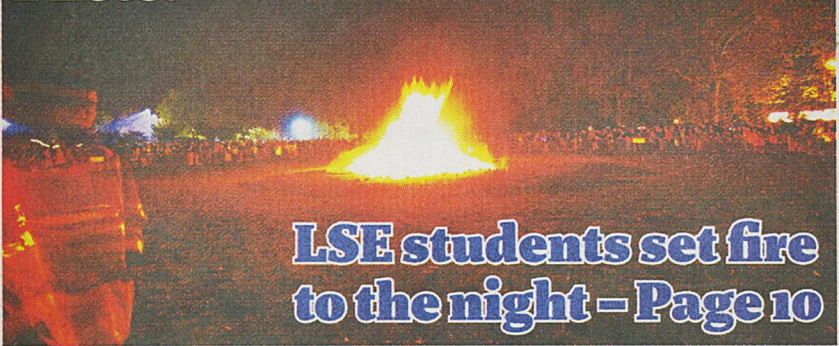


Photo:



LSE students set fire to the night - Page 10

Features:

# KNOCKOUT

Deist delusion or atheist absurdity? Page 16



# The Beaver

9 November 2010  
Newspaper of the  
LSE Students' Union  
thebeaveronline.co.uk  
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## Davies - "We have difficult decisions to make"

Oliver Wiseman  
Sachin Patel

The LSE's Director clashed with members of the Students' Union at last week's Union General Meeting.

At his termly UGM appearance, Howard Davies faced a barrage of questions regarding the School's reception of the 'Freeze the Fees' campaign. Additionally, Davies addressed issues surrounding the future strategy of the LSE.

"This is a difficult time for universities," said Davies at the start of his unusually lengthy speech last Thursday. Amidst a tense atmosphere, Davies presented a comprehensive picture of the LSE's current position, before fielding a series of questions from students unhappy with his reception of the Students' Union's headline 'Freeze the Fees' campaign.

Banners claiming that "The LSE is loaded" and advertising Wednesday's NUS-led demonstration over cuts to Higher Education funding were draped from the Old Theatre's circle by the campaign team, as Davies set out his view on the Browne Review and planned government cuts to Higher Education funding.

Describing Browne's suggestions as "very disappointing for the LSE", Davies made clear his disagreement with the report's proposed complete cut of teaching grants to all non-STEM subjects. "Implicit in that is the conclusion that nothing taught at the school is of any social benefit" said Davies. Sir Howard noted that, despite the "day to day" changes in the government's higher education policy and the relevant bill's nascence, "senior management is working on the assumption that all of our teaching grant will go. This amounts to around £8million or £2,700 per [home and EU] student."

"The inequity of cross-subsidisation [between domestic or EU students and foreign students]" is an aspect of Higher

Education funding that Davies claimed to find "uncomfortable". This concern was put to the Browne review by the LSE's staff at its consultation stage. "We argued for a mixed economy of funding but expressed concerns about inequities between different types of student when making our submission."

"It is quite curious that you've not mentioned Freeze the Fees in anything you have said - I'd be interested in your stance on the campaign" asked one student. "The situation has changed rather significantly since the campaign was launched", responded Davies, "it now looks as though we're getting no teaching grant whatsoever. I don't think that in the current environment [Freeze the Fees] is a realistic objective... Its also an incredibly blunt tool that awards huge benefit to those who don't warrant it."

In response to a request for the Director to back Wednesday's demonstration, Davies said, "I support some of what it says and not all of it. Some of what is said is probably unrealistic in the current environment". Another student expressed concern over the LSE's efforts in lobbying the government on Higher Education funding, asking if writing letters was enough. "I've been in government and know how policy is made. Against that background I'm confident we are doing the right thing," responded Davies.

Diametric opposition emerged between Davies and the LSE Students' Union Education Officer, Ashok Kumar, over the feasibility of the Freeze the Fees campaign.

>> continues on page 3

Comment - page 7

## A frosty reception

Angry student protesters greet Energy and Climate Change Secretary outside the NAB



Photo: Duncan McKenna

Sachin Patel  
Vivek Kotecha

The Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change used a public lecture at the LSE to outline the Coalition government's plans for green growth and a sustainable economy.

Chris Huhne, a Liberal Democrat MP who previously signed an NUS-organised pledge supporting the abolition of university tuition fees, faced a Students' Union-led protest outside the New Academic Building before he was able to speak in the Sheikh Zayed Theatre last Tuesday.

The protest, which was attended by two members of the National Executive Committee of the NUS, was organised by a team of student activists including the Students' Union Education Officer, Ashok Kumar. Over 60 students attended the protest, carrying placards and chanting slogans such as "Shame on you for turning blue" and "No ifs, no buts, no education cuts".

The LSE's Director Howard Davies was also affected by the protest. Having initially walked past students on his way into the NAB, Davies turned to address the protest after Ashok Kumar shouted at him for "turning his back on students". However, as he started to talk, protesters resumed chants of "Freeze the fees", drowning out his voice.

On the motives for the action, Kumar said, "We are stunned that Chris Huhne has the gall to show his face on a university campus after shamelessly renegeing on the promise to abolish fees." A statement from the Students' Union Sabbatical Officers added, "The LSE SU is following the lead of students at Oxford University [sic], who recently forced ... Vince Cable to cancel his planned trip".

>> continues on page 4

## Hardship funds hold-up "stressful and frustrating"

Alev Sen

Students have been left struggling for weeks because of delays in receiving hardship funds from the Students' Union. Many students have still not received a decision regarding their application for funds and there has been confusion over who is to blame for the delay.

The Students' Union's hardship funds are made available for all students facing financial difficulties or unexpected study related costs, through awards from the LSE. They are mostly means tested and include the Students with Disabilities Fund, Childcare Fund, and Emergency Housing and Homelessness Fund.

The application process requires that the student applying provides supporting evidence, e.g. evidence of debts, and letters of recommendation from the Disability and Wellbeing Office and fills out an application form to be considered by the Students' Union Advice and Support Service. However, many applicants have

been turned away at the start of term and on numerous occasions throughout term by Students' Union advisers who have said that they are yet to receive the money promised from the LSE for the funds.

One student who applied for the Students with Disabilities Fund made a formal complaint to the Advice Centre about the delay, having made a claim before term had started. She was under the impression that by applying for the fund she would receive funding quicker than if she applied via the DSA (the government's Disabled Students Allowance), and was "very concerned" about how long she had to wait. She was repeatedly told by numerous advisers that the funds were not yet available and to come back to apply later.

Speaking of her experience, she said that having to "chase up advisers for updates" on the fund's position was "extremely stressful and frustrating". Later on she was told that there was "no timeline" for when the money from the LSE would come through and that there was "a big list of students" still waiting for support through the fund.

Another student applying for the same fund faced similar difficulties. Suffering from severe paranoia when in large groups of people, due to her schizophrenia, she is unable to attend lectures and needs funds to pay someone to record them for her. Without the funds she has been unable to pay for this herself leading to her missing all her lectures to date this term. This student also needs funds to pay for counselling from a non-LSE counselling service. So far she has continued her counselling this year without support from the fund. Speaking of her experience she spoke of how the financial burden the delay has caused has "severely affected" her studies and put her under "great strain".

Many students applying for hardship funds were fearful about expressing their concerns publicly in case it affected their request for support. None of the students who were willing to comment felt comfortable with their identity being disclosed. Some applicants were also concerned about the way Students' Union advisers handled emails to students applying for hardship funds which were not

made confidential, something which made some feel exposed. One disabled student complained about the "complete lack of support" from the LSE regarding their needs, but did not want to go into further detail about her situation, fearful that this might "further delay [her] graduation".

The reason for the delays has now emerged, following several differing reports. Previously, the Advice Centre has told students that the delay was the result of the LSE not providing money for the centre's budget in time and that they were doing their best to secure funding. Advisers have acknowledged the stress caused by this situation to students and have been in contact with the students affected.

Other staff members and students commented that the LSE is usually quick to transfer money to the Students' Union before the start of term, and that the delay might have been due to the Students' Union not having their total budget approved by the School.

It has since come to light that the Students' Union's application for funds from the School was not initially approved.

Following this, the General Secretary made a strong appeal to members of the School's management, that the hardship funds should be financed by the School. The funds have now been secured, and a spokesperson for the Students' Union stated that individual applications should now be approved in the next few weeks.

Last week the Advice Centre claimed that the money for the hardship funds had been transferred by the LSE and that students were notified to make their applications. They were told that if their applications were successful their funding would come through in the next few weeks.

At present students applying for the hardship funds have yet to receive them. And for some, whether or not their application is accepted is still uncertain due to issues with means testing criteria used in some cases. Students apply for hardship funds because they face some sort of difficulty or disadvantage, financial-, disability- or health-related. But for those applying this year the major delay has led to further stress and hardship.

## Editorial Board

### Executive Editor

Sachin Patel  
editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Managing Editor

Calum Young  
managing@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### News Editors

Nicola Alexander  
Vivek Kotecha  
news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Comment Editor

Nathan Briant  
comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Features Editors

Marion Koob  
Oliver Wiseman  
features@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Social Editor

Mehk Zafar  
social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Sport Editors

Matthew Box  
Rosie Boyle  
sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### PartB Editor

Ahmed Peerbux  
Jonathan Storey  
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Photo Editor

Duncan McKenna  
photo@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Design Editor

Ahmed Alani  
design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Web Editor

Alexander Young  
web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

### Collective Chair

Benedict Sarhangian  
collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

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www.tinyurl.com/2010beaver  
0207 955 6705

East Building  
LSE Students' Union  
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Benedict Sarhangian

Collective Chair

collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk



# The Beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 734

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

## Get hard on the hardship fund

Believe it or not, there was a time when the words 'money' and 'education' weren't linked in the public mind. Pre-top-up fees, pre-Browne, and pre-Econ B - one has to journey back far into the annals of ancient history. Though this newspaper applauds the distribution of hardship funds through the Students Union, we believe their efficacy is highly contingent on their accessibility. Thus, the news that many potential recipients of hardship funds are yet to receive them distresses us greatly. In a post-Browne Higher Education system, never has there been a time when financial help has been needed more to make sure students from less affluent backgrounds are able to attend the LSE. Universities should be for the cleverest within our society, not the richest. Houghton Street should be open to all those with the right academic credentials.

That doesn't just mean that the LSE needs to skim off the top performers from the school system, it also necessitates a culture of inclusivity which extends to those with special educational requirements. We expect wheelchair access for the disabled, and extra learning resources for dyslexics, but the LSE's support should run beyond well-known cases. Our news article

(see page 1) reveals that this currently is not the case. Where funds are not being allocated in good time, we demand more transparency and common-sense in the process by which the School approves the Students' Union's applications.

Money is also at the root of another of this week's major stories. Wednesday sees a joint march by universities that affiliate to the NUS, which will protest against the current government's cuts in Higher Education spending. Every step of the protest will be charted by a new collaboration known as the London Student Journalists' Support Network, whom will be live-blogging and tweeting from the event. Members of our own Students' Union will no doubt form a particularly vocal part of the protest. And for all those feeling weary after a tiring day of peaceful agitation, a post-demonstration party is being held in the Quad on Wednesday evening. While many members of the Beaver's Editorial Board would love to attend the festivities, those of us who so vociferously campaigned to keep Wednesday afternoons free for sport (a flagship campaign of the NUS, we recall) feel it would stretch the limits of credulity to spend that time walking round central London. Good exercise though march-

ing unquestionably is.

On the topic of the marches, this newspaper finds itself divided in its allegiances. It's excellent to see an active, organised and powerful Students' Union standing up for what it believes in and mobilising student opinion. We are currently living through the biggest series of state cuts since Sir Eric Geddes axed public spending in the 1920s and it would be remiss to see an apathetic response among those who are most affected. Furthermore, the government's current policy towards funding, which preferences the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects above the social sciences and arts subjects is totally unjust. Clearly the government lacks economic nous if it has to be told how many positive externalities come out of studying at the LSE. On the other hand there are no easy choices when it comes to public spending and British finances are in dire straits. The Beaver rejects sharp dichotomies drawn between right and wrong, or good and bad policy. Difficulty is the essence of political choice. In this context it was refreshing to hear the pragmatic tone struck by Howard Davies at this week's UGM. Funding is going to be cut - the question is, how will the LSE respond? ☘

## BEAVER-ON-BEAVER

### Collective Meeting

11<sup>th</sup> November

6:30 PM

NAB204

INCLUDING:

General Manager election  
& general good-times

## Union Bashō

### No winners

As he crossed, uncrossed,  
truths were checked. Howie Bingo:  
a well-designed game.

*Bashō is the Beaver's evasive haiku poet, who is dragged to UGM by his vice-ridden drinking partner, Jack, when he can be prised away from a pint of Blue Moon.*

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YOU are invited to the launch event  
for Hope Not Hate at LSE

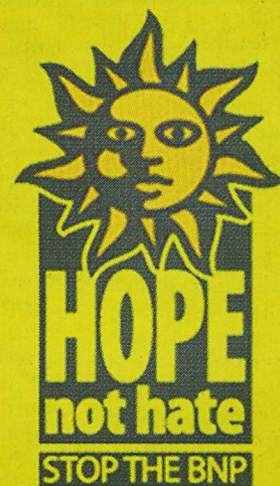
with

Sam Tarry, National Organiser Hope Not Hate  
Ben Grabiner, LSESU Anti Racism Officer

Free Drinks

5pm

Thursday 11 Nov  
LSESU Underground  
Campaigning This Weekend



♥ LOVE LSE  
♠ HATE RACISM

# Sidney Webb break-in hushed up

Nathan Briant

Last Tuesday morning, the Atlas bar at Sidney Webb House, an LSE halls of residence, was burgled. A television was stolen, and vending machines and a pool table were "damaged".

The company co-managing the halls, Places For People, did not tell residents of Sidney Webb House of the break-in officially until Friday, when a collective email to all residents was sent. By the time all residents had been told, the bar had been reopened with security improvements to doors and alarms.

Trevor Murtagh, the warden of the halls of residence, said: "I'd like to reassure residents that while we have improved security to the whole building and it is sensible to be vigilant, crime is very rare here. I'm very happy to answer questions any residents may have and to pass any relevant information on to police. I'd like to thank our residents for their patience and understanding."

A student at the halls of resident commented that he was 'a bit surprised' that the halls had not contacted residents until three days after the break-in, adding that it made them "a bit more wary of their surroundings", although they generally felt safe in the area.

According to the LSE's official accommodation website, the halls of residence accommodates 'over 450' students. It notes that the Atlas bar 'contains a bar, two TVs, a pool table, table football and darts' that it is 'open 24 hours a day and allows residents to relax', and that a new flatscreen TV had been installed recently.

# Freeze the Fees "not a realistic objective"

continued from page 1

"You are saying that the cuts in teaching grants, which amount to about 8 million... change the dynamics of the campaign. The most recent financial committee report says we have a 19.2 million surplus. We put a quarter of a billion pounds into capital expansion this year alone to gobble up more of the neighbourhood and cut teaching and learning by a million. It's time to make up that 7 million, a small percentage of our surplus, on making the university affordable and accessible," argued Kumar.

Davies countered, "We are in a good position. We are not in difficulties and not having to make severe cuts in the way that other universities are. I am proud of that. I will not make apologies for managing ourselves in good times in a prudent way such that we will not have to panic. We are in fact, continuing to invest in teaching. We have taken on more teaching staff. We are continuing to invest in improving our facilities and I am making no apologies for that whatsoever."

"If you look forward and look at the likely trends in government grants and the other costs that will be imposed on us

- staff costs and everything else - then our best forecast is that if we do nothing else, we would quite quickly go into deficit. Therefore a fee freeze will be unaffordable in the medium-term. We have to take that into account when we make these decisions."

This runs contrary to the claim, made by the Students' Union, that the School could maintain a three to four per cent surplus while freezing fees. Kumar posted a video of his exchange with Davies on Facebook under the title "Howard Davies lies to students". When asked for comment, a spokesperson for the School said, "We are in fact working on an explanatory document to give people a clearer picture of how and why certain financial measures are organised." He added that it is "complex unpicking all the figures and drawing conclusions from them". Until this document is published, it remains unclear as to which assertion is correct.

In his response to Kumar, Davies took the opportunity to comment on how the School hopes to go about resolving these "difficult decisions". The Director said, "I'm not hiding that on inter-generational equity, and on equity between different types of students [we have difficult decisions to make]. We need to think about the university not just year by year but in the long term. We have to think about the staff

of this institution. One thing I am proud of is, unlike other places, we don't have to make any redundancies. My point is I hope that when we make those decisions we can do so collaboratively. We talk to each other in a sensible way, and on the whole we don't shout at each other and use adjectival... 'blahdey blah'." He later said: "I look forward to working with the SU on this over the next year and I hope we can do so in a spirit of collaboration where we are trying to do the same thing because I roughly think we are. I do understand what the SU is trying to achieve I do understand the concerns you have about access, nonetheless we do have to think about how we manage this institution now and in future."

Davies also found time to congratulate Professor Pissarides, the LSE's latest Nobel prize winner. "Most winners haven't been seen in their university for the past decade and certainly are never seen again, but Chris is very committed."

## UNION JACK

Jack hasn't been drinking with Howie D for some time, but he would have recommended a stiff tot of brandy to him last Thursday. You need to be made of the right stuff to deal with the gang of Trotskyites who show up to UGM nowadays. Liberal values are all well and good, but so is mature debate, and Jack would never condone the bandying about of "adjectival blahdey-blah", as our imperial overlord referred to it.

There was definitely A-Shoking feel to UGM. Coming only two days after Looney Huhney had been labelled a "bell-end" (wordsmithery being a key virtue of your average student activist), the Old Theatre was bedecked with some of the best painted-on banners that Konnie Huq has ever created. Charlie Brooker, you've found a great maiden to take as your wife.

But enough of the tangential pop culture references. Howie talked a lot about "intergenerational equity". Who does he think he is - Captain Jean-Luc Picard? Speaking of doing the time-warp, Jack was keen to note the presence of a certain Andrew Wright too - history repeats itself.



Photo: Vincent Mok

# LSE clear on Five-Year Plan

Heather Wang

LSE's latest five-year Strategic Plan was released last week. The School's core ambitions and planned actions between 2010 and 2015 are explicitly listed in the plan, which is released to the public annually.

The plan asserts that the most significant economic challenge the LSE will have to face in the next few years is the cut in government funding. Peter Sutherland, Chairman of the Board of Governors, concludes, "Now we are in a different era, in which funding, both private and public, will be more constrained - presenting us with some tough choices." According to Howard Davies, Director of the LSE, almost all government departments will face budget cuts of twenty-five per cent over the next three years and it seems likely that an even more severe cut will apply to universities. Recently unveiled plans for Higher Education funding suggest that the brunt of the cuts will be borne by universities which do not teach extensively in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (the STEM subjects), which remain priority areas for the government.

Against this pessimistic national background, the School shows confidence in overcoming financial problems with several solutions aimed at utilising its existing advantages. "Our student body is very international, which reduces our reliance on statutorily controlled fees," states Howard Davies. He added, "we have been very successful over the last five years, in particular, in enhancing our 'non core' income from Summer Schools, the external programme, executive education, consultancy and residential lettings." These incomes are thought to be very helpful in offsetting the cut in government support.

Overcoming the financial difficulties is essential if LSE is to improve its teaching and research and, ultimately, the School's international rankings. Davies maintains that "the School's focus continues to be on building quality rather than

increasing quantity." The top three priorities of the School are stated to be research and engagement, teaching, and student experience. A number of new schemes had already put in place in order to achieve these goals. Several new research initiatives have been launched, including the Grantham Institute on Climate Change, the International Growth Centre, the Spatial Economics Research Centre and a new Middle East Centre. Davies commented: "In each case they allow us to broaden our spread of research activity."

Despite being recognised as one of the world leaders in social science research, the LSE wishes to cement its position by making "every effort to maintain the amount of research funding from peer reviewed external sources in real terms".

Although LSE academics are frequently engaged in public debate and the School is one of the most international orientated universities in the country, the LSE's strengths in engagement is still uneven across the academic community. To tackle these deficiencies, the School will encourage and assist more LSE academics to connect to wider audiences. To promote engagement in key locations around the world, and bring LSE alumni closer to the intellectual life of the School, the Careers service hopes to develop more alumni groups and overseas faculty visits, which will also help students compete in the rapidly changing job market.

In terms of teaching, an issue that has caused much concern among students in the past - implementing the recommendations of the Teaching Task Force report - has been pressed forward. It was this report that was credited with the improvement of student satisfaction at the LSE this year.

The School will "continue to implement a major new initiative to significantly improve teaching by cultivating and rewarding excellence and increasing contact between students and academic staff". Furthermore, the Strategic Plan states that "teaching must be supported by facilities and services of the highest order" and "improved communication with stu-

dents through website and intranet."

Responsibility of making sure objectives are achieved lies with academic units as well as the School's service divisions. The School's service divisions have set their most important goals as "achieve the highest standards of effectiveness and accountability in governance", "maintain financial sustainability", "encourage donors and alumni to commit to support

of the School through fundraising and alumni relations", "create a higher quality built environment", and "achieve the commitment to environmental sustainability".

With reduced help from the government, the School still believes it has to continue improving its already strong position on research excellence and the student experience in the next five years.

# Students strategise for the future

Vivek Kotecha

Over 250 students from 14 countries attended the LSE Strategy & Management Consulting Conference (SMCC) last week. The inaugural conference, sponsored by the Boston Consulting Group, included speakers from leading business schools and top tier consultancy firms.

The SMCC aimed to be an interactive conference where students could learn more about the current challenges and opportunities facing the consulting profession and gain an insight into this relatively little-known profession.

The all-day event was set up and run by a group of LSE students with the help of the LSE Department of Management and corporate sponsors, including Bain & Company, OC&C Strategy Consultants and business schools such as the École des Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC). The aim of the organisers was to lay the foundation for one of the largest student run consultancy conferences in Europe. Said one of the organisers: "We found that there were many students in LSE and beyond interested in consulting, but that there was no forum for bringing them together with leading experts in the industry. By creating the LSESMCC, we were able to show students the myriad facets

of consulting and help them make more informed decisions for their careers."

A wide variety of topics was discussed through keynote speeches and panel discussions attracting attendees from as far away as China. Discussions included strategies in the Emerging Markets, the effects of new media on current industry business models, a private equity case study and keynote addresses on measuring the value of the internet economy and the future of the world economy following the recent recession. Of particular note was a lively talk given by the FT columnist and serial entrepreneur, Mike Southon, who encouraged delegates to set up their own businesses by making comparisons with the Beatles.

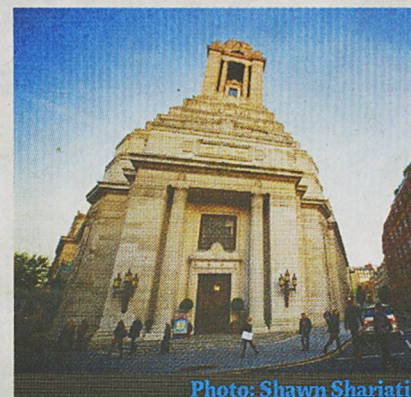


Photo: Shawn Shariati

# News in brief

## MOOT THIS, CITY

Ahmed Alani eminent scholar of law, this week triumphed in the London Universities Mooting Shield Competition (LUMS). Following victory over City University, Ahmed and his team will play SOAS. The LSE won 13 points out of 18. LUMS is the most prestigious mooting competition in the London area, it attracts 10 teams from across the constituent colleges of the University of London. Ahmed also won an award for best advocate. Of no less significance was the performance of Shimin Lee, Senior Counsel for the respondents, whose erudition was commended.

## HOT BOYZ, IN THE COLD

Following their obscene comments which were reported in last week's Beaver, two Pulse DJs have apologised for the offence caused. Henry Adefope and Liam Goy both retracted the misogynist comments broadcast during their 26th October radio show. The show spent over fifty minutes recounting details of women the presenters had slept with. In response the Pulse committee has promised a full root and branch enquiry will take place into the production oversights involved. In addition, the presenters have sent a message to fans of the show, stating that they have elected to remain off the airwaves for the foreseeable future.

## WHEN HUTTON MET KAY

Last week the LSE Economics Society hosted Will Hutton and John Kay as one of a series of lectures entitled, Economist in Residence. Leo Wang, Economics Society President said: "The Hutton - Kay debate was both informative and entertaining! The pair apparently met here at the LSE some years back, and their sustained friendship provided for an intimate, 'no holds barred' environment for the members of the Economics Society. It was brilliant to unleash Will and John upon each other as they tore with honesty at the issue of financial services reform!"

## RAISING THE DEAD

Museums are failing to satisfy the public demand for dead bodies according to Dr Tiffany Jenkins, of the LSE. Dr Jenkins cites a recent poll of 1,000 people which found that 90% were happy with keeping remains in museums. In her book: Contesting Human Remains in Museum Collections she claims that the lack of Egyptian mummies is due to the professional insecurities of the museum staff and not for lack of demand from the public. She adds that this could be due to museums bowing to the demands of minorities such as pagans which will "penalise the millions of people who enjoy learning from the display of human remains".

## BROWNE VIOLATES SHAR'IA LAW

Islamic leaders say changes to tuition fees in England could make them unusable for many Muslim Students. The Government's plans include higher interest rates for repayments on loans. This could breach Islamic rules on finance which do not permit interest charges on commercial loans. However the Business department has stated that the loans are not commercial because they are heavily subsidised and are not a profit making activity. The Federation of Student Islamic Societies stated: "Many Muslim students are averse to interest due to teachings in the Islamic faith - such interest derails accessibility to higher education".

## GIRLS GONE WILD

Last week was Women's Rights Week hosted on campus by LSESU Amnesty International Society. Events included a documentary screening, a fund raising brunch for domestic violence charities in Tanzania and a bake sale on Houghton Street. The documentary examined the global sex trade in the Former Eastern Bloc. One second year, female commented: "Some of the events were really well thought out however, I fail to see how a bake sale achieves the goals that a Women's Rights Week works towards."

## GOT A SCOOP? BRIEF US...

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

# Lebanese PM hard on Israel

## Saad Hariri delivers message of peace

Aman Sahni

The Prime Minister of Lebanon, Saad Hariri, spoke out strongly against Israel in his talk at the LSE last Tuesday evening.

The talk, which was officially closed to members of the press according to the LSE Events Office, raised controversial issues over Israel's part in the crisis in the Middle East.

The overriding message from Hariri was the desperate need for peace in Palestine. He said, "Israel can attack us another six times, or ten times... but we are here to stay, and we will stay. What Israel needs to understand is that they have to make peace with the Arab world...which will be in their interest and in the interest of the region".

Hariri was welcomed with a warm ovation. Hariri first acknowledged the turbulent times that Lebanon is experiencing, stating that for over half a century, most regions in the area have "suffered from vicious and protracted cycles of violence, fear, anger and deep frustration". He suggested that the unresolved tragedy of Palestine lies at the heart of these cycles. He claimed that an Arab-Israeli settlement and creation of a Palestinian state would relieve many of the problems that plague Lebanon.

Hariri echoed his frequent assertion that the tragedy in Palestine has meant that "Lebanon pays a severe price, which it still does every day". He stressed that the

UK, as a global superpower and permanent member of the UN Security Council, should play a "more active role in reaching viable settlement". Hariri recalled how Beirut extended a hand of peace to Israel through the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002. He claimed that Israel's unfavourable response, and the consequent failure to end the Palestinian tragedy has "contributed to the rise of violent extremism in Arab and Muslim societies".

Hariri went on to argue that the complex history and diverse geography of Lebanon made it special, but fragile. However, he asserted that in spite of differences, all the Lebanese people are united in their want of peace and security. He pointed out that the Lebanon has an economy which is growing at a strong rate (of almost 9 per cent annually), a sound banking structure and is making strides in healthcare. He articulated that a secure environment where state authority prevails would only be possible "if regional players refrain from abusing Lebanon's fragile diversity". He added that it was absolutely necessary for global leadership to achieve a comprehensive peace settlement. He opened to questions after concluding that while at this stage "the cost of failure will be great, the payoff for success is even greater".

