

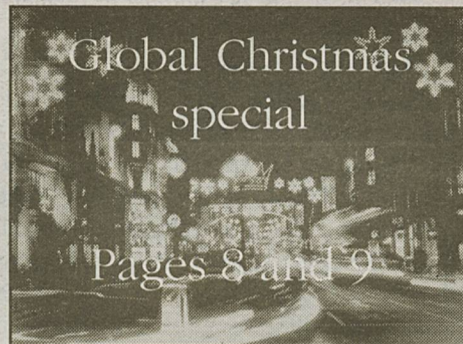


Round-up of the year

Arts: 12 and 13

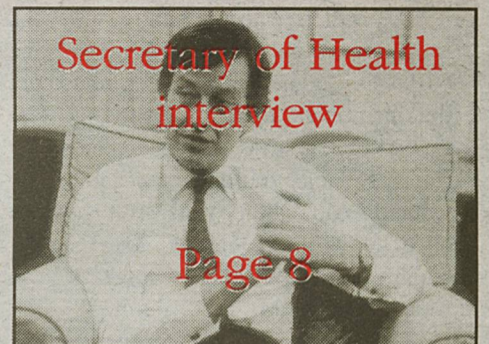


Music: 14 and 15



Global Christmas special

Pages 8 and 9



Secretary of Health interview

Page 8

School to ban smoking

EXCLUSIVE

Dev Cropper

Smoking may be banned next year in many communal areas of the LSE if the recommendations of a School Working Party are implemented.

The Working Party, set up by the Academic Board last year, has one student member – Students' Union (SU) Education and Welfare Sabbatical Omer Soomro.

A draft copy of the confidential Working Party's report has been obtained by *The Beaver*.

It calls for no-smoking rules in the Shaw Library and the side lobby of the Library (at present the only sanctuary for student smokers in the Lionel Robbins Building). More controversially, it proposes that the Brunch Bowl, Pizzaburger and Beaver's Retreat also become smoke-free unless smoking areas "can be more effectively screened and ventilated."

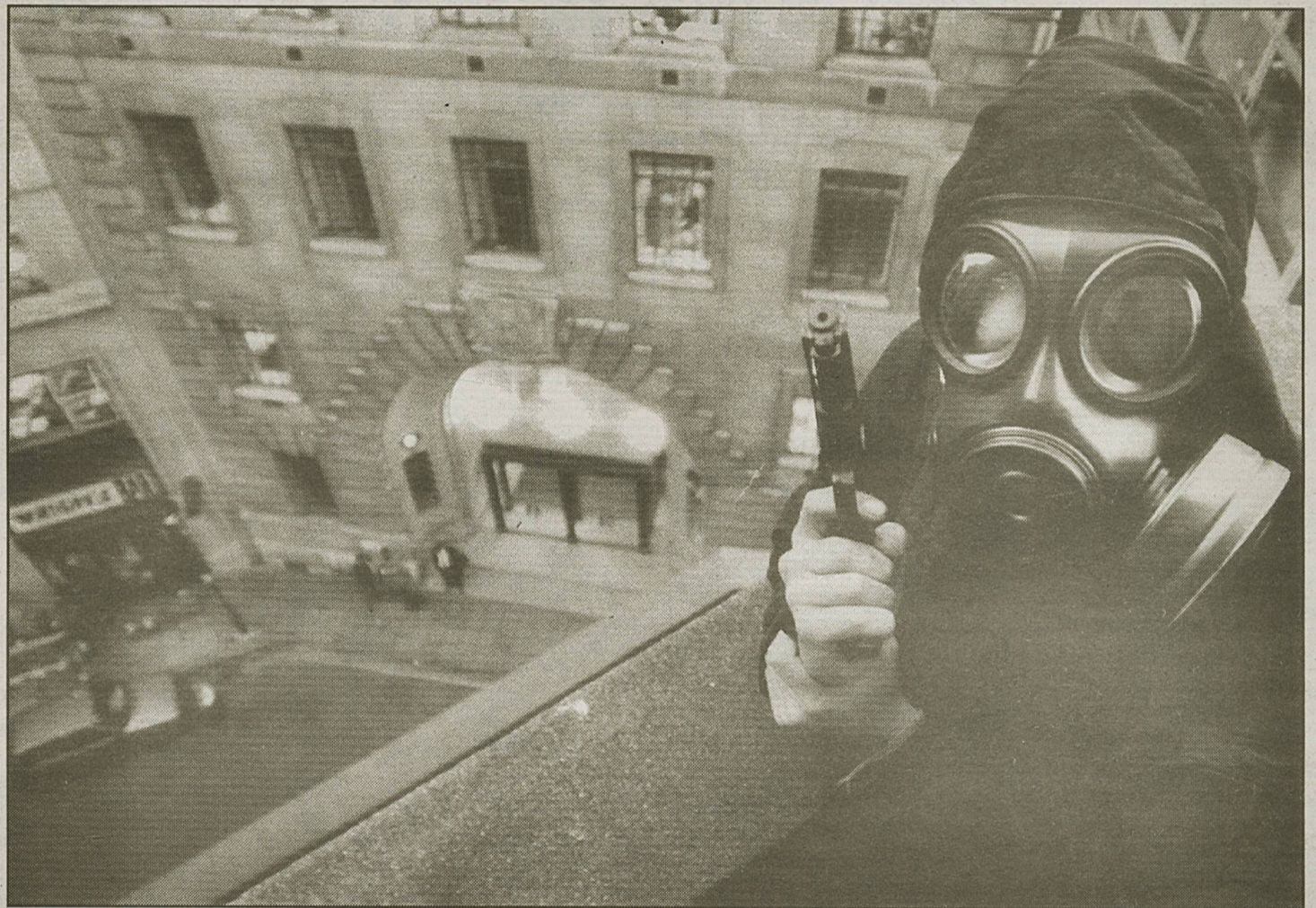
But the report acknowledges that this may be too expensive to be cost effective, leading to accusations that the Working Party wants to ban smoking through the back door.

The School does have plans to refurbish the Brunch Bowl in 1996, at which time structural changes to the smoking area will be considered.

But as the Catering Manager, Mrs E Thomas, pointed out, "smoking is a social activity commonly associated with eating and drinking. . . the situation in the LSE cafés is no different from that in any high-street restaurant."

Current SU policy opposes all of the above bans. Soomro stated that he had made clear the policies of the SU to the Working Party. Furthermore, he added that he hoped all of the student representatives on the Academic Board would be writing to the Board to ensure that the SU policy was made as clear as possible. In his opinion, the proposals would not be "reasonable or effective".

Smoking is of course permissible in the Union-run Café and Three Tuns. However, the draft report implies that this policy may be taken out of the SU's hands: "the School may have to clarify the legal position regarding its responsibilities for smoking on Union premises."



Drama Society member who stormed the Students' Union Annual Budget Meeting in defence of LSE thespians

Photo: Stéphane Sireau

Armed raiders hijack Union budget

Richard Hearnden

With the exception of a few dramatic and entertaining incidents, the Students' Union (SU) budget for the academic year passed unscathed at the Annual Budget Meeting (ABM), held in a packed Old Theatre last Thursday.

In previous years the second half of the ABM, the societies' budget, has been subject to numerous amendments as societies attempt to transfer budget allocations from each other.

This year, despite eleven amendments being put on the order paper, three were withdrawn, and all of the remainder were voted down by the meeting.

Claire Lawrie, SU Treasurer, who presented the budget, expressed her "delight" at its smooth passage and commented that it was possibly the "first time it had ever

happened".

One Finance Committee member, however, expressed his "utter shock" that the Olive Branch Society's budget, referred to by ABM chair Jonathan Bennet as "Baljit Mahal's Olive Branch Society", managed to survive intact, without being amended despite much opposition to the society.

The Drama Society, recently renamed *Market Forces* mounted the most spirited defence of the thespian community by charging the stage with gunfire and smoke during the proceedings, appealing for the passing of their budget and that of the film-making, Sketch Society.

However, Lawrie's control of the proceedings foundered when her predecessor as Treasurer, Ola Budinska, challenged the welfare budget, claiming that contrary to her election promises, Lawrie had failed to negotiate an increase in the size of the Hardship Fund. Speaking afterwards to *The Beaver*, Lawrie pinned the blame entirely

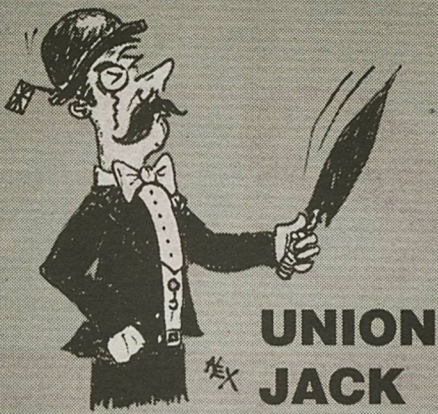
on Budinska:

"The increase in this year's block grant from the School was one of the lowest ever. It was well below inflation. Ola put in the submission, and it's her fault that it's so low."

Lawrie attributed the overall success of the budget to her "openness" with individual societies and her success in raising advertising revenue. The New Students' Fair netted £9,000 and the *Alternative Prospectus* has scooped £3,500 in external advertising revenue.

The *Handbook* issued free to students at the beginning of the year made a profit for the first time in its history, through advertising revenue.

Lawrie described the Athletics Union's (AU) budget as being "the best I've ever seen". The most generous praise, however, was reserved for *The Beaver* which had "improved greatly in quality" despite having to change printers earlier this term and referred to our Editor as the "Beaver Babe".



For those who don't know, last week was Annual Budget Week. On the basis of the contents, Jack does not expect the incumbent to be re-elected. Claire Lawrie of course does not have that worry (in fact, Jack would be worried if she wanted to do another year). But she does have the problem of having to get her budget passed by the UGM, a task even Ken Clarke might find difficult.

This year the heavies were out in force to ensure smooth running, and surprisingly the Chair appeared to get it right. So disciplined was it that an untrained observer might even assume a parliamentary-style whip system as good as the Tories' was in operation.

Talking of Tories and whips, the first amendment to the societies budget was put forward by Martin Sprott. He made a real fist of it, plunging in well beyond his wrist and out of his depth. Curiously, he wished to transfer £100 from the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Society to the Literary Circle. Less curiously the Law, or rather the Law Society, was abused to the tune of £50, with the money again going to the Literary Circle.

Martin looked fresh, as if straight out of a bath, and not in the least bit up tight. The Literary Circle certainly were, however, and said that they definitely did not want the money. This left Jack puzzled as to a motive for the amendment. Martin had argued there was a limit to the number of free condoms that the LGB Society could give out. Jack wondered how he knew. Anyway, it was all reasonably amicable with no blood left on the floor (or walls). And Martin didn't come out on top this time.

Other amendments also represented an outing into the bizarre. Fists were tightly clenched again for the bout between the Women's Group and the Hindu Society. Arun (another Tory - enough said) came off worse after Teresa Delaney used her weight and bulk to protect the female moneys.

Hard though it may seem, an even greater force was employed to protect the Drama Society budget. The Investment Society had asked for £100 of their money, and £20 from the Olive Branch Society to boot. Regular readers will know that the Olive Branch Society is the brainchild (love child?) of Baljit, crowned prince of UGM's. Baljit, in weary defence of the much-maligned OBS, got up to speak.

As he reached the lectern, the lights went off; smoke came from behind him, quickly followed by three armed men in army uniform, firing blanks. Baljit looked as if he had "dropped his load" for a moment before regaining some composure. In the end he had to say nothing as some squealing dramatic person said it all for him and won the day and got a bit of free publicity into the bargain.

Apart from this, it was all rather boring. The tedium was slightly relieved by witty pictures - the best being of Kate Hampton fellating a banana - and of course the lovely Claire herself. She had no red box (or at least didn't show it), but made up for it with that lovely pink jacket. May your Christmas be as jolly.

Loans Bill on the rocks

Nick Sutton
News Editor

Private student loans moved a step closer last week as the Government won approval from the House of Commons for its proposals. Yet successful implementation of the proposals became less likely as a number of financial institutions lined up to say they were uninterested in joining the scheme.

The Second Reading of the Student Loans Bill was won by the Government with a majority of 35 on November 27. The proposal - which was only announced in the Queen's Speech three weeks ago - is hoped, by the Government, to be in place in time for the next academic year.

However, the passage of the Bill through Parliament is expected to be difficult. The Committee Stage of Parliament's deliberations begins in the House of Commons this week, during which the Government will

face harsh criticism. The House of Lords is also thought to be likely to cause trouble for the Government.

Eric Forth MP, Minister of State for Education, said the Bill was designed to ensure students get "choice and a better service" through competition between the state-owned Student Loans Company, banks and building societies.

The Labour Party, Liberal Democrats and economic experts have voiced their opposition to the scheme, describing the proposals as "half-baked" - motivated by pressures to reduce public expenditure rather than the result of any comprehensive plan to address the problem of student finance.

As Don Foster, Liberal Democrat Education Spokesman said during the Commons debate, "The Bill simply tinkers around the edges without addressing the key issues affecting students and the higher education system today."

The opposition parties have tabled

amendments to the Government's proposals which would alter the Bill dramatically - replacing the repayment mechanism with one more closely related to income, as well as requiring consultation with students.

Sir Eric Ash, Acting Chief Executive of the Student Loans Company has made clear his opposition to the Bill and the fact that financial institutions are uninterested in becoming involved in the new scheme - the Woolwich Building Society, Abbey National, Co-operative Bank and the Royal Bank of Scotland have already announced that they will not join.

It is not clear why the Government rejected the plans unanimously recommended to it by the Conservative National Policy Working Group. However, speculation has centred on claims that figures provided by the Department of Social Security's Collections Agency greatly overestimated the cost of the Working Group's proposed national insurance-based repayments scheme.

Vive la revolution!

Chris McAleely

Britain desperately needs a democratic revolution. This was the conclusion of Dr Tony Wright MP given to a sparse gathering of the Fabian Society last Tuesday.

Dr Wright, a graduate of the LSE, began with a few "nostalgic rambling" about the heady days of the 1968 protests. He then got down to detailing his case for change in Britain.

Dr Wright believes that the public now considers the British political system not to be distinctively good, but to be distinctively bad. Right wing lunatics "salivate at the way it is possible to think something up in the bath one night, put it before Cabinet the next day and have it made into legislation within a week." Nowhere else in the mature democratic world would this be possible.

Britain's 'winner takes all system' has no safeguards. It has the most concentrated form of government anywhere in the Western world, meaning power is in the hands of central government, not Parliament or regional authorities. The House of Commons is a legislature that cannot legislate. It merely approves, and does not even provide any scrutiny of new measures, according to Dr

Wright.

Britain has no written constitution, which might have prevented Thatcher's Poll Tax fiasco. Neither are the roles of government bodies defined, for example the GLC was abolished with ease.

Dr Wright said that the system has always been the same. However, since 1979 the government has been a 'constitutional education', because the Tories have taken their authority to the limits and exposed the illusion of Parliamentary rule.

Labour's commitment to changing this is doubtful, given that the system is as favourable for them when they get a turn in power. Despite this, Tony Blair has kept the party committed to a referendum on constitutional reform.

Dr Wright conceded that a written constitution might lead to stagnation, such as the recent impasse in the United States. However a balance must be struck. He was more concerned with defending the rights of individuals against a government which is giving them no say in how they run their own lives.

Dr Wright summed up by saying that institutional change is not the key. What is needed is an end to the adversarial, party against party system, a fundamental change in the approach to politics in Britain.

A boosy faggy budget

Jason H. Kassemoff

Last Tuesday's Budget was a bad one for most students, with taxes on alcohol and tobacco rising. Whether the Budget is enough to revive Tory poll standings is one thing, how student-friendly the decisions are is another.

Beer and wine were spared any tax increases, so that, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Clarke pointed out, "tax as a share of the cost of a pint of beer is the lowest for over 20 years." A 4% reduction on the duty on spirits was announced, amounting to about 27p on the average bottle of Scotch. Super-strength ciders (7.5% proof upwards) such as K, Diamond White, Max, and Brody, that are popular with many students, were targeted for an 8p per pint tax starting next October.

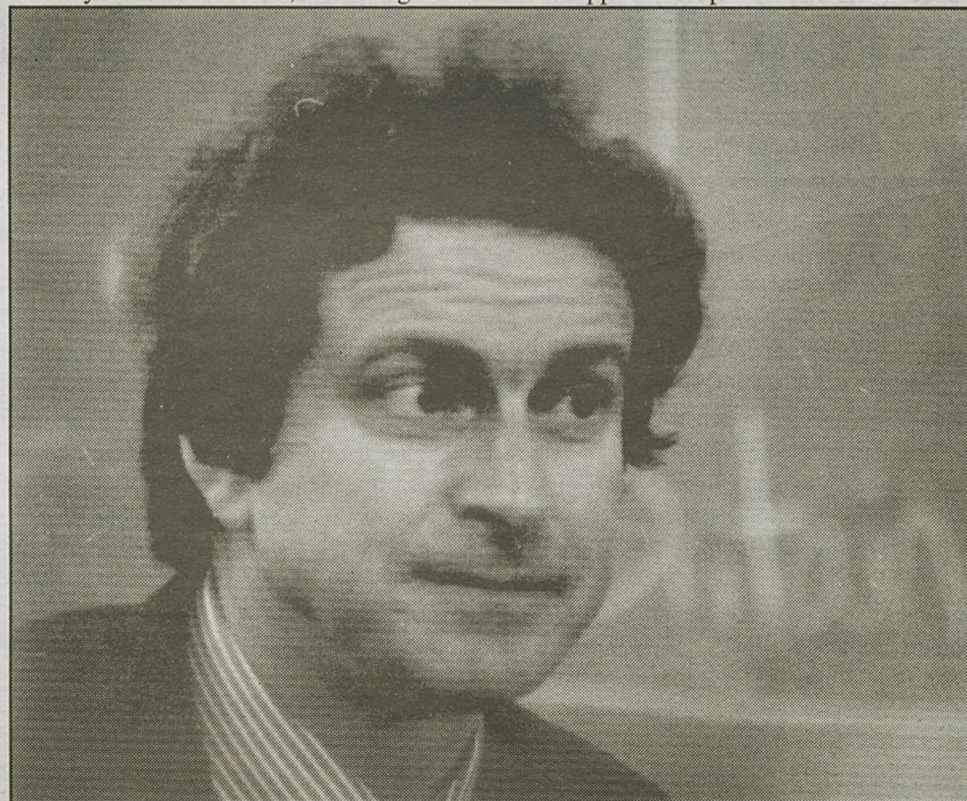
The pressure group Alcohol Concern said that the changes made on spirit duties and those not made on wines and beers, were likely to encourage alcoholism and drink-related crime.

