

the beaver

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Newspaper of the
LSE Students' Union
FREE

Bill Gates tackles issues of global poverty



Bill Gates receives the traditional LSE cap | Photo: Nigel Stead

Bethany Clarke

Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and co-founder and former CEO of Microsoft, outlined his vision for tackling world poverty while speaking at the LSE on Tuesday 24th January.

Hans Rosling, co-founder and chairman of the Gapminder Foundation and advisor to the Global Poverty Project, spoke alongside Gates at the event.

In his address, Gates covered the key themes of his 2012 Annual Letter, focusing on the importance of agriculture and health, which he described as "intrinsically connected," in the fight against global poverty. He specifically pinpointed the lack of development as "what's holding people back" in the developing world.

"Most of the poor are people with very small farms who barely grow enough to feed their families. In tough years, they are extremely malnourished," said Gates.

"So health ties very closely to agriculture. The reason why kids die of diarrhoea and pneumonia is because their bodies aren't very strong. If they had proper nutrition, the death rate

would be dramatically lower.

Gates said that scientific investigation into better understanding plant genes may help lower crop blight, as well as aid the discovery of new methods of tackling human diseases. In particular, he highlighted the importance of working on a scientific innovation to protect cassava, a major staple food in the developing world, from brown streak disease.

Turning to the issue of health, Gates spoke at length about the successes of the campaign to eradicate polio, which was launched in 1987. Today there are only ten nations worldwide left with polio, though Gates accepted that they will be the "toughest countries," to eradicate the disease in. However, India, which Gates considered to be the greatest challenge, has now gone a year without a single case.

Gates ended his address with a warning that despite the tough economic times, it is important that the developed nations do not neglect the developing: "There are many things going on in terms of the Eurozone crisis and budget cutbacks that would make it easy to turn inward and reduce financing."

It is important that "we keep doing what we're doing" to eradicate poverty, and that

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Students complain of overcrowded classrooms

Shu Hang and Yuee Sun

Official LSE figures reveal 14.2 per cent of undergraduate classes currently exceed the official fifteen-student-per-class recommendation. This represents 223 out of 1574 total undergraduate classes.

This is a marginal improvement from last year, when 14.9 per cent of undergraduate classes topped the limit.

Three years ago, Janet Hartley, the Pro-Director of Teaching and Learning, instituted the Teaching Task Force in an attempt to address this issue. Despite this effort, large class sizes remains one of the most pressing issues regarding the teaching quality at the LSE.

Figures reveal the problem affects many departments at the LSE. As it transpires, more evident cases are observed in bigger departments, such as the Department of Economics and the Department of Geography and Environment.

There is also a significant number of over subscribed classes in many second and third year modules.

Data indicated that all five "Management Accounting, Financial Management and Organisational Control" and "Economics in Public Policy" classes have at least seventeen students each, with the largest one having 21.

Furthermore, at least half of the classes for Further Mathematical Methods (Calculus), Research Techniques (Spatial, Social and Environmental), Social Science Research Methods of Management, Jurisprudence, and many other courses currently exceed the designated maximum limit.

As the LSE has publicly declared, improving student contact time has always been one of the administration's top priorities. An article published in the July 2008 issue of the Times Higher Education Supplement detailed that "after consultation with staff and students, the task force recommended that £1.5 million a year should be spent on new lecturers, to reduce class sizes."

At the Students' Union's first

Education Assembly in 2009, Hartley reiterated these objectives, stating that "the big priority for the Teaching Task Force was to improve contact time and reduce class sizes to 15 or fewer."

Many students feel that the large class sizes are affecting the learning process in the class.

Alex Haigh, a second year Environmental Policy with Economics student said: "Oversized classes mean the class teacher is far less able to interact with students personally during the class and it is much more likely that teachers miss students who are failing or are not working hard enough."

Haigh, who had two oversized classes - in GY222 and EC201 - last term, believes that fifteen people per class is "already too many," and the number should be "treated as a strict upper limit instead of an average."

"It's unacceptable that classes are still oversized even after a campaign by the Beaver last year, which highlighted the institution-wide problem," he added.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that students who fail to turn up

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Questions raised over LSE links with Technion

John Armstrong

The LSE is involved in a joint research programme, Policy Incentives for the Creation of Knowledge: Methods and Evidence (PICK-ME), with a consortium of universities including Technion, the Israeli Institute of Technology.

This week, Lois Clifton, LSE Students' Union Environment and Ethics Officer, chaired a meeting addressing the issue of the LSE's collaborative role in the project. The aim of the meeting was to decide whether action should be taken to boycott the scheme.

Technion is a research university based in Haifa specialising in science and technology research and development. Founded in 1912, it is the oldest university in Israel and engages in collaborative projects with the government.

Technion has been at the centre of recent criticism for its involvement in the creation and design of military

technology. Thursday's meeting raised the issue of their connection with Israeli military research. Technion has conducted distinguished research in the field of robotic weapons systems, and in recent years has developed the latest innovations in unmanned aerial drones and unmanned combat vehicles.

Clifton, along with Layla Auer, member of the LSE's Students' Union Palestine Society and Michael Deas, a member of the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, provided a "platform for discussion" on LSE's research collaboration with Technion.

Clifton, argued that Technion is "implicitly implicated in Israel's occupation of Palestine" and the LSE's links with the Institute "normalises Technion's actions." The Environment and Ethics Officer outlined a range of projects Technion has been actively involved in and expressed concern over its relationship with the Israeli government.

Technion has developed a

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Union Bashō

Charity

The Gates-Rosling effect
Crowded alleyway.
Hare Krishna's menu must
have improved, I thought.

Bashō is the Beaver's elusive haiku poet. He has seen "The Joy of Stats" fifteen times.

DEAR LSE
STUDENTS,
PLEASE GO TO
THE FUCKING
UGM.
THURS 1PM.
OLD THEATRE.
THANKS.

thebeaver 

Established in 1949

Issue No. 764

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

Participation

The Emergency General Meeting (EGM) this week was, we believe, a superb step in the right direction for student debate. It should be celebrated that in such a diverse community, views across the spectrum were aired in a civil and reasonable fashion. There are different views on the topics debated, as there should be, even in this paper across the Comment section you can experience this diversity. Debate is good, involvement is better, and it was enthralling to see a bustling EGM. This was, and we believe still is, one of the least apathetic institutions in the country. However, walking into any one of the previous seventeen odd Union General Meetings (UGM), you wouldn't have thought so. This year, the vast majority of attendees were there in an official capacity, and that should change.

The motion to bring the heart of the union back to the UGM is a start, but it was concerning to note the statistics on the online vote: the other two motions debated at this meeting each broke over 500 positive votes, but the motion for the UGM garnered around 200 votes less. 300 is a good

number of votes for a motion to be passed. The concern is, that had there not been two well attended motions and then online votes, this motion may not have been passed so convincingly. It's disappointing to see so many students literally on the voting page already, choosing to forgo supporting such a motion, or even voting on it. Something has to change. At the Beaver, we eagerly anticipate the impact of the "Save our UGM" motion, and hope it will foster a return to spirited debate within our Union.

Any attempt to argue that what goes on there doesn't matter is completely false. Sabbatical officers give their reports and take questions about what they have done making it possible for the student body to hold them to account. More importantly it is a chance to hear the news on campaigns that ultimately affect you. The Only Way Is Ethics campaign will fundamentally shape our university's funding structure; this will govern the money that is used to pay for classrooms, teachers' and lecturers' salaries, and fund the Student's Union (SU), so is inexorably linked to your

university experience. Every officer puts in significant amounts of their time for the university community, and at the very least deserves some level of interest.

The notion of a strong and vital UGM in our university's past is not an historical cliché; it is true that student engagement in the SU is at an all-time low. Yes, this is partly due to the abolishment of paper-throwing at the UGM leading to full - rather than the previous partial - apathy within the Athletics' Union and this must be countered by some measures to improve relations between the SU's largest society and the SU itself. The attitude of mistrust, and at some points severe dislike, must be countered. It is clear that students do not care about the UGM, so something extra must be provided to help them on the way. It is the Students' Union, for the whole student body, not solely for the politically-minded. So the UGM, the only place for our Student leaders to be held to account, must represent the views of all and bringing voting back to the UGM is a positive step in the right direction.

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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

collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

The Beaver would like to thank the LSE students who contributed to this issue.

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The elections for both a new Chair of the Collective and Online Editor shall be held on Tuesday (today) at 2.00 in room TW1.U103, Tower 1, floor 1.

Correction

In last week's paper, it was claimed in "Students discuss antisemitism, Islamophobia at UGM" (24.01.2012) that Lukas Slothuus, Community and Welfare officer made reference to "Islamophobic" actions of the ASH society in calling for a depiction of the Prophet Muhammed". Slothuus did not call the actions of the ASH society Islamophobic or mention them calling for such a depiction. He simply condemned Islamophobia on a wider scale. In addition, the claim that Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Student Union, "condemned the calls from the LSE SU ASH Society to publish cartoons of the prophet Muhammed" was erroneous. Peters-Day in fact stated that the SU will take a "zero-tolerance" stance over Islamophobia and antisemitism.

We sincerely apologise for misrepresenting what was said, and placing these comments out of context. We would like to reiterate that this was not our intention.

Religious intolerance debated at EGM

Sydney Saubestre

This week, the London School of Economics (LSE) Students' Union held an Emergency General Meeting (EGM) in response to the increasing tension on campus among society groups. After weeks of low attendances, the EGM successfully brought a substantial amount of students to the Old Theatre during the Union General Meeting's (UGM) constant Thursday allotment. The meeting, chaired by Jack Tindale, presented three motions to be debated.

The first motion was raised in response to the perceived rise of antisemitic sentiments on campus. 'Stop Anti-Semitism Now!' was a motion that was first implemented three years ago and was up for renewal. The motion aimed to detail what should be categorised as antisemitism, and to ensure that all antisemitic incidents are "dealt with swiftly and effectively in conjunction with the school." The motion further called for the publication of "a semi-annual report detailing all incidents of racism, including anti-Semitic incidents of racism that have occurred on campus during the previous six months and the actions taken by the union and the School."

The motion was submitted by Jay Stoll, President of the LSE Students' Union Jewish Society, and seconded by Coren Lass, receiving no opposition. The motion passed with a total of 507 votes, 78 per cent for and nineteen per cent against, with three per cent of voters undecided.

The second motion, entitled "No to racism - No to Islamophobia," was raised in response to increasing tensions on campus between various LSE student societies. Many Muslim students were offended by the LSE Students' Union Atheist, Secularist, and Humanist (ASH) Society's publication of a "Jesus and Mo" cartoon, in which the two are portrayed "having a pint." The cartoon was originally posted on the ASH Society's Facebook page in solidarity with a similar society at the University College of London (UCL) which was asked to take the cartoon down by the UCL Students' Union.

The motion affirms that the Students' Union believes in "the right to freedom of speech and thought" and "the right to criticise religion," but also reiterates its "responsibility to protect its members from hate crime and hate

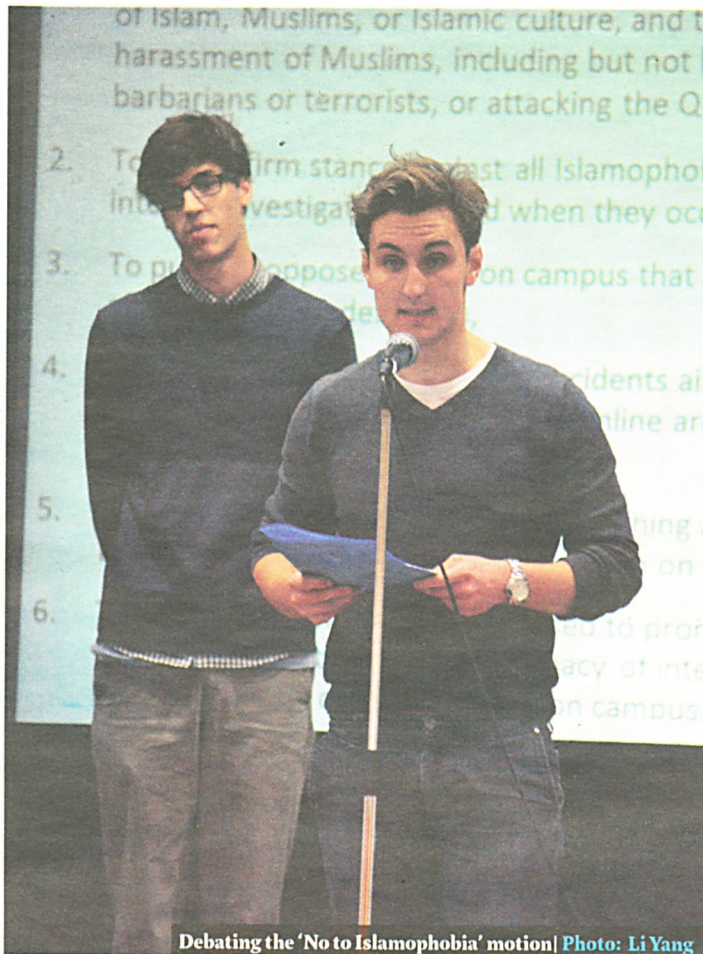
speech." Presented by Anneessa Mahmood, LSE Students' Union Trustee, the motion defined Islamophobia as "a form of racism expressed through the hatred or fear of Islam, Muslims, or Islamic culture, and the stereotyping, demonisation or harassment of Muslims as barbarians or terrorists, or attacking the Qur'an as a manual of hatred." All comments or incidents that can be categorised under this definition should be "publicly opposed" and "dealt with swiftly and effectively in conjunction with the School." Moreover, the implementation of the motion would ensure the "promotion and enhance legitimate debate regarding the morality and legitimacy of international conflicts."

Marshall Palmer and Jack Curtis, members of the ASH Society, opposed the motion on the grounds that it was an "unnecessary curtailment of free speech." They firmly stated that "the motion conflated ideas with people. People deserve respect, their ideas and their religion do not." Palmer argued that he, and other members of the ASH Society, firmly denounced all forms of religious oppression, including "anti-Muslim bigotry."

"We did not so much as oppose the motion as much as we wished to amend it. Unfortunately, by the time the motions became publicly available they were too late to amend," Palmer said. "Voting down the motion, reforming it, and resubmitting it was the only possible way to amend it. Our proposed amendments would replace the word 'Islamophobia' with 'anti-Muslim bigotry' and would strike out the prohibition towards 'hatred or fear of Islam' and 'attacking the Qur'an as a manual of hatred.'"

The audience was divided in its stance and obdurate debate ensued as both those who proposed the motion and those who opposed it were questioned by LSE students. The motion passed with a total of 542 votes, 63 per cent for and 33 per cent against, with four per cent of voters undecided.

The final motion, entitled "UGM-Centre of our Union" was proposed by Lukas Slothuus, LSE Students' Union Community and Welfare Officer. The motion sought to amend the Students' Union's Bye-Laws in response to dwindling UGM attendance this year. The motion stated that "the present system of online voting, rendering attendance at the UGM immaterial, is a strong contributing factor to low turnout at the UGM." Under the new motion, voting will take place at the UGM, unless attendants vote to put the



Debating the 'No to Islamophobia' motion | Photo: Li Yang

motion to an online vote. A few audience members were concerned that the motion would not solve the problem of attendance at UGM, claiming it did not address the "root of the problem with attendance." Others were concerned that privacy would be curtailed, further arguing that a "mob-mentality" effect might alter the outcome of controversial issues. Slothuus responded by pointing out that the motion had a "secret ballot" clause to preclude this, at the discretion of the Chair or by procedural vote. In addition, the motion includes a Bye-Law under which "a vote may be 'taken online'" if "one third of members present at a quorate General Meeting" vote in favour.

The motion passed with a total of 317 votes, 64 per cent for and 23 per cent against, with sixteen per cent of voters undecided.

Under the new motion, the requisite "quorum for a General Meet-

ing vote" has been lowered to 150 members. Additionally, members of the Union may now submit amendments to a motion while they are being deliberated at the UGM. The new Bye-Law 2.10 states: "voting at all General Meetings shall ordinarily take place at the General Meeting itself, by a show of hands or, by procedural motion or the discretion of the UGM Chair, by a count of Student ID cards and/or secret ballot."

"I'm overjoyed, bringing voting back into the UGM is so essential to Union democracy," said Slothuus on the motion's passing. "Online voting killed the UGM but we have revived it. Students now have a real, physical space to discuss the direction of our Students' Union. Being exposed to both sides of an argument and then making a voting decision is infinitely much better and more democratic than being sent to the voting website by a friend."



Tindale presides over online voting deliberation | Photo: Li Yang



Welcome to the new RAG column which will tell you all you need to know about what's happening on campus in the coming weeks! For those who aren't aware of what RAG is it stands for 'Raising and Giving' and we are the fundraising body of the Students' Union. RAG is here to support any students in their fundraising efforts so do get in touch if you have any ideas or need any help! This year's RAG charities are Action Against Hunger, WarChild and National AIDS Trust, but anyone is more than welcome to raise money for the charity of their choice.

Next Week, Week 5, the Debate Society are hosting the RAG Valentine's Cup, where couples can debate which will be raising money for RAG. Do keep a look out for notices and be sure to go along!

RAG is busy making preparations for RAG Week 2012, which is taking place in Week 6 of this term! We'd like to encourage everyone to get involved in any way they can from paying off library fines (which will go to RAG in that week so do save them) to competing in Mr LSE. There will be a full itinerary printed in the Beaver in the coming weeks, so look out for what to get involved in. Great events are lined up including a Battle of the Halls re-match (watch out Carr Saunders) and Gunge-A-Sab. We hope that you'll join the many societies and the AU already set to take part in this fantastic week long fundraiser!

The RAG Skydive for WarChild is taking place at the end of Week 6 on Sunday 19th February. Please support the many LSE students who will be courageously taking part by sponsoring them either in person or on their 'just giving' pages. This is a fantastic event and we wish the skydivers the best of luck! If you have any questions about the dive please email Flora, our Skydive Officer, at f.raffai@lse.ac.uk.

The RAG Hitchhike is to Berlin this year! Leaving on Saturday 17th March (end of Week 10) this event sees teams of two or three travelling to Berlin on as little money as possible. Prizes will greet the fastest team and the team that raises the most amount of money for the RAG Charity - Action Against Hunger. If you're interested in taking part look out for more info in the RAG e-mail, and there'll be an information meeting soon! Any questions can be sent to our Hitch Officer, Nona, at n.j.buckley-irvine@lse.ac.uk. For more information about RAG and its events on campus, please 'like' our Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=132201788970>, become our friend on Facebook by adding LSE SU RAG, and join our mailing list for free by going to <http://www.lsesu.com/activities/societies/society/rag/>. LSE SU RAG is proud to be sponsored by Ernst & Young.

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50.5 per cent of Statistics students international

Connor Russell

According to recently released figures, the proportion of London School of Economics (LSE) undergraduate students classified as being domiciled outside of the European Union (EU) has been over four times the national average for the past three years. 37.6 per cent of LSE students are currently paying overseas fees, compared with a national average of just 7.6 per cent.

English students represent the largest contingent in every single department, with little representation from other countries within the UK across the board. Most non-EU students are from Hong Kong, China, Malaysia and Singapore. General Course students, many of whom come from the United States, are not included in this data.

The Department of Economics registered an average of just two students from Scotland per year, between 2008 and 2011, out of a total of over 650 students enrolled in the department. Northern Ireland was marginally better represented with an average of four students per year. In contrast there was only one student from Wales throughout the entire period. Wales was better represented in the Department of Philosophy, with a 140 students hailing from the country. There was little statistical difference between the different years considered, suggesting that the LSE has now reached a stable and diverse student mixture.

The Department of Statistics tops the list of overseas student proportions, with 50.5 per cent of its entire undergraduate population hailing from outside of the EU, while the Department of Social Policy fell below the national average, at 6.8 per cent. These disparities come despite all departments charging the same fees, and do not correlate with relative competition for places - measured by the ratio of applicants to places.



Houghton Street | Photo: the Beaver

The Department of Economics has the most international student population with students representing 64 different nations. The Department of Law follows closely behind with 63 countries represented, despite the department's need to cover UK law in great depth to satisfy the requirements of the LLB qualification, perhaps suggesting that many of LSE's international students intend to stay in the UK, or view a Law degree at the LSE as

a basis for further study.

The School's least varied department - also one of its smallest in terms of undergraduate numbers - was the Department of Social Policy, which can still claim twenty different countries to its name.

This student body's diversity is reflected in the activities and societies available within the Students' Union, with over sixty different cultural and nationality based societies, including

the Northern and Global societies, which all run a wide variety of events. This figure suggests that the Students' Union comes close to having a society for each nationality represented in the undergraduate student body.

The School has developed a reputation for its particularly international feel for quite some time, as acknowledged by Students' Union International Officer Hannah Geis: "the fact that such a high proportion of our student

body comes from outside the UK, and that such a wide variety of countries are represented on our campus is indubitably one of the most exciting aspects of our university. This great diversity not only enhances academic discussions but also creates a vibrant and colourful cultural life on campus."

Smith discusses emerging economies

Harry Burdon

David Smith, Economics Editor at the Times, spoke at the LSE on the position of emerging economies after the economic crisis, and whether or not they will "rise to the growth challenge."

Smith started by describing how now is the first time since the Second World War that "global GDP shrank from one year to the next." While previous post-war global recessions "had seen world trade fall by perhaps one or two percent in volume terms," the fall in 2009 was ten percent. However, 2010 saw a strong bounce back of thirteen percent in world trade, a "very strong global recovery", with "5.2 per cent world economic growth." Out of the last thirty years, 2010 was one of only three when "global economic growth had exceeded five percent, driven primarily by emerging economies."

As recently as the 1990s, "two thirds of economic growth was supplied by advanced economies," and "only one third by emerging economies." In contrast, "it was the other way round in the run up to the crisis,

and it's been reinforced since the crisis." Initial optimism following the recession was short-lived. In 2011, global growth tailed off, "particularly in the case of advanced economies." Trade began flattening out: "even China struggled in late 2011 to maintain growth."

Smith commented on how "emerging economies tend to be more commodity hungry, more energy hungry." Whilst there was an initial fall in commodity prices at the beginning of the financial crisis, they quickly rose again. In contrast, in advanced economies, the recession led to spare capacity and high unemployment, "bringing down the inflationary pressure." Smith believes this to be a "big factor in explaining... the weakness of growth in a lot of advanced economies, including the UK." In addition, the Japanese earthquake and tsunami harmed the recovery, affecting the interlinked nature of global manufacturing.

Smith commented on how the recession had exposed the serious weaknesses within the Eurozone. Some members of the Eurozone were motivated to join in order to "buy into the credibility of strong northern countries, in particular Germany." This allowed for lower bond yields. Italy arguably saw the greatest gains from

joining, temporarily reducing its debt interest and gaining a primary surplus. However, Italian bond yields increase as the recession hit.

A gap between Germany's bonds and those of the other countries within the Eurozone was expected, but never as large as they have become. Smith stated that the "widening out of bond yields showed the system really wasn't working, because of course it reflected fears that certain member countries can default, maybe they will leave and so on."

Smith drew attention to Mandel's conditions for an optimal currency area, which places importance on a fiscal union where "everybody has to obey structural discipline." However, this was never a part of the Eurozone, claimed Smith. He also made the point that, if national objections could be overcome, "pooling of deficits" would make "quite a lot of sense." Smith most fears an "unplanned disintegration" of the Eurozone, as it is uncertain what would replace it.

Smith then went on to describe the effect of the faltering advanced economies on the emerging economies. In the past, the developing countries were dependent on the advanced, and "when the advanced world had a mild recession, the developing world would

have a serious recession." However, growth rates tell a different story, Smith says. "The growth gap between emerging economies and the advanced economies actually increased as the recession hit, so they weren't necessarily dependent on advanced economy growth." Smith sees this as evidence of a real decoupling, and he went on to say that "all advanced economies saw their GDP shrink," but "emerging economies, overall, continued to grow, albeit at a slower rate." A strong change in the world has been that the proportion of trade that emerging economies have with advanced economies has gradually reduced.

Smith then discussed why the advanced world had been held back, whilst the emerging surged forward. Prior to the crisis, the advanced economies' debt was about seventy percent of GDP, but "by the time that a lot of this has come through, it will be well over one hundred percent." In contrast, in the emerging world, "most of them have relatively healthy fiscal positions," and debt is "projected to fall as a percentage of GDP. He also commented on how the earlier stages of growth are easier than the latter stages. Smith believes that "essentially, the story of the twenty-first century I

think is the rise of emerging markets."

Putting the emerging economies into the context of the past two-thousand years, the rise of the West has been relatively recent. Smith said how in year one, India produced a third of world economic output, and China a quarter. About two hundred years ago, China and India accounted for "between fifty and sixty per cent of the global economy." The European and American industrial revolutions reshaped the economic landscape, and by 1970 China and India represented only five or six per cent of the global economy.

Smith feels the "central question" is the "availability of resources." He also foresees the possibility of "political backlash" from the advanced world. There could be protectionism, and because of the financial linkages, Smith identified the greatest risk to the emerging world to be a second financial crisis in the advanced world. Overall, Smith believes the shift of economic powers towards emerging economies "was there before the crisis, but has been accelerated by the financial crisis."

Students' Union's Financial Team explores NatWest's ethics

Bethany Clarke

The decision will ultimately be made by the Board of Trustees. The next meeting of the Board will be held on the 1st February.

According to the Students' Union's

website, "The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the management and administration of the Union and ... may exercise all the powers of the Union."

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring the good governance of the Students' Union - that the Students' Union is financially stable, has a clear strategic direction, and follows legal

requirements. The Trustees are also charged with staff related issues.

The Students' Union's Financial Team is currently investigating the possibility of moving the Union's banking from NatWest to the Co-operative Bank.

"There are multiple problems with NatWest, primarily that they fund deeply unethical investments," such as "tar sands...and cluster munition," said Lukas Slothuus, the Students' Union's Community and Welfare Officer.

NatWest, officially the National Westminster Bank Plc, has been a member of the Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc since 2000. According to a report by People and Planet, (RBS), is the UK's biggest lender to companies operating in tar sands extraction projects in Canada.

"The Co-operative Bank, despite its flaws, is the most ethical and responsible bank we can use, and is more in line with the values of the SU as an organisation," said Slothuus.

He added the possibility of a switch is currently "on the drawing board and not something that has already been implemented, or is close to being implemented."



Photo: Flickr User

continued from page 1

remote-controlled "D9" bulldozer used by the Israeli army in the demolition of Palestinian homes. This has been heavily condemned by the United Nations (UN).

Similarly, the Institute for Technology has been heavily involved in developing tunnel detecting equipment for the Israeli government. In her article published in the Beaver last week, Clifton suggests that Technion has been both "directly and indirectly" involved in the creation of military surveillance and security equipment in conjunction with Elbit Systems, an Israeli Company known for providing the monitoring systems for the 760km separation wall. Auer further emphasised this point in the general meeting on Thursday, saying there has been a

"close relationship" between Technion and Elbit since a research agreement was signed in 2008.

News of the LSE's close ties with the Israeli Institute comes in light of recent events in New York. In December 2011, Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City announced that Cornell University and Technion won the bid to create a two billion dollar research campus on Roosevelt Island. A similar reaction to boycott the scheme has also been encouraged by students at Cornell University.

However, Thursday's meeting generated a strong reaction by those who disagree with the proposals at the LSE. Jay Stoll, president of the Jewish Society, argued that Clifton's discussion was a "xenophobic meeting" and a boycott of Technion would further isolate Jewish students on campus.

Many of those attending the discussion also highlighted the positive aspects of Technion's research, such as its involvement in the creation of drugs

for Parkinson's disease and the three Nobel Prize winners which are affiliated with Institute.

