

LSE and Libya: the end of the affair?



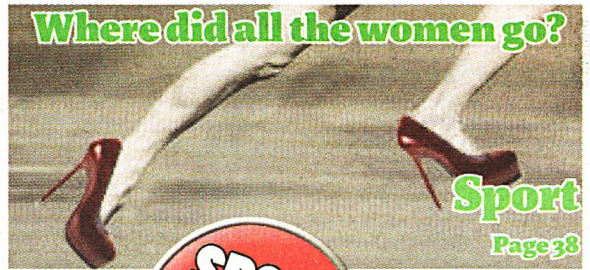
Features Pages 24-25

Comment pages 9-10



The Last Laugh: outgoing Editors have the final word

Where did all the women go?



Sport Page 38



The Beaver

06.12.2011

Newspaper of the LSE Students' Union

thebeaveronline.co.uk

facebook.com/beaveronline

Students Celebrate Pride Week

» 5 Last week, the LSE student body celebrated Pride Week. The celebration was launched by a well attended Pride Crush. On Monday, LGBT activist Peter Tatchell outlined the obstacles to ending discrimination against the LGBT community. Other events included a screening of the film "But I'm a Cheerleader," and a discussion on LGBT related issues in the workplace with a Morgan Stanley executive director.

Students complain about high food prices on campus

» 4 A number of LSE students have raised the concerns that food prices on campus are not affordable. Stephanie Gale, a second year Government student, said, "There doesn't seem to be any middle ground in price range on campus." Students have also noted that there is a lack of facilities for heating up food, making bringing food from home a less attractive alternative.

Bankside hustings postponed indefinitely

» 3 The Bankside Hall Committee elections have been postponed indefinitely following controversy over Jason Wong's campaign. Wong's campaign included statements such as "Girls and toasters - because the bread isn't going to toast itself." Wong has apologised personally to both the Director and Lucy McFadzean, the LSE's Students' Union's Women's Officer, and has issued a public apology to the School and the student body.

Woolf Report "damning" of LSE

Liam Brown, Alex Haigh & Chris Rogers

In the Woolf Report published on 30th November, Lord Woolf is highly critical of the LSE's governing Council and the School's lack of scrutiny into the sources of its donations.

In his "damning" report, Lord Woolf has raised serious concerns over the School's decision to accept a con-

troversial £1.5 million donation from the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF) in June 2009.

Lord Woolf claims that the LSE's "errors of judgment go beyond those that could be expected from an institution of the LSE's distinction." His report says that the LSE's increased freedom from the University of London since it began awarding its own degrees in 2008 has led to it make ethically dubious decisions. Lord Woolf advocates that the LSE adopt an "ethics

code" for any future donations.

The report finds Howard Davies, former Director of the LSE who resigned last March over the issue, to be ultimately responsible for the Council's lack of research into the provenance of the GICDF's donation, and the ramifications its acceptance would have for the School's reputation. Lord Woolf pointed to the possibility that the donation was funded by bribes given to the Gaddafi regime in return for contracts to private firms in the country.

However, Lord Woolf does offer considerable praise to Davies for his response to the circumstance, in his report. He states that Sir Howard is to be admired for his action and for accepting that errors had been made openly, and without hesitation. He praises Davies' resignation as a noble response to events.

The Woolf Report also announces the results of the University of London's inquiry into the alleged academic misconduct of Saif Gaddafi in the

» 5

Students and staff unite to protest

John Armstrong
Staff Reporter

Last Wednesday, over 850,000 public sector workers took industrial action in response to the Government's pension reform.

The nationwide strike was the largest since the "Winter of Discontent" over three decades ago and LSE played a key role in the march through central London.

Picket lines, that included LSE employees, were implemented from 8am around campus, doors were covered with "Do not Cross" tape and protesters handed out pamphlets, while calmly explaining to various befuddled students why they should abstain from attending class that morning.

Tony Whelan, a University College Union (UCU) Committee Member said that "we want the Government to drop substantial cuts to our pensions." He

» 6



LSE students carrying the Students Union's banner at the national protests. Photo: Li Yang

LSE protestor reportedly held in police custody

Bethany Clarke
Nicola Alexander

The LSE Students' Union has neither confirmed nor denied reports that

was taken into police custody while representing LSE students at the National Protests on Wednesday. According to several sources who attended the protests last Wednesday, was taken into custody after several protesters clashed with the police at Piccadilly circus. Sources have told the Beaver that was taken into custody between 3pm and 5pm on Wednesday afternoon. As is one of the

and receives an annual of . In his capacity as the LSE students on the march. was in when was taken into custody. are mandated to report on their activities at each weekly was not present at the last week and did not report on the march or his involvement.

Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union, has refused to answer the Beaver's enquiries on the matter. was unreachable by e-mail.

CENSORED

This article was censored as it contained sensitive information about a high-profile member of the LSE community who was taken into police custody last Wednesday, while participating in the national strike. There are currently unresolved legal issues and the individual in question is not at liberty to comment. The Beaver still believed that the students of the LSE had a right to know about the story. Please see the editorial on page 2 for the Beaver's comment on editorial independence.

Editorial Board

Executive Editor
Nicola Alexander
editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Managing Editor
Duncan McKenna
managing@thebeaveronline.co.uk

News Editors
Bethany Clarke
Sydney Saubestre
Heather Wang
news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Comment Editor
Rimmel Mohyidin
comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Features Editor
Alex Haigh
Gurdeep Chhina
features@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Design Editor
Ahmed Alani
design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Social Editor
Shrina Poojara
social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Sport Editors
Maz Fletcher
Maxim Owen
sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

PartB Editors
Kerry-Rose O'Donnell
Aameer Patel
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Photo Editor
Aisha Doherty
photo@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Web Editor
Liam Brown
web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

General Manager
Anoli Mehta
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Collective Chair
Chris Rogers
collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

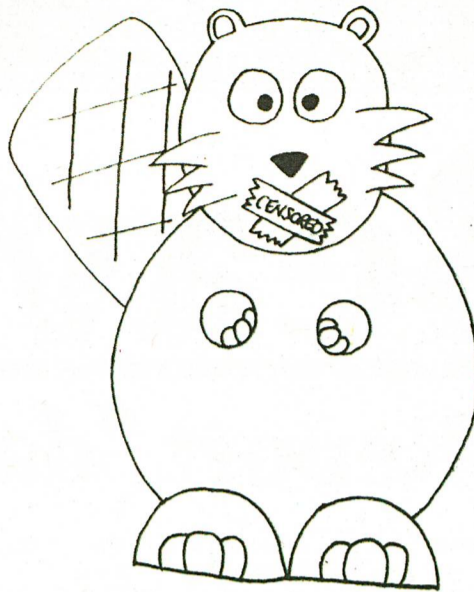
*With thanks to our
Copy Editors*
Kanika Singh
Ehae Longe
Lisa Strygina

Union Bashō

Thinking like a social scientist

In front of the hawks
Leape played the politician.
Social science - where?

Bashō is the Beaver's evasive haiku poet. He's meant to go to the Union General Meeting so you don't have to. He says he didn't attend this week's meeting because he was preparing for an LSE100 summative assessment.



The Beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 760

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

A Beaver censored

The masthead of this paper reads "Newspaper of the LSE Student's Union" and for the past 60 years that the Beaver has been in existence, this has been a point of consternation for readers, writers, editors and officers. Whilst our newspaper is paid for by the Students' Union, partly through advertising revenue, we maintain our proud stance as an editorially independent publication. Essentially this gives our humble rag the right to comment on the activities of the Students' Union without any interference into our journalistic integrity.

The LSE Students' Union prides itself on its adherence to the purest possible democracy; a weekly UGM that comes close to functioning like politics was meant to in ancient Athens, an unwavering commitment to election and franchise. These are things that we, as LSE students, come to hold in high regard, because it is ingrained in the institution that

represents us for three or more years. And as with any healthy democracy, it is natural that all media should be free to comment. After all, it is the media that dispenses information to the citizens, information upon which they make the decisions within the democratic body.

But if the merits of a free press are not enough to convince you that the Beaver should be editorially independent lets consider the demerits of a situation where the media is controlled, influenced and censored by those in power. As it just so happens we have the perfect example to illustrate this issue. You may have noticed that important statements made in a prominent article on our front page have been blocked out. Approximately one hour before this newspaper went to print we were informed that there was nothing libelous about the article in question. In fact, had this newspaper been published by someone other than the LSE Students Union, it would have been able to appear in full and

uncensored. However, as the article pointed out some, less than savory, behaviour that a high profile member of the LSE community dabbled in. This individual happens to be accountable to the student body. Therefore, this newspaper believed that it was only right that the students of the university know about his activities. Unfortunately the right to report on a story that could well make national media was stripped of the Beaver simply because apparently editorial independence is a conditional clause; only when the Students' Union say so.

This paper has stood up to censorship in the past and it will continue to do so. The Editorial Board of this paper have learnt the hard way, that when you are in a position of power no mistake is too big or too small to be overlooked - and rightly so. Accountability is the heart of democracy, its at the heart of this Students Union and its at the heart of this paper.

Collective

Rasha Al-Dabagh, Ahmed Alani, Nicola Alexander, Nioivi Antoniou, John Armstrong, John Allsop, Basak Arslan, Laurence Atchison, Laura Aumeer, Hero Austin, Emma Beaumont, Liam Brown, Nona Buckley-Irvine, Harry Burdon, Adam Burk, Benjamin Butterworth, Robert Charnock, Simon Chaudhuri, Gurdeep Chhina, Bethany Clarke, Lois Clifton, Rosie Coleman Rory Creedon, Roberta Cucchiaro, Alicia Cunningham, Jack Curtis, Hassan Dar, Alice Dawson, Aisha Doherty, Eden Dwek, Goreti Faria, Emma Firth, Maz Fletcher, Alice Leah Fyfe, Stephanie Gale, Alice Gunn, Paniz Geder, Alex Haigh, Jenifer Izaakson, Shu Hang, Rachel Holmes, Mark Heffernan, Konrad Hughes, Max Jenkins, Alexandra Kane, Kirsty Kenney, Aleona Krechetova, Rory Creedon, Sam Langton, Edward Larkin, Zoe Leung, Neeraj Mashru, Duncan McKenna, Anoli Mehta, Rimmel Mohyidin, Angie Moneke, Bianca Nardi, Sophie Newman, Marshall Palmer, Sanni Nissila, Chu Ting Ng, Kerry-Rose O'Donnell, Maxim Owen, Aameer Patel, Maatin Patel, Hannah Payne, John Peart, Alex Peters-day, Kimia Pezeski, Shrina Poojara, Timothy Poole, Abir Qazilbash, Annie Ren, Aimee Riese, Chris Rogers, Connor Russell, Naomi Russell, Zac Sammour, Isabella Silver, Benedict Sarhangian, Abu Sharmuta Sydney Saubestre, Lukas Slothus, Joshua Still, Jack Tindale, Laurence Vardaxoglou, Michael Veale, Ankur Vora, Heather Wang, Sam Williams, Vincent Wong, Mathew Worby, James Yarde, Alex Yang, Alexander Young, Diana Yu,

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.

The Beaver uses pictures from flickr.com which have been issued under a Creative Commons license.



Thank you and good night

The outgoing editors of the Beaver would like to thank all the readers of our newspaper. We would also like to thank the many contributors of this paper for their unwavering commitment to the Beaver. It is thanks to you that each section is so diverse and dynamic. Most of all, thank you to our fellow editors who have made every weekend such an adventure in the office. Our time at LSE will always be remembered fondly and largely associated with those many Sunday evenings spent in E104.

Disabled student campaigns for rights

Heather Wang

Anastasia Somoza, a postgraduate student who had to defer her studies after her disability package with the School fell through, is working on legislation to allow American students to receive government financial aid while studying abroad.

On her personal blog, Somoza wrote: "long-term, this legislation will help people with disabilities to reach their maximum potential and have a better shot at becoming employed. It will also get them off social services and help them to become independent and enjoy a better quality of life."

Somoza is also using her blog to raise money to fund her return to the LSE.

Somoza, who was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at birth, arrived at the LSE at the beginning of the year,

but had to defer her studies when an arrangement with her care-taker fell through at the last minute. The Beaver has learnt that Cherie Blair, prominent barrister and spouse of Tony Blair, former British Prime Minister, was instrumental in assisting Somoza.

Somoza is an international student from the United States studying for an MSc in Human Rights with a full scholarship. She resided in Grosvenor House during her time at the School. Due to her physical condition, Somoza has to rely on a wheelchair and requires a caretaker to help her with everyday activities such as getting out of bed and taking a shower.

Somoza said her "day to day living with her [the caretaker] became intolerable." Somoza's mother travelled to London to assist her upon hearing that the situation with her caretaker had become difficult.

In order to continue her studies, it was decided that

>> 6

Wong apologises for controversial campaign

Sydney Saubestre

Bankside Hall Committee hustings have been indefinitely postponed following a series of controversies surrounding the elections over the last two weeks. At the center of the controversy was LSE student Jason Wong's campaign. Wong's campaign used posters some LSE students and campus members found offensive due to their sexist and classist connotations. Wong was running on a platform to ensure "fridge access for all, cut[ing] kitchen fees by 50 percent and cheaper toilet cleaning rates."

Upon receiving complaints about an unnamed candidate's campaign, Debra Ogden, the Bankside Warden, immediately cancelled the election, which was set for 29 November. A source within Bankside confirms the was candidate Wong.

Much of Wong's campaigning was done on Facebook, where he posted all of his campaign posters. One poster shows a provocative image of a scantily clad woman in a short maid's outfit with the caption "she can clean my toilet for £12, but not the Bankside cleaners." Another poster featured a picture of toast with the caption "Free toasters. Bankside girls for Jason," as well as the statements including "girls love cooking and being in the kitchen," and "girls and toasters-because the bread isn't going to toast itself."

"I can confirm that a decision to postpone the hustings and election was made on Monday in light of complaints made about the conduct of a candidate's campaign [...] Action was taken as soon as the campaign material was brought to my attention," Ogden said.

Wong has written a formal apology to LSE staff and students for any offense caused by his campaign, which

>> 7

News in brief

NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM PREDICTING FINANCIAL CRISIS TO BE DESIGNED

According to the Mail Online, Living Earth Simulator Project (LES) plans to "simulate everything" on the planet to map out social trends and predict the next economic crisis with the use of a variety of information, ranging from tweets to government statistics. EU Commission supported this £900 million scheme. Commenting on this project, Iain Begg, Professor of European Studies at the LSE, told the Sunday Times: "The complexity of the world is simply too great. We cannot even model the weather for more than a few days," the Mail Online reported.

WEAK FAMILY-RUN BUSINESSES DETRIMENTAL TO UK ECONOMY

After surveying 10,000 UK companies for Business Department, a study carried out by LSE academics suggested that badly performing family-run firms' role in the economy should be reduced, the Daily Telegraph reported. Professor John Van Reenen, Director of the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance, said management quality is "highly linked" to productivity and profits. "Second and third generation firms typically had weaker management than peers run by hired hands," he added.

BEGG SAYS TALK BETWEEN SARKOZY AND MERKEL INDICATES NO CHANGE IN POSITION

Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, spoke to the lower house of German Parliament on Friday morning about Europe's economy, one day after Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France gave a speech about the eurozone crisis in Toulon. Iain Begg, Professor of European Studies at the London School of Economics, said that "their speeches indicated no change in their positions." "Nicolas Sarkozy seems to have accepted that Angela Merkel is assuming the role of European leader in this crisis," Begg added.

NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS LSE

Jonas Gahr Støre delivered a public lecture entitled "Thawing Planet: Climate Change, Resources, and Management of the Arctic" in the Wolfson Theatre last Wednesday. The lecture was chaired by Dr Robert Falkner, Senior Lecturer in International Relations. Jonas Gahr Støre held the position of Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2005 and was Secretary General of the Norwegian Red Cross between 2003 and 2005. He also served as State Secretary and Chief of Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister under Jens Stoltenberg.

EMERY NOTES WEAKNESSES OF IRAN SANCTIONS

A tightening web of sanctions is squeezing Iran's economy and placing a new burden on foreign firms' wary of incurring hefty fines for violating the complex regulations, "Al Arabiya" News reported. Christian Emery, a sanctions specialist at the London School of Economics, said the West knew it could not stop oil prices rising or enforce a complete embargo on Iranian oil, two weaknesses in its sanctions armory. "Iran's oil revenue increased from \$73 billion to \$96 billion in the last two years," he said, according to Al Arabiya News.

GOT A SCOOP?

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

Leape discusses LSE100 at UGM

Connor Russell
Staff Reporter

The debate over LSE100 dominated last week's UGM, as director of the course, Dr Johnathon Leape, faced a smattering of criticism from students over the issue of exam timetabling. Leape was presented with a methodical sequence of concerns by mostly second-year students who are directly affected by the date of the exam, 4th January, Friday before the term starts.

Preceded by Christmas songs and a festive air, Leape began with an introductory speech in which he assured the room that he was keen to hear their opinions and take them into account in the running of the course. He also pre-empted the discussion on exam timetabling, insisting that all alternative options would be a worse outcome for students. Evenings and Saturdays had been considered "unsociable hours" and raised "safety concerns", while using an external site at the end of Michaelmas term could lead to students having difficulty finding the venue.

It was emphasised that the School understands the inconvenience posed but had attempted to make a decision most considerate to students, as summarised by first year undergraduate Daniel Frost, "I think his explanations were reasonable, but it's hard to justify ever having an exam outside of term time."

Questions raised also included the purpose of summative assessments within the course's structure, a shortage of teachers genuinely informed on the material and the lack of contribution to students' degree classifications. Leape insisted that the summative assessments provided a depth to the course and enabled students to become engaged with material throughout the course by providing concrete grading to work.

On the particularly controversial topic of class and seminar teachers, Leape stated that he was "150 per cent convinced we made the right decision [to assign course-long class teachers rather than separate experts for each topic]," and that the importance of the student-teacher relationship is not to be underestimated. Each teacher receives a half day of training on each topic and regular sessions every Mon-

day afternoon in order to remain up to date, alongside attending all lectures and receiving detailed notes for each class.

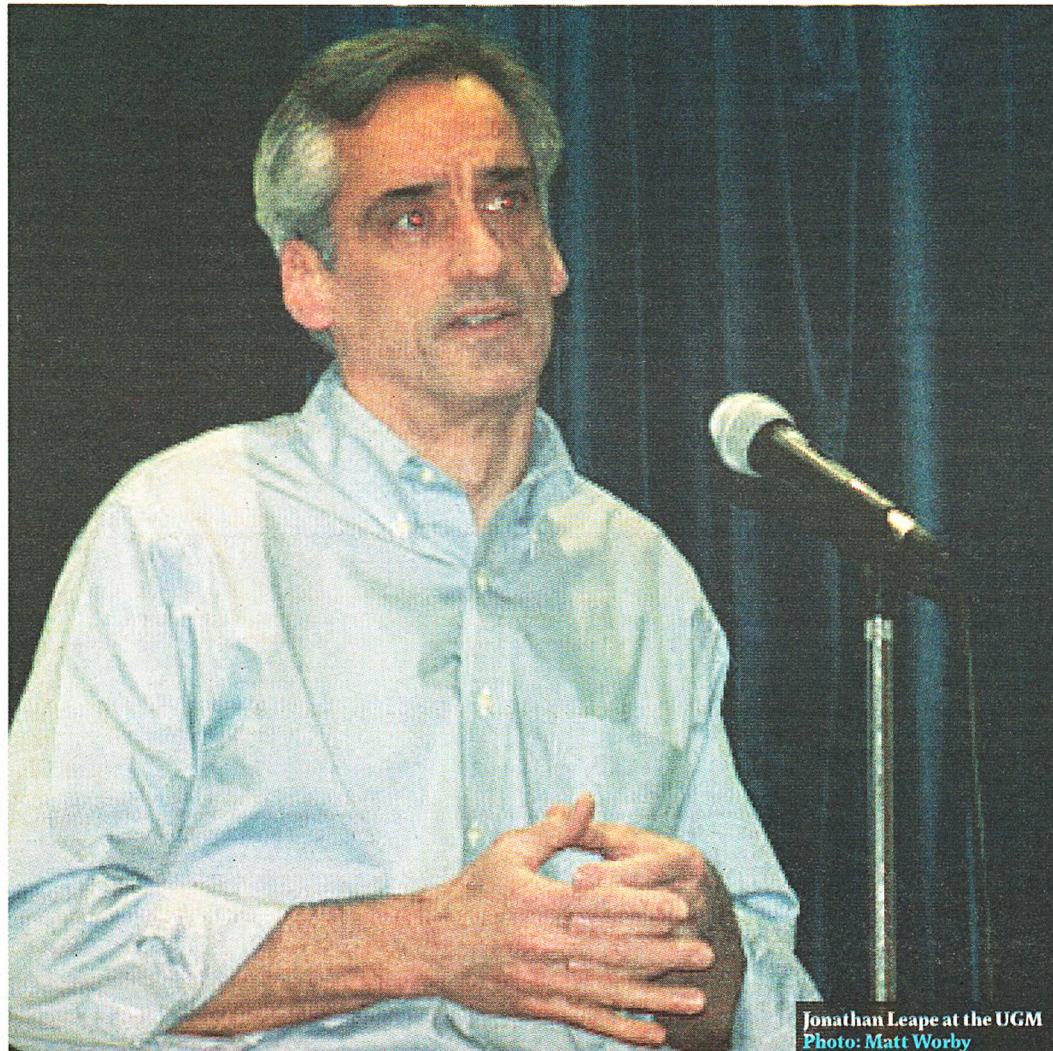
When asked to explain the thought process behind the topics chosen for LSE100, Leape said that the main motivation was to follow school tradition in engaging with the "big questions" of the day, and that new suggestions were always welcome from students. This was responded particularly vehemently by Jay Stoll, vice-chair of the UGM, who claimed that the course made "no contribution" to his degree, and that he resented LSE100 as "a vanity project to

turn the School's motto into a brand." (I thought it was a separate question rather than a response to what Jonathan Leape said?)

While the hour was mostly devoted to debating issues around LSE100, there was an update from the Students' Union Sabbatical Officers. The officers said that reviewing the recently released Woolf Report has taken up a substantial amount of their time, as issues that could form the basis of a campaign are studied. Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union, pointed to the preliminary setting up of an ethics committee in the

school as a key step forward from "The Only Way is Ethics" campaign.

Robin Burrett, the Postgraduate Officer, renewed the promise that a microwave would be put in place next term in the Quad (Did he say in the Quad?). As the meeting finished on the topic of food, a greater variety of Stir Fry options (I thought he wanted more people frying the food rather than a greater variety?) in the Fourth Floor Restaurant were requested. Alex-Peters Day responded by saying she will discuss this issue with LSE Catering.



Jonathan Leape at the UGM
Photo: Matt Worby

Campus food prices not student budget friendly

Naomi Russell
Staff Reporter

Many students have complained about the lack of affordable food options on the LSE campus. There is a variety of catering facilities on and near the university, including the Students' Union shop, Wright's Bar, Forth Floor cafe several chain restaurants on Kingsway.

While students have not questioned the quality of food offered, some students have expressed the opinion that the options provided by the School are simply not aimed at the average student's budget.

Budget conscious students also

complain that there are not enough facilities on campus to heat up food or refill water bottles, and as such, bringing one's own food is complicated by the fact that it can't be reheated or stored properly throughout the day.

Sophie Newman, a second year Government and History student commented, "Although there is a wide variety of food, I enjoy the choice available and if you know where to go you can sometimes find good deals, I do often find myself straying to commercial food outlets as the prices are on a par with those on campus."

"The Garrick is lovely and a charming place to meet people, but it isn't exactly a student coffee shop and the prices reflect this," Victoria Bew, a

second year Economics and Philosophy student.

Stephanie Gale, a second year Government student, said "There doesn't seem to be any middle ground in price range on campus. The only place on campus with affordable pricing is Wright's Bar but this is reflected in its continuous and constant queue. If I am in a rush I am forced to pay high prices."

Other students have echoed similar sentiments. John Peart, a second year Government student is another loyal frequenter. "Unless you're like me, and buy a sandwich in Wright's Bar every day," he said, "I don't know how anyone can afford to eat on campus every day."

Peart added, "LSE Catering seem to think smoked salmon is an entry level sandwich filling, so I guess you can't expect it to be cheap! We don't need bourgeois sandwich fillings; we need something cheap to eat!"

"The whole point of a Students' Union is that it is supposed to provide affordable products for students, a fiver or more for sandwich and drink anywhere on campus," said Rebecca Crompton, a second year History student.

However, some students have expressed concerns that lowering food prices may have negative implications. George Edwards, a second year Government student said, "My opinion is that food on campus is expensive,

but we are committed to paying our staff a reasonable wage. If food could be made cheaper whilst retaining our commitment to a fair London living wage then that would, of course, be desirable."

The London Living Wage for all staff at LSE was adopted as the result of a successful Students' Union campaign in 2007. At the time this meant paying staff a minimum of £7.20 per hour. This price has now risen in accordance with the cost of living and changes in tax and benefits systems to £8.30.

This issue has been brought up by students at several UGM meetings though the Michaelmas term.

LSE and the Guardian's "Reading the Riots" released

Sydney Saubestre

In a unique collaboration, The Guardian and London School of Economics (LSE) interviewed people who participated in the August riots, the largest bout of civil unrest in decades. The report, Reading the Riots, interviewed rioters in London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Nottingham, Manchester and Salford and collected more than 1.3 million words from 270 protesters, giving an unprecedented insight into demonstrators' motivations.

The study, featured in an article published online by The Guardian on 5th December, indicated that the riots were largely in response to widespread

frustration and anger at the way the police engage with communities. A complex mix of grievances caused people to riot, but the largest driving factor was a visceral distrust of the police.

Details of the report will be released over the next five days, based on first-person accounts taken after the protest and more than 2.5million riot-related live tweets.

Monday's report outlined the various political grievances that lead up to the protest. Central to the general discontent that the rioters felt was a pervasive sense of economic and social injustice, as well as general sense of disenchantment in the face of rising education fees and public sector cuts. The economic instability of the last year left many people feeling hope-

less, as job opportunities and public benefits dwindled.

The study looked at the demographics of those involved in the riots as well as the way in which they organized themselves. Though predominantly made up of young males, the demonstrators came from a "cross-section of local communities." Approximately half of those involved were students, and of those who were not studying but of working age, 59 per cent were unemployed. Though approximately half of the people interviewed were black, none of them described the unrest as a "race riot."

In August, the riots were widely compared to the Arab Spring, and there were wide spread speculations that the protesters used social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to

organize themselves. According to the study, social media sites did not play an important role in the organization of the riots. Instead, those involved in the protest relied largely on Blackberry Messenger to share information, communicate and plan protests.

Of those interviewed, "73 per cent had been stopped by the police in the last twelve months." Riots were explicitly described as "anti-police" riots, in response to continual racial profiling and everyday experiences with policing, as well as the police shooting of Mark Duggan, which caused the initial disturbances in Tottenham.

An independent panel set up by the government shortly after the riots stated "identified stop and search as a possible motivation factor for black and Asian rioters," eight times more

likely than the average than the general population in London. Even though the panel did not interview any of the rioters, they did determine that police brutality needs to be alleviated. "Where young law-abiding people are repeatedly targeted there is a very real danger that stop and search will have a corrosive effect on their relationship with the police," the independent report said.

The Guardian and LSE will collaborate again to release a second Reading the Riots report in the next year, will "draw on interviews with communities, police and judges about their experience of the disturbances and their aftermath."

Albright discusses future of women in politics

Jon Allsop

The former United States of America (USA) Secretary of State Dr. Madeleine Albright delivered an impassioned defence of the role of women in global politics, as she addressed an Old Theatre crowd on Friday night.

Albright used a talk entitled "Women Advancing Democracy" to argue that the empowerment of women around the world is the most crucial factor in strengthening global justice, claiming that "for democracy to thrive without women is impossible."

She issued a rallying cry against "insecurity stemming from gender discrimination," asserting that "we each have an obligation to stop" atrocities such as domestic violence, coerced abortion and ritual mutilation, which she dubbed "not cultural, but criminal."

To rapturous applause, Albright told the packed lecture theatre that "there was a special place in hell for women who don't help other women."

Albright, who served as US Ambassador to the United Nations before becoming President Bill Clinton's Secretary of State in 1997, challenged regimes around the world to recognise the intellectual capabilities of women, warning that there would be a "place on the revolutionary calendar headlined 2012" for those who didn't. She also condemned the failure to utilise women's contributions to economic and political stability as "plain stupid."

Albright drew on her own career to discuss the role of women in power

and talked about how she had overcome being "conditioned to accept the leadership role of men" to rise to the top of global politics.

Despite insisting that she had wanted to become Secretary of State "because I'd be good at it and not because I'm a woman", the first female to hold the post didn't completely shy away from the significance of her appointment in terms of gender. Recalling walking to her office for the first time down a corridor lined with portraits of her male predecessors, she remembered hoping that "the walls would shake a bit" when her portrait was put up.

Albright is concerned with equality and allowing skilled people, regardless of gender, to succeed at their given role. She admitted that she was suspicious of the use of quotas to drive up female representation in positions of power and argued that she wanted to see a president elected who "understands how government works" regardless of their gender. However, there is also a need for dismantling of the structural discrimination that is currently in place that discourages qualified women from rising to such positions.

She also reflected on the need for women to strike a balance between their work and their family, admitting that it's "not easy" and that "every woman's middle name is 'guilt.'" Joking that she had "kept getting pregnant to get extensions" at college, she did, however, posit her belief that the current workplace climates continually tells women that "[they] can do everything, just not at the same time."

The Wellesley College gradu-

ate, was cheered throughout by an enthusiastic contingent of Wellesley alumni, also used the talk to emphatically defend the continued relevance of feminism, claiming that "nothing is ever a done deal" and that there are still injustices "even in this country."

In response to a question about why so many young women today seem suspicious of the ideology, Albright put her head in her hands in mock despair before asserting that "there is nothing wrong with being a feminist."

Although the main message of her talk was confined to the role of women in advancing democracy, the 74 year-old used a hugely impressive hour-long Q&A session to share her more general incredible knowledge of foreign affairs more. She advanced her hopes for the establishment of democracy in China based on her claim that authoritarianism and a market economy "just don't go together" but was less optimistic about the current turmoil in Syria, arguing that a Libya-style military intervention would be

"unbelievably complicated" due to the "mixing-bowl of sectarian groups" in the country.

Albright saved her most entertaining foreign affairs anecdote for last, as she reminisced about her dramatic state visit to North Korea in 2000. To uproarious laughter, she reflected on how US intelligence that Kim Jong-Il was "crazy and a pervert" had only been wrong in that "he wasn't crazy." She claimed that the 'Dear Leader' was "very, very smart" and "very communicative" with an apparently encyclo-



Madeleine Albright
Photo: Annie Ren

Proud and loud on Houghton Street

Shu Hang
Staff Reporter

Last week, LSE students were reminded by the rainbow flags on Houghton Street that Pride Week had arrived. Numerous events were held throughout the week to bring together the diverse student body on campus, which includes many Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual (LGBT) students and allies.

According to Benjamin Butterworth, LGBT Officer of the Students' Union, Pride Week aims to "highlight the need for tolerance and be a visible presence of LGBT students."

Having had the entire weekend to recover from Pride Crush, students were in a serious mood when they attended a talk by LGBT activist Peter Tatchell on Monday entitled "The Unfinished Battle for LGBT Equality." In his lecture, Tatchell identified and discussed the obstacles to ending discrimination against the LGBT community.

He criticised the government for retaining the ban on gay marriage and blood donation from homosexual men, which goes against their promise to end discrimination. He also noted the double standard in the way discrimination based on gender identity is treated by the law as compared to discrimination based on religion and race.

The talk took a lighter tone when Tatchell recounted humorously the time he attempted a citizen's arrest of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe. The story contained all the elements of a spy thriller: an anonymous phone tip, a stake-out outside a hotel, jumping in front of a moving vehicle and a dramatic arrest. Although the attempt resulted in jail time for Tatchell instead of Mugabe, it "put Mugabe's crime against humanity on the media of the world."

One attendee felt that the talk was more targeted to people with no or little knowledge of gay rights. However, he found it "empowering" to know that there are people fighting for the rights of the LGBT community.

Tuesday saw the screening of the film "But I'm a Cheerleader." The movie tells the story of a young woman discovering and embracing her sexual identity in a residential inpatient therapy camp.

On Wednesday, about thirty students attended a talk held by Morgan Stanley, Pride Week's official sponsor.

An executive director of the firm gave tips on employment and banking, while discussing the reality of being "out" in the workplace.

The "World AIDS Day Candlelit Vigil" on Thursday was held on Houghton Street. With an umbrella in one hand and a lit candle in the other, Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union, and Butterworth led students to show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate those who have died from the virus.

Statistics estimate that approximately 35 million people are currently living with the disease, a third of whom are children. There is still no cure for AIDS. Antiretroviral treatment, though effective in slowing the immune disorder's rampage, is expensive and not accessible for many HIV/AIDS patients, most of whom reside in developing countries.

According to Butterworth, "AIDS is not a problem of the eighties," and people living with HIV today still have to overcome many of society's unfounded taboos and daily discrimination. Though once solely associated with homosexuality, HIV/AIDS is now more common amongst heterosexual partners. World Aids Day aims to draw attention to the fact that AIDS is still very much a presence in contemporary society. Proceeds collected throughout the day go to numerous sectors, including prevention and education as well as research and support for both patients and their families.

John Peart, a second year BSc Government student, was disappointed with the poor attendance for the event - less than 10 people attended the vigil. "It's a shame that more people didn't turn up for the event", he said, "the Students' Union should either invite more people or join a bigger vigil next year." However, he is glad that "the Students' Union is doing something to commemorate the sufferings of victims of the disease."

The LGBT Pub Quiz suffered from poor attendance, which Butterworth blamed on that fact that "essays are due tomorrow". The low turnout resulted in the cancellation of the event, leaving some students disappointed.

Peter Rednour, a student from King's College London who came to attend the Pride Week events, was sympathetic with the situation, acknowledging the "difficulty in organising events." He said he hoped that the LSE Students' Union would try to carry out the quiz on a different date when more people could participate.



Benjamin Butterworth and political campaigner Peter Tatchell.
Photo: Facebook

» continued
from page 1

liberal influences."

The report concedes that "there can be real difficulty for academic staff in detecting the level of outside assistance" he received in completing his thesis, adding that "Saif's case makes a good opportunity to spell out the parameters of permissible assistance."

Lord Woolf also raises questions regarding the timing of the donation acceptance. LSE policy states that no donation should be accepted from a current LSE student. The donation was accepted on the day that Saif al-Islam Gaddafi graduated from the LSE which Lord Woolf acknowledges may give the wrong impression to the public.

Lord Woolf also cleared the LSE on its £2.2 million consulting contract which trained elite members of the Libyan civil service.

In his report, Lord Woolf makes a series of fifteen suggestions to the

School for the handling and research of future donations, as well as the conduct of its PhD programmes.

In a statement published on its website, the LSE said, "The School will implement all 15 of Lord Woolf's recommendations in consultation with the academic community. It has already brought in many of the changes recommended by Lord Woolf."

Judith Rees, Interim Director of the LSE, said, "The publication of this report will help LSE move on from this unhappy chapter in its otherwise celebrated history. It is consoling that Lord Woolf finds that no academic or other staff member at LSE acted other than in what they perceived to be the best interests of the School."

Peter Sutherland, Chair of the LSE Council, the LSE's highest decision making body, said: "The Council is grateful to Lord Woolf for this thorough report." Sutherland said it contains important lessons "for both LSE and for the higher education sector as a whole." Sutherland was Chair of the Council when the decision to accept

the GICDF donation was made, but was absent from the second meeting of the Council due to health reasons.

In an e-mail sent to the student body of the LSE, Rees said, "I was saddened to read the report and I am clear that mistakes and misjudgements were made concerning the Saif Gaddafi PhD, the donation and our governance procedures," adding, "I am aware that the reputation of LSE has suffered and I will work tirelessly to implement the recommendations and restore the good name of LSE."

Asked if she could reassure students that a situation of this magnitude will not occur again, Rees said: "I believe that the new procedures and processes we have already and will put in place will ensure that such mistakes cannot be made again. However, no system is foolproof and we will need to be vigilant and transparent in our proceedings."

The LSE Students' Union has also published an official statement on the Woolf Report this afternoon.

Alex Peters-Day, General Secre-

tary of the Students' Union, said, "The report is very painful to read and is highly critical of many decisions that LSE made."

"The Report's findings clearly lay-out severe problems in the way LSE has conducted itself. LSE took a gamble with its dealings with Saif Gaddafi [sic], and the stakes were too high."

