

the beaver

17.01.2012
Newspaper of the
LSE Students' Union
FREE

Antisemitic drinking game leads to brawl

Bethany Clarke and Liam Brown

LSE students are facing disciplinary action after participating in a Nazi-themed drinking game during the Athletics Union's ski trip, held at a French mountain-side resort in December 2011. Later in the night, two students were involved in an altercation, one of whom sustained a broken nose from the incident.

'Nazi Ring of Fire' involved arranging cards on the table in the shape of a Swastika, and required players to "Salute the Führer."

A video featuring students making antisemitic comments was uploaded to Facebook, but has since been removed.

"LSE Students' Union Jewish Society (J-Soc) and the Union of Jewish Students (UJS) are appalled by a reported antisemitic assault that occurred after a Jewish student objected to a Nazi-themed drinking game, that was being played by his fellow students on a recent LSE Ski Trip in France. Nazi glorification and antisemitism have no place in our universities, which should remain safe spaces for all students," said Jay Stoll, president of the LSE Students' Union's Jewish Society. "There is simply no context for what has happened here. Those who believe the game was all in good humour need to realize that when a Jewish student is subject to violence and the Nazi ideology glorified it is no joke but a spiteful, collective attack on a community."

Stoll added: "This incident highlights the worrying trends of contemporary antisemitism, but beyond all else indicates a depressing lack of education from students of an esteemed institution."

Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union, said: "The Students' Union does not tolerate any form of discrimination in any of its activities. A 'drinking game' with a Nazi theme could not be further from our values and we condemn the actions of those who participated in it. We have a zero tolerance approach to antisemitism at LSESU and after consultation with LSE, the Union of Jewish Students, the LSE Jewish Society and the LSE Athletics Union, we are all in agreement that the students involved in this incident should face disciplinary action. This action is on-going but we can say that the outcomes will likely involve an educational element alongside any punitive sanctions."

"Although extremely rare, we

want to prevent an incident like this happening again in the future. We will work with all sections of the student community to expand on our current processes, training, and policies," added Peters-Day.

Braden Mycock, President of the LSE Athletics Union, said: "The Athletics Union strongly condemns the actions taken by a small group of individuals on the Ski trip to Val D'isere [sic: D'isere] in December of 2011. The Athletics Union prides itself on our open and tolerant nature and behaviour of this sort is not acceptable and is not an accurate representation of the behaviour we uphold ourselves to. Being in the Athletics Union is about being a team, behaving with respect to our team-mates and Athletics Union peers and representing our Union and our University."

"All forms of discrimination, in this case antisemitism, should be widely condemned and seen as a timely reminder of our responsibilities both in the AU and wider society. The two are not mutually distinct. We will work with the School and the SU to ensure we reach a resolution on this and ensure that the Athletics Union remains a place that students can freely play sport and socialise with others, free from discrimination or intolerance," Mycock added.

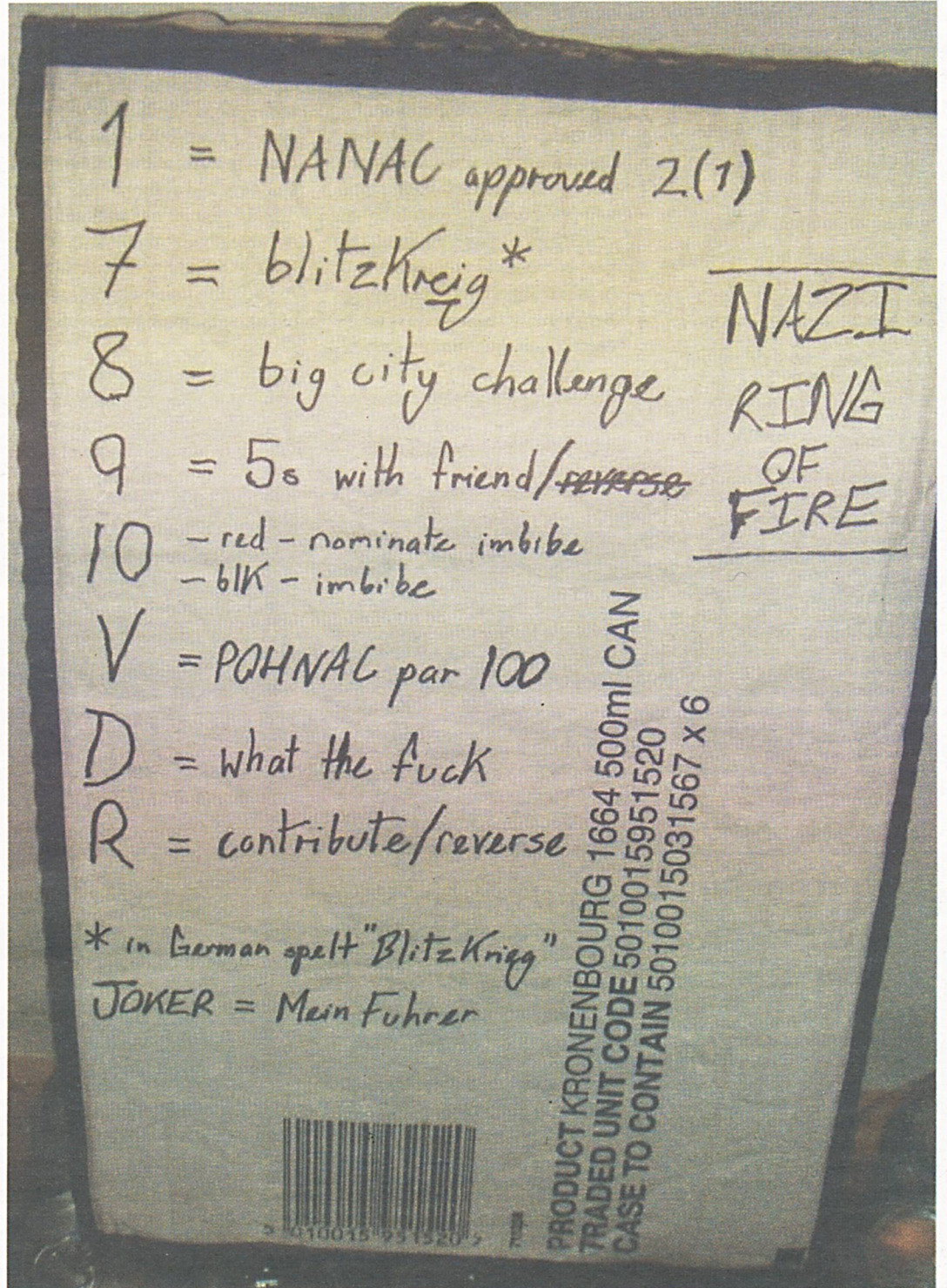
According to a statement released by the LSE, "These are disturbing allegations relating to events which took place on a foreign trip organised by the Students' Union. Both the SU and LSE are investigating these events and are prepared to take disciplinary action if the allegations are shown to be true."

"Students must abide by clear standards of behaviour set by both LSE and the SU and breaches of those standards are taken very seriously. We do not tolerate anti-semitism or any other form of racism."

The Jewish Society and the Union of Jewish Students are currently working with the LSE and the Students' Union to ensure that the issue is fully investigated, and that the individuals involved are held responsible for their actions.

This incident is the latest in a series of antisemitic incidents at British universities. Last November, four of the most senior members of the Oxford University Conservative Association (OUCA) resigned after accusing other members of engaging in antisemitic behaviour, including singing a Nazi-themed song.

In January 2010, the University of Huddersfield investigated claims that two of its students had created a Facebook group for a Nazi-themed drinking game they are thought to have invented.



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Union Bashō Diary of an LSE Student

Michaelmas: Apply.
Lent: More apps, and interviews.
Summer: Get to work.

Bashō is the Beaver's elusive haiku poet. He wonders if the above isn't a purely LSE phenomenon.

thebeaver

Established in 1949
Issue No. 762

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

Shameful display on L*S*Ski

It has come to light this week that, on the LSE Athletics Union's ski trip to Val d'Isere, a small group of LSE students were involved in the deplorable activity of playing a Nazi-themed drinking game. A Jewish member of the group objected to comments that were made and was then the victim of antisemitic comments which led to an altercation in which his nose was broken. The Beaver condemns this behaviour in the strongest possible terms. Behaviour of this variety is unacceptable, backwards and saddening. In a community as international, multicultural and diverse as that which we have at LSE, it is all the more shocking that behaviour of this level of insensitivity, arrogance and stupidity can occur. Antisemitism, like all forms of discrimination, is absolutely inadmissible, and something that should be confined to the past. However, in a deeply

regrettable trend, this variety of casual antisemitism is apparently undergoing a worrying resurgence and appears, in recent years, to have become widespread within university communities and on a wider stage. Similarly egregious events have taken place in recent years; in 2010, at the University of Huddersfield a comparable 'Hitler drinking game' was initiated and in November 2011, within the Oxford University Conservative Association there were allegations of students singing antisemitic songs.

Perhaps the most saddening element of the event, in addition to the hugely offensive nature of the behaviour of those involved, is the inactivity of those on the fringes, who allowed the events to unfold; not only did they fail to intervene, but turned it into a spectator sport, videoing it on a camera phone.

The idea that casual an-

tisemitism is acceptable as a joke and can be used in a way that will not cause offense is utterly wrong. Whether they realised this or not, these members of the LSE student body offended an entire community through their actions. 'Casual' discrimination in any form perpetuates prejudices and enforces negative and false perceptions of races, religions and social communities. The widespread nature of remarks and actions like these mean that the views of many within student communities – and our society as a whole – have been inevitably changed for the worse. If such actions go unchecked, our university will not be the safe place that it can, and should, be for everyone. Our student community is admirably diverse and accepting of others. To protect this tradition, this type of behaviour must be stamped out. Now.

LSE students' loutish behavior

As if the LSE Ski Trip's recent display of antisemitism, mentioned above, was not enough to disappoint the LSE community, it has come to this paper's attention that a group of New Year's Eve revellers destroyed a sink in the basement of the LSE's largest residence, Bankside. While those responsible left the scene, staff were forced to spend New Year's Eve cleaning up the resulting flood.

Unfortunately this type behavior is nothing new at the LSE. In 2009, a Bankside security guard was assaulted by a promoter trying to drop-off leaflets at the residence. Then there was the infamous 2005 Athletics Union Barrel Run in which LSE students caused nearly £30,000 worth of damage to neighbouring King's College.

These type of events not only discredit the individuals involved,

but our school as a whole. It is time for LSE students to fundamentally condemn this type of behaviour. We hope those who vandalised Bankside on New Year's Eve will step forward and we encourage all LSE students to stop this type of activity before it even begins.

The reputation of this school, and our degrees, is at risk. Loutish behaviour has no place on our campus.

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The Collective is The Beaver's governing body. You must have contributed three pieces of work, or contributed to the production of three issues of the paper (editorially or administratively), to qualify for membership. If you believe you are a Collective member but your name is not on the list above, please email

collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

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

The Beaver is published by the LSE Students' Union, East Building, Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE. Printed at Mortons Printing.

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The Beaver is updating its constitution on Friday 20th January.

Voting will take place online.

Further details to follow.

Collective Meeting

The Beaver Collective will be electing two new positions on Thursday 19th January at 7:30pm in NAB 2.14

Positions to be elected:

Features Editor x1
Online Editor x1

Details will be emailed to Collective members shortly.

Those not on Collective can email collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk for more information.

Bankside New Year's vandalism shuts down bar

Nona Buckley-Irvine

Thousands of pounds worth of damage were caused to the basement of Bankside Hall, the largest of the LSE's halls of residence, when unidentified vandal(s) caused a "major flood" on New Year's Eve.

The perpetrator(s) ripped a sink off the wall in the men's toilets in Bankside's basement area, causing a large pool of water to spread to Bankside's bar area and computer room.

It is rumoured that the total cost of the damages is around £10,000, though the Bankside management has not confirmed this figure.

The bar area, games room and cinema room have been shut, and will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

In an e-mail to Bankside residents, Debra Ogden, hall Warden, described the damage as "significant," with staff having to work into the early hours of 2012 in an attempt to mitigate the situation. The building had no access to water for nearly all of New Year's Day due to emergency work being carried out.

Students living in the hall of residence experienced "misery" on New Year's Day, when they were left with limited facilities, and no place to socialise.

There are no signs of these areas being ready to reopen due to health and safety issues

concerning access to water, which was cut off to the bar as a result of damage to a pressurised water pipe. Other safety risks include damage to the ceiling, floor and toilets, meaning full repair work will need to take place before normality is restored to the residence.

The identity of the those responsible for the damage remains unknown. The hall was particularly busy on New Year's Eve, as many residents signed in guests, any of whom could be responsible.

Despite having access to CCTV footage, which was installed in the bar area last year after another extreme incident of vandalism, Bankside's staff were unable to identify the vandal(s).

Some students have expressed concern that the halls management have neither contacted the police, nor made enough effort to find the person(s) responsible for the serious crime. A lack of communication between management and residents over the criminal aspect of the dam-

age has led to anger among Bankside residents.

Alexander Rayner, a third year undergraduate studying Economics with Economic History, is known as the "Voice of Reason" on Bankside's Facebook Page. On the page, he criticised how management had dealt with the act of crime, describing the lack of police involvement as a "massive oversight."

The Bankside management has decided to divide the cost of repairs equally among all Bankside residents as an "unattributable damage fee," under Residences Code of Conduct section 11, unless the culprit is found.

This prompted debate on the Bankside Facebook page as to who was responsible for the damage, and who should pay, with criticism surrounding the Hall Committee and management over the decision.

One female resident suggested that the management use the £30 common room subscription fee to pay for the damages, stating that "unlike other halls which frequently organize [sic] free events (food, boat party), at Bankside we pay for every activity... This is the most fair way."

Others have wanted to avoid paying the fee entirely, calling it "injustice." Alastair Duncan, a first year Government and Economics student, criticised the nature of the contract Bankside residents signed, saying "its an incredibly unfair contract since we kind of need to sign it so we can go to University. There isn't time for negotiation."

Another male post-graduate resident considered whether the "Bankside Committee has reasonably considered OUR FEELINGS, which are bloodlessly wronged and effectively punished in face of evident injustice on us?"

Despite this anger it remains that the cost of the damage will be evenly divided between all residents, with the management expected to inform residents of the cost within the next few weeks.

President of the Bankside Hall Committee, Shyam Thakrar said: "I know that the staff at Bankside have acted as swiftly as they can to have all the damage repaired. In regards to who should cover the cost of the damage - if the person(s) responsible is not found, then it is fair, albeit unfortu-

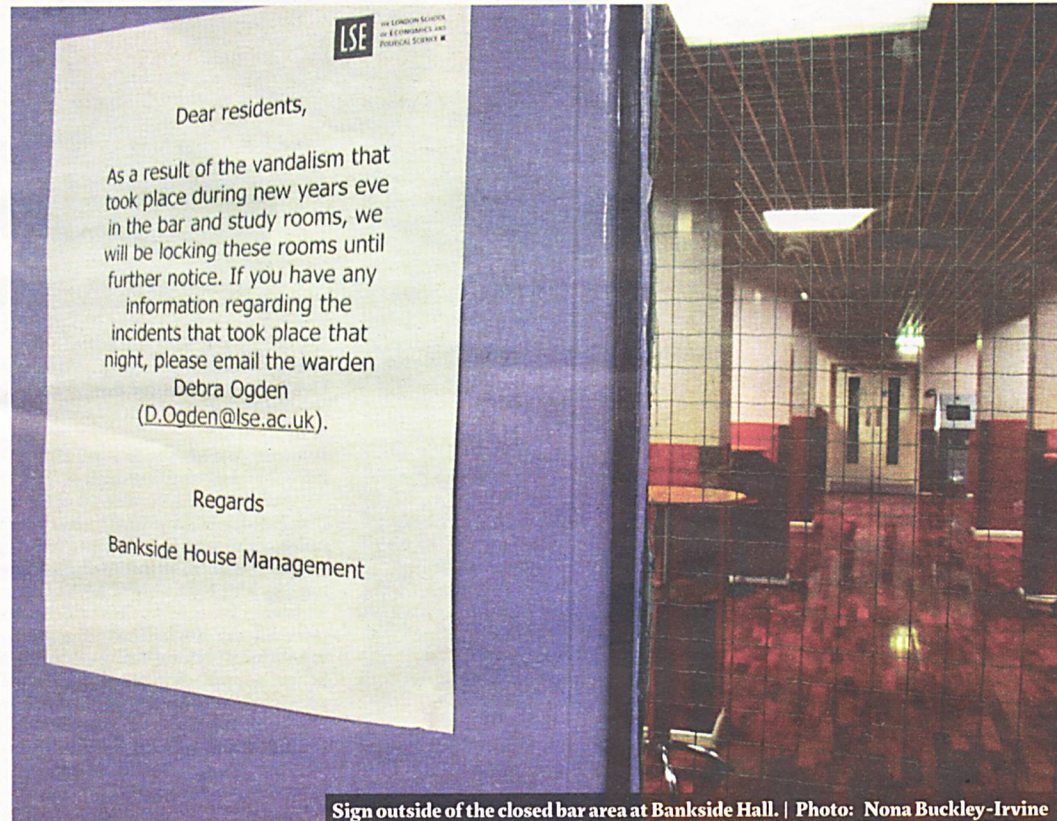
nate, that this be split between all residents, as we agreed in the contracts that we have signed."

At the time of print, Ogden and other members of Bankside's management, could not be reached for comments.

Though certainly the most extensive, the vandalism at Bankside is not the only case of LSE students vandalising the School's residents.

In an e-mail sent to residents of Carr-Saunders in Michaelmas term, Svetozar Rajak, the hall Warden, wrote, "There was hardly a weekend morning in the past two months that the common room was not left in an incomprehensible state of disrepair."

Rajak continued that the hall management had "gone through CCTV footage of the past two months and have identified a number of students who have, some repeatedly, vandalised the common room," adding that he would be e-mailing the students in question to summon them to a disciplinary meeting, where they would be informed of the measures that would be taken against them.



Sign outside of the closed bar area at Bankside Hall. | Photo: Nona Buckley-Irvine

UGM elects new Vice-Chair and Keeper

Tim Poole

The first week back brought the first Union General Meeting (UGM) of the term, and the opportunity to do away with a variety of administrative matters. Old habits die hard and the same people were seen in the same seats they occupied last term. Though the Old Theatre was hardly packed to the rafters, a light-hearted atmosphere, that the House of Lords could learn a thing or two from, filled the air.

Admittedly, the Chair of the meeting professed that there 'was not a great deal to get through,' nevertheless, matters of seeming importance were discussed. Once the Vice-Chair and Keeper were elected, the latter being a gentleman dressed as a beaver, who claimed that he was, is and always

will be the beaver, the agenda moved to reports from the LSE SU Sabbatical Officers. General Secretary, Alex Peters-Day, opened by declaring that a committee to create the ethics code had been formed and that the manifesto for the London mayoral elections had been finalised. In addition, she revealed details of her meeting with the head of undergraduate admissions, at which a potential change in the UCAS admissions process was discussed.

Next on stage was Activities and Development Officer, Stanley Ellerby-English, who announced that the popular Give It A Go program is taking place next week. He re-emphasised the need to promote sports within the LSE community. Following Ellerby-English was Postgraduate Officer, Robin Burret. Community and Welfare Officer, Lukas Slothuus was unable to attend this particular UGM.

Subsequently, it was the turn of the Part-Time Officers to provide their

weekly reports. Details were revealed of the "Nature of Racism Today" discussion scheduled for later that day and International Women's Week. The Disability Officer, Polly McKinley, also announced an upcoming sitting volleyball tournament in the Old Gym, for which the captain of Team Great Britain would be dropping in. A particular point of entertainment came when Lois Clifton, Environment and Ethics Officer, announced her participation in a weekly protest at Kings Cross which aims to make cycling in London safer. Though the idea of a huge gathering of cyclists heading straight into traffic initially generated widespread laughter, the protest is forecast for a large turnout. The Chair had also alluded to recent success of a similar event held in Blackfriars.

However, the jocular nature of the meeting did turn sullen at points within its next juncture, as the Media Group and RAG delivered their

reports. The RAG Officer revealed that RAG week would be in Week Six of Lent term, featuring the annual sky dive. After this, the newly appointed Executive Editor of this newspaper, Duncan McKenna, received several questions. When asked what his aims were for this term, he replied: "to open the paper up to a wider audience and encourage new projects, to make it more accessible." Pulse Radio also announced new upcoming shows, as well as the continuation of its on-air news reports.

It was after this that proceedings came to a close and, despite a generally subdued atmosphere, the Chair complimented the "passion" demonstrated at various points. The meeting concluded with the Chair's poignant remark: "If the world is going to end this year, we're leaving on a high."

News in brief

PROTESTERS PREPARE TO MEET PREMIER MONTI

Premier Mario Monti will soon embark on a world tour in order to restore the markets' confidence in Italy and explain the measure's taken by his government. Monti will meet with British Prime Minister David Cameron before delivering a lecture at the London School of Economics on Wednesday 18 January. Approximately a hundred LSE students are planning on demonstrating outside of the public lecture in protest of Monti's policy on cuts.

LSE ALUMNUS MAKES WAVES IN CANADA

Matthew Kalkman, who graduated from the LSE with a Masters in Economics and Political Science, recently wrote a book entitled *New Liberalism*, which has received much positive attention from Canada's Liberal Party leaders. The interim leader of the party, Bob Rae, quoted from Kalkman's work to party members in Victoria, BC. Kalkman, who is only 23, is currently focused on promoting the party's centrist ideas.

STOP AND SEARCH RACIAL PROFILING ON THE RISE

According to research undertaken by the LSE and the Open Society Justice Initiative, black people living in England are 30 times more likely than white people to be stopped and searched by policemen. Less than 0.5 per cent of these stops lead to arrests for possession of a dangerous weapon, a common reason cited by police members for spontaneous searches. Section 60 searches have increased from 1,389 in 2004 to 23,128 in 2009.

TAIWAN GOES TO THE POLLS

Taiwan went to the polls on Saturday in a close fought presidential election. Ma Ying-jeou, former Mayor of Taipei and Justice Minister is seeking re-election and strives for better relations with China. However, he faces strong competition from Tsai Ying-wen, leader of the opposition Democratic Party and former student at the LSE. Tsai has a doctorate in Economics from the School and hopes to continue Ma's policy of cooperation with China and to tackle Taiwan's rising income inequality.

WORK LESS HOURS, GET BETTER JOB PROSPECTS

Economists at the thinktank, the New Economics Foundation (NEF), gathered last Wednesday at an event with the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the LSE. They argue that if everyone worked fewer hours - for example 20 per week - there would be higher job prospects, employees could spend more time with their families and energy excess would be curbed substantially. Anna Coote, NEF representative cited Germany and the Netherlands as examples of economies with high GDP but with less working hours.

GOT A SCOOP?

Got a story that you think we should be printing? Send us an e-mail: news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Sabbatical officers look forward to term ahead



LSE Students' Union Sabbatical Officers | Photo Courtesy of the Sabbatical Officers

Chris Rogers
Staff Reporter

The Sabbatical Officers are now halfway through their terms as the elected officials for the London School of Economics. Elected in week six of Lent term the Sabbatical Officers take a year out from their degree or after the completion of their studies in order to run the Students' Union.

The Four Sabbatical Officers are General Secretary Alex Peters-Day, Activities and Development Officer Stanley Ellerby-English, Education Officer Amena Amer, and Community and Welfare Officer Lukas Slothuus.

This year the core of the action taken by the Sabbatical officers has been focused on The Only Way is Ethics campaign, signing up thousands of students, and attempting to make the schools funding more transparent. With the changes instituted by the School the initial goals of the campaign have been almost fully achieved.

In addition the Sabbatical Officers helped prepare and co-ordinate the national Demo in November where students, lecturers, teachers and other trade unionists marched alongside one another to express their discontent with the current government's plans.

Peters-Day has been sitting on many of the Committees that govern the LSE over the course of the term, and has been lobbying the School for representation on the ethics committee, and lobbied the school on the Woolf report and helped select the LSE's new director, Craig Calhoun.

For the Union, Alex Peters-Day has started a process to set up loyalty cards in the Tuns, passed the UGM motion to fight against unpaid internships, and has been holding meetings to begin more action on unpaid internships this term. Peters-Day has also been manoeuvring at the NUS Conferences on behalf of the LSE, and negotiated with other London universities to prepare the student response to the 2012 London mayoral elections. Peters-Day said the vast majority of

her time is taken up by "committees I sit on, meetings with various people and groups within the school and the Union, answering emails and doing individual support for students."

Looking to the term ahead Peters-Day said she would be focusing on consultations and working on changes in the higher education system, notably potential changes to UCAS and making LSE more student-focused. The Union, according to Peters-Day, is also looking at planning an exhibition in the atrium of the Old Building for Michaelmas term 2012.

