

First LSE100, now... bee-keeping?

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PRIVATE B

SATIRE!
INSIDE!

PART B

The Beaver

23 November 2010
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LSE Students' Union
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LSE class sizes still over maximum limit

Nicola Alexander

LSE staff records have revealed that classes for several second- and third-year modules are still exceeding the official fifteen-student recommendation.

Two years after the proposals of the Teaching Task Force, which was instituted by the Pro-Director of Teaching and Learning, were accepted by the School's Academic Board, the class-size limit is still being flouted by several departments.

Following reports from students that classes for modules in Economics, Law and French have become prohibitively large, an investigation by the Beaver found that 9 of the 10 Property Law II (LL275) classes are over the maximum limit, with some classes of 18 students. The number of students taking Property Law II is enough to warrant two extra classes. Similarly, Industrial Economics (EC313) has classes of up to 20 students. This is compared to the same course at Oxford which can have between 2 and 10 students in a tutorial, and class sizes of between 8 and 10 for a similar course at UCL.

LSE students taking French as their outside option have also had to deal with class sizes that are over the limit. There is a significant disparity between the two groups taking Beginners' French Language and Society (LN131), with one class having between 5 and 10 students, while the other has over 15.

These reports come after the LSE publicly announced that improving student contact time is one of the highest priorities for the administration. An article published in the Times Higher Education Supplement in July 2008 stated: "After consultation with staff and students, the task force recommended that £1.5 million a year should be spent on new lecturers, to reduce class sizes. Undergraduate classes already have a maximum size of 15 and the new strategy will see masters classes

brought in line."

Last week, Janet Hartley, the Pro-Director of Teaching and Learning at the School, reiterated these objectives at the Students' Union's first Education Assembly. Hartley said that "the big priority for the Teaching Task Force was to improve contact time and reduce class sizes to 15 or fewer." According to the official data, which is supposed to be available only to LSE staff, these goals have not been achieved. In some cases, such as Property Law II, class sizes appear to have increased since last year.

This is a pressing problem for the administration and students alike. Students have expressed concern that the class sizes, particularly for qualitative subjects such as Law, hinder the learning process at the LSE. A second-year law student studying Property Law II commented: "I often wonder if I would be better off missing the classes and using the time to studying on my own. There is no way that you can develop your own ideas in a class of 18 people and I find that the teacher just ends up repeating the lecture rather than encouraging us to engage with the material - which I thought was the point of classes in the first place."

For language students, the larger-than-anticipated class sizes are frustrating to students wishing to improve their speaking skills. Heather Wang, a first-year student taking French as an outside option, stated: "My only opportunity to talk in French is in classes so I would much prefer a smaller class. And clearly, in smaller classes, we can cover much more in two hours than in the bigger classes."

The larger classes have also placed extra strain on teachers who have to attempt to include all students whilst covering the relevant material.

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International Week hits Houghton Street



Students enjoyed a wide range of cultural displays as the Students' Union put on a more "decentralised" International Week | Full story, page 4 Photo: Vincent Mok

Ferguson's attendance sparks remuneration questions

Lauren Fedor
David de Jong

The Beaver has learned that one of the LSE's most notable faculty members is on campus just one day a week, despite earning a salary in excess of £500,000.

Professor Niall Ferguson, who holds the Philippe Roman Chair in History and International Affairs, is receiving a remuneration significantly higher than any other academic at the LSE, according to a source within the Department of International History.

A visiting professor for the 2010-2011 academic year, Professor Ferguson has taken a one-year leave of absence from Harvard University, where he is a professor of both history and business administration, to join the LSE. But aside from delivering one public lecture in October and one lecture for the LSE100 course, Professor Ferguson has kept a low profile

in London - few students or faculty report seeing him on campus.

Professor Ferguson's appointment to the Philippe Roman Chair - a one-year, visiting professorship housed in LSE IDEAS (the School's centre for the study of international affairs, diplomacy and grand strategy) was announced nearly two years ago. In a statement released by the Press Office in March 2009, Professor Ferguson said he was "looking forward greatly" to joining the LSE, which he said he had "long revered as one of the great centres of economic and historical study in Europe." Also in the statement, Professor Arne Westad, co-director of LSE IDEAS, said Professor Ferguson's decision to join the School demonstrated "LSE's pulling power in a fiercely competitive world."

Further, in a recent interview, Professor Westad said the appointment of such scholars as Professor Ferguson reflects the strengths of the LSE: "I don't think other British universities would be able to

attract these individuals."

But despite the prestige of the Philippe Roman Chair (which is funded by Emmanuel Roman, a hedge fund CEO) and Ferguson's public enthusiasm, there is no mention of Professor Ferguson's position at the LSE on either the home page, biography or research sections of his official website, which was last updated one month ago.

The chair holder is expected to bring experience in the fields of history and international relations. Professor Westad said IDEAS seeks to attract professors with expertise in one, if not both, of these fields. He added that the committee charged with appointing the chair was drawn to Professor Ferguson's expertise in economic and financial history.

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Bouncer aggression mars tenth Bhangra Crush

• "I do think it's a one-off situation"

• "I hope that it didn't detract from the success of the night"

Nicola Alexander

LSE's 10th annual Bhangra-themed Crush, hosted in partnership with the Students' Union's Sikh-Punjab Society, was deemed a "success". However, the new scheme of depositing IDs upon entry, coupled with subsequent queues to retrieve them, led to chaos at 2AM, detracting from an otherwise violence-free event.

For the last six years, Crush management have implemented a policy of taking students' ID cards as part of the entry requirements into the Quad. Students were informed of the requirement only once they had entered the Clare Market Building and had passed through one security check. Two handwritten signs notified queueing students that they would have to submit their student identifications to the cashiers before they would be accepted into Crush.

A member of the bar staff told the Beaver that such procedure was a deter-

rent against non-student partygoers who had instigated confrontation in the past. This was later confirmed by the Students' Union's General Manager, Andrea Strachan, who stated: "Historically, there has been a number of incidents associated with Bhangra Crush. It was agreed that we would seek to minimise the risk of major incidents by ensuring that people attending were students or direct guests of students at LSE."

Some students were perturbed by the policy adopted by security staff. Vidhi Doshi, a student visiting from the University of Oxford, commented: "I was very surprised that I had to leave my ID. I actually considered not going in because I didn't want to risk losing my student ID."

As a result of depositing their ID cards upon entry, some students had to queue for up to fifty minutes at the end of the night, while waiting for Crush bar staff to sift through the pile of cards. Several students left without collecting their IDs, stating that they would rather pay the £10 fine of replacing their LSE ID card than

wait in the queue.

This problem did not affect all revelers, however. Third-year Philosophy and Economics undergraduate Sachin Patel said: "I remained blissfully unaware of the chaos escalating outside, since I had been quaffing keenly priced drinks in the Tuns from 8 o'clock onwards." He added, "When I eventually descended into the Quad, I was able to enjoy a great selection of Bhangra hits in the company of many culturally satisfied students."

Amidst the large crowd of students waiting to reclaim identification, the bouncers had a challenging time of keeping control. Two LSE students were inadvertently hit by a bouncer as he tried to calm the queues of Crush attendees anxious to return home. According to reports, the bouncer seemed overwhelmed at the growing queue of students and while attempting to calm the crowd elbowed two female students standing behind him.

One of the students on the receiving end of the aggressive outburst stated: "The crowd were pushing quite a lot and

at the stage where I was at the front one of the bouncers completely lost control. For some reason, instead of calming the crowd down, he turned around and elbowed me very hard before whacking another girl as well."

At this point another bouncer stepped in to diffuse the situation. The bouncer was subsequently escorted away by colleagues. The two girls who were affected waited to speak to a management staff member, who checked that they had not been harmed by the incident.

In a statement from the Students' Union, the Head of Commercial Services said: "Having reviewed the action, we are satisfied that this was an accident while dealing with an entirely specific issue which the person concerned was not involved in."

In spite of this physical altercation, the security and management team were able to ensure a violence-free Bhangra Crush. In the past, Bhangra Crush has attracted a number of conflicts between minority groups. The student affected by the hostile

bouncer was keen to emphasise that "really it was one bouncer who clearly wasn't good at keeping control of crowds, who lashed out at those who were unfortunately in the firing line."

Echoing the sentiments of several onlookers, second-year Ahmed Alani, who witnessed the incident, commented: "I know what happened is unacceptable and quite shocking, but I've been to Crush several times and I do think it is a one-off situation."

Ravandeep Kaur Khela, President of the Sikh-Punjab Society, was keen to highlight the success of the event in spite of the logistical difficulties encountered at the end of the night: "The night was very entertaining and we had a good mix of music. This was the first time that there were no in-fights between groups at Bhangra Crush. Although the physical aggression was regrettable and unnecessary, I hope that it didn't detract from the success of the night".

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Dreaming of City spires

One of the things employers value most about an education is the self-reliance it fosters. Coming to London for the first time aged 18 can be an incredibly difficult and challenging period for students. But ultimately, the majority of those who study at the LSE come to regard the cityscape as an opportunity rather than a threat. It presents unique challenges which teach most students more over the course of their three year degrees than they can possibly learn in the classroom. Graduates leave Houghton Street having lived in one of the world's biggest cities and having gained a student experience far richer than those who have lived sheltered academic lives. But the LSE's location isn't the only reason students leave with greater levels of maturity. The university itself is notoriously hands-off in its approach towards education. There are very few carrots and sticks. The essay diet is remarkably light. And pastoral care ranges from laissez faire to non-existent. We all live in an environment where we sink or swim based on our own industry and intelligence; seldom is there a guiding hand to shepherd us into adulthood.

Yet whilst self-motivation is all well and good, study at the LSE is often

carried-out at a distance from academic staff. In lieu of a tutorial system, the LSE's class sizes have ballooned in recent years; there's very little feedback on work (partially because so little is actually produced prior to exams); and faculty members are often overstretched in their workload to give students individual attention. Within this context it's particularly disappointing to find the LSE still straying above its own class size targets (see front page). Fifteen students in a class lasting only an hour already pares individual attention down to a minimum, to find that upper limit breached is faintly comical. Especially when one looks north to institutions where students enjoy hour-long tutorials which are often one-on-one with academics. Back in 2007 the Beaver reported that "students' main gripe was with the quality of academics' English and a lack of access to department 'stars'." While it's pleasing to see the former problem being addressed thoroughly it would appear that little progress has been made with the latter.

This systematic overstretch at the LSE is consistently substantiated by ranking tables which invariably place student satisfaction at the bottom of the Russell Group pile. That said, students could be doing far more to better their own experi-

ence. Office hours regularly go unused and Student Staff Liaison Committees are often poorly attended. At last week's meeting of the Education Assembly, to which all students are invited, turnout numbered seven, which included four of the Sabbatical Officers.

The LSE's teaching leaves much to be desired, but students should be doing more themselves to better it. This newspaper tentatively suggests that students should spend less time trying to bludgeon through unrealistic goals (on which subject we must disagree with Mr. Frank Dobson - see page 6) and more time weighing in on more pressing structural problems. ☹

On a more positive note, the Beaver was overjoyed to see cultural intermingling finally taking place on campus, during last week's International Week. This publication has long lamented the isolationist nature of many cultural groups at the LSE, so to see such a good-natured expo on Houghton Street was a pleasant surprise indeed. Credit must go to Michael Lok, the International Students' Officer, who has decentralised the week's events to great effect. ☺

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FUTURE OF FEES AT LSE: YOUR OPINION

Tuesday 23rd November
4PM, the Underground

Students are welcome to come along and share their ideas about how the LSE should set its fees in the future, as well as the School's policy on access and Widening Participation.

Union Bashō

Home truths

Showcasing the best national stereotypes - 'truths', if you prefer.

Bashō is the Beaver's evasive haiku poet, who turns up to UGM every week just in case something half-worthwhile happens.

HOW TO SUBMIT A MOTION TO THE UGM:

Write a Motion

- ▶ Union Notes
- ▶ Union Resolves
- ▶ Union Believes

FIND SOMEONE
TO SECOND
THE MOTION

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@lse.ac.uk

BY FRIDAY 5PM

ONLINE
VOTE

CLOSES 5PM FRIDAY

UGM

THURS
1PM

THEY
DECIDE

Poor turnout blights Education Assembly

Sachin Patel

The LSE Students' Union's inaugural Education Assembly, which took place last Tuesday, saw Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning Janet Hartley address an audience of just seven people.

Assemblies are a flagship innovation of the Students' Union this year, and have been billed as a more inclusive and substantive alternative to the weekly Union General Meeting (UGM).

Other assemblies have attracted healthier numbers, but this first Education Assembly was attended by only three lay students and four Sabbatical Officers.

Professor Hartley spoke at length about the implementation of recommendations made by the Teaching Task Force, which she instituted soon after she took up the position of Pro-Director, and took questions from assembly attendees.

The Pro-Director, who is on secondment from the Department of International History until 2012, first explained the structure of the various decision-making bodies within the School, stating, for example, that "Academic Board is small enough that members are on first-name terms with each other."

Professor Hartley then went on to describe the reasons why she stood for the position of Pro-Director, and the objectives she set out for her six-year term, which began in 2007. She said: "I came in wanting to improve teaching, because there was not enough attention being paid to it." She added that "the focus was hugely on research," which was largely due to the Research Assessment Exercise, which had recently been undertaken at the School.

The Pro-Director was keen to emphasise that the issue at hand was more one of focus than of quality, saying, "It wasn't that LSE was full of bad teachers; it's just that teaching had dropped off the agenda." Recognising the importance of laying out a programme that would "engage and excite academics", Professor Hartley struck upon the idea of the Teaching Task Force, a term which had previously found currency at Harvard University.

According to Professor Hartley, the Teaching Task Force registered 45 proposals at the end of its formative period, 44 of which were accepted immediately by the School's Academic Board. The final proposal, which was to launch the LSE100 course, was initially rejected and required "a rethink" before it was eventually accepted the following year. The initial proposal would have seen students complete the course in one academic year, and students' results in it would have fed directly into their final degree classification.

Among the other proposals, Professor Hartley stated that priority areas included the reduction of class sizes and increase in contact time; more training for new teachers and Graduate Teaching Assistants

(GTAs) along with a restriction in their teaching hours; improved course surveys; and a system of rewards that brought parity between teaching and research.

Admitting that "implementation of these proposals takes differing lengths of time", the Pro-Director was keen to stress that financial backing for the recommended policies was strong, with annual expenditure currently totalling £4 million. Some money has gone towards the funding of more staff in the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) and the Language Centre, with new GTAs now obliged to pass an English language exam in order to teach. In Michaelmas Term of 2007, the Beaver reported that "students' main gripe was with the quality of academics' English", and Hartley was able to report that increased standards for GTAs had translated into greater student satisfaction about teaching. She said: "I was pleased since they [the National Student Survey results] went up 4 to 5 per cent, and went up in teaching and in academic support", though she noted that "it's not an ideal measure, because [...] our students are much more critical."

Class sizes were another priority area of the Teaching Task Force. According to a July 2008 article in the Times Higher Education Supplement, "the task force recommended that £1.5 million a year should be spent on new lecturers, to reduce class sizes." The author added, "Undergraduate classes already have a maximum size of 15 and the new strategy will see masters classes brought in line"; however, an investigation conducted by the Beaver has concluded that the limit on class sizes is still regularly being flouted.

Additionally, following feedback from the Research Student Forum, Hartley announced that greater transparency had been brought to the payment system for GTAs. In response to a question regarding the exact rates of pay, Hartley admitted that she did not know the exact figures, but highlighted that "there are now two rates, and these are now equal across the School," whereas previously some departments had been known to pay substantially more than others. This had led to some PhD candidates teaching across several departments in order to maximise their earnings; Hartley was keen to stress that the School "wants GTAs to finish their PhDs, not to become teachers." In this context, such work is instead seen as "training, [which] improves their CV."

Many of the questions from audience members focused on the issue of feedback on examinations, which is currently extremely limited. Third-year Philosophy undergraduate Teddy Groves asked if Professor Hartley found it "unusual" that students could not ordinarily get their scripts back. In response, the Pro-Director said, "We're not sure what you would gain from it... the comments markers write are to the external examiner - they wouldn't be helpful for students."

Professor Hartley outlined improvements to the feedback process that were already or would soon be in place. Citing the pilot scheme in the Department of International History, where all students are taken through their scripts by their academic advisers at the start of the year, she said: "We should get feedback on that," which will inform the decision as to whether the policy should be rolled out to other departments. At the same time, she urged caution, saying, "You can't see if it has a quantitative effect on exam results."

Additionally, this year will see all first-year courses giving back collective feedback, which will explain "what was done well, and what was done badly" in examination papers. As of this summer, students completing such courses will be sent feedback based on all the results achieved on each particular course.

Professor Hartley also took questions

regarding the monitoring of GTA performance, and the availability of course feedback results. One student suggested that publishing such results "would be useful in making course selections", to which Professor Hartley replied, "I'm not sure why they're not, apart from reasons of sensitivity, especially with small courses."

Concluding that in implementing the findings of the Teaching Task Force she was "trying to change a culture", the Pro-Director made notes on various suggestions raised by students in attendance, which she hoped to follow up on.

The next Education Assembly will take place in January, and the Sabbatical Officers have suggested that they will promote it using different methods, in the hope of attracting more students to a discussion about what should ostensibly be a core concern.

"Very short" UGM extends NUS demonstration debate

Nathan Briant

At a "very short UGM" last Thursday, LSE Students' Union Education Officer Ashok Kumar reaffirmed his desire for "direct action" against the education cuts and tuition fees rises.

Describing the next three weeks as "a critical fight", he expressed his hope that the Students' Union would not lose momentum in their fight against the coalition government's policies on Higher Education. Kumar reiterated the importance of the National Union of Students (NUS) National Day of Action on Wednesday 24th November.

When questioned by LGBT Officer Reagan Persaud on his quote in the Socialist Worker newspaper, in which he states that he wants to see "more direct action", Kumar defended his hardline approach. Kumar responded: "It explains itself - people are and were firm [at campaign meetings] that we had to be committed to direct action." He added, "Direct action doesn't mean violence, it means occupation, it means demonstration. It's actually going in and confronting power structures."

"We voted [the coalition government] in to do certain things and they are perverting the democratic structures, and if that happens the only avenue is actual direct action, and I stand by that, and there's a critical mass of students on this campus who feel the same."

Polly McKinlay, the Students' Union Disabilities Officer, further questioned Kumar. McKinlay asked if, in an email, Kumar had suggested that students should work against the police by protecting their friends and increasing their privacy

settings on Facebook. Kumar replied: "Well we didn't get police approval for the march, so technically that was illegal. So in this context, it's not about working against the law - it's about saying, 'we respect the privacy and the confidentiality of students on this campus'"

The other major issue raised at the UGM was the Education Assembly held on Tuesday evening of last week. One question concerned the "really low turnout of about two non-executive members." The Education Officer admitted, "We haven't focused enough on education stuff outside [campaigning]: for campaign meetings we get 50 people; for our education assembly we do the same level of advertising."

General Secretary Charlotte Gerada announced that there was action being taken with the Dialogue Commission, which had "kind of disintegrated", but Gerada confirmed that it was something that is being worked on.

It was also announced by Kimia Pezeshki, standing in for Pulse's Station Manager, that Jack Tindale, the UGM Chair, had been given his own show. Tindale seemed rather flustered and announced that his new show will be called "Tindale's Brunch Box".

Daniel Kroop also made his first address to the UGM as the Students' Union's "first ever Sabbatical Postgraduate Officer" and to take advantage of what could be "a really cool year".

Kroop, who is a graduate of Harvard University, said that he was enjoying London since moving from America: "it's brilliant, as Londoners would say". Among his objectives for this year, Kroop identified that his role would be: "to represent students" on liaison committees and to "chair the Postgraduate Assembly".

News in brief

MOODLE FORUM HEATS UP

A student-sparked discussion on perceived bias in readings for the Microeconomics I course has attracted a great deal of attention on Moodle. The readings, which allegedly give undue levels of opposition against the government's 50 pence tax, are said to be "inaccurate" and "irrelevant" by the student, who says that she is "seriously disappointed" by the bias present. Other students' responses on the forum have ranged from the critical to the supportive, but have raised concerns about lack of objectivity in course readings.

SU PLANS OPEN FEES DEBATE

In a significant reversal of mindset, the Students' Union is to hold a campus-wide meeting about the future of tuition fees at the LSE. The meeting, which takes place on Tuesday at 4PM in the Underground, will welcome all ideas on long-term fee setting and improvements to access and Widening Participation. Its findings will inform the design of a comprehensive survey that will ballot all students. Until now, the Students' Union has stuck firmly to its policy of opposing any increase in fees for the next three years, in spite of significant cuts to the Teaching Grant received from the government.

GOVERNMENT VALUES HAPPINESS

The government has announced that it plans to measure the happiness of UK citizens. Later this month the Office for National Statistics will be asked to include new questions, regarding happiness, in the regular household survey. The issue was first raised by the Prime Minister David Cameron in 2005. Cameron said "It's time we focused not just on GDP but on GWB - general wellbeing." Professor Richard Layard of the LSE is well known in the field of happiness economics, which treats happiness, rather than income, as a measure to be maximised.

CABLE RESPONDS TO ELITE THREAT

"One of the reasons we are [raising the fee cap] is precisely to head off Oxford, Cambridge, the LSE, and a few others from going private," claimed the current Business Secretary, Vince Cable, speaking at a conference last week. Cable alleged that a group of elite UK universities had threatened to go private if the government forbade them from raising tuition fees. LSE, Oxford and Cambridge were highlighted as universities who might have gone private if the cap had not been raised, according to the Lib Dem MP.

STERN HONOURED BY TUFTS

Professor Lord Stern has been announced as joint winner of an annual prize awarded for ground-breaking work in economics. Tufts University's Global Development and Environment Institute announced that it will award its 2011 Leontief Prize to both Harvard's Martin Weitzman and Lord Stern, who is IG Patel Professor of Economics and Chair of the Grantham Research Institute at the LSE. The award recognises the critical role played by both in analysing the economic dimensions of climate change. Lord Stern is the third LSE academic to win this award, after Amartya Sen (2000) and Robert Wade (2008).

PUBLIC HEALTH PLAUDIT

Professor Elias Mossialos of the LSE has been awarded the 2010 Andrija Stampar Medal for distinguished services to public health. Awarded by the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER), it is the most prestigious public health award in Europe. It is awarded annually to an individual considered to have contributed through distinguished service to public health over the course of his/her life. This year, for the very first time, the nominations were collected not only from ASPHER members but also from those of the European Public Health Association (EUPHA).



GOT A SCOOP? BRIEF US...

The Beaver welcomes all students to contribute to the News in Brief section of the paper. If you feel that there is anything noteworthy on campus please contact us at news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

ULU organises occupation workshop

Lauren Feder

Last Wednesday nearly 100 students from various local universities gathered at the University of London Union (ULU) for a two-hour workshop on the logistics and legalities of occupations and direct action protests.

Students from University College London (UCL), the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Goldsmiths, Royal Holloway, Queen Mary, University of Westminster, Birkbeck College and Middlesex University were among those in attendance.

The afternoon event was held both in response to the recent joint National Union of Students (NUS) and University and College Union (UCU) demonstrations, as well as in preparation for future protests, including a national day of action to be held on 24th November.

The event aimed to "assist the escalation of our [ULU's] campaign against cuts and fees," and hoped to give student activists the "tools to successfully make our universities, our cities, and our country ungovernable," according to the Facebook event page.

The Beaver reported last week that Clare Solomon, ULU president, designated 24th November as the next day of action for the campaign against education cuts. She said that she hoped for waves of occupation and "maximum disruption and resistance" on the day, adding that she

wanted students to "take over universities" and wished for "all universities across the country to be occupied".

"We are here to look at nonviolent, safe forms of protest," Solomon told workshop attendees on Wednesday afternoon. Solomon chaired the event, which offered opportunities for students to learn about previous protests, share experiences, listen to speakers and receive information about future demonstrations.

Attendees watched a 6-minute clip from a forthcoming feature film on student protests in Austria. The clip highlighted an occupation in October 2009 at the University of Vienna, during which students demanded free access to education.

Workshop participants also heard from students at Middlesex University, who, in May 2010, took over an administrative building in an effort to urge the university to reverse its decision to close its philosophy department. Nearly forty students occupied a campus building for 12 days, holding rallies, hosting free lectures and discussion panels whilst soliciting support from public figures, such as Alain Badiou, Judith Butler, Slavoj Žižek and Noam Chomsky. Although the occupation was ended at the hands of a high court injunction, the philosophy department did not close, and was ultimately relocated to Kingston University.

Suresh Grover, a lawyer and civil rights activist who participated in three student occupations in the late 1970s and early 1980s, advised students on the legal

framework associated with occupations and direct action protests. He warned students against violence — "If the police have a reasonable suspicion that violence will take place, they can take action," he said — and reminded students that injunctions to end protests can be ordered any day of the week, including weekends.

Solomon said that ULU hoped to work with Grover, as well as law student volunteers, to draft a guide book outlining legal parameters regarding occupations and direct action protests.

Nevertheless, on Wednesday, workshop attendees received a host of pamphlets and advising materials, including fliers with contact details for solicitors and legal counsel, guidelines for staging occupations and invitations to future events, including the Coalition of Resistance Against Cuts & Privatisation's National Organising Conference, to be held Saturday, 27th November, at the Camden Centre.

Ashok Kumar, Education Officer of the LSE Students' Union, did not attend the workshop but said he recognised the importance of such an initiative, particularly for students at the LSE.

"It's about building a campaign culture," Kumar said, pointing to the Students' Union's activist academy, which was held earlier in the term to teach students about campaign, demonstration and protest strategies

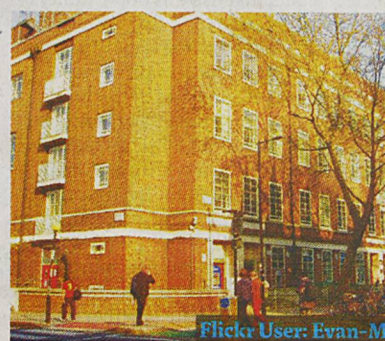
While Kumar said there were no immediate plans for an occupation or direct action protest at the LSE, he said that

he supports efforts to educate students about demonstrations. "For us, it's about informing students as much as possible," he said, adding "we believe in a diversity of tactics".

Vishal Chauhan, who completed his undergraduate studies at the LSE in 2010 and is currently studying at City of Westminster College, attended Wednesday's workshop and said he found the afternoon both interesting and informative.

"I see that occupations are going to be quite likely," Chauhan said after Wednesday's workshop. "I wanted to hear what other students had to say, and learning from the students from Middlesex was very worthwhile."

Chauhan said he likewise appreciated Grover's legal insights. "You can go into an occupation, and it can be closed down for all sorts of reasons," he said. "Making sure that everyone understands that is important."