The audience, mainly Lebanese students at the LSE, raised some insightful questions, traversing a vast range of the problems Lebanon faces. The questions included the role of youth in helping Lebanon grow stronger and problems with the



Photo: Nigel Stead

electoral law. Hariri emphasised the need for youth in a movement for change and identified that the Lebanese brain-drain was due to lack of jobs and security - two issues which he has been trying to tackle. He recognised the problems with the electoral law which seem to be propagating regional disputes, and acknowledged the need for a modern system which would negate the political conflicts that thrive under the pretext of religion.

Hariri addressed a poignant question regarding Lebanon's lack of either good neighbours or good fences by drawing attention to the ever improving relationship with Syria, in spite of historical differences. Hariri said that friendship with Syria came with great geo-strategic advantages. On questions regarding Iran, he was keen

to clarify that the seventeen agreements Lebanon has signed with Iran are not in breach of UN sanctions against Iran, since they are not financial. These questions were of particular relevance as Hariri was in London for talks with David Cameron over the UN Security Council mandate, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. The tribunal has been set up to prosecute those responsible for the assassination of Hariri's father, then sitting Prime Minister Rafic Hariri, on 14th February 2005. Both Syria and Iran have been implicated in the investigation.

The crucial subject of Hezbollah, the terrorist group residing in South Lebanon, was also raised by the audience. Zina Sawaf, a Lebanese student at LSE, asked what role the Hezbollah can be anticipated

to play in the future. Hezbollah has made controversially strong statements against Israel, but Hariri was of the opinion that if a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace was achieved as per the 1967 agreement, not even the Hezbollah would oppose.

The audience had mixed opinions about the talk. Mesrob Kassemjjan, a Lebanese MSc student at LSE stated: "Hariri's stand on Israel was remarkable, although there are other areas where he needs to look at, for example rising inflation rates need to be dealt with". By and large, Hariri's stand for peace in Palestine and his appeal for help from global leaders were, at least at the LSE, very well received.

## Hostile environment for Lib Dem MP

>> continued from page 1

Huhne's talk, which was delayed due to the protest, focused on the need for government to "change its financial story" by presiding over a "third industrial revolution". Describing the Coalition's position as having "weathered the storm" of the financial crisis, the Secretary of State used this opportunity to assert that moving to a green economy would have "macroeconomic significance".

Listing several statistics as to the nascent state of the green economy, Huhne said that "We must secure a bigger slice of the pie", and that by focusing industry in the United Kingdom on saving energy, developing carbon capture and storage technology, investing in renewables, and allowing new nuclear power stations without government subsidy, British industry could reap great rewards.

At present, the worldwide low-carbon economy is valued at £3.2 trillion per annum, and the UK's share of this market is worth £112 billion. According to Huhne, by 2015 it is hoped that there will be 1 million so-called 'green collar' workers in the country. Furthermore, this green growth will not only improve job prospects, but will also increase exports and foreign

investment, provide a boost to innovation and enterprise in the UK, and create the framework for a more resilient economy.

Huhne argued that technological success will bring both growth at home and competitiveness abroad. The government will work to remove obstacles that stand in the way of these developments; as examples, Huhne focused on carbon capture and storage facilities and offshore wind farms. On the former, Britain is in the process of constructing the world's first such purpose-built plant; concerning offshore wind technology, there has been a notable push towards domestic manufacturing of turbines in place of importing finished products.

Renewables will be key to "keeping the lights on", argued Huhne, since our ageing power stations are expected to cause a reduction of 20 gigawatts of energy production by 2023. Against this backdrop, the Secretary of State believes that "demand for electricity could double", in part owing to the increased use of electric vehicles. The challenge for government will be to find a fuel source that is "affordable, secure, and low-carbon", and Huhne stated that this search for clean energy represents "the defining challenge of our age".

Such a solution "must come from the market", if the Coalition is to be believed - Huhne suggested that "removing planning obstacles and planning a new market framework" will be instrumental in bringing in £25 billion of private investment in

energy production by 2020.

Looking ahead to the forthcoming UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Huhne suggested that it will be crucial for Europe to present a "unified and aggressive" argument to persuade other states that a 30 per cent reduction in emissions should be attained by 2020, and that a green economy is a suitable method to achieve this. Admitting that last year's conference in Copenhagen was "a disappointment", the Secretary of State was realistic on expectations for this year's conference, stating that he expects "progress to be made, but no final deal".

Domestic success will be vital in formulating a persuasive line of argumentation in Cancun, and Huhne was keen to stress the importance of the government's newly announced "Green Deal". Under this proposal, the government will seek to redress the quarter of emissions that come from the home by offering a package of improvements to homeowners and landlords with no upfront payment. Referring to the UK's "outdated housing stock" and the need to change people's energy demand, Huhne stated that the Green Deal will represent "one of the biggest interventions ever undertaken by the government". Furthermore, these comprehensive reforms will be applied across the board, so that tenants have equal rights to homeowners: Huhne added that "this government will not put up with tenants living in chilly conditions".

## Phone banking on NUS Demo participation

### Sabbatical Officers man the phones to encourage campaign sign-ups

Nicola Alexander

In an attempt to mobilise LSE students for the National Union of Students' (NUS) planned demonstration in London this Wednesday, the Students' Union has made phone calls to students who signed up to support the 'Freeze the Fees' campaign.

Employing a method of contacting students recommended in NUS guidelines, members of the Students' Union have made personal phone calls to each of the thousands of students who elected to receive important campaign updates. High profile individuals such as Charlotte Gerada, General Secretary, and Ashok Kumar, Education Officer, as well as many student volunteers, have been involved in the scheme. The phone calls were made early last week, and second-year Philosophy undergraduate Duncan McKenna said of the timing, "They rang me in the early evening, while I was enjoying a post-essay nap."

According to Vicky Brock, who was called by Gerada on Wednesday last week, the phone call came as "a surprise". Several students commented that they were curious when they received a call from a private number, only to find out that it was a personal phone call from a member of the Students' Union, encouraging them to come along to the student demonstration on Wednesday.

Brock commented: "Charlotte was clearly passionate about the demonstration; however, it was late when I received my phone call and I was not really in the mood to speak extensively." For students who did not answer their phones in time, the SU members left voicemail messages detailing the plans for the demonstration. Responding to concerns about the

timing of the phone calls, a spokesperson for the Students' Union stated that all calls have been made between 5 and 9 PM. This falls within the same time-frame regulations that other call-centres must adhere to. Furthermore, this ensures that the Sabbatical Officers are not making calls during their working hours.

Although the labour-intensive tactics have drawn comparison with those of telemarketers, it seems that they have had the anticipated effect. Brock stated: "I've decided to go to the demonstration. It is clearly a very important issue, affecting a lot of students and it is an important act of solidarity. I'm don't think it was a case of Charlotte needing to convince me, more a case of the SU letting me know about it - which I'm glad they did."

However, other students have raised concerns over this use of resources, with regard to the cost of each phone call.

Thus far the phone bank seems to have been a major method of publicising the NUS demonstration. In addition, large posters have been deployed on LSE landmarks such as the sky bridges to advertise the event. Finally, further attention has been given to the demonstration on the SU website.

Amassing strong support from the LSE student body at the rally is essential if the 'Freeze the Fees' campaign is to gain national clout among peers. The LSE Students' Union will kick off its 'feeder' march at 11:30AM on Houghton Street, before leading students to join the national demonstration on Horse Guard's Parade. After the march has concluded, the official after-party for the event is also scheduled to be held at the Students' Union, in The Three Tuns.



Photo: Duncan McKenna

# Hutton preaches "fairness"

Luke Smolinski

"There is a view that fairness is an idea like motherhood and apple pie: we all want it and we all know what it means," Will Hutton began, in his book launch last Tuesday. "I want to show that it has some radical bite."

Mr Hutton, former editor of the Observer and executive vice-chair of the Work Foundation, was appointed by David Cameron to head a review into public sector pay earlier this year. In anticipation of the Fair Pay Review, which will be disclosed in December, he laid out his views on fairness last week.

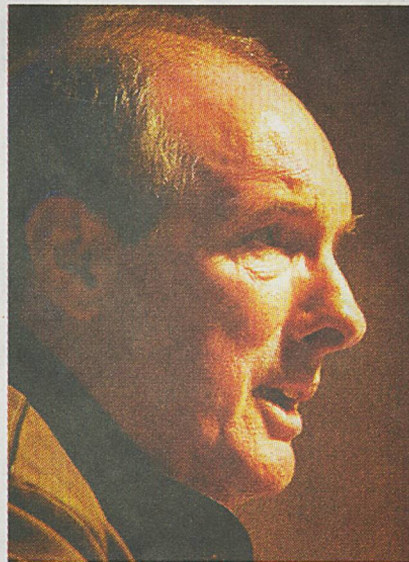
He said that within the past twenty years, we have seen the death of two ideas. The first, communism, perished in December 1991, when Gorbachev signed away the USSR. Six weeks later, Deng Xiaoping administered the post mortem. The Chinese leader admitted

that his people mustn't strive for socialism, but for a "socialist market economy". Legitimacy would come not from communism, but from economic growth and championing Chinese nationhood.

Fast-forward to 2008 and the financial crisis, where another death knell sounds, according to Hutton. This time, it is for the idea of unrestrained capitalism. No serious commentator, Will Hutton proclaims, sees this as just another recession. Demands to deregulate have fallen silent. Defenders of "business as usual" cannot be found. Now, having seen the limitations of both unfettered capitalism and communism, Hutton stated, it is time to start talking about "fairness" again.

There are two crucial ingredients of "fairness", Hutton said. The first is moral desert - fairness comes from "getting what you deserve". If you do wrong, you should be punished. If you do some good, you should be rewarded. This relation between crime and punishment, merit and reward, is such an intuitive

one that it reflects our shared notion of fairness. By the same principle, you ought to be paid according to your worth. In



our age of bankers' bonuses, there is "an undeserving rich", just as the Victorians thought there was an undeserving poor.

The second ingredient of fairness is luck. We may be the subjects of brute bad luck. Out of 300 people, about 15 have the breast cancer gene. Here, it is rational and fair to share whatever the costs of health care may be. We may also encounter brute good luck. We may be the children of rich parents, about to inherit a fortune. It would be fairer if this brute good luck was shared across society. This is why, in societies across the world, there is an inheritance tax. It is no more a "death tax" than NHS hospital-runners are "death panels". In both cases, what is at play is the distribution of luck.

Much capitalist philosophy, Hutton said, ignores luck. As economic hunter-gatherers, it becomes too easy to develop an "I eat what I kill" philosophy: to assert, as a Neanderthal might, that what you obtain is down to your own strength, bravery, acuity and effort,

disregarding any role luck plays. The irony is that even the caveman understood the role of luck; even in Neolithic times, there was a pooling of the kill. And luck hasn't gone away. In a welfare household, a three-and-a-half year-old child hears cumulatively 30 million fewer words than he would in a professional home. We know enough about cognitive development to know this has a big impact.

It behoves us, not because of some Christian faith or socialist doctrine, but because we are human beings, Hutton argued, to act to do something about this. It is because, as humans, we intuitively recognise the notions of moral desert and luck that we ought to change this.

Mr Hutton received a warm reception when he finished speaking. Afterwards, many people queued to have a signed copy of Will Hutton's book. Not all reacted as enthusiastically. One audience member said, "It was good, but there were no new ideas." Another person countered, "The old ideas are the best."

# IMF Economist exports rebalancing agenda

Shrina Poojara

Last Thursday, Olivier Blanchard, the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Chief Economist, gave a lecture at the LSE entitled "The State of the World Economy". Blanchard's lecture launched a series of talks set to honour 21 years of the Centre of Economic Performance, an interdisciplinary research centre at the School, which was awarded the prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education.

Blanchard emphasised the importance of internal and external re-balancing; the IMF's stance is that developed countries require internal re-balancing, which refers to a shift from fiscal support to stronger private demand. External re-balancing is needed around the globe to reduce trade deficits, such as that of the US, and trade surpluses, notably in China.

Having spent his entire professional life there, the economic state of the United States was a considerable focus of the lecture. Revising the IMF's global growth forecast of 4 to 5 per cent for 2011, he said that although US GDP growth is expected to pick up, there is 10 to 15 per cent of

negative growth in the economy. "We're in a different world than in previous recessions," he commented with respect to the high levels of unemployment in US. He emphasised that domestic consumption and investment alone would not be enough to increase employment and argued that the key to sustaining higher GDP growth in the US would be through increasing net exports.

Following the \$600 billion of additional quantitative easing (QE) announced by the Federal Reserve last Wednesday, Blanchard commented, "The mechanical effects [of QE] may not be that large but the psychological effects might be larger." He said that, as a result of increasing expectations that the Fed will keep interest rates lower for longer, "It makes the risk associated with carry trades much smaller... This makes carry trade more attractive". Blanchard was keen to suggest the implications of this may be a rise in capital flows from the US to emerging economies and some dollar depreciation.

When discussing Europe's performance, he focused particularly on Germany, stating that it might be "pulling away from the pack" following a "very high" annual growth rate estimate of

almost 9 per cent. Blanchard argued that this was a testament to Germany's past economic policy focusing on competitive disinflation and stated: "I think it may well be that, had there been no crisis, they were basically on the verge of a very strong export driven growth." With reference to fiscal consolidation in Europe, he emphasised: "The countries which need to do the most are doing the most... but there is a very long way to go."

The key focus with regards to emerging markets was the "need to re-balance away from net exports to domestic demand." Blanchard explained, with reference to countries like China, that the necessity for this is because many of these countries have "very low levels of either consumption or investment relative to what they should have... It is in their own interest to provide social insurance." He made clear that this would only happen through an appreciation in exchange rates.

Blanchard took up the post of Economic Counselor and Director of the Research Department of the IMF in 2008, and is currently on leave from his role as the Class of 1941 Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has published numerous research papers in the field of macroeconomics, as

well as macroeconomic textbooks for both undergraduates and graduates.

Canny Kwok, a recent LSE graduate, commented, "The talk was very informative. It was very clear considering I didn't study economics." Leo Ng, studying for an MSc in Economics at the LSE, stated: "His presentation was very interesting but I think because he is from the US, his view

is more in line with how the US economy is looking... It's a vast amount to cover in just one hour so I would have preferred if he had had time to answer more questions on a wider range of economies." Julia Faggio, from the Centre of Economic Research, said that she was "very pleased with the presentation... it was a very good overview."

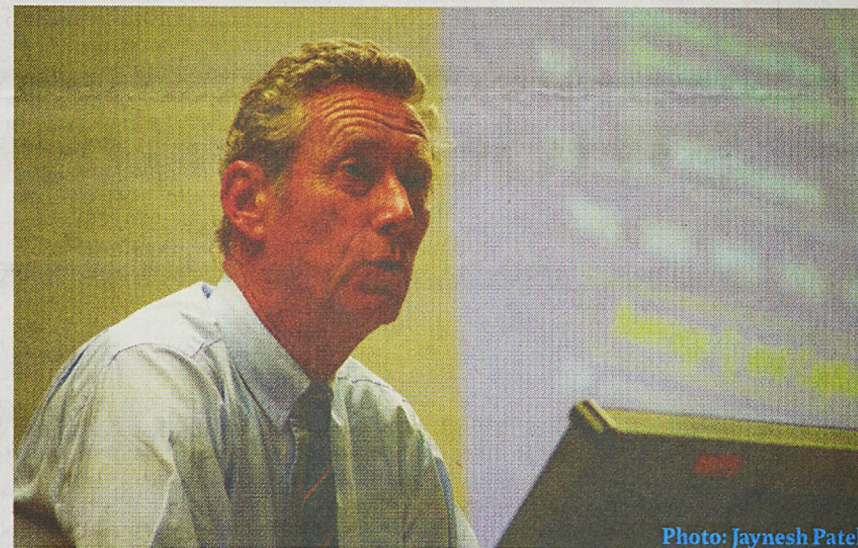


Photo: Jaynesh Patel

# LSE100 - the first 72 days



Professor Niall Ferguson

Dana Andreicut

LSE100 started this term with a series of lectures on the roots of the financial crisis. Speakers included Professor Danny Quah of the Economics Department; Sir Howard Davies, Director of the LSE; Professor Niall Ferguson, the Philippe Roman Chair in History and International Affairs for the 2010-2011 academic year; and Professor Luc Bovens, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method.

The first lecture was given by Danny Quah, who discussed the global dimensions of the crisis. He provided an anatomy of the event, which he broke down into three stages: buildup and initial exuberance, collapse, credit crunch and recession. He highlighted the commonality of the crisis with other events of the same type and remarked upon the fact that the crisis was the most important economic event "of the last 80 years", as it destroyed \$16 trillion of financial market capitalisation (eight times the annual GDP of the UK) and dramatically increased unemployment.

Howard Davies continued the discussion in week two and drew on his experience from the FSA, the CBI, the Treasury, the Bank of England, to offer a presentation about financial market developments

and the roles of central banks and commercial banks in the crisis. Macroeconomic conditions were at the core of the problem, pricing of risk and a monetary policy that did not offset this issue were also decisive factors. Davies highlighted the point that criticising individuals for provoking the crisis is "a bit like criticising drivers for their driving behaviour when weather conditions are bad", their driving might become hazardous given the conditions, although normally it would have been safe. "Drivers" were not fully blameless however, he pointed out, even though circumstances magnified the proportions of the problem.

The blame for the crisis couldn't be exclusively placed on one factor. The crisis was a result of a combination of issues such as the global savings glut, loose monetary policy, inadequate financial regulation, greedy and irresponsible bankers, and reckless borrowers.

The last set of lectures brought together Niall Ferguson and Luc Bovens. Ferguson discussed the historical implications of the crisis, while Professor Bovens provided a philosophy of science perspective to what it means to cause the crisis. Professor Bovens started by discussing John Stuart's Mill writings on the uncovering of causes, while showing that the algorithm put forward by Mill was too simple for such a complex cause

as that of the financial crisis. Among the reasons why causality is more complex in social sciences than in natural sciences, is that in the latter, an explanation can be satisfactory without knowing all the links in the causal chain, whereas in former, an explanation is only satisfactory if we fill in the links of the chain with recognisable human agency. He further illustrated the implications for counterfactuals in the social sciences and highlighted the importance of realising that the models economists had at their disposal prior to the crisis were of limited predictive power.

The next set of lectures in LSE100 have focused on population growth. The talks in weeks four and five were given by Professor Tim Dyson, Dr. Ernestina Coast, Dr. Rebecca Sear and Sandy Pepper. Week six will host a talk by Dr. Wendy Sigle-Rushton, who will discuss whether population growth is a global threat.

LSE100 aims to help students develop the critical skills that underpin the study and application of the social sciences. It has two components: a series of lectures taking place in the Lent Term, dedicated to first-year students, and a series of lectures in the Michaelmas Term, aimed at second-year students.

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# Comment

## Why UGM matters

Come along to the Union General Meeting - so this newspaper doesn't need to tell you to

**Phyllis Lui**



At some point every year, usually in Lent Term, the Beaver tells its readers to "fucking turn up to the UGM". There is a method in this madness, really.

For those of you less politically astute, the Union General Meeting (UGM) is held every Thursday from 1-2pm. The LSE is also proudly the only university in the country who still has one. It used to be a forum for debating motions which were voted on by those in attendance. These motions were then adopted as Students' Union policies and campaigns, which became the responsibilities of the Sabbatical Officers and the rest of the SU Executive Committee.

I employed the past tense, because last year something called a Referendum took place, where the Students' Union "consulted" the wider student body at the LSE and came up with the governance structure that we have now, as they needed to register as a charitable organisation.

Back to the issue at hand, the UGM. One of the issues which came up in their consultations was that "many students do not feel that the issues that they care about are discussed at the UGM... discusses too many external political issues, and not enough local, education-related ones". It was also highlighted that the attendance was unrepresentative, i.e. beyond the officials, the hacks and the like; there weren't any international or postgraduate students.

But the most ironic part of it was that by adopting electronic means of voting, it would supposedly open up the debate and "reduce the bureaucracy of the meeting"

Fast forward to the present, the two motions proposed in Week 4 did not meet the quorate vote of 250. It's only Michaelmas Term, surely student apathy cannot manifest itself so early in the academic year? The second of these motions, 'Students Not Suspects' is most definitely not an external political issue, and both the LSESU General Secretary Charlotte Gerada and LSESU International Student's Officer Michael Lok were out and about asking students to vote on the Friday... but it didn't reach the threshold of 250 votes.

Was it because the online voting system's too complicated or that it followed immediately after the Michaelmas Term Elections? Or are LSE students that apathetic?

If it is the latter, then would the fact that the four Sabbatical Officers are paid a lot of money (£22,000+) which is largely from the School, derived from your fees,

urge you to care? These motions and campaigns, debated at the UGM and voted online, are their mandate for their term in office. If you haven't noticed already, there is a large operation of paid staff, hired in conjunction with SU ARTS, with the intention that the officers would have much more time and capacity to campaign on your behalf to the School et al.

So please make them do more than as our esteemed Director Howard Davies puts it: "blow up balloons".

Last week's UGM with Mr Davies mustered up the largest turnout so far, which doesn't in itself say much. Since the old hacks' favourite "quoracy" call was taken away with the referendum, there hasn't been an accurate estimation of how many people attend the UGM since term started. It is safe to say that the figures have not reached three digits, not even the first one of the year.

This begs the question, what is the purpose of the UGM now? If opposing

speakers are called names, jeered and booed at, despite the best efforts of UGM Chair Jack Tindale to moderate, how does the UGM serve to open up discussion and debate about policies and campaigns that the Students' Union take on? I congratulate Maria Osadchy on braving the almost hostile greeting from the right hand side of the auditorium when getting up on stage to speak, because the rest of us simply cannot be bothered anymore.

It is perhaps even more troubling that in such times as these, when funding to higher education is being cut drastically and fees set to increase, that students are not more engaged. Of course, there's the 'Freeze the Fees' campaign, which has a sign-up of 2,500 and there was a sizeable turnout protesting Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Chris Huhne's talk at the LSE - but why isn't there a higher turnout at the UGM?

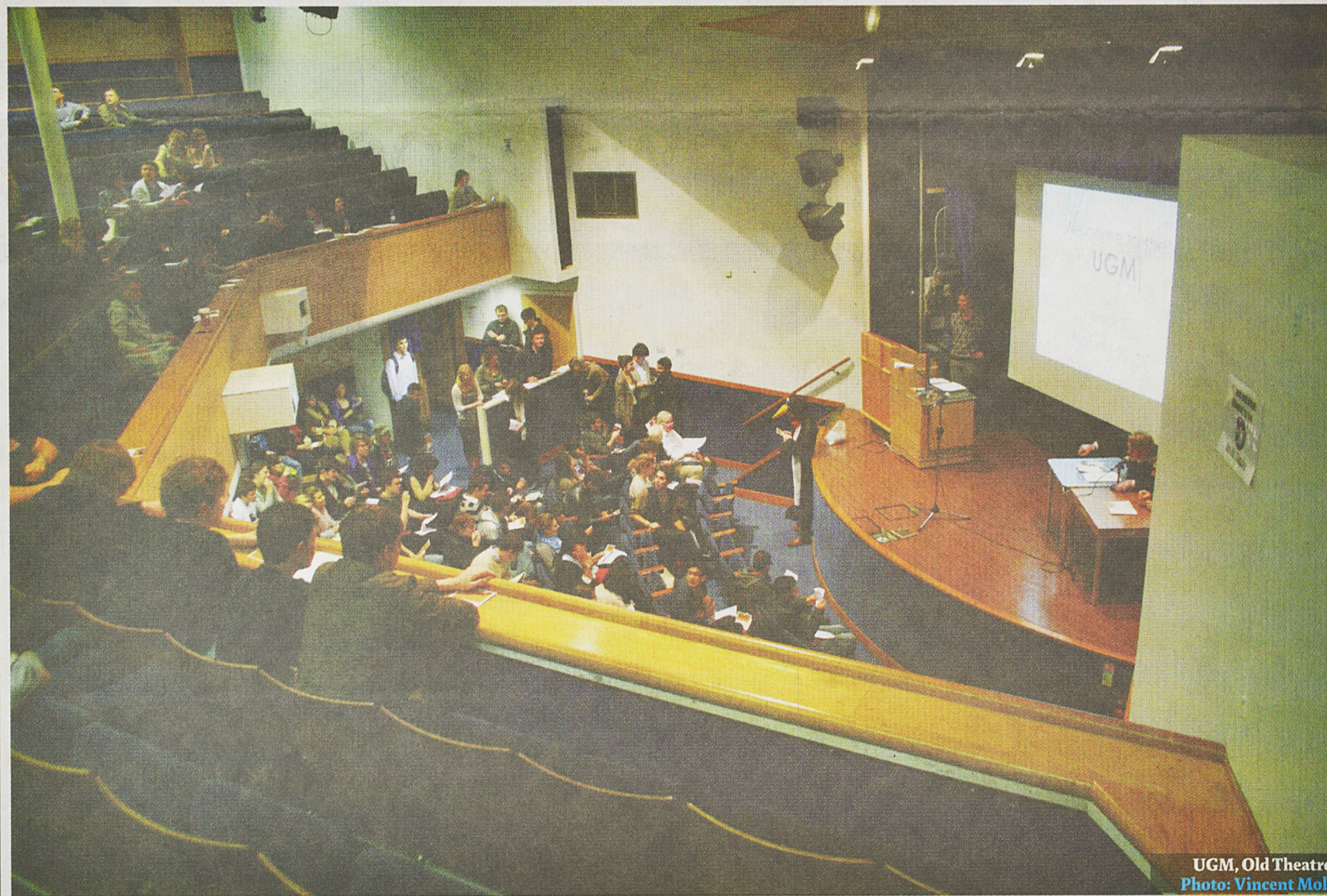
Is the UGM past its use-by date? I hope not, because it is currently a shadow

**I hope the UGM is not past its use-by-date, but it is a shadow of its former self**

of its former self. In its heyday, it has made and broken some careerist student politicians, it has been a battleground for LSESU Palestinian Society and LSESU Israel Society but underlying the heated discussions, students were arguing for their causes.

In light of how badly we do in the National Student Survey, we are most definitely not be satisfied with everything at the LSE, be it teaching or accommodation or printing. I hear lots of disgruntled students in the library complaining about the printers and the cost of printing - propose a motion so that the Students' Union has to campaign the School on that and many other issues that affect you and your friends. Don't just rate the School badly on the National Student Survey without having tried to voice your concerns to have them rebuffed.

LSE students, please come to the UGM. Paper-throwing is banned, but it's a good place to eat your lunch! ☘



UGM, Old Theatre  
Photo: Vincent Mok

## And how some students felt about Howard Davies' UGM appearance last week:

**John Peart, Michelle Kalu, Cassie Anum, George Edwards, Shreya Krishnan, Lizzie Hooper & Elizaveta Strygina**

It might have been freezing outside, but at last week's UGM, it was certainly heating up as Howard Davies, emperor penguin and Director of LSE, was in attendance. We, like hundreds of other students, turned out ready to grill Howard and see if there was any substance behind his objections to the Students' Union's Freeze the Fees campaign.

We left the the UGM feeling angry, concerned and questioning the intentions

of our Director.

During his opening remarks, Howard revealed the Council just signed off on a £38 million purchase of new property at Lincoln's Inn Fields - at the same time, we are cutting £1 million from the School's teaching budget. We are concerned about what Howard's priorities are. When will LSE's spending spree, which will total £213 million in capital expansion, end? And at what point will the School realise we don't need endless new buildings, we need fee levels that are low and accessible to the broadest range of students possible.

We are also concerned about Howard's comments on fees and cross-subsidisation. In his opening remarks, and during his answers to questions, Howard was arguing he was "uneasy" about the gap between fees for home undergraduate

students and international students, effectively attempting to divide the student body and pit these groups against each other.

