
AND SLEEP
PER
CHANGING A STY-
DREAM.
SOME ARE BORN
GREAT,
SOME ACHIEVE
GREATNESS...

THE
POOR
HE IS WISE
BUT THE WISE MAN
KNOWS HIMSELF
A FOOL.
BOTH THINK

27.01.09

3 RANT**lizcheesbrough**

how's the environment doing?

**4 STAGING
SHAKESPEARE****sophiemarment**the director of LSE's forthcoming performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* bares all**6 JOURNEYS****graemebirrell**

africa's smallest country is...

7 VISUAL ARTS**christinaschmidt zur nedden**

a retrospective of Annie Leibowitz

≠ 8 CENTRE ≠

if only they made a sequel!

10 MUSIC**liammclaughlin**

wave collectives love scotland

12 FILM**trentmaynard**

an old road trip; fleeing Poland

13 THEATRE**loisjeary***Twelfth Night* in the eyes of a gig-goer**14 TV****angelachow**

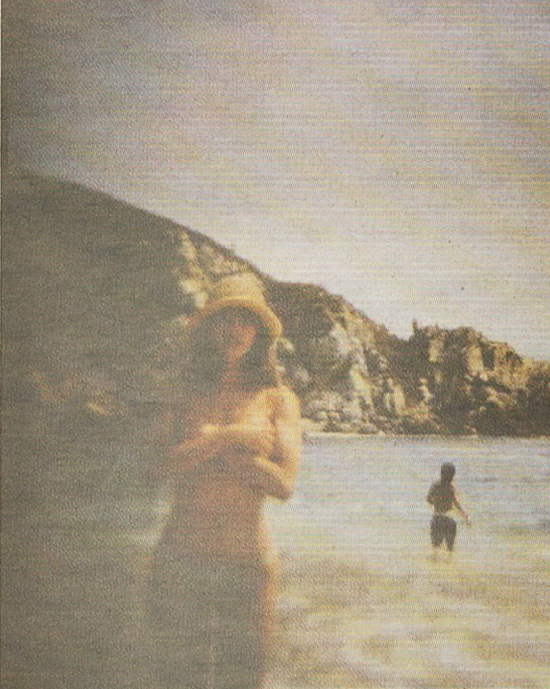
let's meet the LSE's University Challenge team

15 FOOD**sophiemarment**

Shakey makes me peckish

16 LITERATURE**tomsimpson**on the many versions of *Hamlet***EDITORIAL**

12»



Forsooth! 'tis the week of the original old Bill, scribbler extraordinaire and the man responsible for countless torturous hours of baffled incomprehension on sunny school afternoons.

Following the week in which Obama fluffed up his lines, we analyse the lines of a less contemporary world leader, hailing from Hawaii-upon-Avon. We feel he'd have been proud to be canonised in PartB, or at least indifferent.

**SACHIN PATEL &
JULIAN BOYS**

FAQ! FAX! FACTS!

Dear Sachin,

I had a dream where I was the last person left on Earth apart from a one armed duck. I fought the duck and lost. What does it all mean?

All the best,
Camilla P. Dopplertvat

Dear Julian,

Yesterday I received an abusive phone call regarding my daughter, detailing various sordid (and untrue) allegations. I'm appalled - to whom can I complain?

With sadness,
J.S. Ross OBE

CAN YOU WRITE LIKE SHAKESPEARE?**NO?****WE WANT YOU ANYWAY!****THEBEAVER.PARTB@GMAIL.COM**

ENVIRO-WHAT?

marionkoob reminds us of that eternal inconvenient truth

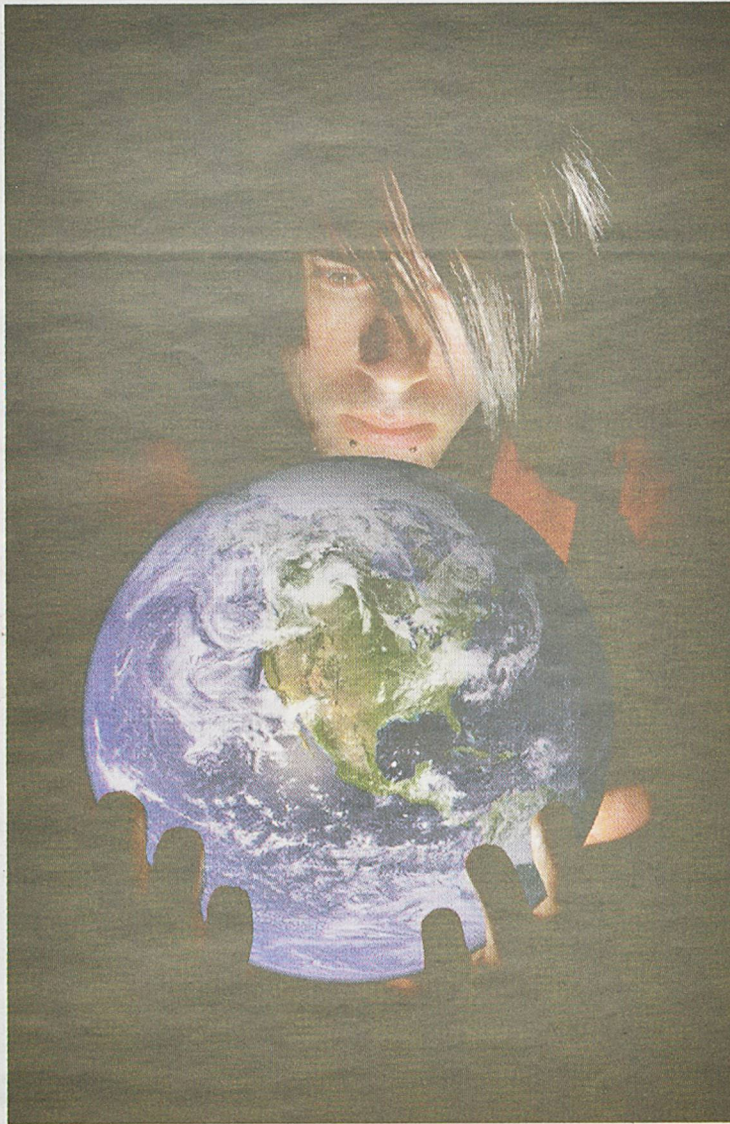
We like numbers. We like to quantify things, to make them more rational; they become real in our minds by converting them into oranges or apples in the style of primary school maths. Now that we've settled into our armageddon-recession, the media is embracing excessive use of figures in order to frighten its audience in a comfortable manner. 'Two hundred thousand jobs to go' or 'Unemployment reaches record levels' are currently common headlines among our newspapers. We are oblivious to the fact that high numerical values are beyond the grasp of our imagination; whether the unemployment announced is a hundred thousand or a million won't stimulate a very great emotional difference within us, nor a dramatically larger pile of imagination apples. Beyond a certain point, our mind gets lost in the magnitude of the phenomenon. Yet we repeat and reuse these numbers: somehow they convince us that being conscious of the 'hard facts' prepares us better for the day to day reality of impending doom. In the past months, our numerical concerns have been drawn to careers, incomes and market fluctuations; drifting away from an equally if not more important issue - the never-ending dilemma of climate change.

Quantification of the process of global warming has harmed its cause in the past and trapped us into a state of indifference. No matter how high the percentages churned out of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, no matter how much urgency they translate; our society still remains for the major part immobile towards perhaps the greatest challenge our species has ever faced - the end of our species itself. You've now perhaps been tempted to turn the page and conclude that I've been watching too many superhero films, or enjoy chaining myself to trees at the weekend. The truth is there but it is truly inconvenient; we are immersed in other, more direct threats to our well-being and our wallets.

It is understandable that in these times of economic dismay, individuals will tend to concentrate their energy in looking out for themselves rather than for the common good. This behaviour can perhaps be attributed to our intrinsic survival instinct; in times of emergency we revert to the 'every man for himself' strategy. A lack of confidence leads to a decline in consumption but it also leads to a decline in our foresight; making us solely value the near future at the cost of what may happen in the next few decades.

Buying ecological washing powder is not as fashionable as it used to be, and we now think twice before purchasing organic food due to

price and dubious nutritional and ethical benefits. When petrol was happily hopping along from record to record values, the media began to enthusiastically speak of a new green age of ecologically-friendly technologies. There was talk of hybrid, electric, even hydrogen cars; hopes of a



green planet where we soar above fields in transport taken straight out of the Jetsons. The crash of the price of petrol has made all these renewable energies much less advantageous to invest in, and the eco-bubble has burst with it. Those who had been driving sparingly, dreading those too-frequent trips to the gas pump have now reverted to their old habits. The Green era may be short-lived.