Clifton's meeting also came under criticism for targeting an institution solely because it is Israeli. While a broader ethics campaign exists - The Only Way is Ethics - some may see the proposals to boycott a university counterproductive as many Israeli academics are the most sympathetic members of society who advocate and encourage an end to the tensions in the region.

Thursday's meeting was the start of an ongoing discussion into the LSE's ties with the Israeli Institute of Technology and Robin Burrett, Post-graduate officer called for a "platform for dialogue, with a broad campaign involving the whole of the LSE student body."

Incorporation leads to constitution changes for Students' Union

Sydney Saubestre

The London School of Economics (LSE) Students' Union officially became incorporated on 19 July 2011 by registering with the Charities Act 2004, the national regulator for students' unions. The LSE Students' Union Trustee Board resolved on 6 December 2011 that it would incorporate at the earliest opportunity.

The decision was agreed with the School, who "had the statutory responsibilities to ensure the good governance and running of the Union," and was "subsequently agreed by the appointed lawyers and the Charity Commission."

As a legal entity, incorporation allows the Union with greater independence and requires greater transparency of its activities, while simultaneously limiting the liability of trustees, six of whom are currently enrolled at the LSE.

In a statement, Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union said "incorporation is a positive move for us as a Union - it requires greater public disclosure of our activities which enhances our transparency and leads to a more effective Union."

Peters-Day went on to say "it limits the liability of trustees - an important feature as we have six current LSE students and five sabbatical officer members of the Trustee Board. Before this, trustees were personally liable if the Union was to go bankrupt."

Specific wording and the use of legal rhetoric has often caused confusion among the student body and as a result, the General Secretary states,

"there has been some change of language in the constitution as a result of incorporating."

In order to register with the Charity Commission, the specific wording of the constitution had to be modified: "the appointed lawyers transferred the existing Constitution into a new one which met this requirement, subsequently called the Memorandum & Articles."

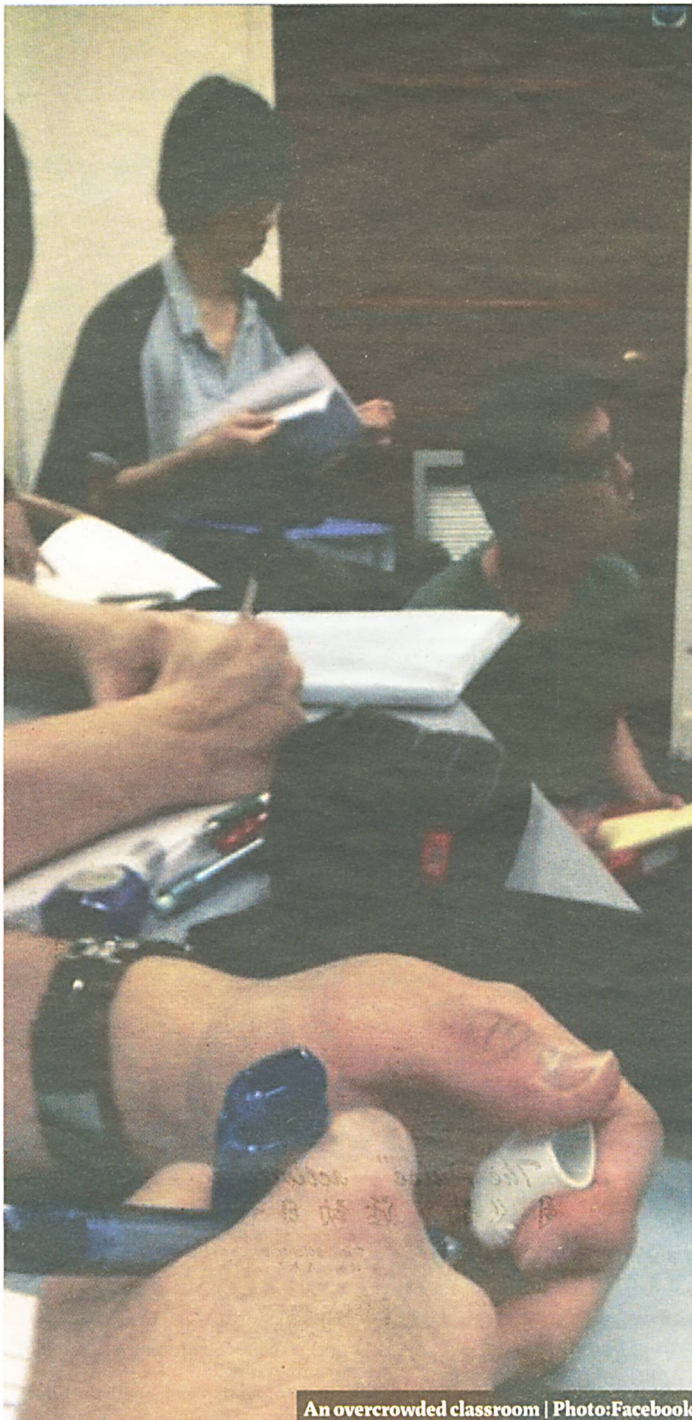
Defining the term "General Meeting" was outlined as a point of discrepancy. Under the new wording, former definition of the term "General Meeting," which formally referred to Union General Meeting (UGM), Emergency General Meeting (EGM) and Annual General Meeting, will now be formally known as "Members' Meetings." On a colloquial day-to-day-basis, the three will informally remain known as a "General Meeting," so that the UGM need not be renamed.

Formally the term "General Meeting" will refer to a "General Meeting for the purposes of the Companies Act." Though this term was not formally defined by the old constitution, its practice is nothing new, referring to a Trustee Board resolution or a petition of fifteen per cent of students, similar to a referendum.

Peters-Day reiterates that "essentially the changes from incorporating only effected the governance of the Union and there is no difference in the way that we, as a Union, actually operate. The wording in the by laws allows us to continue calling the UGM the Union General Meeting even if it is not what the Charity Commission would refer to as a General Meeting. The wording was agreed between the LSE, our lawyers and the Trustee Board."



The Technion Computer Science Building. | Photo: Flickr Beny Shlevich



An overcrowded classroom | Photo:Facebook

» continued
from page 1

to a class can choose to attend another class in the same week.

Justin, a first year actuarial science student, expressed exasperation over the crowding of his afternoon economics class by students with classes in the early morning or late evening.

"We constantly have somebody from outside the class. Considering that there are already 17 students, their inclusion just makes the class impossibly big. There are barely enough chairs to sit on, and we have to make room just so everyone has enough table space."

LSE's ranking in the national league tables has, in recent years, been crippled by its low student satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey. Last year, the LSE saw a four per cent improvement in student satisfaction. The latest score of 84 per cent "puts LSE above the national average and in line with most of its Russell Group peers."

Professor Judith Rees, Interim Director of the LSE, has attributed this to "the effects of the Teaching Task Force, which was set up to improve the educational experience of all students at LSE, and which resulted in an extra £3 million being invested each year in teaching."

Despite these efforts, the LSE still

trails behind other high-ranking institutions like University College London, Durham, St Andrews and Warwick.

According to the School's policy, departments seeking to schedule classes with more than fifteen students are required to seek temporary exemption from the Undergraduate Studies Sub Committee, where each case is considered individually.

According to Linda Taylor, LSE timetable manager, the number of students selecting a specific option fluctuates significantly each year, making it difficult for departments to determine how many classes should be allocated for each module.

"The number of students in each class does not settle down until week 3 or 4, as students tend to drop in and out of classes," she said, "thus you will eventually find classes with large amount of students even though the classes were under the limit to begin with."

She added that the School is always seeking ways to create more classes for oversubscribed courses, but noted the underlying problem that students are reluctant to move once they settled into a class still remains.

Regarding postgraduate classes, Taylor said: "Some courses adopt a 'Harvard-style' pedagogy, which merits larger class sizes, while the specialist nature of some courses makes it difficult for the department to find extra teaching staff."

India's role in global economy examined

Julia Wacket

Ramachandra Guha, Philippe Roman Chair in History and International Affairs at LSE IDEAS for 2011-2012, explained why he believes, sixty years after drafting its constitution, India's hopes for superpower status are far too ambitious, in a well attended public lecture last week.

Michael Cox, Co-director of LSE IDEAS and Professor of International Relations at the LSE, introduced Guha as a "renaissance man," who has written about everything - from Indian history and cricket to Gandhi.

Guha began his speech by focusing on Indian Republic Day, the monumental day sixty years ago when a hierarchical society became a democratic one. Guha sarcastically commented on the labourious process, saying "the Japanese constitution was drafted in nine days, the Indians, being notoriously disputatious, needed two and a half years," which was largely due to India's diversity and internal division.

Since then, the global perception of India has largely changed, and its depiction as a superpower is no longer contested. Today, Guha states, the picture has changed, and the 21st-century is wrongly called the Indian and Chinese century. "There are three kinds of people who promote this

myth: politicians, industrialists and the newspaper editors."

He then proceeded to outline his ten reasons why India's superpower ambitions are likely to fail. As the first three reasons, Guha mentioned left wing political extremism, right wing fundamentalism and the dissolution of the democratic centre. Relating to the first reason, Guha exclaimed that: "Mao may be dead in China, but not in my country," adding that of the 500 state districts, at least eighty would be declared Maoist. In terms of democracy, India is still too corrupt to provide effective political rule, with the major party being controlled by a single family. "Angela Merckels or Barack Obamas who can work their way up out of nothing are hard to find in India," said Guha.

The decline in Indian public institutions, the rising gap between the rich and the poor, India's environmental degradation, and the poor quality of the media, were other reasons for his argument against an Indian superpower. "Especially in the light of income inequality and environmental capture," Guha said, "the media is not doing its job."

"In India we have a multi party coalition, with nineteen parties - and England is already worried about its two party coalition." For Guha, this is evidence that India is "too large, too diverse." Additionally, India is still home to many secessionist movements, with three states were the

majority would vote for secession.

"India needs to be a part of a reconstructed UN Security Council, preferably at the expense of Great Britain, maybe France," said Guha. "But international affairs are not a hundred metre race. India needs a desire and capability to assert its will against other nations."

This will require major improvements, especially in the political sector, to build a real democracy, not a thinly veiled "five-class democracy."

Despite his critical outlook, Guha received impressive applause from the audience. Dheepa Swami, an LSE alumna who studied for an MSc in Psychology at the LSE, agreed with Guha: "the Indian society is still deeply divided. One part is westernised, watching American TV-shows and studying abroad, the other lives in extreme poverty and doesn't know where their next meal is coming from."

"We still have a lot of problems. Transformation has to be step by step," said another audience member, Meera Swami.

Others were not as convinced by Guha's arguments. One audience member asked: "we are a creditor nation, have a robust military base and our culture is accepted world wide - aren't all those characteristics of a superpower?"

Aid ineffective in Arab world

Arisa Manawapat

Khalid Almezaini, visiting research fellow at the University of Cambridge, presented a public lecture entitled "Foreign Aid in the Middle East: Identities, morals, and interests" at the LSE on Wednesday. Almezaini explored the causes of the ineffectiveness of foreign aid to the Arab world, discussing the effects of foreign aid on the Arab Spring, and stressing the need for more transparency in aid reports.

With the majority of the Arab world as aid recipients - Egypt receiving \$3.6 billion in the past thirty years and Jordan collecting \$2.5 billion - Almezaini draws attention to the "linked interests" aid donors share with the developing countries. The research fellow outlined the injustice of aid not reaching the people who need it with the profound image of "pouring water into a packet which leaks and drains away." Almezaini highlights "geographic proximity, culture and language similarities" as the main considerations for Arab aid donors. In particular, "Arabism" acts as the "significant ideology," as in Saudi Arabia's

funding of religious schools in Yemen.

Moreover, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait gained diplomatic credibility in supporting the "least recognised countries of the United Nations." On the other hand, moral motivations to give aid, or as Almezaini terms the "constructivist approach," are undermined by the tendency of countries to "define morality for themselves."

In the case of the UAE, Almezaini emphasises the problematic "lack of transparency" in monitoring aid. From his recent visit to the UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid (OCFA), Almezaini concludes that the data on aid was "unreliable" and "still missing many years." He suggests that the data gap was intentional, due to its controversial recipient, the Taliban.

Furthermore, Almezaini disappointingly admits that foreign aid in the Arab Spring was exploited to "enhance the security and stability of regimes," namely Mubarak in Egypt and Ali Abdullah Saleh in Yemen.

Libyan rebels were supported by Qatar and the UAE, who trained soldiers and equipped them with "weapons, cash, and literally everything they needed for war." Aid was mainly driven by two factors - "prestige and

visibility." This has proved effective, as Qatar is now "feared by other regimes," especially with rumours that the nation will "soon get in contact with the Syrian opposition."

In reply to a question of why aid was still ineffective in Palestine, Almezaini pinpoints the "corruption of Palestinian governments, aid agencies, and objections of Israel." He predicts that aid to Palestine will "remain ineffective, as long as Israel's policy of expansion continues."

Tahira Nizari, a postgraduate MSc NGOs and Development student, described the lecture as "a very eye-opening talk in terms of the vested interest of the UAE in foreign aid, from the perspective of someone who has grown up in Dubai."

"The most interesting aspect," according to Neil Patrick, a freelance Middle East consultant, "is what aid does to recipient countries, corruption of politics in development, and how it has been used to calm situations, yet with limited success."

» continued from page 1

people are reminded that donations and aid have a significant impact on the lives overseas," Gates added. He praised Great Britain's commitment to poverty reduction as "actually quite exemplary."

In his lecture, Rosling provided an overview of population growth over the past several centuries and offered his prognosis for future trends. In an audience-engaging talk that involved animated graphs and interactive models, Rosling said we need to accept that world population will level out at between nine and ten billion by 2050 and begin planning accordingly. He stressed that "today, improving health precedes economic growth" in importance.

Rosling said while poverty is actually "quite easy" to understand - he defined it as "lack of food, lack of clothes, lack of shelter, and lack of school" - social scientists must invest more time and effort into researching poverty as "it's not intuitive what is the best thing to invest in, you really have to analyse" the data.

Audience members and people watching the live webcast of the event were given an opportunity to ask both Gates and Rosling questions following their speeches. One audience member asked the speakers what climate change will mean for agriculture and projects aimed at combating poverty.

Gates acknowledged that "climate change will reduce crop productivity" and as such is "a very serious problem," but added "the good news is that it's not a problem that happens overnight." He urged scientists to spend more time and money researching the

issue, which he described as "under-researched."

The event, held by the Global Poverty Project, marked the launch of the Global Poverty Ambassadors Initiative. Over one hundred individuals were named as Ambassadors in 2012. They will be trained by experts from the LSE and the University of Edinburgh in order to become "leading voices in the campaign against extreme poverty, informing and inspiring their own communities to take meaningful action on behalf of the poor."

Gates said he felt the message of his annual letter is reflected in the mission of the Global Poverty Project: "The message of my fourth annual letter is identical to what the Global Poverty Project is all about - that is, that it's very easy to lose sight of the conditions of the very poorest."

On Wednesday 25th, Gates reiterated many of the central tenets of his speech while speaking at the World Economic Forum summit in Davos, where he again stressed the importance of continued investment in the developing world. He underscored his case by announcing that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation had pledged \$750 million to the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Gates' visit to the LSE was met by widespread student enthusiasm, with students - some with cameras and video recorders - gathering outside the Old Building in hopes of catching a glimpse of the famous entrepreneur and philanthropist as he made his way to his car.



Hans Rosling addressing LSE audience | Photo: Nigel Stead

CHINA WEEK PULSE

中國周韻

China Week 2012

January 30th-February 3rd

For five days, LSESU CSSA brings you tasters of some of the most famous traditional Chinese festive and cultural celebrations. This week is not just for our Chinese community but for all LSE students.

You will be able to experience a dragon dance, wine tasting, traditional Chinese clothes, and much more all.

Prepared over the last few months it promises to be one a one-week wonder on Houghton Street and examines the past of a growing superpower.

We hope you eat well and play hard during China Week 2012!

Partners & Sponsors:

For more information, please visit our facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/events/348702145141127/>
 了解更多詳情, 請登陸我們的facebook 專頁: <http://www.facebook.com/events/348702145141127/>

China Week "The Pulse" activity agenda

中國周《韻》活動日程

Date: 30/01/2012 - 03/02/2012
 時間: 壬辰年正月初一至正月十二

Monday (30th Jan) 周一 (初八)

- Dragon Dance 舞龍
- Kongfu Show 武術表演
- Location 地點: Houghton Street
- Chinese Food Tasting 中國食品鑒賞
- Location 地點: 4th Floor, Old Building

Tuesday (31st Jan) 周二 (初九)

- Chinese Traditional Tea and Wine Tasting 酒茶鑒賞會
- Chinese Traditional Games and Toys 傳統玩具遊戲會
- Location 地點: Houghton Street

Wednesday 1st Feb 周三 (初十)

- Mahjong 麻將會
- Chinese Traditional Music and Chinese Movies Show 中國音樂電影鑒賞
- Location 地點: E304/1200-1500

Thursday (2nd Feb) 周四 (十一)

- Chinese Food Tasting 食品鑒賞
- Location 地點: Houghton Street
- Talk on Chinese Medicine 中醫講座
- Location 地點: CEM 1.01/1700-1800
- Chinese Traditional Music and Chinese Movies Show 中國音樂電影鑒賞
- Location 地點: SAB 2.14/1800-2100

Friday (3rd Feb) 周五 (十二)

- Chinese Traditional Calligraphy Show 中國書法展
- Traditional Chinese Costume Parade 中華服飾走秀
- Location 地點: Houghton Street

Extra: 其他:

We also provide Chinese traditional clothing for photos everyday on Houghton Street. 我們屆時每天提供中國傳統服裝以便您拍照留念。

Director: 侯宇家
 Assistant Director: 謝奕華
 Team Members: 李景錫 韓詩丹 鄧宇丹 曹曉迪 宋曉林

The final contribution to this activity belongs to LSE CSSA China Week "The Pulse" Team. 最後的貢獻歸屬於中國周《韻》活動組。



ThamesReach
POWER

Charity Fashion Show

Enchanted

*For tickets at £ 5:
Stanley Tsang: 07733 089995*

Date: 9th Feb 2012

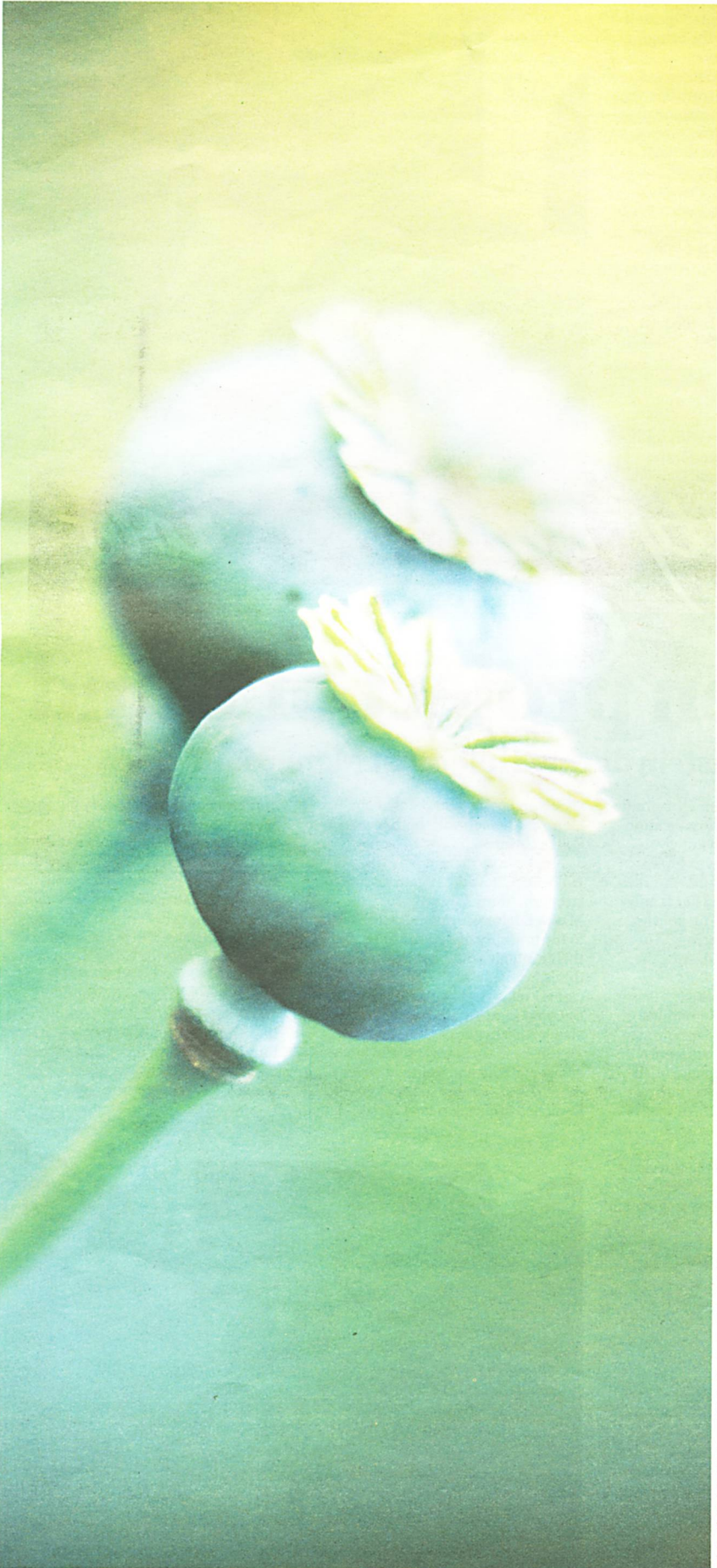
Time: 6.30 p.m.

Venue: LSE Quad, Houghton Street

Comment

100 years of drugs war

Tom Heyden argues that we need to change the way we deal with drug problems



**Tom
Heyden**



Time changes perspectives. The thought of Queen Elizabeth II ordering opium from the chemist provokes a markedly different reaction to that when Queen Victoria regularly used to do so in the nineteenth century. Meanwhile, Great Britain's two Opium Wars with China (fought to prevent them banning opium) contrast strikingly with the "war on drugs" that has raged ever since the signature of the 1912 anti-drugs treaty.

One hundred years after the Hague Convention, we can only hope that enough time has passed for mistaken perspectives to change once again. After trillions of wasted pounds on the "war on drugs," what do we have to show for it? We've spawned the third biggest industry in the world - around £300 billion, following only food and oil! - and delivered it into the hands of violent gangs. We've criminalised the ailment of addiction and have an overpopulated prison system. And, year on year, the UK taxpayer picks up the bill to the tune of an estimated £20 billion.

It is clear that the time has come for our perspective to change regarding this unmitigated disaster. Except that, counter-intuitively, it already has - at least among the people we should be looking to for guidance. Scientists and medical professionals unanimously agree that drug addiction is not a criminal issue; it is a public health issue. As for the police, they regularly argue for drug policy reform and complain about the diversion of precious resources towards an "unwinnable" war, especially when levelled against non-violent "criminals." This leaves us with our ostensible leaders, the politicians. Perhaps their position is best exemplified with this 2002 recommendation by the Home Affairs Committee:

"That the government initiates a discussion within the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of alternative ways - including the possibility of legalisation and regulation - to tackle the global drugs dilemma."

Who could possibly have uttered this recommendation? Why, none other than our current PM, David Cameron. Ten years on from arguing that drug use is a "passing phase" for many young people which "rarely results in any long-term harm," Cameron is now in the driving seat and yet it remains to be seen whether he has the guts to broach such a polemic issue. The problem is that spineless politicians have too often opted for the politically expedient option of announcing their "tough on drugs" stance - at the expense of true leadership. The previous Labour government ominously sacked the chief drugs advisor, Professor David Nutt, for "interfering in politics" after he pointed out the damaging inconsistencies in drug policy.

The key issue is whether to treat drugs as a public health issue or a criminal one. If it is a public health issue, as the Global Commission on Drug Policy (an assorted mixture of distinguished individuals including ex-Presidents, writers and entrepreneurs) has asserted, then we must decide whether we desire a health policy directed by political expediency or one based upon science? This ought to be a rhetorical question but unfortunately too many people seem to prefer the former.

This is why, despite the politician-bashing, the wider population needs to share the blame for the "war on drugs." After all, we may well criticise politicians for political expediency, but the wrong decisions are only expedient because a majority of the population supports them. Through a mixture of misinformation, emotional short-sightedness and hypocrisy, it is the British people who perpetuate yet

another misguided foreign war to blot our copybook. For a foreign war it most certainly is. Those who maintain that the war is worth fighting on moral grounds evidently benefit from the fact that the violence and destruction is largely confined to the distant lands of Latin America. Fuelled almost entirely by US and European consumption, the drug war has facilitated the rise of powerful drug organisations that continue to undermine democracy in the region. Billions of dollars of US support to Colombia has succeeded only in causing the "balloon effect" of shifting production to other areas (like squeezing a balloon).

The crux of the debate centres on the harm to society. Is the "war on drugs," flawed though it may be, ultimately a better price to pay than the harm of legalisation or decriminalisation? First, it is important to concede to drug warriors that legalisation would indeed see a rise in consumption due to the lower risk of acquisition, among other things. Moreover, hard drugs certainly do cause harm to society. Crucially, however, these harmful effects all boil down to addiction. Violent drug users, who steal to get a fix, do so because they are addicted. Incarceration neither deters nor cures them. In economic terms, it costs more money to incarcerate them rather than attempt to cure their addiction. Furthermore, treating drug addicts means that otherwise innocent people aren't institutionalised. If addiction is a health issue, then ethically we have an obligation to try and help these people rather than criminalize them. Now I'm not so naïve as to suggest that treatment has anywhere near a one hundred per cent success rate. Of course not. Addiction is an intensely powerful psychological problem that some people may never overcome. Yet in terms of potential harm to society, an addict will do what it takes to score their fix and this will happen principally in two ways. Either they are forced into crime or prostitution to support their habit, a clear danger to society and themselves, or they could receive them legally from the government along with counselling or treatment. I know which action I'd prefer them to take.

At the very least we must move away from the criminalization of users, even if legalisation is some way off. Portugal provides the best example of the benefits that decriminalization entails, highlighting a significant decrease in overdose and drug-related crime in Lisbon since the government decriminalized drug use whilst maintaining the illegality of supplying. This middle ground between legalisation and criminalisation has produced promising results and offers a piecemeal progression, but legalisation and thus government regulation must remain the ultimate goal. Drug policy as it is remains flagrantly undermined by its inconsistency. The fact that marijuana remains illegal whilst alcohol and tobacco are both legal, despite the damage these substances cause, destroys any legitimacy or coherency to the message that illegality supposedly projects.

Sooner or later we must accept that the drug war has been an expensive failure. The main question is how much money we want to continue wasting on it before we bring it to a close. Aside from the emotionally charged elements of the debate, at its core the argument comes down to simple economics. We have a public health issue that generates hundreds of billions of pounds for violent gangs, while we continue to spend billions fighting a lost cause. Government regulation of the drug market would cut through the profits of these organisations and begin to repay taxpayers' wasted money. Crucially, it would actually help the addicts at the root of the issue rather than stigmatize them and force them either underground or into an overpopulated prison. With a rational and logical approach, we can only hope that in the future the "war on drugs" will be looked on as one of humanity's many missteps, alongside the illegality of divorce and capital punishment for killing a swan - oops, that last one is still a law. ☘

Spain needs Garzón

Why the trial of Judge Garzón represents an injustice

Martin Walsh



Whilst Garzón may not be a name with which one is immediately familiar, the nature of his recent trial confers importance to a discussion on the current manifestations of Spain's notoriously complicated, emotionally-charged and historically-influenced politics.