On the tobacco front, the Chancellor had already pledged in his 1993 budget to increase the tax on tobacco in real terms by 3% per year. He said that this plan was the "most far reaching, and effective way of backing up health warnings on smoking." Clarke exceeded this pre-set target by adding 15p on a packet of 20 cigarettes, 6p on a packet of small cigars, and 8p per 25 grams of pipe tobacco.

The tobacco tax is three times higher than in France or Germany. The average price of 20 cigarettes is now £2.89 compared to £1.89 in Belgium. Britain's tobacco duties are amongst the highest in Europe.

The pressure group Action on Smoking and Health said that they were glad that the Chancellor emphasised the health reasons for increasing the tobacco tax again. On the other side, the Fair Cigarette Tax lobby group said that once again smokers had been singled out as an easy target.

So, depending on your personal vices, the budget details have either hit you or helped you. What is for sure, is that the Tory party as government will gain more revenue from the large brewing and tobacco manufacturers, along with the usual 'donations' given by these firms to the party itself.



Dr Tony Wright MP speaks to the Fabian Society

Photo: Stephen Hau

Ashworth predicts the future

Richard Hearnden

Dr John Ashworth, the Director of the LSE, set out the School's vision for its next century in the penultimate lecture of the current Centenary Series.

Although Dr Ashworth painted a very rosy picture of the LSE as it entered the next millennium, the Director didn't mince his words in describing the present poor state of the School's facilities.

Ashworth looked to the 'information super highway' to provide a stimulus for the awaited revolution in higher education. The Internet would herald the creation of "virtual universities" - institutions that teach only through the Internet.

However, Ashworth reassured the audience that the LSE's days weren't numbered, although he predicted that the School would concentrate more on graduate courses. His remarks will be seen as a successor to the scheme to split the School into separate undergraduate and graduate schools which was shelved in 1992.

However, his praise for the LSE was tempered by what most students encounter every day. He described the School's infrastructure as deplorable, and commented that the "Buildings are well past their sell-by date. . . our fine library desperately needs refurbishing." It remains to be seen whether any of these much needed changes are put into action.

Racist leafletting

Beaver Staff

Hundreds of blatantly racist flyers were confiscated from the LSE Students' Union (SU) reception last Wednesday.

The flyer produced by the National Alliance blames "hateful minorities" and "corrupted politicians" of abducting white European children in England. It shows a Hitlerite image of an Aryan child below the caption "missing" and describes the "exclusive" idiosyncratic qualities of that child.

An emergency SU Executive meeting was immediately held. Claire Lawrie, SU Treasurer, referred to the propaganda as "utterly despicable," and "a clear attack on minorities." "Speaking on behalf of students," she said "the Students' Union obviously does not condone such a thing."

Lawrie was surprised and considered it even more offensive, that the organisation would choose such a cosmopolitan place as the LSE, to spread its "campaign of hate."

A student who called the National Alliance number on the flyer described the recorded message in which all non-white Europeans are referred to as "subordinate" and "aliens". The group also claims to have proof and documentation of a plot to rid 'us' of blondes.

The presence of the flyers was brought to the attention of SU Welfare Officer, Omer Soomro. There was no mass distribution, he said "whoever did it was in a hurry, most probably in the late hours of the evening." He considers the flyers were, "specifically aimed at the LSE because of the complete rejection of any such notion. We are the most cosmopolitan university in the country."



Dr John Ashworth, Director of the School, speaking on the future of LSE last week

Photo: Ana Shorter

News in Brief

Essay Competition

Students in all fields are invited to enter the McKinsey and Company-International Students' Committee essay competition.

All details including application form are available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.isc.unisg.ch/essay>.

Prizes include free attendance at the 26th St. Gallen International Management Symposium and 6,000 Swiss Francs (£3,390).

Klingon BA?

As part of a Portsmouth University degree course, one student will be learning Klingon, the language spoken by Captain Kirk's arch-enemies in *Star Trek*.

School Publications

The School's External Communications Committee (ECC) has established a Working Party to review all LSE publications.

The Working Party will assess their effectiveness and make recommendations to the ECC.

Comments are invited from all member of the School on any aspect of the production and distribution of the School's publications. Please forward any comments to David Mingay, Room H615 to arrive no later than 15 January 1996.

Weekend Catering

For the remainder of the academic year, the Brunch Bowl will be open on Saturdays and Sundays during term-time and the Easter vacation.

A full brunch service, beverages, sandwiches, salads and hot snacks are available from 11am until 4pm.

Third World Fair

Over 60 London-based charities, co-operatives and fair-traders will gather together at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square next weekend.

Jointly organised by Oxfam, Twin Trading, War on Want and the World Development Movement, unusual and exciting gifts from all over the world will be on sale from Friday December 8 to Sunday December 10.

School Strategy

The views of all members of the School are requested on the issues affecting the direction of the School over the next 4-5 years.

The School wants to know what you think about:

- LSE's role as an international university
- the right mix between graduates and undergrads and students from home/EU and non-home/EU
- research
- teaching quality
- estate strategy (LSE's buildings and future development)
- services/infrastructure (Information Technology and the Library)

Please send your views and comments to Andrew Webb (e-mail: Webb,A), Secretary to the APRC, Room H693 no later than March 1 1996.

LSE girl stars in telly's Blind Date

Judith Plastow

It's Christmas Day. It's 8pm and you've had as much turkey/alcohol/relatives as you can take.

What do you do?

Why, turn on the TV of course for Christmas Blind Date. Now this year it is no ordinary Blind Date because LSE babe Barbara Serra is following the footsteps of quite a few LSE students this year in making her television debut.

Back in October Barbara chose to go to London Weekend Television (LWT) to find a date rather than rely on the fine array of male specimens here at LSE but she did.

After cruising the ten minute first interview which involved chatting to some researchers and answering a few Blind Date-type questions (ie "who d'you fancy?" and "what's your most embarrassing moment?") Barbara was through to the second round.

This was slightly more in depth lasting a good hour. With fifteen other hopefuls Barbara did a mime (pretend you're Madonna taking a kindergarten class) and took part in a dummy Blind Date.

Luckily Barbara was chosen to be the picker (as opposed to the pickee because no one likes being rejected) and arrived at the

studio the next day with two outfits and the flu.

And now for some Blind Date truths. Yes! the picker does devise their own questions. Yes! those witty repartees are made up by the pickees (although they are not quite spontaneous, they have an hour before the show to think of them) And no! they don't see each other before hand - if they do they are disqualified.

After her three questions and Graham's 'quick reminder', Barbara made her choice. Her decision rested mainly on the audience's reaction and "his funny voice imitations."

Ten minutes after filming the show the couple were whisked off to a hotel and then the airport for a romantic week for two (plus nine film crew) in a very exotic location.

And after the five star hotel, a trip to the ocean, horse riding and wine tasting, did the two warm to each other or was the atmosphere a bit chilly? (very bad Cillat-type joke). You'll just have to watch and find out!

So after all that who is Barbara's ideal Blind Date? No less than "sex-god" Johnny Depp. But what about a bit closer to home? "To go on a date with someone at LSE you'd have to be blind!"

LSE student in deportation battle

Nicola Hobday
Executive Editor

With the recent Asylum Bill and the continuing troubles in Bosnia, the plight of Zrinka Bralo is one that encapsulates many of the political arguments of the moment.

Ms Bralo, an LSE student is facing deportation. Her case has been given national media coverage and yet sadly it is only one of many.

She faces the leviathan that is the bureaucracy of the Home Office, a task that is seeming increasingly insurmountable as she has now been waiting for a hearing for fourteen months, only for it to be adjourned indefinitely with no explanation as to why.

She is a Bosnian and worked as a radio journalist in Sarejevo. In her work she was openly critical of the government and when the war broke out she knew she had to leave for good, "the hope died at that point" she said.

Leaving war-torn Bosnia, however, was no mean feat. As she was working for a foreign news company she attempted to get airlifted with the UN. Unfortunately she didn't qualify as a foreign journalist so she went about purchasing a Croatian passport in a "semi-legal way".

Zrinka came to Britain because she had friends here and spoke English. She arrived and applied for places at university and

chose to come to the LSE and study Media and Communications as a part-time Masters student whilst also maintaining a full time job.

From here the story takes a decided turn for the worse. Her appeal for asylum was turned down – a complete shock – "I had no idea how the procedures work but I thought that with all the news coverage people would be sympathetic to the problems and that everything would go smoothly." She was not even given exceptional leave to remain. "They didn't even take into account the fact that I was working and paying taxes to the government and was not 'scrounging' by claiming benefits. Either way it works against you; if you are working then you are taking a job from a British person."

The Home Office view her as a Croatian because of her passport and therefore intend to send her back to Croatia. She does not want to return to Bosnia, her homeland, and she certainly does not want to return to Croatia where she has only ever spent four days.

"I lived for twenty six years in Yugoslavia. The way I see it Croatia started the war and it has committed many atrocities against the Bosnians. I do not want to be recognised as a Croatian by others because I do not agree with what that stands for. In Croatia it is obvious that I am Bosnian, my accent gives it away. I was once in a hotel foyer and a man heard me speak and started shouting at me about how I was killing all their boys.

I have no connections there; no friends, no relations." Zrinka is worried about the freedom of speech in Croatia, she knows that she will have no rights there although the Home Office claim otherwise.

As for her attempts to stay in Britain, she is currently pursuing her appeal. She waited fourteen months for her hearing which was to be a few weeks ago. However, five days before the case was to be heard she was told that it was to be postponed indefinitely with no explanation.

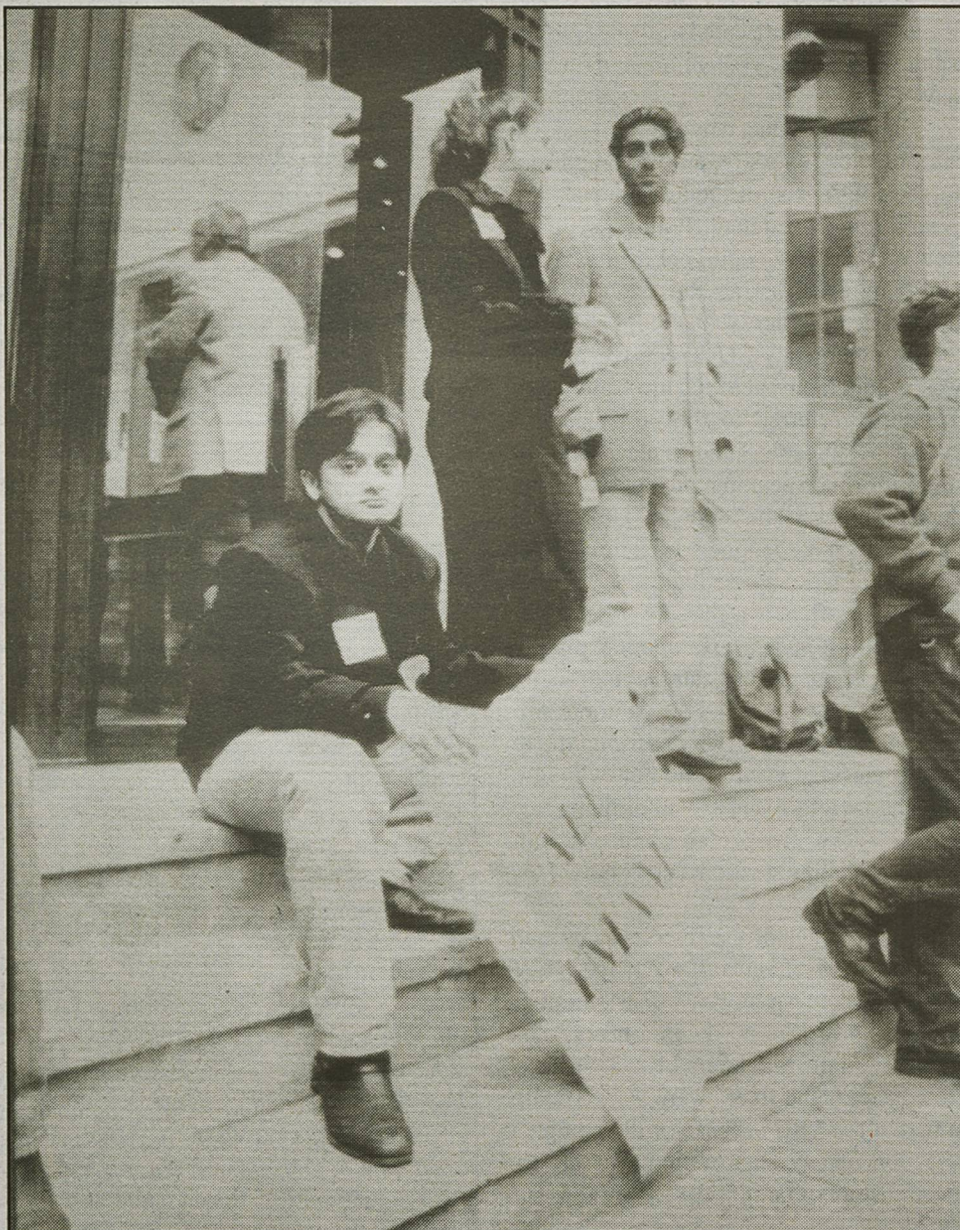
Her hopes for the future are simple; "I would like to carry on my education and do work for refugees as I am doing now. I have

had to start my life three times over now and I'm already twenty eight. I just want to lead an ordinary boring life."



Zrinka Bralo, the LSE student from Bosnia threatened with deportation

Students' Union societies' constitution causes confusion



Ali Imam, SU Societies Officer, pictured during his recent campaign for Court of Governors

Photo: Kenneth Lo

Beaver Staff

At the end of last week society pigeon holes were filled with a proposal for setting up an LSE Students' Union (SU) Societies' Constitution.

However, a number of society officers including Martin Lodge, Chair of the European Society, have criticised SU officer Ali Imam for his "ill-conceived plans."

Arguing that a quoracy of one-third of the membership is unrealistic, society officers have said that the consequences of "this ridiculous proposition" would be dire. Societies that failed to assemble the required proportion of their membership to vote for a committee would not be able to function at all: no elected committee, no budget, and no possibility for organising any events.

The draft constitution also demands that general meetings, which are to be held once a term, should be publicised in writing to all society members. Such proposals, it is argued, add a considerable burden to the work of the society committees.

Overall, societies have argued that the draft constitution is wholly unworkable and is yet another instance of the "lack of thought which is inherent in all of Imam's ideas" and risk the functioning of many well-operating societies at LSE.

Imam claims that if there is no negative response from societies to his proposals it will be assumed that they are satisfied with them. However, he pointed out that the proposals are only in a draft form and he is willing to accept "suggestions, feedback, any amendments, whatever" from societies by December 5.

Student suicide increase revealed

Beaver Staff

Although LSE has been fortunate enough not to suffer from any student suicides recently, a new survey suggests a dramatic increase in the number of students killing themselves.

The nationwide survey conducted by the Liberal Democrats' Education Group found a 400% rise in suicides during the last decade.

In 1983/4 there were 2.4 suicides per 100,000 students, while by 1993/4 this figure had jumped to 9.7.

Raising this issue in a House of Commons debate last week, Don Foster, Liberal Democrat Education Spokesman claimed that students with financial problems are worried about the prospect of unemployment on graduation.

"People who are at university, supposedly benefiting from the education they are receiving there, are being crippled by stress and financial worries" according to Foster.

As well as pressing the Government to make much-needed reforms to help reduce student hardship, Foster called for a full-scale Government review of university counselling services, which have been reduced in a number of colleges.

For those feeling suicidal, as well as counselling services run by the School and Students' Union, an emergency 24-hour helpline – The Samaritans – can be reached on (0345) 90 90 90.

Replies re: Rosebery ravings Star Letter

Rosebery row overtakes High Holborn in boredom stakes

I wonder who this is from ...

Dear Beaver

I wish to strongly object to the letter you published headed Big Breakfast Rosebery Row, sent in by persons unknown, purporting to be "all of Rosebery Hall". The letter made very derogatory, factually incorrect and abusive remarks about Mary Zanfai the Bursar of Rosebery Hall.

The facts of the matter are very different to those stated in the letter. Policy decisions to do with the Residences are made at the Inter-Halls Committee by its members, who consist of Student Representatives from all the Residences, the Wardens and other Academics. Mary Zanfai is not a member of that Committee, she 'attends', in her capacity of Bursar. A number of decisions have been taken on the issue of breakfast at Rosebery and elsewhere by the Inter-Halls Committee, at the last meeting and at previous meetings. The minutes of all these meetings, including the last one are available for scrutiny. The Student Representative from Rosebery tabled a paper requesting that breakfast be reinstated at Rosebery, due to demand. The previous year's Students had agreed that it was unreasonable for the majority of Rosebery Students to subsidize the breakfasts of those few Students who still required it and that the breakfast service could be ceased, thus making savings on costs.

At this month's Inter-Halls meeting the financial consequence of reinstating breakfast was clearly put to the Rosebery Representative and the Committee agreed that if

the vast majority of Students were prepared to pay an additional fee, in order to secure the staffing, plus the food costs of breakfasts taken, breakfast in fact could be re-instated at Rosebery and the Rosebery Representative was asked to confer with the Rosebery Hall Committee to see if this would be achievable, ie breakfasts are still a possibility - it depends on whether the majority of Rosebery Students are prepared to pay.

The other comment which suggested that Mary Zanfai had somehow replaced Student Receptionists with Alfred Marks temps was again not true. Alfred Marks temps are not employed at Rosebery. The issue which was brought up concerned the increasing complexities of the Reception function, due to computerisation. This would make it more difficult for students (who only work occasional shifts), to remember some of the key entry procedures and would thus make mistakes inevitable. It was felt that this post was now much more appropriate for permanent staff, with Students in support from time to time. Rosebery is and has been a very successful and popular Residence for a large number of LSE Students. This is in no small measure due to Mary Zanfai's conscientious endeavours on behalf of Students and vacation visitors over many years. She deserves our thanks not inaccurate abuse.

Yours
David Segal
Assistant Secretary

Dear Beaver,

The Rosebery Hall Committee would like to point out that the letter printed last week about Rosebery Hall breakfast was the work of an individual or group of individuals and does not express the views of "all of Rosebery Hall" as was claimed.

