

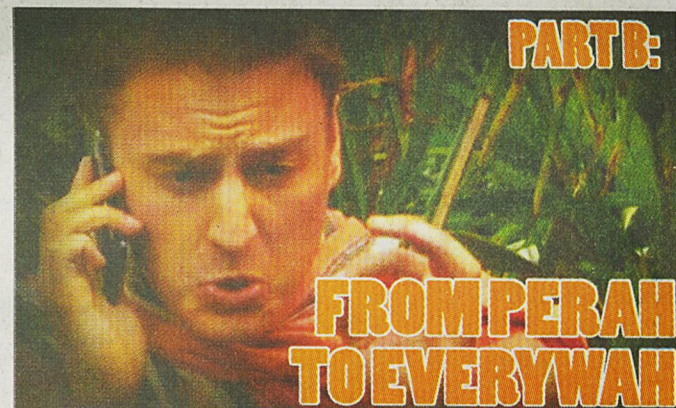
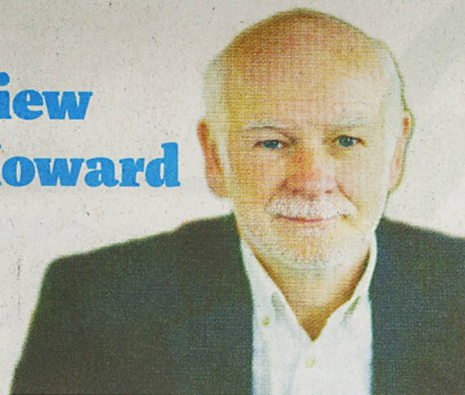


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The Beaver

19 October 2010
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Pissarides earns LSE sixteenth Nobel

**Nicola Alexander
Heather Wang**

Professor Christopher Pissarides has been awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Science 2010 for his work on the Economics of Unemployment.

The Nobel Committee announcement came last Monday, 11th October, to the surprise of Professor Pissarides who said that he was 'speechless' at the news. According to the annual Thompson Reuters Nobel Prize predictions, released in the run up to the announcement, Pissarides was well behind several other economists for the favourite to win. However, the initial odds have not detracted from the magnitude of this achievement for Pissarides and the LSE.

Professor Pissarides holds the Norman Sosnow chair in Economics and has been a member of the LSE's faculty for 38 years following the completion of his PHD in 1973. Two other Economists were also honoured, Dale Mortensen from North Western University and Peter Diamond of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Professor Pissarides is the 16th LSE recipient of the prestigious Nobel Prize.

Professor Pissarides has worked in The Department of Economics as both a PhD student and, later, Head of Department and professor. To add to this personal and professional achievement, Pissarides, is also the first Cypriot to be awarded a Nobel Prize. For the large Cypriot population at the LSE this award has had added poignancy. Alex Christou, a 3rd year cypriot born LSE student commented; "I was delighted but not surprised by this epic achievement".

The employment research for which Pissarides was commended by the Nobel Committee has proved highly influential in today's economic climate. Talking about his work, Pissarides briefly explained that his models; "allow you to understand the foundations of unemployment. It simply tells you why people might lose their jobs, what increases the probability that someone would lose his or her job, what makes it less, and then how they would remain unemployed. So it enables the study of all the processes involved."

"Search theory has been applied to many other areas in addition to the labor market. This includes, in particular, the housing market. The number of homes for sale varies over time, as does the time



Professor Pissarides, an LSE thoroughbred, was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work on the economics of unemployment

it takes for a house to find a buyer and the parties to agree on the price. Search theory has also been used to study questions related to monetary theory, public economics, financial economics, regional economics, and family economics." "Needless to say, the relevance of Pissarides' work to the post-financial crisis world is worthy of the praise that has been offered by the economic community. Recently Pissarides has issued a warning to George Osborne, UK Chancellor, that cutting unemployment benefits are likely to lead to poverty and despondency amongst the jobless.

Pissarides' work is highly valued by Norwegian Nobel Committee; in the announcement of prize winners, they commented that; "Peter Diamond, Dale Mortensen and Christopher Pissarides have developed a theory that explains the workings of markets with search frictions...the research of this year's laureates has substantially improved our understanding of markets with search frictions." The official Nobel Prize website has praised the enormous social impact of these mathematical models.

Following Monday's announcement Howard Davies immediately praised the decision of the Nobel Committee and commented that; "I offer my warmest congratulations to him". Dr Judith Shapiro, Head of The Department of Economics, has said that she is; "elated and delighted". Professor Pissarides' work itself has been commended for its quality and insight; "I think very, very highly of his research. The reaction in the Economics profession has essentially been 'This is an Economist's Economist'. He is a fine theoretician, but also cares deeply about evidence, and he cares about economics in order to understand the economy and impact on policy." said Dr. Judith Shapiro.

Pissarides stands as the 13th LSE Economist to be awarded the Nobel prize, joining the ranks of Amartya Sen, Paul Krugman and Friedrich von Hayek. "That is confirmation of the excellence of our LSE", said Dr. Judith Shapiro.

Pissarides himself commented that the award; "Is a great joy and honour, it's what we all dream for when we are allowed to have dreams."

Visa delays leave students grounded

Poorna Harjani

Home Office suspensions of Indian visa applications have severely delayed some LSE students' enrolment at the School, the Beaver has learned.

Many international students have expressed frustration and anger at the new stringent visa application process enforced by the UK Border Agency, which has left thousands of genuine students across the country with a protracted start to the academic year. The previous interview undertaken to gain a British visa is now a complex points-based system aimed at clamping down on foreigners exploiting loopholes in the system to gain student visas as a pretense for economic motives into low-skilled employment.

The new points based system is split into five tiers covering highly skilled

migrants to unskilled workers, which includes Tier 4 for international students. This category allows students to stay in the UK for the length of the course plus four months if the course is a year or longer.

Jeeyan Patwa, an LSE student who experienced delays coming into the UK to start his masters in International Management, commented: "What is really needed is greater awareness about the Tier 4 system in the home countries from where international students apply for their visas."

Under Tier 4, students have two requirements to amass their 'points'. First is sponsorship from an approved UK educational institution. Secondly, students also need to prove sufficient funds to cover course fees and cost of living. Students are now expected to show that they can afford their tuition fees 28 days before they apply, plus at least £700 per month for living

expenses. This has left many parents with no choice but to provide their 18-year olds with lump sums of money under their own name.

Not only does the system unfairly restrict genuine students who want to study in the UK, fears have been raised of a potential reduced income for universities who are heavily dependent on income from international students. Only those institutions deemed to be highly trusted sponsors are allowed enrol students outside of the EU. Publicly funded universities automatically accorded an approved status to sponsor student visas but can lose this status if evidence of abuse emerges.

Valerie Hartwich, a researcher for Manifesto club, a civil liberties group, says, "The new visa application process doesn't seem to have affected the revenue gained from international students, since we had a recession and a low pound which

made studies in the UK more appealing."

There are also hidden costs from providing solutions to delayed students missing classes and lectures, such as video recordings. Universities are also legally responsible for monitoring students working over 20 hours a week, and ensuring regular attendance which can breach equality laws and goes beyond a university's duty to provide pastoral care.

Protests have been sparked by students themselves with internet campaigns such as 'No spying on students' whose goal is to filter through an inter-university campaign to oppose the new visa system. The LSE Students' Union has launched a further campaign, "Students Not Suspects", aimed at showing that such a system can unfairly categorise as terrorists.

Patwa said of his experiences, "After encountering many difficulties in processing my visa application whilst in Mumbai, I thought it would best to have to go

through the process in London itself." He added, "LSE has been extremely helpful by organising workshops to assist visa applicants, having daily visa help drop-in sessions and being very prompt in email replies."

The Manifesto Club says the new points-based system brings "burdensome new requirements on international students and academics - including higher visa fees, and a requirement to prove up to £7,000 savings." Hartwick says.

Britain is, after the US, the second most popular destination for overseas students. These changes are likely to make the US seem a more attractive place to study, potentially damaging UK's image as a centre for intellectual growth in knowledge, research and an exchange of ideas. The LSE is noted for its predominantly international student make-up; 53.2 per cent of the student population originates from overseas.

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Pissarides ennobled

When Christopher Pissarides found out he had been awarded the 2010 Nobel Prize for Economics he declared himself 'speechless'. Fortunately the Beaver is never short of a few words, so on behalf of every member of the LSE community we would like to say, congratulations. Unlike many of the Nobel Prize winners whom the LSE claims as its own, Professor Pissarides is Houghton Street through and through. He has taught here for the last 38 years since completing his PhD in 1973. However, hopeful undergraduates expecting to find the winner of the most prestigious prize in Economics sat opposite them in class next week are sure to be disappointed. Professor Pissarides, who holds the Norman Sosnow chair at the LSE, only teaches postgraduate courses, including his specialist field, the Economics of Unemployment at PhD level. From this perspective, whilst having a Nobel Prize winner within our midst

does wonders for the school's prestige and moral, the affect on mundane undergraduate teaching will be non-existent. This isn't a dig at Professor Pissarides whose excellence is beyond question, but rather a subtle point about how our higher education institutions should be measured. In a sector which is heavily reliant on prestige, it's all too easy to equate Nobel Prizes with a first rate student experience. There is a far more complex relationship between the research carried out by academics and the quality of the learning that goes on at a university.

In other news this week, the LSE's Students' Union rebooted its 'Students not Suspects' campaign. The SU seeks to eradicate the suspicion cast over international students coming to study in this country on a Student Visa. Under the new system, the LSE may be required by law to report to the government those international students whose attendance at the school is infrequent. The Beaver has long advocated a liberal immigration policy

Get involved in The Beaver!

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CLARE MARKET REVIEW

Tube terror threat at Holborn



Photo: Duncan McKenna

Pooja Thakrar

At approximately 4:20PM last Thursday, Holborn station was shut down following a bomb scare.

Police, emergency services and TfL staff responded to the security alert and the station was evacuated. The Metropolitan Police closed down a several block radius, diverting traffic, buses and movement of commuters. Several hundred LSE students and staff were trying to access the station, or walk through the Kingsway junction, but were instantly prevented from doing so by the police surrounding the area.

As the nearest tube station to the LSE, the bomb scare at Holborn delayed and panicked students and staff. When the alert was first raised, people were seen running out of the station, but most people were left unaware of what was happening, leading to confusion. As expected, many commuters began to panic and tried to leave the proximity, whilst others were left unsure as to what to do. At the time, Becky Abrahams, a third-year Economics undergraduate, who had just finished a lecture and was heading to Holborn station to begin her journey home described the scenes: "I couldn't even get close to the station as there was a huge crowd surrounding it and lots of policemen, but I didn't actually know what was going on."

Another Economics undergraduate was on the tube at the time of the bomb scare and was stuck inside a train at Holborn station. He stated: "The doors would not open and we were stuck there for ages. There were also lots of people on the platform so the alert must have just occurred. Our train was then diverted to Chancery Lane station." He added, "Outside, there

was a queue of empty buses, as the police had cordoned off a large section around Holborn station."

Although TfL has not commented on the exact nature of the bomb alert, several tweets posted on Twitter by workers in the vicinity have stated that four boxes with wires were left outside MetroBank, opposite the station. Others claim that an unknown box was found inside the station. Holborn station staff have refused to comment on this detail. Nonetheless, outside the station, emergency services investigated these unidentified boxes, which were the cause for the security alerts raised.

Despite the initial panic following the security alert, TfL commented that it was handled quickly and without any damage being done. The bomb scare caused severe disruption to the High Holborn and the Kingsway area for an hour, until the police and emergency responders deemed the box as benign.

As reported by the Beaver last week, many foreign embassies have sent e-mails to international students warning them of the high risk of terrorist attacks in London. Following this alert, the recent Holborn threat brings greater legitimacy to these claims.

Tamara Fellon, a third year student, commented: "I've been cautious about taking the tube since the warnings earlier this month; the scare at Holborn has made me think twice about using public transport to get to LSE. I haven't used the tube to get into university since the scare."

Tom Delver, a postgraduate student, gave a contrary point of view, stating: "I take the tube into LSE everyday. This (bomb scare) is just a reality of living in a major city and it shouldn't stop us going about our lives."

Students frustrated by LSE Library

Aimee Riese

Causes for concern over facilities in the Library have been raised this week. According to reports from LSE students there is a notable lack of free computers, scanners, printers and study space.

There are currently 483 PCs, 23 printers, and only 1 scanner in the Library. There are 1740 study spaces that mostly operate on a first come, first served basis; although there are opportunities to reserve individual study space and group study rooms. Some students are claiming that there are not enough facilities and that the current facilities do not always work.

Coren Lass, a second-year Government and Economics undergraduate expressed his concerns, saying, "It is often difficult to find a free computer or desk, particularly at exam time. We expect a minimum provision of facilities for the fees we pay. This is something that needs to be addressed by the School if they are looking to increase fees as recommended by the Browne Review. Presently we are not getting value-for-money," adding, "Sort it out!"

New students at the School have already been affected by the lack of printing facilities. Tom Dilke, a first-year International History undergraduate, described his experiences: "The printers do not always work; I've wasted money and time."

Other students have echoed these sentiments. "It is upsetting that the Library creates a competitive atmosphere to access computers," says Tyler Payne, a General Course student. However, he is

keen to state that "the Library staff are really helpful." At this time, there have been no complaints raised about the Library staff or the academic resources.

The Library has made an effort to improve their services. Over the summer a large number of additional power and data points were installed so that students can use their own laptops more easily. The introduction of i-roam – the Library's laptop loan service – has provided an additional 60 laptops for students to borrow and use in the library. These do not need to be booked in advance. However, there have been suggestions by some students that this will put further pressure on the printers and is not an adequate solution to address the current problem.

The Library stated that it is "always aiming to improve its services to students and listens to suggestions as to how this can be done."

The statement continued, "Sometimes the perception that all study spaces, computers and printers are occupied is not accurate. For example, even at its busiest – during summer exam time – only 92 per cent of study spaces were occupied and for most of the year the figure is around 70 per cent."

"We have taken a number of initiatives to use space as efficiently as possible, including the launch of an online booking system and the introduction of bean bags into a previously unused space."

The Library drew attention to the additional scanning facilities available in rooms CMK.C120 and STC.S502. It advised students to check PC availability on the plasma screens in the Library, or use the PC availability system on their mobile phones to find PCs more easily.

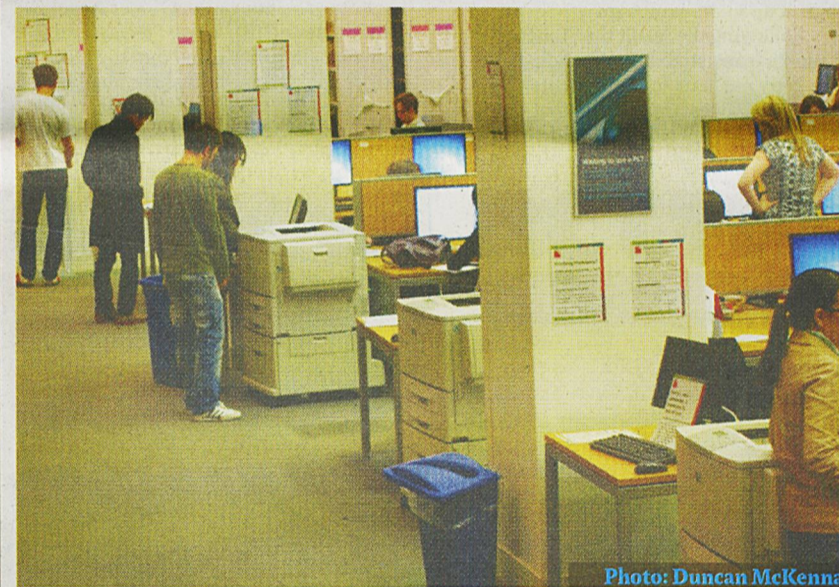


Photo: Duncan McKenna

Rosebery refurb mars hall's "sociable" reputation

Gurmeet Kaur
John Peart

Despite the long-standing reputation of being one of the most lively and popular halls at LSE, students at Rosebery Hall have been left disappointed with the services they've received during their first fortnight.

Like students at many of the halls owned by the LSE, they were unable to confirm a weekly rent before their arrival on 26th September. With quoted figures between £97 and £123 for a single room per week, many students faced problems budgeting their finances in the run-up to their arrival.

Katherine Taunton, an undergraduate student of Government and History, described the inconvenience of not knowing the exact price of the rent before arriving: "The rent is pretty reasonable with average prices of £104.30 per week, but the fact that we didn't know what it was earlier was just a nuisance."

Jonathan Smith, studying for a BSc in Accounting and Finance, had emailed the Accommodation Office a week before arriving enquiring about the price. He was disappointed with the response he received: "I was told that I wasn't going to find out the price until the day I arrived... That could have been a difference of £800 in rent across the year."

The prices of the laundry facilities have also been a major concern for some students. The LSE website claims that "there is an inexpensive coin-operated machine" on site. However, Jennifer

Ofofile, a first-year studying Maths and Economics, disagrees, "£4.20 is hardly cheap for washing and drying".

Rosebery Hall is currently undergoing refurbishment for the 2010/2011 academic year, of its bathrooms and windows. Many students have had a major problem with the building works. Laxman Regala, a BSc Accounting and Finance student, has raised the problem of studying while the building works take places right outside his room every morning. "They begin their works really early in the morning from 8:15AM," he explained, adding, "It would make more sense to do the work while we are in classes or lectures during the day rather than disturbing my studies in the mornings". Nicholas Oliver, a General Course student, concurs: "Not only are the facilities inadequate and filthy, but the noise levels are absolutely unfathomable".

Many students were unaware of the building works until they arrived. Though residents have been told the works will be completed in the next three weeks, Eden Dwek, a Geography undergraduate, is more cynical: "They turn up at 8AM and leave after one hour of building work. It's highly unlikely that they will complete the new bathrooms anytime soon".

The lack of bathrooms on some floors as a result of refurbishment works has meant some students are now sharing one shower with up to nineteen other students. An anonymous student voiced his concern, stating that "it seems almost a health and safety hazard".

