



the Beaver

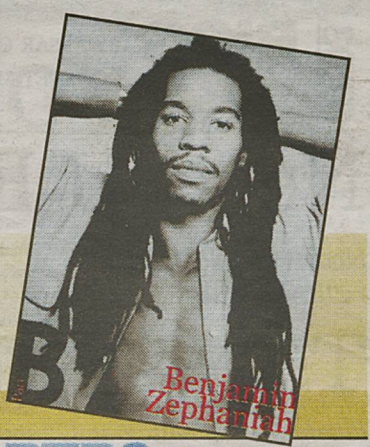
7 March 2006 Issue 640 The newspaper of the LSESU



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UNION DIVIDED AS TAM WINS

- TAM WINS BY 96 VOTES
- REPRESENTATION SPLIT BETWEEN LEFT, RIGHT AND CENTRE

Patrick Cullen
Patrick Graham
Chris Lam

After one week of campaigning and a tense Thursday count night, Societies Officer Jimmy Tam was finally pronounced winner of the General Secretary election race, the highest position in the LSE Students' Union (SU).

At 2.23 am on Friday morning it was announced that out of 1885 votes cast Tam had polled 868 votes - only 96 more than his one rival Stacy-Marie Ishmael who polled 772.

Speaking straight after the result was announced, Tam said that "it felt like a dream."

He said that the first policy he wanted to implement was the "Jamie Oliver experiment." He continued, "especially as an anthropologist, I've learnt how food is integral to a harmonious student society."

Tam - as this year's Societies Officer - was widely regarded to have the upper hand, in terms of society support. However the result on the night appeared to be far closer than originally predicted.

Tam said, "in the end, society endorsements were quite split, but I think many recognised the hard work I've put in

for them this year." The race highlighted the importance of society backing in elections. Ishmael received the backing of the Jewish, Hayek, Russian, Pakistani, Islamic, Dance and Conservatives, with the Liberals and Labour siding with Tam.

Ishmael's campaign was prominent on Houghton Street with blue-shirted supporters, music and dancing winning crucial street votes. However, in the end it was not enough for Ishmael who lost narrowly.

Speaking on the closeness of the result, Ishmael said "I think that it is testament to a strong campaign." She mentioned "the extraordinary people" she worked with to whom she was "very grateful."

On Tam, Ishmael said "I hope that he implements all the policies that he talks about."

Controversy surrounded the race on Thursday afternoon when Tam was banned from campaigning on Houghton Street by Returning Officer Doug Oliver. It was alleged that Phil Bahoshy, former head of PuLSEFM and a member of Tam's campaign team, had been negatively campaigning against Ishmael. Bahoshy and Ishmael are known to have a long-standing personal feud.

Ishmael said that she was

"seriously unimpressed and thoroughly annoyed. It is really unfair because we are trying to run a clean campaign, and if Jimmy is as he describes himself the 'approachable candidate' then he should run a clean campaign."

Oliver told *The Beaver*, "Stacy made a formal complaint that members of the Tam campaign had been abusive about her and telling people not to vote for her and that Phil Bahoshy had called her a 'bitch'."

"I had to uphold the complaint after I received supporting evidence from a trustworthy independent source. The punishment was only for an hour as I was forced to consider Bahoshy's comments in the context of their acrimonious personal relationship."

Tam attempted to put distance between himself and the incident. "Phil [Bahoshy] was not an official member of my campaign, but he had come down to help for a bit and got involved," said Tam.

He continued, "obviously there are personal issues between Phil and Stacy and their personal feelings got involved, however it is still not clear what had happened."

Former LSE SU General Secretary Will Macfarlane told *The Beaver* before results were announced that both candi-



Elated Tam is embraced by friends following his victory

Photograph: Magnus Aabech

dates "were extremely good." He said he thought very highly of Tam, who he thought was "extremely conscientious."

MacFarlane, General Secretary in 2004-2005, said he was pleased that the "centrist legacy" that he and his predecessor Elliot Simmons had started was continued under Rishi Madlani and would be further by either Tam or Ishmael. He continued,

"Whoever wins, it's pleasing to see that it will be a non-white candidate."

The important weapon of societies also featured in the race for Communications Officer, where Ali Dewji, a candidate from the right and backed by the Conservatives was the victor.

Dewji emerged as the winner with 723 votes while his nearest rival, Elaine

Londesborough, polled 675 votes. The remaining candidates, Hanne Thornam and Alex Hochuli, won 347 and 258 votes respectively. The final outcome contradicted an exit poll carried out by LooSE TV in which it was suggested that Londesborough had won the race.

Dewji, a third-year International Relations and



Nationwide lecturers' strike set to disrupt LSE

James Bull
Senior Reporter

Lecturers at the LSE go on strike today as part of nationwide action following a decision made by members of the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the National Association of Teachers of Further and Higher Education (NATFHE). Dan Ashley, Press Officer for

the AUT, said in a general press release that as of tomorrow a assessment boycott would also take place.

The strike was announced as a result of an ongoing pay dispute between the Unions and employers. In a joint press release the Unions said that "taking industrial action is an absolute last resort" and they "remain committed to resolving the dispute at the negotiating table, not on the picket

line."

The statement warned, "AUT and Natfhe are angry that the employers have reneged on public promises to use new government funding - and the extra billions from top-up fees - to improve pay. The employers are still refusing to hold unconditional talks with the unions, and that failure to do so looks increasingly like causing unparalleled disruption across the UK's uni-

versities."

Although many lecturers have responded in the negative to questions on whether they will participate in the strike, *The Beaver* has learnt of several who will not report to work today and lectures are due to be disrupted.

Dr Patrick McGovern from the Department of Sociology will be taking part in the strike because he has "real concerns about the future of

social sciences in this country."

As reasons for his concern McGovern pointed out that "there are hardly any British Students taking PhDs in Economics across the entire country" and that there has been a decline in Economists appointed by the LSE. McGovern also outlined the difficulties of being an academic in London commenting, "the London weighting is a

joke - school teachers and police get two or three time more than we do."

Dr Chris Husbands - President of the AUT at LSE - told *The Beaver* "this is a national dispute between the higher education trade unions and the Universities & Colleges Employer's Association (UECA) concerning the historically low pay, in comparison with professional peers."



The right to question Israel
We have the right to criticise the Zionist project without being accused of anti-Semitism

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Waking up the sleeping dragon
The political climate in China is changing and solidarity towards the Chinese is vital

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Karate
LSEKC brings back medals from the BUSA competition

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Kraut-rock
Alternative German music scene explodes with new bands, such as NEU!, Can and Faust

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New SU Executive decided with nail-biting finishes

Nazir Hussain and
Fatima Manji

The results in the race for LSE Students' Union (SU) International Students' Officer were extremely close with Fadhil Bakeer-Markar emerging the winner with 699 votes. Although all three candidates campaigned visibly and almost continuously throughout Wednesday and Thursday, many election observers were surprised that George Meng - unknown in the world of SU politics - had beaten Eddy Fonyódi with about 100 votes more, after the elimination of RON, to emerge as the first runner-up.

Bakeer-Markar attributed his success to his campaign team, and to his central policy that international students should be better represented. Meng, whose mobilisation of Chinese students to vote was highly visible, said that his campaign "raised awareness of the SU among the Asian students community" and that his good performance would "be a catalyst to encourage more Asian students to be more actively involved in the SU."

Shanela Haque won the race for LSE SU Anti-Racism Officer with a clear mandate, beating runner-up Charles Laurence decisively. Haque, who emphasised her experience in anti-racism campaigns

on her manifesto, was the candidate endorsed by Students Action Against Racism (SAAR) which traditionally organises anti-racism campaigns on campus together with the Officer. Haque attributed her success to her experiences and her "enthusiastic and dedicated team."

Opposition to Laurence, the right-wing columnist for *The Beaver*, was evident among sections of the Union in the run-up to the elections. There were rumours of plans to circulate Laurence's articles with the word 'racist' written across it, although it never happened. Speaking to *The Beaver*, Laurence insisted that he was running an "apolitical campaign", is a passionate anti-racist and was "disgusted" at those who were spreading rumours to the contrary.

The other candidate Pratik Master ran a visible campaign but won less than 300 votes, which he attributed to his campaign being less than organised.

Green Party candidate Aled Fisher secured the position of LSE SU Environment and Ethics Officer. As he received news of his victory during the count Fisher seemed frustrated he "didn't do as well as hoped", especially as he had campaigned far more than his competitor Alkesh Woods. Surprisingly, when questioned before the count on Thursday, Woods

denied rumours that he had left the race and said he thought he "didn't really need to campaign on the streets" as he felt his society endorsements and campaigning at Bankside would be sufficient.

Upon hearing the result, Fisher's most prominent backer and LSE SU Green Party leader James Caspell said he realised since Fisher had run "an active and enthusiastic campaign, it was easy to overestimate his win in predictions". Caspell also felt that Fisher's principles had been important and since the two candidates came from traditionally polarised political persuasions - Green and Conservative - the voters had shown "which direction they want the Union to go."

The race for the post of Residences Officer also saw another victory for the Green Party with the election of Louise Robinson with 717 votes. Her opponents Andy Hallett and Kevin Heutschi gained 253 and 564 votes respectively. The Residences race was unique in being the only one where candidates for a non-sabbatical post also held hustings at residences.

With all three candidates being from the 'left', campaigning was imperative in securing this post. All three were spotted at various times speaking to voters and handing out flyers on Houghton Street. However, Robinson

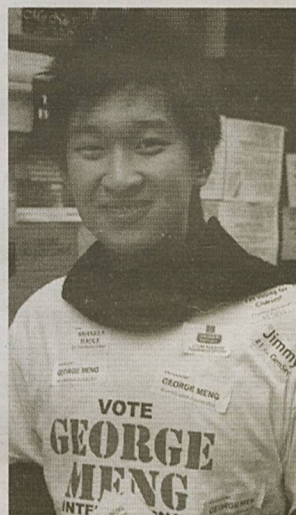
seemed to be more consistently present out on the street and this together with the strength of the 'womens' vote this year is likely to have greatly added to her victory.

When asked to analyse the reasons for her victory, Robinson said she felt her research and efforts were important but also felt the election of herself and Aled Fisher, "demonstrates a mood on campus that demands change in environmental policy" something in which they tried to lead by example by trying to collect used leaflets for recycling immediately after the campaigning.

Favourite Zoë Sullivan emerged a clear winner in the race for LSE SU Women's Officer with 890 votes, more than double that of the other candidate Hillen Francke. Early on in the race Sullivan seemed quietly confident, having secured the support of many members of the current LSE SU Executive as well as several notable society endorsements such as Liberal Democrats, People & Planet, Labour and the Islamic Society. Higher turnout from the Athletic Union is also likely to have increased Sullivan's margin.

During street campaigns

last week, Sullivan was also more visible than Francke, with friends dressed in pink helping her to gain more votes. Francke's tactic of approaching individuals on Houghton Street and discussing her ideas in depth seemed to have been less effective. Sullivan appears to be concentrating largely on maintaining the status quo for the role of Women's Officer but she does hope to "work more closely with first-year students in halls, to ensure all female students are represented and provided with information about personal well-being."



Left to right: Meng, Bakeer-Markar and Fonyódi

Photograph: Chris Colvin & Magnus Aabech

Lent elections create internal tensions in societies

Nazir Hussain and
Chris Lam

The Bangladesh Society has been at the centre of a dispute regarding the endorsement of election candidate Charles Laurence for Anti-Racism Officer.

An initial e-mail sent out last Sunday night through the society's account contained Laurence's manifesto and

stated that he was the candidate officially backed by the society. A second e-mail, sent out on Monday morning, was a list of five candidates being endorsed by the society.

On Tuesday morning, another e-mail which was unauthorised by the Chair Sunerha Rahman, was sent out from the society's account at 11:47.

The e-mail alleged that there had been "a flagrant

abuse of power" and that the candidates backed were "not reached on consensus by all members of the committee." It said, "It is not for the purposes of the President and/or Chairwoman to simply endorse their friends."

The e-mail, which was signed as 'Your Committee', ended by saying that the "candidates are no longer officially backed by the Bangladesh Society."

At exactly the same time, the e-mail was forwarded to the Returning Officer. The sender identified himself as 'an anonymous member of the Bangladesh Society Committee', and reported that the first e-mail had been sent by the Society's Vice-Chair and the second one was an attempt to correct the abuse.

The Returning Officer, Doug Oliver, consulted the Society Chair, Sunerha

Rahman, and certified that the initial endorsement was legitimate as at least three members of the Committee had been consulted.

Controversy also surrounded the Labour Society's decision to back Alexandra Vincenti for the position of Education and Welfare Officer.

An e-mail sent around the Labour Society on the 27th of February showed that the society was backing Alexandra Vincenti, current Student's Union (SU) Women's Officer. However, at Monday's society meeting, it appears that the general consensus was not to back any of the candidates specifically, but that all would receive equal backing.

Vincenti was backed by Sian Errington, this year's Education and Welfare officer and Secretary of the Labour Society.

SU Returning Officer Doug Oliver said, "I had complaints from Simon Bottomley and Dave Cole and their campaign teams. At the meeting, it was basically agreed to endorse all members of the society, Dave was a previous chair, and Simon Bottomley was previously a non-portfolio member."

"The first endorsement went out on Tuesday, their meeting was on Monday, and they apparently agreed to endorse them all equally, however after the meeting Sian [Errington] and Alex [Finnegan] had decided to endorse them by numbers."

"A lot of people were very

unhappy about the decision.

"However the endorsement was technically legitimate, because it was made by the majority of their committee."

In a statement to *The Beaver*, Society Chair Alex Finnegan said, "The elected Committee of the Labour Society decided to endorse Alex Vincenti for the position. There was no discrepancy in the following emails, we just wanted to make sure that members knew two of the other candidates were also Labour society members."

"I am aware complaints were made about the first email and I am sorry feelings were hurt, but I am also aware that according to the Returning Officer we, as a committee, were perfectly in our right to endorse candidates, like every other society."

"It was a tough call but we are very pleased and proud of Alex and we wish her well in her position."

Bottomley said that he thought that the Labour Society endorsement can prove crucial, "everyone wants to know the position of the left wing progressives. Everyone, including LGBT thinks that the Labour Society are fairly well informed, and their position is important."

Insiders said that they thought the decision not to back Dave Cole was surprising given that he was once society chair and was a very active member.



Vincenti talks to a potential voter on Houghton Street

Photograph: Chris Colvin

Tam, Kenrick, Vincenti and Dewji are new Sabbaticals



Union Jack

Jack crept into the Old Theatre to find no-one there this week. Senile dementia was surely setting in but how could he account for all those past glorious UGMs and speeches from the tall, small and ugly.

Less than one person turned up this week making the UGM inoperative, a word often thrown at Bottomless Gay. On the other hand there was campaigning and counting to look forward to.

Each candidate made the most of their colour. Keeping up to date Jack could see Ali DoAwayWithMe carrying around his much abused partner in gorgeous green, making Jack want to "just dewji it" too. T Groarss turned it on in bright pink while Rasta-Marie wore blue and darling Londerbra flaunted LOUD PURPLE.

Both Kreepy and Mullet offered Jack cookies and a trip back to their lairs, but Jack did well to fend off temptation and a trip to the clinic. As happy as Jack is to visit the Hall, he must look after himself...

Bitter they were on Houghton Street, with a former radio head calling a former radio woman a bitch. Parked up beside her was the Action Man, dressed in yellow khaki and pressing the buttons in the studio. He promised explosive action and a good meal too.

It was a tense night on Thursday, as Jack gripped his friend; the Action Man gripped his too. As they broadcast hackery live round the world, drunken disorder ensued amongst the left, whilst the right got off with each other.

Moronic counting coupled with six cans of Stella ensured no dignity was kept. Cheyenne promised to go through C & S, whilst the Kreep said he had the democratic right to hold firm. Heathcock says it was an honest mistake to make, he filters his spam.

It turns out Caveman may not be here next year, but neither will Bottomless Gay. Perhaps they could get together with the Fabulous man, who proved himself to be just that during his campaign, as the Woman said to Jack.

It was tears for some if not all as the saviours fell one by one. Environmentalist Jo.Ke. promised a greener union but not a greener paper. Greener papers means ink on leaves, something incoherent. Communications candidates can however communicate on green leaves, or even on the internet.

But 'dewjing it' could be the way to go now, a wonderful wonderful idea. Left and right and centre all pulling at Jack. Maybe it's time to crawl in the cave with the creeps or hang out in the halls. Either way, Jack knows it will be hard on him and his friends in the year to come.

Victorious lovely Action Man wants to empower his students loves good food, but how will he get students to swallow? Do some surveys Jack says. Rasta-Marie will live on in the airwaves and in the corridors, but will the Union?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

History student from Toronto, also won endorsements from both the Indian Society and Pakistan Society.

An interesting aspect in this race was the perceived difference in political association between the four candidates, a sentiment shared by both Londesborough and Hochuli.

Londesborough, who was endorsed by a broad spectrum of left-leaning societies including Labour, the Greens and Socialists told *The Beaver*, "I think Dewji won more votes because he was the only candidate standing on the Right."

He automatically picked up all the right-wing support, whereas Hanne's, Alex's and my support was split. Unfortunately, it came down to the failure of people to understand the STV system, as I imagine most who voted for Alex or Hanne would have preferred me over Dewji, but for whatever reason did not state so on their ballots."

Hochuli admitted to *The Beaver* that he did not "push hard enough" to win society endorsements. Referring to Dewji's victory he said, "I guess that's what happens if you have three candidates who are explicitly or implicitly on the Left and only one who is on the Right. To Ali directly, I sincerely hope he doesn't get cynical or complacent now and makes a real drive all year to re-politicise this university's staid political culture."

However, Dewji believed that his "no frills" approach to policy matters played a big

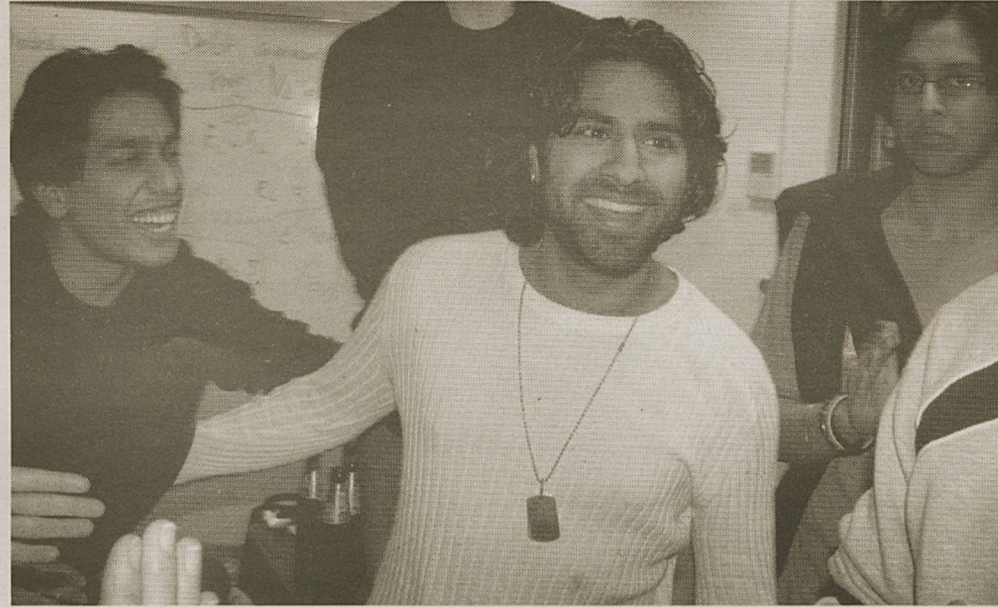
part in his victory. "I built my campaign around concrete ideas. I think that people went for my policy-orientated approach and I find it positive that such a message appealed to LSE students."

After the result was announced, Dewji singled out his campaign team for particular praise. Speaking to *The Beaver* he said, "My volunteer team made all the difference. They followed and persuaded the voters, explained to them how to vote and gave people the opportunity to question and debate my policies. I'm very, very happy, insanely tired but looking forward to it so much."

In the race for SU Treasurer, it was Joel Kenrick, current Environment and Ethics Officer who appeared the clear winner. Kenrick received 755 votes, after redistribution, beating competitor Kanan Dhru into second place with 446 votes. The other candidate Tom Groarke placed third with 253 votes.

After the extent of his majority became evident Kenrick told *The Beaver* that he was "very, very pleased. Natalie did a very good job and I will try and continue her professionalism." He continued saying he would, "bring campaigning back into the SU ... though I'll have to digest [my win] first!"

Groarke, widely regarded from the outset to be the outside candidate said he was, "gutted I didn't get more votes ... although I'm not bothered about coming third," before



A victorious Dewji is congratulated by supporters

Photograph: Magnus Aabeck

going on to lament not having narrowed the gap with Dhru. As a third-year, Groarke said it had been his "first and last campaign."

Two candidates, Doug Carlson and Richard Holden, withdrew earlier in the week. Surprisingly however their names remained on the ballot papers, and the 209 votes which they gathered between them were redistributed between Kenrick, Dhru and Groarke.

In a controversial and bitterly fought campaign for Education and Welfare Officer, it was Alexandra Vincenti who emerged the winner with 699 votes after re-distribution, 79 more than her closest rival

Dave Cole who had 620 votes.

Vincenti admitted that she was not very confident about winning while campaigning on Houghton Street. However her hopes grew once the counting began, as the piles belonging to opponent Dave Cole and herself were fairly well matched.

While clearly relieved now that the race is over, Vincenti and some of the other candidates were not always happy about the way the election was conducted.

When interviewed while campaigning on Houghton Street, Vincenti told *The Beaver*, "Certain candidates have used nasty tactics, personal jibes. In an education

and welfare race that just isn't appropriate."

Simon Bottomley - who was also competing for the position - voiced strong disapproval at the fact that current Education and Welfare Officer, Sian Errington, was publicly campaigning for Vincenti.

Errington defended her position saying, "I've worked with Alex and I think she would be good. Every student has their own view. I'm not doing this on paid time so I don't think it is inappropriate."

Krebbers wins Societies Officer; Afsar appeals

Tanya Rajapakse
News Editor

Arthur Krebbers' victory in the LSE Students' Union (SU) Societies Officer race has been challenged by opponent Shayaan Afsar. Afsar launched a formal complaint to the Constitution and Steering Committee (C&S) on Friday afternoon.

Afsar's complaint centres around the fact that his manifesto was not published in the elections manifesto booklet, which many voters refer to before making their choices. The responsibility of publishing the booklet lies with the

LSE SU Communications Officer, Chris Heathcote, to whom candidates must submit manifestos.

Afsar, a current member of the Finance and Services Committee (F&S) and Chair of Stop the War Coalition, told *The Beaver* that he has heard people did not vote for him because he did not have a manifesto and it made him appear "incompetent and uninterested in doing this job." In his complaint to C&S, Afsar highlights the fact that besides being disadvantaged by not having his manifesto published, he had lost valuable campaign time trying to contact Heathcote and LSE SU

Returning Officer, Doug Oliver.

The Beaver has learnt that a total of 13 manifestos which were sent to Heathcote ended up in the junk-mail folder of the Hotmail account that he had set up to deal with the huge file sizes. Unable to locate the missing manifestos, Heathcote attempted to obtain them from *The Beaver* election pullout. He managed to successfully get all the manifestos through this method - except for Afsar's and F&S candidate Rehan Islam's.

Islam had not submitted his manifesto to *The Beaver*, whilst Afsar's was on the centrefold of the pullout and thus caused Heathcote's computer

to crash when he attempted to retrieve it. Three other candidates in the F&S and C&S races did not have their photos published in the election manifesto booklet as they had not submitted photos to *The Beaver*, leaving Heathcote with no alternative.

However, following the discovery and rectification of the mistake, only half of Afsar's manifesto was published. The manifesto had been divided into two paragraphs, 'Aims' and 'Experience'.

Heathcote told *The Beaver* that only half was published as a result of his mistaken belief that the second paragraph was intended for the F&S position for which Afsar was also running. The updated version of the booklet was made available late Thursday morning but ran out a few hours later, resulting in old versions being circulated once more for a few hours.

Heathcote told *The Beaver*, "it was an innocent mistake that was the fault of no one." He attributed the lack of new copies of the booklet to "miscommunication" between himself and the volunteers helping with the elections. He further said he would, "strongly advise C&S to uphold the results despite the minor mistakes" as the "alternative of UGM by-election would be far less democratic."

Meanwhile Krebbers echoed Heathcote's response and went further saying that he had a clear democratic majority, having campaigned ten hours more than Afsar.

Krebbers later told *The Beaver*, "My own manifesto

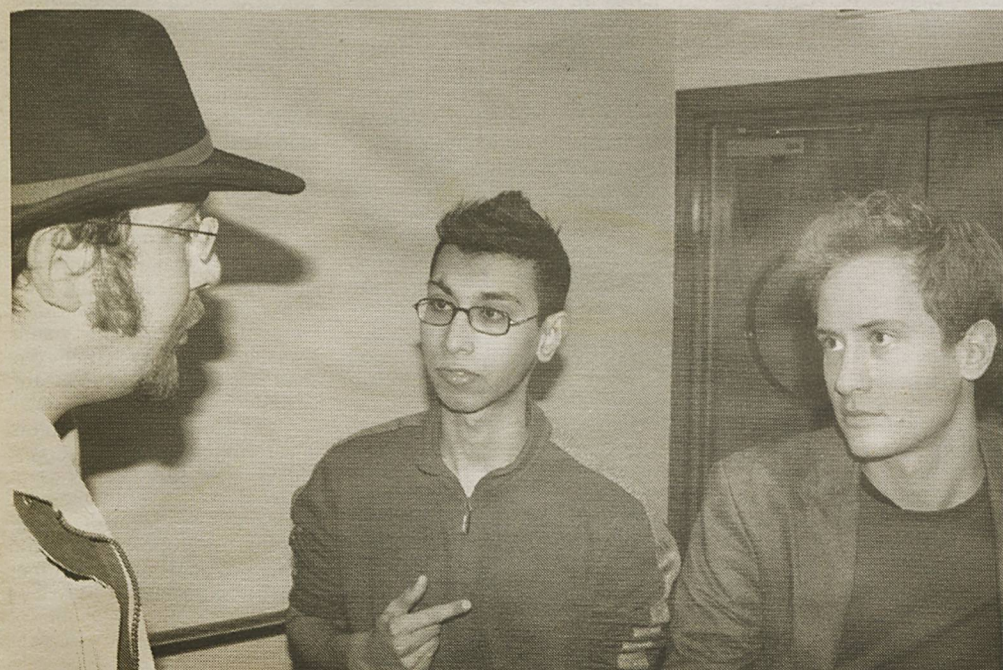
was also incorrectly published by the Communications Officer, which destroyed its layout and subtitling system, dependent on using bold font, and turned parts into an unintelligible blob of text." He also said that he thought, "the role of a manifesto booklet should not be overestimated."

The Beaver also spoke to Oliver who said the error resulted from an "honest and unintended mistake" on Heathcote's part, but noted that "it could have been more easily rectified had Chris produced the booklet by Sunday evening" as he had requested, "rather than Tuesday evening."

Oliver continued, "I think that Shayaan is justified in saying that he was disadvantaged slightly by the omission for half of the polling period of his statement on the manifesto booklet. However, elections are decided by so many factors... it would be wrong to say that without the manifesto booklet, Krebbers 100 vote majority would have been swung."

Meanwhile newly-elected C&S committee member and former Chair of C&S Simon Douglas said to *The Beaver*: "I personally don't believe Shayaan would have won the election, even if his manifesto had been correctly printed from the start of polling. However, there is no qualitative method of proving this, and the mistakes made by Chris Heathcote certainly made the election unfair."

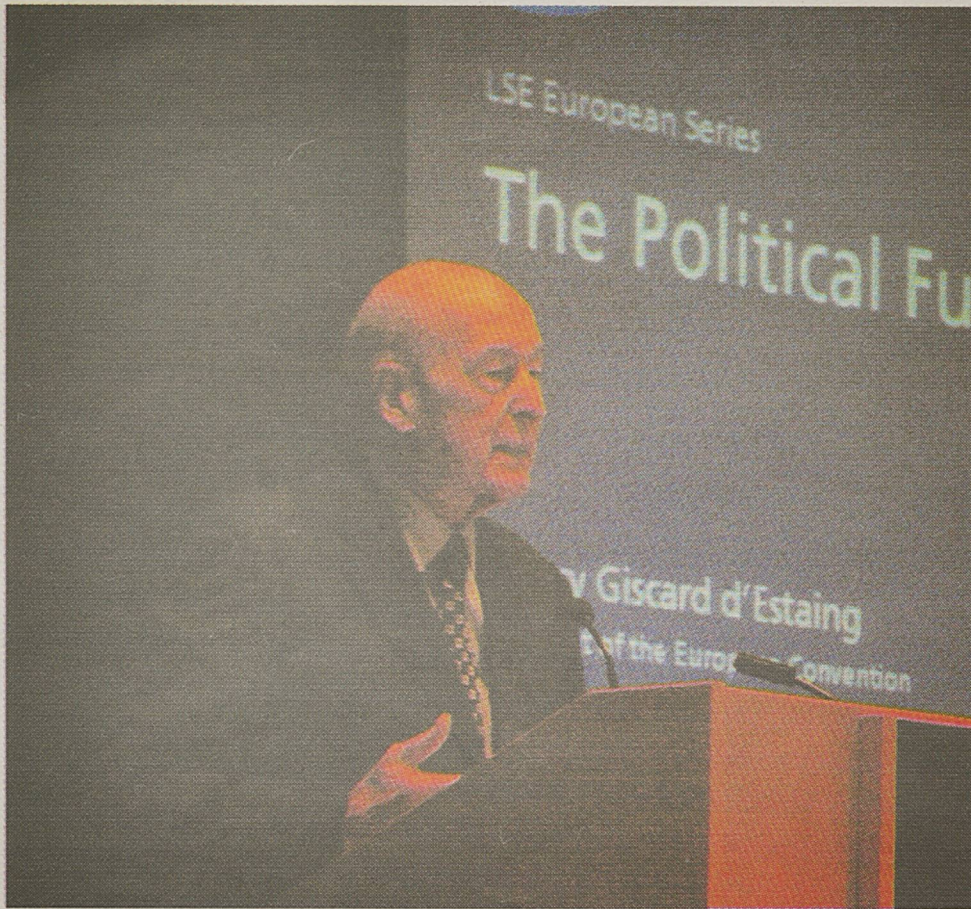
"It's these two issues that C&S will have to weigh-up when considering whether to allow a UGM by-election for the Societies post."



Afsar (centre) consults with Dave Cole (right) and James Caspell

Photograph: Magnus Aabeck

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing addresses the Old Theatre



Former French President Giscard d'Estaing

Photograph: So Yeun Lim

Andy Hallett

In one of the most widely-anticipated visits the LSE has enjoyed this year, former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing made a speech entitled "The Political Future of Europe" to a packed Old Theatre last Tuesday evening.

Giscard d'Estaing, or "VGE" as he is known in France, made a generally well-received speech in flawless English which was peppered with droll asides and rhetorical flourishes, greatly amusing an audience which included former Foreign Secretary Lord Hurd and former Europe Minister Denis MacShane.