"We hope the Report signals a new era for meaningful student involvement in the School's decision making, so that decisions made can never tarnish the integrity of the institution again," she added.

Peters-Day said, "As a member of Council I do feel that the School has made positive progress in ensuring that the problems that the Woolf Report made clear will be addressed, and addressed quickly."

James Waltz, an elected student representative who sits on the Council, said, "We have an opportunity to proactively work throughout the school to implement real changes to the LSE decision-making process. I hope this

episode forces the school to move forward in a constructive manner that will benefit current and future students."

Lukas Slothuus, the Students' Union's Community and Welfare officer, criticised the LSE for acting as "a front for British foreign policy, not as a university."

"We demand that LSE gives full transparency in its financial dealings. We demand disclosure of all donations and investments every six months. The only way to prevent another Libya disaster is by opening up the books. LSE is in serious trouble and needs to act accordingly," Slothuus added.

In September, the LSE Students' Union launched a priority campaign entitled "The Only Way is Ethics," which calls for a range of ethical activities, including the implementation of a new ethical investment policy.



Protests on the 30th November
Photo: Li Yang

» continued from page 1

also stated that in a recent email to all staff, LSE Director Judith Rees said, "There is no more to negotiate" yet he felt that "the LSE management could do more."

The industrial action was not only taken by those in employment, but solidarity was shown by students who would also be affected by the Government cuts.

Mike Cushman, Secretary of the UCU argued that, for him, the strike was about "protecting pension chances for future generations."

However, Cushman went on to say that the LSE management could take a more active role in "putting pressure on negotiations," emphasising the UCU's stance on pension provision.

While students at LSE were not directly affected by reforms to public sector pension schemes, a large number of students turned out in a show of solidarity.

Lukas Slothuus, the Students' Union's Community and Welfare Officer emphasised the importance of joining up with the thousands of workers on strike and stated that it was "more

than pensions." Slothuus then went on to argue that the LSE management "could do more" and suggested that the "University has the obligation to pay staff fairly" in terms of providing the London living wage.

At 11:15am outside the New Academic building, there was a joint LSE and Kings College Teach-out where various speakers addressed the protesters. One speaker made a comparison to the Arab uprisings arguing that if "people get together collectively" it can have a substantial impact on the government.

The demonstration started at Lincoln Inn Fields and ended at Victoria Embankment, where the crowds were addressed by a number of high profile speakers.

Frances O'Grady, deputy general secretary of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) said that the "British people are on our side and together we will win," reinforcing the rhetoric of the "99% movement."

While David Cameron suggested that the general strike was somewhat of a "damp squib," in an exclusive interview with the Beaver, Ken Livingstone argued that "it is never too late to strike."

Livingstone, who is a Candidate for the 2012 Mayoral Election, is convinced that the current coalition

government is pursuing a plan that is not in everyone's best interest, "using the global economic crisis as an excuse for public sector cuts."

Similarly he suggested the impact will see a "significant fall in the living conditions of working people" and the austerity plans should be challenged by all public sector employees.

Public opinion also aligns with this view. In a recent poll taken by the BBC, 61% of people supported the industrial action this week and this received the backing of 29 Unions who urged their workers to take action.

In Scotland, 99% of schools were forced to close while in England the figure was only 66%. Furthermore, 54,000 hospital appointments were cancelled and 7,000 operations were affected by this week's general strike.

While the Tyne and Wear Metro was closed along with the Mersey Tunnel, Heathrow and Gatwick remained relatively unaffected by the strike although an "ISU official told the BBC that half of those trained to work did not have the right level of security clearance."

LSE was affected by the general strike, along with many other universities in the country. However there has yet to be any considerable changes made to the government's austerity measures.



Protesters carrying placards featuring vultures.
Photo: Li Yang

» continued from page 3

as Somoza would require assistance 24 hours a day, she should recruit two new care-takers to help her. This would require two rooms at Grosvenor House to allow both Somoza and her caretakers their privacy. According to Somoza, she could not afford to pay for the extra room as well as the care-taker's, although she was already on a full scholarship.

The School had worked closely with Somoza before her arrival at the LSE. One option offered by the School was to coordinate with the Community Service Volunteer organisation (CSV), which would provide Somoza with three volunteer care-takers on a rotational basis and would also, according to the Somoza, have ensured a robust support system in terms of the back-up care. However, two days before Somoza's flight to London, she received a phone call from the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services denying financial support for the payment of her personal care.

Paul Kelly, Head of the Department of Government and newly appointed Pro-Director for Teaching and Learning at the LSE told the Beaver: "the U.S government never provides funding for students studying abroad." It is this legislation that Somoza is lobbying to reform.

The School states that it "had fulfilled its legal obligations and beyond with both funding and support." The university has some means available to support international students, but "not unlimited fund[s]." When care packages are being handed out, the LSE has to consider what is reasonable for a British institution for higher education to provide for international students.

On Tuesday 25th October, Somoza met with several high-level decision makers at the School to discuss how to resolve her living situation. The LSE reassured her that it would offer continued support, but an arrangement enabling Somoza to continue her

studies at the School this academic year could not be reached.

One of the key issues was the payment of the extra room. Blair, who was present at a meeting between Anastasia and the School, learned of Somoza's situation through an e-mail, written by Somoza and addressed to Nicola Marin, Head of the Disability and Well-being Office. The e-mail was written after Somoza was denied additional financial assistance for the payment of a room for her new care-taker in the upcoming Lent term. In the e-mail, Somoza wrote about her financial situation and experience dealing with certain members of the School's administration.

In an e-mail to the School, Somoza wrote: "I am tremendously disappointed, and I believe that LSE has not completed their obligations to give appropriate accommodations to my level of physical disability, which in effect, denies me the right to attend LSE like any other student."

According to Somoza, Blair was extremely influential in assisting her cause. At the meeting, the LSE agreed

to provide a room free of charge for her aides next year as well as to work towards ensuring that all of the LSE's rooms are able to meet the needs of people with disabilities. Somoza said that although she thinks the meeting was successful, Blair's involvement should not have been needed for the School to make these promises.

In an interview with the Beaver, Kelly and Lizzie Barnett, Director of the Teaching and Learning Centre, commented: "the main concern is the appropriate care package. That was not simply a matter of resource at the time, and it was a big package."

"It's not purely a question of money, it's also a question of sorting out an appropriate level of support which is being safely delivered by those who are providing it. It is not simply a question of can we provide enough funding, it is about what we are providing and what we need to ensure," Kelly added.

Although ultimately Somoza and the School reached a mutual agreement that her study had to be interrupted, Somoza said that she was still taken aback by this decision. She

expressed that she would have preferred to continue to pursue her degree this year.

In her application to the LSE, Somoza emphasised several times the severity of her physical disability, which requires special accommodation.

Somoza said the School was not prepared for physically disabled students like her: "it was impossible for me to get to my room independently. I had to go through three large fire doors that I could not open on my own." She commented that she felt the university was more equipped and used to accommodating students with learning disabilities than it is students with physical disabilities.

Selena Lucien, a postgraduate student studying MSc Global Politics and a friend of Somoza's, commented: "The biggest problem is not even that the School wouldn't pay for her room, the problem is that the LSE is not ready for students with disabilities like her."

Audience dissent at Duncan Smith event

Nona Buckley-Irvine

Iain Duncan Smith, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, gave a public lecture on "Families and young people in troubled neighbourhoods" last Thursday. The event attracted a large number of attendees from different backgrounds with the theatre packed twenty minutes before the start of the lecture. Security was extremely tight among fears that rogue protesters could be in attendance.

Duncan Smith focused his talk around research conducted by Professor Anne Power named "Family Futures" and how to tackle social issues such as crime and poverty. Only five minutes after the lecture commenced, some people started interjecting and interrupting his speech, with one person shouting "you're full of shit," and another saying "He preaches hate... he's on a mission to destroy the world's best state." Duncan Smith calmly ignored these disturbances and the Chair, LSE's Professor John Hills, attempted to restore order, but it did not stop the audience from getting involved and telling them to "shut up".

Interjections continued as Duncan Smith continued to talk. Street gangs were described as being a "product of social breakdown" that still existed during the growth in the Blair years. The issue of poverty remaining even during this growth was mentioned a number of times, not just by Smith but by his respondents, Professor Jane Waldfogel of Compton Foundation Centennial Professor at Columbia University and Professor Anne Power, head of Social Policy at LSE.

Duncan Smith also discussed the

role of Britain's "dependency culture" on benefits and mentioned it as a factor which constrains people and Duncan Smith proposed limiting these benefits for able-bodied people but keeping benefits for the disabled. These remarks caused further dissent among audience members. One shouted "hate crime against disabled has doubled" and another person was eventually asked to leave by the rest of the audience because of the disruption he continued to cause.

Waldfogel and Power had a friendlier reception from the audience. Waldfogel pointed out that "families and communities can't do it all" and ruled in using primary, secondary and tertiary methods to combat youth problems, such as skills based and academic training. This year's riots in London were also discussed.

The audience's mood remained calm as Power talked about "Family Futures", an adoption support agency, and the research conducted which shows that there are 100,000 marginal areas in Europe, of which 10 per cent are in Great Britain. Power agreed with Duncan Smith that work experience and training are valuable to disadvantaged youth but also argued for the incentivisation of learning. She also emphasised the importance of Sure Start, Children's centres providing advice and support for parents and carers.

Questions from the audience were aimed at Duncan Smith, including a heated question about the £26,000 benefit cap being placed on families. The event overran to accommodate as many questions as possible and it was clear that the sentiment from much of the audience was against Smith.

engage in a conversation addressing sexism, and I felt slightly like the issue had been taken out of my hands by this point."

Wong has stated that he believes the issue was blown out of proportion: "As you are all aware the situation has escalated dramatically and has been blown out of proportion by certain media sites and groups."

According to Wong, people used comments he had posted on his personal Facebook page "in order to find dirt to smear me with."

In light of a proposal that Wong should no longer be allowed to run for Bankside Hall Committee Treasurer, a petition to absolve Wong has been circulating at Bankside and on campus. The petition received fifty signatures in a day, under the stipulation that all those who sign remain anonymous, an unusual mandate for a student petition. According to a source, about half of those who signed the petition are members of the Students' Union's Labour Society and approximately fifty per cent of the signatories are women. The petition generally states "its signatories acknowledge and accept Jason's apology" and that this has become a "witch hunt against Jason, which is inappropriate and must stop immediately."

The petition also states that anything found on Wong's personal Facebook page should not be used to condemn his campaign: "any unfavorable information found on Jason's personal Facebook page, especially information dated before Jason started his studies at the LSE, should not be used."

Wong himself echoes this sentiment in his apology, saying, "I apologise to those individuals if they consider any of the Facebook posts I

President on Austria and EU enlargement

Tapinder Ghuman

Dr. Heinz Fisher, the President of the Republic of Austria delivered a lecture entitled "Austria's role in European Politics: 1989 and EU enlargement" last Tuesday in HongKong Theatre.

The event was organized by LSE European Institute-APCO Worldwide Perspectives on European Series in partnership with the Jean Monnet Programme. Fisher, who was elected in his second term in 2010, reflected mainly on his life-long involvement in Austrian Politics.

Regarding the impact of the end of the Cold War on Austria, he said 1989 was a "fabulous year". Part of the revolutions of 1989, the Velvet Revolution taking place in Austria led to the relinquish of power of the Communist Party and the State Treaty granted Austria "sovereignty and independence."

Fisher said: "I can assure you life at this borderline between East and West was not easy." Politically, Austria being a "neutral country" became the platform for "exchange of informa-

tion and contents." Highlighting the significance of Vienna, Fisher spoke of the famous "summit meeting between Kennedy and Khrushchev." For Austria, 1989 was a year of "fundamental and far-reaching political change." He said: "Throughout my political life, I have been involved in Central and Eastern Europe." He also highlighted the fact that Austria would certainly be a part of "the western philosophy of the pluralistic system."

He alluded that due to the Cold War, membership of the European Union (EU) was not possible for any of the "neutral countries". He also said: "Our development will lead to even closer integration in Europe." He stated that the problems are "global in nature and surpass the strengths of a country." The proof was that "at the moment there are almost 500 Austrian soldiers engaged in peacekeeping operations for UN, outside Austria."

On the significant year of 1989, he said that "the states of Eastern Europe, after shedding the yolk of Communism, now wanted to be part of Europe of Peace and Prosperity." The EU accepted and acknowledged that the "former division of the continent had to be overcome."

From 1990 to 2000, "very dense nets" were woven around the bi and multi-lateral negotiations that accompanied the treaties." He highlighted that from the forty years of Communist rule to the downfall of Communist system in 1989, "Austria moved from the periphery of the Western Europe to the very centre." He said: "We have eight neighbour countries who share same values and principles, six of them are EU members."

Speaking of the Austrian Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Fisher said: "Austria in 2010 was the largest investor to Croatia and Serbia." The tourism in Austria is "flourishing", and as for the financial crisis, "government has ensured packages." He said that the EU has always avoided giving itself a "geographic definition." The interest of Austria in "becoming a part of Europe's security", in spite of past struggle, is continuing.

Fisher concluded by summarising the key power dynamics of Austria in the EU: "fall of the iron curtain and the membership of the EU for Austria has given it a larger role in European Politics."



Heinz Fisher, President of the Republic of Austria
Photo: Annie Ren

have made in a personal capacity in the past to be offensive, but I would like to ask them to consider whether what they did was appropriate."

Ogden stated that the upcoming election would be closely monitored and that further regulations would be implemented for future hustings.

"Following the decision to postpone the elections I have had constructive meetings with the Students' Union and the current Committee President to discuss how things can move

forward in a positive way," Ogden said. "It is anticipated that the elections will take place at the start of the Lent term and I will work with the Students' Union and the incumbent President to put the necessary arrangements in place."

The campaign was not violating official Students' Union campaigning policies, as LSE Hall Committee campaigns do not have to abide by the same rules, but the controversy has drawn attention to the fact that further

rules might need to be established.

"There are basically no campaign rules for halls; they're not covered by the Students' Union's rules," Lukas Slothus, Community and Welfare Officer, said. "But this is most definitely in breach of the School's Single Equality Scheme and Equal Opportunity policy."

"I believe [Ogden] and other people in the school and the Students' Union are tackling the issue," said McFadzean.

continued from page 3

was reported online by The Beaver on the 1st December. In it, he outlines the various steps he has undertaken to rectify the reputational damage his campaign has caused across the wider LSE community.

Wong has formally apologized to Judith Rees, Interim Director of the LSE, as well as Lucy McFadzean, Students' Union Women's Officer. McFadzean has described Wong's campaign as "blatantly sexist," as well as "classist and insensitive."

In his apology, Wong described the personal consequences of the campaign as "dire." He has been fired from his internship after his employer received an "anonymous tip off" regarding this incident.

In his apology, Wong states that he is "acutely aware of the controversy and offense the adverts have caused. Whilst it was never my intention to cause such controversy and offense, the fact is, it has. Upon realisation, I have immediately offered my deep, sincere and unreserved apology to those individuals offended."

McFadzean said that she has indeed met with Wong to discuss the issue, and that Wong offered her the same apology as he had originally extended to the public.

"[Wong] did apologise for the extent to which his campaign offended people, however he did not address the issue of the sexism in his campaign, and did not recognise even then that it was sexist," said McFadzean. "I personally didn't find the meeting that helpful as Jason was not willing to

DESTINATIONS		GATE	ARRIVAL
INDUSTRY	IMPACT	OW	FASTER
GLOBAL	ASSIGNMENTS	OW	FASTER
SENIOR	CLIENT CONTACT	OW	FASTER
CAREER	DEVELOPMENT	OW	FASTER
MAKE	PARTNER	OW	FASTER



Some people know precisely where they want to go. Others seek the adventure of discovering uncharted territory. Whatever you want your professional journey to be, you'll find what you're looking for at Oliver Wyman.

Application Deadlines

18th December for January 2012 offers
22nd January 2012 for summer internships

Discover the world of Oliver Wyman at oliverwyman.com/careers



Get there faster.

Oliver Wyman is a leading global management consulting firm that combines deep industry knowledge with specialised expertise in strategy, operations, risk management, organisational transformation, and leadership development. With offices in 50+ cities across 25 countries, Oliver Wyman works with the CEOs and executive teams of Global 1000 companies.
An equal opportunity employer.



Get up close and personal with the Media Group!

XMAS EDITION

Tuesday 6th December
9PM - LATE

The Lock Tavern
35 Chalk Farm Road
Camden
NW1 8AJ

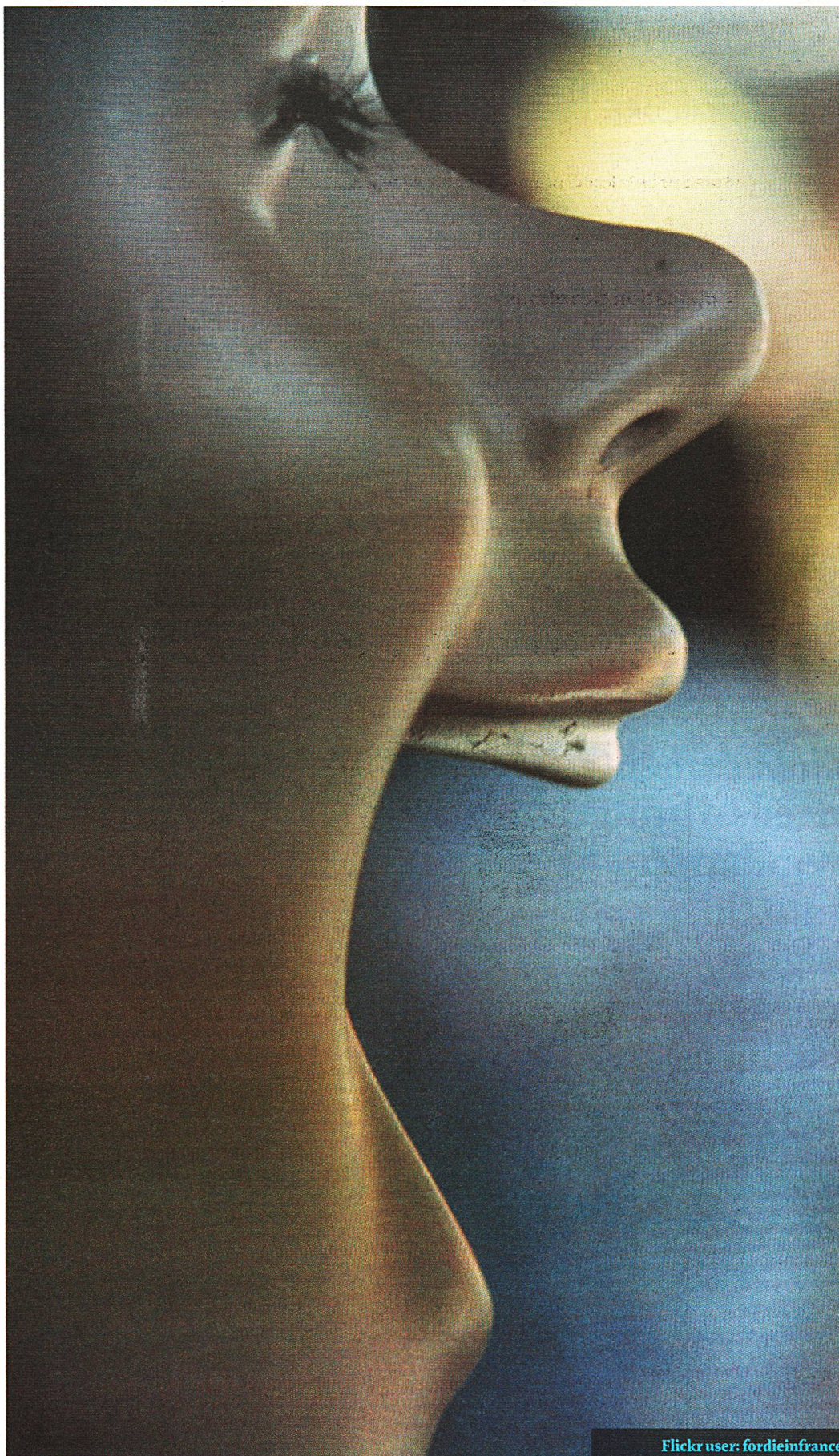
Tickets are £3 on
Houghton Street
and £5 on the door.



Comment

The last laugh

The outgoing Executive Editor pities the fools who don't understand debate



Flickr user: fordieinfrance

Nicola Alexander

I'm laughing at you. You know who you are. You are the unwashed cretins that walk the LSE's halls, stubborn in your belief that the newspapers you read, the people you associate with and the politics you choose to propagate are Divine Law. All the rest of us, humble open-minded folk, are apparently just too thick in the head to "get" what you were chanting about.

Before I explain why your blinkered approach to life is counter-productive to both you and, what is infinitely worse, me, let me address a sad truth: when you and I first stepped foot on this glorious campus three years ago, we weren't too different. We both bathed often, spoke to others with the entry-level respect they deserved, and, most crucially, we both came to university because we realised that at the ripe old age of 17 we probably didn't know everything. Here's the important thing: we both decided to come to LSE to learn more. We wanted to develop our beliefs and hone our opinions, so that when we entered the real world we could actually have a debate grounded in fact.

At some point over the past 30 months, something radical happened. Call me biased, but I think it was you, not me.

In my time as Executive Editor of this glorious publication, you, at some time or another, have called me the following things: "fascist" because I didn't take your copy of the Socialist Worker; "racist" because I was born in South Africa; and "colonialist" because I'm white. Then there was my brief experience as a "sexist" and "misogynist"...um...because I'm a woman? But it isn't just me. I've done my research and I've asked around. Genuinely perplexed by the low turnout at the UGM, and the lack of debate or questioning of anyone who takes the stage, I asked a handful of engaged individuals why they weren't more active in student politics. One Masters student, who at his alma mater had often been criticised for his liberal views, said that he found it too much effort to continually have to defend himself against claims that he was a "right-wing extremist," just because he took the opposing side of a UGM motion. Another UGM regular said that "it doesn't matter what I say, to 'them' all that matters is that I'm not in their crew. Anything I say will be taken out of context and in the wrong way." A third year student, who attended UGM only once, commented "so it's basically, whoever doesn't say whatever 'they' like, gets fed to the wolves." It's not just the UGM that turns into the firing squad, it's any surface at the LSE.

But the joke is on you, friend, because when we all head out into the great wide world out there, and try to draw on our experiences at university

to enhance our prospects, you are going to find yourself at a grave disadvantage. Whilst you were patting coyer comrades on the back, and congratulating yourselves on your latest Facebook status, some of us were stepping out of our comfort zone and meeting people from all different beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. We were debating everything from why we voted a certain way in the UK elections to why organs shouldn't be traded on the market. We were open-minded and we probably developed the do-eyed perceptions that we held when we came to the LSE. With respect and intellectual integrity, we all learnt from each other.

So now when someone outside of our LSE bubble asks me whose side I'm on - I actually have an answer I can back up. And when they come back at me, with a stream of counter-arguments and a list of facts, I will have heard them all before. And I'll know exactly what to say. Most importantly, I'm fairly certain now of what I believe in, because I've had a chance to listen to all the arguments, and I've picked a side.

Where you'll find yourself is a lot less rosy. You see, every time that somebody with a slightly different opinion has approached you, you have swatted away their argument and bullied them into submission by using nasty words like "fascist", "sexist", and "racist" (by the way, it is statistically impossible for us ALL to discriminate against you on the grounds of race, creed and gender). An environment has been created in which it is acceptable to accuse other candidates of institutional racism - our own Anti-Racism officer, Sherelle Davids, was briefly banned from campaigning for her post last year after endorsing the labelling of her opponents as racist (see article "Official complaints log points to scrappy election", 18th March 2011.) You have wasted your valuable time at university, by refusing to use it as a learning experience. If you had taken the time to actually engage with me, and the many others like me, who knows what great feats we could have achieved. You could have changed my mind. I could be amongst your ranks right now. You could have learned all the arguments on the "other side" and how to defeat them in one foul swoop. You could have been the great leaders of, what I genuinely believe to be, an important cause. But you chose to stay in your clique, and there you'll stay.

I could say that this is because you're stubborn, but mostly I think it's because you're scared. You didn't want to debate, because you couldn't. Not only have you alienated the moderate people who could have easily swung your way, but you also neglected the chance to develop your own opinions. So now, you'll have to face the wrath in the real world. Guess what: if you call a fellow politician racist, because he is a Conservative, and you're not, people are going to laugh at you, not him.

So to all of you out here who have read this, and still not changed your mind: point proven. ☹

To the who's who of human failure

Ahmed Alani's scathing indictment of all that's wrong with the Students' Union

Ahmed Alani



Three editorial boards later and I can genuinely say that I will miss being a part of the truly incredible group that creates the Beaver. It has, without a doubt, been the single most enriching experience for me at LSE. In my second term at LSE, I can honestly say that the Beaver drew me into LSE life in a way that I hadn't anticipated, and with this came the raw exposure of what lay beneath the red and white banner: the good, the bad, and the fucking ugly.

Yes, I'm talking about the LSE Students' Union. Having been to an all-boys school, I can say that I never really experienced the politics, backstabbing and bitching that allegedly took place in my sister school, but fuck me you lot took it a new level. Silly old me, I'd never been acquainted with the dichotomy of the "left" and the "right", or more commonly respectively referred to at LSE as the "liberals" and the "fascists". Little did I know that the "right" could never be right, and no sooner had I discovered the existence of this division than I was so readily branded the satanic 1%. Actually, FYI, private schools make up 7% of this country's education system.

But what I got in my first year

was but the tip of the iceberg for what was to follow. Under the oppressive regime of our old Education Officer, Komandante himself, the LSE became more polarised than an episode of Frozen Planet, to the point where I was quizzed by my own friends as to whom I supported in the Israel/Palestine conflict. Just in case there's still any doubt: it's Palestine.

So, with an intolerant Students' Union on my back and having all my beliefs questioned left, right and (clearly, there's no centre) what did the Beaver do for me? It taught me the value of self-restraint; the number of times I wanted to write pieces with the general gist being "fuck you" was only surpassed by the number of times you called Beaver Editors exists. It also instilled in me the ability to listen and not abrasively attack someone for his or her differing viewpoint. Now though, no more. Unfortunately, whilst I sat and bit my tongue in UGM, the bigoted cretins of the LSE felt the need to heckle individuals and use their collective bullying to suppress alternative opinions. The odious and odorous minority were the vocal body amongst the LSE and it really did tarnish my experience.

And then, this year, a whole new wave of special individuals was voted into power. Despite Komandante's insistent return to LSE on a weekly basis, like a bad case of

chlamydia, it seems that the newfound cronies just weren't up to scratch in his vision of "activism". But whilst last year, the activism was fought with, albeit misdirected, passion for a worthy cause, this year you deluded individuals are single-handedly tearing down your Students' Union from within. I hope for your sake that you realise this in time, because it would be pro-

foundly unfair for future generations to come to such a broken Union.

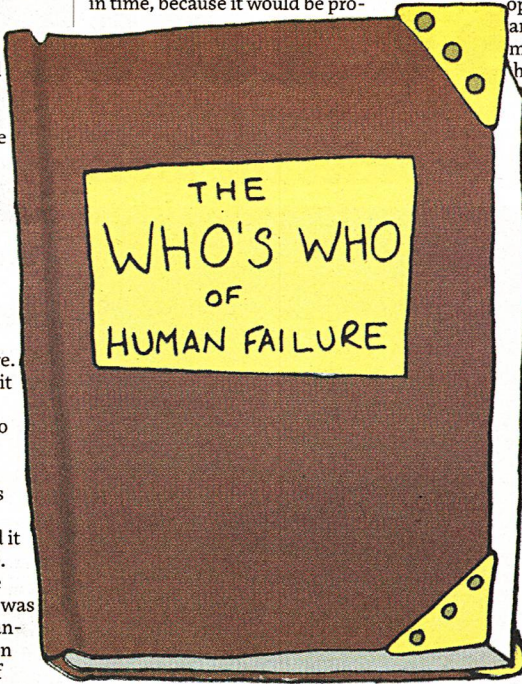
Single-handedly, as a collective body, you have suppressed freedom of speech, despite your obvious disdain for fascism, and you have stifled opinion even though you continuously feel the need to pedal your own ones through your positions. Not having an opinion is also a valid stance, and you fail to recognise that many students at LSE are happy leaving with a degree and changing the world in their own way, not yours. Luckily, as a group, you seem to be somewhat confined, as your tactics have alienated the sane among us, and have instead lead to generally improved relations that stem from the collective perplexity at your farcical ways.

The Beaver, this apparent vessel for homophobia, fascism, racism, sexism and every other 'ism' that plagues our world today is the only facet of the LSE Student's Union that promotes dialogue. We have an entire section dedicated to allowing people to respond to issues that matter to them; add this to expansive news coverage, international features that bestow upon us a sense of perspective (yes, there is a world beyond

Houghton Street) and a Social section that appeals to the masses and has documented personal accounts that vary from coming out of the closet to cultural experiences in Africa, and you have yourself a damn fine publication - one that remains the first port of call for many outlets of international media.

This sounds spiteful, and a lot of it is, but I feel the need to express what three years of being so intimately involved with the LSE Student's Union has done to me. With that, however, I wish to offer a round of congratulations. There is a slight glimmer of hope, I feel, with Alex Peters-Day and Stanley Ellerby-English. Profoundly committed to the bettering of this Student's Union, they remind me of what the institution is actually supposed to stand for. They engage with students and encourage general discourse to the benefit of all. I wish you all the best. I'd also like to extend my congratulations to Nicola, who dealt with all of your shit with more grace and professionalism than all of you combined. It has been amazing to work with her, and alongside the rest of this incredibly talented Editorial Board, who have sacrificed all of their weekends only to be berated by you and your eternal dissatisfaction.

So to all of you haters out there, I wish I could publish a book about you, and entitle it "The Who's who of human failure." I can tell it will be a bestseller. ☹



Your money is (no) good here

Credit rating agencies and their excessive power... and incompetence

Samira Lindner



S&P, Moody's, Fitch. No, these are not the names of clothing brand knock offs. These three firms are the largest global credit rating agencies. What do they do? They rate the ability of borrowers (be they companies or governments) to pay back loans. The worse the rating, the higher the risk of default becomes, which in turn raises the interest rate of the loan. Put more simply, if you get a bad grade, you get a bad loan. But what does this rating process mean in practice? Is this issue purely limited to the realm of international finance? Unfortunately, it is not. Credit rating agencies have become key players not only in finance but also in politics, even affecting the lives of everyday people in worrying ways.

You might be thinking to yourself, "Credit rating agencies... Where have I heard about them before?" Probably during the chaos of the 2007-2009 financial crisis. And not in a good way. The Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission in the US has called them the "enablers of the crisis." That's because these credit rating agencies gave glowing ratings to ridiculously unstable mortgage-based securities. This created a dangerously false sense of confidence for investors and furthered the development of the US housing bubble, a bubble that soon popped and led to devastating consequences.

Two years on, one would hope that these credit rating agencies would have finally lost their (ill-gotten and false) credibility and would no longer be allowed to have an excessive impact on finance and politics. Unfortunately, that is not the case. In fact the situa-

tion may have gotten worse.

The debate on credit rating agencies is highly complicated since it addresses the very technocratic world of highbrow finance. So perhaps a few explanations are in order. First, it's important to stress that credit rating agencies are not, as the word "agency" may falsely imply, government-based. They are purely private-sector. Like most things in the private sector, they are highly unregulated. The way they work is that a borrower (say, a bank like Barclays or a government like Greece) pays them to get rated. That payment alone raises a lot of questions already and may pose a conflict of interest. Then, the agency decides on a grade, using highly complex formulas and taking everything from financial to social elements of the borrower into consideration. The grade, which ranges from a perfect AAA to a lousy C, influences the interest rate at which the borrower can borrow.

So what have been the latest developments with these credit rating agencies? Unfortunately, they are still making their existence and self-professed importance known. When the US Congress finally, after a painful amount of debate, passed the financial rescue package, the credit agencies had to give their 2 cents again. S&P (Standard & Poor's) decided that this was the right moment to downgrade the US from its top AAA rating to a AA+. They justified this downgrade on their opinion that the rescue package falls short of what they think is necessary to save the economy. It's important to point out here that the capital to cover the interest rates on government loans doesn't just appear out of thin air. Instead, it has to be covered by the budget, which in great part is derived from taxes. And once a credit rating agency decides to downgrade a country, especially down from AAA, this often leads to many funds that are bound to a specific rating

mandate, being forced to sell off these securities, further reducing the price of them and thus increasing the interest rate yet again. In other words, a simple downgrade is not that simple. It has enormous consequences for the rated countries, their performance in the international market, and their budget (which, instead of being spent on social services may perhaps be redirected to paying interest rates).

Governments need to bring regulation into this highly unregulated business

So in this case not only do we see that a credit rating agency, with no accountability but with clear incentives and interest, can impact the very budget allocation of a country. And the fact that S&P downgrades the US right when it's trying to recover, seems incredibly irresponsible.

But, to be fair, the impact of these credit rating agencies can sometimes, if interests align, be beneficial. Take Egypt for example. After the military action against protesters a few weeks ago, S&P decided to downgrade Egypt's credit rating in reflection of Egypt's political and economic profile. This could potentially give Egypt a more effective nudge than merely a wag of the finger by the US (although some might argue the S&P is but an

extension of the US). Another example is Belgium. Setting a new world record, Belgium has not had a formal government for over 18 months. Due to this lack of political stability, last week Belgium received a major downgrade from S&P, leading borrowing costs to soar. Not long after, Belgian politicians sat down to focus on finally agreeing to an austerity program, the last major obstacle in finalizing a government deal, which they did at last. In this example, we can see how a change in credit rating managed to literally create a government. So in a way, the impact and influential ability of credit rating agencies can at times serve a positive purpose.

Nevertheless, Egypt and Belgium are exceptions and not the rule. In these scenarios, the interests of the agencies and those of the population may have aligned. But that is not the norm. We have gotten to a point when the European Commission, and even the IMF, are openly criticizing these agencies. Both claim that there are problems of transparency and rigor in the rating process as well as accountability for when mistakes happen. This criticism is wholly justified.

Despite their immense shortcomings, credit rating agencies continue to play a huge role in the world. They are used as the non plus ultra reference point of anything to do with investment and borrowing. The fact that their ratings are created in a questionable way and tend to flip-flop on almost a daily basis (which is especially worrying for countries) creates a hugely unstable foundation on which financial activity takes place. The impact of these agencies trickles down all the way to you and me. Governments need to bring regulation into this highly unregulated business. Otherwise the private-sector will continue to take the reigns of governance. It's time for politics to take them back. ☹

-Quick- COMMENT

What do you think of the appointment of the new director?

It's hard to judge so early, but I have some concerns regarding his suitability, given his lack of exposure to UK universities
- Ahmed Alani, The Beaver, Design Editor

Seems interesting to me how the new director isn't a big name in the finance/business sectors.
- Ankita Sethia, 3rd year, LLB Laws

Unless he can help me with my job applications or get me into Goldman Sachs, he has little effect on my time here.

-Varuag Athem, 3rd year, BSc Economics

I think an American professor will bring a useful perspective to the table.
- Anser Aftab, General Course alumna, 2011

I'm excited. This appointment seems to be a move away from a focus on the financial sector and back towards scholarly intent.
- Duncan McKenna, Managing Editor, The Beaver

I think it's a smart move to appoint someone low-profile.
- Bethany Clarke, News Editor, The Beaver

He's an anthropologist. I mean, really?
- Chu Ting Ng, 3rd year, LLB Laws

NEXT TERM...

Watch this space for the new Comment Editor!

LSE100, how I loathe thee

Let me count the ways

Josh Still



The day before my final essay of term is due in, as per usual, I assembled a large quantity of books, stocked up on caffeine and prepared myself for a long session in the library, where nothing would be allowed to distract me. Except it did, as I realized I would have to go and take an LSE 100 assessment, which counted towards the final mark in the course, on copyright law.

Now, I know very little about copyright law, having skimmed through the LSE100 readings for a sum total of five minutes. And, in all honesty, I care about it even less. But I am forced away from studying for my actual degree at a pivotal time for an hour to write an essay about copyright law that can only be described as 'of substandard quality'. I say 'forced' because there isn't even the opportunity to opt out of this course if you don't enjoy it or don't find it intellectually beneficial, both categories of which I am a member. Everyone in my year must study the course, and our results will be put on our University transcripts.