Was such a motivation ever truly present before the credit crunch came into full swing? Just by looking over our own community, one might consider slightly ironic the fact that the Student Union building, hosting the offices of the most militant members of the student body, still lacks a

fully comprehensive recycling system. Honestly, how are we meant to dispose of our Hare Krishna plates in an environmentally friendly way? Posters and fliers litter Houghton street every day, and I doubt they make it in to a bin, let alone one marked recycling. Becoming eco-friendly is not simply a matter of shifting consuming patterns as most of us would like to think; it must also involve a change to a new way of life for everyone, not just the bohemian middle-aged folks who compare compost heaps over a glass of organic wine.

One could mischievously suggest that the reduction in consumption at least will reduce damages done to the planet through the production - consumption cycle. We buy less? Disturbing, indeed, but at least we also gain the reduction in waste coming along with it. Taking this literally, if we can't afford a pack of beers then the plastic rings holding them together are less likely to end up in a pond - or strangling a duck.

The world's greatest polluter now has an individual at its head who is aware - and believes - that global warming is at least taking place. Barack Obama has spoken of bringing carbon emissions back to their 1990 levels by the year 2020, involving a 15% reduction. His new environmental administration has the determination to make the US part of the fight against climate change; but the methods are already debatable - is a 'cap-and-trade' system of carbon limitations the best idea during these times of economic difficulties? Hindering producers whom are already on dangerous grounds is seen by some commentators as a foolhardy way to deal with the situation at hand. However, if we are about to get angry with the US for not 'handing' the environment properly, at least Bush is back on the ranch and out of harm's way.

The current tradition seems to be that environmentalism is good enough when all's well and society needs something to fight about. It rears its head now and then, furious about an issue that disappears from public consciousness as easily as it came. Meanwhile, it is not considered enough of a serious issue to be of concern during 'real' crises. This is simply wrong. Breaking points are the most opportune moments to advocate for measures against climate change. The extreme nature of the situation allows for consideration of drastic change. The method of dealing with one issue, then another, is outdated: we must do both simultaneously, or perish in the attempt!

STAGING SHAKESPEARE

sophiemarment interviews **tibu fortes**, director of a shakespeare classic

"I an McKellen spoke of Shakespeare being able to capture the essence of the human spirit." So quoth Tibu Fortes, the director of the LSESU Drama Society's production of the Shakespeare classic, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. An accomplished actor himself, Fortes met Ian McKellen while playing Shylock in the National Youth Theatre's *The Merchant of Venice*, which toured to China this summer. It would seem that McKellen's words were true, as the reception of the first Western group to perform in China's National Centre of Performing Arts was extremely positive despite the entire play being performed in English and subtitled. Fortes attributes this to the universality of Shakespeare's work, he laughs: "He's like a rockstar in China."

"Ian McKellen spoke of Shakespeare being able to capture the essence

Why is it then that five hundred years after his death we still relate to the works of Shakespeare and continue to do so despite the endless versions and interpretations of his plays? It is undoubtedly due to the playwright's ability to shape characters which as McKellen put it, 'capture the essence of the human spirit.' There is a great difficulty in staging Shakespeare however and the numerous 'modern interpretations' of his works are a testament to this. Fortes' take on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is an attempt to allow Shakespeare to be understood by today's audience. Often described as the 'pretty play,' Fortes' interpretation is a darker and more discerning one. The wood to which the lovers run away to is replaced by a modern day drug-ridden ghetto. At face value this appears to be just another attempt to 'update' Shakespeare but looking more deeply the replacement of the wood by a ghetto is a carefully thought out device. In Elizabethan times the image of a wood represented madness - to a modern audience this is not immediately obvious - unless of course you have studied it at A-level. Therefore the ghetto and the effect of hallucinogenic drugs is a concept which is more accessible to today's audience.

Fortes is firmly of the view that traditionalist Shakespeare is not the way forward. When asked what he thought about people who preferred a more traditional staging of Shakespeare he answered, "If you believe Shakespeare should be done in a traditional way, I think Shakespeare's spinning in his grave, hoping you'll join him." More importantly he added, "there is no such

thing as 'traditional' Shakespeare and if you believe there is you don't understand it." Even those productions of Shakespeare which stick rigidly to Elizabethan costume and still use boys to play women cannot replicate the nature of a Shakespeare play performed in his lifetime, because a modern audience is not going to understand his words in the same way that an Elizabethan audience would have done. The way in which we relate to Shakespeare's plot and characters is intrinsically shaped by the time which we have been born into.

It is true to say that modern takes on Shakespeare are not always successful. In 2005 the BBC put on four of Shakespeare's classics in a series called *ShakespeareTold*. The line up for this series was promising, with James McAvoy taking the title role in *Macbeth* and Damian Lewis and Billy Piper starring in *Much Ado About Nothing*. There was also the much debated casting of Johnny Vegas in the role of Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. However, despite all the hype, the series was a flop. What in the Shakespeare formula had the BBC missed then? Well it's quite simple. They tried too hard. Not only did they move the play's plot to a modern location - *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was set in a Butlins style 'Dream Park,' where Theo and Polly were coming to celebrate their daughter Hermia's engagement - but they did the unthinkable. They changed the language. With a bizarre mixture of modern and Shakespearean English the dialogue was jarred and lost not only the essence of the great work but also the relatable nature of the characters themselves. The key to making Shakespeare more easily understandable is not in changing the language and setting it in a contemporary setting but in enhancing those aspects that are not so obvious to a modern audience.

Probably the best known adaptation of our generation and a true example of a successful

"Shakespeare's like a rock star in China."

updating of Shakespeare is Baz Luhrmann's 1996 film, *Romeo + Juliet*. It is the clear thought process behind Luhrmann's interpretation which allows Shakespeare's work to shine and to be clearly understood by today's viewers. The modern mafia is not so far apart from the rival families of Shakespeare's Verona and neither also are the replacement of swords with guns. The success of Luhrmann's film is that it does not stray too far from the original. It is not trying to be different - it is merely seeking to allow the audience to watch

something which they can immediately comprehend and relate to. It does not seek to change the essence of the characters but allows the great man's words to do the job. As Fortes comments, "Shakespeare does all the work for you." Most importantly Luhrmann stays true to the emotion that Shakespeare invokes. The fish tank scene when Romeo and Juliet first meet is a clear indicator of Luhrmann's genius, he provides a situation in which the magical and ephemeral nature of Romeo and Juliet's love can be displayed. In *Romeo + Juliet*, Luhrmann succeeds because he puts the emotion and essence of Shakespeare's work at the forefront rather than the setting or the costumes and in this way he manages to integrate the timeless classic with the modern remaking.

The key to 'updating' Shakespeare is to do it for a reason. There is no point in simply setting

"If you believe Shakespeare should be done in a traditional way, I think Shakespeare's spinning in his grave, hoping you'll join him."

Macbeth in a restaurant merely for the sake of putting it into the modern day. There is no point in dressing Ophelia in pedal pushers without thinking about what her character represents. There is no point in making Beatrice and Benedick broadcasters without considering the relationship between the two of them. A play is for the audience and it is important to produce something that they will empathise with. It is true that a modern setting may allow a spectator to understand a character and a story better but only if that setting has been clearly thought out and only if the emotion and the 'essence of the human spirit,' which Shakespeare evokes is not lost or undermined by it. Staging Shakespeare will never be an easy feat. As proved by Fortes' own experience, Shakespeare is capable of crossing boundaries of culture and language and every person who comes across his work will take away a different meaning from it. To tackle such a phenomenon and then to make it accessible is not an enviable task but it is one which should be undertaken with the knowledge that it is the essence of the human spirit which must be upheld.

SHAKESPEARE WEEK EVENTS

MONDAY

Elizabethan lunch at the Nibble & Scribble

TUESDAY

Look out for free Roses and Sonnets being given out by the lovely members of the Drama Society on Houghton Street.

Come and join in with some impromptu Shakespeare scenes at the *A Midsummer Night's Dream* ticket stall

WEDNESDAY

Tour of the Globe Theatre
6.30 LSESU Film & Drama Society showing of Al Pacino's *Merchant of Venice*.

THURSDAY

6-7.30 Shakespearean Actor's Workshop Dooz
7.45 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the Old Theatre

FRIDAY

7.45 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the Old Theatre

SATURDAY

Trip to Stratford.

To get involved or find out any more information about these events email su.soc.
drama@lse.ac.uk



Image: Tom Oxley

IN SEARCH OF AFRICA

aiashakhalid is a local, not a tourist

Tourism took off the world over in the 1960s. Fuelled by new money, new leisure time and new transport the middle classes immediately adopted a 'sit back splash the cash' approach to their newfound freedom. Nowadays we want something more: a novel feeling of belonging in a foreign land, the 'real' experience of going native. Inspired by a nomadic sense of adventure we want to earn our enjoyment of someone else's land and culture by ethical means - volunteering, eco-tourism etc. - or do we?