He was speaking in his capacity as President of the European Convention, the body which drew up the European Constitution, famously rejected by his own country and Holland, in a referendum last year.

Giscard d'Estaing took up a controversial point of view in the speech by repeatedly defending the constitution which has been ratified by 14 out of 25 member states. He described the constitution as the essential next stage in the

European Union's (EU) evolution.

He claimed that France's 'no' vote was "a mistake which will have to be rectified." Later on, in a question and answer session, he added that his fellow citizens were "confused" by the long text, suggesting they were actually in favour of the constitution but wished to defeat the government.

Giscard d'Estaing, with the help of the French-speaking Howard Davies who was chairing the talk, also spoke repeatedly of the UK and its role in Europe. He joked that "it would be easier" if the UK was not in the EU, and later condemned the UK-favoured policy of different levels of membership saying it could dissolve the EU if it went too far.

Regarding the exact role of Brussels, Giscard d'Estaing expressed his wish that European institutions should "move from the what to the how", with the caveat that the EU must provide an institutional framework so that common policies could be pursued at the European level.

One point which stood out in the 80-year old's speech was that politicians should not wait for Europeans to "love

Europe before we reform it", arguing that the EU, in order to gain popular support, needs to safeguard more effectively our identity and role as 21st century Europeans. He also touched on foreign policy, arguing for no obsession with the US, while undertaking a coded attack on events like the invasion of Iraq by claiming that the EU has "more respect for international law" than the United States, to much laughter from the largely Anglo-French audience.

However, not all of those present agreed with the former French president. *The Beaver* was seated next to Denis MacShane, who whispered "bollocks" after one of Giscard d'Estaing's observations about the EU. MacShane later told *The Beaver* that Giscard d'Estaing was "not a fairy prince [who can] kiss [the European constitution] back to life." Lord Hurd, speaking in a personal capacity, lauded Giscard d'Estaing as a "stimulating speaker" but claimed the EU's problem was that its institutions are defective and argued that the real tasks the EU must face - chiefly reform - needed to be made sense of first.

New C&S committee announced but F&S hangs in the balance

Laura Deck
Senior Reporter

The elections for the Constitution and Steering Committee (C&S) and Finance and Services Committee (F&S) encountered several glitches during the balloting process. Although C&S and F&S were planned to be counted early in the evening of 2nd March, a necessary recount delayed election results.

Some voters entered blanks on the ballots which caused problems with the electronic count, while those organising the votes were putting all the ballots in one pile - mixing ballots that had been counted with ones that had

not. To prevent ballots from being counted twice, a recount was held on 3rd March.

The number of candidates competing for seven spots on C&S dropped from fifteen to twelve, including one withdrawn candidate, Fadhil Bakeer-Markar, who was elected to the position of LSE Students' Union International Students Officer.

The final results for C&S included three members of the current C&S committee, Simon Douglas, Carys Morgan, and Jefferson Courtney. The remaining four positions on C&S went to Ali Alobaidi, James Kanabar, Ranil Jayawardena, and James Ketteringham.

During the count Douglas told *The Beaver* that he had

run essentially on his previous experience and did not engage in active campaigning. He admitted he "printed flyers and never handed them out." He also acknowledged how seriously the candidates took the campaign and elections, and called it a "credit to the election."

Morgan, as the only female candidate for C&S, had commented earlier in the week that "it would be sad to see a return to a difficult male dominated committee" and she expressed doubt about her election chances during the evening of 2nd March. She said she would "be happy" if elected to C&S but if not she would "probably try again...not just for the sake of getting elected but because I am interested in

student politics and want to help."

Candidates for C&S campaigned to varying degrees, but most candidates appeared to have enjoyed their election experiences.

James Ketteringham said that he "enjoyed wearing the red T-shirt and hat" in his street campaign and enjoyed "meeting a lot of new people." After seeing some of the votes on 2nd March Ketteringham revealed some doubt about his chances of being elected, while he expressed confidence that his colleague Simon Douglas would be successful.

Thirteen candidates competed for the four available spots on the F&S committee. However due to complications arising as a result of the Societies Officer race two different sets of elected candidates were announced.

Both Arthur Krebbers and Shayaan Afsar contested for places on F&S but due to Afsar's appeal against Krebbers' win in the Societies race Returning Officer Doug Oliver has only issued two provisional sets of winners. In the event that Afsar's appeal is successful and he is elected as the LSE SU Societies Officer the members of F&S will consist of Arthur Krebbers, Quratil Am Zainul, Megan Gaventa and Daisy O'Brien. If Krebbers remains as Societies Officer the committee will be Verity Ratcliffe, Daisy O'Brien, Megan Gaventa and Shayaan Afsar.

Gaventa reported that she was "pleased there are so many female candidates - this is a big improvement on previous years, and I hope this continues in future elections." Over half of the candidates running for F&S were female, a sharp contrast to the C&S elections.

Lecturers' strike

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Husbands also said, "action at LSE is intended to push the School, with other institutions, to put pressure on the UECA to negotiate with the trade unions for a mutually acceptable pay settlement."

However, industrial action has not found widespread support from lecturers and teaching staff at LSE. While many academics at the School support the strike and its aims, others have chosen not to get involved out of principle or simply due to pragmatic reasons.

Dr Thorsten Rheinlander from the Statistics Department at LSE commented that, "a strike is OK [where] one has the perception that working conditions are rather miserable. As this is not the case for me, I see no reason to participate in this sort of industrial action."

Dr Peter Wilson, a lecturer in the International Relations Department, echoed this sentiment saying that he "supports the strike but will not be taking action" because "LSE is a very good and fair employer." He continued, "I know the school has done as much as possible to offer staff attractive salaries." Wilson did however have serious reservations about the higher education sector adding, "the sector as a whole has not been fair to its employees."

In response to questions about the strike an LSE spokesperson told *The Beaver*, "The School regrets that the AUT nationally has decided to take industrial action rather than pursue negotiations through the normal channels."

The School stressed the "adverse impact on students" that this was likely to have, adding that they are "commit-

ting substantial resources to improving pay" which in some areas will "exceed the AUT's requests."

In a press release the General Secretary of the AUT, Sally Hunt, stated, "it is quite clear that the employers are in a very good position to be able to meet our pay claim." She also blamed the universities for not wanting to "hold unconditional talks with the unions" adding "they have had months to stop this."

The LSE Students' Union (SU) had - at the time of going to press - not commented on the strike action, neither issuing their view on the issue nor providing information for students concerned about how the strike will affect their studies.

In contrast, Gaston Dolle - President of the University of Bristol Union (UBU) - condemned the strike action, which is more widespread at Bristol University than at LSE.

A statement on Bristol SU's website condemns the AUT's "method of targeting student's lectures and assessments" instead of targeting "research and administrative work." It adds a commitment to put pressure on the unions involved "to resolve their pay disputes before targeting students at their most vulnerable time of the academic year." However the UBU "believes that lecturers nationwide are chronically underpaid."

The dispute looks set to be a continuing concern for the higher education unions at a national level. The likely outcome of the action and whether disruption to students will continue is, for the time being unclear.



C & S 'regular' Simon Douglas re-elected

Photograph: Marta Skundric

Sabb Review 05-6: Heathcote and Errington



Heathcote and Errington received 'varied reviews'

Photograph: Laleh Kazemi-Veisari

Tanya Rajapakse
News Editor

LSE Students' Union (SU) Communication Officer, Chris Heathcote, and SU Education and Welfare Officer, Sian Errington, received varied reviews regarding their per-

formance over the past year.

Following *The Beaver's* review of General Secretary Rishi Madlani and Treasurer Natalie Black last week, prominent and active SU members were questioned on Heathcote and Errington.

Heathcote's year was marred by the splinter Barrel Run to King's College in which

he took part, resulting in a motion of censure being brought against him.

However, when asked by *The Beaver* about his accomplishments over the year, Heathcote - who pledged to raise advertising revenue, promote LSE students to the wider world, reinvent the website and conduct high-profile

student-orientated campaigns - said, "Overall, I am very pleased with how this year has gone. I feel that I have made the Communications role much more visible and expanded the remit to show what can be done with the role."

He also listed a range of accomplishments including improving the Global e-mail, raising extra advertising revenue for the SU and structuring the SU website.

In a statement to *The Beaver* he elaborated further,

"This year I have also massively developed the Global Email from a resource that was rarely used and rarely read to a weekly e-newsletter, which judging by the hundreds of replies we get from appeals on it, has become very useful to students and I know have to turn people away when they ask for mentions on it.

"I have also spent many hours working on the structure and content of the website." He noted that as a result the website now receives over a 1000 hits per day.

He described his involvement in campaigns by saying, "I have used the campaign budget to invest in promotional material for our weeks and worked with the Officers such as the Women's and Environment and Ethics Officers to bring their campaigns to students."

He mentioned that he was "particularly proud" of Raising and Giving (RAG)

week, of which he served as Chair.

Although Heathcote, like Madlani and Black, was praised by his fellow representatives his participation in the splinter Run was raised by prominent Union member Azan Marwah who said, "In his promise to promote the LSE student body, Chris failed by participating in a riot that soiled the reputation of the SU and the LSE."

Green Party Co-Chair James Caspell meanwhile stated that whilst he condemned many of Heathcote's policies "such as oil companies advertising with the Union" he must "congratulate him for co-ordinating the most visible and successful RAG week in my time here."

When asked by *The Beaver* to describe her achievements over the year, Errington - whose campaign pledges were to cap international and post-graduate fees, provide exam feedback and resits, ensure the LSE develops a mental health policy and guarantee more budget hall places - noted that regarding fees the LSE had not "risen them above inflation."

She discussed her work on feedback and resists suggesting that following an SU submission to the Quality Assurance Audit (QAA) and talks with LSE Deputy Director Tim Murphy, next year's Sabbatical officers would be able to deliver on the promise.

Errington also stated, "The LSE now has an Advisor on Mental Health and Well-being who is developing a mental health policy," and continued, "I have also Chaired the sub-group which is looking at what support the School can provide to students who are looking for cheap accommodation in the private sector. Out of this group recommendations are going to be made which will hopefully be adopted by the School."

Errington received the greatest criticism from Marwah. "Sadly, Sian has failed in nearly all of these respects," he said with reference to her election promises. However, she received a tribute from International Students' Officer Farhan Islam who said, "[Sian] is one of the reasons that I got involved with SU politics." Students with Disabilities Officer, Kanishka Aubeelack also praised Errington calling her "experienced and dedicated."

Overall Black seems to have fared best, with relatively few complaints against her being raised by those who were questioned. Black is also widely regarded to be the Sabbatical Officer who has best accomplished her election promises.

Most of those questioned by *The Beaver* especially commended the Sabbatical Officers for their handling of the AU Barrel incident.

Greek Minister unveils new post at School

Chris Lam
News Editor

The Greek Minister of Economy and Finance Professor George Alogoskoufis, visited the LSE on Friday to announce a new academic post with the Hellenic Observatory at the School.

The post, funded by the Greek government will aim to boost the Observatory's research on Greece's economic relations within south east Europe. The new Research Fellow post will allow an experienced academic to spend time at the Observatory producing research for up to

one year.

Professor Alogoskoufis is an alumnus of LSE. He obtained an MSc in Economics in 1978 and a PhD in Economics in 1981 and holds a Chair in Economics at the Athens University of Economics and Business.

Professor Kevin Featherstone, director of the Hellenic Observatory, said: "This is a timely boost for LSE's focus on south east Europe: it gives us greater specialisation in an area of economic policy of increasing relevance to the European Union as a whole.

"Coming after the announcement of a fellowship funded by the National Bank of Greece, the new Chair in Contemporary Turkish

Studies, and the specialist expertise of colleagues elsewhere in the School, this enables us to make a valuable contribution to relevant policy debates."

Director of the LSE Howard Davies said he will welcome Professor Alogoskoufis: "LSE's links with Greece are long-established: this post will boost them further.

"The debate to come about the future of the EU will inevitably focus on Europe's Eastern frontiers. This post will help us to contribute to that debate. We are most grateful to Mr Alogoskoufis and the Greek government for making it possible."



Professor George Alogoskoufis (left) talks to Sir Howard Davies Photograph: Dimitris Kallergis



Tariq Ramadan

Photograph: Chris Colvin

THE NAKED PUNCH SOCIETY AND ISLAMIC SOCIETY HELD "THE FUTURE OF ISLAM: POSSIBLE PATHS" ON 3RD MARCH FEATURING TARIQ RAMADAN

Banking is No.1 career for LSE grads

Saabira Chaudhuri
Senior Reporter

A recent survey conducted by *The Times* newspaper on LSE graduates cited LSE as "one of the UK's most successful higher education institutions." The school placed fourth in the latest edition of 'The Times Good University Guide'.

The survey, entitled 'Where next for... LSE graduates', explained that last year 60 percent of LSE graduates expected to start a job straight after university. A quarter intended to continue studying for a Masters degree or PhD and just 15 percent planned to take

time away to travel or were undecided about their future.

Although half of LSE's students are from overseas, the survey reveals that many hope to find jobs in London. There appears to be a particular bias amongst LSE graduates towards investment banks, consulting agencies and accounting firms. Data show that almost 40 percent of LSE's 2005 graduates applied for positions in investment banking, a quarter approached the top accountancy firms and a fifth wanted to work in consulting.

Apart from revealing an apparent bias towards certain sectors, the survey also demonstrated that LSE graduates are highly ambitious.

"Financial expectations were high - graduates expected to start work on an average of £23,400 and to be earning almost £60,000 within five years."

For those LSE students who are not interested in a career in consulting or finance it is heartening to know that Fiona Sandford, Director of the School's Careers Service disagrees with much of the survey. "As always, this survey tells only part of the story. Employers from all sectors value LSE students for academic excellence, for their career focus and engagement with extra-curricular activities. The richness of the work that student societies offer in terms of giving students the

opportunity to develop employability skills is seen very positively by recruiters."

The Times survey lists the top ten employers for LSE finalists as PricewaterhouseCoopers, Goldman Sachs, KPMG, McKinsey & Co, Ernst & Young, JP Morgan, Clifford Chance, Linklaters, Merrill Lynch and Citigroup respectively. Fiona Sandford told *The Beaver* that she disagrees with the list. "While it is certainly true that LSE is heavily targeted by the Investment Banks, when we look at actual destinations, we find that organisations like the UN, the European Commission and the Bank of England all feature in the top 15 destinations."

AND THE WINNER IS...

Candid[ate] Progressives in power

Camera

Philip Hutchinson explains why the real winner was the Media Group



Philip Hutchinson

There was only ever going to be one sure winner: the Media Group. During the elections this year, though you may not have noticed it, The Beaver, LooSE TV and PuLSEfm demonstrated their capacity for a qualitatively different kind of coverage. Why has this year been such a quantum leap from previous years? Allow me to explain.

LooSE TV recorded 30-second statements from each candidate (at least, all those who were interested). These were available on the website, so potential voters could sit in the comfort of their own home and hear what each of the candidates stood for. Combined with the manifestos printed in The Beaver, students could associate the names on the ballot paper with real people.

The count night itself was a spectacular demonstration of cooperation within the Media Group. For those of you who missed our live video stream of the count, we were broadcasting from a studio in the count room. Not only did this look fantastic, but it allowed us to get reaction and comment directly from those involved in the count.

Before the polling days, PuLSEfm and LooSE TV held hustings for the sabbatical candidates in the new theatre. Some last minute technical difficulties notwithstanding, the event was a success and for the first time, we were able to ask questions specifically to each candidate. This is a huge step forward, allowing scrutiny of the public record of each contender.

With this opportunity comes the responsibility of impartiality. In a year when two candidates in the sabbatical race had been heavily involved in the media group, it has been vital that we have been demonstrably unbiased. That we have shown our responsibility in this regard allows us to push for the next crucial move: to establish a debate between the candidates. Only then can they get right down to the discussing their differences, and the detail of policy. Plus, it

makes for great viewing...

If we must change the constitution to allow debates between candidates, so be it. If we must change the constitution to allow us, the voters, to examine the record, the personality and the abilities of the candidates, then so be it. The Media Group this year has shown the maturity and technical ability to conduct, with considerable style, such election coverage.

The most significant result of the expansion of the Media Group this year has been to increase accountability. The LooSE TV camera always watching, the PuLSEfm microphone always listening, ink from The Beaver pen always flowing. These are the reasons that those who seek office cannot backtrack on their promises to the student body. Notice, for instance, the 'sabbatical reviews' conducted by The Beaver, comparing the results after nearly a year in office, with the election pledges of the officers of the union.

This year, the hacks have had to sit up and take notice – the camera never lies. The memory of the Media Group Files is longer even than the most committed UGM-goer. Never again will policies passed by The Union be lost and forgotten about. Never again will candidates brazenly be able to claim to stand for one thing, yet have an entirely different track record.

None of the PuLSEfm and LooSE TV events had been publicised – it was important this year to prove that we could actually pull off all of these innovative events before attracting a mass audience. Next year, hustings will be packed with normal people looking for an accessible way in to student politics, and people will be clamouring to be a pundit on our election night broadcast. Just as in the real world, the media is taking the lead in bringing politics to the people.

Watch out for the souvenir DVD of the count night, the UGMs and the debates. It might be a good idea for the winners to buy a copy, just to remind themselves of their commitments when they take office...

ONLINE

Elections online @ www.loosetv.co.uk

Sian Errington reflects on the shift from the Right to Left within the SU

The election results this year can't be seen easily in terms of straight 'left versus right' victories or losses. However, I would argue that the Left should be satisfied with the results considering attempts made from across the political spectrum to split and divide the progressive alliance that was formed in previous years to defeat the former Conservative dominance of the SU. There was also a defeat of those who tried to build unprincipled alliances of sections of the 'Left' and 'Right', most aptly illustrated by a leading Liberal Democrat urging support for a hard-right candidate for anti-racism officer, who argued people should stop focussing on such 'irrelevancies' as Islamophobia and the far-right!

On the broad left of the political spectrum, candidates who stuck to the core principles on which previous victories in elections and policy were founded, such as prioritising equality campaigns and fighting against fee-rises, performed better. Those who appeared to be primarily interested in shifting the focus away from people's stance on these important issues to who could make the most noise, performed worse. It was also notable that candidates who

spent more time throughout the year involved in constitutional manoeuvring and attempts to form 'deals', rather than raising awareness on progressive political issues, saw their plans fall apart when it came to actually having to win broader support during the campaign. The success of candidates such as Shanela (anti-racism) and Zoe (women's) was due to the fact that through running campaigns based on serious and progressive issues that students could relate to, they were able to extend their support beyond the usual core vote.

There are then, a number of positive results. With the continued rise of Islamophobia throughout much of the press, it is testament to the impact of anti-racism campaigning and the progressive instincts of many, that Muslim representation was upheld. It was good that a candidate with a focus on key issues won International Students' Officer, and the increased interest in the race. I am sure the new Environment and Ethics and Residences Officers will do great jobs, and it is also welcome that there are now 6 women on the SU Executive. The strong showing of Shayaan Afsar, chair of the Stop the War

Coalition and seen as an 'outsider' by many in the election for Societies' Officer, whatever the final result, demonstrated that people can build support on the basis of principled activity and ideas, rather than 'networking' and self-promotion. More generally, the involvement on the next Executive of people who have been involved with campaigns such as the Student Assembly Against Racism, where the best elements of the Left/centre-left have worked closely with students from different perspectives for common ends, means there is a real chance of prioritising the correct issues in the year ahead.

I end with a word on the race to be my successor as Education and Welfare Officer, won by Alexandra Vincenti. Credit must go to Alex and her campaign for gaining such a good vote, when many people tried to discredit her. I personally spent holiday time campaigning for various candidates who I felt would best represent students, including Alex, and was subject to being called a 'bitch' by a campaigner for a rival candidate who said they were prioritising equality! It was also worrying that a minority of people generally towards the Left didn't back Alex, a progressive Womens Officer for the last

two years. Their support for a candidate who while at the LSE has ran a right-winger's campaign for General Secretary, publicly argued for higher fees, and supported the war on Afghanistan, suggest priorities that need re-considering. She was however backed by the new Womens, Anti-Racism and International officers, which should now enable the union to build effective, inclusive campaigns.

All in all then, despite some concerns, I am happy with the union as I leave the LSE. Certainly if you had told me three and half years ago when the Conservatives still dominated, that their union representation would be nearly nothing, I would have been delighted. With an important year ahead, in which we may well see the government divert resources to further military adventures whilst arguing there is a financial need for further fee rises in higher education, I am confident that there are now many people at the heart of the union who will not let egos and career ambitions get in the way of campaigning on the range of issues many LSE students care passionately about.

The challenge ahead



LSE SU Sabbatical Chris Heathcote on the highs and lows of the Union

So another year of elections over and in my opinion the best yet. Record turnout, record number of candidates, many more women and international students elected and all in a mostly cordial environment given the competitiveness. This year was easily the most professional elections we've seen and with no joke candidates, more Hustings than ever, I think a number of the races got real debates going about the future of the Union, but what now for those elected?

Despite the inevitable claims and counter claims from the left and right about how victory was theirs, this year's lot seem more sensible, more pragmatic, more centrist and more normal than ever before. Unlike previous years none of

the winners got in solely by pandering to one block or another – they all had to brave the sometimes snowy Houghton Street and talk to real students. Those that tried to hide behind vested interests or thought campaigning was beneath them found themselves beaten to first place.

But as gruelling as the elections are, the cliché about the hard work starting now is certainly true. The LSE Students' Union is surely one of the best in the world; the only Union with a weekly General Meeting, one of the only ones with a totally independent media group, with probably the most diverse electorate in the world and all on a campus in the heart of an incredible city like

London. Nowhere else will elected students wield so much influence with University authorities, nowhere else will they have the same legitimacy from such contested elections, nowhere else will they have the opportunity to make a real difference to the experience of fellow students. But equally, nowhere else will they scrutinized so thoroughly, nowhere else will so much be expected from them with so few resources. Being a student officer at LSE is a privilege and an opportunity, but hard and sometimes unrewarding work.

I'm proud of what has been achieved this year in opening up and professionalizing the Union to get more people involved and deliver results for LSE students. But the challenge for next year's Sabbatical and part-time Officers will be to take that further and do yet more with less and less.

There will be serious developments in the Higher Education sector with the dawning of top-up fees for UK students and for the student movement as a whole as the NUS battles to control its debt by charging students for membership cards and as the University of London battles for its survival. At LSE, more

halls will come online, but will the cost frighten off poorer students and how will the School ensure that it does not price itself out of the market by ripping international students off so much that they go elsewhere? For the Union too there will be challenges, foremost over where we will be housed as our current buildings are demolished in the coming years. The move could be an opportunity to expand our services and solve long-overdue problems such as accessibility. But if managed badly, it could see the Union sidelined and short-changed. It is to neglect such long-term challenges by getting bogged down with the perennial problems and infighting.

And that's the note I want to finish on; the LSE Students' Union is a fantastic place to be a student officer and if you want political experience, I'd say it's second to none. But I hope the new Exec will also remember that are elected to do a job; a job that done properly can make a real difference. My advice is; enjoy the UGM for what it is, don't listen too much to the armchair critics who will always snipe from the sidelines and never contribute anything and stay in touch with real students, after all, you're there to represent them, not just the ones who voted for you.

Too much democracy?

Andy Yeoh argues that the LSE SU is overdosing on democracy

Andy Yeoh



Carnival time. Last term it was yours truly, sat behind the ballot box, dealing democracy. I was even found in these pages, extolling the virtues of our union's political process to anyone who cared to read. Maybe it was the camaraderie, the alluring softness of Dave Cole's hat or just the fatigue, because since then I've done some thinking and have come to some very different conclusions.

As I sat in a corner of the quad, this week, pouring over a copy of the manifesto, I began to wonder how on Earth I was going to choose. True I had my opinions, but with so many contestants, the small amount of text presented in front of me became very important. It was uninspiring to say the least. Few of the candidates seemed to have anything unique or interesting to say. Of course there was some concrete stuff but most simply claimed to be open and accountable - like it was an unexpected extra. A free, fair, equal, inclusive and better union? Who, exactly, is against that?

Perhaps the blurbs were a poor indication of the candidate, but you can't read between the lines when there are so few to begin with and soon, I felt my pen drift towards the names of people I knew. Then a thought hit me. If I was choosing this way, what about those who clearly weren't regarding the large, untouched piles of manifestoes sat in the Quad? Truthfully, how were any of us making our choices?

Of course I'm not saying these were the only methods of voting - I saw some people just filling the numbers in randomly - but the situation is hardly conducive to the democracy we so laud. The problem is intertwined with other current debates: Difficulty in getting freshers involved, low voter turnout and the viability of our weekly UGM. Could it be that a greater, underlying force is at work? Could it be there is too much democracy at the LSE?

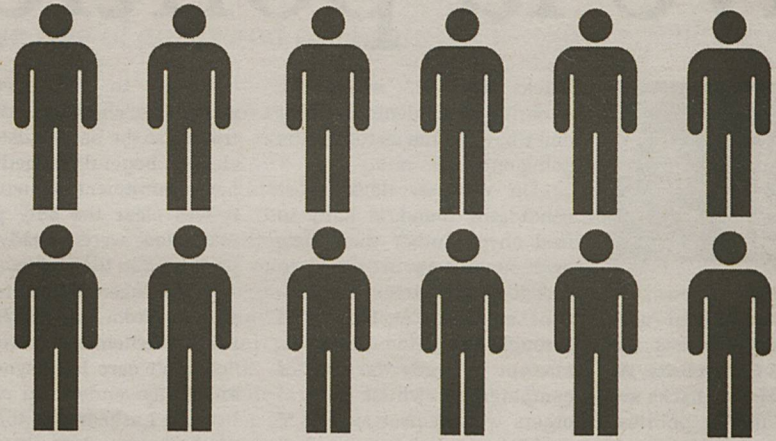
The LSE SU is an unfortunate size: too large to simply guide itself and too small, it seems, for any meaningful democratic process. Although we do need leadership and representation, there are only seven and a half thousand of us and well over half of those couldn't care less about the whole situation; most are only here for a year and they certainly didn't come for the hustings.

Last term less than a quarter of all of us voted. With so few people actually participating and handfuls of votes deciding the winners, elections at LSE have become glorified popularity contests, continually dominated by a clique of the same individuals - the so-called "hacks" - their friends and their facebook profiles.

What's the point of all this polling? The purpose of the SU is surely to represent student interests, desires and needs. Do we really need forty positions elected over two terms to do the job? Why not just have one election once a year for a small executive body, add a couple big UGM's each term, then leave them to just get on with it.

The critics may gesticulate wildly. Power from the people! What of democratic accountability? What of representation?

Firstly, believing SU politics so important that we must impose our democratic right at every avenue must constitute mild narcissism. Some people run for these positions without the slightest idea of what they actually have to do. Even at the higher levels does it really matter who gets in? We will still have our degree to work on. We will still have our lessons and lectures, exams and deadlines. Has anybody thought that per-



haps the reason all those sorry, apathetic students don't think that the SU can seriously affect their lives is because it can't? Lest we forget, we're a Student Union.

Secondly anyone who seriously believes our current representatives are truly, democratically accountable, that the UGM reports are full on vital or that the hour of abuse every week has a purpose, is suffering from delusions. Democratic representation? Our last general secretary won with 750 votes. 10% isn't a mandate; it's barely a discount. 2.5% of the Union turned up at the UGM (that's just about quorate) to re-elect C&S. It's here and now that we have a bunch of un-representational, title-hungry, megalomaniacs who, once elected, do exactly the same stuff as the last lot, so what do we stand to lose? Plus the joke is that, with all this "democratic accountability", they're not being allowed to do their job. Does it seem right that SU be forced to undermine its own legal counsel - C&S who were, in fact, elected by the whole union - one random week, on the childish whim of a handful of the AU?

Yes the solution of abandoning all these elections and meetings seems drastic and will probably upset the traditionalists, who proudly tell us that we run the last weekly UGM in the country, but keeping tradition for tradition's sake is crazy. We are perpetuating an anomaly that is

regarded with scarcely concealed mirth at other universities who, by the way, get on just fine without all this "democracy", thank you very much.

Think of it as a kind of third way. We could have students and politics simply by separating one from the other: A concise, efficient student executive, with general meetings certainly, but dealing with student issues exclusively, plus, for the active amongst us, a weekly student political debate.

Alas, change to our system is unlikely. Those who's CVs it augments love it so. It's unlikely this article will go down well. I suppose it's a good job I have no intention of ever running for anything.

Dont just Dewji it, do it

ELAINE LONDESBOROUGH



"The left won really, we were just too stupid!" Is reportedly what I was drunkenly shouting at the count on Thursday when I heard the results of the Comms race. Not the most eloquent utterance to have passed through these lips, but it does hold some truth.

Although I would not like to pigeon hole my opponents in the Comms race, I think it is safe to assume that Mr Dewji fell to the right of all of us. Hanne, Alex and myself all ran on the ticket of increasing the campaigning function of the Union and involving more students.

Campaigning was high on the agenda of candidates and of the electorate, and yet the only candidate not talking about campaigning won the role.

When the position was created, there was debate over whether it should be called Campaigning and Communications. Clearly, campaigning was seen as something that should be included in the job profile. Indeed, a major part of the description of Comms in the Codes of Practice is based around supporting student campaigns.

Our first Comms Officer, Mr Khurshid 'K' Faizullaev, was widely recognised to be quite incompetent at most areas of the job, and so failed

to really carve out a place for Comms in our union. Certainly the campaigning function was totally ignored, seen as dispensable in the time of 'students not politics.'

Then there came Chris Heathcote, who has done a lot to increase the visibility of the role, but again has failed to reinvigorate the ability of this union to make its voice heard. He has been mandated once or twice to put out press releases or letters, but campaigns have failed to go any further than this.

So now what for Comms? Dewji's campaign slogan was 'Comms can be something more', and he ran on a platform of supporting successful societies more; increasing the money raised in RAG week by holding a few, large events; and increasing the listener-ship of PuLSE. What struck me most was the lack of importance Dewji placed on campaigns and student involvement in the union.

Obviously, Dewji was the popular choice in this cross-campus ballot, and his ideas won through. I wish him the best of luck, but also hope he has listened to the concerns of the audiences at hustings and the ideas of some of his opponents. I fear that if this Comms Officer, like the last two, fails to draw attention to student campaigns, that part

of the job will be lost, only to be taken on ad hoc by members of the exec who happen to have the passion to take campaigning forward.

Three campaigns have struck my attention in the last few months that will need to be carried forward and supported by the next Comms Officer; coalition 2010, organised by NUS and fighting to keep the cap on top-up-fees; the living wage campaign, launched by thoughtful students on campus who care about the welfare and pay of our contract cleaners; and free prescription charges for students, brought to the UGM by Alexandra Vincenti, an issue which will affect many students struggling on a low income.

So what can you do if you don't want a repeat of the last two years? The simple fact is that everything I was talking about in my manifesto can be achieved through the rest of the exec, and through mandating Dewji at the UGM to send out press releases, organise online petitions and advertise campaigns to students.

All is not lost, the Comms Officer might just need a little push in the right direction from time to time. He's here to work for you and the Union, don't forget that, make him work.

A part time revolution

JAMES CASPELL



With the ideological hues of green and red running through the key positions of next year's Executive Committee, the prospects for a more inclusive, campaigning and progressive Union look bright.