Flickr User: Evan-M

International Week brings Expo vibe to LSE

Shrina Poojara

Last week's LSE Students' Union International Week brought a Houghton Street Expo to campus, and succeeded in celebrating global diversity through a series of events including cultural activities and parties.

The week was organised by the Students' Union International Students' Officer, Michael Lok, working in conjunction with many of the Students' Union's national societies.

Differing from the Students' Union's previous Global Weeks, International Week was decentralised, with a focus on working with students and societies to enrich the cultures represented during the week. Lok said, "This year, the SU sought

to provide a platform for individuals to take the stage and to demonstrate what their countries are like and what their societies provide to their members."

The centrepiece of International Week was the Houghton Street Expo, inspired by Expo 2010, which was held in Shanghai from May to October 2010. The event in Shanghai gave more than 190 countries the opportunity to showcase their culture and heritage in unique pavilions and attracted in excess of 73 million visitors.

The Houghton Street Expo took place all of last week and saw many of the university's cultural societies representing their countries at gazebos along the length of Houghton Street, resulting in an array of coloured flags and banners, a vast range of music, an abundance of food and drink and even the showcasing of traditional costumes.

The Kazakhstan Society's Events Officer, Aya Rakhimzhanova, said, "International Society has been a good opportunity for us to present our country and present our society... we wanted to prove to people that there's much more to Kazakhstan than just Borat!"

Fabian Schrey, President of the Swiss Society, said, "We had a vast number of people coming along and, as a result of International Week, my society is now in close contact with the Swiss Embassy, and a few Swiss and German newspapers are writing reports on us as they saw the stall."

The International Week also included the first ever International Assembly to be hosted by the Students' Union, which took the form of a mini-conference. Christina Yan Zhang, the National Union of Students' (NUS) International Students Officer, discussed issues affecting inter-

national students along with speakers from the LSE's Office of Development and Alumni Relations (ODAR), the International Student Immigration Service, the Fourth Floor Restaurant and the Language Centre.

Many of the societies invited to take part in the Houghton Street Expo also organised their own events to tie in with the aims of International Week. These included Asian Careers Week, an Italian Pizza Party, the Hungarian Society Luncheon, the Music Society's International Open Mike night, the Polish Vodka Party and the Baltic Film Night. The LSE's Fourth Floor restaurant also presented a week of international cuisine.

International Week ended with the tenth anniversary of Bhangra Crush on the Friday, organised by the Sikh-Punjab Society. The event was very popular,

with music provided by DJ Raj and live dhol players who kept energy levels high. Ravandeep Kaur Khela, President of the Sikh-Punjab Society, said, "The night had a great atmosphere and it was important for many students to reconnect with their cultural roots. Hundreds of students joined in with the Bhangra (Punjabi folk dancing), and this was an uplifting sight to see!"

Many students were involved in the execution of the week, reflecting the fact that a high proportion of LSE's student body is international. Lok added, "It seems like students rarely have the chance to get the opportunity to learn more about the many nationalities and cultures here... I hope students managed to get a feel of where each other comes from and to truly enjoy and gain from the international side of the LSE."



Photo: Duncan McKenna

Israel-Palestine charity event fails to secure joint support

Aimee Riese

The LSE Students' Union Palestine Society has refused to take part in a joint charity event with the Students' Union's Israel Society.

The proposal, put forward by the Israel Society, was to run a joint fundraising event for a non-political charity that benefits both Palestinians and Israelis. The proposal was unanimously voted against in a Palestine Society committee meeting.

The President of the Palestine Society, Zachariah Sammour, explained the Palestine Society's position stating: "the Palestine society exists for the sole purpose of alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people to the greatest extent possible. Therefore any event we participate in must in some tangible and substantive way contribute towards the achievement of this goal."

Sammour does not believe that a joint fundraiser with the Israel Society, for the proposed charity, will assist this goal, saying "the marginal increase in revenue from a joint charity event with the Israel Society was outweighed by considerations as to our limited time, better potential joint

charity events with larger groups who share our values (for example Amnesty International) and the support of the Israel Society for various elements of the oppression faced by Palestinians."

President of the Israel Society, Gabrielle Kobrin, was disappointed by the reaction of the Palestine Society. She expressed her hopes of building "a productive and meaningful relationship" with the Palestine Society, saying, "I had hoped that a non-political charity event would be a foundation in building a relationship between our societies. It is an opportunity to work together, for charity, to alleviate the suffering of Palestinian people and Israeli people. It worries me that the Palestine Society would dismiss this opportunity of joint charity work."

Kobrin added that the Israel Society "does not support oppression of Palestinians; this is exemplified by the joint proposal for charity work." She continued, "we hoped that we had more in common with Palestinian Society than assumed, but it is disturbing that their narrow agenda prevents them from even engaging in joint charity work with our society."

The two societies remain committed to working together on other events. They plan to run a debate together on the proposed full academic boycott of Israel.

Academics from the LSE and UCL will debate the motion. It is due to take place in January and will be open to the wider LSE community.

Sammour further explained his perspective on the relationship between the two societies saying that the Palestine Society "will not work collaboratively with groups who support, propagate or legitimise the policies which cause this suffering [of the Palestinian people]." However, he highlighted "we are collaborating with the Israel Society this year, having already agreed a joint debate."

He continued, "we are happy to work with groups who disagree with us," adding that the purpose must be "...to highlight those disagreements and discuss them in a positive manner. We will not however share a platform with these groups on any other basis." Kobrin's response expressed that "It is a shame this collaboration does not extend to charity."

The event will still take place with Kobrin adding, "the Israel Society will continue to plan this charity event to raise money for a non-political charity which benefits both Palestinians and Israelis. I encourage the LSE community to support our efforts."

PalSoc sends lecture materials to Occupied Territories

Sachin Patel

The LSE Students' Union's Palestine Society has established a project to send lecture materials to Palestinian universities.

This pioneering scheme, which has already attracted interest from other universities in the UK and in Canada, aims to increase open access for Palestinian students.

Where consent can be sought from lecturers, the Palestine Society hopes to make available lecture notes, recordings and readings to students in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Following a motion that was passed in UGM last year, the LSE Students' Union is twinned with that of the Islamic University of Gaza, and the society hopes to use this link to facilitate the transfer of materials. In addition, the School maintains a link with Birzeit University, located near Ramallah, through which it is hoped the scheme will be made more viable.

The society intends that these two Palestinian universities will agree to make the materials freely accessible to all other educational institutions in the region.

Speaking on behalf of the Palestine Society, President Zachariah Sammour

said: "The scheme is being pioneered by this university as an attempt to empower the youth of Palestine through access to a wider range of high-quality material and educational resources." He added, "We hope [this] will contribute to greater analysis of the challenges facing Palestinian society, and a diversification of tactics and approaches by Palestinian groups to lawful resistance."

The society has leveraged an LSE academic, Mike Cushman of the Department of Management, to gain logistical support from the Centre of Learning Technology. The centre will develop a framework through which materials can be sent expediently and securely.

The project has already received interest from other universities in London, such as Goldsmiths, Kings and SOAS, as well as universities in the North American region. In addition, the renowned Palestinian poet and activist Remi Kanazai has lent his support to the scheme.

Writing in Comment this week, a member of the Palestine Society says: "We may not be able to participate in peace talks, but we can empower the Palestinian students with a gift far more sustainable and superior than money: education."

Comment 8 >>>

Ferguson a low profile on campus

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Known not only as an academic, but also as an author, journalist and television presenter, Professor Ferguson is the Laurence A. Tisch Professor of History at Harvard University and William Ziegler Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School, as well as a senior fellow at both Stanford University and Jesus College at Oxford. A contributing editor at the Financial Times, Professor Ferguson has also written extensively for Newsweek, the American news magazine. His most recent book, "High Financier: The Lives and Times of Siegmund Warburg," was released in June 2010.

Professor Ferguson is the fourth individual to hold the chair: Paul Kennedy of Yale University held the position from 2007-2008; Chen Jian of Cornell University was at the LSE from 2008-2009; and Gilles Keppel of Sciences Po was at the School from 2009-2010.

Professor Westad said that chair holders "contribute to the excitement" of the LSE community, and in a recent interview, Professor Dominic Lieven, head of the LSE's Department of International History, agreed. "The students are fascinated by them," he said. "They bring new ideas and new insights to the LSE, and they undoubtedly increase our international profile."

Professor Ferguson is a frequent traveller; updates to his Twitter account indicate he has travelled to such cities as Beijing, Singapore, Seoul, Los Angeles and New York in the last month alone. And, in an interview published last week in The Wall Street Journal Europe, Professor Ferguson half-jokingly described the exhaustion caused by his hectic schedule, saying, "I often don't even know what day it is."

Professor Westad admitted chair holders tend to be "busy people," and thus getting them in the classroom can be a challenge.

Indeed, due to a timetable conflict, on Tuesday 19th October Professor Ferguson

was unable to deliver a scheduled lecture for the undergraduate pilot course, LSE100. Instead, the one-hour lecture, "Financial crises in the long run and prospects going forward," was pre-recorded the day before, and the video broadcast to the students during the lecture period.

Professor Westad said Professor Ferguson has averaged one day per week at the LSE during the Michaelmas Term. He added that he expects Professor Ferguson to spend significantly more time at the School during the Lent Term.

While in London, Professor Ferguson is thought to be working on his forthcoming biography of Henry Kissinger. During the Lent Term, he will also teach "Western Ascendancy: The Mainsprings of Global Power from 1600 to the Present," a weekly, one-hour, unexamined lecture course aimed at postgraduate students studying international history, international relations, government and economic history.

But some faculty members remain unconvinced. Said one lecturer in the Department of International History: "We have yet to spot him on campus grounds." Professor Lieven declined to comment on such claims, other than to say such frustrations are "inevitable" when dealing with "top-notch visiting professors."

Thus far, Professor Ferguson has delivered one public lecture at the LSE. On 18th October, he presented a talk entitled "The Political Economy of the Cold War."

On Wednesday 24th November, Professor Ferguson is expected to join Heather Jones, a lecturer in International History; Professor David Stevenson of the same department; and Professor Lieven, for a two-hour round-table discussion, entitled "Was the First World War a war that Britain needed to fight?"

Professor Lieven said he hopes the event, which is set to include a drinks reception after the discussion, will offer students and faculty of the department the opportunity to interact one-on-one with Professor Ferguson.

Concern has also been raised over Professor Ferguson's salary, given his infrequent campus presence — and his earnings have long been the subject of public enquiry.

When Professor Ferguson left his full-time post at Oxford for New York University in 2002, media outlets reported he was lured by a salary many times what he had earned at Oxford, not to mention an apartment in Manhattan's Greenwich Village neighbourhood. And when he accepted a position at Harvard University in 2004, there was again media speculation that his move was motivated by money.

In a 2008 interview with the Times, Professor Ferguson said his annual income was "north of seven figures, but not by much." He added, "suffice to say that in Britain I would be embarrassed that it was so much, and in the US I would be embarrassed that it was so little."

A request filed by the Beaver in October 2010, under the Freedom of Information Act, for details about Professor Ferguson's compensation for the 2010-2011 academic year was denied, on the grounds that this represented private information which was exempt under the Act.

Harvard faculty are among the highest-paid academics in the United States, according to the American Association of University Professors. For the 2009-2010 academic year, the average Harvard professor was compensated nearly \$240,000, according to the AAUP. Meanwhile, according to a March 2010 report in the Guardian, just 85 members of the LSE faculty earned more than £100,000 annually during the 2008-2009 academic year. A handful of top earners took home £200,000, according to the report.

One member of the Department of International History has told the Beaver that Professor Ferguson is earning upwards of half a million pounds for his year at the LSE. Professor Westad declined to comment on Professor Ferguson's compensation, saying only that salary is "not the issue" in attracting visiting professors, as chair holders are offered a "decent stipend." He added that while funding for the foundation of the Philippe Roman Chair was through private donation, chair holder's salaries are currently funded by the IDEAS programme.



"I wonder if I would be better off missing classes"

» continued from page 1

For assessed essays and problem sets, teachers with classes over the 15 student limit will have to spend several extra hours going through submissions. As well as this, anxiety over the capacity of teacher office hours has been raised. Several students in classes over the limit have said that the one hour of office time is not enough for classes that are so large.

In previous years, student dissatisfaction at teaching at the LSE has translated into a fall in rankings, although student satisfaction increased by 4 per cent this year, according to the National Student Survey 2010. Hartley told LSE Student News in September: "These increases are a positive sign that the Teaching Task Force, which was set up in 2007, is having an effect. We all recognise however, that there is still some way to go and that we can improve further." LSE's 80 per cent student satisfaction still trails institutions such as UCL, Durham and St. Andrews. The class size issue is only a problem

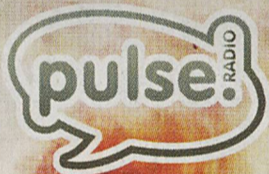
for second and third year students who have more flexibility in their options. Joy Whyte, Department Manager for Law told the Beaver: "While there is no strict rule, LSE policy is that undergraduate class size is normally 15. Numbers on Property II exceeded 15 due to the overall number of students registering for the course - this figure was unusually high in 2010/2011."

"Class size is difficult to control, because at the point when we make decisions about the teaching allocation we do not have a good idea of student numbers on our courses. Some students make their choices at a late stage, or change their choices in the first few weeks of the Michaelmas Term. Some students also change classes where they have good reason to do so."

A spokesperson from the School declined to comment on specific undergraduate class groups, but said: "There are some teaching styles which merit larger class sizes - for example, in MSc Finance, or in some quantitative subjects where computer lab groups are complemented by smaller help sessions."

Nick Byrne, Director of the Language Centre, added: "We have not received any complaints about class sizes."

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Toynbee gives New Labour "6/10"

Nathan Briant

New Labour's record was discussed by a number of Labour and social democratic figures at the LSE last week. Speaking to Polis, the LSE's media thinktank, were Stella Creasy MP and Gordon Brown's former polling expert, Deborah Mattison.

Later that evening, the Guardian columnist Polly Toynbee joined David Walker, editor of Public magazine, spoke to promote their book, *The Verdict: Did Labour Change Britain?*, which analyses the Labour government's success from 1997 to their recent electoral defeat.

Creasy was clear in her view that the era of spin was not a new phenomenon in British politics. Citing figures such as Bernard Ingham, who worked for Margaret Thatcher, and Joe Haines for Harold Wilson, she said that British politics had been dominated by spin for "as long as there had been press".

Explaining the changing face of the British media, Creasy cited several key differences: "There are now more than 400 [TV channels today]", she said, adding that the rise of the internet had enabled over 230,000 downloads of the Labour Party's manifesto during the recent general election.

Deborah Mattison was more critical of the Labour Party - a party for which she had worked for a number of decades before the general election. Saying that Labour should never have "expected voters to be grateful", the party prior to the election "was in denial" about their weaknesses. The party's message of 'fairness' was misplaced - "fairness would only work if the other parties believed in unfairness".

On Gordon Brown, she said that the British public "liked him", and that people didn't particularly register with allegations of bullying that were widely reported in the media. Rather, where Labour had lost out, along with other parties in the general election, was on the national mood of "insecurity and change", although "no candidates owned change".

Overall, Mattison said that the campaign highlighted a number of factors with regard to the press: "the press and national campaign matters a lot less than people think, and the local campaign means more; most voters see all campaigning as futile, self-serving and dull."

In the Polly Toynbee and David Walker public lecture, chaired by Jonathan Hopkin of the Government department, the Labour government was given a mark of '6' out of 10 for their performance from 1997 to 2010. Toynbee and Walker said that Labour had changed Britain, but "not enough".

Confronted by a number of very long questions - including one from Maurice Fraser of the LSE's European Institute which lasted two minutes - criticising the former government's positioning, Toynbee defended Gordon Brown, as the person who saved Britain from "absolute catastrophe".

Toynbee was particularly critical of the Conservative government, one "of Old Etonians, 18 of whom are millionaires", and was particularly scathing towards the way in which the Chancellor, George Osborne, has behaved towards the deficit. Criticising "two homely analogies" which have been used by the coalition, she said that, "If you've got out of these maxed-out families with credit card families, and say, good god, you've got a debt of £250,000 to £300,000 on your mortgage. You must pay it back within 4 years immediately - never mind if you all go bust and you're all out on the street, you must pay it back at once. Nonsense. If there's a low interest rate and it's perfectly manageable then paying it over the 25 years of your mortgage is perfectly reasonable." Toynbee added, "The fact that George Osborne said Britain was on the verge of bankruptcy when he came to power was just not true."



Photo: Duncan McKenna

Davies "should walk the plank" - Holborn MP

Benjamin Butterworth

The Member of Parliament for Holborn and St. Pancras, Frank Dobson, has condemned Sir Howard Davies' directorship of the LSE.

Dobson, LSE's constituency MP for more than 30 years, used an open question and answer session by the LSE Students' Union Labour Society to publicly condemn the LSE Director's record. "Howard Davies should walk the plank for what he's done," he blurted. The remarks came after a question regarding LSE's reputation as a 'progressive institution', and the MP refused to hold back: "I'm not Howard Davies' greatest fan, shall we say". Dobson added, "he [Howard Davies] said the nationalisation of Northern Rock would be the biggest embarrassment The City could have. Well look at what happened. He wasn't right, was he?"

The talk was witnessed by a considerable crowd of students - including General Secretary Charlotte Gerada - who were keen to hear his views amidst the current university funding crisis. "I come from a generation where none of us had to pay for university. It'd be hypocritical of me to say you lot should have to pay," he explained.

Mr Dobson, who suggested he be known as 'Uncle Frank', spoke candidly about his long-held socialist ideals. "People say the state can't afford to pay for universities. That's nonsense. Try taking some of the £7bn in bonuses paid to bankers, bet that'd cover it."

When asked whether he supports the LSE Students' Union's campaign to freeze fees for three years, he was more cautious. "From what I've read, I broadly support the campaign", later adding, "worthwhile causes are worth sticking at. It might seem like a far-off goal, but they said that of freedom for South Africa. Stay fighting." The MP also backed the National Union

of Students' (NUS) position, saying he felt a graduate tax was the optimum policy to pursue.

However the former Health Secretary was less enthusiastic towards scenes witnessed outside Millbank at the recent NUS/UCU demonstration. "I despise of violence and throwing bloody fire extinguishers. But it might just have inspired a few people. I wouldn't say it distracted the media too much."

His greatest scorn was held for the Liberal Democrats though, who he claimed had disgraced themselves by exaggerating claims to abolish tuition fees. Mr Dobson handed round a quote from the Lib Dems' manifesto which read, "We will scrap university tuition fees for all... change is affordable even in these difficult economic times." He branded the party, particularly in the 2005 election, "bloody outrageous."

A graduate of the LSE, 'Uncle Frank' gave the audience an insight into his 31-year parliamentary career. "I'm the Health Secretary who set up NHS Direct, you know. Everyone loves NHS Direct," he replied when asked for his greatest achievements.

Dobson listed the introduction of tuition fees and failed changes to abortion laws as among the low-lights of his time on government benches, as well as the deregulation of banks under Tony Blair. "It was wrong, stupid and didn't work - but other than that, absolutely fine." Furthermore he refused to be drawn on criticism of previous PM Gordon Brown, saying: "I don't believe Gordon has ever been given the gratitude he deserves. I've got a lot of time for him."

Finishing the talk, the Labour MP affirmed his concerns over education cuts telling students, "Do feel free to contact my constituency office. I'm happy to help wherever I can, and you should keep going."

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Comment

A royal fuss (over nothing?)

If anyone (could have) missed it, two reactions to last week's news:

**Kane
Daniell**



Last week saw the long-awaited announcement of Kate and Will's royal engagement. Amid the forced smiles and newspaper sales, a thoughtful student might wonder what the point of all this is in modern Britain. To the enthusiastic outsider, the Royal family is a wonderful museum piece, kept well in order and tightly wound. Though one rarely sees Her Majesty, we can all gaze at the gardens and columns of Buckingham Palace with a mixed sense of pride and resentment. Smiles and waves, wreaths, carriages, handshaking, medal-giving and intimate interviews in well-furnished drawing rooms come to mind. The real question, of course, is completely serious but, sadly, rarely addressed: what's the point of it all?

**The British
don't handle
change well,
but the time
is coming**

living inheritor, immensely (un)fortunate, carefully cultivated and invariably dull. It is not the monarchy which Britons should be proud of, but the great generals, politicians, authors and scientists which helped to create and spread the great British intellectual traditions of democratic government, the rule of law, moderation and tolerance. The mother of parliaments and of constitutionalism, the creator of televisions, trains and toilets, Britain should take pride in its achievements and the merits of its meritocracy, rather than wallow in the pitiful admiration of those who have what they do not deserve. That the most un-British of systems continues to operate almost exclusively in Britain is a historical irony with which people are growing tired. As government becomes closer to the people, the monarchy looks increasingly like a hindrance rather than a help to the development of equal opportunity.

So what is the alternative? A powerful president, or a no-namer? Neither sounds too appealing. Like many British traditions, the quirks of antiquity somehow have a strange and unexpected usefulness in the modern day. Such is the crown's role in keeping politicians out of the Palace and in the office, whilst maintaining the prestige and provenance we all adore. The solution is simple: we don't remove the crown, just the head that sits beneath it. The crown has a future in Britain but the Royal family as we know it does not. The high-speaking aristocrats of a bygone age are replaced by the public, with sovereignty vested not in a person, but in the idea of Britishness, of our history, of moderation and good government, of internationalism and multiculturalism. The robes and jewels are taken from the backs of princes and hung up for all to see, in palaces open to all, every day of the week. Every British man and woman would have a right, vested in the crown itself and carried out by the speaker, to hold the Prime Minister and his government to account and to limit the power of the politician, in the absence of a single monarch or ruling family. Whilst a person, in whatever ceremonial or theoretical capacity, holds in him or herself the nominal right of dominion and leadership, the public right to eat from a silver spoon and be loved and worshipped, there is something grossly wrong with our system of national symbolism and public personhood so important in societies with which we share so much in common.

Perhaps this may be easier understood, annoyingly, on the accession of Charles and Camilla. Queen Elizabeth is loved, and rightly so, for her refinement and skill, and for the dedication which she has shown to her role. This, we all know, is not the point. It is difficult, but essential, to have a discussion about monarchy which is not personal, but general and principled. The dangers of falling in love with Celebrity Kate and Celebrity Will are apparent. The question should be: do we desire a system in which our symbolic leader is hereditary? Shouldn't a national icon be chosen, or representative, or at least deserving? The answer to these questions should be obvious, but we cannot reason with tradition in such a way - it is stubborn, and doesn't go down without a fight. The British don't handle change well, but the time is certainly coming. In the words of Robert Kegan, we should "resist our tendencies to make right or true that which is merely familiar and wrong or false that which is only strange". In the time approaching for our newly-engaged couple - of confetti, cakes and tiaras, rumours of children, double-page spreads and exclusive interviews - we would all do well to remember the staggering importance of all of this, in terms of our nation and our identity. We must not dwarf the debate, or hide it behind outdated affections, celebrity obsessions or delusions of grandeur. We must ask ourselves what we deserve, as a nation, to be recognised for, and bring pride and symbolism up to date with moral and political reality.

Let's start with the good. The pomp and glory makes us all a bit proud when we peer at the no-name presidents of continental Europe and beyond. There is a sense of great collectivity with the monarchy - of the nation's resources (quite a lot of them at £75 million) coming together in an array of crowns and colours, of parties and parades. It is something of empire to hold on to, something to remind us of our own (in)glorious past, something to look up to and something unique to cherish. As new knights and dames glide from the podium, tearful and overwhelmed at the graciousness and kindness of Her Majesty, it is hard to imagine a world without her. What, then, is the monarchy now? It is show and celebrity, celebration and scandal, and we love it.

But yet, there is something within me which hates the whole damn thing. The problem is that the monarch is a person, not just an idea. Think about the source of American pride: ideas of liberty and democracy vested in the abstract images of great men, statues and historical documents. Contrast this with Britain, which vests its cultural identity in a single



Some, if not most, of this week's Mail on Sunday
Photo: Duncan McKenna

**Hannah
Payne**



Prince William is getting married and so from the dress, to the venue, to the attendees, to the honeymoon, the tabloid press seem all set for stories at least until the summer. But with so much else on the cards, why are we all being whisked away in this (not so much) whirlwind romance?

The press attention has been extreme, perhaps too much so, but we can hardly blame them. The first piece of positive news in what seems like an age of never ending cuts, terrorist threats and global warming must be like the first rains to a parched river bed, never mind how David Cameron must have felt as he made the announcement. The nation needs something to be happy about and there doesn't seem to be much harm in cheering on a couple in love, even if we do pay for their palaces and will cover the cost of the wedding.

Whether or not we care for the royals as individuals, we cannot deny that the increase in tourism and the tidy profits to be made from commemorative plates, cups and indeed coins - even if they are all in bad taste - will surely contribute in some way to our flailing economy. Even the international television rights for the big day are set to make us a fair sum. We must hope then, that these will pay for the ceremony itself and indeed prove that the Windsors might just really be worth the hassle.

But surely it is not simply our financial investment in the couple that grabs the

nation's interest; whether an avid republican or devoted royalist, it seems that everyone has an opinion on the marriage. The question is; why? Our reverence of celebrity must have something to do with it. After all, what else is there to hold the royals above any other aristocrat or millionaire? Surely no-one any longer believes that the royals got to where they are due to the word of God - it is more likely the simplicity of tradition, the passing on of wealth and the historic inability of Brits to stage a good revolution. Our obsession can only involve the class system, which remains along with our lust for power, fame and riches that fuels the tabloid press and the idea of celebrity itself. We aspire to these things and love to read about those who do - the more we see of a famous face, the more we come to recognize them. And whose face do we see more of than the Queen's?

The idea of celebrity and the class system adds another element to the representation of Kate Middleton in the press. The need to refer to her as a 'commoner', or indeed as part of the middle class, seems ridiculous. Indeed, with the wealth, education and privileges of any true aristocrat, Kate has never had the concerns of any member of an average middle-class family, regardless of how much snobbery she may have had to endure. Despite this, the fact that her father made his own fortune is probably one of the more endearing things about the Middletons. This representation of class-mobility that is to enter the Royal family seems a positive message and one that the public will like. As our love of *The Apprentice* and Lord Alan Sugar demonstrates, there is clearly less distaste for the rich if they put the effort in to get there.

Further, there is nothing to suggest that a 'commoner' in the midst of the Royals will be a bad thing at all. For one,

it will increase the gene pool to hopefully drastic effect and, on a more serious note, it cannot be said that in a history of royal marriages, the tradition of aristocrats and royals has always ended well. The normality of this relationship, forged first as a friendship at university, must mean that this marriage will have a better chance of surviving than most - particularly better than William's parents.