It was this juxtaposition that bothered me while I was in the Gambia. I was a classic Type A tourist looking for the quick thrills of a two week holiday; when I realised that our holiday would be an 'authentic' African experience, sharing the home of our Gambian friends, I was severely disappointed. The authenticity was so great that I barely existed between phone calls home and the short bursts of time I could spend in the internet café. And is there anything wrong with this, I ask? This should now be the sentence that starts with 'then I realised I should get stuck into the Gambian culture and from that day I began on the path to fulfilment.' But it isn't. Instead I will merrily describe my two weeks as both arduous and enlightening.

The Gambia is your 'typical' African nation, with all the fascinating, lively and breathtaking sights and sounds of African continent and a whole lot more. The smallest country in Africa, it relies on tourism as its primary source of income. This became painfully obvious to me as I realised, while seated on a Thomas Cook flight, that some-

how the chavs had found it before me, a well seasoned traveller. Luckily the chavs and I parted ways at the Airport exit gate.

We (my entourage and I) were staying in our Gambian friends' apartment and we had a Gambian wedding to go to - and in preparation, we were practically local. However we soon found ourselves being drawn back to the tourist hotspots. The Gambian cable TV, which seemed to feature only Arabian news channels, just wasn't my cup of tea, and there are only so many books you can read. So we headed straight off to the beach and the first day seemed to set the tone for the next two weeks. We straddled the line between the local and the tourist. Surely we had resolved the conflict between the tourist holiday and the feel good factor of experiencing the local way of life by visiting the beach?

Gambia is known as the smiling coast of Africa, and the people certainly do a lot of that. You are certain to be approached by people everywhere you go. They carry a great warmth, call you 'happy family' and ask you for your email address. I can honestly say the only thing getting in my way was my own frigidity. The Gambian people are eager to accommodate you and never miss an opportunity to tell you how great their President is. President Jammeh is 'sponsored' by both Africell and Gamcell - the leading network providers competing not just for their share of the mobile phone market but a piece of your patriotic heart too. He once claimed to be able to cure AIDS with a herbal brew. His government seems to have maintained safety and order in Gambia, though some claim that the low levels of unrest in the country stem from the fact that it has no natural resources to speak of.

Serekunda, the largest town in Gambia, is famed for its crowded market providing lots of hustle and bustle for those who are brave enough to enter its depths. Personally, the smell of freshly killed chicken, day old fish and piles of strong spices made me queasy. Fortunately, a luggage merchant offered me a stool and then proceeded to fetch a bench and two extra chairs for my friends.

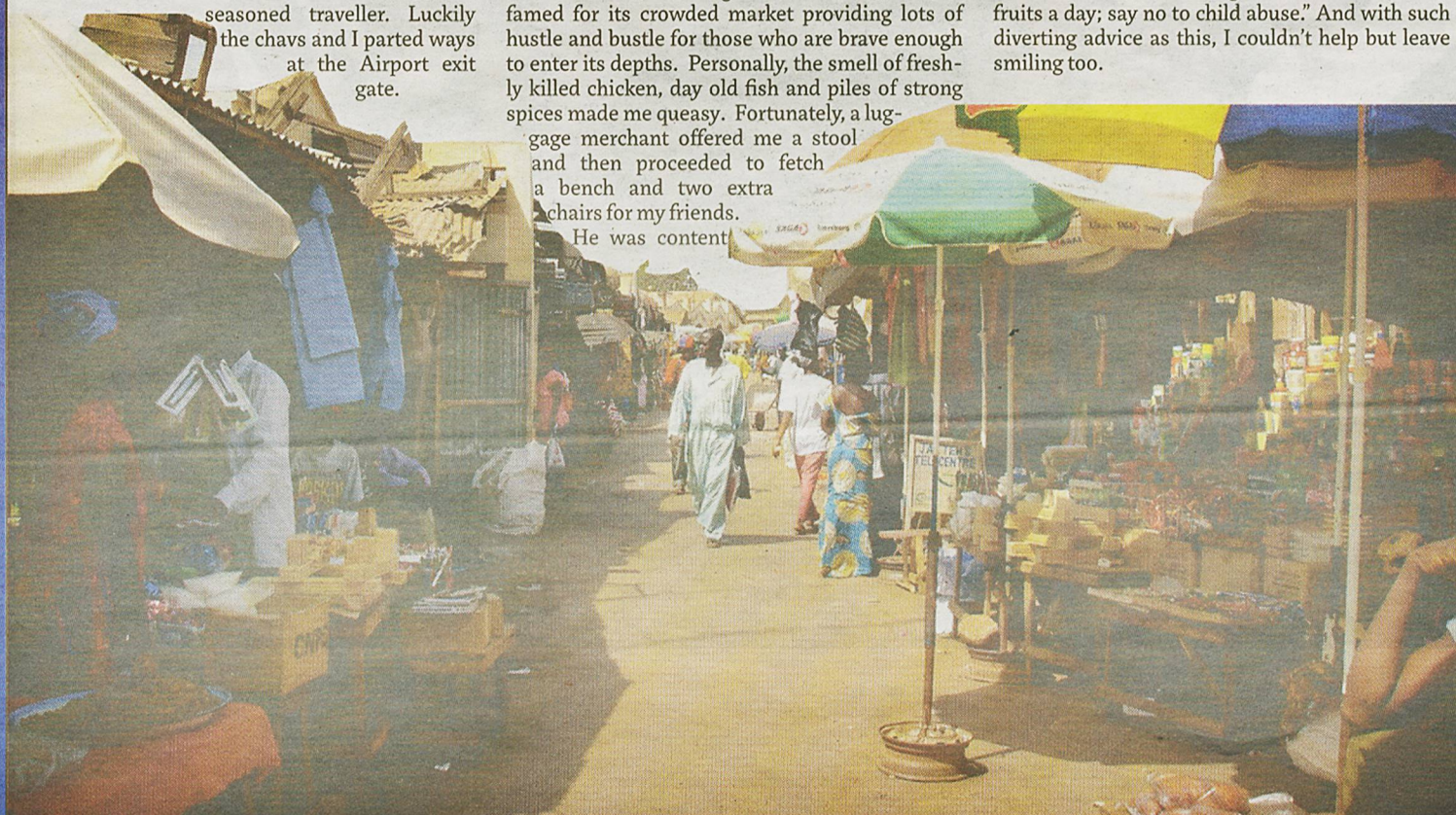
He was content

to sit on the floor listening to the radio.

It was easy to spot Brits darting through the market on a short cultural pit stop before making their way to Banjul, the capital where every car is a battered Mercedes or a pimped out jeep stuck in a sand dune. I noticed that they had packed their Colonial hats, the ones for £15 from Millets made for intrepid exploration. A phenomenon that occurs between Gambians and English tourists is the inexplicable attraction of young Gambian women to overweight men from the North of England. At one point, I overheard an English man extolling the virtues of his new African bride to his mates; by way of introduction he boasted, "She's quite intelligent, she can speak English!"

For me, the Gambia was a bittersweet mix of laid back living in the heat and an abundance of everything coupled with uncertainty and poverty. I watched some sit in the shade all day for lack of work and saw others work tirelessly for hours to earn their living. There were often power cuts and uncertainties about infrastructure, or how to build a better future. One day we travelled to the market to buy some food for lunch and on our way we heard a large part had been burnt down that morning, for me it was difficult to understand the ever changing tides of circumstance, but for the Gambians who sold their wares ten hours a day or more it must simply be part of the risk of trading.

The Gambia is a country of perplexing contrasts, whose people overcome challenges daily, and come out of it all, smiling resolutely. In the words of Abdul, our juice vendor on the beach who wore a woolly hat in 41-degree heat "because it is winter", "Life is a challenge, lets face it. Have five fruits a day; say no to child abuse." And with such diverting advice as this, I couldn't help but leave smiling too.



DECONSTRUCTING FAME

estheryoung reviews a retrospective of Annie Leibovitz's work

If there ever was a photographer that brushed the closest to pop-culture celebrity, it would be Annie Leibovitz. She was, and is, the premiere portraitist of the modern Hollywood era, the Andy Warhol of photography. The Vanity Fair cover artist whose photos usually merit an "Oh, that photo." And she's the subject of a retrospective at the National Portrait Gallery, until February 1.

Leibovitz's work has always been linked to her work with popular culture. One of her earliest jobs was at the newly launched Rolling Stone magazine in the early 1970's (soon becoming the magazine's chief photographer). Her subjects were rock stars and celebrity characters, Patti Smith and Blondie, counter-culture undergroundlings that were fast becoming mainstream with the popularity of rock-and-roll. Her portraits during that time captured the appeal of their grittiness, often taking stark, minimally posed portraits that kept her subjects in ripped shirts and jeans, the platinum hair with the roots poking up underneath, cigarette stained teeth grinning at each other.