The problems with LSE100 are partly organizational: any student of essay subjects can show that weeks 6 and 9 are not ideal to be taking assessed exams. This also stretches further as, for reasons that remain absolutely baffling, it has been decided that, rather than on a Wednesday afternoon or a weekend when there are no classes, the exam will be held before term even starts. Having three days less at home with my family is incon-

venient for me. But the effects this will have for international students who come from the other side of the world are massive. Even more astonishingly, this decision was ratified by personnel in the Students' Union last year. It is little surprise that the Students' Union has a negative reputation when it refuses to support its students' interests, or even consult us in this matter.

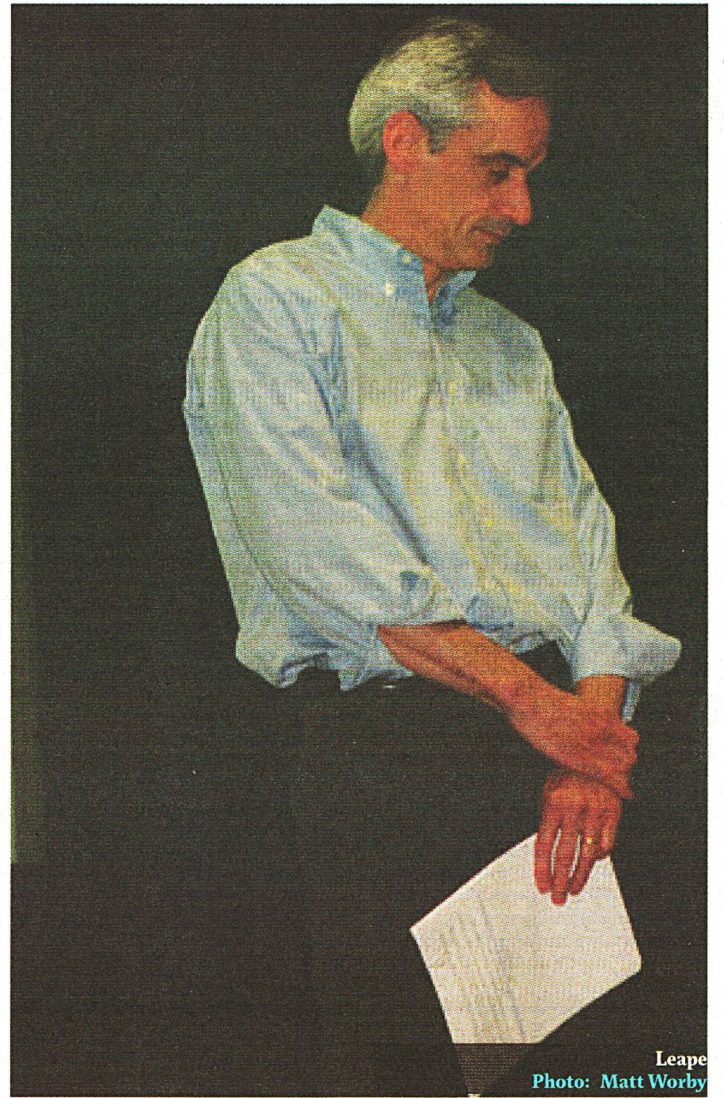
It is important to stress that the idea behind LSE100 is understandable. Reportedly feedback from employers suggested that the outlook of LSE graduates can be, to quote Howard Davies 'narrow and not addressing some of the big issues affecting the future of society'. But the way this idea has been implemented is seriously deficient, and in failing to live up to its ideals, is a perfect metaphor for LSE in general. No wonder the LSE top brass are so keen on it.

LSE100 is simply not rigorous. It makes the General Studies A-level that I took, which incidentally LSE would not accept, seem like an epic intellectual challenge. In 'dealing with the big issues affecting future society', LSE100 does indeed deal with issues like climate change and the financial crisis, but tells us very little about them that we could not have learned by reading a newspaper. One suspicion voiced by several students is that it is a course designed to teach economics students how to write essays, and on current evidence this is hard to dispute.

But these problems, and the patronising attitude they reflect towards LSE students, are overwhelmed by the worrying trend LSE100 has exhibited to dissuade genuine academic excellence. By definition, every moment spent on LSE100 is not spent on our actual degrees. Moreover, the requirements needed for LSE100 are likely to undermine the academic development

of our University's brightest students. To do well in an LSE100 essay simply write a thesis, justification and conclusion. Anything more elaborate and you will be sent, like a naughty child, to the writing lab. And stick to the key readings. A good friend of mine put some of his own knowledge from books he had independently read into an LSE100 essay; he was given a low mark, and in effect told to stick to the reading provided. And here I thought you should have intellectual curiosity to come to University.

The big question is; what would I do instead? For a start, make the course optional. So those who, despite all the problems, have benefited from the course can continue to do so, while the rest of us can focus on our degrees. The illiberal argument behind the course being compulsory, on the grounds that it is good for us is absurd. In general, it is good for LSE students to eat a banana with breakfast, but I don't see Jonathan Leape force-feeding us the things every morning. We are adults, so let us make up our own minds about whether we want to study this. Also, listen to students' concerns about the course in both its serious academic deficiencies and, in the short-term, the unbelievable timing of the exam. Leape attending the UGM was a positive step, but this needs to be backed up with action. Finally, take out the absurd amount of money and resources put into LSE100, including brand new folders, course packs and the interactive voting system in lectures, and put them into the subjects I am amassing over £20,000 of debt to study. Thank you. ☘



Leape
Photo: Matt Worby

Spare your liver...and your bank card

A response to Kirsty Kenney's claim that without alcohol, fun at LSE has grim prospects

Helen Vicary



I felt moved to write in response to an article I read in the Social section of the 15th November edition, namely "Where's My Money? Fresher Kirsty Kenney on expensive city life." Perhaps I've got the wrong impression, but I kinda felt like the author intended it all to be rather shocking. And it's not shock-

ing. Perhaps I'm just a boring old finalist, but to me it seemed to belie a certain attitude, one that is prevalent among many Freshers who land in a big exciting university city with a bank account full of loans, surrounded by hundreds of new people who might be friends, foes, or fu...n buddies. It got me thinking, so I wanted to respond to the author's question of how anyone can have fun at LSE without spending all their money on alcohol. In short, I recommend an early start. Let me explain.

There are a number of factors that contributed to my financial sensibilities. One, I'd been to uni before coming

to LSE, so the idea of having another crazy Fresher's week was a bit old hat. Even during my own Fresher's experience, it was an art foundation degree, hence, no loan, hence, no money anyway. Two, as a Scot, I was raised by single-malt whisky enthusiasts so alcohol has always been something to be appreciated and enjoyed - not only as a mechanism for cutting loose. Knocking it back would be a waste, of money and of the golden nectar itself.

Three, I've lived in London since I was a child, I've grown up here. The novelty of the glittering West End night-life had worn off long before my 19th birthday, and there was always

more fun to be found in New Cross, Brick Lane or Shoreditch. Perhaps that's simply a matter of taste, but even if you want to get hammered it's a lot cheaper to do that south of the river or east of the city. I was lucky enough to learn that by cutting my party teeth aged 14 at the Ivy House and the (sadly now defunct) Hatcham Social Club, rather than aged 18 at Movida. I benefited from learning how to get myself home safe after a night out before I reached that age at which everyone becomes fearless and indestructible (approximately 16 and a half?). Long before it was even legal for me to drink, I knew my limits, I knew the night-buses home, and I knew where I could afford to drink.

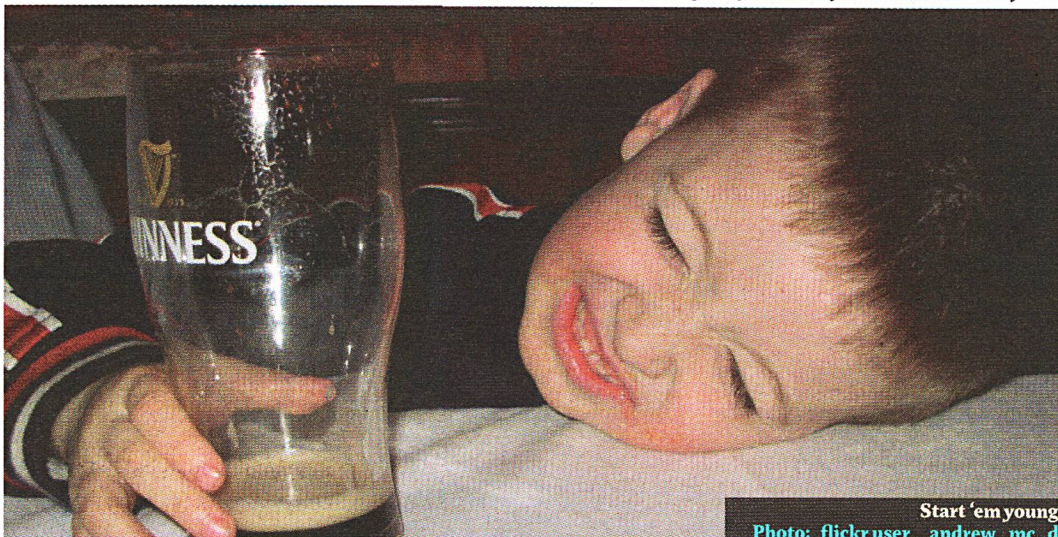
It worries me to hear about Freshers falling asleep on Houghton Street and blowing their entire student loan for the term on vodka shots, and it makes me wonder - what on earth did you do for fun up until now? Is drinking yourself into a stupor and making new bestest best friends in the whole wide world (until you throw up on their shoes) really such a new and exciting thing? Did you not already figure out that there's something to be said for waking up the next morning respectably hung-over, rather than feeling like death warmed up? How about the friends you might make when you actually remember the conversations you had the night before?

I've never thought of myself as a party animal, not at all. I was never one of the social elite, not painfully cool, not anything out of the ordinary.

I had friends, we had fun, and alcohol was usually involved, but a dry night wasn't unheard of. Throughout my time at uni, I've literally felt middle-aged. I (and a lot of people I know from my younger years) are mostly done with the clubbing, we are certainly done with the binge-drinking, and we seem to just have other things to spend our money on.

So when I read an article like that, far from making me regret that my time at LSE has been the most sober period of my life (oh it sounds so exciting, if only I'd got paralytically drunk at Crush a few more times, alas my wasted youth!) it makes me really, really glad that I was among the fortunately situated South London children who got that phase out of the way early - before we had enough money for the damage, to our health or our finances, to be so severe.

So here's my advice; short of going back in time and drinking your tween-age self under the table to teach it a good lesson, you can let this happen in good grace, without bragging or complaining about it. There will come a night when, for the hundredth time, white faced and deadpan, you swear to "never drink that much again". And miraculously, that usually idle threat will, inexplicably, turn into wisdom. And so you never will drink that much again. Or at least not for a while. At that point, your bank card and your liver will breathe a huge, sympathetic sigh of relief. ☘



Start 'em young
Photo: flickruser_andrew_mc_d

Wongly hated

Granted, he made a mistake but does Jason Wong deserve all the hate?

Başak Arslan



It all started with a guy wanting to become a treasurer... That's right, I am talking about Jason Wong and the infamous Bankside elections. As a Passfielder, I can proudly say that the elections in Passfield were incredibly democratic. As some of you might have heard, the 2 candidates running for president ran a successful Re-Open Nomination campaign before the elections, in order to increase the number of candidates running for positions. Undoubtedly, there was a little friction between certain candidates, especially between those who were running for treasurer but that friction could not compare to the Bankside treasurer elections. Seriously people, what part of counting money seems so important?

As half of the UK nowadays knows, there was one particular student whose ambition to become a treasurer went oh-so over the limits. His campaign included cutting down the toilet cleaning rates and having toasters in every kitchen as well as getting an Xbox, FIFA 12 and Modern Warfare 3. In his campaign Jason stated that the wages of toilet cleaners in Bankside were very high when compared to London standards. This probably is not only the worst campaign I have ever heard of, but

tends to be classist as well. Jason also "crowned" his campaign with a picture of a sexy French maid with the caption "She can clean my toilet for 12 pounds but not the Bankside cleaners." The campaign about putting toasters in the kitchen, on the other hand, was aimed at girls as Wong stated, "Girls love cooking and love to be in the kitchen." Unfortunately, we are no longer able to see his "creative" campaign posters on Facebook as he deleted the "evidence" after serious complaints.

I am utterly shocked that men can still associate cooking and cleaning just with women. It is not only sexist but primitive as well. By including those comments in his campaign, Wong clearly puts emphasis on horribly medieval gender roles in the community and as a woman I am definitely against that kind of chauvinism. Personally speaking, I love cooking but I hate the fact that society expects me to love cooking or to cook delicious food. I am a woman and being a woman does not necessarily include being a chef just as being a man does not necessarily include being good at mechanics! Cleaning with super-mini dresses and high heels, on the other hand, reduces me into being a sexual creature that cannot survive without the attention of men. If this is still what the society expects me to be, I am sorry to disappoint them by refusing to do so and by opposing this outrageous expectation.

As well as offending women by his campaign, Jason also underestimated the power of women. When the Women's Officer contacted him

after various complaints were made, Jason updated his Facebook status

I am horribly shocked by the reactions of certain people, and this whole situation is turning out to be some sort of post McCarthyian witch-hunt

saying that his campaign was popular with women as the Women's Officer e-mailed him to have an appointment! However, the situation got more problematic after Wong had a personal meeting with the Dean. After meeting with the Dean, Jason was forced to make a public apology. In his first attempt to apologize, Wong uploaded a video on his Facebook page and claimed that the reason behind those posters was to distinguish

himself from the rest of the candidates in a slightly edgy way. This is a very interesting apology, as I have never considered sexism as 'slightly edgy' or anything else but offensive. His video sounded more like a self-explanation and defense rather than an apology. Even the title of the video explains the situation: "An Apology and Moving On". His written apology, as was reported on The Beaver website, on the other hand, seemed more like an actual apology, although it still had an "I am sorry, but..." nature.

However, although I do believe that the campaigns were offensive and intolerable, I am horribly shocked by the reactions of certain people, and this whole situation is turning out to be some sort of post McCarthyian witch-hunt. Some Labour groups have turned this issue into being a political one as Wong is a supporter of the Conservative Party. I have heard many comments on about him being a "classic Tory". Jason Wong is a Tory. So what? It does not mean all Conservatives share the same opinion on wages or gender roles. You can't just take one example and generalize it, so that you can attack on a political party. To do so would be similar to accusing all men of being sexist since Jason's campaign is sexist. The LSE Students' Union Labour Society's involvement with the situation seems to be controversial as I cannot be sure of the motives behind their motives. If their only motive is to promote gender equality, then I totally support them, however the chance of them having the motivation of introducing party politics into the situation

is relatively high, although they make no such statement in their blog. Nevertheless, the SOAS Labour Society's comment that they are "outraged and appalled to see the Tories at LSE using outdated prejudices and expectations for their own electoral gain," clearly indicates their motive which is not only an example of political generalization and misjudgment, but also a tool that overshadows the pressing issue of sexism in the case. On that basis, I find The Guardian's commentary on the issue outrageous as well.

The only sanction I have personally expected after this controversy was a personal apology from Wong and possible banning of his campaign. Nonetheless, I hear people saying that they want him getting barred from the exams or getting expelled from Bankside and/or LSE. Come on people, his campaign is sexist and offensive, and yes he is irresponsible for making such a campaign, but Wong is not a Marvel villain, and destroying him personally won't eradicate sexism or change the world for the better. We have to fight the concept of sexism itself rather than identifying it on a certain person and making sure that person suffers the consequences. I would have liked him to be sincere in his apology, and I would have liked him to resign as a candidate; that would be the most classy and political way to deal with the situation. He chose not to do either of them but that does not mean he needs to be the most hated person in LSE. 🐻

From the man himself...

Jason Wong speaks up

The last week has been long and tiring for me. Having to search your name up on Google News every hour to see whether a left wing blog has posted yet another misleading article about yourself is not a good experience. I hope to return to some normality now and catch up with work I have missed. I also wish to put an end to all this for everyone's sake and so Banksiders can have their elections as soon as possible.

I have offered my deep, sincere and unreserved apology to all affected parties and will continue to do so. Some such as the Ethics Officer Lois Clifton have suggested "I don't care that you have apologised, I won't move on" (Feminist Society Facebook Page, 28 November at 21:35) and went further to saying she hopes "every person who has liked your Facebook page is barred from exams". The Student Union website states Lois' role as an Ethics Officer is to promote "peace and solidarity". Whilst I understand Lois has been offended and extend my personal apology to her, I do wish she was more peaceful with her vocabulary. But I feel that most in the student body that were offended by the adverts have been able to accept my apology and for that I am grateful.

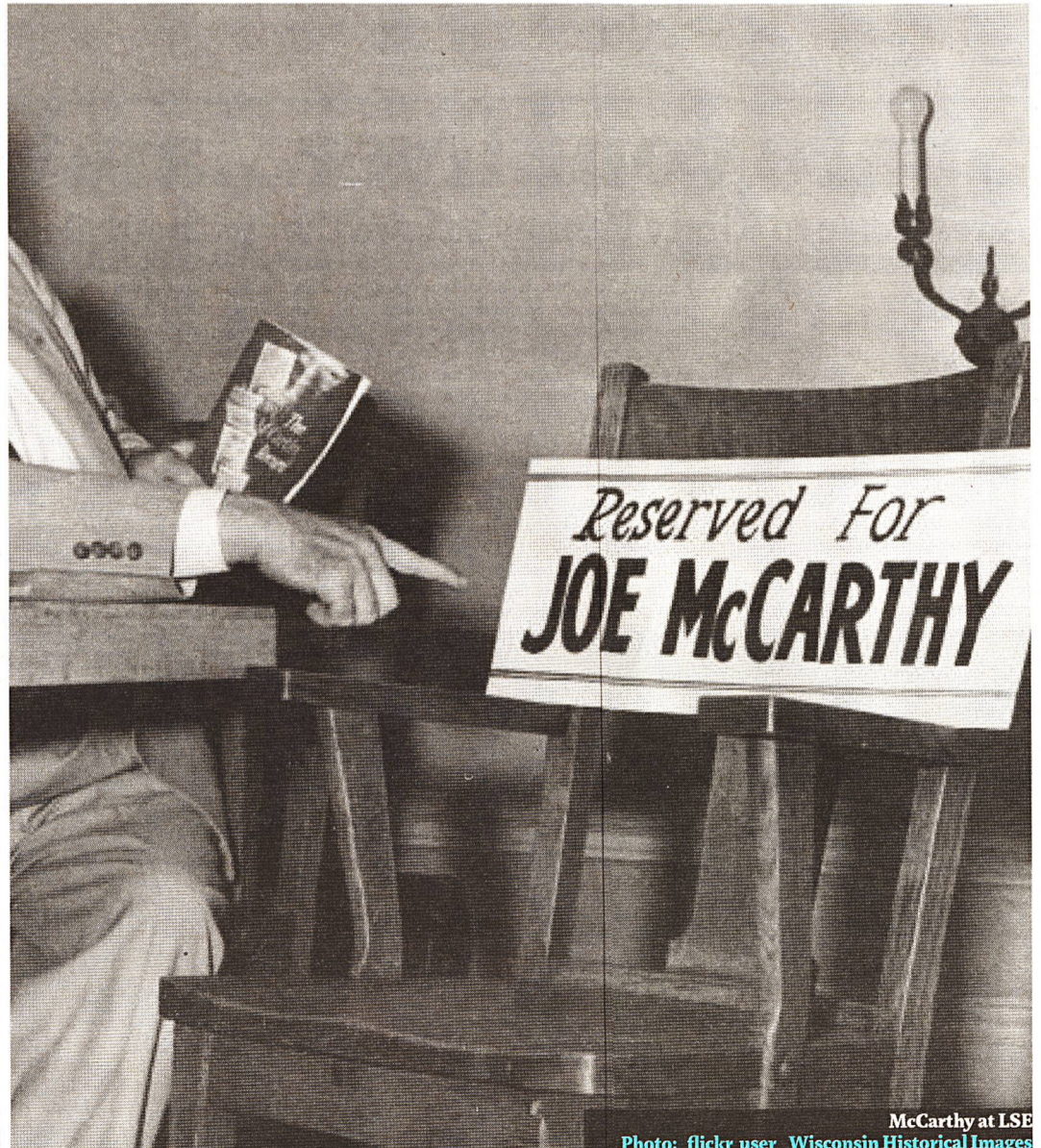
Let me make clear what the purpose of this article is. I am not here to make excuses for my campaign adverts but rather to put into perspective what has happened.

Outside observers might not be aware of the nature of hall elections at the LSE. Indeed, it is generally light hearted, playful and far from serious. In the Rosebery Hall elections that took place weeks ago, candidates com-

peting for the Presidency were asked to perform a striptease. The audience then cheered to their preferred "stripper", with the winner getting to throw a cream pie at the loser. Hall elections at the LSE are far from serious. Whilst this does not excuse or lessen the offensiveness of what my campaign adverts have caused to some; it is important to view the incident in the context of what the LSE Hall elections are usually like, especially as certain news blogs have tried to portray me as a candidate in some overtly serious election.

What I did was wrong, but I feel that some have responded in a disproportionate manner. As I have mentioned in my apology letter, after the first news article about the incident broke out on the internet, my employee received an "anonymous tip off" which resulted with me being dismissed from my internship. There was also the incident of individual(s) who pretended to be supporters of my campaign, in order to manipulate me into accepting them as Facebook friends. They then went through my entire personal Facebook page, in attempt to search for material, including those dating months back before I started my studies at the LSE to smear me with. This, I think has gone too far and I hope will stop.

I wish to reiterate my deep regret on posting the campaign adverts, I sincerely ask for your forgiveness and hope we can move on from here.



McCarthy at LSE

Photo: flickr user_Wisconsin Historical Images

Social



Beating the Winter Blues

Laura Aumeer's advice on getting into the holiday spirit

Flickr user: edvvc

It's cold and dark, and the weather at the moment can only be described as miserable. The end of term is nigh and you've still got essays and presentations due, but, to be honest, you just want to curl into bed and hibernate. The student loan is running out and, as the Christmas shoppers flock into London, your journeys get increasingly stressful and annoying. If the general misery of the British winter doesn't get to you, ten weeks at the LSE will definitely sap your energy.

I may be painting a bleak picture, but we have all been there. It's common to get the winter blues, and this is certainly exacerbated by being at the LSE. So how do we all cope with this stress and these feelings of being down?

It's certainly not advisable to completely ignore it, throw yourself into work and practically move into the library, with only your trips to get coffee taking you outside. Yes, the library is indoors and heated, and if you're in there long enough you may forget it's winter and dark outside, but you will miss everything else going on, both at the LSE and in the world at large. The beanbags are there for resting, not for replacing a night's lost sleep.

On the other side of the coin, nor is it advisable to succumb to the winter blues and not leave your halls/flat at all. Yes, it is cold outside and it gets dark before your class is even over, but it isn't that bad once you get outside. Put your coats and jackets (and I don't mean vodka jackets) on and brave it.

There are, in fact, so many things to keep us going this time of year. Firstly, there are some benefits

of wandering around London this time of year. Some of the Christmas decorations are undeniably pretty - I challenge everyone not to appreciate the giant reindeer in Covent Garden or marvel at the window displays in "Selfridges". Yes, it is ridiculous that the Christmas lights get turned on earlier and earlier every year, but maybe we should stop being so cynical and just appreciate them for brightening up the streets in December.

There are so many Christmas events and experiences to be had, it would be a shame to not try and fit some in. Try treating yourself to a hot chocolate or mulled wine before ice-skating at Somerset House, or wander around London's markets searching for Christmas presents. To experience a traditional British winter, it is a must to go to see a pantomime at some point. "What's that?" I hear the international students ask: well, it's a family friendly show with some D-list celebrities in drag, lots of bad singing and dancing, some crude jokes for the adults and a great deal of audience participation - but I'm not lying when I say it will be brilliant.

Even within the LSE, there's lots going on to lift us out of the winter blues as people start to wind down towards the end of term. Whilst the Christmas season brings some stresses, it does also bring some good excuses for a party. Whether it's the free wine at a department drinks evening, Christmas parties, or just knowing all of your friends are going somewhere together since it's your last week together for a while, the end of term brings some great moments to let loose. It's a time to stock up on party

frocks and shoes and celebrate, even if you're just celebrating that you made it through the term - a worthy achievement on its own.

If braving the cold seems far too hard, it is possible to stay inside without the self-pity of lying in bed whilst watching repeats on Dave. Get everyone around and decorate the flat, cook a roast, make eggnog and watch cheesy Christmas films. Winter wouldn't be the same without curling up on the sofa to watch such masterpieces as "Love Actually" and "It's a Wonderful Life". I may be speaking for myself, but it's hard to still be in a bad mood when the credits begin to roll and the cheery music starts.

The official, general advice for what to do to get out of a Winter Slump, involves making sure you exercise, eat healthily, cut down on caffeine, sleep well and give yourself regular breaks from work. It doesn't take a genius to realise the student

experience doesn't always lend itself to this. We probably would all do better to be on this regime, but I doubt that's going to happen any time

time, maybe we should just try to do as much as we can, whilst realising things are going on outside the library and our homes.

Anyway, congratulations and celebrations are soon in order: just a few more days left.



soon. In the mean-

Flickr user: macinate

Walking in a

Winter Wonderland

Sarah Carr on one of London's favourite festive attractions

At first glance, I thought that the "Winter Wonderland" at Hyde Park was going to be a tacky neon hell, full of screaming kids, inedible food and rides that look as though they have been in action since the 70s.

I am not ashamed to admit I was wrong; it was an incredible evening filled with good food, mulled cider and rides that genuinely make you fear for your life in an 'is this about to disassemble?' sort of way. As soon as my friends and I got there, we all became five years-old again, and the Christmas spirit arrived as if from nowhere, even though it was only November. We went from stall to stall, ride to ride deciding along the way that we wanted everything. Being students this clearly wasn't an option available to us, so we selected a range of food, from goulash to turkey sandwiches, and picked the five rides we most wanted to go on.

From that moment on we were on a mission, it was already 8:30pm, and the rides close at 9:45pm, so we had just over an hour to squeeze in as much fun as possible. Challenge accepted.

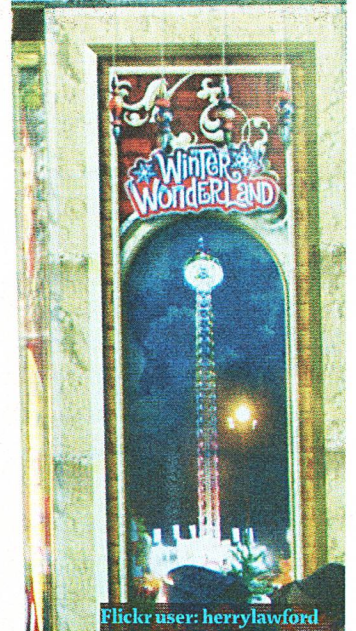
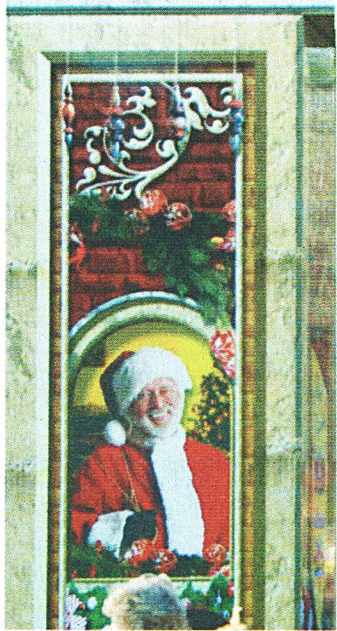
First up, the train of Christmas past. We were all really excited about this, expecting it to be an "A Christmas Carol" themed ghost train with scenes from the book and tiny Tim at the end exclaiming "God bless us, every one." In hindsight, this may have been a little optimistic; we probably should have realised that the name was just a gimmick and what we were in for was a bunch of tatty old Halloween decorations and a water sprayer at the end just to illicit a scream, a task the rest of the ride clearly failed to do. The worst part of the ride, however, was getting in and out of the carriages; the sign may say for adults and children alike, yet what it failed to mention is that if you try and fit two adults into the carriage, you may get stuck and be unable to get out again.

The next ride was a spinning rollercoaster, about which we all got quite excited as it looked amazing (well, by funfair standards). It wasn't until we were queuing, however, that we noticed that the whole ride was being held up with wooden blocks. They didn't even look that sturdy, and some of them were beginning to rot.

This added a not so fun new element to the ride; will we make it off alive? This was not helped when we were on the ride and being thrown around corners where we got pushed over the safety bar and had to hold on for dear life. That put me off completely: there was no way I was going on another ride held up by rotting wooden blocks and with inadequate safety features. I know, I'm a wimp.

The others were rather more adventurous and went on the drop tower and another rollercoaster, which they admitted afterwards, may have been a mistake so soon after eating. We had been hoping to take advantage of the ice rink there, but unfortunately they do not accept LSE student cards so we decided against it, partly because we are poor students and partly on principle.

By this point, the park was beginning to close anyway, so we got our mulled cider and headed home. Despite first impressions, it was an amazing night and can put even the biggest humbug into the Christmas spirit.



Flickr user: herrylawford

A Stint in Melbourne, mate

Stephanie Strickland's semester travelling abroad (with intermittent study)

Before I left for Australia, a friend wrote me what I presumed was a good luck card. Across its middle, she'd written: "Survival secret - It gets worse before better; try not to panic." The knot of nerves sitting heavily in my stomach tightened a little bit more.

The morning of January 21st 2010 was a cold one; the country was still digging its way out of the "big freeze" and on the way to Heathrow, it started to snow. Upon touching down in Melbourne 23 hours later, it was 30 degrees... at 10pm. Thinking of my friends in Manchester, in scarves, gloves and hats, more than likely huddled over desks in the library cramming for imminent exams, was both cruelly satisfying and totally heart wrenching. My life had quite literally been flipped upside down, and I was buzzing with a mixture of blind fear and fizzy excitement.

The first few nights were always going to be the hardest. You are 10,500 miles away from everyone and everything you know and love, in a foreign city with no working phone, no Internet connection and, to top it off, absolutely no sense of what time of the day it is. One thought: "What on earth have I done?"

Needless to say, the only way from there was up. I had given myself a month to travel before the start of term in order to scratch a pair of exceptionally itchy feet. With a country the size of a continent to explore, and the most recent student loan installment sitting happily in the bank, the world, or at least one coast of Australia, was at my fingertips.

I started in Cairns - the tropics, which hosted humidity so heavy it would make you walk with a stoop. For ten days, I learnt to dive whilst living on a boat on the Great Barrier Reef. By the time I left for Brisbane, I had dived with green turtles, swam amongst far too many jellyfish and jumped into the fray of a concerning number of reef sharks - the latter in the dark. The journey only became more obscure. In Brisbane, I got deliberately lost, hugged a koala, fed a kangaroo and went on an adventure with a couple of Americans that ended in a fist fight and a police station. It didn't end there. Stradbroke Island was next, and inspired the rare occasion where a place matches your imagination right down to the last sun-bleached shell. Miles of empty white beaches, crashing rollers, wind beaten bush and the occasional tousled, blonde surfer sprinting into the breakers made me feel giddy with the realities of the Australian cliché.

My return to Melbourne was celebrated by the mother of all rainstorms; the city flooded. The weather would have dampened my spirits had I not been aware that I still had 5 months left and the 'study' part of studying abroad was about to start. Reality was conveniently replaced with a fresh wave of novelty. All I could do at the moment was to embrace the rain; at least we "Poms" (English people) know how to do that.

A lot of new people, a lot of free barbecues and a lot of bar crawls can loosely define the Melbourne version of "Freshers' Week," and, with regards to making friends, it had the desired effect. I soon found a whole new set of things and people to know and love

in addition to those I was missing at home. When discussion did turn to the aspects of home that made your eyes prickle, more often than not, it was family and friends that stirred the most heartache, not the place itself. With this in mind, after a few months, Melbourne started to feel as much like home as Manchester had.

The University of Melbourne is the academic home for over 35,000 students, around 11,000 of whom are international, be it on exchanges or completing their entire courses. Ranked as the number 1 university in Australia, it holds a fair amount of glittering appeal for national and international students alike. After the first few weeks, the University's sterling reputation came to light.

Complimentary to this came the realisation that the entire semester may not be solely spent barbecuing kangaroo steak, sunbathing by the pool or drinking the infamously cheap, low quality cask wine, known more fondly as "goon". More's the pity. Compulsory tutorials made reading a necessity, and in return produced an engagement with the modules that encourages further self motivation: an academically desirable catch-22. The workload was not necessarily larger, but more concentrated; the exams were not necessarily harder, but the distractions whilst revising were greater; the atmosphere was not necessarily more studious, but the general attitude to work was one of genuine interest. The lifestyle was unarguably laid back,

but everyone would manage to stay at the top of their game. We would spread ourselves out on the South Lawn, exchange notes, drink excellent coffee and, as the semester progressed, complain that the temperature was now only in the mid-twenties. And, somehow, I've returned with a better work ethic than the one I left with.

The morning of June 30th 2010 was a sad one. My friends came to my room for final goodbyes and to help me with my things before my lift to the airport arrived. I had ten weeks of travelling through New Zealand and Asia ahead of me, with the disillusionment that after it all, I would be returning to my little apartment overlooking Flemington Road tram stop, Melbourne. I think it is called denial.



Photo: Stephanie Strickland

48 Hours of Madness in Dubai

Kirsty Kenney on her two day adventure in the land of excess

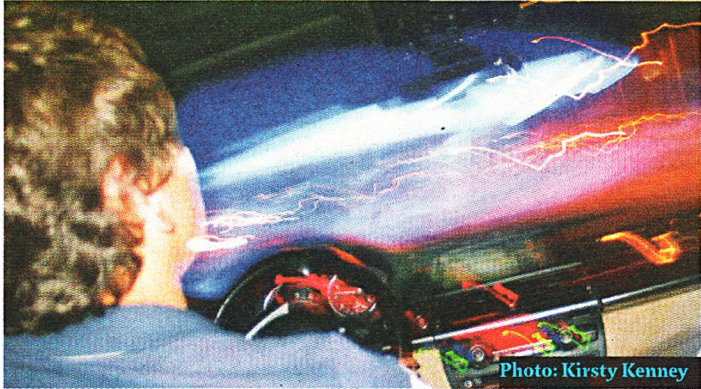


Photo: Kirsty Kenney

When we finished 6th Form, some of my friends packed up and moved to Dubai. You might be thinking, why Dubai of all places? But it's certainly got its appeal. Sun, sea and tax free, but, more than anything, I think they thought it sounded glamorous and exotic. One guy came back home after a year, ready to try his hand at something else. Another now has a successful radio show: he recently interviewed Kim Kardashian. Then there is Carmen, who's better at networking than any LSE student I know; she's climbing her way up the job ladder and has well and truly cemented her position on the social scene.

I decided it was about time to pay Carmen a little visit, so I booked a 48-hour stopover at the end of my year out. Landing around breakfast time,

I made my way in a taxi to Carmen's apartment. I'm not sure if it's true what they say about petrol being cheaper than water, but it certainly seemed like a good deal to me. By 10am, we were in the Hilton sipping cocktails, and by 11:30am, we were on our second jug of "Pimms". It felt strange that we had to go to a hotel to get a drink: I may have been on holiday, but Carmen wasn't. Dubai may appear very westernised with all of its skyscrapers, malls and even the convenience of a McDonald's delivery service, but it's still a Muslim state. So, if you want a drink, you need a license, otherwise hotel bars are your only option. This makes alcohol very expensive. Not that I can complain: Carmen has made friends with all the right people and I barely spent a penny the whole time that I was there.

While sunning ourselves by the pool, Carmen ordered food from the

supermarket over the phone. Mental, right? 10 minutes later, and an Indian chap arrived with our crisps, but they weren't right so Carmen sent them back. I felt bad for the poor guy, 40°C and we were making him run around to find Ready Salted, because Cheese & Onion make your breath smell. Everyone that we met by the pool is in Dubai doing similar things; expat yuppies working for a few years, living the 'good life,' yet still managing to stash the cash to take back home.

Carmen's Lebanese friends made a lovely Kafta dinner on the BBQ. We had to fill in a 2 page form to ask for permission to host this little gathering. This seemed like bureaucratic madness to me as we were sat on the guy's terrace. Of course this didn't dampen the mood; dinner ran well into the night, by which point Carmen and I were sufficiently merry.

The following day we hit the 'mall,' where you can literally find anything and everything that you could ever want, all under one roof. I'm not really a fan of big shopping centres, but this was pretty impressive. Warming up with French onion soup overlooking the indoor ski centre, I could almost have been in the Alps. The soup was bloody good and there were even trees 'growing' out from the artificial snow yet, outside, it's a desert.

