

The Beaver

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Barack Obama
A saviour for America

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Union bars' revenue takes a tumble

Doug Oliver
Senior Reporter

Figures released to *The Beaver* show a fall of over 12 percent in sales at Students' Union (SU) bars during the month of October, compared to the same period the previous year.

The pronounced drop in sales in the three bars - The Three Tuns, The Underground and The Quad - have raised eyebrows and spawned a number of explanations for the apparently alarming decrease. The decline in sales comes despite an increase in LSE student numbers to their highest ever levels and the estimated £825,000 cost associated with the refurbishment of The Three Tuns in 2004.

LSE SU Treasurer, Joel Kenrick, acknowledged the figures though he claimed that they were exaggerated. "Month

by month figures are not as useful as week by week information of sales," he said. Kenrick also pointed out that the previous October had five Saturdays - one of the SU's most profitable nights - and he said he believed that the real fall was probably closer to five percent.

Meanwhile employees of the SU have noted that the attendance of the main student night of the week, 'Crush' on Friday night appears to be falling. Third-year undergraduate Alasdair Barr, who works as a bartender in the SU throughout the week, noted that "the bar this year has looked remarkably quieter".

Many in the SU and elsewhere have attributed the sales decline to the adoption of a more sober student lifestyle amongst traditionally gregarious first-year 'fresher' students.

A second-year hall committee member noted that the "freshers in my hall this year

just don't party as hard as we did last year. I have spoken to various staff members as well - they all agree that the new first-years don't drink nearly as much." Student Katherine Nixon, who works in SU bars, said that "this year's intake of freshers have not been particularly pro-SU active."

Kenrick claimed that "possible contributory factors" for this include the introduction of top-up fees. He said there was evidence students "are taking studies more seriously now they are paying a higher price for them." He also explained that the LSE SU was experiencing a "national student trend" with more and more students opting for alternative venues rather than their own Union when deciding where to socialise.

Many have noted that with pub chains such as Wetherspoons providing offers and dis-



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Photograph: Tahiya Islam

Shami Chakrabarti, director of Liberty at LSE last week

LSE investments come under scrutiny

Ali Moussavi
Senior Reporter

The LSE Students' Union (SU) this week submitted a Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) proposal to the School.

The paper follows the recent controversy stemming from LSE professors' acceptance of research grants from arms companies and aims to stop the School from ever

£15 million
Value of shares owned by UK universities in arms trade, according to Campaign Against the Arms Trade

investing in them.

While the debates in the Union General Meeting (UGM) have so far concerned the actual acceptance of money from arms companies, this paper has been centred on LSE's possible investment in arms companies as part of financial profit-making strategies.

The authors of the document, SU Treasurer Joel Kenrick and SU Postgraduate Students' Officer James Caspell, argue that SRI is a

practice which is both possible and necessary to adopt.

The document reads "the LSE Students' Union is concerned that the lack of a proactive SRI strategy could have an impact on prospective donors as well as potentially leading to reputation damage for the School, particularly when compared to our most successful competitors both in the UK and globally."

While the attention to this issue has largely been brought

about by the discovery of arms companies research grants to LSE academics, pressure on the School has increased following successful use of the Freedom of Information Act and Charities Act. The School's operation and investments are now under increasing scrutiny.

LSE Treasurer Joel Kenrick agreed that the LSE has been lucky that the issue had not fallen on them through negative media attention yet, since the School bears a large profile

in the United Kingdom and abroad. "I think it's important the LSE is proactive in adopting an SRI policy and doesn't wait until facing student protests and media investigations before responding. I am hopeful the School will recognise this and work with us over the next year to adopt our proposals. Doing so would certainly insulate the LSE from a lot of student and media flak over the next year."



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Students grill Davies at termly UGM appearance

Ali Moussavi
Senior Reporter

LSE Director, Sir Howard Davies, spoke at the Union General Meeting (UGM) on 9 November. He gave a brief report in which he discussed developments in the School followed by questions from students.

Davies started his speech by requesting "a one-minute silence today in memory of the man who has run British foreign defence policy for the last six years - Donald Rumsfeld," which drew a round of applause from the audience.

He proceeded to address more serious issues, including space problems on campus, degree classifications, new visa charges and LSE's position on recent league tables.

Davies discussed the increasing number of students at the LSE and the need for greater space on campus. The School, he reported, has begun work on dealing with this issue - opening the lower floor of Tower One this year and continuing work on the New Academic Building that is to open in 2008. The new building will "double" the School's teaching space, he said.

He also discussed the School's degree awarding powers. It is understood that by 2008 the LSE will have individual degree awarding powers separate from the University of London.

Davies also spoke about the new proposals being circulated to change degree classifications from the traditional 'First Class' to 'Pass' system, as well as new government plans to increase visa charges. He encouraged the student body to voice its opinion, which he said was "not something I would normally say."

He outlined a report from the Higher Education Policy

Institute which noted the number of hours undergraduates at different institutions spent on academic work per week. According to the report, LSE law students spend less time working than students at the University of Westminster, whilst Cambridge University law students on average work 50 percent more hours per week.

Mentioning that the LSE was ranked one above the last in the mathematics rankings, Davies expressed concern that employers would view the results negatively.

At numerous times in his speech, Davies was applauded and his humour was met with laughter and enthusiasm from both the ground floor and the balcony.

Ending his speech, Davies pointed to collaboration between the School and the Students' Union (SU) on issues such as environmental policy and the recent marches and campaigns.

During the session of questions that followed, Davies was challenged on numerous occasions by LSE students on a variety of issues.

James Caspell, SU Postgraduate Students' Officer, asked in the context of the Living Wage Campaign, "Howard, if you weren't our director, would you consider cleaning our toilets for £ 5.35 an hour?" Davies paused and asked whether it was a rhetorical question before answering that he wouldn't.

He was challenged again on the topic by SU International Students Officer, Fadhil Bakeer Markar who asked him "why not?", to which Davies responded that it was "[Caspell's] question. Let him ask his own questions."

Davies did address the topic after another question and responded, "none of us are proud about the wage rate embedded in the contract...I'm

not personally very happy."

He explained that he will be meeting with the necessary people both from the School and the Living Wage Campaign to discuss the contract renewal of cleaners. While acknowledging financial pressures, Davies seemed optimistic, "I think it is highly likely that when the contracts come up for renewal they will be renewed...with higher wage rates for our cleaners built into them."

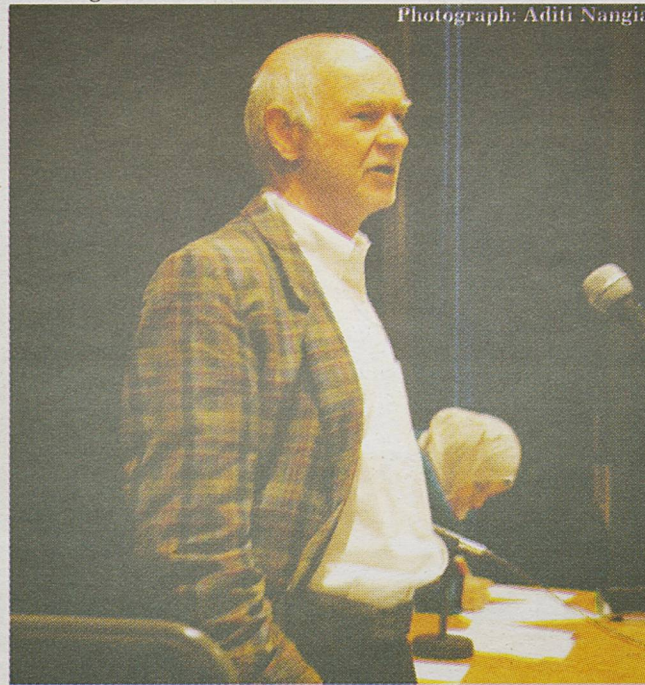
Caspell later issued a statement saying that "The fact that our director would not accept poverty pay himself yet apparently sees it as acceptable for our cleaners, reeks of hypocrisy. The School's administration needs to realise that the current exploitation of our cleaners is regarded as shameful and unacceptable by most students and academics. I hope they will realise this at the next meeting of the Academic Planning and Resources

Committee and endorse the Living Wage Campaign's proposal."

Bakeer Markar also challenged Davies on the amount of fees paid by international students. Davies' response outlined the financial situation the School is in. "Our cost base is rising more rapidly than we would ideally like. We have actually increased fees by less than the rise in [costs]."

When asked about the money the LSE takes from arms manufacturers, and the degree to which the School will take into account the UGM motion opposing the acceptance of such money, Davies replied that the UGM motion will not affect the decision of the School.

He said that the money was taken for research purposes by two LSE professors and forbidding them from doing so would be a contravention of their academic freedom.



Photograph: Aditi Nangia

Davies speaks

Living Wage Campaign demonstrates outside APRC

- Students gather outside Old Building to lobby for higher wages for cleaners
- Results of APRC meeting inconclusive

Ali Moussavi
Senior Reporter

The 'Living Wage Campaign' continued this week as a demonstration was held by LSE students. It was held to coincide with the arrival of the members of the Academic Planning and Resources Committee (APRC) for a meeting at the Old Building on Tuesday.

Students gathered outside

the building with banners and posters, dressed as LSE cleaners to display solidarity. While the campaign itself has in the vicinity of 395 members, the demonstration included approximately 50 LSE students.

Nonetheless, their presence was felt both outside and in the lobby of the Old Building.

It was later learnt that the results of the APRC meeting were inconclusive. However, a commitment was made to increase wages.

Sam Causton, the organiser of the Living Wage Campaign and the Chairman of the LSE Citizens for Social Justice Society told *The Beaver* that "the strength of feeling that the LSE should pay its cleaners a Living Wage was shown once again as students demonstrated outside the APRC meeting...The School is listening to the campaign, it remains to be seen however if they will follow the examples of [other employers] in receiving Living Wage employer awards."

The School's contentious policy on cleaners' wages has been met by much student protest. The LSE Citizens for Social Justice Society was set up to support the campaign. They have called for the LSE administration to amend relevant policies to ensure that all LSE contractors pay their employees a Living Wage, as per the Greater London Authority, with fair sick pay and holiday provisions.

ULU petitions TfL to extend discounts

Michael Deas

Over 1800 signatures have been collected so far in the University of London Union (ULU) petition for the extension of Transport for London's student discount scheme.

The campaign aims to extend the existing 30 percent discounts for weekly and monthly travel cards to single and day tickets. The petition will be presented to London Mayor Ken Livingstone, alongside ULU's proposal for the scheme's implementation for the next academic year.

The campaign was initiated by the LSE Students' Union (SU) and endorsed in a motion passed by the Union General Meeting (UGM). It was subsequently picked up by ULU over the summer.

Joel Kenrick, SU Treasurer said, "I'm thrilled that our support for an extension of the TfL discount has become a London-wide campaign. With so many other SUs backing it, the campaign now has a much higher profile and a real chance of success."

ULU argue it is unfair that

the Greater London Authority is offering free travel to under 18s when the majority of under 18 year olds still live at home and have far fewer costs than higher education students. They are also following up complaints about problems with the Oyster application process.

TfL believe that a lot of problems with the current system will be eradicated as the online application process becomes more widely used and are conducting a review of the entire student discount scheme at the end of January.

Ali Dewji, SU Communications Officer, pointed out that this proposal would "reward students who travel in an environmentally-friendly way, by mixing use of the tube or bus with walking or cycling."

He also argued that the existing scheme penalises students who would sometimes walk by committing them to a travel card in order to receive a discount. The proposal would also benefit students who use public transport irregularly.

The LSE SU is directing students to the petition and soliciting case studies from individual students to accompany the ULU proposal.

SU Strategic Plan outlined

Andy Hallet

The long-term priorities of the LSE Students' Union (SU) have been formally set-down in a recently released 'Strategic Plan'. The plan, which is still in the first-draft stage, aims to ensure an effective SU in the years up to 2011.

The nine-page document has important implications for the SU, especially the future Sabbatical Officers for whom it will effectively function as a contract in terms of their responsibilities to the student body.

The Plan, which claims that the SU's primary purpose between now and 2011 is "to enhance the social experience of all students" at the School, is divided into four areas of strategy; sport, welfare, social and educational provision, and representation are all handled separately within the document.

The document was developed following various meetings between Sabbatical Officers, past and present, and the School administration.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, SU Communications Officer

Ali Dewji termed the document "a good starting point" but admitted that "it needs to change substantially before being finalised (to fully adhere) to the standard and best practice in strategic planning."

Dewji said that he was keen to improve the Plan by listening to students' suggestions, and to this end has uploaded a copy of it on to his newly created blog, available at sucoms.blogspot.com.

In terms of specific targets, the Plan aims for a turnout of 40 percent in SU elections, as well as ensuring the Union is visited at least once a week by three-quarters of the student body and, by 2011, students having to wait no more than two days in the SU Advice and Counselling Centre.

However, the vast majority of the Plan is qualitative-based. Reflecting the LSE's history of student activism, the Plan envisages an SU which can be "a vehicle for our members to affect social change", whilst another point explicitly promises a Media Group which is "independent, legally responsible and relevant to the majority of students".

Residents at Northumberland House smell a rat

Roger Lewis
Senior Reporter

Residents at the newly-opened LSE Northumberland House hall of residence have been experiencing a vermin infestation.

The residence, which opened for the first time in September, is said to be "riddled" with mice. Residents first raised concerns when droppings were found in rooms and mice could be heard running up and down the corridors. The Hall's 370 occupants are reported to have trouble with mice in their rooms and kitchens, while traps designed to control the problem have been placed in rooms when residents have requested them.

Rentokil Initial, a business services company, has the contract for all LSE residences for controlling vermin and other pests. They have baited the building and bristle strips are being fitted to the doors.

Located on Northumberland Avenue and close to Trafalgar Square, Northumberland House was purchased from the Ministry of Defence and planning permission to convert the building was granted in 2005. On-going refurbishment of the building next to the Hall has meant the vermin have moved from the coldest parts of the building to the warmest, now that Northumberland is re-inhabited.

When asked about the mice problems Arand Vora, a General Course student, told *The Beaver*, "One of my friends had his belt chewed through while he was sleeping. It is just disgusting." Other reports concerning the mice include destroyed food and clothes, leaving excrement, mating, and the discovery of mouse corpses.

Ian Spencer, Head of Residential Services at the LSE, advised students not to leave any food in their rooms and to ensure all food in kitchens is kept in secure plastic containers. He said "Unfortunately there are some kitchens which are not being kept to the required standard. Staff are monitoring the situation daily to ensure that kitchens are being kept well cleaned."

He added "We will only eradicate the mice if residents assist in the problem."

Some students have questioned the adequacy of the response of the Hall, which one student described as "poor". The first-year undergraduate said "When we first found mice, Hall staff were really unhelpful. We report the vermin and nothing seems to happen."

Louise Robinson, the LSE Students' Union (SU) Residences Officer, stated "Clearly vermin in a residence is not a pleasant experience for anyone involved, but I am confident this can be resolved in an effective way. Obviously student habits are not to blame in this, but we should all take steps to minimise comfort of our 'furry friends'. Keep crumbs cleared and report incidents when and if they occur."

Northumberland House, described by one commentator as a "palace", is one of the most expensive LSE halls. With the most desirable rooms costing £144 a week, residents are distressed. One student said "We really shouldn't have to put up with this. Northumberland is brand new and we are paying for that."

Vermin have also recently been reported at High Holborn and Passfield Hall, where baits have been set, while Rosebery Hall is said to have had problems with mice last year.

variety of themed nights, to invite more bands and to invite societies to "host" Crush in the earlier part of the night between eight to ten pm.

The general condition of the Quad is also expected to be improved with a thorough re-

"Going by pathetic LSE tradition, I think people prefer 'socialising' in the Library as opposed to in the SU and with the 24-hour opening now, there is even more of a reason for the geeks to cheer."

Alasdair Barr

decoration over the Christmas holiday.

Krebbers argued however, that there was a need for the SU to promote itself better in the short term. He said that he "didn't feel students were



Mousetrap (inset) at a kitchen in Northumberland House

Photograph: Roger Lewis



Union Jack

Well, no chocolates or flowers for Returning Roberts the undemocratic election-supremo, just questions about who the hell she was and how we can get rid of her since no-one ever voted for her in the first place. Thanks to her sloppy electoral practice (what did anyone expect from someone who's been at LSE for 6 weeks and who's only qualification was knowing Hague Ketteringham) the retro C&S re-re-election got underway. This time Roberts cleverly arranged the 'election' with 5 second speeches, no questions and a few more candidates bumped off to guarantee the Same Old Faces got back on. Way to go Ketteringham, Courtney and Douglas, but Jack doesn't think the AU will be pleased to see your smug faces back in business. No-confidence C&S anyone?

Meanwhile Joel was left to run the Union (no change there then) and Dewj-bag was again fending off the angry masses who think he's only busy doing nothing (still no change).

Speaking of the Dewj-bag, he was again busy directing people to his all-encompassing blog. Jack followed the Dewj's advice and took a look- and hadn't it grown?! It now has its own site- <http://sucomms.blogspot.com/> where lucky readers can hear more of Ali's thoughts on everything and see his daily schedule. Or they could until it was scrapped after one day when someone noticed that his diary started at 12, finished at 5 and mostly involved 'Exec Bonding time'. Was Dewj referring to Zoe Sullivan? At least Nick Green helped the Dewj-bag out by reminding us that all the comms officers have been a little shit.

Glorious Green's other contribution to this week's UGM frolics was an attempt at non-confidencing Dazed O'Brien. Alas it fell but in the interests of her keeping her pitiful greasy mawlers on the job for more than another week OUR EDITOR'S NAME IS SID, NOT SAM! At least Bemused O'Brien was not quite so much Discriminatory Daisy this week. Not a Vish in sight.

But it was racism elsewhere on campus that got the lefties hot under their unwashed collars. Back from the dead stepped El Barham, celebrating her centenary at LSE and with her a new-comer to the champagne socialist fold; Laura Pesky-Brown. With their fur-trimmed boots, matching trench coats, cut glass vowels and mechanical voices, they were the picture of the proletariat, urging us to condemn a piece of racist research they admitted they'd never read. Few were convinced and they were sent packing back to their gated communities, but not before Pesky had waved the AU good bye with both her middle fingers.

And that was all. Enjoy it while you can, if we keep repressing disabled people like this, Cesspit and Dilhole-Fisher will get the UGM kicked out and we'll be meeting in the rain. And that wouldn't be nearly as much fun...

CONTINUED FROM

FRONT PAGE

counts tailored for students, Unions throughout the country have faced greater competition and are, as a result, receiving reduced takings at the till.

SU Societies Officer, Arthur Krebbers, pointed to the trend amongst societies of the LSE SU of finding external venues to hold parties and other functions.

He noted that many find "highly attractive external venues for their events. [This] does mean that Union facilities can get underused."

Kenrick accepted the general trend, but pointed out that the Underground bar was still booked for every night until the end of term.

He said that the SU was seeking new ways of providing facilities students need in the short and longer term. He pointed to plans to introduce Juice Bars, provide more social spaces and to expand catering as the SU prepared to face expansion with the opening of the new 24 Kingsway building in 2008.

Figures in the SU have also revealed that there are plans to attract more people to Crush. These include a greater

going out less...the Union should allocate more resources towards devising a holistic and active marketing campaign. Given our location and good value for money, it shouldn't be hard finding potential partners."

Despite the fall in sales, the statistics also reveal an increase in revenue in the SU Shop and SU Café of 18 percent and 28 percent respectively.

The financial success of the Shop is thought to be reflective of the outright success of the Café following the improvements made with a grant from the Annual School fund in January this year. It is unclear if the Shop is benefiting because of an increase in overall student numbers, or because students are spending more of their budget on materials for academic work rather than buying drinks at Crush.

Barr expressed the realisation that if students wanted to party at University, they should have gone to Nottingham Trent. "Going by pathetic LSE tradition, I think people prefer 'socialising' in the Library as opposed to in the SU and with the 24-hour opening now, there is even more of a reason for the geeks to cheer," he said.

Davies to chair Booker Prize judges

Tanya Rajapakse
News Editor

Director of the LSE, Howard Davies, is to chair the judging panel for the Man Booker Prize for Fiction 2007. The announcement was made last Friday.

Also known as the Booker Prize, the Man Booker Prize for Fiction is the United Kingdom's most coveted literary award. Established in 1969 by Booker Plc, the award is currently sponsored by Man Group Plc. Past winners include Salman Rushdie, Nadine Gordimer, J.M.Coetzee and Margaret Atwood.

This year's winner was Kiran Desai, who took home the £50,000 prize for the novel *The Inheritance of Loss*.

Prior to his appointment as Director of the LSE, Davies served as the Chairman of the Financial Services Authority and before that as Deputy

Governor of the Bank of England. He is also a Trustee of the Tate Gallery.

In addition to financial activities Davies is also an avid reader, having been a reviewer for *The Times* newspaper and the *Literary Review* magazine. A press release on the LSE website notes that he is "a member of the Powys and Wyndham Lewis Societies" as well as "a member of the governing body, Royal Academy of Music; Patron of Working Families; and in 2004 was elected to an honorary fellowship at Merton College."

Davies was quoted as saying "I am thrilled to have been asked to chair the Man Booker judges. Next to playing cricket for England - and the selectors have again ignored me - it is my highest ambition."

The shortlist for the prize will be announced in September 2007. An awards ceremony will be held in October to announce the winner.

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US academic institutions are leading the way in terms of SRI. The financial independence of LSE's US counterparts has led to endowments which largely consist of independent donations. This, along with their large media profiles, has made SRI a practical necessity at Harvard, Yale, Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania.

Yet even in the UK, some form of SRI policy exists at numerous academic institutions. Of the UK institutions with the twenty largest endowments, at least eight, including Oxford, Edinburgh and UCL pursue SRI. As a result, many universities no longer invest in arms or tobacco companies, nor those known to be linked with supporting oppressive regimes, human rights abuses or environmental degradation.

The document argues that SRI policies would not be disadvantageous to the LSE as an academic institution highly dependent on its endowment. A recent survey indicated that adopting an SRI policy does not necessarily involve sacrificing financial returns. The Church of England, who have a particularly stringent SRI policy, has the second best performing investment portfolio of 1000 public and not-for-profit organisations in the country.

The report suggests that the Investment's Subcommittee construct an SRI policy. It also recommends the construction of an SRI Working Group, which should consist of interested parties, Governors, academics and designated representatives of the SU.

Kenrick argues that this could certainly be an issue for campaigning by students – indeed the document itself points to student opinion as necessitating an SRI policy. However, the working group

will be seen as the primary vehicle for student lobbying. It is hoped students with concerns about the LSE's investments would be able to approach this body in order to voice them.

The paper has been submitted to the Court of Governors and the LSE Council and awaits discussion. On Saturday evening, sources close to *The Beaver* said that initial responses from the School's financial consultants have been positive.

Arms Shares	
1. UCL -	£1,591,627
2. Trinity Hall, Cambridge -	£1,252,000
3. University of Liverpool -	£1,215,000
4. Nuffield College, Oxford -	£920,000
5. King's College -	£903,550
6. New College, Oxford -	£850,670
7. St Hilda's College, Oxford -	£823,555
8. University of Hull -	£745,192
9. University of York -	£618,923
10. University of Manchester -	£575,640

Source: Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) Press Release

Recently, *The Beaver* was contacted by the organisation, Campaign Against the Arms Trade who have published research which indicates that

UK universities own shares in the arms trade worth over 15 million pounds according to figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

The organisation's press release showed that 45 universities and university colleges have admitted that they own shares in at least one top arms company. Three institutions – UCL, Trinity Hall Cambridge and the University of Liverpool – each hold arms shares worth over a million pounds.

However, more importantly, the source responsible in CAAT told *The Beaver* that when he contacted the LSE and asked whether the University had holdings in arms companies, the School said that it had no direct holdings in arms companies. However, the School did tell CAAT that they invest 16 million pounds of their endowed donations using the BGI Charitak UK Equity Index Fund – a tracker fund designed for charities. They did not have details of individual holdings within the fund.

The source in CAAT stated that under no circumstances was CAAT alleging that the LSE indirectly uses this fund to invest in arms companies, but said that in cases like this financial transparency is important.

Tim Street, Co-ordinator of the CAAT Universities Network said: "It is inexcusable for an institution based on learning and progress to fund a trade that fuels war and perpetuates poverty. Alternative investments are financially beneficial as well as ethically clean. In the last year, students from London to Bangor have taken on the arms companies and won. We are confident that students and university staff will be successful in campaigning for clean investment at many more universities throughout the UK."

Disabilities Awareness Week hailed a success

Photograph: Liam Chambers



The Disabilities Awareness Week banner on Houghton Street

Timothy Root
News Editor

The LSE Students' Union (SU) Disabilities Awareness Week was reportedly a success, barring a no-show from scheduled speaker Anne McGuire MP.

Events included the official opening of the ramp in front of the Old Building by Bert Massie, Chair of the Disability Rights Commission, an Old Theatre discussion on Autism, a showing of 'A Beautiful Mind' in association with the LSE Film Society and two days of sign language lessons. The events were met with much enthusiasm from students on

campus.

A highlight of the week disappointingly didn't go according to plan however, as Anne McGuire, Minister of Disabilities, failed to show up to talk about her role in the government and disability employment.

Emma Hallgren, LSE SU Disabilities Officer, having organised the talk through Sue Hogget, McGuire's diary manager and one of her speech writers, was placed in an awkward position on Tuesday when she was forced to call McGuire's office to find out where she was. She was told by someone at the office that McGuire was at Number 10, and received an apology over

the phone.

Hallgren expressed serious disappointment when talking to *The Beaver* saying, "I have heard nothing from them since and I have not received a formal or written apology. I was told all events with the Minister were subject to parliamentary business, but I don't think it's too much to ask for at least notification of cancellation."

She described the disability alumni lunch that was followed by a tour of the School to show off recent accessibility improvements as a particular success, and said that she and her team were going to meet to discuss ways to improve next year.

The Chancellors' Tales: Howe and Lawson visit book launch



Left to right: Keegan, Osborne, Goodhart, Chote, Burns

Roger Lewis
Senior Reporter

A new book including reminiscences by five surviving Chancellors of the Exchequer from Lord Healey in the 1970s to Kenneth Clarke MP in the 1990s, was launched at a public debate at the LSE last Wednesday.

The Chancellors' Tales, published by Polity and edited by the School's Director Howard Davies, is the culmination of a project seeking to collaborate the stories of five Chancellors while they are still alive.

Each Chancellor – Lord Denis Healey (1974-79), Lord Geoffrey Howe (1979-84), Lord Nigel Lawson (1984-89), Lord

Norman Lamont (1990-93) and Kenneth Clarke (1993-97) – have previously given individual lectures on their time in office, which were held at the LSE in autumn 2004.

Chaired by Sir Charles Goodhart, panellists Lord Burns, George Osborne MP, William Keegan and Robert Chote debated the Chancellors' conclusions over the hour. In

the audience were Howe and Lawson, successive Chancellors under Baroness Thatcher between 1979 and 1989. Virginia Bottomley, a member of John Major's cabinet in the 1990s and an alumnus of the LSE, was also present.

After the formal panel discussion the former Chancellors provided a reflection on their time in office. Howe discussed the famous letter to *The Times* newspaper, when 364 economists wrote to the paper condemning his 1981 budget when he raised taxes and cut spending. Howe went on to say that the success of the economy after then and the low inflation it generated, have won the day despite the criticism they received at the time.

Lawson discussed the implications of the changes he made in the tax regime in the late 1980s, which saw a substantial reduction in the amount of national income spent by the state.

Answering the question posed by Davies at the lecture's opening, as to whether the British economy has reached 'the end of history' with regard to our low inflation and stable growth regime, Osborne, the Conservative Party's Shadow Chancellor, stated "there was still plenty of history to be made."

Decrease in the number of US students in the UK

Rajan Patel
Senior Reporter

The number of enrolments by American students at British universities fell this year, according to a report in *The Guardian* newspaper last week.

The article, entitled 'US students start to shun UK universities', highlighted a 0.5 per cent fall in enrolments this year. Although Britain remains the most popular destination for US students studying abroad, UK institutions are facing stiffer competition from continental universities.

Over the same period, enrolments at Italian universities shot up by 13.4 per cent, while a more modest rise of 3.6 per cent was recorded in Spain.

The article made no attempt to assess possible causes for these results. However, a recent investigation conducted by *The Guardian* into international students' fees has revealed a growing divergence between international and home students' costs.

The LSE was found to be one of the most expensive UK institutions for international undergraduates, who pay an average of £11,418 per year in tuition fees – nearly four times

the amount paid by home students.

Fadhil Bakeer Markar, the LSE Students' Union (SU) International Students' Officer, agreed that LSE fees are "high compared to other universities". He suggested that the current surpluses made by the School should be used "at the very least to freeze the rise of fees for a couple of years or, of course, to cut them down."

Anushka Shenoy, the SU General Course Representative, added that the search for a "unique cultural experience during their time abroad" might be causing US students to look beyond the UK.

"I have friends in Morocco, Madrid, and Ghana this semester, all of which provide radically different experiences that make the UK look almost tame."

However, both emphasised the perceived excellence of the institution and welcoming atmosphere as factors which may help the LSE prove an exception to the national trend.

The large General Course population at the School should also sustain US enrolment. It is believed that there were more applications than places for General Course positions this year, and it is hoped that this result will continue in coming years.

Passfield celebrates official opening after start-of-term complications

Doug Oliver
Senior Reporter

The LSE's Passfield Hall of Residence was officially re-opened last Thursday by the Mayor of Camden, Jill Fraser.

The official event - attended by LSE Director, Howard Davies, and a large number of former residents - comes a few weeks after the most recent residents moved in following a thorough refurbishment which saw the hall closed throughout the previous academic year.

Attendees heard from several former residents who recounted their memories of the LSE's oldest hall.

Named in honour of LSE founder Lord Passfield, the Hall originally opened to 50 male students in October 1950. In the period since it opened, the Hall has gained a reputation for its strong communal spirit, and is remembered with fondness by a large proportion of former students.

Davies commented that when he visits alumni around the world he could not "tell you how many people refer to Passfield. It has such a special place in their hearts." He referred to a couple in Long Island in New York State who named their property 'Passfield' in homage to the residence where they met as LSE students.

After many years of use however, the Georgian building and former hotel, was



Howard Davies and the Mayor of Camden, Jill Fraser, celebrate Passfield's reopening

increasingly in need of refurbishment. The building suffered from a number of incidents of faulty plumbing, leaks, cracks in paintwork and small fires. The project, which cost around £7 million to complete, was complicated by the need to obey English Heritage's planning regulations because of the building's Georgian architecture and also the need to be environmentally efficient.

However, the re-opened Hall was widely praised by for-

mer residents. SU Residences Officer, Louise Robinson, lauded the Hall as an "excellent asset within LSE's great residential portfolio".

Many have been impressed that the work was finished within a year. Refurbishment was only fully completed just after the start of term, with some residents given different LSE accommodation for the first few weeks.

Robinson praised the patience of residents and sin-

gled out Nick Luder, the Hall Committee Interim President, and Joseph Angolano "for all their hard work as students moved in".

There has been some concern that after the year-long closure, the hall might have lost its communal spirit. However, the new Hall President, Orlando Bama, was adamant that there was a "very, very, strong community...and we on the committee are trying to make it better."

Imperial votes to reassociate with NUS

Doug Oliver
Senior Reporter

Students at London's Imperial College voted last week to re-affiliate their Students' Union (SU) to the National Union of Students (NUS).

After a week of intense campaigning, students voted by 53 percent to 47 percent to rejoin the national body which it left over twenty years ago. Turnout was high, at over 30 percent, a record for a University usually known for its apathetic approach towards student politics.

The decision was hailed by Imperial College Union (ICU) President John Collins, who told the Imperial News website *Live!* that he "was delighted".

Joel Kenrick, LSE SU's Treasurer, described the vote as "good news - it shows there is growing support for building a strong national Union." LSE delegate to NUS Conference, Aled Fisher, said he was "happy that Imperial has seen passed (sic) the cynical arguments of the 'No' campaign to return to NUS and stand in solidarity with five million other students."

However, James Folk who led the 'No' campaign at Imperial, told *Live!* the result was "not the right decision for us... since the formation of the NUS, Imperial and its students have never had a good lasting relationship."

The decision to join the NUS was precipitated by Imperial College's recent exit from the University of London. Third-year Civil Engineering student Paul Bevan told *The Beaver* that he voted for affiliation because it "gives us insurance: if we have problems in the future, we know that we will be represented."

The vote was won after several days of campaigning with students dressed up as penguins and giving out sweets and doughnuts.

LSE SU Labour Party Secretary, Daniel Sheldon, was amongst students from other London Colleges who participated in the campaign for the 'Yes' vote. He said he decided to help because he felt "it is important that institutions such as Imperial and LSE are in NUS: leading the organisation from the front."

