

The Beaver

27 November 2007 Issue 673 The newspaper of the LSESU



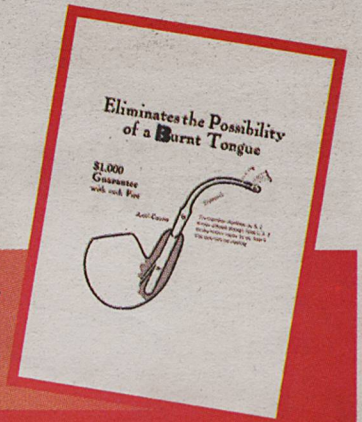
The long war?
Analysing the war on terror

Pages 11-15



Colin Murray
interview

PartB Pages 4-5



NEWS3 Students protest action against Iran **C&A7** Faux pas français **FEATURES12** Terrorism and popular culture **SPORTS22** Swimming in Sheffield **PARTB11** Graphic Literature

Davies accepts teaching failures

- LSE director concedes that improving teaching quality this year will be "difficult"
- Davies fields questions on study space, overcrowding and sports facilities

Phil Pacanowski
Rajan Patel

LSE director Howard Davies confirmed that he was determined to address poor teaching quality at the LSE "as fast as we can" at last week's Union General Meeting (UGM).

Davies faced sustained questioning from critical students on teaching quality, overcrowding on campus and value for money at the LSE. The School's decision to end the year-long 24 hour library service trialled last year was also attacked amidst Davies' claims that a year round service would be financially "unattractive".

The director also acknowledged that athletics and sports facilities "were not good enough", stating that an initiative had been set up "to look at what improvements we can make".

He began by confessing that the School had mistakenly over-recruited 300 extra students onto postgraduate programmes, claiming that this was due to students "making their minds up much later".

"It's becoming the last-minute.com approach to going to graduate school," he noted. This development, coupled with the LSE having the highest applicants to places ratio in the country, led to the School underestimating the number of people who would meet their offers. Davies promised to reassess forecasting "to see if we can improve it for the future".

The School's performance in the recently published *Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES) league table was also assessed. The director acknowledged that the LSE had fallen from 17th last year to 59th this year, stating: "I hope to do a lit-

tle better in future."

He noted that the new THES rankings system "systematically downgrades social science institutions" by placing a greater weight on the citation of research by other academics and suggested that the table's findings did not merit any further consideration by the School.

However, Davies was concerned by the School's performance in student surveys assessing teaching quality. As reported in *The Beaver* three weeks ago, the International Student Barometer ranked the LSE 53rd out of 56 UK universities for "good teachers".

He claimed that "we're not happy about this at all", adding that a teaching taskforce has been set up to investigate why teaching at the School is not "exciting" enough and why quality varies so much from department to department.

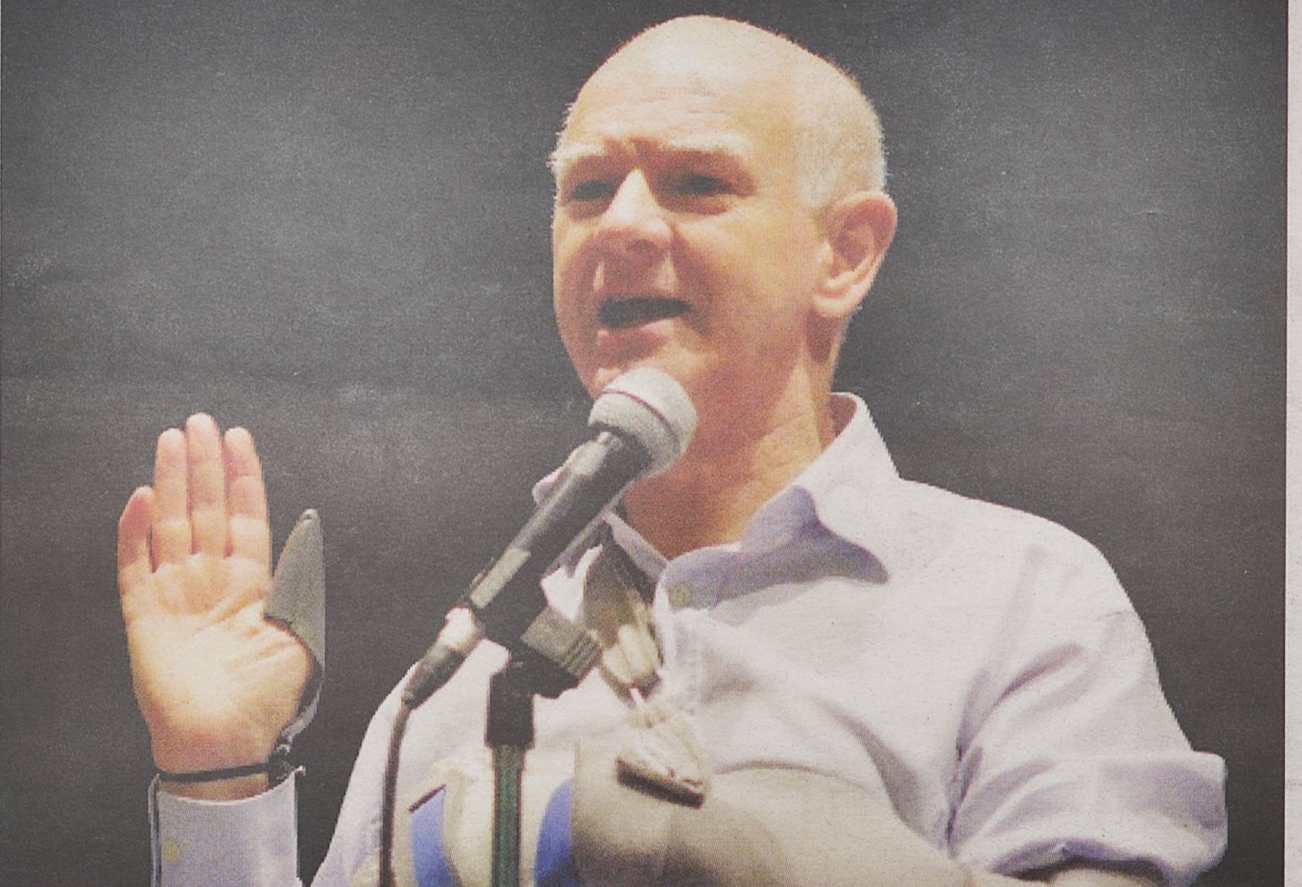
The director fielded a number of questions from concerned students regarding teaching quality. Many students were keen to know how long it would take to see a noticeable improvement in the standard of teaching.

Davies said, "Realistically it's going to be difficult to do anything that will have an effect in this academic year...I have asked the taskforce to produce recommendations during the course of this year."

Some of the recommendations the taskforce is likely to make, such as increasing the student to staff ratio by hiring more teachers, could be implemented quickly; others, such as changing promotion criteria to take greater account of teaching proficiency, are long term goals.

Tom Davey, an Economics undergraduate, raised the issue of class teachers' command of English, stating: "I have to

Photograph: Raidev Akoi



Wrist surgery delayed Davies' appearance by a fortnight

write in a very simple way, because if I write in a complex way I need to explain to my class teachers what it means. Do you think it would be a good idea to have advanced English tests for teachers at the LSE?"

Davies acknowledged students' concerns and claimed that an arrangement exists to "identify class teachers and lecturers who have a problem with being understood and understanding". Further

development of training programmes was promised.

Ruhana Ali, the LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Education and Welfare Officer, later informed the UGM that a students' Academic Affairs Taskforce had been created to consult with students on teaching reform. Students are invited to the first meeting of the taskforce on Wednesday 28 November at 10 am in D1.

Several students questioned whether the School was

offering real value for money at current fee levels. Overseas students and postgraduates were particularly vocal, with one student demanding an explanation for the LSE's fee demands in light of concerns over teaching quality and academic performance.

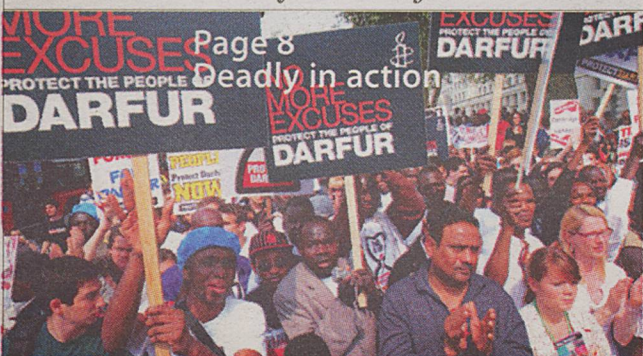
In response, Davies argued that recent THES and student survey results provide no evidence of "deterioration" in the School's performance. Fees, he claimed, were adjusted last

year: discounts were offered to continuing students and some fees were frozen.

The School's Academic Planning and Resources Committee (APRC) is charged with investigating fee levels and further updates can be expected later this year.

Regarding sports facilities the Athletics Committee will take the initiative on investigating improvements to facilities on and off campus. >>>

Comment & Analysis: *Darfur*



PartB: *Music*



PartB Page 8
Nine Black Alps

Features: *Review*



Fidel Castro
Page 16

In other news

HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS

THE NATIONAL STUDENT

Facebook homophobe suspended

A student from the University of Central Lancashire is under investigation for posting homophobic comments on Facebook. Fergus Bowman has been suspended from his university and Students' Union and was ejected from the Conservative Party, for which he had local responsibilities.

As well as listing *Mein Kampf* as one of his favourite books, he led a public group on Facebook called "Homos Burn In Hell". The group seems to have since been deleted from Facebook. Bowman argued that "the comments were made as a private joke amongst colleagues in a group", apologised for the offence caused and claimed that it was a free speech issue.

TCS

Public money for pushy parents

An organisation tutoring Oxbridge hopefuls has attracted funding from the Aimhigher government programme.

The programme encourages people from under-represented groups to apply to university. In a letter sent to state schools, the company said: "We are now looking to greatly expand the number of students who receive our services free at the point of delivery. We aim to do this by working with schools and LEAs to use Aimhigher funding to purchase our services."

The Oxbridge Admissions company generally caters for students from a wealthy background. It has been highly criticised by the NUS, students' unions and Oxbridge authorities.



UK children start reading too early

Children in the UK start learning to read too young. Dr Katz, from the University of Illinois, said that "there was a danger that the British model could put children off reading for life if pupils were forced to learn before they were ready".

She stressed the importance of learning vocabulary in context, arguing that the difficulty of the English language means that pupils should be introduced to it later rather than earlier. This comes after claims from the Professional Association of Teachers that the start age for schools should not be lowered.

Picture of the week



Photograph: Michael Deas

There was chaos outside the Library and Portugal Street last Friday afternoon. Students and staff were evacuated due to a fire alarm and fire security were called in. When later asked the cause of the alarm, LSE Security were unable to comment.

Please send your submissions for 'Picture of the Week' to photos@thebeaveronline.co.uk to be featured here



This week in 2003 LSE Marches Against Bush

Last Thursday, 20th November, LSE students joined thousands in a protest march against US President George W Bush as he stayed in London for part of his three-day state visit to Britain. The march caused major disruption as important roads were closed during rush hours to allow protestors to show their disapproval of Mr Bush's presidency. His policies on the environment, Guantanamo Bay and of course the war on Iraq attracted particular opposition. Estimates vary on the precise number taking part. Organisers claim that up to 20,000 people were there but Metropolitan Police said it was more like half that number.

IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS 1

- Davies accepts teaching failures
- Stop The War 'die in' for Iran
- Davies denies FA chairman speculation
- F&S under fire for unequal Societies budget
- More universities to sponsor academies
- Oxford Union hosts Holocaust deniers
- Resurgence of the Radical Left at the LSE
- Director meets students to discuss LSE position on Palestine
- Students' Union to cover Miss LSE reprinting costs
- Keeping autism sufferers out of work costs £27.5billion
- King's College expansion plans derailed
- RAG motion passed at UGM

FEATURES : COMMENT & ANALYSIS 7

- "May I speak?" asks Venezuelan Documentary
- Executive indecision
- Faux pas francais
- Deadly inaction
- Say it like you mean it
- Flip-flopping on Palestine
- Take a stand



PARTB B1

- Colin Murray keeps the faith
- Fauxnancial Times
- Nine Black Alps
- Rilo Kiley
- Campus cool
- Fancy a drink from the furry cup?
- Point of no return
- Graphic Literature
- Sexuality and the City
- Evolution: A beginners guide

SPORTS 21

- LSE sort out the GKT ladies
- Formula One keeps on drivin'
- Just say Dr No to Goldfinger
- Swimming in Sheffield
- All that glitters ain't gold
- Netball Firsts Crush Strand Poly
- LSEFC or Superstar
- Fifth Team Lions Leave
- Medics Mauled

LISTINGS 17

- Office Hours
- SHAG week
- The Beaver Party
- The Beaver Collective Meeting
- AIDS Awareness Week

NEWS IN BRIEF

RAG Pub Crawl raises £385 for charity

The former RAG Society - now to be known simply as RAG - raised £385 for various charities from their pub crawl last Friday.

130 LSE students were in attendance and had to perform various challenges such as consuming a different drink at every different venue.

The RAG Mega Raid will be held this Saturday in support of SHAG Week. Universities from around London will have to dress up in costumes and seek to raise money by getting donations.

LSE reports drug industry worth £8 billion annually

The illicit drugs trade in the UK results in £8 billion annual turnover, research by the LSE and Matrix Knowledge Group reported. "The Business of High Level Drug Dealing in the UK", led by Professor Dick Hobbs of the LSE, and Andy Richman of the Matrix, was based on prison interviews with 222 convicted drug dealers.

Key findings of the report estimates that there are 70,000 street dealers active in the British drug economy. According to the estimated annual turnover, the average street dealer does £100,000 worth of business each year.

Beaver Party this Friday

The Beaver will be hosting their regular party this Friday in the Underground Bar. Kevin Perry, Executive Editor said: "I want every LSE student to feel welcome to join us. It will be a great event with lots of free drinks."

The party starts at 7:30pm.

Jesus Awareness Week

Last week was Jesus Awareness Week (JAWeek) at the LSE, hosted by the LSESU Christian Union (LSESUCU). The Aim of the week was to "raise the awareness of Jesus" on campus. A number of events were held by the LSESUCU, including Luncheon talks in the Quad every day.

Helpers for the event included helpers from other churches and the talks were hosted by Charlie Skrine, the St Helen's Church student minister, who is also an Oxford University Alumni.

Joel Robinson from the LSESUCU said that "the week was a great success with many attending the events and many questions being answered. Lots of students came to hear the message of the Christian Union; that Jesus came to earth, died and rose again so that we may be able to have a relationship with God."

CORRECTION

Last week's front page article "Miss LSE causes controversy" erroneously asserted that the date of Miss LSE 2007 was Thursday 22 November. It is in fact Tuesday 27 November.

Davies denies FA chairman speculation

Vishal Banerjee

Howard Davies used the UGM to deny rumors that he is set to take over the Football Association (FA) as Chairman or write a novel based on the world of business.

The Daily Mail heclaimed that Howard Davies could be a candidate for the position of chairman of the FA last week.

The article, published on 17 November 2007, was written by *Daily Mail* columnist Charles Sale and states: "The latest name to emerge as a candidate for the independent FA chairman's position is Sir Howard Davies, director of the London School of Economics, and a former director-general of the CBI, as well as an exdeputy [sic] governor of the Bank of England and special adviser to the Chancellor. Davies, an accomplished speaker and experienced in media relations, ticks all the boxes in the job advert."

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Davies said, "The *Daily Mail* story was the first I have heard about it. No-one has been in touch with me at all, so there's not much to say. A bit of kite-flying by a newspaper. I've always wanted to be chairman of Manchester City, actually, but sadly Thaksin Shinawatra has a bit more money than me"

Davies has already held a number of high profile jobs within his career, but added: "After last [Wednesday] night, I'd rather be chairman of the Croatian FA".

Speculation over a link to the FA was followed by the claim that Davies is at work on a novel.

Writing in *The Times* last Thursday, Martin Waller claimed that the LSE director is penning "a Trollopian work set in the world of business...entitled *My Word is My Bonus*". In his speech at the Man Booker Prize presentation ceremony, Davies had noted that "the British novel is not much engaged with the business world".

At the UGM, Davies revealed that this claim led to his office being inundated by copies of such books, many of which were self-published and of indifferent quality.

One such novel was entitled *My Word Is My Bonus* and had previously been referred to by Davies. *The Beaver* understands that *The Times* misinterpreted Davies' comments as an expression of desire to write a novel with such a title.



Davies just didn't have a clue who should partner Gerrard in the centre of England's midfield

Stop The War 'die in' for Iran



LSE students join the national Stop the War protest against prospective action in Iran

Ruchika Tulshyan
News Editor

LSE's Stop The War Coalition organised a 'die in' last Thursday in protest against a possible war in Iran.

The 'die in' saw protestors lying down on Houghton Street with red paint symbolising the loss of life any war would cause.

Daria Rouholamin, a first year student said, "I thought it was really quite effective, we got lots of people's attention. They were walking by, picking

up flyers, I think it's a very good cause."

Aled Dilwyn Fisher, the LSE's Environment and Ethics Officer, was another participant in a day of "national action against the war". He said that the 'die in' was organised to "highlight the ongoing death and destruction of the occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan" as well as "to protest against the drum beating that Bush, Brown and others are doing to take us to war in Iran".

Last Thursday was a day of action for all secondary and tertiary students affiliated with

the Stop the War coalition. In Manchester, students marched through the city centre, holding banners and placards.

Events were also organised last Saturday. Activists in Hackney held a 'die in' similar to that organised at LSE and Portsmouth Stop the War group held a rally in the town centre.

The Stop the War Coalition believe that rather than the promised surgical strike on Iran's nuclear facilities, an attack on Iran would kill thousands of people and destabilise the country, creating a situation similar to that in Iraq.

Earlier this month, US

Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, branded Iran's Revolutionary Guards a "terrorist organisation" and imposed the strongest sanctions since the 1979 Iranian revolution, spurring rumours of a possible war in the near future.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps is an army of 125,000 and an indispensable part of the Iranian military.

The Stop the War Coalition will hold its World Against War Conference on Saturday 1 December in central London.

Director pledges new and improved sports facilities

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Davies added, "We're hoping to get some ideas from you, the students. If they're good ideas and they're practical, we're prepared to spend some money on it. I hope you will respond to that well."

He acknowledged that the scheduling of classes on Wednesday afternoons, particularly for postgraduate students, remained a major obstacle preventing wider participation in sport. Davies claimed that the problem stemmed mainly from inadequate teaching space, which resulted in scheduling problems. He pledged that the opening of the New Academic Building next year would lessen the problem by providing more space.

The loudest round of applause was reserved for an Athletics Union (AU) member who asked: "Does the LSE have any plans to improve support for students who do not wish to go into financial and legal services?" The student criticised the range of options provided by the Careers Service and claimed that most vocational services were tailored to suit prospective investment bankers and consultants.

Davies rejected the stu-

Davies on...

League Tables

"The rankings now systematically downgrade social science institutions...my feeling is that there's very little in this as far as we're concerned, no information to say that we should act on this."

Teaching Quality

"The one area where league tables of a different sort have concerned us is teaching quality...we were way down the league and we're not happy about this at all. Ruhana Ali has her own taskforce and I would encourage you to take part in that. We need people to respond to teaching questionnaires more thoroughly than they have done in the past."

Sports Facilities

"We have set up an initiative to look at what improvements we can make. The Athletics Committee is taking a lead on this and we're hoping to get some ideas from you. If they're good ideas and they're practical, we're prepared to spend some money on it."

24 Hour Library

"It did not look like the cost-benefit of that was at all attractive. I know that the Union has voted in favour of this and we will look at this again, perhaps if the Athletics Union can guarantee that all its members will be there at 3 o'clock in the morning."

Overcrowding

"The school is very full, more full than we had expected. At the undergraduate level, we are the most popular school in the country with fifteen applications per place. At the graduate level, people are making their minds up much later. It's becoming the lastminute.com approach to going to graduate school. We will be looking at our forecasting."

dent's assertions, noting that the Careers Service had diversified this year by boosting support for young entrepreneurs and hosting its first 'International Organisations Day'. Additional resources were recently given to the Careers Service to help it meet the needs of more LSE students.

Davies also dismissed a question on his controversial 'sabbatical' leave, which he is scheduled to take in the Summer Term of 2008. The director confirmed that he will be using the time to write a book "on the future of central banking".

Attendance at this week's UGM was the highest this term as students turned out to interrogate the director.

Although the director has no constitutional obligation to appear before the UGM, Davies answers students' questions at the forum once a term. Students keen to quiz Davies will have another opportunity during Lent Term in 2008.



Union Jack

Despite the advance warnings and false alarms, Jack still found himself caught with his pants down with an unexpected arrival at the Convention. Having become hopelessly enamoured by the gripping spectacle of high politics and desperate treachery through the past weeks, Jack was blind to the looming royalist menace that had been brewing behind his back. Fate was never kind to the incautious and Jack's negligence was an invitation for trouble. So it proved at the UGM. Jack's blood ran cold when the trumpets blared, announcing the entrance of his Majesty...his Highness...his Lordship...the venerable Howie XVI.

The Convention floor fell into ominous silence, unsure of their next move. Never before was the Union caught so utterly defenceless in the face of the very danger it had fought so hard to eradicate. Only last week the Convention had dismissed the Committee of Union Safety - foolhardy, albeit intellectually challenged zealots who would have otherwise stepped in to hinder the return of the King. Even the Union Commissar was nowhere to be found. Jack was convinced the royalist resurgence was the work of the shifty Tarzan, but there was no time to dwell on spilt milk. For the Union was living its gravest hour yet. Aux armes, citoyens! Howie XVI must not retake the throne.

But Jack's bloodlust was never going to be satiated by the meek resistance offered by Fuehrer Baker-Maker. Seeing that Howie was still sporting an arm sling - a chilling reminder of his violent deposal in the storming of the Bastille meeting two weeks ago - Baker-Maker's chivalric tendencies got the better of his political instincts. There was to be no duel with the injured Howie. A battle of wits shall supplant the duel of brawns - a gruelling shouting match in place of the customary sword-fight.

Sadly, it was a contest which the Convention was woefully ill-equipped for, having suffered the loss of its many vindictive and rancorous word-smiths to the guillotine. Howie XVI deflected blow after blow with consummate ease, as the linguistically inept pretenders that composed the survivors of last week's Thermidorian reaction simply had nothing in their verbal arsenal that could put a dent in the Monarch's suit of sardonic armour. The damage was done. With the Union putty in his hands, Howie strode off the stage with the pompous gait of a triumphant gladiator - the House of Davies shall live to see Lent Term.

Jack was gob smacked. The rest of the Convention was irrelevant. That Union proceedings actually went more smoothly than they did with Tarzan and the Committee of Union Safety running the show did not bother him. The Union needs a hero to destroy the royalist menace, and fast. Jack can picture him now...a short, slightly overweight, charismatic, tactically savvy, intelligent and cunning megalomaniac replete with a bottomless appetite for glory.

F&S under fire for unequal Societies budgets

Henry Lodge

The Finance and Services Committee (F&S) has come under criticism over this year's society budgets with many societies complaining about large budget cuts. F&S member and LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Societies Officer, Carys Morgan, said, "This year, Libby [Meyer, LSESU Treasurer] and the whole of the F&S committee were keen to provide consistency over the kind of activities that the Students' Union funded."

Controlling society budgets is one of the few measures the LSESU has to penalise societies engaging in unfair practices. However, Morgan was keen to emphasise that "this does not mean that those societies receiving much lower budgets than expected were necessarily being punished for unscrupulous behaviour".

In the past, there has been much controversy over F&S's handling of the society budget – around £33,000 pounds a year – and the close links between F&S and the Debate Society.

Budget claims for 177 societies totalled £66,000 this year, double the £33,000 earmarked for societies. Previous years saw this figure exceeded and this year the emphasis was put on remaining within the budgeted limits. Following meetings on Friday 23 November, it emerged that only £25,717 of the total had been allocated. Since then, a further £3,144 has been allocated following late applications and budget appeals, leaving £4,139 for

budget extensions later in the year.

Strict funding rules regarding poster & gift expenses, RAG initiatives, Global Week, joint events and sporting equipment allowed F&S to grant budget appeals without reducing other societies' budgets.

This year, the Debate Society has seen a drop in its budget, down from £2000 to £1200 based partly on a fall in membership, which they blame on poor placement during Freshers' Fair.

In a letter to F&S, Tom Davey, treasurer of the Debate Society, appealed for an increase of £400 on the £800 initially granted "in order to bring us more in line with the money per member that we received in the year 2005-2006". The appeal was successful, but members are still unhappy.

Peter Barton, vice president of the Debate Society told *The Beaver*, "Because of budget cuts, the debate society will not be able to pay the registration costs of teams representing the LSE at all debate competitions. It seems that in general this year, there has been a fall in the amounts granted to intellectually stimulating societies in the provisional budget."

Measured in pounds sterling per member, educational societies receive an average of £1.40 per member, behind that of national societies – £1.79 per member. The arts societies received an average of £2.33 per member. These figures do not take into account budget appeals, in which a number of educational societies, such as

Debate and UN, received extra money.

Meyer told *The Beaver*: "We did not intentionally fund one form of society over another. Each society's budget is assessed independently of its category. It is down to pure coincidence that some averages are higher than others."

The Colombian Society received £3 per member, well above the average for its classification, but president Alejandro Lloreda told *The Beaver*, "I'm still not happy – we have seen a drop of £250 in our budget this year." On the other hand Mexican Society president Manolo Reynaud, having received slightly under the average said, "I'm very happy, we got exactly what we asked for. Last year was a very successful year for us, perhaps that is why. That and we threw an amazing party."

The Societies' Budgets will be ratified at next Thursday's Union General Meeting (UGM).

**"I'm still not happy
- we have seen a
drop of £250 in our
budget this year."**

**-Alejandro Lloreda
President,
LSESU Colombian
Society**

Oxford Union hosts Holocaust deniers

Rajan Patel
News Editor

Historian David Irving and BNP leader Nick Griffin, both prominent Holocaust deniers, were scheduled to speak at the Oxford Union last night amidst allegations that the Union was "promoting anti-Semitism".

The event has been plagued by controversy, with the Oxford Union – the debating society of Oxford University – attracting sustained criticism for its decision to give the controversial pair a platform.

Irving was imprisoned for three years after pleading guilty to Holocaust denial in Austria, whilst Griffin was convicted in 1998 of incitement to racial hatred for material relating to Holocaust denial. The BNP has always insisted that it is not a racist organisation, but that it occupies a position on the extreme right of the British political spectrum.

Last Friday, members of the Oxford Union voted by a margin of two to one in favour of permitting Irving and Griffin to address students at a 'Free Speech Forum'. The president of the Oxford Union, Luke Tryl, claimed that the pair had been invited to discuss "the limits of free speech" and were not being

offered an open platform to extol their views.

Tryl said that "pushing the views of these people underground achieves nothing" and argued that denying Irving and Griffin the chance to speak would make them "free speech martyrs".

He added, "I think it's patronising to suggest that Oxford students aren't intelligent enough to debate with these people and I do have great faith in the ability of Oxford students to challenge them."

Peter Barton, vice president of the LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Debate Society, said, "To stop them speaking on the limits of freedom of speech ironically pre-empts the conclusion of debate."

A spokesperson for the LSESU Jewish Society commented, "It is disappointing to note that such a prestigious establishment has given a platform to falsifiers of history, bigots and those who represent the thick side of the wedge of racism in Britain. In placing itself outside of the NUS 'no platform to racists' policy, Oxford Union is bestowing credibility and respectability upon persons who deserve none."

However, the decision met with a wave of protest from prominent figures and Oxford students.

Jeremy Seeff, an Oxford law student and member of the Oxford Jewish Society, said: "Would you invite the paedophile to discuss the limits of the law on child abuse? Would you invite the man insulting your mother into your living room? Regardless of what happens in the chamber on the 26th, the world will see that the august Oxford Union has played host to these men and that will carry great weight with their neo-Nazi supporters."

Trevor Phillips, the head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, suggested that the Oxford Union was using freedom of speech "as a silly parlour game" and called on the Union to "think again".

He added, "If this goes ahead I hope the Oxford students will turn their backs on this shabby exhibition."

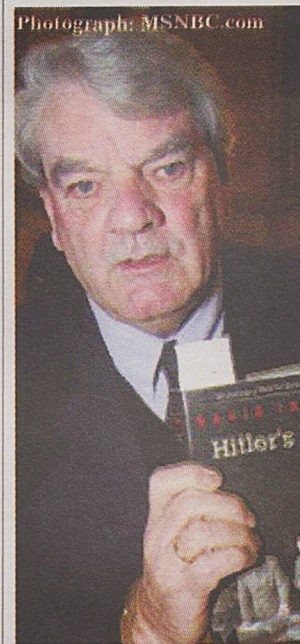
A Conservative MP resigned from the Oxford Union on Sunday in protest at its decision. In his resignation letter to the Union's committee, Julian Lewis, the shadow defence secretary, said: "Nothing which happens in Monday's debate can possibly offset the boost you are giving to a couple of scoundrels who can put up with anything except being ignored."

"They have been exposed and discredited time and again by people vastly more qualified than you in arenas hugely more suited to the task than an undergraduate talking-shop, however venerable."

Oxford students participated in a rally last Wednesday to demonstrate their opposition to the Union's decision and a large number have faced intimidation from far-right groups.

Duncan Money, a second-year undergraduate from Balliol College, told the Oxford student newspaper *Cherwell* that he had received "hundreds of threats from members of the BNP and far right groups" after criticising the extreme right on his blog.

The extreme right had called for a campaign to target students opposed to Griffin's appearance and the police expected a large extremist presence at the event.



Historian David Irving



BNP leader Nick Griffin

More universities to sponsor academies

But LSE "not in position" to follow suit

Simon Wang

University College London (UCL) recently became the fourteenth higher education institution to gain permission to sponsor an academy.

Camden Council gave UCL "indicative approval" to sponsor the academy, which will focus on teaching of mathematics, science and foreign languages. UCL staff, from professors to postdoctoral researchers, will assist teachers at the academy.

Academy schools originally established in 2000 by former prime minister Tony Blair, are state-maintained independent schools set up with the help of

outside sponsors. This was part of a move to replace failing schools in struggling education authorities. There are now 46 open academies and over 100 are scheduled to open by 2010. Sixteen of these are sponsored either completely or partly by universities or colleges.

UCL plans to raise money to set up a science discovery center and improve its support for science, mathematics and languages in the Camden area. However, UCL does not plan to have any direct influence in the running of the school. Professor Malcolm Grant, provost of UCL and chairman of the Russell Group of leading UK universities, stressed that "UCL's role lies in leadership and curriculum added value,

rather than in financial support".

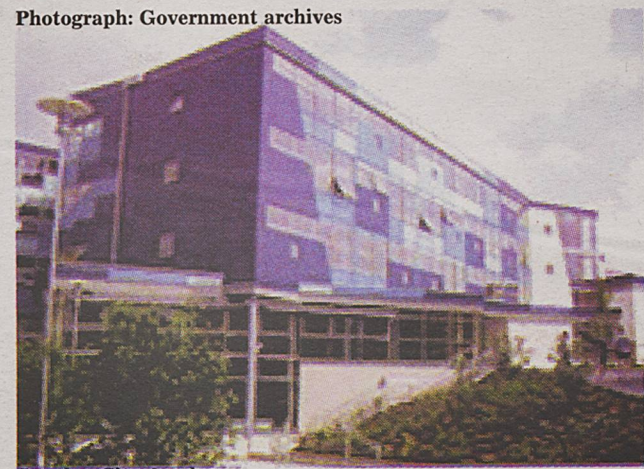
Under the original academy model, schools are required to raise £2 million from private benefactors or organisations to become an academy. However, universities were exempted from this requirement in July 2006, thus UCL will not have to provide the funding demanded of other academy sponsors.

UCL's work in Camden follows a general trend of university sponsorship of academies throughout the UK, although only two universities have opened academies thus far. In 2003, the University of the West of England, Bristol opened the City Academy in Bristol. Liverpool University followed suit, opening the North Liverpool Academy last year.

Simeon Underwood, academic registrar at the LSE, stated that although the School is paying close attention to academies sponsored by universities, the LSE is not in a position to develop a single school along UCL lines.

He added: "The snags include our size and subject range – in most cases the universities involved in developing schemes of this kind have large Schools of Education."

However, the registrar is looking at other options for LSE involvement in secondary education and a report will be made to the School Council early in the new year.



London City Academy

"The fight back" begins - resurgence of the radical left at the LSE

Patrick Cullen

The Media Workers Against the War held a half-day conference at the LSE entitled 'The First Casualty? War, Truth and the Media Today', last Saturday, with the express aim of identifying "...the main sources of pro-war bias as a first step to providing media workers with tools and resources for combatting it."