Back at the apartment, and Carmen got a Facebook message from her 14 year-old brother to say that he has had a message from someone demanding 10,000 dirham (£2000 equivalent) that Carmen owes for

something or another. The person claims to have contacted the police and deportation services. It all sounded like a bit of a scam to me, but Carmen was panicking; she knew what this was about.

Carmen and her friend had borrowed a Ferrari from another 'friend' a couple of weekends before, but had "forgotten" to return it on time. At the time, he had been fine with it, but they were now being asked to cough up. The idea of two 20 year old girls driving around Dubai in a Ferrari may sound ridiculous, but in Dubai pretty much everyone has a Ferrari. Well, that's a bit of an exaggeration, but in Dubai, everyone is all about the big boys' toys.

Later on, we went out to meet some of Carmen's friends for drinks, but Carmen wasn't drinking, the whole Ferrari fiasco was really worrying her, so we ended up walking home early. A big 4x4 drove past a couple of times, and I noticed that the guy behind the driver's seat couldn't be much older than me. It turned out that Carmen knows him, which did not surprise me, and I would later learn that he is the son of the president of Tajikistan. This is what he led me to believe anyway. He has since continued to try and contact me over Facebook; I don't know whether to be flattered and take this as a compliment, or be a little bit concerned.

And so as it was my last few hours in Dubai were spent again in the bar of the Hilton, with important people's children, shisha and Mai Tai's til sunrise, before making my way back to

the airport.

In retrospect, I don't think that I liked Dubai very much at all. Sure, it was great to catch up with Carmen, a total nut job in the best kind of way and always great company. But everything seemed a bit fake to me. Dubai is new money in your face, it's materialism on steroids, it's flashy and, frankly, it's tacky.

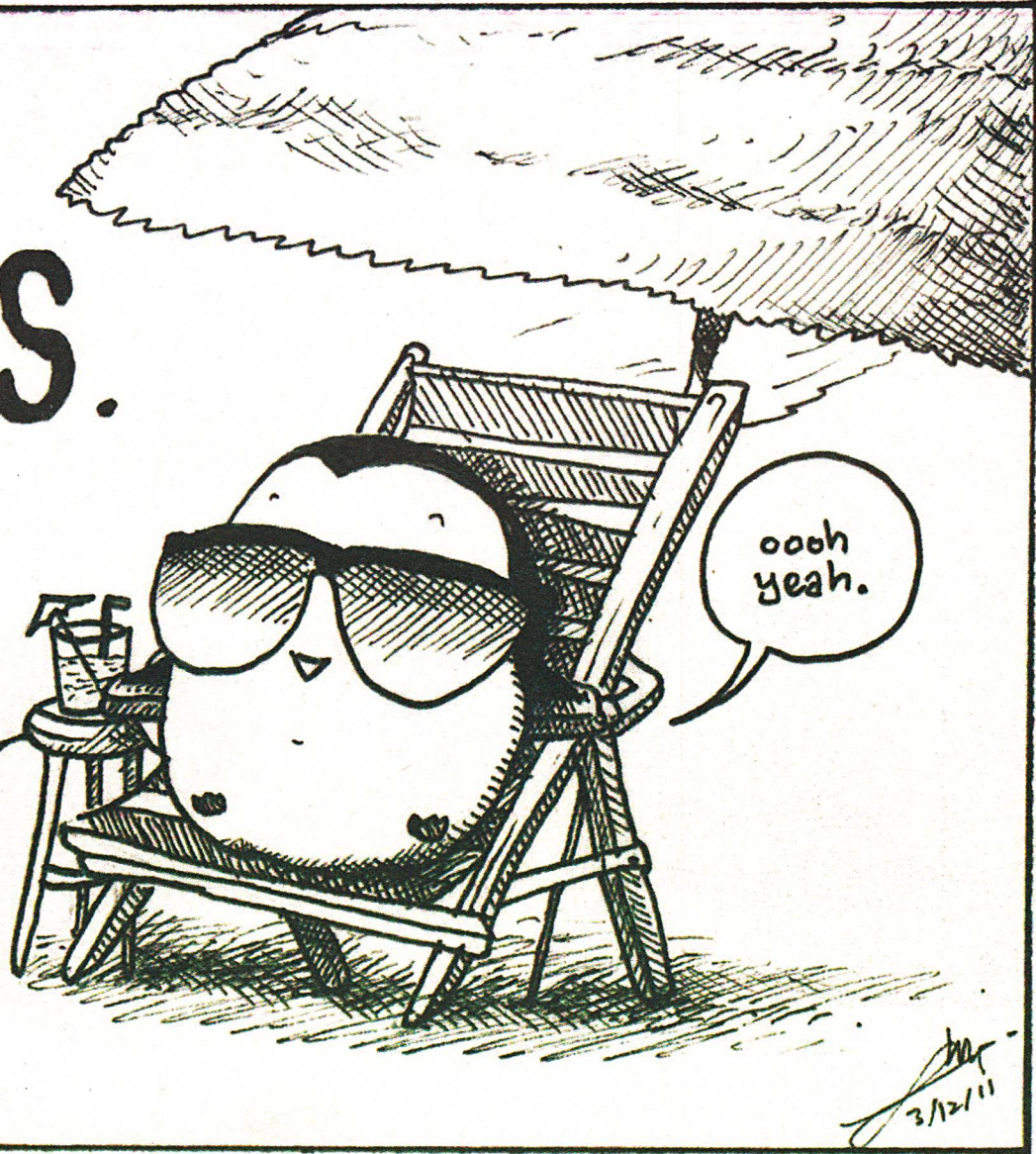
You've got the local people, who are enjoying all that they have achieved in the last 50 years, and rightly so. Remember that we're talking about a place that, before oil, was very little more than a desert. Then you have the expats, who, like Carmen, are making the most of all that Dubai has to offer. But the glamorous lifestyle that these people lead is only made possible with the work of another group. Mostly comprised of Indian immigrants, who are brought into Dubai city centre by the busload at 7:30am every morning, to work in construction and menial service industry jobs. Then the buses take them "home" at 7:30pm every night, to some out of town accommodation. They are the people bringing us crisps at the poolside and double cheeseburgers at 4am. All this made Dubai feel somewhat segregated to me.

Even if the possibility of a great standard of living, endless sun, sea, sand and even snow, cheap petrol and no crime were enough to tempt me, I'm not sure I could stand Dubai for very long. For me, it's got very little in the way of charm or charisma, and, besides, the air-con gave me a headache.

© lee zhi wei 03-Dec-2011

Simple pleasures #37.

HOLIDAYS.



3/12/11

Start as you mean to go on

Andrew Sivanesan on the progress of "Coffee and Smokes"

The last couple of months have been immensely memorable for us as at "Coffee and Smokes". That's mainly because of the shed-loads of fun we've had week in and week out. I for one have had the chance to dress up as Lil Wayne, give a girl directions to the squash courts while wearing a toga, appear in a "fight" scene, rap on live radio and disturb an interview with Christopher Pissarides.

The most memorable part of this term was filming the "Fornicate One's Life" sketch for "Campus MovieFest." Firstly, I had to negotiate some filming time in a pub owned by a very sceptical (and slightly scary) landlord (by the time we'd completed the filming, though, I think he'd taken a liking us). In terms of props, I ended up having twenty-four hours to procure a kitchen apron, fake blood and a lemon meringue pie: fairly standard items for any student shopping list, I think you'll agree. I ended up travelling halfway around central London to find a store which sold aprons, only to find them being sold up the road at my local Sainsbury's! While there, I also managed to bag the very last lemon meringue pie in stock. Out of that props list, somehow the fake blood required the least effort to secure.

Unfortunately, when it came to filming the scene in which the main character, Geoffrey, (played by Amar Shanghavi) has the pie thrown in his face, we had to film it twice. The reason? The first time the pie was thrown in his face, none of us had realised that our cameraman, Tom Diley, hadn't pressed the "record" button. The only solution was to scoop up the pie "residue" off the street, put it back in the aluminium tray and throw it at

Geoffrey's face again.

As part of the filming for one of the scenes in our "Debt Crisis" sketch, I wore a toga for my role as a Greek central banker. Halfway through filming, a girl walked in and asked myself and Amar where the squash courts were. I gave her the directions and, while I was doing so, for some reason, she actually took me seriously. To this day, I cannot fathom how that girl could deem it totally reasonable seeing a guy being filmed wearing a toga in the middle of the East Building on a Sunday afternoon.

Another great memory was when Amar and I were interviewed live on "Pulse Radio". I ended up performing the rap I wrote, called "University," for a music video parody of Lil Wayne's "A Milli." Rachel and Anne (our interviewers) couldn't provide me with a backing track so Amar had to do some impromptu beatboxing. Unfortunately for me, his beat was at twice the speed of the original song so I almost ran out of breath by the time I got to the end of the first verse!

So what's in store for Coffee and Smokes next term? We'll of course continue to film new sketches every week. Not only that, but we're currently in talks with LSE Arts regarding a Coffee and Smokes twenty-minute stage show at the LSE Chill in January. We're also hoping to have a website up and running, which will allow us to provide a wider range of comedy content to you (e.g. satirical blogs, funny pictures). Lots to look forward to then at "The Smokes."

In laughter we trust.

As always, if you want to be part of the mayhem, send an e-mail to A.P.Sivanesan@lse.ac.uk.



Photo: Andrew Sivanesan

A Grey Dawn in Northern India

Holly Brentnall revisits Dharamsala, the place of refuge for many Tibetans

Before sunset in McLeod Ganj, in Upper Dharamsala, the only sign of life is one solitary European traveller curled over their rucksack, and two stray dogs nosing the bins of a shut-up café nearby. Slowly, yellow light seeps through the morning air of the little street. The moisture is suddenly sent swirling in eddies as a pair of impressively brawny Hindustanis pound past on their routine run. Then, just as the mist resettles, a solitary monk wanders into view. With a serene smile on his face and a wooden prayer wheel twirling perpetually in his hand, he makes his leisurely way down towards the "Dip Tse Chok Ling Monastery" in the lower part of the town.

Upper Dharamsala, perched precariously on a steep hillside, consists of a cluster of chalk coloured buildings, draped in a pale cobweb of prayer flags and surrounded by rustling fir trees. Always known for both its Buddhist and Hindu presence, the town has become a settlement for Tibetan refugees who live sociably alongside the native population. However, below the surface of harmony and ease, day to day life in Dharamsala is ingrained with a sense of sadness and loss. It is owing to the severance that these Tibetans have been forced to undergo in the advent of Chinese occupation.

In the name of "liberation", Mao's cultural revolution is answerable to 1.2 million deaths and the destruction of several thousand monasteries and

numerous. The actions of the Chinese military aren't labelled as "atrocities" without reason. Peaceful protesters underwent brutal torture, nuns and monks were ordered to fornicate in the street and young children were forced to shoot their own parents. Contemporary Tibetans are denied education, remain unemployed and generally treated as second class citizens. The monk who set himself on fire last week was the first to do so in that region, but the twelfth self-immolation in the country. He was acting in response to discussions about closing down yet another monastery in that region.

The name Dharamsala means "rest house", which aptly captures its calming Buddhist ambience, but is also evocative of the shelter it has provided for a succession of passersby. Firstly, its indigenous people, the "Gaddis", were a nomadic and predominantly Hindu tribe whose seasonal pastures and farmland were taken by the British and Gurkha regiments. In turn, they were forced to decamp in 1905 when an earthquake hit the Kangra region and caused the loss of 20,000 lives. The current population is a muddle of travellers, Hindustanis, Nepali expatriates and Tibetan Refugees.

At the end of the steep decline of Jogibara Road is a pale pink building with a doorway overhung with brightly coloured silk fringing and a notice saying "Sangye's kitchen". Inside, in its snug low-roofed kitchen, the owner, Sangye, runs Tibetan cooking lessons for tourists. Carefully, he

stirs flour and water with one finger whilst maintaining cheerful banter with his charmed audience. Then, with authority, he slaps the dough down upon the wooden surface and begins to knead it firmly. When the dough has been boiled, it produces a light and fluffy white bread called "tingmo" which goes well with jam. Sangye also prepares "bhalek", a low-fried bread stuffed with onion, as well as thick Tibetan noodles and "momos", boiled parcels of seasoned vegetables to be dipped in a chilly sauce.

While he works, he

reminds about his earlier life as a herdsman in Tibet; how he had loved to ride his horse, galloping freely along the wavering ridges of a tumultuous mountain-escape. For this way of life, people needed much more energy. Cooking was done by both men and women, a quick process in to produce enough nourishment for

an entire family who sat together for up to six meals a day. It was from this life that he was forced to flee. But Tibet isn't just on Sangye's mind as he instructs his cooking pupils. Between lessons, he holds discussion groups to keep up to date on Tibetan affairs and

betan culture, wooden masks and silver jewellery hauled across the snowy Himalayas on the perilous journey across the Tibetan border to India. It is a bustle

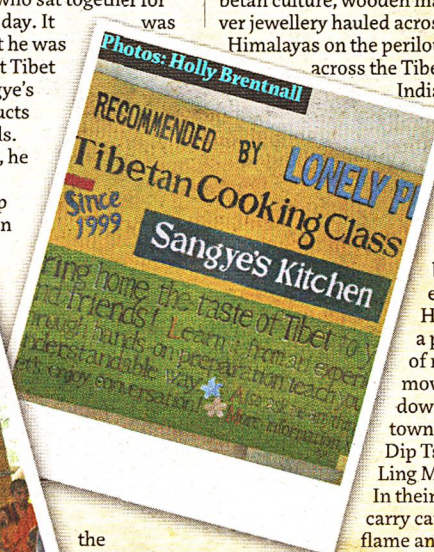
of sweaty tourists. But, as the evening encroaches, all is replaced by a solemn silence. Heads bowed, a procession of robed figures moves slowly down from the town centre to Dip Tse-Chok Ling Monastery. In their hands they carry candles, each flame an orange beam of prayer for the being of their kinsfolk, separated from them by the tremendous expanse of the mountains. At the monastery, the crowd starts a low reverberating humming, layered with the chanting of several leading monks and the drawn out drone of Tibetan horns. It is a call in mourning of the lives lost to the Chinese, but also a call for support in the effort to preserve a culture, integral to the lives of its benign and peaceful people who are always looking forward to the future and a final return home.



order

freed.

By day, Jogiwara Road is lined by stalls selling the dusty remnants of Ti-



the progression of the Tibetan Government in exile, who are busily laying out every detail of the constitution for when Tibet is finally

art

6 December 2011



The Comedy of Errors | **Meat Liquor** | **Puss in Boots** | **Shelley** |
Meet Me in St. Louis | **La Soirée** | **LSEx ...** and **Video Games**

Contact

PartB Editors

Aameer Patel
Emma Beaumont
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

* * *

Fashion Editor

Emma Beaumont
partb-fashion@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Film Editor

Venessa Chan
partb-film@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Food Editor

Max Jenkins
partb-food@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Literature Editor

Rachel Holmes
partb-literature@thebeaveronline.co.uk

LSEx Editor

Callie Nordenfelt
partb-lsex@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Music Editor

Ankur Vora
partb-music@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Theatre Editors

Rory Creedon
Hannah Payne
partb-theatre@thebeaveronline.co.uk

TV Editor

Rasha Al-Dabagh
partb-tv@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Video Games Editor

Hassan Dar
partb-videogames@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Visual Arts Editor

Roberta Cucchiaro
partb-visualarts@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Web Editor

Angie Moneke
partb-web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

* * *

Cover

Spitting Image, 2007,
by Rimmel Mohyidin of the
LSESU Visual Arts Society

PartB uses pictures from
Flickr which have been issued under
a Creative Commons license.



Meet Me in St. Louis

Director: Vincente Minnelli
Screenplay: Irving Brecher, Fred F. Finklehoffe, Sally Benson
Cast: Judy Garland, Margaret O'Brien, Mary Astor, Lucille Bremer
Year: 1944
Runtime: 113 minutes
At BFI Southbank and selected cinemas from 16 December 2011

In this tale of family, love and society, it is the Smith family's passion for their darling Midwestern hometown of St. Louis that makes the film's continuing success so curious. I am rather hesitant to declare that my love of this movie comes from a deep pride in my hometown... *Meet Me in North London*, can you imagine? This colourful masterpiece brings out the childish festive excitement in us all, fabulously executed through Vincente Minnelli's cinematic artistry.

The idyllic life of the Smiths in St. Louis is shaken when Mr Smith announces that he is moving the family to New York City for work reasons. In a pre-Kardashianite era, the four Smith daughters are horrified at the thought of moving away from their beloved city. For Esther (Judy Garland) and Rose (Lucille Bremer) this is an especially untimely decision, as they are both beginning to lock down their



Judy Garland in Technicolor

prospective husbands. An examination of family values under sumptuous lighting ensues.

Meet Me in St. Louis was adapted from a collection of stories by Sally Benson about her Edwardian suburban childhood. Made during the Second World War, this is an example of wartime nostalgia for times past, offering hearty escapism in its vim and vigour.

Minnelli's mastery of film is wonderfully displayed as we follow the family through the four seasons. The picture glides beautifully from the

amber hues of summer sun through the gamut of autumnal leaves to the ruby tones of Christmas, before finally ending in the delightful candy pastels of spring. Minnelli deftly uses Technicolor to achieve an astoundingly glorious effect.

Judy Garland, 21 at the time of production, was reluctant to take the role of the teenage Esther, fearing she would become typecast. Without her talents the film's path to success would not have been as straight. For the first time in her career, make up

was used for "enhancement." Garland considered it the first time she ever felt beautiful on screen, though this might have had something to do with a certain Mr. Minnelli making passes at her in the canteen.

The fusion of romantic cinematography and a soundtrack written especially for Garland empowers the film's musical performance to hold such transcendental power. The expressive lyrics may be familiar: we will all be together "if the fates allow," but "until then we'll have to muddle through somehow," so "have yourself a merry little Christmas now" and "our troubles will be out of sight." The song is bittersweet and poetic, yet with a shade of pragmatism, and Garland's heartfelt rendition is unparalleled.

Meet Me in St. Louis is a film about love between sisters and their journeys together, a glowing message for our own often dark times. I urge even those who dislike the musical genre to watch this classic MGM delight. Go and be pulled into Minnelli's Technicolor world of fantasy and childhood dreams – there is no Christmas treat quite like it.

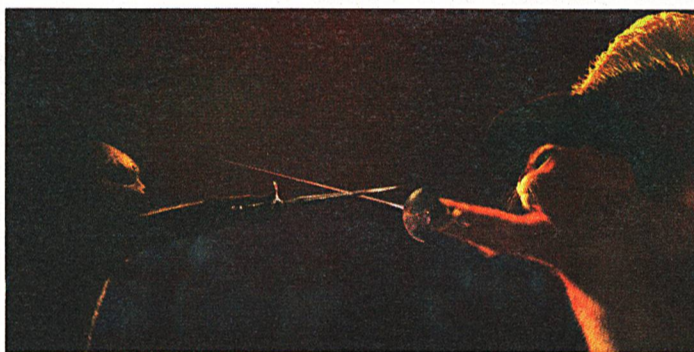
Desiree Benson

Puss in Boots

Director: Chris Miller
Screenplay: Charles Perrault, Will Davies & Brian Lynch, et al.
Cast: Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Zach Galifianakis
Year: 2011
Runtime: 90 minutes
In cinemas 9 December 2011

I must admit, I love children's films. Already a hit in the States, directed by Chris Miller of *Shrek* and *Madagascar* fame and produced by Guillermo del Toro, *Puss in Boots* seemed a good way to spend an hour or two. I hoped for a tongue-in-cheek animated extravaganza and it did not disappoint.

We are taken back to a time before "the furry lover" met *Shrek*, painting a backstory of loss, deceit and more "leche," while answering the question on everyone's mind: just how did this puss get those boots? It is a tale of romance, friendship and



revenge, as Puss (Antonio Banderas) and companions, Humpty Dumpty (Zach Galifianakis) and Kitty Softpaws (Salma Hayek), embark on an entertaining adventure to plant some magic beans and find the golden goose.

Dueling cats, not exactly magic realism

Surprisingly, the hodgepodge fairy-tale actually works. The absurd nature of the plot is largely irrelevant with the humour, action and adventure that this tale has to offer. As ever with these films, there is a happy

ending, not to mention a multitude of dance numbers throughout, which left me content that they had stuck to their end of the bargain in satisfying my lust for all things clichéd, while still delivering a children's film with real adult appeal. The film is being released both in 3D and 2D formats. As a seasoned 3D cynic, I have to admit that this time it is actually quite good.

To say that *Puss in Boots* is a masterpiece would be missing the point. This is a film that does not take itself too seriously, and we should not take it too seriously either. You might not be blown away with the content, but with as many jokes for adults as for children and some fabulous charm from Banderas and Hayek, this film breathes new life into the *Shrek* franchise. You could do a lot worse than spend an afternoon watching the escapades of this cuddly critter.

Victoria Bew

Festive films

It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

James Stewart and Donna Reed. Directed by Frank Capra. A classic, enough said.

Arthur Christmas (2011)

From the studio that made *Wallace & Gromit* and *Chicken Run* comes more hilarity based on an absurd premise. Unfortunately not in claymation, but that does not detract from its fun.

Joyeux Noël (2005)

A heart-warming dramatisation of the Christmas truce during the Great War seen through the eyes of German, French and Scottish soldiers.

Die Hard (1988)

Holiday classics do not have to be melodramatic and sickly sweet. Celebrate the festivities as John McClane shows you how exciting an office Christmas party could be.

Rare Exports (2010)

Based on the folklore that Santa Claus lives in Korvatunturi, Lapland, this Finnish movie offers up plenty of comedy and horror to make an unconventional, but thoroughly entertaining Christmas flick.

Brazil (1985)

For those of you who are nauseated by the perennially cutesy saccharine adverts from high street vendors, Terry Gilliam's got your back with this 1984-esque spend-crazy dystopia, using the Christmas holidays as an appropriate backdrop.

The Hudsucker Proxy (1994)

This Coen brothers screwball comedy is not their finest, but it is very stylish and contains some their typically biting satire, this time directed at the business world. The film reaches its climax as the clocks strike in the new year.

Year's end: what we've loved

Tree of Life (dir. Terrence Malick)

If we believed in souls, we would say that we glimpsed that of Terrence Malick here. We've been looking forward to this for a long time – it was on last year's list – and if the director in question was someone else, we would say that it exceeded our most optimistic expectations. It is an awe-inspiring, staggeringly ambitious, profoundly moving and spectacularly beautiful film, and it won the Palme d'Or at Cannes earlier this year.

Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy (dir. Tomas Alfredson)

A superb adaptation of John le Carré's much-loved spy novel. Gary Oldman matches the legendary Alec Guinness in his turn as Smiley and heads an all-star cast including Colin Firth, Tom Hardy, John Hurt and Benedict Cumberbatch.

A Separation (dir. Asghar Farhadi)

On the surface, this is a Golden Bear winning story about a couple who must decide whether to leave Iran for the good of their child or to stay and care for an ailing parent. Beneath, it is

a masterful exploration of parents and children, husbands and wives, justice, responsibility and society in general.

Drive (dir. Nicolas Winding Refn)

We haven't seen as stylish a movie for a long time. The neo-noir drama sees Ryan Gosling play a Hollywood stunt performer who moonlights as a getaway driver and also stars Carey Mulligan.

Shame (dir. Steve McQueen)

Another film we had on last year's list that has delivered. Michael Fassbender produces another tremendously dedicated performance in his second collaboration with McQueen. He plays a sex addict who manages to retain the veneer of a respectable life, at least until his needy and troubled sister arrives. It is raw, cold, explicit and excellent in every way.

Project Nim (dir. James Marsh)

About the chimpanzee who was the subject of a landmark 1970s experiment in language and cognition, this documentary is fascinating as much for its exploration of the human psyche as it is for exploring the communicative capacities of chimpanzees.

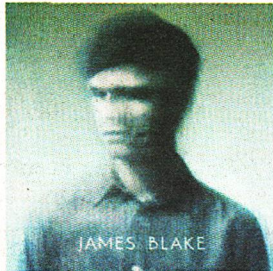
Merry Christmas from PartB! Thank you for reading and writing.

The Top 10 Albums of 2011



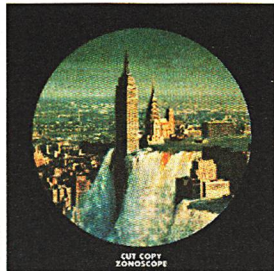
1. Bon Iver - *Bon Iver*

Bon Iver's second album is at once majestic and gentle. It remains rooted in the emotional sincerity that made their debut so appealing, and yet expands the sonic palette with which they express a beautiful fantasy world. Where the first album told the story of a solitary man lost in the woods and the world, this follow-up invites us to get lost in a place of true beauty.



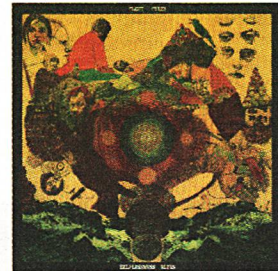
2. James Blake - *James Blake*

Blake's debut shows that he's mastered the art of using negative space: it is employed to such magnificent effect here that it should be called an instrument. Blake realises that minimal does not mean lacking, and his delicate, restrained touch has let him create one of the year's most enthralling listens.



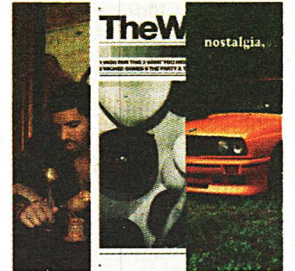
3. Zonoscope - *Cut Copy*

Like James Blake, *Cut Copy* don't have a song on our top tracks list below. In the case of Zonoscope, that's because it needs to be heard in one listen, as a single piece with separate movements, the transitions as important as the songs themselves. It's an album for an age when far too many artists have forgotten what that word actually means.



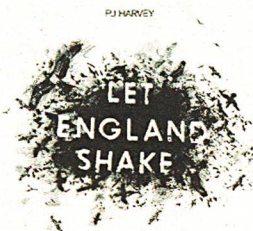
4. Helplessness Blues - *Fleet Foxes*

"What makes me love you despite the reservations?" I like the inviting melodies. I like the earthy vocal harmonies. I like the beards. I like the flannel shirts. I like the jumpers. And I love the black bassist who used to play post-hardcore. The lyrics aren't perfect, but nothing ever is. Apart from their bassist.



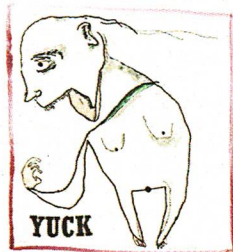
5. Take Care/House of Balloons/Nostalgia, Ultra - *Drake/The Weeknd/Frank Ocean*

Many albums deserve to be on this list, and these three share enough thematic similarities that we have an excuse to fit them in under one entry. They all use hip-hop as a vehicle for self-reflection, baring their often contradictory and insecure personalities.



6. Let England Shake - *PJ Harvey*

It's a concept album about the devastation wreaked by WWI, a concept that few would have the audacity to attempt, and one which fewer still could successfully execute. And yet amid the carnage and destruction, Harvey creates beauty that is both inspired and inspiring.



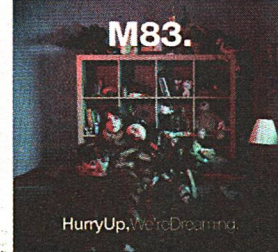
7. Yuck - *Yuck*

Much has been made of Yuck's influences, and the fact that they channel one corner of music history (alt. 90s rock) so enthusiastically might lead to for some to accuse them of being unoriginal. Yet this is actually their strength, because at heart what they channel is good songwriting - giving us an album just as good as almost any of those which they take as influences.



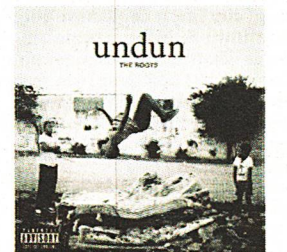
8. Sepalcure - *Sepalcure*

It's electronic "bass" music that is so finely polished that it runs the danger of sounding almost orthodox and pedestrian when described to others. But it's anything but: it manages to combine current trends in funky, footwork, dubstep and house in order to create something wholly original - subtle and delicate, yet simultaneously lively and engaging.



9. Hurry Up, We're Dreaming - *M83*

M83 reviews often use the word big, and any applicable synonyms; massive, colossal, epic etc. Yet despite being the longest album to date, this is also the most accessible, distilling his strengths into a digestible essence. The album dreams big, but its greatest strength is that it encourages you to do the same.



10. Undun - *The Roots*

Despite more than two decades in the game, this concept album is still fresh and still manages to bring new thoughts to the table. Though the songs can be quite a downer, it is hard to not fall for the legendary lyricism of The Roots as they tell timely, relevant and gut wrenching stories about dreams dying in America.

The Top 10 Tracks of 2011



1. Midnight City - *M83*

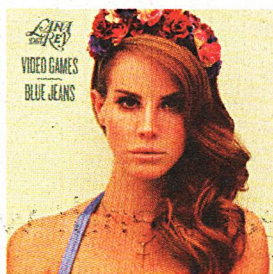
From the opening otherworldly vocal yelps, right through to the jaw-dropping sax solo finale, "Midnight City" transports you to a place of monolithic proportions, and empowers you to think big. But what's it about? Who gives a fuck - when something sounds this good, just enjoy the ride. And it's one hell of a journey.

4. Common Burn - *Mazzy Star*

As previously mentioned, great songs succeed by taking you on a journey. "Common Burn" is the opposite, an exception whose beauty lies with its ability to find a perfect place of stillness and then absorb you in that tranquillity.

5. Marvin's Room - *Drake*

Many of us have been there before, the drunken call to an ex, flirting between pleading and angry, egotistical and guilty. It's an expose of the mix of desperation, self-pity, arrogance, insecurity and loss that characterise the aftermath of a failed relationship.



2. Video Games - *Lana Del Rey*

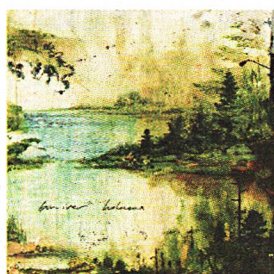
Much of the debate surrounding LDR has centred on her artistic authenticity (and those lips). But this is a classic precisely because it stands on its own merits, divorced from its author. It is the essential ballad: timeless, nuanced and devastatingly emotive.

6. Coast to Coast - *Twerps*

It mixes wide-eyed wonder with a sense of joyous accomplishment, capturing the essence of youthful romanticism, and the sentiment that meaning is itself substanceless. All that matters is now, and how good it feels to remember that.

7. It's Real - *Real Estate*

It flows by breezily, as if it were made with the most minimal of exertion, and despite its high tempo, it feels both languid and mellow in the best of senses; pretty and carefree. It is instantly familiar, providing a warmth that is as comforting and yet fleeting as the summer that inspires it.



3. Holocene - *Bon Iver*

Good songs evolve and bloom as you passively listen on in bewilderment. But the best songs are those which take you on that transformative journey, those into which you can melt, as the song dissolves, dissipates and forms anew. "I was not magnificent" sings Vernon again and again. Oh but you were...

8. Novacane - *Frank Ocean*

It's a love song, but one in which the only way to understand and connect with the object of your affections is to become as numb as them.

9. Dirt - *WU LYF*

As flawed as it is arresting, as naïve as it is galvanising, it perfectly captures youthful disillusionment and unrest.

10. Super Bass - *Nicki Minaj*

Minaj achieves the perfect mix of pop and rap, and lives up to the potential shown on appearances like "Monster."

The Alternative Christmas Song Stocking

Xmas Time Is Here Again
My Morning Jacket: *Does Xmas Fiasco Style* (2000)

Sister Winter / Star of Wonder
Sufjan Stevens: *Songs for Christmas Vol. 5* (2006)

Little Drummer Boy
Mark Kozelek: *Little Drummer Boy Live* (2006)

Just Like Christmas
Low: *Christmas* (1999)

That Was The Worst Christmas Ever!
Sufjan Stevens: *Songs for Christmas Vol. 3* (2003)

Little Drummer Boy
Lindstrøm: *Little Drummer Boy* (2009)

I Wish It Was Christmas Today
Julian Casablancas: *I Wish It Was...* (2009)

Holiday Road
The Walkmen: *Holiday Road* (2010)

The Comedy of Errors, Olivier: National Theatre

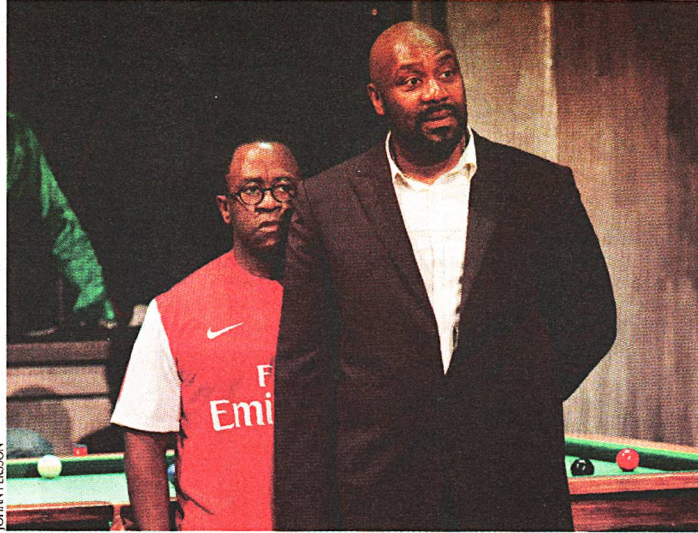
Director: Dominic Cooke
Playwright: William Shakespeare
Key cast: Lenny Henry, Grace Thurgood, Claudie Blakley, Michelle Terry, Ian Burfield, Joseph Mydell
At Olivier: National Theatre until 1 April 2012

Laughing out loud is not something that generally occurs at a performance of a Shakespeare comedy. Well, it may happen, but generally this is because the intellectual funny bone has been stroked, which leads to the emission of a sort of stifled guffaw. Not in this production of *The Comedy of Errors*. Director Dominic Cooke has unlocked every ounce of humour Shakespeare's early comedy contains, and the result is genuinely funny. Sometimes this determined comedy mining goes too far, and while slapstick was surely envisioned by the bard, some of the routine elicits a cringe.

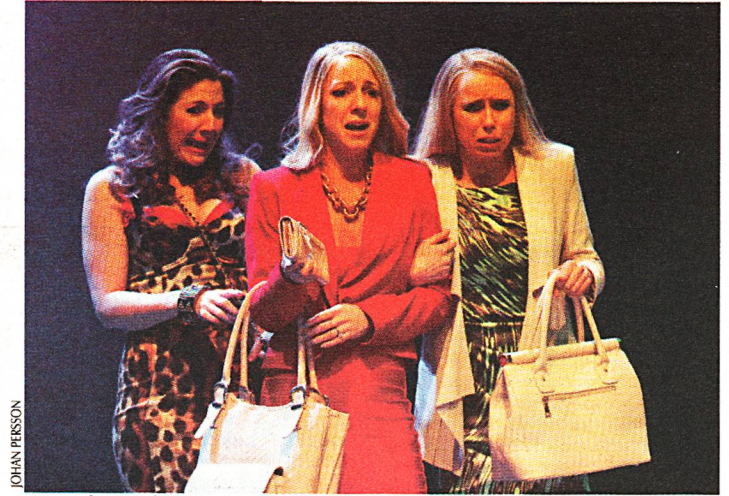
The production is very busy, and while this works to invoke the madness of city life, it could have been toned down at certain key points, such as when Egeon describes how his baby twins and their twin servants were separated at birth in an accident at sea. Rather than the action of this event actually being played out on Bunny Christie's extensive staging, the power of the text should have been allowed to speak.

The real drama begins when these two sets of twins are let loose in the same city. Cue endless errors, seductions and confusion based on multiple levels of mistaken identity. The biggest star of the show is undoubtedly Lenny Henry, and while his is not the best performance of the night, who better to tease out the comedy than

a comedian? Claudie Blakley and Michelle Terry are brilliantly cast as the wife and sister-in-law of one of the twins. Hair extensions, shiny handbags and estuary accents make them probably the most endearing and hilarious characters. These novel characterisations also add a whole new level of comedy to the produc-



Lucian Msamati (Dromio) and Lenny Henry (Antipholus)



Grace Thurgood (Coursen), Claudie Blakley (Adriana) and Michelle Terry (Luciana)

tion; there is something deeply funny about hearing Shakespeare being screeched in Essex metre.