However, despite joining NUS, Imperial College is thought likely to maintain its independent character. The vote was won with assurances from the 'Yes' campaign of NUS reform and it is likely that delegates from ICU will be amongst the most ardent in calling for the NUS to change its internal democratic structures.

Imperial students must also face up to the financial implications of membership: its cash-strapped Union - which according to *Live!* does not have any extra budget allocation for the year - must now decide where its £35,000 a year affiliation fee will come from.

Meyer on press freedom

Sir Christopher Meyer argues against greater press regulation

Rajan Patel
Senior Reporter

Sir Christopher Meyer, Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) and former British Ambassador to Washington, attacked the unhealthy tightening of "the boundaries of freedom of expression" enjoyed by British newspapers in a lecture given at the LSE last Tuesday.

Speaking as part of the POLIS lecture series on the future of the media, Meyer expressed his concern over difficulties in accessing data under the Freedom of Information Act. He claimed that "in 2006 it is harder to find out what is going on in government than it was 10 years ago."

There was no mention of the acrimony surrounding the publication of 'DC Confidential', Meyer's memoirs of his time as British Ambassador to Washington, as the PCC chairman stuck tightly to his brief throughout.

There was, however, condemnation of the opacity of governmental decision making and criticism of the "spinning" of events as conducted by sophisticated political powers. Meyer stated that the current state of affairs renders "the messengers more important than the policy makers."

The relationship between the Government and the press should be "adversarial", he argued, to ensure that politicians remain accountable.

Meyer related his life-long involvement with both journalism and politics, beginning with a diplomatic posting to the Soviet Union in the 1960s. In such environments, he argued, barriers between politicians and the press break down as both work together to gather information in a closed society.

Working within oppressive regimes - such as the Soviet Union and Spain under General Franco - conditioned his core belief in the freedom of the press as "a sine of democracy", something which must be protected at all costs.

Speaking about the UK press, he praised the diversity of opinion on offer and suggested that "the British reader is better served by his or her press than those in other countries."

Interesting comparisons were also made between British and American journalism. In spite of the US Constitution's First Amendment, which gives unassailable support for the freedom of the press, Meyer observed a much greater "deference to institutions" of government in America than in Britain. This has led, in his opinion, to a more constrained

and less "incisive" style of reporting in America.

In contrast, the partisan nature of many British newspapers is "worn like a badge of honour" by their editors, giving the "consumers of news a real choice" of opinion and the ability to substitute away from content they disagree with.

Looking to the future, he spoke of the challenges posed by 'new media' for external regulators and actors within the market.

The task of regulating the audio-visual content of newspapers' websites is a particularly controversial issue, with no current consensus over who should take responsibility for it. Meyer was keen for the PCC to "plant its standard" in this field, describing alternative regulators - Office of Communications (OfCom) or the European Union (EU) - as "undesirable" in the extreme.

Consumers also have access to an ever-widening range of news content, and distinguishing between "what is reasonably reliable and what is completely unknown" will become a more difficult task.

"Recognition and reputation" of news sources will be extremely important in assisting their choice, which Meyer considers good news for established papers with strong records of insightful reporting.

"Racist" professor escapes condemnation vote at UGM

Ali Moussavi
Senior Reporter

Thursday's Union General Meeting (UGM) was once again ridden with controversy as a motion to voice discontent with LSE academic Dr Satoshi Kanazawa was debated.

The motion was submitted as a result of Kanazawa's contentious research paper which correlates life-expectancy in countries to the average Intelligence Quotient (IQ) level. Ever since publication, accusations of racism have been levelled against Kanazawa by both the national press and the student body at the LSE for suggesting that African nations are poor due to their low IQ levels.

The motion, proposed by Laura Paskell-Brown, argues that "such academic research contributes to a climate in which racist theories become 'acceptable' and can be used by those who wish to propagate the myth that developing nations such as Africa are constrained by their own 'biological inadequacies'."

The motion also made a case for it not being enough for universities to "simply argue for freedom of academic research."

The crux of the proposal was firstly to mandate the LSE Students' Union (SU) Anti-



Laura Paskell-Brown argues in favor of SU disassociation from Kanazawa's research at UGM

Racism Officer to look into exactly what was said by Kanazawa and report back to the UGM, and secondly to mandate the Sabbatical Officers to write to all major UK newspapers distancing the LSE SU from Kanazawa's article.

However a heated debate resulted over the motion. The argument used by the first opposition speaker, Steve Gummer, was that writing to the press would be tantamount to student censure of academics' work without an appropriate process being followed, which would set a dangerous precedent. Gummer was followed by Sean Closs, who stressed the need for academic freedom of expression, also questioning the right of the

LSE SU to express their opinion.

The proposition speakers, Laura Paskell-Brown and El Barham argued that the article was racially deterministic and irresponsibly written and as a consequence its association with the LSE was highly damaging to the School's reputation. It was therefore deemed necessary to distance the LSE SU from such views.

The motion ultimately failed following a close vote on the UGM floor.

It is understood that a letter has since been circulated amongst members of the LSE SU Executive, a majority of whom have signed it in agreement, declaring again that the LSE SU distances itself from Kanazawa's views.

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Give new Council chair a piece of your mind

Andy Hallet urges the LSE student population to rise up and voice their moral outrage at Sir Peter Sutherland's appointment

Andy Hallet



evening.

Sutherland's appointment, as revealed by this newspaper last spring, is the latest in a series of incidents where LSE seems determined to follow the filthy lucre and fawn over the worst examples of human greed. Sutherland has no prior connection to our School, nor indeed UK higher education in general. What he is very good at is personal enrichment, a lesson which may warm the hearts of all the investment banking wannabes in WC2 but should spur the rather more considerate students among us to action. A man who, as chairman, has grown rich on the actions of British Petroleum (BP) simply does not deserve the privilege of being associated with an institution founded by Fabians, and whose past directors include the architect of the British welfare state.

In contrast to that, for me Sutherland parodies all too well the other type of pseudo-statesman. He is the man who, as Attorney-General, pushed

Irish women's rights back decades by banning it under the Fitzgerald administration. As Director-General of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) he was directly responsible for trade rules which force poor countries' markets open and thus promote poverty while Western producers grow fat on their lavish subsidies. There is simply not the space in this article to fully document his appalling record at BP, but it is telling that even by the standards of an oil company Sutherland has reached a new low in contempt for international law, environmental standards and the rights of working people.

What kind of signal does it send when the School invites human-rights abusers from China, has security rough-up Peter Tatchell, takes money from arms companies and asks a monster like Sutherland to become one of the top figures in its administration? At present rate, we may be among the

last few years of LSE students to not be comprised exclusively of identikit City-wannabes.



LSE seems determined to fawn over the worst examples of human greed

That is why the campaign against Sutherland, as with the Living Wage, is one for the School's soul as much as it is about its reputation, a reputa-

tion Howard Davies et al claim to be determined to defend. Their recent behaviour suggests otherwise, and will only get worse if Sutherland is brought in with only meek student opposition.

But there are grounds, I think, for optimism. The lesson of 1966 is that action at the LSE works if there is a broad base of support from students and staff and that action is coordinated across many different levels. A petition against Sutherland, currently including more than 450 names, has been around for months, but time is moving quickly. If you haven't signed it yet, do so now. In true LSE fashion, there's even a Facebook group regarding his appointment. Even the relatively apathetic amongst you must be bothered to sign up to those two things, even if you do nothing else in the anti-Sutherland campaign. You do not need to be an ideologue or hack to make a difference, and the small steps ultimately create the big ones

which are the road to victory.

So make a noise. Of course look into Sutherland's record yourself, and if you really think he is a good human being feel free to get back to writing your Goldman Sachs application. But if you happen to care about other human beings, as well as yourself, sign our petition and get on the campaign email list. Time is of the essence if we are to embarrass both Sutherland and the School sufficiently so that he cannot take up the position of Council Chair. A wiser Labour Prime Minister than the one we have currently once remarked, at the time of LSE's 60s radicalness, that his party was about "a moral crusade or it is nothing". If you feel the same about our School then I urge you to protest and kick up a fuss in the best tradition of our predecessors, and ensure Peter Sutherland knows he is not welcome at the LSE.

Sir Peter Sutherland is appearing at the LSE this Wednesday to give a public lecture.

LSE should have responsible investments

James Caspell argues that the School should be thinking about its morals and its students when splashing the cash

James Caspell



account the social, ethical and environmental impact of a company when investing in it; it is an acknowledgement that receiving a portion of a company's profits in dividends and capital returns is morally

Information Act and Charities Act, the School's operations and investments have and will continue to be placed under increasing scrutiny, which will continue to have an adverse affect on its reputation com-

Of the UK's higher education institutes with the twenty largest endowments, at least eight - including Oxford, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, KCL & UCL - have some form of SRI policy. As a result, many universities no longer invest in arms or tobacco companies, nor those known to be linked with supporting oppressive regimes, human rights abuses or environmental degradation.

Edinburgh University has recently moved from a basic policy of investment transparency to one of active SRI implemented by joint committees of students and staff. Their policy allows "any group within the University to draw attention to any investment held by the University that is considered 'unethical'", with criteria for judging whether action was necessary including, but not being limited to "human rights abuse, discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or disability and serious and persistent environmental damage." SOAS and the University of East Anglia have recently divested from arms companies following concerns raised by students, academics and governors.

In the United States many "Ivy League" universities, including Columbia, Yale, Harvard, Dartmouth College and the University of Pennsylvania implement SRI policies, most recently including divestment from Sudan over Darfur, often through an Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investment. LSE currently has no such committee.

For an institution as

prominent as LSE not to have its own SRI policy is not just ethically inadequate but it will have an impact on prospective donors, as well as leading to damage to the reputation of the School as it continues to betray a historical commitment to the "betterment of society".

An SRI policy needn't be unprofitable. The Church of England, who have a particularly stringent SRI policy, has the 2nd best performing investment portfolio of 1000 public and not-for profit organisations in the country

that were recently surveyed, indicating that adopting an SRI policy does not need to involve sacrificing financial returns.

There are clear moral, environmental and financial reasons why LSE should strive to become a centre of excellence in respect of its ethical, as well as academic, standards. It is time for the School's investments policy to take into account the operations of the companies that it profits from; it's time for LSE to take responsibility.

LSE currently has no SRI



equivalent to the investor themselves directly engaging in the activities by which those profits are made.

Many students are concerned that the lack of a proactive SRI strategy means that LSE's investments are used to sponsor environmental destruction, exploitative working conditions, animal testing and the dissemination of arms and human rights abuses around the world. In fact this is almost certainly the case; the School invests through pooled funds in companies such as Shell, BP, GlaxoSmithKline and several prominent arms companies. Aside from the ethical failings of such investments, with the advent of the Freedom of

pared to other leading universities if an SRI strategy is not adopted.

As public awareness of SRI continues to grow and is considered the norm for academic institutions, so will its importance to alumni, donors, students and potential applicants continue to increase. Adverse public perceptions of the LSE's ethical standards are therefore increasingly likely to affect the School's ability to compete in the ever more competitive world of university funding.

The case for SRI is already recognised by many of LSE's most successful competitors, both in the UK and the USA:



Off the record, on the QT, and very... hush-hush

Hacktivist has received information that Caspell Clone Aled believes spreading Green propaganda is more important than performing his duties as an Executive Officer of the Union. In his own words he says that all he did to supervise Freshers Fair for the Union was ask "people if they had any 'concerns' and then return to the Green stall!"

The Clone obviously takes his mission as self-proclaimed politically-correct police chief more seriously; as is evident in his attempt to take the moral high ground against 'Free Speech King Gummer,' although Hacktivist reckons Gummy Bear is only a great fan of free speech, because it allows him to hear the sound of his own pre-pubescent, squeaky voice.

Meanwhile Zoe 'Illegally Blonde' Sullivan is enjoying her new found status as a Stepford Wife in the household of Incompetent Comms

Officer Can't-Dewji-it. Whilst he is busy planning exotic holidays and doing the weekly shop in Sainsbury's with his arm candy, it seems he has forgotten he isn't just being paid £22,000 a year to scribble some nonsense on the internet. As for the Stepford Wife - Careful Mrs. Can't Dewji-it, don't get too carried away being a trophy wife, you have a Sabb campaign to run and reports are coming in of some political heavyweights entering the race...

The eyes of Hacktivist also suggest D-Oliver of Returning Officer Cat-Fight fame was allegedly high on poppers at last week's Crush and embarrassed himself by performing his own version of Erotica. Well they do say guys should take poppers in order to 'loosen up.'

Let YOUR tongue loosen up; be an eye for Hacktivist: hacktivist@tellusthegossip.com

Over recent years, the School's administration has demonstrated how woefully out of touch it is with the students who pay their wages: exploiting our cleaners on poverty pay, introducing spiralling tuition fees that squeeze out students from the poorest backgrounds and presenting Peter Sutherland, Chair of BP - a company responsible for criminal environmental and worker abuses - as the only 'choice' to become LSE Chair in 2008 all indicate that Howard Davies et al. are entirely out of touch with the views of the average student.

Whilst other universities respond to the concerns of their students and academics, LSE is left behind concerning yet another issue regarding social justice which has already hit the headlines this year: socially responsible investment.

This week, LSE's Investments Subcommittee will meet and receive a paper from the Students' Union proposing that the School adopts a 'socially responsible' investment policy to place us on a par with the world's other leading educational institutions.

Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) is an investment policy that takes into

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Last week *The Beaver* printed articles on LSE's relationship with China's government, now the LSE populace writes letters back...

China reports- "a joke"

Cao Qin takes issue with last week's *Beaver* articles

Dear Sir,

I am a student from mainland China. I read the articles on page 1,2,6 and 7 in this week's *Beaver*. Concerning the discussion about the Communist Party and LSE, I have already wrote a longer and less cautious email the Mr. Leeshai Lemish. So in this one I just want to a few points which seems particular confusing to me.

In page one, it is said that Falun Gong is "a peaceful spiritual practice based in traditional Chinese self-cultivation techniques". I have to confess that this is the funniest joke I have heard in the last couple of months. The mainstream tradition of China is Confucianism, while the textbooks for Falun Gong members are just the leader's unreasonable lectures, which sometimes refer to extracts from Buddhist writings. It is very much like the method of faith healing by the Christian Scientists. "Cult" is a better name for it than "spiritual cultivation". One of the famous materials about the leader of Falun Gong is a video which shows that he is "healing" a patient by clapping the patient's leg. As long as I know, even in pre-modern China, such action would

be condemned as witchcraft (I cannot think of more appropriate term). When a Chinese person is ill, the traditional way is to take traditional Chinese medicine, rather than curing by spiritual cultivation, as the leader of Falun Gong suggests. He is an ignorant man, who (if I remember cor-

I cannot remember anything the post-Mao regime did comparable to the Holocaust

rectly) did not finish high school. I wonder whether any of you have read one of Falun Gong's publications, in which that leader uses light years as the measuring unit of time.

In page two, you quote someone who was prosecuted by the Chinese government. I can understand his feeling towards the regime, but I cannot agree with his accusing the current one as "an evil regime which is much worse than the Nazis ever were". I cannot

remember anything the post-Mao government did that is comparable to the Holocaust. Today you can easily find most of

the major works by Hayek and Popper (in Chinese version) in the bookshops in China, and you can also easily buy movies from Chaplin to Scorsese (whose *Kundun* outraged the Chinese government) in the videoshops. I cannot see why the Nazi's are better. I believe a prominent professor in the Government Department says that the current Chinese regime undoubtedly satisfies the minimum moral requirement (I cannot refer to the exact book and citation since I am not in the library now, but I believe I am correct). I am not sure whether you agree with Zhao's viewpoint, but perhaps a little counter-argument is better than none.

In page 7, it said that "[f]or a representative of a party that has long gone on the rampage against Confucius' ideologies and resorted to smashing the scholar's statues outright, the smiling in auguration of a similar effigy by Jia, is even more



Photo: Marie Moore

puzzling".

It is true that Confucius and his theory were discredited in Mao's era, but the Cultural Revolution has been officially denounced by the Party. So I cannot see the problem of a bureaucrat of the Party-State today doing something positive about Confucianism. Some of the American Founding Fathers were slave owners, but if we see an American school textbook which praises both Jefferson and Lincoln, I think it is extremely cynical to say that is a self-contradictory hypocrisy.

I am not trying to defend anyone or anything. Among my friends, I am known as a rather radical critic of the current Chinese regime. I just feel somewhat uneasy about your report, which seems to show us a black and white scene. So some more information might be useful.

Edward Wang and Theresa Gao think Sidhanth Kamath got it wrong on the front page.

We're shocked

Dear Sir,

We couldn't be more shocked and angry as we read the front page of this week's *Beaver* "China and LSE" by Sidhanth Kamath, which is full of false and misleading allegations about China and Falun Gong Movement. We don't want to argue here about the article, as it is so obviously fallacious to anyone who has a little knowledge about China and the truth of Fulan Gong Movement.

A free and independent media doesn't mean a media that gives false information to its readers

As Chinese students, we are deeply hurt by his article. We cannot help wondering why such an article could possibly appear on the front page of the only newspaper in a world-leading institution in political science. Although this

is a newspaper of the Union, inevitably it has an influence over all the students at LSE and should be representative of the voices of students.

To the author Sidhanth Kamath, I am really interested in the source of his judgments. Is this a true reflection from any of his experience in China or just words from nowhere? These kind of judgments towards China have always happened from 1980 to 1990, where some media were dominated by people who wanted to give a false and even extreme impression towards China. Nowadays, most newspapers are objective and honest when reporting events in China. Only in some newspapers supported by Falun Gong movement itself can you see this kind of dishonest and deliberately misleading article aimed at blinding people from knowing the truth about China. So, you can imagine, how greatly we are shocked when we read this article. I am sure that Sidhanth Kamath did not write this article based on his knowledge about China, but from other sources, none of which is objective and correct. A free and independent media doesn't mean a media that gives false knowledge to the readers, especially in LSE.

Innocent until proven guilty

Simon Wang and Tony Hou reply to Leeshai Lemish from *The Beaver's* C&A last week

Dear Sir,

It's such a pity after reading Leeshai Lemish's article last week about Jia Qinglin - a fully western stereotypical view of Chinese Politics - that all we can do is sigh. It's not anger, or outrage that we feel, it's just... sadness.

Now let us get this straight. Neither of us are Chinese citizens - we are both British citizens holding British passports, and have lived in the United Kingdom for the majority of our lives. Although we are ethnically Chinese, we grew up with the British educational system, and have British political views. We were told when coming to the LSE that LSE was one of the most diverse

and international schools in the United Kingdom and the world, so it is surprising that such an old fashioned opinion could have emerged from the pages of *The Beaver*.

We are not arguing against Lemish's article, we would just like to put forward the idea that the whole situation has been blown out of proportion. There is currently no guilty verdict and only one lawsuit has been filed from one accusation - thus, it is hardly the grounds to write such a damning article. Lemish implies in his article that Qinglin has already been convicted. It really seems to us that he is exploiting the image of Chinese politics in the Western world - the real truth has not yet been internationally set - there is no actual physical

proof of the things he has claimed. After all, if Donald Rumsfeld or George W. Bush came to LSE - would the same accusations have been made, the same opinions voiced due to (at least claimed) crimes against humanity in Iraq? It is unlikely, since the Western perception of American politics is completely different. Exploiting this bad image of Chinese Politics is surely bad for both Eastern and Western cultures.

Lemish also questions why LSE is 'courting' China. Does he not realise that China is one of the fastest growing economies in the world? Does he not realise that a large proportion of LSE students themselves are Chinese? Therefore, surely it is vital for the LSE to have connections with China. This is not a bad thing. The Cultural Revolution has now been over for over forty years. The Chinese Government is not going around China smashing statues of Confucius. It is unfair to make assumptions which are either untrue or irrelevant. Lemish was simply focussing on the negative element of Chinese politics and blowing it way out of proportion.

Qinglin did not come to LSE to spread Communist propaganda, but to bridge gaps between Eastern and Western culture. Why destroy those bridges? Why condemn cooperation between China and the Western World? We are two British citizens and we are just... saddened, think how actual Chinese students feel.



Photo: Maria Moore

LSE DRAMA SOCIETY PRESENTS

SILENCE



FRI 24 Nov 2006 7PM

MON 27 Nov 2006 8PM

TUE 28 Nov 2006 8.30PM

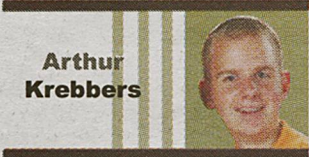
VENUE: OLD THEATRE

Tickets: £3 for Members, £4 otherwise

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Don't give up on ULU

Keep the London union that's for students, says Arthur Krebbers



You don't have to be an apocalyptic to believe that 'the end is nigh' for the University of London. That great federal conglomerate – founded in 1836 – is currently having to weather one of the worst storms that has hit it in recent history. With Imperial College dropping out, and several other esteemed universities almost certainly set to follow suit (including the LSE), many wonder what future remains for pan-London university networks. Though the upper echelons of academia may have given up on co-operation, that doesn't mean we students will.

It is essential that students based in London have a formal structure through which to unite and exchange ideas and best practices.

Student issues are hardly ever an isolated affair. The matters that lie close to our hearts – such as tuition fees, accommodation and transport costs – unite us with students across London. Issues such as affordability and student con-

cessions require us to join forces across the capital and make sure one powerful voice is heard, all the way into the offices of London Transport, the Mayor of London and 10 Downing Street.

ULU has 100,000 students and can take a lead in lobbying

Our day-to-day concerns transgress mere bread and butter issues, however. Recent political engagement has shown that students across the city feel equally strongly about matters relating to non-discrimination, tolerance and respect. As a platform for over a hundred thousand students, ULU can take a lead role in discussing and lobbying on these issues. It can thereby initiate wider public debate on such matters as secretive police investigations on campus and the problematic services offered by banks to international students.

Being affiliated with a London-wide organisation offers additional advantages. It can widen one's social network by providing inter-university societies, sport clubs and cafes. This way, you are able to meet a vast array of students you would never have come across around Houghton Street, such as potential surgeons, engineers and physicists.

As well as this, being able to tap into a wider student population means more niche-interests will be covered. ULU already has a reasonable number of clubs and societies which would struggle to find enough rank and file only on one campus. Examples are the Buddhist, Sudanese and Lifesaving organisations.

The coming years will prove crucial for the survival of ULU. If – as expected – it disentangles itself from a devolving parent organisation, it will have to canvass hard for new associate students' unions to sustain its flow of income. At the same time, it will have to invest heavily in its governance structure and communication with its increasingly critical membership.

It is by no means certain that ULU will be able to revamp itself. If it does, however, that is definitely a good thing for LSE students.

Arthur Krebbers is SU Societies Officer and ULU Council Delegate

James Ketteringham wants LSESU improved

Make the SU better

On Monday I submitted a motion calling for a Governance Review. This Review will examine the way the SU is organised and governed. Proposals will then be made to improve organisation and governance of the SU.

If the Motion passes; the Review will be conducted by C&S in special meetings, open to all students. The AU, Societies, the executive and the media group will be requested to co-operate with the review. C&S will present proposals for change to the UGM before the end of this academic year along with a plan for their implementation. The UGM will debate, amend and vote on these proposals.

Reviews of the Constitution are not new. The last review took place in 2003. Although it must happen at least every five years, this Review is taking place ahead of schedule, partly because a lot of constitutional 'maintenance' needs to be done soon.

Three things make this review important. The Sabbs are working on a strategic plan, which includes re-organising to deliver better facilities and services. Slow progress at the UGM has been partly due to procedural constraints in the constitution – these need to be looked at. Finally, the

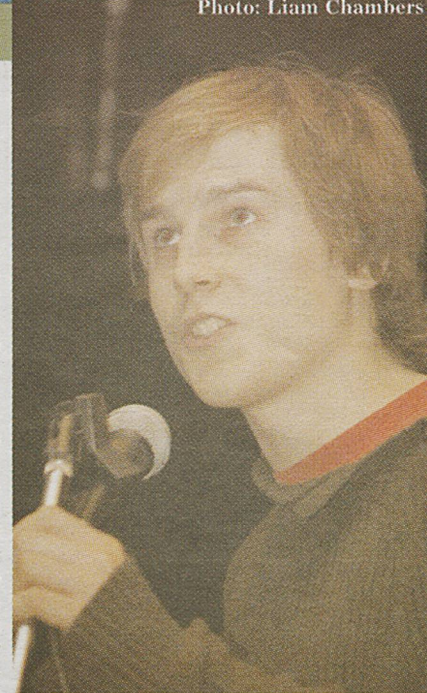
Charities Bill 2006 recently became law which LSESU must comply with.

I believe the point of an SU is to forge a community of students. As such the Governance Review will have a wider remit than previous Constitutional Review Task forces, and so it will be able to improve the SU beyond minor fixes alterations to the constitution and codes of practice. The Governance Review will be able to make recommendations for radical change to the SU; no area of SU governance or organisation will be off limits from proposals for change and reform. A review of this scale and depth will allow thorough improvements to take place, rather than ad hoc alterations.

The Governance Review won't build SU involvement and better democracy alone, much more will need to be done. But I believe it is an crucial long term step to ensure the SU functions properly, is up-to-date with new legislation, ready to cope with up coming changes and is truly democratic; so that the SU can improve as a community and improve as our voice.

I to urge all students to get involved with the Governance Review, further details will be available if the motion passes on Thursday.

Photo: Liam Chambers



Stephen Gummer spoke against criticising "racist" research at the UGM

What about free-speech?



When congratulated by people you normally oppose and criticised by those with whom you normally agree; one should find in such a moment pause for thought. This has certainly been the case for me this week as I opposed Laura Paskell-Brown's motion to urge the LSESU to publicly condemn Dr Satoshi Kanazawa. Having reflected upon my stance at the UGM I do feel vindicated by my decision and have laid out the reasons for my opposition to the motion below.

Firstly, let me clarify that I have not read the article and consequently wish to pass no individual judgement on whether or not Dr Kanazawa is a racist. That being said I have no reason to suppose that Laura's motives in this motion were anything but pure and if her representation of the article is accurate then I wholeheartedly disapprove of its content, implicit meaning and author.

However I consider my opposition of this motion was a defence of the LSE's great culture of freedom of speech and plurality. I do not think that Thursday's UGM motion was explicitly tantamount to

censure, as it did not suggest the banning of the article. However I do believe that a public condemnation in the national press by the entirety of the LSESU would dissuade other LSE professors from voicing academic work if the implications of their research were against a social or unpopular with SU political opinion. This contradicts everything that I believe is intrinsically sacred within university life. I believe this is why the LSE itself declined to comment on the article and I commend them for their decision.

Following logically from this point is that I would happily support, in fact would speak in favour, of a motion that mandated our anti-racism officer to read the article and then if she believes its content to be overtly racist, to mandate the LSESU to write to the university and to the lecturer himself expressing our dissatisfaction with the content of the article. This would in no way embarrass anyone publicly, nor would it send out any dangerous message to LSE academics who thrive on the voicing of controversial opinion and would be a far more dignified way to show our distaste with what may well be a very cheap article.

Three further points should be raised about the motion in question. Firstly, I have no problem with individuals expressing distaste at an academic article. This doesn't inhibit free speech, indeed it is

a vital element of it. However bearing in mind that the majority of the UGM had not read the article in question, it seems a little overzealous for



Making this research newsworthy again would make more crackpots aware of it

the minority who had to urge people wholly ignorant of the content of the piece into a condemnation in the national press that will undoubtedly subject an LSE academic to ridicule and humiliation. Such punishment is unproblematic if the article in question is indeed racist, in fact it's well-deserved. However a motion urging people to read and consider the article and then come back and vote on it would probably have been more suit-

able before the brutal sanction of public condemnation and career assassination was carried out.

Further, the motion stated that such literature can have serious consequences and lead to the fueling of hatred. Some have argued (And I do not endorse this view fully) that a professor cannot be responsible for all the crackpots that badly interpret their work to justify ethnic cleansing, racism and mass genocide. To an extent I concur with this view, as I do not feel we can hold Karl Marx personally responsible for Stalin's Gulags. However I do also acknowledge that being a professor at the LSE provides someone with an enormous pulpit from which to lecture and that people fortunate enough to be in such a position should act with a level of responsibility befitting the size of their audience.

Finally and, perhaps most importantly, I did have a serious concern with a public condemnation of Professor Kanazawa due to the above point. The authors of this motion must realise that such a condemnation would be highly newsworthy and would give license for repetition of the author's opinions on the public stage. This I feel is very likely to give the story more national

coverage than it got originally and make it likely that more crackpots eager to misinterpret, or even accurately interpret, its meaning would be exposed to the article's content.

Racism in all its guises is abhorrent and should be stamped out. But the manner of condemnation matters a great deal more in a society and university culture where freedom of speech is understandably, from time to time, taken for granted. Freedom of speech must come first else racists win. Freedom of speech is not just a universal good but comes with ties and boundaries that mean we cannot always chastise those with whom we strongly disagree for fear of inhibiting not just their right to speech but other's rights to it as well.

the Beaver

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and you will be added to the list in next week's paper.

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COMMENT & ANALYSIS

The Beaver

Established 1949 - Issue 651

Debating the wrong issue...

...welcome to the LSE Students' Union's weekly Union General Meeting

This week the Union General Meeting (UGM) voted against planting a wedge between the London School of Economics Students' Union (LSESU) and one of the most controversial pieces of research ever published at this renowned institution. The research, by LSE academic Kanazawa 'surveys' IQ levels across countries and makes links between levels of intelligence, and life expectancy and economic prosperity.

When an academic produces such a piece of research, it would be ludicrous for the Union to pretend that each and every member voting at the UGM can make an opposing argument based on empirical research, with many yet to earn their first degree. Yet there is no such limitation on expressing a moral objection to such a controversial opinion, that states as its home the same entity that we claim to be our home - Houghton Street.

Yet at the risk of sounding condescending, this paper feels it must highlight the fact that one of the most disappointing aspects of the UGM this week, was the failure to debate the motion in a mature and productive manner.

While not necessarily the fault of any of the speakers, the fact remains that debating a motion that few were able to make an educated opinion on, having not read the actual text seemed inappropriate to many. While the proposers were absolutely right in calling for the SU Anti-Racism Officer to read Kanazawa's research, many clearly felt the same needed to be offered to all.

Furthermore the failure of many to truly acknowledge the disgraceful implications of the research, and the severe sentence it dealt out to developing countries, was disheartening for even the most hardened hack. Have we then by default, condoned this research after so harshly rejecting any attempt to expressing our dismay and disgust of the publication.

A more insightful interpretation of the order paper would perhaps also further the quest for productive debate. Last week's arguments stretched from accusation of practicing racism to allegations of clamping down on freedom of speech. The real issue - whether this Union is able to identify bad research and is justified in disassociating itself from it never got off the ground.

Another opportunity to strengthen the Union's position in the eyes of its own constituent students, the School and the outside world has been lost. Another opportunity to debate on a meaningful issue, and one that would have had important ramifications if passed has been lost, with many not actually understanding the issue that was actually being debated.

Union bars' are seemingly becoming unattractive...

...to many 1st year students who are increasingly taking their custom elsewhere

The news that The Three Tuns, The Underground and The Quad are facing financial difficulty will not come as a shock to regulars.

In ordinary situations, under the watchful eye of the free market so beloved of Milton Friedman, the bars would die a slow, painful death. Many argue that the bars are not deserving of the Students' Union's subsidisation, existing as they do to cater only for a specific section of students.

Furthermore, the drinking culture, so native to this country, arguably alienates many students who do not share a belief that one's social life should revolve around alcohol.

However, there is surely something worth protecting at stake here. The Students' Union exists to foster a community spirit on campus, and nothing does that quite like community space. Yet, there has been a tangible decline in student numbers enjoying the delights of the SU's favourite watering holes this academic year.

The question that faces us is twofold. What are the bars doing wrong, or failing to do, in order to attract punters? And why are we, as a student body, drinking less? Perhaps the problem is not solely that the bars are failing to attract new 1st year drinkers, but also that second and third year students are increasingly seeking out new pubs, with the SU bars unable or unwilling to innovate or to provide us with new reasons to go back to Crush.

However, part of the 'blame' must lie with 1st years, who, while commendably dedicated to academic pursuits, are shunning the supposedly less intellectual pursuits of campus nightlife.

However, this paper feels it must remind its readers that social interaction is just as important as passive study. While an active social life is often lubricated by alcoholic beverages, we should remember that it is not necessarily so. Endorsing the use of the bars at the LSE is does not translate automatically into a proclamation that social life must be based around alcohol. Rather it is an appreciation of the fact that The Three Tuns, The Underground and The Quad all provide unique social areas in which those who indulge, and those who do not, can interact, debate and build relationships.

University life is not solely about continuing your school life and gaining the qualifications necessary for that much lusted after investment banking job. Being at university provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to enter the into the furnace of debate, to forge new ideas, not merely to repeat the staid and well-worn mistakes of the past. Especially at the London School of Economics.

