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The Beaver

The Newspaper of the LSE SU

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Freedman resigns amid more Exec controversy

Mark Power
Executive Editor

LSE SU Equal Opportunities (Male) Officer Daniel Freedman announced his resignation last week amid widespread speculation that he had been hounded out of office by other members of the Executive committee.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Freedman revealed that he felt he had been the victim of a campaign by three Executive committee members to force him to resign. Citing rumoured threats of censure, hostility in committee meetings and denunciatory emails, Freedman claims that his position on the Executive became untenable. He explained that knowing that "people are bad mouthing you, speaking disparagingly of you, and trying to kick you off the Exec was very depressing."

Freedman stressed that it was not all of the Executive committee that had been involved, and that the hostility had come from specifically three members. He identified those members as being LSE SU Treasurer Jo Kibble, Postgraduate Students Officer James Meadway and Communications Officer Omar Srouji.

When asked as to what motivation these students would have to pursue such actions, Freedman said, "I'm the obvious target because I disagree the most with them. It's not about students, it's about the politics."

Responding to Freedman's allegations, Kibble was adamant there was no campaign to eject him from office. When asked to respond to Freedman's claim that he was subject to a great deal of hostility in Executive meetings, Kibble flatly denied it, stating: "He's making that up entirely." He followed that up by saying, "the amount to which he was a team player in Exec meetings is questionable."

Kibble was adamant that he had no desire to remove Freedman from his position and that he had no problem with differing political views. He said that Freedman had been very good at working with societies but conceded that he thought that "he hasn't been the most active Exec member, but he's played his role."

When asked for his version of events, Meadway was decidedly more critical of Freedman's role on the Executive and within the Union. Meadway accused Freedman of "making the most repugnant speech in a UGM [Union General Meeting]." Meadway was speaking in reference to Freedman's defence of what Meadway termed an

"apartheid wall" in relation to Israel's construction of its Security fence.

Meadway said that he interpreted Freedman's condemnation of those who opposed Israel as an inference that likened them to Kristallnacht, the infamous night of anti-Semitic violence incited by Nazi party members in Germany in 1938.

Meadway insisted that he did not make Freedman feel uncomfortable at Executive meetings, but added that "if you are prepared to defend human rights abuses, then you have to face the consequences." He claimed that many of Freedman's actions were inconsistent with his job description. When asked as to whether he had contemplated motions of no-confidence and censure against Freedman, Meadway said that such a motion "would not have been inappropriate."

In contrast to Kibble's fervent denials that no such attempt had been made to remove Freedman from office, Meadway was highly critical of Freedman's conduct, and suggested that his resignation was the result of "a colossal mistake with regard to the Kilroy motion that upset a lot of people."

Meadway made these claims in relation to another controversial motion, which sought to condemn disgraced ex-Labour MP, chat show host and LSE Alumnus, Robert Kilroy-Silk, because of his allegedly racist remarks about Arabs. This defence was the subject of a letter of complaint sent by Omar Srouji immediately prior to Freedman's resignation, regarding what he felt was a failure on Freedman's part to fulfil his role as Equal Opportunities (Male) Officer. In the letter, Srouji called upon Freedman to "reconsider whether you are suitable for the job we have entrusted you to do."

Freedman claimed that such actions contravene his democratic mandate, given that he was elected on a platform from which he made no secret of his political beliefs. He states that "many people on the Exec have disagreed with my politics but we share the common goal of working for the students, and my politics wasn't an issue for them." Freedman conceded that until Srouji's recent email, there had never been any overt actions but an "implicit undercurrent of hatred."

Freedman explained that he had resigned because he was disappointed that he was unable in the end to serve the interests of the students who elected him.

This is, however refuted by Srouji, who claims that Freedman's actions defy the will of the Union body politic, which he should be representing by standing up to racism and intolerance in all its forms.



Romano Prodi in the Peacock Theatre / Photo: Maria Moore

Prodi promotes EU enlargement at LSE

Mark Power
Executive Editor

European Commission President Romano Prodi last week delivered a speech at the LSE in which he called for an increasingly strengthened Europe to take its place in the world.

Speaking to a packed audience in the Peacock Theatre on Monday 19th, President Prodi spoke of the need for Europe to grow in influence, in order that the member states retain their power and influence. Prodi stressed that in the era of globalisation and increased interdependence of the global economy, Europe needed a solution that "cannot be met within national frameworks."

He accepted that the enlargement of Europe did not mean that the nation state should be forgotten, but rather that a European framework should exist to "defend and pursue interests that are increasingly shared."

Prodi spoke of enlargement as the "defining success of my term at the Commission." He presented the need for the European Union to enlarge and extend its prosperity to the entire region

as crucial to its success and continuing development. He also said that the fact that so many peripheral countries wanted to join the Union represented a "feeling and desire to join a large area of prosperity and stability."

The Commission President and former Prime Minister of Italy was questioned on his political intentions after his term expires later this year. Suggestions that he may return to Italian politics were brushed off in joking asides, despite the questioner's clear support for Prodi's well known dislike of current Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi.

The President was also questioned on where he saw the Union developing in the next ten and fifty years. He reiterated his desire to see a common defence and foreign policy at some level. When asked as to whether he thought the US wanted a strong Europe, Prodi responded that he thought that "it depends on the politician in office at that moment."

"The two sides are obliged to cooperate come what may, but with dignity, it is up to us to build our own dignity."

Continued on page 4

Britain's brightest choose the States

Prashant Rao

Qualified students from independent schools in the UK are increasingly turning down offers from the cream of British universities, instead opting to cross the Atlantic and enrol in Ivy League universities in the United States.

All in all, there has been a 20% increase in the number of British students studying undergraduate courses at American universities in the past six years to 5000 students, with approximately 3000 postgraduates on top of that.

One of the many students actively considering America as an option for university is Shehu Garba, a sixth-former in Surrey who has been offered a place at both

Oxford and Stanford University in California.

He says, "Stanford gives me the impression of really wanting me to come," after giving him an unconditional offer, help for paying his tuition fees, as well as four years of guaranteed accommodation in a university halls of residence.

Natasha Norman, another sixth-former has offers from both Bristol and St. Andrews but intends to turn both of them down because, "I'm definitely going to read classics at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The teachers and professors there are outstandingly well qualified, with several Nobel Prize winners."

Along with Stanford and Pennsylvania, British students are receiving offers from

Harvard and Yale in Connecticut, and Princeton in New Jersey and are turning down offers from Oxford, Cambridge and LSE.

Along with their recruiting pitch of lowered fees, guaranteed residence, as well as the allure of studying in a different country, American universities have also sent representatives to inform students about them.

John Price, the undermaster at Winchester, which has been visited by Harvard, Columbia and Brown in the past year and a half says, "American universities try very hard because they want the very best pupils."

Yale University, in fact, has begun awarding financial aid to British students

on the same basis that they award it to American students. Richard Shaw, Dean of Admissions at Yale commented: "Some of the students we accepted were turned down by Oxford or Cambridge. The fact is that Oxford and Cambridge were wrong to turn them down."

The belief that American universities provide better facilities to make student life more enjoyable pervades throughout. Robert Steven, former master at Pembroke College, Oxford said, "The Ivy League universities charge £15,000 a year, but there is the realisation that for your money you get more teaching, better facilities and more resources. Quality is dropping in English universities, and will drop further without higher fees."

Virgin poll calls for Blair's withdrawal

Alykhan Velshi

Facing a possible defeat in the Commons over top-up fees and the ongoing scandal over the Kelly affair, a recently released poll puts Prime Minister Tony Blair's support at all-time lows.

In a poll conducted by Virginstudent.com, the virgin students were asked whether Tony Blair should resign. Of the 1,200 respondents, 65% said that the Prime Minister should resign over his fees proposals and the Kelly affair.

The news comes amid a surge in support for Conservative Party leader Michael Howard. A recently released YouGov poll gives the Tories the support of 40% of eligible voters, followed by Labour at 35% and the Liberal Democrats at 19%.

Ministers will use the poll to put pressure on Labour backbenchers to rally behind the Prime Minister as he faces the twin challenges of today's vote on top-up fees, and tomorrow's Hutton report on the naming of Dr. Kelly. While both Blair and

his Ministers have been lobbying vigorously over their higher education funding bill, they have remained silent over the Hutton Inquiry.

Arguing that Lord Hutton should be allowed to publish his findings before he will comment, the Prime Minister said, "I have really tried in the last few weeks to stay out of discussing even the issues surrounding it in great detail, because he will obviously go into a lot of these issues."

Nevertheless, Tony Blair remains confident. Amid calls for him to resign, he responded to questions over whether he will still be Prime Minister on Friday with a simple "Yes."

The Government claims to have wooed erstwhile rebels to support the top-up fees proposal after making several concessions, including one which would see students pay back their student loans at £5 a week only after they were earning £18,000 a year.

The mood at the LSE appears to support this conclusion. An informal poll of



Is the cup half empty or half full? The students have had their say...

50 students on Houghton Street put Blair's support at over 40%. This manifested itself last week in a poor turnout for a planned demonstration against top-up fees on Houghton Street.

The Don't Price Students Out Campaign, chaired by SU Treasurer Jo Kibble, was hoping to organise a Human

Chain around the Old Building. With only several dozen students turning up, the protesters were unable to circle the building. Said one passer-by of the diminutive crowd: "there are tables big enough for the lot of them in the Tuns."

Hoax on the Humber

Sal Chowdhury

An inquiry has been initiated into the conduct of an Israeli-based franchise of a British university following the discovery that many professionals, from members of the police and armed forces to senior civil servants, have paid for fictitious qualifications.

Over five thousand bogus degrees were fraudulently issued by the former University of Humberside - now the

University of Lincoln - for which four managers of the university's operation in Israel have been arrested. The fraud squad believe that at least one British staff member was involved in the scam.

Police spokesman Yehuda Maman reputed that "Anywhere that was big enough to hold a desk and a chair, including in one case a petrol station, became a branch of the University of Humberside."

Some three hundred and fifty teachers were offered places on Masters courses before completing their Bachelors degree, according to Police Superintendent Aharon Gal-Or. "Humberside gave some of those students credit for having done courses without actually having studied for a Bachelors degree," he told an Israeli parliamentary committee.

Yet the British institution was not the first to be suspected of handing out fake degrees in Israel as local branches of Burlington College of Vermont and the University of Latvia have also been involved in similar scandals.

The effect of this was felt by the Israeli government as a "dramatic escalation in the number of highly qualified employees" as reported by a treasury official, resulting in the 'severe drain' upon the salary budget.

The degrees, which were awarded without any form of assessment, were used by government employees to secure pay rises. Not only have they been asked to repay this

money, but could also face imprisonment as a result of the fraud.

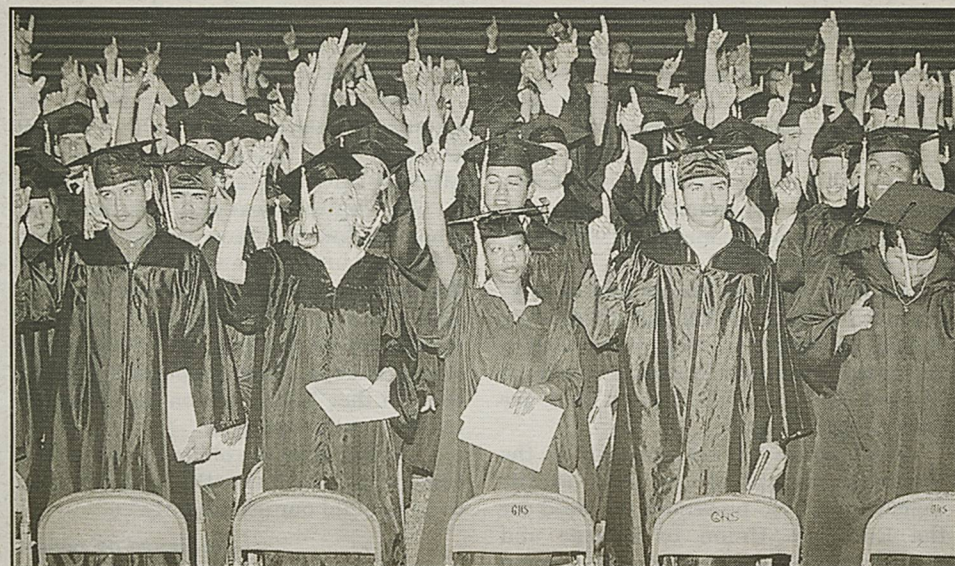
The BA- and MA-purchasing teachers are to encounter a lesser penalty which will take the form of suspension or dismissal.

This comes in contrast to announcements made by lawyers that all graduates who consider their ability as equal to that of those with recognised degrees would be given the opportunity to prove their right to their salary benefits.

The former polytechnic has franchises in twenty-six countries, but following voiced concerns regarding the validity of qualifications its Israeli enrolment programme closed in 1999. A year-long investigation instigated by the Israeli state attorney's office at the behest of educational officials in 2002 uncovered 'a web of deceit involving bribery, fraud, forgery and blackmail.'

It is not only the bogus degree-holders who are likely to be affected by this finding, as concern will now be felt by other British institutions who have undertaken franchise agreements with foreign universities and colleges; the LSE is not one such institution.

The University of Lincoln is assisting investigations by the police and Ministry of Justice in Israel, insisting the forged degree certificates "were fraudulently awarded without the knowledge of the university."



Hands up all those with dodgy degrees.

Treasurer Kibble praises himself and criticises Union Executive in letter

Alykhan Velshi

Last week's Union General Meeting (UGM) erupted into controversy after an anonymous email sent to the Beaver praising LSESU Treasurer Jo Kibble and attacking the Executive was found to be written by Kibble himself.

The letter was sent under the pseudonym B.Reptile-Line and referred to Kibble as "a hard-working and committed officer, unlike some of his Executive colleagues." It did not give any indication of which Executive officers he was referring to.

Kibble also disparaged former News Editor El Barham for an article she had written, saying it "was not a great piece of writing." Barham, a close acquaintance of Kibble, resigned from her position as Beaver News Editor on the same day as the UGM.

When the anonymous letter was first received in the Beaver office, Beaver staff were suspicious as to its origins. They were able to confirm that Kibble was the source after the email was discovered to have been sent from the computer in the Treasurer's office.

At the UGM, when Executive Editor Mark Power questioned Kibble on the letter, the SU Treasurer initially replied, "I don't know anything about anonymous letters." It was only after further questioning from Script Editor Adam Quinn that Kibble admitted he was the author.

Following repeated questioning, Kibble claimed that the letter was a joke, written during a stressful period during which he had "snapped." He then began a vituperative attack on the Beaver, saying "there's a certain illness affecting members of the Beaver staff." It is unknown whether he was referring to the part of his letter which accused "three (possibly four) senior editors [of the Beaver of] prostituting themselves to the right and 'apolitical' centre ground of the Union".

However, further controversy was caused when it was later revealed the letter was written at 10:48 am, during Kibble's office hours. Kibble has already come under criticism for spending too much time leafleting on Houghton Street and not enough in his office.

Nick Spurrell, a member of the Finance & Services Committee, said: "Kibble, who is a paid employee of the Union, spent Union time setting up an anonymous Hotmail account, writing pointless letters to the Beaver, all in an attempt to elevate his own standing." Spurrell later asked "whether or not Kibble has more important things to do whilst on Union time."

Spurrell also criticised Kibble for initially trying to blame the letter on a former SU Treasurer and political rival. The pseudonym of the letter, B.Reptile-Line, is an anagram for Peter Bellini. When questioned over his ostensible attempt to pin the blame on Bellini, Kibble said, "this is just a spat between Bellini and I. I didn't really expect anyone to believe that Bellini wrote the letter."

Kibble has since refused to comment on the email or his initial attempt to deny that he was the author. Rumours have been circulating that Kibble will be seeking a second mandate as Treasurer next year. Speculations abound over the impact of this latest setback on his re-election bid.



'B.Reptile-Line' - have you worked out the anagram yet?

Students to rate their universities

Nazir Hussain

In a move that many students may welcome, the government announced last Friday, 23 January, that it will publish an annual survey revealing how students rate their universities.

UK universities are currently ranked by measures such as student drop-out and the proportion of their intake that comes from state schools every year. The new proposal thus represents a landmark change in the rating of universities.

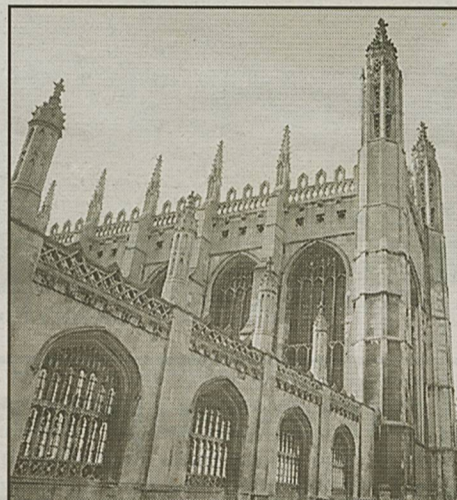
Higher Education Minister Alan Johnson said that the National Students' Survey "will give students better information to help them make informed choices about where and what to study at university." He also said, "one of the biggest reasons for student drop-out has been students choosing the wrong course, one that does not suit them or their needs".

An experimental version of the survey, involving 15,000 students at 23 universities has already been conducted. Participating Russell Group universities are Birmingham, Manchester and Nottingham.

Students and recent graduates were asked to rate universities for quality across seven areas - teaching, feedback, assessment, support, available learning resources, and the ability of the course to improve their skills and workload.

For most questions, a score of five was the best a university or course could achieve, while one was the lowest. Average scores across 20 universities showed teaching quality in social studies ranged from 3.7 to 4.2. Individual courses were shown to have strengths and weaknesses - for example, one business studies degree was rated 3.8 for teaching but 2.5 for feedback.

The HE minister said that the results "show that the overall quality of our uni-



How will the big guns fare?

versities is of a high standard but the diversity within and across institutions and courses shows the importance of and need for this student survey."

The universities took part on the condition that their individual results would not be made public. As a result, those of us to eager to know how students rate their respective universities will have to wait. It is not known when the first actual survey will be conducted.

NUS President Mandy Telford has supported the proposal, but added several points of caution. She said that "for this to work there must be strict guidelines in place and a proper representative number of students questioned.

"What the government must not do is use these surveys to create university league tables to try and justify some institutions' desire to charge much higher top-up fees."

The survey proposal was included in last year's higher education white paper, which contained the plan to allow universities to charge higher fees. Johnson said that the survey "will also enable them (students) to look at the quality of the course alongside the tuition fees to be charged for it."



Union Jack

A cool wind blew through the Old Theatre last Thursday. Hacks looked anxious, religious groups longed for the return of the one who had brought stability and unity to LSE, the right wondered if they would ever see executive power again. For Dan Freedman had resigned, and with him went all hope of peace and harmony on campus, and all hope of Dan and Omar sitting together too.

Jack's trip upstairs last week was an enlightening one, even if it was rather lonely. But 'Stagefright' Jordan and little Jimmy Eyton kept him entertained as they rallied behind their man. Poor Dan, it seems, was treated very badly by his friends in the Exec, he just longed to sit with Bellini and Spurrell and get on with his job of bringing a friendly community spirit to LSE, while getting the sign on the Gents in the Library replaced. But it would appear that some people didn't share Dan's vision; they wanted to condemn Kilroy and have EU tested chemicals. So while Dan built fences, er I mean bridges, the others plotted against him and Dan was forced to leave the Exec.

Jack was more than disappointed to find the balcony so bare; no longer the force it was under the guidance of Supertramp, the AU is stumbling along with 'bone idol' Darius leaving the mischief to little Jimmy and little Willie, occasionally interjecting for a bit of banter with scarecrow Simmons or Sister Rowan. How Jack longs for the days when a whiff of testosterone from the cheap seats could floor even the most rabidly militant left-wing feminist. But the new batch is hardly the no-neck heroes of yesteryear; a few spotty, public-school telegraph readers is all that's left.

Jack's heart was warmed by Kibble's good humour when under fire from those deceitful journalists at the Beaver, though some of his cronies seemed less than amused by the whole affair. In fact, he seemed rather pleased with himself - hardly surprising though when thinking up an anagram of Peter Bellini is the sum total of your achievements for the year. Kibble showed some taste with his knowledge of Private Eye humour while amending the token Tory motion of last week. Jack still thinks £3 is a tad steep for Tory membership, a meal at Wright's would probably be more satisfying, and considering the Mixed Grill's previous history of defeating LSE Tories, a better bet at the polls too.

Jack was disturbed by changes in the UGM seating plan. Several Kibble buddies seemed to be positioned dangerously close to Camp Spurrell, (that's the area, not the man). After the Left's failed attempt to infiltrate the balcony last term, Jack feels further encroachment on foreign territory will only end in tears.



LSE graduates shouldn't worry too much yet about getting into firms like KPMG.

LSE graduates still sought-after despite poll findings

Simon Chignell

LSE students have been told they are still highly valued, despite research published by the Association of Graduate Recruiters last week.

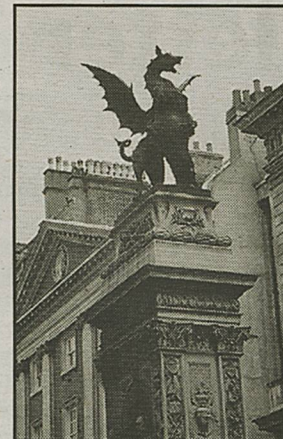
The survey showed that of 215 of the UK's biggest graduate employers, over half thought that too many graduates were already being produced, and 60% agreed that the quality of graduates was decreasing with the expansion in higher education.

This was seen as a blow to the government and students alike with the findings suggesting that top businesses are at odds with the government's target of getting 50% of young people into higher education by the end of the decade. Graduates will be finding it harder to gain employment with greater competition and their degrees seemingly valued less.

However Keith Dugdale, the Director of Recruitment and Resourcing for KPMG, in an exclusive statement to *The Beaver*, has assured LSE students that "You can never receive too many applications from LSE." Whilst he conceded that KPMG, one of the UK's top graduate employers, receives on average around 15 applicants for every one of its 550 graduate positions each year, he stressed the value of LSE graduates.

"LSE have been in the top 10 of the universities from which we recruit for more than 10 years and we are enormously impressed by their mix of academic excellence, commercial awareness and soft skills. You can never have too much of a good thing and LSE graduates are a very good thing indeed."

He also expressed KPMG's view in contrast with the results of the survey. "Graduates are required throughout the



economy for a huge variety of roles and we are in no doubt that they are critical to the future growth of a business such as KPMG."

Charles MacLeod, UK Director of Recruitment for PricewaterhouseCoopers, backed up this statement, while also adding that "we expect large numbers to apply and gear ourselves up to deal with it. We would be pleased to receive more applications from London University which has been one of our key sources of candidates over the years. We would include in that sentiment the LSE with which we have a long and positive relationship."

In response to the results of the survey, the LSE reiterated its position on the increase in first year students, claiming that student numbers will remain "more or less" the same over the next five years, with the only possible increase of approximately 300 students coming from growth associated with new courses.

However, as the number of graduates nationally increases, it seems competition for popular graduate jobs can only increase, which has led Education and Welfare Officer Rowan Harvey to encourage greater use of the LSE facilities.

"Students must start looking for jobs earlier and using the excellent new careers service available in Tower Two." The service has had over 20,000 visitors, with over 1,500 using the one-to-one advice in the last year: a three fold increase annually.

In response to the survey's claim that the quality of graduates is decreasing, MacLeod conceded, "if you increase access to university without driving up the quality of school leavers, you inevitably dilute the aggregate "quality" of the undergraduate population."