With the London mayoral elections approaching the Sabbatical Officers intend to begin finalising their plans and finish writing a student manifesto -- directed towards the interests of London students. They will also begin running a voter registration campaign, plan anti-BNP protests and other election-focused events. In addition, the Sabbatical officers intend to re-launch 'The Only Way is Ethics', focusing on what students think is ethical and what matters most to them.

Peters-Day said that of her time spent as General Secretary: "Primarily I wish I had spent more time at society events -- I feel a bit chained to my desk at times, which is unfortunate as my favourite part of this job is actually going out and talking to students."

Activities and Development Officer Stanley Ellerby-English has spent much of the term focusing on finalising a sports strategy, an initiative championed by his predecessor Charlie Glyn, which he claims will be his priority this term. Ellerby-English has attempted to achieve structural change to the School's approach to sport, and has promoted the LSE Annual Fund which has seen the largest ever allocation to clubs and societies this year.

Last year, the Sabbatical Officers laid the ground work for an increased Tri London Championship in which the LSE competes against Kings and UCL in a wide range of sports over the course of one day.

"Last year LSE reigned victorious crushing all that UCL and Kings put before us, we hope for a repeat this year" said Ellerby-English.

For the rest of his term in office Ellerby-English plans to continue work on the Community Festival, Sports Strategy and Tri London Championship "Apart from that I'm looking forward to elections this term and seeing who will run," he said.

Stanley commented of his own performance "I think if I had the knowledge and skills which I do know I would have been much more effective right from the beginning."

Education Officer Amena Amer has focused her time on the implementation of a Programme Representatives policy and the Education Manifesto that will be presented later this term. Amer hopes these policies will raise awareness of, and address, several of the issues that students face at the LSE, stating "The meetings and stalls I had last year enabled me to get some great feedback from students."

Amer also worked on a report for the Student Affairs committee to help guarantee a safe space for students to raise issues, and can be confident that

their issue will be dealt with. Reviewing her performance Amer commented "I know at the time I was doing everything I could and working completely flat out. It would have been great to get even more students involved ... but I did the best I could and am happy with how last term played out."

In this term Amer intends to focus strongly on dealing and understanding the failure rates at the LSE and finalising the Education Manifesto for students. Whilst 2012 is when some of the government's proposals in the Education White Paper will no doubt begin to be implemented. Amer said that it is "inevitably be mobilising and doing all we can to prevent this from happening."

Lukas Slothuus, the Community and Welfare Officer, played a significant role in The Only Way is Ethics campaign and in organising the Students' Union's participation in the 9th November National Demonstration.

Reflecting on the past ten weeks, Slothuus said: "I have done exactly what I promised I'd do if elected -- no big surprises or political u-turns. In other words, students knew what they were getting and I've delivered on what I said I would."

He added: "There is plenty to pick up on for my successor, but I have 6 months left to achieve the rest of what I promised so hopefully the next Community and Welfare Officer will have the freedom to work on what they feel strongly for!"

Throughout Lent term Slothuus will be focusing on several campaigns, including "Your Hall Your Call," an initiative giving students the opportunity to discuss any concerns directly with hall management. In response to the recent controversy over the Bankside Hall Committee elections, Slothuus will be working to rewrite and formally ratify residence hall constitutions.

He will also be continuing his work on The Only Way is Ethics, pushing for the School to increase the transparency of its financial transactions by publishing its budgets, expenditures and incomes.

Stats on Sabbs

The Students' Union began the year with The Only Way is Ethics, an umbrella campaign which focused its efforts on holding the LSE accountable to students' standard of ethics.

Sabbatical officers are given a salary of £26,000 for their work over the year.

The LSE is the only UK university that holds weekly Union General Meetings (UGM).

Motions need a quorum of at least 250 votes to be enacted.

Nominations for Sabbatical and Executive Officer positions open on Monday 13 February 10am and close on Monday 20 February 5pm.

UGM hustings on Thursday 23 February 1pm in the Old Theatre.

Voting takes place online from 29 February until 1 March at 7pm, elected candidates will work from July 2012 to July 2013.

40.4 per cent of students earn first in language modules

Shu Hang
Staff Reporter

Data published by the LSE reveals that 40.4 per cent of students taking language modules as part of their degree for the 2010/2011 academic year received a first. This figure, representing 114 out of 282 students taking language modules, is twice the School average, a more modest 20.3 per cent.

Traditionally, departments that are generous in handing out firsts fail students more often, while courses that are hard to do very well in are also hard to fail. However, students studying a foreign language module seem to have the best of both worlds.

The proportion of students achieving good honours (first or upper second) was also the highest at the LSE, a generous 89.7 per cent.

Virtually no student was marked below a lower second, with only one student failing the course. The School-wide failure rate was 5.0 per cent, more than double the rate for language courses.

Undergraduate students whose degrees allow for an outside option can choose between Russian, Spanish, Mandarin, German, French or Literature as one of their modules, subject to approval from their academic advisor. Classes are offered at all levels, ranging from level one courses for beginners to level five proficiency courses. 290 students enrolled in language modules this year.

The atypically high number of first honours marks awarded by the language department has earned the language modules a reputation as being easier than others.

Rosie Hamer, a second year Politics and Philosophy student who took LN120, Spanish Language and Society 3 (Advanced) last year, found that the written exam was "stimulating, yet equalled the A Level course in difficulty." She also commented on the difficulty of the assessed presentation, saying: "the questioning by the examiners was to a very high level."

Some students have enrolled in language courses in hopes of achieving an easy high mark to push their overall scores over.

"I do know of people who have done this", said Hamer, "in these cases they have been untruthful about their proficiency in the language, enabling them to enroll in a class far beneath

their ability. I don't know how they weren't sussed out but I'm sure it helped their grade!"

Nick Byrne, Director of the LSE Language Centre rejected the idea that the language courses are "easy."

"There is a lot of competition for students to do a language course, so we are able to select the most promising. Our courses double, on average, the teaching hours of other courses. Hence, we push and monitor students very hard. External examiners all commented that we achieve in a 25% option the same as some universities do in joint-honours."

"It is simply not in our own interest to create easy-option courses for LSE students," he added, "we want to create demanding programmes that not only challenge students but provide them with the intellectual, academic, specific-linguistic and transferable skills which will benefit students both in their work and personal lives."

Many students taking language courses have expressed frustration, claiming that the language courses are in no way easier than their other courses.

"I would definitely say that the course is just as rigorous as my other subjects, if not even more so," said Max Bohle, a first year undergraduate studying Economic History, "the workload is very demanding, and there is constant pressure to perform and keep up!"

The language modules require more contact hours, with level one courses featuring six teaching hours per week.

According to Bohle, the grade distribution can be explained by the fact that "only high motivated student[s] who explicitly want to learn a new language take the course."

Tom Barnes, a first year International History student commented on the intensive nature of the course. "My class is very small, and as a result you are required to provide half of the speaking in a two-hour lesson. There is nowhere to hide, and if you don't put the work in for homework, it shows."

Joana Santos, a third year Government student studying French was equally frustrated with "the misconception some people have towards the department." "We had to do frequent readings, keep up-to-date with French and Francophone news, as well as writing weekly essays about a plurality of subjects. I honestly think no part of this is 'easy'."

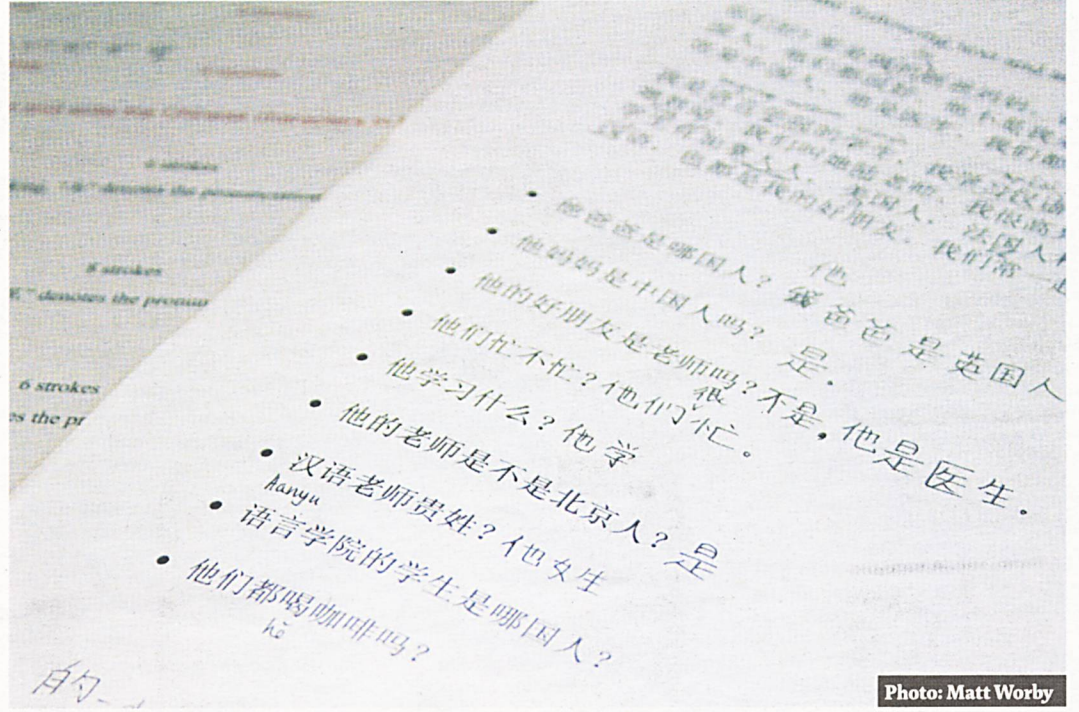


Photo: Matt Worby

Professor Philip Mcann discusses foreign policy challenges at the LSE last Thursday.



Photo: Niovi Antoniou

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Sieberg discusses the dangers of digital addiction

Heather Wang
Staff Reporter

Following the publication of his first book, 'The Digital Diet', Daniel Sieberg discussed his experience as a "tech addict" and shared his advice on how to become less dependent on technology at a public lecture he delivered at the LSE last Tuesday. A former technology correspondent for CBS and CNN, Daniel Sieberg is an Emmy-nominated journalist and currently works with Google marketing in New York.

Sieberg began the lecture with a small exercise. He asked the audience members to take out their smartphones and pass them to the person sitting next to them. While the audience speculated between themselves about the purpose of the exercise, Sieberg explained that his motive was to get people to think about how much their smartphones mean to them today. "It does everything for you nowadays," Sieberg said.

Tracing back to the reasons why he wrote 'The Digital Diet', Sieberg talked about the Christmas holiday that he spent at home in 2009. During his stay with family and friends, he realised that he did not "know a whole lot about what was going on in their lives," although he thought he was "super-connected" - "always online, always on

Facebook and Twitter." He described himself as "a terrific broadcaster, a terrible communicator." This realisation prompted him to quit all social networks for eight months in early 2010.

Sieberg then read out an extract of his book recounting his uncontrollable addiction to technology and the moment he recognised that he actually enjoys being disconnected and having a moment of "quietness." For a conservation project, Sieberg swam with sharks in the Bahamas, where he experienced "the sensation of being so cut-off" - something he had not felt in years.

Sieberg went on to talk about his four steps to wean off technology - Rethink, Reboot, Reconnect and Revitalize. Sieberg said: "Rethink is just to think about what we are doing, our behaviours and what brought us to where we are." Sieberg described people who walk and text at the same time as "hollowed out zombies," and suggested that overusing technology could lead to health problems, such as obesity.

The second stage, Reboot, is about "taking a day or two to have some observational experience of what is around us." Meanwhile, Sieberg's PowerPoint presentation featured the statistic that 10 per cent of people of ages 24 and younger think it's okay to text during sex. Sieberg said: "it's not okay to do that."

Discussing the third stage, Recon-

nect, Sieberg talked about the lack physical interaction between people today, using the example that we spend a lot of time communicating with people who are on the other side of the world, instead of the people in our immediate sphere. Sieberg stressed that physical interactions are extremely important.

Sieberg demonstrated a software called "Rescuetime," which can "out-source self-control," while he talked about the fourth stage, Revitalize. The programme tells people how much time they spend on individual websites, and can be used to keep users offline for a specified period of time.

Sieberg finished the lecture with projections for the future, predicting that there will be a time when physical contact with devices will no longer be needed. For example, even today gestures can be used to control televisions. Sieberg added that we will not be aware of whether we are online or offline in the future.

During the question and answers session, one audience member who conducts work related to augmented reality asked: "Where does the diet come in since the technology is just there?"

Instead of directly answering the question, Sieberg talked about augmented reality, a live view of a physical, real-world environment whose elements are augmented by computer-generated sensory input. "I don't think



Are you addicted to your iPhone? | Photo: Flickr user William Hook

it [augmented reality] is necessarily a bad thing, there are a lot of great benefits attached to it," Sieberg said.

Another audience member asked Sieberg's view on technology as a tool against capitalism. After a long pause, Sieberg said that technology can be used as a tool for any sort of organised government or company; it "galvanises" and "unites" people.

A third question focused on whether or not Sieberg advocates completely leaving all social networks, and if he thinks that social networking is necessarily a bad thing. In response

to this question, Sieberg said that if using social networks is absolutely a problem in a person's life, quitting social networks completely is certainly something to consider. At the same time, he also pointed out that social networks are increasingly aware of people's frustration as to how their information is being used. On "Google+," for instance, users can share different information with different people. "It is hard to completely leave social networks, it's a big part of our lives," Sieberg concluded.



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LSE researchers investigate migrant's impact on housing

Bernadette Chan Roy

A new report published by the LSE London, a centre opened by the School to research economic and social issues in the London region, claims that the emigration of skilled migrants to the UK will likely have little influence on the British housing market. This report, commissioned by the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), claims that their impact on house prices will be one per cent or less over the next five years.

This estimation, based on statistics from Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Annual Population Survey and the Survey of English Housing, suggests that upon arriving in the UK, only 20 per cent of migrants become property owners, with this figure rising to 45 per cent after five years. It is thought that these low figures are due to migrants initially living with friends and family, or choosing to rent property.

It was found that foreign skilled migrants living in Britain are mainly concentrated around industrial centres London, Reading, Ipswich and Aberdeen. As a result, the report estimates that skilled migrants will only add a mere 100,000 additional households to the UK between 2011 and 2017, in comparison to the additional 1.5 million households estimated formed within the same time frame by their UK counterparts. The report does state, however, that skilled migrants have an immediate effect on the rental sector, though they are usually competing for housing against other migrants, rather

than British tenants.

The report also states that prosperous migrants form fewer, denser households in comparison to equivalent indigenous households, but as they assimilate, their household consumption becomes more similar to their UK counterparts.

Christine Whitehead, Professor at LSE London, said: "We had to work with limited information on the characteristics of these migrants and therefore their housing needs. However we can be clear that they initially form fewer households and consume less housing than their UK counterparts but come to resemble the general population over time."

The MAC has also commissioned a report into the impact of migration on crime by the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance. The report concluded that migrants either entering under work-related programmes or from the EU accession countries are less likely to be involved in property crime than their UK counterparts.

Brian Bell, one of the report's authors said: "If you are coming to work in the UK then it's perhaps understandable that you are less likely to be involved in property crime. In fact we found that crime was lower in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of migrants than in areas with similar demographics but lower numbers of migrants."

Egyptian fugitive spotted at LSE public lecture

John Armstrong

The LSE has once again come under criticism after Youssef Boutros-Ghali, the former Egyptian Finance Minister and a prominent figure in the Mubarak regime was spotted at a public lecture held in the Sheikh Zayed Theatre on Monday evening.

After news spread over Twitter, Boutros-Ghali was advised by his security team to leave and shortly before the end of the lecture entitled, "The Year of Egypt's Second Revolution," he was ushered away through a side door.

His appearance caused outrage as in June last year, he was sentenced to thirty years in prison for abusing both state and private assets. Prior to the fall of Hosni Mubarak's regime in February, it is believed that both Boutros-Ghali and his wife fled to Lebanon before moving to London.

In an article published by the Independent in June 2011 it was reported that Andy Slaughter, the Shadow Justice Minister, questioned William Hague on "why Mr Boutros-Ghali is being allowed to remain, despite the fact that the Egyptian judiciary want him returned."

However, Boutros-Ghali cannot be arrested by British police until Egypt issues an international arrest warrant. While an Interpol "Red Notice" has been taken out against the Former Egyptian official, Boutros-Ghali and his family still remain living in London along with "dozens of former Egyptian officials and businessmen" who are

wanted by the new government in Cairo.

Dina Makram-Ebeid, a fellow attendant at the public lecture Tweeted a picture of the fugitive and urged others to confront him saying, "Egyptians in London come to LSE new academic building sheikh Zayed room. Youssef Boutros Ghali attendin a lecture here! Need to confront him."

According to an article published in the Guardian yesterday, Makram-Ebeid took an active role in the Tahrir Square uprisings against the Egyptian government and confronted Boutros-Ghali openly in the public lecture, calling for his arrest.

This recent controversy is yet another reminder of the LSE's close ties with the underworld of global politics. Only two months ago was there an independent enquiry into the £1.5 million donation to the LSE from the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF) in June 2009.

The LSE's links with the Gaddafi regime have also come under recent criticism from MP Robert Halfon who, in last week's Beaver, is reported to have urged David Willets, the Higher Education Minister, to "call on the LSE to publish what really went on in this disgraceful episode of taking blood money."

Boutros-Ghali's appearance at the public lecture on Monday has only fuelled the criticism of the LSE. There is however, no formal extradition treaty existing between the UK and Egypt and, while Westminster Police have been contacted about the incident, Boutros-Ghali is still free to



Photo: Nona Buckley-Irvine

live in London.

In a statement released by the LSE regarding Boutros-Ghali's attendance, the School states that he "was not invited by anyone at LSE nor were we aware of his attendance, once the

event was underway, he was recognised and hostility towards him was expressed online and by some members of the audience."

A Facebook group has recently been created urging people to sign

a "petition against the preferential treatment of Youssef Boutros-Ghali at LSE."

41 Per Cent of LSE buildings deemed unsuitable for use

John Armstrong

Last year, the Guardian obtained access a secret database revealing that "scores" of UK university facilities were in "serious risk of major failure or breakdown."

According to the report, 41 per cent of the LSE's lecture theatres and classrooms were deemed unsuitable for use. The study, which was carried out over two years ago, was a serious blow for British universities and many students question whether raising tuition fees for this year will enhance the quality of their teaching facilities.

London based universities were heavily criticised in the database which deemed around 12% of non-residential buildings at Imperial College as "inoperable." A similar story was heard at City University, where 41% of halls of residence were said to be "unfit for their purpose."

However, in recent years the LSE has invested heavily in the management of its estates and plans for substantial projects have already been implemented.

Since the publication of the report in 2011, the LSE has acquired the Land Registry Building on the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Grade II listed building which cost the university £37.5M will be used in a similar way to the New Academic Building. The upper floors will be used as academic research facilities, while classrooms and social areas will occupy the lower spaces.

The LSE Estate Division argue that they are "ever mindful of the student experience and the relatively poor quality of some areas of our estate." Their response has been swift and

work is already underway on the New Student's Centre located on the site of the old St Philips buildings. This project is the first new building the LSE has constructed in more than forty years and will house the Students' Union, a roof terrace, media rooms and a Multi Faith Prayer Centre.

Funding has also been granted to improving the universities' many halls of residence. Last month, Bankside

Hall, the LSE's largest student accommodation, was granted planning permission to build an additional two floors, bringing its total number of rooms to 667. Julian Robinson, Director of Estates, said that the scheme "not only meets our needs but, importantly, improves the area for others in a sustainable way."

In addition to the rooftop extension, the LSE is planning a refurbish-

ment of the basement at Bankside Hall, which is not subject to planning approval from Southwark council. The proposals include a large student lounge, TV lounge, games room and a new student laundry. §

Similar regeneration projects are also underway in Carr-Saunders Hall and High Holborn. These include full refurbishment of both the kitchen and shower areas and improvements to

bedroom facilities.

Josh Babarinde, a first year BSc Government student, is fully behind the plans for Carr-Saunders, suggesting that "it will greatly transform the outdated halls." However, there are critics of the projects who have complained about the excessive noise disturbing those wanting to study during the day.



The LSE begins construction on new students' centre | Photo: Alexander Young

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Comment



Zero tolerance to prejudice

The President of LSE's Jewish Society highlights the uncomfortable truth about antisemitism on campus

Jay Stoll



Breaking details from the London School of Economics of Nazi-themed drinking games, antisemitic abuse and a subsequent assault on a Jewish student on a recent SU ski trip, in December of last year, cannot, and should not, be seen as another isolated incident.

An evening of swastika playing card formations, "salutes and respect" to "the Fuhrer", inevitably led to violent confrontation with a deeply offended Jewish student, in what should have been preparations for a night out in Val D'Isserre. The game, initiated by those with positions of captaincy within the School's Athletic Union, continued in the knowledge of a Jewish student present. Increased tensions eventually spilled over into a brawl, resulting in the Jewish student having his nose broken. Onlookers and fellow teammates merely stood by, clamoured for the Rocky theme tune and proceeded to post events on Facebook.

In an institution ravaged by 18 months of damning PR, it must be firmly noted that this latest aberration should not be attributed to the School, the Students' Union Officers or the Athletics Union President, whom have acted with an impeccable sense of duty to their Jewish community. A School investigation is already underway, and the LSE Students' Union is poised to implement severe sanctions on the students in question. The true establishment that should be scrutinized is that of an overprivileged, anti-intellectual culture within a minority of the wider student body.

Alarm bells should be ringing as to the consistency in the demographic of students in question, the universities they attend and the type of events that have ensued. Let's not play dumb to the reality here. Let's not pretend we haven't seen it before, from the same culprits, in the same context, with the same excuses. Fresh from their boarding school lives, some of the upper middle classes of Athletics Unions, primed for the future political elites, have displayed a complete disregard to any consequence of their palpably insulting behaviour.

The educated and respectful majorities in Athletics Unions brush

this crude minority under the carpet. Primarily this is done in the somewhat understandable ethos of being part of a team, but more disturbingly, done in order to save face as a collective.

Public order offences, contextualized. Sexism and accompanying masochism, contextualized. Homophobia,

"Let's not play dumb here. Let's not pretend we haven't seen it before, from the same culprits, in the same context, with the same excuses."

contextualized. Tokenism of minority members of their teams, contextualized. Athletics Unions and their autonomous social programs may constitute a fantastic facet of many university lives, but this does not excuse blatant

violations of society's basic tenets: cooperation, mutual respect and a zero-tolerance to prejudice.

The two most galling cases of antisemitism on campuses in recent years have occurred at Oxford and now, LSE. The former being, of course, when Oxford students deemed it appropriate fancy dress to arrive at a party dressed as Orthodox Jews, carrying 'bags of money'. It is also worth noting recently disgraced MP Aiden Burley was Oxford-educated and in fact, a former officer of the OU Conservative Association. Again, not a reflection upon the institutions themselves, but such knowledge should highlight the depressing reality of said instances occurring in the top academic arenas. This also prompts a reality check, regarding where and to whom specifically, we attribute our focus in fighting racism.

The abhorrent BNP and the EDL, and even certain national publications, are all too quick in their McCarthyist agenda to embarrass the Muslim community with constant vilification for their extreme few. Yet when it comes to "fig-leaf" antisemitism, I would argue the true ignorance stems from those who they would look last to accuse.

The recent UJS survey, conducted

by IPSOS Mori and the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, highlighted that 20% of Jewish students had experienced antisemitism, and a further 32% had witnessed antisemitism in the last academic year. Most Jewish students, therefore, live a happy and normal university life, with issues such as job prospects and a healthy social life (!) paramount, but this does not detract whatsoever from the severity of instances such as these.

Some may think that the issue of antisemitism is simply a campus issue consigned to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, who will be touring campuses at the end of this month. As the President of the LSE Jewish Society, I urge readers to think otherwise. I urge you to read the account of events in *The Beaver* this week, then reread this article and realize that such times are screaming out for a non-partisan anti-racism movement with a real pledge to eradicate discrimination in ALL of its forms. Only then can we consign spiteful, collective attacks on a community like this at LSE to a dark chapter of history. ☹

ONLINE COMMENT



Responding to Woolf

Alec Webley



After the Woolf Report came out, the LSE gave an abject apology and an earnest expression of a will to change. Don't believe it. Once the spotlight dims, we should expect many in the School, especially denizens of the unaccountable Office of Development and Alumni Relations, to try to return to their own tricks.