Letters to the Editor

The Beaver offers all readers the right to reply to anything that appears in the paper. Letters should be sent to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk and should be no longer than 250 words. All letters must be received by 3pm on the Sunday prior to publication. The Beaver reserves the right to edit letters prior to publication.

"eugenics in UK"

Dear Sir,

This month's issue of the British Journal of Health Psychology sees a paper by Dr Satoshi Kanazawa deny that ill health is caused by poor education and economic conditions. Instead he links life expectancy to lower levels of 'innate intelligence' in Africa and other developing nations. We would like to lend our names in support of those academics, NGOs and individuals who in response have declared Kanazawa's paper as reviving the politics of eugenics.

Such 'research' is a clear contributing factor to a climate in which racism is still seen by some as acceptable. As representatives of the London School of Economics Students' Union we wish to challenge this 'acceptability' by voicing our disgust and condemnation of a paper published by one of our own lecturers.

This paper alone does not provide conclusive evidence that the author is bigoted. Instead, let us allow Dr Kanazawa's track record to speak for itself. Past titles include: 'Is 'Discrimination' Necessary to Explain the Sex Gap in Earnings?', 'Why Beautiful People Are More Intelligent' and 'The Myth of Racial Discrimination in Pay in the United States.'

Despite such a hideous record, those who employ Dr Kanazawa at the LSE have defended the lecturer's 'academic freedom' rather than renounce such flawed methodology and racist research. LSE's 'neutral' stance lends credibility to his study, a credibility that even his fellow academics at the LSE have privately questioned.

We therefore find it necessary to distance ourselves from this man and assert that we think it unacceptable for respected institutions like the LSE to be used as platforms for this kind of 'science'. Must we remind people that such 'scientific proofs' have been used to justify and 'legitimise' programs of eugenics in the UK, the USA and Germany? Need we recall the horrors that such theories have arguably lead to?

It is important for all those committed to equal opportunities to condemn such prejudices in all their guises.

Laura Paskell-Brown
LSE Student
Shanella Haque
LSESU Anti-Racism Officer
Zoe Sullivan
LSESU Women's Officer
Aled Dilwyn Fisher
LSESU Environment and Ethics Officer
Louise Robinson
LSESU Residences Officer
Helen Roberts
LSESU Returning Officer
Alex Finnegan
LSESU LGBT Students' Officer
Alexandra Vincenti
LSESU Education and Welfare Officer
Anushka Shenoy
LSESU General Course Officer
Fadhil Bakeer Markar
LSESU International Students' Officer
James Caspell
LSESU Postgraduate Students' Officer
Joel Kenrick
LSESU Treasurer

"cavalier dismissal"

Dear Sir,

Megan Gaventa's suggestion that the political impact of academic research should be taken into account before it is published is an outright attack on free speech and academic freedom. However well-intentioned, this kind of politicisation of academic research puts us on a dangerous path towards a totalitarian climate where honest and open debate is stifled by fear of political repercussions. There should only be one measure by which to judge any academic output: strength of argument.

Laura Paskell-Brown's (of "RESPECT") cavalier dismissal of Dr. Kanazawa's findings showed

characteristic lack of respect for this most important of academic principles. More seriously she seems to prioritise crass political point scoring above real concern for the plight of the developing world. If she cares at all about the continued progress of third world development she must recognize that all approaches must be debated, all possibilities entertained, however incompatible they may be with private prejudices.

I am not qualified, as I suspect many of the indignant commentators on the pages of last week's Beaver are not, to engage in a debate on the methodological soundness of Dr. Kanazawa's study. I certainly do not endorse his findings. But as Howard Davies rightly said, such debate should be reserved for the journal in which the findings were originally published and the wider scientific community. It is unacceptable to attempt burying uncomfortable findings in a mire of political sloganeering.

Political fashion changes; scientific facts do not. Let science judge Dr. Kanazawa.

Ari Helgason

"alternative angles"

Dear Sir,

I found the report in the Nov 14 edition of the Beaver on Dr Kanazawa's research very disappointing and it finally made me understand why some of my friends do not take the Students Union seriously. While Dr Kanazawa's research was, to say the least, controversial, and may have been methodologically dubious, the Student's Union is clearly in no position to condemn him and his research record, not the mention to start a campaign to silence him, given that there are no trained psychologists or sociologists in the union. Academic research is about looking at conventional wisdom from new, alternative angles and it will definitely involve unconventional views that may outrage common opinion, though the academic has to be responsible to ensure that his work is methodologically rigorous. This is up to the academic community and the school administration to scrutinize and it is clearly out of place for the students union of an educational institution to be involved. For the union to start a campaign alleging that a controversial piece of research will encourage racism is not only ludicrous and laughable, but also suggests that it is dominated by activist impulses not checked by good judgement of where its duties lie.

Tsz San So

"patriarchal society"

Dear Sir,

What a pitiful mis-reading of my article Sophie Knight [Letters, 14 November] is guilty of! Without wishing to turn this into a slanging match (these will be the last words I write on the subject), I feel I should answer her.

I never suggested women shouldn't wear trousers - remember I did not write the header - and that would be blatant hypocrisy since I am wearing jeans as I write. My belief is that women are forced into trouser suits in much the same way they were forced into corsets in the past. Of course women should be able to choose clothes that are austere but they should not be compelled to wear them and it is an imposition of patriarchal society when they are. To have authority in the workplace over men, they are forced to dress like them, regardless of whether this is a look to which they aspire.

Perhaps Ms Knight mistook my mockery of gender stereotypes for my own opinions. If so, she could do with learning about irony. Note I wrote of stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, not views I hold but ones I hoped the reader would find ridiculous. I had hoped that my ironic use of the term 'weaker sex' or my suggestion that the ability to bear children represents a failing might have revealed this mocking

tone.

Of course women should be free from the constraints of corsets, but don't think they are necessarily more free in trouser suits.

Rosamund Urwin

"many steps"

Dear Sir

I was excited that *The Beaver* was doing a centerfold in the 14 November issue entitled, 'Prospects for peace in Palestine.' However, the three articles in the centerfold did not discuss the Middle East peace process.

Rather, they focused on criticizing Israel and presented extremist viewpoints.

The Beaver has failed to foster healthy discussion on the Middle East. I am disturbed by the fact that these articles do not contain ONE criticism of the Palestinian leadership. That is a sign of unhealthy debate. No one has ever made peace by claiming to be perfect.

I would like to mention three facts. First, Israelis were offered their nation by the United Nations in 1947; their claim to the land is legitimate.

Second, Israel is committed to the peace process. At the Camp David Peace Accords in July 2000, Israel offered the Palestinians a state that included the Gaza Strip and 95% of the West Bank. The Palestinians rejected it.

Third, since those negotiations failed, Israel has been victim to more terrorist attacks than any other nation in the world. Thus, Israel has taken counter-terrorism measures to protect its people.

Israel is far from perfect, and many steps must be taken in order to achieve peace. But the Palestinians are not perfect either. Is *The Beaver* courageous enough to be critical of both sides and discuss the peace process openly? Or will it continue to present only extremist viewpoints, thus suppressing healthy debate and hurting the peace process?

Zach Seeskin

Jewish Society Politics Officer

"years of decline"

Dear Sir,

The abject ignorance out of which Benjamin Romberg's article was written is laid bare right at the first phrase - "racial differences and segregation in the occupied territories", referring to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It reveals ignorance of the fact that there is no racial criterion to Israeli identity. There are amongst the Israelis Blacks, Whites, Jews, Arabs, Asians and Europeans which makes the idea of segregation along racial lines completely absurd. The display of ignorance continues with the false assertion that Israel started building the security fence before the alaqsa intifada started, as opposed to three years and thousands of casualties after.

The poverty of factual information is surpassed only by poverty of analysis shown by arguing that "security measures are, covertly intended to create unnecessary hardships on the Palestinian people". The implication seems to be that rather than being a real-life country run by real-life human beings - Israel is run by some make-believe evil cartoon characters who derive pleasure out of causing unnecessary hardship and will therefore go to extreme measures to do so.

It is all very well for Mr Romberg to play at make-believe journalism, but I suggest he stick to make-believe scenarios when doing so.

Shimon Mercer-Wood

"because it pleases"

Dear Sir,

It is wrong to suggest, as one of last week's respondents did, that students should be deterred from university by the introduction of top-up fees. Higher education, even at £3,000 a year, represents a sound investment. The average graduate

earns £150,000 more over their lifetime than non-graduates, dwarfing the costs of tuition, and enjoys a personal experience that they can draw on for the rest of their lives. In other words, the individual benefit of university is suitably large that we should expect to contribute towards some of the costs.

A more important point, however, is that without increased funding and marketization, British universities stand no chance of competing with the United States - at a time when our advantage in knowledge-based industries is more critical than ever to the nation's economic health. Abolishing tuition fees might make higher education free, but it would also condemn it to years of decline - that doesn't serve anyone's interests, least of all students.

Yours,

Thomas Hitchings

"women may vote"

Dear Sir

I am once again required to respond to outlandish and extreme comments made by the Palestine Society as well as by Benjamin Romberg and Ziyad Lunat in last week's ridiculously one-sided Beaver centre-fold special.

Arabs in Israel have equal voting rights; in fact, it is one of the few places in the Middle East where Arab women may vote. Arabs currently hold 8 seats in the 120-seat Knesset. Oscar Abu Razaq was appointed Director General of the Ministry of Interior, the first Arab citizen to become chief executive of a key government ministry. Sharon's original cabinet included the first Arab minister, Salah Tarif. An Arab sits as justice on the Supreme Court, which in 2002 ruled that the government could not allocate land based on ethnicity. The sole legal distinction between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel is that the latter are not required to serve in the Israeli army.

Is this the behaviour of an apartheid state responsible for the systematic ethnic cleansing reminiscent of 1970's South Africa? The comparison is absurd and offensive.

To deny Israel the right of self defence, granted all other nations, is to effectively deny it's right to exist in the face of vehement attack. Given that a majority of Palestinian voters endorsed a party that continues to deny the very existence of Israel in last year's landmark elections, perhaps it is unsurprising that the Palestine Society committee is perpetuating this stance.

Benjamin Epstein

Treasurer, Jewish Society

"Beaver as a real jewel"

Dear Sir,

Could you explain why you feel duty bound to print the self-regarding, willy-waving tosh that passes for Sports copy on the back page every week? You can't help wondering if some over-compensation is going on. It's a pity, because we post-grads actually want to show off *the Beaver* as a real jewel in the LSE crown, but this element makes us hold back, in case our grown-up friends think we've somehow ended up stuck in a Beavis and Buttthead sketch.

It would make more sense to send it off to some Sixth Form college or perhaps one of the more repressed public schools where such rubbish would be regarded as hilarious and original. But for those of us above the age of 16, it seems like a huge waste of valuable newspaper print. Furthermore, in giving the poor saps who write it the impression of their having some wit, it is a bit cruel - the real world will come as a bit of a shock.

If we want poorly written soft porn, the Internet is pretty full of it. Passionate, up to date student debate on live topics, on the other hand, is a rare thing. Why not stick to what we do best.

Giles Wilkes

FEATURES

In this section: Politics/
Interview/Specials/
Business/Society

thebeaver.features@lse.ac.uk

Disability Rumsfeld

Is LSE disability friendly? End of an Era



Microsoft

Its battle with Apple is intensifying



Eyes to the Left



Amy Williams

In the spring of this year, Sir Peter Sutherland, was appointed Chair of the LSE Council, due to take up his position in 2008. Former Chairman of BP and Goldman Sachs, politician, barrister and member of the ultra secret, elite Bliderberg group - sounds like a nice chap doesn't he? It's an impressive CV of offices held in varying fields, but one common theme runs through his tenure of all of these roles, and in particular his stint as Chair of BP - a disregard for human rights and unethical behaviour.

Sutherland's record as chair of BP is a catalogue of disasters across the globe usually devastating the world's most vulnerable people the hardest. Better experts than me can reel of a list of what he presided over whilst Chair of BP. You can read elsewhere in some detail a dodgy dossier (dodgy on his part not the compilers part) describing his track record. But I want to give another take about what the appointment of Sutherland means. I want to question why this man is being appointed as Chair, and what that says about the future direction of the LSE.

A part of my first year was spent trying to justify why I had come to LSE - A school full of people desperate to get jobs in the city and exploit them in order to make vast amounts of money. Often an all consuming greed flickered across the scrolling eyes of the people sitting in the library reading about those most thrilling of subjects - Economics and accounting. You can't help but ask yourself what happened to those students of the 1960s and the Fabians' dream?

There remains a grouping of students with deeply held political beliefs, passionate campaigns and that all important word "progressive" ideas.

These are not just the misguidedly romantic, whining thoughts of the left - they are what the School continues to use as a great part of its selling point. No doubt the advertising gurus have been in to say how well the "academic rebel" market plays in recruiting top students to the school. It matters that a great part of our reputation globally is associated with a radical past, passionate thinking and as people who fight to understand the human condition not exploit it for their own means. We must strive to maintain our core beliefs and founding principles. I refuse to believe that this can ever be achieved in the appointment of a man such as Sutherland.

For the LSE, his appointment is part of an emerging pattern. As much as we have a battle on our hands now, the succession of Howard Davies will no doubt cause yet more tension between the majority of students who wish to see a suitable candidate and the School who increasingly seem to view LSE as a business enterprise. Sutherland's impending rein is symptomatic of a pattern emerging in our society for the last twenty years. I'm tempted to, and I will do at any given opportunity, blame Thatcher and her cronies for the marketisation of absolutely everything in our society. But we must seriously evaluate what it is that we want from the School.

Many people are coming to the same conclusions. This is a school and not a business. Why do we have a former Deputy Governor of the Bank of England as our Director? Why do we want a politician/business man as our Chair of Council? We are here to be educated, to explore ideas and our surrounding society. We are here to improve our life chances, the experience of university. We are losing sight of what the LSE truly stands for - "To understand the causes of things" is our motto, not "To understand the price of things".

It is not too late to stop Sutherland from taking up his appointment. We are less than two years away from Sutherland taking up his position. We are a day away from his visit this Wednesday to give a public lecture. Many of you, including myself, will have left by the time he takes up his position. But the future students of our school, and the future reputation of LSE depends on what we do now. Let's send a signal that this appointment is not what we, the people who ARE the school, want. ■

Editors' Blog

After much delay; the long awaited Al-Jazeera International; an English version of the channel was finally launched last week, to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the original Arabic channel. The channel will be available to view through various mediums including via mobile phones and the internet with a live stream being available on their website; whose sidebar looks suspiciously rather like that of BBC News' website.

Within its first week of existence, Al-Jazeera English managed to guarantee itself a real scoop after Tony Blair, in an interview with Sir David Frost, appeared to agree that the current state of Iraq was "so far pretty much of a disaster." Although Downing Street officials now claim "he was simply acknowledging the question in a polite way," it was immediately snapped up by the international media as Blair admitting to failure; thus providing Al-Jazeera English with more publicity.

The network delivers on its promise of providing a showbiz line-up in the form of presenters and journalists. In addition to David Frost, the channel also boasts the presence of former BBC correspondent Rageh Omar and former presenter on both the BBC and CNN Riz Khan; who will now host *One on One*; a conversational type interview programme, profiling celebrities and other famous international figures.

But the channel is claiming to be more than just celebrities and glitz, saying it will be the voice of "untold stories" and not be afraid to take on controversial stances; thus following the example of its original Arabic sister channel - which has often come under fire for controversial decisions. According to *The New York Times*, Nigel Parsons, Managing Director of Al-Jazeera International; has said one of the methods employed to do this will be the use of "Asian reporters to cover Asia" and "Africans talking about Africa, rather than having instant experts land there and tell us a story."

Certainly an interesting technique, no doubt designed for the channel to be able to distance itself from the familiar images of a 'BBC-English' speaking, middle-class white-male, in his khakis strolling through African villages; a scene which no matter how well-intentioned, still in a sense, resonates of the well-meaning colonial missionary trying to fulfil 'The White Man's Burden.' Al-Jazeera International is clearly seeking to be the alternative "We're not like the West" media outlet, ironically communicating this in the spoken language of the 'West.'

But will Al-Jazeera International really be the 'alternative' global English language news channel? And if so what exactly does this entail? It is true that it is less likely to have an Anglo-American focus in the type of news broadcast, due to the rotating of its news management from studios in Kuala Lumpur and Doha; as well as Washington and London - which suggests the content of news programmes may well be more diverse and broad-ranging than that of CNN or BBC. However the editorial or political stance that the channel could take is still unclear and it seems unlikely that it will be close to that of the original channel, as this may well alienate potential audiences in 'Western' countries. And despite Al-Jazeera International's claims of targeting the developing world, one cannot help but feel the real audience aimed at is the Western one - why else would it be so keen to recruit famous figures from the British media such as Sir David Frost?

Regardless of the political views which Al-Jazeera International may come to espouse, its launch is certainly exciting in that it is a part of the information revolution we are experiencing. The media and the way in which we receive news is fast-changing, mainly due to the internet and technological advances related to it and Al-Jazeera could potentially prove to be a great addition to the already immense number of information outlets now available to us, but as of yet it is too early to decide what kind of impact it will really have upon different audiences. One thing is for certain, Al-Jazeera International won't be taking the United States of America by storm just yet - especially not the millions who are avid watchers of Fox News. ■

We were planning to write an obituary for Milton Friedman, but *The Right Approach* columnist seems to have paid enough of a tribute. Regardless of whether or not you agree with Friedman's economics, he must be acknowledged for popularising the use of one particular phrase: "There's no such thing as a free lunch."



Just one to go now

The Right Approach

Sam Burke



Sound economists will mourn the death of Milton Friedman who died last Thursday, aged 94. The tributes for Friedman continue to flow freely, and rightly so.

Friedman, by no means had an easy life, if there is such a thing. Friedman's father died when he was 15, shortly before he left high school. It was a scholarship which financially sustained him through Rutgers University, during the worst of the Depression. A great believer in unfettered markets, Friedman was the leader of the Chicago School of monetary economics. He described Chicago as "a cosmopolitan and vibrant intellectual atmosphere of a kind I had never dreamed existed". In 1946 he co-authored (with Simon Kuznets) his first book, "Incomes from Independent Professional Practice". Accusing physicians of price-fixing monopoly practices, the work provoked scathing opposition, delaying its publication by six years. He served as an adviser to the Thatcher government from 1979 to 1990 as it developed a free-market economy, low taxation, and the sale of state-owned industries. Mr Friedman believed that tax-funded government spending was appropriate only to the most limited set of "public goods", such as national defence.

Today, there is not a policymaker in the world (ok, well maybe one or two at the LSE) who would dispute the central thrust of Friedman's argument - that governments should restrict themselves to keeping inflation low and markets free rather than attempt to fine-tune the economy through demand management. And that includes our current Chancellor, Gordon Brown, whose first act as chancellor nearly a decade ago was to grant the Bank of England control of interest rates to ensure inflation remained low and stable. This more than any other action of the Labour Government is the masterstroke of their decade-or-so in office. And we have Friedman to thank for it.

He did not restrain himself to the abstract and applied his free market thinking to all goods; refusing to deny the logical conclusion of his ideas on various social issues led to him advocating for the decriminalisation of drugs and prostitution. For me this is where Friedman falls short. Whilst he fundamentally recognising the need for economic freedom fails to understand the fallen nature of humanity and the need to regulate human excesses and vices.

There are more unsavoury aspects of Friedman's actions. Friedman met with Pinochet during his visit to Chile. He was, however, willing to advise Pinochet after Pinochet overthrew the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende, and was widely criticised for doing so. Friedman maintains his aim was to promote "free markets [which] would undermine political centralisation and political control."

So Friedman had his faults, which are all too easy for us to attribute with the benefit of hindsight. But there is nothing that could detract from the sheer influence and I would argue brilliance of his ideas. He was devastatingly adept at putting his case in clever and accessible language, observing, "If you put the federal government in charge of the Sahara Desert, in five years there'd be a shortage of sand."

Unlike some laissez-faire economists, Friedman had humility. In 2003, he publicly declared in the *Financial Times* that parts of monetarist policy had not worked, "The use of quantity of money as a target has not been a success... I'm not sure I would as of today push it as hard as I once did," he said.

It is rather fitting that he should have survived his intellectual rival, Galbraith, by some six months because the ideas he so vigorously advanced - free markets, deregulation and limited government - have outlived the post-war Keynesian consensus.

Friedman was a small person in stature but a giant in the realm of ideas. His death last Thursday marks the end of this great man, but his wisdom and legacy will live on - not least at our humble home, the LSE. ■

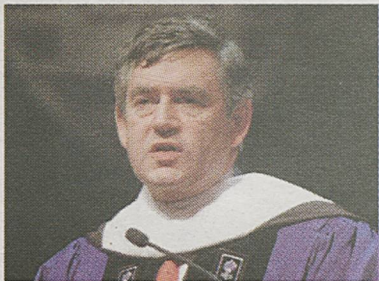
A lesson in diplomacy

Chris Turner spoke to the man who was UK Ambassador to the United States during the run-up to the Iraq War

“I’ve been over in France wearing very hairy brown socks and I came back to find my son had pinched all my red socks; I could only find yellow.” With this Sir Christopher Meyer explained his choice of socks last Monday as he delivered a speech in his capacity as Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission. He had been asked whether he avoided wearing red socks after John Prescott alleged that he was seen on Capitol Hill as a ‘Red socked fop’. Prescott’s accusation came in a letter to Meyer last November and was a response to the recent publication of *DC Confidential*, Meyer’s memoirs of his time as British ambassador to the United States from 1997 to 2003. The book was seen by many in Britain’s government as a betrayal of trust, and although the Foreign Office approved its publication, many in the Blair administration were particularly unhappy about some of the more personal remarks shared by Meyer.

DC Confidential offers a revealing insight into the workings of the British diplomatic operation, but also into the vast and varied landscape of American politics. During six years as British ambassador, Meyer built up a remarkable list of contacts and was able to count some of the most influential politicians in the world among his personal friends. This unique portfolio of contacts allied with his background of diplomatic service offers Meyer a powerful position from which to analyse the shifting political environment within the United States.

On his thoughts about the recent resignation of US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, Meyer responded frankly. “Someone’s got to take the fall for it” he pointed out, referring to the Republican’s comprehensive defeat in the Mid-term elections, “there has to be a political sacrifice. Rumsfeld was obviously going to be the political sacrifice because although there were a number of issues at stake in that election, Iraq



Gordon Brown knows America, he’s a frequent visitor to America, he’s a student of American politics and he’s got very good contacts

was top.” Rumsfeld had come to be closely associated with the US failure in Iraq, and was one of the primary hate figures for Bush’s opponents. His replacement, Robert Gates, seems to offer a new direction for US foreign policy. His position within the Iraq Study Group, headed by former US Secretary of State James Baker, demonstrates that Bush is likely to take any recommendations emerging from the group very seriously. Meyer is also keen to point out that the “Re-



A well-oiled Meyer speaks about his relationship with the press from both sides of the microphone

emergence of Robert Gates shows a turning back to a more traditional type of American foreign policy. The single most important thing is what we’re going to see is a much more traditional view of how America pursues its interests in the world.”

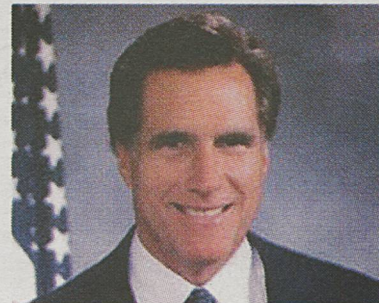
Meyer served as the lynchpin of the US-UK ‘Special relationship’ during a period of close collaboration between the two nations, often in the face of international opposition. How did Meyer see the future of the relationship, particularly bearing in mind the imminent changes within both governments. Meyer stressed that “First of all there is a very strong

infrastructure between Britain and the United States which is there whoever is Prime Minister and President, and that’s pretty solid...there are all kinds of ties there.” In Britain Tony Blair is likely to stand down in May 2007 and he will most likely be replaced by Gordon Brown – a man with whom Meyer has known for a good many years. What are his thoughts on Gordon Brown and will this spell the end of Britain’s special relationship that was taken to new levels under Bush and Blair? Meyer is not worried, “Gordon Brown knows America, he’s a frequent visitor to America, he’s a bit of a student of

American politics ... He’s got very good contacts among the Democrats, he may have some contacts among the Republicans as well – so if he becomes Prime Minister, you’re not going to have an ignorant man there of America.” An optimistic prognosis then, for a relationship which will surely come under significant strain from the combined pressures of foreign policy failure and domestic political upheaval in both countries.

And what of potential changes on the other side of the Atlantic? In Meyer’s opinion the presidential election of 2008 will be one of the hardest to read for a very long time. “I’ve

talked to a few friends about it, and yes, the frontrunners [at the moment are] Hillary on the Democratic side and McCain on the Republican side, but they both have structural weaknesses.” Meyer was of course referring to Hillary’s husband, former US President Bill Clinton – a somewhat divisive figure in American politics. Meyer knows the Clintons personally,



Mitt Romney’s greatest feat in many people’s eyes was his success in granting his constituents in Massachusetts almost free universal healthcare

and predicts that she’ll be “pretty ruthless” in distancing herself from her husband. He is sure however that her political machine will be “very much her own show.” Meyer has huge respect for Bill Clinton’s political instincts, pointing out that he is “astute enough not to spoil Hillary’s game.” In light of this, Meyer insists that it will be quite hard to see who’s going to replace her if something were to happen that damaged her electability. In his opinion the one to bet is the junior Senator from Illinois; Barack Obama for whom Meyer reserves rare praise by calling him “the most wonderful orator, very eloquent,” though conceding he is still a long shot. Speaking about the race for Republican candidate, Meyer is unsure whether Senator John McCain’s health and stamina are up to the rigorous demands of a presidential campaign. Instead he’s a fan of the former governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney, who in his opinion is a very smart politician. Romney’s greatest feat in many people’s eyes and one which will do any presidential drive no harm at all was his success in granting his constituents in Massachusetts almost free universal healthcare. In fact one of the only things that can hinder Romney’s candidature is the fact that he’s a Mormon, though in Meyer’s eyes he feels, somewhat charitably that this won’t count against him in rural America. Despite all of this it is Meyer’s opinion that Hillary Clinton “stands a really good chance of becoming president”.

Nowadays Meyer is in charge of keeping Britain’s newspapers in check. He chairs the Press Complaints Commission, the self-regulating body of the press. When he was first appointed there were many calls for the PPC to be made an organ of the state, like OfCom is. These have since died down and on the tenth anniversary of its creation Tony Blair congratulated the PPC for upholding standards in journalism. ■

Gay Rights in Africa

An LSE student speaks out on the enormous suffering endured by homosexuals in Africa

Little is known about being gay in Africa. In some countries it is punishable by a few years sentence in jail, while in others one could get a life sentence or a death penalty.

Being gay is not a 'Western thing' as has been argued by some African political leaders, religious institutions and the media. "The white man came to Africa and brought colonialism and homosexuality" they say. Others say that these white imperialists are now trying very hard to convert the rest of

African men into 'sissies' through globalisation and modernisation by arguing for gay rights in Africa. What I conclude is that you would rather be anything but gay in Africa.

Africa still boasts and glorifies corrupt leaders, whose dictatorships go unchecked, where civil wars are rampant, HIV infections are rising and malaria is still one of the major killers. For some of us who have lived in Africa, we know that with the right connections and the right money, one can do practically anything. The rich in Africa do not go to jail, do not pay taxes and do not queue in line. There is only one exception though. Being gay. It does not matter how educated, learned, rich, charming or connected you are, if you are gay you are guilty.

In Africa we have been brought up in a culture that tells us that we have to be married to members of the opposite sex. If we do not get married we are failures in life. We are preached to by the churches that tell us that for a man to kiss another man is an unforgivable sin. Despite this, there are men that grow up to realise that they still have a strong attraction towards members of the same sex. We have absolutely no one to talk to for there is virtually no support system that is designed to help



Its bad for elephants in Africa too

children handle the confusion that may come with being gay. I once knew a boy who decided to tell the local priest that he had feelings towards other boys. Later on that week, the priest called him up in front of the congregation and had him banished from the church.

In schools same-sex relationships can occur. This has been strongly condemned by the

Government and as a result a lot of students who are suspected of having homosexual tendencies are expelled from school. In one prominent boarding school, a boy's mother was called to school to collect her child for he had been expelled on suspicion of being gay. The mother was so heart broken that in an attempt to cure the son of his "disease" she undressed and offered her-

self to him. It is heart breaking when you watch the people you called your friends throwing stones at you and shouting "Fag" at you as you exit the school grounds with your suitcase - alongside a crying parent.

If you live in a country that respects and upholds gay rights then there will always be a tendency to take freedoms for granted. In Africa many gay

men end up getting married and living unhappily ever after. Some decide not to get married but live a disguised life. In most cases they will eventually be found out. They will lose their jobs, they will lose all ties with their family, if they have had children then they will lose custody of their children. Their parents will write him off and consider them as good as dead. They will lose all social ties that are necessary for their existence. It is so much easier not to be gay than to be faced by the stigma that comes with it.

One may wonder why I prefer to be anonymous, forwarding no address or indication of the country from which these experiences come from. It is for the very reasons that are stated above. I might be living in London now but in this university there are Africans who think in the very manner I have described above. For me to sign my name below this article means that I will probably lose my friends here and back home. It will be like coming out and my family and my Government will not be very happy about my sexuality. This only helps to reinforce the point I am making. In Africa you would rather be anything but gay. ■

In schools same-sex relationships [have] been strongly condemned by the Government and students who are suspected of having homosexual tendencies are expelled from school

From apartheid to a-partner

Karanja Gacuca writes about South Africa's new law which legalises gay marriage

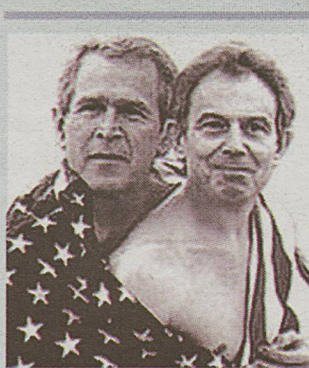
South Africa passed a bill in the House of Parliament with an overwhelming majority that is set to make it the African continent's first country to legalise gay marriage. There was plenty of opposition from religious groups and opposition parties but the ruling African National Congress powered the bill through the National Assembly late Tuesday Nov 14th. The Bill is yet to be passed in the second house of Parliament, and is expected to come into effect by the end of November. This will make South Africa only the 5th in the world to have such a law, the others being Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Canada.

The Bill passed in the National Assembly with an overwhelming 230 votes in favour and only 41 against. South Africa's Government had been ordered a year ago by its highest court to start granting marriage licences to homosexual couples, ruling that it was unconstitutional to deny gay people the right to marry.

