



# PART B

discuss the past decade of music  
with celebrated journalist  
**Simon Reynolds**



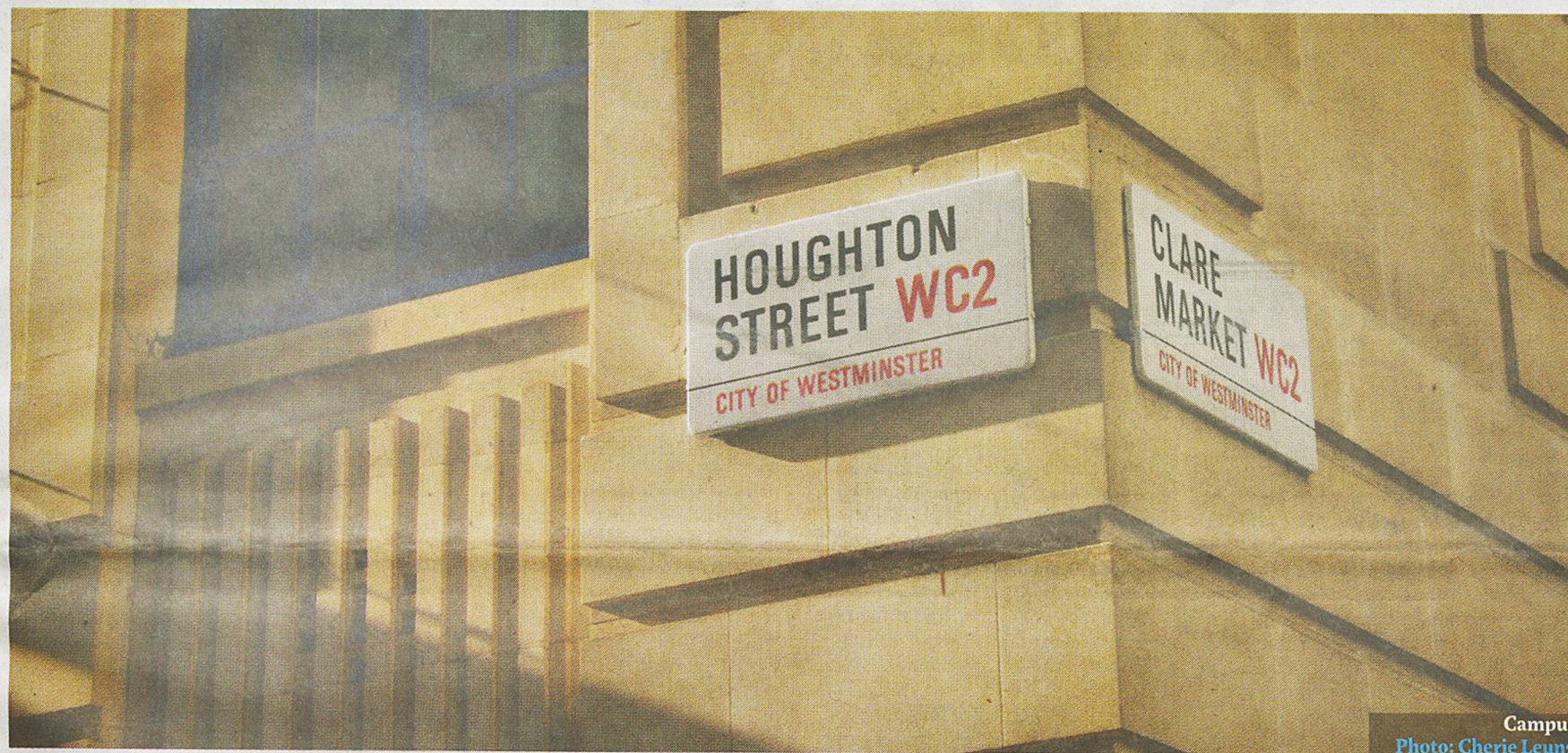
# REFORMS PULLOUT INSIDE



# The Beaver

2 February 2010  
Newspaper of the  
London School of Economics  
Students' Union  
thebeaveronline.co.uk

## LSE in strong financial position



Campus  
Photo: Cherie Leung

**Eunice Ng**

In the financial year of 2008-9, the School doubled the number of higher paid staff, those earning £100,000 or more per annum, from 41 members in the previous year to 85.

Last year, the School enjoyed an overall increase in both income and

expenditure. By far the biggest expenditure was staff costs, which increased by £12 million. The rise in higher paid staff accounted for £5 million of this increase. The School obtained its largest increase in income from tuition fees, which accounts for half of the School's income. 30% comes from Overseas fees, compared to the 13% from Home and EU students.

Students were cautious about speculating on the School's financial decisions.

"Without knowing the previous wages of these staff, it is impossible to say if these doubling of higher paid staff has a significant impact on the school's cashflow. The staff might have been paid 99,999 the previous years," said Yin Lee, a Masters student who also did her BSc in Accounting and Finance at the LSE.

"I'm sure LSE has their reasons for increasing staff costs, not only in terms of hiring more teachers given there are more

students, but also in terms of attracting and retaining key researchers and academics, who are important in maintaining the LSE's reputation and ratings to secure funding from the government."

According to a statement from the School: "This increase is mainly explained by the fact that a previously-agreed pay rise for all LSE staff was implemented during 2008, which lifted a small number of people above the £100,000 threshold.

This rise, pegged to the rate of inflation, was agreed back in 2006."

"LSE is prepared to pay well to attract high quality staff in a competitive sector," the statement continued.

The other big change in the School's financial position was a decrease in the surplus - £17.6 million in 2009 compared to the £26.7 million in 2007-8.

In the Director's Report, LSE Director Howard Davies, noted that the decreased surplus was expected, as the School had intended to spend more on investment. He also noted that the decreased surplus was "comfortably above the Funding Council guideline, which suggests that [the School] should aim for a surplus of between three and four percent of turnover." Overall, the LSE "remained on an even keel in financial terms".

Change, however is imminent. The Funding Council mandates the school to have a ceiling of 9000 students by 2012, and at over 8600 students this year. The School, however cannot rely on increasing tuition fees for income. Davies also acknowledged that the School's goal for the past five years has been on expansion, which came at the cost of student satisfaction. More teaching staff have been recruited and LSE100, a new interdisciplinary course on social sciences, has been piloted. The LSE also has plans to improve its campus; it has bought Sardinia House and the White Horse pub, and a new student centre will open in 2012.

An LSE spokesman said: "LSE is prepared to pay well to attract high quality staff in a competitive sector."

The LSE's focus has shifted, but whether or not students will feel this shift remains to be seen.

## Bankside embroiled in comms controversy

**Nicola Alexander**

The new Bankside Committee engaged in a "flurry" of emails due to two incidents that have arisen over the past week.

Furious messages regarding the publicity on behalf of the Bankside Committee piled up in their email and Facebook accounts last Friday afternoon. The controversy began after residents received an email from the Committee last Thursday, encouraging them to attend an auction of their members to raise money for the victims of Haiti.

Given the historic exploitation of the Haitian people, one Bankside resident was offended by the marketing of the event as a "Slave Auction". This relatively minor response to the language of the message inspired the Communications Officer of Bankside, Jack Tindale, to reply with a second e-mail: "I apologise for this and thank you all for being so quick to email me detailing how offended you were." This sparked the "flurry" of e-mails Bankside residents were to receive over the next day; currently at 10 messages and counting.

This first event split Bankside into two camps, both united by a general frustration at the Committee. Team Tindale, seem unwavering in their belief that no wrong was committed and that the event has been blown out of proportion,

even mobilised a 'Back Jack' campaign. However, several other residents have complained about this insensitive marketing. There is broad consensus that the unfortunate situation was avoidable had it been dealt with in a professional and private manner.

Reflecting the sentiments of a number of Bankside residents, Juliana Apopo commented: "The whole debacle is unnecessary, especially given that this has detracted from the main event - which is raising money for the victims of Haiti." The event was so poorly attended that it was eventually cancelled.

The 'Haiti' situation would perhaps never have reached such levels of aggravation at the Committees' lack of tact, were it not preceded by a similar e-mail event, dubbed 'The Superbowl Wars'. In an effort to publicise Bankside's own Superbowl event, to be held this Sunday in the Bankside bar, an e-mail entitled the "Super-super superbowl event" was sent to all residents. However, the first paragraph of the e-mail was devoted entirely to a smear campaign against the 'rival' Students' Union-organised superbowl event, to be hosted in the Three Tuns at the same time.

"Any one who goes could be at risk from the notoriously snooty bar staff there" spat the e-mail, ultimately warning Banksiders: "By all accounts; Do. Not. Go!".

It was this 'Super-Super Superbowl' e-mail that has drawn most controversy.



The 3 Tuns Pub  
Photo: Oliver Townsend

On Friday afternoon, the 'Bankside 09-10' Facebook group became a tool in the political struggle between what came to be known as "Camp Bank" and "Camp Tuns".

Christopher Gulley, Bar supervisor at the Tuns, immediately responded to the allegations against the Tuns event: "As for

comments about the Tuns being "anti-American", I'm gobsmacked".

A similar message was sent by Michael Potere, a former Bankside Post-Graduate and General Course Officer, warning that any further offensive publicity will result in Committee members

being "permanently banned from this group". By Friday evening, a second apology was sent, with Tindale stating that he would be sure to be "more careful with my wording in the future".

Although the matter has been resolved, the event was cancelled.



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# The Beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 721

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## Change you can believe in

**A**n odd thing happened at this week's Union General Meeting. Sat in a corner of the Old Building, we watched a (literally) magnificent specimen of a man who has become so synonymous with the School, and all the more unsavoury aspects of its administration... and found ourselves agreeing with him.

Andy Farrell, Director of Finances and Facilities, was this week's guest star at the UGM, following the celebrity footsteps of the Wily Wes Streeting and the Honourable Howard Davies. We often find the School constantly passing the buck of blame to the Union, rather than taking responsibility onto their administration. But when Farrell brought up the point that, perhaps, student satisfaction is painfully low because the Union chooses to focus on issues that few people care about, we couldn't help thinking that he was on to something.

Mocking the Union for focusing on international issues, or indeed "any issue under the sun", Farrell believed students concentrate on the wrong problems. Given how much energy has been put into a Union-led campaign for reform, when the students "crying for change" seem to be in hiding (at

best), perhaps student satisfaction and improvement needs to be spearheaded by students themselves.

Now that these lauded reforms are to be voted on by the entire student body, perhaps we finally have a chance to decide what will make us more "satisfied"; at least starting with our Union. People so often see the words "thorough consultation" and a document drawn up, laid down in writing, and assume this means that it has been perfected, and is now set in stone. The student body should not forget, however, that we have the right to dispute this. We have the right to campaign, we have the right to disagree, we have the right to our own suggestions and comments - lest we forget, students also have the right to vote "No".

A 20,000 word document may seem lengthy and imposing. Seeing how this is the biggest change to hit our Union, we urge the members of this Union to read it, every last word, and realize how much this affects every society, every campaign group, every last student at this School. In the middle of this paper is a glorious four-page document highlighting the most important aspects of the reforms, kindly sponsored by the Union's very own "Referendum Budget", rather than coming out of the

Beaver's budget.

We encourage readers to look beyond the more decorative elements of this brochure - dancing silhouettes, primary-coloured polygons et al. - and to consider whether each set of by-laws will help or hinder their interactions with the Students' Unions. Only once an electorate is fully informed will they be adequately equipped to decide whether to welcome or to wave goodbye to the various proposals. That these forthcoming referenda will not be subject to a condition of minimum turnout has troubled us greatly at the Beaver, because a low turnout can be easily destabilized by block votes, costume-enhanced campaigns and the power of the global email. Let us instead use these referenda as a chance to fully express our views, having weighed up a full distribution of arguments for and against them.

Remember: even if your society currently enjoys minimal structural and financial interaction with the Union, if you do not cast your vote, these changes may sweep through your society unannounced and uninvited. After an evening of problem sets and essays, the last thing you may want to do is read through a weighty tome. But believe us: it'll be worth it.

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LSE Students' Union  
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The Collective is The Beaver's governing body. You must have contributed three pieces of work, or contributed to the production of three issues of the paper (editorially or administratively), to qualify for membership. If you believe you are a Collective member but your name is not on the list above, please email

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## CLARIFICATION

In the Beaver (19 January 2010), an article was incorrectly titled "Taking money from anyone", and falsely attributed to the writer Noah Bernstein. The article in question should have been titled "Guilty by association". The Beaver would like to apologise to Mr. Bernstein for any distress caused as a result of this editorial error.

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You can browse through the pictures we post to flickr at: flickr.com/photos/beaveronline.

# RAG WEEK SCHEDULE

## WEEK LONG EVENTS

Pulse radio RAGathon | LSE does the Apprentice  
LooSE Television RAG Reels | Tug of War (Halls, Departments, North vs South, etc)  
Battle of the Halls | Merchandise Stall

### MONDAY

10 am - 6pm  
RAG launches with a Street Carnival

7pm - Late  
Halls Events

### TUESDAY

11am - 3pm  
Pancake Toss

3pm - 6pm  
Rowing: The London to Calais Challenge

6pm - 7pm  
Pub Quiz

7pm - Late

Variety Performance

### WEDNESDAY

11am - 1pm  
AU Tricks

2pm - 6pm  
RAG Raid

7pm - Late

Development Auction

### THURSDAY

10am - 1pm  
Knit-a-thon

1pm - 4pm  
IF Bake Sale

2pm - 3pm  
UGM Swear Box

7pm - Late

Pulse Party with RAG

### FRIDAY

4pm - 6pm  
Hacks vs Jocks

6pm - 8pm  
Pub Crawl

8pm - Late  
RAG Crush

### SATURDAY

10am - 3pm - London Treasure Hunt

### SUNDAY

1pm - 7pm - Inter-Halls Sports Day



# UGM sets reform referenda in motion

Vivek Kotecha

At last week's Union General Meeting (UGM), the motion to put constitutional reforms for the LSESU to referendum was passed, while LSE Director of Finance and Facilities Andy Farrell, held a question and answer session.

Along giving a short biography of his life to the UGM, Farrell talked about the necessity of charging fees at universities and how he expects approximately 20% less funding from the government in 2 to 3 years time. Farrell also agreed with NUS President Wes Streeting, that the "Russell Group [was] slightly overrating the pudding". Farrell also stated his belief in public funding for universities saying that such funding was of public benefit and not just for elitism.

Discussing the subject of student satisfaction, Farrell put forward three theories on why many students tend to be dissatisfied during their time at LSE. Firstly, it could be because students at LSE are "more demanding" than those at other universities, such as Princeton and Cambridge, although Farrell stated this was not his view. Secondly, it could be because students "do not complain enough", or quickly enough about problems they do encounter at LSE or in Halls of Residences. Examples were put forward of how students have endured months of sub-standard or faulty services before bringing it to the attention of the School. He advised students to take advantage of the School's complaints procedure, "complain early" and "follow through". Thirdly, Farrell raised the question of whether LSESU campaigns should address student satisfaction issues more, asking "whether or not the SU are really focused on [things that] make a difference to students' satisfaction" or instead were fixated on international issues and "every other issue under the sun".

A question on why there had been a doubling in the number of staff earning over £100,000 a year at LSE was posed to Farrell. He answered that LSE was bound

to honour three-year pay deals, negotiated with unions, which had pushed many staff whose pay was just shy of £100,000 into that bracket. He also mentioned that there had been an increase in the number of staff at LSE who supplemented their income with other LSE ventures, such as the Enterprise LSE and summer schools.

Farrell defended the overall competence of the LSE Conference and Events Office against a complaint made by a student. The student was concerned about the short notice given to a society in having its room changed for an important event. Farrell appreciated the distress this may have caused, and said he would look into a complaint that many classrooms in LSE were locked during exam time, and so could not be used as group study rooms.

The Referendum motion, carried over from the previous week, on putting to the proposed reforms of the LSESU to referendum, was debated next. Speakers for the motion, Athletics Union President Charlie Glyn and LSESU Environment and Ethics Officer Hero Austin, stressed that the reforms had been carefully drawn up after 2 years consultation with students and that the reforms were not about the Sabbatical Officers leaving their legacy on the Union.

Speakers against the motion generally expressed agreement with the idea of a referendum on the reforms, but feared that there would not be proper substantive debate on reforms without them being discussed at an UGM first. Additionally, doubts were raised over whether students would know what they are voting on, especially as some of the proposals were said to need changing. This meant that students may be misinformed about the nature of the final reforms when it came to voting.

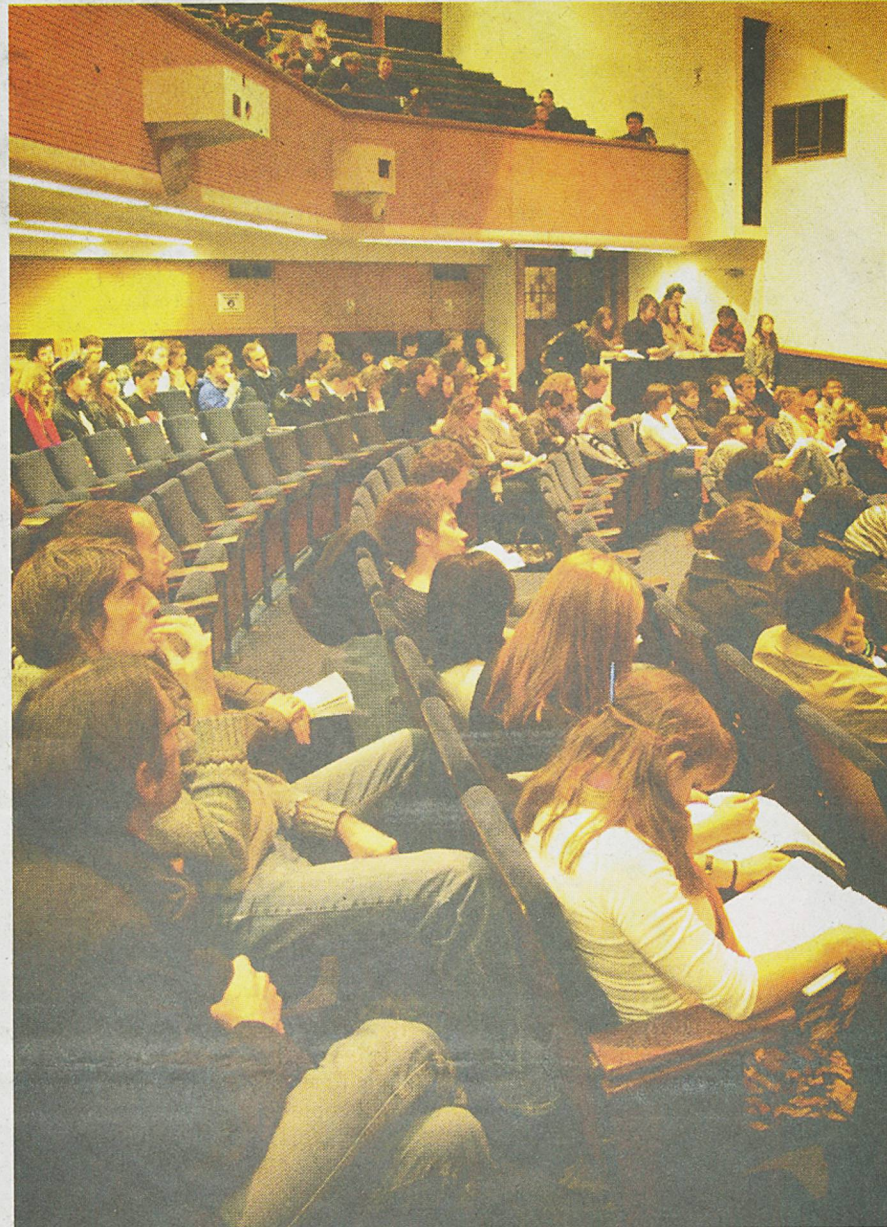
Proposers for the motion argued that extensive publicity and hustings would keep students informed about the nature of the reforms. The believed that since the proposed reforms were not final, if there was significant disagreement with certain non-substantive clauses, then they could be amended before being voted on.

Further questions were raised over the

risk of a low turnout for the referendum, the framing of questions in the referendum to prevent a bias towards a certain answer and why there were still concerns over the proposals within the UGM after claims of through consultation by the

proposers of the motion.

After a secret ballot at the end of the UGM, the motion was passed by a "clear supermajority" according to the Constitution and Steering Committee Chair Michael Lok.



## Union Jack UGM sketch

Union Jack



Jack is the Beaver's anonymous mole at the Union General Meeting, every Thursday at 1pm

Jack knew, from the moment he stepped into the Old Theatre, that filibustering wasn't really going to be on the cards this week. Voting by anonymous ballot; another guest speaker floating in on rarefied airs - this was certainly a changed beast. After the disorderly, debate of last week's referendum motion, both sides had returned with recovered strength. Pushing relentlessly forward like a pack of dictators fresh from breaking a strike, the proposers had come armed with a meaty AU contingent, buoyed by a series of drunken emails sent late at night. Attacking from a number of different, often tangential, positions, was the opposition - a ragtag motley crew of long-haired socialists weaned on the teats of Irish wolves, and anonymously surly LGBT campaigners with regional accents.

Sadly, before either side could lurch onto the stage, they were usurped by a visiting invader, and one who favoured a more lumbering approach. Borne from the loins of a factory worker; sprung from the same stable as cultural stars and a celebrated Modernist architect - hopes could not have been any higher for the fleeting appearance of Andy Farrell, director of Financial Fiddling and Fudged Facilities. Less a man; more an edifice, Farrell showed Streetcar-named-desire how to turn on the charm. Cut back on the greasy hair, don a pastel-coloured shirt that threatens to swallow up the Ross Ice Shelf, and keep on waxing lyrical about a provincial collegiate university that no one really cares about.

Old MacDonald the rough 'n' tumble farmer got rather het up about being displaced by a troupe of barbershop singers - in Jack's eyes, it would appear that MacDonald has had a run-in with a very different sort of barbershop since Christmas. After Farrell's rather meandering response, Syphilis Cheesecake tried to stir some brown-coloured excrement down his throat by raising the issue of fat cats at the School earning investment bank-rivalling pay cheques. A few professional-sounding mumbles later, Farrell's time was up, and he left the stage, reputation as intact as Charing Cross station (or Peak Tower, for our Hong Kong-based readers). He may not have bedded as many women as Colin, or allegedly taken as many illicit substances as Perry, but it was a job well done for Subcommandante Andy.

With Farrell out of the way, and an angry man from the Beaver having shouted something about subversion and democracy, it was time for the big guns. Or rather, in favour of the motion, two meek and mild plastic water pistols, and against the motion, two disgruntled rural shotguns. Needless to say, Jack found all four speeches overwhelmingly boring and bereft of any bite - at one point, he almost nodded off, nestled in his seat between a buxom New Yorker and a lairy mountain of a man with Hellenic features, both regular visitors to this circus limp-and-minimus.

With the old-fashioned debating out of the way, it was time for the formality of a vote, this time conducted with folded-up bits of paper. Judging by the yawns of the AU army commandeering the balcony, their dice were already cast, possibly by dint of a wily post-Zoo electronic exchange. Jack left the Old Theatre disillusioned with democracy, and scurried back to his bolt-hole to prepare for a fickle fortnight of leafleting, soap boxes, and the chance to see an apparently fully-grown man dressed as a can of baked beans.

# No more Food For All?

Phyllis Lui

NatWest on Aldwych has been accused of sending four City of Westminster Street Licensing Enforcement Team officers in an attempt to stop Hare Krishna's food distribution at LSE.

The Beaver was told by Food For All (FFA) that NatWest had sent the officers "to pick fault in the operation", and that "they are struggling to catch us out" as the "guy distributing has his health and safety certificates".

Third year Geography student Tudor Jones commented: "I personally do not use Hare Krishna but I don't think NatWest have a right to complain. They are situated on a student campus and should expect to co-exist in a student environment. If this means crowds of people filling Houghton Street then so be it. Wright's bar, stalls and societies have gatherings of people on the street, so why can't Hare Krishna?"

FFA stated: "NatWest should have just asked us to relocate. We may have been able to move a few meters one way or another. But they chose to jeopardise our project using these government agencies. We run a day centre for the homeless people in Kings Cross and Abbey Bank funded our computer training workshop.

"Our main activity is working with homeless/disadvantaged people, we cook for 200 daily, as well as running workshops and support projects for this community. The student meals have come about due to the abundant supply of good vegetables that are being donated to us on a daily basis."

The Food For All stall is one of the most prominent sights greeting students on Houghton Street



# This week in Higher Education

Cuts will deprive thousands of university place, academics warn  
Guardian, 1st Feb 2010

"Thousands of young people will be stripped of the chance to study for a degree because of savage government cuts to higher education in England, universities warned today.

University funders at the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce) will outline where the cuts of nearly £315m will be made today. They are expected to announce that teaching budgets will be reduced for the first time since Labour came to power."

Universities push for tuition fee rise as funding chiefs plot £315m cut  
The Times, 28th Jan 2010

"Most universities, especially the most selective, want tuition fees to be raised from £3,225 to between £5,000 and £7,000 a year, but believe that savings in generous student support costs may be even more critical to a stable plan for long-term funding."

Thousands of top graduates expected to miss out in record jobs rush  
The Times, 25th Jan 2010

"The biggest recruiters of graduates received unprecedented numbers of applications last year and are expecting even more this summer. Thousands of top graduates are expected to miss out on places.

Job interviews are under way for those graduating this summer, but many of the jobs will have already been filled by those who failed to find positions last year."



# Blair a "murderer", say LSE protestors

Estelle Cooch

LSE students played an active part in last Friday's protest against Tony Blair, who appeared at the Chilcot inquiry into the decisions that took Britain to war in Iraq.

The protest, organised by Stop The War Coalition, started at 8AM when the former Prime Minister began to give evidence and included school students, trade unionists and activists. A large group from the LSE helped hold the main banner which read 'Blair Lied, Thousands Died'. One LSE student carried a coffin, symbolising the deaths of the over a million Iraqis in the war. Others wore Blair masks and covered their hands in fake blood. Police set up cordons to keep the demonstration away from the entrance of the conference centre, near the Houses of Parliament.

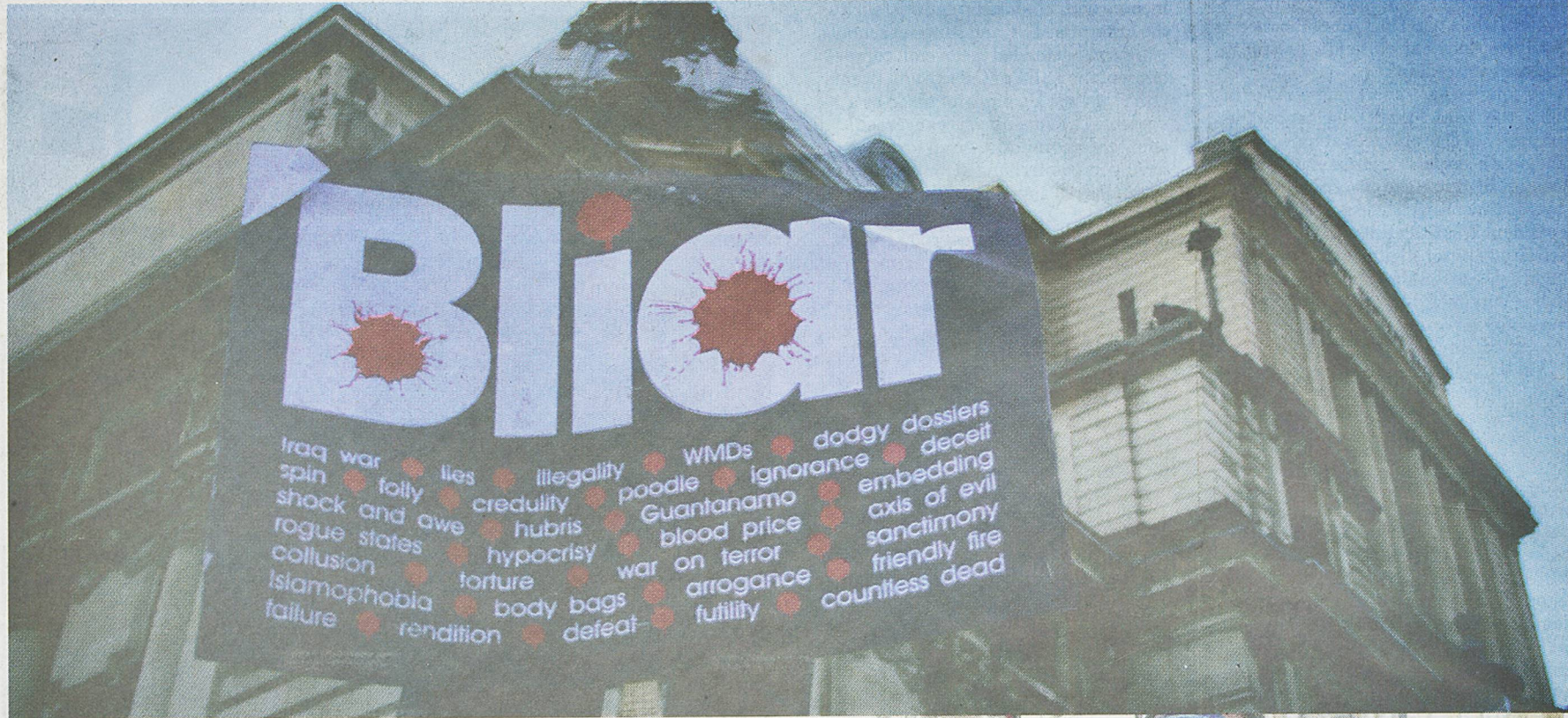
Philosophy student and LSE Students' Union Stop the War society member Vishal Chauhan, who was at the protest, explained that it is important that Blair's role in the war is not forgotten.

"The war against the people of Iraq has become some kind of distant political controversy. The suffering of ordinary Iraqis, the privatization of Iraq's resources and state owned companies and the lies that took us to war have all been forgotten," he said.

He added: "It was also really worrying to hear Blair talking so openly about the need to take military action against Iran. After the mess that has been made in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and the support that the occupations have generated for radical organisations, it's incredible that our political elite still believes that military aggression is a viable route to a safer world."

First-year Sociology student and Stop the War society committee member Emma Clewer, said: "I'm not convinced the Chilcot inquiry is going to bring us any justice. It is generally accepted that Blair lied over the reasons for the war in Iraq, he ignored the two million people who marched in the streets of London and he brought death and misery to the people of Iraq."

"He should be tried under oath in a criminal court, not given the opportunity to tell more lies in front of a hand picked



Protesters  
Photo: Natalie Wong

committee that everyone knows will be a whitewash."

Blair told the Chilcot inquiry that he accepted "responsibility" but not regret for removing Saddam". Members of the

public gallery shouted "liar" and "you're a murderer" at him.

Anti-war activist Grace McCann attempted to place the former Prime Minister under citizen's arrest as he left

the enquiry, but was prevented from doing so by police.

Activists were outraged at the way Blair was sneaked into the building in order to avoid the protests. Andrew Murray,

chairman of the Stop The War Coalition, said, "This cowardly and deceitful entrance is typical of how the former prime minister sold the war to the country - behind the backs of the public."

# LSE paints its red walls green

Sachin Patel

The LSE has joined other leading universities at the World Economic Forum in Davos to sign a charter which commits it to adopting sustainable policies.

LSE has joined Cambridge, Harvard, and other leading institutions in the 'Global University Leaders Forum' (GULF) in backing the Sustainable Campus Charter, which calls on universities to ensure that their operations, research, and teaching are sustainable. Sustainable policies may include reducing energy consumption and waste or ensuring that new buildings have a minimal negative impact on local environment.

The charter is maintained through a joint initiative by GULF and the 'International Sustainable Campus Network' (ISCN) and commits LSE to implement three key principles of sustainability. These are:

- to make sustainability a key consideration in the planning, construction, and operation of campus buildings
- to ensure environmental and social goals are included in campus development, master planning and institution targets.
- to align the institution's core mission with sustainable development

In signing this charter LSE has also agreed to set concrete, measurable goals

to achieve these principles and to provide regular public reports on their performance.