This is because the devil is, as always, in the details, and nobody is better than the LSE at cooking up huge, complicated regulatory documents that no-one – especially not those pesky journalists at the Guardian – will read. There, ethical practice could die a swift, painful death and we'll return to business as usual.

There are already worrying signs: prior to the release of the Woolf Report, the School put in place an "interim structure" for ethical review. No students were consulted in its composition, and – surprise! – there are no students on the "donations review panel." Best of all? Donations from "foundations" were exempted from review. Saif Gaddafi gave his money to the School through a foundation.

One of the bedrock principles of social science is its insistence on clear-headed precision when it comes to diagnosing a problem. So let us be clear. Ethics is not a problem of the character of individual School administrators who made mistakes – it is a problem of power and misaligned incentives. To fix the problem, fix the incentives and

fix the power structure.

The Woolf report has, implicitly, recognized two flaws of this sort at LSE: first, that those who make decisions were subject to undue pressure (financial and political) to behave unethically; second, that unethical behavior was enabled by a culture of secrecy. Change both, and you'll go a long way to fixing the problem.

Let's start with pressure. The School must rely more on the one group of people here who are least susceptible to outside pressure: students. Gaddafi happened because of pressure from the British Foreign Office down; pressure on a department because of a drive for "idealism" and, increasingly, a fear of negative consequences; pressure on a Directorate because of the size of potential donations.

Your average LSE administrator – and, increasingly, your average LSE faculty member – is judged on their ability to bring in external grants and gifts. There is a word for staff who don't accept money for ethical reasons: unemployed. It is telling that only one faculty member publicly stood up to the pressure to take the Gaddafi money. When careers of faculty and administrators, especially, are dependent on bringing in money, we simply cannot trust them to do the right thing when large sums are at play.

Students are immune to this kind of pressure. You can't expel a student for voting against taking a grant; you can't cut their (increasingly pitiful) tuition support on an individual basis because they made a decision with which you disagree. This is the true value of student representation – they and they alone can take principled stances without fear of jeopardizing their position.

Student representation should not merely extend to any proposed ethics

committee (and, at long last, on the Council's Development Committee, which screens donations) – they must be included in every decision made by the School, including admissions. The LSE should look to the USA, where many departments include sitting PhD students in their interview and admissions screening processes for PhDs. If we are to treat PhD students as "junior members of the faculty," it is only right that junior faculty screen their potential colleagues – and only sensible, when students are best placed to resist pressure to admit big names improperly.

Moving on to secrecy: the School must treat its allergy to public discussion of its internal workings. It was this secrecy that prevented any kind of coordinated response to the evolving Gaddafi affair, and the school is still too reliant on secretive Council processes. At the risk of sounding like a dentist, it is better to have these things out at once. The School's proposed ethics committee(s) must hold open meetings, publish its minutes, and go into a closed session only when it is legally essential.

Likewise, the School should go out of its way to lay every donation and investment before this committee and, by extension, to the School community. This is not merely to prevent future unethical donations – it will also highlight the generosity of our donors and the contributions of our non-human-rights-abusing alumni community.

In every department, and in every decision, the LSE should adopt a presumption in favour of disclosure and discussion. Not only does transparency itself improve the quality of decisions, but the vast breadth of expertise possessed by staff and students is best spent in the conference

room before a decision is made, not protesting a badly made decision after it is enacted without consultation. The best way to entrench this would be to move towards open Council meetings, where only sensitive financial and legal questions are kept behind the veil of confidentiality.

What the LSE's power structures

need, in short, is a big dose of extra democracy. Democracy is best facilitated through transparency, openness and the inclusion of decision-makers who are immune to external pressure. It is against this standard that the School's upcoming ethical reforms must be judged. ☛



Blackstone Chambers Profile

True religious morality

Why religious texts do not provide us with a basis for absolute morality

Tom Maksymiw



A claim often made by the religious is that religion (always their religion in particular, for some reason) offers an objective (arguable) and correct (even more arguable) view of morality. It can, they claim, offer us a basis on which we can build our morality. Furthermore, it offers us moral truth which cannot

be granted us by any means other than the divine. Atheism or secularism can only lead us into the (presumably) a/immoral hell of nihilism and relativism. Therefore God (in His preferred form) is the only one who can provide us with a functional and absolute morality – something necessary for us to judge and be judged. I will contend this hypothesis as an atheist aspiring to be a moral person and person with faith in humanity over any deity.

I will use Christianity as an example, not because I possess any more animosity towards Christianity than I do towards other religions but because it is the religion I am most familiar

with and, in my experience, it is the most prolific in making the above claim. Christianity, for the most part, cites its absolute morality from the Bible. However, this particular book is riddled with contradictions. For example, David is either threatened by God's prophet with three years of famine (2 Chronicles 21:12) or seven (2 Samuel 24:13) depending on which book you read. Contradictions are rife; from the number of various people's children to which son of Abraham Jesus is descended from (easy mistakes to make – in the same way, it would be easy for the Bible's authors to confuse seven days with five and a half billion years).

The seriousness of these contradictions is increased when they concern moral teaching. For example, "an eye for an eye" versus "turn the other cheek." It is for this reason that Christianity fails to offer us objective morals. These contradictions allow Christian morality to adapt, change and corrupt – far more than any man-made law or moral position would be allowed to. This can possibly be seen as a strength but not a basis for objective morality.

Furthermore, we can examine the great ethical precepts of the Old Testament/Torah – the Ten Commandments. "These are the ethical basis of our society," it is often claimed. They do not contradict each other and are the basis from which we can develop a good (delete as appropriate) Protestant/Catholic/Orthodox/Christian/

Jewish morality. This point is the jewel in the crown of those that claim their Old Testament religion is a good basis for an objective morality and like a godless jeweller I must proclaim it equally as worthless and devoid of shine as the rest of the crown. The egoistical commandment, "Thou shall

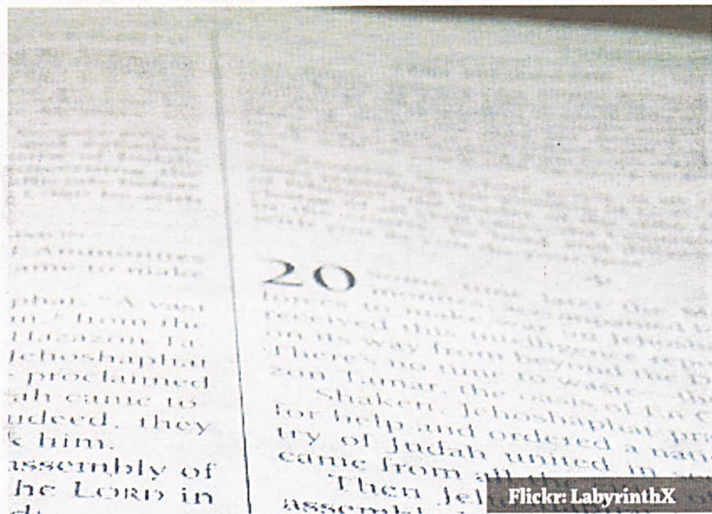
"It is questionable whether this attempt to establish an objective judgment for emotion or thought, not even behaviour, is a basis on which a free society can function."

have no other gods before me" does not seem to be a good objective value in any multicultural society. Perhaps more frightening is the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet." It is questionable whether this attempt to establish an objective judgement for emotion or thought, not even behaviour, is a basis on which a free society

can function. This is not to mention the genocide and other hideous crimes commanded by God in other parts of the Old Testament.

It is true that many Christians have now abandoned the Old Testament as a moral basis and chosen to adopt the less vengeful morality of the New Testament instead. This abandonment of past teaching raises questions not only of God's omniscience and infallibility but also of the Bible (or at least half of it) and its reliability as a source of morality. Christians (and most other religious people) seem to disagree on ethics to such an extent that the phrases "Christian ethics" or "Christian solidarity" are rendered meaningless. The same can be said of Sunni and Shiite Muslims, who both say that their conflicting ethics stem from the same holy book. I must make it clear here (as I hope I have throughout) that these contradictions are not merely due to human interpretation but also the lack of consistency within the books claimed as a source.

Instead we must conclude that holy books are interpreted to fit the relative morality of the interpreter. Therefore these sources are unnecessary to our morality and could even have a detrimental effect in allowing claims of support from a holy text to get in the way of rational and much needed debate. ☛



Flickr: LabyrinthX

That's the best you can do?

Understanding the embarrassing lot of Republican presidential candidates

Samira Lindner



These are sad times for the Republican Party. It's a testament to the utterly absurd catalogue of Republican presidential candidates that somebody as mediocre as Mitt Romney could shine through. So far, the race for the Republican nomination has been a roller coaster of laughs, emotions and outrages. Though it is entertaining, it is also quite tragic.

While the Republican Party used to be a respectable counterpart to the Democrats, I think the current candidates have tarnished its reputation, turning its principles and ideologies into hollowed-out slogans used to out-"conservatise" their opponents. Listening to the (copious) debates,

I hear the same recycled statements repeated over-and-over by most of the candidates: cut taxes (especially for the rich), cut government spending (i.e. the social provisions for the poor) and (miraculously) create jobs. But, in the end, there is no real substance.

Going back to our favourite next-door multimillionaire Mitt Romney, we can see that the very basis of his appeal rests on the fact that he is saner than his contenders. After all, any self-respecting voter would realise that allowing someone like Newt Gingrich, Rick Perry, Michele Bachmann or the joke-in-person himself, Mr. Hermann Cain, to win would be an utter embarrassment. In many ways, Mitt Romney - and perhaps even Rick Santorum and Jon Huntsman - is a safe choice. In comparison to the rest, he is sensible, intelligent and well-respected. However, he lacks three essential factors: reliability, charisma, and a social perspective.

Mitt Romney is both a simple

and a complicated guy. On the one hand, he leads the straight-edge, no-nonsense life of a Mormon and has a squeaky clean private life (despite recent revelations of the Mexican heritage he has kept secret so far). On the other hand, his policies throughout the years have been anything but predictable. As a businessman, he was incredibly successful; this business-oriented mentality can be seen in his financial policies. However, as Governor of Massachusetts, he has been anything but a "true conservative." It is often claimed that President Obama's healthcare reforms were modelled on Romney's reform in his state. Furthermore, Romney has also supported measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions and eliminate tax loopholes. He has even made some pro-choice statements towards abortion in the past. However, in order not to be denounced by the other candidates, he has either kept quiet about these positions or changed them outright. So his biggest problem at the moment is making a credible promise to the Republican Party and the electorate that he is not a flip-flopper.

Charisma is not something easily defined - but whatever it is, most people will agree that Romney does not have it. He lacks the charismatic social skills of an Obama and instead attempts to seem more like a Joe Six-pack. But let's face it - he really, really isn't, which is not necessarily a bad thing. Nevertheless, lacking charisma makes things more difficult for him because there is invariably a bigger focus on substance, which needs to be credible.

Lastly, Romney lacks a social perspective. What I mean is that some

of his policies reek of Wall Street elitism. This could be a major problem for Romney. While, in reality, most other candidates would probably advocate similar policies, they don't have as close of a link to business and potential business-malpractice (with the exception of Gingrich, but he seems to have forgotten that). Thus, this cements the reputation Romney has garnered: he is out of touch with the population. Therefore, Romney

"In the midst of these mediocre and, at times, appalling candidates, I for one am relieved to have Obama in the White House and hope he stays there."

definitely does not have the presidency (or even the primary) in the bag.

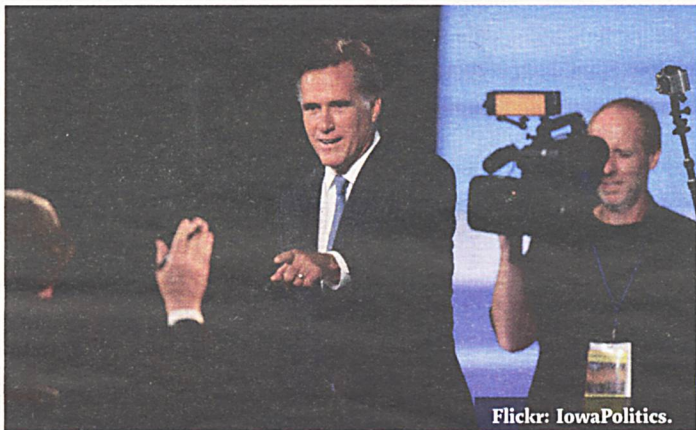
The race for the Republican nomination has been, to say the least, a disappointment. With the help of the media, it has reinforced the short-term memory of the American public and its silent acceptance of candidates that are unqualified, lack substance and are dishonest. Some, like Gingrich, were even kicked out of Congress on ethical charges. Others, like Bachman or Cain, have shown a complete lack

of basic political knowledge. Luckily, the remaining contenders - with the exception of Rick Perry - seem more sophisticated than the ones that have dropped out. However, it is still not an impressive list.

Maybe the reason we don't see many serious and respectable contenders is that most Republicans think Obama will win the election so to campaign against him is futile. Or perhaps Republicans don't want to take over the executive - they seem to enjoy their strong, filibustering role in Congress, able to oppose everything and be responsible for nothing.

On a more positive note, due to the lack of a strong, all-encompassing contender, perhaps like McCain in 2008, it has enabled the rise of more niche politicians like Ron Paul. While he also has some questionable policies, what I appreciate about him is that he is well-read, critical of the mainstream, and committed to his ideals. He does not fit the mold and he offers the American public the opportunity to hear a different perspective.

For some of us, the disappointing state of the Republican race is welcomed: it may ensure Obama's re-election. In the midst of these mediocre and, at times, appalling candidates, I for one am relieved to have Obama in the White House and hope he stays there. Nevertheless, Obama has also given us a fair share of disappointments. Let us hope that in his second term, without the pressure of re-election, Obama will finally give us the change we believed in. ☘



Flickr: IowaPolitics.

Miliband lags behind Cameron

Ed Miliband must change his strategy if he wants to secure our votes

Nona Buckley-Irvine



Ed Miliband had my vote in the 2010 elections. He inspired me, he offered change, he conveyed a change from Blairite politics. He sounded like the guy to turn the Labour Party around.

Sadly, this was a wasted vote. See, the tabloids, the press, the Tories, they labelled him "Red Ed" in an attempt to tar him as an out of date, raging socialist. Red Ed managed to shed this label. In fact, "Red Ed" is now dead. But this has come at such an astronomical cost to the Labour Party.

What does Ed stand for? The not-so-red Ed said earlier in 2011 that he "applauds" the rich getting richer. The not-so-red Ed said only this week that Labour had to face up to the deficit by forming a "new" strategy. The question is, what colour is Ed? It's certainly not red. It's not quite blue. But this has left Labour, and the rest of the general public, feeling a little confused.

This is because he has no strategy. This week, Ed deserted the thousands upon thousands of people who gave up one day's pay to strike against the cuts to the pensions. He deserted the thousands who protested against the austerity measures in 2011. And, really,

he deserted Labour supporters. In an attempt to appear as a strong leader, Ed has done a complete U-turn, and quite frankly, he's a bit of an idiot.

Ed quite rightly attacks a lot of the unjust government policies: cutting tax credits, tripling university fees, and their desire to scrap the 50p top tax rate. But when attacking these policies he is unable to offer his own alternative. This week he gave a bland speech, promising that Labour would "reform our economy", "act against vested interests" and "make choices that favour the hard-working majority." These are all lovely, fluffy, hopeful promises, and I don't deny that these are things that need to be done. But where is the policy? His pledges do not translate to normal hard-working people. They want to hear that their pensions will be secured, that their jobs are safe and that Labour has a plan. That there is a choice to be made between Conservative and Labour.

These people need an alternative, and they don't have it. For example, we all know the university tuition fees are tripling to £9,000 a year. Ed's alternative? He would make them £6,000. To that I say, get real. What sort of an alternative is doubling the tuition fees instead of tripling them, when the fear of university debt already deters people from lower socio-economic backgrounds from applying to university. I do not doubt that there are some cuts that need to be made. But if Ed really wants to appear to have a strategy, a narrative, or any energy, he can't come

up with weak, so-called alternatives to the Tories' draconian measures.

The problem resides with Labour's strategy of regaining the South and the middle-class votes. Ed has given up on having distinct policies that could possibly be perceived as being a little bit centre of left. Ed doesn't want to be radical. He wants to be electable to the South... a Pale-Blue Ed as opposed to Royal Blue Dave. But in targeting the middle-class Southern voters, Ed ignores such a key group of people. The undecided voters. The ones who think that all politicians are the same. He has such a prime opportunity to be distinct as a leader and offer them a real choice between Conservative and Labour. But at the moment, all Ed is doing is proving them right.

If an election was planned for tomorrow, Ed wouldn't get elected as Prime Minister if we look at the polls. He's trailing behind Cameron, despite all of Cameron's austerity measures. So rather than align himself with dear Dave, he may as well be a little different. Speak up, say something new. He can afford to be bold, there really is nothing to lose. The cuts are ripping through society as we speak. It's time for real action, real direction and a real alternative to the Tories. You'd hope that Ed could turn it around. But maybe the change should come from a man with more Balls. ☘



Flickr: EdMiliband

Blair, the coalition and the NSC

Why the coalition deserves some credit for its security efforts

David Britain



The accusations levelled at Tony Blair's so-called "sofa-style" of policy making are familiar. Important decisions were supposedly made and policies formed amongst an inner circle of trusted but unelected advisors and the occasional minister (as long as they were not Brownites) far away from the formalities and prying eyes of civil servants.

Those "in the loop" called the shots. This new style of politics was more streamlined and less stuffy. Civil service oversight just got in the way of Blair exercising that beefy

from Number 10 and the White House.

Almost a decade on and today's coalition government has reacted by creating a government body for high-level policy making in the security domain: the National Security Council (NSC). Recently I heard Sir Peter Ricketts, the UK National Security Advisor, and Nigel Inkster, former Assistant Chief and Director for Operations of SIS (MI6), discuss the role of the NSC after its first eighteen months.

The most striking aspect of the NSC is the breadth and frequency of its policy discussion. The Council consists of a weekly meeting chaired by the Prime Minister. The exhaustive list of attendees includes the Deputy Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Home Secretary, Secretary of State for International

intervals is unprecedented since Winston Churchill's War Cabinet was decommissioned in 1945. Sir Peter said the purpose of such regular meetings is to allow ministers and officials to take a continuous and holistic view of national security.

Some may see the NSC as indicative of a bellicose government, and they may have a point. The idea of a Churchillian-style War Cabinet is perhaps alarming in an era in which the immediate threats of nuclear annihilation or fascist invasion have faded. However, the NSC seems uniquely suited to a complex, fast paced and unpredictable world with a broadening security agenda.

The NSC's eye to the future is particularly evident from the final of the three NSC sub-committees. Chaired by the Foreign Secretary, this group addresses "the UK's relationship with emerging international

and social welfare in vulnerable communities. The NSC should be able to effectively manage such crosscutting issues.

But the NSC is not without its critics. They say that the meetings could descend into micromanagement, evidenced by the fact that since its conception over half the Council's meetings have focused on Libya. This seems a little harsh. It would be an exaggeration to pin the success in Libya on the NSC, but the Council's intensive and consensual evaluation of the situation no doubt contributed.

Discussing the NSC, the LSE's own Professor Gwyn Prins has argued that the formulation of UK national security strategy needs to be "militarily literate and conducted independently, without fear or favour to any party or to any transient issue and without reference to finance."

echelons of government will ensure better decisions are made. The situation in which Alistair Campbell, media advisor to Tony Blair, was given the highest security clearance

"At a time of economic doom and gloom in the public sector and unpopular fiscal policy, the government deserves credit for the creation of the NSC"

and allowed to suggest "editorial" changes to national security documents relating to Iraq in order to make them more conducive to the government's claims should never be repeated. Whatever one thinks about the wider arguments for and against the war in Iraq, the decision-making institutions at the top of government were not formed in the best interests of the UK's national security.

At a time of economic doom and gloom in the public sector and unpopular fiscal policy, the government deserves credit for the creation of the NSC. When it comes to matters of national defence and security there needs to be a robust and continual dialogue between experts and ministers. The NSC provides this.



Flickr: Prime Minister's Office

mandate. Robin Butler, a Cabinet secretary, remarked that, "it clearly came as quite a new idea for Tony Blair that big decisions of government should be collective decisions of the Cabinet."

We know how this tale ends: the "dodgy dossier" and a couple of generally unpopular and protracted wars. Grave and valid concerns were voiced about the role of the UK's national security community and its apparent pandering to the neo-conservative adventurism emanating

Development and the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, with senior members of the security services and the military attending regularly.

Sir Ricketts explained that the structure of meetings is particularly novel at this level of government. They take the form of a detailed policy presentation from civil servants followed by ministerial questioning and debate. Drawing senior members of government and the civil service together to formally discuss issues of security at such regular

powers." This reflects a renewed focus on future economic security as power shifts east. Equally, the presence of the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on the Council is extremely beneficial as climate change worsens and energy security becomes a potential flash-point over the coming decade.

Even more traditional security ventures today require an approach that goes beyond military expertise. Combatting terrorism, for example, is also about targeting international aid budgets and improving educa-

Certainly tactical details must remain with the military. Political independence and a constructive disregard for finance are also valuable aims when developing initial strategy. Nevertheless, with the input of the Treasury and the ability to see diverse issues with a political eye, the NSC is an effective forum to take the ideal to the real while grasping the complexities of the world today.

Most importantly, a broad and up-to-date knowledge on security matters spread across the top

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Are you outraged by something you've seen in this paper and interested in responding?

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I would like to express my great dismay at the antisemitic abuse and violence, as reported on the Beaver's website, at an AU ski trip to Val d'Isere.

When the position of Anti-Racism Officer was created some years ago, many of the objections against it were that there was no problem with racism in as diverse a community as LSE. Sadly, as this event shows, racism is a problem even at LSE and is essential

that we, as a Union and as individuals must continue to combat it both on our campus and within society more broadly.

Yours,
David Landon Cole

The Beaver is looking for a cartoonist!

If you want to contribute your drawings to our weekly issue, please send us an email!



Huis Clos | **New Girl** | **Haywire** | **World Food: England**
| **Stewart Lee** | **Jung Chang** | **Lovesong** | **The Guard** | **LSE** | **Private B**

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Cover

Andrew, 2011
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Huis Clos, Trafalgar Studios

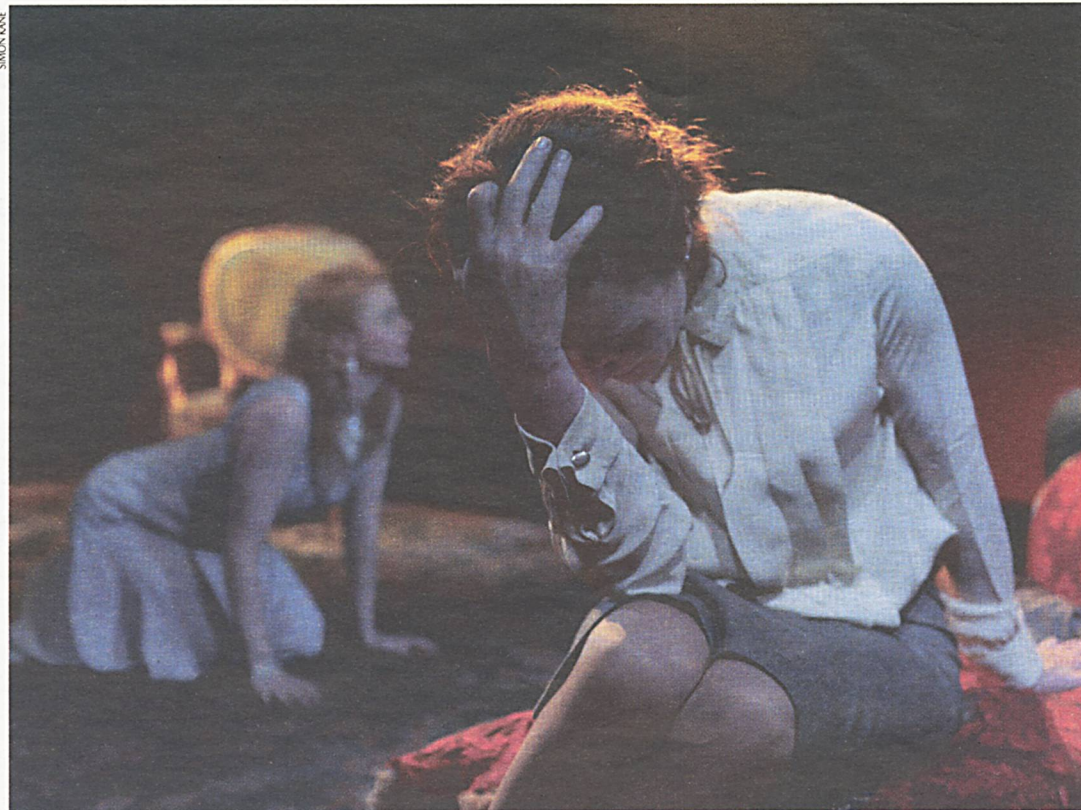


Director: Paul Hart
Playwright: Jean-Paul Sartre
Key cast: Michelle Fairley, Fiona
Glascott, Will Keen, Thomas Padden
**At Trafalgar Studios until 28
January 2012**

It is impossible to talk about *Huis Clos* without understanding that it is the product of Jean-Paul Sartre, the godfather of existentialist thought, and that is as much an example of that philosophy as it is a work of art. Yet while it is certainly a masterpiece of thought, it is a somewhat tortuous experience as a piece of theatre. Little wonder, considering that the crumbling hotel room the three protagonists find themselves locked in is in fact hell. Left to their own devices, this is an inferno free of fire, brimstone and red hot poker; the torture comes rather from the characters's own struggles to come to terms with and accept responsibility for their lives on earth, and the power struggle, games of sexual dominance and judgements that they make on each other.