The official statement from the President of Rosebery Hall, O'vi'e Faruq, in response to these concerns, states: "I

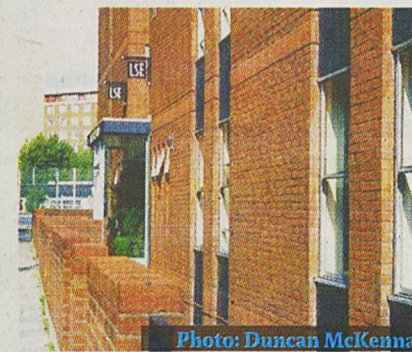


Photo: Duncan McKenna

appreciate that the current refurbishment is of inconvenience to students; however, upon completion in January residents will enjoy a more pleasant bathroom experience. I have been in contact with management over summer in order to make this process run smoothly. Residents were provided with a letter upon arrival, stating the work that was taking place and anticipated completion dates. As a representative of residents I am yet to receive complaints regarding the refurbishment, but I encourage students to contact myself or the management team at Rosebery should any serious issues arise – we are here to help!"

Rosebery is a catered hall with both breakfast and evening meals provided on a pay-as-you-go basis. Because of this there are limited kitchen facilities on each floor which many students like to make use of. Rosebery Hall consists of two buildings: the main building, and a more recent addition, the Myddleton Wing, used almost exclusively for postgradu-

ate students. The LSE's website for the residence contains images of kitchens, but only of those located in the Myddleton Wing, which are of a superior specification and size. This is borne out in higher room rates for students in the Myddleton Wing. Consequently, some Rosebery students have been left feeling disillusioned and unhappy by the misleading information that was provided. With only two small hobs and one fridge shared between one floor, queues have been common.

In response to the complaints Ian Spencer, LSE Director of Residential Services, said: "Listening to and acting on student feedback is an essential part of our management approach. Unless we know your gripes we cannot work towards resolving them." Spencer stated that there is a communications network in place to deal with residents' complaints and added: "I would strongly urge the authors of these complaints to make contact ... and talk through each of their issues. Collectively answers can be found, and changes made to our operation that satisfy everyone."

Despite all the recent problems facing the students, the long-standing reputation of Rosebery as the most sociable hall remains intact. Both Madeleine Leftwich (BA Anthropology) and Katherine Taunton readily assert the view that, "the bathrooms and kitchen problems are just annoying. Otherwise, it really is about the people that make the place. We have good sized rooms, a great location and a really jolly chef!"

News in brief

PHILOSOPHY REFURBISHMENT

Following a report in the Beaver last year, the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method will be refurbishing the students' common room. After several reports regarding the decrepit state of the facility, found on the top floor of the Lakatos Building, the Department has said that they will be re-painting and re-furnishing over the next two weeks. One 3rd year Philosophy undergraduate commented, "I was horrified by the state of the common room last year, especially relative to other Departments. I look forward to the refurbishment and hope that it will become a place that I can use to study."

TODAY IS DEPRESSING

Reserach conducted over the past two months by George MacKerron of the LSE's Department of Geography and Environment has shown that, contrary to popular wisdom, Tuesdays are the worst day of the week. Of the 22,000 people who participated in the study by recording their moods using the iPhone application 'Mappiness', the majority recorded that they were in their worst state of mind on the second day of the working week. MacKerron believes that this is because people have already spent a day at the office and the weekend is too far out of sight.

EXPLICIT BAN ON SAMURAI ARMS

Students at the High Holborn residence have been left perturbed by a message that has been posted on a noticeboard. It is typical for Halls to issue warnings to students if the Management feel there is cause for concern. The printed notice, issued by the High Holborn Management team states; "Although Management respects the diverse nature of its residents, and the inherent risks of nightlife in London, it advises you to not carry Samurai weapons/daggers/swords for your personal protection." Whether this notice is in response to an actual incident involving Samurai weaponry is yet to be confirmed by the residence.

IFS FINDS BROWNE PROGRESSIVE

The bottom 30 per cent of graduate earners would pay less under Browne's proposals than they do at the current fee level, according to a study released by the Institute for Fiscal Studies last week. "Our analysis suggests that graduates with higher earnings would repay unambiguously more than their lower-earning counterparts," said the IFS. "The analysis in the Browne Review, as well as IFS's own analysis, is based on a discount rate of inflation plus 2.2%. Under this assumption the spread of repayments is progressive right across the graduate earning distribution."

PISSARIDES CAUTIONS OSBORNE

As mentioned in the cover piece on Christopher Pissarides (see page 1), the Nobel laureate has cautioned the British Government to be careful in their spending cuts. Pissarides' main concern was that extreme policy could "entrench" unemployment, especially if it was not implemented properly, by disincentivising workers who have been unemployed for over a year. According to an interview with the Times, Pissarides commented that George Osborne, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is "probably cutting the budget a little too fast". Pissarides advises the government to take a gradual approach.

LSE MODELS HOUSING MARKET

LSE academic research, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, has developed a scientific model that can accurately predict fluctuations in the housing market. Given the importance of the housing bubble in causing the decade-defining financial crisis, this research has been praised by economists and politicians alike. The model itself is based on mathematical research and can predict how housing prices and the wealth of individuals reacts to exogenous changes in technology and fiscal conditions. It is hoped that this model will help to better understand the drastic fluctuations that are a typical feature of housing markets.

MORE NEWS IN BRIEF, PLEASE...

The Beaver welcomes all students to contribute to the News in Brief section of the paper. If you feel that there is anything noteworthy on campus please contact us at alexander.thebeaver@gmail.com.

March of the penguin

• Freeze the Fees is passed at UGM

Chris Rogers
Sachin Patel

The LSE Students' Union has voted to "support and continue" the Freeze the Fees campaign, following a debate on the motion at last week's Union General Meeting (UGM).

The Sabbatical Officers have already created substantial interest in their campaign in the initial weeks of term; now, following the publication of the Browne Review's findings, the campaign has been given greater Students' Union support. During the twenty-four hour period of on-line voting on the motion, only 412 votes were cast in total, 90.7 per cent of which were in support of the motion.

Similarly, the UGM in which the motion was debated was once again underwhelming in terms of numbers, with the Old Theatre not even half full, and large portions of the balcony area completely empty. In spite of an energetic campaign by the Sabbatical Officers to improve attendance for the meeting, few of the 2,600 campaign sign-ups were present. Before the meeting, sign-ups had received a mass text-message from Students' Union General Secretary, Charlotte Gerada, and Houghton Street was the target of an aggressive flyer campaign.

The Students' Union will now press ahead with its campaign and begin to build up pressure on LSE Director Sir Howard Davies, who, according to Ashok Kumar, the Students' Union Education Officer, "has continued to cowardly dodge the question."

The motion demands that Sir Howard signs a pledge to "Freeze the Fees" for all students in real terms for the next three years. The motion also requires that the appointment of the new director (which may be made in 2012) should be made with the condition that he/she act "responsibly" with regards to future student fees, and continue to support the Union's position on fees. In an interview with the Beaver, Davies has questioned the legitimacy of the proposed action, asking "What right has the SU got to fire me?"

Those students who attended the UGM were broadly in favour of the proposals – the proponents of the campaign were vigorously cheered, while opposing speakers were often jeered and booed. The Executive Editor of the Beaver faced criticism while attempting to defend the editorial in last week's issue, ("Freeze the Fees?") which pointed to possible problems involved with implementing a freeze on fees.

The Students' Union's Sabbatical Officers has denounced the Browne Review, warning that raising fees "would fundamentally undermine" the principles on which the LSE was founded, and insisted they will continue to pressure the Director until he supports the Union's "reasonable demands". Davies, for his part, has ex-

pressed concerns regarding the manner in which the campaign has been conducted, commenting: "the Students' Union has got to decide, whether it wants to take part in the School's decision-making processes, or if it wants to blow up balloons".

Before the election the Students' Union asserted that they had around 2,600 signatories pledged to support the Freeze the Fees campaign, with 775 received on the first day of the campaign, a far cry from the 412 who actually voted for the motion.

The vote was not unanimous, with 38 voters opposing to the motion. Sections of the School argued that a fee increase would not be as harmful as many complain. One first-year Geography student argued that higher tuition fees, even double what they are now, would be "reasonable for a good education" such as that offered at the LSE.

In response to the result the Students' Union leadership said: "We're very pleased that students show overwhelming support for the Freeze the Fees campaign – a 91 per cent mandate is a strong one. We realise that the number of students that voted 'yes' to the campaign is less than the percentage of the student body which have now signed up – which is nearly 25 per cent – and we have our beliefs about that". The Sabbatical Officers argued that the low turnout was due to "confusion about having to vote for the Freeze the Fees motion separately, when they had already signed up to the campaign".

Following the result the Students' Union has insisted that proceedings are "very much up to the students"; by contrast, Davies has insisted that the campaign's propositions would be "impossible" to implement. Weekly campaign meetings are being held every Friday at 5PM in the Underground, to which all students are welcome.

Students wade into the Browne stuff

Chris Rogers

There has been a mixed response from LSE students to the recommendations of the Browne Review, which were published last week. The findings, if implemented, would represent the most radical shake-up of Higher Education funding since tuition fees were introduced back in 1998.

Browne's headline proposal is that the current cap of £3,290 per year will be removed, allowing universities to charge students any amount they want and creating a marketised Higher Education system. Though a tapered levy will be introduced on fees over £6,000, even if universities charge £12,000 they will be able to keep nearly three quarters of the fee.

Under Lord Browne's proposals students will not have to pay these fees upfront, instead they will receive a loan, which they would only be required to repay after they started earning more than £21,000 a year (up from the current £15,000). However, this loan would carry interest, set at 2.2% plus inflation, raising the prospect that those who do not immediately gain high paying jobs, or have parental help to pay off the loan, will end up indebted over a longer period than under the current system.

The Students' Union's Sabbatical Officers have come down firmly against the proposals. Education Officer Ashok Kumar asserted that it was "devastating for higher education", and that the LSE, with its substantial annual surplus, "has no excuses and can find no justification for raising fees". General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union Charlotte Gerada emphasised that "student access, personal debt and wealth disparity could all be negatively impacted".

Hero Austin, Community and Welfare



Photo: Duncan McKenna

Officer, also attacked the proposals, accusing them of furthering the skew towards STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths): "I am extremely disappointed with the Browne Review; it fails to recognise the value of the social sciences, arts and humanities in higher education".

Many students want to see the findings of the Review challenged, with one undergraduate arguing that he didn't want to have to pay "£10,000 in fees every year". Another warned that the move threatened to deter future students. Many cited the NUS/HSBC survey revealing that 50% of students would be put off attending university if the fees were £5,000, "let alone the much higher fees we might see".

Others have responded positively to the proposals: one second-year undergraduate criticised the Union's stance on

the Browne Review as being regressive, pointing out that the lowest 20% [of earners] would pay back less than they pay now, and only the top 40% will pay back everything they owe. A similar analysis has been posited in a study published by the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Another argued that the increase in the fees would ensure that only those "who really want to learn will go" to university, hence pushing up standards.

One General Course student argued that the LSE should only put up fees if they are genuinely needed by the School, adding "I have to pay fees of \$55,000 (£35,000) so I know how it feels to have to pay that off".

In addition to the heated voices on each side of the debate, some students, primarily those on postgraduate courses, have greeted the Browne Review with apathy. One such third-year undergraduate claimed, "It doesn't matter to me, or many in my year since the Review won't affect us".

At the time of voting some students still appeared undecided on the issue, and this may also have contributed to the low turnout. "I don't really know the whole story" admitted one General Course student, while a first-year Geography undergraduate said that he wasn't completely opposed to higher tuition fees provided "people on low incomes have access to funds to help them".

The Freeze the Fees campaign, now with full Union backing, looks set to gather pace over the coming months and intends to continue with its "escalation style campaign".

» Howard Davies
interview:
page 13



Union Bashō

Apologia

'Freeze the fees!' they cried.
The applause was thunderous.
That's democracy.

Bashō is the Beaver's evasive haiku poet.
Look out for more of his work, veiled in
anonymity, in future issues.

There is a disparity between campaign sign-ups and UGM attendees
Photo: Duncan McKenna

De Soto develops novel thesis on the crisis

Andreas Kuersten

Hernando de Soto, the noted development economist, spoke at the LSE last Friday to a full audience. De Soto sought to apply his knowledge of development economics in Peru to gain greater insight into the recent economic crisis.

Hernando de Soto's lecture was one in a series of dialogues put on by the Global Policy Journal, which, according to Professor David Held, "Has a website so sexy many viewers have said it should contain an age check before entry". Hernando de Soto returned to his native country of Peru when he was 38 and, through his work he has become a leading voice in the field of international development.

De Soto's CV includes stints as a governor of Peru's Central Reserve Bank, and CEO of Universal Engineering Corporation (Continental Europe's largest consulting engineering firm). De Soto has

also been a member of committees ranging from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, to the Intergovernmental Council of Copper Exporting Countries. His most prominent position, however, has been as founder and president of the Institute of Liberty and Democracy (ILD) through which he has sought to tackle the problems of developing countries. From its humble beginnings in Peru this institute now advises governments and head of state all over the world on development issues.

De Soto spoke of his history with Peru and the core difficulties that he attempted to ease through his economic theory on the importance of property rights. Upon returning to Peru, de Soto joined in the Peruvian government's fight against the Shining Path rebel group in the 1980s and developed his main thesis to counter their influence. The Shining Path was able to record and guarantee the property of peasants and in return the peasants hid and supplied them. De Soto countered

this by setting up government laws and programmes to match what the people wanted and needed and thus undermined the position and power of the rebel group.

According to de Soto the problem stemmed from a lack of public records, or as he calls them, "Public Memory Systems." Ownership and relationships are seemingly intangible concepts but the West had figured out how to make them tangible through the keeping of detailed records and by incorporating this formal property system into their formal legal system. De Soto pointed out that developing countries and the poor in these countries were unable to unlock the wealth and earning potential of their capital not out of a lack of effort or entrepreneurship but because they were not a part of a formal system whereby what they possessed and produced gained value in a state or world market. It is this idea that a formal property and ownership system are "the DNA of division of labour and capital" and thus of development and the Western market

that is the crux of de Soto's work.

At the speaking engagement he went on to apply this theory to the recent economic crisis. De Soto asserted that the crash stemmed from the West ignoring its formal property and ownership systems which had made it able to gain its tremendous wealth. Furthermore, de Soto criticised the West for allowing property, such as financial derivatives, to go unrecorded. According to de Soto the West suffered from the same off-the-books shadow economy which afflicts developing countries and these assets must be recorded for recovery to be possible.

Several poignant questions were raised by the audience. The most interesting came from an audience member who asked how de Soto might utilise his methods to address the current narco-militant problem in Mexico. The response was that this problem is quite similar to that which afflicted Peru. De Soto commented that it is infinitely harder for a government to wage a war when it is unable to locate the

enemy. The government is unable to track the financial or capital movements of drug leaders because of the large Mexican shadow economy in which they can operate. Therefore they are constantly striking at small leads while a separate economy fuels the narcotics business. This must be interdicted for there to be success, argues de Soto.

Overall the audience reacted positively to de Soto. One woman did become frustrated and left, but this was in reaction to the ideas Professor Held was espousing. Audience members commented that they enjoyed hearing de Soto's development theories, and his take on the economic collapse. One student commented, "He was actually quite funny". Nicola Alexander, a second-year Government and Economics undergraduate, added, "It was so insightful to see how de Soto applied development economics to the economic crisis. He gave an interesting and entertaining dialogue."

Nobel Laureate Sen honoured at the LSE

Dana Andreicut

LSE's Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method played host to the 40th anniversary of Amartya Sen's book *Collective Choice and Social Welfare* last Monday. Sen, who is currently based at Harvard, and was a professor at the LSE from 1971 to 1977, won the 1998 Nobel prize for his contributions to welfare economics.

Attending Monday's talk were Claude d'Aspremont, from Université Catholique de Louvain; Kevin Roberts, from the University of Oxford; Maurice Salles, from Université de Caen; Nicholas Baigent, from Graz University; and Christian List, from the LSE. They formed the panel to which Sen later on responded. The discussion was chaired by Luc Bovens, head of the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method at the LSE.

The event celebrated Sen's achievement and reiterated the importance that the book still holds today. The book firmly established some of the main topics in social choice theory, and offered readers a chance to explore both the philosophical as well as the economic dimensions of the subject matter. Some of the issues addressed by the book included the use of measurable and interpersonally comparable utilities, individual rights, particular methods such as Simple Majority Rule, the Borda Score, Nash Bargaining solution and the relationships between them, among others. "It certainly attracted some of the brightest minds at the time into social choice theory," Professor Baigent told the Beaver.

The speakers discussed the impact that the book had on their lives, shaping academic careers, PhD thesis decisions and research interests.

Commenting on the talk, Professor Bovens highlighted the idea that prior to the book, much of social choice theory was confined to the world of mathematics, and that one needed to work on theorems in order to explain its subject matter: "Before 1970, a lot of moral and political philosophy proceeded as if economics didn't exist and the interesting thing is that the book opened up these bridges. For many people, the book gave directions to their research. For philosophers there was a whole new field to explore, while for economists novel perspectives emerged as well."

Professor Bovens' interest in Sen's book regarded Arrow's Impossibility Theorem and Sen's liberal paradox. While Arrow aimed to obtain a social ordering by aggregating people's preferences, Professor Bovens took an interest in a single individual attempting to make a decision while taking into consideration a variety of factors. "Think of a person who's trying to determine where to go to university. There are a number of factors he or she wants to consider, and every criterion allows them to rank the options. Where do they go, all things considered?"

Professor Bovens criticised Arrow's ordinality condition, which does not apply to cases such as the university decision example. However, he argued, Sen's liberal paradox does have an analogue in the decision problem of a single individual. He also focused on the problem of bargaining and fairness in his research and attempted to offer a philosophical solution to the

problem, as a reflection on the technical material in game theory. "Sen was a model in this sense as well," he continued, "he encouraged us to pick up *Econometrica* (an academic journal of economics), work our way through a set of articles on common themes and find the philosophical problems underlying the economics."

Claude d'Aspremont raised the issue of preferences, and of how much information one needs to take into account when describing them. The usual candidates for preference measurements include ordinal information, the extent to which one prefers choice "a" over choice "b" and matters of interpersonal comparisons of utility, among others. The conclusion was that, depending on what you allow to be said of the measurement of people's preferences, while adding a few other basic conditions, one can reach plausible conclusions about how to aggregate a set of preferences, and obtain "possibility theorems".

Christian List connected Sen's work on levels of measurability with Nozick's research on objectivity, and told the audience that that the book was a crucial factor in his decision to continue studying political science.