LSE Director, Sir Howard Davies, who signed the charter in Davos, commented: "From our world-class research on the impact of climate change to teaching the world's future thinkers and leaders, global institutions like LSE have a key role to play in promoting sustainability. But we also have a responsibility to practice what we preach and adopt sustainable campus policies which reflect this contribution."

"This Charter will complement the range of environmental initiatives which LSE is already undertaking and at the same time help us to share ideas and initiatives with other institutions across the world."

The signing of this charter follows the expansion of the School's research into climate change, which led to the establishment of the Grantham Research Institute in May 2008. Chaired by Lord Stern of Brentford, the Institute carries out research in climate science and policy, the mitigation of climate change, and adaptations to climate change.

The research produced by the Institute, which is integrated with a related institute at Imperial College London, has gone on to inform policy-makers, non-governmental organizations and the media. In contrast, the principles enshrined in the Sustainable Campus Charter will require the School itself to take environmental concerns into account when planning for future developments on campus.



LSE Green Week  
Photo: Rob Charnock



# Speaking to the Speaker



Bercow  
Photo: Jaynesh Patel

Marie Dunaway

John Bercow was elected Speaker of the House of Commons in June 2009, following the Parliamentary Expenses Scandal and the resignation of Speaker Michael Martin for extensive claims. Since his cross-party election Bercow has made changes to the traditional aspects of the Speaker and says he aims to create greater transparency and scrutiny through the daily administration of the Chair.

In a lecture titled Speaking with the Speaker Bercow spoke on the need for parliamentary reform, need to regain the trust of the public and his role in reinstating the role and voice of the Backbencher.

Marie Dunaway spoke to him after the talk on his reasons for change, public opinion and the role and need for young people in politics.

You spoke in your talk about changing the more traditional aspects to the role of Speaker. What have been your reasons for this? Has this been for accessibility for the

public or other reasons?

Yes. I believe that you should respect the past but not live in the past. I understand why some people feel that the traditional costume is attractive and even important. But my view is that the role is not defined by the costume but by the values that the speaker is supposed to embody. The independence of Parliament, the importance of scrutiny, the need to hear fairly points of view. These are the things which are fundamental to the role of the Speaker - a strong parliament, proper consideration for all business, extensive debate, witnessing all sorts of different opinions. These are the things which are fundamental to the role of speaker, rather than what he or she wears.

Do you think in your short tenure it has improved the image of Speaker so far?

I've not been in place very long but I have found I have had a small number of complaints very early on from Traditionalists who wrote to say it was awfully bad that I was not wearing traditional garb and they were put out. But I equally had younger people saying "you're quite approachable when we tended to think the

Speaker was a very old fashioned figure shrouded in mystique, largely internal and difficult to access". So I feel that I am just dressing in a business like way. On big occasions like the day of the Queen's Speech when the Monarch is present and for what is a ceremonial occasion, I don't wear all of the old garb but I do wear a mourning coat and the state robe. But for day to day business I think we should have a reputation to dress professionally and business like, rather than dressing up in a grand way.

Since the loss in faith of MPS after the recent expenses scandal, and rising distrust and disengagement from young people in politics, what would your words of advice be to young people who are still interested in entering politics?

Join a party. Join a Pressure Group. Join a Web Forum where you can exchange ideas, debate policy, talk about politics which you think matter in leadership. Above all, while you are a young person, perhaps at uni or college, get involved in debate on campus, take the chance that your period at study provides to much more than simply study for your degree. Involve yourself in political debate and

don't hold back. I know I didn't, when I was at university I got stuck in and I would encourage people to do that and to realise that more and more we want to hear the voice of young people - what they want, what they need, what they think is important. At a time when all the parties are saying we want to reengage young people, young people are in pole position, as long as they come forward and express themselves.

In light of the expenses disclosure and money earned and claimed by MPs, the role of Parliamentary Interns who are mostly unpaid has become prominent. What are your views on this and do you think that this needs to be readdressed?

We can't tackle this over night and I am not sure exactly when, that is to say how quickly it will be addressed. But I do feel strongly that the chance to work in parliament should not depend upon the accident of birth or the availability of money. Clearly people who are lucky enough to be sponsored by parents find it easier to get to work in parliament. However I think we should be looking to take advantage of the talents of good

people irrespective of their means and we should try to move towards a situation in which we have a much broader range of people from a much broader range of social backgrounds. So it does mean the issue has to be addressed. I don't think it is going to happen this side of an Election, but it should be happen early in next parliament. I want to see an increase in the numbers and a much wider set of interns.

Finally, a slightly more simple question, Do you enjoy being Speaker?

I love it. I can still represent my constituents and I enjoy doing that but I love the role of Speaker. I enjoy chairing debates, I enjoy the decision making processes of the House and of the various Commissions and Committees I chair. And I love the outreach activity, I love coming to LSE, to schools to other universities, colleges to engage with people because communication is of the essence of politics I think it is a huge privilege to do the job I do, I hope I am doing it well and I hope I will be able to continue doing so in the future.

# Feed back on feedback

Eunice Ng

As part of the LSESU's 'Feedback on Feedback' campaign, postgraduate and undergraduate focus groups were held last week.

The campaign deals with issues on academic and personal feedback given to students, and part of the project involves inviting course representatives to take part in discussions with LSESU Education and Welfare Officer Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang.

Akpan-Inwang first asked students about the current state of feedback received. Students from numerical courses felt that timeliness of feedback was most important. Postgraduate students felt that they were given enough feedback on their coursework, but felt that there was a lack of assignments, making it difficult to track students' progress.

Akpan-Inwang also asked whether students would like different forms of feedback. Currently, students receive the bulk of their feedback through comments on written assignment. LSE100, the new course "aimed at introducing first year undergraduates to the fundamental elements of thinking as a social scientist", will pilot oral feedback where students receive a recording of tutors discussing their essays.

"My perception of the LSE is that you have tonnes of resources," said Thomas Vladeck, a course representative for the MSc Environmental Policy. "If you're self directed enough, you'll get them."

He added that he was satisfied with the level of formal feedback, because as a Master's student, he had already

developed the necessary writing skills in his undergraduate degree. However, he felt that this probably wasn't the case for students who don't speak English as their first language.

Students also felt that strengthening informal channels of feedback, such as being able to speak to a tutor in a pub outside of class, would be the most beneficial improvement. Others also said that the LSE's biggest problem is that first years do not receive enough feedback, which is precisely when students need it. Concerns also revolved around a lack of good feedback after presentations.

Improving student feedback is a focus of the LSESU's agenda, following LSE's relatively poor results in the National Student Survey on student satisfaction. LSE only had 76% satisfaction, which put in the bottom of all the Russell Group universities. Further investigation into the ratings showed that much of the dissatisfaction would due to a lack of guidance on personal and academic development.

Akpan-Inwang, who will be attending a feedback conference 'Changing feedback Practice Intensive: an institutional development opportunity' later this week, commented: "The NSS results from 2009 showed once again that feedback on assessment was a key concern for taught students. There is agreement from the school that this is something to focus on improving and to do it student input is vital."

The next stage for the Feedback on Feedback Campaign will be interviewing students on Houghton Street.



LSE Library  
Photo: Benjy Phillips



# Not by reason alone

Eunice Ng

The launch for 'Not By Reason Alone', a collection of articles written by Nand Kore Singh, a former Indian Administrative Service officer and currently the Member Of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha, took place with a panel discussion last Tuesday in the Old Theater. The panel also included Singh himself, Lord Patten, former Governor of Hong Kong, Lord Desai and Professor Lord Stern.

Opening the discussion was Shekhar Gupta, the editor-in-chief of The Indian Express. He introduced Singh as a "trapeze artist who performs in life of politics and governance." He also added

that "Nand Kore makes friends. Those who have chosen to become enemies - he eventually wins them over."

Shobhana Bhartia, chairperson and editorial director of the Hindustan Times group, spoke next. She described Singh as a "multi-faceted bureaucrat" who "not only knows reforms India needs, but what spurs them and holds them back."

The panel then discussed what constituted "reasonable economics," with the panel agreeing that it depends on context. Smart economics does not necessarily mean more government as it is perceived now after the credit crunch, but more responsible government. For governments, especially India, it is a question of managing the dysfunctionality of certain instruments and economic downturn.

Discussion also revolved around India's relationship to China, particularly whether China was the only model for economic growth. Lord Patten disagreed, saying that: "can't deny the relationship between economic growth and political growth," adding "if I had to put my money on China or Google, I would put it on Google."

India's great strength is that despite being a developing economy, it has also been a stable democracy despite. It is also more successful in self sufficient innovation and creating multinationals.

The panel concluded with all members agreeing that in order to move India forward, it must not only concentrate economic policies, but also into account India's diversity and social policies.

# Baroness Hale in conversation with Justice Cranston

Dominic Lam

Supreme Court Justice Baroness Hale retraced how she started her prominent legal career over 40 years ago as a law lecturer and later became one of Britain's top judges last Tuesday evening.

In an open conversation with Mr. Justice Cranston, High Court Judge and Visiting Professor of Law at LSE, Lady Hale introduced the audience to the less known history of her childhood and education.

Born in Yorkshire in 1945, she was one of the three daughters in the family. Both of her parents were head teachers, but her father died when she was young, and she described her father's death as the event that influenced her life the most. She attended school in Richmond, history being her best subject, though she took the advice of her teacher and decided to pursue her studies in another discipline. She read law in Girton College, Cambridge and graduated in 1966.

Lady Hale then joined the University of Manchester as a lecturer where she specialized in Family and Social Welfare law. Being called to the Bar in 1969, she practiced as a part-time barrister besides her teaching. But later she decided to focus on the academic side because she thought this could complement her husband at that time, who was a barrister, and that she would enjoy more flexibility working in a university. During her 18 years at Manchester, Lady Hale served as the founding editor of the Journal of Social

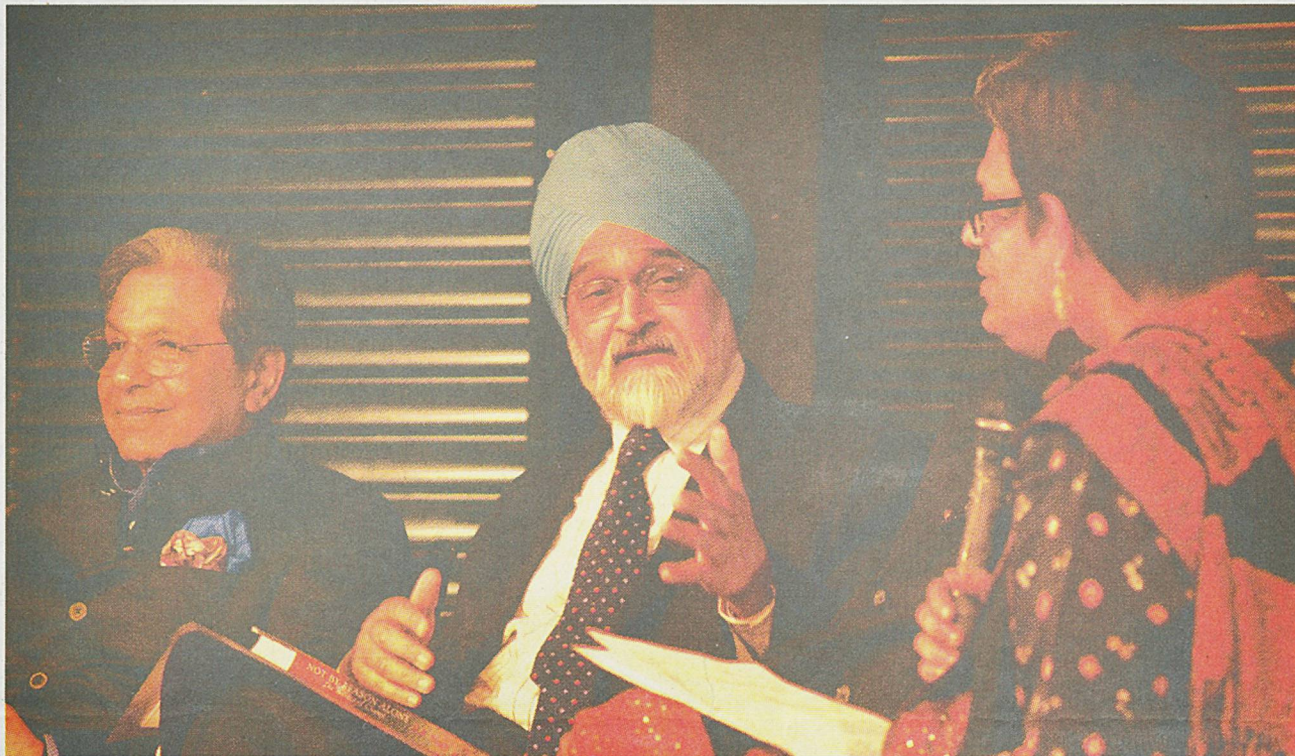
Welfare and Family Law, and she authored a pioneering case book on 'The Family, Law and Society'.

In 1984 she became the first woman to be appointed to the Law Commission. Explaining why she accepted the new post, Lady Hale said although she missed her students at Manchester, she wanted to take on new challenges. At the Commission she oversaw law reform which resulted in the legislation of the Children Act 1989, the Family Law Act 1996, and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Lady Hale recalled that she was invited to meet the Lord Chancellor when her Law Commission tenure was about to be completed, she herself not being aware that this encounter naturally entails a judicial appointment. Nevertheless, she was made a High Court Judge in 1994, Court of Appeal Judge in 1999, Lord of Appeal in Ordinary in 2004, and Justice of the Supreme Court in 2009. She is the first woman to be appointed to the last two posts mentioned above.

In the Question & Answer session, Lady Hale expressed her wish that more women would be appointed to senior judicial posts, including the Supreme Court where currently of the 12 justices only one is female. She also supported equality and rights for women.

This event was part of the Legal Biography Project organized by LSE Department of Law.



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*David McCullough*



# Comment

## A “jaded old hack” fights back

The Students' Union General Secretary responds to the editorial in last week's Beaver

### Aled-Dilwyn Fisher

While I have become used to being maligned in the Beaver over the past five years, last week's utterly unhinged personal attacks on me represent a new low for unbalanced reporting.

Anyone who actually witnessed last week's UGM will not recognise the Beaver's report, as shown by the overwhelming majority that the supposedly “controversial” reform referenda motion achieved this week. To accuse me of being “petulant” at the meeting is a distortion. I was shouted down and shrieked at; my integrity and motivations were derided without grounding. To claim that I “undermined” the UGM Chair is also bizarre. The constitutionality of closing the meeting was not “disputed” by me; I simply disagreed with closing the meeting as I wanted more debate. I made this clear at the time and there was no argument on stage.

Throughout the last week, I have received abuse that even a jaded old hack like me has found upsetting. I have made every attempt to strike up a dialogue with opponents (the “chats” derisively

referred to in the editorial) in an attempt to hear students' concerns. What I have come to realise is that the supposedly large number of the opponents one would have assumed from the Beaver's reporting simply do not exist. The people who have screamed at me during the UGM were the same old loud voices trying to assert control; they could muster only 38 votes in opposition when their filibustering could not continue this week.

Had I not met with students who had concerns, the Beaver would have no doubt accused me of being closed to criticism. However, to claim “intimidation” is a very serious charge, and an outrageous one to make without evidence – but the fact of the matter is that there is no evidence at all, because the allegation is false.

It seems quite clear that the editors have not actually read the reforms. It is demonstrably false to claim that we were using the UGM “as a means to destroy itself”. The reforms strengthen the UGM, allowing video streaming and online voting, which will involve more students in debating and voting than ever before. This can only increase the legitimacy of our policy process in the eyes of the School and students. Furthermore, the proposals were in fact taken more than once to the Constitution and Steering Committee, and received overwhelmingly positive feedback.

The paper also deliberately misrepresented the consultation process. Over two academic years, we consulted over

600 representatives of groups on campus in long focus groups, over 1000 survey respondents, hundreds of more students on Houghton Street and further hundreds during a tour of halls. This is the most comprehensive consultation ever undertaken by this Union. The first motion calling for reform passed in 2006/7 – four years ago – and change is clearly long overdue.

Editors complained that there was not enough information available about the reforms – but that is precisely why it should go to referendum, allowing weeks of discussion, not a single hour. The reform process will not “degenerate” into “frenzied leafleting and vacuous campaigning”. I encourage the Beaver to actually engage in the process constructively in the spirit of debate.

Of course, keen observers will spot that the Beaver's opposition is hardly altruistic – their reform coverage only became negative once the issue of Media Group membership fees was raised. Nonetheless, we have listened to their concerns: we are now putting a question in the referendum on whether the Media Group should charge for membership or not. This shows the open nature in which the reform has proceeded, running completely counter to editorial accusations that we have “outrightly [sic] rejected points raised during consultations”.

Last year, I was attacked as “tyrannical” for proposing the idea of having referenda on important issues. I have

I have never heard of a ‘tyrant’ or ‘dictatorial’ leader creating a referenda facility

never heard of a ‘tyrant’ or “dictatorial” leader creating and then using a referenda facility, but I look forward to any counter-examples the Beaver can provide. I am continually shocked that the idea of allowing all students to have a say is considered so dangerous. We need to reach out to all students, beyond the current dominance of a small clique.

Frankly, I make no apology for saying reform “cannot be stopped”. The issue of changing this Union would not have disappeared if the UGM had voted against a referendum. There is a clear appetite for change among students; and students need a responsive, representative and effective Union more than ever. There is no way that postgraduates can continue to have barely any say in an organisation in which they are the majority; or that societies have to wait until the end of Michaelmas Term to receive their budgets. I make no apologies for being passionate about delivering change (after all, I was re-elected, on a higher turnout out and with a bigger majority, promising “no-holds barred reform” of the Union) and I hope a much more reasoned debate can take place over the coming weeks.

Fundamentally, at this week's UGM, 85% of attendees voted to pass reform to referendum, despite the best efforts of the Beaver. I hope the paper can start to focus on the issues that matter to students, and be genuinely representative of their views.

## Nationalising inalienable rights

The Conservatives' plan for the Human Rights Act is like swapping a fig leaf for a pair of Union Jack Y-fronts

### Oliver Wiseman

Civil liberties will not be the salient issue in the looming general election. Voters are understandably engrossed in a discussion of bankers' bonuses, Tobin taxes and the like. What is forgotten is that, with the front-runners committed to scrapping the Human Rights Act (HRA), our liberty might be at stake this spring. The Conservative proposal is to replace HRA, one of New Labour's redeeming features, with a ‘more British’ Bill of Rights. This pledge is not only politically motivated but also socially dangerous and legally nonsensical.

According to Dominic Grieve, the Conservative Shadow Justice Minister, HRA protects paedophiles, terrorists, asylum seekers and celebrities whilst ignoring the needs of middle England. To address the claim that HRA only protects ‘unsavoury’ types, one need only look at the protection the act has given to elderly care home residents from the physical abuse they are all too often subjected to. Alternatively, one might point to Verna Bryant, who is using Article 2 of HRA (the right to life) to demand an inquest into the murder of her daughter by a prisoner serving a life sentence but on release under inadequate levels of supervision. The Conservatives are of course right when they tell us rights

should be for everyone. This is exactly what the theory and practice of HRA has achieved.

It is the false assertion that HRA protects ‘them’, the criminals, more than it protects ‘us’ that underpins the supposed need for a ‘more British’ set of rights. It is argued that HRA, in enshrining the rights laid out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), gives us foreign freedoms rather than those that are the result of our long and proud heritage of liberty. That there is nothing British about ECHR rights is a misconception. They are, in many cases, the product of British political thought and practice from the Magna Carta to John Stuart Mill. Moreover, no one played a greater part in the drafting of the convention rights than Winston Churchill. Britain may have been late in incorporating convention rights into its national law, but our influence in the formulation of those rights was unrivalled.

Not only is the suggestion that there is a lack of ‘Britishness’ in our current liberties incorrect, it is also founded upon the dangerous premise that freedoms have a distinct national character. In general terms, these liberties are rightly seen as universal and to suggest otherwise encourages jingoism at least, and outright prejudice at most. An emphasis on the uniquely British nature of certain freedoms creates an unhealthy hierarchy of entitlement and is all too coherent with the view that immigrants, asylum seekers and, refugees are not as deserving of these ‘British’ civil liberties as passport holders.

As well as politically and socially perilous, the Conservative proposal verges on



Dominic Grieve MP, Conservative Shadow Justice Minister  
Photo: flickr user Steve Punter

legal farce. They support a scrap of HRA but want the UK to remain a signatory of ECHR. This would mean that although convention rights would not be protected in domestic courts, British citizens could have their case heard before the European Court of Human Rights. In short, none of the rights available under HRA would be completely taken away from us; they would simply become rights in international rather than domestic law. It is on this analysis that it becomes plainly apparent that the Conservatives are doing little more than playing politics with our rights.

The Tory stance is so nonsensical in this respect that one must doubt the sincerity with which they claim to remain committed to ECHR and a withdrawal from that convention would be truly catastrophic.

None of this is to say Labour would be any better at safeguarding liberty. HRA is undoubtedly a victory for civil libertarians but it is a mere fig leaf covering Labour's otherwise naked abuse of our freedom. The periods of detention under terror laws, the extension of stop and search powers, the proliferation of surveillance and, the continuance and growth of the DNA

database are but a few of Labour's transgressions of our civil liberties. It is high time our freedoms were taken seriously and seen as more than a political football. Alexis de Tocqueville reminded us that ‘he who desires in liberty anything other than itself is born to be a servant’. Whoever has the privilege to form our next government should take this warning seriously.



# Inequality, not Islamophobia

Analyzing what Reza Pankhurst's membership of Hizb ut-Tahrir means to the layman

André

Leo

As members residing in the public sphere it is our duty to critically debate the presence of any ideology that threatens the equality of its citizens. While some individuals are certainly xenophobic or hold anti-Muslim sentiments, to stereotype any criticism of Reza Pankhurst and his relationship to Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) as 'Islamophobic' is culturally insensitive to the Muslim and non-Muslim men and women who are, and have been, victimized by the religiously justified political ideology which Hizb ut-Tahrir espouses.

Just as one who may not agree with the actions of Israel would not want to be labelled an anti-semitic, another, who may not agree with an Islamic Caliphate based on Sharia as state law, would not want to be labelled an Islamophobe. To many people, specifically, those who are gay or women, our teacher's membership

of HT is a slap in the face to the notion of equality and a threat to our unalienable human rights.

On the Hizb ut-Tahrir website they explicitly argue against democracy as a system: "It is a Kufr (Non-Muslim/Unbeliever) system because it is laid down by man and it is not from the Sharia Laws". As such, Islamic Law as they interpret it attributes different legal rights to different groups, distinguishing between men and women, as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Hizb ut-Tahrir's draft constitution states that, "Any non-Muslims living in the state may not serve in any of the ruling offices, such as the position of caliph, nor vote for these officials." Article 7 of its Draft Constitution declares that Muslims who "have by themselves renounced Islam ... are guilty of apostasy (murtad) from Islam [and] are to be executed."

According to their constitution, "The primary role of a woman is that of a mother and wife." Muslim women are not allowed to marry non-Muslim men and they "forbid" women from ruling positions such as caliph, Chief Justice, provincial governor, or mayor. Article 116 of the HT constitution stipulates that once a woman is married, she is obliged to

obey her husband, as if she were a dog or a slave; something to be owned and ordered around.

Homosexuals fare even worse. Anybody found guilty of illicit sexual activity (i.e. out of wedlock or between partners of the same sex) are to be "severely punished without compassion and in public" according to *The System of Islam*, a book written by HT's founder Taquiuddin an-Nabahani.

How then, is this ideology any different from that of the BNP, a Neo-Nazi group, or the KKK?

If this group stated, "Blacks, Indians, and Chinese can air their grievances, but they cannot vote or hold high offices," we would openly identify HT and its members as racist and the SU would be outraged, but when it is revealed that he is a member of an organization that wants to do the very same thing to women, why do we excuse it as a 'right of freedom and thought?'. Is it because we dare not criticize religiously justified bigotry for fear of being labelled Islamophobic?

Why the LSE and any student would stand behind a teacher who is openly a member of any group that believes in limiting the freedom of all people, but especially women, non-Muslims and

homosexuals, is shameful. If this group propagated the same views of other minorities, we would call for his resignation.

Not mentioned in the article, and unknown to the majority of current LSE students, there is a long history of extremism surrounding the ideological doctrine of HT. Among them, Ahmed Omar Saeed Shiekh, the man who lured New York Times journalist, Daniel Pearl, to his death. He was a member of HT, and a student of the LSE. Bilal Abdulla, a student at the University of Cambridge, was also tried for attempting to blow up nightclubs in London and Glasgow, admitting that he was largely radicalized on campus by HT.

HT is not only banned from activity in Germany for distributing anti-semitic materials, but it is also banned in Egypt, Turkey, and Bangladesh, and proscribed (publicly identified and condemned as enemies of the state) in numerous Arab countries.

Faculty members and members of the student body have completely disregarded these available facts, as well as the concerns raised by Mr. Maaajid Nawaz, an ex-member of Hizb ut-Tahrir who was imprisoned in Egypt alongside Mr. Pankhurst. A fellow Muslim who knew Reza well, Mr. Nawaz is now co-director

of Quilliam, an anti-extremist think-tank and he warns against the danger of HT and other such groups and their recruitment techniques. He, too, is a graduate of the LSE.

Is Mr. Nawaz Islamophobic, despite being Muslim?

The main concern is not about whether or not Reza is a good or bad lecturer, but about his influence upon impressionable young students within a politically motivated 'religious' context. The concern is that he is still an active member of an anti-democratic organization in a secular democracy whose fundamental goal is to protect the equality of all of its citizens, regardless of gender, religion, sexual preference, or ethnicity. As such, he should not be permitted to give sermons - sermons that people have raised concerns about.

Culture and religion can no longer be used as excuses to support intolerance and inequality. It does the greatest disservice to every Muslim man and woman fighting for Islamic moderation and tolerance, as well as a disservice to the women and men who believe that we are all equal in the eyes of whatever God we choose - or choose not - to believe in.

## 'Tony Blair, where are you? I'm going to hit you with my shoe!'

Felicity  
Le-Quesne

Last Friday, 8AM, outside the Queen Elizabeth II centre in Westminster - the news that Tony Blair has chosen not to enter through the front door is hardly a surprising revelation. There aren't many people there but considering the fact that the hundreds of thousands who marched on 15th February 2003 failed to sway Blair, a certain lack of motivation across the body politic is understandable. The atmosphere is excited, rather than angry. TV crews swarm around asking people if they think their protest will have any effect on Blair or the inquiry. People generally answer in the negative, and they are asked why they bother to attend. This gets various answers; it is clear that most

people are here having accepted that their actions will not affect government policy, and no one has any illusions that George Galloway's suggestion that Blair should commit *hara-kiri* on the steps of the QEII centre will shake Blair's unshakeable self-belief. They attend because they want to demonstrate their sympathy towards the Iraqi people and the families of soldiers killed in Iraq, as well as their commitment to the violated principles of democracy, law and justice.

The police looked on placidly, bored, as members of the Stop the War coalition bellowed chants down their megaphones, the two main ones being: 'Blair lied, thousands died' and 'Tony Blair, war criminal'. The word 'BLIAR' was emblazoned on most placards, along with 'Blair, you are a war criminal and a wanker', which added a personal touch. But despite their fluorescent orange jackets, the authority of the Stop the War team was temporarily usurped. The man responsible had his own megaphone but this was completely superfluous to requirements, as his voice

was not only loud but he uttered the name 'Tony Blair' in such a blood-curdling and menacing way that it almost became synonymous with Freddie Krueger. He became the protest's new champion, and his efforts were admirable until the fame went to his head, when he abandoned the standard chants in order to for some poetic license. This materialized as: 'Tony Blair, where are you? I'm going to hit you with my shoe'.

I found this to be unsettling, and a women close to me was in tears as she told the Stop the War team that the protest was turning a serious issue into a joke. The need to make a protest both meaningful and popular is a difficult balance to strike. All of the protestors there that morning wanted to voice their disapproval of Blair's actions and decisions, but this is only a common denominator. People have different opinions as to what aspects of the case against Blair are the most serious or distasteful. Possibly Blair misleading Parliament, or Blair being George Bush's poodle, or his undermining of interna-

tional law. Or perhaps it was Blair basing his decision on false premises, or the decision leading to the collapse of a state and the unnecessary deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians.

Generic statements such as 'Tony Blair - war criminal' accommodate this variety. A more politically specific slogan would alienate those criticizing the trampling of British democracy. But a generic statement must not be so universal that it belittles its own message, and that is what the shoe chant did. For a start, hitting Blair with a shoe will not provide justice and Iraq is the clearest metaphor for how force and justice are not interchangeable concepts. Amongst the protestors were relatives of people who had died as a result of Blair's decision, and I can't imagine how dispiriting it must have been for them to hear such an idiotic and simplistic shout. I would hate to think that these people might be led to believe that I was at the protest just for the sake of protesting, to prove my LSE credentials, to wave to my mum on the BBC News. Instead I shouted

'Tony Blair - war criminal' because I believe that he did not follow the correct legal processes necessary to justify war under the UN Charter, and that he manipulated the British political system. There is not a hope in hell that he will be tried at the Hague, and I'm not sure it would be in anyone's interest to see this happen. It would be particularly damaging for Britain's image abroad, and unnecessarily unsettling for the British voters who brought Blair to power in 1997, 2001 and 2005.

Whatever people's specific motivations were for protesting outside the QEII, it is important that the protest as a whole symbolizes a commitment to principles of democracy, law and justice. It should be made clear to Blair that he is condemned by the British public because he violated these principles, and not just because he lied and deserves to have his wrist slapped.

## Two cheers for Tatchell?

Investigating the role of gay activism on the war of terror

Pete  
Mills

This Monday, the human rights activist Peter Tatchell will visit the LSESU's LGBT Society. He has had a long and colourful campaigning career, courting international attention with his attempted citizen's arrest of Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, for human rights abuses. In Britain, as the head of his organisation OutRage!, he has become the familiar face of gay activism, a refreshing antidote to the bland corporate assimilation embodied in groups like Stonewall. His prolific campaigning has come at a high personal cost. After an attack by homophobic thugs while protesting at the banning of a gay pride march in Moscow, Tatchell was left with permanent brain damage. It is little wonder that many gay people hold Tatch-

ell in such high regard, as a legend - if not a living saint.

But there is a more problematic side to some of Tatchell's work, and his celebrity status has also given him the power to silence critical voices. An article published in July by LSE academics Jin Haritaworn, Tamsila Tauquir and Esra Erdem, *Gay Imperialism: Gender and Sexuality Discourse in the "War on Terror"*, called attention to the ways that the actions of gay activists such as Tatchell could be appropriated to further racist and imperialist objectives. Tatchell interpreted the article as a personal attack, complaining to the publisher with the implication of legal force. A week after Tatchell complained about the article the publisher declared the book in which it appeared, *Out of Place*, out of print, releasing a sycophantic apology which distorted the critical claims of the work. The book is now effectively censored, although one of the few copies available in London is in the LSE's library. But the issues it raised remain, and bring up important questions about complicity which are wider than Tatchell the man.

If Britain's colonial crimes were justified, in Gayatri Spivak's words, by the duty of "the white man to save brown women from brown men", in the era of the war on terror increasingly it is Muslim queers we are told need saving from their oppressive culture. This is used to justify invading their countries. Even as the spectre of its disavowed homophobia reveals itself in the sexualised spectacles of Abu Ghraib, the West's avowed tolerance of queers has become a symbol of our modernity and the Other's backwardness. The disproportionate highlighting of the persecution of queers in Black and Muslim communities by organisations like OutRage! effaces the continuing history of European homophobia. With the ink still drying on modest gay equality laws in the West, the fiction of a tradition of tolerance is used to justify a call to arms.

