



THE BEAVER

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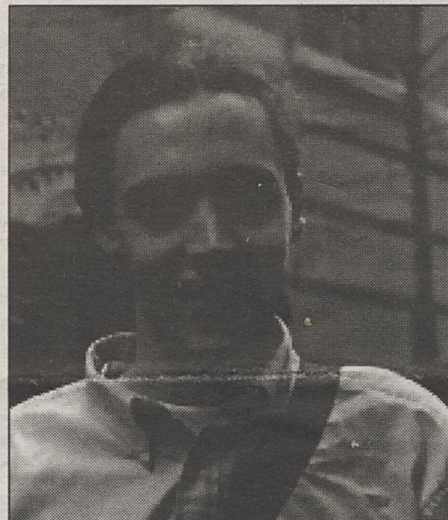


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Aga (Khan) Wins With The Fall Of The Raj



Narius Aga, General Secretary



Yuan Potts, Education & Welfare



Imogen Bathurst, Treasurer

Narius Aga has become the new Student's Union General Secretary, despite an extremely close contest. Union officer Bernardo Duggan described the election results as "the closest race I've ever seen."

His rival, Raj Jethwa, led in the early stages of the voting counts, but Narius pulled ahead in the last phase, winning by a mere seventeen votes.

He said that he was "absolutely elated" with the result, and stated that "the people had spoken."

Jon French, the Conservative Club candidate, described the result as "a bad night for the LSESU," while Education and Welfare Sabbatical Sam Parham said that it was "a travesty for the union." Narius responded by describing such remarks as "sour grapes", and reassured students that he would prove to be the right person for the job. In a similar vein, Chris Cooper identified the result as "a triumph for the Union" and expressed "absolute disgust" at the way the LSE Labour Club had put "international students' union" on their posters, describing the tactic of writing in various different languages as "patronising to foreign international students." He further justified these sentiments by stating that the Labour sabbaticals had been "incompetent all year."

Imogen Bathurst was elected by a clear majority as S.U. Treasurer. Even

As the election results for this year's Sabbatical results are announced, divisions and criticisms over the campaign and the elected sabbaticals. *Beaver* Staff report. Sabbatical photos by Nina Duncan.

before the result was announced, she confirmed that she was "pretty confident" about the proceedings, and regretted that there was not "a bit more opposition to give voters a wider choice."

The position of Education and Welfare Officer was taken by Yuan Potts. Although some members of the LSE Liberal Democrat contingent took this as a vote for their policies, it should be remembered that he stood as an independent candidate and he stressed that he puts the welfare of students as a definite priority over party politics. Commenting on his victory Potts exclaimed that he was "ecstatic. I can only thank everyone who voted for me. We've got a great team for next year." Dan Crowe speaking to *The Beaver* commented, however, that "Sam was shit, but Anj would have been brilliant".

Jasper Ward is to be next year's Entertainment's sabbatical, although the gap between him and his adversary Adrian King was not as large as many had expected. This was perhaps due to the fact that Ward's electioneering had been hampered by an unfortunate accident involving a vending machine which incapacitated him for most of election week.

This year's Labour sabbaticals were visibly upset over the prospect of a sabbatical executive with no Labour representation. Divisions amongst the current sabbaticals were underlined by the sharp admonishments LSESU

Treasurer Darrell Hare and Entertainments sabbatical Chris Cooper received from Dan Crowe, asking them if they were "f***ing happy with the results." Replying to questions from *Beaver* staff, Sam Parham declared that "If you vote for shit, you get shit." He denied that the LSE Labour Club's failure to achieve its goal of two sabbaticals this year, was in any way related to his performance.

The Wrights' Bar Mixed Grill fared poorly in the first round for General Secretary, eliminated immediately with only forty-seven votes. Socialist Worker representative Stuart Locke was the next candidate to fall, succeeded by The Plum Pudding which had accumulated sixty-seven votes in the third round. Contender Philip Hampsheir, with one hundred and fifty votes, fell out of the running in the fourth round.

Speculation surrounded Mr Hampsheir's potential candidacy in next year's sabbatical elections. While the Can of Spam gained just seventy votes in the poll for Education and Welfare officer, the Apple Crumble fared surprisingly well in the race for Treasurer, earning one hundred and eighty four votes.

This year's election have seen a high turnout of over 1'400 students, and after a long and arduous campaign, returning officer Joe Roberts expressed his thanks to all those involved in the administration of the SU's elections, and helped in making it a "good, clean race".

Védrine on the Mitterand Years

By Nick Robin

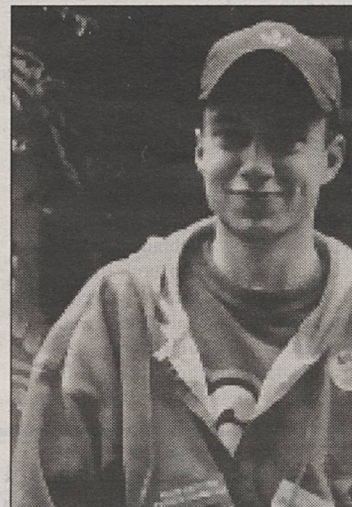
Few great men are great men on their own. They often need outstanding aides, advisers, or friends. François Mitterrand was certainly a great man and a real statesman, and will remain in French history as so. Hubert Védrine was amongst his closest advisers for twenty years, from the time spent in opposition to power. Learning about his personal experience of the two septennats promised to be exciting.

The talk was held in French, as Mr Védrine pointed out that as diplomatic adviser, posts that he held for seven years, from 1981 to 1988, words were crucial. For fifty minutes, he spoke of the intricacies of international relations, of the remote independence enjoyed by States in framing even the most domestic piece legislation. He hinted to all the developments deriving from European integration, the new world that rose out of Gorbachev's reforms, a world where the Cold War was extinct, a world that he and François Mitterrand had helped reshape.

He recalled the ideals of the 1981 where the Left of the Cancun Summit, endeavouring to bring about the South-North dimension when the great powers could only think in terms of East-West divide. However, in a 50 minute talk, he failed to mention French African policy.

That might only have slipped out of his mind. Questions concentrated on European integration and on the achievements of the Left in power. Then, the 1991 Moscow putsch came to mind. Suddenly, the one who felt so strongly about the power of words disappeared. No, François Mitterrand had never accepted the putschists. Rather, he had tried to save the life of both Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev. As far as African policy is concerned in Rwanda, France had only been overzealous.

On the whole, the talk lacked a firm structure. In 50 minutes, only anecdotes were heard and, special cases from which no salient principle could ever be drawn. If one were to be asked what had been the ideas behind 14 years of French foreign policy, one would be faced with a very difficult question. Did one get anything out of those 90 minutes of wind and smoke screens?... Maybe, as he suggested himself at the start of his talk, Hubert Védrine was never more than a 'note taker'.

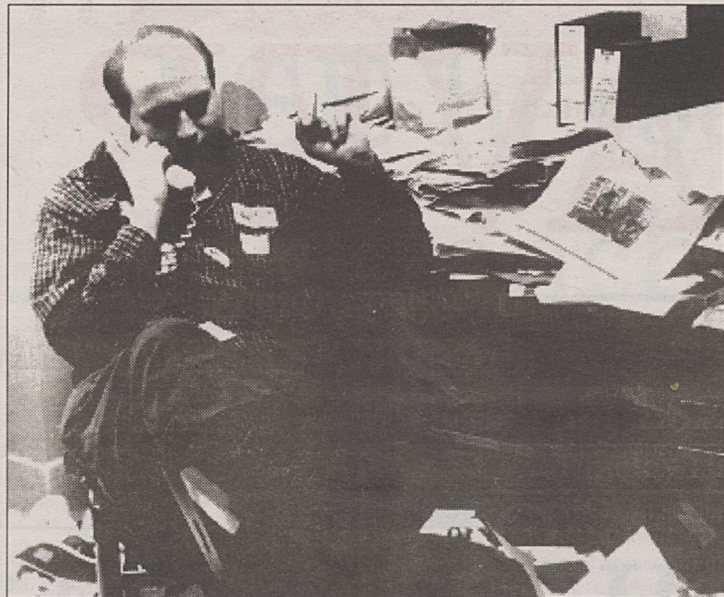


Jasper Ward, Entertainments

Allegations of ballot paper tampering were made after the results were announced on Thursday night. Labour candidate Raj Jethwa requested a recount, but declined to make an official appeal. Subsequently, allegations emerged accusing a candidate of throwing another candidate's first preference ballot papers away. Returning Officer Joe Roberts and Bernardo Duggan failed to comment.

The focus of many campaigns on overseas issues underlined the seemingly emerging consensus amongst Union members that the LSESU is no longer just a British Students' Union, but a body also representing a group of international students, who constitute over 50 per cent of SU membership. This was similarly reflected in the election of the LSESU's first ever General Secretary with non-UK or EU status: a fee-paying Overseas student.

Sam Parham: Pies or Lies?



The den of iniquity that is Parham's office.

Photo: B A Roualec

Chris Roe

DESPITE THREATS POSED BY the revitalised BNP, who plan to field fifty candidates at the General Election, the Student Union's Anti-Racism Week (which was originally scheduled for the sixth week of term) has still failed to materialise. Responsibility for this event lies with Sam Parham, the portly Education and Welfare sabbatical, who has been criticised frequently for his apparent inability to do anything. Some have expressed concern that Sam's fondness for pies containing beef of dubious quality has affected his memory. However, he refuted allegations that he had simply "forgotten" about the event, and maintains that it has merely been "rescheduled" for the future. He accounted for the delay by emphasising his heavy workload, which he implied had been aggravated by the incompetence of other sabbatical officers. He also remarked that

campaigning for the Labour club has taken up a lot of time. Some might argue that intra LSE politics are less important than a rigid stance against racism.

Sam outlined his plans for the week, which will hopefully include a talk by Tony Robson from the Anti-Fascist magazine Searchlight, as well as the distribution of leaflets and magazines underlining the insidious dangers of the BNP and their followers. He reaffirmed his own anti-racist stance, pointing out that freedom of speech should not be used as an excuse to incite racial hatred. However, he remained somewhat vague about the precise date of this educational extravaganza.

Parham also denied that his corpulent form has been conspicuously inactive for the last seven months, claiming that he has concentrated his efforts on "invisible work", rather than on conducting an in-depth survey of the LSE's eateries, as some have suggested.

News From Nowhere

MANY universities across the country are in the grip of election fever, not just the LSE. If you, like me have been accosted by snivelling, power-hungry candidates for sabbatical posts as you stroll through Houghton Street, you can rest assured that your counterparts across the country are going through the same trials with varying degrees of success. Cambridge University has conspicuously become one with a lesser degree of success having only six candidates for their five sabbatical positions. In what their very own loyal news editor called a "ridiculous farce", they are going ahead with the elections anyway, with four of the five posts a foregone conclusion.

Cambridge is also seeing a wave of petty crime across the university. Two examples of this shocking state of affairs are vending machine thefts and changing room raids. It is terrifying that such an upstanding example of British traditionalism is being ravished by a few underfunded students who are too lazy to go out and get an honest job. If it can happen to them what hope is there for the rest of us?

Indeed Bristol has proven that there is very little. Last week three students were arrested after being spotted on top of the union building wielding a gun. The police were contacted after a local resident reported hearing gun shots. When the students were eventually enticed down it was discovered that the gun was in fact a fake. The local resident was last seen having a hearing aid fitted at the local doctors.

While we're on the subject of the so-called "red bricks", more news from Oxford. It has been reported in the Oxford Mail that the Common Room at Exeter College has appointed a "Petting Officer" who has divided the room into "heavy" and "reduced" petting areas in response to complaints, presumably from sad bastards who never pull, that there is too much snogging in public. The measure has prompted comments from the Common Room president who said it is "just like a smoking and non-smoking area really, except its snogging not smoking." One second year Biochemist said that he thought it was "all just a joke, since people at Oxford are not sexually active- they've all got too much work to do."

Compiled by Tasha Kosviner

News From The Archives From This Day: 11 March 1971



ON 11 March 1971 *The Beaver* revealed that the Refectory (Brunch Bowl) was in a critical condition. The Advisory committee held a meeting to discuss the loss of £9,500 from the Refectory account due to an increase in staff wages and the purchase of new equipment. It was said that "some items of expense were unique to [the] period of 1970" and had drained the Refectory's finances.

Under the University Grants Authority regulations, the School was not allowed to aid the Refectory by subsidising it. Following a survey, *The Beaver* listed the solutions proposed by the School, and student proposals both short term and long term. To begin, the School suggested that the Refectory be closed in the evening from the end of the Summer term 1971 to the beginning of the Autumn term. The Robinson Room was to be shut in the evening at the end of the Spring term in 1971 to the Autumn term and the Snack Bar to close at 5pm at the end of the Summer term. Finally, the staff were to be reduced in the staff dining room but even with these cuts, the Refectory would still lose £10,000.

The student proposals for the short term was based on the idea that if the quality of the food was higher, more people would eat in the Refectory but noted that "the menu may be too ambitious trying to supply food which cannot be cooked well on a large scale" and went on to suggest that "perhaps a smaller variety of simple and well cooked food would be appreciated"! The long-term proposal however, was to have a complete change of atmosphere by decorating the rooms with "seating on the same line as Florries or the Orange room." The tables should allow clusters of students to gather round them. "The emphasis" it was suggested, was "to manipulate the general furnishings and appearance of the eating area to encourage more people to use it".

Nevertheless, there were complaints that students felt 'powerless' in the Committee and that none of the canteen 'manual workers' were represented. *The Beaver* wrote that "students seem to be used as a certificate" of respectability for these committees, to legitimise their existence". With such discontent on the Committee, the debate over the Refectory continued.

By Miriam Chalabi

NEWS IN BRIEF

IN RESPONSE to the proposed privatisation of London Underground the NUS has stepped up its campaign for a fairer deal for students.

Student discounts on the Underground were first introduced last term, and are due to be expanded. NUS President, Douglas Trainer, has written to Sir George Young, urging, "a commitment to the student discount scheme to be included in the tender for privatisation". Trainer also hopes that "students will have a discount scheme now and after the sell-off."

The private sector is already involved in the multi-million pound refurbishment of the Northern line and the £1.8 billion Jubilee line extension from Green Park into the Docklands.

Jonathan Black

HOWARD DAVIES, Deputy Director of the Bank of England, spoke last Tuesday to a packed audience in the Old Theatre.

Mr Davies argued that of the major central banks of the world, the Bank of England has the most comprehensive responsibility for banking supervision and plays the greatest role in managing debt.

Mr Davies suggested that the introduction of European currency notes featuring a national symbol for each member state on either side, would result in an astronomically high number of notes.

Mr Davies pointed out that Eastern European states, in an apparent desire to join the EU, have been desperately trying to align their economies with those of the member states. The

audience was left pondering the worrying fact that such smaller states will struggle to compete with a neighbouring, western European "super state."

Amber Marks

WOMEN'S WEEK was met with a mixture of success and disappointment. The stall in the Quad was well used by a variety of people and the free chocolates were unsurprisingly an outright success.

But Fatma Msumi was disappointed with the turn out for specially arranged talks, which she described as "pathetic" and expressed concern about Women's week as a future fixture. She went on to say that "all events were heavily subsidised and if people don't turn up the money spent cannot be justified".

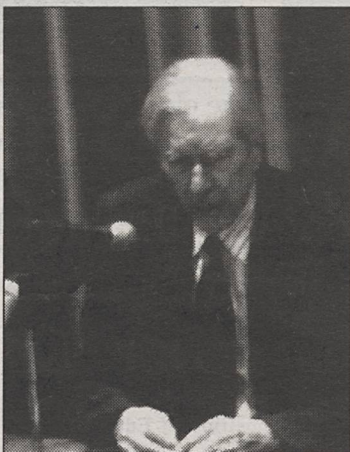
Zoe Peden

Galbraith Returns

Simon Retallack

THE EMINENT ECONOMIST and author Professor J.K. Galbraith returned to the LSE last Wednesday evening to participate in a debate about the capacity of government to adapt to the changing state of the nation. It was at the LSE, he recalled, that as a student he first learned how wrong economists could be, having, in particular, Friedrich von Hayek in mind. Looking frail and hard of hearing, Galbraith attacked the economic systems of both the United States and the UK for "only meeting the consumption needs of the affluent." He warned in particular of the need to protect the welfare state from the process of what he called

"internationalisation," which he fears is endangering it, unlike the production of "morally depraved TV," an area in which he said the US had no competition. The other pressing problem that he identified was the plight of the impoverished of the big cities, to which he said there would be no remedy until government adopted a very different attitude towards the need for equity and public action. It was in this spirit that he urged the audience to vote for the Labour Party at the forthcoming British General Election. Professor Galbraith was joined on the panel by Will Hutton, editor of *The Observer*, Gerry Holtham, Director of the Institute for Public Policy Research, and Geoff Mulgan, Director of Demos.

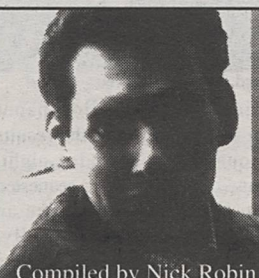


J.K Galbraith Photo: B.A. Roualec

School's Out

This Week's Questions

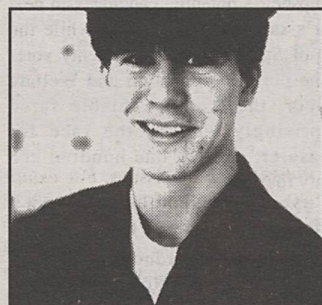
- 1.) Do you think this year's SU officers have done a good job?
- 2.) Do you trust candidates to keep their pledges if elected?



Sam Parham, Education and Welfare Sabbatical.



Philip Hampsheir, 2nd. year BSc. Government and Economics.