Not all of those invited could attend the discussion, and some of the comments were sent via email and presented to the audience. Among them was Kenneth Arrow's statement: "I can't resist the opportunity to join in admiring Sen's work in general and his book in particular." Arrow, currently at Stanford University, is a 1972 Nobel Laureate and founder of Social Choice Theory.

The talk was well received among academics, as well as students. Ying Shi, an MSc student told the Beaver, "It was a

great opportunity to see such a remarkable economist in person. Also, listening to the talk compelled me to go look up the book."

Towards the end of the discussion, Sen responded to the panel's comments and

gave some more details about the circumstances in which the book was written. Amartya Sen is also highly regarded for his work in development theory, poverty and political philosophy..

Arrow's Theorem in Brief:

- > List individual preferences of the people in society and obtain a preference profile R^n
- > Construct a social ordering from the preference profile R^n
- > The social ordering must satisfy four conditions:

1. Pareto: If all individuals prefer x to y , then society prefers x to y

2. Unrestricted domain: There is a social function defined for all preference profiles R^n

3. Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives: If individual preferences change in such a way that all individual preferences over a pair x, y remain unchanged, then the social preference over x and y remains unchanged.

4. Non-Dictatorship: No individual in this society can impose his preference profile on the other individuals.

Freshers have a ball

Heather Wang

Over £9,000 has been raised from last week's Las Vegas Freshers' Ball, organised by the LSE RAG (Raising And Giving). The event, which took place on 11th October at The Penthouse nightclub on Leicester Square, was attended by over 700 students.

Every year, RAG raises money for three different charities, and proceeds from the Ball will be distributed between this year's chosen charities – 'Refuge', which provides support for victims of domestic violence; 'SOS Children's Villages', the world largest orphan and abandoned children charity; and 'Acorns Children's Hospice Trust', which provides care and support for children and young people who have life-limiting or life-threatening conditions.

The venue for the Las Vegas Ball, The Penthouse, is noted for its impressive view. The Vice-President of RAG, Sarah Llanwarne, explained the decision: "We have used The Penthouse for the last two years because it is a really good club for people who are new to London," adding that much of its appeal came from "its panoramic views and exclusive Leicester Square address." The view was considered one of the highlights of the Ball by many students too: "The Penthouse is one of the most scenic clubs in London," said one student. "The view is gorgeous!" added another student excitedly.

Although it was rather empty at the beginning of the Ball, the venue quickly filled with dancing students by 10:30PM. Llanwarne stated: "The queues outside were snaking round Leicester Square", and the Penthouse co-ordinator, Max, was also impressed with the turnout, concurring, "I'd never seen the 7th floor so packed."

Each floor in The Penthouse played different genres of music, including pop, R&B, and dance, giving students a wide variety of music to sample. The music was enjoyed by many of the attendees: "I loved the music - it was the kind I just wanted to get up and sing and dance along to," said one student.

Overall satisfaction with the Ball was positive. "I stayed right until the end, and didn't want to leave," said one fresher who attended the Ball. "Overall I think it was a great success," concluded Llanwarne, after the Ball.

LGBT leaders toast forty years of activism



Peter Tatchell addressed the Gay Liberation Front anniversary
Photo: Flickr user BinaryApe

Lauren Fedor

LSE hosted the UK Gay Liberation Front's fortieth anniversary last Wednesday.

On the evening of 13th October 1970, 19 individuals gathered in a basement classroom at the LSE for the first meeting of the United Kingdom branch of the Gay Liberation Front. Exactly forty years later, on 13th October 2010, nearly 100 people, including many of the GLF's original members, returned to the LSE to celebrate the organisation's achievements and toast its lasting legacy.

Though the setting for last Wednesday's event was "decidedly different" than that of the original 1970 meeting—attendees in 2010 enjoyed cocktails, canapés and conversation on the top floor of the New Academic Building—the sentiment remained the same: "Gay is Good."

For more than two hours, original GLF members swapped stories of how they found inspiration, acceptance, and, ultimately, liberation through the movement. Many activists took to the microphone to share their memories with current LSE faculty, students and other community members in attendance. "The ideas and values of the GLF were revolutionary," Peter Tatchell, an original GLF activist, told the crowd Wednesday night. "We wanted to change society, not assimilate within it."

Wednesday's event also featured an exhibition of photographs, posters, newspaper clippings and other mementos tracing the early efforts of the GLF. The items in the exhibition represented a small portion of the LSE Hall-Carpenter Archives, a collection that is one of the nation's primary resources for the study of lesbian and gay activism, according to Sue Donnelly, Head of Archives at the LSE.

While the British branch of the GLF may have begun at the LSE, the organisation had its roots in the United States. A series of riots and demonstrations in the late 1960s sparked a full-fledged gay liberation movement in the United States. Inspired by the American activists' work, LSE student Bob Mellors sought to spread a similar message of equality and tolerance throughout the United Kingdom.

The GLF was most active in the early 1970s, moving beyond a basement class-

room in St. Clement's and into the streets of London to plan a host of demonstrations, marches, discos, and "think-ins." The organisation gave way to the publication of gay magazines and newspapers, as well as the establishment of gay communes throughout the UK. As the GLF attracted attention and gained members, local groups formed in cities and towns across the country, thus leading the way for a national gay liberation movement.

Hakan Seckinelgin, a senior lecturer in Social Policy, described the GLF as "one of the most successful social movements of the last 40 years," adding that the GLF's beginnings at the LSE represent an "important episode in the school's history." Seckinelgin worked with Donnelly and Felicity Jones, Manager of Trusts and Foundations in the Office of Development & Alumni Relations, to put together Wednesday's anniversary celebration.

Seckinelgin said event organisers were pleased by the outcome of Wednesday's gathering.

"It was great to have many people who participated in the GLF in early 1970s talking about their memories and experiences in taking part in a radical movement," he said. "It turned into a great living history evening."

Donnelly agreed. "I knew the evening would be fun," she said, "But it was also immensely moving to hear so many people's memories of the role GLF had played in their lives."

LSE students in attendance said they were similarly moved by the experiences of the original GLF members.

LSE students who attended the event were equally impressed; "It's really important to recognise the struggles and the achievements that people have made in the past," Andrew Fleming, a master's student, said after the event.

Reagan Persaud, the Students' Union's elected LGBT officer, agreed. "You hear these inspirational speakers talk about what they believe in, and what they've done...it really does inspire you," he said. "It moves me to tears." Persaud added that he found inspiration in the LSE's distinctive historical ties to the GLF. "We're very lucky. We're at a university that has been very, very supportive of gay rights," he said. "It makes you feel really good to have chosen this university."

IDEAS on global power shift

Bethany Clarke

Is the world increasingly favouring the East over the West? Is China replacing the United States as leader on the world stage? Are we witnessing a power shift? These questions were at the heart of last Wednesday's LSE IDEAS' Public Debate "Power Shift: West to East", where LSE Professors Michael Cox and Arne Westad went head-to-head in an open forum in front of a packed audience.

Arne Westad, Professor of International History at LSE and the first speaker of the night, argued that a power shift is indeed taking place, and that it is privileging East Asia, and specifically China, over all others.

He described this transition as a "long-term power shift" and claimed that it is "very unlikely that there will be events in international affairs that will turn this [the power shift] around." He argued that "it is not so much about politics, or about grand strategy, or what governments... will decide, it is about the core economic argument", claiming that the shift was the result of systemic changes that cannot be undone through politics or military strategy.

Professor Westad stressed the fact that China's current best interests are served on a global scale by working in a world led by the United States, but questions how China will act once this is no longer true. He also noted that the United States' own increasing "leadership inability" due to its "near paralysis in terms of its domestic political system", and the country's misguided foreign policy focus on the 'War on Terror' are only worsening the American

situation.

Professor Michael Cox from the Department of International Relations spoke second, defending the argument he described as "the unpopular position" that a power shift is not taking place, and that if one is, that it has yet to be proven.

He claimed that throughout history there have been waves of "declinism", the popular belief that America is declining,

The United States has finally "had its day."

as all Great Powers have done before it. He stated that the fraying of the European Union and the emergence of China as the second largest economy in the world, which both occurred at the same time as the most recent resurgence of declinism, have together led people to believe that the United States has finally "had its day."

Professor Cox defended the United States, reminding the audience that it remains the world's largest economic and military power, that it "is still the only global player" and stating that he doesn't envision any other nation taking its place in the foreseeable future. He argued that this is because the United States still deploys a considerable amount of soft power throughout the world, something that he argues China is lacking.

He ended his defense with the state-

ment that the East remains "in many, many ways dependent on the West" both in terms of its economy and its security, stressing that the East and the West are in no way two separate entities, that there exists a considerable level of integration between the two.

After both speakers had pitched their arguments, the evening moved on to a question and answer session, in which an enthusiastic audience challenged the speakers not only with questions regarding their arguments, but also on points that had not been raised during the debate: the positions of Russia and South Korea, for example.

Audience member Professor Barry Buzan, from the LSE Department of International Relations, presented a synthesis of the two speakers' arguments, claiming that "what's happening here is not a power shift in the sense of from one centre of power to another centre of power, but a general diffusion of power in the system, which means that nobody is going to dominate the planet."

Bernadette Chan Roy, a first-year student who attended the event, told the Beaver "Both of the speakers made interesting and convincing arguments" and that overall "the event made me consider the existence and importance of the West to East power shift."

In this public debate, LSE IDEAS provided a thought-provoking session that encouraged the audience to consider what has become one of the most pivotal questions of our time: Are we indeed witnessing a power shift?

Davies tips the Red Dragon

Neeraj Mashru

Howard Davies offered his perspective on the growth of China in a public lecture last Thursday.

"I think that the moment when there are more Chinese students in the LSE than American students will be the tipping point of global economic power. ...the Americans at that point will realise that the game is over." While not necessarily a geopolitical truth, Howard Davies' opening words on Thursday night explained how appropriate it is that he, as Director of the LSE, is held in such high esteem in China.

LSE's famously international student body includes over 800 Chinese students, a number that Davies wishes to improve. In a recent tour of China, Davies expressed his willingness to train more Chinese academics and officials at the School to aid the country's economic development.

In the last few years, the LSE has shown its commitment to Chinese academia with the Confucius Institute for Business London, and the running of an annual summer school in Beijing in partnership with the Peking University. Davies himself is involved in the regulation of the Chinese economy, having been a member of China's Banking and Securities Regulatory Commissions since 2003. This puts him in what the lecture's chair Lord Stern called "a unique position for anyone outside of China" to give this lecture.

Davies began by detailing the recent growth of China and the consequent tensions that this has caused. The topic of whether China manipulates its currency is of great significance to the US, whose trade with China is both sizable and weighted in China's favour. Critics charge that the undervaluing of the yuan by about 24% against the dollar has led to the 'stealing' of US manufacturing jobs. Davies presented a range of views but praised President Obama for his understanding that the surplus work-force being continuously created in China required a very high level of growth. However in answer to a later question from the audience, he pointed out that service sector development would be more employment rich than the current export led growth, and would thus allow for a more accurate valu-

ing of the yuan.

Another cause of tension is the phenomenal 1000% increase in outward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from 2004's level of \$5.5bn to \$55bn in 2010. Investment in US assets and growing economies in Africa have been the primary causes of worry over the level of Chinese influence abroad. Davies tipped his audience that while China's assistance to struggling western sovereign funds had been received gratefully during the recession, stakes such as 10% in Morgan Stanley may be the focal point of future conflict.

Davies praised the incredible strength of the Chinese banking system, pointing to the sevenfold increase in sector-wide profits in as many years. The recent government financial stimulus of over half a trillion dollars has returned the economy to high growth. With an accompanying increasing of bank credit to 30 per cent, it must be at the forefront of the minds of the Chinese regulators that the world downturn was in part caused by excessive bank lending. Davies said that levels of non-performing debt will show whether regulatory tightening has succeeded in neutering any possible side effects.

Davies noted the still common practice of state ownership (or control) – many of the largest firms are owned or controlled by the government. As well as preventing market competition from functioning correctly, this also hinders the bond market. Davies called it "rather unexciting" since government backing meant that most bonds issued have a AAA credit rating. He also pointed to the minute presence of foreign banks (a fall to 1.71% of the banking sector in 2009 has more than negated any growth in the last six years) as an area that needed development. A general tightening of the enforcement of financial controls and relaxation of financial repression were also highlighted as being necessary for better functioning financial markets.

Davies used the lecture to highlight areas in which the Chinese economy needed work to reach the stage expected of the world's second largest economy. However he was generally very positive about the economy's state and progress, saying of a recent survey: "China was ranked the 22nd most developed financial market... which is one ahead of Italy. So in this case, noodles beat spaghetti."

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Comment

The sheer rudeness of an LSE-goer

Why looking interested when confronted on Houghton Street would be a be good thing

Rimmel Mohyidin



We've heard it all before. The London School of Economics that specializes in LSE i.e. Low Self Esteem which breeds Investment *ankers, pseudo-world leaders and 'philosophers' who smoke their herb to 'find themselves, man'. From cold-blooded capitalists to eager beavers, we've been accused of being the worst of the worst and the best of the best. Hell, we come up with the loving analogies half the time ourselves.

I like that we can be honest about who we really are. I like that a ceramic penguin can make it on our Wikipedia page. I enjoy the internship banter. I would even buy one of those cheesy I heart LSE shirts if they weren't so scam-the-tourist pricey.

Unfortunately, my devotion to LSE was called into question last week. Pick any time of any day of any year to visit Houghton Street and chances are there will be a society stall waving pictures of famished children, acid burn victims and former LSE Students suffering from breakdowns on account of failing to make a million pounds before they're 24. Accompanied with the visual aid is usually a container of sorts, jiggling with coppers altogether making them look like a well-dressed hobo at best. You're late for class, your coffee hasn't kicked in yet and the last thing you need is a bunch of over-enthusiastic idiots playing hide and seek with your guilt. Yet, that is what they do (How can you eat that cookie when little Bob here is starving? HOW?) You want to slap that mug right out of their hands and give them a piece of your mind... but

you don't. You're a respectable member of society and you will assume control over your actions. Deep breath, smile and shake your head. Simple.

Or at least that's what you'd think. I was recently trying to raise money on behalf of the UN Society for the World Food Programme and I too was one of those annoyingly bright faces brandishing a little mug about, so very committed to my cause. I thought to myself, hey we're all semi-decent human beings. Granted we're students and have no standards but no one minds a little charity here and there. Ridiculously naïve of me as the day began to unfold and the dialogue went something like this:

"Spare some change for the-"
"Shut up."

"Would you like to help us with-"
"LEAVE ME ALONE!"

"Can I just have a mo-"
"Shush."

"We-"
"No."

And I'm respecting censorship rules here.

I'm not a priss complaining about how everyone is just so darn inconsiderate. I was genuinely taken aback by the sheer rudeness of most LSE-goers. I get that you're stressed, I'd hate anyone asking me for my money for kids I honestly don't care about. I too would probably walk away. What I wouldn't do is be so hormonal about simply smiling and saying no. Really, LSE? Is that the great 'work ethic' to make you oh-so-employable to Goldman Sachs? Is this how to make good Karma come a-knocking? You're obviously smart and a born suck-up so why is it so hard to just politely decline the offer to ease that pesky little whine box we call

a conscience?

Maybe I'm being a tad judgmental here. Maybe I caught some people at the wrong time. And for that I apologise. However, I'd like to think that I was not as 'persistent' as to run after you, fish through your pockets and ask you to

empty your wallet once you've said no, you would not like to help. Or you're sorry but you've run out of spare change or even better, I'll come back later. These are ready made templates and as much as a cynic like me hates to say this it uses a significantly lesser number of facial muscles

to pull off a smile than a frown (and in some cases, boogie man face. Yes, I am traumatised).

I guess another way to approach the problem is maybe change the system. Let's not have a bunch of students live out their worst nightmares of having to beg on the streets and set up stalls where people stop as they please. But you and I both know that that the only reason that will be approved is because we just want to rid the streets off them stupid fundraisers. More importantly, the purpose of getting money will be significantly handicapped. Ah well, who cares about rape victims, diseased infants and homeless cats, right?

So if we can't do anything about the system and we still hate anyone who throws a 'good cause' in our face, what should be done? Little? Everything? Nothing? Let's take a moment to assess. If we were to do everything i.e. dramatically eradicate all problems of the world and thus rid us of the need for charity then we would be awesome and endearingly deluded. So that's out. If we put The Beaver down after reading this and again yell at the next starry eyed hopeful charity worker then chances are someone is going to get hurt at some point (let's not test the patience of an LSE student recently rejected for an internship with JP Morgan...). So that leaves us with doing little. Funnily enough this hits the Goldilocks scale of perfection whereby a bit of effort goes on to probably not affect your or my day much. But at least I won't go home dejected and hating being a 'concerned' human being and you won't have to explain why you're in such a bad mood.

So yeah, make the little effort of being a little polite and make me love our little university all over again.



Houghton Street, Sunday
Photo: Duncan McKenna

Promiscuity: Males vs. Females

Why women have the advantage over men when it comes to, ahem, sex

Andreas Kuersten



I was sprawled out in my boxers watching TV and contributing greatly to the world when I encountered an interesting topic on the high philosophical plane that is the show Jersey Shore. The men on that show were taken aback by one of the females who, just as they do, had been taking home a number of different sexual partners. The men were saying things like, "Girls can't do that, only guys can do that." Of course this is no longer where our society is at, but I became very interested in attitudes toward promiscuity. As I finally got dressed for the day at around 15:00 ideas began hitting me like large rugby players and I knew I had to get them down. I stripped back down to my boxers, or as I call it, "My Thinking Suit," and began researching and typing.

In delving into the subject of our sexual desires and practices I feel it necessary to look back at our evolutionary history. Reproduction is, as it is with every species, the most important activity for the continued existence of the human species. In

the wild males competed with one another for the right to mate with females with the more well-adapted individuals usually coming out on top. Excuse the sexual allusion. Theoretically each generation improved genetically upon the previous one because superior genes were passed on while inferior genes disappeared with the deaths of the males who were unable to mate. It was advantageous for well-adapted males to mate with as many females as possible so that more members of the next generation would have the superior genes. A promiscuous male was therefore something to be greatly desired because it meant that he was well-adapted in being able to secure so many mates. Females, however, were unable to engage in such a lifestyle due to the requirements of their sex in carrying and rearing young. A promiscuous female was an aberration not to be encountered in the wild.