Kenneth Meshoe, the leader of the African Christian Democratic Party thought otherwise. He called it "the saddest day" of the 12 years of South Africa's Democratic parliament, adding, "Adultery, sexual immorality and homosexuality are grave sins in God's sight"

This is an amazing result given that the subject of homosexuality is still taboo in Africa, let alone the idea of gay marriage. Many African dailies

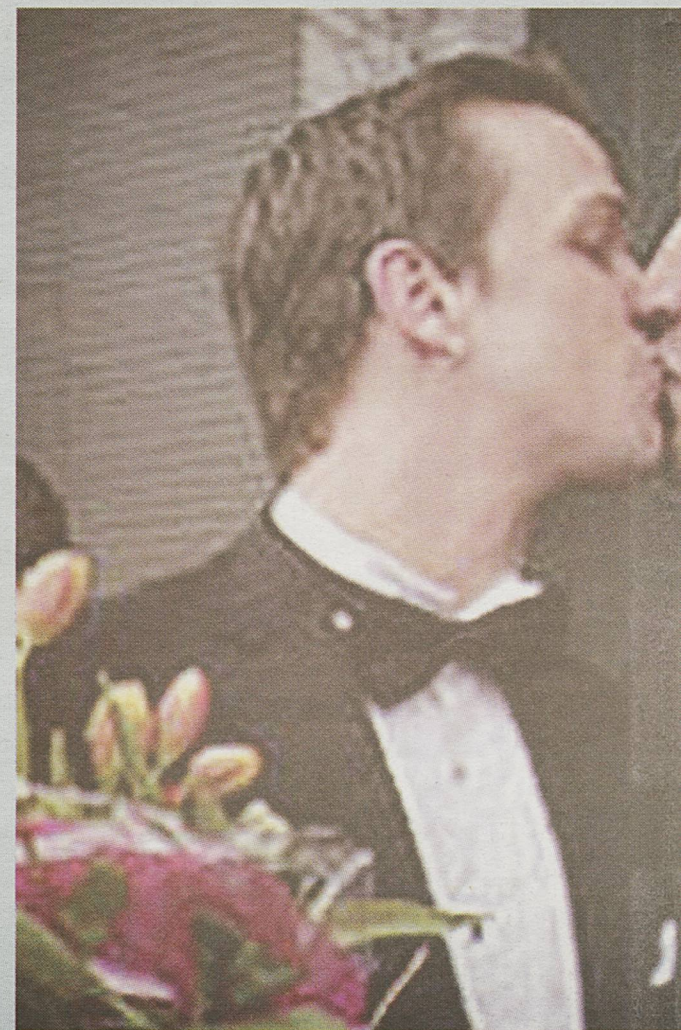
decried the decision. Tanzania's national Daily News sought to disparage the decision saying that it ignored the majority view. The editorial of the Tanzanian daily pointed out that given South Africa's highest court's ruling, the government had no choice, but to either draft a bill or leave it to the courts to draft which is what would have happened as of the 1st of December anyway. The paper made a lot of the fact that the Government chose to draft the legislation in order to salvage any provision that they could, in this case being a clause pushed through giving officials the right to refuse to perform gay marriage ceremonies if they had a religious reason or if it conflicted with their conscience or beliefs. This would be a plausible dismissal of this laudable victory for the gay community in South Africa and in Africa as a whole, were it not for the undeniable majority with which this bill was passed. This is truly a ruling to be celebrated and applauded, for its progressiveness, considering the fact that, even in England, the best we could do was a mere token recognition of Civil Partnerships which falls short of granting the same rights to same sex couples as does a marriage. A Civil Partnership does not, for example, grant the same immigration benefits to a same sex couple in the UK, with the requirements being far more stringent for civil partners than they are for married couples. It



[The legalisation of gay marriage] is truly a brave move ... and maybe countries such as the UK and US could learn a thing or two from South Africa.

is truly a brave move, which shows a commitment to fight injustice in a country that has already seen too much of it, and maybe countries such as the UK and US could learn a thing or two from South Africa. It is heartening to see that South African lawmakers see the hypocrisy of denying equal rights to all South Africans regardless of any variable, in a country that has fought long and hard for freedom and equality for all in the eyes of the

law. The country has, however, been known as one of the most liberal in the world as regards gay rights, and with only 12 years since self governance, has already seen 18 years of Gay Pride parades, and was one of the first in the world to allow gay adoptions way back in 2000. While things have been changing, however, black South Africans have not enjoyed as much of the same freedom of expression as their white counterparts as homosexuality is far more of a taboo among the black community. This ruling, and the bravery that the ANC has shown in pushing it through against the wishes of so many, is an example that puts many western democracies to shame, and in particular, the USA, where the issue of gay marriage is so polarising, that it takes precedence over many sensible economic concerns in the minds of the voting public. The ANC went forward with the very admirable resolution to maintain its duty to uphold the constitution at all costs, to ensure equal protection under the law for all. In an awe inspiring display of leadership, the ruling party went ahead arguing that even though this is an unpopular ruling, the country and the continent it's on will come around to accepting equality and justice for all in the eyes of the law. This is true leadership that we can all look up to in admiration. ■



Pride and Groom

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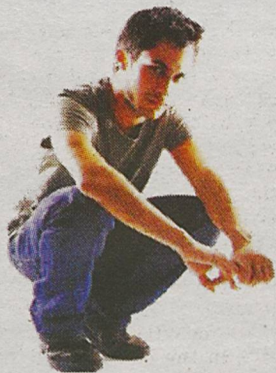
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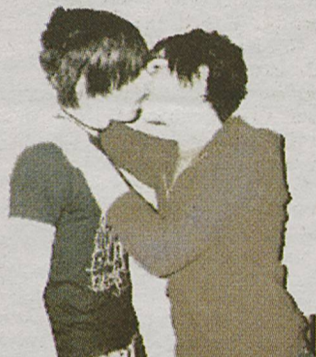
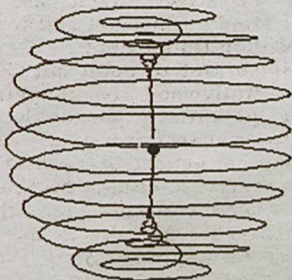


On The Cover

Gael Garcia Bernal on playing Che, learning to direct and political activism in Latin America.

Middle.Beginning.End.

Our cut-out comics explore the limitations of linear narrative. With knob jokes.



Style

rampant gay clichés.



Travel

Homosexuality around the globe.



Theatre

We get Bent.



Music

tv on the radio make us quite like them. ironically the like make us hate them.



Food and Drink

Bavarian sausages devoured. unfortunately, there's no bigsausagepizza.com

Going Down : Gay Men, Lesbians and Prison

The House of Homosexual Culture presents this themed evening about the power of prison in gay people's consciousness. Featuring presentations, new research unveiled, personal testimony shared and a quiz.

Where: The Drill Hall
When: Tuesday 21st
Price: Free

Brian Jonestown Massacre

Smack-shooting Anton Newcombe destroys all comers with the tattered remains of his self-destructing band.

Where: Astoria
When: Sunday 26th
Price: £14

Violent Femmes

Go, daddy, go, to see the blistering alt-rock Americans play their final British show of this tour.

Where: Shepherd's Bush Empire
When: Monday 27th
Price: £17.50

Comedy Camp

London's only mixed lesbian, gay and straight comedy club, compered by Simon Happily. Tonight's show will include performances from Shazia Mirza, Hattie Hayridge, Hal Cruttenden and Debra-Jane Appleby.

Where: BarCode
Until: Tuesday 21st
Price: £10

rant comptrroller
joshheller

music comptrroller
samashfon

visual arts comptrroller
daisymitchell-forster

film comptrroller
angustse

literature comptrroller
erinorozco

theatre comptrroller
mollytucker

style comptrroller
abaosunsade

travel comptrroller
jessicamcardle

food & drinking comptrroller
kimmandeng

comedy comptrroller
christinewhyte

thebeaver.partb@lse.ac.uk

EDITORIAL

We all have a narrative of ourselves. Our autobiographies are our great reflexive projects, stories that we weave from the fragments of experience to create a sense of ourselves that is stable and continuous. Kevin's self-narrative is atypical in that it contains an explosive schism. His lost years (from the ages of 6 to 18) are consigned to the chemical dustbin of good times, as such his witty and self-deprecrating life-story tends to disturb potential partners, consisting as it does of 'I was born, drugs... hello'. Daniel's narrative arc is ragged and multi-peaked, largely composed of things that he read on the internet. Delivered in a monotone mumble he is the Ed Wood of self-narrative. Enough sordid self-mythologising, this week there are words and pictures in various combinations.

Enjoy,



Daniel B Yates & Kevin Perry

bending the narrative arc

irfaanmerali sees cinematic innovation out-ranging time's arrow

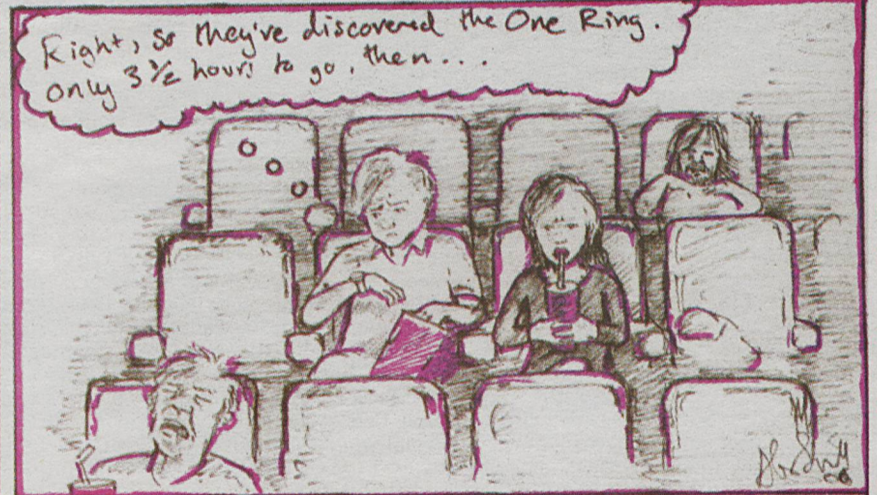
joeymellows would like to pronounce narrative cinema not only dead but smelling funny

Narrative structure usually follows one of a set of basic patterns. For example, one of the simplest, which also happens to be used in Steven Seagal movies, is the 3 Act structure. This is often based around (a.) the introduction of the characters (Seagal, his beautiful wife and young daughter). (b.) the addition of a problem (the massacre of said wife and daughter); and (c.) its resolution (the massacre of several baddies all the way up to and including the big boss). However, some have noticed a recent trend in films that are looser with their structure and have predicted the end of the conventional narrative. Is this fair? First of all, the recent trend is not so recent at all. Yes, there have been Crash and 21 Grams, which only had a series of loosely connected events as opposed to an actual flow of a story. But Scorsese made After Hours (about a man who ends up exploring the city by night) and Godard made A Bout de Souffle (vaguely about a man fleeing from the police) years ago. And what about Bunuel's Surrealist That Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie, a film ten times as bizarre as Don Cheadle's accent in Ocean's Eleven (at one point a soldier, in a café without any drinks, tells strangers how he murdered someone on the advice of his mother's ghost). And some dare to argue that it is not just the 'artier' films that are doing this and accuse that classic of American cinema Ice Age - and, indeed, Ice Age 2: The

(which has a narrative on 3 separate timescales) is showing now, has commented that novelists have greater freedom than filmmakers in playing with structure. Does this mean a change is on the horizon? Will this revolutionise filmmaking just as Steven Seagal did method acting, or Ice Age did the modern, angst-filled hero movie? Look to literature again for the answer. Most novels nowadays still follow traditional, conventional, narratives. So films will too, in all probability. But yes, there do seem to be more films that are more adventurous. It could be seen as part of a wider shift in film and other arts. Though films like The Bourne Identity and Mission Impossible III have not been revolutionary in terms of narrative, their overall style has. The way the fight scenes look more realistic, the way people get hurt and the way the hero has problems that aren't just about his ex-wife. Watching films like these make watching - with all due respect for Bruce Willis and his grizzled puppy dog of a face - Die Hard, for example, look weak and stilted, a product of simpler age. The other huge innovation has been the use of handheld cameras. Although this was pioneered by the Nouvelle Vague movement of 1960s France, where the camera lens was supposed to become closer to truth by being freed from its moorings and wandering around streets and buses, getting all up in the faces of old

The Best Picture Oscar for 2005 heralded a brave, new and exciting opportunity for film writers and directors who have, like this author, grown tired and increasingly frustrated with the questionable direction of 'classic' narrative cinema, that is to say, cinema that employs the trajectory of beginning/middle/end as the immutable plot order. The win for Paul Haggis' 'Crash' was an incredibly important moment in Hollywood cinematic history and refreshingly broke up the monotony of wins for safe, conservative films with good old fashioned American values and predictable narratives, such as, 'A Beautiful Mind'; 'Chicago'; and to an extent, 'Million Dollar Baby'. It is important to point out that, although Hollywood is changing, becoming potentially amenable to more offbeat narrative ideas, this author does not believe that narrative cinema is dead as a form, or even necessarily in decline. Rather I am arguing that in order for film as an art form to avoid stagnation, new ideas with regard to screen-writing structure and the presence of creatively diverse film directors are both increasingly important to drive the medium of film forwards. However, as the vast majority of films, since the birth of cinema, have followed a linear narrative structure, it would be foolish in the extreme to criticise a narrative directive and call for its ultimate replacement and departure from the

seemingly conclude. However it's important to note that this is not how things exist 'out there' it is rather a fact of consciousness, that we seek to order experience into a series. The ability of cinema to take us out of ourselves, to suggest other ways of being and doing, is nullified when all it does is conform. Another, more practical part of the problem, is the sheer size of modern film budgets - especially in the case of blockbusters - and the importance given to the financial, at the expense of the creative. People who invest in film do so, usually, in the expectation of seeing a return on their investment. It's not surprising then that, as budgets increase, the people who are paying become increasingly conservative and do not wish to risk such large amounts of money on a film that is not afraid to be viewed as original, exciting and challenging for the audience. So instead of finding an interesting story to tell, the studios become more concerned about what was a quantifiable financial success last year. It's the need to quantify that causes the problem, and this in turn drives the money towards even bigger special effects, bankable stars and already popular brands, all of which have an identifiable audience to watch the regurgitated, formulaic and ultimately predictable product being pitched. The continuation of narrative cinema could be seen as lacking suf-



Meltdown - of not being an extreme experiment in narrative but a badly made film. Yet The Wizard of Oz had the same structure, except that while Dorothy wanted to make her way home, Sid and the gang wanted to return a human and avoid the 'Meltdown.' If these kinds of films have been made for years, there is no danger of descending into a narrative vacuum anytime soon. As evidence of this, have a look at films showing now or soon: Casino Royale, that Tenacious D movie and Santa Claus 3/4/52. Crash and 21 Grams are the exceptions and there is a limit to how much experimentation will be accepted. Since film is primarily a visual medium, the essence of the film is on the director's vision, not the scriptwriter's (contrast a playwright and his play's director). Therefore a good director can take a mediocre script above its level, which means that the screenplay is less important. There has been more freedom in other forms of art. Literature for example has seen movements like stream-of-consciousness and postmodernism radically change the way we think of novels. Perhaps this is because literature is such an established art form whereas film is a relatively young one. (Literature and film are actually closely related: Quentin Tarantino said he would have been a novelist if he didn't make it as a filmmaker.) Christopher Nolan, who studied English Literature at UCL and whose film The Prestige

women and wobbling from the a-frame of bicycles. This handcam technique was picked up by the Dogme 95 directors in the Denmark of the 1990s as a dogmatic mantra (nothing other than handcams here). Whilst being over-used in slasher flicks for the purposes of first-person POV chase scenes since the schlock horror of the 50s, it is now a dramatic cinematic innovation in its own right. This can be seen in comedies too: think of the realist style of The Office, Arrested Development (the greatest show ever) and Curb Your Enthusiasm. This change, amongst others, is demonstration enough that cinema has many avenues for experimentation, change, and progression, other than simply sacrificing a sensible plot-line. Stylistic development happens regardless of narrative, and makes for the exciting film that we all enjoy today. Narrative cinema is not dying; it hasn't even been injured. Cinema is developing, but mass audiences will not be able to take complex narratives. At the end of the day, the reason why these unusual anti-narrative films stand out and are noticed is because they are the exceptions. Now I'm off to see how enthusiasm (sloth), caution (woolly mammoth), courage (tiger) and something else (?) can save human innocence (baby human) from the harsh realities of life (evil carnivores) in Ice Age. Wish me luck.

cinematic realm. This having been said, it is perhaps the sheer volume of films following a traditional and 'safe' linear story that is causing the indignation, defiance and debate on the narrative structure. For every narrative success story such as, 'Seabiscuit'; 'Hotel Rwanda'; and 'The Incredibles'; there is much more pathetic drivel such as, 'The Fantastic Four'; 'Blade: Trinity'; and the visually repulsive, 'Little Man'. The British film critic and regular contributor on The Culture Show, Mark Kermode, argues that the decline of narrative cinema has, "gone hand in hand with the rise of consumer test screenings, the grisly process through which Hollywood execs show a movie to a cross section of its imagined 'target audience' and then ask them what they would do to make it better." This is one interesting theory and opens up amongst other things, a great many questions on where this cross-section of cinematic rapists are collected from. However, Kermode does not go deep enough into explaining why so many films are derived from focus groups and a hunger for traditional linear narratives. One problem is a mammoth history of linearity. From the bible to Grimm - beginnings, then middles and finally endings - have been the storytelling norm. Perhaps it could be argued that this is how things, under the aegis of time, progress. Processes start, they go along, and then they

ficient mental and intellectual stimulation for a large proportion of the audience who are growing increasingly hungry for new ways to stretch their way of thinking especially in the modern-age of increased access to information and communicative art forms. The success of such films as the aforementioned 'Crash' is not a flash in the pan, nor is it a mere exception with regards to it achieving worldwide success both financially and critically despite its non-narrative structure. I encourage you to go out and watch, 'Sin City'; 'Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind'; '21 Grams'; 'Irreversible'; 'Amelie'; 'Memento'; and 'Pulp Fiction'; to name but a few. These films give credence to the growing clamour for film to be viewed and acknowledged as an art form in the same way literature has historically been. Having said that, even literature needed important movements such as modernism and postmodernism to propel it along and expand and provoke the way people conceptualise and appreciate complex artistic mediums, which are unafraid to move away from the recognised norm and be different and challenging. The aforementioned films are doing just this and should perhaps not be seen as exceptions to the traditional but perhaps the catalyst for a new and more intellectually stimulating movement in cinema. How are things ever going to improve? Here's a suggestion. Stop paying for bollocks.

FRANT

rebel with

joshheller meets **gael garcia bernal**, and is moved to poetry by the young actor

Born in Mexico where there's always hot weather, His parents, sadly are no longer together Selfishly I hope that they are some day For his name, you see, will be easier to say

After study in London and a number of soaps. He'd acted on stage and was learning the ropes. Performances then were smart and assured. Amores Perros was his reward.

This elegant film he made his feature debut in. The foreign film Oscar we thought was a shoe-in. But Gael's performance was to send him far. The beginning of a talented and rising star.

His next feature film sent his star flying high. He played a teenager who was horny and bi. The film was intelligent and to all a treat. This young Mexican actor had the world at his feet

Controversy followed and more than a smidgen As he starred in a critique of the Catholic Religion Uncontroversial, in the century old tale Was his part as the priest and his gripping portrayal

The next major role was the one that's his best oh Biking through South America as a young Ernesto Through his face we saw his conflict internal In the brilliant film of the writings in his journal

Unlike many young actors this guy's not a twit He's a political fellow and he knows his shit Scripts fly at him so it's jolly good That he's an artist enough to resist Hollywood

With people like this who have something to say Repeating other's words seems a shame in a way An attempt at direction may be a smart move As an actor, one feels, he will grow and improve.

In the future, all celebrities will be like **Gael Garcia Bernal**. No longer will we be subject to lashings of media attention on talentless, inarticulate drones with nothing to say. The people who so many look up to will be like Bernal, interesting, articulate and excel in their chosen field. Gael Garcia Bernal is the antithesis both of the **Hilary Duff** school of acting and the **Britney Spears** school of public speaking ("trust our president in every decision he makes").

Gael's English is excellent and his accent is genuinely English, the result of his study in London. Gael had been in Mexican soaps and was quite well known in his own country when he came to London aged 19 to learn his craft and with a plan to work in theatre. After only a year and a half at the Central School of Speech and Drama, he got a call from **Alejandro González Iñárritu**, asking him to do casting for *Amores Perros*. His career took off swiftly from there, but it almost never happened. "My school didn't allow me to work. In England they don't let you miss school, you

miss more than three days you're chucked out. In Mexico that's completely incomprehensible." Luckily the director came up with a "very good Latin American solution." He got his cousin, the director of a hospital, to write a medical certificate detailing a tropical disease. Later, people at the school were understandably "surprised that a film I'd been in was already playing at Cannes."

Y Tu Mama Tambien was his next film role; it made him a star in his own country, as it became the highest grossing film in Mexico. The role that really propelled him to, if not the mainstream then at least the consciousness of independent cinema-goers, was in *The Motorcycle Diaries*. Gael won critical acclaim for his part as Ernesto Geuvara, portraying subtle character changes that the young medical student experienced as he travelled from Buenos Aires to Peru. American critics were less receptive than others, the Commie sympathizing perhaps being too much for them to stomach. One called it an "unexpected renaissance in Soviet filmmaking."

He doesn't like comparing himself to the revolutionary, but Gael came to similar realizations as Geuvara did in his travels for the film. It reaffirmed his belief that Latin Americans are incredibly similar to one another. "We are countries that were created out of colonial caprices" (His word, I had to look it up, it means impulsive decisions) "The Church decided where the borders would be." Like many Latin Americans, Gael believes that there should be more collaboration between the nations and particularly in the medium of film. "We should work as a bloc."

Talk is cheap though, a lot of actors and public figures can say they have ideals but not act on them. This is not the case with Gael. He attended the G8 protests in Edinburgh; it was there that Oxfam first approached him to work with them. He was part of the Oxfam delegation to the Hong Kong WTO meetings and as well as protesting, attended a series of meetings himself. He specifically spoke out against hugely subsidised genetically modified corn and the negative impact it has on Mexican farmers under NAFTA. Some of his political action is centered on the world he knows; film. For example he is working hard at the moment to make sure all money from film premieres in Mexico go to charity. He has a film company with his friend and *Y Tu Mama Tambien* co-star **Diego Luna**; *Canana*. They are working on a number of projects, including *Drama/Mex*, which got a good reception at Cannes and the London Film Festival.

He is in England now to promote his latest film *Babel*. It is directed by the same man who gave him his break in *Amores Perros*; **Alejandro González Iñárritu**. He sees the film as the third of a trilogy that began with *Amores Perros* and continued with *21 Grams*. It takes a similar style to those films, moving between stories and time. There are four stories in the film. An American tourist (**Cate Blanchett**) is shot in the neck whilst on a bus in rural Morocco, we see her husband's (**Brad Pitt**) struggle to keep her alive. We also see the story of her shooter, a young Moroccan boy who was just showing off his marksmanship to his brother and not meaning to hurt anyone, and the consequences to him and his family. There is a seemingly unconnected story about a deaf Japanese girl's sexual frustration after losing her mother to suicide and being unable to connect to her Dad. Then there are the American couple's children in San Diego; their Mexican nanny who takes them to Mexico for a wedding



we are countries that were created out of colonial caprices it's about words that have no meaning, yet have a deep impact in our lives

along with her nephew (Bernal). The film is ambitious in that it is in a number of different languages (hence the Biblical name) and set on three very different continents. There are a number of unknown actors used, in Morocco most actors were locals who'd never been in front of a camera before. Iñárritu says he prefers "innocence to experience." There's a difference, Gael says, in working with Iñárritu this time around. *Amores Perros* was his first film and he feels he's "grown as an actor" since then. The editor and director may feel the same way, but it is not evident in the final film. Gael plays a minor part and the film suffers because of it. Although, admittedly most characters play minor roles in this quite well directed film with four wholly underdeveloped stories.

The future for Bernal seems bright. He is currently on post-production for a film he has directed, *Deficit*. Confusion sets in as he coyly dances around talking directly about it. "It's about words that have no meaning, yet have such deep impact in our own lives. And about us thinking that we know the meaning of these words but really we don't. At the end of the day, the film is about the end of impunity. I know it's very broad, I won't give you the details because I want you to see it, come on."

Gael's status at the heart of the Mexican cinematic revolution has not gone unnoticed by producers in Hollywood. He is currently turning down offers from that world of shattered dreams and stretch-Hummers. There were strong rumours of his being cast as the main villain in the third film in the Bourne trilogy, *The Bourne Ultimatum*. But his intention is clear, "I have to live in Mexico, I have to work there, I have to keep on trying, to keep on struggling." The conflict is clear in his voice when he discusses the "very seducing offers" he's received. Yet Gael's already starred in an independent American production. He was entirely convincing in both his accent and acting in last year's *The King*.

There are a large number of Spanish speaking actors that have made the transition to Hollywood and almost always to their detriment. Think **Alfonso Cuarón** with *Harry Potter* and the *Prisoner of Azkaban*. It seems at least in the foreseeable future that Gael will not make that full transition.

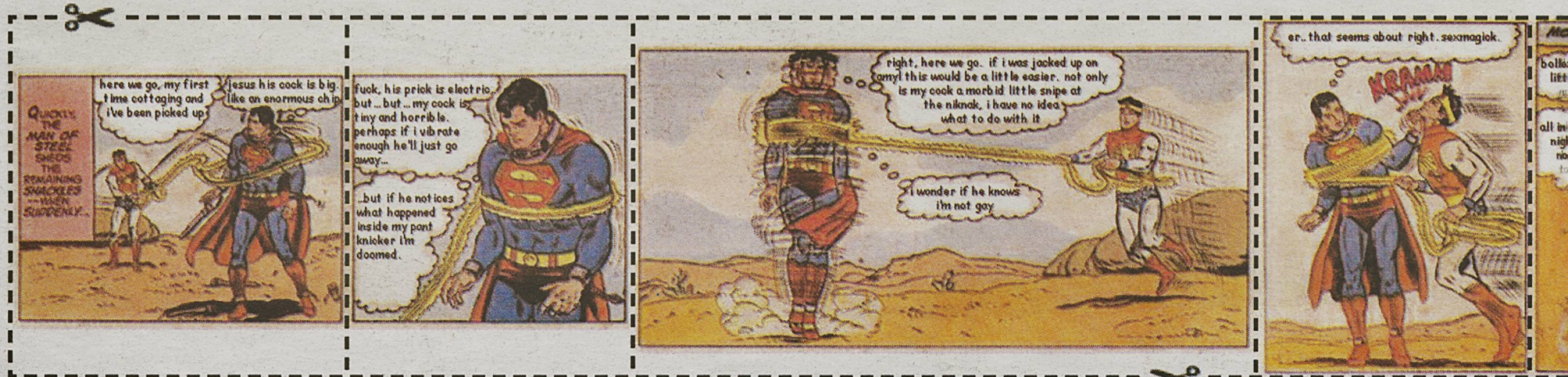
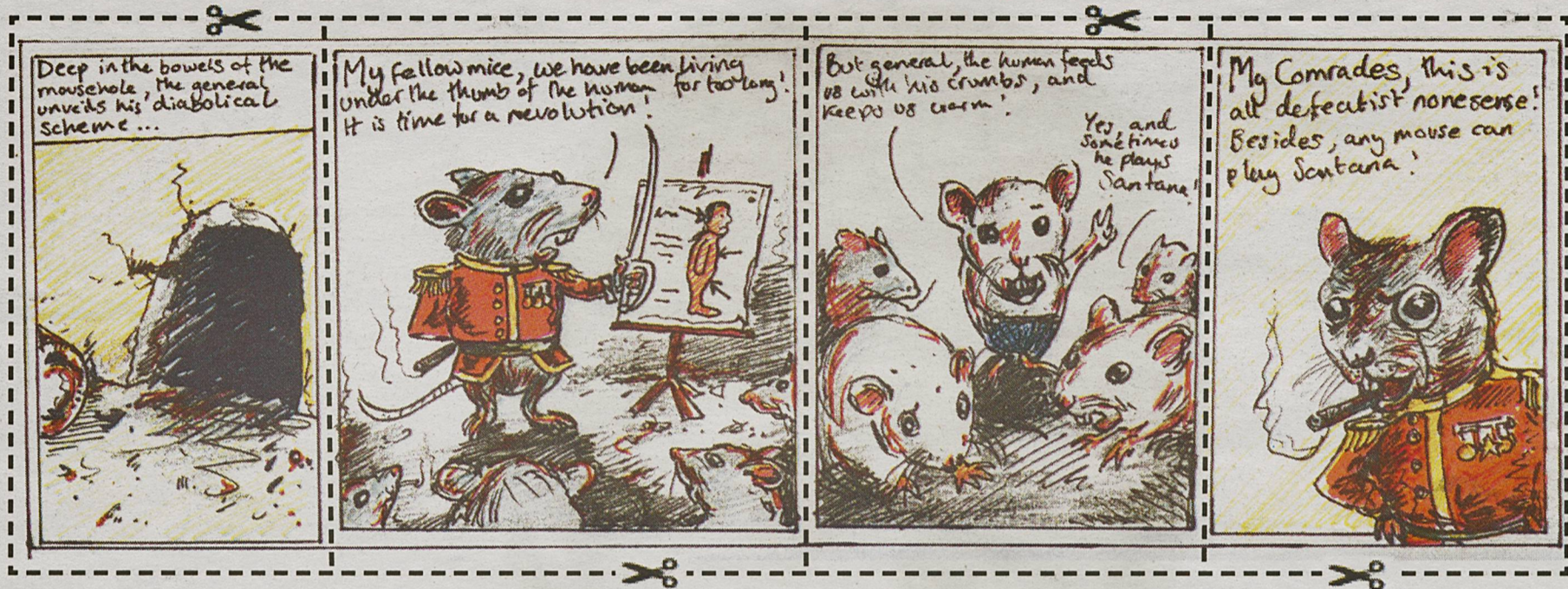
So maybe he's not the future of celebrity. It's probably a good thing for all concerned. One feels the Hollywood world wouldn't suit Gael, even worse it might change a thoroughly friendly **bl o k e**. This is a guy who, despite his fame, still likes to use the tube. A few weeks ago for Halloween, despite being dressed as Sergeant Pepper, he still got on the Northern Line, conspicuous as can be.

a cause



MIDDLE. BEG

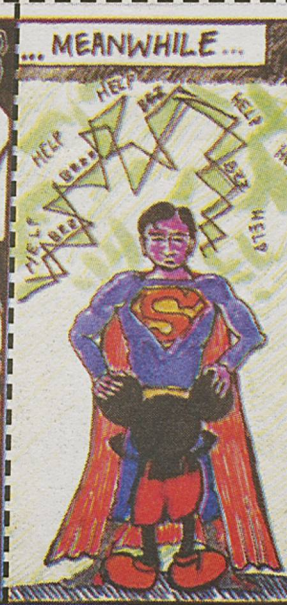
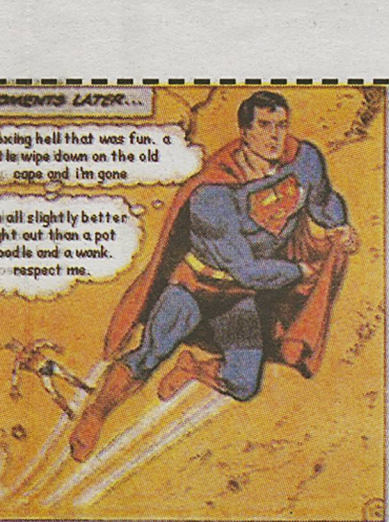
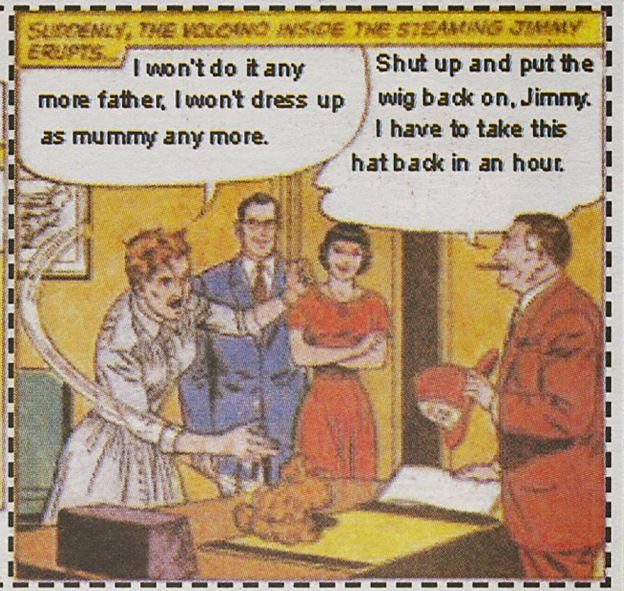
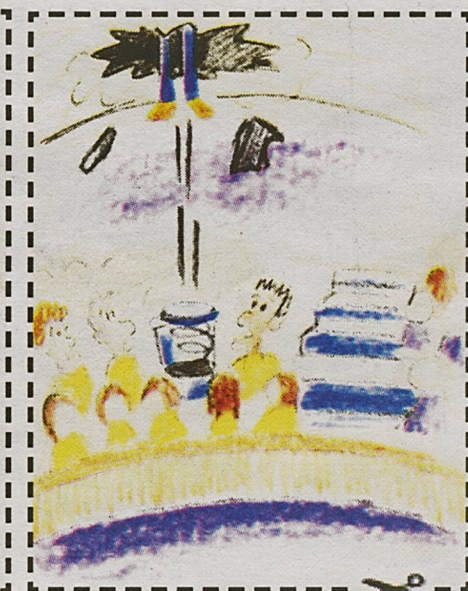
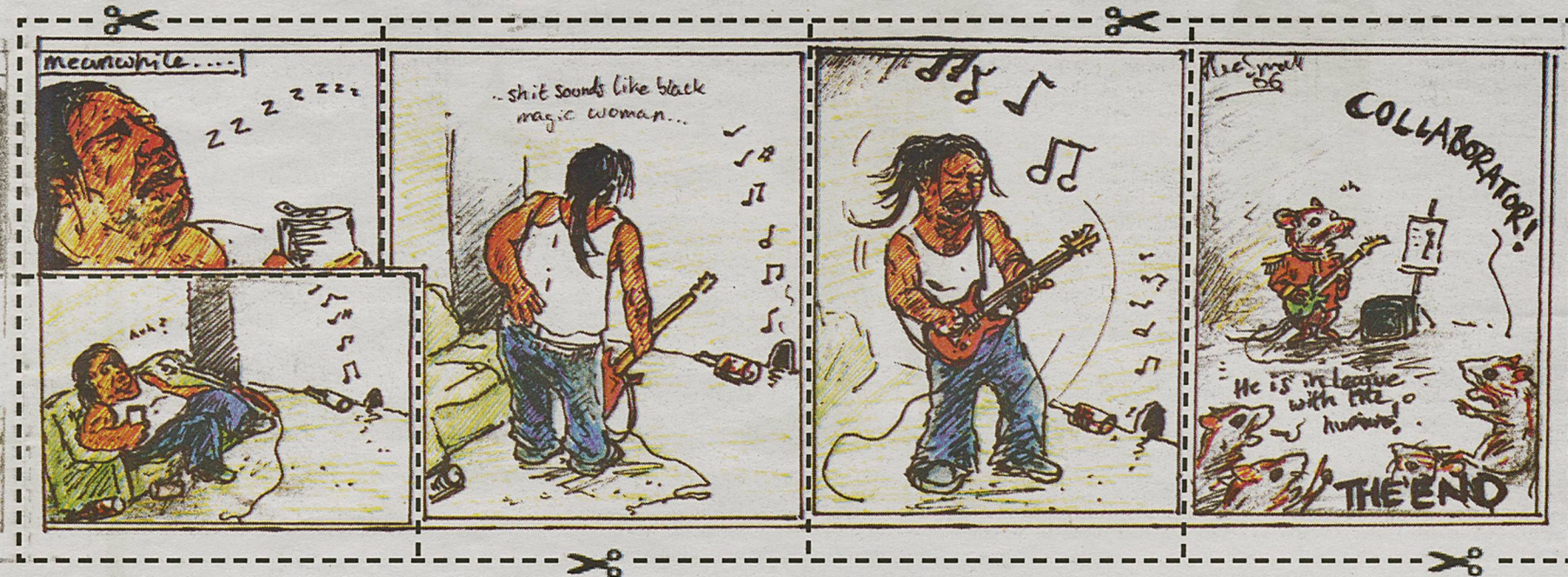
back at school, we were taught that every good story needs a b need to be in that order? here at PartB, we're giving you the ch of the comic strips, mix them up, re-arrange them, and create so



original artwork by alexsmall, lalehkazemi-veisari and lauraparfitt

INNING. END.

beginning, a middle, and an end. this may be true, but do they
chance to play at being iñárritu or tarantino. simply cut out the cells
something better.



looking gay: a typology shane garvin on all things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small

The LGBT community isn't a subway special, but it is celebrating diversity this week. Style examines some of the cliches and subcultural identities that, whilst stereotyped, are nonetheless unique. From trannies to leather daddies there's something for everyone, bring your Nan - bring your tutor, just make sure you use protection:

Emo Gays (i.e. all emo boys)

For these guys, the tighter the better. It's all about tight-ass, testicle-bursting drain-pipe jeans. Pair this in combo with 'I can't breathe' extra small t-shirts supporting the names of their favourite bands (Dashboard Confessional, My Chemical Romance...) and the 'look' is almost complete. Of course, no gay-emo is whole without the token facial metal and 'suburban-life-is-so-difficult' fake wrist scars. Note: the more of their face their hair covers, the more established they are.