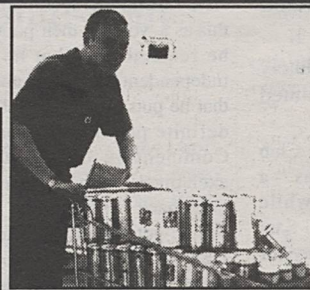
Stuart Locke, 2nd. year BSc. Philosophy.



- 1.) Yes, of course. What else do you expect me to say?
- 2.) If they're Labour then yes, of course. If not I'm not sure. You can only trust New Labour, you can never trust the independents.

- 1.) Some have done superb jobs, others have just drunk too much.
- 2.) Some of the candidates will do topper jobs-they're generally the independent candidates.

- 1.) No. Sam Parham has been more concerned with New Labour and Tony Blair than students' welfare.
- 2.) Unlikely. We won't be elected so who is going to make them?



Chris Cooper, Ents. Sabbatical.

- 1.) Me and Darrell Hare.
- 2.) Oh yes. I look forward to those mid-week events in the Tuns while I go to the cashpoint.. After the summer and the thought of £14,000, you can't even remember what you promised, let alone do it.

- 1.) Relatively so. My F*** up with the candle lit vigil, instead of occupying, failure over the Tuns refurbishment.

- 2.) Election promises can and often prove fruitless. Tory legislation has severely restrained the activities of SUs, and many plans and activities would prove "ultra vires".



Renton (Trainspotting)

Trainer Puts The Boot In

Iwould like to start on the general stance the NUS has been taking recently. Why has the NUS changed its policy from abolishing grants to favouring Income Contingent Loans?

The policy of NUS was decided on at the last National Conference, it received a two-thirds majority which makes the case clear. The majority of students now want to see NUS involved in the central discussion. We had a policy before which led us to being excluded from many of the big debates because we were talking about a political and economic situation that wasn't realistic. We wanted to see education funded through huge rises in tax or through huge changes in the economic situation which weren't realistic and the background to the here and now is that one in six students are dropping out of higher education, one in three can't afford to eat properly. There are huge levels of stress, huge levels of disenchantment with what is currently happening in Higher Education. We're also wiser if we accept we are part of a wider academic community.

How do you address the criticisms that the NUS has made concessions that the student movement is giving in and that there is now a greater scope for the government to say that now they've accepted this, they can make more concessions.

There is no question of the student movement giving in. What the student movement is doing is reasserting where it's at. We're absolutely opposed to fees of any kind, whether it be tuition fees or top-up fees and there is no question on that issue. What we need to do is to be involved in opposing fees in a realistic way and simply opposing everything makes it difficult for us to win any support at all for the kind of policy that we had. By saying that we can remodel maintenance but fees is a definite issue which the government, business and industry should be covering, but also that there should be more subsidy for the maintenance package students get. I think this is a very positive way in taking that campaign forward. We were stuck in a political quagmire and now we're beginning to move forward.

But surely it is a problem. It seems that the whole policy change by NUS has caused a lot of discomfort. At this year's conference forty-six universities are going to sign a motion urging the Executive to "unite the movement against hardship and fees" and to make education funding a general election issue. There is a growing concern about what is happening.

I haven't seen the forty-six universities, I haven't seen the proposal that the forty-six universities are going to consider. But I suspect that it is a proposal as you speak: it is something that we can support. We want a united movement against fees, we want a united against hardship. But what we can't afford to do is ignore the economic reality of that. We need an argument that can succeed rather than an argument that makes us feel that we are doing something right.

Surely, we are conceding the argument. We're saying we're not taking a firm stance when we should be saying this is what we stand for, we are opposed in principle and that this is what we are going to fight for.

Sorry, what argument are we conceding?

The argument on the principle of education. We are agreeing that we should be paying some kind of Income Contingent Loan.

Let's look at the reality. Over 50% of full-time undergrads who study in

In an exclusive interview, Dhara Ranasinghe questions NUS President Douglas Trainer on criticism recently directed at both the NUS and himself.

this country now have a student loan, that's a fact, that's the reality. Part-time students have to pay their own fees. They don't have access to any kind of maintenance support. We've failed as a student movement to take on the issue of post grads. We've failed to take on so many issues in the past because we were focused solely on the full-time undergrad. We can't allow that to continue. The future of HE is different kinds of education in different kinds of ways and we have to have a flexible system. We can't be victims of ideological dogma, we have to move forward. That's what the NUS policy is

The reality is that our funding policy is central to the debate. We're critical of all the major political parties and we're focused on putting people on to the register rather than giving them an indication of how to vote. That's a positive agenda and people are knocking that, that happens in politics. It happens in student politics, but it's part and parcel of the job.

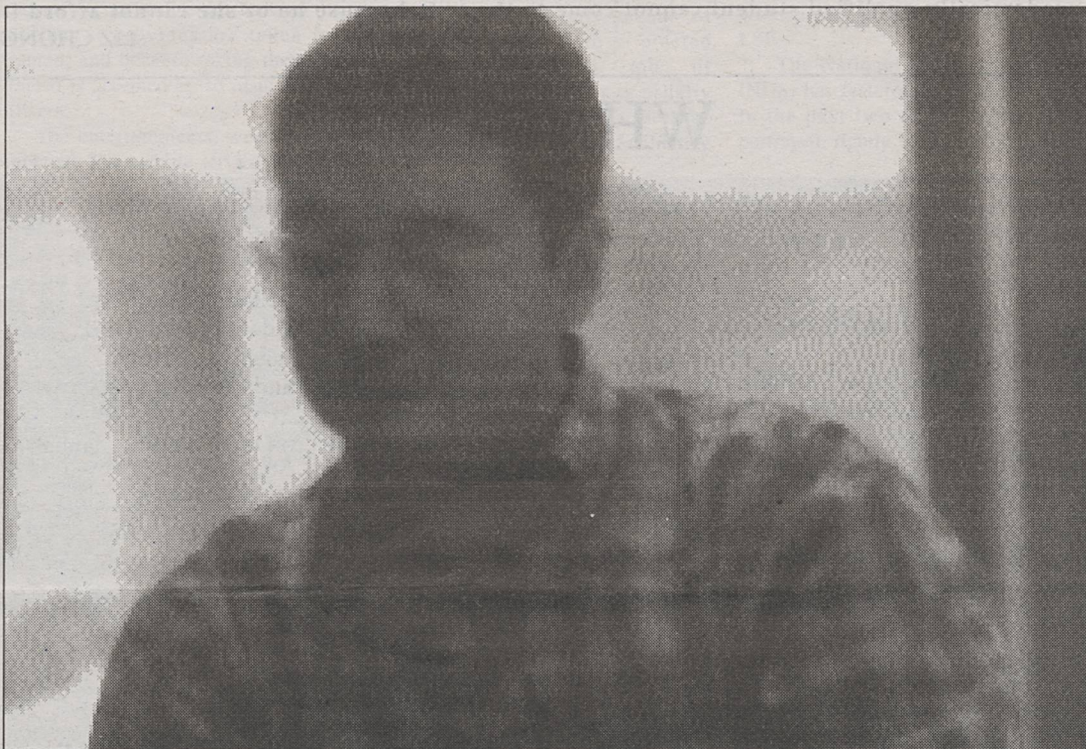
Do you see yourself going into politics?

I'm involved in politics now. This is a political job as you can get. It's not something I've given particular

demonstration last year, was organised by Clive Lewis, the candidate who stood against me for the NUS Presidency, that demonstration was a disaster. Don't blame me for that.

This is such a crucial time for education, especially at the LSE which wishes to go ahead with top-up fees and also with a general election and the Dearing enquiry.. Don't you think the divisions are detrimental to the student movement at a time when it needs to be stronger?

I believe that we do have a united movement on the issue of fees.



NUS President Douglas Trainer

Photo: B A Roualec

about. It's about saying we can remodel maintenance. People should be united around that. We've offered every SU around the country to be part of the anti-fees campaign, whether they take it or not is up to them. I would hope that it is something which the movement can unite around.

Will you make Higher Education Funding a general election issue?

It definitely is a general election issue. We've put 250,000 students on the electoral register this year, that's been a huge success. It hasn't been covered well at the London School of Economics, it hasn't been covered well by *The Beaver* unless I've missed an issue. But I think that the success of other SU's up and down the country has shown that, that campaign can work and work very effectively.

The NUS leadership has been criticised in recent years for pursuing its own career interests and not those of the student movement. Last year's President Jim Murphy is now a Labour Party Prospective Parliamentary Candidate. Doesn't this add to tensions when Universities see a leadership which it believes is pursuing its own interests?

Personally, I absolutely refute that. I think it would be fine enough for me to build a career in the Labour party by being involved in the Labour party's election campaign rather than being President of the NUS during a very difficult time. I'm not doing that. I'm doing what I believe is right, which is being NUS President and leading it when it is a time of watershed in HE. In terms of the general perception of what the NUS is about, it suits people opposed to the leadership of the NUS to suggest we're too close to New Labour.

focus to. I'm interested just now in getting re-elected and leading the National Union at a time when we could face, for the first time in 18 years a new government.

So, you would like to be re-elected as NUS President?

I'm standing for re-election at the Conference this March. I am confident that the policies we've been carrying out, the work, the campaigns that we've been organising will see me re-elected.

Why would you recommend people to vote for you?

I think that I've proven this year, that I'm in touch not just with SUs but with students as well. We're advocating a funding policy that is realistic, we've been involved in campaign initiatives which have been innovative and exciting. We've put 250,000 students on to the electoral register. We've never in the past contacted and involved 250,000 students on any initiative. We've run a national HE shutdown which was opposed by left-wingers on my Executive, because they said balloting SUs was undemocratic. These kinds of things make me believe that I am the person to take the NUS forward and prepare the National Union for the next millennium.

Your critics would highlight a number of other issues. For example, last year's demonstration, where failure by the NUS to back it, meant that it did not receive the publicity that it should have done, also...

You can't have it both ways. You either argue for demonstrations or you don't argue for demonstrations. I believe demonstrations have a place in the student movement. The

You do?

Why do you gather that we don't?

The impression I get is that there is confusion on where the NUS is taking its policy, and this has led to criticism of the leadership in general. Don't we need a strong united movement rather than a weak divided one?

We've got a strong movement and will continue to have a strong movement as long as people don't get bogged down in ideological dogma rather than the practical reality of where we are at. We're in a situation where fees is the number one threat on campus and yet some sects in the student movement are obsessed with the discussion around maintenance. What we've put forward is an agenda by which people can get involved on the campaign against fees irrespective of views on maintenance.

But, are they just voicing a general concern?

What do you suggest?

It's not for me to suggest, they may be seen as equally important?

The difference between fees and maintenance is that maintenance needs a change, government policy needs to change. Fees can be introduced by a single institution in the country. That's the fundamental difference between maintenance and fees. Maintenance needs a political shift, a concerted push by the student movement. Fees can simply be enacted by one institution, that's why there is a need for a national campaign for it. That's why we need to be focused on the issue of fees. That's what we need to say to people and will continue to say to people. I make no

apologies for backing the policy of NUS Conference. NUS Conference is our sovereign body. Two-thirds supported the change in our funding policy. I'm merely carrying out our policy and carrying it out well, by arguing at every level for a change in funding policy which is fairer on students and gets rid of the threat of fees.

If we could move on to criticisms made towards yourself..

Do you have any positive questions? Let's do some positive questions, yeah?

Positive questions?

I don't think you have any do you? I think we should wrap this up. I think I should get back to the important Conference here. What you've got there is a litany of criticisms and I think you're coming from a very blinkered perspective on this.

I'm just trying to address criticism. This is supposed to be a balanced article.

If it's a balanced article what positive questions do you have? What you're saying is that you want to question me on concerns that you've heard. Fair enough. I'm just trying to get to the bottom of where you are coming from.

I'll get through them briefly then. You must have heard that the LSE is considering disaffiliation from the NUS. What do you think if we were to go ahead with that?

The LSE has an important part to play in the student movement and that means it should remain central to the work and campaigns of the student movement.

How would you address criticism made by some that your leadership is "despotic". It is important in a positive sense that you address this if you wish people to re-elect you?

My leadership is not despotic. We've united the student movement around the importance of the general election and electoral registration. We've attempted to unite the movement around the issue of fees. Some aspects of the student movement have been reluctant to do that because they're reluctant to promote NUS policy until we change our maintenance policy. Our maintenance policy is not going to change. It's here to stay.

Where do you see the NUS taking its policy in the next five years?

The next five years are a huge challenge. There will be huge concerns as to whether there will or will not be expansion targets; the Dearing Committee will make various recommendations. We need to keep discussing the issue of education funding and I look forward to doing that at NUS conference.

Did you submit evidence to Dearing?

We submitted evidence before Christmas and sent that out to SUs around the country. We've sent it recently to student newspapers and encouraged it to cover positively or otherwise.

We have, if you look at this week's *Beaver*. (which Douglas Trainer then does)

We've submitted to Sir Ron Dearing's enquiry and we carried out the largest ever consultation of the student movement. We held an event at ULU, Sir Ron Dearing came and spoke; we've had informal evidence to the Dearing Committee a few weeks ago and that was a huge success.



The Beaver

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Amir Absood, Narius Aga, Shaista Ahmed, Mark Antony, Sherrina Anuwar, Shama Aslam, David Bakstien, Mark Baltovic, Laure Beaufils, Faten Bizzari, Jonathan Black, Danielle Bourgeois, Miriam Chalabi, Yasmine Chinwalla, Chris Cooper, Jonathan Cooper, Dev Cropper, Dan Crowe, Kush D, Teresa Delaney, Amit Desai, Danny Fielding, Malte Gerhold, Deborah Goldemberg, Simon Green, Shabnum Hasan, Iain Haxton, Richard Hearnden, Katrin Hett, Nicola Hobday, Caroline Hooton, Helen Jamieson, Dana Johnson, Emma Justice, Chi Kaitano, Sonia Kalsi, Gerald Khoo, Nadezda Kinsky, Philip Lam, Claire Lawrie, Fredrik Ljone Holst, Tom Jeans, Kenneth Lo, Dan Madden, Baljit Mahal, Fran Malarée, Chris McAleely, James Mulligan, Mateo Paniker, Raj Paranandi, Sam Parham, Zaf Rashid, Ruthless Rich, Nick Robin, Chris Roe, Brice- Alban Roualec, Ben Selwyn, Zak Shaikh, Asim Shivji, Sunil Sodha, Silvia Santoro, Stéphane Sireau, Tom Smith, Graham Stevenson, Tom Stone, Chris Sutcliffe, Tragic Tallis, Jamie Tehrani, Peter Udeshi, Gulshan Verma, Joy Wangdi, Rima White, Matthew Wilkins.

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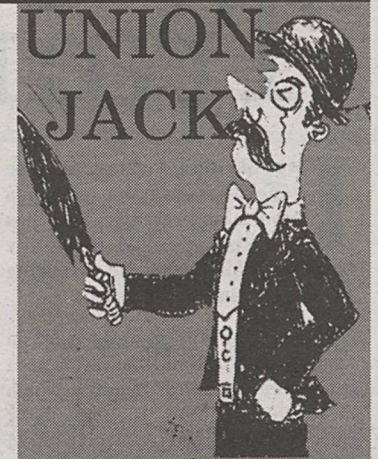
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Whatever Happened To...?

Interestingly enough, anti-racism week did not occur this time round. Perhaps this was the sixth time that it has been taking place, while I have been oblivious to the plethora of speakers and events that the LSE has been subjected to. Or perhaps, would I lose if I were to wager that Safe Sex Week never did occur, just as World Aids Day failed to materialise here, just as Anti-Racism Week has disappeared. Responses that the relevant sabbatical has been campaigning in the elections are entirely irrelevant. Answers that he has taken the days off merely serve to reveal the lack of regard certain union officers hold for their student 'electorate'. Pointing to other sabbatical officers serves no purpose whatsoever, particularly when many of their obligations have been fulfilled. Granted that they will not be seeking re-election at LSE and will thus not be subject to our opinions in such a direct way, they will be venturing into other areas of student politics: a scary thought. Failures to perform with regards to the simple and basic duties of their jobs are travesties and hold further implications for students themselves, who are financing the employment of such officers, who have consistently failed to perform.

The recent Student Union elections come at a propitious time. For the first time in SU history, we have an Overseas student as General Secretary, albeit his election with a razor-thin victory. For the first time ever in SU history since the advent of the welfare state, British students may be forced to pay for their higher education. And the LSE may be the first institution throughout the United Kingdom to implement this. I wish the newly elected sabbaticals luck in combating the advent of home fees and the rises in international students' fees. Yet the Student Union's officers must plan how exactly they will aid students if top-up fees are implemented. This comes part and parcel with the campaign opposing top-up fees: and SU officers, paid and unpaid, must discuss the possibility of the establishment of an 'aid' programme by the LSESU, in order to prevent an event where an academically qualified student cannot come to the LSE, because he or she cannot afford it.

LIZ CHONG



And it was promised to run over the remaining candidates for the non-Gen Sec positions. So, Jack predicts... Potts for Ed and Welfare ... Balfour for Treasurer ... Sperm boy for ... BUT! What is this? The results are in! And, once again Jack was right. So, you know the results. What is the analysis? The obvious change has been the failure of the Labour party to translate its high support into concrete results. Although both Jethwa and Sounhal came close to the main prize, neither was to be smoking the victory cigar. Overall, Jack suspects that their poor showing was not caused by their own campaigns but rather due to the inadequacy of their predecessors. Last year's Labour sabs (one lardy specimen in particular) have cultivated such a hardened reputation for inactivity and incompetence, that it becomes surprising that both Labour candidates did receive such high turnouts. For next year at least, independency is the way forward. Perhaps, if the New sabs gain a similar reputation, Labour could win big next time round. In politics, as in Sam Parham's stomach, it is undeniable that what goes 'round come 'round. We must finally hope that the 47 (count 'em) masochists who did vote for the Parham front must be feeling extremely foolish.