The integration of white gay elites has been purchased at the cost of excluding Muslims, who are represented as essentially homophobic. In delivering the ideological justification for imperialism, positions of privilege are opened up which

depend on reinforcing a dichotomy of gay versus Muslim. This has been explicitly mobilized by right-wing politicians in Europe like Pim Fortuyn and Jörg Haider, and in Britain we are told that it is only a matter of time before Muslim fundamentalists are bombing pubs in Soho. No one denies that some Muslim communities have serious problems with homophobia, but this approach risks obscuring progressive elements within Islam, where imams influenced by *ijtihad* are interpreting the Qur'an as permitting same-sex marriage contracts.

The positioning of Islam as monolithically homophobic is partly a self-fulfilling prophecy. With each repetition, within these communities anti-homophobic talk becomes coded as something white, alien, even racist, and the task of promoting dialogue becomes harder. When all the queers are white, and all the Muslims are straight, speaking from a position which resists single-issue characterisation appears almost impossible. The only voices of Muslim queers that we hear in the media are those which fit the liberal

narratives of Islam as univocally oppressive: the helpless victim or the exceptional case liberated by escape to the West. With the suppression of *Out of Place*, Peter Tatchell has contributed to the continuing marginalization of these voices.

In his defence, Tatchell points to his record of working on behalf of Muslims and opposing Islamophobia. Yet it is clear that his relationship with campaigners in other countries has not always been smooth. In 2007, key African LGBT organisations signed an open letter warning others not to take part in Tatchell's campaigns in Nigeria and Uganda, citing his "blatant disregard" for African queer activists. Tatchell's response was itself revealing, admitting that he wasn't even in contact with key local organisations which he purported to represent. However impressive his record, this defence shouldn't exempt Tatchell from critically reflecting on the role he might be playing in an imperialist project. Perhaps the impact of his own recent efforts to silence the voices of queers of colour would be a good place to start.



# Britain back on its feet but feeling groggy

Britain is now out of the recession, but still not out of the woods of financial hardship

**Richard Bullock**

**L**ike a boxer back on his feet after a heavy punch, Britain emerged from recession at the end of last year still feeling exceptionally unstable, very groggy and facing the risk of another tumble.

As news emerged that Britain's economy grew by 0.1 per cent in the final quarter of 2009, Labour took the opportunity to praise their own public spending efforts and to criticize a possible future Conservative government which, they argue, would drastically cut public spending and "pull the rug out from under families and businesses".

As the last major economy to emerge from recession, Britain's feeble 0.1 per cent growth rate is hardly cause for wild celebration. This is especially true when, upon closer inspection, the growth was actually driven by government spending and the retail sector, the latter benefitting in all likelihood from the final days of a 15 per cent VAT rate. While government spending is all well and good, it is creating a ticking time bomb. The enormous future cost in terms of higher interest rates that the nation eventually pays on its debt will have to be covered by higher future taxation.

The Conservative party, the credit rating agencies and the private sector are only too aware of this but the Labour government continues to bury its head in the sand. The political explanation for this is quite simple. With a general election only a few months away and with the latest opinion polls showing Labour lagging the Tories by at least 10 per cent, it's a politically hedged bet. If they take measures to rectify the budget now by cutting spending, they are likely to lose even more votes and so hand over a healthier national balance sheet to the incoming Conservatives. If they continue to spend, they at least placate their core voters and if they fail to win the next election, leave

the mess for the opposition to pick up. It is self-evident that in an election year, what is good for party politics and what is good for the economic future of the country can be two very different things.

How supportive is government spending for the economy anyway? Granted we need a public health service and spending

**It is self-evident that in an election year, what is good for party politics and the economic future of the country can be two different things**

on education, defence, police, state pensions and transfer payments to those who are unfortunate enough to have lost their jobs, but isn't a lot of government spending wasted on pointless bureaucracy, irrelevant quangos and increased public sector wages and pensions that have now reached unsustainable levels? I fail to see

how this is the stimulus the country needs to return to a healthy level of growth and my sense is that the private sector shares my fears.

With government spending now accounting for over 50 per cent of the nation's output, a budget deficit for this year expected at over 12 per cent of GDP and an accumulated national debt forecast to rise to around 70 per cent of GDP (much flattered by the government's off balance sheet commitments), there is little surprise that the private sector is failing to lead us out of recession. The budgetary actions of the government are merely creating a heightened level of uncertainty amongst private businesses and consum-

ers. Where is the incentive for private investment and job creation when such a dark cloud hangs over the nation's future financial position?

While I am not suggesting that our finances will lead us down the path of Greece or Dubai, our long term interest rates will certainly have to rise considerably. It has perplexed me for a long while how low UK government bond yields have remained. The fear is that by the time the Labour government has curbed its rampant spending or has been replaced by the Conservatives, it will be too late for long term interest rates and too much to inspire the private sector to invest.

With the nation's output having

fallen by a total of around 6 per cent since the start of the recession and with such anaemic levels of rebound growth, experts are talking about the real possibility that it could be 2012 before output reaches its pre-recession level. Add to that the normalised growth rate of 2 to 3 per cent per annum that Britain should usually achieve and it's probably no exaggeration to mention "Britain" and "lost decade" in the same sentence. While it is futile concerning ourselves with what might have been for national income levels, a more pressing concern is if Britain the boxer takes another mighty punch and struggles, once more, to get back on his feet.



The Gherkin, City of London  
Photo: flickr user James Cridland

## Letters to the Editor

**Madam** – In the latest copy of the Beaver (19 January 2010), an article entitled 'LSE teacher accused of holding "extremist" views' wrongly claims that Hizb ut-Tahrir were removed from the NUS no platform policy at a recent national conference. This is entirely false. Hizb ut-Tahrir remain listed under NUS's no platform policy.

The false claim may be attributed to a motion presented in the 2006 NUS National Conference, which called for Hizb ut-Tahrir to be removed from the no platform list. However, this motion did not pass, and no further motions proposing their removal from the no platform policy have been made in subsequent conferences. Our no platform policy is indefinite for all organizations, and so it would require a motion passed at conference for an organization to be removed from the list.

I would appreciate it if you could ensure that a correction is made in the next copy of the Beaver.

Kind regards,

**Wes Streeting**  
NUS President  
(via Lewis Cooper, Political Strategy Assistant, NUS)

**Madam** – I write in response to 'Doug Cartwright's' piece in last week's edition.

It turns out that there is no 'Doug Cartwright' at the School; it is just a 'pen name'. I have to say that any concerns can be brought to me directly at any stage, and anonymously - 'Mr. Cartwright' has never previously spoken to me about any of the issues addressed in his letter.

Firstly, he accuses me of saying "nothing" on protests against the Israeli Foreign Minister. I have no idea why you would think it would be my place to condemn people for protesting at an event. If students wish to exercise their right to protest, it is not for me to criticise them.

Next, he claims that I gave no response to the twinning with the Islamic University of Gaza. Our Constitution makes clear that I act on mandates given by the UGM as our sovereign body; I would therefore not be doing my job if I disregarded successful UGM motions. Had he asked me what I did during the motion, you would know that I made clear my concerns to the proposers that I was extremely worried about twinning with a university that had links with Hamas (a group I have always publicly condemned as clerical fascists), whereas I endorse twinning directly with the students or student groups who are working for a justice and peace. I hope that is what the twinning initiative will achieve.

Cartwright then suggests that I should

respond to the charges facing Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. I am not sure why it has anything to do with me that a former student of another university allegedly commits a serious crime.

I am afraid I cannot respond to every criminal act committed by ex-students everywhere. Cartwright's next assertion is that I gave "no response" to words written in the Beaver. As the Beaver will tell him, they are editorially independent. I certainly do not agree with what was written, but it is hardly my place to stop that from being printed. If he wishes to oppose this contention, he should ask the Beaver to allow him to publish a reply.

Finally, I am accused of not sending a strong enough message against Hizb ut-Tahrir. This is ironic given that all week I have been accused of the exact opposite. I certainly did not "rush to protect" a Hizb member. I made clear in all my press statements that I deplore Hizb as an extremist and bigoted organisation; I also made clear that no evidence of any student breaching the law or our Equal Opportunities had been received, but that I would take any seriously. I also commented to the Times that Hizb have "no place on LSE campus". I am not sure how this can be considered ambiguous.

I am very proud to have consistently supported this Union taking a stance against all forms of bigotry, which is why I worked extremely hard this time last year

to help pass the first Union policy against anti-Semitism. I will keep doing this and ask 'Mr. Cartwright' to come to me first to get a full grasp of the facts.

Yours,

**Aled-Dilwyn Fisher**  
General Secretary, LSE Students' Union

**Madam** – Reading Doug Cartwright's open letter of last week, I can't help but feel sorry for our poor old General Secretary.

As Mr Cartwright rightly states, the General Secretary should not represent "the agenda of a select group of campus ideologues", but he clearly does not. Aled has strong political opinions - most of which I happen to disagree with - but as General Secretary he has made a genuine effort to reflect the plurality of opinion that exists within the student body.

Whilst, as detailed in the open letter, Aled has made clear the Union's firm opposition to Islamophobia, he was also the proponent of a strong anti-Semitism motion at the end of last year. He has taken a firm stand against racism and discrimination on campus, particularly during last year's occupation of the Old Theatre.

Also, contrary to Mr Cartwright's assertion that Aled has failed to condemn

**THE BEAVER  
NEEDS YOUR TOUCH.  
SEND YOUR LETTERS TO  
comment  
@thebeaveronline.co.uk**

Hizb ut-Tahrir, quite the opposite is true. Not only did he tell the Times that "there is no place for Hizb ut-Tahrir at LSE", but he also tabled amendments to a UGM motion which outlined his - and I believe most students' - opposition to Hizb ut-Tahrir.

The fact that Aled has faced criticism from both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine students, the far left, the right and elsewhere within the student body indicates one of two things. Either he is a bad General Secretary (and this certainly seems to be the editorial line of this newspaper); or he is a General Secretary who, although certainly far from perfect, is trying to represent views of ordinary students whilst trying to balance the divergent political forces within the Union.

**Dan Sheldon**  
BSc Government '11



# Features



## Purchasing peace of mind

**Julian Boys** explains the phenomenon of ethical consumerism for what it is worth

Capitalism pervades every aspect of our culture, which is a depressing thought for anyone with even an ounce of romanticism squelching about in a dark corner of her soul. And if capitalism is the devil then advertising is its serpentine manifestation, lurking on all sides to lure you into an endless destructive cycle of yearning and relief. Living in London is particularly awful in this respect; every empty rectangle screams at you to consume, spend, purchase, and satiate desires that you didn't even know you had. Every media source is complicit in this attack on our autonomy, from television to newspapers, the internet to video games. Many think themselves free in the face of this onslaught, assuming that because they usually don't consciously connect the product they're buying to its advertisement, it hasn't been a factor in their decision. But clearly the raising of brand awareness does not work in such a simplistic way, and subconscious associations are at work in most consumption decisions. While explicit subliminal advertising is illegal, all advertising works in a similar way. In addition, the ubiquitous homogenous representations of male and female bodies in adverts perpetuates

harmful ideals, lowering self esteem in ways we are often not even aware of.

A relatively new trick is being employed by marketers which may appear innocuous, but I want to argue is the dirtiest yet. Many products are now being sold to us as "ethical", and we are led to believe that in purchasing them we are somehow being morally upstanding and doing the "Right Thing". Nike would have you believe that by buying its PRODUCT (RED) shoelaces you can solve the global AIDS crisis, while McDonalds tries to persuade you that eating their burgers can help prevent global warming. More and more brands are ostentatiously adopting value systems and creating charitable arms, or donating a certain percentage of their profits to charity. This slimy manoeuvring by corporations should not, however, be taken at face value. While it may have some positive consequences, its motivations and real effects must be scrutinised.

First of all, it is important to bear in mind the suddenness of this turnaround in corporate attitudes. Only in the last few years has it become common, just as 'ethical consumerism' emerged as a dominant force. Its rapid development has all the characteristics of any other growth market: an increase in demand is

**The abominable past activities of corporations like Nike seem all but forgotten, yet only a decade ago was it lambasted for its sweatshops**

perceived and supply rises to match it. The abominable past activities of corporations like Nike seem all but forgotten, yet only a decade ago it was lambasted for its sweatshops which keep workers in appalling conditions on low pay, forbidden from forming unions. Nestlé boasts of donating to the Haiti disaster, while as recently as 2009 it was found to have been sourcing milk from Mugabe's brutal regime in Zimbabwe. Examples of corporate hypocrisy are abundant, yet with a well funded and targeted advertising campaign a company can reinvent itself in the public eye as a responsible, ethical organisation.

Fundamentally, these companies are profit seeking businesses which aim primarily to maximise their market share and returns to shareholders. Other goals are subordinate to such overriding imperatives, and a company only gives money away if it believes it will be profitable in the long run. Nike did not quietly donate 100 per cent of its profits from a small line of shoelaces to benevolent organizations, but shouted it from the rooftops so that you'll remember it next time you're on the lookout for a new pair of trainers.

From the point of view of the ethical consumer, what is really for sale is peace of mind. As images of poverty bombard

us from various sources it is satisfying to think that buying the product with a label saying, "5 per cent of profits donated to charity," is a step towards overcoming the problem. However, if people are constantly being told that they are solving global problems just by buying certain brands, they are less likely to donate significant proportions of their income to NGOs and charities, as they will feel they are already "doing their bit". One danger might be an overall decrease in donations. Also, people delegate the decision as to which cause they want to support to the brand they are buying, trusting it to make a wise decision. Not only does this assume the brand's priorities and values are in line with their own, but ignores the complexity and possibility of grave error in development enterprises.

Our moral obligations to our fellow man are staggering, so don't allow yourself to believe that being an ethical consumer fulfils this duty. If you really care about a cause, research an organisation which shares your values and donate directly. Capitalism has been a cause of most of the world's problems, and it is naïve to think that by tweaking its existing mechanisms it can solve them too.



# LSE Students' Union

# Reform consultations

## Final Proposals: Key points



"Make  
the  
student  
**VOICE**  
more  
important!"

### Foreword from the Returning Officer

This document has been produced for the purpose of informing the wider student body what the proposed reform changes are. It intends to show how these proposals were formed, before explaining some of the key issues that will be voted on during the referendum, finally it details how to get involved in campaigning for one side of the debate or another.

The information contained in this document is only intended to inform you on what the referendum will contain. There will be plenty of time for debate and

discussion on these issues, and in next week's Beaver there will be manifestos for the arguments 'for' and 'against' each of the topics. Having the information provided this week, followed by the debates next week, will allow a better understanding of what is being voted on, and consequently the results of the referendum will better reflect student opinion.

If you have any questions please contact me on [returning-officer@googlemail.com](mailto:returning-officer@googlemail.com).

Regards,  
Shanti Kelemen

### The Story So Far

This has been a process which has been going on for over 18 months. It has involved over 1,500 student interactions through consultations, surveys and discussions. More than 1,000 Students' Union Sabbatical and staff hours have gone into producing the documents going to referendum. The aim of these proposals is to make the Students' Union's structures better by providing **more opportunities** for people to get involved and **take action** on the issues that matter to them. Do these proposals do that? You be the judge.

#### **Consultations - Why consultations?**

Consultations were carried out with a cross-section of LSE students, some who are already very involved in the Union, and some who are not. These were open to anyone who wished to attend, and the feedback provided the basis for the work that was done over the following months.

#### **Who took part?**

**496** people engaged with this consultations.

**116** of these attended specific consultations - including the AU, Chinese students, Disabled students, 5 open sessions for all LSE students, Halls Reps, Living at home students, the UGM, PhD students, and Societies.

**333** students took part in wider consultations that took place on Houghton Street over a 5 day period.

**47** other stakeholders were consulted - including former LSE Sabbaticals and Alumni, National Union of Students Staff and Officers, other London Sabbaticals, LSE Students' Union staff and University Staff.

#### **Key findings from the consultations:**

LSE students believe the purpose of the Students' Union should be Campaigns, Representation and Community (including activities).

**Students** want their Union to do more in terms of Campaigns, Communication and Diverse Events.

**Societies** and representation play a key role in how students are currently involved with the Union.

Two of the largest student groups, the **AU** and **Societies**, feel that the current representational structures do not meet their members' needs. Their voice is not heard at the highest levels of student representation.

Many groups wanted changes to be made to the UGM that involve and enable all LSE students to access it.

Current Sabbatical positions do not reflect what students want or need from those that represent them.

**Postgraduate** representation, and in particular that for PhD students, is lacking and needs improvement.

#### **Your hall your call -**

The Sabbatical Officers and some of the part-time Executive went around all the halls of residences in the 'your hall your call' tour. Here they not only discussed issues within their halls and how this could be better run, but what these students would like to see from the Union.

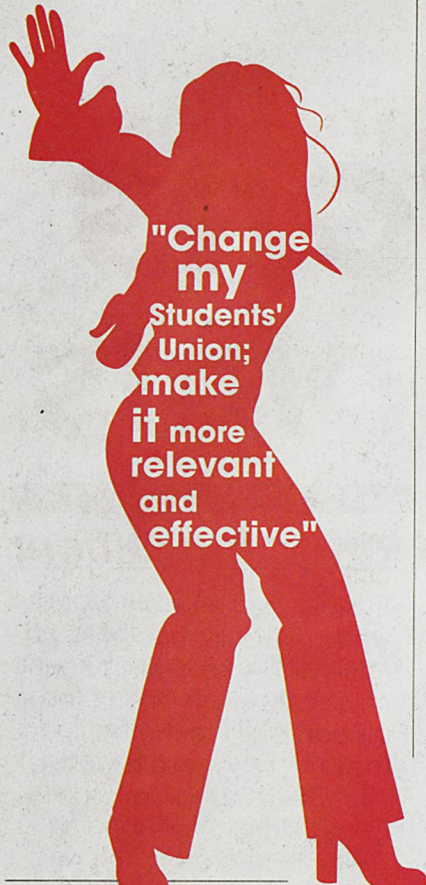
#### **Survey -**

**Why produce a survey?** It was important to gain feedback on the suggestions that were being produced.

The results of this were largely positive, however it is important to bring these questions to as wide a proportion of the student body as is possible. The results from this gave a steer as to what parts of the proposals seemed controversial, and there will be questions on this in the referendum. If you disagree with any of the proposals you are able to vote 'no' in the referendum, as well as campaign on any of the proposals you have opposition to.



# Proposed Structure



**Policy-making**

**Union General Meeting**  
Open to all, voting online until 5pm the day after, 250 vote quorum

**Referenda**  
Open to all, 2 day online vote, Democracy Committee prioritise referenda motions, 250 signature petition motion option

**Related documents:** General Meetings Bye-Law, Referenda Bye-Law, Referenda Guidance Document, Policy-Making Bye-Law

**Executive**

**Sabbatical Officers** (4 full-time & 1 part-time) & **Executive Officers** - lead on and execute policy, chair relevant assembly

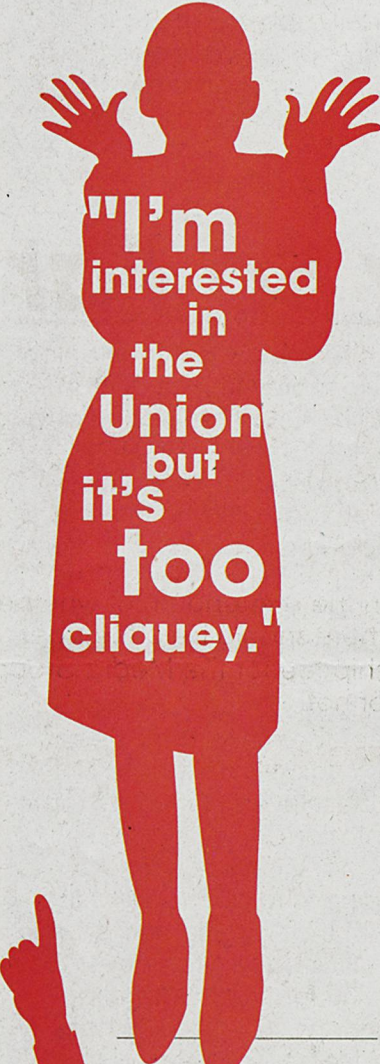
**Related documents:** Executive Committee Bye-Law, Elections Bye-Law, Disciplinary Procedures and Appeals Bye-Law

**Action**

**Assemblies**  
Groups, networks and meetings focused on taking action.

Open to all, chaired by Executive Officers, campaign for change on issues important to students

**Related documents:** Assemblies Bye-Law, Student Activities Bye-Law, Disciplinary Procedures and Appeals Bye-Law



**Related documents:** Articles of Governance, Democracy Committee Bye-Law, Elections Bye-Law, General Meetings Bye-Law, Referenda Bye-Law, Disciplinary Procedures and Appeals Bye-Law

**Judiciary**

**Democracy Committee**  
Oversee and direct elections (Returning Officer), General Meetings (Chair), referenda and policy process

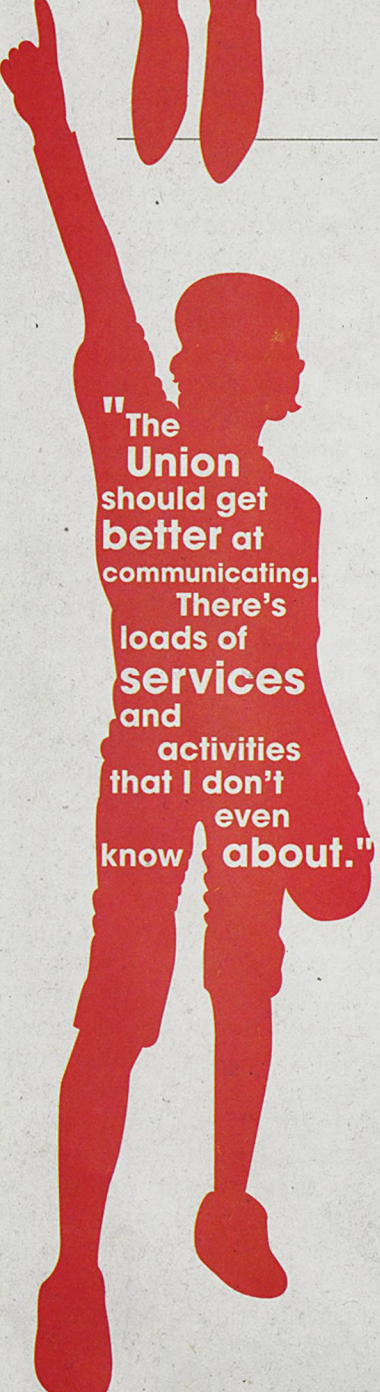
**Oversight**

**Trustee Board**  
legal trustees of organisation, not directly involved with policy

2 options for membership will be put to referendum:

- 5 Sabbs, 4 directly-elected students 2 External Trustees
- 5 Sabbs, 6 directly elected students.

**Related documents:** Trustee Board Bye-Law, Sub-committees of the Trustee Board Bye-Law, Articles of Governance



## Executive Committee

### Before After

Current Executive Committee	Proposed Executive Committee
<p><b>Sabbaticals:</b> General Secretary Treasurer Education &amp; Welfare Communications Officer</p> <p><b>Part-Time Officers:</b> Environment &amp; Ethics Officer International Officer Anti-Racism Officer AU President Postgraduate Officer Returning Officer Mature &amp; Part-Time Students' Rep General Course Rep Disabled Students Officer LGBT Officer Women's Officer</p>	<p><b>Sabbaticals:</b> <b>General Secretary</b> - Primary representative and spokesperson of the Union, Chair of the Executive Committee, Trustee Board, and sub-committees of the Trustee Board, primary liaison with the School and ex-officio delegate to conference, committees and other decision-making bodies.</p> <p><b>Community &amp; Welfare Officer</b> - Directs the Union's work on student welfare, local to international community issues, citizenship and wider social issues, student residences and developing good campus relations.</p> <p><b>Activities &amp; Development Officer</b> - Directs the Union's work on student activities and volunteering, the instigator of new extra-curricular programmes, and leader in the personal development of students</p>

**Education Officer** - Directs the Union's work on educational issues and academic representation, and is the primary representative at academic School committees.

**Postgraduate Officer** - A paid part-time officer who will direct the Union's work on educational and academic issues and student experience for taught and research post-graduates. They will take a leadership role in the Education Assembly, as well as being the Postgraduate Assembly Chair.

**Executive Committee Officers (formerly Part-Time Officers)**  
Athletics Union President  
Anti Racism Officer  
Disabled Students Officer  
Environment & Ethics Officer  
International Students Officer  
LGBT Officer  
Women's Officer

These officers are tasked with directing the Union's policy in their respective areas.

Each member of the Executive Committee is also the Chair of their respective Assembly.

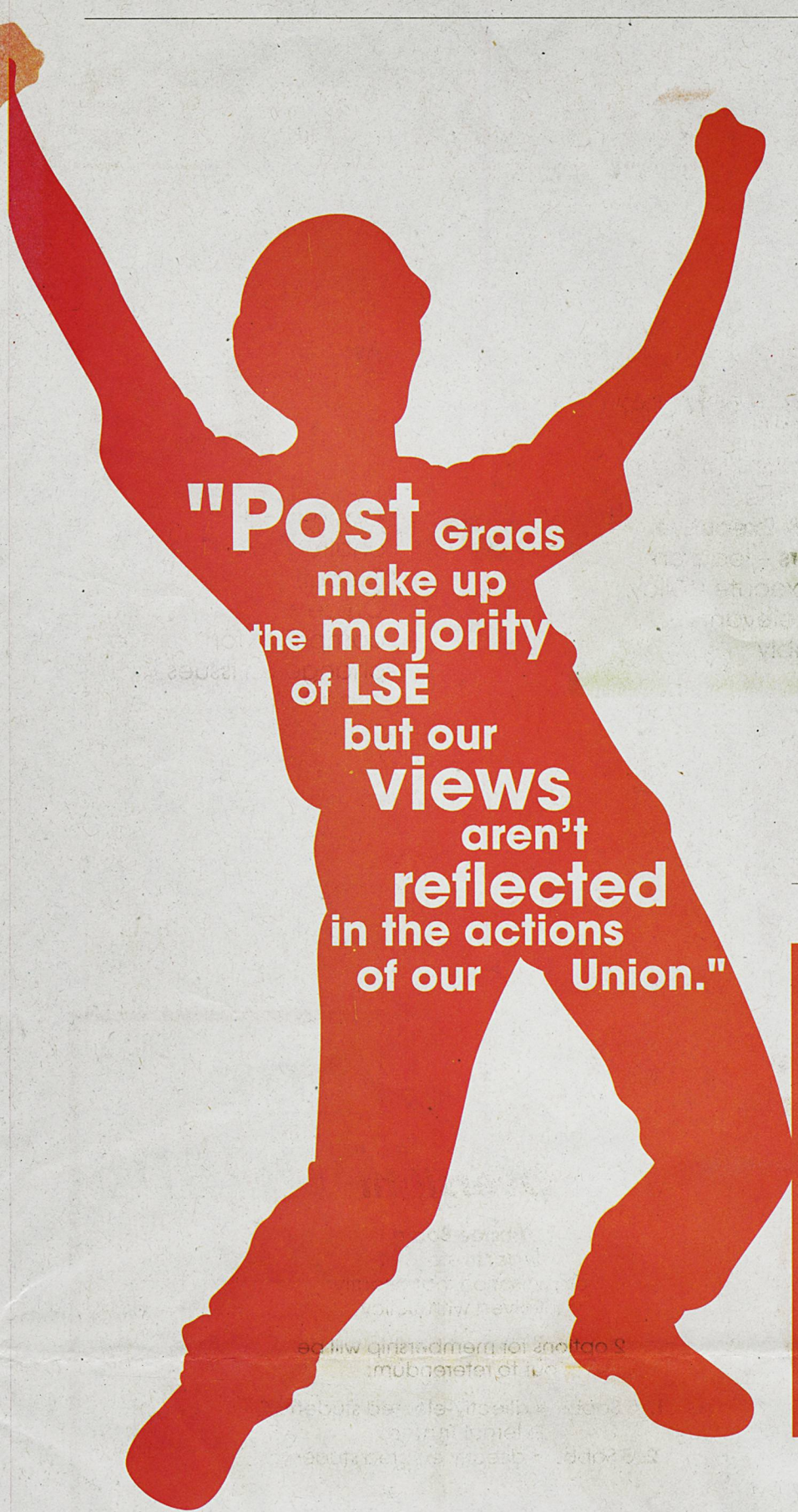
sembly.

General Course and Mature & Part-Time Officers will be elected as Representatives of their constituencies. They would not be voting members of the Executive Committee.

The positions that are no longer there are not lost, they have just been moved elsewhere:

- Trustee Board will take on board a lot of the responsibility for the financial running of the Union, fulfilling the former Sabbatical Treasurer role.
- Specialist staff will be employed for communicating and marketing, and other roles have been merged, fulfilling the former Sabbatical Communications role.
- The Community and Welfare Officer will take on responsibility for student residences, covering the former responsibilities of the Residences Officer.
- The Activities and Development Officer will take on responsibility for societies, covering the former responsibilities of the Societies Officer.





"Post Grads make up the majority of LSE but our views aren't reflected in the actions of our Union."

## Assemblies

- Assemblies are a proposed new institution. They are defined as "groups, networks or meetings where members regularly come together" for a variety of functions geared towards debate, participation and taking action. Executive Officers would chair the relevant assembly for their area.

- Assemblies would have the power to create sub-groups and positions.

- Assemblies could take action on things they've decided, or on issues that have come through the UGM or Referenda.

- Assemblies would have funding and support to create tangible change through campaigning and lobbying.

## General Meetings

- UGM will occur on a weekly basis.

- Voting to be made available online until 5pm the day after the meeting, with supporting evidence for each side of the case provided - Quorum would be 250 voting members, and no voting would take place in the meeting itself.

- Anyone can submit a UGM motion, but the rules aim to make it less restrictive and simpler. Normal UGM motions will have to be on the order paper for a calendar week before they are discussed.

- The Democracy Committee has discretion to set times for speeches and questions.

## Trustees

- The role of a trustee includes being a legal trustee of the Union, promoting and defending the rights of students, and being responsible both to and for the Executive Committee

- There are two options being presented for the make-up of the Trustee Board.

- \* The first is that the composition be made of 5 Sabbatical Officers, 4 elected Student Trustees and 2 External Trustees whose appointment shall be ratified by the UGM. This will utilise the skills that professionals can bring to the Union that may not otherwise be there.

- \* The second option is to have 5 Sabbatical Officers and 7 elected students. This has the benefit of having more current students involved who have the only say in how the Union is run financially and legally.

## Student Activities

- An Activities Committee would be made up of the Activities and Development Officer (Chair), AU President, 2 club members, 2 society members and 1 Media Group member. The latter 3 types of representative will be elected by the Activities Assembly at the beginning of the academic year.

- The Committee's role is to consider proposals for new

clubs, societies and Media Group societies, applications for Associate Membership and to act as a focus group to discuss club, society and Media Group society budgets before they go to the Student Activities Budget Meeting.