Paul Hart's production is gritty, taut and frustrating at times. It is also hugely claustrophobic, with the first row of seats actually within the bounds of the tiny stage. While this makes for uncomfortable viewing, it reflects beautifully the themes of the play, and the audience physically being part of the action reminds us that while this is a play about the afterlife, it is important because of what it teaches us about this life.

Will Keen plays Garcin, the wife beating pacifist with minute attention to detail, his twitching fingers speaking to his inner turmoil as well as his insistent line delivery. Michelle Fairley gives what is probably the most nuanced performance of the evening as Ines, but then the lesbian, somewhat sadistic character painted by Sartre is definitely the most



Fiona Glascott as Estelle and Michelle Fairley as Ines

interesting. Nevertheless, she gave a layered performance that showed the audience some sort of tenderness fluttering beneath her icy exterior. Fiona Glascott, as socialite Estelle, was convincing in being unable to come to terms with her earthy indiscretions and violence, but slipped slightly toward caricature at times, although one suspects that Sartre himself was prone to stereotype when writing her part.

The production is powerful, but ultimately many people may find it inaccessible. The most famous line from the play is "L'enfer, c'est les autres," which is translated as "Hell is other people." The concept of "the other" has a specific meaning in Sartre's thinking, and personally I feel it would be better translated as "Hell is the others," to reflect the fact that Sartre was not advocating a life lived in isolation of

other people, but rather that it is our challenge as human beings to own our actions in the face of the judgement of others. Whichever way you look at it, however, a play with this as the central theme is never going to be easy viewing, and as such, the challenging nature of this production should not put anyone off going to see this seminal work of twentieth century art.

↳ Rory Creedon

Lovesong, Lyric Hammersmith



Direction/Choreography: Scott
Graham and Steve Hoggett
Playwright: Abi Morgan
Key cast: Edward Bennet, Sam Cox,
Siân Phillips, Leanne Rowe
**At Lyric Hammersmith until 4
February 2012**

Lovesong is a moving story of life-long love and commitment. Tear-jerking and almost overwhelmingly at moments, the production seems to do more than justice to a script that does not always provide the detail to make the tale watertight.

With the intertwining of the lives of elderly couple, Billy (Sam Cox) and Maggie (Siân Phillips) with their twenty-something counterparts, William and Margaret (Edward Bennett and Leanne Rowe) we see the effects of life-changing decisions made and troubles suffered together. From their move to the United States, the beginning of Billy's unaffordable dentistry business and the sadness of their childlessness, the emotions are high and reach a peak in the final scene as the frail Maggie makes her final decision in counting out a few too many of "the blue ones," her sleeping pills as Billy sits calmly at her side.

The piece is typical of Frantic Assembly as an amalgamation of theatre, both dance and physical. The choreography is incredibly effective in displaying the differences between the couples, the strength and effortlessness of the



Edward Bennett as William and Leanne Rowe as Margaret

young against the frailty and labour of the old. It also demonstrated the fluidity of time, as Billy dances with the memory of his wife, while throughout the play both characters switch between old and

young in an instant, with the recollection of a past event or reminder of reality.

The importance and nature of time is prevalent throughout, as it becomes clearer that for the elderly Maggie, it is

running out. Though it is never made clear exactly what is wrong, the decision that it is soon to be "the right time" is made apparent throughout, as plans are made for the cat, Biscuit, and Billy is reminded of how to live in a normal fashion - notes on the fridge, peaches from their tree in the freezer. It is in these scenes that the caring between the two seems most apparent. Small arguments over the little things avoid the reality at hand and Billy's outburst on how he will continue to live, but "as someone who used to have a life with someone" is particularly poignant.

The soundtrack is divine. Guiding us through the peaks and troughs of the relationship and each event, it manipulates the emotions beautifully. It is used alongside images projected on the back of the simple set with starlings circling and dancing firefly-like lights that appear on interaction from the young Margaret. Altogether this makes the play a great experience both visually and aurally.

The piece is well acted by all and each emotion felt as intended but somehow it is not quite enough. The lack of detail of the illness, the lack of apparent pain, the amount she loves him still, that he couldn't cope alone and that he just accepts the decision to leave. It just doesn't seem to add up. Emotionally I am there with them, but rationally I am unconvinced. Perhaps that will change with age.

↳ Hannah Payne

See/read/hear/feel/smell/know things first by writing for us.

Email: partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk



Captured: Sam Cox Billy and Joanne Rowe as Margaret in Terence Aspinall's *Lowesburg* | JOHN PIERSON

Haywire



Director: Steven Soderbergh
Screenplay: Lem Dobbs
Key cast: Gina Carano, Ewan McGregor, Michael Fassbender, Michael Douglas, Antonio Banderas
Year: 2012
Runtime: 93 minutes
In cinemas 18 January 2012

From the outset, *Haywire* never claims to be a deep, world-perspective altering masterpiece. It is an unashamed ass-kicking film. However, to pass it off as common action blockbuster could be a slight oversight.

The story follows Mallory Kane (Gina Carano), an ex-marine and operative for-hire. Essentially, people try to kill her, and she survives to kill them in return. While on occasion this seems to be a protracted audition for *Terminator*,

I would say Arnold Schwarzenegger's last niche, now that his political career has crashed and burned, is not greatly challenged. While Gina Carano does make for an interesting lead, it seems that she has a limited scope in the acting realm. Nonetheless, there was an adequate amount of depth to her character to warm me to her.

Carano's prior work as a successful mixed martial artist certainly lends itself to the role. She deals many highly convincing blows, which does induce some sympathy for the actors who face her. Most incidents of women receiving blows have been in the context of them being victimised. In contrast, Mallory takes a fair few solid hits from men, but not as a victim, rather as a highly trained fighter. Gina Carano is a breath of fresh air compared to Hollywood's usual fashionably thin faux action girls.

In addition to its striking cast list – including Michael Douglas, Ewan McGregor, Michael Fassbender, Antonio Banderas, Channing Tatum – the sound and visuals of *Haywire* are brilliantly blended together, making for an exhilarating viewing experience. It has slickness comparable Soderbergh's *Ocean's Eleven*; at times even a superior feeling. However, enjoyable as it may seem, the body count racked up is too unrealistic for me to feel truly gripped by this plot. Abuse of artistic license is acceptable depending on situation, but not for *Haywire*.

Despite all of this, as the stress kicks in with the progression of Lent Term, *Haywire* can provide a relaxing respite and some fun distraction.

Harry Burdon



Gina Carano as Mallory

The Guard



Director: John Martin McDonagh
Screenplay: John Martin McDonagh
Key cast: Brendan Gleeson, Don Cheadle, Mark Strong
Year: 2011
Runtime: 96 minutes
Available on DVD and Blu-ray from 16 January 2012

For anyone who enjoyed the Irish black comedy that was *In Bruges* (2008), this is its very gobby, twisted, yet hilarious younger sibling. Directed and written by John Michael McDonagh, brother of *In Bruges* director Martin McDonagh, it quietly yet persistently earned the place of most successful independent Irish film of all time according to box office receipts.

Gerry Boyle (Brendan Gleeson) is an unorthodox Irish policeman with a passion for swearing, Russian classical literature, prostitutes and recreational

drug use. In the hunt for a trio of extremely dangerous international drug mules, he is forced to assist a visiting FBI agent. Although Boyle's relationship with the black FBI agent Everett (Don Cheadle) does not get off to a great start, "I'm Irish, sure, racism is part of me culture," the seemingly unlikely yet predictable, as in any cop film, bromance that then flourishes helps them track down the eccentric trio of casual philosophy reader and chief mastermind, Skeffington (Liam Cunningham), daft and bloodthirsty Moloney (David Wilmot), and suave, short-tempered part-timer Clive Cornell (Mark Strong).

Throughout the entire film it is difficult to believe that this smart and, for lack of a better word, alternative, take on the traditional buddy-cop pair up is only McDonagh's second film. With Gleeson running as a nominee for Best Actor at the Golden Globes, this maverick oddity is anything but disappointing



Brendan Gleeson as Sergeant Gerry Boyle

– something many Irish dark dramedy fans feared when first hearing about the project. To the contrary, the film is

gripping, laced with decadent violence and dark humour throughout, and is undoubtedly the biggest breakthrough

for Irish cinema since *In Bruges*. Both the scriptwriters and the cast are to be especially commended, for the timing and delivery of each line, regardless of size of role or age group (with the youngest being a 10 year old boy cycling through the swampy fields of Connemara on a pink bike) was exceptional, giving the film a particular edge.

My only complaint was that at times some scenes appeared a little dragged out and of very little substance, probably because McDonagh grew tired of being constantly awesome and decided to insert some boring scenes to make up for his innate coolness. Yes, this film really is that good – even the few bad scenes seem like they were intentionally bad. If anything, this film just makes me want to be Irish.

Alena Krechetova

Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle, Leicester Square Theatre

Stewart Lee poses a problem for the general public and the Tristrans alike: he is a member of the cosmopolitan, liberal media elite, yet he is violently scornful of its populist credo and uncompromisingly superior in his tone. He is an eternal outsider, a pariah, excluded by his smug dismissals of mainstream comics and an intimidating erudition and he refuses to play ball. One noteworthy fact is that he is from the West Midlands. Now this is an important point. Being part of the Brummie Diaspora myself, I am acutely aware of the Midlander's role in British culture. Routinely dismissed as Northerners by the ignorant South (we are not), yet excluded from the successes of the Northern cultural renaissance, Brummies are routinely alienated from the majority of British popular culture – there are no soaps or sitcoms set in Birmingham, nor any notable media figures with even a hint of Brummie-ness. The closest we get to "media personalities" are Jasper Carrot and that bloke from the Autoglass adverts. I digress.

Being born a member of this declining species may go some way to explaining Mr Lee's disposition; despite going through the obligatory Oxford conditioning experience, he retains the dourness of the species – like any self-respecting Midlander he gives off the impression of never being comfortable with his lot yet, for all his virulence, seems resigned to this state. A little into the opening of his show he proclaimed, "I'm not like other comedians. This isn't Stewart Lee's Barrel-o-laughs." This disdain for his fellow tribe is a pervading theme throughout the corpus of his works, but Stewart Lee is not like other comics.

The show was an understated attempt to sabotage the British notion of "comedy" and "stand-up" – with aplomb he deconstructed the entirety of the genre, using his unorthodox and finely-tuned techniques he dissected its clichés and spread seditious talk about its institutions. Each and every one of his "jokes" was (to misquote Coogan) "laser-guided humour," but his unforgetting dismissal of the BBC's edgy comic-darling, Frankie Boyle, was particularly satisfying. Referring to the comic practice of saving a dying joke by bringing in a reference to anal bleeding as Boyle's law, he laid waste to pretty much the entirety of Boyle's shock-value comedy. This practice was not saved for Boyle however, as Gervais, Hicks and Bernard Manning were also exposed to Lee's venom.

Unlike other comics, Lee's show was something of an attempt to raise

comedy up to the level of the other popular arts. The tired practice of machine-gunning the audience with jokes was long discarded by Lee in favour of complex structures and narrative; through self-reference, and by purposeful revelation of punch lines before the joke had been completed, he also raised the usual comic practices of call-back and audience participation to new heights. Effectively, Stewart Lee is to comedy what William Morris was to Victorian painting and decorating.

One thing to be noted is that the show is not worth watching if you're just after some light-hearted entertainment. Audience discomfort set in early: Lee was quietly confrontational, the great Svengali, dictating when you could laugh and when you couldn't, pouring scorn and patronising you in either case. Perhaps, however, this is inevitable when the great subversive comic of his era gains popular acclaim from having a cult-hit BBC2 show (Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle) and subsequently is able to have a near sell-out 3 month run at the Leicester Square Theatre. He is clearly ambivalent about his new found fame, being simultaneously enamoured and repulsed by its nature, and not wanting it to contaminate his art. His show is definitely worth watching and while I do not want to be drawn to use the sloppy claim that he is a revolutionary comic, in many ways he is the genre's Robespierre.

J.K. Checkley

Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle is at Leicester Square Theatre until 10 February 2012

Adorkable

4's *New Girl* has a supersized credibility problem. The casting of Zoëy Deschanel as a girl who is in the market for a new place because she just walked in on her old boyfriend fooling around with another tootsie really stretches credibility, but it often happens to likable girls in sitcoms. However, the bit that really makes you wonder why this show still works, is the hesitation Jess meets from the three very average looking guys who are looking for a fourth person to share the rent.

On what planet, in what galaxy, under what kind of heathen spell would three guys hesitate to give that fourth slot to Zoëy Deschanel? They only appear interested when she mentions her 'model' girlfriends. It seems inevitable that she's going to end up bedding

all three bachelors but that is for the rest of the series to unveil. The men are disparate, and desperate, versions of your Modern Comedy Guy – Nick (Jake M. Johnson), a heartbroken bartender, Schmidt (Max Greenfield), a suit-wearing self-imagined player, and Coach (Damon Wayans Jr.), a personal trainer with communications issues. (Don't get too fond of Coach, though; he will be replaced by the basketball-playing Winston [Lamorne Morris] in the second episode because Wayans returned to "Happy Endings" when it was unexpectedly renewed.)

They don't talk so much as banter, but with a level of self-awareness – make an overly testosterone-fuelled remark and you must put a dollar in the "douche jar" – that shines bright amid the fug of male cluelessness that hangs over so many comedies these days. They are also less prone to singing spontaneously created jingles at awkward moments or using "Hey sailor!" as a pickup line.

Ultimately, the rather sunny ending of *New Girl* doesn't feel earned, and your enjoyment level may depend on how much you can tolerate Zoëy Deschanel's doofy charisma. Personally, I think Deschanel has undeniable appeal as an actress, but the writers must quickly make Jess a more real, three-dimensional person or she could become intolerable. Deschanel is the cilantro of actresses – just the right amount is tasty, but too much is a disaster.

Rasha Al-Dabagh

New Girl is on Channel 4 at 20:30 on Fridays



RON GIBB



Why do you write, Orwell?

I have wanted to read this essay for a long time, yet at times I wonder why it was even written. I do not mean that in a demeaning sense. Orwell's reputation as a writer is well established, and understandably so. But if one takes a step back (a cynical step, perhaps) a question similar to one raised by endless, inconsequential Facebook albums (does anyone care or need to know how you spend every Saturday night?) begins to formulate. Why should I care, or why do I need to know, why you write, Orwell? I read your books, is that not enough?

Being the literary icon that he is, perhaps this essay is justified by talent. Perhaps we should be interested because Orwell speaks. Perhaps it provides an insight into the motivation of what he calls "the whole top crust of humanity," particularly that of sheer egoism.

I recently stumbled onto a blog by a photographer, who is currently "documenting [her] life." I do not know if being a good photographer is about what you photograph, how you photograph, or what you photograph with, I do not know much about photography in gen-

eral, but much like Orwell's literary methodology, I suppose photography blends journalism with creative flair. And like this photographer photographing her own life, in *Why I Write* Orwell not only presents a doorway into the intimacies of his identity, but actually writes about it. For anyone interested in some of the questions raised by Orwell's essay, in *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* Oscar Wilde triumphantly conveys the self-infatuation inherent in all aestheticism.

Despite listing some motivations, Orwell answers his own why in a sentence: "because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention." Subsequently, his most celebrated novels include *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and *Animal Farm* (1945), both highly political and must-reads for students at the LSE. Another personal favourite, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) is autobiographical in tone and documents an experience of poverty which would later become catalytic for his political opinions. His books are embedded in

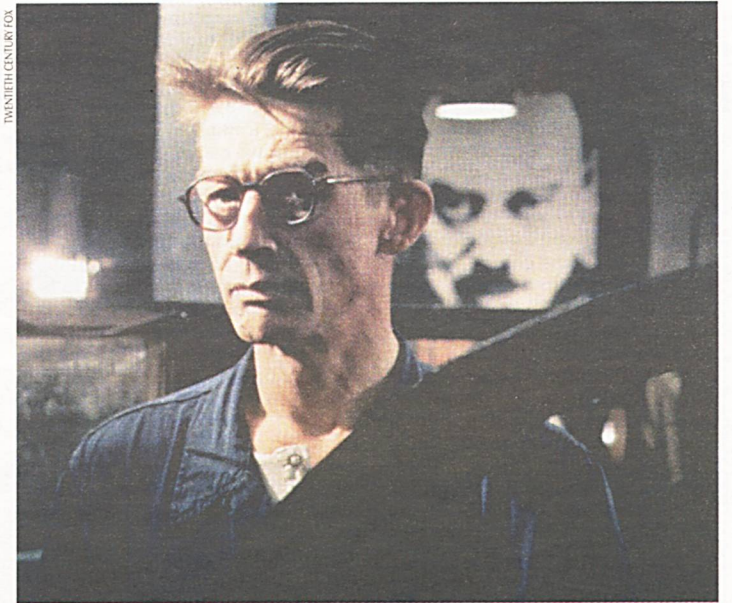
social political systems, are products of "his time" and Orwell rightly suggests that all literature is. And while Orwell's social conscious does inhibit his creativity, as a self-diagnosed political writer, he is able to more clearly confront "the problem of truthfulness" diluted in the illusions of pop culture. Thankfully the "truthfulness" he refers to here is not moralistic, but seems simply concerned with representing things as they actually are. For Orwell, "good prose is like a windowpane."

Closing with quite an existential reflection, Orwell alludes to "the demon whom one can neither resist nor understand" driving him to write. His choice of language suggests that this compulsion is involuntary, in a sense almost akin to destiny.

It is interesting and short. I am still not sure if Orwell wrote it for anyone but himself, but it is an important read in any literary education nonetheless.

↳ Rachel Holmes

Why I Write (1946), George Orwell, available for free online



Winston (John Hurt) is watched by Big Brother (Bob Flag) in the 1984 film adaptation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Art: dangerous?

Our enlightened and caring government, for the safety of the nation and wellbeing of citizens, wards us against danger. We live in the age of fear, and are told to be fearful: of our neighbours, of terrorism and more. There is no-one and nothing we can trust. Should it seem odd when we are told not to trust art? The Department for Public Safety has released a warning, in a pamphlet entitled *Confronting the Danger of Arts*.

What facts are available in a painting or a book, when from the offset, an artist sets out to deceive? "Art is ignorance/ Art fosters lies/ Art is a wrecker / Art costs lives". Why should the government fund art, when the money could be better spent establishing truth with the pursuit of science? *Confronting the*

Dangers of Art highlights the modern day debate on the nature and benefit of art.

Artistic intolerance may seem particular to today's society, concerned with efficiency rather than art, and alienated to the extent of fear. But we are not unique in our phobia. Iconoclasm has followed us through millennia, from Exodus's *Golden Veil* to Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*. History has been terrorised by a fear that art will detach its worshippers from the truth, either immanent or transcendent. As we are reminded in the opening page of *Confronting the Dangers of Art*, Plato understood the danger of art in the *Republic*, even banning it from the ideal state. Yet while it represented a form of education to him, is "art as education" still feasible today?

As students at the LSE, we are vulnerable to falling into this trap. In our pursuit of the "causes of things," it is easy to dismiss art as a distraction, a deception or as a counter-productive activity. As "what you experience/may make no sense," how can art be useful?

Beauty, good and truth were one and the same to Plato, faces of the same coin attained at once or lost together. While today these concepts have been divided, are we really justified in regarding art as mere decoration? Can we learn anything from it – any values or knowledge? Or does art only deceive, lure us away from reality and lead to overwhelming passions?

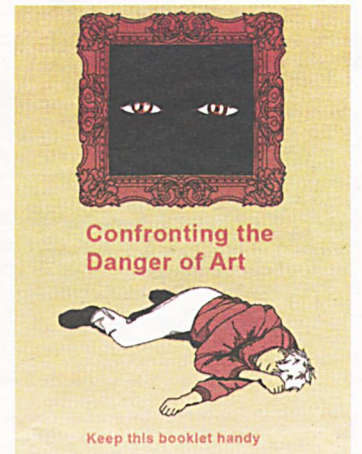
These are some of the considerations stimulated by this ironic pamphlet, a piece of art itself, reflecting on the

nature of art. *Confronting the Dangers of Art* imitates fashionable state issued posters, in the "Keep Calm and Carry On" vein. It is well constructed and Phil Cooper's design complements the irony of Ian McLachlan's poetry. It is a thought-provoking read. Moreover, it can always come to hand, since art is lurking in every corner.

And keep in mind: "If you think you know someone affected by a work of art, contact your council."

↳ Alessandro Allegra and Laura Aumeer

Confronting the Danger of Art (2011), Ian McLachlan and Phil Cooper, Sidekick Books, £5



Profile: Jung Chang

Jung Chang's epic and besotting account of three generations of Chinese women in *Wild Swans* is a gripping insight into China's turbulent transformation. Translated into 30 languages and banned in mainland China, the international bestseller documents the lives of her grandmother, mother, and finally herself.

Born in 1952, into Mao Zedong's China in Yibin, Sichuan Province, Jung was raised in an affluent family. Both her parents being Communist Party of China officials, they lived in a guarded, walled compound and enjoyed the services of a maid, chauffeur and nanny. Her father was exceptionally successful as a propagandist and rose to become a "level 10 official" and one of the 20,000 most important "ganbu" in the country. Her family's degree of privilege was extraordinary for China in the 1950s.

Unsurprisingly, Jung grew up an ardent communist. At 12 years old she asked her father to change her name to something "with a military ring to it." She went from Er-Hong, sounding like the Chinese for faded red (whereas communists were deep red) to Jung, which means "martial affairs."

But discord appeared during the early years of the Cultural Revolution, when at 14 years, Jung became a Red Guard. She was "thrilled by [her] red armband"

but later wrote that she refused to join attacks against other Chinese or teachers. Similarly, with the catastrophic failures of The Great Leap Forward, Jung's parents began to oppose Mao Zedong's policies.

On the back of its vast population, The Great Leap Forward was intended to transform China into a modern communist society, through rapid industrialization and agricultural collectivisation. Among other restrictions, private farmers were persecuted as "counter revolutionaries," which according to historian Frank Dikötter resulted in "one of the most deadly mass killings of human history". Death toll estimates range from 23 to more than 40 million.

As the Cultural Revolution progressed, Jung's parents, among other high-ranking officials, became targets. They were publicly humiliated and abused. Ink was poured over their heads and denunciation placards were hung around their necks as they knelt in gravel or stood for hours in the rain. Her father's treatment during imprisonment led to permanent physical and mental illness.

Jung spent several years as a peasant following disruption of the university system by the Red Guards. Without formal training she worked as a barefoot doctor (a part-time peasant doctor), a

steelworker and an electrician. Mao had previously introduced policies abolishing the formal requirements for such work.

Once universities were reopened, Jung attended Sichuan University to study English. Following Mao's death she passed an exam allowing her to study in the West, leaving China in 1978.

In 1982 Jung became the first person from the People's Republic of China to be awarded a PhD by a British university, when she became a Doctor of Linguistics at the University of York in 1982. Today, Chang lives in West London with her husband, the British historian Jon Halliday. She regularly visits family in mainland China.

↳ Rachel Holmes

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China (1991, New Edition 2004), Harper Perennial, Amazon, £6.99



Jung Chang in 2009

By the time of Mao's death, Chang's loyalty had disappeared. When she heard that he had died, she buried her head in a friend's shoulder and pretended to be grieving. She writes:

"The Chinese seemed to be mourning Mao in a heartfelt fashion. But I wondered how many of their tears were genuine. People had practiced acting to such a degree that they confused it with their true feelings. Weeping for Mao was perhaps just another programmed act in their programmed lives."