In line with this, Harvey condemned the substitution of seminars for classes on many courses, which means that the number of students per 'teaching session' is likely to increase. She stressed that "the LSE must continue to keep teaching quality up to maintain the standard of LSE degrees". The biggest rise in LSE students going into unemployment last year was in first-degree graduates, with 5.9% unable to find a job. This was blamed on the recruitment practices of large employers.

The LSE has also downplayed the possibility of following the lead of universities such as Cambridge and Exeter that have announced they will be offering bursaries of £4,000 to the poorest students if top-up fees are introduced. When questioned on the matter, the LSE Press Office released a statement saying, "irrespective of the tuition fees debate, LSE has continued to seek support for scholarships and bursaries through its Development Office."

However Rowan Harvey expressed the view that the LSE does very little for home undergraduates and that the School must look at the support it offers.

Romano Prodi

Continued from front page

Prodi also took the opportunity to hit back at those criticising the spending of the European Commission, and attempts by some member states to cut the Commission's budget. He said that the amount the Commission spends was "extremely modest" and that the Commission was very responsible in terms of its expenditure.

Responding to criticisms that his appointment to the Commission was undemocratic, Prodi refuted the accusation, claiming that his position had been attained through consultation with the democratically elected leaders of member states and thus was legitimately democratic. "Democracy is not only direct democracy, when you are appointed by elected bodies then you are democratic by second-stage democracy."

Professor Prodi spoke fondly of his links to the LSE, including time he spent here studying for a PhD under industrial economist Basil Yamey, who was present on Monday. At the conclusion of the event, LSE Director Sir Howard Davies presented Prodi with LSE memorabilia, including a cap which he promptly put on to a cheering crowd.

Joined-up protesting? Human chain uninspiring

Aqeel Kadri
Senior Editor

The latest event in the LSESU Don't Price Students Out campaign took place last Tuesday. The 'Human Chain' attempted to emulate a similar protest against top-up fees held on 16 January 2001 in which an estimated 350-450 LSE students participated.

The event was intended as a symbolic demonstration of opposition to the government's plans for higher education funding, as detailed in the Higher Education Bill which will receive its second reading in the House of Commons today. The chain stretched from outside Wright's Bar along Houghton Street, reaching the entrance to the Student Services Centre on Clare Market.

A press release issued by SU Treasurer Jo Kibble on behalf of LSE Students' Union said, "Over 100 LSE students" formed the chain. A brief investigation commissioned by *The Beaver* found that the distance from Wright's Bar to the Student Services Centre entrance is approximately 60 metres, equating to a chain of 40-50 people. In response to this finding Kibble said, "There were definitely more people than that." Angus Jones,



The Human Chain / Photo: LSESU

LSESU ULU Council Delegate, estimated the attendance to be "between 70 and 90 people." Despite confusion over the numbers Kibble said he was "extremely happy" with the turnout. An associate of the SU Treasurer was heard to comment immediately before the event that at least 250 students would be required in order for the event to be a success. Kibble said, "I had no target in mind, I simply wanted it to be a bold statement to attract the attention of the media, which I think was successful." The event was filmed briefly by the BBC's *Newsnight* programme as part of a separate report on Higher Education funding.

Following the human chain, protestors walked to LSE Director Sir Howard Davies' office in Tower One. The Director was away from LSE at the time, though a note was left by the students informing him of their visit.

Controversy surrounds reclassification of cannabis



Under the new rules, police will no longer be able to pursue those in possession of small amounts of cannabis.

**Kati Krause and
Chris Heathcote**

Amid widespread controversy, cannabis will be reclassified from a Class B to a low-risk, Category C drug across the UK from January 29, making possession of small amounts or smoking it in private a non-arrestable offence.

While the government emphasises the continued illegal status of cannabis, the majority of offences for cannabis possession by adults will only lead to a warning and confiscation of the drug, with arrests likely only where there are aggravating factors such as smoking in public places, i.e. around schools. The Home Office maintains that drug laws "should accurately reflect the relative harm of drugs."

Ministers have decided that in terms of harmfulness, cannabis cannot be compared to either Class A drugs, such as crack and heroin, or to amphetamines, which are Class B, but rather, in the same category as anabolic steroids and growth hormones. The reclassification is designed to provide British police "with an opportunity to focus greater resources on priority areas like dealing with Class A drugs, which do most harm."

Home Secretary David Blunkett told BBC Radio: "I don't want to actively end up chasing (cannabis smokers) rather than chasing the dealers and chasing the people who kill young people with crack and heroin."

Mr Blunkett was supported by LSESU Treasurer Jo Kibble, who said: "The reclassi-

fication is a small step, on the part of the law, towards a more realistic attitude regarding contemporary cannabis use. The fact that it remains illegal, however, continues to make a laughing stock of the law, because it is no more costly than tobacco or alcohol."

But the move has prompted widespread opposition with Conservative leader Michael Howard saying a future Tory Government led by him would reverse what he called a "muddled and confusing" policy "without logic".

The British Medical Association (BMA) has also attacked the government's decision, saying that regular consumption of cannabis can kill. Dr Peter Maguire, deputy chairman of the BMA's board of science, told Reuters that cannabis "is actually more dangerous than tobacco." A 'joint' without tobacco contains a third more tar than a normal cigarette, and consumption sharply increases the amount of carbon monoxide in the blood.

On Tuesday, January 20, a man aged 36 who smoked up to six joints a day was reported to be the first Briton to die as a direct result of smoking the drug.

The government has launched a £1m campaign to warn people of the dangers of consuming cannabis, targeting young people and students with radio adverts and leaflets to remind them that the drug is still illegal. Britain has an estimated 5 million cannabis users, and consumption is believed to have grown sharply in the past 20 years.

A government report of 2000 suggested

that while the percentage of 16 to 19 year olds consuming cannabis has decreased from 29% to 25% between 1994 and 2000, the proportion of young people aged 20 to 24 increased from 23% to 27% during the same period.

A 1996 survey of second year UK students carried out by City University London found that 20% regularly used Cannabis, 33% had used other illicit drugs, 11% reported multiple drug use and that 46% had begun drug taking whilst still at school.

However, an internet site named 'The UK Cannabis Internet Activists' challenged the traditional stereotype that students were the main users of "the waster's drug". It rejected the view that cannabis use had led to a culture of "unwashed hippies who slouch around all day, never work nor indeed integrate in any way with normal society" and that "most [cannabis users] will become heroin addicts within a few weeks of seeing their first joint".

It further criticised the habit amongst researchers for focusing their surveys of cannabis use on schools and universities, adding that the results of such studies were likely to substantially underestimate the prevalence and levels of drug use among young adults, and any generalisations, such as just accusing students, would be of questionable validity. The organisation drew attention to a 1997 survey which found that "students [had actually] reported lower drug use than unemployed or working respondents".

Overseas students to rise to 1m by 2025

Adrian Li

The British Council has predicted that by 2025, there will be more than 1 million international students studying in UK higher education institutions.

The basis for such a prediction is the marked increase in students from overseas coming to the UK last year.

A joint study conducted by the Council and its Australian counterpart predicts that demand for places at UK higher education institutions could be as high as 677,000 international students in 2015, rising to 1,330,000 by 2025. This predicted increase is expected to have a knock-on effect for other sectors like further education college courses, English language teaching and boarding schools.

While the British Council hailed these figures, it also warned against complacency. Universities were told they needed to improve the way they deliver their courses and that the UK's marketing needs to change in order to stay ahead of the increasingly fierce international competition for overseas students.

The number of non-EU international students studying in the UK in 2002-3 rose by 23% on the previous academic year - to a total of 174,575, compared with an average increase of 8% in the three previous years. The British Council estimated that the increase was worth an additional £500m to the UK economy.

The Council does not believe the increased screening by the US of overseas students after September 11 has put off students from studying in the US and choosing the UK instead.

The proportion of international students from various geographical regions has also changed. Over the period 1996-2003 the number of overseas students from outside the EU has grown 59%. However this does not reflect large increases from countries such as China and India and big falls in numbers from Malaysia and Singapore, which are developing their own universities.

Alan Johnson, the higher education minister, said: "These figures show that more and more international students recognise the benefits of experiencing a first-class UK education, and demonstrate the success of our efforts to promote the UK as an accessible and welcoming study destination. This is good news - for our institutions, which benefit from greater diversity on their campuses, and for the UK as a whole, which benefits from greater opportunity to develop long-term trade, political and cultural links overseas."

An LSE spokesperson said: "For 2003 entry, the School aimed to recruit around 1,200 new first degree undergraduates (of which 38 per cent were planned to be non-EU students) and 2,800 new taught postgraduates (of which 58 per cent were planned to be non-EU students).

"In terms of all LSE students, 49 per cent were planned to be non-EU. While the overall student population is set to grow towards 8,500 by 2011-12, there are currently no plans to alter the proportion of international students at either undergraduate or postgraduate level."

Tony Blair's Big Week

Matthew Sinclair looks ahead to a week when much will be decided; the fates of parties, movements and especially prime ministers.

When was the last time a government was brought down?

James Callaghan in the late seventies.

When was the last time a government looked like it might be brought down?

Maastricht - around a decade ago.

Tony Blair's government has a sufficiently large majority that, under normal circumstances, immunity from such petty concerns would be assured. That a rebellion of over a hundred MPs, with opposition support, could fail is testament to the Labour party's strength in the Commons.

However, these are not normal times. There are a huge number of Labour backbenchers who tasted rebellion in their pacifist role and enjoyed it, add to these the formidable ranks of ex-ministers with substantial axes to grind and those who have not accepted Blair's consolidation of Thatcherism, and this government's programme is being seriously opposed.

This week will see the Commons battle on top-up fees with the publication of the Hutton report on the death of David Kelly following close behind.

At the time of writing the numbers are against the Government in the battle on top-up fees. If the result goes badly the consumer-focused reform of public services will look like something of a mirage and the rebels will become emboldened to defeat other parts of the New Labour programme that do not suit them. While Tony Blair would probably continue, his government would become a shadow, its mission and self-image lying in tatters.

The outcome of the Hutton report is unlikely to be based upon what the Lord actually reports. It is likely to be decided



based upon the collision of the Labour media empire with Maurice Saatchi's new fiefdom. Hutton's report will probably be highly technical and offer every side a chance to take what it wants from its conclusions; they will sell their side to us remorselessly.

The outcome of the top-up fees debate will be crucial here; the taint of defeat will not subside within twenty-four hours and spinning under such conditions is complex. Two defeats in such a short period of time would be hard to recover from.

The Conservatives are watching with barely disguised glee. Should top-up fees be defeated the New Labour project that robbed them of their preferred place in politics, government, will be undermined, possibly fatally, and a future of the sort of left-right warfare the Tories are good at will beckon.

Should top-up fees pass most Conservatives will be satisfied with the introduction of a market that horrifies the opponents of the bill on the opposite bench. After the publication of the Hutton report the Tories will have a license to cause righteous mischief.

Student movements are facing a more uncertain future. If they defeat top-up fees there will be celebration all round, followed by a lot of concern about the mediocre future German universities are facing and that is looming over British institutions. If they should pass at least one notable in this Union has predicted the "death of the student movement".

Pay attention this week. History will be written at an abnormal rate.

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Bird's Seeds

...Little Nuggets of Wonder...



Hello Sailors. I hope you've all had a tantalising week...

Congratulations to all of you who joined in with the quasi-successful human chain in opposition to top-up fees. I say 'quasi' for two reasons. Firstly, because I am at the L S of E and it's the kind of twatish pretentious term we're taught to use. Secondly, because I had previously referred to it as a human love chain and I think it should posthumously be more aptly named 'the human sweat chain!' Some pillock decided it would be really clever and special to all troop, hand in hand, up all eleven mother fucking floors to the Director's office, only to find him absent. In Paris in fact. So what we effectively achieved was the out-stenching of his corridor with an odour that can only be described as 'dirty', if not entirely 'lefty'. Hopefully it was still humming when he returned to find a charming note from us. This is not to say that one and all shouldn't come aboard the march today. After all, it'll be in the crisp, fresh air of Parliament Square!

Silvio Berlusconi's been pissing me off again. He's been accused of taking back handers. Innocent until proven guilty of course, however, he's got some pretty expensive habits. 'Perma-tan' and 'Just for Men' are somewhat dear in themselves. This is not to mention his penchant for a spot plastic surgery. So he's taken a few

weeks off to tighten up his flabby jowls, because it's not as if there's more important things for him to be doing. What a tool. As far as I'm concerned he can nip and tuck off.

The Queen of Wales, Catherine Zeta-Jones has so far been successful in her pursuit of damages from 'Hello' magazine. She is said to have felt 'violated' by an 'unflattering' photo of her troffing her wedding cake! She felt it made her look a little bit, shall we say 'lardy'. A few points love...don't stuff it down your neck like a bulimic on a binge day! Next time take a slice home. Secondly, you were marrying someone who looks like he's melted! Anne Widdecombe would look like a foxy catch sat next to that! It makes you wonder what the world's coming to when two publicity seeking celebrities start grumbling about having their privacy invaded. I hope Mr Douglas at least has charm and wit to account for the attainment of his stunning bird. Unlike, for instance the cretin that this week asked me if I'd like to "come and watch some wrestling later?", as an invitation of courtship. Needless to say this was not so politely declined.

I had previously been swayed by a most convincing argument put forward by friends of mine, that sought to explain my sporadic disillusionment at the L S of E. They carefully explained that this was at least not aided by the fact that it was a

School of Economics and Political Science. It therefore lacks much room for creativity and is consequently void of any artistic character, as most people attending it are interested in money above all else. This seemed a fair generalisation with a few exceptions, or so I thought. Then it came to my attention (after two and a half years...not the quickest bird in the sky am I?!) that of course the L S of E has character. The proof lies in the voices in the lifts! In the vortex we have none other than Cartman himself telling us what's happening (doors closing etc.), and we've employed the RADA trained character of 'Grant Mitchell' in D building! Heavenly. I propose hence to further this brilliant claim to diversity. There are just too many lifts with the good ol' BT lady informing us through the little speakers. I wouldn't mind having the voice of Alan Partridge in the Old Building... Goooooooooooo.

I doubt much of the above could ruffle too many feathers, seeing as no-body I've mentioned this week reads this paper. It has been drawn to my attention, however, that I've been swearing a lot recently...what can I say, you people have given me the Tourette's I never had. Ahhhh.

Much love, Bird x x x

THE COLLECTIVE

James Allen, Jon Baylis, Hestor Barsham, Jay Bassan, Peter Bellini, Matthias Benzer, Jimmy Baker, Edd Barley, Sian Beynon, Alison Blease, Matt Boys, Ed Calow, Jon Charles, Dave Cole, Naomi Colvin, Chloe Cook, Sarah Coughtrie, Sal Chowdhury, Katie Davies, Tom Delaney, Jon de Keyser, Jan Duesing, Chris Emmerson, Sian Errington, James Eytan, Tristan Feunteun, Jessica Fostekew, Daniel Freedman, Juli Gan, Glyn Gaskarth, Alex Goddard, Sarah Greenberg, Michael Griffith, Daniel Grote, Sachin Gupta, Rowan Harvey, Louise Hastie, Chris Heathcote, Sophia Hoffman, Ben Howarth, Nawaz Imam, Oliver Jelleyman, Tom Jenkins, Bonnie Johnson, Jo Kibble, Paul Kirby, Adrian Li, Van Lim, Paul McAleavey, Will Macfarlane, Ion Martea, Vita Maynard, James Meadway, Francis Murray, Samantha Nicklin, Justin Nolan, Neel Patel, Eliot Pollak, Adam Quinn, Prashant Rao, Zaf Rashid, Loretta Reehill, Olivia Schofield, Matthew Sinclair, James Sharrock, Elliot Simmons, Nick Spurrell, Omar Srouji, Jon Sutcliffe, Darius Tabatabai, Jimmy Tam, Sarah Taylor, Jamie Tehrani, Chrissy Totty, Chenai Tucker, Alykhan Velshi, Saija Vuola, Greta Wade, Claudia Whitcomb, Matt Willgress, Dave Willumsen, Tom Winstone.

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If you have written three or more articles for the Beaver and your name does not appear in the above list please email thebeaver@lse.ac.uk and we will add your name on for next week

The Beaver is available in alternative formats and online at www.lse.ac.uk/union

The Beaver

Editorial Comment

Loss of Plurality

Daniel Freedman's resignation from the Students' Union Executive last week raises some serious issues about plurality in this Union. Freedman's political views were in many cases questionable; however, he made no secret of them during his election campaign. Whether or not one agrees with him, members of this Union should accept that he has a democratic mandate to represent the views he has always campaigned on. Indeed, some would argue more so than Kibble, who famously won by one vote.

The tendency of certain members of the more frenzied left to plot and contrive to make his role difficult is worrying in terms of how tolerant this Union is of political and cultural differences. The concerning factor is how seriously some members of this Union take issues that, when one takes a more holistic view, are inconsequential. The fact that Freedman did not represent

every one of his constituents is not a life-threateningly dire situation. Much more would have been achieved, in terms of harmony and the general better functioning of our Union had he been left to continue in his role unmolested.

The fact remains that Freedman was one of the most active Equal Opportunities (Male) Officers this Union has seen in a long while. The position has long been regarded as somewhat of a joke, and has as such been removed in the constitutional review. The prospect of the intellectual hegemony that some of the left seem to crave on the Executive, whereby all members mindlessly conform to the whim of the UGM for that week is something that should not be tolerated by the political mainstream.

Although many disagree with his stance, Freedman's resignation marks a lamentable loss in plurality on the Executive committee of this Union.

LSE's Drawcard

European Commission President Romano Prodi's visit to the LSE last week was a warming display of the School's enduring sense of community and a confirmation of our place at the intellectual heart of some of this era's most important debates.

The LSE has a unique ability to attract a very high calibre of guest lecturers and speakers, and a fine tradition of supporting them. Turnout to a similar lecture at any other University in the United Kingdom would have been significantly lower than the approximately 2000 students, governors, press and related parties who attended the packed out event in the

Peacock Theatre last Monday. It is a confirmation of the unique nature of the LSE's intellectual environment that we are able to attract such speakers as Prodi and in the past bigger names like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair.

It is the combination of the School's location and intellectual prowess that has made the LSE a most attractive destination for visiting dignitaries. President Prodi's affectionate memories of his time at the LSE and his adoption of the Sir Howard's gift with relish was a warming moment as the audience thundered their applause; the LSE seemed a place to be proud of.

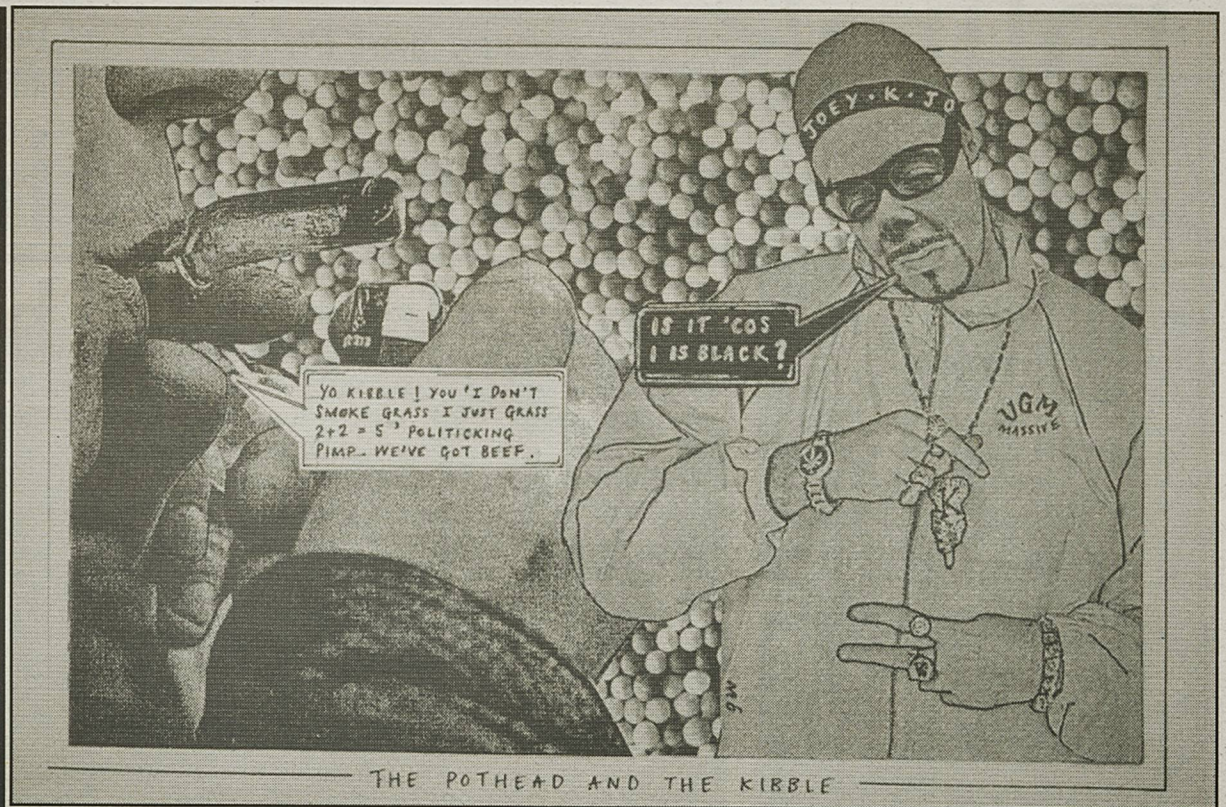
Labour's Waiting Week

This week is the last chance for the LSE's students to voice their opposition to top-up fees and defeat the government in Tuesday's crucial vote. It is important for students to send a united and powerful message to Blair and his government that the students of this country will stand in opposition to the introduction of a market in higher education.

It is tempting to view the government's proposals as a pragmatic and progressive answer to a serious problem, particularly with the convincing rhetoric of the likes of Professor Nick Barr. Such a view, however, is erroneous. Any system that introduces a cost analysis aspect to an applicant's choice of university, and their choice of course should be opposed. The

new proposals have been so compromised that universities are now clear that the scheme does not plug the funding shortfall; they will need to charge more than the currently proposed £3000.

The government's response to criticism that it is breaking an election manifesto pledge is laughable. To suggest that it does not break the pledge because the scheme will be introduced during the next parliament is ludicrous. The fact remains that MPs, who stood in the last election on the manifesto pledge not to introduce top-up fees, are voting, in this parliament, to introduce them, and that is an undeniable breach of the trust of the millions who voted Labour in the last elections.



Letters to the Editor

Sir,

As you might be aware, I have resigned from my post as the Student Union's Equal Opportunities Officer (Male). I would like to explain to the student body the reason for this decision.

From when I first joined the executive, certain people made it clear to me I was not wanted (I can only assume either because of my political or religious beliefs - or both). Last term I was informed that some members of the far-left with no tolerance for other opinions were targeting me with a campaign of character assassination. Knowing that people were working to vilify me, together with the constant undercurrent of hatred they emitted, ensured I was never comfortable on the executive. Sadly this term, it reached a point where for my emotional well-being, and simply out of a desire to actually enjoy being at university, I decided I had had enough of being victimised. It is a disgrace that the executive body of the student union—which is meant to represent all students—should be a forum for such behaviour, making me, or any other student, feel so unwelcome.

Working with students as their officer was the part I enjoyed. Meeting with and helping students has been an enriching and fulfilling experience, making friendships that I hope are for life. In a personal capacity I hope to continue with some of my projects, and any student who feels I can help them are still welcome to contact me.

My decision to resign is no reflection on Elliot Simmons, Rowan Harvey, Jimmy Baker, Will Macfarlane, Danielle Milne,

Andrew Schwartz, Alice Brickley, Rishi Madlani, Catriona Mowbray, Jon Clark, Simon Bottomley, Kevin Liu, Sian Errington, and Anushria Mainthia, whom I hold in high regard.