Even her famed picture of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, displayed at the retrospective, is unfettered, with John Lennon's nudity against Ono's clothed figure contrasting his fierce reputation as a private individual. Leibovitz was the last person to photograph John Lennon before he was shot dead four hours later. It would seem that Leibovitz was more interested in catching the reality of their personas than glamming them up for promotion, a theme that defined the Rolling Stone look, a theme that she took to Vanity Fair ten years later, and a theme that anchors all her work, even under the disguise of glamour.

And her photography is indeed glamorous; above all, Annie Leibovitz's work is gorgeous. Take her colours, for example. Decadent and rich, cool or warm, her photography is a royal palate that blends and infuses the image with intensity and visceral emotion. Her portrait of The White Stripes is imbued with stark red, white, and black, haunting the image's portrayal of a junkyard carnival. Her picture of Nicole Kidman on a stage is flooded with celestial yellows and gold.

Her composition is also remarkably balanced, and the shapes in the photos, human and object alike are combined in a pleasing waltz.

These traits would characterize Leibovitz as a good photographer. What makes her an artist is her gift for people as subjects, capturing images that are beyond the subjects' fame, reputation, or the self-image which portraiture usually caters to. This particular skill is especially useful in her deconstructions of celebrity.

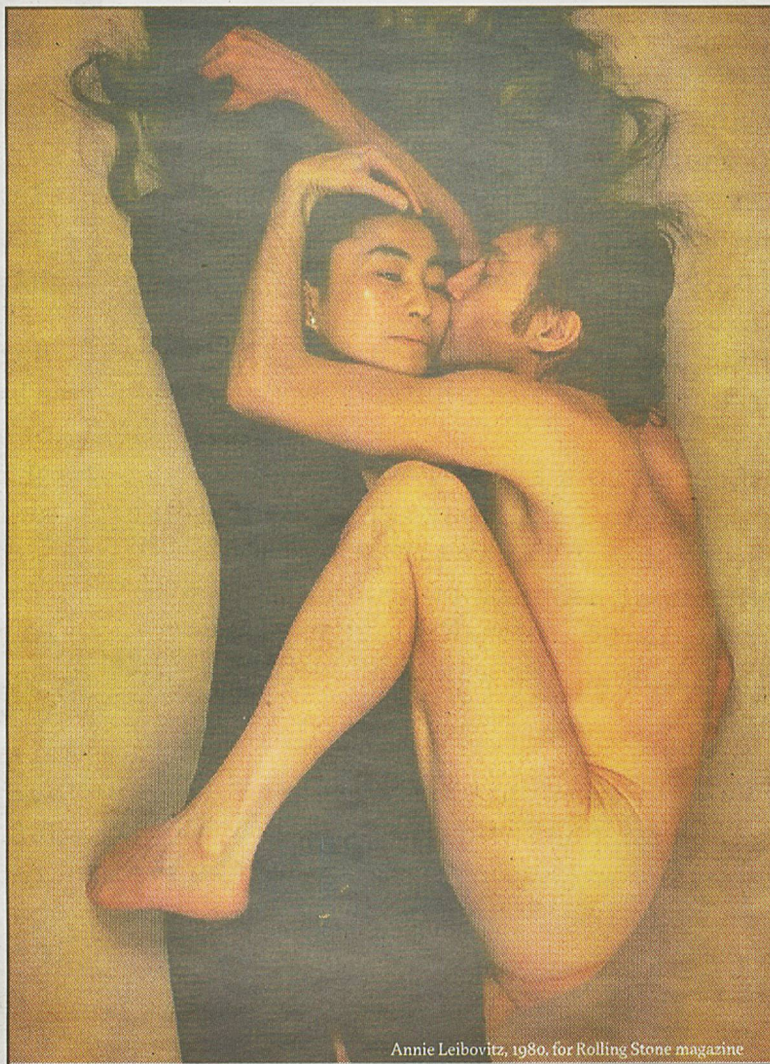
these larger-than-life figures.

Take a photo of Jack Nicholson, depicting him playing golf off the top of the roof of a building. He is wearing his trademark grin and sunglasses, but also a bathrobe, boxers, and business socks (and naught else). Behind him is an ominously stormy sky. And so, even with Mr. Nicholson's fierce reputation as a hard-boiled character, the sinister air is offset by his semi-nude vulnerability.

The exhibit also includes her personal photos, and the same themes run there as well. Hardly any of them are posed, as her subjects are usually moving, jumping, rising or sitting down and there is an intimate naturalness in her photographs of her unusually attractive family. There are more heartbreaking photos of Susan Sontag, Leibovitz's partner of 16 years (who died in 2005) – disarming and simple, of her riding a bicycle, being dwarfed by a cliff, or waking up. All next to a larger-than-life print of Scarlett Johansson.

Here, I think, is the retrospective's one weakness: the scope of the photography is dwarfed by Leibovitz's reputation. Any retrospective, of course, is difficult, but since it seems that this particular iteration wanted to combine Leibovitz's artistic vision and her humanity, it was, ironically, undermined by the choice of "celebrity" photos. They mostly focused on her most famed works – the nude and pregnant Demi Moore, and Yoko Ono with John Lennon, and so brought attention to Leibovitz's fame instead of her considerable abilities as an artist. More powerful were the contrasts between her lesser-known celebrity photographs and her personal photos; a picture of Jamie Foxx next to her devastating snapshot of Susan Sontag on her way to the hospital one final time. There were plenty of these to offset the Leibovitz-a-celebrity image.

One final warning: tickets don't come cheap: at £9, it's one of the more expensive exhibits, at least for students. However, for Leibovitz admirers, it is a vivid and intimate presentation of an artist who truly knows her craft.



Annie Leibovitz, 1980, for Rolling Stone magazine

The setting for her subjects is usually one that is familiar, putting the masters on a stage, putting starlets in ballroom gowns. However, her rich colour, her off-centre composition, and the addition of jarring elements strips away the sheen of perfection. What is left, of course, is no less constructed, as it was created in the confines of a studio, but it is certainly unexpected, which draws the viewer into a more honest regard to

'Annie Leibovitz: a photographer's life 1990-2005' is on in the National Portrait Gallery until 1st Feb.

Romeo and Juliet 2: the Orphan Strikes Back

Five minutes after the end of R&J 1...

The priest runs in to the church or wherever they died. He puts his hand to Juliet's breast. "Hmmm, well she's dead.. but what is that faint murmur I hear?" Taking the knife Romeo had used to cut his through, the priest performs a fairly crude but ultimately successful cesarean. He held the baby she had been carrying for just over 8 months, it cried tears of revenge-blood...

18 years later...

Her training was complete, after all these years of thirsting for the deaths of all of the people that had pissed off her mum and dad, she was ready to kill them all!! Climbing the castle walls, she looked to the setting sun. It reminded her loads of her parents that she didn't know but still thought of a lot. She could hear Escalus coming.

"Oi Escalus!!" He turned around and was frightened but also confused and a little bit hungry.

"Who're you?"

"I'm Romiet, daughtered to a suicided mum, daughter to a suicided dad, and I will have my vengeance, in this life or the next I will have my vengeance. My parents are dead at least in part because of you and your silly stupid feud. So die!" With that she arrowed him right in the head, he was dead before he hit the cold castle stone.

Romiet looked to the horizon once again. Her desire for revenge was stronger than you can even imagine. You don't even know. She walked away into the night, lonely and a bit sad and really annoyed. So many people to kill...

Shakespeare Sequels

Hamlet Returns

Instead of burying Hamlet a first instalment, the palaeo-scientist with massive curls Booblestein, decides to cry him by digging up his grave a really cold lake. 1000 years is drained to make way for a let's perfectly preserved c and is given the kiss of life who thinks he's well buff. though and slaps her, saying

'Verily, thou dost have a fa arse'

Spurned and suicidal, she ju drained lake, slightly brui later goes on to release 'I k I liked it' which reaches nur nian singles chart.

Hamlet, meanwhile, becomes a slap bass player in a Norwegi band who cover McFly songs. ots flock to see them, enthus sentences like

'Oh I know it's silly, but it lously camp!'

Annoyed with himself for conf missively to gay stereotyping avant-garde film director. 56832nd series of Skins, whi tradition of making teenagers equate than they already do, a long black screen with the an of misunderstood youth in the flops.

He then directs this very film birth and second life, before cottage in Dorset to grow obsce etables.

The Merchant of Venice 2

Shylock the merchant looks bitterly out over the shimmering canals and long shadows of Venice. He looks at the cross he has been forced to bear and spits. Literally a cross. Shylock the Jew is now a Christian. He spits again.

"Damn Portia, damn Antonio, twas they who made me convert!"
The last train to Milan pulls out of Venice Central station.
"I will have his revenge even if it is hundreds of years late"
he smiles twistedly, "nobody knew I was immortal!!"

The next day Shylock sits with his friend and biologist Dr. Richard Dawkins in a coffee shop.