Overall, despite the failure to re-run 1789, LSE's very own Robespierre made a surprisingly good showing. Independent or no, French's straight talking was general well received in a campaign of cynicism and disillusion. Sadly, independency cannot hide the tinted blood of a true blue Vulcan from even the dumbest electorate: once a Tory, always a Tory. Philip Hampshire, ruining his campaign with serious promises, did manage to outpace the corpulent 'Mixed Grill'. His failure will be tempered by the knowledge that next year will offer a real chance for success.

For treasurer, Phillip Lenton nearly became the first candidate in history to be comprehensively trumped by a fruit dessert. Although running mate 'The Wrights Bar Mixed Grill' seemed weighed down by greasy sausage, the apple crumble romped into 3rd place, only just failing to usurp the tight-trousered Tory. So, obviously, Imogen wins by a mile. Not hard when both of your challengers are a tad half baked.

Otherwise, the form candidate seemed to win the day. Yuan Potts - nice posters, friendly fellow - received a backing for whatever it is he plans to do with the largely spastic ed and welfare position. More interesting was the close race for ents. Jasper, Carr Saunders block and all, still only just scraped past Adrian King's tasteful tiger skin pants. As with Phil Hampshire, perhaps next year LSE will be treated to the final coronation? As expected, SWSS failed dramatically. But, they don't believe in the ballot box anyway. Having claimed at hustings that SWSS was largely responsible for every major event in human history - "awright! Sliced bread? That was SWSS work mate!" - all candidates failed to win even a modicum of popular support. Better dead (in the water) than red: even better if you can be both.

So, what of the future? Will Yuan Potts begin to cultivate a tasty number in acrylic jumpers and take cups of Wrights coffee to the stage of the UGM? Will Narius decide that the best way to redistribute the student loans is to organise ineffectual conferences on the badness of Top-Up Fees? Will Imogen decide that LSE finances are so 'ticky-boo' as to only necessitate her arrival at five pm every afternoon? Perhaps we can only be sure that Jasper will manage to avoid catching the appalling facial fungi of his illustrious predecessor.

And the past? Dan Crowe was reported not to be happy at the lack of Labour. Parham was heard to repeatedly sing that Labour was coming home. Labour, due to its inability to run LSE rather than run for higher office, has been sent home. The party must realise that sabbatical positions are not a privilege and not a right. Parham was also heard to exclaim "if you vote for Shit, you will Get SHIT". Touché: as last week's racism week clearly demonstrated, this is perhaps the most telling epithet for the previous twelve months. Hopefully, and Jack hopes it with sincerity, this year could be different. On the new team (to quote a friend of the defeated 'independent' Mr French): "We have watched you, we have brought you up, you will not disappoint us". Best of luck, and don't let down those who have put their trust in you. Oh, and those campaign promises: you made them for a reason. Jack will be funny again next week - I promise.

WHAT'S ON

LSE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
presents

in honour of
International Women's
Day

LSE Professor of International Law
Christine Chinkin
speaking on
"Rape in Armed Conflict"
Wednesday, March 12

Presentation followed by sandwiches and
coffee and a film on Women's Rights

THE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY
presents

Mr Allan Britten
Vice-President of Mobil Oil
on the venture between
BT and Mobil Oil

Chaired by Pro-Director Leslie Hannah

Tuesday March 18
6.00 pm to 7.30 pm, A85
Reception Follows
All Welcome

THE LSE EUROPEAN
SOCIETY

presents

Francois Duchene
"Jean Monnet:
The Man, The Legend"

Biographer and
former Personal
Assistant to Jean Monnet
Thursday, March 13
1.00 pm, A144

THE LSE CHRISTIAN
UNION

presents

Homosexuality:
The Christian
Perspective

Speaker:
Jeremy Marks
Thursday, March 13
6.00 pm, A144

REVISING FOR EXAMINATIONS

STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A SEMINAR
ON REVISING FOR EXAMINATIONS. THERE WILL BE
ADVICE OFFERED ON PREPARING AND PLANNING
FOR REVISION, TIPS ON EFFECTIVE REVISION
TECHNIQUES AND SO ON. ALL STUDENTS ARE
WELCOME.

THE SEMINAR WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 19 AT 2.15 PM, IN ROOM A42.

are you beautiful or interested in fashion and lifestyle?
then we want you!
calling all beautiful, gorgeous, stunning, funky lse men
and women...

the beaver needs lse models for our new up and coming
fashion pages. anyone and everyone can apply.
the beaver also needs writers interested in fashion, lifestyle
or health issues.

we would also like to speak to anyone interested in
working for our fashion pages as a stylist, hair or make-up
person. if you are interested, please contact liz chong at *the
beaver* office (opposite the underground) or call on 0171 955
6705.

Council Tax Exemptions for Overseas Student Couples

If you are a non-EU full-time student living with your husband or wife here in
London, you will probably be exempt from paying council tax.

Many students in this situation are being wrongly billed for Council Tax by their
Local Authority Council Tax department. Some departments are unfamiliar with the
current legislation which came into effect in April 1995

and we have successfully recovered overpaid Council Tax for a number of
students.

If you would like more advice, please come to the Welfare and Housing Office in
room E297. We are open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from
10.30 to 4.00 pm.

ELECTIONS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH

Dev Cropper
Communications Officer

So, elections have come and gone again. And, once again, the overwhelming sentiment of the electorate was apathy. Students at the LSE just do not see the point of voting in SU elections when, in their eyes, they are irrelevant.

This is apathy, certainly. But it is not the apathy of the 15-24 age group trumpeted by every newspaper, every political party. Certainly there is a relationship between the low turnouts at national elections in Britain and many other countries and that at the LSE; however, the two are not identical.

Political apathy at the national level is the result of a loss of faith in the democratic systems which seem to deliver virtually no real change to those who would vote for it. The services the national state provides, in Britain or any other country, are monolithic. Even a government with the will to change them in any real respect would have to deal with the institutional inertia of huge and long-established structures.

By contrast, the services the LSE Students' Union provides are simple, and on a small scale. There is nothing monolithic about the Veggie Cafe, or the Hardship Fund, or the Tuns. It should be well within the scope of an elected Union leadership to effect real changes, even if they are always limited by a single year in office.

The apathy of LSE students does not stem from the same sources as wider political apathy, but it is related. Change is by no means impossible, not even unrealistic. The problem is that we have seen no real indications of change for so long.

No one could reasonably say that the LSESU has been innovative in its service provision. I challenge anyone to argue that the Union has consistently looked out for real student wants, and fulfilled them. The story, as most students will realise, is rather one of drift from year to year, with sabbaticals coming and going and having neither time nor mandate to achieve anything.

The reason for the apathy towards the Union election is the belief that no candidates, if elected, will really change the services the Union provides to its members. This is not institutionally justified. Rather, it rests on the bitter experience of students who have been here for more than a year, and the low expectations of more junior students.

On whom can we blame the low turnout at these elections - around 25% - except past generations of sabbaticals? Who has really grasped the nettle, and made the governance of the Union important to LSE students' lives?

It is not, as many assume, that the Union is necessarily no more than a bargaining collective which provides cheap beer and vegetarian food. The LSESU is in fact the expression of a vital political and moral idea: the idea of solidarity and collective action.

Grand words for something most students dismiss. But the Union is important, *does* provide vital services, and *can* be made into something its members see as integral to their lives.

If we dismiss it as a shambolic crock we are admitting our inability to organise on a collective level. We are admitting, in effect, that we are unable to move effectively towards even a base level of integrated communal action.

The Union is important. But many students do not realise this because the services it provides are taken for granted, and because taking them for granted is accepted by so many Union officers.

The entertainments, week in and week out. The welfare services like the

institution.

None of this, of course, need be so. None of this would even be particularly difficult to rectify. All we need is a strong group of Executive Officers committed to real improvement.

We must try to achieve this. Elections may have come and gone, but voting is not the only means of communication with elected representatives. The job of Communications Officer is usually seen as getting the Union's message across to its members. But facilitating

overwhelming majority of its members.

This is the case now. The cost can be measured in the low profile of Union services, and the corresponding lack of use and low level of consumer reflexivity. The cost can also be measured in the disillusion with collective student action that seems a widespread phenomenon within the LSE.

The National Union of Students (NUS) has featured often on this page in the past two terms. It has been portrayed, rightly in my opinion, as an

Equally, the LSESU could disintegrate and individual students could take their own chances in the marketplace for services and support. The two are inextricably linked.

NUS remains an important organisation. Individual student unions will achieve very little, if anything, atomised and squabbling for attention. They will be unable to present a coherent, cohesive approach to student issues. We must, if we disagree with NUS, learn to accept its necessity and work to change it from within.



But will they tell their Union what they want? And will they get it?

Photo: Library

hardship fund. The facilities accepted as part of the furniture like the Three Tuns. The co-ordination and success of events like the Global Festival. The *Beaver*. All are made possible by the Students' Union. We need to start recognising the part so many of these things play in our lives, and recognising that we need to care about them if we expect them to fulfil our expectations.

LSE students suffer from this problem of taking things for granted, and so do LSESU officers. The apathy of students, as witnessed by these elections, is a corollary of the general apathy of Union officers to the services and events within their remit. Certainly there are exceptions, but these only serve to prove the rule. Far too many of the officers elected in exercises such as the one we have just gone through are content to leave things pretty much as they find them and concentrate on patching up such problems as thrust themselves forward too far to be ignored.

This is not *good* enough. It results in a Union which is stagnant in the face of changing demands on it, in the face of fundamental problems. It results in a Union which slouches on from year to year without ever taking a real step forward. It results in a Union which cedes the confidence of its members by becoming no more than a deadwood

input from students is just as important a role, perhaps in the final analysis a more important one.

The new, and the old, Union officers have to be given an idea of what the people they represent want. Only this can turn the vague, 'political' promises of their election manifestos and leaflets into real action. They need to know what is really being demanded. They need to know that there is some point to being active, rather than passive, in their new job.

The main problem, perhaps, is that of a self-perpetuating cycle. We, as students and Union members, tend to be apathetic and pessimistic about the LSESU. Because of this, we fail to put pressure on officers to deliver changes and improvements. The lack of these improvements, of course, confirms us in our belief that there is no point in airing our demands.

All elected Union representatives are responsible for helping to break this cycle; their responsibility must increase with the importance of their job. Union Officers need not only to be accessible - they need to be actively canvassing public opinion. The election campaign has seen, as always, elaborate ideas and promises. The victors must deliver on these, and more besides. If they do not, the Students' Union will continue to be a joke, or an irrelevance, to the

autocratic, perhaps hegemonic organisation with little empathy and communication with its grassroots. The election even saw a candidate running on a NUS disaffiliation ticket. The LSESU's current General Secretary has also suggested that leaving the national student organisation might be a worthwhile idea.

The implications of this are profound. Students are so disillusioned with student organisation as to take seriously the idea of leaving the organisation which represents, or attempts to represent, all students in the UK. The idea does not as yet have real support - but it is in the mainstream of ideas within our Union.

The fact that disaffiliation has come onto the agenda gives another angle on the whole question of disillusionment with student collective organisation. There is nothing new in representative bodies failing to act in accordance with the views of their grassroots' members. There is nothing new in savage battles within the NUS. But the usual response to these problems would be, should be, to work from within to change the position of the national body.

The LSE could opt out of NUS and go its own road, with whatever policies LSE students choose paramount.

Disaffiliationist approaches are confounded by their own logic, and doomed to failure. Our Students' Union also remains essential. It does provide services that play an important part in most students' lives. The problems are of communication and dynamism.

Solving these problems will solve the problem of dissatisfaction with NUS. *Antipathy* towards collective organisation, *apathy* to the recent elections - both can be overcome. A strong, a committed, a dynamic Union leadership, and they will be.

CONGRATULATIONS

to the winners at time of press

General Secretary - Narius Aga

Treasurer - Imogen Bathurst

Education & Welfare - Yuan Potts

Entertainments - Jasper Ward

Overseas & EU Officer - Matthias Mennel

We hope to print post-election statements from the four sabbatical winners in next week's *Beaver*. Further election results are available at SU Reception.

Letters to the Editor

The Baby's or Woman's right to choose?

Dear Beaver,

I am writing in agreement with Liz Chong that a woman has a right to choose how she lives her life and that the right to choice of everybody in society must be respected (A woman's right to chose IS a Fundamental Human Right, *The Beaver* 457). As a result, we cannot dismiss the argument that a foetus is a life as this affects the foetus'

rights in the case of an unwanted pregnancy. Of the forty-seven cycles of cell division that occur between fertilisation and adulthood, forty-two happen before birth. Eye, skin and hair colour of a human are determined at conception and the heart begins to beat at 21-25 days. At 7 weeks the child has his/her own finger prints and at 8 weeks the stomach produces digestive juices, the kidneys have begun to function and

there is hand-face contact. At 12 weeks the child can open or close the lips, wrinkle the forehead, raise the eyebrows and turn the head. From 16 weeks the baby is sensitive to light and at 20 weeks, hair, eyebrows and nails are growing. At 24 weeks, if the baby were born and given the proper care, he/she would survive.

The current scientific understanding is that 6 weeks after conception the elements of the nervous system start to function and it is from this stage onwards that there is a possibility that the child feels pain.

The Abortion Act of 1967 as amended in 1990 sets a limit of 24 weeks for abortion, however in certain circumstances, abortion can be allowed

up to birth. In 1995, 88% of abortions took place at under 12 weeks gestation. However, 3,675 were performed after 18 weeks, of which 73 were carried out at 25 weeks or more. Since 1967 0.003% of abortions were performed to "save the life of the pregnant woman".

Abortion is not a solution because it denies the right of an individual. The foetus is a life and so a right to choice has to be granted the unborn child as well as the mother. Forcing our own personal choices on an unborn child would be an invasion of his/her sovereignty and cannot be condoned in an advanced liberal society.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Batty

Naming the Problem

Dear Beaver,

I attended the Union meeting on Thursday February 13 1997 at the Old Theatre and found that I was in agreement with the suggestion from Prof.A.Giddens, the LSE Director. *The Beaver* should change its name. The name *Beaver* conjures up an image in my mind of an endearingly resourceful creature, hunted to extinction to adorn the corruptible bodies of the privileged few. *The Beaver* is a source of informative and amusing articles, but contents apart, it gives the impression of being a rag. A change of name could be the route to re-vamp a worthy brand name.

Point Direct is my suggestion for a name. It should be glossy with some colour. Why no advantage is taken to exploit the advertising advantages of a circular read by a large number of people with disposable funds to be consumed on costly academic support is beyond me. Maybe I am missing something here. The potential to attract advertisers from the hardware and software retailers, and also suppliers of mobile phones and accessories, who are in close proximity to the school, is enormous and should be researched

I am sure that the opportunity to raise more revenue would be beneficial to a radical periodical that gives news and views about issues. The issues must be of concern, not only to self interested groups within the School but should also address some of the problems facing our society today. It should be a newspaper that not only offers dissent but solutions.

A democratic response to the suggestion from Professor Giddens would revitalise the newspaper. Hope you get the point and and make good use of the academic wealth of human resources here at the School.

Yours,
M.D.Constance

"What's Wrong with The Beaver? - The Bankside Story"

Dear Beaver,

I wish to complain about the quality of the article written on the theft at Bankside. (*The Beaver* 459). It would seem that tabloid journalism is rewarded by front page cover in your newspaper, that the facts are pushed aside for the sake of impact and that unsolicited innuendo and one person's account is deemed a sufficient basis on which to publish.

As my memorandum to *The Beaver* explained - some cash and cheques were stolen during a banking reconciliation. Stolen, not "lost", not "disappeared", not "gone missing". All the cheques were successfully cancelled but the £1200 cash as yet has not been recovered. The Hall will bear this loss, not individual students within it. The detail of the case is currently "sub-judice" and it is totally irresponsible to publish a premature article of this kind.

No doubt the individuals identified in the article may well seek their own redress against the writer for unsolicited defamation. The security guard is not directly employed by the school but by a contract company and thus cannot be "dismissed" by us. He is one of a number of guards who operated at Bankside. Pending investigation into the event, he has been reassigned. Investigations are still under way of all persons in the vicinity at the time of the theft and of other aspects.

I provided a statement, supported by the Warden, which I would have hoped might satisfy enquiries at the time, especially as the matter was and is being investigated both by the police and by the school. It would have been totally improper for any other type of information to be given by me. I would not wish to prejudice any findings or consequences thereof. I would suggest that the writer of this article has stepped

over all considerations of discretion and respect for the individuals concerned.

The staff in all the residences are an invaluable resource and have worked hard to make the stay of generations of students comfortable. The staff at Bankside deserve better than this article. There will be errors and lapses at times as we are all human but when these occur, we need professional investigation and judgements and not this version, which is demoralising and divisive and not appropriate for any publication of the LSE. More articles in *The Beaver* offering unreserved praise for any aspect of the halls and residences would be most welcome.

Yours sincerely,

David Segal,
Assistant Secretary,
LSE.

TUESDAY MARCH 11 <i>Launching of Children's Awareness Week by Professor Anthony Giddens, LSE Director at the Old Theatre, 1.00 pm</i> <i>Food Fair 1.30 pm, Quad</i> Great home-cooked Malaysian food at special prices	WEDNESDAY MARCH 12 <i>Busking on Houghton Street Part One 1.00 pm</i> <i>Movie Fest: X-Files - Tunguska (Most Recent Episode) Reservoir Dogs New Theatre, 2.00 pm</i>	THURSDAY MARCH 13 <i>Craft Fair on Houghton Street 11.00 pm</i> <i>Theatre: Reduced Shakespeare Company Special Reduced Ticket Prices 7.00 pm</i>	FRIDAY MARCH 14 <i>Craft Fair 11.00 am, Houghton Street</i> <i>Busking on Houghton Street Part Two 1.00 pm</i> MONDAY MARCH 17 <i>Charity Bash at VOGUE Discotheque Cheap £5 Tickets Cheap Drinks: £1 All Night</i>	TUESDAY MARCH 18 <i>Theatre: Martin Guerre Special Reduced Ticket Prices 7.00 pm</i> WEDNESDAY MARCH 19 <i>Slave Auction 2.00 pm, A42</i>
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Help the Malaysian Society reach their aim of raising £3'000 for Children's Aid Direct

CHILDREN'S AWARENESS WEEK March 11 to 19

why lse students should support children's awareness week: arul kandasamy writes

Many might question the reason behind Children's Awareness Week. Are we really trying to create awareness or are we just raising funds for charity? Who needs to be told anyway? We all know that there are children suffering. We all know that we can do something about it, IF we WANTED to. So, why don't we do anything or bother?