A man of resolute determination and persistence, Garzón has pursued – occasionally fruitlessly, often with reward – lines of enquiry which invariably attempt to uncover injustice and corruption at the heart of Spanish and, intermittently, international organisations.

From his investigations which sought to discover the perpetrators and accomplices who inflicted criminal acts of torture upon inmates at Guantánamo and his dogged prosecutions of ETA members and businesses, to his issuing of an international arrest warrant for former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet in the early 1990s, he has established himself as a darling of the political left. It is, however, his most recently commissioned inquiries into the appalling organised acts of Spanish state repression in the Franco Era, acts that engendered mutual political and civic distrust which appears to have definitively determined his fate.

Historically vilified by the right as meddling, and accused of acting outside of his jurisdiction, Garzón

has now been indicted on charges of illegally wiretapping prison meetings. More importantly, he has been charged with "blatant [and] wilful" knowledge of an "infringement" of Law 46/1977. A law which was essentially an amnesty insofar that it retrospectively exempted agents of death from being open to criminal prosecution. In his judicial capacity, Garzón had, rightfully and legally, commissioned two investiga-

"There is a sense that the beginning of the end has dawned on the post-1975 climate of fear about public discussion of Francoist Spain."

tions. One ordered the exhumation of victims in mass graves and the other explored the many, allegedly state-organised, cases of disappeared persons. If found guilty of the charges that he currently faces, he will encounter a very lengthy exclusion from his position on La Audiencia Nacional, a special high court in Spain.

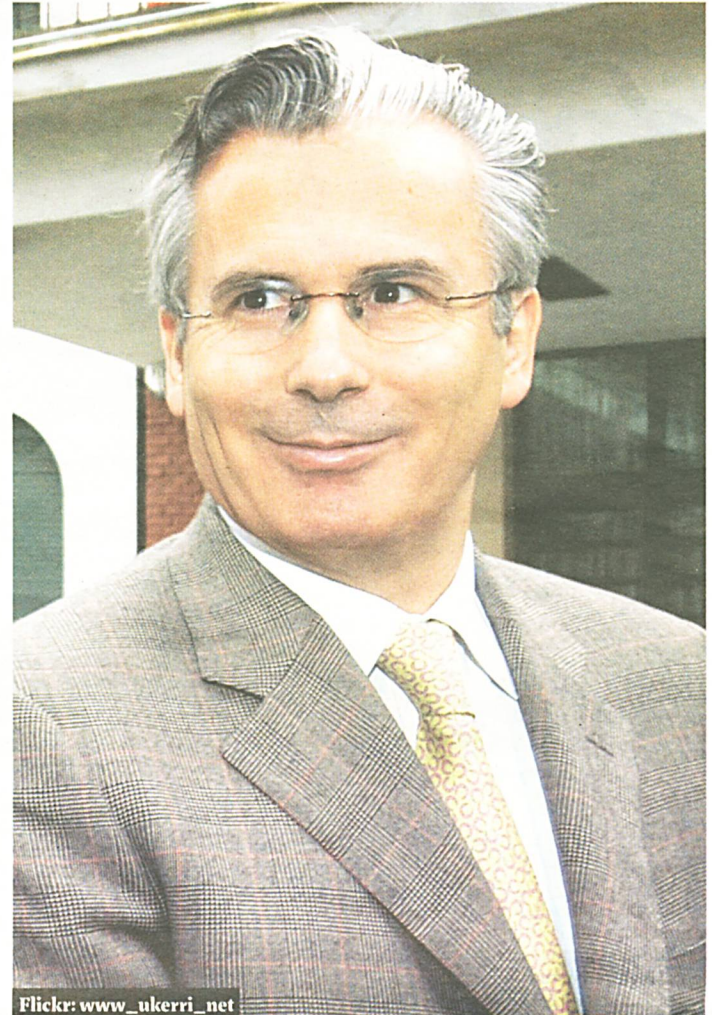
It is the gravity of these potential consequences which triggered the calls of "Shame!", "Remember" and "Fascists" which have been proclaimed proudly and without hesitation outside the Chambers of Justice by his sizeable number of supporters. There is

a sense that the beginning of the end has dawned on the post-1975 climate of fear about public discussion of Francoist Spain.

Dozens of Spaniards and several high-profile organisations (including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch) have taken to the streets for want of change and real answers to the historical problems that they feel require adequate attention. This should be carried out through a responsibly managed, detailed and conclusive investigation into what happened, and why, during the period between 1936-1975. The man himself is seen as the catalyst for the bringing about of these wishes.

Garzón has legitimate interests in discovering where the truth lies. In what must be seen as an irresponsible and conscious misdiagnosis, Garzón's detractors do not speak for the vast majority of those who were politically and socially repressed for almost 40 years. His ideal of gaining justice for those who deserve it is laudable and his legal methods remain the only substantive way of realising a preclusion of the growth of a corrupt network of Spanish politicians and civilians who remain, regrettably, in the past – desperately seeking to cling onto their ebbing influence.

It is essential that an independent judiciary, of which Garzón is a part, brings to account those who abuse public funds for their own ends for if it doesn't, public trust deteriorates and social unrest will begin. Garzón, then, must see his tenure through and, in this way, remain the best hope of restoring some semblance of closure to a country only superficially recovering from its bruised past.



Flickr: www_ukerri_net

-Quick- COMMENT

What did you think of this week's UGM?

UGM is my favourite time of the week!
- Sydney Saubestre, News Editor, The Beaver

What are UGM?
- John Armstrong, News Editor, The Beaver

Personally, I'm really pleased that all the motions were passed
- Basak Arslan, 1st year LLB Law

I don't like Underwater Guided Missiles. It's just not cricket.
- Matt Worby, Photo Editor, The Beaver

Voting online would increase the amount of students who get involved with voting on motions
- Bethany Clarke, News Editor, The Beaver

Although the changes will help increase numbers at the UGM, I am slightly concerned about the privacy of voting.
- Duncan McKenna, Executive Editor, The Beaver

The forgotten project of Bund

Jan Ladzinski meets Esther Bronstein during Holocaust Memorial Week

Jan Ladzinski



On Holocaust Memorial Day, I was given an opportunity to meet someone whose story provokes more reflections on this tragedy than a hundred minutes of silence could ever bring. Esther Bronstein is a Holocaust survivor, born and raised in a Bundist family. Her background influences the way she tells the troubled story of Polish Jews, placing accents differently to the dominant historical narrative.

The Bund is a Jewish socialist movement, which originated in the Russian Empire by the end of the nineteenth century. After the turmoil of the First World War and the Russian Revolution, the strongest Bundist structures found themselves within the boundaries of the newly reconstructed Polish state.

Although one of the main forces in the reconstruction of Poland was the Polish Socialist Party, which had strong links and a history of cooperation with the Bund, soon other nationalist and often antisemitic groups and parties were on the rise. Esther recalls how she was often ridiculed by other children and called a "scabby Jew." Her family would then always tell her that she should not be angry with her peers because they were only repeating

what they heard from their antisemitic parents and that it was the education system that ought to be blamed.

Esther's upbringing was typical for children raised in Bundist families. Her school, her house and her family were all strongly focused on politics. The Bund embraced the struggle of the Polish working class despite the fact that some of its members were antisemitic. The Polish workers were seen as comrades even if a number of them were misled by the far right. On various occasions, Bundists were able to build a true unity between Polish and Jewish workers, such as during the Krakow strikes of 1936, in which Esther's parents played an important role.

Until the very end of the interwar period, the Bund cooperated with the Polish Socialist Party. The engagement in politics proved that large numbers of the Jewish population concentrated around the Bund saw Poland as their true home. Any attempts to create a Jewish state were regarded by them as escapism and the peculiar personal relationships of some Zionist leaders with antisemitic politicians often provoked criticism.

This attitude by no means should be seen as a will to assimilate completely. Bund was engaged in building a strong Jewish identity built around Yiddish language and culture, though not at the price of cultural isolation from the rest of the population. Esther still remembers numerous pieces of Polish poetry and prose, which she quoted several times in our conver-

sation and one could see that she identifies herself with both Jewish and Polish cultures.

The ethos of Bund fell victim to Holocaust, never to regain its full strength. Many Bundists such as Marek Edelman organised resistance to the brutality of deportations, but their struggle could not be won. Esther's brother was the only one of her closest relatives to survive the horrors of Lodz Ghetto and Konzentration-lager Auschwitz.

She remained loyal to the ideas of social equality and political engagement. As an activist in the campaign launched after a series of racist

murders in the early 1990s, she spoke against the BNP's presence in London. Until this day she remembers a quotation from Stefan Zeromski's book "The Coming Spring," in which a great utopia of affordable and healthy housing for everyone is described: "the reforms will create houses of glass and distribute them across the broad open spaces, the fallow ground, and the fields and woods of the former latifundia."

When I heard Esther saying these words, I could only think of the Bundist project of unity and peaceful coexistence which, just like the glass houses, never came true.



Flickr: Philippe AMIOT

Insults get us nowhere

Throwing around insults detracts from reasoned debate

Elizabeth Fraser



A previously little-known journalist called Froma Harrop (yeah - me neither), caused a stir recently when she appeared on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart in both her capacity as a syndicated columnist and as head of the Civility Project. In leading the Civility Project, she campaigns for effective argumentation in journalism, free from disrespect, dishonesty and character assassination. As a columnist, however, she accused the Tea Party of engaging in "economic terrorism." See the disparity? So did the Daily Show, which proceeded to mock her hypocrisy. It also continually highlighted the problem with her use of inflammatory language in her writing.

This was all staged, of course, and Froma Harrop played up her inconsistency in the name of comedy, but it does serve to underline an important point: the use of off-the-shelf and deliberately provocative insults and epithets is all too common both in our media and everyday discourse - and it's extremely unhelpful. Despite its occasional double standards, the Civility Project is working to correct a trend that threatens to lower the quality of our discourse. Merely throwing labels around like mud, is intended only as a pathetic attempt to discredit an opponent. However, in the process, it also serves to discredit those who stoop to using insults and sidesteps the real discussions to be had.

To give an example significantly closer to home, the LSE SU Atheist, Secularist and Humanist Society has

recently found itself having to refute claims made at a recent UGM that it is guilty of Islamophobia, a major accusation. The basis of this claim was that an individual had submitted an article to the Beaver protesting that UCL's Atheist, Secularist and Humanist Society had been told to take down a cartoon of Jesus and Muhammed at a bar from their Facebook group (it had been used to advertise the Society's pub crawl); extolling the virtues of freedom of expression whilst condemning hate speech; and calling for the Beaver to republish the cartoon.

One can of course question the merits of publishing such a cartoon and the intricacies of the freedom of expression versus limiting offence debate, but was displaying the cartoon on a Facebook group - a group specifically for atheists - Islamophobic? I think not. Islamophobia refers to prejudice against and hatred of Muslims or Islam. The cartoon was, at worst, insensitive, but hardly constitutes a display of hatred.

As the author has pointed out, their article and the cartoon did not incite violence against Muslims, nor did they make any claims about the moral status of Muslims. For the term "Islamophobic" to be used in conjunction with this individual or this Society seems hyperbolic and seems to have been chosen simply to sensationalise the situation and to discredit the Society and their ideas. Surely it is far better to engage with a point of view, to understand it and refute it articulately, rather than attempt to shoot it down with an ill-fitting insult?

I feel it important at this point to say that I do not think that terms like "Islamophobic" do not serve a purpose. When actions do threaten a certain group, I think it is important that they are accurately labelled. This is why, for example, I had no problem

with branding the Houghton Street Headaches column from last term as "sexist," because it was. This vocabulary exists for a reason: to label and thus condemn speech and behaviour that is unacceptable because it perpetuates hatred against, or actively harms, certain, often vulnerable, groups. Problems arise when both these terms, as well as off-the-shelf insults, are used inaccurately and in place of reasoned discourse. Simply yelling "fascist" at someone because you disagree with his or her viewpoint doesn't get anyone anywhere.

It is only when we engage in a levelheaded way that we can make progress on refuting erroneous or dangerous claims. I think an encouraging example of this can be found in Nick Griffin's appearance on BBC's Question Time in 2009. Not one of the panelists or audience members resorted to calling Griffin a fascist, but allowed him to speak before calmly and articulately challenging his views.

The result was humiliating for Griffin, he floundered while being robustly questioned and his ideology was exposed for being what it truly is: absurd and unfounded. This was democracy at its best, exposing ignorance and hatred, and promoting reason and respect.

I think there is huge value in being able to engage with those opinions and ideas you disagree with. Free speech is a wonderful tool, but it comes with its limitations, and we must not fall into the trap of closing down other people's right to express themselves. Rather, when situations arise in which we dislike what is said, we should seek to debate and deliberate rationally in order to understand the views of others and counter them in a constructive manner.



English Language Wikipedia:Mrmurray

Crossing the line

Why a former Comment editor is disappointed by the ASH Society

Rimmel Mohydin



You know that section in university prospectuses? Where you've got a happy rainbow of people from Liberia, Estonia, Australia, Korea, and many other far-flung lands and it's all well and good and words like Islamophobia, racism and misogyny are only associated with evil obscurities who you'll never meet at uni? Yeah, that's what I thought being at LSE would be like too. But certain people seem intent on shattering this idealized view I had.

We've all heard this more than once, that discrimination stems from ignorance, that they don't know what the hell they're talking about and that if you sat down with them and had a nice chat, they would emerge as colour blind butterflies who'd hum "Imagine" all day long.

Then you can see why I was surprised when, at university, a place intrinsically dedicated to conquering ignorance, whose motto preaches to know the causes of things, has students who turn around and take the most sensitive aspects of age-old religions and make a mockery of them

like there's no other subject in the joke book to have a laugh over. Seriously? Drawing Muhammad?

Calling it jest does not disguise the fact that there is an underlying tone of malignancy that is designed to hit where it hurts. Did the marginally talented illustrator genuinely believe that by drawing a pint next to a pictorial representation of the most sacred figure in Islam, he'd really just be having a chuckle?

A cynical, dark part of me is convinced that this is just a publicity stunt. When I was editing the most controversial section in this very newspaper, I was often approached by societies to let them use the Beaver to reach out to the wider student body and enlighten them as to what they're all about. Sounded like a good idea in theory and who was I to say no? I think communication is great, and loved that the newspaper could facilitate this. The society in question used that forum at least four times, so we know they like their PR.

Moreover, there are over 150 student societies. Most of us only care about our pending unemployment and fuck me if I could be bothered by whatever the hell the UGM does. So a society has to work to stand out. What better way to get people talking than get the front page article in the Beav, an EGM motion and even stimulating someone as apathetic as me to call you

out on your actions?

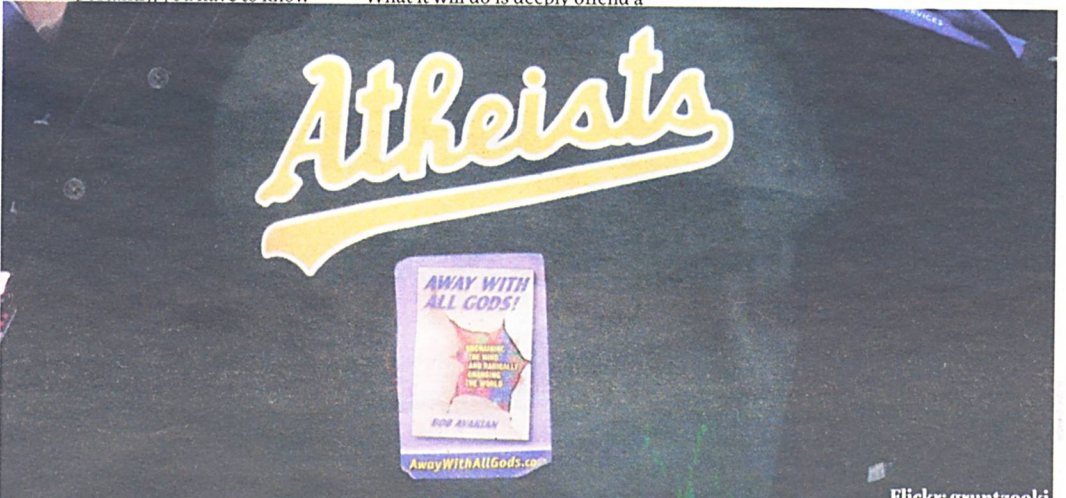
Certain members of the ASH Society have charmingly decided that those cartoons "criticise religion in a satirical way." That's fine. I laugh at the odd Simpson "Rapture episode." I've bought the Cyanide & Happiness App and I also find South Park hilarious. More importantly, I think that atheism has some very valid arguments which I think society has disseminated and explained very well (previously, of course). But, as every great comedian knows, there's a time and place and, most importantly, you have to know

your audience.

Islam strictly instructs all individuals to never graphically depict the Prophet. For reasons you may not understand, this is something that even the most lax of Muslims feel obliged to respect. It's a sacred belief that has been endorsed by the world since the very conception of Islam and, if you are these so-called humanists, you'd recognize the importance of not crossing that one line. No, it won't stimulate some grand intellectual debate. No, it won't be taken lightly as you intended. What it will do is deeply offend a

religious group that has already had enough. What it will do is hurt and sideline even the bacon-chomping, cider-sipping Muslims in a community supposedly designed to celebrate diversity.

So, ASH Soc - hide behind the banner of free speech as much as you want. Call my opinion "highly misguided." Find more ways of getting people to join your society. You're Atheists. We get it. But you're certainly not god.



Flickr: gruntzooki

Commenting on your comment

Leave Technion alone

Responding to Lois Clifton: LSE should not boycott the Israeli research institution

Aimee Riese



I never expected to have to explain the case against excluding solely Israeli academics from our wider LSE academic community. Yet, after I attended the emergency open meeting, held by SU Environment and Ethics Officer, Lois Clifton's, to discuss the LSE's links with Technion, I feel it necessary to shed some light on the proposals aired at the meeting.

This is the only university that it has proposed that we cut ties with. Despite claims of a broader SU ethical campaign, no other universities with arguably stronger, direct ties to human rights abuses have been identified. If the standard of requirement is that of universities cooperating with their government's armed forces, by that very same standard we should be boycotting ourselves. When these same accusations slung at Technion can be applied even to our own institution, the hypocrisy of choosing only an Israeli institution is clearly apparent.

LSE participates in a research consortium with Technion and five other institutions, named Policy Incentives for the Creation of Knowledge: Methods and Evidence (PICK-ME). This involves researching policies for growth, welfare and wellbeing. The European Commission funds this research consortium. Cutting LSE ties

with Technion, in this case, amounts to an academic boycott of one Israeli university.

The academic boycott of Israel is harmful and counterproductive to the pursuit of peace and human rights. It attacks the fundamentals of scholarship and academic freedom. Research does not make an institution complicit in so-called government 'crimes.'

By choosing one university, it is only Israeli academics that are targeted. The claim that this is a boycott of solely an institution, not academics, is entirely fallacious. Obviously, academics need institutions in order to do their jobs. If this boycott precedent is to be applied, the only Israelis eligible to be cooperated with are those living outside of Israel. No other academics in the world are required not to live in their state in order to be accepted by the global academic community. Academics should not be held responsible for acts committed by their governments.

It is my opinion that Technion academics are being targeted purely for the reason that they are Israeli. Many in the Israel Society have expressed the xenophobic nature of singling out one country. If this proposal goes ahead, it would normalise an exclusive focus on Israelis as targets for exclusion.

These boycotts are also counterproductive. Israeli academics are well known to be one of the most critical sections of Israeli civil society. Advocating an academic boycott alienates those in Israeli society often most sympathetic to ending the occupation. We should be engaging with the very

academic and Israeli peace groups that share our ideals of peace and human rights.

So who are these Technion academics? The long list of Palestinian citizens of Israel that are professors and academics working at the Technion? The Palestinian citizens of Israel they teach that make up approximately

"Until the protestors home in on a specific, systematic and plausible cause, they can be treated as little more than pipe-dreamers"

25 per cent of the student body? Or is it just the Jewish Israelis? Or, more dangerous still, are we boycotting just those academics whose research our Students' Union disagrees with?

Personally, I am proud of the LSE's academic links with the Technion, an institution that excels in integrating with the Palestinian community. It has become a model for coexistence

with exceptional equal opportunities programmes, something the rest of Israeli society would do well to learn from. It is a space from where racism is fought and peace is strived for. Its alumni include Nobel Laureates, the leading global providers of electric car networks and developing technology that enables Israeli search and rescue teams to be the first on the scene at the earthquake in Haiti and in other global disasters.

Furthermore, Technion works with Palestinian institutions on joint research into breast cancer and the treatment of waste water. Technion-based Engineers Without Borders (EWB) Israel work with EWB Palestine to promote regional peace and sustainability, developing renewable energy systems for Palestinian villages. Joint research projects between Palestinians and Israelis should be something we actively support, not boycott. If they are working together, why can't we?

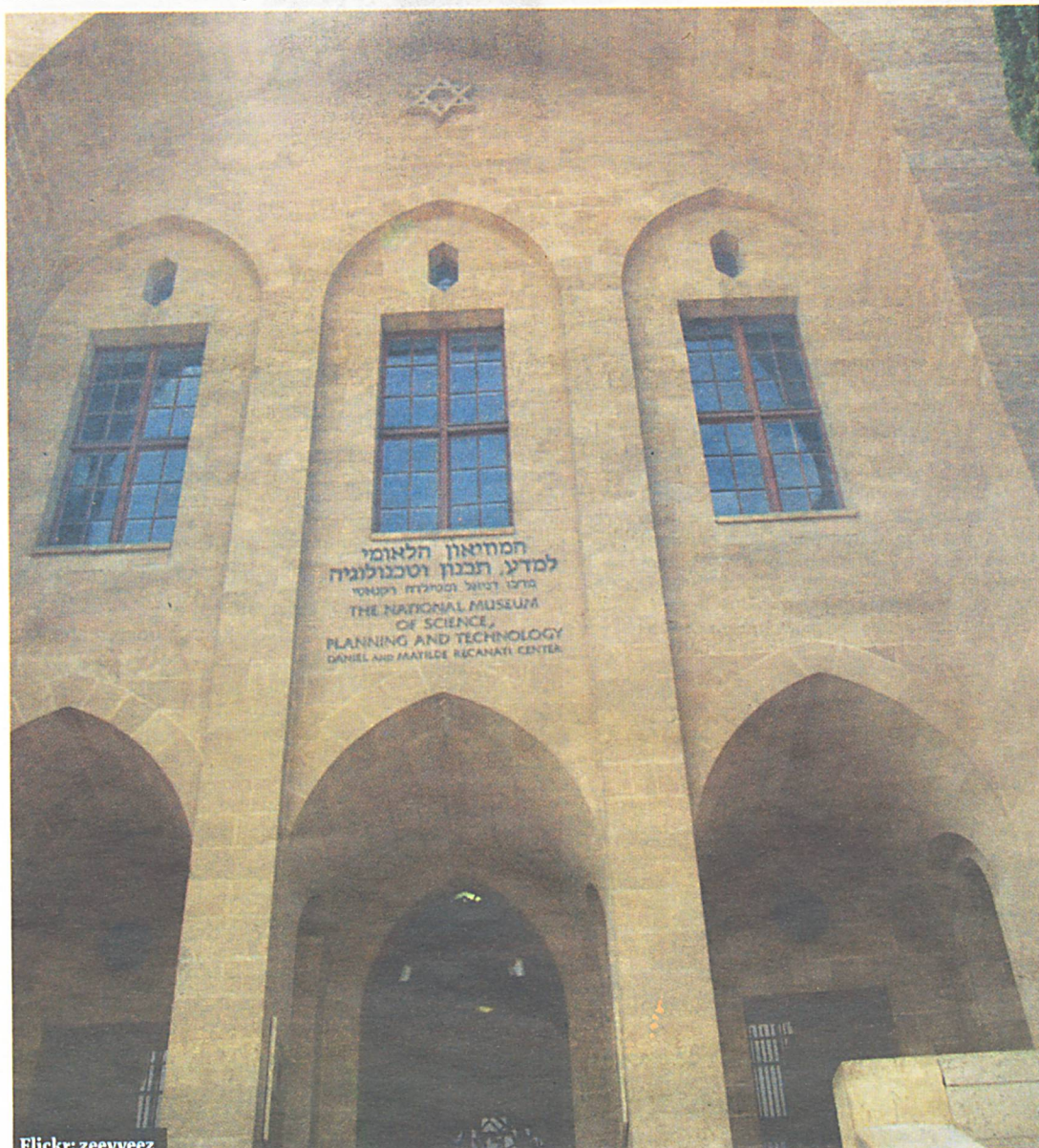
Implicating Technion in the 'crimes' of the Israeli Government, despite the application of the technology coming from other sources, is illogical in itself. However, the 'crimes' cited at the meeting are extremely subjective and sensitive. The idea that technology "to detect the tunnels Palestinians have built to smuggle essential supplies into Gaza" is a 'crime' is, I believe, problematic. Whether you agree or not with the current blockade on Gaza, this statement is deliberately misleading. It has been argued that the tunnels are used to smuggle dangerous contraband, including weapons, into Gaza. There are two sides to this conflict.

They may not be symmetrical, but let's not blame Israeli technology for being able to detect tunnels and protect its civilians. Hopefully it is obvious that, for Israeli students, technology that detects these tunnels saves the lives of all those who live in direct range of rocket fire. They, rightly, do not see the detection of these tunnels as a crime. We cannot pretend this conflict does not have two sides. There is not a right and wrong; there is nuance and complexity that cannot be captured through blanket boycotts. Neither is it the role of our Students' Union to do so.

Last year, the LSESU Israel Society and LSESU Palestine Society held a public debate with a motion proposing academic boycott of Israel. The motion was defeated. Events at the meeting showed further student opposition to academic boycott. If we are going to investigate the ethics of the LSE, a laudable thing to do, let's not target academic institutions, and let's not only target Israel. ☛

LSESU Israel Society looks forward to welcoming the Vice Chancellor of Technion to speak at the LSE on the topic of Israeli innovation.

All are welcome.



Flickr: zeevveez

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I cannot escape the suspicion that most people in this affair - including the editors of the Beaver - did not bother to actually look at the Facebook postings that are at the heart of this controversy.

I learn from your article that 40 separate complaints have been filed with the SU. However, at the time of me writing these lines the Facebook group in question has 81 members - and a substantial portion of those seem to have joined the group once the allegations against the society have become public. A group that, note, is a closed group. You only get to see the postings once your request to join has been approved by the group administrator. About half of the group members lodging a complaint seems a bit odd to me. Don't you think?

Now, to be offended wouldn't you have to actually have looked at the picture in this context? Or could it maybe be that some people just want to be offended?

What I, above all, fail to understand is how a drawing of two men identified as Jesus and Mo sitting at a table and clasping a drink that could be beer that was posted in a tiny closed Facebook group can provoke the Students' Union to threaten one of its societies with the termination of its status as Students' Union society.

Yours cluelessly,

Arndt Leininger

Want to send us a comment?

Are you outraged by something you've seen in this paper and interested in responding?

You can write about anything, from happenings at LSE, to events further afield.

Contact us by email:
comment@the
beaveronline.co.uk

TV Picks of the Week

Whitechapel

ITV1, 22:00, Mondays

DI Joseph Chandler and DS Ray Miles return to investigate the deaths of four people who were slaughtered at a tailor's fortified workshop, a gruesome and seemingly impossible crime that has left London's East End gripped with fear. Edward Buchan joins the detectives once again, hoping his historical expertise will help them solve the grisly case.