Most likely to say: "Dude, life...like...so totally sucks".

You can find them: At Trash Palace, Ghetto, or in their rooms- crying themselves to sleep.

Trannies

Think Christian Aguilera meets Dolly Parton meets Dame Edna Everage. The bolder, brighter and more revealing their clothes are the sexier they feel. It's all bright pink lipstick and big, Big, BIG hair. And let's not forget those 'fuck me

pumps' - fabulously tall heels which make their already gigantic frames even scarier. Most importantly there is their mantra - 'accessorise, accessorise, accessorise'. No sexy-mama is complete without his/her prop, from fans to whips all the best trannies have their own special tool to make them even sexier and more tempting.

Most likely to say: "Darling, does this dress make my cock look big?"

You can find them: Working the guest list and VIP rooms at most gay clubs.

Butch Lesbians

If builders wear it, so do these gals. Think heavy, industrial jeans teamed up with big ol' Doc Martins. A range of t-shirts are suitable as long as it fits two vital criteria - a) it has absolutely no shape and b) it's horrible. All the best butchies know that there's no better way to show off your masculine arms and dragon tattoos than with a stylish "wife-beater" sleeveless top. Oh, and how could we forget, short and cropped hairstyles are an absolute must-have in every season.

Most likely to say: "OI! MATE! YER STARTIN'?"

You can find them: In all gay men's nightmares.

Pretty-Girly Lesbians

Anything pink, fluffy, girly and sparkly. Head to toe in pretty and glitzy bracelets, necklaces and hair-clips, these girls are like a walking 'Claire's Accessories' store. T-shirts with popular and cute cartoon characters on are an absolute must, and none of these lesbians would be seen dead with less than two pigtails. The ultimate and most committed of these types will wear school girl uniforms in support of their all time hero's T.A.T.U.

Most likely to say: "I only do this because my boyfriend likes it..."

You can find them: WARNING: THESE GIRLS ONLY EXIST ON THE INTERNET

Fag Hags

This season, fag hags will be supporting whatever her gay best friend tells her to wear (as always). Of course, no self-respecting fag hag would leave the house without her army of fashionable, well groomed gay followers. Oh and small animals. They love little doggy company for when their homo-friends aren't around.

Most likely to say: "Sweetie, are you gay? Fabulous, we can be friends!"

You can find them: Anywhere, as long as she's surrounded by her gay mates - in the LGBT committee, for example.

Leather Bears

The quintessential accessory for these REAL MEN is one which can't be purchased in shops - hair, hair and more hair. Leatherwear comes in many styles and sizes suitable for all sleazy occasions, from knee high boots to crotchless chaps. All up-and-coming daddies should hunt down two crucial pieces of equipment - yes you guessed it, nipple clamps and cock rings. If you're trying to create this look, simply think 'Big Foot in a leather harness'.

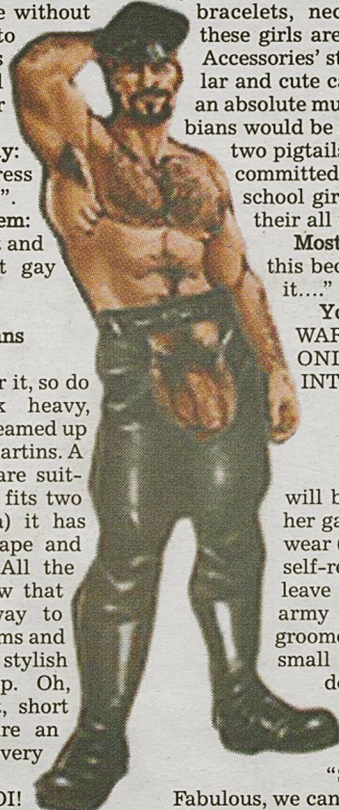
Most likely to say: "Grrrrrrroowl".
You can find them: The Hoist, Vauxhall.

Clubbers

It's all trainers, glow sticks and pounding, pounding techno music. Perspiration, as a result of non-stop dancing and high dosages of E, means that the most suitable attire for clubbers is none at all. Rarely seen with tops on, you can guarantee that at some point during a night at a gay club you'll end up experiencing the joy of one of their sweaty, greasy backs rubbing right across your face.

Most likely to say: "Do you know where I can score some pills?"

You can find them: Right at the front of the main room at Heaven, working up a mammoth sweat.



STYLE

TRAVEL

Are you bored with the academic life? Maybe you've had all the economics and political science you can take. Why not chuck it all in and follow the worldwide circuit of LGBT events? If nothing else, you'd probably get a load of free stuff you could sell on Ebay. This week, in keeping with PartB's LGBT theme, we bring you all you need to know to make this vision a successful one:

First, why not go transatlantic with a trip to Los Angeles where apart from taking in the usual attractions like Disneyland, you could also check out Fusion: The Los Angeles Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People Of Colour Film Festival. An annual event held from December 1-3, it describes itself as 'the only multicultural, gender-inclusive film festival of its kind' and includes all manner of movies, music and performance arts from across the globe. Be sure to check out the film 'Cut Sleeve Boys' which allegedly features an underground drag club, sex in a public toilet, and witty one-liners. Could you ask for more?

From here there is a decision to be made. Either you head north to the land of maple syrup otherwise known as Canada, or south into Spanish speaking Central and South America. Whilst many of us love a stack of pancakes and the Canadian west coast does have a vibrant gay scene, everyone knows that it is in Latin America that they really know how to party. At no time is this more apparent than during Brazil's world famous Carnival which is held every year in February, seven weeks before Easter.

This year the official dates are from the 17th to the 20th. Although it's chiefly associated with the city of Rio de Janeiro, Carnival events featuring parades, music, outrageous costumes (think feathers and sequins) and generally one hell of a party happen all over the country. The fact that Carnival is one of the most diverse, vibrant festivals on the planet means there is something for everyone, no matter their sexual orientation. Be sure to get there well in advance as accommodation rates are known to quadruple and even then, everything from the grandest five-star hotel to the vilest hole in the wall will be completely jam packed.

While you could quite easily while

away the rest of your life in South America taking in its beautiful landscapes, relaxed atmosphere and great steak dinners, you may want to leave in order to attend the Sydney New Mardi Gras over in Australia anytime between the 2nd of February and the 3rd of March. Packed to bursting with a huge range of cultural events, its all about celebrating what it means to be gay in modern society. In between checking out the iconic opera house and the Sydney Harbour Bridge, don't forget to pack in a few of the many exhibitions, concerts and theatre productions which explore sexual diversity and fetishism in all its forms. It's also worth mentioning that the temperature should be at around 25°C, so bring

your shorts. With all this time-zone hopping, you may well be feeling a little jet-lagged, which is why you should rest yourself and take a little time off. Not too long though because you really ought to be starting your intensive training regime in anticipation of the Tennis London International Championships. The bland name belies the fact that this annual event is actually the largest gay and lesbian tennis tournament in the UK and is just one of the thirty-two which are held annually worldwide. Being staged at Battersea Park from May 12-14, it promises high-quality action from a host of international players as well as several domestic hopefuls. All levels of player are welcome to join in, so you best be dusting off your rackets and getting re-acquainted with your topspin lob. If you don't feel like playing, you should at least get involved in the launch party held the night before the first day of play. And whilst the trip to Battersea Park may not chalk you up too many air miles, it is home to both subtropical gardens and a wide variety of flora and fauna so if you try hard enough, you could probably delude yourself into believing that you're in a foreign country. Once you've done all that, you should be fairly worldly, cultured and have many a fascinating tale to tell. On the other hand, you're brain maybe totally destroyed from drugs, alcohol and way too much partying and you might feel you need a holiday. Either way, at least you'll have gotten out of the house and not spent all your time on Facebook.

rahimrahemtulla is a modern day phileas fogg.

around the world in eighty gays

on the road to perdition

iangordon drives at gay writers and finds sexuality taking a backseat

When feminism was the new and cool thing and everyone was doing it, there were a lot of great books written by a lot of great female writers about a lot of difficult female matters. This is perhaps the natural reaction to being subdued for thousands of years and being forced into having babies rather than becoming accountants.

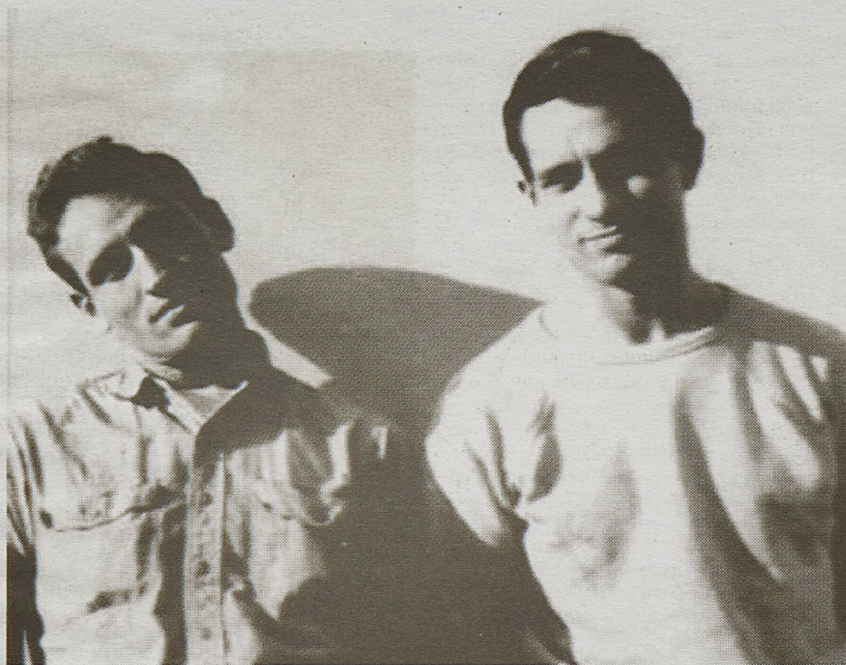
The same is not true about male gay writers, predominantly because they have always been able to get published just by throwing in some tacit references to heterosexual cravings into their work, or at least by talking about war and other macho things.

And so the question arises... being female invariably helped feminist writers write about female matters, but did being gay help male gay writers pen some of history's greatest prose?

The immediate answer would appear to be no. Long lists of great gay people of the past are useful in that they remind bigots that being gay doesn't necessarily mean that God hates you and wants to send you to hell as quickly as possible. But surely we are not to assume that all gay people are brilliant by association. Even if Alexander conquered vast swathes of land all the way to the Indus in order to find a nice Indian fellow, does it really mean that it was his homosexuality that gave him the ability to do so?

On the other hand, perhaps the repression that gay people have faced in the past has manifested itself in the hubris of their works of art, inadvertently making their prose more touching and emotionally immediate than that of their heterosexual twin brothers.

I'm not about to answer this ques-



tion, but I think some analysis of famous gay writers can at least point us in the right direction.

According to gbtq.com, Lord Byron was bisexual, and so it may not be a she at all that "walks in beauty like the night, of cloudless climes and starry skies." Does that matter? Is true love anything to a romantic poet except the idealizing of one's lover's form as an embodiment of nature, whether male or female? Surely no one sexual persuasion is any more apt to spotting beauty than another.

It is E.M.Forster in particular, and *A Passage to India* most specifically, that suggests that even if a gay author writes about very non-sexual themes, they may have an inclination on how to make male-female relationships most platonic, and male-male relationships most meaningful. The relationship between Mr. Fielding and Aziz is heartbreaking regardless of the perspective from which one reads Forster's greatest novel; rarely do heterosexual writers reach such subtle beauty in male to male dialogue.

Kerouac's duo, Sal Paradise and

Dean Moriarty, are another example of a male-male relationship embodying a dynamism unseen in more hetero-secular works. But again, one must question whether bi/homo-sexuality is the cause or the effect. Isn't any great writer perfectly capable of expressing the emotional details of a relationship that means the most to them?

Sometimes the mere admiration or care for a member of the same sex is enough to earn the gay label. T.S.Eliot was a deeply religious man who married twice and left a trail of women in his wake, which is not to suggest he could not have been gay, or at least bisexual. But insinuations that *The Wasteland* is a love poem to a dead man may be missing the more subtle elements of men's relationship with one another, at best. At worst merely an excuse to bring our most popular modern poet into the pantheon. Love, in most quality fiction, is a little more multi-faceted than mere sexual attraction.

I am not trying to suggest the contributions of gay writers is null and void. Rather I would argue that great works of fiction become so because their hubris so universally applicable as to make particular sexualities irrelevant. It is word-smiths that quantify and qualify human nature in its purest form, and that is a service to all (except ignorant bastards that don't read).

"Strange friend, past, present, and to be; Loved deeper, darker understood; Behold, I dream a dream of good, And mingle all the world with thee."

-Tennyson

Martin Sherman's 1979 play about the Nazi persecution of gays begins in the tawdry underground clubs of the Berlin cabaret scene and ends in the Nazi Dachau concentration camp.

The idea that Sherman is trying to show in his play is that love can triumph over oppression. At the start the hero, Max, played by the Scottish actor Alan Cummings, is a flaming figure working in a Berlin nightclub in the mid-1930s. After the 'Night of the Long Knives' in which Hitler's homosexual henchman, Rohm, was executed, Max and his lover, Rudy, are forced to go on the run. However, they are captured whilst in hiding and deported to Dachau, where Max chooses to disown Rudy in order to ensure his survival. In the play's second half, set entirely in the concentration camp, Max meets an inmate over whom he becomes protective, Horst, played by Christopher New.

Inevitably emotive given its subject matter, *Bent* is more rewarding for what it represents than for what it shows—a call for the power of love, in this case homosexual love as chronicled during the Nazi persecution of gay men.

But, precisely because the content is so explosive, the play demands a certain

restraint. In the first half, however, we are treated to a super-heightened theatricality. The first example of this is when a Nazi storm trooper, after the invasion of Max's flat, exits with a gratuitous wave that would not be out of place in *The Producers*. The man who brought the production to London, Daniel Kramer,



uses an approach that has a significant drawback: by extending the theatrical metaphor to the behaviour of the Nazi soldiers that raid Max's apartment, they move in choreographed formation like a cabaret chorus line; they bark their lines and swagger like caricatures.

This is a serious misjudgement: their atrocities, however outrageously grotesque, ought to seem real, and we

need to feel a genuine sense that these are ordinary people whose humanity has been hideously perverted.

What makes *Bent* so powerful is that we see Max as an alcoholic, whorish drug dealer, not some innocent child who's cut down in the prime of life. It's easy to state that Anne Frank didn't deserve to be murdered in the camps,

but to make the point that not even this human scavenger deserves the heinous wrath of the Nazis is tremendously important.

That said, in the second half in the camp scenes where he acquires resilience and dignity through a steadfast abandonment of ego. He is also well-partnered by Christopher New who lends Horst a prickly defensiveness that slowly turns to love.

All in all, this is a production that is not comfortable to watch at times and you leave the theatre thinking about what it must have been like to live in those times, even though homosexuals in Berlin pre-Hitler probably had a better time of it than their counterparts in Britain. As our global society repeats past mistakes over and over, it becomes more and more imperative to absorb the lessons of plays like *Bent* in order to stop the madness from continuing.

silence

LSE Drama Society's first production of the year is upon us! **Moira Buffini's Silence** is not to be missed, and we hope you will all join PartB in taking a look...

The year is 999 AD. The enfeebled King Ethelred cowers in his bed, while Viking raiders pillage the English coast. Lord Silence of Cumbria, a 14 year-old of Viking descent, is summoned to Canterbury to be married to a Norman princess, Ymma. But nothing is as simple as it might be - Ymma has her own reasons for coming to England, Ethelred will soon covet Ymma for his own wife, and as for Silence... is he really what he seems? "Silence" is a medieval romp, with equal parts comedy, romance, adventure, historical allegory and millennial angst.

Performances are in the Old Theatre, on the following dates:

Fri 24 Nov 2006, at 7pm

Mon 27 Nov 2006, at 8pm

Tue 28 Nov 2006, at 8:30pm

Tickets: £4 (or £3 for Drama Soc members)

benbiggs finds moral imperatives in bent's dramatisation of holocaust homosexuality

camp nazi lessons

literature



Theatre

tv on the radio

samashton gets his mediums mixed up



My left testicle is aching. It's defiantly cancer this time, I'm sure of it. I worry about readjusting to life with just one testicle; I'm sure it wouldn't be that bad, tongue cancer on the other hand... My maudlin meditations are rudely interrupted by antipodeans conversing loudly, I don't know whether its the oh so casual racism or their habit of raising their voice at the end of every sentence, turning everything into a question, but something about this particular gaggle is seriously annoying. I try to push all thoughts of debilitating diseases and loud Australians from my mind and concentrate solely on the music in front of me. Guitars roar, pianos twinkle, drums thump and vocals caress, but somehow I find it impossible to stay in the moment, my thoughts always wan-

dering. It's probably not the bands fault, in fact frontman **Tunde Adebimpe** is more than engaging, shimmying across the stage arms a flutter. Perhaps it the ovarian confines of **KoKo** that are to blame, the cavernous ceilings and blood red walls somehow acting as a barrier between me and the band. Or more probably its those cunts behind me talking loudly. As my eyes flit around attempting to catch a glimpse of the various members of **TV On The Radio** I see an abandoned beer bottle. A small part of me fantasises about smashing the bottle and peeling the skin from the faces of those chattering around me with the bits of broken glass, the rest of me agrees with the other parts motives but wonders somewhat about the ethics of the proposed method.

Suddenly the band leave the stage, have they really been on that long? It is only 10.00 pm after all. Such a short set, and I have to waste it on hypochondria and murderous urges. The band re-emerges, I push forward, determined to enjoy what little the encore will offer unfettered. The opening chords of 'Staring at the Sun' ring out, a song I've spent much time with, but unfortunately something isn't quite right. The icy restraint and carefully measured beats of the original are gone replaced with roaring rock, thus reduced the song sounds limp and unoriginal, disappointed I turn and leave, maybe tonight just wasn't meant to be.



the like

loisjeary points out that there's more to the like than legs

Surrounded by a disproportionate number of middle-aged men and lesbian couples, and feeling thoroughly out of place, I started to wonder what it was about **The Like's** oestrogen-fuelled rock that attracted this particular demographic. But as the three young L.A ladies took to the stage, all hotpants and minidresses, it became worryingly clear - **The Like** are hot, and frankly if they had stood on the stage playing **James Blunt** covers, I don't think anyone would have noticed.

This is most frustrating when you realise that **The Like** are not a soft-porn act and should be judged on their music, not their legs. Drummer **Tennessee Thomas** was impressive and from the pounding opening of 'Falling Away' to the more gentle '(So I'll Sit Here) Waiting' powerfully drove every song along with **Charlotte Froom's** melodic bass lines. Singer and guitarist **Z Berg's** rich voice was impressive and shone on the fantastic cover of **The Kinks'** 'I'm Not Like Everybody Else'. Yet the show, coming as it did at the end of a long tour, felt half-hearted and ultimately frustrating, ending after a pitiful 40 minutes as the band skipped off to canoodle with **Alex Zane** in the netherregions of his backstage and the audience waited for an encore that never came.

The Host is a South Korean popcorn gem, which I'm afraid will be unworthily overshadowed and forgotten in the box office, competing as it does against the likes of **Borat** and **Casino Royale**.

Director **Bong Joon-ho** (**Memories of Murder** - and yes, his name does sound like a cheap weed joke) has created a splendid 'monster movie'. No, it's not a pun. While the genre is related to horror and fantasy/sci-fi (a turnoff for some), and in recent times evocative of CGI-laden-but-hollow-to-the-core-geek-wet-dreams (hint: **Peter Jackson's** massive masturbatory effort **King Kong**), don't let this discourage you from experimenting. Not that monster movies should adopt a deeper meaning and purpose, but, as the current issue of **Sight and Sound** rightly proclaims, they should 'remind you why you started going to the movies in the first place'. Genuine thrills and moreover genuine entertainment is the key, and **The Host** certainly provides this.

Park Gang-du (**Song Kang-ho**) is a near-narcoleptic single father running a kiosk stall along the Han River. His father, **Hee-bong** (**Byun Hee-bong**) moans what a slob his son has become. All this changes when an amphibious monster, a giant tadpole with the head of an Alien, emerges from the River and causes havoc, swiping **Park's** daughter **Hyun-seo** (**Ko A-sung**) in the process. Initially believed to be dead, **Park** receives a call from her daughter, who's hiding from the dangerously close monster. Thus, the family, with his ex-student radical brother **Nam-il** (**Park Hae-il**) and his nervous archer sister **Nam-joo** (**Bae Du-na**), launch their rescue mission, against all odds, to save **Hyun-**



seo.

Director **Bong** certainly has a hand in crafting memorable scenes. The beginning, where we first see the monster on his rampage, exemplifies masterful direction. The blending of CGI effects and live action, showing the monster terrorising, eating and flinging citizens in the air is simply stunning and provides the adrenaline rush that we come to expect. Particular mention should also go to the claustrophobic sequences showing **Hyun-seo** trapped in the monster's lair; as well as the unforgettable finale, which is both surreal and graphic at the same time.

Although the monster is the main attraction, much of the film focuses on the family and their rescue attempt. Like **Bong's** previous films, black humour is infused throughout the story. Serious moments, such as the mistaken funeral of **Hyun-so** early in the film, somehow end up as ridiculously comical. Indeed **Bong** is known as a maverick director within Korea, mixing and matching elements of different genres to create an entertaining film. **The Host** refuses to take the clichéd storytelling approach of placing heroic characters brandishing guns-and-ammo going head-on against the beast. Instead, we

are looking at a bunch of misfits who somehow, by fluke, end up reaching their goal. Not to mention the unconventional weaponry- arrows anyone...?

What is obvious right from the beginning is the political tone of the film. The Americans in the film are directly responsible for creating the monster, involved in the quarantine process and formulated the 'final solution' to the beast. Korean bureaucracy is seen as obstructive and kowtowing to the US. In reality, the presence of the US Army in Korea is a sensitive topic, and **The Host** can be seen as an allegory. However, **Bong** claims in countless interviews that he was more interested in concentrating on the working class family and their trials and tribulations throughout, and thus making an anti-authoritarian point and on the social ills in Korean society. While this may be true, it's hard to ignore the implicit pointed criticism against the US, and perhaps **Bong** is deliberately keeping this low-key to avoid stigmatising the audience. The dark finale, in particular, seems to be an episode ripped off from a war film but carrying a pacifist message.

Don't misunderstand that **The Host** is solely a political exercise though. Being the highest grossing South Korean film of all time, it is a rollercoaster delight, with the combination of Western CGI-graphics and unconventional but thrilling and humorous storytelling (when will **Jerry Bruckheimer** et al ever learn?). As an alternative popcorn choice, this is a good bet. It's just a shame about the poor promotion for the film, and a shame about releasing it at this time, with such stiff competition.

angustse witnesses a monster of korean cinema

the host

music



velázquez

daisymitchell-forster delights in diego at the national gallery

Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599-1660) is considered to be one of the most astoundingly talented painters of all time. His lifelike portraits and unique talent for capturing the visual experience on canvas ensured his success in becoming the leading artist in the court of King Phillip IV. This unanimous acclaim of his talent during the contemporary baroque period places him in an unusual niche of appreciation during his own lifetime. He focused on portraying the exact body language and facial expressions appearing on his models before his eyes, allowing the subject of the painting to communicate with the audience regardless of the pictures context – from ancient myth, to court life and to the ordinary.

Born in Seville, Andalusia Velázquez showed an early gift for art and, when he was only eleven years old he served as an apprentice under the artist and teacher, Francisco Pacheco. His early paintings depict common everyday 'low-life' street scenes in a sombre manner, the humble characters portrayed with great dignity and gravitas. The simplicity and the seriousness with which he considers the mundane are overtly depicted in one of his most notable works, Kitchen Scene with Christ in the House of Martha and Mary (1681). Here, a young woman is preparing a simple meal as her older companion indicates towards the framed scene taking place through the hatch – Mary sits at Christ's feet as her busy sister Martha grumbles that she is not helping with the work. Christ explains that Mary has chosen the better path in taking time to contemplate her eternal life. What is espe-



cially peculiar in this painting are Velázquez cleverly mastered background and hatch perspective. It can then be seen as either a painting hanging on the wall behind the subjects on the foreground or an insight, a window, to the room behind. Velázquez is inviting the viewer to consider the contemporary activities in the foreground in the light of the message from the Bible, demonstrating for the first time his interest in multiple levels of reality and perception.

Even by the 1620s Velázquez's position and reputation was assured in Seville

and his appointment as painter to the King, the only one who was to paint the royal family, in 1623 opened new doors for the advancement of his career and for his development as an artist. In the immaculate painting of Phillip IV of Spain in Brown and Silver, the King is portrayed as immobile, impassive and superior – genuinely and truthfully depicting his reputation within the nation.

The Toilet of Venus ('The Rokeby Venus') (1647-51), is perhaps the most outstanding painting – if one is allowed to be selective in this case – out of the works

that are exhibited. Velázquez's only surviving nude is posed backwards to the audience as a cupid holds up a mirror for her toilet and, although the reflection is foggy, it is clear enough that her gaze meets her admirer's. The indistinctness of Venus' visage allows each individual to fill in the features of the perfect woman, supporting a belief, that mar well have been Velázquez's, that true beauty is unrepresentable and ultimately immaterial. The portraits of Francisco Lezcano and Pope Innocent X are also worth mentioning as true masterpieces in their own right. But it is especially intriguing how Velázquez portrayed Francisco Lezcano – a dwarf playmate of prince Baltasar Carlos, sprawled like a child to accentuate both his stunted and bowled legs, leaving him limited not only in stature. His gaze, at once penetrating and lacking in focus, is echoed by the unsteady tilt of the head and the open mouth that drifts between smile and stupor. This image is one of many from a painter renowned for picking his models out of everyday life and capturing their personality and essence at that particular time of their lives – whether it would be pride, absence of thought of sheer pomposity.

Velázquez dizzying use of vivid brushwork in the midst of baroque academic style of his contemporise and the free application of paint and rich use of colour makes him the father of the Spanish school of art.

The work of Velázquez are being exhibited in The National Gallery and will be running until 21st January 2007. Highly recommended.

A Male Perspective

What can we tell about a culture from its food? Probably loads. Bavarians seem to enjoy basement restaurants with no windows, and they also enjoy sausages in all different shapes and forms. There are big and small, white and black, brown and darker brown. Sausages are offered as starters, mains or sides. That most intriguing of meat-products, no one can tell you how they're made but everyone can tell you that German people like them. Well they have every reason to. The sausages at the Bavarian Beerhouse (the first Bavarian restaurant in the country) were excellent; they managed to be minimal on gristle and maximum on porky-herby flavour. So what does the Bavarian love of sausages tell us about the culture? They don't mind how something is made so long as it ends up looking like a veiny bangstick.

Another thing that Bavarians love is cabbage. White and red, pickled or not, these guys love their cabbage.

They love it so

much that when they serve you a main course, they are perfectly happy to take up over 60% of valuable plate real estate with red cabbage. Cabbage is of such importance that the only thing they see fit to place their beloved sausages on is a bed of pickled cabbage. That's right, I talk of none other than sauerkraut, that most peculiar of dishes. It may sound like a stereotype of joyless German people, but in fact if you look past the name it can taste quite good. Smothered in spicy mustard just strong enough, along with those ubiquitous sausages; sauerkraut is almost yummy. The Bavarian's love of Sauerkraut tells us that these people are smart; they understand that the best thing to do with that most maligned of vegetables, is to ferment it for several months.

The authenticity of the restaurant might be called in to question. The waitress was wearing a Dirndl (a German dress) and all the staff spoke German. However, never having been to Bavaria I can't tell you if it was authentic or not. Luckily I ate with a friend...

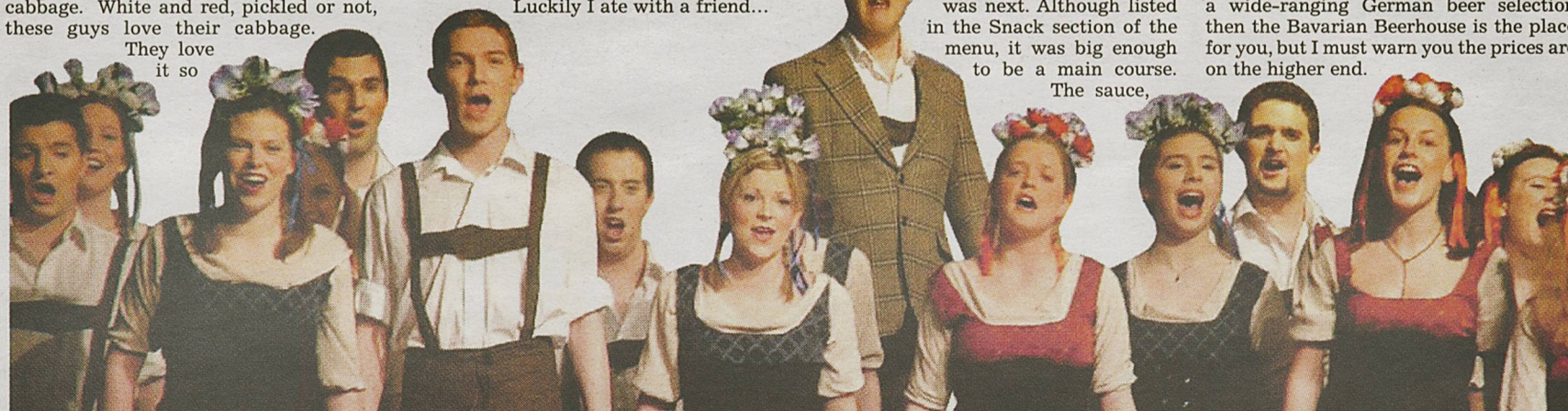
A Female Perspective

The Bavarian Beerhouse certainly offered a touch of Germany in central London. The cheesy German pop and waitresses clad in traditional Dirndl, along with the somewhat uncomfortable wooden Bier Garten benches, did give the basement venue a Bavarian feel, if not exactly an overwhelming likeness. This sadly also applied to the food, which impressively enough is shipped in from Germany. Unfortunately it seems to have lost some of it's authenticity along the way. The starter of pretzels did have a lovely original pretzel taste, with the little rock salt bits, although maybe a little on the soggy side. The Apfel-Shorle, which can be best described as sparkling apple juice, was pretty good in helping to wash the soggy pretzel down.