Yours Faithfully,
Daniel Freedman

Dear Sir,

The paper sucks.

On a remotely related note, I was glad to learn something about Daniel Freedman in issue 592: he had "just been violated".

That's rather rough, but at least he has the courage to come out in the open. Good on him.

Your paper isn't any better for it, though.

From London with love,

Rose, the carnivorous cow.

Dear Sir,

I have an Micro 1 class in 10 minutes, but an article in your Politics section by a Mr. Unkovski-Korica just made my day. Let me explain this joke to you.

His entire argument consists of disjointed logic. Having understood that this issue was laid to rest in one of your previous editions, I was disturbed to find that opinions at LSE still called for international student support against top-up fees.

Unkovski-Korica main point rests on the privitisation of universities, with the reasoning that any increase in Home Status fee-paying students will "encourage" the

increase of fees for international students. Pure bullshit.

The obvious, glaring, staring and simple consequence of the introduction of top-up fees is that universities will have more money in their hands than before. It is a known fact that fees of International-Status students are not afforded the same protection as those of Home/EU-status students and thus our fees at LSE would differ by approximately 3000 pounds that a similar status student at, say, Newcastle University. This disparity is caused entirely by the right of universities to charge various amounts, and the amount decreed would be based on various factors, most of all two issues: market prices and subsidies for Home-status students.

By removing part of the constraint imposed by the government, universities would find more money in their hands (especially when demand exceeds supply - 18 applicants got turned down to let a AccFin student into LSE).

Thus, in turn, International-status students will find that (a) they will not have to subsidise Home-status students anymore (b) their fees will not change regardless of whether the bill fails or is ratified and (c) we will continue to subsidise Home-status students.

If Mr. Unkovski-Korica wants to degrade to Union-esque arguments ("only by standing in solidarity..."), I can respond as illogically: where were Home-status students when LSE decided to charge me 1000% the amount my flatmate pays? I didn't see any protests then...

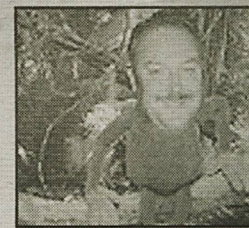
bye,
Samuel Ooi

There will be a further Collective Meeting at 6pm on Monday 2nd February to Elect a second new News Editor. If you interested in the position, or writing for The Beaver, please come along. Meeting will be held in the Societies Room (C023) - All Welcome

blink

Features and Politics

Digital TV on the Rampage
Jimmy Tam thinks digital television
could use better programming
page 11



Edited by Ben Chapman (b.chapman@lse.ac.uk)

Musings

Monkey Annum

Matthew Sinclair

blink Columnist

Year of the Monkey? Too Late. Those crazy Chinese and their wacky, mistimed, New Year. Having been born in the year of the pig I am a little upset at having my chauvinist status predicted from quite such an early age. You do your best but just can't please some cultures; never mind.

The year of the monkey would appear a little out of date. Notable monkeys over the past few years have been flowing thick and fast, whether from the media or flourishing agricultural production. If we have been experiencing relatively non-monkey times surely we can expect a bumper troop in this, specially named, year.

Johnny Vegas's spirited attempt to advertise ITV Digital probably stands at the top of the Monkey ladder so far thanks to its reliance purely upon the comedy value of the word monkey; along with smock, monkey is a word whose particular arrangement of consonants and vowels adds a huge amount to an otherwise dull sentence or film title. "Touch my smock and I'll clean your clock"; "Bite my monkey and I'll arrest your junkie"?

Once they had acquired the terrestrial digital license the BBC felt that they would need to do something special to equal ITV's stellar viewing figures of one, slightly drunken, Irish dog and took the, no longer terribly novel, step of using monkeys in trailers for digital services.

Having run a focus group the BBC found that "Audiences loved the monkeys in research and found their anthropomorphic charm helped communicate very clearly" - they'll run a focus group for anything these days.

Monkey picked tea can be obtained from a specialist Internet purveyor. Among the many wonderful qualities of such a brew is the knowledge that the monkeys "enjoy their work. Picking tea is a family business for most of these resourceful little simians." Apparently they are able to pick wild tea from inaccessible places such as cliff edges to produce a tea of rare quality.

All this talk of monkeys reminds me of the debate over genetic-modification. Now I know there are worries about cross-pollination and allergic reactions, however, playing God has always sounded like a huge amount of fun and I think that anti-GM types have forgotten one of the greatest opportunities presented by biotechnology.

If you were to combine monkey genes with those of, say, an eagle or an albatross you could finally create flying monkeys and scream "FLY my pretties" without fear of ridicule. Any ethical concerns raised over such a project would clearly need to be met with some variety of "screw you hippy; I'm going to China".

Sometimes when you're facing complex debates fraught with risk and ethical conundrums its time to breathe and dream of what might be... flying... monkeys.

Shocking Library Survey



Karen Salerno

A recent ground-breaking survey produced overwhelming, shocking, disastrous findings. A second survey delivered by and large boring, fabricated, and for the most part useless results. I will discuss the latter. Conducted with entirely good intention, this survey concerned a place many a LSE student has exhausted a few grueling hours in, if not merely to check out the fascinatingly painful spiral staircase design (what's with that, anyway?) - the LSE library.

Although generally ambivalent, when probed and bribed, I found the common student to be eerily angry at the LSE library modus operandi. The greatest social science library in the world? "Probably not," they said. Moved by their pain, I delved into the dark and dusty corridors, searched behind books, was reprimanded for using my cell phone, and lost my copy card to boot. All for the sake of asking questions...and...finally...getting answers.

Behind me in line at the course collection checkout counter last week was the proud accumulator of a 500 GBP fine. Hardly moved by the disaster, he was quite aware that the outrageous fine, with a small amount of pleading and some faux tears resting steadily in the corners of his eyes, would quite painlessly be removed from his record - his negligence fluttering away with the touch of a key pad. Who can blame him? But the pain and suffering of the hundreds of students sent spiraling into holiday depression for lack of acquiring that one, if only they could have had the chance to peruse its sweet pages, set text will never be eased - never in fact be justified. The LSE library would, in fact, not earn a cent from this poor forgetful soul. When I informed my fellow students of this catastrophe, they were struck by its injustice, its pure and utter shamelessness, its wickedness. One student, whose name is withheld for qual-

Every visitor to the Library risks electric shocks from the stainless steel bannisters and humiliation from the oddly placed stairs... there's more.

'I found the common student to be eerily angry at the LSE library modus operandi'

ity control purposes, said quite bluntly, "that sucks."

Well, you've heard it from the horse's mouth LSE, it sucks. And we're not talking just fines here - students are skipping class because they can't find their weekly readings, the course collection is a hal- lowing hall of reckless abandon, the printers constantly blink "toner low," and the morale of the whole of LSE drops ever so slightly every time a student reaches the proper location of the book they were promised would be there, and alas it is not. The LSE library oozes frustration, reeks of incompetence, and lets off the foul aroma of mediocrity. It's time to shape up, and here's how:

1. Re-Vamp the "Course Collection." Instead of having three measly copy machines inside the security barriers, load all of the free space up with as many copy machines as you can cram in there. Designate at least two copies of each and every book in the course collection as permanently fixed on the shelves - do not allow these two copies to be checked out, like ever.

2. Provide a "drop box" of sorts in which students can submit notices of "missing books" (i.e. books that claim that they are on the shelves, but are in fact not). Then proceed to have massive search parties for these books.

3. Charge reasonable fines. Thus

igniting actual fear in students, motivating them to turn in their books. The LSE would in fact end up garnering more fine money, because it would not constantly be ignoring massive library fines and students would not have justification for not paying them. Further, (please!) post the fine information in very large print, on all available empty walls.

4. Designate an employee, funded by the increasing fine money, to man the public room printers at all times. Especially Monday afternoons. Massive truckloads of paper and toner, parked right under the staircase, would also do quite nicely.

5. Clearer male/female markings on the bathroom doors. This is a personal request.

And this last plea is to my fellow students. Please share the books. Please don't hide them in the periodical abyss. Turn in lost copy cards. And maybe we can all walk a little more lightly through those stainless style, security protected barriers of the, of our, LSE library.

Karen Salerno is a Social Policy student.

If you're interested in writing for blink or have an article that you would like to get published, simply email b.chapman@lse.ac.uk

All opinions expressed in blink, including those of its editor, are the writers' own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Beaver or LSEU -

We're in this Together



Moderates should be careful of the extremist company they keep.

Chris Pope

On the 20th of November, thousands took to the streets of London to protest the visit of President Bush. The vast majority of demonstrators were not anti-American ideologues, but concerned citizens. (Will our troops get stuck? Where are the WMDs? Will the Middle-East be made less stable? - These are all reasonable questions). Yet, there also seems to be fundamental opposition to intervention under any circumstance. Many are simply unwilling to countenance any possible justification. The war, they claim, was nothing but a conspiracy. The military industrial complex, neo-conservative ideology, oil interests, Jews, etc... In fact, it doesn't matter whether these supposed motives are incompatible and conflict - "It's a damned conspiracy, I tell you!"

Now, these arguments will always find some support with extremists, but the "war on terror" seems to have catapulted them into a respectable mainstream. Suddenly, goons from the Socialist Workers Party are addressing million-strong crowds, Hollywood celebrities are interviewed as geopolitical sages and George Galloway finds someone who wants to listen. People will always hate Goliath. America, the powerhouse of the global economy, now has the lion's share of even France's most cherished domestic market: anti-Americanism. Only Michael Moore and Noam Chomsky fail to appreciate the irony, as they inadvertently highlight the degree to which liberal capitalism lavishly rewards dissent.

But, it's when mainstream politicians join these kooks that we need to worry. Never the types to miss a passing bandwagon, it was not surprising to see the Liberal Democrats throwing their lot in with advocates of communist tyranny.

'Suddenly, goons from the Socialist Workers Party are addressing million-strong crowds, Hollywood celebrities are interviewed as geopolitical sages and George Galloway finds someone who wants to listen.'

Charles Kennedy knows a PR opportunity when he sees one, and never seems to find a moral principle that might obstruct him. Ask Mr Kennedy whether he wants to be filmed with a crowd of revolutionaries seeking to overthrow our free society, and his only concern is whether the outside-broadcast has a makeup person.

Am I being petty? Well, maybe. But, there's a serious point. The media only has a certain amount of time to cover an important issue. Debate in a democracy should be educative, not demagogic. There's a difference between claiming that the case for overthrowing Saddam was not proven, and legitimising protests led by the extreme-left. Though it might be fun to parade around the city denouncing "western imperialism", I doubt that many of those protesting would forego their current status as European or American citizens, for subjecthood under those that they are so keen to defend. It is a simple fact that much of the Middle East is ruled by brutal tyrants, who have no qualms about resorting to horrific methods, to keep their populations enslaved. Those who plot tirelessly, seeking only to inflict inhuman barbarity and wanton destruction on civilian targets, forfeit all moral authority.

After Timothy McVeigh bombed the Oklahoma Federal Building in 1995, the extreme-right proclaimed that "big government got what it deserved". Using the same logic as Palestinian apologists, they claimed that the ends justified the means. Their post-Waco rages at Clinton, and the current fury at Bush, mirror each other scarily. Politics is becoming even more

polarised. This is insane - both leaders had the same broad ends in mind. Venting rage is divisive, reduces our strength of purpose, and distracts us from our goals. Osama Bin Laden repeatedly mocked America for its lack of resolve following the Embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya, proclaiming that materialist decadence had left the West weak. We must pull together if we are to face down the challenge of terrorism.

Of course, disagreement and internal debate are the essence of our society's strength. But, this is only true because we all agree on so much, without even thinking about it. The Rule of Law, human rights and popular sovereignty will bring the vast majority of Europeans and Americans into strong and forceful agreement. Although, at times, it may seem that way, liberty and democracy have never been available for free. The free nations of the world must always be prepared to defend their values. Either the democracies hang together, or they will hang apart.

Does this mean "regime-change all round"? No. But we need a middle way between Clintonesque dithering and hawkish paranoia. For starters, mainstream politicians (and, yes, this includes Howard Dean) should make it clear that their opposition to war was for pragmatic reasons, rather than a strategic shirking of our responsibilities as guarantor of a free, open and stable world order. On the other side, George W. Bush should look for an off-switch to Donald Rumsfeld's mouth. The Secretary of Defense's pre-war rantings undermined any attempt for the Atlantic Alliance to find the common cause which binds them.

Terrorist atrocities, nuclear proliferation and Islamofascist ideology hold little promise for the world. Those who work in our names must be unambiguous about this. If the argument is well made, the transatlantic rift will heal, and the extremists will soon be back where they belong: marching on their own.

Chris Pope is a 3rd year Government and Economics student.

OneEyeOpen

It pains me greatly to proclaim that this will be the last OneEyeOpen column. This not-so-hallowed and legendary piece of prose will cease to appear amongst the intellectual jewels of the Beaver's features section; you won't have to blink to miss it this time next week.

Alas, I can only assume few tears will be shed and even fewer teeth ground in astonished bemusement at the loss of a column which has seldom really known where it's going. It's been about as clear in its pathway to satisfaction as George Bush's rather rain-soaked and badly folded roadmap. No space for the Nutrigrain on this journey - there just hasn't been time. And aren't we all glad I never got round to talking about said cereal bars.

There does remain, however, one small duty to be performed by this grey box (only slightly darker than Musings, but there's symbolism there folks), which is to mount a defence of the section that has played generous host to it these past four months.

Last week, as well documented in the UGM and this week's Beaver, the editors of this esteemed rag received an interesting reptilian email, which amongst some serious, some humorous, allegations, was made the claim that the standard of writing in the blink section of the Beaver (just to clarify, that's a small 'b' in blink, and no bloody colon) had seen "a major turn for the worse this year".

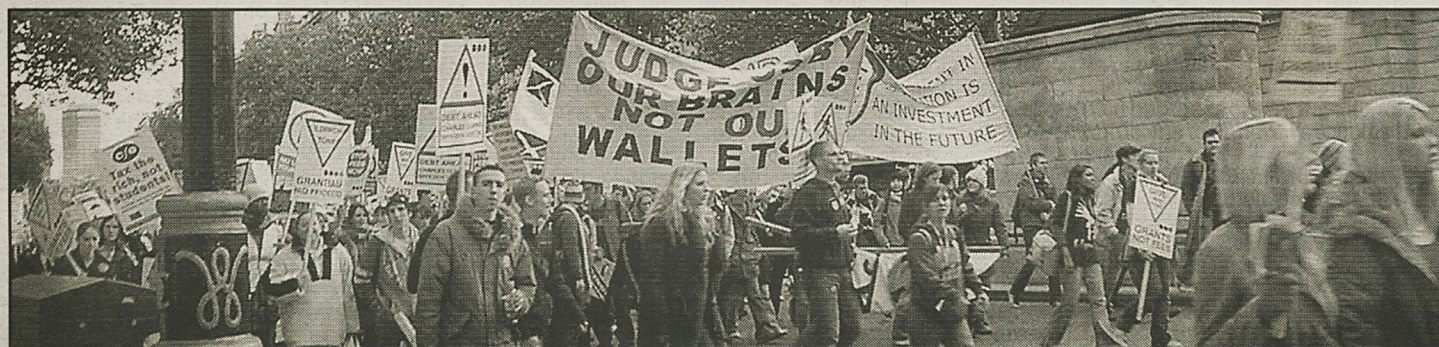
When asked to clarify the comments in an interview with a Beaver reporter this week, the author of the email stressed the reference to the standard of writing in the section, believing that the range of articles had remained as strong as in previous years.

It would not be surprising to receive such comments from the author of the aforementioned email. It has been said by some close to him that his side of the political spectrum has not been adequately represented in blink this academic year: perhaps his belief that the standard of writing has declined stems simply from the fact that he doesn't agree with half of what has appeared in the section of late.

It should be made very clear that blink is open to anyone who chooses to write for it. A boycott by the left, intended or unintended, does not mean that blink is prohibited from publishing articles from those representing the political right. When articles have been received from the left, they have always found a home in the section, and where possible, balance has been attempted in the approach to major issues such as Iraq, top-up fees, Israel-Palestine and George Bush's state visit.

Meanwhile, I would claim that the standard of writing in the section this year has only continued to improve, with a greater number of contributors than last year, whilst consensus seems to suggest that blink is now far less arduous to read and easier on the eye due to shorter articles and bigger pictures.

If this column serves as a challenge to the left to bombard the new blink editor with articles, then we will all be better for it. blink is the only section of the paper where any student can take 1000 words to say whatever they want. The offer is still open, unlike my OneEye.



World Economic Forum, Davos v World Social Forum, Porto Alegre

World Economic Forum Facts

Who - 2100 of the world's top business and political leaders.

Where - Davos, Switzerland

Why - 'provides a collaborative framework for the world's leaders to address global issues, engaging particularly its corporate members in global citizenship.'

History - founded in 1970 as the Davos Symposium, it became the WEF in 1987 and became synonymous with the Washington Consensus of the IMF and World Bank. In 2002 it was held in New York to show solidarity following the September 11th attacks.

Slogan - 'Committed to improving the state of the world'



World Social Forum Facts

Who - 100 000 civil society delegates

Where - Mumbai, India

Why - 'an open space for discussing alternatives to the dominant neo-liberal processes, for exchanging experiences and for strengthening alliances among mass organisations, peoples' movements and civil society organisations.'

History - founded in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001 to discuss strategies of resistance to the model for globalisation formulated at the WEF. Being held outside Brazil for the first time.

Slogan: 'Another World Is Possible'

The World Economic Forum's new attempts at developing a social conscience fall foul of company director's commitment to value their shareholders above.

Joel Kenricks

The World Economic Forum (WEF) has since 1987 brought together business and political leaders to discuss the issues that affect them most. Founded as an informal channel for Europe's leading industrialists to talk to governments, it became a place where leading figures could meet.

After being at the wrong end of 'anti-capitalist' and 'anti-globalisation' activists in the late 1990s the WEF tried to remodel itself as a Forum committed to improving the world. Leading announcements were made by Kofi Annan on the 'Global Compact' and a 'Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization' was set up. Yet neither of these projects has since been adequately followed up.

This year the Davos meeting is themed around "partnering for peace and security" with sub-themes ranging from "Building Corporate Resilience" to "Reducing Inequality". Despite the inclusion of progressive topics, the main thrust of the conference seems to be quite clearly centred on corporate and security issues.

Author Will Hutton is among those who say that despite the rhetoric those in Davos are simply not willing to discuss the biggest problems of the world economy. He cites offshore tax havens as one example of wider financial reform the WEF refuses to tackle.

Historian and Balkans expert Misha Glenny used to regularly attend the WEF to discuss the region. Yet he says that now when the participants 'really could contribute to the redevelopment of the region, they no longer deem the subject sexy enough to discuss.'

A recent PriceWaterhouseCooper survey of top CEOs showed that their biggest concerns were increased competition, overregulation and currency fluctuations. The threat of global terrorism came fifth. Despite the apparent 'peace and security' focus business leaders want to meet politicians to further their own interests. CEOs would rather discuss how to protect their companies from regulation than implement labour and environmental

'After being at the wrong end of anti-capitalist and 'anti-globalisation' activists in the late 1990s the WEF tried to remodel itself as a Forum committed to improving the world.'

standards, and would rather protect their shareholders interests than allow developing countries access to western markets.

"When business leaders claim to be acting in the interests of security and prosperity," said Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth, "they mean security to protect the prosperity of the multinational companies who rule the world rather than the greater peace and security of the world."

A recent joint LSE and WEF debate highlighted the problems the world faces in meeting even the modest UN Millennium Development Goals. With progress on these goals scoring no more than 4/10 Kevin Watkins, Head of Policy at Oxfam, said that far from helping to reach these goals international structures are actually increasing these global problems.

LSE Professor David Held is one of those who still believe the WEF has a positive role to play in solving these huge global problems. Having attended a recent meeting of the WEF he told the meeting that there was an ability to be thoughtful and broadminded. Several NGOs and Trade Unions are represented at the talks.

Yet a recent Christian Aid report is deeply critical of the recent trend of Corporate Social Responsibility programmes, claiming that companies use them to shield themselves from environmental and human rights regulation. But if Davos is merely hot air in an alpine resort, what possible alternatives are there?

The World Social Forum offers an alternative that allows poor country interests to be properly represented.

The World Social Forum was founded in 2001 as an antidote to the Davos meeting. This year it is being held outside of the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre for the first time. Porto Alegre, stronghold of the current Brazilian President Lula, was chosen as a venue because of its history of progressive politics and pioneering 'participatory budgets' that give citizens a direct say in how their taxes are spent.

This huge event attracted over 60 000 participants last year, yet only 200 delegates were from Asia. Committed to widening participation the decision was taken to move the forum to the Indian city of Mumbai this year.

Most of the delegates are activists in a broad range of progressive civil society organisations, in what became popularly known as the 'anti-capitalist' or 'anti-globalisation' movement. Seeking to portray a more positive and accurate image many now call it the Global Justice Movement or alternative-globalisation movement, echoing the rallying cry of 'Another World Is Possible'.

Among this year's delegates are Nobel Prize winners Joseph Stiglitz and Shirin Ebadi, former UN Human Rights High Commissioner Mary Robinson and leading campaigners including Jose Bove, Walden Bello, Bernard Casse, Vandana Sheva and Noam Chomsky. British delegates include George Monbiot and Jeremy Corbyn.

Over half of the 100 000 delegates are from the sub-continent, showing that location has a major effect on the event. Being held in India the caste system has joined the familiar topics of debt relief, AIDs, trade rules, war and oppression. Next year the WSF will return to Porto Alegre, and organisers hope to bring it to Africa in 2006.

The WSF is a bold attempt by civil society activists to set their own agenda, away from the meetings of the global elites such as Davos. It is a chance to meet and discuss strategies with potential allies from around the world facing similar struggles. It is only in building these global alliances that 'globalisation from below' can begin to reclaim the agenda



'The WSF is a bold attempt by civil society activists to set their own agenda, away from the meetings of the global elites such as Davos. It is a chance to meet and discuss strategies with potential allies from around the world.'

and act against poverty, inequality and oppression. This cannot be done alone, yet the extent to which the world's powerful leaders are prepared to respond to these issues is very questionable.

The recent emergence of the 'G21' group of poorer countries during the Cancun talks last year may be a sign that the balance of power is beginning to shift, and that leaders from the poorer countries may be beginning to take a stand. The most powerful thing the movement can do is show that alternatives do exist to corporate globalisation, and the positive message and dialogue of the World Social Forum is an essential part of the struggle for a safe, just and equal world.

Joel Kenrick is a 1st year International Relations student and Chair of LSE Attac Society. This is his first Beaver article.

blink Features

Let's Get Digital

Jimmy Tam welcomes the digital TV revolution but thinks that the quality and variety of the programming will have to improve.