The maddening urban sprawl is created to be more or less complete and replete with users, whores, drag queens, effete jewellers, slimy loan sharks, neon lights and disreputable establishments. In this dreamlike setting the principal characters have lost the only thing that could keep one

sane in such a setting: their identities. This hilarious farce needs to be balanced with an undercurrent of genuine concern on behalf of the protagonists. This balance is well struck by Cooke and in the final scene, where all is revealed and reconciliations made, he takes a much calmer approach, leaving Shakespeare's text to shine out to very moving effect.

↳ Rory Creedon

La Soirée, Roundhouse

Modern day circus, contemporary variety and gender bending acrobats combine with a gargantuan opera singing drag queen, an improvisatory comedienne and even a Freddie Mercury tribute master of ceremonies. The drinks flow freely, the audience are sniffed, slapped, cajoled on stage and even encouraged to ride atop a unicycle. That's right, the La Soirée "family" have once again taken over Camden's Roundhouse for a night of death defying feats, clowning for the twenty-first century, humour and music. Circus, often associated (although considerably less so with each passing year) with fatigued animals and screaming children, has been dragged kicking and screaming

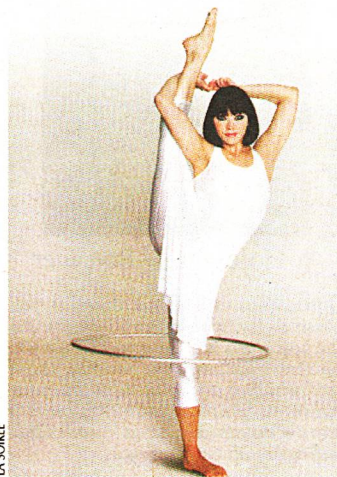


Le Gateau Chocolat

back to relevance by these world class performers. While Cirque de Soleil has obviously refined the art form and brought circus to a much wider audience, the La Soirée experience is more visceral, darkly comic and adult in the blurred line some of the performers tread between mainstream and queer culture.

I went on a rainy Thursday, deadline blues hurting badly, nursing a slight hangover and very much needing this term to be over. I left full of the joy of life. Yes, La Soirée is one of those transformative pieces of performance. By the end the crowd

are on their feet cheering along to "We Are the Champions" while a unicycling, juggling, over-sexed Italian Freddie Mercury fanatic MC crowd surfs around the arena. A word of warning though: seating is not reserved, and while like us you will be tempted to go straight to the front row, bear in mind that you will be in prime territory for some heavy audience participation. The hilarious clown, Mooky, dragged one man on stage, and by virtue of the fact that she had taped lines for him to read to various parts of her body, they performed a whole scene together. Another victim rode atop Mario's shoulders on a unicycle, and



Yulia Pykhtina



Hugo Desmarais

the vintage roller-skating act span another front row girl at high speeds around the stage. However, if you are in the front row you will see every sinew of the gravity defying, taut pole dancing English Gents. You will be genuinely afraid that the inept clown Nate Cooper will sever your nose as he juggles with knives in drag wearing 10 inch heels on a pogo stick. You will

see every pound of the massive glitter Lycra clad La Gateau Chocolat, who has a baritone to match his stature. Even if you don't make it to the front of the house, be assured that no matter where you are at in the theatre, La Soirée will not fail to entertain. A must!

↳ Rory Creedon

At Roundhouse until 29 January 2012

Bridges and Balloons, The Rag Factory

Director: Daisy-May Pattison-Corney
Playwrights: Rob Skinner, Daisy-May Pattison-Corney
Key cast: Harriet Madeley, Laurie Davidson, Jessica Austin
At The Rag Factory until 18 December 2011

Bridges and Balloons is a remarkable debut from Rob Skinner and Daisy-May Pattison-Corney, based on their experiences of student life in Manchester. Following the success of the first performances in Camden earlier this year, the Rag Factory have commissioned a second

run this month, and the script's energy still resonates with an entirely new cast.

Freedom. No Aliens. Freedom. They are the rules of the house according to Oliver, played by Laurie Davidson, detailed in a rousing and charismatic speech to which his fellow housemates all generally agree. Together the characters share a life of gleeful excess, with drugs aplenty and spirits high as they innocently deliberate – as only students know how – the pros of socialism and dream of a future perfect.

Pattison-Corney has used the

space at the Rag Factory very well; the action is split across the living room and a bedroom of a typical student house, allowing for two scenes to be played out simultaneously. The presence of characters in a separate room made real the impression of a house and was used to good effect from the beginning. The "perfect couple" Oliver and Meg treat the rest of the cast to a very audible show of their love for each other, which results in some humorous quips from the living room, as well as some furious note-taking from the male contingent of the audience.

The party cannot last forever though, and the arrival of a new housemate Wendy (Jessica Austin) is like a needle being driven slowly into the housemate's idyllic, if at times naïve, bubble. Austin delivers a performance that forcibly, yet inadvertently, challenges the mantra of the house. Wendy's good nature culminates in a well-meaning dynamism that disrupts the normal order of things, most noticeably affecting Oliver's girlfriend Meg (Harriet Madeley). Friendships are tested as money becomes a source of conflict

and Meg becomes obsessed with ousting Wendy in the hope of restoring the status quo in which she was "queen bee," her true feelings revealed in an insightful dream sequence.

Bridges and Balloons is a very frank and thrilling expose of the way in which young people leave life's unwanted realities at the door, encouraging self-evaluation for current students and (presumably) provoking fond memories for others.

↳ Laurence Vardaxoglou

The good, the bad and the ugly: fashion highs and lows of 2011

So here we are, fully in the swing of yuletide. It is undeniable now, with ethereal lights twinkling all over our fair city, even the grumblers have to admit, Christmas is coming. Now I am a huge fan of the ritual of the holiday. Year on year, the nostalgia that arises from hearing a grainy recording of the Pogues's classic "Fairy-tale of New York" puts any advent fatigue to rest. Even corporations' contrived attempts to cash in on the event with festive cans of Coca Cola and coffee cups that have been altered only in colour prove exciting. However, the ultimate highlight of Michaelmas has to be the review of the year we are bidding farewell to. Indeed 'tis the season to be judgemental, as we are treated to a whole host of top ten lists spanning all of the arts. Having an often unhealthy obsession with rankings (my best friends repeatedly tell me how they resent being ordered into my various categories) I thought I would use this occasion to cast an acerbic eye over the fashion hits and misses of 2011.

To ease us in, it is clear there was one glaring, heart-stopping, fashion moment of this year. I am of course referring to the circus that was the Royal wedding and specifically "the dress" the now Duchess of Cambridge had the honour of wearing. Meticulously cut, of course, the lace was exquisitely antique and the overall look was almost iconic. She was "like a modern day Grace Kelly," the fashion press lauded. It was undeniably beautiful; yet the exaggerated praise that has been heaped on every clothing choice that followed her big day (and let's be clear, William was practically an

extra in the show) has taken it too far. Her sickly array of pastel, knee length dresses have been hailed as sleek and refined, but they are unadventurous and look uptight. A shoulder is never glimpsed and never is a button out of place. There is nothing original about her look. Most irritatingly of all, we are supposed to be in awe of how Kate wears high street, just like a commoner. However, to quote Jarvis Cocker, she'll never "be like common people," and her attempt to relate through the medium of clothes is patronising. Moreover, the supposedly low-end garments she wears consist of £175 beige bandage dresses from Reiss – items unobtainable for the average Brit. She'll be granted more respect when she ventures out in a New Look blouse, inventively styled to resemble a chiffon Celine number. I agree that we need British fashion icons, but I implore you to look to others who define "cool Britannia." Model Daisy Lowe's sultry vintage style or blogger Bip Ling's cutesy looks are much more worthy of adoration.

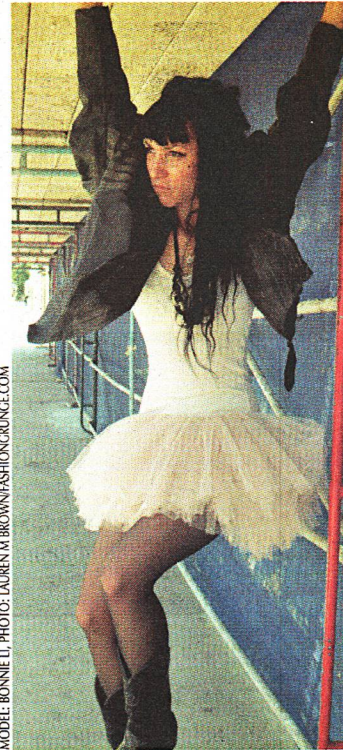
Another giddy style high of 2011 was inspired by the silver screen. After the success of *Black Swan*, dusty pink tutus and charming little ballet pumps became ubiquitous. While not always practical (negotiating leotards and layers of netting, when a little inebriated can prove a challenge) this trend was playful and let all embrace their inner dancer. It marked a return to femininity after years of androgyny reigning supreme.

Now to the best dressed of the year, as voted by... me. This one was agonising to say the least. In the running was the always flawless Rachel

Bilson. Her mix of casual surfer cool, with high-end pieces thrown in, makes her relaxed, yet still enviable. She's like the best friend you wish you had, or your cooler older sibling – relatable yet effortlessly intimidating. Another contender for the best dressed crown was Rihanna. My love for the star runs deep as I have alluded to in previous articles. In fact I could wax lyrical about how innovative her style is. However, in an effort not to appear too frenzied I will simply say this: Rihanna's clothing choices deserve a place on any fashion league table due to the fact that one is perennially interested in what she might wear. On no occasion can she be declared predictable. Staying ahead of the game at all times, it's clear that she will continue to excite her audience for years to come. Yet, ultimately there could only be one winner of the crown, and my pick for best dressed 2011 is the unfeasibly beautiful Mila Kunis. Mila's real style power is grounded in the fact that both men and women love what she wears. She has the rare ability to look incredibly sexy yet still unthreatening in form-fitting dresses with lace applique. Furthermore, her off-duty style is remarkably low-key, consisting of retro 80s T-shirts and leggings. This makes her all the more appealing as she appears not to take herself too seriously; an anomaly in the fashion world.

Where there are ups there must also be downs and 2011 saw its fair share of apocalyptic fashion moments. Firstly, a dishonourable mention must go to rapper Nicki Minaj. Undeniably imaginative, her rib crushingly tight bodysuits left little to the imagina-

tion. In an array of nauseous colours, her clothes seemed to be screaming, nay, begging for attention. She often looked as if an army of toddlers had attacked her with some Crayolas. Still, there was another celebrity who seemed to be grappling with sanity in her clothing choices. Lady Gaga



MODEL: BONNIE LI, PHOTO: LAUREN M. BROWN/FASHIONGRUNCE.COM

Bonnie Li models a vintage tutu dress

crossed over into the fashion abyss in 2011. Perhaps due to the fact that she was running out of unique ideas, the singer seemed increasingly deranged. The most asylum-esque moment came with her appearance on the X Factor in November. Wearing an outfit that gave the illusion of her carrying her own head in prosthetic arms as she sprung from a confessional box. This was not fashion, but fancy dress at its worst. My other problem with Gaga is that when she is not wearing shoes that are literally impossible to walk in (yes, literally, she has to be carried when wearing them) she is just performing in a bra and knickers like every other pop stripling. The dichotomy between her proclamations of quirkiness and her penchant for dancing in her underwear renders her disingenuous.

In sum, it seems that fashion favours the bold. However, there is a difference between cutting edge and ludicrous dressing. Ironically, dressing unrelentingly extreme actually becomes predictable. Wouldn't we all be surprised if one day Gaga elected to wear a classically cut Temperley dress. The style ideal is to hit somewhere between the Duchess of Cambridge and the eccentric singer. Take risks, don't be afraid to show your knees, but maintain some decorum. If fashion in 2011 has shown us anything, it is that it's alright to look pretty and girly. Embrace this and I implore all to invest in a Tutu (my favourite is an piece from American Apparel), as I swear everything is immeasurably better when you are wearing one.

↳ Emma Beaumont

For those who want it

Despite beginning his career in 1979, it was only the publication of *Norwegian Wood* in 1987 that propelled Haruki Murakami into national recognition, even inspiring a film adaptation directed by Tran Anh Hung, released in Japan last year and presented at the 67th Venice International Film Festival.

Time Out describes *Norwegian Wood* as "Evocative, entertaining, sexy and funny." Further praise can be found in the Independent on Sunday, "This book is undeniably hip, full of student uprisings, free love, booze and 1960s pop. It is also genuinely emotionally engaging, and describes the highs of adolescence as well as the lows" and the Glasgow Herald, "A heart-stoppingly moving story... Murakami is, without a doubt, one of the world's finest novelists."

Intrigued by so much Murakami

hype, I undertook to read the 400 pages of *Norwegian Wood* and admittedly, finished the novel in a week. It is "emotionally engaging" and "evocative" but for reasons which, in my opinion, are not characterised by any exceptional literary talent, but rather based on the generic appeal of shared experience. *Norwegian Wood* is relatable: at one point I even thought I was reliving a past relationship. It is full of unrequited love, loss and identity crisis – everything tantalising in teenage angst. Tellingly, it was an audience of young people who brought Murakami to national attention.

Norwegian Wood is "sexy" in the sense of "sex," but misses the point of the "y." A book with such explicit sex scenes is far from sexy and seems only to be verging on the pornographic. Alongside so much heartache it makes the commercial appeal of the novel

easy to pinpoint.

Nonetheless, Murakami's international acclaim should not be so quickly disregarded. He has been described by the Guardian as "among the world's greatest living novelists" and ironically enough, probably because of what I find so unsatisfying: his appeal to universal experiences.

The "what for" question asked of art is a long-standing debate that shows no signs of abating. Is art meant to represent or create, narrate or explain, elaborate or invent? Why shouldn't an author earn probably well-deserved fame for allowing his readers to relive a shared experience? And isn't there something quite reassuring in the possibility that millions of readers worldwide understand a disappointment or joy you once felt isolated in? Surely good art is accessible art?

A friend at Central Saint Martins

passed on an insightful argument his lecturer made in the great art debate: art is not for aristocrats, but it's not for plebeians, scientists, feathered beret sporting poets, drug dealers, disillusioned teachers or pretentious philosophers either. Art is for those who want it. Therefore, while I sympathise with the idea of an everyman's Shakespeare or messiah, I also believe that if you want to explore old memories you should read your diary. If you want to share traumatic experiences you should join a support group.

Good literature and great art are about life, but now we have cameras to take photos and Facebook to bombard the world with them. What is left for art? Surely something challenging, provocative and transcendental. Something able to comment or illustrate an overriding structure, an abstract, an ideal, a political system,

the universe. Life from a bird's eye view, no longer constrained by tradition or convention.

Art theory ramble aside, *Norwegian Wood* is nonetheless well crafted and interesting. It is engaging and alludes to some sort of broader salvation in community. For those of us struggling with the idea of adulthood, it contextualises the end of the world as the end of naïveté.

Murakami is quickly becoming one of the most important modern novelists, so read his work if only to say you are well read. You may also like it, as many do, more than I did.

↳ Rachel Holmes

Norwegian Wood, Haruki Murakami, Vintage, paperback, £7.99

Profile: Percy Bysshe Shelley

Shelley was born on 4 August 1792 in West Sussex, England. After home schooling he entered Eton College in 1804, where he had books snatched from his hands and his clothes torn apart in daily mob "Shelley-baits."

He registered at University College, Oxford in April 1810. He supposedly attended only one lecture during his studies, despite reading for up to sixteen hours a day.

After the Gothic novel *Zastrozzi* (1810) Shelley published his second Gothic work, *St. Irvyne*, and a pamphlet entitled "The Necessity of Atheism" in 1811. The pamphlet provoked hostility from the university administration, and when Shelley refused to disown authorship he was expelled. Even after the intervention of his father, a Member of Parliament, Shelley refused to retract his views in order to continue studying, resulting in their alienation.

Four months later, a 19-year-old

Shelley eloped to Scotland with a schoolgirl, the 16-year-old Harriet Westbrook. After their marriage on 28 August 1811, the newlyweds moved to Keswick in the Lake District. Shortly after, Shelley visited Ireland to engage in radical pamphleteering and was seen at several nationalist rallies. His political involvement incited the disapproval of the British government.

Shelley often abandoned his wife and first child, Ianthe Shelley (1813–76). He later met and fell in love with Mary Godwin (author of *Frankenstein*), daughter of Mary Wollstonecroft, best known for "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," and William Godwin, radical journalist and philosopher. Finally, he deserted his pregnant wife and child on 28 July 1814 to go travelling with Mary (then 16) and her stepsister Claire Clairmont. They crossed France and settled in Switzerland. However, having become destitute six weeks later,

the three returned to England. Outside London, Shelley wrote and lived with Mary while avoiding creditors.

Shelley's estranged wife Harriet drowned herself in the Serpentine in Hyde Park in December 1816. Weeks later, Shelley and Mary Godwin were married. Owing to their father's atheism, Harriet's children were awarded to foster parents.

Early in 1818, the Shelleys left for Venice. The same year their son Will died of fever in Rome while a newborn, Elena Adelaide Shelly was registered in Naples as the daughter of Percy Shelley and "Marina Padurin." Scholars speculate that her mother was the family's nursemaid, or conversely that Elena was adopted to distract Mary from the deaths of William and another infant daughter, Clara. Nonetheless, Elena was placed with foster parents as the Shelleys moved on to yet another Italian city. She died 17 months later, in 1820. For years the Shelleys moved around various Italian cities.

On 8 July 1822, Shelley drowned in his schooner. *Don Juan* sank when a storm struck as it sailed from Livorno to Lerici. Shelley had previously claimed forebodings of death, having recently met his doppelgänger.

Some claim Shelley wanted to die, while others believed that pirates had attacked the boat, among yet more extravagant explanations. Scattered and contradictory evidence suggests that Shelley was murdered for political motivations. A Regency house previously rented in northwest Wales, was "attacked" in the night by someone, who according to later writers, was an intelligence agent.

The boat was discovered 16 km offshore, one side apparently "rammed" by a stronger vessel. *Don Juan's* life raft was unused and Shelley's corpse was found completely clothed.

↳ Rachel Holmes

Love's Philosophy

The fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdain'd its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea—
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

↳ Percy Bysshe Shelley

What to see during the winter break

Gesamtkunstwerk: New Art from Germany

Gesamtkunstwerk is a survey of contemporary artists from or based in Germany. With Berlin being an attraction pole for young artists and much of the art world emerging from there, this exhibition is definitely promising. While there is a mix of young and established artists, there seems to be a strong influence exerted by internationally recognised artists Georg Herold and Isa Genzken over the younger artists on show. With Gerhard Richter now on show at Tate Modern, this exhibition at Saatchi is a further contribution to our understanding of contemporary German art.

Gesamtkunstwerk: New Art From Germany is at the Saatchi Gallery until 29 April 2012



Nathalie Djurberg with music by Hans Berg, *A World of Glass* (film still), 2011

Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2011: In the Presence

This exhibition is an open window into the future of contemporary art, bringing together some of the best works currently emerging from UK art schools by 40 recent graduates. This initiative by Bloomberg dates back to 1949 and through the years it has supported recent art graduates in the most crucial stage of their career development. Many artists who have taken part in this Bloomberg initiative have gone on to become world famous, while others have won the Turner Prize or have participated in the Venice Art Biennial and the Frieze Art Projects, among others.

This year's exhibition features works utilising a variety of different materials and processes, such as appropriation, traditional studio practice, spatial interventions, digital production, collaboration and the use of chance and found objects. The exhibition gives us the possibility to see what the future of the UK art world will probably look like.

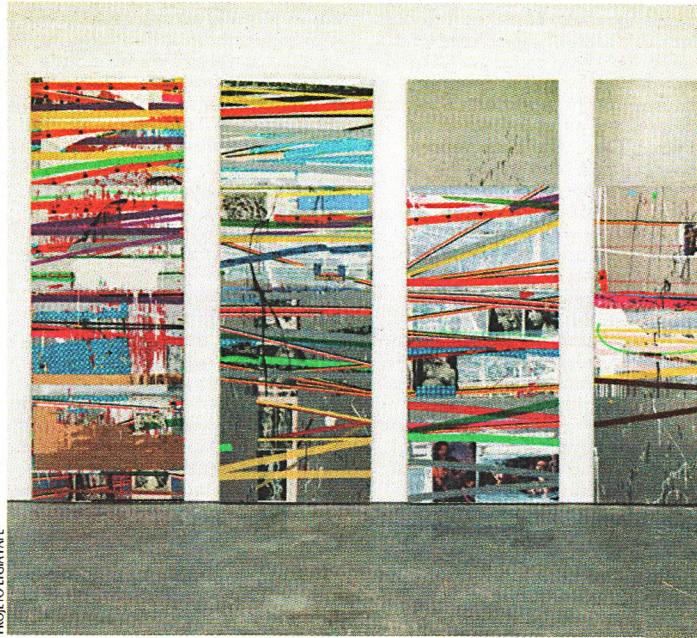
Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2011: In the Presence is at the ICA (Institute for Contemporary Arts) until 15 January 2012

Taryn Simon

In this exhibition at Tate Modern, the works of American artist Taryn Simon are shown. It includes the project "A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters," which she produced over a four year period between 2008 and 2011.

Through this project she travelled the world researching and recording bloodlines in an intricate mix between the external forces of territory, power, religion and the internal forces of psychological and physical inheritance. Among her featured works there are images of the victims of genocide in Bosnia, feuding families in Brazil and the living dead in India.

Taryn Simon is at Tate Modern until 2 January 2012



Lygia Pape, *Untitled*, 1954-56

Pape was a founding member of the Neo-Concrete movement, which was dedicated to the inclusion of art in everyday life. This movement is often seen as the beginning of contemporary art in Brazil, and Pape's work - which focussed on the coming together of aesthetic, ethical and political ideas - has definitely formed an important part of Brazil's artistic identity.

Lygia Pape: Magnetized Space is at the Serpentine Gallery until 19 February 2012

A World of Glass

Swedish artist Nathalie Djurberg has collaborated with Hans Berg for this exhibition, with the latter composing the background music which features rhythmic percussion and sounds of tinkling glass evoking a

strange and compelling atmosphere. In this exhibition Djurberg exhibits luminous, glass-like objects and four new animated films. Her films have been created with a technique known as "claymation" and through the combination of the videos and installations, she is able to immerse the viewer in a peculiar atmosphere. While watching the videos, the viewer is surrounded by the same luminous sculptures that appear in the films, sculptures made from polyurethane, a material that shares the apparent fragility and elegance of glass to add a peculiar element to this exhibition.

Nathalie Djurberg with music by Hans Berg: A World of Glass is at the Camden Arts Centre until 8 January 2012

Electroboutique Pop-up

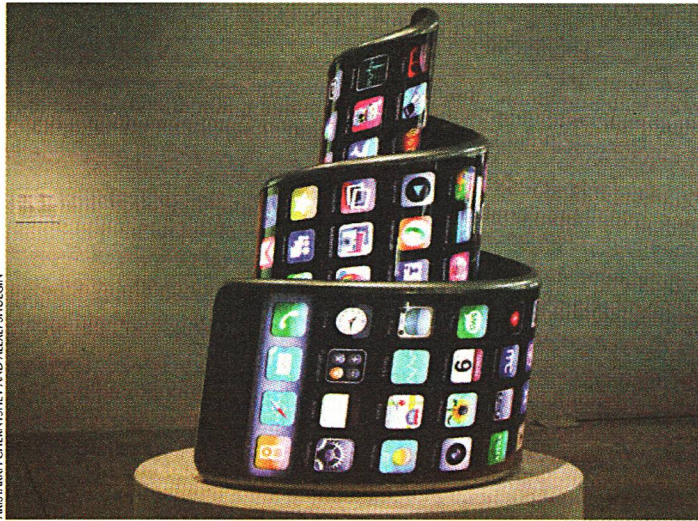
This exhibition at the Science Museum showcases a series of works made using live data, sophisticated custom electronics and bespoke software. This interactive exhibition has been produced by the innovative art production company Electroboutique and features Russian artists Alexei Shulgin and Aristarkh Chernyshev.

The exhibition is highly interactive and the artists generate a dialogue with their audiences through works that respond to the viewers in real-time. The artworks use the languages of pop culture, media and art histories, and while being a great and fun exhibition to visit, the works also raise more serious questions about art production, design aspiration, technological progress, consumerism, capitalism, media control, and the languages of corporate social responsibility.

Electroboutique Pop-up is at the Science Museum until 14 February 2012

Lygia Pape: Magnetized Space

This exhibition brings together the works of Lygia Pape (1927-2004), a Brazilian artist who has made great contributions to the art world through her unique interpretations.

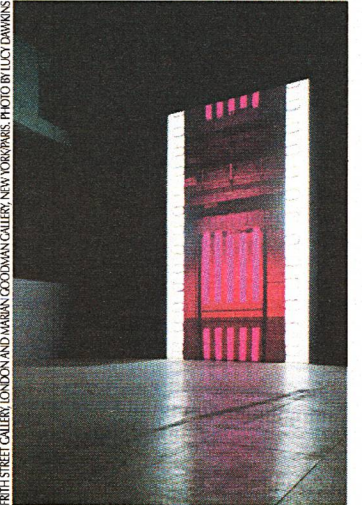


Aristarkh Chernyshev and Alexei Shulgin, *3G International*, 2011

The Unilever Series: Tacita Dean

This exhibition is the twelfth commission in the Unilever Series and features the celebrated British film-maker Tacita Dean. Dean this time experiments a new creation entitled *FILM*, a 11-minute silent 35mm film projected onto a gigantic white monolith standing 13 metres tall at the end of a darkened Turbine Hall. The work evokes the monumental black monolith from 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968). Watching the 11 minute piece feels like a surreal visual poem and it includes images from the natural world, among others. Contrasting with today's digital productions, the exhibition celebrates the masterful techniques of analogue film-making.

The Unilever Series: Tacita Dean is at Tate Modern until 11 March 2012



Tacita Dean, *FILM*, 2011

If you haven't seen these already, you should...

Leonardo da Vinci: Painter at the Court of Milan at the National Gallery until 5 February 2012

John Martin: Apocalypse at Tate Britain until 15 January 2012

Gerhard Richter: Panorama at Tate Modern until 8 January 2012

Grayson Perry: The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman at the British Museum until 19 February 2012

Postmodernism: Style and Subversion 1970-1990 at the Victoria and Albert Museum until January 15 2012

Building the Revolution: Soviet Art and Architecture 1915-1935 at the Royal Academy of Arts until 22 January 2012

Pipilotti Rist at The Hayward until 8 January 2012

Black Mirror: The National Anthem

Channel 4, 21:00, Sundays

New series. The first of three darkly comic horror stories about the power of technology in the twenty-first century. Prime minister Michael Callow faces a dilemma when Princess Susannah, a much-loved member of the royal family, is kidnapped, and he and his staff struggle to deal with shifting public opinion as information about the case spreads across the internet. Written by Charlie Brooker, and starring Rory Kinnear, Lydia Wilson, Lindsay Duncan and Tom Goodman-Hill.

Jerusalem: The Making of a Holy City

BBC4, 21:00, Thursdays

Simon Sebag Montefiore tells the story of the city from ancient times to the present day and explores its importance in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. He begins in the era of the Canaanites, when Jerusalem first came to be regarded as a sacred site, and examines the evidence that King David made it a Jewish city. He also discusses the construction of the First Temple by Solomon, the life and death of Jesus Christ, and the expulsion of the Jews by the Romans.

Perez Hilton Superfan: Lady Gaga

ITV2, 22:00, Wednesdays

New series. Gossip blogger Perez Hilton catches up with four of his celebrity friends, beginning with Lady Gaga in Hollywood and Sydney. Perez also follows the pop star behind the scenes at performance dress rehearsals and heads backstage at concerts.

Without You

ITV1, 22:00, Thursdays

New series. Schoolteacher Ellie Manning's life is thrown into turmoil when her husband dies in a car accident - alongside a woman with whom everybody assumes he was having an affair. She cannot accept her marriage had been a sham and determines to prove his innocence. Drama, based on Nicci French's novel *What to Do When Someone Dies*, with Anna Friel and Marc Warren.

TV Tips for the week

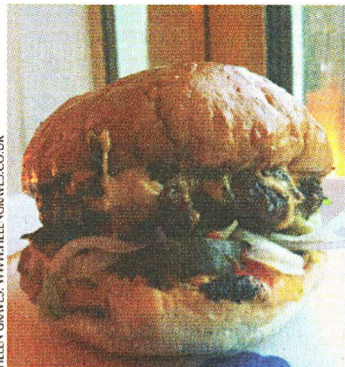
Review: Meat Liquor

I have a special place in my heart for American food. A space that I intend to clog with the high cholesterol goodness of Meat Liquor. American food is about excess. America takes something that is already high in fat, like a Twinkie, deep-fries it into oblivion, and then adds cheese and sour cream. Why? Because it can. Americans know, perhaps better than any other people, that fat is flavour. And their food has plenty of flavour.

So what am I looking for in an American meal? I want amazing food that makes me feel bad about myself afterwards. I want food so ridiculously over the top that I feel slightly embarrassed about ordering it. And I want so much food, that when I'm finished, there is still a whole mountain of food staring back at me. And afterwards, I'll be so embarrassed that I will actually pretend to have a dog to justify asking for a doggy bag.

Meat Liquor's concept appears to be an attempt to get away from the pretension of other restaurants and bars, serving amazing food and drink for a reasonable price (£10-20 per person) to anyone who walks through the door. The menu is equally laconic in both word and design, with descriptions of food being downright Spartan. The menu is small if you take into consideration the fact that most of the main meals are a variation of the burger. Food is simply served on metal trays, delivered to the hungry customer.

Whether I would like this place always depended on one thing: the burger. I can forgive waiting in line, poor service, loud music and bad lighting for a good burger. And I am pleased to say the Meat Liquor burger does not fail. After my first bite I was forced to quote Samuel L. Jackson in *Pulp Fiction*: "Mmm, this is a tasty burger." They miraculously managed to balance keeping the burger juicy while getting the perfect sear on the meat, which was all



A Meat Liquor Chilli Cheese Burger

balanced by lovely cheese and lettuce. This is quite frankly the best burger that I have ever had in London.

However, the food at Meat Liquor takes a back seat when compared to the drinks menu. This is not a restaurant in which to order wine. What they do have are some very tasty and strange cocktails served in jam jars, using ingredients that we don't normally see in English restaurants, such as maple syrup. Trust me, it works. My personal favourite, however, is not one of their cocktails, but the House Grog. The House Grog is a mixture of light, dark and overproof rum combined as part of a secret recipe. All I could tell you is that there was citrus. And rum. Lots of rum. Being a reasonably sized person and having a London student's constitution when it comes to drinking, this deceptively innocuous drink hit me hard. The menu limits the diner to two per person and I can see why. You can't taste the alcohol, but you can feel it. And they have the upside of being delicious.

One of my favourite things about the place is the atmosphere. Put simply, Meat Liquor is dark. I mean this both figuratively and literally. Even during the daytime the restaurant's circular

windows are tinted to give it a dive bar feel. In my book this is not a bad thing for this type of food. Nothing is less appealing than seeing someone scoff down wings dripping with buffalo sauce in the cold light of day. You want a dark room, preferably a closet. At night the lighting is more akin to a bar than a restaurant, with the reddish glow of the neon signs acting as the primary lighting for our food. It even smells like an American burger and beer joint!

Located on Welbeck Street, which is the next street over from Oxford Street, you would expect the place to be full of tourists. Fortunately, this is not true, with it sticking to the dive bar, London-locals-only feel. That being said, it is hardly off the radar with every foodie, blogger and humble food critic talking about it.

Everywhere there is vaguely punk rock art, with a variety of different animal heads on the ceiling's dome. The clientele are a strange mix of young businessmen men in their post-work suits and artistic indie gallery types, swanning about. The music blasting from the speaker (and I mean blasting) was 70s rock'n'roll. Matching this is the slightly frantic air, as the waitressing staff rush around the dining area with trays of food and drink, giving the sunken main dining area a mosh pit like feel. But that is not to say that this



Artwork at Meat Liquor



Part of the bar at Meat Liquor

restaurant is uninviting. While you cannot say it is relaxed, the place makes you feel like you can do whatever you want, be it dressed as a skeleton or drunk out of your skull. And you can do this any time, since Meat Liquor doesn't take reservations and is open late, making it my new destination for late night food.

I loved Meat Liquor's food and hipster punk style and atmosphere. But it's greatest strength is also its greatest weakness: the dark room and red lighting meant that I could barely see the colour of my food. There was just a vague outline, towards which I directed my face. The music too, was very loud. Good for bars but not for relaxed dinner conversation. It is also busy, meaning that you probably won't get your food quickly, or even get the attention of the waiting staff. Worse still, the place is so busy that their popular menu items may run out, as they did when I was there. My biggest disappointment with Meat Liquor was that it

wasn't American. I was not presented with the Flintstones-sized burgers of my youth. What I got was the English take on American food, which doesn't sacrifice flavour, just size. All these things don't matter when you consider what Meat Liquor really is: a ridiculously cool place that opens late and does amazing burgers and cocktails.

I loved Meat Liquor. While I think it has its faults, if you view it as a restaurant, it is perfect for the late night munchies. If you finish your massive paper at eleven o'clock in the evening and feel like celebrating, go there. If you need a place that does great late night food after a night on the town, go there. Fortunately for us, on Friday and Saturday this place doesn't close until 2am, the ideal time to go and get some food. The pub has closed... you're still thirsty and a little hungry. This is the place for you.

Max Jenkins

Festive favours, flavours and fun

It's our favourite time of year, when sexual favours can be traded as gifts and dressing up as an old fat man becomes sexy.

To bring you some festive cheer (and to remind you that things could be worse) let me tell you about my week, in ten instalments.

1. I went to dinner at someone's flat on a date, where he had a photo of himself on Halloween, wearing exactly the same outfit that I wore on Halloween.
2. On Halloween I dressed up as a slutty nurse.
3. He then started talking about how he did his make-up and how much he likes watching *Sex and the City*.
4. I promptly dumped said man for

being too effeminate.

5. Two days later I slept with a guy dressed as a woman.

6. He was so drunk he can't remember us having sex.

7. Although he does remember leaving to go to the toilet half-way through.

8. I was so drunk that I fell off the side of the bed onto my head.

9. We then both passed out mid-sex.

10. So all in all it's been an excellent week. I appear to attract guys who enjoy dressing as women. I dumped a guy who cooked me dinner at his house, and instead slept with one who bought me McDonalds. And I have a bruised head.

I hope your festive season is going

better than mine. Here are some Christmas themed jokes to bring you some seasonal merriment.

Why a Christmas tree is better than a man

- A Christmas tree is always erect
- Even small ones give satisfaction.
- A Christmas tree always looks good - even with the lights on.
- A Christmas tree has cute balls and you don't need to play with them.
- Christmas trees don't get angry if you use exotic electrical devices, or have an artificial one in the cupboard.
- You can throw a Christmas tree out when it's past its prime.

Why a Christmas tree is better than a woman

- A Christmas tree doesn't care how many other Christmas trees you have had in the past.
- You can feel up a Christmas tree before deciding whether you want to take it home.
- A Christmas tree doesn't mind if you look up underneath it.
- A Christmas tree doesn't get jealous around other Christmas trees.
- A Christmas tree doesn't care if you watch football all day.

Santa's pick-up lines

- "Is that a candy cane in my pocket, or am I just glad to see you?"
- "I put the 'screw' into Scrooge."
- "One hour with me, and you'll see flying reindeer."
- "Some of my best toys run on batteries..."

Questions and answers

Q: What's the difference between snowmen and snowwomen?
A. Snowballs

Q: How come Santa has never had any children?

A: He only comes once a year and that's down a chimney...

Q: Why is Santa Claus always so happy?

A: Because he knows where all the naughty girls live.

Q: Why are women's breasts like a train set a child gets at Christmas time?

A: Because they were originally made for children but the father wants to play with them.

Q: What do the female reindeer do when Santa takes the male reindeer out on Christmas Eve?

A: They go into to town and blow a few bucks.



Things that sound dirty at Christmas, but aren't

- Did you get any under the tree?
- I think your balls are hanging too low.
- Santa's sack is really bulging.
- Did you get a piece of the fruitcake?
- From here you can't tell if they're artificial or real.
- Will you pull my cracker?
- To get it to stand up straight, try propping it against the wall.

Cut-out-and-keep guide to CRABS (pubic lice)

What is it?

Pubic lice are tiny blood-sucking insects that live in coarse human body hair, most commonly pubic hair, and cause itching and red spots.

How do you catch it?

- Close body contact with an infected person (they crawl from one hair to another), including sex, oral sex, anal sex, hugging and kissing.
- Condoms cannot protect you.
- They may be transferred through clothing, bed linen, towels and toilet seats (so if somebody in your household has pubic lice, you should wash these as a precaution).