Granted, natural selection no longer plays quite the same role in our society, how else can one explain Richard Simmons and David Hasselhoff? Although I'm pretty sure human perfection has been attained in Hugh Jackman. Regardless, instinctual predilections have merged with modern social ideas to produce today's attitudes towards promiscuity.

There still exists a cultural aversion to women who truly embrace their sexual freedom, but more and more these views

seem to be anachronistic perceptions of societal roles or shaped by issues of confidence.

There is the misogynistic view that men are the ones who should be out in the world experiencing all it has to offer sexually while women should remain 'pure'. If a woman engages in extensive sexual activity then she is seen as usurping the male role and may make men feel intimidated or inadequate. Men are also often nervous that if a woman has had many sexual partners they may not 'measure up' physically or skill-wise to others.

Women on the other hand have seen promiscuity from the viewpoint of the disenfranchised sex. They are often overly affected by old ideas and expectations of women where promiscuity is seen as bad and something that will cause others to look down on you. Those who live this lifestyle have also been seen as hampering the climb of women towards sexual equality by playing into the hands of men. Sexual parity, however, cannot be attained if one sex is able to stride all over such a large social hemisphere as sexual relations while the other accepts its dominance and must tip-toe around it.

As stated before though, the societal role views have become quite outdated. They are still often brought up and discussed but no longer hold the same kind of popular sway in this generation

as in previous ones. As for the issues of confidence, men and women will simply have to cross those bridges when they come to them.

In spite of these views we live in a culture which quite openly accepts promiscuity as normal. Just look at most popular shows, such as Friends and Coupling, which have at their hearts very casual acceptances of this way of life. This acceptance is exceptionally broad in the United Kingdom. A 2008 US university study overseen by David Schmitt, a professor of psychology at Bradley University, Illinois, compiling an international index on promiscuity in Western countries found that the UK, of major industrial states, is the most promiscuous. Finland and the Baltic states actually scored higher when including smaller countries though: gotta stay warm somehow during those long winters. Specific to the sexes Austria has the most promiscuous men while New Zealand has the most promiscuous women. New Zealand is in fact the only country where women average a higher number of sexual partners than men.

A 2003 Journal of Personality and Social Psychology study also found that both men and women are programmed for promiscuity for the natural benefit of the propagation of the species, though they approach it in different ways. Men are more concerned with the sheer amount

of sexual partners attained. They are relatively quick to say yes to sexual intercourse and their requirement for intelligence in short-term mates dropped right off of the researchers' scales. Women on the other hand are much more focused on quality. They spend more time with a potential sexual partner before saying yes and assess more rigorously physical, social, and mental attributes. This serves to make women appear less promiscuous than men, but if there's a plethora of quality around them then they are shown to behave the same way.

If one looks at the roles and desires of ancient humans, the modern attitudes of the sexes towards promiscuity seems to fit in quite neatly. But a key difference is the introduction of social aspects into the mating equation which serve to dilute the purely survivalist and genetic determinants of mating.

This piece is not a stump speech for the merits of promiscuity, it is simply a look at our perception of it and its enactment. In my view the key things to take away from this analysis are different for each sex. Men: If this is your lifestyle book your flight to New Zealand. Women: You have the advantage. Don't just settle for the fellows who happen to saunter up to you. Go out there and grab exactly what you want, because you can.

To freeze or n

After the The Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance -

Charlotte Gerada



This week has been a historical one for the future of higher education (HE). The Browne Review into Higher Education Funding has put forward proposals which hack at the very core of our British welfare principles; that our education be accessible, affordable and key to social mobility. This proposal – no matter how they candy-coat it – is going to end our HE system as we know it. By lifting the cap and allowing institutions to charge at least £6,000 a year (and anything up to £12,000 with the payment of a government levy) for tuition fees, students can face accumulated debt comparable to a decent sized mortgage. The government is immensely hypocritical: on the one hand as we enter an age of austerity, citizens are incentivised to act prudently, and on the other, young people – who face one of the toughest economic climates in a century – are expected to accept and feel comfortable with the incredibly high levels of debt, even before they start out. And yes, many young people will still see the personal economic benefit in getting a degree, and will take on that debt, and feel fine about the loans – but not everyone will. Moreover, it will be the young people that already are most unrepresented in our HE system that will be even less likely to go.

There are already enough obstacles that young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds face – in fact there's a whole assault course of challenges that must be overcome. The challenges are threefold. Before they even apply, there's the initial challenge of getting the grades to get to a HE institution, let alone an elite one like LSE or Oxbridge. And that's if they're not deterred by the overwhelming debt they'll accumulate and will have to deal with – in some cases alone if their families can't afford to support them at all. Secondly, when they finally make it to uni,

there's that slight possibility that the figures just don't add up, so part-time work becomes a necessity. Lucky for some, they'll get a well paid job that means they'll only have to work a day or two. For others, it means juggling different jobs and shifts with academic study, alongside trying to socialise – let alone the prospect of having to support themselves during a holiday, when they often take up an unpaid (or poorly paid) internship to get their CV up to par. Lastly, when they're finally clutching their degree certificate at graduation, there's that uneasy thought, that feeling of disheartenment that your wealthier counterpart graduating after you hasn't rung up half as much debt that you have. And, you'll have to be paying that debt back for the best part of your working life.

What's more, an increase in fees is seen by some as totally acceptable because it means that bursaries and scholarships can be increased to allow poorer students to go to uni. This is simply not a factual statement. Firstly, Lord Browne's recommendations are not to make fee levels more redistributive, it's to make fee levels more marketised, with institutions having freedom to charge what they like. This means students will pay the price that the institution deems acceptable – the price has nothing to do with how much you can afford. Further, whilst Browne has been seemingly incredibly generous by increasing grants for students coming from households earning below £25,000 from £2,906 to £3,250, he also recommends the abolishment of a £300 mandatory bursary that institutions give out to these particular students. So actually, the poorer student gains no more in bursaries and grants. To put salt in the wound, loans for living costs will be at a flat rate of £3,750 for all students, and nothing so far has been mentioned about a 'London maintenance loan' rate. So it seems that the devil is in the detail – or lack of in some cases.

And, I haven't even mentioned the fact that these young people are deterred by high levels of debt because they are so poorly informed about financial support available to them. Evidence suggests that communication is weak, and students are simply put-off by degree price-tags before

they even get a chance to apply. Lord Browne acknowledges this fact, and states that information will be improved – but if the government hasn't been able to get it right for the last decade or so, how does it think it can do it now with fee-levels at least doubling or potentially tripling?

For those of you that truly believe that this 'deterrent effect' chit-chat is just vacuous hyperbole, and this new system will allow students from all backgrounds their chance to get a good education – you're wrong.

I came from a typical working class background and always felt a strong determination to break the mould and get a degree. If I could experience social mobility first hand, surely the UK is the perfect place in the world to do it right? Actually, it was incredibly tough. Coming from a poorly performing inner-city comp, then making it to a Further Education College, I finally got the grades that I'd worked so inconceivably hard to get. With my heart set on going to 'only the best university', I applied to LSE in the hope that I could make something for myself. However, during my A Levels my father was sadly diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and had to retire early. I was in a state of shock and devastation. By some kind of grace of god, I got awarded the Bill Bottrill Scholarship at LSE, and felt so lucky that someone had been so generous and thoughtful to invest their money in someone they believed could excel, but didn't have the financial ability to do so. So I took up my place at LSE, scholarship in hand, feeling immensely grateful. Despite such generosity, the numbers just still didn't add up. Even with the maximum maintenance loan, bursary, scholarship and grant I still had to work part-time to keep myself afloat, and I've still graduated with £15,000 of debt.

Obviously I do not in any way begrudge how much I have to pay back; it could have been a much higher debt level, and, worst case scenario, I could have given into that nagging feeling that I couldn't ever make it to somewhere as prestigious as LSE, and as expensive as London. But honestly, it really hasn't been easy.

I believe this is a monumentally depressing week for HE. The likely changes to our system that have been recommend-

ed by Lord Browne are going severely undermine our beliefs about education. Education for most is the opportunity for anyone – no matter where they've come from – to intellectually equip themselves with the tools to face new avenues in life. Education is the key to social mobility: making fee levels inaccessibly high for many, and immensely so for some, is nothing other than regressive.

Our HE system is already unequal enough as it is. The proposals by Browne to marketise HE will only serve to entrench elitism, create further unequal-

ity and poverty, and provide a whole set of new social problems in a couple of decades' time. The government must recognise the value in investing in young people, and stay true to principles of social justice that we are proud, as a country, to hold dear.



Outside the Three Tuns
Photo: Duncan McKenna

Jakob Schaefer, Emir Nader, Gunnar Schulte, Carsten Jung & George Edwards

These words are written still under the influence of the second UGM's discussion succeeding the motion to Freeze the Fees. Leaving aside for a moment the interesting objective to change the UGM mascot from a beaver to a penguin for the duration of the campaign, we authors of this text claim that freezing the fees is desirable and will invoke five reasons to support the case. These lines are not meant to show that freezing the fees is affordable, although this seems to have been confirmed by the LSE Council, the highest governing body of LSE. Rather, we want to show that freezing the fees is actually a pressing issue and this is why:

1. Rising tuition fees deter candidates for going into Higher Education from all backgrounds:

This point obviously addresses the question whether there is a correlation between enrolment decisions and a certain level of fees. Focusing on the UK, apart from the Ipsos Mori survey with pupils an analogous study by NUS and HSBC with 3,863 current students has been conducted. These were asked whether higher fees would have made a difference to them when it came to the decision of enrolling into university. As a result 70 per cent stated it would have deterred them from going to university if fees were raised to £7,000 per annum, a level at which the

Browne Review, published on Tuesday, suggested the cap of fees to be set. If such a large percentage of current students was severely deterred from going into Higher Education by fees of £7,000 per annum, then fair access to Higher Education is just a castle in the air.

2. Current and rising tuition fees deter capable young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who consider going into Higher Education:

Among experts there seems to exist nearly an unreserved unanimity towards this issue. Most strikingly Callender and Jackson found in 2004 that debt aversion among pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds even remains statistically significant after the introduction of other explanatory variables, like educational achievement or positive attitudes to the benefits and experience of going to university etc. It may not seem apparent, but this achieves a very strong result, implying drastic findings: it means that debt aversion among the concerned students cannot be offset by such factors as the benefits of going to university, including job prospects. It's not enough to promise people they'll earn a huge load of money once they went to LSE to widen participation!

At this point, the Russell Group universities (a group of twenty research-focused universities in the UK, among them LSE, Oxbridge etc.) would probably strongly object. According to their figures a constantly increasing number of students from disadvantaged background has been enrolled at Russell Group universities since the nineties. Yet, these absolute numbers conceal that, relatively seen, the most advantaged twenty per cent of young

people are seven times more likely to enter the most selective institutions than the most disadvantaged forty per cent. This ratio has risen from six times more likely in the mid-nineties. To us it seems obvious that relative numbers give a better account of student inequalities because absolute numbers might be biased by factors, such as the increasing importance of having a university degree to subsist on the employment market.

3. International and postgraduate students would presumably benefit from freezing fees too:

It could be seen in the past that raising home tuition fees was often followed by a rise in international and postgraduate fees as well. Bearing this in mind, it is worrying that the EUROSTAT survey from 2008 finds that in all surveyed countries "financial insecurity plays the dominant role" when it comes to enrolment-decisions "with a median value of 57 per cent stating that this issue was a major obstacle to mobility." At the LSE, this may be the reason why ethnic diversity is much lower at the postgraduate than at the undergraduate level.

4. Bursaries:

Admittedly, if you've followed us so far and accept what has been said, you might still think that bursaries and scholarships can counter these negative effects. However, here our argument is quite simple: it does not work this way round. And the surprising thing is that there is actually some evidence for it. The OECD survey in 2008 concludes that most financial assistance was too little and poorly targeted to counter the inequalities caused by fees.

This is especially grave with regard

A rise in fees is not desirable, not at the LSE, not in the UK!

to the studies of Heller (1997) as well as Oberg (1997), who found that loans or work opportunities had little effect on the enrolment decisions of students, indicating that if policies were to affect these decisions positively, it would have to be an according increase in grants.

But where shall these grants come from if official spending on the education is to be cut, the world has still not completely overcome the credit crunch and UK universities want to use tuition fees to plug future holes in their finances? Who will offer these grants? Endeavouring to counter-balance higher fees with more generous grants means to hope for a deus ex machina. This is not something we want to entrust our fortune with.

Even if you try to support, say, 40 per cent of students at the lower end socio-economically with bursaries, still 70 per cent would be scared off enrolling in Higher Education at a level of £7,000 according to the NUS/HSBC survey. How do the proponents of raising fees deem it possible to fund 70 per cent of the students with bursaries? That is utopian – to freeze the fees, however, is not!

5. Private and social returns: Let's for once view this from an economic perspective:

The more costly a degree is the more pressure there is to obtain a degree that provides immediate financial benefits after graduation. This creates a systematic disadvantage for social sciences disciplines that feature high social returns but relatively low private returns, including many of those at LSE. In other words, students are more and more forced to obtain a training that promises high salaries to repay their loans. Accordingly, the students' interest in education for the betterment of society is sacrificed to the need to pursue individual gains. Such a development cannot be desirable, not at LSE, not in the UK! That is why fees should be freed.

Not to freeze?

the Browne Review - reported last Tuesday, a number of perspectives from the LSE:

Griffin W. Carpenter



Progressive students need to think about tuition differently. As an international graduate student here at LSE, tuition is a matter I take very seriously. Swallowing a £14,904 bullet is not an easy task. Outside of personal reasons, I'm also a proud card-carrying political progressive that would like to devote my education and life's work to removing inequalities in society and breaking down barriers to education. It is a sad fact that I feel the need to display these credentials, but unfortunately this seems to be required given the nature of the debate here at LSE regarding the Students' Union's 'Freeze the Fees' campaign and the Browne Review of Higher Education. The debate seems to be framed as follows: either one opposes increases in tuition fees, or one

supports the increases to the detriment of fellow cash-strapped students (and are thus booed publicly). I believe that the issue is not whether university fees should be higher or lower, but rather that the overall method of assessing tuition should be changed - a different kind of tuition. The attitude seems to be 'you're with us or you're against us' and it puts students such as myself in an awkward position. Let me explain what I mean by a different kind of tuition and how I arrived at this position.

Why is high tuition usually considered 'bad'? Tuition is a problem because the cost - both upfront and as accumulated debt - can be a deterrent to pursuing education. Simply put, tuition acts as a barrier to access and can restrict opportunities after graduating. However, it is important to note that tuition is not the only barrier to access and in fact all the academic literature suggests that it is not even the most important one. The single greatest factor affecting whether or not someone will pursue post-secondary education is whether that person's parents attended post-secondary education themselves. Other important barriers are psychological and include the amount of early out-

reach done in that person's community. Keeping in mind then that any discussion focused on tuition ignores the larger issue of access, it is clear at this point that all students do not find themselves in equal circumstances and a tuition framework that treats them as if they were is irresponsible and unjust.

Why then are the Students' Union advocating a flat fee across all students? Why are we not striving for differentiated tuition across students recognising differences between individuals? My own suggestion would be that tuition should be paid on graduation in the form of interest free debt, held to CPI, and paid back incrementally based on income level, as in the Australian model - but discussions about implementation are best left for a later time in a different discussion. What is most important at the moment are the principles that should guide the debate. What ever happened to 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his need?' Why are we not expecting students from privileged circumstances to pay more? Why are we accepting that students from underprivileged backgrounds pay £3,000 and often more? Why freeze

Frozen tuition is an affirmation of the status quo, and that is simply not good enough

that barrier in place? Frozen tuition is not a vision for higher education. Frozen tuition is an affirmation of the status quo, and the status quo is simply not good enough. The Union states that frozen fees are practical because of the large budget surplus LSE holds, but a temporary windfall does not represent a vision for the future and it is unsustainable and selfish to use this inherited surplus on our own education and not that of LSE students in future cohorts. My proposal at this point is simple: let's have an open and honest debate about how higher education should be funded, keeping in mind that tuition is as much a question of 'how?' as it is 'how much?' and let us work towards breaking down the barriers to high quality education for current and future cohorts. In short, let's act like progressives.

Mariya Osadchy



I am a progressive. I want to improve access to ensure equal opportunities as that is the basis of the meritocratic society in which I wish to live.

The Freeze the Fees campaign has been deemed to be part of a 'progressive' action. A 'progressive' action that - in fact - stagnates the fees to existing levels for an arbitrary number of years.

I want to reclaim the word 'progressive'. 'Progressive', in a socio-political sense, is a meaningless term that merely hints that the speaker's ideas are believed to bring progress: who shall I say does not want to bring progress? Who sits there thinking that they actively want stagnation or deterioration? Progressive is a way of structuring economic payments that allows those that are truly disadvantaged to pay less whilst those that can afford it pay more. Progressivity is a tool that can be used to create higher levels of social mobility within a society.

Freeze the Fees, being the darling campaign of the current LSESU top command, receives little scrutiny. The HSBC/NUS poll that they tote around as some of sort of great indicator of the coming inequality is blatantly biased; of course

students will claim that higher fees will deter them from going to Higher Education Institutions. This was claimed when the top-up fee was introduced. It is claimed now. This will be claimed until the end of time. Students will still go to places of higher education for the economic and social capital that they can reap. Higher education is both a public and an individual good; thus the economic burden falls both on the individual and the state.

A truly radical, flexible funding system ought to be pioneered

It is not remotely progressive to create universally - and artificially - low fees. It simply leads to home students being subsidised by international students without any regard to his or her ability and means to pay. The idea that economic universality is fair has no real rationale; it only creates greater disparity as certain instruments of redistribution are toted as part of some mythical bundle of fair and universal benefits - of which higher education is seemingly one.

Lord Browne's review dismantles the concept of universalism and progres-

sivism to be two sides of the same coin. The review understands that funding ought to be flexible and sustainable. He proposes a system that will not place the burden of payment during study and debt will only be paid off once the graduate earns over £21,000 and then the system of payments is progressive (payments rise in proportion to income) and affordable. The review "estimate[s] that only the top 40 per cent of earners on average will pay back all the charges paid on their behalf by the Government upfront; and the 20 per cent of lowest earners will pay less than today... [and the] return to graduates for studying will be on average around 400 per cent."

As long as university is free at the point of entry I do not believe that there will be a significant impact on access. In fact the review addresses funding for part-time study which is an important vehicle for many to move up the socio-economic ladder in later life. The structuring of payments is meant to reflect individual circumstance and opportunities and income that university can afford individuals. It is true that there are higher levels of debt aversion in lower income families and I propose that there are affordable ways to address this issue through a hybrid of semi-public and private scholarships and grants.