At the Hall Society meeting mentioned in the letter it was agreed that a vote would be carried out in order to see the demand for breakfast. The results of the vote were presented at the Inter-Halls meeting on 10 November, where the proposal to bring back breakfast was found not to be valid.

Yours
Rosebery Hall Committee

Dear Beaver,

I am writing to express my gratitude to your paper. Every issue fills me with joy and elation, and I cannot but jump up and down the LSE in fits of ecstasy.

As an ex-editor of an American newspaper, I would just like to say how brilliant the layout of your paper is every week. The content, in general, is of a very high standard but the layout exceeds any possible expectations. I truly believe the editor in charge of layout should be commended.

To all you editors, THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Yours
Semaj Camashunog

Student Union Shop

Charity Xmas cards, 1996 calendars and diaries are now available in The Shop and a wide range of LSE memorabilia including the LSE teddy bears, Charlie and Benjie, "Zippo" style lighter, hip flasks, LSE mugs, LSE microfiles, shot glasses and much much more.

Also on sale now are Far Side mugs, address books, note books, notelets, novelty mouse mats, gift wrap, gift tags and gift bags to name but a few more Xmas gift ideas.

Come and look for yourself - we are in the East Building.

OPENING HOURS

Mon-Thurs 10-5
Fri 10-4 (during term time)
Mon-Fri 10-4 (during holidays)

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Letters to the Editor must be submitted by 10.00 pm on Thursday

The Editor reserves the right to edit all letters



I want one of those dolls like the girl has on page 10

Photo: Eric Werneni

Bah humbug: Clarke brings Christmas cheer to all



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The Beaver is published by the London School of Economics Students' Union and printed by the Isle of Wight County Press Ltd, Brannon House, 123 Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, (01983) 825333 and at 112 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 3TX, 0171 3781579.

... Societies ...**Latin American Society**

Pinata Caliente!!
Members £4 Non-members £6
at Circa, 59 Berkeley Sq. W1
10.00 pm-3.00 am
Tuesday, December 5th
Dress to impress!

Law Society

Mulled wine & mince pies evening
Members £1 Non-members £1.50
Tuesday, December 5th
5.00 pm onwards
Law common room
(Guest speaker to be announced)

3rd World First

"The economics of climate change - the David Pearce controversy"
Tuesday, December 5th
6.00 pm, C120

Catholic Society

Agape: a celebration for Advent Christmas
Tuesday, December 5th
5.30 pm, K51

and ...

Carol Concert and Guest Preacher:

His Eminence Cardinal George Basil Hume OSB, Archbishop of Westminster
Wednesday, December 6th
Venue to be announced

Islamic Society

Weekly Study Circles
Wednesday, December 6th
2.00 - 3.50 pm, G11

Debating Society

AGM & elections plus mince pies & seasonal cheer!
Wednesday, December 6th
1.00 pm, A85

Amnesty International

Please note that there will be no letter writing stall this week. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for writing so many letters this term.

Islamic Society

"Objectives of Islamic Law"
Hishum Alawadi
Thursday, December 7th
1.00 - 3.00 pm, A85

Central And Eastern European Development Society

Professor Leszek Balcerowicz
Former Polish Finance Minister
Author of the Economic Shock Therapy Programme
Thursday, December 7th
11.00 - 12.00 pm, C120

Jewish Society

Chanukah Party
Featuring a live band & lots of free food!
Thursday, December 7th
7.00 pm, Quad

Public Lectures

Judicial Legislation
Centenary Law and Society Lecture
Professor W.R. Cornish, FBA
University of Cambridge
Tuesday, December 12th
5.30 pm, Shaw Library

Theatre

Andorra
by Max Frisch
Monday, December 4th - 6th
7.30 pm, Old Theatre

...London...**Shop for a fairer world!**

Oxfam's Third World Fair: Cheap Xmas presents from all over the world, dance workshops and exhibitions. Earnings directly benefit workers in developing countries. Jointly organised by Oxfam, Twin Trading, War on Want & the World Development Movement
Friday, December 8th - 10th
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square WC1, nearest tube Holborn.

Club Rwanda '95

The End WC1 (brand new club)
Earnings go to Save the Children Fund
DJs: CJ Mackintosh, Harvey, Kid Batchelor, KCC Rhythm (amongst many others)
£5 Entrance fee
Tuesday, December 5th
10.30 pm - 4.00 am

Amnesty International Concert for Human Rights

Galliano, Eddi Reader, Zap Mama & Nitin Sawhney
Tickets from £7.50 - £18
Call 0171 960 4242
Monday, December 11th
Royal Festival Hall

Editorial

Welcome to the bumper Christmas issue of *The Beaver*. Yes, this week we have sweated blood to give you twenty pages of festive fun and frolics.

My Christmas is going to be anything but glamorous as I intend to spend it in the library catching up on all the work that I have missed doing this. Not another word from anyone going skiing or anywhere exotic on their hols. The end of the year is a time to contemplate on all that has gone before and take

stock of your life and where you now stand in relation to the world. In this, the last issue of the Beaver for 1995 I can take stock and express a heartfelt thanks to all those of you who have missed their deadlines enabling me to be here in the Beaver office, with my trusty Managing Editor by my side, at 7.00 on Friday morning having worked solidly all night.

Thankyou, friends. Have a happy one. Not.
Nicola Hobday

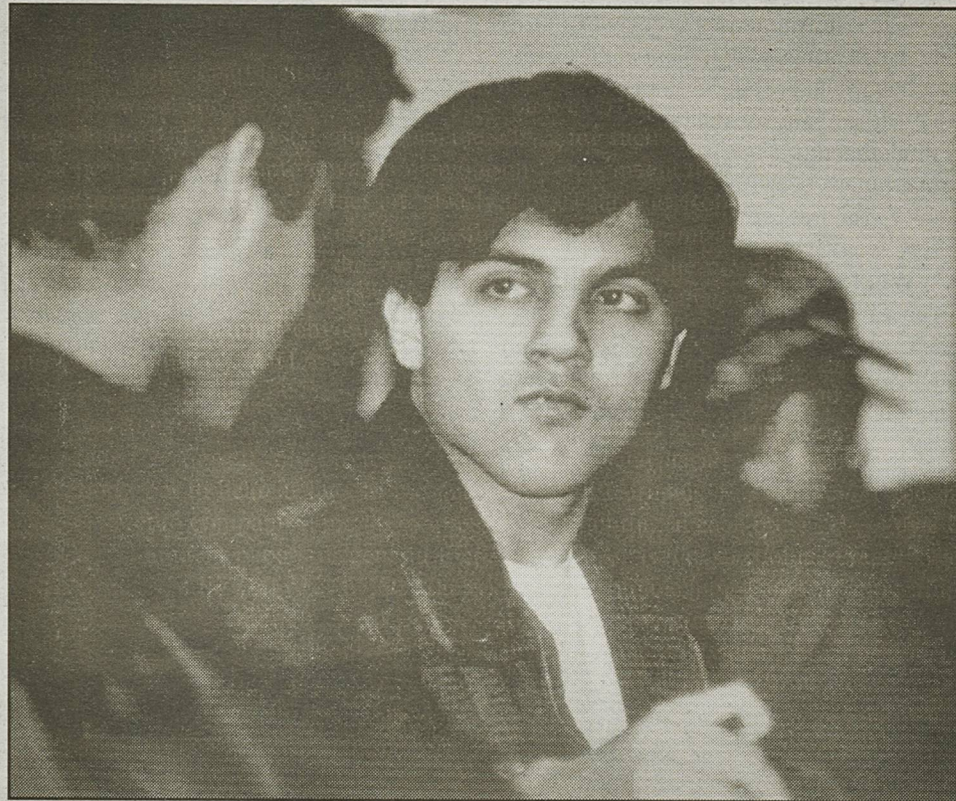
A Last Word

A merry Christmas to all Union page fans. Baljit says adieu but not goodbye

Baljit Mahal Communications Officer

This term has passed in an 'interesting' fashion. It seems that the humble 'Communications Officer' should be a subject of great attention, be that in a UGM, Union Jack or the Campus page. But perhaps we should get some perspective. There are nine part-time officers on the LSE SU Executive. "What a great privilege!" – we all think (not). In fact, we have the honour of putting in a large number of hours for an organisation that seeks to represent students interests at the LSE and promote their welfare. Each part-time officer has much to do, and whatever he/she does do – it is not done through some calculation of self-interest or self-promotion. The post is unpaid and is considered as a disadvantage by many who harbour greater ambitions.

The reason for our involvement might perhaps be because we believe in what we are doing. When we sit through the Executive meeting each week and discuss decisions that will affect the student body, paramount in our minds is doing our best for the students that elected us, and that we are there to represent them. At the end of the day we have to ask what the best way is to make such decisions. That must always be in a democratic forum, where it is by students, through students, and for students that decisions are made. Before 1968 the LSE SU had a full-time 'President' who would be annually appointed by the School. Let us pray that we never go back to such an arbitrary and undemocratic system. It took some



Baljit Mahal, committed to student issues (...)

Photo: Library

of the biggest student protests in the country at the time to secure our elected system. The LSE was literally shut down and all students banned from congregating and meeting within the Union. But, we won.

And, last year in a second great victory in our long history we secured representation on the Standing Committee (equivalent to the LSE SU Executive for the School) and the Academic Board (an influential body that blocked 'top-up' fees in 1992). All credit is due to the two previous General Secretaries, Martin Lewis and Teshar Fitzpatrick, for laying the foundations of this success.

We are now in a strong position. How-

ever, as is the case in any organisation of any description, moving forward takes committed people who are given support and encouragement in their roles. Only if this exists is it possible for the LSE SU to progress and use the forums it now has effectively. This year and last year the Executive has sometimes had differences within it. The strength of our Union is shown when we understand that no one is perfect – we all make mistakes. Sometimes it is better to forgive and forget than bear a grudge that makes things descend into destructive bickering and wrangling. We have to pull together and ensure we work for a common goal: the welfare of

LSE students.

This is the last week of term and we will all be looking forward to the holiday ahead. But before we leave let us remember a principle that many across the world have died for: that for the future generations after us we offer a better way of life than the one we inherited. At the LSE let all of us do what we can to ensure that we do leave behind something that was positive and constructive at LSE.

Much attention has focused on me and my intentions for next term. Let no one doubt that my one fundamental aim is to do

*...it is by students,
through students
and for students
that decisions are
made*

the job I already have to the best of my ability, without regard or reference to one I do not have. I do not think that there is anyone who would doubt that I have been putting in the hours the job demands and that I will continue to do so. It is a sad irony of the LSE SU that – as a senior officer recently said: "the more you do, the more criticism you get". There are few at the LSE who do not themselves hope for their own advancement and progress in future careers. In the LSE Foundation, we are more than aware that many former LSE students realise these hopes. Perhaps, we should congratulate those that left before us and hope that each of us can do as well as them.

Notice of Union meetings

Finance Committee

Tuesday 3.00 pm, Room E206

Executive Committee

Wednesday 1.00 pm, Room E195

Campaigns Committee

Wednesday 3.30 pm, Room E195

All Welcome

Last UGM of Term

This Thursday

1.00 pm

Old Theatre

Be there or be square

Parliamentary
Passion

The final session of the House of Commons which I shall be reporting on for this term was one to bring the reasonably minded and somewhat logical to their feet in a display of utter disgust. Amidst the characteristic boos and disrespectful chatter that are part of the reason why this country goes almost nowhere in terms of real political decisions, many MP's chose to show off their ignorance with some bland and completely idiotic rhetoric.

Mr Wareing (Labour) was a prime source of entertainment for those of us sitting in Strangers Gallery and watching this circus of elected clowns. He criticised British policy for being reactive rather than proactive, which I wholly agree with, since Britain only seems to act when enough pressure has been put upon it to do so. That, however, marked the end of any tangible sense that Mr. Wareing made or attempted to make. He then began drawing a vision of impending doom as he portrayed a world, of not a new order, but a new disorder, using the all-time British favourite of blaming it on the Americans.

As a resident of Great Britain, it never ceases to amaze me how easily the British can be persuaded to believe that the United States of America is the root of all evil. Wareing had the gall to say that Americans do not have the sagacity to be world leaders anymore. As an example in this pitiful attempt at fixing blame, he pointed out the recent budget crisis and said that Congress has its "hands on the tiller". Yes, Mr Wareing, America does have a system that restricts the President, jolly old Bill, from dictating all matters of government and thus becoming a dictator. Or would you rather than America establish a monarchy so that they can be as powerful as they are in this great country? Wareing then criticised the Balkan peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, stating that an imposed peace can never be a permanent peace. Well, what the hell has Britain done to help end this conflict? It has sat in the corner and sucked its thumb while whining for attention. Bosnia is half a world closer to Britain than it is to America. Yet, America chose to take the initiative in attempting to stop the horrific violence that Britain has virtually turned a blind eye to. He also stated that America was "quite prepared to ignore the genocide". Mr Wareing, come out of your dark closet and open your puppy dog eyes. America is about to send 20,000 troops, half of the NATO forces, to stop the genocide. What kind of incomprehensible nonsense are you trying to feed the public?! It is a typical attempt of a Member of Parliament to try to blame all problems on America. To Mr. Wareing and other ignorant MP's and Brits, in case you have forgotten, America has bailed Britain out of two world wars. In World War II, Churchill would have signed an armistice with Hitler if America had not come to the rescue in a European war - Britain would be speaking German right now!

The time for blaming Americans and others for Britain's own inadequacies must end now. It is time to realise that Britain must start taking responsibility for its own actions, and this had better happen soon before this already second class country slips into a third world status which is already precariously close.

The health of the nation

Simon Retallack interviews the Secretary of State for Health, The Right Honourable Steven Dorrell MP

Secretary of State, do you enjoy your job despite the hours and the stress?

It certainly imposes a degree of stress but it also brings with it plenty of rewards. I do have a huge hours' commitment, but that's true of any job that's worth doing and I think that this is one of the best jobs in the government, because it gives you the opportunity to address key issues of social policy.

What about collective responsibility - ever a frustration?

Collective responsibility has its moments. I actually feel that this is a government that I am completely at home in. We may sometimes disagree about the specific issues of policy, but the objectives are shared.

with GP fundholding, NHS Trusts and PFIs, you're turning it into a business, and so the bottom line will be profits instead of care and need?

No, I just don't think that can be made to stack up with the facts at all. I'm a business man by background, I've worked both in the health service and in a profit-making private business, so I know both worlds well, and they are completely different. What we are doing in the health service is using some of the methods of managing business in order to make the NHS more efficient, but we're doing it in the service of a different objective. When I was a business manager my objective was to make a profit for my shareholders, in the health service, my objective is to be able to treat more patients with the

moderate consumption of some alcohol products actually enhances health.

Do you accept the link between pesticide pollution and cancer?

Well, some pesticides are certainly linked to cancer, and where science establishes that link, of course, action needs to be taken to prevent it. Action that you take to regulate the environment must be based on science, not on assertion.

Do you recognise the value of alternative and complimentary medicine?

I'm a user myself of osteopathy, so I don't need to be persuaded of that. There are now GP fundholders who are offering osteopathy on the health service.

Many people say that the main problem with illegal drugs is that there is a huge market for them. Why do you think so many people buy them?

Illegal drugs should remain illegal, because of the very strong links to ill health, to abusive behaviour and to organised crime. I don't regard it as a recent problem though. Opium abuse was quite substantial in the London of the last century. The same goes for the stories about how this generation of students is the generation which has discovered drugs. I remember my generation was also the generation which was held to have discovered drugs.

You don't think that it has anything to do with the growing sense of alienation, or of people feeling that there is nothing in life for them?

I acknowledge that there are a number of different motivations, but I imagine that they were the same motivations for my generation of students as for previous generations before that. It's partly alienation, but more likely, in the majority of cases, devilment; experimentation. I think that anyone who looks at the world of the 1990s and concludes that there is nothing in it for them should just be grateful that they weren't born in any earlier decade.

Will the LSE move to Barts?

That's a question for the LSE management. It's one of an interesting range of options, but it has a long way to go before it becomes a firm proposal.

Why isn't your government doing more about human rights abuse? If we take Nigeria, can you tell me why you haven't imposed an oil embargo there?

One country imposing sanctions of a specific kind against another country doesn't work. What does work, in a limited sense, is the international community acting together. The international consensus was for a range of sanctions against Nigeria which we have taken.

So it's not profits first, democracy second?

No, I don't regard it as that at all. This was a series of sanctions which the international community agreed to take together.

Is it not the case that multinationals are too powerful to be faced up to by governments?

No. In fact I think it is totally the opposite. My motto is "Trade globally, live locally", which I think is a rather attractive slogan for the modern world.

In the next issue, Steven Dorrell will be commenting on the state of the Tory party.



Steven Dorrell in his big office

Photo: Mateo Paniker

Do you feel that you can make an impact in your job?

Yes, I do think that you can make a difference. Those who conclude that ministers don't make a difference either have never tried being ministers, or else weren't good ministers.

What do you think the NHS will look like in ten years time?

I think it will be a service that will have a greater emphasis on primary care services available from GPs and in the community. I think it will be a service that puts a greater emphasis on the use of its knowledge base, on research and development. We're putting more resources now into insuring that we understand which treatments are effective and then ensure that clinical practice reflects the latest evidence on what is effective. So it will be a research-based health service that delivers service locally where that's possible. And it will also be a service that has centres of excellence around the country that will be as they are now, but which will have developed their position in the treatment of specific conditions that will be among the best in the world.

So you're not privatising the NHS?

I'm very much opposed to the privatisation of the health service.

What do you say to the argument that by introducing the market into the NHS,

taxpayers' pounds that are available to me.

How do you justify rationing, then?

This argument about rationing is, quite frankly, a rather circular and not very illuminating argument. The fact of the matter is that if we didn't prioritise the use of resources, that would be the true scandal. But of course it's true that ever since the NHS was established, ministers who were responsible for it have set out to use resources in a way that accurately reflect their priorities.

If you are interested in saving money, why don't you give greater support to the elimination of the causes of ill-health, such as alcohol, tobacco, pollution, pesticides, junk food and poverty?