"This doesn't have enough coffee in it, this is a fucking latte caffè not a café latte! You waiters are the reason this world is falling apart" yells Dawkins abusively

"Richard, are you going to do what I asked?" says Shylock,
"Yes, yes Shylock, so let me get this straight; you want me to put my name to a book you wrote saying that God doesn't exist?"

"Exactly! Then they will finally see that what they did to me means nothing mwahahahaha!"

"Seems a bit pointless to me....aren't 'they' long dead?"

"....would you stop being pedantic and just do what I asked; I made billions in hedge funds to subsidise this, the least you could do is participate"

"Okay okay I'll do it" relents Dawkins

"Good, because your personality is perfect for this" says Shylock

"What do you mean by that? Do you have any proof? Huh? That's just your opinion, it means nothing to me, why should I respect your opinion? Prove why!" shouts Dawkins
Shylock merely smiles in response.

However upon the release of 'The God Delusion' atheism is branded a religion with the same dogmas as Christianity and Judaism. Hearing of this, Shylock throws himself into the filthy Venice canals, only to discover that he is immortal and can't even commit suicide.

He then becomes a tax lawyer whilst simultaneously listening to Coldplay all day, believing it to be the closest to death he'll ever get.

A COMEDY OF ERRORS

ozholland talks about the scottish play effect

William Shakespeare's inventive and intelligent use of the English language was unprecedented in the sixteenth century. Mastering the arts of metre, rhyme and double entendre in a time when most of the population relied upon a mono-character signature, Shakespeare's legacy should have had a profound impact on the progress of language over the last four centuries. A glance at the lyrics contained in most of the popular music released over the last century however, shows that that he probably shouldn't have bothered. Instead of the Bard's subtlety and wit, modern lyricists rely on predictable rhymes and tired clichés to make gormless statements about umbrellas, lesbian kissing and our proximity to Chico Time.

It is a depressing reality that we have come to terms with. However, it is also a reality that is fairly easy to ignore, given that modern music is culturally so distant from the Elizabethan stage. The problem occurs when musicians insist on reminding us of Shakespeare, but in the context of their own questionable music. This contrast can never work in their favour.

Case Study No.1 - One True Voice

Cast your mind back to 2002, when Girls Aloud swept to victory in Popstars: The Rivals. The use of the word 'rivals' may remind you that there were other winners, namely banal boy band, One True Voice. They started reasonably well, reaching #2 in the charts, before releasing second single 'Shakespeare's (Way With) Words'. Not only did this sickening ballad make Cliff Richard look like a badman, it included the following lyrics:

Don't know much 'bout nothing,
Know nothing much at all,
But I do know one thing, I love you, really love you,
And I give anything, to tell you how I feel inside.

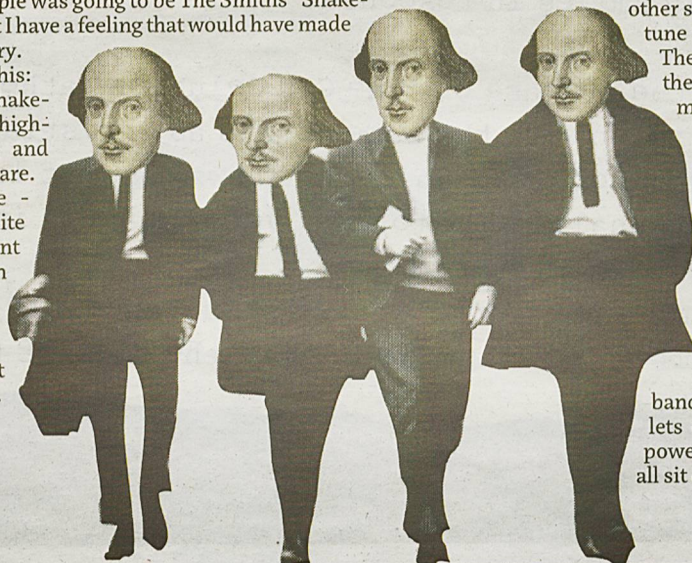
This is of course objectively nauseating, but it was unwise of them to include such lines in a song that used the word 'Shakespeare'. Using the great writer's name in vain spelled the end of their collective careers and they can now be found watching Cheryl on the X-Factor and crying into their old Woolworths staff fleeces.

Case Study No.2 - Akala

References to the Bard may not be career ending but can instead merely highlight how ridiculous your life is, as shown by Ms. Dynamite's younger brother Akala, who rose to prominence thanks to his somewhat strange obsession with big Will. The MOBO Award winning rapper released (unbelievably) two singles which we can refer to here. In Comedy Tragedy History he manages to namedrop 27 of his hero's most famous plays into four minutes of hip-hop hell. This of course, was done bearing in mind his modest claims in 2006 hit 'Shakespeare' that he was "Shakespeare reincarnated, except I spit flows and strip hoes naked". Quite.

My third example was going to be The Smiths' 'Shakespeare's Sister', but I have a feeling that would have made a lot of people angry.

What I will say is this: associating with Shakespeare can only highlight how boring and stupid your lyrics are. Musicians beware - any attempts to unite your lyrical content with the great man himself will instantly turn you into a failure, an embarrassment or Morrissey (i.e. both).



IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE, PLAY ON

new music editor **cathy druce**
loves you yeah, yeah, yeah

Call me a philistine, but to me Shakespeare is much ado about not that much. Blame it on unending hours of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at school. So my first week's article is less about Shakespeare and more about the vaguely relevant idea of love in music. Whadyaknow, the first five or so "love" songs that popped into my brain were by the same band; so, what better way to celebrate love in music than by listening to half The Beatles' anthology in all its optimistically love-y glory?

Probably the most famous of The Beatles' hits is 'All You Need is Love', released in 1967. It may not be one of the lyrically most advanced of The Beatles repertoire, "All you need is love/All you need is love/All you need is love, love/Love is all you need", overdoing the message there slightly: love. All you need. Got it, but certainly this song has charm galore. The triumphant trumpets at the beginning are recognisable the world over, and the chorus must be the most hummed tune of all time.

And what about 'She Loves You'? A little earlier in their career, from 1963, this song has a less clean cut, more rusty tinny sound. Whether intentional or not, this sound is one that has become the trademark style. The slightly jarring harmonies, the occasional bending of notes and the "woo" just before the chorus all knit together to form a song that has that toe-tapping quality that only 1960s music has ever managed to reign in.

McCartney's bluesy harmonica that opens 'Love Me Do' is another sound that characterises The Beatles earlier work, in fact this tune was allegedly written when McCartney was only about 16. The lyrics, as with all Beatles songs are simple, but that's where these songs derive their appeal. The simple form, lyrics and melodies of the songs just beg to be sung along to.

A slightly lesser known song, 'All My Loving' also carries that rattly atmosphere that today's music has lost, which is a real shame to me - it's that sort of familiar 60s jangly noise that inspires people to hum along and tap their feet, and The Beatles honestly happy lyrics about loving someone make a nice change to 50-Cent tricking poor drunk girls in clubs to lick his "lollypop". Modern songs about love or, more commonly nowadays, sex just don't have that same appeal.

The Lennon/McCartney writing duo must have crafted more songs with 'love' in the title than most other bands, and who can deny that they've managed to squeeze drop-lets of pure, happy sounds into many of those tracks. Forget power ballads, if music really is the food of love, then we should all sit down to a tasty plate of Beatles tunes.

ANIMAL COLLECTIVE



MERRIWEATHER POST PAVILION

emilykaiser reviews the Baltimore weirdos' latest album

Animal Collective has put out their best album yet in *Merriweather Post Pavilion*, released this month on Domino Records. Typically indie and typically claustrophobic in their previous albums, Animal Collective has cleared up and straightened out their musical intentions this time around. They have a style of jamming as many elements into a song as possible and, I'll be the Scrooge to admit it, it usually came out as a brown mush on earlier works. (They did have albums before *Strawberry Jam*, remember?). They've got the blending down this time around and *Merriweather Post Pavilion* hits the spot for the perfect palate.

'Bluish' keeps the muddled background of music that the band can't forget to include, but acts this time as more of a shag carpet. Rolling around on a floor of weird tendrils has never been more relaxing. 'No More Runnin' hits a minimalist style perfectly, making an eerie and anticipatory 3-minute plateau that drops off into 'Brothersport', arguably the best and final track of the album, that flutters in an elaborate collection of sarcastic prancing and attractive cacophony.

The album is named after an open-air theatre in Maryland and, if this album does anything else, it fills. Maybe not always huge theatres meant for symphonies, maybe it's just your flat, or your head, but as only Animal Collective would have it, *Merriweather Post Pavilion* certainly doesn't leave it empty.

LIVE REVIEW

WAVE THEORY

rhiannonparkinson surfs it up

David Tattersall, singer, songwriter and guitarist in the **Wave Pictures**, uses his position at the mic to dispel some myths: "People have told me that you can play your best shows to 10 or 15 people. No you fucking don't!" This is the 10th time that I've seen the Wave Pictures (but who's counting?), and for the first time the room is packed to the rafters with people who love the band.