The Lying Game

5*, 21:00, Mondays

Drama about a teenager posing as her identical twin, with whom she has re-established contact after the girls were separated at birth. Emma Becker swaps lives with her sibling Sutton Mercer after being framed for stealing from her foster parents. As she explores her sister's privileged world, she discovers a number of sinister mysteries. Starring Alexandra Chando.

Spartacus: Vengeance

BBC Two, 20:30, Fridays

Sequel to *Spartacus: Blood and Sand*, starring Liam McIntyre. *Gladiator* *Spartacus* faces a dilemma when he is forced to choose between taking revenge on the man who condemned his wife to death and making the sacrifices necessary to keep his band of freed slaves together. However, Glaber and his troops have been sent out to crush *Spartacus's* army.

Prisoners' Wives

BBC One, 21:00, Tuesdays

A man is arrested on suspicion of murder, and his wife's belief in his innocence turns to doubt because he has no alibi, leading to a shocking confession when she confronts him in prison. But as she agonises over standing by her man, she finds friendship with another woman whose husband is already serving time. Drama, starring Emma Rigby, Jonas Armstrong, Polly Walker, Pippa Haywood and Iain Glen.



Alexandra Chando stars as Emma and as Sutton in *The Lying Game*



Fetishism

The word "fetish" originally meant "charm," originating from the fifteenth century Portuguese word "feitiço," meaning "spell." A fetish is an object believed to have supernatural powers, or in particular, a man-made object that has power over others.

Sexual fetishism describes the sexual arousal a person receives from a physical object, or from a specific situation. A sexual fetish may be regarded as an element that enhances a sexual relationship, but can also become a disorder of sexual preference if it causes significant psychosocial distress for the person or has detrimental effects on important areas of their life.

Early psychology assumed that fetishism was caused either by being conditioned, or as the result of a strong emotional or physical experience. Late nineteenth century French philosopher (and incidentally also inventor of the IQ test) Alfred Binet thought that fetishism was the pathological result of associations. He argued that by accidentally presenting sexual stimulus and an inanimate object simultaneously, the object can become permanently connected to sexual arousal. In 1920 sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld proposed that sexual attractiveness never originates in a person as a whole but is always the product of the interaction of individual features, and pathological fetishism exists where people detach and overvalue a single feature - a theory which is still often used in explaining why males and females highlight specific body parts. Alternatively, neurologists propose that fetishism could be the result of neuronal cross links between neighbouring regions in the human brain. It could be more than coincidental that the area processing sensory input from the feet lies immediately next to the part processing sexual stimulation.

Most people have ingrained and natural sexual fetishes, which are part of the method a person uses to choose a desirable and arousing sexual partner and mate. Fetishes are often considered taboo subjects, but it is common and normal for people to find multiple areas of fetish subjects arousing and intriguing. There are some fetishes that tend to be universally arousing to everyone, particularly body parts, which are usually viewed as more acceptable than the extreme examples. Fetishism describes normal variations of human sexuality, and legal forms of fetishism are usually considered unobjectionable as long as all people involved feel comfortable, and do not experience any suffering from their feelings or actions.

Callie Nordenfelt



Using our guide, can you name all of the fetishes in this photo?

Cut-out-and-keep fetish guide

Popular fetishes

Specific body parts: Humans instinctively find particular physical attributes arousing, and different people have different reactions to different body parts. Common examples include feet, breasts, stomach, butt, curves and sexual organs. Hard-core examples include extreme body sizes such as morbidly obese or unhealthily skinny forms, extremely old or young looking people, transgender or cross-dressing individuals, and drastically altered body parts via plastic surgery, such as abnormally large breasts.

Sensual materials or clothing: One of the most famous fetishes is the desire to see women in stockings and heels. Other popular sex signals in modern culture include tight fitting materials such as leather and spandex, and materials that are sensual to touch, such as satin, lace and latex.

Voyeurism and exhibitionism: By another name, one form of voyeurism is probably the most widespread and popular fetish of all: pornography. The act of watching others engaging in sexual acts tends to be universally arousing and allows people to explore fetish material that they would not want to engage in personally. On the extreme side, some voyeurs enjoy watching live shows and extreme examples of this fetish would be illegally spying on or videotaping others. On the flip side, exhibitionism is also highly popular. As seen with the ever increasing popularity of home-made or amateur porn, and some people even enjoy having other people watching during the acts themselves (hence the popularity of nudity on "Chat Roulette").

Piercings: Piercings are a common fetish due to the visual and physical stimulation they can provide. Pierced tongues are a common desire for oral play, and piercings in nipples, on a man's penis, and near a woman's clitoris provide extreme pleasure, even without stimulation.

Role play: Role play can range from simple dirty talk to complex scenarios involving costumes, sets and intricate "scenes." Role playing allows participants to wear sexy costumes, explore a different persona, and act out fantasies.

Bondage: Bondage is basically the act of restricting the movements of one partner during sexual activities. This can range from a pair of novelty handcuffs to using intricate restraint systems. The lighter forms of bondage are quite common and many people enjoy using furry handcuffs, scarves and blindfolds. Hard-core examples can be quite extreme, and include real handcuffs or restraints that cannot be escaped without assistance, suspended restraint systems (which suspend a person from the ceiling or wall), cages, stocks and bolted wall restraints.

Power play: Commonly known as being submissive or dominant, power play is the act of giving power to another person or receiving control over another person in a sexual situation. Perhaps surprisingly, it is common for women to be dominant over their men in bed, and for men who are in powerful positions in their everyday life to become highly aroused by being submissive in the bedroom. This shift of normal power tends to heighten sexual desire and provide extreme arousal for participants.

Fetishes that are stranger than usual (Note: fulfilling the following may not be legal)

Acrotomophilia: The person is sexually aroused by the sight of an amputation, usually of a whole arm or leg.

Apotemnophilia: This person is sexually aroused by having a part of their body amputated, either by themselves or someone else. They have to be awake during the process, and the memory of the amputation can serve to arouse them for years.

Asphyxiophilia: This is sexual arousal caused by loss of

control over your ability to breathe, i.e. self-strangulation or allowing another person to asphyxiate you.

Autassassinophilia: The person is sexually aroused by putting themselves in situations in which they may be killed. They really have to feel they are in danger in order to be sexually aroused. Many such people get killed in the process.

Catheterophilia: The person is sexually aroused by the insertion of a catheter.

Coprophilia: Smearing human faeces on yourself or having someone smear it on you causing sexual arousal (see the infamous internet video "Two Girls One Cup").

Coprophagia: Eating and ingesting human faeces (again, see "Two Girls One Cup").

Erotophonophilia: These people are dangerous - they are sexually aroused by, not just thoughts, but attempts of killing someone.

Formicophilia: Sexual arousal is caused by having insects crawl on their genitals.

Hierophilia: Sexual attraction to religious items or figures. This is often found in people who are very devout to their faith. Many claim that it is blasphemous to desire any religious figures, but practitioners claim they are simply taking their love of the faith to a higher, more intimate level.

Hybristophilia: Sexual relations with a convicted criminal.

Infantilism: Dressing as an infant and acting the role of a child under two years old is sexually arousing. This can include having someone act as a nurse or nanny to take care of you.

Morphophilia: Peculiar body shapes and sizes are sexually arousing such as heavy, short, dwarfism, etc.

Necrophilia: Engaging in sexual activities with dead people.

Objectum sexual: Sexual attraction to inanimate objects. The term was first coined by Eija-Riitta Berliner-Mauer, a 54-year-old woman who was "married" to the Berlin Wall for 29 years. In 2008 Erika La Tour "married" the Eiffel Tower in front of a group of friends and family. Her first infatuation was with a bow that helped her to become a world-class archer, and she claims to have a physical relationship with a piece of fence she keeps in her bedroom.

Plushophilia: Also known as "pony play" or "human animal role play," this is sexual attraction to stuffed animals or people dressed in animal costumes (there are lots of entertaining photos on the internet). It can also involve a partner taking on a dominant role in relation to the animal, for example, the owner or trainer.

Somnophilia: The person can only maintain sexual arousal while having sex with someone who is sleeping. If the person wakes up they lose interest.

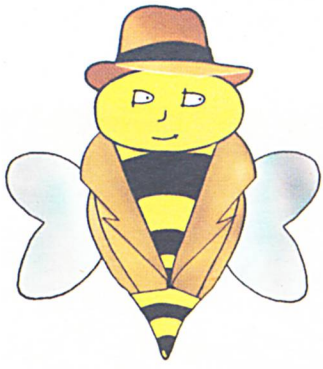
Stigmatophilia: Body piercing and tattooing is sexually arousing.

Symphophilia: Natural disasters are sexually arousing.

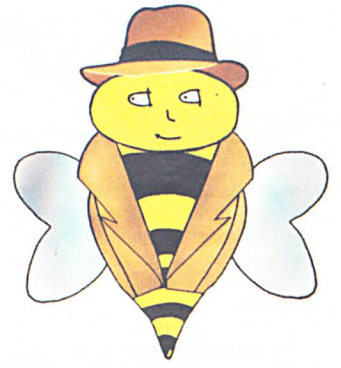
Tentacle erotica: Describes a fetish most commonly found in Japan. Originating in early nineteenth century Japanese artwork, "tentacle rape" (shokushu goukan) involves tentacled creatures (usually octopuses or fictional monsters) having sexual intercourse with females. While most tentacle erotica is animated, there are a number of popular live-action films featuring this theme.

Urophilia: Being urinated on or urinating on someone ("golden showers").

Zoophilia: The person wants to be treated like an animal wearing a collar and even eating out of an animal's dish. (This is different from bestiality, in which the person wants to have sex with an animal.)



PRIVATE B



Bill Gates defends philanthropy record

Something Happens at EGM!

The LSE Students' Union expressed "delight," "astonishment" and "confusion" on Friday evening, following news that more than 5 per cent of members had voted against or in favour of a motion of some description.

After being open for the requisite voting period of twenty-four hours, polls showed clear support among almost a full seventeenth of the student population for condemning racism and discrimination in all forms. General-Secretary Alex Stockwell-Day claimed that the vote represented "a clear break with the past" before going on to state that "it is clear that such a universal turnout marks perhaps the greatest breakthrough in community participation since the Reformation." Stockwell-Day likened the reforms to being "rather like the Suffragettes, Revolutions of 1989 and the formation of the NHS all rolled into one."

NEEL SHAD LSE



Community and Welfare Officer Acedia Peacebro informed the B that the syndication rights to dramatise the campaign had been sold over the weekend for a price in excess of 150 kroner. It is expected that they will form the basis of a Danish police

drama, due to be broadcast in the autumn of 2013.

Initial responses from the LSE community upon the release of the results proved overwhelmingly and ecstatically neutral. Numerous students confirmed that they had been

in the general vicinity of the Old Theatre on the Thursday when the motions had been debated. Of these, second year philosophy student Arrears Patel spoke for many when he confirmed that he was "more or less aware that the Students' Union

had been trying to something about something."

Although it is unclear what the motions that passed would actually lead to, it is understood that it did influence an announcement on Sunday that the LSE Literary Festival had withdrawn plans for a proposed roundtable discussion with Richard Dawkins, Salman Rushdie and the late Anwar Sadat.

Detailed research by the B has since led to the discovery of three motions were probably about preventing discrimination and giving the twelve regular attendees of the Union General Meeting the power to dictate Union policy. An unnamed member of the LSESU Conservative Society expressed outrage at the latter issue, stating that "it is astonishing what draconian acts can be forced through against the wishes of people who have simply been unable to take any interest in their Union for three years."

The inaugural motion at the restored UGM on maintaining the LSESU's support for hosting yuletide celebrations will be proposed by the LSE Poultry Society next week.

Tanned Ale



Looking for somewhere to stay for the Olympics?
Need some way of disposing of a mass embezzlement?
Why not consider LSE Residences?

- Bankside:** Bring your own toaster. (Jason Wanke will make the toast.)
- Rosebery:** Bathrooms designed by the team that brought you the New Delhi Commonwealth Games Village.
- Carr-Saunders:** Perfect for the former Soviet Bloc athlete missing home.
- Passfield:** Saif Al-Fingal Gaddafi chose Zintan over this.
- High Holborn:** Our premium rates ensure that it will be Sheikh, Rattle and Roll.

Mandatory special offer for students: Go home for the summer.

LSE Vacations: We used to just teach people.



That new Beaver Constitution in full



It shall hereby be declared that *The Beaver*, being the sole and legal authority of the London School of Economics Students' Union, shall be organised under the following Articles of Association.

Article the first: The Beaver shall be sent for printing no later than noon on the Monday before publication.

Article the second: The prior article shall be forfeit in the event of the Executive Editor being intoxicated or suffering effects following being intoxicated.

Article the third: Teh most impotent part of teh *Beever* shal be proper proff-reding..

Article the fourth: Haters are going to hate.

Article the fifth: Hastily rewritten articles from *The Economist* shall not be permitted unless it gets to Sunday evening and the Features Editor publically expresses desperation.

Article the sixth: Members of the Editorial Board are prohibited from being BOTH misogynist AND racist.

Article the seven-th: Pull quot-s are to b-e used spari-ingly.

Article the eighth: No one shall ever clarify what Social is for.

Article the ninth: We are Tory scum, no matter what we do.

Article the tenth: Is this honestly enough? Surely there has to be something needlessly offensive we can put in?

CORRECTION CORNER

"A progressive and open-minded inquiry section"

-Lord Hutton

Dear Editor,

Mr Lanyard-Cole has asked me to inform you that Section III (ii) 1b of Bye Law 7 requires a quorum of three for an interview. I trust you will amend your practices immediately.

Yours,

David Langdon Cole

David Langdon Cole

-We present our apologies to Mr Lanyard Coal and his proxy, Mr. Langdon Cole. Pending references to the new Beaver Constitution, the Peace of Westphalia and Hammurabi's Legal Code, our practices have now been amended accordingly.

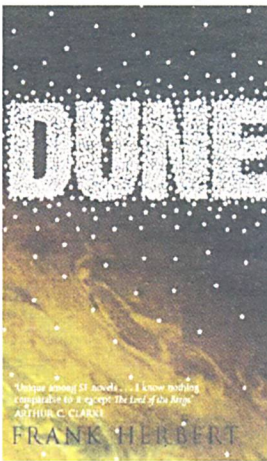
-Assisstant to the Sub-Deputy Underservice Editor (Locum)

Perspective: Dune by Frank Herbert

In a world where resources are scarce and the Earth is reduced to dust, the human race must adapt in order to survive. Resources indigenous to a particular planet have suddenly become worth more than gold, and because of this, conflict between kingdoms and clans loom large.

This should all sound vaguely familiar in relation to our world. Replace oil with a geriatric drug known as the Spice, Earth with the seemingly destroyed ecosystem of Arrakis, and inter (and intra) state conflict with rivaling clans in an intergalactic empire and you have a closer picture of what Frank Herbert paints in *Dune*. Of course, the list goes on and the rest is startlingly complex.

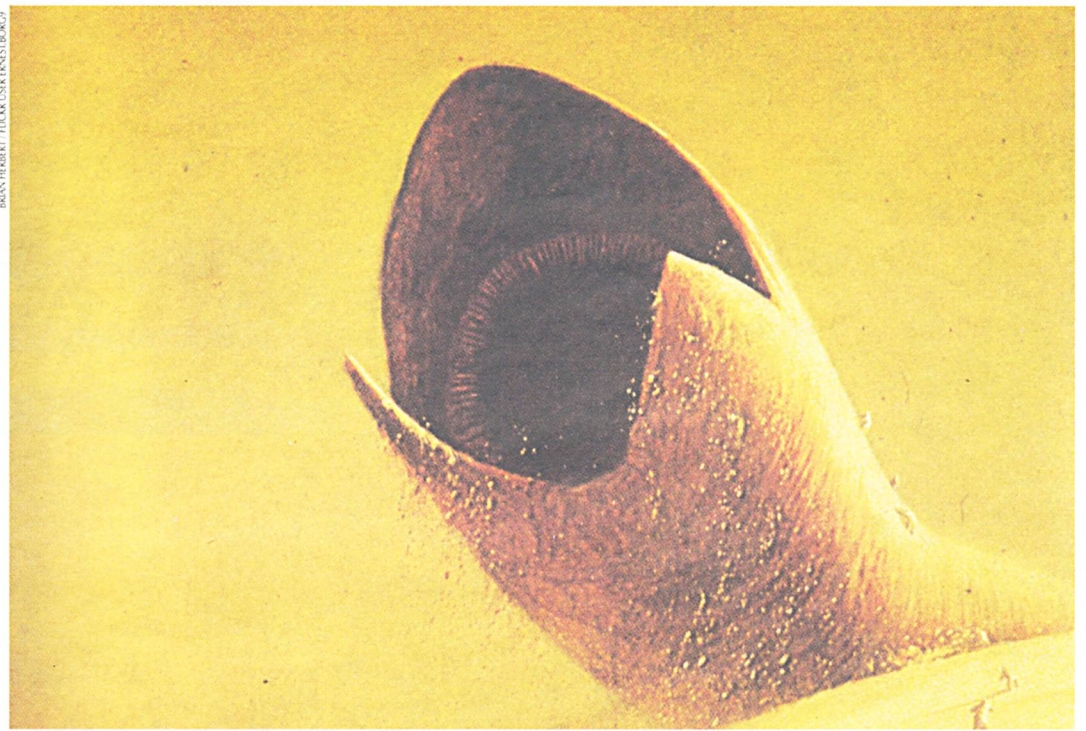
Frank Herbert's 1965 novel was a seminal work in the history of science fiction. It tackled the very relevant themes of religious fundamentalism, environmental decline, feuding families and offered a very interesting view on eugenics. The plot itself is roughly as follows: Paul Atreides is the sole heir of the Atreides house and inherits the fiefdom of Arrakis (a planet better known as Dune) after the murder of his father, Duke Leto. Arrakis is an arid, sandworm-infested landscape without a drop of water in sight. Consequently, inhabitants of this planet wear protective suits to conserve water at all times and have developed supersensory capabilities. More importantly, Arrakis is the only planet where the Spice (a powerful drug) is harvested and subsequently, certain powerful clans in the galaxy wanting



on the drug trade are interested in the politically inexperienced Paul Atreides. Except when their armies arrive some years later, they discover Paul the revered Messiah of the Arrakeen populace, transfigured into something rather mythical. The real powers of Paul are mind-boggling and he is often at doubts with what he is capable of. And the story goes on.

Published at a time when issues such as climate change and climate change science was only just taking off (at a time when we were all

preoccupied with the Cold War and well before the first global oil shock), *Dune* was both foretelling and revolutionary. Many agree that next to the venerable world of Middle Earth, the *Dune* saga (Frank Herbert wrote the six novels of the original series, while his son, Brian, and Kevin J. Anderson co-authored two trilogies as well as a seventh novel based on Frank Herbert's notes to conclude the original series) is one of the most well-built and well defined imaginary constructions to date. The fragile ecological system of Arrakis is explained thoroughly, and the religion its inhabitants build their lives around has references to Islamic texts. Even the exact workings of the Dune peoples' protective suit are described. Every minutiae is addressed and the glossary and appendixes round it all off. Alongside a strongly developed world, the emotional development of the characters appear a little stilted at times. But the cast is nonetheless of epic proportions. While some charac-



Shai-Hulud, the sandworm of Arrakis, by John Schoenherr

ters such as Duke Harkonnen are rather simplistic (but still a formidable and crafty foe), the Bene Gesserit, Paul and Stilgar and Leto are all fleshed out and to the reader, become more than just the author's literary voiceboxes. The plot does not drag and Herbert manages to fit in quite a few references to apocalypse, jihadists, impending death of the main protagonist, the usual epic romance and a many other revelatory concepts new to science fiction and the world at the time.

Many (more qualified) individuals have reviewed and analysed *Dune*, and have placed it in the hall of science fiction fame. It spawned a terrible film adaptation by David Lynch and a staunch cult who defend the work as one of the greatest in science fiction literature and has since set a very high standard for would-be authors of the genre. *Dune* has also influenced many subsequent works, including *Star Wars*. Sadly, however, it has not been accepted into the usual literary canon, but Hodder and

Stoughton have recently issued an edition with a more mundane cover, in the same way that the *Harry Potter* books all received monochrome makeovers, so that you might be mistaken for reading a great contemporary classic on the Tube instead. Enjoy.

↳ Stephanie Chiang

Dune (1982), Frank Herbert, Hodder and Stoughton, Paperback, £8.99

Mishkin's



Location: 25 Catherine street, London WC2

Nearest station: Covent Garden

Average price: £25

Opening times: 1100-2330 Mon-Sat, 1200-2230 Sun

If you have ever wandered to the north end of Brick Lane you will have visited a true London highlight – the beigel (the true Yiddish spelling of bagel). These shops are bastions of the cultural heritage of East London's Jewish population, as well as the historic Cable Street Mural and the Ridley Road Market. Yet they are the faltering earmarks of a very important immigrant population that are disappearing from

the former working class areas. The rapid and ubiquitous investment in to East London has robbed the area of these little wonders and smeared a number of stale chain eateries that capture as much social history as the back end of a donkey. However, Mishkin's has brought some remnants of Jewish cuisine back to London and in quite some style too. The self-claimed "kind-of Jewish delicatessen" (mind you, it is not kosher) takes most of its influence from across the pond but also holds on to the Jewish London influence. The range of Jewish inspired classics in their superb small plate selection and delectable list of cocktails makes this a perfect venue for a special lunchtime experience.

Mishkin's is one of four restaurants opened in Central London by the restaurateur Russell Norman. This, his second in Covent Garden, mimics his others in their New York inspired diner/cocktail bar mash up. His style is to peel back and polish, letting the interiors splash with 1950s wallpaper and a shining but dented giant zinc bar. What's more, the exterior looks like an authentic 50's diner from either side of the Atlantic, sporting the name on the window in a handsome gold font and the lace curtain that starts half way down the window. As I walked on to the parquet floor and looked up at the vintage pendant glass lampshades, I feared that, in addition to the red vinyl benches, it would all be a bit too kitsch for me. Russell Norman's choice of staff quickly put an end to that notion. Tattooed up to her jaw line, Carmen, the floor manager, is not your usual Covent Garden waitress. Furthermore, her colleague, Elliott, two years her junior at 24, sports wristbands from all festivals five years prior, but is a delightfully skilled barman, complete with dishcloth over shoulder. The youthful looking and comfortably capable staff bring a crucial twist to what potentially could, on looks alone, be a stand-alone idiosyncratic Ed's diner.

The consumables rid me of any doubt I had. Starting with a gin based cocktail of a majority grapefruit juice, the London Cup, served in iced jam jars, really inspired the stomach to lead the way as I perused the menu. On such a winter's day when the wind would have you on the floor, I fell instantly for the Brick Lane salt beef with Colman's mustard and dill pickles. A classic I knew and a classic that held up. At twice the size of your average Brick Lane salt beef beigel, this sandwich is a behemoth. This works for the price but not for its behaviour as a sandwich, for which it disintegrated quickly among the yummy pickle juice. I did not shed a tear, however, as I was entertained by

experimenting with the different levels of hot English mustard I could take from the retro yellow condiment squeezer. An affair that is not possible on Brick Lane, which is more like a Russian roulette game, waiting for the fateful bite that has the entire dollop of mustard they scraped in to the damned thing.

On another occasion I had the latkes, smoked eel, applesauce and soured cream. While eel appears in jelly in England, the Jewish-German immigrants took their smoked version over with them to the bright lights of The Big Apple. It has made its delicious trip back east on to my plate to tell its tale, bringing with it its very sweet American applesauce and another Jewish treat – the potato latke. The presentation is a delight in its

delicate tower always served on a blue bone china plate. The meaty smoked eel has the lighter soured cream as a foil, while the crunchy latkes and applesauce complete a well-rounded combination of well waited oppositions. While the dish is filling, a side order of the beautifully battered onion rings make for a hearty meal.

It can get pretty hectic at lunch, especially if you sit at the bar. It is possible to book but I find it most enjoyable to stroll on up after a mid-afternoon lecture and lounge for a while with a nice meal, good atmosphere and scrummy cocktail. Who knows, it could be your little piece of *Mad Men* living.

↳ Bibo Mukhayer



The exterior of Mishkin's, on Catherine street



Reuben sandwich



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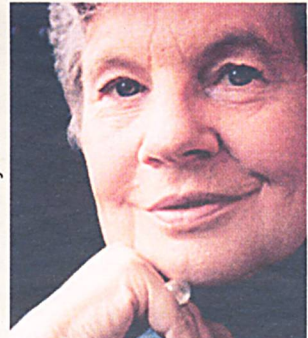
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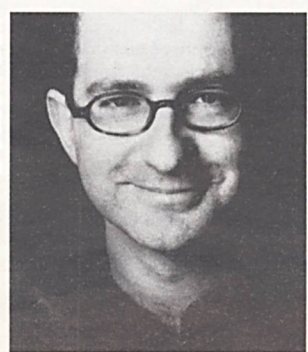
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John Lanchester

Tickets available online from Monday 6 February:
lse.ac.uk/spaceforthought

The Descendants



Director: Alexander Payne
Screenplay: Alexander Payne, Nat Faxon, Jim Rash, Kauai Hemmings
Key cast: George Clooney, Shailene Woodley, Amara Miller
Year: 2012
Runtime: 115 minutes
In cinemas now

So much for preconceptions. If *The Descendants* continues its mediocre performance at the stateside box office then Alexander Payne only has his publicity team to blame. Their trailer makes the film look everything it is not; schmaltzy, overblown and painfully feel-good. In reality, it is a beautifully subtle and bittersweet reflection on loss, grief and legacy that deserves every plaudit being thrown at it this awards season.

George Clooney plays Matt King, a lawyer in Hawaii dealing not only with the tragedy of his wife Elizabeth falling into a coma after a boating accident, but also with the imminent sale of his family's swathes of unspoiled land, part of their heritage in the state for hundreds of years. What could seem like a relatively straightforward tale of loss is quickly shown to be far more convoluted and morally ambiguous; King's daughter Alexandra (Shailene Woodley) tells him his dying wife had taken a lover prior to her accident. King is thus forced to attempt to reconcile his feelings of anger and betrayal with his deep love for his wife as she drifts away, whilst also embarking on an almost farcical search for the man his wife loved in her final years.

That, really, is all that happens in the film, as we follow King's journey around Hawaii, punctuated by visits to see his cheating, comatose spouse. Yet Payne makes every scene utterly enthralling, and manages the bittersweet, dark comedy with the same skill as in *About Schmidt* to years ago. There are none of the soaring orchestral pieces

or shots of rain snaking down an open window that often make Hollywood weepies so unbearable. Instead, Payne does everything in his power to underplay the tragedy and lace it with brilliant laugh-out-loud humour. King's veneer of contentment never breaks for his daughters' sake, and we are introduced to a string of ever more absurd characters along the way, not least Alexandra's doofus boyfriend Sid (Nick Krause) and King's cousin Hugh, Beau Bridges on inspired form as the archetype of an aging Hawaiian hippie.

Clooney himself is particularly interesting in this film. It is often said that he only has three or four characters which are endlessly recycled, and for many of the early scenes he seems to be on auto-pilot as the lovable idiot character we have seen so often in the past. He is startlingly excellent, however, as the film reaches its climax; his understated emotion fits the tone of the film perfectly, and his rare ability to convey a full range of feeling in one look dovetails with many of the moral challenges in Payne's screenplay. If there should be no surprise at Clooney's Oscar nod this week, then there should also be consternation at Woodley's absence from the nominees. She is revelatory as Alexandra, the eldest of King's daughters, and her charming, and often cutting outspokenness complements the introverted nature of her father. Their relationship is at the very core of the film.