We do offer support to those organisations that promote healthy living. We have created a new flow of funds into sporting activities through the National Lottery that is bigger than it's ever had before. On tobacco, we are pursuing the policy that has been shown all over the world to be the most effective way of restraining tobacco consumption, which is to put up its price, as the Chancellor did again only yesterday. In terms of alcohol consumption, there isn't actually any evidence that links normal consumption with ill-health. Certainly alcohol in large quantities causes real health problems, but moderate consumption causes no health problems. The latest evidence suggests that

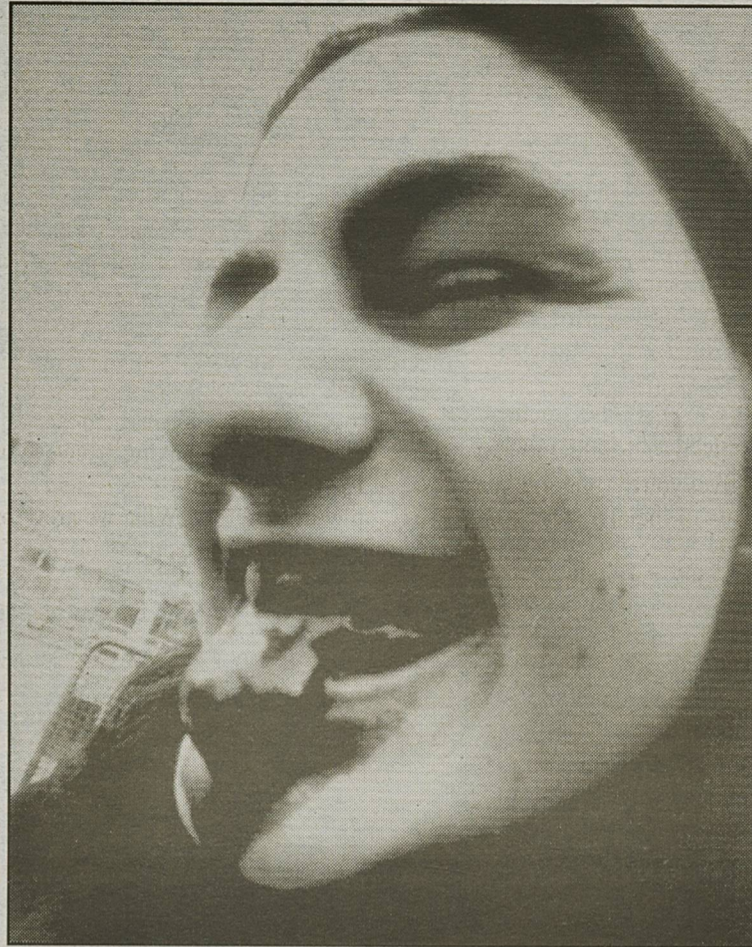
Mmmm...aaaagh..ohhhh..
Yes, of course, I'm talking about chocolate. That soft-hard-dark-light-smooth-endless-melt-in-your-mouth-'crumbliest'-'flakiest'...

Where was I? Oh yes. Chocolate, in which 100g of milk chocolate contains a rich

Am I just a hopeless emotional wreck ruled by my hormonal shifts and need to be loved, cherished and understood?!

source of copper, good source of calcium, protein, vitamin B, iron and selenium. As Vice-President of the newly founded 'Chocolate and Ice-Cream Society', I'm here to proclaim unashamedly the delights of the world of chocaholics and to prove moreover that chocolate is 'good' for you!

"How could this be?" I hear you cry excitedly. That chocolate lovers stand a 'bite' above the rest is concluded in Dr Virtue's book "Constant Craving". Years of research has brought her to the conclusion that people who crave chocolate are unlike



... or you can just eat it.

Photo: Stéphane

* dramatic, flamboyant streaks who have a great need to be the centre of attention.

43% with "Mmmm" and only 7% with no reaction.

shamefully to no avail here!) I asked innocent students whether, on eating their chocolate they sense a feeling of

- 1) "Oh, oh, oh"
- 2) "Mmmm" or
- 3) "Not much".

A measly 10% of 30 men questioned said "yes" to number one, compared to the 66.7% in the negative "not much" category. Almost in complete contrast were the women, almost all of whom expressed some element of delight: a dominant 50% giving a cry or at least sense of "oh" at their first bite, followed by

Many a moment has passed on my part in the company of women lost to an almost ecstatic state in describing the very foundation of the chocolate that they hold. The explicit details of the spine-tingling sensations they receive on consuming this particular object is a serious matter of debate.

Okay, maybe I'm just weird, but Ladies, you all have a sense of what I'm talking about, don't you? For instance almost half of the women in the "yes, we have cravings" group mentioned they had "severe" cravings without even being asked, most indeed were totally unabashed in exclaiming their exact feelings on the subject. Yet the matter was hardly touched upon with the lads - most seemed perfectly happy in admitting cravings but any attempt on my part to distinguish of what nature was met with blank stares.

"Is it the sort that sets you on an unstoppable mission to satisfy? Or is it perhaps the need to taste that soft, swirly, sensation in your mouth, that spine-tingling feeling down your back?" Questions such as these, ones that hinted at the nature of the male desire for, and reaction to chocolate, either resulted in a 'blushing to the root' at my offerings on the subject or more often, as they so aptly put it, 'Not much' on the matter.

Yet do I stand alone on this matter? Am I just a hopeless emotional wreck ruled by my hormonal shifts and need to be 'loved, cherished and understood'? I refuse to believe that, and use as evidence what image

Chocolate lovers say "oh! oh! oh!"

Faten Bizzari wallows in the sublime world of the chocaholic

those who crave anything else. Moreover, the possibility that one can "discern a person's emotional issues just by hearing what food they craved" is also present.

That chocolate is the Number One food craving in the USA, especially among women, has been concluded by Dr Virtue and others similarly. By conducting a survey of what was most important in women's lives she establishes that: 'high self-esteem' ranked first; followed by the 'love and emotional intimacy' of their partners. Through some curious means she concludes that chocoholism and all its feel good factors are 'a cry for love, intimacy, romance. The perfect anti-depressant for the love-sick', a replacement indeed for those women that may lack their basic needs.

Yes, well, urmmm, maybe. I can understand some reluctance to believe completely in this conclusion (statisticians where are you?!) and, on the men's part, to point your finger right at the ladies with the thought "Well, of course, this is women's stuff". But the lads can't get away that easily I'm afraid. In the era of 'new age' men, Dr Virtue indicates that many men crave emotional intimacy, romance and love too. Indeed some studies show that "today more men than ever before are expressing desires for commitment and marriage". What seems only too curious is that in many of these cases "those men are often chocaholics". Ahhh... how sweet! - it might even say something for the survey on 60 LSE students and their chocky eating habits in which a large 37.5% of all those that 'craved' chocolate were male. More on that later.

Clever people's conclusions, unfortunately, get worse. We have another fellow called Schuman who found that people who use chocolate to meditate or cover up depression, tension, or irritability tend to exhibit certain personality traits. These include people with:

* tendencies to fall in love more easily than others

* those that become devastated by romantic rejection.

Yes, okay, if you say so. Yet we're probably better off discussing how such research tends to the fact that many psychoactive food ingredients are identical to prescription and illegal drug ingredients. For instance, Phenylethylamine (all together now: 'fennel-ethyl-a-meen' or PEA) found in chocolate, triggers a feeling of euphoria and was so powerfully mood-altering that it used to be used in a prescribed medication known as MDMA. Made illegal in the early '80s it continues to form a primary ingredient under its modern name: Ecstasy.

Now, this is not an article trying to prove that Ecstasy is also 'good' for you. What I am trying to show is that chocolate does contain a melting pot of feel-good properties that can help explain its curious effect upon each of us. Dr Virtue presents this in a series of examples which include:

* High carbohydrate levels which "trigger-production of the brain's 'feel-good' chemical, Serotonin".

* Serotonin-like substance dipherylamine which "appears to promote feelings of calm and serenity".

* Stimulants: PEA, caffeine, and other "instant pick-me-ups".

* Pyrazine in odour of chocolate as "a chemical that triggers pleasure of brain".

* Even the "texture can be creamy if you need comfort, crunchy if you're angry over love life and the flavour can add to the appeal".

But does chocolate really do any of this, is the question? In answer we'll now take a look at the totally random, totally un-representative and, most likely, totally meaningless survey of LSE students undertaken on my part. (Apologies in advance to Professor Atkinson *et al* whose EST classes were

Furthermore, of all women questioned not one failed to have at least one bar per week, with 83% ranking in the bar per day category. Yet with the men, only one ate a bar per day (caught red-handed I might add gobbling M&Ms and a Snickers bar, yes Mr X, you know who you are!), with the majority of men (63%) in the two to five bar per week.

I will not come up with any world-changing-I'm-Adam-Smith-or-better-still-Keynes-theories but may humbly pronounce "some-

Chocobolism and all its feel good factors are 'a cry for love, intimacy, romance. The perfect anti-depressant for the love-sick', a replacement indeed for those women that may lack their basic needs. Hmmm!

thing's amiss". Could the fact that women and men seem to eat similar volumes yet react so very differently have any stand in real life? - Do a handful of LSE students represent, yes, The World!!!! Well, let's not get excited here but attempt to look at this, well, reasonably of course.

Women have an unusual ability to appreciate, shall we say, 'the art of chocolate'.

the chocolate in media has to offer. Take advertisements - the only male orientated one I can think of is Yorkie bars where a huge and hunky man messes around with a huge lorry and, looking very macho, pulls out his huge and chunky er... Yorkie bar, then eats it. And does he say anything? Well no, 'Not much' actually.

And then there are those targeted at both sexes with mottoes like 'have a break' and 'take it easy' which seems to support all those feel-good factors chocolate possesses. And then, of course, I think of all those targeted at women...

Firstly does a woman ever give up her last Rolo? I don't think so! And what about all those women sitting in bath tubs as the water overflows, ignoring phone calls, losing all sense of their surroundings as their first bite transports them onto this higher level that I feel so determined to share with you?! I think the female sex is trying to get a message across here. All those dark, luscious sexy voices used to describe the chocolate? What could they be about? Even the caramel bunny has a drop-dead-sexy voice!

Yet perhaps the epitome of all that women may feel for chocolate can be seen in the unforgettable milk tray ad. The mysterious man, clad in black, will go to any extent: swim oceans, cross uncharted lands, parachute off planes "all because the lady loves Milk Tray".

Is this an attempt to suggest the extent women themselves may go to for that one bite? Or an attempt yet again to emphasise to men the pleasure a woman receives from it? Is it as a hint of pleasures to come or worse still a replacement of that one pleasure he can't completely satisfy? (It better not be!) Is all this perhaps only an indication that chocolate is there to be enjoyed at all levels both selfishly alone and if possible with others? (Hint, hint, choc soc!!).

I'm not Einstein but I know this much "Only Smarties have the answer".

Kinder Surprise

Peter Udeshi

Every year in Austria my conscience tells me to buy a potted Christmas tree, which would spend the rest of the year on the terrace. However, every year I get told the tree would die as soon as it enters the living room.

So we wait, until finally on Christmas Eve we go and buy a tree, rejected by countless families before.

The tree has to be over three metres high to look respectable in our living room, so unless there is a Mercedes-combi taxi waiting around, we have to carry it home in a rather strange procession evoking images of retuning from a mediaeval hunt.

The afternoon is spent wrapping candy, attaching hooks to the ornaments and decorating the tree whilst watching the best MTV of the year, or some sickeningly sweet American sitcom 'Christmas Special' that isn't

funny when dubbed into German.

After a few days, empty wrappers are cunningly left hanging on the lower branches, courtesy of my four year old cousin, who can only reach so far. Care must be taken to ensure that the chocolate bottles filled with alcohol and the ones filled with fruit juice are in appropriate places.

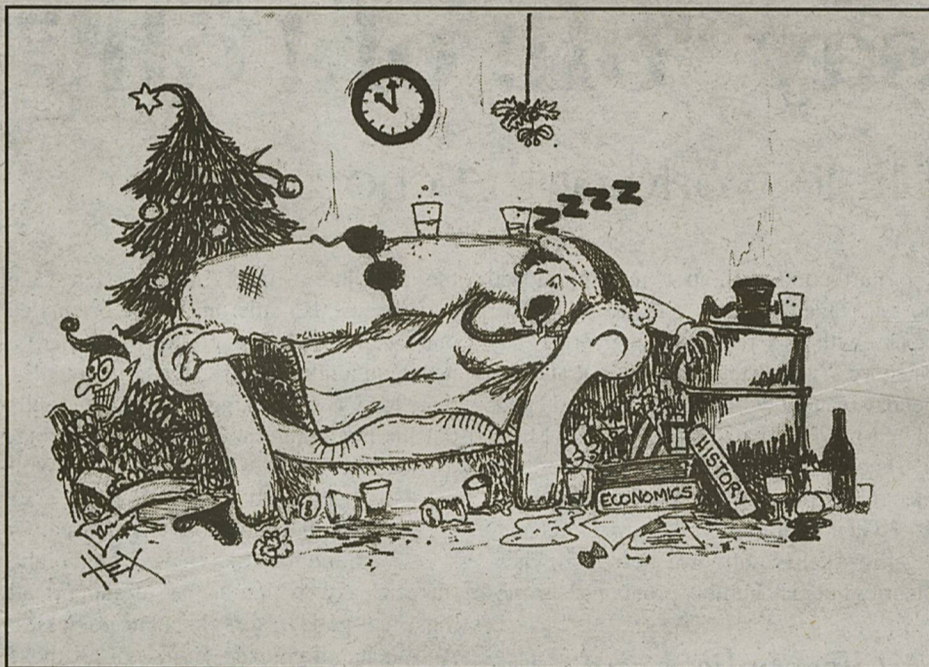
Before dinner, a prayer is said for the living and one for the dead. The family then gathers around the Christmas tree and sings carols. 'Silent Night', Austria's great contribution to the world, usually stretches my German to its limits, and a frighteningly bilingual rendition spouts forth. By the seventh hymn, the candles drip wax ferociously onto the presents below.

The presents are then distributed; brothers and sisters complaining that someone else got more than them, accusing their parents of favouritism. Gingerbread and cookies come home-made and are eagerly gobbled-up until we are so full that we can eat no more.



I think Daddy wants one of these too ...

A Slob's Christmas



David Whippe

Christmas in England is a time of great contradiction. It is an important Christian festival, yet takes place on a Pagan date; it is highly religious though incredibly commercialised; but worst of all, this time of great receiving is tarnished by the fact that you have to give too. What a bummer. My one abiding memory of Christmas in high school is that, no matter how many cards you had got for your mates, there was always one geeky bell-end who had got you one which you couldn't return, thus putting you on a guilt trip for the rest of the day. It's not that you would usually care, except for all that 'Season of Goodwill' malarchy which compels you to show at least some remorse.

Christmas isn't like a birthday. You can't sit back and watch the presents roll in, you actually have to think of other people, counting your presents to see if you have received more than you have given out or, God forbid, less than you have given. The end result

is inevitably a time of great stress for all. Witness how families always seem to have the biggest arguments on Christmas Day, inevitably over something crap like Trivial Pursuit, which you didn't want to play in the first place.

My solution is to look upon Christmas as just another holiday, see your mates back home, get beered, get fat on enough Turkey for life, and piss yourself as
y o u
laugh

at all
the lads
coming back
after the break
with the shit jump-
ers their Gran's knitted
them.

Cymru Crimble

Gwyn A Collier

Christmas is basically the same in Wales as in England, but with a few slight regional differences. On Christmas Eve my friend and I (two Welsh basses) go carol singing around the town, and if we're unlucky get invited into people's houses, which is very embarrassing indeed. Last year we earned £40 between us, which we then spent getting drunk on lager and vodka. Unfortunately,

I'm usually too pissed to get excited about

the local sheep, so we stagger home late into the night.

On Christmas day, I'm always hung over when we eat the nice turkey lunch. Following lunch (during which I have become pissed - again) I am harrassed by relatives and neighbours to play the piano, which is always interesting. No-one seems to notice the mistakes I make, as everyone else is inebriated too.

Jordanian Jollities

Lama Mansour

Living just up the road from where Christ was born, it's kind of surprising that not many people celebrate Christmas. That's because Jordan is predominantly a Muslim country. 20% of the population is Christian (Greek Orthodox), and they celebrate Christmas in the usual way, which normally involves a family reunion and special lunch on the 25th.

The festival in our country tends to be a religious one rather than a commercial one. Muslims respect their Christian friends' religion, greet them and send cards etc. The weather at this time of year is moderate, certainly not a white Christmas.

Christmas in Cape Town



Clinton Ray

Seeing as the ratio of females to males in Cape Town is 7:1, you can guess what I spend my time doing... "Girl chasing" as we call it. I'm not trying to make you poor guys envious or anything, but Christmas Day is spent by the ocean, jet-skiing, sun-bathing and snorkelling until sundown... At night we party in the heat of the summer until we drop, which is normally well into boxing day. Have a cold Christmas, friends!

Xmas is a bitch

Oscar the dog

I spend Christmas in Pontypool with my family and friends: Sam and Peppy. They're always ever so glad to see me, and we give each other a good lick on arrival. For Christmas I would ideally like to get a CD (Snoop Doggy-Dogg), a poster (some gorgeous bitch) and an Indian rug: all the things that I constantly see in the Quad, but can never lay my paws on. But these are only dreams. Instead of what I want, I always get a stocking filled with doggy-treats, and the leftovers of Christmas dinner. Last year I was feeling extra hungry, so I started eating Peppy's portion, and we got into a nasty scrap which, needless to say, I won. I now admit that this was a barking mad thing to do and my owner has said that I may not be able to go back to Pontypool this year unless I swear that I will be on my bestest behaviour.

Kilted Kristmas

McJames McCrabtree

Christmas Day is a very traditional time in Scotland, and the daily ritual is as follows. We rise at five, and go for a quick swim in Loch Ness. If the monster is about, so much the better. Then, before the festivities, it is necessary to don our kilts, battle through the blizzards, and tend to the sheep. Sheep do not wait just because of pagan festivals. Yet, the extreme cold of the wild icy north is not too arduous, as the entire population has flowing red hair and long red beards (even the women) for protection.

Breakfast is a hearty meal of cold porridge, garnished with lashings of cold porridge. If you are very lucky, there may be a fire, but mostly the small children generate warmth by running quickly around our small thatched hovel. Presents, being expensive, are generally kept to a minimum. And if you think Santa is getting a whole glass of scotch, then you can piss off.

After breakfast, it is traditional to climb the nearest mountain and indulge in a spot of haggis chasing. The wild hairy haggis is a wily beast, and many happy hours will be spent in the snow, trying to find him. However, there is always a danger in this: at

minus 20°C, the exposure provided by the kilt can be quite unwelcome. Shrinkages apart, as luck would have it, the Haggis is fatally impaired by having one leg shorter than the other. Consequently, he can only run round the mountain in a hopeless circle, and is unable to escape. This makes him easy to catch. Once you've got the little bugger, he should be stabbed with the nearest Claymore, covered in porridge, and devoured whilst a friend gives a reading of Burns's poetry. Christmas Dinner - you can't beat it.