What are the symptoms?

- It can take one to three weeks before you notice any symptoms.
- Itchy red spots (not caused by bites but by an allergy to the louse saliva or faeces).
- You may be able to see live lice or

eggs in coarse hair anywhere on your body, including around your genitals, anus, chest, abdomen, back, armpits, facial hair, scalp, eyebrows and eyelashes (adult lice are about 2mm long, grey-brown in colour and have six legs. Their two pairs of hind legs look like the pincer claws of a crab).

Treatment

- Insecticidal lotion or cream.
- Everyone that you have had close body contact needs to be treated at the same time, including current sexual partners and all members of your household.

Complications

- Skin irritation from scratching, which could leave to an infection, for example impetigo or boils.
- Eye infections if eyelashes are infested.

Romantic text of the week

Messages

Oversexed Beav

Edit

My one night stand has passed out. I've been feeding him paracetamol and fanta for when he wakes up. I am practically a saint

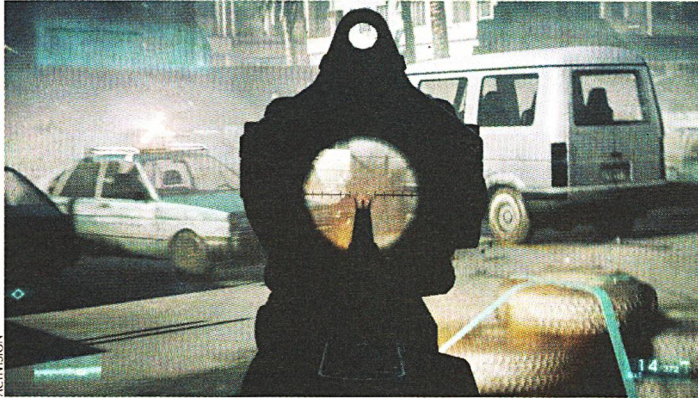
I've got a urine infection from having too much cum inside me

Eww. You win

Join the Battlefield or answer the Call of Duty?

Maybe you've been holding off on your purchase, eagerly anticipating the end of term, when you can guiltlessly indulge in FPS mayhem knowing the essays have been eradicated and the problem-sets pulverised. Or maybe you've been living under a rock. Either way, you will have to make a decision soon, lest your online gaming brethren far surpass you in those all-important experience points. Yes, the annual titanic battle between fanboys and fangirls, FPS and FPS, *Battlefield 3* and *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3* is here.

For the less informed but no less curious "non-gamers" among you, two of the most eagerly anticipated titles in the first-person shooter (FPS) genre have arrived. As always, a selection of high-tech US Army (or indeed, Russian) approved weaponry is complemented by geopolitical scandals and terrorist plots of epic proportions. The premise is simple: pick your team, pick your weapon and kill as many of the other team as you possibly can.



Battlefield 3 on Xbox 360

The decision this year is definitely tougher. While most would agree that the *Call of Duty* franchise has held the crown for some time now, *Battlefield 3* is stepping up its game by including a more extensive, cut-scene orgy of a single-player campaign, bringing it in

line from a value for money perspective at least. It does seem, however, that developer DICE is displaying its relative inexperience in crafting truly engaging single-player campaigns. It feels somewhat linear, with an A.I. that leaves much to be desired.

Having said that, *Battlefield 3*'s single-player campaign is a real visual treat. From watching a point-of-view Sgt. Blackburn ease himself into the sea-sprayed, slippery cockpit of an F-18 fighter jet to the consequent dog-fight over a spectacularly rendered, violent Atlantic Ocean.

Call of Duty doesn't disappoint either. As the third installment in the *Modern Warfare* franchise it brings the epic trilogy to a decisive, fearless end with a little more continuity than *Battlefield 3*'s less engaging campaign. The single player campaign is still based on the same slightly ridiculous but thoroughly engaging plots with students of international relations wondering if its problems would not be better solved through the application of a little soft power. While its improvements including crisper and clearer visuals, *Battlefield 3* has the edge graphically.

Both games bring a solid multi-player experience to the table and any FPS fan will tell you that after those

always-too-short campaigns, this is where the real meat of your purchase resides. *Battlefield 3* continues its focus on vehicular combat with an array of twisted metal at your disposal. It also has a steeper learning curve, encouraging and rewarding team-based co-operation and consequently a deeper experience than *Modern Warfare 3*. Having said that, the latter remains easier to pick up for beginners. "Killcam" still teaches you the same painful but important lessons and the experience system of both games appropriately rewards the lengthy investment of time you will inevitably make. In both cases, sacrificing your social life is obligatory.

— Hassan Dar

***Battlefield 3*, DICE/EA, on Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and PC**

***Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*, Infinity Ward/Sledgehammer Games/Raven Software/Activision, on Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and PC**

Skyrim, devourer...

Skyrim, devourer of study time, social lives and romantic pursuits. For some, Bethesda's huge RPG needs no introduction, because they've been living and breathing this immersive game for the past month. However, for others, it merely brings to mind that weird poster on the Tube.

For the uninitiated, *Skyrim* is a game of battling dragons, learning magic and fighting civil wars. If you're not au fait with geek culture then think along the lines of *Lord of the Rings* or *Game of Thrones*. The story starts with you on your way to your own execution when, just as you lay your head on the chopping block, a dragon swoops down from the sky to savage your executioners. A golden opportunity to escape a gruesome end presents itself, and you scarp off to freedom.

Two scourges plague the land of *Skyrim* during the game – a bloody civil war and thought-to-be extinct dragons. The player soon discovers that they are the last of the Dragonborn, a people with the ability to communicate with dragons. You are the salvation of *Skyrim*, the only one able to rid it of the dragon menace, end the civil war and save its plucky inhabitants.



The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim on PC

So the journey to save *Skyrim* begins, taking you from snow-capped mountains, to green fields, to menacing dungeons. The environment of the game is undeniably the star. Its cities seem alive, from their chatty stall owners down to the ivy growing on their walls. Bethesda has lavished

such attention to detail upon the game that if the player looks to the night sky, you can even see *Skyrim*'s aurora borealis. The map is truly expansive and incredibly impressive. The game's creators have also tried to give individual towns and cities their own distinct cultures. The game itself is

intimidating, with 300 hours of quests in total to complete. Whether you wish to complete those 300 hours in one session is up to you.

The combat system has been tweaked slightly since the previous games. Dual wielding has been introduced so you can mix up your combat

style. The level based system has also changed so that you gain experience according to what skills you use most frequently (magic, archery, sneaking etc.). This means that the player gets better at what they do most. So if you're a fan of dual-wielding magic then your player will be significantly different to someone who always uses a battle-axe.

Bethesda has undeniably hit another one out of the park with *Skyrim*, improving on what it has learned from *Fallout 3* and *Oblivion*. There are still plenty of bugs in the game and loading times are a drag, but its complex and ambitious story is so absorbing that these minor faults pale into insignificance. For the sake of geeks everywhere, I hope the game's creators can continue this winning streak for a long time. For the sake of non-geeks, I hope you can get used to us talking about killing dragons for a similarly long time.

— Simon Chaudhuri

***The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*, Bethesda, on Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and PC**

Skyward Sword: A slow-burning masterpiece

I won't deny it. I'm a huge *Legend of Zelda* fan. I have seen it, been there and even bought the T-shirt, at the recent *Zelda* Symphony concert, no less. From the original 8-bit *Legend of Zelda* to the first 3D iteration, *Ocarina of Time*. The more astute among you may have realised that this year marks the 25th anniversary of Link's generation-transcending quest to rescue the Princess Zelda. I urge you to play this game. "Boring," I hear some of you mutter. "It's a game for kids" I hear a voice shout, while fervent murmurs of agreement break out. Then somebody remembers, "It's on the Wii!" at which point "pro-gamers" everywhere burst into raucous laughter.

I am here to dissuade you. *Skyward Sword* is a masterpiece. For the uninitiated, The *Legend of Zelda* series is part of the action RPG genre, noted for its expansive, character-filled worlds, engaging real-time fighting systems, innovative methods of transport and epic, epic storylines, all with a decidedly medieval tint. Furthermore, the newest iteration in the series takes advantage of the new Wii Motion Plus control system, allowing you to wield the Wii Remote (almost) as if it were a real sword. As the name suggests, *Skyward Sword* brings protagonist Link to the skies,



The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword on Wii

on the back of an oversized bird that he controls.

The first few hours can be quite slow, with the backstory of this particular iteration fleshed out in some detail. Additionally, like all *Zelda* games, none of the characters are

voiced, meaning a healthy affinity for the written word is a must (considering LSE Library borrowing statistics this shouldn't be a problem). However, once the dungeon-crawling action begins, the age-old *Zelda* formula of fiendish puzzles combined with

incredible set-piece boss battles brings the action back to the forefront of gameplay. The first boss battle is not the "ease-them-in" tutorial you might expect from other RPGs. As the main antagonist of this installment, Lord Ghirahim gives you an early and se-

vere lesson in ass-whooping, gleefully confiscating your sword, should you try to flail madly with the Wii Remote instead of carefully timing your slashes, parries and shield bashes. Even this seasoned fan did not beat him on the first attempt – how about that for kids?

As usual, interspersed alongside the dungeons are several side-quests where one can become quite addicted to fulfilling the petty needs of everyday villagers in return for seemingly unimportant objects, eventually traded up to the holy grail that is a new item or weapon upgrade. Think "around the world in 80 trades" with your artifact-swapping adventures taking you all over the land of Hyrule.

Give it a chance. One of your younger siblings surely pestered mum and dad to get a Wii. Maybe you impulse-bought one on the promise of hours of party fun on *Wii Sports*. Wherever it is, dust it off, get a copy of *Skyward Sword* and give it a chance. Reach the end and I assure you that the only disappointment you will experience is that it didn't last longer.

— Hassan Dar

***The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword*, Nintendo, on Wii**



ПРАВДАВ

THE GLORIOUS RAG OF THE LSE POLITBURO



DEAREST COMRADES...

Dearest Leader Judith no-Results writes to the workers

Comrade Students!

The past few weeks have been a difficult time for the Londongrad School of Economics. Despite the successful exiling of the discredited supporters of Gaddafiism-Duvetsism and the exile of Traitor-Professor Heldon to the bitter end to Durham Corrective Labour Camp, it is clear that there has to be no real deviation from the University Line until the arrival of my successor as Head of the School Politburo.

Citizen-Twitterer Caliningradhoun has already been a vocal supporter of the Revolutionary movement within the USSA, we look forward to his arrival in September.

It is therefore a great pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural edition of Pravda B, the first publication to welcome in the Era of Change of the New School Order. Whist I have no intention of adding the newly formulated Neo-Reesism as part of Post-Fabian-Continuation-Theory, it is obvious that the report formulated by Comrade-the-Right-Dishonourable-Lord-Woolf brings engaging reading for the School.

We will be instigating the following suggestions at once;

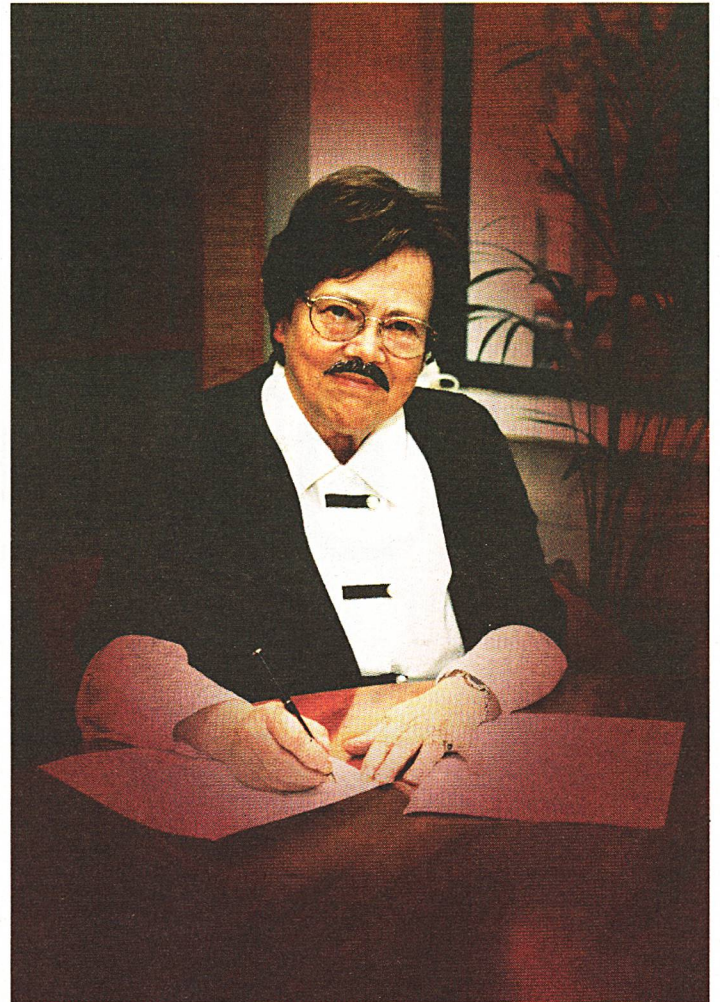
1. All donations to the School will be placed in burlap sacks with a dollar sign on.
2. The School will cut all links with the Gaddafi Foundation (currently headquartered in Mali).
3. Former General-Secretary Giddonenothingwrong will be recalled from his position as Ambassador to Syria.
4. The following external services will be nationalised owing to their Crypto-Bourgeois damage to the reputation of the School;
 - a. Alpha Books
 - b. The Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method
 - c. The Stir-Fry Bar at the 'Fourth Way' Restaurant
5. To send a £10 book token and a signed note of apology to the people of Tripoli.

My advice to all Comrade-Students would be to put the negative period caused by Howardist-Heldism behind them.

All students attending LSE100 will be provided with a free sweet and class of water at their next class, consuming it will be compulsory. All non-LSE100 students will have their degrees suspended should they continued to spring to misplaced conclusions as the moral failures of the past regime.

The School Prevails!

Judith no-Results



Ice pick inserted into Heldon

Heather Loves-Wange

»3 The inquiry into the vicious attack on David Heldon continues, with little progress being made.

The dissident was brutally assaulted by an as yet unknown assailant wielding an ice pick, stalling attempts for his re-entry to the party.

Given the expensive nature of the weapon and luxurious, unnecessarily wasteful leather handle the committee for Student Union Security believe they are searching for a capitalist assassin, probably hired by the imperialist forces promoting free market forces from the University of Chicago.

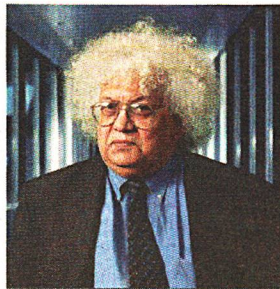
The search continues and the B is sure that the culprit will be brought to swift justice before he strikes again. Initial accusations that it was the LSSR politburo behind the attack are clearly spurious propaganda attempts being espoused by misguided fascists to smear valiant members fighting the good fights.

Please report any dissidents to the Politburo in the underground of your Students' Union if you happen to overhear these spies. Together we can prevail.

Dizzy Looky-Likey

Ginger Whoreby

»T



Dr. Robotnik (source: Skyrim)



Lord Dizzy (source: LSE Press)

Opiate of the Masses Week

Kesterr the Friendly Ghost

»lamp It is with shame that the B has to report that despite severe warnings about the undermining of the utopia here at this glorious institution, the Opiate of the Masses Week took place.

Led by the Chaplin, who it must be noted commands absolutely no divisions unlike our supreme institutional leaders, the event garnered very little turnout, and was completely overshadowed by the protest held to condemn Matt Santos' (The President-Elect) oppressive regime.

Seeing comrades motivate themselves to such an extent for fellow workers across the globe is encouraging, but we still have much to accomplish. Complaints were raised by the Marxist Society over the legitimacy of this event, but ultimately weren't upheld.

The B is certain this oversight will be rectified with some exiling in the near future. You will be kept abreast of any updates comrade, be attentive and check the pages of this newspaper for further updates.

Any information you believe should be relayed to someone of authority must contact their political commissar at

SOCIALISM PUB QUIZ
DECEMBER 21::TUNS



PravdaB Collective Farm List

Kesterr The Friendly Ghost *Party Liaison to the Chair*

Here is the list of the comrades and ideological theorists who have been so dependable and hard-working in their formulation of the Five-Minute B.

Comrade-in-Exile Tanned Ale:
For Services to the Usurpation of Bourgeois Information Management.

Comrade-in-Equestrianism Ginger Whoreby: For Services to Three-Day-Plan Eventing and the Glorious Proletariat Tweet Manufacturers of the Celtic Fringe.

Comrade-in-Edmonton Lion Balm:
For Services to the People's Socialist Republic of Alberta and Socialist Messaging.

Comrade-in-Editor Arreers Petal: For Services to Photo-ShopsareanarchaispectoftheOldOrderwithnonecessityintheLabourTheoryofValue.

Comrade-in-Église Kesterr the Friendly Ghost: For Services to the Eradication of the Opiate of the Masses.

Comrade-in-Expletive Rolex Young:
For Services to the Critiquing of Undemocratic Centralism.

Despite the fact that Comrade-Rubbisho likes to utilise a form of feudal-inspired poetry that has no place in the Glorious New World Order, he has sent us the following work that has been passed by the Community Welfare Officer for "brave effort in the face of ideological corruption".

We welcome guest editors

Robin Bares-It, Saif Al-Umnus and Tinned Dick, haved assisted the PravdaB Commissars-in-Chief. As such, any mistakes, typos, or offence taken can be referred to them.

oligarchy@pravdabinprint.ussr

Union Rubbisho *Too little time*

Winter is here now
Which has allowed me to note,
Free Markets are fu-

Rubbisho is PravdaB's Commissar for Haiku-ery. Any other attempts at expressing one's self using poetry will be met by swift justice. We have no time for deviation from the PartB line.

PravdaB

Established in 1917
Issue No. 5318008

Telephone: 3 Telegram: Moscow

The Truth.

As was evident two Wednesdays ago, it is clear that capitalism has already died. The alleged continuation of that most vile of ideologies is simply a lie that persistently re-emerges owing to the bias of News International, the BBC and a sustained approval rating for the Comrade Conservative Party.

The Pravda B politburo is firmly behind the view that United Socialist Soviet Kingdom has already emerged within the austere surroundings of the Londongrad School of Economics. As the intelligentsia, all Comrades must be prepared. Apathy is unacceptable, unless you are in an Econometrics lecture, in such an event, it is vital that you ignore all that is said.

Our time is upon us. The holistic brand of the university is vital as all ideologically sound comrades must break down the component Departmental-Soviets as a means of orchestrating the formal overthrow of society. We at the Pravda B tentatively suggest the disillusion of the university thusly.

Economics: Will continue to undermine the Cameronist-Cleggist-Cabalist Cabal and Bank of England in the way formally agreed in 1986.

Government: Will produce sufficient numbers of flow charts and Game Theory Reports

to bore all members of rival Revolutionary Command Vanguard to death.

Philosophy: Exportation of the Revolution Sociology/Anthropology: Live Weapon Testing.

Sacrifices will have to be made. We must impress upon people that hallowed mantra of Neo-Petersdayist-Slothusuism: 'The Only Way is Ethics.' Any comrade who lacks the understanding of such a clear moral ethos must be quietly and painlessly destroyed.

Genderneutral-tory is watching and the greatest inspiration to us all of this Institution. George Bernard-Shaw-nothingbadhappeninginRussia marches with us in spirit, we must do him proud, just as he did when he said Comrade Stalin was "a bloody good bloke with phenomenal banter."

Putting this in terms even the most ardently bourgeois Capitalist running-dogs can understand, this, rather like the discredited-Stock Market, is a zero sum game. Just as with LSE50, failure is not an option. Neither is the consumption of meat on Monday, such bovine provisions are endemic of the failed ideological system, such those resources will be spent more efficiently elsewhere, unless one is in possession of a coupon for a Rosa-Luxemburgerbar.

We at Pravda B thank the Soviets' Union for being wonderful human beings and paragons of kindness in the face of a determined voice of haphazard honesty for the purged traitor of the Ideological-Revisionism-Editorial Board. The generosity and hard work is well respect, as is their voice of respectful avoidance of governance.

We remain a fermenting arena for progress and modernisation, and even as capitalists best us at every turn we shall not be defeated. You, the members of this Supreme Establishment must succeed, if you do not succeed, then there is no hope for the Strand Polytechnic whatsoever. The six regular attendees of the Union General Congress shall be martyrs. We ask you to attend every strike and your local communes for the glorious advancement of ethical distribution as soon as the hated followers of Cableist-Willitsism fall.

It is your duty!

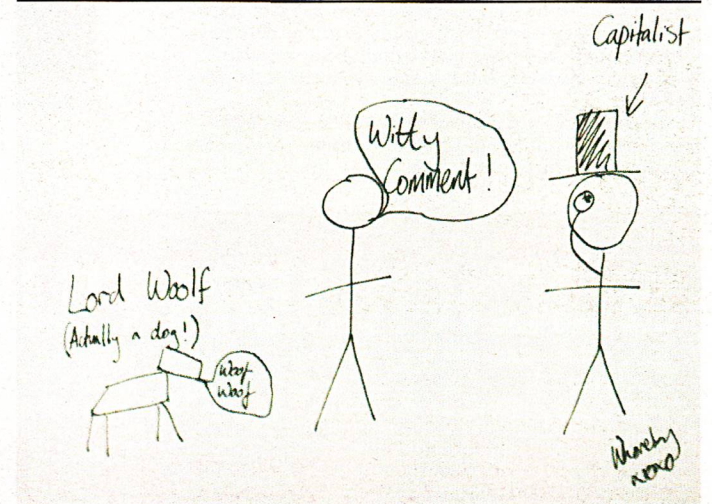


MAKE THE PAPER GLORIOUS

JOIN THE COLLECTIVE



This close to saiftirical



Letters to the Commissar

Readers praise the gloriousness of PravdaB

Dear Commissar

I was struck today by what a [REDACTED] job you are doing under really [REDACTED] circumstances. Pravda B has gone from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] this year, I can only assume that you must be [REDACTED] when in the office, it is honestly that [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] you

678 Anonymous Members of the Student's Union

-Commissar's note: Sorry about this, fellow proles, the lovely letter was damaged, we think the missing words are, in order;

- 'Witty'
- 'Squeezy'
- 'Strength'
- 'Strength'
- 'Monk'
- 'Full of hits'
- 'Luck'

Dear 'Editor'

I realise that your esteemed organ has not said anything bad about me lately. I would ask you to please rectify this at once as my latest advance hasn't come through yet. It's like you're not even trying any more. I've half a mind to make my next work a counterfactual posing the question what would happen if the Pravda satff actually did their freaking jobs?

Kneel F**erson
The Moral High-Ground

Dear Comrade-Editor

Sorry, who actually READS the Independent?

Yours,

David Heldontothebitterend
Northumberland Corrective Labour Camp 45

Dear Collective Chair

If you want lessons in increasing the ethical nature of your struggling democratic institution, I now have the time to help out.

Yours,

S. Berlusconi
Romeingallovertheplace

Dear Collective Chair

If you want lessons in increasing the electoral stability of your struggling democratic institution, we offer a large-scale consultancy office. Our advance would be, approximately, a bailout.

Yours,

The Governments of Greece and Belgium
Up a Creek

Dear Editor

I would just like to say that [REDACTED] a horse [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

and that Nicola is a [REDACTED] with the moral compass of a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] moreover, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thanks for the amazing job you're doing. Keep up the good work...
My best,
LSESU Investment Society

Students ask: what went Wong?

Tinned Dick
Exiled Newsreporter-in-Chief

That Court Report from the Trial of Discredited-Comrade Wrong Regarding the Conduct of the Left-Bankside Election Campaign in Full:

Held on the 46th Day of the Year of the Confused Mao-se in The Comrade-Sir-Howard-Duvel's Memorial Sewage Overflow Shaft at Any time that Clashes with the Investment Society Consultancy Fair

7.30: Meeting opened with the lighting of the Flame to the Victims of Patriarchy

7.31: Tense debate regarding if the flame should be lit by a woman, burning-effigy of Iain Duncan't Miffed, or a member of the Socialist Workers' Party.

7.40: Discredited-Comrade Wrong to enter and be handcuffed to the Ceremonial Mace

7.41: Discredited-Comrade Wrong to accidentally spray himself in face with Ceremonial Mace

7.42: Charge of 'Wilful Chauvinist Abuse to an Inanimate Object' to be added to tally of crimes

7.56: Prosecution stated that the Accused;

1. Used images of heated bread in one election poster, thereby offending women, the gluten-intolerant and Worker-Comrades at People's Toaster Factory No. 14-35

2. Habitually referred to the subject of HIS-TORY, thereby insinuating that all past events should be done by Conservative Males

3. Was once in the same coun-

try as Bigoted-Implied-Murderer-of-Organised-Labour and promoter of Reactionary Automobilst-Hammondism, Jeremy Clarkson.

8.32: Prosecution to end with a standing ovation and three offers of marriage

8.35: Three prepositions to be expelled for wilful promotion of Crypto-Osborneist-Burkeian Institutionalism

8.45: Discredited-Comrade Wrong to be allowed to defend himself

8.46: Discredited-Comrade Wrong to point out that he has never done law and hence isn't responsible for anything

8.47: Discredited-Comrade Wrong to be told to shut up

8.56: Screening of 'Apology' Video, co-hosted by Comrade John McCrick (Director: Comrade Michael Winner)

9.12: Jury to leave for consultative discussion

9.13: Jury to return "Guilty as Hell" verdict

9.15: Room to be vacated prior to sentencing so cleaners can clean up resulting effluence at the morally acceptable rate of the London Living Wage.

Owing to spacing constraints the Heldon article will be continued on Pravda page 4.

If this ruins your day, please email us at oligarchy@pravda-binprint.ussr and we will have you promptly Clarksoned.

Stalin wins Movember



The B can confirm that by an overwhelming majority, approximately every single vote, the winner of this year's Movember competition was Josef Stalin. Despite not being with us for the past 58 years it is universally agreed that the creation of a finer specimen is yet to occur. Thrush Beret commented that this was further evidence that Stalin's legacy is undiminished and stated that "Who the hell does the other side have?" At least that's all we could hear over Starbucks' really loud Christmas music. Clearly the future is bright Comrades, we can only twirl closer to greatness.

-Lion Balm

Capitalist interpretation of woman who ruined country



**Kerry-Rose
O'Donttakethepissoutofme**

It must have taken me sixteen hours before I had recovered my senses prior to watching 'The Iron Lady'. That the capitalist media would have produced a masturbatory expose of the most evil person in history was not a surprise, but it quite apparent that the entire process was going to be very evil indeed, rather like Starbucks, Fred West and Michael Gove all rolled into one.

Mrs Thatcher's legacy upon the country is so vile as to barely warrant repeating, but the sixty-five million children who died as a direct result of her policies probably do not get a single mention. Instead, the film almost certainly focuses on her violent suppression of the Counter-Imperialist liberation of the Malvinas.

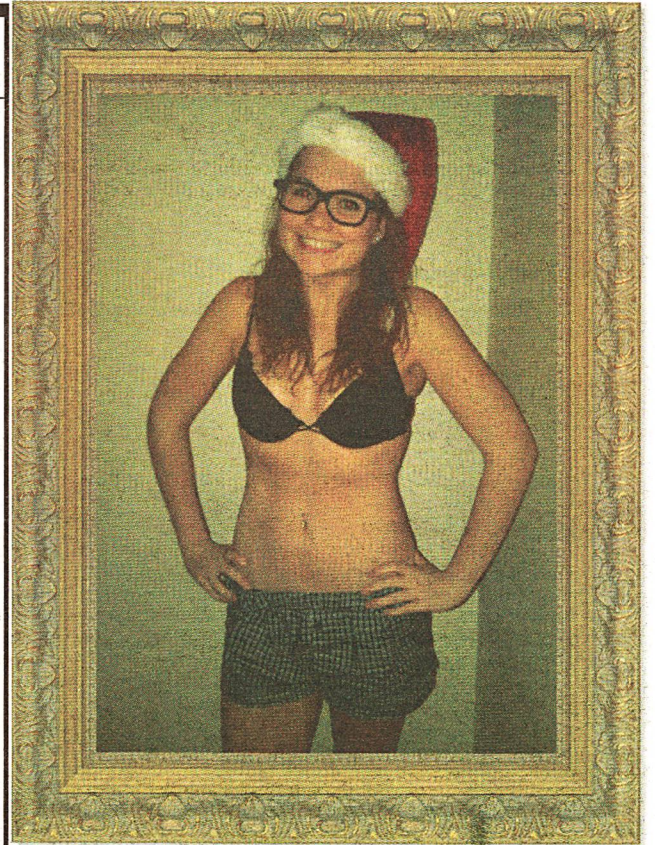
The film will obviously star a bunch of Crypto-Fascist 'actors' who will spend their money on guns to kill poor people with, rather than attempting to re-open a few of the Coal Mines that the former 'Prime' Minister deliberately shut in order to turn them into prisons for trade unionists.

It is obvious that the director probably got funding from Lockheed Martin, Goldman Lynch Merrill-Street-Porter and the government of Bahrain to produce this neo-Liberal wet dream. Frankly, if whoever was in charge of it is still alive, it is only because the International Banking Cabal has given him protection.

In addition, err, Section 28, err, Poll Tax Riots, err, Westland, err, relationship with blood-thirsty Dictator Reagan!

I would urge you to not go and see this film, I have already boycotted it. Indeed, when it comes out, please write down all the people who go in and pass it onto your local Sub-Commissar for Ideological Purity.

Female Torso of the Week



In an attempt to advance gender equality, we at PravdaB have noticed a disgraceful gender bias in the torso of the week. This photo was sourced ethically and with the explicit consent of the krasavitsa in question.

Soviet Sex Tips

Stalin Himself

A man who needs no introduction

Dear readers,

As a small percentage of you may be aware; procreation can be an enjoyable way to spend your time, especially on the Sunday before an essay is due in on Monday. Of course one must be careful to avoid STDs, and the relevant information can be found from the Bureau of Medical Health found in bloc 3, as precious minds who will be responsible for leading the globe into a new age of socialist harmony and utopia, care must be taken. But in addition to this duty we, as future pioneers, have the obligation to spread our genetic wealth, so the future of humanity can be secured for another generation. In this great cultural and geographical melting pot, this glorious place has the chance to be the genesis of the next great generation. After the great revolution, a proliferation of child care will be brought about as advancement from the present gender repressed society. Until then ensure you have the time and effort to care for the young socialists you bring into the world.

This week's STD is capitalism. Given its fast spreading nature and difficulty to cure, we've had a flood of letters asking us what the early symptoms are, and any possible emollient. After extensive research, we have found a number of precautions you, as the socialist leaders of the planet, must take to stay safe and reduce the spread of the contagion. Better dead than red.

1. Thoroughly quiz any potential partner on the finer details of

Das Kapital, if they don't know their superstructure from their infrastructure, then such a dissident should be reported to your superior, not taken to bed.

2. Avoid the LSESU Investment society at all costs, such capitalist dogma should be avoided at all cost, any sign of them seemingly becoming more reasonable should result you checking yourself immediately into bloc 3 for a full examination.

3. Try to avoid looking anyone dressed in an expensive suit directly in the eye, the likelihood being it's too late to save them, just save yourself.

4. If in doubt, use protection, and don't do anything you think you'll regret in the morning.

5. Using a condom emblazoned with Marx's face seemingly increases virility, however this may be as a result of a distinctly underwhelming sample size.

In terms of a cure, we're afraid to comment that in conducting our research, people infected with capitalism seem unable to turn back, unless caught soon and swiftly given a copy of the socialist worker to read. Some small success was had in an extensive re-education program, but some small lingering psychosis remains. Just don't play Tchaikovsky's 3rd symphony and mention Hayek's free market capitalism at the same time, it'll end in tears.



The Descent of the Mummy

Ginger Whoreby

Party Liaison to the Soulless

Comrade-Professor F***erson's latest work is the in his latest in a long-running series of populist historical novels in which the esteemed academic challenges historiographical orthodoxy by using a number of well regarded counterfactual thought experiments. His works have been a boon to the ideological consolidation of the SU, fermenting political and economic discord amongst the masses whilst luring capitalists into overreaching themselves. For this, Comrade F***erson deserves our lasting thanks. Whilst class traitors may decry many works as "poorly written", "apologies for Imperialism" and "a travesty when I can't even get my bloody PhD cited", to do so is to ignore the work of an Entryist genius.

The esteemed citizen's most outlandish thought-experiment yet, namely, what if his academic standing was taken seriously?

The Descent of Mummy builds upon this unique academic basis with the esteemed citizen's most outlandish thought-experiment yet, namely, what

if his academic standing was taken seriously?

Ludicrous though it may first appear, Kneel F***erson's hypothesising has merit. Readers would be aghast to think of what would have happened had the Comrade-Professor not spent his time promoting his latest repackaged defence of Imperialism over something that would actually pass peer-review. The good Citizen's hypothesis of a world where Ultra-Bushist-Volckerist-Brownism failed to materialise will shock and stimulate any reader, as will the passage where 'Dr' F***erson marks some term papers rather than getting interviewed by Archinstigator Glenn Beck, erstwhile supporter of Teapist-Footinmouthism.

At times, the work borders on self-parody. This reviewer could think of no way in which Comrade-Professor could have stated, "First Citizen Obama is okay" without being involved in a failed experiment on the Parietal lobe. On a more technical level, the sheer amount of archival research used was disconcerting and many long-term followers of Comrade-Professor F***erson's work perhaps feel nostalgic for traditional citations such as "I heard on the grapevine", "A bloke told me" and "All the copies of this book were destroyed in a fire."

These minor failings aside, The Descent of Mummy is a worthwhile addition to the Comrade-Professor's canon and hence should be burnt as soon as possible.

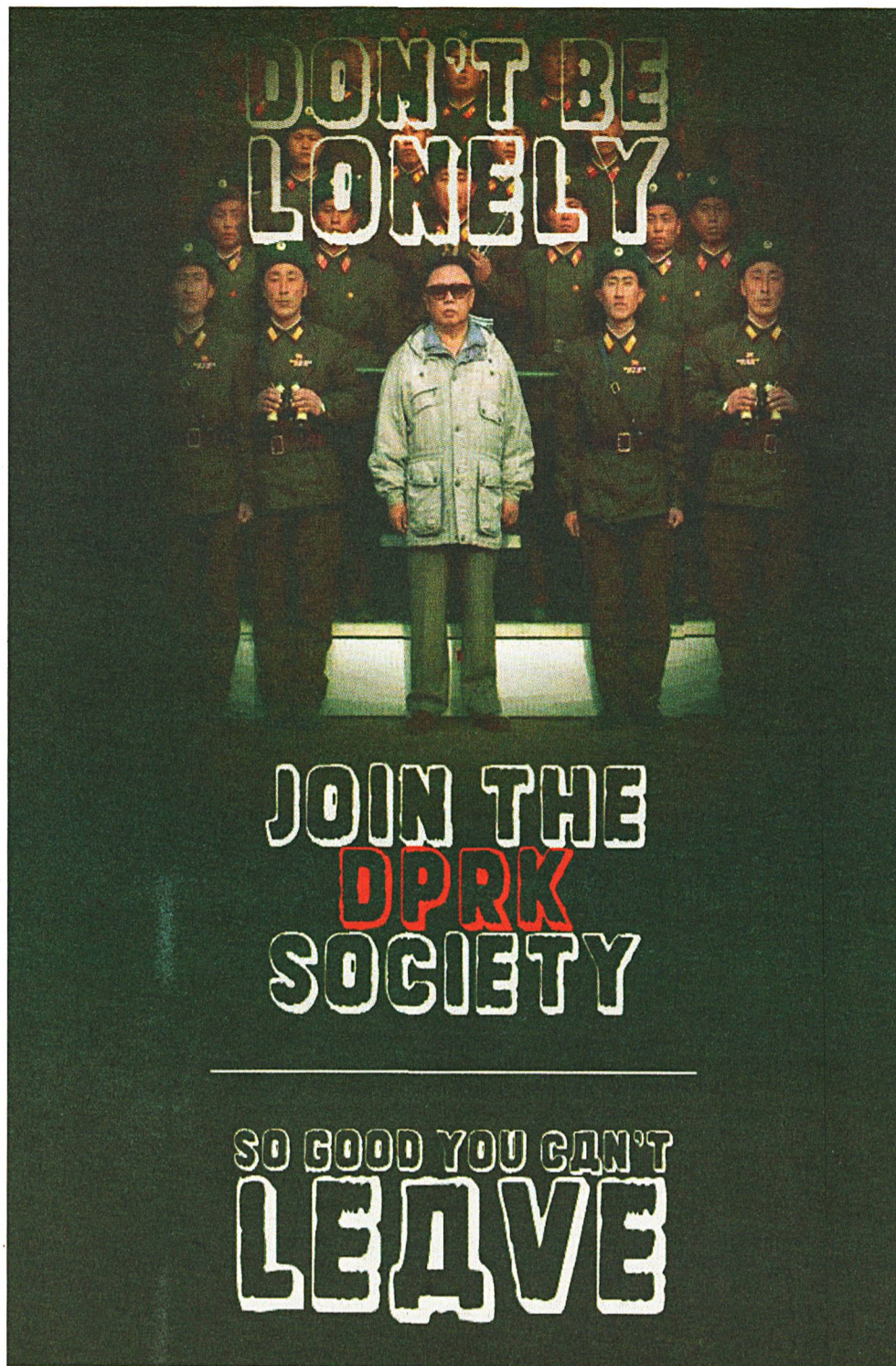
Heldon article continued on page 1 owing to space constraints.

