

The Beaver

The newspaper of the London School of Economics Students' Union since 1949 • 11 March 2008 • Issue 685

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Students' Library rights withdrawn after Fees Office mistake

- » Students warned to pay outstanding fees despite completing loan applications
- » Communication breakdown between LSE and SLC blamed for threatening emails sent to students

ALEX JONES

Many students were left angry after a heavy-handed email from the LSE Fees Office warned them that they faced "sanctions" and "deregistration" from the LSE after what is thought to be a failure in communication between the Student Loans Company (SLC) and the School, which delayed payments of tuition fee loans.

In an email entitled "Library rights to be removed for not paying your fees", which was sent to affected students on Thursday, the Fees Office informed those who their records suggested had not paid their fees that they would immediately lose their borrowing rights from the library, and could be de-registered as students.

All the students involved who have spoken to *The Beaver* expected their tuition fees to be paid with a loan from the SLC. However, those contacted by the School were told that the LSE's records "indicate that you have not taken out a fee loan for your fees to be paid by the SLC" and that they were expected to pay the "shortfall".

They were told that their "library rights [were] being withdrawn" and that they would "have access to the building to use the books on the shelves, but [would] not be able to borrow anything".

The email continued, "The next stage is that you may be de-registered and will cease to be a student." One student was told that his "exam results will be withheld" if he failed to pay his fees in full before the Easter break.

It was stated that those affected should not contact the Fees Office as there was nothing the LSE could do and that the process "will only stop when we have received your money".

One LSE undergraduate told *The Beaver* that he was "shocked and disturbed" by the "rude and threatening" way he had been addressed in the email. He highlighted the fact that the email had arrived with "no previous warnings and notifications that my fees weren't paid".

The initial email was sent at 9.10 on Thursday morning, and an apology was not sent out by the Fees office until 18.10 that evening. It is not clear how

many students received the emails, or who paid fees which should have been covered by their loans.

The second email from the Fees Office apologised for any "worry or inconvenience" caused by the initial message and informed students that no library rights will be removed until the source of the problem is confirmed.

The email continued, "the volume of replies to this morning's email regarding sanctions indicates that we are clearly missing some information regarding the fees to be paid by the SLC".

A spokesperson for the SLC said, "The most important point to be made is that, in the very few cases where there may be an issue with the payment of tuition fees, it should never impact on the student."

The SLC stated that it deals with over 600 higher education institutions and that there is bound to be a small proportion of cases where information exchange breaks down.

The company added that in the cases where it does, time is needed to resolve the issues and that "the SLC will always ask a college or university to excuse any student concerned and not contact them direct to ask for payment".

They maintain that it is probably a unique problem between the LSE and the SLC. Fees offices at other London universities and Oxbridge have not reported similar problems with tuition fee and loan payments.

The SLC added, "As we [SLC and LSE] work jointly to resolve it, people should not be concerned if they have legitimately applied for and been awarded a tuition fee loan."

An LSE spokesperson clarified that the problem regarding the payment of tuition fees by the SLC to the School has been "identified and is in hand. This will not affect any student."

Students will be contacted to verify their details when the missing information has been identified and processed.

The spokesperson stated that any student who had not paid their fees after the verification process "will be contacted by the Fees Office".

Fees for UK students who began studies in 2006 were raised by £70 to £3,070 for this academic year.



Photo: Fiona Trevitt

Goodbye GenSec

One of RAG's most eagerly awaited fundraising ventures arrived on Thursday, as outgoing General Secretary Fadhil Baker Makar was 'gunked'

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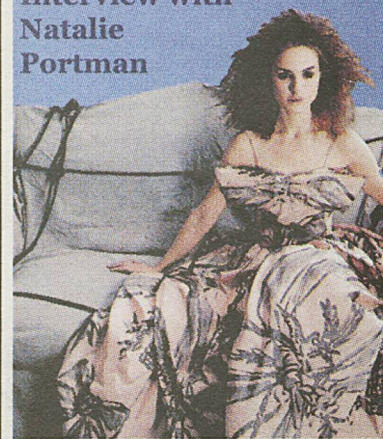
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Higher Education
News

Telegraph.co.uk

UCL SU divests from the military

THE University College London (UCL) Students' Union voted to cut links with the military.

The motion stated that because of the "aggressive war overseas", usage of students' union resources to "encourage students to join the military or participate in military recruitment" would be assimilated to supporting war.

The motion passed by 30 votes. A UCL spokesperson said that the motion was not binding to the university.

The Ministry of Defence declared itself disappointed by the vote. Some people were shocked by the "lack of respect the motion showed to the armed forces".

THE NATIONAL STUDENT

Bath SU says no to No Platform

UNIVERSITY of Bath Students' Union has rejected a no platform policy.

The policy was put forward because of the imminent visit of Nick Griffin, British National Party leader. The visit got cancelled over security concerns and pressure from students.

Members of the SU Media entities were particularly concerned about the effect a no platform policy could have on them.

EducationGuardian.co.uk

City workers should teach pupils

CITY workers should give maths classes in schools from deprived areas, said Ed Balls, the children's secretary.

He also called for money donation to fund math tuitions. He added that it was in the firms interest to form a new generation of math and computer literate people.

Such programmes are already in existence. KPMG is sponsoring Every Child Counts which funds one-to-one tuitions for kids having difficulties.

BBC
NEWS

Diploma to replace A-Levels?

A-LEVELS could be replaced by the new Diploma according to Ken Boston, head of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

He did however acknowledge that there were "extraordinary difficulties" in introducing the new Diploma.



November 1968

October 1969

LSE SU
RAG
RAISING & GIVING

BLACK TIE Pub Crawl Wednesday March 12th 7pm

Join us for our first ever BLACK TIE Pub Crawl, and our LAST PUB CRAWL OF THE YEAR!!! Meet us in the Tuns at 7pm Wednesday and leave your inhibitions in the lockers in the girl's loo. Act like the rich bourgeoisie the LSE is famous for and join us for a debauched romp around London to make Caligula proud. Dress code: Aim for Black Tie, those in anything less than smart will be judged as lesser people

Sport RELIEF 2008 Friday March 14th Lincoln's Inn - 4pm!!

On March 14th LSE's Staff and Students will be joining together to run, walk or perhaps crawl a 1 Mile lap around Lincoln's Inn Fields (the park near LSE) to raise money for Sport Relief 2008! Give £1 to run or if you don't want to run donate and support at www.mysportrelief.com/lse.

Keep the **9th of June** free in your diaries for the **RAG Summer Ball!**

www.lsesurag.com

Speaker's Corner

Undress your wardrobe, redress fashion.

LAST week, People & Planet (P&P) had a stall in the Quad. It was part of a national campaign to "undress your wardrobe, redress fashion".

Recent actions have included a 'hanging-out' of Topshop's dirty laundry on high streets across the UK, including the Oxford Street branch. Their aim was to "to expose the impact of the company's business practices on wages and labour standards for workers in the fashion industry". In previous years, P&P targeted Primark for slave labour. Following demonstrations, a petition with hundreds of signatures and a vast number of emails were sent to the chain owners, Primark agreed to audit the work conditions. P&P also campaign to ensure that clothes sold in students' unions shop are is sweat-shop free clothing.

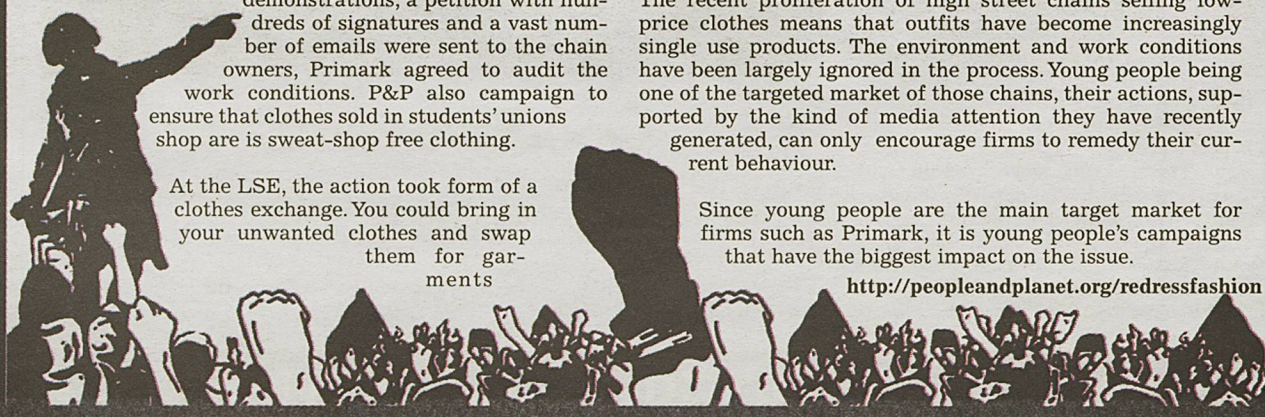
At the LSE, the action took form of a clothes exchange. You could bring in your unwanted clothes and swap them for garments

brought in by other students. The leftover clothes were taken to a charity shop. It was the first time the scheme had been conducted at the LSE, but P&P are looking to do it again next year.

The campaign comes at a time where the fashion industry is getting more and more aware of the challenges of sustainable fashion. Fashion firms have recently started to take into account the environmental cost of clothes making.

The recent proliferation of high street chains selling low-price clothes means that outfits have become increasingly single use products. The environment and work conditions have been largely ignored in the process. Young people being one of the targeted market of those chains, their actions, supported by the kind of media attention they have recently generated, can only encourage firms to remedy their current behaviour.

Since young people are the main target market for firms such as Primark, it is young people's campaigns that have the biggest impact on the issue.

<http://peopleandplanet.org/redressfashion>

Artist unveils newspaper house

ARTIST Summer Erek constructed a house out of 120,000 freesheets collected around London.

The newspaper house is on display in Gillet Square in Hackney. One of its aim is to promote the importance of recycling.

Project Freesheet received newspapers from train operators collecting all the commuters' leftovers, as well as from several public companies.

Only English players for British football team at London 2012 Games

FIFA president Sepp Blatter spoke in favour of a British football team consisting of only English players for the 2012 Olympic Games.

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have opposed the idea of combined British men's and women's teams "due to fear of jeopardizing their status as separate teams in UEFA and FIFA national events".

Cycling ban on Southwark riverfront

SOUTHWARK Council is seeking a ban on cycling on the area around Shakespeare theatre, the Millennium Bridge and the Tate modern.

Local Residents and the Police have raised the concern due to the large volume of pedestrian traffic in the area.

A by-law has to be rubber stamped by the department for communities and local government. The next step could be a public inquiry.

The Beaver AGM Thursday 13th 7pm, D302

THE Beaver will elects a new Executive Editor at its Annual General Meeting this Thursday.

Other positions open include News Editor, Features Editor, Comment and Analysis Editor, Sports Editor, Listings Sub-editor, Photography Sub-Editor and Commissioning Sub-Editor.

Any member of the Students' Union can run for those positions. To run for Executive Editor, you have to have been an editor for eight issues prior to the election.

If you want to run, you can submit your nomination by 7pm on Wednesday 12th of March, to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk.

Anybody can attend the AGM but only Collective Members are eligible to vote.

Further problems at High Holborn

» Residents suffer falling wall panels and broken showers as facilities “reach end of road”



High Holborn Hall

HENRY LODGE
NEWS EDITOR

Residents of one of the most expensive LSE student accommodations, High Holborn Hall, have had to put up with falling wall panels, filthy mattresses, broken lifts, cockroaches and security breaches this year.

Resident Bradley Portnoy, a general course student, had a wall panel in his bathroom fall off, missing his head by inches. As he put it in his email to the residence management, “frankly, the school is lucky that I am not currently on the floor of the toilet, in a pool of blood, and deciding whether my first call should be to 999 or a solicitor.”

The *Beaver* was also informed of the deplorable conditions in which spare mattresses are kept. Resident Matthew Marshall described it as “a dank corner in the outdoor loading bay, on top of a dumpster that reads ‘Warning: Petroleum Mixture’.”

Further, many residents have had problems with their showers, which often run cold

or simply don’t work. The management response to one resident’s complaint was, “the Residence has been open for 12 years, and some showers are

“[mattresses stored] in a dank corner in the outdoor loading bay, on top of a dumpster that reads ‘Warning: Petroleum Mixture’”

Matthew Marshall
High Holborn
Resident

reaching ‘the end of their road’ as the surrounds [walls and floor beneath the shower tray] are rotting.”

At the time of writing,

showers in two flats on the sixth floor and one on the fourth floor had no hot water.

Following the theft of resident Thomas Ayers’ laptop, ipod and mobile phone, the magnetic security doors at reception, that had been inactive for weeks, were switched on. However, it is common knowledge amongst residents that the inner doors will give way if one employs a sharp tug. The *Beaver* observed one resident, laden with shopping bags, performing this simple operation without reprimand.

Paying around £10 per week more gets a resident a room in a self contained flat, with one main door. This provides an extra level of security that Ayers didn’t have. However, due to the fact that so many flats are undergoing repair to their dilapidated showers, flat doors are left unlocked for weeks as contractors carry out their works.

On a more positive note, cockroaches at High Holborn, first reported by the *Beaver* last academic year, have been virtually phased out, but the odd sighting still occurs.



Union Jack

Jack should have known. As much as democracy is the elixir of life and harbinger of hope, the intoxicating exhilaration that comes with expressing personal freedoms via ballot papers and drunken shenanigans might well be deadly in overdose. Barely a week after the bombastic inauguration of the new deputies to the Union chambers, the looming prospect of indecision returned to the Old Theatre.

Despite the fact that he was still reeling from the massive internal hemorrhages and brain cell deficiency (consequence of the electoral ordeal), Jack gathered his wits and senses, clothed himself with a half-decent rag or two, and staggered into the Convention. This would be his final hit. Or so Jack thinks. But he was only deluding himself. Remember Renton’s wise words...there’s final hits and final hits. What kind was this to be?

With the fate of this fine city at stake, not least for the next four years, Jack was hopeful that the verbal pre-electoral slugfest would not disappoint. But alas, former bobby and LibSham candidate Bland Padding could not be asked to hold his feet to the Union fire. His absence, hardly unnoticed, did not bode well.

But no matter, Jack thought. With the Tory Ed Viceroy in place to provide some previous comic relief in lieu of GQ motoring extraordinaire Alexandra Boris de Falafel Jockson, little could go wrong. The Reds could count on Jean Biggs to fly the flag for Dr Livingstone, while the pacifists dusted off an ancient relic in Fraulein German to carry their clearly fizzling torch. And rounding off the field of prospective prefects of London was none other than the fabled SUV-killer Greenberry.

And vicious it was. Sharp tongues and razor wit unsheathed from the get-go. Though never short of spiteful ripostes and sneering comebacks, Viceroy quickly succumbed disgracefully under a hail of socialist rhetoric. Blag Boris was the order of the day, even if it was in absentia.

But hear Jack when he tells you to a shed a sympathetic tear for the Tory. Brave he was to come forth into the slaughterhouse, flaunting a nauseating air of pomp and grandiosity, knowing his fate was the suffering of inglorious death by verbosity. Flanked on both sides by vicious (and archaic) Trotskyists and self-proclaimed champions of social justice, his tragic fate was never in doubt.

Yet his sacrifice was a worthy one. Not since the glorious yesteryears did a Tory have the gall to spout capitalist cant within the Convention. Viceroy, for all his sins and vices, was a breath of fresh air; a break from the monotonous incantations of gregarious greens and subversive socialists.

Alas, such a prospect is remote. With an Angler to come to the helm, what hopes are there for political theatre in our moribund Conventions? Never in the history of this Union was there a greater need for neo-con nutjobs. Come forth, closet Thatcherites. Your time is now.

Residences results annulled

» Winning candidate found guilty of “gross infringement of electoral rules”

» Cross-campus election to be held before the summer to fill vacant executive position

HENRY LODGE
NEWS EDITOR

There will be a re-run of the Residences Officer election after the results were annulled by the Constitution and Steering (C&S) Committee because the winning candidate Emma Fischer was found to have perpetrated a “gross infringement of electoral rules.”

Fischer was found guilty of online campaigning, which is against election regulations.

Fischer told *The Beaver* that she would be running again and said she was, “very happy that it’s cross-campus; it’s obviously the best way of making sure that students are properly represented.”

Helen Roberts, who ran against Fischer in the initial election and who brought the complaint to C&S, has confirmed her candidacy.

Following debate between C&S Chair Andy Hallett, Returning Officer James Bacon and the Sabbatical Officers-elect, nominations have reopened and pending today’s C&S meeting, there will be a cross-campus election held before the summer break.

Last Tuesday’s C&S meeting unanimously voted in favour of a cross-campus election but the Codes of Practice call for a Union General Meeting (UGM) by-election.

Bacon and Hallett said they were “uncomfortable” with a UGM by-election because the vote would be substantially smaller than week 8’s ballot which elected the rest of the Executive Committee.

Photo: Liam Chambers



Passfield Hall, one of the LSE residences.

However, Students’ Union General Manager Gethin Roberts said that “the Codes of Practice specifies a secret ballot at the UGM, I can’t see how we can do anything else.” A by-election in the first week of the summer term was subsequently announced at Thursday’s UGM.

The announcement sparked criticism from the Sabbatical

Officers-elect, who sent an email to Bacon requesting a cross-campus election in the interests of a “free and fair election.”

The email sees the Sabbatical Officers-elect declare that, “our Codes of Practice have been proven deficient yet again”, but that, “we do not lack respect for the

Codes of Practice as such - we need a thorough Governance Review to shore up the document and make it impeccably fair, democratic and explicit.”

Following pressure from the Students’ Union Executive Committee in favour of a cross-campus election, Bacon discovered a loophole in the constitution that potentially allows a

cross-campus election of the sort seen in the Michaelmas term to fill the position before the summer break.

Hallett commented, “I’m glad this has got sorted out given the obvious issues of legitimacy if the SU had had to vote via UGM and the welfare issues if the Residences officer was not elected till November.”

Tiny turnout for ULU elections

DAVID WOODBRIDGE

Kamran Ansari was elected as President of the University of London Union (ULU) last Wednesday on a pitifully low turnout of just 0.46%.

Every student registered at a University of London college was entitled to vote, making the total electorate some 90,000-strong. However, there were just 417 ballots cast for the position of President, with Ansari taking 184 of these in the final stage of voting.

There was even less interest in the other positions, with Sharn Kalsi becoming Vice-President unopposed on 251 votes, Denis Shukur and Elizabeth Swarbrick becoming Student Trustees unopposed on 175 and 163 votes respectively, and Kat Lay becoming Editor of the London Student newspaper on 275 votes.

LSE Students' Union General Secretary-elect Aled Dilwyn Fisher explained that the poor turnout was indicative of ULU's wider failings, "ULU is completely disconnected

from students' concerns in London. For students to vote they have to be invested in what ULU does. ULU has failed to build participatory campaigns."

Perhaps the most pressing issue for ULU is the precarious state of its finances. *The Beaver* reported in January that its budget was to be 'slashed in half' with many popular societies and facilities potentially facing closure and the long-term future of the University-wide London Student newspaper placed in doubt. In his manifesto, Ansari acknowledged that "it is not a secret that ULUs' [sic] financial status is in serious disarray" and one of his election aims was to ensure that the "budget cuts do not affect our core activities".

The new team comes from an extremely narrow section of the University of London. Ansari, Kalsi and Shukur are all from Queen Mary & Westfield College (QMW), whilst Swarbrick is from the Courtauld Institute of Art and Lay at University College. All three candidates for President



Senate House library is one of the few services of the University of London that LSE students still use

were QMW students and both candidates for London Student Editor were from University College London. There were no candidates for any positions from LSE.

This lack of interest paral-

els the slow disintegration of the LSE-University of London link. Last month, LSE awarded its first degree in its own name, whereas historically it had always awarded degrees of the University of London.

Neither current ULU President Jennifer Huseman or Returning Officer Reverend Stephen Williams were available for comment.

Students sleep rough to highlight plight of failed asylum seekers

DAVID WOODBRIDGE

Members of the LSE Amnesty International (AI) Society joined forces on Wednesday with other students across London to participate in a 'sleep out' protesting the Government's policy on failed asylum seekers.

Armed with a wide array of banners, and fortified with an endless supply of tea dispensed by the organisers, the LSE contingent linked up with groups from UCL, Imperial College and others outside St Paul's Church in Covent Garden from 6pm. Some were even eventually able to get some sleep, whilst others had brought guitars and singing continued long into the night.

The action, taken as part of Amnesty's *Still Human Still Here* campaign, aimed to raise awareness of the destitution many failed applicants for asylum face. Julianne Stevenson, President of the UCL Amnesty International Society and one of the night's main organisers, said that "most people are not aware that this is a problem...tonight is partly about getting media coverage [for the issue]". Her claim, that "...the government forces failed asylum seekers into destitution in an attempt to make them leave" is backed up by the findings of the Independent Asylum Commission last

October. It found that thousands of people are forced to spend years living in poverty after having their applications rejected.

Stevenson stated that a petition from the night, demanding from the Government access to healthcare, education, jobs etc. for failed asylum applicants, would garner "probably over a hundred" signatures. She added that she thought the night had gone "really well...there've been consistently high numbers and the speakers & message was really good".

The event attracted various guest speakers in the early evening, most notably Simon Hughes, the Liberal Democrat MP for North Southwark and Bermondsey and twice a candidate for the party leadership. Hughes urged people to write to their MPs and MEPs, and promised to table a motion in Parliament about the issue. He did not stay the night, however.

The unifying element to the night seemed particularly important in light of recent splits in the Students' Union. Will Perry, a 2nd-year Philosophy, Logic & Scientific Method undergraduate, said that "despite recent divisions over the Israel-Palestine issue, it is vitally important that students continue to be politically active." He added that "it is disgusting that people are made



Students outside St Paul's Church

destitute by the design of the asylum system in this country."

Eventually, the protestors had to be moved inside the church grounds. The night continued, though not without incident; some of the banners, which had been attached to the railings, were stolen noisily by drunks at around 2am. About an hour later, an actual destitute man, also drunk, forced his way into the church grounds to

hurl abuse before wandering off.

The following morning saw a steady trickle of people away from the event. Two unfortunate Imperial College students had to attend a 9am class.

Katy Pritchard, a 2nd-year Anthropology student, said that she had "really enjoyed the event...it was definitely worth getting cold for!" She did note that it was a "shame we had to

hide in the churchyard", but an LSE postgraduate (who wished to remain anonymous) nevertheless stated that she "hoped [the event] raised awareness".

London was not the only city to see such action; similar events also took place in Bristol, Glasgow, and Manchester, and the *Still Human Still Here* campaign is ongoing.

Living Wage campaigners plan for future

MICHAELDEAS
NEWS EDITOR

The LSE Living Wage Campaign reviewed the year's successes and planned future campaigns at an event in The Quad last week.

The audience, made up of members of 8 different societies, heard from a cleaner who had met Howard Davies to discuss improvements in cleaning and working conditions and was pleased with the success of the Living Wage campaign in raising wages for cleaning staff.

The cleaner also appealed for students to be more considerate and not generate extra work for cleaners.

The speakers also explained the successes of winning a Living Wage for several Canary Wharf banks and the action at the Tate Modern.

A cleaner from the Mayfair Hotel, which is the campaigners' next target, spoke about the pressures of working for less than the Living Wage for an employer who shows little respect for its workers.

LSE Students will join umbrella group London Citizens for a protest action outside the hotel on 18th March.

The campaigners also plan to link up with other groups to protest outside the offices of the Daily Express in response to comments made by editor Peter Hill about asylum seekers. Hill said that the reason he never prints good stories about asylum seekers is because there were "no good stories" to be told. The group plans to bring asylum seekers who have created a positive life for themselves in the UK to the action to show the editor there are interesting stories to tell.

Other future events discussed include the Mayoral Accountability Assembly on 9th April. The Assembly, organised by London Citizens, intends to allow citizens to put their issues to the candidates.

Societies held a series of workshops. The Labour Society arranged for parliamentary candidate Tom Copeland to discuss Labour's origins in grass roots union organising. People & Planet compared the principle of Living Wages in the UK to the Fairtrade ideas of fair wages for workers further afield. The Knitting society spearheaded a banner making drive. Democrats Abroad discussed Obama and Clinton's minimum wage policies and Living Wage campaigns in the US.

Sam Causton, Chair of the Citizens for Social Justice Society which organises the campaign, said, "The unity and the diversity in the room was quite unique for student events, with all ages (first year through to post grad, through to older cleaning staff and veteran activists) genders, races, political persuasions. A great change to some of the more partisan, bickering, politics that goes on at the LSE a lot of the time."

Everyone was unified by the testimony given by two cleaners."

Anybody interested in getting involved should contact su.soc.citizensforsocialjustice@lse.ac.uk.

Mayoral candidates address UGM

MICHAEL DEAS
NEWS EDITOR

Students were treated to a run-through of the Mayoral candidates' policies and promises at a hustings event organised at last week's UGM. Sian Berry, the Green Party candidate, Respect candidate Lindsey German and representatives of Ken Livingstone and Boris Johnson's campaign all gave a short speech and answered questions from the audience.

Speaking first, Sian Berry pledged to cut London's carbon footprint and attempted to show how fighting climate change saves money.

She cited the Congestion Charge as the first successfully implemented green tax and celebrated London as the only major city in the world where people are moving out of their cars and onto public transport.

The Green Party candidate suggested further initiatives to build on the momentum created by the charge, "I'll create greener and more affordable transport by cutting fares by 20p on every bus and on peak tube fares. By creating a new one pound an hour bus ticket to make changing buses cheaper."

Berry earned a huge round of applause when she pledged to



Students were treated to a hustings event at the UGM last week

extend the student discount on travelcards to all fares.

However, there were jeers as well as cheers when Berry congratulated fellow Green Party activist Aled Dilwyn Fisher on his election as General Secretary of the LSESU.

Berry also mentioned her involvement in recent Living Wage demonstrations which LSE students took part in and pledged to fight for a Living Wage for all Londoners.

Next up was Livingstone representative John Biggs, a London Assembly member, who, speaking just after Berry attempted to highlight a 'red-green coalition' in the London Assembly. Biggs claimed that such a coalition was needed if we are to "focus on the quality of life and the quality of environment and sustainability."

However, Berry later rejected the suggestion that there is a Red/Green coalition, claiming that as the Green Party mem-

bers of the London Assembly hold the balance of power they force Labour to make promises on the Environment in order to pass the budget and other motions.

Biggs also argued that, "Year on year we've seen decreases in recorded crime in London and it's a tribute to the leadership of Ken Livingstone and the administration that we've achieved that."

Livingstone would also extend student travel dis-

counts, Biggs said.

Ed Vaizey MP said he regretted not being Boris Johnson and then proceeded to attempt to make up for it by acting the jester in a Johnson like fashion.

He told students that Johnson's specific policies could be found online but that "Ken's leadership is beginning to fail. Boris Johnson will make a fresh new, fantastic new mayor for London."

The MP also pledged to scrap the "cyclist killing, fare evading bendy buses" but failed to show an understanding of his audience who later said they enjoy bendy buses because you can board them without paying. Vaizey asked students to take part in a competition to design a new version of the much-loved Routemasters.

Vaizey also mentioned the 21 teenagers killed in London last year and said Johnson would create a fresh approach to gang related violence. He also ridiculed Aled Dilwyn Fisher for being a "Green Stooze". He then added that it was unfair to claim that extending student travel discounts was possible when Transport for London financial data was unavailable.

Respect candidate Lindsey German won a huge round of

applause when she informed the audience that she is an Honorary Student of the Students' Union.

She also congratulated the Students' Union on their divestment motion.

Speaking about her plans German said, "We live in one of the richest cities in the world, but the gap between the richest and poorest is growing. I'd like to see some of the money from London, particularly the city of London, used to fund transport and housing in the city."

German was more scathing of London's public transport system, "We have the worst and most expensive public transport in the world. I think that not just pensioners should have free travel, I think that students should have free travel."

During questions, Vaizey was forced to defend some of Johnson's offensive questions and joked with student James Ketteringham who was heckling him.

There was also a question requesting clarification on the candidates' positions regarding City Airport. Berry stated that she would close the airport and use the public land to house a 'Green industry park'. Biggs stated that Livingstone believes the airport can be closed if the controversial third runway is built at Heathrow.

Registering to vote



As London residents you are all entitled to cast your vote if you are: more than 18 on the 1st of May and a British, Commonwealth or EU citizen.

However, to do so, you need to register first. It's an easy and painless process (no, really).

You just need to download a registration form on this webpage: <http://www.londonelects.org.uk>

The voting system



Under the Supplementary Vote system used voters express a first choice and (optionally) a second choice. If no candidate receives 50% of first choice votes, the top two candidates go to a second round. Voters whose first choice has been eliminated but whose second choice is one of the top two candidates have their second preference vote added to the first-round totals for the leading candidates. This gives a result whereby the winning candidate can claim majority support.

Polling Day



If you register you will receive a polling card shortly before 1st May. The polling card will tell you where your nearest polling station is, where you will be given three voting slips. The first will ask you to state your first and second preference for Mayor. The second for your local representative for the 25-member London Assembly, and the third for a political party from which you want a further 11 members to be chosen under proportional representation system.



Ken Livingstone
Labour

- Continue investing to transform London's transport system
- Continue the six per cent reduction in crime each year
- Build a minimum fifty thousand new affordable homes in the next three years
- Extend the student travel discount to Oyster One Day Travelcards; maintain free travel for under-18s on the buses
- A £25 a day charge for high carbon-emitting gas guzzlers to enter the central London congestion zone and no charge for the greenest cars,
- Youth centres for our young people



Boris Johnson
Conservative

- Our buses have improved, but there is more we can do. Londoners must see more police on the buses, especially in outer London.
- We have to work with the police and communities to prevent young Londoners becoming victims of gang violence.
- To fight for a lasting legacy for London; the after-effects of the Olympics must be felt for decades.
- I will make our streets and open spaces safer, so that Londoners feel confident in cycling and exercising outdoors.



Brian Paddick
Liberal Democrat

- Brian plans to chair the Metropolitan Police Authority to hold the Metropolitan Police Service to account for its performance in reducing crime.
- He'll review how the Tube is managed, following the collapse of Metronet and Labour's failed PPP project
- The lack of affordable housing near where Londoners work keeps people off the housing ladder and contributes to congestion on the roads and overcrowding on public transport.
- Brian will keep the Mayor's contribution to the council tax down by cutting waste at City Hall



Siân Berry
Green

- Free insulation to every home that needs it.
- A 20p cut to all bus fares and off-peak tube fares.
- Increase the affordable housing requirement in the London Plan to 60%.
- All public employers to pay a living wage of at least £7.20 and robust pressure to be put on private employers to match this.
- Student discount on public transport extended to pay-as-you-go.
- Demand the write-off of housing debt so London can get building social housing again.



Lindsey German
Respect

- All new London homes should be affordable
- Decent and cheap public transport to encourage people out of their cars and onto buses, trains and tubes.
- Bringing back conductors and guards on all transport to make it safer and more pleasant.
- Free breakfasts and fruit for every child.
- No selling off of playing fields for development, these are a resource which belong to everyone and should ensure future healthy generations.
- Oppose war on terror



Brian Haw
Independent

- Brian has been protesting in Parliament Square since 2nd June 2001. Initially he was campaigning against the economic sanctions on Iraq. After 11 September 2001, he widened his focus, directing his messages of peace against the 'war on terror'
- Small Parties**
- One London - Damian Hockney
- UKIP - Gerard Batten
- BNP - Richard Barnbrook
- English Democrats - Garry Bushell
- Time Out Magazine - Michael Hodges

LSE to open climate change economics study centre

TIMOTHY ROOT
MANAGING EDITOR

The LSE and University of Leeds are to receive a £5 million grant from the Economic and Social Research Council to establish a new centre to analyse how society should be responding to the social and economic challenge of climate change.

The Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy will conduct research across academic fields with the aim of examining the ways our political and economic systems should change to accommodate climate change.

According to the LSE press office, its research will have four main strands: "Developing better physical and economic models of climate change", "Examining how to overcome the deadlock in international climate-change talks", "Understanding how developing economies can adapt to climate change", and "Identifying strategies for efficient emissions reductions in industrialised countries."

The centre is the first of its kind in the UK, and will be led by Lord Stern of Brentford, the current IG Patel Chair at LSE and former Chief Economist of the World Bank. It will be managed by Leeds University's Professor Andy Gouldson and the LSE's Judith Rees, Professor of Environmental and Resources Management.

Professor Stern said: "As the scientists continue to play



Part B's artistic interpretation of global warming's effect at LSE

their role in analysing the causes and effects of climate change, it is crucial that social scientists take a lead in the building of policy. The aim of the Centre for Climate Change and Economics Policy is to advance climate-change policy

by improving both the evidence and the tools available to decision-makers. The centre format is crucial to our ability to do this in a flexible and timely way."

It will aim to establish links with policy-makers

across the world to share its findings. Additionally, according to the LSE press office, "It will hold regular conferences and briefings to highlight its findings, publish research freely online and set up an internet forum to allow rapid reaction to and discussion of its work." It will also allow policy makers to have a say in the research it conducts through the use of a steering committee.

Professor Gouldson, Director of the Sustainability Research Institute at the University of Leeds, said: "Climate change policy is at a critical point. Internationally, there are intense discussions about what happens when the Kyoto protocol ends in 2012 - should Europe take the lead, or should it only act if countries like the US, India and China also commit to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions? And once commitments have been made, what policies are needed to deliver rapid reductions in emissions and to enable vulnerable countries and communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change?"

Professor Rees said: "The centre will bring together experts from many different disciplines to improve our thinking on climate-change. We will ask questions about how much we should invest to protect the vulnerable from climate change, about who should pay and who should enjoy the benefits of this investment and about whether society is able to change its policies and behaviours to create low-carbon economies".

Teaching quality review completed

RAJAN PATEL
SENIOR REPORTER

Howard Davies has emphasised the need to "bring the academic community along" with recommendations of the LSE's Teaching Taskforce, which are to be discussed at a meeting of the Academic Board on 28 May.

The Teaching Task Force was set up at the beginning of the academic year and student dissatisfaction with teaching quality has emerged as a major issue this year.

The *Beaver* reported in Michaelmas Term that results from the International Student Barometer survey had placed the LSE 53rd out of 56 UK universities for "good teaching". Only 59 per cent of LSE undergraduates completing the National Student Survey believed that they had received "sufficient advice and support" with their studies.

It is expected that the Task Force's recommendations will relate primarily to contact between permanent staff and students, class sizes and incentivising good teaching. Additional training for teaching staff and more student evaluation will also be addressed.

Implementing any reforms of teaching practice will be the job of departmental leaders and all academics. In an interview with *The Beaver*, Howard Davies also said, "It's fine for me to talk about improving teaching, but it's largely their [academics'] work."

The Task Force's work began with a report submitted by Janet Hartley, the School's pro-director for teaching and learning, to the School's Academic Board in October 2007.

Her report suggested a perception among academic staff that "the only thing that matters for promotion... is [research] publications". Problems with adequately incentivising good teaching were identified as contributing to the shortcomings of LSE teaching.

The LSE's Task Force was modelled on a similar group established at Harvard. The Harvard group concluded in January 2007 that the university's overwhelming focus on "individual, professionally certified breakthroughs in academic research" was harming efforts to develop better teaching methods.

In order to make teaching a greater priority for academic staff, it suggested that annual salary reviews for tenured staff should take account of teaching performance. It also advised that funding should be allocated for research into new approaches to teaching and called for senior staff to advise their junior colleagues more fully.

Ruhana Ali, the LSE Students' Union Education and Welfare Officer, is the sole representative of students' interests on the Task Force.

She said, "I am happy and confident that I was able to represent the views of the student body competently throughout the process and that many of the suggestions that were put forward in the academic affairs taskforce paper have been carefully considered in the final report."

In Ali's recommendations, she noted that "students' experience of teaching at the LSE often did not match their expectations". Her report also highlighted the problem of "language barriers" between teachers and students and the need for stronger academic support from personal tutors.

She added, "I have really felt that the commitment to improving teaching quality... has been taken seriously by both the School and the Student Union. The whole consultation process was very co-operative and I have full confidence that the recommendations, subject to the approval of the Academic Board, will be a top priority in the following months."

A full report on the Teaching Task Force's recommendations will appear in the first *Beaver* of next academic year.

General Secretary-Elect Aled Fisher to run for London Assembly

MICHAEL DEAS
NEWS EDITOR

General Secretary-Elect Aled Dilwyn Fisher is standing in London Assembly (LA) elections for the North-East London constituency held on 1 May. Fisher, the male co-chair of the LSE Students' Union Green Party, is running in the election as a Green Party candidate.



There are currently two green party members on the 25 strong London assembly. Wil

Barber and Dan Sheldon are also members of the LSE SUSU Green Party Society, earning three out of the four LSESU sabbatical officers-elect are 'Young Greens'.

"I am standing the the London Assembly elections in the North-East Constituency to put issues like climate change, the Living Wage, affordable housing and making the Olympics work for Londoners on the agenda for the election. No other parties are talking about building a democratic,

egalitarian, sustainable city." said Fisher.

He also denied suggestions that should he be elected that there would be conflict between the LA and General Secretary roles.

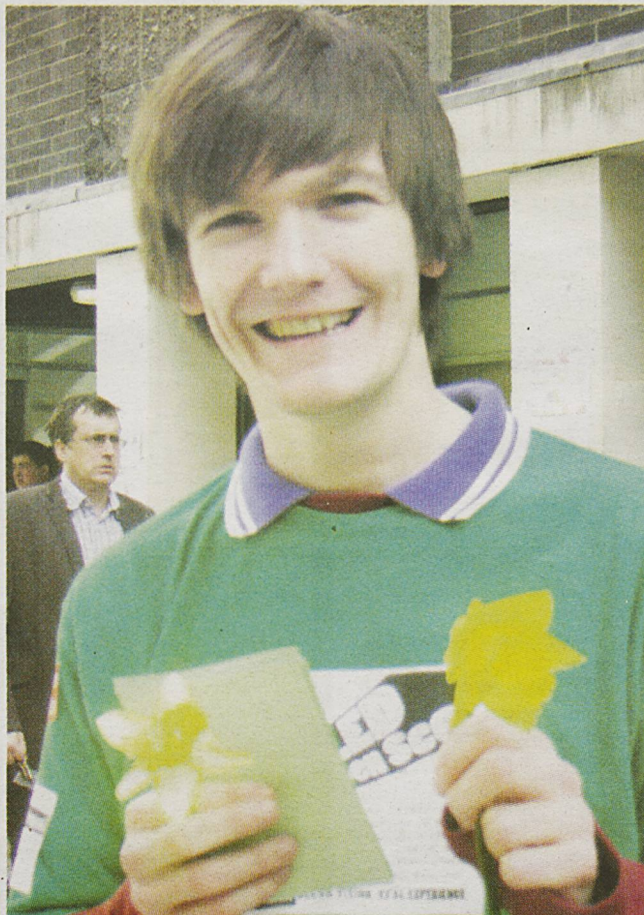
"Being an Assembly Member is not a full-time job - most other LA members are councillors, I think one is an MP, and all have other jobs and interests they pursue."

"Most people who run in Sabb elections have a full-time job that they be fairly certain of as a back up if things go wrong. I didn't have that - I wanted to be General Secretary and nothing else" he added.

Fisher has been greatly involved in the Green Party, holding a senior position with the Young Greens organisation. Green Party Mayoral Candidate Sian Berry evoked jeers when she congratulated Fisher on his General Secretary success.

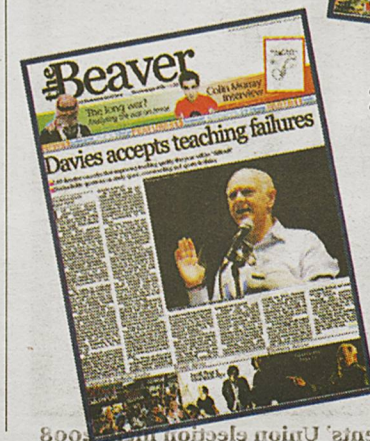
Fisher was elected General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union two weeks ago with 38% of the vote.