Everyone claims to think about and know about the suffering going around us. They also claim that they would like to help out, and then proceed to donate whatever coins they have in their pockets. But, is that what charity is all about? Charity can take many forms and we should not be confined to thinking that the only way we can help out is by giving money to charities. What we hope to do, through the organisation of fun activities, musical performances, food fairs and theatre trips, is to raise money for Children's Aid Direct (our target is £3'000) while at the same time letting LSE students know that there are numerous ways in which you can contribute to charity. Have you ever thought of spending an hour a week volunteering at a children's hospital or at an old people's home? Did you know that OXFAM,

The LSE Modern Dance Society Show this year promises some explicit self expression. The program carries a diversity of classical and contemporary dance, sprinkled with aggressive street moves and soul searching ballet. The 1,380 kilos of muscle which make up the dance society provide the engine for a pumping hour at the Old Theatre, 7.30 pm on Thursday March 13 and Friday March 14. Tickets are £3 (£2 members) and are available from Houghton Street this week and on the door.



As part of our series on issues excluded from mainstream political debate:

The Politics of Aid

Simon Retallack, Politics Editor, interviews the Minister of State for Overseas Development, Baroness Chalker, and her Labour Shadow, Clare Short.

Contrary to expectations, Lynda Chalker and Clare Short have much in common. They are both self-assured, forceful women ploughing increasingly lonely furrows on the left of their respective political parties. They now share the same portfolio, Chalker becoming Overseas Development Minister in 1989 and Short appointed to shadow her, in what was seen as a demotion, in the autumn of last year, a job she says she much enjoys and given the choice would have opted for, although admitting, "It was just the way I came to it was not particularly pleasant." Chalker is no stranger to setbacks either, suffering the displeasure of the voters in 1992 when she lost her seat in the Commons. Now in the Lords, what she seems set to lose is her job, which Clare Short quietly expects will soon be hers.

The task of a Minister for Overseas Development is, in principle, to provide aid, in the words of Lynda Chalker, "to help countries to stand on their own two feet." For Clare Short, the use of aid in this way should be "a transitional arrangement that assists, alongside other policy instruments, the poorest countries of the world to develop in the mutual interest of everybody in the world." The problem is, as Clare Short points out, "we haven't seen much of that for a very long time."

According to Timothy Raison, Minister for Overseas Development until 1986, the aid budget is seen "as simply a big pot of money to be used for buying business and impressing foreign rulers." Chalker denies this, at least as far as the past ten years are concerned, but the facts speak for themselves. Aid is still clearly being used as an export subsidy for British companies, with up to seventy per cent of British aid tied to the purchase of British goods. Chalker tries to justify this by arguing that British goods and services are being bought "because of winning, being the best in the field." But no adequate justification can be made for a system which forces the poorest countries in the world to buy western manufactured goods which they rarely need with money better used to relieve real poverty, and which undermines their indigenous industry and culture (although curiously, both Chalker and Short doggedly insist that coca-cola-isation represents no threat to traditional identities). Clare Short objects to the tying of aid on the grounds that "it leads to gross inefficiency." However, she is only committed to reviewing the policy, presumably so that no reforms which would antagonise the business community are announced before the election.

What both Short and Chalker do rule out (because it is illegal) is the use of aid as a sweetener for armament purchases. However, it is alleged that aid money is being used for precisely that purpose. Lynda Chalker denies this, continuing to insist that even the Pergau Dam "was not tied to arms." Sadly, it is not an isolated case. Indonesia, the fifth biggest recipient of British aid, which as Clare Short points out, "is a little surprising given its state of economic development and history," also happens to be the fourth largest purchaser of British arms. Two projects in particular, to train the Indonesia police and to re-equip and re-build radio stations, it is alleged, are linked

to arms contracts. Once again, Lynda Chalker refuses to accept that there is a link, arguing, "The Indonesian police project was done on its merits, of trying to teach the Indonesia police to have better respect for human rights and the rule of law." This is rather ironic given that the only lesson the Indonesian Government will learn from receiving British aid and arms (including fighter jets and water cannon - of which the latter can only be for use against the native population) is that they may grossly abuse human rights, as in East Timor, and get away with it. The possibility of a linkage between aid and arms in Indonesia is currently under investigation, but can we rest assured that such a policy would never be permitted under a Labour government? "I will do my

production of food.

An even more scandalous way in which Britain, and America in particular, are seriously exacerbating world hunger in the long term, is by dumping cheap food in developing countries' markets, (agreeing only to reduce the quantity they dump by twenty per cent by the year 2000), and by 'liberalising' world trade in food. Southern producers are being thrown into unequal competition with the heavily subsidised, capital-intensive agricultural systems of the North. As a consequence, local agriculture in the poorest countries of the world is being destroyed, with millions of livelihoods being lost as a result, completely contradicting Lady Chalker's claim that she is "helping countries to stand on their own two feet." Chalker admits

being destroyed and child labour being exploited, Lady Chalker believes the best approach is "to educate countries out of it." Clare Short, on the other hand, believes in taking action now. "The monsters are getting away with it all and it's time that we stopped them," she says. She points out that "the WTO was built by national governments and it can be reformed by national governments." However, she believes politicians cannot be relied upon to carry out reforms on their own without "movements of people demanding regulation of the rules of trade" from below. The problem, Short fears, is that "people are so bemused by globalisation they all think they can't do anything about it." That is why she believes the task of clarifying our capacity to act is so urgent.

market forces at any price", which "have done untold harm." She believes that the World Bank can be reformed, in partnership with other governments, but is less optimistic about the IMF. "There are some massive battles to be fought there," she says. "That's going to be more difficult." The ravages are set to continue.

At the end of the day then, has aid done more harm than good? Clare Short fears this may be true. Aid, she says, is too often used to "let the world off the hook about the biggest instruments that are malfunctioning, like trade and debt." Whilst massive capital is exported out of developing countries, their people and resources exploited by our corporations for all their worth, "you can pretend to care," says Short, "by dolloping out shrinking pots of charity and then it seems as though you are not quite as cruel as you really are." It's like the old argument about charity, she argues. "Do you give charity as a substitute for social reform, or as an instrument of social reform?" She fears aid is used for the former, and that is why she says, "I almost feel like calling for the abolition of aid."

Others argue we should stop giving aid because it fails to increase developing countries' growth rates. But should that be the purpose of aid? Is it possible and indeed desirable for the poorest countries in the world to achieve economic growth and development along the lines and to the extent that we have? Both Lynda Chalker and Clare Short agree that it is not. As Short says, "If the poorest countries in the world develop in the way that we did, the environmental catastrophe will smash human life as we know it on this planet to smithereens." So what is development all about? If, as Lynda Chalker admits, "there are finite limits" to growth, in terms of resources available and the extent to which the planet can absorb our waste products and emissions, can there be such a thing as sustainable development, is it not surely a contradiction in terms? Both Chalker and Short continue to insist it is not. For Clare Short at least, the only way forward is "to share out what we have got fairly equitably," to ensure that "everybody's material needs can be dealt with," and at the same time, "agree to be intelligent about pollution." Then, she says, "economic growth ceases to be the point of human progress," and we can concentrate on the important questions: "how creative are you, how moved are you by the beauty of nature and music." This, she believes is "the next phase of human history." There is only one problem: "the chances of achieving that, short of incredible catastrophe, are politically very unlikely." The only way in which it might possibly be done is by persuading the people of the West to "have less celebration of greed and consumption," and to understand the inequities of a system which "impoverishes and marginalises a fifth of humanity." But it won't be easy. Short genuinely believes it has to be done though, and stresses, "it is a revolution, you understand?" I ask her if her leader is behind this revolution. "As you know," she replies, "politics in Britain at the moment has to think at a rather low level, so questions like this are not on the political agenda." Until they are however, we will continue to fail the poor of the world.



Baroness Chalker and Clare Short

Photos: Press Office

damnest", says Clare Short, "but I won't be all the forces at work in a Labour government." She repeats a theme she comes back to regularly during the interview, "You don't just need good governments, you need them surrounded by pressures that make them do good things."

One of the great arguments in favour of providing overseas aid is that it helps prevent malnutrition among the poorest countries in the world. However, the methods by which this has been attempted have in many ways proved counter-productive. Aid, for example, has been used to promote intensive agriculture in order, in theory, to increase production of food (whilst also helpfully enabling agro-chemical companies to sell their high input products). The problem, however, with intensive agriculture is that it involves the use of expensive, water-hungry strains, artificial fertilisers and pesticides, which soon exhaust the land, leading to soil erosion. It also involves the employment of far less people than traditional agriculture, resulting in huge numbers of peasants ending up in the slums of choking cities without work. Lynda Chalker, however, does not see the need to discourage the use of artificial inputs, just their "over-use." Clare Short, as a good socialist, points out that "the commitment to sustainability should be everywhere, not something that we impose on the poorest and least developed in the world." The implications of this should be the promotion of traditional organic agriculture throughout the world. That would really ensure the secure

that "there has been some" dumping of food, but seems as unconcerned as she is about the impact of the liberalisation of trade. Clare Short, on the other hand, cannot withhold her anger. "This is outrageous!" she says. "Here we are saying to the poorest countries of the world 'you have got to open up your markets to western goods, and by the way we will think about phasing out the dumping of our agriculture.'"

It comes as no surprise to Clare Short that these developments are occurring under the tutelage of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). "I think the WTO is a big con," she says. "It is supposed to be a rule-bound system with fair trade, but in reality it is the biggest bullies in the world getting their own way about everything, and behaving even more badly than they used to in the past." It is under the rules of the WTO that Multi-National Corporations are shifting production to developing countries in order literally to exploit very cheap labour and lax social and environmental protection laws, causing human misery and environmental degradation. The WTO is also being used, as Short points out, as a mechanism to "use the poor of the world to drag down standards for everyone else." She believes that unless "we get some kind of democratic grip on it," the potential effects of the WTO "are massively destructive."

Lynda Chalker, in line with her Party's almost religious belief in free trade, refuses to contemplate even the introduction of social and environmental clauses in GATT or control MNCs. If environments are

Like the world trading system, the world's financial system has long been operating against the interests of the poorest people in the world. National and World Bank aid consisting of loans, often for unviable schemes and the bank accounts of corrupt westernised elites, has placed countless developing countries in terrible debt. Lynda Chalker states that her government has helped relieve the situation by getting the world to write-off up to two-thirds of the interest. Clare Short hopes a Labour Government will "go faster and harder at it." The debt itself, however, will remain, with all the consequences that this involves. One such consequence is that it forces debtor countries to earn foreign exchange, which they do by converting their best land to the production of export crops. This results in a lack of food for domestic consumption and hence malnutrition. Debt also forces countries to carry out IMF structural adjustment programmes which often involve cutting worthwhile services such as education and health programmes. Chalker recognises that the economists of the IMF "have a lot of power over countries if they are in debt," but is not critical of what the IMF is doing. Instead, she criticises developing countries for "the fact that they go on fighting, and that they have got mines in the ground," failing to appreciate that Britain has been one of the biggest sellers of arms and mines to developing countries for years. Clare Short, however, does regret the fact that "the IMF and the World Bank have been captured by the ideas of monetarism" and "an ugly belief in

Libertarianism - a political philosophy?

Chris Rouse on a very radical manifesto for the future

The present political system in this country is a mess. For too long we have been in the grip of politicians telling us how to live our lives. A new type of politics is needed - one which allows us to make our own decisions and take charge of our own lives fully. The creation of a libertarian society would in my opinion, help achieve this. Libertarianism places the individual very firmly at the centre of the political process, whilst also providing a radical way of looking at traditional issues.

Take taxation for example. What would be your response if you were walking down the street, wages in hand when you are suddenly accosted by someone demanding a share of your money, which will even be taken by force if necessary. I do not know about you, but I would call it theft. However this perfectly sums up the present day tax system in this country.

There is of course a huge difference. The state is even more dishonest than the common criminal. It claims for example that extracting your money is actually for your own good in that the government can provide services in return.

But these services are of poor quality. The only real way to improve things is not to increase taxes on the rich, as those poor deluded dinosaurs on the 'old' left often claim, but to actually abolish taxation altogether.

By allowing people to keep their own earnings, the government would also be allowing them more spending power. This would mean that the vast majority of the population would be able to pay for things that they required themselves.

Allowing increased competition to

provide for essential services would also lead to a decrease in prices, as companies would not want to go out of business due to excessively high costs. However the quality would have to remain high, otherwise no one would use them.

Abolishing taxation would mean that people would have higher disposable incomes, which would lead to a greater demand for goods and services. Greater demand of course means the need for more workers, which would reduce unemployment.

genuine need of help. Undoubtedly though there would remain a small proportion who would not be able to help themselves, such as the elderly, infirm and dependent.

When the only option is to watch the poor starving in the streets, it is my contention that individuals will choose to intervene to prevent their suffering. This does not come from some utopian view of human nature, but rather that individuals are generally rational beings acting in their own self interests. Is it really in our self interest to have to step

when we pass beggars in the street. But this is an entirely different matter. How many times have you heard people say, "well I would help, but it is the government's job isn't it?" If it was not the government's job, then I believe that things would be very different.

Great Britain is an extremely charitable nation. This is despite the present taxation system. Surely, without taxation we would therefore have even more money to give away. All of this would mean abolishing taxation, and with it the welfare state would increase the sense of morality in society, as individuals would be made to take responsibility for themselves. Then they would learn to look after others as well through necessity.

Libertarianism is however much more than a mere set of economic arguments - it is a whole moral philosophy based on the premise that individuals should be allowed to live their lives how they choose to, completely free from any kind of state intervention. This is provided, of course, that they do not harm anyone else.

This also means that the state has no right whatsoever to criminalise such things as drugs. If people are stupid enough to inflict irreparable damage to themselves, then it is up to them. They should not however expect to receive any kind of medical treatment when they become ill. The National Health Service should therefore become privatised to ensure that individuals are made to complete responsibility for their own actions. Those who can not do so would be provided for by charities.

As Charles Murray states, 'An

adult should be permitted to engage in any kind of activity of his choice in private. This freedom includes being able to read, watch, say, listen to, eat, inject or smoke.' Anyone who cannot accept that it is little more than an authoritarian. We all know what happens when the state controls things, one only needs to look at Nazi

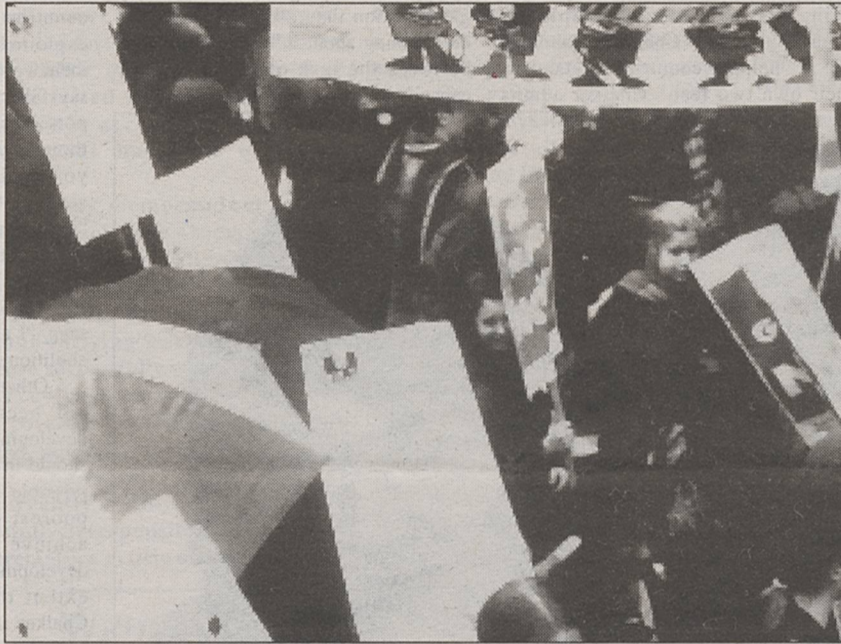
"The major fault with society today, is that it is largely populated by mediocre people trying to impose their own stupidity onto the rest of us..."

Germany.

This was not because of some random evil occurrence, but because of a political ideology, ie Fascism, taken to its natural logical conclusion. As Hayek believed, the only thing that state control leads to is serfdom. Socialism is after all according to David Starkey, 'the preferred political system of mediocre people who cannot succeed in an individualistic society.'

The major fault with our society today is that it is largely populated by mediocre people trying to impose their own stupidity onto the rest of us. We must never forget that the state is there because we put it there, the politicians are our servants. This means that we tell them what we want to do, not the other way around.

The government is there to represent and manage, not to impose its own dictatorial will. Unfortunately, none of the main political parties seem to understand this. This is why the general election does not present us with any real kind of alternative. Perhaps one day an alternative will exist. Then hopefully we will witness a change in society which can only be for the better.



Do not expect any special treatment

This would result in more people being able to take responsibility for themselves, leaving fewer individuals in

over disease-ridden bodies, every time we venture out? Of course some of you may claim that this happens every day,

A. Nonymous considers the merits and pitfalls of Economics at LSE

LSE Economics- Is It Any Good?

