

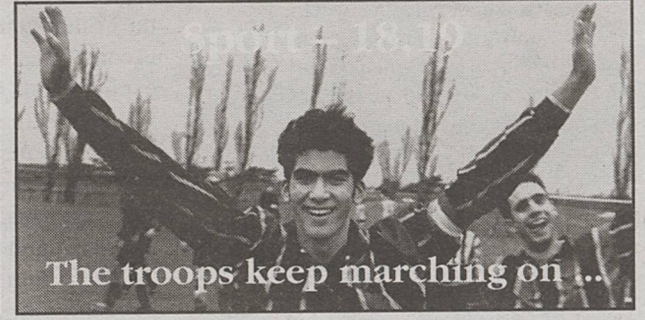
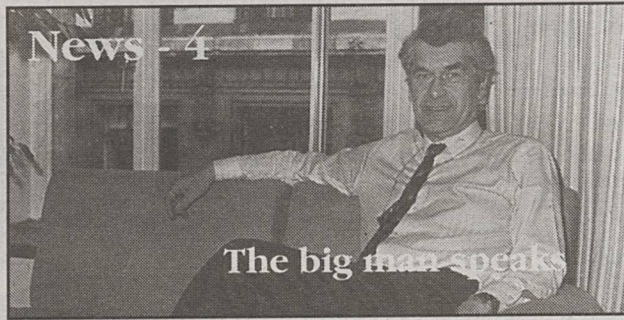
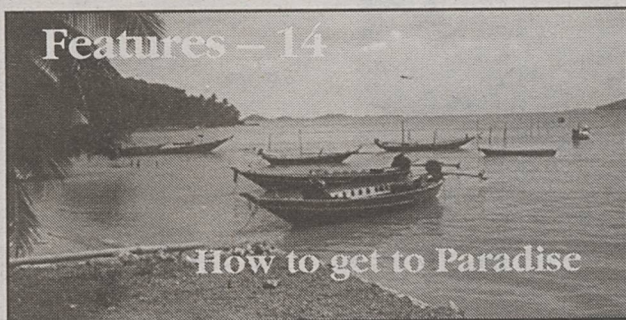
The BEAVER

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS' UNION

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Elections marred by disqualifications

Election night fever

Mathieu Robbins

Labour candidates have won two of the four sabbatical posts on the LSESU Executive for next year, amid a low turnout and rumours that votes might need to be recounted. After four hours of counting it was announced that Dan Crowe and Sam Parham had both won their contests, gaining the posts of General Secretary and Education and Welfare Sabbatical respectively. "People say that no-one at the LSE ever wins on a Labour platform. Cheers!" were Crowe's quick words of acceptance.

Sam Parham, whose election was announced a couple of hours earlier, had been slightly more eloquent: "I am proud to be the first Labour Sabbatical in four years". He went on to thank the Labour Club, whose help he found "invaluable". He congratulated the work and effort of Damian Thwaites. "He has been an excellent and fair Returning Officer. Criticism of his performance is wholly unfounded."

Chris Cooper was "ecstatic" at his victory in the race for the post of Entertainments Sabbatical. "Thanks to all those that helped, especially Raj Paranandi who stood

up for me in the face of the blatant racism charges against me. I'm proud of him for that." He added that he felt that Ents Sabbatical had been the only post for which the campaign had been run only on policy, and had not "degenerated into anything sick". Cooper and many of his fellow candidates expressed their support for Damian Thwaites who, he felt, has been treated disgracefully during the immediate run-up to the elections, and was a victim of "racial harassment".

Darrel Hare won the position of Union Treasurer outright. "Read my leaflets for what I will do", he quipped before disappearing into a crowd of congratulations, back-slaps and generally merry supporters. However, the atmosphere of the night was rather subdued, and A86 remained quite empty until the announcement of the new General Secretary.

Paul Bates, the losing independent candidate for the post of Education and Welfare sabbatical had this to say: "I am pleased that Sam Parham won. It is a very good result for the Student Union. It is good for the Union that the Welfare Officer can not only spell the word welfare but will also do the job."

Continued on page 2

Constitutional conundrums

Benjamin Hawkin

The Constitution and Steering Committee met for a second time last week to discuss an SU election issue. The meeting was convened by the Chair, Tony Armstrong, to decide whether the Returning Officer, Damian Thwaites, was right to disqualify Baljit Mahal, candidate for the post of General Secretary and James Garner, candidate for the Finance Committee, for infringing the election rules. The Committee's decision to back the Returning Officer's ruling was the climax to a week of intense campaigning and personal rivalry.

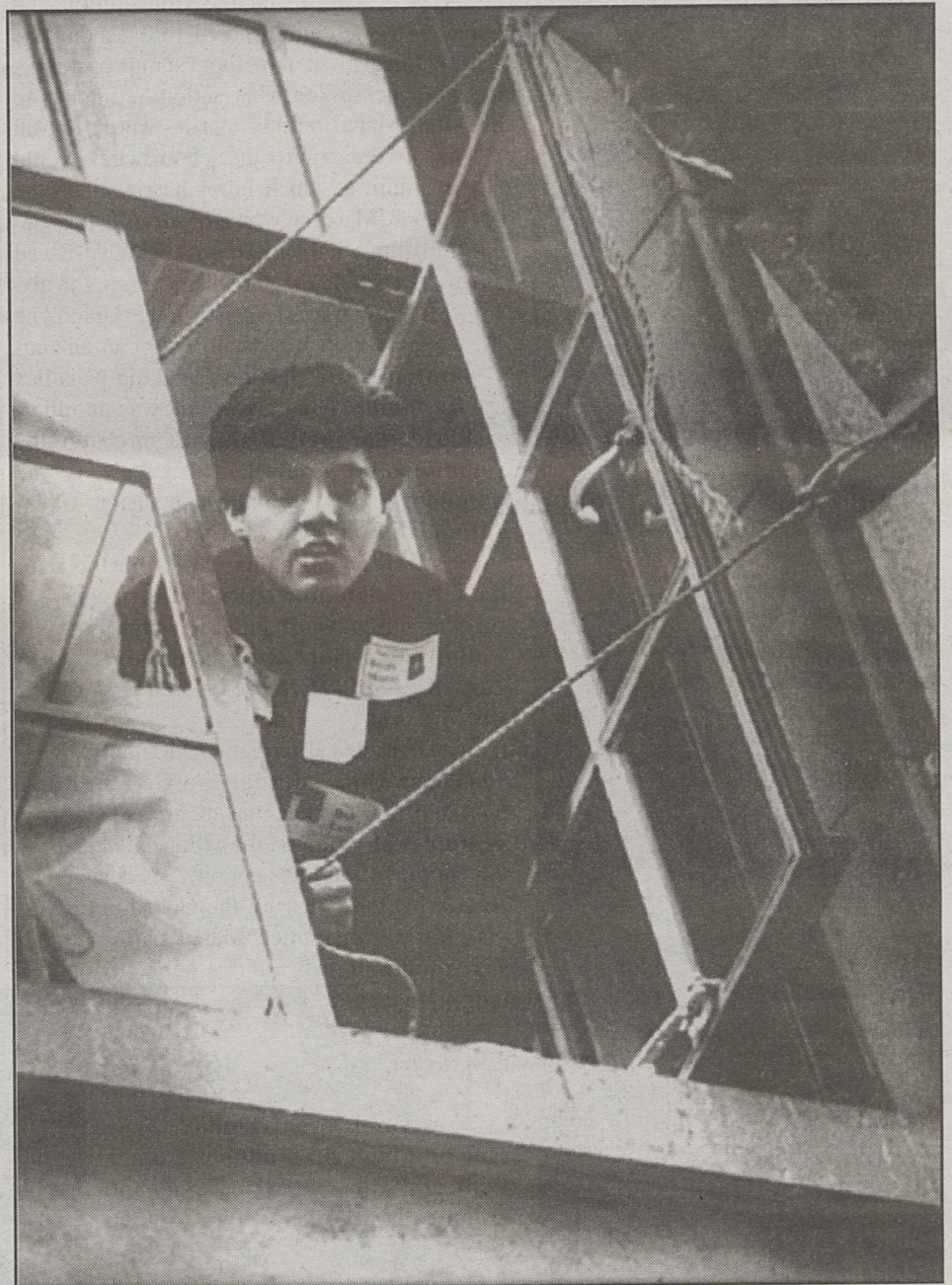
Damian Thwaites gave the reasons for his initial decision at the beginning of the meeting. They were that Baljit had produced an "illegal" campaign leaflet, contravening 9.6(e) of the electoral code because it was not on recycled paper and 9.6(f) because the Returning Officer did not re-

ceive a textual copy of the leaflet before it was distributed. In addition, James Garner, with whom Baljit had linked his candidature, had put up new-design unstamped A4 posters in Butlers' Wharf and the School, contrary to 9.6(d). There were subsequently allegations that both had exceeded their paper allocation, and under 9.7(b) Garner and Mahal, as linked candidates were deemed to be responsible for the actions of each other - it only had to be proved that one had committed a "gross" breach of the election rules for both to be disqualified.

Omer Soomro assumed the role of defence counsel for the accused with considerable passion and commitment. At times having to shout to be heard above the raucous interruptions of the decidedly anti-Mahal audience, he attempted to refute the allegations to the satisfaction of the Committee.

Afterwards, Kate Hampton, General Secretary, pointed out that as disputes over

Continued on page 2



Mahal: taking his appeal higher up the School

Photo: Anastasia Shorter.

Results

SABBATICAL POSTS

General Secretary
Dan Crowe

Treasurer
Darrell Hare

Education and Welfare
Sam Parham

Entertainments
Chris Cooper

OTHER POSTS
Returning Officer
Hector Birchwood

Equal Opportunities &
Mature Students Officer
Julie Lawrence

Other posts to be confirmed



UNION JACK

In light of recent assaults on his column (see letters page last week), Jack solemnly promises to be as impartial, fair, just and unbiased as a Diplock Court. For those who are not familiar with this particular British institution, you take a normal court, remove the jury, and export it to the six counties in the North of Ireland to try accused 'terrorists'.

Sorry to go on a bit here but Lee Clegg (letters page again) as far as Jack knows, was not found innocent but released by special license granted by Sir Patrick Mayhew.

Of course, the truth should never stand in the way of gut-instinct patriotism and Jack is a little upset that it seems to have brought on a hint of defensiveness from otherwise stout defenders of the realm.

Jack returned to the UGM last week anticipating more condemnation of the Irish Republican Army but that was withdrawn. Not to worry though, there was plenty more to make blue blood warm.

The Tories launched a scathing attack on the failure of SWSS to mount any serious opposition to their visiting dignitaries Kenneth Clarke and Peter Lilly this term. They accused them of not being very good socialists and bemoaned the absence of egg-throwing at recent SWSS pickets. It was touching. You can see the problem. For Tories, like Samantha 'by any' Means (heckle: "you filthy virgin"), easy targets, such as as Auburn haired socialists (heckle: "Are you a man or a woman?" reply: "Yes, I am."), are necessary. Without them, what does she stand for, apart from election?

Drugs, or so it would appear.

The Scott report was also discussed. A motion condemning Tory hypocrisy and arms dealing was passed without too much bother. "Who cares who we sell arms to?" summed up the pro government position.

Now Jack is as peace-loving and dictator-hating as the next anonymous columnist but wonders if the point hasn't been slightly missed here (as usual?). Of course the government made a quick buck selling a few weapons to dictators and continues to do so round the world and of course it is terrible.

One speaker was horrified at the prospect of "British soldiers being killed with British weapons". It wasn't explained why the country of origin of the weapons that took the life really matters. Perhaps a letter to *The Beaver* is in order.

For the 200,000 Iraqis killed in the Gulf War it isn't a question. Much more important for them, Jack presumes, were the kilotons of British and US munitions delivered for free. As for the living, they still have the US-made depleted uranium shells littering their country as a lethal calling card from Western arms manufacturers. Just so they'll know where to come next time.

The Tories claimed that the Scott report exonerated the government. They lost. Jack thinks it a bit worrying for democracy that it takes an unelected judge to bring them to book and then only for the lesser crime.

In the interest of accurate reporting it has to be said that hardly any of this was really discussed at the UGM but what the hell, Jack might wind people up again.

Sorry, did someone say drugs? Oh yeah. Kate Hampton wanted the UGM to legalise them, all of them. She lost too. But not before the death penalty had been demanded for all drug dealers, to hysterical cheers from the right. Confusingly, she was accused of wanting more 'fluffy' controls through legalisation and safe drugs campaigns by someone named William Wistan Mayes (or is that Billy Wizz?) speaking against. *Was that irreverent enough, ed?*

Election night

Continued from front page

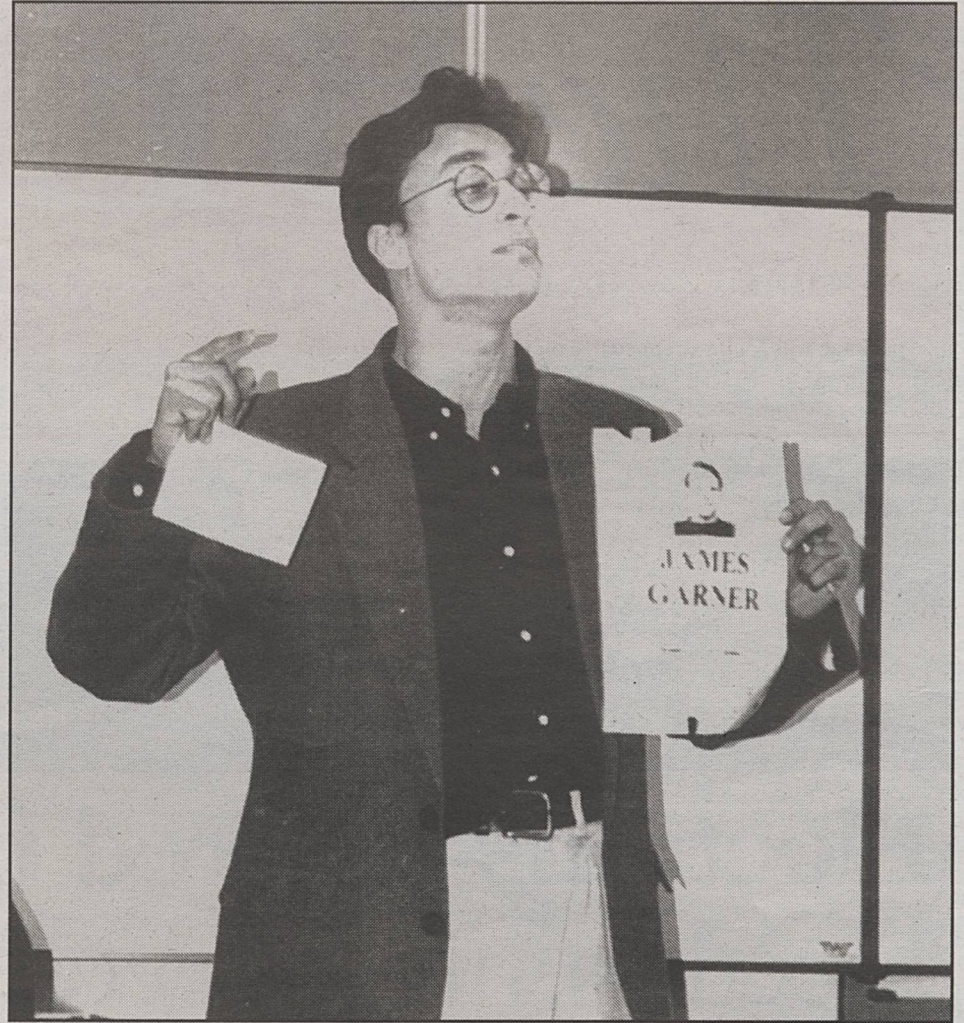
Baljit Mahal however was not celebrating. He was disqualified earlier in the day from running for the post of General Secretary for what he said were "trivial and involuntary rule infractions" of his linked candidate, James Garner.

Some of his election posters had gone up on Friday without stamp-backing. By his account, this was done after he had been explicitly told by Damian Thwaites that this would be allowed. "On Saturday night, I called Thwaites and asked him if there was anything wrong. The reply was no. I would like to say that firstly, these infringements were committed in good faith. Secondly, they were trivial. The constitution allows at most the taking down of these posters as a means of punishment for this offence. Thirdly, they were committed not by myself but by my linked candidate. My name was not even on the posters involved. Also, they were A4-sized and the Constitution and Steering Committee had told us that we could put them up without stamp-backing".

When asked what action he intends to take, Mahal replied that he would appeal against the action to the School, which would give him a "much fairer hearing than the current SU ever would", and possibly accord him a recount of the votes. When asked if there were any possible reasons for discrimination on the part of the Union, he replied "Thwaites tried to pass an amendment to the Constitution making penalties for this offence harsher. He was humiliatingly beaten in the UGM. He might for this reason bear a grudge. He is the only one responsible for taking the decision to disqualify me."

When asked for his view of the incident, Thwaites was adamant. "Baljit is constitutionally responsible for the actions of his linked candidate." Indeed linked candidacy is, he said, "a matter of shared responsibility".

Thwaites also pointed out that financial irregularities in Baljit and Garner's campaign had come to his attention. He therefore decided to take the action of disqualifying them. This was not only his decision: it was agreed upon by the Constitution and Steering Committee. Mahal's appeal to the School will be heard this week.



Here's one that shouldn't have been prepared earlier

Photo: Erik Wernevi

Constitutional wrangles

Continued from front page

paper allocations had been so numerous and well publicized during the week, the candidates must have "deliberately and knowingly" breached the rules and so should be penalized for a "gross" breach.