The conference was one of four such events taking place across London, with the others being held by the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), RESPECT and George Galloway's breakaway party RESPECT Renewal. The four conferences were an attempt to organise the left wing at the grassroots and "retake the reins of power", according to

Crosswalk News.

John McDonnell, a left-wing Labour MP and member of the LRC, told *Crosswalk*

"...it can only be a good thing if British political life gets away from the idea that disagreement is bad...consensus politics is a joke."

**-Third year
Government LSE
student**

News that "the fight back is beginning". Dr Cullen of Warwick University, a political historian, told *The Beaver* that "the Labour movement urgently needs to develop a viable alternative to the liberal market, and neo-imperialist policies that currently dominate all mainstream British politics. Hopefully for British democracy the LRC will be able to fill this ideological and political gap."

A third year Government student who wished to remain anonymous told *The Beaver* that "it can only be a good thing if British political life gets away from the idea that disagreement is bad ... 'consensus politics is a joke.'"

Director meets with students to discuss LSE position on Palestine

■ Meeting a result of students storming Council last month

■ Director Howard Davies refuses to issue pro-Palestine statement but pledges to improve bursaries for Palestinians

Michael Deas
News Editor

LSE Director Howard Davies refused to issue a statement supporting the Palestinian Right to Education during a meeting with students. Representatives of LSE students, members of academic staff, Davies and LSE Chairman Lord Grabiner met to discuss the Director's opposition to a Universities and College Union (UCU) motion calling for a debate on a potential boycott of Israeli academic institutions last Tuesday.

Over twenty students stormed a Council meeting to

demonstrate against Davies' opposition to such a debate last month, branding it "implicit support of the Israeli occupation". The students argued that in order to redress the balance, the LSE should issue a statement supporting Palestinian Right to Education and free debate amongst students and academics "without intimidation" on controversial subjects. They demanded a meeting with Davies to discuss their grievances.

The students claimed they were forced to storm the Council meeting because Davies had previously refused to meet with them on two separate occasions.

Photograph: Birzeit University website



LSE Director Howard Davies has agreed to revisit the possibility of LSE twinning with Birzeit University in the West Bank

During last week's meeting, Davies argued that a statement condemning the UCU motion released on the LSE website did not constitute opposition to debate.

Despite refusing to issue a statement supporting the Palestine Right to Education campaign, claiming he did not feel it was appropriate for LSE to take political stances, Davies did agree to help Palestinian educational institutions in other ways.

Davies pledged to secure donations for a scholarship for Palestinian students and to widen existing scholarships for students from the Middle East so that Palestinian students would be eligible to apply.

The Director also promised to enter into fresh dialogue with academics interested in establishing a formal link between the School and Birzeit University in the West Bank.

In addition, the School will "take all necessary measures" to protect those who are coming under pressure for their views.

An LSE academic said that these measures went beyond compulsion. "Although, given

the financial consequences, no university administration can today be expected to adopt policies critical of Israeli violations of the rights of Palestinians, the LSE administration went beyond that to condemn debate among their staff and students concerning appropriate individual moral and non-violent forms of solidarity. Where all Western governments back the oppressor, only individual moral action remains".

Despite the School's promises, Ziyaad Lunat, a spokesperson for the LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Palestine Society, said they had not gone far enough. "LSE continues to mislead its students, staff and alumni thereby protecting Israel and ignoring entirely the plight of Palestinians. Davies' and Grabiner's statements condemning debate and their unwillingness to rectify such bias is a disgrace to our School, undermining its international credibility for thousands of students and potential donors across the world."

In a press statement released after the meeting, the

students complained that Lord Grabiner "stifled debate over the crucial issue" of releasing a statement. Grabiner insisted on attending despite explicit requests from students that he should not do so. The LSE had previously told students they could invite whoever they wanted to the meeting.

Students also raised concerns during the meeting relating to Grabiner's remarks in a House of Lords debate on anti-Semitism where he described the UCU motion for debate as "poisonous". The group describe themselves as "infuriated" that the LSE Chairman is "abandoning the impartiality the Chair is expected to maintain...and undermining the LSE's commitment to free debate..."

LSE students who support the Palestinian Right to Education campaign also reject LSE's argument that as the School has never previously taken political stances it should not oppose Israel's violations of Palestinian academic freedom. The students cite the School's decisions to divest from companies in South Africa in opposition to

apartheid and to break academic links with Chinese institutions following the Tiananmen square massacre in 1989.

Douglas Oliver, Student Governor, told *The Beaver* that he believed members of the LSESU should campaign for more relevant causes.

"Students must rightly feel exasperated that many of its representatives to School governance, are pushing such ridiculous and counter-productive demands which offer nothing for the Palestinians - making the student body look so politically inept - whilst losing focus on issues like poor teaching standards and inadequate library service.

"Ironically, Israeli academics have been the most vociferous in demanding free movement for Palestinians. Meanwhile Netanyahu's Likud - which has no sympathy for the Palestinian cause - thrives on the false perception of a global conspiracy against the Israeli state, which the proposed boycott would surely feed," he added.

Photograph: Pooja Kesavan



Students stormed council last month to demand the meeting

Students' Union to cover Miss LSE reprinting costs

Estee Fresco

The LSESU Executive has voted to pay for reprinting of promotional material for Miss LSE 2007. This decision came after the LSESU's decision to disaffiliate from the event and demand that the event's organisers stop distributing any flyers and posters bearing the LSESU logo on Union premises.

LSESU Treasurer Libby Meyer gave 121 Entertainment, the organisers of the event, permission to print the union's logo on flyers for the event. However, subsequent to this decision, the LSESU's Executive Committee ruled that Miss LSE 2007 contravened section 8 of the Union's constitution stating that students should not be discriminated against on the basis of gender or physical appearance.

The Executive has decided to reimburse 121 Entertainment for the cost of reprinting publicity material for the event without the LSESU logo. However, the Committee has not discussed compensating the organisers for any other damages resulting from the decision to disaffiliate from the event.

In an e-mail written to LSE student James Ketteringham, a member of the LSESU staff



Photograph: Beaver archives

Beauty comes at a price

claimed that the Union is required to reimburse the organisers for the money of reprinting their flyers because the LSESU initially entered into a contract with 121 Entertainment.

According to LSESU Treasurer Libby Meyer, the Executive will ensure that they are giving 121 Entertainment the appropriate amount of funds. Before releasing funds, invoices documenting the original costs of printing promotional material as well as receipts documenting the new costs of printing material with-

out the LSESU logo on it need to be provided. Through this procedure the Union intends to ensure that a fair and accurate payment is made.

The money the Executive will give the organisers will come out of Union funds. The LSESU member of staff has stressed that, due to the strong legal case 121 Entertainment could mount against the LSESU for breach of contract, the Executive's decision to pay the organisers is the most prudent financial decision they could make.

Keeping autism sufferers out of work costs £27.5 billion

Henry Lodge

Supporting people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) costs the UK economy £27.5 billion annually, according to Martin Knapp, a Professor of Social Policy at the LSE.

The report states that "children and adolescents with autism often receive adequate support up until school leaving age but are then left stranded with little hope of a meaningful future because they are given little support to enter further education or employment."

As a result, a large proportion of the 433,000 adults living in the UK with autism are unemployed. The average annual costs for an adult with an ASD range from between £36,507 and £97,863. As Knapp puts it, "denying work to autistic people is expensive."

His report, entitled "The Economic Consequences of Autism in the UK" says that the cost is equivalent to just under one third of the UK's current account deficit.

The LSE's policy on supporting disabled students involves a tailored approach. The student takes medical documentation of their disability to the Disability Office, where

specialists will offer advice and support according to the condition. This is called an Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA).

While students with physical disabilities frequently benefit from ISSAs, it often fails to help those with disabilities such as autism. This is because many potential autistic students are put off by the academic environment as a whole and never get far enough in the application process to realise the support available.

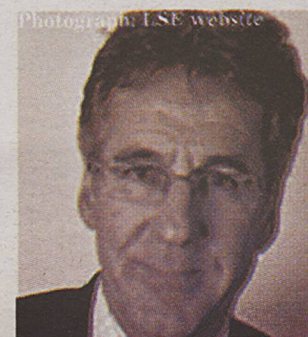
Lizzie Fison, the LSE Students' Union (SU) Students with Disabilities Officer told *The Beaver*, "In my experience, wide promotion to all prospective students of accessible arrangements at universities tends to be quite poor. At the LSE, we have a Disability & Wellbeing Office, one way of showing a more inclusive approach, which has a mental health & wellbeing advisor as a member of the team."

No complete statistics are available on the number of students studying at the LSE with disabilities; this is in part due to the fact that many do not inform the school of their disability.

For an autistic student, special arrangements can be

made. These include customised exam arrangements, specialist tuition support, trying to make timetables as accessible as possible and creating a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) with the Health & Safety advisor. However, Lizzie Fison stresses that "some areas may need more work, especially with regards to the differences between individual teaching staff - as with everything, some are brilliant, others could do with more training and awareness".

The report is available from www.lse.ac.uk/collections/pressAndInformationOffice/newsAndEvents/archives/2007/EconomicConsequencesAutism.htm



Martin Knapp, Professor of Social Policy at the LSE

King's College expansion plans derailed by rival bid

■ LSE anticipates that New Academic Building will reduce campus overcrowding

Chloe Pieters

King's College London is facing a battle over its efforts to expand its campus. A luxury hotel group has trumped the university's £40 million bid for the 'New Wing' of Somerset House, a 19th century building by Waterloo Bridge currently used by the Inland Revenue.

The decision of whom the building will be sold to rests with culture minister Margaret Hodge, and King's College London has launched a lobbying campaign, seeking not only local politicians but even the Prime Minister and the Queen.

King's College London has around 20,000 students and is 24th in the Times Higher Education Supplement global league table, but its law department buildings are dilapidated. Several years ago, the ceiling collapsed on the dean of the law school, Professor Robin Morse, who resigned in protest.

Adam Boulton, political editor of Sky News and a member of King's College's council, told the *Independent* newspaper: "[King's] doesn't have the geographical identity of, say, University College London...It's crucial for King's to get a decent shop window."

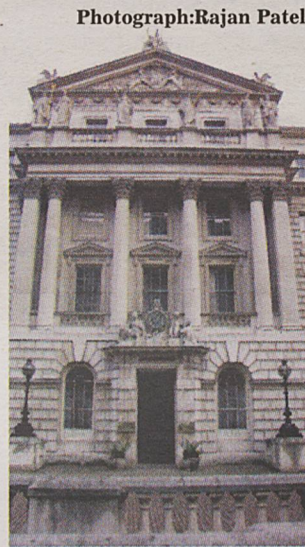
The university plans to use Somerset House to host its law school, part of the management school, and a new public policy centre as well as performance venues.

Meanwhile, at the LSE, students frequently complain about overcrowding, citing the



Students race to find a space in the Library after a fire alarm; and the 'New Wing' of Somerset House, above left. King's College was outbid for the 19th century New Wing by a hotel group.

Photograph: Michael Deas



Photograph: Rajan Patel

lack of study spaces and computers. When questioned about it at the UGM, Howard Davies

"The School is very full, much more full than we expected...we did underestimate the number of people who would make their offers"

Howard Davies

admitted, "The School is very full, more full than we had expected. At the undergraduate level, we are the most popular school in the country with fifteen applications per place. This year we did underestimate the number of people who would make their offers."

The completion of the New Academic Building (NAB) aims to ameliorate this while also providing some room to increase student numbers. According to an LSE spokesperson, the NAB will contain four new lecture theatres, including one that can seat 400, and dedicated quiet study areas. There will be two IT training and teaching rooms and 16 seminar rooms.

The NAB will "permit the

student body at the LSE to grow to about 9,000 full-time students, an increase approved by the LSE Council as one that is a substantial rise, but not too large as to radically alter the character of the School", according to a School spokesperson.

Beyond this, the LSE does not currently have plans to expand its campus further. However, the School is considering developing the current site. The ideas, formed in consultation with the LSE Students' Union, include a new SU building on the St. Philips site. Developing Clare Market, St Clement's Tower and the East Building have also been suggested.

RAG motion passed at UGM

Ruchika Tulshyan
News Editor

We're quite an informal organisation anyway so this new change should make things easier, not put up more obsta-

A motion to make the LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Raising and Giving (RAG) Society a separate constituent body of the LSESU was passed at the Union General Meeting (UGM) last Thursday, having been on the order paper for nearly a month. RAG will now be a separate arm of the LSESU, dedicated to raising money for charity.

This amendment to LSESU's Codes of Practice creates a more clearly defined position for RAG within the LSESU. RAG will no longer function as a Society. Charlie Samuda, co-founder of the new, year-long RAG, likened RAG's new position to the organisation of the Athletics Union (AU) and the Media Group within the LSESU.

RAG has raised in excess of £8000 since the start of this term. Last year, the LSESU amended their Codes of Practice to make RAG a year-long event rather than a week of fundraising. In many other universities, RAG has been an organisation of the Students' Union for years and is, as one third year LSE student remarked "an inherent part of university life, unlike at the LSE."

Samuda said, "The proposal to make RAG a constituent body of the LSESU came about due to logistical difficulties of not having a clearly defined structure within the Union. We were working in collaboration with many other Societies but realised that in terms of functionality, we would be best off being a separate organisation.

"This year so far has been such a huge success for RAG...I can only hope that RAG becomes an integral part of LSE student life"

Sherlyn Wong

Second year

International

History student

cles.

"Our goal is to ultimately raise as much money as possible by the end of the year," added Samuda.

Sherlyn Wong, a second year international history student and active member of RAG said, "This year so far has been such a huge success for RAG. Now that this motion has been passed I can only hope that RAG becomes an integral part of LSE student life."

Within the next two weeks, RAG will be holding elections for a variety of positions, such as president and treasurer.

Anyone interested in being a part of RAG should contact su.rag@lse.ac.uk.

PAGE 9

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Disability Awareness Week

Photograph: Rande Akoi



Students crowd Houghton Steet during LSESU Disabilities awareness week

Phil Pacanowski

The LSE Students' Union (LSESU) Disabilities Awareness Week took place last week with a variety of associated events. The week was in collaboration with the LSESU Debate Society and featured, among other events, a performance from a renowned stand-up comedian.

The week began with a performance by deaf comedian Steve Day in the Underground Bar. He has performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and is known for his routine "Deaf in the Afternoon." He gave a question and answer session after the show. A yoga instructor, Amrit Singh, visited the

LSE on Tuesday to provide a specialised yoga session for disabled students.

The largest number of events took place on Wednesday. The Disability Friendly Awards event took place that day. The purpose of the event was to recognise members of staff who had gone out of their way to help students with disabilities, despite it not being part of their brief. The Awards were followed by the Disability & Diversity Consultative Forum, which takes place once per term. The main event on Wednesday evening was a debate organised in partnership with the Debate Society, which discussed the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act.

The week was concluded with a series of one-off careers advice appointments, booked specifically for students with disabilities. The Battle of the Beavers, an entrepreneurial event wherein participants compete to create an 'enterprise' incorporating a fundamental awareness of disability, was closed due to lack of interest.

Lucie Goulet, a second year international relations and history student commented, "the Disability Awareness Week is a great way to raise awareness at the LSE about students with disabilities. However, I wish they had promoted their events more so that there could have been more people attending."

"May I Speak?" asks Venezuelan Documentary

Jia-Chuan Kwok

The crossroads at which Venezuela has found itself was shown in graphic detail by a screening of "¿Puedo Hablar? / May I Speak?" at the LSE last Tuesday. The screening featured an appearance by producer and co-director Christopher Moore, who spent two months in the country filming the documentary. He travelled around six regions of the country, speaking to both Venezuelan citizens and academics.

By following developments within the country as it moved towards presidential elections in December 2006, Moore

presented a snapshot of Venezuelan society divided over the incumbent president, Hugo Chavez, with some seeing him as a dictator and others as a saviour.

Moore also explored the question of Venezuelan identity, asking

Venezuelans what their country meant to them. When asked the same question by the audience, Moore said that the Chavez question was "emotionally charged".

Response to the film was largely positive. Peter Barton, president of the Grimshaw Club, said that the film "gave an insight of Venezuela generally not available in the mainstream media."

Valentina Issa, a Venezuelan postgraduate student, noted that "it was lacking a bit in the coverage of the middle class, but otherwise it represented a lot of Venezuelan society and did a good job".



Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez: "divisive"

Photograph: Fox News

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Executive indecision



Andre
Tartar

US Presidential Elections 2008: Does it matter?

Before anything else is said, let me lay my cards down on the table: come next November, I will be voting for the name on the Democratic ticket (provided it is Hillary Clinton). Just kidding. Naturally, as a politically-literate US citizen, I am interested in the absurd PR spectacle unfolding in Iowa and New Hampshire. But quite frankly, no one else should be.

Even though this election season is making headlines more than a year before the fact, only one thing is actually special about this presidential contest: image. This is the first election in American history where a woman is the front-runner, a black man is a viable candidate, and the Hispanic and Mormon candidates weren't automatically ignored. Clearly there has been a shift in the politics of image, but does this election represent anything more than that? Honestly, it seems to me that the only real change that we can expect is that a new face will be inhabiting the Oval Office come January 2009. Don't get me wrong: anyone who's last name doesn't begin with a 'B' and end in an 'H' is a

The American electorate seem to be split for choice in the coming Presidential elections, but such a view couldn't be any further from reality

quantum leap forward in my book.

First, let's consider the actual policy platforms on which the major Democratic candidates are running. You will quickly see that behind pretty thick veils of rhetoric – mostly centered around the word 'change' – this election represents little in the way of real change. The only candidates calling for immediate troop withdrawals from Iraq (which most Americans are in favour of) are a few of the fringe nobodies. Most of the heavyweights are just about as hawkish when it comes to a nuclear Iran or North Korea as Bush-Cheney, save perhaps Barack Obama who has famously agreed to talk to the likes of Ahmadinejad (that is, before blowing him up). The only really new idea circulating the debate circuit is that of universal healthcare.

Now some of you may be ready with "Hillarycare 2.0" at the tip of your acid tongues, but let's hold off on that for the moment. True, universal healthcare is a frighteningly big issue to tackle. The healthcare sector makes up 25% of the U.S. economy: that's a \$4 trillion industry. I know Hillary and Barack are tough, but this morsel may be too big

even for their seemingly insatiable political appetites. It should be noted that even their proposed universal healthcare schemes are not the advent of European-style socialist medicine but built on mechanisms not dissimilar to Bush's infamous "private accounts". So even the biggest Democratic issue is just ripped off from the Republicans.



The once-grand Republican machine is now little more than a rusting pile of junk, stripped of all its cogs and bolts

As for the Republican candidates, need I say anything? They are, plainly speaking, non-contenders offering up more of the same. Chew this one over: the only people that Americans hate more than the Republican Party right now is Congress and Dubya. And we

all know what a wonderful job the pork-heavy Congress and lame-duck White House are doing. The Republicans have honestly never been this fragmented, especially not so soon after their thumping victory in the last election. With seemingly more presidential candidates than most people have appendages to count with, the Republican field feels like a playground after a wave of the measles. The once-grand Republican machine is now little more than a rusting pile of junk, stripped of all its cogs and bolts.

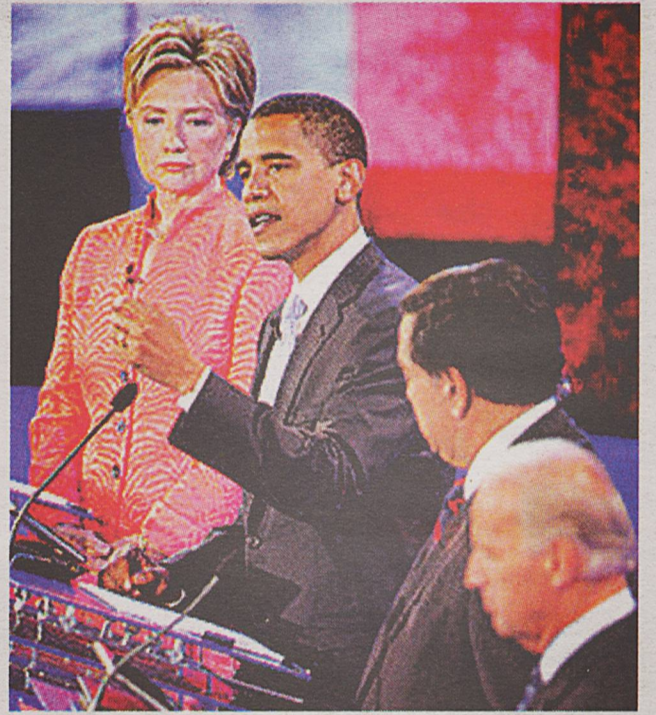
So if this election is truly such a peripheral event, how come people seem able to talk about little else? Two reasons. First, the American electorate is notoriously malleable, responsive to TV demagoguery and, sadly, because how presidential a candidate looks holds far more weight than how presidential a candidate actually is. As my high-school US History professor would chant, "H and H, it's all about hair and height". Hillary certainly has the hair but it seems like Obama wins on height. Makes you think.

The other reason that these endless debates, personality spats, campaign leaks, fundraising results, and pundit opinions have been flooding the media channels for the past several months is the very nature of the American media. It has a unique love-hate rela-

tionship with Washington, verging on the perverse. Without the vagaries and scandals that must characterise the most powerful city in the world, the newswires, papers, and TV stations would be forced to cover Arnold Schwarzenegger more than they already do.

So for some of you out there this election may be exciting, for others it may be nauseating (remember that this media circus kicked off a ludicrous two years before Election Day, a historic first). But for most of you, this election should be a nonentity. Maybe the next US President

will turn out to be more affable toward the European continent and less trigger-happy. Looking back at the last Democratic administration, Clinton I, these would not be unreasonable expectations. But it seems more likely that the reality will be less rosy. More than ever, the American electorate is clamoring for a leader that will be tough on terrorism and tough on the latest challengers to U.S. hegemony. Bottom line: Election 2008 will change very little except whether the next "leader of the free world" is to be addressed as Mr. or Madam President.



Faux pas français



Iris
Raynaud

It would certainly be too optimistic to respond positively to the poser 'Are Reforms possible in France?' after attending a

It is with great irony that a French politician should relegate foreigners to the sidelines in his call for the acceptance of globalisation

lecture by Éric Besson, Minister for Prospectives and Evaluation of Public Policies, at the LSE last Monday.

One could possibly see Besson's appearance in Britain as a reflection of the desire to draw inspiration from a political model which partly causes envy across Channel. He also indicated clearly that reform is necessary for France if she is to adapt to a globalised world. Yet one could also detect in his manner a certain instinctive conservatism. Is it possible only to reform France so as to make it more competitive, while its leaders unwittingly strengthen the ideal of "the French exception", which is so characteristic of acute conformism? This French peculiarity was well-illustrated throughout his lecture.

Besson, invited by

the LSE SU French Society to present his views on Sarkozy's reforms and how they may receive acceptance, aired his ideas in an acceptable English, free from embarrassing errors. Yet the audience did not have to wait long for the famous French *exception culturelle* to emerge. Indeed, wishing to answer questions in French rather than English in order to offer answers with greater depth, Besson asked for a simultaneous translation of the exchange of views (a translator was present on the panel).

However, having noted that only a minority of the audience was non-French speaking, he elegantly invited them to stand apart from the main audience alongside the translator; a great 'French improvisation' which finally permitted a Franco-French discussion! However, one should not forget that these now separated individuals comprised, ironically enough, precisely the indigenous

natives of the country in which Besson found himself that evening. In essence, his attitude was rather rude. Besson did not have the presence of mind to be aware that the debate would have been enriched by contributions from non-French participants. This illustrates the paradoxical French understanding of and desire for being 'open' to the world.

As such, questions were asked in French, and the answers, naturally, delivered in French. The language issue soon surfaced. "While speaking of structural reforms, wouldn't it be just as important for the French to begin speaking English?"

Not surprisingly, Besson's answer clearly summed up his overall attitude. "I am proud to be French...and to speak French...the defence of the French language is essential". Was Besson responding to the question? Or was he implying that learning English was incompatible with the protection of the French language and culture? The answer to both of these questions is an obvious and categorical "no". If "language is a tool" as

Besson wisely said, the fact that English actually represents an essential "tool" for "the necessary opening of France to the world" seemed to have eluded him.



How can one accept reforms or even understand the "necessary adaptation of France to a globalised world" when French political discourses are sustained by self-satisfaction and, perhaps arrogance?

In just an hour, Besson unwittingly summarised, through his actions and his remarks, the French mentality and the current situation in France. His optimism towards the coming success of reforms and the adaptation of France to a globalised world con-

cealed a more profound contradiction. That the belief in the French *exception culturelle* that is based on a "unique history" with its own language (two entities which appear, in his mode of presentation, to be exclusive to France!), thereby cultivating the mythical belief in a French uniqueness.

Hence the question remains: how can one accept reforms or even understand the "necessary adaptation of France to a globalised world" when French political discourses are sustained by self-satisfaction and, perhaps arrogance?

To be proud of being "francophone" was understood, even experienced, by all present at the lecture. May those non-French speakers who were present but left out of this debate excuse these bad manners, also known as 'the French touch'. One can only hope that foreigners (from the French point of view, of course) would nonetheless want to continue to participate in future meetings organised by the French Society.

On the back of this experience, one would have gone away with the understanding that the French way to "open" themselves is first of all to exclude all forms of otherness, that is, to exclude everything and everyone who is not French!

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

c&a@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Deadly inaction



Lior Miller

The swathe of humanitarian crises in Africa cannot be allowed to sink beneath the media radar, as the Rwandan tragedy demonstrated

We all know the adage 'If a tree falls down in a forest, and nobody is there to hear it, does it make a sound?' I think we can agree that civilians killed in crossfire between Ethiopian government soldiers, Ugandan African Union troops, and Islamic militants in Mogadishu cry out before dying, and that raped Congolese women struggle, loudly, against their aggressors, but do their protests reverberate in the international sphere? We need to challenge our media, and ourselves, on the (non-) coverage and lack of concern for the humanitarian disasters ravaging Somalia and North Kivu in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

In Somalia, a country bereft of a central government since 1991, there are an estimated one million internally-displaced persons, 200,000 of whom fled the escalating violence in Mogadishu in just the past two weeks. Even as the Somali interim parliament swore in its Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein last week, all is far from good in the Horn of Africa. Many are facing starvation in the wake of crop

failure, insufficient humanitarian aid, compounded by distribution difficulties owing to poor road networks and piracy off Somalia's coastline. The capital has been wracked by renewed violence since last December, when Ethiopian troops helped the transitional government topple the Union of Islamic Courts. Refugees fleeing the country have been denied asylum in neighbouring countries, including Kenya and Uganda.

In North Kivu, DRC, a conflict of complex dimensions and multiple players has been stewing, with renewed violence since August 2007 when the renegade General Laurent Nkunda began attacking government troops, accusing them of aiding Hutu extremists in targeting Tutsis. Other players in the conflict include the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), comprising Hutu militiamen; the Mai Mai, unpaid community militias; and the Congolese army. A year after its first ever democratic elections, the country is poised to descend once more into a civil war. Cholera outbreaks ravage refugee camps and rape has been on the rise; Human

Rights Watch and other NGOs claim that it is used as a method to punish supporters of rival groups and certain ethnic groups.



We all know what happened when the United Nations delayed to escalate the Rwandan crisis to what it truly was: a genocide

What makes it all the more distressing, although understandable in an awful, 'let's sweep this under the carpet way', is how South Africa and Angola, acting on behalf of the 53-member African Union, recently watered down a non-binding UN resolution that sought to denounce rape as a

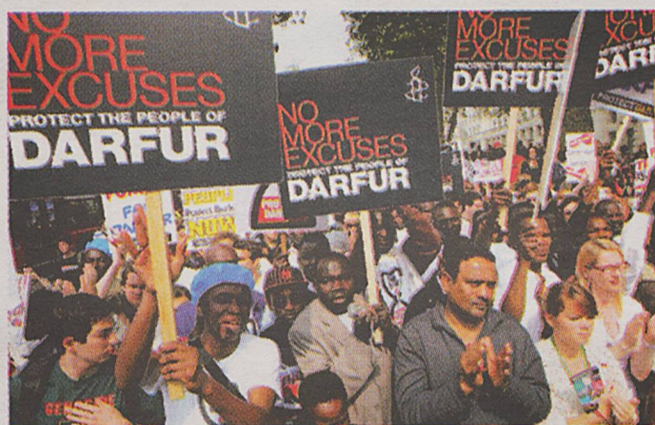
weapon of war by governments and armed groups to achieve political and military gains.

What are we to do with these horrible circumstances? After years of international inaction with regards to Darfur, the general public is at last cognisant of the crisis, no doubt due to a large amount of civic activism. There is some hope that with the deployment of a 26,000-strong UN peacekeeping mission, the disaster will abate (although MONUC, currently the largest UN peacekeeping mission, is currently in the DRC, and their effectiveness remains questionable). But UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opposes the prospect of a UN mission in Somalia, even though the Security Council is said to be considering sending in a peacekeeping mission. Meanwhile, only Uganda has so far contributed soldiers to the 8,000 total pledged by the AU mission, and experts agree that the violence and ensuing

suffering in both regions is likely to worsen, rather than subside in the near future. Indeed, there is significant worry that the violence in Somalia may take on a regional dimension, as long-held tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea could flare. Thousands of troops are already amassed on the border, and the fighting in Somalia itself is viewed as a proxy war between the two countries.

We all know what happened when the United Nations delayed to escalate the Rwandan crisis to what it truly was: a genocide. The result? Over 800,000 Rwandans lost their lives.

As an active and socially progressive student body, perhaps the least we can do is raise awareness, both on the LSE campus and amongst the general public about these issues. We need to break through the pervasive silence and complacency, and get noisy.



Say it like you mean it



Chloe Pieters

In an institution that prides itself on social justice and equality, it's perhaps worthwhile to pay closer attention to semantics and hidden prejudices

Last week, looking at a poster advertising the 'Miss LSE' beauty pageant, I casually referred to the event as "inherently sexist". As I argued to my incredulous companion, the very use of the title 'Miss' imbues the pageant with certain characteristics. The ideal female attending the LSE is a 'Miss': young, pretty, silly.

A little girl whose identity is, by definition, entangled in her relations to the men

around her. Think of the terms associated with 'Miss': little Miss, Miss Manners, Miss Priss. Inevitably a Miss can only become mature by adopting the title of 'Mrs', which will only be conferred to her by the more powerful men around her. 'Mr', in contrast, is a neutral term of respect used for men. An event called 'Mr LSE' not be an inherent validation of social prejudices which are trying to enforce the idea that a man's place is in the kitchen

or bedroom.

Several days later, walking down Houghton Street, I regarded an enormous banner reading: 'Homophobia is gay.' Later, over dinner, I insisted that the use of the word 'gay' to mean, effectively, 'lame' is in itself, a subtle homophobic act. The fact is the word 'gay' is used to refer to, and is often embraced by, the homosexual community. Ergo 'gay equals lame' is 'homosexuality equals lame'.

This is not just a spurious personal opinion: it is grounded solidly in linguistic theory. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis holds that there is a strong link between the words we use and our mental attitudes. Essentially, linguistic structures create mental structures and shape how we see the world. An Inuit who knows fifty words for 'snow' will physically experience snow in a different way than an English-speaker will. Our minds are, to a large extent, trapped by linguistic convention.

Referring to a female person as a 'chick' represents a different mental association than calling that same person a 'woman', 'lady', 'girl' or 'baby'. Three of these adjectives - I need hardly point out which - represent females as childish, even childlike, with the dependence and inadequacy of children. 'Lady' is a linguistically fraught term, implying as it does prostitution (think 'lady of the night') rather than nobility. Only 'woman', as the gendered counterpart to 'man', can be considered unobjectionable.

The oft-ridiculed prevalence of political correctness is not just a woolly way of obscuring hard facts. Political correctness is an attempt, however watered-down these days, to reshape our mental

attitudes. Political correctness is an attempt to restore parity in the relations between the powerful and historically powerless by reconstructing the way we think about marginalised groups.



Referring to a female as a 'chick' represents a different mental association than calling that same person a 'woman', 'lady', 'girl' or 'baby'

Hence it should be time for us to choose our words with more care. The LSE campus should be where we reconstruct how we view the world, not where we reinforce - however subtly - the world's view. Tired of being a 'little Miss', all primness and propriety and wide-eyed awe? Try a neutral 'Ms' instead. Bonus: You can continue using it should you choose to get married, something that can't be said for Miss.

Words don't just mean what they say they mean.