The true brilliance of the film, however, predictably lies with Payne. It has been seven years since his last film, *Sideways*, but *The Descendants* proves that he has lost none of his mastery of either direction or writing. He carries an interesting premise with wonderful dialogue; nothing is superfluous and comedy is found in the most unexpected of places. Who knew that shouting at a dying, comatose woman could be both so tragic and simultaneously so darkly amusing? Payne. His direction,



George Clooney, as Matt King, and family in Hawaii

moreover, is beautifully done. Hawaii is strikingly attractive. It is shown not as the fantastical hula-land of countless previous portrayals, but as a real place, where tragedy occurs amidst the palm trees and not everything can be surfed or slept away. Loss is shown as neither inexorable nor fatal, heritage is not al-

ways a barrier to progress and tragedy and comedy can be equal bedfellows in a film without it feeling awkward or lop-sided.

Characteristic of Payne's films, *The Descendants* is richly satirical and symbolic, but it would be a shame to spoil the unexpected challenges the

film poses. Instead, I would simply suggest that you ignore the cliché ridden trailer for this film and go and see it. It is one of the most charming and thought-provoking films to come out of Hollywood this year.

↳ Mark Heffernan

House of Tolerance



Director: Bertrand Bonello
Screenplay: Bertrand Bonello
Key cast: Hafisa Herzi, Céline Sallette, Jasmine Trinca, Adèle Haenel, Alice Barnole, Iliana Zabeth
Year: 2012
Runtime: 122 minutes
In cinemas now

Bertrand Bonello skilfully captures the last days of brothel L'Apollonide in fin-de-siècle Paris and of the girls living and working inside the closed world that is the *House of Tolerance*.

The opening scene begins with the story of Madeleine (Alice Barnole), who is brutally attacked by a client. He leaves her mutilated with a scar in the shape of a smile stretching up her cheeks. This becomes a key symbol and a central focus of the film, and we return to the events of the evening in flashbacks throughout. The closing scene, equally dramatic, parallels this opening scene and brings together the story of Madeleine.

Played out alongside the tragedy of Madeleine is the death of Julie (Jasmine Trinca) from syphilis and the demise of opium addict Clotilde (Céline Sallette). However, much of what lies between the dramatic opening and closing scenes is less energetic. The main body of the film often seems little more than a compilation of events and anecdotes from the girls, which often grate against each other rather than fusing together.

This is part of Bonello's vision to capture everything from the individual perspective of the prostitutes – of the women themselves. It is an uncommon angle of approach. His idea extends be-

yond the screenplay, as there are very few shots of males at all. The film alternates between the girls' happiness and misery, allowing them to disclose their worries alongside their confessions.

House of Tolerance is a film of contrasts. Being shot almost entirely in the brothel house, spaces within the building have extra importance. Downstairs is the workplace of the girls, an elaborate aesthetic – think a house of velvet – that is juxtaposed with the upstairs, where the girls live a very simple lifestyle. Paradoxically, it is upstairs that they at times are able to find companionship in each other, quite unlike their relationships with the clients who seek clandestine pleasures in the rooms below. The men are always portrayed as self-absorbed and lacking in character: "men have secrets, but no mystery," and thus sympathy for the prostitutes is easily felt.

For a film that is essentially about sex, there is less eroticism than you might expect. Although there is certainly no shortage of bosom, the limited sex scenes are characterised by unusual fetichisms. The clients have the girls act out their oddest fantasies, such as bathing in champagne and talking dirty in Japanese while dressed as a geisha.

The casting is excellent with the mélange of personalities complementing each other extremely well. Their friendships are raw and believable. Iliana Zabeth, as the youngest prostitute Pauline, is particularly likeable and her tender naïveté contrasts with Sallette's role as the haggard and weary Clotilde. While each girl is unique, they all exhibit characteristics of endurance and compliance, and of course all are incredibly sexy.



L'Apollonide: House of Pleasures

As with most period dramas the costumes are among the most captivating aspects of the film; the women's outfits emulate opulence, lavish corsets and provocative lingerie, while the dandy appearance of the male clients works perfectly too. The work of costume designer Anaïs Romand is very impressive.

More debatable is the choice of music. Bonello's soundtrack mixes early twentieth century classical pieces with

modern 1960's American soul music, aimed at connecting the lives of the girls with slavery. While this is a veritable parallel, the anachronism is jarring and the film has the potential to create such connections more subtly.

This is not the only respect in which the film is not entirely a period piece. The last shot, which acts as a final comment, underlines the perpetuity of the issues highlighted by Bonello. We see

the girls of L'Apollonide standing by a busy road, their corsets replaced with short skirts, as they offer themselves and their sex to a resolute twentieth century world.

While *House of Tolerance* may not be to everyone's taste, it leaves you with much to think about and, if nothing else, the haunting images of a once beautiful, now disfigured face.

↳ Kirsty Kenney

Perspective: The Value of Authenticity, Vol. 2

At the beginning of this term, we published an article about the value of authenticity, and the distinction between a manufactured "artist," and a manufactured "sound." That article prompted a number of responses, and so we've decided to do a follow-up addressing the ideas contained within some of those replies.

The original article proposed that the authenticity of the artist themselves matters much less than the music which they produce. As long as the music feels "real" then whether the artist really means what they're saying is irrelevant.

One of the most compelling counter-arguments to this disputes the ease with which you can separate the artist from the work. Detaching the two might be intellectually possible, and have less relevance when trying to objectively critique the music, but it seems harder to distance the visceral experience from what you know and on what authority.

A song or album can contain sentiments to which you can closely relate,

and to know that these feelings are manufactured undermines their emotional resonance. The problem isn't with the subject matter of the lyrics – the example mentioned in the original article talked about it being irrelevant whether the object of affection in your favourite love song was actually intended to be a member of the same sex rather than the opposite. This isn't an issue because the desire, passion and pain is still heartfelt.

Rather, the problem is with songs in which it just seems impossible for a person to relate to what they're singing about. For example, Rage Against the Machine have, or at least had, a real contempt for many aspects of Western society, whereas Enter Shikari seem to effuse a similar disillusionment without having any basis for their anger. In the same way, it seems rich for multi-millionaire John Lennon to pass moral judgment on the very system that gave him a voice.

But "Imagine" is still one of the greatest songs ever written. And "I Want You

Back" isn't diminished by the fact that it's sung by a pre-teen Michael Jackson. As long as the sentiments are something that you can relate to, perhaps it shouldn't whether even they themselves are manufactured. The point is that songs need to have a visceral impact, and how they go about achieving this isn't particularly important if they succeed. On the other hand, songs which fail to resonate become a lot more vulnerable to criticisms of inauthenticity, it becomes a lot more apparent that they are in some way "cheating" us.

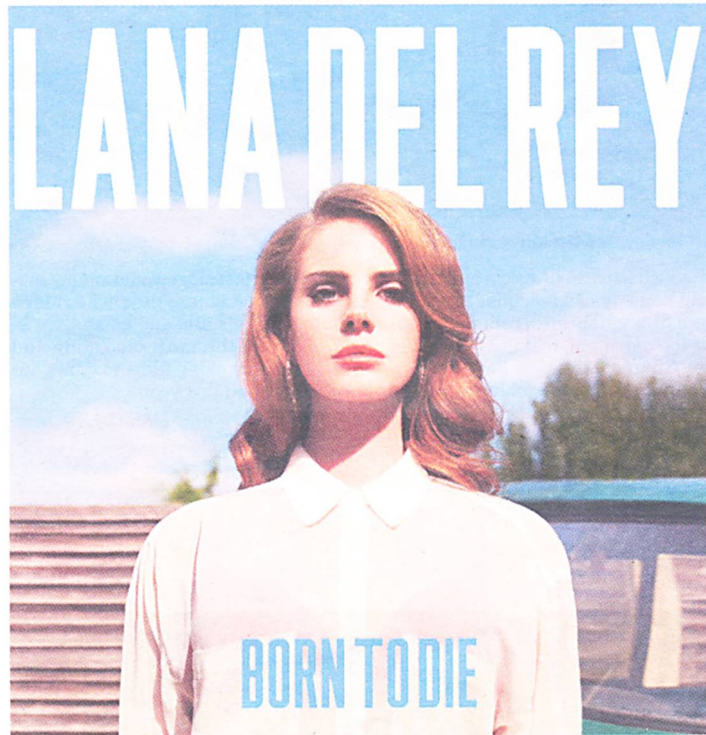
Perhaps the most important point is that sometimes, ignorance is bliss. The less information we have about something, the more it can sometimes affect us. One of last year's best songs, "Holocene," by Bon Iver contains the lyric "I was not magnificent." For us, that line carries a huge amount of weight, but precisely because we're able to interpret on our own terms.

↳ Aameer Patel and Ankur Vora



Expressions of genuine angst. Slipknot at Rock in Rio 2011.

Lana Del Rey – Born to Die



The controversial Lana Del Rey seems to be the "it girl" of the moment. She has been hailed by many as the best breakthrough artist of 2011, having quickly become a YouTube sensation after racking up millions of views.

Yet, she has been met with a crashing wave of backlash before even finding her well-deserved fame, with cynics who see her as a trouty-mouthed Frankenstein creation by back-room bigwigs aiming to manufacture the Facebook generation's newest indie-pop pin-up. Two years ago, under her given name Elizabeth Grant, Del Rey was little-known on the music scene, one of hundreds of musicians trying to find their footing amongst the bar and club scene of New York. Now, traces of Lizzy Grant are hard to come by, with her first album, "Lana Del Rey A.K.A Lizzy Grant" having been withdrawn from iTunes after a brief period, prompting Grant fans to believe suited Svengalis have been behind Del Rey's potentially strategic reinvention. Add to this her recent lacklustre Saturday Night Live performance and theories that her Daddy Warbucks has been behind her transformation and you have yourself a star enshrouded by public intrigue.

Either way, "Born to Die" has been hugely anticipated ever since Del Rey uploaded her home-made, old-Hollywood reminiscent video of the beautifully haunting "Video Games" to YouTube. In the album's opening track, after which the record is named, she floats effortlessly between her sultry lower register and coquettish soprano, resulting in a track which is unforced evidence of her (self-proclaimed) "gangster Nancy Sinatra" perfection. On the addictive "Off to the Races," her enticing vocals take the listener dizzily from raspy flirtation to sugary giddiness, while there is a momentary breather from the heavy atmospherics on the succulent "Diet Mt Dew," a truly standout track. "National Anthem" is well worthy of its title, brimming with attitude and showcasing Del Rey's ability to create tracks that are little less than epic.

What makes Lana Del Rey, and the album, so richly thrilling is her ability to naturally transition between the film-noir femme fatale, the white trash all-American girl and the innocent Lolita, a trait which she seems at times, deliciously unaware of and, at others, teasingly eager to augment; the vocally Lykke Li-esque "Lolita," which appears on the Special Edition, seems to be an almost mocking play on this

depiction, while on the compellingly dark "Carmen," Del Rey rarely lets slip her veil of Hollywood glamour.

Bittersweet as dark chocolate, a thematic focus of the record is that of destructive and damned love, of the rebellious "jeune fille" falling for the bad guy. It's the kind of record you could imagine being spun by Skins's Effy Stonem during an hour of contemplative solitude, though its inevitable appeal to today's angst-filled teenaged youth should not detract from its brilliance.

The record is not quite perfection; it collapses slightly towards the end, and the excessive production can become rather nauseating. "Summertime Sadness" plays the nymphet card one time too many, while "Dark Paradise," though a small masterpiece in its own right, pales in comparison to the opening track's magnificence. Yet, Del Rey works hard to make each track a work of art in its own right. From start to finish, "Born to Die" takes the listener on a giddy journey down the rabbit hole to her own dark and hazy wonderland where she is the Queen of Hearts. Whether the persona, or the bee-stung pout, is authentic or not, there is no doubt that music certainly is.

↳ Shrina Poojara

This week's live highlights

31 Jan: **Feeder** – KOKO

2 Feb: **Nicolas Jaar** – Roundhouse

3/4 Feb: **D'Angelo** – O2 Academy Brixton

3 Feb: **Actress** – The Bussey Building

4 Feb: **Roots Manuva** – Roundhouse

6 Feb: **Tim Hecker** – St Giles-in-the-Fields



PartBeat

The office playlist this week...

Daylight

Aesop Rock: *Labor Days* (2001)

Te Amo

Atlas Sound: *Parallax* (2011)

Twistin' the Night Away

Sam Cooke: *Live at Harlem Square Club* (1963)

Death Mountain

Rustie: *Glass Swords* (2011)

Dreamer

Tiny Vipers: *Life on Earth* (2009)



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art
24 January 2012

The Descendants | **The House of Bernarda Alba** | **Lana Del Rey** |
Mishkin's | **The Bee** | **Dune** | **LSEx: Fetishism** | **Private B**

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Cover

Untitled, 2011

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The Bee, Soho Theatre



Director: Hideki Noda

Playwrights: Hideki Noda,
Colin Teevan

Key cast: Kathryn Hunter, Glyn
Pritchard, Clive Mendus, Hideki Noda
**At Soho Theatre until 11
February 2012**

The Bee, which opened in the Soho Theatre in 2006, makes its return to London as part of a world tour that takes it to Tokyo, New York and Hong Kong. Its blend of physical theatre that verges on clowning and blank verse will no doubt delight audiences craving a departure from the normal language of spoken theatre, just as it will leave others bemusedly scratching their heads. Some quirky and innovative stage artifices from co-writer, director, actor and Japanese legend Hideki Noda keep the production interesting, yet the highly stylised action sequences (set in the main to music) are not quite elegant enough in their execution to truly convince that this is artful dance rather than pantomime. One is left with the impression that the play is merely a vehicle for experimental direction, and as such, the story fails to stir the emotions.

Set in Tokyo in 1974, Mr Ido, a salary man, returns home to find that an escaped convict, Ogoro, has taken his family hostage. Rather than wait for the inept police force to deliver a messy resolution, he takes matters into his own hands and retaliates by taking the convict's own family hostage. So begins a brutal game of tit-for-tat whereby each captor rapes and maims their opposite's wife and son. In dream like semi-balletic sequences set to Puccini's *Madame*



Hideki Noda as Ogoro, Glyn Pritchard as child and Kathryn Hunter as Ido

Butterfly, Ido is trapped in a cycle of posting severed fingers to his enemy and in turn receiving Ogoro's gruesome offerings. He fucks Ogoro's wife, eats, washes and sleeps. He is at once horrified by the violence he is committing, yet also empowered by the fact that he is no longer a victim.

The significance of the bee that torments Ido throughout the play is not especially clear. Perhaps it is a symbol of domestic annoyance reflecting the monotony of the life of a salary man; perhaps Ido's nagging conscience; perhaps nothing more than a dramatic conceit to show that Ido, like a bee that has stung, must die for his violence. The dreamlike quality of the play, reinforced

the narration by Ido of the physical actions he is simultaneously taking, hints at themes beyond the simple hostage narrative. Yet if this is a comment on the role of women in Japanese society, or some more existential imperative to own one's own actions, this is lost in the calamity of the production.

Each member of the cast plays a variety of characters. Kathryn Hunter, notable for being the first woman to have played King Lear, cuts a strange figure as Ido. Her raspy voice and RSC training lend a deranged yet lyrical quality to the text, which is written in blank verse (with a slight over-reliance on rhyming couplets). Hideki Noda appears as Ogoro's wife and lends some

credibility to the kabuki style set-pieces. Particularly impressive in terms of characterisation is Glyn Pritchard, who plays Ogoro's much mutilated son as well as a raft of other parts.

Playful at times, funny and occasionally taut, the production is never slow. There are moments of directorial brilliance and the creative team achieve what they set out to achieve in blending various theatrical traditions of both the West and the Orient. However, this constant mish-mash of styles is overwhelming and a great deal of meaning and poignancy is lost in the on-stage cacophony.

↳ Rory Creedon

The House of Bernarda Alba, Almeida Theatre



Director: Bijan Sheibani

Playwright: Federico García Lorca,
adapted by Emily Mann

Key cast: Shohreh Aghdashloo,
Jane Bertish, Pandora Colin, Jasmina
Daniel, Amanda Hale, Seline Hizli,
Sarah Solemani, Mia Soteriou, Badria
Timimi, Hara Yannas
**At Almeida Theatre until 10
March 2012**

Emily Mann has reinvigorated Federico García Lorca's masterpiece *The House of Bernarda Alba* by transporting it from rural Spain to present-day Iran. Originally written during the political unrest in Madrid in 1936, Lorca uses the everyday inferior treatment of women as a suitable metaphor for tyranny more generally. At the time of writing a military coup was looming in Spain, threatening to plunge the country back into another dictatorship – a context that adds further substance to the play's already far-reaching motif. What sets the play apart from others is its entirely female cast, which leaves the audience no choice but to focus their attention on women, and more specifically the way in which they live as subordinates to men. Mann's version manages to keep hold of the messages that have made it Lorca's most frequently staged play, and the cast gives a crisp, at times delicate, performance.

The stage is designed by Bunny Christie to give the impression of a grand old house, with bare bricks and chipped paint; in the first scene we see the maid (Mia Soteriou) busily scrubbing the floors, before giving up to retrieve a vacuum cleaner – one of several humorous moments in an otherwise composed production. The maid resents her master, Bernarda Alba, played by the brilliant Shohreh Aghdashloo. As



Jane Bertish as Darya and Shohreh Aghdashloo as Bernarda Alba

a servant, the maid suffers: she must obey Bernarda's every command. It soon becomes clear, however, that Bernarda is just as restricted as her maid: powerlessness does not stop at the lower classes, but extends across all women. Where the maid is inferior to the higher classes, women are inferior to men.

The house of Bernarda Alba would be better described as a prison. Aghdashloo gives a commanding performance as the autocratic Bernarda, and rules her five daughters (Pandora Colin, Amanda Hale, Seline Hizli, Sarah Solemani, Hara Yannas) with an iron hand. The daughters are like a chorus of dissatisfaction, each one as inherently unhappy as the other in their struggle to exist in the monotony of a patriarchal society. Their weakness and feelings of helplessness

are illustrated on stage as they often use the walls of the house as support, leaning exhaustedly against them – struggling to deal with the heat of the day, but perhaps more the dominance of men. Bernarda is, ultimately, subject to the whims of men too; and Aghdashloo presents this frailty with a subtle conviction – despite it going against her character. She is wary of men, most evident in the unmovable commitment to her late husband, who manages to control her even from beyond the grave. Elmira (Amanda Hale) describes their lives in house as like "living locked up in a cupboard," and as their frustration grows they begin to turn on each other. Sibling point-scoring has never taken on a more serious form, when Adela (Hara Yannas) maliciously pursues her sister,

Asieh's (Pandora Colin), fiancé. This turn in the plot exposes the destructive effects of tyranny.

In *The House of Bernarda Alba*, Lorca boasts a carefully constructed script which reveals the plot at a gradual pace so as to keep the audience engaged right up until the end. It is the maid's vacuum cleaner, however, that resonates even after the curtain falls on a dark closing scene. It makes the point that there has been little progress since the 1930s. The tyranny of men is still at large and the persecution of women is still a very real issue – perhaps less so in the West, but certainly in Middle Eastern countries and elsewhere.

↳ Laurence Vardaxoglou

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Features

Fear or Foolishness

Rachel Way looks into the battle for women's rights in the Islamic Republic

The past month has seen Iran sitting comfortably on the front page of newspapers worldwide, oil embargos, assassinations and allegations of nuclear plotting becoming commonplace. Golshifteh Farahani, however, has succeeded in forcing another more overlooked issue into the limelight: the continuing rebellion against the strict Islamic codes forced upon women in Iran.

The Hollywood actress, who rose to fame in her home country through state-sponsored and highly censored movies which forbade the touching of hands became the first Iranian actress to star in a Western film, playing alongside Leonardo DiCaprio in 2008's "Body of Lies". After moving to Paris, she sparked a heated debate by choosing to appear nude in the French magazine "Madame Le Figaro" in protest against the ultra-conservative policies that she claims are restricting Iran's film industry.

The Iranian government banned her from returning to the country in response. The semi-official Fars news agency asserted that she had "auctioned off her modesty and honour in front of the Western cameras". The move has taken the social media by storm, prompting mixed responses within the Islamic Republic. Facebook comments on her page have ranged from cries of support to accusations that she has turned her back on her Muslim faith. One particularly poignant comment reads, "I am ashamed to call you an Iranian". In a society such as ours, where glamour models enjoy celebrity status and nudity is embraced in the arts, it is hard to imagine that a place exists where women are not entitled to the same liberties, or at least the choice to enjoy them without fear of reprisals. Iranian women live in a painfully unequal society, and their history is a most unhappy one.

"Iranian women live in a painfully unequal society, and their history is a most unhappy one."

Before the 1979 revolution, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi led Iran. Under his leadership the Shah brought about the "White Revolution" in 1962, introducing female suffrage, restricting polygamy and working to establish a society that resembled those of his allies in the West.

Unfortunately, such poverty followed that the entire population began to rise up against the monarchy in the 1979 revolution, where many women believed that the Ayatollah Khomeini, a religious teacher, would grant them the freedoms they truly deserved. This was the greatest travesty of all.

Upon gaining power, which would have been impossible without the efforts of female Iranian protesters, Khomeini went on to strictly enforce "Sharia law" - the religious code of Islam - as the official law of the state. Khomeini made the chador, a full-body cloak, obligatory for women, and effectively removed any liberties that they had enjoyed in the past.

The next national rise of women in pursuit of equality came in the form of the 2009 election protests, where fears of four more years under conservative president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad forced thousands onto the streets. Despite their best efforts, Ahmadinejad won under suspicious circumstances and a harsh government crackdown followed. Horror stories began to emerge via the Internet of beatings, torture and rape of protesters aligned with the movement. Three hundred

"Despite these astonishing setbacks, there is hope for the future. The new generation of Iranian women are more determined than ever."

women are known to have been arrested since the uprisings, but thousands more are too terrified to speak out. Not only to the threat of being re-arrested, but the social stigma that is still attached to harassment and rape. One unidentified victim laments "I didn't even have nail clippers in my purse for them to say I had anything remotely sharp or dangerous, all I had done was give one vote and that was to Mousavi. A vote that was never counted."

So what of women's rights in Iran today? Iranian laws still highlight a chasmic divide between the sexes. A woman's testimony in court is worth half that of a man. Women who appear on streets and in public without the prescribed "Islamic Hijab" will be condemned to 74 strokes of the lash by the Basij (government-backed militias). A husband may ban his wife from any technical profession that conflicts with family life or her character. Men can marry non-Islamic women (males are allowed up to four wives, as long as they can provide equally for all of them) but women cannot marry non-Islamic men. The list goes on. Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani awaits imminent execution after confessing to adultery under torture before retracting her statement. The presiding judge was able to ignore the lack of evidence due to Iran's fickle and sexist judicial system.

Despite these astonishing setbacks, there is hope for the future. The new generation of Iranian women are more determined than ever. 65 per cent of university students are female and women are competing in many different markets. Thirty-three years after the revolution, many leaders are trying to reinterpret the constitution in women's favour and talks are in process on amending several of the more extreme laws. Although still a theocracy by definition, it seems that an organic sense of equality may be taking root. By no means is the West a perfect model to follow, but if figures such as Ms Farhadi continue to draw attention to the stark contrast between the rights of women around the world, then it can only serve to narrow that gap, and perhaps find a happy medium in which so many women would not have to suffer needlessly. ♀



Fifteen Minutes on the Tube

Edward Larkin reflects upon his travels on the Underground

Holborn to Hyde Park Corner, 9:27 PM. Piccadilly Line, 5 stops, off-peak, easy. I sit down on the end seat of a sparsely populated train, three seats away from the next guy. A girl comes in and for some reason sits in between us with an empty seat on either side such that any couple or twosome wouldn't now be able to sit next to each other. It does, however, ensure that she is as far from us as possible, which seems to be the intent (the reason for which is, again, unknown, but the maximization of distance from other people seems to be pretty standard fare in public transportation, the closer seats only grudgingly taken when it's clear that there are going to be way too many people to sit one to every three seats). Above the windows on the opposite side of the car is an advertisement for the London Sperm Bank, and the "do" in London is shaped like a penis and testicles in such a way that I can't decide whether it's imaginative or just really creepy, since you really have to contort the "do" and even make it look like some sort of hideously fused "db" for the proper effect.

Almost everyone is buried in their phones, these being predominantly iPhones. The point seems not so much to accomplish anything as to have an easy way to avoid any sort of eye contact, an impression I get after watching the girl two seats from me continually open apps and then close them after about three seconds.

A middle-aged woman steps on before the doors close at Covent Garden and after looking around sits next to me out of necessity. A backpacked young man is playing what appears to be an iPhone game across the aisle. The people beside him watch in a way that projects a casual yet not unseemly interest.

Businessmen and lawyers pretend to be utterly and completely absorbed with their Blackberries in order to convey status and importance in the world above. Otherwise, they stare off

into space in a way that indicates the maximum amount of boredom and contempt possible, a contempt that seems to be borne of the conviction that us Cretans don't have enough appreciation for either their net worth

"Businessmen and lawyers pretend to be utterly and completely absorbed with their Blackberries in order to convey status and importance in the world."

or the positive macroeconomic effects of their providing liquidity and capital, that if we could just see them in their glass castles in Canary Wharf we'd be a whole lot more respectful.

Across the aisle, two seats from the iPhone gamer, a rather normal looking man is listening to an iPod, the porous headphones of which blare, "Marry the Night" by Lady Gaga. This is making everyone else in the train uncomfortable because it's funny but to laugh would be socially unacceptable given the current dynamic, a dynamic which could be best described as atomistic.

A hipster with multi-colored hair and corks in his ears stands with a friend near the door, both of them the type of people that enjoy looking alien but kind of dare you to look at them as alien.

What is clearly a homeless man steps on the train at Piccadilly Circus and perhaps the best word is collapses into a seat. Immediately the atomism is ended and everyone else in the train is united against the other, as if a strong electrical field had all

of a sudden polarized what had been a heterogeneous solution. Even the businessmen look up from their pseudo-reading of email. Everyone seems vaguely put upon that the man is in this car, the way they might respond to someone talking on the phone in a quiet part of a library. The man stares downwards, huddled up in himself. Had I not seen him walk on I wouldn't be able to tell if he was alive or dead. And then it further occurs to me that no one seems to care whether he is alive or dead, and perhaps the reason that people appear put upon is that because his presence in this car forces them to either consider the implications of this not caring or at least expend effort trying not to think about it.

The homeless man is larger than everyone else on the train. I wonder to myself as we're accelerating through the tunnel whether other people realize that whatever structural aspects of the world have somehow put this guy in this position are completely null while we're in this train, that he could forcefully take whatever he wanted if he so desired, and that the only reason he shouldn't is that that real world exists both at the beginning and end of the tunnel. I also wonder how long the train would have to be in the tunnel before he realized it as well. An hour? A day? A week?

The woman next to me for some reason seems to be sitting as far away from me as is physically possible while plausibly appearing to remain on her seat. The reason for this is unknown. Two businessmen/lawyers in particular seem to be competing over who can possibly stare/type into their Blackberry in such a way that it makes them look most senior and busy. Any sort of physical or verbal contact whatsoever is total anathema.

The teen hipster and his friend are talking kind of loudly so that you can't help but overhear their conversation. The benefit of this is that it makes eavesdropping unavoidable. The hipster throws around the F bomb

a couple times which, even though a lot of us on the train probably consider ourselves new age and tolerant, is still somehow grating. I am wondering to myself as I listen passively how long the homeless guy will stay on the car, whether someone will eventually force him off. How many other permutations of passengers he will unite in defense of civilization against its afterbirth?