Although Curling, Caber tossing and Shinty are both popular Christmas pursuits, in the evening we go down the pub with our friends Sean Connery, Billy Connolly, Rob Roy and Rod Stewart. It is essential, however, to go with some foreign friends, as otherwise the supply of McEwan's Lager may run short. In drinking, as in the World Cup, a Scotsman will rarely get past the first round. Having sponged enough to get suitably drunk, it is important to 1) find an Englishman; 2) beat him up; and 3) Sing "Flower of Scotland" in a raucous manner. Then, 4) Collapse. Then? Well, ROLL ON HOGMANAY!

Intergalactic Christmas

Mechu J
Samasnoga

Me and my brother Zquxply start Christmas off on Planet Zorg-11 by playing a game of Pling-Plong in which I attempt to plaster him in gooey green stuff and usually win. Then it's off to the Liquid Nitrogen purification showers. After a light lunch of purple gamoozles, we sit around the gaily decorated Christmas cucumber, which my Mummy Wummy imports from Earth every year. We decorate it with the remains of our pet Glippo, who died in an orbital moon-buggy accident a space month ago. If that isn't enough, I buy a couple of freshly smuggled LSE environmental geography students (they taste the best). Then, Daddy Gaddy places the presents inside the electromagnetic protection shield knowing full well that Zquxply will dive straight into it - he is such a bad Daddy Gaddy.

Having fried Zquxply, I get all his presents and we settle down for an evening of bungee-jumping in and out of black holes and other relaxing tongue twisters.

Holy Land Chanukah

Moshe Merdler

Although Israel is regarded by many to be the centre of Christianity, the number of people who celebrate Christmas is quite small. The reason for this is that the number of Christians in our society is roughly five percent. But we Jews have our own version of Christmas: Chanukah, the festival of light. During Chanukah we light coloured candles, sing songs and (as we successfully managed to copy from our Christian brothers) give each other Chanukah presents.

Fortunately, we don't have a Santa but we manage without him. In the eating department we have traditional doughnuts usually filled with jam. They are always a great treat, and this festival serves a wonderful excuse for a mass Israeli binge of this tasty dish.



Like the Serengeti National Park, but with more lights

Photo: Mateo Paniker

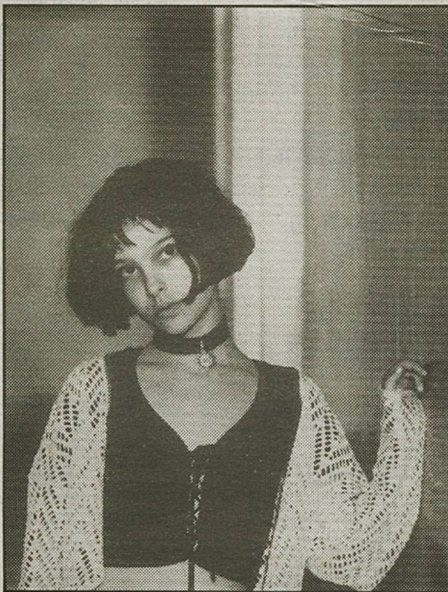
**"If you want to work for
The Beaver, tough."**

Confuscus III

The Beaver's top 5 films of 1995

Leon

Stylised, thinking-man's action movie with Gary Oldman as a drug-crazed NY narcotics cop hot on the trail of Matilda, a hip chew-you-up 12 year old street-wise girl, who witnesses the slaying of her entire family by Oldman and crew. Along for this roller-coaster of a ride is famous French star Jean Reno who plays Leon, an assassin-plant-carrying-simpleton, who befriends Matilda and disposes of assorted baddies with great originality and flair. However, with Matilda falling for the simple paternalistic charms of Leon the film is turned completely upside down. What can one possibly make of a relationship between a 12 year old street-wise girl and a sexually unaware assassin, I ask you?



Natalie Portman as Mathilde in Leon



Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman in The Shawshank Redemption

Photo: Library

Shawshank Redemption

Defying the usual appalling standard of Stephen King adaptations and prison movies alike, The Shawshank Redemption covers twenty odd years in the life of prisoner Andy Dufresne, convicted – wrongly? – of murdering his wife and her lover in a fit of jealousy. The always excellent Tim Robbins, playing Dufresne, and Morgan Freeman as Red, the lifer he befriends, both give exemplary performances, which more than make up for a little over-contrived plotting. At over two hours, it's a long film, but more than worth it for the surprising finale. It's a film which unflinchingly portrays the worst horrors of prison life but in such a way the end is ultimately uplifting. Sublime.

Shallow Grave

For those of you who have been in an isolation tank for the last year, Shallow Grave was the tale of three Edinburgh flatmates whose new lodger expires shortly after moving in, leaving a large suitcase full of cash (like you do) but unfortunately also a rather inconvenient corpse. Given the friends are quite keen on keeping the former (but not the latter), they decide to dispose of the body themselves (well, what would you do?) and so begins a chilling psychological thriller as the gruesome burial, and the ensuing aftermath, affect the three friends in different, but equally bloodcurdling, ways. Simply the classiest British film in ages.

The Usual Suspects

Film noir meets Tarantino and told in great style and panache with enough flashbacks to convince a group of junkies that their number was surely up. Five suspects, five different stories form a well crafted plot which will leave even the most clued-up cinema goer guessing right up until the very end as to who the mysterious Kaiser Solze is. Then again, for those of you who were unfortunate enough to have read Houghton Street Harry's recent disclosure, the plot's been blown. However, it would still be an excellent watch and most of you will have forgotten what he said by now anyway. A gripping masterpiece of unchallengeable status.

Clerks

Kevin Smith's \$27,000 epic is as funny as funny gets. The script is based on his job as a shop assistant in an out of town store in the States. Street hockey on the roof, conversations about the morality of the rebel alliance, gate-crashing funerals and abnoxious customers add to this masterfully scripted film.

The plot is nothing special: its about life but this observations on the monotony of our everyday lives are superb. No wonder that it was such a runaway success winning the International Critics prize at Cannes.

What is fantastic is that an imaginative film can be created so cheaply: an inspiration to us all.

Escape from Alcatraz - the sequel

Liz Bougerol examines first-degree murder

Murder in the First

Director: Marc Rocco

The premise of Marc Rocco's *Murder in the First* is a good one. Set in and about Alcatraz in the early forties, it is based on a true story of the prison's corruption and the inhumane treatment that went largely unnoticed and unspoken, smoothly concealed by the power-tripping wardens who spent too much of their lives inflicting torture in the name of truth, justice and the American way to retain their sanity.

Stealing five dollars to feed his ailing sister lands Henri (Kevin Bacon) in Alcatraz, where his stay is extended for trying to escape. Warden Glenn (Gary Oldman) recommends rehabilitation, ie solitary confinement. Although the maximum stay 'in the hole' is legally 19 days, Glenn is such a raving lunatic that in between beatings, administered by the warden himself, Henri stays cooped up in this five-foot high dungeon naked, with no heat, bed, toilet, sink, air, light or anyone else for over three years. Within minutes of getting out – and in front of 200 witnesses – Henri grabs a spoon and

goes for the jugular of the guy who finked on him about the escape to save his own skin while Henri was busy befriendng spiders.

Because everybody at the DA's office sees this as a cut and dry case of murder one that'll wind up in the gas chamber, rookie lawyer James Stamphill (Christian Slater) gets assigned to the defence. When James learns about Henri's whole dungeon ordeal, he takes the historical, one-man-against-the-system risk of putting Alcatraz on trial as the murderer for having deprived a man of his humanity. This, of course, shakes the foundations of the American legal and penal institutions to their very core. James is stubbornly torn between his determination to bring about justice and the need to understand Henri's choices. Their friendship develops as James realises there's more good in his client than in the entire legal system he calls home.

This movie has fine intentions, it really does. Especially interesting is the idea of the case being tried not in the courtroom, but in the media... hmm, sounds familiar... But something's amiss. Maybe we're talking miscast. Bacon is utterly believable as the de-socialised victim of the system. Regrettably, the film makers didn't want to focus on him – this is supposed to be Christian Slater's movie, which would have been fine

if this were a Slater role. Fresh out of law school, this guy is supposed to be just as broken by his own gradual disappointment in the legal system as Henri was by his little sojourn in the pit.

In the end, only the lavish production values – especially the brilliant cinematography – save this movie from surrendering wholeheartedly to its inherent 'movie of the

week'-ness. *Murder in the First* uses a very large club marked 'doppelganger' to whack us repeatedly over the head, desperately trying to make its we-are-all-the-same-inside theme fit into the non-existent relationship between James and Henri. The result is a film so excessive, so eager and so downright preachy, one yearns for the subtle idealistic morality of *Footloose*.



Kevin Bacon and Cristian Slater

Photo: Library

Bond is back... again?

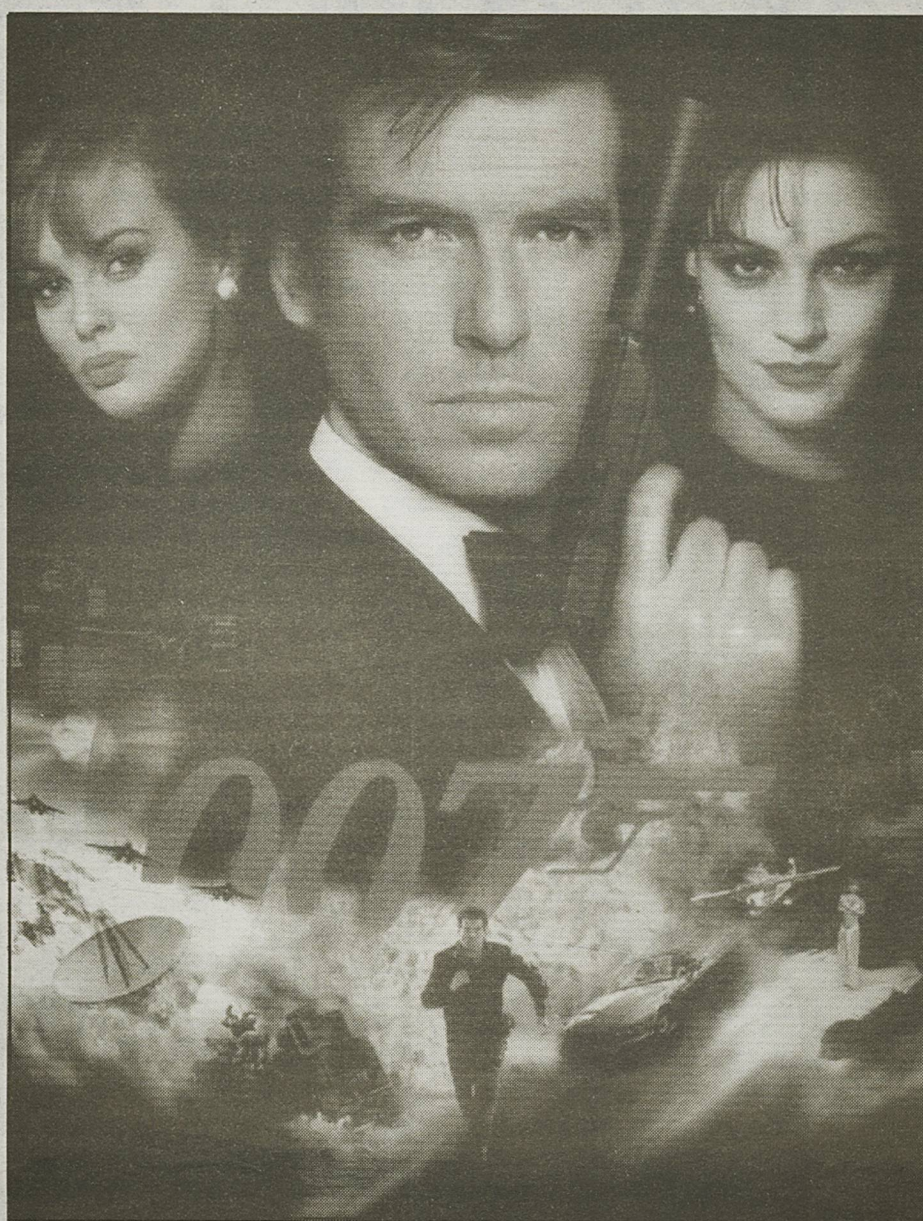
Our Arts writers are shaken but not stirred by Pierce Brosnan's 007

Now pay attention 007. The Cold War has ended, M thinks you're a "sexist, misogynist dinosaur" and you're facing major competition from megabuck American action films like 'True Lies'. Do you really think you have a place in modern society? Well, somebody obviously thinks so because after months of hype and celebrity interviews, the world's most high profile secret agent is back on our screens.

If you've ever seen a Bond movie then you've seen 'Goldeneye'. There's the standard facially disfigured, psychotic baddie with a penchant for dressing in black (as played by Sean Bean), a psychotic, killer baddie who can only reach orgasm through killing men with her thighs (one of those tips Dr Ruth never got round to mentioning) and of course there's our Jimmy (à la Pierce Brosnan) – suave, sophisticated and ready to shag anything within a 10 mile radius. The plot is typical boy's own adventure and involves Sean Bean wanting to destroy London while stealing lots of money, but there is a twist, in that Sean Bean was also a secret agent called 006 and a friend of Bond's and Bond blames himself for what he thought was Bean's death during a mission 9 years before.

As part of this return to traditional Bond antics, we see the return of the much lamented airbrush bimbo, aka Bond's main bird. As Natalya Simonova, Izabella Scorupco has the body, the foreign accent and the scream to be an atypical Bond girl. Unfortunately, she doesn't seem to have the acting ability, having obviously learnt her craft through watching the home shopping channel, but then you can't have everything. The producers have made one concession to feminists by making her a computer expert and thus the only person on Bond's side who can actually disable the Goldeneye of the title (a secret Russian space missile which can destroy anything with an electrical circuit). Unfortunately this is academic because if the weapon can be turned off by a chick with computer, then the audience will be denied an explosive, big-fight ending and after all, with a Bond movie that's really what you're paying to see.

Caroline Hooton



Is that a gun in your pocket, or are you just pleased to see me James?

The best thing about going to see the latest James Bond film is the anticipation. I'm not saying that the film is bad, it is a brilliant mixture of action and adventure that is synonymous to the Bond label. However, it is very similar to all the other Bond films as it includes the usual plot of evil Russians attempting to destroy the world and steal all the money. James saves the beautiful damsel in distress and thwarts the

psycho bitch who gets off on killing people, need I say more?

The film itself is formulaic but entertaining. Car chase is replaced by a tank chase which is brilliant and the obligatory Q scene is funnier than ever. Robbie Coltrane plays a Russian who is fat and sounds Scottish. He would have been good but unfortunately he really only has a bit part.

The one thing that is different is that M

is a woman – shock, horror! But don't be fooled into thinking that this film has a nineties twist. James is still irresistible to every woman he meets. The fact that Natalya has just nearly been blown up and hasn't washed or slept for days does not seem to stop her from engaging in a passionate sesh with James on a railway track. Bond is, as always, constantly up for it, a walking gland you might say. I don't feel up to much if I've got a bit of a headache, James on the other hand survives finding out his dead best friend is alive and has betrayed him, an attack by a sex-crazed psycho woman, saving the world from its imminent peril and clinging by one hand from a very high thing and jumping out of a helicopter. After all this he is still up for a bit of hanky panky in the middle of a field. Surely I'm not alone when I find this hard to believe, wouldn't even James Bond want to have a shower first?

Oh well, no nineties twist then, no woman can resist him, not even M. I think that it's a shame but the men probably wouldn't. It's still a lot of fun and a good escapist film. After all, nobody does it better...

Nicola Hobday

Let me just start by saying that Goldeneye is a cracking film and has no peer amongst the last years releases. Forget Shallow Grave and Leon, Bond is back and Bond is great. Who needs substance and plot when you've got fit birds, one liners and a licence to kill?

As other reviews have already concentrated on things like storyline, it is probably best for me to stick to the points that really matter in a Bond film. Yes, Isabella Scorupco is a stunner, while Famke Janssen is the best bird baddie for a long time, sighing orgasmically every time she kills a man between her thighs. This is the sort of film that makes you want to be in Her Majesty's Secret Service, in fact, stuff stockbroking, I'm going to be a spy, and I don't care who knows about it. My Walther PPK is already in the post, courtesy of Stella Rimington.

David Whippe

In the bleak film industry

Stephen Lloyd looks in on the world of the luvvy

In the Bleak Midwinter
Director: Kenneth Branagh

Kenneth Branagh's latest masterpiece is his most thespian yet. It follows the attempt of an out-of-work actor to restore his self-confidence by putting on a small production of Hamlet in a small town named Hope. The actors he attracts are all neurotic – but good. He has no commercial sense whatsoever but amazingly the play comes together. The film was entertaining but I couldn't help feeling that there were too many in-jokes. If you are into theatre then you will probably love this film, otherwise you probably won't find it funny.

Interestingly each of the characters that Branagh has created can relate to Hamlet's characters, and so all need the production in one way or another, proving that unrequited

love, neglected children and fear of failure are still present today as they were six hundred years ago.

There are entertaining cameos from Joan Collins as an agent and Jennifer Saunders as a Hollywood producer which makes the film too much like a Ben Elton comedy at times.

Nevertheless it was funny and well written – perhaps not what you would expect from 'Much Ado' Ken but solid still the same and apart from the dangerously strong sense of déjà-vu I enjoyed the film.

The good thing was that it was convincing – few films rarely are these days. Branagh has managed to stereotype the thousands of actors who are talented but depressingly never quite make it. He claims that it isn't based on him but I can't help feeling that these characters are too realistic to be entirely fictional.



Nine luvvies and a soap star

The *Beaver* presents the S.H.I.T Awards for 1995

If you don't normally pay much attention to the music pages then obviously now is the time to start. Between January the 1st and now there have been a good few thousand releases ranging from the superb (sic) Beatles to The Hackney Downs Primary schools exquisite rendition of Silent Night. It is now the time of year to inform you which ones you should have embraced with arms and legs open and which should be incinerated for fear of audio lergy.

I'd like to promise an absence of Blur and Oasis but I wouldn't be doing my job properly if I didn't include them somewhere. I think I could find room for Blur in the prestigious 'Blue Peter' category on the strength of their uncanny ability to produce number one singles out of cardboard and common human excrement. Pulp, I'm hoping, will qualify for the ever popular 'Lord Lucan' award as the trend for bands with androgenous frontmen who can't actually sing dies and disappears without trace. They are tipped to follow such legends as Bros, New Kids On The Block and Living In A Box. I can't remember who said they were destined for bigger and better things, but although the bargain bucket at Woolworths is bigger, it's debat-

able if it's better. I give them no more than two years.