We too are uneasy that international students are subsidising home and EU undergraduate courses, but Howard is not making this argument because he cares about the welfare of students from overseas - he is making this argument to try and justify a blanket fees increase.

On the issue of education sector cuts, we are equally concerned. We are disappointed that Howard has refused to support the efforts of the National Union of Students and the University and College Union this Wednesday, as thousands of lecturers and students march together on Parliament to defend education funding and ask again what his priorities are:

survival at any cost with ever higher fees or standing up for the principles of social justice and equality on which this institution was founded on.

And on widening participation we are dumbfounded by Howard's audacity at claiming this institution has a good record of attracting students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. As an institution we are not even top of the Russell Group in terms of widening access, doing worse than both Warwick and Imperial College, and the Group's record is already worse than every other mission group in the UK. Having just 15 per cent of students from these backgrounds is nothing to be proud of - it's less than half the national average.

And though Howard thinks, and is arguably right, that freezing fees is a blunt tool to use for access, it is surely better

than a failed bursary system that leaves £19 million a year unspent nationally and on out-reach programmes targeted at a minute amount of people.

We are disappointed at Howard's poorly structured arguments, by his pre-occupation with maintaining a £19.2 million budget surplus, double that which is required by government, rather than prioritising those people he is here to support - students - and his opposition to keeping this school progressive and allowing the market to control this institution rather than its guiding principles. ☘

# A human pulse

The radio station's Head of Communications writes to keep listeners on the pulse

**Kimia Pezeshki**



**“F**irstly we need to apologise for last week's show. We are very sorry for the derogatory [remarks made].” This is the quotation from last week's Liam, Chris and Henry Show that was crucially missing from the report you read of the incidents in last week's Beaver. I am very upset that vulgar and offensive content from the show itself was quoted no less than ten times in favour of this very important (and undoubtedly more constructive) display of remorse. Various members of the Pulse Radio committee have been harassed all week with claims that we have not taken this issue seriously enough, and I hope that I can now clarify our position in the same publication that has been the cause of such reputational damage.

**This error of judgement quite rightfully did not go unnoticed**

All Pulse Radio shows are supervised by a committee member to provide help with technical issues, check sound levels and to ensure that immediate apologies are made in cases of accidental swearing and other Ofcom regulation breaches. I

became their supervisor, and in their first week on radio, Henry and Liam broke record listenership for the year and attracted many loyal listeners immediately with their exaggerated style of bragging and storytelling.

The following week I was absent due to illness. A different member of the committee covered my supervision and, unfamiliar with the nature of the gossip in their show, paid attention only in the more typical way that is necessary with the vast majority of our disc jockeys. This means keeping an ear on the volume levels and making sure no one curses. I appreciate that the more relaxed style of supervision on this occasion was an oversight on the part of Pulse Radio, and we wholeheartedly apologise for our mistake. The boys began speaking without barriers or consideration for others, their vulgar and nasty remarks causing many students discomfort at best, personal offence and victimisation at worst. Their behaviour is by no means justifiable, these individuals took advantage of an absent-minded supervisor to attack people live on air, and this is utterly unacceptable. It causes me great pain to know that they have caused damage that will be extremely difficult to rectify, and I cannot stress enough how remorseful we are at Pulse Radio.

This error of judgement quite rightfully did not go unnoticed. During their show, a formal complaint was made by a student in the Quad at the time, and monitoring became immediately a lot stricter. The boys were reprimanded for their lack of sensitivity and were asked not to use full names in their stories. Following on from this, our broadcasting director sent the boys an email detailing the exact codes of practice, how they'd broken them, and warned that they could not continue breaching these rules otherwise they would lose their show. Before their show on the following Monday, I reiterated this message to them, and they made an on-air apology.

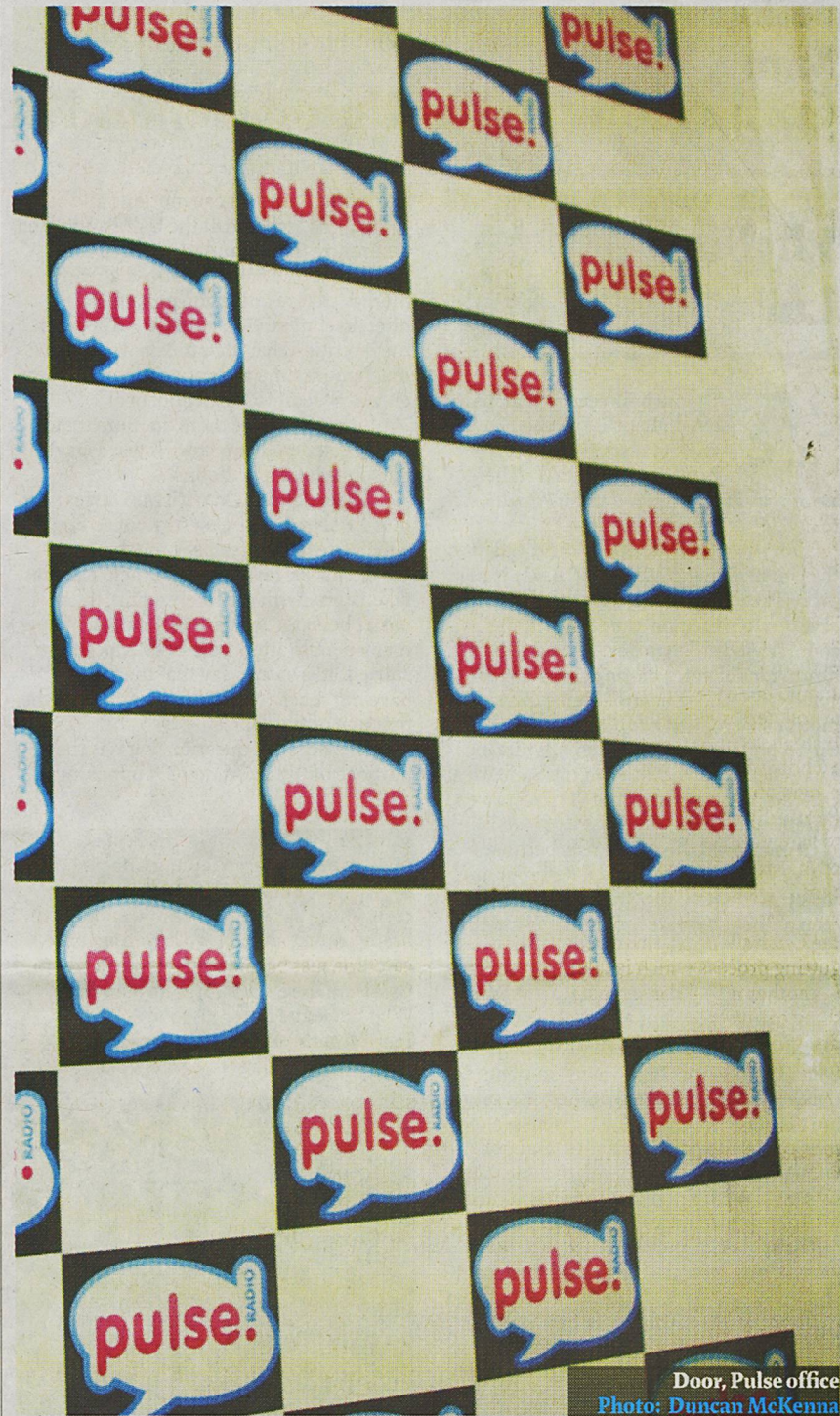
Furthermore, for any of you who listen to Pulse Radio, you will have noticed that we are playing the following official apology every hour for the next week: "Pulse DJs give up their free time voluntarily to provide you with daily entertainment. Every care is taken to ensure that none of our programmes cause offence to any of

our listeners. However, we understand that comments made on one of our many shows last week were extremely inappropriate and we would like to apologise for any upset caused and ensure you, the listener, that befitting measures have been taken." It is important that the victims of these verbal attacks know that we have not brushed this incident under the rug, and such is the nature of live broadcasting that we cannot go back and edit our media. Therefore we can only focus on the present, which is to offer consolation, and the future, to explore preventative measures.

We are currently in the process of looking into further action with regards to the damage to campus relations. We will hopefully proceed with the Dialogue Commission with help from Hero Austin, the Students' Union Community and Welfare Officer, but this is still in its early stages.

It is a great shame that the actions of these individuals have led to the reputation of both Pulse Radio and the Athletics Union (AU) to be put into question. In a formal statement made by Megan Protheroe, Social Secretary of the AU, it is asserted that "at no point prior to the show being aired was the Athletics Union Executive approached to endorse or encourage the airing of such offensive material, despite efforts by The Beaver to associate the Athletics Union with the show. Withstanding, I can confirm that Liam Goy and Henry Adefope are not affiliated members of the Athletics Union." She added, "we will continue to provide support and advice to those members of the Athletics Union who have raised concerns about the show."

If you have any more concerns regarding the actions of Pulse Radio and our formal procedure in relation to these types of issues, please feel free to visit any committee member in the Pulse Radio Studio during broadcasting hours, 11am-9pm on weekdays, or send me an email at [k.pezeshki@lse.ac.uk](mailto:k.pezeshki@lse.ac.uk). Alternatively, students are welcome to offer questions during the Media Group reports at the Union General Meeting (UGM) on Thursday 11th November at 1pm. Finally, if you are interested in what Pulse Radio has to say about last week's Beaver editorial, check out the post "Beavergate" on our official website, [www.pulse.dj](http://www.pulse.dj).



Door, Pulse office  
Photo: Duncan McKenna

# A rallying call

Why LSE students must attend the November 10th rally

**Charlotte Gerada & Ashok Kumar**

**I**t's no coincidence that the National Union of Students have run with the demolition theme for the NUS National Demonstration on November 10th. Thanks to the Browne Review and the Comprehensive Spending Review, 2010 is the year that our higher education system is en-route to destruction, as both reviews drastically undermine principles of a publicly-provided education. We now know, after the government's response to the future of higher education this week, that the cap for tuition fees will be raised to £9,000 for UK and EU students. The true cost of teaching a student is suggested to be around £6,000-7,000 minimum, so it seems highly likely that institutions will have to charge at least this amount to compensate for the cuts which are being made to teaching grants.

Students are presented as commodi-

ties, nothing more than a hindrance on our public spending budget. The cuts to teaching and research grants, in tandem with Browne's suggestion to increase fees to triple what institutions charge currently, is causing students and universities to become losers in the game of cuts-and-reform. The reality is that the government is now trying to clear the higher education sector of public funding to open it up to the private sector.

It is an abomination that the government is unloading the entire burden of higher education cuts onto young people, instead of realising that graduates are a true investment to society and should be invested in. The government has its priorities all wrong – telling some sections of the population to be financially prudent and not incur unnecessary debt, and to our young people, that it is totally acceptable to take on mortgage-style debt before they even start out. Not to mention that the government's prioritisation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects is completely unreasonable as this suggests that only these subjects are important to our society. Whilst the UK may have a skills deficit in

these areas, it is not for the government to dictate which subjects are more valuable. And this is whilst the UK's cutting a mere 8 per cent from the military budget. A small percentage of what the government wants to spend on the unnecessary Trident missile defence program could send every higher education student to university for free.

Whilst the principle foundations our higher education system are being demolished and the future sustainability and accessibility of university is beginning to crumble at our feet, now is not the time to sit around mindlessly thinking about what issue to campaign on next. This is the issue that we need to act on, and we must act now; before parliament make their vote about the future of higher education. There is still time for the Liberal Democrats who've made broken promises to reinforce their original pledge to the NUS and students countrywide that they will keep universities accessible.

We feel incredibly disheartened when a handful of students have questioned why we should be getting involved in campaigns about tuition fees or cuts to higher education. If there was any year to rally

up students, take campus-based action, and empower young people to act on the future of their education 2010 is the year. We have an aggressive fight on our hands, with the current coalition attempting to diminish the government's involvement in higher education, and force institutions to seriously start considering privatisation. Unions all over the country have spent significant time and resources to engage students in getting involved to fight against the cuts to our education system. And, with LSE's Students' Union having the national reputation of being an active campaigning Union, we think it's about time that we live up to it! One of the core activities of an SU is to engage students in campaigns, and we should save our powerful force, as the student movement, for big, meaningful things.

And for all the other issues that students care about – teaching, feedback, contact-time – we will, and always do, still work on them. The Sabbatical Officers spend much time vocalising in committees about how students think their education at LSE should be improved. Furthermore, much of the recurrent complaints that students at LSE make about

their educational experience, are things that the School are aware of, and are striving to improve. We are also utilising the Education Assembly (which is organised for Tuesday 16th November at 5pm) as way of gauging students' concerns. And finally, we're also working with Janet Hartley, the LSE's Pro-Director for Education, about why students fail in the first place, to hopefully lead to action that will solve the root of the problem.

Our SU can perform many functions: we can work in committees, improve your current LSE experience, and campaign about wider local and national issues. 2010 is the year to act. We must become a united force, as a student body, to make the biggest impact we can on this decisions this government is going to make about our education system. If you want to join the movement, then join us and students from all over the country on Wednesday 10th November from 11.30am on Houghton Street to take a stand and get our march-on. ☘



# LSE interior design: proud to be bland

## Reflecting on what's found to be round and about the LSE

**Sam Shirley**



Try as I might, I can't help thinking that Lord Foster isn't all that. Hobbling down the circular LSE Library staircase, one does wonder whether the design by one of our country's foremost architects really cuts the mustard. Indeed, for someone who constantly preaches modernity, he had a recent press photo taken featuring some rather Edwardian-looking attire. So, whilst one always feels one ought to be slavishly deferential to the views of esteemed architects, the niggling sceptic comes to the surface – if not on Prince Charles proportions.

What appalls me about the library is not actually the design, which has an interesting open plan system, but the bland universalist conception of how it should be. Apart from the bean bags, there is nowhere where you can read in comfort. Instead, as blessed students, we are given a 'choice' between slippery chairs with no provision for those who are taller than 5ft (vertically abundant comrades are forced to lean over the grey, despondent desks) or miserable and dangerously placed bean bags. Given an inclination to read, you have to retreat to the Shaw Library in the Old Building, a saving grace for the gutting process which is taking place. This is another new fad it seems; rip out everything of any character and replace it with design dreamt up by those who spend too much time in airports.

The height of ghastly conformist interior design can be found in the Fourth Floor Restaurant. Bereft of any atmosphere, miserable jagged benches and tables are surrounded by bright white walls. Had you not noticed the clichéd block text with a glancing reference to LSE's history, you might as well have gone to any old boring cafeteria typically named "Eat", "Drink", or "[insert monosyllabic verb]". Forget sterile, the place is positively reminiscent of a miserable channel crossing on P&O ferries.

### Ghastly conformist design can be found in the 4th Floor Restaurant

Much alike Lord Mandelson, who was said to have gone 'gaga' in the sight of rich people, we often pay too much attention to supposed design experts. I decline to subscribe to the empiricist euphoria without spatiotemporal context\*. Amused as I am by the notion that designers tend to use a lot of the same software and at the same time claim to be creating something new, one can't help noticing a degree of sophistry when it comes to arguments for re-hashing a canteen. Funnily enough, the hordes aren't all going to be piling into a cafeteria just because it feels like a trip to Calais on the Pride of Canterbury ferry. Why not serve different food – Kentish Hop picker's pie (Interest declared: it is sold in my village butchers). Ban the



Tower One  
Photo: Duncan McKenna

ubiquitous paninis.

But don't worry, a column of the Daily Mail this is not.

What we should seek from LSE campus is something a little exciting, because at the moment it is so "Geoff Hoon" – no panache. If Rory Bremner's sketch of Mandelson tells us anything, oomph is good. University should be broadening our mind, fostering and challenging new conceptions. Much like Bauhaus, which did so, LSE should have different types of interior. Whether it is a belief that reproducing the omnipresent bland mundane designs somehow attracts us yooof into using LSE outlets, or dimwittedness on someone's part, there should be recognition that it is good to have a bit of difference here and there. To attempt a grander point, advances in our thought are inhibited by an inability to conceptualise differently, not whether a coffee table is insufficiently tinny.

Who could LSE cautiously look to? Wetherspoon's, with its attachment to traditional pub fayre at least proves the notion that the whole country does not believe that salvation lies in Bacardi Breezer, served in temples of neon and acrylic. Wright's Bar draws on the London tradition of caffs in the 1970s and 1980s. My policy prescription is this: Bauhaus in one room, Louis-Napoleon opulence in the next.

Whether or not you believe my postulations are drivel, next time you find yourself enjoying the Shaw Room, enjoy it while it lasts because next year it might become a fusion IT room inspiringly baptised as "6th floor web café". I can't wait.

\*Note attempt at profound statement

## Letters to the Editor

**Sir** – It is time for students at LSE to reclaim the streets. For too long extremist factions have misrepresented the views of LSE students, wasting our time and money on unachievable campaigns. Do you wish the SU spent more time campaigning against the RMT and tube strikes than freezing the un-freezable? I would like to invite all concerned students to a rally to restore sanity on Houghton Street: 12 noon on Thursday the 11th November.

What do we want? A dialogue with all stakeholders involved in a calm and orderly manner!

When do we want it? In a timeframe acceptable to all parties involved!

Hosted by IMPACTS LSE in conjunction with the "they're all just too damn high party", ironic placards and beer are strongly encouraged.

**Scott MacDonald**  
Chair of IMPACTS (Irritated Moderates and Progressives Against Crazy Trade-unionists and Socialists)

The Comment and Features Editors will be on Houghton Street on Tuesday 9th, between 12 and 2 PM. If you have any questions, please drop by.

Also, there is a Beaver Social in the Underground from 7pm on Tuesday 9th. Please please please come along.

comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

# Tory lies and coalition trash

## How the coalition's policies are slowly, brick by brick, bringing down progress

**Sean Kippin**



Goedwin's law states that no sooner is an analogy drawn with Nazi Germany in an online argument, than the argument is lost. In view of this, allow me to lose the argument early: the coalition government are perpetrating an act of propaganda so barefacedly dishonest and brazen, it could almost (though not quite) be worthy of Josef Goebbels himself.

It was Goebbels after all who coined that famous dictum: 'If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it'. The Tories and Liberal Democrats have taken heed of this message, and continue to drill their own lie remorselessly into our collective brain. This is, of course, the familiar refrain that they are somehow 'sorting out the almighty mess' left behind by Labour. Whether true or not is nearly irrelevant – it is quickly becoming the received wisdom.

The line, trotted out by every shameless Liberal Democrat and well-nourished Tory is that Labour in government overspent on welfare claimants, overspent on delinquent's education, overspent on bureaucracy, pot plants, paperclips and anything else you care to think about. The swivel-eyed socialists in office were spraying taxpayer money at the riff-raff as if there was a bottomless pit of the stuff.

Because of this apparently unabashed profligacy, Britain now has the second largest budget deficit in the G20. Literally nothing has improved since John Major was answering Prime Minister's Questions. Our interest payments are rising

exponentially. Without decisive action, we are in danger of defaulting on our debts, losing our AAA credit rating and being sent back into a perpetual spiral of recession and depression. Therefore it follows that we need urgent, massive spending cuts. This will help see us back into the black, and usher in a new era of private-sector driven prosperity.

This is a tissue of outrageous lies and incorrect assertion. For starters, George Osborne was arguing as late as 2006 that Gordon Brown should spend more money, as he stuck, limpet-like to Labour's spending plans. While they were at it, the Tories were also arguing that the Irish economic model of non-existent corporation tax and an even more bloated property market was one we ought to be trying to emulate. If the coalition think they have inherited a "mess" now, one can only imagine the debacle they'd have bequeathed to their eventual successors had they been allowed to emulate the 'Irish Miracle'.

When Labour came into office in 1997 it inherited a creaking school system, under funded social security and a near-crippled NHS. Despite dramatically increased funding levels, we are still short of the European average for public expenditure in these areas. The size and scope of the state increased, but from a low base-line. Borrowing wasn't high, and although it increased towards the middle of the decade, the UK still had the second smallest budget deficit in the G7. The idea that this was a period of unparalleled licentiousness can be discarded as utter bunk.

Things quickly changed throughout 2007 and 2008. Northern Rock sailed too close to the sun and had to be nationalised (against the Tories' best advice). Recessionary forces began to take hold in the American financial sector, triggered by the rapid disintegration of the hugely over-leveraged Lehmann Brothers. This led to a cataclysmic series of bank collapses all across the increasingly interconnected fi-

ancial world, leaving policymakers utterly befuddled about what was taking place and how best to deal with it. A downturn enabled by the ideologies of Thatcher and Regan and implemented by large, too-big-to-fail financial institutions, took hold and wreaked havoc. It was the beginning of the banker's recession. Of the bankers, for the people, by the bankers.

Eventually a consensus on how to deal with it, led by the British government emerged. The state would rescue and recapitalise failing financial institutions and dying economies would be given the adrenaline shot of fiscal stimulus, money pumped into the economy to stimulate demand and protect likely victims from the worst affects of the subsequent recession. Governments even went to the extraordinary lengths of printing money, in the form of quantitative easing. As tax revenues collapsed, spending was increased in order to prevent the social catastrophe of home losses, mass unemployment and the inevitable spike in crime.

Because of the size and lightly-regulated nature of our financial sector post-Nigel Lawson's 'Big Bang' in 1986, the recession in Britain was of a particularly daunting size and the response suitably large scale. Fortunately, the action taken by the government blunted the worst of it, kept unemployment low and prevented a complete collapse in demand. Unfortunately, rescuing an economy the size of ours is expensive business and the money to do it had to be found somewhere, so the government borrowed money. Spending more than you receive in tax revenue inevitably leads to an increased deficit. But the extra money was sorely needed, both to prevent suffering on a catastrophic scale and to stop the economy well and truly going off a cliff.

The Tories opposed every significant element of this economic rescue package, arguing that it was unaffordable and likely to be counter-productive. But was

a return to the dole-queues of the 1980s affordable? Were home repossessions on a mass-scale affordable? For the Tories, lest we forget Norman Lamont's famous refrain that unemployment has always been a price worth paying.

The resulting deficit certainly needs to be reduced, but this should wait until the economy fully recovers, and it should be done at a slower pace, over a longer period of time and with a greater emphasis on tax rises. When Labour politicians argue this point, they are chided by the coalition and their right-wing friends in the media as 'deficit deniers', yet one wonders whether they would have the chutzpah to tar Paul Krugman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist who makes exactly the same argument, with the same brush.

Krugman's arguments have been ignored in favour of Danny Alexander's. Respectful as I am of the statesman-like former head of Communications at Cairngorms National Park, his analysis is both economically illiterate and morally defective. There are estimates that 1.5 million people or more are set lose their jobs, whilst the IMF points out politely that welfare cuts are 'regressive' and will disproportionately hit society's least well off. The amount payable to disabled people is being reduced and council tenants are being moved out of the communities they have lived in for generations because of arbitrary housing benefit cuts. Hundreds of thousands of children now won't see their schools rebuilt.

Although a full investigation hasn't taken place into precisely which individuals were at fault for the recession and subsequent deficit, I can state with some confidence that it was not the recipients of Disability Living Allowance, the urban poor or school children. I am, however, happy to receive clarification on this matter.

This course of action also happens to run the risk of throwing us back into a dreaded double-dip recession. The

government know this, and continue apace. The government obviously thinks that the human cost is worth it. It is not. Whilst balancing the books is a noble aim, the government is acting as if it is the only worthwhile objective. However important deficit reduction may be, it ought to be a secondary consideration after what I consider to be any governments overriding moral responsibility: to limit avoidable suffering. Even if economic growth continues uninterrupted (and the signs aren't good) they will have failed in fulfilling this crucial duty.

There is, however, another motivation at work. This is an ideological government. David Cameron, George Osborne and, to a lesser extent, Nick Clegg are the intellectual and political children of Margaret Thatcher. Most Conservatives come into politics with the express aim of limiting the scope of the state in order to allow the unrestrained free market to bathe us all in its limitless prosperity. The deficit is being used as political cover to do what the Tories have wanted to do since time immemorial but haven't been allowed to do by political circumstance. Now, they spy an opportunity and are again implementing their idiosyncratic version of the good society.

Alas, it didn't work in the 1980s and certainly won't work now in even less favourable economic conditions. Inequality will accelerate, the disadvantaged will lose their homes, the well-off will tootle about their business unaffected, talking no doubt about what a success their misery-inflicting cuts have been. The coalition's buzzword of the moment is 'fairness', but what on earth is fair about that?

The previous government didn't create the budget deficit through their profligacy. The current government do have a choice about how to address it. They have chosen an ideological route which will relive the mistakes of the 1980s and they are lying about it every step of the way.

# Photo

9 November 2010 | The Beaver

*Remember, remember,  
the 5th November!*



Vincent Mok



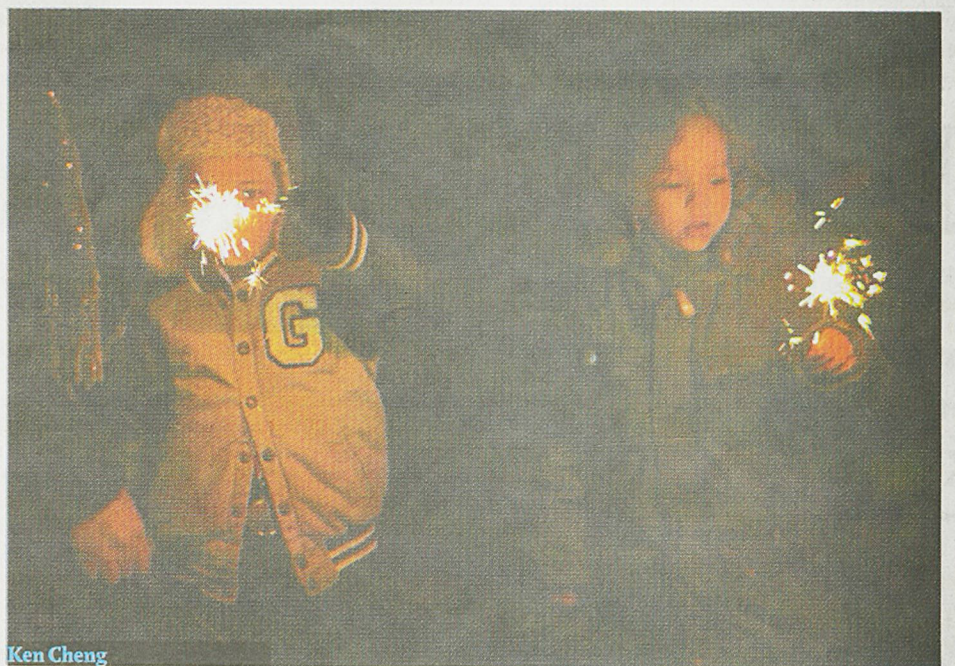
Angelina Castellini



Ken Cheng



Suwan Tan



Ken Cheng



Ken Cheng

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# Social

## Somebody call 911

**Rimmel Mohyidin's** nerves mount as she auditions for Timeless!



**'H**is palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy, There's vomit on his sweater, mom's spaghetti'

I'm pretty sure that when Eminem penned that poetry down, he was talking about auditioning for Timeless.

Okay, that may be pushing it a little, but we've all been there. That growing doubt about your dancing skills, the realization that no, you can't hit that note, or even the sudden epiphany that the clothes you chose to wear today of all days are an utter disaster! As the crippling fear of rejection takes you over, you realize you're about to either make it or break it. (Pause for Impact)

I love drama and not just the teenage, hormonal, 'OMG-is-he-going-to-call' kind. The real deal with the huge theatre, nerves and inch-thick stage make up. I can even put up with fluorescent rainbow dresses (anyone who saw Timeless! last year will know the gravity of that statement), thick moustaches and the odd embarrassingly bad dance step as long as I get to enjoy that moment when the spotlight blinds you to everything else but who you're meant to be in that moment. Dramatic, I know.