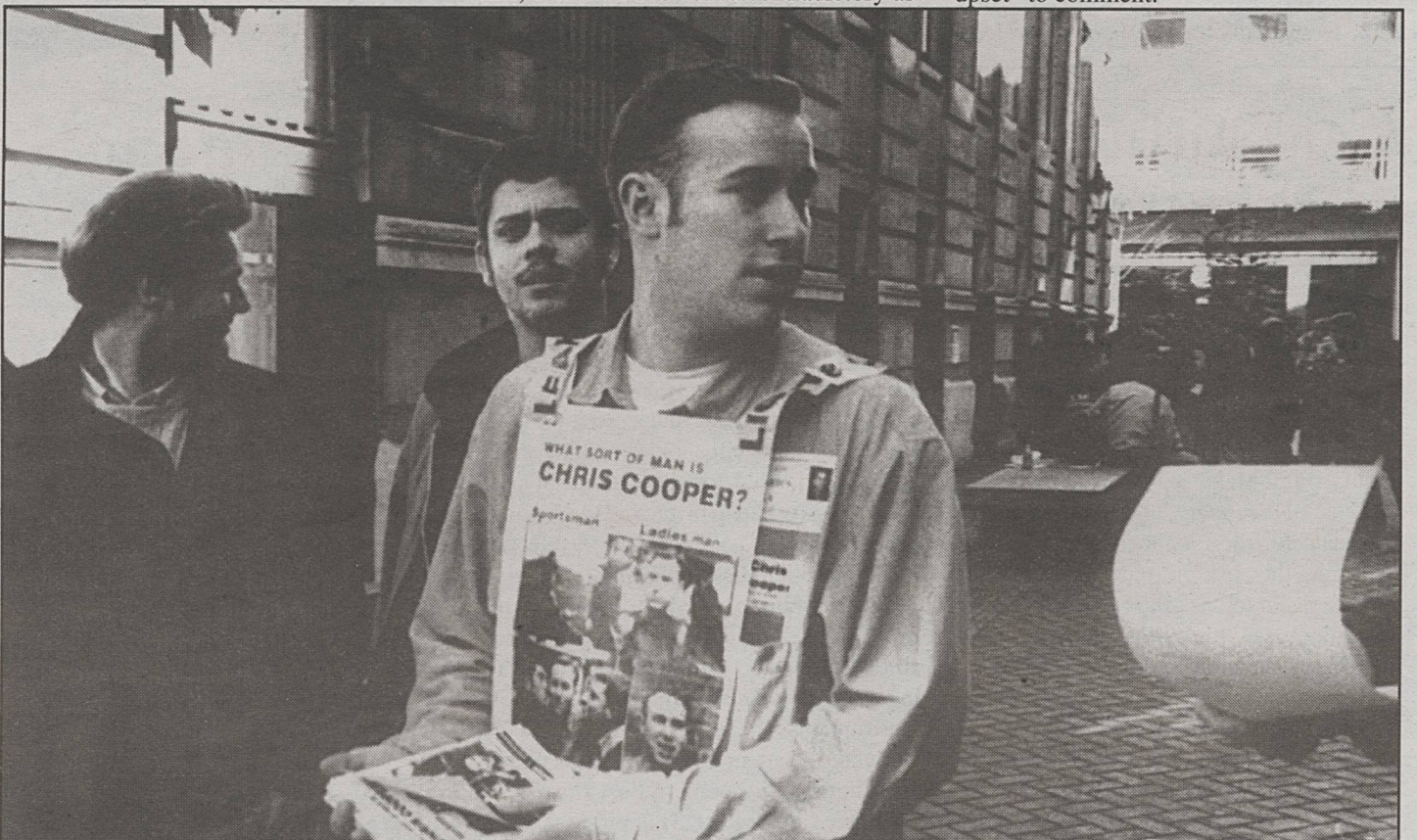
James Garner gave evidence on his own account to what seemed to be rapidly becoming LSE's own version of the Scott enquiry. He admitted that he had not read all the electoral rules but that he "wasn't a Union hack" and could not be expected to read everything.

Two members of the C & S Committee then gave their own views on the matter. Ali Miraj thought that both the accused, but in particular Baljit, were "bloody stupid" and deserved to be penalised for a "major" infringement of the rules. However, he took pains to stress that it was not a "gross" infringement and "by no means a disqualifying matter". Sam Parham, himself a Sabatical candidate (for Education and Welfare) followed this with a contradictory as-

essment, describing the pair's actions as "unfair" and even suggesting that Baljit had been dishonest with regard to the number of posters that he actually put up.

The meeting was then brought to a close, a secret ballot taken, and as a result, Baljit Mahal and James Garner were disqualified from the elections. Damian Thwaites said later that he felt that his decision had been "totally vindicated" by the verdict of the Constitution and Steering Committee.

Afterwards, Mahal claimed that Thwaites failed to inform him of his initial decision until the day after it was taken. The subsequent delay in appealing to the C&S Committee he felt "strongly influenced the decision towards 'gross' infringement" as the penalties for a "major" offence, such as poster confiscation and campaigning bans would be ineffective at such a late stage of the voting. Baljit said he intended to appeal against the decision, James Garner was "too upset" to comment.



Cooper turns the other cheek

Photo: Anastasia Shorter

Bomb scare causes disruption

Dev Cropper

The effects of the end to the IRA ceasefire came even closer to the LSE last Tuesday night when the School had to be evacuated after a suspicious package was found strapped to a bicycle in Clare Market. The Three Tuns, the Library and the other LSE buildings were evacuated.

Students caught in the evacuation seem to have taken the incident in their stride. "It was more funny than scary because no-one really believed the IRA would bother to bomb the LSE," said one.

Nevertheless, there is a growing awareness of the potential threat within the School. Notices have gone up in classrooms advising students on what to do if they find a suspicious package. On Wednesday night one was found in the lobby of Columbia House, though when staff investigated it turned out to contain nothing worse than football kit.

On Sunday, February 18, as reported in last week's *Beaver*, a bomb went off on a bus in the Aldwych. Its intended target was the Law Courts, a few hundred metres away from the LSE.

Perhaps the most common feeling, was one of unreality. "It doesn't really seem like its all happened," one student said.



The Aldwych bomb

Photo: Stephane Sireau

Call to Cap the CAP

Dev Cropper

Mad Brussels bureaucrats. Beef mountains. Wine lakes. The general impression of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is of yet another deranged regulation from Brussels, responsible for massive over-production and for farmers being paid not to use their land.

As President of the National Farmers' Union, Sir David Nash has a very different idea of the CAP. Speaking at a European Society meeting on Wednesday, he explained that the Policy's main aim is to ensure that European agricultural remains capable of producing enough food for all Europe's people.

Subsidies are needed to stop farmers here

being put out of business by competition elsewhere in the world.

The CAP has come under fire from free marketers since its creation, and Sir David tried to justify the protection it gives his members. He said European farmers had important responsibilities to both the environment and to rural communities.

He also emphasised that, on his reading of the statistics, Britain has "the most competitive agriculture in Europe", and remarked that some of his members might well prefer to be on the open world market.

A major part of Sir David's talk dealt with the future possibilities for the CAP. The National Farmers' Union sees it as an evolving policy, and as one which will eventually expand to East European countries. This may be dependant, however, on political as well as agricultural developments.

Pathetic Prisons

Beaver Staff

"Prison does not work", claimed former LSE student, Anita Dochley, at a lecture presented by the Schapiro Club last Tuesday. Now Policy Officer of the Howard League for Penal Reform, she stated that the aim of the charity is to ensure that Britain has an effective and humane justice system.

The League can be very critical and act independently because it is not funded by the Government. The League attempts to tell the Government what moral principles it should work with, rather than telling it how to run prisons.

Dochley spoke of the "politics of imprisonment", claiming law and order is always a vote winner. Prisons are overcrowded due to a change in culture where the authorities

are afraid to let prisoners out on bail.

Between 1990-95, 390 people have committed suicide in prison. Dochley blames isolation, especially the lack of contact with their families, for this startling figure. There is no cohesive sense of community and a general lack of care for prisoners. She advocates more time out of the cell and constructive regimes such as vocational training.

In the final analysis, the prison system does not present a deterrent. (89% of prisoners in the youngest age-group are reconvicted whereas only 50% of all prisoners are reconvicted). Offenders do not believe they will be caught or are not afraid to go to prison.

The Howard League has been criticised for being pro-offender, but it claims it is aiming for a safer society; fewer victims and focus on the offender.

Carr-Saunders elections

Narius Aga

Elections were held for the Carr-Saunders Hall Committee on February 2. Hustings were held the previous week and were followed by a week of campaigning which got off to a slow start, but picked up a brisk pace as the day got nearer.

A large turnout (about 60%) was witnessed and counting took place immediately after the elections.

President - Edmond Ho
Vice President - Andrew Wynn
Treasurer - Martin Davies
Secretary - Ritwick Roy
Women's Officer - Nupur Sharma
Social Secretaries - Clyde Fowler & Jasper Ward

LSE debaters 'press' on upwards

Close result in inter-varsity competition

Benjamin Hawkin
and
James Crabtree

On Saturday February 24 the LSE Debating Society recorded another brilliant tournament result when it finished runner-up in the Warwick-Barclays Inter-Varsity Competition. Coming only a matter of weeks after its strong performance in the John Smith Memorial Mace, this latest feat is unmistakable evidence that LSE has scaled new heights in oratory excellence.

The first motion for debate concerned "the future of the environment" - LSE found itself in an uninspired round as the proposers used very bland and truistic assertions.

The next round looked even more

daunting as LSE had to prove that "single mothers are the cause of societal collapse". Showing experience of these matters, LSE refused to do a 'Peter Lilley' and instead broadened their arguments to include divorce, family break-up and the new Family Law Bill proposals. They also had a good third round, arguing that they would "turn the other cheek" basing their case on a recent article in *The Economist* about Northern Ireland.

The final saw the LSE pitted against two teams from Oxford and a pair from Dundee. They soon found themselves attacking proposals for a strict privacy law and vigorously defending the freedom of the press.

The judges, however, considered Oxford to have won - LSE came a very close second. This was little consolation as the winners got a cheque for £400.

LSE Cabaret

Copies of the
tape of the
highly successful
LSE Cabaret
are available
from the
Economist
Bookshop
priced £7.50

The parting shot

James Brown interviews John Ashworth, outgoing Director of the LSE

Apppearance: Boyish, bonny and very bold." So began last week's *Guardian* Pass Notes on Dr John Ashworth. It is hard to think of a better phrase to sum him up. As he put it, "it's less malicious than most". And even malicious academic opponents at the LSE grumble, if pushed, about his charm and good looks, as if blaming that for his inexorable rise from path-breaking scientist to the ranks of the great and the good.

His career has been unconventional from the beginning: "I couldn't imagine anything more curious", he chuckles. As a second year chemistry undergraduate he contributed to a footnote in a book on Roman Women, a fact of which he is "tremendously proud". The link between chemistry and classics may not at first seem apparent. But his scientific knowledge enabled him to establish the meaning of a textually corrupt passage by Tacitus, the only existing copy of which was made by monks who didn't understand the technology being referred to.

It is doubtful there is a monk alive who would understand his later output. "My first serious research was on the high vacuum ultraviolet spectroscopy of HCL-35 and HCL-37", he said with all the confidence and energy of someone who has just rushed from the lab, flushed with discovery. It did not seem to occur to him that the details of physical chemistry are lost on social policy students: here perhaps was a flash of the alleged arrogance, even insensitivity, that causes problems with his colleagues at LSE.

Biochemistry was his next domain, where he became a professor, followed by a remarkable four-year stint in the original Downing Street think-tank, the Central Policy Review Staff. Both his time there and his legacy were impressive: he was one of the very few to survive the transition from Callaghan to Thatcher in 1979 and his position, Chief Scientific Officer, is the only one that remains following the abolition of the CPRS. The combination of an excellent academic background and external experience made his next move seem obvious; in 1980 he became Vice-chancellor of Salford University.

He arrived to face huge financial difficulties. The government had just announced cuts of 17% in the money going to the University Grants Committee, which in turn slashed Salford's budget by 50%. "Everyone expected that Salford would close - this was a crisis", recalls Ashworth.

There was no place for sensitivity and he was appropriately blunt with his new colleagues. At his first Academic Board he asked them to shake hands with their neighbours as it might be the last time they met. The shock treatment seemed to work. After 10 years at the helm, Ashworth left Salford not just surviving but positively thriving with a larger budget and more students and staff.

Whilst willing to call this decade "a success", Ashworth is more coy about his achievements at the LSE: "The problems I have faced here have not been as dramatic as those at Salford. My colleagues never felt that the funding cuts were big



John Ashworth in his lair

Photo: Katrin Hett

enough in any one year to justify making the profound changes in policy that I deemed necessary".

This reluctance did not stem from a lack of trying on Ashworth's part. Six months into his tenure he gave a speech entitled 'The LSE: A 2020 Vision'. "This wasn't an agenda for action", he insists, "I was suggesting examples of the kind of things the School ought to consider". Looking back, he feels his predictions were over-optimistic; "I didn't think that an elite School like the LSE would have been treated quite as badly as it has been".

Nevertheless, most of the academics at the time felt he was crying wolf. And his ideas, even in the currently tumultuous world of higher education, are difficult to swallow. Proposals to split the graduate and undergraduate schools and move one to a greenfield site or to alter the academic year to four 12 week terms still seem radical, even for a radical institution (or is it?).

Just as the situation reached stalemate—a case of 20:20 going blind perhaps—the idea of moving to County Hall, the former home of the Greater London Council, emerged. The wicked academics behind the LSE Centenary Cabaret put it nicely; "I [Ashworth] had a vision like St Paul; we'd find our fate in County Hall". It was a true conversion on the road to Westminster: he was initially reluctant to believe that it would solve all the LSE's problems, but eventually he decided it was a "no-lose situation".

But lose the LSE did, despite a massive public campaign. There were positive benefits, however. "When I came here the image of the LSE was of a bunch of self-indulgent, riotous students who did nothing but demonstrate, wave banners and make a nuisance of themselves. That image has changed for all time." This, he claims, is demonstrated by those mobile barometers of public opinion, taxi-drivers. "If you took a taxi to the LSE the

drivers would ask 'are the buggers rioting today' or some such. Now they are more likely to say 'terrible pity about County Hall'."

Whilst the LSE's public stock may have risen, Ashworth's reputation in the School suffered. It sank further when he tried to introduce top-up fees for all UK and EC students. His proposal attracted a mere nine votes out of a possible 700 academics, causing "a breach between us that has never really been healed".

"County Hall was one solution that would have expedited the changes needed at LSE. Failure meant that we had to try

"I didn't think that an elite School like the LSE would have been treated quite as badly as it has been."

something else." Ashworth is convinced that there was, and still is, a great deal of misunderstanding about the links between access and paying fees. "The more students pay, the greater the access", he says, sweeping aside conventional wisdom on the topic.

He cites Chile as evidence, where there has been a great expansion in higher education following the introduction of student fees. They now have an age participation rate higher than Britain's. He admits there are problems: "some say that some of their universities are not very good, but then some say that about British ones".

More convincingly, Ashworth argues that the very future of the undergraduate school depends on charging fees. "At the moment the undergraduates are being subsidised by the graduate school. Every

other university I know of does the reverse."

This, like most of his utterances, is blunt and reflects exactly what he is thinking. There is a sense of impish enjoyment of telling people news they don't want to hear. He seems resigned to the fact that they sometimes don't listen. Or, to quote from the cabaret again, "they never believed me".

A close colleague agreed: "In the early years the academics were trying to establish Ashworth's hidden agenda. There never was one; he is the most transparent person I have ever met. Given the delicacy of the position of the Director of the LSE, transparency is what they need, not the most inscrutable mandarin in Whitehall."

This is a clear reference to the preferred candidate to take over from Ashworth in September, Sir John Bourn. He is not now coming, but Ashworth is still going. He leaves with some regrets. "The fees issue is worryingly unresolved and I would have liked to have seen Enterprise LSE more deeply embedded in the School's culture." ELSE is one of his pet initiatives, which he hopes will one day generate substantial income for the School; "we're going to be very dependent on the profit that company makes".

His transparency and energy is to benefit the British Library, where he will be Chairman of the Board. He realises there are problems to be faced there too. "Firstly there are not enough seats, and secondly there are no books".

There is, however, a computer-driven railway system for finding and delivering the soon-to-arrive books. As he mentions this, he leans forward in his seat with boyish glee. The mind's eye flashes up an image of him sitting astride the train after hours, Wallace and Grommit style, racing round the basements. His hope must be that his ride will be smoother than the one he had at the LSE.

Suggestions for the Year 2000 ?

Dear Beaver,

Recently, there has been a lot of criticism of *The Beaver*, some of which is justified and some isn't. The editorial board has rightfully responded by asking for creative ideas. Well here are some ideas, though they may not be so creative.

Although *The Beaver* is not a very bad paper, it certainly needs some improvement. The editors can start by improving its language. To have a large readership of students, most of whom hopefully are not perverts, *The Beaver* does not need to have filthy language, especially in the entertainment pages and regular columns where it is increasingly found. If people want to read such material, it is available

in abundance in sex shops and adult magazines. They can satisfy their desires through them. Writers too can use these outlets.

Additionally, most of us are not really interested in the regular sex lives or individual likes or dislikes of a select bunch of people. Once in a while it does have entertainment value. But in excess, it becomes sickening.

If I am wrong, apart from the Gen Sec, Treasurer, and officers of the SU, there are others in the LSE too. Why can't they be involved in *The Beaver*. By this I don't mean that, for a change, you start studying their anatomies, but they can be encouraged to participate more actively in *The Beaver's* presentation.

As I understand, again through the Beaver, more than 50% of LSE students are foreigners. It may be a good idea to interview students from different backgrounds and include one interview in each issue of *The Beaver*. Topics such as the political and economic situation, sports and entertainment activities, and tourist attractions of the countries can be discussed. The students can also give their views about the LSE, the SU, *The Beaver* and life in London, in general, together with the problems they may be facing. I am sure many students will agree to be interviewed, if such a series started. There is so much diverse information which students can share with others.

The Beaver is the paper of the LSE,

which (at least to those outside it) appears to be a highly prestigious institution. That is exactly what *The Beaver* should reflect.

Oh fuck! It is getting late. Sorry for the language (students will be students).

Yours,
Faiz Jalal

Dear Faiz,

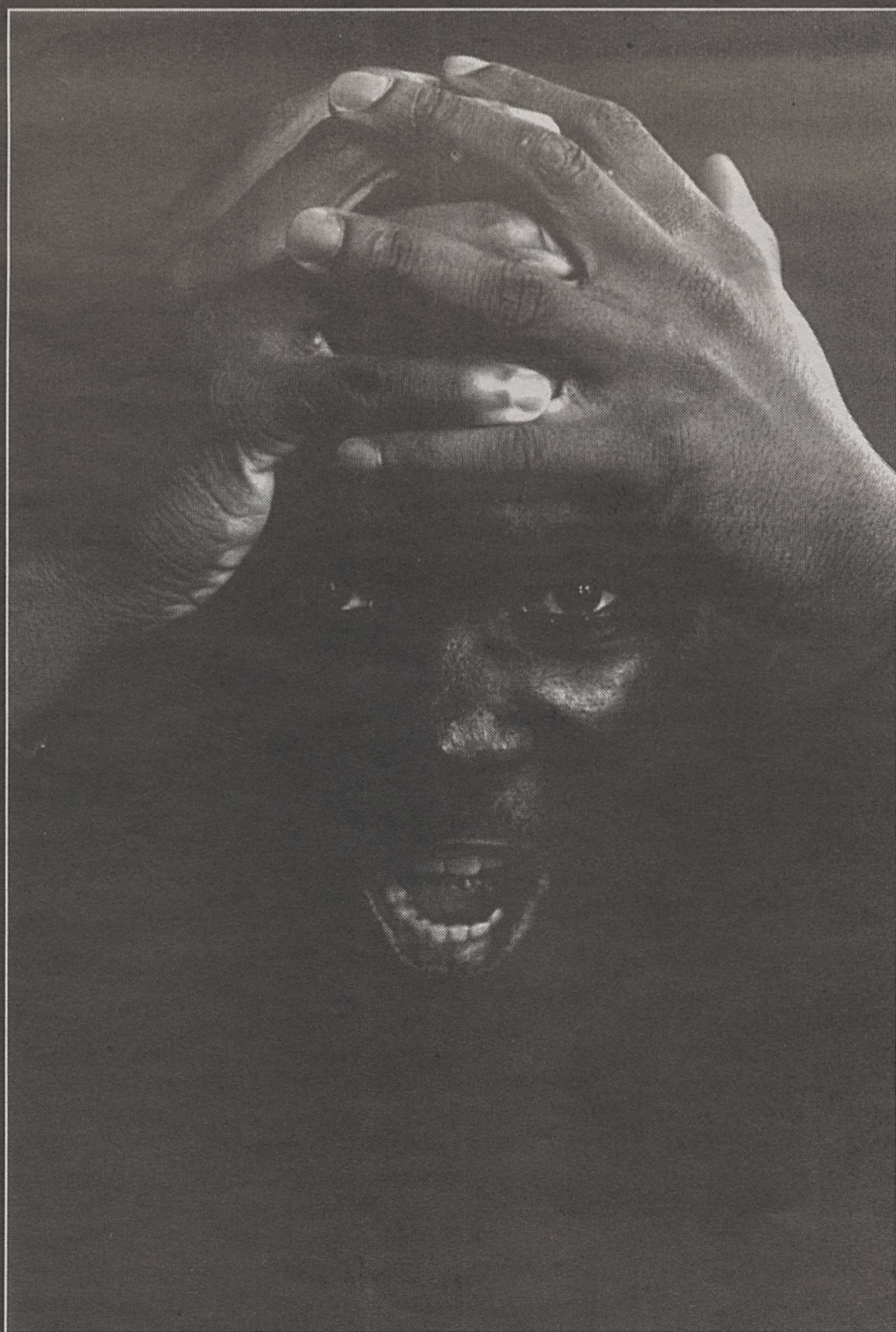
Thankyou for this constructive letter. This is a very good and workable idea. Hopefully we can start a series like this going next academic year—maybe you would like to interview or be interviewed ...