Jimmy Tam

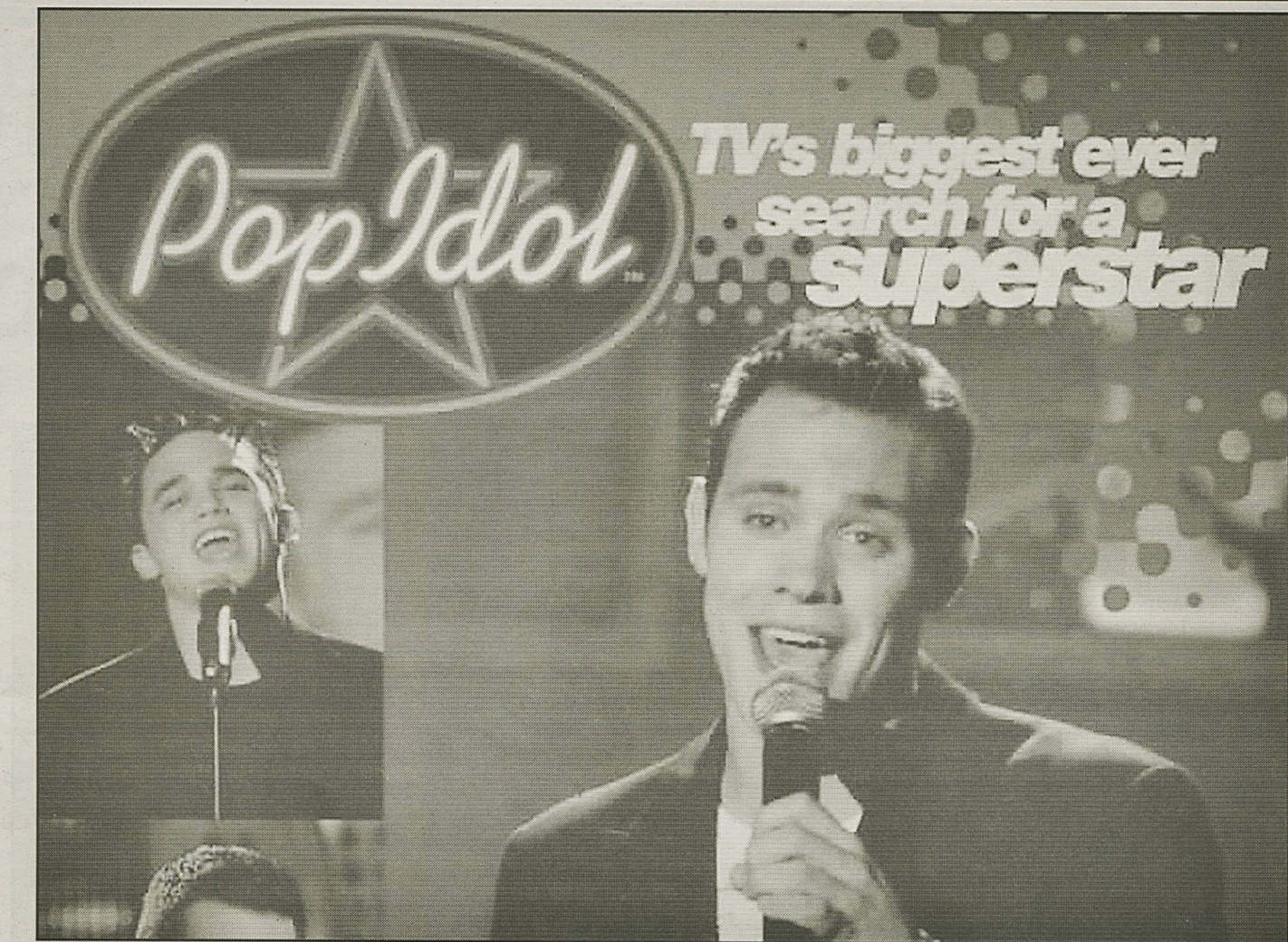
Recently I've been getting this pain in my right hand. Think I've been using it too much. I wonder why? Hmm, too much... television, of course! What were you thinking? 50.2% of us now have digital TV, undoubtedly helped by the extraordinary success of year-old Freeview, which is currently found in 2million British homes. Unfortunately I'm still in the 49.8% remainder. It wasn't until coming to LSE, and Passfield Hall, that I experienced the joy of digital television. Being president even means I get ownership over the remote control. An analysis of how the remote control equates power is itching to be made, but I'll resist.

With the advent of digital TV, we Brits need no longer lag behind the Americans. As a young child on holiday in New Jersey at my aunt's house, I marvelled in jealousy at the seemingly endless number of channels that she had on her television. I've been a big TV fan since I was very young - hence the glasses - and it just seemed unfair that us Brits only had, at that time, four main channels compared to Americans' two thousand six hundred and ninety-five. Or something like that. But, aside from this catch-up, what has digital TV actually given us?

One would hope that the consequential competition coming out of the plethora of new channels would make the big terrestrial five pull out all the stops and make some mighty fine programmes so we don't stray. One would think wrong.

This summer I dabbled my young toes into the sordid world of TV pitching as an intern at an independent production company. What did the cool and cutting edge Channel 4 want? Er, property shows. Yes, that's right. More property shows to add to the three million that are already clogging up the airwaves.

The sad fact is digital TV hasn't given us much more originality. Channel 4's sibling E4 has become little more than an outlet for round-the-clock Big Brother/The Salon and ITV2's no different with its Pop Idol Extra and Kate Yawn-ton. Look at the so-called All New Top of the Pops. Running scared after years of 'low' ratings (though note that TOTP, even at its all-time nadir of 2.8million, still beats any other terrestrial music show), Andi Peters is drafted in to



'revamp' the national treasure. Who does Peters bring in? A presenter from, er, MTV. 22-year-old Tim Kash is an ambitious if somewhat deluded individual: "Let's just say that by 30, I want to have had an international best-selling autobiography."

If digital TV is to be successful, then it needs to give us quality as well as quantity. Legendary kids' news show Newsround now has weekend bulletins for the first time in its thirty-one year history. But how much news can 10-year-olds really watch? When I was ten, my friends and I thought news was boring. Most people I know only watched it because they fancied the presenters Julie Etchingham and Chris Rogers. Or was that just me?

Come to think about it, where is Chris Rogers now, hey? After a brief spell (and several cock-ups) at Sky News, then the ill-fated RI:SE, his career went tumbling down to the rather pointless ITV News Channel. I guess that's what happens to an uneducated pretty boy who leaves school at 19 to (try and) be a serious news presenter.

Digital TV, nevertheless, does have its plusses. BBC News 24 and Sky News continue to receive critical acclaim and it keeps sports fans happy. 2003's most watched digital TV show was indeed a football match. Digital TV also provides a refuge for telly has-beens. Blue Peter presenters (as well as Chris Rogers) needn't descend back into utter obscurity once they tire of sticky-back plastic. Anyone else spotted Yvette Fielding on Living TV? The McDonald's counter no longer beckons for media studies graduates aspiring to those elusive 'glamorous' TV jobs. Any statistician will confirm that more shows call for more staff; the CBBC department tripled in size when the CBBC Channel and CBeebies launched. Even I almost got a job there, after being called in for a screen test at Newsround. Beaten by Thalia, an existing Newsround producer, I take comfort in the fate of Chris Rogers.

The government are clearly supporting a complete changeover from analogue to

'If digital TV is to be successful, then it needs to give us quality as well as quantity'

'It just seemed unfair that us Brits only had, at that time, four main channels compared to Americans' two thousand six hundred and ninety-five. Or something like that.'

digital and the recent Freeview success shows that we're on the way to achieving this by their target of 2010. However, whilst digital TV takes up less transmission space and gives us better quality pictures, one cannot help but be suspicious. The television, which connotes entertainment, is a powerful communicative tool. We are more likely to be susceptible to its messages as they are beamed direct into our living rooms. Basildon District Council has actually launched their own local digital channel, BDTV. Could the government be supporting the television revolution to ostensibly further their own political agendas?

Interactive TV highlights one step towards the anticipated convergence with the computer and, with increasingly fragmented viewing, it looks progressively likely. It just seems a shame that the once communal, bonding experience of watching television is now turning into a more singular, solo event. Ever tried sharing a computer? Just doesn't work does it? Though one interesting observation is the paradox between an escalating abun-

dance of TV channels and an emerging trend (still in its infancy) of cross-national, arguably homogenising, global shows in the vein of World Idol.

At 2002's Edinburgh Television Festival, I was talking to some industry people (darling) about the possibility of advertising-produced programme-making. At the moment official advertisements are confined to the breaks, whilst any semi-competent Internet surfer will be familiar with the devil's child that is the pop-up ad. Could the future see plugs for the latest Tampax popping up in the middle of Neighbours and you having to search for the remote to click the red button in order to remove it from your screen?

In fact, there is already one type of channel that is completely produced on the basis of adverts: the music video channel. The commodification of the music video means that viewers often forget that they are basically promotional tools. The relative shortness of videos lures the viewer into a false sense of security: since you are not committing your eyes for more than three or four minutes, your concept of time soon goes out of the window and hours later you'll find yourself still in front of the telly, having watched nothing more than a series of glamorised album adverts in disguise. Paradox number two: while we spend more time partaking in the "passive" act of television consumption, television is becoming more and more "interactive".

We're experiencing an evolution in television output but, although admittedly it's early days, this isn't being reflected by the input. Whilst I welcome technological advances, we mustn't forget that viewers don't tune in for technology - they can get that from their PCs and PlayStations - they tune in for good quality and original programmes.

Jimmy Tam is a 1st year Social Anthropology student

After Napster - the Music Industry Backlash

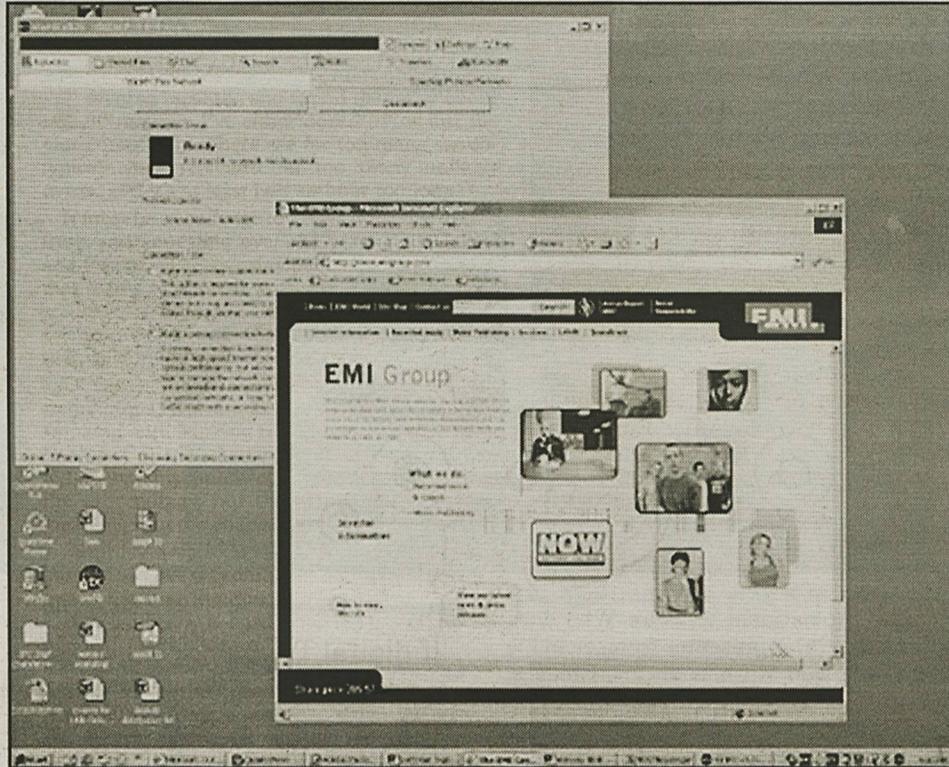
Tracy Alloway

I spent my Christmas Break in the United States, in a gluttony of American food, shopping, music, television, and movies. The local Mall was my bastion of consumerism - where I could enjoy the blockbusters of the season while munching on a king-size cookie dough chocolate bar (aaahhh...only in the States). Lord of the Rings, Cold Mountain, and Big Fish were all watched and greatly enjoyed. Yet my movie-marathons were continuously interrupted. In the slew of advertisements which preceded each film one stood out - an infomercial representing the "little-people" of the entertainment industry. Set-painters and stuntman stared mournfully into the camera, bemoaning the damaging effects of movie-piracy (the illegal downloading or copying of movies). While the stuntman complained that he risked his life to produce a product for people's enjoyment (enjoyment apparently, which must be paid for) I was sniggering in the back of the theatre.

As someone who has downloaded music and movies until their computer hard-drive is full (thank you Holborn high-speed internet!) the anti-piracy campaign didn't shame me, so much as amuse me. There I was sitting in a movie theatre, paying a good six bucks for the privilege of watching a box office smash while the entertainment industry informed me I should be giving them even more money! Movie and music piracy, it seems, have been pinpointed by the industry, as the main cause of recent losses numbering somewhere in the billions of dollars. CD sales in the US alone have fallen by 26% in the last four years, a loss attributed to peer-to-peer networks such as Napster and Kazaa (not incidentally, the flooding of the market with less than satisfactory, sugary pop). The anti-piracy infomercials it seemed, were just another component of a crack-down on illegal downloading which began in the Summer of 2003. Should the American crack-down succeed, it's certain one in Europe will follow.

Anyone who remembers the dark days of the 1990's - a world before iMesh and Kazaa, should be very, very worried. Before the advent of peer-to-peer networking, we were forced to buy entire CD's or wait months for new movies to come out on VHS. Those were the days when the record-industry refused to release singles, forcing buyers to purchase whole albums. I'm sure almost everyone owns one or two mediocre albums bought only for a single hit-track (think Semisonic, Chumbawamba, and the Verve Pipe). Those days could be coming back all too soon, and god-forbid, be worse than before.

In the US, the record industry has started civil lawsuits against downloaders of music. Such suits can charge \$750 to upwards of \$150,000 for a single copy-



righted song. The first of such lawsuits came in September of 2003 and targeted 261 individuals who had downloaded over 1000 songs. Though charges against one individual - a 66-year-old grandmother were later dropped, others were less fortunate, and were forced to pay thousands in penalties to the record companies. While the technical details of such lawsuits remain slightly dubious (is a downloaded Beatles song worth more than a Britney Spears one? If you download a song for private use only, shouldn't you only be liable for its market price?), they have a lot of people worried.

Students at American universities in particular, are being specially targeted by the crackdown in piracy. The entertainment industry has, since 2003 encouraged US colleges to treat internet-piracy as they would shoplifting. The record industry in particular has been pressuring schools to police campuses for illegal downloading and enforce copyright laws. Using companies such as MediaForce and NetPD, record labels commission searches to hunt for unauthorized copies of songs and albums - and the computers which copy them. If they find illegal songs on campus-based computers, the record industry can order a university to cease and desist the illegal copying. Should the schools fail to do so, they too could be liable for piracy law-suits.

Under such pressure, schools such as Stanford University have imposed technical barriers to piracy, slowing down internet speed in dorm rooms to discourage the downloading of music and movies. Meanwhile, colleges like Penn State have taken the opposite route. They've struck a deal with Napster - now an entirely legal file-swapping network. Starting this

File sharing is being blamed for hurting the little people of music but there are more constructive solutions to the industries problems than the legal and technological assault currently taking place.

month, Penn students will be able to download Napster music for free (the normal subscription fee will be paid by the University's information technology fund). Through such measures, Penn State is hoping to legally meet the demands of its student downloaders.

To those who think such anti-piracy tactics are unlikely to be implemented in England, think again. The entertainment industry's crackdown on piracy in America is already beginning to have world-wide effects. How many of you have downloaded a song recently, only to have it be four minutes of irritating noise? It's not as one might expect, an erroneous download, it's a fake mp3. To frustrate downloaders, record labels have been flooding peer-to-peer networks like Kazaa with disguised mp3's which are difficult to distinguish from their real, yet illegal, counterparts.

In a world where the movie and music industry earn billions of dollars a year, it's difficult to sympathize with their claim that downloading movies and music amounts to theft. Personally, charging 15 pounds for a Busted CD seems more of a crime to me. Perhaps the industry would do better at halting its losses through positive changes, such as the lowering of CD and DVD prices, or the encouragement of quality entertainment, instead of a campaign which drives fear and resentment into the hearts of its consumers.

Illegal downloading may be eating into the entertainment industry's profits, but the majority of people still pay for entertainment products. We buy movie tickets to the best films, we buy whole albums from our favorite musicians, we spend our hard-earned money on artist T-shirts and feature-packed DVD's. If the entertainment industry wants to discourage piracy, perhaps its best bet involves, not an intense crackdown on downloading, but the encouragement of quality films and music and the gradual lowering of CD and DVD prices.

Tracy Alloway is a second year International Relations student.

'Students at American universities in particular, are being specially targeted by the crackdown in piracy. The entertainment industry has, since 2003 encouraged US colleges to treat internet piracy as they would shoplifting.'

'In a world where the movie and music industry earn billions of dollars a year, it's difficult to sympathize with their claim that downloading movies and music amounts to theft.'

WHO ASKED FOR THIS STATE?

The European Constitution has been dreamt up by an elite creating a state without the national identity required to make it work and have not answered the hardest questions about Europe's future.

Glyn Gaskarth

The European Constitution is about defining what Europe is. Europe will no longer be "a mere geographical expression" as Otto Von Bismarck referred to it. We no longer live in a Europe of nations. We live in a nation called Europe. A nation with its own flag, anthem, currency and constitution. The European politicians are correct. This is a serious move. It is also wrong. Here is why.

European elites have not asked their people if they want this state to be created. This is important if you believe the authority of a government relies on the consent of its people to be governed. It is what turns power into authority. It is what makes state power legitimate. It is called democracy. It has been absent from the European constitutional process. The Constitution was decided in secret and is now presented to the people as a fait d'accompli. There has been no mass movement to demand the creation of a European state. No referendum will be held in Britain to sanction its creation. This is important because the powers that have been signed away are not Tony Blair's to give. They are the property of the people and are held in trust for them by him and the Queen. It is the duty of the latter to

'The powers that have been signed away are not Tony Blair's to give.'

ensure that we as a people make the decision about whether to join this European nation. It is our right and we demand it.

Nations created without popular consent, against the wishes of the people rarely survive. Often they end in bloodshed e.g. Yugoslavia. Peace was the great achievement of the European project. Nations that once hated each other continued to do so but now the Germans visited France in BMW'S rather than tanks. That's progress - of a sort. Why endanger it with this foolish document? The Constitution endangers peace because it seeks to create a unified state and thus it must answer questions, which a diverse association does not. For instance, who is European and why are they European? Are the Turks to be included or are they to be excluded? Many European politicians seem to believe they should not be in Europe. Why is not answered, I will leave you to decide why European politicians do not want a populous Brown, Muslim nation joining the club. The borders of Europe need to be defined. Is this Union



to encompass Russia and thereby border China? If so the attempt to form a common identity between the citizens of Vladivostok and Epping is going to be a bit difficult. A common identity is an important part of statehood. People are governed together because they perceive themselves as forming a unit. There is no European unit. There are no European political parties campaigning together across Europe with a single manifesto. There is no single European paper. Politically and culturally Europe has not yet developed a community that would form the basis for a European state. Europe is putting a constitutional cart before its common identity horse. Very bad analogy but you get the point (I hope). Thirdly, we need an answer to the question what does a European state provide that an association of free sovereign nations does not? Why is this necessary? Is the constitution designed to limit the powers of the central European government or to enshrine them? The Constitution does not answer any of these questions. It should but it does not.

Therefore I believe there should be a public debate which informs the negotiation process not follows it. Then there should be a public vote. This premature and inadequate constitution designed by an elite in secret, without public involvement is wrong. Do not support it - should you get the chance.

Glyn Gaskarth is a 3rd year Government student and Chair of the LSESU Conservative Association.

The Beaver

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The Beaver

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B:music

edited by Jazmin Burgess and Neil Garrett

HIDDEN IN PLAIN VIEW

New Jersey's Hidden In Plain View are one of the better up and coming bands to have broken onto the scene in 2003. Signed to Drive Thru Records and on the verge of releasing their debut EP over here at the end of this month, they made their first foray over to the UK this week as the opening act on the Drive Thru Invasion Tour. Which is where **JAZMIN BURGESS** caught up with the whole band and attempted to get some form of interview done onstage at the Astoria during soundcheck... now really, how much more (New Jersey) rock and roll can you get!?!)

How's the tour been going so far? Has it been good being in the UK for the first time?
 Rob Freeman (R.F): It's been awesome, like really. All the crowds have been really welcoming, especially since we're the opening band..
 Chris Amato (C.A): yeah, I mean it's a lot better than the US where people so often don't give any time for the first band and a lot of the time are only interested in the headline band...

So, how did you guys get signed to Drive Thru? What's the story behind that..?
 R.F: We just tried to keep in touch with them all the time, because ever since we started we wanted to be signed to them, because it's such an amazing label and would suit the band so well. So then we got to hang out with them and get to know them all and vice versa, (laughs) and the rest is history...

You're one of the few newer signings to Drive Thru who are more hardcore orientated then perhaps the older artists on the roster. How've you found fitting in? What's been the reaction of the Drive Thru fan base?
 C.A: Well not really because the label's been branching out for quite a while now, with different bands with different sounds and all.
 R.F: Also every band on Drive Thru seemed to be united in having a really catchy chorus and a bit poppy, so there's always something in the bands for everyone...
 Spencer Peterson (S.P): And even Finch, who are probably the heaviest band on the label still have the same following as New Found Glory or something...

So, have your older, perhaps more hardcore fans, who knew you before you signed to Drive Thru been accepting to the fact that you've signed to a label that's so typically associated with pop punk?
 R.F: well we haven't had any bad reactions (laughs) So I guess they've been okay! And we're not all dark hardcore either, we have happy days too!

Your EP is about to be released here, so what's next for you after that? Is there a full length on the way?
 R.F: Yeah, as soon as we get back we're going to sit down and start writing it properly. And then we've got another tour coming up with Allister, and then we should have the album finished by the summer and then we're going on the Warped Tour.

The emo/hardcore/alternative scene's exploded loads in the past two years..Have you found that helping or hindering you since you're one of the newer bands to emerge from it?
 R.F: it's kinda been both ways. I mean there's a lot of competition now..
 C.A: But then at the same time that really pushes you to do your best and produce the best music that you've got..Which I guess can only be a good thing...

Well, as with every other band, I'm sure you've been labeled everything from emo to melodic hardcore or whatever..Have you agreed with any of these labels or if not how would you classify yourselves?
 S.P: (laughs) Yeah, I read the other day that we're metal..
 Mike Saffert: Yeah, I read we're screamo now..
 Joe Reo: Kerrang said that we have 'odd metal breaks' (laughs) 'what's all that about?!'
 C.A: What?? That's weird, I want to read that. We're just straight up New Jersey rock and roll. Leave it at that.
 M.S: I like being metal.. It's big in Finland isn't it?(laughs) maybe we could go make a name for ourselves there..



(laughing) Yeah, that'd be an interesting career move.. so what's the best thing you've learned from another band and who was it from?

R.F: definitely MxPx.
 J.R: Yeah, MxPx told us a lot about how to play a really good show.. because they never have bad shows y'know?
 Cathay also taught us a lot about tequila..
 M.S: And God...(laughs)
 J.R: Yeah, (laughing) MxPx taught us about God and tequila

If you could recommend one up and coming US band to a UK audience, who would it be?
 C.A: Maddison for sure..
 R.F: Ana Divine
 J.R: listen to Jenoh, the new Drive Thru signings, they're really good...

Albums of 2003?
 S.P: The new Blink 182..
 M.S: The new Thursday and The Blood Brothers one..
 R.F: I really liked the Postal Service album a lot..
 C.A: Ludacris' 'Beer and Chicken'. That's THE album of last year.

Okay, and finally, tell us a good tour story from the Drive thru tour..?
 S.P: I lost my virginity to a man.
 Everyone else: (laughing) WHAAT?!
 C.A: (laughing) This interview just died! (laughs) Turn the tape off! Leave it at that, otherwise its all going to go seriously downhill from here...

JAZMIN BURGESS

THREE DAYS GRACE

BEN HOWARTH checks out Canada's latest offering to follow in Nickelback's footsteps at their recent sold out date at the Barfly..