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China (1991)



Members of a people's commune put on Mao buttons together

TIANYA BBS

The power of the argument

January is a bitter month. Hailed as an opportunity for new beginnings, rejuvenation, it invariably descends into a mire of boggy failure. You still don't read for your classes. You still can't resist buying a ten deck of camels, when you only went in for salad. You still have those mildly queasy, lingering feelings towards that person you know you shouldn't. You still get dragged to shit clubs, full of cheap vodka and cheaper people in flammable outfits. Essentially the notion that everything changes is a falsehood and actually emphasises the failings in one's life.

Rambling, morose thoughts, as above, come very easily to one, when lying in bed regretting escapades of the previous night and certainly the enduring dark days are not conducive to shiny happy people. However I come bearing the gift of glee, in the form of fashion. I am talking about the "power of the garment." At the risk of indulging in psychobabble, I believe happiness correlates to self-esteem. If we feel good about ourselves we project that on to the world. Clothes are a fantastic way to capture positivity. They allow us to be expressive, have fun and (dare I say it) feel pretty.

Now I'm not suggesting that American Apparel, cable knit jumpers (however darling they may be) can solve all our problems. Rather, they provide cheap thrills that give us a spark of optimism or a hint of a swagger. Without feeling confident we can never really allow ourselves to be content, so it is convincing to argue that there really is power in the garment.

I have tested this thesis against my long-suffering friends whose attitudes seemingly support the theory. In fact the commencement of Lent term is a particularly good time to observe the pleasure clothes can bring. Post the gluttony of Christmas, it is common to see your social circle displaying a variety of new vestments, probably gifted by their 'cooler than their age' mothers. You know the type of lady, part of the Jigsaw generation, more partial to chunky knits and leggings than sensible Marks and Spencer cardigans. Anyway, when running into one male friend outside the library last week, I noticed a distinct spring in his step. As he turned to canter off I saw that he had replaced his standard issue jeans with some snazzy, hip-hugging chinos. Sure, he looked vaguely reminiscent of a member of One Direction,



One Direction

but more importantly he was almost ebullient. As our meeting took place the day before the LSE100 exam, I can only attribute his happiness to the trousers.

However it is important to note that the "power of the garment" can also have a sinister edge. While clothes can certainly enhance one's mood, they also have the inherent ability to deplete our happiness, at least in the short term. My housemates often tell me that they only enjoy nights out when they are unequivocally pleased with their outfits; ensembles they have been thinking about for the best part of a week. Furthermore the vast majority can relate to the bitter sting of a dress that seemed so perfect on the hanger looking less than stunning under the abrasive lights of the

clinical changing room.

Ultimately, I suggest a moderate approach to clothes (although as the slightly embarrassed owner of the most extensive and eccentric wardrobe this side of King's Cross, it is certainly not one I adhere to). While I maintain that individual items can create the dizzy cheerfulness that is usually reserved for children, it is perhaps not wise to attach your happiness solely to clothes. This tactic will most likely end in extensive debt. Rather I prescribe finding one item that you truly adore, one that has the power to lift you out of any indulgent, gloomy temperament. And cheer up, wear some acid brights. It will be spring soon.

↳ Emma Beaumont



Neon Colours by Christopher Kane



Cambridge by Harvey Nichols

Campus style

University dressing is usually associated with mussed up hair, pajamas and Ugg boots. Here at LSE, in the heart of central London, we have a higher standard to uphold. And uphold it we do: spend an hour on Houghton Street and you'll start to wonder if it is actually a runway. There are furs. Sky-high heels. Designer bags everywhere. Quirky kids lounging around corridors. With that in mind, PartB has partnered up with the LSESU Fashion Society to bring you Campus Style, where we'll profile one student with a unique sense of style each week. Today, we kick things off with postgraduate Maxim.

Name: Maxim Mukhin
Programme: MSc Management
How would you describe your style? Edgy-chic.
What are you wearing right now? I'm wearing this amazing sweater that I bought in a boutique in Islington. It's called Uniform for the Dedicated. I've had it for two or three weeks. It's

my new baby and I wear it quite often. It's the warmest sweater I've ever had.

The trousers are from my favourite brand, Cos. Nearly every third item (in my wardrobe) is from Cos, which is a Swedish brand owned by H&M. Shoes are Hudson. Most of my shoes are from Hudson. All their shoes have a similar style. They look a bit vintage, but they also very smart. They go really well with all my clothes.

The coat is from Muji, which is mostly known for home stuff and stationery but all their clothes are really nice.

How about the shirt under your sweater?

It's just a white shirt. It was the cheapest H&M white shirt. It had an ugly collar so I cut it out. And how about the bag? It's one of my favourite bags. I bought it in Berlin, from an independent boutique.. I've always wanted a bag like this but usually they cost £100. This one was 50 so it was quite a bargain. I was afraid it would be geeky but I think I

manage to pull it off.

Where are your favourite places to shop in London?

I love Cos. Love TopMan. I can always find something there. And I go to vintage markets. I often go to random sales. Last week, I went to an Alexander McQueen sale. I got amazing black trousers for £50.

How did you find your Vivienne Westwood scarf?

I got it from a sale as well for around £15.

Do you dress specifically for school?

I usually just wear whatever I feel like wearing, but I do think about it.

The LSESU Fashion Society will be hosting its annual sell-out fashion show February 17th. Keep up with the Society on Facebook or Twitter @LSESUFashion. Want to nominate someone for Campus Style?

Send details to Jennifer at J.Fong1@lse.ac.uk



World Food: England



One of the best things about being at the LSE is the international diversity. World Food will reap its culinary benefits, bringing you a starter, a main and a dessert from a different country or region each week. We are looking for submissions, so send us your authentic recipe and you could see it published here. This week it is England, with warming recipes from Aameer Patel. It is just as well, because the days are really starting to get cold.

Starter Chestnut Soup

A classic winter warmer, this can be served as a starter or enjoyed on its own, with good bread or croutons, as part of a lighter meal. Serves 4.

Ingredients

450 g fresh chestnuts (or 1 tin of puréed chestnuts)
25 g butter
225 g onions, chopped
225 g potatoes, peeled and diced
2 celery sticks, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
900 ml chicken or vegetable stock
1 clove (or 1 teaspoon allspice)
1 sprig fresh thyme (or half a teaspoon dried thyme)
1 tablespoon double cream
Salt and pepper

Method

1. You can skip this step if you are using puréed chestnuts. Cut a cross into the base of each chestnut and place into a pan of boiling water. Remove, drain and carefully peel chestnuts after one minute.
2. Melt butter in a large saucepan and fry onion until soft.
3. Add potatoes, celery, carrot and fresh chestnuts (do not add puréed chestnuts at this stage). Pour over stock and season generously. Add clove or allspice and cover, bring to the boil, and simmer for about 20 minutes. If you are using puréed chestnuts, add them after around 10 minutes, once the potatoes are soft, and then simmer for another 5 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and liquidise.
5. Season, add a swirl of cream and sprinkle with thyme.

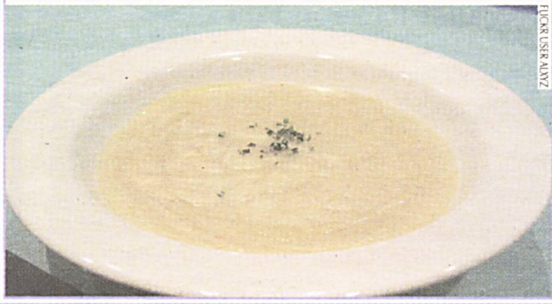


PHOTO: IAN BERRY

Main Cottage Pie

Although cottage pie is best made in larger quantities, it is just as delicious if properly reheated the next day (in the oven, not the microwave). It is warm and hearty, making for a lovely winter supper. Serves 8.

Ingredients

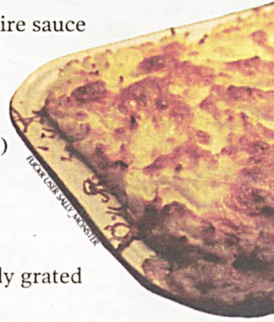
1 kg beef mince
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium sized onions, chopped
2 large carrots, chopped
2 celery sticks, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
2 tablespoons plain flour
1 tablespoon tomato purée
700 ml beef stock
3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
A few thyme sprigs
2 bay leaves
1 teaspoon sage
Salt and pepper
1 cup of red wine (optional)

For the mashed potatoes:

1.2 kg potatoes, chopped
180 ml milk
25 g butter
200 g mature cheddar, finely grated
Nutmeg, grated

Method

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan and brown mince. This will take a while.
2. Remove the mince, add more oil, along with onions, carrots and celery. Cook on medium heat until soft, stirring regularly.
3. Add garlic, flour and tomato purée and simmer for five minutes.
4. Return mince to the pan, add wine and simmer for a few minutes, before adding stock, Worcestershire sauce, thyme, sage and bay leaves. Simmer uncovered for around 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until quite thick.
5. Season and remove thyme stalks and bay leaves. Allow to cool.
6. Add potatoes to a large saucepan of cold salted water. Bring to the boil and simmer until potatoes are tender. Drain thoroughly, then mash with milk, butter and two thirds of the cheese. Season with nutmeg, salt and pepper.
7. Spoon mince mixture into 2 ovenproof dishes. Spoon mashed potatoes over mince and sprinkle with cheese.
8. Cook on gas mark 7/220°C for around 25 minutes, until cheese is golden. For a crisp topping, place under grill for a few minutes before serving.



Dessert

Walnut and Honey Tart

This West Country specialty is very rich and a small slice is the perfect way to round off an evening, or to treat yourself before bed. Serves 6.

Ingredients

175 g plain flour
75 g butter
3 eggs
1 orange, grated rind and juice
4 tablespoons honey
80 g fresh breadcrumbs
3 tablespoons brown sugar
100 g walnuts, roughly chopped
100 g dark chocolate, melted (optional)

Method

1. Stir flour, salt and butter together until the mixture is quite fine and crumbly. Add orange rind and bind with a suitable amount of orange juice.
2. Roll out on to a floured surface and place in an 8 inch flan tin or dish. Bake on gas mark 6/200°C for 10-15 minutes until set.
3. In a bowl, mix together honey, breadcrumbs and sugar, beating in eggs as you go. Add remaining orange juice and stir well.
4. Sprinkle walnuts into the pastry case and pour over honey mixture. Bake on gas mark 6/200°C for 20-25 until set.
5. If you like, you can spread some melted chocolate over the tart before it cools. Serve with clotted cream.

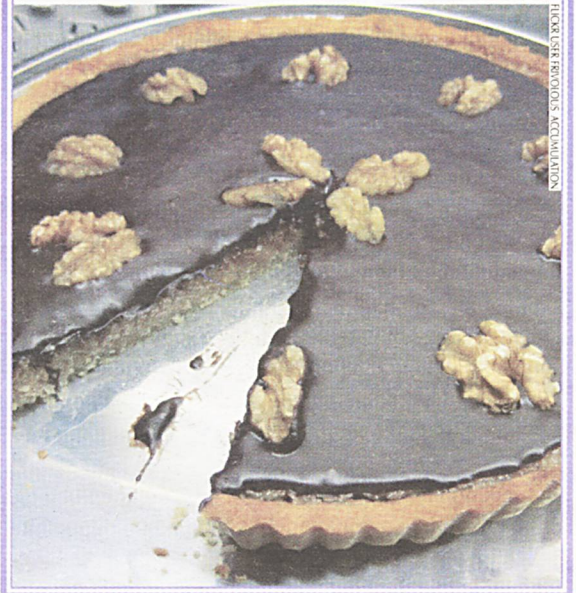


PHOTO: IAN BERRY



For one night only

Nothing tops off a happy family holiday better than my mum receiving a phone call from my auntie telling her that in the fancy dress costume I had lent her, she had found an empty condom wrapper. Cue a very persuasive speech about how I must have accidentally picked it up when I got changed at someone's house.

So, apart from stray empty condom wrappers, what else do one night stands leave us with?

What is his/her name?!

This is a common problem, especially given the usual involvement of alcohol in one night stands. I will never forget when my flatmate tiptoed into my room early one morning to ask me for the name of the young man in her bed. You can only get away with "hun" and "babe" for so long. If you are not fortunate enough to have a flatmate who knows the name of the person in your bed nearby, you can always ask how their name is spelt, for Facebook. But it's a bit awkward given that you probably don't want to contact each other ever again.

Nightwear

What is the protocol for nightwear when a one-night stand is over? Usually you don't bother, but some people get

cold or embarrassed (preparing for the morning). My friend brought a guy back and he requested something to wear in bed. She offered him her nightie, and he put it on ... That's definitely worse than waking up naked.

Getting lost

Being in a strange house, in the dark, and potentially inebriated, the potential for getting lost is high. Having experienced this - walking from the bathroom into, not only a stranger's room, but their bed, realising it was not the right room and running out without saying a word - I can testify to this.

Unfortunate events

I recently went back to somebody's and had an argument. He then rolled over and refused to talk to me, and rather than find my way home at four in the morning, I spent the night balancing on the very edge of the opposite side of the bed. Not ideal. A girl in my hall of residence brought a boy back during one of our many periods of having no water (oh, how I miss halls!). He switched on a tap when he went to the loo, and by not turning the tap to the off position, flooded her flat. The next

morning they were confronted by five angry flatmates and he had to walk home in soggy clothes. Another friend brought a guy back, but they were so drunk they were getting motion sickness during sex, so he just sat up, straddled her, and finished in her face. Nice.

Pillow talk

My friend woke up to his lady-friend telling him, "I hate one night stands." At least they both appreciated it for what it was.

Breakfast

So, you've brought a stranger home and they've seen you naked, but do you offer them breakfast? If he has recently decorated your face (without permission), probably not. But if you shared a beautiful evening together, there is nothing wrong with offering them some toast. Or, as (perhaps undeservedly) offered to my name-forgetting flatmate, take them out for brunch.

STIs

Just joking - you've been reading my guide to STIs, so hopefully not.

↳ Callie Nordenfelt

Cut-out-and-keep guide to Chlamydia

What is it?

Chlamydia is the most common STI in the UK. Most people who have chlamydia will not notice any symptoms and won't know they have the infection, but it can lead to serious long-term health problems if it is left untreated.

How do you catch it?

- Through unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- By sharing sex toys.
- If infected semen or vaginal fluid is transferred to another person's genitals.

What are the symptoms?

- Most people who have chlamydia don't notice any symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, but then disappear, the infection still remains.
- Women may notice Cystitis (pain when passing urine), change in vaginal discharge, lower abdominal pain, pain and/or bleeding during sexual intercourse, bleeding after sex, bleeding between periods or heavier periods.
- Men may notice white, cloudy or watery discharge from the tip of the

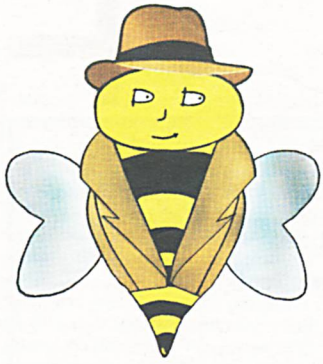
penis, pain when passing urine, pain in the testicles.

Treatment

- A course of antibiotics.

Complications

- If it isn't treated, the infection can sometimes spread to other parts of the body and lead to infertility in both sexes.
- In women, if chlamydia is not treated it can spread to other reproductive organs. This can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), and inflammation of the cervix (cervicitis), fallopian tubes (salpingitis) and Bartholin's glands (Bartholinitis). Infection with chlamydia during pregnancy may also be linked to early miscarriage or premature birth of the baby.
- In men, untreated chlamydia can cause inflammation of the testicles, urethra (urethritis), inflammation of the epididymis (epididymitis) and reactive arthritis.



PRIVATE B



LSE100 Enters Second Year: World Reacts

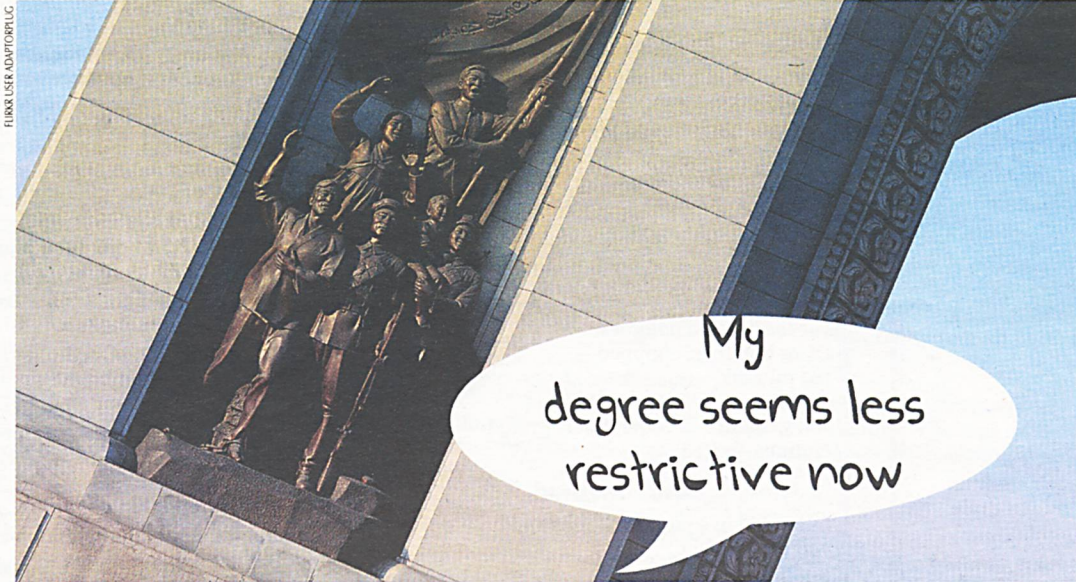
Twits Dominate Beaver News Team

The editor of the Beaver, Duncan McCain, was urged to resign on Monday, following the publication of a headline story regarding the LSE Students' Union General Secretary, Alex Stockwell-Day. Complaints surrounded the story that was reported by this newspaper despite relying entirely on the social media for evidence.

Within fifteen minutes of Stockwell-Day reporting on the popular social micro-blogging site Twitter that "Leonard Cohen [sic.] has a new song out" and that she was "too excited to listen," McCain had co-authored a piece decrying the lack of effort by the General Secretary.

It is understood by the B that the story was almost sent out having only filled six lines of typeface prior to news editor Sydney Habour-Bridge informing the paper that the hundred-and-forty character limit applied only to the website.

A Features editorial decrying alleged "endemic corruption" within the LSESU relied on the fact that a senior member



of the executive committee had liked the marketing ad "Win an iPad," while Environment and Ethics Officer Lois Miffedon was accused of "Anti-Male Sexism" for following female Twitter users by a ratio of over 18:17.

Complaints regarding the overreliance upon unaccountable sources by writers for the Beaver have become increasingly vocal in recent months. It was later revealed that a headline story from 2011 regarding the mooted

privatisation of the LSE was based entirely on the fact that a member of the Finance Division had set up an eBay account. A story in the same issue in which Sir Howard Duvets was accused of adopting a prejudiced view of American

students was also found to have been down to Duvets changing the settings on his Microsoft Word dictionary.

McCain has defended the use of social media as news sources, arguing, "In an era of increasing technological innovation, it is vital to use half-baked stream-of-consciousness ramblings as a substitute for doing proper interviews."

"Historically," the McCain continued in an increasingly hysterical tone, "the Beaver has depended on innovative investigative journalism as a means of bringing major developments within the school community to light."

"The original founding of the School was broken two hours prior to the Press Release after a prospective student journalist found an old cigarette packet that Beatrice Webb had doodled a few initialisms on."

It has also come to our attention that an extensive article regarding the latest developments in the long-running Libya scandal was written entirely with reference to Saif al-Fingal Gaddafi's Tumblr page.

L Tanned Ale

Bankside House plans "predatory"

Newly approved plans for the redevelopment of LSE halls of residence, Bankside House, have received a warm welcome from students and members of staff, but have attracted criticism from nearby businesses. The strongest reaction came from leaseholders at the neighbouring Blue Fin Building, who described the plans as "predatory, like many of your alumni" in a statement yesterday.

Designed by British architectural firm Wisdom + Partners, the new building will be completed in April 2013. Naming rights will be sold to the highest bidder, no questions asked.

When opened, the new building will be the most luxurious and technically advanced halls of residence in the world. Students will be housed throughout, with the exception of the penthouse, which will be reserved for wealthy guests, and the basement, which will become maid's quarters, led by a former resident known as the "Cock in a Frock". Among its most anticipated features is a mock stock exchange, whose fortunes will be tied to the weather. A new Wright's Bar franchise will compete with McDonald's and the high-end bistro Smuggu to provide meals. Current affairs will also be catered for, with dispensers for the *Financial Times* and *The Economist* on each floor, which, despite statistics showing that 99 per cent of students to be readers of both, have been described by *Grauniad* editor Alan Handwinger as "a shameful conspiracy." Plans for a permanent Interpol desk have been put on hold after the Woolf report.

The building will be powered by a unique sigh-detecting generator system. Sighs will be provoked by a central sound system, which will periodically transmit such terms as externality, FT, internship, LSE100 and UGM.

The plans have not proven universally popular, although Students' Union Community and Welfare Officer, Glukus Aide was quick to disagree. "I can count the number of complaints we have had on Sai's hands. These 'people' are not representative of the wider student body."

L Arrears Patel



An impression of what the redeveloped building will look like, but not by an artist

LSE That LSE Draft Referendum Ballot Paper in Full



As part of a wide-ranging program of School Governance reform, please fill in the questions below to the best of your ability.

Once complete, please return the paper to the following address;

M. H. Davies
Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris
27, rue Saint-Guillaume
75337
PARIS

Q1: Do you support the expulsion of the Department of Philosophy for bringing the School in to Disrepute?

YES / NOT IF THEY WILL GIVE ME AN MSc OFFER

Q2: Do you support the secession of the Department of Anthropology from the School?

YES / ONLY IF IT WILL STOP MY DAD'S EXTRADITION

Q3: Would you support the establishment of the Hare Krishna stall as neutral territory?

YES / I AM THE MANAGER OF WATERSTONE(')S

Q4: Do you support returning all of the Gaddafi funding to the people of Libya?

YES / I AM THE FORMER HEAD OF THE WTO

Q5: Do you regularly attend the Union General Meeting?

NO / NO / NO

Q6: Do you support the maintaining of the Living Wage in line with inflation?

YES / I AM A FORMER CANDIDATE FOR TREASURER OF
BANKSIDE HOUSE

Features

A threat to the secular state

Emily Delahaye examines the small minority threatening Israel's democracy

In December 2011, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton drew attention in the West to a growing issue in Israel. Events which are disturbing Israelis and their Western allies are occurring on a now regular basis. This month an Israeli woman in Ashdod received death threats for refusing to respect one of the segregation rules that exists on some buses. Last year some Israeli Defence Force soldiers walked out of an event which included female singers. Elsewhere, an eight year old girl was heckled and called a "whore" as she walked to school as pedestrians saw her as being immodestly dressed. These events are the actions of a small ultra-religious minority in Israeli society, but a minority which is increasingly worrying for the moderate secular general population of Israel.

This ultra-religious minority are called the Haredim, and represent the most Orthodox strand of the Jewish religion. Many Haredi followers rejected, and in some cases still reject, the formation of the state of Israel in 1948. Often they lived in the Middle East prior to 1948 and believe that founding a Jewish state goes against the Torah. They have separate religious

schools funded by the secular Israeli government. Due to the large amount of time they spend studying religious texts they are exempt from military service. This has caused concern in Israel, where national security is viewed as essential, because the Haredim represented 10 per cent of the population in 2007 and are predicted to represent 25 per cent of the population by 2019. This demographic growth stems from a mixture of large families, which are sometimes up to seven children (following the religious commandment to "go forth and multiply"), and a low rate of infant mortality in Israel. The Haredim reject modern culture and norms and believe in strict relations between the sexes. For example, unless you are married to each other or are otherwise closely related, you are not allowed to touch a member of the opposite sex. This can extend to different genders attending different schools, and also arranged meetings for potential partners. It is also forbidden for a man to watch a woman singing in this ultra-orthodox culture. The Haredi extremists' overt and controversial activity towards women in contemporary Israeli society has been picked up before in the Western world. In April

2009, the BBC reported that the Haredi newspaper "Yated Neeman" had digitally altered a photograph of the new Israeli cabinet so that the figures of Limor Livnat (Minister for Sports and Culture) and Sofa Landver (Minister for Immigrant Absorption) were replaced with men. Here the ultra orthodox newspaper felt that publishing images of women would be a violation of their female modesty and so acted to uphold the Haredi religious views.