This is why I felt a bit like Eminem (though luckily my breakfast remained safely in my stomach) before I went in to audition for this year's show. I had

something to lose; therefore my throat was dry, my stomach was churning and I was literally conducting a dialogue with my heart to please, slow down. After all, I had done this before. I had stood and pretended to be a man, an octopus and a blind vampire on crack in front of a panel begging them to hand me a role and, at the risk of sounding full of myself, I usually managed just fine.

So why was this different?

As LSE students...hell, as people we're probably never going to have a shot at being on the West End. We're no Phantoms, Elphabas or even half as talented as the trees that wave about at the back of the stage. The stage that has seen many life changing, Laurence Olivier type award winning, or just bloody brilliant portrayals of legendary characters. But this is where Timeless! comes in. Somehow, the slightly artistically inclined amongst us internship junkies, cold-hearted capitalists and CV-enthusiasts can see what it's like to have a soul.

I guess the good bit about the joys of anticipating is finding safety in numbers. I wasn't the only one pouring butterflies and shudders out of my ears. I saw some hopefuls merging six different dialects to deliver six words. I saw people rocking back and forth, clutching their knees invoking some sort of Audition God to bless thy acting spirit. I also caught one girl practicing in front of the bathroom mirror. She subsequently locked herself into a

cubicle so I wouldn't 'steal her technique,' as one does. Ah well, we're 'artists' after all. Room must be made for eccentricities, right?

Being that nervous, you'd obviously expect the judges to be these almighty, eight feet tall blurs of intimidation; the reason why you'd want to sleep with the lights on. It certainly seemed to be the case with the time it took them to audition one person at a time. With the odd feeling that I was waiting to find out I had some fatal disease, there was not much else to do than to remind myself that this isn't the dream of most novice actors, of course you can get on the West End on your own and what the hell, even Alfredo James had to be rejected twenty something times to become Al Pacino. Right? RIGHT?

(N.B. The judges were lovely and only took their sweet time because Timeless! is oh-so-democratic and they'd appreciate any feedback/suggestions we had. How nice.)

All validation, breathing techniques and self-deprecation aside, I can safely say that the exclamation point after Timeless! is probably one of the most apt punctuation placements in the history of grammar. There's a reason why everyone with a shred of acting, dancing and singing ability wants to put up with the racing hearts and breathing problems. To be up there with the big names is what makes you extraordinary and that is why Timeless! becomes timeless.

## An artsy LSE

**Malithi Fernando** looks beyond just economics

I accidentally overheard a conversation between two unsuspecting LSE students that made me feel a little outraged. One of the students involved in this conversation was surprised to hear that the LSE had a Drama Society and that they produced performances. It shocked me not only because I am on the committee of the Drama society, but also because I realised that there may be students who progress through their three years at the LSE with little knowledge of the arts.

I know that we attend the London School of Economics and Political Science, but that does not mean that we must spend all of our spare time reading the Economist, attending every careers event related to the banking sector and scouring through the library looking for limited copies of the further readings. That is why I felt it was important to highlight all things creative and artsy that are happening around the LSE. Hopefully, at the end of this article I may have stimulated some interest in at least one LSE student to visit a dance class or a drama workshop.

The best way to begin may be by saying that there is indeed a Drama Society at the LSE, one that puts on at least five productions per academic year. It is a perfect example of LSE's talent, since the plays are chosen, directed and acted by students. I hope that this year there will be greater enthusiasm and a higher turnout at the performances, as well as greater involvement with the society in general. However, if you lack theatre experience and think that a role in a play is too great a commitment for you to take on, why not look at alternative opportunities? There are several ways to get involved in drama such as the improvisation workshops which are a great place to start gaining the confidence and experience needed to step onto a stage. There are no scripts, no rigid rules and all the flexibility that a tentative LSE student would need. It takes place every Thursday and has been growing in popularity.

Next line of argument: who knows what the Film Society does at the LSE? I believe the majority will answer, "don't they just watch films twice a week?". That

is partly true because they want to expose their members to different types of films. However, the Film Society has taken an exciting initiative this year to use their resources in actually making films. Even as I write, they are busy gathering a film crew; people from different lands with eclectic skills and interests, who when they come together will likely form a group reminiscent of the fellowship in the Lord of the Rings.

We must not forget the Dance Society that produces an annual dance show in March where LSE students get to choreograph and perform their own routine. This is a spectacular event which is held in the Peacock Theatre with professional stage managers and organisers. A showcase of unique dance styles and ideas, there is definitely something for everyone, even those who protest their dislike of dance.

Finally, I must tell you about the exciting new enterprise conjured up by some very creative students. They have their own Variety Show, which will take place for one night only at the beginning of Lent term. The Variety Show consists of a combination of drama, dancing and music all packed into a one-and-a-half-hour extravaganza. Someone once told me that, to them, a variety show sounds like a circus. My answer to that is: what is wrong with a circus? It's a melting pot of different talent and styles, something that anyone can enjoy. Plus, who wouldn't like to visit the circus for one night? In all seriousness, it is not a circus, there is a structured programme with a variety of dramatic monologues as well as comedy sketches and music spanning from classical to contemporary pieces.

So next year during Fresher's Fair don't walk past the arts societies without a glance. Take a chance and get involved because you might discover something completely amazing about yourself. If that does not clench the deal then I must inform you that it always looks good on your CV.

## Catering to convenience

**David Woodbridge** asks LSE students' to make use of sQuid



Collecting your shiny new ID card upon registering as a student at the LSE is probably an experience that most freshers are aware of only in the vaguest sense. I sort of remember getting mine; it was a rainy day way back in October 2007, my ears were still ringing from the Queen tribute band in the Quad which had been playing the night before. I had not quite recovered from the Tums' finest, cheapest beverages. Stumbling into the Hong Kong Theatre to get the card was just a brief stopover on my way back to bed.

I assume that the students of 2010 are not so different, and so perhaps few would have noticed that the back of their

new cards are red and sport a 'sQuid' logo. Continuing students, who have been exchanging their old cards for the new sQuid cards over the last two weeks, may be slightly more aware. Although the stress of essays, presentations and campaigning for the SU elections/avoiding campaigners for the SU elections may mean that their minds are also occupied elsewhere.

All of this conspires to keep the new sQuid cards something of a mystery to most of the campus' population. Jake, a 3rd-year Philosophy student, who collected his card last Tuesday, noted that although the card was,

"...something I would use once I know how it works", he was also "...not that sure" what it was for, exactly.

What it's for, primarily, is to provide an easier way of paying for food, drink and other items across the LSE campus. If fumbling around for coins or waiting to punch in your PIN number at a checkout counter has always struck you as somewhat annoying, then you may well appreciate the sQuid contactless payment system. Similar to how the Oyster card works on TfL services, you can top your sQuid card up with credit and then use it to pay at most LSE Catering outlets including the 4th Floor Restaurant and the Garrick. More places will come on stream in the future, and LSE Catering is planning a number of special offers for card users.

Once set up, the sQuid card can be extremely useful. Alina, a Master's student studying the History of International Relations, noted that the card was on how to get one and get started using it might be helpful. "...fine, once set up" and had proved "useful".

Obtaining a card shouldn't be a problem: all students who started at LSE this year will already have a sQuid card, having been given one at registration. Continuing students, if they haven't already exchange their existing card for a sQuid card, can do so by visiting the Student Services Centre. As for setting up, it is as simple as pointing your browser at [www.squidcard.com/LSE.html](http://www.squidcard.com/LSE.html); once registered, you can also use this link to top-up and view your card's balance.

Now, if they could just programme the card so you can use it to transfer karma to the Hare Krishna guy...

2 free tickets to see...



Israeli Singer

**IdAn Raichel**

28 November - O2 Academy Islington

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# LSE Diary

## Chu Ting Ng basks in Bali

Being naturally impatient and lazy, I was sure I would not survive the forty-five minute journey to the city centre.

Oddly enough, I'm unreasonably in love with Bali. For the geographically challenged, it's an Indonesian island that's typically beachy, leafy and touristy. I love it so much that at nineteen, just due for a quarter-life crisis, I've decided that Bali is where I'm going to dodder my slothful retired days away.

Bali sounds like just another sunny and over-exposed Southeast Asian island, but there's something different about it. I know everyone says that, but take it from someone who's from Singapore. Southeast Asian credibility has got to stand for something. I've been to my fill of Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian islands but none of them can beat the allure of Bali. Maybe it's the mashed culture, amazing weather, lush spas or simply the great marketing, but seriously, there really is something.

For culture vultures, religion in Bali is a definite trump. Unlike the other predominantly Muslim parts of Indonesia, most Balinese people are Hindu. Islam and Buddhism feature as well, but it is Hinduism that finds its way into the architecture, social norms and everyday practices of the Balinese. Elaborate temple rituals and beliefs are so deeply embedded into the Balinese way of life that after a while, you wonder how they ever find the time to do anything else. I was extremely lucky and managed to witness a temple ceremony that left me deeply moved. There's no point in trying to describe it here because I wouldn't do it justice, but if you do visit I beg you to keep an eye and ear open for these opportunities. Tanah Lot, the village of Batuan and kopi luwak\* plantations: it's a mix you'll never see anywhere else. Soaked in the

scent of frangipani, this amalgamation of Indonesian culture and Hinduism lends Bali a surprising grace and slightly ominous elegance amidst the bustling activity.

I profess to being an aloof young person occasionally, you know, being too cool and all. But Bali's tourist-y glory cracked that and still satisfied the party and shopping-hungry monster in me. Clubbing is

**I've been to my fill of Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian islands but none of them can beat the allure of Bali**

amazingly fun with the endless hotpot of locals and tourists from all over. Alcohol is gorgeously affordable. Shopping is out of this world, especially if you have a thing for white linen, beads and long flowing dresses, as I do. The southern stretch of Bali, Kuta, Legian and Seminyak is where it all happens. Don't leave without spending at least a day there.

I unfailingly crave luxury and can officially claim mastery of the art of doing nothing. Besides being the usual traps for hilariously pasty, sun-craving tourists, beaches and spas in Bali are the nirvana for all of us moaning about the strains of university and self-induced

party damage. Nusa Dua boasts the finest beaches in all of Bali. It's quieter and more secluded than Kuta beach. Nearby is Jimbaran Bay, where you can indulge in fresh seafood while basking in a grand sunset after roaming Uluwatu temple. The Grand Hyatt is perfect and pricey for such a stay, but truly every sloth's dream. For the slightly more mobile, sea sports abound in the northeast region, along Candidasa beach. For the totally immobile, posh spas and deep relaxation await in the jungles of Ubud. That is where you'll find true bliss and sensory decadence.

It's not expensive.

It's not dangerous. It's never boring. It's perfect for anyone, so take my word for it and go as soon as you can!



# Rolling out the red carpet

**Maatin Patel** attends the BFI London Film Festival

If there is one thing to celebrate the London Film Festival for it is its immensely diverse selection of films that over the past two weeks have dramatically broadened my cinematic horizons. Horizons which, up to this point, I would like to have thought were pretty well nurtured. I'm sure the same can be said of the countless other film lovers who helped to break all records of attendance in this 54th instalment of the British Film Institutes' (BFI) annual celebration.

Over the course of the festival, I saw some extraordinary things come to life on the big screens, all of which were helpfully located within walking distance of the LSE campus. My journey began with the story of the world's youngest billionaire, as told in *The Social Network*, which jumps between the equally fascinating stories of the inception of Facebook in a Harvard dorm room, and the lawsuits brought against the creator by his peers (who claim that the idea was stolen from them) and his best friend (who is forced out of the business). The film concerns itself with an extremely contemporary subject matter that is the vogue of today yet the interplay between the characters is age-old, making for a story that appeals to audiences of any kind.

I moved from the multi-million dollar corporate litigation settlements to the emotionally charged tale of a miscarriage of justice in *Conviction*; a powerful story set in rural Massachusetts in the late 1980s. Hilary Swank undoubtedly puts herself up for award nominations yet again for her remarkable transformation into Betty Ann Waters, an uneducated single mother who dedicates her life to proving her brother's innocence. If it were not a true story it would be hard to imagine such unwavering strength and love for one's family, and I certainly wondered if I could ever expect the same devotion from my own sibling!

In my desperation to see certain films I was forced to subject myself to a pretty tight schedule, resulting in my attendance of 3 screenings in the same cinema over a period of 24 hours. It became hard to separate the real from the imaginary as I journeyed between worlds, with the heart-warming feeling brought on by *Conviction* dispelled through the dystopian world envisioned in *Never Let Me Go*. Chosen as the Opening Gala for this year's festival, it offered a chilling view of modern medicine, following three children as they grow up to discover that they are clones created solely to donate their organs for the advancement of science. This theme of isolation was carried over to George Clooney's character in *The American*, which used the beautiful backdrop of rural Italy and some impeccable cinematography to construct a visually stunning cinematic experience, showcasing Clooney in a role quite unlike any of his others.

I counted myself extremely lucky for the proximity of the LSE campus to the festival venues no more so than on Wednesday night when I raced out of a 6pm class in order to make it to the Closing Gala event at the Odeon Leicester Square. Such was my sense of haste that it very nearly passed me by that in the space of 15 minutes I had gone from discussing Machiavellian theory to walking the red carpet alongside James Franco and Danny Boyle! In the space of 36 hours I had seen Franco embody two real life, extremely contrasting characters - the poet Allen Ginsberg in the experimental film *Howl* and the climber Aron Ralston in *127 Hours*. In the former, he carefully paid tribute to a truly unique artist who rose to prominence in the 1950s after his epic poem *Howl* drew much criticism for its obscene language and vulgar subject matter. For the latter, the 90 minutes spent in a claustrophobic Utah canyon were enough to confirm the diversity of

**I saw some extraordinary things come to life on the big screens**

James Franco's acting ability, as he brilliantly portrayed Ralston's gripping 5-day struggle whilst trapped under a rock. To imagine the mental struggle of someone faced with their own impending mortality is near impossible, and it is only down to a wonderful collaborative effort on the filmmakers' part that one felt transported into the canyon alongside Ralston, able to share his experience almost first hand.

*127 Hours* was a fitting finale to my first London Film Festival experience; a film that will long be talked about for its heroic plot and the terrifying, gory scene in which Aron Ralston is forced to remove his arm using only a blunt multi-tool. It should also be praised for its powerful central performance and cinematic artistry; Danny Boyle once again demonstrated his abilities as a director, and these were recognized by the BFI when they fittingly bestowed upon him their highest honour, and inducted him as a Fellow at this year's Film Festival awards.

I would encourage anyone and everyone to open themselves up to the offerings of the festival; amongst the multitude of films spanning all cultures, languages and subject matters one is bound to strike a chord with everyone, and if you are a film-lover such as myself, it is simply an indulgence too good to miss out on. Until next year...


## THE BAG-PACKING BLOG

Fabian Graimann's tips for Uganda

I think the first thing to say about a trip to Uganda is that one should just go! Unlike what most people believe, there is no war waging in Uganda and the country is not controlled by war lords. Basically the situation in the country is safe for most activities that involve voluntary work. Moreover, there are a couple of gems in the country that make it worth a visit:

1. The capital city Kampala fits the stereotype of the overcrowded and bustling African megalopolis. Although not quite the ideal for European style sightseeing, it offers a variety of insights into African culture and is a great place to start a tour of East Africa.
2. The highlight of the city is the Owino Market: the most amazing market I have seen on this planet (and I have been to a few)
3. A one day rafting trip on the Nile. A 30km stretch of the Nile peppered with Grade 5 rapids and including a 3km leisurely swim. The whole experience is absolutely breathtaking. Pick the cheapest company as they all have the same equipment and safety regulations (which, by the way, are excellent!).
4. The quintessential African trip cannot be complete without a safari. Queen Victoria National Park is the one to go to. If you are brave enough and don't want to pay the high student fees any more, cross into DR Congo and do a guided tour up a volcano. (FYI: You will need an official invite from the UN (or other world saving organizations and the visa costs 250 USD).
5. Uganda is a great place to go if you want to gain some volunteering experience over the summer. We did it in a school/orphanage near the Tanzanian border. This is the way I would want to experience Uganda again.

# PART B



PartB has a chat with  
rising singer-songwriter  
Simon Cliff

TELEVISION

Glee stars  
behaving badly

FASHION

Going gaga for  
Gaga

FOOD

Vegetarianism?  
Bah! Humbug!

# It's showtime!

## Alice Leah Fyfe looks at Gaga, Glitz and Glamour

Annika Ranga takes a closer look at the most controversial

### Queen of Pop

She's won two Grammys, 11 MTV Video Music Awards, 5 World Music Awards, 3 Brits - the list is endless. It seems this talented lady just keeps picking up the trophies. Oh, and she's starred in Gossip Girl. Ever since Lady Gaga entered the music industry she has caused quite a stir, whether it be with her music, her music videos, or her fashion sense, the tabloids and her 'little monsters' just can't get enough of her... and they're not the only ones.

Do you remember when you first heard "Just Dance"? You know the infamous intro with the "I've had a little bit too much..." (we've all been there). Well, did you ever think that what started off with this fresh young blonde singer would turn into what Lady Gaga is today - a fashion icon with a hit list of records behind her. She started off by fitting in with what the industry wanted - a blonde singer who gave the people what they wanted and wore what she was told to wear: it was all hot pants and tank tops. But the apple fell too far from the tree. Lady Gaga rebelled and now we have a star who has been called the next Madonna and compared to the likes of Michael Jackson. These are big superstars and it's a lot of pressure for one little lady but she exceeds all expectations.

Her fashion sense is off the hook, as is her music. With a name which originates from Queen's 'Radio Gaga' song, we should have taken it as a forewarning to expect big things from this her. She was the lady in lace at the VMA awards last year, wearing a red dress and mask to match.



It was here where she wore a total of five outrageous outfits ranging from a high-necked Victorian style dress bedecked with feathers to wearing a padded corseted playsuit and black glitter boots. Her fashion sense has no bounds and this is exactly why we love her. Lady Gaga pushes all of the limits when it comes to fashion and her favourite designers include the late Alexander McQueen as well as Jean-Paul Gaultier, and the king of mad hatters designs her infamous headwear - Valentino. She is a big fan of McQueen's armadillo heels, which she can be seen sporting in her "Bad Romance" video.

Causing chaos with her fashion style just isn't enough for Lady Gaga: she has to do it in the music industry too - just another one of her fortés. In March we saw a Quentin Tarantino-inspired music video in which Gaga collaborated with Beyoncé for her song "Telephone". The video was based on Kill Bill, with a Thelma and Louise ending. It had a whopping 17 million hits on YouTube in the first four days of its release. In it, we see Lady Gaga wearing nothing but black and yellow police tape and various unexpected hairstyles, with one of her wearing a telephone as part of her hair - very audacious. And like true sports, her and Beyoncé both



wear Wonder Women inspired outfits with the American flag on them. It's quite patriotic but, oddly, Lady Gaga makes it work.

It's impossible to pinpoint her fashion trend: her look does not fit into the indie/hip-hop/vintage/60s girl categories, so instead Lady Gaga has done what only a true fashionista can do, which is to create her own style of clothing, which everyone of course wants to be part of. She had celebrities such as the likes of Beyoncé, Paris Hilton, Katy Perry, tweeting about her, wanting to dress like her and are big fans of her look. But it's not all rosy in the Haus of Gaga, where in October we saw her take a tumble, literally. At Heathrow Airport she fell on her face, tripping on her Noritaka Tatehana platform boots, with paparazzi there to take those pics. We should rate Gaga for wearing them; those boots were 20cm high! We can allow her a stumble.

So when you've fallen in 8 inch heels, worn various masks, Armadillo shoes, won a lot of music awards and broken Facebook and YouTube records, what does one do next? Well, at this years MTV VMAs, Lady Gaga wore her notorious meat dress, complete with hat and shoes. The dress is designed by Argentinian Franc Fernandez and Gaga also recently posed in a beef bikini for Japan's Men's Vogue magazine. And her reason for wearing such a scandalous garment? To show that 'she's not a piece of meat'. I think the message has been shown loud and clear.



As mentioned by Alice, you know when you've made it big when a university wants to not only name a course after you but teach a course about you to its students too. This is exactly what has happened to Lady Gaga: the University of South Carolina has introduced a sociology course dedicated to the life, work and rise to fame of Lady Gaga.

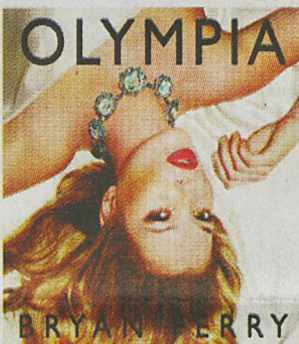
Consequently, I believe that Lady Gaga is a true icon: not only in music but fashion and education too. She has definitely made a big imprint on society, and for the better. A little controversy along the way is always good.

**CHECKOUT: Gagafashionland.com**

Last week, a new university course was revealed to the world at the University of South Carolina; the rise to fame of Lady Gaga. She has become an event in popular culture; a phenomenon appealing to the millions and redefining the boundaries of the multi-billion pound music industry.

While Gaga may seem like a new kind of social obsession, music and fashion have always had a close and dependent relationship: each an expression of popular culture by two of the most valued senses - sight and sound. What better way to exhibit a new runway collection than a demonstrative rock show, or a limelight pop video? And how else to complement a hit number-one single than with the jaw-dropping garments of McQueen or Galliano? On every level, acoustic folk to techno, the combination of music and fashion exude the identity of the performer, the latter giving the listener something tangible with which to express their tastes. Artists across the board project a complete lifestyle package for fans to covet and marvel at. Headline acts are naturally paired with the runways of Milan and Paris, while understated and enigmatic performers choose a more subtle, liveable sense of style. Of course, this is not a new phenomenon: think of The Beatles, The Stones, The Blockheads... each genre of music pioneering new and exciting means of expression and way of dressing. In fact, any music star will have his own unique style and every music star will be mimicked, however ludicrous.

A most recent reminder of this deep-rooted, ever tightening relationship is the cover for Bryan Ferry's new album, Olympia. Ferry, as former frontman of Roxy Music, is a British style legend, one we will take a closer look at in due course, but his new solo album features one of contemporary fashion's most recognised faces, Kate Moss. The photo shoot was the embodiment of sheer decadence; Louboutins and De Beers



splashed over Ivory Silk, antique furniture adorned with the iconic face of Moss. But what link to this fashion goddess does Ferry's art rock have? In short, an image of A-list influence in the world of art industry, a luxury lifestyle that Ferry has chosen to convey vicariously through this striking vintage style cover.

In his 70s heyday, Ferry's own iconic status relied not so much on album artwork, or MTV, but on spectacular live performances, himself as the jewel in the crown. Tame compared to the likes of Gaga's but at the time, the heady nar-

### Jamie: first year Maths & Econ

Citing the painter David Hockney as a major source of inspiration, it is no wonder that Jamie, who incidentally sports round-framed glasses like the artist, seeks out quirky patterns and colours (notice the collar of his blouse!). Himself a former art student, Jamie admires Hockney's fantastical landscapes, and portraits and sketches of men often in playfully classic attire; similarly, he mentions the online magazine Fantastic Man as one of his favourites. Most of all though, Jamie is one to be "seduced by comfort" when he goes out to expand his wardrobe; his most cherished items are therefore a heavy knitted winter coat by Japanese streetwear clothing brand Undercover (which, he explains, has a heat retaining system ensuring one is never too hot or too cold when wearing the coat) as well as the Lanvin cashmere jumper he is wearing today, which was a (very generous!) gift. Under his motto of "Ultimate Comfort" he always finds himself "swayed by whatever knitwear is on show. For me, there is really no planning in buying." With such a taste for soft materials and functional yet stylish clothes, of course London landmarks like Bstore and Dover Street Market are on top of his list. The thing Jamie finds most remarkable about fashion of a certain city or area is that when taken out of context, people's perception of it changes: "For example, in Paris everyone sees trench coats as the height of fashion, whereas in London nearly everyone owns one and it is really nothing special." At LSE, he says to be most fascinated by a certain mysterious "tribe of strangely

serious suited people", whom he takes to be postgrads who take their work seriously and have their clothing reflect that. So what image is he trying to transcend? "That I have ultimate comfort as a life's objective!"



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

cotic opulence generated by his music was reflected in the daring, yet debonair sharpness of Ferry's stage costumes. He was renowned for his sequined blazers, something that was regenerated by Michael Jackson in the 80s. Of course, he has now become synonymous with grandiose glamour the world over. For me, the sequin jacket makes the biggest impression on the cover of Jeff Buckley's Grace Album of '94. This gold sequined Jacket has been the benchmark for many a rockstar's wardrobe since. Reworks of this "entertainer" style have continued decade after decade, donned by Karl Lagerfeld himself, proof that this

are still very much on trend and worn with turn-up trousers and socks as loud as you like, you may find yourself moonwalking down the Strand. Asos have some for a fraction of the price (£26, below) of Repetto, as do Office; a bit more sturdy perhaps.

In the last decade or so, the virtual realm of the music video has provided a perfect platform for the outrageous and experimental.

Already, we have looked at the Gaga hype but other obvious marriages include Rihanna and Bryce Aime, the CSM graduate whose spike shouldered dresses of "Hard" video fame shot him to fame in 2009. He now has a stunning boutique in the luxury neighbourhood of Knightsbridge. Rihanna's style is now recognisable as structured and minimalist.

So while the world waits to see what stunts Gaga throws our way next, we can say that with a little updating and imagination, music stars of all time can provide solid informed style guidance. They are the supermodels with the unique identity and individual extravagance that their runway one-dimensional, size-zero counterparts lack.



accessories for all occasions and at affordable prices. And the final necessity is footwear.

For cheap and chic shoes, one of the best places to go is New Look. It is a rarity in London seeing shoes - perfectly fine for a night out, priced from just a fiver; definitely a student-friendly sale. They always have some kind of sale going on and for any non-sale items you like the look of you can get a 10% student discount to make the price a bit friendlier! These satin black heels below cost only £15 in the sale! They have ruffles and a cross over strap, matching the dress perfectly. With all of this you have a stylish and Gaga-esque ensemble for only £87.97!



### Gaga Fashion without Gaga Prices, by Jaymie Strong

Ever since the phenomenon of 'The Fame Monster'; women nationwide have been struck in awe by Lady Gaga's bizarre sense of style and fashion. Oddly, the icon seems to not only get away with the most out-there and unusual outfits but she also makes them polished works of art! Given the amount of money she spends on her outfits it comes as no surprise that she rocketed in both the music and fashion industry so quickly. Not many deny her status as one of today's most eccentric fashion icons - in the 2010 Brit awards, for her Marie Antoinette inspired costume, the accessories alone cost over £6,000! So, for those of you without a spare £6,000 to splash out merely on accessories, see what you can get dot-



ted about London! You're looking for evening wear, you want to keep up with the Gaga trend; where do you start? Well you should stick to the monochromatic colours as they'll be the "in" colours over winter, blacks, silvers, greys etc. Start with something simple; a plain black figure-fit dress - an economical buy is the H&M number to the left which is currently priced only £24.99. There are two or three stores on Oxford Street, one on Regent Street and one on Long Acre - there's generally one within walking distance anywhere in



Central London - maybe Gaga should open her eyes next time she's in town! To liven it up: avoid the funeral look; get some glittery tights or leggings and accessorise well! Bracelets will go well with this chic dress as will heels - both are crucial to the overall look!

H&M give a recommendation online about the perfect bracelet for this dress which you should definitely take. It will leave you short of £7.99 but it's a wise investment as it is versatile and glamorous and you could wear it to cultivate countless dif-

ferent outfits.

Notice all the glittery tights and sequins in fashion post-Gaga? Well, that's what this outfit is missing at the moment! What you really want to add is a pair of glittery leggings! These, on the left, came from Rokit which is a small store with some excellent vintage style clothing there ranging the 1940s to the 80s! It's a disco heaven! But, more importantly, the prices are très agréable! The leggings to the left are only £10! Regarding Rokit, there are 3 stores in London - Camden High Street, Covent Garden, and Brick Lane. Definitely a hidden gem of London: not only did I find the leggings for this outfit there but also an ideal bag, ideal both in appearance and in price - £15.