There's a sense that tonight is something of a homecoming. Not only is this their biggest headline show they've played in London (their adopted hometown) so far, but there are also a number of old friends from bassists Franic and David's real hometown of Wymeswold (in Leicestershire). Even David's old babysitter is in the crowd, getting a dedication to the title track of their album *Instant Coffee Baby* because "he always let me stay up late". Another highlight of the set is when drummer Johnny "Huddersfield" Helm picks himself up from behind the drum kit to sing the heartbreaking lament of lost love,

'Now You Are Pregnant'. With sparse bass and guitar lines and particularly emotive content the crowd are hushed enough to hear a pin drop.

Relatively recently the band signed to London indie label Moshi Moshi and unlike other bands, plucked from obscurity and sent to woo the world, the Wave Pictures already had years of touring and recording under their belts. The years of hard graft on the road have clearly allowed them to perfect their live shows, and with a mix of popular songs from their only full length commercial release, old songs from home-recorded albums and new unreleased material the audience become more enthusiastic with each bar.



Closing the set with 'Strange Fruit For David' and the immortal lyrics "a sculpture is a sculpture, marmalade is marmalade, and a sculpture of marmalade is a sculpture but isn't marmalade", a mass sing-along ensues.

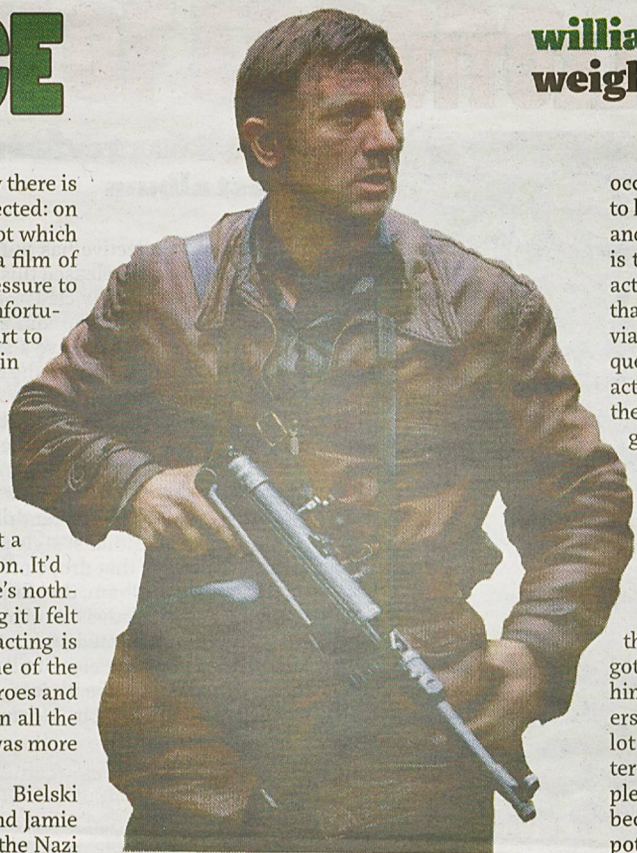
All this makes for a highly energetic and charismatic set filled with blistering guitar solos, witty banter and a lot of smiling. It finally feels like The Wave Pictures are getting the recognition they deserve.

DEFIANCE

In any action film based on a true story there is a delicate balance which must be respected: on the one hand there's the necessary plot which is almost always incredible (why make a film of it if it's not?) and on the other there's pressure to play up the action aspect of the film. Unfortunately *Defiance* was destined from the start to be a film where this balance was tipped in favour of action, compromising the core of the piece.

Given that Edward Zwick (director of films such as *The Last Samurai* and *Blood Diamond*) was chosen for this film, it's obvious that the producers wanted an action film based on a true story and not a true story which contains necessary action. It'd be unfair to say that the film is bad: there's nothing strictly wrong with it, but in watching it I felt it really fell short of its potential. The acting is good and the story is quite amazing (one of the first times we've ever seen Jews as the heroes and not the victims in a WWII film) and all in all the film delivers. What it needed to be great was more character development.

The film follows the three Jewish Bielski brothers (Daniel Craig, Liev Schreiber and Jamie Bell) as they flee to the woods to escape the Nazi



williammcmahon weighs in on the action

occupation of Poland. Over time other Jews forced to leave their homes join the brothers in the forest and they form a community whose only real goal is to exist. What is most interesting is the interactions between the characters, not the "revenge" that the trailers flaunt. As the year progresses Tuvia has to make some tough choices which force questions about his own humanity. This is exactly what I wanted to see more of. The fact that they omitted the Naliboki massacre (the partisan group that the brothers formed is alleged to have been involved in the massacre of 128 innocents) from the film shows that they were unwilling to take this theme as far as it needed to be taken.

I might be expecting too much, though; Edward Zwick is known for producing action films that have secondary themes running through them (and he's good at it), but he's not got the skill to make character driven films with hints of action. In a way I can respect the producers for making this film, as the audience will be a lot larger with an action film than with a character-driven film, and I think this is a story that people should know about. The fact that the project becomes mediocre is saddening, however, as the potential was great.

Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN

dilaragurpinar pulls the sexy Mexican road-trip gem out of the vault

Y Tu Mamá También (2001), a Mexican production directed by Alfonso Cuarón, follows two teenage boys, Julio and Tenoch (played by Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna), as they set out on a road trip with Luisa (the excellent Maribel Verdú), an older and attractive woman who is married to one of Tenoch's cousins. The boys make up a fictitious paradisiacal beach named Boca del Cielo, in order to persuade the sensuous Luisa to join them on the road. She agrees.

As the road trip progresses, tensions start to emerge in Julio and Tenoch's friendship. At the start of the film, the two boys appear to have no secrets between them and have a very intimate friendship. But as the story develops, cracks begin to emerge in their supposedly ideal relationship.

The film is narrated by an omniscient third person who reveals the thoughts and events that unravel. Through the narrator we pick up on subtle details about each of their lives, and the emotions that they choose not to discuss. The real turning point comes when Luisa lures Julio into bed. Tenoch witnesses this and begins to feel that maybe there are secrets between them after all.

As they continue further down the road, Julio and Tenoch admit to having slept with each other's girlfriends. These revelations - coupled with both of their sexual encounters with Luisa - lead to the demise of their friendship. Towards the end

of the film, after countless shots of tequila, Tenoch and Julio end up kissing passionately while Luisa is giving them oral pleasure. The morning after the encounter the boys cannot stomach looking



at each other; the reality of all that has happened, and all that cannot be undone, is just too overwhelming. And thus, the friendship ends.

Sex is one of the staples of the threesome's debauched roadtrip, and the film is littered

with graphic sex scenes. It deals with and portrays sex in a much more realistic way than typical Hollywood films. We are exposed to the awkwardness and inexperience of both boys. Through their experiences with Luisa they learn how to treat a woman and how to be a good lover. But what they learn about sex is just an indicator of the lessons they are learning about life in general.

The film ends when Tenoch reveals some news to Julio concerning Luisa which forces both boys and the viewer to interpret the events that have taken place through completely different eyes.

Aesthetically *Y Tu Mamá También* is beautifully shot. The scenic routes they take on their road trip and the beach they eventually arrive at are breathtaking. The shots of rural Mexico and the economic and political realities of the country serve as a backdrop to the main storyline. While watching, you get a sense of the political tensions and their impacts on the Mexican populace. The fact that Tenoch and Julio come from two very different sides of the political and economic divide plays a further role in the inevitable downward spiral of their friendship.

Y Tu Mamá También's brilliance comes from its ability to match comedy with tragedy, honesty with deceit, and beauty with the unsightly. In this regard, it captures not only something crucial about the realities of twenty-first century Mexico, but also of the human experience itself.

OH, WHAT A NIGHT!

peterwhite exorcises his shakespeare demons

What does Shakespeare have in common with the periodic table and quadratic equations? Well, more than you would initially think. School children throughout Britain are forced to study his works, and at age sixteen many of them are happy to see the back of him. So it was with a sense of trepidation that I went along to *Twelfth Night*, to see if Shakespeare really was as torturous as I remembered.

I am much more accustomed to spending time in London's dingier music venues, where a boozy ectoplasm sticks your shoes to the floor and the only drink on offer at the crowded bar is a pint of weak Carling, served in a plastic cup. These smelly cells are a world apart from the grandeur of the Wyndham's Theatre, with its gold leaf and baroque frescos, and I admit I was seduced by the improvement in my surroundings. Although, truth be told, they still made us drink out of plastic bloody cups!

Crash! Bang! Wallop! With a roar of thunder and flash of lightning the theatre is transported to the heart of a storm off the coast of fair Illyria, where we lay our scene. The story is about a pair of twins, separated in a shipwreck, with each presuming the other dead. Viola, the sister, de-

cedes to pose as a castrato, Cesario, and offers her/his services in song to the local Duke, Orsino. Meanwhile, the brother, whose appearance is identical to his sister's new guise, is rescued by a pirate and begins to seek his own future elsewhere in the province.