In December, the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu displayed his intolerance of this behaviour in a speech at the Knesset, the Israeli House of Representatives, where he declared that "we won't accept spitting on people in the street just because someone doesn't approve of their dress." Israelis are becoming more and more concerned about the threat these extremists pose to their democracy. As already mentioned the rising Haredi population is seen as a threat to Israeli security, as the ultra-religious group does not serve in the army. They are now being seen as an even bigger threat to the political system. Threats to Israeli democracy have occurred before, with the emergence and activities of the radical religious

right in the 1970s and 1980s. Here groups of fervently religious Israelis, some under the leadership of the radical Rabbi Meir Kahane, violently took against the government's decision to sign the 1978 Camp David Accords which gave back captured land to Egypt. Meir Kahane posed a particular threat with his activities in the Knesset, after gaining a seat in 1984, by proposing a law banning marriage and sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews and propagating similar extreme anti-Palestinian views, to the extent that his speeches were boycotted by other Knesset members.

Today, the activities of the ultra-orthodox towards women have added to existing strong resentment, in some sectors of the population, towards the anachronistic Haredim. This existing dislike ranges from bitterness of state funding for Haredi schools which do not teach the core Israeli curriculum, to anger at the fact that many Haredi males do not work (feeling that they must study the Torah all day), and consequently live off state benefits. This latter problem is seen as putting a strain on the Israeli economy, which will only be exacerbated by the growing size of the Haredi population. Once

again, this links to fears over Israel's capacity to defend itself, if its economy is being undermined through state welfare spending on a group which is seen by some to not sufficiently contribute to society. Some critics discount fears about Israeli democracy – seeing the Haredim as an insular group wanting to preserve their way of life in a secular state, not change the state itself. In the defense of the ultra-orthodox minority, they point out how the Haredim are discriminated against when they do look for work, and how, as an insular group, they do not have the opportunity to speak out for themselves. Others may be remembering the 1980s and the calls from a small minority, a group called Gush Emunim, for the introduction of halakhah (Jewish) law into the secular Zionist state. What is clear is that this issue will not go away, but will continue to create discord in Israeli society if present demographic trends continue. This small ultra-orthodox minority, with currently minimal involvement in government, could conceivably increase its influence over time decisively affecting the make up and operations of Israel. ☛



A Death on Facebook

Edward Larkin asks 'does Facebook dehumanise us?'



Flickr: BEYOURPET

Jonathan Franzen delivered a compelling commencement address at Kenyon College this past May in which he discussed the relationship between technology and love. Franzen suggests that modern technology has made itself the ideal recipient of erotic love – giving everything instantly and asking for nothing in return. He warns against substituting this instant gratification-driven technophilia for the messy art of actually loving a real human being. “Liking,” now synonymous with a deliberate click on Facebook, is not the same as loving.

The speech, which was adapted in the New York Times under the title “Liking is for Cowards. Go for What Hurts,” has a ring of truth to it. There’s validity to the claim that only having a “Like” button restricts the bandwidth of human emotion. There’s also a way in which Facebook’s very public history of missteps with users’ data has bred distrust that colours our online selves. Perhaps even larger than the actual missteps is the knowledge that Facebook’s incentive structure is directly tied to how much public data they can possibly wring out of you. I personally always enjoy trying to figure out how new profile layout changes subtly encourage more sharing – or at least make it harder to hide previous activity.

Furthermore, the effects of the news feed on the human psyche are certainly up for debate. Does a constantly updating log of our friends’ activity make us informed or just feel alone, somehow left out? Does it encourage us to be voyeurs, peering in on the lives of others without actually participating? Is frequent posting a mark of self-confidence or solipsism? Does it distract us, exploiting our inherent fascination with human interaction to the point of saturation, or does it make us content, more sensitive and attuned to the inner and

outer lives of those around us?

After having been dazzled by the way Franzen dug up and classified the complex strata of modern life in his 2010 novel “Freedom”, I was initially predisposed to agree. But that was before Jennifer Winesmith – whose name has been changed for the purpose of this article.

Jennifer Winesmith is (was) a friend of a friend, someone I had never met. This friend posted a status saying, “I can’t believe you are gone Jennifer. It seems like just yesterday I saw you...” Normally, I would have momentarily paused and moved on, the update falling farther and farther down the feed before eventually reaching whatever dusty corner of Facebook’s servers serves as purgatory for old statuses. Yet Jennifer’s name had been tagged. It stood out with the telltale blue of a link, and my cursor obligingly changed from an arrow to a hand when rolling over it. I clicked, hoping to at least put a face to the person who had died.

Surprisingly, the whole profile was open – pictures, wall, info, the whole nine yards. I started with the pictures. Jennifer was very short and overweight to the extent that it was clear that weight had been the overriding issue in her life. She had a short bob of black hair, wore glasses, and one of those really pure smiles that lacks all self-consciousness and cynicism and is really hard to fake. She stood diminutively in the center of a group of friends in most of the pictures, smiling. Except the most recent one: just her sitting at a desk, staring right into the camera (probably taken on “Photo Booth”), with the sort of knowing half-smile you might have at the end of a good movie. The colours were soft and reddish, as if someone had applied the antique filter on a photo editing software. For some reason it struck me as a particularly appropriate last picture.

Next I moved to the wall, where it was immediately apparent that she

had indeed died – friends as far as the eye could see had posted condolences and expressed remorse that she was gone. The posts were hypnotic, and I continued to scroll down, reading the compliments and memories and sadness. There had been probably a hundred posts since she had died. Some were touching – despite not knowing her well, Jennifer had inspired them to join the debate team and kindled them with her passion. Some were sad – one girl expressed regret about never really telling Jennifer how deeply she appreciated her, another claimed that she would never drink Diet Coke or listen to “Ke\$ha” again without crying. Others hadn’t registered the loss, and posted as if they were talking to her.

Finally, the condolence posts ended and Jennifer’s life began. All of a sudden she was liking, commenting, posting status updates. It was disorienting, as if I had somehow traveled back in time simply by scrolling down on Facebook. I went back to the point between Jennifer’s last activity and the beginning of the condolence posts and stopped there for a while, looking at the white space between the two.

Cultural commentators spend a lot of time thinking about how technology dehumanizes us – how Facebook contorts relationships (Sherry Turkle), Twitter prevents profundity (Bill Keller), Google jeopardises memory retrieval (Nicholas Carr). We’re paranoid about representing ourselves online (Are employers watching? Are grad schools watching?), as if our cyber image is always hanging under the Sword of Damocles, ready to be loosed into an uncontrollable spiral of nude self-picture chaos at the slightest disturbance.

But the sheer in-congruence between those two posts on Jennifer’s wall – that last status update and the first condolence – was humanising in a way that was perhaps deeper than any pre-Facebook statement could

have ever been. This wasn’t a black and white picture in the obituaries section a few days after the fact along with a paragraph that neatly summed up an entire life. This showed just how incongruous death really is – how absurd.

Usually we’re only affected by this absurdity when a person very close to us dies in an accident. We lived and interacted with them and understood that they were real and had volition. And no matter how erudite we think ourselves to be, for all practical purposes we usually live assuming the rest of the world is a machine, where things tend to happen mechanically. We hear about people being killed or dying of cancer or committing suicide, and unless it’s someone close to us, we can’t quite comprehend it. When we hear about death on the news or in the newspaper, it’s presented as an abstraction (which it pretty much has to be if we are going to stay sane, since they only pick the most bizarre and terrifying deaths to report). An anchor stares at the camera and says calmly, “a local man was killed by a falling tree while walking his dog.” “A student was murdered in a home today.” It’s almost literary.

But seeing that white space on Facebook after the last post has a way of bringing that reality a little closer, even for someone like me, who had no prior knowledge whatsoever about Jennifer Winesmith. It has a way of making clear that this was indeed a flesh and blood human being who a few hours ago was living exactly the same as we are.

Without even knowing it, we’ve all started to leave a long stream of ourselves to posterity. There’s a long digital wake trailing all of us. The implications of this are profound. We’ve always tried to recapture the dead through books, old belongings, clothes, letters, maybe recently even a few home videos. The gaps are im-

mense, and we tend to fill them favourably. While this makes for great heroes and rich mythology, it often glosses over the little tics, the minor annoyances, and the slight tendencies that make us us. A stream of tweets and Facebook posts is immeasurably richer, giving little snapshots from all across a life. People post when they’re mad, sad, happy, drunk, sober, high, heartbroken, triumphant, defeated. There’s an element of real life there that was much more difficult to capture in previous eras.

For a few days, I was fascinated with Jennifer’s profile. The story of her death eventually appeared in the university newspaper, and I figured out that it had been 24 hours between her last Facebook activity and her death – that was the gap between the two posts. I went back to my friend’s profile to click on the tagged name and visit her profile again. But the link was gone. Facebook had memorialized her account, making it off-limits to non-friends. “Jennifer” stood in the same black typeface as the rest of the post, and the cursor no longer changed when I rolled over it. For a moment it felt strangely like I had lost something, but the feeling passed.

The connection was lost. But the experience impressed upon me the necessity to maintain a critical eye when evaluating compelling narratives like Franzen’s. But whether one agrees with his thesis or not, the important thing is that we’re having the conversation. As noted computer scientist David Gerlenter said, “We need more people who are less diffident in the face of technology...articulate Luddite, anti-technology voices.” That improves technology and it improves us. And while Jennifer’s Facebook is gone, the news articles now have a person behind the headlines. Interestingly enough, they are all accompanied by a picture – that knowing half-smile set colored by the antique filter. ☛

A week in Westminster and beyond

Chris Rogers rounds up last week's political happenings

Mitt Romney has, with a slim victory in Iowa, and a crushing victory in New Hampshire, pushed ahead of his rival in the two of opening contests in the Republican Presidential Race. With his victories now secure Romney

primary season will continue for some time. Defeating more Conservative and Evangelical opponents, Romney is likely to be the first Mormon to be nominated by a major party for President. Democrats have already started running several attack ads focusing on Romney, but the Primary season is still

Foot, has prompted various attempts to renew his personal image and restore the leads he enjoyed when he first emerged as leader of the Labour party. In his speech he attempted to reconcile his left-leaning public image with credentials to fit the narrative - 'there isn't much money in the national coffers'. However his lackluster speech, and reluctance to present any radical new policies so far from the general election, resulted in a disappointing re-launch that proved to be more of a damp squib.

The Referendum on Scottish Independence moved one step closer this week with the announcement of the date for a referendum on Scottish independence, in late 2014. The First Minister, Alex Salmond, who is also the leader of the pro-independent Scottish National Party, faced criticism for not bringing the referendum forward. Furthermore the UK government argued that the authority for a referendum on constitutional matters is under the control of the government at Westminster. Salmond is believed to be attempting to play on the nationalist sentiment of the 700th anniversary of Bannockburn. George Osborne has led the charge for the Unionist movement this week, attacking the realism of Scottish independence, particularly Salmond's assertion that Scotland will be able to keep the pound.

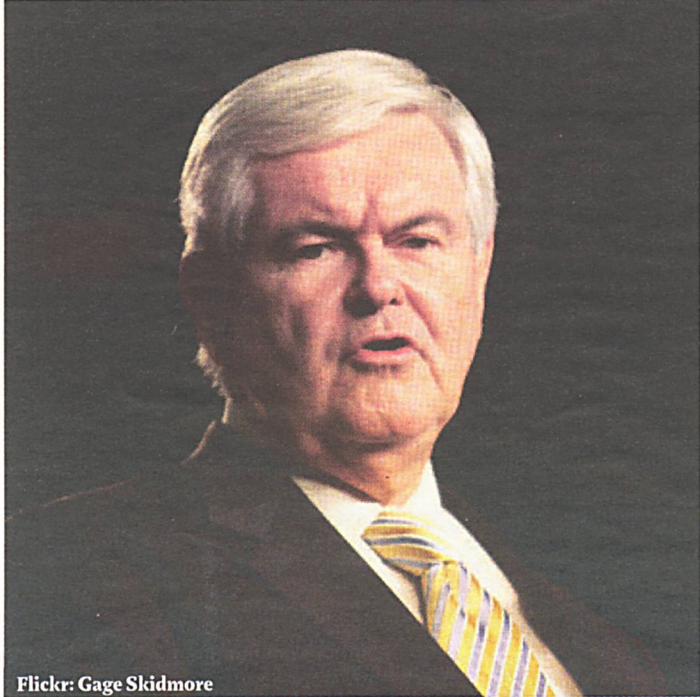
High Speed 2, the controversial high speed rail network has been given the go ahead despite strong criticism. Costing billions of pounds, people have argued that HS 2 will result in destroying homes and damaging the countryside. Proponents counter that it will reduce congestion and provide thousands of jobs. The project is set to be completed by 2026, and allows people to travel from London to Birmingham in less than an hour, and has been argued to provide up to £34 billion return

on the investment.

This week saw the first Prime Minister's Question Time of 2012, where the Prime Minister David Cameron faced a barrage of questions from MP's from all parties. After a string of poor performances from Ed Miliband, and a few lively exchanges, Prime Minister's

referring to the show as "BlackBusters." This was the result of an intern in Ed's office, who has undoubtedly had a hard time as a result.

And finally Michael Gove's schools reform became a political battleground over the fate of a local primary school. David Lammy MP and Christine Blow-



Flickr: Gage Skidmore

now seems to be the presumptive Republican candidate to oppose Barack Obama in the Presidential election this November. Questions still remain over Newt Gingrich's willingness to engage in mutually assured destruction; the release of a 30 minute bare-knuckled attempt to paint Romney as a candidate who "enjoys firing people" indicate the

on going and many of Romney's rivals are likely to stay in the contest for a few more races yet.

Ed Miliband began his re-launch this week trying to regain the political narrative and take the political advantage from the Conservatives. His poor personal opinion ratings, only higher than Iain Duncan Smith and Michael



Flickr: Ed Miliband

Questions this week proved a tame affair. The one moment of importance occurred when Ed Miliband accused the Prime Minister of reversing the Labour government's decision to cap fares, when it was revealed that the Labour government's plan was for it to lapse naturally this year.

Twitter provided another fiasco for the Labour leader. Ed Miliband fumbled a tribute to quiz show presenter Bob Holness, the host of "Blockbusters", with his official twitter account

er, the head of the National Union of Teachers, condemned Michael Gove's plans to reform failing schools by converting them to academy status. The focal point of the conflict is a local primary school in Downhills, at which, in its best results in years, 39 per cent of pupils failed to achieve an acceptable level in English or Maths. Gove argues that the school needs serious reforms, whilst David Lammy the schools MP argues that this will break up local communities.



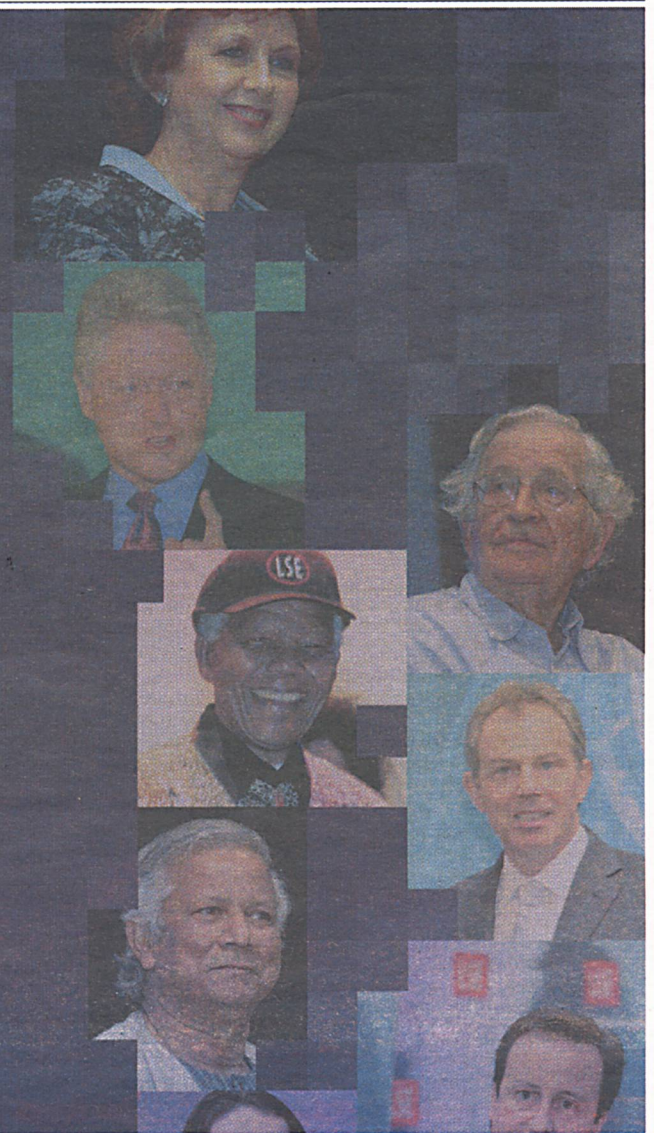
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

events

“I encourage you to attend LSE's public events – your chance to hear lectures by prestigious speakers from across the world”

Professor Judith Rees, director, LSE

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Novum organum

Alessandro Allegra looks at the relationship between science and London

The relationship between Science and London is an interesting one. Looking back at the history of scientific discoveries in London we can see the struggle many have had in defining science as a concept. It seems the more you try to define it the fuzzier it gets. People at the LSE philosophy department have been

“London might have been marginal in the production of scientific ideas, but it was vital in its diffusion and communication.”

trying to do it since it was founded, but it appears to be a hopeless task. For some reason, this thing we call science has been hanging around London for a while now. At the beginning of the 17th century, the Lord Chancellor of Eng-

land published a rather curious book. Its title was “Novum Organum” and it dealt with the nature of knowledge and the investigation of nature. Its author, Sir Francis Bacon, had realised that natural philosophy, as the enquiry of nature was called at the time, was taking a new direction. He thought a new kind of knowledge was emerging, and he set for himself the task of defining its method. This was the forerunner of what we now call “scientific method”. Around the end of the same century, in London, another English gentleman published the fulfilment of Bacon’s dream, the “Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica”. This is more or less the way our modern idea of science was born. Around the same time, a bunch of rich and educated gentlemen founded the “Royal Society of London for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge”, thus initiating that collective effort to gain knowledge we are familiar with today. So far so good, but no one had yet mentioned the word Science. They wrote in Latin, and “scientia” meant vaguely knowledge. It took almost two centuries and plenty of controversy about how this knowledge had to be achieved before

the word acquired its present meaning, and the term scientist was introduced only in the 1834.

Most of these gentlemen engaged in science were trained in Cambridge, but London was the centre of the action. Many of them were pursuing science simply as a hobby, aside from their everyday occupations. Many of them were lawyers, Lords and share-

“We all face the far reaching consequences of modern scientific discoveries.”

holders of trading companies. They soon realised that there was almost no point to science if it wasn’t shared. And London was certainly the place to share it. London might have been marginal in the production of scientific ideas, but it was vital in its diffusion and communication. It was in the capital that societies were founded and experiments performed in front

of the general public. It was also the place where museums were built to showcase the wonders of nature. It was in London that scientific instruments were crafted. London was the base of the Admiralty and the East India Company; science, trade and war have always propelled each other. For some reason or the other, London was the place to be if you were interested in science.

This is a nice story - probably partial and lacking something - but it gives a fair idea of what has been the intimate relationship between London and science. But LSE students are not

necessarily interested in History for its own sake, so you might be tempted to ask, what has all of this to do with us? That’s the question we should raise. Most at LSE are not doing the traditional sciences, but it still concerns us. We have people interested in bioethics, policy making, climate change and philosophy of science. We all face the far reaching consequences of modern scientific discoveries in fields as diverse as warfare, online trading and biomedicine. And, of course, the university’s place in London, a city where the propellers of science are still located. ☛

Take a look at our new weekly science column! If you’re interested in writing for it please contact features@the-beaveronline.co.uk. Feel free to get in touch if you other ideas or queries.



Questionable funding?

Rachel Williams ponders the ethics of Tata and the LSE

Where would a commonplace conversation about the LSE be without a comment about questionable funding? As calls for accountability and transparency become the new weapon of the public, organisations have nowhere to hide. This holds true for LSE funder, Tata India, who despite their claims of ethical business practice have fallen under fire for their allegedly questionable practices regarding land acquisition.

“The vision Tata was founded on holds strong in the public eyes but does not hold up in practice.”

In 2008, the plans of Tata Steel to take over 997 acres of farmland in West

Bengal led to outrage by protesters. Abandoning construction mid-way due to fierce opposition, the company simply moved their sights to the state of Orissa, where current plans for a car manufacturing plant are due for completion in 2014. Displacing over 1100 families for the 6 million ton integrated green-field steel plant, the aim is to provide India with the cheapest automobile ever made - the Tata Nano.

Cooperating with LSE through the Tata Institute of Social Sciences Academic Alliance, the Jamsetji Tata trust recently pledged £1.8 million for the school and also founded the university's Social Policy department. However it is evident that again, the sources of LSE funding are not as squeaky clean as they first appear. Although many of the Tata Brothers companies may claim to have strong ethical concern through their commitment to corporate social responsibility, there are many questionable areas of operation which are contradictory to Tata's usually shining reputation.

It is undisputed that the company

itself was created under admirable aspirations. Owned by charitable trusts, the Tata Brothers organisation predated contemporary CSR practices by over sixty years, they were the first to introduce minimum wages and the eight hour working day.

Functioning under Parsee business principles, managers are convinced by the ethical approach with which the company's founder - Ratan Tata - strived to uphold and see it as an integral part of the functioning of all Tata Brothers companies. The group's reputation in India is considerable, as its founding fathers were key players in the Indian independence movement - therefore Tata Brothers holds a significant nationalist sentiment in the eyes of many.

However, the original Tata Brothers, seen as a paternal "caring" company is part of a dying trend. Realising their position as a small fish in a big pond over the past few years, they have had to adjust and expand in order to compete in an increasingly globalised world.

One result of this has led Tata to abandon their structures of permanent employment and welfare in the Tata company town of Jamshedpur. Due to increased global competition, Tata has had to seek lower production cost, leading to lower wages for its employees. The notion of providing its employees jobs for life has disintegrated and been replaced by flexible labour regimes, typical of global neo-liberal capitalism.

The vision Tata was founded on

“Are we simply more selfish in our pursuit of capitalist rewards?”

holds strong in the public eyes but does not appear to hold up in practice. The historical legacy of its ethical business practices may be a motivation for their CSR programmes but all in all, Tata is an industrial company like any other.

Similar patterns could be alluded

in the case of the LSE. Founded on the principle of changing the world for the better through social sciences, it is debatable how many graduates do go on to strive for anything other than a high-flying job in the financial sector. In many ways, Tata and LSE go hand-in-hand as organisations following in the footsteps of their forefathers but see the allure of the global market as something far more worthwhile.

Is it that the visions of the founders were too idealistic, or are social hopes for development steadily more difficult to achieve as we are all forced to expand our visions to an international level? Are we simply more selfish in our pursuit of capitalist rewards?

It would have to be said that the foundations of any company or organisation are based on optimistic targets and visions. We cannot expect them to tick every box. However, the mistakes made by Tata should not be excused under this premise, even in lieu of the complex issues posed by an increasingly globalised market. ☛



“Tolerance we hardly knew ye”

Matthew Worby discusses the disturbingly high presence of religious intolerance

This week, the Beaver became aware of an antisemitic event that occurred during an LSE Athletics' Union ski trip. Although only a small number of LSE students were involved in the event, it is part of a greater, and far more concerning trend of wider antisemitism across

British universities, and Europe generally. As the President of the European Jewish Congress stated in May 2011 “Anti-Semitism has not decreased in a noticeable fashion across the European continent.” Acts range from not just physical abuse to threats, literature and desecration. The year of 2011 saw many unacceptable incidents, to high-

light a few mentioned by the Anti-Defamation League based in the USA: In Belgium, a Jewish man was punched in the face for “being a Jew”, while France saw several incidents, one including an eleven year old girl threatened with a knife while walking to synagogue for attending a “dirty meeting.” Closer to home the then president of the

National Union of Students (NUS) had to leave a tuition fees rally, escorted by police because the crowd began to chant anti-Semitic abuse. In Scandinavia Molotov cocktails have been thrown into synagogues.

As reported by the Community Security Trust (CST), during 2009 a total of 924 antisemitic incidents were

reported in the UK, an increase of 69 percent from 2008. Even discounting the impact of a response to Operation Cast Lead, the statistics indicate a rise in the real level of incidents. 124 of these were violent, three of which were categorised as causing general bodily harm. The potential issue of categorising these events is the question of whether they indicate an antisemitic trend, or an anti-Israel trend. The statistics collated by the CST make this distinction, 489 events were excluded from the final total because they were directed towards Israel, or pro-Israel work.

Indeed, not only is antisemitism on the rise, but the trend of Islamophobia is increasing at an alarming rate. Organisations like the English Defence League are nakedly intolerant of people who follow the faith of Islam, organising marches as recently as the 14th of January of up to 100 people. Sussex recently sentenced three men for an arson attack on a Mosque which was thankfully unoccupied. In the Netherlands over the course of five years, 117 incidents at Dutch mosques, have been reported, the vast majority of perpetrators remain unidentified. The overall picture is one of increasing violence across Europe.