As individuals, the part-time executive in particular is abundant with fresh ideas, enthusiasm and progressive principles following in the tradition of the LSE of old. The challenge now is for the Executive to collectively embrace their mandate for positive change, rather than coast along with the status quo in the fashion of past Executives.

It is highly disappointing for the left to lose some of its leading lights: Dave Cole, Hanne Thornam and Elaine Londesborough have each made positive and active changes to improve the lot of students at LSE, but the winner-takes-all nature of representative democracy means that there can only be one victor for each position.

However, the election of Joel Kenrick as Treasurer marks a return of campaigning and progressive politics to the most influential sabbatical position in terms of funding and co-ordinating the political direction of Union services.

Under Joel's able stewardship, the part-time executive

will be given the resources and support to campaign for the changes they want, such as more sustainable and affordable halls and facilities, and generally a more campaigning Union vis-à-vis the School and beyond. With the election of so many enthusiastic and progressive first and second years, students can anticipate open and active support for social and environmental justice in a Union that is committed to inclusivity and diversity.

For example, Shanela Haque brings to Anti-Racism Officer a track record of active campaigning and will no doubt further the great work of Farhan Islam and Raihan Alfaradhi before her.

International students are to be represented by Fadhil Markar whose boundless enthusiasm and wealth of ideas will serve an oft-neglected position well, whilst he also encapsulates the approachability of many of the Executive's new intake.

In Louise Robinson the Union has a Residences Officer who is not afraid to speak out and tell it like it is. Too many people have obtained Union positions and shied away from making positive changes merely because it involves confronting the School's management. I have no doubt that in Louise, the

Union has found a candidate who will actively work to improve the experience of students in halls, whilst fighting to make them more affordable and sustainable in the process.

Aled Fisher is again highly enthusiastic and principled, and will continue to make excellent progress, building on Joel's achievement of making LSE the most sustainable and ethical university in London. There is more to be done however, and Aled will fight for a more ethical and active campus, mirroring the great strides that the LSESU Green Party has made since its foundation last year.

Admittedly, the compliance of the paid sabbatical officers will be crucial and the part-time executive alone cannot carry the banner of progress.

Will Dewji focus his energies into making positive differences for our Union, or simply play devil's advocate to potentially progressive changes? Will Tam carry out what are on a paper an excellent raft of policies? Will Vincenti improve mental health provision for students? Only time will tell and it is up to students to hold the Executive to account and make sure that the policies which we have voted for come into fruition.

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Vive la politique?

Fatima Manji



“LSE is the world's most political university!” boasts the LSE SU website. At UGMs, we hacks are all so proud of our political enthusiasm and demonstration of student democracy. With post-election fever, every political affiliation will now be raving on about how through our (comparatively) high voter turnout, students have demonstrated they want their Union to follow a particular direction. Certainly with the incredible amount of campaigning and the perseverance of candidates in acosting potential voters on Houghton Street, most students would find it hard to be completely unaware of the elections. Yet can SU elections truly claim to be little more than one big

'hacks festival,' when the majority of students actually don't have a clue as to what is going on?!

On election days, most candidates found it hard to find anyone other than their own supporters or rivals to talk to on the street. One student even ran at top speed through Houghton Street in attempt to evade the mob of campaigners, whilst several others walked past stating “I couldn't care less,” when asked if they had voted. I personally spent 20 minutes with Azan Marwah, Aled Fisher and James ‘J-Dog’ Caspell; (the latter of whom even resorted to rap) in trying to convince one student to vote, only to discover later he was a student at Oxford rather than LSE!

During the Bankside hustings, candidates found themselves addressing an audience mainly comprised of other candidates and their campaign teams. Of the students not directly linked to any campaign team, there were possibly three who were actually

listening to the speeches, rather than chatting with their friends at the bar. Whilst every election hopeful pledged his or her commitment to inclusion, it was clear the only people interested, were already fully partaking in the Union.

As an agent, I tried to rally support from various friends many of whom suffer from the “couldn't care less” syndrome and only ended up voting because I asked them to. Some of these went into the Quad, began desperately looking through the ballot paper for my name and emerged looking rather confused when they couldn't find it asking me: “What were you running for again?” I met one friend over the weekend who asked me if I had won and insisted he had voted for me! Such random anecdotes, aside of being mildly humorous illustrate the point that a large mass of students at the LSE are unaware of what is happening in their Union and more worryingly actually don't care.

So what then can be done

to address this problem of apathy? The problem is not a new one and is suffered by almost every Union as well as by many democratic states including the UK, with many potential voters simply being uninterested in politics. Solutions offered to increase participation include introducing e-voting and compulsory voting, as practised in Australia. Yet simply forcing students to vote, when they are unaware of the issues and apathetic with regard to the Union is not the answer. In my opinion the real solution involves creating awareness and actually engaging voters into the debates that concern the Union.

Returning Officer Doug Oliver must certainly be praised for his initiatives in trying to increase turnout, but much more must be done to engage the average student. The newly elected officers must keep their promises of trying to integrate societies and residences more closely into the Union so as to

increase awareness. Voting systems and procedural aspects of the election need to be more clearly explained to all those, who are not as informed on these issues as Government students.

Candidates for election must be more honest in expressing their opinions and vision for the LSE Students Union. Whilst I disagreed with Alex Hochuli; candidate for Communications Officer, I respect him for the fact he openly stated his belief that religion should not be brought into the realm of Union politics. It is only when candidates are honest about their views and realistic about their objectives, rather than falsely promising everything to everyone that all students will be able to witness a clear debate and then vote to have their say, to make a difference to the Union. It is only then that we can honestly say that students (and not just hacks and their friends) have decided the future direction of their Union.

Democracy going strong?

Outgoing Returning Officer Doug Oliver assesses participation at the LSE

It was not only team Tam who woke relieved last Friday after the election count, but also myself as SU Returning Officer - thankful that the main elections of the year had finally been tied up. It has been a tumultuous year of by-elections, excitement and plenty of stress. At the end of my year of being responsible for student democracy, I will take this brief opportunity to discuss how strong I think that it is.

When elected last year, I ran with the explicit intention of trying to boost student interest and involvement in SU elections. Having heard plenty of pessimistic tales from apathetic students regarding the opaque workings of the SU, I was very keen on trying to do something to increase publicity and enthusiasm.

Much is said of LSE's student disillusionment with the SU. With LSE students' apparent obsession with careers, internships and the Lionel Robbins building, it is perhaps easy for us to lose sight of the political nature of the institution in which we study. In contrast to Unions such as Durham, Warwick, Oxford and of course ULU, uncontested elections have been the exception rather than the rule in previous years and turnouts have been amongst the highest in the country. However, three complaints regarding LSESU elections repeat themselves perennially: that the SU is dominated disproportionately

by white, male undergraduates (people like me); supposedly undemocratic society block votes and the apparently abstruse nature of SU rules and regulations.

Before the Michaelmas and Lent elections, a large “publicity drive” was undertaken through the mediums of remorseless email spamming, leafleting and posterage. The results were clear - with the procedures properly explained students are more than willing to get involved. For example, the myth that no post-grads have an interest in the SU was exposed when eight stood for election for post-graduate officer. The number of candidates standing in Michaelmas elections rose significantly and the turnout increased by a third. Though the results were less marked, the story was similar in Lent where there were about ten more candidates overall including - for the first time in at least two Lent elections - a candidate for mature & part-time students' officer. The lesson that incoming and future SU officers can take is that with a little work and a clear message of publicity, it is possible to increase the scope of involvement and interest in the Union.

However, as Returning Officer, I have encountered obstacles to involving more students in elections and many of these difficulties arise from the attitudes of some individuals with key roles in the Union. For example, I was shocked at

the attitude of the Education and Welfare Sabbatical Officer when she refused to send an email to the Student Assembly Against Racism which she chairs because she already “knew someone who was running”. Similarly, I was frustrated by the un-democratic sentiment of James Caspell, co-chair of LSE Greens, who refused to help leafleting to publicise the elections - on the grounds that he might help “induce competition” for the people he would like to support.

In the past few years,

much has been done to increase the ability of average students to decide who to support - more hustings such as in halls and on PuLSE; manifestoes which are clearer and on-line and elections that are better publicised than ever before - however, too much power still rests in the hands of a small number of individuals who have “power without responsibility”. Though I would not say their judgement is necessarily flawed, when candidates seeking election need to pander to these interests just as

much as those of the average student, then it is clear that something is seriously wrong with our democracy. This unequal distribution of power can only be dealt with by a reduction in student apathy. Whilst it is important that officers continue to “communicate loud & clear” apathy can only be properly circumvented by individual students taking initiative and taking an interest in the decisions that affect them and the way that the decisions are made.



Hacks, voyeurs and the politically curious; welcome to Hacktivist - your one stop shop for superior spurious rumour, gossip and hearsay. This is the filthy grease that keeps the Houghton Street Circus oiled.

What a week. What a count. More sleaze too. This week Hacktivist enjoyed the salacious company of AU Treasurer elect Vangelis Livanis (nee UGM chair) who demonstrated how to (hypothetically) remove a peanut lodged in the back of a choke victims throat using only his tongue. Carys Morgan performed ably as said victim. Alas the love peanut could not be removed and Morgan had to turn to inebricated SU Communications Officer Heathcote to take her home for intra-oral tonsil sur-

gery.

Chris Heathcote's facial blight has now left him. After several hours at the local GUM clinic and extensive consultation with a psychiatrist the growth was persuaded to migrate somewhere cleaner.

LSE students can now sleep safe at night knowing that Dave Cole, failed EdWelfare and GenSec wannabe, has “handed over the Union” to the safe hands of James Ketteringham. Alas students may not sleep so soundly knowing that Dave may be rejoining us next year anyway - to do a masters.

GenSec elect, Jimmy Tam, has promised to make the launch of the LSE SU ‘Jamie Oliver’

Off the record, on the QT, and very... hush hush.

experiment his number one priority for the year ahead. How appropriate then that straight talking cockney sparrow Tam should lead the campaign.

Outgoing LSE SU Returning Officer Doug Oliver also came under fire this week for pissing off just about everyone in the Union. Doug's own brand of rumour hearsay and gossip also threatens Hacktivist's own monopoly on the subject - though readers can rest assured that at least a grain of truth is contained herein. The same cannot be said for Oliver.

Well done on good elections all the same though Doug!

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If you have written three or more articles for *The Beaver* and your name does not appear in the Collective, please email:

thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk

and you will be added to the list in next week's paper.

The Beaver is available in alternative formats.

the Beaver

Established 1949 - Number 639

Like a gensec

(for the very first Tam)

All in all this paper is forced to concede a mixed set of results. We see both promise and problems in next year's Executive Team.

Tam brought promise to the GenSec race with his wide-ranging and colourful raft of policies, but the real litmus will be his delivery. Over the past year he has performed ably and dynamically as societies officer and was a marked improvement on his predecessor. Nonetheless, where faced with crucial decisions, Tam has too often towed the line of least resistance.

The election of Joel Kenrick as Treasurer was a result deserving of more praise. When he wants to Joel has shown real integrity and strength; invading a meeting to present Howard Davies with a student petition urging the Director's resignation from Total Fina Elf, for example.

Alexandra Vincenti's victory was another cause celebre for the left, not that the right saw fit to put any notables forward for the ed welfare race this year. This paper is confident Vincenti will continue in the same vein as Errington.

The role of Communications sabbatical also shows continuity; fast becoming the reserve of the moderate right, with Ali Dewji succeeding Chris Heathcote in the job.

But of all the four, the real question which remains to be answered is who will lead? Now more than ever, this paper sees the need for strong leadership as an absolute priority. The Union must remain focused and committed. Pretty policies, internal politicking and nitpicking will not solve this.

This year's sabbatical team have dedicated much time and effort to rectifying internal divides. Consensus politics has prevailed internally. Now its time to deliver on representing students to the school and the world at large: one voice, loud and clear, to represent all LSE students.

The Right to Strike

AUT strikes supported

AUT lecturers have voted to strike today. Despite this paper's concerns for the AUT's questionable stance on top-up fees in the past, we feel this time the AUT has taken appropriate action.

Lecturers are woefully underpaid and are much maligned in an academe increasingly dominated by the needs and demands of marketisation. In a system in which students are regarded as assets and the success of an institution is measured in pounds and brand value it comes as little surprise that academics are getting such a raw deal.

However, the school alone cannot take the blame for the current problems in the Higher Education sector. Indeed, as many LSE lecturers have said, the school is a generally considered an excellent employer. As LSE representatives have pointed out, in some cases, the LSE will be exceeding AUT demands for better pay.

This may have been the institution that fostered the thought of Friedrich August von Hayek, but it was founded by progressives who saw the future of education lying in the clarity and equity of social justice and the value of the educator, not the sterling. It is important that we continue in that tradition.

As such we support the national plight of the AUT and the argument for better wages.

SU Elections

Finally, congratulations are in order to SU Returning Officer Doug Oliver. Few students are willing to put in thankless hours and sleepless nights as Oliver has done to keep this Union running.

Without the work of the Returning Officer this Union would not function. So congratulations to Doug on a hugely successful two weeks of elections.

Letters to the Editor



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

Eyes to the Left

Dear Sir,

Loathe as I am to pour anything other than derision onto the Conservative Party, the "Eyes to the left" column last week's description of the post-1945 election as the electorate turning their back on the "party of... appeasement" is quite frankly preposterous. The Labour Party was advocating pacifism in the 1930s, with such figures as Ramsey McDonald to the fore, and was certainly not standing up to Hitler. Whilst Chamberlain was undoubtedly a Conservative and an appeaser, the majority of the leading opponents of appeasement were also Conservatives. Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden and Leo Amery were all members of the Conservative Party and were all staunch anti-appeasers by 1938/39, yet Amery lost his seat in the 1945 election.

I make no judgements on what else was said in the column, but it is hard to take seriously a piece which argues that the British public voted against the Conservatives in 1945 because of their role in appeasement. There were many reasons why the Conservatives were rightly turfed out of office, and the column does mention these, and goes on to make good points about the left in general. The article is, however, made to look foolish by suggesting that the British people voted against a party led by Winston Churchill because it had failed to stand up to the Nazis.

Yours,

Richard Coopey

Machismo ducismo

Dear Sir,

I was rather disturbed, to say the least, when towards the end of last week's Italian society party around 5 guys raised their right hands to the "saluto romano" or "Hitlergruss" as it is called in German.

Such open display of fascist imagery testifies either a degree of ignorance and lack of sensitivity explicable only by utmost stupidity, or political views which are fundamentally incompatible with the university's and student union's commitment to diversity, human rights and democracy.

Having been the only person in the Underground bar to express disgust at the scene just described, I was left won-



dering what is more irritating: people with a mindset reminiscent of Europe's darkest hour or the apathy and silence of a crowd of elite-university students confronted with it.

I would have hoped that most LSE students are educated and courageous enough to speak out against such inadmissible behaviour and values, even if it means spoiling a party.

Yours,

Martin Luis Alton

A market for communication

Dear Sir,

Our new Comms Officer-elect Ali Dewji wants a free market in societies. Let me say that again - he wants to extend the principles neo-liberalism to our SU. Incentives for societies to do more, cutting funding for those who don't. Unpopular, niche societies? Forget about them, it's the money earners that we should concentrate on, especially the ones which easily attract sponsorship. Feeling let down by a society you joined? Let's stop funding them! But which societies stand to benefit from Ali's plans? The well established, rich ones like... Debate Society! Who'd have thought it!

Societies are not businesses, no matter what FinSoc say. They are there to benefit the

whole of LSE (whilst bolstering the C.V.s of committee members) and serve our diverse interests. I'm not asking for a socialist revolution in society funding, but to speak about incentives and competition with reference to societies is as ridiculous as the current free market in NGOs, which benefits nobody.

Yours,

Daniel Sheldon

Right approach?

Dear Sir,

Last weeks article was yet another confused spurious attack on the EU by the right. The article seemed to rest on rather shaky assumptions and like so many arguments from the right seems to overlook allot of good that the EU has brought about.

I am not going to claim the EU is a perfect body or is not prone to mistakes (sometimes big ones). But I will declare that I am glad, among many more things, that European states co-operated after world war two and avoided another devastating conflict, that human rights, paid holiday, a 48 hour week and a minimum wage are now legally recognised and enforceable and that deprived areas across Europe receive EU funding. This improvements are often neglected but make a real difference to Europeans across the continent.

The author also neglects something else; whether a member or not the UK will be effected by the EU (e.g. Norway is the first state to implement many EU regulations)

so I argue we should stay in the EU and continue to see that it delivers the kind of prosperous, peaceful and progressive society that so many of us want to live in.

Yours,

James Ketteringham

Praise Part:B

Dear Sir,

I would just like to praise the pullout editors and sub-editors for last week's superb issue, which I feel was the best instalment of Part B to date. Part B was a real treat last week with informative and original articles, brilliant photography and great graphics. I would also like to point out how far the music section has come over the past few weeks, with the last issue showcasing classical, jazz, indie and house all on the same page! A big cheers to the Part B kids and here's to more awesome issues!

Yours,

Nastaran Tavakoli-Far
Final B:art Editor

FEATURES

Politics/Law/Business/Careers

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The future of
Asian securityHunger
striking for
ChinaThe right to
question Israel

The right approach



The sixties were a profoundly important period. Whilst there may be disagreements about whether free love and the decline of the pre-eminence of the traditional family were good phenomena, the intellectual liberation that decade brought was very important. Censorship largely ended in the UK and universities around the world tore up their syllabi in favour of radical new ideas. A lively period of intense discussion and debate ensued where no idea was considered unchallengeable. For anyone who believes in liberty and truth these were important breakthroughs.

Now, with the resignation of Larry Summers from his post as the head of Harvard University, it is time to acknowledge that the wheel has come full circle. There is now a left-wing establishment embedding itself in the culture of both the US and Britain which, like the old one, is only interested in protecting and promulgating truths it sees as self-evident, turning viciously on anyone who challenges them.

Summers provides an important case study. He resigned rather than face a second no confidence vote from the faculty. What were his crimes? One was to suggest that African-American Studies professor and sometime rapper Prof. Cornel West should spend more time teaching and researching rather than on his more glamorous extra-curricular activities. Not outrageous, one might think, but in the liberal establishment of American academia, Summers had crossed an important line: criticising the practices of a prominent black faculty member. Crime number two was to muse that the massive over-representation of men in scientific and mathematical fields may not be wholly down to discrimination. Mr Summers went as far as to suggest that there may be differences between men and women. Note the key words: *muse*, *suggest* and *may*. The freedom to express an opinion on such a topic would seem fundamental. The reaction: how dare Mr Summers contradict what every post-feminist product of the sixties knew to be true, that men and women are completely alike? Mr Summers hung onto his job under intense pressure. But clearly, going against left-wing orthodoxy is a crime that can and will be punished.

This may seem abstract and removed from the day to day. But this establishment is educating the world leaders of the future. The men and woman who spent their youth taking down an establishment are now guilty of rank hypocrisy by creating another. Throwing about words like 'racist' and 'sexist' in order to silence critics. And yet, when it suits, such words disappear: the French establishment refused to label the three-week torture and eventual murder of a Jewish man in Paris as racist, despite the fact that the murder was committed by a gang who exhorted the murdered man's impoverished father to get money "from the synagogue" for a ransom that proved useless. Whether something is racist or not depends on how politically expedient the use of the word is.

And this new bankers establishment is now attempting to embed itself. In this country the government uses terrorism to further increase its grip on every part of our lives. It is not widely realised, but Walter Wolfgang was only one of 426 detained under anti-terror powers at the Labour Conference. As none has turned out to be terrorists we can safely assume that the act was used as a method of control at the supposedly democratic conference of a party that has unfortunately governed this country for the past 8 years.

Religious hatred and glorification are now illegal and people who believe in basic and absolute freedoms are told that they must "find the right balance" in a game in which "the rules are changing." But the government is doing more than play on our fears to its advantage. The real embedding is economic and is almost imperceptible. The relentless rise in public sector workers, that has given us an NHS with more managers than doctors, is clearly wrong. But despite the protestations of Gordon Brown this gross inefficiency is quite deliberate. Sure a few grannies may die before receiving treatment, but since 1997 Labour has created 784,000 mostly useless new jobs. Furthermore, these people are beholden to Labour, as any other party would sack most of them instantly. It may be expensive and immoral, but as a means of guaranteeing election success, creating a whole class whose livelihoods depend on one party's continuation, is ingenious.

We are falling into the iron embrace of a generation who cut their teeth liberating us from the last one. Ironically, it is now the Right's turn to free us.

Eyes to the left



Even by his usual standards, Tony Blair's assertion last week that the US concentration camp at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba was "an anomaly" was particularly pathetic. His analysis of the situation is, quite simply, historically, and in a contemporary context, completely nonsensical. Holding people captive without charge or trial has been entirely consistent with American foreign policy since 1945, a policy which has succeeded only in ruining millions of peoples' lives right around the world whilst preserving the US' position as the world hyper power.

Indeed, the world as run by America for too many decades has seen an astonishing number of what our PM would term "anomalies". Consider the millions of Vietnamese killed or horribly maimed by Americans in the 1960s and 70s or the millions of Latin Americans who suffered under US-backed military dictatorships after their democratic choice was toppled by the CIA. Or the Arabs whose identities and homes have been stolen by the 51st (terrorist) state Israel since 1948, whilst the US creates and supports theocratic, oppressive regimes across that region until they no longer serve their interest. All empires behave in this way, and the US is certainly no exception. If Americans actually bothered to read some books or

tore themselves away from Fox News they might understand "why do they hate us?" a question asked repeatedly in the weeks after 9/11.

Thus, when Blair and other American serfs bang on about the horrors of anti-Americanism, a creed which I wholeheartedly endorse, one has to ask what is worse; running a global empire underpinned by gross human rights abuses and contempt for international morals and law, or protesting about said empire. Of course, the cause is not helped by including such "progressives" as Saddam Hussein's pal George Galloway or the homophobic, women-oppressing Muslim Council of Britain, but in general anti-Americans are intelligent people who could better run the world. There is no shame in being opposed to barbarians, particularly when they have the terrifying ability of Middle America to view their behaviour and role in the world as the complete opposite of what it actually is.

I say Middle America because, judging by the last two presidential elections, the people on both coasts seem far more progressive and, dare I say it, European. Until they get tired of their red-necked, gun-toting inlanders and join up with Canada, I urge them not to give up hope and continue to prove that a large minority disagrees with Bush and the policies he follows, policies which are rarely about anything other than maintaining US military might and protecting their key allies. Whilst there is not exactly a Left in the US, there are still people whose views are seen by neo-cons and their pals as extremely dangerous, and it is too easy for European social democrats to belittle their valiant efforts - our views would be branded as "Red" or "un-American", such is the Rightward positioning of the "centre" in US politics.

At least the elite, as expressed by Donald Rumsfeld several weeks ago, recognise that the US has a problem with the billions of people who find its behaviour both morally wrong and offensive. However, instead of proposing the seemingly obvious solution, that of stopping doing the things people dislike the US for, like, say, razing cities to the ground with bombs and stealing countries' natural resources, Rumsfeld merely wants to improve the US' image through PR - a very American response, of course. Indeed, one of Bush's closest women is Karen Hughes, who since September 2005 has had the unenviable job of improving the US' global image in her capacity as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy.

To do this, whilst in Saudi Arabia Ms. Hughes rather famously expressed a wish that women could "fully participate in society", but of course the US position towards the horrifically regressive and backward House of Saud, which still bans women from driving and voting in 99% of the few elections that are held, to name just several of the problems women face in this US-backed and arms-supplied tyranny. The Left's solution, as articulated by our wonderful mayor Ken Livingstone, was somewhat more direct; Ken has expressed his wish that he would wake up one morning "and find that the Saudi royal family are swinging from lampposts and they've got a proper government that represents the people". We can only hope that, preferably soon, the US follows the example of the Left and shuns image changes and the like, preferring to actually improve its generally despicable behaviour. It is however, unlikely, and so I at least will continue to be proud of being branded "anti-American".

theBlog 05/03/06

There was something deeply disturbing on TV this Saturday night, and it wasn't Stars In Their Eyes Kids. As if the sight of Blair trying to charm his way from Parkinson's sofa into our living rooms wasn't nauseating enough, the Prime Minister treated us to what one Labour MP described as a "painfully honest" insight into his private faith in God, and how it helped him to reach a decision about the invasion of Iraq. "I think if you have faith about these things, then you realise that that judgement is made by other people... and if you believe in God, it's made by God as well," he explained.

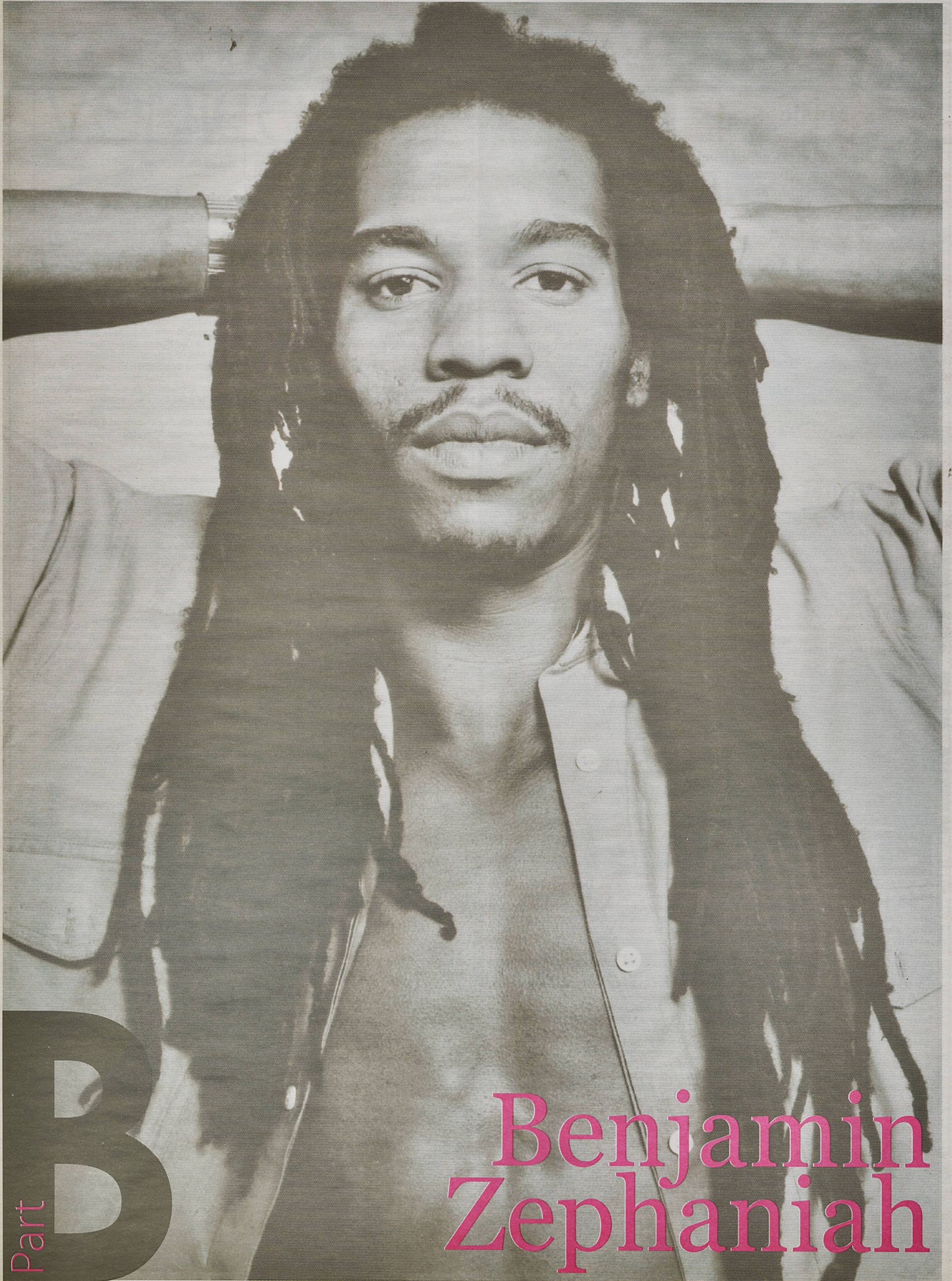
Aside from the fact that this, rather conveniently, evades the democratic right of the British people, quite apart from The Almighty, to judge Mr Blair, his religious reference marks another step down the road to the kind of creeping, insipid Christian moralising that pervades in the US. On a recent trip to New York, of all places, I was shocked to find anti-abortion literature in motorway service stations, and condoms locked in glass cabinets in high-street chemists to ensure maximum humiliation for those who wish to engage in sexual activity without adding to the great American gene pool.

I was naïve, of course. I should have realised that this would be the case in a country where religious abstinence groups that teach teenagers to be ashamed of their sexuality, receive federal funding. The most powerful of these, the Silver Ring Thing (SRT), produces a book entitled, 'Epidemic - How Teen Sex is Killing Our Kids.' The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) launched a lawsuit against them in order to stop federal funds being used to further religious activities. They point out that research indicates that, rather than deterring teenagers from doing the deed, abstinence programmes can leave them ill-educated, and less likely to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy and disease. Yet the SRT are determined, in their own words, to protect "the youth...from sexual promiscuity promoted by groups like the ACLU and their allies." Quite how pre-marital sex necessarily equates to sexual promiscuity is, unsurprisingly, not explained.

Mercifully, for the birthplace of the Protestant religion, Britain is an extraordinarily secular country - yet the right of citizens to practise their religion unheeded is central to the multicultural and liberal character of Britain. This is a country where the banning of hijab and other ostentatious religious symbols, as in France, would be unthinkable. Of course, there are many deep-rooted flaws in British society - the rise of the BNP, for example, is an extremely worrying threat to our way of life - but the generally secular nature of our government and culture should be applauded. The promotion of Christian values by our leaders will only lead to division and intolerance.

Alistair Campbell once famously barked at reporters who pushed the Prime Minister on his religious beliefs, "we don't do God." The public outcry at Blair's latest remarks would suggest that there's a good reason for that. Long may that remain so.