Another of the, ahem, success stories of '95 are those cheeky Oxford lads Supergrass. Trying to find an award for them went beyond difficult and wobbled on the impossible.



They weren't even worthy of a good old fashioned slagging. There's no skill and no satisfaction in describing something that is so obviously shit, as shit. It doesn't matter how many clever analogies and anecdotes you produce they're just not worth the thinking time. So, I've decided, that they along with Menswear, Apache Indian, Björk, Method Man, Love City

The hardest part is attempting to select the ten worst songs of the year. How can you define bad? My pissed rendition of the self-penned 'Southampton' was, for anyone unfortunate enough to witness it, clearly the worst song of the year and quite possibly of all time. But, due to the fact that only approximately five people were present at the time, it cannot obviously be a candidate. Similarly 'All I Ask Of Myself Is That I Hold Together' by Neds Atomic Dustbin was far too dismal to even trick die hard fans like myself into buying it, thus, nobody got to hear it. Due to the nature of record companies, the music press and student papers in general there are still well over 65,000 (aprx) exceedingly wank singles still kicking about *The Beaver* office any of which could be a clear contender. So, in a feeble attempt to adopt a different angle on this, I ploughed through the charts. Still no joy. It has become an all too fa-

mil-i ar story that to even get beyond number 30 in the charts the song has to be as aurally stimulating as listening to a Tory Party conference whilst on Betablockers.

Besides this, the granny factor and the ever-large quantity of teenage girls spending their money on music instead of fags, has meant that a list containing only Take That and Robson and Jerome carries as little a point as it does interest. For these reasons the compilation now consists of the songs that really piss me off. The over hyped and the overplayed with just a hint of genuine, hardcore cack thrown in. The same songs that infect my head every time I walk into the Tuns, Sainsbury's, Knights snooker hall and just about every pub in London full of Germans flocked round the jukebox shouting at each other "Hey guys, English music is like so cool ja? I feel like shaving my blonde moustache off and eating Yorkshire pudding, ja?" Crazy. In conclusion it became pretty damn obvious which was to occupy number 1. If there was ever a song that I hated so much as this, it has to be Common People. Everywhere I went all I could hear was fucking Jarvis Cocker. The fact that his name is an anagram of 'Cock, Revise & ja' merely underlines all my previous points (with one 'E' too many, which is a point unto itself). If I hear one more LSE

student say "The lyrics are so good. They really describe life at the LSE" I'm going to have to give them a slap. It doesn't describe life at the LSE. The story of a rich girl pretending to be poor and wanting to hang around with poor people is crap. If it including a line about Americans travelling thousands of

Groove, Plastikman, Marion and Whigfield are to be invited to the Quad in the new year for a bare knuckle fight to the death. The last one with a pulse wins my collection of the losers records and a chance to challenge me and my Kookabura cricket bat for a pint. I think that's fair.

Now, the hardest part about attempting to select ten singles for each of the following positions in the next category, is not trying to remember what the hell came out this year although 1995 is hardly going to be remembered in pop history as a fantastic year.



And the winners areBlack Grape

Photo: Radioactive

TOP TEN SHIT SONGS

1. COMMON PEOPLE - PULP
2. WIBBLY BOOM BOOM - OUTHERE BROTHERS
3. MANSIZE ROOSTER - SUPERGRASS
4. SOUTHAMPTON - ELECTRIC ROGERS
5. MAKE WAY FOR THE INDIAN - APACHE INDIAN
6. WHAT'S THE TUNE DOO DOO DOO - DOROTHY
7. DAYDREAMER - MENSWEAR
8. THE UNIVERSAL - BLUR
9. KING FOR A DAY - FAITH NO MORE
10. SCATMANS WORLD - SCATMAN

TOP TEN SINGLES

1. THE REVEREND BLACK GRAPE - BLACK GRAPE
2. MELLOW DOUBT - TEENAGE FANCLUB
3. WHATEVER - OASIS
4. FOR ALL THE COWS - THE FOO FIGHTERS
5. FINE TIME - CAST
6. HIGH AND DRY - RADIOHEAD
7. CHRISTINE KEELER - SENSELESS THINGS
8. ORBVS TERRARVM - THE ORB
9. SOME MIGHT SAY - OASIS
10. TURN ON, TUNE IN, COP OUT - FREAK POWER

Mr Rogers delivers his round up of the best, the worst and the goddamn mediocre songs and albums of the year

miles to a foreign country just to meet more Americans and never talk to anyone else, then it might be appropriate. I hate it, I hate it, I hate it.

Minor awards go to the Boo Radleys and to Suede. The Boo Radleys receive an award for tricking me into thinking they were brilliant for a couple of years and then producing one of the most annoying albums of the year. I even forced myself to further listens in the vain hope that my first reaction would be wrong. It wasn't. Paradoxically (good word for your next economics essay there) they also earn the prize of the best gig of '95 at Reading. Unlucky although The Prodigy at Glastonbury ran them close. The converse award goes to Suede. Widely regarded as the biggest sack of bollocks to come out of England for years Suede hit disaster when the talented one left to form a partnership known as McAlmont & Butler. This was the worst thing to happen to Suede because although Brett Anderson still has a Yokel's vocals, somehow they became good. When I say good, I don't mean anything special but I listened to the album teeth and buttocks clenched in anticipation of an orifice overload and I actually thought to myself "Hmmm....this isn't Suede it's got a half reasonable amount

of thought behind it". Shame Brett still sings though.

The question on everyone's lips now that the National Lottery has become boring, is "What is the best song this year?" What a good question that is too.

Slightly easier to grade this one. Oasis deserve some

be no better song. Slagging the Pope off for giving sanctuary to Nazis just gave it that vital edge. Bad luck Teenage Fanclub. If you're looking for a gentle, emotion-packed melody, then this is your baby. A better song in this style has not been heard for a long time. I love it. Elsewhere, The Foo Fighters prove there was more to Nirvana than Kurt, The Senseless Things pay their respects to Christine Keeler with one of those songs that grab you immediately, Oasis piss everyone off by not putting "Whatever" on the album and Cast enter the arena with "Fine Time".

Possibly the most important and arguably the most commercial category is that of 'Best Album'. The top ten national album charts invariably have at least one good album unlike the singles charts. The victor here was relatively straightforward.

Way back around the turn of the decade an album called "Catholic Education" was released.

credit for making the point that a song doesn't have to be shite to be commercial but

unfortunately the German factor has meant that I've heard 'Live Forever' and 'Roll With It' twice a day since their release and my threshold was shattered months ago.

The big point of contention is who to install as number 1. Since I began writing the top spot has swapped four times between

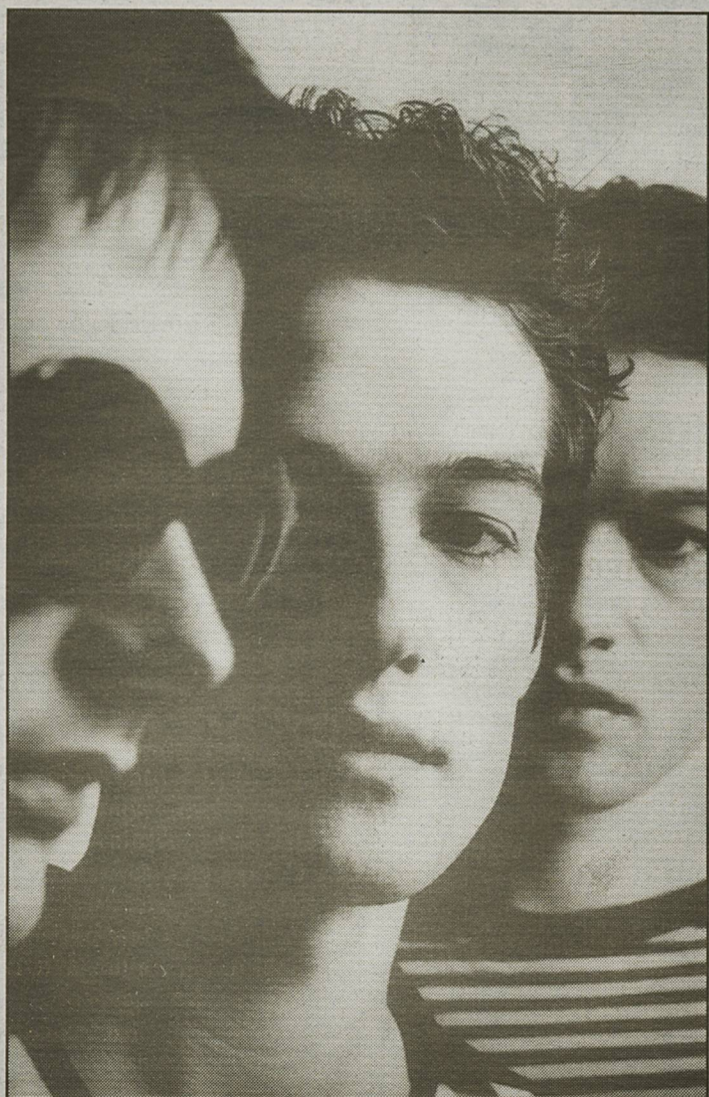
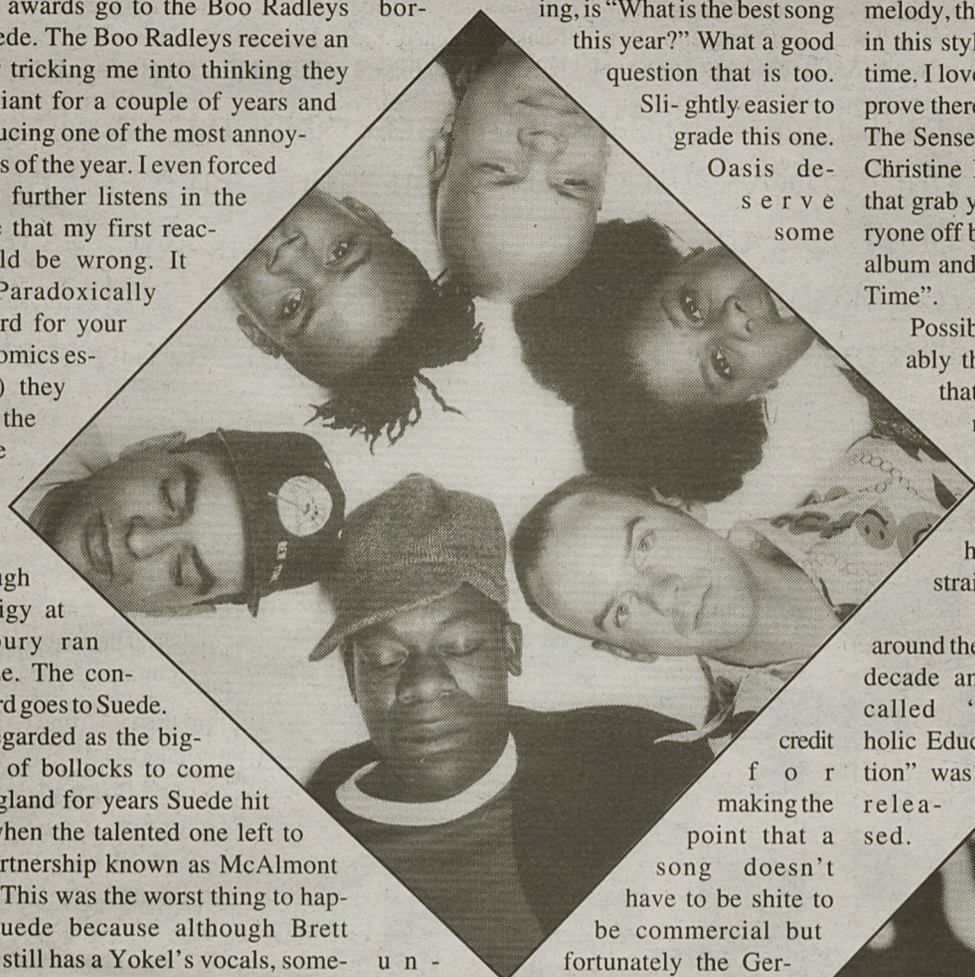
"The Reverend Black Grape" by Black Grape and "Mellow Doubt" by Teenage Fanclub. The problem lies with another song by TFC called "Verisimilitude". It's even better than "Mellow Doubt". Where's the problem? The problem is that they haven't yet released "Verisimilitude" thus disqualifying it. In the end "The Reverend Black Grape" just scrapes it by 114 points to 113. The Happy Mondays live on. There is no other way to describe it but brilliant. For happy, dancey original music there can

Although it was met with relative critical acclaim it never quite got the recognition it deserved. This was followed by "Bandwagonesque" and Teenage Fanclub were propelled into the spotlight. It was a mixture of raw genius and overcooked white noise. Still the strength of the end tracks made it one of the albums of the year. Their next release in late '93, "Thirteen", was poorly treated by the music press for the simple crime of being good. They had made the mistake of a first track plagiarism that is now the fashion. It wasn't then. They had clearly turned off the critics before they had started. Shame. If they had continued listening they would have noticed that some tracks were wholly original, full of thought and emotion, and towards the end they cleverly dabbled into the realms of self-plagiarism with the result being one of the finest finales to an album ever. This year they went one stage further. Besides repeating past mistakes with a weak opening, "Grand Prix" recovered instantly to become the most complete album since "Dream Of 100 Nations" in 1993 and "Nevermind" before that. It's pure brilliance in its simplest form. No tricky chord changes that sound crap, no showing off, no fill-in lyrics, no fill-in tracks, just soft melodic rock at it's best. It should be in everyone's collection. Listening to it you can under-

stand his point in almost every line. It's not that you feel sympathetic for him, he doesn't want that. You just know what his story is and nod agreeing to yourself at regular intervals. If their pattern continues, the next album should go on sale for £100 and I'd

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1. GRAND PRIX - TEENAGE FANCLUB
2. THE BENDS - RADIOHEAD
3. WHATS THE STORY(MORNING GLORY)? - OASIS
4. SLEEPY EYED - BUFFALO TOM
5. SACRED SPIRIT - VARIOUS
6. DRUGSTORE - DRUGSTORE
7. SIXTEEN STONE - BUSH
8. DUBSTAR - DISGRACEFUL
9. TINDERSTICKS - TINDERSTICKS
10. TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS - SENSELESS THINGS



Close but no banana - The Flamingoes

still buy it.

There were more than a few unlucky groups that missed out on the prestigious top ten. These include Sleeper, The Foo Fighters, The Flamingoes and Mojave 3, who I'm sure are hoping for another stab next year. Radiohead go from strength to strength with "The Bends", a bloody brilliant album. Bush have been unlucky with UK success but "Sixteen Stone" made it in America and should have made it here. "Sacred Spirit" was bongtastic, so to speak. All profits from the sales go to Native American Indians so it's a good cause too. I'm hoping for a follow-up very soon, quality ambience is hard to find. The recent release by Dubstar hasn't met with anything like the success it deserves despite having posters of a zip-up fanny all over the freshers fair.

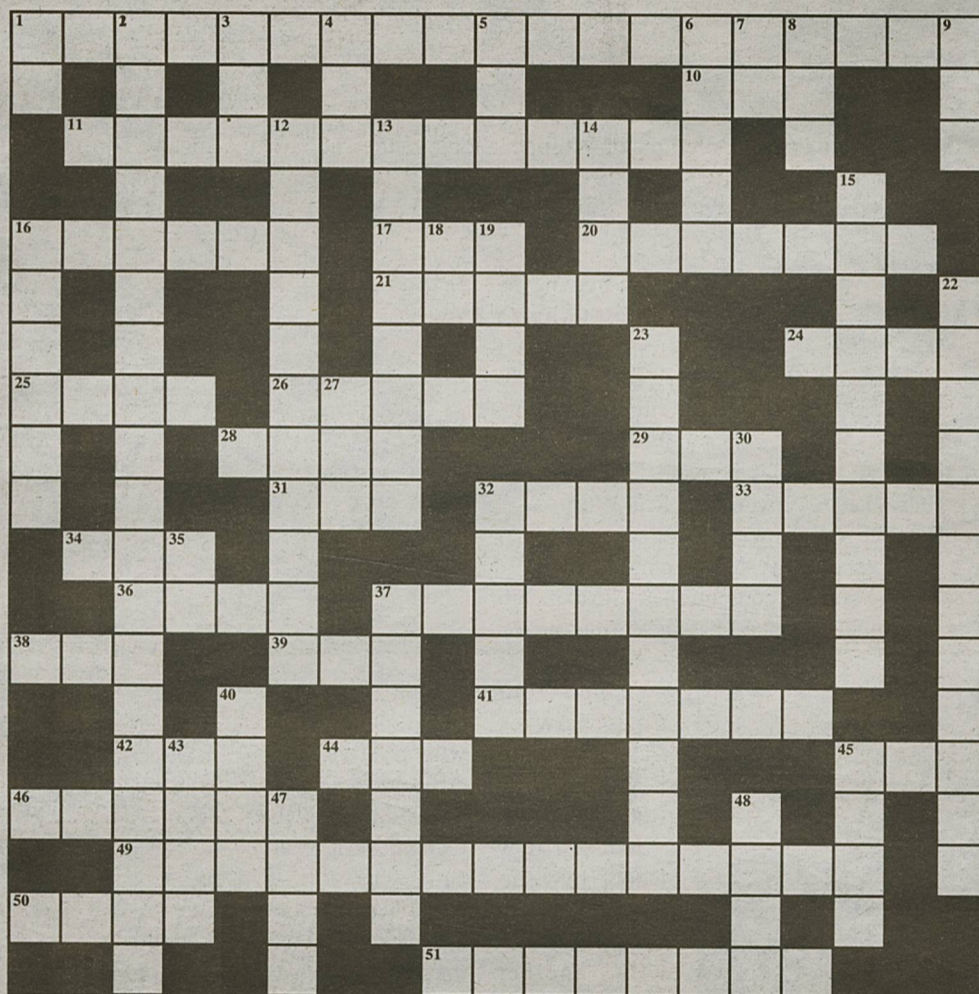
That, as they say, concludes 1995 and my last issue of the year. I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year, except for the c**t who nicked my Whale CD from my drawer, in which case I wish them a broken back as my present to them when I find out the bastard who did it.