Nicola Hobday - Exec Ed

The letters deadline is Thursday at 12.00 pm

The Editor reserves the right to edit all letters

Photo of the week



He just realised that there are only twelve weeks left until the exams

Photo: Nigel Boyce

Political farce?

Dear Beaver

I am writing to express my opinion of last week's elections as an average, relatively apolitical, student.

First, it strikes me that such a small proportion of the LSE population turned out to vote—strikingly small by the standards of any democratic system. I shall not draw a conclusion about the SU's ability in getting students interested.

Second, I note a stark contrast between the way certain posts were contested. The Sabbatical posts of Entertainments Officer, Treasurer and Welfare went well. It is revealing that the accusation of racism against Chris Cooper was settled in a gentlemanly manner—something that would never have happened had the Sabbatical post in question been General Secretary.

Because if, as a student not infected with some of the less desirable morals exhibited during the elections, I had any hopes of fair proceedings in the Gen Sec elections, I was soon disillusioned. And seeing that, all in all, most of the candidates behaved 'properly', I am particularly referring to the Mahal Affair.

I understand the requirements and pressures faced by both the Returning Officer and the C & S Committee. However, I doubt that they have executed their duties in the fairest possible way. I must say that I am not advocating Baljit as Gen Sec by any means, and I do not doubt that Baljit's conduct in the elections may have left room for improvement. My views on Baljit as candidate are mine (and anyone else's) to make as part of the electorate, but the issue here goes much further for it seems to me that Baljit was part of a victimisation campaign.

I know full well, as many others know, that this has been the case for some time—and one could have excused it in terms of Baljit's ability to irritate certain sections of the student body, but I am disappointed at the conduct of both the R/O and the C & S Committee. Many of the candidates broke the Constitution but it seems to me that Baljit Mahal was specifically targeted.

And true enough, there was an infringement, but the matter was intentionally blown out of proportion. And can I treat a C & S meeting seriously when over forty minutes were spent arguing over whether a piece of paper was a poster or a flyer?

My view is that the Returning Officer's strong stance was taken solely to disqualify Baljit—did he perhaps investigate the confession of one candidate that he himself had cheated? Is it a coincidence that he failed to notice the several breaches of the constitution which I myself noticed? Baljit Mahal may have many faults, but he should have been allowed the use of democracy.

Furthermore, may I cast a shadow over the idea of having a C & S Committee which includes candidates who themselves are running for Sabbatical posts? It seems to me that such a powerful body should have as much neutrality as possible, and its structure should be reviewed. How about having a truly neutral member of staff (perhaps even from the Law department) on it, or at least ensuring its members do not have vested interests?

This does not detract from the 'propriety' and straightforward campaigning of most of the other candidates—and I am satisfied with the outcome of the elections but I feel that, sadly, the elections for the SU's highest post were marred in a way they need not have been.

Yours
James MacAonghus

Paddy's political pointers

Nick Sutton speaks to Paddy Ashdown, Leader of the Liberal Democrats

At 55 years old, Paddy Ashdown is the oldest of the three party leaders in Britain. Born in New Delhi, India, he joined the Royal Marines and served as a Commander with the Special Boat Squadron in the Far East.

Elected as a Liberal MP for Yeovil in 1983, he became the first Leader of the Liberal Democrats when the party was established in 1988. Eight years on, he continues to lead the party, and clearly, as he told *The Beaver*, has no intention of leaving.

You look busy with the Scott Report at the moment. Do you think Lyell and Waldegrave will have to resign?

The fact in this case is that it'll all be worked out at the end of the day on the raw mathematics of the division lobby. If Tory MPs want to join the government in defeating—in slamming shut the doors on the fortress of government—there isn't really much we can do about it. But, if as I suspect, many Tory MPs are deeply unhappy about this whole thing, and are not prepared to simply reject the Scott Report in the way that the Government are doing, then it will be a totally different thing.

MPs like Peter Thurnham perhaps?

Peter Thurnham is one, but there are quite a few others.

What's happening with Peter Thurnham? I saw in the papers that he had lunch or was it dinner with you and...

I have dinner with all sorts of people, Nick. You know this place revolves around lunch, not that I'm a great luncher. But, yes, he has had dinner with me, it's perfectly normal MPs contact. There's nothing peculiar or spectacular about that.

We won't be seeing another defection then?

I don't know. You may be seeing another defection, but whether it's Peter Thurnham or not I can't tell either. My view about Peter Thurnham is that he's taking a difficult decision, it's a painful one, no doubt he's agonizing about it. He should be given a bit of space to do so. And that's what I've told our people to do. Don't knock on his door, but leave him to his space.

What do you see the state of the party as being at the moment?

Very good. I mean if it wasn't I would hedge my words but, genuinely, we've had an exceedingly good first couple of months. We have had the Emma Nicholson event, which was a coup at the end of '95. We've been part of the action all the way through the year and we're producing some serious policies, like, for instance, on Higher Education.

We'll be the only party that goes into the next election with a clear Higher Education policy. The others will always be in this conspiracy of fudge that works between Labour and the Tories. And it's tough. It isn't what every student will want. But it's realistic. We are committed to set up a system that is flexible, which overcomes student poverty, in which it can be accessible to many more and in which many more will choose to come. And which is to give decent, high-quality education, and I think this does that. I suspect that when the others review the situation they'll come up with something almost exactly the same after the

next election not before.

What do you think about the top-up fees proposal...

I'm opposed to that reform, though I understand why CVCP have done it. They've done it as a political lever. That's the purpose of it. I'm opposed to them in their present form, though in our system I would not object to top-up fees. Indeed I want a flexible system. Providing we have our system. If people want to add to that with top-up fees then, within reason, they should be allowed to do so. I would not be prepared to let top-up fees intervene if the effect was to remove access for students of more limited means or if it was to cut across our determination to create a meritocratic rather than an elitist system.

Moving towards your relations with the Labour Party: your 'partnership politics' speech...

Well it's beginning to work. We know where we stand, Labour has to decide where they stand. If there are areas where we can work together in order to follow what we believe in then we should do it and where we're true to that was Robin Cook and Ming Campbell together last week. How far to go just depends on Labour.

You must have been encouraged by Tony Blair's John Smith Memorial Lecture?

I thought it was pretty thin gruel to be honest. I think it's very easy to pick on an easy target which is the House of Lords. To show your real commitment to pluralist politics you have to be able to tackle the thorny issues for Labour, like with Scottish devolution, what do you do with the Kilbrand Commission Report, which obliges you to reduce the number of MPs you have in Scotland because they're over-represented. It was an interesting speech, it was a good speech, it was, within Labour's limits, an encouraging speech, but it was an easy speech. It failed to tackle some of the thorny issues.

He did reaffirm his commitment to a referendum on proportional representation.

Well, that was reaffirmed at the party conference. I must say, if he had not even reaffirmed what John Smith committed himself to, that would have been devastating. So it was reassuring but hardly banner headline stuff: "I promise the Labour Party will not renege on the position it was in three years ago". It was not revolutionary. Labour's moving in the right direction, we should just realise how far they've still got to go.

And they've got to move further before you make any deals with them after an election.

Well, I don't see the question as about deals, I mean I honestly don't, if there is to be a partnership government, that depends on one imponderable and a lot of things from Labour. The imponderable is what happens—the outcome of the election. You can't ask people to vote for a hung parliament, it's impossible, there's no way and one couldn't. A hung parliament is a statistical outcome, not a campaigning aim. Then we will have to decide whether or not Labour was going to follow policies which will put Britain right. One aspect is constitutional, of course it is, but if that government didn't also

include investment in education, then we would find it difficult to work with them, if it didn't also include a clear position on Europe it wouldn't be... So, the issue is not about one thing, it's all about a package necessary for a successful Britain. Now I don't know if Labour's a million miles away from that, they're muddled and divided on Europe, they don't make the commitment to investment in education, they're rather unclear, although they're moving, in the area of constitutional reform. They don't mention the environment at all. They're not committed to an independent central bank, so there's a long way to go.

Would it be possible to keep your party together even if Labour did move far enough towards what you want?

It's a democratic party, and of course there are people who oppose it. But at the end of the day, the party must make a choice.

What do you think the likelihood of a hung parliament will be?

I can't tell you, it's impossible to predict, I can't predict what's going to happen in the May elections this year let alone what's going to happen in a general election next year. We live in immensely volatile times. I would have said that the statistical likelihood of a hung parliament is relatively small, probably very small. I'm certainly not basing our strategy on a hung parliament.

No, but perhaps building a coalition for more than one parliament, without actually having a hung parliament.

Well, that's true, but, I mean, that can be done from the opposition benches, and I've been very careful to say that. The idea that partnership depends on coalition is nonsense. We had a partnership with the Conservatives, for God's sake, in order to get through the Maastricht Bill, but no-one would accuse us of being in coalition. So partnerships can be built across the House of Commons, like you see on Northern Ireland at the present.

On Northern Ireland, what hope is there for the peace process?

Well it's looking pretty gloomy at the moment. It all depends on the extent to which the British and Irish governments can get their act together. The basic rule of thumb is that if the two governments agree they can do anything, if they can't agree, they can do nothing and the terrorists start doing things. So it depends on them compromising and getting their acts



Paddy Ashdown MP at the House of Commons. Photo: Guillaume Spinner

together and it depends on the constitutional, or democratic parties, showing a new spirit of compromise.

I saw in *Black Dog*, that if you lose, or if you have no power, after the election... [you will stand down as Leader]

Rubbish. Complete rubbish, I mean look I spent nearly eight years building up this party. Eight years of my life. I gave it its name, I gave it its symbol, I gave it its policies, I gave it its feel. I mean when I say 'I', I mean 'we'—a small collection of us. We gave it the chance to survive when we were only three percent. It's taken a long time to do it, and someone says to me, that having created an instrument which you can do something with, I'm about to retire, absolute nonsense.

But, being party leader for eight years is a long time.

Yes, and I would be giving it up tomorrow if I thought my energy or my ideas were running out, but they're not. In the end it depends on the party, because we are a democratic party, as you know, and if they want to kick me out, they can do so. But, from my point of view, if you ask me what my intentions are, I've got lots and lots and lots I want to do.

You're starting a nationwide tour quite soon. What does that involve?

I think the next election is going to be not so much about Westminster, but about those people that can make Westminster reach out to the country, that's what my book, *Beyond Westminster*, was all about, about how Westminster doesn't provide the solutions. I want to go through another sort of *Beyond Westminster* phase, not quite the same, in the run up to the election to get my message out to the country.

Strange Days

Asim Shivji goes to the cinema again

I have always felt that when I go to a film, I go without preconceptions from reviews that I have read or things that I have heard, I go to enjoy myself. However, when I discovered that James Cameron was writing a Science Fiction film, with a *Bladerunner*-esque pretext and a William Gibson style concept, and it starred Ralph Fiennes I had an inkling that it was going to be astonishing. It was.

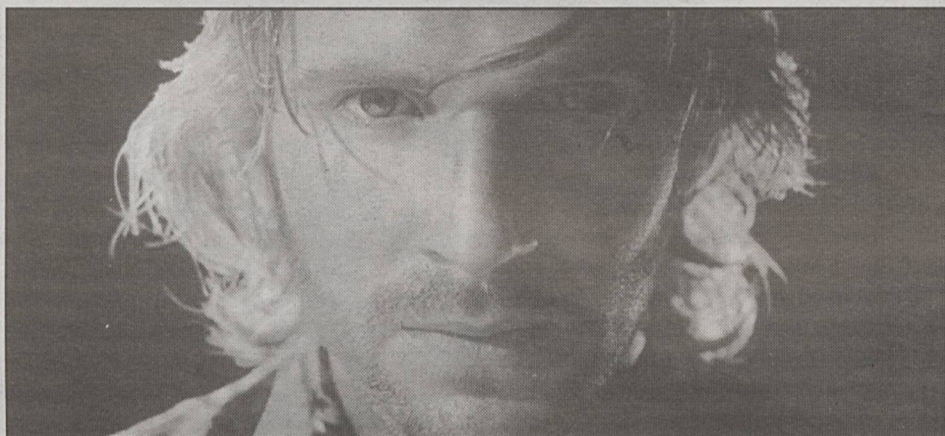
It is 1999 and the eve of the millenium, the city is LA, and crime has wormed its way through the fabric of society – the streets are not safe. Lenny Nero (Fiennes) is an ex-cop turned black market trader who deals in 'playback' – people's memories recorded through their eyes and other senses, the ultimate virtual experience. However, following the mysterious death of a leading black singer/ rights campaigner, Nero discovers that his ex-girlfriend, with whom he is obsessed, might be involved. The story unfolds in a sadly predictable way but the film still manages to ooze with style in every frame. The direction is frenzied, the

playback sessions literally seen through the eyes of the viewer are particularly so, and Kathryn Bigelow manages to sustain this furious pace right to the end.

Although *Strange Days* is original in its right, it does represent a return to Ridley Scott's *Bladerunner* in its prediction of the future. It is striking because the context is plausible and unfortunately very possible. The LA riots and the case of Rodney King were clearly a big influence.

The conclusion, which can only be described as 'Hollywood' (the baddies get put away and the goodies live happily ever after), is too euphoric in contrast to the otherwise dark film. However, Cameron is not to blame, the film was viciously edited after a disappointing response in the States, and I expect that the new end would probably appeal more to the Americans than to the British Shallow Grave-loving public.

Director: Kathryn Bigelow
Released on: March 1
☆☆☆☆



Ralph Fiennes looking Strange

Photo: Library

Underground

Alexis Derby digs deep

Think not of a District Line disaster or a Central Line catastrophe, *Underground* is a film about Yugoslavia not tube turmoil. It is an epic; epic length, epic landscapes and an epic Serbo-Croat text. But it is engaging, the subtitles merge into the film, and the vibrant atmosphere that is recreated carries the lengthy story.

It follows the lives of two members of the communist party from the second world war to present day, who look and sometimes behave like the Marx brothers. Marco is a cold-hearted businessman and 'Blacky' an idealist; they both share the love of an actress of, let us say, negotiable virtue. Marco shows his support for the war effort by acting as a go-between for the local community who are hiding in an underground shelter, and producing guns and ammunition for the communists.

As the war ends and Tito's communist regime sets in, the workers and Blacky carry on produc-

tion, oblivious of what is happening in the outside world.

On the surface Marco becomes rich (because he is selling the arms on) and important (because he is pals with Tito). He builds this facade whilst the underground community live in a world of their own. Eventually (twenty years later) Blacky and his son break out expecting to take on the fascists but surface into a quite different environment.

The story is long and twisted but the loud jazz soundtrack and beautiful cinematography make the time pass enjoyably. The direction shows much more attention to detail than most Western directors would bother with and that is what makes this film so mesmerising. Few use the cinema this gracefully.

Director: Kathryn Bigelow
Released on: March 1
☆☆☆☆



La Madra Muerta

Anit Roy-Choudhury enjoys a Spanish film

This tasty morsel is directed by acclaimed young Spanish director Juanma Bajo Ulloa. It is a stylish and provocative tale of murder, obsession and death, stuffed to the brim with devastatingly powerful performances, and devilish plot twists. A real taste sensation of brutish and shocking violence, and sensitive acting.

The story begins when Ismael Lopez de Matauko (Karra Elejalde), a violent and dangerously unbalanced thief, kills the mother of a young girl, Leire (Ana Alvarez). Leire sees Ismael as he tries to leave the scene, and he is forever haunted by her accusing stare.

Years later, Ismael sees Leire again, and when their eyes meet he is convinced that she has recognised him. However, we discover that Leire is mentally disturbed and she does not communicate with the outside world. Ismael becomes increasingly disturbed by the sight of Leire and conspires with his possessive lover Maite (the

intriguingly named Lio) to kidnap her for a heavy ransom. He pauses only to beat his employer to death; he inquired whether Ismael liked girls with big pussies – I see. (I don't-Ed)

Anyhow, after kidnapping her, Ismael finds that he is becoming more and more obsessed with the innocence and beauty he sees in Leire. Maite is not best pleased with this turn of events and demands that he kills Leire. Ismael finds himself unable to do the deed, and as his passion for Leire mounts, he is overwhelmed by feelings of guilt and insecurity, resulting in a somewhat sick and twisted love triangle.

This is a tough suspense filled psychological thriller, and is really well acted. Go see it, but make sure the person in front of you takes off their hat, or you won't be able to see the bloody subtitles! Bitch!

Director: Juanma Bajo Ulloa
Released on: March 1
☆☆☆☆

French Twist

Virginie Gatin gets continental

French Twist or *Gazon Maudit*, is Josiane Balasko's first film, as a director, to be shown in Britain. She is better known here for her acting in *Trop Belle Pour Toi* with Gerard Depardieu. *French Twist* is a love triangle between two women and a man: not a new subject, but here portrayed in a light and very realistic way. Josiane Balasko stresses that her aim when making this film was not to raise any gay issues, but simply to show how people can fall in love with an unlikely person, at any time.

Loli (Victoria Abril), is happily married to Laurent (Alain Chabat), with two children and a house in the South of France. Loli is totally unaware of her husband's love affairs, but Laurent feels they are unimportant as Loli is the only woman he loves. His cosy life is soon to be changed though, when Arijio (Josiane Balasko), a butch lesbian, breaks down in her van outside their house. She instantly falls for Loli, who, tired

of her husband's constant late nights 'at work', enjoys the attention and a friendship is quick to develop between the two. This soon evolves into a deeper relationship, and when her macho husband discovers her infidelity, he finds it hard to deal with his wife's newly discovered sexuality.

The film portrays the 'Menage à Trois', as Loli finds it impossible to choose between the two. *French Twist* is a typical French film in the ambiguous characters, and a very good one. I couldn't help though being surprised at this particular film being released in Britain, despite its success in France and nomination for the Golden Globe awards and Oscars, its very bold approach to the lesbian relationship is not suited to the British prude eye. It still remains one of the best films released this year.