Features Editor Jess Brammar



Part **B**

Benjamin Zephaniah

INSIDE THIS ISSUE AROUND LONDON

Music

Kraut Rock bands Faust, Can and NEU! influenced every genre from techo and trance to punk and commercial hip hop

Faust

Faust/So Far



Today

Lew Soloff Quartet featuring **Joe Locke**
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street
8:15pm
Admission: £10 (NUS)

'London Salsa'
Abbacus, 34 Cornhill
8pm
Admission: Free

Giant Squid
The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road
10am-5:50pm
Admission: Free

Wednesday

'The Scabby Tabby'
The Red Lion, 20 Great Windmill Street
8pm
Admission: Free

International Women's Day Celebration
The White Post Centre, 25 White Post Lane
11am
Admission: £3 suggested donation

The Automatic
Barfly, 49 Chalk Farm Road
7:30pm
Tickets: £7

Thursday

Men's Pond Swim
Hampstead Heath, Parliament Hill
7am-2:45pm
Admission: £2

'Survivors Poetry'
The Poetry Café, 22 Betterton Street
8pm
Admission: Free

Geffrye Museum
Kingsland Road
10am-5pm
Admission: Free

Friday

Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig
The Barbican, Silk Street
7:30pm
Tickets: £7-£35

Burn, Citizenship, Chatroom
National Theatre, South Bank
7:30pm

Tickets: £10-£20
Citizen Kane
National Film Theatre, Belvedere Road
8:45pm
Tickets: £6.25 (NUS)

Saturday

Borough Market
Borough High Street
9am-4pm
Admission: Free

'RoTa'
Notting Hill Arts Club, 21 Notting Hill Gate
4pm-8pm
Admission: Free

'Playground'
333, 333 Old Street
10pm-5am
Admission: £8 (NUS)

Sunday

St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival
Covent Garden, Trafalgar Square
12am-6pm
Admission: Free

Courtauld collection
Courtauld Institute
2pm-6pm
Admission: Free (NUS)

'Lost and Found'
Madame JoJo's, 8-10 Brewer Street
9pm-2am
Admission: £5

Monday

World Domination League
Nambucca, 596 Holloway Road
8pm
Admission: £3 (NUS)

LGBT Photography Exhibition
Greenwich Picture House
11am-5pm
Admission: Free

'Trash'
The End, 16a West Central Street
10pm-3am
Admission: £6

Something we missed? Any hot events during coming weeks? Email thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk

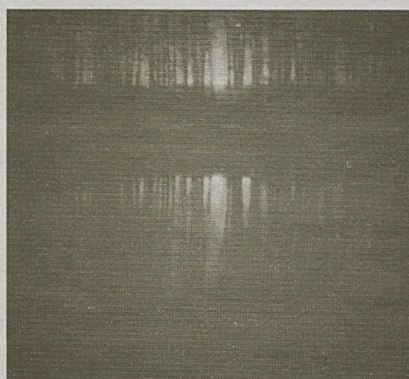
Fashion

The new summer collection from Topshop is both vibrant and bold



Visual Arts

Photography as an art seems robust as Steichen's masterpiece sells for a record price



Travel

Your last chance to see Venice before it floods over with beauty and love



EDITORIAL

On Friday morning, we woke up to witness the results of the SU elections, as well as the inevitable tears, drunk threats and smiling faces that come along with them. Because direct threats have been made against the integrity of *The Beaver*, we worry that PartB will not be the same next year. Senior editors pat us on the back and say, 'Don't worry, it'll work out'. We must thank them, and thank we will in the next issue.

Has the planet changed over the past two decades? Computer games, **Spongebob Squarepants** and **Adriana Lima** definitely shaped the world. An exceptional offspring, who was born in the dreamlike OC, thoroughly enjoys the aforementioned abbreviation and is named Jami, recently turned 20. No, he did not enjoy a day off.

Back to what you are about to read. To summarise, Music sub-editors Sam Ashton and Kevin Perry have taken over. Sam pres-

ents an overview of German Kraut Rock. Kevin describes an interview with poet **Benjamin Zephaniah**, who expressed passionate views regarding free speech and politics.

On the opposite page, LSE Head of Security **Bernie Taffs** tells stories that are more captivating than The Great Train Robbery or that multi-million pound heist currently in the news.

Elsewhere, we feature the best place to play pool and chill. The Travel section highlights Venice, because spring quickly approaches and it is time to get romantic. You might decide to fast for Lent when you look at the Topshop models in the Fashion section.

Before you get carried away with thoughts about models, there is a superb cryptic crossword on the last page with which we both struggled. First person to submit the correct solution will get £20. Promise.

jamimakan & alexteyfelboym



HEY YOU!

Birthday Bouncer

By Anonymous

Last week it was my birthday, an exceptional occasion that interrupted an otherwise dull routine of studying, sleeping, masturbating, eating and watching *Lost*. I spent at least four days planning my outfit, assembling a guestlist, inviting friends and re-inviting them when fears of celebrating my party alone at **The Roxy** became overwhelming. You see, the last several years have not brought the best of birthdays, many of which were spent moping, being homesick and eating Pizza Hut in front of the television. So it was important that this year be different, that I enjoy an epic night of carousing and drunken stupidity with dozens of my closest friends.

And indeed, the night got off to a great start. Tons of people showed up, and I found myself shifting between crowds of old friends, new friends, school friends and girl friends. Never before had I been at the centre of such an amazing party. Alcohol was flowing like honey. People were smoking like chimneys. Scorching hot girls were dancing like strippers. People were buying me drinks by the literal dozen.

Unfortunately, I consumed too much. All of a sudden, the sickness hit me hard and I dashed to the toilet. I ended up spending about 45 minutes locked in there. I was finally sobering up when you, you piece of shit bouncer, stormed your way inside and threw me out of the club. I was too drunk to remember your face, but I imagine it looked more ugly than **Yoda's ass** or **Courtney Love on crack**. You threw me onto the curb and refused to let me back inside.

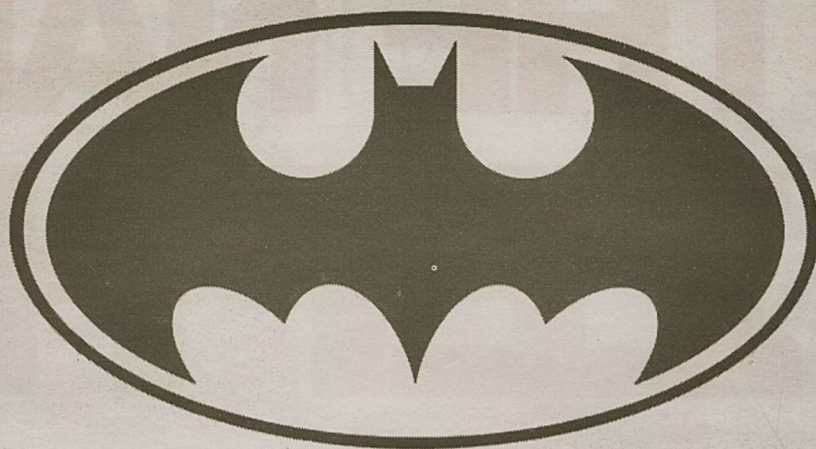
Thanks for throwing me out of my own birthday party, you fucking loser. I hope that when your birthday comes around, you spend it alone, wishing you earned enough money as a lame bouncer has to get as drunk as I was that night.

Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations -changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent- to thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk with 'Hey You!' as the subject line. Hey You! inspired by the OC Weekly of Santa Ana, California.

Batman at LSE

ernie

Late last month, £53 million was stolen from the Securitas depot in Tonbridge, Kent. After what turned out to be Britain's biggest cash robbery ever, we decided to discuss campus crime and security with Bernie Taffs, LSE's resident policeman and crimefighter extraordinaire.



The Beaver knocks on door A101 and receives a warm welcome by the Head of Security and his spectacular team. 'Greed is the basis of all crime, there's no romance in it', explains Bernie Taffs as we sit down for a chat. It's just the type of profound statement you'd expect from the man who has been keeping LSE students out of harm's way for over a decade. His views on the heist last week? Comparing it's runner up, The Great Train Robbery of the 60s, Mr. Taffs vehemently condemns any glamorisation of crime and criminals: 'You'd rather wash your hands after shaking hands with them than go away boasting about it.' Having previously fought crime in shady East London districts, Bernie has seen a lot of 'misplaced enthusiasm' for crime; at the end of the day, most criminals who get caught end up in prison and 'die broken people'. Bernie also tells us about the shift in the priority of crime control: 'Years ago, police had gangbusters whose job it was to bust these gangs. Busting gangs like that is, perhaps, not as high a priority as combating terrorism, etc. You have to put your excellent detectives on the most serious tasks'. With all these words of wisdom, it is no surprise that Bernie Taffs is not just Head of Security at a London University, but also a name widely recognised all over campus.

Over the past eleven years at the LSE, Bernie has come across plenty of stories and scandals on campus. We ask him to recall the most serious cases. He sits us down like schoolchildren at a storytelling; we learn about the Sydney Caine Memorial saga. Some time ago, the school hierarchy decided to buy, as a memento of a previous director's deceased wife, a ceramic vase made in 16th century China. 'I think his name was Sydney Caine' says Mr. Taffs. Sir Sydney Caine was our beloved director from 1957-1967. The vase was put on display in the Shaw library in an alarmed glass display cabinet. A few years later, it disappeared. Sometime after joining the LSE, Bernie was approached by the Metropolitan Police, who had an inkling of where the vase was. How did the vase come back into the public limelight? The university circulated pictures and a description in internal trade magazines read by Chinese ceramic dealers. Someone in Bond Street had approached a dealer with an offer to buy the vase. The mystery man did not have the vase on him but promised to bring it to the dealer. Meanwhile, our courageous dealer looked up the vase and, upon realising it was stolen, dialled 999. The thief approached the dealer with the vase the next day. Busted.

Unfortunately, this wasn't the end of the tale. LSE never filed an official criminal record of the missing vase, and the thief conveniently claimed he had found it in his deceased father's loft. Poor Bernie was forced to prepare a dossier and sift through obscure records and piece together some proof. CPS claimed there was insufficient evidence to claim criminal offence. Bernie Taffs did not give up and put up a fight in his classic style. 'I had to go to court with the photo of the case and spend half a day arguing with the thief. It was a cock and bull story that he had found it in his deceased father's loft'. Twelve hours of courtroom bickering later, the magistrates realised who the rightful owner was. Bernie brought the £25,000 vase back to the school. 'It was one of my great moments of glory' he says. Ironically, the vase was eventually sold off. Bernie lets us in another potential vase saga: 'In a few weeks' time, a certain VIP is coming to unveil a £30,000 detailed stained glass and it's going to be put in the Shaw Library'. The school has sought security arrangements advice from this expert. His response was, 'if you put it in there, you're mad!' Ah, classic Bernie.



'I don't actually believe this campus is very "dangerous" if you look at the statistics'. The Security team produces annual statistics for the school and there have hardly been any serious crimes, rapes or assaults on campus. 'Well, there have been one or two cases like one robbery in a toilet years ago, and the incident last New Year's eve. That was when the SU was open to outsiders but I don't think we should mention that. They won't like it!' What we can share though, are stats on the remarkable work Bernie and his team have done. Over the last five years the estimated cash loss from stolen equipment has dramatically reduced from £36,681 to £13,600. The number of reported crimes in the Clare Market building has decreased from 14 to 8. The Garrick has had its fair share of problems this year. In the last 6 months, about 20 crimes were reported in the Garrick: one of the worst periods of crime in a single area. So Bernie put someone in a bright fluorescent jacket at the door between 11.30am and 2.30pm. There has been hardly any crime since. The actual number of reported crimes a year is between 170-190 but the total is probably much closer to 210: 'It's nothing to be complacent about, neither is it a dreadful crime wave.'

'Bearing in mind this is a town of 12,000 people, 18 hours a day in the centre of a massive city in the middle of Northern Europe, the statistics are pretty remarkable'. Houghton Street crime has gone up in recent years but that is only because the Metropolitan Police are cleaning up Covent Garden and the petty thieves shimmy along to our campus for a bit of light relief pick-pocketing. So what are students to do about laptops and iPods? About 12-14 laptops are stolen each year on campus. Bernie's words of wisdom: 'For goodness sake, back up your gear!' You don't want to end up like the unlucky German student whose laptop got nabbed a week before her dissertation was due in.

'At the end of the day, leaving things in an open environment is a risk. Between the hours of 8.30am and 6.30pm, you can do anything as long as it doesn't look too suspicious. If you leave your things around for even a minute, you're at risk!' Bearing in mind we have 26 open access buildings, crime is inevitable. Bernie ensures that this is kept down to a minimal level with alarmed doors, movement detectors, magnetic locks, CCTV, key card access and 24-hour patrol patterns. With the campus' old architecture, the buildings have a labyrinth quality. There are many nooks and crannies, which Bernie and his staff have to remain aware of.

As engrossed as we are in conversation, it's time to conclude the interview. We won't dare disturb the team for too long! Sergeant Taffs offers some final words: 'We see students as customers, money on legs. It's ironic considering students are broke. We see the pressures students face. They're away from home, no money, engaged in romantic ties, student accommodation...it can be a difficult, toxic mix. We hope we don't add to that, but help to alleviate that. It's refreshing to see that wherever students come from, their aspirations are the same. LSE has a very healthy environment and long may it continue!'

Well, Bernie, thank you for making it such a healthy environment. The security department is clearly a well-oiled machine. Well, boys and girls, in times of need all you need to do is call LSE's very own Batman. Just dial extension 666.

THE NAKED POET ZEPHANIAH

Benjamin Zephaniah publicly rejected an OBE honour and recorded a protest song for Nelson Mandela with The Wailers. He is a reluctant radical, a wordsmith whose music and writing have helped fight inequality and racism.

If Tony Blair was in front of me, I'd fucking lamp him.' Benjamin Zephaniah is back, and he's angrier than ever. His new album *Naked* is his first since *Belly of De Beast* a decade ago. He begins our interview by explaining that he never gets himself tied into a record or book deal, so you know that if he's got material out then it's because there's something he needs to say, not because he's fulfilling a contract. However, he tells me that there could be another record not too far away, simply because there's so much going on in the world that he feels the need to speak out about. He may be best known as a poet, but his albums allow him to combine music with the performance poetry that comes naturally to someone who favours the oral tradition over dull textbooks. *Naked* sees him at his very best, 'dressed' and 'looking at the truth'.

Despite his righteous anger, I get the feeling that Benjamin Zephaniah is something of a reluctant radical. He's as laid back and easy-going as they come, and happily tells me that he'd much rather be 'writing comedy and having lots of sex'. Unfortunately for the Tony Blairs of this world, he's the sort of person who couldn't live with himself being apathetic.

On the title track of his new album he states, 'I hate dis government as much as I hated the one before it and I have reason to believe that I will hate the one to come'. It's a powerfully delivered statement, but I ask him if he ever feels depressed about the lack of difference his message, and those of people like him, has made. 'Yes, in a word. One of the most frustrating things is that there are no alternatives.' He tells me about his experiences in South Africa after the fall of Apartheid, where he experienced the rare phenomenon of people actually being excited to vote for someone, rather than voting for the lesser of two evils. The end of Apartheid in South Africa was an issue that was close to Zephaniah's heart. In the early 80s he recorded a protest song for Nelson Mandela with The Wailers, becoming the first artist to record with them after Bob Marley's death. He tells me that the issue of South Africa brought them together, and the song was heard by Mandela, who asked to meet him when he was released from Robben Island. Zephaniah cannot help but remark on the way Mandela's image has transformed in the West 'You have to remember that at the time, the ANC were Al Qaeda, and Nelson Mandela was Osama Bin Laden, except that he'd been caught!'

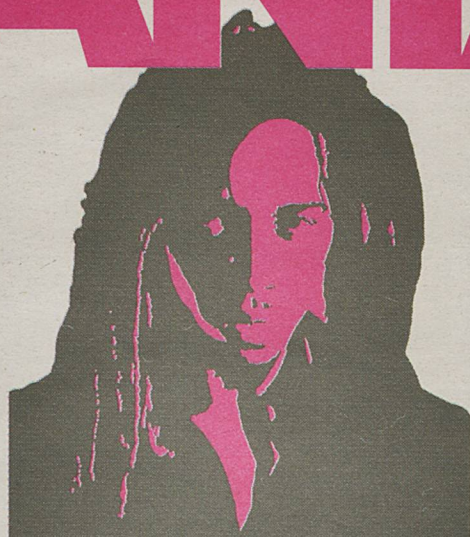
Africa remains a central theme in Zephaniah's writing. On 'Rong Radio Station' he says, 'I waz trying to convince myself that I could ease my conscience, if I gave a few pence or a few cents to a starving baby in Africa. Because African babies need me so, because African babies needed my favours, because Africa is full of dictators and, oh yeah, globalisation will bring salvation. I've been listening to the wrong radio station.' I tell him that while I agree that giving money to charity may not be the long term way to solve inequality, it

must have an important role to play for the people suffering right now. Anyone who received the Kenyan Society's recent urgent email regarding the drought that has hit the Horn of Africa will know that it has been estimated that eleven million people there will require food aid, but is the urge to give them our loose coins any more than middle class guilt? Zephaniah thinks that charitable giving is short-changing African nations: 'If you have a stab wound, you don't try and cover it up with a plaster, do you? I'm not saying that people who give to charity are bad people, I'm saying that they should get political. Too often people give to charity and think that that counts as being political, because they're scared of being revolutionary or radical.' He compares the difference to that between being a racist and being actively anti-racist: 'If you're walking down the street and you see a guy getting beaten up by a racist, do you walk on and say "that's bad, I wouldn't do that" or do you actually get involved and do something to stop it? It may not be directly confronting the racist, but just anything to actively stop it happening. The same applies to charities. There's more to stopping inequality than putting money in a tin.'

Issues of inequality are never far from Zephaniah's mind, which is hardly surprising given his personal journey from spending time detained at Her Majesty's expense to being invited to the palace to meet HRH in person and collect his OBE, an 'honour' which he famously declined. He wrote at the time, 'Me? I thought, OBE me? Up yours, I thought. No way Mr. Blair, no way Mrs. Queen.' He rejected it on several grounds, not least the fact that an Order of the British Empire would be an unwieldy honour for someone who is 'profoundly anti-empire'. Today he stands by his decision, describing those who accept one as 'getting into bed with government and monarchy'. He says, 'I mean, I got a letter from Tony Blair inviting me to Downing Street. If Tony Blair was in front of me, I'd fucking lamp him. I'm a vegan, and when I was offered the OBE it was like someone who knew that offering me a steak. I'd fucking hit them, you know?'

He tells me that the years he spent in prison were formative for him. 'Prison gave me time to think,' he says. 'Screws always have this thing where they'll be like, "I'll give you a year, you'll be back." When they said that to me, I said, "I'm not saying I won't be back, but if I am it'll be political." I realised that stealing off of the working class guy wasn't achieving anything, but political activism could.'

Honours that he has been happy to receive are the honorary doctorates that have been bestowed on him by various universities scattered across Britain. He counts ten proudly displayed on his wall, and tells me that for someone who left school at thirteen, being told your work is influential is an especially great honour, and one with some unexpected privileges. 'After the first one I went to give a talk to some school kids and they introduced me as



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There's more
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Dr. Benjamin Zephaniah. I said, 'Oh no, you don't have to do that' but the kids seemed impressed. I told them that I had had it put on my drivers licence so that every time I get stopped, the policeman has to call me 'doctor'.

Freedom of speech has always been a key issue in Zephaniah's writing, but he says that he thinks the recent uproar over cartoons published in a Danish paper highlights the 'responsibility that comes with the right' to free speech. Furthermore, he tells me that he believes portraying the prophet as a suicide bomber perpetuated the negative stereotype that all suicide bombers are Muslim. He tells me that when he was in Palestine there was a suicide bomber who was a Christian, but 'the media reported that he was a Palestinian suicide bomber and never mentioned the fact that he was a Christian. It just fits in with this blinkered view that all suicide bombers must be Islamic.'

Musically speaking, *Naked* is Zephaniah's most diverse album. Every track stands out as an experiment in a different genre. He switches effortlessly from drum'n'bass to hip-hop, from garage to reggae dub. He tells me that whilst previous albums have been mostly reggae orientated, like *Belly of De Beast* which was produced by the legendary Mad Professor, the new album 'experiments with any genre of music that will enhance the words'. This openness to experiment has seen the involvement of a couple of talented collaborators. Preceding the release of the album is a remix EP by Rodney P, a friend of Zephaniah's who 'demanded' involvement after first hearing the album. The album itself, unlike so many of the cheap and mundane CDs on the market, is physically a work of art. It is presented as a miniature poetry book, something Zephaniah says was intentional to ensure that the poems could stand alone from the music. It features the artwork of genius graffiti artist Banksy, whose work has become notorious worldwide and is 'displayed' everywhere from Palestine to LA and in several places close to the LSE campus. Zephaniah praises the alternative viewpoint that Banksy's art provides. 'He's subversive and gives you another way of looking at the issues, which complements my poems.'

You sense that whilst he is very much a performance poet, he is at heart a wordsmith. I ask him how he sees himself. 'I describe myself as a "Griot". It's a West African term which has no exact translation in English. Probably "troubadour" or "bard" would be closest. It's someone who travels from village to village. Maybe they'll tell a story in one village, sing in the next and perform a poem in another. Sometimes they aim just to entertain, but sometimes their aim is to get people off their asses and ready to storm the government.' At a time like this, we need Griots like Benjamin Zephaniah more than ever.

kevinperry

7 March 2006

5 B





1970s Kraut

If I were to tell you that some of my favourite music of all time is 70s German rock, then you'd either laugh or dismiss me as unbearably pretentious. Germany conjures up images of dour faces and **David Hasselhoff**; it is not normally associated with some of the most creative and compelling music of the past thirty years. However, the Kraut Rock movement of the 70s gave us just that.

No, and this is a word we would never use. Nobody in Germany knows this term. We don't eat sauerkraut. It simply doesn't exist. If you find it in Germany, it has been brought in from outside. -Florian Schneider

The term 'Kraut Rock' began as something of an insult, referring to Germans' supposed penchant for pickled cabbage, but quickly came to be defined by the progressive sounds created by bands **Faust**, **Can** and **NEU!** Loosely, the Kraut Rock sound can be characterised as a combination of traditional rock instrumentation with experimental electronics, creating a highly psychedelic sound focused on the mood and texture of the music.

Perhaps the most famous of the Kraut Rock bands were **Can**. Formed in Cologne in 1968, the band was made up of **Holger Czukay** (bass), **Michael Karoli** (guitar), **Irmin Schmidt** (keyboards) and **Jaki Liebezeit** (drums). They created a sound that focused on the minimalist groove of the rhythm section, which incorporated both funk and jazz influences into lengthy jam sessions. Their first album *Monster Movie* featured the bizarre vocals of an American named **Malcolm Mooney**. The album's centrepiece was the 20-minute 'Yoo Doo Right' (reportedly edited down from six hours). Its incessant repetition of the rhythm section's primal beat verges on being hypnotic. The song is propelled relentlessly forward by its minimalist funk vamp, while the keyboards and guitar provide sensual textures and melodies. At this point in time, a genre was born.

With the departure of Mooney, **Can** recruited new vocalist **Damo Susiki** whom they found, according to legend, busking outside a café. Damo's vocal style was less overtly abrasive than that of Mooney but no less unique. Damo sung in a mixture of Japanese and English and would frequently move from soft crooning to full-on scream assaults much like **Yoko Ono**. The band's first proper album with Damo was the epic double album *Tago Mago*. The album was distinctly split between the groove-based funk hinted at by 'Yoo Doo Right' and a far more experimental sound characterised by reverb-drenched guitars and harsh electronic noodlings, with the latter being the most 'out there' music **Can** would make during their entire career.

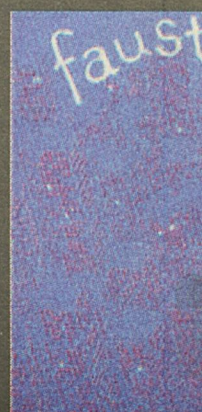
'Augmn' and 'Peking 0' are sprawling soundscapes whose eerie electronics have more in common with **Musique Concrete** and minimalist drone than the more traditional rock templates **Can** are usually associated with. Screeching violins sit atop slowly disintegrating tape loops and unidentifiable echoes. Sounds creep from the speakers. Shorter songs like 'Mushroomhead' have a far more commercial sound, providing rollicking drum breaks that have been sampled by underground hip-hop producers **Buck 65**, **Sixtoo** and **Madlib**, to name a few. Like the rest of the instruments, the focus of Damo's voice is not on lyrics or conventional melody but texture and percussive propulsion.

Following this sprawling masterpiece, there was only one thing for an unusual band like **Can** to do: create what is essentially a tight, blue-eyed funk album. *Ege Bamyasi* was funded by the Top 40 hit 'Spoon', which was popularised by a German cop show. Poppy synths were largely left off the album, which focused on the traditional instrumentation of guitar, bass and drums. The songs are focused and tight, varying from dissonant, jazz-inspired rock ('Pinch') to brittle funk that could rival **James Brown** for its soul ('Vitamin C').

Their next album *Future Days* would be their last with Damo; he left soon after its release to become a Jehovah's Witness. *Future Days* was yet another step forward for the band, incorporating keyboard drones and melodic electronic ambience with a far more laid back (but no less hypnotic) groove. These songs represent **Can** at their most overtly melodic, with traditional vocal melodies and far less dissonant guitar work. Guitar solos were no longer scratchy and psychedelic; rather, they were played with a bluesy fluidity not previously known to the band. Damo cooed listeners to sleep instead of exhorting them to violence, and Liebezeit's drums lost their militancy, thus creating a gentle caress rather than the stomping crashes fans had previously heard. The whole mixture created something far more lush and smooth, akin to minimal techno and trance long before those genres came into existence. *Soon Over Babaluma* continued in this ambient vein but marked the last great album of their career. Of the many albums they released throughout the second half of the '70s only a few would display the flashes of brilliance that brought to mind the **Can** of old. A surprising bookend to their career was the disco hit 'I Want More' from the album *Flow Motion*, which charted all over the world and can still be heard in clubs today.

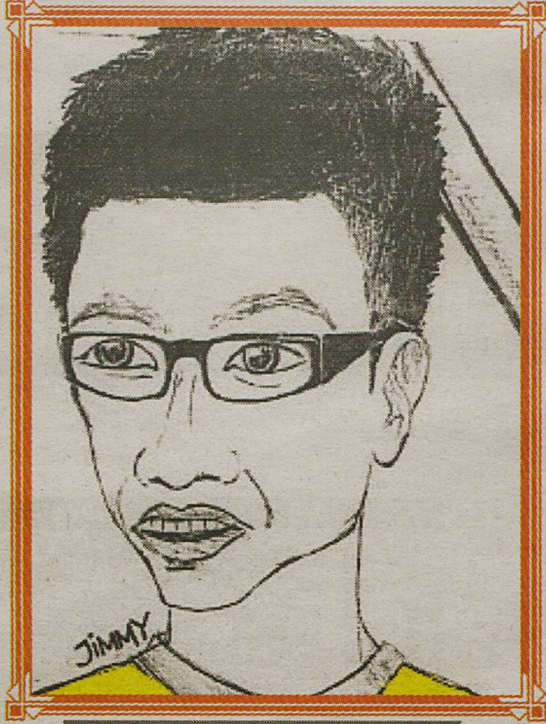
Now that's progressive. -John Peel

Like many things **John Peel** said, the above quote quickly and concisely tells us something about music that might be simple and obvious but no less true. This is supposedly what **John Peel** remarked after first hearing **NEU!** During a decade whose musical landscape was dominated by an overtly overwrought genre that took its name from the word 'progressive', it took a couple of Germans to truly capture the meaning of the word. Nothing in **NEU!**'s musical arsenal was particularly new or groundbreaking; guitars, drums and keyboards had all been used before, but the way these two men from Düsseldorf played them was utterly unique. Listening to **NEU!**, it is difficult to believe



the Beaver

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General Secretary



Treasurer

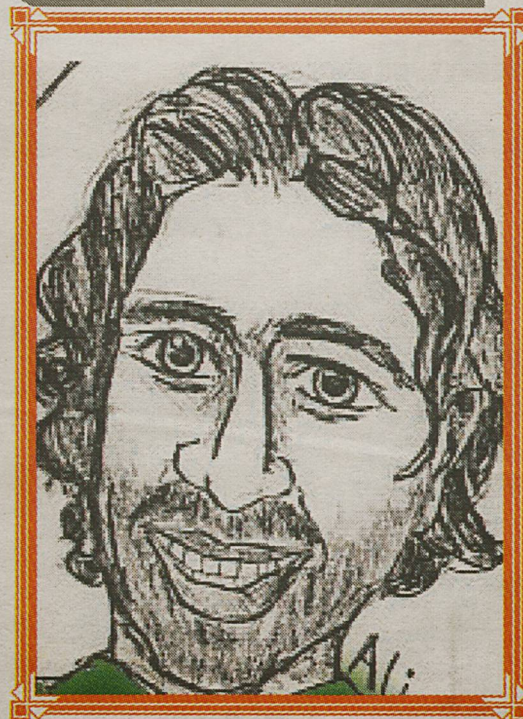


post election the Beaver handout

Education & Welfare



Communications



Sabbatical Officers

	jimmy tam	GENERAL SECRETARY	Jimmy Tam 868	Election Pledges
			Stacy-Marie Ishmael 772	
			Spoilt 172	-More consultation - eg student-wide survey
			Re-Open Nominations 73	-Promoting student development
				-Resits and exam feedback if you fail
				-Fostering a student community
				-The "Jamie Oliver Experiment"

	joel kenrick	TREASURER	Joel Kenrick 755	Election Pledges
			Kanan Dhru 446	
			Thomas Groarke 253	-An Inclusive Union
			Richard Holden 140	-Campaigning for Students
			Doug Carlson 97	
			Spoilt 281	
			Re-Open Nominations 82	

	ali dewji	COMMUNICATIONS	Ali Dewji 723	Election Pledges
			Elaine Londesborough 675	
			Alex Hochuli 258	-More sponsorship for the SU
			Hanne Thornam 347	-Raise more during RAG week
			Spoilt 428	-Make PuLSE more relevant
			Re-Open Nominations 58	

	alexandra vincenti	EDUCATION & WELFARE	Alexandra Vincenti 699	Election Pledges
			Dave Cole 620	
			Simon Bottomley 372	-Against all higher fees
			Fabian Joseph 278	-Against increasing visa charges, protect the right to appeal.
			Spoilt 520	-24 hour library - whole academic year
			Re-Open Nominations 73	

Executive Officers

	louise robinson	RESIDENCES	Louise Robinson 717	Election Pledges
			Kevin Heutschi 564	
			Andy Hallett 253	-Active lobbying - improved health, welfare & education in halls
			Spoilt 486	-Recycling, reduced wastage & renewable energy
			Re-Open Nominations 132	-Aiding transitions into private accommodation

	arthur krebbbers	SOCIETIES	Arthur Krebbers 777	Election Pledges
			Shayan Afsar 672	
			Spoilt 373	-Better reimbursement facilities
			Re-Open Nominations 81	-Better society websites more online space for societies, additional options
				-Society Handbook containing all useful LSE and external contacts for new committees

	wil barber	RETURNING	Wil Barber 701	Election Pledges
			Adrian Beciri 448	
			Re-Open Nominations 205	-Improve voter turnout by piloting electronic voting through LSE for You
				-Supply more information to students about how the voting system actually works so fewer are put off voting

emma hallgren *STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES*

Emma Hallgren	1212
Spoilt	456
Re-Open Nominations	132

Election Pledges

- Better access for disabled: more ramps around campus, more computers specifically assigned to disabled students and better lift access for students who need it
- Help students with disabilities in applying for careers; highlight the specific opportunities available and special considerations when applying

zoe sullivan *WOMEN'S*

Zoe Sullivan	890
Hillen Francke	418
Re-Open Nominations	132

Election Pledges

- Ensuring women are heard on all issues
- Increase female participation in all areas of SU
- Work closely with EdWelfare, LGBT, Anti-Racism and SwD officers to campaign against all discrimination
- Increase involvement in active campaigns for equality

michail retsinas *MATURE/PART-TIME*

Michail Retsinas	1119
Spoilt	502
Re-Open Nominations	215

Election Pledges

- Organize a Career Fair aimed at mature and part-time Students
- Present training opportunities in the industry for research students
- Encourage departments to provide students with complete teaching material in an electronic form

fadhil markar *INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS*

Fadhil Bakeer Markar	699
George Meng	679
Eddy Fonyodi	431
Spoilt	262
Re-Open Nominations	90