The likes of River Island are also worth checking out. They sell some superb



# Glee stars bring sexy back to GQ

Shrina Poojara examines the recent controversy around Glee about 'that' photoshoot

The makers of hit US musical comedy show **Glee** came under fire recently after three of the show's stars dropped their "squeaky-clean" image (and most of their clothes) for the cover of November's issue of men's magazine GQ. Lea Michele, and Dianna Agron, who respectively play ballad-belted Rachel and once knocked-up cheerleader Quinn, posed in raunchy schoolgirl outfits alongside their noticeably fully dressed male co-star Cory Monteith, who plays the high-school quarterback Finn on the show. Michele's shots in the magazine spread are particularly provocative; in one picture, she is seen suggestively licking a lollipop while leaning up against a school locker; in another, she sits on a locker room bench flashing her underwear at the camera with her legs crudely spread.

Due to the show's huge number of child fans, the shoot has caused outrage in the US amongst parents' groups, with the Parents Television Council (PTC) stating that it "borders on paedophilia". Despite the fact that all three stars are over 21 years of age (Michele and Agron are 24 while Monteith is 28), the row stems from the fact that they are shot as sexed-up versions of their high-school characters. I guess that means that all of you who dressed up as a naughty schoolgirl for Hal-

loween this year committed a serious ethical faux pas? Shame on you.

It must be said that I have several issues with the shoot, but we'll get to those later. The main point is the controversy surrounding the so-called "paedophilic" nature of the shoot seems to be based on pretty flawed logic. Agron expressed this perfectly when she recently posted in her online blog: "If your eight-year old has a copy of our GQ cover in hand, again, I am sorry. But I would have to ask, how on earth did it get there?" Glee cast: 1, parents: 0.

It should also be contested just how child-friendly the show really is. Sure, much of the "High School Musical" generation were drawn to Glee, but as it turns out, the show is hardly a close substitute for the sickeningly sweet film franchise; Glee's infamous musical numbers often sugar-coat the array of adult themes the show covers. It's hardly surprising then that the series, which has openly discussed mature themes like teen pregnancy, homosexuality and the loss of virginity, released the Season 1 box set with a BBFC certification of 12 (unlike the U given to the High School Musical trilogy). It is clearly a show that was never primarily aimed at young children; Brad Falchuk, the co-producer and executive producer of Glee, said, "We

didn't know 9-year olds would like it so much." If you're still in doubt about Glee's alleged wholesome family image, just check out the cast's cover of 'Push It' in the episode 'Showmance' (complete with dry-humping choreography), the cringe-worthy scene of Finn's premature hot tub ejaculation in

## The controversy surrounding the so-called 'paedophilic' nature of the shoot seems to be based on pretty flawed logic

'Preggers' and even – spoiler alert – the girl-on-girl action in season two's episode 'Duets'.

The GQ debate takes an interesting twist when you consider one of Michele's other November photo shoots:

a semi-topless shot for UK magazine Marie Claire. Perhaps it was because this shoot was overshadowed by the GQ shoot which has meant the photo has gone pretty controversy-free, but I have my own suspicions; it seems that Marie Claire (unlike GQ) managed to find the line between sexy and sleazy, resulting in a shoot that can only be called beautiful: an adjective far from mind when looking at the GQ spread.

Terry Richardson, the photographer and 'creative director' behind the GQ shoot, is pretty notorious for doing 'tasteless, oversexed shoots with little artistic merit; in March of this year, the Guardian exposed claims by Danish model Rie Rasmussen of Richardson sexually exploiting his models. In a comment to the newspaper, Richardson said, "Maybe it's the psychological thing that I was a shy kid, and now I'm this powerful guy with his boner, dominating all these girls." Well, I'm reassured.

The GQ spread was one that could only be described as tasteless, with many commenting in Internet forums that Michele looked like she was "trying too hard". I can't help but agree; one only has to look at her Marie Claire shoot to know that she doesn't need to be spread-eagled tugging at an open shirt, wearing just underwear and an "Aren't I a bad girl?" expression to

be sexy. Surely there is a way to look seductive without looking vulgar?

The Inbetweeners' shoot for FHM last month came and went without controversy; the girls of the show graced the magazine cover in sexy office wear. While the pictures were certainly risqué, they were certainly a lot classier than Glee's GQ shoot. Granted, The Inbetweeners, though also a high-school based comedy, doesn't consider eight and nine-year olds as its typical fans (at least I hope not) - thus perhaps one explanation for the lack of outrage - it must be said that the FHM shoot perhaps consciously made no reference to the high-school aspect of the show, unlike the Lolita-esque theme of GQ's.

Aside from the borderline-offensiveness of the Glee shoot's theme, one has to question the motives behind it even taking place. John Nelson, GQ's editor-in-chief, stated that Fox network was aware that the shoot was taking place but was not involved with the theme; "It was up to the individual actors and the reps for the actors to approve the concept," he said. This, however, does still not make it possible for one to completely disconnect the shoot with the show.

At the heart of Glee is the theme of inclusion. Sure, the attempt of the show to cover as many stereotypes as possible is as blatantly obvious as the photos on the diversity page of any investment bank's website. but the sentiment seems much more heartfelt; the message is that you can be from any background - overweight, gay, disabled... the list goes on! - yet you are still entitled to love, friendship and acceptance. In spite of this, choosing three of Glee's most conventionally attractive stars and fitting them to near physical ideals for the GQ cover seems to portray the exact opposite sentiment, undermining the show's laudable message of embracing difference and being happy with yourself. It really makes one wonder what the point was in the boundary-pushing show, which is certainly not short of publicity, wanting to come across as sexy to GQ's target audience of straight white men.

Glee's Halloween themed episode 'The Rocky Horror Glee Show' was aired in the US on October 26th amidst the GQ controversy. It's airing was aptly timed; the particularly salacious episode centred on the balance between self-expression and audience discomfort. The character Sue Sylvester (played by Jane Lynch) argued, "When pushing boundaries is the only aim, the result is usually bad art." Along this train of thought, I can't help but think that, for once, Glee got it horribly wrong.

Glee will air on E4 in January. The November issues of GQ and Marie Claire are on sale now.



Saucy enough for TV but not for GQ? Naya Rivera and Heather Morris from Glee

## Theatre: Yes, Prime Minister, Gielgud Theatre Daniel Parnaby

In writing the script for the stage version of **Yes, Prime Minister**, Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn could hardly be said to have lacked suitable material, and whilst the vagaries of coalition government have occurred too recently to feature in any meaningful way, big political themes such as illegal immigration, financial

### The stage version of Yes, Prime Minister is more bitingly satirical than the original

crisis, global warming, conflict between the government and the BBC and the culture of spin serve to bring the 1980's political satire in to the 21st century.

The plot revolves around the negotiation of a financial bailout of Europe by the nation of Kumranistan which if successfully concluded the Prime Minister feels will prevent him being forced into resigning. However, there are strings attached with the Kumranistani foreign minister asking for an underage prostitute to be provided, the EU get-

ting involved and the usual scheming of Sir Humphrey Appleby.

The play stars a masterful performance by David Haig as Prime Minister Jim Hacker, whose character is played as a more excitable and angry version of Paul Eddington's original portrayal. Haig shows a character torn between what he believes to be his moral and political future as well as his slow collapse under the pressure of the fiascos that surround him. Haig is wonderfully contrasted with Henry Goodman, who manages to instantly make Sir Humphrey's role of the elegantly obstructionist mandarin his own.

While the script early on does feel like a re-heated version of the sitcom series and elements of the dialogue are clunkier than one would expect, it quickly develops into an original product, more bitingly satirical than the original playful fun poking of the television version, with Tony Blair's "doing God" and Gordon Brown's press management coming under particular scrutiny. However, while closer to the bone than its TV predecessors, Yes, Prime Minister retains all the qualities that made it both lovable and convincing; the added sharpness of the satire adds to the hilarity that unfolds as the government is enveloped in farce during the second act. All in all: a must see!  
*Yes, Prime Minister is running now.*



David Haig and Henry Goodman try and get the country out of crisis in Yes, Prime Minister

## Why I Like Meat

Leonora Rumsey will swallow anything, as long as it's not veg

I'm going to be straight with you. I like meat. A burger in my bap. A sausage in my bun. The works. In fact, it didn't occur to me how much of meat fan I was until I sat down to write this article and considered, for a second, a life without meat. (Now before anyone gets hot and heady, this is a food review. So don't jump to the wrong conclusions, even if much of what I seem to be writing reads like dodgy innuendo.) Before this, I'd never appreciated how much meat I seem to chow down on a daily basis. I'll even eat it raw (I heart sushi big-time) But I'm game for trying new things so I'll consider the prospect of life without meat.

Vegetarianism I find easier to stomach than veganism. However, as a person who likes to go all out, I find the vegan idea admirable – if you're giving up meat you may as well go the whole hog, no? Well no. You shouldn't. I have a vegan relative who occasionally visited when I was a child, whose veganism you can spot a mile off. Thanks to my mother, I perpetually still think of her as 'the one who looks on the verge of death because she's a vegan'. Morally commendable idea though it may be, veganism is, to be frank, a dull concept with very few options come meal time.

I refuse to seriously entertain the notion that lentils are a meat substitute.

Over the summer, I visited a friend in Italy where we stayed with some of her relatives, a couple of whom were, you guessed it, vegans. One evening, they kindly offered to cook for every-

### On the one hand, if you don't eat meat you should do it properly... but how dull would our palettes be?

one. I must confess: I was not aware that they were the night's chefs until I realised that the main course was over and there had yet to be any meat in my mouth. That realisation kind of pissed me off. I felt robbed, and that distracted me from the vegan chocolate tart they had managed to whip up

which was actually rather good. Can you be a part-time vegan? Desserts only? I reckon that's the only way to go; I'll readily admit that meat won't cut it in a pudding. My sister and I found that out first hand when we naively ordered chocolate sushi once on holiday!

Vegetarianism I find less abhorrent. However, some vegetarians really get my goat: the types that claim to be on the anti-meat brigade and yet exclude fish from that bandwagon. How is that justified? I will never know. In my eyes, if you eat fish, you eat meat. I feel like I'm contradicting myself because I feel that on the one hand, if you won't eat meat you should do it properly and skip vegetarianism to be a vegan, but on the other hand, how incredibly dull would our palettes be with a vegan menu? Unbearably so.

I will admit that some of the reasoning behind people's adoption of a non-meat diet is admirable. In the global warming era, the world cannot afford for everyone to be as greedy as me. Also, the morality of some slaughterhouses may be questionable, and I'm an animal lover, so that's a big no-no for me. But quit altogether? God no. Just splurge on fair trade produce and convince yourself it gave the poor creatures a good deal before they popped

it. Besides, as long as you're not planning on doing a Lady Gaga with it, the meat won't be wasted – eating meat is a great source of protein, and no one looks good (or grows) without protein in their diets.

I truly don't think I could face a life without meat. I'll leave you with the

words of little known singer James Taylor (who no, I had never heard of either until I cannily Googled the phrase 'songs with meat'):

"I don't want no onions or sauerkraut, mamma, hold on to the bun baby, work it on out. I'm a chili dog."



## Going the Distance?

Rosalie Ng worries about long-distance relationships

We live in a world where there are practically no more international barriers. Technology now enables instantaneous communication regardless of location. Tools such as BBM, Facebook, and Skype are relied upon by the majority of the developed world.

This type of efficient global commu-

nication has been the turning point for commercial and political development. However, humankind is much more than that. Another vital aspect of our existence is our relationships with each other. How has globalisation affected our relationships?

One evident result is the rising number of long-distance relationships. A common misconception is that with

the current technology, it seems entirely possible to have successful relationships regardless of distance.

But the truth is, it can't be done. Long-distance relationships are not real. They are simply illusions. A pleasing combination of fantasy and memories. But nonetheless, an illusion.

With distance, we can very easily hide our true selves. With the safe barrier of distance, no one has to reveal their faults, annoying habits, or genuine perspectives on things. We lie about all these things to create the illusion of compatibility with our partner. True, all relationships take a certain amount of lying. But the basis of it has to be on an actual compatibility. You can't truly test that without going through life experiences together. You don't see how your partner really handles his affairs, just purely his perspective on things. You don't really see what their characteristics or preferences are – you have to base it purely on their own perspectives. And we all know our perspectives of ourselves are skewed.

Besides that, long distance relationships miss out on the whole point. Putting one night hook-ups aside, the purpose of most relationships is learning how to support and care for someone else. Can you really do that simply through encouraging words through the phone? When you're ill, when you've failed, when you're helpless: that's when you most need your partner there. In long distance relationships, however, your partner can't take care of you when you're sick, can't fix your problems or even be there for you. Even if those are the times you need them most.

Without all of that, you're reduced to not a relationship, but the illusion of possession. You think, "Oh, he is my

boyfriend. She is my girlfriend", but you're not learning how to love them. You're just learning how to claim and possess them. This is especially true in a world where it's so popular to rate someone's attractiveness from 1 to 10. People use their significant other as reflection of their own attractiveness. You are more attractive if you can attract a perfect 10. But love isn't about possession. It really isn't. It's about switching the focus of your world from yourself to love.

Speaking of possession however, almost all relationships (fuck buddies aside) require fidelity. At this point, I'd like to share a technique my friend uses. He meets several girls at a club and gets their numbers. The next morning, he proceeds to type one text: "It was great meeting you last night babe. I haven't met someone I'd really connected with, for a long time". This text is mass forwarded to all the girls he met. In his words: "Who has time to focus on one girl? I gotta throw a big net, and see what fish bite". The point of this story is, how do you know your 'boyfriend/girlfriend' is not having simultaneous long term relationships? Messages can apparently be sent to everyone. Phone calls last an hour tops, which is about one twelfth of a waking day. There's no way to find out: they are in a completely different country, with a completely different circle of friends, and leading a very separate life than yours. You must rely on trust. But trust takes time to build, takes living life together to build. That just simply can't be done through long distance.

There's also the obvious problem involving the lack of physical contact. Physical contact isn't needed for business relationships, but it's essential in romantic ones. There's a certain

chemistry between two people. In movies, it's often known as the 'spark'. That chemistry just can't be replicated via the internet or phone. It requires the physical touch, eye contact, smell, and all the small things that just cannot be done through words. It's the same reason why sex is so vital in long term relationships. Regardless of any emotional differences, the physical chemistry reminds us of that initial connection. So why do people enter into long distance relationships?

There are people who immediately start out as long distance. These people have spent so many years waiting for their perfect partner. They have a multitude of failed relationships behind them. They watch the friends around them go into happy relationships while they stay single. They want so badly for a perfect partner that they project that perfect image on a person, any person. Distance creates a safe buffer where that image won't be destroyed. They've found a partner perfectly suited for them.

Others have been in a relationship for a while and are forced into long distance because of unforeseen circumstances. These people have invested so much into the relationship; they're unwilling to part with it. They can't let go, so they choose to hold on to the happy memories by pretending that they're still in a relationship. But as I have said, it's not real. You're just basking in the warmth of happy memories, unwilling to move forward and unwilling to see that the sun has set long ago.

We all think that we're different. It'll work for us. But more often than not, we're not the exception; we're the case in point. So, stop dreaming. For your sake, please wake up.



Is this what we should all be aiming for in love?



To celebrate the release of the new film Skyline, ParitB is giving away 10 sets of branded t-shirts, USB pen drives and glowsticks.

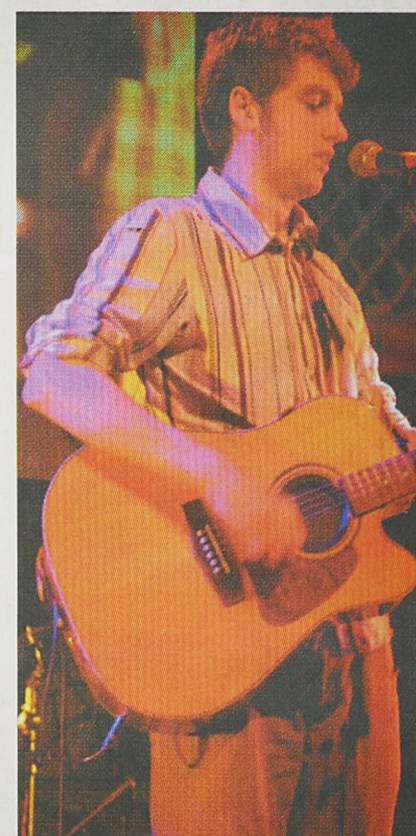
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Skyline is released in cinemas 12th November





# Simon Cliff



The East London-based musician talks to **Masaya Tanikawa** about choral hymns, boat canals and peach farms...



**S**imon Cliff is a singer-songwriter with many talents. When he's not strumming his Ibanez acoustic guitar and singing on-stage with his Si Cliff band, he gives music lessons, leads youth groups and children's clubs at churches, composes film scores and even plays the drums on the side. Despite his impressive career with a degree in Popular Music, Simon says he only started taking music seriously when he was 17.

"Unlike most musicians, I was a late starter. My first instrument was actually the drums back when I was in primary school," says Simon, pointing at his electronic drum kit in his New Cross home studio. "Like most kids, I was in a rock band. I can't remember why I picked up the drums. I also played piano until Grade 1 but I hated it. I quit right after, but I regret it now. It would've been helpful for what I do now."

Born and raised on the rolling fields of Sandbach, Cheshire, Simon went to an all-boys school through primary and secondary education where he took drum lessons. "I taught myself guitar through the internet while I played the drums. When I was 17 I decided I wanted to do music, so I took up an AS-Level in Music. I think I went in over my head," laughs Simon.

"There was Mozart and all this choral music. I loved the pieces but at the time I had just started to get going, so my knowledge of analysing orchestral music was obviously very limited. I did a performance on guitar for my final assessment and I got high marks."

Encouraged by his good grades at school, Si started getting involved with the local folk scene. "A big festival is held each year called Middlewich Folk & Boat Festival, where the place is surrounded by canals. My parents owned a canal boat company and that's where I worked, which is how I got to know the people involved with music."

"In each town there's a folk club where people would gather 'round in a pub, pull up some chairs and just start playing. The first time I played was at one of these folk clubs, where they're really supportive. They'd tell me to sing louder and strum quieter; back then I strummed way too hard."

Surprisingly, his determination was shaken after his first public performance. "It was really nerve-wracking. I played at a pub away from my hometown where I stood way far back from the mic. There was good feedback from the crowd, but I told myself I'd

never do that again because it was that scary. I don't know what brought me back. I guess you just get stuck into the folk scene somehow."

After a summer of touring around Chester, Liverpool and Northwich, Si joined a BTEC course at Mid Cheshire College in Commercial Music. "I wasn't ready for uni yet, so this course was great for introducing me to popular music. I got familiar with studio work and how to think about music professionally. I also met loads of great people including this great sax player, Phil Haywood. We're doing a project called Alternate Perceptions. It's very jazzy stuff."

Though Si primarily plays folk-influenced acoustic songs, he dabbles in a myriad of styles. "I'm still really into that honest acoustic-songwriting stuff, but I've been influenced by jazz a lot lately. The jazz progressions and walking bass lines, that sort of jazzy groove, I love that. What really broadened my horizons was coming to Goldsmiths though, being able to work with so many musicians from all around the world."

"Studying there made the most sense. I wanted to pursue music to become a stronger songwriter. It's been nothing but amazing, with so many opportunities like working with Eska Mtungwazi and Matthew Herbert. Studying music academically was also quite helpful, especially since I was self-taught."

"Goldsmiths was also where I met the members of my band. Their input is really important for my music. They seem to get what I write. We have this great synergy," says Simon, who writes all the material for The Si Cliff Band: Kevin Andrews is on bass, Lloyd Musto rides the drums and Ifan Owen plays electric guitar and keys.

"They're amazing musicians in their own right and they all have creative input. That's how I like to work. I would give them a sort of musical flavour and we would work with that," he says.

"Music is a very creative thing for me. I like to have everyone involved in the creative process."

As a vocalist, guitarist, drummer and composer, Si has involved himself in many creative works and projects. "I played several songs live on BBC One. It was a service for Pentecost where I was playing live to camera with an audience and a click track and everything. I recently performed on this '18 Guitars' project by one of my tutors, which was a post-minimalist style project where 18 guitars were doing different things

on-stage."

"I also worked with the NHS on a documentary about human error in medicine and its prevention where I made rhythm beds and such. It's challenging in a different way when you're writing for someone else, you have to have these sync points and work with what the director wants and doesn't want."

Simon led the Goldsmiths Christian society last year and regularly leads youth clubs at churches; religious beliefs play a large role in his music.

"All the Christian stories, choral hymns and songs influence me. Not directly, but the songs about love and tolerance have a lyrical influence on me. Church is like a big family of creative people, so some of my creativity comes from the different people there."

Si says there's many ways to find creativity. "I find a lot of inspiration from films and art and the people I meet, especially at church where there are all these people who need support. Nature inspires me as well. My dad's British but my mum's from British Columbia in Canada, where the scenery is beautiful with peach farms in the summer. I'd sit on a lakeside surrounded by mountains and just play."

"These religious aspects make me think about musicians as role models as well. I think musicians are responsible for influencing people in a good way," says Simon.

"Emotions in music run so deep. It takes you to places that would otherwise be quite bare, and I feel my music influences people in a positive way."

I also like teaching kids because it feels like I'm doing something good, there's something about taking young kids and teaching them from knowing nothing to getting them really good."

Simon now makes a living as a teacher in drums and guitar, busily dividing his time across two primary schools and a secondary school based in the east end of London. "I have to plan the lessons and get up early in the morning so it's quite busy. I mainly do one-to-ones and work in small groups so I get to know the kids, I'm really enjoying it."

All of his spare time goes towards work with songwriters; he is currently writing songs and putting a band together with Ghanaian-Welsh R&B artist Juliyya.

Simon's live album is planned for a winter release. To find out more about his works, visit [www.sicliff.co.uk](http://www.sicliff.co.uk).

"I only started taking music seriously when I was 17...My first performance was nerve-wracking. I played at a pub away from my hometown, where I stood way back from the mic...I told myself I'd never do that again because it was that scary."



## Album: Crystal Fighters - Star of Love

**M**ost bands are formed out of rusty garages and parents' dusty basements - not for **Crystal Fighters**. The band formed after lead singer Laure found a diary of her 'insane' now-deceased grandfather, containing an unfinished 'surrealist' opera based on the myth of the western Pyrenees area with the eponymous title.

debut is just as imaginative. Balearic influences shine through their fast-tempo tracks, driven forward by rhythmic rolling percussion and hefty basslines full of grit and bite. Thick beats accompany crooning female vocals with anthemic synthesizers filling out the higher frequencies; sporadic guitar riffs cut through the mix, keeping things interesting by injecting metallic timbres into the air.

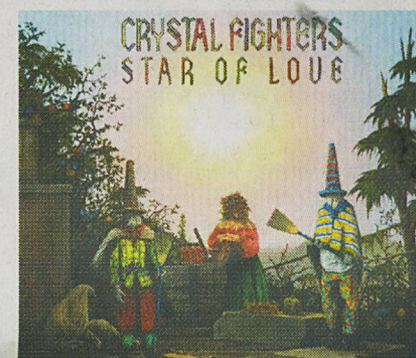
of Spanish, American and English members) seems to have a penchant for folk-influenced guitar work - jarring at times, but it oddly fits in with the baroque-ish vibes that some of the songs give off. It also stands them out from their fellow Kitsuné label artists that are more indie-dance-inclined.

Credit must also be given to their creative use of interesting instruments including the Txalaparta, a wooden device that was originally used to pro-

## Masaya Tanikawa

duce cider which makes an amusing horse-trotting sound. Also look out for a pipe whistle called the Txistu, another instrument unique to the Basque region.

The album is a patchwork of styles spanning bits of pop, Ibiza-style dance and slightly strange folk; they even cross over into dub-step and electro. *Crystal Fighters'* debut is slightly dull, ruined by the awkward-sounding male singer but nonetheless worth a listen.



True story or not, their dance-punk

The five-piece band (comprised

# Jackass 3D

Ahmed Peerbux takes on comedy at its lowest possible form



**Director:** Jeff Tremaine **Cast:** Johnny Knoxville, Bam Margera, Chris Pontius  
**Runtime:** 92 minutes **Cert:** 18 **Year:** 2010

The old gang get back together for the first time in far-too-long to bring us another instalment of bone-crunching fun. Now steeped in middle age, the crew set about doing what they've always done: creating chaos for the hell of it. Some of the stunts performed

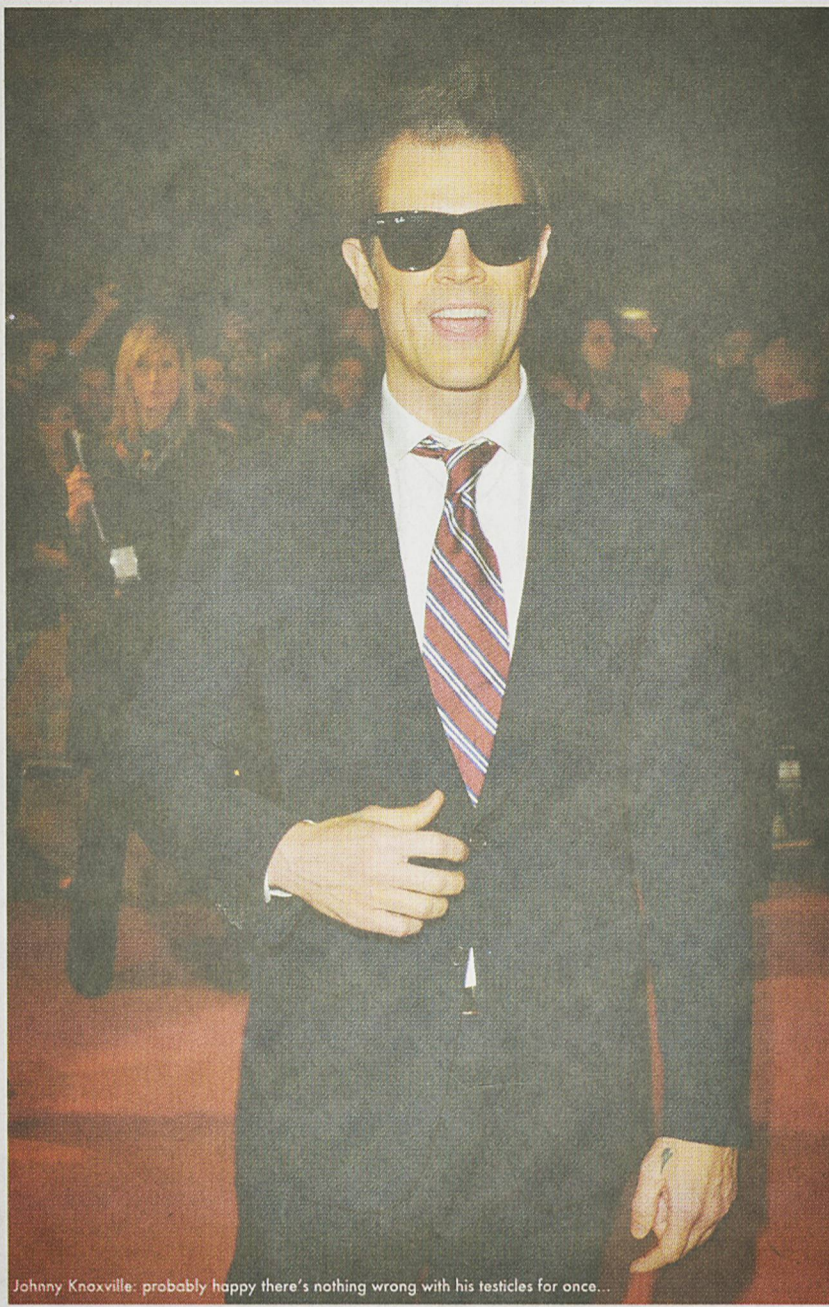
**Films like Jackass 3D are the antidote to the wave of pretentiousness created by our satirical renaissance**

are absolutely stellar, while others will make you wish you'd brought a sick bag (with the new-and-improved poo cocktail being of particular note). For those of you that have been living under a rock for the last ten years, here's the premise of the franchise that

keeps on giving: Johnny Knoxville and company go around hurting themselves for our amusement and, well, that's about it. No, really. It's comedy at its lowest possible form; brash, crude and, at times, downright sick. In short, it's amazing. Among all the pointless violence, you sometimes get to see a true sense of craft, though I should think a \$20m budget would have something to do with that. They've strayed away somewhat from their old school gonzo vibe and have come away with a film that's actually visually pleasing, even for 3D. They've amped up everything for this film and it really manages to pay dividends. It's simple, classic, ball-busting fun.