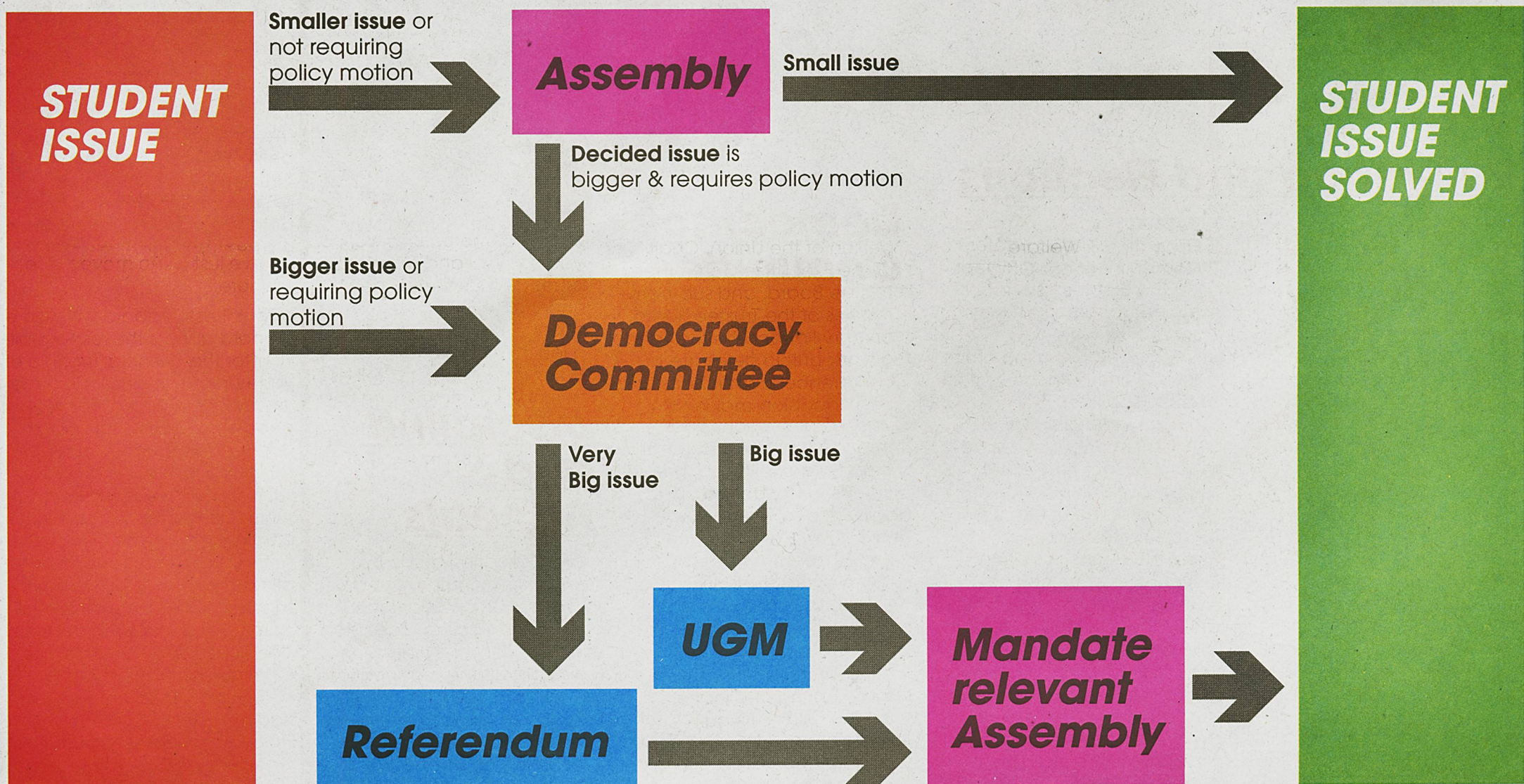
- Power over who gets what funding is devolved back to clubs, societies and the Media Group. There will

no longer be the Finance & Services committee as a result. Society, Club and Media Group budgets will be voted on in this assembly.

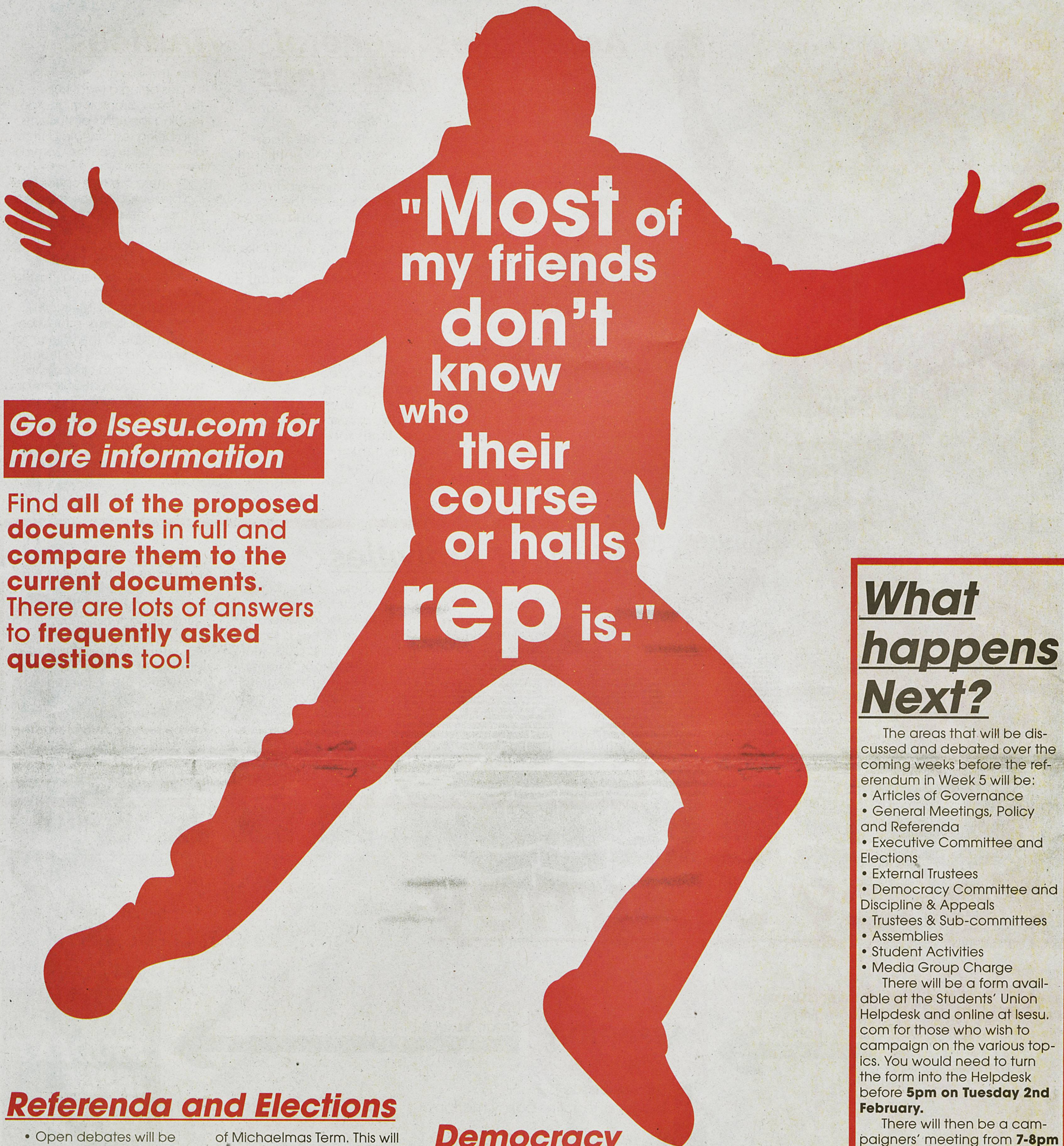
- There will be a minimum charge of £1.50 to join a society and £10 to join an AU club.

- There will be a question in the referendum of whether there should be a membership fee for the Media Group or not.

# Policy Journey







**"Most of my friends don't know who their course or halls rep is."**

**Go to [llesu.com](http://llesu.com) for more information**

**Find all of the proposed documents in full and compare them to the current documents. There are lots of answers to frequently asked questions too!**

## **What happens Next?**

The areas that will be discussed and debated over the coming weeks before the referendum in Week 5 will be:

- Articles of Governance
- General Meetings, Policy and Referenda
- Executive Committee and Elections
- External Trustees
- Democracy Committee and Discipline & Appeals
- Trustees & Sub-committees
- Assemblies
- Student Activities
- Media Group Charge

There will be a form available at the Students' Union Helpdesk and online at [llesu.com](http://llesu.com) for those who wish to campaign on the various topics. You would need to turn the form into the Helpdesk before **5pm on Tuesday 2nd February**.

There will then be a campaigners' meeting from **7-8pm on Tuesday 2nd February in NAB 214** where the Returning Officer will go into more detail about the rules of campaigning and when it can start.

If you would like to get involved in campaigning please contact [returningofficer@googlemail.com](mailto:returningofficer@googlemail.com) with your name and the issue you want to campaign on.

There will be many opportunities advertised over the coming weeks where you can get involved in one way or another. If you have any ideas, suggestions or thoughts regarding the proposals please don't hesitate in contacting Communications Officer Robin Low, who will be more than happy to hear your thoughts. He can be contacted on:  
Robin Low - [su.comms@lse.ac.uk](mailto:su.comms@lse.ac.uk)

## **Referenda and Elections**

- Open debates will be organised for referenda, allowing people to discuss the key issues before voting.
- There is a Referendum Guidance Document which outlines recommended practice concerning referenda with regards to responsibilities, campaigning, the role of the media, counting, complaints and sanctions. These are largely the same as the current procedures.
- An Elections Guidance Document partners the Elections Bye-law, outlining in more detail recommended electoral procedures. The Democracy Committee has the authority to amend the Elections Guidance Document.
- The Democracy Committee should publish a Democratic Calendar for the academic year at the start

of Michaelmas Term. This will include all of the key dates in the Union's democratic year.

- The electoral system remains the same i.e. Single Transferable Vote.
- The default voting procedure is online, with the option of paper ballots.
- The Returning Officer (who is a member of the Democracy Committee) will ultimately oversee elections.
- The timing of elections is more flexible to be able to meet the needs of students. Elections must be held at times to maximise turnout and are recommended to stay at the same times as currently.
- There are rules governing the conduct of candidates during a campaign to ensure actions are fair and reasonable, with more flexibility to campaign online.

## **Democracy Committee**

• The Democracy Committee will take over the role of the Constitution and Steering Committee.

• Their powers include: Overseeing elections and referenda, ensure democratic processes are followed, prioritise issues for debate, and deal with disciplinary procedures.

• It is composed of 5 directly elected students.

The candidate with the most votes will be the UGM Chair and (normally) the Returning Officer (unless they refuse).

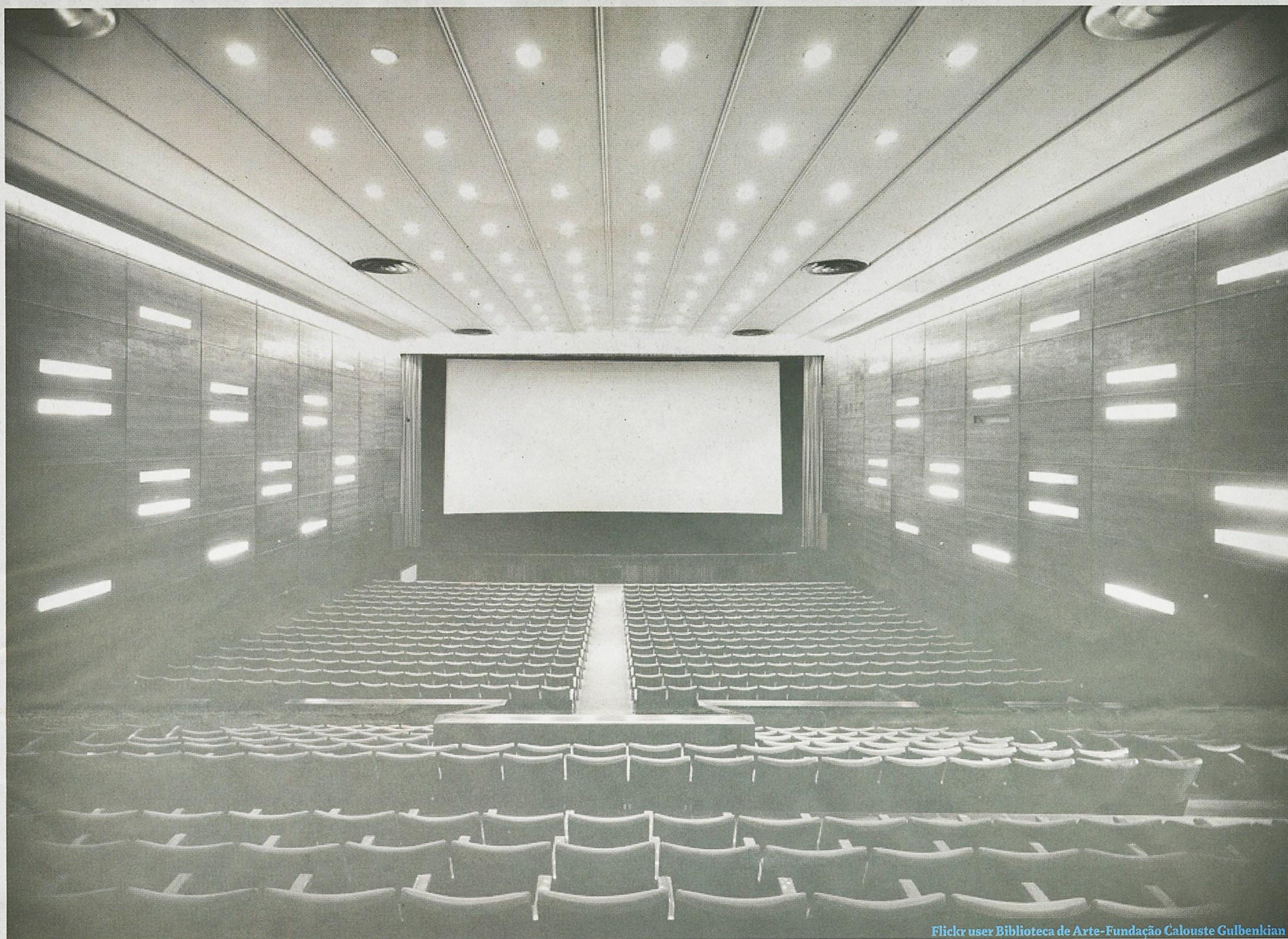
• The Democracy Committee will internally elect a Chair who is not the UGM Chair or the Returning Officer.

## **Discipline and Appeals**

• This section of the Bye-Laws outlines the procedures to appeal Union decisions. This can be a disciplinary decision or a club or society decision. It also details the composition of the disciplinary and appeal boards, and their powers and procedures.

• Simple. Fair. And the same for everyone.





Flickr user Biblioteca de Arte-Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

# Projecting the history of film

**Jonathan Storey** traces the evolution of cinema from the silent days to *Avatar*

**B**efore Walt Disney died, he famously said: "Of all of our inventions for mass communication, pictures still speak the most universally understood language." It's hard to think exactly what Disney would have said if he were alive now. Had the rumours of his cryogenic freezing been true, he may have awoken in the 21st century to find both a communications industry and an entertainment industry vastly different from the ones he left behind in 1966. Whilst it is true that cinema is still popular - 2009 was the largest box-office draw ever - the way it has been used to communicate messages has changed over the twentieth century and is still evolving in this new millennium. However, what continues to drive the medium forward is not flashy gimmicks such as 3D technology, but quality subject matter told expertly by people who love and care for cinema.

Indeed, when cinema first sprang onto the world, it could not have been more different than it is today. Technological deficiencies in the early 1900s meant that the only form of mass cinema were silent films. However, it is this lack of sound that made these early films so universal. There was no need to dub voices or use subtitles, as speech was demonstrated through the use of intertitles - the black and white 'dialogue cards' - and could be adapted when each film was exported to foreign lands. The film score could also be altered depending on the location of the screening, to reflect local musical tastes. It was

these changeable properties that helped cinema become the de facto mass media of the time.

And then came the first death knell: sound recording. Since the '20s, the film industry has always considered itself to be in 'dire straits' or 'under attack' from some internal or external force. Sound recording was the first, as bemoaned by Gloria Swanson in *Sunset Boulevard*, in which her character lamented,

"There once was a time in this business when I had the eyes of the whole world! But that wasn't good enough for them, oh no! They had to have the ears of the whole world too. So they opened their big mouths and out came talk. Talk! TALK!"

As crazy as it sounds to us, such a drastic change in business model meant the industry was as genuinely concerned about its future in the same way that most new technology seemed to frighten studio executives. Television in the '50s gave rise to many a heart attack; VHS and DVD were initially held in contempt; the internet was - and in some quarters, still is - held as an irrepressible evil. Yet film prevailed through sound recording, and will continue to prevail through all of these obstacles.

Going back to the '20s, sound recording did spell the end of truly universal cinema as it was once known. Localised production facilities were set up throughout the world, from Hollywood to Bollywood and everything in between. The films themselves became more local, and film

that knew no boundaries became a thing of the past. Through the '20s up until the end of the Second World War, the industry became increasingly fragmented, but the one element that remained an inter-war staple of the cinema, was the newsreel.

Newsreels became the main source of news, current affairs and entertainment for millions of moviegoers until the second death knell - television - supplanted its role in the '50s. As a method of communication, the cinema was the place to be. There were, of course, newspapers, but the cinema was the only place that people could see what was happening and feel like they were in the midst of the action. Although it was mentioned earlier that last year was the highest grossing box-office year ever, inflation and increased ticket prices dilute the real value of the statement. In reality, the inter-war period was the big money winner, with *Gone with the Wind* earning a massive US\$1.4 billion in the United States alone (factoring in inflation), and three in five Britons going to the cinema at least once a week.

Then, along came television to wreck Hollywood's audiovisual monopoly - at least according to the executives at the time. Becoming increasingly popular in Britain around the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, and in the US with the election of John F. Kennedy, television provided what cinema could not in terms of live news and entertainment. This sparked a panic in the film industry which never really settled down until the late '60s. It was at this time when Hollywood

was at its most gimmicky, launching the first out of three 3D revolutions, as well as Cinerama - a novel way of shooting widescreen by simultaneously projecting images from three synchronized projectors onto a huge, deeply-curved screen - and cobbling together a hurried mix of slapdash musicals that all failed horribly at the box office. Europe coped better, with the French New Wave and Italian Neorealism emerging from the ashes of old Hollywood to take the cinematic world by storm. It was this European influence that eventually solved Hollywood's problem of getting an audience.

In 1968, the Hayes Code - the set of industry censorship guidelines which governed all US-made films - was abolished, and executives and directors took advantage of this by releasing some of the most violent, gory films with language previously unheard on screen, in the hope that this liberalisation of the regulatory framework would revitalize the sinking film industry. And it did. Cinema audiences were presented with such classics as *The Godfather* and *The Exorcist*, and they were lapped up by all who saw them. It was truly the Golden Age of Hollywood, where film could show what television could not.

A minor snafu in the late '80s with the advent of VHS meant another 3D 'revolution', this one with the red and blue glasses. Eventually, film studios embraced video when they realised they could actually make money out of it. Which brings us to the present day and the final, for now,

death knell: the internet. Whilst no one is seriously suggesting that the internet will become the primary method of audiovisual communication for at least a while, the threat of piracy that it presents has resulted in an industry-wide crisis. One would have thought that Hollywood would have learnt from its previous gimmicky attempts to reclaim its former glory that flash-in-the-pan ideas never pan out, but film executives must have an ever shorter memory than bankers when it comes to past catastrophes. Instead of solving the distribution problems which make much of the international audience resort to pirating films, or decreasing the ticket price which puts off many domestic fans, 3D has been heralded as the way forward for cinema - which it isn't.

But try telling that to *Avatar*. What started off as Jim Cameron's personal project has been morphed by Hollywood into a saviour for the industry, the pinacle which all films should aspire to. However, film executives need to realise that whilst the 3D in *Avatar* is impressive, the film is proving popular not solely for that reason. The main reason films do well is not because of any gimmick, but because they are either good, or have popular appeal. The sooner Hollywood realises this, the sooner films can become about something real, and not about something gimmicky.



# WRITING OF RWANDA



Linda Melvern, an investigative journalist, has devoted her life since 1994 to chronicling the events leading up to and during the Rwandan Genocide. She was the first journalist to write about the abandonment of Rwanda by exposing the secret decision-making by the UN Security Council. The publication in 2000 of her first book on the genocide, *A People Betrayed*, was received to critical acclaim. Romeo Dallaire, commander of UN peacekeeping forces in Rwanda at the time, wrote 'she has discovered so much that we did not know and her book is one of the best resources available'. She has continued to write, explain and uncover the events in Rwanda and in 2004 released *A Conspiracy to Murder* as well as a revised edition of her first publication with more exclusive information.

Our meeting took place in a London café, a distance away from the horrors of Rwanda in 1994; however, not far from the centres of power whose complicity in the circumstances of the genocide we are yet to fully understand. As we talked, Linda reconstructed the events of 1994. Her enthusiasm, resilience and compassion were compelling, and I am grateful for her acceptance to be interviewed. Linda warned that "a lone journalist in North London cannot begin to uncover the whole truth". However, perhaps more than any other individual she has shed the light on events in 1994.

**How and when were you determined to find the truth on the Rwandan Genocide?** I had written a history of the UN, and the book was being filmed for a documentary for Channel 4 which took me to New York

in April 1994. As I heard the events unfold in Rwanda, I realized this was a milestone. It was massive and it concerned all of us.

**Given that delegates at the UN claimed ignorance over what was happening in Rwanda. When, exactly, did you know that genocide was taking place?**

I knew when I was interviewing the non-permanent members of the Security Council, especially the New Zealand envoy to the UN, Colin Keating. From the beginning, we were aware tens of thousands of people were being killed. It was shocking as everyone - including many Rwandan victims - had been lulled into a false sense of security. "There are peacekeepers now in Rwanda". Rwanda wasn't on the top of anyone's agenda, not even Human Rights Watch. I interviewed Alison des Forges, only a day before she

**During the genocide, the UK only offered Rwanda fifty flat-bed-trucks with no drivers, no spare parts, and no means to transport them**

died; she told me she had been distracted by events in Burundi. There was also a diplomatic campaign to persuade everyone that people were dying in a civil war.

**What was your motivation when you first started your work on the genocide?**

It was to explain the extent of the failure. This is still hardly understood. Otherwise, there would have been immediate inquiries into the decision making, especially in the US and the UK. Many officials and politicians who took the decisions over Rwanda and continue to escape scrutiny.

**I assume therefore it is the institutional flaws of the UN that you are trying to uncover?**

This is not about institutions. It is about individuals who made choices. Britain is a permanent member of the Security Council, and this brings special responsibilities. During the genocide, the UK only offered Rwanda fifty flat-bed trucks - with no drivers, no spare parts and no means to transport them. Why was the British ambassador the first to call for the withdrawal of the UN peacekeepers when the genocide began? What signal did this send to the Hutu Power extremists? And yet all those concerned have managed to airbrush the event from their political legacies.

**By uncovering the failure to respond, are you hoping this will help to reform the system?**

I am only trying to produce the facts. This is hard enough.

**In a review of *A People Betrayed*, Gerard Caplan, a Canadian scholar, said your 'book shows impatience with well-known scholars who don't deny the genocide but give ammunition to those who do'. Can you explain this?**

It has been acknowledged by genocide scholars that denial inevitably follows genocide. The denial over the genocide in Rwanda has been joined by some scholars in the US and the UK who have tried to minimize what happened. Their work results from the failure to understand that when it comes to genocide, it is racist ideology that legitimizes any act, no matter how horrendous. Some academics have even written that they are certain the Rwandan Patriotic Front was responsible for the shooting down of the President's plane, and yet not one shred of evidence exists that this was the case. I am suspicious of such scholarship. I am also suspicious of western academics that have based research on interviews with perpetrators. I don't believe that perpetrators are willing to tell the truth and admit how many, how and why they killed.



## PHILIP RUSHWORTH speaks to journalist LINDA MELVERN about her investigation of the Rwandan genocide

A



**What are you working on at the moment?**  
I am researching a third book on the deafening silence and the denial which followed the genocide. I used to work for the Sunday Times and we were taught that institutions of power have to be held accountable. There is much work still to be done and not only on the British failures. I remain concerned about the extraordinary role of President François Mitterrand.

**Is this a part of a broader campaign against those responsible?**  
I am not a campaign journalist. I gather the facts.

**Which resources remain unavailable?**  
There are documents concerning Rwanda in the archives of governments concerned, including the US, UK, France, and Belgium. These should be released.

**Moving onto the situation in Rwanda at the moment - you have been going to Rwanda since 1995 up to the present, what has changed over the years?**  
When I go to Rwanda I am still very much concerned with the genocide. However, anyone doubting Rwanda's achievements should read the report from UNICEF called 'Starting from Zero'. I included it in *A People Betrayed*. They inherited a scorched earth. Everything was looted and

ruined, including western donor agencies. The work to rebuild the country has been phenomenal. I have never seen people work so hard. One official I spoke to said he hasn't had a day off since October 1990. I would also like to pay tribute to the unprecedented access which the Rwandan government gave me to the documentary evidence which was abandoned when Hutu Power's so-called "Interim Government" fled the country. It has been exceptional.

**The work of the ICTR (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda) finishes in 2012. It has received a lot of criticism within Rwanda, has it been the correct process to go through?**

The ICTR is the first time in Africa that anyone has ever been held accountable for gross human rights abuses. However I do understand the frustrations. The ICTR suffers the weaknesses of any UN organisation, many different languages and different ways of working. It has however provided a paper-trail, and for years people will study its archives. It may have been better to have established the ICTR in Kigali, because in Arusha its accessibility to survivors is limited. I also believe the court should stay open; there many planners and perpetrators of genocide still at large.

**We failed to do the right thing, and since then there has been nothing but cover-up and denial**

Philip Gourevitch praised the Mutsinzi report in the New Yorker, but he warned 'this is hardly the last word on the assassination'. What are your views on the report and will the issue ever be resolved?  
We still don't know who fired at the Falcon jet and certainly questions remain. Why for example were all the gendarmes confined to barracks on the night of 6th April? Who decided that this should be so? This is a complicated conspiracy to unravel. Mutsinzi has produced a useful report but I consider it to be only the beginning. I believe there is a lot of information in France and Belgium. There were senior French military officers embedded in the Rwandan army units that began the genocide. What did they know? Why are there claims that that white men took part in the attack? Why has the French mercenary Paul Barril not been called to account for his role in what happened in Rwanda? The answer will only come from an inquiry in France.

**This case does need to be placed in its context. Even without evidence over shooting down the plane, this wasn't a cause of genocide.**  
Yes, but it remains a cornerstone of the defense case at the ICTR. The genocidaires deny responsibility and maintain that the killing resulted from 'an outburst of anger' at the death of the president.

This is a way of avoiding the fact that - as my book *Conspiracy to Murder* proves - the genocide was planned.

**Gerard Caplan has written that 'the vast majority of books written on the Rwandan genocide continue to be written by non-Rwandans'. Why?**  
The country was completely devastated after the genocide, but increasingly there is important work being undertaken by Rwandans, such as Gacaca and an understanding of Rwanda's politics at the 'colline' level that can only properly be explained by Rwandans. Charles Mironko, a Rwandan, has interviewed perpetrators and his work provided invaluable insights.

**Other reporters have suffered emotionally from their work on the Rwandan genocide. What has been the effect on you?**  
Rwanda changed me forever. It broke my heart. There has not been a day gone by since 1994 when I haven't thought about what happened. I will never stop; there is no way, not with all we still need to know. We need new work. I am ashamed of the failure of my country. We failed to do the right thing, and since then there has been nothing but cover-up and denial. We did not defend the most basic human values. We should acknowledge that fact.



## LSE Diary

## The cost of culture

Nathan Briant has been trying to make the most of his student life



Last week certainly taught me a few lessons. I dived headfirst into London culture, as I often try to, and probably came out of the week with my fingers burnt yet again.

Lesson number one: never double book, or get a diary if needs must. A few weeks ago I emailed the LSE Events office in childlike enthusiasm to ensure that I would get a free ticket to see the Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow. They replied quickly; I had a ticket, all I had to do was go and collect it on the day of the event. Such was my enthusiasm that I did not know or care what day it was on. I would base my day around it, make it a real event - it's not often that you get to see the Speaker! Or so I thought. However, about a week ago my flatmate reminded me that he had bought a theatre ticket for me to go with him to see a West End play on the same night weeks ago - priced at twenty pounds, something I can ill-afford when living like Withnail - on the same day. Sadly for me on several levels, I quickly realised that the decision boiled down to either missing Bercow and the opportunity to tell my grandmother which politicians I had seen at the LSE that week (she likes it and it saves her watching repeats of Countdown and Eggheads all day), or let down my flatmate. I went to the theatre. I haven't phoned Nan yet.

Then came the second lesson. Never let a person buy tickets in an arena, theatre or other seating area without telling you explicitly where they will be. 'I hope you don't mind, we've got tickets in the gods,' my flatmate said on the walk to the theatre. I replied, no, fine, I did have a slight fear of heights when I was younger, but I'm over that now, growing up has cleared me of that. To be honest, I was still thinking about the Bercow event and how much I would have liked to have been there rather than seeing Keira Knightley prancing around in half an hour's time. But when we sat down on the very top row of the dress circle, I realised that the situation was utterly intolerable - from the seat it seemed as if I was leaning over the whole theatre, precariously balancing there.

I am not tall, only five foot eight, but my legs were held in place with a metal bar strapped in front of my legs, something that was as intrusive to my movement as it was terrifying that there was even a need for such a thing. I sat through a relatively tedious (of what I could make out when I wasn't worrying about the height) first half, absolutely terrified. I was biting my nails, pestering the people next to me with my nervous fidgeting, and thinking that if I could just wriggle out, or jump out if need be, and ask for another seat, everything would be fine. The thought of

Bercow had disappeared and survival was on my mind: it was like I was Ross Kemp for an hour and a half. At the interval, I felt my shirt - it was drenched in sweat. Needless to say, the second half was not too enjoyable since the mental maelstrom in my mind continued relentlessly. Second lesson for me this week: never, ever sit in the gods ever again.

Thursday, a trip to the NAB to see Vince Cable - a relatively interesting lecture that I will remember for the typo on the presentation behind the speaker. It made me feel better about my sometimes haphazard reading over Comment more than anything (Electoral Reform in the Wake the Economic Crisis [sic]), but passed almost without incident. That being said, on the way out I walked into an old man and accidentally swung my bag into a young woman's face, so basically it was a normal public lecture for me. In the end, the third and fourth lessons: keep eyes open at all times and keep possibly wayward bags under control when exiting events with Liberal Democrat politicians.

Then, last Saturday I took leave of my senses and felt it would be a good idea to leave London for a place I had never visited before, a place with no discernable tourist spots, to follow my favourite football team. Some LSE students go to Barcelona or Monaco for the weekend. But they tend to be exotic and rich - I'm not.

Instead I went to Gillingham, Kent, to see a miserable goalless draw between Walsall FC and Gillingham FC, and seem to have nearly have contracted mild frostbite in the process - on the train home it took fifteen minutes to regain feeling in my feet. Fifth lesson: if I plan to go standing in the British winter at least take some gloves and, at the risk of looking an idiot, a woolly hat. I am now likely to fall foul of a cold.

So really, if I have learnt anything this week, it is not to get involved with anything. Possibly, once I graduate I'll be suited to being a hermit. However much I try to be cultured there is something out there - whether it be a seat in the gods, misreading or misunderstanding dates and the inability to organize myself properly, letting down my Nan, hitting people accidentally with bags, or nearly freezing at a minor football stadium - that means that I somehow fail to derive the pleasure that I should. Lessons have been learnt. Next week: the Tate Modern, I think. In light of the news last week I'll have to try desperately not to fall through a Picasso like that poor woman did in the New York Metropolitan Museum. Looking back at recent trials and tribulations, the chances of me accidentally head-butting a Warhol probably need immediate slashing.

## WHAT IF...

Damon Albarn had run the Department for Education and Skills

Sachin Patel

Despite his best efforts to promote Parklife, Estuary vowels and workaday alcoholism, one always sensed that there was more to Damon Albarn than met the eye. True, his day job consisting of turning four art-school types (himself included) into *bonafide* men of the people; however, with his thoroughly middle class upbringing, it was inevitable that Albarn's true ideals would eventually surface. That it took the protracted dissolution of his band, Blur, to achieve this was equally unsurprising, because fame has a funny way of obscuring one's honest feelings. Blur strove to depict and critique the actions of the everyman, but in so doing, they were forced to adopt contrived and dumbed down public personae. Removed from the fickle world of pop music, I have little doubt that Albarn could have been a valuable public servant, whose policies would have countered the societal decay we have witnessed over the last decades.

Aristotle believed the reason for teaching ethics was to properly equip the youth of the day with the tools to live virtuously, in the hope that they would not grow to be tyrants. Over two millennia later, as the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt. Hon. Damon Albarn MP would have performed a similar service. In place of a curriculum that cossets those choosing 'soft' subjects, Albarn would have favoured the rigorous study of the liberal arts, the natural sciences, and philosophy. While today's children are weaned on vapid consumerism, and revel in exhibitionism, the products of Albarn's system would emerge with values of modesty, economy and a very British sense of reserve.