Election Pledges

- I plan to encourage mass mobilisation for all cultural events
- Greater linguistic support and encouragement of multilingualism
- I oppose tuition fee rises
- I will combat plans to reduce the right to appeal regarding visa applications.

alexandra murphy *LGBT*

Alexandra Murphy	1073
Spoilt	482
Re-Open Nominations	267

Election Pledges

- Work closely with the LGBT society to help organise more events, both formal and informal
- Potential for regular drop-in sessions, and accessibility through email
- Promotion of awareness of sexual health
- Work towards eliminating all homophobia, biphobia and transgenderphobia at LSE

aled fisher *ENVIRONMENTÐICS*

Aled Fisher	706
Alkesh Woods	582
Spoilt	118
Re-Open Nominations	167

Election Pledges

- I will form an Environmental and Ethics Group of societies and individuals to focus campaigns.
- To increase sustainability, I will follow the rule of reduce, reuse and recycle.
- I want LSE to be a world leader in environment and ethics

shanela haque *ANTI-RACISM*

Shanela Haque	779
Charles Laurence	539
Spoilt	523
Re-Open Nominations	87

Election Pledges

- Three goals:
 - increase awareness of racism and all forms of discrimination
 - maintain LSE's vibrant and on the whole tolerant atmosphere
 - expand LSE's tolerant attitude further into the wider community

constitution & steering committee

- ali alobaidi
- simon douglas
- james kanabar
- jefferson courtney

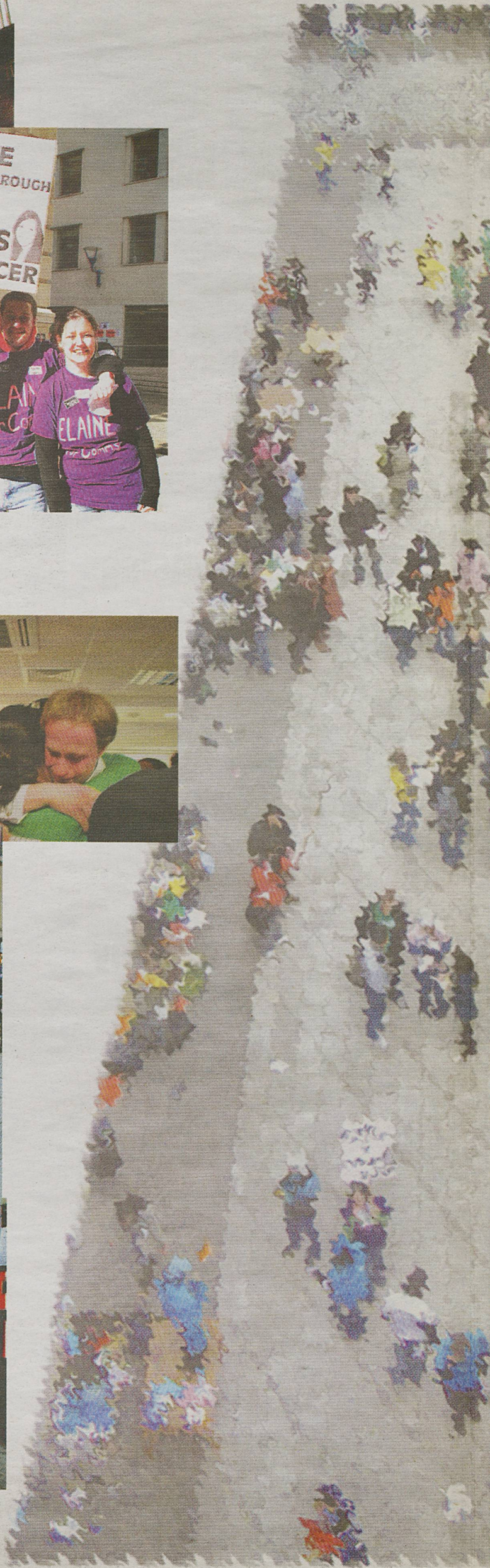
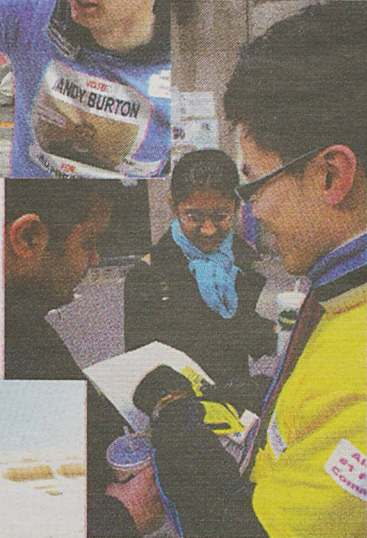
- ranil jayawardena
- carys morgan
- james ketteringham

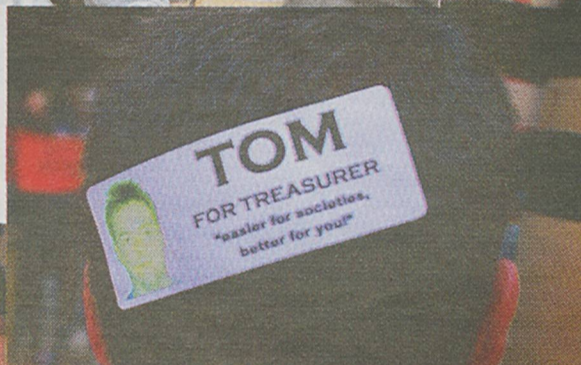
academic board (by-election)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Natalie Black | 885 |
| James Caspell | 525 |
| Re-Open Nominations | 63 |



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Photographs: Marta Skunric, Ruby Bhavra, Chris Colvin, Magnus Aabech
Graphic: Sidhanth Kamath



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Cartoons: Laleh Kazemi-Veisari

SU is Dead

How elections were won

It's official: Facebook wins elections.

Throughout the recent elections, people constantly referred to Facebook - somewhat facetiously - as being a key electoral tool. Several candidates have

inordinate numbers of Facebook friends - is it *really* possible to have over 600 friends in LSE? - and some people, including the creators of at least one Facebook group, were suspicious that these friends were acquired, at least in part, for electoral purposes

Facebook cropped up during election debate several times. During hustings in the Quad candidates for the most important position in the Students' Union - General Secretary - were asked about their policy for adding friends on Facebook. Stacy answered that she'd have to have had at least one real conversation with someone before she added them. Jimmy said that he'd stopped adding people - to which Matt Sinclair was heard to exclaim, "is there anyone left?"

So I decided to investigate the link between this ubiquitous tool of social-networking and our SU elections.

Despite the Codes of Practice banning the use of outside websites for campaigning uses, and Returning Officer Douglas Oliver's constant re-emphasis of this point, Facebook did, indeed, become a tool for getting elected. Some candidates used their friends' profile pictures to advertise their campaign; others used Facebook messaging to encourage people to vote. And these are just the methods that I directly experienced.

In virtually every race - Treasurer, EdWelfare, Anti-

Racism and the Academic Board being the only exceptions - the candidate with the most Facebook friends (or FBfriends) won. In EdWelfare, Dave Cole had only 4 more FBfriends than Alexandra, and only lost by a small margin. Joel won Treasurer, despite having about 75 fewer FBfriends than Kanan Dhru - but then, Joel is a well-known hack celebrity; as is Nat Black, who beat James Caspell for the vacant Academic Board spot. Finally, Shanela Haque won the Anti-Racism race, against the very well FBfriended Pratik Master, but then she did run an extremely large Houghton Street campaign, and received some very influential Society Endorsements.

At one point, Jimmy Tam (General Secretary elect) said at the UGM hustings that it is great to be friends with someone and talk to them about things other than politics and, that way, you can get more out of them. This, in my opinion, epitomises the FBfriend syndrome.

So where does this leave our SU democracy? Are our elections nothing more than a glorified popularity contest? A Facebook group was started after these elections, in whose description was the quote: "Once again populism wins over meritocracy." This group was called 'SU is DEAD'. Facebook is merely an extension of popularity:

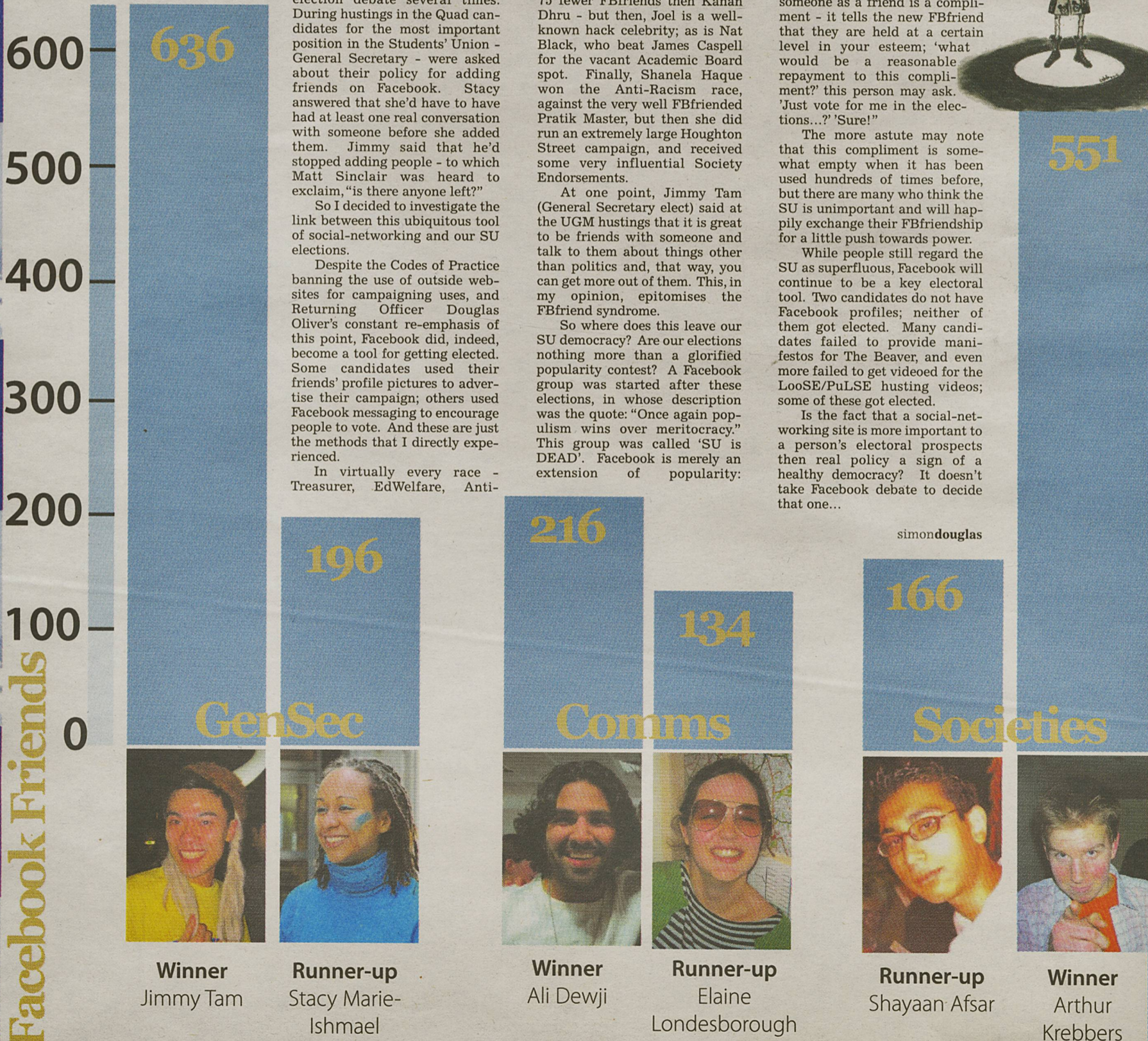
FBfriend totals are a direct indicator of the size of someone's social circle - therefore they should be more likely to get elected.

Is it possible to influence someone to vote for you by adding them as a friend? Or poking them? OF COURSE! Adding someone as a friend is a compliment - it tells the new FBfriend that they are held at a certain level in your esteem; 'what would be a reasonable repayment to this compliment?' this person may ask. 'Just vote for me in the elections...?' 'Sure!'

The more astute may note that this compliment is somewhat empty when it has been used hundreds of times before, but there are many who think the SU is unimportant and will happily exchange their FBfriendship for a little push towards power.

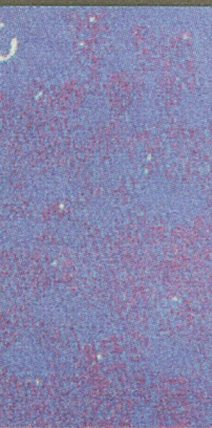
While people still regard the SU as superfluous, Facebook will continue to be a key electoral tool. Two candidates do not have Facebook profiles; neither of them got elected. Many candidates failed to provide manifestos for The Beaver, and even more failed to get videoed for the LooSE/PuLSE husting videos; some of these got elected.

Is the fact that a social-networking site is more important to a person's electoral prospects than real policy a sign of a healthy democracy? It doesn't take Facebook debate to decide that one...



simondouglas

aut Rock



the music was made so long ago. Its influence is everywhere, splashed across the musical landscape like florescent paint of the most gorgeous colour.

Drummer **Klaus Dinger** and guitarist **Michael Rother** were originally in **Kraftwerk**, but left after the first album to form **NEU!** and went on to release their eponymous debut record in 1972. The most striking element of **NEU!**'s sound is the **motorik beat**: a minimalist 4/4 groove that continues, with subtle evolutions, throughout the song. Album opener 'Hallo Gallo' is a ten-minute encapsulation of the band's music: an ever-present motorik beat, dry funk guitar, an insistant bass line and subtle, ambient guitar stylings. The second track 'Sonderangebot' demonstrates that **NEU!**'s aesthetic stretches beyond the minimalist death disco of the motorik songs. The song floats through spacey electronic ambience, without Dinger's drums to anchor it, before giving way to another motorik track, one that is far more laid back this time around. 'Im Gluck' combines the sound of a rowboat on a lake with droning keyboards to great effect, while 'Lieber Honig' is the album's only track to feature vocals; Rother moans formlessly over slowly-picked guitars, coming across like a less mentally ill **Jandek**.

The band's second album **NEU! 2** was affected by a lack funding from the record company. So with only half an album recorded, the band went ahead and invented the modern remix. Experimenting with tape manipulation, the band savagely altered two of the album's tracks, 'Neuschnee' and 'Super', to create a further three songs, 'Super 16', 'Super 78', and 'Neuschnee 78'. The original source material is chopped, spliced, sped up, slowed down and combined with found sounds to create songs that do not sound anywhere near as good as the originals but nonetheless display the duo's ingenuity and experimental flair.

Their third album **NEU! 75** would be their last, as a result of tension between the pair that lead to a split that still exists. Such tension is obvious on the album, which is split into two distinct halves, each representing the opposite directions Rother and Dinger wished to take **NEU!**'s sound in. 'Isi' contains the familiar motorik beat, but the acid-fried guitars are gone and replaced by swirling synths and untreated piano melodies that hold the song together. The rest of the album's first half glides by on similar ethereal ambience previously unknown to **NEU!**, until the snarling punk of 'Hero' bursts through the speakers. The album's second half is vicious and biting where the first half was soothing and calm; guitars stab, drums crash and Dinger howls and screams in a way that could not have gone unnoticed by Johnny Rotten, who would assume a similar vocal style only a year later. **NEU! 75** represents the ultimate progression for **NEU!** It is difficult to see how they could top either of the record's distinct halves and, as such, it seems fitting that they stopped after attaining perfection.

The final third of Kraut Rock's holy trinity is the ever-experimental Wümme collective **Faust**. **Faust** formed in 1971 and was comprised of the members **Uwe Nettelbeck**, **Hans Joachim Irmler**, **Zappi Diermaier**, **Arnulf Meifert**, **Jean Herve Peron**, **Gunther Wustoff** and **Rudolf Sosna**. **Faust** released several albums throughout the first half of the 70s that pushed the genre's boundaries both musically and artistically. They insisted that their album **Faust Tapes** go on sale for the unbearably low price of 49p. Their first self-titled album was born out of the intensely creative atmosphere of a communal house in Wümme and combined acid-damaged rock in the mould of **Frank Zappa** and **Captain Beefheart** with psychedelic pop. Not just content with breaking musical ground, the band also experimented with the minimalist aesthetic demonstrated by the album's cover. The first pressing was clear vinyl in a clear sleeve, an idea that reappeared on the largely black album art of second album **So Far**. **So Far**'s opening track 'It's a Rainy Day Sunshine Girl' immediately allied the band with **Can** and **NEU!** and featured the motorik beat. But the repetitive guitar strumming also brought to mind a more damaged **Velvet Underground**, sounding much like 'I'm Waiting For My Man'. **Faust** differed from **Can** and **NEU!** with their extensive use of horns and group chanting, but always maintained a pulsing Kraut Rock groove, most notable on the song 'Kraut Rock' from their 1974 album **Faust IV**. **Faust** split up in 1975 but re-united in 1990 and are still releasing albums and touring today. Most interestingly, they collaborated with the Avant Garde hip-hop group **Dalek** on the EP **Derbe Respect, Alder** to create some feverishly weird industrial sounds synched to booming breaks.

There were of course many other bands that have been labelled Kraut Rock over the years, notably **Amon Duul II**, **Tangerine Dream** and **Kraftwerk**. However these bands had very little in common with the core three besides their shared German heritage, especially the latter two, whose music concentrated almost exclusively on electronic instrumentation and avoided the psychedelic rock that characterised the original Kraut Rock sound.

Kraut Rock began as a reaction to the cultural vacuum that Germany became after Second World War. Although clearly influenced by English and American bands, it was a cultural movement that managed to offer music completely distinct from Anglo-American homogeneity. Ultimately the brilliance of this music can be seen in the myriad of genres it influenced, from techno and trance to punk and math-rock. The relentless musical innovation of a few German bands will be felt for a long time to come.

samashion



Top of the shops

Topshop has created a niche of affordable fashion which it filled. Its diverse and rich style and selection of accessories appeals to anyone whether you are looking for cheap bijou or a one-off evening dress.



FASHION

It's Thursday afternoon, I'm sipping on complimentary champagne and martinis, receiving free beauty advice and being privileged enough to watch a spring/summer 2006 catwalk preview. No I'm not dreaming, this is realer than real. Last Thursday I attended an event at Topshop's central store in Oxford Circus, with all the above listed perks plus more. Topshop in conjunction with Vogue hosted a spring/summer 2006 event at the central store and Vogue readers and Topshop shoppers could purchase a ticket for £10 (which was redeemable against any purchase on the day) to watch the catwalk preview and be pampered for two hours. For a whole two hours, I was able to step out of the February cold and was made to feel important and special. If that wasn't good enough, I walked away with a free goody bag and picked up some white rimmed aviators (fresh from the catwalk) with my voucher - the day had cost me nothing!

I am not a Topshop girl, I've always thought Topshop was for the masses, but recently I have been forced to re-evaluate my position and conclude that times are changing and Topshop is definitely evolving and on to something big. Topshop's sponsorship of Vogue's seasonal trend pullouts, their dabbling in catwalk inspired designs and their debut in London Fashion Week in September 2005 with their own personal high fashion

range, **UNIQUE** have all confirmed that this high street retailer is ready to take a step into the world of high fashion.

Topshop was launched in 1964; however her parent company, Arcadia Group Ltd (which also boasts **Topman**, **Miss Selfridge** and **Burton** under its name) has existed since 1900. After several changes in structure and management, Topshop and Topman joined forces in Oxford Circus in 1992 to create the world's largest fashion store and was reopened in 1998 as a refurbished flagship store. Topshop has now created several specialist areas in addition to its main brand. It has been selling vintage clothing for 15 years but in the last few years it has developed this area of the central store, with the lowest level of the store being the place to pick up more individual items of clothing. **Topshop Boutique** was created to cater for the more design savvy shopper and contains collections from selected designers (at a slightly higher price) as well as Topshop's own high fashion brand, **UNIQUE**. **UNIQUE** is formed from an in-house team of 14-16 designers who do not design to emulate the catwalk but to provide a significant contribution to current fashion. The label had its industry debut during London Fashion Week in September 2005 and was received well. Some of Topshop's other innovations include its first maternity line 'b' by Topshop and its own shoe store, *Shoes* by

Topshop.

Topshop is obviously changing; its central store is becoming more of an establishment than a shop. It is undergoing an evolutionary period in which the end result will be a store that links the 13-year old who is just entering the world of fashion and spends her weekly allowance on earrings to the high flying 25 year old fashionista who wants a one off evening gown. Destination=Monopoly of the industry, every female between the ages of 13 and 30 will shop in Topshop.

If what they were offering were not enough, how they are offering it is even more impressive and enough of a reason to go to the store even if it's not your preferred shopping destination. Topshop now offers in store Style Advisors who will help you shop and navigate what can be a labyrinth of a store. Customers can receive style advice by email (I currently receive a weekly alert of new stock to the store) and can hold specific items via text message. Topshop Atelier is a new service in the central store that offers made to measure dresses by appointment. 'Topshop to Go' is the new home shopping experience where the Style advisor team will visit you in your home or work place (in a Topshop to Go Mercedes I hear) and arrive with clothes, shoes and accessories for any occasion you require. All these in store treats combined with events such as the Topshop and Vogue event I attended and the 38 hour shopathon, (complete with massages and breakfast) to name a few are enhancing the shopping experience and to the relief of many making it a more efficient process.

Under the direction of brand director Jane Shepherdson (for the last 7 years) Topshop is set to deliver £100 million to Arcadia Group Ltd this year alone (amidst the worst consumer downturn for 20 years), making it their star performer. The online contribution to Topshop's sales grew by 140% last year and is set to rise with up to 300,000 people now browsing Topshop's newly revamped site during peak trading times. If national domination were not enough (when has it ever been), Philip 'Midas touch' Green, the owner of Arcadia Group Ltd is looking to take Topshop to Paris and New York. According to Green, "Topshop has the potential to be a world brand and my aim is to put it there". The Green/Shepherdson collaboration is proving to be a fruitful one with shareholders (you know who) receiving a £1.3bn dividend in the current financial year.

With 300 stores, Topshop believes its unique selling point is fashion and this separates it from discount retailers such as Primark. I would partially agree but I would stress that the second secret to Topshop's success is their relationship with the average customer. Topshop is emancipating customers around the country. If you allow them to, they will help you maximize your shopping experience. They have tapped into a new level of customer care that goes beyond 'loyalty' cards and the opportunity to shop online. They seem genuinely interested in helping the customer receive the best shopping experience they can and yes I know you will always get the occasional grumpy sales assistant but this isn't enough to alter their underlying philosophy. By allowing the average shopper like me to be let into the world of high fashion and making me feel special for 2 hours on a February afternoon it is enough for me to take more than a second look at this establishment. I feel like Topshop has grown with me, initially just another amateur retailer with not much personality, but as I have grown, the brand has evolved and as I am ready to explore the world of high fashion this brand is taking its first steps in that direction too.

I started by saying I was not a Topshop girl and I refuse to say that I've been completely converted but my tone has completely changed. I have come to realise the virtues of this super brand and despite the fact that it's getting bigger it's trying to get closer to the individual than it's ever been. My advice? Don't knock it until you've thoroughly tried it out.

words and photographs: yewandesokan



A victory for photography

Steichen's masterpiece is sold for over £2m, as the fight to make photography an art in itself is won



Almost three weeks ago Sotheby's auctioned off a photograph, 'The Pond-Moonlight', for just under £2m. Taken in 1904 by Steichen, a pioneer of photography and the developer of the autochrome method, it became the most expensive photograph in the world. On the same day, two photographs, both taken by Alfred Stieglitz, exceeded the previous price record set by a Richard Prince's Marlboro famous cigarette advert.

Steichen trained as a painter and worked for Vogue and Vanity Fair, later becoming director of photography at MoMA. He made great progress in the autochrome method of colour photography, which was patented by the Lumière brothers in 1903. The method is complicated colour-additive process on a black-and-white negative

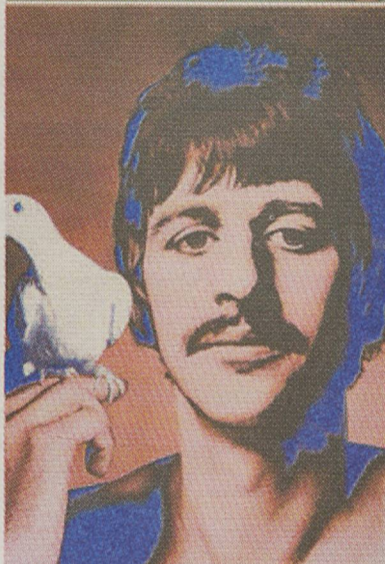
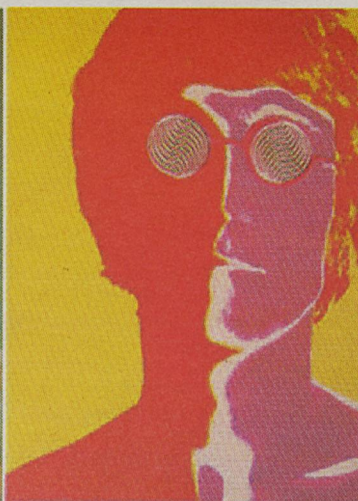
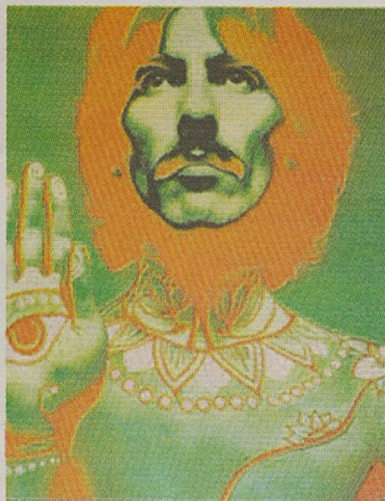
using starch. Steichen heavily influenced later American photographers, such as Richard Avedon.

'Pond Moonlight' is a wonderful pictorialist masterpiece. Steichen coloured it layer by layer, using different tones of weak colours. He achieved weak shades of blue and green, which create a multi-dimensional atmosphere of mystery and purity of nature. The photograph's presence is subtle, as the non-photographic elements clearly dominate.

Photography has only recently been given a place an art of its own and the sale of Steichen's masterpiece is victory for all those, who have fought the battle for photography's independence. However, the sale of this particular photograph is rather paradoxical. Steichen belonged to the Pictorialist

movement, which regarded the artistic elements of the photograph more than its subject. They supported manipulation and distortion of negative to make them look similar to paintings. Later, several American photographers, including Edward Weston and Imogen Cunningham, rejected this movement and created the Group f/64. It stood for 'the qualities of clearness and definition' and believed that 'the production of the 'Pictorialist'... indicates a devotion to principles of art which are directly related to painting and the graphic arts'. Therein lies the paradox. As much as photography dealers and rejoicing, the "Pond-Moonlight" may have appeared to its buyer more as a painting.

On the other hand, I doubt whether photography would ever be accepted as a self-standing art without pictorialists. Manipulation with negatives and developing is the arguably the most important part of creating a photograph. It took almost century of exploration and research in photography to create the first tricolour Kodachrome film. Pictorialists, more than anyone else, valued subtle tones, which are so incredibly hard to achieve. 'Pond-Moonlight' may not appear so spectacular to modern eye used to the snaps of Maxim, but would Avedon ever create the famous portraits of the Beatles without picture influence?



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Good Night, and Good Luck

George Clooney's new film is a provocative, accurate and richly-detailed account of communist witch-hunts

Drama

Director: George Clooney

Starring: David Strathairn, George Clooney

* * * *

1953 represented a tumultuous time in America's history. The country was progressing uneasily in an era in which Communism was supposedly rife. In February, the newly elected President **Dwight Eisenhower** refused clemency for **Ethel** and **Julius Rosenberg**, two American citizens who were executed for spying for the Soviet Union. Less than a month later, Stalin had died. Meanwhile, the American media was coming into its own, particularly in the sphere of early broadcast journalism. Set against this volatile backdrop, *Good Night, and Good Luck* chronicles the real-life conflict between television newsman **Edward R. Murrow** and Senator **Joseph McCarthy**, Chairman of the toxic Un-American Activities Committee, who exploited the precarious political situation with a self-endowed mandate to 'root out' all Communist-sympathisers. With a desire to report the facts and enlighten the public, Murrow (played by **David Strathairn**) and his dedicated staff – headed by his producer Fred Friendly (**George Clooney**) – defy corporate and sponsorship pressures to examine the lies and scaremongering tactics perpetrated by McCarthy during his communist 'witch-hunts'. A very public feud develops when the Senator responds by accusing the anchor of being a communist. In this climate of fear and reprisal, the CBS crew carries on and their tenacity subsequently proves historic and monumental.

Clooney could have made life so much easier for himself. He is, so I am told, a bona fide heart-throb, and I doubt many would have complained if he had spun out his career stealing a few more million dollars from another unsuspecting casino owner, or by wearing more scrubs on E.R. Nevertheless, he has defied many people's expectations and has proven that as well as being able to make performing hepatectomies and laminectomies look as easy as cooking dinner, he can star in, co-write and direct a film that is itself worthy of praise. The film posed a challenge for him, not least in confronting the apathy Americans felt in not wanting to re-tell this part of their dynamic history. However, by mortgaging his house in order to finance the project – granted, we aren't talking of a tiny little shack here, but still – we can begin to appreciate the film's personal scale and the commitment that drives it. Clooney has by all means created a film that by any standard is filmak-



ing of a superior standard.

Shot in black and white in a brisk ninety minutes, the film lovingly and succinctly re-creates the studios and backrooms of 1950s New York journalism, where the men wore white shirts and dark suits, the women fetched the coffee and the morning papers, and everybody smoked all the time. Interspersed with evocative jazz interludes that act as a mood barometer, as well as a little punctuated humour, the movie's sense of a nation reduced to a sustained paranoid twitch is artfully realised. Never falling into the trappings of sentiment and nostalgia that burden other similar film-making attempts, Clooney effectively plays out the drama with a very modern urgency. The principal action takes place in a darkened TV studio lit like a bunker, and for good reason: this is, after all, war. Additionally, the use of original footage showing McCarthy at work was a very clever choice, evoking drama and emotion that an actor simply couldn't have himself.

Good Night, and Good Luck is everything Hollywood normally isn't; hence, its six Oscar nominations are praiseworthy. And in any other year, this would probably have guaranteed it at least a few nods. However, 2005/2006 has shown that it is in Hollywood where the political edge is now strongest and despite the intelligence and skill this film possesses, it will be hard-pressed to take away a golden statuette due to this year's other competition. (Have no fear though George; you might well get the nod for Best Supporting Actor for another well-chosen role in "*Syriana*"

as '*compensation*', something which in itself is worth a watch.)