Director: Josiane Balasko
Released on: March 1
☆☆☆☆

A Boy's Life

Cyril Megret has a gay old time

Hold on a second! What do you know about being gay? Think about it. All many of us know is prejudice. *A Boy's Life* confronts with each story, the situations and feelings of three different boys, who have one thing in common; they are gay. *A Boy's Life* is a collection of three award winning short films. "Dottie gets spanked" by Todd Haynes, is about 6 year old Steven who is obsessed with a TV program about a dizzy blonde woman which is aimed at girls. When he wins tickets to the show the shock of meeting "Dottie" in the flesh, coupled with his football-crazed father who forbids him to watch the programme any longer, causes dreams that reflect his deepest secrets.

The second short film, "A Friend of Dorothy" by Raoul O'Connell, is a romantic comedy in which Winston, a very reserved, quiet guy comes to New York. He is shocked by his first sexual experience, but finally approaches his room-mate Tom, with whom he has been in love since he moved in. Tom has to leave for LA because of a job, and Winston is left behind, but he begins to come out on his own.

"Trevor", the last film in the program is concerned with the fact that 1/3 of all teenagers who try to commit suicide are gay. Thirteen year old Trevor is depressed, when all his schoolmates spurn him after he admits his love for a friend. He tries to kill himself, but survives an overdose of

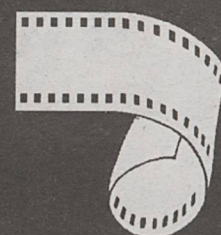
aspirins and regains the will to live with the prospect of getting tickets for a Diana Ross concert (wouldn't the effect be quite the opposite –Ed). To those with prejudice this film shows gays in a positive light. Gone are the images of desperate men walking around Russell Square at night. "A Boy's Life" tries to make us aware of young gay people's wishes and their desire to be recognised and loved. In this film one notices the portrayal of gay desire as no different to 'straight' desire. I agree with Peggy Raginski who made "Trevor" the cornerstone of a non-profit educational media campaign; showing and making people think about the particular problems facing gay and lesbian youth is the only way to heighten awareness and tolerance.

Director: Philipp Kunze
Released on: March 1
Showing at: ICA
☆☆☆☆

☆☆☆☆☆ The best
☆☆☆☆ Rather decent
☆☆☆ Average
☆☆ Not so decent
☆ The worst



Beaver Golden Oldies



No 7: All The President's Men
Director: Alan J. Pakula (1976)

The film that put the investigative into journalism, and has done for the profession what Cocktail did for bartending. The Watergate scandal was the event that shook 70s America to its very core with its revelation that even the President of the United States is not beyond making political ends meet personal needs. No real surprise there really. In the aftermath of all big events we get the film of the scandal, *All The President's Men*, but surprisingly *not* directed by the master of the genre Oliver Stone.

Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman star in this cleverly woven and well paced political thriller as the two ferreting Washington Post reporters Woodward and Bernstein. Excessive amounts of overtime were needed to uncover the labyrinthine conspiracy that was the bugging of the Democratic Party headquarters by Richard Nixon's Republicans. Beyond this historical event the film stands as a telling indictment on the dark corridors of corruption and power.



There is definitely no need for a *white-wash* here as both Redford and Hoffman excel and give assured performances as the two Washington news-hounds scenting the big journalistic break. Redford plays it straight down the line as the methodical non-nonsense hack, Woodward, while Hoffman portrays his highly strung and fidgety partner Bernstein with great conviction. The introduction of the mysterious *deep-throat* may encourage a few of the lads to watch this highly compelling movie although we never find out if it lives up to the name.

Available on video from HMV and Virgin Megastore at £11.99

EJ

Available on video from HMV and Virgin Megastore at £11.99

Spellbound

Asim Shivji is not

The *Spellbound* exhibition celebrates 100 years of cinema through the work of ten top artists who were asked to explore the relationship between art and film. Damien Hirst, Boyd Webb, Steve McQueen and Ridley Scott all make an appearance, some choosing to express themselves on celluloid, others choosing more conventional art forms.

Hirst's film named *Hanging Around*, is an enigmatic puzzle that is smartly constructed, but the only reel which caught my attention is Boyd Webb's short animation, *Love Story*, which follows the romantic encounters of a piece of popcorn! Douglas Gordon's 24 hour *Psycho*, simply Hitchcock's film slowed down to three frames per second and projected onto a large screen, claims to 'absorb the viewer in new ways' but did not manage to absorb me in any way

— being a traditionalist I have always enjoyed the film at normal speed. Ridley Scott's contributions are the storyboards from *Blade Runner* and *Alien*, but they are not on display having been transferred onto video and are shown on small monitors. Fiona Banner's dubious contribution was writing out the entire script for *Apocalypse Now* and *Full Metal Jacket* on an incredibly large piece of paper.

The real problem with this exhibition is that it is a gigantic waste of money. In fact I could recreate *Spellbound* in the comfort of my own flat, with the aid of a video recorder, a rented copy of *Psycho* and a Blur video. Frankly with concessions at £3.50 and the only available guidebook (without which the exhibition is incomprehensible) priced at £17 I'd rather go and see a proper film.

Venue: Hayward Gallery
Until: May 6

Cézanne

David Bakstein on this Great Master

After a number of exhibitions have been held across Europe, London finally gets its own major compilation of Paul Cézanne's genius. This unfortunately means that visitors have to show great amounts of patience both to get in and to get through. However, the permanent collection does give one an opportunity to kill at least some waiting time.

Cézanne's life and artistic cycles are decomposed into nine stages in as many rooms and progress with time. Beginning with his early years in Aix-en-Provence, these works are based on Romanticism. After having taken up his studies of arts in Paris, Cézanne got in contact with fellow Impressionist artists like Manet and Renoir. During that period his slash-like brushstroke technique tries to catch the structure of the objects and their nature. He creates some-

thing that appeals to the mind and not just to the eye and thereby takes the first step towards Expressionism and Cubism.

Portraits of himself, his wife and everyday people from French life which he painted throughout his career form a complement to his still lifes and images of the French landscape. He derived his influences both from his roots in Provence and from Auvers-sur-Oise, the place where he finally settled. A number of drawings, some representing a homage to fellow artists like Puget or Michelangelo round up this exhibition.

This exhibition represents the first climax of this year's art season and so is not to be missed. However, I would recommend a visit when the initial waves of tourists have settled or best of all, during the week.

Venue: Hayward Gallery
Until: April 28

Frederic Leighton

Emma Justice on art for arts sake

Think Pre-Raphaelitism or Classicism and most art lovers tend to think of JP Waterhouse, but Frederick Lord Leighton (1830-1896) is an equally brilliant exponent of these two great schools. It is therefore a treat for



Flaming June circa 1895

Photo: Library

us all to be able to see the retrospective of his work currently on show at The Royal Academy of Arts.

Leighton belonged to an influential group of avant garde artists in the 1860s who believed in art for arts sake. They held that the chief objective of art was to attain an ideal, abstract beauty without recourse to narrative, story telling or formaldehyde sheep. Leighton certainly created his own vision of ideal beauty and this is seen most clearly in his famous painting "*Flaming June*". This picture of a sleeping woman is charged with feeling and seduces the eye with its sumptuous colour. You really do have to see it to believe how powerfully it evokes in you that languid dreamy mood felt on a hot summer afternoon. This was certainly my favourite but his sculptures of male nudes were equally good in their depiction of the perfect male form.

As a celebration of the centenary of his death the exhibition is very comprehensive and further events are being held at Leighton House and The Victoria and Albert Museum.

Venue: Royal Academy
Until: April 21

Opens 5 March

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Laugh? I nearly died!

Bernard Levin

The Times

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Twelfth Night

Emma Justice on gender-bending

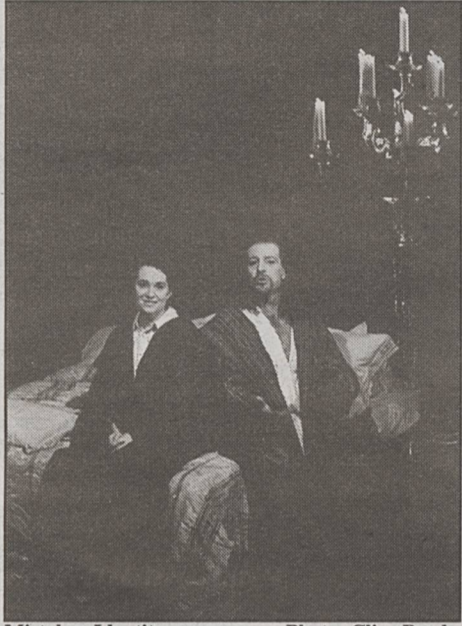
Gender-bending is what most people associate with William Shakespeare's comedy plays and *Twelfth Night* does not disappoint. He breaks all Elizabethan morals, or not, as the case may be. The RSC's production at the Barbican makes the most out of the humorous situations which inevitably arise when people are not what they seem. On the surface it is a simple story of a brother and sister shipwrecked miles apart on the strange island of Illyria. The sister Viola secures a job at the love sick Count Orsino's court as his number one man servant. Dressed as the youth Cesario, she/he is sent to woo the mourning Olivia who in turn falls in love with her/him but meanwhile Viola/Cesario is pining after Orsino. This is just part of the confusion as everything is made ten times worse when Viola's twin brother arrives with the sailor Antonio who has fallen madly in love with him. If all this isn't enough there's an equally amusing sub-plot involving the scam to humiliate the haughty Malvolio. To try and explain the plot further would get me as equally confused as you probably are now but I assure you it all seems perfectly clear when you watch the play.

With this eccentric plot Shakespeare delicately explores the boundaries of genders to rapt effect. If performed as it would originally have been, everything would have been turned on its head again as Viola would have been a boy dressed up as a girl and then dressed up as the youth Cesario. The mood

and tempo are just right and the acting is spot on with Feste, the fool, played brilliantly by Paul Greenwood pipping the others at the acting and singing posts. However, they all succeeded in having the audience literally eating out of their collective hands.

Unless you are a keen follower of the Conservative Party you will never see better comical and homo-erotic scenes. *Twelfth Night* is a play not to be missed because it really does convey superbly what is best about Shakespeare and that is his understanding of human foibles.

Venue: Barbican
Until: March 8



Mistaken Identity Photo: Clive Barda

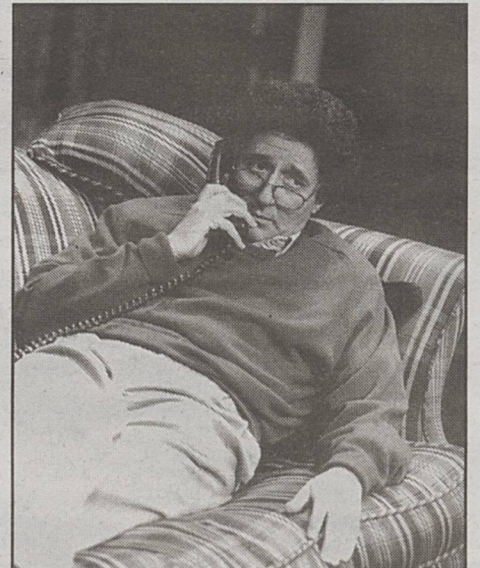
Chapter Two

Liz Bougerol explores human behaviour

Nobody knows American comedy like Neil Simon, and in case you've never come across one of his chatty, obsessive sketches of human shortcomings, (eg *The Odd Couple*, *Biloxi Blues*) *Chapter Two* is a crash course in the formula that has made him the most successful living dramatist a hundred times over.

Chapter Two follows the whirlwind romance between divorced actress Jennie (Sharon Gless) and widowed writer George (Tom Conti), thrown together by her zany but sweet-souled chum and his sleazy but well-intentioned brother out of concern to see them get on with their lives. They meet for five minutes, fall in love in about seven, and tie the knot within a few blissful weeks, only to come crashing head-on into each other's unfinished emotional business.

Conti is quietly brilliant as George, struggling to reconcile his admittedly unwise decision with a craving to believe in love the second time around. Gless's incarnation of the embittered ex-wife who gives herself another chance is endearing but terribly cautious, and while she's busy walking on eggshells Debora Weston's Faye steals the show. While her otherwise from-hell marriage is good for the odd laugh, Faye's catty cynicism conceals a loneliness which lands her in an affair that she doesn't quite know how to have. This situation is supposed to be even funnier because she's flinging with George's very married brother Leo (Ian Redford), but it just winds up being rather



Tom Conti keeps BT in business Photo: Mark Douet
pathetic – kind of like Redford's overzealous hybrid East Coast speech, a small blip in an otherwise witty performance.

As if the Manhattan skyline, cluttered apartment sets and Harry Connick piano riffs weren't enough, Neil Simon's dialogue is so New York it's like spending two and a half hours over a deli plate. Neither too deep nor too clichéd, *Chapter Two* does what it sets out to do, and if you're less than constantly entertained by the one-liners and quiprosos, you'll be hard pressed not to find one joke, emotion or character flaw that comes across as arrestingly real.

Venue: Gielgud Theatre
Until: June 15

1953

M Rizzo on a mournful apocalypse



John Warnaby as Oldenberg Photo: Ivan Kyncl

ROME 1953. The past rewritten. Europe in ruins. Hitler still in control and Mussolini's son, Vittorio, ruling Italy. The corridors of power burning with a sickness called desire. The plot of Raine's play revolves around Hitler's decision to cement the relationship between Germany and Italy by the marriage of the German princess Ira to Vittorio (the King of Italy). However, Vittorio is stricken by the allure of Annette le Skye, a Jewish widower whose son is claimant to the English throne. Vittorio is therefore torn between his desire for Annette and having to sacrifice his son in order to co-operate fully with his allies.

Raine's sexually explosive play is a cold and callous piece that aggressively explores the nature of sex, obsession, desire and the thirst for power. The majority of its protagonists have few redeeming qualities (which makes it extremely difficult to care what happens to them). What actually hooks and fascinates you about the first act is the scheming, manipulative, and malevolent attitude of its central characters. This is further enhanced by some powerful and disturbing acting and in addition some neat flashes of dialogue that at time punctuate the air like sharp bursts of modern poetry.

Unfortunately, the resonating strengths of act one were impaired by a final act that devoted far too much of its time tying up any loose ends and resolving the fate of its characters with longwinded, hollowed out soliloquies. All in all this was an entertaining if erratic piece of theatre that attempted to expose the dark aspects of the human condition but ultimately, had you leaving the theatre with an undeniable sense of feeling somewhat cheated.

Venue: The Almeida Theatre Islington
Until: March 30

Gulp Fiction

Anita Majumdar on Tarantino East End style

Quentin Tarantino and the Real McCoy, not exactly an obvious match, but one worth investigating so I went down to Stratford on a cold Wednesday night to check it out. I was not disappointed as the next couple of hours were the funniest I have ever spent.

Eddie Nestor and Robbie Gee play all the parts, apart from Felix who copes with playing the music and the silent sidekick (he also has an afro to die for!). The main characters are Ronnie and Reggie (hmm wonder where I've heard those names before), the Diss brothers, who are just out of jail and ready to go straight. However, all does not go well for the intrepid duo as much tougher than any hardened criminal is Lizzie, Reggie's girlfriend. She is hilariously played by Robbie Gee who looked quite stunning in a dress (Ru-Paul your days are numbered!) Sub-plots included Ronnie and Reggie's mum coming into contact with Reggie's father again after 35 years and the ensuing chaos that follows as a woman scorned gets her revenge.

The best parts of the show were all the

audience interactions, as audience members were 'dissed' (eliminated) with such sweet words as "You're so ugly that you talk out of your bum so your breath smells!" They also dissed each other, my favourite diss being, "You're so stupid that you would not give a sample of your urine at the hospital because you thought it would be taking the piss out of a black man". Other funny moments were when Lizzie burst into 'I will survive' after Ronnie had let her down and when she/he did a rendition of Shaggy's 'Mr Bombastic' in the tightest mini skirt imaginable! The thing that really made the show work was the way that the actors were able to swap roles and with it accents and whole personas without the slightest bit of difficulty.

There was hardly a bad moment in the show and just when the ending seemed to be a bit of a cop out there was a final scene where Ronnie opens Reggie's briefcase to find a rather feminine item of clothing.

All in all a singing, dancing and dissing extravaganza and the best farce I've seen in years. Quentin Tarantino eat your heart out!

Venue: Theatre Royal Stratford East
Until: March 9

Communicating Doors

Virginy Gatin on time travel X-files style in a hotel

The comedy thriller *Communicating Doors* sees Alan Ayckbourn back to his brilliant best, with the play nominated for an Olivier award. His exploration into the possibility of time travel has the audience laughing at one moment and gasping in terror at the next, supported by the music from "Psycho" and a superb design by Roger Rossop.

Set in the same hotel room in three different time periods, the story follows the encounters of Poopay, a self-confessed specialist sexual

consultant, with a felonious old gentleman, his two late wives and his murderous business partner. The cast is superbly led by Angela Thorne, of 'Three Up Two Down' fame, who learns that she is soon to be murdered when Poopay travels back in time through a communicating door. The events that unfold provide much amusement, partly through the absurdity of the situation and partly by Ayckbourn's clever characterisations.

The play has no pretension and manages to sustain a fast moving pace. Anybody seek-

ing sophisticated humour will be disappointed, but the action is amusing thanks in part to John Arthur in the role of the bungling yet officious hotel detective, and the script only degenerates into farcical flapstick briefly. Ayckbourn contrives to produce surprises right up to the final curtain, and as long as you don't take yourself or your theatre too seriously, *Communicating Doors* provides a very entertaining evening.

Venue: Savoy Theatre
Until: April 27



The two villains Photo: Library

Big toys, big noise

Toby Mason talks about beer and life in an exclusive interview with The 60 Foot Dolls

Meet the 60 ft dolls, the pop world's newest rock'n roll sons, in the plush bar of a West London hotel. The opulent surroundings contrast slightly with their fashionably down-at-heel clothes, but guitarist Richard is wearing a lovely woolly cardigan. Cardigan! Surely not the uniform of the rock'n roll ubermensch? Actually, you see, the Dolls, despite their fearsome, debauched reputation are really nice blokes. Can this be? How can the firebreathing, hoteltrashing monsters of popular folklore actually turn out to be amiable creatures with all the destructive intent of Eeyore under heavy sedation? Mike has the answer.

"Alcohol" he states. "We're all monster drinkers, and with enough inside us, we acquire a glint in our eyes which would make Satan jealous". The effects of this glint have been well-chronicled in the music press, whose gossip columns have regularly featured such events as their full-scale excavation of a seventeenth-century golf course, Mike's 48 hour drink and drugs binge on the NME Bratbus tour last year, and most spectacularly, Carl the drummer frying his girlfriend's goldfish after a particularly heavy night out.

"We're all monster drinkers, and with enough inside us, we acquire a glint in our eyes which would make Satan jealous"

However, Richard is keen to dispel this hedonistic image.

"We're turning into a joke band", he says ruefully. "A few years ago, I would read the gossip columns, and hate the people in them for showing off and being stupid. Now we're in every week!" Carl looks at his shoes. "I don't know how they get hold of them," he says. (His publicist winks at me behind his back) "There was a story that I lost my underpants up a sheep in Wales the other week..." (the publicist gulps and looks down).