Several comparisons have been made between William and his father and Kate and Diana in an effort to gauge how well the marriage will go - these seem somewhat unnecessarily pressurizing. I doubt anyone (including Charles himself) could honestly say that they believe Charles to be the better man, or that Kate won't have a tough job in living up to the legacy that has been left before her. It is only the existence of the relationship and the whole family within the public eye that has led to such comparisons. Indeed, one doesn't turn up to a friend's wedding and openly discuss the chances of it turning out badly - we save those sentiments for private discussion post-vows. And so, in a swing towards hypocrisy I could claim that it is the press itself that could again produce a little destruction of the royalty from which it profits so well.

So whether one claims to be for, against or indifferent to the principle of royalty, what's the harm in being happy for the pair of them? After all, they're just another couple, he didn't choose to be born a Windsor and don't we all love a love story? ☘

The battle for the Labour Party

How Labour won, and must stay on, the centre ground

Jack
Curtis



The Labour Party once again faces a battle over its identity - and the outcome is something of great significance not just for the party but for Britain in general. In order to prevent themselves from becoming a mere footnote in history, the party must rein in the militant tendencies that forever lurk just beneath its surface. This warning is not confined to the Labour Party itself, but instead applies itself to the entire centre-left, because whenever there is an economic downturn the centre-left becomes drunk on false hope. I know because I too suffer from flirtations with idealism. Nevertheless, embracing these ideas shatters credibility and shows an approach completely devoid of pragmatism and any sense of the world.

However, this is a dangerous precipice over which the Labour Party occasionally hangs, and we must resist the urge of deluded militants to give in and fall over the edge. For over this precipice lies only a slight sense of relief and satisfaction as you begin the descent. Unfortunately this euphoria quickly turns to pain and regret when you reach the bottom and the electoral wilderness: electoral failure inevitably follows.

With the election of a new leader supposedly more traditionally Old Labour as well as a Conservative Party to unite against, the temptation to go backwards must be all too great.

There is no doubt that the recent economic crisis presents an opportunity for the centre-left within British politics, not with a lurch leftwards but a reordering of the middle ground in British politics and the further entrenchment of the centre with social democratic ideas. It is a time to rein in the City but not destroy it; a time to strive for real equality of opportunity not pointlessly pursue an unachievable equality of outcome; a chance to use a subdued market to tackle arguably the biggest challenge facing the world today: the environment.

Tony Blair got a lot of things wrong - he began a chilling assault on our civil liberties that should be undone at all costs. He took our country to an unnecessary war which destroyed liberal interventionism, an ideal that he had a great deal of success executing and which was based around a decent amount of morality. It is a morality that is in short supply throughout our increasingly globalised world.

Where he succeeded was the near eradication of the militant tendencies that tore the Labour Party apart during the 1980s and allowed the conservatives a chance to drastically change our society and redefine the basics of the centre ground. While New Labour perhaps went too far, it is unarguable that Labour was severely in need of modernisation and a firm positioning in the centre.

When people manage to look past Iraq and actually try to rationally evaluate Blair's premiership they see the main successes as Northern Ireland, maybe de-

volution, perhaps the successful interventions in Kosovo and Sierra Leone. What people fail to recognise is the way in which he created a new consensus in British politics.

I firmly believe that it is this reordering of the centre ground that has stopped conservatives from completely decimating the NHS and education in their vast ideological cutting of the state. This restructuring became ingrained in the psyche of the British people and has forced conservatives leftwards. Therefore, it must become obvious that the real way to try and combat conservatism is not a lurch to the left and the embracing of politically unattainable ideas but rather a strong belief in social democracy and the eternal battle to entrench these ideas in the centre ground of British politics.

I urge all fellow left-leaning individuals to resist the temptation to slip back into familiar and comfortable extremes of ideology but rather help to cultivate a real-

istic opposition to Conservative cuts. This will help keep the consensus that New Labour created and stop the Conservatives from shifting it rightwards towards neoliberalism. The reason I advocate this is because there is plenty of reason to oppose Conservative cuts from this angle without adopting principles that failed to work in the 1980s and will just lend credence to the claim that the coalition provides the only sensible direction for our country.

We must help Labour to define themselves with relation to the centre and not a bygone outpost that should be confined to history for good. Throughout history Labour has been most successful when it has operated within a progressive consensus. We only need look at the legacy of the Attlee government, undoubtedly the most successful Labour government. Attlee, Bevan and the like helped to establish a consensus that the Conservatives had to abide by, a consensus which

subsequently acted as a means to pacify far right attitudes within the Conservative Party. When Labour struggled to define themselves as a centre-left movement and allowed themselves to be held to ransom by the unions there was a failure to realise real change. This was a major factor in allowing Thatcher to sweep to power and establish her very own regressive and New Right consensus in our country. It is also worth noting that Attlee achieved all this while implementing his own austerity measures perhaps showing that an opposition to every single cut is not only electorally unwise but unnecessary as well.

Labour is most potent when it rejects its extremes and sets about redefining the centre-ground of British politics. If we wish to stop the Conservative onslaught of the state we must reject ideological folly and instead help to advance the progressive consensus established by New Labour. ☛



Woking Labour Party protest
Photo: flickr user skuds

The Palestinian right to Education

Nadia

Marques de Carvalho



To deny education to the Palestinians is to deny peace and hope to the Middle East. Education is an intrinsic right, one which helps mould individual personalities and forge great nations: it is a tool as much as it is a weapon. A tool, which has been constantly obstructed and denied by the State of Israel who spends 10 per cent of its GDP on its own education system, with blatant disregard for the 40,000 Palestinian students which it has deprived of an education this academic year. Palestinians require education as an alternative means of resistance so that they can assess the problems in their society, which have precluded them from ending the illegal occupation.

In response to this, the LSE's Palestine Society has taken an active stance to not only raise awareness about Israel's orchestrated means of undermining and crippling the development of the Palestinian society as a whole, but also by pioneering dynamic initiatives such as the opening up of LSE's electronic resources (within copyright restrictions) to Palestinian universities. As a university of the social sciences, we recognise the necessity, importance and power which education provides us with and we bear a duty to promote this to other students less fortunate than ourselves. With the support of academics and the majority of the student body, the LSE is aiming to create

a strong foundation upon which Palestinian universities can share our resources and build strong links between students - whether this is through letters, Facebook or Skype, it is the principle that there is on-going communication between students, sharing of knowledge and hence galvanising hope for people persecuted in their own land. This progressive initiative will offer the Palestinians a whole new perspective on matters, however it will most importantly highlight the LSE standing in solidarity with not only the Palestinians but also with the core values and principles that define our society - justice, freedom and the right to education, core values and principles audaciously violated by the State of Israel.

Talks are already in place with other British universities to follow in suit: the LSE's Right to Education Campaign aims to mobilise and strengthen partnerships between UK and Palestinian student bodies and professors, so that united we can strategically challenge the prevalent injustices faced by Palestinian students.

We may not be able to participate in peace talks or have direct pressure over the actors making the decisions, but we can empower the Palestinian students with a gift far more sustainable and superior than money: education. Through education a stronger more united society will develop, a more aware, creative and inspired generation will be shaped: a generation that will seek peace not through the injustices of Israel or through the guns of Hamas.

Education for the Palestinians will ultimately create individuals and a nation that is self-reliant, independent and sovereign. A nation that we can call Palestine. ☛

Suits in New York, violence in the desert

Teresa

Garcia Alonso



Fortnight last Monday, the Moroccan army dismantled the Gzeim Izik protest camp - 20,000 Saharans were protesting against poor social and economic policies - although many of the protesters did not hide their links with the cause of Saharan independence and self-determination from Morocco. The camp was close to El Aaiún (Laayoune), the main city of the Western Sahara.

It is still not possible to confirm the number of deaths and injuries - since Monday the Moroccan authorities have banned the access to the area of all press.

The few political figures who could raise their voices remain silent

The eviction came just a day after the Polisario Front (the people of Western Sahara) and Moroccan diplomatic representatives met in New York to discuss the future of the former Spanish colony. The meeting was supposed to be hosted by a

UN special envoy, Christopher Ross. Representatives from Algeria and Mauritania were also due to be in attendance.

In 1975, Spain ceded the administration of Western Sahara, but not sovereignty, to Morocco and Mauritania. Since 1979 Morocco has occupied the area and despite numerous attempts by the UN to reach an agreement for the autonomy or independence of the Saharans, the problem remains unresolved.

It is not a coincidence that the Moroccan police operation coincided with the opening of negotiations in New York, facilitated by the UN. This is just another example of the Moroccan government trying to hinder any kind of negotiation process to reach an agreement with the Saharan people. If within a conflict, one party does not want to end it then a third party (the UN) has to take decisive action, or the loser of this relationship will always be the same and the confrontation will never disappear. It is a complicated issue with a lot of interests, but after what happened this past week at the protest camp we cannot ignore it anymore. According to the minister of cooperation of the Polisario Front, "the troops have crushed with extreme violence Gzeim Izik camp. There are hundreds of civil victims, including children. The city of El Aaiún is beleaguered and, to the military and security forces have joined the Moroccan settlers in a kind of 'hunting' for the Saharans; thereby, creating a scenario out of control that can end up creating their own hatred of ethnic cleansing." Moreover, "the mass imprisonment and trials against human rights activists in the absence of guarantees continues" and that "Morocco, with its contempt for international law and human dignity, has unleashed a dynamic of tension and threats whose course is

unpredictable."

What should be done so that the international community agrees to take all necessary measures to solve a conflict that has existed for more than two decades now? The Western Sahara is not a low-intensity conflict anymore after what occurred at Gdeim Izik. International pressure was one of the few factors that used to force global organizations to take action around this issue. However, this option is not available at the moment. Morocco is challenging international law, and the Western Sahara cannot defend itself. The lack of international pressure is due to the fact that the main press has not even mentioned the events that went on in the camp because the coverage and knowledge of the events is so limited beyond the area itself.

In addition, the political figures who could raise their voices in the international arena to make known their concern, remain silent, like in Spain. The Spanish authorities, who have a lot of influence in this area as a decolonizing power, don't dare to condemn because, according to the Foreign Affairs Ministry, "Spain has a lot of economic and strategic interests with Morocco".

Undoubtedly, the most relevant fact is that Morocco has barred the media in the relevant areas. Again, this looks like an attempt to confuse international public opinion by arguing that there are two versions of what really happened in Western Sahara. ☛

Future of fees brings mature debate at last

Teddy Groves



At various points this year various boards will meet to decide how much LSE will charge for tuition from 2012. Groups of thoughtful people will look at each other earnestly across a table and try to agree on the best amount to charge future students for tuition over the coming five years. Unfortunately there is a serious danger that, without our help, these well-meaning people will make a disastrous mistake.

It might not seem obvious that a dramatic increase in LSE graduates' financial burdens would be a disaster, but a little thought makes it clear. If fees go up as expected, several thousand people

This is a clear choice between accepting a less shiny university and sending thousands into a financial car crash

will lose out on life-changing amounts of money. A few will be rich enough that this won't be a severe hardship, but most won't be so lucky: an £18,000 mugging is a personal disaster. Beyond the immediate damage, countless others will suffer indirectly. Many will be squeezed out of jobs by uninterested LSE alumni who feel obliged to pay off their debt rather than follow their vocations. A-Level pupils, especially poor ones who are more prone to debt-aversion and never being rich, will be put off applying to LSE, with clear negative repercussions. Children will lose out on time with their overworked parents. While the payments will be deferred and income-contingent, the fact is that you can't take huge amounts of money from people without causing huge amounts of harm.

The alternative to this scenario is one where LSE doesn't increase its fees, and as a result would have about £20 million less to invest over the next few years. While it would be silly to suggest that this loss would have no bad effects - most likely LSE would have to cut back on capital spending, the benefits of which

shouldn't be scoffed at - it would be sillier still to pretend that the school's financial solvency or ability to continue producing excellent research would be at risk. This is a clear choice between accepting a less shiny university and sending thousands of people into a financial car crash.

The unavoidable consequences of higher fees are not controversial, but they are difficult for our minds to process. It takes some imagination to convince yourself that future people really matter just as much as present ones, that a little less money every month really can add up to a messed up life, or that messing up thousands of lives really is thousands of times worse than messing up one. It is much easier to sympathise with pain that is immediate, concentrated and has an obvious victim than with slow-motion, dispersed, faceless tragedies like this one. This is a well-documented flaw with human brains that frustrates reasonable decision-making on all kinds of topics from global warming to fishing policy: we weren't designed to make correct decisions on a larger scale than our immediate circle of friends. It is important to take this into account when trying to get these kinds of calls right.

If you find it hard to visualise the human consequences of a fee rise, imagine how much harder it would be from the point of view of a typical member of LSE's court of governors. You wouldn't remember very well not knowing your exact movements at least two weeks in advance. You would struggle to picture how students make important career decisions or badly off A-Level students decide whether or not to apply to university. Your professional life would have conditioned you to deal with colleagues or customers whose financial behaviour reflects their needs, rather than with vulnerable young people making hopeful stabs in the dark. On top of this distance from those who would lose from a fee increase, you would be closely acquainted with the people who stood to gain, and this would naturally bias your decision. You might have the best possible intentions, full access to the facts and the benefit of a lifetime's experience, but your distorted human sense of sympathy could still cause you to make a biased and incorrect choice. If this happens for enough of the right people, a needless disaster will happen.

This is why it is vital to make your voice heard over the next few months. As a current student, you are one of the very best qualified people to judge how a massive fee increase would feel, and the people in charge are in desperate need of this information. Perhaps you think that the benefit of the extra spending justifies the undeniably severe hardship that increasing fees would entail. Perhaps not. In either case the decision-makers and those whose lives they are about to alter deserve the benefit of your expertise.

Moses Lemuel



Very few of us students are or can actually be privy to the real financial situation behind the proposed budget cuts in education. Yes, the UK national debt is growing, but whether cuts to the education budget are really necessary, whether cuts could be better made elsewhere, is a question many of us do not have a good answer to. In that sense, the "What is your alternative?" retort made by politicians and those in favour of the cuts are begging the question.

The reasoning is simple: finance graduates earn more than anthropology graduates

Let's assume that the cuts are necessary, or that they will happen whether we agree or disagree. What is a better way of increasing university fees? I'm arguing for differentiation in fees between courses, and the argument is a rather simple economic one: Under the current system of charging uniform fees within absurdly broad categories of 'arts' and 'sciences', student loan payments are socio-economically regressive due to the differences between average income and potential earning power within those categories.

The idea has been brought up within the LSE, most notably by Sir Howard Da-

vies in his recent Beaver interview on the Freeze the Fees campaign, and I agree that if fees must be raised this is a good idea. The second "To Freeze or Not to Freeze" article in the Beaver raised the prospect of adverse social consequences caused by a fee hike on degrees in fields that produce high social returns but low private returns for the student, since it would make them even less attractive and thereby reduce the benefit society receives from the vital services of professionals in those fields, as fewer young people would consider pursuing such careers due to their financial unfeasibility. The great thing about this argument is that it still applies even in the framework of guaranteed fee hikes through the notion of fee differentiation.

The reasoning is simple: finance graduates earn, on average, higher incomes than anthropology graduates due to the kind of jobs and opportunities available to them that offer greater financial remuneration. These two fields are just examples and the same comparison can be made between other degree programmes such as Law and History and even amongst the natural sciences. However, most if not all degrees have social use values, which are not reflected by their exchange values in the form of wages and other forms of compensation on the job market. By charging uniform fees, particularly moderate or high uniform fees, UK universities are effectively raising the price of some degrees while lowering others as compared to what they would be without any intervention. The effect is to increase demand for degrees with higher exchange values and lowering it for those with lower exchange values, which in turn results in the reduction of the social benefit generated by people working in fields related to the less financially-rewarding degrees.

Thus, by charging different fees for different degree programmes according to potential earning power, everyone can benefit to some extent. Students considering degrees with lower exchange values would not be further disincentivised by the prospect of unmanageable debt, while students considering degrees with higher exchange values would face reduced competition for entry and for employment after graduation with fees that would closer approximate the balance between demand and supply of available places. Furthermore, society would be able to enjoy increased benefit from the easing of the chronic undersupply of capable people going into valuable but not highly-paid positions.

Young people looking to get rich quickly might be unhappy with such a proposal, but if the aim of policy-making is still closely tied to the pursuit of social justice or at least the maximisation of social benefit, this is an option really worth considering if the budget cuts are a given.

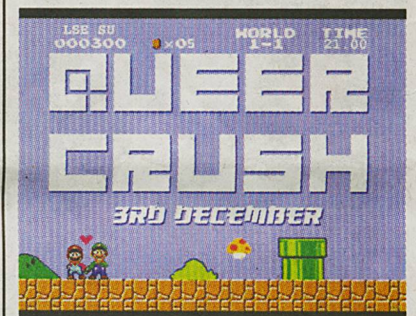
Pride Week: A year on

Scott MacDonald



As most students at LSE are yet to find out, next week will see the second ever pride week held on campus! Since last year much has changed in the world of LGBT rights. I will use this opportunity to explain, as a former LGBT officer, why the developments of the last year make having a successful pride week more important than ever.

The past year has been a mixed bag of successes, failures and new challenges for LGBT campaigners. One of the most heartening areas where improvement seems to be happening is to do with gay marriage in the UK. The policy now seems to have the support of all three parties in the UK, passing with little opposition at the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties' conferences. The main opposition to the movement within the LGBT campaign itself, Stonewall, has now relented on their previously untenable position and now back full marriage equality. Without a vocal opposition to gay marriage it is likely that it will pass within the year, a success on all fronts.



One area where significant improvement does need to happen though, and where awareness raising on campus can be vitally helpful, is in terms of the mental health of young LGBT teenagers. Regrettably this was recently brought to the attention of the world following a spate of teen suicides in the USA. This has provoked a global response with everyone from Barack Obama to David Cameron recording videos telling young people that "it gets better". As students from a diverse and cosmopolitan university it is important that we spread this message. University is seen by many students who are bullied at school as an opportunity to have a fresh start in a new liberal community. We must make it clear to every gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender student who is sitting miserably in a classroom at school that at university, it does get better.

As well as campaigning, pride week also needs to concentrate on awareness raising. The main obstacle to LGBT equality at LSE is ignorance. Students here will often, quite literally, go on to be world leaders in business and politics. We must seize this opportunity to educate the community. University presents a situation where LGBT people are friends, classmates and roommates rather than a cause to support or the subject of a story in a newspaper.

This year's Pride Week has more events planned than ever. We're having a debate on religion and sexuality, a pub quiz in the tuns, a stall on Houghton Street and our legendary queer room on Friday at Crush. In order for the week to be a success we need to make sure that people beyond the LGBT community are involved. It is important that all allies become engaged with the community and our discussions, as without your support we will be continued to be marginalised in society and on campus.

- EVENTS FOR THE WEEK:**
 Tuesday: Pub Quiz in the Tuns - from 8pm
 Wednesday: Discussion on LGBT in religion - From 7pm in A4RES (Old Building)
 Thursday: Porn and Pot Luck (Film and Food) From 6pm in NAB 2.06
 Friday Night: Queer Crush/MrMiss LSE - Underground Bar from 9pm"

Letters to the Editor

Sir - Following up on the article in the Beaver of last week 16/11/10 Why I don't hear the LSE Library. I would just like to let all Library users know that fines are charged on overdue books as a way to encourage prompt return of materials, particularly those that are wanted and reserved by other students and so not eligible for renewal. Income from fines is returned to the School and levels of fines have not been increased for more than 10 years.

Elizabeth Chapman
 Director of Library Services

Sir - I would like to bring to your attention the serious concern I and fellow international students have with regards to the implications of the immigration cap on our educational and professional future. According to the Financial Times last Friday, an immigration cap may result in denying 88,000 international students the opportunity to study in the UK. This will

be detrimental not just the universities, but also the economy.

Furthermore, international students who are currently at the LSE may not be able to take up job offers they have secured because of the cap.

This ludicrous legislation is not getting enough coverage or attention at LSE.

Regards,

Aliabbas Virani

Sir - The feelings on campus about fees are running very high; as the latest issue of The Beaver clearly illustrates cries of "New Tories, Same Scum" and loaded accounts of the assault on "Tory Towers" abound. Young Conservatives are used to being hated: it is part of the deal. I speak as a Conservative at LSE and as a veteran of a hard fought council campaign in the East End (I will not forget one debate I had with a Marxist Rasta up a tower block in a hurry). We accept that our attitudes to the market, taxation and the state are

not always as popular as those held by the Left at our age. We even accept that part of coming to the LSE, with its Fabian origins and radical heritage, is that you enter a powder keg of anti-establishment feeling populated with alternative view points on how society such operate. However, as much as we accept this we also have a right to hold our views in a climate free from fear. I welcome the LSESU accepting that it is not just Tories who are opposed to the bid to fix the fees. Indeed, and here is a revelation, not all of my members are opposed to the initiative.

The question which faces the students of today is not just a rise in fees; it is how to contribute to the maintenance and development of a sustainable higher education system we can all be proud of. Education is the foundation stone of a civilised society, if we do not learn to think how can we be? Yet the cold reality is we need to find the cash to pay for it. We have had over a decade of a Labour government committed to fifty per cent of the population going to University; in working

to that goal without adequate foresight resources have been stretched to near breaking point. The situation has been compounded by the worst fiscal crisis for generations. I personally am mired in debt, a state of affairs I willingly entered into when I decided I wanted to further my education. Of course I am not happy that this has happened but it has: I wanted to learn, I must pay. If we want to still possess one of the leading higher education systems in the world tough decisions have to be taken about how to pay for it. Fees seems like the only way to go in this time of austerity; I remain to be convinced about an alternative solution when the government has run out of cash. Next time readers shout "Tory scum" I hope they think about that.

Regards,

Christopher Wilford
 Chairman, LSESU Conservative Society

23 November 2010 | The Beaver

Photo

Gets international



Duncan McKenna

Duncan McKenna

Duncan McKenna

Duncan McKenna

Duncan McKenna

Vincent Mok

Rosie Coleman

Social

The business of the bees

Nikki Patel discusses bee-keeping at Passfield Hall



Einstein once said "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left". While this theory has not been proven (and isn't very likely to be), it does demonstrate the importance of bees in our environment. What we do know as fact is that 1 in 3 honey bee colonies were lost last winter, and we rely on bees for pollination of a third of the crops we eat. The honey bee in particular has been of interest to the LSE Residences and, in partnership with Camden Council, the LSE welcomed its first bees to Passfield Hall in July 2010. The LSE Estates division, working with beekeeper Dr. Luke Dixon, have worked to install two honey-bee-hives at Passfield Hall, and it is hoped they will grow to house up to 100,000 bees!

For those of you who aren't bee experts, here's a brief summary of the workings of a beehive: a worker honey bee in summer lives on average only 6 weeks from the time she hatches as an adult bee. At any one time a hive can contain an extraordinary 70,000 bees. Each hive has one queen, 250 drones (male honey bees), 20,000 female foragers, 30,000 female house-bees, and numerous larvae and cells being developed. The inner workings of a beehive are impressive; they are like a miniature human society in that they have a leader, workers and even a 'police force' to keep law and order within the hive.

You may be thinking bees aren't very similar to humans, but you'd be surprised to know that for an organisation that turns over every 6 to 8 weeks, they are very successful at managing themselves and the

fact that they've been producing honey for over a hundred million years suggests they have acquired the considerable knowledge and skills needed to continue their success.

Last week at a public lecture hosted by the management department, Dr. Michael O'Malley spoke about his new book 'The Wisdom of Bees: What the Hive can Teach Business about Leadership, Efficiency, and Growth'. His analogy is that business organisations and beehives are in fact very similar, and business managers can learn up to 25 lessons from the beehive. In this analogy the beekeeper plays the role of manager in a firm, while the queen bee does little in the hive, and the workers are comparable to the forager bees. In his insightful public lecture, Dr O'Malley sets out four meta-principles which he

believes makes bees such a successful species: common goals and interpersonal trust; protecting the future; decentralised organisation; and extremely effective management of risk.

The highlight of the lecture had to be Dr O'Malley's demonstration of the famous 'waggle dance', which is one of at least 17 different honey bee communication signals, which makes use of all their senses. This dance language is used to convey to the other bees information about the direction and distance to flowers yielding nectar and pollen, to water sources, or to a new hive location. It is this sort of intriguing communication and sense of community which has led some scientists to coin the term 'honorary mammals' for bees.

As someone with little prior knowledge of bees, the public lecture was certainly entertaining and revealing as to what actually goes on in the mysterious wooden boxes (the hives) I see every day as a resident of Passfield Hall. The key message of the book is to refute the general perception of bees as creatures to be feared and instead to place the focus on the incredible thinking and communication techniques that make them so unique.

The bees at Passfield Hall have recently been closed for winter since winter bees live for about 6 months and rarely leave their hive during this time. But a small amount of honey has been extracted this year, with the intention of extracting more in subsequent years. The proceeds from selling the honey will go back into various sustainability projects in halls of residence.

The Residences Sustainability Champions (RSCs) are a group specifically concerned with promoting the vision of a sustainable society in LSE halls of residence. In general our aim is to educate, energise and mobilise students in halls to take actions that contribute to reducing the negative environmental impact of LSE halls of residence. We are particularly passionate about encouraging sustainable lifestyles, and producing our own honey is just one of the many initiatives that can help us to achieve this goal.



Festival of lights

Ashma Kunde recalls the spirit of Diwali

Diwali, one of India's most renowned festivals, is celebrated across the nation and across the globe, interpreted by different narratives, meanings and significance. We take light over darkness to symbolise triumphs of good over evil, and welcome the New Year, always wishing for happiness and prosperity. So how do we, as students, mark this auspicious time of the year? Have we come to celebrate it as less the festival of lights, and more the festival of lights, cameras and action?

Last year, I attended the Oxford University Diwali Ball 2009 (as they said, "the full name is necessary for gravitas"). Held at the Kassam Stadium, it was a meticulously planned and executed extravaganza, making it more 'Ball' than 'Diwali'. There were seating arrangements! And an intricate schedule involving a drinks reception, performances, dinner, fireworks display and dancing. Once-upon-a-time phenomenon Raghav sang of Angelina and Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and Navin Kundra strummed 'Love Thing' on his guitar. We all huddled together in the freezing cold night to watch the breathtaking fireworks. To add to this, there was a professional photographer, which brought back memories of my school prom, and stalls of sweets and drinks and many other things. All these festivities probably made

it the most formal, most multicultural Diwali celebration I've been part of. I can only imagine how much effort went into its organisation, as it was truly a spectacular spectacular.