Three Days Grace are a puzzling band. They are also a shit band. It is because of their inherent shitness that makes them a puzzle. In their native Canada they are hugely popular and sell-out arenas, and have arrived in the UK with the aim of achieving the same level of popularity. Why Canada has taken a dull, but painful sounding Nickelback tribute band to its heart is yet again a puzzle. Maybe the Canadians just don't like things that are exciting or interesting. Make your own conclusions.

To review a band as agonizing as this is indeed a painful process, yet I feel that they should be treated in the same way

they treat those unfortunate enough to hear their music, i.e. in a predictable unchanging formulaic manner. The first thing that was wrong with this gig was the audience. There were people wearing Nickelback and Staind t-shirts - what's that all about eh? The second thing that was wrong with this gig were the roadies. Now I'm not going to accuse alternative roadies of being over intelligent, yet 3DG's were exceptionally annoying and stupid. They could only carry one set list at a time, and they smelt bad. The third thing that was wrong with this gig were the guitarists, on the left we had a sumo sized mohawked punk, the kind to molest 14 year olds in Camden Palace. On the right we had a pint sized redneck, who looked ready to strangle non-Aryans at any moment. The fourth thing that was wrong with this gig was the music itself. They were full of fake overstated emotion, urgently clamouring to be Linkin Park, that loftiest of all musical positions, and failing. I didn't like the singer but the drummer didn't offend me. The fifth thing wrong with this gig..... the list really could go on forever.

In short never buy a Three Days Grace records, and never see them live. Even avoid Canada just to be safe. Sorry for the bad review, its just that's the way they made me feel.

BEN HOWARTH

Genre Spotlight: Post-Punk

Context: After the mid-1970s punk revolution led by The Ramones and The Sex Pistols, a number of inspired musicians formed bands to play music that was similarly energetic, defiant, and unconventional, but usually less militant and less succinct. Most of the famous bands of the post-punk movement were British. The movement took place during the late 1970s and early 1980s, although a few contemporary bands describe their music as being modeled after the post-punk style.

Defining features: Loosely based on punk and drawing on funk, jazz, reggae, dub, and new wave, post-punk is largely characterized by its experimentalism and forays into abstract territory. While the movement produced plenty of tight, danceable songs, post-punk artists usually used flexible forms rather than adhering to rigid musical structures or traditional vocal styles. The result is a raw and sometimes improvisational sound, in which creativity counts for more than training.

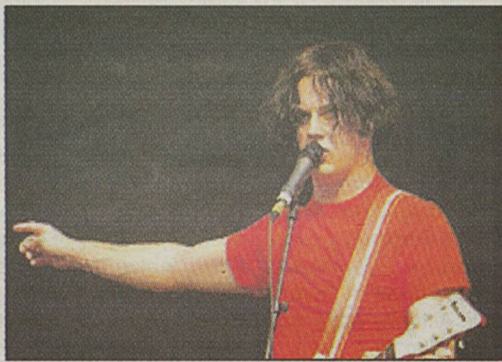
Some great albums: Cut (The Slits, 1979), Beat Rhythm News (Essential Logic, 1979), Entertainment! (Gang of Four, 1979), Colossal Youth (Young Marble Giants, 1980), Odyshape (The Raincoats, 1981), Dr. Heckle and Mr. Jive (Pigbag, 1982), Sense and Sensuality (The Au Pairs, 1982), Kleenex/LiLiPUT (a collection of all of LiLiPUT's recorded work, reissued in 1993)

BONNIE JOHNSON

The White Stripes

through his trousers and likes to beat up other musicians in his spare time (please let him fall out with Chris Martin). After seeing the White Stripes live, I can say two things about these rumours. Firstly, the trouser thing is true. Very true. Secondly, none of them matter in the slightest. The oh-so carefully crafted legends behind the band melt away the second they take the stage and start to assault the audience with raucous, bluesy noise.

The albums are great, sure, the best of the last few years, but the Stripes are definitely a live band. From the opener "When I Hear My Name" Jack was pouring sweat with the exertion of producing these incredible sounds from his guitar. His voice is unique with an impressive range, in turns a whine, a growl, a yelp or a shivering hiccup. Meg's drumming, so rudimentary on a recording, reverberates through you. They battle on stage, screaming silently at each other. Jack, the sexiest man in rock n' roll, stalks around her drumkit. She points her drumstick at him accusingly, daring him to play louder, faster, more explosively. He reacts by apparently jumping onto the kit, throwing his face right into hers so their foreheads slam together. She is every bit the coy, unmovable wall to his furious, unstoppable force. This energy level doesn't dip for a second during the set, from the desperate, plaintive rendition of Dolly Parton's "Jolene" to the sleazy filth of "Ball and Biscuit" and the now classic "Seven Nation Army" whipping each other and the crowd into a good old frenzy.



That's the weird problem with the Stripes - they're just too good. Meg isn't exactly a classically trained musician. Jack's guitar playing sounds so good because for the most part it's simple enough stuff spiked with ultra heavy distortion and a helluva lot of soul. Even those solos that blow you half way across the room don't qualify as true fret-wanking. They have deliberately limited themselves with their sparse sound and distain for computer effects. They shouldn't be this good, and they certainly shouldn't be this popular. And with that realisation comes a rising panic that maybe Jack White, this ol' blues man, born with a silver slide in his hand and a red and white guitar cradled in his arms, is just going to implode in a hail of plectrums and cigarette smoke before your widened eyes and snatch away the best damn rock n' roll going.

SARAH COUGHTRIE

Music Business Society presents...Judge Jules

Entering the room dressing in jeans and a t-shirt, sporting transparent blue shades, Jules (a.k.a. Julian O'Riordan) looks very laid back considering he is about to talk for an hour to 80-odd students.

The Judge (dubbed so by Norman Jay) tells us about his rise to fame, and at the same time his frustration at all the people who ask him how to get to the top quickly. "There's no obvious path to get into the business", he says. "To become a lawyer, you get your degree and start working for a company, but it's not like that in music". Jules is a self-made success. He started at the bottom, organising parties "that can only be described as dodgy", and working on pirate radio stations before he got his big break at Radio 1. The fact that he had a degree in Law from LSE made it easier for him to focus on his DJing, because he had something to fall back on in case he didn't make it - "For every successful DJ, there are 100 that aren't, so it was a comfort to know I had a degree that I could use if it didn't work out". So has his degree in Law ever helped him? He chuckles, "a little bit in the industry, but I still have to hire £300 per hour music lawyers".

At times, he talks fondly about the music business, and at others he seems genuinely frustrated at the industry that he describes as having "no conventional infrastructure", and being "disorganised". It is only a matter of time until the topic of file-sharing is mentioned, a topic he seems split on. When asked what effect it has on the industry, he churns out the

same line we hear from everyone in the music business - that it is responsible for the decline in record sales over the last few years. Questioned later about its effects on his own career, he seems appreciative that it allows him a wider fan base, and admits that it helps to a certain extent in promoting new music. He admits that "the physical cost of sending demos out" is crippling to any new artist, and that it is a lot cheaper and easier to upload tracks for downloading.

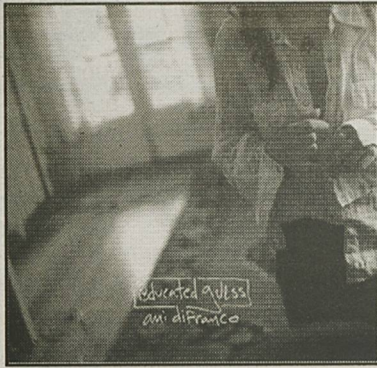


The best thing about his lifestyle, Jules tells us, is travelling. It's not the actual gigs he enjoys most; it's "being shown around cool cities, by cool people".

Such modesty is refreshing in an industry containing so many large egos and artists with an insatiable lust for fame and attention (Robbie Williams, anyone?). Judge Jules has a reputation for being a crowd-pleaser, and he certainly achieved that here. Hopefully we'll see him again soon, as the Music Business Society are currently attempting to lure him back for a short DJ set in our beloved union.

JON DE KEYSER

Album Reviews



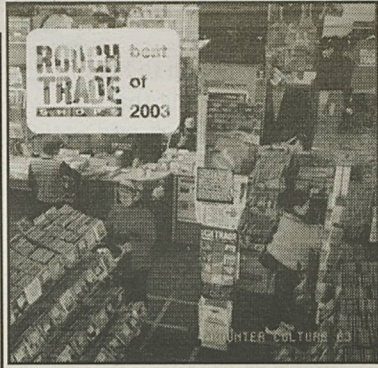
ANI DIFRANCO
EDUCATED GUESS

Ani DiFranco, underground heroine, activist, and director of Righteous Babe Records, returns with her thirteenth studio album, *Educated Guess*. On her new release, DiFranco steps back from the full band arrangements that marked 2001's *Revelling/Reckoning* and 2003's *Evolve*, and resumes her reliance on her own dynamic voice and excellent acoustic guitar work.

Unfortunately, *Educated Guess* lacks the lyrical and conceptual maturity of *Revelling/Reckoning* (which, by the way, was vastly underrated) or the funky sound of *Evolve*, without successfully reviving the righteous anger of DiFranco's earlier albums. What's left is a number of somewhat insipid songs, augmented by four tracks of clichéd spoken word. DiFranco continues her rants against corporate capitalists, foolish men, and the American government (not mutually exclusive groups), and revisits themes of self-discovery and troubled love. But her songwriting on *Educated Guess* is looser, less creative, and altogether weaker than usual, and much of the album sounds uninspired.

"Swim" is an exception to this, a hooky manifesto of independence. Also, "Bliss Like This" is a gem with its jazz chords, improvised bass lines, and some pretty sweet scatting. And on that track, old fans will recognize the spunk and sexuality that defined albums like *Not a Pretty Girl* and *Dilate*. But overall, DiFranco's latest work comes off as a sloppy caricature of the movement she helped to build. (4)

BONNIE JOHNSON



V/A
ROUGH TRADE BEST OF 2003

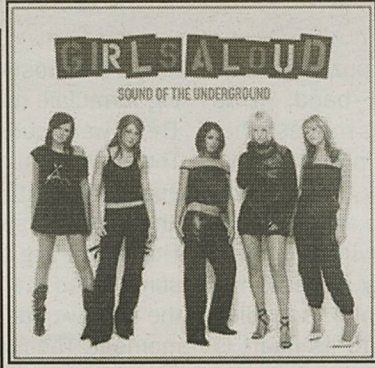
Rough Trade has released its follow-up to last year's *Counter Culture* compilation. But is it really the best of 2003?

The songs are divided between two CDs, one for chilled-out tracks and one for party music. Highlights of the former: Iron & Wine does a lo-fi cover of Stereolab's "Peng! 33," and The Concretes play a Mazzy Star-esque breakup song. A lovely track by Kaada combines looped samples of doo-wop with Kaada's own backing, and the disc ends with a salvaged recording of a spiritual from the American south - sweet. Highlights of the second disc: A song by Seattle's Kinski called "Rhode Island Freakout" brings to mind Daydream Nation. Also exciting are some sexy dance numbers, Peaches' "I U She" and a bootleg remix of Some Product's "Sid Vicious Is Dead."

The compilation is comprised mostly of staff favorites but includes some Rough Trade shop best-sellers, which explains the tracks by The Kills, Franz Ferdinand, and the hugely overrated Dizzee Rascal (though the Rough Trade folks redeem themselves somewhat on that count with a Cody ChesnuTT pick).

In general, the whole affair is too electronic for me. Even the few tracks that are guitar-driven are so produced that hardly anything in the collection sounds organic or raw, which I consider disappointing. But maybe this is the way of the future. (6)

BONNIE JOHNSON



GIRLS ALOUD
SOUND OF THE UNDERGROUND

Clearly one of the best new acts of 2003, it's shocking that Nadine and co.'s debut LP hasn't done better. Whilst none of the fifteen songs on this new repackaged version quite match the pop classic 'No Good Advice', those who liked the singles will love this.

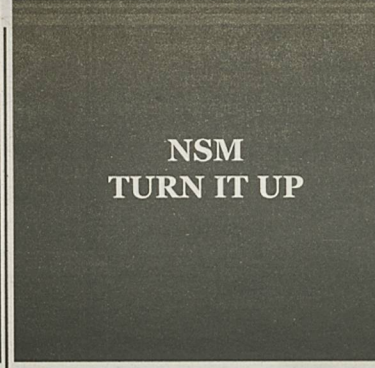
"We got some dancin' to do" announces an unidentified, weirdly comical male voice on the intro of disco stomper 'Boogie Down Love'. And aptly so: the ballads are kept to a minimum - wise decision considering the dull-as-dishwater 'Forever & A Night', the set's nadir.

The fantastic 'Love/Hate' sees the group dabble in jungle (kind of) and contains a surprisingly challenging word ("reciprocate") for a council estate pop group. 'Some Kind Of Miracle' is gorgeous sing-along affair about unrequited love under the dancefloor glitterball. A Crush anthem if there ever was one.

Louis Walsh has certainly been doing some hardcore networking, by getting the Girls onto not one but two film soundtracks. The inanely catchy if ill-advised cover of 'Jump' features in *Love Actually*, apparently (I've seen the film and swear I never heard it). And adorning *Freaky Friday* is 'You Freak Me Out', a great rocky, jump-on-the-bed type song. Considering the Passfield mattresses though, I wouldn't recommend it.

Despite the perpetual comparisons, Girls Aloud are not the new Spice Girls. No, they're much better. (8)

JIMMY TAM



NSM
TURN IT UP

NSM
TURN IT UP

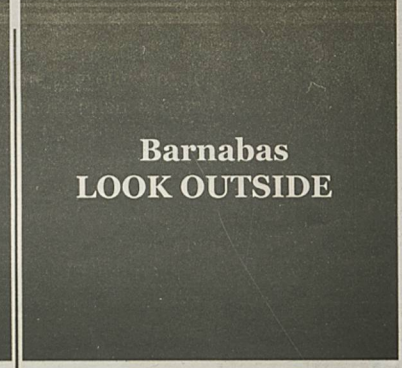
Mediocre R n B that doesn't sell itself on originality. Mind you, it does exactly what it says on the tin...jazz, soul, beats and general weirdness, but unfortunately I think this is Value as opposed to Heinz. Don't expect the beans to jostle together in a plump, glistening mass smothered with thick tomatoey sauce. I've tasted better dollops of 'finely balanced soul and tech-y-broken edginess'.

Is that the same tech-y-broken edginess one might call the 'West London Sound' or 'Broken Beats'? I hear you cry...Why yes, my wise students. This is the second album from the studio of IG CULTURE, who is firmly rooted in the British School of eclecticism - which I guess means a concoction of beats and weird sounds.

So weird in fact, one song (Digital Age) almost gave me a panic attack. The rhythms were too syncopated and the tones too random for my brain to compute. Also didn't approve of the horrendously spine-shuddering voice of shrieking Cecile which featured in far too many of the tracks. However, redeeming features do exist, at times it is beat-allicious yet relaxing, I like the soft melodies and well chosen lyrics when Cecile is not allowed near the microphone, and Tha Fame makes use of an amusing Brummy accent in the chorus.

But, life is too short for thin, watery beans...I'd go with Heinz. (4)

SIAN BEYNON



Barnabas
LOOK OUTSIDE

BARNABAS
LOOK OUTSIDE

Despite the recent success of the likes of Damien Rice and David Kitt, there remains a suspicion of the singer-songwriter, quite possibly based on the belief that anything to do with things like 'feelings' and 'emotions' must be a bit, well, poncey. Now would be the normal point to berate the overimportance of 'coolness'; to point out the double standards of a musical climate which holds such attitudes and yet goes potty when Karen O blubbs like Sinaed O'Connor on a video. But it strikes me as entirely fitting that a genre which gave us David Gray should on occasion be given a wide berth. And anyway, 'Maps' is a great song.

Thankfully, unlike Mr Gray, Barnabas (who is, as will probably be obvious by now, a singer-songwriter) steers clear of middle-of-the-road, coffee-table mediocrity with 'Look Outside'. At its heart is Barnabas' voice, whose vulnerability and Morrissey-ish air of resigned melancholy is highlighted when, as at many points, it is left with the sole accompaniment of a plucked guitar, punctuated only by the odd sporadic bursts of joyful cello or the knees-up that is 'Little Things'. And yet this never descends into irritating twee-ness (see: Gary Jules) or, even worse, dullness. Baranabas doesn't do the 'folky' thing of simply twaddling about on a guitar for a few minutes at a time: there are some excellent tunes here. There is the odd clumsy lyric, but it would seem pedantic to pick holes in such a good record. (8)

DANIEL GROTE

Singles

SPAN
DON'T THINK THE WAY THEY DO

I'm impressed. When I accidentally saw Span live I thought they were mental metal Norwegian noisemakers, and dismissed them accordingly. But this is almost tuneful, catchy even. It could be a Queens of the Stone Age b-side. Their debut album, *Mass Distraction*, is out next month.

SARAH TAYLOR

EASTERN LANE
SAFFRON

Hailing from Battle, Hastings, this twenty-something four-piece prove nothing's happened down their way since 1066. Steve Lamacq wrongly describes them as 'somewhere between a scuffed Coldplay and bewildered Beautiful South', to give you an idea. They've managed to get this out on Rough Trade, and best of luck to them, but it really is very dull.

SARAH TAYLOR

KEANE
SOMEWHERE ONLY WE KNOW

I'm tempted to hilariously pretend that this is the first single by psychotic footballer and general idiot, Roy. But I won't. Keane are in fact the new Coldplay. 'Somewhere only we know' is thus unsurprisingly an epic tale of love and pianos, which despite being less than original is not that bad at all.

DANIEL GROTE

STARSAILOR
FOUR TO THE FLOOR

Starsailor seem to have forgone the catchiness & simplicity of their early, popular singles in favour of a more complex structure that comes off, unfortunately, as a lightweight version of Muse. Over-production has ripped any emotion out of this song, and they've thrown in a truly dire string section reminiscent of Seal's "Kiss from a Rose". Sample lyric: "no reason to care". Indeed.

MATT BOYS

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND
ESCAPE ARTISTS NEVER DIE

I don't want to get into a fight over the definition of EMO, but this sounds suspiciously like it to me. Apart from the final track sounding like the singer is being backed by Iron Maiden, it isn't bad. It's not the best the genre can offer, but it is good. But they're signed to Infectious, which is never a good thing. Um, I've run out of things to say, really...

MATT BOYS

ALFIE
NO NEED

Despite obvious ability and all the correct NAM credentials, Alfie yet again fail to hit the mark with this latest song. It strums away quite nicely, but fails to encapsulate any feeling of passion or intensity. In all honesty, it just sounds like they don't care... so why should we?

LAURENCE KAVANAGH

B:creative

edited by Dalia King

Letters from Tierra del Fuego

Noam Schimmel experiences more of Argentina

Date: Wed, 09 Sept 2003 20:13:09 +0000 (GMT)
From: "Noam" | This is Spam | Add to Address Book
Subject: Hot Cocoa in my Cup

I finished my day of hiking with just that, and it was so good. Unbelievably beautiful. I can't begin to describe... Oh, but I can. Such purity to the place, such a clean, fresh feeling. Spare but also green in places and mud and snow sloshing under my feet. I watched two birds with big wing spans and stunning edges to their wings fly above me before I started hiking and I wondered, what do birds see and feel when they are up there? And how they must have some sense of wonder, must have some bird-like sense of wow - here I am. Flying. I just don't see how they could possibly just fly the way we go for a walk. Flight seems to me to require more than just stepping out your door and walking.... The constant change of perspective, the sensation of floating and thrust and velocity so much more intense than just a walk in the woods...

And I got lost along one path, and was sort of like, here we go again, Noam the flake strikes again. But I retraced my steps and made my way back to the main track and found an awesome route up to another trail through dead trees that lean on each other, some of them are dead, some are alive, and there is this creaky wheezing and whining that you hear as they lean on each other and it gives a goth Blair Witchy feeling but also made me think about friendship and community, cause in that forest of trees you feel very much that you have entered a community.

And then it was slowly starting to get dark and I sort of missed the last bus to town and so I hitched with some Argentine young businessmen who were friendly and then their driver gave us a tour of the rest of the park and then to the very very edge of Tierra del Fuego that looks out on Chile and to the place where the Indians that used to live here lived and cooked, along the shore.

There was something moving about that place. I felt reverence for it, though all that is left is some mounds. But I felt their presence. I knew that they lived off the land in a way that we don't at all. There are a few left in Chile, and the next time I come back I'd like to visit them and talk to them, though I know that little of their culture has been preserved because they were wiped out when Europeans came down to the end of the world.

All the travel sensations are back that I had when I was in Mozambique and Malawi... making me emotional the way by hiking I can learn so much... the effect of seeing these horses that randomly graze in the national park, making eye contact with them... The way horses are gentle always moves me so much. I try to get close to them, but they usually run away.

And time stretched out endlessly - I could not believe that I was only away for 6 hours because the forests and the mountains and peat bogs and dead trees all spoke to me so much and it was all calm and intense at the same time..

And the dead trees reminded me of the dead trees that I loved so in Namibia. Here they are similar, but in the austerity of the snowy cold rather than in the sand dunes and the Namibian sun. And I liked so much that I know what they are like when they are in the sun, and now, when they are in the cold too.

Date: Wed, 17 Sept 2003 19:23:49 +0000 (GMT)
From: "Noam" | This is Spam | Add to Address Book
Subject: The Petals are Closing and Falling

Such an interesting feeling this last week... I feel as though at some point in the last few years I have internalized the natural flow of my life, as changing and moving as it constantly is, so that before I am even conscious or thinking about what my last week in Argentina means, somehow my heart and mind are already registering it, responding. And only a few days later do I realize that they are gently leading me onwards, allowing me to grow.

It is good to be able to transition like this. This week, at the same time that I have been visiting friends and saying goodbye and being a little frenetic and sad about my imminent departure, there has also been this great sense of wholeness, of slowing down, of taking the time to breathe, to sleep, to walk but not run - to know that this place is mine and always will be, that this is no longer just an imaginative love or dreamy longing. It's real, and knowing that with a confidence that I never quite had before allows me to leave.

I feel the petals closing. That is, I feel that even though here in Argentina we are moving from winter to spring and even getting a glimpse of summer I know that as an individual I am heading towards autumn and winter... not so much literally, though that is true too because I am heading home to America and then to England. But more importantly, because I think departure after a very full and lived-in season is inevitably the autumn, it is inevitably the closing of things in a burst of colour and drama and concluding in the clarity and purity and sparseness of cold snow, fallen tree branches, and the earthiness of brushing up against the bark of a tree on a winter day and you know that it is very much alive, but asleep at the moment.

I have the feeling of walking on a fall day and looking up at the leaves on the trees and watching them fall... not quite a melancholy feeling but one that is happy and cognizant of the approaching closure, tinged with sadness, but moved more than anything. The sensation is one of inspiration and belonging, of knowing that I am in the right place now and going to the right place soon. The leaves are changing colour and falling and I am too. I am there with them, standing underneath, and they are falling on me.

I was thinking the other day of the beauty of time lapse photography, of the heightened intensity of being able to actually see the petals opening and closing, the leaves falling, the grass growing, the clouds moving... all with the full power of their movement. Sometimes their movement is so subtle we miss it, and we are not aware of our own internal growths and deaths within. But now I feel it, and I love that sensation.

Next week - more B:creative and the reviews are back!