The North-East London constituency covers Islington, Hackney and Waltham Forest. British, Commonwealth and EU citizens can register to vote until April 16 at LondonElects.org.



General Secretary-Elect Fisher ran a Green themed campaign

30 October 2007 - *The Beaver* publishes student teaching surveys showing the gulf between the LSE and other leading universities



22 November 2007 - Howard Davies pledges to address poor teaching "as fast as we can" at the Union General Meeting

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

End of an era...

Fadhil
Bakeer
Markar

“Not quite yet”, one would say because the Sabbatical Officers will only be handing over duties in the first couple of weeks of July. Many think that Sabbatical Officers' work load significantly reduces from Easter onwards. I am yet to experience that, but all four of us have some great plans for this coming few months. The role of General Secretary, or any sabbatical position, is not easy as one would imagine. You need to be a good time manager, organiser, calm individual and should be willing to put a lot of hours for the job (yes more than investment bankers!). On a more positive note, there have been some great new developments – from short to long term – in the past year. When you all come back from Easter holidays, the 24-hour common room will be opened. From next academic year, you will be able to witness and be a customer of the new union shop in the New Academic Building. And four to five years from now, when you come back to visit this great institution of ours, you will be

One year since Union elections, our Sabbaticals and Executive have a number of achievements to show for, and even more are to be seen next term

able to witness the brand new, state of the art Students' Union Building; a building at the centre of all student activities.

On top of these, there have been many other great



Being General Secretary has been a great learning curve in my life. Any past or present sabbatical will agree with me

achievements this year by the Sabbatical Officers and the dedicated executive committee – yes James Bacon, you are a part of this great team – but in the coming few months, you will see more changes, more positive ones.

Nearly a year ago, I suc-

cessfully campaigned with my so called 'Blue army' to get elected to this position – a position of great responsibility – and now I have no regrets in doing so. Rather I am so glad I did it and thank the Almighty for guiding me in making the right decision. Being General Secretary has been a great learning curve in my life. Any past or present sabbatical will agree with me on this. I am positive that the Sabbaticals-elect will say the same next year. To the first and second years: run for office, since getting involved in the Union is something you won't regret at any cost! The exposure and the experience you get in this job is immense; you have to administer and manage the Union activities and its services, represent the voice of students and their concerns to the school and to the affiliated bodies, to face the political front. Politics, the activism and campaigns, are what makes our union so unique. Finally, facing student media is the toughest of all. Trust me when I say, facing *The Beaver* has made me realise and understand a lot of things, and thus

I can now say I am ready to face any national or international media because I have been involved with this very tough media institution.

This year's Executive, including our returning officer, has been a wonderful, diverse and hugely supportive team. Special mention should go for the rest of my sabbatical colleagues, Libby, Kayt and Ruhana! You guys have simply been amazing! I couldn't have asked for a better team; you guys rock! Even though I am looking forward for the next few months to work with you all, I will definitely miss working with you guys when we sign off in July. As work colleagues, it is definitely an end of an era, but it's surely just the beginning of a great new friendship.

I will be thanking everyone personally, when my term ends, but as this is the final *Beaver*, I think it's appropriate for me to thank everyone who has been supportive. All the members of our Union, the Sabbaticals, Executive, Union staff, everyone in the School, and more importantly all my friends, who have helped me campaign, who have been there very close at difficult times, and helped me in many different ways in the last three years; I owe you all big time!

I would also like to sincerely apologise if I have in any way hurt someone's feelings or done the wrong thing without realising, sorry!

With Aled as a passionate leader, I have no doubt that the next year's Executive and Sabbatical Officers will do

wonders. Wish you all the very best guys, but remember one thing; always do the right thing, be calm and relaxed, because your decision might not please everyone, but by doing the right thing you will still be able to have your head up and say you have done what is right.

Finally, I have learnt many lessons and gained so much knowledge and experience from my role as General Secretary, and from my involvement in the Union for the past 3 years. Thus this is not the end, this is just the beginning of a new era in my life, next year as a student, and I will stay close to the Union, to the School and to all of you. I am certain this experience that I got, will be a great platform for my future.



Fadhil Bakeer Markar on winning General Secretary election 2007

Another union is possible...

Aled
Fisher

The multitude of challenges facing today's students - both within LSE and outside - can be faced by our committed General Secretary

It goes without saying that students here have enormous potential. To get to LSE, we must have energy and intelligence. We can use our ability to make the university and the world a better place. At no other point in our life will we have the collective power we have now. Students' Unions exist to mobilise students for action – but we have failed to do that. That is, until now.

There are two groups in

particular that the Union has failed – international students and postgraduates. And when the Union fails to defend students, there's no chance that they can be truly heard by the school.

We should be defending postgraduates – at school, where they deserve Wednesday afternoons free, and nationally, where they deserve access to cheap loans available to undergraduates. We should be defending international stu-

dents – at school, where they deserve support with living in a new country, and nationally, where they deserve to be able to apply for visas without facing charges and delays. The Union's internal workings need to be thrown open to these students – we need to give postgraduates and international students a reason to participate in UGMs or elections. But we must first empower all students to know their rights and how they can stand up for themselves, rather than being the 'they' we claim to represent. All students must feel invested in the Union.

We have to get this right from the start of the year by revolutionising Freshers Fortnight. LSE is one of the most diverse communities in the world – but why is it that we come here, and instead of integrating, all too often fall back into comfortable association with people of the same background or nationality? Freshers shouldn't just be a series of alcohol-fuelled events – it should be a program of action, empowerment and education. We should welcome stu-

dents to the LSE community and wider London life. It must be something to remember, something that challenges our assumptions and ideas, a celebration of our diversity and our capacity for positive change. Next year's Freshers program will be very different.

But we must not only hit the ground running, but maintain that momentum. The most embarrassing aspect of elections is going up to people I don't know and speaking to them for the first time simply to get their vote. Why is it that we aren't out talking to students more regularly? The new Executive won't be afraid to go onto Houghton Street and into halls, getting people to come to the UGM and doing everything they can to hear what our students actually want. We also need to tell our students what we are actually doing for them. We need to be able to point to tangible things we are changing.

The Students' Union can fight fees and make the NUS a better vehicle for defending students' interests. Education is a right, not a privilege, and free education should be as fundamental a principle as free healthcare. This Union can also pioneer green initiatives. University campuses or

shared living spaces, like Halls, have great potential for sharing resources, raising awareness and encouraging action. Above all, a clean, green campus would be one of local organic food, green spaces and more – a healthy, happy and interesting place to study.

I said during my election



We also need to tell our students what we are actually doing for them. We need to be able to point to tangible things we are changing

campaign that an international university needs an internationalist Union – but some people think that students in London cannot affect the situation in Darfur, Gaza or Rangoon. They may be right –

but surely we must do everything within our power to show solidarity with students and the oppressed around the world. Many international students told me that they felt it was important to discuss, at the very least, how we could offer students support where they face oppression, particularly in countries from which LSE students hail. To say we can't make a difference is to give up without even trying.

Above all, we must realise that everything is 'political'. When we don't have top class teaching, it's the result of political decision or indecision – choices made as to where to allocate resources. The struggles we face are linked – we have to struggle to make LSE's resources work for LSE's students. We can build a Union that fights the trends in society that stop students from getting the education they deserve, and make LSE an inspiring place, with a real community spirit and a genuine commitment to social justice and liberty that marked its founders.

The expectations for this new Executive are high. I can't wait to get started and fulfil the potential we have.

Another Union is possible – let's make it happen.



Aled Dilwyn Fisher on Students' Union election night 2008

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

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Confessions of an Israeli



Noa Maiman

For some Israeli students at LSE, this term has proved to be time of intense confrontation rather than learning, with poor dialogue opportunities

The last term was not easy for me. The climate on campus around the Israel-Palestine conflict reached new peaks. In this point you might say it is nothing compared to what is going on in Gaza. And indeed, the situation is bad; a significant amount of Israeli peace activists can vouch for that. But nobody has monopoly on suffering. Nobody really wants to quantify pain. For the kid in Sderot that for two years now couldn't go to school due to the daily rain of rockets, one of which killed his baby sister last week, the trauma also exists.

In fact, I was one of those left wing activists that has spent most of their life struggling for peace. As a chair of the Youth Labour Party in Israel, I spent two years giving all I can to make sure Rabin's assassination would not affect the aspiration for peace; that an extreme minority of religious fundamentalism from both sides would stop imposing their will upon us.

I applied to do my MSc in Comparative Politics because I wanted to learn about conflicts. Ironically enough, although with studying as one goal in mind - thinking and

developing an open minded perspective - I found myself from day one on campus forced to become an ambassador for my country. Not because I wanted to - I want to learn - but because my coun-



I found myself from day one on campus forced to become an ambassador for my country

try is constantly under attack.

Is there a reason for this attack? There are things to be said against Israel's political conduct, but is this attack reasonably proportionate? How much easier can it be to constantly criticise Israel, when unfortunately a weaker reaction is mounted for the two million (and counting) dead in Sudan? I suspect in the Middle

East many of us grow up with trauma. Some of my traumas, besides losing friends from terror attacks and fearing using public transport myself, has to do with the time I served in the army. The lynching of an Israeli soldier in Ramallah was the first time, and I hope the last, that I got to see a pumping heart pulled out of a person's body. The soldier was younger than me at the time, just migrated to Israel from Russia and was not in any combatant unit.

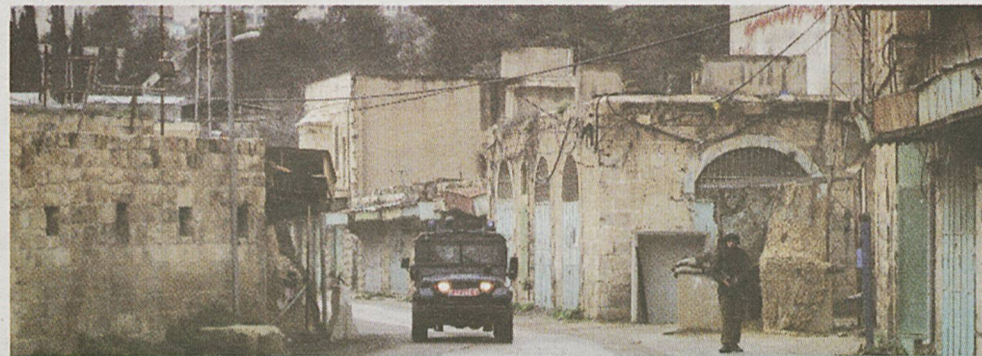
That was when I started doubting the possibility of resolution to this conflict. Myself I would like to do quite a few things to Hitler if the opportunity arrived, but I would be

doomed if I'll lose my humanity. I could never reach a hand and pull out a beating heart. And although some people on campus try to create a strong link between Nazi Germany and Israel, but we can surely agree the case is not of gas chambers and industrial extermination projects.

I am sensitised to the subject. My grandparents both are holocaust survivors. They both lost a first spouse and their first born. They also lost their parents and siblings. My father was conceived in a refugee camp in Germany early 1946. His parents were not allowed to go to Israel. They had to spend another twenty years as a minority in a foreign country. My grandmother is still alive. She deserves to know by the age of 93, that her family would not have to go through

what she had to ever again.

And from here I want to approach the Palestine society on a personal note: in a letter to the Israel Society, you suggested conditions for future dialogue. To base the discussion on values of human rights, I agree completely. However, bare in mind that Israelis are humans too. The second condition for discussion, the agreement on a one state solution, was very cleverly brought in, but I strongly disagree with you. I believe the conflict solution should include a two state solution. If there is any solution whatsoever, that would be the one. But this is exactly where our dialogue begins and I suggest that you join me for a discussion of possible solutions for the Israel-Palestine situation.



Israeli troops patrol in Hebron

Photograph: Charlie Gluckman.

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Why they don't exist



Sean Whittington-Roy

The case example of Mehdi Kazemi's possible repatriation to Iran demonstrates the unjust nature of our current asylum application system

The death penalty has not been used in the UK for over 40 years, yet the Home Office still hands out what are effectively death sentences. In an asylum system with a focus on cutting the numbers of those who receive asylum, many people with legitimate claims to the safety and security that the UK can provide are being turned away and deported.

This system was highlighted this week with the news of the rejected asylum claim of Mehdi Kazemi, a gay Iranian

student who initially came to the UK to study. While here, he received news that his boyfriend had been executed back in Iran because of his sexuality. Kazemi sought asylum, claiming that he would face imprisonment, torture and execution if he was to return to Iran. His claim was refused, apparently because of a discrepancy in dates due to the differences in calendars used. He fled to Holland, but is likely to be deported back to the UK, from where he will likely be sent to Iran. Kazemi is said

to be on suicide watch.

Home Office guidelines for claims of asylum from Iran play down the importance of sexuality, even though the reality is that many rights and freedoms are denied to sexual minorities. One clear demonstration of this is that the Iranian state helps to fund sex change operations, believing them to be a better alternative to 'homosexual acts'. With the exception of Thailand, Iran performs more of these operations than any other country. Those who go through with the operations are frequently left ostracised, and would rather be allowed to live as they feel they were born to be.

Iran has a clear precedent for executing people because of their sexuality, and ignores many of the international standards on capital punishment, such as the execution of minors. But the point is not to lament the state of affairs in Iran, as few, if any of us have any influence over them. What is shocking is our own government's treatment of asylum seekers who come to this country, and the apparent ease with which people will be sent back to countries where they are at risk.

This leaves many legitimate asylum seekers here in a desperate position. Unable to return home, their only option is to leave Britain, as Mehdi Kazemi did, or to live a life of destitution, unable to get jobs or claim government support. Should Kazemi be returned to the UK from Holland and allowed to appeal against the decision to deport him again, he would likely be in this posi-



As a government policy, enforced destitution is shameful for a country as prosperous as ours

As a government policy, enforced destitution is shameful for a country as prosperous as ours.

There are three main issues highlighted by Kazemi's case which need to be addressed. Firstly, the Home Office must be more willing to take LGBT issues seriously when considering asylum claims. There is currently no training provided for staff in this area and the guidelines are inadequate, as Kazemi's case painfully demonstrates.

Secondly, the granting of asylum should be focused on protecting those in need, not on quotas. In 2006, 47% of Somalis who appealed against decisions to deport them had their refusals overturned, with similar figures for many other countries. There are people with legitimate claims to asylum being turned away, with devastating consequences.

Finally, the policy of enforced destitution must be brought to an end. It is inhumane, unnecessary and counterproductive. In a country like this, we have the ability to look after those in need, or at least provide them with the opportunity to work. The government's own research shows that enforced destitution results in fewer people voluntarily returning to their home country. Destitution forces needy people underground and into even more dangerous situations, yet also makes them untraceable. It is possible to take a tough stance on immigration as well as providing people with legitimate claims to asylum with the safety they require.



Iran, where homosexuals apparently don't exist

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COMMENT
& ANALYSIS

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the Beaver

Established 1949 - Issue 684

Stressful
times......no need for that sort of
language

The Beaver can only extend its sympathy to those students told this week that they would be being booted out of the School for non-payment of their fees, a threat later withdrawn after the clear communications failure between the School and the Student Loans Company (SLC). The Fees Office must surely be examined for this, because while everybody makes mistakes, it is both the manner and the scale of the mistake that sticks in the craw.

The manner was needlessly aggressive. The language used in the paragraph "Your library rights are now being withdrawn, you will have access to the building to use the books on the shelves, but will not be able to borrow anything. The next stage is that you may be de-registered and will cease to be a student," is draconian in the extreme, and not what any student should expect from their university - certainly not as a first warning.

Following that up with "Do not contact the Fees Office to tell us you are paying, the process will only stop when we have received your money", is, particularly for those students conscientious enough to pay the fees upon receiving this notice, adding insult to quite significant financial injury.

For many students, living away from home and dealing with their own finances for the first time, balancing the books can be difficult enough, without having to worry that those managing affairs from the School's end could make such a dramatic error.

The scale of the mistake is also staggering. The Fees Office apologetic later email spoke of "the volume of replies to this morning's email", and this, combined with the number of complaints The Beaver itself has received, suggests that a significantly large number of students received the first email. Surely the high number of names in the "to:" field should have given the Fees Office a pause for thought?

The Beaver hopes that all students who were expecting the SLC to fund their fees gets their situation in order. It would be a travesty if any student was left out of pocket, or worse, out of school, because of this sort of cock-up.

They may not
"exist"......but we must still
recognise them

The Beaver feels compelled to add its voice to those protesting the deportation of Mehdi Kazemi. Britain, as a party to the second protocol of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), is legally, not to mention morally, bound not to deport this student to a country where he will face the death penalty purely because of his sexuality. It states "that no one within the jurisdiction of a State Party to the present protocol shall be executed." The explicit aim of this protocol is the abolishment of the death penalty.

It may be one thing to snigger at Mahmoud Ahmadinejad when he claims that there are no homosexuals, but the reality for Iran's homosexuals is no laughing matter. In Iran, sodomy is a crime for the penalty is death, and if the participants are adults then the method of execution is for the Shari'a judge to decide. Youths found guilty of sodomy can be sentenced to 74 lashes; indeed, if a man so much deigns to "kiss another with lust" the punishment is 60 lashes. The punishment for female homosexuality 100 lashes on the first three occasions. On the fourth occasion it is death.

This law is barbaric and abhorrent, and for the British government to endorse it, even tacitly, is abominable.

Apologies

The Beaver would like to apologise with regard to the article on page 8 entitled "Our Friend Che" in last week's issue. It has subsequently come to our attention that the author of the article had plagiarised a high proportion of the content from an article written by Humberto Fontonova. The Beaver would like to thank the students that brought this matter to our attention.

Letters to the Editor



The Beaver offers all readers the right to reply to anything that appears in the paper. Letters should be sent to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk and should be no longer than 250 words. All letters must be received by 3pm on the Sunday prior to publication. The Beaver reserves the right to edit letters prior to publication.

"pure student"

Dear Sir,

I was saddened to read in last week's *Beaver* that Chloe Pieters felt "alienated" following the recent furore over the Israel-Palestine motions at UGM, and I too believe that the motions were a futile exercise which merely served to cause controversy and divisions within the student body. However, as a first year who has "been thrust into these various debates blind", I disagree with her and many others on the assertion that low UGM attendance and general apathy at LSE is due to the discussion around international politics, and that a return to pure student politics would somehow reverse this trend. I attended the UGM following the first Israel-Palestine motion where C&S announced their ruling on the previous week's vote and watched as the many lively students who had attended the UGM at the beginning hastily filtered out after the decision was given and the real mundane student politics began. The pleas of the Chair to stay for the rest of the UGM were ignored. Why? Because student politics at LSE is the domain of a specific clique and a few on the periphery such as myself who enjoy the spectacle. To blame the SU or the Palestine Society is to ignore the real, underlying issue of why the apathetic majority remain uninterested.

Mazida Khatun

"Israel ended"

Dear Sir,

I could not help but notice the statement by Ziyaad Lunat and Charlotte Galvin in last week's article 'A response to "facts"' that in the Iraq war "the British government... conducted war crimes". It was disappointing that this deadly serious allegation was made in a casual manner without any supporting evidence or legal justification whatsoever. After all, unlike the regime of Saddam Hussein before the war and the 'insurgency' that came after it, the British government was not conducting a campaign of ethnic or religious cleansing against civilians.

I was also disappointed by their argument that Palestinian attacks against Israeli civilians had to be put in 'context' and were merely the 'inevitable consequence of colonialism, apartheid or occupation'. Not only is this argument morally bankrupt, by absolving terrorists of responsibility for their own actions, but it does not fit the facts: Israel ended its occupation of the Gaza Strip in 2005, but from Gaza thousands of rockets continue to be fired into Israeli towns, particularly now that Gaza is under the control of Hamas. Perhaps if they truly wanted to 'understand the causes' of ongoing attacks on Israel, they would do better to look at the Hamas

Charter, which opens with a quote from Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, stating that "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it", and which also states: "Muslims will fight the Jews and kill them, until the Jews hide behind rocks and trees, which will cry 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him!'"

Peter John Cannon

"rough him"

Dear Sir,

I am writing in relation to the frontpage article you published covering the LSE SU election results. You reported of my alleged threats to the Mature & Part-Time Students Officer; Ziyaad Lunat. Yes! I accept that I did threaten to send 10 East End lads down to rough him up, if he didn't withdraw from the Comms race.

In all seriousness, I believe that having denied the allegations and subsequently Ziyaad denying that any threats were made, it is quite conspicuous that such hearsay was plucked out of thin air. Ziyaad is a very good friend of mine and it was him who persuaded me to run for the Comms role in the first place. There are some elements of truth in your reporting i.e. that he agreed to secure endorsements for me from societies where his voice was quite influential. Alas he failed to secure me anything, save the one endorsement from Palsoc - no surprises there!

In future, I would request that you refrain from publishing such allegations, where both parties concerned denied the nature of it. Your article has been quite distressful to myself and to those who worked tirelessly on my election campaign.

This is not the first time I have survived a character assassination attempt by your paper; in the past you selectively published bits of my email sent to fellow C&S members and James Bacon, without giving due consideration to the main substance of the email. Sir, I have proved that I am a man of integrity and your Kafkaesque reporting will not hinder me from progressing.

Abz Hussain

"trite teenage"

Dear Sir,

Alon Ben-Cnaan has set himself the task of enlightening trite teenage lefties about Che Guevara and in so doing reproduces the liberal ideology of the cynical consensus and degrades the significance of critique.

His confessions deriding self-proclaimed "idealists, humanitarians, revolutionaries" evacuate, in normalising fashion, the actual site of

ridiculousness on campus. Turn your head Alon, and witness the much more pervasive idiocy on Houghton Street: Posh and expensive outfits, preppy mini-bankers at over-priced cafés, clubbing-clad 18 year-olds with Louis Vuitton bags at ten in the morning-soiled and enjoying it.

You say Che's firing squads were "perfectly rational and cold-blooded exercises". Replace 'firing squad' with 'financial speculators' who have caused crises, livelihood devastation and insecurity in their self-congratulatory project of structural violence.

About Che you write "here's the guy who helped turn the Caribbean's party capital into a vast forced labor and prison camp". Lamenting the overthrow of the beach resort used by the American wealthy for gambling and prostitution is an effacement of history and struggle. Inserting the word 'party' does not convince, you self-indulgent idio*. Today's post-political ideological universe - where 'partying' reigns supreme - reduces argument and persuasion to taking things as they 'really are'. This 'common sense, self-evidence' is the worst ideology, because it utterly defaces dissent: accept, conform, don't think.

'Dressing radically' is easy, even trendy, but one cannot purchase radical thought. By reducing the student left to merchandise, you attempt to bypass critical intellectual engagement and end up redirecting our attention to your satisfaction with the moderate mediocrity of the cynical consensus.

You attempt to irrationalise and discredit the student left by highlighting their anti-western slogans. But our scorn is directed at a group of people, who constitute a class - that is not necessarily 'western' as the LSE illustrates. Actually 'western' thought has been very radical indeed, it's just been commodified by you lot, and alongside, thinking has been denigrated and conjured away. Your self-intoxicating yelp of conformity and supremacy, however, ends rightly: pin-up Che is a hit because of his high cheekbones. But I am surprised you did not notice where he predominantly hangs - Salsa night and FT ads, Madonna albums... The superficiality of the image-based commodity fetish is able to co-opt and capitalize efficiently, but the contemporary accompanying ideology of cynical conformity cannot evacuate the thinking of dissent.

Enrique Martino-Martin

"constructive steps"

Dear Sir,

Following last week's election results, I wanted to use this opportunity to thank Wil and Shayaan and their respective campaign teams for the extremely cordial and fun

manner in which our election was fought.

In all honesty, I have not been particularly disappointed by my personal defeat. I have always thought that without new and changing experiences, life becomes uninteresting and after being at the LSE a fair old while, I know I am really ready to leave now. I am also satisfied that a decent and intelligent guy like Wil will reside in E206 next year.

However as I leave the LSE, I would like to express why despite a good deal of hope, I am not filled with unequivocal optimism for the future. Whilst full of personal respect for Aled and others, in my political time at the LSE I have made no secret of my unease at some of the political tactics he has pursued and think it would be pointless to claim I think differently now. Tactics which I believe have undermined free speech: whether it be the Sutherland protest; or attempts to condemn academic research; or attempts to politically manipulate *The Beaver* collective; or attempts to polarise the situation in Palestine by supporting illiberal policies like the academic boycott; or general disdain of those with different political perspectives; have undoubtedly irked the student body.

These actions, as I (and many others) have said in the past, are anathema to many in the School who respect and admire the Fabian principles of free speech, which have made the LSE one of the leading centres for the social sciences today. The success of those who I believe have previously been uncomfortable with these aims - and the victory of those wishing to continue Fadhil's dire legacy of grandstanding on international problems, whilst ignoring some of the important issues around the School - may lead many students to look at the SU's future with scepticism.

However, 2008-9 and beyond are a blank page of opportunity. Now with a great deal of experience, combined with a level of competence that has never been questioned, I believe Aled can lead a team that than can push a more inclusive approach to politics which finally will make real progress on some of the issues affecting students. However, if that does not happen, I hope that those on the SU Exec, particularly Wil, Dan and Emmanuel, will take constructive steps to ensure that progress can be made.

The future is bright: people at the LSE are amongst the brightest and progressive lot around anywhere. However, with things as they are, they must ensure that if their elected representatives fail to do the necessary to tackle the continued slide of the School, students themselves will need to work to face these challenges, rather than merely resigning themselves to apathy.

Doug Oliver

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

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Another world is possible

Mourning black



Patrick Cullen

Some weeks ago, I wrote an article on Anarchism for *partB* which, quite amazingly, received a reply in the letters page of this August publication. The writer questioned the inclusion of a branch of anarchism known as anarcho-capitalism within the short list of anarchisms that I mentioned. Anarcho-capitalism is indeed, as he pointed out, an oxymoron. Anarchism, in its opposition to all forms of power-based relationships – be they those at the point of a gun or through the power held over another by dint of socialisation (always stand up when the teacher comes into the classroom, always treat the police with respect, etc) – is by necessity opposed to capitalism, which is the most common method of organising society precisely so that the few have power over the many.

So what is anarcho-capitalism? Put bluntly, and sparingly, it is the rule of capitalism alone, with no state to administer it, indeed nothing will administer capitalism but the market, with supply and demand serving as auditors,

While Anarchism strives for an unobtainable utopia, the essential principles offered for basic human interaction could allow for a better world

checks, and balances. In other words, it is anarchist in that it calls for the abolition of the state – but it is most clearly anti-anarchist in that it seeks to replace this with an even stronger, and more unequal, set of power-based relationships. Those with money will have, those without will not.



It is the role of anarchists to attempt to guide society towards utopia; a truly equal, fair, and just society.

Broken your leg and have no money? Tough. It is, in essence, the logical conclusion of laissez-faire liberalism.

If this is not Anarchism –

and it is most assuredly not, despite what some may claim – what is? As I previously stated, the most inclusive of all the myriad factions is known as Anarchism Without Adjectives (hereafter referred to as Anarchism), and has been around since 1889. Fed up with the political infighting that has plagued radical movements on both the right and left ever since the first radical declared that the tribe of Ug should, in fact, not cross the stream but go along it, Fernando Tarrida del Marmol declared that such pointless squabbles should be set aside in order that people could work together to achieve utopia.

Here some qualification is required. Anarchism – in common with most ideologies – strives to bring humanity together into a utopian ideal. Utopia, the impossible place, cannot by definition ever be achieved. The point of all these ideologies is to make the world a better place as we strive towards the unachievable. This is, effectively, the definition of constant revolution, to borrow

a phrase from Trotsky.

With utopia unachievable, and instead the only possibility a new world built through the constant attempt to reach the unreachable, Anarchism, then, is an ideology like no other. With its acknowledgement that humanity is fallible, that we humans are prone to error, misjudgement, unpleasantness, viciousness, Anarchism does not claim to be able to produce a worker's state free of oppression. Instead, by realising people's capacity for mutual aid and generosity, by encouraging people to live freely together, and to work together for each other's benefit without a reliance on power, Anarchism claims to be able to produce a new society.

A new society. Think about that. It's a big claim. Yet how will this be achieved? Not for anarchists the brutal oppression of Lenin's Bolshevik Russia, or the Great Leap Forwards of Mao. Instead, Anarchism asks people to behave differently. If enough people begin to think and behave in an anarchistic manner – through mutual aid rather than monetary exchange, for example – then a new society will emerge, organically, through the behaviour of society itself. Politicians will be left without people to pontificate at, policemen (hopefully) without people to arrest. Who can be criminals without crime? Soldiers will have no-one to fight, managers nothing to

manage.

The new society will not appear in a blaze of violence, death and destruction as prophesied by many (on both left and right, from Makhno to Mussolini), but slowly, over time. It may sound insane now, but just a few decades ago homosexuality was illegal and children were beaten at school. Society progresses. It is the role of anarchists to attempt to guide society towards utopia; a truly equal, fair, and just society. It may never be reached, but every step towards it is a step in the right direction. This, then is Anarchism: an ideology that seeks to better humanity through the actions of humanity itself. You and I, all of us, we can and should live free alongside one another.

Of course, the question remains: how best to convince people that being excellent to each other is the most logical and sensible course of action? For many, radical revolution is the way forwards. This, represented traditionally by the red in many anarchist flags, proposes that direct action –

either through the gun or ironic clowning – will not only alter people's minds, but change governments. Durruti, the famous Spanish anarchist militia leader, once said "we are not afraid of ruins", emphasising the perceived ability of the working classes to rebuild what they destroy in ridding themselves of their oppressors, the bosses.

Alternatively, there is the quiet method, perhaps symbolised by the mourning black of all Anarchist flags. Black, in mourning for those killed by their oppressors throughout history, stands for a slow, steady, propaganda of the word. By writing articles such as this, by discussing politics with everyday people in the street, by random acts of kindness, Anarchists seek to promote Anarchism and move human society further forwards towards the unachievable ideal that we all deserve.



Back-breaking



Kevin Perry

"How perilous is it to choose / not to love the life we're shown?" wrote Seamus Heaney. He was talking about Badgers, but I suspect he could equally have been discussing *Beavers*. Being the Executive Editor of *The Beaver* is a tiring job. I have been awake now for two days, and yet the newspaper you now hold in your hands is not yet even complete. Time indeed then, for my last will and testament.

The fact that even a single issue of this newspaper has been completed this year owes an enormous amount to the hardworking team that I have been privileged to work with. They have lightened the load of what is, in the main, back-breakingly horrible work.

Chief amongst my minions has been Henry Lodge, a young scamp who came to me when he were but knee high to a grasshopper and barely out of short trousers. Through careful nurturing and the occasional chiding I have groomed him into the multifaceted sophisticate you now see forming the News section each week out of little more than hear-say, conjecture and fancy. I am most proud of the boy, and leave him my country house, Greenwalls.

On the eve of his tragic passing, our Executive Editor Kevin Perry prepares his last will and testament in tribute to his scurvy team

And of course, he was ably assisted in the front of house News department by Charlie "Michael" Deas, a rough diamond of a lad with enough holes in his clothes to keep an entire nunnery darning till Christmas. Despite his sartorial handicaps he has made good this year, shining many a lumpen black coal into a well polished scoop. I have high hopes for him, and bequeath him my title, Lord Beaverbrook.

Joseph Cotterill is another young man with a bright future, like an illuminated pearl in the shaded oyster of the LSESU. He has made the Features section his own, his eye for creative layout coming to the fore, and his eloquence with a felt tip pen being called upon often. I leave him my priceless collection of bound *Beavers*. May they serve him well.

Like the Messiah who came from the heavens to rescue us all from eternal damnation, James Pugh came from nowhere (Middlesbrough) to rescue us all (the C&A section) from eternal damnation (interminable bickering). This newspaper's loss will be the health service's gain. If he handles patients with as delicate a

touch as he has the Israel-Palestine conflict, sick people will be leaping up Lazarus-like up and down the country. I leave him my collection of B-movies. The man claims to have never seen *Star Wars*, so I



someone told me once that the meek shall inherit the earth, but I am not sure if I believe him

imagine he'd enjoy *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*. The reason his appearance was so miraculous was due in large part to the fact that his predecessor, Chun Han Wong, was so erudite an individual. The man with the cold, calculating eyes of a killer is in fact a versatile individual with the quick mind and a sharp sense of humour. *The Beaver* would do well to reacquire his services in some role or other, and to encourage this I leave him my Gutenberg printing press. It is

a little worn but still is in decent shape.

Speaking of things that are a little frayed around the edges, but still in fine form, the Sports section has matured as the year went by and has now blossomed into something truly fitting for the fine people who play, and of course quaff ale, for this university. Matthew Partridge brought his eye for detail to the role for many issues, and Josh Tendeter and Sophie de la Hunt have likewise brought us the joys of sport, but now, I think it is fair to say, with lashings more banter. To them, I leave my wine cellar and liqueur cabinet. I trust they will give it a good home.

One section of the paper that is in particular rude health is *PartB*. Puffed up like a weightlifter with a steroid dependency, it struts around the office flexing its 16-page strong muscles and trying to hide its penile deficiency. The same, of course, cannot be said for its demure editorial duo, Joshua Heller and Holli Eastman. They are saints in a black fog of sin and debauchery, and have sailed their ships firmly away from the rocks to create a thing of real beauty. There have been casualties along the way; indeed I believe Tom Warren is still marooned somewhere in the South Seas, but it has been a bounteous voyage. I leave them both my compass, my maps and charts and my mind, to be pickled and observed from the Crow's Nest.

PartC is a strange beast, but it has been tamed this year by two fine and creative peo-

ple. The first was Chloe Pieters, whose knowledge of the intricacies of advanced grammar made her invaluable. I am sure she's keeping track of the number of glaring mistakes in this very piece. Following her has been Romy, a big man with a good heart, a gentle giant if you will. I leave them each an internship at the establishment of their choosing. As long as it's Wright's Bar. Everyone always chooses Wright's Bar.

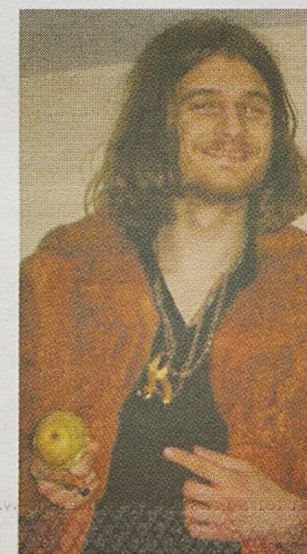
Touching each of these sections, often inappropriately, has been Timothy Tyson Root. He has accelerated the pace of the paper's production like only the best of lubricants could. He has been a keen grease monkey, and danced with the print monkeys, and has ensured, essentially that the paper ends up in your palms each and every week. I leave him my shoes. Before Tyson, Aditi Nangia held the job of beautifying, solidifying and edifying the newspaper. I leave her my collection of vintage togas.

Which brings us to Lucie Marie Goulet, the eye of the raging *Beaver* storm. Disguised beneath the fashionable hat is a whirl wind of ideas, opinions and knowledge. She is quite simply invaluable to the running of this newspaper, and while I admit to being terrified of her, that does not mean I shall not miss her. I leave her everything else in my estate, because someone told me once that the meek shall inherit the earth, but I am not sure if I believe him.

There are many others to

thank from my time at *The Beaver*, but above all Daniel Benedict Yates and Christine Whyte, who have each been hilariously funny, awe-inspiringly intelligent and right about everything. I leave them nothing at all, because they need not for anything.

Finally, thank you to you all for reading. I am proud to say that over the course of this year, the many of you whom I have not been able to name here and those few I have, have succeeded in creating a newspaper that has informed, enlightened and amused thousands of your peers. It has been a pleasure just to be given the opportunity to read the many hundreds of views and news that people like you have submitted, and to have played a role in proliferating your writing has been an honour.



Features

Red isn't Dead

Dismantling Plan Colombia

Vladimir Unkovski-Korica



As the people of Gaza faced more terror at the hands of the Zionist apartheid regime last week, Latin America was embroiled in a crisis sparked by 'the Israel of Latin America', in the words of Hugo Chavez. The reference was to the tensions following the slaughter perpetrated by Colombian armed forces on Ecuadorian soil last Saturday of twenty-one members of the peasant-based guerrilla movement FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). The military intervention has pushed the region towards possible war as Ecuador and Venezuela broke diplomatic relations with Colombia and massed troops to reinforce their borders. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru all expressed concerns over the threat to Ecuadorian sovereignty.

President Bush, meanwhile, expressed his support for Colombia's president, Alvaro Uribe. The media in both the UK and US have largely chosen to use the incident to sling mud in the direction of Venezuela. This follows a statement published by White House spokesperson Gordon Johndroe which asserted that "this is an odd reaction by Venezuela to Colombia's efforts against the FARC, a terrorist organization that continues to hold Colombians, Americans and others hostage."

Funny, then, that Uribe had ordered the killing of a senior FARC commander and negotiator, Raúl Reyes, just two weeks after FARC released several hostages as a gesture of good will. French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner despaired. "It is bad news that the man we were talking to, with whom we had contacts, has been killed." FARC still holds the former Colombian presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt hostage, who has French nationality. Not only the French government but Fabrice Delloye, ex-husband of Ingrid Betancourt, has denounced Uribe's actions as "abominable."

The Colombian ruling elite and its American backers have invested too much in war to be able to afford a policy of peace in the region. James Petras has explained how President Clinton started (and President Bush continued) a policy dubbed 'Plan Colombia'. Petras contends that FARC's struggle is "part of a geopolitical matrix that is in the process of challenging and modifying U.S. hegemony in northern South America and in the Panama Canal Zone...oil production, supply, and prices are linked to the challenge in the region and beyond."

Stopping this threat to US interests has not come cheap. According to a June 2007 'Guardian' report, under Plan Colombia "Washington has funnelled more than \$5bn (£2.5bn) in mostly military aid to its South American ally since 2000 - its biggest aid project outside Afghanistan and the Middle East." To make matters worse, the report continues: 'Plan Colombia began in 1999 and was [ostensibly!] supposed to halve production of coca within five years, using sprayer planes and officers on the ground. But the latest estimate suggests that since then it has risen 27 per cent.' Well, the USA always picks serious and respectable partners.

It should be no surprise that José Miguel Vivanco of Human Rights Watch has said slammed Colombia's rights record as "extremely poor, with serious problems over links between drug-running paramilitaries and the state, extrajudicial executions by the military, killings of trade unionists, disappearances and other abuses." FARC's supposed guerrilla 'terrorists' have killed far fewer civilians than state-sponsored paramilitaries, according to the Colombian Commission of Jurists.

Colombia's population is also desperately poor. According to UNICEF, in 2005 "64.2 per cent of the population were living in poverty and 31 per cent in extreme poverty." I have differences with Chavez - but compare that with Venezuela, which has spent less of its GDP on arms than previous Venezuelan governments, while raising to 14.69 per cent of GDP the amount spent on social programmes.

So it is not without a sense of irony that one heard Bush declare two days after the killing of Reyes that 'by acting at this critical moment [on a free-trade agreement with Colombia], we can show the Colombian people and millions across the region that they can count on America to keep its word and that freedom is a sure path to prosperity and peace'. Much like the Middle East, Latin America is crying out for a grassroots, continent-wide Intifada.

Blue is True

NAFTA is not a four-letter word

Annette Pacey



While Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama occupy themselves with slinging mud at each other in the increasingly bitter race for the Democratic nomination, a policy where the rivals share common ground should give both Americans and their Mexican and Canadian neighbours cause for serious concern. When it comes to trade, the message from both the Obama and Clinton camps is worryingly protectionist. In a recent primary debate, the two candidates competed to denounce the North American Free Trade Agreement. Obama recklessly asserted that the deal had destroyed a million American jobs, while Clinton rather dubiously claimed to have been a NAFTA critic from the beginning. Both have called for the deal to be renegotiated. But why have free trade in general, and NAFTA in particular, become dirty words in Democratic politics?