Getting into the LSE was always one of my dreams. I had heard a great deal about it, especially the prestige attached to it and the excitement of living in London. As September 1995 came I was filled with excitement, totally zealous and full of life, almost as soon as I stepped off the plane.

"many of the lecturers and researchers...do not really know how to teach..."

I had heard a lot about the Economics BSc. One of the main advantages was the fact that many famous academics and researchers often give public lectures here such as Robert Barro, last year.

The actual Economics course itself, does not require any background, so both Economics A and B were quite basic and gave the fundamental ideas of Economics. In my opinion I felt that Economics at A-Level should have been a pre-requisite for the course. My first year at LSE turned out to be quite Maths orientated, rather than Economics

orientated. I did Mathematical Methods, Statistics, Economics B and Sociology as an outside option. The Sociology course was especially heartening as I was able to read works by such classical theorists as Weber, Durkheim and Marx and to see the applications to present day life. I must say quite truthfully that I loved Nigel Dodd, my tutor and lecturer who was much better than any of my other lecturers, especially the Economics ones.

Despite the fact that I understood nothing about partial equilibrium analysis, spawning sets and basic multiple regression or money markets, (please note that none of the sociology topics are listed because I enjoyed them thoroughly), I managed to get through the first year exams. In retrospect I feel that the exams were just a farce as the questions were simply taken from the tutorials, often word for word. Most of us were given exact solutions which were rigorously memorized. The same applies for the Maths, Statistics and Sociology. The questions were so predictable that some of my friends and I were exactly able to predict the nature of some of the questions.

In my second year I am doing

Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Principles of Econometrics, which was not a good move and Introduction to Accounting and Finance, which was a good move. This year I feel that my economics is very interesting, especially the oft-quoted readings. Though some of the Microeconomics is repeated from last year, it is still interesting, rigorous and mathematical. Once again as we draw near the Easter break, with exams lurking just around the corner, I wonder if the exams will be just like last year's and if the questions can be predicted to the same degree.

To a certain extent the LSE's reputation did not meet up to my expectations as many of the lecturers and researchers, despite being Nobel Laureate nominees do not know how to teach. Having done my first year I felt unable to draw any economic conclusions on my own. Hopefully after the second year, the grey areas will clear up. As one of my teacher's said, "when you leave the LSE one hopes you have the capacity to make some good economic comments and statements. That is what we aim for you". That is certainly what I aim for myself, I hope the LSE helps me to achieve it.

Anthropology -the truth

Ruth Smith on the existence of an exciting degree at LSE

Yes, LSE does offer more than economics and accounting and finance. Hidden on the 6th floor of the Old Building is the Anthropology department. The home of white bearded professors in sandals discussing the sexual life of savages. Can this really be a degree?! What is anthropology anyway? (A surprising number of people don't seem to know beyond the usual stereotypes.) In essence social anthropology is the study of different societies - from hunter-gatherers in Africa to factory workers in Bradford.

Anthropology looks at everything in the society, kinship, religion, political, legal and economic institutions and much much more. This is all put into a theoretical framework as we struggle (it's hard work with a never ending flood of reading and essays) to make sense of apparently bizarre practices and understand why people think and behave in the way they do. It is an extremely interesting degree and challenges everything you say and do. In a world where there is so much

prejudice and conflict it is also very relevant. Human rights and development projects are just a few of its many applications that interest me.

The department itself is small and friendly. The lecturers are helpful and accessible. They don't all have white beards although one claims to be deaf from shooting too many elephants all those years ago. The course is taught with the usual lectures and we have tutorials and a series of ethnographic films as well. We also have to write assessment essays in the holidays.

My friends did not appear to have many criticisms about the department and degree. Apart from the fact that there was too much reading and that the secretaries could be more amenable everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves although with exams looming this may change. Anthropology so far has been what I feel a degree should be - intellectually stimulating but interesting as well. In between the stress of essay deadlines it is proving to be an enriching and enjoyable experience.

Side Stepping the Jack Boot

Following the recent National Front victory in Southern France, Ben Selwyn looks at the threat of fascism in Europe and how it might be countered

The 1990s have seen a growth of fascist organisations across Europe. This trend was graphically illustrated recently when the French National Front under the leadership of Jean-Marie Le Pen won control of its fourth town, that of Vitrolles near Marseilles. In national elections the National Front poll between 10 and 15 per cent of the vote.

In 1994 the Movimento Sociale Italiano, Italy's main fascist organisation, won a seat in the cabinet, the first time since the end of the War that a fascist has sat in active government. Most recently Joerg Haider's Austrian Freedom Party won 27 per cent of the vote, coming second after the Socialist Party. The British National Party plan to stand fifty candidates at the forthcoming General Election, thus getting free advertising on the television.

What all of these parties have in common is a programme of systematic racial hatred. Le Pen regularly uses the slogan 'four million immigrants, four million unemployed'. He also infamously commented that the Holocaust was a 'mere detail of history'.

Additionally, these organisations are totally hostile to working class organisations such as trade unions, and believe that they, as well as all other structures and organisations in what is called civil society, should be torn down.

Fascist organisations have their ideological roots in the fascist and Nazi movements of the interwar period. Those twenty years or so were a period of immense unemployment and of great levels of class conflict. Furthermore they were characterised by a general sense of inadequacy with the established democratic process. The rise of fascist organisations today has also corresponded with growing



Is 'Never Again' enough?

Photo: Library

disillusionment and unemployment. The level of class conflict in Europe has also risen, with last year experiencing the highest levels since the interwar period. Nevertheless, there are several reasons why fascist parties cannot hope to emulate their predecessors at the moment.

First, the fascists and Nazis of the interwar period did not so much take power through revolution as by invitation and the consent of the capitalist class. They were accepted

because they presented a solution to the massive economic and social crises of the time. Today, although the crises is spreading in length and breadth, the capitalist system is still resting on solid foundations. There is no need for the ruling class to hand over power to fascism.

Second, while the fascist parties may have a rising percentage of the vote, they need a hardened cadre of stormtroopers in order to tear down the structures of civil society. Hitler had

400,000 members of the SS when he first took power in 1933. Today's fascists cannot build up such a cadre because established politics still has sufficient pull to dissuade people from joining mass extra-parliamentary organisations.

However, there is a great danger that as the economic crisis continues, and the established political parties fail to deliver any meaningful reforms, people's frustrations may turn to despair and the dark forces of fascism.

This prognosis has been borne out by the growth of the National Front in France.

In 1981, following Francois Mitterand's victory a great wave of hope swept the country. The National Front won less than 1 per cent of the vote. But for fourteen years, instead of delivering reforms, Mitterand's Socialist Party presided over growing unemployment and austerity measures. This created the disillusionment that enabled the fascists to grow.

Finally the growing wave of class conflict represents the force that can destroy the fascists' popularity. The recent truckers' strike in France achieved more in twelve days than the Mitterand Government delivered in fourteen years. The nature of class conflict is antithetical to fascism as it brings together workers - be they black or white - in a show of strength and removes the divisiveness that fascism feeds off.

However, the established parties of the left - the socialists and communists - want to direct this anger towards parliamentary representation. This is dangerous because even if they win parliamentary majorities, when the economy is in stagnation they cannot deliver reforms. This results in increased disillusionment.

For fascism to be halted, it must firstly be confronted and dispersed, as the Anti-Nazi League in Britain has recently succeeded in doing. But secondly, and more fundamentally, it must be recognised that reforms can only be won through victorious class struggle - for example through strikes - something the trade unions and left-wing parties are reorientating themselves towards. Short of this, a new organisation must grow which can fill this vacuum. If such developments do not occur, the advance of the fascists will be made all the easier.

A Chittagong Hill Massacre

Over the last twenty years the Jumma tribal peoples have been subjected to violence by the Bangladeshi Government. Tasha Kosviner investigates...

To be seen from above the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), the traditional home of the Jumma tribes is a beautiful and mystical land, often shrouded in mist and emanating tribal simplicity.

But closer to the ground, there is a different story to tell. On April 10 1992 the Bangladeshi military and some of the 400,000 Bangladeshi settlers who have been relocated from the plains to the lands of the tribal people of the CHT, carried out a frenzied and brutal massacre that left over 1200 tribal people dead, burnt alive in their own homes.

Eye witnesses describe how the

"While they hacked tribal people to death, the army indiscriminately opened fire on those trying to escape."

village of Longang, where the killings took place, became a 'cremation ground' when inhabitants were locked in their homes before the military set fire to their houses.

Women, children and the elderly were the main victims of this brutal act.

Longang is a cluster village to which many of the Jummas have been relocated. It is designed to keep them under military surveillance and supposedly to protect them from guerilla attacks. It is hard to miss the paradox of these dual aims.

Nearly a year and a half later, on November 17 1993, a similar crime was perpetrated in the nearby village of Naniachar.

The military opened fire on 2000 unarmed students who were carrying out a peaceful demonstration to protest against the army check-point that guarded the main access to the village, a riverside passenger shed. Jummas arriving by boat from outside the village are routinely harassed by the guards and have consequently been made to feel like unwanted visitors in their own lands.

As the demonstration was ending, a boat of Bangladeshi settlers armed with iron rods, spears and knives arrived and were reportedly ordered by an army officer to attack the disbanding demonstrators. While they hacked

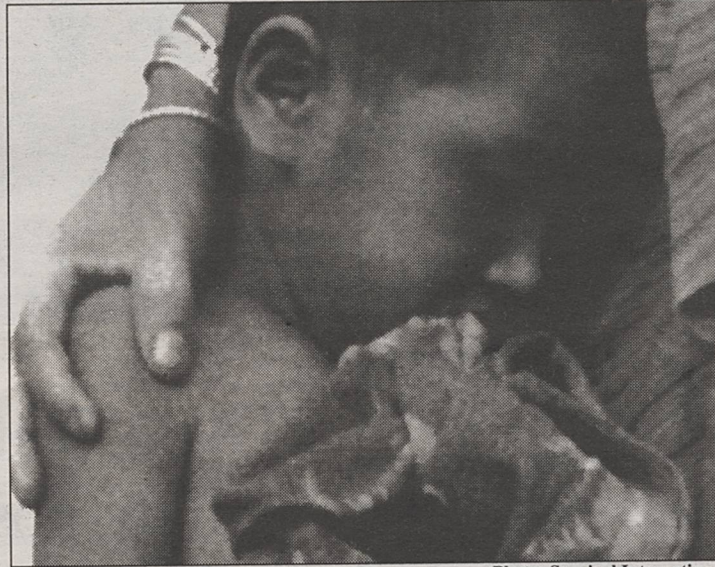


Photo: Survival International

the tribal people to death, the army indiscriminately opened fire on those trying to escape. As many as 100 people were killed and up to 500 more injured. That evening, a boat full of Jummas heard of the attack and requested that they be dropped off before Naniachar. But their pleas were ignored and they too were murdered when they reached their homes.

Although parliamentary democracy was restored to Bangladesh in 1991, the CHT remains heavily militarised and the policy of genocide which was instigated during the previous military regime, continues unabated. Since the late 1970s tens of thousands of Jummas have been killed and those that remain are being forced to adopt Bangladeshi

culture. The Jummas are being systematically destroyed as a people.

The Bangladeshi Government is in the process of holding talks with the Jummas to try and resolve the CHT situation. But the effort can be seen as little more than a smoke screen for the international community when they are held against the background of such indiscriminate butchery.

If you feel strongly about the plight of the hill people of the CHT, you can take action by writing to the Government of Bangladesh expressing your concern and calling for a halt to the militarisation of the CHT. Letters can be addressed to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Sugandha House, Prime Minister's Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh. You can also attend the pressure group Survival International's monthly vigils outside the Bangladeshi High Commission, held on the last Thursday of each month between 12 and 2pm. Until the Bangladeshi Government is made aware of the international outcry that this despicable situation is generating, the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts will continue to be faced with actual and cultural death at the hands of their new 'democracy'.

*I come from the people,
They need to adore me,
So Christian Dior me...*

So go the evocative words to an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, "So Christian Dior me". Synonymous with grace, elegance, style and luxury, 50 years of the haute couture of Christian Dior is celebrated with the opening of an exhibition at the Imperial War Museum, entitled, Forties Fashion and the New Look. Since his very first couture collection in 1947, Christian Dior and the fashion house that has lived on after his death, has become a household name that figures alongside the likes of Coco Chanel and Hubert Givenchy.

Dior arrived on the fashion scene with an explosion on 13th February 1947. As one fashion writer of the time wrote, Christian Dior was unknown on February 12th. On the thirteenth he was famous. Dior single-handedly changed the look of forties fashion overnight, with a style that came to be known as the new look, a phrase coined by the fashion journalist Carmel Snow for Harper's Bazaar, and which was soon adopted by the media worldwide.

After the war years of 'make-do and mend' fashion, when ankle-length skirts and voluminous hemlines were inconceivable and extravagant, Dior introduced fashion that brought the femininity back to women's clothes. He gave them rounded shoulders and nipped and tucked waists, exaggerated bodices and busts. He cast aside the square shouldered jackets and short straight skirts of army style uniforms. He seemed to rejoice in the beauty of the female form, and at the time his bold move was seen as a step away from the gloom of the post-war shortages, reconstruction and rations. He epitomised extravagance and elegance, and followers of fashion could just not get enough of it.

However, despite the initial success of the "new look", the house of Christian Dior has been beset by troubles. With factional in-fighting from the word go, and the early and untimely death of Christian Dior himself in 1957, the fashion house has failed to really capitalise on an initially extremely promising start. When Dior was alive, the company ran more-or-less smoothly, with each season producing a great new look, be it the A-line or the later straight cut H-line. But an early error by one of the business brains behind the haute couture label, lead to a downturn in the brand image, while everything from stockings to ties and sunglasses acquired the Dior franchise and label. A little part of the World of Dior came within the reach of every pocket, and the fashion itself, the raison d'être of the brand, lost some of its appeal. The very importance of haute couture itself is to maintain the elitist nature of high fashion and support other products in the range. The outrageous prices and the inestimable glamour of the world of high fashion produces an image of a style of living that we all long for, but few can afford. And it is not for a lack of highly respected and very newsworthy designers at Dior, such as Yves Saint Laurent, Gianfranco Ferré and most recently, John Galliano, that the fashion house has had trouble; indeed, it is quite probably these men that we must thank for the continuation of this icon of elegance, that sends a buzz through anyone who dreams of the very finest in fashion. Yet despite the glamour and fascination of the haute couture catwalk, and the constantly hopeful claims by designers and models that it is the exquisite extravagance of made-to-measure gowns that gives each fashion house its individual identity, the designs rarely get much further than the drawing board or the catwalk, regardless of Galliano's innovative ideas.

The haute couture itself has grown little since the early days, perhaps fulfilling Yves Saint Laurent's pronouncement of thirty years ago that couture is dead, (though it has most

Celebrating the Female Form: Forties Fashion and the New Look



Slide: Christian Dior

Hattie Sellick, Arts Editor, travels back to the immediate post-war years of Women's Fashion, courtesy of Christian Dior, Balenciaga, Norman Hartnell, Chanel, Hardy Amies and The Imperial War Museum.

certainly not died either), and for some time the House of Dior seemed unable to produce an successful ready-to-wear line - the real money spinner in the fashion world. Dior has not been helped by the fact that a number of its former holding companies have gone bust, and it has frequently changed hands. It seems now however, that its future is assured in the grip of the huge LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy) group that sells everything from leather luggage and champagne to cognac and scent.

The world of luxury goods is notoriously fickle and as fashions change and competitors such as Armani, Versace, Jil Sander and others have come into the ready-to-wear market, life at Dior has got tougher. But many say that this is where John Galliano steps in: an outrageous Englishman who has a reputation for wild and whacky designs, he is considered to be the new life blood of Dior, to drag it into the next century. There are undoubtedly parallels to be drawn between the iconoclastic nature of the designs of both Dior and Galliano: Dior revolutionised 40s fashion, and Galliano certainly provides a point of discussion for the future direction of couture. However, it is equally true that there could be no greater contrast than between Galliano's romantic-fantasy style of today, and Dior's original tailored collection of 1947, some of which is on show at the Imperial War Museum until 31st August.

The exhibition, Forties Fashion and the New Look, is beautifully designed with dark display cases dramatically spot-lit with minimal pin-point lights so that the atmosphere is very much like a black-out. There are examples of fashion from the war years such as handbags with integral gas mask compartments, dresses made from parachute-silk and hand-coloured silk scarves. The exhibition also shows detailed drawings of how to remain fashionable in your bomb-shelter and air-raid suit - ridiculous as this may seem nowadays in the age of utilitarian clothing and women in jeans, we must remember that fashion was of daily importance in the life of every young lady. The collection also includes some interesting costumes worn by icons of the time such as Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, Ginger Rogers and Margot Fonteyn, the work of major designers including Balmain, Balenciaga, Chanel, Norman Hartnell and Hardy Amies. Complimenting the fashion wear is an interesting collection of perfume bottles, a reminder of an increasingly crucial factor for fashion houses. For the financial health of a fashion company, and the funding for its haute couture line, is now largely dependent on the sales of its fragrances.

The overriding impression is one of high society and great glamour, and dresses that retain their appeal even now as masterpieces of workmanship, intricate embroidery and skillful tailoring. Forget Top Shop, Gap and Jigsaw, next stop Christian Dior for me please, Taxi! Sadly, most of us will only be window-shopping in Bond Street as we hurry on up towards Oxford Street and Marks and Spencer, but this exhibition can really set the ball rolling for many hours spent pleasantly dreaming of organza and silk ball-gowns, and bodices embroidered with gold thread and pearls - only when would we wear them if we could ever afford them? Perhaps it is not couture that is dead, but glamour that has passed away. The popular minimalism of Jil Sander and Armani, and the growth in sales of unisex perfumes highlights that fact that both women and men are moving towards a more androgynous expression of fashion, and if this is true then glamour is most certainly an old-fashioned word.

Forties Fashion and the New Look is showing until August 31 1997 at The Imperial War Museum.