Films like this are the antidote to the wave of pretentiousness created by our satirical renaissance. Jon Stewart's all well and good and Stephen Colbert may well be hilarious, but so is the work of comics like Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd. Slapstick is still a great form of comedy and, thanks to people like the Jackass lads, still continues to permeate the mainstream. Johnny Knoxville, we salute you.

*Jackass 3D is in cinemas now.*



Johnny Knoxville: probably happy there's nothing wrong with his testicles for once...

## Attention writers!

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# Autumn

Sehrish Ejaz reviews a more highbrow affair



**Director:** Aamir Bashir **Screenplay:** Aamir Bashir, Shanker Raman, Mahmood Farooqui **Cast:** Shahnawaz Bhat, Reza Naji, Shamim Basharat  
**Runtime:** 99 minutes **Year:** 2010

The ninety-nine minute film opens in the beautiful Kupwara District near the Indo-Pakistani border. The robotically disillusioned Rafiq (Shahnawaz Bhat) is trying to escape the brutal realities of everyday life in occupied Kashmir by crossing into Pakistan. Others use family connections, promises of television careers and black money to try to forget the helplessness they're leaving behind. He is escorted back by his father's friend between bullet-riddled walls to a

**Autumn takes the viewer on a disturbing journey through Kashmir**

life where he wakes up to the morning prayers and the constant nagging of his mother. "The way to Paradise doesn't go through Pakistan," remarks one of the characters cynically.

It is autumn in Kashmir: a season associated with loss, decay and anticipation of a dark, cold winter, and half-widows come out in protests with the Association of Disappeared Persons for a right to bury their loved ones. While others are frisked every so often, the stone-faced Rafiq is whisked from one scene to the other at his uniformed father's elbow. 'Fighter', his shoes read. The tight camera work takes the viewer on a claustrophobic journey between amplified background sounds showing the lives of children who shield their eyes as their world explodes and collides. "Every night," a grown man sighs, "I try to see my mother's face in my dreams but all I see is their faces."

The film takes on a tremendous task. It takes the viewer on a disturbing journey with teenagers who dream of playing football against China, with Rafiq who discovers the power of photography and with young friends lying on crisp, orange leaves who quip: "The Kashmiris have never voted in an election. You expect them to vote for you in

a TV show?" It explores the veneer of enthusiastic playground games, disdain as people deliver newspapers, and the hidden loves in undeveloped camera films, beneath which the autumn leaves burn. Things get so bad, that looking at a picture of the destruction, a man remarks: "Is this Afghanistan?"

Rafiq's father is haunted into insanity by watching a young bomber being forced to blow himself up. His mother cries on the prayer mat for the dead body of her other son who has been missing for years since the military insurgency. The film builds to a quaking finale when, during the celebrations of Eid, Rafiq is shot dead. The audience was numbed into silence at the

disclaimer: "No animals were harmed in the making of this film." Do we live in times when the ram is spared and the son sacrificed? The director, Aamir Bashir, who had flown in from India for a Q&A, remarked on the powerlessness of the people: "Even if God asked a father (in Kashmir) to sacrifice his son, he probably wouldn't." In the last scene, the father sobs, heartbroken, thinking he indirectly provoked the death of his own son.

Sitting through the minimalist dialogues, I tried to gauge the reaction of the audience: unease, sympathy, maybe a little guilt over the scenes that unfolded before their eyes - another disaster story among thousands. But

while the film did manage to impress, I was slightly put off by the discrepancies in the director's responses. After declaring his contempt for commercial cinema, he went on to shoot the film in Urdu as opposed to Kashmiri for strictly commercial purposes. When asked what his vision for peace in the region was, he said, quite endearingly: "I'm just a story teller; I just put a story out there... I don't have any solutions, sorry". The perceived specialisation and division of responsibility he hinted at seemed to assign to him the job of whistleblowing alone. Surely everyone who understood the dynamics of the problem would have at least an opinion on what the way forward should ideally

be. But I realised I was being a little sceptical and maybe even a little petty. The people of Srinagar do not trust anyone from outside with a camera, primarily due to a fear of misrepresentation of their "Berlin-esque" lives. Despite that, this was an attempt to paint a genuine picture of the lives of ordinary people in the occupied territory of Kashmir by an Indian director without all the glitz and glam is standard Bollywood. Not perhaps an ideal end point, but it didn't have to be. If it got even one person thinking or talking, it was not a waste. The process, I concluded, was equally important.



The cast of Autumn

# Features

**D**an Ariely is the author of *Predictably Irrational* and *The Upside of Irrationality*. He is currently the James B. Duke Professor of Psychology and Behavioral Economics at Duke University. Recently the Economics Society brought him to the LSE to discuss his new book. I was lucky enough to talk to him while he was on campus.

**PV: How do you decide which areas of social behaviour to research?**

DA: I consider myself to be a bit of a social hacker. I like to answer questions that other sources frequently overlook. There is a component of social observation to it, but a lot of my ideas stem from news sources as well. Mainly though, I focus on topics that we can actually do something about, issues that genuinely affect our daily decisions.

**PV: How do you go about creating your experimental methodology?**

DA: I try to do the experiment in a way that is the most similar to reality. Most experiments in economics and psychology are usually very abstract. Connecting the experiment to real things required a lot of effort on the part of the reader. The early days of behavioural economics, it was all about gambles. Gambles were the fruit fly of economics. Gambling experiments model risk-taking and risk-attitude, but it is harder for people to understand how this connects to the stock market or conflicts of interest. Because my purpose is to convince people to do things differently, I'm willing to conduct experiments that are harder, more time-consuming, but closer to the reality I care about. I want to use their results as persuasive tools so I'm trying to make the most realistic possible. I also understand that nuances that come from the environment are important, so I try to imitate real situations as closely as possible.

**PV: How would you define yourself- motivational speaker or social scientist?**

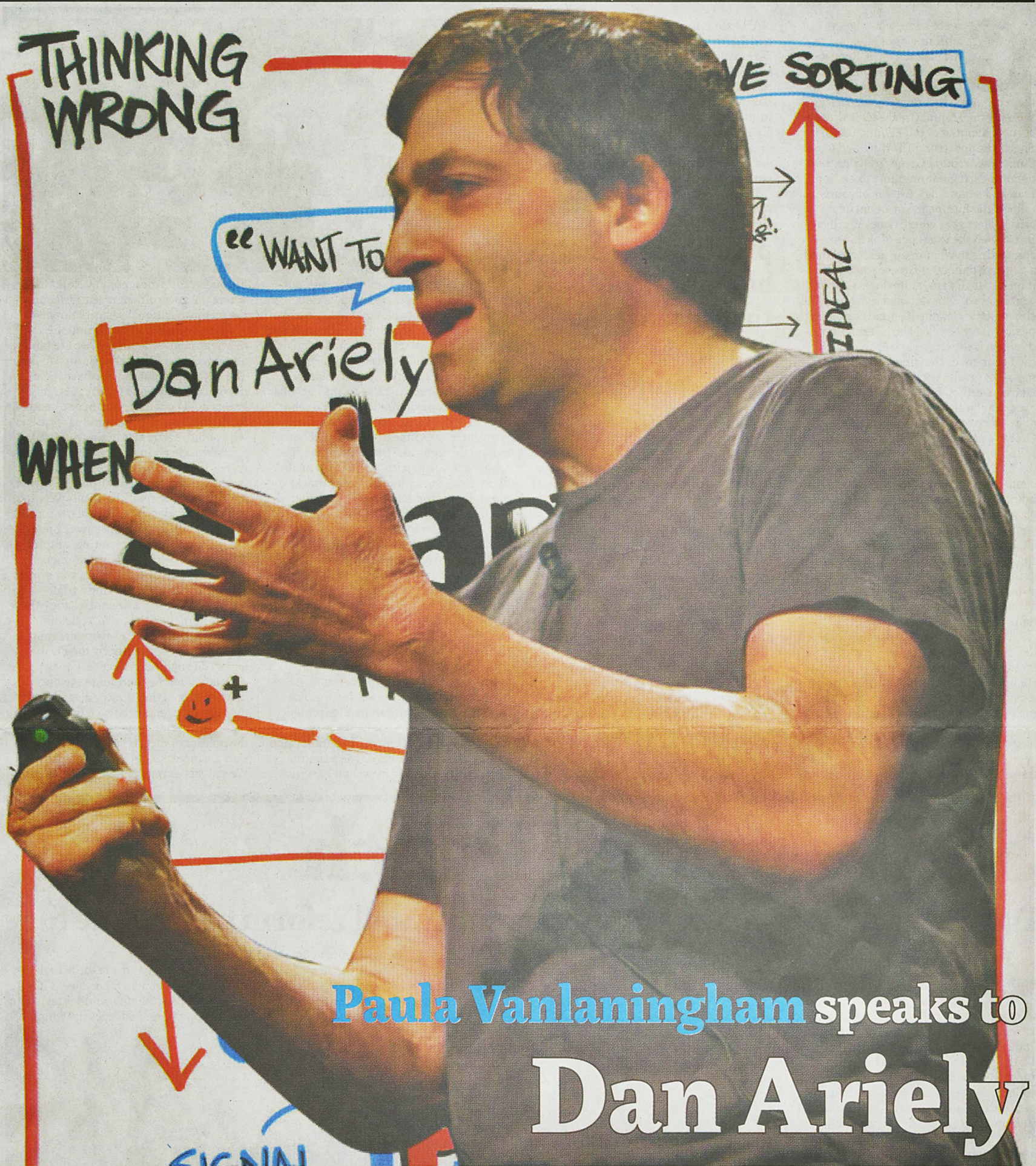
DA: A social scientist. What makes a good talk is taking people on a journey that explores human behaviour. I try not to tell people "Here's what I know and you don't", but rather, "here are some questions, let's think about exploring them." We only partially understand the answers to these questions. When people criticize my research, and I'm very happy to respond that there are a lot of uncertainties. I'm trying to create a sense of exploration.

**PV: It is interesting that the rational choice school tends to criticize your research and behavioural economics in general as not being applicable in practice- particularly since their own mathematical economics relies so heavily on abstract models. How do you respond to these comments?**

DA: What I usually tell economists, is "Look, think about what you believed before I showed you this data, and what do you believe now. If you're rational, you should update your beliefs at least a little bit, right?" For example, I've done

**Psychologists never say that incentives don't matter, but rather that there are many other issues also at play**

research about what happens when you pay people big bonuses. The results show that people tend to perform worse than they would have without. I then go to Wall Street, and the immediate response is:



Paula Vanlaningham speaks to  
**Dan Ariely**

"This is wrong." Yes, it could be wrong in many ways, and perhaps not applicable, but think about it: What did you believe before this talk? What did you believe would happen in this experiment? Most people thought that the results would be different – people predicted that more money would lead to a higher performance. If you did believe this and were shown concrete data that proved you wrong, shouldn't you at least doubt your own intuition? The reality is that I wish we would all be empirical, but economic theory is non-empirical, and it's very difficult to think about the data that would actually disprove a theory. All I want is to create in people a healthy sense of skepticism, and if we achieve that, that is great. I've done some experiments where, at the end of the day, people turn out to behave completely rationally. Psychologists never say that incentives don't matter, but rather that there are many other issues also at play. In some cases, only economic incentives matter, but we need to understand what the limits of these situations are. From this perspective, it is difficult to argue with me because I don't have any inherent beliefs: if you want to prove that people behave a certain way, just show me the data. Sometimes I offer bets – "If you run the experiment, people will behave rationally" and I say, "Let's put some money on it". In most cases, people respond "I'm not a betting person."

**PV: In *Predictably Irrational*, you mentioned that regulation can and should be used to counter irrational behaviour or, as you put it "our own worse tendencies". Since behavioural economics looks at the way people act, and regulation tends to tell them how to act, how do you reconcile those differences?**

DA: There are cases where we act in a way we don't want to or don't intend to. Self-control problems is a classic case, so then you have to ask yourself, what do you do? This is a case where regulation is clearly very useful. In fact, people would probably voluntarily agree to be regulated because you say to yourself, "I realize that I can't be relied on not to text while driving." This is a case where I think people would want to be regulated. Now, there are cases where people don't understand what role regulation should play in curbing their own worst tendencies. In this case, there are really two solutions: you can regulate something without bothering to convince people, or you can show them the data – "This is where people fail, and these are the reasons we're going to regulate." There's a lot of stuff we're just not that good at. Why isn't this okay? Here is the big puzzle to me: think about how much we engineer and design the physical world we live in. Look at this room – it has light, it has acoustics, it has elevators,

it has seats, we have air conditioning, we have heating. We've created all of these aids because we're not supermen. If we were supermen, we could stand outside in the cold and we wouldn't need light, we wouldn't need heating. When it comes to the physical world, think about how much human activity is directed towards overcoming our physical limitations. What percent of GDP is connected to overcoming our physical deviation from perfection? Lots. What about mental imperfection? In the same way, we're not physically perfect, we're not mentally perfect – we can't reason about everything, we can't think about everything, we can't contemplate all of the options. Doesn't it make sense to invest time in to creating crutches and better environments for us to make decisions? There will be cases when people see the advantages and adapt, and cases where people don't see the advantages as much, and then you have a clear political issue.

**PV: With the success of your books and the "Freakonomics" series by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner – both of which encourage people to look at every day economic decisions, albeit from slightly different perspectives – can we expect to see a substantive change in public behaviour?**

DA: I think we do see it in many ways. I

get lots of emails from people who don't say "I've changed everything", but they say "I recognized myself in chapter X and decided to change something." So that's one thing; I think that individuals have started looking at their decision-making behaviour a little more closely. We also see start-ups that aim to help people. For example, we recently did a study on people with multiple loans and how they decided which they paid back first. To a student of economics, the answer is simple: you pay the loans with the highest interest rates. It turns out that's almost never what people do – the smaller loans are usually dealt with first. It works the same way when you look at your inbox – you answer the quick emails first, rather than the ones that are actually important. Now there are people who are designing software to overcome this flaw. So individuals are changing, companies are starting to change. Government are particularly interested in this development. ☛

For more from Dan Ariely and additional information about his battle with the American Dental Association, his blog is available at [danariely.com](http://danariely.com). The Economics Society has a number of events planned this term, including an "Economists in Action" series. For more information, drop them an email at [su.soc.economics@lse.ac.uk](mailto:su.soc.economics@lse.ac.uk).

# Canary in the coalmine

**Craig Willy** thinks Greece foreshadows future developments across Europe

Greece's image has been suffering as of late. Just in the past ten days, Reporters without Borders ranked Greece the EU country with the least press freedom, Transparency International found Greece to be the most corrupt member of the EU, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Cruel Punishment found Greece's facilities for detaining irregular migrants to be "inhuman and degrading". All this of course follows the European sovereign debt crisis of last year where Greek profligacy threatened the existence of the Euro, concluding in what many perceived to be a German bailout of Greece - actually a joint EU-IMF €110 billion loan at 5 per cent interest. This entailed a good deal of chauvinistic Helleno-Germanic exchanges of slurs (lazy Greeks, Nazi Germans and other such stereotypes) culminating in the Focus cover showing a classical statue, normally armless, giving the finger to the German nation. I want to suggest, however, that far from being simply indicative of a defective national character, that Greece's problems largely foreshadow or reflect broader European issues.

The troubles in Greece are partly accentuated by internal dysfunctions, most notably the wretchedness of the political class coupled with an intense nationalism. The latter can have a decidedly petty character, apparent in the refusal since the 1990s to recognise Skopje and its environs as anything but the "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (as opposed to just Macedonia, the preserve of the legitimate heirs of Alexander the Great.)

This nationalism also entails high defense spending of 4.3 per cent of GDP, far more than even the relatively high spenders that are Britain and France. This expenditure is partly meant to sustain the military, as in many countries, as a vast national "welfare" scheme and partly based on enmity with Turkey, which is deep-rooted national tradition. It matters not that the two countries have been

NATO allies for over half a century. Greek and Turkish warships continue to occasionally provoke one another and play idiotic games of chicken in the Aegean. It has all turned out to be mostly harmless but the inability of the Greek government to stay afloat financially appears particularly unacceptable given that the country, until last year, was still the biggest recipient of EU funds, amounting to some 3.3 per cent of GDP.

## The Greek predicament may be doing little more than blazing the trail upon which other countries will follow

It would be wrong, however, for other Europeans to be too smug or condescending with the Greeks as the problems of their country also reflect those of the continent. The IMF/EU loan required the Greek government to implement drastic budget cuts and tax increases, particularly on VAT. These have resulted in an economy projected to shrink 3 per cent in 2011, the rise of unemployment to 12 per cent and massive public protests. These problems are all affecting other European countries to varying degrees. Spain is still struggling with a 20 per cent unemployment rate. Ireland's austerity measures have led to a "double-dip" recession and is planning further cuts. Britain is poised to implement similar unprecedentedly deep cuts across the board while in France massive strikes and protests are underway. Indeed, the long-term budgetary



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outlooks of many EU countries, and not just the "PIGS" for that matter, are no more encouraging than that of Greece. It remains unclear how our societies and our welfare states will emerge from the crisis.

Similarly, while the situation with regard to press freedom is particularly alarming in Greece, it also forms part of a broader European trend. The RWB report has Greece plummeting 35 places since last year to 70th, ahead of Moldova but behind the Central African Republic. The report cites, in particular, political meddling in the media and physical attacks on journalists. This, however, is not isolated. RWB's Secretary-General said that "the EU [itself] risks losing its position as world leader in respect for human rights." In France, there is the violation of journalists' sources and the heavy influence of the President in the hiring and firing several major media figures. Recently, journalists from Le Monde, Le Point and Mediapart (all investigating Sarkozy's government) had their laptops stolen, apparently coincidentally. In Italy there is extreme concentration of media ownership and many journalists, often fearing reprisals from the mafia, live under police protection. As a result, RWB rank these two major founding members of the EU beside Bosnia and Burkina Faso. The situation has also deteriorated in several Eastern

European countries, notably Romania, where the government recently deemed the media a 'national security threat.'

Finally on immigration and the mistreatment of detainees, we are talking about what is ultimately a European issue. The UN rapporteur indeed discovered horrifying conditions for irregular migrants held by the Greeks. In one center he found that "sanitary conditions were bad, with some mattresses hiding hundreds of cockroaches". In another the detainees were "often forced to sleep for up to two weeks on benches or on the floor" in "dark and suffocating cells". Facilities were too cold, lacked adequate medical care, and access to toilets and shower was poor. One can imagine the resulting "respiratory, skin and psychological problems" of people held in these facilities, sometimes for 18 months before having a trial.

Yet if the Greeks are not treating these people humanely, it is also a question of capacity. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of people entering the EU illegally do so through Greece. Greek police estimated that in 2008 some 150,000 people entered the country illegally and they do so generally to reach the El Dorado that is Western Europe. More generally, the politics of race, religion and immigration are increasingly dominating Europe. We see this as much in the race-baiting

government of France with the perpetual taunting of Muslims and the expulsion of the Roma as in the stunning sales of Thilo Sarrazin's book on the existential threat Muslims pose to the German nation. Even traditionally liberal countries have seen the rise of the politics of xenophobia with the electoral breakthroughs of the Sweden Democrats and Geert Wilders' Freedom Party in the Netherlands. Indeed, with the first dispatch to Greece of armed European frontier guards by the EU agency Frontex, we are seeing the formal Europeanisation of the immigration question.

So if the Greek predicament is depressing, it appears that country may be doing little more than blazing the trail upon which other countries will follow. It would be wrong to think that everyone is Greece. The country's situation is uniquely dire and there is significant variation across Europe. For example, as a rule of thumb, the liberal Germanic Nordic-Alpine countries (Holland, Austria, Switzerland and Scandinavia) continue to generally dominate the healthy end of the corruption, press freedom and other rankings. But Greece serves an illustration, albeit an extreme one, of the new trends in Europe. Lets hope Greece is not the proverbial canary in the coal mine and that we are not seeing the untimely end of a generous, liberal Europe. ☘

# Strike-ingly French

**Dasha Plotnikova** looks at the rationality and reform behind the fury

As Nicolas Sarkozy was personally welcoming China's president to Paris with his usual touch of charm, it was difficult to put aside the internal turbulence that has disquieted France over the past few months. After all, the pension reform is to be one of Sarkozy's most significant and decisive political moves on the national stage. Can such decisions ever escape controversy? Definitely not here. The French public took to the streets and, in a manner that perhaps comes with great experience, managed to attract the attention of the world's media.

**In a survey taken on 18th October the majority of the French public simultaneously supported the strike and accepted that raising the retirement age was unavoidable**

In order to reduce the pension deficit, the French government has outlined three reforms: raising the legal age of retirement from 60 to 62 years, increasing pension contributions, and higher taxes. Of these, it is the increase in retirement age which has caused the most outrage. At the moment, both men and women can retire

when they reach the age of 60 (provided that they have paid social security contributions for 40.5 years). However, they enjoy only a partial pension until the age of 65, after which they are entitled to a

promised that "the right to retire at 60 years must remain". The retirement age increase should help to eliminate 40 per cent of the pension deficit - the rest will come from higher taxes and increased

(€350m).

On the other hand, are the actual reforms reasonable in themselves? It is a well known fact that the world is facing an ageing population and faces the conun-

EU that it will be reduced by 3 per cent by 2013. Sarkozy's pension reform is estimated to reduce the budget deficit by 0.5 per cent in its first year.

The public believes otherwise. There has been a dramatic increase in productivity and GDP since 1983; people are now producing more during their working lives. Therefore, even if there are fewer workers per retiree, the workers are richer than they were nearly three decades ago. In turn, fewer employed should be able to sustain the same amount of retirees (the growth in GDP has drastically outpaced the growth in life expectancy). What about the poor? Isn't an increase in retirement age a regressive cut that hits the poor hardest? Lower paid workers tend to have a lower life expectancy and thus lose a higher proportion of retirement years. Those who face early retirement, due to unemployment or other hardships, also face a benefit cut.

So after all the protesting, demonstrating and blockading, has the view of the French authorities changed? No. On Wednesday 27th October, France's parliament gave final approval to the pension reform bill and Sarkozy is expected to sign it in the next few weeks. The strikes have begun to ease. Life seems to be returning to normal. But this is only the beginning - the signing of the law sets out only what is yet to come.

Some think Sarkozy has been ignorant of the fury felt by the people; some think he has betrayed his pledge. But he may simply be ambitious. Perhaps he truly understands the concerns of the French and realises that as circumstances change, promises made three years ago are no longer applicable, useful or beneficial. In a survey taken on 18th October the majority of the French public simultaneously supported the strike and accepted that raising the retirement age was unavoidable. Perhaps Sarkozy is loved by the people more than it appears. When he came to power, he said he wanted to be a reformer. And so he shall. ☘



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full one. This has been a treasured social right brought by the Socialist President François Mitterrand in 1983. President Sarkozy's proposal is to increase the age for receiving the partial pension to 62 (provided 41.5 years of social security contributions) and the age for receiving the full pension to 67. The French are infuriated, not only because they feel that they will be over-worked, but also because after his election in May 2007, Sarkozy

pension contributions.

One may wonder whether, for the sake of only an extra two years of work, the strikes have been justified. Indeed, they began on 12th October, and within a fortnight 2,500 people had been arrested for violent outbursts. At one point, the country's twelve oil refineries were blocked, spreading scares among the French about potential fuel shortages and each day of strike action has come at a cost of €400m

drum of supporting its elderly members. Certainly, the number of workers per retiree in France has fallen from 4.4 in 1983 to 3.5 in 2010. By reducing the number of years people would require state pensions, Sarkozy hopes to accumulate savings that would amount to €220bn between 2011 and 2020. This will help him to tackle the country's overall budget deficit which is expected to reach 8 per cent of GDP in 2010, and keep to his commitment to the

# The Moscow car boot sale

**Andreas Kuersten** exposes the lessons from the first wave of privatisation in the 1990s

Russia has recently announced plans to embark on a massive privatisation effort in an attempt to raise money to tackle a budget deficit estimated at 5 per cent of gross domestic product. Hundreds of state companies and large portions of important sectors of the economy such as banking, agriculture, and telecommunications have been earmarked for sale. Students of Russia's recent past will know this is not the first time such a move has been planned. In the 1990s a similar plan was undertaken which resulted in widespread corruption and a large loss of popular support. In once again privatising numerous government industries, Russia has numerous pitfalls to avoid.

The current plan of the Russian government involves the total or part-sale of up to 900 state firms. It is hoped that through these sales the state will be able to raise around 1.8 trillion Roubles (£38 billion) to help pay its debts. There is also the benefit of increased tax revenues from the newly privatised firms. Relatively small shares of 15-25 per cent are for sale in more important state holdings such as Aeroflot (the Russian airline) and Russian Railways, but the stakes offered increase in holdings deemed less important.

What can be learned from the similar project pursued shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union? Massive portions or complete ownership of inefficient state firms were put up for sale in an environment of economic chaos. In the opening chapters of his book, *Black Earth*, Andrew Meier provides a vivid picture of the situation. Western and domestic firms and businessmen poured into Russia with money and capital seeking to take



Flickr user: Boris SV

advantage of all that was suddenly being made available. Initial interest from western firms was eventually dissipated. They were muscled out of boardrooms, stripped of what they had paid for, and foreign businessmen began turning up dead. Russian interests were just as brutal to one another as well. What resulted was a cutthroat business environment where the rich and powerful of Russia took control of its biggest and most important industries becoming the people we now call 'oligarchs'. Former state monopolies of economic sectors became private monopolies.

As intense disputes, both internally and between Russian and foreign interests, continued, the state began to reassert itself in the industries it had privatised. This sort of action became particularly strong once Putin took office. The government began stepping into disputes and resolving them by exacting stakes of its own from the given firms and industries. Divergent interests within businesses were made to agree by the state inserting itself into the equation as a shareholder, often a majority one, and forcing them to agree. Putin also embarked on a campaign against the oligarchs. This was

mainly a political tool, directed at those whom he viewed as a threat. Many of the targeted oligarchs ended up in prison or in exile and their economic empires were torn apart and largely swallowed up by the state.

Through the actions of local business interests and the government Russia earned its current reputation as a hostile business environment. This may hinder the state in its effort to raise capital through sales of its holdings.

Recently though, perhaps in order to gain credibility before its coming privatisation effort, the government has

shown restraint in dealing with business squabbles similar to those where one might have thought it would have asserted itself strongly. This is seen most clearly in its recent handling of a power struggle between two oligarchs with equal stakes in Norilsk Nickel, the world's largest nickel and palladium producer. The dispute arose after one businessman took the other's seat on the company's board and was thus accused of attempting to alter the hierarchy of influence within the company. When it was announced in August that Prime Minister Putin would be heading to Norilsk it seemed certain that the state was set to intervene in the same coercive way which had become normal. Instead Putin seemed to take on the role of mediator and gave press conferences on the progress of negotiations between the two parties.