I ask them about rock'n roll itself. Are they perhaps following the well-worn models of bands gone by in order to gain recognition? Mike scratches his nose. "It's fun, like," he proffers. Richard comes to the rescue. "We're not following any particular tradition - I mean, Dylan Thomas used to go to America, get drunk and throw up over journalists - was he the first rock'n roll star? Perhaps he was just following Byron though, but no-one accused him of copying anyone!" With logic like this, who am I to disagree? I debate mentioning Baccus and co, but perhaps that is pushing it. Rock'n roll as an eternal concept? Interesting, nonetheless.

Let's move on, though. Having vaguely known the Dolls during their stint as a minor support band in Newport, I ask them about the effects of their (relative) fame. Now that music is a career, do they feel any less free than before? Mike shakes his head. "It's a great life" he says. "I'd recommend it to anyone. When you think of the kind of jobs we could have been doing; and here we are in a hotel, drinking and chatting." Richard nods his assent. "I mean, the satisfaction of

getting somewhere far outweighs it - it's what every artist wants really, isn't it? And we're prepared to work for it, too". Too right - the Dolls have just finished a tour where they had three nights off in three weeks, and claim to have been home for two days in two months. "But 'home' is basically hotel rooms in London now, rather than Newport - we just visit now and again"



The 60 Foot Dolls relax in their personal heaven; a beer cellar!

Photo: Pennie Smith

I ask them how far music represented escapism - the Manics always said that music was their only road out of dead-end jobs in small-town hell. "Totally," all three nod their agreement. "It's the kind of career where it doesn't matter if you haven't been to the right school, or are in the Masons or anything; you join the elite in your field based on merit, not on artificial, social constraints. The Beatles were the first great working-class band, and they, more than anyone, made the music world classless." Hmm, interesting, but Richard goes further. "Popular music is the purest form of natural selection; if you're good enough, and work hard enough, then you should succeed, and you deserve your success". Dylan Thomas and Darwin in the first quarter-of-an-hour! This is not what I was expecting.

This rosy view of stardom is all very well, but I ask about its effect on them as people.

"...The Beatles were the first great working-class band, and they, more than anyone, made the music world classless"

Do they now have to treat fans as consumers, rather than mates - out of necessity? They pause for a moment. "Yes" says Richard, reluctantly. "But it's the only way - I mean it's not humanly possible to care about faces in the audience personally anymore. It's more general, you know, 'thanks for coming'" Carl chips in here, though. "We still remember the fans who came to our first gigs - I've a lot of respect for the people who were committed when we were nobody. It's a lot easier now, but a lot of people made sacrifices to come and see us in the early days, and that still means a lot".

There's a disarming honesty here, which is endearing, but the Dolls repeatedly come over as committed nihilists - some record company literature I read quoted them as

extolling the virtues of smashing phoneboxes as a means of expression. Where's the anger? Are you the voice of disenfranchised youth? Richard answers carefully. "It's like, if you can't write a letter to your MP, and you know that it won't make any difference, then throwing a brick through a window is your means of protest, isn't it?" I arch an eyebrow. I'm not convinced. Richard tries

again. "Everything is political, right down to the clothes you wear." True; one of the great achievements of the Manics was to show that even drinking a can of Coke is a political act, rather than any kind of neutral consumption, but the Dolls don't quite seem as sussed, somehow. "We don't really like bands with agendas, it's just pompous", states Mike. So your manifesto is not to have a manifesto, then? Silence. Let's talk politics. Would you play a gig for any political cause? "No" says Richard, firmly. "We don't believe in any political party, really. We might play a gig for CND, if we're invited".

"Everything is political, right down to the clothes you wear"

Earlier in the interview, I quoted to the band some lines from Iggy Pop which I came across while preparing for this interview, and which seemed to sum up the band:

"I'm the world's most forgotten boy, The one who searches and destroys". Again they nod. The band are vocal about their status as Anglo-Welsh provincials - Richard described their position as the 'niggers of Europe' because they have no language, no culture, and unemployment is as high as anywhere in Britain. However, do they know who they're trying to destroy? I suspect not. In a funny kind of a way, perhaps the Dolls do represent some kind of a voice - that of the disillusioned, disenfranchised twenty-somethings whose only pride is in their alienation from the empty political system which subjugates them, and whose anger stems directly from their inability to change anything.

I leave the Dolls drinking coffee in the bar. They have escaped, I suppose. They're visiting Wales for a week before resuming promotional duties in London, and possibly visiting America later this year. They look kind of happy, as well as tired, because the future holds real possibilities for them, not least the possibility of forgetting the boredom from which their music may just have saved them.

Toby Mason

Gone in a Blur

Bluesky explains why Blur aren't sticking around

When I was fifteen, I really liked Blur. They were as cute as could be and meant everything to me. Me and my friends would spend hour upon mindless hour arguing over who was sexier: Damon or Alex. Now it's who was wiser: Plato or Aristotle. Which conversation is sadder, I know not. I think the music you listen to generally reflects what is going on in your life, as you grow and your taste in films, clothes, music, TV and even friends changes with you; so it's out with *Top Gun* and in with *The Usual Suspects*, 'burn the Shell suit' time and buy some hipsters, forget *Children's Ward* and remember to catch *ER* on Wednesday night and, sadly, bye bye Blur. For me, that is. I don't regret watching *Top Gun* ten times or making The Lemonheads my world the year before Blur happened. I flick through my fourth year homework diary with whimsical glee, Evan Dando pictures torn from successive copies of NME are omnipresent, for he was God then with his baby-cute eyes peering through his floppy hair. I remember standing at the bus stop one afternoon and thinking that "Patience is like bread, I say, I ran out of that yesterday," (from *It's about time*) was the best lyric ever written. I was So Young. But then Dando cut his hair, instantaneously losing his appeal and The Lemonheads stopped writing songs like the precious *Being Around*. Even the poster symbolically peeled itself off the wall.

Garbage, Alanis Morissette, Foo Fighters and Skunk Anansie. And I can't not mention the melancholic heaven/hell that is The Bends and the ethereal greatness of Radiohead. The Brits judges proved yet again this year to have no clue. Radiohead deserved so much more, and as for what Oasis deserved... Can someone please explain Oasis to me or are "what's the story" and "morning glory:" two completely unrelated and irrelevantly tied phrases that just rhyme? I love them really, in a schizo kind of way.

I always have music on when I am writing and I've just realised that what I'm listening to now - *Murmur* by REM - was recorded sixteen years ago. I guess that's really the reason why Blur aren't good anymore. Not many of us will be listening to the multi-award-winning *Parklife* in sixteen years. Wait and see. **Bluesky**

Artist: Melissa Etheridge

Single: I Want To Come Over

Deeply shite in the most profound sense, Melissa Etheridge's crimes against humanity continue unabated. This utterly undistinguished track has been taken from the stagnant quagmire that was her "Your Little Secret" album, and *Jesus Christ*, I hate it.

This is the kind of tune crap dads listen to on a Sunday afternoon, as they drive back from the Gardening Centre, assorted pot plants and plastic patio furniture cluttering up the boots of their BMWs, speeding home to suburbia with this "rocking" on their overly expensive but criminally underused car stereos, looking forward to a Bird's Eye Boil-in-the-Bag Cod in Cheese Sauce and the latest episode of "Howard's Way" on the telly, all the while ignoring their wife and children, pondering what great a decade the eighties were, and hey, wait a minute, a bit of Tina Turner or Bon Jovi would be quite agreeable right now...

So fuck this corporate rock bollocks. Melissa Etheridge is a twat. **IH**

Punish Your Machine!

Artist: Front 242

Album: Mute@ge Mix@Ge

This album is a timely reminder that not everything sprang punk. While the Sex Pistols were rene-ewing the three chords of rock there was a true musical revolution going on. Extreme experimental bands like Throbbing Gristle and Cabaret Voltaire were forging new sonic paths. They presented extreme music and images in complex multi media corporate style. Industrial music began and it's aesthetic was allied to Kraftwerk like electro pop in the early 80s. Electronic body music was formed revolving around fear, hatred, domination, politics and religion. At the forefront of this movement was 242. By the end of the decade the futuristic notion of the scene, political changes, repetition, overexposure and the rise of dance music rendered the scene impotent. Most faded and others went metal. Only 242 were able to reinterpret their original vision for the 90s.

This new compilation of mixes of songs from releases since 1991 reaffirms 242's relevance. They've used the top names in dance music to reinterpret their songs. Neither a cash in or cop out but logical. Without 242 and their contemporaries then techno would never have developed. So is the album any good? Of course it is!

Dancesoundtrackmusic is a harsh intense instrumental that is an abstract synthesis of the moods of *Tyranny for you*. The chilling quasi electro goth political *Gripped by fear* begins with a harsh German vocal sample then edges into deep pulses mixed

with beautiful piano blended with a rigid tense beat and bubbling synthesizer. The vocal refrain "recession, repression, aggression" adds to the tension. The mix of uplifting piano and fearful electronic beats result in an excellent take on the original. The second version is even darker and more apocalyptic. Things get even better. The original Orb 12" mix of *Rhythm of time* is a stunning alternative dancefloor classic. This is more typical of the traditional military teutonic thump of 242. It draws the

depths of the originals driving beat, extends it, adds an insistent clang and disjointed vocals. Unfortunately the new Orb version is 7 minutes of ambient burbling that removes any trace of 242 and is a real let down. Their mix of 'crapage' is better; short, discordant and edgy.

Of the more recent tracks Underworld do a dub and club mix of *Happiness* (from the 1993 'off' album). The former is more pleasant and comfortable. Both have a sweeping classical undercurrent and discordant piano. The club mix highlights Underworld's understanding of a vast range of atmosphere and sound and how best to utilise these. Hence this great 10 minute track spans a range of dance styles but an uplifting

house feel remains constant.

Two unusual and pure 242 tracks are included here. The first is 'Break me' from the mini album 'Angels versus animals'. A beautiful female voice sings a plea of vio-



Front 242, or is it a group of newsagents looking hard? Photo: Danny Williams

lent submission over typical 242 hard beats. A strange, unsettling but successful mix. *Junkdrome* (from 'off') is still my favourite piece of techno trance. Multiple spacey beats overlaid with a sharp rising pulse combine, reach the point of no return, and let loose in a stunning explosive burst. This is breathtaking, like a cosmic journey through some corridor of blurred twisted patterns. This is the best example of 242 maximising technology's potential to the full. Futuristic and alien but somehow warm and alive with the beauty of nature.

The remainder of the mixes are those done by the Prodigy on 'Religion'. These draw on the true angry dynamic at the heart of 242. The first mix lifts the brutality of the

song and wraps it in a furious relentless gabba like thump. Techno breakdowns and vocal snippets of "burn you down" offer no respite and merely add to the maniacal fury. There's a pause in the middle but the beats pile back in harder, stronger and more intense than ever before. This is hard and thrilling. The final *Trance you down* mix is the best. It's harsh deep trance techno with swirling breaks and deep thunderous techno workouts. It's excellent; dark and very nasty like a bad trip or a rave in hell. It's good to see the Prodigy haven't ignored the darkness and fury so fundamental to 242 and have (like all the others) made reinterpretations that are a credit to all involved.

This album shows the band in all their innovative diversity added to by new cutting edge talent. It's an excellent product but is not perhaps the best introduction to the band. It's neither a best of collection nor a complete set of remixes. However it's always nice to have a new 242 product, especially when it reaffirms their status and points the way to the future. As the band knows, the possibilities are endless if you have vision. The revolution begins in the mind and all else follows. Whatever they do next it's sure to be special. When you've spent years rehearsing the future it's easy to ride the moment. 242 do this, they make pop music for the 'crapage'. This is the soundtrack for the fall of history and the trumpeting of another unknown age. Gaze into the abyss and it's amazing what you'll find. Listen to 242 and you'll go beyond the deep into a new uncharted territory. Let them be your guide and you'll never want to return. Welcome to paradise.

Denim in the eighties

Pop group in time travel shocker

Artist: Denim

Album: ...On Ice

If Denim had to be a colour, I don't think it would be blue. Most denim is blue I know, but I think that *the* Denim would be purple. This is because their music isn't blue it's purple, yes purple, it's purple Denim. Not because purple is the nicest colour in the world but because it's downright weird and unusual, as is their music.

So just what makes their music so unusual? Well it's not to do with weird samples about slugs, joke phone calls to LWT, or even mind-bendingly complex covers which mean the CD is inaccessible to those with an IQ below 100, no, leave that type of weirdness safely in the hands of The Orb as they accidentally journey rather too far beyond the Ultraworld and have to resort to transmitting all of their material to their record company from another solar system; thus making their music just a little too weird for the average weird bloke, if not enjoying some chemically induced state of interplanetary weirdness.

Denim are weird in a different way, not in an outer-space kind of way but rather in a way which they may well have learnt from Dr Who. Yes you guessed it, Denim have mastered time travel! Blasting themselves back into time, their inevitably unreliable time machine (they did learn it all from a bloke with a long scarf and floppy hat remember?) was unable to tell them precisely the age in which they landed, but it was definitely somewhere in the early eighties. Once Denim landed they wasted no time in setting about their business. It was the most incredible idea in pop music

ever, made possible by the miracle of time travel, Denim were not just going to record an album that *sounded* like or was *influenced* by early eighties pop, they were actually going to record a *brand new* eighties album! Lawrence, the leader of the band, wasted no time in gathering together some out of work musicians left over from the seventies; members of the Glitter band, a Buzzcock, a Blockhead, and of course a Sex Pistol. Wasting no time they all headed for the nearest recording studio and began to create... finally it was completed, and what an album it was! Lawrence said sad farewells to his new-found friends, exploring them to return with him to the future, they were almost convinced until Lawrence accidentally mentioned Blur, which made them decide to carry on with the eighties instead! It was only the first time round for them remember?

On arriving back in the present, last week, the new (old) Denim album was promptly released and is in the shops now. The Ian Dury influences are clear, the songs are very seventies' (obviously) they are also very funny, weird and surreal (this input was due to Lawrence's time travel sickness, which makes everything quite *straaange!*) Denim will be regurgitating their eighties sounds at Wembley Arena, supporting Pulp, on the 1st and 2nd of March.

An interesting footnote to this story, is that when Lawrence left the eighties studio, he accidentally forgot one of the master tapes; a version of their song *Synthesisers in the Rain*. This tape fell into the hands of the tea boy, who later went on to join the group Ultravox, and use its bass line for their hit single *Vienna*. I hope Lawrence isn't too pissed off when he finds out!

Tom Stone

Ruthless Rich knows The Score

Artist: Fugees

Album: The Score

"Ooh La La La, It's the way that we rock when we're doin' our ting".
Damn, The Fugees have got a bitch in their crew.

There are threotypes of people that I have always associated with not being able to rap: 1) Residents of the UK 2) Caucasians 3) Women
The latter of these has now been dispelled.

Usually when a woman grabs the mic, she will come on screaming and wailing, but Lauryn can actually sing as well as upstage most male mcs with her intelligent and prolific lyrics.

If you are at all sceptical about hip-hop, hold back your prejudices and listen to the bass a bouncing, and the guitars intimately caress your eardrums.

The album is mainly self-produced by the trio, Pras, Lauryn, and Wyclef. However a guest producer Diamond D, who made a big impact a few years back, works the boards and rhymes on the track *The Score*.

Initially the album is quite raw with a hardcore sound similar to Mobb Deep merged with Arrested Development, but this group has wider influences including, soul, reggae, and ragga. In fact the album is so diverse and unpredictable that it surprisingly includes two cover

versions, Mr Marley's *No woman, no cry* and Roberta Flack's *Killing me softly*.

The former utilises a guitar riff which could be mistaken for the famous riff from Steve Miller's *The Joker* although an appropriate sample is not listed, whilst the latter features heavy percussion laced with powerful female vocals.

The first single *Fu-gee-la* appears four times on the compact disc, but the remixes (from the US 12"), including one featuring Sly and Robbie on the instruments, prove that nobody can enhance their winning formula.

This that Shit. Mind blowing. This album is the bomb.

"Ooh La La La La La La La La La La La La La La La La..."

RR



Fugees, spot the bitch!

Photo: Columbia

Singles Singles Singles Singles

Up on the Ruth

Artist: Ruth

Single: Fear of flying

The first time you listen to a song, and its cack, the great temptation is to ignore it totally. But, then, sometimes, you give it a second chance. And a third. And a fourth. And then you start to like it. So it was with Ruth. These unknown chaps have a nasty habit of beginning their chunes in a manner of startling crapness (Fairground tunes, Zeppelin riffs, Jingle Bells, tedious guitar), and only after a couple of listens do you get the trick. *Fear of Flying* itself is an especially fine song, and it has a middle eight to kill for. The rest are also pretty good. Not special, but fine. Under the superficial starts, there lurks a dangerous collection of hummable tunes, which sneak up behind you and place a metaphorical lettuce up your trousers. Sort of. Maybe, with another couple of singles under their belt, Ruth will rule the world, break America and headline Vegas. Then again... JC

Artist: Lush

Single: Ladykillers

People reinvent themselves. Madonna, for instance, has changed to keep up with a ever demanding public. Thus, Lush have changed to keep up with the new wave of 'Britpop' revolution. But, the key is that you must change for the better.

Lush used to be interesting, subtle, new, innovative, and almost sublime. This has now been ditched in favour of a short cut to POP! heaven, and the result has been dreadful to behold. The first single was panned (in this very paper), and (GUESS WHAT?) this one is even worse. At least *'Single Girl'* was memorably bad; *'Ladykillers'* is nothing less than forgettable. When the first line contains the immortal phrase "drinking with my friends in Camden", you know exactly what type of indie-poo is coming. And you cringe, because Lush don't even seem to realise how embarrassing they have become. It is said that imitation is the highest form of flattery; don't believe it. Imitation is an insult, and I have the single to prove it.

Artist: Sussed

Single: Never Want To See Your Face

Are Sussed actually cast-offs from Grange-Hill? From their band photo it certainly looks as if they are, all seeming to be between 12 and 16 with greasy hair to match.



Sussed: the ladykillers! Photo: Tony Smith

They seem to have been mysteriously transported forwards from the TV show in the late seventies in much the same way that their music has from the Manchester scene of the late eighties. They sound like a second rate Stone Roses (from the days of "She Bangs the Drum"). Perhaps Sussed should leave the too-young-to-buy-alcohol music writing to Ash and get on with revising for their A-levels (or should that be GCSEs?). Fred Scorfe

Magnapop storm indie charts with record sales

Artist: Magnapop

Single: Fire All Your Guns at Once

Magnapop come from a fine stable of rock. American indie to the core, these lucky chaps have found fans in Bob 'King amongst men' Mould, and Michael 'God amongst Kings' Stipe. Such influences and helpers allowed them to produce a splendid debut album (*'Hot Boxing'*). Yet, listen to the first track of this EP, Answers on a post-card. JC



Magnapop do the Cranberries! Photo:SR Etheredge

and you'd be pushed to realise it. Only extra throw away numbers show the true talent peeking through; taut and vital. 'Hold You Down' is especially good.