The film is by no means subtle in the point it tries to make, and the film is not totally devoid of 'bumps'. Strathairn is outstanding as the witty and dedicated journalist with a deadpan charisma that Paxman aspires to be, and Clooney is pretty good too. Yet, certain other characters are hardly as well developed in a background that sometimes appears just a little too bogged-down with thematic ciphers. Nevertheless, this doesn't really matter as all the viewer actually cares about is whether Murrow wins, and by how much. The film certainly gets your respect and attention and leaves you stimulated, talkative, and perhaps a little combative about the current state of our corporate-dominated media. This is, no doubt, what Clooney wants.

Ultimately, I have not enjoyed a film this much in quite so long. Provocative, principled and richly detailed, the movie also allows the relatively unknown Strathairn to shine in an intellectually stimulating exercise of what human beings will allow other human beings do to them in the exploitation of their deepest fears and suspicions. Murrow understood just this when he quoted Shakespeare's Julius Caesar on air:

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not our stars, but in ourselves."

If this is not as relevant today, in the current fog of terrorism, I am not sure what is.

alexbarros-curtis

Jostling for Elbow Room in Hoxton

The renowned fusion of club, bar and pool hall lives up to its reputation



The Elbow Room was founded by **Justin Carter** – apparently it was an idea which was spawned whilst he was playing a few frames with Kiefer Sutherland in an LA pool bar. Upon returning he hooked up with Patrick Chessells, Paul Daley and Arthur Baker and founded the first of the many Elbow rooms to come. Just over a decade on they have had such phenomenal success that they have expanded their franchise across London and even into Bristol and Leeds. Their successful formula of bookable tables, chilled atmosphere, good food and great drinks has netted them a plethora of awards: Best Branded Concept; Top 10 Burgers; Best Use of Technology and a whole clutch of Best Bar/Bar of the Year recognitions.

Food is served throughout the day, both lunch and din-

ner and the menu is an extensive array of American char-grilled fayre: drunken chicken wings, nachos, skewers; fajitas and the such. However, they are most famed for their award-winning burgers which covers offerings as varied as chilli and chickpea, Mediterranean lamb and chicken, bacon and avocado.

Drinks are as widely ranging as the food served – draught beers include Grolsch, Carling and Coors Fine Light, whilst speciality beers are also offered. The usual suspects of premium bottled beers are available, whilst wine by both the bottle and the glass are there for all of the oenophiles. Shots are can be bought in great-value shot-racks of either straight spirits or cocktails such as the infamous B-52. Cocktails, as would be expected of any trendy bar, are top-notch, and, amazingly for London, they are also excellent value for money – fluctuating around £6 but well worth it, as they are superbly made by knowledgeable and well-skilled staff using good quality ingredients – fresh juices, premium spirits, decent champagne and the such.

Pool tables are bookable in hour-slots which is a paradoxically double-edged endeavour – whilst you are guaranteed a table it also means that you only have a single hour guaranteed, but nonetheless it probably still means that you'd play a lot more than you would in your local pub where the regulars compete on a 'winner-stays-on' basis. The music played is a pleasing and ecumenical mixture of whatever takes the DJs fancy – hip-hop, electro, rnb, dancehall – or if you are lucky a live set by any number of famous musical figures.

The essential happy hour (or more accurately 'hours') is between 5 and 8 wherein they operate a 2-for-1 offer on pints of Carling, bottles of Coors Fine Light and various selected cocktails.

The clientele is very eclectic and encompasses City-suits to trendy media urbanites, old-school pool hustlers and locals looking for a great place to spend an evening.

garethrees



Venue 1: The Elbow Room, 97-113 Curtain Road, Shoreditch EC2A 3BS
Tel: 020 7613 1316
Nearest Tube: Old Street Station
Venue 2: The Elbow Room, 89-91 Chapel Market, Islington N1 9EX
Tel: 020 7278 3244
Nearest Tube: Angel

FILM

Venice

It may be overrun with tourists whose footfall threatens its crumbling bridges, but Venice and its inhabitants remain as welcoming as ever. This week we discover that it's all about the little things

THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

I remember a night drunk on wine: the three of us stumbling through the narrow streets of Venice that belched us out, without warning, into spacious *piazzi*, some conspicuously empty, without a bench or a tree or a small cathedral to pronounce them. Some of the *calli* are so narrow our shoulders grazed the sides of the walls, and it disoriented me every time I found myself thrown into a square, as if I'd suddenly shrunk in size, at a loss as to which corner to take.

Squinting beneath dim street lamps, we were trying to decipher my well-worn map to find our way home from Paradiso Perduto, only one of a handful of lively bars since Venice isn't big on night life. Paradise was in **Cannaregio**, at the head-end of the Venice-Fish; and our hostel was at the tail-end in Castello near Arsenale, the huge naval dockyard now in ruins. It was past midnight and the *vaporetti* had ceased to function, so we walked. In Venice, the saying goes, you lose your head and find your feet. In fact, for me, it hadn't taken any getting used to. The non-existence of traffic lights and roads and vehicles sailed past unnoticed.

The entire *piazza* was dark. One night falls there is no sign of life in Venice. This I had already noticed looking out the balcony of our room at **Ca' Venezia**. The calle was narrow enough that I imagine we could have leaned out the window to talk to our neighbours, had we had any. But perhaps people tend not to stay here very long. Venice is a continuous fluctuation of people. Apparently the locals move out onto the mainland when summer arrives to avoid the hordes of tourists – people like us – though of course, out of some deluded sense of individuality, we thought of ourselves as different from the usual undiscerning masses, epitomized by the steady influx of Japanese tourists every morning and every afternoon. They stick them in a *vaporetto* as soon as they arrive and take them on a quick tour, then a few hours in **San Marco**, a brief ride in a gondola, and then they smile and kick them back out. "There, that's Venice for you!"

I liked the occasional quietude though. We had taken to late night strolls and barefooted piggyback sprints alongside the water, even early morning forays into the deep recesses of Venice, crossing *ponte* after *ponte*, the romance that is the

essence of Venice harking back at us from every direction: Bridge of the Marvels, Bridge of the Tits, Bridge of Fists, Bridge of Devils, Bridge of Sighs... It is these 400 or so bridges that link up the 120 or so islets making up Venice, hold them firm against wind and water – an island of smaller islands. Everywhere I walked there was the smell of moss and musk, wafting in from the canal banks and the undersides of the bridges, from deep in the murky green water where sewage must run.

Early one morning I had sat myself at a small coffee table by the water to write. I was there before the café opened, the white-green umbrellas still clamped tight over the tables and the cluster of chairs. I remember the lull of the water lapping against the concrete banks, the intermittent squawks of seagulls, the husky hum of the *vaporetti* and ferries navigating through the lagoon, men bronzed by the sun unloading cargo. But about a half hour later the tourists flocked in, transforming the landscape of Castello. The souvenir stalls had all unfolded by then, basking in the hot sun, their gaudy ornaments on full display – postcards, calen-

In the same way **Torcello**, an island about a half-hour *vaporetto* ride away, is a relief from the crowd in Venice. Some have described its solitude as barbaric, since the entire island is only a huddle of residential houses with nothing of conventional touristy value except for a pair of churches and one house masquerading as a souvenir shop. But if by some sleight of luck you endear yourself to the local residents, the place will soon seem to you the dearest place in the world. A lady called Zane took me into her garden and hosed me down after I had fallen into the water, even offering me a selection of clothes to choose from. I left her place refreshed and dry though itching a little, clutching her



Rialto Market: riddled with souvenir shops, all of them selling melting Salvador Dali clocks, Pinocchios, masks, notebooks of recycled paper or colourful quills. It is a scintillating display, especially in the embrace of the sun: reflections of reflections, mirrors of mirrors. And of course, the gondolas.

I have hardly travelled the world but so far, I have to say the Italians are among the most effusive (and the men the most flirtatious), and the Italian landscape among the most beautiful. The thing about Venice is that it is not enough to only take in the big picture. You need to open your eyes to the details: the smell of each café, the plaster peeling off the walls to reveal ash or red or blue or green underneath, the broken hinge of a window, the occasional graffiti. There are no garbage bins and no public toilets and yet the place is clean, devoid of litter. What is more, the numbers of addresses are completely random – there is no conceivable pattern. Venice is a city full of curiosities. If you neglect to look at the thousands of microscopic pieces that make up the big puzzle, you risk thinking that every *piazza*, every *ponte* and every *calle* looks the same.

On our last morning in Venice, I herded the girls out of bed early. We wanted to see Rialto Market again before leaving – I had grown defensive of Venice, and I was determined to like everything about it. Besides, we wanted to see Venice one last time while she still had her glass slippers on. But it wasn't meant to be. The sky, slowly eclipsing the pink-orange stain of the coming dawn, was churning an angry dark gray-green, heralding a storm. We never got off the *vaporetto* we boarded from Arsenale. We just sat in our ponchos, hair slicked wet from the rain blown into the waterbus by the strong gales of wind, clutching our cameras tightly to us to keep them dry until we made a round trip back to where we started. And there they were still. The hordes of Japanese tourists, cameras hanging loosely from their necks, all wearing the same red, yellow and white ponchos, flapping around in the wind like ducks. Such tenacity! I thought. Then I looked down at ourselves and I had to laugh. We weren't so different, as loftily as we liked to think we were.

emilyding



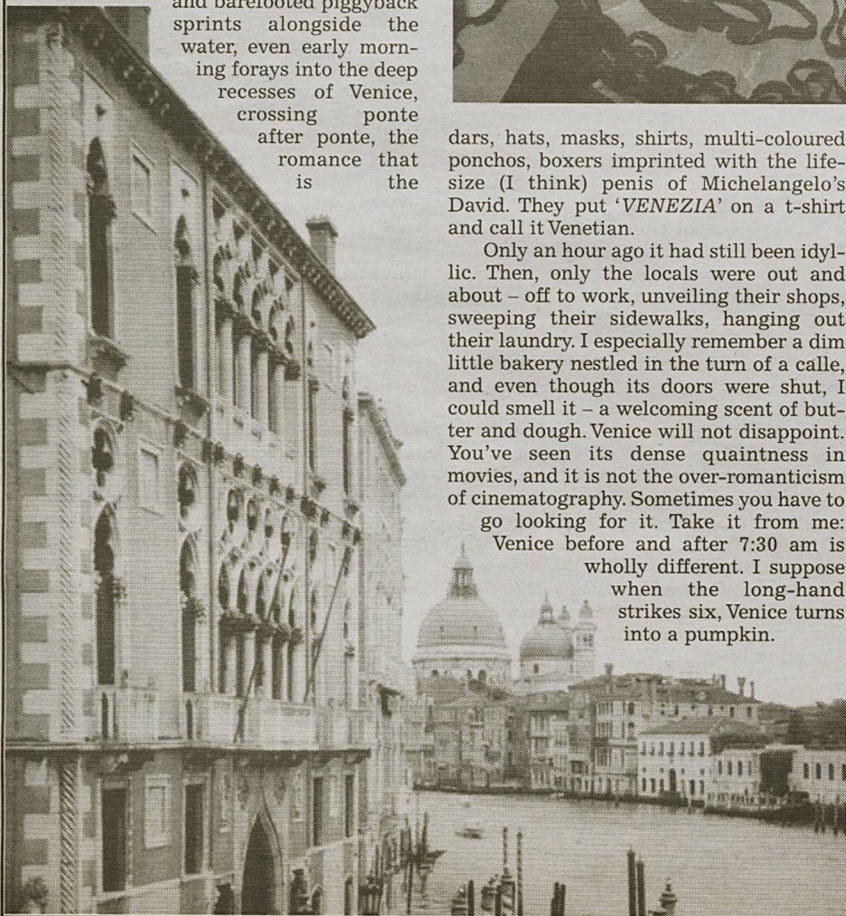
dars, hats, masks, shirts, multi-coloured ponchos, boxers imprinted with the life-size (I think) penis of Michelangelo's David. They put 'VENEZIA' on a t-shirt and call it Venetian.

Only an hour ago it had still been idyllic. Then, only the locals were out and about – off to work, unveiling their shops, sweeping their sidewalks, hanging out their laundry. I especially remember a dim little bakery nestled in the turn of a calle, and even though its doors were shut, I could smell it – a welcoming scent of butter and dough. Venice will not disappoint. You've seen its dense quaintness in movies, and it is not the over-romanticism of cinematography. Sometimes you have to go looking for it. Take it from me: Venice before and after 7:30 am is wholly different. I suppose when the long-hand strikes six, Venice turns into a pumpkin.

scribbled address in my hand (I knew enough Italian to ask her for her *indirizzo*), wearing her daughter's red shirt and a pair of jeans that, surprisingly, fit me perfectly. Such is the kindness of strangers, and I had to hug her – a complete stranger.

While I was cleaning up in Zane's garden, the rest of my company had also received an invitation into a neighbouring home. Apparently my splash had caused quite a commotion, and neighbours were eager to show us their hospitality. Luciano used to be a fashion designer, I was told when I caught up, and eyeing his white singlet and blue jeans, I detected a residue of glamour, even in their simplicity. It is easy to imagine him in his heyday. Tall and brown with wispy white-grey hair, he had a toothy smile, and just a hint of a paunch. He showed us around his house, sat us in his living room and offered us drinks, took delight in us playing the piano.

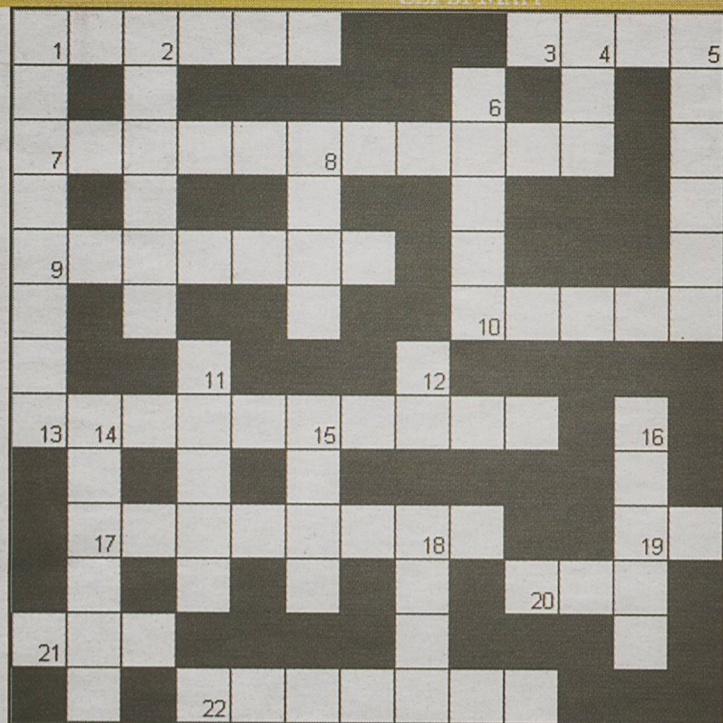
I think it is rare that the little island has the pleasure of company, but I was supremely charmed by Torcello. Taking the road less travelled, with the surprises it throws in your way, can be very rewarding. But of course, we also went through every tourist's ritual. There is always something to be said for tourist attractions, the most notable the **Piazza San Marco**, home to the **Basilica** with its intricate architecture, and the bell tower to which you can take an elevator (even if you wanted to walk there are no steps). And then there's the



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CROSSWORD 11

SET BY MATT



- Across**
- Mascot is industrious and hard-working in Abe Average's newspaper (6)
 - Lament as bordering Los Angeles (4)
 - Enslaved attaché's turn invested at the last act of the ball (4,3,4,5)
 - See 1 Down
 - Thrown out! I spoke French in Europe, Canada and Tunisia initially (5)
 - Must her rut strangely force her to speak her mind? (5,5)
 - Sure it is more than nothing? (7)
 - 16&18 Life in Italy is sweet (2,5,4)
 - Sir Ian castigated leaders for not correcting spelling mistakes (3)
 - American pill with purpose (3)
 - See 8 Down
- Down**
- The muddled worst of daft bore brought step in the right direction (4,4,7)
 - Media publicity from Brad (Vert ramp marketer) (6)
 - Allow house to be rented? (3)
 - Word made up of six parts? (6)
 - See 7 Across
 - Difficult pub profit? A tricky compromise (4,7)
 - Parts of statistics are authoritarian enforcers! (5)
 - Hesitation going into US hospital (2)
 - Woman abuser in Novara pistes (6)
 - Chugger's job is to solidify Spanish leader (4)
 - See 19 Across
 - See 19 Across

SUDOKU 11

4	8		7				9
		3					2
				4			6
	5	7					3
			1	8			
3						9	4
	4		5				
	2					1	
9			2			8	5

VERY HARD

9	3						
	2	7		8	6	4	
		1		3			
		8		2	1		9
	6						7
	9		3	7		5	
				6		7	
	4	3	8			1	5
							8
							6

VERY LIMP

Beaverlingus

The best thing about having loads of friends is you can get them to do things for you'

J. Tam

Ask

Auntie Shaw



Hello Boys and Girls! Now weren't the elections exciting last week? All those perky parliamentarians 'chilling' on Houghton Street in their jaunty coloured T-shirts! It's so nice to feel loved, and loved is what I felt with all those dreamy young bucks and buckettes trying to press stickers to my bosom. Still, Mr. Shaw got quite flustered at the sight of Stacy's angels wafting up and down the street, though fortunately now the election is over he's calmed down and no longer wants to play 'door-step canvassing'. We've got a lovely new team for this year, students, so remember to congratulate them all if you see them. And remember, dearests, that if the pressures of student or sabbatical life get too much for you, you can always write to me at TheBeaver.Art@lse.ac.uk. Keep smiling!

Auntie Shaw xoxo

Have you ever seen the X-Men films? One of my female friends has an uncanny likeness to the Wolverine character in terms of facial hair. She would be rather attractive if she would trim a bit, the question is how do I tell her this without hurting her feelings or worse yet having her attack me with her stubble?

Concerned friend at Bankside

I have indeed enjoyed the X-Men films, and let me tell you, your friend is very lucky if she looks like that Wolverine character. Madonna herself would be envious of muscle definition that pronounced! I've never been one to let facial hair get in the way of my appreciation of the female form, after all, I was a keen member of those progressive feminist communes in my youth. However, I respect your evaluation of her looks, it's very kind of you to be so considerate about your chum's cheekbones. Now, what does Auntie advise? How can you get her to lose the hair without losing your friend? The answer is treacle! Roberto, who does my bikini line assures me that sugar wax is far less bother than hot wax at hair removal, so I suggest the following plan for finishing with those follicles. I'm sure you've got buckets of maple syrup left over from pancake day - tell your friend it's this super Thai moisturizer you brought back from your GAP year, and be super generous and lend it to her. A few dabs with some cotton wool pads and she'll be as clean shaven as, well, we best not go there.

Take care,
Auntie Shaw

Don't you wish your girlfriend was hot like me?

Daniel

Well, Daniel, that would be very pleasant. Unfortunately, since some of the home movies from my private collection were stolen and released on eBay, Mr. Shaw and I have decided that it might be best to put our 'Three's a crowd' social evenings on hold for a while, so for the time being I can't enjoy the company of any girlfriends. Trust me, you'll be the first person to know once the libel case finishes.

Hugs and kisses,
Auntie Shaw

Auntie one of the few perks of my job as a barmaid is that I save on cigs thanks to all the ones I manage to scrounge off customers. Now the smoking ban's come through, what am I going to do to get my fix?

1st year Government

Well, Auntie doesn't want to press, but this law was introduced to stop people smoking in the first place. Which is why it would be utter bosh to let it stop your habit, after all, Auntie never lets anything go down that she doesn't want to. I suggest you invite some smoking pals round for some kind of social event, a soiree, ball, perhaps a dinner party, or whatever it is you kids call it when you want to get fitties drunk in your bedroom, and lock them in your room for the duration of the evening. By the next day, you'll find that one whiff of your soft furnishings will give you a full eight hour nicotine hit!

The wife's stomach keeps getting fatter, he eats really weird food combinations and is now being sick every morning. Could he be pregnant?

Anon

One of my friends had a similar problem at our Catholic high. She had the same symptoms as your wife, but refused to believe she was pregnant as she had had sex with Darren Carter standing up. Unfortunately, Darren's sphere of knowledge only included the birds, and not the bees, so poor Julia grew larger and larger, and eventually had to go on a very long holiday with her 'aunt' in Lime Regis. Her family still don't know to this day. Now what about your conundrum? Well, maybe Darren can be illuminating here too. You see, he had sex with Bishop O'Connor standing up, lying down, every which way you can imagine, but both parties managed to escape getting in the club because they were, and here's the crucial part, both MEN. Now, I suspect in your case your 'wife' is getting fat and vomiting in the morning because he overdoes the cakes and cosmopolitans, and so you really have nothing to worry about (apart from your worrying ignorance of O-level biology).

Yours,
Auntie Shaw xoxo

My housemate smells like sugar pie.

Manor house dweller

She might be sweeter than a treacle tart, my baronial pen-friend, but if you continue to revel in your olfactory obsession you'll only hurt your housemates and yourself. It's hugely difficult to keep a house together when some of the members are coupling up. For the time being, just control your urges. If that's too hard, just steal their pillowcase when they're out and keep it tucked under your mattress as a kind of lust-methadone for the hard times. Soon your house will have split up and gone their separate ways for the summer, but still friends thanks to your carnal control. Then, you have Auntie's blessing to get all the sugar you want. One day at a time, sweetie!

Auntie Shaw

...don't you like the sound of my voice?

Rothna

Well, I'm not sure what you sound like dear. Have we met? Was it at that swingers event last week? If so, Mr Shaw gave me rave reviews!! Ooh my, thank you for teaching him that one legged saucy snake. It's done wonders for my g spot. Not so much for my joints though. Why not join us sweet voiced lady.

Love ya,
Auntie Shaw

A modern-day Renaissance man

Andy Hallett spends some quality time with M. Valerie Giscard d'Estaing discussing politics, Europe and *La Vie en Rose*

He may have two nicknames, either "VGE" or, more rudely, "L'Ex" (since he is the only surviving former French President), but, one would imagine, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing is not the easiest person in the world to like. I was keen to speak to him about his views on all things European, but I was also very much aware of his aristocratic, rather aloof background and some extremely questionable decisions he made when President, none the least of which was his crucial support for the African dictator "Emperor" Bokassa. However, after spending around 40 minutes in his company, I was charmed by his wit and direct way of talking to the extent that I largely forgot, frankly, my concerns about his career and life. Such is the power of the successful French politician.

We met in the outrageously plush sitting room of his suite at the Connaught, one of the most expensive hotels in London. After arriving 10 minutes late, a quick glance confirmed that M. Giscard d'Estaing was entirely at ease with the decadence which surrounded us. His suit looked like it cost more than my education, and his general appearance was still, at age 80, that of the dignified French bourgeoisie, his height something of an indication of the esteem which many hold him in. However, after a quick bonjour and handshake we were down to business. We begin by discussing what the infamous French "no" to the European Constitution, which he was in charge of drafting, meant for Europe. He was blunt. "When people vote, you don't know why they vote... maybe they're dissatisfied with the regime" he says, before claiming, perhaps arrogantly, that "in France, people didn't vote against the constitution (but the government)". "Absolutely not," is his quick answer to the question of whether the successful no campaign was the French, amongst others, showing their rejection of how Europe is being run and where it is going.

However, VGE also accepts that in France "a minority" is worried that Europe is "too liberal," threatening France's *modele sociale*. But this does not stop him stating that France should vote again, "not before (the 2007) elections," but what for, he is quite vague, simply suggesting a "simpler" question to be put to the French electorate.

Indeed, he makes a coded attack on Jacques Chirac, a man he is known to loathe, claiming his is a "lame-duck administration," even though Chirac can, constitutionally, run for a third term as President. Knowing he is completely against Turkey ever joining the EU, I ask him about

where Europe should end in the East and the problems of Turkey joining. Once again, a quick answer in superb English is forthcoming. "We must be sensible," he proclaims, claiming that Turkey's addition would be too large a shock to a Europe which even now "we are unable to organise." Giscard d'Estaing then effectively brands Turkey as non-European, saying, "we must wait (for non-European nations)... (the EU) must be popular with the people" first. Turkey is merely described as "a great neighbour" and proposals to admit it "unrealistic... it will not happen."

What, then, is the definition of a European country? He begins by claiming "it is easy," mentioning geography and the basic international definitions of continents. However, he concludes that the Eastern borders are a problem, as "they were never very fixed," using Ukraine as an example of a state which is "a mixture of both (Russian and European influences)." And is, then, the EU truly a federation of 25 states, rather than the old system of France and Germany effectively "running the show"? VGE says the Franco-German alliance is "a part of Europe, its not the whole of Europe," but that "the system stops" if France and Germany disagree or are disconnected. He compares this alliance to the Entente Cordiale, remarking on how the latter has not changed from one of pragmatism, praising how "comfortable" French and German politicians are with each other. This is not surprising, given how close VGE was to German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in the 1970s, when they both in power. However, realistically France and Germany are now far less influential at a European level, since many of the new Eastern members seem to have a more "British" conception of where Europe should be going.

As to European integration, M. Giscard d'Estaing is fairly scathing of British proposals for "levels" of European membership and integration, saying that being branded "second-class" would not be liked by the outlying countries not in the "core" of Europe. He hopes it will not happen, given the associated problems of some countries adopting more European protocols and the like than others.

We then move on to foreign policy, VGE saying the EU should be "both" a counterweight and a partner to the United States since "we belong to the same system", whilst observing that Americans "are the children of Europe". In perhaps a coded reference to, in particular the Iraq war, VGE claims that "we are more legal than they are," and "sometimes (the US) goes too far." He even

goes so far as to claim that had "Europe been more united, (the war) may not have taken place" and that Europeans "are really peaceful people now."

In answer to the question of which single person has most promoted European integration and furthered the condition of Europeans, Giscard d'Estaing praises Franco-German Robert Schumann, one of the key figures in establishing what is not the EU, as having "vision." However, he counsels against too deep inte-

'Giscard d'Estaing says the Franco-German alliance is "a part of Europe, its not the whole of Europe," but that "the system stops" if France and Germany disagree or are disconnected'

gration, mentioning national culture as an essential element to be maintained, and says some "people are lobbying to go too far," which is in opposition to his own preference for a "strong European level and a strong national identity level."

Throughout the interview, VGE is a very physical communicator, waving his hands around and looking straight into one's eyes as he talks. However, he was also keen to put the interviewer at ease, making sure I do not want a coffee and punctuating his answers with smiles and small jokes. We chat for several more minutes, and by the time he leaves I have completely forgotten the issues I had with VGE before meeting him.

To many in Europe, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing is a symbol of the old Europe which they are completely opposed to. Perhaps his successes, now in the past, come from what the French call his *je ne sais quoi*; certainly this was the impression I received.

Valerie Giscard d'Estaing

President of France: 1974-1981

From 2002 - 2003 he served as President of the Convention on the Future of Europe

Currently

- > President of the CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions)
- > A member of the Académie française (French Academy)
- > A de jure member of the French Constitutional Council



Waking up the sleeping dragon

Leeshai Lemish looks at the changing political climate in China and urges us to act in solidarity with the Chinese people

You may have seen people walking around the LSE wearing sashes that read: 'Hunger Strike for Human Rights in China'. You may have wondered why students would deprive themselves of food for a day to support people they don't know and will likely never meet. Here I want to explain why not eating for a day is something that I really want to do—the very least I can do to support courageous people in China who are risking so much more.

Desperate times call for desperate measures—that is at least how the people in mainland China who started this now-global relay hunger strike feel. In a joint online statement last week they said, "hunger striking is not our first choice, but the only choice left to us, and that is to appeal with the only thing we have left—our physical bodies."

But that is not how things started. My sense is that only a few months ago Gao Zhisheng still had some faith in China's government and legal system. Gao's story is classic. Born in a Shaanxi Province cave, his family could not afford to send him to school, so he listened outside the classroom window. After junior high school he joined the army and entered the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), eventually becoming a lawyer.

Now based in Beijing, Gao has taken on the full range of difficult cases: he has represented coal miners, whose hazardous profession leads to as many as 20,000 deaths per year; he has represented a client whose home was confiscated in preparation for the 2008 Olympics; he has worked for Taishi villagers who came under suppression after they sought to legally impeach their corrupt official; he has investigated the persecution of Christians; and he has sought to represent Falun Gong practition-

ers who have been tortured.

Through his legal work, Gao came to realize that the rule of law has not been established in China. He thus began writing open letters to CCP leaders Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao informing them of his discoveries. The letters were written with a tone of respect, hoping that, once they found out about the atrocities taking place across the country, the leaders will want to correct them.

Extremely troubling to Gao was the subject of his third open letter: the six-year persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. The campaign, which was started by former CCP leader Jiang Zemin in 1999, has taken the lives of at least 2,838 innocent people. Jiang had become fearful and jealous of Falun Gong's popularity in the 1990s—more people were practicing the discipline's five gentle exercises and trying to lead their lives by Falun Gong's principle of 'Truthfulness-Compassion-Tolerance' than there were members of the Communist Party, which advocates very different principles.

The "continuous, systematic, large-scale and organised persecution against Chinese people practicing Falun Gong" is a "barbaric atrocity," Gao wrote. His December letter documents gut-wrenching torture in secret mountain chambers and calls for the rule of law.

But Gao's letters were met with silence and then persecution. First his firm was shut down. Gao kept writing. Then his legal license was revoked. Gao kept writing and joined the millions of Chinese who have resigned from the CCP and its affiliate organizations over the last year. Then they put his family under 24-hour surveillance. He kept writing. Then he was detained. But by then Gao had become an increasingly promi-



nent international figure and had to be released. After his release, Gao narrowly escaped an assassination attempt, but he keeps writing online.

All of the CCP's moves to silence Gao have backfired. He has become more daring and is receiving broad support from fellow Chinese. Lawyers have joined hands with him, government officials quietly give him a pat on the back, and phone calls, text messages, and letters of support pour into his office from all over the country. China's human-rights-advocacy community is rallying behind Gao, united for the first time.

It is a community that, having read the 'Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party,' has become increasingly clear about the CCP and has realised that, though they each have different grievances, the share the same root problem. Ordinary Chinese, too, are gradually coming to the same conclusion and are realising that they have been lied to their entire lives.

They have realised that Great Leap Forward famine that killed 30-40 million people was caused not by 'natural disaster' but by the CCP's policies themselves. They have come to question the CCP's revolutionary myth and the Party's historic legitimacy. Those who had not known it already have found out it was the People's Liberation Army that opened fire on students in Beijing in 1989, not the other way around. They have discovered Falun Gong is not an 'evil cult' but a peaceful group of people brutally persecuted by the CCP for their beliefs, and they have been shocked by the knowl-

edge that the Tiananmen 'self-immolation' was fabricated.

A letter from the Chinese 'Relay Hunger Strike for Human Rights Support Group' shows the depth of the introspection behind this new courage: "Just as the Nine Commentaries says, 'Each one of us should reflect on our innermost thoughts and examine whether our cowardice and compromise have made us accomplices in many tragedies that could have been avoided.'"

What is more, these people have recognized that the CCP has not fundamentally changed. Yes, much has changed in China: there are skyscrapers in Shanghai and a stock market in Shenzhen; Chinese can get on many, if not all, websites and study overseas; official corruption can be criticised in the media and some lawsuits are successful. But what has not changed is that the CCP is obsessed with preserving its power, not the good of the people. Can journalists publish opinions that call for an end to one-party rule without being arrested? Can the 10,000 people executed a year receive a fair trial? Are people free to worship peacefully without fear of arrest and torture? If the country is ruled by a corrupt and murderous person like Jiang Zemin can the people replace him? They cannot.