The Beaver

2nd Floor, East Building
LSE Students' Union
London WC2A 2AE
email: thebeaver@lse.ac.uk
Published since 1949.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Kevin Perry

MANAGING EDITOR
Aditi Nangia

SECRETARY
Lily Yang

NEWS EDITORS
Michael Deas;
Rajan Patel;
Ruchika Tulshyan

C&A EDITOR
Chun Han Wong

FEATURES EDITORS
Joseph Cotterill
Al Mansour

PART B EDITOR
Daniel B. Yates

SPORTS EDITORS
Matthew Partridge
Josh Tendeter

PHOTOGRAPHY SUB-EDITOR
Anna Mikeda

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Chloe Pieters

THE COLLECTIVE:

Chair: Lucie Marie Goulet
collectivechair@thebeaveronline.co.uk
Fadhil Bakeer-Markar; Will Barber; Peter Barton; Ramsey Ben-Achour; Clem Broumley-Young; James Bull; Rochelle Burgess; Sam Burke; Jess Cartwright; Victor Figueroa-Clark; Owen Coughlan; Patrick Cullen; Peter Currie; Hollie Eastman; Aled Dilwyn Fisher; Estee Fresco; Erica Gornall; Andrew Hallett; Shanela Haque; Aula Hariri; Josh Heller; Kevin Heutschi; Tahiya Islam; Felipe Jacome; Lois Jeary; William Joco; Pooja Kesavan; James Ketteringham; Sadia Kidwai; Arthur Krebbers; Laura Kyrke-Smith; Ben Lamy; Henry Lodge; Bea Long; Ziyad Lunat; Kim Mandeng; Jamie Mason; Nitya Menon; Irfan Merali; Libby Meyer; Daisy Mitchell-Forster; All Moussavi; Rachael O'Rourke; David Osborn; Aba Osunsade; Douglas Oliver; Erin Orozco; Laura Parfitt; Anup Patel; Will Perry; Danielle Priestley; Joe Quaye; Dominic Rampat; Gareth Rees; Ricky Ren; Sacha Robehmed; Louise Robinson; Charlie Samuda; Thienthai Sangkhaphanhanon; Saurabh Sharma; Daniel Sheldon; Rebecca Stephenson; Alex Teytelboym; Kerry Thompson; Angus Tse; Molly Tucker; Vladimir Unkovski-Korica; Subash Viroomal; Simon Wang; Greg White; Christine Whyte; Chris Wilkins; Amy Williams; David Woodbridge

PRINTED BY HARMSWORTH
PRINTING LTD

If you have written three or more articles for The Beaver and your name does not appear in the Collective, please email: thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk and you will be added to the list in next week's paper.

The Beaver is available in alternative formats.

The views and opinions expressed in The Beaver are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors or the LSE Students' Union.

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

c&a@thebeaveronline.co.uk

The Beaver

Established 1949 - Issue 673

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.

Free speech is sacrosanct...

...but do we legitimise what we seek to question?

Should David Irving and Nick Griffin be allowed to speak at Oxford Union? Well, it is simply a question of free speech, surely? We all know that academic institutions flourish in conditions of free thought and expression, so this debate is a foregone conclusion. It is de rigueur at this point to quote Voltaire, even if it is unlikely that he ever actually used the phrase: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it". A paraphrasing of his original work, perhaps, but the sentiment rings true. Indeed, we can even quote the right to freedom of expression from article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

However, a closer examination reveals that the real question is not about whether Irving and Griffin should be allowed to hold racist views, it is about whether by associating with them we legitimise their extremist views. Some half a century ago an identical debate was happening here at the LSE, when it was proposed by the SU to extend an invitation to speak to Oswald Mosley, the founder of the British Union of Fascists. However, the invitation remained unresent as the Union voted against it on the grounds that while it may be acceptable for individuals to hold abhorrent, racist views, and even to espouse them in their own ways, by inviting these individuals to speak at an academic institution one is legitimising their views as well as tarnishing the reputation of the university.

Does this argument hold? Well, one obvious question would be whether views which remain undebated are driven underground. By creating a taboo around their opinions, we turn these men into martyrs, rather than exposing their views to the rigours of academic examination.

So where does that leave us? David Irving and Nick Griffin should be allowed to speak, but people should also be free to protest vociferously against them wherever they go. It is important to remember that this is not a purely abstract argument. The BNP will be active at local elections across the country in the coming year - including in many London boroughs. If we allow the BNP to define themselves in their own terms it can only strengthen them. By holding their views up to the light of debate we can show more clearly how ridiculous they are.

Raising and Giving...

...independent, autonomous and eleemosynary

The Union finally passed a motion at the UGM this week - but at least the motion which broke almost a month's wait was worthwhile. RAG has gained autonomy, which should increase still further its ability to raise money for good causes. Having already enjoyed a truly remarkable start to life as a year long endeavour, with over £8,000 raised since the beginning of term, well on their way to topping the £28,000 raised last year.

Hopefully, one of the most significant changes that this amendment will bring about will be a psychological one. RAG is no longer just another society among others - it is becoming a fully-fledged and integral part of life at this university, as it has been on campuses across the country for years.

With bigger and bolder plans lined up for the year, the only thing RAG needs to achieve its potential is your support.

"pot calling"

Dear Sir,

Last week, Adrian Hall accused this newspaper of purposely ignoring "factual" information regarding Howard Davies' sabbatical. Even if this were true, this would be a clear case of the pot calling the kettle black.

Firstly, the 1000-plus students who voted in the referendum, the Students' Union Executive Committee, academics and many lay governors were not aware that any reappointment would be on the proviso of a three month sabbatical on full salary (circa £225k) for no academic reason. Therefore the entire basis of any "support" for Davies' reappointment, as recorded in the Council minutes of 6th March 2007, numbers 157 a. (i), (ii) and (iii), is bogus.

Secondly, Hall states that "Student members were present at the Council and raised no objection". Given that even the School's minutes (ibid. 159 (a)) records that 2 members of Council voted against Davies' reappointment, one of whom was a student Council member, this is entirely false.

Thirdly, there was no express vote held on the sabbatical, nor, I understand was there even any substantive discussion on this issue. As such none is documented in any of Minutes 156-159 inclusive, which record Council's entire discussion of Davies' reappointment.

As Mr Hall would surely not ignore factual information for political ends, one can only infer that, oddly for a university bureaucrat, he does not acknowledge the views of students as important.

James Caspell
Honorary Student
Former Student Governor and
elected member of LSE
Council

"have sat"

Dear Sir,

I want to write to congratulate Chun Han Wong, your letter writer of November 20, on his ability to quote Wilfred Owen. Unfortunately it does not seem Wong's literary prowess extends far beyond using the words of others to pithily, and smugly make unsupported points. After misreading the arguments made in my letter of November 13, he proceeds to demolish several straw men and end his tirade in an arrogantly patronizing platitude. Well done sir!

Before mistakenly claiming that I said the Allies fought the Second World War to end the Holocaust (they didn't, its end was a happy by-product of Hitler being defeated militarily; yet another example of the use of force bringing about just, if unintended, outcomes), Wong challenges me to cite "a

single example of an equitable end to a conflict," with the caveat that it must be "free from a whole host of unwanted and bloody repercussions." Ah, there's the rub Wong, since no conflict in our imperfect world has ended without "a whole host of unwanted and bloody repercussions." To claim otherwise would be naive and intellectually bankrupt. I can, however, list several wars that brought about an end to some injustice that would not have been possible otherwise (regardless of the motivations for said conflicts).

The American Civil War brought an end to slavery in that country, arguably generations before such an end would have occurred without war. The first Iraq war (regardless of motives) freed the Kuwaitis from the looting, rape and murder visited on them by Saddam's forces. Was that not an "equitable" end worth fighting for, regardless of the "unwanted and bloody repercussions?" Should the West have sat back and watched as it did in Rwanda, Tibet, and now Darfur? Is Wong so naive as to think there is any viable option, save the deployment of overwhelming force, to halt those who commit genocide and engage in expansionary warfare?

As to Wong's assertion (again quoting a much more articulate, if fictional, spokesman) that I "pick up a weapon and stand a post" if I support the military defence of justice, I would rebut that though I'm sure Wong supports less crime and bringing criminals to justice, I do not observe him amongst the ranks of baton-wielding bobbies upholding the laws of his country. Why is that? Is it perhaps possible to support the actions of someone without joining them in the execution of said actions? A novel suggestion, but one which I submit for his consideration nonetheless.

J.P. Medved

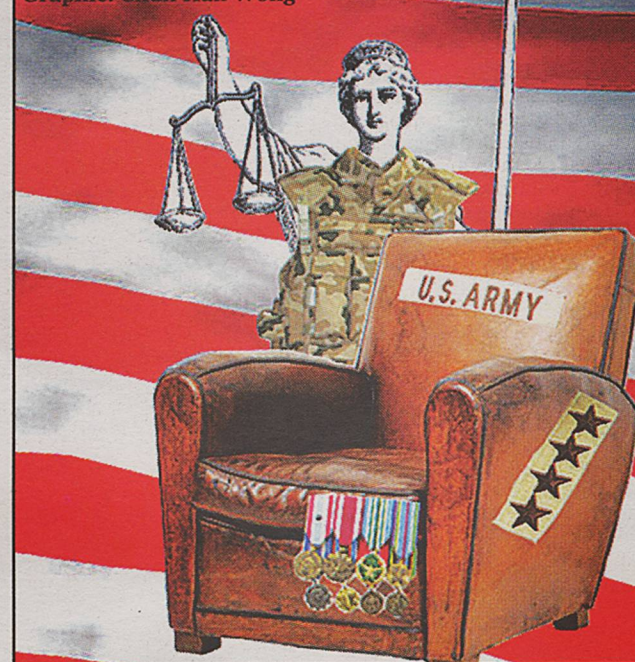
"hold them"

Dear Sir,

In response to Adrian Hall's personal attack on myself in a letter published on November 20, I write to ask: what exactly is it that he is disputing about my coverage of the Director's sabbatical? It is most certainly the case that "students did complain that the sabbatical was 'not fully and adequately discussed by LSE Council'", which is all my article stated.

Mr Hall will himself know that all decisions made in Council are not voted upon democratically but approved 'by acclamation'. As he will also know, LSE Chairman Lord Grabiner agreed to grant Sir Howard Davies his Sabbatical "on express agreement from me [Grabiner] on

Graphic: Chun Han Wong



behalf of the LSE" during contract their negotiation over the Director's reappointment.

Therefore, does Mr Hall not feel that fee-paying students have the right to ask: was the sabbatical, the first to be granted to a non-academic by the LSE, discussed fully as part of Council's discussions about the reappointment or was it pushed through Council 'by acclamation' after the decision was made to reappoint Davies?

Given that no member of the School's administration has ever claimed that the issue of the sabbatical was mentioned, let alone debated, prior to the decision to re-appoint Davies, is Mr Hall willing to show *The Beaver* minutes of Council meetings that show the sabbatical was fully discussed?

Mr Hall's feeble attempt to ridicule me and discredit this newspaper, and the disgracefully abusive way in which Chairman Lord Grabiner conducted himself during correspondence with myself at the time of the Director's reappointment, only serve to show that the administration of the LSE finds it totally acceptable to bully those who attempt to hold them to account and protect the interests of students and academia.

The interests of students and academia, in case Mr Hall and Lord Grabiner have forgotten, are what a university should exist to serve.

Michael Deas
News Editor

"offensive series"

Dear Sir,

I am writing with regard to the recent PartB centrespread outlining details of a future LSE building project. I do not feel the need to write this because I am against the idea of satire, and humour that

involves making fun of LSE and all of its many quirks and foibles. I am not writing this because I believe anyone on *The Beaver* staff genuinely believes that the School will construct a building in which gimp-related sexual activities will occur, or that it will be crowned with a giant Council-Chairman-and-or-sexy-bits themed statue.

I am writing this because it's getting boring. 'It' being an extremely tiresome 'f**k you' attitude, a pointless need to be obnoxious and as offensive as possible; not for any useful purpose or even to be constructively critical, but just for giggles. Specifically, the giggles of a couple of people. Because to be honest, before it caused all the trouble it did, the joke of that centrespread wasn't even that great. It was a prolonged, offensive series of aspersions cast on every aspect of an institution full of people who work really hard, every day. The Nazi symbol implying that the LSE are fascists? It isn't just the Jewish employees and students who would find that comparison horribly inappropriate. The blatant insult to the New Academic Building, which has been in the planning for years and will be a huge asset to the School and future generations of students.

The person who made those 'jokes' probably doesn't get why I or anyone else didn't find them funny, and I don't suppose they ever will. All I can really hope for is that maybe, next time, they'll try to understand that a joke doesn't have to be offensive to be good. Get it?

Kimberley McAddams

The Beaver recognises that the content on the PartB centrespread of issue 671 was offensive, and took steps to remove it from circulation. *The Beaver* apologises for any offence caused.

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

c&a@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Flip-flopping on Palestine



Emiliano Huet-Vaughn

Right now, in one of the many injustices that mark the Israeli military occupation of Palestine, some 600 Palestinian students with invitations to study at international universities – including the LSE Students' Union's honorary Vice-President – are denied the right to leave their homes and pursue an education.

But what does LSE director Howard Davies care?

Apparently, he doesn't care enough to issue an innocuously-worded statement on the LSE website that would say the following: "students everywhere have the right to pursue their education, and [LSE] recognises that where this right is systematically violated, as in Palestine, students and staff at LSE are free to undertake solidarity actions."

I was a member of a delegation of eleven students and faculty members who met with Davies and members of the LSE Council, the School's governing body, to ask them to endorse this statement. The meeting itself, as readers of *The Beaver* will recollect, was denied on two previous occasions, despite written requests from over 100 students, academics, heads of student groups, and Students' Union officers. Only when an intru-

The self-contradictory positions taken up by the School with regards to the Palestinian right to education needs revision - in favour of justice

sion was made by insistent students into a Council meeting did Davies grant the students' requests to meet with him. Such resistance to even discussing the topic of Palestinians' right to education was a sign of things to come at Tuesday's meeting.

Davies and company refused in no uncertain terms to endorse the above statement, which does nothing more than express support for both a universal right to education and the right of LSE students to freely organise on behalf of those who wish only to do the very thing we take for granted every day: study.

Why would they take this position and put the School in the odd place of being an institution of higher education that refuses to recognise the right of all students to pursue an education?

Because, said Tony Grabiner, the Chair of the LSE Council present at the meeting, the School does not take political positions. It has consistently refrained from doing so, he said, referencing LSE's neutrality even in the case of South Africa under Apartheid, and it will continue to do so in the Palestinian case, both Grabiner and Davies maintained.

What's wrong with this

rationale? Well, beside the fact that Grabiner rests his position on its accordance with a policy that refused to condemn one of the longest lasting forms of legal racism (count me in the camp willing to promote views that openly condemn such things), it is also factually incorrect. According to the LSE SU's position paper on socially responsible investment, written last year by two former members of the LSE Council, the School actually did take the very political decision in the 1980s of divesting LSE funds from companies which were investing heavily in South Africa. This was in response to a worldwide campaign encouraging a boycott of South African institutions and divestment from companies that did business there, similar to the one mobilising now around Israel. In this context, the School's decision to divest was most certainly a political position. The far more modest request currently placed before the Director, that of publishing the above statement on the School website, can hardly be considered more political than this historical example.

And yet there was the appeal to historical consistency made at the meeting. But what if we don't hold Davies,

Grabiner, et al. to their own argument and instead accept the view that they cannot be expected to maintain consistency with past incarnations of the LSE Council but only with the actions undertaken during their tenure?



The School did actually take the very political decision in the 1980s of divesting LSE funds from companies which were investing heavily in South Africa

Well, this too would not pass the smell test, as, just in this last year, the School has taken a very public and political position related to the issue of Palestine.

At the end of the last academic year, the University and College Union, the nationwide union of teachers in higher education, passed a resolution condemning the way in which the Israeli occupation harms

Palestinian right to education and other fundamental rights. The resolution also encouraged a debate among UCU members about a possible boycott of Israeli academic institutions – a tactic requested by Palestinian civil society and inspired by the South African experience.

Immediately following this resolution, Howard Davies issued a statement in his official LSE capacity that, in any casual reading, would be seen as a forceful condemnation of the UCU resolution and the open debate about a possible Israeli academic boycott it called for. This puts the School in yet another awkward position of seeming to discourage debate amongst faculty whilst professing to be an institution that holds open debate as sacrosanct.

Though Davies quibbled with us about the exact meaning of the statement and whether it implied condemnation of the UCU resolution itself, and thus open debate about an academic boycott, or only of any actual boycott that might result from the resolution, its meaning was clear enough for LSE Council Chair

Lord Grabiner to say before the House of Lords, "the director of the LSE, Sir Howard Davies, promptly rejected the UCU resolution [note that he stated the resolution itself], and that appears clearly and firmly on the front of the [LSE] website."

Of course, Davies defended his statement, despite its apparent breach of the political neutrality norm. Why? Because in this case, he said the implications of a boycott might affect the "basic governance" of the school, i.e. who it hired. He was subsequently assured by faculty privy to the UCU debate that the academic boycott as envisioned would not discourage hiring of individual Israeli academics. But in so far as the Israeli occupation strongly deters the ability of aspiring Palestinian students to attend LSE and thus affects who LSE incorporates in its basic composition, it seems that the restrictions on Palestinians' right to education affect the school's basic governance in the same way.

Thus, unless Davies et al. choose to deny the reality of the rights violations caused by Israel's occupation – going against the preponderance of world opinion and fact – they should at a minimum declare LSE support for a universal right to education that encompasses Palestinians harmed by Israeli occupation.



Take a stand



Joseph Brown

Normally I would consider it rather cool that my surname was being banded around as if I were the Prime Minister. Likewise, being compared to a leader of the world's most powerful nation in the same article can't be a wholly bad thing, even if it is Bush. However, seeing that every other conclusion Douglas Oliver drew in his op-ed of November 13 was mistaken, un-academic or just plain naïve, perhaps I shouldn't have been so flattered.

Doug kindly informed me that I had a "polarising agenda." This is a charge I wholly deny – if only because, should I had taken this route, there would be precious little for me to do. As in every debate, there are four poles: those for, those against, those who want to compromise and those who simply don't care. The difficulty with the Israel-Palestine debate is that those who don't care or seek to compromise are actually sustaining the status-quo of violence and terror just as much as those who are for the occupation. This may sound like a radical, untenable Bush-ism to some, but allow

In the face of overwhelming injustice, taking the 'middle' ground could result in the de facto condoning of unjust acts. Progress requires action.

me to explain.

Firstly, on the twinning of the LSE SU to An-Najah University in support of the universal right to education



The motion was not about reinforcing the universal right to education just anywhere. It is concerned with a place where that right is systematically denied

campaign, which both Doug and I agree is "unquestionably a worthy cause". However, he goes on to suggest that the motion was "self-contradictory" in as much as that it made "exceptions" to the universal right to education because the

motion did not seek links to Israeli institutions. He then made the unfathomable leap to imply that the motion suggested Israelis were non-human. Cutting his flight of fancy short, I would remind him that the motion was not about reinforcing the universal right to education just anywhere. It is concerned with a place where that right is systematically denied; in the case of Palestine, by a brutal military occupation and colonisation programme.

Furthermore, while Doug might seem to be fighting the corner of balance and reconciliation, I wonder which beacon of educational freedom in Israel he would seek links with. Perhaps Ariel University, established in the illegal settlement of the same name, which only accepts Jewish international students. What about Bar Ilan University? Also built against international law; all students there must complete some form of Jewish studies. Maybe Haifa? Here disciplinary charges were brought against Arab students for their protest against a racist lecture entitled 'The

Demographic Problem' ('problem' referring to the growing number of Arabs living within Israel). What about Hebrew University, who require a "certificate of integrity" for Arab visitors to the campus? Or Tel-Aviv, who are looking to confiscate even more of the once-Arab town Sheik Muwannis, somewhat ironically in order to build an archaeology department? The list goes on and on, and hence to seek links with Israeli universities would not only undermine the Palestinian cause in principle, but would most probably contribute to their ongoing subordination.

Secondly, Doug brushed off the infamous 'letter' sent to freshers as it was allegedly one-sided and opposed to the idea of peace through "discussion and mutual understanding". The letter was as one-sided as the current situation dictates. It highlighted the actuality on the ground. To run away from this fact, and others conveyed by the letter is not to represent a productive moral high ground as he claims, but to hide from the very understanding of Palestinian grievances, serving simply to sustain them and allow the conflict's continuation. Only once we can stomach the nature of the occupation can we discuss it in a constructive manner.

Perhaps even more mind-blowing than his reading of the Twinning Motion and 'the letter' is the way in which he seemed totally uninformed regarding the demonstrations

at the School Council on October 30. He called it "irresponsible", "reactionary" and "politically unsophisticated". I would be inclined to agree had it all happened in a political vacuum. However, the Palestine Society had previously sent two correspondences to the Director formally requesting a meeting to discuss his statements regarding the UCU motion to debate an academic boycott of Israeli institutions. Both letters were signed by over one hundred students and academics. Both letters were politely brushed aside. Taking our lead from decades of righteous activism we looked to the next prudent step – direct action – and it worked. Moreover, our letters (to Howard Davies – not including 'the letter'), protests and subsequent meeting did not call for the School to support the boycott as Doug suggests. Rather, we were looking for recognition of Palestinian right to education in order to balance his defence of Israeli universities.

More concerning than Doug's clear misunderstanding of current student politics is the fact that political issues more generally seem to have passed him by. He seems to be under the impression that there is a great mass of fair pro-Palestinian academics in

Israel who would be inadvertently silenced by an academic boycott, or indeed turned against the Palestinian plight. Unfortunately, this is not the case. One only need look at Ilan Pappé, who was effectively exiled from Israeli academia for his strong views to see that freedom of expression is not high on the agenda in such institutions. Likewise, the case of Teddy Katz who had his MA in History (originally awarded at 97%) retracted by Haifa University because of its description of attacks carried out by Jewish forces in the 1948-9 war against Arab civilians. As a true supporter of reconciliation between Israel and its neighbours, I would be the first to highlight the vibrant and critical debate within wider Israeli society regarding its treatment of Arab citizens within its borders and under its occupation. However, it is a tragedy that the debate is prevented from taking place within the foremost arenas we expect.

It is important for people to understand that taking a side is not always pigheaded or immature and, likewise, trying to stand on the middle ground is sometimes the same as being part of a movement that sustains or even advances injustice, whether we want to or not.

Features: The Long War?

Red isn't Dead

Splits don't give the Left enough Respect

Vladimir Unkovski-Korica



Splits on the left tend to take on an apparently disproportionate vehemence and importance in comparison with the tasks at hand. Some may therefore question my decision to discuss one such split on the comparatively small radical left in England and Wales - when there is mass resistance to neo-liberal counter-reform in France, a new UN report out highlighting the magnitude of the threat of global climate change, and threats of further imperialist adventures in the Middle East.

But the issue of the split in Respect - the first parliamentary bloc left of Labour since 1945 - between rival groups led by the Socialist Workers Party and George Galloway respectively is totally out of step with the successes of such broad extra-parliamentary movements as the Stop the War Coalition in recent years. They do, however, come fresh in the wake of the failure of the left within Labour to challenge Gordon Brown - first for the leadership and then against his turning the party conference from a decision-making body into a political rally.

This mirrors recent developments in the European left. In Italy, the leadership of Rifondazione Comunista has trampled on the party's legacy of involvement in the anti-G8 protests in Genoa and the massive anti-war movement, by entering Prodi's neo-liberal government and voting to keep Italian troops in Afghanistan.

None of these problems can be explained away as simply the betrayal of sell-out leaders. Real problems faced the new coalition forces of the radical left when they started filling the gap created by the slow rightward shift of social democracy towards neo-liberalism. The Rifondazione Comunista is a good example: it was faced by the serious dilemma of literally being the difference between a Berlusconi and a Prodi government. Solving this dilemma was conditioned by the party's confused heritage: it is led by reformists, contains revolutionary socialists, and dons the costume of a cuddly grass-roots organisation that largely uses uncritically the language of some of its key semi-anarchist activists - autonomism. Autonomism is an anti-capitalist ideology claiming that capitalism benefits from the unionised working class, and that a crucial precondition for working class liberation is its separation, or 'autonomy', from capitalism at a political level. The resulting low political level of the rank-and-file left it bereft of tools to challenge the leadership when faced with difficult choices.

Respect faced similar problems. Its often very localised but spectacular electoral breakthrough led to a large influx of careerist members who wanted a piece of the pie. Frequently, these were community leaders with strong business ties. Hence a debate over what electoral strategy was best for Respect: one that relied on community leaders in the coalition's strong areas (as George Galloway's supporters contended), or a broader one that could appeal to those disenchanted by the pro-war and neo-liberal consensus of the main parties (as argued by the SWP and its allies). Much of the discussion was muddled by claims of organisational improprieties. In particular, George Galloway posed the SWP's Leninism as a bar to a genuinely plural coalition of the left, likening SWP members to thoughtless drones blindly following an unaccountable leadership.

Galloway and his supporters left to form Respect Renewal when his attack on the SWP failed to cause a significant split in that organisation or to provide Galloway with a majority at Respect conference. The issue is simple: parties like the SWP are often seen as monolithic precisely because they insist on giving their membership huge political importance. As the many Communist parties in France prove, revolutionary organisations with no big names can win almost two million votes and remain a major focal point for the left. Nevertheless the split in Respect cannot be seen as a step forward: for electoral victories undoubtedly strengthen the movement on the streets - so long as they remain subordinate to it. As the Brown bounce weakens, we must forge new alliances with the mass mobilisations that offer hope that another world is possible.

Blue is True

Striking French students are wrong

Annette Pacey



Can we beat Sarkozy?" cried the rather earnest young man to passing students on Houghton Street. "Why would we want to?" I thought to myself, as I declined his offer of a leaflet. Far from their struggle being our struggle, it seems to me that the protesting French students have it totally wrong.

Taking a similar line to the leafleting student, last week's Red Isn't Dead column suggested that privatisation of universities is a bad thing, because, in order to win funding, courses will have to justify their usefulness. But the alternative, which the French students seem to support, is that the taxpayer funds courses regardless of how pointless they might be. This is not to dispute students' right to study something obscure or even utterly useless - it's simply that the taxpayer shouldn't have to pay for it. That certainly doesn't mean that graduates are going to be restricted to "managerial or technical" jobs. On the contrary, we have far more choice of career than our parents' generation ever did.

We all feel the pinch during our student days and it's tempting to feel a bit sorry for ourselves as we watch our debts mount. But going to university is an investment: we pay now and we get it back later in the form of a lifetime of higher wages and more fulfilling careers. If it wasn't for the prospect of those benefits, none of us would be here. Raising university fees feels unfair to us, but it is actually much fairer for society overall than if the state paid for our education. That state funding comes from the taxpayer. Now, the working class contribute the most to the tax pool as a group, compared to other socio-economic groups, because there are more of them. However, as a group, the working class are also the least likely to take advantage of state funded university education. It's mostly the middle classes that benefit. That means that when the state pays students' fees, in a sense what is happening is that working class taxpayers are putting the kids of middle class families through university. How fair is that? The idea of charging university top up fees is to correct that distortion and make sure the people who benefit from the education contribute more to the cost of it. Student activists who assert their 'right' to a free education forget that there is no such thing. They don't deserve their free ride at the expense of the working class taxpayer.

It's a similar story with the striking French transport workers. It's a little surprising they have only weak support from the public in the famously work-shy land of the 35 hour week. Something finally seems to be shifting in French public opinion, as people get fed up with the extreme privileges demanded by a small section of public sector workers. Railway, gas, and electric workers are clinging desperately to their long-held right to retirement after only just over thirty-five years of contributions, compared to forty years for other public sector workers. That can mean a retirement age of 55, or even 50 according to The Economist, after which they go on to a full pension funded by, you guessed it, the taxpayer. It's hardly a neo-liberal conspiracy to expect a bit more equity between the rights of different types of workers, and it isn't fair for some workers to demand that they get special treatment at the expense of others. Clearly ordinary workers feel that way too as, strange as it may seem, there was a pro-work protest in Paris last week in the midst of the strikes.

The notion of a neo-liberal conspiracy with a dastardly plan is nonsense. The aim of the neo-liberal agenda, according to last week's Red Isn't Dead, is "to ensure Euro-Atlantic competitiveness on a global scale". But hang on, isn't a competitive and prosperous Europe a good thing? Do we want an impoverished and stagnating Europe instead? I admit I am confused by the left's arguments. The way I see it, pampered French students and striking public sector workers are fighting for the right to enjoy excessive privileges at the expense of the rest of the population. They are not justified, and so my answer to my fellow student handing out leaflets in Houghton Street is simple. "No, I don't think you can - and the more's the better".

The rhetoric of the war on terror is arguably the most significant aspect within the plethora of political elements that define the nature of this struggle. The pathos of the war on terror are characterised by dramatisation of historical conditions, and exploitation of socio-political divisions. Persuasion is at the very heart of this process. The intrinsic merits of the politics, or the legitimacy of the claims are secondary to the exhortation of the masses. The public incarnation of these politics is marked by excessive sensationalism and scaremongering. The perception of threat is much more important than the real prospects of danger.

Over that past few years the terminology of the campaign against Islamic terrorism has been articulated through different semantic fronts: The "War on Terrorism", the "War on Terror", the "Global War On Terror (G.W.O.T.)" and the "Global Struggle Against Violent Extremism (GSAVE)"; each particular terminology has been culturally and politically conditioned to express a precise idea. They all invoke sentiments and connote politics that shape and influence public's political attitudes towards relevant policies and actions. The exploration of the psychological process through which these public campaigns are carried out are of utmost importance. It is only through careful analysis of these political trends that we are able to distinguish between legitimate concerns and vapid justifications for perpetual war.



Fighting Terror with MP3s

Julia Belluz talks with Waseem Mahmood about the most downloaded song in the history of Pakistan and his mission to dispel the negative image of Islam through Pop music



When Waseem Mahmood arrived in Afghanistan in 2002, he found a place that was "shell shocked, still finding its feet." The British media consultant and former BBC producer, who specializes in rebuilding the media in post-war countries, was bringing the concept of public service broadcasting to Afghanistan with a morning show. By the time he left in 2004, he says, "It was a very confident country that was looking to the future."

Now, Mahmood has turned his gaze to Pakistan, his birthplace. The country has gained notoriety since 2005 for being the next big terrorist haven - the 7 July bombers were trained there, while the siege of the Red Mosque showed that Al Qaeda could strike at the very heart of Islamabad. With the drift of General Pervez Musharraf's rule into a state of emergency, this has only gotten worse. In the past month alone, there have been hundreds of deaths due to political violence, terrorism, Islamist insurgency, and at least five suicide bombs. If anywhere in the Muslim world needs a positive self-image, it is Pakistan. As far as Mahmood is concerned, however, rebuilding this image is a task that requires more than mere media management.

Inspired by Jimi Hendrix's

assertion that change in this world can only happen with music, Mahmood has directed and produced Yeh Hum Naheen, an Urdu song with the message that Islam is not about terrorism or extremism. The translation of the song's title: "This is not us", "we are not that." Though its sweet melody sounds like a lover's ballad, its lyrics are less frothy.

The song is now one of the most downloaded ever in Pakistan, according to Mahmood. This is based on information he received from the owners of Pakistan's music sites, although it is difficult to verify exactly how many downloads there have been. Numbers for the song's YouTube video reach into the tens of thousands, and it was number one on MTV Pakistan for four weeks this year.

Much of the success of Yeh Hum Naheen can be attributed to the clout of its singers. Mahmood gathered together eight of the biggest names in Pakistan - such as Haroon, Hadiqa Kiani, and Ali Zafar - to participate in the project. The video shows the stars mournfully crooning beside images of the daily lives of regular folks in Pakistan, which is home to the second largest Muslim population in the world.

Mahmood is unabashed about using pop music and the

performers' fame as his vehicle for getting the moderate message across to young Pakistanis. "Given that music is such a popular medium there, it seemed like a starting point. You're piggybacking off the fan base that already exists for these young singers."

Yeh Hum Naheen is the latest in the tradition of Live 8, Live Aid, and all the music that has brought attention to global issues such as poverty, AIDS and famine. Now Mahmood wants to make the cause du jour counteracting the widespread debasement of Muslim culture. As he wrote on one website, "finally the jihad by the moderates against terrorism has begun." Mahmood aims to change ideas about Muslim identity first from within, before reaching out to the West. Much of western exposure to Islamic pop culture comes from state-controlled sources in the Arab and Persian media, the authenticity of which is dubious.

Mahmood is especially targeting Muslim youth. This decision was informed by his two teenage sons. The residents of Birmingham complained that their peers considered them bad Muslims because they ate so-called western foods, like pasta. "My sons have been a little dismayed by the way that Islam is perceived not only by the west,

but among young Muslims themselves," says the 45-year-old father.