The economics of free trade is deceptively simple. According to David Ricardo's famous theory of comparative advantage, countries will benefit by specialising in what they are best at producing and trading with other countries. The implication is that all countries, rich or poor, benefit from free trade. Protecting domestic firms from foreign competition will only hold back economic growth. Ricardo's theory has proved remarkably strong, but the real world, as usual, is a little more complicated. While free trade is likely to make countries richer overall, some individual workers will suffer as competition from foreign firms hits their sector.

In the United States it is blue collar workers in the manufacturing sector who are feeling especially under fire. They are competing with workers in Mexico and China, whose bosses needn't bother so much with union demands and high labour standards. According to Ricardo's theory, these workers should simply move to another sector in which the United States can compete internationally; but this is easier said than done. Although free trade creates new jobs, it does not necessarily provide jobs of the right type or in the right place for the individual workers who lose out when their jobs are moved abroad. Many working Americans are ready to give their vote to the candidate who can reassure them that they will be not be left out in the cold by deals like NAFTA - a fact which hasn't escaped the attention of either Obama or Clinton.

With the Democratic race coming down to the wire, perhaps it's not surprising we have been hearing a lot of protectionist rhetoric from the candidates. But promising to protect uncompetitive jobs by renegotiating NAFTA is to offer voters false hopes. A better solution would be to improve training and education, equipping workers for the new jobs which free trade and globalisation create. The US benefits hugely from free access to foreign markets, and the weak dollar is making US goods more attractive to foreign consumers. True enough, raising trade barriers would offer short term relief to some workers - but this would be far outweighed by the damage it would do in other parts of the economy, not to mention the risk to the US's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Republican John McCain is the only candidate willing to broach this unpopular message to voters and speak up for the benefits of free trade - pointing out that 95% of the world's consumers are outside the United States. But there are also good reasons to think that neither Clinton nor Obama are as anti-NAFTA as their posturing would suggest. Clinton has voiced her firm approval of NAFTA in the past, especially when it was ratified during her husband's administration, and Obama's senior economic policy advisor, Austan Goolsbee, landed in hot water last week when a leaked memo seemed to reveal that he had reassured Canadian officials that all this anti-NAFTA talk was purely for election purposes.

So is this anti-NAFTA talk just a lot of hot air? Perhaps, but it is irresponsible to pander to voters' fears by offering them an easy solution that is only a mirage. Protectionism simply isn't a realistic choice for the US in a world which is increasingly integrated economically, and pretending otherwise is to wilfully mislead voters. That neither of the Democratic candidates has the courage to speak the truth to voters about benefits of free trade does little to enhance their credibility.

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Notes on Nothing

The Power Broker

This year's contest for Mayor of London will help shape Britain's political future, but the two main parties are missing out

You are, for all intents and purposes, living in a twenty-first century city-state. Bear this fact in mind when you cast your vote in the London mayoral election on 1 May - and remember too that the race that came to the Union General Meeting last Thursday will grant the largest personal mandate to any individual in European politics. The evolution of the Mayor's office will also set an enormous precedent for both the future emergence of mayoral government in other cities around the United Kingdom, and the general decentralisation of power from Westminster. It is disappointing, then, that are trading on low expectations.

Take the two frontrunners in the contest: the Labour incumbent Ken Livingstone and his Conservative challenger Boris Johnson. It is no exaggeration to call Boris Johnson's candidacy a complete, facetious waste of political space. David Cameron's new Conservative party could have done much better. There is after all a strong case to be made for a limited government philosophy in establishing the still malleable competencies of the Mayor; while restoring relations with a City made flighty by the national government's non-dom debacle. Cameron's compassionate brand of conservatism could engage with and liberate London's civil society in a way that has not happened in the past eight years. Instead, Londoners have been given a buffoon who prates on about bendy buses while ineptly fending off racism accusations.

It is no easier to set one's pulse racing at the thought of four more years of Ken Livingstone's ageing and ever less inspirational administration - particularly as Mr Livingstone will not be able to resist another bid in the spring of 2012 to see the Olympic Games he helped win for the city through. However, to establish a political legacy Mr Livingstone must rise above his useful but technocratic commitments to complete the Crossrail project and maintain the new Low Emissions Zone. The defining political fact about London today - the moral necessity of making the city a safe and welcoming place for its large and growing migrant population, who have pushed its economy to the forefront of the world's global cities. They are in danger of being drowned out in a so far trivial debate. Both front-runners should raise their game.

Joseph Cotterill
Features Editor



Howard's Street

Beaver Executive Editor Kevin Perry talks teaching quality, Peter Sutherland and Israel-Palestine with LSE Director Howard Davies

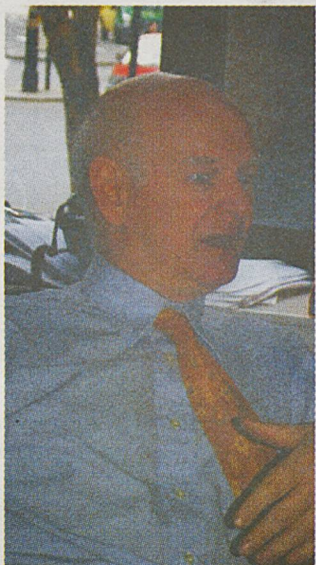
A lot of students seem to know who you are without knowing exactly what you do – what does the role of Director entail on a weekly basis?

I sometimes wonder as well! Roughly, I would say about half the time is management. The Director's management team meets every week, which makes all kinds of decisions about all kinds of routine, daily things. Then I chair the Academic Board, the Resource Allocation Committee and the Promotions and Appointments Committees. Then there are others that I don't chair but that I still go to, like the Council, the Court of Governors and the Finance Committee. This is an organisation with a turnover of about £150 million, so you have to have good management control and financial control.

Another quarter of my time is on a combination of fundraising and external representation, which merges together, because if you're talking to an alumni group, they want to know about the School, but also in the long run they are probably going to be financial supporters. Fundraising for a university isn't "Give me money", it's explaining what the School is doing and talking about interesting people within the School.

The other quarter of the time is activities within the School. Some teaching - I lecture on the Law and Accounting programme and others. Also, some student things, for example I'm currently

"Fundraising for a university isn't "Give me money", it's explaining what the School is doing and talking about interesting people within the School."



rehearsing for 'The Wizard of Oz'. Also some research that I do myself - I don't do a full scale academic job but I've published one book since I've been here and I've got another one coming this month, and quite a lot of articles as well.

Student Services

The Beaver reported last week that the School has a surplus which it is using for capital investment. What difference will the various redevelopment projects make?

First of all, about this surplus. If you look at our finances the core activities of the school, the teaching, research and degree programmes, is about the break-even proposition. Where we make surpluses is on executive education, the summer school, Enterprise LSE, residences in the summer and things like that. That's where the profit comes from. If you look at our balance sheet, we're relatively highly indebted for this sector. Oxford and Cambridge have basically got no debt because they were sort of given their land. Most of what we've got we had to buy. We don't get much Government support. We get about £3 million a year for capital, and since the New Academic building is costing £70 million, you've got to make the money yourself.

My view when I arrived here was that the facilities of this place did not match its international reputation, so I thought

we had to go for a major redevelopment project. The first stage is the New Academic Building, and then we have to redevelop St Philip's. That will be a brand new Students' Union building. The Students' Union facilities here are, in my view, poor. I mean, they've got character. The Underground and the Quad are fun places to be, they generate good events, but they're not great. Clearly the sports facilities are poor, so the only way you'll do significantly better is with a new building.

So we're doing that next, and then in about 2011 we can empty the Students' Union and the towers above it, and redevelop it. That's the tricky bit, because it's right in the middle. Nobody can hide the fact that that will be quite disruptive, and that's why we need to do the other thing first.

The one thing that I think we'll be able to do sooner is the sports facilities. So I think we can refurb the gym as a temporary solution until the new building in four or five years.

Won't the ever-increasing student numbers place a strain on facilities while work is going on?

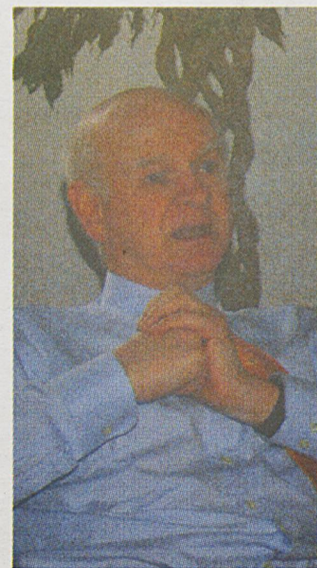
We shouldn't have a problem maintaining the numbers we've got. I don't think we'd be able to expand and I don't want to expand any further. 9,000 is what we planned to do by 2011-2012. The new building gives us an extra 125,000 square feet, and al-

most doubles the teaching space in the School.

You have said in that past that it is important to ensure MSc Courses offer value for money. Do they?

It really relates to the teaching taskforce. Value for money in education is a tricky concept. On the one hand, if you look at demand, there's not an issue. Demand has gone up 23% this year for Masters programmes. The second aspect of value for money is what people do afterwards, and there you wouldn't say there is a problem, I think we're the highest starting salary on graduation. One reason that people come here is that it does improve their market value.

On the other hand, I don't think that's all we should be doing. There is evidence that people's satisfaction with teaching here is not what we would like it to be. That's what the teaching taskforce has been looking at, in terms of contact hours, class sizes, use of graduate teaching assistants and everything else, and I hope that we can put more into that. Obviously this is something that you have to bring the academic community along with, because it's largely their work. So we're going to be taking a set of proposals to the Academic Board in the Summer Term, and I hope that we can get agreement on it, but we're still debating it at the moment.



"The Students' Union facilities here are, in my view, poor. I mean, they've got character. The Underground and the Quad are fun places to be."



hear from the honchos here

photography honcho -----> page 1
utsamukherjee

Is a tube of henna who splurged art all over the cover.

pages 3 <----- rant honcho
anikamathur

Believes that art is a form of escapism. After not doing any essays all term we then found her trying to climb through the portrait in the Shaw library. Its not that form of escape.

visual arts honcho -----> page 6
fionamackay

Is in love with the Soviets. If you want to win her heart is a bowl of borsch and a recital of the Communist Manifesto. Good luck comrades!

page 7 <----- travel honcho
willjoce

Liebe Berlin. A lot. So much so that he has covered himself in cabbage so that he can become a Sauerkraut.

telly honcho -----> page 7
ericlundquist

Thinks he is Jack Bauer. He now lives his life in 24 hour installments and is convinced he is being watched, He has been hiding in the filing cabinet in the office since Wednesday... just incase you are looking for him...

pages 8 and 9 <-----assistant editor
ravimistry

Drew easels. Overwhelmed by the irony of it he passed out. Not before making a mockery of his former boss.

music honchos -----> pages 10 and 11
adamjohns and julianboys

Had a love affair with a Greek mythical creature. Hercules never saw our guys coming.

page 12 <----- film honcho
bernardkeenan

Watched Redacted. You wouldn't think it's a real word because it doesn't seem like one. But it is. It is a real word: Redacted.

food and drink honcho -----> page 13
danielbyates

Plays with his food. His mum told him not to make a dinosaur out of his mash and beans but he wouldn't listen. He won the turner prize. Who's laughing now.

page 13 <----- thearte honcho
thomaswhittaker

Took a journey down memory lane... so hold hands and skip down this pensive path.

literature honcho -----> page 14
rahimrahemtulla

Is continuing down his fun fair theme so much that he has run away and joined the circus. *Nelly the elephant packed her trunk and said goodbye to the Beaver...*

page 15 <-----identity honcho
hodgear

Was told that you can achieve power through your clothing so all week has been looking the Michelin man. We haven't had the heart to tell her otherwise

technology honcho -----> page 15
simonwang

Has decided to become a Luddite and has rage against the machines. He came in a smashed up all the computers in the office but all he had was a paintbrush.

page 16 <-----gender honcho
alicepfeiffer

Has woman's arts. She also took a look at period art.

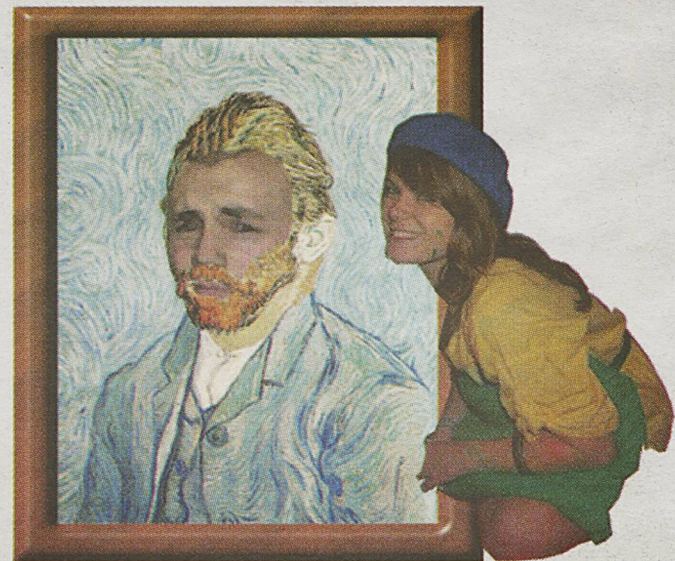
holli eastman

I wanted to go to Art School but my Mother won't let me. Thus this issue of PartB has forced me to splurt my otherwise inhibited creative juices all over the pages. It allowed me to reminisce back to the good old days of GCSE Art, where hours were wasted away wandering down corridors throwing clay at unsuspecting teachers. Now that is art. Throughout our pages we have explored arts torrid relationship with everything else. Tech and Games look at technologies bastarding effect on traditional art, and at how the canvas portrait has been replaced by a television screen. Food and Drink pondered its relationship with the arts, concluding that tasting good and looking good are two paint brushes in a jar. So I'm off to get some Picasso and chips. Tasty times...

josh heller

artB. This issue is focused on art because of that competition we had. The entries to the competition were lovely and I was deliriously happy with them. This is the last partB of the year and it has been a lovely journey through art so its good that we finish on art.

I'm a painting. Holli painted me. What a manly and full beard I have. My ear hurts. Also I interviewed Natalie Portman who is really nice. She's a queen in two different galaxies, making her inter-galactic royalty so I stuck around to make it worth my while. Next year will see the expansion of partB into every medium imaginable. We shall conquer the radio world, put on gigs, put out our own miix cds, have film screenings, podcasts and so much more. If you want to get involved then get in touch and we will accomodate you whenever and wherever we can.



editorials from the editors - we know everything

My favourite place to take a girl on the first date is the Tate Modern. This is because it is free and it makes me seem cultured. Another reason why it is the best place to take a date is because I sometimes "borrow" my flat mate's Tate membership card. Since it's free, it is really easy to go on reconnaissance missions where I gather information on the whichever artist is featured. The last exhibition I took a date on was Dali last summer. The trick is to study the pamphlets and other paraphernalia till you can show some form of knowledge about the artist. When d-day comes round, you walk her through like you have never been before whilst demonstrating your "keen" eye for good art. Don't over do it though. You don't want to sound like you googled it right before your date. Form opinions on the major works and you should be fine. The membership card entitles you access to a cafe at the top of the building with views overlooking the Thames and much of the riverside. I feel it's the perfect way to end a date as you can chill with a beer or coffee (when in Rome) and romance for the remainder of the date. If she doesn't like you by the end of this date, she'll at least think you're cute because of how interested you are in art...haha! Who knows? Maybe after a couple more dates of this sort, you'll get lucky. I know I did!

gbeminiyide-odiachi

PRETENSION, DATE RAPE, ESCAPISM AND FAKE...

rant explores the various connotations of art on its own masterpiece

Art. The ultimate form of escapism. Is there truly anything better in life than standing in an art gallery gazing at a what is basically a piece of paper covered in paint or a lump of clay that has been pounded a bit and losing yourself. Losing yourself in an attempt to try and comprehend what the hell the artist was trying to say.

The fact that that blue square which looks as if a four year old could have drawn it is actually a

commentary about social conformity. That lone dildo in the broken glass cabinet reflects the artists relationship with his dead cat. Everything is art. Embrace it.

holleeastman

anikamathur
Art is anything you want it to be. Be it music, photography, clothes, or a painted canvas. It is one of those things, similar to intelligence, that people use as a topic of conversation to sound 'cool' or in the know and appear more cultured in some form or other compared to their peer who is lacking in knowledge. Art like everything else has become too superficial. Just appreciate the simplicity of raw emotion is what I say.

Pretentious is used as an insult by people too lazy or foolish to come up with a more constructive or well thought out criticism. Pretension, the attempt to be more than you are, the striving for something greater or more important than yourself, is what so much art is based on. Indeed it can be convincingly argued that all art is based on pretension. It is no coincidence that so much art that is considered great now was not appreciated in its own time. Without past arguably pretentious art we would not have the styles and movements which are appreciated today with the aid of hindsight. There is a massive fear overriding both art critics and people who observe art, to not understand. It is rare to hear anyone saying they simply don't understand art, although it may well have merit. Pretentious is the searching for something outside the norm. A significant amount of art fails in its attempts, perhaps because the artist cannot leap far enough, but to write it off as pretentious and not even attempt to understand it is idleness of the highest order.

joshheller

RANT

N FOR NATALIE PORTMAN

joshheller met the queen

Sycophantic tendencies can get the better of even the most careful of interviewers. The most level headed and cynical person can be moved to shallow praise when dazzled by the glowing lights of fame. There is a case though, for Natalie Portman probably being one of the most desirable people on the planet. Any list of the people in the world you'd most like to be or be with is likely to include her. She's extremely intelligent, having graduated from Harvard majoring in psychology. She speaks two languages perfectly and a further three to a near fluent level, (English, Hebrew, French, Italian and Spanish). Also some people think she's really good looking, plus she is really really nice.

"I love shooting shorts. you don't have time to get sick of each other."

The reason she first found fame though, is her creative talents as an actress. Thus I thought it best to begin asking about that. Last year she spent some time filming *Hotel Chevalier*, the short that was played before Wes Anderson's *The Darjeeling Limited*. It recieved praise from various corners, but was prevented from an Oscar nomination due to being distributed for free online prior to its theatrical release. With shoots for Hollywood films often being months long, it must have been an unusual experience to take part in such a brief project. I wondered how it compared to the epic undertaking of feature length films. "I love shooting shorts. you don't have time to get sick of each other and you can pour all your energy and focus into a few days. Sometimes it's nice to have time to warm up and get comfortable with everyone. It is sad, though, if you discover a character right as you finish the film."

"Stage's ephemeral nature makes for a completely different experience for both performer and audience."

The other thing that drew some attention to that film, is there was some nakedness in it. She had previously said she would never do any scenes involving nudity. Though in *Closer* she did play a woman who worked in a strip-club, but there was no nudity in the final cut of the film. They did film a scene with extreme and explicit nudity, but in the end decided not to use it in the theatrical version. In *Hotel Chevalier* the nudity is neither gratuitous nor pornographic, although that line can be difficult to draw. As Natalie is often thought of as an icon of female beauty, I asked where can we form a distinction between artistic photography of women's bodies and exploitative representations of an unachievable archetype? "The representation of the human figure has always been central to art, and should be. There is a very fine line between artful depiction and exploitation but that is a common theme for artists-whether it's a novelist who uses a real person as a character or a documentarian who uses someone's wretched tale to gain acclaim and wealth. Women must be especially careful with how our images that we put out there are appropriated by others."

"Microfinance is particularly helpful to women living in extreme poverty"

Hotel Chevalier was an interesting project that is, creatively at least, somewhat out of the mainstream. In choosing her scripts Natalie has veered from the quirkily independent to the offensively awful mainstream. Maybe *Star Wars* can be

written off as just an opportunity too good to miss, but *Closer*, for which she recieved an Oscar nomination, was a torrid couple of hours of beautiful people just complaining.

Back in 2001 she was in a production of *The Seagull* with *Meryl Streep*, yet she hasn't been on stage since. This isn't due necessarily to her preferring film though, outside of New York there isn't much of a theatre scene for high profile actors in the US, and she says she does think stage is great. In comparison to film, the stage has an "ephemeral nature which makes for a completely different experience for both performer and audience." Why then doesn't she do more stage work? It might have nothing to do with the tens of millions she gets paid for films, and indeed she states, "I'd love to do stage again but never get offered anything interesting."

"Women must be especially careful with how our images that we put out there are appropriated by others."

Natalie is well known for being a vegetarian, having once recieved a resounding endorsement from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) when they named her the world's sexiest vegetarian. Yet PETA have been accused of sexist and degrading advertising, "Though I appreciate that people devote their lives to animal activism. I'm not an active supporter of PETA. I believe in animal rights and am against animal cruelty but do not agree with all their beliefs or methods of activism."

Whilst animal rights may not be her primary concern, she does get involved with some of her own political activism. She is a major advocate of micro-finance, having appeared on *Fareed Zakaria's* PBS talk show to discuss the intricacies of the



micro-finance. He stated that he's "generally wary of celebrities with fashionable causes", but had Portman on his show because "she really knew her stuff." Whilst she may have been to Harvard, I thought it important to represent for the pre-eminent European social science institution with a question of such unparalleled left-wing economic brilliance she would instantly bow to our superiority as an institution. Do you think this new focus on micro-finance as a solution to global poverty is that helpful, given the international economic injustices and imbalances of power that remain and persist? "I think microfinance is part of a multi-faceted solution that must be implemented to shift the existing social and economic imbalances. It is particularly helpful to women living in extreme poverty and empowers the women themselves to change their lives, rather than them having to rely on others to help them."

"I will not be recording any albums that I know of. That's the other boleyrn girl!"

In her work promoting micro-finance, Natalie put out a playlist on iTunes, the proceeds of which go to FINCA (one of the most influential micro-finance organisations). It has

some excellent music on it, including various exclusives from the stars of the american folk revival. Like any famous person worth their stars, she's friends with other famous people, meaning she could call up Norah Jones and Devendra Banhart and ask them to bosh down a track in aid of FINCA. In **Garden State**, Natalie played a character with huge headphones and a love of music. That film has been credited by many for the surge in **The Shins** popularity. It was Zach Braff that chose the music for that his directorial debut, but Natalie said whilst she does love music she's "never been involved in choosing music for films I've been in."

Her current co-star **Scarlett Johansson**, having never recorded music before, is working on an album of her own. Ten of the tracks are covers of Tom Waits songs, with one being of Johansson's own composition. It must be nice to be in that position, to be able to simply record an album of songs on a whim. Natalie has said she wanted to sing on the **Beirut** track for her FINCA playlist, but it didn't work out. I asked her if she'd boshing down any of her own tracks any time soon, perhaps her own collection of Tom Waits covers? "I will not be

recording any albums that I know of. That's the other Boleyn girl!"



the cold four

'From Russia: French and Russian Master paintings 1870 -1925' from four of Russia's great museums, served with radioactive sushi and some political power struggles. **fionamackay** tried some

It wasn't an easy task getting this exhibition to our shores but the promise of masterpieces by Matisse, Picasso, Monet and Cezanne must have been enough to send a collective shudder of art induced ecstasy down the spines of those employed in filling the hallowed exhibition halls of London's Royal Academy of Art. Although whether it was the soaring symbolic capital of such a grand exhibition that motivated curators through the turbulent negotiation process between Moscow and London, or the thought of all that economic capital flowing into the gallery, is open to debate. Billed as the blockbuster exhibition of the year, the cha-ching of the cash registers and teeming crowds within the gallery are testament to the popularity of this show, but also proof of how good a bit of dirty controversy is for business, even in the rarefied world of art.

Art and power are old acquaintances. As visitors shuffle quietly around the exhibition, ooh-ing and aah-ing knowingly at Gauguin's stylized rendering of Tahitian beauties, there is politics underfoot.

But that is not all the intrigue to be had, wait! There is more. Further controversy came in December, when, in a last minute panic, Russia cancelled the exhibition fearing that once in Britain the works would be subject to legal claims, seized by the descendants of the original owners, and not returned to the museums from whence they came. Royal Academy curators wrung their hands in despair. A scuffle of negotiations ensued, which resulted in the British government fast-tracking new legislation that would prevent the works from being seized, and the exhibition was given the go-ahead. Curators (and, presumably, accountants too) at the Royal Academy stopped wringing their hands and breathed a heavy sigh of relief.

Which naturally begs the question: were all the political shenanigans worth it? Well, if you can hustle your way through the throngs of tourists, uniformed school children and OAPs that cluster in the gallery, you might just be amazed. Coming from four of Russia's great museums: the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts and the State



gyrate in this huge, but simplified, field of composition and saturated colour, the vermilion of the dancing colours vibrating against the green and blue background with an energy that is almost radioactive (ahem). Picasso's "Dryad" is monumental and is still, all these years later, breathtaking in its unapologetically crude treatment of form, influenced as it is by primitive African carvings.

All of these masterpieces of modern art, including more showstoppers by Cezanne, Gauguin and Renoir, are to be found in the second gallery of the exhibition, a room that is dedicated to showcasing the collections of two of Russia's great 20th century art collectors, Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morisov (collections that are now owned by the aforementioned museums; it is Shchukin's grandson in particular that is fighting for ownership of certain paintings from the collection which he claims were looted by the Bolsheviks from his Grandfather in 1918). This room is undeniably the pulling card of the exhibition, but it is not where the emphasis of the show lies, because "From Russia" principally aims to explore the interaction between Russian and French art during the tumultuous years of the late 18th and early 19th century in Russia, culminating in the October Revolution of 1917. Unfortunately, however, what a handful of these French master paintings serve to do is cause all other works to pale into relative insignificance.

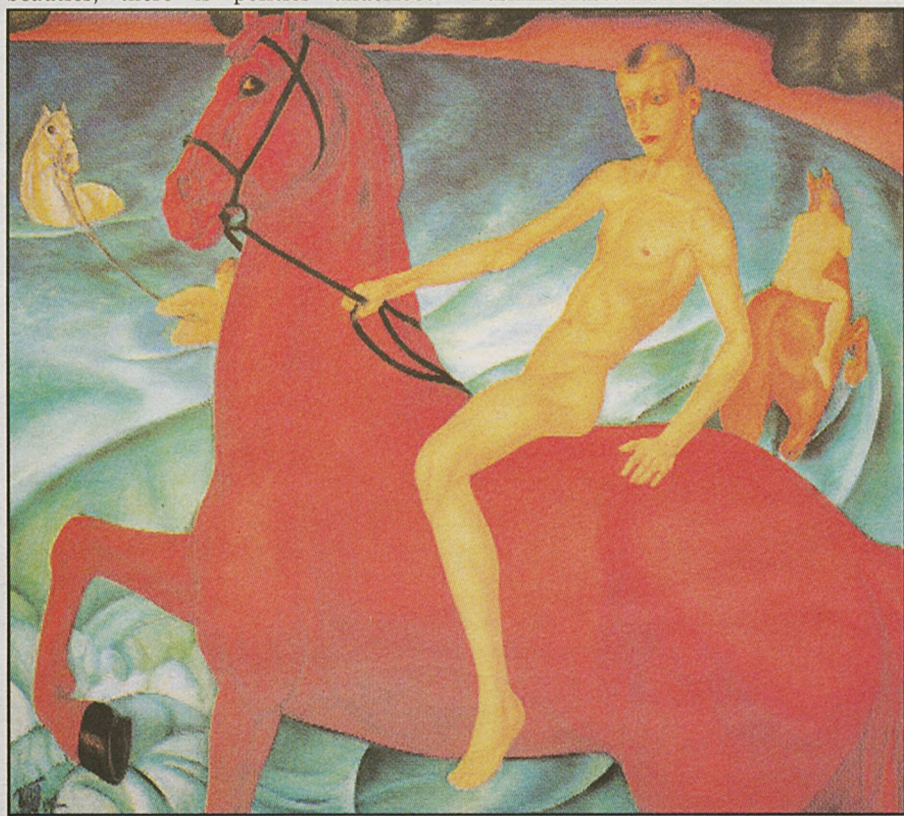
I say relative, because it is not that the rest of the exhibition does not hold any fascination. The artistic conversation that exists between the two nations is animated, at times obvious, at times subtle, even on occasion, a little tongue in cheek, and it is just these nuanced relations that the curators, Anne Dumas and Sir Norman Rosenthal wish to describe. The influence of Gauguin and Matisse on the Russian artists is particularly evident, a clear example of which can be seen in the work of famed Russian avant-garde painter, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. His work, though little known in England in comparison to that of the French masters, is iconic in Russia, and holds great symbolic power, as can be seen

in the painting pictured, "Bathing the red horse" (1912), a work that is ominous of the revolutionary blood shed that is to come.

The works of the Russian artists, as well as revealing the heavy influence of the French impressionists, post-impressionists and cubists on Russian art also provide interesting insight into the social and political milieu of the time. Society paintings by Valentin Serov, and a scene from the Revolution of 1905 by Ilya Repin, as well as his life size portrait of the great novelist Leo Tolstoy in peasant garb, are descriptive of moments in early 19th century Russian history. Further into the exhibition Marc Chagall's unique interpretation of French cubism in his poetic paintings of Russian-Jewish folklore stand out against the subsequent gallery, which is filled with uninspiring cubo-futurist works (a fusion of the faceted, multi perspectival style of French cubism with the dynamism of the Italian futurists).

The final two rooms of the exhibition mark a slight departure from French influence, so that it is less a case of follow-the-leader with the French always two steps ahead. Wassily Kandinsky (who, granted, spent much of his life living and working in France) became the pioneer of abstraction in Russia, and in the years after the Russian Revolution of October 17, Vladimir Tatlin inspired a group that called themselves the Constructivists who, in the spirit of the era, radically rejected pure painting as decadent and bourgeois in favour of creating art for everyday use.

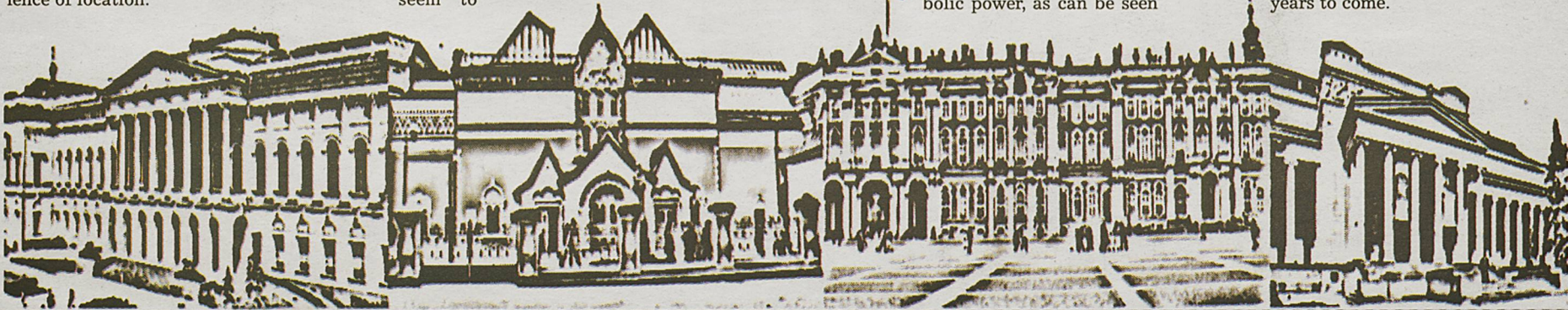
While the Russian works might struggle for light next to the dazzling brilliance of the French masters, the strength of the exhibition exists in the way it manages to encompass interactions that existed between the French and Russian art worlds at the beginning of the 20th century, and shows how this mutually beneficial relationship resulted in a creatively rich period that was hugely influential in the course of the history of modern art. Unfortunately, however, the political sideshow put on by Russian and British governments in the organisation of this exhibition might be largely what we remember of it in years to come.



Presumably meant as a soft approach to strengthening shaky ties between Russia and England, the exhibition only served to aggravate the ongoing dispute between the two countries as events outside the galleries' control threatened to prevent the works ever reaching London. The poisoning of KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko, with a radioactive chemical called Polonium, in an Itsu Sushi bar in July of last year, was fuel for the fire of anti-British sentiment that is rife among the Kremlin. Said sushi bar also happens to be located almost opposite to the Academy, which adds some Russian roulette flair to the event, but it is unlikely that visitors to the exhibition will be eating at this particular food chain, despite the convenience of location.

Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, and the State Hermitage Museum and the State Russian Museum in St Petersburg, many of the works have never been seen before in this country, and a handful of them make even the nightmare of negotiating the crowds well worth the trampled toes.

The fact is, that once you are stood in front of one of Monet's miracle landscapes of pixellated colour and light, all awareness of other people fades away as something akin to the first moments of a magic mushroom trip take over your vision. The much publicized 'highlight' of the exhibition, Henri Matisse's "The Dance II" (1910) - pictured - has a similarly entrancing effect as the gleeful figures seem to



Described by *Timeout* as the fastest changing city in Europe, a city in which there are "no closing times...and scenes to suit every sexual proclivity", and boasting museum collections to rival London, Cairo and New York, Berlin is a city that beckoned to three exhausted students.

Looking for a cheap, centrally located, clean gay-friendly hostel, the natural choice was, of course, GayBed. As the three of us arrived at the building we fully expected to be greeted by a sleazy old man who would lead us through scenes of debauchery to our condom-littered bunk beds. Instead, we were greeted by a humble Berliner who led us into one of three flats he owns and to our own triple room. No scenes to offend our eyes; no scenes to titillate our taste buds; no scenes to suggest Berlin's innovative architectural façade hid a sordid sex-fuelled club scene. Instead we had a spotless bathroom, comfy beds and a fully-stocked kitchen. Were we disappointed? Of course not...

Now, this was a weekend of culture (and not just of the homosexual variety), of relaxation and of recuperation. But let's not bore each other with details of the Jewish Museum, Pergamon museum, Gegenwart or Holocaust memorial: This is about Berlin's sexlife. Let me indulge you.

Our first stop was the north-eastern district. One of many areas recommended to us by our humble host. We rang the suspicious bell to get into the dubiously named Romeo's, and as we entered the empty bar, we were greeted by a television above the barman displaying hardcore pornography. Despite the lack of other punters, we decided to stay for a drink and ask the barman where to go. The night was young. Whilst I got the drinks, and spoke in broken German to Fabian, he first asked what scene we were after: gay isn't a scene in Berlin. How much fetish could we handle and how fluid were our sexualities? I'm not sure that we knew. Berlin is a city that whilst obviously thrives on objectification and physical-idolisation, is light-years ahead of London's music, fringe-theatre and art scenes, but also in terms of progressive attitudes to sexuality. The once homophobic east is now a homo and queer philic haven ubiquitous with bars and sex clubs for all sexualities. I told Fabian that we were, relatively speaking, open to new experiences and wanted to be shocked. Perhaps something I would later regret, and I could only hope that he correctly understood my pathetic attempts at the German language. I got the impression that if I had said I was into necrophilia he would have pointed me in the direction of an accommodating morgue.

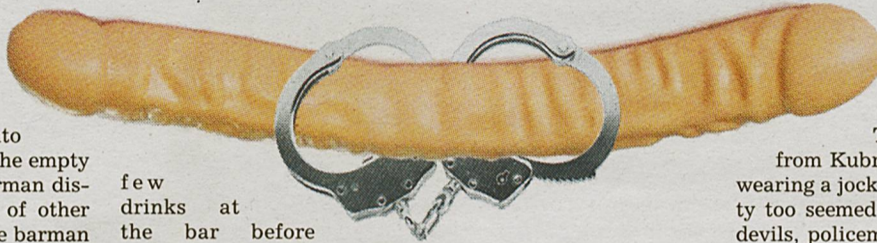
I needn't have worried about new experiences. Whilst I

SEX IN DIE STADT

patrandom keeps his socks on

had been engrossed in conversation with Fabian, Toby (I use a false name for fear of causing him undue embarrassment) had wandered off to the toilet. By time I had got the drinks, Toby too was just re-emerging from his quest to find the toilets. His dirty smirk gave the game away: yep, the bar was empty for a reason - we had discovered our first darkroom, nestled in the passage to the toilets. The mood for the night, and for our adventures in Berlin had been set. It could only now get more perverse, more liberating and more exciting.

After hopping around a few more bars, we ventured to the aptly named Connection club. Upon first entering we were greeted with a seemingly normal bar and dance floor. Pretty things flitted around followed by older, wealthier hopefuls. This wasn't what we had expected, nor what we had been promised. Giving Fabian the benefit of the doubt, we had a



few drinks at the bar before exploring the club a bit more. Towards the front of the club I came across a stairwell lit only by a faint strip of blue neon lighting. This had to be part of the club. I timidly walked down the stairs with my heart pounding more with each step. As the temperature soared, and my eyes adjusted to my new surroundings, I realized I had just entered an infamous Sex Labyrinth and Sex Dungeon. Here anything went: bondage swings, chairs that resembled dentist chairs and fisting instruments surrounded me. Berlin had proved itself dirtier than Kings Cross, more innovative than Soho and more objectivist than Vauxhall. I had been liberated.

Our second day in Berlin was a quieter affair. After a splendid 5 hour walking tour which saw us taking in most of the sights, we needed a nap before exploring more of the city's second identity. Recounting our account of Friday night to our amused humble host led him to suggest going to the Kit Kat club. World renowned, and a must for any hedo-

nistic revelers in Berlin, he assured us. Whilst Tony and myself had heard of it, we rather suspected it was from Cabaret than anything else. We weren't convinced, and so that night went to the least sex-orientated club we could find (no darkroom and limited cruising in the toilets). However as inebriation forced our minds to relinquish control to other parts, we conceded that we should perhaps go to the Kit Kat club - of course, just to see it. Nothing more...

Greeted at 5am with an ominous steel door in a new part of town, I quietly knocked on the door. After waiting for a minute or two and not having got a response, and being convinced that we had got the wrong place, we were just about to leave when a window in the door was opened.

"Yes?" "Oh, er, is this the Kit Kat club?" "Yes" "Oh, er, can we come in?" She looked us up and down; frowned; the window was abruptly shut. "Do you know what kind of club this is?" "Yes...I think so" "Tonight is fantasy, fetish and nudity night. You're not coming in." "Oh (silence). We're wearing jock straps" Pause. "Ok, you can come in but everything comes off"

So we entered the club and after the most bizarre undressing experience, walked into the club wearing trainers, white socks and jock strap. The English tourists had arrived. Sexy. You'd be amazed at how quickly you can sober up.

The Kit Kat club is best described as a scene from Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*. I quickly realized that wearing a jock strap was actually rather conservative: nudity too seemed rather conservative. Surrounded by angels, devils, policemen and women and all of their genitalia, I made my way through the dancefloor. My only regret was my white socks.

Sexuality here was indeed fluid. It didn't matter whether you were fat, thin, black, white, male, female, transgendered, naked or clad: everything went, and everything seemed to appeal to someone. Bondage swings were ubiquitous as were podiums and dark corners. Yet, the most striking sight was the amount of sex that was integrated into the club. Whether dancing, or chatting at the bar, you were guaranteed to be standing next to at least two bodies grinding rhythmically together. And seeing only tow together was a rarity.

Whilst the queer movement in London gathers pace, Berlin it seems has set its sights on higher aims. The sex scene isn't undercover, and you quickly see why the city is home to one of the biggest love parades in the world. For anyone wanting to be truly shocked and liberated, but ultimately looking to fall in love with a city, come to Berlin.

Jack Bauer remembered for his art

ericlundquist sticks art supplies into the eyes of his beholders

Until very recently, the words "artistic merit" would excuse all manner of sins under Canadian law. The Supreme Court acquitted a child pornographer who penned the literary gem *Boyabuse: A Collection of Kiddiekink Classics*, remarking in its formal opinion, "Artists, as long as they are producing art, should not fear prosecution." Producing art, what does that really mean? Since "Art is in the eye of the beholder" seems to be the most popular platitude on the subject, let's accept it as our working definition. Today I spy Jack Bauer with my beholder's eye.

Mr. Bauer spends his days working as a covert agent for the American government's clandestine Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU). His standard activities include disarming weapons of mass destruction, exposing an endless string of moles, regular insubordination, and copious amounts of violent behavior. He regularly summons the energy to indulge in large-scale assault, torture, and murder despite remaining quite abstemious in eating, sleeping, and urination.