Everyone would probably feel better if the seats were facing the windows or at least perpendicular to them, as people seem relatively uncomfortable trying to not look at those across from them. It occurs to me after seeing a sample size of about 500 during my few months in London that the sheer

"Sure, we see apathy and boredom, but we also see generosity (witness a man give up his seat to an older woman) and sensitivity to others' comfort."

fact of being in an underground car gives every woman over the age of 50 a look of terminal sadness.

The pressure to be silent seems unbelievable, the social equivalent of a deep-sea dive. It would be fascinating to see what exactly you could pull off in an underground car without eliciting a response. Could you watch porn on an iPad? Could you carry a dead animal? Could you be profusely bleeding from one side of your head? At this point it seems plausible you could get through a few stops unmolested in any of these situations.

I wonder why it is that everyone

looks so hollow. Is this just a skewed sample of the population, the outliers on the normal distribution? I doubt it, as there seems to be no compelling link between hollowness and frequency of subway patronization. Is there something about the underground itself that saps the life out of us? It doesn't seem like it - the cars are generally clean, the rides smooth, the woman PA's voice soothing and agreeably British.

In the end, there may be some small part of everyone's subconscious that looks at the scene and realizes how pathetic it is that no one can muster a word to anyone else. That we're all so awkward and dull and suspicious and completely unequipped to deal with other people that when placed in forced proximity we have to resort to things like burying ourselves in our phones even though they don't have service. That we have to avert our gazes towards the ads above even though they're incredibly simplistic and maximize the possible distance from each other on the seats as if the slightest brush of fabric will cause the other person to become uncontrollably horny.

All these details might seem odd or trivial, but the subway is our modern agora. This is where we are placed out of necessity into communion with strangers. This is where we can see human interaction at its most basic. And the results are deeply telling - not all good, not all bad. Sure, we see apathy and boredom, but we also see generosity (witness a man give up his seat to an older woman) and sensitivity to others' comfort. Seeing the dynamics in a subway car makes it hard to believe some of the more bold pronouncements about human nature - the typical dichotomies between good vs. evil, religious vs. the secular, liberal vs. conservative, etc. Maybe we're not fundamentally good or fundamentally bad. Maybe we're shy and scared, fundamentally cautious. Maybe we just want to get from Point A to Point B.



Flickr: Mike_fleming

Egypt: After the Revolution

Shyam Desai interviews Omar Khashaba



Flickr: sierragoddess

Omar Khashaba graduated from the London School of Economics last year with a Bachelor of Laws degree, and upon returning home to Egypt, helped run the Free Egyptians Party.

What needs to be done to complete the transition to democracy?

Well, as I am sure you're aware the parliamentary elections have already taken place and the newly elected Parliament has been tasked by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the body which has been governing the country since Mubarak stepped down, with drafting a new constitution. In my opinion this amounts to putting the cart before the horse. How can Parliament draft the constitution when it is in fact the constitution which must determine the powers and prerogatives of Parliament? Likewise, it is the constitution which creates a system of checks and balances and divides power between the executive, the judiciary and the legislature. It also dictates which political system a country adheres to, i.e. whether it is a parliamentary or a presidential democracy, a federal or a unitary state. So conceptually it makes no sense for Parliament, as an organ of the state which itself ought to be governed by the constitution, to have the exclusive right to draft that constitution. More importantly, however, a constitution is meant to be a permanently binding legal document which governs future generations and is either impossible or very difficult to amend. So then why should today's political majority, which is transient in nature, possess the right to, at least theoretically speaking, bind all future majorities by exclusively drafting the constitution? Finally, to allow the political majority to write the constitution is tantamount to the creation of a utilitarian democracy. In a utilitarian democracy the majority reigns unencumbered by any restraints and the minority is vulnerable to whatever acts are proclaimed to be in the interest of the majority. The constitution is the one document which limits this absolute power of the majority and guarantees the fundamental rights of all citizens which cannot be infringed by any government. Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and all those rights that are often taken for granted in Western societies essentially derive their power from the constitution. So is there not a clear conflict of interest in allowing

Parliament, and therefore the majority in Parliament, to draft the very document that is meant to constrain that majority's power?

Ideally, what I would have liked to see is a constitution being written by a panel that comprised all the political factions of Egyptian society. There would have been no voting procedure in this panel (that would lead to the same majority-minority problem outlined above) but instead a provision would only be included if it was the subject of a consensus. The sorts of compromises this setting would have necessitated would, in my opinion, have laid the groundwork for a sound constitutional democracy.

As for the SCAF, ideally they would have handed power over completely to a civilian transitional government. Instead what we ended up with were civilian governments that lacked any kind of prerogatives and were little more than secretaries to the SCAF. The greatest challenge lies in removing power from the military who has been governing Egypt since the military coup of 1952. Opportunistic manoeuvres by the Muslim Brotherhood may mean that the army could retain very broad competences, such as the ability to determine of its own budget or to veto any legislative proposals relating to the military or national security, even before Parliament has had a chance to fully consider such legislation. Essentially, the military would not be subject to any democratic controls.

Religious tensions seem to be growing, and fundamentalist factions appear to have popular support. What can be done to remedy the friction between religious groups?

The marginalization and under-representation of the Coptic population in Egypt is a very real problem. For example, there are numerous regulatory obstacles that must be overcome in order to obtain planning permission for the construction of a new church. In a country where there is an ad-hoc mosque on every street corner there is simply no justification for that. I think it's also fair to say that there is a rising level of sectarian tension in the country that is further exacerbated by the failure of authorities to protect Copts against acts of violence and terrorism. One example of this is the failure to investigate a church bombing in Alexandria last year. More recently, fundamentalists destroyed a church built by locals in the city of Aswan. To add insult to

injury, the Governor of Aswan issued a statement saying that the church had been built without planning permission thus impliedly justifying the attack on the church. This sparked mass outrage not only in the Coptic but also the liberal community in Egypt and led to mass protests in Cairo's Maspero Square. During the demonstrations the military clashed with protesters resulting in a large number of fatalities.

It's important to note at this point that there are extremists on both sides, Muslim and Christian, but the root cause of the problem is, in my opinion, education. Public education in the country is in a deplorable condition. There are schools with up to eighty students in a single classroom and neither the syllabus nor the style of teaching promotes critical thinking. Moreover, the educational system was used by the former regime as a way of planting seeds of blind obedience and adherence to authority at an early age. This mental attitude of uncritical acceptance coupled with a level of religious conservatism, which has been taking hold in Egyptian society over the past two decades, meant that people were highly susceptible to the views and ideologies espoused by religious authorities in their local communities. In fact, most confrontations between Muslims and Christians in Egypt begin with local Imams' anti-Christian sermons during Friday prayers. Now, I am painting a very bleak picture here but it's important not to overstate the level of sectarian tension in Egypt. Extremist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists are of course the main culprits and largely responsible for the international coverage this issue is receiving. However, whilst undeniably there is some level of rising tension average Muslims do not, in my opinion, feel deep hostility towards Christians and vice versa. Islamists are obviously a different story entirely.

That leads me to my next question. Do you think the results of the recent parliamentary elections show Islamists to hold a majority in Egypt?

The short answer to that is: No. The Muslim Brotherhood received over 40% and the Salafists about 25% of votes cast in the elections. No doubt these figures are alarming and both these groups admittedly do command significant followership in Egypt. Nonetheless, in my view, these results are in no way representative of the political landscape in Egypt. Rather,

they are a direct reflection of the superior infrastructure Islamist parties have managed to build over the decades. The Muslim Brotherhood, for example, has been in existence for more than seventy years. Contrast that to all the newly formed liberal parties in Egypt who simply could not have had the time or resources to reach out to voters and explain their propositions, especially in rural areas, which comprise no less than 60% of the country. Liberal parties just need more time to get organized and I think that the presidential elections to be held later this year will attest to this by showing a significant increase of liberal votes. In addition, I believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has been very successful in steering election debates away from issues such as the economy, health care and education and toward religion. Casting the debate in those terms automatically meant that if you voted for a liberal party you were breaching some kind of a religious obligation to vote for the Muslim Brotherhood/Salafists. I think that one of the biggest mistakes the liberals made was to not take ownership of these public debates and draw Islamists out of their comfort zone of religion. The truth of the matter is Islamists had no legislative agenda or campaign platform besides religious indoctrination and not capitalizing on that was a grave error. Nonetheless, once people see the Muslim Brotherhood in action I think that that romantic enchantment with religion will start to dissipate as they realize that the performance of a government truly has nothing to do with how committed to Islam it claims to be. At the end of the day, people want to see results: They want jobs and higher standards of living.

So what can be done about the unemployment and worsening economic situation of the country?

The educated yet unemployed youth taking to the streets in January last year was the main spark that ignited the revolution. Those who first marched towards Tahrir Square weren't school leavers or illiterates – they were doctors, engineers and lawyers who had spent years at university but upon graduation couldn't land a job. Many either continued to live with their parents or took jobs as cab drivers, waiters, etc.. Between 2005 and 2008 the international press lauded Egypt's high rates of economic growth. The IMF sent accolade after accolade; HSBC

predicted that by 2050 the country will jump 16 places to become the 19th largest economy in the world. Yet after the revolution it became painfully clear that first of all the growth was driven by the agricultural sector, offering the youth no escape from the economic quagmire that they found themselves in. Secondly, this wealth did not trickle down to them in the form of minimum wages, a good health care system and, in general, improved government services due to a corrupt system of government which allowed only the elite classes of society to reap the rewards.

It's obvious that whatever political change comes about, the needs of this stratum of society must be addressed. What's interesting about this is that many of the Islamist political parties, who as I noted above never really presented any clear economic proposals, claim to possess the "magic bullet" for resolving the issues; they promise to tackle unemployment by offering job opportunities in the public sector. Yet, history has shown us time and time again that this is a flawed premise. The only way to combat unemployment is through the private sector. Promoting the establishment of small and medium size business and facilitating both domestic and foreign investment are the only sure-fire ways of generating jobs. The current situation is dire. Small businesses are an integral part of the economy and yet draconian measures are employed to deal with people who default on loans for example. Inevitably, some small businesses will fail; if their owners are sent to prison over such matters then risk-averse behaviour will become entrenched in the collective mindset. Entrepreneurship will die before it has been allowed to live, and the country's escape route from its economic woes will be blocked.

This doesn't mean that politicians should remove themselves from matters of the economy; correct government plays a crucial role in cultivating the environment in which industry can prosper. The foremost thing they need to do is maintain a transparent, democratic system that protects the fundamental rights of citizens and upholds the rule of law. A fair and predictable legal system is an essential prerequisite for most investors. After that they can consider commercial measures, tax waivers, and various forms of investment incentives and perhaps trade agreements which would facilitate free trade and open up the market to foreign capital. ☛

Science and Technology

Darwin's Museums

Alessandro Allegra examines the evolution of taxonomy

Most people think of museums as large collections of stuff, whose main scope is the accumulation and display of objects for the amusement of visitors. If we turn to natural history museums, the point is clear: they are a huge collection of rocks, minerals, dinosaurs and beetles. What is interesting about this stereotype is that it perfectly embodies another commonly held view, that of biology as a butterfly collection. And this stereotype held true when we consider the time when the very idea of museums came about. The modern institution of the museum arose around the middle of the eighteenth century, in the trail of the Enlightenment. The term biology arises more or less by the end of the same century, when natural history was the prominent approach to biological facts. Natural history is, by its own definition, the collection and cataloguing of facts and observation regarding the natural world. In the case of organic beings, this approach takes the form of taxonomy, the science of cataloguing living beings by placing them in different hierarchic levels with funny Latin names.

Given this historical contingency, it seems reasonable to consider natural history museums as the architectural embodiment of taxonomy, a place where specimens are stored and labelled and eventually shown to bored gentlemen and curious ladies. Both these ideas of taxonomy and its reification however, were destined to change drastically.

This happened during the Victorian era when magnificent buildings such as the Natural History Museum in London were built to host such collections. It was in that period that a new perspective was taking hold in

biology, namely evolutionism. Even if the idea of evolution was not Darwin's novel thought, the mechanism of natural selection he proposed certainly was. It has been said once that Darwin came to rescue biologists from being butterfly collectors and turned them into scientists. In the famous words of evolutionary biologist Dobzhansky, "nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution." Darwin was the one providing that light and for what concerns us here, turned taxonomy into a dynamic science by adding a new dimension to it: time.

Since Darwin, species have been ordered not only synchronically, but diachronically as well. A new powerful tool has been added to taxonomy, namely the discipline of phylogenetics. By using different methods ranging from comparative morphology to genetic sequencing and comparison, phylogenetics informs us on the evolutionary relationship between living and extinct species, making sense of higher order taxonomic units in terms of common ancestry. Where older methods of taxonomy grouped together humans, whales and cats in the class mammalia because of their morphological similarity, this similarity is now explained as descent from a common ancestor. By discovering these relationships between organisms, we can draft the "tree of life" dreamed by Darwin. What could be more impressive than having a single branching graph linking all past and present living beings on earth? However, even if the fact that life originated only once and all presently living beings share common ancestry is reasonably well established, tracing the actual branching pattern is far from easy. Multiple factors come into play here, from the lack of data regarding disappeared intermediate forms to phenomena

such as horizontal gene transfer, a phenomenon common especially in bacteria that adds lateral interweaving branches to the otherwise ascending tree. However challenging and ever changing this task could be, the point remains, Taxonomy remains a static collection.

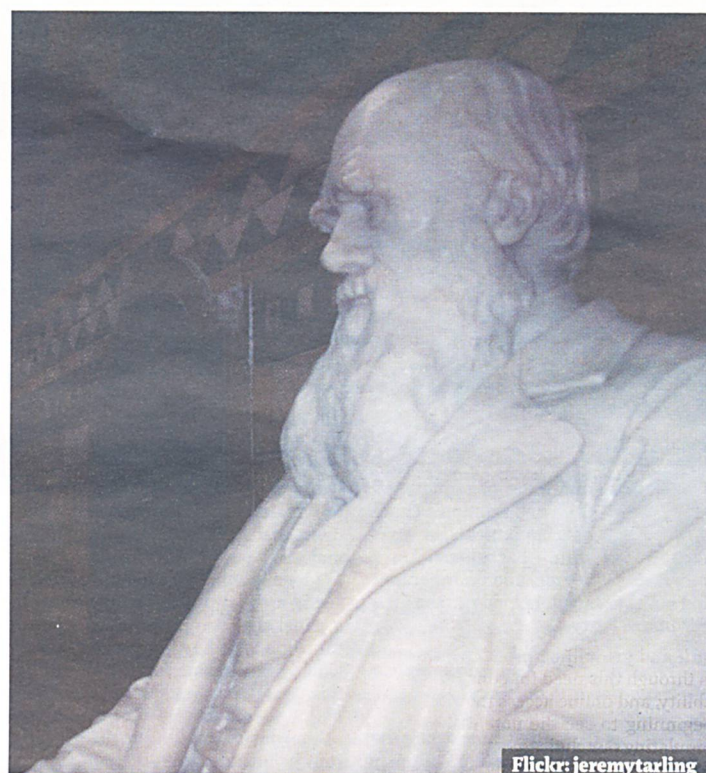
But what about museums? Are they left behind at the point where Darwin left them, or did they manage to keep up with the evolution of the biological sciences?

Since its foundation, the Natural History Museum in London has had a prominent role in taxonomical research, and it has kept up to date since then. Nowadays it is one of the world's leading research centres in taxonomy, hosting a collection of more than 7 millions specimens, a massive archive and state of the art DNA sampling laboratories. It awards Masters Degrees and PhDs jointly with the university of London and it is home to some of the leading scholars in the field. Moreover, the Museum's researchers contribute greatly to the international project attempting to reconstruct the tree of life. This is already impressive for what could be regarded as a collection of bones and bugs, but what is even more impressive is that the research and the display faces of the museum are not just two distinct worlds that happen to be hosted under that same roof, but they actually have a strong interaction. The newly built Darwin Centre provides the venue for these worlds to come together. Within the impressive and contrasting architecture of the new wing of the Museum are housed the 'spirit collection,' comprising of organisms preserved in alcohol, and the 'dry collection,' featuring entomological and botanical specimens. The collections are available for both visitors and scientists alike, with the former

having the possibility to observe the latter performing their research in the many glass-walled laboratories surrounding the centre. Moreover, the Darwin Centre houses a curious egg shaped white structure – the Cocoon. Inside this multi-storey shell, visitors are guided by the avatars of the scientists working in the museum. Captivating for both kids and grown ups, the exhibition engages the visitors with questions such as what "species"

are, which different approaches to taxonomy are possible and what role does DNA analysis play in modern biology. Much more than just roaring dinosaurs (even if we all love them!).

Summing up, if the Natural History Museum embodies taxonomy, it does so in the most coherent way: as evolutionary theory made the biological sciences evolve, so to, does it's receptacle evolve into what we see today.



Flickr: jeremytarling

Newt Man in Town

Elli Palaiologou analyses the Republican Presidential race so far

Over the past few months the polls for the Republican presidential nomination have been fluctuating wildly. While numerous candidates have risen rapidly, and fallen just as fast, no dominant figure has emerged who consistently overshadows the rest. Despite Mitt Romney's stable performance, the results show that the former Governor of Massachusetts is considered merely the least worse, rather than the most favored, GOP candidate.

While Romney's path to victory seemed inevitable after Iowa and New Hampshire, Newt Gingrich managed to defeat him by the considerable margin of 12.6 points in the South Carolina primary. Moreover, although Romney was, until recently, considered the winner of the Iowa caucus, it was Rick Santorum who ultimately emerged as the unexpected victor, after a recount completed around two weeks after polls originally closed. Such developments can hardly leave the former governor indifferent, since Gingrich seems to have stolen his cloak of

electability, as Alistair Bell stated on Reuters.

Romney's discomfort became obvious following his attacks on Gingrich. His accusations were largely based on the latter's consultancy work in Freddie Mac, a company that had been intensely criticized for its risky mortgage investments and extensive contribution to the collapse of the housing market. In Romney's own words: "I don't think we could possibly retake the White House if the person who's leading our party is the person who was working for the chief lobbyist of Freddie Mac." Gingrich has denied such allegations, labeling the former governor as a "desperate" candidate.

The tension within the Republican Presidential race is verified by the surprising volatility of the polls. Even though Romney is currently leading in Florida by an average of 8.0 points (according to a Real Clear Politics poll of polls), it was Gingrich who was in the lead just a few days ago. However, the former continues to enjoy a considerable wealth advantage, provided by the generous "super-PAC" supporting

his campaign and this advantage may prove a crucial factor in determining the prevailing nominee. Nonetheless, Gingrich's more conservative ideals, together with his charismatic debating skills render Romney's victory anything but secure.

The high volatility of the Republican race raises the following questions: is the inability of the GOP to find a suitable candidate a result of a lack of options, or is the problem rooted in their shift towards more radical, Tea Party principles? Is Gingrich here to stay, or will he be another flash in the pan?

When the Republicans took over the House of Representatives in the mid-term elections of 2010, they owed their victory in part to the emergence of the Tea Party movement. This return to radical conservatism seemed to be the key in confronting and eventually defeating President Obama, and this conviction is still evident today. The line of the Republican Party – tax cuts, abolishing the "Obama-care" (and any other Obama-related project for that matter), making abortion all but illegal

and opposing measures to combat climate change – is strict, and every GOP candidate must abide by it. Mitt Romney, for example, has profoundly altered his ideological positions, especially regarding health-care reform and the legality of abortion, as a means of acquiring the conservative credentials required of the GOP nominee.

As governor he defended a woman's right to choose, while as a contestant for the Republican nomination he campaigns for the implementation of stricter control. Furthermore, "Obama-care," the health care plan that he rails against so passionately, as a presidential candidate, bares a remarkable similarity to the health care law he passed in Massachusetts. Romney's rightwards shift is indubitable, and it is a typical indication of the hard line taken by the GOP. Others such as Mitch Daniels or Jeb Bush, were not as eager to change. Daniel's statement following Obama's State of the Union speech on Tuesday, defined by a directness and clarity that was unfortunately absent from the President's report, must have generated a feeling

of resentment amongst Republicans over his decision not to run. Thus, in my opinion, the Republicans' difficulty in finding candidates that will fire up their voters is not the result of lack of options, but a direct consequence of the limited freedom the party platform allows them in running for President.

It is now looking unlikely that Gingrich's sudden upsurge will endure. He may emerge as the leader of the GOP, or, more likely, he might suffer the fate of Rick Perry. What this lack of certainty indicates is that the Republicans' desperate search for the ideal nominee has proved fruitless. Even if Romney defeats Gingrich, the candidate's challenge will be his ultimate encounter with President Obama. Despite the declining job approval rates and the harsh criticism he has received after his third State of the Union Address, Obama continues to lead National Presidential polls. According to a poll from NBC News/ Wall Street Journal, he is clearly preferred to Romney and Gingrich and is presently leading them by a margin of 6.0 and 18.0 points respectively. After all, we must keep in mind that Obama kept his promise in ending the war in Iraq, prevented the economy from suffering a second recession and tackled one of America's most controversial domestic issues by initiating the health care reform.

Therefore, while the GOP is on its way to the "Sunshine State," its biggest worry should be whether its obsession with undermining the incumbent President has led it a step too close to radical conservatism, and consequently a step too far from the White House.



Flickr: DonkeyHotey

Do we feel like we only 21 have seconds to go?

Oxana Zaraisky ponders the impact of digital Britain

Hello, ladies, look at your man, now back to me, now back at your man, now back to me. Sadly, he isn't me, but if he stopped using ladies scented body wash and switched to Old Spice, he could smell like he's me. Look down, back up, where are you?" Old Spice is illustrating how our minds are so constantly bombarded with ideas, that we end up losing track of where we left off. This darting to-and-fro between the handsome Isaiah Mustafa and you as the viewer, has now become a typical way to interact with people; one just has to look around on the street to see people texting while walking and crossing the road. From YouTube sensations to the overpowering need to flick some fuming birds into pigs whilst on a 2 tube stopover, a major realisation has to be that never before have we had such a low attention span.

Research in 2007 has shown that the pace around the world is 10% faster than ever before. Rushing around is regarded as an acceptable hazard of city living, we don't like to sit still, sit in traffic, or wait in queues. Reading 'Next train to: Cockfosters in 4 minutes' is infuriating when we arrive on the platform having got so used to the 1 min time frame. Many of us are feeling pressured to move quicker, multi-task and yet still be productive, and it is through this need for constant availability, and online access that firms are beginning to see the potential in manipulating our choices.

It is said that we may soon live in a world where the distinction between being online and offline won't be as clear cut. It is simple to see here why digital marketing has become one of the biggest growing industries in our economy. Being online means opening your arms to advertisement and implicitly allowing for the 'Cyber Salesmen' to approach and nag at you whilst you're supposedly being busy with something else.

The famous Amazon.com suggestion list is well known for working out what treat you can convince yourself that you need. It is crucial, however, to remember that Amazon is not a real friend, even though it will remember your birthday, compliment you on your new shirt and recommend you a book. This data Amazon is using is your personal information, and this is how directed marketing has become one of the leading selling points online. Pay per click advertising space is on the rise, and the price of an advertisement on Facebook has risen by 54%. More products are seeking attention and competition is increasing, so establishing a market share is becoming more difficult. Even with Google's reputable market lead, it is still threatened by the growing Bing search engine. Increased spending must mean potential for a profit to be made and more and more firms are funding these 'sunk costs' to hopefully find themselves out on top.

Last year, Facebook introduced 'sponsored stories', a way in which companies can be imposed onto your friend posts. A simple payment to Facebook, could entitle the likes of Starbucks to be a featured ad once a friend has mentioned the name and additional funds could warrant it to be the first story you read. Add our growing desires for fast paced flows of information, and our rising inability to go and visit a good friend, we settle for their life updates to stem entirely from our newsfeed.

Everything around us is becoming a marketing tool, and we embrace it as

a way to save time. The need to search for restaurants is becoming benign as recommendations are flung at you from popular check-ins and status updates. Even upcoming artists become megastars in the time it took for second years to revise for the LSE100 exam. Our overwhelming obsession to be continuously available is distracting us from our natural mental processes and innate human needs -- like digesting a full meal!

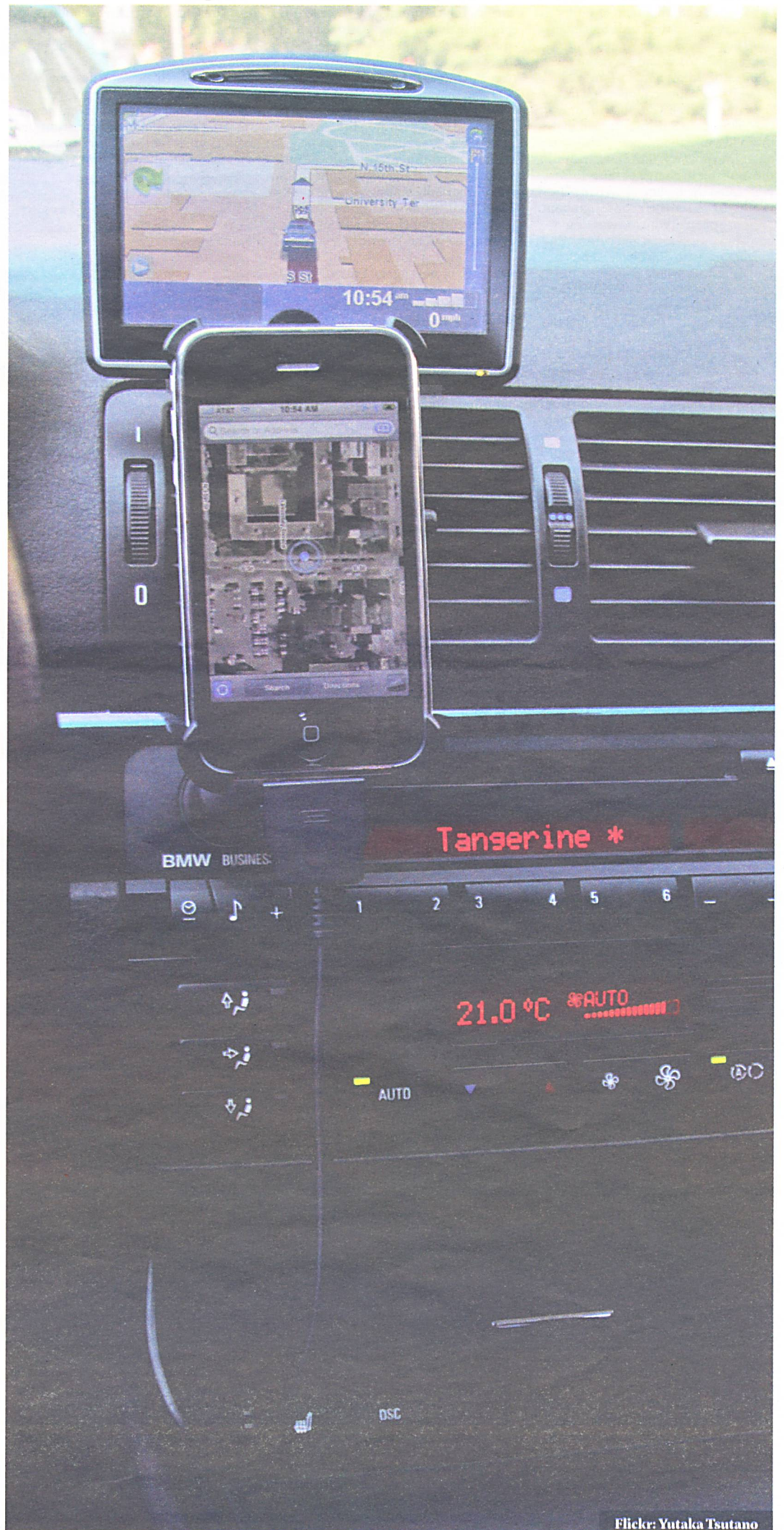
Rushed meetings in Garrick, and quick catch ups in the library are the only meetings that we seem to be able to have without having to add it to our 'crammed schedules'. In the absence of our handy calendars on our iPhones and to-do list on the BlackBerry, it wouldn't be surprising if no one ever managed to actually meet one another. 'Penciling you in' has never been so appropriate despite the fact that pencils have all but disappeared in modern day society.