Yet, all this matters not a jot. For, flicking through this week's NME, I noticed that Magnapop are in with a bullet at number 24 in the indie chart. Translated, this mean they have sold about 4 copies. Who, then, has the other three? JC

Artist: Pure Morning

Single: Scum

This single sounds like it has been based around some kind of erroneous framework for perfect Indie music that many bands seem to be following these days, which consists of simply repeating a mediocre line ad infinitum; "You're just scum, scum around here, your're just..." (etc) to a background of uninspiring, single chord guitars. This really sounds like a recipe for disaster. However, despite its dullest of dull indie roots, sounding like a mix between the Wedding Present and the New FADS, it all seems strangely, almost disturbingly addictive. FS

Artist: Abra Moore

Single: Sweet Chariot

No, this isn't the song that pissheads sing at rugby matches, although it would be rather more interesting if it were. This is a song that floats in and out on a breeze of jangly Byrdsian guitars and predictable chords; just don't expect this to take you beyond your room - it clearly has no pretensions beyond US FM radio. There is nothing offensive here, it just seems to be so uninspired. You can almost hear the session musicians counting their pay. Kabo Morley

Artist: Bennet

Single: If You Met Me Then You'd Like Me

This debut Reading four-piece Bennet is a jaunty, likeable affair. There's something of Weezer here, a hint of Supergrass and the energy of These Animal Men. It sounds a little minimal in places but this potential.



Bennet bask in big beginnings Photo: Mark McNulty

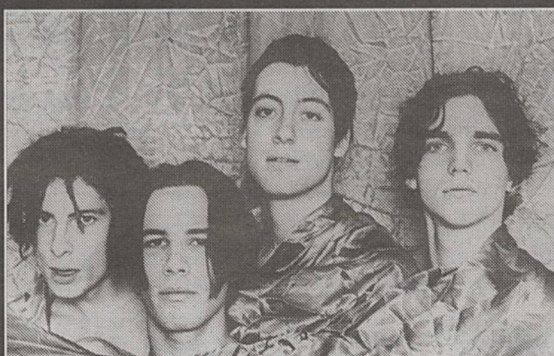
helps create a real speed-fuelled Buzzcocks vibe. In a market swamped with spiky, likeable pop, however, there is not much to let Bennet rise above the crowd. But hey, any band that puts a surf instrumental on the B-side and namechecks Elvis has Kabo Morley

Eight arms means musical charms

Artist: Octopus

Single: Magazine

Oh, the timing. A tune that fits so perfectly inbetween the post-Blur fallout, Pulp's ascendancy to Godhood and the general realisation across the nation that the Beatles are in fact cool again (the old Beatles that is, not today's limping old men sucking the flaccid dick of their former glory). Octopus slowly just right. I've listened to it five times already. IH



Recipe for succes; wrap Octopus in foil! Photo: Fiona Freund

have the mercurial elegance to snuggle amongst all three.

So not only is this tremblingly sweet, but the real genius is that the band are all clearly members of the old school of tunesmith songwriting, and know how to bash out an ace little number of POP! Yes! Harmonies! Melodies! Dynamics! Little Brass Accompaniments! Hurrah! The whole thing is

Terrormucus

Artist: Terrorvision

Single: Perseverance

Paint a picture in your mind. You are lying in a bath of greenest mucus, up to your neck. The sickly goo, replete with crusty bits, submerges your entire body up to your head. It seeps into your entire body. Someone walks into the room, holding a steaming pile of human faeces. Looking malevolent and evil, they launch said turgid pile at your head...!

!!!

DO YOU DUCK?????????

This is Terrorvision in a nutshell. They are crap, they are the sensation when the mucus gloops over your head. And, on the subject, I shall say no more than that.

James Crabtree



"Ahh! A bath of mucus I'll strip off and jump in!" But wait! What's your mate got in his hand? Photo:Simon Fowler

Artist: Honey Crack

Single: Go Away

"Go Away" by Honey Crack, is a pure blistering indie-pop, grunge-anthem, happy, jumpy, fluffy, rocky, chart-friendly, post-Nirvana, dance floor filling slice of paradise and is actually quite good.

Artist: Hooker

Single: The Fear

When I was, like, fifteen, the biggest thing that rocked my sorry ass was Rage Against the Machine. This band follows all the criteria of a militaristic, politically activist, dodgy rap metal group: shouty vocals, dreadlocks, distorted guitars, and some appalling rant about how awful "the system" is, man. It's all here.

God, how I loved it all, but a certain mellowness of age follows frustrated adolescence, and so I guess I'd probably have liked Papa Brittle when I was fifteen, but sadly, no more. These days, lines like "Gun Control reserved culture / Has curbed the slaying of happy eaters / The alienated people's clock / Is ticking faster / Emotional revenge" are hardly vibrantly, dangerously radical, but just a wee bit embarrassing. Especially when the band prints them all over the sleeve.

There are a couple of redeeming features, like when they use electronica, ditching the psycho-rap metal and coming over all Chemical Brothers. But these bits are too few to keep the tune away from the territory marked "arse". Lighten up, chaps.

Iain Haxton

Indefinite Article

I've never been very good at science. I'm not putting myself down, it's just that I'm not very good at dealing with things that I can't see. They say that CFCs rise up and destroy the ozone layer which is supposed to stop lethal tri-oxygen particles from entering our atmosphere, but how do I really know? I accept that I'll know once the damage has been done, but what good is that once my skin has become all warty with cancer and I can't breathe properly? So I have to trust someone else to guide me on the properties of things I can't see. Big oil and chemical companies come up with all these fantastic new substances to make my life easier, but seem to be unable to know what to do if something goes wrong. This we see quite clearly in cases such as the oil spillages or the emission of carbon monoxide. First comes the invention and then the cure, which is often too late for our wildlife or ourselves.

Which is why one of my newest fads is an interest in molecular engineering. One of the most recent areas in this field is designing molecule shapes to help clean up the destruction that modern industries neglected to think through properly. Molecules can be designed now in any shape or form from mini-pagodas to miniature bracelets. But listen to one of the latest designs from the Michigan State University (MSU). They have designed a bucket-shaped molecule which is miniscule in size and depending on the type of chemical that the submicroscopic bucket is made out of, it can trap and detect chemicals which are found in the polluting environment. For instance, say in one of my more ambitious moods, I happen to spill a quantity of benzene. I can't see the benzene but I know that I have 'dropped' it somewhere and need some way of picking it up. MSU have come up with a solution. In this case, I spray on to the area where I think the benzene might be distributing millions of these tiny 'buckets' which in this case, are made up of 6-8 molecules of glucose. The glucose bucket is shaped in such a way that it fits in one benzene molecule perfectly and not only that, it actually attracts the lethal chemical. Problem, how do we manage to retain our catch once it is inside the bucket? More genius. MSU have built the submicroscopic bucket with a 'lid' made out of a ninth molecule, so that when the benzene eagerly swims into the bucket, the lid shuts, sealing the container. Even more genius is that as the lid closes, an inbuilt sensor on the edge of the structure glows as the benzene pollutant enters the glucose bucket. This works as the energy which the pollutant absorbs from light sources, is passed on to the supramolecular bucket and glows. Thus, we can see when the millions of glucose buckets have trapped the benzene and detect whether all the pollutant has been picked up.

I'm baffled at how something so small such as microscopic buckets can be so useful and important to the inventions of modern industry. It makes my degree in anthropology seem somewhat inadequate. Studying the blood-letting rituals of the Bemba seems somewhat irrelevant next to something as useful as science. But at least I realise that there is hope for me. Although after three years at the LSE I feel that I know almost less than when I started, at least my mind has been opened up to take an interest in and appreciate all these subjects that other people are studying.



Travel

Taking on Thailand

Amy Shaw recounts her Siam experience

It was with trepidation and a lot of prejudice that I arrived in Bangkok. Any fears of being sold as a sex slave (in my case not particularly likely!) were pushed to the back of my mind as I negotiated customs and faced the barrage of taxis vying for my custom.

My introduction to the notorious Bangkok traffic even at 3 am was something I will never forget. Even in the early hours it is not a city you get around in a hurry - where else could you get traffic jams at that hour? The Bangkok bus system is not for the faint-hearted and in very un-traveller-like fashion my friend and I ended up taking tuk-tuks (oversized, three-wheeled mopeds with room for four nervous passengers) everywhere. Another more civilised mode of transport is the river taxi, which I took to visit The Grand Palace, a breathtaking collection of temples, sacred Buddhas and the most amazing Buddhist religious statues. A feast for my western eyes, so used to European architecture.

Soon the city became oppressive and so I headed for Thailand's trekking centre, Chiang Mai, ten hours north of Bangkok.

I found a trek suitable for me at the hostel I was staying in and for 35 pounds got possibly the best three days of my life. Our guide Jin, who conducted the whole trek wearing flip-flops, spoke fluent English and so we were fairly knowledgeable about the tribes we encountered, which for me really enriched the experience. The first night we stayed in a Lahsu village deep in the Thai jungle near the Burmese border and I felt like an Indiana Jones movie extra. The next day we went elephant riding and I had the misfortune to be stuck on the world's most belligerent elephant. He paid no heed to

shouts of 'stop' in any language (and believe me we tried them all!). His mission was to find the juiciest shoots in the surrounding area, and if he could dislodge his stupid English passenger in the process then so much the better. The following day we went bamboo rafting down a river, and to a coward like me it seemed like something I imagined James Bond dealing with. We luckily only capsize once and in so doing managed to

enjoyable, if not slightly tacky evening.

The smaller and more laid back island of Koh Pha Ngan basically offers no more than nice beaches and lots of drugs. Its infamous 'full moon' parties attract hundreds of travellers each month, but a cautionary tale; two foreigners per month get committed in Koh Pha Ngan after eating their special brand of mushrooms and stories that the police don't care about drug-taking are only believable to a point. During my stay there, the Bangkok police made a special point of coming to raid the island. A fact that made my cocky French travelling companion, with his voracious appetite for marijuana, think twice about obtaining it. Visions of me playing Nicole Kidman's role in *Bangkok Hilton* entered my head and made me bid me 'au revoir' to my French friend and head back to Bangkok.

I learnt a lot of things in Thailand, the most important

wedge our raft between a tree and a rock, which took 30 minutes of macho men antics to dislodge.

After all that I decided that tropical beaches were calling and headed for the idyllic islands of Koh Samui and Koh Pha Ngan in the south near Malaysia. Koh Samui is beautiful, no argument there, but I would be lying if I said it was much more than a beach resort. It is also a dangerous one, as the abundance of palms give rise to around 50 deaths per year sustained by flying coconuts! However I passed a pleasant three or four days there and courtesy of cheap car and motorbike hire got to explore the waterfalls and exotic flora and fauna the island has to offer. In terms of nightlife, everything centres on Cha Weng, a higgledy piggledy collection of restaurants, bars and gyrating prostitutes, where you can pass an

being; don't ever try to rush a Thai - they simply are not interested. And if a bus is scheduled to leave at 8.00 do not be surprised if it doesn't depart until gone 11.00 and whatever you do, do not get annoyed. The other important thing is that a lot of the time you feel like a walking dollar sign. Do be aware that the Thais, although very friendly, are often not adverse to a swindle.

One place I have not so far mentioned is Kanchanaburi in western Thailand; possibly the most chilled out place on earth and the site of the bridge over the river Kwai - a must for anyone who is in Thailand for a reasonable length of time.

Basically, Thailand is where it's at. I loved every minute of being there, but go soon if you have the chance, before everything changes too much.



Life after Halls of Residence

Every year, more than twice as many apply for halls than there are places. This means that out of all the applicants only 40% will be successful. The remaining 60% will be looking towards the private rented sector to meet their accommodation needs.

The transition from halls to private rented accommodation need not be an unpleasant experience! This means thinking and planning ahead. For those who have not lived in private rented property before it's important to make most of the resources available.

Securing your accommodation before you can leave for the summer vacation by paying a holding deposit can make life easier.

But if you can't (only a minority of landlords are interested in this kind of arrangement), you can still start thinking about where you want to live, who you want to live with and how much you can afford to pay.

At the very least, you will need to allow two weeks before the start of your course to look for accommodation. Ideally, you should be looking by early September. You will need somewhere to stay during this time, and again this is something for which you can begin planning now.

BE PREPARED for high rents! It is possible to find affordable accommodation

in London but don't expect to live within walking distance of the LSE (or even within zone 1) unless you're prepared for a lengthy search and can afford rent upwards of £90 per week. Residential property in the immediate vicinity to the LSE is scarce and costly.

For more information about renting in the private sector (tenancy agreements, deposit etc) see the Housing Advisor in Room E297. You will find details of available private accommodation in The Housing And Welfare Office (E297) as well as at the University of London Accommodation Office at Senate House.



FAME

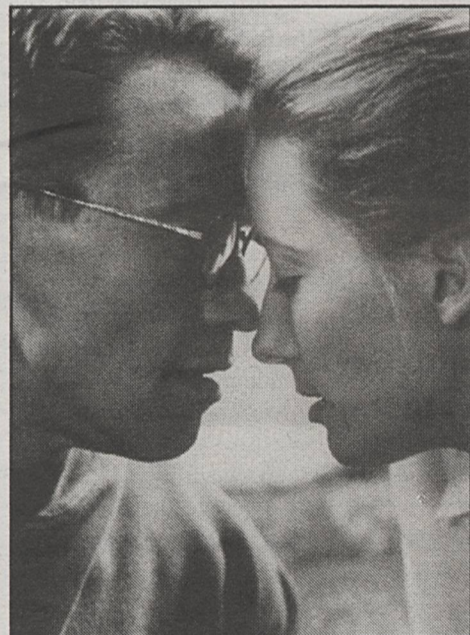


Who wants to live forever?

Kamil Dimmich explains how to become rich and famous in one go

As you casually browse through the intellectually stimulating student newspaper, perhaps with the obligatory FT at your side, a discrete yawn momentarily distorts your features. In the back of your mind there is a nagging desire to pull out *that* paper, infinitely more appealing to your baser instincts. It is one of the daily papers which are read by millions of prim middle-aged housewives, bored taxi-drivers, frustrated football fans and, frankly, anyone who has been guilty of letting a fat headline stimulate his fancy. Sex and violence, tragedy and scandal, football and Royalty all concur to create 'real' life drama to entertain the masses.

As everyone who has read Chairman Perlman's little green book, or stayed awake during Macroeconomics lectures will know, demand is equal to supply. Extending this theory to the huge demand for human drama, we must conclude that there needs to be an



Get married to a Kennedy, or marry a luvvy and get divorced. Perfect!

equal supply of it. Where does this supply come from? The price for this good (or is it a service?) is obviously a high one, in order to entice people into delivering it. And they do.

To give a recent example of a particularly successful story – we have all heard of the lucky couple who went off for a lovely holiday to Indonesia. After their ferry capsized, they spent a night swimming around in warm water, during which, for lack of better conversation, they decided to get married. The two made front page colour photographs of practically all national newspapers, with the noteworthy exception of the FT (thankfully), as well as television news.

The snotty and ugly little girl who went to Turkey to get married, while she was still thirteen is another success. Coverage of her story will provide a constant stream of excitement since it is followed up by a court case and a whole lot of suspense, so there should be a number of highly paid exclusive interviews with the girl, family, husband, teachers, friends etc.

Fame and fortune await anyone who can provide a good story. Sometimes things just happen, but if you can't afford to wait for

fortune to strike you, there are a number of ways you could help fate along.

If you are a particularly slimy character and not too scrupulous, you could become a Royal lover/spouse/personal secretary/friend in that order of preference. Stick with them for a while and then produce revelations about them for the rest of your life.

If you don't have a problem with a little pain, there are some neat variations. You could try on the old Cantona trick (perhaps you remember how *The Sun* ran huge photographs of a distinctly unattractive male chest with an invisible bruise where the fiery Frenchman's boot had struck). Try going up to Chris Eubank and whispering in his ear that he is a total poof.

These are some of many possibilities, however I have detailed a rather elegant plan for a relatively easy and highly effective stunt which would give you high quality exposure. You need a partner, ideally of the opposite sex, who you can pretend not to have known before (ie your brother/sister may be a bad idea), and at least one of you should be a very good swimmer. The girl should have some form of stress (exams, divorced parents, abusive boyfriend – he doesn't really need to be abusive, as long as he looks the part), which might explain a suicide attempt on her part. I speak of the female, not because I am sexist, but because it just is more romantic. You need to find a nice high bridge across the Thames – I personally quite fancy Tower Bridge, as it will offer the largest audience. The girl climbs as high up as she will dare. At a suitable moment, with the attention of as many Japanese tourists as possible, she lets out a piercing scream. If there are no Japanese tourists, you will need another friend as a fake tourist, who can film the whole scene and sell it to the BBC (you should see how much a guy who filmed Rabin's murder got; I bet he was in on the conspiracy). With the undivided attention focused on her, the girl jumps into the Thames and pretends to drown. Into the picture comes the hero, who, without hesitating, jumps in after the stranger and rescues her after a prolonged struggle. He then runs off and disappears for a few days.

Wait for the highest bidders before giving exclusive interviews. The basic story in itself will guarantee a week's fame, if carefully handled (accusations against the education system/ family/ boyfriend can provide good material, as can pseudo-psychological interviews with the hero. "I'm just a normal guy. I don't know what came over me. It was like a dream...") Then – the announcement of your marriage. Optionally you could follow this up with a divorce on grounds of homosexuality.

Having achieved fame and money each will spawn more of the same if carefully handled. Advertising contracts will provide you with more money and you could start a teenie band. Sex, drugs and rock'n'roll await you...

The inquisitive reader might ask why the author of this brilliant plan does not execute it himself. The answer is quite simple: I have a better one. Just wait until you see the headlines.



Try a personal interview on Panorama for a quick way to fame and fortune

Who wants fame? asks Jacqueline Macleay

The one thing that never ceases to amaze me about people is the way they are affected by fame. Everyone wants to be a star or at least bask in its glory. Just look at the lengths people will go to. The fact that an appalling show such as 'Blind Date' has been running for over ten years proves my point. People, (even OAPs who should know better), are so voracious for their "15 minutes" of fame that they are willingly subjected to the most public humiliation. Contestants reduce themselves to the mentality of an 18-30s rep, regurgitating clichés tried and tested in many an Essex discotheque. You can almost smell the desperation.

Similarly, the flunkies are exploited by Barrymore's 'People Show'. Under the guise of giving the public an opportunity to entertain, people are really offered the chance to debase themselves. From all over the country plebs flock to the tawdry malls, queuing for eternity just to put 'little Kylie' on the stage or to perform a nightmarish rendition of Gaynor's 'I will survive'. It truly is a modern-day freak show.

What is even more incredible is that the general public do not need to be bribed, paid nor coaxed into self-deprecation. Why? Perhaps life has become so bitterly mundane for many that this is a form of escapism. People often look at the famous and see something missing in their own lives. After all, they are generally more successful/ richer/ better looking than you or I. Moreover their achievements are publicly enshrined, for the fa-

mous are elevated above us, who labour in oblivion.

Fame distorts people's sense of perspective on the world. The ugly and obnoxious become desirable as wannabes start fancying the likes of Chris Evans and Tommy Lee. Major celebs such as Wacko Jacko become too isolated to live in, or even resemble, normality. In today's society, fans harass their adored so much that celebs are left with as much freedom as a goldfish in a glass bowl. Life destroys art. The divide between zeal and obsession is fine. It confounds me how close to insanity the actions of many fans actually are. One grown man collects the dirty water left-over from the wash of his fave football team's strips; whilst vigils outside hotels graced by celebs are commonplace.