On paper Blood and Wine is a great film. Any Hollywood producer of any worth would bet his next nose job against it. It has all the jey ingredients, big stars, hot bodies, an established and respected director. You take these ingredients and stir in some slick action sequences, cool as an eskimo sunbathing one liners and then garnish heavily with the foreign spice (not Mel C unfortunately), Michael Caine. After a good mix, the next step is to put this mash into something resembling a film. Unfortunately this job is not done well and the result is a rather turbid movie.

The story follows two aging criminals Jack Nicholson a purveyor of

fine wines, and Michael Caine a shoddy British crook suffering from cancer and soon to die for smoking all his life. Together they plot and steal a very expensive necklace. Along the way the sexy nanny gets involved and so does the son-in-law of Nicholson. Eventually they story comes down to a mad dash for the jewel after things go wrong when Jacks wife decides to beat him up after the robbery, because she thinks he is cheating on her. Ain't that just typical.

The plot moves along quick enough for us to look over the fact that Jack Nicholson is supposed to be a wine expert, when he blatantly knows as much about wine as Rab C Nesbit. But

that is not a major problem, or at least it not have been if it been compensated for in other departments like the action.

When Jack and Michael have to get down and dirty and beat the shit out of people things turn a little too funny. These two men once were the most menacing movie stars in their early days. Now they have become pastiches of themselves, which is not inherently bad because they are still meaner and more vindictive than Kevin Spacey (why does always play a budy) or Arnie combined. The problem comes when they need to fight. They are stiff and unsure. They are just plain too old to kick people in the face, no matter how much the almost angelic Stephen Dorff

deserved it. On the basis of the the action scenes alone the title of the film should have been changed to Grumpy Old Men, because that is what they are.

Now being old and stiff is not a problem. The arthritic movements could have been easily shot or edit in a way to make Caine and Nicolson seem in the prime of their youth. Just look at Sean Connery's films to see a geriatric action hero. So the blame of such farcical movements must lie at the bed of the director, Bod Raphaelson.

Of course such farcical movements are not the only reason why the movie does not work very well. The Stephen Dorff character falls in love with the house maid Jennifer Lopez. But there is absolutely no build up to or reason for his emotions. They happen and the rest of the movie hinges on it.

Overall the movie is vicious in the most unoriginal sense. It leaves behind all notions of maniacal brilliance that Caine and Nicholson have become known for and goes for garish and graphic violence. It is a real shame that the result is an all too common cop-out of anything interesting to something done before.

There is no real redeeming moral fibre throughout the movie. One does appear out of nowhere in the last three minutes and is so blatantly added on as an after thought that it just worsens the already diminished impact of the movie. Surprisingly, despite everything that would seemingly have prevented this, Michael Caine looks cooler than he has done since he got his hair cut in Educating Rita. His wanders across the screen chain smoking and hurling abuse. He truly is a hard man. See it if you're a Caine fan.

Ben Dover



All's fair in love and FLIRTING

Hal Hartley has got soul. His films Trust and Surviving Desire have wit and insight into aspects of human character. They have acquired cult status in America and the UK. Hal is chiefly interested in how humans love, and how that affects their actions. Although similar in content to the work of Cassavettes Hartley's execution is entirely different. Whereas Cassavettes main interests are his characters, Hartley's characters are secondary to exploring his the themes that interest him. In his films the characters are colder and less passionate than people in reality.

Flirt is in the same vein of most of other projects. It is an object study about the nature of love and the question of commitment set in three localities, New York, Berlin, and Tokyo. The same events happen to different characters in each place. By having the same things happen to the players Hartley attempts to show that culture or class do not influence decisions in matters of love. It is a basic plot about flirtation, sex, and people being shot in the lip. Each part has the general story of two lovers, one is leaving on trip for three months, the leaving lover wants to know if there is a future with the left lover. In the end, the left lover ends up in hospital with a bullet wound in the lip while the leaving lover leaves.

It's a complicated story and often while watching it one tries to figure just how the different plot turns will unfold in that particular story. Though amusing, this actually comes from the fact that film fails in holding the attention of the audience. Much this film is ponderous and boring. The settings of New York and Berlin are superfluous and have no inherent connection to the story. They could have been set anywhere. Only the Tokyo short gives us a sense of the nature of Japanese. There are long passionate silences that should hold our attention. However, the audience is so bored by that time they could not care less about any telling silences.

Moreover instead of exploring the idea fully he merely proves that his idea is right. The film then has become autonomous to reality while purporting to represent it. In Flirt the key idea is that indecisive love means loss regardless of culture or class. Unfortunately class and culture are very restrictive on human nature. They shape our options and constraint our ability to obtain them. Further if one disregards class and culture we are still faced with the fact that humans are not all the same. Each individual responds differently to situations. They cannot be separated like Hartley suggests. Hartley's point about the commonness of human love is further weakened by the fact that the characters in the three different scenes are more or less bourgeois. None of them are working class and calling them middle class is a tenuous statement. So what we have in the end is a film that is focused on bourgeois love and that, to be honest, is pretty dire and petty subject for a film. Objectively most of his films have been about the bourgeois. But that has been covered over by pithy one liners and stonkingly dry and witty dialogues, e.g. Do you love me? No. I respect and admire you. Is that love? No, that is respect and admiration. In Flirt there is none of that at all. Hall's bourgeois tendencies have been allowed to become too obvious and overshadow the rest that is good about his films. Flirt is a pretty unexciting exercise, seeming more like a pretentious and bloated film student picture than the work of a cult director. Hopefully this is not the shape of things to come.

David Balfour



RMA VEP

It was, as it often is, a dreary rainy day. London. The cold damp air seeped into every crease in my clothing, and every cranny of my body. I weaved my through the maze of Soho pedestrians. Taking a left onto Old Compton and a right onto Dean street brought outside the doors of the Groucho Club, that famed refuge for entertainment industry types from writers like Stephen Fry to drug-addled rock stars like Liam Gallagher. I was here to interview Olivier Assayas, a young French film director who was promoting his new film Irma Vep.

Irma Vep on the surface a film about a film. The film being made is a remake of the french classic Les Vampire. The action is a clever and energetic mix of rehearsals, shoots, clips of the old films, bits of the new film. The director's neurosis and obsession turn the film into a farce.

The inspiration for the film was not the love of the classic but a desire to work with leading lady of Hong Kong film industry Maggie Cheung after a brief meeting some years before. "I had seen Maggie in a few films. I had liked her. 150 years ago I was at the Venice Film Festival and she was there. She was unique. Her presence was different than anything else in the movies." Later when collaborating on movie about different people in a hotel he almost immediately came up with the idea that would become the movie Irma Vep. He wanted to have Maggie play a foreign actress working on movie in Paris.

After the hotel project fell through, he modified and extended his vision so that the movie was about this remake of the Les Vampire. Irma Vep was the heroine and sex symbol of early French cinema. It was first appearance of the dangerous and sexy woman. "It was the first time that such a character appeared on film. Irma Vep has been a strong influence on many things. You see her in the movies, photography and on TV."

For Assayas, recreating Irma Vep was a way of talking about many things, not least fantasy and desire. He is deeply concerned with the ways one realises their desires. For the director, the Irma Vep project is a way of putting on screen his sexual fantasies. Maggie Cheung represents for him everything sexy, erotic and exciting. That is why he wanted to make the film. However during the process of the shoot when he put his fantasy and desire in action, taking Maggie through the motions step by step, demanding things to be done exactly as he envisioned them things started to go wrong. The act of filming fantasies actually ruined them. On the screen his desires became empty and meaningless. After realising that merely recreating his fantasy would not make a good film he has a break down.

Unlike most other directors today, Assayas reasons his films on several different levels. All of which are entirely true. When Hollywood directors do that the result is often plastic and shallow. However Assayas' s Irma Vep is multi-layered and brilliant. Assayas is very concerned with the perception of reality. "When you film something," he says to me passionately, "you are not just filming an object. No, you are also and most importantly filming your thoughts on the object. So what the viewer sees is both, then tangible and intangible."

Certainly, Assayas' Irma Vep has such reasoning running through at the heart of it. It is refreshing to see a truly innovative and exciting film with intelligent and real points backing supporting it. One final note, the last three minutes, when the results of the directors edit are shown, is the most bizarrely wonderful piece of cinema creation to come out in years. It was invigorating and energetic. **DB**

Catch Irma Vep at the ICA through March.

Crying Freeman

If you are looking for a well written plot, thought provoking drama look elsewhere, Crying Freeman will not satisfy the higher neural lobes of a discerning movie aficionado. There is no animation in this Manga saga, which was rather unfortunate, considering that the directing by Christophe Gans the major force behind the cult film Necronomicon is no better than the average cartoon. Still, there are a lot of redeeming features which director Gans has carefully crafted to turn a predictable story line into a hot action movie with plenty of karate chops, high octane explosions and of course gratuitous nudity.

The fanciful story begins in San Francisco where a docile Emma encounters a deadly assassin, Yo, who falls for her alluring innocence as he empties a round of bullets in his targets' head. It's not romantic, but what else can you expect from a Manga strip that's geared to deliver lustful fornication before the middle of the movie.

To compliment the hot, sweaty flesh scenes there is plenty of destructive violence to keep the blood levels high. With an amazing capacity to out-dodge searing bullets aimed at point blank range, our hero always manages to deliver a deadly blow to his foes, and yield a higher body count than any Rambo movie you'd care to think of.

With a budget of \$15 million Crying Freeman managed to purchase enough ammunition to level several city blocks and cause the Dolby surround system to explode in our eardrums. Although, the final battle with slicing Katanas was definitely a classic touch to counterbalance the high-tech weaponry- there is nothing more satisfying than slaying the "bad guys" with a steel blade- the film leaves much

to be desired. Yet, if it's sex, action and muscle that you're looking for this is the one to grab.

Hector Birchwood

This fantastic movie opens sometime in the near future?



Competition

The Monkees

To celebrate The Reunion of the only ever true rival to the Beatles, this week we have a couple of Videos of the original Monkees TV series. To win one just write the answers to the following questions on piece of paper with you name and telephone and turn them in to The Beaver office.

1. Name the Full names of the Monkees?
2. Which one(s) were not American?
3. Which famous singer/songwriter wrote one of their biggest hits?
4. When was the last time the Monkees had a reunion?

Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds
'The Boatmans Call'

This time it's personal, but murder is not an option. Neither is heroin, voodoo, bats, booze, tortured blooze or Elvis, sex and violence. That's the past and may be the future. For now Nick Cave is answering the 'Boatmans call' and we should be thankful he's let us hear his reply.

This is the tenth album by the great man, and it's the most important in a long and consistently excellent career. At the time of 'Tender pray' (1987) Cave was ravaged by heroin and entered rehab. The first "clean" album 'The Good Son' was a shocking transition but very much the Nick everyone knew and love. The new album is a similar move from the horrors of 'Murder ballads': the result is even deeper and more significant. It is a very different album, but blessed by Nick's developing characteristic of genius.

With 'Murder Ballads' Cave found himself beginning to confront his inner demons while becoming aware of his talent; he was confident in his art for perhaps the first time. The new songs are the fruit of this deep soul searching. There are no special guests, none of the fantastic characters or situations that made his previous work so unique, no controversy and no fuss. What remains is Cave at his most open and personal; singing directly about himself and we are the privileged to this epic private work.

Bereft of the strange world he normally expresses himself in, the pain and emotion are all the more poignant and intense. In fact it's telling that on the song 'Idiot Prayer' he seems happiest and most confident. In this sleazy swagger, where "Love is only for the birds" he seems to return to a 'Mercy Seat' style guilty man who knows that "they're gonna shut me down" and is aware that ultimately we "each get what we deserve". Among the soul bearing of the rest of the album Cave seems most at home in a tale of someone else's folly even if some how it represents his own.

In line with the new lyrical impetus and tone, the album contains only moody, sparse ballads reflecting his deep contemplative mood. What may be indulgent for others is natural for Nick. Indeed many songs recall the classic slowie 'Shivers' of his ex-ex-

band The Boys Next Door. Over the years Cave has constantly used slow songs to maximum effect, complementing the fury and tension of his more upbeat ones. His voice is at it's best; confident, gentle and rich with melody, but ravaged and almost hollow with emotion. It's always underlaid by range and depth and is every bit as powerful as his 'Birthday Party' screams. The voice is beautifully and respectfully accompanied by the music of the ever wonderful Bad Seeds. Desolate piano, melancholic accordion and sweeping violin mix with drums and guitars to create the perfect smokey barroom backdrop to the songs.

On initial listens the album drifts by, constantly enjoyable but never dragging you in as his albums normally do. Slowly the songs begin to stand out and the sheer variety, power and beauty on hand almost becomes too much. I spend most of the album on my metaphorical knees. The songs mainly deal with love and religion, the latter a constant theme in his work. The two often intermingle, the imagery of one reinforcing the power of another. This is clear in the single and album opener 'Into My Arms' which is a devotional hymn of a love song. The themes are dealt with in a confused, honest and open way reflecting a man who feels outcast from society and coping with his own view of life.

The album gives off a strong sense of fear and sadness. Love lost and betrayed is mourned. Love to be is anticipated while the process itself is celebrated. The fact that we all need love is felt to be inevitable, a strength and weakness of human nature all in one. Religion is similarly celebrated and lamented.

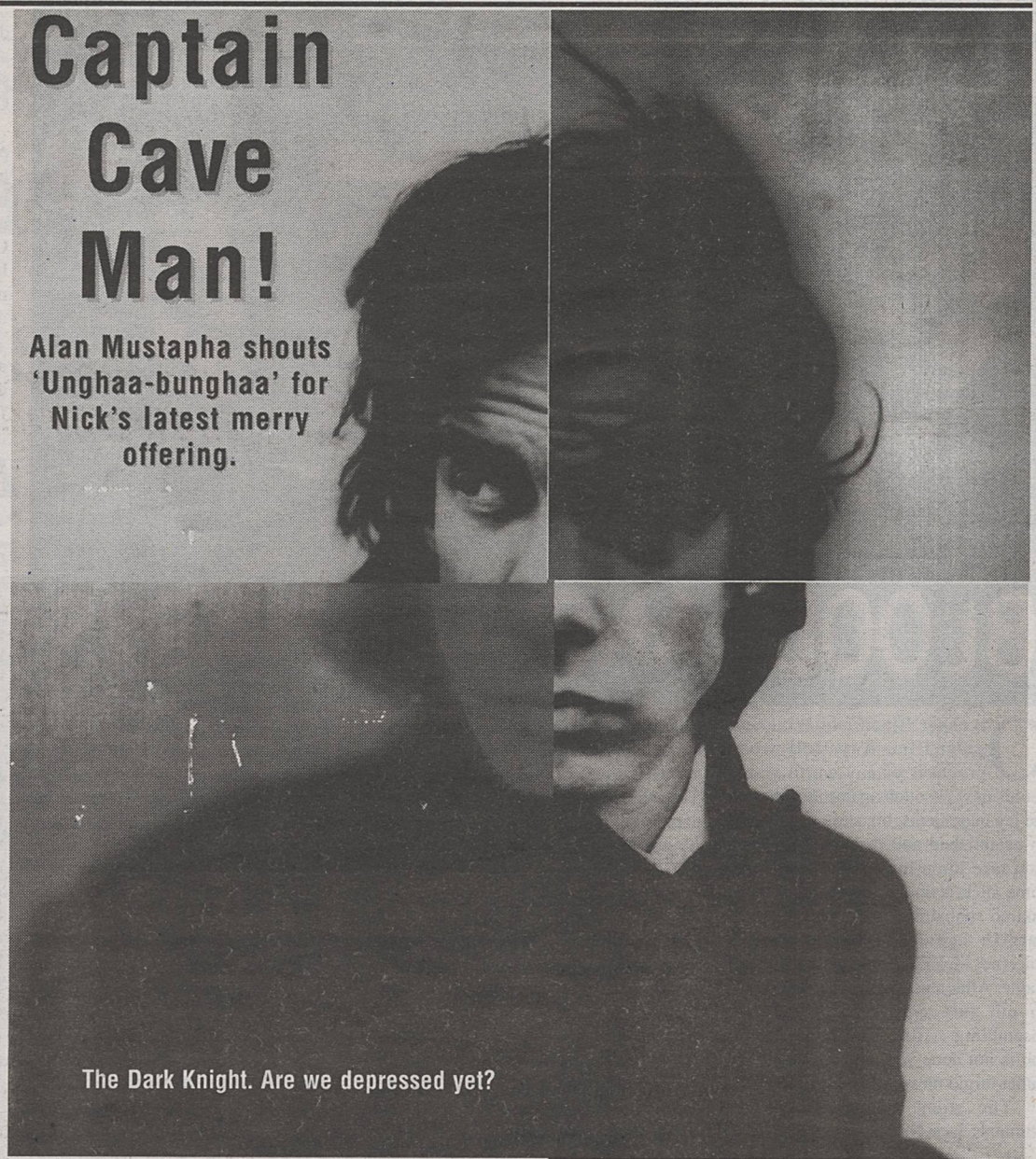
The song contains a very human mix of conflicting reactions to love. There is a sense of vulnerability on 'Lime Tree Abor' where Cave is indebted to the lover that protects him. 'Are you the one I've been waiting for?' documents that ever present feeling that somewhere out there is someone right for you. It's hopeful and tragic all at once. On 'There is a kingdom' Cave's voice is drawn with emotion as around him the song sweeps into a glorious hymn of religious devotion. It almost make you head for the nearest church. Almost, but not quite. Cave qualifies the joy on hand with some spite and tragedy. In 'Brampton Oratory' we find him suffering from a

only leave you feeling happier than you were before. They try and tread the narrow path between pop 'sell-out' and indie 'coolness' for 45 minutes and in the most part, succeed. Tracks like 'So Real' provide a slightly more rock format while 'I Will be Well' shows the band in acoustic-ballad mode.

tc hug are like The Rembrandts or Menswear with an equally bad name. Brash, noisy rebellion are not what they bring to your ears, just good, solid guitar driven radio-friendly music. A calming brass passage features in 'Someone' and at the end of 'Greatest Hour' all listeners will do a double-take as a sequence just like 'Wonderwall' concludes the track.