Mahmood's children had an epiphany when they visited him while he was posted in Jordan. Initially, they were against the trip because they thought Jordan would be "restrictive and so boring" - their perception of an Islamic country. Instead, "They found it relaxed and laid back - and that religion wasn't shoved down their throat," says Mahmood. "The key word that came out of that trip was one of tolerance. All religions were living side-by-side."

Though most reaction to Yeh Hum Naheen has been positive, there have been criticisms that it is too self-defensive. As Mahmood says, "there are people out there who say that the real terrorists are those in the White House and Downing Street and that's who we should be targeting, not ourselves." Andrew Leonard's salon.com posting about the song says that as "an expression of a society-wide identity crisis, this avowal of negation -- this is not us -- is heart-rending."

The most surprising reaction for Mahmood, however, has been from non-Muslims. He cites the Japanese subtitled version of Yeh Hum Naheen, which has emerged on YouTube. Mahmood

adds that there have been five to six thousand emails so far from people around the world commenting on the song, thanking him, and asking what can be done next. Proceeds from the song go to a foundation, which "aims to build on the essence of Islam as a faith that promotes tolerance, peace and harmony removing prejudices within the community and amongst non-Muslims around the world." All the same, the costs of making Yeh Hum Naheen - around \$60,000 - have not yet been recouped.

In the future, there is talk of doing an Arabic version of Live 8 for Mahmood's cause, "since terrorism is one of the major problems facing our generation." But he has a long way to go before he reaches the levels of success of previous music-for-change projects by the likes of Bob Geldof and Bono. Mahmood says his cause is as important as famine and peace. But perhaps even when it is sung from the shiny lips of young pop stars, the subject of terrorism and Muslim identity is still too polemic and will take time to be universally accepted and easily marketable as the "Give peace a chance" campaigns of yesteryear.

Yeh Hum Naheen:

This story that is being spread in our

These stamps of death on our forehead
others

The name by which you know us - we a

The eyes with which you look at us - we

This is not us - this is not us...

As with the coming of night one loses o

We are scared of the dark so much that
our own home

What is this rising all around us...

The stories that are being spread in our

This is not us...

We have lost on the way the lesson of li

We are now even scared of each other,

They are others whose faces are on you

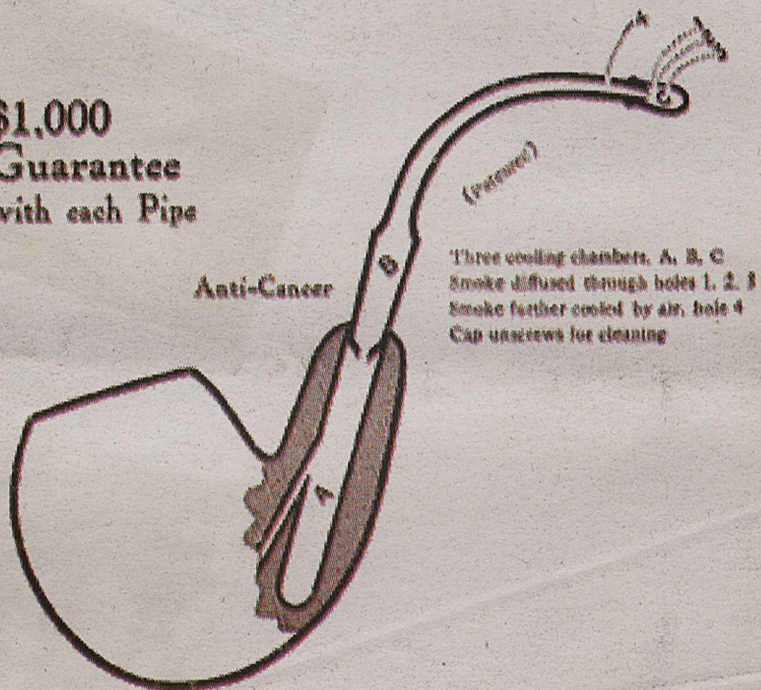
Your hurts are a deep sea - our wounds

The stories that are being spread in our

This is not us...

Eliminates the Possibility of a **B**urnt Tongue

\$1,000
Guarantee
with each Pipe





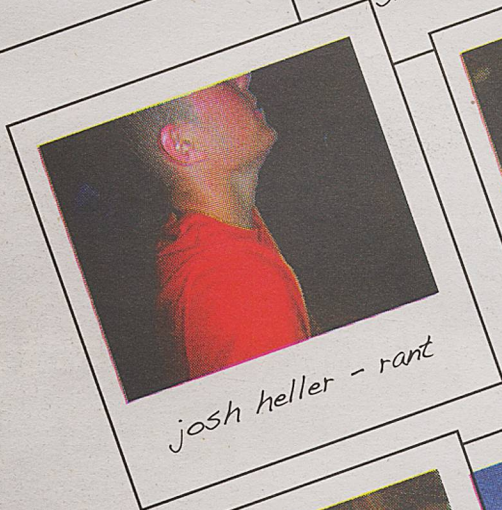
contributors



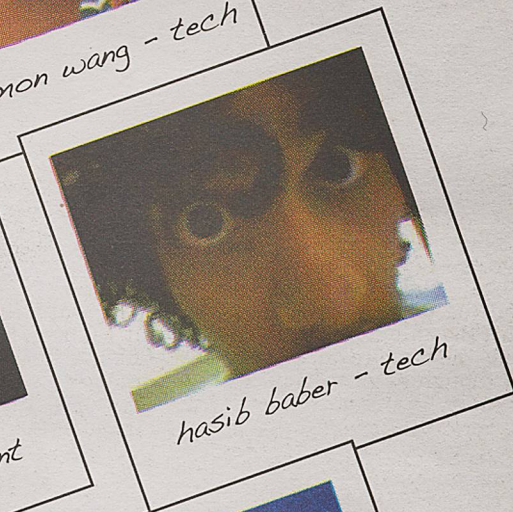
erin orozco - literature



simon wang - tech



josh heller - rant



hasib baber - tech



Touch my cock Yoda!



Patience Boba, paedo you are



will joce - travel



thomas whittaker



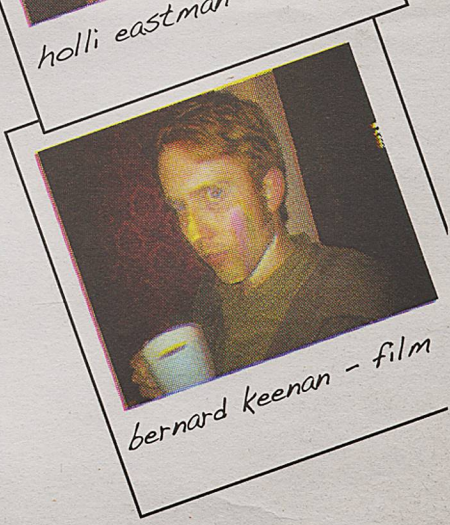
lois jeary - music



alice pfeiffer - sex&gender



holli eastman - identity

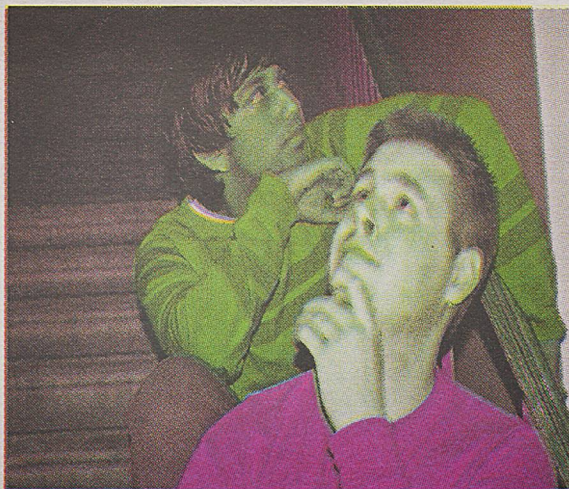


bernard keenan - film

Editorial

The master Yates left his door open so his faithful chimps have moved into his office during the dead of night to steal his biscuits and his editorial integrity. However, we have remained true to the master's florid style of journalism, so vulgarity and quality rub shoulder to shoulder like two unhappy bedfellows in an ill fated romance. Next week no doubt we will be back to hiding under the masters desk and eating the leftovers that he kindly tosses to the floor before us whilst we play with our genitals. It is said that every dog has his day. Personally, we cant wait to get back to the kennel.

thomas blake warren & ravi mistry



INDIE: ANNA JOSH

and the quest for a definition

starring joshheller and annaspode

In the past week I went to three gigs. Each was totally different and yet all three have been described at various times as indie. The word has ceased to have any meaning and should be abolished.

In three days there were performances from The Shins, The National and Andrew Bird. The Shins produce pop-influenced rock music but range to acoustic folk at times. The National are a brooklyn based band that make rock music with consistently prominent drums and the unique baritone of lead singer Matt Berninger. Andrew Bird is part of the new weird america movement and though he plays a guitar and has a drummer, he also plays and plucks the violin as well as whistling a lot.

What does this word mean then? It can't be based on sound surely? Or is it that, like a fire alarm, if you hear it you know what it is. It can't be the instruments because different artists use so many different ones. The guitar and drums do seem to be ever present but that cannot be the definition of the word. Blame NME and its being rubbish, blame Radio 1 and kill Chris Moyles. The word has to my mind become a perjorative term. It brings to mind razor-lights and hard-fis. It can still be used to talk about music that is itself great, but there are no great musicians who would describe their music as being indie.

Everytime someone uses indie to describe music crying out for a more specific definition, the word dies a little



more. The only time it is useful is when, like a doctor talking to a patient, you find yourself discussing music with someone unfamiliar with much of the basic terminology. After reeling off a list of sub-genres and being met with a blank stare, the phrase, "kind of indie," will inevitably met with a knowing nod. In the future we must move towards a far greater specificity. The simplification of language has led to a simplification of the understanding of music. The ability to tar all music remotely like rock with the brush of indie has led to a profilation of absolutely terrible pop. The kaiser chiefs and their like can sell music and be marketed to an audience that genuinely believes they are an alternative to Britney Spears or James Blunt. We should not shy away from paragraph long definitions of a band's sound. To destroy the word indie would increase our appreciation of music and basically make us all much much better people.

Tell lady Jane tha wants...

if it's good enough for lady chatterley's lover, it's good enough for thomas warren

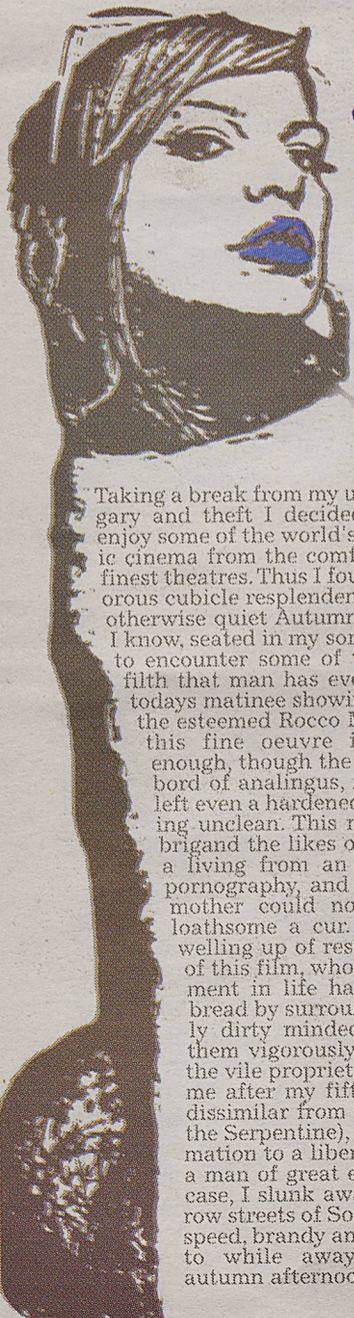
There is one standing vulgarity in the English language that can cause both shock and offence. The fine epithet of which I speak is the word cunt. Other curses have fallen by the wayside, used increasingly before the watershed and no longer censored on the television. "Cunt" however stays an outlaw word, used but censored at all times, and is never used in polite company unlike the term fuck, a once fine term that has become cheapened through its excessive usage.

However, like all curses c*nt can be used in a variety of contexts for different affect. The most vulgar usage of the word c*nt is undoubtedly when the term is used in anger. Even the most hardened user of the term can grimace when the visceral term is applied with full vigour, which normally occurs before somebody gets a fist or glass thrown into their face. In this context c*nt is the only word that suits purpose, a term that communicates a full hatred and cannot be replaced such otherwise fine words as prick, shit or bastard, which would seem only too trite at a time of imminent violence.

But this, my most cherished of oaths, also has deeper use than as a linguistic counterpoint to the ill behaviour of young men. The term also has place in

humour and even in the expression of affection. What young man has not affectionately called one of his friends a c*nt in jest, the softened tone of the word reducing the level of offence that the term is aimed to cause. Thus the word c*nt is easily a private synonym for terms such as mate, a veritable bastion of male bonding. It too has many humorous uses, and even the most poker faced of human beings is forced to laugh at a geriatric Joan Rivers calling Britney Spears a cunt. This c*nt certainly did, and I shall not apologise for it and neither should you.

I could also illuminate you as to the illustrious history of the term, but instead refer you lazy c*nts to wikicunt or some other such site. The history of the term is however assured, having been used by Chaucer, referenced by The Bard and almost costing D.H. Lawrence his liberty for his fine, if somewhat earthy, usage of the oath as a term of romantic endearment. However, the value of the word is not in examining its history in order to justify its usage but rather in its usage in uncommon parlance. Saying the word c*nt is a pleasure, a hidden one much like smoking a joint in school or masturbating in church, but a pleasure nonetheless. It also serves to express much which is indescribable, for better or worse, in one word. For this reason alone, I must champion the use of the word. You c*nts.



Ms. Rubella Valve reviews porn

Taking a break from my usual duties of beggary and theft I decided to sit down and enjoy some of the world's finest pornographic cinema from the comfort of one of Soho's finest theatres. Thus I found myself in a glamorous cubicle resplendent with Kleenex on an otherwise quiet Autumn afternoon. Little did I know, seated in my sordid cubicle, that I was to encounter some of the most distemperate filth that man has ever known. The film for today's matinee showing was none other than the esteemed Rocco Meets Suzie. The title of this fine oeuvre is seemingly innocent enough, though the film itself is a smorgasbord of analingus, fisting and felching that left even a hardened pervert like myself feeling unclean. This man Rocco was clearly a brigand the likes of which could only make a living from an arena as degenerate as pornography, and I felt that even his own mother could not love so immoral and loathsome a cur. For this reason I felt a welling up of respect for the director/stud of this film, whose sole and great achievement in life has been to earn his daily bread by surrounding himself with equally dirty minded people and sodomising them vigorously. Indeed, by the time that the vile proprietor of the peepshow ejected me after my fifteen minute time slot (not dissimilar from the hiring of a rowboat on the Serpentine), Rocco had risen in my estimation to a libertine of the greatest repute, a man of great esteem. And that being the case, I slunk away into the dark and narrow streets of Soho to invest in some cheap speed, brandy and a copy of Readers Wives to while away the otherwise dreary autumn afternoon.

MR. WLEFT'S TOP RECIPE

Good day bobo's, Mr. Wlefty here with some recipes to spice up your mundane lives. Grab some mustard and rub it on your balls, then rub tobasco in your eyes and beat yourself in the crotch. Even better, get someone else to do it for you. I had Jamie come round and do this for me while Mrs. Wlefty was out. Jamie was great, he really enjoyed it and his freaky size 15 feet meant that he caught both of my nads when he kicked me in the goolies. A word of warning though, always get a non smoker to do this for you because a smoker might stub out their Marlboros on your chest whilst you are blinded by the tobasco, and if the wife sees the marks its all over for you my puppy. Peace and love my little gimps.



LSE in LOVE

Email thabauer.parth@lse.ac.uk

met at a swingers club last week. You pulled out and came on my face. I never even caught your name.

sit opposite each other in class. You smell like a pirate and your trousers are stained but I love you so.

have no love for each other, only degenerate lust. I want to feed you grapes and suck on your toes.

came into my class with a puppy in a Prada bag. I think your jacket was made of the pelt of a Panda. Be my Paris Hilton

crashed your party, stole the booze and puked in your favourite shoes. Can I make it up to you on Thursday for dinner?

never met a guy like you before. We meet for dinner and you sleep with my flatmates. You cad.

think you got a real personality, but my lady friends think you are a minger. Buy a balaklava, and lets go for a drink.

love you more than life itself. We play polo with you every week, and then we go riding afterwards. I even love you when I clean out your stables.

PRANT

Colin Murray keeps the faith

Lois Jeary talks to Radio one DJ Colin Murray about playlists, John Peel and flying the flag for new music...

Colin Murray, the Radio 1 DJ who is currently at the helm of the ten to midnight slot, wants to be your friend. He wants to come into your room of an evening, talk about your day and play you some music – albeit in as quirky and interesting a manner he can muster. “If you’re listening to Chris Moyles you’re going to work, or if you’re listening to Edith or Jo you’re in work, so you’re there and you’re a captive audience. But once you get to me the only people listening are those who choose to tune in because, on the whole, the world is doing something else, and it creates this amazing mix of people. You get people who work in chicken factories, loads of farmers, loads of fisherman and loads of students. In general our show is just very interactive so it’s a good pal to have whilst studying. That’s very important to me because I think late-night radio should feel like you’ve got your friend in the room. It’s a very honest and frank show – what are you up to, what are you doing, what do you want to hear? It creates a nice feeling, like you’re finishing the evening off with a mate. You probably would actually rather be round your mates house but you can’t because you have to study, so I’ll be your mate.”

I tell him that is all well and good, but for those of us students who live in halls of residences, playing music after 11pm is a strict no-no and more often than not his show will be cut short by the wrath of the warden or your party-poopier neighbour. “There was someone who texted in last week who got a written warning from the warden because they were playing my show too loud – I can’t remember what song it was, but it was a classic, worth getting in trouble for. I think it’s a show that does get a lot of students in trouble because when the old tunes come on you’ve got to turn it up. They’re right jobsworths those wardens – killjoys, perverts. They all are.”

The show is purposefully eclectic, relying on text contributions from listeners or random internet finds, a policy which he feels makes it the perfect show for students. On Tuesday nights The Black Hole plays host to the best the internet has to offer, and Colin personally goes through the hundreds of emails he is sent to find the pick of the crop. “What you actually hear in The Black Hole is about three or four per cent of what we get sent – so you can imagine the fucked up stuff that gets sent in. I opened a song on a Myspace site that was about Carol Vorderman’s vagina. As if I can play that! Other people send things in that are completely visual. How the fuck did you think I could play this on the radio? I play stuff that is good – I don’t mind if it’s too weird or too mainstream. There may be an idea that we wouldn’t play it, but I look out for that sort of stuff and it does get in.” He takes a similar policy to the callers he allows on air. “The people I want to talk to on a Thursday night are the callers who ring up and when you ask ‘do you listen to the show?’ go ‘nah, don’t really like it that much’. Make it like the anti-phone-in. You can get some outstandingly stupid people on the radio. If you phone up with a cleft pallet I would definitely put you on, I don’t care. If someone goes ‘I’ve had a bad week, my Gran died’ then that’s great!”

Murray’s musical philosophy is inclusive and unpretentious – the only criteria for choosing what to play is whether or not he likes it, a far cry from the trend-setting or scene-following approach of other radio stations. He doesn’t care about playing the next big thing and enjoys departing from the Radio 1 playlist and exposing his listeners to real alternative music. It is this which he believes sets him, and Radio 1 as a whole, apart from the commercial sector. “I play stuff that I know is never ever going to sell anything. If you listen to alternative commercial stations they don’t do that. They masquerade under being alternative but all they do is play fucking Jamie T and the Kooks. Guitar music is big at the moment, and selling, but that doesn’t mean it is good and just because they have a guitar in their hands doesn’t make it alternative. I would

argue that the Kooks and Jamie T aren’t alternative, just like in the ‘80s ABC weren’t alternative. I’ll tell you who else – Amy Winehouse, Kate Nash and Lily Allen – they’re not alternative, they’re mainstream pop music. I think guitar music being big stems the growth of good alternative music, because during the day on every station they’re playing the likes of the Kooks and labelling them as alternative when it’s really just grey, MOR pop music. For me, it’s not helping the British music scene when bands like that sell records. In the ‘70s young bands tried to sound like the Beatles. What are young bands going to want to sound like in 2015? Do you want them to sound like the Kooks or like good, fresh alternative music, which maybe isn’t breaking as much into the mainstream as I’d like to see it.”

The music that radio stations choose to spin is made all the more important if you recognise the role that radio plays in launching new bands. “It used to be in the old days that you’d get your radio play and become big, and to a certain extent that is true. Amy Winehouse would be an example of someone who brought out albums and no-one cared – then Radio 1 start playing it and all of a sudden she’s massive although there is not much difference between the two records. It must be frustrating for the artist who makes a good record and relies upon one or two people to support them. The new Kings of Leon album didn’t get played on Radio 1 before 7 o’clock and it was at number one. So I don’t think it’s essential to get national radio play but I do think Radio 1 has a stamp of quality that goes on to help sales. I think good bands sell records. It is healthy now that whilst you probably do hear good new music on Radio 1 there is an independent way of doing it, for example a lot of kids get their music taste from MTV2, especially in the emo and punk market.”

They masquerade under being alternative but all they do is play fucking Jamie T and the Kooks.

Murray has been at Radio 1 since 1999, a period which has seen a distinct change in the nature and role of BBC radio. With the proposed move of a number of BBC services, including Radio Five Live, from London to Manchester, I ask him whether Radio 1 needs to be based in London and how a move up the M1 might change it. “When I came into Radio 1 nationally, it was pretty much in the shitter. I used to tune in and think it was just a bunch of Southern wankers. One of the things that helped was that they told all the DJs to stop pretending it’s important to be in London, because it needed to be a national station. Edith and I, coming in, had a typical Celtic chip on our shoulders. It was a very Southern radio station and now it’s not. I don’t think Radio 1 needs to be in London. If Radio 1 moved to Manchester, I’d complain just because it’s Manchester and I’m a Liverpool supporter and I ain’t living amongst Mancs. I would move to Liverpool in a second. I’d love Radio 1 to move from London – it’s costly, it’s violent.”

The period has seen Murray move about a fair bit too, from a regional show in Northern Ireland, to a daytime slot along co-hosted with Edith Bowman and finally his current incarnation in the night-time slot. Frustratingly for Murray, each move has been characterised by taking over hugely popular slots from legendary DJs. “That’s what I am here for at Radio 1 – taking over slots that nobody else fucking wants. Time and time again – it has happened every time. The boss called Edith and I in and said ‘we’re going to give you a daytime show’ so I was thinking maybe we’ll do drive-time but no, it was Mark and Lard and I thought “Oh fuck”. I remember going for a beer with Edith and thinking that we’re going to be hated because we’re

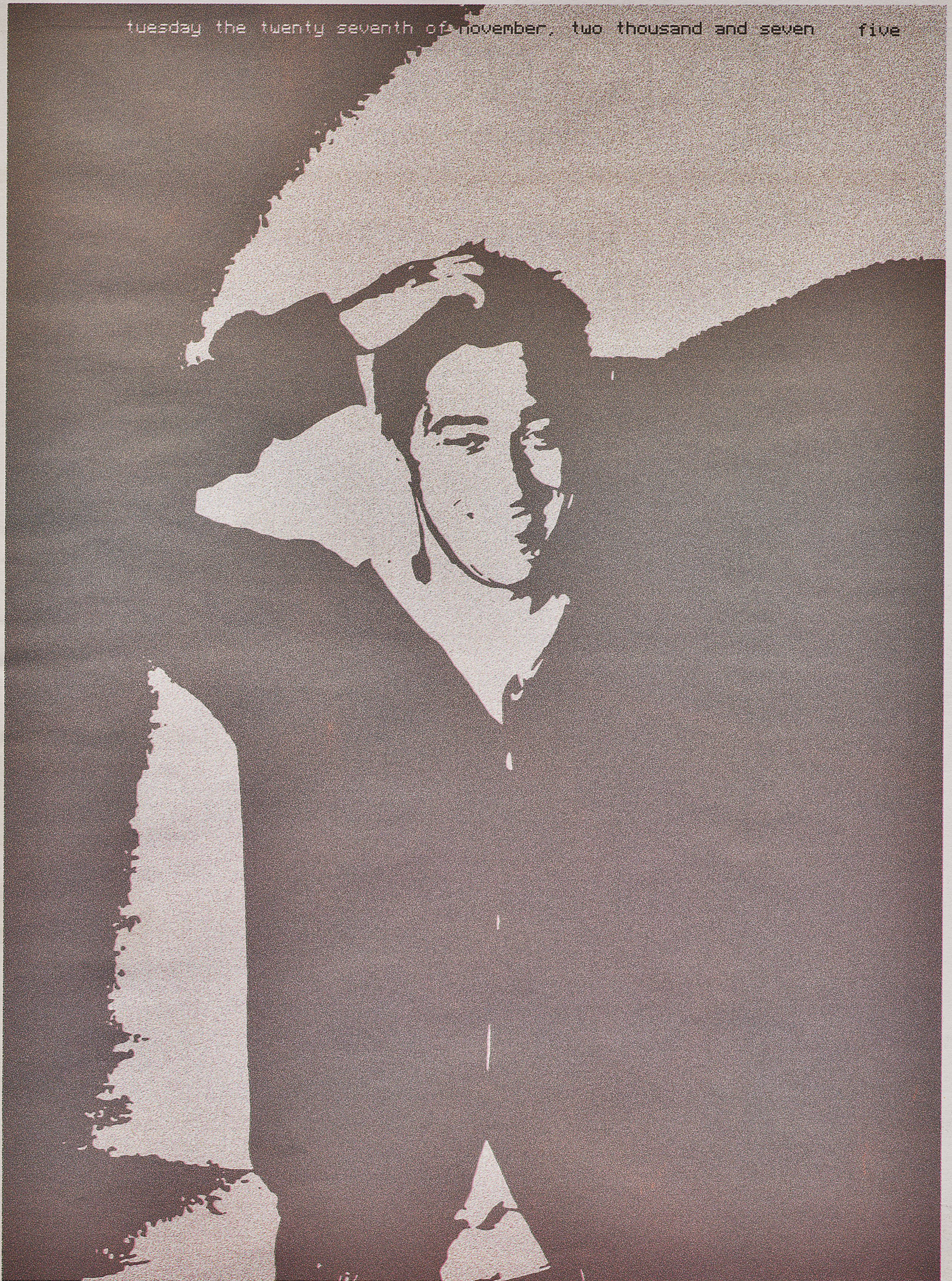
taking the best show off the radio. The texts in the first few weeks could have put us in mental homes, the amount of abuse we got! But we did better than them – we got more listeners even though they were better than us. They got annoyed with the playlist and they didn’t really want to be here and that can never happen because your heart has to be in it. My heart wasn’t in it by the end of the daytime show. I was sick of playing stuff that I didn’t like – we played Paris Hilton and that was the straw that broke the camels back, but they were able to offer me another spot.

“Then I go to the fucking Peel slot! That never worried me because I worked with John and I used to talk to him about football because he was a Liverpool fan. The one thing I learnt off him was that he wasn’t a snob about music at all. He hated scenesters. He fucking hated people who thought you were less of a person because you listened to shit music, or you listened to mainstream music. He taught me to be myself. People listen now and say ‘well, it’s not John Peel’. No way, it’s not John Peel. The John Peel people talk about is 30 years down the line so if you want to make a comparison go and listen to what John Peel was like when he was 30, not when he was 60, that’s an unfair comparison. I can’t be expected to be 30 years better.

“I’ve never been given a show that isn’t a poisoned chalice. Even on television! I did RI:SE which was the follow up show to the fucking Big Breakfast and got hammered. I don’t know what show I’ll get next! Wogan? That’s what it will be – Terry Wogan. I’ll get his job.” Surely it shows a lot about his talent? “No, it says a lot about my bad timing.” Despite the pressure, Murray admits that he doesn’t let the bitter comments or expectations of his listeners get him down. “I want to come off air thinking I’ve done the best night-time show in Britain – that’s what I’m aiming to do and that’s where the buzz is. But I go home after work, I go to football and to gigs, and if I do something that fails it doesn’t affect anything to be honest. I don’t go ‘the public don’t like me’ because in the nicest possible way, I don’t give a fuck what they think and I never have. I want to create a show that people love but I don’t care how big it is and if it doesn’t work then... my mum’s healthy and that’s more important. When I got offered those shows I sat down and thought whether I was prepared to take the stick, and I decided yeah I was, so it was okay and I got on with it.”

This down-to-earth approach has led Murray to avoid the trappings of fame and celebrity, and despite a brief stint on celebrity Fame Academy to raise money for Comic Relief he prefers to remain behind the mic than in front of the camera’s glare. “If you’re in the public eye but you tell people that you’ve got no interest in the fame side of it then they find it hard to swallow. I did Fame Academy and got a taste of what it is like to be famous, but from the day I walked out of Fame Academy I’ve done nothing. I’ve avoided it because I didn’t want to be known for that, although it was good because it raised money for charity. You’ve got to have morals otherwise you’re Kevin Federline, aren’t you! Otherwise you’re Callum Best! If you don’t actually have a job that you do well you’re Callum Best and you’re just making a public appearance.” Indeed, by not exploiting his fame or thrusting himself into the public eye Murray has managed to preserve a guilty secret – “I’ve been on just about every radio station in Britain under a false name! I can phone up Five Live coming back from Anfield and go on their phone-in show all the time under different names.” Don’t they recognise his voice? “No, because they think all the Irish sound the same.” In dialectical terms this might well be true, I cannot say I have met enough Irish people to make a considered judgement. However, in DJ terms, I have to disagree. Colin Murray is an important voice on Radio 1 precisely because he doesn’t sound the same or think the same as anyone else. He is willing and keen to take risks for the sake of good music and that, above all, is what we need from radio.

tuesday the twenty seventh of november, two thousand and seven five



FAUXNANCIAL TIMES

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 27 2007 | £1.30 + your soul

News Briefing

Interest rate hike threatens students

The government have doubled the interest of student loans, from 2.4% to an astounding 4.8%, which could spell disaster for students
See Page 1

Grot shares rise

Shares in pornographic publications have rise by up to 23% in the last quarter. The leader of the market, Razzle Publications Ltd. has faced stiff competition from other purveyors of filth, but has managed to survive. At the bottom of the market, Ass Ventures faces a hard time from it's big investors.
See page 12

Arms industry blowout

Given the pugnacious attitude of certain states, many investors in arms companies have found themselves riding the wave. Celius McNasty of the BEA Shareholders Group today lauded the nature of the arms market, stating that "the bomb is the perfect weapon. Starting at £400,000 and totally non reusable regardless of where they land, the bomb makes the perfect investment".
See page 8

Sparks and Mencers to start selling leather

Investors at S&M were today left smiling in their cereal as the company announced its plan to supply bondage gear in its stores in an effort to lose its staid image. The store will start selling beginners bondage kits at £44.99, which will contain one leather corset, a 12" prosthetic phallus and a "gimp" mask. The kit is expected to be a quick seller, especially having been released in time for Christmas. S&M have also gathered a cast of stars to promote their product.

BP tipped for takeover of the LSE

BP is rumoured to be on the verge of announcing a 10 billion pound takeover of the London School of Economics and Political Science [LSE] - The writing has been on the wall for the past few months now with BP director Peter Sutherland moving into the boardroom of the LSE. although the reasons for the takeover has not been officially announced, the general consensus is that the company sees the London based university as a money spinner

with over 50% post-graduates and 75% international students, suggesting high revenues. In addition, the petroleum giants see the Russell group university as an ideal breeding ground for the future stars of its company. The move has been recieved with enthusiasm by the student body who appear to share BP's core values regarding the issues of human rights and the environment. One student was quoted saying "We don't give shit about either of those as well". Students are

also excited that someone with big business links such as Sutherland will be Chair of council at the LSE, further cementing the university's love for investment banking. Although, there has been a small amount of opposition to the move this should soon be silenced after the pending takeover, hopefully creating a more orderly institution devoid of "controversial viewpoint" that marring its current reputation. Once completed, the move should see the green and



yellow of BP a down in your more permanent diary. fixture at the LSE, sponsoring our sports teams and possibly even Crush - BP Crush, it's a date to put

Slavery to follow student debt

The raising of interest rates could lead to a potential increase in slavery and indentured service argues Prof. Cyril Montague-Barnforth this evening. In his inaugural speech for the Dunleavy Centre for Finance Solutions the Professor will argue that the inability of people to pay their debts could have positive effects on the economy, as people will be forced to turn themselves over to the government in order to escape bankruptcy. Officials will then be able to use the debtors as an unskilled workforce. Professor Montague-Barnforth argued that this is no great tragedy as "the poor are accustomed to menial and soul destroying occupations as a matter of course". This workforce would of course be put to good use, as an anonymous government official revealed, "the country needs more bodies to fill up the American's next bandwagon invasion". Ironically, the government will also be short of debt collectors in the future, pitting debtors against one another hailing back to the glory days of the amphitheater. Either way the government's have successfully ensared the current young generation and placed the shackles of debt firmly around their ankles. If possible, this could further increase student's desire to work for Goldman Sach's and co whose substantial wage packets would bail them out. However, student's would arguably only be trading in one form of slavery for another. So only one question remains will you be public or private property?