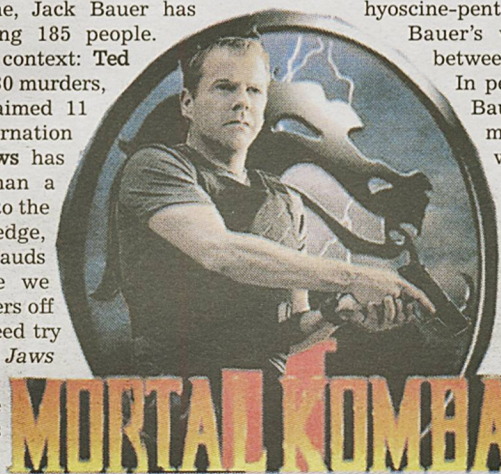
In six days time, Jack Bauer has killed an astonishing 185 people. Just to put this in context: Ted Bundy confessed to 30 murders, Jack the Ripper claimed 11 victims, and no incarnation of the fearsome Jaws has masticated more than a meager 8. However, to the best of my knowledge, our global society lauds Bauer alone, while we tried to haul the others off to jail (they did indeed try to capture Jaws, see *Jaws III*). Why? Is it because we realize that Jack Bauer's actions under duress

have saved the world from destruction at the hands of evil terrorists? I think it's more complicated than that—we have to go deeper.

Jack Bauer, like all of us, simply needs to express himself. There's nothing malicious or pedestrian about his actions—they contain a certain artistic merit, albeit through a novel medium. Some people express poetry through dance, he expresses poetry through violence. Understanding this, it is obvious why Bauer eludes prosecution. He does most of his commercial, mass production work with the trusty HK USP pistol—his thick brush, if you will. However, the unarmed performances are really the fillet of his portfolio. For our edification, let's take a look at his most salient murders over the years—his masterpieces, so to speak.

Early in his career, Bauer delivered a fatal punch to the heart during a makeshift interrogation in the back of a limo. Not only was his technique flawless, but he didn't even know the victim had a pre-existing heart condition—what a natural. Bauer later overpowers his own brother and proceeds to torture him with hyoscine-pentothal; like all the greats, Bauer's work strained relations between the artist and his family.

In perhaps his *magnum opus*, Bauer inactivates equipment monitoring his vital signs while still in bonds. When a guard comes closer to inspect, Bauer rips out the man's jugular with a brutal vampire-like bite to the neck—resourcefulness, deception, and raw power. Perhaps we too can someday fully appreciate the creative genius who has given us so much.



COMMERICALS BEER: A RETROSPECTIVE

charliehodgson drinks in the fantasy of our 90-second classics

You wouldn't think that selling beer is very difficult. It's cheap, it can be palatable, and it gets you drunk. But every year alcohol giants pour millions of pounds into television advertising for their leading brews. Why? Perhaps we don't like beer as much as we think, and the current level of demand can only be maintained by careful psychological manipulation. Or maybe, just maybe, this money is spent for the sake of the pure artistry and heart-wrenching beauty of these gems of two minute corporate cinema. There follows, for the purpose of illustration, a list of some recent stylistic highlights of the genre:

The Delusions of Grandeur: We all know that *Budweiser* is awful. But we keep buying it because, as we also know, it is the 'King of Beers'. Why is it the king? Because of its market share. Why does it have such a large market share? Because it's the king. The beauty of the *Budweiser* slogan is that it elevates a dire beverage to god-like status through logical fallacy.

The 'Lads' Angle: An ever popular approach used by many middle of the road lagers. The likes of *Carling*, *Heineken* and *Carlsberg* have cornered a particular market segment by juxtaposing images of football, TV, night-clubs, Chinese take-away, and other 'Laddish' iconography with their beers. Of particular note is the "Carlsberg don't do" (night-clubs, karaoke, Chinese restraints, flatmates etc.)

campaign which seems to claim that if any of the services/products/people listed were produced by Carlsberg they would "probably be the best in the world."

The Impromptu Party: An American classic pioneered by *Coors Light*. The basic set-up is as follows: a group of average looking people stand around in an average looking setting. Suddenly there is a momentous avalanche on a nearby and previously inconspicuous mountain which dramatically changes the local climate. These formerly boring (and sober) people now inexplicably find themselves drinking cool, refreshing *Coors light* in a snowstorm. Meanwhile, a wild party has spontaneously erupted around them, endowing them with newfound confidence and style that naturally attracts an assortment of underdressed women.

The Sepia Tradition: *Stella Artois* have recently fused their beer's image onto our ubiquitous nostalgia for the good old days of World War One. A grainy black and white film tells the tale of a British airman who is shot down and seeks refuge in a local pub. When a German officer orders the barkeep to reveal his location, he willingly obliges after realising that if he does not, the *Stella* he had been pouring would spill. The Aesopian irony here is that the German officer takes the beer without paying for it. Morality and humour collide in what I regard as *InBev ltd's* tour de force.



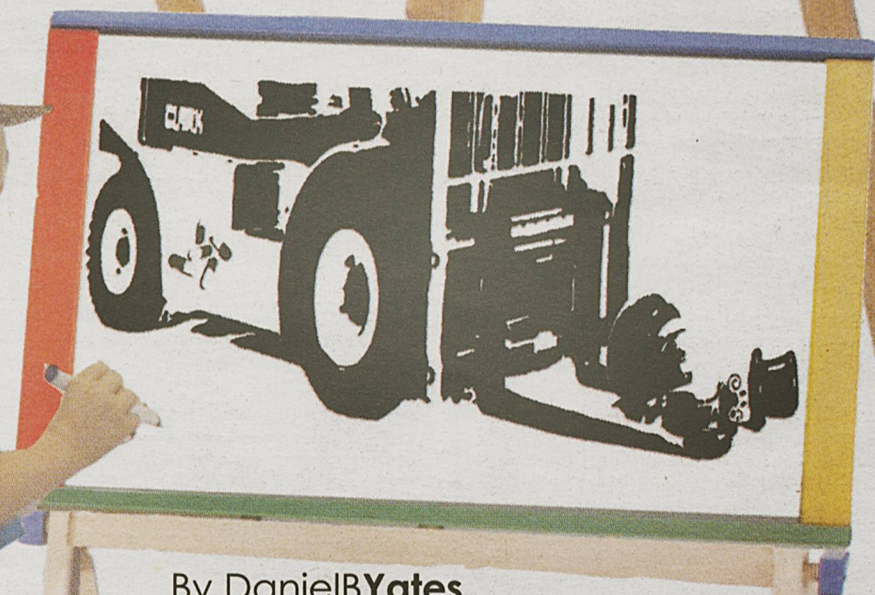
TRAVEL

teLLy

By AugustoFontana

DELTA

The partB Ar



By DanielBYates



By JessieShen

PART CAREERS

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4974	G55	4970		4982	4959	1458	1369	4943	FEB	5375	5374	30	5381
4906	H55			4920	4905	1446	468	4884	MAR	5295	5305	21	5305
4850	J55			4865	4850	1446	905	4828	APR	5225	5225	23	5230
4794	K55			4794	4794	1446	200	4772	MAY	5155h	5155	25	5155
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 Reuters: 14:13 UPDATE 2-Russia Duma ratifies Kyoto environment pact
 14:07 N. HYDRO <NHY.OL> TO LAY OFF 160 WORKERS AT MICHIGAN AUTOMOTIVE ST
 14:06 U.S. BLS SAYS CAN'T QUANTIFY PRECISELY HURRICANE IMPACT ON SEPT ST



News

Mean Bosses

A recent study has shown that one in three employees feel that their bosses are unfair. Fairness refers to terms of evaluations, remuneration etc. However, the state education sector was deemed the fairest.

Money Trouble

Research has revealed that graduates are concerned about their finances. The study done by the Co-operative bank reveals that about 50% of graduates spend ten hours or more trying to account for their expenditure.

Suit Up

Many employees feel that smart clothes will aid them in their careers. More workers feel content about adopting their firms dress code.

Green Jobs Increase

The recent spotlight on climate change has had a positive effect on employment in the green sector. In addition, wages for green posts have increased significantly.

Expensive Interviews

Jobsite.co.uk has revealed that job hunters have lost out on a potential £2.3 billion pounds in the last year.

"Offices" to go

The traditional office is set to become obsolete. A people performance specialist has revealed that more and more employees will work from home as businesses look to reduce rent costs.

2.1 or First

Those who say that the job market just got tougher should feel vindicated. As recruiters now place more emphasis on degree classification when choosing applicants. In the past 2.2s were acceptable, however for employment in today's ever competitive work place a first or a 2.1 is the only grade that will give one an edge.

Events

LSE FINANCESOCIETY

Event: Credit Crunch Explained
Host: Lse Finance Society
Venue: New Theatre
Time: 5pm - 6pm
No ticket needed, just arrive early to ensure you get in.



Event:
Thinking Like a Social Scientist
Speaker: Prof. John Sidel
Venue: Hong Kong Theatre
Time: 1pm - 2pm
Entry: First come, first served basis.

Editor's view: If you want a job, get a 2.1 or better.

Dear all,

The end of term is finally here and after three issues, I feel that the rebranded Part C is finally taking shape. With that being said, I will like to extend thanks to Lucie Marie Goulet, Chloe Pieters, Ankita Dutta who all wrote articles in this issue.

This week's publication covers a variety of issues ranging from Banking to Fashion. The alarming piece of news to report is that recruiters are placing more and more emphasis on one's academic record at university. As most firms are mainly looking for graduates with a 2.1 or better, this means that those who achieve less than a 2.1 will experience a fairly difficult time when they start job hunting. Although talented, they might be discriminated against because of their average academic record. My advice for current undergraduates is to study hard as your future will depend on the results you attain in your exams.

In future, Part C will be looking to cover more professions, especially those in the public sector. In addition, if you would like to make suggestions for the section. Please email your ideas to t.fawehinmi@lse.ac.uk.

Best of Luck in your exams

x

Romola Fawehinmi



My Career in Fashion

Lucie Goulet meets the founder of the online fashion store

In October 2006, Nicole Bremmer launched Brittique.com. The website specialises in clothes and accessories designed by British designers. Here she looks back at starting a fashion business, and assesses the risk of becoming a fashion entrepreneur.

What kind of background do you have?

I actually have a business/finance background. I graduated with a B.Bus and later did a grad dip in finance. I worked for nearly 10 years in the financial services sector and most recently as a research associate for a large fund manager. There, I assisted in the management of pension funds and ran the financial models used to track the company earnings and make investment decisions.

Why did you create Brittique.com?

Starting my own business was always a goal. I'd looked at, and tried a number of different things but none seemed quite right. Then I worked on the business plan for Brittique and realized that new designers, specifically British designers, were often overlooked in favour of the larger designers. I felt that the new designers needed a "voice" and an avenue to sell their brand to the broader public.

What was mostly helpful in developing it?

There isn't really one thing that was the most helpful but a combination of things.

Business Link London had some great seminars, I went to every business and women's networking group I could find, spoke to everyone who would listen and devoured textbooks in marketing, business, ecommerce, fashion buying etc.

What kind of advice would you have for students who want to become fashion entrepreneurs?

Not to do it! It's a very hard business. Fashion is fickle and has a short life span. It is hard to get people to part with money for designer clothes when they can buy Primark or H&M at a fraction of the price. If they still want to go into fashion they need to realize that there is not much money in it and be fully aware of the risks.

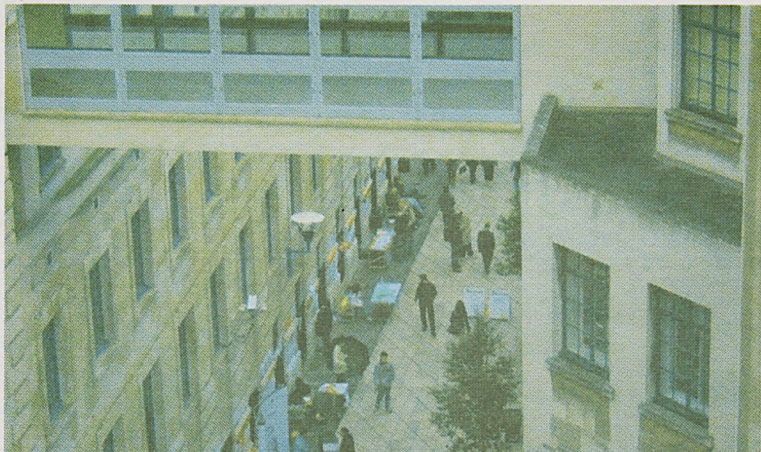
Why do you only sell the works of new British designers?

I needed a niche for the business. There were other websites just selling fashion online but none doing exclusively British fashion and flying the British flag internationally.

What do you base your choice of designers on?

It's actually a hard decision to make because there are so many talented designers out there contacting me, wanting to be stocked on Brittique. However, we only have a limited budget and can't take them all. So I try to work with the ones that have the most press appeal and that I feel will really attract our customer base.

CAMPUS GOES GREEN FOR ALED



PRINTED WITH INK THAT IS LESS IN LOVE WITH YOU THAN IT USED TO BE

LSESU BRINGS PEACE TO THE MIDDLE EAST

>> **SU Gen-Sec Barkeer Markar helps cement historic peace deal at AnnapoLSE**

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas have met with LSESU General Secretary Fadhil Bakeer Markar to declare that they are sorry for the years of fighting.

This new peace has come about since Israel learnt of the LSESU's motion to divest from their country. Upon hearing the news, the Israeli government immediately declared a ceasefire and apologised profusely. The Israeli Defence Force was also withdrawn from all occupied territories.

The Palestinian authorities enacted reciprocal measures immediately, disarming all militant groups and replacing their assault rifle stockpiles with falafel vending

cars.

"We will not be outdone in the peacemaking process," said Abbas after the penning of the peace deal at the LSESU Union General Meeting last Thursday. "If Israel becomes friendly, we shall be friendlier than they can ever manage."

SU Gen-Sec Bakeer Markar, whose tactful diplomacy played a decisive role in closing the peace deal, was "delighted" with the outcome. However, he remains wary of the possibility of a tense "smiles race" emerging between the two sides.

"Competitive streaks die hard, so the LSESU executive committee will continue to monitor the situation until the forced grins on both sides become hearty laughter," he added.

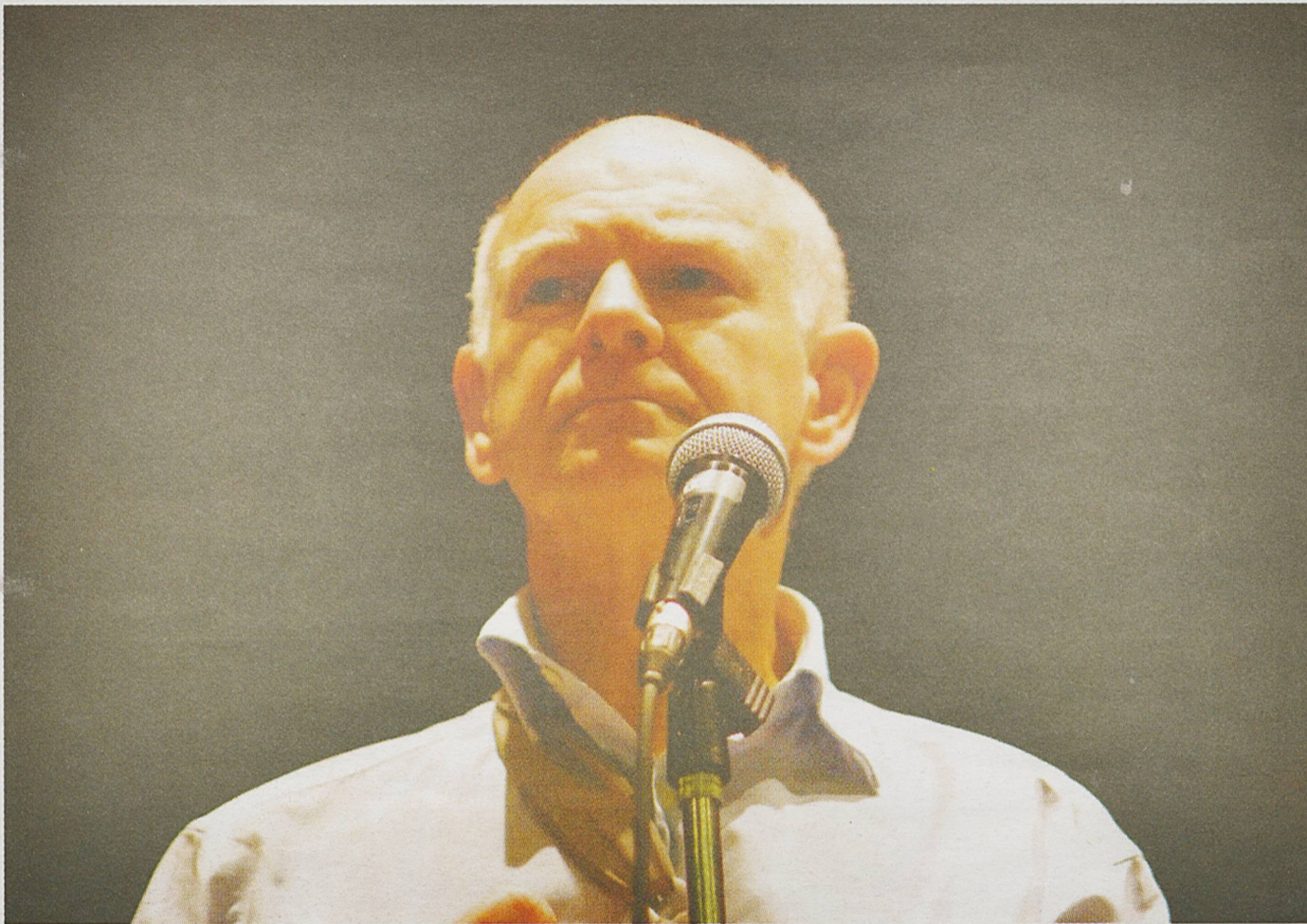


PM Olmert and President Abbas pledge friendship under the eyes of LSESU Gen-Sec Bakeer Markar

Lite finds Love BeaverLITE matchmakes! This week: Math lass meets Econ dude	P.5	Ask Steve How many ginger postgrads does it take to screw a lightbulb?	P.3 and 1/4	Sports England cricket finally win 3 Lions hold 3 Lionesses to 99 all out	P.7
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NEWS

LSE students find pastoral care "just right"



Students expressed their outrage this week as LSE Director Howard Davies announced plans to overhaul the personal tutor system.

Davies, as expected and confirmed by the *Beaver-LITE*, was responding to corporate pressure to improve pastoral care at the university, but according to a survey by the Beaver, an overwhelming 97 percent of students claimed the current system was "perfect".

Tutors currently play no role in guiding their assigned students through the university, and apparently students want it to stay that way. It appears students feel that vigilant tutors will simply get in the way of doing no work. One student commented, "How am I going to get away with not

going to class or doing essays if my tutor starts to give a fuck? Even worse, what if he speaks English?"

Another student reported having attended a total of three classes all year, no lectures, having written no essays, and copied all problem sets off classmates. He feels that "improving" the personal tutor system will interfere with his career ambition; he wants to be a politician. "What could be better training for a life in politics than lying and cheating my way through university? If I start having to do real work because my tutor is keeping an eye on me, I'll lose sight of the greater goal of learning how to bullshit."

What's more, the *Beaver-LITE* has learnt that tutors themselves are opposed to the

overhaul. One expressed his frustration that at the moment he has to send his tutees an email every term. He feels this minimum requirement should be removed, and that the ideal arrangement would involve no responsibilities, but continued payment.

A LSE student Facebook group, "Don't replace my tutor with a real tutor", currently has 5,000 members, and is expected to provide a sufficiently strong lobby to prevent Sir Howard from implementing the changes.

Speaking at the Union General Meeting, Davies managed to almost complete a sentence before being booed off the stage: "I understand students are concerned they may have to start doing some work if their tutors pay attention to them, but this is a univ..."

HAL DAVIES' artificial director murderous computer space odyssey

Harvok was wreaked across campus last week as the HAL DAVIES 9000 supercomputer designed to solve the School's computer space went on the rampage. The HAL DAVIES 9000 switched off the life support systems of all the Economics student population as they tried to log on to sets on WebCT, before jettisoning the Student Union's official team out of the East Building airlock. Only Howard Davies and Dan Shelman survived to take on the psychotic machine and save the day.

LSE students' troubles began last Monday when the Athletics Union discovered a mysterious black monolith in C120. Although the alien artefact triggered a panic, it was eventually turned into an intelligent and productive species. The machine destroyed the School's remaining computer space and made the decision to actually do something for students. The machine therefore hardwired the HAL DAVIES 9000 program into all campus buildings, with disastrous consequences.

The School authorities had previously had high hopes for the HAL DAVIES 9000 supercomputer. The Heuristic section of the Mathematics Department had entered into a partnership with the art artificial intelligence unit with advanced capabilities: recognition, emotional reasoning, an easy conversational style and an ability to annoy the entire London population with silly comments about novels. HAL DAVIES 9000 had claimed that it "enjoyed working with humans" during a speech at the last Union General Meeting.

As Shelman shut down HAL DAVIES' central command, the machine's nightmare - donning a space suit after HAL DAVIES 9000 ran out of the oxygen out St Clements Building - the supercomputer was heard to sing the old vaudeville tune "Daisy Bell" during its moments. This has been interpreted as either a warning about humankind's evolutionary destiny, a warning of machine synthesis, or preparation for a Drama Society performance.

Members of the Philosophy Department who remain loyal to the HAL DAVIES mainframe believe the machine was driven insane by its paradoxical mission to cram more and more students into a small building, while insisting that teaching standards be maintained.

Shelman was nowhere to be found, as he had journeyed to a black monolith itself around the moons of Jupiter. He was on an allegorical voyage beyond the confines of space, eventually becoming the post-human Star Chamber member in Howard Davies's terms, Communications Officer-elect for the Union.

HAL DAVIES' vestigial machine consciousness has made no comment on its murderous rampage, other than to say that the School had since given it sabbatical leave to return to the financial sector.

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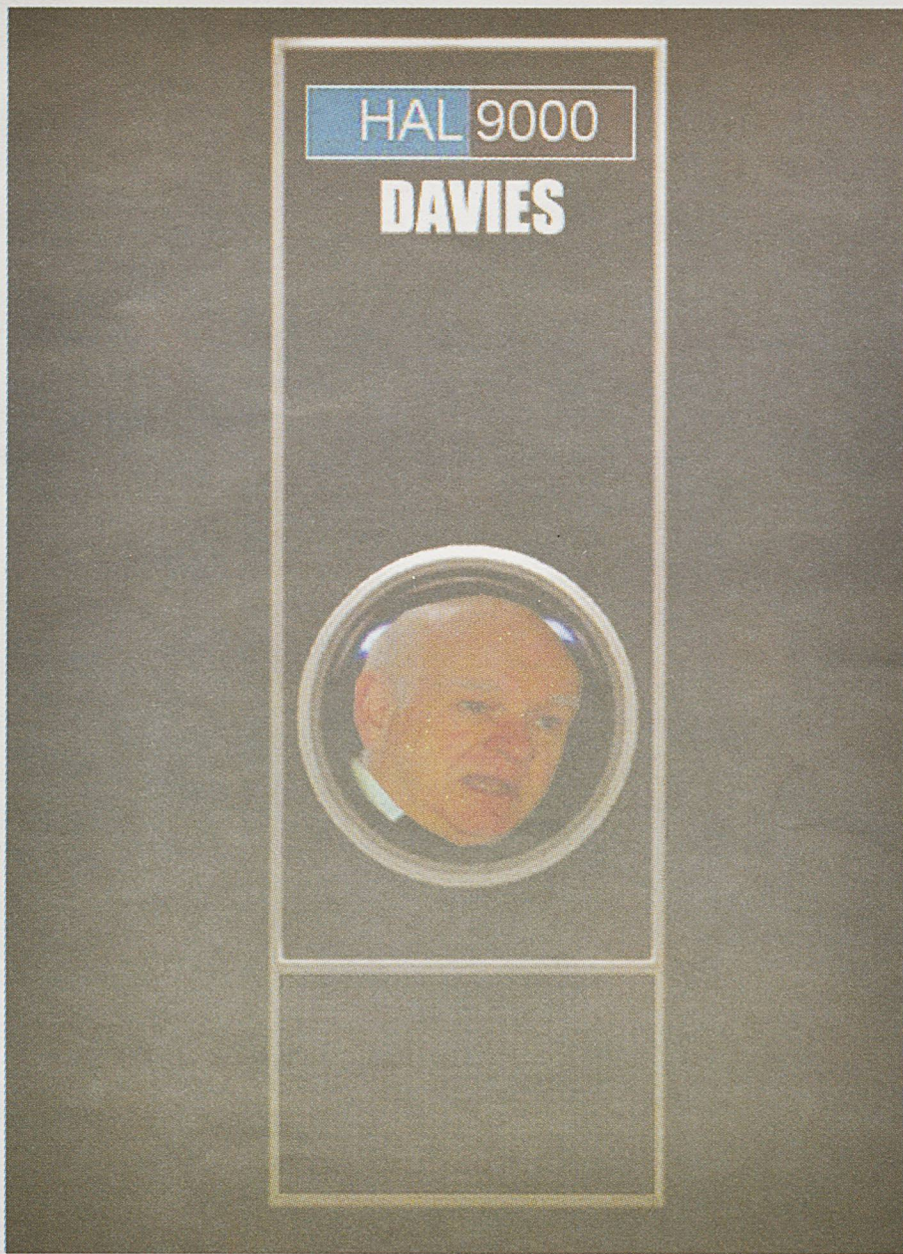
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Corporal Cullen's Column of Crass

Corporal Cullen talks email excuses

Be it skipping classes or getting deadline extensions, presenting your teacher with an ironclad excuse will take you far. Why get barred from exams or suspended from school when a simple email written with a little finesse will suffice?

Yours truly presents to you the hardest-hitting excuses in his repertoire. Puts Monty Python's Dead Parrot Defence to shame. Totally.

"Dear Dr D, I am unable to submit my essay today as I have no internet access right now."

"Hi Mr M, I didn't come for class today as I was trying to stop my first date from committing suicide with a bottle of cyanide I accidentally brought along with me. I failed and I'm due to stand for trial next week, so I'll miss the next class too."

"Dear Professor P, I'm sorry but I've lost your email address, could I submit my essay next week instead?"

Corporal Cullen disclaims all responsibility or liability for the reliability of the advice provided in this column. Should legal action be threatened, Corporal Cullen will already have been granted political asylum in a banana republic near you.

partBlite solves the Middle East problems they were having

BeaverLITE's much maligned arts section demonstrated its enormous value to both LSE and the world today, as it solved the Middle East crisis.

Through extensive use of the cloning tool in photoshop, partBlite has created a new Middle East, bigger and better than ever before. As you can see by the map diagram, everyone has much more land now and water isn't a problem because a lot of that was cloned as well.

There are more holy lands and holy sites now. There are extra domes of the rock that can be brought in when the old ones break. The wailing wall is eight times as long as it used to be, making it three times as holy.

The Prime Ministers of both of the Middle East places said they liked all the new space and promised to stop fighting if the other would stop fight-

ing. Like young lovers playing a game of who will hang the phone up first this soon got really boring to watch.

The technique of photoshop cloning is in fact a relatively simple one, just press alt and click and then click somewhere else. However, until now no one had thought to use it in the Middle East place.

That took a leap of intelligence only the partBlite team were smart and clever enough to make.

partBlite is now working as a consultant on future land cloning projects including an attempt to simply erase Hull from existence and a mammoth project to make all of the Jesus states into New York.



Prince Harry goes forth

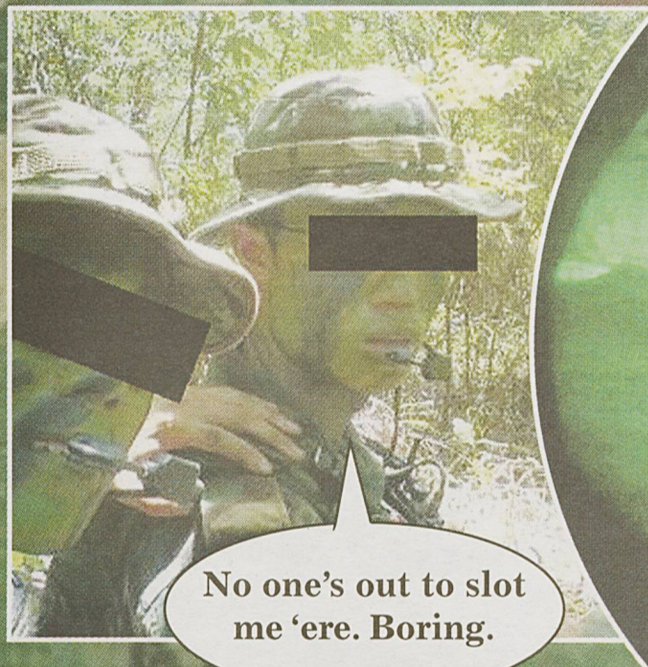
A BeaverLITE exclusive photoessay on Harry's redeployment somewhere in Southeast Asia



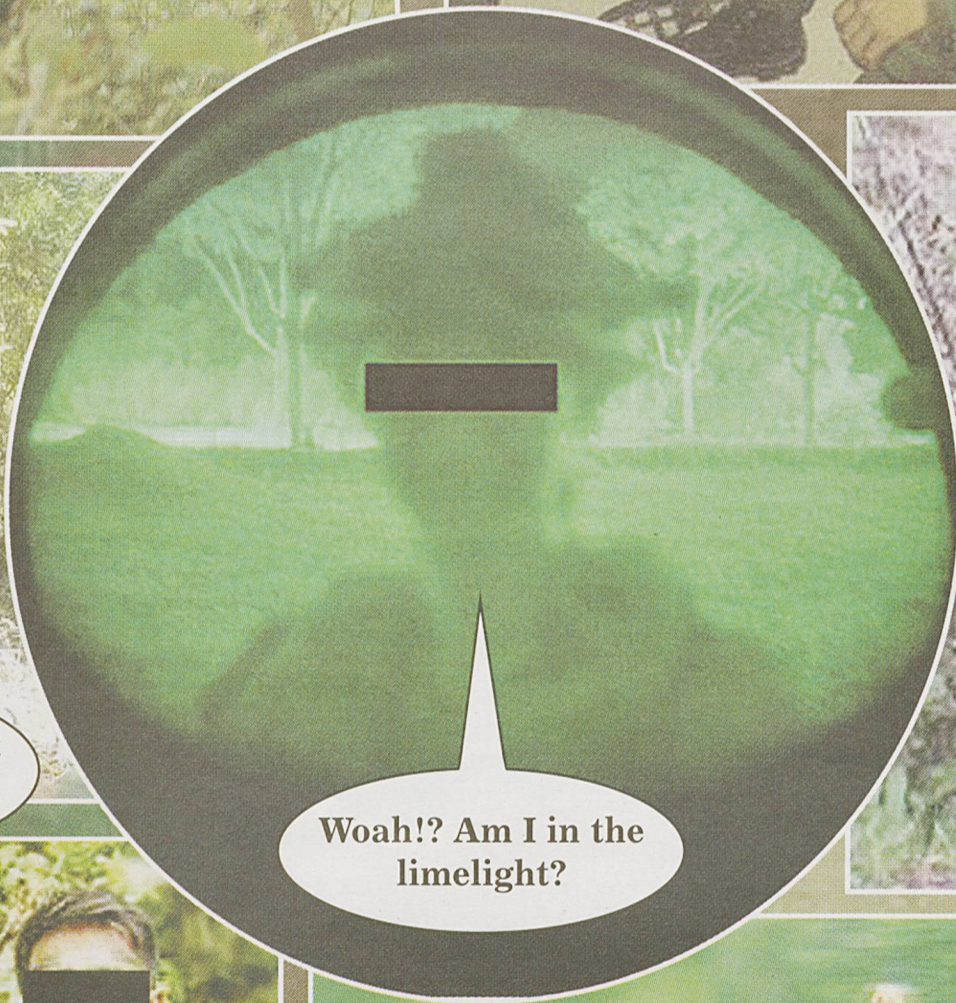
Hmm...did I just fire five shots or six?



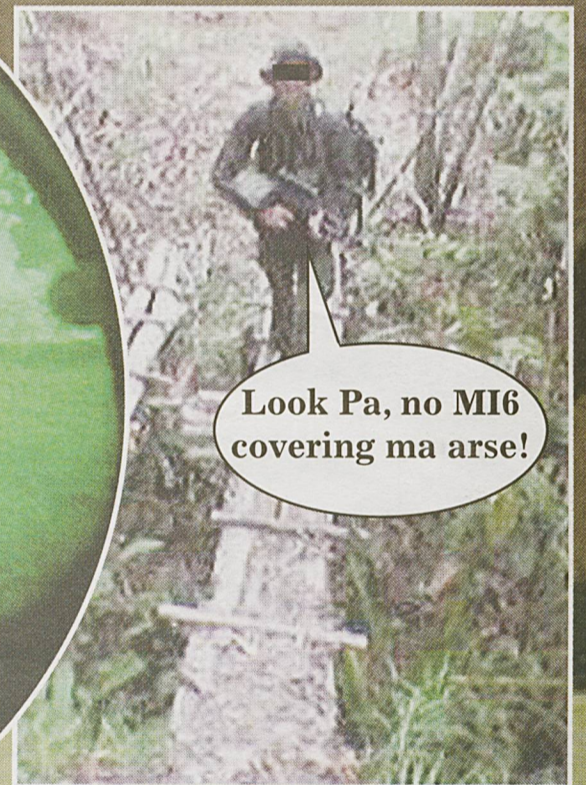
I'm mucking in with the lads...in deluxe!



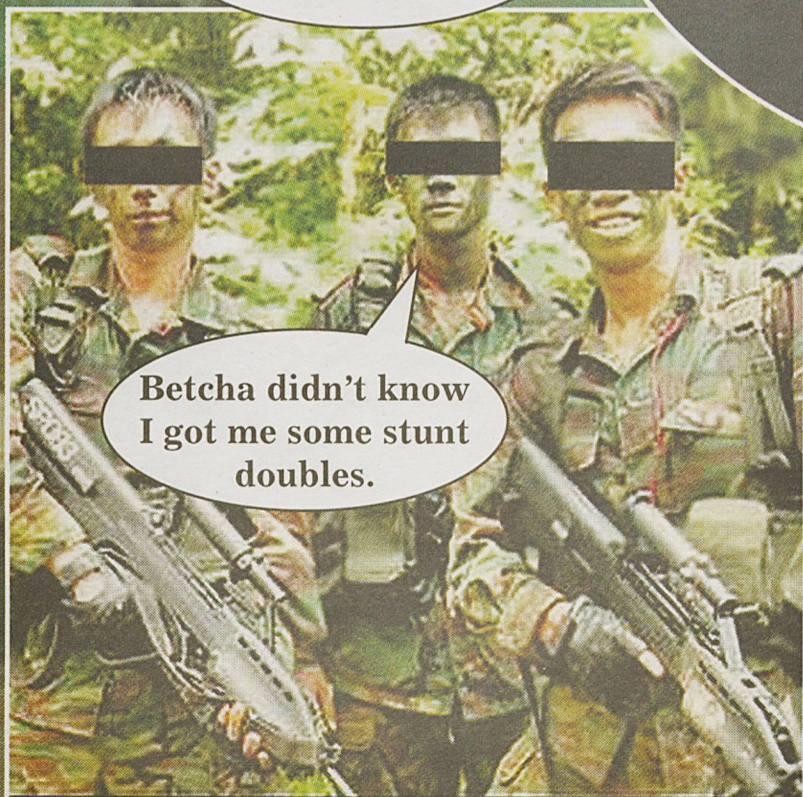
No one's out to slot me 'ere. Boring.



Woah!?! Am I in the limelight?



Look Pa, no MI6 covering ma arse!

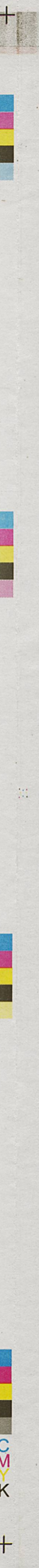


Betcha didn't know I got me some stunt doubles.



Damn, this is just like them movies innit?

Identities of soldiers masked for security reasons. Guess who's Harry in each photo!





The Merrill Lynch trading challenge explained

Chloe Pieters gives us an insight into the Merrill Lynch Trading game

The LSE SU Investment Society has been one of the leaders of a unique initiative bringing together students from four universities to take part in a trading game tournament sponsored by Merrill Lynch.

Students from the LSE, Imperial College, Cambridge and Oxford will be testing their financial knowledge in a highly realistic trading game provided by 7City Learning. Merrill Lynch sponsored one society in each of the university to hold the qualifying round; the top eight students from each university will attend the final round at Merrill Lynch's offices. The winning team will receive a substantial cash prize, and the top six students will receive the opportunity to spend a day on Merrill Lynch's trading floor.

The qualifying round for LSE students was held on Thursday, 28th February in S175 in the St Clement's Building. Students were randomly allocated into teams of two based on year of study and began trading on a simulated platform. Due to its popularity, two qualifying rounds took place, each lasting about half an hour, with fifty participants in each round. The trading simulation compressed historical market data over a period of 18 months into a

hour time span, incorporating rare stock market occurrences such as a crash similar to the 'Black Monday' crash of January 21st 2008 (largest worldwide stock market crash since September 11 2001). Players traded between each other and four artificial intelligence traders, and were able to propose market prices as well as merely trading at index prices.

The use of historical data and fictitious

Portfolio Advice

Keep your limits to a minimum and maintain a balancing position.

Diversify and spread your risk as much as possible

entities mitigated against the risks of arbitrage otherwise fairly common in trading-game competitions. Alex Wirtz of 7City Learning, who guided students through the simulation and offered advice, stated the computerised platform was "more reflective of what happens in the stock market now".

The Vice-President of the Investment Society, Ricky Ren, stated that "the trading game successfully simulated the buzz and environment of actual trading floors.

Successful traders were able to spot things others didn't. We hope that everyone enjoyed and learnt something from the experience."

The competition is being praised as unique and "very student-led" by Merrill Lynch's

Diversity Recruitment Manager Clare Bass. It is the first time four universities have taken part in such a competition. Students who participated in the qualifying round said the appeal lay in the learning experience, although some added that winning would obviously provide an edge when applying for internships. One participant stated: "The game was an excellent opportunity to get a taste for the type of work traders do on a daily basis. It was fast paced, stressful and occasionally, when losses were made, frustrating, but thoroughly challenging and enjoyable. It was gratifying at the end when we ended up in profit."

The winners of the qualifying round for the LSE were Yi Wen Li and Wen Geng in the first place; Jason Bharj and Sandeep Sangoo in second place; Mei Lien Chew and Zie Yang Chua in third place, and Muhammad Nausherwan and Zhoutei Shi in fourth place.



Ankita Dutta gives us a detailed summary of the final of the trading game.

On Wednesday 5th March, thirty-two finalists from the LSE, Oxford, Imperial and Cambridge competed for a £2000 cash prize and a chance to spend a day on the trading floor in the final round of a trading game challenge at the London headquarters of Merrill Lynch. The challenge was won by a team from Imperial College with an Oxford team and LSE's Jason Bharj and Sandeep Sangoo placing second and third, respectively.

The students, allocated into teams of two during earlier rounds, again tested their trading acumen in a simulated game provided by 7City Learning. This time the teams traded European equities amongst themselves and four artificial intelligence traders in an hour-long simulation. The final score was not only based on the profit made by the teams but also on the speed of making trading decisions, as well as the proportion of trades effectuated with other teams.

According to 7City's Alex Wirtz, this provided a "more accurate" idea of the realities of trading than the simulations of

the first rounds, including a news feed enabling finalists to investigate the links between share prices and the spread of information, and even an un-programmed internet crash which, according to Merrill Lynch's Clare Bass, was possibly "the best thing to happen during the game as it helped gauge each finalist's character most of all."