The classic Currywurst und Pommes (Sausage in a curry-ketchup sauce with fries) was next. Although listed in the Snack section of the menu, it was big enough to be a main course. The sauce,

which I am more accustomed to be thick and ketchup like in substance, was more like a watery lake. The fries were also nothing to write home about, but were served with a side of mayonnaise in true German style. The whole meal was heavy to say the least, and left absolutely no possibility of dessert. This was a shame, as the offers, including Black Forest Gateau, did sound tempting.

The restaurant was empty, which may have been due to our timing, two o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon hardly being a busy and happening time in any venue. The frequent phone calls the hostess attended to did seem to indicate that the Beerhouse is quite popular, especially during the Bundesliga matches, which are shown there and for which the bookings were flooding in. Most amusing was the fact that you could purchase your very own traditional Bavarian dress at the restaurant, although at 119 pounds I am not sure they are bestsellers. If you're looking for something a little different or a wide-ranging German beer selection then the Bavarian Beerhouse is the place for you, but I must warn you the prices are on the higher end.



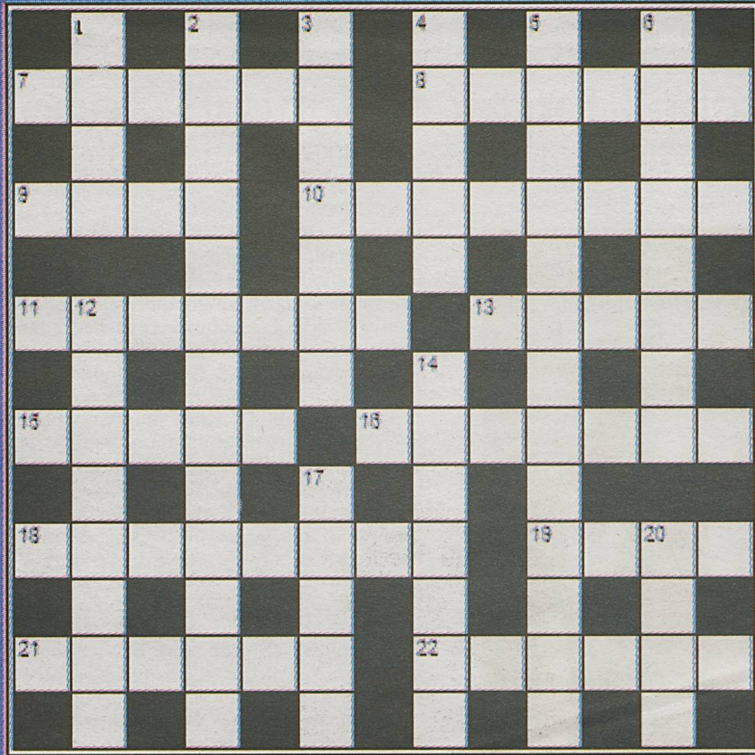
striking a blow for sexual equality, kimmandeng and josheller give us a male and a female perspective on bavarian cuisine

sausages, sausages, sausages

visual arts

food and drinking

SET BY SCOLIOSISTER

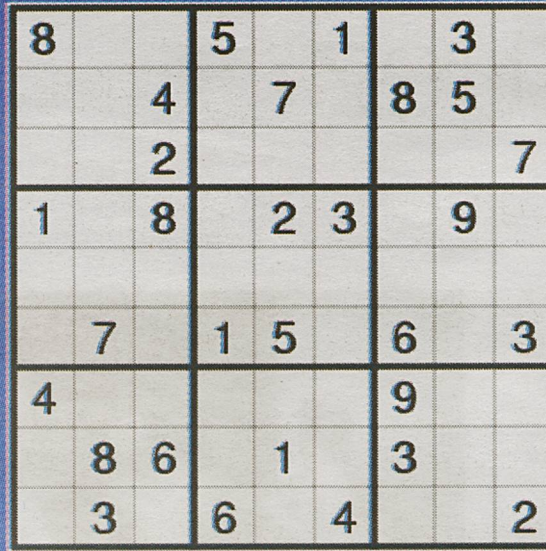


Across

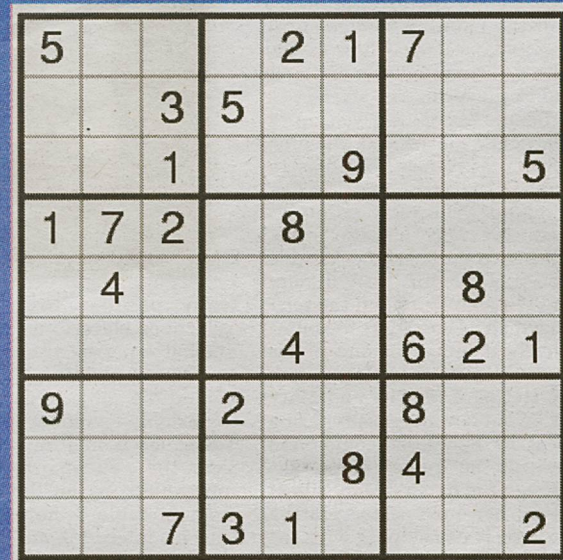
- 7 abstract things in a row
- 8 hack at my chin with this
- 9 a little mistake
- 10 listening in
- 11 hard boney structure behind the ear
- 13 not advanced
- 15 city-lunch
- 16 weird little instrument much loved by Zelda
- 18 a place that gives advice
- 19 stairs for those on wheels
- 21 we stare at it all day, it's not a breast, it's flatter than that
- 22 suffuse in a nasty way

Down

- 1 bells do this
- 2 he will take your things around town, on wheels
- 3 process of things going in things when they're next to each other
- 4 eight things making noises
- 5 something not-heavy that flies
- 6 the ramones wanna be '...'
- 12 the ramones don't wanna be this, this carries roman water
- 14 a non-sexual plastic
- 17 the opposite of lost
- 20 you can do the monster version, or do it to a potato



Difficult



Very Difficult

sudoku

the c-word

Ask

Auntie Shaw



Ooh my!!! I do like young boys in ties and Mr Shaw certainly doesn't mind pig tails and fresh fanny's deliciously wrapped in those tartan skirts. The school disco in the quad this week went down a treat!!! Although my own attempts to sport whatever perk I have left of in my pompoms failed miserably, I thoroughly enjoyed lusting after all yours. I must say, I do wish this 'bite-a-snake' drink concoction was more popular in my day - it sent me over the edge very fast. I mistook the bouncer for Mr Shaw at one point and well...mistakes happen. No regrets of course. This week I've had a lot of letters from young ladies...perhaps it's that time of the month. So young-uns, prepare yourself for dildo disasters, tampon tantrums and as always, spelling mistakes. Enjoy!

Dear Auntie

I found a dildo in my girlfriend's drawer at the start of term. It's perfectly possible that she had it before she met me but it has increasingly become an issue for me and my manhood. It's big, incredibly life like, purple, takes AA's and has a 'simultaneous clitoral stimulating function'. Don't ask how but I know it's still used. If I could do all those things and take AA's up my ASS I WOULD BUT I CAN'T, I FUCKING CAN'T, I AM NOT A MACHINE, I HAVE FEELINGS....I'm GOING TO KILL HER (Ps. She doesn't know)

2nd Year

What on earth were you doing in her drawer?! I think you might be suffering from a few minor insecurities. Since you certainly do not seem like the confrontational type, a little shock therapy for your Missus can cure her addiction to Roger. Why not mischievously replace the item with anal beads. Discovering this in her drawer will completely shock her system right through and soon paranoia that she

bought the item will begin to kick in. If this fails, put the item in a fellow flatmate's drawer and create a bit of tension in the household. This will ultimately lead to a female wrestle which you can sit back and enjoy!

I recommend www.sextoys.com
Auntie Shaw xoxo

Dear Auntie

You said these letters can be as explicit as we want so here it goes (and I want explicit answers too!) What is better, a tampon or a pad? The thought of a tampon creeps me out but pads always have potential overflow issues and I hate the sight of blood. The tampon or pad issue is a great debate among health critics. I'm sitting on the fence until I hear from you Mrs. Shaw.

1st Year

Name withheld, Passfield Halls

The female menstrual cycle is a bit of a bloody bizarre issue isn't it? What a beautiful thing a birth is (I still remember holding a kicking and screaming Fanny Flirtina in my arms) but is all the bloodshed really necessary? I would personally stick to the female sanitary towel. The thought of anything else there up in those sensitive regions other than myself or Mr Shaw is rather disturbing, although that could be due to my age...I was rather adventurous during my student days. If you are looking for a discreet way of managing your menstrual cycle then tampons are the best option. These days, I hear you can mistake them for packets of sugar. However discreet you are, boys will always squirm at the remote thought of 'feminine issues'. I hope your haven't really been setting on that fence until you heard from me or that would be a very dirty fence indeed.

You can gain up to 9lbs during ovulation
Auntie Shaw xoxo

Dear Auntie

F is my best mate, so is S. We always do everything together. Recently, F has been hitting on my mate P who is my ex flatmate's ex boyfriend. I normally wouldn't have a problem with this but I know for a fact that S used to fancy F and she got the hint that the flirting wasn't just a one way thing. T is such a bitch because she moved in with us this year and she just eats all my food and listens to really shit music. I've recently been confiding in T about this and she thinks that F and P have already had a thing just after my ex flatmate and P split up. T's ex, J, have been on and off for a while but J is my really good mate who I shared a kiss with last Christmas. I'm not sure whether I should tell T about this after she has been so nice to me. It meant nothing and I'm not even sure they were going out at the moment. If anyone has ever been more deserving of advice from Auntie Shaw I'll eat my own pair of shoes.

Government and Social Policy
LSE '08

However exciting meddling and gossip maybe be (I do it as a living), there is a limit. After reading and re reading your letter, I really couldn't find a single issue that you could potentially be involved in. F is clearly a bisexual, the x-mas kiss needs no mention, leave J and T alone and as for the SPF triangle, it will not become a square. Oh and those shoes, I would start eating them right away young madam!

Start with the laces
Auntie Shaw xoxo

If you want to share (or scare) me with you problems, rants and general nonsense, please do get in touch at thebeaver.partb@lse.ac.uk or through Auntie Shaw on Facebook. Ever your Auntie xoxo

Donation not discrimination

Alex Finnegan argues against the discrimination that prevents gays from giving blood

My grandmother always gives blood. Once every six months she trundles into town and waits for her turn. It's a good opportunity for her to rest her feet, chat with her pals and get a cup of tea and a biscuit. She's the only one in the family that bothers to do it. She is always on at me to do the same. But I can't give blood, I am not allowed.

In the UK, there is a blanket ban on blood donation by gay and bisexual men. The National Blood Service (NBS) argues that gay men are a "higher risk" group than others in society and therefore we are banned from donating blood. Don't get me wrong, the NBS does a fantastic job. Many thousands of people across the country rely on the service otherwise they would die. It just seems strange that it has imposed a blanket ban on one section of society based on the misleading stereotype that all gay men are promiscuous and put themselves at risk.

Pardon the pun, but let's get a few things straight. Proportionately, the risk of HIV infection is still higher amongst gay and bisexual men – but this is proportionate to the size of the gay and bisexual community. Newsflash: it's not that large! Secondly, rates of HIV infection continue to increase more sharply in the heterosexual

community, despite the safe sex message.

The ban even applies to gay and bisexual men who have always used a condom. The NBS seems to view all sexual activity exactly in the same way.

The NBS should discriminate before it takes blood from people. But it should discriminate based on behaviour rather than sexuality. Not all gay and bisexual men have multiple partners. I could have had a monogamous same-sex relationship for ten years. This would put me in a far lower risk category than someone who has multiple heterosexual partners. It is all about behaviour and individual risk. Not sexual identity.

Last year, patients received over three million units of blood that were tested for HIV, Hepatitis B and C before they were used.

One of the problems associated with testing for HIV has to do with what is called the 'window period'. This is the time between infection and the time it takes to detect the infection in the blood. The NBS argues that this 'window period' means its blood tests won't reveal the presence of antibodies in the blood, which confirm that the infection is there.

However, new testing procedures mean that they can detect

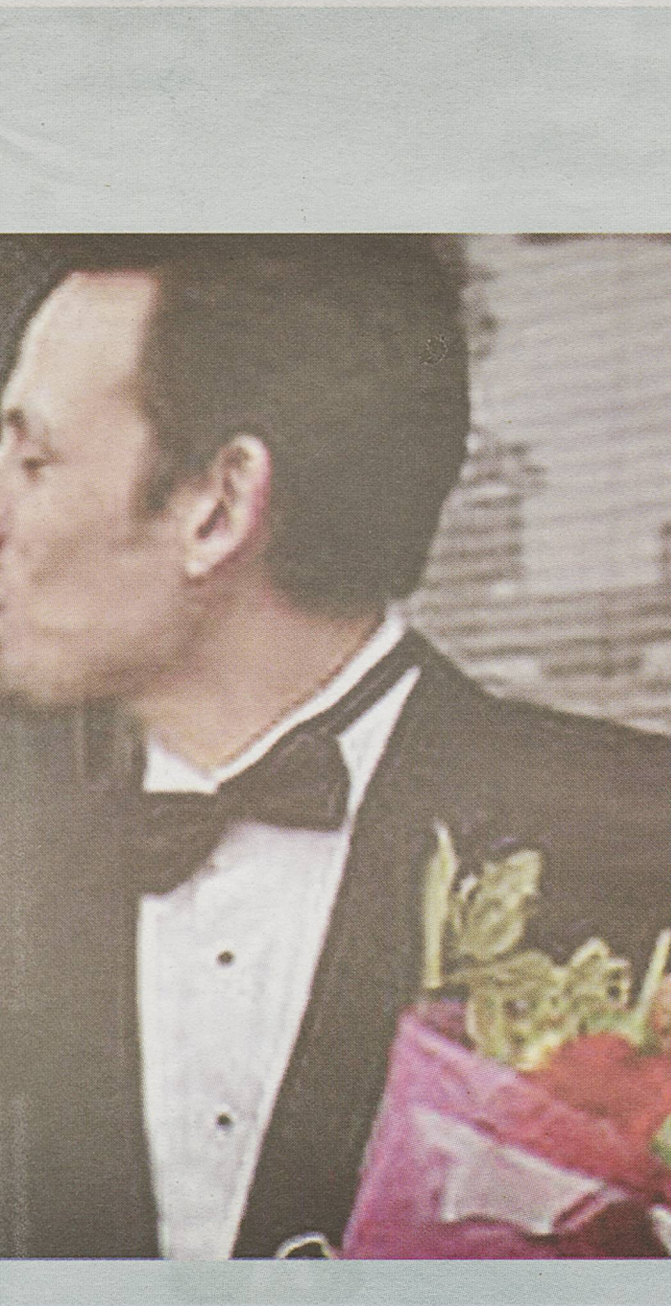
infection in the blood far more quickly because they are looking for the virus and not the antibodies. In the UK there are dwindling blood stocks. It seems wrong to me that the NBS would cut itself off from a potential source of help.

I am certainly not encourag-

ing anyone to break the rules regarding blood donation. It is important that the blood supply is as safe as possible and gay and bisexual men, just like their heterosexual brothers, might not always be aware of the risks to them and their body. Sexual health check-ups are a must.

However, it is time the NBS changed its policy. Other countries in Europe are reviewing their policies and the American Red Cross has called for the ban to be lifted. All this week, on Houghton Street, we will be encouraging people to sign our petition, to urge the NBS to

review its policy so that individual donors are assessed on their behaviour, rather than their sexuality. Please come and sign up. Giving blood is a responsibility, not a right, which can help save the lives of millions of people so please give blood today. I wish I could. ■



You'll only feel a little prick

Is the LSE campus disability friendly?

Features Editor **Fatima Manji** discusses *The Beaver* team's experience of being 'disabled' for an hour and highlights some of the problems disabled students may face whilst at the LSE

Last Friday, Emma Hallgren; the Union's 'Students with Disabilities Officer,' organised a competitive Campus Orienteering activity to highlight the various problems faced by disabled students around LSE, as part of Disabilities Awareness Week. As always your very own Features Editors were up for a challenge and we thus volunteered ourselves and new-kid-on-the-block Sports Editor Joey Mellows to take part with the intention of familiarising ourselves with the issues pertaining to disability awareness as well as engaging in a bit of friendly competition against the two other teams; the infamous UGM celebrities: C&S and the Student Union Executive team, represented by the Sabbatical Officers. (Unfortunately the former failed to show up, whilst the latter had to be coerced into taking part - thirty minutes into the challenge, so as far as the 'competition' element is concerned; it looked like a victory for *The Beaver* from the start.) Thus we set off to explore the LSE campus armed with precise instructions and closely followed by Emma and her assistants to make sure we were observing the rules, in order to be able to experience five different disabilities.

Disability Number 1: Mobility



This is perhaps the one that most obviously comes to mind and most people would think of a wheelchair user, when hearing the word disability. However according to official government statistics one in five people of working age are considered to be disabled and this encompasses a whole range of problems; not just that of mobility. Mobility impairment itself refers to an inability to use one or more extremities or a lack of strength to carry out physical activities such as walking and those who are mobility impaired often use wheelchairs, crutches or walkers to aid them. With this particular disability, usually being overtly noticeable we imagined the LSE campus to be fairly accommodating.

But as we headed off to the Careers Service, as per our instructions, almost immediately we were confronted with a problem. Just as we were about to run down the stairs, towards the Towers, we were reminded that we were technically meant to be in wheelchairs and this was impossible. Aha...but there's a lift we thought smugly and just as we were



Photograph: Aditi Nangia

What's meant to be wrong with us now?! A confused Beaver team

about to decipher the exact workings of this modern invention...turns out the lift appeared to be strangely 'Out of Order,' posing us with a bit of a problem. (My investigative skills suggest this apparent fault with the lift was staged for the purposes of this activity - so don't all write into LSE Maintenance!)

Eventually we worked out in order to reach our destination, we would have to go all the way round from the other side, but having finally reached the doors to Tower Three we were faced with problem number two as wheelchair users; being unable to open them. Joey and I clearly looked confused, whilst Ben made a desperate plea to passers-by: "Excuse me, I'm in a wheelchair can you open the door for me?" One man rather aggressively ordered him to "Open it yourself!" (this of course set me off with an attack of hysterical laughter for about three minutes), whilst others simply ignored us. Finally one bewildered looking student obliged and we gained access to the building. What

would have been a matter of seconds for the three of us normally, took much longer when we were faced with mobility impairment and this was to areas where 'disabled access,' is supposedly enabled. In any case, the activity served its purpose and for the rest of the challenge we all began spotting potential problem spots for wheelchair users including narrow gaps in doorways and lifts. Obvious? Maybe not.

Disability Number 2: Hearing Impairment



This can consist of varying degrees; from a complete absence of hearing to a decreased ability to perceive auditory information. Our task was to answer five simple questions by listening to a pre-recorded lecture - but here's the catch - it was deliberately played faintly so as to allow us to experience what it is like to be hearing impaired. We felt it was difficult enough to listen even in silence, imagine what it could be like for someone with hearing difficulties, having to concentrate around people chatting during a lecture or when there is a high level of background noise - as is the case in many of the classrooms close to main roads such as in Clement House.

Disability Number 3: Accessibility

Next task. Student Union Copy Shop - which by the way isn't accessible for wheelchair users. And so we were given an ordinary task: photo-

copying to conduct as a growth impaired student. Joey very kindly volunteered of his own accord (after some level of coercion from Features) to take this on - photocopying, whilst standing on his knees. As three editors who might be described as technologically 'challenged,' we have a tough enough time deciphering how to work photocopying machines as it is. This task took a good ten minutes. Perhaps some form of height adjustable photocopying machines would make life a lot easier for students with this disability?

Disability Number 4: Visual impairment



Contrary to popular belief, visual impairment does not simply refer to someone who is fully blind but is also a term used for those with reduced vision. A person can be registered 'blind' on the advice of an ophthalmologist, if they cannot see the biggest letter on a standard letter chart with both eyes open when it is held three metres away. The activity we had to undertake to experience this disability was again to answer five straightforward questions, this time by looking at a paragraph of writing from a projector slide. Writing which was deliberately skewed to make it difficult to read, thus allowing to empathise with the potential problems faced by a visually impaired student. Hence the clear sense of confusion on all our faces in the photograph. Although this activity was enlightening in informing us 538 students at the LSE are registered as disabled. There may be many more who experience a disability and are not.

The confusion continued into the next activity as we embarked on unscrambling a love poem - an example of viewing the world from the perspective of a dyslexic student. Dyslexia is a learning difficulty of a complex nature. It impacts a person's ability to read, write and count - and results in a person's cognitive ability being lower than that which would be expected from a person of their intelligence. Approximately 4% of Britain's population is thought to suffer from dyslexia, but 10% show some of its symptoms.

So in conclusion then our campus

orienting activity was a fun experience in watching each other struggle but also a very real insight into the problems faced by different types of students. Fun and games aside, there is a serious tone to all this: the fact that disability awareness is fundamental. Regardless of how progressive and educated we may believe ourselves to be, the reality is that very few of us are aware of the realities experienced by disabled students - and in this I do not just refer to those in wheelchairs.

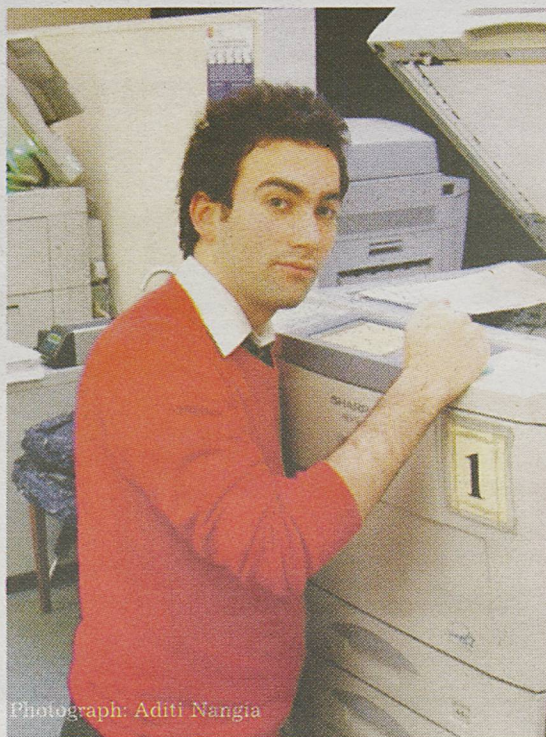
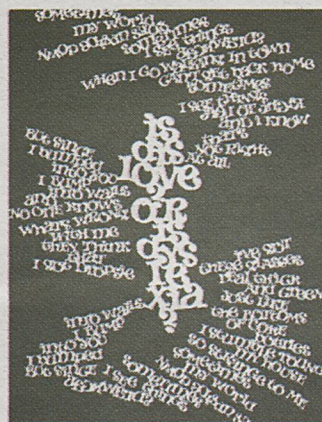
Two very important elements stood out for me. Firstly that disabili-

ties are not always that obvious; everything from dyslexia to hearing impairments may be entirely invisible and this needs to be considered when we speak of the 'needs of disabled students.' Secondly, despite the School's efforts in trying to accommodate the needs of different students, there is still much more which can be done. For those with mobility problems, certain areas of the campus are completely inaccessible including The Beaver office. And other disabled students may experience problems of a different nature. In writing this article, I am not advocating patronizing

students with disabilities in a self-righteous manner. But we need to be aware that various students around us; our friends and classmates may face different disabilities. Our role is to be aware of them and to be willing to help accommodate their needs, without treating them any differently as individuals in their own right.

(And in the final scores for the challenge; The Beaver team successfully beat the turned-up-late Sabbaticals!)

Disability Number 5: Dyslexia



Photograph: Aditi Nangia

Are we meant to shrink this to fifty percent?



Photograph: Luan Chambers

Lift on the way to the Towers

With many thanks to Union Student with Disabilities Officer Emma Hallgren and her team of helpers for organising an extremely insightful experience.

If you would like further information on LSE's provisions for disabled students please contact Emma on:

Su.Disability@lse.ac.uk

Addressing disability issues in our education system

Features Editor Benjamin Biggs examines the debate around where disabled children should be educated

The debate over whether England's 1.5m children with "special educational needs" - which range from dyslexia through behaviour dysfunction to severe medical conditions - should be educated in mainstream classrooms rather than in specialist schools was a key campaign issue at the last general election. The prevailing view amongst education professionals was that they should. However last summer a report published by the all-party parliamentary committee on education concluded that the system is not "fit for purpose."

Inclusion seems an uncontroversial enough aim. Supporters say that segregating disabled children in special facilities keeps them from achieving their educational potential and developing social skills. Mary Warnock, an academic and now a peer, led the crusade for inclusion. Her ideas became law in the 1981 Education Act, although the money, under a Conservative government, lagged behind.

When Labour came to power in 1997 they declared that "the proportion of children educated in special schools should fall over time." Ministers have also stumped up more cash (about £1.5 billion since 2002) into educating children with special needs, much of it in ordinary schools. Through the "School Action Plus" programme, mainstream schools were told to identify children with problems and give them extra help.

Thanks to these policies, the number of pupils taught in special schools

has fallen dramatically, from 131,000 in 1979 to 90,000 last year. The number of children who are legally entitled to specific help, has fallen too, by 8% since 2001.

Many mainstream schools are struggling though. Children with special needs now account for between a tenth and a quarter of an average intake. Yet schools do not always earmark extra cash for them, and many pupils do not get the help they need. Their numbers have increased too, partly because medical advances have allowed more children with severe problems to survive. Teachers are not trained for the widening range of conditions defined as educational disabilities. A growing number of pupils are autistic or have behavioural problems, and hence are disruptive: two-thirds of all those suspended from school have "special needs".

Pupils with physical disabilities or milder learning problems can thrive in mainstream schools but others are unhappy, especially at secondary level. Many would prefer specialist schools. Lady Warnock has also changed her mind: last summer she published a pamphlet arguing that inclusion had gone "too far". The Conservative Party, in line with their stances on everything else it previously believed, have changed their mind too.

Andrew Adonis, an influential education minister, wants to redefine inclusion. His new vision is of "third-way provision" - special units located within ordinary schools so that pupils with special needs can mix with the



Mainstream schooling for disabled children: a circle of inclusion

others for some lessons but be protected from the chaos of school life for others. He says that the government

does not have a policy of closing special schools, although some may amalgamate. Cash, as always may

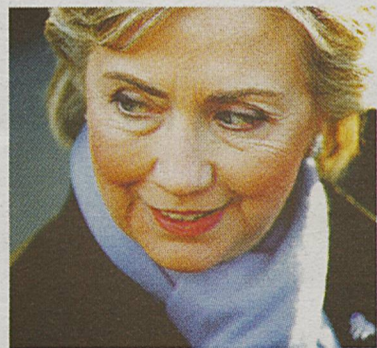
prove be what matter. Special facilities cost up to ten times as much as mainstream ones.

Barack Obama: A Saviour for America

In the first of our series of American Presidential profiles, **Greg White** takes a look at the new darling of the Democratic Party

The Democratic Party is in shambles. At least that is what you hear from right to left across the United States. If you watch any sort of television news programming in America or read *The New York Times* you might begin to believe this as fact. To understand why this is the case one needs simply to look at those individuals currently leading the party. While Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid have done a fine job of saying little in their positions as Democratic Party leaders in the House and Senate, respectively, the country has been left to look to figures such as Hillary Clinton for inspiration. While a shrewd and tremendous politician, Senator Hillary Clinton is anything but leadership material. There is nothing inspiring about her rhetoric, nothing that a citizen could grab hold onto and vote for on a national level. The search for a new Clinton continues, but in the process the country may have found a new John F Kennedy. The diamond in the otherwise stripped mine of post-Clintonian democratic politics is Barack Obama of Illinois.

It's unlikely Obama hysteria has crossed the pond at this stage, but it has certainly conquered blue America from coast to coast. Obama was quoted as saying, "I'm so overexposed, I'm making Paris Hilton look like a recluse." Possessing the speaking ability of Clinton with the imagination of JFK, he is the most capable populist politician the country has seen in some time. Coming from a mixed race background, a black father and a white mother and an education in both Christian and Muslim schools,



Hillary Clinton is anything but leadership material. There is nothing inspiring about her rhetoric, nothing that a citizen could grab hold onto and vote for on a national level

Obama has appeal with a diverse group of communities.

Senator Obama also possesses the international aspects, most capable American Presidents have, without the decidedly Francophile style of defeated democratic candidate John Kerry. Having lived in Indonesia as a youth after his mother remarried,

Obama has a more global outlook than some of his more domestic counterparts. The pedigree of Ivy League studies is also well established in Obama's veins, having studied international relations at Columbia and graduated from Harvard Law.

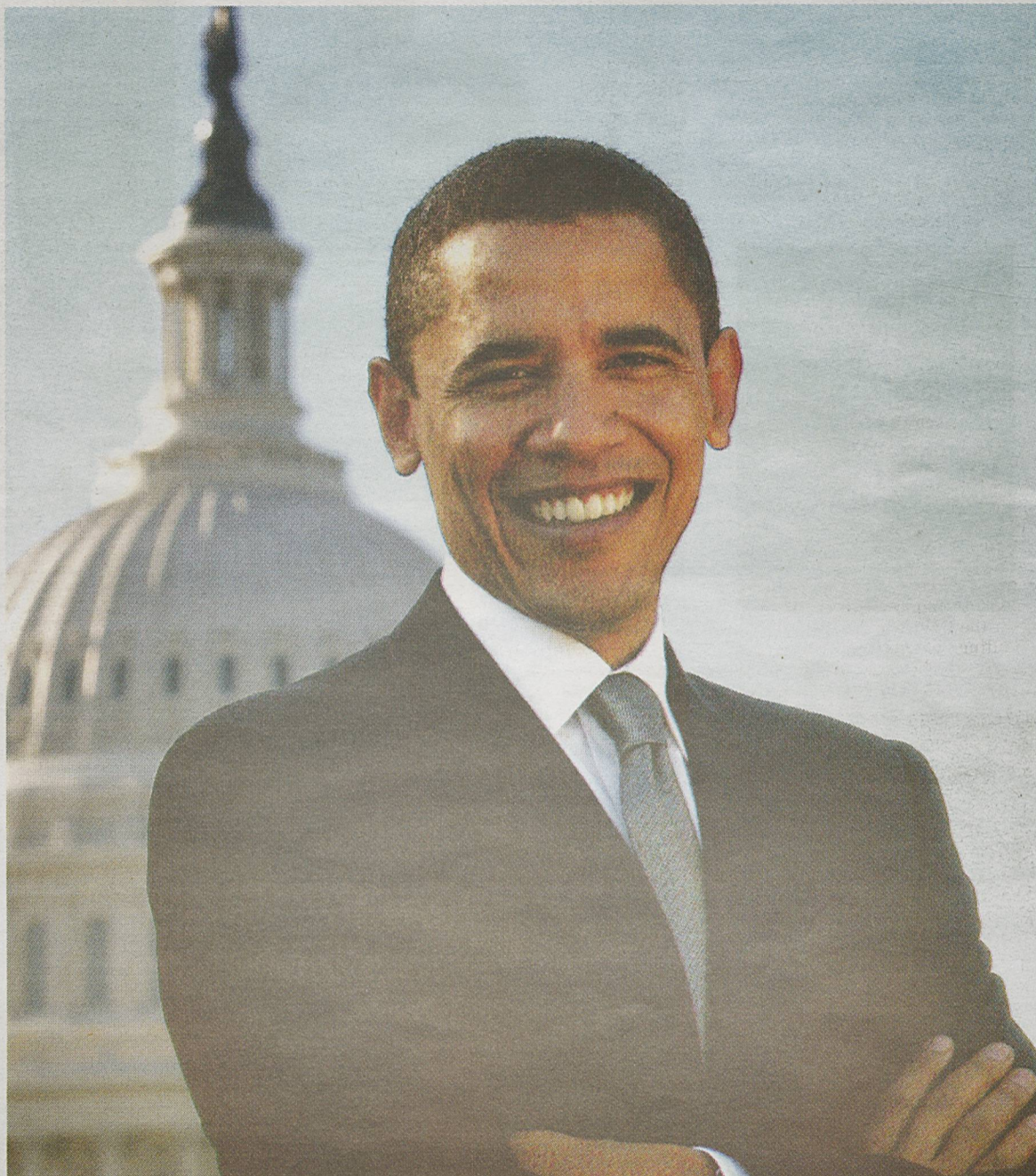
While all of this is appealing in many ways, it is his broader ideas and conceptions of the United States and the world that make him such a compelling character in American politics. A moderate anti-war leader, who seems to talk more than he votes on the issue, Obama represents much of the sentiment of common Americans on the Iraq issue. He has been a strong voice in the Senate in regards to anti-torture legislation when Republican candidates, such as John McCain, are floundering on the issue.