Gao and his supporters are challenging all of this in order to protect human rights. They are living proof of how the 'Asian values' debate is no longer valid—Chinese people want the same things that Western people do, and while they may want economic rights, they clearly want social and political rights as well.

But while courageous, these people are also in great danger and need our support. All of Gao's legal staff and many of his supporters have been arrested, prompting Amnesty International to issue a press release. HIV/AIDS activist Hu Jia has disappeared and his wife Zeng Yinyan is now on hunger strike, too. These are just a few examples. The Relay Hunger Strike Group has called for people inside and outside China to join them and support their non-violent effort for human rights.

That is why I, along with members of LSE's Amnesty International and anyone else who is interested, are holding a relay hunger strike on Houghton Street. Different people likely have different motivations for joining the hunger strike: some might care about labour rights, some about women's rights, some about religious freedom, some about Uighurs, some about Tibetans, and so on. Now we can all care together, and our caring raises the international profile of these brave people and makes it that much harder for the CCP to persecute them.

Here in London, we join the hunger strike because we can do so without fear and because we do not take this privilege for granted.

Students, staff, administrators and others interested in joining the hunger strike for one day are welcome to write to:

LSEhungerstrike@yahoo.com



Tiananmen Square, Beijing, 1989

The new age in politics

Sam Lehmann questions the role of gurus and celebrities in forming public opinion



The image of Tony and Cherie Blair smearing watermelon and papaya over each other in a mud bath is an enduring one. So enduring, in fact, that it may haunt me for the rest of

my life. And now, as such an image weaves its way into your head, you may never be able to look at

Cherie Blair with the same longing, lustful gaze as I once did.

The rebirthing ritual which the Right Honourable Tony Blair and Cherie Booth QC decided to engage in on holiday in Mexico way back in 2001 was the tip of iceberg in the Carole Caplin affair, and heralded the beginning of a new wave of the lifestyle guru.

Mrs Blair's indulgence in the form of a New Age life coach has continued to this day. It has become part and parcel of our modern society. Intelligent, mature adults visit these 'experts' in their droves for instruction on how to live their lives. The simple principle that you should 'be yourself' has been replaced with a more dangerous and controlling notion of the way you should be feeling, thinking and living.

The power wielded by such gurus is more influential than at first glance. Tens of thousands of people allow their lives to be dictated by individuals who in reality know very little, and are making a living out of spouting clichés. The lifestyle guru has now manifested itself in many forms, and sets out to control our way of thinking more than ever before. The worst manifestation is the celebrity lifestyle guru.

Prince Charles is the prime example. He is, for all intents and purposes, a celebrity. His status and profile has far-reaching influence, even before he has become our future King of England. No doubt influenced by

his own life coaches and holistic guides, his meddling in governmental affairs has been well-noted of late. His advocacy of alternative therapies has led to the government now funding alternative medicine through the NHS, for instance. And the leaks from his diaries that appeared in the national press recently suggest that his desire to project his political beliefs upon society will not end once he takes the throne.

school dinners. And there are a lot of individuals, especially in America, who have no idea what they are talking about and yet have more influence through the medium of celebrity than elected officials and experts. Take Martha Stewart, for example. Or Rosie O'Donnell, who argues for gun control in the US yet has an armed bodyguard accompany her. Even those with important messages can be dangerous, though – using their strong and popular public profile to back their fashionable cause can distract people and politicians from the duller, but equally important issues. You won't see Bob Geldof staging a rock concert to raise the profile of a pension crisis. Not for a few years anyway.

This brings us to the question: why do we allow these unelectable and unaccountable people to influence our lives so much, whether they be a 'qualified' lifestyle guru or trendy celebrity? Is it the cynicism towards authority, created and compounded by our distrust of politicians?

I fear for a future where a reformed Pete Doherty is lecturing us on genetically-modified crops. People need to make up their own minds, rather than lazily leaving the decision-making up to hired gurus and celebrities. We need to start trusting elected authority, and, dare I say it, politicians to represent us. Only then will the non-fashionable, but equally important, issues be tackled too.

'I fear for a future where a reformed Pete Doherty is lecturing us on genetically-modified crops'

At least it can be said that Charlie has a grain of intelligence. There are many celebrities who feel it is their duty to lecture people on how to go about life. Perhaps it started back in the early 1990s when celebrities were asked by governments to help end voter apathy and get involved in 'making politics cool.' Since then it has gone downhill. Of course, there are celebrities with genuine and important messages to get across. Bob Geldof on poverty, Bono on poverty, Jamie Oliver on

Internship or internment?

Features Correspondent Lisa Cunningham sets out to boost her CV, and asks whether it's worth all the hard work

I woke up last Thursday morning nervous but excited. I would not be trudging into uni, still half asleep, with cornflakes dribbled down my front. I wouldn't be finding a spot in the library, nor attending lectures. I had an interview. My stomach flipped; I wanted this so badly. I had the chance to get experience with an organisation I respected and admired. This would look impressive on my CV, and hopefully make me stand out from the crowd when the ferocious job hunt begins in earnest.

Instead of grabbing my usual mini skirt and cute cardigan combo from the wardrobe I was dressing in smart black trousers and a crisp white shirt. My hair was not its usual unruly self – I had taken the time to straighten it and tie it back in a 'no messing, I mean business' bun. I devoured a power breakfast of porridge and prunes, recommended by my sister, an avid follower of the GI diet. I knew I had to make the best impression, I considered myself lucky just to get an inter-

view.

While on the tube I had a thought: all this effort, but what am I really getting out of this? My interview was for an unpaid internship, if I was hired I would be working for free. I would still be studying for my Masters full time, but expected to work three days a week. Unlike other masters programmes at different institutions, I wouldn't be earning any class credits for my efforts. The prospect of going into the library to read for classes and write essays after a long hard day in the office was decidedly grim.

Arriving at my destination, the doubts vanished from my mind. I looked up at the office from the street with a hint of wonder and awe. "I could be working here," I thought to myself, proudly. Not before a quick once over in the mirror to check for toothpaste residue, stray hairs, and smudged make-up, I purposefully marched through the door.

The interview went well. To my surprise I sounded charming,

articulate and enthusiastic. My answer to one of those annoying quirky questions that are designed to assess your personality seemed to go down particularly well: "Tell us what inanimate object best represents you?"

"A bouncy ball." Cue confused expressions.

"I'm never down for long and I always bounce back." Cue laughter; mission accomplished.

In fact, they were so impressed I was offered the position on the spot.

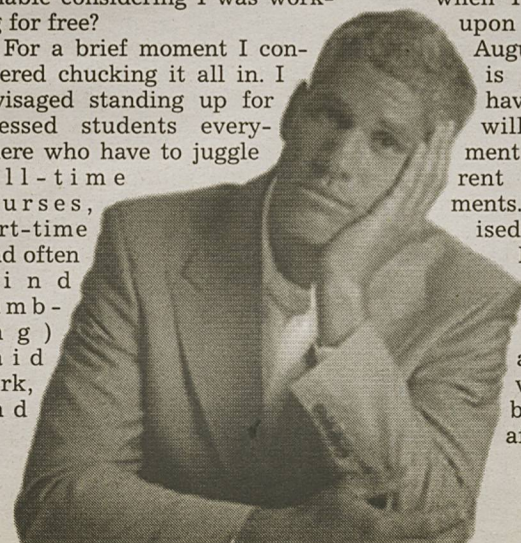
Arriving at the office on my first morning, I was summoned to a meeting with the Director, where I was briefed on my role within the organisation and what my responsibilities would be. The list seemed endless. I am never one to be frightened of hard work, but this seemed a tad excessive. They weren't even paying me full travel expenses, never mind a wage. Didn't I make clear in the interview that I was still a full time student and my Masters was my main priority? I took this opportunity to reassert my role as

an intern by telling them I wouldn't be able to come into the office on Monday; my hot water had been temperamental for a few days and I had to wait in for an engineer. This was met with a cold stare. How was I supposed to do my job if I was at home without internet access? I was flummoxed. Wasn't this a little unreasonable considering I was working for free?

For a brief moment I considered chucking it all in. I envisaged standing up for stressed students everywhere who have to juggle full-time courses, part-time (and often mind numbing) paid work, and

internships just to secure a job at the end of their studies. We are over-worked and under-paid. It is unfair that we have to subject ourselves to essentially slave labour while still learning to increase our employability.

Of course this was just a fleeting thought. How could I risk not standing out from the crowd when I come to embark upon my career in August? The job market is so competitive, I have to ensure that I will secure employment so I can pay my rent and loan repayments. Inevitably, I promised to stay late on Monday to make up the time and apologised for the inconvenience my absence will cause. I wanted to make the best impression, after all.



Anti-Israeli is not anti-Semitic



Richard Coopey explains why we should all have the right to criticise the Zionist project, without being accused of anti-Semitism

I am not an anti-Semite. I do not believe that Israel should be "wiped from the map," nor do I condone the rise in anti-Semitic attacks in Europe. I do not deny that the Holocaust happened, nor do I support suicide bombings in the cafes and shopping malls of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. However, I feel that I have the legitimate, democratic right to criticise the actions of the Israeli government. I do not believe it is right to build a wall around Palestinian land; I do not believe that the Palestinian people should be condemned to live as refugees, nor do I believe that the Israeli army has the right to shoot unarmed children because they think they might possibly be acting a little odd, for example playing football near a border area.

Mark Feerick launched a vigorous defence of Israeli policies in last week's *Beaver*, and there is much to commend in what he said. It is undoubtedly true that the state of Israel has a perilous existence. However, Mr Feerick must accept that there are people who do not agree with his assertion that Israel's "right to exist is beyond question." Personally, I do believe in the right to a Jewish homeland, but I also believe that the Israeli people must accept that they are attempting to build their homeland on someone else's country. The difficulties of balancing biblical right to land with modern realpolitik and practicality is undoubtedly difficult, but in the end, compromise is essential.

The argument that Israel will

not allow a Palestinian state on their borders which is hostile to them is self-defeating. It is self-defeating because the terrorism will never go away until there is a Palestinian state, in much the same way that the Zionist terrorism against the British rulers of Palestine did not go away until there was a Jewish state. There will always be militants who want to destroy Israel, but their support would dry up if Israel followed a moderate policy. Most people on both sides want peace, and the fuel for the extremists would dissipate if there appeared to be progress.

Alas, this requires a first step. Mr Feerick is right to suggest that Israel's foes lack the constraints of statehood, yet this very statehood would help to restrain the Palestinians. There was an old belief in British politics that people with a "stake in society" would not act against its interests. The same is essentially true in international politics. If the Palestinians could be brought within the system, then they would have a reason to behave and operate within its rules. In essence, it would allow them to be subjected to the 'carrot and stick' of international diplomacy, with aid and investment in a stable Palestinian state being the alternative to a chaotic disintegration and poverty. At the moment the Israeli government appear to be wielding a very large stick with a remarkably small carrot.

The election of Hamas may make it harder for Israel to make this first step, but there must be a

recognition that they were primarily elected for domestic political issues of corruption and service provision rather than those of foreign policy. Hamas undoubtedly must acknowledge Israel's right to existence, but the Israeli government and army must also stop carrying out what essentially are state sponsored acts of terrorism. Some actions, such as the assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, I cannot condone, but I can understand. Israel's unique national security position must lead to unique measures of defence. However, this position is not justification for the cold-blooded murder of civilians, including children and human rights campaigners. The Tom Hurndall case is a tragic indication of that Israeli army are capable of massively overstepping the line. Mr Feerick's idealised vision of the Israeli justice system rather falters with the statistic that only ten soldiers had been indicted, and none convicted, regarding the deaths of civilians between the start of the most recent intifada and January 2004. The Israeli government needs to get its own house in order, as well as the Palestinians, and it is not anti-Semitic to say this.

The Arab world believes that the West supports Israel at the expense of the Palestinians. It is hard to argue with this assertion, given most American policy in the region. However, this is a dangerous road, as it provides fodder for those who wish to propagate such poisonous views as the idea that the West is a "Zionist conspiracy".

I would not dream of suggesting that this is anything beyond perverted fantasy, but there are issues which can so easily be twisted. The recent juxtaposition of the David Irving case and the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) provides a biting example. It is easy to see how it appears to many that "the West" (easily portrayed as a homogenous entity) protects the sensitivities of Jews, by preventing what is, whilst repugnant, legitimate historical debate, whilst championing free speech when it allows the publication of something which offends Muslims. For me, both the cartoons and Irving's speeches and books should be allowed, despite the deeply offensive nature of the former, and the facile crassness of the latter. Freedom to have an opinion and to share it with others is a fundamental human right.

For me, the biggest danger is the risk that criticising Israel is becoming equated with anti-Semitism, and this clouds the issue and prevents debate. There are extremists on both sides, and a moderate, common sense middle ground is needed. In the end, there will have to be a two state solution which allows the existence of an Israeli and Palestinian state, side by side in

peace. There will be no agreement, however, if discussion is stunted. Criticism is warranted, and needed, of both sides, and it should be done without fear of being called a religious bigot. I

believe that Islamic extremism is indefensible in the

West, and I believe that suicide bombings in Israel are disgraceful

(as well as counter productive for the Palestinian

cause). I am

able to balance these

beliefs

with a disgust at

state-sanctioned

murders of children by the Israeli

army. I do not seek moral

equivalency of terrorist

and soldier, it is not my

place to make such

grand judgements.

But I do condemn the

waste of human life

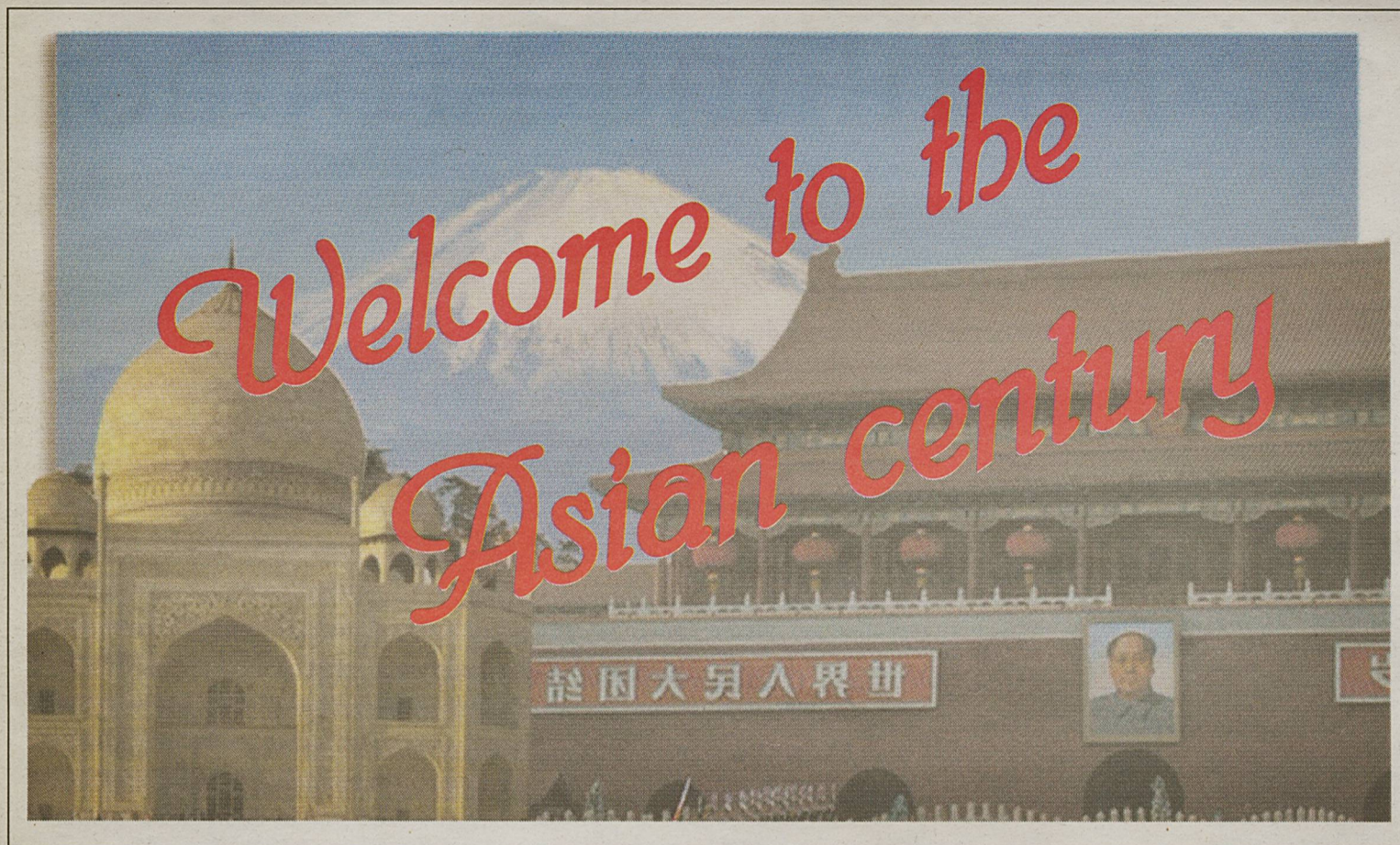
on both sides, and I

refuse to accept that

anyone who criticises

Israel should be dismissed as an anti-Semite, just as I would not wish to be portrayed as Islamophobic for making legitimate criticisms of the Palestinian cause.





Features Correspondent Yee To Wong examines the future of relations between the Asian powers

This week, India captured headlines across the world by concluding a "historic" nuclear accord with the United States. US President George W. Bush, in his first state visit to India, agreed to allow India access to US civil nuclear technology while his host, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, approved inspection to its nuclear facilities. The new strategic partnership clearly has profound implications for the geo-political structure of Asia. Indeed, no one can afford to ignore the rising powers of China and India, and the recovery of Japan. Few will dispute that we are entering an Asian century, and any strategic moves by the US will have deep repercussions on international security, as the world's lone superpower is in a position of authority to dictate the trajectory of the region – whether to war or to peace.

Many scholars predict the emergence of a tripolar order in Asia, with China, Japan, and eventually India competing for regional leadership. One cannot help but notice how the situation resembles that of nineteenth century Europe, often characterised as a balancing game between Britain, France and Germany. Japan and India, the two largest democracies in the region, take on the role of Britain and France, while China, with a potentially volatile authoritarian system, is perceived as a "threat" much like Germany in the pre-1914 period. Interestingly enough, the idea of a "global partnership" between Tokyo and Delhi floated up during the "Peace in Asia" dialogue between Japan and India in 2004 to counter China's rising hegemonic status. In this sense, China's perception of its encirclement by hostile neighbours is not completely unfounded.

Indeed, the prospect of peace in Asia is looking rather slim, with little efforts made to foster closer integration and co-operation between the various powers. Relations between the three

Asian giants are, at best, lukewarm. Although there was talk of a "global partnership" between Japan and India, Indo-Japanese relations remain largely underdeveloped. The Cold War -political structure separated the two countries' geo-strategic interests, as Japan launched itself firmly into America's embrace, while India opted for a non-aligned policy. In 1998, India's nuclear tests had drawn hostile response from Japan, sending post-Cold War bilateral relations to its nadir.

'Many scholars predict the emergence of a tripolar order in Asia, with China, Japan, and eventually India competing for regional leadership'

Meanwhile, relations between China and India still have not escaped the traditional conception of the two as bitter rivals. China's "all-weather" friendship with Pakistan has always complicated its relations with India. In fact, while China fears encirclement by India and Japan, India is also worried about China's "strategic encirclement" of India, apparent in its attempt to make friends with all of India's neighbours, from Sri Lanka to Myanmar. The Chinese are viewed by the Indians as the biggest potential threat to their lead in exports of IT services and outsourcing. And despite China's rapidly expanding economic activities in the region, Sino-Indian trade only accounts for 1% of China's global trade.

The rather icy relations between China and Japan needs not to be discussed here at length. Since Prime Minister Junichiro

Koizumi took power in 2001, Sino-Japanese relations have deteriorated over a number of contentious issues: Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni shrine, right-wing Japanese textbooks, the status of Taiwan, the ownership of the Diaoyutai/Senkaku islands, just to name a few. In fact, both sides have given up hope to improve their relations. Japan, in its National Defence Programme Outline 2004, had explicitly described China as a source of "concern" with its rapid increase in defence expenditure, while China's former Foreign Minister, Tang Jiaxuan, had said that there was "no longer any expectation" of better relations between the two countries while Mr Koizumi was still in power.

The picture presented above is rather gloomy. However, there are also signs of potentially better relations between the three. There are glimmerings of a blossoming relations between Japan and India. For one thing, the two are united in their bid for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Japanese investments in India have slowly picked up steam. The experiences of Honda, Toyota, Suzuki, and Sony have not been too bad in India. With Japan facing the demographic time-bomb of a rapidly aging population, estimates are that there is a shortage of 300,000 technical workers in Japan, which accounts for 20 per cent of the world's total IT market at about \$270 billion. This is clearly an area in which India can engage Japan.

On the other hand, diplomatic relations between India and China are better than at anytime in decades. Bilateral trade is growing, and talks on border disputes have achieved some progress. China has stopped voicing overt support for Pakistan's stance on Kashmir, and India shows its willingness to co-operate in securing energy resources, when, in January 2005, it acquired 20% share in the development of Iran's biggest onshore,

which was operated and 50% owned by Sinopec, China's state-owned oil enterprise. In fact, the two share a strikingly similar realist outlook of international affairs, seeing themselves in a historical self-perspective as great and ancient civilisational centres. Both are moving towards more liberalisation and view the US as a key threat, but at the same time are pragmatic enough to favour multipolarity.

An US-India nexus is emerging with India, a democratic power next to China, perceived by the US as an important strategic ally'

And while relations between China and Japan have hit an impasse, let's not overlook their common economic and political interests. Last year, China overtook America as Japan's biggest trading partner. The two economies are surprisingly complementary. There is virtually no major trade dispute between the East Asian neighbours, as cheap Chinese goods delight Japanese shoppers, while sophisticated Japanese equipment are flooding Chinese factories. They both share a common interest in preventing the dollar from declining rapidly and in keeping exchange rate stable. Both are taking part in an effort to launch an East Asian Community, symbolised by their engagement the first East Asian Summit in December last year, and are also committed to resolve the North Korean nuclear standoff.

Having presented the case for both a confrontational and a

peaceful vision of the Asian security complex, we are now down to the most important variable – the United States. Even after the end of the Cold War, America remains deeply involved as the guarantor of the region's security, and all actors in the region, even China, albeit with much reluctance, prefer the continuation of US presence. The strategic alliance between the US and Japan needs little mentioning. Japan is home to 100,000 American servicemen, and last year the US declared an upgrade of the security alliance, seeking further integration of the military commands and their operational capabilities. A US-India nexus is also emerging, with India, a democratic power situated next to China, perceived by the US as an important strategic ally.

Besides, India's sizable Muslim population (around 150 million) proves to be crucial in the US-led war on terror. In fact, according to a poll conducted by the Pew Research Centre last year, 71% of Indians held a favourable view of America. It would only make for the US and India to forge closer ties in the near future.

By comparison, the Sino-US relation is less cordial. China is cautious of its encirclement by a string of American bases in Asia and is actively seeking to become more active, at the expense of US influence in the region. The Shanghai Co-operation Organisation, comprised of China, Russia and the Central Asian states, poses as China's counter-hegemonic response to America's military presence in the area. In Southeast Asia, China is engaging in an unprecedented level of discourse with ASEAN, to the point where the US is feeling left out. The US, on the other hand, increasingly comes to regard China as a competitor. In a report published in July 2005, the Pentagon expressed concerns about China's military power, which was considered of being "capable of prosecuting a range of military operations in Asia – well beyond Taiwan."

Obviously, there exist many reasons why one ought to be concerned about the future of Asia's security. Even though President Hu Jintao of China has envisioned a "harmonious world," where countries of different outlooks live together in peace, the fault lines of Asia's security structure are becoming more apparent, with divisions deepened by America's determination to "contain" China through its alliance with Japan and, hopefully, India. Nevertheless, I would like to end this analysis with a healthy dose of optimism, through a quote from a speech given by Robert Zoellick, US Deputy Secretary of State, in September 2005: "the wide range of global challenges we face in the years ahead – terrorism and extremists exploiting Islam, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, poverty, disease – and ask whether it would be easier or harder to handle those problems if the US and China were co-operating or at odds." Maybe the time has arrived for the Asian great powers to shelve their historical grievances, leaving behind the Bismarckian worldview to deal with global problems that await us in the future.

The 'Self-Fulfilling Prophet'

Features Editor Joshua Hergesheimer reveals that the American President is not an idiot - he's just a man on a different level

To some people, George Bush is a visionary, a bold man who will bring democracy to the world's people, defend America in this new age of insecurity, and hunt down terrorists wherever they may be hiding. To some, George Bush is an incompetent nutcase, a man who bungled the hunt for Bin Laden, got bogged down in Iraq, botched the Katrina relief effort and drove the Iranians to try and develop a nuclear weapon. As George himself famously said, "our enemies never stop trying to come up with new ways to harm our people, and neither do we."

Visionary, moron, or something in between - everyone has their favorite label. One label that you don't hear very often, however, is a prophet.

I believe that George Bush is a prophet. But not just any old prophet. A special kind - one whose actions bring about the very things he claims will happen, albeit without any recognition of his role in causing them to occur. He is, therefore, a Self-Fulfilling Prophet.

In the run up to the invasion of Iraq, George Bush told the American people that Iraq was somehow connected to global terrorism. He said that under Saddam Hussein's leadership, Iraq was harboring terrorists.

At the time, most political analysts and security experts outside of the Pentagon thought he was wrong. If there were any terrorists there, they were sure keeping a low-profile. There were no terrorist training camps, nothing to suggest an inflow and outflow of foreign fighters. In short, there was nothing that would indicate that Iraq was the centre of any terrorist organization. On the strength of the available evidence, many concluded he was waging the wrong war.

But just look at Iraq now. Iraq is clearly a centre for terrorism, a global hub for a myriad of loosely-affiliated, interconnected terrorist groups. Furthermore, not only is there an Al-Qaeda presence in Iraq, but they have a head office with a high-profile branch leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. There are probably dozens of terrorist training camps, sending jihadi graduates out into short but high-impact careers involving car bombings and suicide attacks on markets, mosques and hospitals. There are frequent kidnappings and occasional beheadings. Oil supplies are almost continually disrupted, and a large portion of the money originally earmarked for reconstruction is siphoned off paying the exorbitant prices demanded by private security firms. Sectarian violence is raging. It is not yet civil war, but it is getting close.

So, 3 years on, we should admit that, gosh darn it, George was right after all.

For the skeptics out there who remain unconvinced, let me give you another example of George's prophetic ability.

When Guantanamo Bay first opened, the Bush administration told the international community

that it was being used to house people who "hate America and its ideology of freedom." It was a place filled with "Al-Qaeda sympathizers opposed to our values of justice," people who "would not hesitate to strike against us if given the chance."

Once again, at the time, most military and political strategists outside the Department of

to the conclusion there that there was little to be gained from further questioning any of them. Yet the Bush administration refused to release them.

So, is George right? This prophecy is more difficult to verify without first-hand knowledge of the current situation inside Guantanamo. However, I still think it is possible to speculate.

fact that the detainees on hunger strike are not even being allowed to die with dignity, but are being force-fed in the most brutal fashion possible, would probably cause a few of them to develop, if not a hatred, then at least an intense disliking of what the American people are allowing to be done to them.

And, just as Bush predicted,

ment he received. The now-famous Tipton Three are the subject of Micheal Winterbottom's new movie "The Road to Guantanamo" (showing Thursday at 9pm on Channel 4). All of the negative publicity generated by these former inmates will undoubtedly serve to further undermine America's case for Guantanamo.

And even if what Donald Rumsfeld says is true, that "some of the people we released have later been captured on the battlefield attacking US soldiers," is anyone even slightly surprised? If I was just an ordinary Afghani farmer or teacher, after enduring years of horrific treatment, I would probably be willing to join up and fight the Americans on my release. And there is probably little I could say that would convince my brothers, cousins or sons not to try and avenge my humiliating treatment.

So, if George's prophecy has not yet fully come true, it soon will. The longer the detainees at Guantanamo are denied justice, the longer they are subjected to torture, abuse or humiliation, the more likely it is that they will develop a hatred of everything for which the US claims to stand. It will not be surprising if at least a few of these people decide to act on their frustrations.

One last point. George Bush predicts that the War on Terror will be a long war. It may last decades, even generations. It will involve kicking in doors, raiding houses, torturing suspects, bombing villages, invading other countries, deposing other heads of state and setting up puppet governments. It will involve rooting out and killing terrorists and their sympathizers wherever they may be hiding.

There may be mistakes, of course. There may be unintended casualties, like Pakistani villages that turn out not to have hosted Al-Qaeda dinner parties. There may be cases of mistaken identity or miscommunication, resulting in innocent people being rendered to countries that use even more horrific methods of torture than the US can dream of employing.

There may even be cases where there turn out not to be stockpiles of Weapons of Mass Destruction in countries where Bush was sure there were. After all, making prophecies is more art than science, and interpreting the meaning of divine revelation takes practice and skill. Sometimes it may not seem right at first, or may contradict the current evidence available.

But given George's track record on Iraq - which turned out in the end to be a terrorist hotbed - and Guantanamo - where people are now very suspicious of American justice - excuse me if I start to believe him.

George is truly a Self-Fulfilling Prophet. If the US continues its campaign of bombing with impunity, abrogating human rights and threatening to attack anyone, anywhere, anytime, then the War on Terror will undoubtedly be a long war. God help us.