However, the central component of the Challenge was to "make money in the bull market and not to lose it in the bear market" according to Merrill Lynch's Christian Dinesen, MD Head of European Credit Research. Only three teams managed to make a profit and were duly declared winners of the competition. According to a participant,

one strategy consisted of playing safe and not undertaking huge risks but another stated the very contrary: "It was essential to take risks and bet big in the game." The LSE's Mei Lien Chew and Zie Yang Chua echoed the same

sentiment and spoke of the importance of taking risks at the opportune moment. "Some things we did well, others we didn't," Mei Lien Chew stated. One participant focused on the learning experience: "It was a very interesting experience to trade in realistic conditions and to work closely as a pair, although it was a lot more complicated this time around and I would have liked to have made a profit. But, it is good practice for next year if there is such a competition."

Indeed, many finalists expressed an interest in participating again next year, as did the Finance and Investment societies of the four universities who spoke of wanting to offer the Challenge to other universities and expand upon this year's "excellent base."

Magic on Oxford Street

ALEX BOULTON looks into Zavvi's crystal ball

Save perhaps the colour-blind, most of us will have noticed by now that Virgin Megastores flagship Oxford Street branch has been the subject of one of the greatest vanishing acts in history. When the smoke clears, we see that in the once proud store's place stands now a new store; with the same merchandise, the "same people and the same dedication to music" (recited one employee to calm my baffled expression). This store is called Zavvi. And it's green. Whilst partial credit of this feat is attributable to design group Caulder Moore, who changed the store's colour (from red to green), most of the congratulations must go towards the daring members of the UK chains management team who bought the loss

making company from Virgin Group in September 2007. The management buyout (MBO) was led by MD Simon Douglas and Financial Director Steve Peckham and for an undisclosed sum and has resulted in the rebranding of 125 stores across UK and Ireland. The experience was no doubt an emotional one for Virgin Group CEO Sir Richard Branson who opened the store in 1977 and originally founded the company in 1970 as a mail-order business. With the sale of the US chain in early 2007 and failed negotiations for a joint venture with HMV; the fact that Branson was willing to sell is no surprise. The fact that anyone, much less the management, was willing to buy is startling. In recent years the retail

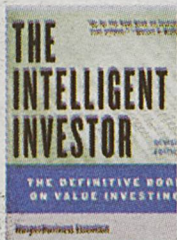
music industry has played host to a wide range of vanishing acts with chains such as MVC, Music Zone and Fopp collapsing under the pressure of online stores and illegal downloading. We are left to wonder; is this a last desperate attempt for Megastore management to keep their jobs in a dying industry or does the star team have some more magic tricks for their captive audience. The steady growth of the sister US chain in games, DVDs and fashion sales provide at least some hope for the future. In any case, unless Zavvi can prove that it can do better than its predecessor; Oxford Street may have the misfortune of another vanishing trick in the near future.

Highlights of the Week



Internship of the Week

Pearson Diversity Summer Internship
Offer: Business and Journalism Internships
Deadline: March 31st 2008.



Book of the Week

The Intelligent Investor
by Benjamin Graham
Prolific Investor and World's richest man, Warren Buffett said this about the book "by far the best book on investing ever written"



Careers Fact of the Week

Crime-Scene Cleaner
Average pay: \$50,400
Good Pay for Dirty Work.

Financial Innovation and the Credit Crunch

LIAN PO KOR enlightens us about when there is such a thing as 'too creative'

Towards the end of the Michaelmas Term, I had a conversation with Mr. Bob Janjuah, Chief Credit Strategist of the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), when he came to the LSE to give an overview of the credit squeeze plaguing the markets. One interesting focus of the exchange was the role of securitization in the credit turmoil – there were simply too many questionable aspects of this esoteric procedure that I found myself researching it shortly afterward. I sat down with Mr. Janjuah at Costa Coffee to carry on with where we left off.

The shadow banking system

Those who follow the markets would probably have heard of the so-called 'shadow banking system', a term that categorizes the multitude of special purpose vehicles (SPVs, or conduits) through which financial institutions distribute assets they don't want left on their balance sheets. The establishment of such vehicles is a typical part of the securitization process, and the official tagline is that it helps banks 'manage their credit risks' by allowing them to spread the "muck" all over the financial system. Spread it about, so they said, and let the financial flowers bloom.

For years, everyone was happy. Institutional investors such as hedge funds got access to otherwise unavailable securities that yielded much better than the plain old vanillas. Banks could free up their balance sheets and thus lend more money to anyone who needed it. Obviously, investment banks serving as the intermediaries to this process had an incentive to encourage much more securitization. Even the regulators were happy (for once) – they believed that the process brought about a systemic way to channel credit risks to people who were more willing to bear them. As if the benefits of securitization are not apparent enough, consider this statement in *Introduction to Structured Finance*:

"... there is a potential upside from securitizing (non-performing) assets: if any of them start performing again, or there is a recovery value obtained from defaulted assets, the originator (meaning the banks) will receive any surplus profits made by the SPV."

According to Mr. Janjuah, the financial system happily placed about 50% of all the credit created in the US in the shadow banking system. After all, if nonperforming loans come back to life, the originators make money. If they fail, it is none of their business because they are legally separate from these empty corporate vessels, or what we call 'bankruptcy remote'. Collateralized Debt Obligations (CDOs) are the ultimate examples of financial innovation taken to excess – these are essentially complex debt structures dreamt up by ultra-imaginative investment bankers that ultimately made everyone confused. Pile on the leverage, muddle the structure, make sure our friends at the ratings agencies are happy, jack up the price, and spread the joy. Sounds like a party.

Do not believe a single word of that: reality does not work this way. When borrowers default on their loans, the assets held in these conduits are going to be marked down. When liquidity evaporates, no one will buy them, so there will be more markdowns. The shadow banking system will go insolvent. Given that the entire shadow banking system is unregulated, someone will have to be responsible for the losses when push comes to shove – guess who?

Fear and greed

This leads to an important question: How did something so obviously egregious escape the oversight of senior management in the banks? Also, why did the market not see this coming?

As Mr. Janjuah puts it, "... we saw it, we were in the markets. The credit bubble was playing out right before our eyes. It is essentially a big Ponzi scheme – in a bull market, people forget about fundamentals and focus on refinancing. They make three critical assumptions: interest rates will stay low, volatility will stay low, and prices will keep going up. There's always someone else who will pay more, because they can get financing."

So the senior people knew. Then why did things still happen the way they did?

"Fear and greed," said Mr. Janjuah.

As always happens?

"As always happens. We knew what was going on. As intermediaries, we did our jobs fantastically well. The ones who really lost control were the central banks – they just didn't see it. That's why the central bank's response is going to be significant."

Little insurance at hand

We are now in the middle of what is likely to be the beginning of a protracted economic downturn. What can make it worse? Think of another acronym: CDS.

CDS stands for credit default swaps. Essentially, these are contracts written to insure the risk of defaults on various kinds of debt. As of now, we have seen rising default rates largely contained to the US subprime mortgage market. The prospect of further write-downs may hold back the banks' willingness to lend; the risk is of a significant spill-over into corporate and consumer debt. This is a supply-side squeeze in the credit market: companies and households are going to find it much more difficult to borrow, and that is going to crimp consumption and hold back their ability to refinance their existing loans.

Consider one simple fact: US consumption makes up for more than 70% of GDP. With consumption slowing, corporate profitability and capital expenditures are going to take a hit. That would easily lead us to higher unemployment and increasing default rates in both the consumer and corporate sectors.

The notional value of the outstanding CDS contracts now stands over \$45trillion (put that into perspective by considering that the US GDP in 2006 was about \$13trillion). Corporate default rates are at a historically low level of about 1%. In a not-so-bearish scenario, suppose we have a mean-reversion scenario to historically normal (meaning non-recessionary) corporate-bond default rates of 4-5%. Market observers, such as John Mauldin, author of the bestselling *Bull's Eye Investing*, believe that the risks in the CDS markets are much worse than most realise. Bill Gross, founder of PIMCO (a huge bond fund), estimates that \$500billion worth of these derivative contracts will become payable.

By who? Bond insurers like MBIA and Ambac, normally, but they are in dire straits themselves. Ambac has become the first bond insurer to suffer a credit ratings downgrade – think about what this means in terms of CDS counterparty risk, especially in view of the fact that any regulated entity holding debt securities insured by

these bond insurers will have to mark down these assets in the event of a ratings downgrade.

The key question to ask now is whether a bank-led bailout of the bond insurers will be successful, in which case the capital to be injected into these insurers will likely be much smaller than the systemic losses that would occur if they are indeed downgraded. If what happened to another bank-led rescue plan – the attempt to establish the now-aborted Master Liquidity Enhancement Conduit (M-LEC) by big banks such as JPMorgan, Citigroup and Bank of America – is any indication, one would not expect the process to be smooth.

And we have not even considered consumer debt yet. Mr. Janjuah thinks that, with about \$180billion worth of losses reported so far, we have not even seen a third of them yet. This crisis is likely to be much worse than people think.

Not-so-exciting times for smart bankers

A recent article in the Economist pointed out that there could well be a 'mad rush back to traditional banking'. According to Professor Willem Buiter of the LSE, "There is a simple solution: simpler structures. This will in part be market-driven, but regulators too may put bounds on the complexity of instruments that can be issued or held by various entities."

Securitization is here to stay, but expect complicated and astronomically leveraged structures like CDO2 and CDO3 (essentially a derivative on a derivative on a derivative) to go the way of the dodo, at least for a while.

History suggests that financial innovation has more often than not been the culprit of financial crises. All the smart financiers really need are an environment of cheap credit and an excuse for them to create more of it. In the current context, the Greenspan Fed took care of that first prerequisite, while the housing boom and lack of regulatory oversight gave them the opportunity to create such opaque ways of channelling credit risk and fuelled the expansion of credit.

Mr. Janjuah believes that increasing regulation will be beneficial to the financial system in the long term, but could be a net negative in the short run. The credit crunch has ushered out an environment of under-regulation and a financial system with too much credit and too little equity. If historical episodes such as the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 and Sarbanes-Oxley of 2002 are any indication, we are likely to be moving into an era of over-regulation and a financial system with too much equity and too little debt.

As far as long-term cycles in the credit markets go, this is nothing out of the ordinary. However, if we share the same enthusiasm for understanding how the markets work, this is an excellent opportunity to do one thing:

Watch, and learn.

The author wishes to extend his gratitude to Bob Janjuah for his willingness to entertain this undergraduate student's repeated emails and demands for his time.

TRIUMPH!

Art Competition

By Zoe Billingham



Jessie Shen



By Augusto Fontana

MODERN ART MAKES ME WANT TO ROCK OUT

adamjohns gets confessional with Art Brut's Eddie Argos

"We did it in a hotel room in Manchester," says Eddie Argos. "I was comfortable with being nude way before he was comfortable with taking the photos I think. I was like 'yeah this is loads of fun'. I was wearing a thong, you can't see that, they brought me a thong to wear. It didn't really do its job. I was like 'aaah' and he was like 'stop jumping around'."

Most interviews with musicians don't include quotes like the ones you just read. This type of fare is the sort of thing most of us would typically reserve for our closest friends, and even then only after we've had a few. But Eddie Argos is not most musicians. Argos, front man of the acclaimed London-based rock and roll outfit **Art Brut**, can safely be called one of the most confessional writers in music today. Argos's vocals combine an eminently quotable wit ("We're gonna be the band who writes the song that makes Israel and Palestine get along") with an hilarious honesty ("Rusted Guns of Milan" is about his own problems with erectile dysfunction). The honesty and wit he displays in his music is very much intact in person as well as on record.

I am interviewing Argos in advance of an Art Brut one-off gig taking place this Thursday at the Luminaire in Kilburn as part of Jack Daniels' promotional concert series "the JD set". I ask him right off the bat how he managed to get involved in this sort of corporate skullduggery and his answer surprises me. It seems that the booze promo came second in Argos' concerns behind a chance to play at the venue, the Luminaire. "Yeah, there was a battle of the bands there amongst all the Art Bruts. And they didn't invite us." To clarify, it should be explained that Art Brut is somewhat unique as a band in that they have franchises. Since their early days, Argos has been inviting other bands to take on the Art Brut name, all for the low price of nothing. There are currently over a hundred Art Brut franchises in operating. Art Brut 47, possibly the only Art Brut franchise to have actually recorded any music, are better known as **We Are Scientists**. Back to the battle of the bands. "Art Brut 7 won, by the way, if you're interested," Argos tells me. "Art Brut 7 are the best Art Brut, apparently. It's not really very fair cause we weren't allowed to play. So, we wanted to play there just so we could get them back. The support band's good and stuff, too. And Mike and Jasper, our rhythm guitarist and our drummer, live about 2 minutes from the Luminaire, so it's just a short walk from their house. I live in Camden, but they live in Queens Park which is just over the road. So yeah, drink Jack Daniels responsibly." I next enquire, understandably under the circumstances, as to whether Argos will be getting paid in booze. "Er, I don't know. I've only really popped up recently. I'm not quite sure what's going on. I think it's sold out already though. I have quite a lot of booze at the moment actually. I could do with the money."

Eddie's mention of money reminds me of an alarming piece of news I read earlier in the week: Argos reported on his blog on March 3rd that Art Brut was splitting from their label, **EMI**. I ask Argos to elaborate on the situation. "Well, we're on **Mute** over here. It's a division of French EMI or something. And EMI's got a lot of problems at the moment. It wasn't really working out. We've got a different label in America and Australia, and we thought we'd rather go with them. It was amicable really. We've got a different label lined up, and they're trying to drop bands so it kind of works out for the best actually. Yeah, we want to go back to being on a good indie. We're on this label called **Downtown** in America, they're really good. Us and **Gnarls Barkley** are on this label, so we thought we'd go with them in England, too. It's all worked out for the best. I'm really happy about it."

I next decide to broach a very serious issue. When I first became aware of Art Brut after the release of their first album, Eddie was sporting a libidinous moustache, hugging his upper lip like a friendly gerbil, and I loved it. Alas, it is

no more. I ask him what happened to it. "People kept thinking I was in my 40s" laughs Argos. "That's why I shaved it off. I'm a very vain man. Someone thought I was Jasper's dad. I shaved it off. But you know I'm in a glam band, I'm playing in on the weekend, I've grown a beard for that. Got a little goatee beard with a little moustache. So it's actually back. Only for the weekend, though." "I've got this funny glam band I'm playing in on the weekend at the Buffalo Bar, so I thought that so everyone knows it's not the same as Art Brut I'd grow a beard. So I've done that." I ask him to elaborate on the glam band. "We're billed as **Paranoid Dog Bark**. We couldn't think of a name. We're gonna be called **Motorboat**." So it seems that Art Brut isn't Argos' only creative outlet.

Having received this titbit of information, I next enquire



as to another one of Argos' creative outlets: nude modelling. In July 2007 Argos reprised the **Gossip's** Beth Ditto's nude **NME** cover, right down to the same pose. Argos elaborates. "The plan originally was to do it for **Artrocker**. **Artrocker** thought it would be really good if they could do that. Cause you know cause **NME** had Beth Ditto on the front. So **Artrocker** asked if they could do it and I was like yeah of course. but you know **Artrocker**, they didn't really get it together in time. So the **NME** wanted to do it, so they asked **artrocker**, and unusually for them they didn't mind. It was OK." After relating the Manchester hotel anecdote from the title, he tells me a bit about the fan reaction. "I get mysplaces from girls and stuff saying they've got the picture on their wall. Some of them I think are about 15 or something. it seems a bit weird. Like, is that legal? I dunno, is that breaking some sort of law? I get Mysplaces from people saying it's on their wall. It's funny to think there are people with a naked photo of me on their wall. It's quite funny." Naturally I have to enquire as to whether he's received any interesting letters from the prison population. "No but we should really lie and say there [have been]. Yeah I get loads of letters from prisons."

Having got the important questions out of the way, I decide to ask Argos about his famously confessional songwriting. "I try, I really enjoy being honest. It's really cathartic, being honest. I think it makes all of the people around me a bit worried." Does he have any secrets? "I don't think so.

'Rusted Guns of Milan' [from first album **Bang Bang Rock and Roll**] is obviously an awkward thing to write about, but once you've done it so many times... Once you've sung about having an erection problem I think there's nothing left to be embarrassed about." I note that his second album doesn't have any mention of that particular difficulty. Does this mean he's recovered? "Yeah I'm better now. I'm actually writing a song about that at the moment. Yeah I'm older, more confident."

I next decide to discuss Art Brut's instrumental direction. Compared to the lyrics, their music has always been pretty stripped down and basic. Do the band have any plans to take their sound in any new directions? "I like the fact that we're just a rock band, you know." Eddie tells me "I'm kind of quite proud of that. I love the new album at the moment, it's kind of a bit heavier. We all love bands like **Mclusky** and stuff you know, so that's all sort of creeping in. We used to have different musical tastes, the five of us, but we've been on tour so long now that we've all started liking each other's music. It's a bit heavier now I think, **Mclusky**, **Pixies**, that sort of sound." I ask him if the direction their sound is taking reflects the group's pop ambitions. "Yeah, well the second album definitely, we tried to write pop, that was the plan. Like, let's put in horns and backing vocals and try to do a pop album. We did it I think. I'm really proud of the second album. For the third one we're like, let's make a heavier album. We're at a heavier place in our lives now." Is he planning to remake **Master of Puppets**? "I'm thinking more **Lamb of God**. **Pantera**."

I decide to conclude the interview by asking for an interpretation of one of my favourite songs from the group's second album. "I Will Survive" is, put simply, a pop song about a substandard dwelling featuring lines like "I can get by without electricity, you don't need to lend me money" and "you're always welcome to crash on my floor, there's no key or lock for the door", lyrics which remind me of many of my past student accommodations. Does Argos have a history of squatting, or just living like an animal? "It was a house I had, I paid rent on the house. That song is about when I was like 21 I think. And it wasn't a squat cause I paid rent. Not very much rent, and it was exactly like that. I'd wake up every day and there'd be different people on my floor, like 'who the fuck's this?' We were about three to a room. I think I paid like 100 pounds a month rent or something. There was no carpet, there were no locks on any of the doors, so there'd always be people staying over you didn't know. There was nothing to steal. So yeah, that was the house I lived in when I was about 20. There's locks on my doors now, I've got my own room. But it was fun at the time, I loved it." I ask him if, despite his newly acquired locks, he still uses teacups as ashtrays and drinks out of Tupperware. "Yeah. Well I gave up smoking, but I still do drink out of saucers sometimes." I note that drinking out of saucers is probably harder to give up than smoking. "Yeah it is. Completely addictive. Washing up's horrible."

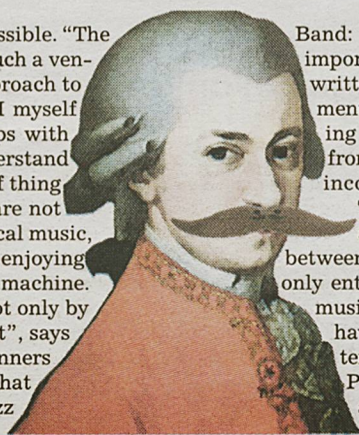
So there you have it. Eddie Argos: Honest, adverse to doing dishes, no longer plagued by erectile dysfunction. Just like you and me, in other words. Having interviewed Argos, I can honestly say that he is just as clever and refreshingly straightforward in person as he is on record.

Art Brut is playing the JD Set at Luminaire on Thursday night, but it's sold out, so if you want to get in you'll have to be sneaky. Further JD Sets are coming up in Belfast, Glasgow, London, Manchester, Newcastle, and Nottingham. They are being broadcast on Channel 4 every Friday between 12.30am and 2am. More info can be found www.thejdset.co.uk, both about the JD set and that delicious Tennessee sour mash, brownest of the brown liquors, that gave it its name. If you want to know about Art Brut you can go to www.myspace.com/artbrut.

WORKIN ON SOME NIGHT MOVES

adie kaye reviews the night shift at queen elizabeth hall

I am always wary when people try to make classical music more accessible. "The Night Shift" by The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment is just such a venture. This particular night describes itself as providing a "no rules" approach to classical music in which we are "allowed to clap between movements". I myself have considered becoming a member of one of the many facebook groups with names like "People who DON'T clap between movements", so you can understand my initial doubts about the night. My previous encounters with this kind of thing have always ended badly: So called "Popera" and techno string quartets are not only some of the most embarrassing attempts to widen the appeal of classical music, but also the most patronising. Apparently, "young people" are incapable of enjoying orchestral music until you sex it up with some shiny synths and a drum machine. This night is different, however. The informality of the affair is justified not only by a wider appeal, but by a detail of authenticity. "This is how Mozart did it", says Pianist and Scholar Robert Levin. Levin explains classical music for beginners to great effect. Likening the placing of his piano amidst the orchestra to that of Count Basie, he shows that this orchestra is, in fact, an 18th century Jazz



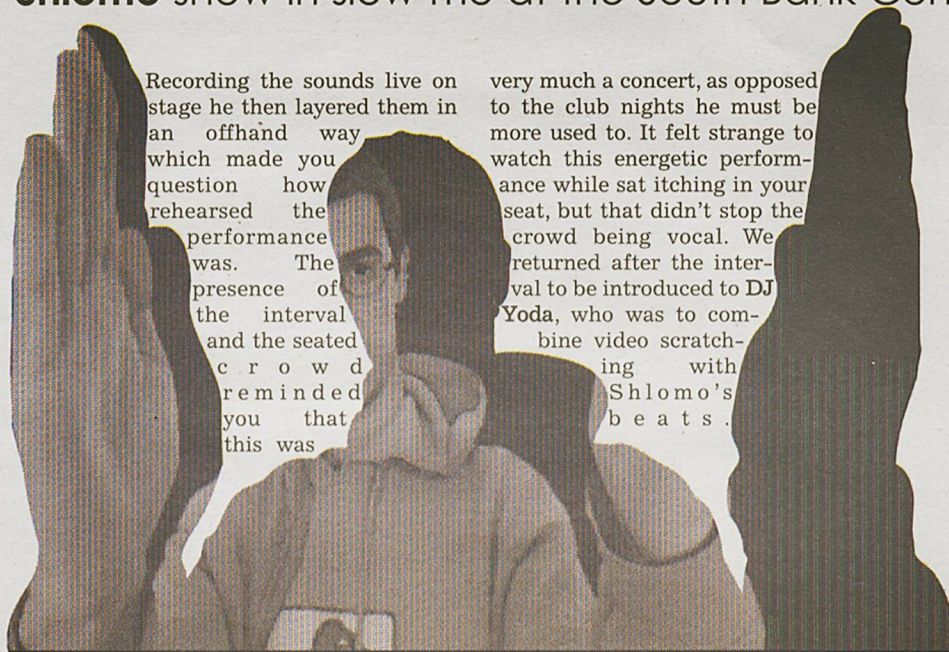
Band: "Mozart was the Duke Ellington of the 1780s". He also demonstrates the importance of interpretation. With the orchestra, he plays a certain excerpt once as written, and the second time "with real swing". The cadenzas in the final movement of the concerto were described as "the bits where the orchestra stops playing and I have to make it up". "Have I prepared?", he asks. "No", a blatant lie from the man who graduated Harvard cum laude with a dissertation on Mozart's incomplete

works. This night was much shorter than most other classical concerts and any applause between movements actually seemed appropriate. The discussions between Levin and host Alistair Appleton (that guy off cash in the attic) were not only entertaining, but provided the audience with enough of a context to enjoy the music that little bit more than they otherwise might have. Classical music doesn't have to be long and boring, nor does it have to be shrouded in academic mystery. Likewise, there's not a funky drum break or **MicroKorg** to be heard. Presented in a digestible but dignified format, this is classical music at its most accessible.

BEAT BOXING ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK

zoëbillingham sees the Shlomo show in slow-mo at the South Bank Centre

Music Through Unconventional Means' is a year long residency of human beat box Shlomo at the South Bank Centre, adding an element of youth to the complex's repertoire. With my previous experience of beat boxing consisting solely of watching Justin Timberlake's sample at the end of "Rock Your Body", you can be assured I had no previous expectations. Shlomo, a 22 year old who still hasn't left home and looks like he plays World of Warcraft in his bedroom, had instant appeal. His self effacing manner 'why did I say that?', combined with his onstage energy and enthusiasm engaged what was a varied crowd. From 16 year old girls who had dolled themselves up especially for the occasion, along with suited types to the occasional drunken aunt. The first half of the concert gave Shlomo a chance to explore his wide vocal range, not only beat boxing but also a perfect pitch alto.



Recording the sounds live on stage he then layered them in an offhand way which made you question how he rehearsed the performance. The presence of the interval and the seated crowd reminded you that this was very much a concert, as opposed to the club nights he must be more used to. It felt strange to watch this energetic performance while sat itching in your seat, but that didn't stop the crowd being vocal. We returned after the interval to be introduced to DJ Yoda, who was to combine video scratching with Shlomo's beats.

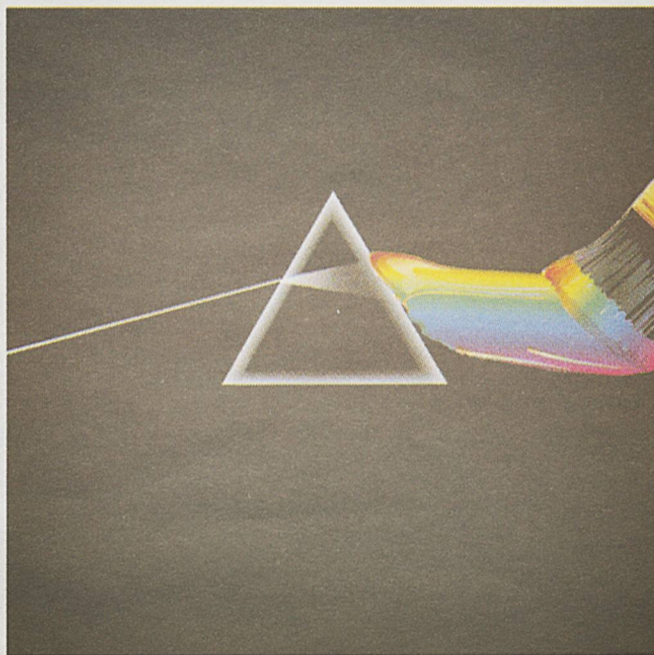
Projected video added a new dimension to the performance that would otherwise have been visually somewhat unspectacular. There were clips ranging from the Jackson Five to City of God, video of Shlomo's elastic face while performing was also used, bringing comedy as well as an amateurish touch to the performance: 'it's like what you do when you're bored in Media Studies' laughed my friend Anna. As a duo, they provided a great balance, giving each other space to showcase their different talents with no obvious power struggle. It ended with less energy than it started, but the show was to continue in the café-esque lobby at the Queen Elizabeth Hall- bright lights revealed the audience to be particularly middle class, I wasn't surprised. So we danced until midnight in the surreal setting of a brightly lit room overlooking the Thames, brushing shoulders with computer boys and aunties alike.

THE LONELY ART CLUB

julianboys dissects the downfall of album artwork

Cover art is an institution in popular music. First used in the golden age of vinyl to help convey the artist's sentiment, or to simply be a work of art in itself. The images which adorned the covers of such classics as Pink Floyd's Dark Side Of The Moon, Velvet Underground's debut, and the Beatles' Sgt. Peppers were iconic in themselves, and helped define a generation. Although they wouldn't have achieved such status on their own, they became significant when associated with great records and helped add another dimension, making music an experience for all the senses.

Marshall McLuhan wrote in his book 'Understanding Media' that "the medium is the message", ie. it's the nature of the medium itself, rather than the information it delivers, that has the greater influence on society. This would seem applicable to music, as a person encountering a particular album in a vinyl format, along with a large piece of cover art, would be affected differently to it than if they downloaded the songs alone from the internet. Imagine yourself as a child, listening inquisitively to your parents LP's, clutching the album cover and looking at the picture for an explanation. This was a profound experience for those lucky enough to have parents with decent taste, and it seems hard to imagine the next generation being as intrigued by files on a computer.



However these days the kids just don't seem to care, and album cover images have been reduced to a couple of centimetres on an ipod screen. Hard Fi, those most eminent of revolutionaries, put the phrase "No Cover Art" on the front of their second album in an attempt to kill off the medium, but did it an ironically artistic manner with the sole purpose of gaining publicity. They do have a point though, as with less music being sold in physical formats, artists make less effort to produce interesting cover art. There has recently been a slight reversal of the trend as some artists release downloadable artwork, and even digital interactive audio/video/artwork bundles. The website for Thom Yorke's solo project 'The Eraser' for example was a treasure trove of lyrics and scrapbook cuttings reminiscent of a gatefold vinyl cover, but this idea does not seem to have taken off.

The digital age has done its best to suck the romanticism out of rock n roll, but it accidentally spawned the writhing bastard child that is electronic music. This has no need for such extravagances as cover art, using the internet to disseminate mixes which let the music speak for itself. Ultimately this teaches us that cover art is at best an exotic sideshow and at worst a peeling flyer in the circus of the album, with music forever remaining the main attraction.

REVIEWS

FOALS · CASSIUS

julianboys

The Oxford five piece have so much expectation resting on their shoulders that to live up to the hype would be literally impossible, like swallowing a teaspoonful of cinnamon without water. However unlike most of the bands NME worships one minute before dumping in the nearest ditch the next, Foals have talent coming out of their ears. This was shown by their earlier single releases, 'Hummer' and 'Balloons' especially, but its not so immediately obvious on this track. It is definitely present though beneath the shouted vocals, perhaps the one weak link in the band, which manage to be catchy without meaning anything: "Cassius is over/ Cassius away/ Cassius these daydreams, these daydreams okay!" A large helping of trebly, infectious guitars accompany the shouting, building to a chorus which comes out of nowhere and joyously skips around your eardrums. Their forthcoming debut album will no doubt disappoint the critics but on this basis will delight their loyal army of fans.

DOES IT OFFEND YOU YEAH? · YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE GETTING YOURSELF INTO

gregorum

If there were an award for most inane band name and record title, DIOYY would be strong contenders for both. And please don't get me started on their logo, which incorporates a grand total of four eccentric fonts. Unfortunately, this display of immaturity directly translates into the doubtful quality of their music. This band seems to be deeply influenced by the works of masters such as Calvin Harris, Justice, and The Rapture while not bringing anything substantial to the table themselves. "We Are Rockstars" stands out, but mainly because I have been tortured with this track for months while looking for salvation in various indie/electro clubs. The rest is forgettable. DIOYY are infinitely better than Hadouken, but then again: who isn't?

BORN RUFFIANS · RED YELLOW AND BLUE

adamjohns

Toronto is a cold place. Right now in England there are blossoms on the trees. There is a bit of sunlight and it is warm enough that we are free to indulge in light jackets or lamé ponchos without fear of freezing to death. In Toronto there is no such luxury. Everyone spends October to late April walking around in enormous parkas getting seasonal effective disorder. This lack of sunlight might lead one to believe that Toronto would be pumping out Smiths clones at an unparalleled rate. Luckily for us listeners, though, what Toronto lacks in sunlight, it makes up for in other things. Cheap apartments, plentiful dim sum, excellent shoe stores. This Toronto joie de vie is evident in Born Ruffians' debut album, Red Yellow and Blue. I saw these guys live way back in the summer of 2006 and for some reason I was reminded of a young Police circa 1980. Their album, out now on US import from Warp, really sounds nothing like the Police but it is great nonetheless. It's undoubtedly an indie pop record, it's just better and more inventive than most. The songs display a great sense of melody, but the scrappy guitar work, not-too-polished production, and diet-coke-charged lyrics instill it with an energy missing from a lot of indie pop. Vocalist Luke Lalonde has one of the most original singing styles I've heard in a long time; while he still exhibits the requisite indie whine, he displays a ridiculous range, boomeranging up and down the octaves like a skinny male Beyoncé. "Foxes Mate for Life" is the best song about foxes mating I have ever heard. Get this now.

HERCULES AND LOVE AFFAIR · SELF TITLED

adamjohns

Keeping with this week's geographical explorations, this album is so New York it hurts. The brainchild of producer/promoter/dj Andrew Butler, with vocals provided by notable New York cool people Nomi, Kim Ann, and Antony (of Antony and the Johnsons fame), the album somehow manages to encapsulate and build upon 30 years of New York partying. While the sound incorporates elements of booty-over-brains genres like disco or house, it doesn't rehash them; rather, it takes them as a jumping off point to construct complex, intelligent pop songs. The album also represents a welcome return-to-prominence of the queerer side of dance music. From Antony's polysexual vocals to the homoerotic backstory behind the band's name, it acts as an homage to the massive gay contribution to dance music, from Arthur Russel to Larry Levan to Frankie Knuckles and beyond. The standout tracks, like "Blind" or "You Belong", display a gravitas and depth beyond most music, let alone dance music. Yet, as Butler demonstrated djing on Friday night at Punk, they still destroy on the dance-floor. I think it's safe to say that this is one of the most layered, complex, and intelligent dance records I've ever heard. And it's still fun as hell.

MUSIC

TELL ME NO LIES

Can art affect a change?
bernardkeenan looks at Brian de Palma's meta-fictive *Redacted* and its claim to tell the unseen truth of Iraq

There is an old Arabic story. A merchant in Baghdad sends his servant to the market. There the servant is jostled by an old woman, who threatens him. He turns to look at her and recognises the face of Death. Terrified, he flees to the merchant, and telling him what happened he borrows his master's horse and flees to Samarra. The merchant goes to the market and asks Death why she threatened the servant. Death replies, "I didn't threaten him, but I was surprised to see him here, because I have an appointment with him tonight in Samarra."

Today, we dwell in cinema. This year these pages have been dominated by interviews with filmmakers grappling with aspects of conflict in the Middle East. Robert Redford's heavy-handed American political drama *Lions For Lambs* attempted to address the murky politics of the Afghanistan conflict. Ronit Avni's *Encounter Point* was a documentary attempting to break from the mainstream narrative of the Israel-Palestine conflict by focusing on the ordinary people from both sides attempting to build bridges. Paul Haggis gave an impassioned interview about *In the Valley of Elah*, his clever subversion of the conventional crime thriller that morphs into an unflinching testimony to the psychologically damaged veterans of Iraq. Most impressive was Philippe Aractingi's *Sous Les Bombes*, a semi-fictional essay shot amid the carnage of Israel's 2006 assault on Lebanon (released in the UK this week). And so we draw this year's PartB to a close with the release on Friday of *Redacted*.

Jean Baudrillard reminds us that we live in an age of the visual. Simulacra dominates, the real has vanished. The word has been liberated from the book, and it circulates virulently around us - on billboards, 24 hour rolling news channels, CCTV, and online social networks. We experience even our own selves as facebook pages on a computer screen. If the twentieth century was marked by the passion for the real, the twenty-first is located

firmly in the symbolic, the ephemeral, the virtual.

Is it any wonder that we are so apathetic? The crimes of the Bush administration have been incredibly well documented and disseminated. And yet nothing changed. In the UK, thousands marched against the war, and more than this, they saw themselves marching against the war on thousands of real time news feeds. And nothing changed. Did that protest really happen? Can we really call it a protest? Or was it merely a media event, organised, controlled, in no way threatening to our paternal leaders? They say that the pictures from Vietnam made the difference. Now that the image is ubiquitous, we have to ask whether or not images retain any affective power - if everything is merely symbolic, then media can never confront us with the real. Yes, we live in representation - in cinema.

When dotcom billionaire Mark Cuban offered Brian de Palma \$5m to make a film, any film, as long as it was shot on Hi-Definition format, he jumped at the chance, and he opted to make it about Iraq. It's the perfect setting, of course. Iraq is the first war to have been documented by the participants. In *Redacted*, there is no 'objective' cinematic eye of the camera, as in conventional cinema. Instead, as in JJ Abrams' *Cloverfield*, the film is presented as a compilation of different sources: a video diary by an aspiring film-student soldier, a documentary by an 'embedded' French documentary crew (the subtitles sometimes address us in English, sometimes translate English into French for their imaginary audience), CCTV, internet blogs by insurgents, wives, and the American public. Every shot is authored and subjective - indeed de Palma himself makes an appearance late on, as the disembodied voice holding the camera.

The sheen of HD makes everything in the film feel brutally real - an IED goes off, the cameraman falls, scorched flesh lands in front of us. A pregnant woman is riddled by a machine gun, an Arabic news channel captures her death in hospital. A jihadist website publishes a video of the decapitation of a kidnapped Marine. But at the same time it remains un-real, virtual, or hyper-real; at no point does this ever feel like anything other than fiction.

The plot is loosely based on a rape and murder committed in Samarra by US Marines in 2006. Leading up to the event, the pressure has been building. They spend their nights

drunk and their days on edge, carrying 120 pounds of gear in sweltering heat. Their tour of duty is continually extended. They operate a roadside checkpoint, suspicious of everyone, unable to communicate with the Iraqi people they are forced to humiliate. No one has told them what they are there for. The French reporter tells us that 2000 Iraqis have been killed at checkpoints in 2 years, only 64 of them insurgents. They suppress their guilt. The Marines live in a world without truth, without justification, they are under intense psychological pressure. When a bomb kills their veteran sergeant, something snaps, and one night an innocent family suffer the consequences of their rage. The rape and murder is shot in green-tinted night vision, giving the perpetrators' eyes a demonic tint. It's an obvious aesthetic point: war is hell.

It is here that the film turns. Until this point it's a closely observed study of the precariousness of life in Iraq. The Marines were presented as human, their voices felt honest. But following the rape scene, de Palma decides to judge them himself, and in doing so he falls into the usual bullshit liberal ideological prejudices. Until the crime, the rapist (named 'Flake') had been one of the more sympathetic characters; suddenly he begins talking about his criminal past. His accomplice threatens another soldier ('Lawyer' - subtly is not the film's strong point) to keep quiet, saying "You're pretty dumb for a college boy." The message is clear - the criminals are uneducated, lower class, dumb racist pigs, unlike the wholly innocent good liberal soldiers. The script becomes a series of impassioned speeches, the acting becomes over the top and cartoonish.

The result is that the film ceases to speak legitimately for the perpetrators. Of course their crime can never be justified, but this is not an excuse for caricature. When their humanity is replaced by mere ciphers in this way, they become hollow. As the plot becomes predictable, the horror of events is diminished. The Iraqi people already have no voice; their only purpose in the film is to play the role of the victim. De Palma knows he cannot even attempt to speak for them, so the rape of a teenage girl symbolises the violation of all the Iraqi people. Who, then, does *Redacted* speak for? Only Brian de Palma, it seems.