The landscape may appear gloomy, but intolerance and hate are not going unchallenged, the ideal of tolerance remains strong in Europe. Interfaith dialogue is an important and central tenant of combating intolerance, work by institutes such as Center for Interdisciplinary study of Monotheistic Religion and the Three Faiths Forum continues to combat intolerance. There is some room for optimism however, surely being in such a multi-cultural society is advantageous. This is certainly echoed in the message of our very own university Chaplain and Interfaith Advisor, “In our diverse university we have the opportunity to engage with the rich traditions of faith constructively and collaboratively.”



Flickr: Machine Made

Measured musings | Corruption in India

In a country so plagued by corruption that it has become a part of everyday life, talks of pro-democracy measures are understandably met with scepticism. Nevertheless some of India's long suffering anti-corruption campaigners have now seen some hope emanating from new “social audit” measures. This will attempt to monitor welfare spending and ensure funds reach those who need it and do not end up in the outstretched hands of the country's notorious middle men and corrupt officials.

2011 ended along with any chance of an anti-corruption bill being passed by India's government. The passing of the ‘Lokpal’ bill - which was designed to instate a powerful ombudsman in an otherwise hopelessly lacklustre scrutiny system - was adjourned as it failed to make it past Parliament's upper house. The political debacle that resulted in this embarrassing failure was followed by blame games and accusations exchanged by the Congress government and main opposition party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). This display confirmed that India's political class were not ready to make progress on one of the most fundamental problems the country faces.

Last year was particularly tumultuous in terms of anti-corruption movements. It saw the rise and rise of the social activist Anna Hazare, who began a series of publicised hunger strikes in order to pressurise the government. Hazare's activism, and the media hype surrounding it, brought

him supporters from all over the world, and gave him a somewhat iconic status. As the anti-corruption movement was brought to the attention of the middle classes his trademark hat became a fashion statement. Despite the uproar as the Lokpal bill failed to materialise, many commentators, including Hazare himself had begun to voice their cynicism regarding the actual effectiveness of the bill.

Given its tremendous economic strength and its attractiveness as a trading partner, much has been made of India's title as the largest democracy of the world. There are many who would say this title is painfully ironic. It's not just India's democracy that is decaying as a result of corruption; it is also taking its toll on the country's economy. Potential investors take in to account the nation's bribery epidemic when making decisions - and they view it as an investment risk.

Perhaps then if large scale efforts as used by Hazare have failed, a more incremental approach to tackling this institutional disease will prove more effective? The state of Andhra Pradesh has pioneered the “Social audit scheme”. The independent audit body is designed to monitor the government's welfare scheme and ensure money is diverted towards intended recipients. The new body has significant powers and more open access to government records. Much emphasis has also been placed on making all findings public, as it is the downfall that publicity can bring that most corrupt public servants fear the most.

This new social audit scheme has actually been effective in eliminating the middle men who have consumed so much public money. Sowmya Kidambi, who leads the social audit team in Hyderabad, emphasises the key theme of public empowerment: “It empowers people to question elected representatives who attend these social audits on a continual basis - and not just during elections. The public is now as much a part of governance as the elected representatives.” One of the important achievements of this programme is that it has provided many people in rural villages, those who lose out the most as a result of a welfare system riddled with disappearing funds.

This progress seems to have only scratched the surface of a problem, which will only disappear as time goes by and education and awareness levels increase. There are many who say that India will be host to the world's next revolution - it certainly looked that way as the furore that surrounded last year's anti-corruption campaign came to the fore. But it seems to be no coincidence that the momentum of the movement has been lost with the momentum of the Lokpal bill. As attention moves from Hazare and his hunger strikes, perhaps these smaller scale, much quieter revolutions will prove successful in paving the way to cleaner politics.

Gurdeep Chhina
Features Editor



Flickr: Miran Rijavec

Social



A more authentic trip

Photo: Francesca Washtell

Francesca Washtell's call to ditch the hostel and avoid the tourist traps

This summer I was working with the What Took You So Long Foundation (WTYSL), a grass roots film-making organisation that travels the world looking for interesting stories and unsung heroes while living as nomadically as possible. Their long term project is currently a film about camel cheese. But over the summer I worked with them for two weeks in Kenya on a 2,500km road trip, where we were making media content and a short documentary for a car company called Mobius Motors. Mobius is based in Kenya and has created a \$5,000 (US) car - roughly the same price as most second-hand vehicles - that is aiming to mobilise Kenya. The car is versatile enough to be used to carry both people and goods for business or personal use.

It was a hectic two weeks to say the least, but it reminded me why sometimes it's better to try and do an internship or work abroad than just go backpacking. During the two weeks we

travelled from Mombasa on the coast to Kisumu and Lake Victoria, up to Mount Kenya and beautiful rainforests and small towns in between. We

“hostel culture isn't always conducive to getting off the beaten track and beyond the Lonely planet”

stayed with local people on the whole and went out clubbing with our hosts and their friends. The story might have

been the same had we just been couch-surfing, but on the whole the backpackers circuit, like any, is quite small. The safari, South African Garden Route and climbing Mount Kilimanjaro are still the most mainstream ways to access sub-Saharan Africa. This is unequivocally NOT to say that there is nothing to see, but it is true that there isn't quite the same concentration of UNESCO world heritage sites and Buddhist temples as there are in the South East Asian circuit.

This summer was my second internship in Kenya - on my gap year I interspersed backpacking with working and in November 2010 I stayed in Nairobi with a host family while I worked at a national newspaper. Backpacking in sub-Saharan Africa takes you to some of the coolest hostels in the world (especially Malawi), but internships allow us to put down roots for a given amount of time. We actually unpack everything in that oversized bag and daypack and find real places to put say, the toothbrush or the pack

of cards, instead of stuffing them into various pockets of said bag, realising each time you need something important (e.g. passport) that you've made the rookie error, yet again, of putting it at the bottom of the crammed daypack. It isn't difficult to be an engaged traveller and to talk to people who are actually from the place you're staying in, and not just the bohemian-looking Swiss girls at the hostel bar, but hostel culture isn't always conducive to getting off the beaten track and beyond Lonely Planet. It's going to be true of most places in the world - getting settled for a while will bring a city and a country alive for you. Backpacking risks being plainer tourism or a parody of the European Grand Tour, with tick-box lists of temples, waterfalls and snorkelling spots.

Staying somewhere for an extended amount of time or having something to actually “do” gets us out of the comfort zones we're not always aware we're trapped in. Even studying abroad or going for a more “ethical

tourism” approach of staying with local families allows us to actually spend time “abroad” rather than just moving around in pockets of Western culture, from one hostel to the next, with exotic versions of people we could just meet back home.

Overall I'm glad, and lucky, to have been able to experience both backpacking and internships abroad. I love backpacking, but I got to see more of Kenya by talking to Nancy, whose family we stayed with. I got to talk to her about her responsibilities as a Head Teacher of a high school and how many initiatives she is piloting to try and keep girls in education. I got a greater knowledge of life in Kenya than I did by talking to Alex, an American geologist, in Mombasa. Westerners still need to stop shying away from the fact that most of the popular hostels and Lonely Planet tours provide us with experiences that reflect ourselves, and not necessarily the places we've actually decided to travel to.

Ebay: The highs and lows

Kirsty Kenney on the thrills of being a seller

You win some, you lose some; that's my attitude when it comes to eBay. Grandma's china tea set only made me a tenner, yet someone paid £16 for a pedometer! An Armani Exchange dress - worn once - sold for a £1; someone's lucky day, albeit not mine. Yet, two women battled it out for a mushroom patterned woollen dress, bobbling and all, that only cost me a couple of quid in the first place. Despite the odd disappointing sale, I am a massive eBay fan and I am fast becoming a very keen seller. It's a great way to pass on things that you don't need/want/like, or to get rid

of your less loved Christmas presents. Sorry Mum.

The beauty of eBay has to be its unpredictability. Will someone stumble across your trinket box and still bid on it even though half the crystals have fallen off? And if they do, how far are they willing to go? The thrill of selling gets me all excited. There's no satisfaction like sitting back and watching the bids come in, laughing at the people getting carried away in the last few seconds battling it out for the prize. But mastering the tactics of timing proves not to be as easy as you might first think; when the tables are turned the last minute war slays me

every time.

The concept is genius. But it can feel strange when you are arranging sales through online messages and feedback comments with an unknown person known only as 'smallbadman' or 'lozzietheaussie'. Who are these people buying your stuff, what do they look like in your Armani prom dress, or have they actually got round to using that pedometer - that they must have so desperately wanted?

There are of course a few things that niggle me with eBay. The dead-beat bidders, who never pay up. You know who you are, don't bid if you don't want to buy! And spending a

good 20 minutes photographing and listing items when you only manage to earn yourself pennies makes the charity shop option all the more appealing. Returns can be a bit dodgy and clearly not everyone learnt basic description skills at school. Seller fees too are somewhat of a pain, with both PayPal and eBay taking a cut. Mr eBay must be laughing; what is essentially a mass e-car boot sale has made him a gazillionaire.

Just like you'll find at any Sunday car boot fair, the best of the weird and wonderful is up for grabs. If you're ever bored, eBay can provide hours of entertainment, just search "Weird

Stuff." One of my favorites is a listing that says 'recently taken photos of me': nine photos of a random woman. Who would do that and who would buy that? She's not even good looking. But, my all time personal favorite is

“One of my favourites, ‘recently taken photos of me’: nine photos of a random woman”

someone's, perhaps fanciful, claim listing 'Tom Cruise Semen!' The seller writes "I have in my possession an item of true rarity, semen from Tom Cruise. As described in the disclaimer, I can't physically sell semen on eBay so I am not but instead selling you a glass container whose content is a mystery."

Anyway, back to amateur selling. Don't knock it if you haven't tried it! Despite a bit of initial effort, the eBay stars will soon start to appear and let's face it, all students love a bit of pocket money!



Flickr: Images_of_money

Dear Diary...

Nicholas Jaroszek on the challenges of filling up blank pages

For the last week I have been trying to decide whether or not to start a diary. It may seem an unusual thing to spend one's time doing - a new form of procrastination, perhaps. However, when you receive a rather nice note book for Christmas, you begin to wonder what to write in it. Indeed, you begin to wonder what your friend intended you to write in it. A diary represents one obvious solution to the problem of redundant notepaper.

Starting one has been in the back of my mind for some time now - there's something about keeping a record of the things you've done, the places you have been and the people you've met that seems quite attractive. I have no desire of becoming a modern day Samuel Pepys, and I don't particularly want to turn up in an LSE100 exam like Anatoly Chernyaev. However, there is still the possibility that I might experience noteworthy events - although the recent life story of a particular PhD graduate is not exactly what I have in mind. There is also the personal value of a diary to any descendants (fingers crossed), and perhaps more importantly the chance to never again forget what you did on holiday. The diary is beginning to look like a clear winner.

Having said that, there must be drawbacks or pen would have already been put to paper. There are considerable hurdles to overcome before deciding to start. While the end result may be good, the idea of sitting down at the end of the day and coming up with

something half decent to write down is slightly daunting. It may sound fun at first, but consider that to do it properly requires an additional task every day.

“I have no desire of becoming a modern day Samuel Pepys, and I don't want to turn up in an LSE exam”

One more thing to worry about. Every week may be more manageable, but it comes with the added challenge of remembering on Sunday what you did on Monday. A potential chore begins to emerge.

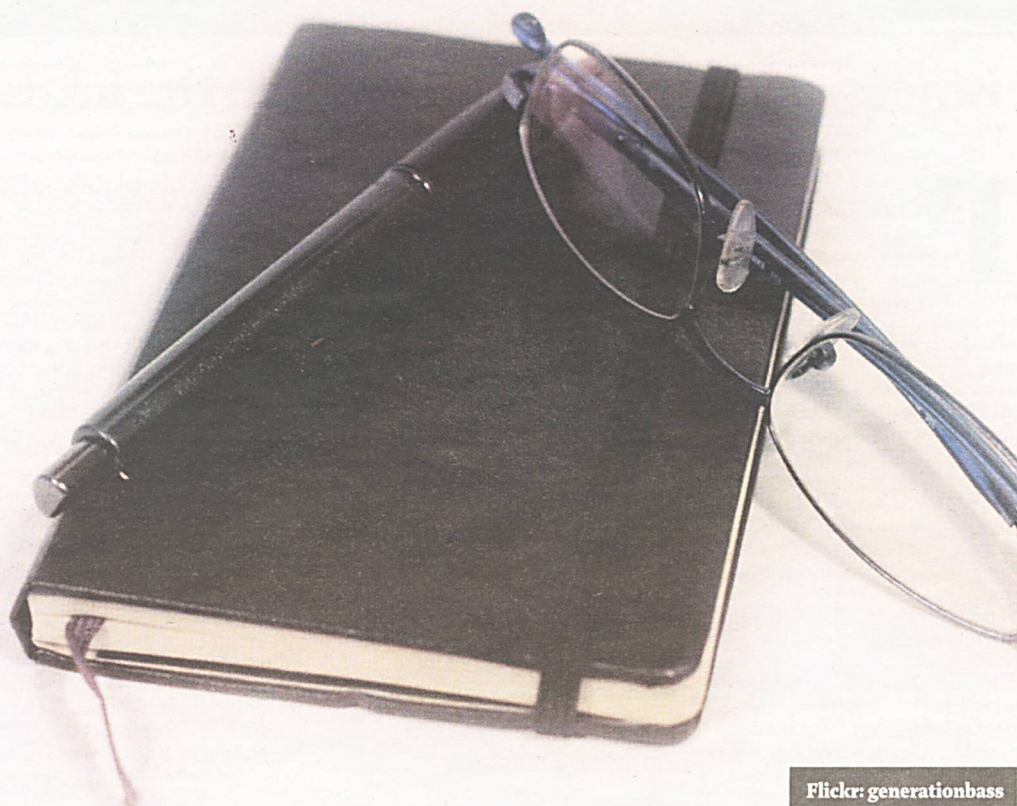
There is also the issue of deciding what type of diary to write. Factual accounts of everyday activities are, perhaps, the easiest to write, but not particularly motivating. Aim for the expression of near-philosophical ideas, which only seem to flow when you're trying to get to sleep, and risk ridiculousness in the light of day. Focus on personal reflection, and be prepared to cringe when reading it

months or years later.

I'm yet to come to a decision. Perceptive readers may have noticed that the traditional starting point for a

diary, January 1st, has already passed. It is certainly not getting any closer. Indeed, the first week of the year has passed too, so I really can't hang about

much longer if this is going ahead. Perhaps it's best if I just take the next eleven months to answer all these questions, in time for 2013.



Flickr: generationbass

Winter Travel Diaries

Tatum Summers on her Christmas holiday in the idyllic Lagen Island

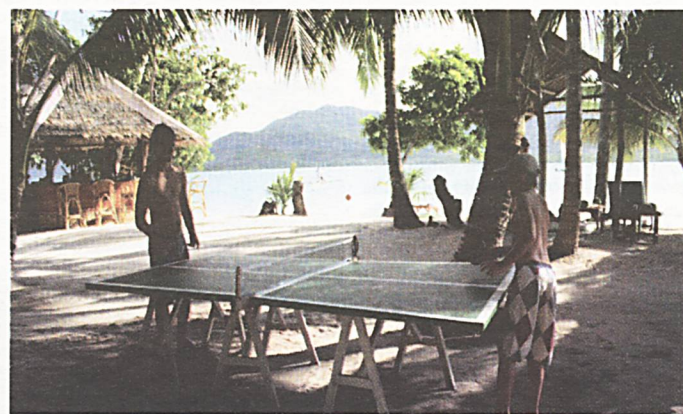
Over the winter break I had the amazing opportunity to experience two extremes, in respect to culture and climate. After a fantastic time on the LSE Ski trip, I headed to the Philippines for a family Christmas holiday. The journey halfway around the world lasted three days: 20 hours on a (very subdued and hung-over) coach to London; six hours to Dubai; stopover; nine hours to Manila; stopover; an hour to El Nido airport, in what felt like a toy plane that seated ten people; and a final hour on an old fishing boat to the tropical Lagen Island, South-West of Manila, just off the island of Palawan. Luckily, five consecutive days of skiing and partying had exhausted me sufficiently to ensure I slept the entire way.

The Lagen Island resort is nestled in an idyllic lagoon on a tiny private island, enclosed by looming cliffs and lush green forests, home to monkeys, snakes and enormous lizards. The resort consists of 50 standalone bungalows on stilts creating a semi-circle of huts along the perimeter of the bay. The philosophy of the resort is simplicity; the rooms are sparsely

furnished - no TVs or Internet - and outdoor dining involves competing with the monkeys for the buffet. The elements of nature are the sole source of entertainment. In a place filled with such natural beauty, embellishments are not needed anyway. This philosophy goes hand-in-hand with their commitment to preserving the spectacular environment, evident in the ubiquitous signs urging guests to use minimal water, pick up any foreign objects from the surroundings and to report any sightings of rare species of sea life to the resort staff. They also encourage guests to take part in their weekly-organised coastal clean-up projects on surrounding islands. The back to basics atmosphere is topped off with their rule prohibiting noisy mobile phones.

The Palawan region is famous for its beautiful clear blue sea and exotic underwater species. As such it offers plenty of exciting opportunities for people seeking an active holiday rather than the standard poolside-coma retreat. Although, that's not to say I didn't spend my fair share of hours glued to a sun-bed. Having not seen my two brothers, 16 and 11, for three

months, I was eager to involve myself in all of the 'boy' activities they were undertaking - and was determined to prove I could keep up! We started off with sailing. After somewhat flippantly signing a waiver releasing the resort from responsibility in the "unlikely", we were told, case of our deaths, we buckled up our lifejackets and hopped on a Hobie cat, with one of the instructors. Following a few minutes of, quite literally, showing us the ropes and what must have been convincing nods of comprehension from us our instructor made a quick exit, leaving us to our own devices to brave the elements... Had we been in real trouble of course we would no doubt have been rescued within seconds, but the combination of the excitement of our sibling reunion and serious jet-lag on my part left us all in a state of near hysteria and exhilaration as we embarked on our maiden voyage. Having never sailed before, I was truly blown away by the experience. Once we figured out how best to control the boat, it was great fun lying in the hot sun with the salty water splashing in our faces and the cool wind blowing through our hair as we



zoomed along the wavy surface - bliss. After an hour of circling the area, we eventually grew restless and maneuvered ourselves back to the island, where we were confronted with our next challenge: mastering windsurfing. My brothers, both avid surfers, were both openly skeptical about how their non-surfing sister would cope with a big, heavy, windsurf board (as, to be honest, was I). Whilst being shouted millions of instructions and cautions about the strong wind, I surprised myself by successfully hoisting up the massive sail. I was then surprised by the speed and suddenness with which the sail caught the wind, instantly propelling us forwards at incredible pace. Of course, it was only when I noticed how far away the island was beginning to look that I realized I had no idea how to turn around; this split second faltering in confidence resulted in an abrupt loss of control and complete submergence in the sea. I was unable to recover on my own from this far out at sea but luckily an instructor in a kayak came quickly to my rescue!

Other highlights of the trip included kayaking around a tranquil and quite eerie lagoon, catching waves in the kayaks at the offshore break spot we found, a candlelit dinner on a sandbar that was normally submerged during daylight, and extremely tense games of beach volleyball (this ensured the quick dissipation of the initial sibling affection we felt for each other). The El Nido area is one of the

nicest I have ever had the privilege of visiting, and whether you are seeking an action-packed break or an environment of pure serenity to relax in, this



place absolutely warrants a trip. Other highlights of the trip included kayaking around a tranquil and quite eerie lagoon, catching waves in the kayaks at the offshore break spot we found, a candlelit dinner on a sandbar that was normally submerged during daylight, and extremely tense games of beach volleyball (this ensured the quick dissipation of the initial sibling affection we felt for each other). The El Nido area is one of the



Photos: Tatum Summers

Devyani Garg on his changing attitudes to the city of Dubai

Dubai was an absolutely amazing break from the cold and dark London winter. The weather settles at a comfortable 20 degrees Celsius in the winters and the sun is shining every day. This was possibly my favorite aspect of my recent trip to the city; it was good to see sunshine again after a term living in London.

When I was young, Dubai had always seemed to me to be the most exciting place on Earth: we used to

“at what cost has Dubai’s development come?”

live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where entertainment for children had been limited, there weren't even any cinemas. Dubai had every type of cuisine on the planet, movies in both English and Hindi, and just in general a more open and easy environment.

In the past ten years Dubai has changed dramatically. From a barren desert, Dubai has become a city dedicated to skyscrapers and shopping

malls, a premiere holiday destination as well as a country which offers jobs to many around the world - it is regarded by many to be an economic success story. It has taken the western model of a city and tried to create the biggest and best of everything.

Today, my favorite part of new Dubai must be the musical fountain outside of Dubai Mall. The lights and music are beautiful and combined with the sheer size of the fountain itself, the fountain is an awe inspiring spectacle. Shoppers come out in the evening, when it's cool, to sit by the fountain with their shopping bags and watch it.

On the other hand, the bridge designed over the fountain, in order to ensure that more people can watch at once, reflects a traditional Arabic style, but its grandeur makes it seem almost cartoon-like. As if somebody had been busy trying to recreate a scene out of a fairytale.

Nevertheless, I feel that if you are there after the sun sets - watching the enormous jets of water shoot into the air in synchronization with the classical Arabic or Western music - the whole thing lit up by colored lights above and beneath the water - you would feel that the designer had come pretty close to his or her aim. The fountain is one of the few things in

Dubai that manages to look luxurious but not garish.

However, at what cost has Dubai's development come? In many respects, Dubai is a city designed to cater to tourists alone. There is something permanently artificial about the city which was not present before. The old city still retains some of its charm as a combination of metropolis with conservative Arab culture. However, the new city has become the playground for a game of 'who can spend the most money in the most trivial way'. Although at first fascinating, one begins to wonder, climbing the world's tallest building, which is located right next to the world's biggest shopping mall and in the vicinity of the world's most lavish hotels, what the point was. It's glamorous when it hits you for the first time, but when the novelty fades away the famous Burj al Arab simply looks tacky.

If you go with the purpose of tax free shopping, Dubai will not disappoint. However, it does not really deliver when it comes to showcasing Arab culture and it is not really possible to observe a unique character to this new and different city. The weather is fantastic and the beaches are beautiful, but I still felt that Dubai had lost its personality.



Flickr: eGuide Travel

Match Report

LSE Netball: Michaelmas Moments

Pepita Barlow and the Team Captains

Michaelmas term was a whirlwind adventure for the Netball Club. With two teams top of their leagues and another in close second, (not to mention a recent grant by the LSE Annual Fund for training, something the Club has never had before) we're set to close the season successfully. And there's heaps to look forward to: massive AU events such as the ReAUnion and AU Ball, and a contingent of over 30 netballers heading to Croatia this Easter. Here's what we got up to last term... and how we shall endeavour to continue!

1st Team

We are on track to be promoted, despite being plagued with injury and illness, which has posed an additional challenge to the team. Our New Year's Resolution is to reach Zoo Bar performance on par with our level of court play; all in all, when it comes to being outrageous, we do not let the AU down, like the true sportswomen we are. As the most fined team at Club Dinners, every last scandalous action of our players was revealed. All I can say is that if you are coming on tour, be warned, SO ARE WE!

2nd Team

With a 10-2 record of wins to losses, we have definitely become a force to be reckoned with. Major Ma-teer has done an amazing job leading the team to Zoo Bar every week, making us without a doubt one of the most sociable and outgoing teams in the AU... and one of the most mentioned in this newspaper! With another great season looming, we are on course for promotion and with 9 out of 10 players going on tour, we are in for an even more exciting, scandalous and messy term!

3rd Team

Headed by mighty Moffat, the 3rd team gained many new legends this year, with Lim and Fenton as the

resident freshers. Our performance on the pitch has varied, but we have definitely settled into AU lifestyle. Like Little Red Riding Hood, we showed our innocence... only to be lost by several members of the team when the hoods came down in Zoo. We are well rounded women: Richmond has demonstrated ironing potential, whilst Gale's chunder (too many beverages for a fine young lady) made us all change carriage on the tube at Club Dinners. On court, shooters Erukidze, Bigley and Jenkins have shot some corkers, whilst Davies continually dominates

Overall: fantastic Zoo attendance, copious quantities of alcohol and LOTS of French bread sticks consumed (take that to mean what you will.)

New Year's Resolution: win more than 1 game this term...