Correct, you may say, maybe Lord Browne's proposals are a sustainable approach to university funding from the Government's perspective but does not take into account LSE's unique position

of a relatively high surplus. Although the reports of the LSE being able to sustain a bizarre alternative low-cost regime may be correct it would still eat into our current surplus which may put us at a competitive disadvantage compared to the growing funds of other universities due to the change in funding. Even if this does not occur, the LSESU proposed funding regime is only sustainable while the LSE remains economically buoyant. The financial engineering practices of investment banks were sustainable pre-crisis as well. Instead of reverting to a hard-line position the LSESU should have the courage to propose a truly radical approach the LSE can take in response to the proposed changes.

I propose a hybrid public-private scholarship and grant system to be enacted within the LSE to encourage higher levels of access that befits a meritocratic institution while allowing the LSE to remain a competitive university internationally. The scholarship system will be both means and merit tested. It will be targeted at students whose parents are not necessarily deprived but the funding system would create a possible strain on their family finances. These parents may be sceptical if the economic burden on their child is worth the education. The grant system will target those who are the least well-off. To address concerns of debt aversion disadvantaged students would finish university with no money owed. The combination of grant and scholarship money will allow students to be

funded proportionally to their means and their ability. As this will be proportional funding, there will be no arbitrary cut-off point; rather the system can be responsive to changes in living costs, the macroeconomic situation, available funds and a myriad of other circumstances. Those who can pay will be expected to pay or take out a loan to cover their education and living expenses. As proposed loan conditions are favourable to the graduate this is not an excessive burden on someone who comes from a comfortable background. This system will be funded with the extra income the university generates from higher fees and alumni donations.

There also exists a fear that debt-burdened students will avoid third-way careers and aim for soulless City jobs. Once again I believe that the loan repayment scheme adequately addresses the potential concerns of those on different incomes. Furthermore certain funding and scholarship schemes can be set up to fund those that are committed to third-way or activist careers as the state, the university and the public understand the social capital that is generated from such individuals.

I urge Howard Davies to reject the unilateral proposition of 'Freeze the Fees'. A truly radical, flexible funding system ought to be pioneered by the LSE. Our university can prove that economic sustainability and accessibility are both equally achievable and that higher fees are not causative of lower access to universities.

Letters to the Editor

Sir - While the news of the Browne Review fills me with as much outrage and disgust as those at last week's UGM, the issue is beyond the amount we have to pay. It isn't because I don't believe that the LSE, even in this point of time, needs to achieve greater access. Rather, as it was pointed out to me on Thursday, student satisfaction fell when there was an increase in fees years ago, teaching and the overall student experience are not the LSE's strongest points. As it stands, students do not believe they are getting value for their money, so why is the Students' Union not making that a part of their campaign to improve our experiences in and out of the classrooms? Further, the School is indeed in a very strong financial position, but if cuts are going to be made to social sciences, and we just rely on the School's investments to pay off, have we not learnt that is a very dangerous game

to play? What about the research which makes LSE the world-class institution it is and its funding? The trade-off has to be made somewhere, whether it be larger class sizes (as was the solution at UNSW when I attended briefly), or worse still, academics leaving the LSE in search of greener pastures.

Ask yourself this: how much would you pay for your experience at the LSE so far and why? Conversely, how much would you pay for the fabled Oxbridge experience?

Phyllis Lui, LLB '11

Sir - I was shocked when reading last week's editorial. Firstly, if a "survey of opinion among authoritative commentators" was conducted, then why was only a single LSE Economics lecturer cited? Secondly, saying "everyone at the Beaver"

shares the editorial's negative attitude towards the freeze campaign is simply not the case, and I have sources to confirm this. Thirdly, it is not true to say that "there is no logical reason why higher fees would disincentivise Higher Education for the poorest young people within society". Earlier this year, HSBC and NUS found that £7000 for a year's tuition fees would have deterred 70 per cent of current students from going to university. We can afford a freeze on fees, and I have faith that even more LSE students will sign up to the Freeze the Fees campaign and fight tuition fee rises.

Lukas Slothuus, BSc Government '12

The Comment and Features Editors will be in the Beaver office (E204) every Tuesday from midday until 2PM to answer any queries on both of the sections.

If you've any questions please come along.

And, to contact the Comment editor, email: briant.thebeaver@gmail.com

Photo

19 October 2010 | The Beaver

A new angle...



Vincent Mok



David Bass



Liam Brown



Rosie Coleman



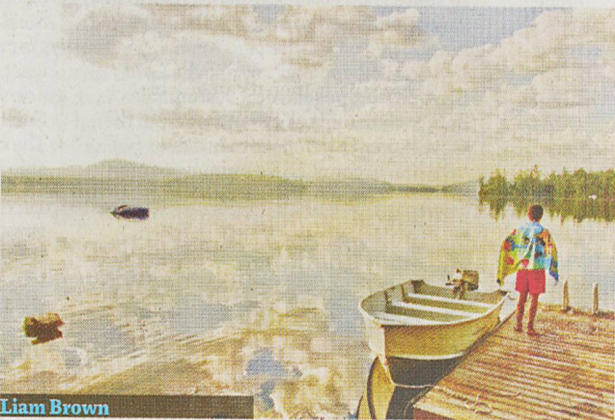
Vincent Mok



Allie Fonarev



Vincent Mok



Liam Brown



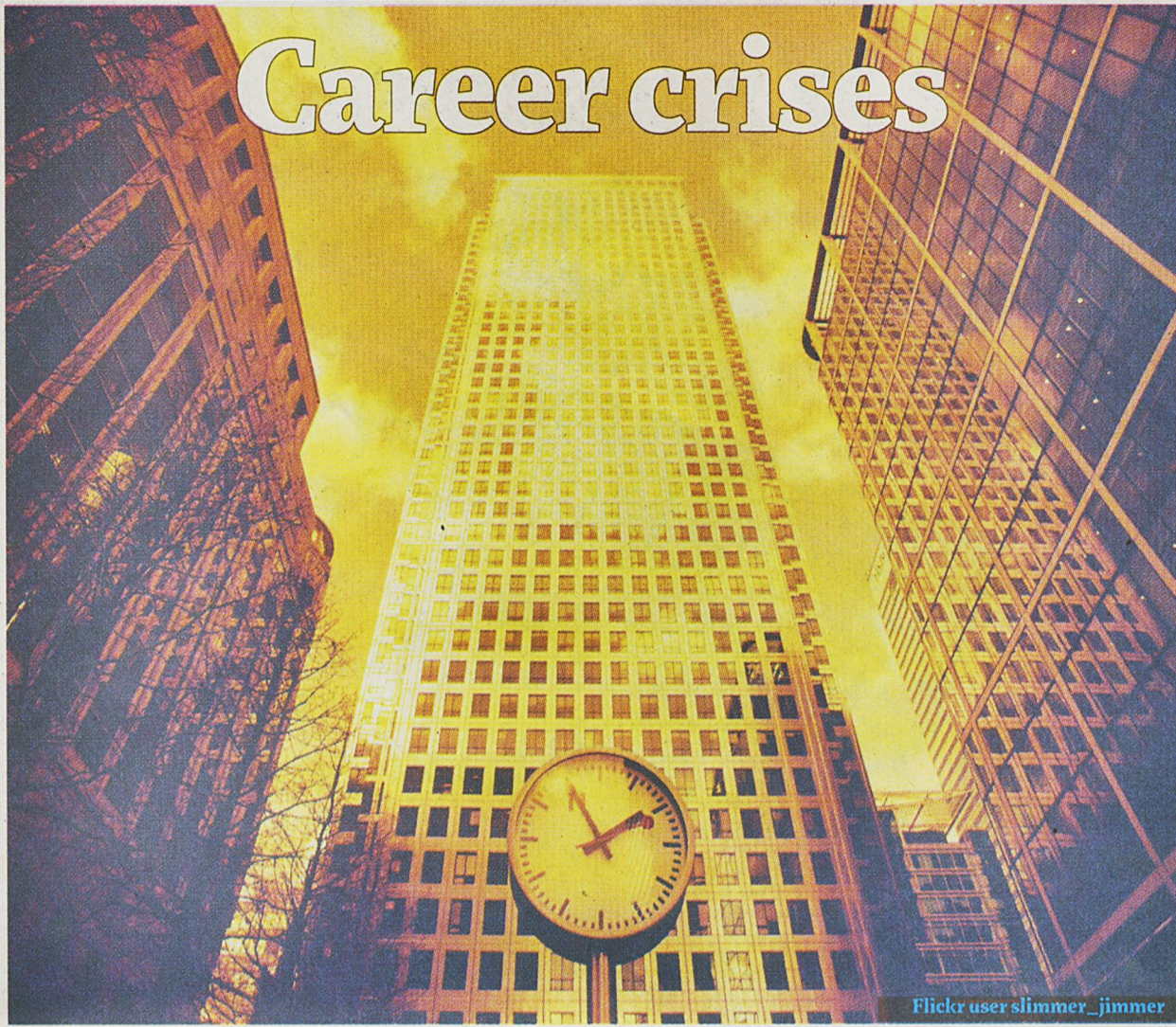
Saffaan Qadir



Allie Fonarev

Want to join our photography team?
Contact us at
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Social



Career crises

Fahd Humayun attempts to withstand mob mentality

The other day I accompanied a friend to her KPMG interview in Canary Wharf. We arrived early and had quite a bit of time to spare, so we did what we do best on these occasions and looked for food. The coffee bar in the waiting area only accepted cash, and I dutifully went out in search of the closest cash machine. As I stood shivering slightly in the cold, waiting to withdraw the amount I needed, I felt a blanket of disquiet settle down inside me. In the queue in front of me there were a dozen or so suited employees, and even more joining from behind as I waited. It was around one o'clock, and most of these workers were on their lunch break.

Needless to say, I was the only one amongst them dressed in faded jeans and the hoodie I had fallen asleep in the night before.

They say the most prolific period of pessimism comes at twenty-one, or thereabouts, when the first attempt is made to translate dreams into reality. Perhaps it comes with the territory – the expectation that is tagged to the LSE label drives home the fact that as graduates we really can't go for blue-collar jobs even if we wanted to. There is an obvious curve in terms of how much attention students give to their future at this university. As first year undergraduates the concern is minimal while individual hopes are the highest they'll ever be. These stary-eyed dreamers then slowly go through a subtle and almost utilitarian process by the end of which they'll take whatever comes their way, as long as it has an appropriate salary, bonus etc. Outside my third year international history classroom, for instance, talk of working for child welfare in the Brazilian rain-forest has died down to a great extent. Instead there is a hardened and almost deadpan earnestness in the scramble for desk jobs in investment banks as the safer and more practical exit route from the LSE. There is a clear maximization of transferable skills as abilities to debate, analyze, research, reason, and problem solve, the prized assets that they are, are reduced to bullet points on CV's and cover letters. Those who have yet to be shaken from their ivory towers come up against fierce arguments from their peers, attempting to convince them that they too should join the free-for-all that consumes the majority of career fairs and firm seminars during the first few weeks into Michaelmas Term.

There is a strong argument to finding a job you like that adds rather than subtracts

“

They say the most prolific period of pessimism comes at twenty-one or thereabouts, when the first attempt is made to translate dreams into reality

”

five days from your week: the pursuit of these jobs can definitely be a more rewarding process, and the job hunt is actually a means to a particular end which seems to be a sensible approach, even if the chances of getting hurt along the way are significantly greater. On the other hand, fitting, or forcing yourself to fit, into the mainstream might be a less daunting challenge – after all the Road Not Taken really isn't likely to be a bed of roses, and it's always easier to do what everyone else is doing simply because everyone else can't be wrong. This almost spiraling mob mentality becomes an uncontrollable force of its own, consuming those who are too weak to withstand opposition, eventually seeing them succumb to external pressures to sell their ideals for something they weren't ever particularly attracted to, but ended up convincing themselves was the right thing to do.

If you came to the LSE as one of those idealistic dreamers, then morphing yourself into a corporate slave should be a personal choice and not some noble call-of-duty you feel you owe to the institute that has prepared you for the outside world. If you feel strongly enough about your career path, then it can be a highly rewarding experience and the beginning of a life-long adventure be it in an office cubicle in the city's financial district or selling online web spaces from your home settee. No matter what path you choose, there will always be the 'one foot in the grave' bias that comes attached with the routine 5am wake up calls. And the prematurely graying hair. And the skepticism from those who took alternative routes to their six figure salaries. But for those who do stick to their guns, battle their way through debt, career crises, and the occasional hot water being turned off because the rent hasn't been paid, and at the end of it all still manage to do what they set out to do – be it researching monkey diseases somewhere deep in the jungle or building malaria shelters for indigenous populations in far off tribes – there is certainly something to be said for them. After all life is not measured by the breaths you take but by its breathtaking moments, and as students we should be the last people on earth to forget that.

Secret Societies

Nicola Alexander wants you to join her

If LSE is ever to firmly cement its status amongst the University 'big boys' (Oxbridge and The Ivies), it is crucial that we induct our first generation of an ancient secret society. In a practice that is as old as elitism itself, secret societies have formed on all of the most prestigious campuses - Oxford has The Bullingdon Club, Yale has The Skull and Bones, Harvard has Final Clubs and LSE is left lacking. The concept of a secret club is as legendary as it is simple. A pocket of hand-picked first-years are 'tapped' for having potential to be future masters of the universe. After an induction process that will terrify and disgust the freshers to their very core, those left standing are successfully admitted to the elite crew and are henceforth part of a brotherhood that will help you climb the ranks and marry well. A mafia amongst students or a fellowship amongst man, depending upon which side of the society door you find yourself. LSE is no doubt worthy of such a fine institution, which is why it is so very baffling that we do not yet have a secret society of our own. We certainly have the ambition to create an exclusive band of 'powerful-in-waiting', we have the brains to develop a following that will prosper and we have the passion to do better than has been done before. So, the conclusion is clear: a secret society must already exist but, as per the analysis of LSE student psyche, it must be so effective that it has thus far escaped detection. Still, this cryptic society does not merit the term 'secret society' as it is missing the two critical components of conspiracy and legend, and thus is invalid.

The hope is that this article will trigger the student body to realise that there is a gap in this particular market at LSE. And, as fervent advocates of supply and demand we must seek to establish one (or several) secret societies for the prosperity of economics as much as for the future of our own institution. Here is a rare opportunity to escape the pattern of privilege, nepotism and sexism that befalls so many a secret society as, in the spirit of the free market, membership is open to anyone who reads this and takes the initiative of introducing a secret society of their own. Needless to say, the benefits will be plenty. For the first time in LSE's history our academic and employment record will be matched by legend and mystery surrounding groups of students who conspire to rule the world. A band of alumni will form

with a bond that holds them together beyond just a common Facebook network. Fellowship will see LSE graduate helping LSE graduate through the trials of life and love. Rivalry between secret societies will inspire innovation and take LSE students beyond studying, beyond 'starbucksing', to further horizons. Latin mottos or, for the most epic amongst us, Greek battle cries will direct us in ways "rerum cognoscere causas" (LSE's own motto 'to know the causes of things') has been unable to. You see, secret societies will breed all things good.

This is a chance for LSE to create legacy and influence through groups of students rather than individuals or academics. With the exception of a handful of campus societies and the 'in' crowd of the Athletics Union, LSE lacks the crucial ties between collections of students by placing emphasis on the individual. Lectures, problem sets and internships are targeted at challenging the sole student. Most rooms in halls and, later, apartments will keep students in their separate worlds for most of their personal time. A secret society is a chance to inspire sibling-strong bonds between similarly minded alumni, united with a common goal to strive for excellence. It is this missing element alone that has held LSE back from a peak that it is so close to reaching. Imagine the implications of a world where Amartya Sen, the Development Economist, had been secret society 'brothers' with Stelios Haji-Iannou, the founder of East Jet. Or Mick Jagger had shared some evenings in the secret society house with Cherie Booth, barrister and wife of Tony Blair. Or an evening where Michael Manley, President of Jamaica, broke bread with John F Kennedy. The legacy that would have come out of LSE would not only be a Nobel laureate, an entrepreneur, a rockstar, a lawyer and some politicians but a CEO who took development around the world, a barrister who revolutionised law since she could 'get no satisfaction' and a Rastafarian who could take on the Supreme Court. The secret society creates networks that will last lifetimes because you are joined by experiences rather than a collective e-mail from the alumni association. Take these words seriously. The age of the LSE secret society is now. And I want in.

Screenings and Games Night at 6pm every Monday and Friday!

Room: CLM.D703 (Clement House 7th Floor)

ALL WELCOME!

LSE Diary

Simon Chaudhuri on his Roman adventure

Perhaps one of the lesser known facts about the city of Rome is that it is still home to prehistoric man. This discovery has somehow eluded scientists, but take my word for it – the caveman walks along the banks of the Tiber. Forgive me, dear reader, for that may be a slight exaggeration. Perhaps not cavemen, but at least men from before the emancipation of women. During my brief stay in Rome in September, I encountered such chauvinism that it ceased to be offensive and eventually became amusing, even to my suffering sister, who would try to enter her PIN code when paying for a meal and employees of the hotel would ignore her, choosing to address the boyish looking 19 year old with her. If sexism does not bother the reader then please continue, for you might find something you like about the chauvinism capital of the world.

Rome is very much a city geared towards tourism and its focus on tourism can be both a blessing and a curse. Like the other major European cities, tourists are very well catered for, with excellent English-speaking guides at all the major attractions and English translations on most menus. Conversely, if one does not make a point of going off the beaten track every so often, one risks the city becoming an elaborate Disney-style theme park.

We stayed in a hotel just on the edge of the Villa Borghese gardens, one of the city's beautiful public parks. The comparison with Hyde Park is rather striking. The Villa was built by the Borghese family in the 17th century and is now home to a classical art gallery. Although the hotel was slightly further out from the historic centre of Rome and the other main attractions, having some extra breathing space and saving money at the same time makes

looking at hotels in the Borghese area a good idea. It is possible to economise while in Rome; if you avoid the Roman custom of eating antipasti, primi piatti, secondi piatti and dolci in the evening, then meals can be rather cheap. However, any savings on food will almost certainly be absorbed by expensive taxis and a noticeable dearth of free admission to attractions. The minimum fare of the licensed white cabs doubles when the sun goes down and the cabbies are notorious about choosing the longer 'scenic routes' to get the most fare. Similarly, unlike in the UK, most national galleries and museums charge for entry.