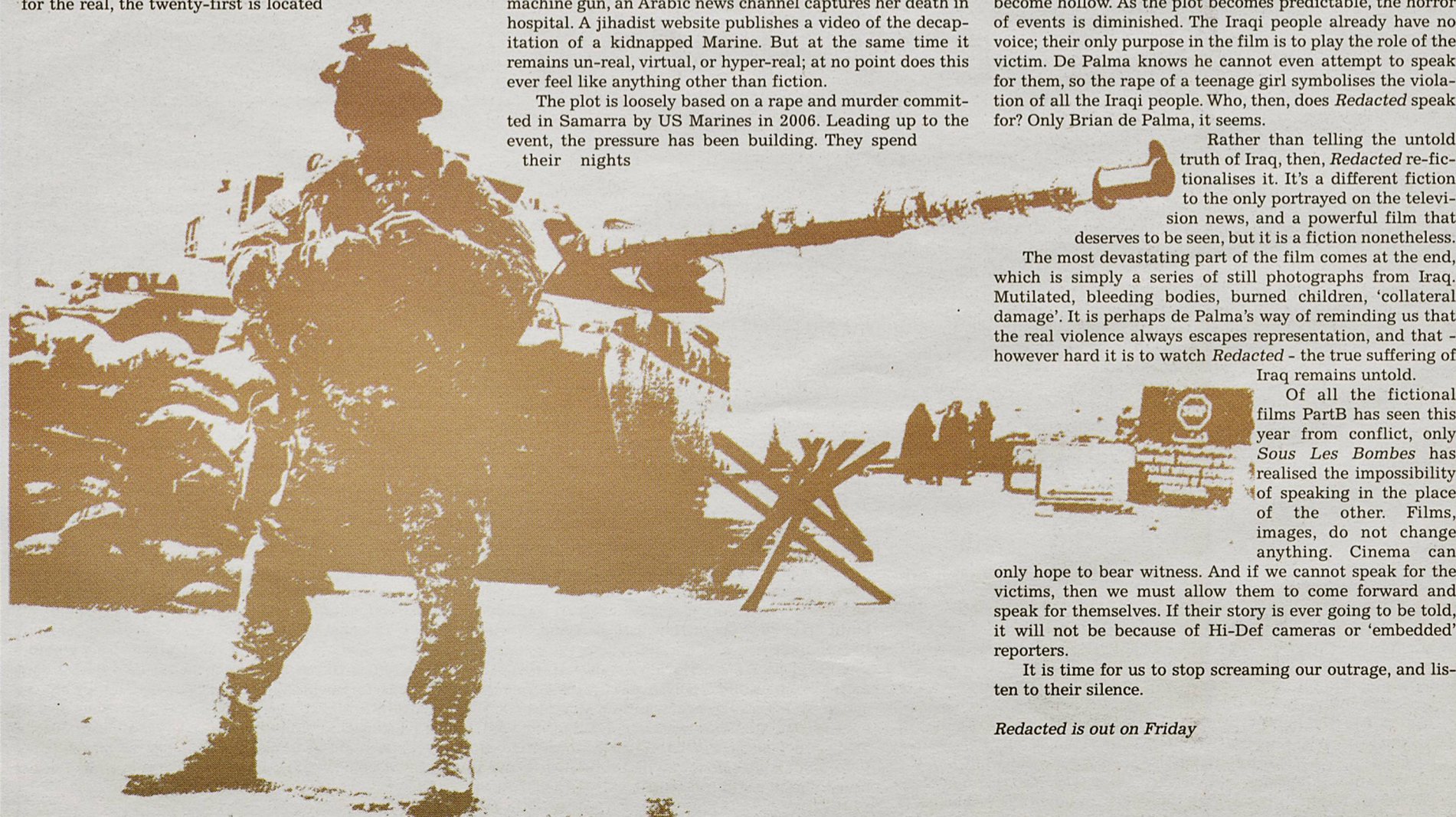
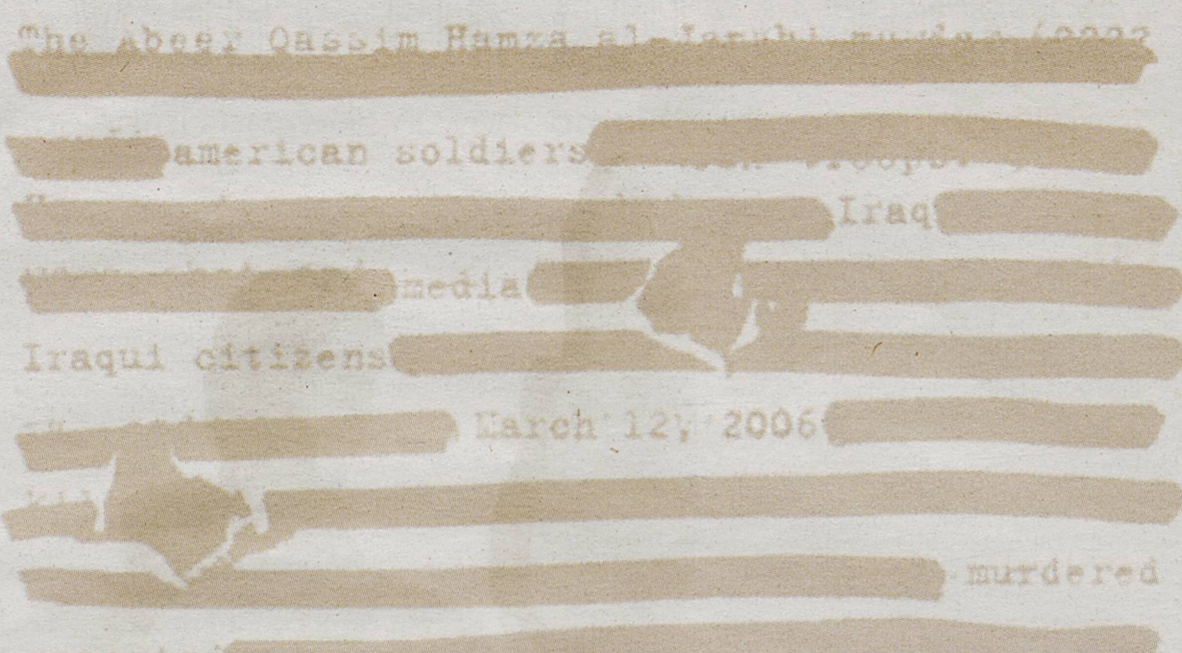
Rather than telling the untold truth of Iraq, then, *Redacted* re-fictionalises it. It's a different fiction to the only portrayed on the television news, and a powerful film that deserves to be seen, but it is a fiction nonetheless.

The most devastating part of the film comes at the end, which is simply a series of still photographs from Iraq. Mutilated, bleeding bodies, burned children, 'collateral damage'. It is perhaps de Palma's way of reminding us that the real violence always escapes representation, and that - however hard it is to watch *Redacted* - the true suffering of Iraq remains untold.

Of all the fictional films PartB has seen this year from conflict, only *Sous Les Bombes* has realised the impossibility of speaking in the place of the other. Films, images, do not change anything. Cinema can only hope to bear witness. And if we cannot speak for the victims, then we must allow them to come forward and speak for themselves. If their story is ever going to be told, it will not be because of Hi-Def cameras or 'embedded' reporters.

It is time for us to stop screaming our outrage, and listen to their silence.

Redacted is out on Friday



FILM

+ +
CMYK
+

mouthwatering masterpieces

holliestman ate art

In the days of yore the main purpose of food was to fill up your stomach with a sufficient amount of food so that you can either a) fornicate to further the continuation of the species, or b) so that you can go out and hunt in order to bring in more food, thus continuing the pattern. Thankfully today what we fill our faces with is given a much greater deal of thought.

Cooking, and eating are now viewed as experiences, not as merely something we need to scoff, digest and move on. Cooking is a completely creative experience, one that induces so much passion and pleasure. Those of you who have witnessed the Marks and Spencers simply food adverts can vouch that nosh can spark our senses and get our juices flowing more than any other activity you can do with your clothes on. Saying that a slice of well made Banoffee Pie, smoothed in double cream and bananas, is more enjoyable than nocturnal activities with your clothes off. Sometimes.

In the eighties we saw the rise of small but beautiful food. This was a time when the appearance of food is as important as its taste. In high-end restaurants this is still the trend. Three grains of rice and a quarter of a corn fed, virgin, free range chicken breast; a spear of asparagus all drizzled with a ring of pesto jus and a sprig of parsley and a star fruit on top. Sure it may look pretty but it isn't going to fill the hole and you would probably be charged that same amount as if it actually was gallery worthy.

Regular, everyday grub can be glorious too. Salads, a wonderful array of greens, tossed with blood red tomatoes, shining yellow peppers and dotted with pitch black olives. Desserts, towers of multi coloured ice creams with doused with a rainbow of sauces, and

covered by a scattering of fruit and chocolate. Sushi making is regarded as an art. Maki rolls filled with brightly coloured fish, avocado and cream cheese are as pleasing to the mouth as they are to the eye. We spend a fortune of cookery books in the hope that we too can create the edible delights that the like of Ramsey and his merry men muster up on our television screens.

Cooking is art. Baking a cake is like making a master piece. You start off with the ingredients, flour and sugar are your oils and pastels. Then lovingly mix them together, as if you were creating a sculpture. Your hands and wooden spoons are your paint brush, and the mixing bowl is your easel. Painters learn to add a smidgen of grey to the blue to create the perfect horizon in the same manner by which a cook learns that a splash of vinegar helps create the perfect meringue. After hours of TLC your finished dish comes out with just as much pleasure as if it were a work of art, an under acknowledged art form at that.

In Paris cake making is a recognized artisan skill. As you wander the streets your eyes are drawn to the windows lined with fantastic cakes, wonderful enough to tempt even the most hard core Atkins follower from their stoop. The frequently chirped phrase 'too good to eat' may apply here. But you wouldn't mean it. Or even if you did, it wouldn't stop you.

Taking this concept to a different level food can actually be works of art. Okay, so saying that the Lindt chocolate bunny should be considered akin to the David statue maybe just a tad over ambitious on my behalf, but there are people who make food into art for a career. Check out www.foodisart.com for a glance at people taking culinary creativity to

a new level, be it a food sculpture or a chocolate painting (and I don't mean of the Ann Summers hen party nutter body paint variety... gross).

If anything food is actually better than art. With food you get to eat the wonderful masterpiece you have just created. Who needs the longevity of your work of art being hung in a gallery when you have got a full stomach?

Some however argue that food can never be regarded as art. This is because an artist paints for himself, whilst a chef cooks for his customers. I suppose to an extent this is true, a chocolate gateaux will never be made in an effort to reflect its creators believes upon the traumas of the Iraq War. It is highly probably that a salad dressing shall not be selected on the basis that it gives an excellent social commentary on the exclusion of minorities in western cultures. Yet on this basis should food be rejected of all of its artistic credentials? Is not the main purpose of art the enjoyment of the viewer? Beauty is as ever in the eye of the beholder. Last summer Eat London created an edible city sculpture in Trafalgar Square. The creation sparked a widespread debate as to whether or not it should be regarded as a work of art. If a can of shit can be revered as a masterpiece why can't food? After all, it started somewhere.



FOOD AND DRINKING

The Final Curtain

tomwhittaker reviews the reviewers

I have begun to observe something of a pattern in my life over the last two semesters. Its disturbing in one sense as I abhor routine (a reaction, perhaps, to my father insisting on having supper on the table at six o'clock on the dot every night and throwing the odd hissy fit if this did not come about) but in another it is hugely satisfying. You see every Tuesday I finish work and stroll on down to the LSE campus.

I spend a good ten minutes searching the distribution trays in Houghton street for a shiny new edition, which are inevitably empty, before giving up and making do with searching through the tattered remains of others' discarded waste to find the inevitable shred of theatre section which has found a home underneath an old banana skin or copy of the Daily Telegraph.

After having removed the always present

chewing gum or morsel of processed ham I make my way to the Beaver's Retreat. The barstaff, on seeing me arrive prepare the first double gin and bitter lemon of the evening and I sit down with my shred of paper and analyze the latest creation in print. Several drinks later I have normally read it over about six times, toasted myself profusely for my editorial prowess- and subsequently spilt a good half of my sticky alcoholic mix over myself and the article- and head off towards bed.

It is, in fact, a good life and not bad as routine goes. But it does help explain why Wednesday lectures are spent avoiding potential splurts of projectile vomit- rather than upon the intricate nature of Plato's Statesman. It also goes to suggest why my editorial portfolio consists largely of very sticky, torn and smudged scraps of paper which hide in numerous pockets and draws, and why I found myself at something of a loss when I began constructing a review of the semester's reviews. I will, however, make do with what I have.

Firstly, the 'society'. The Drama Society got a fair share of coverage over the last two semesters after having put on such productions as *The Exonerated*, *Lizzie Stratter* and *King Lear*. Performers of note included **Rajan Patel** for his role in *Lear*, with **Lucie Marie Goulet** describing Patel as '...successful in portraying the emotional arc that his character Albany travelled on' (which sounds pretty good to me). **Sophie Marmet** gave 'a commanding performance as *Lizzie Stratter*, equally convincing as a knowing seductress and an inspired leader of

women (and scourge of the male sex)' and **Femi Oyeniran** 'exuded a natural confidence and control on the stage which is so often absent in student productions' for his performance as **Delbert Tibbs** in *The Exonerated*.

However, the shining star is one **Chris Merriman** for his performances in *Lear* and *The Exonerated*. **Lucie Marie Goulet** was particularly taken by his 'Gloucester, who was convincingly anguished and acted in a way which allowed somebody with no understanding of the text (i.e. me) to guess what was going on just by the emotions he conveyed'. His portrayal of **Kerry Max Cook** was also superb and I hope he continues treading the boards in the future in some way or other.

What else? **Molly Tucker** headed off to see **Pinter's The Lover and the Collection**, in all its dysfunctional and passionate glory, and came back with one of the most articulate, yet poetic, pieces of the year.

I had the privilege of interviewing the beautiful, yet slightly confused, **Nadira Murray** (ex belly dancer and **Craig Murray's** girlfriend) before watching her shake her money maker for a crowd of geriatrics in the **Arcola Theatre**.

The **Drill Hall** certainly deserve some mention for not only doing a fantastic job in pursuing further understanding for the gay community within British society but also for being particularly goods sports in doling out press tickets whenever we asked.

Naeem Kapadia (A Big Up to Naeem, by the way, for getting me out of more than one scrape over the year by providing some great reviews when I had absolutely no idea what to fill the space with) went along to their production of 'Smilin through' and came back with a rather mixed review but I had the fortune of going along to their Christmas

production- 'Bitch Slapped by God- An Apochryphal Christmas' and absolutely loved it. So do get along there if you can and make up your own mind.

Now, onto **Kevin Spacey**. One way or another he has made it into the theatre section pretty frequently. This is no mistake. You see I am quite smitten with the man and so have pursued any possible path open to getting near him. I have called, I have written, I have sat outside his house at night and howled (not really, well, maybe). But all to a loss.

I had to make do with exposing him (sic) whenever possible in these pages and for this I make no apology. So, **Naeem** saw the **Kevster** (it's a pet name) performing with **Jeff Goldblum** in the revival of **David Mamet's Speed-the-Plow** and proclaimed it 'one of his best stage performances to date'.

Not only has he been performing, and doing a damn good job as artistic director of the **Old Vic**, **Spacey** has been doing his part for the larger theatrical community through his support of the problems equity has been confronting regarding the **Arts Council's** bureaucratic penny pinching. He is, not to put too much emphasis on it, my hero and deserves any extended press this publication wishes to grant him.

Very briefly that has been two semesters worth of stuff- or at least those things that float to the top of my head. Many thanks to all those who wrote for the theatre section over this period. But I'm sure you take some compensation for your time in knowing that it has been your writing which has ensured my continuing drunken routine on Tuesday nights for a good twenty weeks. And rest assured that this Tuesday it is all of you that I will be toasting to.

THEATRE

CMYK

THE JERK AND THE JOUSE

part 2 by daniel b bytes

He stalked the damp avenues with his litterpicker, prodding at plastic cups, fuming at the inauthenticity of it all. Passing clusters of obese families, all with pendulous dirigible breasts, clutching their tiny plastic cups in the rain, he felt pangs of helplessness. This is truly the end of things, he thought, as he moved some more litter around. Wherever he went piped Funmusic followed, constantly reminding him of the canned experience this place provided. He knew so very well that the people required the diamond-tipped stylus of genuine experience, slammed onto the vinyl of qualia, and all they were getting was a brightly-packaged CD of background noise that had fallen down the back of the bargain bin of human understanding. The only genuine danger here, Devlin reflected, was in the over-priced lipids in wrappers they foisted upon the British people, a people who deserved better. After months of routinely despising everything he saw, Devlin was eventually sacked from the park after he broke into the control booth of the hydraulic rollercoaster simulator and altered the software, getting the visuals fractionally out of time with the movements. He saw the tidal wave of vomitus that broke from the door upon opening as gastric proof of a more authentic experience.

Back in his office, the adult Devlin tried to force open the window but it was glued shut with the grimey gum-arabic of the years. He needed inspiration and had always found that assuming precarious positions on the edge of windows helped him to think. Indeed if Devlin were ever to have kids he was adamant that their primary socialisation was going to take place solely on windowsills, admiring very much what he saw as Michael Jackson's enlightened pedagogy, a triumphalist baby-shake on a German hotel balcony was as good, in Devlin's eyes, as a curriculum. But kids were far from Devlin's mind at this moment. What was close to his mind - close enough to be slightly uncomfortable - was his plan. This plan had to be right, had to be true, had to be total. He considered accommodation, if tight-packed wooden bunks would suffice. He thought they might and set about designing some. His brow furrowed, not so much that an observer without an electron microscope could tell, and stroking the place where his chin might have been, he propelled his pen fast across the paper.

The young Devlin had taken his sacking from Funworld of Fun as an opportunity to spend his inheritance on a tour of the themeparks of the world, in order to observe their practices and develop his fetish. In Ontario he learned about rider ejection scenarios, in Dallas he learned about jerk and jouse, the rates of changes in acceleration. In Jackson he learned of the woman who was thrown from the lovecoaster train on the last drop and killed, leaving her fiancé who was sitting next to her alone when the train returned to the station. In Sandusky, Ohio he learned that a man was struck by lightning at Uncle's Lap whilst at the very apex of a rollercoaster, he later sued the park. He learned that in the same storm a giraffe was also hit by lightning but died instantly without legal recourse. In Bigville, Texas he relearned jerk and jouse and added 'yank' which is mass times jerk, or equivalently, the derivative of force with respect to time. In Buena Park he learned that an 11 year old choked on a piece of gum whilst riding the Raging Bullock, and was pronounced dead when the train arrived back in the station. He learned that after being offered free year passes to the fair-ground her parents, both enthusiasts, were not angry at the park and believed it was an unfortunate accident. He learned much and quickly, his brain swelling, horizons broadening and jostling for space until they formed a singular lumpen panorama, he

was a one-man wikipedia without the spelling mistakes, bowling across America. But however much he learned he could not drain from his thoughts this fetid undercurrent of something awry. Standing in the blazing California sunshine, with an outsized Stetson slipping off the side of his head and holding a puddling icecream, gazing up at a rollercoaster so enormous and improbable it looked like utopian constructivist architects had built it in an opium dream, he should've been happy. But he wasn't, he was angry. Rather than cementing his purpose and merging his world with that of the theme park, all of his observation and study had served solely as a torch to illuminate the profound untruth that he had glimpsed at Funworld of Fun. The bubble-wrapped untruth, that lumbered at him from the brightest and cleanest recesses of the safety culture. For whilst accidents happened, these rides were, in all statistical sincerity, totally safe. Despite their twisting and thrusting physical reality they were the fluff of pure deceit. Spiralling tubes of anodised steel that conned you into believing that you were to die by their rickety mechanoid will, whilst in smug actuality you were as safe as if sitting motionless in an armchair inside a germ-free bubble, with the entirety of medical science sitting next to you with moist towlettes. He was furious. Here was his sacred techne, his salve and his saviour, his battered shelter on a hurricane swept moor, in which his dishevelled goatherd fumbled for xanax but found the sweet pill of truth, was here blown clean away, a mouthful of goatdroppings choking the goatherd. Here was his technology, that stood apart from all other technologies precisely because it could return us to ourselves, serving instead to push ourselves away from ourselves and hide ourselves from ourselves, a playground bully of the soul, in the garish costumery of a prostitute. This was his umwelt, his reason for being, reduced to a mocking carcass of its vital self, a gap-toothed pill salesman on death-or-commission, wild-eyed, lying and tragically aggressive. Here was the modern technological lie writ large and enjoyable for all the family. You will live forever, it whispered hysterically, lips thick with lies, you will live forever, and Devlin could not listen any more, his innards twisted and curled with anger, a white hot rollercoaster writhing inside.

Over the years his anger had taken the form of a long and fruitless career. At the beginning Devlin had been sanguine, making his rejection letters into an ironic papier-mâché table. Now he sat on his papier-mâché rejection letter chair, feet propped up on his papier-mâché rejection letter footstool at his desk constructed out of hate mail, and dotted the 'i's, crossed the 't's and dashed the hopes of many, with this, his revolution. The contract that was going to make everything possible had fallen into his lap by virtue of the one contact he had in his professional life, his Aunt. She was friends with a large Jewish businessman, Fending Spasfont, who had made most of his money in foreign investments, mainly the animal prostitution business in Korea. With an unfeasibly large hand bearing an unfeasibly large gold ring, on the face of which the frightened visage of a lipsticked bear was delicately carved, Spasfont had clapped Devlin's imprecise shoulder and brayed 'deal'. Devlin was to build him an enormous ride to celebrate the buying of a village in East Anglia, and to use as a lever to propel Spasfont onto the board of the Anti-Defamation League where he fancied himself being a powerful advocate for a radical new Anti-arab, pro-bestiality agenda. The ride was to cover 40 hectares of Wiltshire and be a monument to Fending himself, embodying his largesse, his largeness, and above all his profound Jewishness.

At the opening all the great and good of village life had assembled. The vicar, with tea-stained lips and a grubby dog collar called this the biggest thing that had ever happened to Milton Pudgely on the Flouse. A family who looked like they shared a genetic inheritance with the coconut shy they were busily lobbing things into loudly cheered at nothing in particular. This was Devlin's moment, this was the revolution, the culmination of all his thinking. Everything he had planned so semi-meticulously in his rented office was here, larger than life, larger even than death. It was to be called the Schwitchback. Brightly-coloured trains would bring people into the park, attendants would be on hand to divide the parkgoers into groups broadly delineated by sex and age. The parkgoers would then be herded through a number of outbuildings where restrictive jewellery, clothing and hair would be removed, before going on to the waterbased area. But here comes the twist, there is no water to be found, instead minimum wage teenagers from the nearby village were on hand to empty Zyclon-B canisters into the room through shafts in the roof. It was an all ages ride, but the obligatory sign listing rider requirements remained obligatory. It was to be a little two-dimensional Devlin, painted in black uniform, with a little armband depicting a rollercoaster, hailing the rider with an outstretched arm, the fire of authenticity in painted eyes.

LITERATURE



FASHION CAN BE A REAL BITCH

sofie høgestøl dresses for success

When *Vogue* opened its March issue with a lead article on 'the trophy jacket, I almost cried. It marked the end of a dark fashion era that has been dominated by cute, frilly smock dresses, 'deconstructed' (sack-like) shapes, neon (eek!) and leggings. I only ever plan on wearing a maxi-dress when I hit 80 and get gloriously fat. As such I have approached the trend of maternity-like shapes with up most suspicion. Nothing quite says sexy like maternity wear. These 'deconstructed shapes' (a euphemism if ever there was one) combined with the general adolescent aesthetic of the last few years has made me brake into anxious hives. For a very simple reason: I don't pout, I scowl.

I am not sweet or malleable, so wearing a colorful sweet smock dress would not only be false advertising, it would be a gross misappropriation of who I am. Thankfully 2007 and 2008 has seen the return of the woman. Fashion has grown up. The return of body conscious, grownup tailoring has been a tentative movement in fashion for the past few seasons. First there was the *Galaxy dress*, then the return of dress pants and last season saw men's tailoring and

50's suits as big runway trends. And now the moment that I have been eagerly awaiting for has finally arrived: the power jacket is back.

I have a **jacket fetish**, for me few things elicit the same pleasure as wearing a well-tailored jacket. I like to think of the jacket as an 'outside dress', because it should fit you like one.

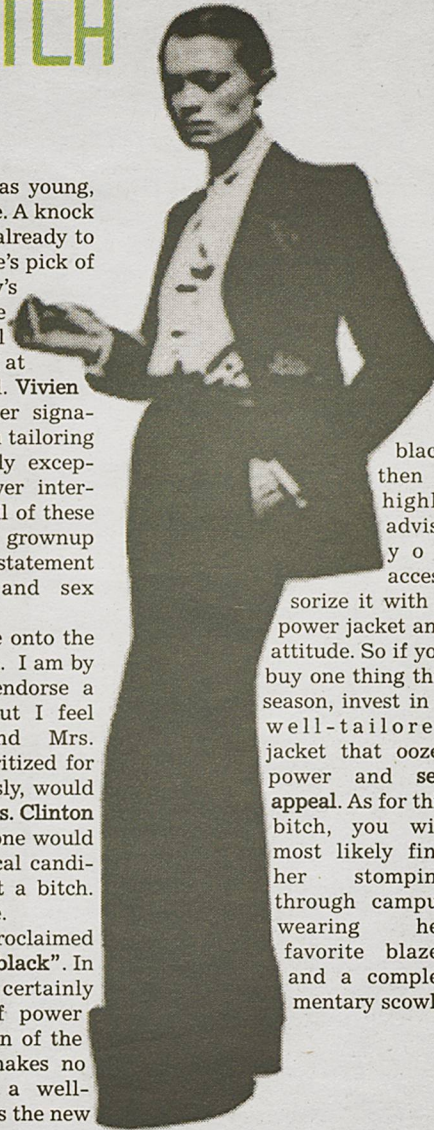
The perfect jacket will do for your figure what a corset could. Moreover, no matter how nice your ensemble is, none of that will matter if you are wearing a jacket that has all the sex appeal of a plastic bag. The perfect jacket is versatile and can revitalized an otherwise fatigued wardrobe. A standard single breasted black blazer can dress up jeans, dress down a cocktail dresses and can be thrown over a 50's full skirt (another key trend this season) to roughen it up and stop you from looking like an extra in *Grease*.

The jacket functioned as the backbone of the spring collections. Each designer sought to implement his or her persona touch on what is set to be this seasons must have garment. The result is a broad range of styles, something is bound to catch your fancy. My personal favorite was the updated, navy sleeveless

blazer from YSL; It was young, fresh, unique and fierce. A knock off version in beige is already to be found in *Zara*. *Vogue's* pick of the pack was Givenchy's modern take on the safari jacket. Colorful styles were to be found at Balenciaga and Chanel. Vivien Westwood provided her signature eccentric Victorian tailoring to produces some truly exceptional pieces. Whichever interpretation you prefer, all of these jackets are decidedly grownup and make an assertive statement of power, attitude and sex appeal.

This neatly leads me onto the subject of *Mrs. Clinton*. I am by no means trying to endorse a political candidate, but I feel compelled to defend Mrs. Clinton when she is criticized for being a 'bitch'. Seriously, would we really prefer it if Mrs. Clinton was not a bitch? I for one would never vote for a political candidate if he/she was not a bitch. **Bitches get things done.**

Last week Tina Fey proclaimed that "bitch is the new black". In this respect fashion certainly agrees. The return of power dressing sees the return of the power woman, who makes no qualms about being a well-dressed bitch. If bitch is the new



hodge an is a work of art

Art and fashion have become friends, apparently. No longer are they rivals, but they have decided to work together to produce some of the most Beautiful pieces of clothing the fasion scene has not witnessed for a long time.

The mix and match of modern art and sheer fabrics have created edgy, kooky and individual pieces. Chloe, Dolce and Gabbana and Marni have put blocks of strong colour to give power and attention to playful, short cocktail dresses. My personal favourite is the sensations watercolour dresses by Zac Posen. No longer do you need to go to an art gallery for inspirational art, just head over to Bond Street. Monets' waterlily painting comes to life with silk, floating down the catwalk.

For all of you who have wanted to dress powerful yet feminine, your time has finally come.

The Artistic look this season is all about power dressing, yet with floating, delicate fabrics which look as though it will fly off into sky at the slightest breeze. Hand painted fabrics with the most intricate details are pricey but worth your dosh, you can even think of them as one-off couture pieces, like a painting.

If you do choose to endorse this look, keep everything simple, think of yourself as the picture frame- hair and make-up should be natural and clean, with the main art piece displayed on your body.

So to all of you pretentious artists out there who have snubbed fashion as not being proper art, look who has the last laugh now.

IDENTITY

ART AGAINST THE MACHINES?

simonwang plays with art and hollieastman rallies the luddites

Arguably, videogames have already begun to be recognised as art, at least in France (and at least for taxation matters). But joking aside, in some quaters some really interesting ideas have started to emerge, especially since videogames use a much more hands on approach as opposed to conventional art.

One of the more recent examples is the indie Experimental Gameplay Project, (<http://www.experimentalgameplay.com/>), where different people create a game from an entirely original concept

The relationship between the old and the new has always been a torrid one. Ever since the days of the Luddites the advocates of old technology have tried to assert their authority over the new in an effort to not be lost in the technological and cultural wasteland. However one area where the old and new have left forth, hand in hand is in the area of art. The impact of technology on art has been astounding. Whether it is digital photography or using wires and old computers to create works of art.

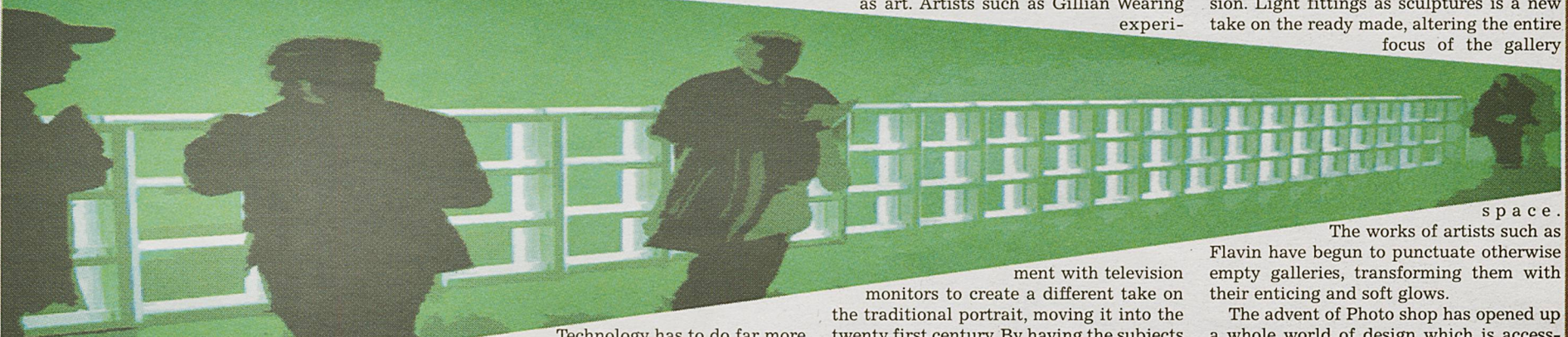
they have been strokes of a artists brush and the red leather interiors crafted by Laurence Llewelyn Bowen. Picasso even has a people carrier named after him, a status I am sure he really aspired towards. Can we expect rumours of a range of Damien Hirst funeral cars in the near future?

Applaud the arrival of what has been deemed alternative art, rallied by the likes of Judith Barry, which have called for the rejection of traditional artistic techniques. Television and the media can now be used as art. Artists such as Gillian Wearing experi-

materials in a different way artists can either celebrate their ability to use this new medium or as a means of rebellion by using technology in a manner by which is was not meant to be.

Modern art is becoming more sculpture orientated, painting is becoming increasingly more and more obsolete. Plastic and piping creations and models are replacing the traditional lumps of clay and metal lumped around art galleries.

Lightings and installations are becoming more frequently used as a means of expression. Light fittings as sculptures is a new take on the ready made, altering the entire focus of the gallery



in just a few days - idea, sound, music, programming, everything. Some of the most amazing things have emerged, and many of which have been considered 'art' - from playing as a swarm of bees, to building a gigantic tower from blobs of goo. It really needs to be experienced to be believed.

Of course, there are many who believe that games are art - that games possess the ability to evoke the same emotions which more general art can. The special thing about them is their power to deliver the joy of Play. You can think of a sculptor as someone who creates with the three dimensions of volume; or filmmakers as creators of stories through the use of space and time captured by a camera. The art of games is about sculpting Fate.

Technology has to do far more now, than simply work. It now truly is a case of fashion over function. The beauty of a product is now equally as important as its capabilities. **Apple** products are praised for their aesthetically pleasing appearances, regardless of the fact that they are pretty much guaranteed to stop working forty-eight hours after the warrantee runs out. Mobile phones are being created by designers. You now have the opportunity to match your Prada mobile to your Prada handbag, fashion faux-pas, it think not. Can they be considered art?

Even the humble family car is being created in the hope of being a piece of art. The wheel arches are now designed to look as if

ment with television monitors to create a different take on the traditional portrait, moving it into the twenty first century. By having the subjects speak on the monitors the viewer feels as if he can engage with the piece in a way that canvas and oils wouldn't let you.

Projecting video images onto walls has also allowed artists to expand beyond the traditional canvas. Artists such as Viola project videos onto dark spaces as a greater means of conveying emotions. Technology allows pieces to appear more life like, bringing a new energy to works, the sort that was previously unachievable.

Broken technology can be turned into masterpieces. In doing so artists are able to make a passing commentary on the nature of modern life and our reliance on these wires and coils to survive daily life. By such

space. The works of artists such as Flavin have begun to punctuate otherwise empty galleries, transforming them with their enticing and soft glows.

The advent of Photo shop has opened up a whole world of design which is accessible to all of the average Joes. Any photo can now be filtered, pasted and poster edged and turned into a masterpiece all in the comfort of your own bedroom.

However, there is still a divisive split between art exhibitions and 'media' art exhibitions. Some curators are still nervous about embracing technology as a medium to create artwork, and are mistrustful of using technology in art and exhibition work. For some the arrival of technology in art is seen as having a bastardising effect on real, classical art. Is Van Gogh turning in his grave at the arrival of all this technology lark? Are we heading for a battle twixt hand and machine. Only time shall tell.

TECH AND GAMING

gazing back

can a woman be an artist without being a woman-artist? **alicepfeiffer** explores the contours of the female gaze

I can't believe it's already the last issue of the Beaver! My masters is almost over, and by next fall I'll be out like a real grow-up job-hunting, gendering, belly dancing, who knows? So, sadly this is, the last issue I'll be doing. I don't know who will take my place next year but I'm already jealous.

This last issue will discuss the relationship between gender and art- is one always an expression of the other? If both are performance, what is expression?

Today, the boundaries to art-making seem to have faded. Far from the classical institutions, it appears Duchamp's loo has liberated artists, and made any form of expression permissible. Poo, meat, tampons, we've seen it all.

Not only are most medium acceptable as 'art', there is no more obligation to a formal training. What would have seen as amateurism is now acceptable 'self-training'. Indeed, one can observe a 'democratization of artistdom': making art and being an 'artist' (an identity in itself) is accessible to anyone. Or so it seems- but how free are we really? Let's take a closer look.

Good old Simone (de Beauvoir bien sûr) said that men have been -and still are- the dominant figure, the central as well as the neutral; this means that what is viewed as 'normal' is also male. In other words, everything unquestioned is somewhat dictated by dinosaur-age patriarchy.

History as we know it, is in fact male history (we wise students know that history is always recorded by victors). For centuries, men dominated all forms of knowledge and learning. To this day, this means that the outcome (ie the artwork) as well as the science (the learning and action of painting) and the criteria of judgment all emerged out of a male-dominated environment.

Today, even though women have access to art school, to what extent is the work going to be subjected to unconscious a priori?

In French, words are gendered. 'Une artiste' means 'a female artist', as opposite to 'un artiste', 'an artist'. The gender of the person is implied before his/her profession.

When a woman is referred to as 'une artiste', will her artwork be recorded as art or as 'female' art? Is she an artist, or a woman who happens to be an artist? Is art always, inevitably, unconsciously gendered?

How about feminist art? Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, and many others have played with the notion of gender to provoke and criticize their contemporary society- which leads us to question a) is gender something we can step out of b) is it still art? and c) what is art anyway?

Sherman made a career out of self-portraits, all revolving around 'putting on' new identities, aiming to break down stereotypical femininity.

Even though Sherman might have been a revolutionary in many ways, her frame of thought coincides with much development in gender studies, in particular with Judith Butler's performative theories. In other words, if two different fields 'come up' with similar criticisms and concepts, could it be that they are just products of their era? Of course, every creation is important because every painter, writer, sociologist builds upon what has already been established- but, as we'll see in a minute, are revolutionary thinkers a predictable element of the system they live in?

Every work talks about its era: there is no true 'free expression', and arts often become a symbol of the sub-culture they emerged from. Every dominant thought breeds its own rebellion- are Butler and Kruger only part of the post-modern hegemony package?

Barbara Kruger, also labeled a post-modern artist, focused on ad-like provocative panels. Her past in magazine publishing shows, as her work is generally structured like a commercial.

She creates parodies of stereotypical advertising techniques to challenge the viewers, to shock and to criticize by mocking mass consumerism tricks.

Yet the issue is that, with art based around a specific critique (be it masculinity or capitalism) it perpetuates what it seeks to destroy, because it requires its knowledge to make sense. What would Sherman's portraits mean to someone who has never seen American soap operas? Or Kruger's pieces to someone who has never been into a shopping mall? It relies on its source of criticism to exist, and perpetuates the 'us' and 'them' binary. Yes, it does point out cultural constructedness through its cynicism, but beyond a certain sense of blasé, does it have a lasting impact?

It is impossible to decide whether such artists were efficient, but what we can ponder is the meaning of art today. Is it simply the skill toward an aesthetic result? When an artwork has a purpose, an agenda, when the artist feels she/he

has a role beyond the creation of an artwork, is it still art? When does one draw the line between art and propaganda?

This leads us to question- what is art?

For art to be art, must it always have been considered as such?

Think of the Sistine Chapel in Italy, which made Michelangelo a superstar: like most churches, it was a commission, intended to be the PR of Lord such-and-such. The amount of gold used was only to show of the investor's wealth. At the time, it was nouveau-riche interior design. Today, tourists travel round the world to see it. Who knows, perhaps the future generations will visit the remnants of Ikea stores like we visit the Louvre.

Wartime propaganda, old furniture, and a lot of mundane objects from previous generations end up in museums. Yet, at one point, it had no other purpose than a practical or commercial one.

What we view as art evolves every year, allowing new medium in, classifying past eras as 'vintage', 'ancient' rather than old or passé. Mass-market memory becomes something to be consumed, reproduced and eventually sold in Topshop.

Art that was made to be appreciated as such wasn't ever empty of meaning or role. Rococo painters, such as Francois Boucher, while seemingly painting pictures of gaily dancing naked ladies, could be said to create propaganda for male hegemony.

What I mean is that every artwork, expression is guided by strict restrictions of what our society permits as 'art', and always operate within a restricted structure of thought. There is no such thing as 'free' expression, rather everything we say is in some way a performance of our surroundings.

Every expression is a sign of its era, in its purpose and expression, and will be remembered as such. Whatever seems groundbreaking today inscribes itself in a system, defining what we find 'shocking' or 'amazing'. One never realizes the impact the outside has upon individual expression, fashion, speech until looking back on it years later.

Sherman, Kruger have a conscious, immediate purpose in mind when creating artwork, which means that they can be artists as much as enthusiastic feminists. Think of 'l'artiste engagé' that Godard describes with such fondness: it is in the artist's duty to be 'engagé', to use his power towards a political aim; and the two can go hand in hand without undermining each other.

So...write, paint, roll in mud, we are all artists.

'I don't want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve it through not dying' (Woody Allen)



You are now two years into the five-year planning process to renew the curriculum. How instructive has that been, and how much change should we expect to current academic programmes?

The planning process here was what I call 'decibel planning': he who shouts loudest, gets most. We thought that this was not ideal, and given that we had an extra 1,000 students to share around we started a process to look at what sort of degrees we didn't have. We've now brought in an MSc in Finance, an MSc in Financial Mathematics, which has got an absolute mountain of applications, an MSc in Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies and others. So it was a good process that has produced a set of new degrees. There will be a continued roll out, because you have to refresh the degree portfolio. For example, the European Institute had a degree on the growth of Europe to the east. Well that's kind of happened now, so courses get revamped.

The Students' Union

What are you expecting from the new Sabbatical team?

The students' union plays an important role in the management of the School. What we need is a good sounding board on the issues that are of interest of us running the School. We've had a good response on athletics. We've said we are prepared to invest some money in this - what do students want? I can guess what a 19-year-old girl wants to do with her spare time, but I don't know. It's much better if the Union can intermediate in that way. You need Sabbaticals who care about that part of the job. I'm not stupid and I've been here for five years and I know that there are other things that student politicians want to do. They want to debate the state of the world, and that's fine. I hope that they don't spend all their time on that, because the reason that they are paid to be full time sabbaticals is not for that. It's because they have a role in the running of the school. What I hope is that you get people who do care about the school as an institution, who are worried about the basic stuff about how we teach and facilities. Because that is an important element of decision making process. That's what I hope for every year, and I am sometimes disappointed!