In a country where investor rights have long been poorly protected this sort of action is key for Russia to be viewed positively by the international business community. Yet the government must also somehow show that it is just as even-handed in dealing with international business actors as well. Its new privatisation effort cannot be effectively carried out and financed by domestic business alone. The key for currently state owned firms to becoming flexible, efficient, and growing entities is foreign influence and access. The state must continue to present itself as an even-handed mediator between business interests and a defender of shareholders. If it follows this advice, its current privatisation effort might be successful. ☛

# From Maoist to Naxalite

**Bhavna Tripathy** tracks down the roots of the insurgency and discusses ways to end it

The origins of the Indian Maoist movement (also known as Naxalism) can be traced back to a 1967 communist rebellion in Naxalbari, a town in West Bengal. The latest incarnation of the movement, which the Indian Prime Minister has called "the nation's single biggest internal security challenge", can be recognised as a result of the development vs. displacement debate, manifested by a decade long struggle between the native tribal and the economic and industrial aspirations of the country.

**With little to no government machinery present, the rebels stepped in to create a mini-state within a state**

An understanding of Maoism in India would be eclipsed without a reference to instances of policy manoeuvring on the part of the Indian government in the 1980s. Its resource mismanagement steadily led to systematic marginalisation of the tribal who subsequently aligned their interests with the Maoist insurgents. As underlined by an Institute of South Asian Studies report, seeds of the impasse were sown when the Indira Gandhi government began acquiring land and establishing large-scale mining operations in the country's resource-rich but underdeveloped eastern provinces, in response to widespread power and infrastructure

shortages. However, much of the targeted land was inhabited by a tribal group – the economically marginalised adivasis. As a result of the policy, they were dislodged from their centuries-old traditions by force, to make room for the mine sites. This was perhaps the largest movement of the impoverished mandated by the Indian government's development programmes. Signs of resentment can easily be traced back to this period.

Apparently oblivious to the bitterness provoked by this policy, the government then enacted the Forest Protection Act of 1980 which aimed to protect the country's natural resources from exploitation. It was a forceful piece of legislation, granting important powers to forest officials to prevent encroachments and habitations within declared forest areas. In areas delineated as reserve forests, even traditional occupations such as gathering twigs were forbidden. Those who earned their livelihood using the forest resources, even in a sustainable manner, suddenly found themselves outside the law. The inhabitants of these areas found themselves encroaching their own land.

The lack of access to traditional means of livelihood coupled with the stark neglect of the state was perhaps the major contributor to the disenchantment of the tribal populations living in the forests. It also resulted in subsequent lawlessness in the region as state agencies began to be viewed as enemies and not as allies. Against such a backdrop of increasingly sparse policy support, when the government started handing out every mountain and forest glade in the region to the multinationals in the form of MoUs, the local public had no reservations in rejecting the high-handedness of the state and finding common cause with the Maoists. With little to no government machinery present, the rebels stepped in to create a mini-state within a state.

In 2009, 669 people died in violent incidents involving the Maoists. From beheading local police inspectors to plucking children from villages at an early age, indoctrinating them in Maoism's creed and training them to plant detonators, the group has produced a social engineering of an incredible scale in the area now known as the Red Corridor – a stretch of roughly 35,000 square miles to the East of India that experiences the brunt of Maoist

military activity.

Scholars suggest that violent Maoist insurrections in India are "an inevitable consequence of

the existing agrarian structure," and that these movements "thrive in an environment where economic development is lagging, where the old exploitative classes have not been dislodged by modernisation and where the government machinery has not been made transparent by the pressure of a functioning democracy." Another reason attributed for the persistence of Maoism in India is that other forms of social change take a great deal of time and end with compromise. Passive resistance and democracy require commitments measured in years, and can conclude without successfully resolving important issues. Maoism, on the other hand, is a

proactive approach that will also take time, but will only end with the complete elimination of the enemy and the issues settled in the way that is "just." With the depressing socioeconomic situations experienced by impoverished people, Maoism may seem to be the only choice. While there is nearly universal recognition that there is a link between India's socioeconomic problems and the militancy of the insurgents, the Indian government has chosen to condemn the "intellectual climate" as one that encourages terrorism. In rethinking its security paradigm, it has banned the CPI (Maoist) party by labeling it as a terrorist organisation and is considering paramilitary offensive as the principal solution. The logic of force, rather than the force of logic prevails in these circles.

Evidence suggests that the rebels are chiefly funded through extortion, looting, abductions and poppy cultivation. They have access to trade channels that are entrenched in drug trafficking.

It is also clear that they have access to those who supply arms, and that the intelligence of the state has not been able to bring any of these suppliers to book. A BBC "preliminary interrogation report" also suggests that the rebels receive important corporate funding. Many doubt that the massive military effort against the rebels will yield the desired results unless their "finance line" is choked.

Over the years, the Naxalites have developed a symbiotic relationship with tribal groups, which they use as human couriers, serving as a rudimentary intelligence and communications network in areas of the jungle where cell phones are useless. This allegiance leads us to a key point – the state is no longer privy to information or intelligence, and hence unable to come to grips with crime or terrorism. The only way it can enforce obedience is through 'state terror' – picking up suspects, imprisoning them under draconian laws, lumping the innocent and the guilty together, and ensuring that things do not get out of hand. Little do they realise that this further alienates the public. The confrontation between the recalcitrant state and its opponents, staged at the brink of institutional decay, is fast acquiring the dimensions of a civil war.

Effectively dealing with the Maoist insurrections would necessitate the replacement of the likes of Salwa Judum (an anti-Naxalite movement that allegedly recruited 12,000 minor soldiers) with implementation of policies that create space for positive dialogue with the rural poor. Policy makers must be open to new and peaceful ways to entice Maoists to contribute to positive change. Until the government changes its tactics, the violence will not stop. Injustice pushes tribal groups towards the Maoists. Yet, the primary and driving ranks of the sturdy organisation remain strangely unknown. It would be only reasonable to trade frantic development against a fair share of life and livelihood – but before the Maoist aspirations overreach and succeed in destabilising the world's largest democracy and bleed it endlessly. ☛



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The 2010 US midterm elections, a few days ago, have been and will continue to be characterized as the coming of age of the Tea Party. With many speaking on the Tea Party's paranoia, hysteria and simplistic view of the world, most have not given credit where credit is due. As a member of Marco Rubio's staff from 2009 until August 2010, I had the privilege of working, along with many other constituent groups, with the Tea Party first on political and then on policy matters. I came away understanding that their concerns were valid and, while their approach could be rough at times, they were good people who cared deeply about America.

It is important to note what the Tea Party is and is not. They are not racist

as they supported black (Allen West), Hispanic (Marco Rubio), and women candidates (Christine O'Donnell, Sharon Angle and others). Sure, there are the fringe few who have extreme views but that is no different to what one saw at the anti-war rallies of the mid-00s. They are not political insiders even though they did receive DC organizing advice and were well financed. Finally, and most notably, they were not originally Republicans. In fact, many of them commented openly about having to hold their nose to vote for the Republican Party. To them, Republicans and Democrats were both responsible for where America was and is going.

Made up of hundreds of independent groups who are energetic and earnest, the Tea Party collectively believes that

government is chipping away at American exceptionalism. In other words, that the US will be no different from any other country in the world as the political class takes over and dictates what is best in every aspect of life. Their children will be worse off and have fewer opportunities than they did. These concerns produced a level of mistrust for all politicians, no matter the party. In an attempt to protect and promote their beliefs they tried to secure, via questionnaires and pledges, the unitary set of values a candidate's position dictates one has. Whilst negotiating that process was not easy, I was proud to see a sizable part of the electorate engaging with ideas and why they matter. The 2008 election was their shot to get the right people in office, reorient government and take the country back from the career politicians.

As has been reported, the expansion of government spending is one of the Tea Party's biggest issues. They are absolutely correct that it is a very real threat. According to the White House's Office of Management and Budget, federal spending has increased to 25.4 per cent from 20.7 per cent of GDP since 2008 while revenues continued to be collected at the historic levels of 18-20 per cent of GDP. This difference can lead to real economic damage. The International Monetary Fund has estimated that an increase of the debt-to-GDP ratio by 10 per cent slows growth by 0.15 to 0.2 per cent per year. For a country whose public debt is expected to reach 80 per cent of GDP in 2015 and over 100 per cent by 2020, the time to begin limiting the debt's corrosive impact on the economy is now. These politically-aware voters also witnessed the events in Greece and saw the havoc caused by excessive debt and the pains of getting it under control. This all resulted in an electorate that is instinctively concerned about the explosion of government spending, its accompanying debt and consequences. This is not just about the current government though as deficit spending has been happening since 2000. It is about the continuing attitude, from both parties, towards government expansion in many

new aspects without taking care of its core responsibilities.

In this past election cycle, a maxim of "if government treats everything as a priority then nothing is a priority" was an oft heard refrain. People recognized that the response to Hurricane Katrina; the laxly enforced regulations that led to the Gulf Oil Spill; unwillingness to address entitlement reform (the single largest contributor to future debt); lack of free trade promotion with the 3 Free Trade Agreements currently holding in Congress; the ineffective Stimulus packages and even border security are all failures of government to take care of its core responsibilities. This is a key component of limited government; the belief that government should do, and only do,

## American voters want to see government actually do what it is prescribed to do

what it is entrusted to do. Progressives and Conservatives might disagree on the actual size and responsibilities but both sides should agree that what government is tasked to do, it should accomplish right and well. It's about real prioritization and being responsive to public needs. And, as it is, the American people are looking for government to respond to the jobless recovery.

Exit polls for last Tuesday's election

illustrate an important issue linkage for the Tea Party and, indeed, the election. ABC News found that over 70 per cent of voters were dissatisfied (29 per cent angry even) with government and almost 90 per cent concerned with the direction of the economy. Put together, and you have a vast majority of Americans who are concerned about the economy and upset that government has been ineffective in addressing it. Further, many see government has actually made the economy worse through either talking about or introducing new regulations that cause market uncertainty like Card Check, Cap and Trade and Healthcare Reform. With 9.6 per cent unemployment and many with unemployment benefits about to about to end, people are desperate and want the government to simply stop being counterproductive and allow small businesses and entrepreneurs to return from the sidelines. However, they will only do so when predictability and certainty of governmental actions returns.

During his Victory Speech last Tuesday night, Marco remarked that "we make a great mistake if we believe that tonight these results are somehow an embrace of the Republican Party. What they are is a second chance... a second chance for Republicans to be what they said they were going to be, not so long ago." This quote strikes to the core of many voters and Tea Partiers. American voters want to see government actually do what it is prescribed to do. They want to stop seeing politicians saying one thing and doing another. Many thought the 2008 elections would fix Washington and its broken policies. Now, many of those same voters and a vocal new group have given Republicans an opportunity to get it right. The Tea Party will be watching and ensuring those same politicians they helped get in power fulfil the promises made or else we will see this groundswell again, with Republicans and Democrats targeted, in the lead up to 2012. ☛

Brandon Patty is Marco Rubio's former Campaign Director and before that, Policy Director

There is, in Britain, a ridiculous misconception of faith and how it operates. To the British, the devout man plays one of two parts; either the delusional fanatic or the blinkered god-fearer. No one, of course, would want to be typecast as either. It is for this reason that I had to spend my time as Prime Minister playing down my faith. I found myself in the midst of an absurd state of affairs where a statesman must hide from the voters the forceful and all-encompassing part God plays in everything he does.

Americans are, on this issue and many others, far more level-headed. Their society understands that Christian faith is the ultimate moral compass and, sensibly,

want a leader who uses it to find his way.

Doubtless, Mr. Hitchens will, at the heart of his argument, demonstrate the evils of faith by pointing to the subjection of women in the Muslim world or the wrongs committed by the Catholic Church from the Spanish Inquisition to the sporadic problems of paedophilia seen today. This policy-based look at religion, focusing on central organisations and their occasional mishaps is proof that the heathen can never grasp why religion matters.

God is not just another ruler, not a mere politician whose worth can be calculated by comparing two sides of a ledger - weighing up tangible successes and failures will not work here. God's ever present positive influence cannot be quantified.

It works on every level. From the love that motivates a man to provide for his family and a woman to raise her children to the decisions of the powerful, he is there. He is there in all human action - wittingly or not, we are all following God's will.

Another thing Mr. Hitchens will fail to grasp is faith's ability to guide you through difficult decisions. It was God that guided me to the right decision over Iraq. As Prime Minister, one has countless advisors presenting convincing evidence on both sides of the argument. A leader needs to do more than just look at the evidence. He has to look within himself, think of God, and make a decision. A leader that trusts God is a leader that warrants the trust of his people. It was when

George and I prayed together that I knew we were doing the right thing in Iraq. Without faith we would have hesitated. Hesitation would have been fatal. The world should be grateful that men of faith made such vital decisions. ☛

This article does not necessarily reflect the views of Tony Blair, let alone Oliver Wiseman.

Did you find this interesting? If so, it could be you writing for us next week. Email us at [features@thebeaveronline.co.uk](mailto:features@thebeaveronline.co.uk) with your 'Knockout' ideas

## Oliver Wiseman is...

# BLAIR



# Is religion a force for good in the world?

Calum Young is...  
**HITCHENS**



I am nervous writing this piece because it matters to me. Today, it is not just my duty, but my pleasure to nail the philistines who would have us believe that the fictitious presence of a celestial dictator has enriched or bettered any part of human society.

What do the 9/11 suicide bombers, the militants who run Hamas and the far right in America have in common? Each is motivated by a religious hatred, each feels they have been ordained by god as his or her chosen people, and each looks beyond this world when it attempts to rationalise its actions.

The evil in religion springs from the way it downgrades the worth of human life in this world. All faiths offer those stupid enough to believe in them the promise of a Utopian after-life. A place where there are more virgins than you can shake your phallic extremity at, a realm where the isolated iniquities which make this life so difficult will be banished, and hardship will be nothing more than a bittersweet

memory. This is a form of low grade imagination - so low, in fact, that someone else does the imagining for you, but it is imagination none the less.

What is the effect of this certain paradise on those that believe in it? They cease to care about the errors in this world. Social engineering, progressive policy and the value of life are no longer the *sine qua non* of existence. Consider the Islamist who guns down a primary school full of infants - among the flayed corpses and the mangled limbs, the killer finds solace in his religion. Sure, their earthly lives have been prematurely terminated, but those lives haven't been wasted. Far from it; they are in heaven now, enjoying the infinite treats which logic denies this world.

The happening of death is, then, a nuanced occurrence for the believer. And for those not willing to engage wholeheartedly in this deist delusion and actually start killing kids, there is still the backup option which is just to ignore earthly pain.

Why try and maximise terrestrial happiness, if there is something coming after it? Why engage in the Enlightenment project of progress, when God is running you a bubble bath for once you have shuffled off this mortal coil?

Then there is sex. No other earthly pleasure is more intense, fulfilling and cheap as sexual intercourse. Yet the god squad have forbidden it. Condoms are the work of the devil, masturbation is wrong and free love is oppressive. This is a world where the historically negative consequences of sex have been alleviated by scientific innovation. The prepared Letch doesn't have to worry about pregnancy or STIs, so why do people enjoy this pleasure of pleasures so infrequently? Religion has taught us to be ashamed of our bodies, because sex is deemed a sacred act and because a simple fuck might impinge on some sacred contract.

Only in a world where religion's apotheosis is complete could uninhibited hedonism appear a bad thing. Only in

a world ruptured by one rogue Aramaic speaker, could suffering have become a virtue.

There isn't space here to mention the papacy's alleged paedophile cover-ups, the retrograde practices of the Church throughout history, or the the plethora of mad mullahs trying to blow-up our printer cartridges.

During the Spanish Civil war, anarchists decided they had had enough of this. The clergy were deracinated from their affluent insouciance for the peoples suffering and killed. Hemingway's *For Whom The Bell Tolls* chronicles the decision to throw priests off cliffs by the rural peasants, in the village of Ronda. In the absence of cliffs on Houghton Street, I suggest we just slaughter them, Halal style. ☛

Calum Young obviously does not condone slaughtering, even of the Halal variety

# Iran's hand in Iraq

Daniel Lahey considers what we know about neighbourly interference

In a memorable 2007 interview, CNN's Baghdad Correspondent Michael Ware described the American-led military effort in Iraq as comprising four wars occurring simultaneously: one against the Sunni insurgency, one against al-Qaida, and another a civil war between Shi'ite and Sunni militias. The fourth war, he argued, was a hidden one against Iraq's Shi'ite neighbour. "Iran's been involved from the very, very beginning," Ware suggested. Two noteworthy developments over the last month, the Wikileaks release of The Iraq War Logs and news of a potential Iranian-brokered political compromise in Baghdad, have served to further confirm the long held suspicions Ware shared with many other analysts.

On 22nd October, Pentagon officials girded themselves for another public relations nightmare as Wikileaks, a non-profit whistle-blower organisation headed by an esoteric Australian, Julian Assange, proceeded with what it billed as "the largest classified military leak in history." In all, 391,832 US military documents chronicling the protracted American war effort in Iraq were released to the public. This marked the third major disclosure of restricted US military information by the organisation in less than a year. The first was a particularly incriminating video of an American Apache gunner insouciantly mowing down a dozen Iraqi civilians in the erroneous belief that they were armed insurgents. The second involved the release of approximately 77,000 US military documents from the seemingly intractable Afghan conflict.

The Iraq War Logs, as they have been dubbed, include a number of news-worthy segments, such as widespread evidence of detainee abuse on the part of Iraqi security forces and details regarding the number of civilian deaths since the 2003 invasion. Of particular note, however, is the inclusion of military documents outlining the

degree to which Iran has been militarily involved in Iraq over the past several years. This interference has principally, although not exclusively, been manifested in the active support of Iraqi Shi'ite militias, who have played a major role in the internecine violence that continues to rack the country.

According to documents contained in the leak, Iran's proxy war in Iraq has been multi-faceted, involving a combination of arms smuggling, training for militants, strategic planning, and kidnapping. Over the course of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime, hundreds of thousands of Iraq's Shi'ite population fled eastward to Iran to escape his iron-fisted rule. These refugees were treated not only as ethnic brethren and victims worthy of relief, but as assets through which Iran could gradually increase its influence over Iraq upon their repatriation, particularly in the event of a sudden regime change. To this end, the al-Quds wing of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps actively recruited and trained expatriate Iraqi Shi'ites.

This training, the documents suggest, has continued since the American-led invasion, providing Shi'ite militiamen with the skills necessary to wage war against US-led forces, the Baghdad government, and other sectarian groups upon their return to Iraq. In a 2008 document from the leak, for instance, the author states that, "recent intelligence indicates that there are three ACF personnel (Iraqi Shi'ite militiamen) that were trained in Iran as snipers and

specialists in explosives living in the Hay Al-Nassir Region."

The documents also include damning evidence regarding Iran's role in providing arms to the militias. A number of reports suggest that heavy weapons such as rockets, high-powered rifles and bombs were provided by Iran to their Shi'ite proxies by smuggling them across the highly porous border. In one US report from November 2005, the author asserts that near the Al Amrah border area of Iraq, "Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) personnel smuggled ammunition, explosives, and rockets from Iran." Other reports suggest Iranian collaboration with Iraqi extremists in the planned kidnapping of US military personnel and the assassination of Iraqi officials. Taken together, the War Logs portray a belligerent Iran that is very much intent on undermining American interests in Iraq and facilitating sectarian violence while aggrandising its own position in the country.

Initially, Wikileaks' third major release of classified US military documents was eagerly anticipated by the Iranian government, as new tales of American troops killing civilians or overlooking detainee abuse always serve to boost anti-Americanism in the region. Iran's state-controlled PressTV was even tasked with covering the War Logs launch.

Once it became clear, however, that numerous reports included in the release implicated the Iranian military in aggressive intervention in Iraq, Tehran unsurprisingly changed its tune. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesper-

son Ramin Mehmanparast reacted with indignation to Wikileaks' disclosure, calling it a "mischievous" act that would, as he said without elaboration, "be confronted by his government." Mehmanparast also called into question the timing of the leak, suggesting unconvincingly that it was somehow aimed at influencing protracted political talks in Baghdad

## Iran's proxy war in Iraq has involved a combination of arms smuggling, training for militants, strategic planning, and kidnapping

regarding the formation of the next Iraqi government. Whether Mehmanparast meant to draw the connection is doubtful, but it is at those same talks that Iran has demonstrated a continued willingness to intervene politically in Iraq's affairs.

Since parliamentary elections were held in March 2010, Iraqi federal politics has been subject to continued wrangling over which combination of parties will form the next government. The leading rivals in this struggle are the incumbent Prime Minister and head of the Shi'ite Islamic Dawa Party, Nouri al-Maliki, and former Prime Minister and leader of the secular al-Iraqiya Party, Ayad Allawi. Seeking to undermine the legitimacy of Iraq's new order, militants have exploited this extended period of uncertainty by carrying out waves of devastating bombings, including in the capital. The effect has been an increased sense of urgency to resolve the political impasse.



## Measured musings

There seems to be an undying yet misinformed paradigm amongst political scientists that Belgium serves as an excellent example of a nation which has successfully managed its polarized linguistic divide. Whether debating the merits of electoral systems or federalism within culturally heterogeneous countries, the academic, usually in a gratified, warm and patronizing tone, will slide in the discreet caveat 'but of course, Belgium and Switzerland have happily resolved these issues.' To my knowledge, Switzerland prides

itself on having stable governing institutions, but for several years now, Belgium has been tottering on the brink of void. Since the legislative elections in May 2010, the Belgian government still has no Prime Minister to name. This is a simple repeat of the impasse which took place three years ago, during which Belgian remained without a government for nearly a year. Predictions of the country breaking into two have been casually flung around since this first deadlock, and are now commonplace among the media. The RTBF, the main Belgian francophone channel, even broadcast a fake report of separation - before revealing, to thousands of panicked Belgians, that the information had in fact been imagined.

## Misperceptions on the Scheldt

Relations between Francophone and the Flemish, especially between the average Belgians, have always been tense. Addressing an inhabitant in French within Flanders is considered rude, and met with anger. Local governments, despite being staffed with bilingual officials, will refuse to address residents in a language which is not official to their commune [town]. Francophones find learning Flemish difficult and often are unconvinced that it will be of much use. Most Flemish, on the other hand, are not only fluent in French but also in English, and resent that no effort is made to address them on their own terms within their home. The true reasons behind the conflict, however, go beyond those of linguistic

technicalities. Economically, Flanders is significantly more prosperous - and thus to a large extent, subsidises Wallonia. This is a situation which many in Flanders find unacceptable, while in response, Walloons [francophones] argue that the Flemish have no sense of solidarity. As a result of these endless squabbles, Belgium has become an institutional oddball with countless regional parliaments and ministers. Despite its numerous civil servants, the government is gently inefficient - in other words, maintaining the running state of affairs with little improvement or reform. Public transportation is laughable. RTBF reporters challenged themselves to spend the night in the Royal Palace of Justice unnoticed

by security. They not only managed to stay, but also explored the building's large (and confidential) archives. Belgium is thus not the paragon of institutional efficiency all too often described in academic publications. While a separation is unlikely, a greater decentralization of powers seems inevitable, combined with near fiscal autonomy (if, of course, the two entities agree on how to divide the national debt). Day to day animosity, despite being contained to words, is far from extinct. An unfortunate situation for a country which hosts the bulk of European Union bureaucracy.

Marion Koob  
Features Editor

## WHAT IF... ... What if England had held on? Pt. II

Jack Tindale

Northern Ireland had been a gently smouldering cauldron of socio-ethnic turmoil prior to the victory of the Keith Joseph Conservative Party in the 1974 General Election. The abolition of the Parliament in Stormont had been countenanced by the Wilson government in 1972, but it would not be until the aftermath of the Lawnbrook Massacre of March 1975 that the body was formally abolished and its powers returned to Whitehall under the direction of the Northern Ireland Secretary Airey Neave.

Neave would continue the hard-line policies against extremists on both sides of the ethnic divide that had been started by his Labour predecessor Roy Mason, by then serving as Shadow Home Secretary. The veteran MP for Abingdon found himself at the heart of one of the most powerful government departments and also saw his mandate extend to military control over the province as well as a systematic "clearing out" of the Security Services following numerous reports of endemic corruption within MI5 and MI6. These, in addition to Neave's reputation as the only Minister able to successfully brow-beat Chancellor Powell's cut-backs to departmental budgets soon brought him into the inner circle of the Cabinet.

However, violence in the troublesome province continued to mount through the first Conservative term in office, limiting the pace of economic growth which, after a slide into recession during the winter of 1974, had soon risen into several quarters of healthy growth. Buoyed by this, the Conservatives increased their majority in the Autumn 1977 general election by almost forty seats, prompting the resignation of Labour leader Roy Jenkins and his surprise replacement by the leader of the party's soft-left, Barbara Castle.

Castle would prove a far greater challenge to the Joseph administration, admonishing the government for the poor performance of the newly privatised industries and increasing reports of human rights abuses in Northern Ireland. Despite being refuted by the Prime Minister, Enoch Powell's failed attempt to sell off the Royal Mail despite lack of any manifesto commitment prompted his sacking in November 1977 and his replacement by the less ideologically driven John Nott.

Nott backtracked from many areas of government policy, bringing him into conflict with the hard-right of the Conservative Party, notably from the Home Secretary Margaret Thatcher with whom he clashed publicly over police spending. Eventually, Thatcher herself would join Powell on the backbenches where the two would become leading figures of the "Awkward Squad" opposed to the perceived leftward drift of the party.

Despite attempts to maintain party unity, Keith Joseph soon found himself unable to hold his fractured party together, another recession in 1979, race-riots in Hackney and the assassination of several high-profile Loyalist and Republican MP's weakened his authority. The Trafalgar Square bombing of 1980 finally forced his resignation in the April of that year. His replacement as Prime Minister, William Whitelaw, was unable to restore unity to the party and led the Conservatives to a heavy defeat at the polls in the spring of 1982.

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

### Lauren Deevy

**Who is she?**

Netball Social Secretary, if you don't know who she is, you don't deserve to.

**Where is she from?**

The Bermuda Triangle

**Natural Wednesday Night Habitat:**

Forcing scared Freshers to play taps on the Minge Bed.

**LSE Sporting Career Highlight:**



After a heavy night in Walkabout, Deevy decided to take on the challenge of the industrial-waste-bin-long-jump. Deevy managed to set a world record, however the exertion of the act meant that she soon fell asleep in the bin.

**Profile:**

Deevy has not let a severe allergy to Vodka affect her time at LSE, she still manages to put away around a litre every Wednesday. Deevy is an AU legend, and has found love with a fellow lash-hound from the Welsh Valleys. We're all holding out for a wedding reception in Zoo Bar.

### Brendan MyCock

**Who is he?**

Rugby 1st Team Captain and part-time Butlin's Redcoat.

**Where is he from?**

He's Brendannnn and he's from NOTTINGHAM. Yeeessss maaaate.

**Natural Wednesday Night Habitat:**

Playing his favourite game of 'floppy fish', much to the annoyance of bouncers.

**LSE Sporting Career Highlight:**

Running for AU Communications last year wearing a costume that consisted of just a box and marker pen ink.

**Profile:**

Brendan came on to the AU scene nothing short of a fully fledged pimp. Rivaling President Robinson for the largest quantity of Ralph Lauren clothing on one person, he has ascended to the dizzying heights of 1st Team Captain, with designs on the BUCS league and his own clothing line in the pipeline.



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# Rugby 1st XV Teammates

Matthew Box

If you would like to dish some dirt on your teammates with witty profiles, contact us at [sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk](mailto:sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk)



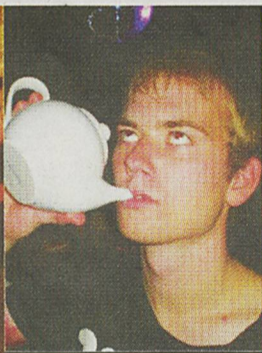
**Most Presidential - Ben Robinson.** Like Bill Clinton dragged through Ralph Lauren backwards.