The must-see icons of Rome (the Coliseum, Forum, Pantheon, Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain and Vatican) can all be covered in a matter of days or a long weekend. If you are fortunate enough to have more time to spend in the city then the Vatican Museums are well worth a visit. Though it is near impossible to view the entire collection, which is so huge that if you were to look at each exhibit for just a minute, you would be wandering its miles of halls for 12 years. One piece of advice on sightseeing that I offer is to seriously consider opting for a guide. The Forum, which perhaps has the least visual stimulation in comparison to the other attractions, was truly brought alive by a fantastic guide we stumbled upon. Having paid for your expensive taxi and admission, it may be tempting to ignore any guides that try to grab your attention, but there are bargains to be had. Our guide (from Walks of Italy, recommended by the New York Times) was in fact offering a free tour of the Forum as a taster before an evening tour of the rest of the city. In comparison, our experience of the Vatican Museums, while beautiful and awe-in-

spiring, was nowhere near as engaging.

After your hard day of sightseeing treat yourself to a refreshing Caffè Freddo in one of the piazzas, and partake in the favourite Roman pastime of turning your chair to face the street and oggling at the passers-by. But be prepared to pay a little bit extra for the privilege. Neglect your travel companion for a while and enjoy the spectacle of Roman life, a life that never seems to stop or slow down. My advice for restaurants is to avoid the trattorias that line the piazzas and streets favoured by tourists and to find places that have eschewed the laminated copies of menus in every language of the European Union. A particular recommendation is La Matriciana (close to Termini Station) which serves truffle risotto which is a favourite with the locals.

Finally, soak up some culture and see an opera if you have the time. The ones held in churches sell tickets for reasonable prices and we saw a good rendition of La Traviata in a church a few minutes away from the Spanish Steps. For what it's worth, La Traviata translates to 'the woman gone astray'. How patronising. How Roman.



Often the simplest messages are the most important. That we should all do more to eradicate the fact that 1.4 billion people in the world live in extreme poverty is one such message. Reminding us of this is the Global Poverty Project (GPP), an organisation on the eve of a breakthrough. Founded in 2008 by Australian humanitarian, Hugh Evans, GPP exists to raise awareness of poverty's causes and cures, catalysing a movement to end extreme poverty in our lifetime. This is a sentiment with considerable weight behind it. Indeed, Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs, has agreed that poverty could come to an end within one generation. This week the charity premieres its DVD, 1.4 Billion Reasons, essentially the Inconvenient Truth of development, taking a small-scale lecture programme along an exponential trajectory.

Poverty campaigns tend to be one of two things. Some come across as the playthings of the rich and famous – a convenient excuse to pile your glamorous friends into a recording studio for a sing-a-long. Others reduce their efforts to shameless guilt-tripping. Either way it seems that the message has become desensitised. Despite the honourable intentions, mass media has taken a once poignant truth and diluted it down.

The GPP approach is something wholly different. The organisation's primary output is a 90-minute presentation that takes the audience through the web of problems that surround extreme poverty and seeks to provide practical solutions that begin at the individual level. For GPP the fight to end poverty hinges upon filling a gap in our knowledge. The manner in

which GPP goes about achieving its goals is a testament to the strength of their arguments; neither cynical tugs of heart-strings, nor the promise of a party are necessary in persuading people to commit to the eradication of extreme poverty.

As well as a predictable array of celebrity endorsements – including Hugh Jackman – the movement has the backing of eminent intellectual Jeffrey Sachs, international health expert Hans Rosling, and director of the UN's millennium development programme, Stephanie Dujarric. In addition to the gravitas and sincerity evident in these endorsements, teams of student organisers at some of the world's top universities give GPP genuine grassroots credentials.

Much of GPP's focus falls on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), objectives that Sachs calls "practical and obtainable goals. The goals of our generation." The MDGs, agreed on with much furore in 2000, tackle hunger, disease, child mortality, environmental damage and other critical development issues. These targets remain a mirage. Halfway through the time frame, 86 per cent of the work is still to be done. It is this kind of complacency that GPP combats.

At the core of GPP is an admission that there exist more than enough ways to give. In this sense, GPP is not a charity – rather, it is an umbrella organisation that improves the ways we currently try to effect change. If we think about extreme poverty when we "volunteer, talk, buy, learn, shout and donate" then the brave aim to eradicate extreme poverty might become a reality.

Save the bottom billion

Oliver Wiseman urges you to join him in eradicating extreme poverty



Eminent economist Jeffrey Sachs

OVERHEARD AT LSE

Politics of Economic Policy class:
"If I had my way, LSE would change its name to 'The London School of Disciplines Related to the Social Sciences and Associated Fields'. But I guess LSDRSSAF doesn't have the same ring to it..."

Our esteemed UGM Chair Jack Tindale:
'Let's boogie on down motherfuckers!'

Person 1: "Actually, Smirnoff Ice IS a man's drink!"

Two students having an argument. One says to the other: "You'll never be a CEO."
The ultimate insult for LSE students!

Overheard at Bankside restaurant:
"Playing the guitar is like diagonalising a symmetrical 6x6 matrix, each finger is like eigenvalues and you can just think of it when your switching between chords as if your performing row operations."

At the LSE open day
Girl: "But I want to go to Exeter!"
Her dad: "But think about all the intelligent people you'll get to study with at LSE!"

In NAB... why Americans should never express preference:
"I like learn to like things I don't like and one minute I like don't like it, and then I like do. It's like hummus. I used to like hate it, but like now I like it."

La lutte continue...

To join the fight against poverty, come to the global premiere of 1.4 Billion Reasons, the DVD, in London this Wednesday at the Bloomsbury Theatre.

Contact GPP at dvdpremiere@globalpovertyproject.com in order to confirm your attendance.



PART B

He's back from his Gap Yah.
And he's chundering and blundering with us.

TELEVISION

Banksy let loose
in Springfield

MUSIC

As good as
Goldfrapp

LITERATURE

Booker Prize: but
what does it mean?

Ethics vs. Aesthetics

Alice Leah Fyfe looks at the phenomenon of EcoChic

This week we are taking a step off the fast, pacey fashion treadmill to consider the impact of our persistent shopping cravings on our society, on creativity, on the planet. So many of us take pride in what we wear, spending hours wading through shop rails and spending hundreds on a season's wardrobe. But how many of us actually stop to think where it has come from; who made it? Living in London, we are living in the candy shop of high street fashion chains, your favourite brand merely a preference of sherbet over toffee, but most are not as sickly sweet as we would like to think. For so many years, the escalating demand for fast fashion has been the elixir of this industry but it can't continue.

16 % of the world's pesticides are used on cotton alone

Don't you think that's shocking?!

Anastasia Albert urges you to Rethink, Recycle, Rewear:

Before writing this article on organisations fostering sustainable fashion, I have to admit that I had no idea that there were so many charities trying to address this issue; the rise in clothing consumption due to the growth of contemporary low budget fashion; the use of cheap labour force in order to be able to satisfy the consumer's hunger for the latest and inexpensive clothes. I have heard about the consequences: bad working conditions and low wages in the emerging economies where many companies produce their clothes. However, I have always thought that it's the businesses that should take social responsibility. Did it really matter whether I was shopping at American Apparel instead of Primark? And what strikes me the most is the fact that people seem to know about the problem, but do not think that their consumer behaviour could actually change something.

Rethink

Various organisations like the Textile Recycling for Aid and International Development (TRAID) and the Ethical Fashion Forum (EFF) are trying to address consumers and focus on raising people's awareness by making them think about the choices they make when it comes to fashion. The campaign "Think Act Vote", which started as a group of friends, launched an initiative in partnership with ethical fashion label Komodo in the beginning of this year. Young designer labels were supposed to design a carbon neutral Think Act Vote T-shirt. The aim for the founder, Amisha Ghadiali, was to use creativity to create a community around the choices we make for our future. What and how can we bring about change? What bothers us in current politics? These are questions the initia-

tive wants us to think about. In times of decreasing political engagement and debate the campaign tries to inspire people and make them think thereby provoking a change in behaviour.

Recycle

TRAID is a charity organisation, which operates over 900 textile recycling banks across the UK. Clothing donated to TRAID recycling banks are transported to their central warehouse and sorted according to quality and style. Damaged clothing is fixed or redesigned and sold back to the public in one of TRAID's charity shops under the fashion label TRAIEdmade. Every piece of clothing is unique and made of second hand textile, which helps to reduce landfill and protect the environment. The money that is raised by TRAID through its shops is used to expand the charity's recycling activities, its engagement with schools and donated to overseas development projects.

Rewear

The EFF, apart from trying to engage with businesses and reduce the negative ecological effects of the fashion industry, focuses on education. Its aim is "to engage with schools, fashion institutions, the fashion industry and the general public to raise awareness and inform about sustainability in relation to fashion". This contributes to an early education with regard to fashion and make one of the most important consumer groups, namely young people, aware of the impact their consumer behaviour has on the environment and people. As everyone who is familiar with fashion knows: It's coming back, so don't throw it away! Rewear it! There are many different organisations, creative ideas and campaigns on how to get people start thinking about sustainable fashion. It is yet to be incorporated in our consumer behaviour. We need to start changing our behaviour in order to force businesses to change theirs. And it's so easy: Rethink, Recycle, Rewear!

Annika Ranga weighs up today's fashion dilemma:

Primark is loved by bargain hunters and enjoying a boom since it was discovered by society - but all is not so good here. This store makes use of cheap production and outsourcing to countries where labour is below market level. With a code of conduct that is next to non-existent, why is this clothing store thriving? We are just loving the low prices. Customers are fully aware of the ethics that Primark employs, yet still go there to shop. It's a shop that doesn't fail to fall short of consumers - seriously, is there ever a time when this store isn't busy?

On the brighter side of fashion, a growing trend within this industry is recycled clothing. Whether it be recycling clothes or buying used clothes, this

look is becoming a new vogue. With vintage clothing stores such as Beyond Retro, located on Great Marlborough Street, they sell everything from those 'forgotten' decades including oversized jumpers and neon clothes. Rokit in Covent Garden, Brick Lane and Camden is a haven for chic secondhand pieces.

H&M launched their Garden Collection in Summer 2010, which saw them using recycled clothing to make new stylish garments. With this line being a success, H&M had to take it a step further and now sell clothing that is made from organic cotton and linen, recycled polyester. They use Tencel, which is a silky renewable material produced with minimal environmental impact. Ethical clothing is a growing phenomenon that even celebrities and designers are responding to. Last month's London Fashion Week saw Stella McCartney and Vivienne Westwood parading their work amongst new eco-conscious star labels including Christopher Raeburn, Kate Halfpenny, Made and People Tree. The runway was filled with supermodels such as Erin O'Connor and Audrey Marnay, who helped put sustainability into the limelight. This change in attitude towards fashion is helping to raise further awareness of eco-sustainable fashion, proving it's a campaign worth taking notice of.

So, instead of rushing out to buy the cheapest items of clothing, with a little thought and creativity, can we not use existing items and style them in a different way? Swap Shops are everywhere around town - my particular fave is in **The Britannia**, near Victoria Park E9 7BT. The next one is on Saturday 13th November when you can swap your wardrobe over a drink or two or a spot of lunch.

Despite ethical brands' use of the likes of Emma Watson and Fearn Cotton, the concept still has connotations with "hippies" and just being thoroughly "untrendy". But we can change this view? I asked Chu Ting Ng to have a look at a couple of the city's funkiest Ethical Fashion boutiques, stockers of some of the most cutting edge designers out there. You must check them out, you are guaranteed a most unique and aesthetic experience...

Not just for the hemp-trouserer, but for the truly responsible and respected fashionista

Supermodel Erin O'Connor recently became the spokeswoman for TRAID whose 10th anniversary is being celebrated early 2011, proving that the shift to a more ethical and sustainable way of wearing is always possible. It is this attitude that will affect change. Think about it.

eponymous line generally range from £40 to £100, with items such as fur jackets going up to £1500. NHS begins from £140 to roughly £350, depending on the materials used when constructing the garment.

EQUA
28 Camden Passage, London N1 8ED www.equaclothing.com

Tucked away in Camden Passage, Equa's ethos is built upon environmental consciousness and being "fashionably fair". The shop is Penny Dowling's brainchild who, upon graduating with a degree in International Development, dreamt of setting up a Fairtrade business. Like all sharp entrepreneurs, she spotted a gap in the Fairtrade market and decided to source for women's clothing. Equa was thus born in 2005 and became London's very first ethical multi-label womens' clothing and accessories boutique.

Upon browsing the well-stocked racks, you will find that the label on each piece of clothing tells a story. They detail where the materials came from and how each garment was manufactured. Most of these materials are organically grown and harvested, if not recycled. There is also creative material recycling, as seen in a rugged leather



Emir: a first-year Politics and Philosophy student from Richmond, North Yorkshire. Emir has a penchant for individualistic threads when it comes to shopping in charity shops: "These days London folk dress in fashion for fashion's sake, but I prefer to dress for identity." A keen bargain hunter in charity shops in the Northern regions, Emir definitely gets our double ethical fashion thumbs-up. Many fashionistas these days are too quick to disregard charity shops as a credible hunting ground, but quite often it is possible to find little vintage gems at a fraction of their original price. Emir adds to this that its great to be able to dress in quirky items whilst being able to contribute to a good cause. Contrary to popular belief, shopping in charity shops is not as tedious as one may think - in fact, Emir insists that "I don't find the clothes; the clothes seem to find me!" On London street style, Emir thinks the London fashion scene is improving: "People's styles are not defined by their subcultures anymore, there appears to be a more dynamic interaction between styles such that subcultures have become a thing of the past." If you are intrigued by Emir's distinctive style, be sure to tune in to his Jamaican Reggae radio show on Pulse Radio, Wednesday 4-5pm.



Maaike Mossel & Yan Giet scout Houghton Street's best dressed



Erica: a Masters student originally from New York, studying Media, Communication and Development. Erica describes her style as a mix between classically "American" and eccentric. Combining pieces from J. Crew with items she picks up in a thrift store, she aims for a style full of opposites: "It's fun to be unexpected!" Today her outfit is perfectly in sync with this objective: a girly skirt combined with a masculine jacket, shoes and briefcase create a truly remarkable look! Inspiration can come from many sources, but for Erica living in New York has sparked her creativity more than anything else. She gets ideas from people on the street, especially across the river. "Brooklyn is more edgy than the rest of New York, which can be quite conservative", she states. Applauding Londoners for their provocative style, she admits to a serious "shoe envy" when walking down the streets.

According to Erica, upon comparing fashion in both cities, London fashionistas put a strong emphasis on what they put on their feet and create the outfit around their footwear, whereas in New York people think more in terms of outfits. On the subject of "ethical fashion" Erica says she does not specifically select her clothing on its ethical value, although she does think it is important to take care of her clothes so as to not waste the effort put into producing it. Moreover, her love for thrift store shopping is not merely based on the possibility of finding original items: "While I don't seek out hemp clothing or actively eschew leather materials and fur, I think an important element of eco-friendliness is reusing and recycling. Visiting my local thrift store (or my mum's closet!) for amazing finds cuts down on shipping and helps to neutralize the environmental impact of transporting a sweater from some factory across the world."

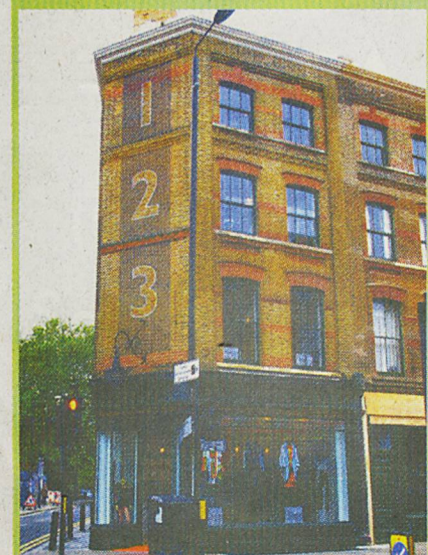
sides clothing and accessories, Equa also stocks other natural products. Arranged on a counter are scented candles by Japanese designer Timothy Han, along with petrochemical-free body lotions and creams by Whish, imported from the USA.

Though slightly unadventurous, the garment construction and materials make Equa's pieces worth considering. Now that we all have a genuine cause to shop, make Equa your next stop. Prices for clothing range from £40 to £450, depending on the complexity of manufacturing processes.