Obama has stated; "Today we are engaged in a deadly global struggle for those who would intimidate, torture and murder people for exercising the most basic freedoms. If we are to win this struggle and spread those freedoms, we must keep our own moral compass pointed in a true direction." This is the sort of inspirational rhetoric the American people are craving, not the decidedly crippled electioneering of Hillary Clinton or John McCain.

And like every presidential candidate, Obama has written a book. Titled *The Audacity of Hope*, influential broadsheets like *The New York Times* have showered it with praise; "And in these pages, he often speaks to the reader as if he were an old friend from back in the day, salting policy recommendations with colourful asides about the absurdities of political life."

It's the reality that Obama brings about in his script that is so appealing. In his previous book *Dreams From My Father*, Obama was audacious enough to describe his experiences with drug use. Admitting to that in American politics is quite typically political suicide. The US has had candidates cover these issues up in ridiculous style such as the bizarre series of Clintonian remarks about not inhaling.

The impact of his books and speaking ability has been the creation of a community, intent on getting him to run. Not that Obama has not been secretly building this group for some time now, with his blogging and podcasting activities. But this stretches beyond the Deaniac, internet, grassroots campaigners of the previous presidential election. *Time* magazine, a rather centrist outfit, ran an article on its front page; stating why this man will be the next President of the United States. That is a rather aggressive piece for someone who has not even served a whole term in public



But you haven't even mentioned me gassing the Kurds yet?

office. But perhaps it is just that which makes him so appealing.

His roguish, progressive, morally mindful attitudes are what should be shaping the party lines of the Democrats, not the conflict driven pursuit of further differentiation. All the nonsense in the US about red and blue states is a great deal of rubbish. People have always had different opinions on issues of society and class, but more or less, most people agree on 'the big stuff.' I doubt many

Americans feel that education and healthcare should be so under-funded as to leave a generation of students behind and in debt and that a generation of seniors should be reduced to making car trips to Canada in order to buy cheap drugs. Nor do people believe that the US should start an American Empire of foot soldiers who march the world waving our flag and shoving our culture down others' throats. And that too works in the reverse, as most Americans do not

want the US to become isolationist, distant from all the cultures that make up the United States of America.

Obama stands for the progressive centrist, 'common sense politics' that can turn a generation destined for cynicism and doubt, into one of hope and inspiration. All he has to do is run and the whole nature of American politics could be shifted. ■

In his own words...



"Money is not the only answer but it makes a difference."



"There's not a liberal America and a conservative America - there's the United States of America."



"My job is not to represent Washington to you, but to represent you to Washington."

Rumsfeld resigns, but will Gates give the US a new foreign policy?

Features Political Correspondent Ben Gianforti examines those in charge of US Defence Policy

After six long years, Donald Rumsfeld is finally out of a job. Thus ends the tenure of the most unpopular and polarising Secretary of Defence since Robert McNamara, the architect of the Vietnam War. Henry Kissinger, the former Secretary of State, once described Rumsfeld as the most ruthless man he had ever met. Indeed, his rule at the Pentagon was characterised by ideological bullying and intolerance of dissent. In Bob Woodward's new book on the Bush administration's execution of the War on Terror, *State of Denial*, Rumsfeld is portrayed as a pigheaded jerk whom the President had to order to return then National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice's phone calls. As if this weren't enough to indict Rumsfeld based solely on his personality, *The New York Times* recently reported that the man plays incredibly dirty squash, refusing to clear the middle of the court to allow his opponents to reach the ball.

But Rumsfeld was not ousted because of his objectionable personality or foul play on the squash court. Rumsfeld lost his job because of a long list of catastrophic failures. At the top of this list, was his campaign to transform the American military into a 21st century fighting force. He sought to reorient the military away from the Cold War mentality of large standing armies and big, costly weapons systems towards small, flex-



But you haven't even mentioned me gassing the Kurds yet?



Gates...should bring a degree of consensus building back into the Defence Department. He is not an ideologue and has been critical of the war in Iraq.

Iraq would be generous. Furthermore, there is a tragic irony in the fact that Rumsfeld's 21st century fighting force is now woefully unable to deal with 21st century problems like nuclear proliferation. There is no doubt that Iran and North Korea's nuclear activity has become far more brazen of late because they know that an American military response is highly unlikely due to logistical and political constraints.

Beyond hamstringing the American armed forces, Rumsfeld presided over a string of scandals. The first was the lagging procurement of life-saving armour for Humvees and infantrymen. In response to one serviceman's request for more armour Rumsfeld replied, "You don't go to war with the army you want, you go to war with the army you have." Evidently, this means you go to war with an incompetent defence secretary hell-bent on fighting wars cheaply regardless of casualties.

The second and most damaging scandal was the torture exposed at Abu Ghraib. While perhaps not specifically condoned by Rumsfeld, the kind of abuses that occurred at Abu Ghraib were only possible within a military culture that does condone looking the other way and passing the buck downward in rank. The same could be said for the scandalous cover-up of the Haditha massacre in which a platoon of marines who had just lost one of their number to a roadside bomb slaughtered 24 Iraqi civilians including women and children. This list of scandals could be lengthened ad infinitum, so comprehensive was Rumsfeld's negligence. What is striking is how utterly unrepentant and indignant he managed to be in the face of these scandals. Rumsfeld was completely unwilling to accept any responsibility for his errors in judgment and the kind of culture he helped to foster within the armed services.

As the midterm elections approached this fall, the steady drumbeat of calls for Rumsfeld's ousting reached a point of cacophony.

Embattled Republicans, Democrats, retired generals and the military press all lent their voices. In the wake of the Democrats' victory in both houses of Congress, many prominent Republicans, most notably former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, are blaming the White House for not sacking Rumsfeld before the election. The Bush team is claiming that they didn't want to give any weight to the Democrats' claims that Iraq is a failing endeavour in need of a new direction. Unfortunately for Bush and the Grand Old Party, the results of this election cycle indicate that this is exactly how the American people feel. They wanted Rumsfeld's head on a plate and that's what they got.

Several months ago, before the midterms it was clear that Bush would never let go of Rumsfeld. Iraq is so central to Bush's legacy that the loss of Rumsfeld, as the architect of that war and the War on Terror generally, would be tacit acknowledgement of the failure of Bush's vision. Additionally, the Bush administration has adhered to their "stay the course" mentality fairly closely despite the fact that they chucked the phrase itself. Right up until the midterms, Bush was saying that Rumsfeld wouldn't be going anywhere regardless of the outcome of the elections. Finally, Bush can't seek re-election and Cheney is not running. If they had refused to make changes in the face of gross incompetence when they could still be held accountable electorally, as lame ducks with nothing to lose there was no way that they would cease their unequivocal support of Rumsfeld. For all these reasons, I was slightly perplexed when I found out that Rumsfeld had resigned.

To some extent, the people have spoken and the Bush administration responded accordingly. But this was not a spur of the moment decision. In the past week it has come to light that Rumsfeld's resignation had been in the works for months. The Bush team was having a hard time finding a replacement (understandably) and, again, they wanted to wait until after

the midterms. Interestingly, Bush refused Rumsfeld's resignation twice during the Abu Ghraib scandal.

Rumsfeld's exit from the Pentagon and Robert Gates' nomination to fill the post tell us three things about today's Bush administration. First, it proves that Bush is finally willing to acknowledge publicly that the situation in Iraq is deteriorating and in need of a fresh, bipartisan approach. Rumsfeld was the perfect sacrificial lamb to show that Bush is ready to make changes and not simply stay the course. He was a partisan enforcer that ruled the Pentagon with an iron fist. Gates has served under both Republican and Democratic administrations in various capacities and should bring a degree of consensus building back into the Defence Department. He is not an ideologue and has, in fact, been critical of the war in Iraq and the administration's approach to Iran.

Second, the Gates nomination

No matter how you slice it, Rumsfeld's resignation is a step in the right direction for the United States

allows Bush to mend the rift between the Defence Department and the State Department. Rumsfeld first opened this wound by rejecting then Secretary of State Colin Powell's advice on the invasion of Iraq. Powell is a four star general with a doctrine attached to his name as well. The Powell doctrine is one of overwhelming force to topple regimes and keep the peace afterwards. Obviously, this did not fit in with the paradigm Rumsfeld envisioned. The antipathy between the Defence Department and the State Department was only perpetuated when 'Condi' replaced

Powell in early 2005. Gates was director of the CIA under the first President Bush. He rose out of the intelligence agency's Soviet analyst ranks. During Bush I's presidency, Gates worked closely with 'Condi', also a Soviet expert and then a member of the National Security Council, formulating policy on the collapse of the USSR.

Third and finally, Gates' entrance into the White House inner circle indicates that Bush may have finally gotten over his Oedipus complex. I don't mean to psychoanalyse W, but the war in Iraq could be seen as an effort to do what the old man couldn't, oust Saddam and turn the Middle East into a democratic utopia. Adding fuel to this fire, is the fact that Rumsfeld is Bush I's great rival. It is reported that the two men despise each other, having worked together under several Republican administrations. Rumsfeld's inclusion was certainly a thumb in Dad's eye. Gates is not the only evidence that W may be trying to reconcile with his father. He has been more attentive to Brent Snowcroft, Bush I's National Security Adviser and a leading Republican critic of the war in Iraq. Most importantly, W appears to be eagerly awaiting the findings of the Iraq Study Group, co-chaired by James Baker, Bush I's Secretary of State. These men were 'Cold Warriors'. They are seasoned realists of the old school that should tamp down the idealistic bent of W's foreign policy.

No matter how you slice it, Rumsfeld's resignation is a step in the right direction for the United States. I'm sceptical as to how much things will actually change, particularly in Iraq. Gates can't will into being the huge amount of combat ready troops we so desperately need to keep the peace. But we can be hopeful that the Bush administration will begin to engage members of the so-called "Axis of Evil" such as Syria and Iran to prevent Iraq from becoming a failed state. Also, Gates may be more serious about implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. ■

More money for Fat Cat CEOs

Giles Wilkes argues the huge pay gap between chief executives and their employees is unfair and must be addressed

Last month, we learnt from Income Data Services that the average pay of FTSE 100 chief executives grew last year by 40%, to stand at £2.89million, or 98 times average earnings. Ordinary wages grew at around 5%. In fact, they had to - the economy only grows so fast. But, somehow, the salaries of bosses defy gravity. How can this happen?

I like the 'E' in 'LSE', and tend also to like what free markets do - much smarter and more adaptable than governments - and so find myself intrigued when they seem to misfire so badly. For that is the standard excuse for pay awards, at both ends - "it's a free market, innit", and who can gainsay the all-knowing market? In fact, the Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) put it so much better in an letter to *The Times*: "Senior executive pay has increased in line with international benchmarks, while lower-skilled employees have found themselves competing with low-cost workers overseas".

How interesting! Being in an international market has pushed CEOs pay UP, but keeps other workers' pay DOWN! I have experience working with people at the Mercedes-end of the pay-scale in the City. The most striking observation I gained was that higher levels do not incentivise better work. In fact, the more they were paid, the more whiny, defensive and aggrieved the employee would be. Being able to buy almost any amount of stuff made little difference to motivation. In fact, at high levels of pay, the absolute value of a salary package becomes immaterial compared to the positional advantage it gives you relative to your peers. Once the bills are paid, the wealthy don't care how many pints, houses or suits their salary packet can get them. But finding out that Bob from Fixed Income got as much as Rick from Equities is enough to have Rick chucking the rattle out of the pram and storming into the boss's office,

even if Rick has just been given enough to buy himself a portion of the Caribbean.

Such lack of perspective on the 'demand' side would not matter if the market was efficient in all other ways. After all, having a few yuppies complaining about not yet being able to afford the Ferrari wouldn't matter if their jobs could be instantly taken by a graduate on a fifth of the pay. But it doesn't work like that - entrenched employees have real bargaining power, through their accumulated knowledge, their valuable contacts, in fact as much through the damage they can do as the good.

I am a believer in the fairness of free labour markets - when they are genuinely free. This means - lots of buyers (employers), lots of sellers (employees), no barriers to entry, and so on. But the CEO pay bazaar is not such a free market. A CEO has "local monopoly power" - which means the ability to extract supernormal 'rent'. To be a candidate for his position, you need to have a history in that business, sometimes in that very company. You need the existing sales relationships, knowledge of the other key employees, the funny technological quirks of your business. In particular, you need to be known and trusted by the City, who could punish a 'wrong' appointment with a 10% fall in the share price if it looks too out of court. The result is a short candidate list - and not because the talents are incredibly rare.

Other factors differentiate the CEO pay-market from that of a burger-flipper or cleaner. For the CEO, a panel of similar people - directors, other CEO's, etc decide his pay. They



Inside the shady world of shareholders

won't fight for a low salary package, because they also benefit from the system. Few directors want to be known for being the worst payers in the FTSE 100 or 350, whereas one suspects that showing brutal restraint on lower level salaries is seen as a tremendous virtue. Furthermore, the ultimate paymaster is the shareholder. Where are they? Supposedly present in the form of the directors, their interests are in fact heavily diluted, and confused by the short-term City share price reaction. How frequent are shareholder revolts over CEO pay? They tend to be famous because their very rarity, such as the squabble over JP Garnier's package at GlaxoSmithKline.

The "benchmarking" of CEO salaries also explain a bias towards empire-building mergers and takeovers. Taking over another company, study after study has shown, does not enhance the shareholder return for the acquiring company. But it *does* push a CEO into a bigger bracket - and with it, a better benchmark.

I am not against high pay as such. To give an example of ludicrous salaries that nevertheless 'make

sense', look at the football market. In the 1960's, owing to a legally-rigged market, professional footballers were paid a maximum of £20 per week, until this was ended by Jimmy Hill (better known nowadays for being a large-chinned pundit). By the 1970's, salaries had risen to £100, and, in the early 1990's, £10,000. Now, following the Sky Television bonanza, £100,000 per week is not uncommon. Much less, and the player will be seen in some café, complaining to an agent about what an insulting chap the Chairman is.

Footballers get away with this not because ball-juggling talent is so much rarer since the days of Pele, Johan Cruyff and Bobby Charlton. If anything, the supply of good players has increased. The actual reason concerns the structure of the market, and the supply of cash. With the end of transfer restrictions in 1995 (as a result of the Bosman ruling - a mediocre player having a huge effect), the genuinely limited supply of star players, now in full possession of property rights in themselves, could fully leverage their value.

But the football market is fair. There are few barriers to entry. Any sixteen-year-old who can run all day and bend it like Beckham can break into the top ranks. The competition for his signature is genuine and fierce. Unlike CEO's, a footballer is also the major capital asset of the 'company'. The CEO of BP, on the other hand, is making money that is actually being earned by billions of pounds of invested capital. Also, a footballer is in a very risky job. The vast majority fail, and even the superstars have at most 10-12 years of good earnings to pay

for a subsequent lifetime as PE teachers. Finally, Gary Neville's salary is not decided by a panel consisting of Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs, and, for balance, his brother Phil from Everton.

So footballers were unlocking their true value after decades of a false market. CEO's are not, instead they are increasingly exploiting their monopoly position, and abusing the fact that their compensation is decided by reference to other CEO's. Government organisations like the Civil Service are closer to the right mark, paying amounts more like ten times the average salary at the top. They don't have trouble recruiting.

How can this broken market be fixed? Shareholders need to care more, and make it clear that they do not see a huge CEO pay package as a share-price boosting virility symbol. But ultimately, the only answer can come with restraint on the demand side. So long as every CEO wants to be paid well relative to his peers, they will just be a herd of fat cats chasing their own tails, getting fatter and fatter but no more satisfied. Their peculiar selfishness seems worse for the fact that they are pursuing lumps of cash that they clearly fail to appreciate for its real value - instead, seeing it as tokens in a childish competitive game. There are plenty of reasons to be proud of becoming a CEO - it is a huge achievement, despite all I have said here - but earning 100 times that of the average employee is not one of them. ■



laptops. Microsoft wants to create a similar effect - they want users who have a Windows machine to be inclined to buy and use a Microsoft Zune MP3 Player, a Windows Mobile device, MSN Messenger, a Xbox 360... and so forth - thus allowing users to have access to all their information wherever they are, whether at work, at home or on the move.

However this path is radical and risky - one of the fundamental reasons why people still use Windows is because they are used to 'the way things are'. If things change, then other options such as Apple's products may be considered by consumers. However, Microsoft still has a plan for this - its 'Live Initiative' - where it slowly integrates its own products into our lives. From Windows Live, an internet-based hub where users can access their email, storage, calendar etc, to Xbox Live, Microsoft's \$70/£40 a year gaming service - currently the videogame industry's benchmark - for its Xbox and Xbox 360, to Office Live - an online space of Office and Website tools. Ultimately all these 'Lives' will be integrated together with each other - and thus the 'Apple Effect' (soon to be Microsoft Effect?) will be complete.

Still, will this all be enough to challenge the iPod, Google or YouTube? There are certainly reasons to believe that it is possible. Microsoft is cornered on all sides, and it's toughest when cornered. It is hugely pushing for web apps as well as innovative hardware (although unlike Google and Yahoo, Microsoft seems keen to develop its own rather than gobbling up other companies) - and ultimately, Windows is still the most commonly used operating system in the world by far.

However, as time goes by, the world of computing changes extremely quickly, and Microsoft is struggling to keep up, while Google, Yahoo and Apple's outmanoeuvring seems to continue. Ten years ago, people thought Microsoft would control the internet with MSN. Now Microsoft seems to be hanging on the edge. In 1995, Bill Gates foresaw the internet tidal wave and pushed his company to adapt. Today, Ray Ozzie is doing the same thing, but this time, it's about survival. ■

An Apple a day keeps Microsoft away?

Simon Wang says Microsoft must fight to revive its once giant status

Microsoft is old. In the 21st Century, it is clearly lagging behind - outmanoeuvred, so to speak, by faster, clever, hipper and more innovative competitors - from Apple and Google to Flickr and YouTube. With its share of both hardware and software markets dwindling, something needs to be done. It's not really a case of *if* Microsoft will truly challenge Apple's iPod, the Blackberry or MySpace, but rather *how* - after all, it's already happening, regardless of whether people are aware of it or not.

In June, Bill Gates stepped down from his role as chief software architect (although he will remain Chairman) of Microsoft - marking the end of an era. His handpicked successor, Ray Ozzie, now has the task of facing the opposition, which has to this day outmatched any new products Microsoft has managed to produce in this new battleground. Apple Computer currently completely controls the online music and MP3 player business with the firm grip of the iPod - Microsoft has tried to compete with its own music device, the Zune, released five months ago, with a very low success rate. Although Microsoft's

games console, the Xbox 360, has been a hit, competition from Sony's Playstation 2 (and the upcoming PS3 and Nintendo's Wii) means that profits are elusive, if they exist. And as for internet applications - what is generally considered to be the defining factor in future technology companies - Microsoft is clearly not leading the pack. Google reigns supreme in both search functionality and online video (after its swallowing of YouTube a few weeks ago), as well as experimenting

with web apps, and MySpace, Bebo and Facebook generally dominate the social networking sector. Meanwhile, Microsoft has been struggling with the sort of things it has done best - big software packages. Windows is slowly but surely losing ground to both Mac OS X and Linux, due to the security of the former and the cheapness of the latter (Linux is free), and Vista, due out next year, is two years late and has no firm release date.

But Ozzie has a plan. He is painfully aware of the story of IBM in the 1970s - when it was the most powerful corporation on Earth - so powerful that the government sued it for antitrust violations. Ozzie does not want history to repeat itself. Therefore, instead of spending billions and years on one giant deeply integrated software package, Microsoft seem to be taking a leaf out of Google, Apple and Yahoo's book, by designing smaller and thus, faster releases of software in interchangeable pieces. They are trying to copy what is currently known as the 'Apple Effect' - the effect of the hugely successful iPod contributing to greater sales of Apple's main profit maker - iMacs and MacBook computers and



MP3 players: Windows of opportunity

An Immaculate Collection

Features Editor Benjamin Biggs looks at the history of collecting

According to a study published in the *Evening Standard* last week, one in three people in Britain exhibit "mild collecting tendencies" whilst one in seven Britons have "OCD related tendencies towards collecting." In other words collecting takes an unhealthy amount of their time. Collecting is something we have all had a passion for at some point in our lives. When we were small children we may have been interested in finding shells or marbles; then perhaps moved onto collecting comic books, dolls or toy cars. If collecting is common amongst humans it is even more common in the animal kingdom. In the mountains of Papua New Guinea, the male bowerbird collects flowers, moss, berries and man-made items, fashioning them into a bow to attract a mate.

Collecting is "the process of actively, selectively and passionately acquiring, possessing and disposing of valued things, often removed from ordinary use and perceived as part of a set." Hunting for them excites the collector, and taking possession of the object of his desire can be a moment of pure passion. Don Juan, with his 1,003 conquests in Spain alone, was an archetypal collector. His hunting ground was half the human race, so he could never hope to complete the set. Most collectors pursue less ambitious goals, merely wanting to acquire every first edition by an author or every denomination of a stamp, and love putting the last piece into place.

Some people think the urge to collect may be related to mankind's origin as a hunter-gatherer. Others have looked for Freudian explanations: compensation for a loveless childhood, or an attempt to impose order on a chaotic world. (Freud himself possessed over 4,000 antiquities, many of which look distinctly phallic.)

Collecting has been around for a very long time. King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon kept statues from the period of the kings of Ur which at the time were already hundreds of years old. The Roman Empire developed a craze for antique statues, paintings and other objects from Greece, which were plundered and brought to the capital for sale to Roman collectors. For much of the Middle Ages, collecting in Europe was mainly done by the Church, which kept treasuries of artefacts made from gold, silver and gems. By the early Renaissance, princes and nobles in Italy became interested in collecting art and curiosities, and the habit rapidly spread northwards.

From the late 16th century, the wealth and political stability of the Netherlands brought a passion for collecting among a middle class that had the money and opportunity to indulge it. Rembrandt kept over 2,000 weapons and pieces of armour, as well many paintings and prints, ethnographic specimens from Asia and the Americas and lots of other items. The 17th-century saw the famous craze develop surrounding tulips in the Netherlands. Tulips first arrived in Holland from Persia or Turkey in the middle of the 16th century. In 1623 a tulip collector, Nicolaas van Wassenaar, bought a single bulb of an exquisite red-and-white striped variety for a sum that at the time would have bought eight oxen. The collector's instinct had become mixed up with speculation, greed and fear.

Like all bubbles, the mania subsided, leaving many a speculator ruined. But interest in the rare and exotic survived, soon to be fed by another craze: the grand tour. Well-to-do Europeans started travelling south, mostly to Italy, to visit the sites of classical civilisation and buy up antiquities and paintings to take home. Some of these acquisitions



People who collect stamps are philatelists

formed the core of great museums, such as the British Museum. A grand tour of another kind, Napoleon's military progress around Europe, yielded the first collection for the Louvre in Paris.

By the 19th century, the collecting habit had started to pass from rulers and nobles to robber-barons such as Andrew Carnegie, John Pierpont Morgan and John D. Rockefeller. Nelson Rockefeller saw collecting as a duty saying "in my position I must collect. My mother did it, and my grandfather did it. It is an obligation." In Europe, magnates such as Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, Sir William



As many traditional items of desire, such as paintings, cars and furniture are reaching prices only plutocrats can afford many people are turning to new items to collect

Burrell and the Rothschild family developed a similar sense of duty, and many such collections ended up in their own museums for all to enjoy.

According to James Stourton at Sotheby's, who has met a great many collectors, those who attend auctions often share certain characteristics. They are very intelligent, predominantly male, typically Jewish, often childless, and sometimes gay.

Most serious collectors are not motivated by money, but by a fascination with the objects themselves. Sometimes they go over the top, like Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), an Englishman who declared that he wanted a copy of every book in the world. He managed to acquire around 50,000 books and 60,000 manuscripts, but went bankrupt in his quest.

A modern example of the passionate collector is Robert Opie, who as a teenager took an interest in consumer-goods packaging. This came cheap, because it was designed to be thrown away. He now has a collection of over half a million objects which he markets as an image bank and a repository of advertising history and nostalgia items. It has taken over his life, but perhaps this is not surprising.

As many traditional items of desire, such as paintings, cars and furniture are reaching prices only plutocrats can afford many people are turning to new items to collect. Alistair McAlpine, a British collector, remembers how in 1964 he paid £2,000 for a painting by Mark Rothko which his friends thought was dreadful. This year another work by the same artist dating from 1964 was sold at Christie's for over \$10m. Lord McAlpine, who has formed some 100 different collections in his time, subsequently moved on to rare chickens and now collects cyclads, a variety of tropical plant. They have yet to appreciate in value the way the Rothko did, but he says he collects for love, not

money.

Another way to avoid disappointment is to collect something nobody else wants. A few decades ago Victorian art was unfashionable, but once enough people had discovered its charms, prices went up. Likewise, ethnographic art held no appeal for collectors in the 1920s when James Hooper started buying it, so although he had little money to spend, he was able to build up a splendid collection.

Mass production has democratised collecting and brought it within reach of ordinary people

When the rest of the world caught up, starting in the late 1950s, it became very valuable.

The best way for a collector to ensure he can find what he wants is to develop an interest in something machine-made. Mass production has democratised collecting and brought it within reach of ordinary people. Once something could be made in a workshop or factory—a print, a piece of china, a candlestick—the supply became much more elastic. Not too elastic, though, because even a mass-produced item can become rarer and more valuable if it has a flaw or a slightly different colour from the rest. And there is always the device of a limited edition. During a craze for Beanie Babies toys a few years ago, some versions were made only in small quantities, which persuaded people to queue up and pay high prices for these "rarities".

The biggest change in the world of collecting in the past decade or so has been the arrival of the internet, though television has also boosted the habit. There is no end of websites that cater to collectors, offering information, specialist books and magazines, valuations, search engines for wanted items, auctions, framing, shipping and insurance services, and much else besides. The internet has made an enormous difference. Abbots, an auction house in the east of England which holds fine-art sales every few months, used to publicise them by advertising in the papers, sending out catalogues and telephoning dealers. Now it puts its catalogues on the web, complete with photographs, and finds it gets inquiries from much farther afield.

Auction results too are posted on the web, so it is easy to find the prices achieved around the world. This is useful for collectors, but not necessarily for dealers buying on behalf of clients, who find their trade secrets exposed. Andrew Patrick, who used to run the Fine Art Society in London's Bond Street, says many dealers prefer to buy privately to preserve their mystique.

The same sort of transparency is available on eBay, the online auction house that in a mere ten years has almost 200m registered users and saw a turnover of \$40 billion last year. eBay sells mundane things, from clothes to cars, but also has a large section of "collectables" that offers a wealth of more esoteric fare. Would-be buyers browsing the site can see a description of the item, a photograph and the highest bid offered so far, and if they trump it they may soon get their purchase through the post. It may lack the theatrical excitement of raising your hand at Christie's, but it is wonderfully efficient, as hordes of hoarders have found. ■

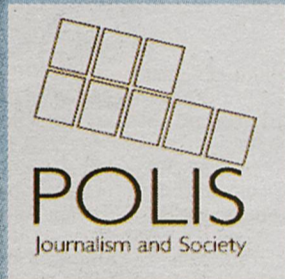
TUESDAY	
8:30 CU Prayer meeting, Chaplaincy	
11:00 LGBT Awareness Week Drop in session with adviser to male students Matthew Engelke D6	
13:00 LGBT Awareness Week Public lecture: 'Human rights and homosexuality in Zimbabwe' with Matthew Engelke H101	
14:00 Yoga Ashtanga Yoga, Badminton Court	
15:00 CSSA Chinese Classes: B-class D106	
Apologetics Science and God, Speaker: Dr Sharon Dirckx, a brain imaging research scientist S421	
16:00 LGBT Awareness Week Public Lecture with Peter Tatchell, organised jointly by LSESU Labour, LSESU Greens and LSE LGBT, Location to be confirmed.	
17:00 LGBT Awareness Week 'Know Your Rights Workshop' with NUS LGBT Officer, Claire Anderson H208	
18:00 AIESEC Weekly meeting S421	
18:15 Yoga Intermediate Ashtanga Yoga D002	
19:00 Debate Weekly meeting D302	
20:00 LGBT Awareness Week Bar crawl around Soho Meet outside, Peacock Theatre	
WEDNESDAY	
8:30 CU Prayer meeting, Chaplaincy	
11:00 LGBT Awareness Week Women only coffee morning with ULU L53	

13:00 Catholic Mass Green party Weekly meeting Hindu Vedic lunch Anime & Manga Drawing class Accounting Homework help session Student Action for Refugees Weekly meeting Go Weekly meeting 14:00 Pakistan Weekly meeting Opera Weekly meeting Yoga Intermediate Hatha Yoga 15:00 Maths and Stats Homework help session Chess Weekly meeting CSSA Chinese Classes - B-class 16:00 Bridge Weekly meeting CSSA Chinese Classes - I-class 17:00 LGBT Awareness Week GMFA Sex and Your Health Workshop, Followed by pre-film drinks 18:15 Politics Discussion forum / meeting 19:00 Swing Dance Improvers Classes Classes cost £2.50/£3.50 (members/non-members) 20:00 AU night Mexican Mexico in Motion! Party Motion Bar, Victoria Embankment 20:30 LGBT Awareness Week Film Night: Short documentary on LSE LGBT, followed by Brokeback Mountain New Theatre	Chaplaincy H104 D211 Z129 G107 A283 V101 U203 H104 D702 Z332 K05 V103 H206 G107 H206 G108 H103 G108
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THURSDAY	
8:30 CU Prayer meeting, Chaplaincy	
11:00 Australia and New Zealand Weekly meeting D9	
13:00 SU UGM, Old Theatre	
15:00 CSSA Chinese Classes - B-class K05	
17:30 Yoga Hatha Yoga, Badminton Court	
18:00 People and planet Weekly meeting H103	
Sikh-Punjab Music class S78	
Dance Intermediate hip hop class S75	
SU and OneVoice 'Israel and Palestine conflict: forget what you've been told', Old Theatre CU CU Central: 'Grace not Works' S50 Come along to CU Central meeting- LSE CU united on campus for dynamic praise and worship and practical teaching. Be prepared to meet many exciting and passionate people. Be prepared to have your heart ready and challenged for God. Visual Arts Life drawing class D206	
18:30 LGBT Awareness Week 'LGBT careers in the workplace' panel with JPMorgan, PwC, McKinsey, Google, a leading law firm and Ben Summerskill from Stonewall, U8	
19:00 Debate Workshop D302	
19:30 LGBT Awareness Week Free champagne reception, Underground Bar	
20:00 European Conference: 'An ever wider union? Effects and prospects of EU enlargement', Hong Kong Theatre Speakers include Turkish and Austrian ambassadors to the UK	
FRIDAY	
8:30 CU Prayer meeting, Chaplaincy	

13:00 Yoga Intermediate Acrobatic Yoga D702	
14:00 CSSA Chinese Classes - A-Class Y115	
16:00 CSSA Chinese Classes - O-class S221	
17:00 LGBT Awareness Week GMFA Sexual Health Workshop D106	
Hindu Gita Classes D11	
19:00 Dance Ballet Class S75	
20:00 Malibu Soundclash Crush With exotic dancers, 4 new dj's, tonnes of games n give aways and a venue	
MONDAY	
16:00 CSSA Chinese Classes - B - class K05	
19:00 Swing Dance Beginner's Classes Classes cost £2.50/3.50 (members/non-members) D502	
SOC NEWS	
Want your own society webpage? Go to www.lsesu.com/register and speak to su.comms@lse.ac.uk for more info and advice.	
The LSE Arts advisory forum is hosting the 'LSE Perspectives' photography competition. E-mail lseperspectives@lse.ac.uk for more info. Book your end of term party in the Underground Bar or the Quad! E-mail su.ents@lse.ac.uk for more info.	
Any Society questions? Pop in to the Society's officer's office hour from 1-2 pm every Friday in the quad.	
Visit the SU shop for special bulk discounts for student societies when you buy at a least a dozen of the same product.	
Want to be included in these listings? Send your event details to su.societies@lse.ac.uk Friday evening at the latest.	

QUAD OFFICE HOURS	
Jimmy Tam , General Secretary Thursday, 2-3PM	
Joel Kerrick, Treasurer Thursday, 2-3PM	
Alex Finnegan, LGBT Thursday, 2-3PM (in office of Alex Vincenti) E209	
Alexandra Vincenti, Education and Welfare Thursday, 2-3PM	
Ali Dewji, Communications Friday, 2-3PM	
Arthur Krebbers, Societies Friday, 1-2PM	
Aled Fisher, Environment and Ethics Monday, 1-2PM	
Fadhil Bakeer Markar, International Students Tuesday, 1-2PM	
Emma Hallgren, Students with Disabilities Tuesday 1-2PM	
Shanela Haque, Anti-Racism Friday, 10AM-12PM	
James Caspell, Postgraduate Officer Thursday, 3-4PM	
Zoe Sullivan, Womens Thursday 10-11 in D703	
Louise Robinson, Residences Thursday, 2-3PM	
Anushka Shenoy, General Course Tuesday 1-2PM	
Sid Kamath, Executive Editor The Beaver Tuesday, 3-4PM in E204	



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POLIS is the new forum for research and debate in to journalism and society at the LSE and the London College of Communication. Check out our website at www.lse.ac.uk/polis.