Even our private information is becoming more accessible. Many put their credit card numbers, ID information, and other personal details into their phone in hopes their lives will become ever more harmonized. But when the phone is stolen, all of that personal information is in the hands of criminals. Even companies are getting involved in the privacy game. People need to ask themselves where is this data going? How is it being manipulated into a profit making scheme and how far will it go before we decide that we want some privacy back? It seems like we are not ready yet, and although there are a few who insist on carrying antiquated mobile phones -- or none at all -- to prove a point, we all know they're going to convert, because these tools make our lives easier. Our lives which are so jam packed that it is simply not enough to have one email, but rather two, three, or even four that are regularly checked and answered.

So in a world where things are going digital, and only octogenarians are protected, we are letting our personal information out to thousands of people -- both friend and foe. What are the transition stages to come? Companies are completely re-inventing their corporate strategies, and beginning to innovate in entirely new fields. Before, a friend's birthday would be embedded into your memory, now it's in your phone or delivered to you every week by the Facebook fairy.

It is through our dependency and willingness to convert to a more modern world that we are allowing for the corporate firms to infringe upon our lives. The apps available to nearly all smart phones are either cheap or free, but once the user is hooked like a smoker to their last Marlboro, the prices sharply rise and the demand will sadly be met.

Every second of our online activity is monitored for marketing purposes, and the advertising we're exposed to is narrowly selected by companies to peak our interest. Many companies now face new challenges in launching products into new markets, questions like: "How can selective advertising be improved? What's the cost of advertising space? Does it vary per consumer? Is there a medium that controls the exposure of each advert?" are crucial in analysing the consumer, and they're continuously being used to analyse online consumers. So next time you close a website and then see an advert for that company in your new browser, take a moment to realise how and why that was achieved and the potential profits such clever advertising could reap.



A Week in Westminster

Chris Rogers highlights the main stories of the week

The main focus of the news this week has been the government's plan to implement a benefit cap and the resulting battle between the two houses of Parliament, or rather the government and the Lords Spiritual.

The Bishops have argued that the cap fails to take into account the number of children that a family has. A family with four children will face the same limit as a family with only two. The Lords Spiritual argued that this will cause thousands of children to enter into poverty. Iain Duncan Smith, the minister in charge of the reforms lambasted the Bishops asserting "I would like to see their concerns about ordinary people, who are working hard, paying their tax and commuting long hours, who don't have as much money as they would otherwise because they're paying tax for all of this".

The Lords managed to block the bill with a sizable number of rebel Lib Dems and Labour peers, despite their parties supporting the introduction of a cap on benefits. The government however intends to push through their reforms in the face of opposition from the Lords, safe in the knowledge that the vast majority of the population support the concept of a benefit cap.

Chris Huhne, former Lib Dem leadership contender, and one of the highest ranking Liberal Democrat ministers, seems one step closer to losing his office this week. His problems centre on rumours that he asked his ex-wife to take speeding points on his behalf, a criminal offense.

His ex-wife reportedly informed the Sunday Times of this fact and the

Essex Police Service, having won a court order to retrieve the relevant emails, have presented the evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service and an official charge is expected within weeks. If he is found guilty, it is highly probable that he will have to resign from the government.

David Cameron also chose this week to increase his rhetoric on Europe. In a speech in Davos, to the World Economic Forum, he told other European leaders to stop the "madness" that was causing such havoc across the continent, and to focus on cutting red tape and regulations that are purportedly stifling growth. His solution is to follow a more economically liberal model, such as that found within the UK or America.

As the Bishops took to the airwaves to protest against the government's benefit cap, this week also saw the right of abortion providers to advertise their service on public airwaves for the first time since abortion was legalised. Critics have argued that at a time when cigarette brands are banned from advertising, that those for abortion should be approved seems ridiculous. Proponents have argued that this is simply a natural extension of a woman's right to choose, and a right to choose among providers. The move has met considerable resistance from Pro-life groups, who argue that by allowing the advertisement of agencies which carry out abortions, the government fails to take seriously the significance of the act.

The question of Scottish independence moved closer to resolution this week as Alex Salmond, First

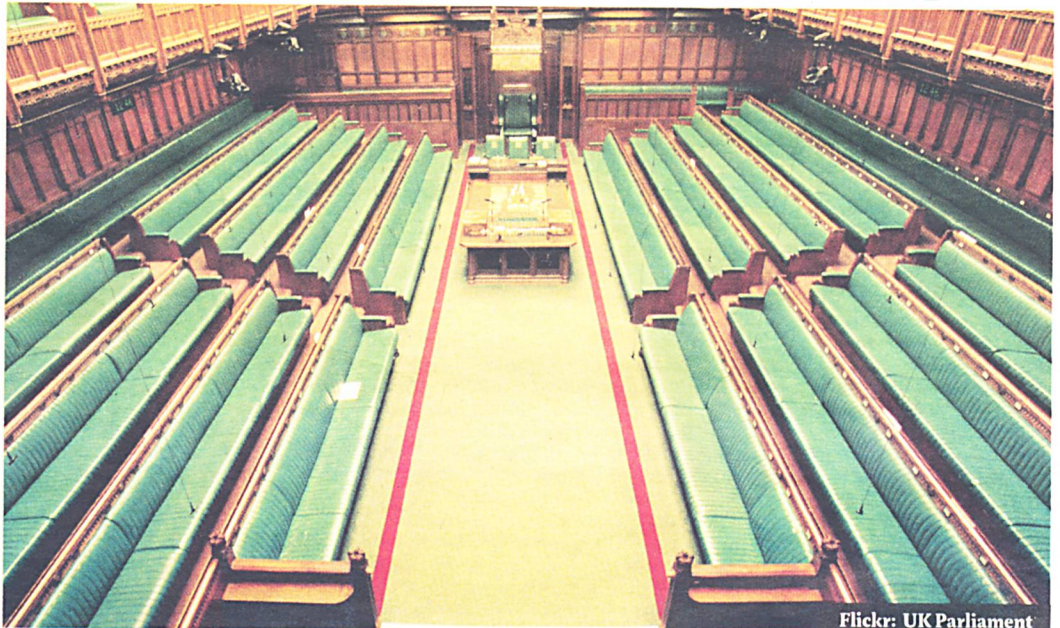
Minister of Scotland and leader of the pro-independence Scottish National Party, released the question that shall be put to Scottish voters in just a few years time.

Presently, the main question is pencilled in as, "Do you agree that Scotland should be an independent country?" Critics have argued that this is a loaded question designed to provoke an affirmative answer. Scotland doesn't have the legal powers to issue a referendum as constitutional affairs are reserved for Westminster, but Salmond intends to have frequent

meetings with David Cameron to discuss staging a legal referendum. The question will have to be sent through the Electoral Commission first, and they may argue a more balanced question is required.

A transparency bill also succeeded in its second reading this week. In its current form the bill would see each taxpayer receive a break down of their tax money, and see where it was spent. Conservatives favour the move, believing that when people see just where their money is going, it will encourage a strong desire for reform.

And finally, a minister helping to steer a bill through Parliament was found hidden in a toilet, after walking into the wrong voting lobby. Discovering the doors locked behind him, and unwilling to continue through the lobby past the tellers (those responsible for registering the votes) thereby voting against his own bill, he is reported to have hidden in the toilet in the Lobby until the vote had ended. The Shadow leader of the House questioned whether the incident showed that "government incompetence had plumbed new depths."



Flickr: UK Parliament

Measured musings | Mexico's drugs war



Flickr: Jesús Villaseca Pérez

Mexico's concoction of warring drug gangs, increased violence and police corruption, makes it notoriously unsafe for journalists. In an ongoing effort by organised gangs to silence reporting on drugs trafficking, an estimated 67 journalists have been murdered in Mexico since 2000. These attacks effectively work to censor news

on an issue that instills fear in many Mexicans living in areas terrorised by gang violence.

At the beginning of his term, President Calderon placed tackling drug trafficking at the top of his priority list. It is undeniable that there have been consistent attempts to break up the influence and success of these infamous drug cartels. This, however has not stopped the consistent targeting of

journalists. The rising number of reporters killed, or registered as missing, has caused concern regarding the state of the country's human rights and freedom of expression. Much of the media are forced to practice a frustrating but necessary policy of self-censorship in order to protect staff. Angering these organised criminals is a precarious business and the long list of dead is evidence of this.

Gang activity often goes unreported as a result of this silencing of the media. It must be a strange affair to see a complete absence of reporting on the spreading violence, the lack of tourists and closing businesses in areas hit by cartel operations. Many Mexicans do not even wish to comment on the situation in their area as they fear the deep infiltration of spies who work for these organisations.

This week, "PEN international," an organisation of writers promoting freedom of expression, issued a signed declaration of around 170 signatures urging the Mexican government to put a stop to this gagging of the media. "These violations diminish us all and threaten the right of Mexican citizens to live lives both safe and free from censorship."

Recently the Zetas cartel has been named as overtaking their rivals the Sinaloa. This is apparently due to the fact that the former's more generous use of violence and brutality has allowed it to outstrip its rivals, which are more reliant on bribery. The power struggle characterising the competition between these two different groups seems like something of an action thriller, but its violent fall out is very much real.

The problem seems to be exacerbated by corruption that seems to have crept to the higher ranks of the Mexican police. Drug gangs are able to smooth out operations with ease, by handing out generous pay offs to underpaid police. So much so, that the government itself holds the police in suspicion. In their efforts to break up the influence of these gangs, their choice to extensively deploy military personnel as opposed to the police was deliberate.

It doesn't appear that the reign of these powerful cartels will end anytime soon. Drug smuggling is an issue that has haunted many Mexican Presidents and has been the subject of much elections campaigning. But as long as there is an opportunity to smuggle drugs across the US border, and also to the rest of the world, this extremely profitable trade will remain.

Gardeep Chhina
Features Editor

Social

Diary of a wannabe banker



Flickr: user asw909

Bakr Al-Akku on his all-important interview to live the LSE dream

The past month was strangely interesting in the world of high finance. Our jovial enemies as Englishmen, the French, had their credit rating downgraded to AA+, a move welcomed by laughs, cheers and croissants all-round for breakfast, across London trading floors. "All to help an ailing economy" said one banker - although the croissants were made by a Greek bakery. Oh the irony. I think he missed out an 'f'.

As this was occurring, my own journey to banking stardom reached the peak of its plight. Yes, that's right. I had my final round interview for a job at LSE's favourite investment bank. Having essentially forgone sleep, all essay deadlines, classes and lectures for the past week in preparation, I was armed with 8 rounds of the "FT" in my barrel, a few Economist articles as gunpowder and, of course, the Wall Street Journal as my trigger.

I was somewhat worried I had actually spent more time watching Youtube videos of cartoon investment banking situations, including "The LSE problem part 1," rather than

preparing. Nonetheless, I donned my finest suit, tie and shoes for the 3 hour drama ahead.

First question... "Why us?" That shouldn't be difficult; just remember to fake confidence. And always remember the never discussed, yet somehow universally known rule: absolutely under no circumstances whatsoever mention that sacrilegious word in banking - "money." For a company that prides itself on being the most competitive and most successful in regards to money-making of all IBs - that's short for Investment Banks for all of you not in the know - never mentioning the word "money" can be extraordinarily difficult. It reminds me of that game I would play as a kid, where you had to answer an endless stream of questions without saying "no" or you lost. Unfortunately in this scenario saying "money" meant losing a £50,000 a year job.

After my first interview I went back to the waiting room filled with Oxbridge-educated, "Yah Yah I just came back from my Gap Yah," over-privileged, more money than sense, lips still stained from the silver spoon

"remember the never discussed, universally known rule: absolutely, under no circumstances whatsoever, mention that sacrilegious word in banking - money"

they were fed from, students. Sitting down, my privacy was invaded in the form of an impeccably dressed, tall blonde from the Oxford corner inquiring about my interview questions.

"Yeah, just all the usual questions about myself and my interests..." I replied

"Oh, that sounds nice"

"Yeah it was"

As any student of EC102 will know, "talk is cheap," unless it's helping your opponent beat you. I wasn't telling her squat. LSE 1. Oxford 0.

Next interview...that was alright. In fact, I found the entire process akin to "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." Each question brought me closer to the magic million, and performing well to the end of each interview marked the £1,000 and £32,000 safety markers. Only in this game, there were no lifelines.

Then came my final interview with the MD, and the nerves were kicking in. All good so far, I had managed to respectfully answer the brainteasers as I climbed the ladder's rungs from £250,000 to £500,000.

"You're clearly intelligent, you've

done your research and you have a passion for markets. Tell me, if I were to hire you tomorrow, what changes would you make to how we run our business?"

Yes, yes... I knew exactly what to say. If there is a God out there he was watching over me!

"Well, considering Equities generates the most revenue..."

"Ahhh, so it's all about the money is it?"

Wait.. what? I didn't say money did I? No! I'm sure I said "revenue." How the hell can he equate revenue to money? This is totally unfair. Who decides these damn rules anyway?

My interviewer leans back smiling, the creases in his cheeks stretching out as he laughs "So you're here for the money?" in a matter-of-fact voice. Wearing the satisfied look of a parent having caught their son tip-toeing, chair and all, with one hand in the cookie jar, he leans forward and makes a small, seemingly inconsequential note. "You can leave now."

I had failed on the million pound question. Flop.

Networking, what's in it for me?

Cleo Pearson on how she was taken to a five star hotel and a strip club

I try to think rationally about my fears. I'm bigger than spiders after all, and statistics keep me from worrying that my aeroplane is going to fall from the sky. This should make my life easier, right? In some instances yes - there is no need to have a panic attack every time something falls under my bed and I have to delve through cobwebs to retrieve it. But in other cases, I'm not so sure. I don't seem to have that little voice in my head that tells me to stop and say no, especially when I think I smell an opportunity.

My eyes lit up when I met a gentleman who worked for the BBC World Service, whilst I was working at a gig in King's Cross. I study Geography and write for the student paper. You needn't know much more about me to realise that this was an opportunity I felt I could not pass up. Yes, he was old enough to be my dad, had been standing at the bar alone, caressing his beer and was wearing a tweed jacket with

a moustache reminiscent of Murray from 'Flight of the Conchords,' but these were mere insignificant details. He gave me his card and I went home and googled him, naturally.

The next day I met him at the St. Pancras hotel. It was 4.30pm - a good, safe time surely - in the booking office. Me + old journalist + booking office of hotel = room? No, fortunately my maths and my ignorance failed me; the booking office is the bar of the hotel. Sticking to the soft drinks, I couldn't avoid the fact that he had to pay for a bill as big as my weekly budget. We chatted both work and play before he told me he wanted to show me both sides of King's Cross.

Around the corner from the five star hotel we came to a pub with boarded windows and music blaring out. I thought that this seemed more my kind of place. But, how odd, all of the women inside seemed to have forgotten to wear their clothes to work today.

"An apple juice, please."

I discovered that this wasn't 'the kind of place' to serve juice. My companion slipped me a couple of quid change from our drinks. "Put it in the pot" he said. I was embarrassed at first, there was no need to make a point of me being a student. Then I noticed the small stage in the corner and the signs that read "all customers must pay £1 to watch a dance."

Next we headed to a trendy and bright Bloomsbury gay bar. Another apple juice down and I was invited to dinner with my companion and some friends at Blacks, a private members media club in Soho. As he had neither offered me an internship nor attempted to assault/marry me, by this stage I figured that this would be where we would negotiate the details one way or another.

Inside the beautiful candle lit Georgian house I scoured the rooms, recognising faces of people I'd seen on the television before. I ordered what



Flickr: Herry Lawford



Flickr: Glenn Harper

I hoped was the vegetarian option on the menu - if only I had understood what the ingredients were - and enjoyed a lovely meal with the three middle-aged gentlemen in my company. On our walk back to Bloomsbury, my acquaintance advised me to exploit the contacts in industry I make. But when I asked how I may work with him, he said that we could organise his CD collection together: not exactly what I had in mind. He began to disclose his personal struggles to me with religion, loneliness and his sexuality. Being a naturally curious and caring person I listened and consoled him, and then we departed and went our separate ways.

Within the next few days my inbox had been furiously invaded by both my needy acquaintance and disapproving older sister. She insisted that I made

it clear to my companion that my motives were entirely professional and that they should remain so. He told me that he was "not [his] job" and that the company he keeps is "not always strictly professional."

I never heard of him again, until a week ago when I was telling this story to a friend of mine. The friend asked his name. Apparently this poor man had tried to pursue a friend of ours almost a year ago and later proclaimed his love to her. Perhaps the non-existent, little voice in my head should have been telling me that this was the likely case all along. However, on reflection, I wouldn't change the way I behaved. Despite my friends being appalled by this man's motives, in what way were they worse than my own? We were just two people with different aims, isn't that networking is all about after all?

Frankie goes to Bollywood

Travel Diary: Frances Bennett on her gap year adventure in India

Last year I took a year out to travel across the world to India, where I unlocked my inner spirituality and discovered myself in a new and culturally enriching environment, enabling me to ... UH OH. Is anyone still reading?! Have I encapsulated the clichéd 'gap yah tragedy'?

I admit that when initially planning my trip, perhaps I was a member of the idealised 'I'm such a pioneer,

breaking barriers with my presence in undiscovered corners of the globe' mind-set, but I quickly forgot about the 'quality of experience' crap when my feet were on new ground; I was drinking its rainwater and instinctively feeding from the culture of its people and their practices.

My trip lasted for five months, beginning in the north with Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, and then exploring the southern states of

Kerala and Karnataka, before the trip culminated in a three month stay in Goa working with a children's charity I found online (www.childrenwalkingtall.com).

When I first arrived, I was very green to the art of travelling. I was scared, in the sense that I was suspicious of everybody and everything, with my slash-proof bum-bag and panic alarm disguised as a watch strapped tightly to my wrist. What I

was yet to realise was that India is, in my opinion, one of the safest places in the world.

For me, India embodied a masala of generosity, kindness, patriotism and excitement, mixed with a fierce brashness required to survive everyday struggles, and a conscientious concern to look after others. I'm aware of the dark side of India, evident in the unconcealed corruption throughout the government and police force, and

the caste system which cannot yet be deemed extinct, but there is a gentle yet fiercely vibrant vein that pulsates through India and her people.

So, you can see I'm a fully signed up member of the Indian fan club, but it was more than the kulfi (imagine triple-fat icecream, and then triple the richness again), and the excuse to buy more bangles than I had inches of arm, that won me over.

Somehow, things in India just work. Thinking in a tight western perspective, you cringe on the trains as people throw their rubbish out of train windows onto the tracks. Until you realise there is a rag-picker waiting to pick it up, and that is their livelihood. You barter hard with a rickshaw driver, but if you smile and use your limited Hindi, you usually get a congratulatory "Indian price!" Both of you leave feeling happy about the transaction. People everywhere you go ask you "What is your good name?" They're never going to see you again, but their relentless interest in what your father does and how many siblings you have verges on comical! However, in essence, everything they do is to make you feel a little more at home.

Thinking of going to India? Perfect an ambiguous Indian head wobble, get good at traffic-dodging, dance in the street because IT'S ALLOWED, embrace the stomach bugs and tuck into the street food, and finally, take me with you!



Photo: Frances Bennett

The return of 'the glass'

Frances Bennett on her personal journey on the geek chic bandwagon

In a recent desperate bid to increase my intelligence, or at least the appearance of it, without labouring any more hours in the library, I decided to jump on the 'geek chic' bandwagon and don glasses once again. Since I was thirteen, I've barely spent a day not wearing contact lenses and my decision to go back to glasses was not made lightly. Despite my schooldays of being told I "should've gone to spec-savers" being almost a decade behind me, the fear of admitting my blindness lived on.

I am as short-sighted as they come, measuring -4.00 in both eyes. For all you able-sighted people, that means I can barely see how many fingers you're holding up, and no, before you ask, I can't see what face you're pulling from the other side of the bed. It can get awkward.

Last week, I took a trip to my nearest optical chain and found my own slice of the myopia pie. I was a little daunted by the prospect of having 150 frames to choose from, even ignoring the 1,500-rich collection online – there is such a thing as too much choice. So, I took along a patient, and crucially, honest, friend to assist me in choosing the next path of my fashion destiny. As you would imagine, there were shapes and colours to tempt even the strongest eyeglass-sceptics. Shock in Elton's, rock the thicker frames of Buddy Holly,

kick back stereotypes with innocent Ghandi's or go seriously wrong with tinted Bono's; the possibilities truly are endless.

Those in the know have utilised the iconic status the 'glass' can give for years. Said to have first been popularised by the Hollywood stars of the 1930s, glasses have existed as a defining feature to many a famous face, from Dame Edna to David Hockey, Kanye West to John Lennon, and even Colonel Mustard's monocle in Cluedo.

In the world of politics, however, spectacles have always seemed a fairly no-go area, perhaps perceived as yet another barrier between their lies and our votes. Blair hit headlines when he admitted to wearing glasses 'at home' in 1999, as if it were some sordid secret he was planning to expose in his biography when cash was getting low. The country responded accordingly, panicking that our golden yellow Labour leader was turning distinctly grey, and that wearing spectacles was synonymous with being 'past it' and having hit middle age.

However, more recently, Sarah Palin revived the 'glass' during the US election race, where she sported a sexy secretary image alongside her desired hockey mom persona. So farewell to the nerdy conceptions of glasses. Whether they make you look more intelligent, act as a fashion statement or are merely another way for us to

express our 'individuality', they are on the rise, with high-street stores now selling glasses complete with non-prescription lenses.

However, I am sure most glasses-wearers would agree with me that the idea of choosing to wear glasses is rather bizarre. They are a practicality, or, for many like me, an indispensable commodity, yet they most certainly have their downsides. After just a week, some of the illusions of wearing glasses are shattering somewhat. When it rains, you need mini windscreen-wipers, when you enter Starbucks from outside you steam up, and inevitably you're going to have to push them up your nose at some point. Don't even get me started on trying to put on mascara half-blind.

However, if we are going to suffer these inconveniences, let's have fun in the process! Glasses are back. There are three optical chains on my street alone, all sporting dewy Mediterranean goddesses pouting in outrageous frames in the windows. Glasses have been revolutionised, and sexed up. They are now as big an accessory as your handbag, they must be coordinated with your cufflinks and, LSE students take note, you will be judged by them in your internship interview.



Flickr: nimble photography

How to be a perfect LSE student

Harriet Danby-Platt on striking that hard to reach work-life balance

I made a specific choice about coming to LSE. I wanted to be part of an institution where hard work was of a high priority. I wanted to leave university not just with a good degree and job prospects, but with a better understanding of important political and economic issues. However, over the Christmas break, with some close introspection, I decided I was not a

good enough LSE student.

Many friends and relatives looked somewhat disappointed at my achievements and I was often told to "make the most of it whilst I am here." Instead, I rarely managed to reach beyond the four or five essential readings for each of my modules. I had half-heartedly attempted to explore the city, getting as far as Buckingham Palace

before deciding that getting drunk was preferable to being a tourist. Indeed, in the majority of my first term memories I was either drunk or hung-over. Staying in bed watching "The Killing" quite often won over being in the library for 8am. This lifestyle isn't out of the ordinary for many students, but it left me quite frequently feeling let down by my own preconceptions of the lifestyle I would lead at LSE.

Such high expectations are shared by the majority of LSE applicants. But the very high-pressure nature of LSE means that no matter how hard you push yourself, there is always someone willing to go that little bit further, which can be dispiriting.

However, even if you look at your experiences from an individual perspective - necessary to stop you driving yourself mad - there is still an issue with expectations at LSE: the location. It is in London, and the scope for all things is thus immeasurably higher.

Friends in Leeds and Newcastle enjoy brilliant nights out but, three months in, feel they have worked out the city's haunts; where to avoid, where not to. With London, I feel I have barely scratched the surface of the places to drink, dance and get merry. Whilst I have pretty much sussed out places to go in a half-mile vicinity, I keep hearing of great places that I'm missing out on in Notting Hill, Shoreditch, Mile End, Mayfair... the list goes on.

Additionally, I have had to get a job, as my student loan only just covers the expensive London accommodation fees. Essential as this job may be for me now, it takes a large chunk of my time and it doesn't really seem to be adding that much to my student experience and my CV. I am able to pull a pint and deal with drunken, perky men, but I don't think most employers rate that highly.

Working 21 hours a week in a pub funds going out, shopping and at-

tempting to save up for this summer's travels. Again, travelling appears to be an essential part of being that "perfect LSE student." I was left feeling rather dull having stayed in Durham for my Christmas break, as opposed to spending Christmas in Morocco, New Year in St Petersburg and a week in the south of France before returning to university. Instead, coming back to London is my excitement.

"I got as far as Buckingham Palace before deciding that getting drunk was preferable to being a tourist"

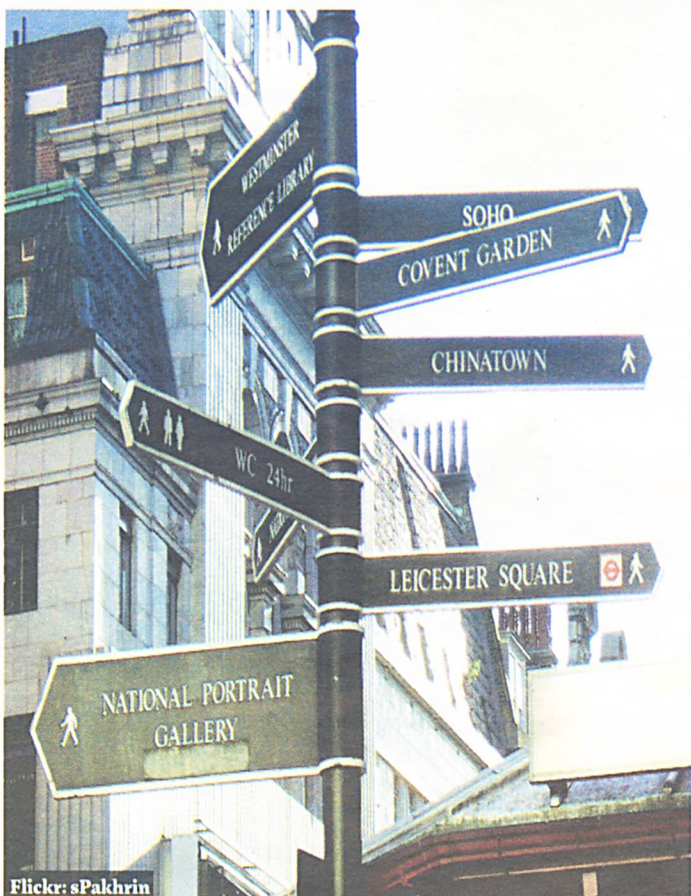
Is it possible to get the most from the whole LSE experience? Do I prioritise my school work above all other things, even if it proves detrimental to my social and mental well-being? Or do I fully experience the London night-life whilst I am young and not tied down by serious jobs or babies? Essentially the question is, where do I draw the line on work-life balance in a city and university that expects so much from both?

The attempt to find such a balance underpins the majority of my New Year's Resolutions: a rather substantial list including items such as attend events, be cultural, and learn basic geography. So have I succeeded?