This year's Warwick Diwali Ball was a different affair altogether. I wouldn't call it a ball, but an extremely glamorous dinner-dance party. A legitimate reason to bedazzle ourselves from head-to-toe, paying a sartorial ode to our roots, and to take entirely vain photographs. Warwick University, great as it is, is not ideally located (a fact you notice more after living in the heart of London) and so coaches were organised to take guests from the university campus to the venue in Birmingham. There was a quick pit stop at a temple in Coventry, which was a nice touch. In Birmingham, we sat amidst the lavish setting of Shimla Pinks and watched the beautifully dressed attendees swan around, drinking, talking, flirting. Sparkly saris were strategically worn to conceal and reveal. The DJ was incredible, but there were no performances, barring a spontaneous one from Anmol Malik when 'Talli' began to play. It didn't feel like I was in the UK at all, but rather an Indian cosmopolitan city.

The Diwali parties I've known in my three years at the LSE have always been a rave, despite entirely lacking in glamour and formality. Every year has been a

classic combination of the Quad, our very own singing star Medha Krishna, and a nonexistent queue to get to the food. And of course, one spends the night dancing away as DJ Senator churns out his standard mix of Bollywood's latest hits. It's all perfect when you're in good company.

I once read that Diwali is "a time of observing precious customs passed down the generations". As I think about all these student-organised festivities, I can't help but wonder – does the lack of a religious dimension, and an absence of the age-old customs leave our celebrations empty? Are we supposed to be reading the meaning of Diwali from its original Sanskrit, and chanting the prayers and performing the rituals? Perhaps now, we have our own definition of the festival, and although it's not what it was, this is what it has become. And an element of the original meaning is still there; we may not share the traditions, but I believe we share the spirit, and that's the most important thing. Because yes, I do love the ample opportunities for gorging on sweets and dressing up that Diwali provides, but what I love more is that Diwali allows me to step away from my otherwise scepticism-ridden existence, and makes me believe that peace and happiness are entirely plausible concepts.



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LSE Diary

Priscilla Anushka Abishegam in Greece

There must be something about the air in Greece, about the myriad reminders of history that gives this country its incomparable atmosphere. As you walk the tangerine tree-lined streets and tread upon the cobblestones you become part of a world now long past. I have always had a Byronic obsession with Greece because of the vast stores of myth and legend that the country has given life to.

Truthfully though, I should not have been allowed to go to Greece; my enthusiasm was more than my parents and every Greek shopkeeper could bear. As is customary when one purchases items which have a specific history, the retailer often regales this significance to customers who he is sure barely know if what he speaks is the truth, for after all he is the native, the inheritor of the legends and myths of his ancestors. There were many instances when I contradicted shopkeeper's tales and informed them of what Homer and Sophocles and the seven wise men of Greece had said. The most extraordinary instance occurred when I became incensed because a keen salesman suggested I buy a statue of Achilles 'the invulnerable' instead of the one of Apollo 'the all seeing'. The man could not have imagined the rant that came his way. I lectured to him:

"Achilles was a bloodthirsty savage who dragged Hector's marred body across the Troad plain, a man whose restless spirit demanded that the Trojan princess Polyxena be sacrificed upon his grave, a man who claimed glory but hid in women's clothing in his wife Deidamia's palace. Do you really expect me to buy his statue?" I can still relive my impassioned rant!

Yes, I do have a lot to say on Greek mythology; in fact I ruined the movie Troy

for all my friends because I could not stop myself from pulling apart that ludicrous depiction of one of the greatest events of the Age of Heroes. I remember one of my friends saying,

"Priscilla can you just enjoy the movie and forget the history, Orlando Bloom is really cute."

My answer to this was, "Anne, when Achilles joined the war he was fifteen not forty like Brad Pitt, and Hector never accompanied Paris to Sparta, Paris went there for the sole purpose of thieving Helen; she was promised to him by Aphrodite in the 'Judgment of Paris' - how can you expect me by any stretch of the imagination to compute this movie as the 'Trojan War'?"

Well, back to Greece itself - climbing the Acropolis was sublime, the remnants of semi-precious stones upon the ground and the beautiful architecture was more wondrous than I could have imagined. When one is actually in Greece, surrounded by such ancient structures, one can truly believe in the glories of the past. Of magical places like the Elysian fields, of strange creatures like Chiron the centaur, or the chimera and of beautiful Pegasus (who by the way was a wild horse tamed only by Athena's golden bridle by Bellerophon, not Heracles!). My only disappointment was that I could not see the statue of the grey-eyed Athena with Nike, the goddess of victory, in her hand.

I loved everything about Athens, the tiny jewellery shops, where you could see turquoise or coral set in beaten silver reproductions of Mycenaean platters, the family-run restaurants with lamps hanging outside and flames dancing in the flickering light. And the food was superlative; I will never forget the little jam bottles of Ambrosia served for breakfast at the Athens InterContinental Hotel, I kept one of the bottles, always remember-

ing that I too had partaken of the 'nectar of Jove'.

I never wanted to forget what I felt when I went to Greece. I realised then that I would never feel like that again, thus I wrote these four lines and I always read them when I need to be taken back to 'the splendour that was Greece': 'We may not live in the Age of Heroes, But our world is splendid still, Never lose heart for the endless sleep of the hundred eyed Argus has yet to fall upon this world'.



From the streets of Tel Aviv

Aimee Riese interviews the music sensation Idan Raichel



Flickr user Masa_Israel

The dreadlocked Israeli music phenomenon, Idan Raichel, is coming to Europe this month. The Idan Raichel Project, which started in 2002, fuses sounds from the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. His music has been described as encompassing the sounds

of the streets of Tel Aviv and encapsulating the multicultural dynamic of the city. Idan Raichel writes and produces his own songs, and performs them alongside other musicians and artists. The project features many participants including Mira Anwar Awad, an Arab-Israeli; Cabra Casey who is of Ethiopian parentage and was born

in a refugee camp in Sudan, and Sergio Braams of Suriname. The debut album of the Idan Raichel Project sold over 150,000 copies. His music is featured on Putumayo's *One World, Many Cultures* CD. He has already toured in Ethiopia, the US, Australia and Hong Kong and will be in Europe this month.

How would you describe the sound of your music for someone who has never heard you?

The Idan Raichel Project involves a group of eighty-five musicians. They are from different sections of Israeli society, making up its many cultural voices to show, create and define Israeli music for the past decade. The origins of the artists make it more than just an Israeli project; it is a world music project with musicians from Rwanda, Mali, Russia, Yemen, Columbia and beyond. Everyone is a solo artist but together we are one team of musicians. The fun part for me is that every tour we can change the band around - we don't have all eighty-five musicians on at once, we mix up the band and each musician can interpret the songs in their own way. We also use different languages - Hebrew, Arabic, Amharic, Zulu and Hindi. This is why to understand the music you need to listen to at least ten songs, they are all so different.

What were your earliest musical influences?

When I was growing up I played the 'non-coolest' instrument ever - the accordion. My interest in music grew from there. I like folk music, tango music, and Miles Davis. Tracy Chapman and Radiohead have influenced me. Ethiopian music has also had a huge impact on me.

Right now I love the artists of the Idan Raichel Project. They are all individual artists in their own right, and they are what inspire me.

As an Israeli, do you feel your music has a political message for those outside of Israel?

My music has more of a cultural message; I am a cultural ambassador for the Middle East. The Idan Raichel Project has eighty-five musicians, as you can imagine there are eighty-five opinions on politics! We have to accept we will never all agree about everything. My goal is to have a platform to create music together. Peace is not just about contacts and agreements, it's about normalisation and relationships. I have brave Lebanese, Syrian, Iranian and Palestinian musicians who join me. Mira

is an Israeli-Arab singing in Arabic with me. I want to make music in Ramallah, in Damascus, in London, in Tel Aviv and for students to come with no political judgment or agenda.

You are a goodwill ambassador for the charity Save a Child's Heart, can you tell us a bit more about that?

While I was in Addis Ababa I saw Israeli doctors training local doctors and discovered that this was a project by Save a Child's Heart, who work to provide life-saving heart surgery for children in the developing world, taking them to receive top medical care in Israel, and train local doctors. It is amazing humanitarian work.

What are your hopes for this tour?

I've been on the road now for six years, from Uruguay to Australia to Ethiopia making music and performing at World Music festivals. I am hoping to reach a wider audience, particularly students who are willing to explore music. Everyone can find himself or herself within music. Music transcends politics and borders and it is great having musicians from all nationalities on stage. Any readers who want to jam on stage with me, from Iran, from Syria, Palestinians, anyone, contact me on MySpace, and we'll make music in London.

The Idan Raichel Project is playing in London at the O2 Academy Islington on 28 November.

<http://www.o2academyislington.co.uk/>

The following is a link to his MySpace page <http://www.myspace.com/theidanraichelproject>

Top Track recommendations:
"Mi'Ma'amakim" (Out Of The Depths)
"Boee" (Come to me)
"Im Telech" (If you go)



PART B

Sex and Gender is back.
With THIS guy at the helm.

Theatre
Design for
Living, reviewed

Private B
Satire.

Fashionski
It's Russian
this week

Design For Living, The Old Vic

Christopher Finnigan explores how Coward's play continues to provoke and amuse

Noel Coward's play *Design For Living* remains very daring to this day. Banned when it first appeared in 1933, its explosive mix of Wildean wit, strong enigmatic characters and three-way sexual dalliances result in an engrossing theatre spectacle. Commissioned by Kevin Spacey and playing at the Old Vic in Waterloo until the end of this month, *Design for Living* focuses upon three lovers in three different locations, managing their three separate dilemmas of the heart. The play is heavy on intelligent dialogue, yet doesn't demand too much out of its audience. The triangle-shaped relationship provides for endless quantities of raucous flirtation, which sees all three actors comfortably gain podium finishes for their performances. The play is unconventionally broken up into three segments making room for set changes. Each segment is extremely impressive in its own right, helping entertain and sparkle when the actors very rarely failed. Additionally, the Old Vic's setting facilitates a strong level of intimacy between the audience and actors, and its cheap prices for under-25s is an act of explicit seduction for students.

Endless paradoxes between how the friends feel and act see their emotions explode as their lust becomes too great a weight to burden. This frustratingly becomes clouded in guilt, sparking yet another change in location as they attempt to start a new life in a foreign country. The play mainly caters towards an older audience, yet the nature and comedy found in the relationships amended any discon-

nect with younger viewers. The second scene is notably the best, where the sexual tension between the two male friends slowly ferments. Aided by a bottomless alcohol cupboard, the two lose their sense of inhibitions and discover a new found friendship that sees

The triangular shaped relationship provides for endless quantities of raucous flirtation, which sees all three actors gain podium finishes

the sharing of intimacy circle their triangle. This, unfortunately, even today prompted some in the audience to uncomfortably shift around in their seats and let out a slight gasp.

Fed up with their friends from the outside world who insist on moralising

about their every action inside their cosy triangle, all three finally realise that their unconventional attitudes to one another requires simply, yes you guessed it: a new design for living from this moralistic bottom shifting gasping world.

The variety of emotions the two male characters display is tremendous, and their ease to move from one to another is as equally impressive. The roller-coaster ride each character is subjected to in the three scenes sees them adopt one distinct aura, which by the end has been easily swapped for another. The most entertaining to witness is Andrew Scott who plays Leo, as he changes from a prudent high minded member of society to an impulsive intuition led artist. We can see Coward's play as a living and breathing rebuttal to those who seek to judge ignorantly from a distance. This fierce character exploration combined with disarming humour can be compared to the suave politician, who angling for votes charismatically neutralises his reluctant audience.

Finally, for all those with a taste for drama should keep a close on the Old Vic's website. Rumour has it, Kevin Spacey himself is intending to reappear in Spring 2011 for a few months in an adaptation of Shakespeare!

Design For Living is on at the Old Vic until 27th November



The cast of Design for Living

From Russia With Love

Alice Leah Fyfe looks at the impact of Russian romance on the runway

Long dark nights are drawing in and this winter is predicted by many to be the coldest on record. While most invincible youths seem adamant on exposing their goose-pimpled limbs to the freezing elements, why not take the lead from the snow-stormed lands of Russia? Russians have been dealing with sub-zero temperatures their whole lives, and have winter dressing down to a cosy and glamorous art-form. There's something romantic and mysterious about the dark forests and snow quilted plains of Russia and numerous associations with tragic love stories, *Zhivago* and *Karenina* and ethereal fairy tales. It has been the inspiration for art forms world over. In particular, dance; the Ballets Russes, whose past costumes and sets have been associated with Picasso, Matisse and Chanel.

The ultimate pas de deux this winter is that of fur and sequins

Last Friday, in association with their current exhibition to celebrate the centenary of the Ballets Russes, students from the London College of Fashion collaborated with the English National Ballet to unveil their designs inspired by Diaghilev's company and their astounding costumes over the last decades. And while ultimately created for dazzling and demonstrative shows, the costumes of the Ballets Russes provide strong influence for some of this season's styles, embroidered chiffons and wafts of netting along with the utility of thick, heavy felts and velvets in sombre tones.

There has obviously been a lot of controversy surrounding the ethics behind real fur and I am not going to condone either way; each to

their own, but there is such excellent faux fur out there now, and at a fraction of the price. Some may say it's nice to have the real article though, more snug, more authentic, in which case there are countless opportunities to pick one up on the corner of Brick Lane (likely to be a rip-off) or tucked away in a thrift store or the bottom of the pile in Deptford Market. If you want to invest in a real one, definitely shop around to find the best style and price as it's something you're unlikely to buy more than once. But, real or imitation, the look is still the same and a great colour for the depths of winter is a rich mahogany which will make you feel like a deliciously chocolatey treat. The cossack hat is the ultimate accessory to round off any outfit in the Russian style. With jeans and T or the whole-hog military skater coat and boots, these hats looks great on guys and girls alike! If you'd rather not be so hot-headed, there are some cute fur headbands out there as well. The high-street has so many fur coats, capes and accessories. Here are some of my favourites:



Mittens, Warehouse, £28



Hat, River Island, £20



Rust jacket, Topshop, £60

And I said sequins. I meant everything. Nothing is ever too much. Gilt embroidery, beads, brocade, sequins, tassels, feathers. Be adorned; be adorned. Bebaroque is an exquisite (but ludicrously priced) hosiery company specialising in the most beautifully embroidered tights and leotards. As pricey as they are, they do have a sale on at the moment, and you can pick up some tights for about £20. Keep an eye out, the bigger items may go down even more around Christmas time. I hope so!



bebaroque.co.uk



Snood, ASOS, £38



Fur cape, Genevieve at ASOS, £80

So if you want some more inspiration for a way to compose your own exquisite ensembles, go and marvel at the beautiful exhibition at the V&A. It really is an embodiment of the fantastic.

Diaghilev and the Golden Age of the Ballets Russes, 1909-1929 runs until 11th January 2011



Maaik Mossel & Yan Giet scout Houghton Street's best dressed

Matt, Masters Media & Communications

With only a hint of a Rock Hudson quiff to betray his LA roots, Matt has done pretty well to blend into the London fashion landscape - particularly when we consider that our transatlantic cousins usually stick out by a 'preppy blazer' mile! In spite of the decidedly London facade, Matt draws inspiration from New York's very own fashion blog 'The Sartorialist' which demonstrates that fashion loyalty really is where the home lies. Matt labels Urban Outfitters and Ben Sherman as the ultimate versatile brands that he swears by; often shopping in the eclectic fashion hub that is London's Soho. In comparison to his native LA, which he describes as an "army of fashion surfer legions," he feels that London is definitely more fashion-forward and has to shop up to twice a week just to keep up with the London Fashion Joneses! His opinions of LSE fashion are contradicting; on one hand, he wishes to emulate the select few who always manage to look "suited and booted." On the other hand, Matt deprecates those who "turn up in their pyjamas" - referring to LSE students who clearly take the 'just got out of bed look' a tad too literally. Honestly speaking, if you're turning up to your lectures wearing your Chunky Monkey Jim-Jams? Well there is not much hope for you, really! Matt's qualms concerning LSE hoodies are the same as mine - "You are on campus - we know that you are at LSE, there is no need to advertise that fact!" Amen to that.



Jodie, first year International History

This frosty fall week I have seen Uggs reappear and umbrellas swallow your lovely outfits, but Jodie tackles the autumn attire quite well! Being one of those people who cannot give up wearing shorts, even though the leaves have long left the trees, she pairs them with warm tights. Adding a cosy dark green cardigan to this she matches fall's warm shades of orange perfectly. Autumn is essentially all about layers upon layers, a motto that Jodie seems to have gotten down. She loves hunting the vintage shops for colourfully patterned cardigans that add a fun aspect to the outfit, though the one she covered herself in today was a Primark bargain. She usually hits the high street shops where she usually seeks out high-waisted clothing as she finds it looks more flattering; her most recent buy are a pair of leather trousers from Topshop that have already become a new favourite in her wardrobe. Though plenty of people give them a try, I still find them quite bold, but she feels that Londoners are not afraid to be daring. Still, for a night out she leaves the leather at home and goes for something more classic: "You really can never go wrong with a little black dress". The LSE community definitely dresses smartly according to her, but she is not sure if it is thanks to the environment. I would say the fact that we are in the middle of London has a distinct influence on the way people dress; open your eyes and be inspired by the wonderful styles that pass you everyday on campus - you'd be surprised! Though, let's hope that in a few years' time, people will instead be inspired by the Campus Chicness of LSELookbook.blogspot.com. (Shameful blog plugging, take note!)

The Art of sexual injury

Gangly computer nerd Alexander Young auditions to be the new Alice Pelton

Sex leads to pain. That isn't just meant in the inevitable 'heart-break when someone decides that you can no longer partake in it with them anymore' way: it's meant far more in the literal 'broken limbs and muscle strain' sense. It is truly a cruel joke that either evolutionary processes, or a sadistic intelligent designer with a keen sense of situational humour, has engineered the body parts to be used for such a vigorous activity to be so sensitive to slight miscommunication between participants or slightly maligned perceptions of spatial awareness. The worst part is that this pattern of hilarious manufacture definitely does not stop at the genitalia: even if one's troubles start there, the unavoidable fact that the rest of your body is most definitely and inexorably connected to them leads to the possibility of a local scuffle turning into a full-scale demonstration of national civil disobedience.

I would like to add, before I go into any further detail on the issue, that all of the things to be detailed have indeed happened to myself or have been inflicted unto others by my own hand - or any from a wide selection of body parts, for that matter. In time-honoured PartB tradition, I shall start with a discussion of the Pelton favourite: the torn frenulum. The spite that I reserve for this particular incident in my sexual development is unmatched by any event prior or post: not least due to the fact that this occurred during an act in which it should not occur. There was neither rhyme nor reason to its incidence, save for the careless mouth of someone who really had no idea what they were doing: girls, if you're going to play with your teeth in that region, be gentle and be careful. That instance of fateful fellatio has led to me requiring a Level 3 NVQ or equivalent qualification before I even consider anyone's application: fortunately, the specificity of such a qualification has led to it not suffering from the grade inflation witnessed elsewhere in the sexual world.

Such an 'elsewhere' would be the art of straddling: while this particular branch of injury (it was suffered for about six months by myself) is not permanent

and does not lead to a fair volume of an inappropriate bodily fluid being deposited in an inappropriate orifice, it is most definitely terrifying. I do not know of any technical term for the horror which I must have faced a triple-digit number of times, but a male reader would most definitely understand that the disappearance of a testicle would be cause for definite con-

cern. 'Disappearance' may be misleading as a term: 'displacement' would be more on the money - a shift up into the torso. From the outside. Into the inside. Tell me that that doesn't make you feel slightly sick. The curious thing about this case of sexual assault is angling: I will concede

that at the time I was considerably thinner than I am now, but I don't see how the actions of someone atop me could have had great influence at the middle of my depth. The short of it is: how did they manage to be forced up from motions which would have been downwards? My favourite common sexual injury which occurs to me, above both of the

have I damaged others? Unfortunately, we have the standard culprits, borne of typical male laziness in foreplay and lack of concern for the welfare of the sexual partner: vaginal irritation. I could probably have put this species of injury (which is, apparently, quite painful - not that I will ever have to feel it) down to 'overuse', but I could not decide if the macho 'I have so

of menstruation, it was definitely not the time of the month for Aunt Flo to be visiting: I am incredibly conscientious when it comes to such matters, purely out of a completely irrational self-interest. Neither was it the breaking of a hymen: the girl was, let's say, *au fait* with the riding of 'horses' and 'playing tennis'. To this day, I cannot explain that one.

We finally get onto the species of injury which are my definite favourites: non-sexual sexual injuries. These are the ones which fulfil the previously stated 'national civil disobedience' criterion of injury. My favourite and most recent, as it happens, involves sheer carelessness and absent-mindedness whilst changing positions in a fit of (if I am indeed capable of such a thing) passion. Having managed fine in a single bed for much of my university life, one would have thought that the much larger double bed would have posed no sexual logistical problems. Of course, the stupidity of teenagers having sex can never be underestimated: there was a

Sex leads to pain: real, physical pain

large logistical problem resulting in me (and only me) falling to the floor. But this, ladies and gentlemen, is not the peak of pain which I will be suffering in this tableau: I dust myself down and ponder the significance of what just happened. About twenty seconds later, I realise how bloody hilarious all of this is, and the most obnoxious of belly laughs ensues. My entire body rocking and suffering from intolerable involuntary muscle spasms, I pause as I feel pain shoot up my entire left side: not the fall, but the laughter proceeding from it leads to two cracked ribs. I will never again laugh at someone who cracks a rib by sneezing.

My idea of 'protection' now consists of an austere environment in which to engage in sex solely in the missionary position with no scope to even change the arrangement of legs. It's a practical thing.



Alexander Young is here to service your hardware! Alternatively, he'll turn your floppy disk into a hard drive. N.B. Alexander isn't gay.

cern. 'Disappearance' may be misleading as a term: 'displacement' would be more on the money - a shift up into the torso. From the outside. Into the inside. Tell me that that doesn't make you feel slightly sick. The curious thing about this case of sexual assault is angling: I will concede

forementioned, however, would have to be the perennial choking on pubic hair: fortunately, this hasn't happened with a recent partner, but certain prior ones have had certain shedding issues sufficient to turn my throat into a cigarette filter. So, enough about my pains; how

much sex!' approach or an appeal to stereotypical male uselessness would make me look less bad. In the end, it just came down to the one which would grant me more pity. On a similar note, I have made someone bleed during sex. Before this is pinned down to male naivety on the issue

'Going the Distance' 2: Judgment Day

You may remember that article from a couple of weeks back on long-distance relationships. Charlotte Morgan wasn't pleased...

After reading an interestingly disappointing article, 'Going the Distance', two weeks ago in PartB, I felt compelled to respond for two reasons: it almost made my best friend cry (she's in a long-distance relationship herself) and the majority of the article is based on a close-minded subjective view of the subject, without evening defining what a long-distance relationship is. I'd be grateful if you allowed me a few moments to rant about love, and why distance does not make a vast amount of difference to a relationship's success.

The type of relationship you choose to follow should not classify you, nor put you into a category of people who are 'fooling' themselves, as the article was suggesting. Long-distance relationships are a personal choice, just as short-distance ones are: whether or not they start that way or are forced to follow that route, it is a conscious decision to continue the partnership, because you find in that person something you have not found elsewhere. Let's just put it out there: the reason long-distance relationships occasionally fail is not because they are long-distance but because they are relationships. All relationships have their problems and distance is one of them, but it is not the sole reason problems occur.

I would like to begin by swiftly stating that the definition of a long-distance relationship is too broad to allow such sweeping generalisations as represented

by the article. The phrase encompasses a far greater collection of situations: are we talking of angry teenagers in love for the first time, or middle-aged professionals who are forced to live in different countries due to their jobs? This should definitely have been considered before the author went on to pinpoint with such subjectivity why such an enormously difficult social situation goes wrong.

Responding directly to the author's introduction about technology and how globalisation has had an effect on long-distance, even if the article had anything to do with globalisation whatsoever, I think the author would have had to agree that technology has made things slightly easier for couples doing long-distance than a letter in the post, Mr. Darcy style. Technology has, if anything, helped long distance, not been detrimental in guiding that person into "seeing the light", one might say.

Relationships, whether long distance or short, are essentially the same. You are with someone because you love them, and because they have an effect on you that no-one else can command; they make you feel more alive, more appreciated, and more valuable than ever before. Whether or not it started out as long distance, or whether it developed into one through various decisions taken by the couple, it doesn't change the fundamental fact that a relationship is a relationship. It can be an "illusion" whether close or far. Couples who live ten minutes from each other can experience the same problems

as those who live 2,000km away. I admit, it's true that long-distance relationships can be straining, and that they can fail, largely due to the distance. However, it is perhaps more accurate to say that the majority fizzle out because the individuals begin to mature, adapt, and develop: this would happen, regardless of distance. One can go as far as to say that short-distance relationships end for much the same reasons as long-distance.

One point raised in the article that really 'got my goat', as they say, was her views on cheating. My question is: does it really matter if you are near or far? I personally know dozens of couples who have broken up over cheating and they

Allow me to rant about love, and why distance does not make a difference to relationship success

lived in the same city. The author seems to think that trust is something that can only manifest itself physically, but trust doesn't immediately become far more difficult just because you are far away. That is like suggesting that trust is about spying on your partner all the time and making sure they aren't flirting with infidelity. Trust, in my humble opinion, is something that has to be present from the outset, in any relationship. Think about it: you wouldn't be with someone who lived close to you if you suspected them of cheating, let alone someone far away. For this reason, I believe that argument is completely debunked. (I'm not even going to go into my sentiments of horror at the author's example of a 'typical man').

I have to reject the idea the author has running through the entire article that people in long distance relationships never see each other - this is simply not true! In addition to which, it seems the author has the notion that support is restricted solely to those who live in the same area code. The idea of being loving, supporting and caring - that is

exactly what long-distance is about. The author seems to have it in her head that relationships are about physicality and nothing else. Relationships are a lot more than that - they permeate your mind, your soul, your being, and not just your body. It also appears to me that the author thinks one should expect absolutely everything from a partner, which clearly isn't the case in the majority of relationships. There is a reason we have friends, to take care of us when we are sick, to talk to us, to support and love us. Couples contain that extra bond, which is admittedly, partially physical, but there is a lot more to it than just sex. I abhor this concept that long distance relationships are useless at support. Over 50% of my friends are in long distance relationships, and despite the fact that they are not in the same place, the support is enormous. You can support someone from far away. Sure, you can't make love to them every day, but you can offer them as much love and support as you can give.