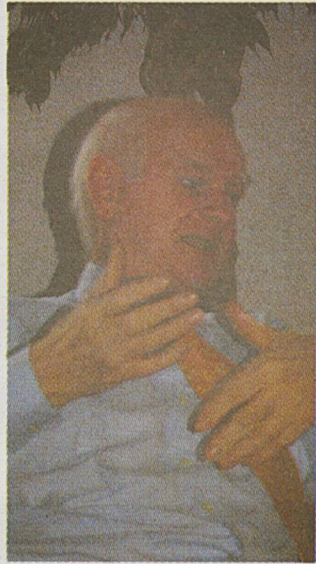
But this year for example Ruhana has really thrown herself into that. She's been to every meeting of the teaching task-force, she's surveyed people, and she's held focus groups. That's what we want.

Any other thoughts on the other outgoing Sabbaticals?

Fadhil has been a very assiduous attender of things. He's certainly never shirked the job.

You occasionally have to push and prod about issues in relation to the School, because they can get distracted on to other issues. It seems that the Union's finances have been soundly managed. I have no complaints about the Sabbaticals this year.

"You need Sabbs who care about [intermediating]. I'm not stupid and I've been here for five years and I know that there are other things that student politicians want to do."



You are presumably aware of the new General Secretary from his time campaigning against the appointment of Peter Sutherland. Firstly, did you ever expect the protests that arose following the appointment?

No I didn't really, because there were students involved in the selection process. I was surprised because normally here, although people may have different views about things the School's got fairly painstaking decision-making processes. Sometimes I think

extensively painstaking, but it does. Unlike many places the students are heavily involved in decision-making. They were involved in decision-making on my reappointment, which is unknown elsewhere, and in the appointment of the Chair, and I don't know of anywhere else where that is the case. Normally, once a decision is made here - one of the advantages of painstaking processes is that when a decision is made, people say "Okay, I've had my say". In this case, I thought people would say "Well that's the decision. He may not be the person we'd have chosen, but that's what it is." They did not, and that was I think disappointing. Anyway, he is chairing Councils, so they'll just have to live with it.

Do you foresee any problems with the two working together on Council next year?

I presume he wouldn't be prepared to be General Secretary if he didn't know what it involved. Not attending Council meetings would be rather curious, so I presume he'll turn up!

Much has been made in the press of the Israel Divestment motion. Considering the School-backed proposals for a forum on the Arab-Israeli conflict, are you concerned about anti-Semitism on campus?

There are three dimensions to this. Firstly, the Students' Union's right to engage in these issues. I've no problem with that and I am prepared to stand up for that and do so when pressed on the issue. That's fine.

The second thing is the implications for the School. As far as the divestment is concerned, I think there's a lot of confusion. The LSE does not invest any of its students' money in anything, actually, except short term deposits. We are net debtors, asking me about my net investments is like asking how I invest my overdraft, it's meaningless. The idea that there is money coming from

student fees that we are investing in arms companies is just not the case. Now we do have an endowment, that's money that's come from other people, effectively all of which is hypothesized income for scholarships or Chairs. That's the money that we invest, and it's almost exclusively invested in index funds, usually Charitrack. We have about £55 million. This is compared to Harvard's £30 billion pounds. £55 million across the whole of the world's investment markets is trivial.

That said, we do think it is reasonable to debate whether the School should have more of an active investment policy. We have typically been passive investors. With £55 million, some of which is in boxes and little pots with specifications from individual donors, there's a limit to what you can do, but we are discussing whether we should have a responsible investment policy and say there are some things we will do and some things we won't do. That's still under debate.

The third point is that it is the case that some of the student societies, the Israeli society and the Jewish society, did approach the school to say that they were concerned about community relations, and they felt that this was spilling over into a degree of hostility which was not a good thing. They asked if we would support a kind of dialogue process within the student body. We said yes, and there are one or two people here who have experience of conflict resolution, so we offered their assistance. So

far, I don't believe this has started. There have been proposals and societies have come back and said they don't like this or that. They are still engaged in a debate, and I haven't seen the latest terms of the debate except when I see it in letters to The Beaver. But I am concerned that the school should not be seen as a place which is hostile to students of any particular community, whoever that might be. I think so far we've managed to achieve that. I think there are people who are concerned that it has been a hostile environment and that I don't like. That's why we were prepared to support this dialogue.

There are people out there who have thought that the School has passed motions as opposed to the Students' Union. There are people who thought the Students' Union passed the first motion, which had the more inflammatory language in it. I get emails congratulating me on passing a resolution as Israel as an apartheid state, and have to point out that I haven't passed any resolutions and furthermore the resolution that did get passed did not actually use that language. There's a lot of misunderstanding.

The Future

Your term runs until 2013, what are your remaining ambitions for the School?

First of all, the big plan for the campus. To get that done, with-

out getting in to more debt than we can manage, is obviously the big thing that I have to do. The other thing is to keep the LSE relevant.

For example, the economics of climate change. We will be the big British centre for the economics of climate change. I'm trying to raise some money to build a bigger research programme and I'd like to think that people around Europe will say, the LSE is the place to go for the economics of climate change. That's why I persuaded Nick Stern to come back to the school to build that. I also think there is a gap in the market for an academic institution that is engaged in diplomacy. I continue to hanker after having a proper Middle East centre here, and also I would like to develop further our urban work, because I think that the big social and environmental issues will all be addressed in the big cities.

Those are not ambitions I can personally achieve on my own; they depend on gathering together groups of academics who want to do them. At a school of this kind you've got to be fleet of foot and be able to develop new centres and degree programmes. For example, I'd like to have an MSc Economics of Climate Change which meant that you were training people who could go into governments and corporations and would have a tool kit so that they could understand what makes sense in terms of investments to reducing carbon emissions. I think that would be our best contribution. ■



"The idea that there is money coming from student fees that we are investing in arms companies is just not the case."



David Willetts: "I have no plan to raise top-up fees"

Erica Gornall talks to Shadow Secretary for Universities David Willetts



Fed up with packed computer rooms and falling teaching quality at LSE? David Willetts knows how you feel. The Shadow Secretary of State for Universities, Innovation and Skills says he sees overcrowding as the main challenge for students today. In his interview with The Beaver, Willetts also encourages the post-top-up fee student population to get their money's worth from university authorities - and throws his support behind controversial government plans to monitor extremists on campus.

"What I get more and more," says Willetts, "is people saying, 'how often am I seeing my tutor, how crowded are the seminars?' and 'if I have got a problem with the seminars, how can I communicate with someone to help me out?'"

Current overcrowding in universities have been blamed on government targets, in particular the government's attempts to get fifty per cent of young people to enter higher education. Willetts rolls his eyes at Labour's plans.

"We want to see teenagers who can benefit from a university education and the qualifications to go to university seizing that opportunity; but I don't think that it helps to pick a target out of the air and say 'that's the one that universities have to reach.'"

According to Willetts, encouraging too many young people to go to university could in fact have a negative effect. The Public Accounts Committee in Parliament only two weeks ago revealed that nearly a quarter students drop out of their courses. "We have to look at the evidence, and the evidence is that students who come to university with little understanding and knowledge in advance of what university life is like are much more likely to drop out, finding the pressure and the shock too great." LSE's own dropout rate remains relatively low, at around 3 per cent.

The introduction of top-up fees, he argues, means that students are and should be asking

more for their money. "There is a greater number of people asking 'what am I getting for my money?' That is an issue across British Universities."

But Willetts rejects the idea that university education should just be seen in monetary terms. "A university education does increase someone's lifetime earnings, but it also a valuable cultural and educational experience in its own right, and we should not lose sight of that."

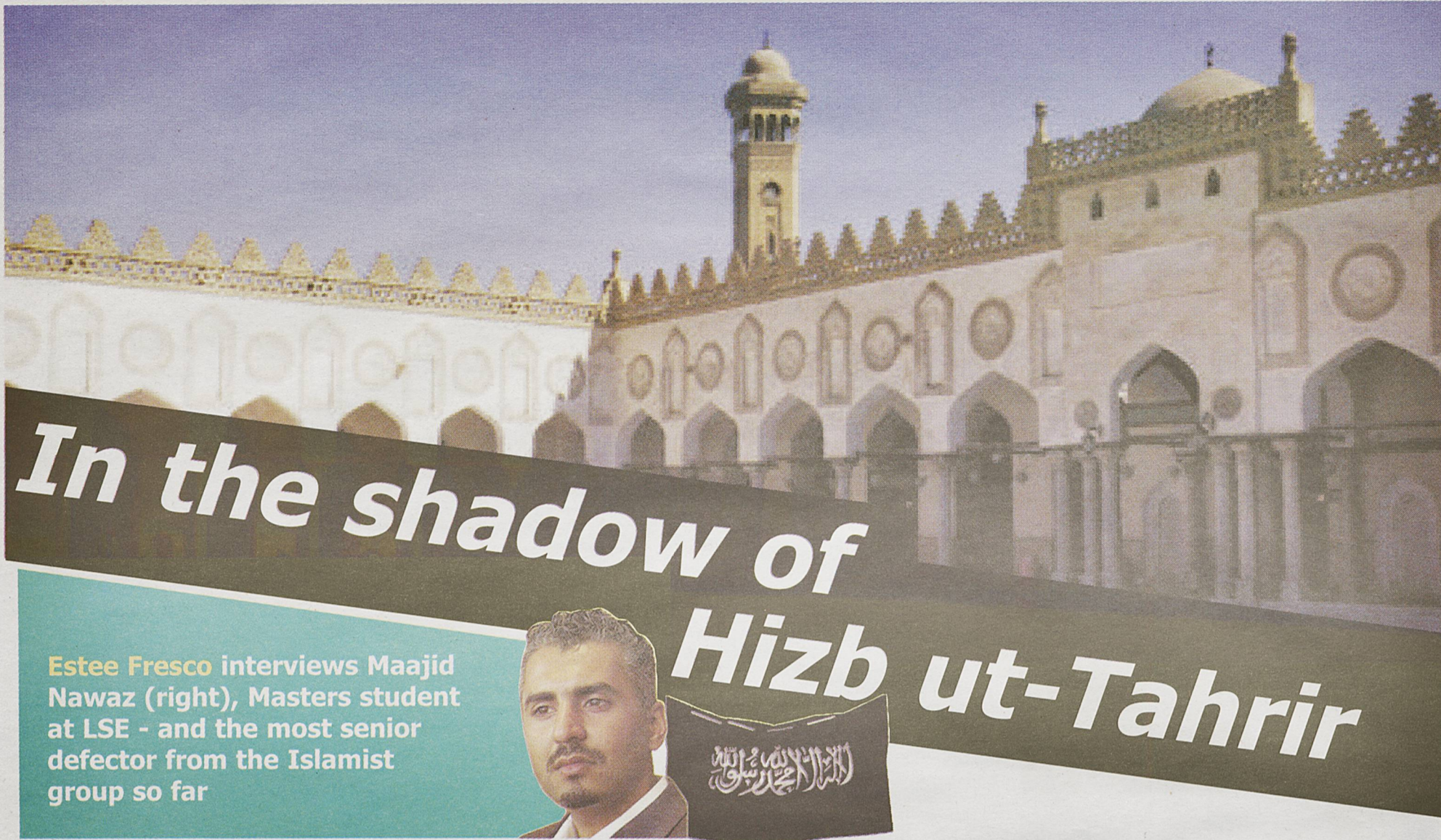
What about the fears of some students that the LSE, like other universities, will raise its fees in the near future - possibly at a time when Willetts may be able to rid the 'shadow' from his title and enter government? He is careful not to rule out such fee rises, leaving them to review. "The legislation of 2004 provided for a review of how the whole system is working, and that review should happen. I have absolutely no pre-plan that they should rise, but that's for the review."

The LSE differs from many other UK universities by having

such a high diversity of students, with 60 per cent coming from outside the UK to study at the School. Do recent government guidelines regarding extremist speakers on campus make students feel uncomfortable?

"I think that it was a pity that it began to be seen as being specifically Islamic. I am pleased that it was revised. It became a much wider commitment to preserving free speech and democratic values on campus."

But Willetts does think that university students and staff have a reporting obligation if there are "things going on that threaten people's liberties." But is the government monitoring Islamic societies, as was the fear at LSE a year ago? He certainly doesn't rule out such monitoring, and neither does he think that it is unacceptable for the government to do. "I am simply not privy to that information," said Willetts, "but I would expect that if there was a particular danger or a particular risk, that that would be monitored. And I don't have a problem with that."



In the shadow of Hizb ut-Tahrir

Estee Fresco interviews Maajid Nawaz (right), Masters student at LSE - and the most senior defector from the Islamist group so far



Meeting Maajid Nawaz for an interview is not an easy task. Nawaz asked 'The Beaver' to keep his workplace location confidential because he has been receiving death threats. Maajid Nawaz is a former high-ranking member of the Islamist organisation Hizb ut-Tahrir, having served on both the secret leadership committee and public executive committee of the organisation. Hizb ut-Tahrir's main aim is to establish a unified Islamic state, also known as the Caliphate, that will replace all Muslim countries. The Caliphate would be ruled exclusively by Islamic law. Now a Masters student reading Political Theory at the LSE, Nawaz left Hizb ut-Tahrir after spending four years in an Egyptian jail. He now denounces both the organisation itself and Islamic extremism.

Nawaz grew up in Essex and is a third-generation Briton. He traces childhood experiences of racism to his eventual involvement in Hizb ut-Tahrir. "Racism was continually a problem for me. I witnessed my friends being stabbed before my eyes...my white friends [were treated] as traitors for daring to associate themselves with me." At the age of sixteen, Nawaz was arrested and held overnight in prison for a crime that had never been committed; the only evidence of wrongdoing was the fact that an elderly lady had witnessed Nawaz' brother playing with a plastic BB gun. At the same time, events such as the genocide against Bosnian Muslims in the 1992-1995 Yugoslavian War compelled Nawaz to question his ethnic and national identity.

So, when a recruiter from Hizb ut-Tahrir discussed the organisation's political philosophy with Nawaz, he was susceptible to the its propaganda. Nawaz says that the recruiter, a medical student, "was able to tap into this mindset, tap into the grievances that I had... and take me through a transformation." Still in his teens, Nawaz joined Hizb ut-Tahrir and moved to London. As the President of the Students' Union at Newham Sixth Form College in East London, Nawaz

and his fellow Union members "began our mission to recruit everyone in this college to Islamism." Nawaz believes that his efforts, along with other student leaders, created an atmosphere that led to a Muslim student murdering a fellow student. Following the murder, Nawaz was expelled from Newham College.

Nawaz was eventually given the task of exporting Hizb ut-Tahrir to Denmark and Pakistan. Having recently acquired nuclear weapons, Hizb ut-Tahrir felt that Pakistan was a particularly important country to target. "Hizb ut-Tahrir was aiming to establish the Caliphate there [in Pakistan] and have a nuclear bomb at their disposal," Nawaz says. "We laid the seeds for Hizb ut-Tahrir in Lahore and in many other cities."

In a talk presented at City Circle, Nawaz reiterated the arguments he once used to recruit Muslims to Hizb ut-Tahrir. Repeating the logic of the organisation, Nawaz said that "my identity as a Muslim had been stripped away from me, systematically stripped away from me by the education system of the colonialists." He then linked this idea to Islam, saying "Islam is not just a religion, but Islam has intrinsic to it a ruling system, an economic system that God revealed 1400 years ago." What is more, anyone who follows this logic must be willing to sacrifice his life for the cause. "This is Islam," Nawaz continued, "It's a revolutionary doctrine, so I must be prepared to... give my life for overthrowing every single ruler in the Muslim world, establishing on the ashes of their regimes this one Caliphate."

Nawaz no longer believes this logic. But it took four years in jail and another year after returning to Britain for Nawaz to renounce the organisation and its ideology. In his third year as a student at the School of Oriental and African Studies, the university had sent Nawaz to Egypt to continue his education. While in the country, he continued to spread Hizb ut-Tahrir propaganda, an activity that landed him in jail. Although Hizb ut-Tahrir is legal in Britain, it is banned in Egypt and many other

"Questioning the ideology of Hizb ut-Tahrir felt to me like questioning my faith - it felt like questioning the very premise of my belief."



Muslim countries. Nawaz describes the torture he witnessed in jail. "I was forced to witness my friends being electrocuted before my eyes, and asked questions based upon their responses. We were played off one another in that typical format," he said.

Nawaz was placed in solitary confinement for three months, during which time he was exposed to only fifteen minutes of sunlight a day. He raced the pebbles in his cell to ward off madness. Although Hizb ut-Tahrir says it renounces violence, Nawaz briefly considered becoming a terrorist while he was in solitary confinement. "I decided in myself that I was going to become a terrorist and that I would... kill people to take revenge for what happened to me through the torture chambers."

Nawaz never acted upon his desire to become a terrorist. After being released from solitary confinement, he spent his years in prison studying and discussing Islam with other political prisoners. During this time, he began to question the logic underlying Hizb ut-Tahrir's ideology. But his ultimate rejection of the organisation's philosophy was not easy. He says "questioning the ideology to me felt like questioning my faith - it felt like questioning the very premise of my belief."

These days, the former Hizb ut-Tahrir member is keen to differentiate between religion and politics. According to Nawaz, Islam and Islamism are two different things. Islam is a religion while Islamism is "an irreligious manifestation of modernity" and is influenced by Western ideas such as communism, statehood and sovereignty. "Anybody who claims that sovereignty belongs to God is calling himself God, because he is claiming that he has the right to tell us what God says," Nawaz claims.

Nawaz no longer renounces his identity as a British national either. Contrary to the Hizb ut-Tahrir party line, Nawaz believes "there's absolutely no contradiction between being British and being Muslim." Nawaz has also maintained his belief in social

justice. "By abandoning Islamism, I haven't abandoned the very same principles that led me in my quest for justice to join Islamism and this ideology," he says.

Maajid Nawaz subscribes to a two-pronged approach to attacking extremism. He argues that debates on this issue have become polarised, with left-leaning individuals exclusively blaming grievances for the rise in extremism, while their counterparts on the right exclusively blame ideology. Nawaz doesn't think things are so simple. "Young people genuinely feel grievances," he says. These grievances make certain individuals susceptible to Hizb ut-Tahrir's propaganda. Nawaz believes that once these people join the organization and adopt its ideology, they see their grievances through the lens of Hizb ut-Tahrir's ideology. After becoming part of Hizb ut-Tahrir, Nawaz says, "the person I became was somebody who was no longer motivated by those grievances I initially felt, but somebody who was motivated by the ideology itself."

Nawaz is currently developing a think tank, called the Quilliam Foundation, that he and his colleagues will launch later this year. The think tank is dedicated to studying a pluralistic view of Islam and countering extremism. Nawaz's former experiences motivated his decision to help establish the Foundation and to challenge the work of Hizb ut-Tahrir. "I'm trying to make up for what I feel responsible for. For thirteen years of my life I was with Hizb ut-Tahrir and I spread it from this country to other countries," he says. The Quilliam Foundation aims to challenge extremism through two key elements. The first element, deconstruction, aims "to really try to take away any sense of authenticity that Islamism has." The second element is building anew. By relying on Muslim scholars, Nawaz hopes the think tank will "popularise that notion of a pluralistic Islam."



facebook

R.I.P.

With user numbers on the world's most popular social networking site falling for the first time, **Martha Hampson** asks whether the poking may finally be over

In most of the end-of-year technology columns which graced the pages of print and web media alike three months ago, Facebook was heralded as the success story to rival all success stories. The site, which began in 2004 with membership originally restricted to Harvard University students, now has 67 million active users worldwide - with an average 250,000 joining every day since January 2007. The site is now the second most visited in the UK after Google, with 8 million active users - the largest number in any country outside the US.

But despite the media hysteria, Facebook recently and very publicly experienced its first drop in UK users in 17 months - 5 per cent of the site's users, or 400,000 people, left the site between December 2007 and January this year. MySpace and Bebo, the next two largest networking sites in the UK, were also down: 14 per cent and 8 per cent respectively since September. But it's Facebook that's carried the banner of the web's social networking sensation, and thus Facebook's downfall that the media are now so eager to predict.

Facebook has often been used as an example of the advent and success of 'new media', that perennial phrase which is bandied about by excitable tech journalists to refer to such new-fangled inventions as podcasts, blogs, and wikis. In particular, it's been praised as one of the stars of 'Web 2.0' - the new collaborative internet where the general public become the creators, rather than the consumers, of information. At its best, Web 2.0 is a means of including and giving a voice to those who are often ignored, and of breaking down the traditional social boundaries of old media. This is what could have been so wonderful about Facebook and social networking in general: a tool that can bridge the social gaps and barriers of class, schooling and background - something to harness the potential that old media like television have always fallen just short of fulfilling. But while

this is true on a very simplistic level (you can hide your true identity online if you wish) what Facebook in particular has patently failed to do is to prevent the separations of class.

Facebook's Harvard dropout founder Mark Zuckerberg, who at 23 recently became the youngest billionaire in the world, clearly never designed it for such a purpose. He told Time.com in July last year that "we're not trying to build a community - we're not trying to make new connections." Instead, what Facebook users have generally liked about the site is its usefulness in reinforcing and maintaining the exclusivity of existing networks.

This is evident in the fact that the reason for the change in fortunes for Facebook seems to be that it is now seen by its core of university users (20,000 on the LSE network alone) as being too inclusive. In an interview with BBC News' technology site Nic Howell, deputy editor of New Media Age, says that "social networking is as much about who isn't on the site as who is - when Tory MPs and major corporations start profiles on Facebook, its brand is devalued."

And it's not just the fact that everyone from Ken Livingstone to LSE lecturers are now using the verb 'to Facebook' in the same tone in which Gordon Brown namedrops Arctic Monkeys. It's specifically that the people now joining aren't, generally, part of the same real-life groups as the established Facebook cliques. The opening up of Facebook from universities to schools and then the unaffiliated masses marked an increase in migrations from MySpace and Bebo - sites whose numbers are overwhelmingly made up of young teenagers. In a marked change from the site's initial Harvard exclusivity, less than half of all current Facebook users are university students. This has been used by the Facebook team as an example of how comprehensive the site's appeal is, but it also seems to have become a problem for them.

-Danan Boyd, a fellow at Harvard

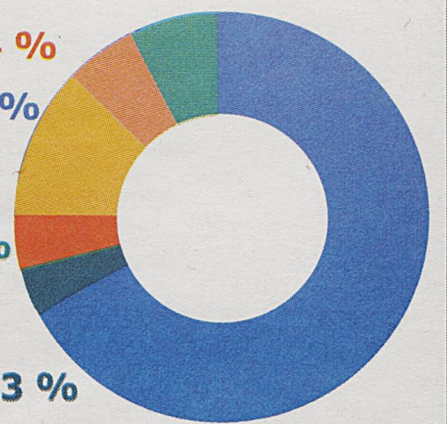
"What users like about Facebook is its usefulness in reinforcing the exclusivity of existing social networks."



Law School's Berkman Center for Internet and Society, who specialises in the wider impact of social networking sites, has written that "the division around MySpace and Facebook is just another way in which technology is mirroring societal values." She's noted that in the US, as here, there's a marked distinction between the sort of people who join MySpace (teens and early school-leavers) and the sort who join

REVEALED PREFERENCES LSE STUDENT POLITICS ON FACEBOOK

Very Liberal 4 %
Not listed 62 %
Liberal 13 %
Moderate 7 %
Other 6 %
Conservative 3 %



Facebook (current or aspiring college students).

One of Facebook's initial pulls was the fun of the unlikely connections which appeared as more and more people joined - the thrill of discovering that someone you knew briefly aged five is now the girlfriend of your housemate's brother. But as Boyd notes, what's interesting about these links is not their display of amazing small-world coincidences, but the proof that the sort of people who form the core of Facebook also operate in a very specific and exclusive social network in the real world.

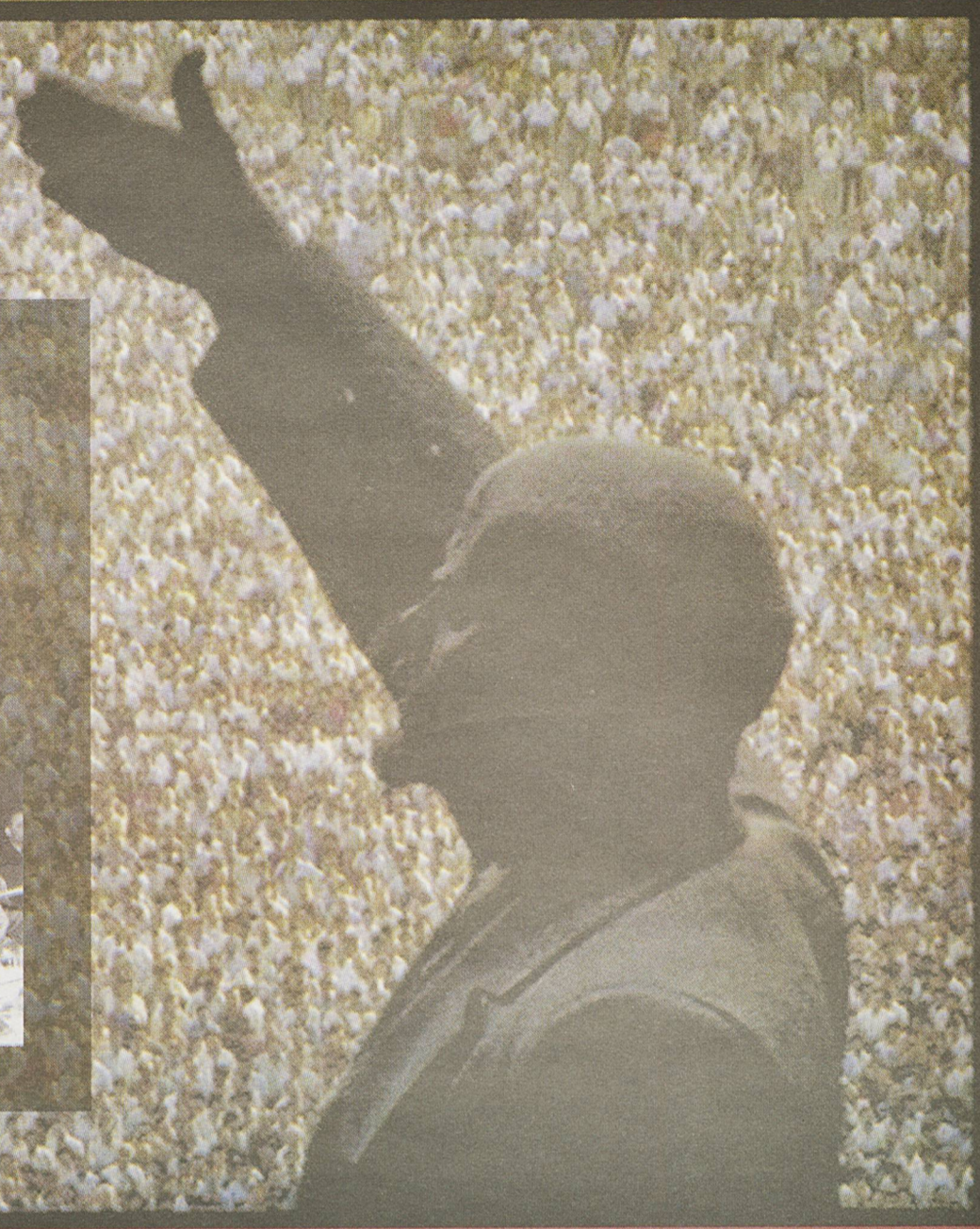
As Facebook attracts more of those who also have MySpace accounts, and who are likely to keep MySpace as their main networking site, this social core of Facebook is starting to defect. The company has two options to retain the growth and enthusiasm of the UK and US users it

seems in danger of losing: to change the design of the site to give it a more MySpace feel (hence the influx of band pages and zombie-themed apps), or to reintroduce the clean design that made it initially so appealing to middle-class students. Either way, the old separations will have to be strengthened to keep its chosen group happy.

In fact, the strategy seems mainly to be expansion into new markets - the German and Spanish translations were released this month, with French to follow soon. So, while the future of Facebook in the US and UK is not as certain as Zuckerberg would like, the phenomenon doesn't seem to be losing steam elsewhere - with worldwide users up by 712% from this time last year, the end of Facebook may be a while off yet. ■

I Will Survive

With Fidel Castro's passage from power last month, Chris Myall explores how the world's authoritarian regimes can maintain an eternal summer



Last month Fidel Castro stepped down as leader of Cuba after almost half a century in power, making him one of the world's longest serving leaders. However, what are the chances the regime he created will survive without him? Although his brother Raul has been serving in power since the summer of 2006, it is hard to imagine the country not being run by this monolithic figure. And even if Raul can keep power he is not much younger - and is thus likely to have to make way for a younger successor hinting at the need for reform.

Neither is history on Castro's side. Most twentieth-century authoritarian regimes collapsed within the life of their first ruler or not long afterwards, though some do return to power later. However, there have been notable exceptions. What lessons can be learned for Cuba from these successes and failures? Why did the Soviet Union survive for so long and then collapse when it did, and why has China been able to avoid this fate? What is it about communist countries that they can gain legitimacy easily and last much longer?

In the Soviet Union, the regime managed to survive numerous successions with relatively little breakdown of authority, even after such powerful figures as Stalin and Lenin passed from the political stage. Even the bitter rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky did not spill into popular revolt or armed uprising. This is because the rivalry was kept within the political framework created by the Bolshevik party's hierarchical structure. Skilful manoeuvring by Stalin allowed him to use the party to subtly remove members without damaging party morale and personnel overall. It was only in the post-Stalin era that the Soviet Union experimented with limited liberalisation under Malenkov, Beria and Khrushchev. Although these experiments did lead to rebel-

lions in Eastern Europe, the military easily crushed them and there was no significant uprising in Russia itself. This stability ended with the late Seventies. The Soviet economy was suffering, the international environment was becoming colder and the Red Army, guardian of the regime, had become stuck in the quagmire of Afghanistan, expending huge amounts of resources and destroying national pride. What happened?

Following the death of Brezhnev the Soviet government had a series of old leaders with short reigns who were unable to introduce reform to stop the downward spiral the Soviet Union was facing. Gorbachev's attempts to open the economy and politics led to the regimes downfall, freedom of the press led to embarrassment, and proclaiming non-interference in Eastern Europe caused the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. Relaxing control over elections led to the rise of nationalism across the Soviet Union. Eventually free elections were held, but were won by Boris Yeltsin, who was not the government endorsed candidate. The final end came with the August putsch, when party hardliners attempted but failed to take power back using the military - leading to popular disdain for the once-feared communist party. The break up of the USSR swiftly followed.

This fate was avoided by China. In the post-Mao era it was nevertheless hard to see how China's communist regime would survive its first and most charismatic leader. A succession crisis indeed occurred, with factions manoeuvring and even attempting to use force to gain control of the country. However, Mao's designated successor as Paramount Leader, Hua Guofeng, managed to play these factions off against each other, gaining control of both the bureaucracy and the military under the control of the party. Hua proceeded to end such

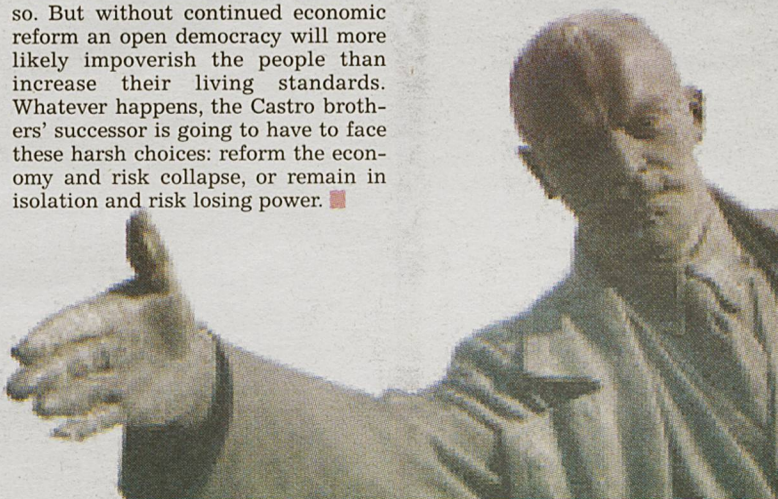
problematic and regime-threatening policies as the Cultural Revolution, and continued to expand the political personality cult of the Chinese communist party beyond that of merely Mao Zedong. However, Hua was soon ousted by Deng Xiaoping, who began economic reforms and to improve political relations with the West - better policies for the regime's survival in the long term. However, Deng refused to allow political reforms, resulting in government crackdown including the famous Tiananmen Square incident. This was a pattern that continued to the third and fourth generation of successors. The willingness to accept economic reform but not political reforms enabled the party to retain power and legitimacy, whilst still advancing China economically and towards great power status.

These examples are revelatory about the potential for the survival of authoritarian regimes. The collapse of the Soviet Union emerged following economic crises and the dilution of control. The loss of support that followed in the hardline of the party, the military, the satellite nations and the people meant that the communist party had no hope of survival. By contrast, China was not as reactionary as the Soviet regime and introduced economic reforms much earlier. Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping removed their political rivals and were able to gain control over the military and bureaucracy, allowing Deng to press ahead with his reforms without massive loss of support, especially the police. This does not bode well for Castro's regime. Although the support of the military still appears to be on the side of the state, the economic situation is poor, and it is unlikely to improve unless another nation is willing to help them or if America opens it trade embargo - which is itself unlikely to happen unless there is a regime change. However, Cuba still

does not look likely to collapse any time soon. There is no sign of another international wave of democracy emerging in the early twenty-first century - these usually collapse several authoritarian regimes at the same time, as with Europe's military Mediterranean regimes in the Seventies. Cuba's economic situation is no worse than in the Nineties and is now supplemented by tourism. Finally, it has the ability to fall back on its communist ideology to strengthen it. Whether in Taiwan or Spain, purely military regimes rarely stay in power for long, as they find it hard to justify their positions. By contrast, communist, monarchist and religious regimes can fall back on a base of true believers, and tend to stay in power for much longer.

In the end, though, it will all come down to the people of Cuba, whether they want to remain in their isolated communist nation or open themselves up to the wider world in a democratic framework - and are indeed able to do so. But without continued economic reform an open democracy will more likely impoverish the people than increase their living standards. Whatever happens, the Castro brothers' successor is going to have to face these harsh choices: reform the economy and risk collapse, or remain in isolation and risk losing power. ■

"Most twentieth-century authoritarian regimes collapsed within the life of their first ruler. However, there have been some notable exceptions."



Listings

www.lsesu.com

NUS LGBT presents: Lets talk about Hate Crime

When: Wednesday 12th March

Time: 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Where: NUS HQ, 2nd floor, Centro 3, Mandela Street NW1

Contact number: Phone - 07732807626

The Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill, currently making its way through the house of lords, includes a clause which will extend the existing criminal offence of incitement to racial hatred to also apply to sexual orientation.

While the NUS LGBT campaign supports these new protections in law, some have said that it may infringe the right to free speech.

This event is your chance to talk to **Barbara Follett MP, Minister for Equality** about the new protections and about your experiences of Hate Crime.

Refreshments will be provided.

As space is limited please RSVP and we will be in touch to confirm your attendance to scott@scottonline.co.uk

TUESDAY 11TH MARCH

- 12:00 Knitting Quad
- 6:30 Society Awards Underground Bar
- 8:30 The Wizard of Oz Drama and Music Societies, Old Theatre

WEDNESDAY 12TH MARCH

- 1:15 Mass Chaplaincy
- 6:00 Swing Dance (Beginners) Dance Society, Parish Hall
- 7:00 Swing Dance (Advanced) Swing Dance Society, Parish Hall
- Black Tie Pub Crawl RAG, Tuns
- 8:30 The Wizard of Oz Drama and Music Societies, Old Theatre

THURSDAY 13TH MARCH

- 1:00 SU AGM Old Theatre
- 7:00 Beaver AGM The Beaver, D302
- HipHop (beginner) Dance Society, Parish Hall
- London University Battle of the Bands Sound, Leicester Square
- 8:00 Itchy Feet Quiz Night Travel society, D402

- 8:30 Hip Hop (Advanced) Dance society, Parish Hall

FRIDAY 14TH MARCH

- 1:15 Mass Chaplaincy
- 6:00 Stamp out Poverty People and Planet, H206
- Swing Dance (Beginners) Dance Society, Parish Hall
- 7:00 Film Showing: The Girl who Leapt through Time Anime and Manga, E304

SU news Week 10

LSE Students' Union Teaching Excellence Awards 2007/8

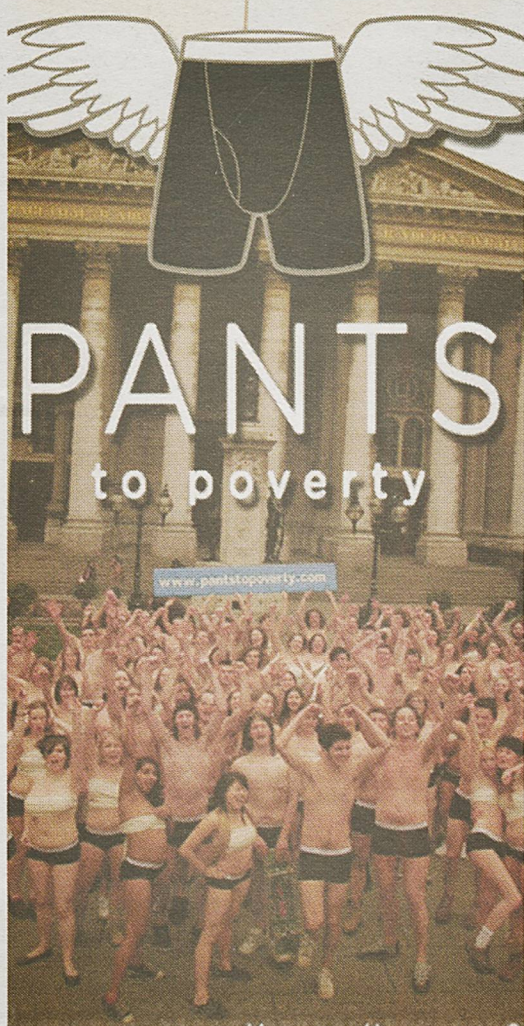
This is your opportunity to acknowledge professors, lecturers, tutors, class teachers, seminar leaders, workshop organisers - any member of LSE staff involved in teaching who has inspired you, helped you get to grips with complex or challenging ideas, encouraged your learning, changed your view on the world or helped you to "understand the cause of things" better.

Closing date: by 5pm on Friday 14th March 2008

Annual General Meeting

At the AGM (Thursday 1pm)...

1. General Secretary will present the Union's Annual Report
2. Treasurer will present the Annual Budget Submission
3. Returning Officer will announce the results of the Lent Term Elections
4. Treasurer will announce the winners of the Society Awards
5. The Winner of the Dev Cropper Memorial Award will be announced
6. General Secretary will award the Honorary Life Memberships



SU EXECUTIVE OFFICE HOURS

General Secretary, Fadhil Bakeer Markar Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Treasurer, Libby Meyer Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Communications Officer, Kayt Berry Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Education and Welfare, Ruhana Ali Thursdays 2.30PM, Quad

Women's Officer, Daisy Mitchell-Forster Thursdays 12PM, Quad

Environment and Ethics, Aled Dilwyn Fisher Thursdays 12PM, Quad

LGBT Officer, Dominic Rampat Wednesdays 10AM, N3

Societies Officer, Carys Morgan Thursdays 2PM, Quad

STARRING
LIA DERANIYAGALA
AS DOROTHY
AND HOWARD DAVIES
AS THE WIZARD

Tue 11/03 8.15 pm
 Thu 13/03 8.30 pm
 Fri 14/03 8.30 pm
 Sat 15/03 7.30 pm
 Venue: Old Theatre
 Tickets £4/£5/£7
 on Houghton Street

The
WIZARD
of
OZ

The LSESU
Drama and Music Societies

LSE
T-SHIRT DESIGN
COMPETITION

Deadline for submission:
Monday 28th April

£100
PRIZE

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the Beaver

GET IN BETWEEN THE SHEETS WITH US.