The Chu Revu: Chu Ting Ng looks at a couple of London's Green boutiques

123
123 Bethnal Green Road,
Shoreditch, London E2 7DG
www.123bethnalgreenroad.co.uk

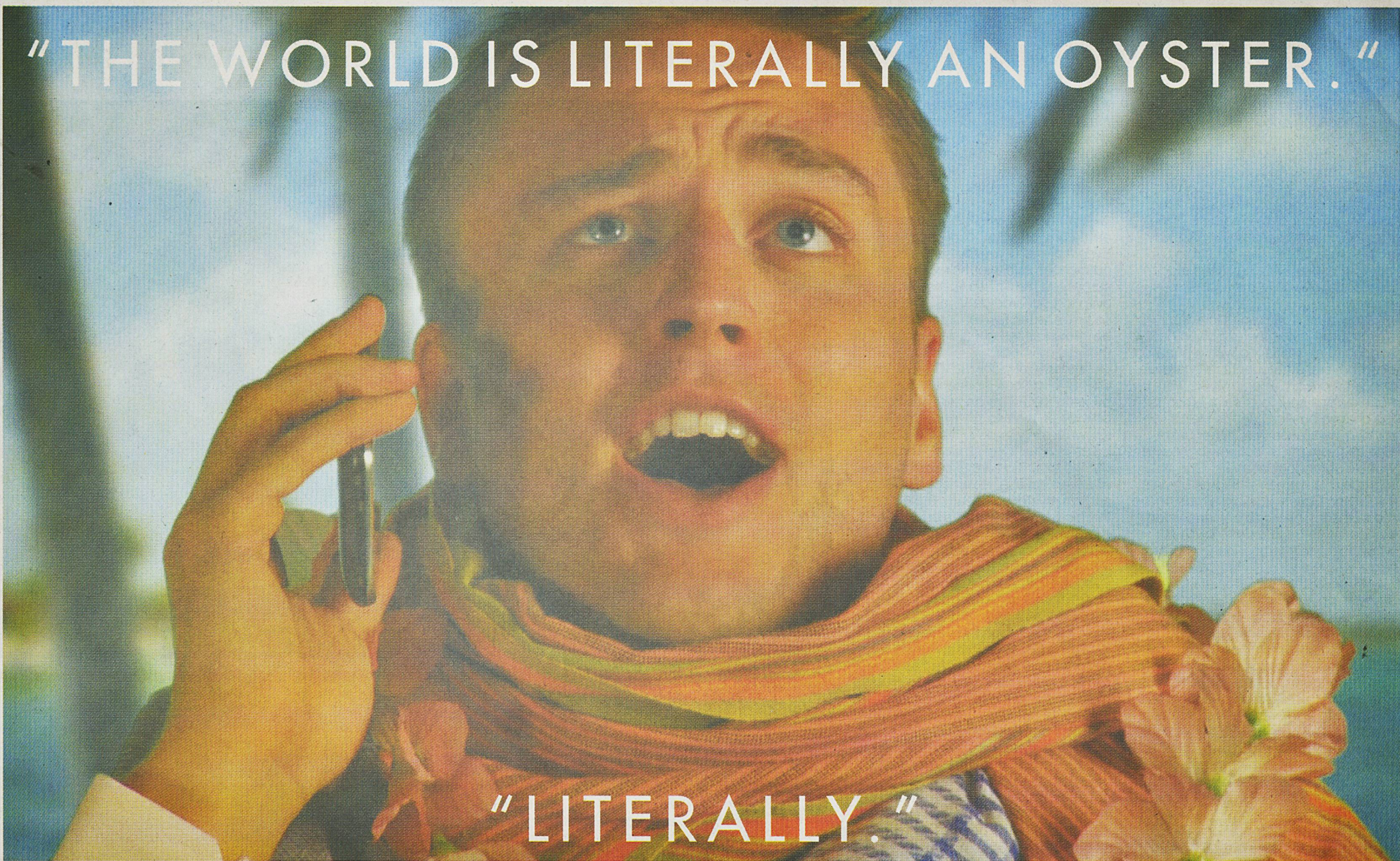


From its roots in Lawrence M. Barry & Co. (LMB), a textile recycling operation, 123 has burgeoned into a Brick Lane

staple with the launch of its own line. In addition to carrying to vintage finds, the design team behind 123 recycle fabric extensively, all of which are hand-picked from the Camden Town warehouse. Michelle Mathie, one of the 123 designers, is a name to look out for. The current 123 line in store contrasts strong colours in demure designs styled in a clean but deserted-looking showroom. The careful and austere presentation of 123 makes the entire room feel slightly off-kilter when framed with racks of clothing. The distinctly feminine, overall girlish prints and ballet flats set amidst heavy armchairs are oddly incongruent, but not unpleasantly so.

On another floor is "fashion rebel" Dr. Noki's line, NHS. This is an explosion of colour and energy, with the letters "NHS" emblazoned on each piece in every conceivable manner possible. The feel of Noki's line is more casual, with sturdier fabric but masculine and less structured shapes. As the first ever designer to construct couture gowns entirely out of jumpers and other recycled fabric, Dr. Noki is definitely another one to watch. Prices for 123's

"THE WORLD IS LITERALLY AN OYSTER."



"LITERALLY."

FROM SLOANE SQUAH ... TO EVERYWAH

Ahmed Peerbux talks to the YouTube 'Gap Yah' sensation. It's verbal chunder.

You may not have heard of **The Unexpected Items**, but you will soon. They - Sophie Alderson, Katharine Hill, Matt Lacey, Max Pritchard, Adam Reeve, Tom Williams, and director Charlie Henniker - are the comedy group behind the YouTube sensation **Gap Yah** - a sketch which has generated two million hits and counting, and resonated with audiences across the UK. It's catchphrases litter Facebook walls, playgrounds, campuses and offices country-wide. What started as a caricature of the gilet-wearing socially privileged has spawned a music video & single ('Gap Yah' - Orlando ft The Banter) and even an Apple app, 'iChunder'. Some are even tipping the single - an electro-spiked floor filler - as a potential Christmas no. 1.

So, what happened when I managed to pry Orlando (Matt Lacey) from All Bar One for a little bit of 'banter'?

What advice would you give to freshers'?

One word. *Lash*.

LSE's student body is highly diverse, with many new to London. What would you recommend; The National Theatre, or the V&A perhaps?

One Word. Jack Wills. I get most of my stuff from little boutiques when I'm on my gap yah, but when I'm in London it all comes from Jack Wills.

The fear of fee hikes looms over Houghton Street. The Browne review has confirmed students' worst nightmares...

Yeah...just like, put it on a credit card or something.

Are you, Tarquin and the rest politically-minded?

I banter voted in the general election this yah - voted communist because it was *literally* ironic. My dad's an MP, But I don't really go to the constituency

home. Nor does he. A friend also ran for the Conservative association, his name was Hugo. But I'm more kind of Bono than Gordon Brown, you know. At heart I'm just a troubled Bono. So I'm into the kind of really big issues, not the price of benefits or...cheese.

What kind of big issues?

Oh you know, all of them, all the charity stuff. World...poverty... peace? I did a lot of work in Tanzania. Whenever you've got a country that's in peril or in suffering from poverty or a natural disaster, the thing they most need is a western presence. Like when Geri Halliwell flew out to Nepal, she single-handedly western presence'd them all.

What about climate change?

Al Gore was so right, it is an insignificant truth. I don't know who said this - it may have been Bono - 'if we don't do something, nobody will do something.'

I'm not sure he said that.

Yeah, but you know, we could do a dub-step night, for the Pakistan flood relief, and call it flood-step. That came just off the top of my head.

So you're up to date on current affairs?

Yeah, I don't really read newspapers though. But Mummy quite likes the Daily Mail because it's got lots of things about Diana.

What do you do at university?

Oh really like social, political, spiritual things, you know. Clubs. Shopping. Just bantering, really.

Is that your favourite word or something?

It's *probably* Banterosaur. Or Banterology.

We've all heard a lot about your banter.

That's because it's epic. Sometimes

legendary. Sometimes it's all just an absolute lolocaust.

Do you see yourself as privileged?

I see myself as a privi-legend!

What?

Yeah.

You're a fan of wordplay aren't you.

Love it. Absolutely *love it*. I'm a bit like Oscar Wilde really. It's just all part of the banter. The Archbishop of Banterbury, that's what the lads call me. Fidel Lashtro - sometimes they call me that. I'm always withdrawing lash from the lash machine - if anything I'm in too much credit.

Speaking of which, why are you always 'chundering' everywhere?

Could you hold down your drink if you've had like a *million* beers? Probably not. That was hyperbole by the way. I'll pretty much drink anything, that's my problem... I think there might be a few braincells gone.

Are you hung-over right now?

Literally.

How do you deal with that?

Hair of the badger. It's like hair of the dog, but you mix more drinks.

You're an expert on gap years. Where would you recommend?

The world is *literally* an oyster.

Literally.

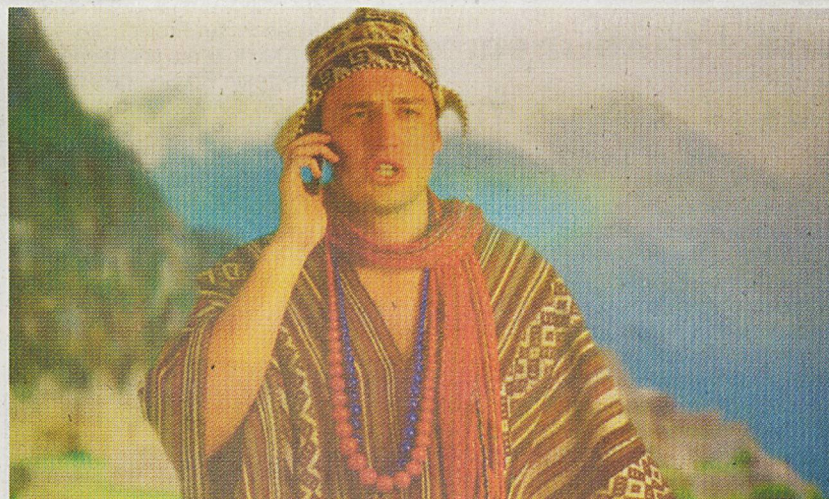
It's literally an oyster. So open it up, and find a pearl.

Sounds philosophical...

I don't have a philosophy. My philosophy is don't have a philosophy. See what I did there?

No. What does that even mean?

I'll let you work that out.



The Unexpected Items are performing in London now. Visit www.theunexpecteditems.com for details of upcoming shows at the Hen & Chickens Theatre in Islington and SOAS.

Easy A Poonam Mantha



Director: Will Gluck **Screenplay:** Bert V. Royal
Cast: Emma Stone, Penn Badgley, Amanda Bynes **Runtime:** 92 minutes **Cert:** 15 **Year:** 2010

As the story of a smart, funny good girl who supposedly goes bad, **Easy A** – a sassy modern take on Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* – is well-written and oftentimes hysterical thanks to a star-making and irresistible performance by Emma Stone.

Stone plays a high school student Olive Penderghast who is invisible and anonymous until a false rumour spreads that she has lost her virginity to a college student. It's only here that we find the plot to be relatively unbelievable: in what universe would a gorgeous, green-eyed teen with a sultry voice be considered ordinary? Also, in a modern America where promiscuity has become utterly commonplace, it seems odd that the simple loss of virginity would cause such a salacious scandal. Still, Olive adds fuel to the fire when she pretends to sleep with a variety of boys – from gay to simply repulsive – to help with their own flailing reputations.

And here is where we enter Hester Prynne territory: when Olive becomes the subject of gossip and ridicule at the hands of conservative Christian students, she fully embraces her pseudo-prostitute image and dons fishnet tights with corsets carefully embroidered with a scarlet

"A". The comparison between Olive and Hester, although relatively weak, gives startling commentary on modern sexual politics: while Olive's supposed conquests receive a boost to their reputations, Olive herself becomes a social pariah and faces judgment from even her best friend. Predictably, Olive finds her own 'Prince Charming' in Woodchuck Todd (Penn Badgley), a student who likes Olive despite her sullied reputation. However, *Easy A*

Easy A explores the destruction of reputation in a Facebook generation that is completely devoid of privacy

separates itself from other teen comedies by allowing Olive to gain Todd's affection not by proving her chastity and purity, but instead by gaining control over her own reputation.

That is, honestly, what *Easy A* seems to be about: the creation and destruction of a reputation in a Facebook generation that remains completely devoid of privacy. Students at

the high school text and tweet about Olive until her exploits have gotten completely out of control, and the once ironic lie becomes less harmless and begins to ruin Olive's life. Even as lies and rumors spin out of control, nobody seems to care about the real story. Only in a live webcam is Olive able to finally tell her peers the truth, using technology as her salvation and redemption.

Admittedly, *Easy A* is not flawless. The plot remains relatively predictable, and it owes a great debt to famous teen films of the past, specifically the brilliant 'Clueless', which is based on Jane Austen's *Emma*. 'Clueless' brings forth a more shockingly honest social commentary, while 'A' sometimes flails in its desperation to be cool and witty. Still, all shortcomings are eclipsed by the amazing Ms. Stone, who embodies Olive with a deep sense of both confidence and vulnerability, all while maintaining a hilariously charming sardonic wit. She carries the film on her relatively young shoulders, and has proven her star-power in the process. The film is great not because of the overall storyline, but because of its refreshingly intellectual script that pays homage to pop-culture phenomenons like John Hughes teen sagas, *Huckleberry Finn*, and the Kinsey scale. When it comes to refreshing comedies that poke fun at the absurdity of growing up in a modern generation, *Easy A* definitely makes the grade.

Easy A is released in cinemas on 22 October.



Emma Stone brings the sunshine in *Easy A*

Despicable Me

Jonathan Storey



Director: Pierre Coffin, Chris Renaud **Screenplay:** Ken Daurio, Cinco Paul
Cast: Steve Carell, Jason Segel, Russell Brand **Runtime:** 95 mins **Cert:** U **Year:** 2010

While Steve Carell is normally a commanding screen presence, whether on television or in film, it is his lackadaisical attitude to voice acting that means *Despicable Me* can never rise above the lacklustre. A performance that compounds, rather than helps, the poor screenplay, Carell should bear the brunt of the despicable failure of *Despicable Me*.

Carell stars as Gru, a super-villain who is becoming overshadowed by a younger, fresher super-villain named Vector (Jason Segel) who has already stolen the Great Pyramid of Giza. Seeing an opportunity to spy on new-kid-on-the-block Vector, Gru adopts three girls from the local orphanage with a goal to use their cookie-selling abilities to infiltrate the other villain's lair. As you will probably have gathered from the onslaught of promotional material, there are also little yellow minions, as per CGI animation rule number 342: anthropomorphised cute creatures are a must.

The unsettling thing is that it is the stock, unoriginal characters and ideas that work best in this film. The little yellow dudes that inhabit pretty much ev-

ery second of the screen are genuinely funny and add a source of amusement to an otherwise dreary narrative. Russell Brand's token mad scientist/James Bond 'Q'-style confidante – in a very un-Brandian performance – is actually the best performance in a cast that includes the likes of the aforementioned Carell, Segel, Danny McBride and Julie Andrews.

The rest is just flotsam and jetsam. Carell's quasi-Russian accent is a massive distraction from the already lightweight story; Segel comes across

It is the stock, unoriginal characters and ideas that work best in this film

as a non-entity in terms of why we should care about his daddy issues or his evil plan; the kids, voiced admirably but without heart, are the epitome of 'bleh'; the storyline is both predictable and derivative.

A boring and unfunny film strangely salvaged by what should be its worst elements, *Despicable Me* is a chore from start to finish, and a despicable disappointment: especially for Carell. *Despicable Me* is in cinemas now.

The Stoning of Soraya M.

Aameer Patel



Director: Cyrus Nowrasteh **Screenplay:** Betsy Giffen Nowrasteh, Cyrus Nowrasteh **Cast:** Mozhan Marnò, Shohreh Aghdashloo, James Caviezel **Runtime:** 114 mins **Cert:** 18 **Year:** 2008

"Two men are accusing you of conduct unworthy of a wife and mother." One of them, your husband, has an agenda and everyone knows it. "Can you prove your innocence?"

"How can I prove my innocence?" How can anyone prove their innocence for every possible accusation that any two men could make? Any man however, is innocent until proven guilty.

"That is the law." The law in question is supposedly directly from God. If this is God's law, God is stupid. Based on the true story of Iranian exile Freidoune Sahebjam's international best-seller, the events in *The Stoning of Soraya M.* took place in 1986. But little if anything has changed for women like Soraya across the world. Note the current case of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani and thousands of nameless others.

The conflict between Soraya (Mozhan Marnò) and her husband (Navid Negahban) is a very common one. He wants to leave her and their two young daughters, for a younger wife; if, using his influence in the prison, he can save the girl's father from execu-

tion. But he must first obtain a divorce from his current wife. To sweeten the deal, she is offered their hut of a house and a patch of barren land that cannot sustain her family. But she is lucky to have a mullah (Ali Pourtash) in a village where people 'look out for each other', a man who was a prisoner under the old regime for an unknown crime that would warrant stoning in a just world. He would provide for them if she became his sigh (temporary wife). It is ironic that she is stoned for adultery when to be a sigh would have been honourable.

For spurning this offer, Soraya and her aunt Zahra (Shohreh Aghdashloo) are referred to as witches. It is important to note that oppression of women is not limited to just certain countries and religions. But there are not a great many where they continue to be killed. Zahra is a brave and intelligent woman who would have held more status under the Shah. Even so, unlike any other women in the village, she is able to hold her own with men, but is ultimately just as powerless. It is through her that Sahebjam (Jim Caviezel) learns Soraya's story that it may be told to the world.

Stoning, unlike any other form of execution, is one where the whole community acts as the executioner. Many just get caught up with the mob and in hatred for the shame Soraya is supposed to have brought upon them. But some, like the troubled but ultimately cowardly mayor, Ebrahim (David Diaan) clearly know right from

wrong and can see the inconsistencies, but proceed nonetheless.

We would like to think that this could not happen in our country. Not to completion, but domestic abuse and violence against women is a problem in every country. But at its heart, this film is not necessarily criticism of a culture or its flawed legal system.

It explores the consequences of inequality and corruption, something that threatens every society and to which women and minority groups overwhelmingly fall victim.

Our sentences are not as brutal or as final any more, but Soraya is not afforded her rights even in accordance with her legal system. Society must be vigilant in vesting its power and must protect its members, especially when that power is over life and death. If all those who stoned her knew her full story, she would have lived. That she could not defend herself is the most significant aspect of her case. That right, whether exercised personally or on your behalf, is the most universal of rights.

The law exists for the weak to be protected by the collective strength of society. When its instruments are corrupted, the weak are afforded no such protection.

This film is as brutal as the title suggests. If it is not for the faint hearted, society is not for the faint hearted.

The Stoning of Soraya M is released 22 October.

BFI 54th **BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL** **AMERICAN BOARD**
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BFI London Festival: week one

Jonathan Storey reports from the front row

Welcome to PartB's coverage of the 54th BFI London Film Festival. For the next three weeks, I'll be your eyes and ears as to what the hottest new things in film will be for the next few months.

Let's start off with a very un-festival film: both a horror film and a remake, **Let Me In** is the sophomore directorial effort of Matt Reeves (of *Cloverfield* fame). Based on the Swedish book – and film – *Let the Right One In*, the film follows the coming-of-age story between 12-year-old Owen (Kodi Smit-McPhee), who is being tormented by bullies, and Abby (Chloë Grace Moretz), who, on the surface, appears

12, but is really a vampire. Capturing the look and tone, if not quite the initial scare value, of the Swedish original, your opinion of *Let Me In* will probably depend on your thoughts on the Swedish original. Many scenes are replicated almost exactly. While this may satisfy hardcore fans of the original, I never held the film in as high esteem as other more lauded critics. That this remake is good, yet nothing more, suggests that I'll be in the minority again. (Rating: ***)

Faring much better is the Ryan Gosling/Michelle Williams-starring **Blue Valentine**. The story of both the creation and breakdown of a marriage of a couple in their mid-twenties, it is superbly directed by Derek Cianfrance

and tremendously acted by Gosling and Williams. The split narrative is reminiscent of *The Godfather Part II* in its ability to contrast the rise and fall of the central relationship. A messy, no holds barred film that draws out its emotional conflict rather than resorting to melodrama. (Rating: ****)

In what is certainly my favourite film of the festival – and, dare I say it, the year – so far, **Tabloid** reaches beyond standard documentary conventions to tell a riveting story of the English tabloid press and their relationship with a North Carolinian woman accused of kidnapping a Mormon missionary. The less you know, the better; just go and see it. (Rating: *****)



Features

Sir Howard Davies has a beautiful office, I note; the kind that would lend itself easily to all of the activities one might expect the LSE's Director to get up to. Quiet contemplation, weighty conference calls, micro-symposia – each is encouraged through judicious distribution of furniture, foliage and folio. The ideal environment, then, in which to formulate mature, rational, and balanced views on the fundamental debates surrounding Higher Education today.