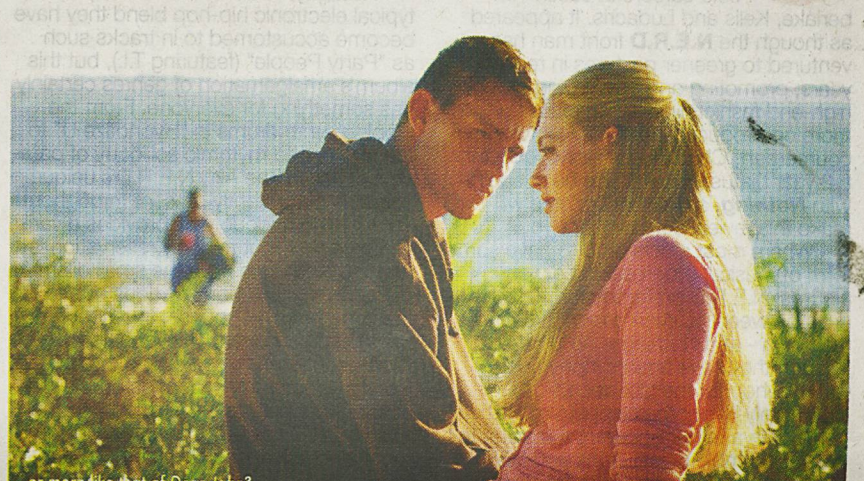
Possession was also an argument that made little sense to me. "[In long-distance relationships...] you're not learning how to love them, you're learning how to claim and possess them": how is this in any way specific to long-distance relationships, or even true? This whole idea of an attractiveness scale, or of cold-blooded possession without the presence of love, is completely banal in our society at the very least. First of all, is the author suggesting that possession is not something that arises in short-distance

relationships? And secondly, even if possession is a factor, which is debatable, why is it incompatible with love? The author then writes a sweeping, grandiose statement on the essence of love: "[Love is] about switching the focus of your world from yourself to love". What does that even mean? How do you switch your focus to love without focusing on how you are perceiving this love? I think what might have been more appropriate is to say that love gently pushes individuals to consider other people almost as much as they consider themselves. You can focus on yourself while in love, but you are also focusing on your partner and how they are coping with their lives.

The fundamental underlying idea to this debate is that long-distance relationships are not the problem, people are. Long-distance relationships work if there is a goal to be reached at the end of it all. If you start off in a relationship long distance and no final destination is agreed upon, such as living in the same place, going travelling together, or visiting more, then the relationship will eventually dissolve. But this can equally be said for relationships which take place in close proximity. It's not as if the moment you are involved in a long-distance relationship, it's immediately doomed. Every relationship is unique and one cannot just create some universal theory to encapsulate the sole reason why long-distance fails. For this reason alone, I felt a duty to express my point of view. Thank you.



Are long distance relationships like *Sleepless in Seattle*...



...or more like that of *Dear John*?

Alternate Reality TV

Kerry O'Donnell loves **The Only Way Is Essex** and doesn't care who knows...

So I guess this is it. I am finally stepping out of the closet and wearing my heart on my sleeve. Before you think, 'is she declaring her secret lust over a member of the same sex?', I am not. But believe me, it is much worse.

I have fallen ridiculously head-over-heels in love with ITV2's new documentary-come-soap opera-cum-reality TV show **The Only Way Is Essex**. Goodbye dignity, hello blockade of disapproval. Like Chuck Bass' little slip of the tongue to Blair Waldorf in last week's episode of *Gossip Girl*, I just can't hold it in anymore. I love *The Only Way Is Essex*.

Yes, you got it, I am an utter unadulterated TOWIE (as ITV now like to call it) superfan. I feel I need to shout it from the middle of Houghton Street with a giant placard declaring my shame. The fake boobs, the 'you've been tango-ed' sunbed over-usage, the all-too-obvious hair extensions and the ever-flowing champagne; I just can't get enough of it. That's right. Your eyes aren't deceiving you. I HEART TOWIE.

For those of you who are TOWIE virgins, the cult reality show dubbed by the Daily Mail as 'Britain's answer to America's *The Hills*' follows the high-maintenance lifestyle of a select group of equally high-maintenance 'pwopa geezas' and their so-called glamorous lads' mag princesses. Shot in the beauty salons and WAG-wannabee ridden bars of Brentwood, Essex, viewers are given an unforgettable glimpse at the scandalous lives of star (and BFF) to Jack 'Jade Goody' Tweed) Mark Wright and friends as they swap pouts, punches and partners all in the name of prime time entertainment.

Sound like your worst nightmare? Mine too. Until I got past the veneer of the girls who look like they've been pulled fresh from the 'factory seconds' boxes at Barbie Headquarters with their matching Ken dolls in tow, who wear enough fake tan to coat the Statue of Liberty

twice over. With the exotic mystique that zoo animals bear over a prying child, the young, beautiful creatures caught up in their own little Essex cage had me trapped under their fake tan-stained, freshly manicured claws.

That's when I realised. It was the completely brainless, superficial, dim-witted cast that had me so obsessed. I tuned in every time just to laugh at their blatant lack of awareness that a world outside Essex, home of the 'vajazzle', (Google it. Actually, on second thoughts...) even existed. I was entangled in Mark - self-proclaimed Mr Essex's - love triangle, bimbo beautician and mini-Katie Price, Amy's hilarious outbursts and her cousin Harry's overtly camp sayings,

The Only Way Is Essex is like that Primark spin-off of the dream Luella dress you couldn't quite afford

which have brought a whole new meaning to the phrase 'Oh shut up!'

If a lesson in general knowledge is what you're after then TOWIE definitely isn't for you. The penultimate episode that aired the week after Bonfire Night included a scene in which some of the cast try to work out who Guy Fawkes was. Cue my favourite Amy outburst: 'I'm not a historian, but I think he was American'. Good job you're not a historian, love.

On that note, taken as a bit of meaningless, trashy light-entertainment that I'm sure ITV had intended it to be, TOWIE has fast become my perfect evening sofa

retreat choice after a day of mind-numbing readings. I had long been aware of the Essex stereotype but little did I know that there were people who actually lived up to it pretty much word-for-word.

Although Essex-girl-done-mildly-good, Denise Van Outen reminds us in the narration that 'these are real people', ITV have made no qualms about the 'fakeness' of this 'reality' show; in the opening caption it states that 'while the tans you see might be fake, the people are all real, although some of what they do has been set up purely for your entertainment.' With this in mind, it is also no coincidence that the series is run by Lime Pictures, the company which also runs the production of *Hollyoaks*. However fake TOWIE is though, I am too addicted to care. Besides, in my head it can be 'real' right?

As an MTV reality enthusiast (I thought all my Christmases had come at once when MTV - the 'r' standing for reality - first appeared on my TV guide) I have to admit, as much as I love *The Only Way Is Essex*, it does rather dimly fall short of its American 'counterparts' - *The Hills*, *Laguna Beach*, *The City* and *Newport Harbour*. Compared to these reality masterpieces, TOWIE does seem a poorly-constructed, typically British rip-off. In essence, the lives of a handful of fairly-wealthy chavs is no match to the excitement of LA's 'It' girls and the social-ites and fashionistas of New York.

The Only Way Is Essex is like that Primark spin-off of the dream Luella dress you couldn't quite afford. It's cheap, cheerful and a whole lot less luxurious, but you love it all the same. After all, TOWIE can be my little guilty pleasure of all guilty pleasures. And, until ITV air *The Only Way Is Essex* Christmas Special next month, I will have to find a cure for my withdrawal symptoms.

For those enticed, *The Only Way Is Essex* is available on ITV Player.



There must be another way... The Only Way Is Essex

Watch This Space

Simon Chaudhuri's TV tips for the week

The Event
Channel 4, Fridays, at 21:00

Is this the new *Lost*? This US show employs similar use of flashbacks, an ensemble cast (with a few well-known faces) and a plot which bamboozles viewers. The premise is that during the Second World War extraterrestrials crashed in Alaska and infiltrated American society. Rife with nods to the real world, with the first Hispanic president in the White House, terrorist attacks and a detainee camp with a dodgy record on human rights, *The Event*, while enjoyable, is not subtle with its message.

The Walking Dead
FX, Fridays, at 22:00

AMC transplants the zombie genre to a

new serial drama, premiering in the UK on FX. The series follows Rick Grimes (Andrew Lincoln, *Teachers*) who wakes from a coma to find that the dead are walking and his wife is canoodling with his best friend. The show even converted the 'zombie haters' of the *Wall Street Journal*.

The Increasingly Poor Decisions of Todd Margaret
More4, Sunday 21st November, 22:35

The first season of this new US sitcom continues on More4 on Sunday. The show follows the misfortunes of Todd Margaret, an American executive who lands a dream job in London. The only problem? He knows nothing about Britain, nothing about sales and has just one employee from hell.

Album: Michael Bublé - Crazy Love

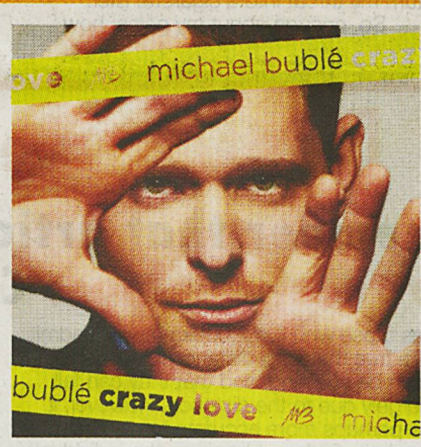
Rish Gudka

Since his self-titled debut in 2002, Michael Bublé has decided to change his style, enhance his originality and even his image in *Crazy Love* after constant comparisons to the late Frank Sinatra. It is not surprising that Bublé took this route to fame by sticking to comfortable classics that everyone including himself was comfortable with; however, this album certainly sounds different despite the predictably high number of covers. Rather than replicating his predecessors, Bublé has acknowledged that original material would be appreciated on his fourth studio album. This has worked out well, with the almost pompous track "Cry Me A River" showing a new confident Bublé, singing carelessly about a lover's betrayal. The combination of heavy brass and fluttering string arrangement in this track complements his baritone vocals, reminiscent of the flamboyant openings of old Bond films.

"Haven't Met You Yet" is the lead single, which definitely has more com-

mercial appeal than previous releases. This isn't necessarily a bad thing because Bublé's brief venture into pop seems to have been successful, and provides a greater range of material that previous albums have lacked. The real highlight of the album seems to be "Georgia On My Mind"; he sticks to the combination of a brassy orchestra and his voice to deliver a song that is highly expressive yet simple.

The outcome of Bublé's new sense of innovation is striking given how he received such heavy praise in his past musical exploits, which were basically 'lesser' covers of classic hits. The only thing I could complain about here is the restraint he has shown with displaying his talent in writing his own original material. I am sure however that, given the success he has found, he will begin to broaden his musical horizons - Bublé has the ability to produce something that is not only original but that can transcend his previous efforts.



Spotify Spotting

What Sachin Patel, Editor of the Beaver, is listening to this week...

Junior Byron
Dance to the Music

Friendly Fires and Azari & Ill
Stay Here

Luther Vandross
Never Too Much

Fleetwood Mac
Sara

Antony & the Johnsons
Christina's Farm

Find the playlist here:
spotify:user:sachinpatel:playlist:0POCZNTcofyD9zCprhHWN

Album: N.E.R.D - Nothing

Rish Gudka

Over the past decade the musical Midas touch of Pharrell Williams has churned out hit after hit, helping launch the solo careers of Justin Timberlake, Kelis and Ludacris. It appeared as though the N.E.R.D front man has ventured to greener pastures in recent years, promoting and developing several high-end fashion lines while focusing more on production with his Neptunes' counterpart, Chad Hugo. However, after a 2 year hiatus, N.E.R.D are back again with *Nothing*, a title that I'm sure will make this review confusing for you.

Where most artists tend to have some form of musical progression between albums, N.E.R.D prefer to blur the boundaries between genres - almost creating their own - and *Nothing* is no different. Though they have been synonymous with hip-hop for the last decade, this album only has some snippets of the genre with a rather apparent transition to a unique jumble of jazz, funk and R&B. This is probably most evident in "I've

Seen the Light / Inside of Clouds" with the melancholy saxophone riff unexpectedly complementing Pharrell's signature falsetto.

Naturally, N.E.R.D fans will expect the typical electronic hip-hop blend they have become accustomed to in tracks such as "Party People" (featuring T.I.), but this album's amalgamation of genres certainly has something for everyone. From the dipping synth drums in "Hypnotize U" to the fast-paced rhythmic soliloquy of paranoia of "It's In The Air", N.E.R.D's unique sound is consistently present throughout.

Nothing undoubtedly provides a variety of tracks - but my only reservation is that the Neptunes have the small dilemma of becoming jacks-of-all-trades due to the large range of sounds, in respect to the album production. Nevertheless, I have been listening to nothing else except *Nothing* since I got my hands on the album this week, and it is evident to me that N.E.R.D have produced one of the most innovative, original albums of the year.



Alan Partridge's Mid-Morning Matters

Nathan Briant never thought he'd be imploring you to listen to North Norfolk Digital

Currently, my weeks are book-ended by watching Steve Coogan on screen. On Monday, I park myself down in front of the TV for *The Trip* and afterwards, I wait until Friday when I watch the new Coogan vehicle, *Mid-Morning Matters*, on YouTube. Thankfully, for the benefit of all watching, though probably not for Partridge himself, Alan Partridge has got another job.

Partridge now broadcasts on North Norfolk Digital - his career's in the doldrums. Again. His spell on TV in the mid-1990s was clearly a long, long time ago.

He hasn't changed though. He's touring the M25 in a day listening to Deacon Blue. He's hosting an art section on his show for which people send in nude drawings, possibly of their mum, entitled 'Family', which subsequently is given pride of place in front of Partridge in his studio. Someone emails in: 'Is there a case to put kids in - in inverted commas - fat schools? You could house them in dormitories, lock them in and then push pieces of Ryvita smothered in Philadelphia Light under the doors. This way they would become educated and thin.' Partridge's answer is typical: 'You can't fault his logic.'

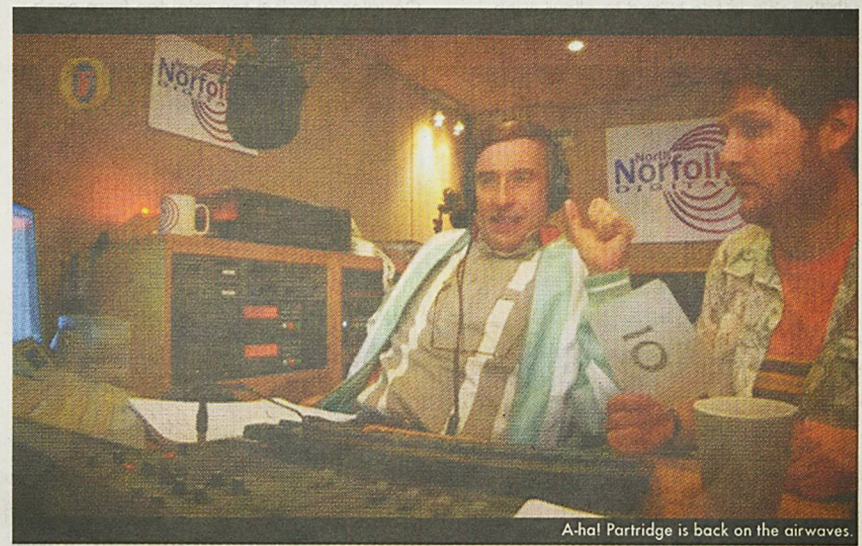
Despite Coogan's long hiatus from playing Partridge - the last significant and original appearance of North Norfolk's star TV presenter TV was in 2003 - the writing is as entertaining as it was in the

early '90s when the character was originally conceived. Armando Iannucci, Steve Coogan and others involved can count this, even if it is an internet-only release, as another notch on their career post.

Alan Partridge hasn't changed. He's touring the M25 listening to Deacon Blue

The addition of Tim Key, as Partridge's 'Sidekick Simon' - with whom Partridge feels he shares 'great banter' - is a welcome one. As regards Coogan it's clear that his Mancunian accent seems to inhabit Partridge more these days.

Overall, a triumph. It's just a shame that the programme isn't available to more people on television. In a week, at the time of writing, just under 140,000 people have watched the second episode. If you haven't seen any of them yet, you know what to do:
<http://youtu.be/ucprgmJxx0E>



A-ha! Partridge is back on the airwaves.

Books: Stephen Vizinczey's In Praise of Older Women

Presca Ahn

Certain books show up on the reviewer's desk with an unusual amount of extra baggage. **In Praise of Older Women** is one such book, and its baggage is of the least tractable kind: its cult status as a graphic handbook of male sexual experience.

In *Praise* is the (lavishly well-written) fictional memoir of ageing philosophy professor András Vajda, a Hungarian who has been expatriated in North America for many years. He recounts his relationships with older women as a way of framing the story of his early life.

At the beginning of the book, the ageing András melancholically compares himself with young American men: "I am a European, they are Americans; and what makes for an even greater difference, they are young today, I was young a long time ago. Everything has changed—even the guiding myths." He mourns society's loss of reverence for experience, wisdom, and age—from the point of view of someone growing old in a country not his own.

Those who have found the book merely spicy have not read well

This edition from Penguin is the re-release of a 1966 bestseller. Then as now, neither its adorers nor its abhorers can quite get past the book's supposed sexiness. Penguin seems to be encouraging this view with a cover photo of a bare-breasted woman in a presumably erotic pose.

In this country, several of the professional reviewers who have written about the re-release have dwelt fondly on memories of how schoolboys used to snigger over its descriptions of female bodies, or how older men would pass it on to younger ones with a knowing smile.

All of which, fifty years later, seems rather silly and overdramatic. Contemporary readers will be able to see that the book has merits apart from some (really pretty mild) descriptions of sex.

Indeed, the novel is mainly about the successive personal losses that András endures—of family life, of friends, and eventually of homeland—and how he tries somehow to recoup those losses through love and intimacy. Those who have found the book merely spicy have not read well. *In Praise of Older Women* is a story based on grief as much as on

gratified desire.

András's idyllic youth is interrupted by the Second World War, which upends his family's life. In 1943, their apartment in Szekesfehervar is seized by the Wehrmacht; soon after, their neighborhood is destroyed by air raids.

Still a young child, András undergoes stints in an oppressive military school and as a hungry, terrified refugee in war-torn Austria ("It was then that I must have acquired the sensibilities of a libertine: when one sees too many corpses one is likely to lose one's inhibitions about living bodies"), before he is adopted by an American army unit and becomes the go-between for GI's and desperate female refugees who have turned to prostitution.

Despite his job as a child pimp, András doesn't succeed in learning much about actual sex, and he resorts to sniffing panties, spying from behind a cot, and even trying to ambush one of the more mothering prostitutes as she showers.

His sexual experience only really begins in his post-war student days in Budapest—a stretch of time which comes to a sudden end with the Hungarian Revolution. One of the book's most absorbing passages appears in the chapter called "On Anxiety and Rebellion," in which András seems temporarily to forget his project of describing amorous encounters. Instead, he gives the most robust description of Hungarian nationalism under Russian rule that most fiction readers will ever get. After surviving several street battles in late 1956, András escapes over the Austro-Hungarian border once again. He ends up having to rebuild his life in Italy, and then again in Canada.

Amid these unhappy events, András pursues intimacy with women whose pasts are as sad as his. Far from being a sophisticate who makes conquests of aging ladies, András is a traumatised young man, slightly high-strung as a result, who is starved for sincerity, for human dignity, and for affection.

He finds them in his relationships with the benevolent, highly literate Maya, who takes his virginity; the hedonistic violinist Bobby, who turns out to be an Auschwitz survivor—someone who can relate to András's unhappiness; the "frigid" journalist Paola; the nervous and guilty Ann, locked in a loveless marriage to an academic; and several others.

András calls himself "a good student of the women I loved," and though the book is about as representative of "men and women" as *Lolita* is about "children," such accuracy isn't the goal of what is essentially the diary of a sentimental education.

Film: Dog Pound

Marion Koob



Director: Kim Chapiron **Screenplay:** Jeremie Delon, Kim Chapiron **Cast:** Adam Butcher, Shane Kippel and Mateo Morales **Runtime:** 91 minutes **Year:** 2010

Paradoxically, making a film about prison can seem like an 'easy way out'. Even just from a technical perspective, everything is well delimited: location, characters, possible outcomes. More often than not, however, this narrowness turns into a liability. How do you avoid falling into the predictable course of action: either an escalating exchange of violence between inmates, or an attempted break out?

Dog Pound doesn't manage to escape this fallacy, and the premise of the movie is based on plotline number one. The sole originality of the story resides in that the inmates fall within the 15-18 age band. This aside, the film is less humane and just as violent as *The Shawshank Redemption*.

In matters of plot, the audience gets a vague impression at the beginning that the three protagonists have committed menial crimes; dealing, car-jacking with violence and assault. However, little room for empathy is offered. Thus, when the turbulent trio are welcomed into the Enola Vale penitentiary, I already don't care.

Typically, neither of three make it through their first few days without some form of bullying. Of course, none of the numerous guards notice. From whence follows their retaliation, still at the expense of the overseers' attention. As a *leitmotif*, lot of drugs are passed around, with no explanation as to their provenance. Another natural, inherent condition of prison, we

Dog Pound clearly wills itself to shun entertainment and strives to be artistic

are to suppose.

The problem is that by trying too much to look like the 'real thing', the film-makers have created a near-documentary. As a result, *Dog Pound* ends up feeling like a afterthought without real drive. The short length - the film is only 80 minutes long - certainly doesn't help shift this impression.

A few brilliant scenes salvage the emotional desert, each because of their

slightly mischievous, dark, humour. One of the main characters describes his sexual fantasies to the rest of the dormitory; another attempts to woo the counsellor, the sole female presence on the grounds, with a poem; the detainees go on a hunger strike; a coach falls into intelligent shouts when the group divides into teams-on the basis of race.

Also, some of the actors do their job well, but translate grief better than anger. Beat-ups and bullying moments feel too rehearsed, and the sentiment is accentuated by the fact that it is child's play to predict what is about to happen next. On the other hand, the rendition of a desperate, tearful, plea in the middle of the night for a phone call strikes a chord.

This type of film clearly wills itself to shun the purpose of entertainment and strives to be artistic. This only works if, despite the prolonged silences and the lack of easy explanations, your product achieves an emotional connection with the viewer or provokes. While certainly being bloody and rough enough to be an art house film, *Dog Pound* doesn't manage to do either. As the credits roll by, the viewer is left somewhat puzzled and unimpressed.

NB For the record, the best film about prison I have ever seen is *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. It's perhaps a little aged, but well worth its screening time.

He didn't like it much either. Dog Pound



Arts around London

Georgina Lee, a History of Art student at the Courtauld Institute, explores the splendour of London's arts scene



Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) Man with a Pipe, c.1893-96 Oil on canvas, 73 x 60 cm © The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London

As Christmas draws ever closer and this term's spending budget lies in tatters, there is still hope of experiencing the plethora of exciting new art exhibitions in London without eating through that ever-dwindling overdraft. Here's a quick guide to the best the Capital has to offer this side of the festive season.

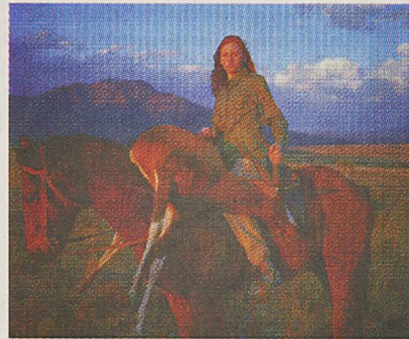
Cézanne's Card Players at the Courtauld Gallery may be small, but it packs a mighty punch. The exhibition focuses on the paintings and preparatory drawings Cézanne made of the local farm workers near his home in rural France. The images blur the line between both traditional portraiture and genre painting, whose origins lay in Dutch art of the 17th century and were often used to teach a moral lesson to its viewer. Cézanne is the father of modernism and these creations have come to be seen as some of his most important - it is an exhibition not to be missed.



Untitled 2 by Abbie Trayler-Smith © Abbie Trayler-Smith [4th Prize] Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2010

Those on the training contract trail might like to take a break from applications and pop by the **Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2010 at the National Portrait Gallery**. Showcasing portraits captured by both established and aspiring photographers, the works

explore themes including age, sexuality and poverty and range from the beautiful



Huntress with Buck from the series 'Hunters' by David Chancellor © David Chancellor [1st Prize] Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2010

to the downright disturbing. Controversial and thoughtful in equal measure, this exhibition is sure to encourage lively debate.

Anyone with a penchant for fashion should head straight for **Dior Illustrated: René Gruau and the Line of Beauty at Somerset House**. Gruau and Dior met when they both worked at *Le Figaro*. When Dior launched his career in fashion,



Image credits: SARL Rene Gruau Dior Illustrated: Rene Gruau and the Line of Beauty

Gruau became one of the primary fashion illustrators for the label, creating a number of iconic images. Perfume bottles also accompany Gruau's illustrations and a number of dresses that were either chosen or created by the maestro of the catwalk himself, John Galiano.

The Barbican's freeB membership for 16-25 year olds offers discounted tickets for its major exhibition mentioned in last week's Fashion section: **Future Beauty: 30 Years of Japanese Fashion**. As well as displaying the creations of key figures in Japanese fashion of the 20th century, the exhibition gives an insight into the huge effect of Japanese fashion on traditional views of beauty and fashion in the West.

If none of this takes your fancy, you can't go far wrong with a free visit to one of the permanent collections in numerous galleries throughout London. From the Tate Modern to the Wallace Collection, there really is something for everyone.

Cézanne's Card Players at the Courtauld Gallery is open until 16 January 2011 (Adult £7, under 18s and Full-time UK Students go free)

Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2010 at the National Portrait Gallery is open until 20 February 2011 (Admission £2)

Dior Illustrated: René Gruau and the Line of Beauty in Somerset House at the Embankment Galleries is open until 9 January 2011 (Adult £6, Concession £5)

Future Beauty: 30 Years of Japanese Fashion at the Barbican is open until 6 February 2011 (Adult £8 online/£10 on the door, Concession £7 online/£8 on the door, check out online freeB membership for 16-25 year olds for discounted tickets)

PRIVATE B

INCREASE THE FEES

MAN BREAKS WINDOW!

There was chaos last week as a man physically broke a window. In what has been called the most violent, most revolutionary moment since the Storming of the Bastille, the man broke the window to cries of "Break the window! Break the window!" The man, having broken the window, was greeted by cheers because the window was broken.

Window broken!
A spokesman for the National Union of Teachers and Students condemned the man for breaking the window, saying "I condemn the man for breaking the window. It is probably not a good idea to break windows. I do not condone it."

Prime Minister David Cameron intervened into the 'window' debate last week, saying, "We live in a civilised society which upholds liberty, equality and windows which are not broken. It is an insult to these principles to think that a man overrode our democracy and broke a window."

Kermit refuses to speak out against breaking windows!
Other voices have not been as keen to condemn broken windows. One student said, "It is within our rights as human beings to break any window we like! The idea that breaking windows is criminal damage is ridiculous!"

Activist Inculcation Officer A-Shock Kermit cleared up any confusion caused, by saying, "With all the media hubbub, there has been much confusion. I'm still a supporter of breaking windows, even though I think breaking windows is despicable. Though I do not condone it, I do not condemn it. In any case, this is not the issue."