Markets	Nov27	%chg
STUDENT 350		
Student Morale	-130.1	-10.2%
Racial Intergration	-867.6	-26.4%
Student Debt	3500.4	3500%
Promiscuity LSE	-0.045	-89.9%
Promiscuity Shagfield	69.69	56.5%
Tomfoolery	-25.67	-62.9%
Wasteness	1607.1	100%

	Nov27	%chg
LSE 100		
Council Popularity	-267.8	-96.2%
Spending [teaching]	0.012	-80.3%
Spending [Other]	215005	98.4%
Profitability	167890	56.9%
Angst	678.89	100.2%
UGM	-23.86	-59.2%

	Nov 27	%chg
STUDENT INTEREST RATES		
Socialising	-72.89	-53.2%
Studying	72.89	53.2%
Careers	689.7	46.7%
Internships	963.4	554%
Economics	30.56	16.2%
Politics	-23.21	-82.3%

part careers



858-
1038
A
4873
8358
-833
858

PRIVATE EQUITY A VENTURING INTO UNC

14TH - 15TH JANUARY @ LSE |

Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts & Co (KKR)

The Blackstone Group

Apollo Management

Abraaj Capital

Goldman Sachs

GLG Partners

Texas Pacific Group

Boston Consulting Group

Investcorp

DLJ Merchant Banking

McKinsey & Company

Man Group plc

Marshall Wace

Arcapita

UBS

Lansdowne Partners

REGISTRATION ENDS DECEMBER 1ST

AND HEDGE FUNDS HARTED TERRITORIES

REGISTER @ WWW.LSEAIC.CO.UK



Liongate

CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Sankaty Advisors

a member of the BainCapital group

PE

LSE_{SU}

Private Equity
Society

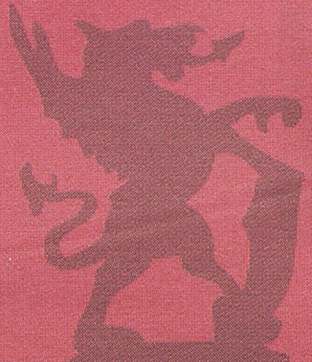


LSE_{SU} Business Society

"Your Future Is Our Business"

LSE
students'
union

FINANCESOCIETY



AIC

2008

LSE_{SU}

Alternative Investments Conference

Kindly supported by Marshall Wace Asset Management

Looking through the long lens of history

Erica Gornall interviews LSE's oldest living alumnus, Reece Lewis, and gains insight into an LSE where the students were mostly British and a world where the upheavals we consider history were just another part of life.

As the oldest living LSE alumni, 104-year-old Reece Lewis is refreshingly youthful and passionate. His voice is still deep and strong as he sits at the head of the table, recounting his time at the LSE. No-one could have more insight to the changes of LSE over the last century than Lewis. Coming to the School when George Bernard Shaw was still lecturing and living through the 20th century's historical milestones, Lewis' rare visit to the LSE brought memories, many of which were long assumed to be consigned to history books, back to Houghton Street.

Lewis' enthusiasm for life and the LSE was immediately clear; also clear was that his long life was a family affair. "It must be in the family because I have got a sister who is 99 and I've got another sister who is 98," says Lewis. "The three of us have done well in that sense, why I don't know."

The busy streets of Kingsway and Houghton Street are a far cry from the mining town where he grew up. Leaving the local school at 13, Lewis worked, like 90 per cent of the other men in his town, in the coal mines. His time was spent studying not to prepare for university, but to become a mine manger.

By this time, however, the economic climate was changing. "It was too late," says Lewis. "The mines were in decline, the demand for coal was falling, mines were closing, and there was no point in me studying and passing an exam when there would be no jobs!"

Lewis first steps towards the LSE went via the universities of Swansea and Aberystwyth, the latter being where he studied his preferred subject, Geography. Never having travelled to London, his first experience of the capital came when he was searching for a job.

"We were welcomed by a lady of some acquaintance and we were taken to taken to a large corner house in Oxford Street," Lewis recalls. "My God, it was wonderful - wonderful meal and an orchestra playing at the same time"

After securing a job at the London County Council as a teacher in the East End, Lewis decided to join the LSE as a full-time evening student. Studying in the evening after working during the day, Lewis had his lectures at six in the evening. "It was three evenings a week and took me five years to cover the course," he recalls.

But what made the oldest living LSE alumni choose to study here? "The LSE was very well-known, it was the only place I knew about," Lewis asserts. "I had a wonderful time."

At a time when famous figures lectured at the School, Lewis particularly remembers Eileen Power. "[She]...was a lovely person, a brilliant mind and a wonderful lecturer. Listening to her - I remember she gave a course on the Far East in the 19th Century. Her flow of language was so beautiful, it was like a river, a

stream coming down the mountain-side."

His enthusiasm wanes when the later reputation of the School during the protests of the 1960 was brought up. "I heard that there were some students protesting about something but that was, to me, irrelevant."

The expansion in the number of students attending university can be seen by Lewis' own story. When asked who else from his town went to university, he replies, "I was the only one."

"Very few people went to university when I was there," he continues. "It has become quite common now but not then. I was the only one in the village that went at that time but since then, after the war, it's changed."

Financial support for higher education was lacking, with students such as Lewis having to sacrifice many comforts in the

recognise the place where he studied all those years ago.

"It's so much bigger! It's huge now, compared with my time. It was very small, relatively speaking. Oh yes, I have seen a huge change! When I go up in the lifts as I did, my God, it's a different world altogether! As far as I remember, there were no lifts then - none at all. But of course, it has developed since then!"

Along with the LSE buildings, numbers of foreign students are also very different in the 21st century. Talking about his evening classes, he reckons that, "As far as I'm aware, they were all British."

"There was a group from the Far East. I remember I met a former student after a seminar who had just come back from the Far East," Lewis recalls. "And he said to me, 'When the leaders of government knew that I was from

that the left-wing reputation that the School had, was over-exaggerated and that, like today, the City has always had an influence in its running. "People thought that LSE was left-wing - it turned out that it was not the case," says Lewis. "If you looked at the list of governors, they were all City people," he added.

Undergraduates were also a majority in the 1930s and 1940s, along with a "flourishing" Students' Union. "Every Friday evening, all the students gathered in a large hall and there was some interesting discussion going on". The weekend equivalent of 'Crush' in the 1940s was a more subdued, yet nonetheless still packed event. "There was dancing. I wasn't a good dancer but I danced," Reece laughed.

But the excitement of the LSE in the late 1930s was disrupted by the Second World War



Reece Lewis, left, meets LSE Director Howard Davies

quest for a degree. "I had meat only once a week - I lived off dates! So I managed and I worked over the holidays, digging graves and things of that kind."

From the diversity of students to the new buildings on campus, Lewis finds it hard to

the LSE I was treated like a god - I had everything! Most of the people that ran the Far East are former LSE students."

In this respect, it seems that very little has changed, given the growing list of alumni who have gone on to become Heads of State. Similarly, Lewis believes

"LSE was evacuated to Cambridge during the war," added Lewis. Luckily, the LSE escaped extensive damages, despite being in central London.

As Lewis looks around the School after so many years of absence he exclaims, "It is revolutionary since I saw it. It was relatively small compared to today. It has expanded, a marvellous place now."

The oldest living LSE alumnus has himself contributed to that expansion of the education system over the last century. After leaving the LSE, Reece Lewis went on to become a teacher in the first comprehensive in the country.

Reece Lewis was 104 on September 17th (b.1903). He was an undergraduate from 1933-8 studying BSc Economics and a Master's student from after the war until 1946.

“The Students' Union was flourishing. Every Friday evening, all the students gathered in a large hall and there was some interesting discussion going on.”

Reece Lewis' 20th century: The five defining moments

The end of the First World War

"When it ended, a flu epidemic began, spread all over Europe and killed more people than the war. I had it myself".

General Strike

"The miners were fighting a losing battle. The miners went on strike but it didn't work. Unfortunately they were not very well educated- the opportunities didn't exist. That should have happened, in my view, after the first world war. But it didn't happen. The government were very reluctant to spend money on education and they might have solved this problem by adapting to a new situation. Technologically, there was a lot of change taking place."

The Russian Revolution

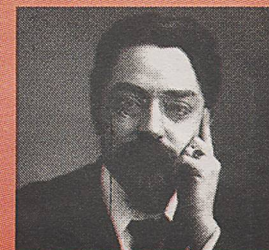
"I remember very well. February 1917, I remember reading about that. The 'Ten Days that shook the world.' And my God, it did shake the world."

The Outbreak of the Second World War

He went to Geneva at the outbreak. "We came back to the station and we saw a big notice which said 'today a pact was signed between Hitler and Stalin.' That meant that war was now inevitable. When I arrived home, my wife told me; 'you've got to report to school tomorrow.' And when I arrived [at school], preparations were being made for evacuation."

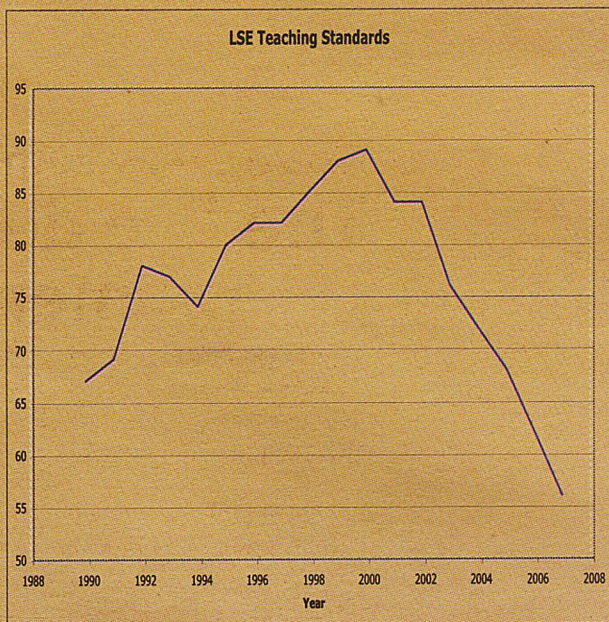
Sidney Webb at the LSE

"I heard Sidney Webb speaking. [The Webbs] went to Russia, and they came back and they wrote a book. 'Russia the revolution: a new civilisation?' with a question mark. And when the book was re-issued, the question mark had been dropped. They couldn't have been more wrong. Stalin's revolution was one of the bloodiest in human history. We know now, we didn't know then."



Sidney Webb, one of the LSE's founders, who Lewis heard speak about Russia

LSE Teaching Standards fall



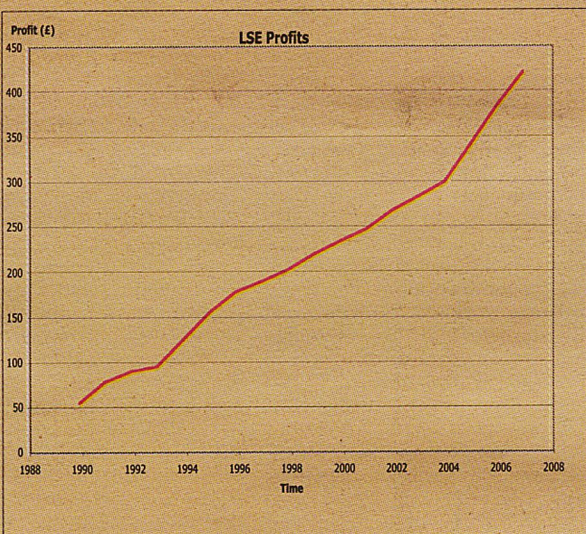
Survey of International student's shows teaching standard's are low Teaching standards at the LSE continue to slip according to recent reports, with student's bemoaning the lack of enthusiasm with the class teaching at the university. Much of the recent slide has been attributed to the LSE low maintenance, cost effective "laissez faire" approach to teaching. The university's belief of "leaving the students to it" allows them to become independent and effective learners, is worth £3,000 or £11,000 depending on your disposition. This has often come as a shock to students, who somehow expected comprehensive teaching from a top ranking institution. Opiniated student Drew Peacock stated, "If I didn't want proper teaching I would have gone to a polytechnic!". Tutors have urged student's to abide by LSE's ethos and prepare for classes - with limited succes. Credit is due to the innovator of this simplistic yet excellent approach to learning.

Piracy hurts music industry

At a conference held today at a Bel Air mansion, industry executives bemoaned the fact that piracy is driving them to the gutter. The same is true of the music industry, as last week Metallica are rumoured to each have only four holiday homes apiece and are just hovering above the poverty line. See Page 6

Man shits gold

An unnamed millionaire has revealed that he craps gold. Following a pain thought to be haemorrhoids, he laid a 22 carat turd that has since been traded on the New York gold exchange. He is currently searching for investors to form a mining partnership and is forming exploration teams to prospect for gold in the bowels of relatives. He has stated that he will use the gold to pay for a new hair transplant. Pages 14&15



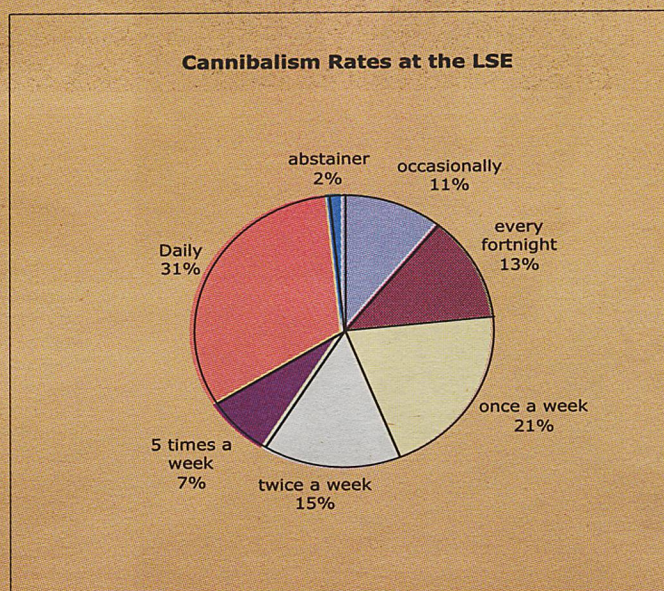
LSE Profits set to soar

In other completely unrelated news, LSE's profits are set to soar this quarter, with the university thought to be publishing its official interim report tomorrow. In sharp contrast to the meagre teaching standard rate, the gross profit is set to rise 15%, almost twice the most optimistic forecast. This growth will pay for a range of prestige projects in the school including the long awaited Pol Pot Cafe, and the creation of a set of solid gold urinals for the use of the staff and their cats. It has surprised many that the school should be turning a profit, but it comes as little surprise considering that the school boasts some of the most expensive student accommodation in London and also one of the most expensive eating places in the form of the Garrick. The Garrick is more expensive than many off campus eateries and many eschew it in favour of the cheaper victuals to be found elsewhere. The fact that a university should turn a profit has surprised some. Bolo Manfredi, a second year student of postmodernity and vandalism had little sympathy for the LSE's economic well being. "Fuckin' profits? Man can't afford to live and dems got gold urinals for cats? Fucking madness bruv". Page 12

Banker's Diary

The coming week promises to be a special one for bankers. The launch of Awooga Cavier and the Hindley Mansions Hotel should be an utter cokefest and any banker worth his salt should have an invite. Tuesday coming also marks the completion of financial reports, so you had best act fast and book a classy hooker and a holiday for the wife. Word of warning lads- be sure to charge prostitutes to your expense accounts. Friday is the birthday of Lord Gilbert Bungleton, and he has promised the boys at the bank that they can trash Annabel's. Should be a Cracking night!

LSE Cannibalism Breakdown:



- %chg
- 53.2%
- 53.2%
- 46.7%
- 554%
- 16.2%
- 82.3%

NEW RELEASES

The Killers
Sawdust

13th November



Sawdust provides an interesting mix between the indie-club sound of **The Killers'** debut *Hot Fuzz* and the stadium sound of *Sam's Town*, so although this collection of b-sides and re-makes might sound somewhat schizophrenic, it provides the missing link between the two studio albums. 'Tranquilize', featuring Lou Reed, creates a darker sound than we are used to, but with the exception of an acoustic version of 'Sam's Town', the re-makes are nothing to get excited about. A cover of Joy Division's 'Shadowplay' is inevitably inferior to the original; but Brandon Flowers and his Las Vegas posse have stamped their own identity onto it. Although a good collection of tracks, *Sawdust* is nowhere near the band's previous albums, which is to be expected from an album of songs that weren't quite good enough first time around.

Maroon 5
Won't Go Home
Without You

19th November



I would immediately leave a club that played **Maroon 5**. They are a paragon of mainstream rock. They don't take risks, but are instead content with playing safely within their boundaries. There simply is no reward for repeatedly listening to their music because you won't discover anything you did not spot the first time. In all likelihood, you will just be a bit more annoyed. Their latest single, 'Won't Go Home Without You', embodies all these qualities. If you have taken a distinct liking to the album tracks of **Brian Adams** or **Bon Jovi**, you probably do not mind serious lack of originality anyway. Everybody else, please beware: this is music strictly for people who don't listen to music.

erikhaug

gregorulum

THE LISTINGS WAR

judged by loisjeary

28TH NOVEMBER

Pendulum
Electric Ballroom

vs.

Roisin Murphy
KOKO

Camden gets its dancing shoes on and plays host to DnB superstars and a disco darling.

21TH NOVEMBER

Take That
02

vs.

Ian Brown
Brixton Academy

Two of Manchester's finest musical exports (I'm completely serious) will help you relieve the 1990s - if you are desperate enough to want to, that is.

30TH NOVEMBER

Interpol
Alexandra Palace

vs.

St. Vincent
Bush Hall

Interpol will bore you to death and break your heart in the meantime. Discover Annie Clark's pretty anti-folkness instead.

NINE BLACK ALPS

rahimrahemtulla tries to cheer them up

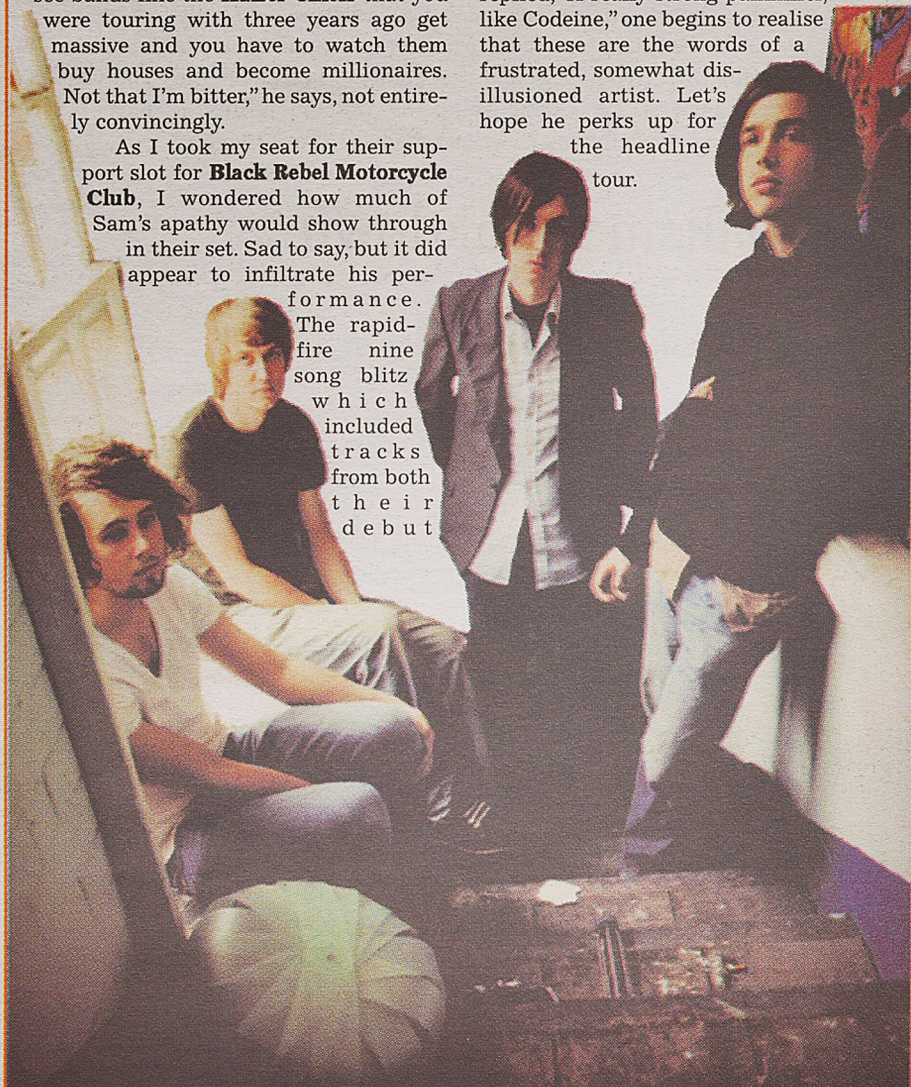
Manchester-based five-piece **Nine Black Alps** have been making music together since 2003 and four years on, guitarist and lead vocalist **Sam Forrest** says that he thinks touring their new album *Love/Hate* is "going to be a lot more fun." In a melancholy mood, Sam describes his time in the band, not altogether jokingly, as "four years of going slowly mad". It's not all doom and gloom however, as he does mention tours and recording trips to Japan ("sweet, polite, well-ordered") and the U.S. ("much more relaxed") which were highlights, and have given him a desire to eventually leave England. And yet although he has had some great times in the band, more commercial success would not have hurt. "You see bands like the **Kaiser Chiefs** that you were touring with three years ago get massive and you have to watch them buy houses and become millionaires. Not that I'm bitter," he says, not entirely convincingly.

As I took my seat for their support slot for **Black Rebel Motorcycle Club**, I wondered how much of Sam's apathy would show through in their set. Sad to say, but it did appear to infiltrate his performance.

The rapid-fire nine song blitz which included tracks from both their debut

Everything Is as well as their most recent offering, was a solid yet unspectacular run through their work. The combination of grungy rock and melodious guitar harmonies came to a close with 'Everything Is,' their biggest single to date and one which Sam said "takes him back". Back to what? Judging by his onstage demeanor, perhaps to the days of a nascent Nine Black Alps, when he was enjoying himself a little more. That said, Sam's vocals, which were at their gruff, raspy best, cannot be faulted.

Towards the end of the set Sam shouted out to the crowd something he had said to me in our earlier conversation; "life is pain, death is pain, birth is pain." Add to this the fact that when I said to him, "If you had to be a drug, what would you be?" he replied, "A really strong painkiller, like Codeine," one begins to realise that these are the words of a frustrated, somewhat disillusioned artist. Let's hope he perks up for the headline tour.



RILO KILEY

loisjeary longs for a little more sparkle

Rilo Kiley's latest album *Under the Blacklight* shook their devoted indie-kid following to the soles of their Converses with its departure from the lyrically focussed alt-country sound that has served them through years of craft both as a band and in their solo efforts. It was hailed as a brave move by a band standing at the fringes of the big-time, and even those who were initially shocked by the new sound learnt to love the '70s funk influences which fused well with the band's country soul and indie roots. Unfortunately for all concerned, what works so well in your ears does not always seem to translate well into a live performance - especially when the audience seemed more comfortable with staring at the floor through their long fringes than wiggling their skinny hips to cowbells and synthesizers.

Front woman **Jenny Lewis**, an undeniable talent, attracts more attention than is entirely appropriate in her tiny, sparkly outfits. Lewis's voice is perfectly suited for the country feel of 'I Never' and 'Under the Blacklight', which was mercifully stripped of all its decoration and instead performed as the gentle, acoustic song the album version longs to be. But what sets Lewis apart is her ability to deliver a song with the emotion and expression it requires. Rilo Kiley's songs are filled with complex characters and stories which Lewis brings to life. The heartbroken agony of 'Does He Love You?' poured out of her, whilst the flirtatiousness of 'Smoke Detector' was perfectly communicated by a subtle wiggle of her hips as the guitars rollicked and rolled behind her. Tellingly, by far the biggest cheer of the night came when Lewis dressed in super-short shorts stood atop an amp as hundreds of camera phones were raised to the heavens.

However, the significant role of Rilo Kiley's three male members should not be allowed to fade behind the electric magnetism of Lewis. Guitarist and vocalist **Blake Sennett** is equally skilled in melt-

ing hearts, pleading to his 'ma' during 'Ripchord', delivered on a tiny guitar which Blake ironically referred to as 'a bad mother-fucker'. Seemingly content with allowing Lewis to shine, Sennett, along with drummer **Jason Boesel** and bassist **Pierre de Reeder**, got on with the job of creating beautiful multi-layers of sound, accompanied by the female vocal backing of support acts **Orenda Fink** and **Grand Ole Party's Kristin Gundred**. Indeed, *Under the Blacklight* has thrust the musicianship of this band to the fore, because where their previous albums contained lyrics which could stop your heart, the slightly more superficial lyrical approach of their latest album has intentionally allowed their new musical direction to speak for itself.

Given that all the ingredients for magic were there - and that Rilo Kiley have delivered breathtaking shows time and time again - it is difficult to account for why it felt like there was something missing from this concert. Unfortunately, the set was filled with tracks from their newest release, which is on the whole weaker than their previous three albums and certainly not what the catatonic audience seemed to expect as they stood rooted to the spot, greeting everything (except Lewis's legs) with half-hearted applause. Their epic back catalogue, full of rare treats and potential show-stoppers was virtually ignored, with the only truly unexpected song coming in the encore in the form of the gorgeously melancholy "I Love LA". The closing song, "Portions for Foxes" went some way to rouse the audience from their slumber, with Lewis singing 'baby I'm bad news' like a true vixen; however, this injection of passion came a bit too late and the measly 70 minute set left you feeling that even if you got more it probably wouldn't get better. Disappointingly, at a time when Rilo Kiley should be at the top of the game, playing to their biggest audiences off the back of heated media attention, the only thing that truly sparked on that stage was Lewis's guitar strap.



Campus Cool

hodgean and hollieastman harrass stylish strangers

Nobody ever wants to be out of bed for an Economics B lecture at 9am on a Monday. Being at one of these dreadful events is a hard enough task in itself, without having to worry about whether or not your oversized knit compliments your underwear. Whilst known for their academic abilities the LSE student body is not renowned for its stylish capabilities. In the war of ULU fashionistas, who prevails? Who wins the title of campus cool? What does it take to not be campus crap? Identity hits the streets to investigate just what the identity of a typical Kings, St Martins, SOAS, UCL and of course LSE student entails. Those of you regretting your UCAS applications, see what you could have looked like if it was not Houghton Street that you are wandering down right now. We go forth and seek out some of the coolest kids in town(well north of the river...).



Kook it up at Kings

Kings College to many, Strand Polytechnic to the rest, may be akin to LSE in location but not in style. 'Alternative' with a small 'a' is the means of creating your Kings persona. Translation to: if you are male you may attempt to look as if you are in an alternative indie rock band and thus fashion is important. Tom, a second year reading War studies, states "I spend my entire student loan on vintage Fred Perry jumpers".

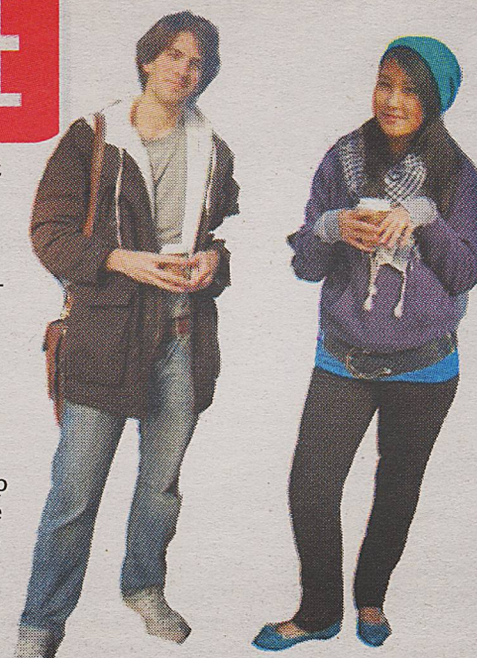
Others at King's customise. Josie, a first year English student, customises her Camden jumper with post nu rave inspired hearts. Bringing year nine fashion into today.



UCL The epitome of Public Schooling

University College London has long been recognised as the flocking point of the Oxbridge rejectees. The concept that Daddy bought me a pony so I couldn't afford Vogue does somewhat spring to mind. Landed gentry fashion, Rugby shirts, or regular shirts 'livened' up by a V neck jumper, where manners and table etiquette come before one expressing oneself through ones clothing. Angus, a first year reading German and Italian, wears a simple Rucker's shirt and jeans, just like back at Eton.

Kate, a first year Spanish and Italian student, adopts skinny's and boots with big collar and scarf combination. UCL London's global university, not London's glamorous one.



We have style and a lot eLSE

The good old LS of E. Whilst it may be fully acknowledged that Houghton Street is not a Parisian Catwalk, the identity of the standard LSE student need not be an the suit wearing Investment banker protege, or an Ugg wearing Rah. James, a second year Government student, shows how rocking up in causal jean and a hoodie can still be a fashion statement. Mel, a second year reading Econmics, dons large knit wear, a vintage belt and freedom fighter scarf as a means of adding life and politics to her attire.

Central St Martin's College of Art and Design students have style oozing from every oraphis. Okay, so guaranteed if you are going to go to Art school a certain amount of effortless cool is a necessity, even the way that one sneezes if judged by lighting and composition.

Jonnie, a first year Graphic's student at St Martins, teams military hat and boots with bright jumper and coat. Sarah, a third year Textiles student, goes for a more subtle approach, donning a puff ball and patent lace ups.

Showing those at St Martins are there to bash down, stir up and reform the fashion boundaries.



I am so cool I could just die, like right now, St Martins

The School of African and Oriental Studies, or SOAS in common speak, is well known for its alternative style of academia. This indie flare transcends into the student body. Nabinah, a second year studying Music and History, embraces intellectual chic with her cloak and beret noir ensemble.

Jessica, a post graduate studying Violence and Conflict development adopts the ethical consumerism, voicing her passion for nosing around in Charity shops and the eclectic modern hippy look. Showing that saving the world and style are two peas in an organically grown, fair trade, free range pod.



I am going to save the world, and look dam good whilst I do it, SOAS



STYLE

Fancy a drink from the furry cup? *alicepfeiffer*

Thirsty? Why don't you pour yourself a large, refreshing glass of pussy?

No, I haven't gone mad, nor am I recruiting actors for the upcoming 'Alice in Penisland Part II'.

No, tragically enough, I am quoting a drunk, ape-like man's chat up line last Saturday night (which I unfortunately experienced first hand). He was proudly opening a white, phallic can (no need to expand on the colour), where, amidst swirly lines almost mistakable for pubic hair, stood, in neon pink letters 'Pussy. Natural Energy'. 'Want a sip of my pussy?', he added, roaring in self-amusement.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, I kid you not. Please welcome 'Pussy', the brand new energy drink- 100% Stylish 100% Refreshing- as the website specifies.

Launched a few weeks ago, I first came across it this weekend. As one can imagine, it ensured an entire evening of army jokes and blushing girls. It soon turned into what seemed to be a cutout scene from American Pie 'I'm feeling sick, I've had too much pussy; if only pussy were this cheap', etc etc, you name it, I heard it.

In a time where it was still acceptable for James Bond to combat Pussy Galore and where Prince sang about Pussy Control, referring to female genitalia in these terms was still in nudge-nudge wink-wink territory. Today, the double-entendre has virtually disappeared.

A drink called 'cock' wouldn't produce the same reactions. It would become a source of giggle amongst girls, would remain untouched by (straight) men and wouldn't be problematic in the gay scene. Phallic references, 'having the balls', often suggests courage, being a 'real man'. Pussy, slang used by men at men, is a) a vagina b) (as in getting some) getting laid and c) (being a) being a coward.

What does this suggest about women? Is a woman merely a cockless man? A coward and a woman is essentially the same thing as none of them 'have the balls'? Is a woman a non-man, defined by what she doesn't have and hence is reduced to her engine, her service to men?