B:film

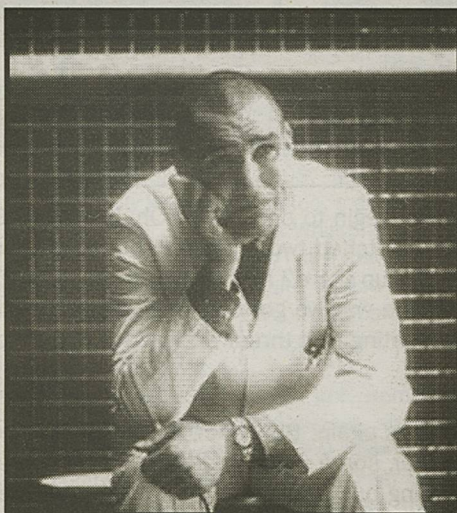
edited by Dani Ismail and Simon Cliff

Exclusive B:Film Preview...

Tooth

CERIGRIFFITHS reviews the latest British effort, released next month...

'Tis the season for children's films...unfortunately this attempt to keep the kids quiet won't be released until February. But do not despair kiddies, you probably won't bother going to see it anyway. The concept of this film is a mixture of traditional fairy stories with a modern twist, much in the style of *Stuart Little*, and a dash of celebrity cameo. The plot is embarrassingly predictable. Set in Fairytopia and modern day Britain/America (apparently there is no difference) the film centres around a tooth fairy who has to rediscover traditional magic in order to save the tooth fairy kind from fairy hunters. We have all the usual characters: the Easter Bunny, Mr and Mrs Clause and several small, annoying children. It really is quite a suspense filled plot though; will they save the magic of childhood, won't they? Gosh I really was on the edge of my seat (preparing to leave at the next available opportunity).



Just when you think it can't get any worse it actually gets a bit better (which was a surprise). *Tooth* actually has a good cast. Harry Enfield is our baddie and considering he can't act but is amusing in general, he is actually the star of the show. More to the point the man is a legend purely for having the audacity to start shouting

Director: Edouard Nammour

Starring: Harry Enfield, Vinnie Jones, Stephen Fry, Jim Broadbent, Sally Phillips et al.

Certificate: Universal (suitable for all)

Running Time: 91 minutes

Release Date: 13 February 2004

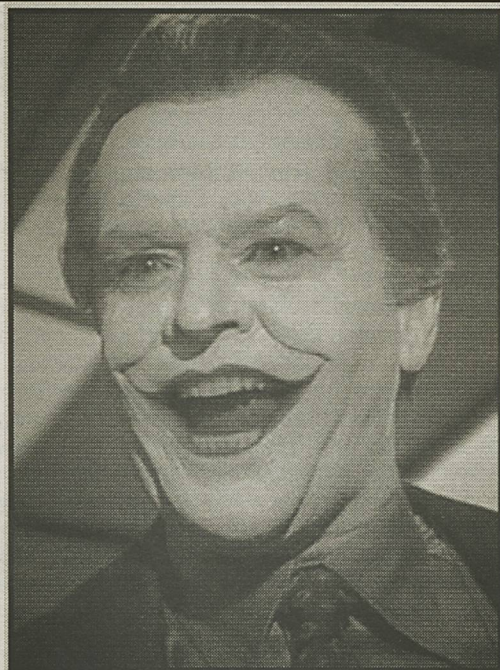
swear words and talking about Beirut to a film premier audience of mostly under tens; nothing could have been more apt.

The cast is the only reason one should ever lower oneself to viewing this monstrosity of a "modern fairytale". Richard E. Grant, Stephen Fry, Vinnie Jones, Jim Broadbent and Sally Phillips are all present. God knows why respectable actors feel the need to sink to the seemingly endless depths of children's film but apparently they will insist upon it. One can only hope they were paid enough but quite frankly they could never be paid enough to justify their participation in this production.

One would think that with such a talented cast *Tooth* couldn't be as bad as it is. However, the fact that the makers of this film are clearly mad and one suspects masochistic, results in them making the phenomenal error of not even nearly utilizing the great talents available to them. Apart from Harry Enfield, the main characters consist of three children of the usual insipid, sickly nature and the Easter Bunny; it's all highly surreal. Vinnie Jones plays a benevolent, cowardly dentist (what were they thinking?) and Stephen Fry is seen for all of thirty seconds acting as a carer in a retired magician's home (but we do see him run which quite frankly is the most amusing moment in the film).

If you fancy a couple of hours of whimsical nonsense with disgusting overtones of morality look no further. Remember kids, the magic's inside of you...

★★★★☆



the editor's cut

Cold Mountain gets a lukewarm reception, and yet another Top Ten to tantilise and inspire...

Like Johnny Depp in *Pirates of the Caribbean*, Renee Zellweger's wholesome farm-girl turn in Oscar-hopeful *Cold Mountain* is a beacon of comedic light in an otherwise fairly standard offering. Jude Law is also outstanding, though the true praise goes to the supporting cast, many of whom (including Natalie Portman and Philip Seymour-Hoffman) are on-screen for a matter of minutes. An enjoyable road-movie with cracks in the epic-emotional depth it works hard to create (cracks filled-in with Oscar gloss that falls short of ROTK).

Short and sweet was that mini-review. Now for another Top Ten of filmic bests - this week, it's the turn of the all-time great film endings (spoilers ahoy!). Enjoy...

10. E.T. - "I'm right here."
9. The Sixth Sense - he's dead, you know...
8. Psycho - his mother's dead, you know...
7. Donnie Darko - he dies.
6. Thelma and Louise - should have tested their brakes. They die.
5. Casablanca - "Here's looking at you kid."
4. The Shawshank Redemption - "I hope..."
3. The Italian Job - "Hold up lads..."
2. The Usual Suspects - "The greatest trick the devil ever pulled..."
1. Se7en - "If you kill him, he will win..."

Disagree? Do something about it! Email the address below with your suggestions and the best will be printed next week (don't use attachments as the damn things never work). Until then, behave yourselves...

Comments, ideas and bribes: s.e.cliff@lse.ac.uk

Out Now...

The Last Samurai

Director: Edward Zwick

Starring: Tom Cruise, Ken Watanabe

Running Time: 154 min

Certificate: 15

LARABASTAJIAN evaluates...

The storyline is pretty straightforward and as predictable as it gets; disgruntled ex-soldier is captured by enemy armies only to be seduced by their code of honour and becomes one of them, helping them in their Last Great Battle. Tom Cruise exhibits his usual over-the-top acting and meaningful (read: confused) looks but gets away with it most of the time. The battle scenes themselves are absolutely breathtaking. At one point, when the fight scene between the Samurai and a group of invading ninjas reached its end, one guy in the audience couldn't resist yelling 'YEAH!'

The only problem I had with this movie was that, about three quarters of the way through, a great battle scene comes to, what you think is, its conclusion. But it isn't. Instead, Cruise solemnly declares 'It isn't over yet' and that's when the movie goes on for a further (completely unnecessary) half hour. By which time you're thinking, 'Oh just get on with it and kill the man so we can go home!'

Seriously though, other than it's length, *The Last Samurai* is a great movie, especially for the action film aficionados out there. Just don't bother catching it at the cinema and wait till it comes out on DVD.

Only a movie like *Lord of the Rings* is allowed to keep me in a cinema seat for over two and a half hours without a bathroom break.

★★★★☆



Released This Week...

Sylvia

B:Film Editor DANIISMAIL reviews an award-tour hopeful...

You'd think that a poet and author as great as Sylvia Plath would have warranted a touching, poignant, and sensitively directed film, portraying the excellence in her art while simultaneously recounting the troubled life she led. A woman who inspired the Ryan Adams lyric "I wish I had a Sylvia Plath" (which I think is quite a straight to the point declaration of his love for her) deserved a movie that did her and her work justice. What we are actually presented with is a slightly perturbed love story, punctuated with sex scenes to keep you interested; a coarsely sexy Ted Hughes (the brooding Daniel Craig); and what can only be called an inadequate insight into her work. Most of the highlights of the film come when random lines from her poems are spoken while she is shown to be feverishly writing, at the few points where her work is mentioned.

Gwyneth Paltrow obviously sees herself as quite a period actor, but to be honest I'm getting sick of her breathy voice and over enunciated accents. Her acting is probably not at fault, but more the script, as she came across desperate and paranoid. The plot definitely needs some filling out else you just think she's unreasonable - she may well have been in her life, but as a commercial film, you have to throw the audience a bone. That said - she does act out her increasing frustration with her life, her children and her philandering husband quite well, if you can oversee the absence of the transition from a relatively satisfied, newly married poet, to an overly depressed, stuck in a rut mother. If you go to see the film with some knowledge of her back-

Director: Christine Jeffs**Starring:** Gwyneth Paltrow, Daniel Craig, Jared Harris, Michael Gambon**Running Time:** 110 minutes**Certificate:** 15**Released:** 30th January (Friday)

ground, you will be disappointed. While her work was indeed overshadowed by her husband at the start of their career, the film fails to mention her many and prestigious successes. Neglecting to incorporate her novel, *The Bell Jar*, into the film, was to me a fatal mistake, as its autobiographical thread is one that would instantly attract an audience. Her life, though depressing, is definitely a story for the telling and the makers of this film did not capitalise on that fact.

More subjectively, however, it was not all bad. The chemistry between Paltrow and Craig was definitely believable (I suppose the fact that they're both pretty damn good looking helped). The strong acting substituted for the weak plot, but it still did not manage to elicit much of a reaction from me. This does not happen to me often and so it took me by surprise - I felt that I could have walked out of the theatre anytime during the movie and not felt much of a loss to my life.

Usually no matter how shit a flick is, I'll endure it. That's a pretty bad sign. However, giving it two stars out of five is overly harsh, so a three it will have to be.

★★★★☆

Classic Review...

Network

ABTEENKARIMI reflects on Lumet's classic media-satire...

"I'm as mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore!" The words of Howard Beale, the mad prophet of the airwaves, have entered our collective consciousness although many of us could not pinpoint the source or context. Indeed, in addition to his own collection of film clichés, Arnold Schwarzenegger used the phrase to express his dissatisfaction with California Governor Gray Davis in the recent recall election, not only misusing the expression but missing how truly ironic it was that he should be saying it.

Network is a film about many things, but it is most directly and most relevantly about the slow evolution of the Great American Freakshow. Howard Beale is not, as the movie frequently and sarcastically reminds us, "a latter day prophet railing against the hypocrisies of our time", but a recently divorced newsman, slipping steadily into depression and alcoholism who is being fired by his station UBS. One night he finally breaks down and casually mentions during his broadcast that he intends to blow his brains out on the air.

An ambitious program director, Diana Christensen, decides to exploit Beale's madness in an attempt to boost the network's low ratings. Beale's on air, seemingly insane rants are used by screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky as a device to present a series of remarkably perceptive diatribes on globalization, the loss of individuality and the emergence of a mass produced person, unthinking, unloving, raised by and soaked in television culture - ideas that were easily 20 years ahead of their time. As

Director: Sidney Lumet**Starring:** Robert Duvall, Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Peter Finch, Wesley Addy**Running Time:** 120 minutes**Certificate:** 15**Released:** November 1976

Max Schumacher notes about Diana Christensen late in the film : "She's television generation - she was raised by Bugs Bunny". Some of the films funniest scenes come when Christensen recruits an Angela Davis-esque figure to produce a television series about her band of Marxist guerillas. She quickly makes the transition from soft spoken, Communist intellectual to raving wild eyed lunatic demanding higher profit shares, better ad placement and time slot adjustments.

Could the makers of this film ever imagined how their seemingly outrageous prophecies would have become reality? What happens when films and television programs are made not out of a love for emotionally, intellectual challenging and genuinely edifying stories, but out of a kind of perverse voyeurism? What happens is we cheerfully line up outside the tent and wait to watch a guy bite the head off a chicken.

Pop Idol, Survivor, Big Brother, Jerry Springer. None of them are quite Howard Beale, but it's not a question of principle so much as degree when we might find the exploitation of a mentally unstable man disgusting, but a Saturday night spent watching back to back episodes of "Cops" is must see TV. When a famous movie muscleman wins an election not through experience or substantive policy debates but instead rides a wave of media exposure that can only be called a circus to victory. The makers of *Network* knew we'd crossed a certain line in 1976, and that mass media was a mixed blessing at best. The irony Arnie. Oh the irony.

Movie Matters by Dani Ismail

As a great fan of Kevin Smith, I feel obliged to believe that his pairing of the sadly no longer united Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez in his new flick *Jersey Girl* has some deep, subtle meaning and will succeed in proving the world wrong about them two after watching or just hearing the indelibly bad reviews that *Gigli* received. If not, losing his colourful array of characters, such as Jay and Silent Bob, will be fatal to his currently flawless record of producing funky films. I will even concede that Jay and

Silent Bob Strike Back is strangely watchable.

A second coupling of Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson sounds easy in comparison. Stiller revels in a stupid afro and Wilson in his unfortunate looks as Starsky & Hutch hits our screens a few months down the line. Snoop Dogg plays Huggy Bear, a move that makes one inclined to wonder

about his diminishing credibility as an actor. Also joining them is the genius that is Will Ferrell and the interesting looking Vince Vaughn. It's stellar casts like this that make up for the fact that Vin Diesel is actually a professional actor. He will reappear in *The Chronicles of Roddick*, the sequel to his 2000 movie *Pitch Black* in the early summer, but honestly, why the fuck he's doing it is beyond me. I continually and without shame berate my female friends who admire his body and mangled looks. Harsh? Yes. But come on - go live out your true vocation as a bouncer in some back alley club in Orange County or some such shifty place.

Out this week, along with the saddening, trite manifestation of a third instalment of the Scary 'because it's so shit' Movie franchise is a movie about chess. I may be reaching slightly, but watching the IBM computer Deep Blue beating the Russian Kasparov in one of the most boring games ever, succeeded only by golf and cricket, in the originally dubbed *Game Over: Kasparov and the Machine*, sounds incredibly appealing. It will no doubt make you feel wonderful that while your own computer crashes at the mere hint of 'just about to save my very important paper' hysteria, it can beat a real live man at chess.

After last week's deification of Bill Murray in the paper, I find it necessary to quickly mention his future role in *Garfield*, which in retrospect is a strange strange name (try saying it out loud..), made even stranger by its solid import in probably all of our childhoods. His distinguished voice plays the lead role. If you haven't seen it yet, go watch *Lost In Translation* - it's purely brilliant. Bye all.



B:about

edited by Sarah Warwick

This week B:about has gone a bit cultured. We show you how to get a 2 course posh dinner and tickets to the ballet for 2 for under £50

B:eating

Pre:theatre dinners are famously cheap and cheerful. B:about headed for a top bistro near the Royal Opera House to sample the cheapest cheeriest meal they could offer.



We're running through the rain at Covent Garden in our best togs. Getting big hair wet and trapping shoes in the cobblestones. Cold, late, hungry, we throw ourselves through the doors of Tuttons and into the warm steamy rich smells of bistro air. The waitresses jump to attention even though the place is already packed to the gills with chomping balletomanes and tourists. We are seated in seconds and as soon as we mention the need for haste it seems we have wine and menu in

hands and our bubbly waitress is recommending specials.

They do a pre theatre dinner for £11.95 (order before 7) for soup, salad or puff pastry tartlet followed by pork, fish or sausage special. I had the Caesar salad, which had beautiful silver chubby anchovies, buried in mounds of crispy dressing-laden leaves. My friend had a red onion tartlet, which had pastry so flaky it fluttered across the table. I know it was good because she wouldn't let me have any (the excuse: it's a bit too flaky to share without making a mess - yeah right!) We both had the pork escalope with celeriac mash and Madeira gravy, which was beautiful: subtle savory and sweet tastes mingling nicely. The pork was a little tough but as the mash was really creamy we let them get away with it.

The restaurant itself is lovely. It offers an air of sophistication yet is relaxing and comfortable. It is complete with high ceilings, low lighting and reassuringly heavy cutlery, there is enough starch in the tablecloths for them to stand alone but

despite this though the place is welcoming to everyone: even us scummy students. There is a good mix of people and there is a relaxed and intimate feeling both in the polished wood bar and in the restaurant where the Parisian street café ambience is not as contrived as one might expect. The restaurant seats about 140 and the place feels busy as the tables are very close but it's not so much cluttered as cosy and you have good opportunity to perve at the other diners meals as you make your own choices!

They were very understanding of our time constraints and rushed us the bill with time to spare. The wine was pricey (a fruity Italian house) about £5 but apart from that the food was reasonable considering the quality and location of the place. You won't even resent the 12.5% service charge as the staff are so nice and efficient. We left to get to the ballet in the nick of time but came straight back afterwards for a helping of their deliciously toffeeey sticky sticky toffee pudding. A mistake to serve it with crème fraise (give me full fat anytime) but it was a lovely end to the night. Couple it with another glass of the fruity Italian and nestle down in the conservatory for a bit of late night people watching. For a pre or post theatre experience I highly recommend it. On a cold wet winter day it is a perfect place to get warm and comfortable. Be warned, you won't want to leave.

Tuttons 11-12 Russell Street, London, WC2B 5HZ For bookings call 020 7836 4141



B:on tippytoes

Feeling the effects of too much TV, B:about decided to grab a bit of culture and headed to the Royal Opera House for 'Giselle'

The last time I went to the ballet I was about 8. It was a performance of one of the folk ballets, all full of smocked tunics and girls with head scarves and was set in a market square around an ornamental fountain. Charming child that I was, I complained about being bored the whole way through and the only bit I clearly enjoyed was when one of the fair maidens almost broke her ankle falling over the aforementioned fountain. I laughed so hard I almost wet myself and my mother had to take me out and give me a talking to. Needless to say my parents never took me again. My history with the ballet has not been good at all really. I got thrown out of ballet classes when I was 4 for kicking the other children during leg kick exercises and never made it beyond the flexing and pointing of toes. My mother's hopes for me as a ballerina thus crushed and my career as a mini-islingtonite duly tarnished I moved onto other things. I never felt any sense of loss having never had the inclination (or frankly the ability) to be a graceful girly and I have managed to live my life perfectly well so far without the ballet.

I bought 2 tickets to Giselle for a ballet mad friend and felt, to be honest, that if I was bored then at least I would have something to put in B:about this week! Having recently dyed half my hair pink I was worried that they wouldn't even let me in but we were swept in and ushered in to our seats in the nick of time for curtain. I had bought almost the cheapest seats without obscured view and thought that we would be looking at white tutu-ed ants on the stage but we

could see all the dancers clearly and even follow their footwork. The first act of Giselle opened with a village scene but with no ornamental fountains I found I had to concentrate less on stopping myself from laughing than from stopping myself from crying. The dancing of the star-crossed lovers was beautiful and Leanne Benjamin played the title role with a vibrant yet technically brilliant passion. When the curtain came down on her mother cradling her body I had a sob caught in my throat so I found myself squeaking out my drink order at the bar. Which of course was 'can you charge me £9 for 2 thimbles of wine?'

The second half was just as good if not better and the wilis (the spirits of dead girls who have been jilted and who dance their old lovers to death) were appropriately chilling. I found myself regretting my loss of ballet training when I saw 20 dancers take off in a jete and land together onto blocked shoes with no more than the sound of a dull clap. It was indeed as if they were the weightless and floating spirits of the story. The queen of the wilis was especially good as was Jonathon Cope as Giselle's lover who she saves from being danced to death. His endless pirouettes certainly had a wild and powerful desperation. At the end of the show I was breathless myself. I clapped and clapped with the rest, my opinion totally revised. I think I might have to try the opera now!

Giselle is at the Royal Opera House until Feb 7. Book online at <https://tickets.royaloperahouse.org/etickets/index.asp> Tickets from £4

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF LAST WEEK'S CLUBBING COMEPETITION: Herman Pauwels and Harriet Cuddleford WHO WILL BE ON THE VIP GUESTLIST FOR THE FANTASTIC OPENING NIGHT OF GET LOADED.

walk:about



There are times in London when you will feel that the next person who steps on your foot, the next tourist who stops dead in the middle of the pavement or

the next business man who shakes his wet umbrella in your hair will have to die. You spend half your time gritting your teeth against screaming at people on the tube and the other half apologising and hoping they don't scream at you. If you've had too much of inane urbanity head for one of the 'villages' around London. Richmond, Hampstead, Blackheath or Stoke Newington all offer relative tranquillity with parks, cafes and winding streets and a real community feeling. They aren't of course real villages and they are still clearly influenced by the rest of London but they are pretty and slower paced than 'real London.' I headed out to Stoke Newington to enjoy an afternoon walking round this most bohemian and eccentric of London's villages. A diamond in the rough, Stokey (as its inhabitants call it) is sometimes pretentious and over priced and is always filled with hippy mothers, babies and dogs but it does have a slower pace of life than much of London, people smile at you in the street and you can get all manner of delicious titbits in its eccentric mix of cafes and restaurants. Anyone who has been to Greenwich village will find a similar vibe: a contrived parochialism yet truly friendly and uncomplicated.

The first thing that literally sets Stokey apart is the lack of tube access. It's easy enough to get to though - just 10 minutes from Liverpool St and trains run fairly frequently. Buses are also frequent and the 73 comes straight from Oxford St or Tottenham Court Rd. If you come out of Stoke Newington Station it looks pretty uninspiring at first. Turn south away from the signs pointing to Tottenham and Stamford Hill. You do see the Hassidic influence of these areas in Stokey with some excellent bagel shops and the occasional Hassidic Jew lingering in the hardware stores here.



There is an excellent mix of people generally in SN as it is located at a kind of crossroads of cultures. Hackney as a whole has a big Afro-Caribbean influence with some great market stalls selling specialist Caribbean and African food staples. Green Lanes is a big Turkish area also and the kebabs round here are some of the best in London. Dalston has a huge gay and lesbian community and although Stokey itself has been hailed as the new Islington as it attracts so many young white middle class couples the area isn't as conservative as Islington and is really accommodating and liberal. Stoke Newington High Street looks a bit of a dump really. Just walk down past all the rubbish and broken down shops with nicotine coloured facades towards the nicer part of Stokey. The further you walk toward Church Street the nicer the buildings get until you turn into it (on the right hand side) and suddenly you no longer feel like you are in a busy down at heel area of London but in some funky rural market town.

As soon as you turn into Church Street you'll be struck by the sheer numbers of women pushing buggies and men walking dogs. These seem to be the number one pastimes for Stokies along with listening to Jazz or Salsa and eating out. The whole street is brightly decorated with pastillian buildings and bright patterned doors; it's spattered with Time



Out recommendations also. Take your pick from the plethora of great places to eat and drink. Bar Lorca has happy hour 5-9 Monday to Saturday with cocktails £3.75 a glass or £9.50 a jug...bargain! They also run Salsa classes on Thursdays at 7 and have Djs playing Latin Music every Friday and Saturday. Dervish is a pretty Turkish café, multicoloured

lanterns and rough brick-worked interior giving it a traditional feel despite its funky well stocked bar in the back corner. The food is cheap and good with a mezze platter for only £4 and dips with bread for about £1.95. We recommend the King Prawns at £2.85 or chose from the special menu which does 2 courses for £9. On the opposite side of the road (right) is Yum Yums which has been a top Thai restaurant for 10 years. Run by the director of Hackney Catering College who happens to be Indian rather than Thai the place is loved by everyone in Stokey. Its melt in the mouth concoctions and outlandish décor combined with extensive wine list and set lunch and dinner offers insure this is an affordable treat for everyone. Set lunch with tea or coffee (2 courses) is £6.95. Further up is the delicious Rasa serving Keleran and South Indian fish dishes in huge portions. Try the mixed seafood pakoda described in one review as tempura with attitude and bursting with all things fishy. Their set menu for lunch is £8. Batio at no. 61 offers enormous pizzas from upwards of £5.50. Share one between two or get a four person table! If you don't fancy eating in and it's warm enough to take out food and sit in the park try the excellent delicatessen Camia: they serve warm ratouie, risotto or onion and potato bake for £1.95 and a gloriously fattening selection of pies and pastries.