Quick Comment

All comments are positive and therefore it is pointless to publish them.

All is well in our communist utopia and as such, it is inconceivable that any negative comments would be uttered.

There will be NO deviation from the PravdaB line.



Cultural Learnings of Tosca for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of LSSR

Lion Balm
Bourgeois-in-Chief

As Bourgeois-in-Chief, I felt it my duty to visit the Opera, Friday, to find out what all the fuss was about. It was like sitting inside a wedding cake full to the brim with fat old white men trying to impress their trophy wives with a night of 'culture'. It made me sick to the back teeth having to endure this elitist atmosphere, but I was strengthened with the knowledge I was doing it for my fellow workers, to beat the enemy first we must know the enemy.

Comrade Areers was known to have uttered the following: 'despite the crass Capitalist nature of the Opera in general, the performance was not actually that bad. Well acted, with Claire Inarut's portrayal of Tosca as a sturdy, reliable spouse quite convincing.' Given the grave nature of him clearly enjoying this elitist filth I shall give you the review, he is currently enjoying a full re-education program.

More accurately this is a classic tale of the upper classes destroying themselves and hard working men that are forced, with gritted teeth, to assist their folly. Indeed the plight of Spoletta is completely lost in Puccini's fervor to thrust his elitist concerns of the talented, but ultimately unproductive Tosca and her lay-about lover Cavaradossi on the audience.

Without spoiling the ending of this Western, imperialist work by Puccini, Tosca's display of a range

of emotions was reminiscent of early performances by the great divas Maria Callas or even Montserrat Caballe. Or so I'm led to believe, as I was informed by those more borgeoise and elitist than me, comrades.

Although we believe, of course, that Opera is a tool of the United States and Europe to oppress our superior masses, this production of Tosca by the Brit Socialist Opera was worthy of high praise. According to the evening standard.

Those who are ideologically impure can appreciate a fine voice, but the pervading atmosphere is one of superiority and loathing of the working class.

Next time, we hope that the tickets will be free and that all aspects of the production will be moved to Moscow or Havana, where proper ideals will be followed. Of course those who have had to endure this affront to their senses should receive box seats, but that is an issue to be resolved at a later date.

All-in-all an adequate night out at the fascist, Capitalist, and obnoxious London Coliz-eum. For a more enjoyable evening of revelery we suggest a fruitful study of Marx's critique of the Gotha program. Fully understanding the principle of 'To each according to his contribution' may just save your life one day.

Rating: 

Apology to the Workers

Dear Pravda B readers

It is with regret that I must inform you that because of ideological inadequacies the talk initially advertised last week as Marx giving his thoughts on his theory on international socialism has had to be changed. Because his arrival to London earlier this week in first class seating on the locomotive, his Excellency will be unable to attend his own talk. Such a right wing attitude is unacceptable, and given the nature of the Student's Union Bureau of Truth, not even his Grace would be immune from the repercussions from such inevitable blasphemy. Such dissident talk would be, frankly, unacceptable, and as such the event has been altered in such a way as to prevent offense.

This is clear evidence that the forces of capitalism have finally got to him. Whilst his Highness is undertaking a corrective course of thorough re-education, Engels will be taking over any speaking events currently on his Eminence's schedule. We are looking into just who could have possibly gained access to the great philosopher, rest assured the culprit will be caught and removed immediately.

Of course, now that Marx has been removed from the acceptable speaking list for being (temporarily) too rightwing the list of those allowed to address us is growing thin on the ground indeed, the only acceptable speakers left are Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, assuming he's removed that pesky ice pick from his person. But our will will prevail.

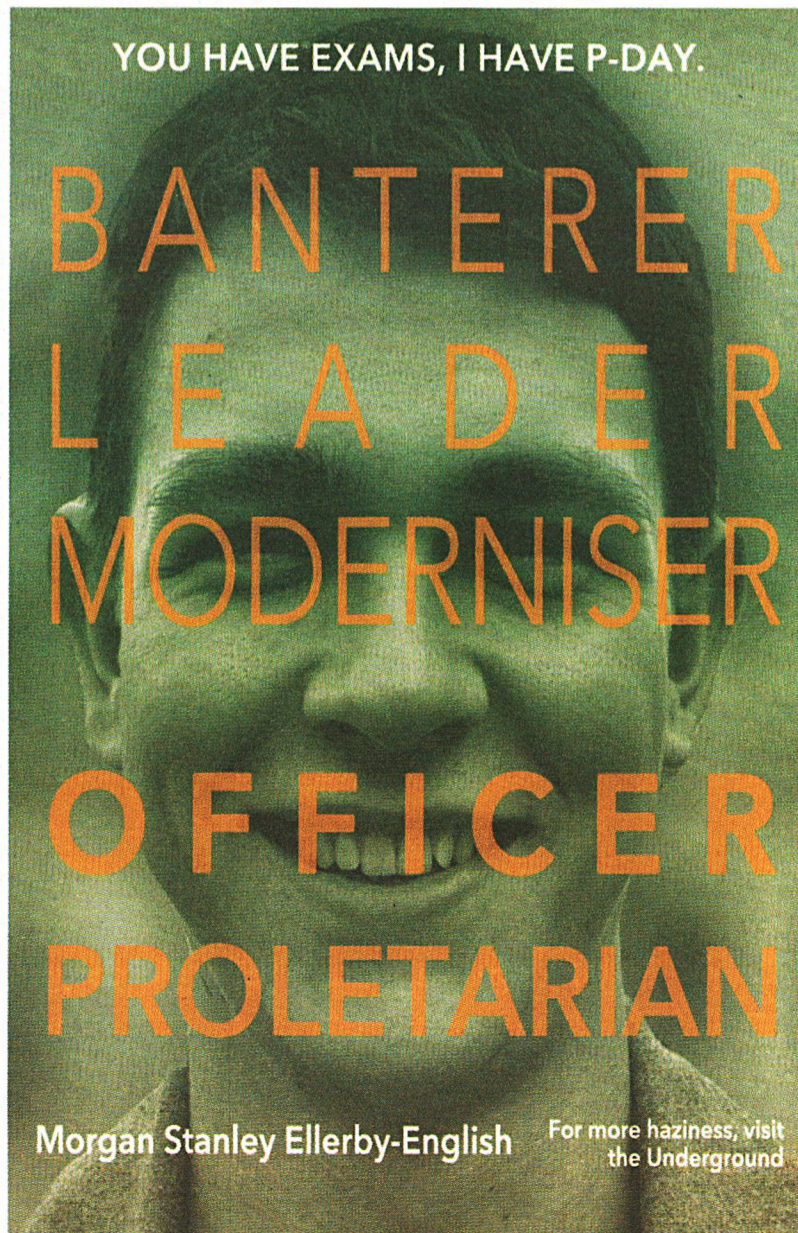
Arguments arguing for the expansion of those allowed to address us have rightfully been dismissed as Fascist.

Many thanks for your continuing support at this difficult time, of course the Party Prevails!

We the undersigned apologise for this previous error:

Commissar for the Truth.
Commissar for Social Justice.
Commissar for Ideological Purity.
Lion Balm, party liaison to the propaganda ministry.
Ginger Whoreby, party liaison to the soulless.

Ed's note, since the paper's never distributed do we even need to bother? I'm fairly sure no-one even saw the advert.



£4 entry after 8p.m.

NEW!!!
Fish
Bowls
£9

CHRISTMAS Crush!

Friday 9th December

SANTA'S MERRY GIVEAWAY (9-10pm):
FREE barrel of beer
FREE SHOT for anyone in fancy dress

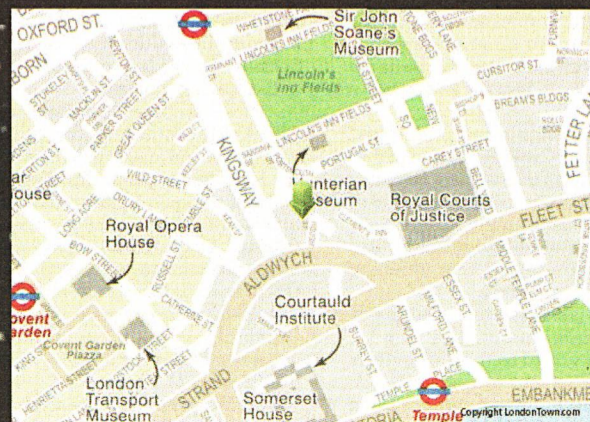
Double Vodka Mixer (exc. Red Bull) £2.95

Double SoCo Mixer £2.95

ALL NIGHT LONG!!

KISS RADIO DJ SET WITH MYLES JAMES
IN THE QUAD 9PM-2AM

CRUSH, The Quad, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE
LSE is at the corner of Kingsway and the Aldwych. The nearest underground station is Holborn, which is on the Central line or Piccadilly line.



Features

Ken's come back

Gurdeep Chhina interviews "Red Ken" about his mayoral aspirations

Ken Livingstone was announced as the Labour candidate for the 2012 London Mayoral elections. Having previously been the mayor of London for two terms, he was defeated in 2008 by Boris Johnson. I met with him after a question and answer session he held at the University of London Union, to discuss his time as London Mayor, his reelection campaign and his plans for office if he is successful.

At the last mayoral elections, why do you think people voted for Boris Johnson? Was this a reflection upon yourself or the Labour party?

It was just the worst time. The economy had just gone in to recession. Then the Labour government abolished the 10 p tax band five weeks before polling. The poorest people saw their tax bill go up. I think it re-awakened a lot of anger amongst white working class people who felt "this government's done nothing for me," and they were largely right. Because the government was far too focused on the agenda of the Daily Mail.

Ed's a very relaxed and modern person and Gordon really wasn't. He was always a struggle.

What would you change in next year's elections?

You never stop changing. I'm still reading and learning, still voraciously devouring new facts. I'm still interested in scientific discoveries across a whole range of areas. I can't imagine people lose an interest in learning. You never stop learning. You never stop changing. People say to me "what was the biggest mistake you made as Mayor?" Actually all the major programmes we carried out worked. If there had been a big mistake people wouldn't need to ask me it would have been all over the papers. So it should have been a successful administration. I've been in local government since 1971, I've been the leader of the GLC in 1981. To have spent that long in London politics and screw it up would suggest you were pretty dim.

You said that the best way to reduce tuition fees is to introduce a progressive taxation policy. If you became London Mayor how would you go about advocating that policy?

Well you can advocate it, the trouble is the mayor doesn't have any taxation powers at all. Whereas when I was leader of the GLC you got 62 per cent of the council's income which was from the business rate. Given the bulk of that was the very profitable corporations at the centre of London, that was very well worth doing and a good mechanism for the redistribution of wealth. That will be the case I make.



Flickr user: Roy Stronton

It's the clearest possible choice. Boris Johnson is campaigning to cut the top rate of tax for the richest 1 per cent, which would save himself £20,000 a year. I'm campaigning to actually cut fairs, hold down rents, for the great majority who are really struggling.

In terms of your relationship with past Labour leaders, is there a reason why you get on better with Ed Miliband, than you did with Tony Blair or Gordon Brown.

It's because we share progressive policies, which Blair didn't have. Ed's a very relaxed and modern person and Gordon really wasn't. He was always a struggle. I mean, it was quite pleasant being with Tony Blair, because if he didn't agree with you, he didn't say so, he just said "I'll get back to you on that." It was much harder work with Gordon Brown.

In response to the London riots, you've said they were caused by a "social dislocation" brought about by the spending cuts. What would you do as Mayor to tackle this?

I mean I don't really have a focus on an agenda just for one class. Unlike Boris.

When Cameron talks about "broken Britain" he's right. There are areas that are broken, there are whole communities that have been broken. What he doesn't accept, admit or understand is that started in 1979 with Thatcher, as in America with Reagan. We've had 30 years of a neo-Liberal economy that has failed. It hasn't generated investment or growth in GDP that we had in the years before. Whole communities have been devastated and effectively all those jobs that working class men did have been wiped out in manufacturing, in the docks, all of that is gone. Jobs that the utilities used to provide have been massively reduced and so you sort of impoverish the working class. There is a lot of anger about that. A lot of lost opportunities. When you

look at Germany where unemployment is only 6 per cent, they're still exporting manufactured goods to China which given the wage differential is stunning. They make certain their banks invested in modernising their manufacturing, developing new products and processes and that's what we've got to do. So a complete shift away from the predominance of finance and business services to a broader base.

How would you go about making sure that the white working class know their votes are very important?

Well I just have a set of policies that are there for all Londoners. Working class or middle class, rich or poor. Everyone benefits from improving the Bus system, increasing police numbers, bringing down crime everywhere. If you attract investment from Brazil or China or India to London, and Middle class and working class people get those jobs, the whole community benefits from that. I mean I don't really have a focus on an agenda just for one class. Unlike Boris.

What about the knife crime problem in London, what do you think is the best way to deal with that?

Well youth knife crime has gone up 30 per cent under Boris Johnson. This was one of his big campaign pledges. Of course, if you spend all your time doing photo opportunities rather than the job. Your focus on re-election rather than actually tackling problems, things like this will get worse. You have to give young people opportunities. You have got to make sure they're not failed by the education system. You have to make certain you name and shame those schools that just kick kids out on to the streets, rather than putting the work in to making sure they get can achieve their potential. You have to make sure that the police are very focused on young people. That they reach out to them and that they get to know them by name. They might be able to get them engaged in youth activities and things like that. One of the things most disappointing is that I left Boris Johnson £79 million which was available to expand youth provision and I see no evidence this has happened. ☹

An equitable future for healthcare

Edward Larkin examines the inequalities within US healthcare



Flickr user: Steve Rhodes

Inequality in health is an uncomfortable issue for the modern developed world. Many view access to healthcare as a basic human right, and even those who aren't so dogmatic about its special status agree that health can defy the neat logic of capitalism. Witnessing someone struggle to pay to protect their own health is perhaps more disconcerting than the struggle to pay for an iPad. Equality – or at least a basic level of satisfactory care – has thus emerged as a goal of modern health systems, and many countries have made admirable inroads. However, the impact of future technological developments on healthcare equality remains open. Will inequality increase, as one might expect given the much talked about income divide?

Ezra Klein of the Washington Post predicts an explosion in healthcare inequality in the United States once the genetics revolution finally reaches the clinic, suggesting that our increasingly precise knowledge about biology (afforded by genomics) will give the rich preferential access to precise therapies that work exquisitely well, while the poor simply won't have the means. Currently, he states, health inequality is limited because modern medicine simply isn't smart enough: if you have advanced-stage pancreatic cancer, it doesn't matter whether you're a billionaire or bankrupt – medicine simply can't do much to help.

The Human Genome Project, completed around 10 years ago, provided the first full sequence of the human genetic code. The results of the massive undertaking were unveiled in the journals "Science" and "Nature," along with much hype and the usual grand predictions about the looming revolution in medicine. However, the project has recently been decried as a failure by some in the popular media.

The more grand hopes of genomics in medicine rested upon a straightforward proposition – if you can decipher a person's genetic sequence,

you can tailor personalised therapy to treat their ailments. If you have a blueprint, you can make renovations. Doctors, researchers, and journalists alike dreamed of a golden age on the immediate horizon in which we would decipher, at a fundamental level, all the human body's predispositions and vulnerabilities, its strengths and weaknesses.

Unfortunately, this turned out to be overly idealistic. The genome sequence has revealed far fewer actionable insights into the basis for disease than many had hoped, and perhaps the most important result from the entire endeavour has been an increased appreciation of the sheer complexity of human life – both in the myriad ways that disease can arise at the genetic level, and the importance of the interactions between genes and the environment (embodied in a hot new field called epigenetics, which studies how the environment modifies genes and their regulation).

However, despite the current disappointment, the genomics revolution will occur. As NIH director Francis Collins says, "we tend to overestimate the short term impact of a technology and underestimate the long term impact." This is almost certainly the case with the genome project, and the genomics revolution will come to medicine within the next decade. The price to sequence a genome has dropped exponentially, even faster than the vaunted Moore's Law in computer science. The \$100 genome is due to arrive in 2015, and companies are already predicting that technology will soon allow an individual's genome to be sequenced in less than 10 minutes. These developments will change everything – sequencing will become a standard part of routine checkups, and the sheer amount of data produced when every single person who goes to the doctor's office has their genome sequenced will certainly yield valuable new insights hidden to current studies, which use much smaller data sets.

So what are the effects of this coming revolution on healthcare inequality? Will it really skyrocket, as Klein suggests?

There may be reason to believe that inequality might actually decrease. One of the main lessons from modern technological advancements is that they don't increase inequality as much as forecasted. The exact same predictions were made about the advent of the radio, television, the Internet, etc. A deep fear that the advent of revolutionary technology will yield two separate classes of human beings – the informed and the excluded, the initiated and the uninitiated, the higher and the lower – seems to come with the territory.

But this is never the way it happens. Kevin Kelly points out in his new book, "What Technology Wants," that while the early adopters of new technologies – typically the rich and technophilic – do indeed reap the benefits earlier than everyone else, they typically have to deal with all the kinks and crudities of the early system as well. Early adopters of mobile phones weren't cruising around with sleek iPhones, armed with all the capabilities of the Internet and the app store – they were toting gigantic cell phones carried around in briefcases that had basically no functionality. Early adopters of TVs weren't surfing 500 digital cable channels and saving programs for later – they could only access a couple channels that functioned a few hours of each day. Early Internet users didn't have Facebook, Twitter, Bloomberg, Gmail, YouTube, or MIT OpenCourseWare – they spent most of their time sitting at their Compaq desktops waiting for AOL dial-up to work.

The same goes for "personalised" genomic medicine. Those who reap the early benefits won't immediately have sophisticated analysis and devastatingly efficient targeted therapies. Early therapeutics will be based on limited data analysis, and truly ef-

fective personalised therapies may require the collection and digestion of millions of samples. This will be possible only when genomics is available to everyone – including low-income patients. Just like other technologies, businesses will always have great incentive to move products downmarket – available at lower cost to more people. That's what has happened with cars, radios, TVs, computers, digital cameras, sophisticated medical techniques, and many other types of technologies. Thus, despite the fact that some argue that technology has contributed greatly to the increasing income divide, many have predicted a much starker divide that never came to fruition.

Peter Orszag notes in a recent Bloomberg column that life expectancy among the rich and the poor has been increasing sharply as of late. Moreover, he argues that health inequality may be exacerbated by new methods of "self-tracking." For example, Orszag uses a Wi-Fi scale to track his weight and send it via a wireless network to his computer, where he can look at graphs and analyse trends. This has been proven to promote healthier eating and an increased ability to keep weight down. He also utilises other gadgets such as the "Fitbit," which tracks the number of steps taken and calories burned every day.

These devices are becoming ever more sophisticated, with the potential to measure ever more meaningful parameters – blood pressure, blood glucose levels, heart rhythms, etc.

But I would frame the current increase in life expectancy differential as an artifact of the current healthcare system rather than a long-term trend bound to continue. Furthermore, I would argue that these sleek new self-tracking devices that Orszag utilizes will eventually help low-income patients more than anyone else.

The poor, who more often suffer from chronic diseases, stand to gain the most from the coming healthcare

revolution. The current system is profoundly ill-suited to treat the kind of chronic diseases that are associated with low-income: hypertension, diabetes, obesity. Going to the hospital after a severe episode is just a fundamentally flawed way to treat these problems.

Atul Gawande wrote a fantastic article in "The New Yorker" this past January about the benefits of continuously tracking, coaching, and helping those who suffer from chronic illnesses such as diabetes and obesity, rather than waiting for them to have a crisis and come to the emergency room. There's an increasing awareness in the medical community that truly reducing health costs requires this kind of focus on poor, uninsured people afflicted with chronic diseases – this represents an incredible opportunity to increase equity and reduce costs, since they contribute disproportionately to the national healthcare burden.

If you look at the marginal benefit of these new devices, those who struggle with chronic diseases stand to gain the most. Obese people stand to benefit most from Wi-Fi scales and devices like the FitBit. Patients who suffer from hypertension and Type II diabetes (both associated with poverty) will benefit most from blood pressure and blood glucose monitors. The prices of these devices will inevitably fall – they won't remain restricted to elites. And when they do, they could provide serious help to poor, chronic disease sufferers for whom the United States' reactionary healthcare system is currently the most ill-suited.

Moreover, modern advances – both in genetics and information technology – will allow the administration of more sophisticated healthcare by physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and technicians in low-cost settings. MinuteClinics at places like CVS/pharmacy are disrupting the centralisation of the typical doctor's office. They cost less and generally avoid long waits, both of which disproportionately affect low-income workers dependent on hourly wages who can't afford to miss much work. Complicated cardiac surgeries are increasingly done with only tiny incisions, routine physician visits have the potential to be exported to mobile phone apps that help with diagnosis and wirelessly send data to the doctor. The barriers to entry are lowering – healthcare is moving out of the ivory towers.

Perhaps this is an overly sunny assessment, but I disagree with Klein's hypothesis that the genomics revolution will tend to increase health disparities. The coming changes in healthcare – both from cracking the human genome sequence and integrating information technology into delivery – have many structural facets that inherently encourage health equity. Healthcare is bound to move out of the hospital and towards the home, and this bodes well for low-income patients who suffer from chronic disease which necessitate consistent monitoring rather than reactionary doctor's office visits after serious incidents. Just because this may be the case, however, doesn't necessarily make it so. While the healthcare of today is likely to become more equitable, cosmetic biotechnology might exacerbate inequality by tomorrow's standards. Working to make sure that healthcare fulfills its potential of a more equitable future will require commitment on the part of business leaders, policy-makers, doctors, and most importantly, us – the taxpayers and patients.

The final frontier of intolerance

John Peart explores the barriers to a genderless society

Some areas of our society are persecuted every day because of how they choose to live their lives. Racial, gender and sexual discrimination are rife within our society even today. Several countries around the world still outlaw homosexuality, punishing those who are "found out" with the death penalty. Fascist organisations like the British National Party and the English Defence League are growing in number and strength, peddling messages of hate and attempting to deny those who don't conform to their discriminatory vision, the right to even exist. The battle for equality and freedom from oppression is far from over.

The Gay Liberation Front challenged the social norms and prejudices of the 1970s and took the first steps of a journey that is still being taken today

But sometimes, it takes one person, or a group of people to challenge the way that people think. The Gay Liberation Front was one of those groups. As a radical and revolutionary force, the GLF challenged the social norms and prejudices of the 1970s and took the first steps of a journey that is still being taken today.

The GLF found its roots in late 1960s America in the wake of a riot

that would come to symbolise the struggle for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer liberation. The Stonewall riots saw the first true resistance to institutional oppression of LGBTQ people; a routine police presence in a well known gay bar escalated into violent protest against state oppression of civil liberties. Democratic principles teach us that all people are created equal under the law, but in 1970s America liberty and freedom of expression applied to some more equally than others and Stonewall soon became synonymous with gay liberation.

The first meeting of the UK arm of the Gay Liberation Front was held in a dusty basement classroom of the London School of Economics in 1970

On both sides of the Atlantic, movements were stirring, riding the wave of enthusiasm that another society was possible. A society free of oppression.

The first meeting of the UK arm of the Gay Liberation Front was held in a dusty basement classroom of the London School of Economics in 1970. Only a dozen people turned up to the inaugural meeting, but little did they know that this would be the start of one of the most high profile, radical, revolutionary, and ultimately short lived organisations is gay rights his-

tory. At the height of the movement, the organisation was regularly hosting hundreds of attendees in the LSE's New Theatre and coordinating action on a massive scale.

The GLF was more than just a pressure group. It was a movement. And it was more than just a gay rights organisation. The GLF allied itself with the women's and black movements, and any movement that was struggling to fight against societal norms to gain equality. The organisation saw itself as more than a one trick pony and more than just a reformist group.

At the core of GLF's vision was a genderless society. It was gender that oppressed gay people and only through the destruction of those gender structures could they be liberated. Reformation was not the goal of the GLF, their goal was revolution. The structures of society were set up so that men were masculine; they sought attractive women and dominated them - women were their subordinates. In such a society, anyone who challenged these norms were outcast. The GLF's mission was to free society from this oppression.

This oppression had to stop and the worldwide GLF movement would stop at nothing to ensure they achieved their mission. In 1971 the organisation published a manifesto.

"We do not intend to ask for anything. We intend to stand firm and assert our basic rights. If this involves violence, it will not be we who initiate this, but those who attempt to stand in our way to freedom."

The message was clear. Expect the unexpected, expect to be challenged and don't expect the voices of

oppressed minorities to go away. The GLF would try anything to shock society into a new world order and spark the structural revolution they so desperately craved. Idealistic, passionate and determined, these revolutionaries would not be deterred by anything.

Perhaps the most well known and inspiring action that the GLF took was an action at the festival of light; an event that was organised and backed by Christian groups. The church had long looked down on homosexuality - certain factions still do to this day - and that made it a prime target for the GLF. To highlight the absurdity of the church's opinion, and the rigidity of the gender structures it reinforced, the GLF organised for dozens of protesters to dress in drag, infiltrate the crowd and pair off in same sex kisses throughout the crowd. The movement grabbed headlines and media coverage around the world with its innovative and strong political methods to such an extent that the effects are still felt today.

But for all its campaigning success, the movement came to an untimely end.

But for all its campaigning success, the movement came to an untimely end. Factions were numerous within the GLF, and they all disagreed about which direction the movement should travel. Both the US and UK arms of the GLF disbanded only a few years after their inception, the UK arm splintering into organisations that still exist

today. Organisations like Stonewall and OutRage! only exist today because of organisations like the Gay Liberation Front. Their tactics may be more reformist, but these organisations continue to push the envelope in the 21st century.

The major barriers to society today for gay people are not structural but psychological

The GLF is probably one of the most revolutionary movements of our time. But its effect on society was not as profound as we might expect. Where the civil rights movement gained legal equality for black citizens, and the suffragettes - also based at LSE - secured the right to vote for women, the gay rights movement has had little impact on the day to day lives of LGBT people across the world. Whilst no longer an illegal act, the major barriers to society today for gay people are not structural but psychological. There is still a stigma attached to being homosexual in our society; there still exists a problem with people's perceptions about the gay community; bullying is still rampant in schools and discrimination is still rife across all levels of our society.

The GLF catapulted the 1970s into questioning its approach to the question of gender and its very existence. This means that today, people like me have a voice in society, but the job is far from finished. ☛



LSE and Libya: the

Nicola Alexander and Alexander Young explore LSE's liasons with Libya, the

THE STUDENT

Even in May 2010 Saif Gaddafi acknowledged the grip that his father, Muammar Gaddafi had over the country and Saif, himself, stating "We cannot do anything without his approval." But in the same speech Saif Gaddafi claimed that Colonel Gaddafi was approving of his reforms. Indeed, the more moderate Saif Gaddafi is evident in the Ralph Miliband lecture that he delivered to the LSE on 25th May 2010 at which he concedes; "It's not a secret that I'm involved with the Palestinians - both sides, Hamas and Fatah... The biggest battle now is how to convince the Palestinians to sit together and try to create one government and join their efforts into just one group."

The turning point in Saif Gaddafi's position, relative to the student at the LSE, was most obvious during the speech delivered on 20th February this year. In the now infamous address to Libya, Saif Gaddafi blamed oil companies, "imperialists," drugs and alcohol for the protests and claimed that if the unrest did not stop "rivers of blood" would flow across Libya. The speech given by Saif Gaddafi in February 2011 is perhaps his second most quoted, the first being the Ralph Miliband lecture he delivered at the LSE in May 2010 entitled, "Libya; Past, Present and Future." At the time praised by many journalists for being forward thinking. In retrospect, the lecture given by Saif Gaddafi has become better known for Professor Held's introduction in which he acknowledged Gaddafi as

"someone who looks to democracy, civil society and deep liberal values for the core of his inspiration." The lecture has been used by the media to characterise Held as an ill judge of character or even to imply that Held was a Gaddafi-sympathiser. Yet Held's concluding remarks are rarely quoted, in them he is critical of Gaddafi, stating, "In your model of democracy I did not hear clear answers to the question of how, in your conception, leadership is transformed - that is, changed - through the democratic process?" Remarkably, the podcast of the - now infamous - lecture is still available on the Public Lectures section of the LSE website.

The LSE maintains that Saif Gaddafi did not fool the School or him during his studies had the School, rather the context of the situation in Libya drastically changed in a short period of time leaving Saif Gaddafi with the historic choice of sacrificing his beliefs or cutting ties to his father, he chose the former. Allegedly Saif Gaddafi had almost two speeches prepared for the night of the 20th February. One by his closest advisor which started with a conciliatory message to the people of Benghazi, apologies and deep concern about what had happened. Instead Gaddafi decided to give the now infamous speech preaching nationalism. Vanity Fair reported on Mohammed al-Hawani, Saif Gaddafi's aid who allegedly drafted this alternative speech.

THE DEGREE

As the focus shifted from the LSE's acceptance of the GICDF's £1.5 million to the legitimacy of Gaddafi's PhD, entitled "The Role of Civil Society in the Democratisation of Global Governance Institutions: From 'Soft Power; to Collective Decision-Making?" the LSE was implicated again. The Independent published claims made by Professor Abubakr Buera of Garyounis University in Libya, saying Saif Gaddafi "gathered some PhD holders" from Buera's own university, to "help him right his doctoral dissertation." Buera specifically claimed that Gaddafi consulted Dr. Ahmed Menesi, an economist who later came out of retirement to take up a series of senior positions within the Libyan government.

The role employees at Monitor Group, a Boston-based management consultancy, played writing Saif Gaddafi's thesis has been called into further question following the firm's admittance that they mishandled a multimillion dollar contract with Libya intended to improve the country's reputation. A spokesperson for the firm said the arranging of visits for academics and policymakers to Tripoli had been based on "misjudged

The conclusion of Lord Woolf's Inquiry into the handling of Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi's admission into the

LSE, the subsequent management of his academic work both during the course of his Master's in Philosophy, Policy and Social Value and in his PhD and the gift received by the School from the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF) brings with it findings that have been dubbed "damning" in the national and international press. No doubt, the report of the Inquiry has cast aspersions as to the propriety of certain conduct of the School, but to take these elements of the Inquiry's report without considering the methodology of the report and normative claims made therein is to do a great disservice to both the School, the Inquiry and honest journalism. It is aimed that these elements be tackled here in order that a more rounded review of the report be given than seen in the press at large.

The crux of the criticisms made by Woolf pertaining to the admission of Gaddafi to the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method for his PhD study was based upon what Woolf terms the "idealism factor": a factor explained by Luc Bovens, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method, as being an "element of idealism present in

providing an education to appropriately qualified students who also came with a promise that they might do some good for the world." Nancy Cartwright, Professor of Philosophy in the Department and strong advocate of Gaddafi's admission, further described the factor as non-decisive in his acceptance to the Department, but as "an additional factor that [she had felt] important, that LSE is part of an international economic and political community and it hopes to train future national leaders."

The factor, however, is not strictly applied to those "likely" to become national leaders and the promise of "changing the world" is not construed in a manner that excludes all but those who happen to be the sons, relatives or followers of government heads: though Cartwright does explicitly mention "national leaders", this may well be a slip into a verbal commitment to this given the context of the Inquiry. There are, arguably, a number of different ways that one can become a "leader" aside from the obvious leadership associated with governance: one could well make a case for one being a national cultural leader, a national leader in academia or a national religious leader just as easily as the case for being a national government leader.

Woolf asserts that, given his rejection for a PhD from the Departments of Management and Government, Gaddafi's application to the

Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method was aided by the Department's policy on "idealism". As a response to such a subjective influence making their way into admissions procedures, Woolf recommends that the "idealism factor" not come into decisions as to admissions of students as such criteria being used would lead to candidates incapable of reaching the necessary standard for PhD qualification. If this were to be the case, it would become more and more difficult to "cut the cord" on the research project when it was clear that it was going nowhere. This would be the case because both the candidate and the academics involved in the supervision of the thesis would have invested too much time and effort to be willing to just sever ties with it. The response that Woolf appears to endorse, based upon a consultation with John Sutton, Professor of Economics at LSE, a system of subcommittees within each department to deal with admissions and thereby add a sense of rigid uniformity across applications within departments.

Such a policy, however, as both Woolf and Sutton concede, would lead to "[the loss] of the opportunity to educate great world leaders": a concession that seems plausible. Their shared assertion that such a problem is a "small price to pay for maintaining academic standards, because that is our business," is less convincing: it is, of course, very important, that the



Flickr user: Mal Booth

end of the affair

scandal that unfolded and where we stand now

School's integrity regarding academic matters be upheld, but this should not come at the expense of being able to educate future world leaders and being able to provide them with analytic tools that lead to better decision making. There is no use being a leading institute of the social sciences if the focus of the research is to be on merely the theoretical without any real scope for the application of theory. If such a system of unified application were to be imposed by the School, this would infringe upon the autonomy traditionally enjoyed by departments within the School: Woolf dismisses any concern for this by stating that the imposition of order and uniformity does not infringe upon the autonomy of departments as they can still work within this framework of their own will. Whether this, however, would be sufficient is a matter for debate: within an institution such as LSE, even though all of the departments are those of social sciences (save for mathematics), there is a large range of approaches and subject material within them. Whether a top-down imposed system of admissions could be functional for all departments within the School remains an open empirical question, with huge risks involved in trying to close it by trial.

Aside from the issues raised by the discussion of the "idealism factor" in admissions procedures, the methodology of Woolf seems somewhat problematic. Much of

the report is based upon interviews conducted with both internal LSE and external sources and, if only for the lack of a mention of anything otherwise, these interviews appear to be conducted and assessed on a basis of good faith rather than any legally binding agreement of honesty. This may well open the door to accusations of collusion between interviewees as to their stories and experiences of the Gaddafi affair in order that people's backs be covered. Of course, one may argue that, under the rubric of Flood and Drescher's Prisoner's Dilemma, that the ultimate end of such a scheme of cooperation would be that all defect from any agreements in an attempt to maximise their respective payoffs. Such assumptions, however, may not apply here: the Dilemma is based upon the assumption that the solution of defect-cooperate leads to the greatest individual payoff for she who defects, and the lowest payoff to those who cooperate. In this instance, it may be that the stakes were sufficiently high for those who were potentially to defect from pre-arranged agreements of mutual dishonesty not to do so, due to the impact of the truth on themselves. The loss of a high-status post may be a greater utility loss than the loss of freedom of a criminal. In such an instance, these lies are made viable for collective action due to the total of potential losses of an individual involved.

The dependence upon documents

released by the LSE to the Inquiry also casts doubt upon the veracity of the conclusions drawn by the Inquiry: if one is to be dependent upon information released from a body that may well have something to hide, it follows that one should be sceptical as to the completeness of the information given. While this may seem paranoid, the School had a lot to lose in terms of anything further than that which was already known coming to light over the course of the Inquiry.

The Gaddafi fiasco marks a historic moment in the heritage of LSE: with accusations of both financial and academic impropriety, it is important that the coverage of this in the media and within the School alike be shaped by a complete and fair-minded analysis both of events and of the conclusions drawn from the report of the Woolf Inquiry. The simple-minded reporting of the affair thus far has been to point fingers at those who are implicated within the report: this is simply not sufficient. The quality of evidence, analysis of this evidence and basis of the normative claims made within the report need to be taken into account just as much as any conclusions derived from these made by Woolf: just as anything follows from a contradiction, anything follows from false or incomplete evidence.

THE DONATION

The Gaddafi foundation was not a completely independent organisation. On behalf of the Gaddafi government, it had organised the release of Abdusset al-Megrahi - the man charged in Scotland in connection with the Lockerbie bombings - and was responsible for distributing compensation to the victims. The release had even been declared part of a political deal by Saif himself. However, in 2008 these aspects of the foundation were not known, it was viewed internationally as a well respected organisation. The GICDF received commendations from several respected philanthropic organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The charity had impressed the groups through its reputation for upholding international human rights standards and promoting political reform.