Captain Cave Man!

Alan Mustapha shouts 'Unghaa-bunghaa' for Nick's latest merry offering.



The Dark Knight. Are we depressed yet?

love lost and pain seeps into his dignified delivery. Here the promise of religion and the sanctuary of the church offer no respite from the aching of the heart. 'West Country Girl' has more menace and tension. The seemingly less obvious lyrics are matched to a more rigid musical structure which brings it closer to material on the last album. On this song and 'Black Hair' a girl with a 'heart shaped face' seems to point to someone specific. 'Black Hair' may be seen by some of his sadder goth fans as a song to them but it's a gorgeous accordion lead song. At the end when

She takes a train to the west you feel like a voyeur to a private and deeply tragic moment. 'People aint no good' contrasts traditional Cave spite with beautiful poetic lyrics that personalise it in the context of the breakdown of marriage expressed via the change of the seasons. A complex and moving song presented in a deceptively simple form. It, like all songs here, highlights Cave's mastering of the many layers available in a single narrative and the perfect application to the medium of song.

Nick Cave is not mellowing with age but becoming ever more consumed by his art. With every song he gets greater and greater. Disappointment is not an option, or ever likely. This album is a coming of age: though we may feel we know him better the spell has only become stronger. With two nights at the Albert hall in May we have the privilege of witnessing a living legend. In the meantime we have this stunning album and one more reason to love him.

Alan Mustapha

tc hug
Pie-MONDO

Strange name for a band, tc hug. Even weirder name for an album, 'Pie-MONDO'. All the bizarre names and funny dolls on the cover suggest that the musical content may be well a bit different from the usual offerings (or crap) that the Music Ed. gives us. In this case though, mere words and pictures deceive. tc hug are a surprisingly normal band with normal, plain songs. A rich vein of pop runs through this record and Pie-MONDO can



COMPETITION

Win 3 David Bowie CDs

To win, answer this:

Question: What colour suit did Bowie sport when fronting his previous incarnation in 'Tin Machine'?

Drop your answers into the Beaver office. Winners will be drawn randomly, and printed in a later edition of 'The Beaver'. All usual rules apply. There are none.

dEUS @ The Astoria

Having seen dEUS playing in front of 75,000 spectators at the annual Rock Werchter Festival in Belgium and filling quite big venues in mainland Europe they seem to be a bit lost being confronted with a bunch of young fanatic Placebo-fans who don't have the slightest clue what dEUS's music is all about. People seem bemused, even though they storm into their set with the hymn-like Turnpike, which has been shown in many European cinemas as a trailer to Britain's topselling movie Trainspotting. Confusion throughout the audience seeks its height when people realise that this fantastic tune is played by no less than six people on stage, three (!) drummers/ percussionists, two guitarists and a bass-player. Singer Tom Barman (yes, that's really his name!) guides the crowd into the weird sounds of his bands, which have been put on three CDs so far. Already with 'Opening Night', third song in the set, they have the audience under full control. People who haven't even heard the name dEUS before, now jump enthusiastically up and down as if they cannot get enough of this weird mixture of modern alternative-rock and old free-jazz songs. Violinist Stef Kamil then leads the band into their MTV-smash-hit 'Suds & Soda'. Half way through the set dEUS slow down a bit with 'Little Arithmetics', but the attracted audience won't even give them a slight break. Pushing and crowd-surfing even increases in this part of their 50 minutes long set. They leave a whole lot of bunch of new dEUS fans with the best song of their latest release 'In a bar, under the sea', the tremendous 'Roses'.

Thus we are forced to ask: who rocks? The answer? It was the Belgians!

Malte Gerhold/Bjorn Lampe.

Frankie Cutlass

'The Cypher: Part III'

Old Skool beats. Old skool samples. Old skool rappers. Old skool reviewer. Press releases make ideal toilet paper especially when the Tuns fail to leave out the family-size-economy-style-sandpaper-textured rolls for my nimble fingers to tamper with. If you need a press release to write a review how the fuck do you expect to pass your exams. Actually there are no escorts for persons leaving the exam rooms. Hiding notes in the toilet is a cunning ploy.

Bring that beat back. Criminology pays. Four players from back in the dayz. Fuck drum-n-bass. Big Daddy Kane can rhyme at 180 words per minute. Roxanne Shante paved the way for sexual frustrated hardcore female rappers like Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown whilst Biz Markie paved the way for fat comical rappers with halitosis. And Craig G. Well Craig, I don't actually know who you are. You sound convincingly hard and important, but so do 99% of all rappers.

The problem is that all these transitional pioneers have up-dated their styles. No more dis-jointed rhymes, no out-of-key singing, no dirty, grimy garage recordings. 'Same ol' shit every day and every night/ but when it gets dark, n'ers get outta sight.

The Grand finale. A message to the administration of Bankside: 'I'm a ruthless gangsta, definition villain/ you leave your shit unlocked and I'm stealin'. 1.2G's equals 110 more rap albums. Mmmmmmm. rap albums.

Ruthless Rich

Coast

'Do it now'

No, it's no typing mistake and it's not Cast once again. Coast are their very own band. They still sound very much like Cast though. But I dare to say that they're even a bit better. A little bit at least. Unfortunately, that's about the only difference. Yes, you got it, brit pop again. What a surprise! This time it's with a slight tendency to indie. Will it never end? Admittedly, I cannot really say that it's bad because it's not. It's just all been done before. Over and over again. Nice to listen to in a pub with your mates, loud and rocking. A bit of a feel-good song. But soon to be forgotten as well. The same holds for the B-sides 'It's not to late' and 'Bullseye', though the former is still the single's highlight. Don't they realise that it's so much better to be original? To go their own way? (long and frustrated sigh...) MG

Agent Provocateur
'Agent Dan'


I always thought Agent Provocateur made funny knickers and fluffy handcuffs for couples, but I was wrong! Instead they make the most fantastic music. 'Agent Dan' is just cool. A spooky, mysterious start, a shake of sleigh-bells and then suddenly the room fills with sound. Catchy guitar riffs, pulsating organ noise and funky bass. 'Agent Dan' has no brain, apparently, feels no pain and 'creams his dreams'. It's a powerful catchy tune and will only help to strengthen Agent Provocateur's growing reputation. In the seedy world of music this particular agent should be a force to be reckoned with.

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And It's That Time of Year Again

Springtime: the sun is shining, everyone is happy, what possibly could Caroline Hooton find to moan about?

I was recently accused of having a somewhat pessimistic take on life. Well, actually, I was called a 'miserable old slapper' but the principle remains the same. And so in this humble piece of literary orgasmic talent, I aim to retain a cheerful outlook on that funny old chestnut we know as life.

Which brings me to my first problem. What exactly is there to be cheerful about? Having given the matter some thought over the last three or four weeks, I have decided that with the coming of spring is the coming of jollity.

Yes, spring is nearly here. Daffodils and crocuses are pushing their little petals above the earth to grant the world some much-needed colour after the long winter months. Birds are singing because this is the season where they all get some. Everyone goes around with that same happy grin on their face which says, yes, in two months I will get my bermudas and sandals out and expose my knees to the unsuspecting world. And soon Capital will be playing

reggae numbers just for the hell of it and we'll be singing along because hey - we're glad to be alive.

That over-riding feeling of being alive is reinforced by the presence of



children and especially babies everywhere on the streets. You can't turn around without seeing someone pushing a pram, wrestling with a push-

chair or walloping a toddler. Yes it does this cynical old heart good to see so many smiling little faces running around, shouting, laughing, jumping in front of Land Rovers. And it's good to see the maternal glow of their mothers. That tired smile which tells you that baby Jimmy/Jessica didn't get to sleep until 4 am. The slow walk which conveys the fact that their stitches

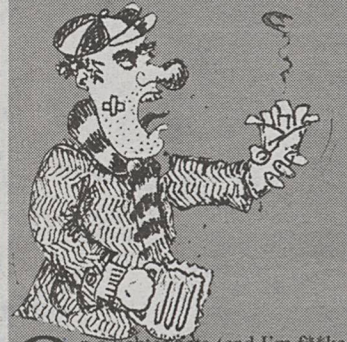
haven't healed and/or the little lamb is still biting while breast-feeding. The strain around the eyes which says there is no way she is going to go without

contraception again in this life time. Yes, life is evident and death sorely oppressed.

Oh who am I kidding? I'm sorry, I've really tried but let's face it, the coming of spring just means that exams are that much closer. And after that, there's the problem of looking for a job. And a house so that you can be within commuting distance of your career. And all this means that you cut the umbilical with your parents once and for all, which means you will no longer have anyone to blame your problems on. No more getting your laundry done or free no more arguments over borrowing the car. This is it. Your life, your future, your f**k ups. Thus dear reader, despite my intentions to the contrary, I am left more miserable than ever, but hey, while there's Prozac there's hope, so if you'll excuse me I'll break off now to get my prescription renewed.

Caroline Hooton is currently hunting out her bermudas while riding high on an overdose of Prozac.

HOUGHTON STREET HARRY



On a lighter note (and I'm f**ked if I'm going to let serious subjects lower the tone of this column), the sickening, repulsive, revolting stench of LURVE seems to be infesting the air around Houghton Street at the moment. Well, it makes a change from the drains outside the Tuns (the sooner they renovate that hovel the better - I love the place, don't get me wrong, I have to be dragged kicking and screaming out of there at the best of times - usually closing time - but the drains STINK!), but that's not the point. All you see on the Street in the mornings, afternoons, in fact at any time of the day, are two individuals (usually of the opposite sex, though no doubt the LGB Society will have a word or two to say about that - oh shame on me, how terribly un-PC) simpering, cooing, canoodling, face-sucking and generally slavering all over each other.

In her eyes he's Lancelot, a knight in shining armour (and I'll bet she had to polish the sodding lot for hours, spending a fortune on Brasso... sod that I'd rather drink the stuff...) on a trusty, pure white steed, ready to whisk his damsel in distress (ah, she broke a nail, what a personal disaster) always in the nick of time... For God's sake, it's sad sad sad.

In his eyes, she's Snow White, pure and unsullied as the driven snow ('Course she was a virgin before she met me... Are you trying to say my girlfriend's a slag?'), bluebirds flying around her head, deer and sundry other forest mammals following her wherever she goes (naturally if her name's Bronwen or Nerys or some other Welsh name, there'll be a sheep there somewhere), whistling as she works (probably on the game, the dirty whore). Pass the bucket, quick (TM).

The point is that, although I don't begrudge their being happy, I object to public face-sucking and ostentatious displays of affection. Basically I refuse to have my face rubbed in the fact that other people feel superior to me because they're part of a 'whole' (not quite the hole I'd like to see them in - I was thinking along the line of a huge pit, like the San Andreas Fault), just because they're in a relationship that's probably not that much kop anyway. They look at you with pity when you tell them that you're (oh-so-painfully) single and treat you with the delicacy as they would had you said your cat had just died that morning. Fuck off, I say. At least I can beat men off with a stick without having to plead 'sorry... boyfriend, see?'

Wannabe Knights of the Round Table don't do it for me anyway...

Alright so I'm a miserable, cold-hearted and all round nasty cow. So sue me.

On the subject of relationships, those of you who were present at the recent LSE Blind Date event will probably be as interested as I am to watch developments regarding that unlikely couple, Bernardo Duggan and Sam Parham (maybe not so unlikely, come to think of it). Bernardo struggled to suppress his delight at his choice, and Sam was ready to pounce regardless of what number his intended uttered. Match made in heaven if you ask me. But please lads, for my sake, save it for the bedroom...

Harry is currently trying to find someone to fill the void in his heart that has remained empty for a long time. Who could Harry have in mind for this tremendous task?

Restaurant Review

Café Med

184a Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ES

Zak Shaikh

Walking along Kensington Park Road with my blonde bombshell from the London College of Fashion (somebody tell me what's in their diet?), we arrived at the misleadingly named Cafe Med fashionably late. Well actually, it was twenty minutes late and they had nearly given our seats away. In an attempt to seduce my young lady companion, I was hoping this would not turn out to be a 'dirty burger joint'; on the contrary, as soon as we walked in I realised I should have worn a blazer if not a suit. At least she was wearing 'that little black dress'!

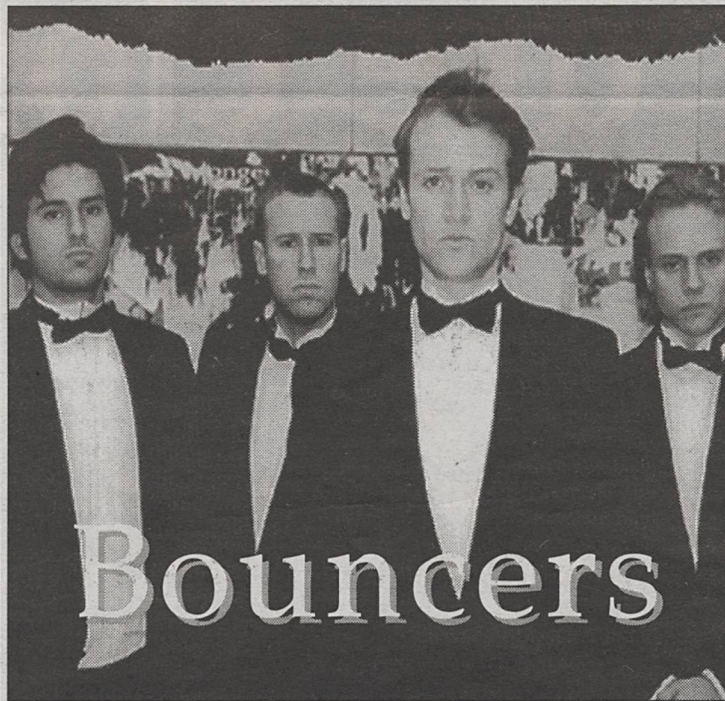
While becoming more indecisive as we read through the menu, which included delights such as duck breast served with asparagus and white wine source and an original starter of French bread served with garlic oil (as opposed to just garlic bread), our waiter rolled off the specials of the day explaining in some eloquence the details of each dish. Apparently he was also good looking enough to model for Armani... "Fiona, please don't try and pull the waiter," I thought to myself! Nevertheless, it was decision time and I convinced Fiona to start with the Oysters (only because they're supposed to be aphrodisiacs)

while I started with the aforementioned Bread with garlic oil. Then, to my excitement, she went for the Steak of the Day, which was Alligator steak served with a mushroom and red wine source - medium rare, of course!

The meal was overall, splendid: most satisfying was that the portions were large, and for somewhere as nouveau riche as this, it was a surprise they did not serve the trendy tiny size portions. However, a significant difference about the Cafe Med was its unpretentiousness in that food: clearly the most important aspect. Nobody was looking round; everybody was into eating and chatting. In fact prior to our desserts - sorbet for me, chocolate and almond cake for Fiona (obviously chocolate for the girl!) - Fiona went to 'powder her nose': it was at this point where I let my eaves-dropping take over and managed to over hear a gentleman saying, "I think we should offer Channel 5 the contract." Oh really!

The highlight for me was, however, the wine. A crisp South African sauvignon blanc was an appropriate white wine for the starters, but the Spanish Riochan red wine practically stole my heart - it also managed to do wonders to my head!

Ultimately I was successful, but was it due my efforts of seduction throughout the evening or simply that she was pissed on the (very expensive) wine? If the latter is true, which with hindsight I suspect, then it would have been a damn sight cheaper to take her to the nearest firkin pub, and get her firkin wrecked on five firkin pints!



Thursday 13 and Friday 14 March, 8pm Venue: The Quad Tickets: £2 (£1.50 for Drama Soc and Ents card) on the door

Last Wednesday saw the opening performance of The LSESU Drama Society Lent term production, Bouncers. Written by John Godber, it is set in a provincial discotheque in the 1980s, and it is a comic masterpiece - hilarious and tragic, poignant and piss-taking. With its dark and menacing undertones, and accompanied by the sounds of the '80s, Bouncers is both a warning and a celebration. Well, that's how it's supposed to be, but this rendition has somehow managed to turn it into one-and-a-quarter hours of pure unadulterated comedy. The script is bent to the limits and performed at such a slick pace that I found myself laughing from start to finish, barely able to draw breath. The casting itself is inspired, combining the talents of Dan Crowe, Nik Morandi and Matt Ziegler (You Never Can Tell) with the less subtle humour of Chris Cooper (ENTS, UGM), as between them they play over thirty characters (with no changes in costume!). It is a testament to their acting skills that a play of such complexity was so easy to follow, and

also a credit to the production team of Alec Seysses, Laura Howard (lights) and Patrick Oparah (sound) that the audience is really made to feel part of the discotheque atmosphere.

It is through the audience that the play impresses so much. Despite the constant laughter, one genuinely feels intimidated by the bouncers' on stage presence, and the way that the audience are ushered in and out all adds to the splendour of the occasion. Quite what John Godber would make of the slight alterations to the script is anyone's guess, but the deafening applause that greeted the end gave a fair indication of the performance. Don't panic if you think you've missed out though, because this was merely a preview showing as part of The Global Festival, and there are two more showings on this Thursday and Friday (13th/ 14th), with doors opening at 8.00pm. So, if you want to see Nik Morandi bawling his eyes out, Matt Ziegler and Dan Crowe in a porn film and Chris Cooper with his trousers down, get yourself down to The Quad for a thoroughly enjoyable time. But make sure you've got a tie on, or you won't get in!



King's spanked by Ladies

Perennial whipping boys Strand Poly lose again to the team in purple - weight of support decisive factor in LSE women's victory.