Shopping here is often wowed about but I can take it or leave it to be honest. The boutique Hub is run by two sisters and has a lovely stock of socks but little else to tempt. 73 is a gift shop which doesn't try at all: their stock consists mostly of scented candles and humour lacking slogan mugs. Eye Candy has a better selection of stuff with the hard to find Babycham clothing range and 'steel' watches which are a cheaper equivalent to storm watches. If you go in say hi to the owner Rob from me! There are a couple of good toy shops and one good men's boutique where you can get beautifully made shirts. Although it is nice to see stuff other than the real high street tat it does often feel that the independent shops here could be more independent. My favourite shop around here is the organic supermarket 'Fresh and Wild.' As you go in the smell of rice and spice enfolds you and you want to buy loads of food you've never even heard of, never mind can't afford. If you do want to splash out the organic ice-cream is about the same price as Ben and Jerry's and is creamier and better for you. The shop has a café inside where you can linger over free trade coffee and nut bread. The bulletin board by the

door tells you what's going on in the neighbourhood and makes it feel like a real community. You get the feeling this would be a nice place to live. Then you go and look in the window of the Estate Agent and see that it is £200,000 for a one bedroom flat, with no tube access, in one of the most crime-ridden boroughs of London.

One of the highlights of Stoke Newington is a visit to the unique Abney Park Cemetery. Take someone with you as this place is seriously creepy. Not only is it overgrown with vines and brambles and moss but it



is a notorious meeting place for tramps and nutters. It is, however, very beautiful and striking in its own way. It is like you just walked off a high street and into a gothic novel. Crumbling angels peer serenely through a veil of ivy while heavy black marble tombs appear to be being sucked into the uneven muddy ground. Creepers grab at your feet as you tread the narrow paths and the smell of mulch and mould hangs thickly in the air. You can almost imagine Heathcliffe himself skulking in the bushes. It may have been that vision but I chickened out of my walk when a tramp winked at me through some bushes by William Booth's (founder of the Salvation Army) grave. If you take a friend though, it would be a nice walk through the undergrowth to the war memorial and to some of the other famous graves dotted about. If this is too scary try Clissold park for the duck pond and miniature zoo. It's a top place to spot residents and their matching dogs too. St Mary's Church in the park is ancient and mentioned in the Domesday Book.

Before you leave good old Stokey visit the Vortex jazz club which is a great (if slightly smokey) place to hang out day or night. It's a café, restaurant, club, pub and book shop all rolled into one. Priced a little on the top end of the scale find some nice young professional to buy you dinner or just nurse a glass of wine and soak up the musical talent. The 73 bus will take you back to civilization from here refreshed after your mini-mini-break!

Like eating, drinking, clubbing, shopping, all of the above? Feel like you could write an article for B:about? We are looking for new writing talent. Just email s.l.warwick@lse.ac.uk with reviews or ideas.

B:theatre

edited by Keith Postler and Carolina Bunting

Ashes to Ashes

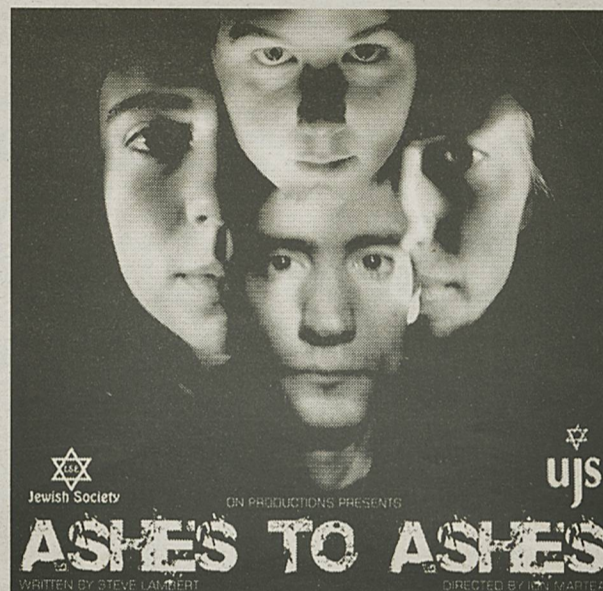
A play on the Holocaust is bound to be emotionally charged. The challenge is to avoid the over-dramatisation of pain and diminishing human suffering to cliché cries, sobs and cringes. Director Ion Martea's adaptation of Steve Lambert's play "Ashes to Ashes" rises above this challenge. It reminds us with excruciating poignancy of the courageous struggle of the soul to survive under the physical and psychological tortures endured in the Nazi concentration camps.

"Ashes to Ashes" depicts the experiences of three Jews held in Auschwitz-Bercenau in March 1943. Although the Nazi guard (Ruth Austin) is a stereotypical despot, Austin does a convincing job of terrorizing the prisoners, as well as the audience, with the startling banging of her baton. Steve Bond interprets Philip, the character on whom the play is based. Forced to work in the gas chamber, Philip tries to infuse hope and dignity into the lives of the condemned. One such soul is Rivka, performed by the remarkable Fionnola McLardy. The second is the prisoner from Corfu, Sara (Giorgia Demarchi). Demarchi steals the scene. Her disillusioned stare and striking stage-presence left this reviewer mesmerized with the quality and authenticity of her performance; especially as this is her first play in English. In fact the cast of four manages to transcend the confines of the theatre and reveal some humanity in the tragedies of the Holocaust.

Working off a simple set with very few props, Martea carefully utilises the theatrical tools available to guide the audience through the pains and triumphs of the characters. Using very little lighting, the audience is literally enveloped in the darkness of despair and solitude, hoping for the pale, uncomfortable light to weakly shine on the two protagonists. Martea then carefully builds up to the climatic prayer, sung live by an eerily powerful choir, leaving the audience completely unsettled by the horror and the beauty of the story. Debi Ilovici's emotional solo marks the high point of the play, representing the inner voice and struggle of millions of Holocaust victims.

This voice should not be ignored or forgotten. Sixty years after the Holocaust, "Ashes to Ashes" remains a relevant story and highly moving play.

Anna Carolina Bunting



Performances will begin at 8pm, Old Theatre on Saturday 24th, Monday 26th and Wednesday 28th January. There will be a special performance on Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January) at ULU, Room 101 Malet Street. All ticket prices £3 concessions, £5 adults.

Living Timelessly

Play: TIME AND THE CONWAYS

Playwright: J. B. Priestley

Venue: Richmond Theatre

Running Time: Act I & II 50 ", interval, Act III 30 "

Ends: Saturday, 24 Jan

J.B. Priestley is perhaps most famous for *An Inspector Calls*. *Time and the Conways* is one of his underrated and more thought-provoking plays that deal with Priestley's obsession - the concept of "time". While we may perceive time as linear, for Priestley past, future and present overlap.

The play has at least two levels: on the surface it describes the rise and fall of the family's fortune and personal circumstances. We meet the Conways in a detached villa in a prosperous suburb of a manufacturing town - Newlingham. In Act I, the autumn of 1919, the Conways hold a family celebration in honour of Kay Conway's twenty-first birthday. Both sons, Alan Conway and Robin Conway (Tam Williams) have returned safely from World War I. The future seems bright and filled with happiness and dreams. We see the Conways preparing a charade for their guests in

a flurry of costumes. However, the game reveals the charade of the characters' lives. For instance, Mrs. Conway, the formidable and imperious Penelope Keith (*The Good Life*, *To The Manor Born*), is superb as the matronly tyrant, treating her offspring with the theatrical affection of a retired singer. By 1938 (Act II), in the context of a hopeless national situation, their make-believe world has collapsed. The Conways have become the Nobodies of Newlingham: broke, bleak and bickering. Even the seemingly dominant Mrs. Conway has become a shadow of her former self.

On a deeper level the play is about the impact of the passage of time. The play essentially takes place in 1919 and back again via 1938. Acts I and II follow each other in seemingly linear time. Acts I and III occur on the same autumn evening of 1919. What happens in 1919 (Act I) influences the events of 1938 (Act II), but the events of 1938 are somehow present in the subconscious of the characters in Act III therefore shedding light on how the events of 1938 turn out the way they do. The future affects a small part of our perception of the present. What Priestley conveys is that if we want to change our world, our existence, our future, we have to change our thinking, not simply blame that "devil in the universe" that we call "time" for our failure to act.

The Conways are essentially self-absorbed, never fulfilled, and never truly happy. "Time" is the scapegoat. Time is seen as the thief of dreams once held.

Kay Conway, effectively portrayed by Hannah Young, is in many ways the pivotal character of the play. The scenery illustrates this point. The rotating stage creates an impression of the passage of time, while Kay Conway, the only one aware of, and hence affected by time in its multiple dimensions, is on stage at the end and beginning of every Act. Thus the scenery is appropriate throughout the play.

The cast put in enjoyable performances. Alan Conway (Jamie Chapman) renders the most quietly convincing performance as the intellectual. Although he is seen as the "fool" of the family and is never taken seriously, he is the most genuine of them all. Alan is the only Conway who is "truly happy" because he accepts life for what it truly is. He understands "time".

All in all it was a rather enjoyable performance - not at all a waste of time, worth a trek to that small piece of the West End in the South, Richmond Theatre.

Irina Janakievskaja

B:v

And so to the BBC's latest Saturday night offering, **Britain's Best Sitcom**, the title of which excludes Friends (it's not British,) the Fast Show (it's not a sitcom,) and My Family (it's shite.) Basically, the BBC has commissioned a public vote (what else!!) to decide the top ten situation comedies of all time. Absent from the top ten are critically acclaimed shows such as The Office and Father Ted, however, one name is on the list which may surprise people, the Vicar of Dibley, starring Dawn French.

To put it mildly, the Vicar of Dibley is to comedy what John Leslie is to celibacy. Songs of Praise is a far funnier religious comedy. So how did Dibley get in the top ten? Perhaps the votes were cast using a system of proportional representation, and that being the case, Dawn French does represent a sizeable proportion of the planet earth. But in truth, we must blame the good old British public.

Yet what else can we expect? Modern polls regularly proclaim David Beckham as the greatest ever footballer or The Darkness as one of the greatest British rock bands of all time. People vote for what they remember and although Dibley is possibly not even in the top fifty sitcoms of all time, it is recent and fresh in the public's memories. Only last month, the public proved yet again their ignorance in such matters by electing Michelle McManus the Pop Idol 2003, ignoring the fact that she only got as far as she did because she ate all the other contestants.

By the way, back to the top sitcom; in my opinion the top three British sitcoms of all time are (drum roll please) Fawlty Towers - Blackadder - Royle Family.

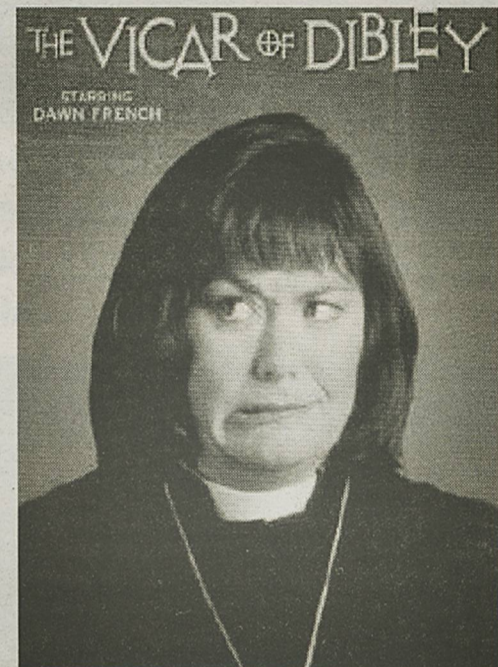
Following on from the Sun's now infamous 'Bonkers Bruno Locked Up' front page headline, **the Sun** had promised to clean up its act, following hordes of complaints from readers. And to their credit, they had been true to the word. But, last Wednesday following the suicide of Harold Shipman, well, in the words of Frank and Nancy, then they went and spoilt it all by saying something stupid like... 'Ship Ship Hooray.'

B:v Recommends:

Grass - BBC2, Saturday night, 10:45: Excellent new comedy drama starring Simon Day as Billy Bleach, an unassuming witness to a crime which leads to him being put onto the witness protection programme.

Mark & Lard - BBC Radio1, Monday - Friday, 1:00: Cult student listening combining humorous banter with seriously good music. Catch them whilst you can - it's rumoured they're off to Radio2 in the near future.

Nuts - Brand new magazine basically billing itself as a male equivalent of the very successful Heat. There is a huge gap in the printed media market for a mag like this so let's hope Nuts is good enough to fill it.



B:mail

Subject: Old Street

Is anyone else finding that old street is now piss poor? It's supposed to be this underground scruffy industrial but trendy at the same time type of area to go out in and everyone bangs on about its greatness. It is scruffy (i.e. ugly) but there's nothing trendy about it. It's full of overpriced bars and crawling with tarts and badly dressed larger lovers. Like the bar Herbal for example, its interior is like a derelict house. Why is that good? Old Street. A great place for a bad night.

Mike

Subject: Cirque de Soleil

I went along to see Cirque de soleil at the Royal Albert hall last week. It's something I've wanted to see for years but its always sold out before I've been able to get tickets for. It def lived up to my expectations. It's more than a circus, it's a whole artistic experience choreographed with visuals and music. Anyway they did loads of weird acrobatic contortionist stuff, the best being when they started flipping through hoops simultaneously. Hard to explain. It is as good as the hype.

Laura

Subject: Cheap food

If you live in Angel, at the end of Chappel Market (just passed Elbow Rooms) there's an all you can eat Indian vegetarian Buffet place. It's 3 pounds!!! The food isn't the greatest ever but its not bad, so if you want to go out for some food but find restaurants are a rip, its good place to know about.

Ewan

Spread the Love...

Got anything to tell us? Disagree with any of this? Send your b:mails this way - conveniently labelled B:mail - and we'll print them here. Anything and everything arts related welcome: Beavermails@yahoo.co.uk or N.Garrett@lse.ac.uk

Nice one

The Beaver Listings

Your guide to what's on at LSE this week

Students' Union Events

China Development Society presents
Professor Peter Nolan (Cambridge University)
'China at the Crossroad'
5-7pm, 29/01/04
Venue: E171 (New Theatre)

LSE Kenyan Society
Swahili Language Classes
3-5pm, Every Friday, D6 (Clement House)
Limited places available / complete beginner level / £5 per hour

LSESU Liberty Society will hold
An introductory meeting and their first committee elections
12.30pm, Wednesday 23 January 2004
D302

Human Resource Management Society presents
'Where women want to work: making the right choice'
with speaker - Glenda Stone, CEO, Aurora
6pm, Monday 2 February 2004
D502

LSE FILM SOCIETY presents
THE DEER HUNTER
7pm, FRIDAY 30th JANUARY
NEW THEATRE (E171)
Winner of 5 Academy Awards and starring Robert De Niro, The Deer Hunter has been critically acclaimed as the best Vietnam war movie made to date. Admission 50p. For more information email su.soc.film@lse.ac.uk
Poetry Society Anthology 2004?
For those who don't know, the LSE poetry society produces an annual anthology of students work. WE ACCEPT EVERYTHING!!!!!!!
As long as its written by LSE students/staff.....if anonymity is your thing then pseudonyms or initials are welcome as long as you let us know!
The finished product will be launched in week 9 of this term, so we need your work as soon as possible!!!
Please email all contributions to su.soc.poetry@lse.ac.uk. ... By the end of next week, 30/01/04.

LSE ISRAELI SOCIETY AND LSE FRIENDS OF PALESTINE PRESENT:
DRAFTING PEACE:
6pm, Tuesday 27 January
Room G101 [opposite the Peacock Theatre]

A joint event to explain and discuss the latest peace initiatives. Moty Cristal, an Israeli negotiator who participated in some of the crucial talks, will discuss and compare the original Geneva draft with the agreements drawn up at Camp David, Oslo and Taba. Come to read the texts, see how they differ from past plans and form an opinion. All welcome.

LSE Catholic Society invites you to a Science and Religion seminar:
Galileo and The Church
Date: Wednesday, 04 February 2004
Time: 1600 (4 pm)
Venue: LSE 20 Kingsway Building, room G1
Speaker: Professor William Carroll
William Carroll was Professor of History at Cornell College in America for thirty years. He is the Aquinas Fellow in Science and Religion at

Blackfriars Hall in Oxford where he teaches for the Hilary Term. He is the co-author with Steven E. Baldner of Aquinas on Creation.
This event is free and open to all with no ticket required. Entry is on a first come, first serve basis.
For further information, e-mail su.soc.catholic@lse.ac.uk or contact Rev. David Peebles on 020 7955 7965. You are also welcome to visit <http://personal.lse.ac.uk/catholic> for more information about other events.

LSE FINANCE SOCIETY Presents
'Alumni Networking Evening'
Tuesday January 27, 6pm - 9pm, Senior Common Room (Old Building)
A chance to socialise with LSE alumni who are now working at the top Financial Institutions in the city. A great opportunity to find out what working in the City is really like. Drinks and snacks provided. Members only.

LSE FINANCE SOCIETY Presents
'KPMG Case Study'
Tuesday January 27, 4pm - 6pm, D211
A transatlantic case study, providing an insight into business services. An opportunity to see an example of the type of work carried out by KPMG and to ask any questions to representatives from the firm about their internship programme.
Members Only, Non-members can sign up at the door. (Penultimate Students Only)

LSESU SOCIALIST SOCIETY presents
Iraq: The Lessons of Vietnam
5pm, Thurs 29th Jan, Room L04.
Speaker: Len Aldis, Chair of the British-Vietnam Friendship Society

Philosophy Society presents
Speaker Event
Tuesday 27th Jan, T206 (Lakatos building, opposite library) 3pm
Professor David Papineau (author of Philosophical Naturalism and Introducing Consciousness) will give a talk on consciousness. The event is free and open for all.

Poker Society are holding their Poker Tournament
Mon & Tue 26/27th January 8.00pm, S412 (St Clements Building),
Free for all to attend on Monday or Tuesday.
Sign up fee of approx £10-15 collected on the day. Potential winnings of over £100 for the first placed. Sign up su.soc.poker@lse.ac.uk or otherwise just turn up on the night!

Grimshaw Club, Business and European Societies unite for our 'Bond Theme' Boat Party, cruising down to Greenwich and back on Thursday night. Dress to impress!
Members £4/Non Members £6 (INCLUDES ONE FREE DRINK!) PLACES VERY LIMITED!
Tickets on sale at Houghton street from Thursday (22nd Jan) 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Time and day: Thursday 29th January.
Embarkation at 19:30 & Sailing at 20.00 (be there at 19:30!)
Location: Embankment Pier

Swing Dance Society hold Swing Class
7-9pm, Every Tuesday, S75
All skill levels welcome! A fun friendly swing class taught by 2 experienced teachers!!

LSE Christian Union
Life to the Full...
MONDAY 2ND FEBRUARY
Coffee Bar: Aren't all Religions the same?
Free Doughnuts, Coffee/Tea and Speaker
11am-3pm in Underground Bar
Jazz Bomb in the Quad 7.30pm (tickets £3 on the door)
A ticketed event with a professional jazz band and an inspiring talk.

TUESDAY 3RD FEBRUARY
Coffee Bar: Do Christians have the best sex?
Free Doughnuts, Coffee/Tea and Speaker
11am-3pm in Underground Bar

Jonathan Aitken in D302 at 7pm
The former Tory Minister tells his story about life in politics, prison and beyond.

WEDNESDAY 4TH FEBRUARY
Coffee Bar: Isn't the Bible just one big Rule book?
Free Doughnuts, Coffee/Tea and Speaker
11am-3pm in Underground Bar

THURSDAY 5TH FEBRUARY
Coffee Bar: Why does God allow suffering?
Free Doughnuts, Coffee/Tea and Speaker
11am-3pm in Underground Bar

FRIDAY 6TH FEBRUARY
Coffee Bar: Jesus: Just a good man?
Free Doughnuts, Coffee/Tea and Speaker
11am-3pm in Underground Bar

Business Society present
Europe: pillar of the world economy - or just an appendix?
Lecture by Professor Norbert Walter, Chief Economist, Deutsche Bank Group
Chair: Professor Lord Wallace
Speaker: Professor Norbert Walter
Chief Economist of the Deutsche Bank Group, Frankfurt
Member of the Committee of 'Wise Men' on the Regulation of the European Securities Markets
Member of EU's Inter Monitoring Group for Securities Market since 2002
The world's superpower, the United States, needs a rival to compete with. Europe is potentially the only candidate for this role for the next 20 years, but Professor Walter will argue that economic weakness relegates it to the position of an appendix. This event will be extremely useful and is highly recommended for interview preparations and discussions.
This event is free and open to all with no ticket required. Entry is on a first come, first serve basis.