On the one hand, Albarn espouses very domestic values - he laments the loss of the tea lady, the village green, and the small slice of lemon drizzle cake served in a coffee shop. On the other, Albarn is the man who scoured the world for exotic sounds to sell on under the guise of pop music. A polymath and a truly global connoisseur of culture, Albarn as effective Minister for Education would have presided over a nation of embracing multiculturalists. For him, there is no single currency of culture, and so his education system would be one that cherry-picked from the successes of other countries, and one that encouraged its students to do the same.

There are numerous sobering thoughts as to the parlous state of our youth. Headlines have it that students leave school with no applicable knowledge, a nauseatingly short attention span, and a rebellious streak that endangers the future of the country. Regardless of how this sensationalist vision matches up with reality, Albarn's children would certainly be more political animals; in the Aristotelean sense. If mankind tends towards the complex web of interactions of the *polis*, then a more communicative education system that encouraged artistic expression could only assist the running of society. In all that he has done - whether the cartoon hip-hop of Gorillaz, or the eastern strains of the opera, Monkey - Albarn has an almost childlike love of honesty that young people could learn much from.

## Measured musings

Manendra Singh Gohil has had a singular destiny. As an Indian Gujarati prince, residing in the pink city of Rajpipla, his life took a sharp turn in 2002 when following a nervous breakdown, he revealed his homosexuality to the community at large.

His family promptly disinherited him, claiming he brought shame to their name. Upon meeting him seven years later in a LGBT party in Vadodara, Gujarat, however, he seemed to be well over the whole affair. Appearing on the Oprah Winfrey show in 2007, he confided, helped greatly his acceptance across the sub-continent. He now devotes his time between his grandiose residence and the NGOs he has founded in various cities of the province, dedicated to providing healthcare and creating a community life.

India is often deemed a land of paradoxes. The intricate relationship tying its

## The prince and the paradox

booming economy to its conservative culture is perhaps the most blatant example of such a contradiction. Perhaps none is more surprising, however, than its beliefs with regards to its LGBT community.

The discomfort with such matters emerges from the overall taboo regarding all sexual matters. Although some Hindu texts do mention homosexuality as something that ought to be regulated, popular works such as the Karma Sutra speak of it freely, and figures depicting diverse (and exotic) sexual positions are still to be found on many temples. And whilst homosexuality is direly discriminated against, men holding hands in public - a simple sign of friendship - is accepted as normal. Here resides the initial cultural paradox.

In the recent news, an upcoming beauty pageant organized for transgenders, infamously known as the 'Super Queen' contest has provoked

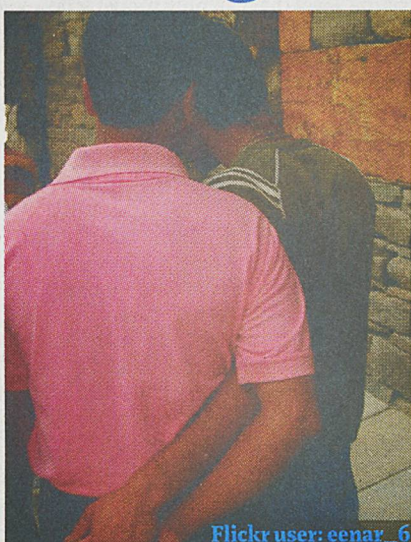
numerous reactions on the rights of this prominent community in India. The final will be held on the 21st of February in Delhi. Although on the fringes of society, hijras, known as the 'third gender' are feared for their spiritual powers. This induces all fearing Hindus to request their presence at important family celebrations; such as births, weddings, and funerals.

Yet, beyond this recognition, it is impossible for transgenders to obtain a regular job: the dream of most of the beauty pageant's participants. Instead, they are reduced to living off performing at these ceremonies, or for the most unfortunate of them, prostitution or begging.

Despite the example of the pageant, mentalities are still resistant to change. Most men which I encountered at Lakshya (the NGO) admitted to being rejected by their families on their coming out. Others caved to social pressure, and married. A few wives even come for consulting ses-

sions at the organization's office. Overall, the impression seemed that these men were carrying dual personalities; maintaining ordinary family men in the outside world, and themselves in the LGBT community.

As all cultural premises, however, India's is evolving. To the delight of activists across the country, the Delhi High Court ruled in early July 2009 that homosexual intercourse between two consenting adults did not constitute a criminal action. Previously, one found guilty of such an act could be condemned up to ten years in prison. Hopes are that this will simultaneously aid a better prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, which remains salient issue amongst the community. This law, let us hope, will mark the end to one of India's less-beloved paradoxes.

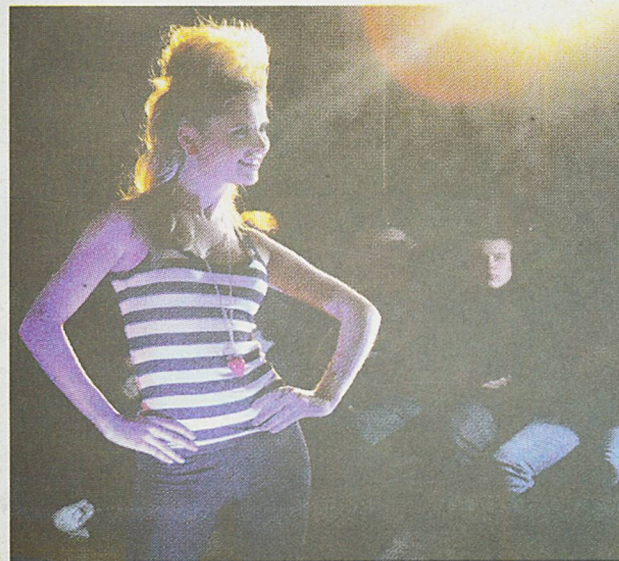
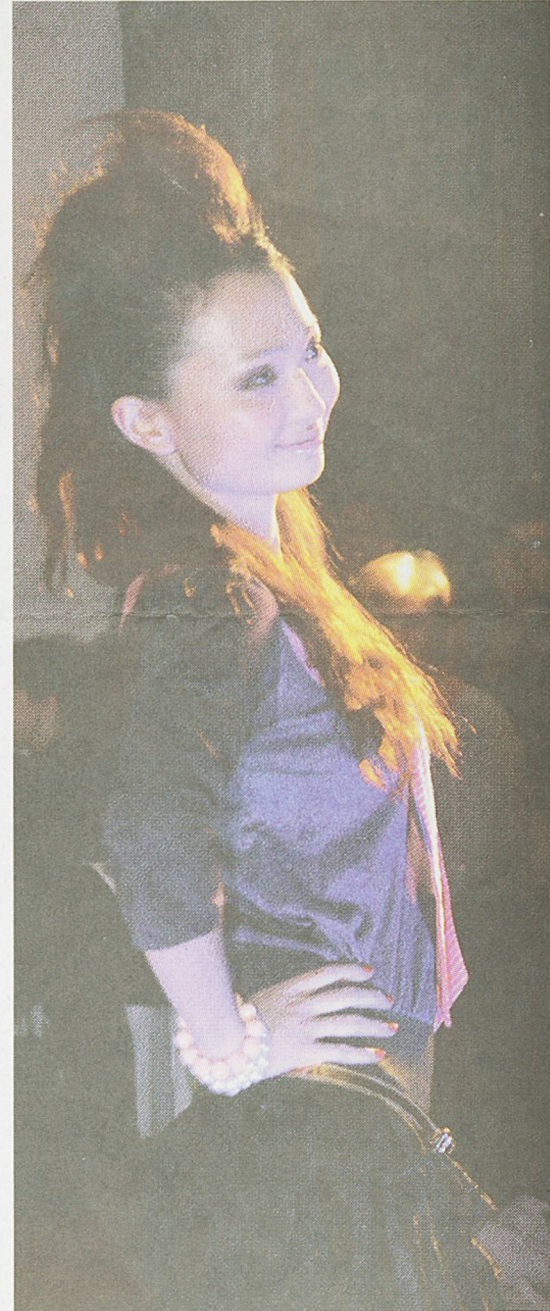
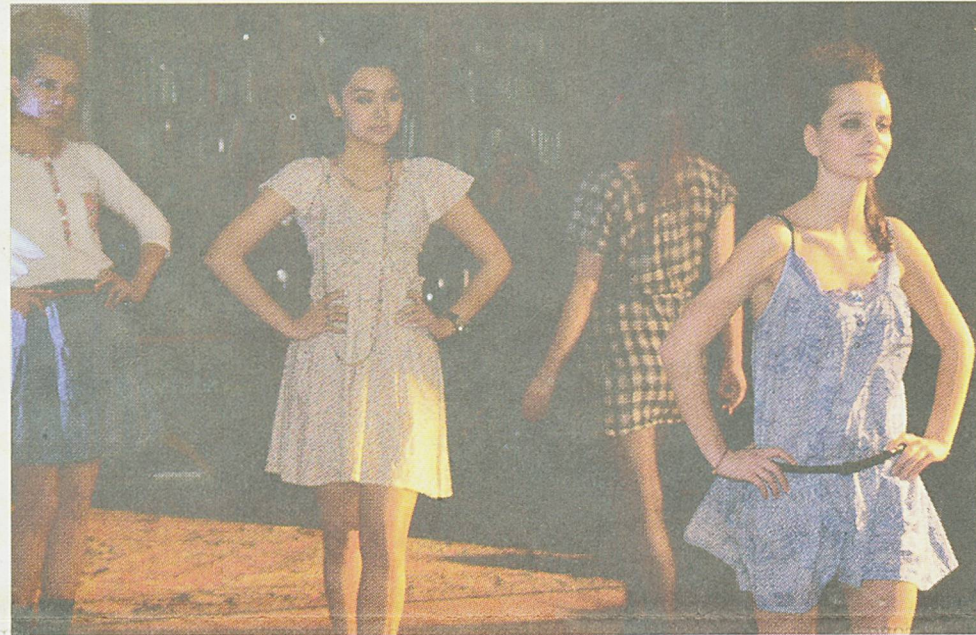
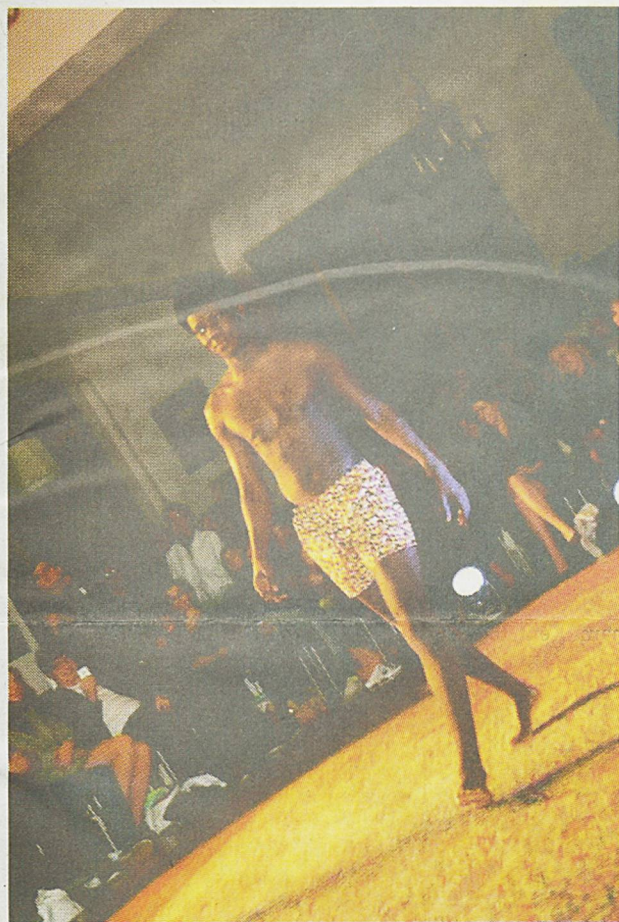
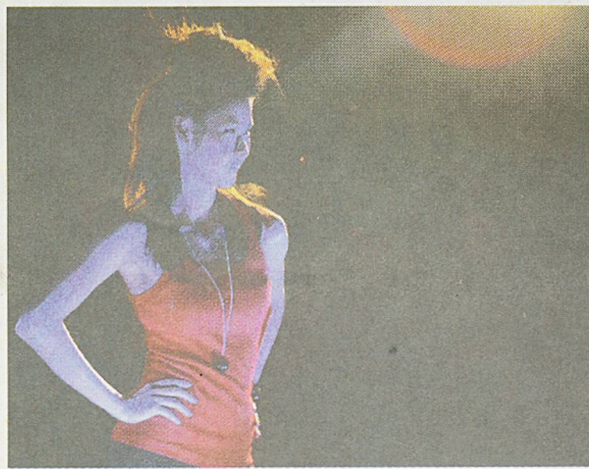
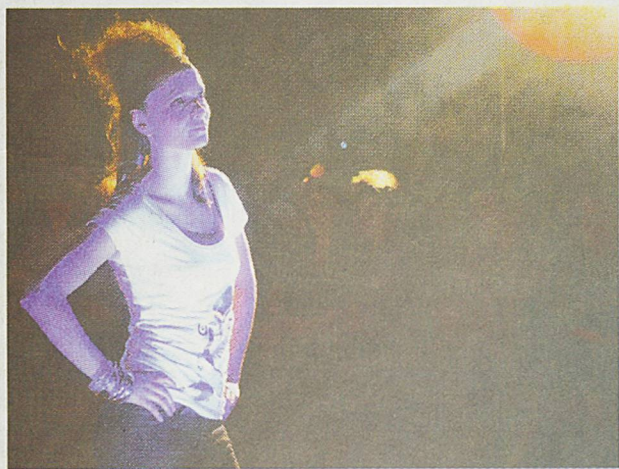
Marion Koob  
Features Editor

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## ETHICAL FASHION

Photos by Ben Phillips and Jonas Schorr



**The LSESU Fashion Society and Development Society held an Ethical Fashion Show on the 29th of January at the Shaw Library. The purpose behind the show was to highlight the need to think more consciously about the clothes we purchase, and that ethical fashion is now affordable and attractive. The show was a visual feast and an immense success, with all proceeds donate to the development charity Room to Read.**

**Want to join our photography team? EMAIL US ON [photography@thebeaveronline.co.uk](mailto:photography@thebeaveronline.co.uk)**



# Social

## A tale as old as time

Madeeha Ansari sneaks a peak at the happy ending



**T**wo more minutes, just two more."  
"No, Pooja, we've been over this - I can't give Bollywood two extra minutes."  
"Ok, one then. One more minute, just one."

I would not have been able to resist her face.  
The final production, if executed seamlessly, is never a good indication of the planning, the haggling, the sheer agony of different kinds that goes into creating a show of the magnitude of Timeless. In recent years, it has been established as the most spectacular exhibition of talent and culture staged at the LSE. This year's team knows it needs to work hard - it has a lot to live up to.

Expectations are running particularly high because this year, the show promises to offer something "different". The flyer says it is a "brand new musical", presenting "LSE's Global Fairytale". How different could it be, then? There will be music, one would think, with the presence of a Maharaja ensuring that much of it is Indian. There will be true love and a simplistically complex quest to attain it. Primarily, there will be a princess. It has all been done before, one would think. It really hasn't.

I entered the ULU "Venue" for my sneak peek of the performance to find it brimming over with a large number of surprisingly punctual people. What

**For something to be "Timeless", it has to transcend the existing reality**

followed was a progressive unravelling of all my cynical preconceptions. Sans sets, sans costumes, sans even a good quality sound system, it was a purely original presentation of the multicultural character of the LSE. The programme brings together performances as far apart as kathak and tap dance, fusing them into a funky yet fluid sequence. Once the music started and the performers took the floor, one could feel it coming together. The girls in tights and ponytails simply became graceful courtiers, the drab interior of the ULU theatre simply melted into the royal court

of the "World of the Beat".

The "World of the Beat", you ask? Are you for real?

No. But that just may be the point. For something to be "Timeless", it has to transcend the existing reality. At the same time, it has to be something that we can all connect to, whether or not we are interested in metaphysics. In this case, it has to be fun.

That is where the role of the script comes in. While playing with a whole range of stereotypes, it adds nuances to them and remains refreshingly spontaneous. There will indeed be a Princess. There will even be a Little Investment Banker who graduated from the LSE, along with a pair of rather interestingly street-smart ladies. Thus, the show becomes a sort of urban fairytale, bringing life to the myriad dreams that tend to clash on Houghton Street.

As with all ambitious projects, it could turn out messy and it could turn out to be epic. At the very least, as one participant of the contemporary routine said, "the nicest thing is that we see the side of the LSE which we wouldn't expect".

**Timeless takes place on Saturday 6th February. Tickets are on sale on Houghton Street from 11 am-3 pm Monday to Friday. Contact Jeevan: jeevan@lsetimeless.co.uk, 07731795475 for details.**

## The long road Canary



Srinjoy Banerjee searches for solace in unlike

**I**f there ever was a city at odds with itself; it must be London. It is a primate city that not only defines the UK, but with over 300 languages spoken within its boundaries, it is a capital of the world; and certainly the financial capital of Europe. It is this diversity that is reflected at the LSE. It is a very simple exercise to observe the ethnic diversity here, but much more difficult to grasp the diversity of aspirations, of ambitions or of personalities. When people look for solace, a place to get away from the stresses of LSE life; whether suffering from the academic rigour of its courses or the seemingly perpetual hunt for internships, this diversity is evident. For me, at the time I felt worst, I sought out my solace not in some ancient theater, or large city park but rather in seeking out the location of my ambitions; Canary Wharf.

Like all LSE students, I fancied myself to be a bit of a genius in my secondary school and, at the end of the first eighteen years of my life, having done with A Level examinations and UCAS applications, I felt that university would be my 'happily ever after'. Unfortunately, the trials and tribulations of life did not end at sixth form but continued, intensified and otherwise arrived at a new climax, of a rushed and badly written sequel that was first year at the LSE. The new climax was

the Econ B exam. Any illusion I had of being particularly intelligent was instantly cast aside after the exam, and I was utterly convinced that I had failed - and quite tragically so.

Needless to say I was depressed. Econ B was meant to be the centrepiece of my ambitions to become an investment banker, a consultant, a PhD student in Economics, almost everything! The thirty minute walk back to Bankside was very much all doom and gloom. The end of life as I knew it was to be July 15th - Results Day. Firmly deciding that I would stick it out and definitely not jump from Blackfriar's bridge, I nevertheless looked across at the river.

Now, there is only one set of buildings that really stand out from Blackfriar's bridge and those are the ones at Canary Wharf. Standing proud (even in the midst of one of the worst finance-sector driven recessions the country had ever seen), the buildings that house the investment banks LSE students are so eager to get into, appeared to be reachable. So I decided to walk it; see if I could make it. I guess subconsciously I wanted to make sure that I could physically make it.

Now the way to Canary is not so easy, especially when you are going by just looking at where the tall buildings are. Suffice to say that after an hour's walk, I was totally lost. I was far away from the

## A career in compromise

Poorna Harjani begs the LSE woman to make her own way in the world

**C**inderella had devised a plan when she glammed up in borrowed clothes and raced off to the ball before midnight. She was out to bag a prince, and she got one. For some, gold digging is an instant route to fame, wealth and success.

Nowadays there is a rise of a new breed of young women known as the 'Gold Diggers'. They choose their partners according to the size of their wallets, and their primary interest in a relationship are its material benefits. Whether they wish to admit it or not, perhaps even subconsciously, a male 'breadwinner' offers financial security and a stress-free life of luxury. What is interesting about the new rise of gold-diggers at Universities is that they tend to be well-educated and even come from wealthy family backgrounds.

Many international students look for ways to stay within expensive central London zones and for a break from the student life. At the LSE, these students are on the lookout for males who can provide for them; who can wine and dine them in famous places in London. Things that girls do to attract these men is first and foremost, look attractive. Their hair is impeccable, they wear just enough makeup to enhance their natural beauty, no wrinkle ever stains their clothes. An indeed, they are quite impeccable. In exchange for their beauty, they seek a lavish lifestyle of leisure. And even if they are unhappy, they take the view that at least they'll be miserable in comfort.

The LSE is a hub of budding investment bankers who predictably will earn high bonuses. In this way gold diggers at

this campus can prepare themselves for like-minded career fields that get them in contact with such soon to be wealthy men. Additionally, having a job is a clever disguise; it gives off the impression that they do not need more money.

In a report published last month by Barclays Wealth Management, economists predicted that there will be more female millionaires in the UK than men by the year 2020, and less than one in four of them will have acquired their wealth through marrying a rich man. These days young women can wine and dine in the finest of restaurants and pay their way on club tables without having to flirt with rich investment bankers. Gold Diggers try to defend themselves by saying that relationships are a compromise, and they just compromise more than others. I would

argue, however, that it is insulting to the millions of women who don't live their lives according to these so-called 'compromising' ways. A relationship where there is such an imbalance of power, where one partner has too much material advantage over the other is dangerous too.

In a report published last month by Barclays Wealth Management, economists predicted that there will be more female millionaires in the UK than men by the year 2020, and less than one in four of these will have acquired their wealth through marrying a rich man. These days young women can wine and dine in the finest of restaurants, pay their way on club tables without having to flirt with rich investment bankers. Gold diggers try to defend themselves by saying that relationships are a compromise, and they just

compromise more than others.

However, with a degree from the LSE, and the motivation to have a career, no compromise is necessary. It takes away from the whole point of being at University and for all those women who campaigned for women's liberation and equality. University is a development of the self and this development helps create our identity which in turn, makes us more secure. After graduating, we are more able to define ourselves in occupation but also in our beliefs and moral values. Higher education in itself leads to better social mobility and social prominence. A degree in hand and the willingness to strive for success is all that should truly matter in the pursuit of riches.



# The inspiring saga

Stephanie Adickman takes a page out of the LSE archives



**T**he tenacity and fire of the women whose work is recorded here must inspire us to continue their work until all women and men enjoy genuine peace and freedom. May they continue to inspire future generations."

So said Margaret Turner, President of The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), while speaking at the LSE last term. Her presence here marked the relocation of WILPF's archives to the London School of Economics' library, a somewhat exciting moment for us at LSE's WILPF Society.

And what exactly is WILPF, you might ask? It is an International NGO that campaigns for peace, justice and human rights for all peoples. Current issues on the UK WILPF agenda include an initiative to have African women lobby British politicians regarding foreign policy as well as a campaign for strengthening women's rights. Furthermore, WILPF has consultative status with the UN and recently joined

the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign demanding equal representation and a much larger budget for women in the UN. A constant presence, WILPF advocates for both men and women on all issues pertaining to social and economic justice.

Founded in 1915 by more than 13000 women who came together to protest World War I, the organization has grown so that it now has branches in over 35 countries, and is one of the oldest women's peace organizations in the world.

The transfer of the archives thus marks a significant moment, not only because it is the first time the extensive collection has been housed in a single location, but also because they contain the history of women's involvement in social and political movements within the UK spanning from 1915 to 1999. The material that has been transferred includes items such as minutes and committee papers; policy, case and campaigning files; publications and press cuttings; photographs, posters and other visual materials; audio-

visual material; and newsletters. Notable among these is a commemorative plaque to Jane Addams, president of WILPF from 1919 to 1935.

The archives offer a significant resource for the LSE, especially since WILPF has recently been extending its reach and starting student groups on campuses across London and UK. While the WILPF student association at the LSE is relatively new, we hope to achieve a lot even in our founding years!

So let's pay heed to Margaret Turner's words and take inspiration from the myriad of powerful women whose records are now housed in our library. Let's be inspired!

**The WILPF is screening Pray The Devil Back To Hell on 19th February in the New Theatre for a fund-raiser. For more details, please visit <http://event.pingg.com/PrayTheDevil>**



PRESENTS

## THE ONE WORLD (?) LECTURE SERIES

LECTURE 19:30 - 21:00 D602 MONDAY 1 FEBRUARY

### "A Borderless World?"

Mr Parag Khanna

Author of *The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order*  
Foreign policy advisor to Barack Obama during his Presidential campaign  
Director of the Global Governance Initiative

PANEL DISCUSSION 18:30 - 20:00 OLD THEATRE TUESDAY 2 FEBRUARY

### "Global Governance: Mission Impossible?"

Professor Jan Aart Scholte

Professor Stephen Haseler

'Building Global Democracy' Programme Director  
Professorial Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick

Director of the Global Policy Institute  
Author of *The Super-Rich: The Unjust World Of Global Capital and Meltdown*  
Amnesty International

PANEL DISCUSSION 18:30 - 20:00 D402 THURSDAY 4 FEBRUARY

### "The Role of NGOs in Creating Global Governance"

Professor Peter Willetts

Mr Michael Hammer

Author of *The Conscience of the World: The Influence of Non-governmental Organisations in the UN System*  
Professor at City University London

Executive Director of the One World Trust  
Former Africa Programme Director with Amnesty International

LECTURE 18:30 - 20:00 D402 FRIDAY 5 FEBRUARY

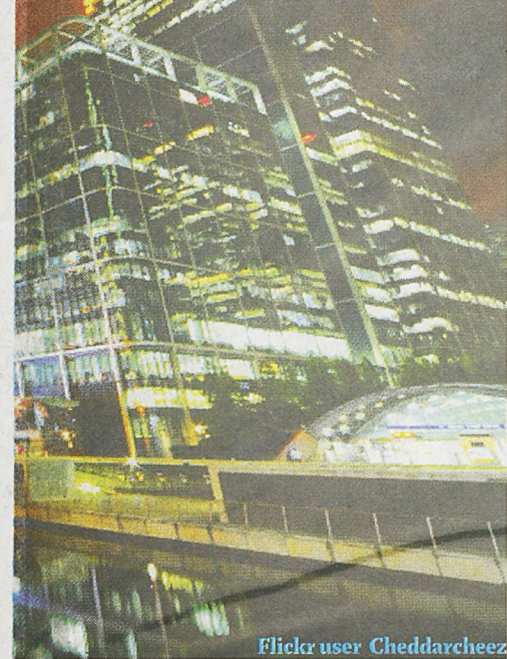
### "Shaping a New Global Economic Order"

Dr Paola Subacchi

Research Director of International Economics at Chatham House  
Regular contributor to leading media such as the BBC, CNN, Bloomberg and the Financial Times  
Focus on international capital flows, global imbalances, economic cooperation and global governance

Visit the facebook page: <http://tinyurl.com/y8ol3t8>

## to Wharf



Flickr user Cheddarcheez

## y places

city landscape of London and in a suburban Paradise, complete with green parks, a lake, and the ruins of a castle. This was Far East of Tower Bridge.

For a couple of hours I tried to find my way again, but the towers that were so impressive from the bridge were nowhere to be found now. But far from feeling depressed, the walk through the green suburbs helped me to temporarily forget the stresses of the city. And the truth is that, I guess, sometimes it is useful for us to escape from the fast-track life of the city and get out into an environment where not everything is manmade; the old cliché that nature is good for something. And clean air, people who are not in a rush, picturesque churches – all in the context of a glorious summer day – is, I think, normality. Seeing elderly couples, holding hands, relaxing in the sun outside their neighbourhood pub reminds you that there is a life beyond Econ B, LSE exams and even Canary Wharf. There are many sequels to that first book, and all we really have to aim for is arriving at a happily ever after at the end of the series.

So if any eager First Years, who fervently want to work in Canary Wharf in later life, find themselves in a similar state after their Econ B exams, I highly recommend a walk to Canary Wharf – just head East – take in a surprise suburban world; and perhaps learn a life lesson or two.

# OVERHEARD AT LSE

HY116 class, late Friday afternoon:  
Teacher: "How are you doing with the reading? Be brutally honest, you know. Are you able to read?"

Bankside Committee e-mail:  
"The event previously titled "Slave Auction"... has now be retitled "Non-Ethnic Minority Specific Non-Consensual Labourer Happy Fun Bid Time".

Econ history lecture  
Professor: If dad loses his job in a recession, what happens?  
Student 1: Mom leaves dad.  
Student 2: He becomes depressed. He commits suicide.  
Professor: Mom looks for a job.

Of Obama bowing to foreign leaders "he wouldn't bow to Sarkozy, he might want to kiss his wife, but not bow!"

In starbucks: "I had no idea UCL was like a good school, like a well-ranked school. I thought it was just like King's or some regular school"

EU Law Lecturer, Damian Chalmers: 'Humans are genetically closer to Baboons than Cadbury's Flake is to chocolate'

"I'll probably do it on the development of Muslimism in Europe"  
"You mean Islam?"  
"Yeah."

"There should be other sensory-based LSE facebook groups, like Overfelt at LSE, or Overseen at LSE. Trust me, I've overfelt and overseen some weird shit around here."

MA103 lecturer: "Do you all know what n factorial is?"  
(For you non-mathematicians, n factorial is denoted as "n!")  
No-one responds  
MA103 lecturer: "It's just n, but louder."

A load of people in my halls went out clubbing one night, except for one girl. I asked her why she wasn't going out and she replied,  
"Because the terror alert in London has been raised to Severe!"



# AU Obituaries

It is with great sadness that we bring you the following news concerning several tragic 'deaths' in the Athletics Union. If there are any more unfortunate demises you would like to bring to our attention, please email us at sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

## Jonny Jackson

Jonny "Pornstar" Jackson started out so promisingly, securing himself a place in the First XV Rugby Team and a slot on the popular "Rugby Does Pulse (again)" radio show. However, with his good looks and new-found fame came his demise. It seems that Jonny fell into "actual love", with a girl, and he has been Missing In Action ever since. RIP buddy.



## Annabel Litchfield

Babybell was considered a significant force in her first year, eating her way through the men of the AU like a piss-head through a kebab. Indeed, had her form continued along its early trajectory, she would have no doubt been challenging Emma Heap for the AU fantasy League "Golden Condom". However, she has since slipped into obscurity, choosing to focus instead on her degree and netball. She will be sorely missed.

Whilst many observers put this down to 'natural causes' (its members were always bound to realise that they played a rubbish sport sooner or later), the true reasons appear to be far more sinister. Recent evidence points the finger at Rob Fenton, who stands accused of murder by banter-starvation. Fenton was last seen being handcuffed by police following being formally charged. Obviously, owing to his lack of banter, he had no comment.

## The FC

Few of you will have failed to notice the sad demise of the FC. The once great cornerstone of the AU is, alas, not the club it was. It's death was confirmed at 21:07hrs on Wednesday the 20th January at the ReAUnion, where the entire AU, past and present, was in attendance the witness the final breaths of the once proud club. There were no last words, and certainly no last chants.

# Dear manager of Chicago Fire...

We wanted to share with you a brilliant email, and answer, that was sent following a heavy defeat on FIFA 10

Just to give you the background to the following exchange, for those of you who don't know, FIFA 10 is a computer game where players control football teams and play out matches between them, controlling the players on the pitch. One house of second years has a rule, that whenever someone loses by 5 or more goals to nil, they have to write an email to the club they were playing as to apologise for the defeat. Clubs that have been sent emails include Besiktas and Panathanaikos. Understandably, most clubs don't reply. After losing 6-0 to Chelsea while playing as Chicago Fire, the following email was sent.

Adam -

On behalf of the organization, we are disappointed in your recent loss in Fifa. While we understand that Chelsea has more wealth and influence to put a stronger team on the field, we also understand that a dedicated and skilled Fifa player can overcome these challenges and put up a more concerted effort in facing a stronger team.

present themselves. Also, set your team's strategy to "offside trap" and watch as Drogba and Anelka get called offside more often than not. If you do this, I can assure you will have John Terry crying once again.

We here at the Chicago Fire can forgive you for your Fifa indiscretions and wish you the best of luck in defending Chicago Fire's good name.

Regards,

Chicago Fire Soccer

Try keeping the game close by playing a more defense-minded game, all the while looking for your opportunities when they

Dear manager of Chicago Fire FC,

I am writing to appologise sincerely about the loss that i suffered tonight on FIFA, on behalf of the team, I feel ashamed. Even though we were playing Chelsea, a stronger and more capable side, that does not excuse a 6-0 loss. I feel like I've let you, the boys, the fans, and my parents down.

I hope there is some way you can forgive me.