LSE Women XI 4 - 1 Kings Women XI

Timothy Haire

On Sunday I had the unestimable privilege of watching as the LSE Ladies Football team kicked seven types of metaphorical brick dust out of Kings College. Were you there? Statistically speaking that is unlikely, there were only five spectators. I can't understand why? What else have you got to do on a Sunday? A more enjoyable afternoon I cannot imagine and it's excellent value for money, all you need is to buy a train ticket to get to the pitch and the rest is absolutely free!

LSE went into the match as the cleat underdogs, they only had eight players against Kings eleven plus one sub. As if that didn't make things tough enough Kings' not quite professional referee decided to waive many of the rules of the game which turned out to be distinctly beneficial for the opposition. After a scrappy first five minutes our girls soon found form and Veronica's opener cleared the path for three more goals from Ameer, Vicky and a particularly fine free kick from Vanessa.

LSE coped well during the second



Hairy King's dog looks on as Sheppard sizes up another hard tackle

half considering the on-field absence of its German wall of defence Nicole, who sat this one out because of an injury and made up 1/5th of the spectator body. Vanessa, Monica, Madalina and Catherine did well and only let one fluke ball through. The goal was of little consequence and the game finished a convincing 4-1 to LSE. All credit to Frank and the regular support of Bobby.

So now you know how exciting it gets, make sure you're there next time. I strongly recommend you empty your bladder first though, because in all the excitement you might just regret it if you don't. Special thanks to Ameer for all her effort this year as this was her last match for LSE (rumour has it Barcelona, AC Milan and Workingham Town are after the youngster's coveted signature).

Netball Horror

Alex tells all about her sex life but forgets to mention the netball match LSE Netball VII 17- 23 QMW VII

Dirty Alex™

It has been the sad story of the LSE netball team's season that although consistently fielding a team of supermodels, they have often found that their beauty is no match for sheer weight and hairiness. Last week's game against the orange bibbed stinkers of QMW was to be no exception, with the opposition attempting to compensate for their looks by applying copious amounts of fake tan cream. Dirty Alex™ did manage to score more goals in the game than she has all season, a performance made all the more remarkable due to the fact that she was still recovering after being dragged, by Matt 'use the water and get on' Miller, into his favourite mating place (the boys toilets) the previous Wednesday.

Gemma was glad to be playing at all this week, after last Wednesday when instead of playing netball she was playing dead after an all day drinking session. Gemma did emulate last week's antics during the game, as she managed to fall to the ground several times, mainly due to the disgusting cheating tactics employed by her loud mouthed opponent.

On numerous occasions the LSE players were double marked, but Becky seemed to enjoy this, which is not



QMW pressurize LSE goal

surprising as during the week she was kicked out of KFC for having a threesome in the toilets.

Maria's new addition to her furniture that she acquired on a Friday night obviously inspired her to perform well on the pitch and off as the referee, even though she was often unfairly questioned by the opposing team. Lovely Livvy, Vicky and Zarine performed well especially as those marking them were twice their height.

It was a very tight, close match maybe it would have been better if it rained and we could have put Matthew Miller's theories to test, "use the water" (????????????????).

Fourth's held by lucky Strand Poly

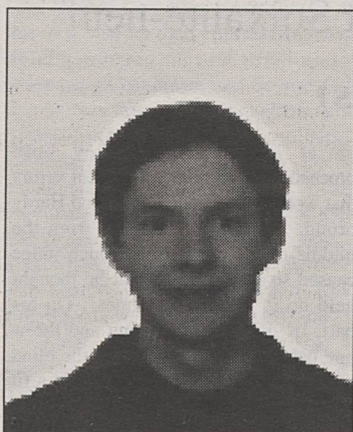
Headed wonder goal by Newton still not enough for LSE, as King's scrape a shock draw

LSE 4th XI 1 - 1 KCL 4th XI

Peter Clegg

A kick off loomed on Saturday the 4ths once again had only 10 fit men and although there were three candidates for this remaining position on the team, none were particularly suitable. The first was Dan Pickering but his pleas for a game were completely rejected, as following the physical injury inflicted on an L.S.E footballing compatriot, the 4ths hadn't the confidence to allow this walking disaster area/crap captain anywhere near a football pitch. Pickering took the news like the man he is - by kicking down the dressing room door, which resulted in yet another apology having to be offered by Dan - this time to Brian the groundsman. The second candidate was 6th teamer Chris Camp, popular defender and the man all girls love to reject. However, the usually reliable Camp was in no state to play as he was still clearly in shock after actually pulling in the Tuns the previous night. Therefore by default the final position in the team was taken by esteemed sports editor and puller of mingers extraordinaire, Ben 'mingers' Newton. Recently the 4ths have enjoyed

victory upon victory, crushing all opposition with their combination of Brazilian flair and British resilience.



Newton : Headed wonder goal almost won the day for fourths

However, the inclusion of Newton instantly ended this and also meant that a game in which we would usually destroy the opposition, now turned into a very tight, hard-fought affair. The first half belonged to the LSE who placed King's under constant pressure. The previous week's five goal hero Ralph Banks went close on a number of occasions, as did Damian Jackson-Bergkamp and Steve 'not at all' Quick. Such was the extent of L.S.E's dominance

that even Newton went close, with his delicate 20 yard lob not only just sailing over the bar, but also resulting in play being stopped for 5 minutes whilst members of both teams tried to accept that such a blatantly shit player could produce such an extravagant piece of skill. Despite this relentless pressure somehow King's survived without conceding a goal, with the score at half-time still 0-0.

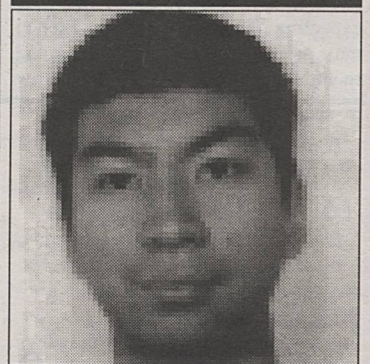
In the second half, midfielders Steve Seget and Chris 'scouse' Williamson dictated the proceedings, patrolling the midfield in the same efficient manner with which Pickering patrols the King's Cross area on a Friday night, before having to apologise to the hookers for passing on his amazing collection of STD's. It appeared only a matter of time before LSE would score, and with 20 minutes remaining they did just that. Jackson Bergkamp whipped in a corner and the ball fortuitously cannoned off the face of Newton, looping over the keeper for one of the luckiest goals ever seen in the history of football. Newton was shocked with the goal, but the rest of the team experienced greater shock when realising that the impact of the ball on face had rearranged Ben's features into an even more hideous mess than was previously

imaginable.

King's now finally applied some pressure to the LSE goal but the back four of Enda Hannon, John Parkin, Peter Clegg and Gideon McClean, as well as keeper Ginger Porter, held firm, sticking to their task with dogged determination. This determination was illustrated above all by McClean who played out the last 5 minutes with a recurrent knee injury caused not by an opponent, but by violent, drunken first teamer Matt Miller in a clash far removed from a football pitch. Just when it appeared L.S.E would gain another three points, King's equalised with the last kick off the game, direct from a corner. Celebrations as wild as those by King's will not be seen again unless Newton ever pulls a good-looking girl, or Pickering ever gets through a week without having to apologise. Clearly therefore, such celebrations will never again be seen by the human eye.

A draw was not a fair result, but L.S.E still had the satisfaction of knowing that King's were now relegated to the murky depths of division four, and that with a bit of luck Pickering will soon resign, meaning that next season the division three championship will be a certainty.

Player Profile



Name: Kevin Lui

Age: 19

Nickname: Hockey Kev™

Date of Birth: 10/08/77

Height: 5ft. 11in.

Weight: 11 stone, varies depending on how many members of the team I'm carrying

Team: 1st XI Hockey captain, (when our starting 11 players are injured)

Favourite Position: Missionary

Favourite Team: Arsenal - only one team in London

Favourite Drink: Guinness, Caffreys or anything in the Ballykissangel pub.

Favourite Food: Chinese

Sporting Idol: Steve 'Euroboy' Curtis, for showing academic losers can still be sporting winners

Favourite CD: Charles Mingus

Favourite T.V. Programme:

Ballykissangel, Fast Show, Postman Pat

Favourite Film: The Usual Suspects

Favourite Magazine: FHM, Euroboy
Most like to be stuck in a lift with: Caprice and the pub owner out of Ballykissangel

Favourite Chat-up line: Can I borrow 10p? Why? I want to phone God and tell him one of his Angels is missing.

Favourite Joke: Horse walks into a bar. Barman says: "Why the long face?"

BeaverSport BeaverSport BeaverSport

LSE heroes dole out French lessons

General Fielding's makeshift LSE team proves too strong for useless French tourists

LSE 'Select' XI 2 - 0 Ensaie (Paris)

Ben Newton

Over recent months and years many people in this country have been talking about closer links with our European friends, and with France in particular. In a diplomatic move on par with the Battle of Trafalgar, Ensaie from Paris sent a team to London to go to war with General Fielding's gallant LSE army. It was hard for the gaffer to arouse patriotism in his English team since the closest that most of the LSE lads have got to the Battle of Waterloo is when they fought their way past a Parisian ticket inspector after a match at Berrylands.

The French were expected to field an improved team after last year when they were trounced 2-0 on their home territory. LSE however, produced a team that on paper looked less menacing than my Nan's Poodle "Fluffy". The backbone of the team was the 4th team combination of Steve Segget, Chris, and 'Hard' Rob. The team was also weakened by the addition of four 6th team players, and the home team were very much looking to 1st teamers Miller and Dirty Cooper™ to provide the inspiration. Clearly out for revenge this year, the visitors performed an elaborate and brilliantly organised 20 minute warm-up, while LSE booted the ball around aimlessly, with Fielding providing about as much organisation as the LSE timetable office. After seeing the French limbering up it is fair to say that the LSE heroes all took to the field expecting 'Toulouse', and the French must have thought the game was going to be easier than a 2-piece jigsaw

puzzle.

The game was to be refereed by Brendan 'LeGraw' who showed his true allegiance by arriving at Berrylands in the French team bus. This continental bias was confirmed by a series of outrageous offside decisions which continually incensed Lairy Cooper™. Cooper had the added responsibility of



Drunken McGraw manages to break LSE's prized trophy

being captain, and attempted to stamp his authority on the game. Unfortunately the only thing he managed to stamp on was the stomach of his opposite number. McGraw should have got the red card out, but raising it would have exposed the French to a smell worse than their own. Either it was that, or he feared the wrath of

Cooper, as witnessed by his pummelling at the 1st team Christmas dinner. But after half an hour the LSE defence had rarely been troubled, with the centre backs Miller and Chris 'Gay' looking just as firm as the female cast of Baywatch. The ferocity with which Miller heads the ball can be quite frightening for his own players as well as the opposition. Senior doctors have confirmed that Miller is worryingly losing 6,735,256 brain cells each time he heads the ball his customary 40 yards. It can't be long until Miller is merely a zombie wandering around the pitch with what appears to be no brain at all. Still, it hasn't done Gazza's football career any harm.

After some promising LSE pressure it was left to Steve Segget to head the English into a well deserved lead. It was hardly surprising that the break through came since the French were reeling under the sort of pressure they can't have felt since the battle of Verdun in 1916. Half time must have been a real relief for the French after 45 minutes of aerial bombardment, and punishing and effective ground attacks that left the French in disarray. Unfortunately for the French, on this occasion they couldn't rely on the English to bail them out.

The second half began with the French dicking on us for about 15 minutes as LSE struggled to get the memory of Fielding's half-time talk out of their minds. It took a string of fine saves from Lee Porter, and a series of And Cole-esque fuck ups by the French forwards to preserve LSE's lead. But the English held out. Tom Smith (the

ginger haired supremo whose mouth seems to be on the butt end of a fag more often than Freddy Mercury) was majestic at left back, and on the right Keron Smith produced a solid and effective display that showed great potential for the future (providing the 7th team continues next season). Towards the end of the game LSE were back on top, with continual genius from Lairy Cooper™, Ian, Steve, and continual brilliance from Newton on the left. The last 10 minutes could have been a real test for the LSE warriors, but the game was put beyond the grovelling reach of the desperate French when Rollands fired home following a filthy corner from Lairy Cooper™.

The last 5 minutes saw Chris replaced by 4th team captain, Dan 'foot in mouth' Pickering. Pickering's first impact was when he tried to turn a defender but only succeeded in confusing himself, and falling flat on his face. (See article below in which Pickering apologises to the fans on the sideline for this disappointing piece of football.)

The final whistle was greeted with applause by the travelling army of fans on the sidelines, as both of them went wild. All that remained was for the weary warriors to get absolutely trolled in the bar, and then to break various things. Lee Porter managed to break the world record for downing a pint (as we rubbed salt into the French wounds by destroying them in a boat race), while Brendan only managed to break the head off the victory trophy the French had given us.

Readers' Remarks with E. Pinkerton and D. Pickering

Never let it be said that the Beaver sports editors don't know talent when they see it. Ben Levine, Appreciation Corner, the netball bird (unfortunately taken out by our dictatorial, feminism-embracing executive editor) are three such examples of why these pages romped home with a Perrier journalism award. Emma Pinkerton's ability to moan is (allegedly) unquestioned. Dan Pickering's apologies on behalf of the LSE football club for continually inserting his clumsy size 10 into his mouth. The Beaver Sports' Editors have decided to harness their journalistic talent in a new weekly column of Pinkerton moans, Pickering apologies.. This week Pinkerton moans about the quality of the Beaver sports pages....

Pinkerton Moans

To the Beaver

I would like to complain about the articles in last week's edition. Although many may have found them entertaining I found it insulting to my sense of humour. The articles were all almost entirely incoherent and unfunny.

The incompetence of your editorial staff to check the standard of puns and witty comments, as well as the general tone of the articles was proven yet again. This is however, not my main concern. The articles held no interest for any but a group that considers itself to be elite and seem to enjoy uncalled for and offensive language at the expense of others (e.g. the 1,251 members of the Athletic Union).

If this is repeated, I will have to take the complaint further as it reflects badly on the Union and University.

Yours Faithfully,
Emma Pinkerton

Pickering apology (part 3)

In last week's International match versus Ensaie (from Paris), an unfortunate slip by myself (Dan Pickering) resulted in considerable distress being caused to certain members of the crowd. I am sure the sight of me selling myself a dummy was funny for some people, but I realise that it was an ill judged turn that cost LSE possession, and offended several spectators. I apologise wholeheartedly for the upset caused and in future I will be more careful with my footing.

Rugby lads send French tourists packing

Outstanding! Rugby team achieve their first ever perfect Soixante-neuf

LSE Select XV 69 - 0 ENSAE XV (Paris)

I.K.Iroche

The headlines that flashed across the front pages of the nation's newspapers after LSE's crushing demolition of the French tourists on Friday, the 28th day of February, paid tribute to this brilliance of the victory. The kids from across Le Channel never knew what hit them. The 'Mighty White' warriors strode imperiously onto the hallowed turf of Berrylands to face the yellow-jerseyed, yellow-bellied French men.

It was straight down to business right from the whistle for Liz's Army as they scored the opening try within 20 seconds. At that point, the ENSAE boys should have turned tail and gone back to France but alas, inspired by false delusions of victory, they stayed on ... to their peril! What ensued must have felt like the Nazi invasion as the LSE tanks tore the opposition to shreds. The backs were especially inspired by the guest appearance of last year's club

captain, Femi 'I have a big penis' Adewale and by the bullocking charges of Dave Neequaye (a.k.a. Will Carling). They were ably assisted in the first half by the debut centre pairing of Nick 'le hair' and LSE's own 'crazy French man', Alex Pichon. Up front, the LSE forwards had most of the play and for the 1st time all season, managed to get the scrum going in the right direction (all credit due to the 15 year old girls brought in to beef up the ENSAE pack). Perhaps even more shocking, was the sight of Tom 'I'm in love with Rebecca' Jeans winning line out possession (on his own throw!

By half time the score was: plenty to nil and it seemed like Becky's Boy's game plan was paying off. Basically, the lanky, Welsh one (of Creche Sex Scandal fame) preached a doctrine of total, fifteen man rugby played at a 100 miles an hour in his pre-match pep talk. So with the game effectively wrapped up by half time, we could have some fun in the 2nd half. Being Welsh, Jeans felt there was a vital flaw in England

Manager, Jack Rowell's tactics and decided that rather than finish off the opposition in the last 20 minutes, it was much better to kill them in the first 40 minutes and enjoy yourselves in the 2nd half. Big Jack was at Berrylands that day and was most impressed with what he saw and decided to use our tactics in the big game at Twickenham (the England Coach told me he was even more impressed by the news of Tom's new conquest and was glad that the therapy sessions were ridding him of his addiction to prepubescent netball players). Unfortunately for England, they failed to implement the plan to the letter and let the French score in the first half - something which Femi tried his damndest to do the previous day as his so-called attempt at a tackle left him flat on his ass (thankfully, Zar, the Energizer Bunny saved the day).

Being such good hosts, LSE decided to entertain the French visitors in the 2nd half and made some tactical changes. The two most inspired being moving BJ to fly half and bringing IK

on at inside centre. They both proceeded to commit a litany of errors that would have made Laurel and Hardy proud. BJ's 'miss 10' pass from the middle of the pitch to the touch judge caused so many laughs that he thought he'd do it TWO more times! On his part, IK did a little dancing and threw one pass so forward that even the blind septuagenarian referee burst out in a fit of uncontrollable laughter. When questioned later, IK said "While I had been running touch in the first half, the French supporters were so depressed that I thought I'd do a little something to cheer them up". Contrary to recent speculation, IK isn't just shite, he's considerate as well. A few more tries were scored in the 2nd half to bring the score to an embarrassing 69-0 (Brian still hasn't recovered from the shock).

So the Mighty White warriors hope to round off the season with some more good victories now that 1996/97 Captain Jeans is betrothed to Rebecca, younger sister of Rachel, girlfriend of 1995/96 Captain BJ.