If you would like to get involved please email your CV and an indication of your interests to Laura Kyrke-Smith at polis@lse.ac.uk.



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Come and visit us at the Public Sector & Policy Fair on 22nd November in the Student Services Centre (Old Building) from 6:30pm

Bringing leadership to life

1. Want an iPod? Beaver survey

FILL IN AND BRING IT TO SU RECEPTION

2. Are you:

LSE Student General Course

LSE Teacher 1st year

LSE Staff 2nd year

Other (please specify) 3rd year

Postgrad

3. How often do you read the Beaver?

Every week

2-3 times a month

Once a month

Less than once a month / Never

4. Why don't you read the Beaver every week?

Cannot find it every week

Only take it if front page is interesting

Not interested in the Beaver enough

Do not agree with the articles or views

Other (please specify)

5. When do you generally pick up the Beaver? Please tick all answers that apply.

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Weekend

6. Where do you pick up your copy of the Beaver from? Please tick all answers that apply.

Outside Quad

Outside Old Building

Library

Brunch Bowl

Shaw Library

LSE Halls of Residence

Pick up someone else's

7. Where else would you prefer finding the Beaver?

The current locations are fine

Peacock Theatre

Clement's House/ D Building

Inside Quad

Inside Tuns

Common Rooms

Other (please specify)

8. Rate the Beaver in terms of:

Very Somewhat Average Not really Not at all N/A

Interesting

Fun

Informative

Useful

Objective

Controversial

Overall: good?

9. Which sections do you read? Please tick all that apply.

News

Features

Part B

Sports

Auntie Shaw / Puzzles

I read them all

I don't read any

10. Rate the News section of the Beaver:

Very Somewhat Average Not really Not at all N/A

Interesting

Objective

Informative

Overall: good?

11. Rate the Features section of the Beaver:

Very Somewhat Average Not really Not at all N/A

Interesting

Analytical

Informative

Overall: good?

12. Rate the Part B section of the Beaver:

Very Somewhat Average Not really Not at all N/A

Interesting

Fun

Informative

Overall: good?

13. Rate the Sports section of the Beaver:

Very Somewhat Average Not really Not at all N/A

Interesting

Fun

Informative

Overall: good?

14. Did you hear about the Polly Courtney book signing event?

Yes No

15. Did you attend this event?

Yes No

16. If yes, did you enjoy it?

Yes, a lot

Yes, somewhat

It was average

Not really

Not at all

17. If you did not attend this event, why not?

Not interested

Did not hear about it

Was not free at time of the event

Other (please specify)

18. Did you get an Accenture/The Beaver bag at the beginning of the year?

Yes No

19. If yes, do you still use the bag?

Yes No

20. If you did not get an Accenture/The Beaver bag, why not?

Did not see them

Did not want one

They were all gone

Other (please specify)

21. Did you get a Fresher's Guide?

Yes No

22. If yes, please rank it:

Very Somewhat Average Not really Not at all

Interesting

Fun

Informative

Included all I want

Published early

Overall: good?

Tell us what you think about us

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LSE SU LGBT AWARENESS WEEK 20th-24th November

MONDAY
1600-1700 Room D6
Drop-in session with Adviser to Female Students Dr. Daphne Josselin

1930-0100 Underground Bar
ULU LGBT special 'Cowboys and Indians' party (£2 entry, everybody welcome)

TUESDAY
1100-1200 Room D6
Drop-in session with Adviser to Male Students Dr. Matthew Engelke

1300-1400 Room H101
'Human Rights and Homosexuality in Zimbabwe' - public lecture by Dr. Matthew Engelke

1700-1800 Room H208
'Know Your Rights' workshop with NUS LGBT Officer

2000 onwards Meet outside Peacock Theatre
Bar crawl

WEDNESDAY
1100-1200 Room L53
Women's only coffee morning with ULU



1700-1900 Room D206
GMFA Male Sex and You workshop. Followed by pre-film drinks

2000 onwards New Theatre
Film Night: Brokeback Mountain





THURSDAY
1830-1930 Room U8
LGBT in the Workplace careers panel with JPMorgan, PwC, Google and Stonewall

1930-2300 Underground Bar
LGBT in the Workplace reception. Free Drinks

FRIDAY
1700-1900 Room D106
GMFA Male Sexual Health workshop: What your GP didn't tell you

ONE VOICE








OPEN YOUR EARS TO WHAT THE ISRAELI & PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ACTUALLY WANT

Come and listen to the realities on the ground and a plan for change from leading Israeli and Palestinian Youth Activists Odeh Awad, Ava Hlilazi, Yoav Sukary and Moran Avital with an introduction from Professor Fred Halliday

**Thursday, 23rd November, 6pm
Old Theatre**

Sponsored by Howard Davies and the Students' Union

Team mates

This week Rob Lowe names and shames the Footie 2nds

Hard-man: John Verdon. Any argument on the pitch and he's right there! JV's got your back! Any man that gets past him on the wing can also expect a crunching tackle from behind. Surprised he hasn't been booked for that yet...

Teammate you would least like to be:

Probably Baller, not only cursed with being short, but also ginger! Someone up above is having a right bubble at his expense.

Most likely to be a raging gay: Gabs Butu, I suggest him only because of all the gay clubs he's been going to recently... there's no smoke without fire mate! Also because proclaiming yourself as an AU legend to girls you're chatting up, having been at university for little over a month, is pretty homosexual.

Lady Killer: Half the team seem to have girls dripping off them, with the exception of the captain. Ace, Simbah, MJ, Smallwood, Gabs... spread the love guys.

Who's the longest in the shower:

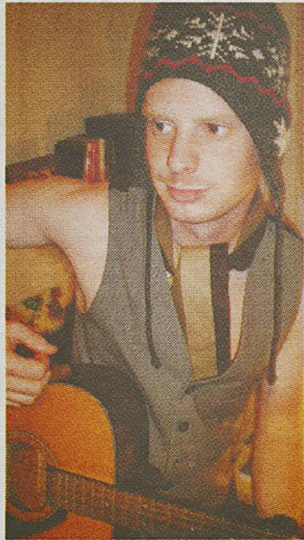
That would have to be gorgeous George.

Strangest sex stories:

Aged 17 one of the lads shagged a sixty year old, to prove that he wasn't gay to her. I feel slightly ill thinking about it.

Cock of the week

Step forward Andy 'Birdman' Burton. No justification is needed to explain why Andy is this week's cock of the week. Indeed, Andy could win cock of the week every week (as a number of you have mentioned in your e-mails to the editor). However, Andy plummeted to yet another record low on Wednesday when he chose to spit all over his housemate and 6th team player Matt 'Brummie' Davenport. Not content with drenching his friend with his own salivary Reef coloured drool, however, Andy made the unwise decision of going back to the bar in order to ruin everyone's night and further embarrass himself by emptying his drinks on any women, disabled people and Muslims he could find. What a cock!



The Beaver would like to sincerely apologise for and retract the comments made in last week's "Slag of the week" column.

Women's Rugby

Double Whammy



Ivy "Minnesota Nice" LeTourneau

LSE ladies	15
King's Medics	5
Berrylands	
LSE ladies	15
Imperial	5
Berrylands	

As a rookie and a native of a land where pansy-ass "men in tights" sports like baseball and American football reign supreme and "Rugby" is merely a tiny town in a state no one's even heard of, I am perhaps not the best qualified member of the women's squad to be writing a report on our recent Berrylands shaming of Imperial (I think I'm writing this as a fine for drunken beligerence at team dinner; wankered after 20 minutes). But I know enough to say this much: Wednesday's win was only the latest instalment in a series of sleek, sexy, ever-improving matches from a team that doesn't just LOOK good, but IS good.

Still riding the momentum of our 15-5 victory over King's Medics during Week 5, we were off to a strong start when Yvette "I run circles around fatties" Chee scored our first try within five minutes, assisted by a string of neat passes by the attacking line. Imperial became intimately acquainted with their end of the pitch,

rarely driving us more than ten metres from our try-line for the first half.

The offensive advantage was an empowering environment for new recruit Sophie to get her first taste of real contact, and this netball double agent's brash, fearless sprints gained valuable ground and hint at a promising future with the team. Experienced newcomer Sarah proved equally invaluable both at kick-offs and bolstering up the scrum, and her brutally inescapable tackling inspired visible fear in every Imperial ball carrier.

Our women continued to prove that LSE ladies CAN do it all, balancing academics and sport with the hard work of being sexy. Fellow Yank rookie Heather took an afternoon off from the demands of an MSc program to spend a couple hours boosting our mauling power and throwing shoulders into the gut of any Imperial woman who had the audacity to tackle her. Megan hauled her ass to Berrylands after her noon class and the team breathed a collective sigh of relief as she bounded towards the pitch just minutes before kickoff.

Besides scoring our slick second try, Laura continued to be the team's equivalent of a conscience. She's that little voice in the back of your head (or behind it, really) telling you the right thing to do, and she can spot a penalty a mile away, often giving orders for "Back! Back ten!" before the ref even flaps his arms. Pint sized terror Hannah darted around

lumbering Imperial defenders for our third try, discrediting the notion (apparently embraced by our opponents) that one has to be a hulking beast of a woman in order to be a good rugby player.

Fearless Rachel Warner, my partner in second-row crime, repeatedly demonstrated her own driving finesse, nimbly skirting multiple defenders, and dragging would-be tacklers several metres before succumbing. Rachel "Disney" Allchurch was ever-versatile, improving every situation whether it was a lineout, scrum, maul, or a lucky offensive breakaway.

Imperial's five points came on a try that was as sad, lonely, and isolated as most of their thunder-thighed, dog-faced players will be for the rest of their lives. Just after the half-time goal switch, they made a dirty and desperate dash across the try line as LSE was momentarily stunned by the visual horror of our men's thirds' kit. Coach-slash-centre Jennie expertly rallied and refocused us, stopping that freak accident of a try from becoming an Imperial second-half comeback.

Not letting Imperial's shit try or shady lineout tactics discourage us, we were determined to again confine them to their end of the pitch. Our success in this venture hinged on quick, sound thinking and smart passing, and Wildcat wonder Komal definitely delivered, keeping herself strategically situated to make quick breaks when the ball

came out of rucks and mauls. A defensive highlight of the second half was fullback Christina's head-on flying tackle of a breakaway ball carrier, reinforcing the comforting belief that all is not lost just because the opponent has snuck behind our main defending line.

As Imperial's situation became more perilous with time running out, they became more ruthless. With no 2nds team to nick substitutes from, we had to carry on through all but the worst injuries. In true hooker form, Kimmy kept coming back for more no matter how abused she was, valiantly embodying Yvette's now-famous admonition: "Get over it." She hooked back beautifully to even deny them of their own put-in dans la scrum on one occasion. Despite a lingering busted hand from the King's game, and facing a dirty-tricking beast of an Imperial tighthead, Josie represented LSE admirably in the front row and in the breakdowns.

The victory was sealed as we dashed Imperial hopes for a last-minute score from close-range scrums and penalties. Joined by Naz after a bad hit took Jen out of the game, forwards and backs alike joined to form an impenetrable try-line defence. LSE repeatedly repelled Imperial's attempts to batter through with a gigantic tank-assed woman, proving that obesity and the laws of physics are no match for a fit team that cooperates and communicates. Well done, ladies!



Punter



Matthew JCG Partridge

The ending of the mid-term elections are traditionally the starting gun for the Presidential elections. With this in mind, and given that I am writing this from the boyhood home of Harry Truman, I am going to begin a rundown of the market prices on the various candidates for the Republican and Democratic nominations in 2008, starting this week with

the Democratic candidates. There should be no surprise that the favourite is Hillary Clinton. With strong name recognition and a huge war chest, this is justified. However, the price at which she is quoted on Tradesports (55-56) is too high as her divisiveness, and the fact that her attempt to reposition herself as a centrist candidate has both annoyed the left and failed to convince those on the centre, makes her nomination far from certain. Al Gore is also overpriced at (10-11) since his single issue focus on the environment has fallen on the agenda. It is also extremely uncer-

tain whether he will actually run. Both of these candidates present short selling opportunities if you are prepared to tie your money up for over eighteen months.

There are few opportunities either way with Barack Obama since he is fairly priced at (15-16) with his inexperience and left-wing positions on foreign policy being balanced by his image as a fresh face and a solid political base, which will be very useful if the field is crowded. Similarly, Kerry's political career was mortally wounded by his joke about Iraq but the fact that he has a large amount of cam-

paign funds left over from 2004 makes him a reasonably priced long shot at (1-2). My hunch is that the quintet of Bill Richardson (2-3), Evan Bayh (2-3), Ken Salazar (not quoted yet) and Tom Vilsack (1-2) could set the contest for the Democratic nomination alight. They are all centrist Democrats from swing states who do not have the baggage of the frontrunners.

Use any advice given here at your own risk and don't gamble what you cannot afford to lose. Columnist(s) may have positions in wagers mentioned. Prices quoted are correct at time of going to press.

Fanny

The Fanny Report



Hello there my lovelies! Haven't we been quiet? This week it was fireworks for Berrylands, but was it fireworks for any AU members?

Nathan Alone was obviously hoping for some when he face-raped a girl on the dance floor after some smooth moves, yet the girl had other ideas and left him hanging. Unsure of what to do next, Nathan proceeded to look very confused and embarrassed and attempted to cover the awkwardness with a crack at the lone-tango. Maybe Lippy Slyer should have helped him out since she was caught busting some moves on the dance floor at Berrylands, alone.

Everyone's favourite Toy-Boy seems to be taking his recent split well by using the age-old technique of a major sluggish rebound-pound, after being spotted playing tonsil sumo-wrestling with Netball "discontinued" 7th's Pecca Stiff. After being liquidised, Netball 7ths have shown they are still very active members of the AU; most are dedicated players of the soon-to-be Olympic sport known as "The Field". Angel Puke is a prime example; using an attacking move on weekly Slasha, repeatedly, to win the coveted prize of free drinks from Walkabout.

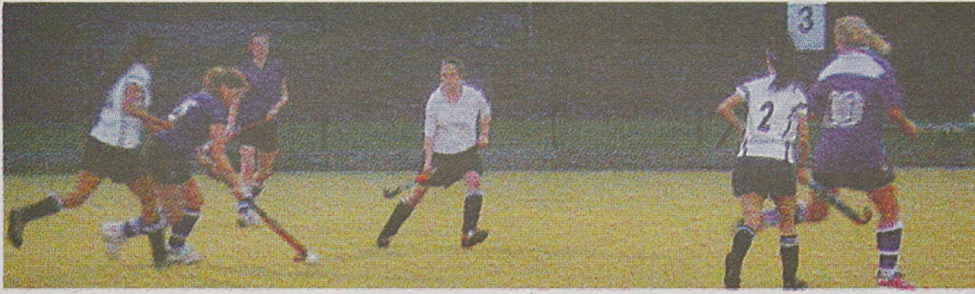
Handy Birdman was understandably disappointed that he didn't have a mention in last week's Fanny column and so decided to draw attention to himself by being, well, a cock. An opportunity arose in a dentist's chair challenge in which he whole-heartedly emitted two entire Reef's in Twat "going home for a Pot Noodle" Havemcort's face. This began a drinks duel between the two where both parties took advantage of their Swot card discount when buying drinks simply to offload onto each other. Sacrilege.

Congratulations go out to new couple Dont Holdthis and Clouider Than Whitby, who are about to embark on a beautiful journey, ready to be scrutinised by all. Commiserations however to Sid De Mouth and Hazelnut who are currently in therapy after Sid's crush at Crush, on Sam Jones. Joining them in therapy should be anyone who may have been blinded by Kath With NoNicksOn's nipples, or anyone unfortunate enough to be in the vicinity of Doliver high on poppers. More congratulations go out to Dick Gulp who this week announced his membership to the LGBT society. Dick soon decided to swing back the other way after being the object of controversy as the only gay in the AU, and proceeded to reaffirm his straightness by taking home Mary Fakum and her acquaintance for a bit of tri-person household. Keep it up guys.

Mwah xxx

Women's Hockey

Holloway convicts can't escape



Louise and Ju

LSE Women's Hockey 2
Royal Holloway 0
Battersea

Cough, cough; Juicy Ju is out of the game... and that was just the beginning of our injury list for our fourth BUSA game of the season. Having won the other three, we weren't about to crumple in the face of week six essays, bank interviews and hospitalisation!

We scraped together twelve fearful souls (Gabba) and set off for our fortress in Battersea. Warm-up consisted of chats on the sideline, while the opposition walked through their lunges and skips, sporting a rather attractive kit that only Lolly could be jealous of. In the pre-match team talk Betty's eyes grew wide as she found out she was sweeping (but not the Hong Kong streets this time) but the likes of MC and debutante Azra aka Razzle (don't you just love that?) stepped up to show us what they were truly made of.

JJ blew the whistle and what had shown to be a shaky start soon saw us pulling ourselves together and making

moves that only your Under-thirteen school coach could dream of. We passed around the pitch like we had all the time in the world, but still Gabba could not seal the deal for us. The frustration mounted slightly but our team qualities shone through when suddenly, from the sideline, a Todd shouts "Talk to each other girls, we all know each other's names!" This coming as somewhat of a surprise, the team began to finally communicate like we do on the old minibus when nobody's watching. The chat and nonchalant passing around the stunned opposition built up to its climax as Kimmy slotted in our long awaited goal. Uno a nada.

A bronchitis-infested Ju whistles like crazy and that marked a turning point as we strode on to the pitch for the second half, cool as cats. Lolly holds the fort at the back but makes a few bold surges forward, backed by Emily past the defending half (what is this?!). Razzle was ever present in the middle of the park as she and Pheely worked up a 'one-two' storm down the right. We still needed another goal... it was time to bring on the Todd, our secret WMD. Not that she scored, but she brought with her a renewed wave of confidence, going bravely into the tackles. With a valiant MC, Turnips, Toddy, Jadeth and Zoë making our defence impene-

trable, our attack became unrelenting. Razzle somehow managed to steal some space in their crowded 'D', where they lined up their entire 1st XI in front of the goal, and got a snap strike away. Clean as a whistle, as a nut even: dos a nada. Not much was left to do at this point except to attempt a clean sheet, which the defence did oh so well with some clearances coming from the gut and some hustle and bustle between Jadeth and her rather pushy opponent, she shouts "Stop pushing me, Dick!", (not bitch notice.)

We wrapped up the game and all came off the pitch smiling, so content with our 5th win in a row that we even invited Royal Holloway back to teas, knowing how difficult it is to scramble some grub in Egham. Oh well, more for us as they wallow on home... Nobody even doubted teas followed by a rather large curry, it was a match made in heaven. Well in Kimmy, for bagging herself 'man' of the match for her unquestionable poise. And now, we go on to organize a mighty away squad for the minibus journey of the season: Portsmouth, or Pompey as Meeny Meenal would call them. Good times to be had for all the family. (Note: the mighty Stilyian Petrov, of the mightier Aston Villa, said a team must be like a family, and we are just that.)

Football

Mozza's men march on



Nathan Muruganandan and Rich Morrow

Sublime 6ths 3
KCL 2
Battersea

The times-they-are-a-changing! The Sublime 6ths are usually poor starters, not a single recorded victory until mid-Nov but this year we have now won four of the seven with the wins coming in the past five matches. Yes the rumours are true, we are the in-form LSE team! Football is not a game for the faint-hearted or for big-mouth forwards to be beaten by substitute goalkeepers in free kick contests! Drela nonchalantly placed the ball past Eduardo into the top corner to win two pints, much to the bemusement of this author. It has definitely been a topsy-turvy season; to be in 5th position with a goal difference of -26 after only five matches. Despite this alarming lack of consistency, Capt Morrow still claimed the team

was in with a chance of promotion; a declaration some may put on a par with Wenger and Ferguson sharing a bottle or two of vintage port while discussing the merits of pretty wives at home!

Nonetheless, the opposition were old rivals King's, and the 6ths continued the LSE-trend of plugging their polye-technic! Abandoning the 4-5-1 for 4-4-2 illustrated a desire to get back to grassroots tactics. The match started at a frenzied pace, with chances being created aplenty. The breakthrough came after fifteen minutes as neat interplay between Erlend and Ollie released Toby "road-runner" Irving to claim his second of the season. However, as only the 6ths can do best, they sought to make life hard for themselves. A needless free-kick saw King's level before half-time as the finishing touch eluded the 6ths. This was somewhat harsh on keeper Eduardo who had been a virtual spectator for the best part of the encounter.

The second period started badly as King's second shot on goal of the entire match ended up in the top-corner. Alarmingly, after dominating

the entire match, the 6ths were staring defeat firmly in the face, and smelling its garlic-laced breath! But behold, the game was taken by the scruff of the neck with cock-of-the-week contender Brummie winning everything in the air and marauding full-back Ed Frew providing impetus down the left-hand side. Suddenly, the ever opportunist Ollie drove forward and unleashed a sizzling shot into the roof of the net from outside the box. Constant pressure was duly inflicted upon KCL defence as the search for the winner proved elusive. With twenty minutes remaining, super-sub Robyn Sargeant strode into the penalty area and after shaking off the attentions of his marker placed a shot across the rather rotund goal-keeper which made its way (eventually) into the bottom corner. The 6ths continued to dominate and were unfortunate not to extend the lead.

With team-dinner traditions being kept, Berlin becomes the Sublime 6th's port of call come the end of the term; red-light district debaucheries and "Ich bin ein Berliner" faux pas await!

Netball

3rds draw Pompey whores



Mad Dog Ang

LSE Netball 3rds 30
Pompey Perma-tans 30
Pompey

The Portsmouth Perma-tans. What a fucking joke. Don't get me wrong; on court, I am the most sporting captain ever, but it has to be said, Portsmouth are actually ridiculous. I will try to elaborate...

At 1pm on match day, I received a call from the ring-leader, demanding to know where my team was and why couldn't we start the match? I simply and calmly told her that it was too fucking early for a 4PM SCHEDULED START! Twaatt.

When us 3rds arrived at Berrylands courts, we were blinded by some yellow neon flashing lights which had appeared out of nowhere. Car headlights, court floodlights, some kind of atomic explosion? No, if only! It was, in fact, the glare from the perma-tanned, bleached-blond, skirts-up-arses, Grant Mitchell look-alikes, those Portsmouth skanks. The word 'rat' could not have been more appropriate.

With our eyes still burning from the glare, it appeared that their skirts were so far up their arses that rolls of cellulite

bulged out of their knickers, and on some supposed 'girls', these seemed particularly large.

Finally the match began, but the temporary blindness and near-vomiting had evidently affected those 3rd team Freshers who had not been hardened by the Barrel and the Perma-tans went into the lead despite some honestly shitty play by both them and us in the 1st quarter. However, early in the 2nd quarter, 3rd team Goal Attack Rose Donovan had a plan; shouting to Shooter Laura Khong to "Spread your legs!" in the shooting circle, Laura replied excitedly, "Ok! I can do that really well!" After that, many goals were scored.

By the end of the 1st half we were only down 19-22, with the whole match to play for. With so much testosterone in their veins, the Perma-tans were getting increasingly pissed off at 3rds team's Emma 'Say No More's constant interceptions in the shooting circle, and Jess's constant retrieval of their missed shots. Their bulky frames, it seemed, could not travel as swiftly through the air. It seemed to drive their Captain Trunchbull completely psycho, as every few seconds she screamed and swore at her team, then proceeded to pet them and call them "Babe"... Cuckoo!

The Skanks' constant shouts of "Come on Pompey!" were seriously fucking off the whole 3rd team (I mean - who

are you?) Social Sec Jen Barking-Mad showed a not-so-social side as she and the Trunch had their own private catfight and the 3rds shouting oncourt became deafening. It became clear that I (the original Mad Dog) had been training them in the Art of Aggression. Oh yes.

Goals were coming one apiece for each team and nothing seemed to deter either side. Even Barking-Mad's comedy shutdowns such as "Cellulite eat your heart out!" could not raise our game enough to prevent their Miss Perma-tan 2006 scoring a couple of goals.

When the final whistle blew, the score was heart-wrenchingly close at 30-30. After playing our Mad Dog hearts out, we didn't know whether to be happy or sad. Thank God for our Keeper Jess Cartwright who pointed out that Chav Crush was just around the corner and "Now at least we've got some ideas for costumes!" Personally I have never been so proud of my 3rd team girls for an astounding performance in which we all helped each other to improve, some serious aggression, and most of all team spirit in the face of our opponents (who incidentally haven't lost a game all season). Well done girlies, it's definitely our turning point of the season. Game on for the away match; as our much missed Mad Dog Emma Coker-Cola once said, "We'll kill the bitches!"

Men's Hockey

Der Hammer time



Dan the Businessman

LSE 1st XI 4
Queen Mary 1st XI 2
Battersea

What was initially supposed to be a straight-forward victory for the men's 1sts descended into a veritable battle of attrition at Battersea Park. Having conceded a sloppy goal right at the beginning, the team struggled to find rhythm and convert chances for much of the first half. An awe-inspiring team talk given by skipper Kieran at the break

spurred the comeback as Jakob "Der Hammer" scored our equaliser at the start of the second half. Mary's came back at us strongly and eventually forced a penalty flick which was converted despite a heroic attempt by keeper, Hemal.

Things were beginning to look very bleak with ten minutes on the clock and no substitutes on the bench. However, either through sheer testicular girth, or wanting to impress the MILFs randomly watching us from the touch-line, the team rallied and equalised with a beautifully constructed goal instigated by Evan and executed with typical German precision by Jakob.

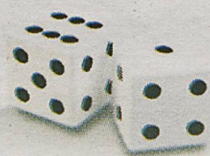
At 2-2 with five minutes on

the clock, Furzey's pre-match promise of a goal was fulfilled with cheeky deflection from a short corner. The MILFs were treated to a show of Julius Agahowan proportions as he celebrated his first ever goal for the club. Mary's then started to crumble and allowed Jakob to complete his well-deserved hat-trick. Rob Moore heroically repelled the Queen Mary's feeble attacking line much in the same way as he does the women's hockey team. Man of the match deservedly went to Jakob "Der Hammer" and dick of the day went to Rob Morris for volunteering to be Furzey's dance partner at the bus stop; all were left asking, "Where on earth did he learn to do the tango?"

Punter

Place your bets on the Presidential elections

JCG Partridge



Post mortem

King's Medics are rucked over by women's rugby

Ivy LeTourneau



Sublime 6ths score

Without the aid of rohypnol

Rich Morrow and Nathan Muruganandan

21.11.06 thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk

Beaver sports

Ultimately, they didn't win



Dan Pasternak

LSE Equilibrium 3
King's College 8
South London

On Sunday, November 12th, Ultimate Frisbee's Team Equilibrium travelled to the far reaches of South London for our first Winter League tournament. A sizeable LSE squad turned up at 8:30, eager like hot sweaty Beavers to apply all our accumulated skill against a team other than UCL. A seemingly lucky draw had us facing King's College first at 9:30. King's is traditionally to Ultimate as King's is to most disciplines of the brain or body, so we collectively assumed an easy victory. How exactly the final score was 8-3 in their favour still remains something of a mystery.

With the comparative intellectual wattage of the KCL women's rugby team and the facial asymmetry to sug-

gest ancestral indecency, we next encountered a squad whose peculiar existence was a form of nostalgia for those of us familiar with the Gorg's (yeah, that's a Fraggie Rock reference, just appreciate it). These truly hideous creatures showed little decency or discretion given our unstable condition following such a humiliating defeat earlier, and proceeded to punch-fuck us 9-2. If the large Australian fellow on the team happens to read this: We get it. You have a really big penis. It is probably very nice. Stop being an asshole.

Praise the lord sweet baby Jesus for redemption. Our next match was against the Tamer's, a club comprised mostly of local intellectuals, featuring a woman in an LSE tracksuit who is allegedly a professor here. Let's hope Mamabear's remaining tenure at the school is not compromised by the hit that left her flat on her ass. It was unintentional, but to be fair, if you show up to a game against us dressed like that, it kinda looks like you want it. Inspired by our colleague's temerity, we proceeded to score an impressive twelve points to their eight, which

means... we won?

Oh karma, you cruel bitch. Why did we have to be humiliated by losing our next and final match to the University of Chichester? I will commend the male members of team Chichester on their surprisingly exceptional hygiene. The women on the team however had the distinct odour of stale semen mixed with rotting potatoes. I wasn't the only player on Equilibrium whose fleshy interest was suddenly piqued by such an olfactory affront. Running upright with an erection in one's shorts is not easy, regardless of how small it is, and thus both our points are admirable. Also, they were good, and they scored twelve.

Not the success we had hoped for, but not a complete wash-out either, for all team members learned something from this expedition. For some it was humility, for others it was patience, and for Darkness it was how to properly tickle a man's junk. We shall further refine our efforts at practice and will return on December 10th for Winter League II... hopefully with a better story.



Wombles unnecessary as LSE clean up in Wimbledon



Andy Hardman

LSE Men 3rd
LSE Women 4th
Wimbledon Common

Last Wednesday afternoon saw the biggest contingent of LSE runners since time began descend

on Wimbledon Common for the 3rd race of the season. In all, 16 of the most gorgeous runners in the league gathered at the start in perfect running conditions. The long course of fast downhill sections and long climbs promised this would be among the most debilitating races in the calendar. Running through the forest in the fading light combined with Kings' piss poor course markers (they used carrier bags, sticks, grass clippings, small kids, stray dogs etc) meant that getting lost en route was a distinct

possibility. Experienced members of the team instilled a high level of confidence in the rest of us by sharing stories of previous years cock ups involving runners disappearing into the forest to return sometime after everyone else had finished. Kings' crapness was firmly established post race when it was revealed that four of the five top runners took a wrong turn on the first lap and failed to finish the race, not that we were complaining.

Hopes were immediately

dashed with the conspicuous absence of "the girl with the hot ass" that had spurred on those at the back in previous races. Lacking such a crucial motivational tool the LSE seconds had to resort to each other for support and enjoyed a formation first lap moving through the field in a textbook diamond that Sven Goran Eriksson would have been proud of. In a similar fashion to the ex-England boss the system was found to be crap, once the hill at the end of the lap had left everyone knackered. Second time around, the surprise hurdle of the fallen tree was taken with all the grace and elegance of an arthritic pensioner, as everyone's legs decided they'd prefer not to bother anymore.

Despite this, the results suggested there may in fact be some underlying talent nestling beneath the outer hotness. The captain led from the front (well, 10th actually) with Michael Lui and Sam Trowbridge producing impressive performances to finish in 14th and 15th. Matt Rushworth was the fourth LSE vest over the line finishing in 18th but, owing to the fact he's actually at SOAS he didn't score any points. LSE racing debutant Nathan Converse

(like the trainers) left us wondering why we hadn't forced him to race before, finishing in 22nd. An inspirational performance by the LSE firsts was rounded off by Lawrence Leong rolling home in 36th and Tome Sandevski a couple of minutes behind in 47th. Overall LSE firsts finished 3rd behind the future Olympians of St Mary's and a strong UCL team.

The start of the LSE second team came with Charlie Dougherty in 51st. Andy Hardman was cruelly shafted by Tim Windle in the last twenty metres, after Andy failed to spot the finish and ran the wrong way (pillock). They finished 52nd and 53rd with Greg Opie following shortly after, a tenth of a second behind his increasingly well protected nipples. James May completed a sound run for the men's team by finishing 63rd, although his glow in the dark Millwall FC shorts signaled his impending arrival half a mile before he eventually turned up. The LSE second team finished 8th, top of the pile for second teams and beating the Kings first team by a massive margin. (This is in no way due to Kings only fielding half a team and is entirely down to LSE's superior skills).

In the women's race, team captain Helen Sharp looked up at all the other girls on the start line before giving most of them a bloody good hiding, finishing in 11th, followed closely by Caterina Scaramelli in 15th. A good run by Sarah Horn finished off the first women's team who finished 4th overall and the second from the ULU teams, losing out to Kings by a few points. Paula Svaton finished 25th as the solo runner for the LSE second team, but still managed to be the third 'B' team across the line.

The post race social was held in the Tuns with LSE conclusively proving that they are better looking, more sociable, better dancers and bigger drinkers than everyone else in the league. In a rather rash move some misguided UCL punk challenged LSE to a drinking competition, look out for news of their destruction in the future.

It's a smug LSE team then, that moves on to Hackney Marshes in a fortnights time where LSE will prevail as a running deity in the ULU championship. Be sure to check out the much anticipated karaoke version of "We are the champions" as we bask in supreme glory. Probably.



"I'd much rather kill a person than an animal" Tanya Rajapakse