Yours Faithfully

Adam

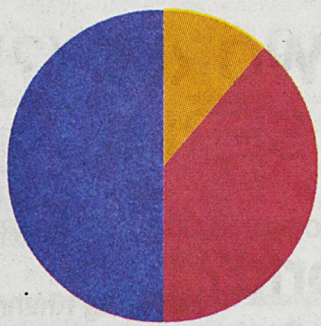
Obviously, no answer was expected, as per usual. However, much to the delight of the house from which the email originated, they received a response, which goes to show if nothing else that even people at professional football teams can have a sense of humour.



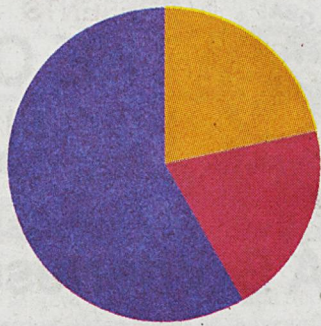
# What women want! (And what men want too...)

Here at Beaver Sports we conducted the largest ever survey of students in any Students' Union in the country on the age old (and unanswered) questions as to what makes the perfect man and woman. We asked 54 men and 59 women their opinions, and here we give you the results. Referenda will be held in 2 weeks time to give you the chance to change the men and women of your Union for the better!

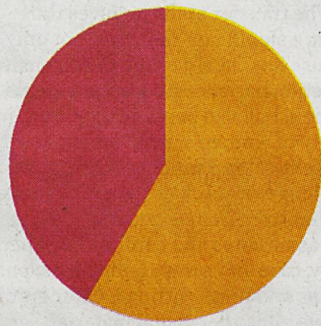
Do you prefer blondes, red-heads or brunettes?



Which is most important to you, tits, a flat stomach or a nice arse?



Do you prefer girls who are smart or girls who are sporty?



Do you prefer girls who are slutty or hard to get?



Bowers or Strivens?



Blonde  
Red-head  
Brunette

Tits  
Flat Stomach  
Arse

Smart  
Sporty

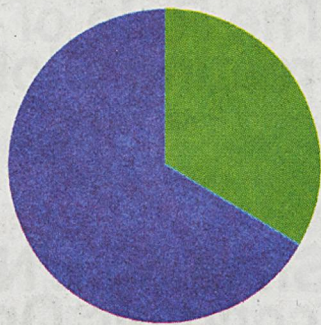
Hard to get  
Slutty

Bowers  
Strivens

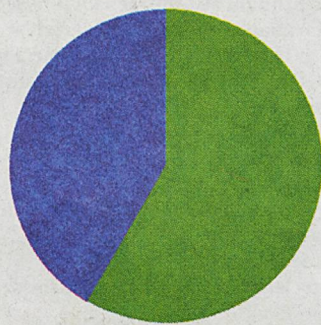
Do you prefer perfect abs, or a little something to hold on to?



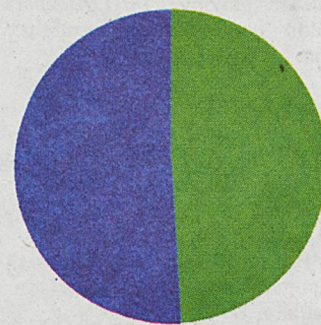
Do you prefer a hairy man, like STK, or a completely smooth one?



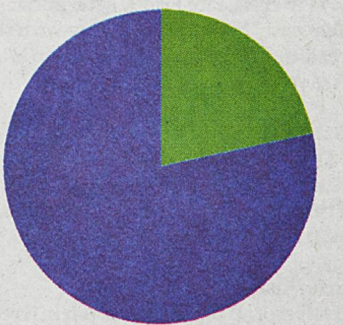
Do you prefer rugby players or footballers?



Do you prefer sophisticated guys or ladsy guys?



Does size matter?



Abs  
Love Handles

Hairy  
Smooth

Rugby  
Football

Sophisticated  
Ladsy

No  
Yes



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# Jonas and Xisco tell it like it is

This week, **Jonas and Xisco** smell bacon (no, not Lizzie), and report on the recent spate of arrests. With several prominent members of the AU, and Rob Fenton, finding themselves on the wrong side of the law, J&X give you their version of events

In a week which has seen the England captain go from G. Crow to Rob Fenton, perennial woman beater Sebastian 'Yo! Sushi' Yoshida felt it prudent to make a post-crush pilgrimage to the bed-wetting crybaby John Terry's place of birth. When the fuzz finally caught up with Bacala he was found threatening an elderly woman with the hockey stick he snaffled from the Old Building, screaming at the top of his voice: "I'm gonna shine this stick up real nice, turn it sideways, and shove it up your roooooody poo, caaaaaandy ass!" After being informed that not everyone wants to be a partner in his and Charlie 'red rum' Glyn's sordid sex games, the red faced Sebby Webby quickly retreated back to the bosom of Snavilletooth, who once again had gone home alone.

It really was a poor performance from the LSE security staff on Crush night. Having allowed Seb to sneak past them earlier in the evening, they were unaware

**Sebby Webby quickly retreated back to the bosom of Snavilletooth, who once again had gone home alone**

as Xisco look-a-like Mr. Crowlington managed to lay down some new beats in the Pulse studio with a natural blonde turned Glyn-ger. Continuing with the theme of getting one's hands dirty, Nadir 'Go-hard or Go-home' Gohar got a sticky

hand job on Saturday afternoon. In a romantic tryst that even Shakespeare could not have spun, the couple, who met on MSN and shared endless webcam conversations, finally met at T.G.I. Friday's. Needless to say, that after 16 Jack Daniel's BBQ-XL ribs, the young lady had succumbed to Nadir's charms. The night was not a complete success for Nadir, as part-time friend and full-time Katya-chaser Sam 'Frodo' Bateman interrupted proceedings with some low quality American style refreshments of his own. Birthday boy and enigmatic charmer Rob Fenton was arrested on Wednesday evening in an unfortunate case of mistaken identity. An overzealous police officer was so taken aback by the quality of Fenton's karaoke that he was actually under the impression that Bolton's very own version of Gordon Brown was the real Slim Shady. A shortened version of the police report reads as follows: Young, Caucasian male arrested at 3:04am...believed to be prominent American rap star Marshall Mathers aka Slim Shady...heard repeating the following lyrics ad nauseum: "And Henry said...nothing you idiots! Chris Liu-Dawg's dead, he's locked in my basement! (Ha-Ha!)"...believed to be in relation to a previous incident involving the girlfriend of aforementioned Chris Liu-Dawg.

Had a tour? Punctured anyone's hymen? Actually read the whole of one of Alice Pelton's sick fantasies? Fended off Snaville? Got Facebook? Now you can talk to Jonas&Xisco on our fan page.

Alternatively, email now: [jonas&xisco@thebeaveronline.co.uk](mailto:jonas&xisco@thebeaveronline.co.uk)

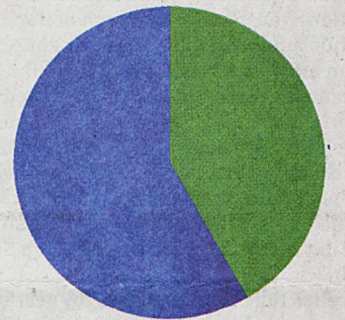
## Players of the week

**Rob Fenton (FC) -2.5m**  
1 (Tuns)+  
1 (Zoo)+  
3 (Drunk and disorderly)+  
8 (Getting thrown out twice)+  
20 (Arrested)  
= 33pts

**Chris Knight (Tuns) 15m**  
1 (Tuns)+  
1 (Zoo)+  
3 (Drunk and disorderly)+  
10 (Shag)+  
=15pts

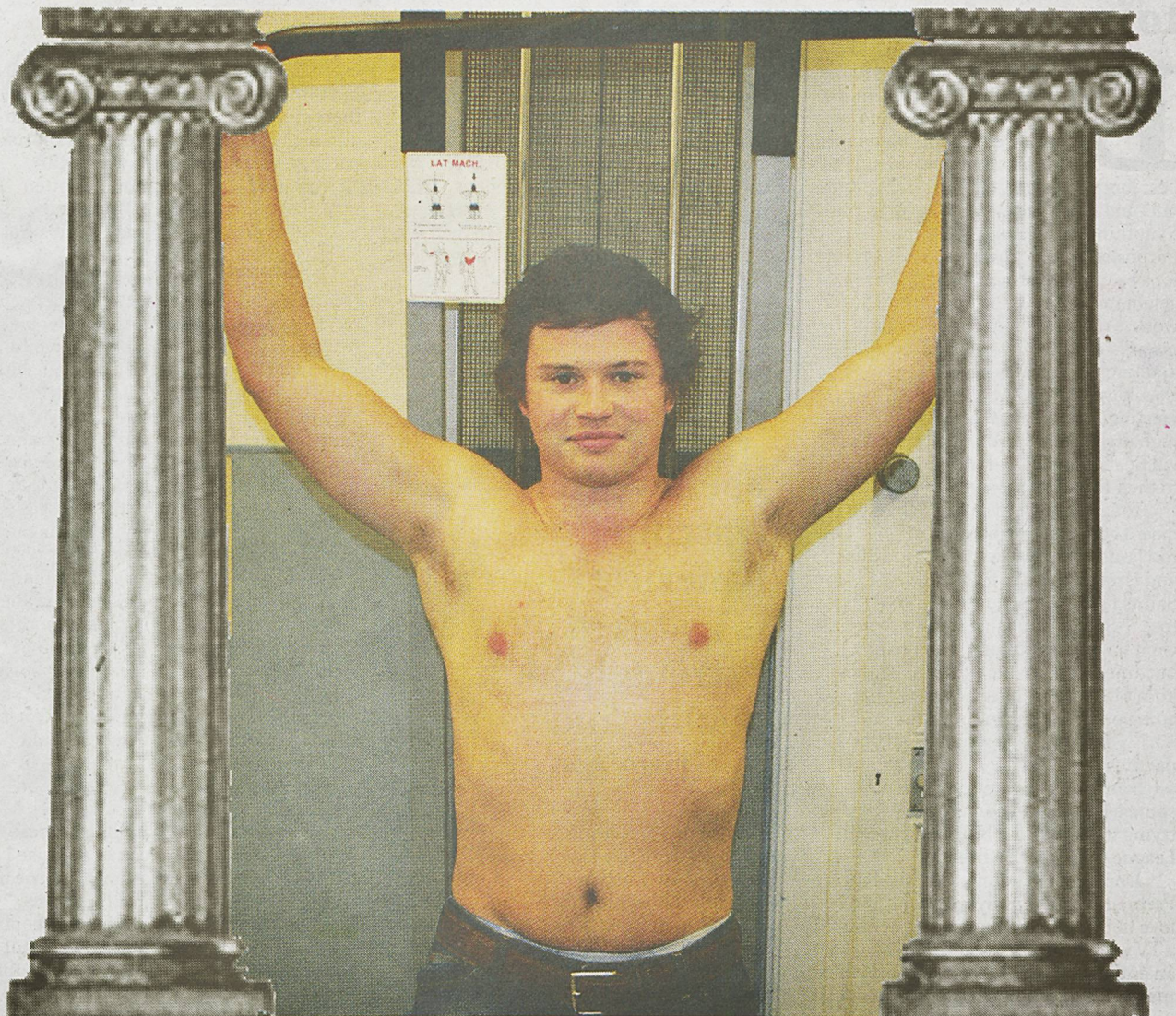
## What do women want - Jonas or Xisco?

In an exclusive poll conducted for the Beaver, we finally reveal which of the two renegade reporters is most coveted by the lovely ladies of the LSE



■ Xisco ■ Jonas

# TORSO OF THE WEEK



results

football:

lse 1sts	4 - 0	rumms 1sts
lse 2nds	2 - 2	queen mary 1sts
lse 3rds	2 - 2	kings 1sts
lse 5ths	2 - 0	rumms 3rds
lse 7ths	2 - 4	goldsmiths 2nds

rugby:

lse 1sts	51 - 0	ucl 2nds
lse 3rds	3 - 68	medway 1sts

hockey:

lse	8 - 0	st marys 2nds
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# Sport



AU obituaries  
inside!

## Women's Rugby, fat and ugly LSE women's rugby may have lost, but at least they were better looking... (?)

Lizzie Bacon  
Katerina Soukeras

**L**SE's finest ladies were once again in action against (currently top of the BUCS league) UCL. Their strong game play, so far this season, has brought them head to head with the LSEWRFC, challenging us to a place in the Final of the BUCS Cup.

We knew the David v Goliath struggle we had before us, but still we managed to scrape together enough players to avoid total embarrassment on the pitch. Unfortunately, the team had a few casualties, by Saturday night four members of the team were struck by a variety of illnesses, reducing our army to a mere 15. This left us with no chance of a substitution.

The day started very well. Missing our train (we blame St. Pancras train station), the massive labyrinth of the station stumped probably the brightest team members. However, don't doubt our intelligence until you've attempted to find your train there for the first time. After reclaiming all fifteen players from the depths of St. Pancras, we ran to make the next train (Judith and Kirsty only just managing to catch this one) and began our day of fun. Kate amused us all on the train with her explanation of why she travelled fully kitted out in rugby gear - after all none of us know when we're going to meet our husbands!

For those who are not aware, UCL have built their sports ground in Scotland and after a long train ride we surfaced in the alien town of St Albans, then to catch a taxi for another fifteen minutes. An eternity later and we arrived, all excited for the giant killing that was about to happen.

We lined up to receive their kick,

which flew straight into the arms of Bacon, who (quite surprisingly) can catch. After some textbook errors by most of the team, we found UCL barking on our try line, eventually breaking through our back line to score the opener. A good start it was not, but we plodded back to the half-way line to scare them with Tamara's imposing kick, and the fun continued. Their nippy backs ensured holes were sliced into our line, carving their way to another four tries before the half time whistle blew. Our first consolation was that none their players could ever look as good as us (being the best looking rugby team around). For example take their number 13, who had obviously attempted to economise by cutting her hair by using a bowl as a stencil.

The less said about the first half, the

**Their nippy backs ensured holes were sliced into our line...before the half time whistle blew**

better. Left frustrated by an alarming scoreline, we entered half time 25-0 down, definitely not a true representation of our abilities! Another injury for Judith left us wondering if we'd even leave with fifteen, but the wrestling move inflicted on her by a UCL beast was not enough to break team spirit. The most exciting event of the half, for us, was definitely the hospitalisation of a member of the opposition by Bacon, who seems to be making quite a habit out of this. She couldn't handle the skill of this routine tackle, so fell to the floor like



a sack of potatoes and laid there until someone took pity on her and picked her up.

We switched ends and dreaded what the second half would bring, but motivated by the thought of running downhill. Unfortunately, they had brought spares so the new cripple had a friend to swap with, much to the team's disappointment. Aware of our brute force, they seemed to bow to the pressure that is the LSEWRFC; conceding rucks and losing mauls to Katerina's impeccable ball skills and the sheer

force of the pack. Agnes' recent switch to the backs proved popular; her presence in the back-line seemed to work wonders, with the team gaining ground swiftly. Nil and You's persistent mauling paved the way for Becky "Blonde and Essex" Kean's debut, she motored towards the try line for her moment of glory, celebrated by the forwards who rarely catch a glimpse of this happy place!

"Why stop at one?" our coach shouts, apparently relieved that we'd finally left the changing room and come onto the pitch. Our enthusiasm and quick-

wittedness was enough to outsmart the UCL brains, with Judith gladly claiming try number two, shaking off any earlier symptoms of concussion she may have had due to shoddy tackling by the opposition. As the clock ticked down, we were unlucky not to score again; the scrum we were gifted next to their try line didn't go our way, but we held firm and pushed until the final whistle, only losing the second half to a conversion. Final score 37-10, they'd better be afraid for our encounter next week!

## US sports in the UK

With the Superbowl coming, Jason Bharj asks why we seem to ignore American sports?

**D**avid Beckham's move to LA Galaxy in 2007 was a move both widely lauded and criticised. People bemoaned the fact that one of England's best footballers had seemingly "copped-out" and taken the easy option of joining a "nothing" league, solely for monetary purposes. Others however saw the transfer as a move to establish England's most celebrated sport in the USA, through the world's most famous footballer. Both the number of Major League Soccer (MLS) and English Premier League fans in the USA have grown since his arrival, with viewing figures for MLS reaching a high in this year's MLS final in which David Beckham took part, taking LA Galaxy to their first final for 5 years.

Today I asked myself, "If I wanted to have a conversation about how good LeBron James is, and whether Reggie Bush and Drew Brees can lead the New Orleans Saints to the SuperBowl, who could I talk to...?" Sure, I could just find an American General Course student, or a postgrad, but among the vast majority of people I know, hardly any have any idea what is going on in American sports.

"NFL is for sissies, look at all that padding they wear! Put 'em on a rugby pitch and see how they do there..." is a response I often find coming my way when trying to discuss the National Football League (NFL) with a friend.

Don't get me wrong, I am the biggest Premier League fan in the world, and I love nothing more than sitting in front of a TV watching test cricket, but I also have an enthusiasm for American sport which makes me question why certain people in

our country have such a narrow minded approach to it.

People certainly play basketball at school, but they don't seem to take any interest in the National Basketball Association (NBA). In England, with sports such as rugby and cricket so popular, there doesn't seem to be any interest in their American counterparts - the NFL or Major League Baseball (MLB).

There is inevitably a reason for this so lets examine why most people in this country have only ever heard of Michael Jordan, the most famous basketball player in history, but not the Larry Bird's or Joe Montana's of this world...

**I believe that watching American sports is justified by their extremely high quality and competitive nature**

Is it due to lack of marketing and TV air time? With Sky Sports at the forefront of sport broadcasting in the UK, Sky Sports has bought packages to show both the NFL and the NBA but there has been criticism over their handling of the NBA. While the NBA coverage has often been criticised, the NFL coverage is considered

excellent among the people that watch it. But if the NFL is handled so well, why is there still such a lack of popularity? And although FIVE have an American sports package in which they show the NBA, NHL and MLB, the programmes often take up the graveyard slots, where the number of people watching TV will be at its lowest.

In my opinion I believe the lack of facilities to play sports such as American football and baseball has caused people to often lose interest in the sport, while they are able to remain fully in touch with football, cricket and rugby; with facilities very easy to locate for these "English" sports. Another issue I find is that some people seem to take a very stubborn approach to embracing foreign ideals, and in this case, American sports. Not only are people more interested in the sports they grew up with, they don't seem to be willing to even give a chance to these other, fantastic sports. Granted, people may be pushed for time to watch so many sports, but I believe that watching American sports is justified by their extremely high quality and competitive nature.

So if you're watching the SuperBowl this Sunday, look at the people around you. While it certainly is a spectacle in itself, are they just there to have a good time and party, or are they a real American football fan with a genuine interest in the game and the outcome. Because I believe American football, and American sports in general aren't just for Super-Bowl Sunday or the playoff finals. People should gather to watch the games out of interest and embrace them as they do the Premier League.

**SUPERBOWL XLIV**

**SUPER BOWL**

**COLTS VS SAINTS**

Indianapolis Colts vs New Orleans Saints

**THREE TUNS PARTY**

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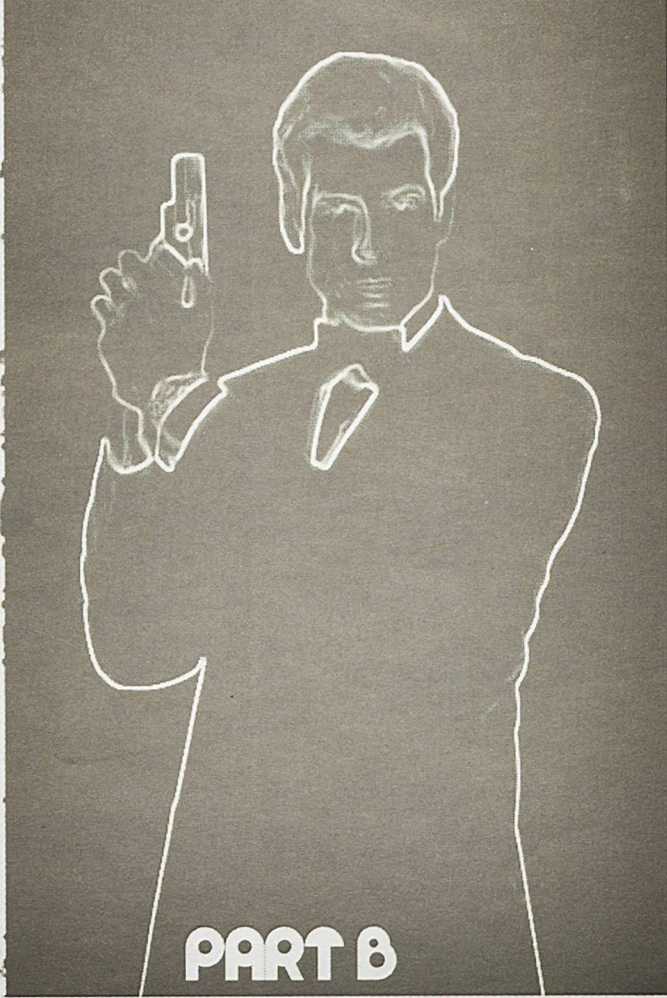
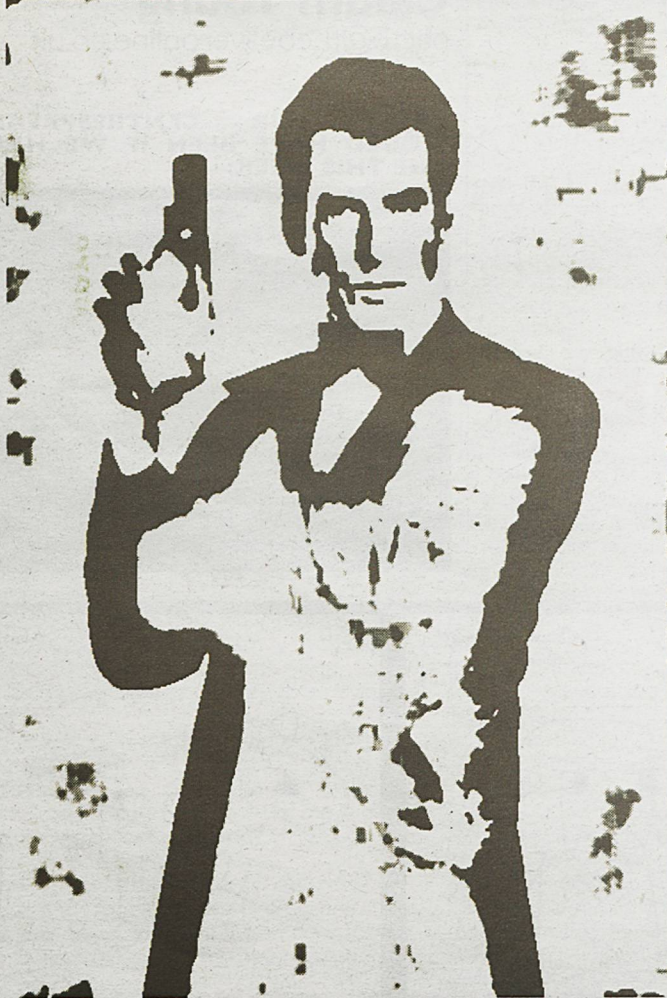
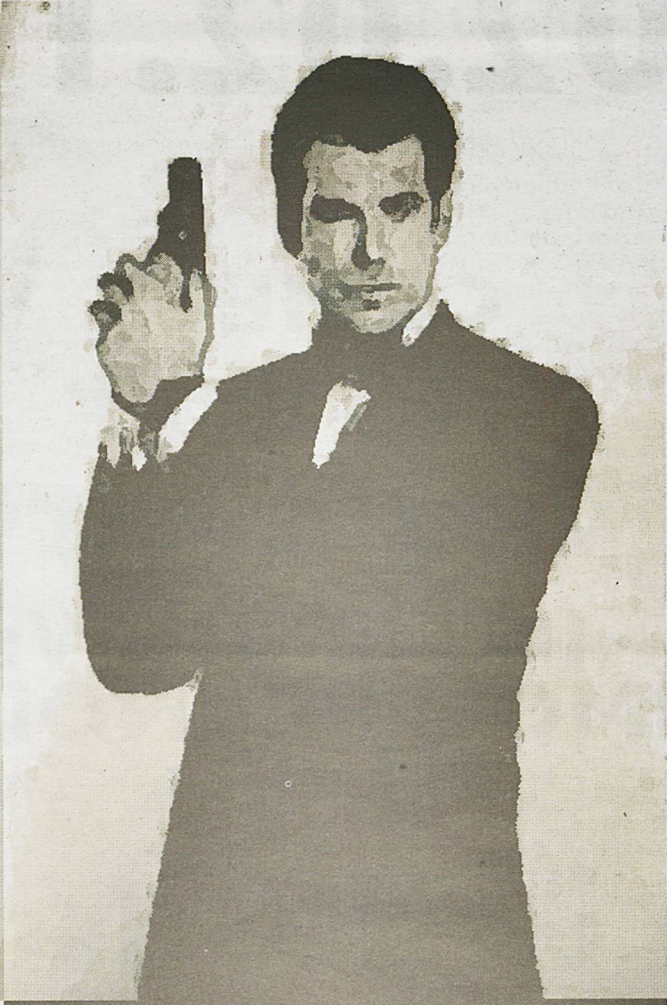
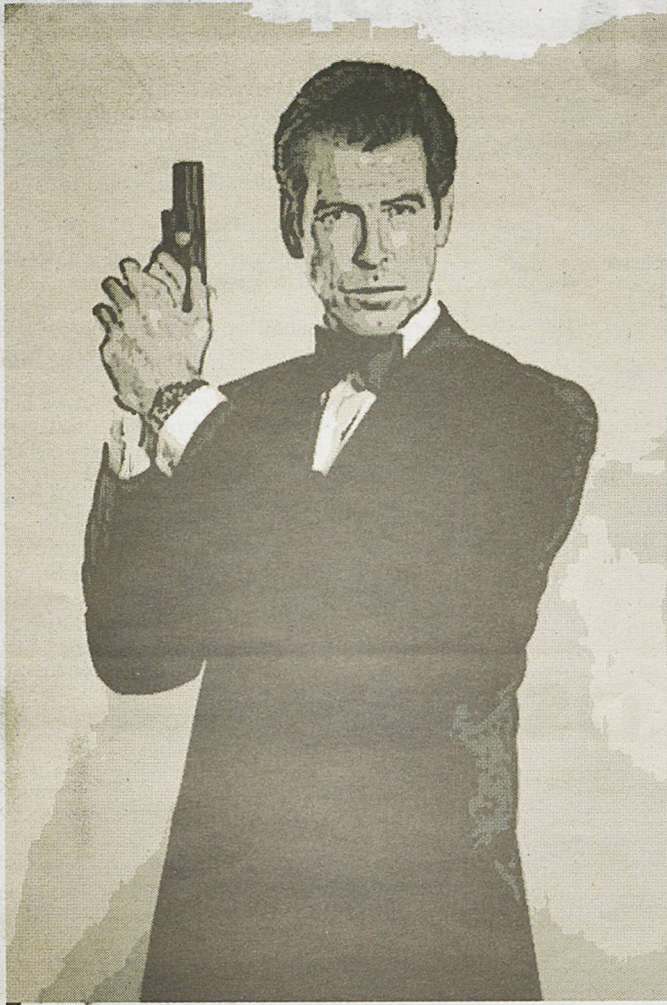
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**BEER PONG!**

**AMERICAN BEERS AND  
SUPERBOWL COCKTAILS.**

**LSE STUDENTS  
UNION**





PART B



# 02.02.10

ALEX WHITE – PARTB-RANT@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## RANT

IF YOU WANT TO WRITE COMEDY FOR US, EMAIL PARTB@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## COMEDY

SOPHIE MARMENT – PARTB-THEATRE@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## THEATRE

SARA DOWNES – PARTB-VISUALARTS@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## VISUAL ARTS

# INTERVIEW: SIMON REYNOLDS

LIAM MCLAUGHLIN & CATHY DRUCE – PARTB-MUSIC@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## MUSIC

GARETH LEWIS – PARTB-LITERATURE@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## LITERATURE

AHMED PEERBUX – PARTB-FILM@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## FILM

IMO OTORO – PARTB-FASHION@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## FASHION

VICTORIA TERRY – PARTB-FOOD@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

## FOOD

ALICE PELTON – PARTB-SEXANDGENDER@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

# SEX AND GENDER

## EDITORIAL

Burns, he said, it takes but '9 inch to please a lady'  
So let's change ought into is, and be there, maybe

Of London, on Fridays, those girls make me sick,  
But given the opportunity they could teach LSE  
lasses a trick.

Anything broadening is unbecoming, is it not so  
If she is focused in figure, do not say no.

Temptation's behest may be tomorrow's disgust,  
Yet happiness to he that foregoes nature's trust.

So to the chase and forever's hope that we bunt,  
Along life's long river in search of a..... maisonette  
Or a warm place to house us on wintry nights,  
When all goes unspoken, out of minds' sights.

Let's turn vice into virtue, and love into lust.  
Recall life's commonality, have ye fairer sex sust.

Esteemed figures of this mortal coil's club,  
Neglect shriveled members, fear not to drub.

Oh shattered illusion of thighs sprite, conquer me,

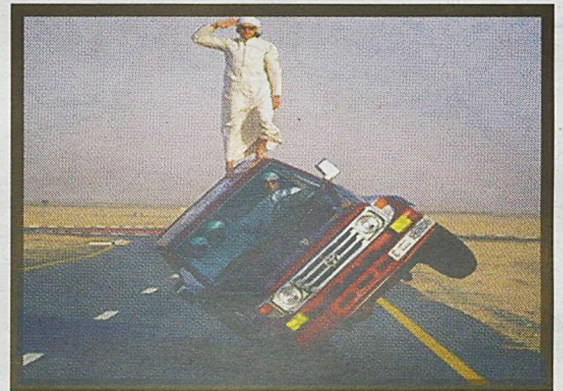
Condoms to the left of us, condoms to the right  
of us,  
The moral dimension askew.  
The salient betrothed, give me breath, phew.

A poem dedicated to all those clergyman's daughters  
who knew how to take the collection.

## Graeme Birrell & Calum Young

partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

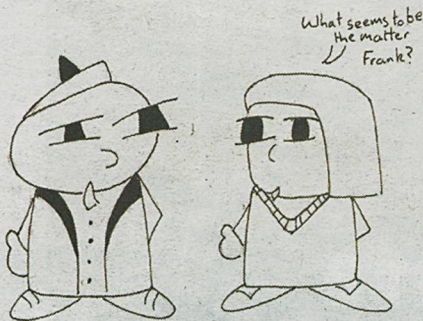
### WHAT OUR CENTRESPREAD WOULD HAVE BEEN IF WE HAD ONE THIS WEEK:



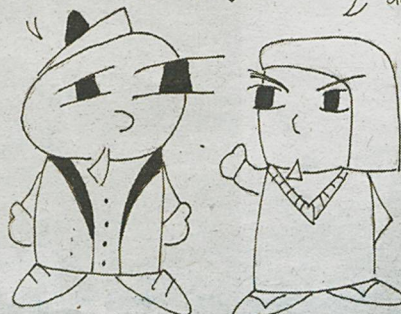
## Frank!

by Mark Twyford

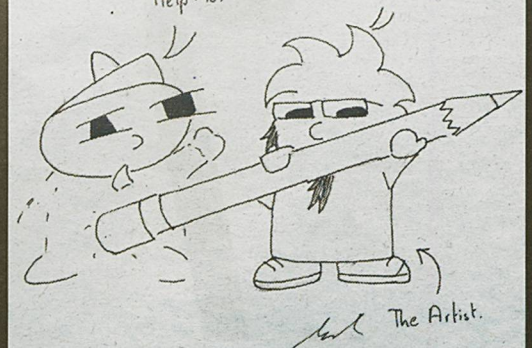
Frank is consulting with Lego-Haired  
General Secretary Lade Dolwun Fishman.



Well I'm afraid I don't  
like the reforms you're posing...



Help me! I'm sorry Frank...





# AUNT BEVERLY

Do you have problems? Stuff on your mind that you can't sort out on your own? Why not email PartB's own Agony Aunt/Slut at [partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk](mailto:partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk) and see if she can help.