Graphic: Joshua Hergesheimer

Defence thought Bush was wrong. The vast majority of those transferred from Afghanistan had been captured by Afghan security forces who were paid 5,000 dollars for any "terrorists or foreign fighters" they could find. It was inevitable, therefore, that most of the people had nothing to do with the Taliban or Al-Qaeda and everything to do with some soldier's greed. Most detainees were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Even the military interrogators and the CIA came

Four years on, after enduring torture, abuse, force feeding and solitary confinement, it is almost inevitable that many of the detainees will have developed a dislike for the American doctrine of "freedom." After being denied any legal status, after being refused access to lawyers, and with the fear of kangaroo courts that can sentence them to death, it would not be surprising to find that many of the detainees might be suspicious about America's justice system. The

those who were released have not hesitated to strike back against America. Several Pakistani men are currently compiling a legal case and are planning to sue the US government for kidnapping, abuse and illegal detention. Moazzam Begg, a British citizen and former Guantanamo detainee, has written a book entitled "Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey to Guantanamo and Back" (released on March 6th). In it he provides a detailed account of the mistreat-

Social Tennis

What a lovely day (finally) for tennis



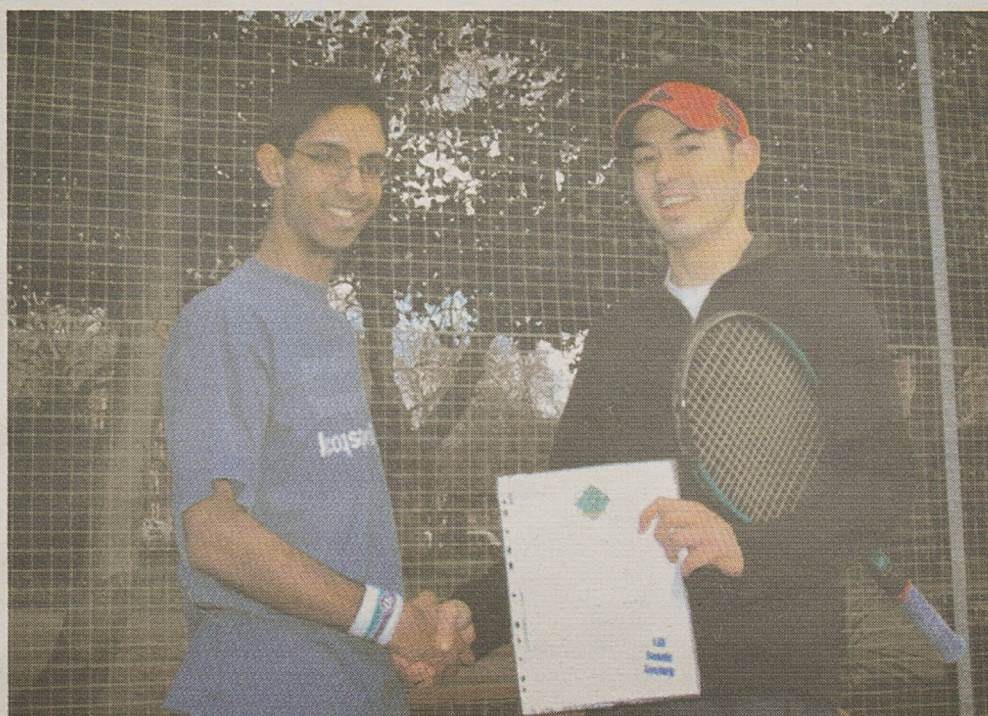
Summit
Buttoo

Back by popular demand for one week only - ok what I really mean is that one or two people have been asking why I don't write tennis articles for The Beaver anymore. Well being way too busy is one reason...work in the SU shop, DJ on the ever-improving PuLSE fm, and then the reason why I'm writing this report: Tennis society President. So I thought I should honour my position on the Beaver Collective and do this report.

Ok enough about me...let's get to the real business. Sunday 26th February on a sunny, breezy and DRY day the social tennis tournament was finally completed. This tournament started midway through Michaelmas Term, but due to numerous delays - mainly due to the British weather - it has been completed a number of weeks behind schedule. Oh well nothing new for British sports projects...look at Wembley!

The first final was between Jordi Matsumoto and Mark Ludwig, American and German respectively. Mark bundled me out at the semi-final stage quite convincingly, and Jordi was more or less the clear favourite even before the two had met! As it was, this match went according to script, occasional flashes of brilliance from both players, but Jordi never really having to get out of gear 0. I was incredibly disappointed with Mark's performance and I don't think he did himself justice.

Jordi won the toss - a sign of things to come - and elected to serve. Both players started sluggishly with Jordi double faulting on the second point, and Mark letting out German expletives (I assume!) as he realised it should be me, not him, in the final...sorry I couldn't resist that! Jordi took the 1st game with little trouble. Mark's watch fell off at the start of the 2nd game, but he re-gathered his thoughts to play a half decent game to level it up, although Jordi won't have been happy after some sloppy shots on both wings and maybe the miss of the century on a smash...ok that's a bit exaggerated. The third game saw mistakes flowing from



Men's Champion - Jordi Matsumoto receives prize money from Prseident Buttoo.

both players' rackets, with Mark even colliding with the net to concede one point! Jordi eventually claimed the game.

People watching, including Jordi's girlfriend, would have been amazed if I told them this was a tournament final! Anyway the 4th game was a slight improvement and Jordi's class was starting to show. Mark was loosening up but his 100mph serve (another exaggeration) was missing by inches. From this

game it was clear Mark's volleys (especially) needed a lot of work, and a wild forehand gifted Jordi the break he would never lose. 3-1, and finally everything was going to plan. Jordi made it 4-1 after a game that produced the best rally of the match, but as ever Mark missed an easy put away to let Jordi win it.

The players took a timeout to reflect on why they were playing so unlike finalists with Jordi adjusting his sun visor and Mark taking a swig (of water). The break favoured Mark as he finally played his first good (ok great) shot of the match, a lovely overhead that Pete Sampras would have been very proud of. Next was the 7th game, known as the crucial one in the tennis world. Not really so here as Jordi made light work, winning 40-0, to take a 5-2 lead. So Mark was serving to stay in the match. I could say he bottled it, but really he tried quite hard in this game, unfortunately Jordi wasn't having any of it. He also had the luck as a total mis-hit caused Mark to lose his concentration. And there it was...as expected, Jordi came through with ease, but not really flying colours. His reward was a peck from his girlfriend Eleanor. Oh yeah,

he also won the £65 prize money and a certificate. As you can see from the picture, Jordi was just happy to get through the match and to

take the cash. As any serious tennis player will tell you, these are the matches that can be lost if you're not careful. No offence to Mark, but I'm sure he would agree there was only going to be one winner in this final. Match time: 20 minutes. Final score: 6-2 in favour of The Yank. Make your own judgment.

The ladies' final followed and was a much more worthy event. Another American, Heather Klein, had been in meticulous form in the group stages, but her opponent, Andresa Lagerborg was also unbeaten in hers. Andresa's nationality is somewhat harder to specify...she has resided in Brazil, Portugal, Sweden here, and also Belgium! Anyway many,

including Andresa, expected this final to be as much of a formality as the men's, with Heather cruising to victory. It didn't quite turn out that way. It was colder and windier than an hour ago for the men's match, so a drop in quality would have been acceptable. But neither lady disappointed (Andresa even made an effort for The Beaver; earrings were an unusual accessory!).

Heather served first but looked nervous as Andresa powered in to a 0-30 lead. A double fault followed, and then a superb backhand down the line gave Andresa a

somewhat surprising early break. It didn't last as Heather roared back in the next game. Andresa was moving Heather around and hitting well, but a nasty bounce coupled with a double fault and a nice backhand from Heather saw it become 1-1. The 3rd game was the worst quality in the match; some hard hitting from Andresa making sure the 3rd break of serve in a row happened.

Heather couldn't take it anymore and decided to strip...a few layers of clothing that is...and also decided sunglasses were needed to rival Andresa's earrings accessory. Andresa seemed slightly put off by the break, but this game

was pure quality. An 18 shot rally was finished with a top class winner from Heather, and you sensed that she was just about to turn on the style to put Andresa in her place. And sure enough, Heather won that game. So 2-2, and nobody's had held serve yet. Unfortunately for Heather this trend was not broken in game 5. Another long rally went Andresa's way this time, after the 10th shot struck a net chord, and maybe a dagger through Heather's heart. The only deuce game of the match was certainly of the highest quality, but you could sense a little desperation creeping in for Heather as she lost her serve yet again. Andresa put her cap on and it did the trick, as eventually there was a consolidated break.

Again the crucial 7th game arrived and this time it was important as Andresa stepped up a further gear to take a 5-2 lead. It certainly wasn't all plain sailing though. Heather was marginally missing the lines, and an astray forehand put Andresa 15-40 up. But Andresa got nervous and let her opponent get back to deuce, before showing real class to win a phenomenal 20 shot rally and then produce an equally good forehand to take the game. By now Heather was looking non-plussed and unsure how to break Andresa down. So Andresa was serving for the tournament. Heather apologised for an unintentional 'tap' over the net, but clouds were gathering in the sky, and you felt also for Heather.

Andresa put away a Christmas present volley from Heather, but then suddenly the fighting spirit expected of Americans came to the fore. Some fine shots saw Heather get back in to the match and take that game to make it 5-3. But the multi-national wasn't to be denied, and after Heather missed by an inch again, after another couple of mind-blowingly long rallies, Heather eventually succumbed.

6-3 was the ultimate score, but as the report suggests, the score line hardly does justice to this worthy final. Thank God Andresa prevented an All-American affair in terms of the Champions of the Social Tennis tournament 2005/06. Andresa's sister was on hand to be the second person to congratulate her (after me), and Andresa was delighted to pick up the £45 hard cash and certificate as her prize. She did the tennis committee proud! Her boyfriend was equally delighted, and not directly because of the prize money! You see Andresa promised him dinner in a swanky restaurant if she won! Well you win some and you lose some!

Just as an aside to this. LSE social went to SOAS last week for the annual tournament and we also won that. Unfortunately the massive trophy we won cannot be seen by Beaver readers, as there wasn't a Beaver photographer who could make the short trip to Cartwright Gardens. So congratulations to the 2 acting

Captains (in my absence for a certain unsavoury reason) Alex Moore and Andresa - yeah her again, and the rest of the team as follows: Jordi M, Pedro A, Shariq G, Mark L, and Heather K for a 7-6 win overall. Apparently SOAS couldn't even provide playable balls and one player played nearly all their matches, but LSE came through and rounded off what has been a rather successful year for the tennis society, even if I do say so myself!



In Lehmann's Terms

Sam Lehmann
Editor



Hello beachflies. It's the penultimate issue of BeaverSports for this academic year. Sancha and I have done a measly ten editions of this rag tag of sporting references, but it feels like years have passed. All good things have to come to an end, though, and this time next week will be my last. It's been emotional.

But enough of that bollocks. Last week there was lots going on, and plenty to talk about. Election fever swept through the LSE like bird flu through continental Europe (looks like my distant homeland of Poland is next) and the streets were infected with campaigners begging (literally) for votes. The SU elections are no doubt covered throughout the rest of the paper - I don't care who won, especially seeing I'm a third year - so it is the AU elections, much like a certain Gary Glitter, I will touch upon very briefly.

There wasn't much campaigning on Houghton Street for the AU elections. Kav and Van (both eventual winners) ran a neat double-ticket poster campaign, but were mostly spotted sitting at the back of the Quad. For the Events race, Stephanie Idicula and Ed Frew appeared to have agreed to both not campaign, although it later transpired that Ms Idicula just wanted to sit in

the Tuns all day, and ever-the-gentleman Ed decided it was unfair to take advantage of his opponent's idleness.

Andy 'Birdman' Burton spread himself around like a venereal disease, occasionally shouting, "If you're uncertain, vote Andy Burton," doing Oliver Twist heelkicks and generally making a tit of himself. Feeling hungover from Wednesday night and sorry for his pin-shaped head, I agreed to step away from my position as an independent observer and give his campaign some much needed pizzazz. It resulted in me stumbling over backwards after being hit in the face by a girl. Needless to say, he ended up on the losing side.

The results are published below in all their elected glory. Some races were closer than others, but I think we can all be very happy with our new leaders. It's gonna be tough for Gareth Fishlock to top the hard work put in by Jimmy Little as Comms officer, but we should all have every confidence in our elected representatives. And if they don't deliver, we can cull the lot of them.

Back-tracking to Wednesday night for a second: what the fuck was going on with having to buy tickets to get drinks? I got progressively drunker and angrier before the 8pm start time came round, and ended up complaining to the Tuns manager and attacking various trolls in 'Epoch' attire. In the end I found the loophole of the Underground Bar and got my drinks from down there, but the whole debacle

was both a ridiculous and horrific affair for me and other AU drinkers. To try and charge us honest students FIVE QUID a pint in our own student bar when there's an England match on, we're already getting drunk, and with no other place to go is shocking and should never happen again. If anything drinks should be cheaper for members of the AU on Wednesday nights. Unbelievable. I will personally make sure it never happens again.

That's all I've got time for this week. The inaugural AU ball is tomorrow night, and I can't fucking wait. Ignore what Sancha says about me being the most likely to disgrace myself - going on what happened at election night last Thursday (kerfuffle, fighting and tears from certain prominent AU figures) it should be an emotional evening. The week after that it is club dinners, and of course the final week of term and final issue of BeaverSports. I promise some excellent photos of the ball, loads of match reports (send them in first though), the much-awaited special feature on our spiritual home, Berrylands, and a complete round-up of LSE teams' fortunes in ULU. If it actually rains at some point I'll even throw in a picture of that puddle I was going on about last week. It will be cracking.

In the meantime, take care of yourselves, and each other,

Sam

Great Debate

The great debate no.8: au ball

There are worse things I can do ... than to go with a boy or two...

The AU Ball is tomorrow night, I hope you gents have hired your dinner jackets, borrowed your dad's bow tie and debated whether a cum-bund would be 'too much'. Ladies I hope you have shaved, straightened, plucked and pruned. It's a big night, there is a lot of pressure on everyone's shoulder. Who will win team of the year? Who will get full colours? Who will projectile vomit their way to the toilets first? (Lehmann being odds on favourite after Wednesday's performance). Who will make a giant tit of themselves? (Again Sam is definitely the jolly, see me for sweepstake info).

Basically the odd bit of vomit and falling over is expected. In fact it is encouraged. A visit to the loo before dinner, one after and one mid dance will ... make you a bulimic. But keeping account of your drinks and bearing in mind your recommended weekly intake will make you a wanker. So fuck it. Get trashed, properly trashed, ruin your new dress, hired tux, pride, honour, principles in style. We're not professional athletes, although that should imply higher tolerance alcohol level, so we won't have our names tarnished over the tabloids. In fact you could get away with the odd bit of hit and run, kebab shop trashing and even a minor arson attack. In fact you probably wouldn't even make it into BeaverSports unless you were in fancy dress and heading

towards a southerly King's direction (easterly if coming from actual ball - clear maps will be given out on night).

So if you really want to cock up your social status, risk imprisonment, be transferred to a Poly and make sure your name is spread across not only the Beaver's FRONT page but that of the London Student, Varsity and Oxford Shit then continue reading as I debate the worst thing one could do tomorrow night.

The level of the crime is directly proportionate to your current social standing. If you are usually a first class cunt then being one is not going to get you any fame. In fact if you came sober, kept your hands to yourself and resided quietly in the corner with the chess team then you may pull... a member of the chess team.

For example, my flat mate, a pure saint, visited confession for four hours on the weekend after her boyfriend ejaculated over her mother's Prada shoes that she had unknowingly borrowed. Now I'm not saying such acts should be front page news but it is all relative. Talking of relatives, any form of incest (are there any siblings in the AU? Male twins perhaps?), sodomy, bestiality or exhibitionist sex will not be a surprise. Its not funny and its not clever so don't do it.

Now ladies mathematical logic is extremely important at the AU Ball and I advise you all to hit the library tonight and study Kneebone's 'Mathematical Logic and the

Foundations of Mathematics: An Introductory Survey.' To summarise this beauty of a textbook, if a guy was ugly before AU Ball night, the fact you are twated, probably on some weak form of rohypnol and he is wearing his dad's tux does not make him a) attractive, b) a worthy catch or c) you any better looking.

There are plenty of disasters that could happen tomorrow night: 1. Hitting your mobile off snooze while mid nap under the table during the speeches. 2. Getting so plastered that you think you're the captain of the team and therefore the world, and therefore thinking it is your duty to splutter numerous acceptance, thank you and honouree speeches throughout the evening. 3. [Censored - Ed].

So on that note, men remember there is a fine line between trying to pull a girl and rape. Ladies, just because he gave you a swig of his mate's free 1/2 bottle of rose does not mean he loves you.

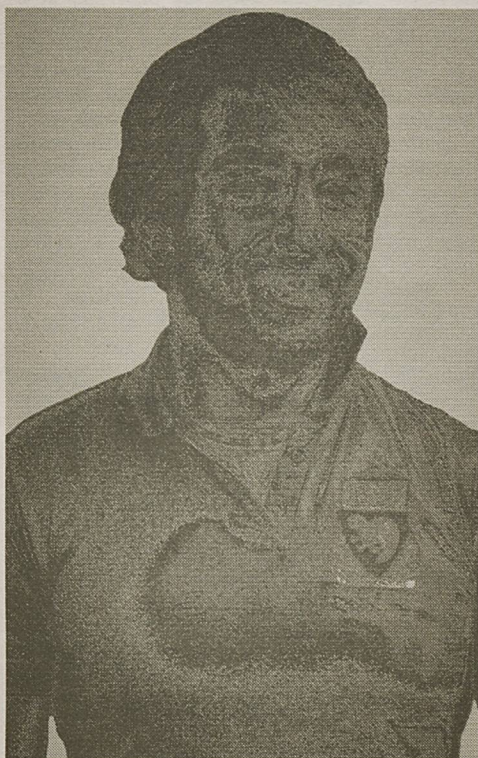
The worst thing you could do tomorrow night?

Not come.

Sanch



AU Elections



A message from our new President: Kav Patel

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who stood in the elections for the AU exec this year, those who won and lost, the sheer competition brought out around 500 members to voice their opinions through voting. This mass participation is something I would like to encourage and hope continues for the next year, not only in a social manner, through Wednesday nights, but also through political and sporting channels. I would like to encourage the return of the AU having a large contingent at the UGM weekly and voicing its views as it did earlier this term when a ban on paper throwing was proposed. All members would also agree that the AU needs to improve the retention of members that sign up in fresher's week, this, I believe, will be best achieved through their enjoyment of the sport they play and a more complete integration into the AU social events. Ultimately, I hope that the AU will continue to be a society that will significantly improve its member's time at university and will be a place where all have the opportunity to enjoy the sport(s) they play.

And the other winners were:

Treasurer - Van (Independent)

Comms - Gareth Fishlock (Football)

Secretary - Simba Mutasa (Football)

Events - Stephanie Idicula (Netball)

Liaison - Joey Mellows (Football)

Let's hope they get stuff done!

Team of the week



Seeing that there is only a week left now, and many teams have finished their matches, BeaverSports would like to take this opportunity to thank Dom Rustam for compiling Team of the Week for this term.

This week's subs are Nick Quin (7), Joey Mellows (4), and Fred Salt (1).

RAG week five-a-side

The RAG week five-a-side football tournament finally kicked off this Sunday at Berrylands. Roughly eight teams took part, though there was much incest between sides throughout the group stages in particular. Ultimately the competition was a failure, as

'Team Goddard' lost controversially in the final to Hungerford House (god I love editorial bias). Not sure who won the plate - but jolly well done to those who did. There were some thrilling 0-0 draws and the occasional 1-0 wins throughout. Many thanks to lame-duck

President Claudia for organising the tournament, and thanks to all those who took part as well. Remember to get in contact with Claudia to pay any team fees still owed - all the money goes to charity of course. Minus expenses, though, naturally.

Chess

LSE Chess make the right moves



Alvin
Kissoon

The LSE Chess Team scored 6 wins and 2 draws in the ULU League this season. The league had lost King's (clearly scared of us) and SOAS (who played in a pub with Playboy TV on a large plasma screen – no sound), but we warmly welcomed Bart's to the league...until we realised that they were a complete joke. The year started at Freshers'

Fair, where our 3-way chess-board attracted more than a little interest (black, white and red?), whilst I was asked questions such as "Is this real?" "Does this board exist?" and "Is chess fun?". This was followed by the team trials, where we managed to filter out those who were continually using innuendo in their games ("Come into my castle" indeed) and assemble a team squad from which we would challenge to win back the title of ULU Champions, having won in a record-breaking manner in 2004.

We started the season with a 3-3 draw against the defending champions UCL, with our

secret weapon and Captain, "SuperJan" (who ended the season with 7½ wins out of 8) on board 1 taking on the best London had to offer – and winning! We proceeded to Bart's, who offered little resistance, and our greatest challenge was having to cope with their noisy pizza-eating. Although I got a bit worried when the girl I was playing seemed very keen on showing me her ID card and kept on telling me how good a player I was! Imperial is always tricky but we recorded 2 very good wins, including convincing my opponent to agree a draw in an obviously lost position for me (that is, obvious to

everyone else but my poor opponent). This was done by constant pressuring, where I must have said, "I mean it's your choice but I reckon I've equalised" about 100 times, as well as suggesting having a few pints at the Tuns after the game. We completed the double against City and Bart's, both of which adopted the age-old cheating tactic of playing their boards out of order – surely it's a bit embarrassing when your "best player" doesn't know the rules of the game? This was achieved with significant contributions by Vincent (who has had 3 exceptional years in the chess team – 3 ½/4), Eric (who I

must thank for helping me write this article) (4½/8), James (4½/5), Elin (many a game has been disrupted by his cries of "check" and (once) "check-mate" – 3/8), "drawmaster" Alvin Tan (2/3) and Michael (1/4). Me? I had a shocker of a season scoring just 4½ wins out of 7, from Board 2, and being the last to finish in almost every match, but there you go.

So the crucial game against UCL came with us needing at least a draw. Despite me losing (on time) in a theoretically drawn position and having to suffer squealing, hugging and a victory dance by my opponent, as well as UCL finally finding

Jan's weakness by bringing his wife along, Eric won and the rest of the team drew in a very hard-fought contest. We pulled through a 3-3 draw, meaning that we beat UCL in the league by 1 point. However, due to the rules of the league akin to the Premiership being decided on goals scored, Imperial can still overtake us! So it's a nervous wait. Thanks to everyone who played, especially our President, Kristina, who has run the team and society outstandingly and even stepped in to play a game at last minute! Let's hope the success continues next year!

Karate

BUSA glory for LSE Karate Club



Kizito
Kiyimba

Karatekas from scores of British Universities converged on Edinburgh University Centre for Sports on the weekend of 11-12 February to tussle it out in the coveted annual BUSA tournament.

The tournament started with a bang. The trio of Haymon, Chris and Kizito were pitted against a Cambridge trio in team kata. Haymon – a purple belt – and Chris – a brown belt – were performing a superior black belt kata that they had learnt a week and a half earlier. In spite of the pressure, the trio performed impeccably. Other universities came forth and strutted their stuff. Two intervening teams were disqualified either for making mistakes or for performing the wrong kata very well. The team kata bronze went where it belonged – in the custody of LSEKC. It was well deserved, for the team had left no stone unturned in the short period they had for preparations.

Next, the individual kata competition was crowded both by competitors and by with the idiosyncrasies of the different styles. Goju-Ryu, Wado-Ryu, Shito-Ryu and Shotokan schools were all competing on the same mats, under the eyes of the same judges. Human error often imposed itself. LSEKC got its share of the misfortune when two medal hopefuls, Alice Grimaud and Haymon Sinapius lost to rather lousy performances from their opponents. Their only respite was to have made it into the quarter finals. Akshay Kundaiker was not an exception. He had treaded carefully but surely past several opponents (and judges?) into the quarters where a mixture of misfortune and human oversight conspired to stop him. A

little later, the kime of Chris Yeoh and the power of Kizito saw off a few opponents in kata. But still this did nothing to buoy the sinking hopes of LSEKC for medals in the individual kata events. Dario Ghazi saved the day when he outfoxed his opponents in the black belt category. Injuries in both knees did not allow him to exploit the full capacity of his legendary high jumps and high kicks that bring everything out of kata. All else – the power of his technique, the focus, the hip action and kiai made up to convince the judges that the bronze rightfully belonged to Dario.

On the following day in kumite, Haymon dispatched his opponents one after the other with ease. He beat his first opponent 8-0 and the fight was stopped before the full time of two minutes. It was apparent that one of the two was not fighting in their category. Before long, Haymon was faced with his elder brother, from the

University of Edinburgh. Haymon had the temerity to score first, dealing Hagen a decisive gyaku tsuki to the midriff. The brother bounced back to reality and sought to impose his superiority. The result was an action-packed brotherly exchange that left Haymon out but happy. Haymon imposed himself afterwards to win the bronze of the category.

James Gordon had proved in the dojo back at the LSE that he was bursting with talent that needed to be converted into medals for LSEKC. The weekend after his grading to a belt that allowed him to compete, he signed in for BUSA. James had one thing on his mind – to bring back a medal. The anger in his kiai was unmistakable to his opponents as James unleashed his lethal legwork and by hard punches. In the end, coming from a point behind, James achieved his mission bringing back the bronze of the category.



On the next mat, Akshay was busy in his deliberate and systematic manner. His opponents did well to keep their distance after they had tasted of the gravity of his gyaku tsuki. In a change of technique, Akshay deployed his thundering kizami mawashi kick to the back of a few unlucky ones. For a first fight in his budding karate life, Akshay performed a feat by entering the quarters.

Meanwhile, her black belt opponents must have been confused by the contrast between Alice's calm mien, and the busy activity of her hands and feet. The slightest attempt to attack by her opponents was enough hint for Alice to dive in and punch hard. The attack varied between a backhand or a straight punch to the head, and a reverse to the midriff. At the quarters, she bowed out satisfied that she had sorted the pool out.

In his turn, Chris was not daunted by his mainly higher graded opponents. This time around, he added a feint kick to the head to his usual arsenal of attacks, as well as adopting a

block and counter strategy. This recipe helped Chris sail deep into the pool and only relinquish his grip in the quarters.

Yunis maintained his reputation in BUSA by walloping all his opponents according to plan. During the arduous preparations for the competition, Yunis had broken a toe. But his quest for a medal overruled the option to stay home and relax. He still raised his legs to reach out for scores to the head. After an entertaining fight against the world junior number two, Yunis dispatched his next opponent in a straight 7-0 match to retain the bronze from last year.

In the women's black belt category, Christina made sure that LSEKC maintained a respectable presence. The bundle of energy she is went into overdrive as Christina chased her opponents around the mat. Her explosive ura mawashi kicks to the head caught many an opponent by surprise as Christina made her easy way to the bronze medal of her category.

In his very first individual fight of the tournament, Samu Korhonen was drawn against the defending champion of the category. Samu carried the day when the judges ruled that his opponent was hitting with too much contact. Samu's joy resided in having seen the defending champion off.

Kizito was saved from the dubious honour of facing international champions in his pool, when in the quarters, his opponent delivered a desperate round house kick that was awarded. Dario was not given a real chance to unpack his kumite toolbox as the judges took the unfair complaints of opponents too seriously and awarded the opponent undeserved points. He revenged by ensuring that all remaining fighters brought back a medal to the LSEKC.

At the end of the weekend, LSEKC's ten walked away with 8 medals. Credit goes to the discipline and fighting spirit that the athletes showed, but above all else, to Dario and Joseph our tireless coaches who make sure that LSEKC delivers.

Making a racquet

Tennis show their balls and serve up victory

Summit Buttoo



All hail Kav

A message from our new AU President

Kav Patel8

Chess? In Sports?!

Things are black and white for LSE Chess

Alvin Kissoon

07.03.06 thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk

Beaver

sports

Travelling basketball seconds slam dunked by Holloway

Royal Bummaway **Some**
LSE Basketball 2nds **Less**
Sunday 26th February

Joe Quayle
Somewhere beyond the M25

It was love at first sight. Ever since seeing Vincent's pink boxer shorts in the changing rooms the previous day, the team dynamic had changed irreversibly. It was

this issue above all that weighed heavily on the minds of the Super Seconds as we travelled deep into the Berkshire countryside to play Royal Holloway at Egham. That, and trying to explain to Maximos why Royal Holloway is in the University of London despite not being on a tube map.

After a taxi journey with the world's least talkative cabbie, we began to ponder our fate as only six members of the

Super Seconds had managed to reach Egham (apparently some people at LSE study on a Sunday). It was clear from the outset that Royal Holloway were going to put up a worse defence than David Irving's lawyer, however with only six players we would have to be very disciplined with our play.

The first quarter saw the Super Seconds at their best. However, having to deliberately avoid playing hard defence we allowed Holloway to match

us. The second quarter saw heads drop in typical style as we began to tire and we allowed Holloway to go in at half time with a 11 point lead. However the third quarter saw the Super Seconds rallying with strong drives and big shots from Ricardo, Heavy Duty Maximos and Vincent. In winning the third quarter we gave ourselves a real chance to catch up with Holloway. However we lost momentum faster than Britain's chances of

winning any Olympic gold medals and Holloway's fast breaks and quick feet overcame the tired legs of the Super Seconds. The game slipped away from us along with our best chance of recording a big victory this season.

A full squad might have turned the game in our favour but we can take heart from the two quarters in which we played some great basketball with genuinely good perform-

ances from the whole team. Vic Mehta was strong under the boards after coming off the bench. Vincent and Maximos made contributions with valuable points whilst Pikey Joe and Jesse made big points under the boards. Man of the match goes to Captain Ricardo who kept the game alive in the last quarter with his hot hand and strong ball handling despite playing out of position.



The sixth team celebrate their first goal against Goldsmiths in a 3-2 win which guaranteed safety in ULU Division Three

Sevenths slashed as sublime sixes secure survival

LSE 6th XI **2**
LSE 7th XI **1**
Saturday 25th February

LSE 6th XI **3**
Goldsmiths 2nd XI **2**
Wednesday 1st March

Rich and Phil
Land of Berries

The shabby 7ths went into this game off the back of 4 straight wins whereas the sublime 6ths had managed a paltry point out of a possible 18. Easy pickings

for the 7ths you may say, but the 6ths have developed a character stronger than Vallee's erection when he catches sight of Drela's mum. So, on a pitch more suited for the long jump and with a wind so strong that we nearly lost BabyShams, both teams found it hard initially. But the breakthrough came early as a loose ball was latched upon by Brownie, who deftly lobbed the stranded 'keeper. Now the 6ths enjoy giving up leads almost as much as Fynn likes licking arse, so it was no surprise when Nick Green capitalised on a defensive

error to equalise. 1-1 at half time.

With renewed vigour at the thought of disappointing our team whore, Rich's cousin (fit), the 6ths started to put themselves out like Drela at his beloved Tantra. Rich 'FarmBoy' Morrow and Phil neutralised their opposite numbers in midfield, giving time for Jimmy 'Crouchy' Parfitt to grow even taller. All the pressure was on the beleaguered 7ths defence, allowing V the time to nip for a shit-break at the King's ground without anyone picking up on his absence. Superb interplay

stemming from Greg and Nick 'Give Me A Nick-Name' Keehan led to Brownie coolly slotting the ball away after beating a couple of hapless defenders. That's 5 goals in 5 matches against the 7ths for the lazy bastard and 3 wins out of 3 for the sublime 6ths against the 7ths.

With Eppers investment wanking, Justin R.I.P. and GayR still AWOL, the 6ths fancied their chances 4 days later for the visit of the jewellers of Goldsmiths. However, everyone's hearts dropped quicker than Toby drops the soap in the showers,

upon learning that Polish dwarf Drela was in net. The team, 'Riddelled' with ringers, opened the scoring early on from a tight angle through Irfan, disliked in the 6ths just as much as in the 5ths. Yet again the 6ths surrendered their lead like school girls surrender themselves to our very own Will Smith, Andre.

Fynn's half time team talk of, "Keep it tight. Like a virgin," was ringing in everyone's ears as battle literally commenced on the glorious turf of B.Lands. The death threats were flying in like paper to Azan Marwah's head but

'Hollywood' Geoff remained as calm as Mylo joyriding his supped-up SR Nova around Essex. A Crouch-esque header from Crouchy made it 2-1 to the sublime but Tobes' 2nd own goal of the season (still lagging behind Mozza) brought things level again. As the clocked ticked down on several stars' last game at the Fortress, an assist from Geoff's face found Brownie who notched up his second winner in as many games. Safety was secured and bragging rights claimed, all in one glorious week. UP THE SIXES!!!