In other words, a 'real man', a fully cocked one, should know pussy, know how to hunt it with success, have access to one (preferably on a regular basis) and now even buy it in a corner store- but certainly not be associated to one. Is a penis valued through its power over the non-penis?

How about a drink called 'Jew'? Packaged in a gold can with dollar signs 'Jew- rich in

taste', why is that more offensive than 'Pussy- natural energy'? Technically, 'Jew', like 'pussy' isn't illegal but both carry unspoken social boundaries.

'Pussy' operates in the same way: by hiding behind tongue-in-cheek humour, it is uniting traditional, growling heterosexuality, from frat boys to army lads to bond over one big locker room joke.

This is shamelessly bringing back chauvinistic values, which one would have, thought dead, or at least illegal after the 60s. Through its loungy-ibiza-like appearance, it markets Pussy as the essential accessory to a life of crystal and private jets. The joke is easy and the message is clear 'I like you like pussy-money-weed'

Marketing is male-dominated, both in its production and consumption: men and women both make and spend money, but both processes happen within patriarchal boundaries. In other words, yes women work and have a purchasing power, but the woman purchased (the hair-flicking, stilet-toed identity sold with the drink/hand bag/washing powder) is a male construction, defined and produced for and by a male gaze.

It's a man world where 'boys will be boys', still joke openly about women's bits, read all about them in FHM and watch films that revolve around creating apple pie substitutes for them.

The problematic area lies in the transition from teenage humour to sophisticated marketing ploy. How did one go from macho teenage jokes to 'pussy party- because we want all our pussies to mix'?

'Pussy', as a drink and as a concept, suggests the most extreme form of objectifying: it is cheap, available everywhere, a little alcohol with it helps. Read as a joke or not, it suggests that a woman is no more than the blurry surrounding to a man's Saturday night quest.

All in all this is symptomatic to an increasingly desperate capitalist regime paralleled to a general regression of women's rights. One must not forget that this inscribes itself in a world experiencing a rise of reactionary politics, new anti-abortion laws (that pussy won't deliver a child nine months later) and general loss of feminist values amongst men and women in popular culture.

What came first? The pussy or the cock? The snake or the apple? Let's all discuss it around a testicle on the rocks.



sex & gender

FILM

Point of no return? *Deborah Hyams encounters Encounter Point and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*

One frequent argument in the mainstream media, and recently at LSE, is that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is 'immensely complicated'. People maintain that it is somehow unique, that its 'millennial roots' differentiate it from all the other conflicts involving land, religion, identity, or refugees. Apart from the ridiculous corollary of such exceptionalism (does this mean that all the other conflicts, most of which receive far less Western media coverage than Israel-Palestine and are even less understood, are 'simple?'), the major implication is to discourage any action on the issue. If the situation is too complex for ordinary people to understand, and 'solutions' are solely the province of politicians and 'neutral' experts, we are left with a continuation of the status quo.

Most of those who are privileged in Israel and Palestine today—mainly, but not exclusively, Israeli Jews—do not view the resulting stasis as a problem. Not surprisingly, those whose rights are consistently denied take a different opinion. Most Palestinians, and the increasing number of Israelis who are waking up to the reality 'on the ground', do not waste time explaining the conflict's 'complexity'—they are far too aware that the longer ordinary people are disempowered and the 'status quo' continues, the more walls are built, settlements expanded, and unequal and oppressive separation entrenched.

The Israelis and Palestinians profiled in the documentary *Encounter Point* are inspiring because they each reject the 'complexity' argument and in their own way try to do something to change the status quo, day by day and person by person. One does not have to agree with everything they say or do to appreciate that at least they have decided not to wait for the politicians or give in to the pundits' pessimism. Gandhi exhorted people to "be the change you wish to see in the world," and the eight people featured in the film have tried to follow his advice. For some, the catalyst for their activism was the sudden loss of close relatives; for others, long years in Israeli prisons or the slow realisation that reality for their Palestinian neighbours was very different from life inside the boundaries of their West Bank settlement. They do not all agree with each other, which is one of the strengths of the film, but at least they have not resigned themselves to indifference or despair.

Filmed and produced by Just Vision (www.justvision.org), a non-profit organisation dedicated to informing Israelis, Palestinians, and the international community about "Palestinian and Israeli joint civilian efforts to resolve the conflict nonviolently," *Encounter Point* (www.encounterpoint.com) packs quite a lot into 85 minutes, but in some ways what is left out is as revealing as what is included. In telling the stories of West Bank Palestinians and Jewish Israeli activists and how they work together, there is footage of daily life

amidst checkpoints, settlements, and the Wall in the West Bank, and demonstrations, meetings, and a previous suicide bombing in Israel. But there is very little footage of Gaza, and none of refugee camps in the West Bank or Palestinian towns or villages inside Israel. The focus of the film, and of the activists profiled in it, is the territories occupied by Israel in 1967: the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem.

As someone who lived in Israel and the West Bank and worked extensively with Palestinian and Israeli activists, I agree that the 1967 occupation is important, and that ending it is key to 'solving the conflict' as several of those in the film argue. But it is not the whole story. The reality is that today, similar processes of exclusion and segregation operate in the Galilee and the Negev (inside Israel's pre-1967 boundaries) as in the West Bank: Palestinian land is confiscated so that Jewish Israeli settlements can be expanded. Genuine peace will require dismantling the system of Jewish privilege that has been entrenched in Israel since 1948. Meanwhile, just as the Palestinian refugees in Deheisheh (the camp near Bethlehem where I lived and worked) have rights, so do those living in camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and beyond.

Can all these stories be heard in an 85-minute film? No, but that doesn't mean the film should give no indication that such stories exist. Two of the people profiled in the film (Palestinian Ali Abu Awwad and Israeli Robi Damelin) did refer to these issues in the question and answer session that followed the screening, but the film itself could have acknowledged the issues arising from 1948. Would this just have played into the "conflict is too complex and therefore inevitable" line I argued against above? Not necessarily. There are grassroots groups and individuals working to bring justice for Palestinian refugees, or real equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel, including joint Palestinian-Israeli efforts like Ta'ayush (www.taayush.org), Zochrot (www.nakbainhebrew.org), and the Alternative Information Center (www.alternativenews.org). And there are villages like Bil'in (www.bilin-village.org), where Palestinians, Israelis and internationals have stood together (nonviolently) week after week to protest the Wall and the 'status quo' of isolation, separation, and lost livelihoods it has brought.

I include these web addresses to give you a taste of the activism in Israel and Palestine beyond the two main organisations featured in the film, the Parents Circle/Families Forum (www.theparentscircle.com) and Windows for Peace (www.win-peace.org), and also because the film itself (which I do recommend seeing, whatever your views on 'the conflict!') is not yet widely available in the UK (though you can order the DVD through the *Encounter Point* website). Unfortunately, I did not find a good links page on either the Just Vision or *Encounter Point* websites—a pity given the publicity the film has generated and the stated mission of Just Vision to publicise Israeli and Palestinian activism. There are lots of ordinary Palestinians and Israelis trying to make a difference like those profiled in *Encounter Point*, and there is an ever-increasing amount of information about their efforts on the web. So the next time someone tells you that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is 'too complicated' or 'insoluble', I would encourage you to think outside the box and browse some websites you don't usually visit. You might find things that surprise you or question what you thought you knew, which is what *Encounter Point* is all about.



Graphic Literature

inspired by a recent public lecture at the LSE on the political merits of graphic novels and cartoons in a globalized world, our reviewers examine the literary aspects of the medium

josephcoterill reviews *Watchmen* by Alan Moore

simonwang reviews *Maus* by Art Spiegelman

If Flaubert had written comics, he would have written *Watchmen*. As it is, Alan Moore is still a genius. Yes, this is a book about super-heroes. In an alternate, screwed-up 1985 on the verge of nuclear war, someone is killing the costumed vigilantes left over from an earlier crime-fighting fad. The novel has only one authentic superhuman - Dr Manhattan, given omnipotence by a nuclear accident, and probably the novel's most compelling psychological study.

The gulf that the text creates between Manhattan and the other heroes makes it an excellent extended riff on the meaning of authority. The human vigilantes exist in an uneasy state of post-veneration, in a world where hero worship has become too close to fascism. By contrast, Manhattan's powers have turned him into a cold post-human. *Watchmen* also bends the traditional comics dichotomy between heroes and villains in a mind-blowing twist at the story's end.

It all amounts to a ruthless psychological realism that had never been seen in comics before, and which was no mean feat for a text that abandoned the genre's stylistic shibboleth of using thought-bubbles. We never hear from the characters themselves what they are thinking in real-time, making the symbolism and juxtaposition of the narrative all the more powerful.

The storyboard structure is like a Renaissance fresco of frozen action and beautiful primary colours. Strips mirror strips, repeat each other, and juxtapose to create new narrative linkages. In short, *Watchmen* is a summation of the comics art. Finally the thematic structure is out of this world, and it would take several readings to appreciate it. For example, *Watchmen* is soaked in tropes of time - from obvious signs, like an obsession with images of watches and clocks, to buried treasure like the narrative device of superliminal tachyon particles, and the fact that one of the vigilantes models himself after an owl. Very few graphic novels achieve this symbolic richness.

Time, memory, authority: *Watchmen* is obviously not just a very good graphic novel and a deconstruction of super-heroes: it is an ambitious metaphor for the artifice of narrative. I told you it was Flaubertian.

When *Maus* was published over twenty years ago, people were already overwhelmed by the existence of a multitude of Holocaust stories. Yet *Maus* did something different - it used a medium never attempted by another (at the time) to describe those terrible events: the graphic novel. The book encapsulates the popular phrase 'a picture speaks a thousand words' and uses pictorial images to complement written imagery.

Maus is essentially two stories interwoven. One is Spiegelman's father's tale of life and survival in Nazi Poland, and ultimately Nazi concentration camps. In the account, Jews are drawn as mice, the Nazis as cats, the Americans as dogs, and the Poles as pigs. Immediately the relationship between the various characters in the book becomes obvious, and any events that happen in the story become even more vivid. It's a technique that reminds readers of the inhumane practices of humans at the time. It also allows Spiegelman to approach a subject matter that is usually harrowingly personal in an innovatively fresh light.

The second story is Spiegelman's own account of how he interviewed his father to learn more about his haunted past, highlighting their unique, and at times difficult, relationship. Spiegelman finds it difficult to understand his father's behavior as he interviews him, but also realizes that it is impossible for him to empathise completely with the struggles that his father must have endured. This, coupled with other problems such as coping with the death of his mother, creates a very interesting contrast to his father's Holocaust story that runs in parallel.

Ultimately, the Holocaust is one of the most horrible episodes in history. It is one that cannot and should not be forgotten. *Maus* renews this brand of survival tale in a way that makes it more accessible for all ages and generations without belittling the experience of those who lived through it. It amounts to more than a narrative of what happened, but into a story of struggle and of hope.

LITERATURE

Sexuality and the City

Naeem Kapadia reviews *Smilin' Through*

This month The Drill Hall presented *Smilin' Through* by Billy Cowan, winner of the 2003 Writing Out award for Best New Gay/Lesbian Play, as part of a series of works to commemorate its 30th anniversary.

Set in Belfast in 1998, *Smilin' Through* is a funny and heartwarming tale of a dysfunctional Irish family coming to terms with each other. Peggy Morrow (Gillian Hanna) has long terrorised her son and husband with her domineering ways,

drunken revelry and forceful personality. Used to running her working-class home with an iron feather-duster, she gets the biggest shock of her life when her son Kyle (Declan Harvey) announces that he is gay and wishes to move in with his boyfriend. A devout Protestant, the thought is appalling to Peggy and she immediately asks Kyle to leave the house.

Kyle however decides otherwise, stubbornly locking himself in his room and declaring to be on hunger strike until she comes to terms with who he is. Harvey and Hanna play off each other well and maintain a level of physical comedy that is enjoyable to watch. Neil Irish's split-level

set, cluttered with homely bric-a-brac and situated just feet away from the audience, gives it a feeling of intimacy and draws one into the family drama as it unfolds.

Amongst the supporting cast, particularly entertaining are Colm Gormley as an ineffectual police officer and Billy Boyle's stellar cameo as an effeminate Cardinal in resplendent purple robes who arrives to knock some religious sense into Kyle. Natalie Wilson's directing is largely competent though a touch clumsy, tending to lapse into melodrama and being poorly paced in parts.

Cowan's script is well-layered though downright cheesy at times, evoking an equal measure of laughter and pathos. Peggy's mulish and unyielding ways are slowly broken down over a series of surreal, musically-inspired dreams where she encounters her childhood singing idol Nelson Eddy (where did that come from?) who helps her to let go of her emotional baggage and accept her son. Kyle, for all his childish petulance, is revealed to have a strong resolve motivated by love for his mother and even puts his relationship with his boyfriend on hold to mend things with her.

Peggy's narrow-mindedness and refusal to coun-

tenance her son's homosexuality is intended to be a metaphor for the much larger issue of acceptance of minorities in society. The play itself is a poster for the difficulty of coming out to one's family, a perennial concern of the gay community. However, considering the ubiquity of queer theatre that has sprouted up in recent years, one rather wishes that Cowan had delivered a more eloquent plot with richer characterisation. Though socially relevant, his premise ultimately feels laboured and formulaic and operates like a vaguely amusing TV sitcom at best.

Clichéd and bizarre in parts, *Smilin' Through* is nonetheless a feel-good family drama and an amusing way to spend an evening off West-End. If nothing else, it might just bring a smile to your face!

What is the Drill Hall?

The Drill Hall is London's premier LGBT performance space and is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year with several exciting new works including 'Bitch Slapped by God - An Apocryphal Christmas Carol', a Christmas rantomine featuring a protest march by a million Santas, a host of nursery rhyme characters and tons of razor-sharp satire about the Bush administration (5 Dec '07 - 6 Jan '08 (£15/£10 concessions),

Viva La Diva - a celebration of the flamboyant female performers who have inspired and delighted gay/lesbian audiences over the past 100 years (11 Dec '07 8pm (£15/£10 concessions) and the 'Blow the Fuse Jazz Club' (18 Dec '07 8pm (£15/£10 concessions))

Tirelessly pursuing further understanding for the gay community within British society, the Drill Hall has hosted past productions which have dealt with topical and controversial gay issues. In the past year, there has been a talkshow on AIDS, a poignant play about the infamous Stonewall gay riots in America in the 1960s, and a forum about the uneasy relationship between homosexuality and the penal system.

For more information about Drill Hall and to find out more about their productions you can visit their website www.drillhall.co.uk

Just a Reminder...

Tonight is the last night of the LSESU Drama Society's production of...

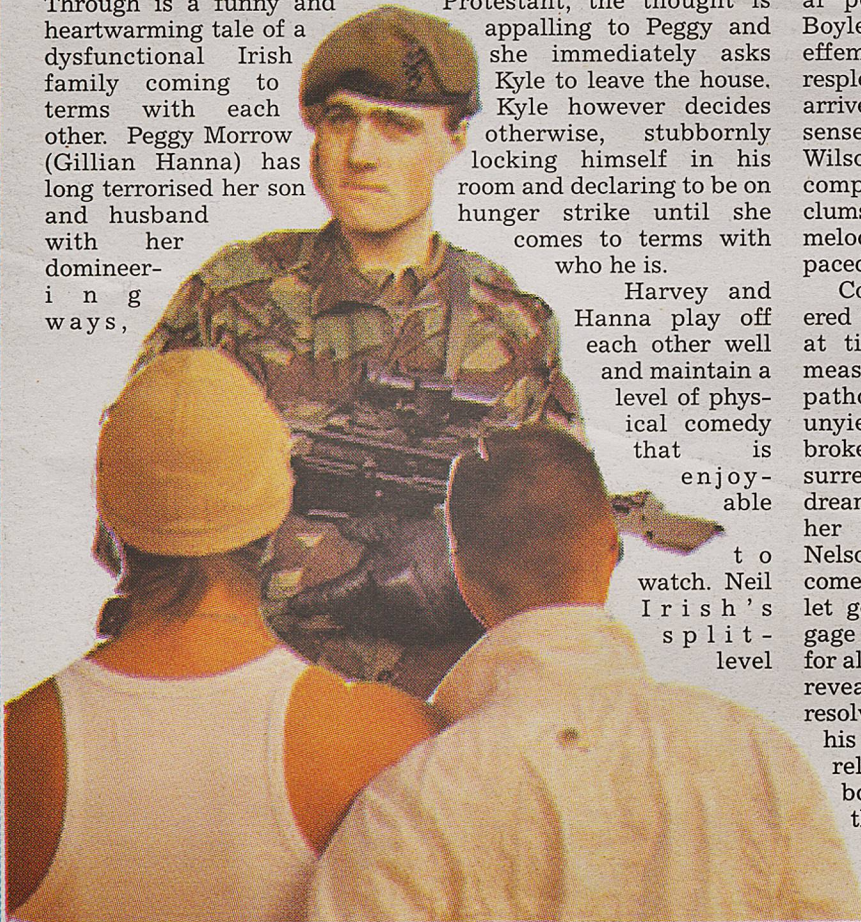
THE EXONERATED

A Play by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen

Where: The Underground

When: 7:30 pm.

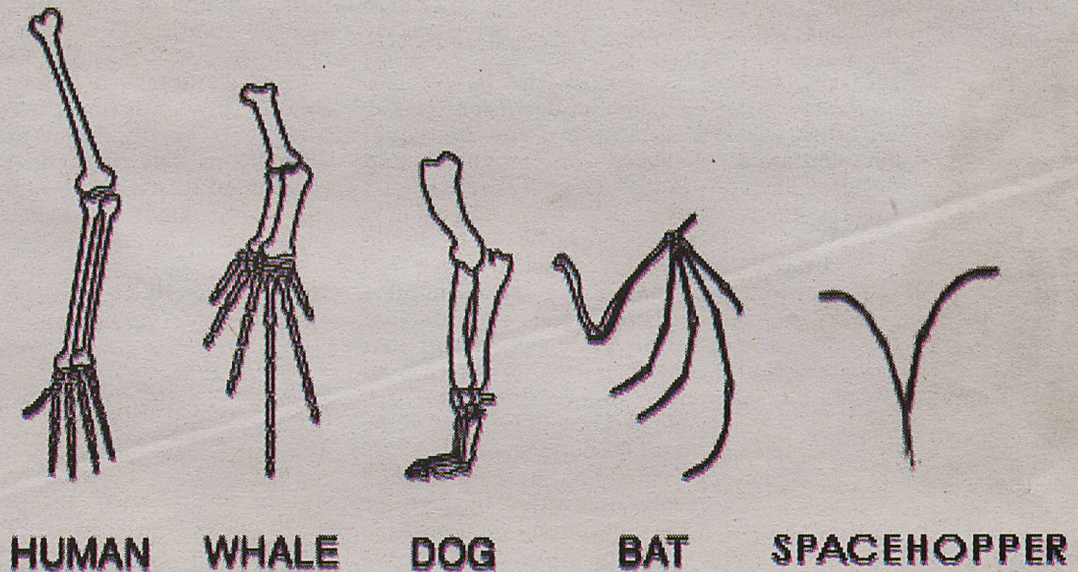
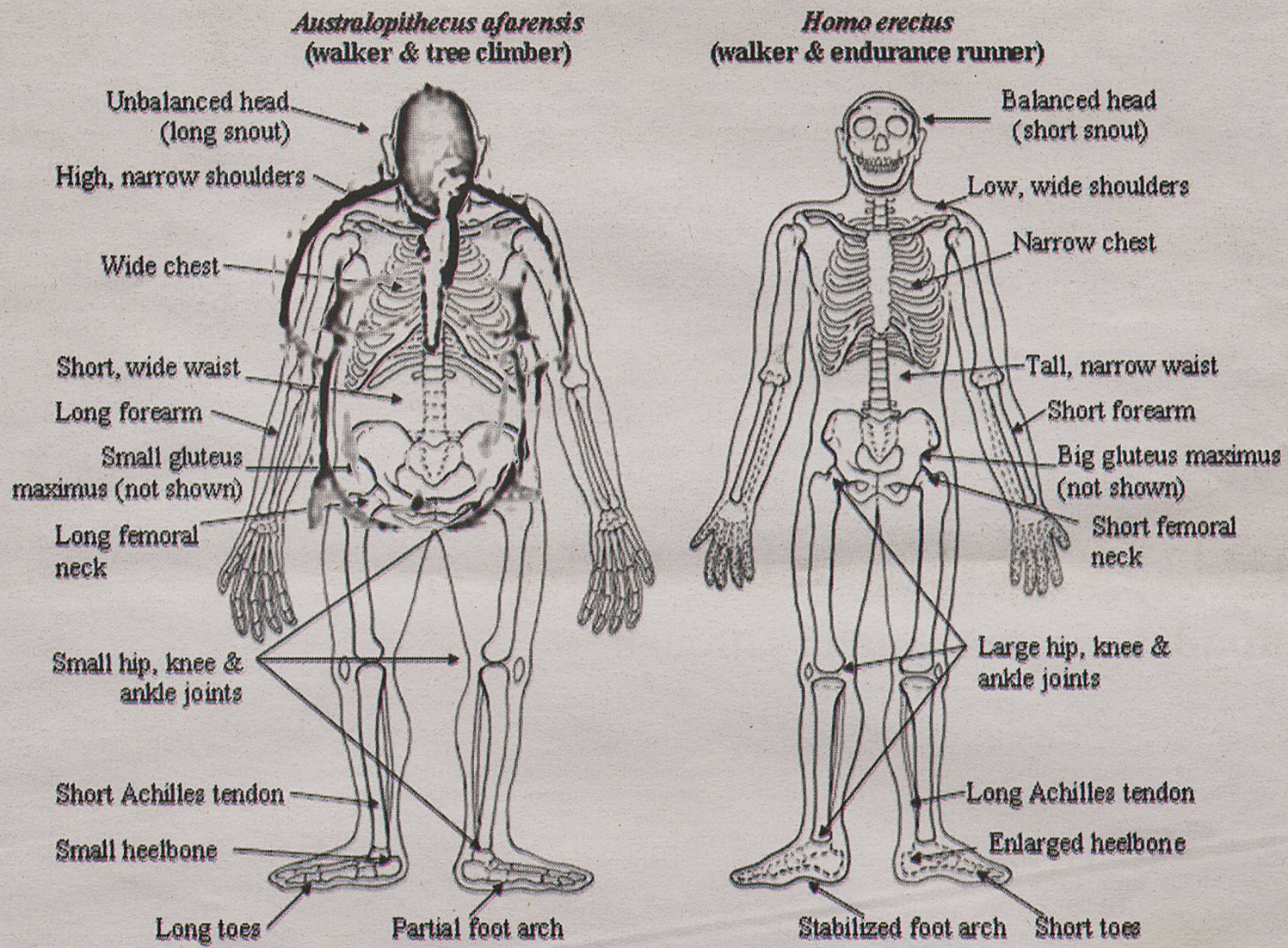
Price: £3 for drama society members and £4 other-



THEATRE

EVOLUTION

A BEGINNERS GUIDE



HUMAN WHALE DOG BAT SPACEHOPPER

Running From Demons

The lawlessness in the Pakistani-Afghani border area has made the resurgence of the Taliban a serious concern and threatens the stability of the entire region

By Madeeha Ansari

The end is nigh. The time of the bearded barbarians is upon us. Has been upon us, will be upon us, till the world finds another demon to blame for all that goes wrong.

Not to dismiss the talibanisation demon as a figment of the Western imagination. It is indeed there, and has been skulking in the background for some time now – especially in the case of Pakistan. In addition, Pakistan's "Western Frontiers" are geo-strategic regions, the instability of which has very real implications for the US, China, Iran as well as India. That is why it is important for the world to tread carefully, and address the right questions. Where did this "demon" come from? How and why was it allowed to grow to these present proportions? If we are to put our guns down for a moment, perhaps we will be able to see it taking a slightly more human form. And then, perhaps we shall be able to apprehend it better.

The strategic importance of the area straddling the borders of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran is, in some measure, responsible for the situation today. During the '80s, it became a convenient breeding ground for armies of militants to fight the state-sponsored Jihad in Afghanistan, on behalf of the US. This was conducted through the medium of "deeni madrassahs" – centres of religious instruction that traditionally played a role of considerable social importance. Thus the short-term objectives of the proxy war thwarted the shape of an institution that was originally meant to provide children with food, shelter and some form of education.

Another consequence of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was a virtual dissolution of the

Pakistani-Afghan border. There was unregulated movement of men and materials across the Durand Line, which has remained more or less flexible ever since. This meant that the northern areas were directly influenced by the neighbouring Taliban regime; indeed, their conditions made them highly susceptible to its militant brand of Islam. After the ouster of the regime, the Waziristan region in particular became a sanctuary for the Taliban, many of whom shared the language and culture of the fierce, proud Pashtuns.

Waziristan is part of what was known as the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) of Pakistan. The term is self-explanatory – the government has only ever had nominal control over the tribal system dominating the region. As a result, development projects on the part of the state have been minimal. The literacy rate is 17.4%, there is one doctor per 7,670 people and gun control is unheard of.

A sizable chunk of the North West Frontier province, therefore, had been left to its own devices – until this policy became inconvenient. Exactly the same can be said of the 10,000 madrassahs all over the country, housing over 1.5 million students. No one cared to examine the curriculum, or the conditions of the scabies-ridden children deprived of any kind of softer influences. There seems to have been no system to monitor madrassah funds, derived from sources both foreign and indigenous. Nor has there been any check on the exploitative political agents that have altered the colour of these essentially philanthropic organisations.

We stand where we are, therefore, through sheer negligence. It is not only the state that

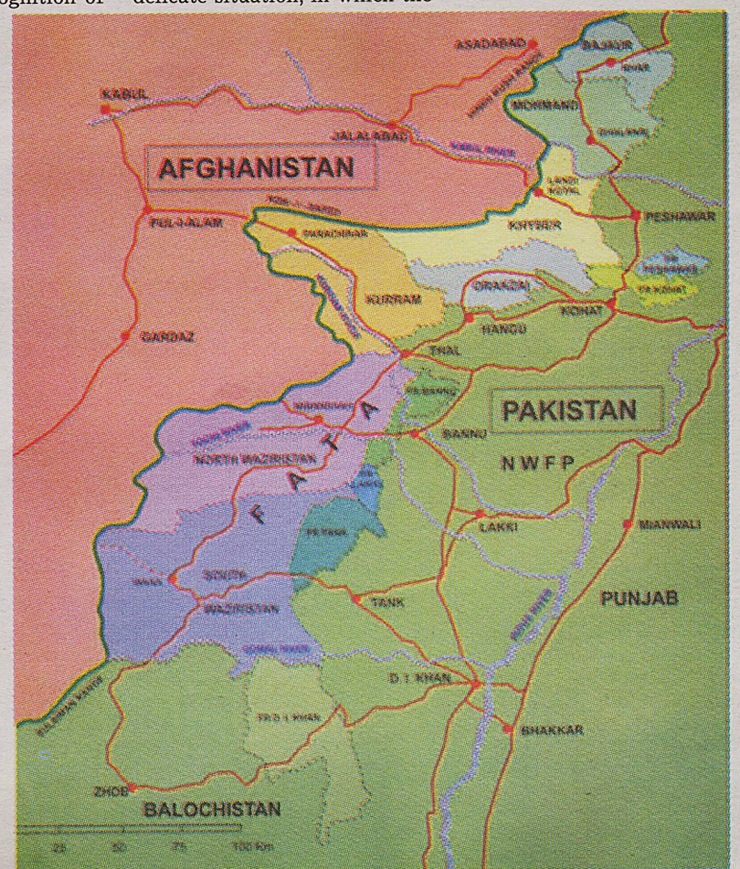
can be held accountable; it is also the public, which chose to ignore the huge fault-lines in society (until the Lal Masjid brigade struck shockingly close to home). And now it has come to this. The conflict between the army and the people of Waziristan has been continuing since 2004, and has only served to consolidate its position as a semi-independent state. The fragile Waziristan Accord of 2006 offered a de facto recognition of

this independence for the first time, in exchange for the promise that the "Al Qaeda" agents in the region either be given up or kept under control. However, the Accord hardly constituted a solution. Violence resumed in 2007, and has since followed a well-worn vicious cycle. Most recently, the beautiful Swat region has been ravaged by heavy fighting between the "Pakistan Taliban" and the national army. The food supply to the area has been cut off, wooden houses are being destroyed by the shelling, and the threat of starvation is among the factors stimulating evacuation. It is a desperate situation, in which "militants" accompanying refugee women and children are being arrested, perhaps in order to justify mounting civilian

and military casualties.

The problem is, the possession of a beard indicates little in the context of the NWFP (North West Frontier Province). One cannot purge the entire population of the province. That is something that also needs to be understood by the proponents of the War on Terror. To be pushing the government towards hard-line action may not be the wisest strategy in the long run. It is a delicate situation, in which the

people's loss of faith in the government needs to be restored. Peace, however uneasy, may provide the space to do that, and to carry out much-needed reform programs. The pursuit of violence can only have two possible consequences: resentful, short-term submission; or the creation of fully-fledged "Islamic Taliban Emirates". Either way, the "demon" lives.



...taheen:
 ...being spread in our names is a lie
 ...death on our forehead are the signs of
 ...ch you know us - we are not that
 ...ch you look at us - we are not that
 ...s is not us...
 ...g of night one loses one's way
 ...he dark so much that we are burning
 ...g all around us...
 ...re being spread in our names are lies
 ...e way the lesson of living together
 ...scared of each other,
 ...hose faces are on your hands
 ...leep sea - our wounds are deep.
 ...re being spread in our names are lies

IDEOLOGY of Separation

Eastern religion, Western cynicism
and the prospect of cultural prejudice

By Al Mansour

It is claimed that we live in a post-ideological world. A world in which exponential advances in science and the enlightenment of reason have transcended our consciousness beyond the impermeable boundaries of ideological frameworks. In 1992, Francis Fukuyama famously asserted that the collapse of the Soviet Union not only affirmed the end of communism, it also marked the “end of history”. With the most significant ideological counter-balance to western, political and cultural sensibilities out of the picture, the position of capitalism and democracy has thus been permanently solidified as the sole determining force in world affairs; we have reached the end-point of mankind’s ideological evolution and our collective history has culminated in the universalisation of liberal democracy as the final form of human government.

However, the immense vacuum left by the Soviet enemy was quickly

filled by mythification of a new enemy, an image perpetuated under the facade of radical Islam and apocalyptic prospects of impending terrorists attacks. This is proof enough that the ideological forces which determine the course of socio-political discourses have not disintegrated, but are increasingly utilised with more ferocity. The crucial difference is that unlike the mighty Soviet Union, ‘Al Qaeda’ and global networks of terror are decentralised entities fraught with ambiguity. They have been constructed for the sake of public imagination and their perceptions are sustained through campaigns of fear, over-estimated threats and exaggerated rhetoric. The danger is that the deliberate imprecision of this antagonism leads to the generalisation of hostility. A general public with a heightened sense of security is indifferent to the legitimacy of popular discourse. Under this mentality, entire groups of people are cast under the

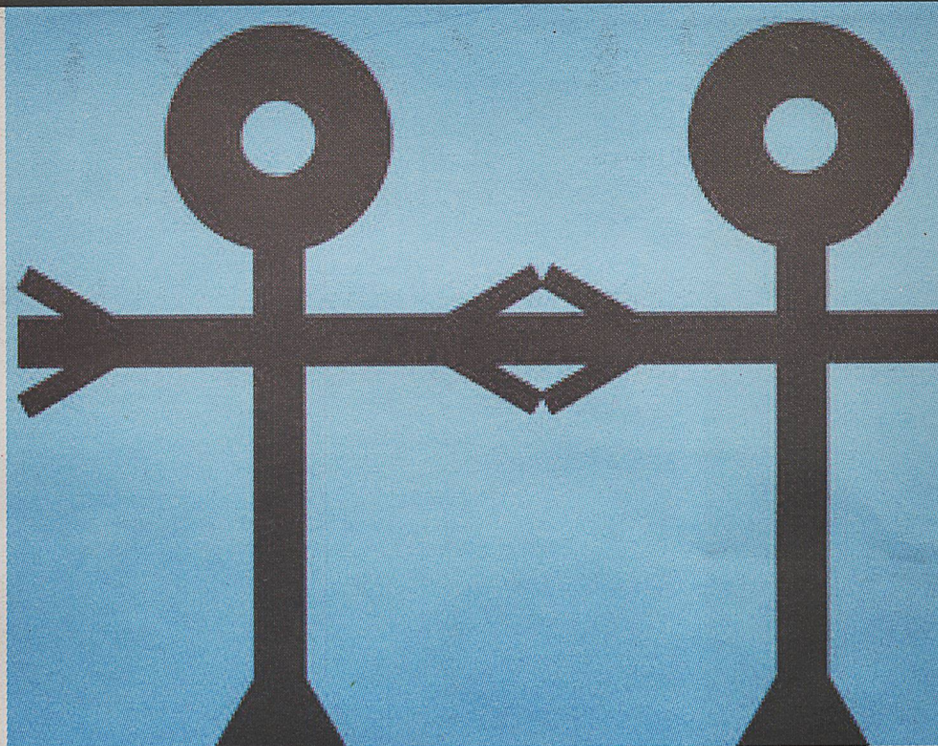
suspicious gaze of ‘threatened’ democracies and are typecast as a whole.