Nowadays, it is easier than ever for a fan to feel personally involved in a celeb's life. This is often due to the marketing strategy of publicists themselves, as well as media coverage of illustrious intimacies a la Diana and Panorama. The 'cult of celebrity' is inherently dangerous because it involves homage to an image rather than reality itself. Madonna to Maxine from Coronation Street have all had their stalkers. Thus, people do often get lost in the inventiveness of it all. It may be laughable to think of girlies everywhere crying over the split-up of Take That, but it is sobering to remember the helplines and counsellors in place to deal with the anticipated teen suicides. So it seems the fame game often builds you up, just to bring you down.

Under the roof of Tibetan Buddhism

A Westerner's experience of life inside a Tibetan monastery

Simon Retallack

As part of my year out between school and university, I taught English to exiled Tibetan monks in a monastery six hours north of Delhi above the town of Dehra Dun, in the foothills of the Himalayas. I arrived in July just as the monsoon began. The greenness and coolness was so refreshing after Delhi's stifling heat; how wonderful it was to hear the sound of falling rain again. The afternoons were often beautiful – when the cloud lifted to reveal a deep blue sky, sweet smelling air and a clear view of the mountains to the north and the great plains to the south, with the warm bright colours and intricate designs of the monastery in the foreground.

Every day in the temple there are three hour-long sessions, known as pujas, when most of the monks, in their long saffron robes, pray, chant, and play trumpets, drums and symbols. Although they spend at least eight hours each day doing this and learning their scripture off-by-heart, the monastery is more than a spiritual school. To be a monk in Tibetan society is very prestigious, but the monastery is also a refuge for the chil-

perform the difficult task of playing football with flip-flops on their feet, not with a proper football, but with a ping-pong ball or a melon ...

Many of the monks are still children; full of life, energy and a wonderful capacity for affection and joy. In a sense they are no different from any other children in the world. Initially, this thought was troubling. It is hard to accept that they could really be so happy, separated as they are from their parents, often from the age of 7, for at least a year at a time and for many permanently. Some older monks told me this was irrelevant. What was really important for them was to follow the darma – the right spiritual path – to become a wise and enlightened spirit after many years of learning and praying to help to relieve the suffering of the world. But initially, in the majority of cases, it is their parents who decide that they should be monks. But to this there is another argument; being far away from one's family serves the 'vital' purpose of severing the 'chains' of attachment from which all monks must be free in order to be selfless and compassionate without discrimination. One monk told me that it wasn't a problem because his present family was just one of

believe that the situation must and shall be rectified in some way one day, since they think the Chinese now owe them a very

peace. The Tibetans say that the sky is like the mind – pure underneath but covered by clouds. They believe that everyone has the

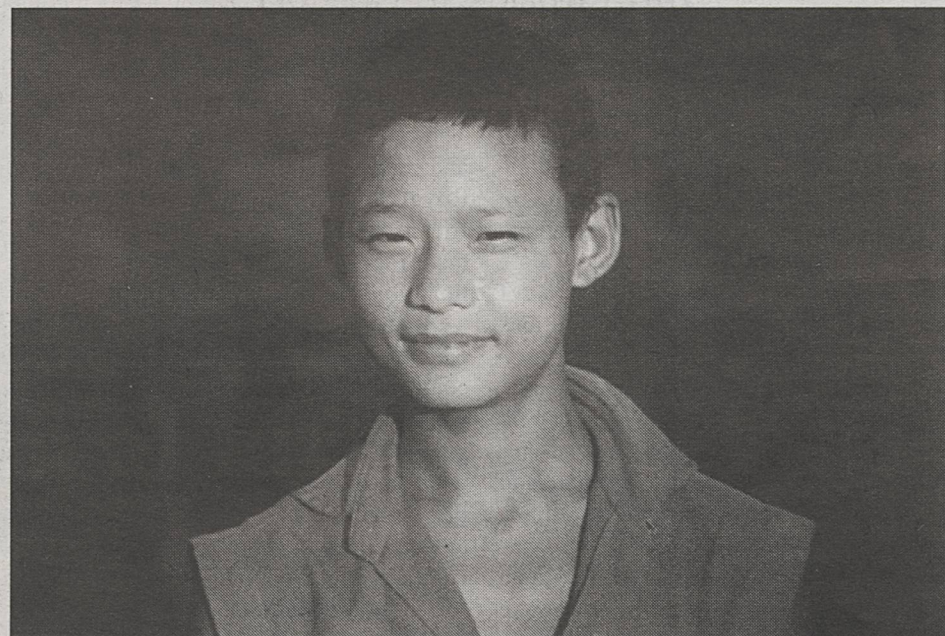


Photo: Simon Retallack

substantial 'karmic' debt. I got them to talk about Tibet in class and I shall never forget their astonished, wide-eyed look when I told them that there were only 7 million Tibetans in the world compared to 1200 million Chinese! What could they do to stop such hordes?

The monastery itself is the seat of the head of the Sakya tradition, one of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism. He was on a world tour whilst I was visiting, but I met his wife who suggested that on a karmic level Tibet may have invited its current treatment by being too introverted and politically corrupt. She also talked to me about the positive aspect of the Chinese invasion of her country; namely that it has helped to disseminate the Tibetan Buddhist message around the world.

What became clearer and clearer to me was how similar their faith is to the central tenets of other religions, including Christianity. Of course it is often said that all the great teachers were really saying the same thing originally. But a lot has been discarded over time. When I explained to some of the younger monks that Christians didn't believe in reincarnation, their faces filled with disbelief and amusement. At the heart of their religion is the belief that compassion, love, understanding and respect for all living creatures are the key to inner and world

Buddha nature within them but that it is obscured by ignorance and other defilements which we must spend our lives removing, by being born again and again in order to gain more and more experience, knowledge and wisdom, until we reach ultimate enlightenment. The word 'Buddha' simply means 'the enlightened one'. Once we become Buddhas in turn, we will find happiness, peace and be free from suffering. Crucial to this process is meditation and an understanding of sunyata – a realisation that the physical world is an illusion; a place where everything dies and nothing is permanent. An understanding of this, they say, is of great help in learning to let go and to shrink one's ego. Also of importance to them is patience and the ability to live in the present and not submerge the mind with memories of the past or anxieties about the future.

But what I was given there was more than just a limited and theoretical understanding of Buddhism. Witnessing the wonderful feeling of happiness that existed there was like being plugged into some sort of spiritual power supply. There were so many magical moments of great warmth and understanding. In fact, they accepted me so unconditionally into their world that I vowed one day to return.

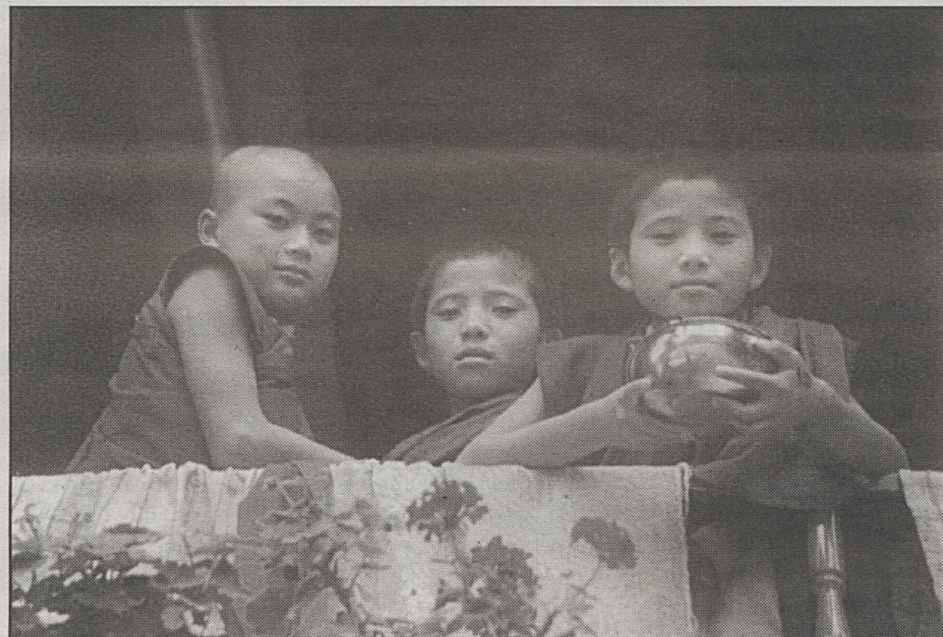


Photo: Simon Retallack

dren of the very poor and for orphans. A rather different social-security net to ours.

I was given three reasonably sized classes set according to ability with a wide age range in each. Most of them were keen and quick to learn. A few already had excellent English. They often surprised me with what they could say. In one of my classes I asked them to tell me why they wanted to be monks, and one little boy told me, "I want to be a monk because I always pray to God and when I die, I can go to heaven happily". Something else that quite surprised me was their wonderful sense of humour – they really like to laugh. In my middle class, one morning, we were discussing jobs and I asked one notoriously comic little monk what his mother did. "She's a wrestler", he told me, and the whole class erupted, together with its teacher. During their free evenings they often put on some hilarious performances for me; singing, dancing, doing acrobatics, telling jokes. The sight of seeing all those monks rocking with laughter is one I will not easily forget. During their rare moments of free time in the day, it was often equally entertaining watching them

many when previous lives are taken into account... The prospect of spending my entire life in one place and doing one thing would unnerve me. But for them it may be part of their acceptance that this is only one life among many others. Reaching ultimate enlightenment takes a long time! Something that must help a great deal is the fact that they really do help each other out. There is a real sense of brotherhood even between the eldest and the youngest, and never a trace of malice. As one monk told me, "No one has enemies here". And the majority of them do all look so happy.

I tried to find out as much about Tibetan Buddhism as possible. Apart from anything else, it enabled me to be of far greater use to my pupils in helping to discuss their vocation and religion in English – which was surely why I was there. Many aspects of the religion make a lot of sense. Take this saying for example, "Hatreds never cease by hatreds in this world. By love alone they cease". The monks that I met apply this quite literally as far as China is concerned. They showed no bitterness or hatred towards the Chinese, although they clearly



Photo: Simon Retallack

Job jamboree just unjust

Dave Whippe decides to join the dole queue

The third year at university is supposed to be a time of release as you wholeheartedly relish your final year of freedom before the onset of real life. Unfortunately, it invariably turns into a bunch of arse as the realisation dawns on you about just how much of a toss hole you really have dug yourself into. Far from fulfilling my potential as an intellectual maverick, I now appreciate how the previous two years of inactivity could have been better spent. It's a question of priorities really. Whereas mine have been those such as wasted nights in The Tuns eulogising the respective merits of Becks and Coors Gold, and putting hours of toil and sweat (though sweat especially) towards producing *The Beaver*, the priorities of others have been alien notions like getting a good degree. Fine, at least I've had a laugh, but the last laugh is on me. Why? I hear you ask, because I'm trying to get a job.

The whole process of job hunting can be simplified into two approaches, the conventional and otherwise. The problem with my approach is that, rather than be boring and apply for jobs I am suited to, I took the slightly more hazardous route and decided that I really don't want to work at all, so I should just go into something involving a shit load of readies. So, banking it was then. Unfortunately, the first step in application forms is deceptively easy and does nothing to discourage you from your delusions. It's all about building yourself up, and I'll be the first to admit that my forms contained some of the most outrageous estimates of my personal worth since the crew of the Space Shuttle Challenger said "Of course those little rubber rings will withstand the heat". Alas, these finely crafted half-truths are more than likely residing in the shredding machines of approximately 75% of the companies I have applied for. This didn't unduly jolt my confidence though, as I was sure, nay positive, that my interview technique and personal skills would stand me in good stead for the remaining 25%.

It later transpired, however, that my interviews were not my forté either, somewhat revealed when the spotty little trader twat asked the question "Are you arro-

gant?" to which my reply was "Yes, of course, lets move on". I think, though, that in this case I burnt my bridges when, having only received two hours notice for this interview, I informed them unequivocally that if this was the way they conducted their business, then they needed me more than I needed them. The lack of laughter and uncomfortable silence suggested that my attempts to break the ice had fallen on deaf ears.

The problem, as a whole, appears to be that I have actually had a life experience while studying at the LSE. For example, in social circumstances, my mates have called me a few things in my time, badger, fat,

sore-cock and slimy being ones I would rather forget, while Bond, Lord Shlong, and God rank in my top five. The realisation of recent events, though, is that this is not what prospective employers are looking for. A youth spent pursuing laddishness and high jinks in a bid to establish some sort of reputation is not, in the eyes of Cargill, HSBC Holdings, Cazenove, Hambros etc a resounding vote of confidence for handling other people's money. I now realise that if my life had been landmarked by nicknames like speccy, twat and no life mott boy, and my pursuits had been the tortuous education of my taste buds to recognise individual

brands of apricot liqueur, I would now be sitting on my fat chino clad arse savouring the prospect of earning thirty grand a year before bonus.

The worst thing about interviews, though, is not the rejection, it's the rejection with positive feedback. Having possibly broken all existing time records concerning being turned down ie on the spot after an assessment, I was told in the following interview to apply next year if I improved my numerical skills. This is disturbing because it reveals a severe lack of foresight in my approach to job seeking. My criteria were as follows: Buy a gorgeous Ralph Lauren suit, turn up looking like sex on legs, get the job. The company's criteria appeared to be: Stick him in a room with some Chinese people in cheap suits, tell him (surprisingly?) that he came top in the English assessment section, turn him down because his maths was pants. My problem was that, though I could communicate loquaciously in the Queens English and promote a positive image of the company, the banks were actually looking for some mindless little automaton who could rattle off equations with the alacrity of Imelda Marcos ordering a new pair of shoes. The really galling thing though, is that the interviewer was female, and the lingering eye contact made it patently obvious that she wanted me to give her one, she just didn't want to give me the job. (All things considered though, I could probably earn more in one minute selling my body than in a lifetime as director of SBG Warburg (who also rejected me (bastards!))).

The immediate conclusion I can bring is that maybe a degree in International Relations, vocationally, was not the best option. Alright, I can theorise eloquently on the Grotian concept of the human good, but short of becoming an academic, it has little real use. One thing's for sure, though, I'm definitely not spending another summer folding croissants at Vamix foods in Worcester. Believe me, there's only so much fun that can be had turning pastry into knob shapes and watching quality control freak out further down the line. Now, where did I put that 'Maths for Mongs' book?



This way to the dole queue

LSE TOP TEN: ELECTION BLUNDERS

- 1) Chris Cooper: For putting his ugly photo on his posters
- 2) Ali Imam: For spelling Welfare wrong (Wellfare)
- 3) Steve Roy: For losing the electoral register last year
- 4) James MacAonghus: For spelling Committee wrong (Commitee)
- 5) Dan Lam: For accusing Chris Cooper of racism
- 6) Ralph Wilde: For placing posters in the library last year
- 7) Baljit and Ali: For running as linked candidates, but not registering as such
- 8) Ola Budzinska: For using her own photo this year
- 9) Tom Smith: For using a 'hired gun' as his campaign manager
- 10) The C&S Committee: For letting Dan Lam back into the election

Ode to lairy lads

Farmer Cooper with your head so bald,
Emma Justice would not be mauled,
The things you tell us are a lie,
Have you touch us? We'd rather die.

Matthew with your paisley pants,
We think you are so very rank,
You tell your mates you've had church cherry,
Well! Know we'd rather have Nick Berry.

Raj with your Brummie flair,
We think it's time to try elsewhere,
If you end up with Kathryn I'll eat my hat,
And "Do you want garlic bread with that?"

Steve, Steve, we know you are the best,
You're so much better than all the rest,
First team footballers, you shine above
And that is why we all love (you!!?)
Love and kisses
LSE Women

Firsts and Fifths reach

First Team Legends one step away from football immortality

THE ROAD TO MOTSPUR

ROUND 1: Bye

ROUND 2: Heythrop 2 – LSE 3

Although the score-line may suggest this was a close match, the plucky religious students were outclassed throughout, despite the LSE resting several key players. A goal from Leong-Son and two from Steve Curtis proved enough to see us into the next round.

QUARTER-FINAL: Imperial 0 – LSE 5

What a performance, what a victory. In the tie of the round, the LSE boys turned on the style to emphatically destroy IC. Goals from in-form strike partners Ludford-Thomas and Chang, as well as a Venini rocket and a brace from Marcus Kern were due reward for the team performance of the season so far.

SEMI-FINAL: LSE 2 – Holloway 1 (after extra time)

In this tense encounter the holders simply could not match LSE's grit, determination, or indeed two goals. Holloway forced extra time with a lucky equaliser after Chang had put LSE in front from a well worked set piece. As time ran out, it was Ludford who confirmed the Cup Final reservation with an audacious winner, much to the delight of the watching hundreds.

THE TEAM SQUAD

GOALKEEPER: Svein Michellson

The towering Norwegian has improved as the season has progressed, proving a match-winner on several occasions. His full stretch stop in the last seconds of the semi-final has now been acknowledged by Gordon Banks as better than the save he himself made against Pelé in the 1970 World Cup.

DEFENCE: Steve Curtis

Back from injury, Steve has added an extra dimension to the right flank where he often maraudes into enemy territory, in his new found role as tormentor and provider. This "man of a thousand faces" (all of them ugly – balding Ed) is essential to team morale with his ability to say something stupid in tight situations.

Chris Cooper

Renowned for his mazy dribbling both on the pitch and on the women in The Tuns, this gifted left footer has created many of the LSE's goals this season. This Ent's Sabbatical hopes to be entertaining the back of the Goldsmith's net in the final.

Danny Fielding

The lynch-pin of the back four. His un-

derstanding of the game is second to none, as is his ability to clear the ball a long way. He may not be the tallest player, but he's never beaten in the air, he may not be the quickest player, but he always gets to the ball first. Legend.

Matt Miller

His contribution to the team should not be underestimated. When Matt plays well, the whole team plays well. His aerial presence is magnificent, and his ability to get out of tight situations with a cunning drag-back is unquestionable. The line up of his hair style is a closely guarded secret and will not be revealed until one hour before kick off.

MIDFIELD: Rikos Leong-Son

Inspirational leader of men. His commitment to the mission in the face of adversity (ie having the piss taken out of him by the rest of the team) is admirable, and nobody deserves the trip to Motspur more than he does. In what will probably be the bouffanted one's last game for LSE, the lads will be wanting to win not for their own personal glory, but for the gaffer (schaa right).

Nic Jones

The visionary passer in the midfield, he is the only man who actually looks up before passing. The final could hinge on whether Nic has more than two hours sleep before the game.

Kevin Sharpe

The first year with the rocket launcher throw has adapted brilliantly to the rigors of first team football. A victim of his own versatility, he covered in defence in Curtis' absence. So versatile that next year he'll probably be the groundsman.

Markus Kern

A player with the tenacity (and face) of a bulldog. Goldsmiths have only agreed to play the final with the proviso that if Markus has a shot, he goes and collects it from the car park himself.

STRIKERS: Tim Ludford-Thomas

Has posed many questions this season which opposition defences have found impossible to answer. Currently in red hot form, he holds the key to unlock the door of glory.