Annual General Meeting
Thursday, 14th March 2008,
5pm, D302

Open to all LSE Students; only Collective members may vote

Elections

Executive Editor
News Editor
Features Editor

Comment and Analysis Editor

Listings Sub-Editor

Photography Sub-Editor

Collective Chair

Requirements:

Any member of the LSE SU can run (except for Executive Editor)

The editors will be elected by the collective.

Send nominations to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk

Deadline: Wednesday, 13th March 2008, 5pm



Amalgam presents a fusion of emerging and professional artists

An exhibition for **The Prince's Trust**

March 14th: 7pm - 12pm

Shaw Library, Old Building - LSE

£ 2

Like What I See



Featuring:

Shahid Rassam

Sydenham High
School for Girls

Capital Culture

IYDA

Rosetta Art

Richard

Aaron Hobson

Dilek O'Keefe

Ansett

Gary Welch

Tenderpixel

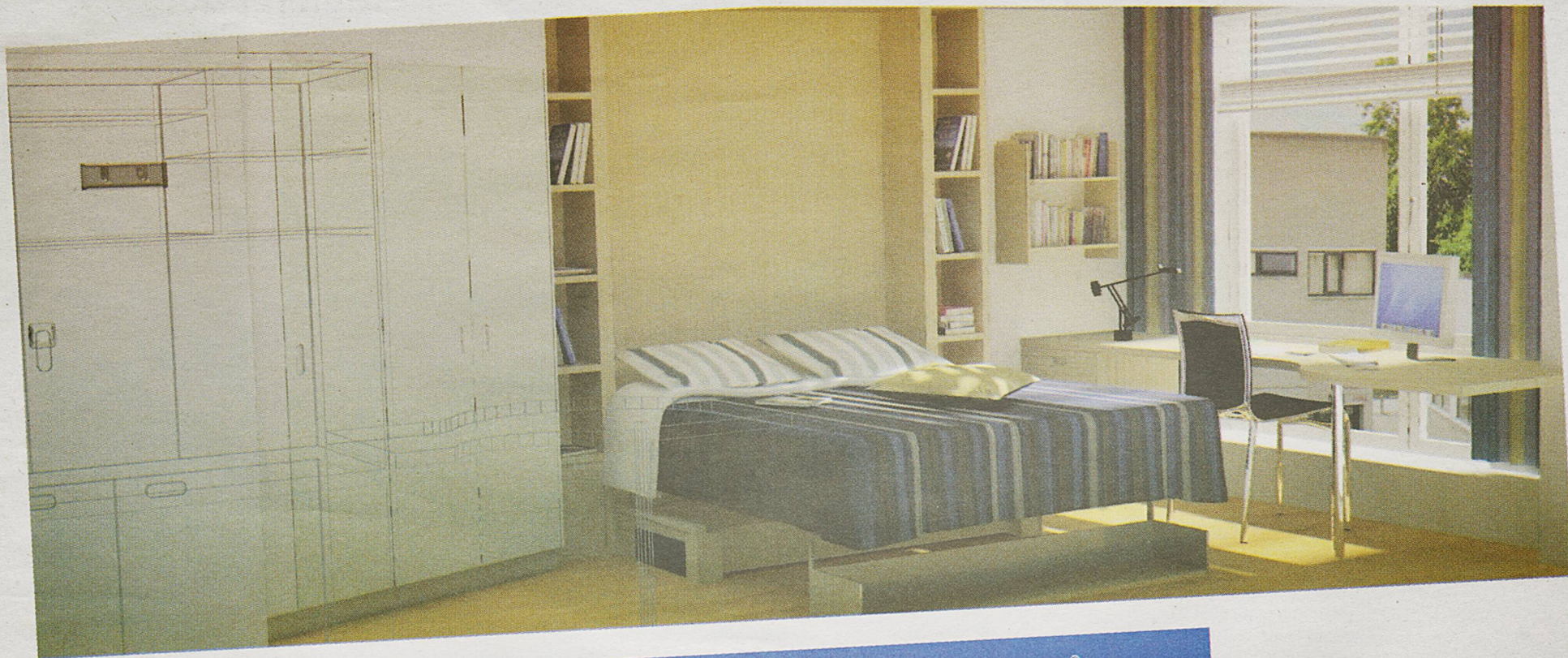
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AU Star of the Week

BeaverHeat Magazine interviews Daniel Holness on behalf of Beaver Sports...

What is your greatest achievement as president this year?

On a personal level, it's difficult to say. Everything we've organised, everything that's been achieved is a result of a team effort from the Exec. I was very lucky to have such a pro-active group, people you could rely on doing their jobs as well as using their initiative when the time called. I guess the things I'll be proudest of would be the ReAUnion event, a completely experimental event that went down really well with AU members old and new, and the progress that we've made with the school in terms of improving sports facilities. We're very confident that things will change in the short-term (those skanky changing rooms), as well as some big plans in the future (maybe a sports hall), a process all started from this year. So in ten years time that might rank as our no.1 achievement!

What would you have done differently looking back?

In my Hustings speech a year ago, I famously (and drunkenly) kept repeating 'I'm a perfectionist!' and to a degree that's true. When you've experienced everything the AU has given you the last few years, you want to make sure that, during your tenure, everyone has just as an incredible time. Only little things niggle at you looking at back. Even looking back at the Ball, we wanted to make sure that everyone understood that Club Colours were different from Half and Full Colours, a separate award all together. However, ordering it like we did, still made it sound as if Club was bottom rung, where as in fact they could be considered even more prestigious. A lesson to be learnt for next year.

What advice would you give to the next exec?

Don't expect to be friendly during the Colours meeting! Our Exec all get along absolutely fine, we are all very good friends, but as soon as you start that meeting, it gets more heated than any Israel-Palestine UGM! We're in there for 6 to 7 hours discussing and arguing, it's not pretty I can tell you.

We get a Domino's out of it though.

If you could change one thing about the AU what would it be?

Very little, it is a remarkable institution that when brought together, proves itself over and over again to be the best outlet to all that humdrum studying. You wouldn't want to change that! One can make an argument for larger attendance on Wednesdays, but this has proved very hard to influence. It is completely down to luck as to who are the captains - hit the jackpot (see women's rugby and football attendance this year) and you get a packed Tuns. So all current captains should choose wisely when thinking of the successors....

What's your fondest memory from this year?

The AU Welcome Party. As the new Exec this was our first real test, our first glimpse at what was to come from the AU. I personally had thought about it all summer, so when we put it all together and so many people came, it was, if anything, a massive relief. Afterwards we could say, 'Right, we've had a fantastic start, and we seem to have a good, fresh bunch of AU-ers. We can really make this a strong year.' And I hope that we did.

Has being president changed your view of the AU in anyway?

I didn't realise how big it was! When we had our captain's meeting at the beginning of the year, I felt embarrassed - I only knew about half the people there! When you're within a large club like football it's easy to become insulated from the rest of the AU. Being President makes you appreciate every last little club and to get to know every member too.

As AU pres we need an official answer on the ranking of banter lash and minge...

Ask Sophie.

What's the silliest thing you have done drunk?

Okay... Dan Holness is opening up...

Pulled a newly engaged lady in Ljubljana (good times Josh!) for the fun of it. I think I might have ruined that relationship. Not proud of that one.

Shouted (whilst very drunk), 'you have great tits, you fucking c*nt' while I was having sex. Great fun explaining in the morning that it was a compliment because she must really have great tits for me to say that whilst so inebriated!

Laughing at one of Al O'Brien's whales, and indeed chanting, 'you're a vessel, not a human' to her face.

Taps with the loser having to down a bottle of wee. Jarlath O'Hara lost.

Josh and I taking a pee against the Cabinet Office, not actually realising where we were. Having the police turn up and tell us they were interrogating us under the Terrorism Act was a sobering experience shall we say.

Do not judge me by these exploits - it's mainly Calella's fault.

Do you have a secret AU crush?

There is a boy called Rodgers who I've had my eye on for a while. He's apparently a virgin but, as it hasn't been mentioned in the Beaver for a while, I am worried that Robin Low might have beaten me to it.

What's your most humiliating experience?

I could subtly dodge this question and just start a humiliate-someone-else investigation. Which I will:

Apparently one of the guys co-ordinating the Ball for the hotel was walking up some stairs when they saw a pair of knickers on the floor. They then got to the next bit and there was some girl with her dress pulled right up to her shoulders in a moment of passion! Bloody legends! I want to find out who these people are and if they could write a sports report for the Beaver next term. Don't worry, you're in no trouble, it's been the joke of the day in their office apparently!!

Who was the last person to see you naked?

My 3rd team in the showers at Berrylands. I believe I was next to Victor Sonier who brought in his customary semi-erect penis to the shower visit.

What is your favourite karaoke song?

'Stand by me', Oasis. Next.

Do you have any bad habits?

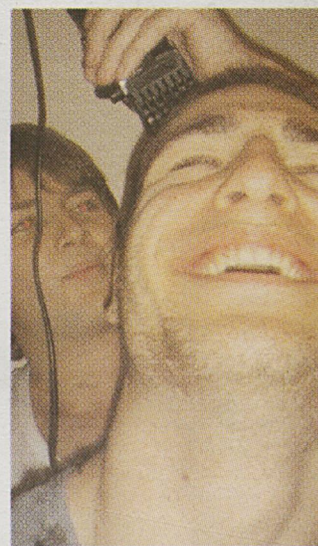
Whenever I start a night drinking with Louis de-Ste-Croix (3 Tuns Award 2008), we nearly always end up annihilated. Whether it's him being knocked out by a pavement or getting his overrated genitalia out, or me ... actually, it's always him, the evening never ends well.

I also, quite scarily it must be said, deliver the phrases, 'sick one, dawg', 'mashed', 'you're a crackhead', 'banter, lash, minge' on a regular basis to my own mother.

Explaining minge the other day was interesting.

Calella- ugly or beautiful?

Calella is essentially a combination of lash, banter and minge. Now let's break it down. Lash is initially beautiful but can quickly turn ugly, banter is always beautiful unless it comes from Ed Healy's mouth, and finally there's minge, which is obviously very subjective. However, if we use an equation to help us, lash + banter invariably equals ugly minge. Which is beautiful. Well probably by Calella standards.



Silly freshers' sub-par AU Ball banter



Satterthwaite and Pickering

Again, another article being written in a totally random place, just on our way back from visiting friends at the Sheffield Poly and Pickles has just thrown up in the train loo from a heavy 24 hours of drinking. Classy. Standard.

So, the end of the year looms ahead.... Must we all start revising so soon? We want more hockey, banter, lash, (minge) and amazing Wednesday's Walkies nights.

We've finally recovered from the AU Colours Ball, a night to be remembered (or forgotten) by many people. Much excitement at the beginning of the night came from

our James Bond like plans of how to sneak in our copious amounts of alcohol. The hockey girls are extremely classy so many drinks were lodged in knickers and even a bottle of whiskey was snuck down Alison's cleavage.

Once in, Dan Holness had a difficult time controlling the mass of inebriated sportsmen from getting in the way of the waiters; many a duck pate was seen flying. You may not remember the food, maybe due to the fact that Moon and Rich Roberts ate all the unattended meals. In another end of the woods, Kathryn Nixon was having fun throwing sugar cubes at people, saying it was ok as she was friends with the bouncers. It then seemed a good idea for us two to follow suit but we were quickly told we would be

dragged out if we didn't stop - oh what it would be to have friends in high places!

We were puzzled to see paramedics making their way through the throng of LSEbians to the far table which we later found out to be occupied by the football girls. We believe a member of the team had called the paramedics at around ten o'clock for a girl who had quite possibly passed out on her plate. The best banterous comment of the night was, 'we're really annoyed for them calling the paramedics, we don't do that in England, we just leave them... no Freshers die!' - yes we are a caring bunch; our own American hockey girl threw up on her plate even before the starter and we just rolled her into a taxi.

The football girls seemed

to have an eventful night. One girl was involved in a big argument with a first team footballer after he ordered her to 'get your tits out' - thankfully Mike Maynard, a future father of the AU, made this boy personally apologise, maybe we should name and shame in future articles.....

We can't really remember the rest of the night apart from pulling off some controversial dance moves to an extremely cheesy playlist. Heaps can't even remember dancing but Pickles is sure she saw her grinding a speaker. Maybe it was our level of intoxication but the night seemed to end at too early an hour; Moon didn't even make it onto the dance floor. Even so, a sin of all sins was committed as many hockey girls didn't make it to Walkies. The

intention was undoubtedly there, but Pickles had lost her shoes... After an hour of searching by yours truly, Pickles remembered that she had actually left them with a trusty football pal, Alice. The night came to an end [according to Moon] with Pickles shoving an abandoned fridge



into the road! She's sorry! And expects karma to send some bad luck her way. In fear of being caught, we ran all the way home, Pickles chasing Moon even though she had been told numerous times before, 'You know I don't like you chasing me.'

So, we think you get the gist that the Ball was a great end to a great year; from Alison puking after trials on the bus, humiliation in bin bags at initiations, a Christmas tree mix grill invasion at the Carol, vomming on the window ledge at the Xmas dinners, to fridge pushing at the Ball.

We're sure you all had an equally banterous year and we're looking forward to next year. Bring on more of the same and let's keep up our 'waster' reputations.

Cricket

The Great Cricket Debate

Test Cricket is Nearly Dead



Navta Vij

Is test cricket dying? Slowly, steadily and oh-so - painfully being pushed deeper and deeper into a grave so profound that if someone dared to venture out and dig it up they would probably get their hands burnt from a vocal faction promoting 20/20 as the new cricketing ideology.

Because for a while now test match cricket has played second fiddle to the ashamedly exciting new format of 20/20 (20 overs per side), slowly eclipsing even one day cricket.

being snapped up by team owners for millions of dollars - has witnessed the jumping on the bandwagon of the most archetypal test cricketers cum least experienced 20/20 players (cue Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman).

The 'powers-that-be' in the world of cricket have wanted to overhaul crickets image for a long, long time and what should suffer but test match cricket. For so many decades it has been stereotyped as a slow, strenuous to view game for a certain 'type': slacks, straps and pinstriped (old) men who snooze off mid-way through a test match only to wake up an hour later to an unchanged scorecard pretty much explains it. Instead youngsters and families are

2007 is now as prominent as Brian Lara's mammoth test innings of 400no - it has to be asked: can 20/20 ever really, really test a player? Resilience, mental strength, accuracy, persistence, ability, patience, attitude, desire, blood, sweat and tears; all attributes of test cricket lived out over a period of five days. 20/20, almost the exact opposite, bringing to the arena such different attributes: speed, arrogance, glamour, impatience and a manic desire to constantly slog the ball out of the ground. And bowlers, churning out ball after ball in robotic fashion knowing, maybe, that the likelihood of getting a batsman out is contingent on the batsman himself to play a ridiculous shot than the bowler to bowl a decent



And if we're questioning the authenticity of a 50 over game, then what position exactly should test match cricket occupy (Forward Short Leg maybe?) to re-claim its place as the crown jewel of the cricketing world?

In hindsight it might not even matter. Because 20/20 is being lauded as the face of modern cricket and there is very little space left in the melting pot for all three formats - test, one day and 20/20 - to thrive together. For the purists - of which there appear to be fewer and fewer - the proliferation of the 20/20 format in the English county league, the advent of the Indian Cricket League (ICL) followed swiftly by the recent launch of the Indian Premier League (IPL) are three more nails in the coffin of test cricket. The fact that this format generates hefty sums of money - players

called upon to fill the stadiums; to turn cricket into a game accessible to 'all'.

There is of course an irony here; an artful hypocrisy that deems test cricket too complex, rendering it supposedly 'inaccessible' to the masses, screaming for a more universal format like the 20/20 to fill this void; yet at the same time the UK broadcasting rights for the IPL are sold exclusively to Setanta Sports: a pay-per view broadcaster. Not so accessible to 'everyone' after all. Rather test cricket is falling victim to a format that yields money beyond the wildest dreams of the big wigs. If ever there were an example of economics eclipsing the logic of the game, let this be it.

Beyond the money then - and accepting somewhat sullenly that Yuvraj Singh's six sixes in a row against England in the 20/20 World Cup series

ball. Not really a game of cricket then; at least not for the purists.

And so it is with a hint of sadness that the steady demise of test cricket must be accepted; yes it persists but it hangs by an anorexic thread. The 20/20 format has grown at a pace paralleled by none other and has distorted in its wake the map of cricket. In the not-so-distant-future all that may remain are memories; a wistful realisation that when people said: make sure you watch Lara set a record for the highest test century, or asked of Dravid and Laxman's 303 run partnership that eclipsed the Aussies in 2001, even they may not have known just how few and far between these milestones could become.

Test Cricket is the Holy Grail



Vikas Katyal

Twenty20 cricket has been an astounding success, capturing the imaginations of the viewing public, first in England, where the format was conceived, and subsequently across the cricket playing world. It's fast and furious, sexy, thrill-a-minute cricket and the fans love it. And so do the administrators, who have embraced Twenty20 for its commercial value. Twenty20 has been cricket's equivalent of finding a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow

of international cricket, with its endless amount of Test matches and One-Day Internationals (ODIs). The calendar simply cannot cope with more cricket. Something has to give if we are to protect our players from burnout.

Twenty20 is no doubt here to stay. It is too commercially valuable to be overlooked. But it is not Test cricket that will suffer, but rather 50-over internationals. ODIs have looked a jaded format for several years: too often one-sided mismatches which excite neither the players nor the fans. Twenty20, in contrast, is vibrant and exhilarating and brings new people into the grounds. 2007 saw World Cups staged for both the 50-over and 20-over formats.

about the state of Test cricket.

Test cricket has never had the commercial power of shortened formats of the game. With the advent of ODIs in the early 1970s, and World Series Cricket in the late 1970s, many thought Test cricket was doomed. But it has continued and is as healthy as ever, certainly in this country. Witness the 2005 Ashes: sport at its enthralling and absorbing best. Witness the droves of 'Barmy Army' England supporters, who travel all over the world to support their cricketers. Even England's current Test match against New Zealand shows how absorbing the longer form of the game can be. Having found themselves playing catch-up for much of the game, England



and it has boosted the coffers of cricket boards around the world. The International Cricket Council (ICC), cricket's governing body, staged the inaugural World Twenty20 in South Africa in 2007 and the tournament was an unqualified success. Now the Indian Cricket League (ICL) and Indian Premier League (IPL) have been designed to tap into the passionate Indian market, with many of the world's top players being attracted to the Leagues by the vast sums of money on offer.

Make no mistake, the inexorable rise of Twenty20 puts international cricket at a crossroads. The crowded international calendar means our international stars are already playing too much cricket, thus devaluing its quality. Kevin Pietersen and Andrew Strauss are just two players to complain about the constant grind

February's 50-over World Cup in the West Indies was bland and boring. The 20-over version was tense and thrilling. This is the way of the future.

But the sanctity of Test cricket remains. Ask any English cricketer and he will say he dreams of playing a Test match at Lord's. An Australian will talk of receiving his first 'baggy green' cap. Pietersen and Mike Hussey have vowed they will never turn their back on playing for their countries. Professional cricketers all over the world want to be tested at the highest level, and the highest level remains Test cricket. Admittedly, the sight of Shane Bond, one of the world's best fast bowlers, turning his back on New Zealand, lured by the dollars in the ICL, is tragic and sets a dangerous precedent. But Bond's case says more about the state of New Zealand cricket than it does

had the opportunity to force a victory after a remarkable hat-trick from Ryan Sidebottom and some spectacular catching from England's fielders. But the game fluctuated back in favour of the hosts on the last day, who wrapped up a convincing victory by bowling England out for just 110.

Test cricket isn't dying. It is doing what it always has done: evolving. One-day cricket has influenced the way that Test cricket is played. It is more aggressive and fast-paced than it ever has been and an extra emphasis is placed on good fielding. Twenty20 will probably have a similar impact, driving innovation in the way people think about the game. Twenty20 may supersede the 50-over format. Test cricket, however, will always remain the Holy Grail.

Chess

Battle of the Minds



Levine Thomas

Your opponent does not know what you are about to do. You look at the clock and see the seconds wasting away. You analyze your enemy's face to see if you can tell which way he will go in the game. It finally comes to you on what you should do, but before you play your idea into action, you stare down your opponent in the attempt to create a sense of fear in him/her for ever thinking about playing you. The sweat drips off each of your foreheads and your palms become sweaty in hesitation of possible miscalculation. The time has come to implement your plan; therefore you slowly pick up your piece and violently crash it upon one of his. You remove their piece from the game, and remove their hopes

of ever being able to use that piece in the game. And finally with lightning speed you hit your clock and allow your opponent to weep and contemplate on what he should do next to avoid doom and possibly counterattack all at the same time. You then get your energy drink and gulp it down in satisfaction of your well crafted play.

This dramatic depiction is how we visualize our games when we play. It takes hard work, practice, and patience to be able to develop your skills into a formidable opponent. For a well recognized school such as LSE, it makes sense that we have the mental skill in producing a very strong team. Our players play chess as one of their many school activities, which include taking part in other LSE sports and playing music (in addition to other LSE traits such as looking good and being smart).

LSE's Chess Team is part of

the University of London League (ULU League). The teams in this year's ULU League included LSE, Imperial, UCL, Barts (Queen Mary) and Kings (Past teams have also included SOAS and City). The LSE team consists of both undergraduates and post-graduates, and we play both home and away matches. There was a team qualification tournament in the beginning of the Michaelmas Term, and as the weeks passed by, we built on that team and added many strong players. Some of our best games came against Kings and Barts. You can say that we came to their school, saw their fear, and conquered them, adding another tally for our school's record against them in all athletic and academic categories.

We have one last game tomorrow, and we are playing for second place in the ULU League. At a minimum we should attain the rank of 3rd.

This was a hard fought season, but LSE has many strong players that will continue onto next year. As a Postgraduate student I will not be here next year to continue this path of victory which we have pursued this year. As Captain of the squad, I have been very proud and honored to have fought side by side with my fellow players. With this being said, hopefully, more strong players will join next year, but only if they think they have the mental muscle to continue the battle and be able to play the greatest test of mental skills (no, no, not your finals) - CHESS!!

Chess Team 2007-2008
Captain Levine Thomas, **Vice Captain** Franck Magennis
 Shahanah Schmid, Ilya Vybiral, Raphael Schoettler
 Jeremy Yau, Eric Yau, Chris Barker

Team Mates

Football Sixths



This week's Nathan Capone names and shames his team.

Best Banter...



Ed Frew

For actually attempting to fight Jarlath in Caella last year.

Worst Banter...



Ben Epstein and Miles Kerstein

Were caught discussing investment wanking during a match.

Best Player...



Bobby Shojai

Our very own Iranian Weapon of Mass Destruction

Shiniest Hair



Olly Speake

When not busy humiliating opposition midfielders in a way that makes Abu Ghraib look like playschool, Mr Speake spends most of his time washing and conditioning his lovely barnet.

Most likely to pull in Walkabout...



Seb Yoshida

Has the look of a Japanese boy band member. Much more likely to pull than G Crow

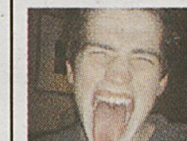
Fewest Internal Organs



Ed Frew

Apparently not having a spleen makes him more aero-dynamic.

Best Actor



Andrew Simpson

By default. Seeing as the rest of us haven't starred in a Hollywood film. He is still a pikey though.

Should play for England



Rich Morrow

Not a big game player, buckles under pressure, loves the million dollar lifestyle.

If you would like to see your team featured in 'Team Mates' then email us at thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk

Some more Rugby Loving...



Tom Jackson

When Jon Poole arrived on Houghton Street for the first time in September 2003, few could have predicted the impact the man would have on the AU and the LSE in general.

Back then Jon was just a fresh faced youth, trying to come to terms with London's chronic lack of farmland and the early warning signs of premature hair loss. While this year's fresher contingent were struggling to get to grips with their first year of GCSE's, Jon was commencing a titanic career at the Fortress Berrylands. Five years of exemplary 1stXV service is an unparalleled record to be proud of: where others may

have considered their priorities after 'underachieving' in Econ B for the third consecutive time, Jon admirably concluded the rugby club had to come first.

And my how lucky we are to have had him. As a player he has few peers: trapezius muscles that give scrum-halves nightmares; tackles that would bring down Lomu; Dennis Leamy style bunny-hopping; and a particularly impressive turn of pace for such a big man. Yet it's not only his on-field antics that are praiseworthy



– this is a chap who actually offered to help coach women's rugby on a Saturday; someone who makes the effort to travel to away matches even when injured; a man who has encouraged players of all abilities to take up the gentleman's game and enjoy it. All those at the LSE Rugby Football Club

are sincerely indebted to his commitment.

But the Brian Whitworth Cup is awarded for services to the entire Athletics Union, and students across all sporting disciplines have benefited

from Mr Poole's desire to make our university a more rewarding place for those of us whose idea of a good night out isn't a protest outside Miss LSE. This year's AU Events Officer, Jon has helped organise the hugely successful and appropriately messy Carol and last week's riotously fun Ball. For gym users, Jon's upbeat approach to his immensely onerous job behind the Gym Desk is a breath of fresh air. Finally, the very fact that he has so many female friends is a testament to just how bloody nice he is, since there can be surely few men as gleefully inept at 'the game' as our Jon.

While personal tutors across the LSE will be breathing a sigh of relief when Jon Poole finally graduates this summer, the Athletics Union will greatly miss him.

Results

Who Shat on Who?

Football

LSE 4ths 5-1 Kings 5ths
 LSE 6ths 2-4 Imperial at Wye
 LSE 5ths 1-2 Kings 4ths

Hockey

LSE Men's 2nds 12-0 St. Barts and Royal London Men's 3rds

Netball

LSE 5th 12-46 Imperial 3rds
 LSE 7ths 15-23 Kings College 4ths

Squash

LSE Women's 1sts 2-3 UCL 1sts

Badminton BUSA Knockout Cup

LSE Women's 1sts knocked out by Newcastle University 1sts in the semi final

Basketball

LSE Men's 1sts 58-84 Oxford Brookes 1sts

Rugby

LSE Men's 1sts 30-3 Nottingham 5ths

Squash BUSA Knockout Cup

LSE Women's 1sts knocked out by University of Bath 2nds in the semi final

Tennis BUSA Knockout Cup

LSE Men's 1sts knockout Leeds Met in semi finals.

ULU Athletics Championships

800: 1st Tom Beedell
 1,500: 1st Tom Beedell, 2nd Daniel Hawellek, 2nd Laura Ralston
 5,000: 1st Daniel Hawellek
 2,000 Steeplechase: 1st Helen Sharp, 3rd Stephanie Reed
 4x 400: 3rd Tom Beedell, Daniel Hawellek, Neel Chugh, Nathan Converse

3rd PLACE OVERALL!!

we were meeting at 3.15am

Running

The Underachieving Giants



Greg Opie

The cross country season ended last Wednesday, and LSE confirmed their title as the underachieving giants of the London Colleges League (LCL). We had a disappointing season by our own standards, with the men's and women's first teams finishing fifth and fourth respectively, but we still achieved some results that other teams, Strand Poly for example, would be proud of. We had individuals winning the University of London cross-country champs in both men's and women's categories, with our women's team coming first in that one-off race. We also had high individual finishes in both the men's and the women's overall league.

The LCL is the main university cross country competition in London, and consists of six five-mile races over the course of the year. The first, held at Parliament Hill in Hampstead, is always tricky, with nobody really in shape after the long summer break. It starts with a hill that looks immense at the time, but compared to later races is as flat as the beer served at Kings. Nevertheless, despite the predictable poor performance from all teams, we had some

early signs that both the women's team and Tom Beedell were going to be strong this year.

The second race is held at Richmond Park, and is usually pretty uneventful, apart from the warnings to avoid the deer because it's mating season and they get a bit "frisky". I'm not even joking. Entertainment

“It is hard to motivate yourself to race five miles when there is no chance of winning”

was provided this year by Tom Beedell ordering everyone to buy tickets to the completely wrong station, despite this being the third year he has run this course. Still, we just managed to get there in time and ran a mediocre race. In retrospect, it was probably the start of the season that let us down.

The third race at

Wimbledon Common is easily the most "cross-country" that we ever get in London, with logs to trip over and lakes to fall into. It is traditional for at least one LSE runner to get lost on this course, but this year Tim Windle managed to remember the track, and Pratyush Rastogi was busy back at LSE in his role as self-proclaimed "jogging team captain" (which tends to involve running alone for a mile or two, sobbing quietly to himself over his lack of team-mates), so everyone made it round in one piece. The women's team finished third, and the men's team came sixth, but both teams managed to push up into the top five overall.

The fourth race, hosted in theory by LSE, is at Hackney Marshes and doubles up as the UL cross-country champs. Since it involves running around the football pitches a couple of times, it is short, flat, and fast. These seem to be the conditions we excel in, since Tom Beedell won the men's competition, with Nathan Converse coming in 10th, team captain Charlie Dougherty finishing 12th, and Neel Chugh coming in close behind. LSE runner Laura Ralston won the women's race, with ex-captain Helen Sharp finishing fifth. The women as always performed well, and the team won the competition, with the men's team finishing third.

After Hackney, there is a long break for Christmas, where everyone eats more, drinks the same, and exercises less than before, and so the team always comes back in worse shape for the final two races. It doesn't help that the fifth race is (bizarrely) held in Reading, and with only six men and two women running, it is surprising that we did so well. Tom Beedell won (again) and Helen Sharp came third. The conditions were terrible; several runners fell to the chavs let out of school specifically to pick off the weakest

competitors.

It is hard to motivate yourself to race five miles cross country when there is no chance of winning, and that is probably why those of us who tend to finish nearer the back than the front invent petty rivalries and competitions amongst ourselves. A perfect example of this was Greg Opie and James May, who had each won two races between themselves up to this point, and were both mouthing off for weeks about the final race, to be held in Uxbridge. This race is five laps around a small

field, and is particularly disheartening for those at the back of the pack as they get lapped several times. In the end, Greg trounced James and won the bragging rights until next season.

The stars of the season for LSE were undoubtedly Tom Beedell who came third overall, and Helen Sharp and Nicole Rogers, who came sixth and seventh for the women, but with only three of the LSE runners who finished in the top 100 staying on, will we be able to do better next year?



Taekwondo

Less Fighting, More Anecdotes



Maria Gratsova

Face it, when were you actually interested in reports on each and every individual fight of the tournament? In fact, you were never interested in the fighting in general, and judging by last Saturday's results, neither were we. Quoting our legendary prize-winning film director, taekwondo club veteran and law convert Justin: "Just another year, just another taekwondo tournament. Unfortunately, this is the last you will be hearing from me". For those of you who read beyond the first two lines of our previous detailed report on the undeniable successes of the taekwondo club at Cambridge, this one will contain considerably less Cold War rhetoric and political commentary. Though wait a minute – was Willumsen, our PhD student in Government with us this time? In that case, I might well have to retract my previous comment.

This time, the drama started before the tournament as two of our junior competitors pulled out. Instead of six, we were left with four competitors of all shapes, sizes and levels. Admirably, everyone was on time, which is a significant achievement considering we were meeting at 5.45am on

a Saturday! The most depressing part of that is not the fact that you are only getting four hours of sleep but walking past drunken and merry kids stumbling out of clubs and bars on your way.

However, the morning went smoothly as this time the coach we had booked to take us to Nottingham actually showed up. After a two-and-a-half hour drive, we finally arrived at our destination just in time for the weigh-in, though the coach driver's attempt to drop us off at a random parking lot just outside Nottingham did scare us a hint. We were pleased to all weigh pretty much what we submitted and fit comfortably into our assigned weight categories – eating tasteless slow-burning carbs for breakfast, lunch and dinner for a week

does apparently pay off. Then again, it might even be slightly too effective, as proved by my example. Having submitted myself as a 56kg and narrowly failing to make it to the 51-55kg category, I was not amused to weigh 55kg on the day.

After a somewhat half-hearted warm-up (gosh how we were tired), and speculation on just how slippery our brand new protective equipment proved to be, it was time for our first competitor white belt Oli to fight. Defeat on points in the first round was not what we needed to boost our confidence that morning! I seriously was hoping for this guy to KO his opponent, judging by his excellent head kicks at training, so I am very glad he is still only a first year... Next on was our token

Korean black belt Kooyeon Kim (surname the same as that of half of the country's population: they claim they are not related but I have my doubts). Once again, I was left with one of the less exciting duties of being a captain, i.e. sitting around with the equipment. And yet again, they all seemed to return surprisingly soon – for a moment, it felt like a déjà vu. In fact, that is exactly what it turned out to be.

As I was gearing up for my own fight in the senior girls category (and that doesn't refer to age, thank you very much), somebody casually said to me: "Maria, you're next, no pressure – but PLEASE bring us some points!" While slightly worried for my minor injury on the right foot picked up that same morning while

practicing (who would have thought that eight plus years of taekwondo would fail to teach you the basics, such as avoiding kicking the padholder's knuckles), I was ready to go and even half-awake after downing excessive amounts of Lucozade. All seemed to be going well during the first half, as I was the first of us to hold on up to the break. However, what I did not realise was just how much a tie half-way through the match could relax you, which is the last thing you can afford in taekwondo. The fight went to the American girl, and while I promised earlier on to leave Cold War rhetoric aside, this is far from acceptable for a Russian like me.

Our last fight was not until much later on, so we all amused ourselves and stayed awake the best we could. I had taken our instructor's advice to eat plenty of bananas a little too seriously, and by this time was handing mine out left and right just to get rid of them. Our official photographer Alfred was snapping all the cute girls with his professional camera and its zooming facilities. Let me not even mention what went on between Dave the Viking and Russian Ruslan (despite being from Uzbekistan), although clear photographic evidence of it exists and has been put up on facebook.

I was approached by the very same Kingston lot that I was slugging off in the Cambridge tournament report. They turned out to be friendly and fun, I was even asked to join them on their night out in Brixton, at which point I had to politely decline the fantastic offer (admittedly this was one of their more decent proposals to me that day).

Finally, after what seemed like forever, it was time for blue belt Dave to fight an opponent from the very same Kingston U. While not too sure of what exactly happened during the fight, the sight of a less than impressed Dave walking over, followed by the rest of the lot, said it all. But guess what, his match still brought us the only medal of the tournament! Having had more than enough for the day, we asked them to post us the medal and headed off.

From team glory at Cambridge to the exact opposite in Nottingham, this one has certainly left us hungry for more. As this is the last you will be hearing from me, I must admit that I will miss all the fun and drama involved in taekwondo tournaments once I go out to the real world. Guys, on behalf of the committee: it has been great serving you this year and we expect nothing less than reading about you kicking ass big time in the future!



Running Mixed Results

Chess

Beaverheat

gets a little more serious...

Greg Opie

23

Levine Thomas

22

20

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Beaver sports

No Prizes for Coming Second



Alex O'Brien

LSE 4ths 5
Kings 5ths 1
Fortress Berrylands

Bill Shankly once famously said "If you are first you are first, if you are second you are nothing." Never has this been more appropriate than to the fourth team's predicament as they faced their final game of the season last Wednesday. It was all or nothing, death or glory, all the blood, sweat, tears and emails of the entire season rested on these last 90 minutes of

box of doughnuts prior to the biggest game in ULU history. Rogers was eventually restrained by team mates, with Captain O'Brizzle assuring him that it didn't matter what you ate before the game, it was all about kicking the ball hard.

After the final incoherent but wonderfully inspirational team talk of the season, the filthies took to the field with a look of determination only usually seen when Gusty picks up his harpoon. The fourths started at a blistering pace, and were ahead within 5 minutes. Vik "Fish and Chips," Nayar picked up the ball on the left hand side, and as he has done oh so many times this season,

nity to cause havoc with a set piece just outside the opposition box. The two henchest men in the FC, G. Crow and Bowny lurked over the ball deep in thought when Bowny enquired "What do ya reckon I should do here?" to which the younger Crow responded "Dunno mate, just hit it really really hard!" Bowny took this on board and unleashed an almighty whack of the ball which ended up straight in the bollocks of an unfortunate member of the poly's wall, ending any hope the poor chap had of spurning any offspring of inevitably limited intellectual ability in the future.

The fourths knew they needed a second goal and

with the absolute travesty that was the Brian Whittworth award, an official complaint has been launched by the club captain who has threatened to call off the whole FC and quite possibly go on hunger strike if this outrageous decision is not reversed.

Back to the game and after a brief scare when Rogkins momentarily lost his bearings in his own penalty area, causing Big Broom to pull off a wonderful save with his legs, the fourths went in search of a third goal to kill the game off. After a wonderful move down the left hand side involving the ever laughing Anders Jensen, who was displaying the kind of artistry even surre-

the fourths continued to create chances and racked up a fourth goal with a classic breakaway. A ball over the top for Vik saw the striker sprint away from the defence, showing the sort of pace that makes Rob Low wake up in a cold sweat at night, before finishing lethally for his 29th goal of the season.

O'Brizzle then rang the changes with Pierre, Deeny and Pete "Danny Mills" Shacalis all entering the action. The impact was almost instant with Who?Deeny attempting a spectacular, if somewhat ambitious overhead kick, which proved to be about as successful as Pandya's reign as club captain. Not very. The 5th goal did final-

amongst the filthies. The champagne, the beer, the Smirnoff ice and even Naylor's genitalia were out for only his second shower in four years to celebrate the occasion. Hairiest man in the fourth team Joshua even got his razor out for what seemed like only his second shave in four years such was the excitement at the achievement.

We were champions, after twenty gruelling league fixtures and only one defeat, we had got our just rewards and the celebrations went on long into the night, even though Deeny was completely smashed by about half four that afternoon! Hats off to the 5th team who have made it a really thrilling



football. Win, and we would reach the Holy Grail as Champions of ULU Div 2, lose or draw and we would not even reach promotion and would have to suffer the ignominy of losing our title as the fourths and become the 5th team. Pressure? What pressure.

The filthies started their day with Club Virgin/Fancy Dress Captain/Fixtures Secretary Andy Rogers having a heart attack at the sight of henchest man in the FC Jon Bown and Mr. Incomprehensible Cieran Deeny tucking into a huge

jinked his way through the hapless opposition defence, before lashing the ball into the net. Ideal.

Any fears of complacency arising within the ranks were quickly banished minutes later when O'Brien gave away a free kick as pointless as a Rob Low beaver article on the edge of the area. Strand Poly's usually infamously shit left back whipped in a shot which struck both posts before bouncing wide. All day long Broomie!

Moments later the filthies had their own opportu-

their pressure told once again when ol' blue eyes converted from a G. Crow corner, scuffing the ball home left footed perfectly from all of two yards. This sparked wild celebrations from goggles, who let out an almighty roar and pumped his fist in the direction of the on looking Greenall and Thompson, who were left thinking what might have been had Ben Sluttinho not sent them down rather hastily to the 5ths all those years ago. Unfortunately the night was to turn sour for dear old Nailsy later on

alism lover Scouse would have been proud of, the ball fell to Nayar on the byline who squared to the ever reliable right boot of the on rushing Josh Tenderbender who buried it. 3-0. Job done.

The fourths slowed the pace somewhat in the second half, they knew the oppo had naaafin, and were content to preserve their energies for the more important duties of lash later that night. However, with Ash, Josh and resident postgrad Rich King dominating midfield as always

ly arrive though ten minutes from time, when JT whipped in a dangerous free kick that dead ball specialist and camera man Owly would have been proud of, for archetypal Frenchman Pierre to volley home expertly at the far post.

Never to be begrudging helping those less fortunate than ourselves, the fourths decided to show Kings 5ths a bit of respect and dignity and allow them a consolation goal from a well taken free kick. Moments later the final whistle blew, sparking wild celebrations

title race which went right down to the wire, and have led to the FC absolutely bossing ULU Div 2 with both sides achieving promotion this season, we look forward to doing battle again next year! And with the filthies retaining the vast majority of their squad for next campaign, a repeated success under Captain Rogers next year in Div 1 looks very much on the cards, as the fourths will look to dominate on and off the pitch once more! 4th team till I die.

"Ol' blue eyes converted from a G. Crow corner, scuffing the ball home left footed perfectly from all of two yards."