As their paths interweave and the characters are confused, farcical scenarios ensue. The visuals would have been all the more comical on the Elizabethan stage, watching young boys dress up as young women dressing up as young men.

The star of the show is, of course, Malvolio, played by Derek Jacobi, an actor with an astounding Shakespearean and Hollywood portfolio. One of few individuals bestowed with two knighthoods (one British, the other Danish), Jacobi was previously mentor to Kenneth Branagh, whose *Ivanov* preceded *Twelfth Night* at the Donmar's year-long residency at the Wyndham's. In a season which will see a number of Britain's leading actors take to the stage, including Jude Law as *Hamlet* later in the year, Jacobi is the latest big-name draw for the company and executes his role with suitable arrogance.

A boisterous, prattling buffoon with brilliant white-blonde hair was cast as Sir Andrew Aguecheek, a gentleman of leisure, who is mindlessly coaxed into a duel with Cesario. I couldn't help but think, as he staggered around the stage, that the physique and mannerisms were a jibe at our newly appointed Mayor of London - but make of this what you will.

A few years ago, when the BBC ran the Greatest Britons poll, I was pleased to see old Bill up there in the top ten. His works have influenced the English language more than any other body of literary work, except perhaps the Bible. Without Shakespeare you would have no 'bedroom' or 'birthplace', there would be no 'fair play' or 'foregone conclusions'. The "long and the short of it" is that even if you argue that "it's Greek to me" you will still be quoting Shakespeare.

Probably the greatest demonstration of Shakespeare's talents was his ability to write plays that are relevant to each generation. Over four hundred years since the play was

debuted in London, it is still leaving audiences in 'stitches' (another Shakespearism). Time has treated no other writer so kindly.

It is often difficult, as a student, to decide to splash out on a trip to the theatre. When you have to calculate the number of equivalent pints in the Tuns on more than one hand, the novelty quickly wears off.

This was the third Shakespeare play I have seen since I was forced to study him at school, but it was the first that I have paid for and I would definitely go again. To be taught Shakespeare in a classroom, without a chance to see it on stage or explore it through performance, seems to me to be missing the point.

To an extent, the more you study it, the more you'll get out of the performance. Despite that, I enjoyed the production without having read *Twelfth Night*, and believe that with the right staging you can probably appreciate any of his plays without any prior knowledge. So, I beg you, go! Go and see some Shakespeare, before your student discount runs out or you piss away all your loan. Like me, you might be pleasantly surprised.

Twelfth Night runs at the Wyndham's Theatre until 7th March

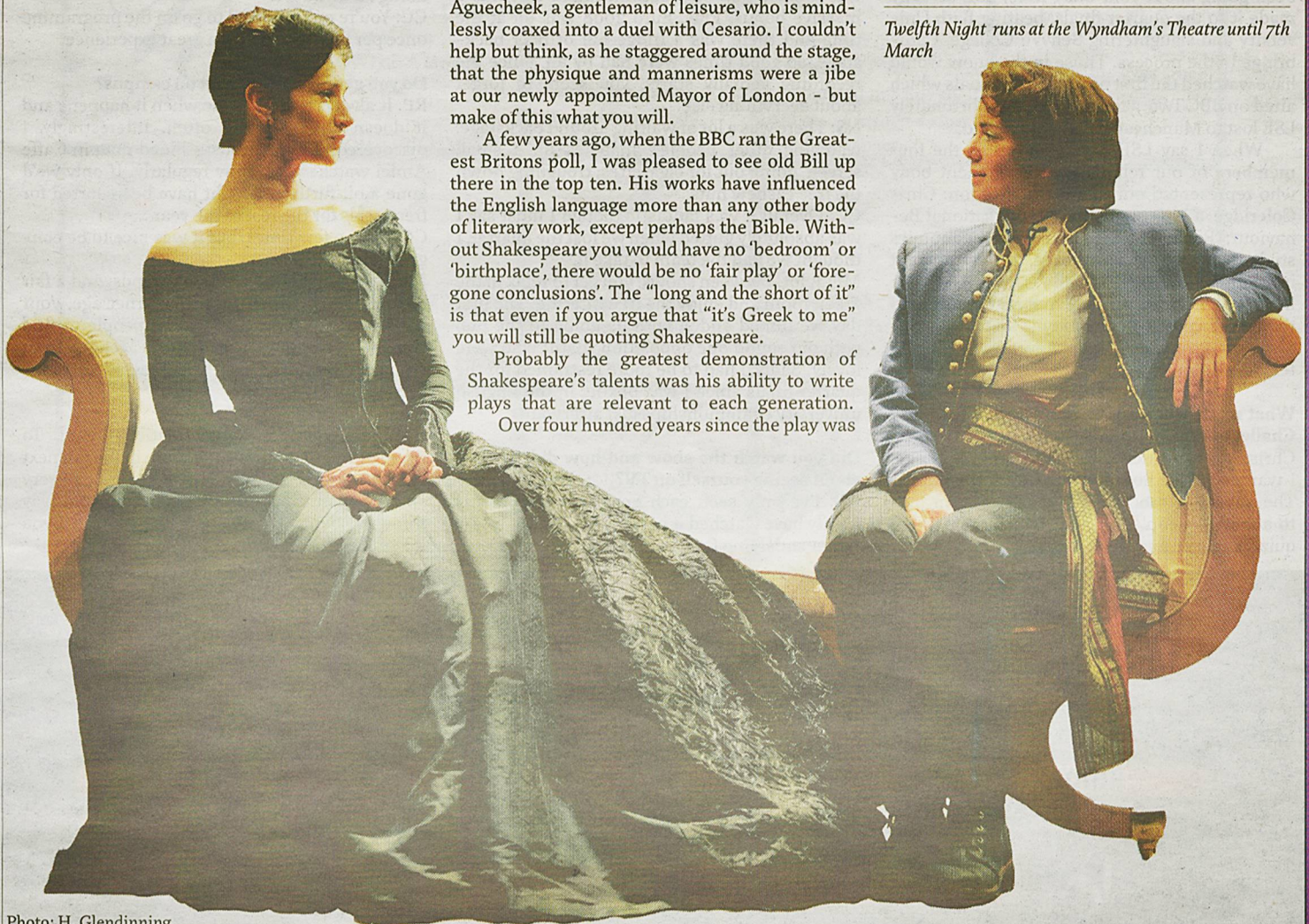


Photo: H. Glendinning

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

angelachow interviews the team

University Challenge: The good old British quiz show which pits universities and other higher education institutions against each other with rounds of super-hard questions on any select topic. The two competing teams buzz to answer starter questions to gain points if they're correct, or lose points if they're not, and it is followed by bonus questions to further add to the score tally. All of this happens while the rest of the minion population are still trying to figure out what the question actually means.

"I like showing off, and if it's on telly, so much the better."

For those who have grown up watching the show thinking unrealistically that we would be sitting in those chairs representing our university one day – it's kind of a big deal. To those that have no idea what I'm going on about – Wikipedia it or watch it on iPlayer because while you've been going about your daily lives, LSE actually made it to the quarter finals, beating Bath University and slaughtering Selwyn College, Cambridge in the process. Those in the know would have watched the first of the quarter finals which aired on BBC Two, a fortnight ago. Unfortunately LSE lost to Manchester. But never mind.

When I say LSE, I actually mean the four members of our relatively small student body who represented our humble institution: Chris Coleridge, a PhD student in Organisational Behaviour; Rajan Patel, a final year Economics student; Marianne Fairthorne, a PhD student in Mathematics; and Nikhil Shah, a part-time MSc student in Social Research Methods. PartB thought it would be good to quiz them on a couple of questions and get to know them a bit better. So, here goes:

What made you want to compete in University Challenge and how were you chosen?

Chris: Having watched the show for many years I wanted to see how I would be on the buzzer. The selection process was a big written quiz to about 80 people followed by play offs, more quizzes and an audition.

Rajan: I have watched it for as long as I can remember so I tried out for the team at the first opportunity.

Nikhil: I like showing off, and if it's on telly, so much the better.

Marianne: I love the show!

Did you think you'd get on the team?

RP: Not at all. The overwhelming impression I get in most classes is that everyone is cleverer than me. [Don't we all?!]

NS: Didn't think too much about it as it seemed like such a remote prospect at the time of filling in the initial quiz.

How did you prepare?

NS: Porridge, yoga and sexual abstinence.

RP: You can't really prepare – it's more a case of hoping that a decent proportion of all the interesting things you see and hear every day will stick in your brain. We did a few good pub quizzes, which contributed little on the knowledge front but did help us get to know each other.

Did you enjoy it?