"It is not the man who broke the window: it was the government - oh, and the media! By perpetuating the narrative that the man broke the window, it is the media that is to blame!"

The students were protesting about something to do with government cuts.



Disgrace: broken window!

"I think the man was wrong to break the window!" Comment - page 8.
"I think the man was right to break the window!" Comment - page 9.
For pictures of the man breaking the window, page 10.
For analysis of the man breaking the window, page 2-94.
Next week: some real news (possibly)

Those articulate, well-reasoned placards at the protest in full:
"Dick Clegg"
"Your a cock Cameron"
"The government is gay"
"I Think Therefore your all Tory twats"

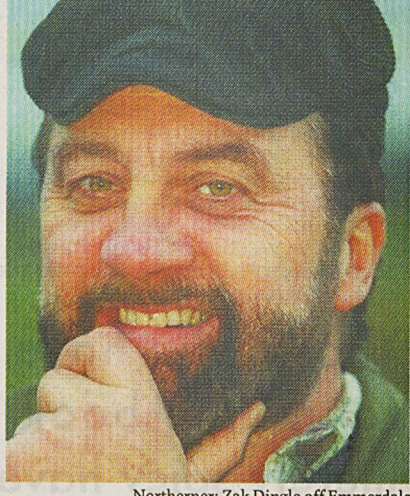
LSE considers selling off Northerners!

LSE Council attracted much criticism last night for debating whether students from the North should be sold off to the market. The sell-off of Northerners, who are famously loss-making, would generate much revenue for the school. However many students are worried about the ethical implications [Is this right? At LSE? Ed.].

General Secretary Charlotte Guardianista said, "I think it is shameful that blahdy-blah social mobility blah blah opportunities blahdy-blah."

Director of the LSE, Howard Devils struck back at criticism, saying, "We never intended to sell off Northerners; we only discussed the option. It is right that we discuss all options after the Browne Report. Even selling off Northerners."

"As it is, we concluded that the costs of doing so exceeded the benefits. Those who reported the story were very silly and irresponsible, as they did much reputational damage to the school. 'Reputation', if you don't know, means 'how things seem'. This is of the utmost importance to me and the school, followed closely by 'how things actually are'."



Northerner: Zak Dingle off Emmerdale

Crazed madman A-Shock Kermit voiced his concern: "Northerners are being treated as objects to be profited from, rather than the real human beings who sound-a-bit-funny that they are."

But you probably shouldn't listen to him, cos he's mad.

Students dislike student fee hike: shock!



Students not on facebook: shock!

There was shock and consternation in the Beaver offices last week as it was revealed that some students don't like the idea of student fees increasing.

Many fainted after being shown photographic evidence of students being angry at the government and going on marches.

One editor said, "I don't get it. Haven't they read The Beaver? They should know by now that tuition fee hikes are what students want!"

Another said, "It is clear that these protesters were not LSE students. Look, none of them are doing class work! Why, you'd think they didn't want to work for Goldman Sachs or something!"

Some refused to believe the story outright. One editor, Sucha Petal, 34, said, "It is clear the actions of some 50,000 students do not reflect the views of LSE as a whole. Furthermore, what is needed is not irrational, irrational protest, but rational debate, rational debate which concludes that paying more for university is what students want."

"This was nothing but silly infantile behaviour. Look, that protestor wrote bell-end on his placard! I bet other protesters swore, as well! Mature, guys! Yes, very mature and sophisticated and not crude at all."

"Now, where's that Sports column I asked for, people?"

Apathetic about apathy rally

There was confusion last week as the apathetic were apathetic about turning up to The Rally to Restore Apathy.

In reaction to Wednesday's march of 50,000 students, literally tens of people arrived on Houghton Street to protest against protesting.

When asked about the turnout, organiser Scott McDonalds said, "Apparently no-one could be bothered to come out to support the cause of not being bothered. It turns out people who aren't in favour of protesting don't come out to protest. We did not foresee this."

Another protester couldn't be bothered to comment.

LSE shop branded 'worst in country' by More-Reasons

In a survey of eight university Students' Union shops across the country, the LSE has come bottom of the poll. The survey deemed the LSESU shop 'extremely rude', 'crude' and 'too focused on banter'.

Surveyed across the country for a total of six months last year, the report, commissioned by More-Reasons Supermarkets and the National Union of Arsey Students, found that on ninety occasions, staff were said to be talking about their sex lives and internships at Stringfellows. In one excerpt, published on the supermarket's website, one first-year Government student recounted on the More-Reasons website about how one staff member had talked to their colleague for approximately three minutes before they realised the person was there - only to take the student's items, process one of the two items through the till, and talk to their colleague again of their sex life in intimate detail (According to a source the quote was: 'and he was hittin' it, hittin' it right there').

Any action that may be taken from the LSE

and the LSESU is unconfirmed. On Twitter, a PhD student, @markesmith, said that it was 'probably know [sic] appropriate for the staff to wear muzzles'.

Only last week, according to a source, Sir Howard Davies and Peter Sutherland were in the NAB shop when they were 'incredibly surprised'

"too much banter"

that a staff member had decided to break off from their work selling them a packet of mints, a copy of the Times and the Daily Telegraph to turn to their fellow staff member who asked their colleague whether they had watched Danny Dyer's Deadliest Men the night before.

In the rest of the survey, London South Bank University came top; second was the University of Sunderland; and third, Aston University.

(No) Comment

As an LSE student, my writing is turgid and uninspiring. I bombard readers with nauseating words and phrases like 'progressive' and 'the West'. This is both lazy and satiates my insecure desire to appear left wing and cool.

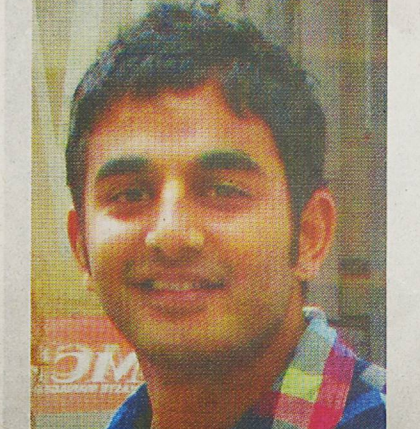
I scrawl with an air of authority, like I'm Matthew d'Ancona, or someone else who's actually important. The truth is I'm neither. It's all about getting my name in

the paper, really, so I can show my mates and Ma-ma. Oh, and it also helps for the old CV, when I'm applying for those finance internships. You have to get something on there that makes you stand out! I also like that they put my picture next to my name. When I'm walking down Houghton Street, I may have to fight off those who recognise me with my trusty copy of the FT. Probably not though, as it's unlikely they'll be reading this inflated drivel.

Having welcomed our brilliant haikuist to the News section, we welcome his equally superb half-cousin, RUBBASHO
It is hard to write These. Five, seven, five. Er, add One more word. Hobnobs.

LSE Looky-likey

...Which bears no resemblance to Private Eye's Lookalikes feature. Which we haven't even heard of.



Vijayakanth, Tamil actor extraordinaire. Acclaimed star of Viswanathan Ramamoorthy



Ashok Kumar, Millbank siege veteran. Lover, fighter, Education Officer.

Features



How happy are you?

Leonora Rumsey explains why the coalition government cares

Flickr user: HM Treasury

How happy are you on a scale of one to ten? Are you close to completing your life's ambitions? These are the questions that we will soon be asked of a number of us by a grey-suited official from the Office of National Statistics. The government has recently commissioned a happiness index to measure peoples' psychological wellbeing as well as whether people are pursuing sustainability measures towards the environment. It aims to poll respondents on their subjective utility in order to gauge the British population's cheeriness. The plan is for the findings of the poll to be incorporated into the government's policy-making process. Already set in motion in both France and Canada, it could come into effect here as early as next spring. The happiness index is a reaction to the recommendations of two Nobel prize winning economists, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, who recently advised world leaders to measure countries' progress through means other than the economics-centered gross domestic product method; by exploring measurements of a population's well-being and sustainability.

Well, let's begin with the positives. The index quite rightly asserts that there is more to a nation's character than its economic wealth. It's an identification that GDP does not represent everything of value to a country; a noble assertion that money is not everything nor does it equate to our happiness. Measuring progress purely by GDP does not provide an accurate assessment of our quality of life. It mustn't be forgotten that the index is not merely just a publication of the nation's mood; it provides material to allow the government to actually do something about it. The government could choose to tailor policies aimed at a specific region depending on that area's 'happiness'.

In this respect the index stimulates a closer relationship between government and the people because it gives

citizens an outlet in which to pour their discontent, forcing the government to take heed. It will also allow the government to have a deeper insight into the consequences their policies may have on general wellbeing, providing an empirical test of those policies' impact, making public dissatisfaction more difficult to ignore. And of course, the index's aims regarding environmental sustainability are valid ones. Finally, sustainability is placed on a par with economic growth and is elevated into

Do we have time and money to spare investigating something as elusive as happiness?

something which could deservedly have equal impact on policy making.

And yet, this proposition's negatives seem to outweigh its pros. The timing struck me as odd. Now is a dubious time to start pestering people about how happy they are. I know we've all heard it a million times before but we are in the midst of an economic recession and we have yet to know the full impact of the cuts to come. There is an irony in the image of a state issuing cuts of supposedly £83 billion, then demanding to know exactly how happy we feel. I don't suppose that the rumored 500,000 or so public sector workers facing unemployment will have much to say when quizzed about whether they are achieving their life goals.

And in the context of the economic recession, how much exactly will it cost for us to learn how happy we were that one day when that inquisitive man asked us how we were feeling a few months ago? And will the index really have any impact on shaping policy making? I have my doubts about that. Last week's march in Westminster against tuition fees has so far failed to ignite any palpable policy change. I suspect governments will no more listen to moaning statistics than they will to rowdy student demonstrations.

The proposal also seems somewhat extravagant – with time perhaps more than with money. Although it is unlikely that the financial cost of this endeavor will be preposterous, an opportunity cost must presumably be incurred. Do we really have the time and effort to spare investigating something as elusive as happiness? It makes us seem like a pampered nation who have exhausted economic progress and now have nothing better to do than to move onto the next mountain: making people happy. All the countries backing this measure are wealthy ones: it almost seems that these nations, having achieved so much by means of their industrialisation, now want to tell the world that really progress is not about

the economy, it's about happiness.

Although I doubt we'll be proving exactly how over the moon we are as a nation any time soon; as I've said before I don't think English folk are too cheery right now. Nevertheless, the happiness index resonates with piety. It's also completely unnecessary; why do we need a measurement of our happiness or a reminder of whether or not we've achieved our lifetime goals? To me it has an almost Orwellian nature to it – it's the kind of excessive governmental interference that you'd expect to find in 1984.

But the thing that I hold most against the happiness index is that it futilely attempts to translate happiness, a subjective emotion, into

objective data. It seems obvious that this is just not possible, and any data translation of someone's happiness is a worthless reflection of how they truly feel. Happiness in itself is an intangible emotion that many of us struggle to keep a firm grip on. Indeed when we are happy often we won't know we are until we're not anymore; and if we're capable of appreciating our wellbeing we may stumble at defining exactly what is responsible for our mood. The interchangeability and impermanence of happiness means that you simply cannot use data from months past to gauge a person's happiness in the present day. As admirable as it may be, the happiness index is something I'm not sold on yet. ☹

HAPPY PLANET INDEX RANKING

1. Costa Rica
2. Dominican Republic
3. Jamaica
4. Guatemala
5. Vietnam
6. Colombia
7. Cuba
8. El Salvador
9. Brazil
10. Honduras

...

51. Germany
52. Switzerland
71. France
74. United Kingdom
75. Japan
76. Spain
114. United States of America

Medvedev the moderniser

Dasha Plonikova defends Russia's controversial leader

The launch of the NATO summit on Friday was not solely significant because of its topic of discussion, but also because of the parties in attendance. Indeed, on the round-table sat the Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev; his first meeting with the organisation since 2008. A glimpse, perhaps, of a plan for a new Russia.

Co-operation between NATO and Russia had been under severe threat during the Russo-Georgian conflict in August 2008. Effectively, following a presidential pledge by its President, Mikheil Saakashvili, Georgia invaded its separatist administrations, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, in an attempt to reunite the country. This attack was decided illegal by the EU-sponsored report in 2009. More than half of South Ossetia's population had taken up Russian citizenship prior to the conflict. In this view, Russia acted in the protection of her citizens. Furthermore, Russian peacekeepers were based in South Ossetia, some of which perished as a result of Georgia's invasion. Others argue that Russia's involvement was part of a provocative process, the outcome of which would halt or cease Georgia's entry into NATO. Indeed, although Georgia's membership has not completely disappeared from the agenda, NATO countries have adopted a more cautious approach. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, NATO has had to re-evaluate its role. It is now concerned with the general security of the world and encourages democratic values.

Given their history, the significance of the Russian President's presence in the NATO discussion of Afghanistan, as well as a study on a potential joint missile defence, should not be overlooked.

Certainly, there seems to be a new mindset at the top levels of government in Russia. There is a realisation that some internal aspects of the country may have to be altered. Medvedev wants to tackle corruption and modernise. Yet, these conundrums have lurked in Russian history, despite numerous attempts to resolve them. Will Medvedev's efforts be anymore effective?

Medvedev is both ambitious and realistic, clever and thorough

Last year, the international anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International ranked Russia as 146th in its annual Corruption Perception Index of 180 countries. This humiliating result places Russia alongside Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe. In his 2008 article "Go Russia!",

Medvedev urged, "we need to cultivate a taste for the rule of law...It is the job of the courts with broad public support to cleanse the country of corruption. This is a difficult task but it is possible. Other countries have succeeded in doing this". Top officials found to be corrupt have been fired and the civil service is to be reduced by 20 per cent. Many worry that this is not sufficient and that the implementation of these measures has been too slow.

Apart from jurisdictional institutions, free speech is another check on corruption. For this, there also remain concerns following the deaths and threats faced by investigative journalists. Two of the three main federal channels are state-owned and numerous newspapers are government owned or controlled by individuals close to the Kremlin.

Medvedev is aware of this and has shown signs in favour of more freedom and more debate (even political) in the media. In particular, he focuses on the Internet; "the growth of information technologies...gives us unprecedented opportunities for the realisation of fundamental political freedoms, such as freedom of speech and assembly. It allows us to identify and eliminate hotbeds of corruption". He has even given interviews to Novaya Gazeta, a newspaper reputed for its investigative journalism.

Medvedev's another priority is to modernise Russia. At the moment, its economy is highly dependent on raw materials – more precisely, oil and gas. Russia has the largest known natural gas reserves in the world and is the world's second largest oil producer after Saudi Arabia. In 2005, oil and gas accounted for approximately 60 per cent of Russia's export. As a result, Russia's economic performance is closely related to the price of these commodities.

Ronald Nash, chief strategists at Renaissance Capital, a Moscow investment

bank, explains that "the two most important factors influencing the economy are both set independently of Russia...for both the price of natural resources and the cost of capital, Russia is a pricetaker".

Medvedev is determined that Russia must wean itself of this reliance on such a small and primitive base. He calls for innovation and a knowledge economy. He outlines five strategic vectors for economic development: efficiency; the rise of nuclear technology; improvement of information technology; development of ground and space infrastructure; and leadership in the production of certain types of medical equipment and medicines. A transition from a commodity-based economy to a knowledge economy is feasible for Russia. After all, Russian young talents enjoy frequent victories in international intellectual competitions and many inventions made in Russia are patented abroad. In an effort to begin the transition, the Kremlin has financed the development of Skolkovo, a high-tech cluster in a Moscow's suburb, now sometimes referred to as "Russia's Silicon Valley". "The most important competitive advantage is knowledge that others do not have, intellectual superiority, the ability to create things that people need", Medvedev reiterates, "As Pushkin wrote: There is a higher courage of invention, creation, where an extensive plan is overwhelmed by the creative idea".

Some think that these transformations have been and will be brought by Vladimir Putin (Medvedev's predecessor and possible successor). Yet after two years in office, Medvedev has established his own authority, especially after his firing of Moscow's mayor, Luzhkov, in September. Luzhkov was been a long-lasting political figure – and a potential rival. He has also faced numerous corruption allegations, and his wife has become one

of the richest women in the world. This has provided a platform for Medvedev to demonstrate his promised tough approach to corruption. Thus Luzhkov, a strong and established persona, was fired by the President.

Medvedev is both ambitious and realistic, clever and thorough. In his article, he quoted Confucius: "Impatience in small matters destroys a great idea". Maybe that is all we need. ☛



From isolation to intervention

The rainbow nation needs to take a lead in Africa writes Francesca Washtell

Jacob Zuma is a busy man. Since becoming South Africa's third democratically elected President in May 2009, he has racked up an impressive forty visits abroad – roughly two a month. But South African foreign policy doesn't seem to have made any real progress over the last year, and is still falling short of its potential. Criticisms rest not on what has happened, but on what is not being done.

Since the isolationism that characterised South Africa's international affairs during the apartheid era, its leaders have formed extensive links with the international community. Their efforts have

ranged from public appearances and foreign visits to active involvement in a number of international institutions and campaigns. Zuma is courting the BRICs with fervour, and retaining the close trade relations with China that his predecessor, Thabo Mbeki, had cultivated since the late 1990s. This year's FIFA World Cup has enhanced South Africa's international reputation, especially as fears about the aptitude of the government and police services to handle the large influx of tourists in some of the world's most crime-ridden cities were apparently without cause. Especially when compared to the disastrous Commonwealth Games in New

Delhi, South Africa seems more capable than ever.

In addition, Zuma is still actively pursuing a commitment to close ties with the West, which he renewed during his European visits, including one to London in March this year. South Africa is also a key member of institutions such as the African Union (AU) and a pivotal member of the fifteen-member Southern African Development Community (SADC). Maintaining good relations within the continent while also acting as a bridge between Africa and the West seems to be Zuma's priority. In October South Africa was re-elected onto the United Nations

Security Council, a position it previously held in 2007-8. The country is clearly a hot player in the international arena.

Yet, in terms of tangible policy, it all seems to be falling a bit short of its rhetoric. There is more to foreign policy than shaking hands and signing contracts. Though South Africa clearly doesn't have the economic clout of the BRICs or more prosperous Western economies, the potential reach of its political influence is too often underestimated. It is a key to solving the Zimbabwe crisis, for example, and though Zuma helped broker the agreement between Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai's then-opposition, steps to prevent further troubles are not being taken. South Africa taking a harsher stance against Zimbabwe within the SADC or African Union would almost certainly mark the tipping point beyond which Mugabe could not continue. Unfortunately the passive and solely rhetorical condemnation of the dictatorial regime has created a deadlock for interventionist action. During its 2007-8 position on the UN Security Council South Africa apparently backed China and Russia in their efforts to veto resolutions that would have effectively condemned not just Mugabe, but also gross human rights violations in Iran and Myanmar. It appears as though keeping the trading partners happy is as far as South African foreign policy will politically extend.

As Zuma tries to be as inoffensive as possible to these trading chums, its commitment to human rights is suffering. There is no denying that South Africa is in an awkward situation. It may be too much to ask for the country to be making human rights a priority in foreign policy when there are so many domestic issues that ought to be addressed first. Although the country is already vocal about human

dignity, a more publicised stand might come off as hypocritical. South Africa's women, for example, are some of the most vulnerable in the world, with more than 150 women raped every day, and one in four men admitting to the crime. Yet, as the superpower of sub-Saharan Africa, doesn't Zuma have a precedent to set? Isn't there a degree of responsibility for any superpower to set the focus on important cross-border issues such as human rights?

Unfortunately it seems to be a common affliction of South African leaders to only publicly discuss issues when the moment has passed. Nelson Mandela has spoken frequently of the only major regret from his Presidency being that he didn't take a strong enough stance against the HIV/AIDS epidemic that was sweeping through his society. Keeping quiet didn't seem to do much damage at the time, but in retrospect the lack of awareness has resulted in painfully high numbers of preventable deaths and infection rates.

If South Africa wanted to take a stronger political position with foreign policy it is unlikely that the West would stand in its way. It will be interesting to see whether or not this second term on the Security Council will precipitate a more active moral agenda. The presence of Russia and China, however, might make this impossible. It is a shame that Africa's superpower doesn't always act like one. Alas, it seems that its vested interests aren't currently in touching upon things beyond friendly foreign relations and financial security. Be prepared for more press conferences and photo ops in Beijing, but not for much action from Pretoria. ☛



Jacob Zuma: A busy man

“Her hair pinned with flowers, the pro-democracy leader emerged from her crumbling lakeside mansion in Yangon to rapturous supporters alongside riot police armed with guns and tear-gas.”

Following the Burmese general elections, Aung San Suu Kyi, the world's most recognisable political prisoner who has endured 15 of the past 20 years under house arrest, was released on 13th November 2010. Known to all as 'the Lady', Aung San Suu Kyi is, in many ways, Burma's uncrowned queen. Daughter of Aung San (the architect of Burmese independence who was assassinated when she was barely two-years old), a political leader and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, Suu Kyi has spent the past 22 years at the helm of her nation's "second struggle for peace", doing so with a delicate but compelling charisma and unimaginable determination.

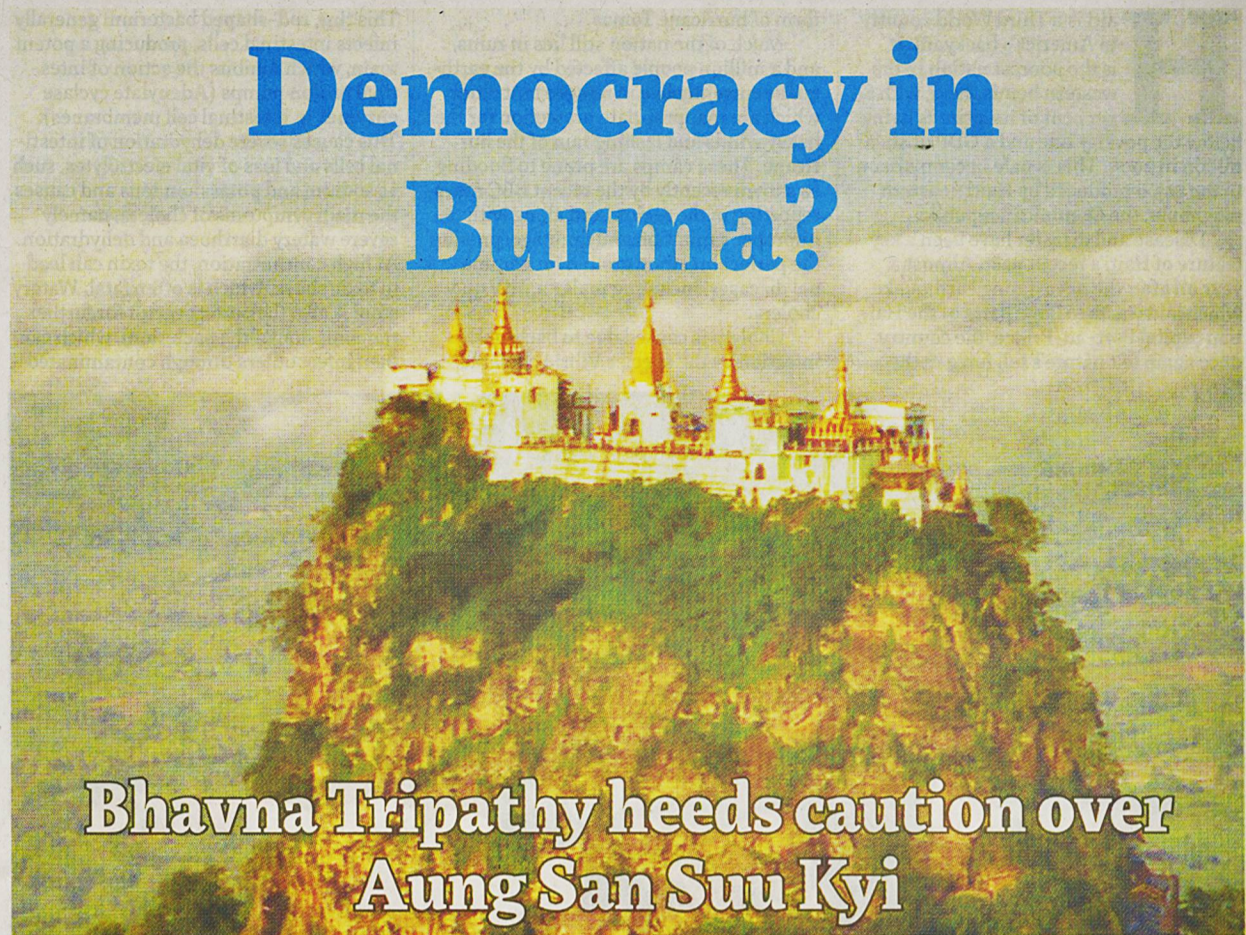
In 1972, Suu Kyi married Michael Aris, a British academic whom she met while studying at Oxford. Leaving Oxford, Aung San Suu Kyi visited Burma in March 1988 to nurse her mother. The period coincided with countrywide pro-democracy protests against the junta. For this reason, some critics describe her as the 'accidental' or 'tourist' politician. Keen to continue her father's legacy, Aung San Suu Kyi addressed 500,000 people at the Shwedagon pagoda in Rangoon, as it was then known, demanding freedom and set up the National League for Democracy party (NLD), becoming its secretary-general and calling for an end to military rule. The rest is as sad as it is familiar. The junta placed Suu Kyi under house arrest in July 1989 for "endangering the state". In 1990, even without her, the NLD won 392 of 489 parliamentary seats in the elections, but the military refused to relinquish power.

Aung San Suu Kyi is a symbol of what people can achieve through peaceful and courageous action. But it has come at an immense personal cost. In 1997, when Suu Kyi's husband was diagnosed with prostate cancer, numerous appeals fell on deaf ears as the Burmese government did not grant Dr. Aris a visa to visit Burma, and instead urged Aung San Suu Kyi to leave the country to visit him. She declined, fearing she would be refused re-entry.

But why were the men in power, armed to the hilt, scared of a demure and unarmed woman? Aung San Suu Kyi's image in Burma cannot be understood without appreciating what is called 'the Aung San factor'. In modern Burmese politics, legitimacy is crucially linked to Suu Kyi's father, Aung San. It is through him that modern Burmese ideas of nation and nationhood have been translated. The 'Aung San factor' is the notion that most citizens believe Suu Kyi can rightfully use her father's memory to call attention back to 1948 and to draw on political history and traditions that touch a collective and familiar chord in the hearts of all the people. It reaches deep into the core of the regime itself, as even the soldiers placed to guard Suu Kyi had to be frequently changed in case their loyalty to the military would be overcome by her presence. Thus, the junta that has corruptly squandered the wealth of the country, unleashed a gruesome litany of abuses and made 'torture a veritable institution' in Burma, presides over a sullen, alienated population to whom a figure as revered as Suu Kyi provides hope and the only channel for change.