The real significance lies in the nature of the ideological rift between the west and the east. We assume that the rising level of Islamist threat pertains directly to the role of religion within the broader cultural sensibilities of people in the Middle East. On the other hand, our own attitudes towards religion and other belief systems are marked by intense disillusionment. We are increasingly cynical, sceptical and dismissive of anything entailing ideological commitment. From Christianity to Marxism, nothing is spared from mockery. This form of ideological promiscuity is an extension of our refusal to establish a firm allegiance to any belief. Everything, including morality, is relative and, as such, commitment to any broad set of principles is deemed inflexible and futile. That is why we maintain an ironic distance from everything we do not want to be per-

ceived associated with. This enables us to observe and ridicule from a distance anything that we judge below our intellectual capacity. This distance is said to be ironic because it also presents the opportunity to people to derive pleasure from the very same things they consider below them: enjoying Christmas despite our harsh views towards its futility; participating in the workforce while we are adamantly against capitalism, and everything else that we shamelessly consume and indulge in as ‘guilty pleasures’ are all different expressions of the same cultural contradiction inherent to the modern condition of the individual.

The real hazards emerge when this attitude is extended through to other cultures. It is dangerously easy to project wide beliefs onto people of different cultures and ethnic identities through distance. Much like myths of ideological enemies, these beliefs are also ascribed externally

and have little credibility or authenticity. The understanding of this phenomenon is of utmost importance due to the historically sensitive times in which we live. The people who want to convince us that the prospect of the so-called ‘clash of civilisations’ is imminent capitalise on our cynicism to establish an image of the people of the other side as credulous, narrow-minded, dogmatic radicals whose beliefs pose a fundamental contradiction to our very nature. The fragile state of world affairs coupled with our confused attitude towards our own and other people’s beliefs, have considerably increased the prospect of cultural and political prejudices. This is why it is crucial to gain a new understanding of the ideological processes that give rise to this condition, and discontinue their function.



A terrorist by any other name

What’s in a name? Possibly
Muslim hearts and minds

By Joseph Cotterill



Who have we actually been fighting for the last six years? No, really – what do we call them? Throughout the “war on terror”, as it has moved on from its early battlefields fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan and rebuilding Iraq, the United States and its allies have variously claimed to be fighting Islamists, Jihadists or – with a dubious nod to another long ideological war – Islamofascists. President George W. Bush provoked a frisson in the aftermath of the 2006 transatlantic airliner bombing plot by referring to the perpetrators as “Islamic fascists.” Since one of the first principles of war is to know your enemy – and given the first principle of this particular war, of all wars, surely, is to wrest hearts and minds in the Muslim world from the ideological alternative – this lack of clear nomenclature is a problem. Solving it, however, would finally allow the West to gain some desperately needed traction in the ideological fight. After all, in the Grimms’ fairy tale, the queen had three days to find out Rumpelstiltskin’s name, or he would take her first child in return for spinning her straw into gold.

In part, the naming issue is a problem because the original enemy of the

war on terror – the Al Qaeda organisation itself – no longer provides a firm geopolitical rationale linking together the United States’ counter-terrorist commitments scattered around Africa and Asia. Still, many western intelligence analysts have long claimed that Al Qaeda became an amorphous “brand” after the dismantling of its physical infrastructure in Afghanistan in October 2001, so that it is appropriate to group the overall terrorist threat under its moniker. (Which name, incidentally, means ‘base’ or ‘basis’, a testament to Osama Bin Laden’s simple but elegantly insane belief that his organisation’s purpose is to lay the foundations for a return to the Caliphate.) This is almost certainly wrong. Al Qaeda has returned back from the dead as a fairly centralised organisation enough times for it to remain a threat by itself, rather than become the ghostly inspiration for what the Council of Foreign Relations in 2006 called “Al-Qaedaism.” The atrocities committed by Musab al-Zarqawi’s small but vicious ‘Al Qaeda in Iraq’ group were a serious problem for the US occupation between 2004 and Zarqawi’s death in 2006. Meanwhile, ‘Al Qaeda Core’ under the presumptive leadership of Bin Laden himself

is slowly reconstituting itself as a viable political unit in the chaos on Pakistan’s lawless Northwest Frontier.

The far-flung extremist groups of the new phase of the War on Terror do pay homage to Al Qaeda, but this is almost certainly for reasons of bravado and shock value. Calling them “Al-Qaedaists” frankly overrates their intellectual provenance. Take, for example, the Islamic Courts Union that ruled parts of the stateless country of Somalia in 2006, before its deposition by invading Ethiopian forces earlier this year. They are one reason why the United States is interested in extending the war to Africa, a battleground Al Qaeda ironically vacated some time before 9/11 (Osama Bin Laden was a guest of the Sudanese government before moving to Afghanistan). However, the supposed extremist elements of the ICU, such as the imposition of a harsh interpretation of sharia law, had more to do with its tribal origins than a reaction to the chaotic onset of modernity in the Middle East. Somalia has been without modernity for some time. The ICU also shows how misnaming our enemy in the war on terror can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. By calling the Union “Islamist” without much

justification, the United States over-sold its commitment to a region which was very far from becoming a mature front of the war just yet. In the meantime, the United States has linked itself to an unsavoury regime in Addis Ababa, which will present any distancing from it by Washington as flagging in the war on terror.

For these same reasons, Islamofascism is a non-starter, as it gives a credence and a dark glamour to our opponents which they do not deserve, and which may come back to haunt us. Tellingly, the term is most current among American right-wing populists and self-styled left-wing hawks like Christopher Hitchens, who are more interested in goading the left and scoring points in the culture war than facing up to and beating the terrorist threat. Furthermore, fascism was based in mass politics and often held its own against its democratic opponents in European party systems of the interwar period. The rogues’ gallery of terrorist groups fighting the war at the moment have nothing like this appeal, and in fact developed in the absence of proper political resistance to the authoritarian ancien regimes which blanket the region, as Al Qaeda did with Saudi Arabia.

The Modernity Problem

By contrast, “Islamism” ought really to be reserved for the description of genuinely mass-based political movements in the Middle East that basically argue that Islam is the answer to the region’s modernity problem. This includes the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the political wing of Hamas. We should be careful not to lump these movements – although they are deeply unsavoury in themselves – with the extremist frontier. Though Hamas in particular falls far short of the Arab Spring that the

Americans hoped for in 2005 after the example of Iraq’s first democratic elections, these groups are the most moderate option we have to work on.

That leaves “Jihadism.” This is our best option for choosing a name, because it guts the terrorists of a broad association to Islam overall, while clearly showing their ideological modus operandi – to take one Islamic doctrine and blow it up out of context into an end in itself. Its second merit is to evoke the complete aimlessness and emptiness of the jihadists’ end goals. Since many terrorist personnel come from criminal backgrounds – like Zarqawi, a drug addict before graduating to terror – the term captures a certain mindless commitment to violence.

Coming up at last with a catch-all name for our enemies in the War on Terror could be a bad thing. It could puff them up out of proportion to their actual intellectual coherence, and encourage them to coalesce together into a substantive ideological alternative that has never really been there. Jihadism is no more a comprehensive political programme than fascism was in the twentieth century: there is nothing behind the mask. Consequently, leaders like George Bush who have referred to it as an “ideology of hate” tend to look foolish. However, the potential costs of naming are outweighed by the benefits of having a clearly defined enemy, forcing it out into the cold light of day and onto the marketplace of ideas. When the queen eventually found out Rumpelstiltskin’s name in time, he grew so angry he stamped his foot into the ground, tearing himself in two when he tried to pull it out. That would be a fitting end for the jihadists indeed.

Inter Arma Silent Leges?

Are the laws silent in war?

Torture or "enhanced interrogation"? Julia Mayersohn looks at the state of the legal debate on domestic responses to terrorism in the West

Terrorist attacks spawn emotions, and it is by this virtue that they are so effective. Victims and their families suffer physical pain and grief, passersby are left with a traumatic memory and countless more will become riveted to their televisions to watch the drama unfold. Most of all, attacks remind us of our vulnerability, and emphasize that the government was unable to protect us in our own cities, on our own transportation and in our own offices.

This is, of course, one of the aims of the terrorist groups – to undermine their targets confidence in the governments whose policies or existence they oppose. The reaction of governments to clamp down on liberties or even come out with draconian measures isn't an unexpected reaction – provoking a harsh government response may even be the goal of the attack.

Reactions come in many forms – from increased security measures to large-scale military retaliation. The goal is to reassert the ability of the government to protect and avenge its citizens. These decisions form much of our experience in the "war on terror," since now, more than ever, the home front has become the battlefield. These issues will come closer and closer to home as terrorism becomes more and more home-grown – a reality of which Londoners in particular should need no reminder.

"Enhanced Interrogation"

The use of torture on suspected terrorists and detainees – "enhanced interrogation techniques" in the words of its supporters – has shot to prominence as one of the most hotly debated tools used in the war on terror so far. Torture has long been banned under international humanitarian law. Take, for example, the United Nations Convention Against Torture of 1984, which almost all states have ratified. The US Uniform Code of Military justice also bans the use of torture by American military personnel anywhere at any time.

Nevertheless, both American and British officials have hinted darkly that attacks have been thwarted using information garnered from "enhanced interrogation" sessions. Some of these sessions have allegedly involved the extrajudicial transfer of suspects held in the West to countries where torture is rife. This process of so-called "extraordinary rendition" has always been denied by officials. On the other hand, investigations by the Council of Europe and the European Parliament in 2006 and 2007 ruled that around one thousand CIA torture flights had taken place since 2001. An investigation by British police in 2007 found that no UK airports had been used for extraordinary rendition flights, however.

An additional concept of "moderate

physical pressure" has also appeared. This is purported to include relatively mild forms of pressure used to elicit information, such as the playing of loud music in holding rooms or seating detainees on a low chair for extended periods. These are, perhaps, easier for policy makers to stomach than waterboarding, an interrogation technique straight out of the rulebook of such unsavoury forebears as the Viet Cong and Khmer Rouge. "Moderate" pressure certainly sounds like a small effort to make in order to offset the greater evil of a successful attack.

Indeed, these practices are usually meant to be reserved for so-called "ticking bomb" scenarios, a thought experiment that suggests torture is morally acceptable – even morally

required – if a terrorist has already planted a bomb in a populated area and the security services desperately need to find its location before it goes off. Advocates of this (supremely rare) exception are at a loss, however, to explain why a terrorist would spill the beans on the cusp of triumph. Even notwithstanding the moral repugnance of torture – whatever Orwellian construction is put on it – using violence to get information is a bad idea simply because it does not work.

Detention: 28, 56, 90?

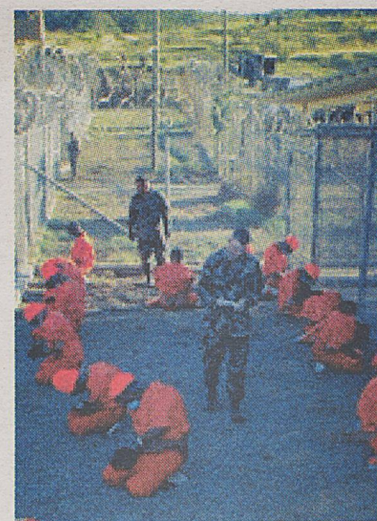
Torture is intimately connected to detention in the debate on legal responses to terrorism, ever since the first Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters were captured in Afghanistan in October 2001, presenting the US with a legal grey area. Administrative detention is the practice of interring or imprisoning an individual without charge or trial. This sort of detention is meant for use in situations where the government may not have sufficient time to assemble enough evidence for a trial, but nonetheless requires that a person be detained for reasons of public safety.

Abuse of this power to detain without trial has of course always been dangerous. This topic has been hot recently as political actors on both sides of the Atlantic propose longer holding times for detainees. In Britain, Gordon Brown's government has proposed extending the time to fifty-six days from twenty-eight. A ninety-day bill proposed under his predecessor, Tony Blair, was defeated in the House of Commons last year.

Thirdly, the practice of profiling by age, race, nationality, religion or gender has been taken on with varying levels of subtlety. Airports, police services and border controls have tried to make best use of their resources by targeting specific groups, or people who appear to be part of a group. The dynamics of this practice have to change quickly and considerably as local cells produce more attacks. Ethnic profiling for young, underemployed, Middle Eastern males wouldn't have stopped the darker 7/7 bombers or the South Asian doctors who attempted to attack a nightclub in London and Glasgow airport this year.

A grim future?

Looking at the recent political situa-



tion, the options for liberty may seem grim. Debates among Republican presidential candidates in the US have become dominated by a race to appear the toughest on terror. Mitt Romney, for example, has proposed doubling the capacity of Guantanamo Bay. The fear of terrorist attacks can harness votes like few other issues can.

But we should remember the not so distant past when nations faced with terror, even terror much more persistent than we feel now, made the decision to err on the side of liberty instead of authoritarianism. In 1978 litigation between Ireland and the United Kingdom, the European Court of Human Rights decided on an outright ban on the use of tactics which, though not considered torture, were uses of "stress positions" on IRA detainees and which had been used to elicit information. In 1999 the Israeli Supreme Court, in a nation which has suffered from many, many attacks before and since, banned moderate physical pressure in a way that the US and Britain have not.

There are lessons to be learned from the counterinsurgencies raging in Iraq and Afghanistan as well. Harsh tactics alienate as many people as they protect, and may indeed lead to the creation of more enemies in the future. Abu Ghraib still grates on the Arab Street today. This isn't a challenge that can be bested by forcing surrender and by overpowering the enemy. Efforts should focus on denying terrorists the ability to strike, deterring active terrorists from striking, and providing an alternative for those who might be tempted to take up terrorism as their cause.

There is, of course, always a decision to be made. We could suffer no attacks – Syria has had virtually no attacks from the Muslim Brotherhood since it wiped out an entire city which had become its stronghold. The massacre at Hama left more than ten thousand civilians dead, but it did crush the group effectively. Liberal democracies can, and should, make the choice to leave themselves vulnerable to some attacks, but retain much of what is important to their identity.



A couple passes an Abu Ghraib mural on a Teheran street, 2004



Ossie Fikret reviews 'My Life' by Fidel Castro

Few people can claim indifference to the character of Fidel Castro, the archetypal revolutionary charismatic leader. To many he is a hero, a symbol of defiance in the face of American hegemony; to others, a villainous tyrant and former pawn of the U.S.S.R who has run his country into the ground. One thing that is for certain is the fact that he will be remembered long after he dies. This makes a primary source from el Presidente himself so valuable to historians. Castro has never really put his own life into writing before, save a memoir of his relationship with that other great revolutionary icon (or hollow idol, if you prefer) Che Guevara. That is why this book - coming in the twilight of his life - is such a compulsive read. Based on about a hundred hours of conversation with the Spanish writer and editor of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Ignacio Ramonet, the book amounts to the longest period of access Castro has ever granted a journalist.

Cuba's cigar-smoking President and Comandante en Jefe is easily identifiable and even more easily caricatured in his khaki army fatigues - yet, the world knows next to nothing about who he really is. Ramonet delves into this seemingly mystical figure - who seems to have been born not on a sugar plantation in Cuba's Biran province, as is often claimed, but in the Sierra Maestra, where he would later fight the U.S. backed dictator, Fulgencio Batista. The story spans Castro's unruly childhood and early life as a defiant and rebellious student, right up to modern day Cuba with its numerous economic and

social difficulties. The life of the world's longest serving head of state is, as would be expected, littered with the names of historical legends. Guevara, Mandela, Kennedy, Nixon, Khrushchev and Gorbachev are just some of the dramatis personae in a worldwide drama that has seen both the rise of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin wall.

He didn't mean to put them there

'An incident': that is how Castro describes the moment when the two leviathans of the Cold War came to the brink of thermonuclear conflict - the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. For reasons that remain unclear - brinkmanship, overconfidence that the "correlation of forces" was going the USSR's way, fear of US missiles in Turkey - Khrushchev installed Soviet nuclear arms on Castro's island, sparking a tense standoff with the Kennedy administration when his plans were found out. Castro's own take on the whole sequence of events reveals a little bit more about the crisis. The contentious missiles were indeed placed with the tacit support of the Cuban regime, but, as he tells the story, only as a defence against "aggressive American foreign policy."

As far as Castro is concerned, it was the maintenance of Cuban independence that drove him to support the missile placement initially - a decision he now claims to regret. This is not due to the fact that it brought the world close to annihilation, but through his fear at the time that any leaked radioactive material (either through sabotage or military opera-

tion) could leave the island uninhabitable. Through the course of the biography, Castro also makes various other interesting statements, such as with regards to the island's relationship with the U.S.S.R. The two were not "natural allies", but rather, the alliance that formed - culminating in Cuba becoming the only member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) in the Western hemisphere - was in response to United States pressure. Cuba was in essence, forced into forming a relationship with the Soviets. Yet, for such an interesting and varied story, strewn with world leaders of the past fifty years and shedding light on the darkest parts of the Cold War, there is something wrong with this biography.

Something is rotten in Havana

Uneasiness pervades the reader's awareness from the moment one reads the introduction. Ramonet boasts in the introduction that "this version of the book has been totally revised, amended and completed personally by Fidel Castro." This undermines the very nature of the book and is symbolic of the further problems with freedom of speech in Cuba. As Hamlet said, "something is rotten in the state of Denmark" and indeed this statement is applicable to today's Cuba. This biography, although fantastically in-depth and extremely lucid, is definitely not the product of free speech. Nor should its reliability as a primary source be taken for granted.

While Ramonet speaks of Castro in glowing terms (not all of which are unfounded), one questions how far he

Fidel Castro: a Life in Revolution

1926

Born in Biran province - or in the Sierra Maestra

1945

Enters the University of Havana

1952

Batista takes power in a coup. Castro, a politically active lawyer, goes underground

1953

Rebels botch attack on army barracks. Castro arrested before release in general amnesty in 1955

1955-59

Organises resistance from Mexico, returning to fight insurgency in Sierra Maestra which soon spreads across Cuba. Castro ousts Batista at the age of thirty-two

1961

US severs ties, sponsoring unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion by Cuban exiles

1975-79

Sends Cuban troops to intervene on behalf of Marxist groups in Angola, Ethiopia and Nicaragua



Castro and the Soviet Union: close, but no cigar

really went as a journalist. Was he able to openly criticise Cuba's President, who ultimately had the power of an editor in deciding what could and could not be published in a book written about him? Someone looking for a critical account of Castro, which will push him on the issues of human rights abuses, the repression of homosexuality, democracy and freedom of speech should not expect to gain a great deal from a reading of 'My Life'. Nonetheless, the title of the book is correct - it is Castro's life as he himself sees it. The book is indeed a compulsive read, and while it may leave a bitter aftertaste in many western readers' mouths, it is as in-depth and authoritative as the world is going to get from the declining Fidel Castro. Due to illness, his brother, Raul Castro, became acting President in July 2006. Although Fidel retains ultimate authority, this revolutionary's story is surely almost over.

Castro Mk II?



Listings

www.lsesu.com

SU Executive office hours

General Secretary,
Fadhil Baker 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, Quad

Societies Officer,
Carys Morgan
Thursdays 3PM, Quad

LISTINGS

TUESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER

KNITTING
Knitting
Quad, 12.00 PM

ARTS FORUM
Meeting
Quad, 3.00 PM

LIVE MUSIC
Open Mic Night
Underground, 7.30 PM

DRAMA
'The Exonerated'
Underground, 7.30 PM

WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER

INTERNATIONAL
Global Show Auditions
H101, 1.00 PM

CATHOLIC
Mass
Chaplaincy, 1.15 PM

SWING DANCE
Beginners Swing Dance Class
Parish Hall, 7.00 PM

THURSDAY, 29 NOVEMBER

LSE SU
UGM
Old Theatre, 1.00 PM

LITERATURE
Book Club
G120, 5.00 PM

VISUAL ARTS
Life Drawing
Z329, 7.00 PM

PEOPLE AND PLANET
Lecture
(AIDS Awareness Week)
New Theatre, 6.30 PM

DANCE
Hiphop (Beginner)
Parish Hall, 7.30 PM

GAIA & TOCQUEVILLE
Hat Party
Quad, 7.30 PM

DANCE
Hiphop (Advanced)
Parish Hall, 8.30 PM

FRIDAY, 30 NOVEMBER

INTERNATIONAL
Global Show Auditions
Y002, 2.00 PM

PEOPLE AND PLANET
World AIDS Day Auction
Quad, 6.00 PM

THE BEAVER
Party
Underground, 7.30 PM

LSE SU
Crush!
Quad, 9.00 PM

SATURDAY, 1 DECEMBER

RAG
RAG Megaraid
Soho Square, 10.00 AM

MONDAY, 3 DECEMBER

DANCE
Ballet (Beginner)
Parish Hall, 6.00 PM

DANCE
Ballet (Intermediate)
G1, 7.00 PM

SWING DANCE
Improvers Swing Dance Class
Parish Hall, 7.00 PM

LGBT
Mind the Gap
Underground, 8.00 PM

Filipino Society Literature

Forum on Press Freedom in the Philippines

Press freedom, largely considered to be the handmaiden of democracy, has always provided a balance, in being able to report honestly without fear or favour. Without freedom of press, democracy is almost certainly threatened in its inability to allow its denizens to judge the government, through lack of accurate information. The Philippines is a country which boasts of being the second most dangerous place for journalists in the world in 2004 and 2005, second only to war-torn Iraq. It is with this in mind that we would like to invite you to join us in this forum on press freedom in the Philippines, with a prominent journalist, Conrad de Quiros, leading the discussion.

Room: E168
Time: 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.
Date: 3rd December (Monday)

Submissions for The Muse

LITERATURE SOCIETY: THE MUSE IS AWAITING CONTRIBUTIONS

The Literature Society is looking for submissions for the third issue of their yearly magazine, The Muse. The Muse is an anthology of creative writing works by LSE students, alumni and staff members. If you would like a chance to see your words in print (be they short stories, poems, articles on a literary topic, or theatrical sketches), send them to submissions.themuse@gmail.com.

The deadline for submissions is the end of Week 8, Michaelmas Term.

S.H.A.G.

Sexual Health and AIDS Awareness

W E E K



Have any sexual health questions? Write them down anonymously and put it in the drop box outside the SU reception

Pick up your free S.H.A.G goody bags from Houghton street, on Thursday

LISTINGS

Throughout the week:
UNICEF Art Exhibition on HIV/Aids and its impact around the world, Quad

Sexually Transmitted Infection of the Day, Quad
People & Planet World Aids Day Stall, Houghton Street

Health Society & Destin Stall, Houghton Street selling red beaded ribbons made by women living with HIV/AIDS in rural Togo for charity, Houghton Street

Monday 26th:
"Impact of HIV/Aids in the UK" 11 - 12pm in AGWR (Graham Wallis Room, 5th Floor of Old Building) by Rowan Harvey from the Terrence Higgins Trust

People & Planet Society film screening "Yesterday" and discussion 06.30pm S75
First-ever isiZulu feature film (with English subtitles) produced in South Africa in 2004 and tells the story of a young mother named Yesterday who falls ill and discovers that she is HIV positive. Snacks and refreshments provided

Tuesday 27th:
"Sexualisation and Sexual Health" - 7.30 pm D202
Panel discussion around pressures surrounding the sexualisation of women and men and its link to sexual health. Refreshments provided

Tuns Pub Quiz - Sexual Health Round

Wednesday 28th:
Oxfam Society Campaign Stall - Houghton Street
Signing students up for World Aids Day action cards to promote Health and Education for All

Test YOUR Team - 10am - 2pm, Houghton Street
Be part of a nationwide challenge and pick up your free Chlamydia testing kit from the Boots Stall and test your team! The kit is easy to use and can be sent off straight-away!

Dignitas society film showing 'RENT' the award-winning musical about living with HIV/Aids in New York 6:15pm, Z329

"Fun in the Tuns" in 3 Tuns, 7pm
Selection of games to promote Sexual Health Awareness...cucumbers and condoms, check it out

Thursday 29th:
S.H.A.G goody bag giveaways
Pick up your free Sexual Health And Guidance goody bags from the stall on Houghton Street

Form the Human Ribbon - Publicity PhotoShoot 12pm, Jon Watkins Plaza
Join Dignitas Society and form a ribbon of people in red and be photographed from above outside the library to show your solidarity against HIV/AIDS

Friday 30th:
People and Planet - World Aids Day Fundraising Auction 6-8pm Quad
Annual P&P auction of celebrity items! Come down to bid on a host of books, CDs, novelty items and 'experiences'... All money raised will go to the charity CrusAID.

S.H.A.G Crush with G.I Jonny - "Condom Happy Hour" 8 - 9pm.
G.I jonny's will be out in full swing with sweets to boot, show your G.I condom to the bar staff for a £1 pint of beer or cider

TO BE FEATURED IN THIS SPACE,
SEND ALL LISTINGS AND
REVIEWS TO THE LSESU
SOCIETIES OFFICER AT
SU.SOCIETIES@LSE.AC.UK

China Development

Tea and Knowledge Public Lecture
Multinational Retailers in China

Date: Wednesday 28 November
Time: 2 - 3 pm
Venue: G108
Speaker: Dr. Jos Gamble

This talk will present the key findings from a recently completed three year-long ESRC/AHRC Cultures of Consumption Programme project conducted on multinational retailers in the Asia Pacific. It focuses on the extent to which retail firms from the United Kingdom and Japan transfer their parent country human resource management approach to China and Chinese employees responses to these transferred practices, as well as the effects of multinational retailers on local customers. Dr Jos Gamble is a Reader in Asia Pacific Business at the School of Management, Royal Holloway, University of London.

GAIA

Dig out your sombreros, find those novelty sunglasses and search out your ski goggles because Gaia is having a HEADGEAR PARTY!

A joint event with the Tocqueville history society, this Underground party promises to be one of the best Headgear-based parties ever. Come down this Thursday and make sure you don't miss out!

Keep the evening free and watch this space, more details (including some very special entertainment) to follow...

10% discount on a salad, sandwich or sushi pack

Come and visit the Quad Café for a range of great tasting food and drinks. We even have a juice bar where you can create your perfect juice from a selection of fruits and vegetables.

All items sold at the Quad Café are an absolute bargain! Since it is week 8, we know your funds must be getting a bit low so we are helping your money go further. If you present this voucher to the Quad Café staff, you will receive a 10% discount on a salad, sandwich or sushi pack of your choice!*

Also, don't forget to check out 3TK in the Underground. Offers for 3TK will follow shortly...

Opening hours: Monday - Friday
9am - 6pm

*Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Photocopies are not accepted. Limited to one offer per customer, per visit. The Quad Café have the right to retain the coupon. This coupon has no cash value and is not for sale. Valid until the end of November 2007

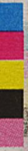




the **Beaver**

**FREE PARTY
FREE DRINKS
FREE FOOD
THIS FRIDAY**

7.30 PM, 30 NOVEMBER, UNDERGROUND



the **Beaver**

GET IN BETWEEN THE SHEETS WITH US.

Collective Meeting

Thursday 29 November, 6.30pm
Graham Wallas Room, A550

Open to all LSE Students; only Collective members may vote

Elections

Managing Editor

Deputy editor of the paper, immediately responsible for the paper's layout, design and style. Shall organise the paper's distribution, delivery and printing.

Candidates must be current members of the collective. The managing editor will be elected by the collective. Send nominations to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk

News Editor

One of three editors heading the News section. Responsible for sourcing news content, managing team of reporters, editing articles and laying out section.

Candidates must be members of the LSESU. The news editor will be elected by the collective. Send nominations to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk

PartCareers Editor

The opportunity to edit an exciting and widely-read Careers pullout. PartC enjoys close links with the LSE Careers Service and many corporate employers, as well as a wide variety of LSE alumni.

Candidates do not need to have previous experience on *The Beaver*, but should be enthusiastic and interested in the job market. The editor will be elected by the collective. Send nominations to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk

All nominations must be received by
6.30pm on Wednesday, 28 November



AIDS awareness WEEK

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS:

Monday 26th:

film showing: **YESTERDAY**

(South Africa, 2004)

the first ever Zulu feature film!

(with english subtitles)

an awesome film, a relaxed, informal showing.

drinks, snacks, discussion...

6:30pm, S75

P&P World AIDS Day Stall

on houghton st all week, raising awareness about AIDS issues & encouraging passers-by to take part in loads of campaign activities, including a giant never forget chain - one knot for each person, compelling the government to keep its AIDS treatment promise.

Also, come along to buy a beautiful AIDS ribbon, lovingly knitted by the knitting society, a help raise money to fight AIDS.

all week, houghton st, 11am-4pm

Thursday 29th: **Stop AIDS Campaign MASS Lobby**

a day of solidarity with those living with HIV, a chance to put the pressure on your MP to help the government keep its promise of universal access to treatment by 2010. **8,000** red flowers in the shape of a ribbon in parliament sq, to represent the number of people who die from AIDS each day, for info on how to make sure YOUR MP is in attendance, swing by the houghton st P&P stall.

all day, parliament square

Thursday 29th: **Public lecture**

speaker: helen epstein

The Invisible Cure:

an LSE-organised event, this lecture promises to be both fascinating and MASSIVELY popular, come early to grab a seat! P&P will be there, & will be running petition activities for people to take part in.

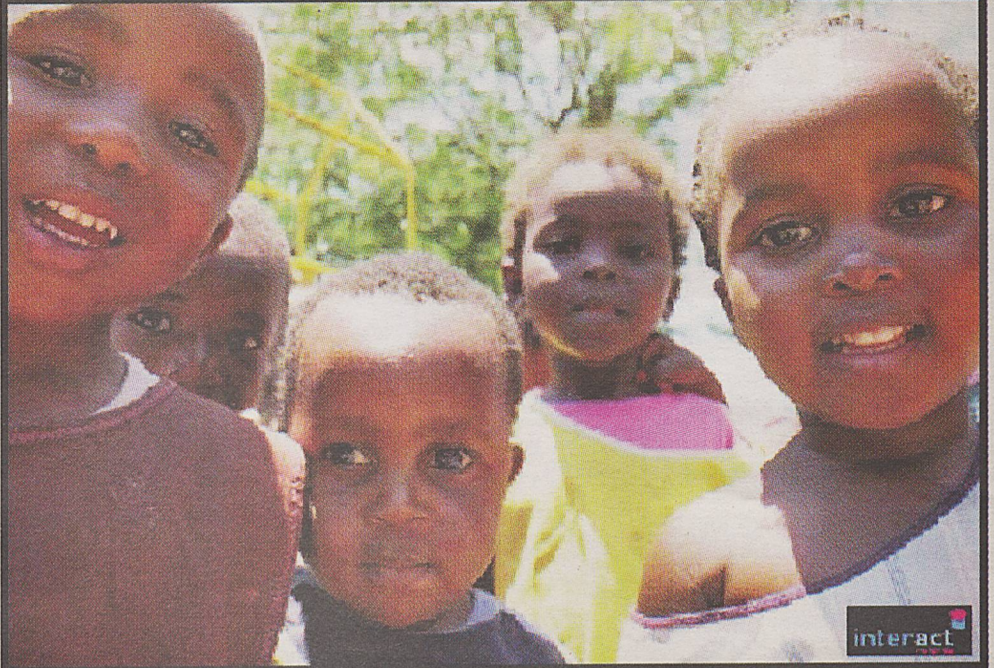
6:30pm, new theatre

Friday 30th: **World AIDS Day Fundraising Auction:**

on the eve of world AIDS day, what else could it be but the annual P&P auction of celebrity items, come down to bid on a host of books, CDs, novelty items & 'experiences'... all money raised is donated to CrusAID. end-of-week wind-down, or pre-Crush warm-up... come along for fun, food & fundraising.

6-8pm, the quad

give40 **WORLD AIDS DAY**



We're counting on you!

RAG WORLD AIDS DAY COLLECTION SATURDAY 1st DECEMBER

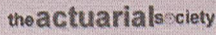
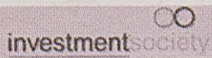


FANCY DRESS THEME VILLAINS AND SUPERHEROES!