RP: I had no real expectations, so the first win was fantastic and the second round win was a massive bonus. Plus, Euro 2008 was on at the time and there was a fridge full of beer backstage, so good times were had by all. Once the recording actually starts, you seem to forget about everything else.

NS: There was a lot of waiting around backstage, watching other people's matches on a small screen, going out for cigarettes, troughing down the free cashew nuts.

CC: Overall it was fantastic though I must say I was absolutely gutted when we lost the quarter, I thought we had the team to take it.

MF: A lot. Between shows, you get to relax in the green room and enjoy the free catering. The first day we filmed ended with us going to the pub with our round one opposition [Bath] who were lovely. Sadly, I had to be more restrained for the quarter finals since I was boxing in the English university championships just afterwards.

Did you watch the show and how did you feel about seeing yourself on TV?

CC: I've only seen each episode once but my family have watched it literally ten times. It was rather satisfying for a vain person like me to see

myself on the box.

RP: I watched all three shows. The experience was mostly enjoyable, except when I made a complete tit of myself with some very stupid answers.

NS: The first was on a bank holiday and my mum's birthday, so we had the whole family round. I like to think she'd had enough of being the centre of attention by 8pm, but perhaps I'm just a conceited little sod. I had to work when the third one screened, and although I recorded it, I haven't watched it yet. I am still embarrassed enough about not knowing which empires died in 1918 that I might never want to watch it.

"I've had a few emails and Facebook messages from strangers."

Would you recommend trying out for the team next year?

All: Yes!

NS: You get a surprising amount of kudos for not doing an awful lot.

CC: You're only allowed to go on the programme once per lifetime and it's a great experience.

Do you get recognised a lot on campus?

RP: It always surprises me when it happens and it doesn't happen very often. Interestingly, I discovered that the moustachioed man in Caffe Amici watches the show regularly. If only we'd gone a bit further, I might have been sorted for free meals for the rest of the year...

CC: Only a few times, but it was nice to be congratulated.

MF: I get recognised a bit on campus, and a fair bit outside it as well. In the internet age, your name and college is enough for people to find you so I've had a few emails and Facebook from strangers. Someone even asked me out after the second round!

There you go. Congratulations team. To those of you that may want to join in the fun next year I'd suggest buying a buzzer, attending every single pub quiz you can find, working your way through Wikipedia and going along to see if you make the cut.



WAXING LYRICAL ABOUT FOOD

sophiemarment quotes the pick of the crop

<p><i>A</i> </p> <p>Twelfth Night, Act V, Sc 1 ANTONIO: An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin Than these two creatures.</p>	<p><i>B</i></p> <p>The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act II, Sc 2 MASTER FORD: I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter...than my wife with herself.</p>	<p><i>C</i></p> <p>The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act V, Sc 5 FALSTAFF: Heavens defend me from that Welsh fairy, lest he transform me to a piece of cheese!</p>	<p><i>D</i></p> <p>Romeo and Juliet, Act IV, Sc 4 NURSE: They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.</p>	<p><i>E</i> </p> <p>As You Like It, Act III, Sc 2 TOUCHSTONE: Truly, thou art damned like an ill-roasted egg, all on one side.</p>
<p><i>F</i></p> <p>Anthony and Cleopatra, Act V, Sc 2 FIRST GUARD: This is an asp's trail: and these fig-leaves Have slime upon them.</p>	<p><i>G</i></p> <p>A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act IV, Sc 2 BOTTOM: ... And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath.</p>	<p><i>H</i></p> <p>Titus Andronicus, Act II, Sc 3 LAMORNA: But when ye have the honey ye desire, Let not this wasp outlive us both to sting.</p>	<p><i>J</i></p>	<p><i>J</i></p> <p>Anthony and Cleopatra, Act V, Sc 2 CLEOPATRA: Now no more The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip..</p>
<p><i>K</i></p>	<p><i>L</i> </p> <p>Love's Labour's Lost, Act V, Sc 2 BEROWNE: A lemon. LONGAVILLE: Stuck with cloves. DUMAIN: No cloven.</p>	<p><i>M</i> </p> <p>The Tempest, Act V, Sc 1 You whose pastime is to make midnight mushrooms.</p>	<p><i>N</i></p> <p>Hamlet, Act II, Sc 2 HAMLET: O God, I could be bounded in a nut shell and count myself a king of infinite space.</p>	<p><i>O</i></p> <p>All's Well That Ends Well, Act V, Sc 3 LAFEU: Mine eyes smell onions; I shall weep anon.</p>
<p><i>P</i> </p> <p>All's Well That Ends Well, Act II, Sc 3 LAFEU: Go to, sir; you were beaten in Italy for picking a kernel out of a pomegranate.</p>	<p><i>Q</i></p> <p>Troilus and Cressida, Act V, Sc 1 THERSITES: An honest fellow enough and one that loves quails.</p>	<p><i>R</i></p> <p>Hamlet, Act IV, Sc 5 OPHELIA: There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember.</p>	<p><i>S</i></p> <p>Anthony and Cleopatra, Act I, Sc 5 CLEOPATRA: My salad days, When I was green in judgment: cold in blood.</p>	<p><i>T</i> </p> <p>Twelfth Night, Act II, Sc 5 MARIA: Lie thou there, [Throws down a letter] for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling.</p>
<p><i>U</i></p>	<p><i>V</i></p> <p>Love's Labour's Lost, Act V, Sc 2 KATHARINE: Veal, quoth the Dutchman. Is not 'veal' a calf?</p>	<p><i>W</i></p> <p>Twelfth Night, II, 5: FABIAN: Now is the woodcock near the gin.</p>	<p> partB recipe</p> <p>Devonshire White Pot easiness - 9/10 tastiness - 8/10 cheapness - 8/10</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take two quarts of new Milk, a peny white Loaf sliced very thin, then make the Milk scalding hot, then put to it the Bread, and break it, and strain it through a Cullender. 2. Then put in four Eggs, a little Spice, Sugar, Raisins, and Currans, and a little Salt, and so bake it, but not too much, for then it will whey. 	
<p><i>X</i></p>	<p><i>Y</i></p>	<p><i>Z</i></p> <p> </p>		

THIS IS THE QUESTION

judehutchinson asks which is the real shakespeare

To be or not to be - ay, there's the point'. Seemingly misquoting what is quite possibly the most well known soliloquy the greatest playwright in English history took the care to pen could seem like a bit of a rookie error. It's just one example of what faces editors before they even consider whether Shakespeare plagiarised what we've decided are his words; trying to figure out which of the bastardised original copies of the play can be considered authentically the bard's. In short, we don't know what the devil that enigmatic man from Stratford intended for his plays.

Most must have existed in an abridged version - with theatrical productions restricted to being performed between 2-5 in the afternoon, plays cannot be shown in their entirety. As the marvellous film 'Shakespeare in Love' will attest, no single manuscript in Shakespeare's hand survives, and no play that we know of was accurately printed from manuscripts. The First Folio, the original not-so-Complete Works, appeared seven years after his death and misses a few complete plays out, never mind a few lines. The odd

looking version of the 'To be or not to be' speech comes from what textual scholars have rather typically condemned as the 'bad' First Quarto of Hamlet, one of two (the second is smugly referred to as the 'good' Quarto). Quartos were single editions of the plays and are notoriously riddled with errors, transcribed from what bribed actors could remember or written down during a performance. The search for an authentic Hamlet is a blind one; the first Quarto (the bad one) is a massively distorted image of the original performance, the First Folio is corrupted and the 'good' Quarto has more errors in than an essay written under the influence of Pro Plus.

According to theatre legends, the Big Bad Quarto was written down by the actor playing Marcellus, such a small part that he presumably had nothing better to do than make a rather shoddy edition of the play in the wings. There seems to be a reason he wasn't trusted with theatrical greatness as he was obviously easily distracted; the Bad Quarto lives up to its name in being quite frankly rubbish, full of weird metrical anomalies and lines that don't make a huge amount of

sense. While it's useful to theatre nerds in that it tells us that the original Elizabethan Ophelia, once she goes a bit mental, comes in 'playing on a lute, and her hair down, singing', it also suggests that Shakespeare couldn't write. Don't trust it. So, editors conflate the various texts into an über-Hamlet, or a superlative Romeo and Juliet, or a matchless Henry V. We can be sure of one thing about each of these texts; Shakespeare never produced a play exactly like it.

So, where do we decide that a play is Shakespeare's? Is a collaborative one with Fletcher, or Middleton, or Wilkins still a Shakespeare play? Are the bad Quartos still Shakespeare plays or just detailed accounts of performances? For that matter, is a modern performance full of anachronisms and (god forbid) female actors fulfilling (or surpassing) Shakespeare's intentions? While we're pretty certain Shakespeare never wrote 'To be or not to be - ay, there's the point' we can also be pretty sure that the Hamlet we see is not the one he first put on. For the time being, all we can do is sit back and enjoy the show.