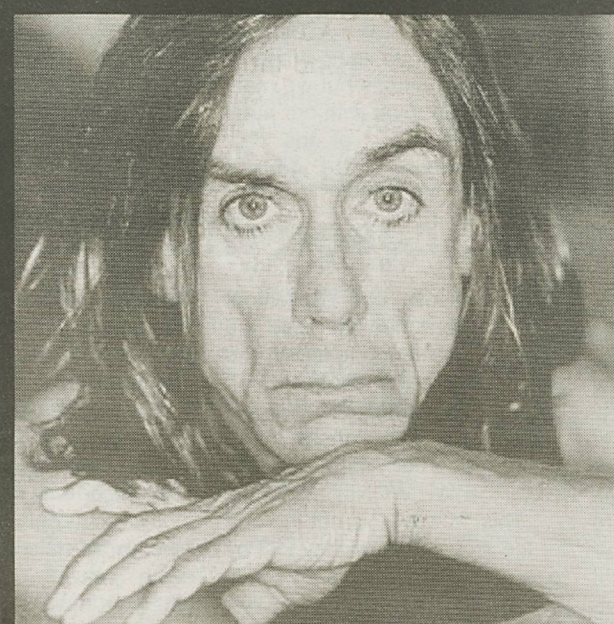
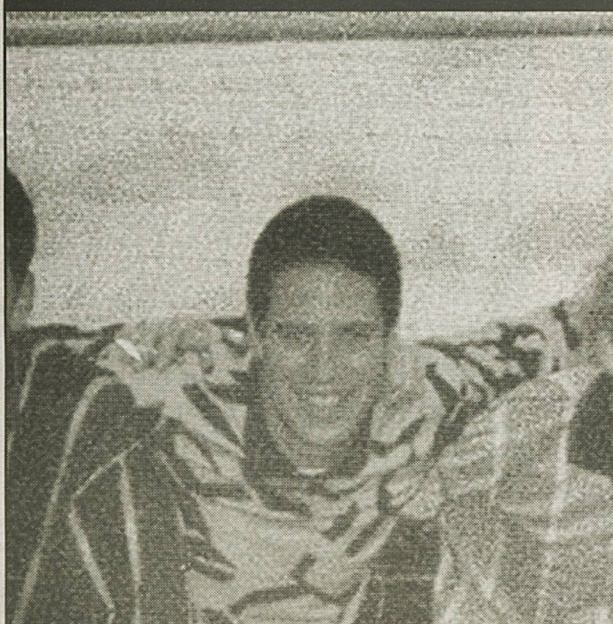
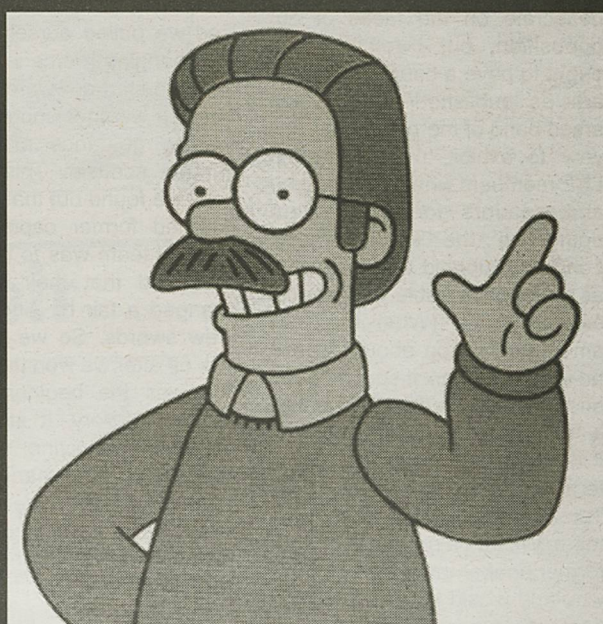
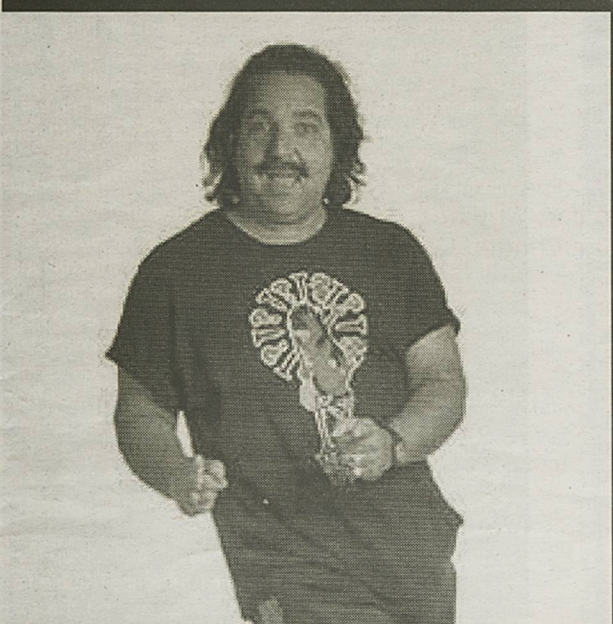
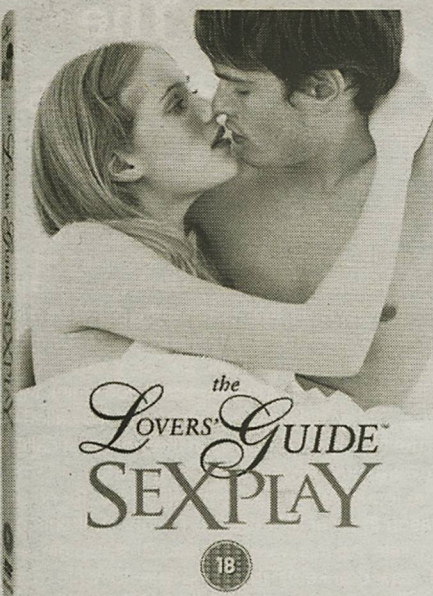
Time and day: Thursday 29 January 2004
6.00pm
Location: Old Theatre, Old Building

Oikos London announces:
WHO'S CHANGING WHO?
NGO partnerships with business for sustainable development
Talk by Matthew Gorman, Principal Advisor of the Business Programme of Forum for the Future
When: Thursday, 29 January, 6 pm
Where: Room D502, Clement House

Measure The Pleasure !!!

It's back! *The Lover's Guide 2 - Sexplay!* And you thought we were taking the piss... well, in order for us to be able to give this away, we have to do the following: Credit Universal Pictures UK for this, check. Inform readers/ listeners that you can buy the thing from Feb 2nd, check. Say somethign about B.I.G PR, check. Okay, let's get this sexual show on the coital road. No guessing the owners of large chests this year, it's the pork swordsmen we're rating (in line with Student Union Equal Opportunity Policy... Rowan would be proud). Put these legendary monsters of cock in order of girth, lengthiest first, and win yourself this orgasm-inducing prize. For those of you who don't need such video-based education, do it anyway, and we'll print the names of the correct entries or something... get measuring the pleasure!

Basically, you need to figure out who each one is, then rank them in order of who's been blessed most... size, as Brianna Banks might say, matters... send answers to g.h.carter@lse.ac.uk or vyras@lse.ac.uk... same old, same old...



BeaverSports Co-Editor Position: The Race Hots Up!

Right, last week we saw five candidates throw themselves in the firing line for the position of Ellie's right-hand wo/man: Paul McAleavey, Hestor Barsham, Louise Tasty, Claudia Munchkin and Fabs Joseph. This week, they're joined by men's rugby thirds player Jaimin Patel, or 'Jay P'. He doesn't write regular pieces for the Telegraph as a ghost writer for Henry Winter, nor does he have a CV, even a fake one. However, he does wish to take many more photos of rugby players, and has one or two or many new ideas for BeaverSports. I went to Ladbrokes the other day, but they're not taking bets. I'll get in touch again, see if we can get some sort of sweepstake thing going, like we wanted to do with the 'who burgled the Beaver office' thingy.

Fictional Scoreline Leaves Thirds Rugby Victorious!

LSE Rugby 3rds.....	103
Gimperial.....	31
Somefieldbyarunway, Heathrow	

Jay Patel



Okay, you may be asking why I'm writing a report on a game so far in the past that William the Conqueror could have been bastardising pop songs with explicit lyrics to desecrate on the faces of our opposition, but I felt that we ought to have a couple of decent articles published for our half arsed band of merry fuck ups this year to exhibit to the common LSE members what some of their ambassadors for rugby were doing on the fields around London to uphold our fine name as a truly admirable educational establishment. (What the fuck am I rambling on about? I have no idea but I think it sounds good and spent a long time writing it so just read it).

It was the last Wednesday of term and when we left the Three Tuns we were two men short of a team. We had a promise from our former hooker that he was on his way and would be out of bed by 1pm to meet us Holborn. Somehow from the time we left the Tuns to the moment we stepped of the train into the murky depths of Heathrow we managed to pick up three extras giving us a full ensemble plus one. However, having played the gimps at the beginning of the season, we had a vague idea of

their strength and considering we were all about half their size, the 95 -0 (or so) beating we got was a good mile post to work against. By the time we got to the murky farmlands of West London, the fog had begun to set in, so we had limited visibility and we were about 5 minutes from kick off.

Having got ourselves organised we pulled ourselves out of the changing rooms in dribs and drabs to start our warm up in the freezing weather under the stout swilling guidance of the honourable scouser. This was the point we found out that the newly qualified former captain of the imperial team was to be our referee and that their team had changed a fair bit since we last drew swords. So we elected to kick off after we won the toss and that was the beginning of our stunning victory. It started with the forwards giving some outstanding performances with some huge hits on their relatively small backs who tried to worm their way through our ranks, but the hit anything coming our way tactics worked a dream. We let in two tries early on, but as we went on, we drew tighter and soon our defence was impenetrable. Then we started our attack.

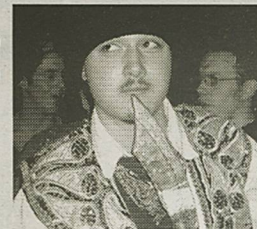
We started with a pincer movement as we rounded the forwards from either side and then passed out wide as we faced the backs. Fine passes out to Buffy (aka Shanti) on the wing

left him open to sprint straight under the posts and end with an NFL style dive between their full back and a rapidly retreating outside centre. Following tries were just as impressive with a superb run by another of our wingers Bye Bye (aka Now) who even had time to wave at us before he went over. A solitary converted try by the gimps took us into half time and a restoration of our bodily fluids and a pause for our brains to rest after the pretty play patterns we made in the first half around the fairies we were facing.

The second half started with our first try for the forwards. We made a spectacular drive over the try line after an interesting kick from imperial. They played it straight to our backs, which generally starts if they think they can put enough power on their backs side to claim the ball, but there seemed to be some confusion as all but one of their players were following their forwards on the right. After we got up off the floor from laughing so hard, I dived onto the ball and managed to free myself from the clasps of the opposition's scrum half only to be hit full on by one of their huge flankers (considering his size it was amazing how fast he crossed the field to reach me). But our fine props were in support and with Scouse mouthing off about my half arsed hooking technique (our former hooker has been sacked out of the position by the lack of NFL style padding and big guys running at rather than after him) "Little" John landed on top of me to setup a ruck from which we pulled the ball clear. By the time we reached their try line, all their forwards had made it across but we managed to push over with our number eight on top of the ball. Scouse managed to convert

nicely from the finest of angles to set us at 75-24. A few more tries and the odd field goal later, we had managed to push over 100 points with a fine kick by our captain from 40yards to end the tie 103-31 After the final whistle we ran in for a quick drink and sandwiches in the Chelsea FC training ground bar before returning to the Tuns to begin on our quest to drink ourselves into a stupor in time for our club dinner and a legendary night at Limeabout.

Alright, now to the truth of it all. Outside of our little dream world, we didn't quite play the match as I so emphatically described above. In fact we were pretty poor and as in every other game this season we setup our defensive game to try and let in as few tries as possible. Although this was our best performance so far (even the gimps felt pity on us and told us we played better than at the beginning of the term), it still lacked the cohesion needed to score a try or even a point for that matter. But things are looking up and with a league game this Wednesday and an interesting friendly against the ULU Thai team on Saturday we should hopefully be able to put a try past some scum to face us. Maybe our eagerness to get to our club dinner should have been put on hold, but it did give me a chance to write a winning report for the thirds (probably our only one this year considering only two players turned up for training last Wednesday). Lazy twats.



The Pirate's Piece

Very proud, and a bit intrigued to hear that the netball club had an Ann Summers party in the Underground Wednesday night. A wide-eyed and dreamy Emmo told me that, apparently, no guys were allowed down to see what was going on, since if they did it would then be classified as an 'orgy' and hence become illegal, or something. You see, I don't think that's fair. You get eighty girls and one guy and it's called an orgy, you get twenty guys and a girl then what's it called? My housewarming party last term, that's what... Rrrright, I've found I've tended to go off on one for no particular reason in recent Pieces, so I might think this one through a little bit this week. Um... 5ths captain Alex Goddard was drunkenly imploring me to write about 'the... fucking bast... bast... BASTARDS!!!! Bastards, who... stand, STAND outside the... old... old building... BASTARDS... and don't move!!! BASTARDS!!!! but I think for the full effect of his vitriolic outburst to be felt, you'd have had to have been there, on the balcony of Lime-about, swaying dangerously and worrying that you're beginning to think the girl with one arm and a lazy eye on the dance floor isn't THAT bad... So, this week, I'm starting off talking about someone who had a bit of a night last Wednesday, languid Space Cadet and UGM duncer: Andy 'International not-Homo' Schwartz. With the entire SU Exec currently in the process of stabbing in the back anyone who won't agree that 'one stockbroker is one too many', Andy's future is looking bleak. It's a shame really, since he's such a quality International Officer, one that clearly doesn't give a shit about anything really. He deleted three e-mails from the Oxford International Students' Officer, since he immediately thought that any e-mail from 'Xiang Li, Re: International Action' was bound to be Oriental kiddie-porn. True story. Anyway, he's quality, and the self-righteous, electioneering wankers who'd have him out should go and tell a Limeabout bouncer that no, they 'won't take their bandana off in the club, fuck off'. From bitter experience, I know that that'd teach them.

Not that I want to denigrate anything the anti-top up fees pikeys are doing nowadays, but I think the Kibble-fiddler's labelling of the 'lets hold hands around the Old Building, oh we can't because there's only twelve of us' as a success is a bit much. To be honest, I hardly noticed it. It just seemed like there were slightly more BASTARDS not moving outside the Old Building than usual. Another thing, those absolute twats, those muppets of Byzantian proportions who possess absolutely no social nous whatsoever, those unequivocally cuntish idiots who pretend that they're 'lads'. You know the type: 'Yeah, got fucked in Yates on that stuff, what's it called? Yeah, beer. Yeah, properly fucked, and then Jonno and Chrisso and Rupert saw this girl and called her a 'strumpet'. Well, what can you expect from us? We're mad we are, properly mental. I mean, we started drinking at 11am!! Which is pretty late for us you know? Chortle chortle.' You what?!?!? Fuck off you daft bastard. You mean to say you wake up at 10am everyday and neck a pint?!? Guffaw-fucking-guffaw. I bet your being slightly tipsy by evening time amuses your other dickhead mates, but some aren't so easily impressed/taken in by your exaggerations, you pointless fool. Don't get me wrong, I love it every time Emmo tells me he woke up at 3pm in the afternoon under a bridge in Wapping. I know! It's fantastic and I love it! I was there at Limeabout, watching him trying to fellate the DJ booth or whatever the hell it was, it's just that... well, I don't know what it is, other than one of my housemates brought home one of his 'associates' from the House of Commons a while back, who pretended he was 'one crazy alcoholic', but was, in actual fact, 'one dull stupid arse fuckwit'. We were quick to point out the distinction after said muppet had left, since he had a 9 o'clock policy meeting in the morning. Clearly, his craziness knew no bounds. Oh, running out of space... shit, wanted to clear it up: I love it when stories about LSEAU members come in, about them waking up in Stockport or something, since they're genuine. It's people who feel they need to boost their own image by pretending they drunkenly signed up as a human shield in the Iran-Iraq war because 'that's how crazy they are'. People 'comically and self-deprecatingly' bemoaning the fact they're piss-heads annoys me. Just live with it, love it, and then let us know, so we can print it... :-)

Bye.

Goldsmiths: Sore Fucking Losers!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

LSE Netball 2nds.....	29
Goldsmiths.....	28
Lincoln's Inn, Holborn	

Alison Blease



OK so this match was tough even for such practised professionals as ourselves. The afternoon did not begin well when they managed to take nearly an hour to get to Lincoln's Inn after they had rung to say they would be there in 30 mins. Then two of them ran off to get changed and did not return for at least twenty minutes leaving us all standing around freez-

ing our arses off. However this little trick to put us off did not last long and after a merely 'good' first quarter (as opposed to our usual dizzying brilliance) we were back on form.

It was a very tight game but our hypnotic grace and stupefying speed were paying off as we led (just!) all the way until the last quarter when they pulled one goal ahead. It could all have gone to pot so easily but at LSE we believe we are made of sterner stuff and we fought back! Spectator Aine wished she could get at her duff arm in its sling as she had bitten down all her fingernails on her other hand - it was such gripping stuff. As you can tell I am trying my best to

build suspense and excitement but you don't need to read the scoreline at the top to know who won. Our brilliance has been clearly documented over the past weeks so I know there is no doubt in your minds - OF COURSE WE WON!!!!!!!!!!

This, however, is not the end of the story. I know they lost by one goal and were clearly really fucked off about it, but HA HA. Three words to describe them... SORE FUCKING LOSERS!!!! They had been pulled up during the match for breaking at nearly every centre pass (running out before the whistle went) and when one of them tried to argue about it she completely dropped herself in it and showed that she didn't have a clue what the rule is and basically admitting that she had been completely wrong and had rightfully given away penalties every time. Yet still at the end of the match when they all

had faces like a slapped arse, they tried to blame our umpire for blowing the whistle too slowly! Get over it - YOU LOST!!

Much gratitude goes to Olivia who was doing the umpiring for us for managing to control herself when faced with such blatant stupidity and general crapness. Much praise also goes to us for being amazing - it is a natural gift, you have it or you don't. Needless to say Laura, Marie, Rachel, Louisa, Krystal, Captain Fiona and of course myself, have it by the bucketload. Next week we have two matches both away so sorry to disappoint all of you who would otherwise be sprinting out to Lincoln's Inn on Wednesday but you will have to cope without a glimpse of our truly breathtaking skills. Prepare yourselves for more tales of victories against scummy uni's.

The Sevenths: Better Than Gaddafi, Dwight Yorke, And RVC!

LSE Footy Sevenths.....5

RVC.....1

Potter's Bar, Jarvis' fault

Paul McAleavey



train through the normal route of the doors, and not the alternative option of being cut free by the emergency services. Before the game a quasi-Satanic Sevenths ritual took place. Ed K-Lo had brought with him a scarf which can only be described as something designed under the Ceaseau regime in Romania. The pattern on it was similar to the kind of pattern you get when you rub your eyes too hard. The addition of a bottle of Swan lighter fluid later, K-Lo's scarf, and a ridiculous pair of American frat-boy chinos belonging to Manni, went up in smoke in the corner of the pitch. This ritual scared the opposition team so much that the caretaker had to be called to put out the fire.

The match had a lively start, resulting in me becoming more acquainted with their nonce of a number nine than I would ever wish to, following a few "late" challenges. We created loads of chances, Ross was looking sharp and was providing more quality ammunition than Colonel Gaddafi ever did for the IRA. Playing up a slope which would have proved difficult for Edmund Hilary, we broke the deadlock through top scorer Nick. Once this goal went in the Champagne began to flow in the manner to which ULU League Division 4 has become accustomed to this season. The defence was looking sharp, and the left sided pairing of Ally and Indy was poking more holes in the opposition side than Dwight Yorke ever did in Jordan.

At half time, despite dominating the first 45 minutes, a slender 1-0 lead was all the Sevenths had. However launching into the



Vets like Alison Hammond into a sausage sandwich, the lead was extended early in the second half when Ed K-Lo scored a dizzying solo effort. However, some shit defending meant RVC pulled one back, despite Manni pulling off three good saves in close succession. After Nick was hauled down in the penalty area, referee Indy "Mark Halsey" Sangha awarded a penalty which K-Lo converted. Much like Helder Postiga, Steve Kelly made his debut halfway into the season, but managed to do slightly better than Postiga, by laying on an assist for Nick to complete his hat-

trick. Rob sent in a few dangerous corners, which their keeper dealt with well. In the end it became a bit of a walk in the park. Afterwards we retired to the RVC Union, which is housed in a small barn on the edge of their campus, and took large amounts of ketmaine to get us through the long journey home.

* Did I say fantastic? I meant shit. Sorry about that.

The Champagne Sevenths had played RVC earlier in the season at Berrylands, and had found the Vets to be thoroughly nice chaps. Despite having six goals put past them these likeable Northerners still had a smile for their southern opponents, and donned their flat caps after the game and walked off into the Surrey sunset with their greyhounds on their leads and smiles on their faces. However, we can only conclude the lack of central heating and inside toilet facilities in the terraced houses of Wigan, Grimsby and Chester-le-Street led to many of their players dying of pneumonia over the cold winter break, and being replaced by dickheads.

The journey to Potter's Bar began in the drug and prostitution capital of London - King's Cross. We reached Potter's Bar successfully and thanks to the fantastic* safety record of Jarvis, were able to disembark the

10 Minutes To Fill A Slot -BeaverSports, Not Alex's MILF...

LSE Footy Fourths.....4

Goldsmith's 1sts.....1

Albany Park, Milesaway

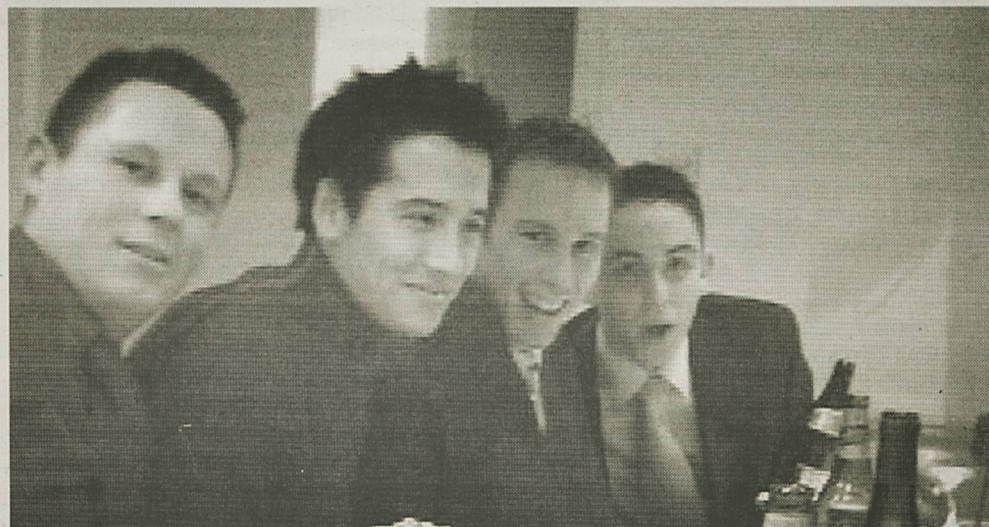
Craig 'Taffy' Harris



tle cos he was shit and one of their subs, so he clapped his hands instead) the gathering crowd was in awe in the Blue army. I cant remember who scored sorry lads, but the goals were all proper Bo! I fucking loved it. Aksel Folly and Alex give Goldies back 4 a real treat in a performance reminiscent of Ian Rush's glory days, off the superb supply from Pikey and Nelson Mandela on the wings, whilst Jimmy Hill (Joe) and Jan put on a showmen's performance in the centre. Back breaking penetration!!

From cocky bastards to demoralised poly students, with faces like slapped twat, the Goldsmiths flids saw 4 goals race into the back of their net. Steve, gay Mike, Matt Joy and myself (more from the oral side of things) were impenetrable in the back. Once the score hit 4 - 0 to the holders of the inter-LSE cup, the ref asked if we minded giving Goldsmiths a penalty for their efforts. We duly obliged (again I've forgotten who gave it away), and they slipped in a consolation finger goal to make the score 4 -1 LSE. Do one!

Now feeling it was safe to bring on missile Sphicas, not having to worry bout him getting sent off, the little man came on and did a job worthy of a place in the Cardiff (scum) line up. Dennis 'the earthworm' Nelson returned from 3 months injury - or hypochondria - to earn his place in the starting line up. And to bring the Pirate on, alongside Jan, when we were some-



thing like 4-1 up, was just taking the piss and harsh as fook. But we fucking loved it!

However, there was one performance on the day that I've left till last - cos I think the player who put it in is well worth being remembered. Richard 'the rimmer' Gull took so many kicks in the ribs that he started choking on the blood that he was coughing up. Did he go off?? Did he fook. He stayed on to sweep up the few - yet vital - mistakes that squeezed their way through the back four, legend.....but then he wasn't at the Tuns so it don't count and he's dropped for next

weeks cup game.

So there it is in 10 mins Pirate. Hope this has filled the slot adequately. Its one to be proud of though....the 4's crazy army hammering a team potentially 2 leagues above them (with a ref that blew up as the ball crossed the line for an LSE goal for an offside that was meant to have occurred 5 mins before). All the best u arsehole.

Giant killing 4s on a role, watch spice-boys in the LSE tournoi! Proper Bo! Goldsmiths...CLOSED!

On the back of an eight match unbeaten run, the golden fourths - with a couple of ringers by the name of 'the Pirate' and 'geeza' Jan, as well as a Darlington FC YTS centre back, who Taffy the Wheeler dealer managed to secure on 1 match loan - arrived at Goldsmiths with only 2 things in mind....the Tuns and Lopabout.

Goldsmiths 1sts, with their top-of-the-league pedigree - having come from the spice-boys Premier League to the messy Division 1, thought they were Proper Bo! In reality, they were proper BASTARDS, and the mighty 4s were out in full strength (now that Sphicas was on the bench) to make sure they flooded their piss bags.

From the 1st clap (the ref didn't have a whis-

Exhibit B

Right, apologies for the shit picture, but this -following on from the Chloe Strong saga that was Exhibit A- is, duh-duh-duuuuuuh: Exhibit B.

Some anonymous person has found this in his bed, and wishes to return it to a certain lady. Who that certain lady was, we're trying to ascertain. Hence, if this is yours, give us an e-mail, and we'll get it back to you.

BeaverSports: Righting wrongs, and helping one-night standers.