RAG's from Leicester, Nottingham, Loughborough, East Anglia & Queen Mary's - Street and Pub collections in SOHO and the WEST END!
MEGA RAID MEETING TUE Nov 27th 4-5pm Underground BAR



PEOPLE & PLANET CAMPAIGNS ON AIDS, GLOBAL POVERTY & THE ENVIRONMENT. TO TAKE PART, VISIT OUR STALL ON HOUGHTON ST., OR EMAIL SU.SOC.PEOPLEANDPLANET@LSE.AC.UK



in association with RAG



PRESENT

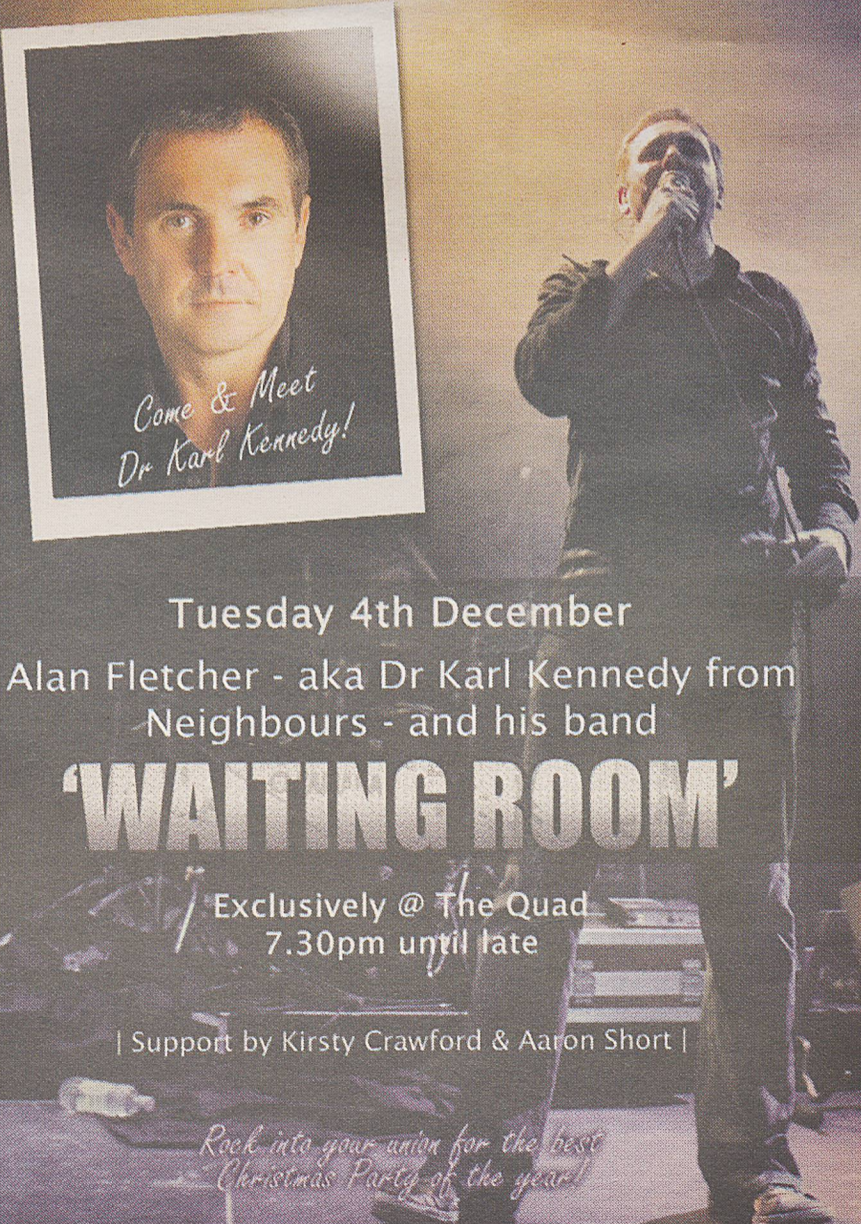
CHARITY Christmas Ball

30th NOVEMBER 19:30 - 1:00

Thistle Marble Arch

Tickets on sale NOW on Houghton Street

ticket price includes: 3-COURSE Gourmet Dinner and a bottle of wine for 2

Come & Meet Dr Karl Kennedy!

Tuesday 4th December
Alan Fletcher - aka Dr Karl Kennedy from Neighbours - and his band
'WAITING ROOM'

Exclusively @ The Quad
7.30pm until late

| Support by Kirsty Crawford & Aaron Short |

Rock into your union for the best Christmas Party of the year!

Buy direct from the Union for the best price!
OR www.ticketweb.co.uk | Price: £12.50

Men's Football

LSE sort out the GKT ladies



Nathan Capone

LSE 6ths 2
GKT 4ths 0
Berrylands

Good morning, LSE! Since you are reading this you will have already realised that the saviours of Beaver Sports (i.e. the only part of the paper that anyone actually reads) have returned. Yes, the sixth team are back, relieving you from the recent piss-poor journalistic skills of rugby.

Prior to giving you a thrilling breakdown of our match against Strand Poly, the sixths would like to make a rare venture into student politics and express their disdain for the recent fracas surrounding the Miss LSE contest. The whole thing is thoroughly contemptible. Contemptible in

that we might be denied the opportunity to appraise a collection of scantily clad ladies. If the event is short on numbers, our left-back Ed Booth is willing to put himself forward as a contestant. We think he'd look pretty good in a tiara.

Our match against GKT 4ths was a scrappy affair. Plying one's trade in the lower echelons of the ULU football league can often lack the glamour of the higher divisions. Despite this, our style was the proverbial Gisele to GKT's Jade Goody, the latter simply resorting to hoof it upfield from their goalkeeper repeatedly. Needless to say, LSE's defence held firm for the entire match, despite a couple of wobbles at the beginning of the second half. On both occasions, Wilko was equal to the challenge, making two excellent one-on-one stops. For the third time this year he was clocked on the head by an onrushing striker, but being the footballing equivalent of the cheerleader from Heroes, he is impossible to

kill (Callela may prove this theory wrong). Apparently his essay grades have begun to decline inexplicably since his first collision last season, and we notice he's been slurring his words, although that may only be on Wednesday nights.

The first goal came midway through the first half. Consistent pressure led to a corner, which Olly swung in for our own volatile Irishman, Andrew 'I sleep with Cate Blanchett' Simpson, to evade his marker and nod into the net. GKT then panicked like you might do if you woke up ginger. Their striker also continued to mutter obscenities to himself. The second duly came a minute later, a lightning-fast break putting Bobby one-on-one with the keeper. Scoring in this situation, much like fly fishing, is a matter of technique; Bobby's was sublime, sliding the ball neatly under the keeper.

Skipper Ed Frew is rumoured to make a return to action at some point having overcome an ankle

injury (not as exciting as last season's spleen injury). The rest of the team recommend he trim the fringe of his hair in order to see, otherwise he may be liable to 'do a Morrow' and stick it into his own net. It is possible some further injuries may occur during our team dinner trip to Budapest in

week ten. We worry that some of us might not make it back quite the same.

We hope we haven't caused too much offence with this article. Last time we managed to insult the dyslexic community and received some fairly awful letters in reply. Sorry about that. But it's onwards and

upwards for the sixth team as we move up to a respectable fourth in the league. Not enough to push Madeleine off the front pages, but by the end of the season with promotion in the bag, we hope it will be.



Formula One

Formula One keeps on drivin'



Tom Patterson

In sport, much like in life, the ending of eras can be both exciting and disconcerting times. In the world of Formula One some were saddened by the prospect of losing the charismatic Michael Schumacher. Others were excited by the prospect of a more competitive championship. Schumacher, often controversial, always clinical, was indeed a hard act to follow. Over fifteen years driving for Jordan, Benetton and Ferrari, he won 7 World Championships, 91 races, 76 fastest laps and 154 podium finishes. His tactics were often questioned and his theatrics

(most notably at the Monaco Grand Prix, 2004) were regular grist for the anti-mill, yet Schumacher was a winner because he was ruthless.

In his final years with Ferrari, the eminence of both the driver and the maker were undone. Engine failures blighted crucial races and Schumacher's dominance came under sustained attack from that of Fernando Alonso. The years of repetitive predictability were at an end. Schumacher retired in 2006, no less a champion. For Formula One this signalled an end to the dominance of Schumacher as the driver and Ferrari as the constructor. An epochal change...of a kind.

Cue Lewis Hamilton - boy genius, mothers love him, all round good egg. Hamilton's graduation to the ranks of professional Formula One has been remarkable considering

his age, just 22. In his first year driving for McLaren-Mercedes, he broke several records: most consecutive podiums from a debut race; youngest driver to lead the World Championship, most wins in a debut season, most pole positions in a debut season, the list goes on. He narrowly missed out on winning the World Championship, finishing second to Kimi Räikkönen after a dramatic climax in the Brazilian Grand Prix in October. Time will tell whether Hamilton is really that good. This year, at least, he seems a good bet for the BBC Sport Personality of the Year.

The world of Formula One can be a murky one. Since the 1980s the sport has become a billion-dollar industry where the goings-on off the track are sometimes more intriguing than the actual races. Criticised in the past for

allowing tobacco manufacturers to emblazon their cars with advertising, the sport also strayed into political territory in 1997 when Tony Blair, then Prime Minister, was accused of exempting Formula One from a tobacco ad ban in exchange for a £1m Labour donation from Bernie Ecclestone. More recently, both the Renault and McLaren teams have been engaged in espionage and counter-espionage of Machiavellian proportions. Dubbed 'Renault-gate', the controversy surrounding Renault's alleged illegal procurement of mechanical and technical data from McLaren does well to demonstrate the centrality of science and technological innovation to the advancement of the sport. Within it a multi-million dollar weapons race is being fought. The driver championship is one thing. The constructor's is quite another.

Moreover, while the Schumacher era in Formula One served to underline the dominance of one personality over the entire field, it did in other ways mask the harsh volatility of driver popularity. After deposing Michael Schumacher as the Formula One World Champion in 2006, Alonso moved from Renault to McLaren. Unfortunately for him, the move to McLaren coincided with Lewis Hamilton's debut season for the same team. As Hamilton's star rose, the McLaren camp was blighted by accusations of favouritism towards him. Cast out to the periphery of McLaren's vision, the former Renault driver appears to be courting his old team once again having terminated his contract with McLaren in November.

The prospect of next year's championship is consequently very intriguing. Will the quiet,

but determined, current world champion Kimi Räikkönen once again reassert Ferrari's dominance over Formula One by claiming a second championship? Will Alonso return to winning ways for Renault? Will another driver emerge from the shadows? And what about Lewis Hamilton - can he be the next Schumacher? Schumacher believes he could be. And while Hamilton's rise is already accompanied by the inanity that envelops upcoming stars - in this case watch adverts for an autobiography originally entitled 'My Story' (Is he joking? What pearls of 22 year wisdom can he share with us that Wayne Rooney or Charlotte Church haven't already!?) - he promises to be around for a long time. All the better for the soap opera that is Formula One.

Just say Dr No to Goldfinger



Matthew Partridge

I'm going to take a break from recommending bets on specific football fixtures for the time being. This is both because of the lull in international football fixtures this week but also since the success of one

of last weeks picks, namely Croatia to beat England, made me fear for my safety. However, the Betfair market on the next England manager looks too tempting to ignore. I believe that the next England manager will be both foreign and someone with a lot of experience. So I would suggest that you avoid Martin O'Neill and Jurgen Klinsmann and bet on Jose Mourinho (6.6), Rafael Benitez (29) and Luis Scolari (27). At the moment

I'm also going to stick my neck out and, despite the fact that I support Spurs, predict that Arsenal will be this year's Premiership Champions (3).

Turning back to betting on current affairs, I'm going to stick with my recommendation to bet against Mitt Romney (45-49 on Intrade.com) in the Republican Iowa caucus and against Barack Obama (37-49.5) in the Democratic counterpart. Personally, I

think that the winners will be Mike Huckabee and Hillary Clinton respectively. However Fred Thompson and John Edwards can't be written off, so I am going to go with the more conservative option of betting against Mitt and Barack. Keeping on the theme of the Republican primaries, I would also bet against Mitt Romney (65-68) winning New Hampshire. Closer to home I also see value in Ken Livingstone being re-elect-

ed Mayor of London (1.54 on Betfair) since he's ahead of Boris Johnson in the polls and has a high approval rating.

Finally, in terms of betting in the great casino in Canary Wharf, I'm going to go out on a limb and short gold immediately, rather than waiting for it to return to around the mid 700s. Although there are problems in the credit markets, worldwide political insta-

bility and rising gas prices, they are nowhere severe enough to justify a rise of nearly two hundred dollars from just over \$640 as late as August to over \$820.

Use any advice given here at your own risk and don't gamble what you cannot afford to lose. Columnist(s) may have positions in wagers mentioned. Prices quoted are correct at time of going to press.

ULU Swimming

Swimming in Sheffield



Jane Evans

The London University Swim Team (L.U.S.T.) had its best finish ever at the British Universities Sports Association's (B.U.S.A.) short course championships held November 16-18 at Ponds

Forge swim pool in Sheffield. Thirteen new L.U.S.T. team records were set during the competition, and the team placed seven swims in the National Championship finals. "We had a wonderful showing this weekend at the B.U.S.A.s," said co-captain Rob Williams. "It was an exciting weekend." The team placed thirteenth out of sixty-two teams with 43 points, while Bath and Loughborough placed first and second respectively, with 384

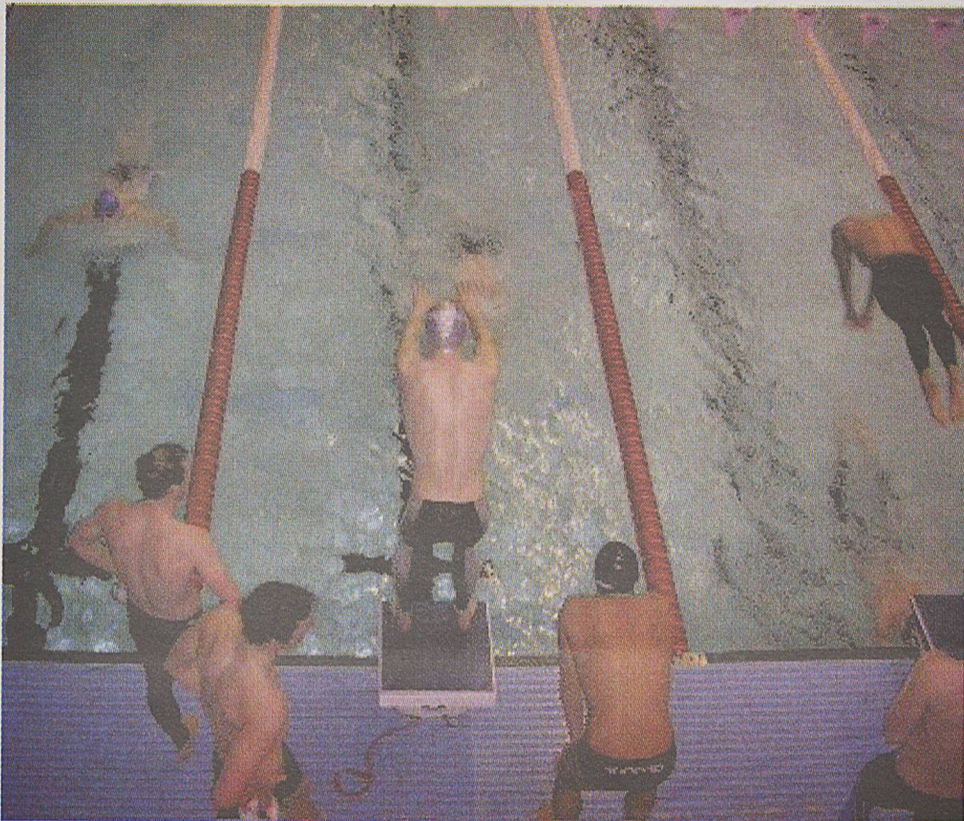
and 360 points.

New team records include: Trevor Gaunt, QMUL, in the 50 back (27.85); Rob Gordon, King's College, in the 50 breast (30.64), 100 breast (106.84), and 200 breast (2:29.51); Rusty Chevassut, QMUL, in the 200 back (2:22.36); Rob Williams, Birbeck, in the 400 free (4:22.72), 800 free (9:06.51), and 200 fly (2:17.89); Jane Evans, LSE, 200 IM (2:34.61), 400 IM (5:23.43), and the 200 fly (2:33.63); the men's 200 free

relay (1:37.53) with Gaunt, Yannis Theocharis, UCL, James Page, UCL, and Jay Solder, King's College, and the men's 200 medley relay (1:48.51) with Gaunt, Gordon, Page, and Theocharis.

Swimmers who competed in the National Championships finals by placing in the top ten during prelim heats include Gordon in the 100 breast (tenth place), Gaunt in the 50 back (tenth place), Evans in the 200 fly (ninth place), Angela Fu, LSE, in the 50 breast (34.64, fifth place), Jane Leighton, UCL, in the 200 breast (2:45.40, sixth place), the men's 200 free relay (eighth place), and the men's 200 medley relay (ninth place). Swimmers who placed in the National Championship finals scored points for the team.

"Just wait until the team is in better shape for spring B.U.S.A.s," said L.U.S.T. coach Steve Bratt. The meet not only rewrote the record books for L.U.S.T., but nine new B.U.S.A. records were made during the competition. Further, this B.U.S.A. Championship was the first team win for Bath, finally overcoming longtime foe Loughborough. In addition to fast swimming, L.U.S.T. members had a good time at the competition. On Saturday night, the team wore matching t-shirts and hundreds of glow sticks as they attended the athletes' social event at the Sheffield Student Union. LSE students swimming at the competition included Fu, Evans, co-captain Stuart Ventham, Bradley Portnoy, and Farah Master.



Men's Hockey

All that glitters ain't golden



James 'Jacko' Jackson

LSE 2nds	2
Goldsmiths	3
Berrylands	

It had rained all Monday and Tuesday, so it was with great hope and happiness that the 2nd XI Hockey woke on Wednesday morning to both bright sunshine and the news from our Captain Jazz that we had a multitude of subs. We would thus be able to rest our sorry asses on the bench when, out of breath, ten minutes into the first half, we could run no more. However, somehow by the time of the push back, we only had 9 people on the pitch. It turns out Geordie had succumbed to manflu over night, a mysterious ailment, presumably sex specific, that had confined him to bed. On top of this, there were the large group

of people saying they could come on Monday and then nothing was heard of them since. Notably lazy newbie Andrew, who didn't even start his first game for LSE, coming on for the last ten minutes of the first half and then declaring himself too tired to continue, taking another stint on the bench from halftime. So the game got started with our limited team (limited only in numbers, not in skill, of course) and we were still holding them to a 0-0 draw thanks to some solid centreback defending by Harris and Dan Vy-ravi-ravi-sri-sri-shankar-pillai when our tenth player and second Joe turned up.

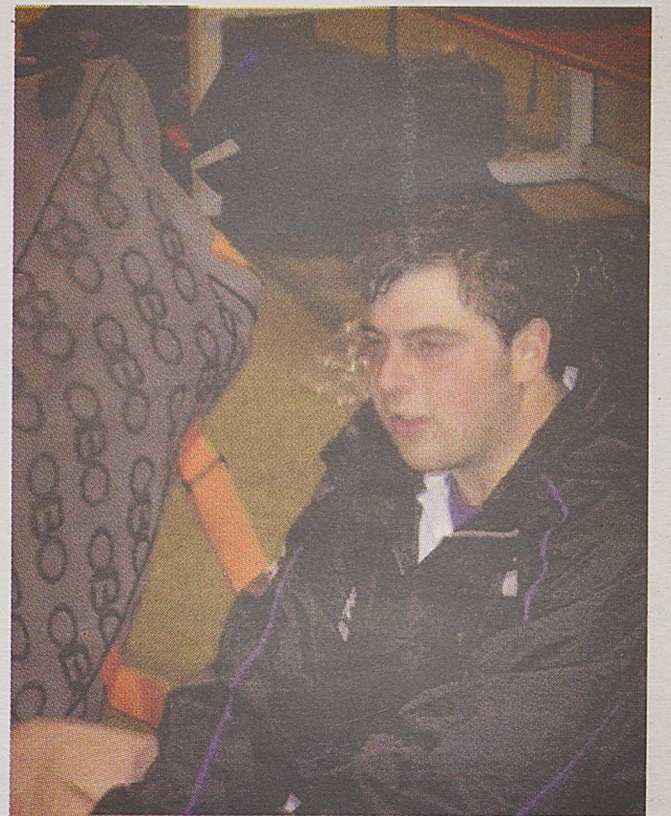
Suddenly boosted to only one less player than the opposition we took the lead with new Joe (or Joseph) making a good move down the left and Raoul doing all we ask of him putting away his third of the season, placing him at the top of the team goal scorers chart. Sadly, Goldsmiths pulled one back when the ball fell luckily for them in the 'D'. But before half time we realised we did have an advantage after all.

We had a long time LSEHC member, the Parf and her significant other Sophie, reffing the game for us. So when just prior to halftime a flick on towards goal was going slightly wide and Jasper couldn't get his stick down in time he was forced to give it a little kick to put it in the back of the goal. Thankfully, Sophie "can't see everything" and the goal stood.

We went into the second half a goal up and with the momentum on our side. Harvey Nichols, debuting at right back, was doing the team proud and feeding many a good pass through to little Joey Meadway, who was having a stormer down the right wing. But sadly we couldn't convert our pressure into more goals and with time running out we let in two more goals which belied Hemal's usual high standards. What was to be Jasper's second goal of the season, a lovely touch to deflect a through ball, was disallowed when, despite our cheers and sprinting back to the half way line, it was ruled outside the 'D'. It seems we couldn't get another dubious goal past the

In the pub legendary left-back Welshie tried to rouse us with his rendition of 'Land of our father' but somehow it didn't work

refs. So the game ended in another LSEHC loss. In the pub, legendary left-back Welshie tried to rouse us with his rendition of 'Land of our fathers' but somehow it didn't work. Though I would like to thank the ladies Hockey team who stayed in the pub with me until they finally threw us out after midnight. I was particularly impressed with their freshers who were all in fancy dress.



Netball

Netball Firsts Crush Strand Poly



Gillian O'Regan

LSE	32
UCL	45
LSE	44
Kings	18

It was a dark and stormy night. A cruel wind whistled through the trees and lashed sharp drops of rain against the faces of the seven. Hoods up, hands shoved deep in the pockets of their coats, they ploughed on through the wilderness...Well, technically Camden's not really the wilderness, is it? Artistic license - the rain bit's true,

anyway. And I can't be bothered writing like that anymore, either, I'm afraid.

So, the Netball 1st Team had arrived (sadly, not 'arrived' in the just-made-my-first-million-and-bought-a-Porsche sense, but in the, like, just got off the 168 bus sense). The venue: a sodden netball court in NW1. The opposition, a frighteningly together-looking UCL 1sts. I mean they had dresses for God's sake. And they actually warmed up while we huddled under the awning and moaned (er...about the rain...). But, despite the downpour and the massive-ness of the opposing team, we pulled on our equally snazzy kit and took to the court.

Now I'm not going to lie - they were good. They were very good. And most of them even had ever so quaint banterous ra-ra Sloane Square-ish accents to make them even

more annoying. (Example: "oh yaaaaarrrrrr, like I know, like didn't I just make the most amaaaaazing save?Yar!")

But, equally, we played well. Despite Asha, Glynners and Hannah (yes, boys, the 'new blonde netball fitty' - how many times do I have to tell you I can't guarantee a date!?) being out of action, we managed to pull together a very respectable first half. There were some giggles, even, in the face of the rain and the blistering pace from the opposition, with Pui attempting some transverse-line magic tricks to get the ball - this is clearly way funnier in our heads cos, you know, we were there - and Nic taking a fantastic belly slide on the wet concrete. She was pushed, but sadly none of us were quite up to a head butt that night. Pffff, girls....

The second half began with serious beef: we think at least

one of their players may have been the antichrist, actually, and probably should be in a straightjacket in a padded room with nothing to play with, ever, especially nothing alive. Despite this, our defensive end pressured well and Effie, Pui and Delia managed to pull off some spectacular intercepts throughout. Lindsey also got kinda bashed by the opposition (sorry, what, non-contact girly sport my arse) but maintained her cool, and Haribo as always worked like a Trojan under the ring. Oh, and Nic got punched in the ear.

I could spin witty sentences all day people, but the fact is that we lost. We fought hard and we lost. "Never mind", we cried, fists a-raised (not really), "Wednesday will be different!"

And different it was. A different lineup (sans Hannah and Effie), a different venue

(North Dulwich) and very different weather (birds chirping, sun shining, cue tinkly music etc etc). We arrived to find a much friendlier team in the form of King's, but we still proceeded to grab the match with both hands and run far, far away from the opposition, cackling with glee (ie. we won, we were victorious, we came not second, we put the ball through the hoop more times than they did. And we looked really pretty doing it, and we warmed up doing the robot).

There were good patches and bad, but LSE dominated King's for the third time this term with our agile defender-midcourt player Charlie named (wo)man of the match (woot woot).

When the job was done, we of course headed cross country to Berryakastan for some works of the fire variety. Beverages, sausages, wetness,

sparks, you know the Wednesday drill. And some entirely inappropriate 'never have I ever' calls you should never have to hear from someone you are related to (cough cough)...

Thus, our work was done. Another week, much love, many chuckles. And, just for shits and gigs, we did it all without downing dirty pints, vomiting on school property, or abusing other sports teams for kicks.

The Low-Down

LSEFC or Superstar?

The Low-Down is back this week and I thought I'd throw in a few FC lookeekeys...I was sent off this week whilst playing for the 6th team after being carded for obstruction and diving. As I looked over to my Captain Ed Frew, all I could see was a Take That superstar.



Mark Owen



Ed Frew

Following this remarkable revelation and a very average footballing performance from myself, I opted for my usual pick-me-up; a good old fashioned wank over the Royal Family.



Prince Harry



Nick Crawford

In other news, Sir Rupert Guest is standing for Mayor of London...

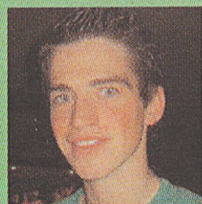


Boris Johnson

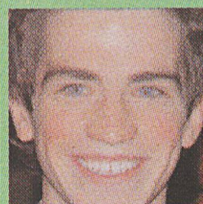


Rupert Guest

It is common knowledge within the FC, that I am a bit of a film buff, watching at least a film a day. I watched my four favourite films yesterday: 'Football Factory', 'Troy', 'The 40 Year Old Virgin' and the fantastic 2003 release 'Song for a Raggy Boy'. Remarkably, there are FC lookalikes for all these films!



That Guy From "Song for a Raggy Boy"



Andrew Simpson



The 40 Year Old Virgin



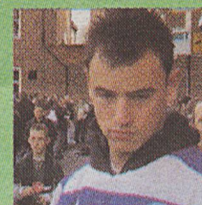
Andrew Rogers



Brad Pitt



Rob Low

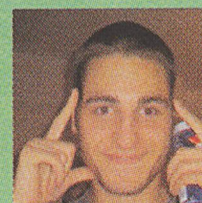


Danny Dyer

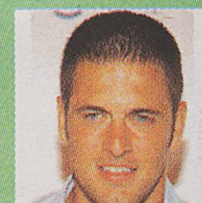


Ed Healy

As England went crashing out of the European Qualifiers, it was brought to my attention that one of the main reasons for the loss was that the AU President was playing on the left wing. Ridiculous!



Joe Cole

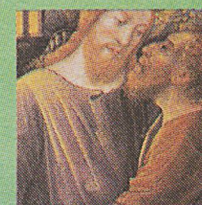


Dan Holness

Finally, it seems that Neil Yoganather's betrayal of the 4th team may have been on the cards as long ago as last year's AU Ball. This Judas-like behaviour took place a good five months before his defection to the 3rd team.



Jesus & Judas



Tendeter & Yoganather



Frew are ya?

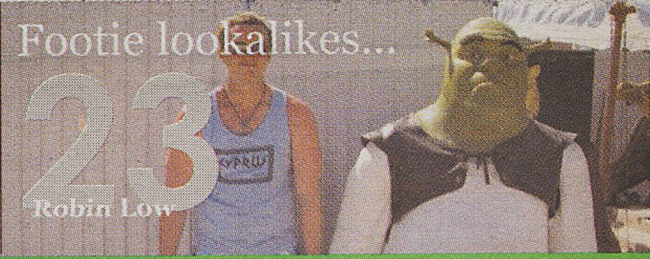
21

Football 6ths school the scum.



Hockey 2nds lose...again.

22



Footie lookalikes...

23

Robin Low

27.11.07 | thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk

Beaver

sports

Fifth Team Lions Leave Medics Mauled



STK

LSE 5ths 6
RUMS 3rds 0

LSE 5ths 2
St Georges 2nds 1

Some of us have the vestiges of our forefathers' courage and temperance, those who find that perfect blend of instinct and reason, those who fly in the face of senseless anxiety and simply revel in the demolition of obstacles they face. The notion of virtue is not something I wish to discuss further here, but what the LSE fifth team has shown me in the past two games is that in an increasingly insecure and disheartening world that we as students live in, the underlying qualities that make us who were are never more on display than in the arena of sporting excellence.

With the details of the Holloway game shorn from our memories, the fifths boarded the train to St Albans in the knowledge that nothing more than six points from the next two encounters would suffice. The point was hammered home in no uncertain terms by captain Pumbaa: "This isn't the fucking Masai mara, there aren't any evil lions or hyenas looking to rip your throat out", pertinent if nothing else. The fifths opened with their customary wobble, Pumbaa, with his mind on some big juicy creepy crawlies no doubt, allowed the high ball to bounce in defence, alas the medics did not prove to be as deadly as most of our country's hospitals.

Prior to this game all of our goals had come from the potent triumvirate of Zamir, Tevez and Knuckles. So when our first chance was superbly converted by Arnund Daatay, meeting a low corner with a deft scoop over both the goalkeeper and the defender on the line the excitement was under-

standable, sadly the gangster strut celebration so familiar to all on the Kingston R'n'B scene was nowhere to be seen. Soon after, Tevez was unceremoniously put on his ample backside but the resulting spot kick, the first of three, was saved by the goalkeeper, lets just hope he doesn't take that second chance mentality in the health care industry. A minute later Jimmy 'Leinster Contemporary Dance Champion 2005' Conran made no mistake from twelve yards. Conran then turned provider as his floated ball was met by Knuckles whose firm head is the scourge of many a footballer and young lady.

The second half begun with two more quick goals to rub salt into the wound of EU public health legislation. Conran was running the midfield with Black and Tan brutality, Timon and Pumbaa continued their beautiful partnership at the back, also reciprocated off the field despite occasional Wednesday night aberrations with the former proving once again that he is one of the most consistent and voyeuristic members of this great institution. The final goal from the boot of Daataay put the finishing touch to a top draw performance from all concerned. The RUMS joined the ranks of Rob Low and Sunderland to name but a few of those who have been totally outclassed this season.

St Georges turned out to be a different proposition to the team which was dispatched in such spectacular fashion in the opening fixture of the season. They comprised no fewer than five first team players in a misappropriation of resources which has come to be expected of anything involving the NHS. The initial exchanges instantly showed that a potential banana skin in the title race was fast becoming a full blown car crash. A goal was leaked after a long ball was picked up by their extremely talented striker who delivered a powerful cross which found its way into the net via a Frank Lampard special series of deflections. Yet this is a team which unlike the MV Explorer will not sink even when breached, half time saw Pumbaa, a name derived from Kiswahili meaning 'care-

less': Greenall was anything but, declaring the next forty five minutes to be of monumental importance, time for those of great artistry and flair to show their metal, time for all the words spoken to take on their meaning, time for heroes to emerge from the shadows.

The call was answered straight away as Knuckles collected a ball from welsh bad boy Carys (no not Morgan so you self aggrandising, reactionary feckwits from the SU can chillax) turned his marker and slid the ball into the back of the net. One could sense something special, something more than the sum of the parts, the soft flesh was giving way to cold hard unforgiving steel. A knock down from Sapha, whose importance to this team is incommensurable, was controlled by Knuckles who gently pushed the ball into the path of the on rushing red dragon, a successful delivery HM revenue and customs would be proud of. Carys' controlled strike nestled in the bottom corner, cue pandemonium, and some snorting and snuffling from Mister Pig.

The game was still far from won but at no point did the energy or commitment wane, preponderance in all areas was the result. Ibrar in between the lovable Lion King duo deserves special mention for an incredible all round performance. My own moment of glory, pulling off what I hear was quite an auspicious stop, was just part of what proved to be evidence that this team is highly capable.

Capable of what seems to lie more and more in the outcome of the titanic clash a week on Wednesday with the progeny of Alex O'Brien, with whom we currently occupy the top two spots in the division. Pressure is no albatross to this team, it is the wings that give them flight. For those who have found this all a bit too delphic, two simple words should help: Hakuna matata. It means no worries. I certainly have none.



"The fifths opened with their customary wobble"