Campus Christmas Crossword Competition

Here's the Christmas present you've all been waiting for. The Campus competition, and it's a cracker, just like the First Prize. A romantic candlelit dinner/date with our sensational new Executive Editor Nicola Hobday. Take a look at the photo, boys. Phwoooar, you won't have any pr-HOB-blems or a CROSS-WORD to say about this EDIT-ion, though I'm not giving any CLUES as to what she likes in her *BEAVER*. For the girls, you've got our Managing Editor James MacAonghus, though the scanner exploded when we put his photo in. He must be too hot. Welcome to the challenge.

ACROSS

- 1. Person to whom every Beaver complaint letter is addressed (8,6,5)
- 10. Slippery long thing (3)
- 11. New Bond star, looks like the Campus Editor (6,7)
- 16. Large sign, lost by Baljit (6)
- 17. Ton (anagram)? (3)
- 20. Small country house, happens in the East Building Toilets (7)
- 21. Inebriated (5)
- 24. Penis, or useful implement (4)
- 25. Armed forces position, describes odour (4)
- 26. Fish & (5)
- 28. Not rich (4)
- 29. Don't stand (3)
- 31. Wise bird (of the flight variety) (3)
- 32. They're for smoking, not shagging (4)
- 33. What you could win if you finish this crossword (5)
- 34. Festive jovial mood, homo sexual, Scouse (3)
- 36. Not early, a girl's in trouble if she is this (4)
- 37. Male cow excrement, Baljit's nickname (4,4)
- 38. Bottom (3)
- 39.the day, regret (3)
- 41. Place where skinny revolutionaries organise rent strikes - High (7)
- 42. Unified European Currency (3)
- 44. Beer (3)
- 45. Nickname for pubes, animal's pelt (3)
- 46. Old students, describes smell of 51 across (6)
- 49. You need this for LSE electoral success - ask 8 down (6,5,4)
- 50. Arabic for woman (4)
- 51. Surname of Lib-Dem who made Ron Voce appear attractive on University Challenge (8)



Name:

Address:

DOWN

- 1. Santa says this three times (2)
- 2. Takes place every Thursday at 1pm (5,7,7)
- 3. Opposite of 'him' (3)
- 4. Single (3)
- 5. Double 4 down (3)
- 6. Rule or belief (5)
- 7. Opposite of she (2)
- 8. Iman, has electoral pact with 37 across - see also 37 down (3)
- 9. Thug - describes 1 across (3)
- 12. Smears Haagen-Dazs on 22 down, AU president (5,6)
- 13. Partner of 11 across, went on Blind Date (4,4)
- 14. Christian name of LGB member who is "physically threatened" by paper (4)
- 15. 14 down campaigned for the creation of this position (1,1,1,7)
- 16. AU annual sports event where rugby boys wank on each other (6)
- 18. Either (2)
- 19. The Three (4)
- 22. Nickname of Scottish sabbatical (see 12 down) (6,6)
- 23. Avoid responsibility, what everyone did over 16 across (4,3,4)
- 27. Indian, sorry native American, greeting (3)
- 30. "Down '.....'", where Tom Smith once worked (1,3)
- 32. Suck spunk from number two orifice (5)
- 35. Upper class for yes (2)
- 37. Derogatory phrase, other word for helmet (4,3)
- 40. Shit (4)
- 43. Cruder word for muff (the only way I can get this past the censors) (4)
- 45. What birds do when Scouse approaches, run away (4)
- 47. Ireland (4)
- 48. team, nickname for LSE First XI football (4)



Horizontal semi-abstract cubist representation of a pineapple

Photo: Joy

All entries in to the *Beaver* office in Room C023 by the end of the week

The secret diary of a Welfare Officer aged 22 and one month

Monday 9am

My god I am so handsome. This morning I woke up and went straight to the mirror – my eyes sparkled!

Every day this week I am going to concentrate on a different feature and learn to appreciate it as others must. I got dressed, the feeling of a new jumper just out of the packet gives me the edge every day.

11am

I arrived at college today to find posters persecuting me, 'Fight homophobia in the welfare office'. That poof Deardon is persecuting me just because he can't pull birds – the reason he turned gay in the first place. I went along to his meeting, it was a shit turnout. If they wanted to get a big turnout they should have put my name and a photograph on the posters. Anyway to help them out I took along a smattering of my many friends that trebled the audience. I defeated the persecution just as the Holy book predicted I would.

Tuesday 9.30am

I leapt out of bed and kissed my life size photograph of Imran Khan (we have so much in common). The feature I am concentrating on today is my nice hair, it glistens and shines like a newly mined diamond.

12pm

I love my job, 'Education and Welfare'. I educate everyone who sees me that their welfare is improved by being in my presence. I found, for the 15th week running I might add, loads of bits of papers on

my desk – I threw them away, they probably weren't important anyway.

10.30pm

I read *The Beaver* tonight; no wonder it has gotten into such financial difficulties, not one photograph of me! Instead

turned up ten minutes before the end. I wish some fucker would tell me what they are for. Every week they (lots of ugly people) sit around and talk about 'the union' (whatever that is). Actually Katrin's not bad - but hey she's Baljits girl. I mean

Thursday 9am

Today's feature was my marvellous dress sense, actually on that subject I can leave my 'national costume' waistcoat at home today as there is no UGM today.

9.30am

As president of the Varsity International Lezza Extermination Protection Union From Fags or VILE PUFF (as we are known), I recieved a commendation for my services to homphobia. This is fantastic - they must have heard about my one man crusade against LSE benders. There will never be an LGB officer on the executive! Hurrah!

12pm

I was supposed to meet all the students for a march today. I have no idea what it was for but I tell you – if they want a decent turnout they should have an Omer Soomro appreciation march. I didn't really want to go and even gave my best excuse 'I'm going for a shit' but still they waited. Mind you - I did manage to kiss 60 girls before leaving.

8pm

Hizb-ut-Tahrir were at the LSE again today – good line on gays but all the rest is shit.

Friday

I have really good legs...actually so does Paul Bates.....no, fight it, deny it. I once nearly gave myself away in a UGM and called him by the pet name I have for him in my fantasy 'Little red riding hood'.

Oh yes he would look good....but no I can't let the truth be told.



They all love me, yes they do

Photo: Stephane Sireau

they insist on printing pictures of Whippe (the man without a golden gun) and Cooper (who is so ugly they have to put a box over his head).

Wednesday 8am

You know, today I discovered I have a beautiful smile. I watched Zig and Zag sing " 'dem girls, 'dem girls...they all love me"; I joined in.

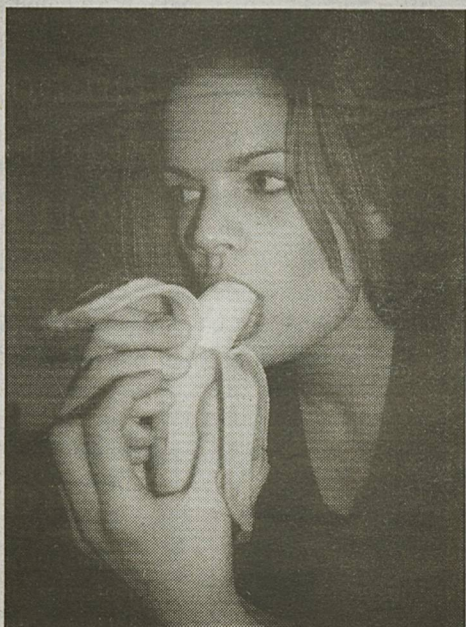
6pm

Today we had an Executive meeting, I

look at the sabbaticals – Kate, I'm told, was elected because she is pretty!!!!!! Claire, although I have technically been in her blue plastic pants, is stupid and talks about numbers a lot (isn't that a new drug), Nick is the only person I know who developed a face around an obsession (FA Cup).

Anyway things started looking up when I was asked to go to a 'Campaigns Committee'. Now this is something I'm good at but it turned out that it was just about campaigning for women (I'll do that on my own).

Quote of the Week



"It's been on the floor,
I can't put it in my
mouth now."
Kate Hampton.

Blind Date debutante

Surprise, surprise, sober Serra suportingly cites Cilla's simply super show

This week we bring you another Campus world exclusive. On the ball, as ever, we are the first paper in the land to be able to reveal that an LSE student has appeared on the Christmas edition of Blind Date to be screened on December 23. Despite fierce competition from the inept *Beaver* news editors, we can reveal the identity of the student and, from an interview with her, bring you the following article.

The name's Serra, Barbara Serra, otherwise known as Bond Girl, or alternatively, President of High Holborn. The show, filmed this summer, was, according to Barbara, a good crack, but let's start at the beginning. The auditions for Blind Date were held in two sessions, and Barbara, believing in safety in numbers, went with long time friend Martin Lewis (ex General Secretary). Unfortunately for him, he found that the same qualities which had propelled him to his sabbatical post – getting the competition disqualified – were not appreciated by LWT, and he failed to pass the interview stage through an utter lack of charm and charisma. "Our Barbara", however passed both the

first ten minute interview and the second longer one with flying colours.

On to the show, which went smoothly, despite nearly chundering beforehand. Apparently, selection is made much easier when you've got some trustworthy old lady in the front row telling you who to pick. We can't tell you who it was, or where they went, however, as LWT would not be amused. I can tell you though, that it was exotic and foreign, and a perfect setting for plenty of sun, surf and sex, except there was none of the sex bit. Poor bloke. They're still friends though and he was introduced to the delights of The Tuns some Fridays ago. (Maybe she didn't like him that much after all).

Unfortunately, Barbara has not seen the final cut of the show and will be out of the country at the time of showing. As a personal plea to every *Beaver* reader out there, she has requested as many video owners as possible to record it for her and drop their copies into High Holborn reception. Oh, and she says it's not staged, although the pickees have an hour to think of their answers.

Scouse's quote of the week

"If Garth and his mate want a fight then me and Howie will lamp them in a big way."

Poetry Corner

Esther, Esther I don't mean to pester
But without you I would truly fester
I don't want to be a child molester
All I want to do is taster
Your bed's suspension

I'd take you out in my beige fiesta
Together we'd share a long siesta
You'd be the Queen, and I'd be the jester
Go on, you know you love it

Anon.

Seconds Steal Show in Sibson Spectacular

Brendan McGraw

It was not to prove a day for giant-killing at Sibson Lane, as the mighty Seconds demolished another barrier on their way to cup success. The day got off to an uplifting start with Reverend William Hague conducting a team prayer session at Holborn Station. It was comforting to see a full squad praying for Raj's weight loss.

The game began with the fluency for which LSE are famed. Even Raj Parandhi displayed some skill on the right-wing, although rumour has it that the defender collapsed in a heap of boredom after reading one of his ever so amusing *Beaver* articles, in which he usually chronicles the reasons why he has failed to pull anything that hasn't looked like Yoda. After fifteen minutes LSE had opened the scoring through Mads Svendsen. Typically, the Danish striker brought home the bacon, scoring his first LSE

hat-trick, before going off to star in a porn flick alongside girls with bunches carrying pitchers of wine and comically large sausages.

The teams went in at half-time with LSE leading 2-0. As usual, McGraw (Leader of men), was not satisfied. He lambasted his troops with his usual incomprehensible Braveheart gibberish, instructing them to step up the pace in the second-half. Sure enough, when the final whistle was blown it was 5-0. The other scorers were Jan Petersen and Tom "puppy fat taffa" Grace, although a special mention should be attributed to the multi-talented Simon 'the cat' Watson. The fiery redhead Hague was not amongst the scorers. He is yet to get off the mark. All that was left to be said was from the IC captain: "You're ten times better than your Thirds, what with their obese keeper snogging his bird at half-time, and their silver-haired right-winger, who has obviously never pulled". McGraw stared quizzically and profoundly across the field of glory and replied "I know".

Ball-bouncing babes batter brainy bitches

Francesca Malaree

The women's football team, under the command of Norsewoman Mia the Invincible made the journey to SE23 to take on UMDS-that is Guy's Hospital, whose site is soon to be taken over by LSE, no doubt. Once again we started off with nine players and had to recruit Yu Ling, who had only come along to watch, to play in midfield as well as getting Priyanka out of bed on a Sunday to come on at half-time.

The match started off as a close-run thing, when some fast and skilful play by their captain caused confusion on the right wing and we had to defend about ten corners (or so it seemed) and if it weren't for the firm grip of Su Lin, who apparently had a magnet-like attraction for the ball, LSE would have been down 2-0. This, however shook the LSE out of their Sunday

slumber and a pass down to Mia on the right gave her the opportunity to dispatch about four defenders with consummate ease to score.

By the second half the unfit medics were already tired, as was the diminutive referee, in his case of abuse by our headband-wearing American, Connor who kept questioning his decisions but was luckily let off for being a girl.

LSE increased their lead from a pass to Sylvia who wove her way around a few of their piss-poor players to score with a shot that soared over the heads of the defence and goalkeeper. Our supporters went wild, especially Dave Whippe, who loves her deeply. By now the doctors were drinking at the last chance saloon, and were not spared further humiliation when Connor just slipped one wide and then went on to score seconds before time. LSE's Amazons are march on, unbeaten in the league.

Fighting Fifths Four Flummox QMW Fourths

Pete McSporran

Poor pitches at QMW took the Fifths to Berrylands for the scheduled away fixture, and home advantage proved too much for the hapless QMW Fourths. A Schmeichel style throw-out from their keeper was intercepted by Ramesh, "no need to shop around", thirty yards out and returned with interest. The stranded keeper could only watch as the ball soared into the top corner. A proverbial peach from

the bespectacled five-a-side whizzkid.

This proved to be one clown antic too many from their budding Grobbelar and he was promptly substituted. The Fifths defence, which has shown fragility in the past, was to prove resilient on Sunday. And it was from defence that the second goal came. Our very own myopic Millard released a forty-yard defence-opener with pin-point accuracy that found the dependable size 14s of Clayton Bush, who poked it past the goalie's despairing arms.

The BeaverBall™ top scorer was once

again in inspired form as he was to get a second, his seventeenth of the season. Picking up the ball from a corner, he swivelled his 'lofty' frame on a sixpence and buried the ball high into the net.

Heads were dropping in QMW's ranks as their attacks, lacking imagination, were repelled with consummate ease. QMW tempers flared under the strain of LSE's superior passing and aggressive tackling. The second half continued in the same vein. A burst of acceleration took Bushie down the wing and after a quick shimmy round the

keeper he laid it off to Alfonso Bonzo for an easy tap-in.

QMW replied with a penalty, Stambouli mesmerised by the simplicity of the placement. The elusive clean sheet remains so. There were ominous signs of the usual collapse and as tempers frayed, Roy "de hampto", our Spanish North Londoner, his Latin blood boiling after his very dodgy haircut, was pushed too far by the ludicrously unjust taunt that he was clumsy. But petty jibes and poor sportsmanship could not detract us. Next stop the title!

Hockey 2nds victorious despite Vish nightmare

Aggy

The LSE 2nd XI hockey team finally managed to win a game. What a way to finish a losing streak, an emphatic 6-0 thrashing of UCH. Maybe, just maybe, this might not be such a dismal season.

The team started well and put together a decent move which was finished by the impressive Kingsley. However, the umpire had blown for an earlier foul and disallowed the goal, so Kingsley took it upon himself to score a wonder goal, taking the ball around four players (two were his own) before slotting past the keeper. The youngster has made a promising start to his LSE career, although it was slightly marred by his antics at the hockey dinner, as he crawled through the corridors of Rosebery, covered in sick, calling for Karen to be by his side. No chance son.

One-nil soon became three-nil as Aggy smashed the ball into the corner of the net from Kevin's right wing cross. Hassan then picked up the ball from the restart and masterfully moved his way through the UCH half. He slipped the ball to Sam who calmly chipped the goalie. At three-nil the game seemed to be in our grip. However, Captain Marvel Vish decided to try and throw the game away by conceding a penalty flick and

being warned for his efforts. Cometh the hour, cometh the man, and, after psyching out the striker with those killer looks, Mo saved the flick by using his head - literally using his head.

Everything was going our way and, from a quick break, Ian ran down the right exchanging passes with Hassan and Kevin. This was to be a great goal, until Ian mis-hit his shot. Now we know why he is playing right back. Fortunately the goalie was perplexed by the dummy and the ball trickled into the corner. Our French-Canadian star Pascal, having failed to score with some minger on the catwalk that is Houghton Street, didn't flop this time and made it five.

Sam then went through on goal but was brought down by the keeper. Vish stepped up, steadied himself, looked up, looked down, pulled his stick back and then fell flat on his arse, the result of wet astro. The umpire signalled a save while Vish argued for a retake. Unable to change the decision, Vish told him to fuck off, and promptly departed unwillingly to start the showers running. The game was not over for everyone else though, and Aggy gained a penalty flick after good work by Ian and Pascal. Our goalkeeper Mo showed the now tearful Vish how it should be done, pushing the ball firmly into the back of the net to complete a richly deserved victory.

Vivacious Vicious Vollbracht Volleys Virgins to Victory

Ian "Goals" Vollbracht

The LSE fourth team has hit a rich vein of form of late. Poor league form at the beginning of the season has not been dwelt upon as a useful squad of players, led by an inspirational (if at times incomprehensible) captain, have secured BUSA progress and continue to march up the table. Three of the last four games have resulted in resounding wins, (including a 5-1 away thrashing of Goldsmith's) the most impressive of which was the 4-1 drubbing handed out to UCL on Brian's fields of dreams.

A few weeks earlier UCL had provided stern opposition in a tight 1-0 win, but today things would be different. LSE, lacking Hinal "lightning" Patel and left-midfielder Hamza, but bolstered by recent form and the brevity of Tattersall's pre-match team talk, put pressure on their opponents from the first whistle.

The early play centred on the UCL penalty area and the breakthrough came after fifteen minutes. A ball spilled out to Vollbracht, who flicked it dangerously towards the far post for Oliver to deftly poach the opener. Relentless LSE pressure ensured that a second was to follow shortly. This one came from the boot of Vollbracht

himself, accurately lobbing the goalkeeper from the edge of the penalty area. Crazy celebrations were witnessed as the blonde striker netted his first goal in LSE colours.

The remainder of the first-half saw the two goal margin maintained and right-midfielder Chris having to leave the field due to a "mystery" stomach bug. This is, however, hardly a conundrum worthy of a Poirot or a Holmes when one considers that Chris is a Passfield resident.

LSE's first-half performance reduced captain Mike to "By 'eck lads, that wor gorgeous" and the second-half was to be no different. LSE reasserted their dominance with the back four of John, Dave, Chris and Dan remaining solid and Guy "shorts" Burton being dependable between the sticks, despite his best efforts at Campus impersonation. Two more goals were scored, Vollbracht knocking the ball past the keeper for his second after an incisive through-ball from Oliver and Takis rounding off the afternoon with a low, powerful shot from Sean's cross.