**Dear Aunt Beverly,**  
I think I may have an obsessive personality. When I decide I like something (or, to be honest, someone) I can't get it out of my head. This week for example is Granny Smith Apples and 'Don't Cha' by the Pussycat Dolls (iTunes playcount: 247). The person whose name I howl as I cry myself to sleep at night shall remain nameless. What can I do to break my cycles?

**Granny-Smith-rocks-my-world, 1st year**

**Dear Obsessed-doesn't-cover-it,**  
The old saying an apple a day keeps the doctor away, doesn't really seem to apply to you does it, pet? The good news is you don't have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The bad news is that you have an obsessive personality: you need these things to feel good, something like a shopaholic. So what to do, what to do? Try plunging your head into a bucket of ice-cold water whenever you have the compulsion to listen to that dreadful song or consume ineffective levels of vitamin C. This might negate any positive connotations with those things. Failing that, no one in their right mind would put up with such odd behaviour and the prospect of spending your life alone ought to do it.

**Dear Aunt Beverly,**  
I think I love my professor. I have been having incredibly vivid dreams about him and my day literally brightens when I see

him coming around the corner. Office hours are bliss. Just how wrong is a professor-student relationship? I am over 18 after all. An adult. In love.  
**Age-is-only-a-number, 2nd year**

**Dear Odd-one,**  
Well dear I suppose that whether it is right or wrong is up to the rules at the institution. Some completely ban it while others 'frown upon' it or allow it as long as the professor does not teach you. I think it important that you find out if he likes you at all...a possibly awkward moment. Some words of caution dear: will he want to hold your hair back while you're vomiting at 3 AM after a night of binge-drinking? What will your friends think? No one likes to be accused of brown-nosing. And finally, it is possible that he is a former geek stoked at the thought of this nubile young girl at his mercy. All the best, pet.



## Just a Thought

Years ago, Virtue was easily identifiable. The term, derived from Virtus in Latin, meaning 'of man', or 'manly'. Thus, back in the halcyon days of Romanic civilization, virtuosity was characterized by charging around in battle, being headstrong and confronting those around you with displays of physical strength.

These days, things are much more complicated, diplomacy and consensus have superseded aggression as values we applaud. Kindness and compassion are now essential parts of any righteous human-being, yet in the past they were considered obstructive to self development because they focus attention away from the individual.

One radical interpretation of this change comes from the philosopher and writer, Ayn Rand. In a return to ancient values she argued that what was truly moral was to maximize your own individual self and neglect the community around you. Self-triumph and the pursuit of greatness were, she argued, the only ends that man should strive towards. Thus, aggression ought to triumph over altruism in the pursuit of Virtue.

## FLAT BROKE

### YOU DON'T WANT TO GO HOME WITH **ALEX WHITE**

First years living in halls, here is my message to you: the food might be shit, you may despise your neighbour, and your life is probably consumed with stockpiling 20p coins to operate your laundry machines, but sweethearts, you got it good.

I increasingly find myself living in impressive squalor. My once lovely three-bedroom flat has suffered the year and a half of student nonchalance, and now I may as well reside in a squat. It'd be cheaper and could not get shitter.

It all started about a year ago when some self-ish fuckwit broke into the building. Management swooped in and stole our electronic key fobs, promising to replace them with ones that wouldn't let people into the building anymore. All well and good, except that 'people' not getting into the building includes me, unless everything is planned with military efficiency. With now only two fobs between the three of us, I constantly track the every movement of my flatmates with creepy tenacity, and have been locked out more times than I've been let in.

More than anything, I miss 'Snoop Dogg security guard' in halls. He looked like Snoop. He walked like Snoop. I'm not sure he ever spoke, but he could drop it like it's hot, and he let me in every time I managed to flat myself out. He would have been the ultimate flatmate.

Anyway, provided I manage to get myself into the building, the light in the hall is broken, and the lift only goes down from the fourth floor. How it gets up there is a mystery I may never solve. Drunk

doesn't feel like drunk unless I've fallen up three flights of winding stairs in darkness nowadays.

Having battled another of my demons and worked my way up to my flat, the helter-skelter of domestic bliss only continues. The windows in my room don't close properly, and there's no functional heating.

Jump in the shower for a nice warm jet? EPIC ERROR. If you've seen me recently and found that I smell a bit funky, but didn't want to say anything out of politeness, don't even worry about it. I know. The boiler can handle two heated showers a day, and on weekends it observes the Sabbath. You've never known true misery until the shower has teased you with a sensuous trickle of enveloping warmth before blasting you with icy jets born of Satan himself, hair mid-shampoo.

There is an big blue boost button on our boiler for these purposes, but we were given ominous warnings upon first moving in by the tax-dodging ex-tenant (mate if you're reading this, want to come collect your threat letters?) NEVER to push it.

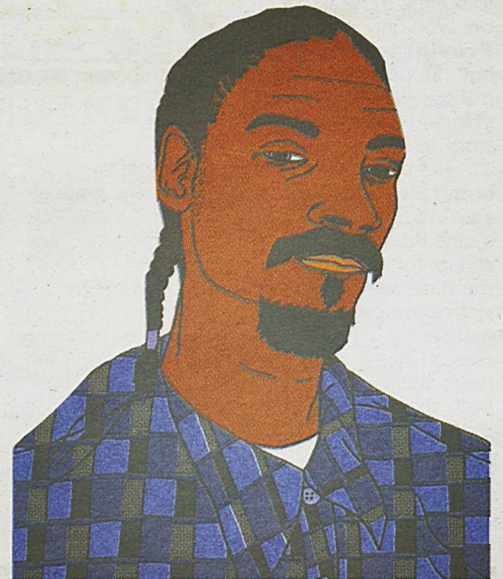
We pushed it.

Like the apocalypse itself descended upon us in all its hellfire glory, we were plunged into a darkness of our own making. An eerie silence permeated, broken only by my flatmate's haunting wail: 'oh bollocks'. Life has never been the same, sympathetic reader. That day our washing machine was transformed into an endless tundra, a whirlpool of mouldy smelling towels swirling in despair. I genuinely haven't washed anything in three weeks: I'm

down to 'The Ugly Pants'. You know: those.

One of the toilets is leaking from the base, a sink is perilously hanging on to the wall like a rock climber on a sheer face of slate. The bins are getting separation anxiety and the Hoover has all the sucking power of a 14-year old behind the bike shed.

Snoop Dogg security guard: call me. I've got me a stack'o'twenies and I'm willing to share.





# COMEDY

## COMCOMEDY DOES IMPROV

GRAEME BIRRELL FINALLY FINDS SOME GREAT PUB COMEDY

Being both a comedy aficionado and a cheapskate is quite tricky when you live in London – rarely do the two actually go together. This has led me to some awful £4 comedy nights – Lewis 'the Jew-hating-Jew' was a particular lowlight – and a general scepticism of pub comedy nights. However, my recent discovery of the live nights run by the new website and comedy promoters **Comcomedy** (check out the website at [www.comcomedy.com](http://www.comcomedy.com)) at the Queen of Hoxton pub in Shoreditch seem to have reversed this trend. At £4 entry (£2 NUS discount!) it suits the cheapskate in me, and with always-impressive acts Comcomedy nights have yet to disappoint.

Their recent improv night (Jan. 13) was genius. Whilst **MC Maureen Younger** was perhaps the weakest act, hosting small comedy nights is a notoriously tough job, and to be honest she was miles better than almost every other pub-comedy MC I've seen in the last couple of years.

The first improv act was 'Rapping' **Rob Broderick**, the self-proclaimed 'fifth best hip-hop act in Ireland. Out of seven.' Not sure what to make of improvised Irish rap at first, I was immediately converted as he asked the audience to get out whatever they had in their pockets and wandered round rapping about what they handed him. This may sound easy enough – but trust me, Rob is in a class of his own here. A rant about how Vodafone have poor customer service to the tune of **Eminem's** "Stan" and an angry story about how the government can't force us to do the laundry in the style of **Rage Against the Machine** were the highlights of Rob's set. A 'So You Think You're Funny?' finalist in 2005 and Edin-

burgh Festival favourite since 2007, Rob Broderick is definitely one to watch for the future.

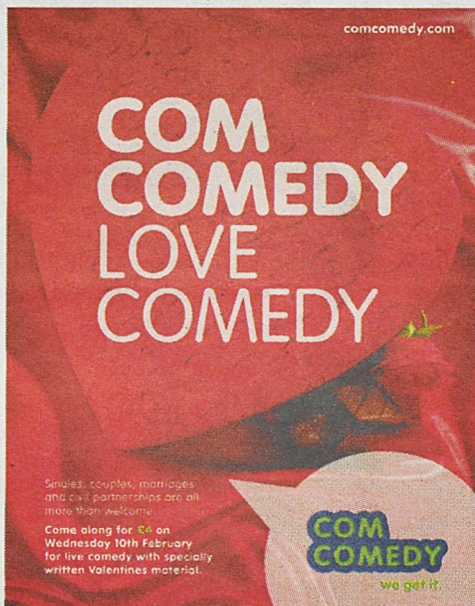
Next up, **The Galants** came on in period costumes proclaiming they wanted one suggestion from the audience that they would act in an improvised scene as their entire set. What we got was a half hour play about nineteenth century poets Byron and Shelly in Switzerland, where Shelly was turning into a werewolf whilst writing poetry. Great improv meant that despite the length of

this single plot device, they were still very funny right until the end. Even as what appeared to be a mistake when the lights turned red instead of off, the actors continued by observing that perhaps in Switzerland they don't have curtains, and instead just smear blood on the windows at night.

Finally, the energetic trio **Don't Tell Jimmy** came on to play *Whose Line is it Anyway?* style improv games. Their sheer charisma and comedic pace make them one of the most watchable and laugh-a-minute improv acts I've seen in a long time, not to mention the latent comedic value in putting a really tall lanky guy, and a really short guy (and a fairly average-looking dude) on stage together. One of my favourite moments of the night was when my drunk mate decided to volunteer himself to take part in a game, where he was instructed to pretend to be a charity worker but not to let anyone know. Naturally, he took one step out on stage and shouted, "arr... I'm from Oxfam" and then looked longingly at the audience for approval. He didn't get any.

All in all, then, Comcomedy's improv night surpassed my every expectation for both a cheap pub comedy night, and an improv night in general – a challenge for even the most experienced comedians to pull off well. Indeed, Comcomedy seem to have pulled off that feat I always thought was impossible – a cheap comedy night that doesn't compromise on quality for one second.

COMCOMEDY'S VALENTINE'S SPECIAL WILL BE AT THE QUEEN OF HOXTON PUB IN SHOREDITCH, WEDNESDAY 10TH FEBRUARY. CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE AT [COMCOMEDY.COM](http://COMCOMEDY.COM) FOR MORE INFO.



## every good boy deserves favour

SOPHIE MARMENT LOVES HAVING AN ORCHESTRA ON STAGE

If there is one reason to go and see **Tom Stoppard's** *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, it's this: there is an entire orchestra on stage. This is perhaps the reason that the play is so little performed and consequently the reason you should go and see at the National, because who knows when you might next have the chance to see this musical spectacle. Not only is **André Previn's** music fantastic but Stoppard's writing makes it incredibly accessible and adds a meaningful story to Previn's notes.

The plot is an open-ended study of two men, both called Alexander Ivanov, who are incarcerated in a Soviet mental hospital. One Alexander is a sane Russian author who has been placed in an asylum for claiming that sane men who opposed the state were being put into asylums by the Soviet regime. The other is far from sane, believing that he has an orchestra (the one the audience sees on stage), in which he plays the triangle, and hears them inside his head from dawn to dusk. Both characters are played brilliantly with Adrian Schiller taking the role of Alexander the tortured author and Julian Bleach as Ivanov, the triangle-toting musician. The two complement each other brilliantly, with Stoppard's lines bringing about some moments of laugh-out-loud humour. Johna-

than Arris, the hospital's doctor, also has a talent for delivering absolutely dead-pan lines which have the audience rolling with laughter, and plays the violin respectably well. His character plays the violin in the local orchestra, presenting beautifully crafted scenes with Ivanov, where having convinced his patient that he 'does not have an orchestra', he jumps up with a cry of 'I'm late for the orchestra!'

The orchestra is brilliant, some taking part in the acting itself with some plants amongst them who leap into action as physical performers during a scene which illustrates the psychological struggle in Ivanov's head to come to terms with the fact that he 'does not have an orchestra'. Actors pivot across the stage wielding violins as weapons against state officials, leaping over each others heads and being swung around the floor by their partners. This incredibly physical performance can be attributed to director **Felix Barrett**, whose recognisable style has been seen in many Punchdrunk productions. The sets are stark but befitting to the subject matter of the play as

well as working flexibly with the entire orchestra on stage.

Stoppard's words are brilliant, Previn's music is entrancing and the spectacle is one you are unlikely to see anywhere else. *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* is undoubtedly one of the National's greatest productions which is why it is back for a second run. See it while you still can!





## NO WOMAN NO CRY

SANDRA SMILEY ON CHRIS OFILI

As a Young British Artist, being lewd is likely written into Chris Ofili's contracts. United by advertising magnate Charles Saatchi under the Thatcher junta, the YBAs are 'conceptual' artists – 'conceptual' in this case roughly synonymous with crazily eccentric and outright abject. The YBAs have few commonalities save their unmeasured use of expletives, politically uncomfortable themes and overt, ribald sexuality: consider the group's matriarch **Tracey Emin**, whose stained, rumpled bedstead stippled with soiled panties and used condoms earned her the nefarious Turner Prize.

Dung was for long Chris Ofili's differentia. Early on in his career, Ofili began to use chunks of elephant faeces in his art and sculpture. He could, for a time, be found hocking the stuff on the street in Brick Lane and Berlin. It became something of a gimmick, unsurprisingly, and crap puns abounded. Unfortunate because, as I discovered upon visiting the Tate Britain's retrospective on the artist, there is much more to Chris Ofili than faeces.

Scat aside, Ofili's early works are given to a fun, droll reflexivity and sense of the obscene. Greeting the (paying) gallery patron are *Painting with Shit on it*, *Popcorn Tits*, and *Bitches Tossing their Pussies Before the Divine Dung*, all of which Ofili painted, tongue jammed firmly in cheek, whilst in London in the 90s. These early works are an ocular freak-out: evoking the lurid technicolor madness of psychedelic art, the artist's drooling resin layers and intricate dot painting overwhelm and arrest. Smattered with pop cultural references, religious symbols, and faces ranging from those of the ubiquitous red-carpet set to the anonymous orgasmic visages of blue movies, ideas and objects spar to shock and offend. The iconographic and the pornographic lay together in Ofili's crap-encrusted exegeses to suggest that nothing is sacred (or everything is).

Ofili's favoured source of inspiration among the postmodern verboten seems to be a Christian imagery more Renaissance altarpiece than dank east end warehouse space. *The Holy Virgin Mary*, the elaborate portraiture of a black idol with one fecal breast, is exemplary. Gilded by a



halo of 'rear-views' snipped from girlie magazines, the figure famously obfuscated then-mayor of New York City Rudy Giuliani when it was exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. The controversy, which nearly cost the BMA a cool \$500 K at czar Giuliani's hand, effectively affirmed Ofili's reputation as contemporary art's *enfant terrible*. "Is it art?" Giuliani said. "I have a general rule that I follow: anything I can do isn't art. And if you want to throw dung at something, I could figure out how to do that. That is not art."

There was similarly shit slung over *Upper Room*, an installation conceived by the artist in collaboration with architect **David Adjaye**. Thirteen meditative tableaux of a monkey with a chalice queue against the walls of the Adjaye-engineered walnut structure. The paintings, each of a

different base colour, are individually spotlight and bespangled with glitter, map pins and other accoutrements of crafternoons. Though the mercurial art community was generally impressed with the joint project, members of the anti-YBA Stuckist faction successfully scandalized the Tate's purchase of the work from Ofili, who was at the time a trustee.

Beyond the Upper Room is the artfully reductive *Red, Black and Green* series which, despite the Stuckist besmirching, was triumphantly exhibited at the 2003 Venice biennale. The paintings depict a tale of lust and enchantment using only the colours of the pan-African union flag. Ofili employs a campy exoticism redolent of **Josephine Baker's** *Vaudeville* fame: lactating from one breast, *Triple Beam Dreamer's* corpulent female nude eats a banana against an oblong canvas of resplendent green tendrils and wood. The ornateness of Ofili's colouring and the grandeur of his sweeping lines, however, create a simultaneous reverence and respect for his subject, a tender romance unfolding in tropical idyll.

The rest of the exhibit gives the impression of protracted experimentation, from the slapdash watercolours of *Affromuses* to the towering canvases of the last room, *Recent Work*. *For Blue Rider*, inspired by the landscapes and life of his adopted Trinidad, Ofili loses the dung and *découpage* for a challenging palette of dark blue and silver hues, culminating in a beautifully bucolic visual poetry. A limp body hangs in shadowy gallows while a sullen, effete blues three-piece plays on in the gloaming; adjacent, a disembowelled swine dangles upside down with its slayer brandishing a machete nearby. The subjects of *Recent Work* are similarly inchoate and mysterious – *The Healer's* dark, brooding dramatis personæ, awash in shade, gorges itself on the umbrage of the yellow poui tree. Though it would uninspired to say that the Young British Artist has 'come of age', the economical expressionism of *Confession (Lady Chancellor)* projects a control and confidence previously pianissimo in the artist's portfolio – perhaps obscured by poo humour? To say so would also be premature: at only 45, Ofili has oceans to traverse.

## JOG YOUR MEMORIES

MELIHA GUNENC AT THE OUTSIDE WORLD GALLERY, WITH KEITH POSTLER

The Outside World Gallery presents *Memories*, the first solo show by the Turkish born artist **Meliha Gunenc**. This is a mixed media show of abstract paintings, sometimes with a hint of figurative style, and layered assemblages. The assemblages describe moments in time through words and images written on several transparent layers of inks and latex on acetate and glass. These pieces are bound together by and hung from transparent threads, linking the stories they tell. The use of colour is striking in the paintings. This reviewer particularly liked one work enough to think of buying it. Here is a chance to invest in a contemporary piece at a reasonable price before Christie's ups the price. Why not split the cost with your housemates and share the painting around in your rooms? Make this part of your

'Get to know London' mementos.

This is an interesting show, well worth the visit, in the fascinating area of Brick Lane in London's East End. You can combine your gallery visit with dinner at an eatery and then a pub in the area.

The show will run until the 27th January and unsold paintings may be viewed after the public showing by contacting the gallery, which is open from 12 – 6 p.m. or by appointment.

## Gallery details:

44 Redchurch St. E2 7DP  
c.a.halpin@theoutsideworld.co.uk  
Tel: 07814 430 852

Transport: Liverpool Street Station

Artist's details: [www.meliha-gunenc.com](http://www.meliha-gunenc.com)  
[melihagunenc@hotmail.com](mailto:melihagunenc@hotmail.com)





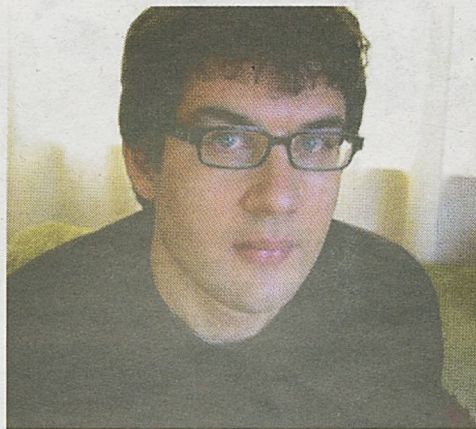
There is a famous, possibly apocryphal, quotation, variously attributed to **Elvis Costello**, **Frank Zappa** and **Miles Davis**, which says that "writing about music is like dancing about architecture". Indeed, no matter how flowery the language used to describe music, it is impossible to convey the actual experience of it with words alone. No amount of elaborate metaphors or similes can recreate the sound of music or the depth of feeling it gives you. But then, those guys probably didn't read anything written by **Simon Reynolds**.

Since the mid '80s, Reynolds has been writing for a wide variety of music publications about a wide variety of music, including indie, R'n'B, jungle, hip-hop, grime, techno, dance and dubstep. His lucid and erudite insights into the world of music serve as an enlightening companion to the music itself, but it is his contagious enthusiasm for it which actively encourages you to get out of your armchair and into the shops. Applying academic structure to vibrant and passionate writing, I could think of no better person than Simon Reynolds to question on the legacy of the '00s and what it can tell us about the future of music.

The '00s is the first decade where I have been consciously aware of the whole thing. Many of the landmarks of the '00s have been the results of revolutionary changes which have taken place in the wider world; think MP3s, blogging, MySpace and accessible recording facilities. So why, when there was a massive increase in the

Despite the proliferation of good music, Simon is right; there is much less great music around now, and the volume of 'good' music, whilst of course being 'good', has simply by virtue of its sheer quantity carved an overarching '00s legacy of good but ultimately insignificant music.

But then again there are other genres of music which came to prominence in the '00s which have arguably achieved greatness and are definitive of the times, whether that is due to ingenious pioneering or simple novelty. Two particular styles which come to mind are the underground British movements of dubstep and grime. As a long-



the ever more extreme incentives in hip-hop to earn hard cash. "Well hip-hop has always been about making money" reasons Simon. "There's never been that bohemian hang-up about selling out or making dough that you sometimes used to get in white rock circles. What's changed is that they got a lot more shrewd as businessmen, and made sure that they got the money as opposed to the record business. **Puff Daddy** was one of the first to make himself the mogul but you also had **Jay-Z**, forgotten figures like **Master P** (the guy who did No Limit Records – one of the first big Southern rap labels), and the Cash Money guys in New Orleans. These are all people who realized the way to really clean up was to own their own record label, but also to diversify into all these other areas: merchandising, lines of clothing, sideline ventures, sponsorship, endorsements and movie appearances. It didn't always work out as planned, but to be a rap star in the late '90s and the '00s meant also being a businessman, a transmedia operator, a brand manager and a career strategist with MC-ing only being a relatively small area of one's focus. That might explain the deterioration of the art form! Now you have people, as the rap music business goes through the same crisis as the rest of the industry, who are building careers in a more do-it-yourself, grass roots, bottom-up way again, with the mixtapes and the steady flow of material to a more compact fan-base."

This idea of hip-hop coming full circle back to its street genesis with a focus on music instead of

# BRING THE NOISE

amount of music produced during the '00s, does Simon think that, as he wrote in a recent Guardian article, compared to the '60s, the '00s saw far more good music, but far less great music?

"The idea started with a thought I had when running my eye over the Pitchfork 'Top 200 Albums of the 2000s', which was that once you got past the top 30 or so of the list, and went further down, it started to seem like a subtle indictment of the decade. But it wasn't because the music was bad; on the contrary a lot of it was very good, and every so often one of my own favourites would pop up at Number 61 or Number 137. It was more to do with a sense of inconsequentiality. In an equivalent list of the top 200 albums of the '60s or '70s, I think far more of the records would have seemed consequential in the sense of having an impact on the times, or defining the times.

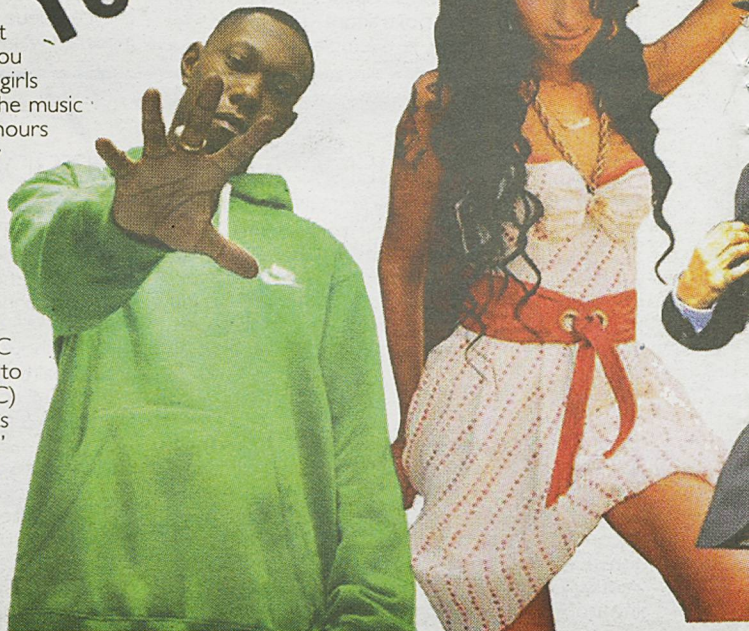
"There are all kinds of reasons you could speculate on for why this has ceased to be the case. Maybe it relates to the reduced centrality of music in popular culture, the fact that it's not the leading edge or power spot, or that it's simply been around too long; become too familiar. Or that all the most striking stylistic and formal leaps were made, necessarily, in the earlier decades, and now we're well into a phase of consolidation and recombination. But the one I focused on in that Guardian post was the idea that music's just spread too thin; there's too many people making it. There's people from the preceding generations/eras who have hung on in there, and more and more younger people coming forward, and as a result it's simply harder for any given band/record to pull around itself an audience substantial enough where the group's journey – the trajectory from record to record to record – seems to be consequential!"

time champion of both genres since they were in their embryonic stages, I ask what Simon thinks explains their social-class defying success over the past decade, especially when fighting against the sheer volume of music that's out there.

"That's rather a big question!" Simon responds, "Well, have they defied class? Grime had to really tone itself down to get to the top of the charts. **Dizzee Rascal** pretty much had to separate himself from the grime scene and from grime sonix to become the big mainstream pop star that he is now."

But dubstep is surely more adept at crossing class boundaries? At raves you can see middle class private school girls dancing with working class wideboys; the music linking their disparate lives for a few hours of sweaty partying. Simon immediately disagrees though. "Dubstep was always I think more of a middle class and white scene than grime, so its success – which isn't pop success but becoming this internationally established hip sound with outposts all over the world – is easier to understand. Being instrumental and lacking grime's MC element (on the records, as opposed to in the clubs, where there often is an MC) also helped it spread. It can be enjoyed as this atmospheric, home listening music."

Another genre which contorted and evolved during the '00s was hip-hop, which arguably saw its zenith in the early half of the decade. However, since then it has seen a qualitative downturn and I wonder how much the 'hubris of hip-hop' has to do with





money could signify a change in incentives and accordingly, quality within the genre. But money isn't the only thing which has affected music during the '00s. MySpace, blogs and MP3s, whilst initially created to increase the communication and sharing of collective musical experiences, have actually destroyed this collectivity by atomising the distribution and experience of music.

"In an odd way, connectivity has been the enemy of collectivity" Simon agrees. "We are all much more connected and aware of each other's business, yet the possibility of real collective shared experience through pop seems to have been badly eroded. This is partly to do with fragmentation, the replacement of public arenas of mass musical experience (in the UK that would once have been Top of the Pops, Radio 1, or the weekly music press), with a plethora of niche markets and narrowcast channels. Occasionally there will be the old-style flashes of a mass media event that everyone is aware of...like **Kanye West** and **Taylor Swift** at the MTV Video Awards, and these probably reach even more people because they can be YouTubed and seen by people who wouldn't bother to watch the show itself. But it seems rarer and rarer."

With faster broadband and an ever increasing amount of 'zines, bloggers and YouTubers voicing their own opinions, it would be naïve to expect that music will recover the central position of success and renown it held in popular culture throughout every decade from the '50s up until the late '90s. However despite the diffusion of opinion on net-

based media, big music magazines' popularity still remains, as does their influence. I ask Simon if he thinks the music press innately hold a hegemony over general musical opinion and consequently affect people's tastes and perceptions of music through the repeated use of buzzwords and buzz-bands.

"Not really. From my point of view it would be nice if you really could shift opinion in this way. Perhaps if a whole swathe of professional opinion actually manages to cohere around one

**"Grime had to really tone itself down to get to the top of the charts. Diz-ze (Rascal) pretty much had to separate himself from the grime scene and from grime so-nix to become the big mainstream pop star that he is now."**

certain pieces of critical writing that opened up my ears to something and created a new taste for something in me. But I don't think that people can be swayed to like music that is totally crap, purely by writing. There must be something in there that actually connects with them. In the **Libertines'** case the music had plenty of things going for it, and the whole back story and the off the rails chaotic charisma of Doherty made for a perfectly plausible package in terms of the media going for it and the punters going for it too...Of course it helped their careers because it gave them that authenticating stamp and kept them in the media with lots of column inches. What I wonder with both is whether there was a willed element to it, like they chose to become fuck-ups because they yearned to have some kind of authentic equivalent to the blues experience, even that they had to work at it. Someone said that white middle class musicians could only access the blues type worldview through drug addiction."

Indeed, the '00s was rife with confusion; indicative of the dominion of concessionary, commoditized art and the ever widening gulf between the good and the great, in part due to the things which in theory should have lessened it – blogs, MP3s, YouTube and MySpace. These individualized media tools widened the spectrum of general opinion and praise, but also that of criticism. As an inverse result of all the truths being spouted, the '00s had no galvanizing truth and the disparity of musical quality and style is a result of this. With no sign of slowing down in the atomization of the mu-

The fact that the 2000s has seen more summations and analyses than possibly any other decade so soon after it ended is indicative of the massive shift in the power of communication we have seen in the past ten years. **Liam McLaughlin** talked to music critic **Simon Reynolds** about how this has affected music, and what it might mean for the future.



figure, it would have some affect on the artist's profile or sales. It used to also be the case that there was a kind of climate of opinion and sensibility that would form around music where, as you say, buzzwords and just the language of praise used by journalists would make certain kinds of sounds seem attractive. But I'm not sure even that goes on anymore, except in quite small niche areas.

"The amount of professional pop media is much, much bigger than it was when I grew up, but now we also have all the blogs and message boards mouthing off too. It's a cacophony of opinion, and almost as a structural effect of people wanting to differentiate themselves and have a more interesting, cooler take, there will be fuller spectrum of opinion on any given thing. Everything will have its detractors no matter how good, and everything will have a defender, no matter how crap it is. It is hard for an artist or group to achieve full spectrum dominance in the way that the Beatles did."

It could be that the grassroots media of blogs and 'zines are actually adding to the musical overkill of the '00s rather than preventing it. Perhaps it's not even that there are too many artists around, it's just that there are too many people giving exposure to the most inconsequential of them. But if these artists are getting exposure and even ending up in Pitchfork's 'Top 200 Albums of the 2000s' list, it makes me wonder whether music taste is purely subjective or can be swayed by reactionary writing which lauds style over substance. I'm talking things like **Pete Doherty's** heroin addiction making his music more appealing than the music itself.

"I don't think music taste is completely subjective, and personally I can think of

music community, it could be a while before we hear more music of universal relevance and greatness.

However, it also follows that artists can't be wholly implicated in this. Social atomization, as Simon emphasizes, gives us – the audience – much more of a stake in music's success and greatness too.

"Greatness/importance isn't just an integral component of the record, it is partly conferred by an audience, and that becomes a cycle of amplification in so far a band responds to the fact that the audience is out there waiting on what they do. And if they know that, and also know there's going to be wide ripples from whatever it is they next do, they respond by raising their game. I think musicians and bands in the '00s were responding, unconsciously, to a creeping sense of inconsequentiality."

Whilst the '00s saw the power of communication expand rapidly and diffuse down to every person with access to the internet, Simon also points out that there comes a responsibility with this – to support artists and respond to their music in a positive, enthusiastic way. Whether this is possible or not in a time where the gap between the good and the great is getting larger remains to be seen, but movements like grime and dubstep, along with defiantly brilliant artists like **Radiohead**, **Panda Bear**, **Talib Kweli** and **Four Tet**, prove that there is hope yet.

Nevertheless, remember that the future is, at least in part, in our hands.