5th Team

2011-12 is proving to be THE season for the 5th team. Following two somewhat underwhelming years of netball success, we're turning it around and racking up some impressive wins. The freshers haven't failed to disappoint, with Lisa being crowned Queen of the Plank at Initiations...just

the patches. We're proud to present the first non-female Netballer to our team, who earned his place joining the Club on Tour last year (think week long initiations and you'll appreciate that this was no mean feat), proving to be worth his weight in banter. Although we aren't top of the league yet, 'slow and steady wins the race'!

7th Team

We've had an absolutely mighty first term. On court, we've had numerous incredible wins (including the LSE 5th team... no biggie) in the face of numerous incredible injuries - 5 sprained ankles (result of ridiculous collision falls), a bloody knee, an asthma attack, and a bad scratch from a particularly feisty, and clearly 'enthusiastic yet inexperienced', 8th team player. Off court, the team has been immensely on form. Two bouncers forcibly removed one girl from Zoo Bar and imprisoned her in a back room for excessive inebriation, until she was rescued by her noble captain. Said captain appeared on ITV's X Factor, and another member wore an AU walk-of-shame male hoodie to a match, claiming it was "so warm and such good quality". Admirable effort all round!

8th Team

The Social 8th's have certainly had their fair share of social: think 'classy' drinking sessions with cheap wine in an alley in Leicester Square, making out on the sofas in Zoo and endless drunken banter with our 'mother meerkat'. Our Puss in Boots appearance at Carol was definitely the highlight, although in passing one little girl remarkably mistook our costumes as 'princesses'. Princesses we are, and thus bound to our duties to serve our cause, we even had one social match. With all the support of the National Demo protesters, we managed to lose with graceful style. All was not lost, however, as one of our captains scored an entire goal and the 7th's even poached a player!



Photos: Pepita Barlow

the centre court. With a solid defence squad of Brown, Coker and Ogundiya, a force not to be rivalled with (Zoo bouncers your unemployment looms), we hope to have a successful Lent Term performance on the court, which shall pale in comparison to the mighty Zoo shenanigans to come.

4th Team

Although the 4th's may not have been 'winning' so much on court, we certainly had a successful first term together.

Noteworthy performances: Birty's bed breaking, snowqueen Jess lusting after old men on Kingsway, Kathy & Georgia's flirtation with Tuns bouncers, playing Troll at a very civilised team dinners... not to mention weekly general Zoo shenanigans.

as Lairy Lydon, an acclaimed 'veteran' had to be taken home at 8. Performances at Zoo Bar have been on top form and, whilst some may occasionally choose to hide under the guise of an ugly duckling, it's clear that the men of the AU see only a beautiful swan, cue naughty antics. Bring on Lent Term.

6th Team

On the court we've had wins, losses, and some 'truly taking it for the team' with the words 'I'm fine...I just can't see'. The 6th's got stuck into the Zoo Bar hotties (although sometimes the same ones...) and once again pulled some great fancy dress costumes out of the bag! We've also felt the nicotine withdrawal of one member, who became aggressive after dropping the fags and taking up

A new hope?

Richard Illingworth

England rugby could not be under a more all-encompassing revival. New faces, new coach, new environment, new game plan. Gone (hopefully) are the days of stagnating forward play culminating in a charge down or failed attempts to pass the ball out wide only for a member of the front row to trundle the ball back into contact. Stuart Lancaster has stripped down the team, shed it of aged forwards and migrating backs and formed something that appears to be an England Rugby team full of hope.

With many stalwarts retiring and experienced players (a polite way of describing old players lacking their former physical prowess) leaving the performance squad and being replaced by young twenty-somethings who have shown their ability in the Aviva Premiership, the Six Nations could not come sooner for English rugby fans.

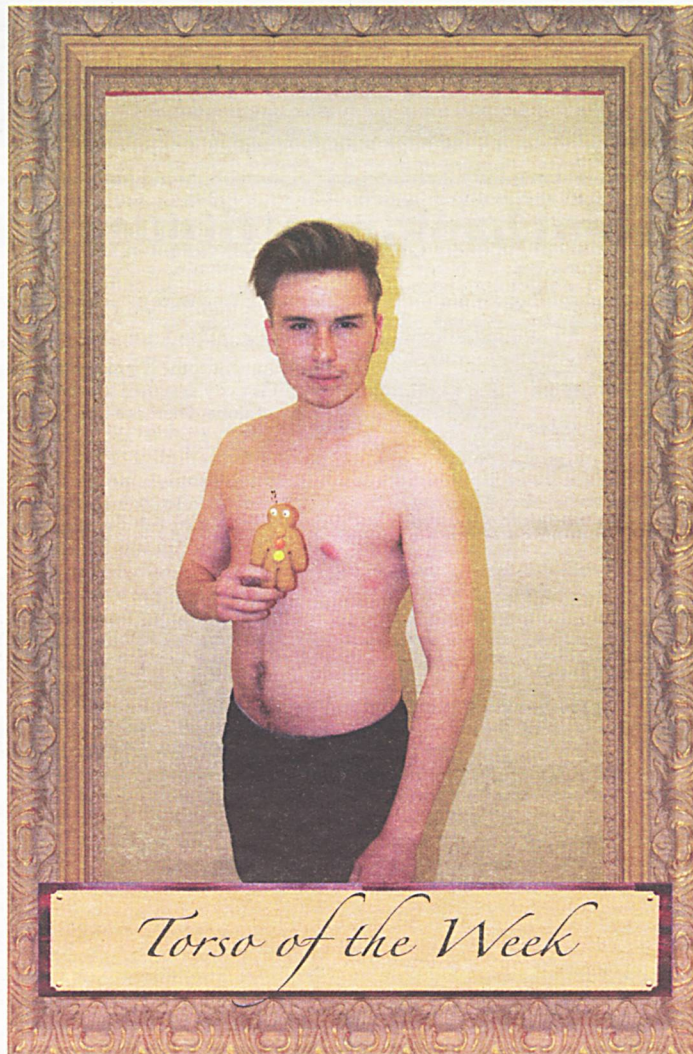
Every decision that Lancaster has made has pleased all those that surround him. Whether it be to ban Danny Care (a player he knows well from his time in charge of the Leeds Tykes (now Carnegie) academy) from the Six Nations team for being caught drink driving and drunk and disorderly in the space of a month, or to move England's training base up North to Leeds so the squad can bond in the perilous Yorkshire climate. Even the press are seemingly in love with Stuart Lancaster for his presentation of Eng-

land's new game plans and what they hope to achieve.

However I offer a caveat to the above, one that comes from many years of watching Leeds Carnegie where Lancaster was head coach. Lancaster is undoubtedly a fine developer of rugby players, whether it be moulding future England internationals in the Leeds academy, or grooming England Saxons players for future full international honours. Yet, I am more dubious as to whether Lancaster can impose a style of rugby that is effective in the Six Nations.

Whilst Leeds may not have had the best of rugby players, Lancaster, whilst in his two years at the helm of the West Yorkshire side, managed to achieve promotion to the Premiership and swiftly get relegated again. Play was dominated by unimaginative attacks, defensive lapses and eventual heavy losses. This was his only experience of being the head coach of a rugby side in competitive games before England's forthcoming Six Nations game.

I am very much hopeful of a strong English performance in the Six Nations, one where Owen Farrell, Mike Brown and Ben Morgan take Europe by storm, but whether this can happen with Lancaster in charge is unclear. Players alone can't win major tournaments, and in the face of an incredibly strong Welsh side coming off a huge performance in New Zealand, England fans should be increasingly cautious with the upcoming Six Nations.



Football In Brief

Kenny gets his Tactics Right

Liverpool produced an astute defensive display to give them the advantage heading into the second leg of their Carling Cup semi-final. Opponents, Manchester City, capitulated in the absence of key men, Vincent Kompany, Yaya Toure and David Silva.

Scholes is Back

At manager Sir Alex Ferguson's request, Paul Scholes has come out of retirement in a shock return to Manchester United.

The Prodigal Son Returns

Another footballing legend, Thierry Henry, began his second spell at a former club last week. The Frenchman marked his homecoming for Arsenal with his 227th goal for the Gunners.

Warnock Sacked

QPR have parted company with manager, Neil Warnock, with the club lying in 17th place in the Premier League. Mark Hughes has been named as his successor.

Vote Cantonal

Eric Cantona recently announced that he aims to run for French president. Is there anything the Frenchman won't achieve in his illustrious career?

Transfer Talk

Chris Samba is debating moves to London or Paris, whilst QPR are said to be in pursuit of Bobby Zamora. The Carlos Tevez saga is developing erratically, with Inter Milan the new favourites to sign him.

Can Sparky reignite the Rangers?

Hughes' Managerial Record Should Encourage QPR Fans

Amit Singh

QPR's recent terrible form (which has seen them sitting just above the relegation zone) culminated in the sacking of Neil Warnock. However, the imminent appointment of Mark Hughes should be cause for optimism for QPR fans, especially in the transfer window.

Wherever Hughes has gone, he has done an adequate job at the very least. At Blackburn, Hughes turned a relegation threatened side into European contenders. This was a remarkable achievement, especially in the context of the club's recent form.

His remit having taken over Blackburn was to keep them in the Premier League, which he did, and in his second season he guided the club to a sixth place finish and a UEFA cup spot in the process. Hughes created a side with real quality as well as a 'physical' style of play that made them tough to beat and made Ewood Park a difficult place to go for any side in the Premier League. In all four of Hughes' seasons at the club, his side finished bottom of the fair-play league.

It was at Blackburn where Hughes demonstrated his ability to deal in the transfer market. He brought in the now much sought after Chris Samba for only a few hundred thousand pounds, goal scoring sensation Benni McCarthy and David Bentley, who was sold on by the club for over £16 million, having only cost £500,000.

The style of play adopted by Hughes was widely criticized by some;



Flickr: kateboydell

unsurprisingly, Arsene Wenger was quick to lambast the side's physical play. But this was a style of play necessary to further the ambitions of a side not blessed with huge technical talent. It is this trait of creating a formidable side, as he also did at Fulham, that should prove successful at QPR.

His time at City may be criticized by some, but he was brought in by Thaksin Shinawatra and the club was sold only months later, leaving him managing for a chairman that did not want him. In essence, his time at Eastlands was arguably doomed from the start. The job was difficult, but

finishing 10th despite the large sums of money spent was arguably not good enough.

What is often overlooked by pundits is the fact that some of City's current stars were bedded in under Hughes and, for that, he does deserve some credit; Kompany, Barry, Zabaleta, De Jong and Lescott in particular, were sensible signings in a time where the club were bidding for the likes of Kaka.

His spell at Fulham was also impressive; in previous manager Roy Hodgson, Hughes arguably had big shoes to fill, and for that he would

have been forgiven for struggling. But he managed to leave his own mark on the side that eventually finished 8th in the league and, in the process, secured another UEFA Cup qualification. Hughes reportedly left the club after one season due to a lack of ambition from the board. This should not be a problem for Hughes at QPR as he is likely to be backed by Fernandes with money, reportedly £20 million for this transfer window.

Despite having slipped to 17th in the league, QPR still do have potential and at times have pulled off impressive results this season, including a 1-0

home win against rivals Chelsea. His immediate job, however, would be to lift QPR up the table and restore confidence in the players. With his record at finding bargains such as the aforementioned Samba, Hughes has the ability to sign players capable of keeping the club safe in the Premier League.

As well as this the main problem for QPR has been their inability to protect the lead and keep clean sheets, having conceded 35 goals so far this season. Hughes will have to try and instill the sort of steal into this side that he did at Fulham and Blackburn, by making QPR hard to beat and making Loftus Road as difficult to go to as Ewood Park was under him.

With Hughes' physical style of play, having Joey Barton as his captain appears a match made in heaven, and, despite the midfielders disciplinary problems, Hughes has proven in the past that he is a fine man manager. His management of Bellamy at Blackburn was testament to this as he got the best out of a player, who moved to Liverpool the following season as a result of this form. This man-management could also prove crucial in getting the best out of the talented yet difficult, Adel Taarabt, a player who could be key to the future success of the club.

With the club only a point off the relegation zone and in the context of their terrible run of form (which leaves the club with no win in 9), Hughes will definitely have a job on his hands. If given the resources to attract players, Hughes should be able to keep QPR up and, if he is capable of doing this, he definitely has the quality to build a side that can match Fernandes', and QPR fans' ambitions.

Tebow-time is up

An insight into the most enigmatic person in sport

Matthew Worby

The Tim Tebow train has finally ground to a halt, coming up well short in Foxborough losing to Tom Brady's Patriots 45-10. The sporting phenomenon and part-time quarterback's winning finally gave up. For a man who apparently can't throw, couldn't stay in the pocket or make even the simplest read of the defense he's had a pretty good run.

When taking the reins of an anemic offense from Kyle Orton it was questioned if the locker room even wanted the second year product from Florida under center, whilst Brandon

Later the Mile High Miracle, beating the Bears, having casually brought the team back from 10-0 down, scoring the required points in just over two minutes. Then finally last week beating the vaunted Steelers with another crushing Mile High Miracle - an eleven second overtime win.

No one could have expected or hoped for such a season. Critics will note that the Broncos faced injury ravaged teams, and were resurrecting a style of football last seen in the 1940s, both sides of the debate have merit.

“This is because of the man's religions, and his willingness to wear his faith on his sleeve (and cheeks).”

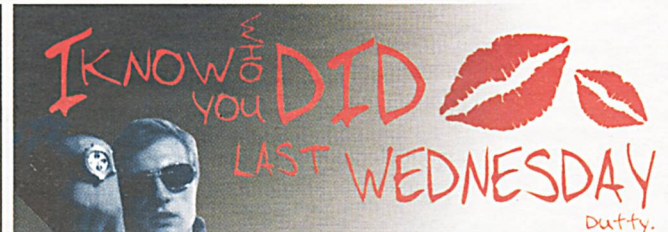
So it would be understandable that Tebow became a feel good story for the season, the classic tale of the hard working, pious man, becoming the best through the perfect mix of hard work, blood and guts. But it's become so much more. ESPN had entire hour sections of shows developed to the young quarterback, his face has been plastered across magazines in lieu

of either Brees or Rogers who both had phenomenal seasons. It's hard to equivocate just how special Tebow has become, from Tebowing (verb, to Tebow) to four miraculous overtime victories, he has gained a following that the casual observer would be forgiven for thinking is a cult.

This is because of the man's religion, and his willingness to place his faith firmly on his sleeve (and cheeks). From appearing in a controversial pro-life advert in Superbowl XLIV to praying on field, the way Tebow approaches his faith has led to some calling for football to have it's version of the first amendment, i.e. a separation of church and football.

Others, notably 'Mountain Man' Plummer, have asked him to just give it a rest. From an English perspective, ironically a country where the head of state is charged with defending the state religion, whilst the outburst of admiration for his religion was startling, it's his choice and his voice. Personally, the repetitive nature of the message results in the impact of such statements being drastically reduced over time. To prevent him from vocalising his beliefs would be far more unacceptable.

Tebow has given fans a thrilling ride with ups and downs and ignited a debate over the place of faith in society. Such a discussion is important and a welcome break from the usual numbing impact sporting stars have on society. It was a hell of a ride, but for this cynical fan perhaps his greatest achievement was making a post Elway Broncos team relevant.



Four weeks of abstinence resulted in apocalyptic levels of sexual tension that boiled over throughout last week. But sadly, ladies and gents, I know who you did last Monday, Wednesday AND Friday. No longer is there any sanctity in the other days of the week - attempts to confine your sexual activities to other days are futile.

The return to social life started with the termly visit to the animal hunting-ground that is Tiger Tiger, with many seeking rapid satisfaction for their grown sexual appetites. The netball cock-tease was spotted in the company of Welsh glory, whilst his previous Odd squeeze found herself the victim of the village bicycle, more commonly referred to as Grizzly Bear.

On Wednesday, many arrived suitably trolled, with Jeansy's condition so dire that she had to be escorted home by her caring flat mate. Ever the altruist though, she refused to interrupt JizzPhuck and Tingy's reunion, and suitably hopped out of the cab at Holborn, only to find herself asleep on the bar at Zoo.

Forget ski poles, ski-Rhods are the new accessory, as one third-team Netballer found herself escorting the pro-skier home at an unacceptably early hour. Using her ski-Rhod for stability, Miss Biggles was seen swaying dangerously as she queued up to get her coat. Fellow skier McG was also seen escorting his lovely lady home at a similar hour - as if the two didn't already get enough Après-Ski over the holidays.

The evening appeared a bit of a daze for one Marshmallowish, as the night consisted of a heated discussion with a hottie ex-, aimlessly wandering round for decent conversation and looking for answers about his Monday night antics. Amongst others, Shlong seemed unphased by this, and reports are coming in of her departing Zoo with LSEFC's Higs.

Fifth team Netball had a particularly active week it seems, with their flame-headed mascot doing the rounds with one specific Luxembourg-er yet again. Clearly, she was dissatisfied with the quality of the snow-plow over Ski. Fellow fifth-teamer and fresher Neeks was also seen lip-locked with Eyebrows, as the desperado was spied hurriedly trying to lift up her top at the bar in Crush. Nice. Congratulations have been flooding in from Eyebrows' well-wishers. Geoff pulled.

Last, but by no means least, and proving that action need not be confined exclusively to LSE-related locations, YourCock allegedly received the servicing of a lifetime outside the National Portrait Gallery. The strapping rugby player left in the company of other Zoo Bar revelers, but worries began to escalate as he was discovered missing from the group after a few short minutes. Sensing the potential worry, he had the good sense and decency to rapidly inform others of his situation, as people breathed a sigh of relief.

Many thanks for the active return ladies and gents, and here's to another week of sexcapades.



Flickr: OPENSports

Lloyd was swiftly traded even his most ardent supporter would have admitted they had very low expectations. Then came the miracle in Miami, where the team were trailing by fifteen points with fewer than three minutes left.

Sport

Inside

- Tim Tebow-time is up
- Stuart Lancaster: Hope for English Ruby?
- Mark Hughes at QPR

An Englishman abroad

Où est Joey Cole?

Maxim Owen

Joe Cole. Name ring any bells? 330 Premier League appearances and 56 caps for England? No? If you still don't know who I'm referring to then you might want to ask a Lille fan.

On a not unusually hectic summer transfer deadline day a few months ago now, one of the more surprising last-minute moves was Joe Cole's loan from Liverpool to Ligue 1 champions, Lille. 'Lille as in French Lille?!', I hear you exclaim. Yes, French Lille. Like very few brave Englishmen before him, Joey Cole decided to take the highly unorthodox leap across the channel to try his luck on the hopefully greener pastures of Northern France. 30 years old, undesired, and under performing at Liverpool, Cole took one last gamble, one more throw of the dice. And fortunately for him, what a throw it has so far turned out to be...

One of the reasons why English players so rarely go abroad may well be for the fear of, well, being 'forgotten' from the English footballing conscience. When our very own Superbowl-of-a-league is moving at speeds of 100mph, spitting out 8-2s,

6-0s, and 5-1s faster than Sepp Blatter can put his foot in his mouth, it is no surprise that players who go abroad fear being consigned to that oh so lonely grave that is youtube highlight reels. If this article serves any purpose

write him off. In fairness, his inability to make the Chelsea starting line-up and his subsequent extremely disappointing form at Liverpool gave them little reason to do otherwise. However, much to everyone's surprise,



Photo: Joe Cole FB fan page

at all, it will hopefully be to remind you first of all that Joe Cole still exists, and second of all that he is doing rather well for himself.

When Cole first arrived at Lille, many people began to pre-emptively

his move to Lille has so far been a tremendous success. He has slotted into the Lille starting 11 and adapted to the French Championship's style of play with unbelievable ease, scored 8 in 24 starts and his complementary

play with the team's prize asset Eden Hazard is something to behold. Not only are Lille 3rd in the League and making good progress, but they also had a great Champions League run and were one goal short of qualifying for the latter stages of the tournament - something that cannot be said of the club currently still paying Cole's wage: Liverpool.

As Cole himself puts it, "the clubs who wanted me were no better than mid-table". He goes on to say that "I'm really happy at Lille. If things continue like this, it would make sense for me to stay. I've started well here and I'm going to keep getting better and better." His form is helping Lille close down on Paris at the top of the table and has even caught the eye of Team GB coach Stuart Pearce, who is considering him for the Olympic Squad.

Cole's ambitions are perfectly aligned with those of the club's president, who has made it very clear that he would be more than happy for him to make a permanent transfer. Many believe that the president will use Cole as a negotiating tool in the seemingly inevitable sale of Eden Hazard (who the club have priced at a whopping 50m euros). The most obvious

obstacle blocking the Englishman's transfer may well prove to be his wage demands. Lille are currently contributing to the £90,000 a week that Liverpool are paying him but would have to assume full responsibility for that cost should they want to bring him in

"He would love to leave a legacy like Hoddle at Marseille"

on a permanent basis. If this issue can be resolved, the transfer makes could well be on the cards.

As Joe puts it himself, he would love to leave a legacy at the club in the same way that Glenn Hoddle did at Marseille before him. With all of this in mind, give the man some credit and try not to forget about him. Not for the first time in this world, an Englishman could be making history in France.

LET'S TALK TACTICS



More of the same in Melbourne

Timothy Poole

Fact: only in three of 24 Grand Slams since 2004 have we had a male champion other than Djokovic, Nadal or Federer. Conversely, the women's game has seen 12 different winners over the past decade. At this year's Australian Open, the pattern is set to continue.

Indeed, we can expect a grand spectacle and digest all the delights that come with it - but, deep in our hearts, we know the outcomes already. Though, of course, this won't deter us from what will invariably be another memorable Grand Slam.

Looking at the men's draw, the oligopolistic dominance of the top three seeds is virtually guaranteed to remain unsurpassed. And within this elite group, one must look no further than the powerfully driven, lion-resembling beast that is Novak Djokovic, having won three of the last four Grand Slams. After losing the 2009 US Open final, Djokovic transformed his mental approach to the game. He hasn't looked back since. The Serb improved his service game dramatically, whilst developing a return of serve that is now the undisputed best of its kind on the tour. The top seed is undoubtedly

the favourite. For him not to conquer Australia once again would provide a shock of at least 8.9 on the Richter scale.

Nonetheless, if Djokovic were somehow to miss out on the title, the arena would be open to two of the sport's greatest gladiators: second and third seeds, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. It will take something special for either man to dethrone Djokovic after spending so much of last season in his shadow. Yet, at their best, both are capable of doing so, or at least pushing the Serb to his absolute limit. After confessing to have lost some of his passion for the game last year, Nadal is now playing with more verve and confidence. He is pleased with his current return of serve - a key reason for defeats at crucial stages last season. Federer, on the other hand, may be held back by fitness worries; the 30-year old is unbeaten in 15 matches but is harbouring a back injury.

Now, being in Britain, it is almost by law that I am obliged to champion our own lion resembling beast (albeit a substantially less well-groomed one), Andy Murray. I'll keep it brief: Murray is extremely unlikely to win this year's Australian Open, despite the Scot reaching the last two finals in Melbourne. Yes, his partnership with new



Flickr: Mirasha

coach, Ivan Lendl, may well be a beautiful one, but this is only its beginning; only time will tell whether Murray can break the Grand Slam barrier. Even briefer is the case that anyone else will win it... miracles can happen: Tsonga might. On to the women's draw.

At the pinnacle of the female tour exists a power vacuum, plagued by the mediocrity of so many underachieving 'stars'. Is there one leading figure we can call the best? Serena Williams was the best in her day but is now fraught with injury. Current no.1, Caroline Wozniacki, has never won a Grand Slam and gravely struggles when it comes to playing anyone of a similarly high ranking. The analysis could go on tirelessly until an insurmount-

able conclusion was reached: there is no clear front runner. In fact, the women's game is currently lacking quality in all departments. So who, if anyone, can be considered a deserved contender for the Australian Open?

With Williams an injury doubt, Wozniacki lacks the hunger of a real champion, electing to spend much of her time modelling, advertising or with her boyfriend, a certain Rory McIlroy. Looking further, Li Na, the embodiment of the rise of the Chinese, won last year's French Open but subsequently disappeared from the final rounds for the next two majors. Clusters is a proven world-class performer, yet is hindered by nagging injury problems, whilst Stosur, Schiavone

and Sharapova all have the talent, but lack the consistency. Undeniably, Victor Azarenka, does provide some hope, though is yet to prove herself by winning a Grand Slam singles title.

The one shining light is Petra Kvitová. The Wimbledon champion will consolidate the world no. 1 spot if she lifts the Australian Open trophy; let's hope she has the mettle to do it and fill the void - a void that desperately needs to be filled - at the top of the women's game.

So, it's a case of more of the same in Melbourne. However, with this comes a sense of guaranteed quality on the men's side and a pulsating unpredictability on the women's - an unpredictability that is often the very essence of sport. Time, please, the players are ready.

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