The irony of Burmese politics, if not tyranny generally, is that all leaders, even those who have seized power illegally, champion democratic rule. That the military feels obligated to pay lip-service to this is clear in the manner the elections of 2010 were conducted. The New Constitution automatically gave the military 25% of seats in the Parliament and stated that the military government will have the final say over election results. Burma barred the international media by saying that, "We are holding the election for this country. It's not for other countries." Furthermore, the NLD was given the choice of expelling Suu Kyi or not contesting the election. It took the painful decision to disband - and called for a boycott. But the party split internally, with some members deciding to compete as the National Democratic Force (NDF), arguing it made more sense to be involved in the process, however flawed.

Aung San Suu Kyi has raised her voice against this form of 'sham democracy', a democracy that runs on manipulation, vilification and self-justification. On the eve of the country's first elections in 20 years, Suu Kyi remained a political phantom of sorts. Her National League for Democracy (NLD), which was cheated of its victory at the polls in 1990, is now defunct, its members divided. Amidst reports of voter intimidation and bribery, the Union Solidarity and Development Party



Democracy in Burma?

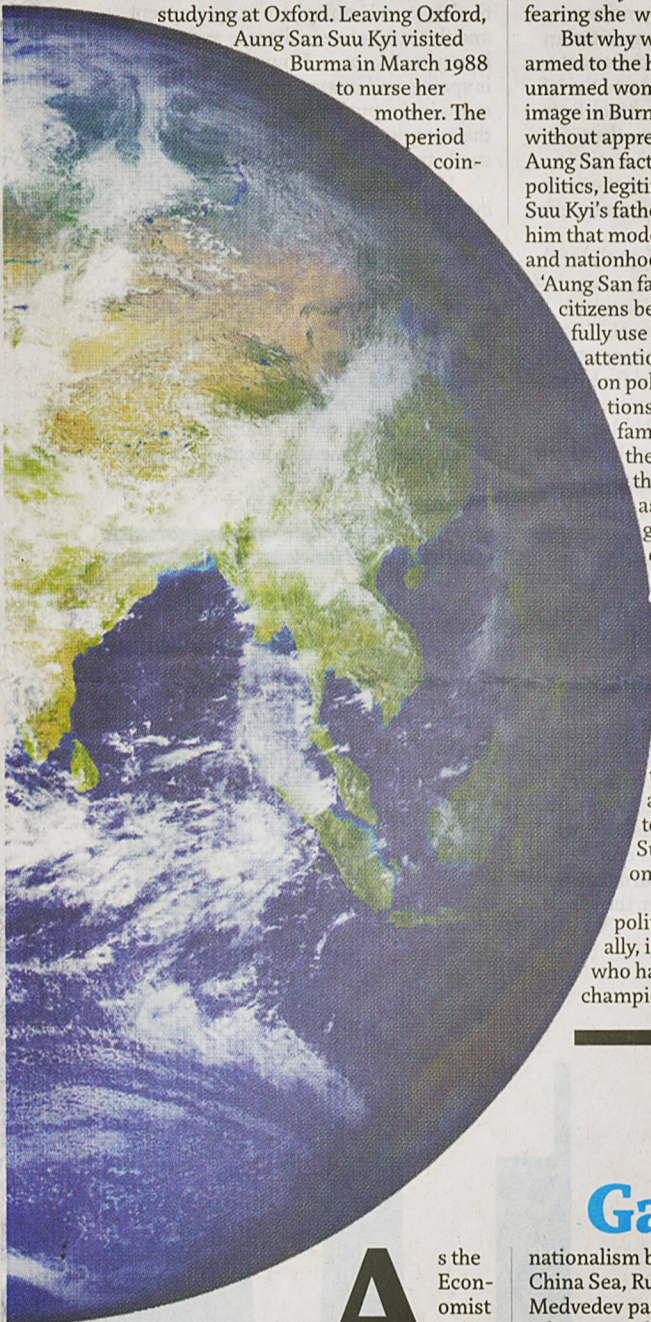
Bhavna Tripathy heeds caution over Aung San Suu Kyi

(USDP), the pro-regime party, gained majority in both houses of the parliament. The international outcry over Burma's electoral results is inevitable but justified. It has long been clear that the transition to a 'genuine multi-party discipline-flourishing democracy' in Burma is simply a legalistic device to disguise continuing military rule behind the façade of an 'elected' parliament. Even as world leaders applaud the release of the Burmese pro-democracy leader, skeptics voice caution: Was Suu Kyi's release conditional? What will she be able to accomplish under the thumb of a hard-line dictatorship that has stamped out voices of opposition and just held an election that has been widely criticised as a mockery? Analysts label the move as a political calculation. The regime is trying to reinvent itself as democratic, first with the elections and now with Suu Kyi's release. There is concern that other countries will take the regime's bait and lessen their tough posture in terms of sanctions and human rights pressures.

Perhaps the most obvious lesson to be drawn from the regime is that meaningful political change can only come from within Burma. In this sense, the main outcome of the elections has been that the new

opposition parties who attempted to bring change within the structures allowed by the regime, have now gained popular support. Loosely known as "the Third Force", they were considered of little importance until now. Their leaders are now waiting to see how the institutionalisation of the new structures will play out.

As to how and in what form Suu Kyi will mobilise people and what action it would elicit, remains to be seen. But for the time being, the release of Aung San Suu Kyi has brought hope to millions fighting against authoritarian rule. Nothing reveals the potential brittleness of such regimes more than the power of particular individuals who come to symbolise challenges to the system. Several states have struggled and are still struggling because they have not generated a figure who could be the locus of national reconciliation. Aung San Suu Kyi projects a spirit of idealism and morality that thaws the heart of repression and sends out a message of empowerment, confidence and freedom - lessons that hold immense potential to spur debates, at home, in the neighbourhood and overseas.



As the Economist puts it, Japan 'is getting beaten about by neighbours over lumps of territory'. Naoto Kan - the relatively new Japanese Prime Minister who assumed the position last June - is experiencing the most challenging test to his political capacity to resolve territorial disputes with China and Russia and maintain public support at home.

Japan's arrest and detention of a Chinese fishing captain in September around the Diaoyu-Senkaku Islands - five tiny islets and three barren rocks northeast of Taiwan - after a Japanese coastguard ship collided with a Chinese trawler, inflamed relations between the countries. Historical roots which haunt relations resurfaced once again. Even after the release of the Chinese fishing captain on September 24th, the relationship between the two countries remained icy. At a gathering on October 4th of European and Asian leaders in Brussels, China's prime minister Wen Jiabao refused to schedule an official meeting with the Japanese leaders. Hu Jintao and Naoto Kan barely conversed at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit in Yokohama on November 12-13th. To Japan's dismay, China's halt in the export of rare resources which are crucial for the manufacture of many high-technology products, in revenge for Japanese actions has not been reversed following the release of the captain, as China demanded both compensation and an apology.

While tensions remained uneasy and

nationalism boiled up across the East China Sea, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev paid a visit to the Kurile Islands - known to the Japanese as the Northern Territories - and posted on Twitter snapshots of Kunashiri island with the exclamation "There are so many beautiful places in Russia!". The sovereignty of the Kurile Islands was still in dispute between Japan and Russia. Naoto Kan, in protest, could do nothing but express regret and temporarily recall the Japanese ambassador to Moscow.

The diplomatic setbacks with both China and Russia were interpreted as a show of weaknesses at home and received harsh attacks from Japanese politicians and the public. Unhappy with Kan's foreign policy failures and adamant that it was against Japanese law to release the Chinese fishing captain, the Right and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) politicians were furious at Naoto Kan's submission to foreign pressure and which stirred up public discontentment.

It is worth remembering that one of the major reasons for Yukio Hatoyama's resignation in June was the failure to settle the relocation of the Futenma American marine base in Okinawa. The Okinawa Curse has not yet been broken and is pending a provincial election for the governor in late November. Seiji Maehara, the current Minister for Foreign Affairs who joined Kan's cabinet in June, is re-orienting Japan's foreign policy towards the restoration of Japan's prestige and military strength in East Asia through the US-Japan Security Treaty. He also openly supported the revision of Article 9 of the Constitution. However, in the

recent clash over the sovereignty of the Diaoyu-Senkaku islands, Hillary Clinton's offer to mediate the confrontations while stating that the islands are covered by the US-Japan security alliance, in conjunction with her reiteration of the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea as American 'national interest', did more

Since the 1980s, Japan has been on a path of eternal decline

harm than help to ease the tension.

Some critics raised doubts regarding Kan's decision to return to a pro-American strategy and justify an expansion of military resources by stepping up the rhetoric of an emerging Chinese military threat. In aspects of politics and security, Japan will need the backing of the US. Yet, the success in reviving the long-depressed Japanese economy lies in maintaining a positive economic and benign diplomatic relations with China. The two make up a mutually beneficial partnership: not only

for geographical reasons, but also the fact that Japan has a comparative advantage in service and high-tech manufacturing industries over China and it can benefit from China's colossal market.

The Japanese economy has become increasingly dependent on the Chinese market especially after the ravage caused by the credit crunch two years ago. This element may prompt Naoto Kan and Seiji Maehara to re-think the ramifications of a pro-American foreign policy.

Indeed, the biggest challenge haunting Japan - and arguably the overarching problem which influences the credibility and popularity of Kan's government - has been its economic insipidity.

For more than twenty years, the economy stayed in a trough and showed no strong signals of recovery. The causes of economic stagnation came from a combination of a relatively strong Yen, weak demand for Japanese exports - primarily automobiles and electronic products which are not daily necessities - and a high tendency for domestic savings and a shrinking demand within its domestic market. As long as the US pursues the policy of QE2, Japanese Yen will remain strong; and the fragility of the economy would only reinforce the strength of Japanese Yen. Therefore, external forces will not help Japan walk out of the shadow of economic stagnation. It needs to bolster domestic consumption and carries out structural reforms of industries.

Since the 1980s, Japan has been embarking on a path of eternal decline. The government passed on to Naoto Kan from Hatoyama was squeezed under both internal and external pressures. Kan

was extolled by many as a 'fast learner' (when he became the Finance Minister but without much prior experience before) and a leader in the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) who does not have the burden of factionalism and the influence of Ichiro Ozawa. He has the capacity to do better and outperform his predecessor. As John F. Kennedy once pointed out, "The word 'crisis' in Chinese is composed of two characters - one represents danger and the other represents opportunity."

In this time of domestic and diplomatic crisis, Kan should find the opportunity to lead Japan out of insipidity. Domestically, the solutions to many problems hinge upon the revival of the economy. Internationally, Kan Naoto has to weigh the importance of political victories versus economic gains. The relocation of Futenma American naval base promises upheavals and is thus a bomb which has to be defused with great care. As for the clashes over the Diaoyu-Senkaku Islands, Professor Jerome A. Cohen, an adjunct senior fellow for Asia at the Council on Foreign Relations suggests that Japan abandon its unpersuasive claim that the Diaoyu-Senkaku are entitled to an EEZ [Exclusive Economic Zone] and continental shelf if a peaceful settlement is what Japan desires. Then the parties could continue negotiations to reconcile China's claim to control the economic resources of its vast continental shelf with Japan's endorsement of principle of drawing equidistant EEZ boundaries between neighbouring coasts. For the benefits of both sides, they can implement their long-pending plans to jointly develop petroleum resources in those disputed areas.

Naoto 'yes we' Kan

Gabriel Pak surveys Japan's current political landscape

Haiti is a Third World country in America's backyard. It is the poorest nation in the western hemisphere, with 80 per cent of its citizens living below the poverty line and a GDP of \$6.56 billion in 2009. This is pale in comparison to the \$45.6 produced by Haiti's eastern neighbour, the Dominican republic.

Disease and disaster have been a key feature of Haiti's recent past. Almost a year on after the devastating earthquake which laid waste to large parts of the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, the country once again felt nature's full force in the

form of hurricane Tomas.

Much of the nation still lies in ruins, and a million people affected by the earthquake currently live in refugee tent cities which are inappropriate protection for the heavy winds and lashing rain of the hurricane. These camps are prone to flooding, as shown recently by the recent BBC news reporting in the region, and along with the improper sanitation and drainage, provide the perfect breeding ground for communal diseases, including malaria, HIV and cholera.

Cholera is caused due to bacterial infection by the species *Vibrio cholerae*.

This tiny, rod-shaped bacterium generally infects intestinal cells, producing a potent toxin, which inhibits the action of intestinal proton pumps (Adenylate cyclase enzymes in intestinal cell membranes). This causes severe dehydration of intestinal cells and loss of vital electrolytes, such as sodium and potassium ions and causes the main symptoms of cholera, namely severe watery diarrhoea and dehydration. At high concentration, the toxin can lead to toxic shock, which is often fatal. Watery stool is also the perfect vector for further transmission of the bacterium, which can then infect others through contaminated

water and food via faecal-oral contact. Despite the debilitating nature of the infection, cholera is easily curable if treated quickly using antibiotics and rehydration therapy. However, those often affected by cholera are the very people lacking medicines, clean drinking water and safe sanitation to combat cholera.

So far, 900 people have been estimated to have died of the disease, and 11,000 have been infected. The problem seems to be worsening due to reports of contaminated flood waters entering Haitian river systems: 5 out of 10 Haitian regions have reported cholera, and the disease may also begin to spread to the neighbouring Dominican republic.

The rebuilding of Haiti's infrastructure is vital to curbing the cholera epidemic. To achieve this, strong leadership, local stability, and adequate medical and food supplies are required. However, all three factors hinder the rebuilding effort.

Violence and looting broke out after the January earthquake, leading to criminal gangs and a climate of fear and unrest within the refugee population, but also hampers the actions of aid agencies trying to effectively carry out humanitarian work. Peacekeeping troops from countries including South Africa, Nepal and the US have themselves come under attack from frustrated Haitians, who blame them for introducing the "South Asian" strain of cholera. Political uncertainty in the country has also been a major factor hampering the rebuilding effort.

Elections are due in Haiti on the 28th of November, with 19 candidates running for President (including musician and rapper Wyclef Jean). Rene Preval, Haiti's President has been in power since 2006, and has been heavily criticised for his slow and ineffective action after the earthquake. Elections could herald in better leadership for Haiti, but in the short-term divert vital attention and resources away from the rebuilding effort. Yet, rather than

postpone the upcoming elections, holding them may be more beneficial. It may divert attention and resources for a few weeks, but a stronger, more determined new government could provide better leadership and coordination between the government, charity, and NGOs and provide more effective treatment to cholera hit areas.

Supplies are desperately needed. Much of the capital lies in ruins, including the Presidential Palace, and getting people out of the tents and into more stable accommodation with effective sanitation and clean drinking water is vital for long-term containment and rebuilding of Haiti. In the short-term, Haiti needs clean water, antibiotics, food and effective shelter.

As with disease prevention programmes around the world, short-term aid provision is no substitute for long-term development of infrastructure, national economy and the building of effective health systems in the disease hit country. Haiti is no different. Even before the earthquake and hurricane, Haiti already had the highest HIV rate in adults in the Western Hemisphere at 2.2 per cent, and the link between disease and poverty is very well known. However, investment is sparse, and international companies may also be put off by cholera affecting their employees, despite the fact that it is easily treatable.

Haiti needs to be brought out of the cycle of poverty, disease and natural disaster. Whilst we can do little to avoid natural events, we can invest in Haiti to get rid of its grinding poverty. Lack of investment from European and North American countries in Haiti during its early years as a revolutionary nation of former slaves has been the key reason it has lagged so far behind its Hispaniolic neighbour, the Dominican Republic. It is time that investment, not charity is given to Haiti. ☞



Haiti's misfortunes

The way ahead for the plagued country, as analysed by Arun Karnad

Thanks to my academic largess, last year I visited Madrid during the Easter break. The city's glorious baroque architecture was stunning, the panoply of cultural landmarks was exquisite, but what really made the holiday for me was the region's prostitutes. I had taken hotel in an upmarket district and each day, along with my morning newspaper, I woke-up to find a bevy of working girls encamped on my doorstep. There's no better way to start the day than by watching the sun rise over the twin peaks of a Brazilian's buttocks. Usually at about 9am I would single-out a woman of my choice, lead her back to my room, peel back her porky pants and grind myself empty into her waiting abyss. Forget caffeine, that's how to stir yourself in the morning.

Now, I am all in favour of a Night Watchman state - but the state shouldn't watch over us at night (nor in the morning). What we do with our own bodies, both in and out of our sexual liaisons, is our own prerogative.

Few philosophical positions cite prime time television, but if HBO's *Sex and the City* has taught us anything, it's that a great many women enjoy an adventurous sex life. Why shouldn't they be allowed to do what they take pleasure in during their own free-time? Better still, if they can make money out of it, doesn't that sweeten the deal?

Like fishing, golf and reading, these days, sex is just another past-time. People make great sums out of being professional sportsman. So it's a logical extension to allowing individuals to glean some cash

through being a professional sexer.

Consider a woman who is a particularly gifted in bed. She doesn't write well, she's no great academic but she is great in the sack. Wouldn't it defy Socrates principle of Eudaimonia (human flourishing) to deny that individual the right to make the most of her talents. We should all make good on our potential in life, and there are those among our number who simply are at their best when the lights are off. Giving one of these prurient Goddesses an auditing position would be a travesty, not only for those clients who might benefit from her services, but for the individual's self-worth as well.

Then there are the dangers involved in pushing prostitution outside the law. A business which could be policed, regulated and protected, becomes seedy and

dangerous when the state turns its back on it. The reason why so many prostitutes are rape victims is not because there is something innately risky about the job. All goods and services can be exchanged without recourse for violence. Rather, prostitutes are trapped, because unlike every other worker in the world's economy they cannot turn to the state for help when things go wrong. Early nineteenth century workhouses operated on exactly the same principle as the modern brothel. When unregulated both abused their employees. Thus, as the financial world turns towards the guiding light of regulation, the sexual world should too. ☞

Calum Young is...

NOZICK



KNOWLEDGE

Should prostitution be legalised?

Jenny McEaney is...
DE BEAUVOIR



Prostitution is often called the oldest profession in the world. It is now so accepted as an unchangeable part of the night-time economy of our society that there are calls from 'sex worker'

feminists, everyday feminists, and non-feminists alike to legalise prostitution to protect the women providing sexual services from violence, HIV and AIDs and in an attempt to combat organised crime syndicates and trafficking.

However, does the legalisation of prostitution live up to its promises? The legalisation or the decriminalisation of prostitution does not protect the women working in the sex industry, does not combat trafficking and organised crime but expands it, increases the demand for prostitution, and is not the best solution to combat the spread of HIV/AIDs.

Abolitionist feminists argue that prostitution in popular culture, such as 'Secret Diary of a Call Girl' and 'Pretty Woman', perpetuates a 'happy hooker' myth portraying prostitution as a rational choice made by women which results in a glamorous and lucrative way of life. Most of the women interviewed in CATW (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women) studies reported that choice in entering the sex industry could only be discussed in the context of the lack of other options. There is a massive disjuncture between

the reality for the majority of women in prostitution and the lives of 'escorts'. Prostitution instead should be considered a pyramid with a very small minority of women working as escorts, such as Belle de Jour, and the vast majority of UK and trafficked women working in Britain's brothels, the streets and coping with drug addiction and high levels of poverty.

With the advent of legalisation in countries that have decriminalised the sex industry, many men who would not risk buying women for sex now see prostitution as acceptable. When the legal barriers disappear, prostitution is normalised and so too do the social and ethical barriers to treating women as sexual commodities.

Another argument for the legalisation of prostitution is to combat the spread of AIDS and HIV in the Global South. The prostitutes and their clients are considered a high risk group and a bridge for the spread of the disease. Ban Ki Moon, an international advocate for the elimination of violence against women who contradictorily claimed, "We must unite. Violence against women cannot be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in

any circumstance, by any political leader or by any government", believes in the legalisation of prostitution for this reason. His argument is that with the regulation of prostitution and the empowerment of the women working in prostitution, contraceptives will more than likely be used to combat the spread of HIV and the prostitutes themselves would not be at risk of prosecution can access services to control the disease.

However, as one of the main universal reasons that women enter prostitution is poverty, more money offered to have sex without a condom is difficult for many women to turn down. In one of CATW's studies, U.S. women in prostitution interviewed reported the following: 47 per cent stated that men expected sex without a condom; 73 per cent reported that men offered to pay more for sex without a condom and 45 per cent of women said they were abused if they insisted that men use condoms. As for the fear of prosecution prostitutes face when seeking medical help for HIV/AIDs, governments could adopt the Swedish model in which it is not the prostitutes who are criminalised,

but the male clients. The rationale behind the 1999 legal amendment is stated in the government bill thus: "it is... not reasonable also to criminalize the one who, at least in most cases, is the weaker part whom is exploited by others who want to satisfy their own sexual drive." The women are considered victims of circumstance as opposed to criminals. Harriet Harman is a key proponent for adoption of the Swedish model in Britain.

Therefore legalisation or decriminalisation of prostitution does not better the health of the women engaged in prostitution, does not protect them from violence and is not the best solution for combating the spread of HIV or AIDs. In addition, it does not eliminate sex trafficking of women or reduce the power and profit making potential of organised crime gangs. Legalising or decriminalising prostitution increases demand, legitimises viewing women as commodities and consequently has a detrimental effect on power relations between women and men in wider society. ☞

The Carbon Conspiracy

Heather Wang tracks the current denial of climate change among Republicans

Even after years of debate, the likelihood of Democrats and Republicans agreeing on the issue of climate still remains rather slim. After achieving the biggest mid-term victory in recent history, Republicans showed no signs of softening their scepticism. Rather, there is a depressing shift from opposing cap-and-trade to rejecting the entire idea of global warming altogether.

One administration after another – Bush Snr, Clinton, Bush Jnr, and Obama – all at least reaffirmed a commitment to tackle the problem of climate change, despite the fact that none accomplished a great deal in the end (though this remains

Opposing finding ways to reduce carbon emission fits the general Republican ideology well: a small and limited government

to be seen with Obama). However, Republicans currently would not even support actions that help to reduce carbon emission in the most superficial and marginal way. Many refuse to admit the problem exists. Ronald Brownstein, a conservative columnist, wrote: "It is difficult to identify another major political party in any democracy as thoroughly dismissive of climate science as is the GOP here." Thus, with the hardening Republican attitudes and a Republican majority in the House of Representatives, the future of action on

climate change looks dismal. If the most influential economy in the world refuses to commit, the effects of any universal pacts regarding to climate change will be greatly diminished.

Those with a Tea Party root, such as Sharron Angle, have a firm view on the matter: "the man-caused climate change mantra of the left". Although some have more ambiguous opinions – for instance, California's Carly Fiorina, who says simply, "I don't know" – the Republicans overall have a pretty dismissive view on climate change. Out of 20 GOP senate challengers, 19 believed that scientific research on climate change was inconclusive and incorrect. Accordingly, as there was such strong sentiment against proving climate change, two Republicans who affirmed the science, Rep. Michael Castle in Delaware and Sen. Lisa Murkowski in Alaska, were defeated in Senate primaries this year.

In 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's most definitive statement on the human contribution to climate change did not convince Mr. Cheney at all. He insisted that there is not enough evidence to "sort of run out and try to slap together some policy that's going to try to solve the problem". Sarah Palin had expressed doubt on the fact that climate change is man-made as well. A recent Gallup poll also showed that more than twice as many Republicans as Democrats say the seriousness of global warming is 'greatly exaggerated'.

Gradually, Mr. Cheney, Sarah Palin and other Republicans' sceptical ideas were taken much further by members of the party who have more extreme views, jumping to a conclusive statement. Years of peer-review findings about global warming are now repudiated, considered as little more than hoax or conspiracy.

In January next year, the Republican Party will take control of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, giving it considerable influence over federal energy policy and climate change regulation

and legislation. Candidates for position of chair all have radical opinions on the issue of climate change. Mr. Shimkus, one of the Republican contenders, is unconvinced that global warming is provoked by human activity, or is even actually taking place. Theology is increasingly used to refute growing scientific consensus that human activity greatly endangered the environment we are living in. In 2009, at

Theology is increasingly used to refute growing scientific consensus that human activity greatly endangered the environment we are living in

a hearing on climate change by the House Energy and Commerce Committee's energy and environment subcommittee, Mr. Shimkus famously said: "The earth will end only when God declares its time is over. Man will not destroy this earth... I believe that is the infallible word of God, and that is the way it is going to be for his creation". At the same time, Mr. Shimkus also proposed the idea that the earth was a "carbon-starved planet", which suggests that if we decrease the use of carbon dioxide, we would be depriving plants of food. This thought provides growing carbon

emission with a justification. In a recent interview with Politico, Mr. Shimkus said if he can take control of the energy committee gavel, Congressional action on climate change would come to a halt.

Another competitor, Joe Barton, has similarly argued that global warming has nothing to do human activity, and in any event, that we can just adapt. He stated: "When it rains, we find shelter... When it's hot, we get shade. When it's cold, we find a warm place to stay." He also introduced the 'Better Use of Light Bulbs Act' in this September to repeal a requirement that phases out incandescent light bulbs in favour of more efficient compact fluorescents. His concern was however focused on economic impact, as opposed to environmental effects.

The Republicans believe that tackling the problem of global warming will have an adverse impact on the economy. A great deal of money will have to be spent on investing in green technology. Businesses will need to cover the costs to develop cleaner production methods, which could hinder growth. To Republicans, it is absurd to spend billions of dollars on a policy while being unsure that it will result in tangible benefits.

Furthermore, opposing finding ways to reduce carbon emission fits the general Republican ideology well: a small and limited government, because solving the problem of global warming will involve a greater involvement of government in businesses and people's everyday life, which is opposed by the party. However, on a rather sad note, as opposition against solutions for climate change has become such a core value for the party, undecided Republicans have come under pressure to share similar beliefs in order to gain support.

In an atmosphere of doubt, with the need for ideological justification and political support, Republicans' conviction in a non-changing global environment, unfortunately, is unlikely to be altered in the near future. ☘

WHAT IF...