The decision to accept the donation went through two meetings of the Council, LSE's highest decision making body. It was at the second meeting that the most thorough discussion took place. Fred Halliday, Emeritus Professor of International Relations at the LSE, argued strongly against the grant during the LSE's second Council meeting. He told the

Council that "the most important issue of all is that of reputational risk to LSE." He believed the LSE should recognise that there have been few changes to domestic policies of the regime and spoke out against formal academic ties with the country.

The minutes of the meeting also note that "no academic constraints had been placed on the use of the gift, although Mr Gaddafi had requested Professor Held's assistance in developing a Centre for Democracy and Civil Society in Tripoli." On the table at the second Council meeting was also the fact that, by June 2009, Held had recently been accepted to the board of the GICDF. This was announced after the first Council meeting before LSE announced it would accept the donation. Held subsequently stepped down from the board of the GICDF on the recommendation of the Council. In his brief period on the board of the GICDF, Held acted as an advisor sitting along side other well known academics such as Hernando de Soto, the Peruvian economist famous for his literature on property rights in developing nations, and Benjamin Barber. However, he notes that he attended one subsequent meeting of the GICDF as a guest.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The LSE needs to establish an embedded ethical Code monitored by a set Committee.
- 2) A greater uniformity of practice for PhD admissions needs to be established.
- 3) An academic body needs to be established to oversee postgraduate students.
- 4) Departments should be mindful of maintaining good lines of communications with staff and students.
- 5) A formal idea of what is and isn't appropriate in terms of guidance needs to be established.
- 6) A policy needs to be drawn up for dealing with breaches of said guidance.
- 7) Academics need to be made more aware and continually reminded of the School's Regulations.
- 8) The LSE, as an institution, needs to adopt a policy on donations.
- 9) The donations policy needs to include a procedure for the scrutiny of proposed donations.
- 10) The donations policy should identify whether it is appropriate for donations to be requested by a individual, centre, or department of their own initiative.
- 11) The LSE needs written guidelines on the appropriate relationship between the LSE and a donor.
- 12) The recommendation of the Sutton Report on the governance of research centres should be implemented.
- 13) The Code will apply to all individuals performing on behalf of the LSE.
- 14) The Committee dealing with ethics needs to be given all information on all bodies operating under it's name.
- 15) No donation will be accepted from a current student.



Habari Gani?

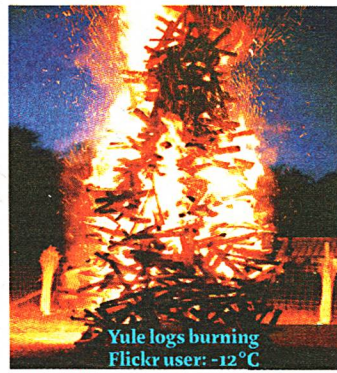
Gurdeep Chhina and Alex Haigh round-up the month's religious and social festivities

Kwanzaa: Celebrated by African Americans and created US organisation, a Black nationalist movement, in 1966. The aim was to reunite African Americans with their African culture. Swahili is used to symbolise Pan-Africanism. The name comes from "matunda ya kwanza" meaning fruits of the harvest and the greeting is "Habari Gani" meaning what's the news?



Christmas tree
Flickr user: Peninumkopi

Yule: Celebrated by pagans, and subsequently Christians, it has fallen on the 25th of December since the introduction of the Julian calendar to celebrate the shortest days of the year. In Scandinavia, the festival is honoured with a "Yule Goat," an ornament originally to celebrate Thor, the Norse God, whose animal is the goat.

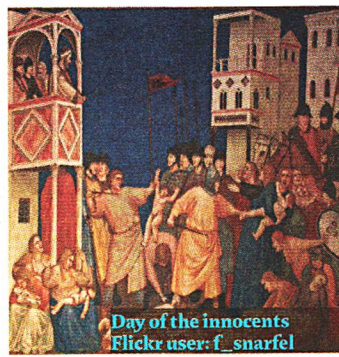


Yule logs burning
Flickr user: -12°C

Bodhi Day: Celebrated by Buddhists across Asia, it is the day that Bhudha achieved enlightenment. According to traditions it is said that on this day, as the morning star rose in the sky, Bhudha had achieved enlightenment and reached the state of Nirvana. Celebrations vary; individuals may chose to meditate, chant Bhudhist texts, and generally be kind towards other individuals

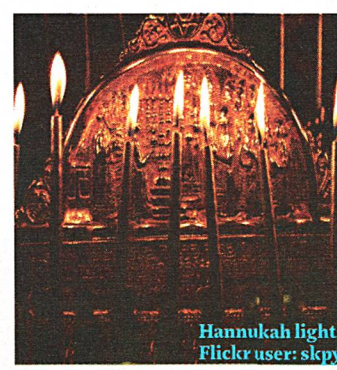


Day of the Innocents: Commemorates the "Massacre of the Innocents," which refers to the infanticide that occurred following the orders of King Herod as he sought to avoid losing his throne to "the King of the Jews."



Day of the innocents
Flickr user: f_snarfel

Hannukah: Celebrated by Jewish people, the festival commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem after the Maccabean Revolt. It lasts eight days to celebrate "the miracle of the oil." It is held on the 25th day of Kirslev, in the Hebrew calendar (late November to Late December).



Hannukah lights
Flickr user: slqpy

Pancha Ganapati: his Hindu festival lasts for five days and is in honour of Lord Ganesha. The festival symbolises a new beginning and the mending of past mistakes. Each day the statue of Lord Ganesha is decorated in different colours; yellow, red, green and orange to represent his five powers, or "shaktis".

Measured musings | Flickers of progress

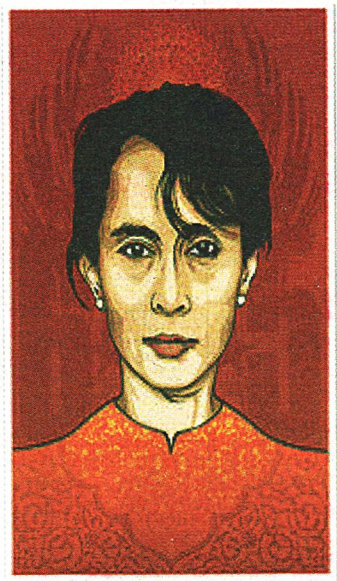
Slowly but surely it appears that Burma is taking steps towards democracy. It seemed to begin with the release of the pro-democracy opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, who had previously been under house arrest. Since then, the country has seen the military take a step back from governance. A series of laws have also passed that suggest the Burmese government is more willing to give its people more extensive civil liberties. Optimism, however, must proceed with caution, it is clear that Burma still has a long way to before it can be considered democratic. The oppressive military regime that rules Burma has been in power since 1962. Its rule has not tolerance for dissidence or opposition, and the few uprisings that have occurred in the past have been quickly crushed. Internationally condemned and classed as a pariah state by Western democracies, Burma has been subject to many sanc-

tions. Despite its flourishing tourism industry and oil exports, financial benefits have not yet trickled down to its ordinary citizens. Of late, it does appear though that the small but telling reforms being made in Burma are a step in the right direction. In October this year, a law was passed allowing workers to form trade unions, provisions for strikes and protests were also made. It is true that the formation of unions has been limited to a minimum of 30 people and that it still remains to be seen how well this law will be implemented. Yet, worker's rights are undoubtedly in a better position as initially they were practically non-existent. Perhaps it was steps like this, along with the government's release of 200 political prisoners, which persuaded the National League for Democracy to re-register as a political party and contest in a series of by-elections this year. The NLD boycotted last year's elections as their leader Aung San Suu

Kyi was not permitted to run. They opposed the previous polls labelling them as an attempt to apply a veneer of legitimacy to the military rule. Perhaps their participation in elections will pave the way for better representation. Other positive steps include the establishment of a Human rights commission in October this year. Steps in the right direction have not gone unnoticed. The Association of South-East Asian Nations, which aims to support economic growth and stability in the region, has awarded Burma the rotary chair in 2014. Western recognition has also followed, with the Hilary Clinton's visit to Burma this month marking the first senior US official to visit the country in almost 50 years. Obama has recognised the "flickers of progress" made by the country's government, Although clearly Burma has started to walk along what Aung San Suu Kyi dubbed "the road to democracy", there is still a while to go. The

military's presence in the government is still firmly constitutionally entrenched, with a specific proportion of seats reserved for military members. The country is also riddled with ethnic conflict, with many minorities seeking separate states and further rights. Despite recent happening, the truth is Burma remains under a largely oppressive regime where freedom of speech is almost unknown and civilians have very few rights to protest. Observers wait in anticipation for the next steps to be taken by the Burmese government. Concessions made could be reversed at the drop of a hat, but there are hopes that the political direction will continue to move towards more democratic reforms. Hopefully Burma won't waver as it takes the long road to democracy.

Gurdeep Chhina
Features Editor





LSE CHINA DEVELOPMENT FORUM 2012

CHINA'S REFORM PHASE II

LSE, London 18th February 2012
 Registration www.lsecds.org

NOTABLE SPEAKERS INCLUDE:



XIAONIAN XU (许小年)

Professor of Economics and Finance at China Europe International Business School (CEIBS)

LAN XUE (薛澜)

Dean of School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University



XIAOPING XU (徐小平)

Co-founder of New Oriental Group (新东方教育科技集团), is now the founder of ZhenFund (真格天使投资基金)

GANG QIAN (钱钢)

Co-Director of the China Media Project at HKU, former managing editor of Southern Weekend (南方周末)



JONATHAN WOETZEL

Director in McKinsey & Company's Greater China Office

KATO YOSHIKAZU (加藤嘉一)

Research Fellow, Research Center for Korean Peninsula Studies, Peking University

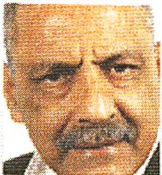


MARTIN KING WHYTE

Professor of Sociology at Harvard University

RICKY BURDETT:

Professor of Urban Studies at the LSE and director of LSE Cities



ATHAR HUSSAIN

Director of the Asia Research Centre at the LSE

DANNY QUAH

Professor of Economics at the LSE



Platinum Sponsors



Match Report

The Social 8ths: Not just social (anymore)

The Netball 8th Team branch out from their usual specialty of Wednesday nights

Ellie Tayler

This week saw the occurrence of the most important game in AU sporting history: The 2011 Inaugural Social 8ths' Netball Match.

The setting was appropriately atmospheric: at Lincoln's Inn on the day of the Pension Strikes, we had an audience of thousands, all waving flags and chanting. Obviously, being a serious netball team, we met up early to discuss important tactical questions like: 'How do you actually play netball?' and 'I can't run with the ball, right?'. Eventually we got to the more complicated rules, such as the footwork rule. The blonde captain, Ellie Tayler, was quickly corrected by our Club Captain, Peppi Barlow (who kindly umpired), when she called it the 'footstep rule'.

Having mainly not played netball since Year 7, choosing positions was a slight hurdle. There was a scramble to grab the positions that required the least running and our fortunate ex-captain Jess Burns managed to get Wing Defence – widely recognised as the least effort. The blonde captain bravely took the short straw and played Centre. Luckily, we had a good turnout and had 2 substitutes, so no one actually died from respiratory malfunction due to lack of fitness.

It quickly became clear that we were no match for the 7ths and their shooters (who this year beat even the 5th team) and we were left to being very sporting when they successfully scored after each centre pass. So half way through, it was decided that we should mix the teams up.

After this, we all performed much better. Our best player was clearly Charlotte Campbell, who scored lots of goals and was even scouted by the 7th team to play some matches for them. She's also our tallest player, which seems to be important in netball.

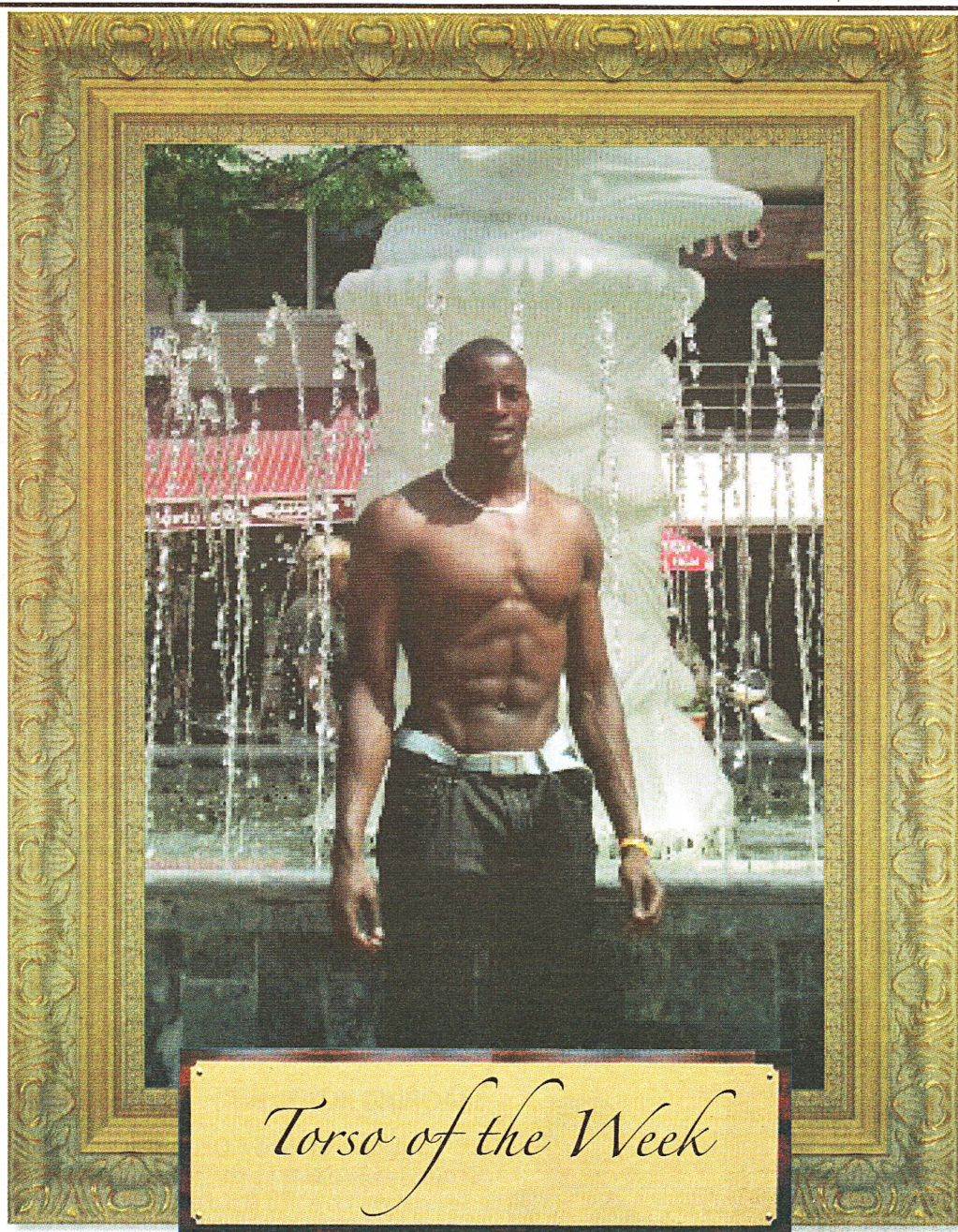
A highlight of the match was the brunette captain, Lauretta Molica-Franco, scoring a goal, which was followed by a celebration worthy of winning a world cup. A fight to the death over something we were told is called a 'toss up' also ensued after a scramble resulted in the blonde captain sitting on top of Gemma Wood. Used to playing rugby, it seemed she had gotten confused about the fact that netball is non-contact.

The match was great fun and everyone really enjoyed it, but of course the Social 8ths are better known for our excellent Zoo Bar turnout.

We are frequently to be found The Beaver's gossip column, showing that we do deserve our title of the 'social' team. Particular mention goes to Laura Aumeer, possibly the most 'sociable' of our team, who always commits herself to improving relations between our team and male members of other sports clubs.

In particular, we have excelled at the AU tradition of dressing up and at Carol this year we looked wonderful as Puss in Boots (think musketeers, but with faces so orange that Essex would be proud). Obviously, as we are hard-core, we had many members lasting until Crush.

The Social 8ths plan on continuing their sporting streak, but mainly, we'll see you all in Zoo Bar.



Dismay as no women shortlisted for SPOTY

Why the outcry at the system is wrong

Richard Illingworth

Portions of the British sporting public are in uproar due to no sportswomen being deemed worthy enough to be part of the 10 place shortlist for the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year. Some see it as an attack of women's sport, some see it as an outcome of a male-orientated voting panel. World Champion swimmers and Ironman champions are being thrust into the spotlight in efforts to suggest that athletes have been ignorantly overlooked, however the reasons for a male dominated shortlist are much more fundamental than the arguments promoted in the media.

Quite simply, there is a severe lack of platform for women's sport to be portrayed to the British public on. Lack of TV coverage, media interest, public interest turned into stadium attendances. There are many basic issues as to why sportswomen aren't glorified in the same manner as male athletes, but they all result in sportswomen not being stamped on our imaginations in the same fashion as sportsmen.

Truth be told, women's sport is not taken as seriously as male sport across the entire board. Attending a Twickenham rugby game where it is announced that a women's international will follow illustrates this point perfectly. Whilst 80,000+ fill the stadium for the male international, the women's game will be lucky to get a tenth of the capacity.

Outside of significant sporting events such as the Olympics, or dominating world record setting or gold medal winning performances

made viewable in the eyes of the British public, women struggle to gain nominations. Observing the past 5 years nominations, all women are



Flickr user: conservativeparty

nominated on the basis of such a noticeable performance on a global stage. Nominations for performance over a year, such as Andrew Strauss' and Andy Murray's, are incredibly difficult for women to attain due to a lack of consistent coverage of their sports.

However the issue is not of the reasons for the perceptions of women's sport, but of the outcome of this. Sports Personality is about an athlete capturing the mind of a nation, Sir Steve Redgrave and Dame Kelly Holmes being obvious examples. The mistake many make is confusing SPOTY with most successful athlete of the year. Winner of the women's Ironman World Championship Chrissie Wellington may well have had more success than Amir Khan, but Khan is talked about as a potential pound-for-pound champion whereas Wellington is unheard of. If the success alone approach was taken, we'd be discussing 13-time SPOTY Phil 'the Power' Taylor.

Rather than discussing whether potential nominees had greater or equivalent success, the critics should evaluate who had a greater impact of the British conscience. Yes both Rebecca Addington and Dai Greene are gold medallists at world championships, but Dai Greene emerged in an event with a poor track record of British success. Addington's race received less press coverage and suffered from greater previous success, thus reducing her impact on the minds of British sports fans.

The attack of the system used for

voting, where sports editors round the country, but sadly not our own Beaver's, seemingly ignores the fact that these journalists pin-point the most defining moments of British sport in the past year and they are in the best position as journalists to judge this because of what they deemed news worthy. You can label the voting system as fatally flawed and sexist, which is currently forcing the BBC into a review of the system, but any forceful amendment could degrade women athletes greatly. Talk of a quota would go against every athletes principle of earning awards out of genuine hard work.

The BBC needs to see through this haze of criticism and look into reality. The simple matter is that when you combine a competition that is about the impact of sports stars success on a country, a society who is much more obsessed with male sport which corresponds into a greater percentage of media coverage and attention than their female counterparts, it is not surprising to discover that sportswomen normally provide only 2-3 nominations. This combined with the consideration that this year has been rather unimpressive in women's sporting achievements that had captured the British sports fans attention, zero nominations for women is of no matter. If people feel compelled to cure this 'injustice' then they should subsidise women's sports on TV, not have a moan.

The incessant managerial merry-go-round

Managerial cuts continue as more and more premier league managers lose their jobs

Jack England

The sacking of Steve Bruce last week saw a continuing trend of at least one premier league manager losing his job before Christmas, which has happened every season since the turn of the millennium. It had seemed that there may have been the slightest hint that chairman were beginning to give their managers more time to make their mark, with the sacking of the first premier league manager becoming progressively later in the last 3 seasons. Paul Hart lasted until November of the 2009/10 season, Chris Hughton until December of last season and now Steve Bruce had lasted nearly 5 months of the current campaign. Although this is an improvement on previous years, it still seems a sorry state of affairs for Premier League managers' job security, when at least one of them will not last half a season.

Current Premier League chairmen are often too quick to jump to the 'solution' of sacking their manager after any run of bad result. Any reasonable football fan is likely to tell you that for a team to flourish they need consistency within the club and time to develop. Wigan boss Roberto Martinez put it perfectly when speaking about Steve Bruce's recent departure, stating 'Stability and patience are two words that are needed at a football club'. Martinez is lucky enough to have an extremely faithful chairman, who has seen 2 of the last 3 men he appointed as manager resign not sacked, Bruce resigning on two separate occasions coincidentally. Richard Bevan, the

League Managers' Association (LMA) chief executive has also highlighted the importance of a chairman's ability to persevere with their manager, stating 'In any form of working life - business, government or sport - you need time to build your team and deliver that philosophy on what you're looking to achieve.'

If chairmen needed any more convincing, then they should look no further than the 10 longest serving managers within the football league. 5 of these managers are in the Premier League, managing Manchester United, Arsenal and Everton, 3 of the most consistent teams in recent times, as well as Stoke and Wolves who are cementing themselves as Premier League regulars after recent promotions. If we look at the 5 other managers in the top 10 we find, amongst others, those managing AFC Wimbledon and Crawley Town who have also seen huge success by their own standards in recently being promoted to the football league and performing admirably up to now. So if the general consensus in the majority of the footballing world is that managers need time and support, then why do many chairman still consider sacking their managers as the most effective way to tackle a bad run of form?

This lack of job security for Premier League managers can be put down to a by-product of how the modern game has developed transforming football into an increasingly global game and along with this, a lucrative business. The last two decades of the premier league has been defined by a monopoly of the richest clubs, who have taken part in increasing expen-



Flickr user: zawtowers

sive transfers. This has led some clubs within the top leagues to view large expenditure during the two transfer windows as the foremost way to improve their teams and achieve success. Although this technique can obviously be effective, as we have seen with the sudden rise of Manchester City, it may not suit many other Premier League clubs who do not quite have the finances to splash out on International players in every single transfer window. As some of these more cash-strapped clubs and chairmen have continued to try and spend as much as possible during certain transfer windows, added pressure is put on the managers making the signings due to the price tags on the heads of their new players. Therefore if the players are not immediately effective then the manager comes under pressure from

not only their out-of-pocket chairman but their supporters as well who expect that such large expenditures on players should have instantaneous effects on their team's performance.

This pressure from fans and chairman may be magnified due to the large financial incentives surrounding Champion's League qualification at one end of the table, as well as relegation at the other. We are seeing continuing growth in inequalities in wealth between those who qualify for European competitions and those who don't, as well as between those in the Premier League and those in the leagues below. This situation is causing chairmen to panic as soon as they see clubs who are similar to themselves performing better for a period of maybe only a quarter of a season.

This panic may have set in at Sun-

derland, who after bringing in several new players during the summer, have seen teams such as their local rivals Newcastle experience outstanding starts to the season. This is not to say however that Steve Bruce was definitely the right man to take Sunderland forward, but as they currently lie above the relegation zone and only 5 points from 9th place, it may be fair to say that he could have been given more time to see his new signings settle in and develop a team around them.

The incessant managerial merry-go-round that we see within not only today's Premier League but the Football League as a whole does not seem to be slowing down any time soon. 50% of premier league managers at the end of last season had been at their clubs for less than 12 months. Premier League managers need to hope that as the division as a whole becomes more competitive and as more clubs try to cement their position financially and cannot splash out on lavish transfer fees, that their chairman begin to recognise this and choose stability instead of sacking. You only have to look at the likes of David Moyes, Alex Ferguson and Arsène Wenger to see that when a manager is at the right club, has the backing of his chairmen and is given time to build the team and club to their own specifications then it will only bring improvement. However, the high expectations and therefore high pressure brought about by big money transfers and competitions is still at the forefront of many chairmen's thinking. This leaves us with the question, who is next? Steve Kean? Owen Coyle? Or even AVB? I'm sure we will soon find out.



So, I can be forgiven for being a little bit worried about last Wednesday. Unsurprisingly, many people wanted to "allow" Zoo Bar in anticipation for Carol on Friday. And allow they did - for the first time, it seems like Zoo Bar had a lower attendance than UGM, which was an impressive feat in and of itself. Regardless though, the true veterans, the heroes, the torch-bearers soldiered on and made the most of an airy Zoo Bar.

Credit must be awarded to those who were in attendance though, for being more "on it" than Sonic. The 15-strong group that was present, which consisted primarily of the sausage-fest that is the LSEAU Rugby Club made sure they

decided to duck out for the best part of an hour. In the words of Adele, rumour has it... nah, we don't actually know what they did, but I'd imagine a condom or two was missing from Gash's wallet. On an aside, the cheeky man clearly gets around a lot as he was seen with a not-so-Ugly Duckling on Wednesday and seemed unphased by interjections and interruptions by fellow rugby players.

Cheeky chappy Gizzly Bear was also spotted on Wednesday getting down and dirty, sneaking a backside grope of the voluptuous lady whose lips he fell on.

Mycock's love triangle did not go unnoticed, and for once, it was other Zoo-goers who were acting as paparazzi for the night. His drunkenness, however, manifested itself in a phenomenal and frankly unprecedented collection of acrobatics that attracted the unwanted attention of the Zoo Bar bouncers - who incidentally had only

just placed baby-faced Martin in the corner for a time out. Said acrobatics included rolie-polies across the Zoo Bar chairs, Beyonce booty-shaking at randoms and a spectacular tumble out of Zoo Bar, taking down the barriers, innocent bystanders and a security guard. Smooth.

At this stage, I'd like to interject with a congratulations to Captain Mateer and her partner in crime Johnston, who along with a select few spectacular individuals recreated their own mini interim tour - Zoo Bar followed by Law Ball followed by Carol.

Strong. And now, to Carol.

The ultimate AU social event for the year, where men were made and weasels were broken. Chunder was strewn across Houghton street before midday and bemused expressions were to be found on the innocent perplexed bystanders who were trying to make their lectures - well done to the multi-tasking individuals who managed to attend classes AND Carol - good effort. A round of applause must go for the costumes, but a slightly awkward turtle was to be found by the two teams who both turned up in Elf outfits - you know who you are. Particular highlights included the Queens of Heart and our odd duo in morphsuits, who gave more of a show than what we can expect in the upcoming charity naked calendar.

As revellers got to the Den, the shagging began, with people mistakenly believing that their costumes would mask their identities. Special mentions must go to the Snow Queen who had her Gaelic Kiss for the night, the Toy Story Alien who locked lips

with a Finnish Elf and to the Rugby 1st Team Hunter who was being straddled by up a hockey squeeze. Clowns were reliving previous Wednesday columns with footballers, and the ugly ducklings felt like swans with all the attention they were getting. Whilst two of your number partook in PDAs, your Ugly Netball Vice Captain ducked out once again early for some inter-animal breeding with a racoon-dayum gurl, you naaaasty.

As fines ensued, this column found its use with sexcapades publicly named and shamed. All those who were with a blonde bombshell were identified and jeered at, whilst cock-teases and repeated shags with other Kiss members were publicly outed and handcuffed - much to the fury of one Armenian Kiss. An attempt at a Rowing fine failed as the fine-submitter was instead made to down a special concoction of alcohol and a mixed-grill, turning the stomachs of the already queasy drunken spectators. Captain Mateer's conquests were also pulled on stage and she received a sexy lap dance from her latest baby-faced squeeze.

As events at the Den came to a close, and fancy dress parts were left strewn across the floor, Carol-goers dropped like flies. McDonald's and Chicken Cottage seemed like the downfall for many, as hangovers began to kick-in and the Tuns was the place for many a post-lash nap. The stumbling revellers slipped and slid across the hazardous floor as they tried to muster up one final ounce of energy and see who could be the last man standing for the night.

Wasted to within an inch of their lives, the Statue herself and flatmate Brown were looking



some-what worse for wear as their bleary-eyed smiles and dishevelled hair

greeted all who spoke to them. Mycock decided for a re-enactment of Wednesday and Rugby Club Captain Jones took a prolonged nap whilst counterpart Lennon embarked on a spree of spanking with his hunter's whip.



Lastly, this is your final bit of gossip for this term.

It's been an honour divulging your sexcapades, and I can't end this without a special mention for the Women's Rugby club, who vociferously forced me to include something about them - I'm sure at least one of you was shagging this week. Watch out in the first issue of next term for a recount of all the tales of Ski Tour and any other sordid stories I hear from Christmas. Happy Holidays! xx

the most of their night. Gash Dasari and 2nd team's Johnston were locking lips before they

Sport

Inside

- Managerial cuts continue
- I Know Who You Did Last Wednesday
- The Social 8ths: Not so social (anymore)

Chelsea forwards deserve some blame

Chelsea's front men are as much to blame as their defence

Amit Singh

Of late there has been a huge amount of criticism levelled at Chelsea's defenders, much of it duly deserved. A once water-tight defence is now seemingly leaking goals on a far too regular basis, so much so that the club have only managed to keep three clean sheets in the Premier League this season. However the over emphasis on Chelsea's defensive problems masks the realities of their deficiencies in front of goal.

Recent back to back clean sheets against Newcastle and Wolves point to slight improvement with Chelsea defending slightly deeper. Luiz however still looks erratic, incredibly lucky to survive a red card against Newcastle although Terry put in a better performance. Against Valencia on Tuesday much of the attention will be focused on the defence but perhaps it should look at Chelsea's misfiring forwards.

To blame the back four solely for Chelsea's defensive deficiencies is harsh. The tactical shift that has taken place under AVB revolves around winning the ball high up the pitch and looking to constantly press, something that involves every individual player and can leave gaps if possession is not won or mistakes are made, which is a distinctly different tactic to the deep

defending used under Mourinho and those who followed him. The result of this has been that Chelsea are conceding less shots on goal than last year as well as catching the opposition offside more which suggests structurally the tactic is working. But it has led to lapses in concentration and Chelsea's slow defence being caught out at times.

In the 5-3 defeat against Arsenal the usually reliable Cech was arguably at fault for at least three of the Arsenal goals getting beaten easily at his near post by Van Persie, Santos and Walcott. With regards to the Santos goal it highlights a clear theme. The full-backs are encouraged to win ball high up the pitch and surge forward. What becomes clear with this goal was that Sturridge, for all his attacking qualities lacks the discipline to cover his full-back as he completely lost Santos for Arsenal's third, as was the case for Leverkusen's equalizer last week where Sturridge completely lost his man.

It seems odd to criticize a forward for defending but in this formation as stated the emphasis is on defending all over the pitch and thus discipline is required from the forward men.

Striking problems

You could go as far as to argue that Drogba and Torres have been the biggest beneficiaries from the defence's poor form as it has taken attention away from their own dismal perform-

ances. In football it is obvious to state that you win games by outscoring the opposition. Were Chelsea firing successfully upfront nobody would care about how many they concede at the back.

A staggering stat is that Daniel Sturridge who is being played wide on the right has outscored Drogba, Anelka, Lukaku and Torres combined, all of whom have occupied the centre forward role at some time this season. Chelsea are attacking more fluidly than last year but without a centre-forward who is successfully running the line or scoring goals which is seriously worrying and a serious factor behind the clubs recent poor form that has been overlooked of late.

Arsenal's defence for example is weak but they are continuing to pick up points due to their attacking potency which massively revolves around Van Persie's goal scoring form. City have Aguerro, Dzeko and Balotelli who have been in good goal scoring form, Hernandez is doing well at United and Rooney's failure to score in the last seven is a factor behind their recent poor form.

Part of the reason for this is due to the transition going on at Chelsea at the moment. AVB has drastically changed the way Chelsea play both defensively and offensively. Offensively Chelsea traditionally would counter as well as look to utilize the power of

Drogba through long balls and a more direct style. Viewing Chelsea lately has made it clear that the emphasis is on a more concise build up. Cech regularly plays the ball out to the back four or Mikel (as was the case for Maxi's goal for Liverpool last week) rather than knocking it long.

The addition of Mata and Sturridge was aimed at supporting Torres as they provide the flair and creativity to play balls in behind (Sturridge did this to great effect to assist Drogba versus Leverkusen to be fair). Far fewer balls are coming into the box in the air now as Torres favours running onto passes and playing on the deck. Drogba has enjoyed a decent spell in the last two weeks scoring twice but still looks less powerful than he once did.

Torres at £50 million represents a huge headache for AVB. Torres showed moments of his old self before his red card versus Swansea and started all four league games prior to that, however since returning he has only started one in four since, which could show AVB is losing patience. However Torres could be key to any successes Chelsea could experience this year and getting him firing has to be a priority with a lack of better alternatives. His moments of brilliance against United (despite the miss) and a few more dynamic performances hint that he could be getting better which could leave some cause for optimism for Chelsea



Flickr user: AtilatheHun

fans and AVB.

Defensively perhaps AVB should slow down the transformation as Chelsea's defenders at current lack the pace to defend high up the field and prevent balls in behind which was a huge problem against Arsenal, where Gervinho and Walcott regularly exploited gaps in behind. It will take time for the side to adapt to this style of play which represents the biggest tactical shift of any manager to proceed Mourinho and thus Abramovich needs also to give AVB the time to complete his overhaul. Chelsea will need to get either Torres or Drogba firing if they want to get back into the title race especially now as they face both Spurs and Man City in December, they can ill afford to continue carrying a passenger in the centre-forward position.

LET'S TALK TACTICS



R.I.P. Gary Speed: A tribute

Timothy Poole

There are many atrocities in our beloved game of football; hooliganism and racism are prominent examples. Yet when a tragedy befalls the sport, the underlying nature of why we watch and play it surfaces to reveal something beautiful. In the face of disaster, all those involved in football, harmonious and unified, show what is good about humankind. It happened after Hillsborough, after Heysel, after the Munich disaster. And it's happening again now.

Gary Speed was found hanged at 7am on Sunday 27th November by his wife, Louise. An inquest will investigate the circumstances and reasons why on the 30th January.

The shock of such news has left the football and non-football world alike in paralysis. Former and current colleagues, Robbie Savage, Shay Given and Craig Bellamy were left in tears on national television; joining them were many others who had worked with Speed and a nation in mourning. Not



Flickr user: PhotographybyUrbaneyes

to mention his family.

Though, in the aftermath of tragedy, it is the positive side of human nature that must be embraced and used to celebrate a life of success on and off the pitch. In matches around the country, minutes of silence and minutes of applause have been held in Gary Speed's honour, fans in Leeds have chanted his name for 11 (his number at Leeds) minutes and his family have been 'overwhelmed' by

support from people from all walks of life. This is truly touching.

Gary Speed MBE will always be known as a consummate professional. Every so often, a character appears to lead others: modest and understated... dedicated and inspirational. Paul Scholes is a fantastic example. So is Gary Speed. His forte did not lie in possessing immense natural talent; he was a workhorse. Hour after hour of perfecting his technique on the

training ground was Speed's way of becoming the best - and then getting even better. Amongst a generation of footballers that did not know the health and fitness benefits of today, he stood out from the crowd. He adopted a modern approach to diet and fitness and set the example for others to follow.

Speed guided by doing. He played at the highest level until the age of 39, subsequently going into management and leading Wales from 117th to as high as 45th in the FIFA world rankings within a matter of months. During his reign, Wales won 11 of their 28 matches. As a player, he captained Wales 44 times and is their most capped outfield player in history, with 85 appearances. During this time, he scored seven goals for his country.

Another exceptional quality was his supportiveness of others. He was a devoted family man, whilst younger team-mates would always cite how helpful he was to them. Speed earned respect by giving respect. A regular captain, he always had the necessary leadership qualities within him to produce the best from himself and others. Speed was a flexible player who

could play at left back, on the left flank or in central midfield. He was a goal scorer and creator, scoring 103 goals in 677 Premier League appearances and contributing with numerous assists. A playing career spanning 12 years saw him play for Leeds United, Everton, Newcastle United, Bolton Wanderers and Sheffield United. He was awarded an MBE by her majesty in 2010.

Gary Speed is best summed up by the Leeds fans that so wonderfully embraced what is positive about football, sport and humanity overall. During their recent 4-0 win over Nottingham Forest, Leeds supporters chanted 'there is only one Gary Speed'. Indeed there is, and though he is no longer with us, his legacy will live on forever.

Happy Holidays from your Sports Editors - see you next term for more articles, match reports and gossip!

Best,
Maz & Max