UCL managed a consolation goal in the last minute, but victory was ours and well-deserved after outplaying our opponents in all departments. If this showing is anything to go by, it will not be long before Tattersall is once again heard to shout "Bloody 'ell lads, we wor magic."

Femi talks about his penis again

Femi Adewale

Our recent record against QMW is rather poor, well it was fucking poor. Played two, lost two: both by one point. Could they make it a hat-trick? No, they couldn't, but the ubiquitous Brian Femi could (more of which later). On the back of 3 successive victories, which must make captain BJ the most successful captain in LSE history, the question still remained whether we could overcome our bogey team.

A sloppy start saw us concede a soft try and go under (as opposed to on top, as we like it). Much has been made in previous weeks of Brian Femi's so-called 'decline' in form - the critics had their pens dipped in blood, but like the true champion he is he responded emphatically.

The first of his trio was gloriously created by Greedius Maximus who surged through the hole (dirty bastard) and laid on a superb pass for yours

truly. The second, required Brian Femi to beat four players to squeeze in in the corner (partly due to his gargantuan penis). Just before half-time a charge down by Mike Oz saw him race 60 yards up field only for his lack of pace, due to an excess of anal intrusion, to be exposed, and on hand was Maximus to dive over.

We allowed them to get straight back into the game after the restart, and a spattering of penalties nudged them into the lead. But when the going gets tough, then Brian Femi gets rough, as he went over for the last of his hat-trick of tries he sealed the game for a famous victory and to take us into the second round of the cup. Final score 26-23.

The evening that followed was predictable - except that Brian Femi managed to remain fully clothed for once.

The barmy army washed down their pies with pints, to maintain their cultured, sophisticated image. They were, in all probability, saving themselves for the damage of Friday - by now all is history.

BUSA GOLD

It was a day of triumph for the LSE on Sunday as they won the BUSA national five-a-side championships at the NEC Birmingham. The team, consisting of (from left to right) Nic Jones, Steve Curtis, Chris Cooper, Danny Fielding and Dave Egerton (not in picture) did the LSE proud and defeated the best that Britain has to offer.

A tough group draw saw us face the might of Durham, Southampton, Middlesex and Oxford. With a combination of tight defence by Fielding and Curtis, the vision of Jones in midfield, and the predatory instincts of Cooper in front of goal, we finished top of our group undefeated, scoring 20 goals and conceding only one (an Egerton blunder). In the quarter-finals a Jones diving header and a last ditch tackle by Fielding saw us progress to the semis. There we faced holders and favourites Birmingham, backed by a huge partisan crowd. With the game locked goalless, it soon became clear that it would take something special to separate the two teams, and up stepped Steve Curtis. A left foot volley burried in the bottom corner decided this tense encounter that was worthy of a final. Loughborough were our last hapless victims, just as they had been in the cricket final last Summer, losing 2-0 with goals from Fielding and Cooper. Congratulations are most definitely in order.



80% of the LSE glory boys. Aren't they hard?

Photo: Erik Werneni



Fantasy BeaverBall™



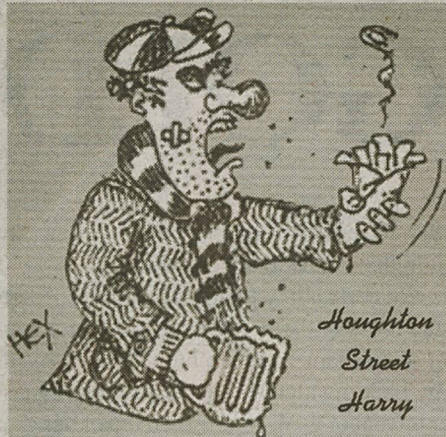
That's right folks, it's that time again. After the hectic mid-term period, the Fantasy BeaverBall™ table has been almost turned upside down, as the race for the Christmas no.1 reaches an amazing climax. And there's a new leader as Dave "Bond" Whippe gets it for the first time (I never thought I'd see myself writing that). He attributes his success to the extra strategy and planning he has been putting in at home on Saturday nights, since he, Scouse and Howard were finally and thankfully banned from the Chuckle Club. The boy Kinnear retains second place, while Saunders babes Alison and Rachel are scrapping for third spot. Meanwhile, down in the basement, Ben Tallis has been given a vote of confidence by his board of directors, despite his woeful performance. "He's going nowhere", said a close source yesterday. My sentiments entirely. Here's the full table:

- 1. Thor's Thunder & Lightning Army 96
Dave Whippe
- 2. LSE Footballing Legend 95
Angus Kinnear
- 3. I've Done 'em All 92
Alison Summerfield
- 4. The Yellow Fred Perry Lives On 90
Rachel
- 5. Escapes To Victory 88
Steve Curtis

- 6. Not Wanted At The Rovers 86
Matt Miller
- 7. Simon Watson Is Gay 85
Peeping Pron Bose
- 8. Liz's Legends 85
Liz Petyt
- 9. Hobday's Bristol Rovers 84
Nicola Hobday
- 10. Hot Sluts With Cocks 84
Tim Ludford-Thomas
- 11. Lowen Is A Jaffa 83
Chris Cooper
- 12. Scouse Is Great At Football 81
Scouse Gardiner
- 13. Steve Claridge Is God 73
Raj Paranandi
- 14. Maple Street Mingers 72
Sorrel Osborne
- 15. FBS 71
Alain Stambouli
- 16. The Butcher 70
Danny Fielding
- 17. Blair Is A Tory 69
Alex Ellis
- 18. Scouse Isn't Great At Pulling 67
Clare Wilson

- 19. 1st Team Are Wank 65
Fat Alex Lowen
- 20. HSK United 65
Tanya Abou Habib
- 21. Double Jointed Carpet Munching Vaginal Gymnastics Olympic Team 64
Nic Jones
- 22. We Don't Deserve To Be One-nil Down 62
Rikos Leong-Son
- 23. Marc's Mad Monkeys 59
Markus Kern
- 24. The Grantham Grandads - A Jacklin Tribute Team 59
Johnny Parr
- 25. PSV Average 59
Steve Curtis
- 26. Diesel's Dazzlers 57
Steven Erickson
- 27. Brook Wanderers 52
Kevin Sharpe
- 28. Steko Park Argyle Rangers 52
Ben Goodyear
- 29. Two Sad Bastards In A Tree 50
Unknown
- 30. Whippe Fanciés Irish Paul 49
Howard Wilkinson

- 31. Enigma Eleven 44
James MacAonghus
- 32. I'll Think Of One 44
David Ferrin
- 33. The Jesus Army 42
William Hague
- 34. These Guys Make Us Hot And Wet 39
Emma Justice and Eirian Evans
- 35. GBH Team 36
Greg Beurain
- 36. AFK Bargain Basement 35
Steve Curtis
- 37. Jacky Jack Jacksaw And The Jacksaw Jackies 34
Mick Tattersall
- 38. A Sort Of Labour Party X1 31
Sam Parham
- 39. Great Balls Of Chunder X1 31
Matthias Mennel
- 40. Tani's Lost Boys 30
Tanvir Hussein
- 41. Villa Shit On Blues 21
Ben Tallis
- 42. Joanna McSheffrey's Derby Army 18
Joanna McSheffrey



It is with a tinge of sadness that Harry comes to you all this week. The cold winter nights are going to last a bit longer now, and the sun will no longer shine so brightly over the hallowed stone benches, for the time has come. After thirty glorious issues of light-hearted banter, it is time for this Harry to hang up his boots. During that time Harry has had death threats, numerous promises of violence, too many letters of complaint to mention and a fair share of man-to-man discussions with Editors and General Secretaries. Every one is like a badge of honour to me. The number of times the powers-that-be have said to me "I know there's nothing wrong with it/Of course you're right, but you just can't say that here" is a damning indictment of what Political Correctness does. PC is an insidious disease; it kills debate and allows people to hide away from reality.

To all those groups I have apparently offended, be they LGB, Mature Students, Hizb-Ut-Tahrir, Women, Chinese, Indian or the Samosa fan club, I regret nothing. You people deserve everything you get, and then some more. If you can't laugh and joke with each other, then you're pretty fucking sad. If I had a pound for every time someone called me sexist, racist or homophobic, I'd have enough money to replace Justin Fashanu as my butler. I am not any of these things. It just so happens that sometimes the truth offends.

To all those people who have complained (the list is never-ending) Nick Deardon, Robert "Spannerman" Reed, Viv Nunn, Shaista Ahmed, David Levine, Amal Sanderatne, Chris Parry, Scouse's Dad, Garth *et al.* I love you all (Don't get any ideas Deardon). Not really. For all those who cannot cope without me, do not fear, for the ideal Christmas gift is to become available. "Harry - the glory years", featuring issues 402-32 is now available in paperback form. Who could forget such greats as the "Chinese and Indian waiters wank in the food" gaffe, "cottagers are persistent buggers" or "I take it up the arse phone 0171 955 6705." Copies are available from the Beaver office and all good bookshops, priced £7.95 (Harry will be personally autographing copies in the Economist's Bookshop on Friday). Harry will be back next term in a different guise, but it won't be as good.

And so, as I set off on horseback into the sunset to face my exams, I'll leave you all with a quote from the great man:

"Never in the field of human conflict have so many been so fucked off by me. I can say what I want so if you don't like it, piss off".

Houghton Street Harry has now left the building. There will be no encore.



It was me all along

That's three league wins on the spin for the glory boys of LSE football, taking them to the heady heights of third in the Premier Division. Saturday's demolition of the best team UCL had to offer was another fine performance from what has now become a cohesive unit playing liquid football. Under the new captaincy of Steve CostaCurtis, deputising for Rikos (whose fit girlfriend wouldn't allow him to play), LSE killed the game off by half time. Nic Jones opened the scoring, reaping the rewards of his new tactic of hitting the target when five yards out rather than blazing over. A second goal followed soon after, Mark Chang latching onto a pinpoint throughball from Steve Curtis to finish impressively off both posts. The final nail in UCL's coffin came just before the interval, Paul Cherry's sublime lob leaving their keeper stranded.

During the second half Danny Fielding, Chris Cooper and Raj Paranandi were distracted by the attendance of Eirian Evans, Emma "no chance, Cooper" Justice and Anetta, her twelve year old sister, respectively. Nevertheless we still held out.

And so the First XI go marching on, seemingly unstoppable, at least until they next play QMW. Just in case you're wondering who these heroic heart-throbs, representing you at the highest level, are, here is a quick summary of LSE's leading lights:

1. Svein "Hands" Mikkelsen: This ex-Norwegian U21 international shot-stopper has proved a valuable asset to the side having survived a career threatening toe-nail injury and a first year sharing a room with the 'amiable' Raj Paranandi. Describing himself as the safest hands in the business, this lofty young fellow is currently under investigation by the Trading Standards.

2. Players' Captain "Goals" CostaCurtis: Ex-Surrey Schools Captain (my arse - Sports Editors), this skilful little full-back is just one of the highly rated Hollywood look-alike back four. Although he's lost some of his sharpness and flair after contracting his disease it has at least earned him an Oscar for his lead role in the film 'Philadelphia'. His commitment to the side is unrivaled, playing every game as though it's his last. How true this might be.

3. Chris "Goal" Cooper: A dead-ball specialist who makes Stoitchkov shake in his boots, Chris's penetrating bursts down the left flank have been likened to slow-motion action replays of Ryan Giggs or real-time-elapsed of a hippo in full flight. A firm believer that a shit goal is better than no goal at all, meanwhile his effort on the pitch makes him a contender for Goal of the Season.

4. Nic "k" Jones: A welcome addition to

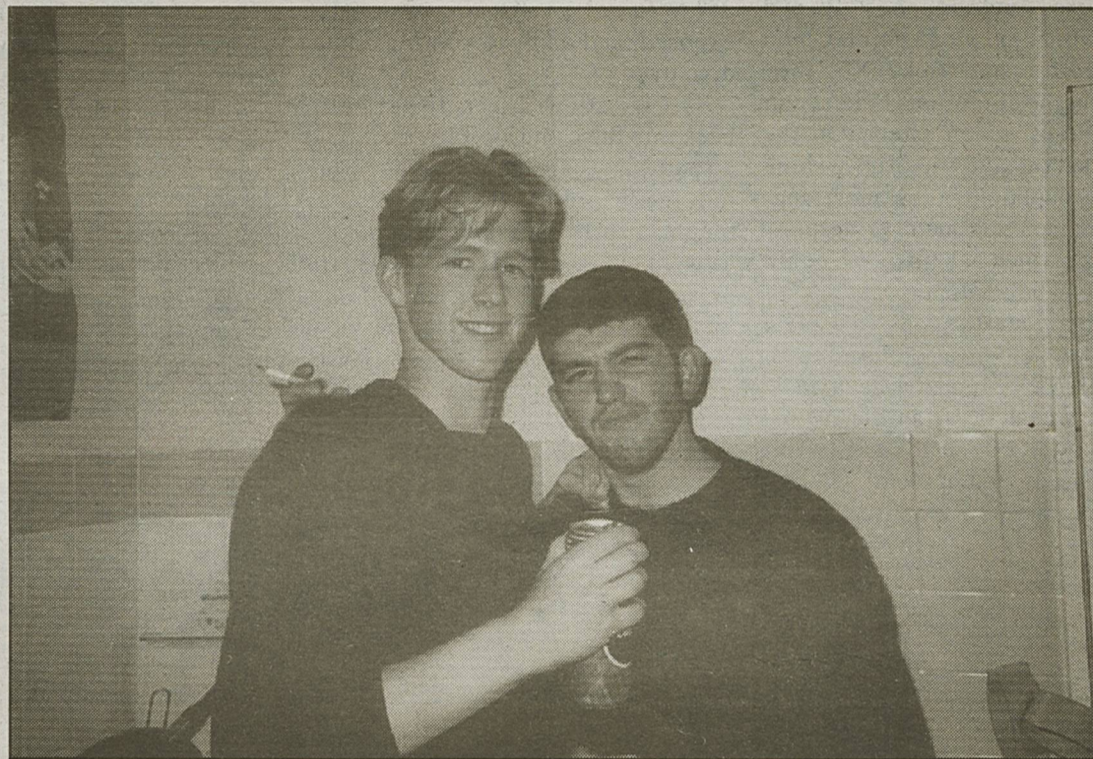
First Class

the side whose hardman reputation and heading ability have been testified by many a fair Carr-Saunders maiden. A strong feature of his game has always been his visionary first time passes and subsequent first time apologies. He makes his presence felt in the midfield when he can be bothered to turn up.

5. Danny "The Butcher of Berrylands" Fielding: the veritable cornerstone of the

ous LSE 1st XI since scoring goals appears to be his only achievements in life. His goal scoring record is totally unrivalled for any first team player in the history of the college. A tremendous athlete, Gus should score sacks of goals this year.

11. Kevin "SCUD" Sharpe: a more than useful left mid-fielder, Kev has fitted in superbly in the set up in his first year at the



Matt Miller celebrates the long-awaited return of his sex life, while Whippe looks like he has just shagged Claire Lawrie

Photo: Chris Cooper

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defence, orchestrating authoritatively and bringing down Madou before he gets a sniff of the goal. He's been lucky to avoid dismissal this season - the only red card he's received was from his girlfriend in Cardiff. By gum he can kick the ball a long way and very high in the air.

6. Matt "Lowen" Miller: The season so far has been a joy-ride for the hardest kid on the estate. A grazed hip has kept him out the side in the early part of the season but he's now back in the thick of things, proving himself to be a massive presence in defence (in the witness stand testifying against charges of fare evasion). He's keeping the family flag flying after his brother Garth (SWSS) didn't make the grade.

7. Rikos "Chairman Mao" Leong-Son: official captain and third LSE hard-man who's brought Brazilian style to the University of London Premier League. This blood and guts stud has mastered the art of using any part of his boots to score goals, especially his studs. Mr Motivator come Mr Fonz come Rob Roy.

8. Fillipo "bench-warmer" Venini: an extremely Belgian and promising first year who has adapted well to his new role as a roving winger, his Italian style and dad's car is a welcome sight to the LSE first-teamers. More goals from this Keith Gillespie play-alike are inevitable, as are temper tantrums on occasions of substitution.

9. Tim "Gary Wilmott" Ludford-Thomas: graduated with honours from last year's 2nd XI school of football where he left behind his reputation for not being able to hit a cow's arse with a banjo, he now devastates defences, cutting through them like a hot knife through butter. He is currently enjoying a period of fantastic form and can be seen all over the West-End getting rave reviews for the musical 'Copacabana'.

10. Angus "UB40" Kinnear: the popular goal machine/legend is currently experiencing his fourth fruitful season in the illustri-

12. Marcus "Mein Hund hat Durchfall...Wo ist der Bahnhof...Ein Doppelzimmer mit Dusche, bitte etc" Kern: A likeable German, short in height but stocky and extremely strong on the pitch. A revelation at the LSE, the exception that proves the rule that Germans are generally about as funny as a bomb blast in a Primary School. Highlight of his season: having his dirty boxer shorts nicked during training and punching Jay (RHUL tosser) in his pearly globes of passion.

13. Mark "I'm the Lyrical gangster, cha cha chang" Chang: another Carr-Saunders starlet, he's ably deputised for Ludford and Kinnear, showing that he's earned the right to play at this level. His goal scoring abilities on the pitch are second only to his scoring in the toilets at Villa Stefano.

Dinner Update

Some new-found friendships were made at the Xmas dinner, as Svein declared his undying love for Matt Miller. Unfortunately Miller is not interested, as he already has his two Saunders loves, Imogen and Jonesy. Meanwhile Rikos showed his class by tickling the ivories. Tanya is not that impressed with his organ though. While Rikos showed all the class and panache of Freddie Mercury, Curtis just showed the symptoms. When the turkey came out, Rikos sliced it true to form. Angus "Jockey" Kinnear took the spoils at darts. Obviously he has plenty of time to practise on his days off from working the chip van outside Selfridges. Paul "Cabaret" Cherry was sadly unavailable to attend, as he was at the Comedy Store doing stand-up, just like his hair does before he applies two gallons of Duckhams Hypergrade and slaps it down.

The kit you wear, the passes you hit, the tackles you make. Goals? Nothing to be ashamed of, if you score it, flaunt it. The long ball game? Nah that's not our style, we're travelling up the league - Taxi! Tell Charles I'm on my way.