THE ROUNDUP

HOLLY RUBENSTEIN REPORTS ON THE LATEST EVENTS IN THE WORLD OF MUSIC

This week we saw a rare all-star musical event that will go down in history with the likes of Live Aid and Live 8 - the Hope for Haiti concert, raising \$58 million for quake-stricken Haiti. Performers included Stevie Wonder, Christina Aguilera, Rihanna, U2, Jay-Z and Shakira, with the standout performance coming from the ever-flawless **Beyoncé**, singing an acoustic rendition of her smash-hit "Halo". A further highlight came from newcomer **Matt Morris**, who performed Leonard Cohen's (no, not Alexandra Burke's) "Hallelujah" together with **Justin Timberlake**. Morris' heartfelt and pure vocals soared over the rousing classic, prompting many viewers, I'm sure, to run to their computers and Google who this unknown was, and why we hadn't heard of him until now. In case you were wondering, Morris is signed to Timberlake's record label, having grown up starring in the Mickey Mouse Club together, alongside the likes of Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera. All performances are now available to purchase on iTunes, and I would thoroughly recommend giving Morris a listen.

It was also announced that Simon Cowell, at the request of Gordon Brown, is co-ordinating a charity single to help raise further funds for those in Haiti. The single will be an all-star cover version of **R.E.M.'s** heart-wrenching classic "Everybody Hurts" - a choice which, in my opinion, doesn't deliver the message of hope that should come out of a venture like this. Yes, it definitely pulls on our heartstrings, but a song with a more positive tone could potentially appeal to a greater audience. The initial acts announced - Leona Lewis, JLS, Cheryl Cole and Rod Stewart - were certainly sub-par, bearing in mind Cowell's worldwide celebrity status - it was recently reported that he was the most famous person on the planet, beating God (!) However, since then, reports have tentatively suggested that the list now includes: Beyoncé, Mariah Carey, Miley Cyrus, Lady Gaga, Bon Jovi, Wyckle Jean, Take That, Mika, James Blunt, and Michael Buble.

On a cheerier note, 'girl power' fans around the world - myself included of course - will be rejoicing with the news that a stage production based on the **Spice Girls** and their music is being created by *Mamma Mia!* producer Judy Craymer, with the help of music mogul Simon Fuller, who used to manage the girl group. It's working title is "Viva Forever". Craymer said she planned to "create a unique celebration of the band and its music, with its own flavour and joyful message" I can't wait.

I will leave you with my tip for the week... **Theophilus London**. This Brooklynite's sound is so fresh that he made it onto half of the Sound of 2010 lists with only one track and a few beats up on his MySpace page. Having performed at Mark Ronson's recent NYE bash, and being billed to performed at this year's Pre-Grammy party in LA, Theophilus is one to watch - he is destined for huge things. Check out his track "Humdrum Town" on [www.myspace.com/theophiluslondon](http://www.myspace.com/theophiluslondon)



Holly's tip for the week, **Theophilus London**

REVIEWS

THE FLASHGUNS// MATCHING HEARTS, SIMILAR PARTS EP.

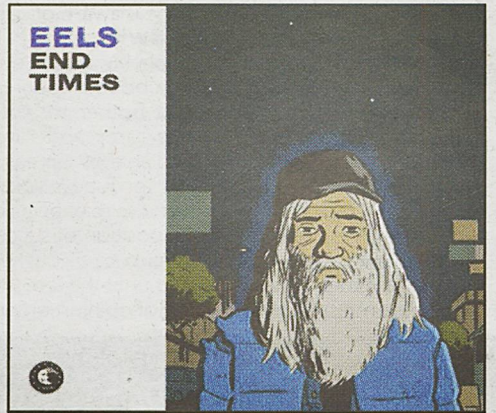
NICK RUSHTON

The **Flashguns** have not been pedalling their wares for long. Still unsigned, *Matching Hearts*, *Similar Parts* is their first significant offering aside from two somewhat lacklustre singles. However, the EP is their first record to retain the raw, guttural, beauty that many of the Flashguns' early demos promised and that had clearly proved so elusive in previous recording sessions. Sam Johnston's **Morrissey**-esque voice resounds over haunting guitar riffs, to summon up images of Modern Britain akin to early **Babyshambles** recordings. The EP is driven by an almost palpable desperation of a band struggling to succeed within the ever crowded indie-rock genre. The last track entitled "Racing Race" in many ways encapsulates the band's current predicament. Far darker and more melancholic than the rest of the EP it seems to both signal the way forward for the Flashguns musically and point to the mountain they still have to climb. What happens next? I for one will be watching intently.



NEW RELEASES IN THE CHARTS

Out of the two new releases that we've reviewed this week, one will probably bring you down and the other might push you over the edge. Sorry.



ENDTIMES// EELS. - N° 21

Mark Everett, who has built a career on writing (often truly beautiful) songs about misery, claims to have written *End Times* in reaction to the desperate times we currently live in - sounds chirpy. Oh and it's also about his bleeding, barely beating, battered, broken heart. It's a break up album. And in all likelihood it's going to drag you down into a 14-track long pit of self pity with its unending and desperate gloominess. Everett is arguably one of the most hopelessly sad, tragic men that ever lived.

Unfortunately, you're going to have to listen to this album in all its yucky self-satisfied agony. All the way through. Maybe twice. This album is as beautiful in its melodies and as direct and honest in its lyrics as Everett's albums always have been.

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS 2; THE SQUEAKQUEL OST// ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS - N° 22

Imagine how many people must have bought this album of insipid nonsense for it to get to number 22.





## THE BEAVER ONLINE

GARETH LEWIS BLAMES AN ATEMPORAL MASCULINITY CRISIS ON HIS FUTURE SELF

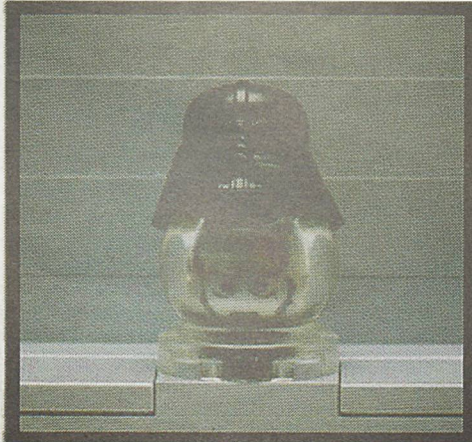
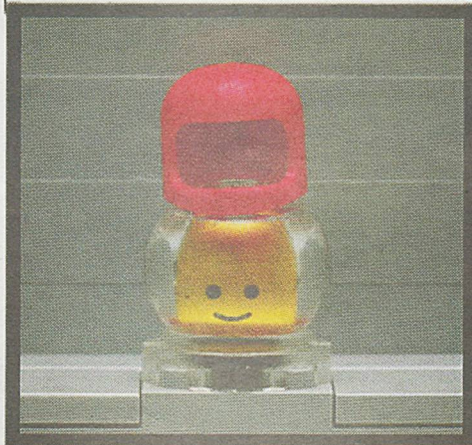
**A**s I write this, I'm listening to something called **Four Tet**. I don't know what this is. It sounds like the kind of music that Tinkerbell would make if she had access to Garageband and a glittery sprinkling of battery acid. It's like a choir of rapping tic-tacs. It's mainly just beeping, and every so often a LOLcat lets out a little squeak from somewhere inside the electrics. I'm told this is Very Good Music, but I can't like it. For a start it's not made for humans, but for very tiny things. This is music made for electrons and pollen. I expect the point is to dance, but how? How do you move in time with the endless repetition of a tingly pop?

The really weird thing is it changes the way you think. I'm now thinking in decimal points and horizontal lines. In division signs. This has happened before. It happens when I read books and watch films and ride escalators. Yes, ride. Something spasms inside your head, and you start quite literally to re-read real life. Ever read *Will Self in Paris*? *Dostoyevsky in Corfu*? *Mills and Boon in Albania*? You start wondering what's being pumped through the Pompidou's extraneous piping – purloined oil from the old colonies, perhaps? You forgive the aggressive metrosexual in the luminous green Polo shirt for bottling you in the forehead, on the grounds that he's probably suffering an existential breakdown, just like you are. And you add your own sexy postcard with a premium number to the phone booth in Tirana, complete with an absurd narrative involving a genie, hardly any intercourse and strictly no anal.

But the cosmic ring of *Four Tet* is only one part of this messy formula. Chalk etchings and strange arithmetics encrust my cerebellum. This week has been weird. This time, it's thanks to a combination of Philip K. Dick, French rugby monster Sebastien Chabal and a sneaking suspicion that time is moving backwards (as in, the future is approaching us faster than ever, rather than the alternative regression to dinosaur-fighting). On the one hand, any novel that deals in precogs, psychics, time-distortion and cryogenics is bound to unsettle. Philip K. Dick's *Ubik* is just this. You find you're more suspicious than usual of the voice on the tube. How does she know? And more importantly, where do those orange letters that scroll across the digital info-display come from? Where do they go? There are lots of Gaps on the tube. Too many to Mind. I've stopped taking it places. These days I just sleep in the Beaver office underneath all the empty champagne bottles.

And then there's the Chabal stuff. Coupled with Tiger Woods' bunkered philandering and our collective inadequacy in the aftermath of last week's Mr. LSE pictures, it seems sensible to conclude that I'm experiencing something like post-masculine depression. I don't want to be anywhere near my masculinity. I can't bear to look at it. *It doesn't look anything like me!* If Neil Strauss's *The Game* dumped me fraudulently into the ball-sack of phallogentric society, then all this tinkly *Four Tet* nonsense and a year overdosing on science-fiction has me wriggling in Tink's moon dust as naked and vulnerable as the day I was born.

Lastly there's the psychic millennialism. Esquire shows me a picture of a man who has had a computer chip implanted in his arm. There's a mock-up of a woman with a mechanical bottom-half, and a bloke with a titanium neck. I haven't



**I don't want to be anywhere near my masculinity. I can't bear to look at it. It doesn't look anything**

heard from Donna Haraway for a while. Perhaps she's finally finished building her spaceship. The *New Scientist* ponders the possibility of asteroids clunking us off balance in the next fifty years or so. Elsewhere, bicycles, iPods and bowels are all running on solar power. Cows are replaced with holographic replicas – still organic, mind – and chickens who refuse to lay carbon-neutral eggs replace the luminous inmates of Guantanamo, who will soon run America. And this was just last week.

Frederic Jameson thought that one of the consequences of postmodernity was the evaporation of any sense of history. I'd say the counterspectacle to that nightmare is the perpetual presence of everything that's yet to happen. In *Ubik*, the protagonists find their world is regressing about them, disintegrating and slipping back through time, back to the 1930's. Of course, everyone reads this from the point of view of the time travellers themselves. The sheer horror of life in black-and-white, Pleasantville in reverse. But imagine what it's like for the people knocking about in the 30's, face-to-face, suddenly, with the spectre of their species from centuries ahead in time. I think I know how I'd react. 'Four-tet, you say? Spartan man? Tell me more about this Tom Ford character. I'm going through something of a masculinity crisis myself, as it happens. Nothing like a bit of science-fiction to testosteroneize the spirit.' How wrong I'd be.

**Which one of these Men Of The Future (MOTF) are you?**

- a) Spacegoat
- b) Klu Klux Klingon
- c) Royal Male
- d) Pastyface

Answers on a postcard (no e-mail please) to: [partb-literature@thebeaveronline.co.uk](mailto:partb-literature@thebeaveronline.co.uk)



PART B FILM CLASSICS PRESENTS  
WITH ASAD KHAN  
NIXON (1995)

There was something about the 1960s. Drugs, the Great Leap, targeted killings, the Beatles, Labour, Vietnam, and mass hysteria were all awash in that "glorious" decade. Many reading this have no living memory whatsoever of the sixties, but that's alright; as Jefferson Airplane rockstar Paul Kantner said, "If you can remember anything about the sixties, then you weren't really there." The sixties was also the time of a resurgent Richard Nixon, and with his entry, I sadly have to abandon these unwarranted pop culture references.

It takes Michelangelo, in the form of filmmaker **Oliver Stone**, an equally bizarre paragon of his field, to fashion the life and times of the utterly conflicted Nixon for the screen. *Nixon* the film is terrifyingly ambitious, a hulking, breathing, three-hour opus that you begin to watch, then to feel, and finally, no matter how historically clueless you are, to relate with the title character in all his sweating, foulmouthed, acutely intelligent glory, a rags-to-riches president who, as one commentator wrote, could neither relate to rags nor riches. The genius of Anthony Hopkins is to embody a walking paradox, with all the screaming and fum-

ing, affected hand movements, and smiling guile of Richard the Quaker; at times more Nixon than Nixon himself.

But this is a film by Oliver Stone of *Natural Born Killers* fame and Hopkins' herculean albeit stagey effort is counteracted by Stone's trademark frenzied editing and amalgamation of wholly unfitting story arcs. This gives what might have been conveniently served up as a timeless Shake-

**Nixon the film is terrifyingly ambitious, a hulking, breathing, three-hour opus**

spearean tragedy the contorted feel of an unsettlingly recent phenomenon. Sharp cuts, flashbacks, interweaving scenes, and dizzying camera angles are almost casually thrown together.

There is focus on Nixon's all-important televised debate with one John F. Kennedy, which may potentially bear parallel to Gordon Brown's up-

coming clash with David Cameron. There's Cuba, Cambodia, Kent State, and lots and lots of Watergate as well, but Stone is far more interested in the aching void that is the man destined to come within inches of inarguable greatness, and then to promptly destroy himself. Nixon is as prone to self-pityingly attempt to connect with student protesters as he is to hurl books and obscenities at supine hangers-on.

*Nixon*, for all its stylistic excess, is a consummate historical biography in a genre bereft of such entries. As the question remains asked of most political movies, does it have any relevance today? Well, it shouldn't be viewed for said relevance. It is a sprawling, exhilarating experience, as majestic in its scope as it is perverse in style. *Nixon* is a piece of visual art; a depiction, if flawed, of the man and the blissfully over-the-edge era he symbolized. It is not the ending's heavily damned funeral that resonates, but the real-life Richard Nixon's awkward, intrinsic symbol of the dual victory as he departs in disgrace in the penultimate scene, inspiring love and hate for generations of the great silent majorities to come.

# white ribbon

EMMA KELLY THINKS HANEKE HAS UNDERACHIEVED



**Director:** Michael Haneke. **Screenplay:** Michael Haneke. **Cast:** Burghart Klaussner, Christian Friedel, Josef Bierbichler. **Runtime:** 143 mins. **Cert:** 15. **Year:** 2009.

The buzz about *The White Ribbon* was everywhere. Cannes selection, five star reviews, descriptions of its 'mastery of its own cinematic language', so I approached the film with high expectations. I'm also a **Haneke** fan so I knew it was likely to be miserable and disturbing. Frankly, that was what I wanted.

But sadly the film left me confused and unable to make up my mind, wondering if I've missed some vital element that was obvious to others. I felt underwhelmed by the respected Austrian director's latest production; for a director of Haneke's reputation and legacy, it is well below par. It reminded me of **Pedro Almodóvar's** *Broken Embraces* which came after the fantastic *Volver* - Haneke too has similarly failed to recreate the heady brilliance of *Cache*.

One of the main flaws of Haneke's latest film is its lack of a central sympathetic character. You could argue that the same could be said of *Cache*, but at least by the end of that film you had some empathy for the Juliet Binoche character. Even generally in films where there aren't any redeeming characters you can usually identify with an aspect of at least one character, but I found *The White Ribbon* strangely lacking in this.

While the central figure of the teacher does not possess the coldness of others in the film, he is essentially rather boring and characterless. Drawing on largely unknown actors, the film also needed the acting prowess of an Auteuil or a Binoche to carry it and turn it into a great, mem-



orable production.

Unlike Haneke's previous work, the film missed that sense of impending doom, that feeling of being on edge in anticipation of a dramatic event that you know will leave you questioning and brooding on its impact long after the final credits. Those who have seen *Cache* will instantly recognise the scene at the heart of the film that shocks its audience to the core. While *The White Ribbon* attempts to portray a number of shocking events, so much of the build-up to them is overwhelmingly depressing and negative that their im-

pact loses dramatic effect. *White Ribbon* is rather like an A grade student submitting a B grade essay.

That's not to say that, by normal standards this isn't a good film and worth seeing. But I did have the uneasy feeling that Haneke may have become this year's fashionable director in critics' circles and the rave reviews for what, I feel is really not a five star film, is perhaps just a rather belated guilty acknowledgement of his five star back catalogue of true masterpieces like *Cache* and *Code Unknown*.



# Winter Warmers

KIRSTY MAJOR WANTS TO WARM YOUR COCKLES.

At the moment I feel well and truly like a little kid in a sweet shop due to the unprecedented amount of beautiful men around campus. Some may argue that it's because I am a raving hormonal sex pest, and there may be a smidgen of truth in that, but I put it down to the increase in one thing, and one thing only: knitwear. Just as the summer brings a wave of shapely female legs in thigh-skimming dresses to the joy of men around the world, the winter brings something magical for women; men in chunky, patterned knitwear. I practically dropped my coffee in a pheromone-induced fit yesterday, when I saw a certain member of the Student Union's sabbatical staff wearing a grade A cardigan. Feel free to speculate who this may be and pass on the information that I want to parade around their bedroom wearing nothing but a pair of La Senza knickers and their vintage cardie. To put it into perspective for my male audience, you know that feeling you get when you see a woman wearing American Apparel contorting herself into a quasi-pornographic pose. That is how we feel when we see a man in a beautiful piece of wool.

Perhaps the roots of this knitwear fetish have a logical explanation deep within the female psyche. By wearing woolly items men break down their

masculinity. The structured lines of suits, shirts and blazers represent harshness, showing that men mean business, whereas their fashion antithesis, the cardigan, the playfully patterned jumper, are more laid back. Knitwear domesticates men; it is something men would wear at home, allowing you to think of them in softer casual surroundings; such as in front of the television, giving you a backrub while you watch reruns of *The Wire*. That is not to suggest that knitwear emasculates a man, far from it, knitwear screams sexual maturity. A straight man has to be pretty damn comfortable with his sexuality to don a cardigan. Drawing from this, maybe knitwear is the winter version of the post-coital boyfriend t-shirt. Do women imagine slipping into their boyfriend's/friend with special privileges' knitwear to make a cup of tea after some x-rated action?

I'm pretty sure that my views echo the common consensus among women the world over, allowing me to justify my obsession with wool. However, this fascination has taken a dark turn of late, and I'm not sure whether I can call my fixation with men's knitwear an innocent preference anymore. Whilst researching this article (I swear it was research), I found this website, <http://www.woll->

[traum.de/](http://www.woll-traum.de/). I assumed it to be a traditional German knitting website selling some snugly jumpers and maybe even some tank tops. Much to my dismay I was confronted by a plethora of woolly gimp masks, full knitted sex outfits complete with woolly stockings, suspenders, knickers, bras and gloves. I had discovered the underground world of the wool fetish. The most terrifying piece was the Willy Warmer, my 'favourite' being the Willy Warmer disco, a pink woollen cover for the whole of the male area, sequins and all (tastefully pictured left). As I navigated the pages I found the daddy of all knitwear; the woollen zentai. Zentais are essentially, cat suits with gloves, feet and full body hood, with some strategic holes, totally enclosing the wearer, for those who enjoy erotic objectification. But really, in wool? Imagine how hot and itchy it must get in there, not to mention the possibility of some pretty ugly rashes.

Was this the logical conclusion to my fascination? Is wool like drugs, does one tokes of a woolly spliff lead to jabbing knitting needles in your arm in the company of Pete Doherty playing Puff the Magic Sheep on his guitar, all the while wearing a woollen one piece with an ominous hole in the rear? It's not like I hang around the H&M men's section waiting to molest unsuspecting wool clad indie boys, well not yet anyway. After much soul searching I came to the conclusion, as with most fetishes, there is a spectrum. Just like a guy can appreciate a girl in a good pair of heels and not have a Quentin Tarantino-esque foot fetish, I can ogle the opposite sex in their chunky knits and not feel like a sheep stalker.



## FROM NORTH TO SOUTH: THE CUISINE OF THE AMERICAS

VICTORIA TERRY ENJOYS BURGERS, BEANS AND BURRITOS... IN LONDON

**North America** - burgers, hot dogs and chilli fries are all very well, but in my mind the greatness of North American diners in London lies in their milkshakes. Battling it out for the top spot on my list of American diners is Eds and Tinseltown, both having the obligatory delicious burgers and fries with a variety of toppings (my weakness being the cheesy fries), but each having a distinctive take on the joy that is a great milkshake. Eds takes the more classic route of flavours, banana and peanut butter being the one I simply can't resist, the shakes are always in generous portions and so thick that they can fill you up before your food even arrives. Tinseltown on the other hand has shakes made from 'candy' and though thinner than Eds, the variety of flavours (60 at last count) and the offer of a Malteser AND Crunchie flavoured drink is always tempting. What's more, Tinseltowns are open until 6am ready for you to get your fix whenever the need arises.

**Southern USA** - For some 'real soul food' head down to Blue's Kitchen in Camden Town where you can delight in trying the foods with weird and wonderful names that you probably have heard of in American films but have had little chance to sample. Gumbos, Jambalayas, Corn Fritters and Po' Boys are among some of the delights awaiting you, which in my mind must be followed with Key Lime Cheese Cake or a Mississippi Mud Pie. If going for dinner you can stick around and enjoy the Rhythm and Blues with live music every night. Or when feeling hungry during the morning after the night before, this is the place to go to gorge on stacks of pancakes or a full American

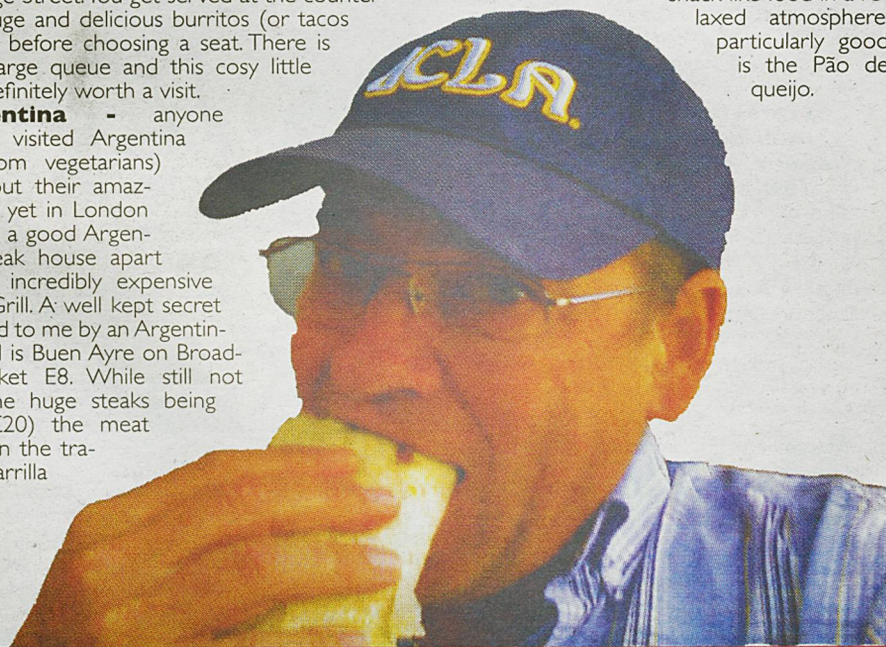
breakfast (served for brunch between 12 and 4).

**Mexico** - I'm sure you have all heard of the amazingness that is Wahacca, situated so wonderfully near our university. While it puts off some I can assure you that braving the usual half hour wait is well worth it for the huge burritos, the churros and drinks! Another Mexican place that I must admit I am rather loathe to tell you about in fear of creating queues there too, is Benito's Hat on Goodge Street. You get served at the counter equally huge and delicious burritos (or tacos or salads) before choosing a seat. There is rarely a large queue and this cosy little place is definitely worth a visit.

**Argentina** - anyone who has visited Argentina (apart from vegetarians) raves about their amazing steaks yet in London few know a good Argentinian steak house apart from the incredibly expensive Gaucho Grill. A well kept secret introduced to me by an Argentinian friend is Buen Ayre on Broadway Market E8. While still not cheap (the huge steaks being around £20) the meat cooked on the traditional parrilla

(charcoal grill) is a must have for all carnivores.

**Brazil** - Guanabara on Drury Lane is a well-known Brazilian club but what is less commonly known is that it is also an excellent restaurant with long wooden tables, large portions and a selection of dishes to satisfy all. Nearby is a café serving Brazilian food, Canela, on Earham Street, which will satisfy the cravings of travelers from Brazil who miss enjoying snack-like food in a relaxed atmosphere, particularly good is the Pão de queijo.





## TROJAN WHORE

ALICE PELTON PAYS TRIBUTE TO LSE'S LAPTOP SURGERY

For those of you who don't know, I've only recently developed my stunning good looks. I had an unlucky childhood; I was born half deaf, I had a lazy eye and had to wear an eye patch, I had braces for 10 years, and I was born with one working nostril. These factors, combined with the bitter fact that up to this point I've had a ridiculously embarrassing life, have all contributed to my deep-set malaise of insecurity.

In my first year at the LSE I lived in Hughes Parry, a gloriously ugly 1960s intercollegiate hall near Russell Square, filled with mainly UCL and Kings 'cool kids'. Whilst living there, I had the pleasure of meeting a particular member of the UCL Rugby team who once knocked on my bedroom door at 4am and shouted 'Do you want to be my number 84?' Whilst admiring his audacious honesty, I knew that if I shagged him I might as well ring Camden Sexual Health Clinic first and pre-book an appointment. Other than that, I liked this guy; he was quite fit and he had nice muscly arms.

That was until one morning I went downstairs for breakfast and bumped into him. He was still totally drunk, having just returned from a night-out, and decided it would be funny to pull down my pyjama bottoms. Now, I was fully aware that 'de-bagging' is common practice amongst the majority of middle-class privately schooled teenagers, but I was completely unprepared for it this time. I'd just woken up and didn't have any pants on; the entire dining hall, filled with around 200 people, saw my vagina. People screamed, some started crying. I believe some may even have thrown up.

The worst thing about it was, when he pulled my pyjamas down I was mid-way to my table. This meant I was left in a veritable no-mans-land; naked from the waist down, clutching my tray laden with a hot cup of tea and cereal. I thought about dropping the tray, but I dithered for too long, and then decided for some reason that I should shuffle, slowly and painfully, with my trousers round my ankles, the 10 metres to my table. Meanwhile the room was stunned into silence.

Another embarrassing incident that happened during my residence at halls takes me back to last week's warning about being bored and home-alone. I experienced the same sense of restlessness when, a few weeks into my first term, I found myself sat in my Hughes Parry bedroom with nothing to do. 9pm - the hallowed time when everyone would converge on my 'party' room to start pre-drinking - hadn't come around, and I'd already wasted an hour on the phone to Banjo.

Sat around with nothing to entertain myself with, two thoughts crossed my mind almost instantaneously. Firstly, it was the first time in my 19 years of life that I'd ever had a working lock on my bedroom door; and secondly, it was the first time in my 19 years of life that I'd ever had a computer all to myself. Realising that I had complete privacy and no father figure to check up on my laptop internet browser history, lead me to my epiphany. As my eyes gazed from my laptop to the locked door and back again, I knew there was only one thing I should do; look at porn.

Excitedly rushing to my laptop, I dutifully typed something generic such as 'sex' into Google and found a site that showed me a vast array of videos. Struck by the sheer hideousness of what met my eyes, I curiously

clicked on what looked like an interesting sample and watched expectantly for my initiation. (Later when I was asked by my friends why I had chosen to watch this particular video I justified it on the grounds that 'the

**When I later asked her what she had seen on the screen, she responded chirpily 'Just lots of boobies! And when he thought he'd got rid of them, an advert for an escort agency'!**

prise surprise, buying new software for only \$22.99. I was frantic. How was I going to explain this to anyone? I mean I'm... a virgin for god's sake! I don't ever look at porn! Besides, girls don't look at porn anyway - God forbid!

After summoning the help of my beloved male friends, I was greeted with laughter as they told me in an arrogant 'I-watch-porn-everyday-and-never-have-a-fucking-problem' way, that I had made several 'rookie errors' during my first naive foray into this online underworld. Apparently 'You Porn' is all the rage, and downloading videos - with big dicks on - isn't. And apparently, they smirked, 'Trojan' viruses are all blatantly from porn. This information seemed to alude my poor father, who was none-the-wiser when I called him to tell him my computer had become 'mysteriously' infected. Bless my dad, he immediately felt very guilty for forgetting to send me to university equipped with any anti-virus software. What was I going to say? 'Dad I was bored and there were these massive cocks on my screen which I just had to watch.'

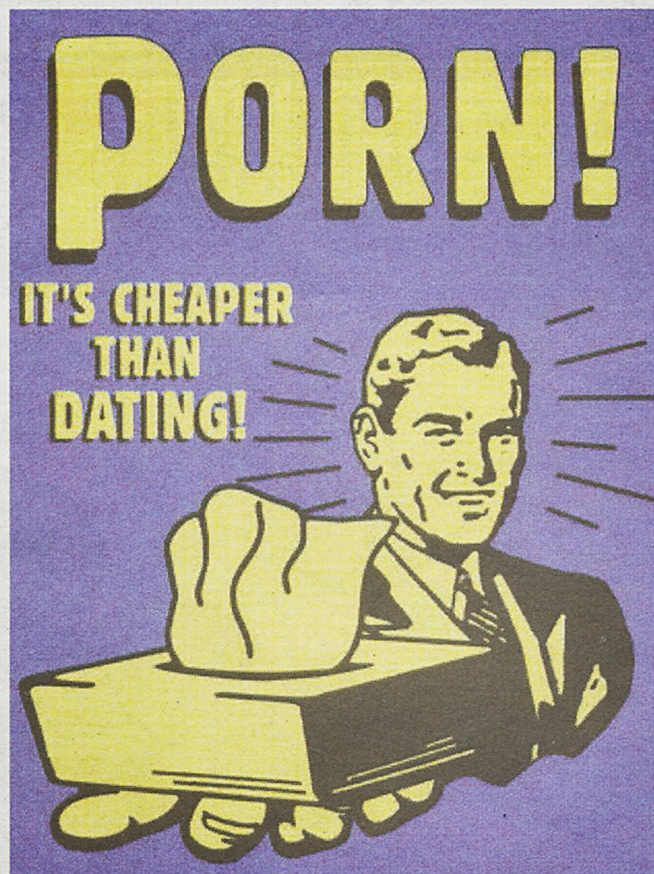
If anyone who works at LSE Laptop Surgery is reading this, then please accept my deepest gratitude for the help you and your colleagues gave the rather red-faced looking fresher who arrived there the next morning. I woke up early and ran down Kingsway, desperately clutching what was left of my laptop

and dignity. I then spent the next seven, yes seven, excruciating hours in the laptop surgery, whilst four different people tried to fix it, and ran a total of five anti-virus software programmes on it. They kept muttering things like 'We've never seen anything like it!' and 'I wonder where this virus came from...' whilst asking me to recount, time after time, what I was doing on my computer when it got infected.

The worst part was probably when the kind man helping me looked at me knowingly and asked 'So you got this virus at night then didn't you?' I stupidly decided to retort with a very badly concocted story about how 'I'd left my laptop in my room, and my male friends locked me out and decided to have a jizz fest without me' but my lies fell on deaf ears. If Howard Davies is reading this, I would like to apologise for wasting LSE's 'valuable' time and resources on putting right my porn-induced misdemeanour. Actually, I'm not that sorry - I've gotta get my money's worth some how.

Viruses clearly don't put everyone off looking at porn. One of my good friends, who happens to attend a very well respected Social and Political Science institution, went to see one of her teachers during his Office Hours. You would have thought - seeing as she was showing an interest in the class subject matter - that he would have welcomed her with open arms. Unfortunately, when she knocked on her teacher's ajar door, he was sat with his back towards her and over his shoulder she spotted him frantically closing down several porn sites on his computer.

Both her and her teacher sat through the following 20 minutes eyeing each other up and wondering if each other had seen what they thought they'd seen. When I later asked her what she had seen on the screen, she responded chirpily; 'Just lots of boobies! And when he thought he'd got rid of them, an advert for an escort agency!' At least now I've finally found out why people do PhD's. Four years of Personal Hand Development.



dicks were just too big.' Can I just add in my defence that they were huge and it would have been madness not to watch it.)

Except sadly I never got the chance to look at either of the dicks. The fucking had fucked my laptop right up. Like a fat slag returning from a night-out in Newquay, it was completely infected. Within a second I was offered the chance to 'get rid' of the virus by, sur-