Lenin was Assassinated at Finland Station? Pt. II

Jack Tindale

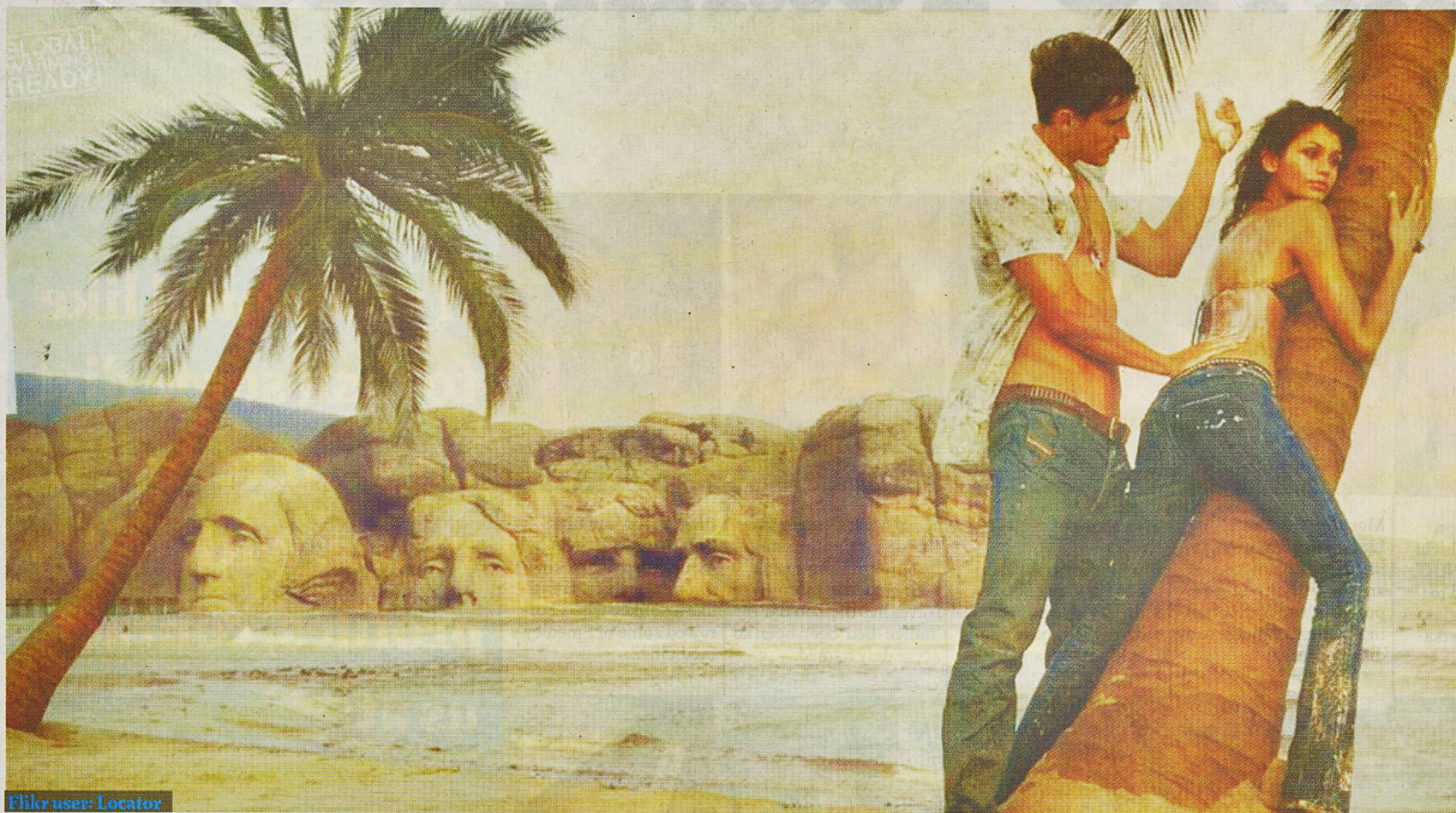
The re-entry of Russia into the Great War on 12th November 1917 came as a surprise to many members of the revolutionary clique in Petrograd, most of all Nikolai Bukharin, who suddenly found himself at the head of a large uprising by the members of the United Soviets. This aborted coup d'état by the Bolsheviks failed miserably, not least because of their failure to co-ordinate their actions against the Kerensky government. Holding up in the Peter and Paul fortress, it is not known if the Bolshevik leader was killed by gunfire, one of the many salvos fired from the battleship Potemkin, or simply from a self-inflicted bullet wound. By nightfall on the 14th, the remaining leftist leadership had either fled the city, been captured or killed. Leadership of the remaining elements of the Petrograd Soviet passed to the Mezhrainytsy leader, Leon Trotsky.

For Premier Kerensky, the defeat of the Bolshevik uprising secured his intention to force the war to a fairer settlement after the humiliation of the Declaration of Lomonosov. Under the able leadership of Baron Wrangel, the Republican Army soon shattered the Austro-Hungarian forces propping up the unstable National Republic of Ukraine. In the north, General Brusilov, learning much from his failed offensive of 1916, managed to drive the German troops stationed in the Baltic almost into the sea. These advances on the Eastern front coincided with a fresh Allied assault in the Somme. Despite heavy casualties, especially by the Anglo-Canadian forces, the German line was pushed back substantially for the first time in over three years.

With yet another Turnip winter looming for the dispirited citizens of Berlin and with leaders in both Vienna and Constantinople seeing their empires on the verge of total dissolution, Kaiser Wilhelm, displaying a rare act of assertiveness, requested a ceasefire. An attempted putsch by Ludendorff only furthered the resolve of moderates within the Reichstag to reach an armistice agreement. On New Year's Eve, one was granted, with peace talks opening in Strasbourg in April.

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, signed on the site of Charlemagne's Palace, revoked most of the gains made by Germany following the Franco-Prussian War as well the terms of the voided peace with Russia. Polish independence was formally guaranteed, with Zdzislaw Lubomirski installed as King, although real power was placed in the hands of the Prime Minister, Józef Pilsudski. The Ottoman Empire collapsed into civil war soon after, Austria-Hungary only avoiding a similar fate by establishing a tripartite system with the proclamation of the Kingdom of Croatia. Such a compromise was able to last almost three weeks before the secession of Hungary and the outbreak of the Danubian War.

By the time of the inauguration of President La Follette on 4th March 1921, Europe was slowly returning to an uneasy peace. The Great War had shattered any pretence of solving socio-ethnic strife by Imperial Federation, with most of the Balkans in a state of bloody civil conflict. Alexander Kerensky, national economy imploding around him, was swiftly dispatched from power in July, ending up as Governor of Omsk. His successor, President-for-Life Wrangel, would soon establish the brutal dictatorship which would remain under several different guises well into the mid-1950s. ☘



Flickr user: Locator

Measured musings

The European Union specialises in dithering. Since the trauma of the latest Treaty, whose ratification took a near-decade, politicians are reluctant to undertake grand reforms. These, after all, are doomed to fail, or lag beyond the duration of their tenure: what is the likelihood that twenty-seven countries will unanimously agree on anything even

vaguely controversial?

The consequences of this indecision have now come to light. The markets no longer trust Ireland- or perhaps, rightly, the EU's capacity for solidarity within the Eurozone. After brushing past economic collapse last summer with Greece's tottering public finances, the lesson hasn't yet born fruit. The creation of a stated emergency fund is still a matter of the imagination. Angela Merkel had recently expressed the intention to integrate this within a new binding Treaty, to the incomprehension of many other European

Ireland gets its pot of gold

leaders.

Ireland had preempted this situation. A few months back, following the austerity fashion initiated by Spain, Portugal, Greece and the United Kingdom, the Irish government had announced a deficit-reduction plan. This has clearly not been sufficient to reassure investors. All of a sudden, a collective realisation has emerged: the nation once known as 'the celtic tiger' has a faulty banking system.

The problem seems endemic: after the 2008 crisis, any word of malfunctioning financial institutions feels like a

refash of old news. Haven't we heard it all before? More worryingly, why has no one noticed this any earlier? Media attention also turned to other threatened countries last may, when Greece was well in the red. How did these now unanimously recognised issues previously escape all notice?

In its honour, Ireland first denied any need for a bailout. It was the worrying neighbouring countries which insisted on the need for the Irish economy to be helped out. Brian Lenihan, finance minister, has now recognised the necessity of EU and IMF help. Despite the lack

of a instituted 'system', at least the Euro countries are more reactive to the turn of events.

The EU should stop hesitating and get on with its work; the Eurozone needs a set solution to such tensions. A succession of these situations will no nothing for progress in other realms of EU cooperation, and the supra-national organisation badly needs a boost of confidence. ☘

Marion Koob
Features Editor

Play-off Profiles: This week it's Basketball vs Rugby

Joanna Hirst

Who is she?

Women's Basketball Captain

Where is she from?

More countries than Gary Glitter's been imprisoned in, but most recently was token White Girl at Hong Kong's South Island School.

Natural Wednesday Night Habitat:

In her lion suit at Zoo Bar, which she has NOT had sex in...

LSE Sporting Career Highlight:

NOT having sex in a lion suit

Profile:

A resident of one of the most sexually charged households, which may have something to do with its status as a brothel until this past June. She is often seen rejecting punters, unless they can be the Simba to her Nala. Her latest animal fetish has spread to baby monkeys riding pigs. Despite this animal obsession, or maybe because of this, she has been described by her friends as "the happiest person at LSE".



Chris Hallam

Who is he?

2nd Team Rugby Captain

Where is he from?

Worth? Abbey? (We don't know, apparently he played rugby at that school)

Natural Wednesday Night Habitat:

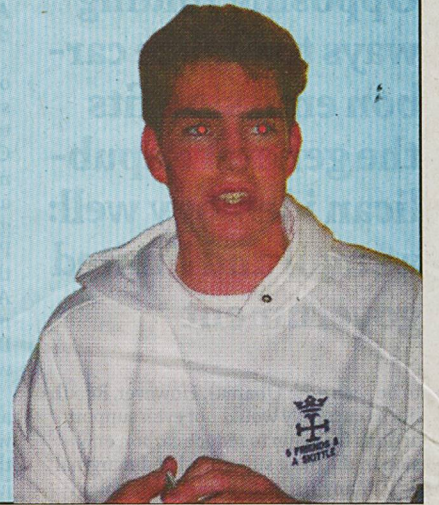
Creeping towards girls in Zoo Bar with self-esteem issues, with about as much grace as a Thunderbirds puppet.

LSE Sporting Career Highlight:

Pulling Gately in Salou without his "free-pass"

Profile:

Also known as the "lesser of two evils", a reference to the hard fought competition between fellow second team captaincy candidate Jae 'Jong-II' Park. Hallam's general well being is on the ascendency, as he is often found actually enjoying himself on a night out, in contrast to his first-year experience. Some say the transformation took place in Salou, when he showed his worth by vomming on some Polys from a rooftop after being there for less than 50 minutes.



Dream AU Teammates

Boca and Boylem

Biggest Bristols - Alex Avolonitis: NASA scientists have been investigating the claim that they have their own gravitational pull.	Littlest 'Big Name on Campus' - Latif Baluch: Self proclaimed 'BNOC', so minute you need to wear your reading glasses to maintain a conversation with him.	Most Destructive - Lizzy Bacon: Can single-handedly drink more snakebite than all the FC put together. Whilst causing criminal damage to a disabled toilet.	Second Most destructive - Russian Greg: A close second to Lizzy Bacon. Many a Poly has been destroyed. May have finally met his match and the love of his life.	Third Most Destructive - Catherine California: Just look at Greg's neck on a Thursday morning. Never has the Zoo Bar 'minge-bed' been seen so accurately named.	Biggest AU 'member' - Rob Dagger: Dagger by name, great big fucking sword by nature. Hung like a donkey who's borrowed some of Smedley's medicine.
Biggest Shit-Stirrer - Natalie Davies: Since outing Paddy Dixon, Moorsey and Sumner with false stories of love in Europe, people are questioning everything which comes out of her mouth.	Most Ginger - Chris L'Orange: You have to wear SPF 15 to stand near him, nothing near to the SPF 50+ he has to wear on his summer holidays.	Most Pent-Up Sexual Frustration - Megan Protheroe: If patience is a virtue, then Megan is a saint.	Best G-Crow Impersonator - BJ Watson: The only man from Middlesborough to have a Pompey accent	Loudest Big Name on Campus - Kate Strivens: More decibels than The Prodigy at a lager sponsored summer festival.	Biggest Rugby Wannabe - Jaz Bradfield: She Baywatches, she planks-off and she pulls girls. The Rugby club would be proud to have her.

If you would like to dish some dirt on your teammates with witty profiles, contact us at:

sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

GG tells us whose fireworks went off with a bang and whose fizzled out...



This Wednesday, GG followed the AU's finest athletes to Berrylands, and saw the Rest of the World Barbarians Rugby team teach the English a thing or two. Yet the after party began in good spirits, with power ballads receiving a butchering like never before at the hands of Netball and Rugby.

FIREWORKS

As the alcohol for Steve's bar continued to flow so did the tongues of tipsy netballers. The Berryland ladies room became a haven for gossip and luckily GG was there to catch an earful. Whilst Rugby murdered more Karaoke classics than Wagner upstairs, the girls shared their darkest dirtiest moments. Stories of bum-holes in America and gimp masks in Scotland buzzed around the room as the girls touched up their make-up for the night ahead.

PIT-STOP

Not all were present to witness the display, Maz Fletcher and Youssef had already left to get food by the time the first firework illuminated the sky. Despite the delicate delights of the burger van scrumptiously sizzling away downstairs, the menu at Youssef's was far more tempting. Rumour has it after feeding on the fruits of his loin, the pair snuck back to Zoo Bar, where Wednesday's chaos continued.

CANNONS

Bored with the usual AU women the FC fell at the feet of this week's special guest. With breasts so large that it makes it physically impossible for her to stand up straight, Miss SideBoobs provided the answer to the football clubs dreams. Noz, The Chemist and a few more are rumoured to have formed an orderly line in a quest to risk life and limb for a chance at a life changing motorboat. GG's ears burnt as the line "it was amazing, we were so far away but still touching" escaped from Cuniffes lips.

COWGIRL

Lack of seating on the Zoo Bar sofa

meant straddling was the position of the week. Relations between Russia and California continue to blossom, despite a three grand bet that Russia would be able to resist, and these two proved that money cannot buy you love, but four double vodka red bulls and a bed in Aldgate East most certainly can. Jaz celebrated life as a KPMG kept woman by taking her own trip to the O.C; GG is pondering whether there will be anyone's lips that won't have seen Californian sunshine by the end of the year.

USSR

Determined to stamp out rumours of homosexual tendencies, Paddy Dix made a trip to the Eastern European bloc. GG is awaiting comment from a certain Liz Toomast on how well he played it straight. Yet for some it was all too much as Sophia Sleigh turned 21 unconscious in the arms of a bouncer, Mooresy found himself stumbling around Grey's Inn Road, whilst Smedley got it up for once. Unfortunately what he did bring up was 12 pints of spew all over his bedroom.

IMPREGNATION

The second poshest Scot in the AU (behind the one with the back-combed blonde hair) practically jumped out of Schlong's friend zone and almost jumped into her bed. GG cannot confirm or deny whether any Geordie-Scot babies were conceived, but by the sounds of this quote on his Facebook wall from a concerned third-party, the answer is probably no. "I leave you for one night and look what you do! Dearest S***h ends up in my bed!"

LIGHTBULB

Friday brought with it a bigger Crush than normal; the unfamiliar beats of Bhangra from the Quad confined the AU antics to the Tuns. Queue some old-skool Crush antics, with games of taps and fives sprouting up left, right and centre. Not all were present though, after being released on bail, Josef Fritzl found himself a new woman and pulled out the big guns by taking her to opening night of the new Harry Potter. The date was believed to go just magically despite bumping into Rugby ruffraff on the way home who adequately abused the new WAG on the top deck of the N91 bus. The question on GG lips is: did she find herself in Harry's Cupboard under Cooper's stairs, as previous women have done, or is this a case of actual love?

HAIRY

GG will be observing these trends next Wednesday and if things are to develop further, the AU Wax and the sex caves at Verve are sure to act as a catalyst. Until then - you know I'm watching, XOXO.

LSE SPORT RESULTS

Attach:

Share

Athl Unik

LSE Athletics Union Football:

LSE FC 1st v UCL Men's 2s ULU: 4-1
LSE FC 1st v Thames Valley University Men's 1st: 5-1
LSE FC 2nds v UCL Men's 3s ULU: 5-0
LSE FC 3rds v Buckinghamshire Men's 5th: 3-1
LSE FC 4ths v UCL Men's 5s ULU: 5-1
LSE FC 5ths v School of Slavonic & East European Studies Men's 1s ULU: 3-0
LSE FC 6th v Royal Holloway Men's 4s ULU: 2-5
LSE FC 7ths v St George's 3s ULU: 3-1
LSE WOMENS FC v UCL Women's 2s ULU: 4-0

a few seconds ago · Like · Comment · Promote

Athl Unik

LSE Athletics Union Netball:

LSE Netball 1st v University of Kent 2nd: 40-21
LSE Netball 6th v Imperial Medicals 5s ULU: 32-10
LSE Netball 5ths v Queen Mary 4s: 11-12
LSE Netball 3rds v Imperial Medicals 3s ULU: 16-20
LSE Netball 3rds v Brunel University West London 6th: 18-39
LSE Netball 4ths v St George's 4s ULU: 17-15
LSE Netball 2nds v King's College 2s ULU: 31-10
LSE Netball 2nds v University of Creative Arts 1s: 45-25

2 minutes ago · Like · Comment · Promote

Athl Unik

LSE Athletics Union Basketball and Volleyball:

LSE Basketball Womens 1st v Kings: 37-62
LSE Basketball Basketball 2nd v University of Hertfordshire Men's 1st: 69-37
LSE Volleyball v King's College, London Volleyball Club Women's 1st: 0-3
LSE Mens Squash v University College London Men's 1s ULU: 1-4
LSE Womens Squash v University of Sussex Women's 1st: 4-0

4 minutes ago · Like · Comment · Promote

Athl Unik

LSE Athletics Union Badminton and Tennis:

LSE Men's Badminton 1st v Imperial Medicals Men's 1st: 8-0
LSE Women's Badminton 1st University of Hertfordshire Women's 1st: 2-6
LSE Men's Tennis 1st v University of Brighton Men's 1st: 4-8
LSE Women's Tennis 1st v Canterbury Christ Church Women's 1st: 5-5
LSE Men's Tennis 2nd v Imperial College, London Men's 1st: 0-1

6 minutes ago · Like · Comment · Promote

Athl Unik

LSE Athletics Union Hockey:

LSE Men's Hockey 1st v University of Greenwich Men's 1st v: 12-0
LSE Women's Hockey 1st v Kingston University Women's 1st: 5-0

TORSOS OF THE WEEK

AU CHEST WAX

Wednesday 24th November, The Tuns

8pm



Sport



Inside: GG puts the week's fireworks on display, with the culmination at Bhangra Crush

Netball Fourths leave St Georges requiring attention

Sarah Long

After some epic golfing last week and excitement over the announcement of the carol theme, IVs trekked out to zone 3 (who knew there was civilisation there) for a match against some distinctly chubby medics.

The IV medics of St George's played dirty from the off, by employing the hospital security guard to give wrong directions aptly setting the scene for the battle that was about to ensue.

The first quarter saw the LSE team boss the court and with a strong lead going into the second we were confident for victory.

At the beginning of the second a well executed shove had Mrs Jonny Jackson on all fours causing a fabulous second left knee to grow from her shin. Notorious Baywatch stripper, captain Jazzy B swiftly stepped in to make the substitution. However with the realisation that the only possible alternative was an American (who's more inclined to play with Russian balls than netballs) raging blonde was kept on court to battle through the pain.

Although towards the second half the medics started to come back, they were no match for the merciless duo in defence. Mama K and our newfound talent of Nana Ellie continued to perform leading Deevs to ask whether Ellie did in fact have the ability to fly.

The medics had no answer to raw talent, sheer determination and Mrs Jackson's temper and the battle ended in the only possible outcome: IV victory in our tightest match of the season.



What's that coming over the hill?...Victory!

Lizzie Bacon

After a perfect start to the season, LSE-WRFC found themselves hosted by our toughest opposition yet, Royal Holloway, who are somehow considered as a "London University" despite being located nearer Bristol than London.

After being struck by a spate of "boy-friend syndrome", and even emergency surgery, LSEWRFC were lacking some key players, so a loss at this stage would not be unexpected. Our train ride was filled with deliberation about the carol, a sign of an obvious concern about our scrumming problem... Thankfully, we managed to bump into an old friend, who was, coincidentally, also going to Egham. After twisting her arm, our total was boosted considerably, giving us a fighting chance of squashing the poly and sitting pretty at the top of ULU league.

Taking to the pitch, our challenge was clear. Missing our scrum half, and our second row (as well as the rest of the team), Jenni Au took up the challenge of number 9, whilst Strivens was dragged into the scrum, kicking and screaming (any excuse to make a noise). Our back line was filled with players who would normally best suit the wing, but today Flying Frenchwoman Julie gladly stepped up to the challenge of the number 12 shirt after two previous games filled with massive tackles and fearless runs, despite only being 4ft tall. The match started well, with "magic-hands" Tara kicking off, and subsequently scoring within one minute. Start as we mean to go on, after all.

Our welsh second row surprisingly held up quite well, despite being half formed of a winger... initial fears of sheepish play were all but squashed when the LSE scrum stole multiple Holloway balls, giving us a heady advantage in terms of the points tally, and in terms of strength and fitness. Try after try was scored, the referee hardly able

to cope with the simple task of adding up the points. As the end of the first half neared, the points looked all but secure for LSEWRFC. A significant amount up, our opponents looked dejected, as if they belonged at the bottom of the league.

The second half proved catastrophic for the poly, LSEWRFC having taken advantage of their lack of team spirit and poor passing abilities. To be honest, this spectacular half's events skip the memory, but one can assure that they beat anything ever experienced by LSE's many teams; if only they happened at Berrylands. A

moment to be cherished in the colourful history of LSE sports. The score 61-0. It should have been more.

The end of the match contained more satisfying victory for LSEWRFC. Fresh from our unfair defeat of the welcome party boat race, we were excited at the prospect of kicking more posh poly arse. Bacon's selection of Women of the Match was seemingly perfect for the opposition's suggestion of a boat race, and was then turned into a perfect situation when Bacon herself was by the other team. Their first player's admission that "she was shit

at downing" all but secured the victory for the Dreamteam, confident that the Poly Smashing would continue into the bar. And smash them we did. Teammates Strivens, and French Fresher Vivianne proved their competence; we finished all three before their liability of a "teammate" had finished the first beer... However the excitement of victory was too much for lightweight Vivianne, who was so intoxicated that she had to be carried home. Great game, great lash, especially if you are Viv...



The Fourths show why they're not the Fifths...

Joseph Watson
Chris Main

UCL 5s 1 - 5 LSE 4s

It was with trepidation that the 4th team made the arduous journey to the furthest northern corner of Scotland. Shenley, home of poly and shit football team alike. Losing FC Club Captain/early player of the season candidate Joe Checkley to a day-date with Kate Henry was a potential ruger for the 4s. Especially when coupled with the loss of part-time 4th team captain Nadir Gohar to a dangerous case of a haircut. To make matters worse the filthies were coming into this game on the back of a questionable defeat to terrible footballing instituon that is LSE 5s. Obviously the 4th team are a gracious losers, but rumours of foulplay were abound. By all accounts had a drugs test been administered on wannabe Alistair Higson and part-time beta tranquilizer taker Youssef Darwich a 9 month ban would have ensued.

So as BJ was tucking into a lobster and tomato parpadelle a patched up 4th team featuring non-other than reserve keeper Johnny Snaville, took the field. The first half was by all accounts pretty dirt, the 4s succumbing to a sucker punch from a corner after Chris a l'orange was left by his man during one of his regular day-dreams about Big Bird. At half time it was clear things weren't working out. Like a young and brown Steve McLaren captain Gohar rang the changes. It was evident world drinking champion Jaffri was struggling after a heavy night on the laaaaaaaarger, so he was replaced by good British catholic dependable Dave 'The Rave' MaCauley. After 'Gohard or go home' s epic half-time work the filthies hit the ground running. They delivered an INSTANT REPLYYYY as Derby reject Alex 'Loves a Punt' Hunt spanked a long range

through ball for perennial beard sandwich Malibu to punch over the line circa Diego Maradona 1986. As the team celebrated Malibu was seen crying in the corner after the referee told him to apologise. Evoking memories of the bolo bunch he received from southpaw Lydia Casayer.

At 1-1 the 4s continued to press and one of the more Turkish looking members of UCLs 5th team inexplicably banged one into his own net from outside of the area. Tour. UCL were determined to fight back, however some tight defending from Kilian 'Can't even sort out a double date with Inga' Huber and Ryan Cody-Ben-Seth-Matt-Corey-Payton-Tom-90210-Brady-Manning-Affleck-Damon-Cohen Conolly their poly attempts were thwarted easily. Jason do-some-TING and John Premanchandralalalalalalalalalalal appeared able to put their bitter rivalry for shittest hair of the year award to link up in a fluid and sexual motion, the former delivering a delightful little ball for Malibu to knee into the net. A fourth goal was added by Chris in Orange Sauce, the ginger ninja finally delivering on his promise and scoring a bullet on the buddy holly ergo Glenn Huddle vs Forest in 79'. Take that Mulcahy you 'fackin' cripple! The final goal, the icing on the cake, whatever you wish to call it came in due course. Stella Artois spokesman Demola rasping a bullet harder that he hit that minge, the cat made a fine save but who else that Holly Tophams favorite Welshman was on hand to let it bounce off him and back into the net. Game over. 5-1 like England vs germany. Take that Kilian, just like 45'. By the way BJ still won man of the match, showing Henry the time of her life by all accounts!

Naturally only winning by 4 is a disappointing result for the team but Holly Listers favorite turk managed to lift the mood by treating the team to kebabs from him and Manny's new Turkish Delicacies "ray" Parlour. The team then went to

Sherminator's love den for the obligatory pre-steamer. Sadly Alex 'loads-a-cunt' Hunt couldn't make it apres being admitted to A&E from severe alcohol poisoning. Stuart Downing a yellow and a red wine gum proved too much for the Scandinavian princess. As frivolities ensued at Gingers, 2nd Team il duche Sachin Mitra bearded on the fireworks and made a guest appearance, entertaining the fans with his famous ping-pong trick. One member of the fourth team conspicuous in his absence was Jonathan Fellows MP. Rumour has it he had an interview the next day for a position as assistant to the team leader of Ed Balls fluffer.

On to zoo bar and Nick Liu was seen beating his personal best managing to take a slut home quicker than Dave MaCauley can get Strivens wet. (and that's quick). Resident shrimp taco Ollie Povey was as usual a non-event almost rendering the position of pseudo social-sec meaningless. We should also mention at this point that Edouard is a beard on touch. Everyones favourite Hollyoaks reject was of course there, however his overtures towards all the minge were spurned after he had to come clean and admit he's a poor mans Seth Costello.

Any article regarding any sort of tour would of course be a gross misrepresen-

tation if it did not mention the two biggest voyeurs in the FC. Jake Mulcahy was up to his usual tricks again, with Rob Jeffries as a tall, dark and handsome wingman. The two cleaned up faster than a Polish maid as per, I think Malcahy was spotted with a shot girl, on second inspection she might have been Cunniffe/Noz/Derulo's lasy lover. Rob had a que of minx to his room at Roseberry. There were however confirmed reports of regular cross-dresser Laurence 'I'm gayer than Cunniffe' Coppin being amongst the baying crowd.

Shrimp Taco out.