Mark Chang

Has notched over twenty this season, but only in Saunders shags. A useful target man, he has scored crucial goals at important times, and is much cooler than Jones.

Filipe Venini

The first year from the Arctic Circle is a wizard on the ball. Maintained his form this season despite bleaching his greasy locks, although he has struggled to adapt to the concept of having a shower after the match.

THE OPPOSITION

In the final, on March 9, LSE face a much fancied Goldsmiths side who are currently top of the premier league.

In our first encounter the LSE lads were robbed by a controversial refereeing decision. Half the team didn't even notice though, as they were still pissed from an orgy of drinking at the AU Barrel the day before.

The two sides were set to lock antlers once again last Wednesday but they bottled it.

So onto the final, where the LSE Doctors of Football will be dishing out Goldsmith's medicine...

Athletics Union Election results

The following people were picked by you to represent you:

President:

Ben Johnson

Vice President:

Dennis Aghaizu

General Secretary:

Livvy Hunt

Assistant General Secretary:

Nik Stanojevic

Treasurer:

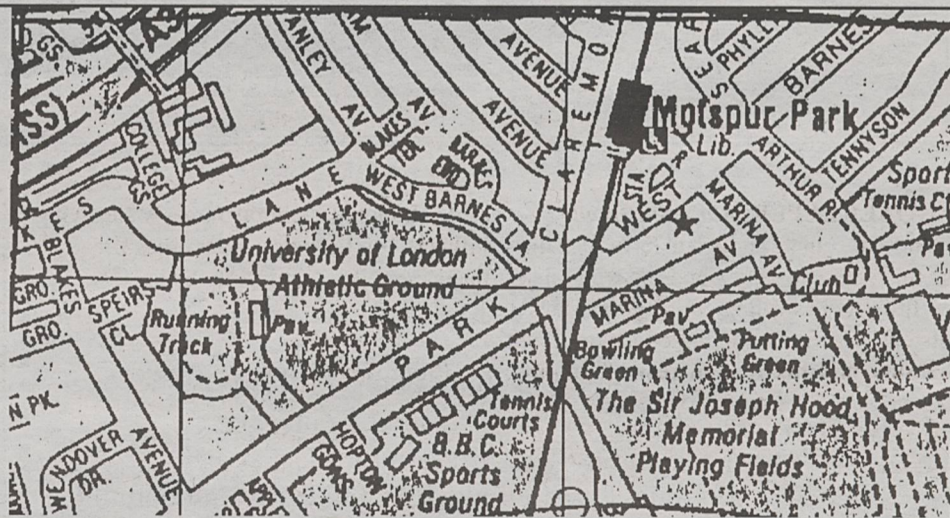
Michael Tattersall

Assistant Treasurer:

Danny Fielding

Come and support both teams at Motspur Park. We can promise a fun day out for all the family. PS The bar will be open all day

Kick Off:
Firsts: 3.00pm
Fifths: 11.00am



Motspur Park can be reached by BR train from Waterloo Station.

Trains leave at 16 and 46 minutes past every hour.

the London Cup Final

Glory beckons for the Fifth team football heroes at Motspur Park

THE ROAD TO GLORY

1st round: Charing cross 2 – LSE 3 (aet)

The lowly med school posed no threat but we transpired to miss chance after chance – including a Jillur penalty – before we gifted our opponents an equaliser. This spurred Bush to forget the tribulations of the night before (he had turned up 5 mins before kick off with very dark glasses) and rescue us from the penalty lottery.

2nd round: St Georges 1 – LSE 7 (seven)

Again the cup draw threw up challenging opposition in the form of a bunch of shit longball donkeys (no not the fourth team - ed). A hatrick from glamour boy Webb (see below) who surprisingly didn't disappoint and a brace a piece from deHamptona and Bush put the score at 7-0. We let them have the consolation goal otherwise Alain might think he was a good keeper.

Quarter Final: QMW 3 – LSE 5

The fifth team army had to face the trek to Theydon Bois without their influential captain who had been given an international call up. However his tactical awareness and class had rubbed off onto his teammates so they were amply equipped to see the cup run continue. A Bush hatrick and goals from Webb and Jillur secured the win.

Semi Final: LSE 3 - UCL 0

An easy tie on paper, it turned out to be easier in the flesh. The opposition, clearly a bunch of ringers, were not able to play the cohesive passing football that has brought such plaudits this season.... "They're much better than the 4ths who are just running scared." Brian, Liz, anyone who has seen a ball kicked this year. Nik towered above their gargantuan centre half to head the first and by half time we had scored again. The defence held firm (well you would if Alain Stambouli was behind you) and a brave Bush header secured our rightful place in the final.

SQUAD OF 96

GOALKEEPER: Alain Stambouli

Those fortunate enough to have seen the 5ths this year can only stand in awe at just how fully he has followed in teflon Dans' footsteps. However for his concentration, reliability and his role in team harmony Alain cannot be faulted. Win or lose Alain will make sure that the team enjoys the occasion... cue Mexican wave.

DEFENCE: Raj Biswas

Raj is under the delusion that given his new streamlined haircut he is fast – faster than Pron, perhaps – but, as Saturdays game showed (when he was more than a little keen to play for the opposition), only a patch on his captains' pace.

Pete McSporran

Without Pete, the marshall of the defence (if not his alarm clock), the frailties of our inspirational keeper would have been

(more) apparant – but having said that there are some cracks (the grand canyon) that you couldn't fill with polyfilla. Apparently Peter means 'the rock' and even if it doesn't it should now. As the famous song goes 'the wise man built his...etc' and I'm sure that come the storm of the final the defence will hold strong.

James Allard

As dominant as Pete may be he alone cannot fill the centre of defence (only Beckenbauer or Pron could do such a job) and so he is aided and abetted by senior Allard. The quiet man of the team James's yin complements Pete's yan.



Rikos praises the Lord

Photo: Erik Wernevi

Chris Gaskell

A close second to Robert Wadlow, Chris is a towering force in the defence and in the bar afterwards. Of all those listed his size 18 boots will be hardest to fill.

James Garner

Descibed (fairly) as a 'whining 12 year old' by our opponents in the semi-final James is by far the most committed member of the squad. Committed to his CV that is. But, this aside, I should mention James's steadying influence on the side – Everyones friend he makes sure that team harmony is 100%.

Jim Millard

Professional

With such dirt to dish on the rest of the team and limited space I need only say that Jim should be a model to us all – especially you Alain, Garner.

Dem Oral

Another player in the James Allard mould. Dem is always on hand in a crisis especially when you want to know the premierships latest scores.

MIDFIELD: Jon Webb

Jon always appears to be surrounded by the cream of LSE's female population but despite the constant promises the touchline support never materialises. I only hope that

he manages to put away a few more chances on the football pitch.

Jillur Rahman

Despite eating pork sasuauges during last years campaign Jillur has yet to have his skills blighted by the almighty's retribution (although recently he has lost the ability to score or play 'the early ball').

Roy 'deHamptona' Hampton

Driven by the samba beats the flair that is deHamptona adds a carnival atmosphere to the passing game that is the fifth team.

Ewan King

A Star Player who due to acting commitments has been unable to play regularly. However his fame and fortune are now assured due to his appearance in Casualty (Saturdays) and ER (Wednesdays). Injury City.

Captain Marvel

Not wanting to blow one's own trumpet here, are just a few observations on my talent:

"Far better than that other Warlingham alumnus", Pelé.

"The most complete player of his generation", Beckenbauer.

"The presence of Stubbs, the dribble of Curcic, but unfortunately the team selection of MacFarland", Eusibio.

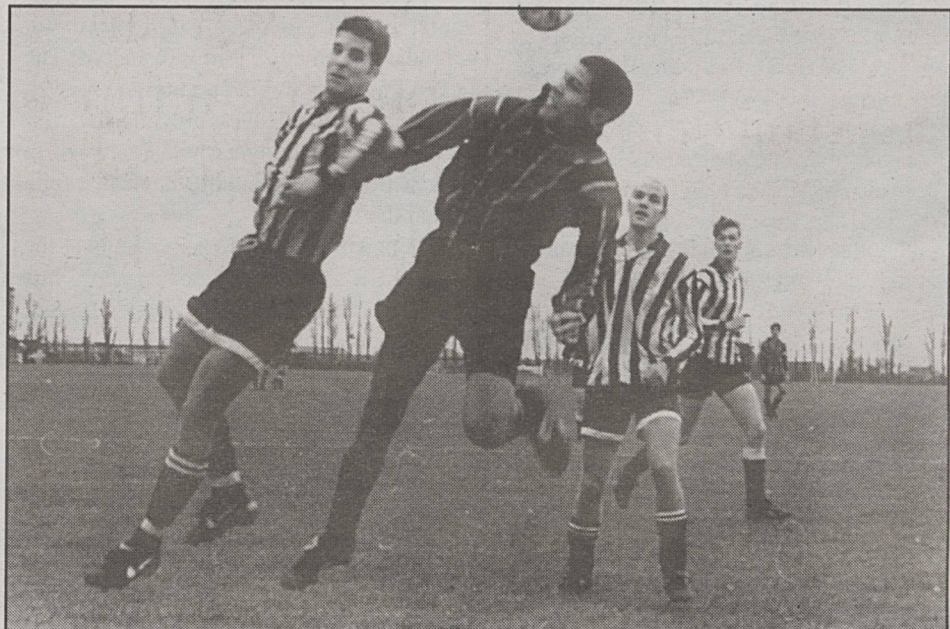
FORWARD: Clayton 'Rob' Bush

The pivot around which the final turns. The lone striker is a role that Clayton has made his own this year. Already the studs on his boots are turning gold and we just hope that the prize is secured with a hatfull in the Final.

LINESMAN: Pron Bose

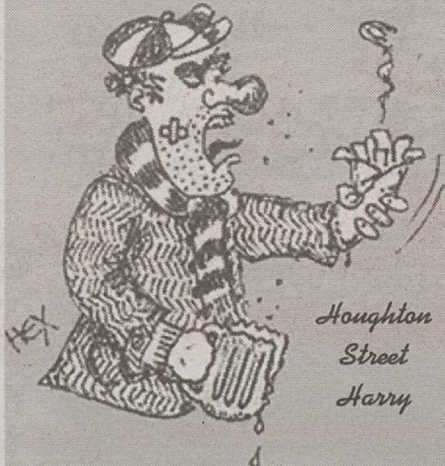
Nicknamed Penguin Man during the first game of the season Pron has been on the fringes of the side. In the last game he played he asked me for a run around, and that is exactly what he got.

Well done to all
the footballers
playing on
Saturday.
The Beaver wishes
you the best
of luck



Ludford-Thomas – not a hair out of place

Photo: Erik Wernevi



Harry's first (and last) chat up line to a Christian ended in dismal failure and an impromptu visit to casualty.

"Do you have a mirror in your pockets", I piped up, barely able to stand in my inebriated state.

"Why do you ask", enquired the beleaguered bible-basher.

"Because I can see myself in your pants", I exclaimed, much to the amusement of all my mates and everyone else within a ten mile radius. At least it was funny at the time...twenty seconds later, I received a stunning right hook which knocked me out cold and left me with a face like a bulldog's arse for weeks to come.

And that's why I've had a cob-on with religious types ever since. Initially, it wasn't their fault, but since that fateful day I've become increasingly frustrated with high-brow weirdoes who continually preach about what god can do for me.

Christian Union types, especially, can really get to you, as they're always engaged in an elaborate pretence to convince you just what a good time they are having. To this end they organise crap parties, where everyone has a magic laugh drinking Perrier. This presumably works on the presumption that they'll get pissed for cheap, simply because Jesus once managed to turn water into wine...personally I've got my doubts; the "water into wine" tale has all the trappings of the type of story you make up to your pals when you're wasted ("I turned water into wine mate - and I love you, you're my best friend"), so I reckon that Jesus was just posing off because he was on the pull.

A vow of celibacy is another apparent pre-requisite of Christian activity. This inevitably induces much respect from others, who see it as a sign of inherent morality and self respect. What people fail to realise is that there's about as much chance of most CU members pulling as there is of Peter Beardsley first being chosen for modelling duties on Parisian catwalks and then shagging Cindy Crawford.

CU members really are extraordinarily ugly, and so it's inevitably far easier to pretend that virginity is a matter of choice rather than compulsion. That way, no-one can possibly accuse you of being a boring, shit-life no-shag.

The recent Brit awards also served to emphasise the dangers of religion. Michael Jackson now appears to regard himself as some kind of Christ-like icon. This is probably because MJ touches the parts of children that other people can't reach; he really does have great knowledge of how they feel "deep down". The fact is though that if Wacko Jacko is a deity, then I'm better looking than Brad Pitt and Emilio Esteves put together, and Sam Parham should start wearing a ponytail.

And that's the danger. Ordinary people get a bee in their bonnet about religion and suddenly try to indoctrinate others with their lunatic ramblings. There soon follow concerted attempts to appeal to the majority of the student populace, with posters asking "What can Christianity give you that a degree can't?"

I admit that I'm stuck for an answer. Dandruff? Syphilis? Answers on a postcard to the *Beaver* office...

Strand Poly as sick as a parrot

Creatures from the planet Ging inspire victory in Rugby Seconds

It was a historic occasion last Wednesday, as the warriors strode down to the halcyon fields of Berrylands to face the hitherto unbeatable local rivals of Strand Poly. Having had many of our stalwarts stolen by the cowboys in the Firsts, we threw together an unruly mob of hangover animals - it did not look promising, a bit like Tom Twat pulling Angela. Inspired by our captain's usual drivel about inflatable sheep (even shagging real sheep is beyond him now), we traversed the shitty ditch that Kings made us march through in an attempt to bring us down to their level. Silence in the warm-up was understandable given the destruction to follow.

The LSE's most spirited team sped off the blocks, with Alex kicking superbly in between checking mirrors and washing/combing his hair. The forwards, led by our ginger contingent, provided a solid platform for the free running cavaliers in the back division, to provide the expansive, explosive, exhilarating rugby for which we are becoming renowned. With Nick Hair and James "battered husband" Verdier searing through the middle and creating space for Denise "Jilted" Agaylord, he was able to find out that if you actually manage to stand up in a tackle rather than collapsing in a pathetic, drooling heap at their feet, it is possible to go forward. One

such break resulted in the only try of the game, with Alex ignoring all fourteen men and the groundsman outside him, to luckily (accidentally?) score in the corner.

The second half was, however, a different story. Thanks to Twat's half-time twaddle we spent almost the entire half in our own 22. Big tackle has never been a problem in the rugby team, so our entire 15 played like men possessed. Huge hits from "Ginga" Mike "Bruce" Lee, together with Zav's amazing arm muscles epitomised our bone crunching dominance in all areas. Kings came back at us very hard in the dying minutes of the game and very nearly pipped us at the post, but our determination, aggression and brute force kept our attackers at bay until the beautiful sound of the final whistle rang in our ears (particularly in Ginger Lee's trophy handle ears), giving



Legs Photo:Nigel Boyce

us a win of 5-0.

Possibly the most memorable moment of the game, however, was towards the end, when in a moments silence during a line out, after Tom Twat had screamed his orders injected with expletives, one of the Kings' forwards turned and innocently asked us "is your hooker always such a tit?" Tom, you are a legend (bell-end surely? - Ed) even in other colleges.

Basketball firsts make national finals

While most LSE students were hungover or passed out from another long Friday night, LSE's basketball team was playing for a berth in the Final 8 of the BUSA tournament, and a chance to go to Newcastle to play for the All-Britain title this weekend. LSE was dealt another unfavourable draw, a road game at Bradford. But behind a combined 25 points from Leo 'The Legend' von Bredow (24 points) and Jaywan Bernstein (1), the Beavers prevailed by a 68-61 margin. The Beavers will thus head to Newcastle the weekend of March 1-3, for a shot at the title.

There were some tense moments at the end, as LSE's lead was cut to just two points at 60-58 with under two minutes left. But, David Lebowitz came through in a big way, hitting a couple underhanded free throws, while von Bredow hit some key buckets at the end. Lebowitz was all over the court, scoring 9 points and running the point solidly in the absence of Bill Sanford.

Andrea 'Don't Call Me Malakas' Vourloumis added 14 points for LSE, despite fouling out with 5 minutes left. Apparently the pressure of the situation got to him, as he opted for a seat next to Coach Andy

Staab for the game's duration. Andy Robb dropped in 7 points, while 'José' put in 6, while dominating the boards

Bret 'Brick' Rosen won't say how many points he scored, but promised to pad his scoring average in LSE's next game against Holborn Pre-School, or an equivalently talented team such as Charing Cross Medical School. Dr Paris Yeros kept up his team high fouls/points ratio, picking up more fouls (4) than points (3) for the second game in a row. Chris Raatz and Ahmet Mes Inoglu offered key contributions as well.

LSE followed up the big win with a 103-49 triumph over Charing Cross in a London league game (NOTE TO THE SECOND TEAM: KEEP UP THE SH-T TALKING AND A SIMILR FATE AWAITS YOU). Before the game, von Bredow's jersey #11 was retired, in an emotional ceremony, forever to hang from the Aldgate East rafters. Rosen, making good on his promise, led LSE with a team high 26 points

(on a wide assortment of shots from all over the court), while Vourloumis and Yeros each added 14. Oliver Rey did a great job running the scoreboard - maybe he's finally found a career path that suits him.

Wonderful Williamson wallops winner

Fourths close down Barts's league chances

Ian Vollbracht

Matches at Chislehurst are usually synonymous with superlative performances by the fourth team and today was no exception. The sun shone in a cloudless sky, but we were to surpass even its brilliance. Arriving on time despite "brains" Tattersall initially trying to take us to Walthamstow, we expected weak opposition but did not anticipate being greeted with the question "Err, you haven't brought a ball with you by any chance have you lads?", from their pathetic captain. In the end we played with a Mexico '86 World Cup ball which was fine at the start, but which was balder than the veteran (of the Great War) Referee by half-time.

We asserted our customary dominance over such minnows from the first whistle. Our only problem was that the Referee did not understand the offside rule and took it to mean "a forward pass from the midfield". In spite of this we were ahead after five minutes, Tattersall neatly beating the Goalkeeper inside his far post. More was to follow soon after, Chris Williamson scoring an outstanding volley and hitting the post with a twenty yard bullet for Nick "the yank" to net our third. So vast was the gulf between our stylish flair and their hapless hoofing that we took our foot off the pedal a little. Whilst their forwards failed to test Guy, Ramesh did perhaps go a little too far in doing the job for them by scoring an own-goal just before the interval.

3-1 at half-time then and the second period failed to provide any more goals. Vollbracht was, however, once again exemplary, his lightning pace and mazy dribbling dazzling their defence. Dan Pickering also had a good game. One can only speculate as to what he might be capable of if ever he were to wash the dirt from his lice-ridden mane (and steer clear of certain members of the Passfield fraternity). Speaking of members, this time of a more insignificant nature, we turn to Chris Kuchanny. He was about as successful at covering their sloth-like striker as his own diminutive manhood, by his own admission after last week's game. Finally, we should give a mention to our keeper Guy Burton. He did not have a shot to save all game but kept himself company (busy) with Barbara the gay-sex-toy sheep. Such a device would usually be more at home in certain Hackney mansions, but if we keep winning, then she's fine by me!