I have indeed attended events and now finally understand the Arab-Israeli conflict enough to have a vague discussion on it. I have managed to do all my readings and picked and planned essay questions a couple of weeks in advance. I have attempted to be more actively involved in the student body. I have even managed to sort out an internship - oh how very LSE - for September. I managed to finally make it to the British Museum, and whilst I was definitely unimpressed with what were essentially rooms of stuff the British have allegedly purloined, I felt it ticked the 'be cultural' box off my list.

However, despite these minor successes, I am still aware that my credentials as an LSE student are not up to standard. I haven't the faintest idea about economics, my linguistic abilities are pretty much confined to counting to ten in Spanish and propositioning people in French, and I am rather indifferent to whether someone went to Oxford, Cambridge, or indeed a newer university.

I don't suppose, I'll ever really find a way to avoid inadequacy entirely. People grapple their whole lives trying to work out how to prioritise. My work will inevitably be compromised by going out and exploring London, but that isn't such a bad thing. Likewise, if I miss out on a must-see night out because I've stayed in to work, the world won't end. There will be other days and other nights. I suppose the main point of this article is to convince myself - and hopefully a couple of you reading this - that it is impossible to be good at everything. This mythical perfect student which we seem to see around us on campus and in our classes, is probably struggling just as much as we are to get things under control and is an ideal we have created ourselves and imposed on others. As if we didn't need any more pressure!



Flickr: sPakhrin

England Cricketers Falter

Benjamin Schneider

England's ten-wicket defeat in the first Test against Pakistan in Dubai brought to a shuddering halt the momentum of a side that had clobbered India and Australia, and comfortably dispatched Sri Lanka and Pakistan over the preceding eighteen months. England's deep batting and three-pronged seam attack backed up by the spin of Graeme Swann propelled Andrew Strauss' side to the #1 ranking through a surprising whitewash of the Indians last summer.

Unfortunately for England, their run of nine Tests without defeat ended in Dubai on Thursday, and it was only the impressive batting of Swann in both innings that prevented the top Test team in the world from going down to an innings defeat. Alistair

Cook, two Tests removed from a brilliant, match-winning 294, didn't stick around long in either innings. Neither did his captain and fellow opener Strauss. Jonathan Trott went early in the first innings, but was the only resistance apart from Swann during England's second chance in the middle. Kevin Pietersen, seemingly always the focus of discussion and controversy, ensured that he would be a main story on the back pages of the papers with just two runs from thirty-seven balls. Ian Bell had been in a fine run of form against Sri Lanka and India last summer, but amounted to little in the first Test, while Eoin Morgan failed to take advantage of the team's dire straits in both innings and play a match-saving innings that could have ensured his long-term future in the Test side. In the second test, England lost by 72 runs.



Flickr: paddynapper

It's far too early to write off this England team – either overall or on this tour, but this first result, as well as a defeat in the second test, doesn't augur well for the rest of this series, the visit to Sri Lanka in the spring, or the four-test visit to India later in the year. Fortunately for Strauss and company, neither Sri Lanka nor India look nearly as dangerous as Pakistan in recent times. Their one victory over South Africa aside, Tilikaratne Dilshan's team has struggled mightily in Tests over the past year, and India appear on course for another away whitewash at the hands of an improving Australia.

The much-discussed future of Test cricket relies, in large part, on continued interest in England and India. The two largest markets for the game must remain engaged with the longer format, for if they do not, the original form of the game will become even less profitable and less attractive to players, further damag-

ing Test cricket's image in the eyes of fans. While interest from India and England is not solely reliant on the success of their respective national sides, keeping both nations strong home and away is key in maintaining interest in the game. The Indians have a long stretch of home tests to retool their batting lineup before venturing off the subcontinent, while England face a series of challenges to their No. 1 status. Perhaps what is needed for India is a renewal of their rivalry against Pakistan, while a sustained period of success for England could help to break through the choke-hold that the Olympics and the Euros will likely have on sport coverage in 2012. Sadly for both, and for cricket, bringing both of those developments to pass will be more difficult than expected.

And how about that – I managed to discuss England v. Pakistan without talking about spot-fixing!



Flickr: RNLJC&M

Around the NBA

Gabriel Everington

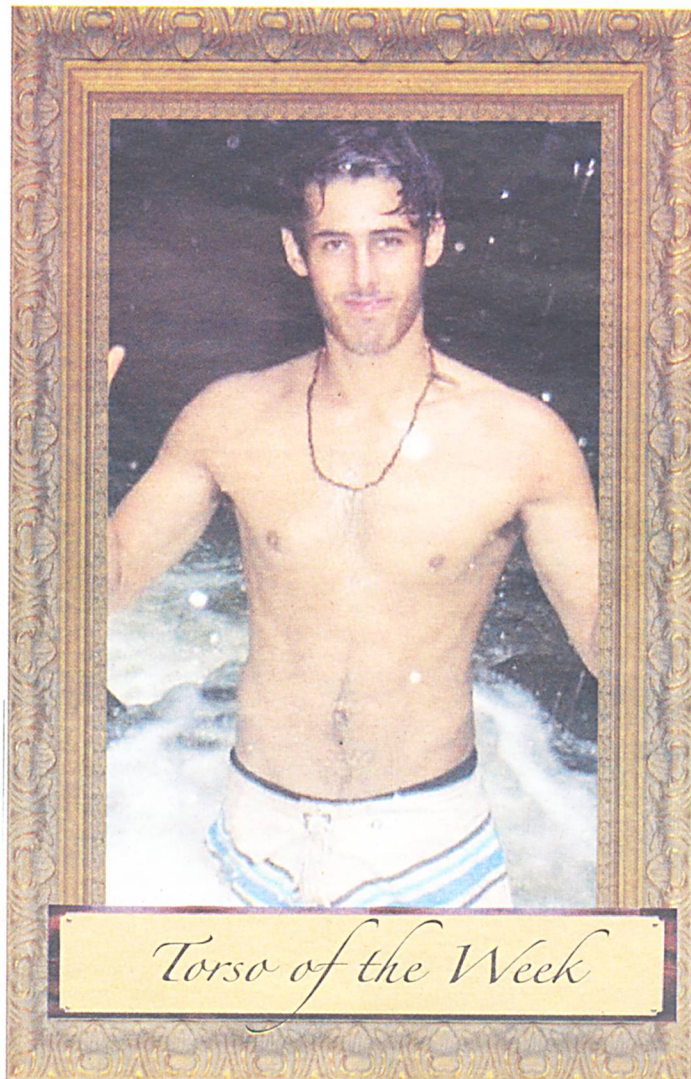
As he walked off the court in Salk Lake City, a thousand flashbulbs following that infamous number 24, nothing seemed to have changed. Kobe Bryant had just scored forty points against the Utah Jazz, one game after dropping forty-eight on the Phoenix Suns – same old Kobe, same old terrible Phoenix defence, same old NBA. But as we become more and more engrossed in another frantic season, it is important not to forget what was happening in the league just a few months ago. Or rather, what wasn't happening.

The labour dispute between the players and the League led to a lock-out; the eventual solution to which left this season with 66 of its original 82 game stretch. But, unlike the NFL lockout before it, the battle to agree a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (or 'CBA' in sports hack-speak – the irony is presumably lost on them) centered not on the biggest name players and their lawsuits, à la football pin-up Tom Brady, but on the plight of the employees on the whole. And this process was fascinating in a league built on working-class participation. The courtside seats may be a sea of white faces – save for celebrity rappers like Jay Z in New Jersey and Snoop Dogg in LA – but in 2008-9, almost eighty-two per cent of NBA players were African American. The reigning Most Valuable Player, Derrick Rose, escaped a tough Chicago neighbourhood to lead his home town Bulls to the Eastern Conference Finals last year; he was previously photographed with an ill-advised gang tattoo. Make no mistake, basketball is the lifeblood of American sport, the game of the streets. They say there's a basketball

court on every street in New York City. Probably the greatest white NBA player of all time, Larry Bird, was a salt-of-the-Earth guy from rust-belt Indiana. NBA players – at least, before they start cashing their cheques – are normal people. Really tall normal people.

Derek Fisher, a Lakers team-mate of Kobe's and the archetypal small, blue collar player getting by on smarts rather than devastating talent, is President of the Players Association. Who better to champion the little guy? Together with players ranging from bench-warmers to more high-profile stars, Fisher thrashed out a compromise with Commissioner David Stern and the franchise owners. But just as we have seen and will continue to see in the political arena, this compromise satisfies no-one. Indeed, immediately following the announcement that the lockout was over, Stern vetoed the trade of superstar Chris Paul from the League-owned Hornets to the big-market Lakers, under immense pressure from small-market owners – most publicly in an anxious letter from Dan Gilbert, owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers. An uneasy truce has been reached, but many feel that the people's game should belong to the people once more.

So, stay tuned for more Dwight Howard (forty-five points and twenty-three rebounds against the Golden State Warriors recently), more 'Lob City' with Blake Griffin and the LA Clippers (even his nicknames are fantastic: Blake Superior, the Human Posterchild, Earth Blake, Griffin Impossible...), more D-Rose, more King James, more of dazzling Spanish rookie Ricky Rubio and – God help us – more zone defence. But remember, these multi-millionaire athletic freaks are just like you and me.



Torso of the Week

Sport In Brief

The Thunder from Down Under

Australian, Neil Robertson, stormed to his first ever Masters Snooker title on January 22nd, defeating Shaun Murphy 10-6 in the final.

Mourinho's Barca Jinx Continues

Despite a second half comeback at the Nou Camp, Real Madrid failed to win at Barcelona for the ninth time under manager, Jose Mourinho. The result saw Barcelona progress to the semi-finals of the Copa Del Rey.

We're on Our Way to Wembley

Liverpool and Cardiff booked their places at Wembley for the Carling Cup Final. Liverpool they drew 2-2 at home in their semi-final second leg, progressing at the expense of Manchester City, whilst Cardiff overcame Crystal Palace after a penalty shoot-out.

Brave Murray Defeated

Andy Murray produced arguably his best ever performance in the Australian Open Semi-Final, but still lost to World Number One, Novak Djokovic in five enthralling sets.

Pakistan Conquer England Once More

The second test of the England v Pakistan series ended in another heavy defeat for England. A second innings batting collapse led England to lose by 72 runs.

The Greatest Show on Earth

Our writers give you the low-down on the upcoming spectacle

Chloe Cotoulas, edited by other contributors

ning wasn't the problem, the lack of a stand-out receiver for him to play his get out of jail card was. The situation was so tenuous at on point in the season Coughlin, the Giants head coach, was seemingly destined to become just another sacked head coach after a mediocre season.

is now famed for Salsa-dancing touch-down celebrations is now part of New York folklore for the dominance he has displayed this year catching the ball. The Giants, in their quest for the big one, have dominated the Falcons and crushed Green Bay's dreams of immortality. They have then visited San

Superbowl, but with one of the worst defences in the NFL it should be. Somehow Bill Belichick, the Patriots Head Coach, and Brady have been able to dominate the NFL with a group of star players surrounded by vast quantities of quality-stricken footballers. When one takes a look at the current

league for passing yards allowed, there is only so much bend and break a team can perpetrate before they get eliminated. Just ask the Packers. Indeed it is a testament to Belichick that this group of players have come as far as they have done.

However, form counts for little when heading into the television spectacle that is the Superbowl. The bright lights, elongated television ad breaks, ridiculous singing of the national anthem, this sporting final is a clear example of having to turn up and deal with occasion. Many headline athletes have lead their team to the Superbowl and gone missing in the shadows of the floodlights, just ask Donovan McNabb. It's just as likely that Sterling Moore is the star of the show as Victor Cruz is. Ability has nothing to do with it, but often Cojones. The aforementioned David Tyree was released from his contract only a year after the Superbowl victory due to him actually being a relatively sub-standard football player, his moment of brilliance was the result of him stepping up to the occasion and 'making a play'.

Heading into Superbowl weekend, a moments thought should go to the Kickers. Most games you won't even hear their names, but Stephen Gostkowski and Lawrence Tynes, are heading into the most watched sporting event in the US knowing that if the game is close they will be expected to step up and convert a field goal. Whilst this can be an opportunity to be immortalised in NFL history, they also can be the butt of every joke for a year and even receive death threats if recent events in the NFL playoffs are anything to go by. For some reason they seem to enjoy their jobs, but if the clock is ticking down with the game on the line you can bet your bottom dollar not a single person in the stadium would rather take that field goal.

The Superbowl will be broadcast on both BBC and SkySports on February 5th.



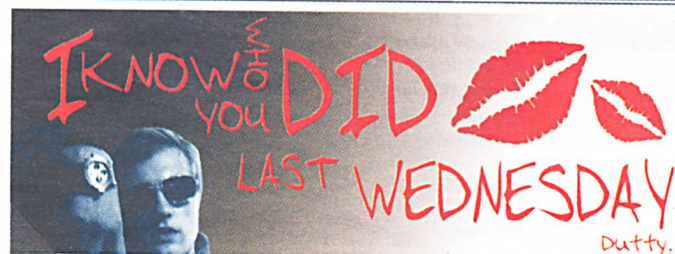
Flickr: MattBrit

Yet only four months later, Eli Manning, the self-proclaimed 'Franchise Quarterback' (indicating quite a sense of self-confidence), is backing up his words. Jason Pierre-Paul, most notable for 13 consecutive backflips on youtube whilst weighing 20 stone, is leading the reemergence of the Giants pass-rush, and finally, Victor Cruz who

Fransisco, trading punches with one of the most physical teams in the league, coming up triumphant. Again, the "hot" team have entered the play offs after a few breaks, and have stormed the tournament.

With Tom Brady at the helm, it should, theoretically, be no surprise that New England reached the

Patriots line up there is the star quality of Brady, Gronkowski, Hernandez and Welker. The inconsistent Wilfork definitely belongs in that group most of the time, but he has the habit of becoming anonymous for long periods of time. The rest of the group are weak, the culmination of which can be seen in the Patriots placement of 31st in the



Oh me oh my, if only the people from Guinness World Records had been at Zoo on Wednesday. I'm not sure if it was due to my distinct sobriety, or rather due to the presence of the older generation pressuring people into sexcapades, but ReAUnion saw a record 22 incidents witnessed - oh to grab a hold of THAT Zoo Bar CCTV footage. Sadly, we have limited print space, and though I'd love to reel each one off, some culling has occurred. To those who think you escaped - be warned, I may keep you for a dry spell. Though the night started later than usual, Zoo Bar veterans and freshers alike were graced with the presence of countless people seemingly losing their zoo-ginities.

We may as well start with one particular Zoo-goer, who found herself occupied throughout the whole evening. This little vixen was never spotted alone, but the scandalous lady was seen in the company of not two, not three, but FOUR separate men throughout Zoo - it seems Mrs Norris was indeed roaming the corridors of Hogwarts, but thwarted and ignored any attempts by any Basilisk to escape from its Chamber of Secrets. Seem-

ingly desperate to steal the title of cock-tease, she flirted her way through the likes of Mailbu and a Russian Oligarch Alumnus, amongst others, but in the end made her way home with two hockey chaps - for an innocent burger, apparently. That brings her total count to a WHOPPING 6 men in one evening. And apparently Mrs Norris was not the only member of her house to be on the prowl though, as your teenage witch and puppy-eyes were once again spotted ducking out alarmingly early - and all in the presence of her recent ex-squeeze. The once power-couple had barely been over for three weeks. *sadface*

Blondes were more than a little active, though, as our frequently featured third team Biggles was seen stealing yet more kisses from a fresh face. Her desires, though, were short lived, and she soon grew tired of her man, only to find his rapid infatuation had grown even faster than her own exasperation. The poor girl was followed round by said gentleman, who tried on numerous occasions to woo and court our fair lady, but if Facebook is anything to go by, she's having none of her new-found stalker-man. Your Sunny tennis

bombshell was also seen moving on rapidly from last week, as her tongue and lips got all Knotted up - when asked about her latest pull, she assured others "what?! We were already Facebook friends and all!" Phew!

Having berated me last term for the lack of Women's Rugby coverage, it seems some of You were really on the prowl on Wednesday. In a red dress that would make Lucy Liu raise an eyebrow, one starlet was seen trying out the previously featured Hoover manoeuvre with the man who provided one lucky girl the nickname of "sex-raggled tool." As Hobbes danced and pranced his way around Zoo in his usual fashion, it seems the magnetic attraction between the pairs' lips was uncontrollable, and they were spotted sharing oxygen in the corner, by the fan, near the toilets, outside...well, you get the picture.

Netball's very own Keith was also seen making her comeback to the market on Wednesday. Turning heads in a striking, yet typically revealing blue dress, a case of mistaken identity ensued as to whom she snared that evening. With many people thinking she was off with a 4th team FC lad, who must indeed be disappointed as his inability to hit a home run, sources can confirm that she was actually entangled with an Alumnus named Jacko. Next time, get your facts right people. Indeed, the rest of her household also seemed to be unusually active, with several other cases of 'rendezvous' occurring that they'd like to be kept secret, I'm sure. Suffice it to say, one Ski President got the true white-glove Butler service at Zoo but was, alas, also

seen going home alone.

This, however, meant that one person in particular was left high and dry. But never one to be phased by this, your Gaelic Footballer jumped back on the saddle and was seen working his magic, trying to charm your Dance Captain. The captivating lady was seemingly enraptured by his efforts, and the two were seen to be "busy" for much of the night. The Sam squared couple was also seen doing the dirty on Wednesday, though it seems Lush Sam couldn't quite keep up with the momentum of his energizer-bunny counterpart, and often had to sit down to deal with his fatigue or all-round ineptitude.

At long last, though, it seems the will-they or won't they pseudo-couple declared their feelings for one another publicly, and a rugby captain allegedly managed to Reed the signs correctly - he sealed the deal with one stunning Brazilian Tuns girl to all-round sounds of "awww," sighs of happiness and even the odd tear of joy being shed by bystanders. YourCock was also spotted trying to crack onto the tallest member of the Netball sixth team. Reacting instinctively to the advance of his drunken lips and tongue, it seems TeeLee defended her vulnerable lips with her hand, but little did she know that YourCock was all too happy to pull her palm. And finally, it seems the Netball fifth's cock-tease really did live up to her name once more, spending several hours refusing the advances of Welsh Glory. Only at the end of the night though, did she give in to his inevitable charm and allow him to steal a kiss (or seven), but it seems ac-

tually speaking to a girl, rather than an outright pull, works a treat - the pair were seen tottering off in the direction of Tottenham Court Road in the wee hours of the morning, though our girl denies any...frivolities.

Sadly, the night was not all love, sex and magic. With one Alumnus being led out of Zoo Bar by the hand à la mummy-and-toddler scenario, Captain Mateer also had several unfortunate run-ins with bouncers. Having been unceremoniously ousted from Zoo, it seems she learned a trick or two from Alumnus Boca and managed to weasel her way back into the club, to continue her task of ensnaring Lennon. But if her determination manifested herself in any way, it was in violence, not lust, and many a man was seen running scared of her flailing limbs. Suffice it to say, it seems the Zoo Bar bouncers had once again had enough - and this time, it was for good. It would appear our beloved Netball social sec has done the unthinkable and got herself BARRED from Zoo! With a year and a half remaining, how the hell will she survive Wednesday nights? And more importantly, how will this affect her alleged bid for AU Pres? Our hearts go out to you Captain Mateer. I'm sure you can sweet-talk your way out of this!

Cheers for a truly spectacular week, and here's hoping you live up to expectations next week. Credit must also go out to Boffin (-B+M-in+at) for her documenting skills. A visual recount of last Wednesday is available on Facebook thanks to her. Until next time...

Sport

Inside

- I know who you did last Wednesday XL
- Super Bowl preview
- England cricketers falter

Ashley Cole: Past his Best?

Amit Singh

Chelsea's defence has been widely reported to have been playing poorly this season, although in recent weeks they have improved somewhat. Luiz has borne most of the brunt for Chelsea's poor defensive displays as has, at times, Petr Cech. Recently, some fans and pundits have been questioning whether Ashley Cole's best days are behind him, some have even questioned whether he still warrants his place in the England team.

Cole has built a career around being a dynamic attacking, yet defensively capable full back. However, this season Chelsea have conceded 25 goals, more than a goal per game, in which Cole has played in every league game. If we take Cole, Evra and Liverpool's Enrique as the three best left backs in the league, as well as Baines, his direct England rival, it is thus appropriate to compare their form to ascertain how well Cole is playing this season.

The number of tackles completed per game is thus: 2.7 for Evra, 2.6 for Cole, 1.8 for Enrique and 1.2 for Baines. For interceptions, Evra has 1.2 per game, Cole 1.5 per game, Enrique just 1 per game, whilst Baines comes out on top with 2.1. As well as this, a comparison of fouls per game for each defender is also relatively tight, with Evra committing one per game, Baines 0.9, Cole 0.8 and Enrique 0.4 per game. Defensively, it is tight; Chelsea have conceded more goals than United and Liverpool but Cole's individual statistics imply he is still playing to a similar standard to both Evra and Enrique. One would expect Baines

to complete more tackles due to the fact Everton are a more defensive side than Chelsea, United or Liverpool. Thus, with the low level of tackles he completes, one could assert that he is the weakest defender.

It is in the attacking third that Cole has actually been at his best this season, recording six assists, with Evra and Enrique having two each, whilst Baines only has one. This is a very high number of assists for a full-back (the most out of any Premier League full-back so far this season), indicating what an attacking presence Cole has been, even if it hasn't always been noticed.

A wider look at the attacking statistics reflect favourably on Cole. Cole completes, on average, 50 passes per game this season with a pass completion rate of about 89%; Enrique has the highest passes per game with 52, but has a much lower pass completion rate than Cole with just 79%. Evra completes less passes than both full-backs with 42 per game but boasts a decent pass completion rate with 86%; Baines stats reflect the weakest in this regard, with an average of 41.8 passes per game with a completion accuracy of only 76.8%. Thus, although Enrique completes slightly more passes per game than Cole, Cole's superior pass accuracy percentage means that he has been the most influential attacking full-back out of the three.

With regards to crosses per game, Baines has the most with 2.3; Enrique has one per game, whereas Cole and Evra have less, with 0.6 per game and 0.3 per game respectively. The reason for this is perhaps due to the more cross-centric style of play used by Liverpool, who cross more balls into

the box per game than any other side, rather than due to Cole and Evra being less able to do so.

A stat that highlights the attacking influence of Cole this season is the high number of successful through-balls he has completed, with 2.6 per game; Enrique completes 0.1 per game, whilst Baines and Evra have attempted no through balls this season. Again, this is indicative of differing styles of play but further shows how AVB has used Cole in a far more attacking sense than previous managers have, arguably at the expense of the defensive side of his game.

What explains the perceived dip in form?

There are numerous factors that explain why some people believe Cole has performed worse this season, despite his obvious importance in an attacking capacity for both club and country. One factor is that the Chelsea defence as a collective has been poor this season. The alteration in tactics from a deep sitting backline to a high line has caused problems for every one of Chelsea's defenders, with Luiz often bearing the brunt. As well as this, the other full-back, Jose Bosingwa, has come under fire more now than ever before in the new system. The reason for this is perhaps that, by pressing high up the field, the Chelsea full-backs are often a lot higher up the field than they would like to be, both in and out of possession; this means that if Chelsea lose the ball, or if they're beaten in behind, the full-backs look very vulnerable.

During attacks, the shielding midfielder, now Romeu, will often slot back to make a back three with the wing-backs, often urged up the field



Flickr: Downing Street

to initiate attacks and stretch the opposition; as stated, this can leave them vulnerable in behind.

Whilst on the topic of tactics under AVB, the formation is more of a 4-3-3 than previously as now the wide men, Sturridge and Mata, are far more focused on attacking than defending. The result of this is that the full-backs are often left unprotected. In Cole's case, when Mata comes inside, he is left incredibly vulnerable to opposition attacks. Even when Mata does look to track back, he is more of a forward minded player and thus is not capable of adequately protecting his

full-back.

A further factor behind a perceived drop is that Cole has set himself incredibly high standards over the year and, thereby, anything short of that makes it appear that he is playing poorly. Although at the age of 31, he does not seem quite as quick as he once did. This is more obvious when defending, especially on the turn, than when attacking. Although, as stated, his attacking has been very good, he has not been as dynamic on the ball, in fact much of his attacking work has been from running in behind, rather than running on the ball, highlighted by only 0.3 dribbles per game. Perhaps this is tactical, or perhaps it does point to how Cole is adapting his game as he is getting older.

But with regards to Baines, he is not as strong as Cole at defending and is statistically worse than him in an attacking capacity. Cole has 93 caps to his name and his experience alone is a reason why he is a valuable player for England. Furthermore, with Cahill and Terry the preferred centre-back pairing for Capello, it makes sense to transfer the Chelsea trio to the international game as well. Baines is a good defender and should go to the Euro's, but he is not, if we compare stats, of the same calibre as Cole.

To say Cole is finished would be ridiculous, the comparison of defensive statistics shows that all players are similar and the attacking stats tip it in Cole's favour. Thus, he should still be considered a key member of the Chelsea and England starting 11. As stated, his six assists are incredibly impressive for a full-back.

Amit Singh is the editor of www.thinkfootball.co.uk

LET'S TALK TACTICS



Semi-finals spell disappointment

Timothy Poole

The other day, I came to a startling realisation. Manchester City have been knocked out of three of a possible four tournaments this season. Its an obvious statistic but one I find particularly difficult to fathom. Admittedly, this puts them in pole position for the title race, but with only one trophy left to win, how much pressure does this put on Roberto Mancini? Is Sheik Mansour happy with one trophy per season (and/or the Europa League) after investing so, so much? Moreover, what happens to Mancini if City slip up in their Premier League quest? Arguably the best coach in the world, Jose Mourinho, is in a similar position at Real Madrid: knocked out of the Copa Del Rey and unable to overcome the mighty Barcelona, Mourinho surely has to win the title to satisfy the de-

sires of his bosses. However, a key difference favours Mourinho's position in comparison to Mancini's in the shape of Champions League prospects: Real Madrid still have them, City do not.

Roger Federer - the Great Roger Federer - has enjoyed the most successful career in tennis history, but now the fairy-tale appears to be approaching its last few pages. After taking the first set of his Australian Open semi-final on a tie-break, Federer must have felt that he could finally secure a return to his superlative best. However, the next three sets slipped away from the 30-year-old as he finished the match with 64 unforced errors. Utmost credit must go to Federer's opponent and fiercest rival, the Great Rafael Nadal. The two have waged war against each other for as long as the world of tennis can remember; though, this war has always been one of peace and grace, fought



Flickr: Kenneth Hong

under the most gentlemanly conditions. The Spaniard is the main reason why Federer's total of Grand Slams has been limited to sixteen and, although it is unlikely, Nadal may still be able to surpass that total. Indeed, it seems that Federer will now have to get used to not winning the major tournaments,

but the veteran is still willing to put up the best fight he possibly can.

Ahead of the Australian Open, I identified Petra Kvitova as a rising starlet who could fill the gaping hole at the top of the women's game. I hoped and duly thought that she could lift the

trophy in Melbourne to become World Number One. I was wrong. That said, I did allude to the unpredictable nature of the women's game, and the fact that Victoria Azarenka and Maria Sharapova made it through to the final is testament to that. It appears that the Eastern European ladies, as fierce and determined as they are (grunts galore), are making a move towards a period of sheer dominance. Yet, Kvitova is still a part of that, and perhaps even the spearhead of the attack. Kvitova is not yet no. 1, but reaching the semi-final at least demonstrates a level of consistency. I can only hope that the very admirable Czech makes it to the summit of the game sooner rather than later - and she will, of that I am sure. However, she has much to learn after her defeat to the more experienced, Maria Sharapova, and, at least, the passive Caroline Wozniacki has finally been dislodged as World Number One, albeit by someone other than Kvitova.