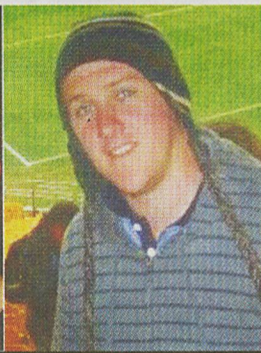
**Worst Dancer - Boca.** No co-ordination, grace or style. But what he lacks in finesse, he makes up for in enthusiasm. Probably too much enthusiasm...



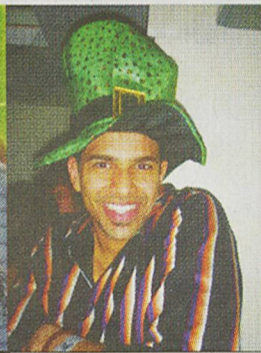
**Weight Watchers Success Story - Tom Lennon.** Has lost 12 stone since his first year, and his muscle fibres represent those exactly of a Tesco chicken.



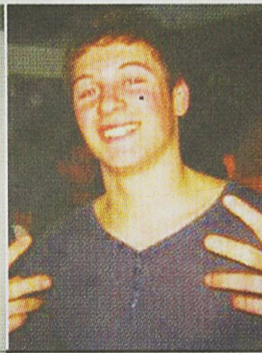
**Biggest Serial Killer Lookalike - Cooper.** He loves hiding women in wardrobes. And he looks like both a murderer and the Murderer.



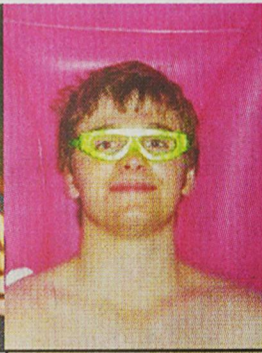
**Most Welsh - Dan Reed.** Like Rob Brydon on a high calorie diet, but with the handling skills of James Hook, Reedy makes up 62% of LSE's pack.



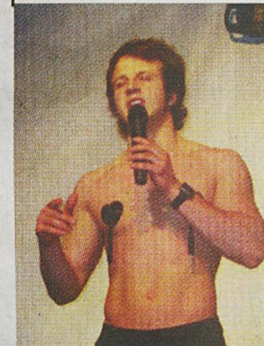
**Most Flair - Hamdi 'Crowd Control' Talib.** Not flair in the Rugby sense, but in the fashion sense. As this picture demonstrates accurately.



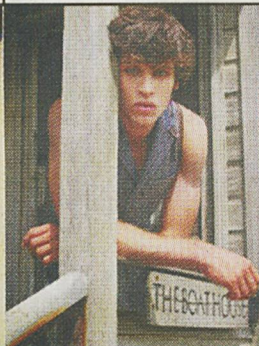
**Most Whipped - Ollie Barcock.** So much so that he couldn't even play a game for the Economical 2nds without her supervision.



**Biggest Hitter - Pad Dixon.** Not always subtle, not always legal, but always effective. Certain varieties of players find this out more than others.



**Biggest Steroidal Experiment - Reesy.** M-Stak, HGH, you name it, Reesy can get you it. Luckily, thirteen pre-match pisses flush the evidence out of your system.



**Most Airbrushed - Rob O'D.** He has 'Blue Steel' down to a tee, but make-up and airbrushing have helped propel his modelling career. And chest-waxing



**Kinkiest - Alexander Smedley.** When he does get it up, things get kinky. And meticulously documented and photographed.



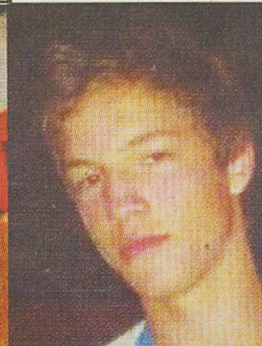
**Griffin Regular - Stu Whiteford.** Apparently he carries vast sums of money in £1 coins at all times, always ready to see John introduce the girls.



**Most Michelin Stars - Will Wilson.** In case you didn't know, he used to be a head chef. For a Michelin Star restaurant. Able to cook a 3-course meal at 4am on a Thursday morning.



**Fastest - Jonny Jackson** Some say he has appeared in over 4,251 adult movies. Others say it's actual love. All we know is, he's called Pornstar.



**Keenest - Sam 'I'm your Number Ten' Hewes.** Don't let his lightweight appearance put you off - if you are Poly scum he will let you know it.



**Most likely to appear in 'This Is England' - Jordan 'Combo' Emery.** Prior to LSE, employed as a stunt double for Thomas Turgoose.



## Gossip Gollum scraps for gash Thou shall not covet thy neighbour's woman



**ARGY**

This week saw the triumphant return to Zoo Bar, but beforehand GG witnessed what appeared to be a scene from 'Danny Dyer's Deadliest Men', with the Tuns replacing the men streets of Sao Paulo as the venue for the fracas. Some Polytechnical Undergraduates, from a well-known Strand based vocational college, audaciously decided to end their pub golf at the Student Union bar of a Nobel prize winning institution.

**PETER ANDRE**

Zoo Bar was graced by the presence of two 'mysterious girls', who managed to pull their way through the entire smoking area. Fourteenth in line, the would-be Mancunian Labour Party rent boy, was 'lucky' enough to take the one with the loosest morals home. GG can only specu-

late as to the nature of the sordid acts that may (or may not have) ensued. Though the Mancunian's reputation for a love of all things S&M, combined with a mysterious girl who trades snogs for smokes, would suggest activities more aligned to those of an F1 Director than a Labour MP.

**ORGIES**

On the subject of blonde girls with slightly looser morals than most, GG must give an honourable mention to Comrade Gregori, and his Californian lover. Gregori's testosterone levels were through the roof after his 'debate' with polys previously in the night and like a true resident of the San Fernando Valley, the blonde made the most of this and took the opportunity to get camera happy on the 'minge bed'. Whether or not Director Wilson has had prior experience in the adult movie industry is not for GG to confirm or deny, but the calibre of the material produced shows a natural flair for encapsulating the beauty and sensuality of the human form.

**LIASONS**

Speaking of blonde bombshells, in an unlikely union of passion, Malibu Stacey was taught a thing or two about 'liasons' with the opposite sex, after his appalling attempts at converting last week. His tutor was everyone's favourite inter-club specialist, a Miss K.S. Trivlah. Despite the tutelage afforded to him by a world renowned expert, Malibu still failed to convert, against all the odds. GG doesn't know whether this was because of a drunk Miss L.B. Acon hanging out of a window, or memories of his Welsh long-term girlfriend back in the Valleys. When interviewed over the incident Malibu replied, "I thought about going back to theirs, but after seeing a drunk L.B.Acon hanging out of a window, I had second thoughts."

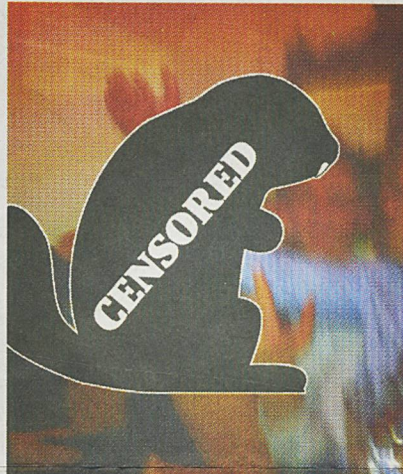
**JORDAN/KATIE**

At the other end of London that night, another Rugby boy pumped with Soviet levels of testosterone attempted to pull using a method not seen since the playgrounds of the mid-1990s. When his game of kiss-chase went awry Netball's esteemed Vice-Club Captain and purveyor of fine soups (its Campbell, ged-

dit!) on the other end of the chase ended up rugby-tackled in a fashion not seen since the Autumn Internationals. Both hearts and bones were bruised, but safe to say the primary school pulling technique failed. Combo was advised to leave out the Wellbeck-educated strategic manoeuvres in future and have a go at 'talking to women,' or so its called.

**GOLF**

This week GG will be digging out his finest argyle jumper, visor and polo shirt for the AU's very own Pub Golf. The boys will try to drink quicker than each other, with messy consequences. The girls will try to drinks pints of bitter, with similarly messy consequences. Visors will be stolen, scorecards tampered with and casualties abandoned in the bunkers. And the victorious will be able put their Tiger Woods pulling skills to good use in Zoo Bar: any reports of "holes in one" for next week please.



Beaver on Beaver: Action? The photo that everyone wants to see. Unfortunately, due to the height of the Beaver's moral ground, we can't print it uncensored.

### Athl Unik

**LSE Athletics Union Football:**  
LSE 1sts 5 - 1 Kings 1sts  
LSE 2nds 2 - 4 Imperials 1sts  
LSE 3rds 5 - 1 Imperial 4ths  
LSE 4ths 2 - 3 Queen Mary 3rds  
LSE 6ths 1 - 5 UCL 6ths  
LSE 7ths 1 - 2 Holloway 6ths  
3 minutes ago · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Promote](#)

### Athl Unik

**LSE Athletics Union Basketball:**  
LSE Women's 1st v Essex 2nds : 77-18  
**Tennis:**  
LSE Men's 1st v Imperial Men's 1st: 4-8  
**Women's Hockey:**  
LSE 1st vs. Reading 3rds: 14-0  
**Mens Hockey:**  
LSE 1sts v University of Portsmouth Men's 5th : 8-1  
LSE 2nd v University of Westminster Men's 1st: 1-7  
**Lacrosse:**  
LSE v Kings (Cheating Poly Scum) 8-18  
**Golf:**  
Kingston University 2nd v LSE 1st: 6-0  
4 minutes ago · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Promote](#)

### Athl Unik

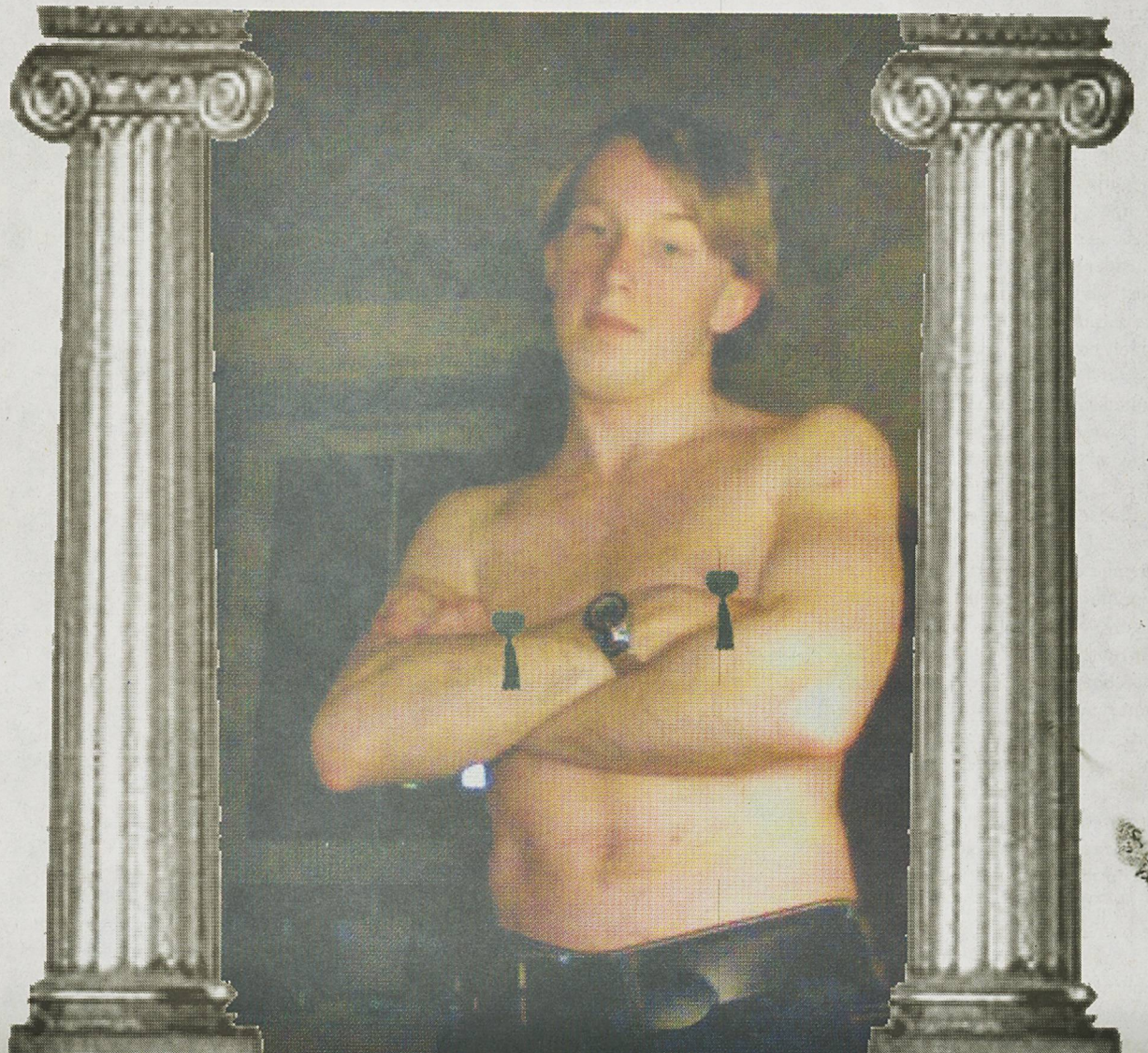
**LSE Athletics Union Netball:**  
LSE 2nds v Royal Free: 34-28  
LSE 2nds v: University of Southampton: 79-6  
LSE 3rds v Polysmouth: 21:35  
LSE 4ths v Queen Mary, University of London 2nd ULU 9:39  
LSE 6th v Imperial 1st: 200-0  
LSE 5ths v St Mary's University College 1s ULU: 25-6  
LSE 7ths v Queen Mary 3rds: 3-39  
**Squash:**  
LSE Women's 1st v Imperial Medics 1st : 5-0  
**Table Tennis:**  
LSE Men's 1st v Brunel Men's 1sts: 12-5  
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### Athl Unik

**LSE Athletics Union Men's Rugby:**  
1st XV 36 - 23 Hertfordshire 1st XV  
**Tennis:**  
LSE Men's 1st v Imperial College, London Men's 1st: 4-8  
**Badminton:**  
LSE Mens 1st v St. Barts 2nds : 6-2  
  
LSE Mens 2nd v Reading: 7-1

LSE Womens 1st v Portsmouth : 5-3  
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# TORSO OF THE WEEK



## AU PUB GOLF

TEEING OFF AT THE TUNS - 8PM  
SCORECARDS & ROUTES  
DISTRIBUTED BY THE AU EXEC  
>> £1 PER PERSON

FINAL HOLE: ZOO BAR - PAR 5

# Sport



**Inside: GG performs a post-mortem on last week**

## Women's Hockey whip up a sandstorm

Women's Hockey 1sts turn their attention from Golden Balls to golden goals

**Christina Ivanova  
Hannah Sheppard**

This Wednesday the WHC turned their skills away from Zoo Bar and onto the pitch. Battling through illness, injury and tube strikes, the hockey girls descended on 'Ra-Ra-Reading' ready to seek revenge for the previous week's match. With team shortages due to a neck injury from downing too many drinks (Ali Singer) and an apparent Beast of a 'workload', we called upon former captain and twice winner of Golden Balls, Emma Heap and somehow managed to tempt Social Sec Ivanova away from her residence of C120.

From the first push back, we completely dominated the game, much like we dominated the Baywatch Boat Race and within the first 5 minutes we were one up on Reading. The play continued well with Zaza scoring the first of 2 hat tricks, much to the detriment of the defence's feet. Goals just kept hitting the backboard thanks to the indestructible team of Emmas on the left.

Reading did make a few breaks past the halfway line and into the D, just enough to keep goalie Hannah Sheppard from popping for a cigarette. Screams of Reading's 20(wo)man squad could be heard as they closed in on the goal, however these were to no avail as their forwards were no match for our rock solid defence: Rianne, Fiona and Meagan. Reading's frustration grew, prompting them to chant "ditch your sticks, use your fists" a tactic later adopted by the local strand-based Poly, with no success, or so we hear.

Fiona's usual incessant cries of 'he-ya' could be heard from the right back but once met, she quickly fed the ball down the line to Mel, giving Reading few chances at goal. Our star sweeper Nat, crowned Woman of the Match, ran laps

the stops to score 2 goals. Heaps, wanting to prove hockey was for life not just for university, also slotted one in after half time. Christina, desperate to score, was unlucky on a couple of attempts but her achievements off the pitch this term have

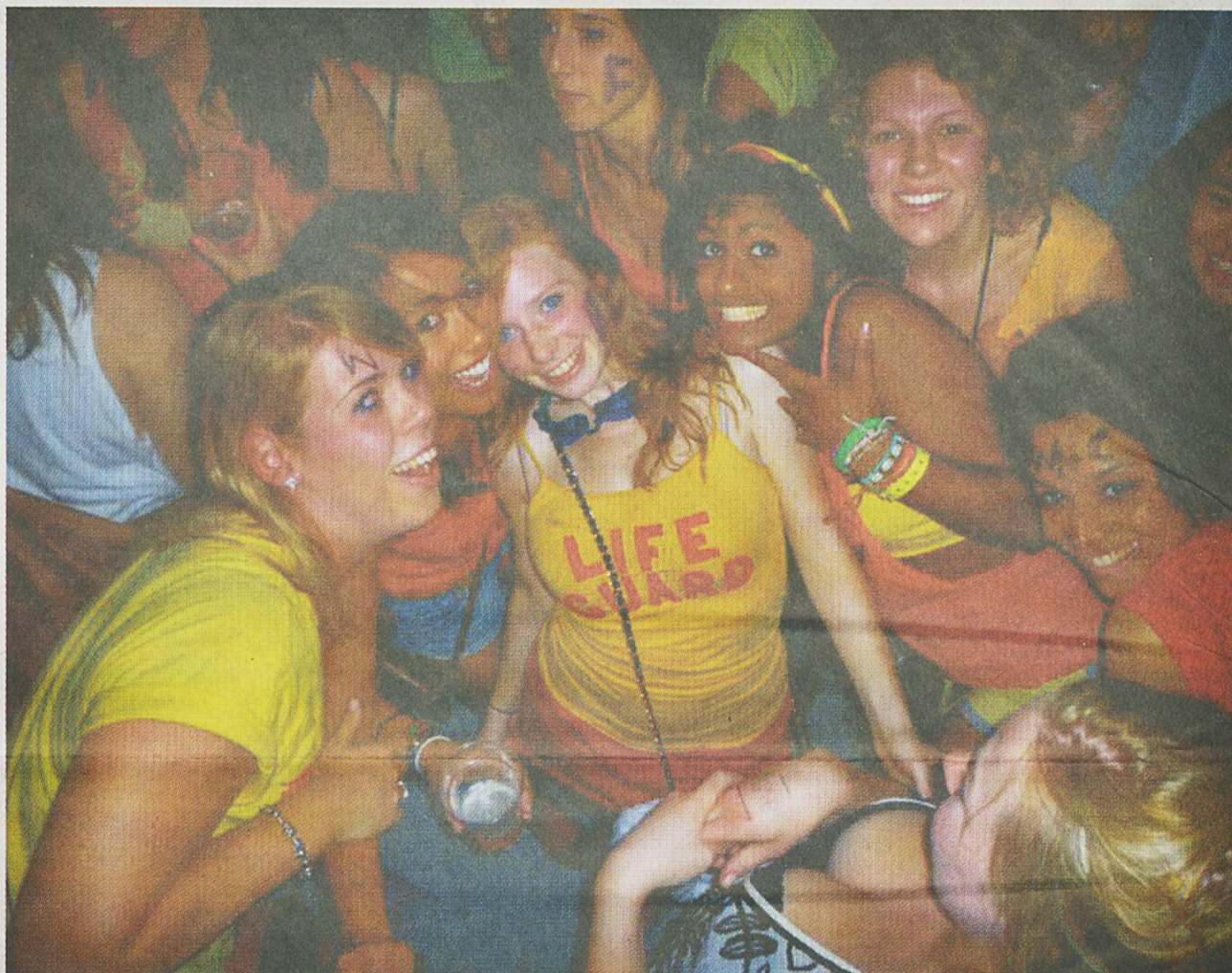
been rather more successful. And finally, Sabrina (our Golden Balls frontrunner) having had one goal disallowed, slipped one last one past the post bringing the final score to a spectacular 14-0.

Naturally such a spectacular win could

only be celebrated in one place: Zoo Bar. Despite a temporary dwindling in numbers, pitchers were shared, drinks were spilt and our hard core regulars stayed till the end.

**"not even the umpires sent from a time when Hockey was played with wooden sticks, could stop us from reaching double figures."**

round the opposition – proof that walking up and down Edinburgh hills for 4 years does wonders for your fitness. The Astro-turf seemed more of a sandpit, but nothing, not even the umpires sent from a time when Hockey was played with wooden sticks, could stop us from reaching double figures. Congratulations are in order for our charity coach Zaza, who scored 6 goals in total and our team captain Haugh, who casually slipped in 4 goals in the left corner. Clearly wanting a piece of the action herself, centre defence Rianne grew tired of observing the game and pulled out all



## Affairs to remember

**Nicola Alexander**

Tens of thousands of fans at the Arsenal v. Newcastle game this Sunday would have seen, innocently posted along the sides of the Emirates stadium, the Nike advert: 'Just do it'. In light of the Sun's recent allegations (6th November) about Arsène Wenger's possible activity with a certain Parisian rapper, I would caution Nike to consider just how literally they would like their slogan to be taken. Wenger, the decade-long manager for Arsenal is widely credited as one of the most successful football team managers in the United Kingdom, if not the world.

Numerous sportsmen have been accused of playing the away game. Indeed, just this year Ashley Cole and John Terry of Chelsea and Wayne Rooney of Manchester United have all been found to be having extra-marital affairs. However, we cannot restrict judgement to football players or even just sportsmen, as politicians can match point for point the off-field scoreboard. John F Kennedy, a President synonymous with civil rights, was indisputably having an affair with Marilyn Monroe while married to Jackie Kennedy. Bill Clinton, husband of Hillary, eventually admitted to having "sexual relations" with Monica Lewinsky. Really, the examples are infinite, although, it would appear, limited to men. Clearly, others have gone before.

For each infidelity we must inevitably ask; "Does cheating reflect on his character?". Herein lies the dilemma of every sports-fan and enfranchised citizen.

Whether the decision to cheat is active or passive, long term or instant, we can reasonably infer the following: cheaters are risk takers, greedy and weak. There is very little difference between cheating in the game of love and the game of sport. In both scenarios you make a commitment to honour a set of rules. Certainly, the rules are more explicit when laid out in a player handbook however, I would argue that "until death do us part" is equally binding.

**In an unusual twist, consumerism has proven to be a moral check and balance to a game that should dictate the ethical rules.**

A player caught cheating by using performance enhancing drugs, sabotaging or bribing officials is punished by prescribed sporting law. Why? Because the world of sports, as anyone reading this section will know, aims to achieve something beyond triumph or defeat. Sportsmanship is as much ingrained in the game as the scoring infrastructure. Sportsmen are required

to be ethical, respectful and fair, goals we would also hope to strive for in relationships. The standard for judgement is how well you play the game, not how well you play the players. Applying these rules to life simplifies a morally questionable mess. A marriage is a promise to be the best that you can in the team that you have committed yourself to, without compromising the morality enforced at every wedding, religious or secular.

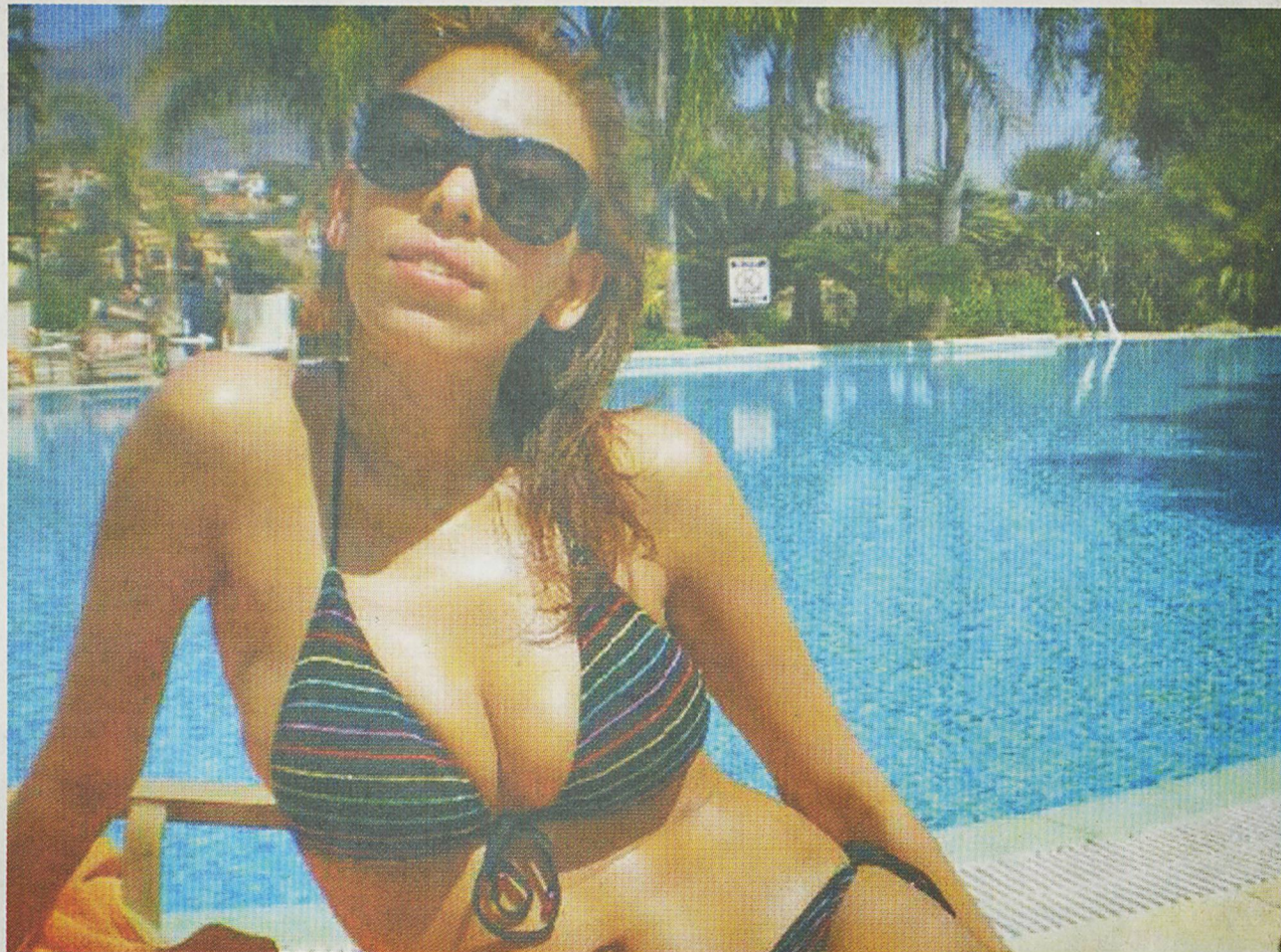
Perhaps we can forgive politicians as,

cynically speaking, deceit is part of their game, but surely sportsman know better than anyone else the value of playing by the rules.

Beyond the ethical implications of individual cheaters' actions, there are hectic commercial ramifications for the bevy of sponsors that flock to sports celebrities. Do these brands want to be associated with a cheater? If the backlash of Tiger Woods' stick work is anything to go by, the answer will be a firm no. In an unusual

twist, consumerism has proven to be a moral check and balance to a game that should dictate the ethical rules. Sportsmen be warned, hell hath no fury like a sports-fan scorned.

Newcastle beat Arsenal 1-0 in the end; the scoreline might not be the only thing weighing on Mr. Wenger's mind.



**Insert pun about balls here...**