We begin, predictably, by discussing the campaign sensation that's sweeping... well, not quite the nation, but Houghton Street at the very least – Freeze the Fees. Sir Howard professes to be somewhat bemused by what he describes as “the very personalised nature” of the campaign, adding, “My role is to steer the school community to a view that reflects all the constituencies of interest in the school.” In this context, Davies argues, “it's impossible to commit to a view”. This links into a wider point he makes about the Sabbatical Officers' apparent ignorance of “how things are done here.” He goes on to describe the various committees on which members of the Students' Union sit, explaining that “that is where these decisions will be made.”

For the Director, the manner in which the campaign has unfolded “offends everything about the School”, and he confesses, “I don't want to pre-judge the decisions that these committees will make, but I would be very surprised if the balance of views was in favour of freezing fees.” Davies concludes that the campaign is, in a word, “pointless”, offering the characteristically pithy observation, that “the Students' Union has got to decide, whether it wants to take part in the School's decision-making processes, or if it wants to blow up balloons”.

This idea, that the Sabbatical Officers are ignoring proper protocol, appears to prey on Davies' mind. A little later, I raise an additional aim of the campaign with him, which is to ensure that a condition of the selection of his successor is that he or she must support the policy proposed. The Director sets out his position on this objective very clearly, first bringing up the terms of his re-election in 2008. “Curiously,” he begins, “unlike at any other university, there was a student vote [to decide whether he should be allowed to stay for another five-year term], which I won – by a lot.” This is not the most modest of claims, but Davies continues: “In 2012, a decision will have to be made as to whether I carry on beyond that. I will have to think about it, and so will the School. So the Students' Union's idea, that I'm somehow a short-term appointment, is totally and utterly made-up.” Once again, he appears somewhat galled by their hard-talk, stating, “Frankly, I think it's real disservice to the School, and to me – what right has the SU got to fire me?”

“Freeze the Fees... that's just not going to happen.”

When we move on to the substantive content of the Freeze the Fees, Davies is similarly direct in his assessment: “In the light of Browne, this campaign belongs to another age.” Any decision on fees, he explains, must be taken in the context of the full implications of the Browne Review's recommendations. Currently, the vast majority of the LSE's undergraduate programmes are classed in Band D of the funding hierarchy, in that they are deemed to require less running costs. Consequently, the government pays the School around £2,700 per year for each of its 2000-odd home undergraduate students in the form of a teaching grant (known as the T-Grant), in addition to the £3,300 each student pays in ‘top-up’ tuition fees. From this, the School sets aside £700 for bursaries. This results in a total income of around £5,300 per student, which, according to Davies, still does not represent the true cost of education at the LSE, hence the infamous cross-subsidisation via overseas students, who pay some of the highest tuition fees in Europe.

Under the proposals suggested by Lord Browne, the LSE would lose the

entirety of the T-Grant, with the immediate effect of roughly halving the total income for home undergraduates. Against this backdrop, if fees were frozen, argues Sir Howard, “This would massively increase the cross-subsidy, and would quite quickly push the school into an unviable financial position, because you'd be losing £7million a year.” Currently, he admits, the School would be able to cover this kind of loss; however, given its future forecasts and capital commitments (Davies mentions “these buildings in the middle of the campus, which are falling down, as you can see”), such a proposition would be “impossible”.

When I put it to Davies that the Sabbatical Officers' campaign has made much of the numbers, repeatedly insisting that the School would maintain a 3-4 per cent surplus, the Director is fairly blunt in his response. “I don't think they've worked

“The campaign has a short-term consumerist focus, whereas I have to take a stakeholder analysis”

out the numbers in the light of Browne – now, it's highly unlikely.” Moreover, he adds, “even with the numbers worked out before, the claim is moot.”

I mention a question raised by an audience member during the most recent UGM, which concerned the longer-term implications of enacting a freeze on fees. The student, I explain, feared that in such a situation, the School would be compelled to redouble its efforts to recover the lost income once the policy lapsed. Davies' response to this reminds me of the kind of trade off Nicholas Stern chose to make in his report on the economics of climate change several years ago. In his mind, “The campaign has a short-term consumerist focus, whereas I have to take a stakeholder analysis.” When I ask him to clarify this, he explains, “The interesting part of my job lies in the balancing of interests of current students, future students, current staff, future staff, and alumni. Even if I could choose to freeze the fees, would it be reasonable to spend down one's surplus to benefit one group of students in one period of time, given the future consequences?” In an answer that will surely chill the ambitions of the Freeze the Fees campaign, Davies states, “Personally, I could not support that; it would make me uncomfortable.”

We move on to discuss an issue that Sir Howard feels merits much more feedback from the student body – that of financial aid and Widening Participation (WP). Again, he feels that some history is essential when considering what decision can be made; in this instance, he reveals an insight into the discussions which took place when the government previously raised the cap on tuition fees, to £3000. “In order to be allowed to go up to the previous cap,” he explains, “you had to sign an agreement with OFFA (the Office for Fair Access) to commit to a certain level of bursa-

ry spending.” On that occasion, the School toyed with not meeting the cap, but there eventually came to be “a large consensus” on raising fees to the maximum, since the costs of educating students would still far outweigh the total income, and also in order to safeguard bursaries. “We agreed to be generous,” recalls Davies, “because we're a progressive institution and so forth – and, unlike many other institutions, we spend all of what we claim.”

Post-Browne, the decisions regarding bursary money will be “more complicated”, hence the importance of gauging students' views – Davies believes that it would be “quite valuable” to ask questions like, “What would make it more likely that bright and ambitious students apply here?” The Director confesses that “we take a smaller proportion of people from lower income groups”, before optimistically suggesting that in the future, “more could be spent on WP programmes, or targeted programmes in particular communities, improving people's ability to get in.” He is extremely transparent about the reality of the current system, admitting, “The marginal bursary recipient here, or at Oxford, is wealthier than many of the people who get no support at all at the South Bank [LSBU].” More must be done to combat this problem, and this is an example of the kind of question Davies believes the Students' Union should be engaged with. He is pretty clear about this: “The sooner the Students' Union engages in debate about the real issues, the better it will be – for them, too.”

Another such “difficult question” that Sir Howard believes the Freeze the Fees troupe is obscuring is that of degree-dependent fees. Last time round, when all fees were raised to about £3,000, the conclusion was that varying fees for different degrees might send out “the wrong kind of signalling, in that you'd be suggesting some programmes weren't as good as others.” Now, Davies argues, “when the numbers get high enough, I think you have to ask that question. And it's a question where students' views would be rather interesting.” I press him for his thoughts on the matter, at which point he delivers a surprisingly truthful account. Though the average starting salary for LSE graduates is very high (in the region of £29,000), “on the whole, Goldman Sachs don't re-

Howard's Means

They say:

The LSE can account for a 35% cut in government teaching grants

He says:

Browne proposes that the government eliminates all teaching grants

They say:

The LSE can survive a 30% cut in government research grants

He says:

The STEM policy leaves our research grants extremely uncertain

They say:

LSE has the largest annual surplus of any university in the UK

He says:

The School's surplus is required by the HEFCE, given its capital expenditure commitments

cruit that many anthropologists”. Consequently, charging different fees depending on the graduate prospects for a given programme would seem a fair and progressive choice, although Davies is keen to point out that the levy on withdrawal rate, and its tapering, is a “heavy disincentive to engage in this kind of cross-subsidy”, in that half of every extra pound raised by the system would go to the government. “It makes it bloody expensive,” observes Davies.

Nonetheless, such a system would seem logical to many students at the LSE – another reason why Davies would welcome greater involvement from the Students' Union on these “real issues”.

“It's not the best outcome for the LSE”

The tapering of the withdrawal rate is one of many complaints Davies levels at the findings of the Browne Review. While he agrees with Nicholas Barr, the LSE's Professor of Public Economics, in that “the framework is reasonable”, Davies bemoans the lack of support for institutions focusing on humanities and the social sciences. Many, including Davies, believe that university gives a mixture of public and private benefit; however, the disappointing part of Browne's assessment is in his belief that only Medicine and science students contribute to this public benefit. “Even history

and classics give a public benefit,” counters Davies, adding that “Browne's very instrumentalist view of Higher Education ignores the non-economic benefit of other subjects.” As a result, the School expects to have its teaching-grant eliminated, and its research-grant severely reduced; in Davies' words, “It seems we'll be worse off than we thought. Our forecasts were too optimistic.”

In spite of this, Davies professes to be a fan of the review's more progressive suggestions: the raising of the threshold for repayments and the uniform maintenance loan being two such examples. And, fundamentally, Davies is very glad that Higher Education is not leaning towards a graduate-tax model, which he describes as “a real problem for us, in that it breaks the link between students and universities.” In such a model, higher education institutions would become “creatures of the tax system”, which Davies describes as being “unhealthy for academic independence”. He is circumspect with regard to the role the tax system could play – “Even though I've been in the Treasury, I wouldn't trust them to say, ‘yes, you can keep that amount’.” He adds, “I don't believe in hypothecating taxes, and so, once it goes into the tax system, you can forget about saying, ‘That's our money!’ It's not. It's the government's money, and they'll give you as much or as little as they can get away with.”

“World rankings drive me nuts”

Sir Howard is similarly philosophical about university league tables, some of which depict an institution in further decline. While he is firm in his belief that “single faculty institutions are always in an apples-and-pears situation”, in terms of availability of prizes, subject matter adjustments, and incommensurate size of grants, Davies admits that the LSE's rankings are “inconvenient” and “difficult to explain” to alumni and potential private donors. He insists that the only table he cares about is the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), which is “genuine, in that it actually influences your research funding”. According to the RAE, the LSE comes out 2nd in the UK, and the problems it highlights in its evaluation of the School are ones that Davies takes very seriously. “Some elements I do worry about. Some subjects, we did rather badly in, and so we've got to work on them.” But he concludes on a typically upbeat, combative note: “In some ways, I think the more [league tables] the merrier, because you're bound to come top of one of them.”

“Freeze the fees? Pointless.”

Sachin Patel in conversation with LSE Director, Howard Davies

A love for the tragic

Moses Samuel explains how Greek classics can help overcome the hurdles of life

What have the ancient Greeks ever done for us? Thoughts of Monty Python-esque sketches aside, the beloved philosopher-philologist Friedrich Nietzsche had an answer to offer. The good news is that we do not have to engage in a complex and obscure discussion about the Dionysian and the Apollonian to flirt with the idea that Classical Greek tragedy finds an echo in modern society.

Before Nietzsche, Hegel made interesting observations about Greek tragedy. Focusing particularly on Sophocles' *Antigone*, he talks about tragedy as arising from the conflict between prevailing moral forces of the age, a tension that can be transposed to any era. On one hand, there is the force of law, which establishes civic duties and social order; on the other, there are traditional values such as loyalty to family, which dictate a different course of action. When such inexorable moral forces

clash, a person must face the consequences, with potentially tragic results.

Being reminded of this perennial problem might just spur us towards building a more understanding society, especially with the modern reality of increasing pluralism and cosmopolitanism in many parts of the world. However, where tragedy seems unavoidable is where Nietzsche's discussion of it can provide us with some valuable insights.

Simply put, the younger Nietzsche held the ancient Greeks in high regard because he believed that they had discovered the secret of living. At the height of their civilisation, they remained aware of the destructive force that life can deliver onto human beings, but were able to go on indefatigably, unfazed by the tragic prospect. How did they do it? Nietzsche thought that it was through watching plays which attuned them to the tragic but covered it with a sheen of glory and nobility. Thus, while being poignantly educational,

theatre also soothed their feelings and allowed them to face the difficult and the devastating as part of the Herculean project of living.

Can Greek tragedy do this for us today? From an academic standpoint, Nietzsche's account of Greek society was more fantasy than reality. Yet it tells us something about the psychological needs that all people have. We need to be emotionally on guard against the worst, and yet we cannot let the possibility prevent us from living normally. We need to face our fears and also push them aside so that they do not constantly haunt us, either as repressed emotion or as paranoia. Could this perhaps explain our fascination with sad stories, even of the gruesome variety?

Perhaps many of us have the hope that when something unhappy happens to us, we would be able to transpose our lives to a scene or a story we've seen on a screen or on a stage. We might not be happy, but at least we could be tragic heroes in

the stories of our lives. And when we are content, we know that such a consolation would be available to us should circumstances change. In this sense, people have not stopped watching and appreciating tragedy.

The good news is that we do not have to engage in a complex and obscure discussion about the Dionysian and the Apollonian to flirt with the idea that Classical Greek tragedy finds an echo in modern society

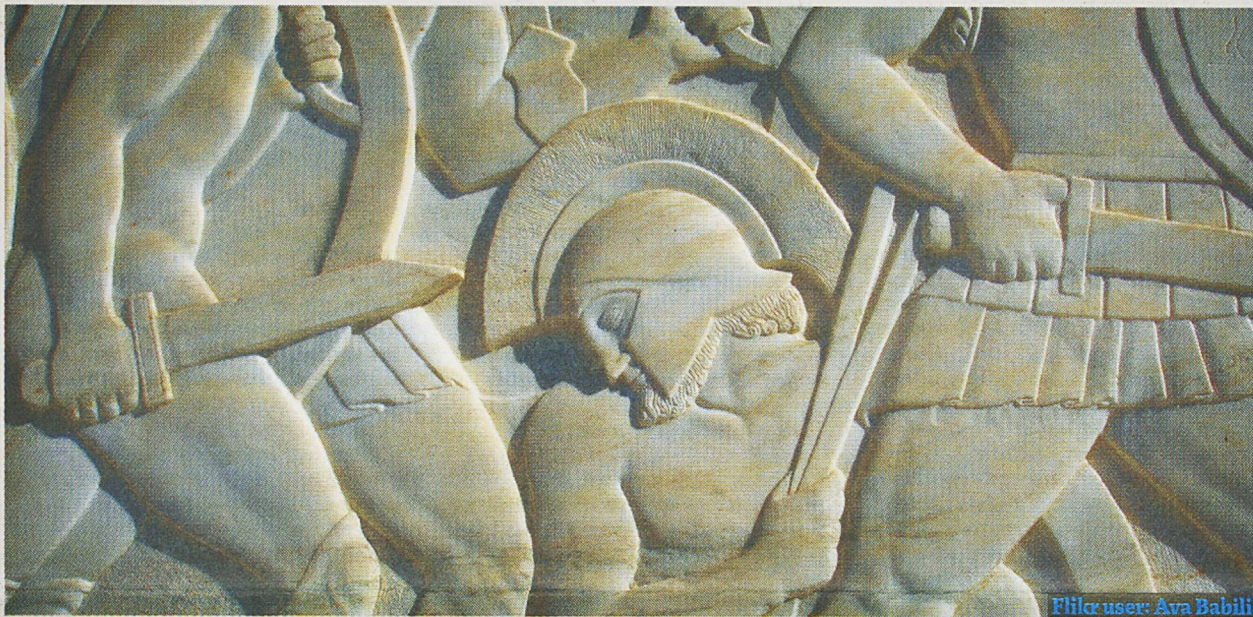
You may not buy this story so far, but it does not end here. Greek tragedy shares more thematic and functional similarities with the narratives that we read or watch today. Let us take *Iron Man 2* as an example of a contemporary narrative. In its portrayal of the hero and the villain, the movie exemplifies our social

consciousness: We celebrate the lucky ones, those 'blessed' with ability, position or plain luck that makes them our heroes and icons. On the other hand, those whose lot in life are different but who struggle against it are 'doing the wrong thing', and as such they must be bad—ruthless and barbaric. Although we can initially sympathise with the villain in *Iron Man 2*, in the end, because he is gradually shown to be cruel and inhuman, we are happy with the fact that he is destroyed. First we see the unlucky man, then his evolution towards the desire for vengeful satisfaction; because he was deprived, he must therefore become something less than human, destined to eventually be beaten back by his betters.

A very similar picture of paternalism can be seen in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, written more than two thousand years ago. On one hand, we have Agamemnon, the husband, the general and the king; on the other, we have Clytemnestra, the wife, the mother and the usurper. The wife suffers the sacrifice of her daughter to the cause of the Trojan War, and is depicted as a villain who overstepped her natural boundaries and killed her husband. Having suffered injustice and oppression as the weaker sex, the woman becomes cruel and barbaric, plotting and executing the noble king.

Like us, the audience in Classical Greece witnessed injustice in a story but had their consciences salved by the fact that those who suffer it could only disturb the natural order if they acted against it. Thus, we could argue that Greek tragedy is as much a carrier of ideology as our stories today and operated in similar ways.

Does that demonstrate a coherent tradition of storytelling originating from Greek tragedy? No, but it shows again that it can reflect modern society in interesting ways and thus provide us with insights, whether we watch, read or study it. If we cared to take a look.



Flickr user: Ava Babili

Xiaobo's peace of mind

Chris Rowley thinks that the Chinese Communist party has few options left

As news emerged last week that Liu Xiaobo had won the Nobel Peace Prize, the international community was quick to respond. Beijing was first, dismissing the award as an "obscenity", maintaining that by giving the Prize to an imprisoned dissident, the Nobel Committee was interfering with the affairs of a sovereign state. While the Chinese Foreign Minister was busy warning Norway about cooling relations, President Obama and the European Union, perhaps unsurprisingly lauded the Nobel Committee and called for Liu's release. Meanwhile, the laureate's spouse, Liu Xia, has been subject to house arrest ever since she visited her husband in prison. Xinhua, the government's official press agency, has remained relatively silent about the events while international coverage concerning the award has been entirely blacked out.

We have all heard the story. China jails political dissidents, limits freedom of speech and still operates under a single-party system. The 2010 Nobel Peace Prize, awarded to Liu Xiaobo, was recognition of this. The award itself and the reactions that followed are but another recent example of the headache human rights still give Beijing: on the one hand, the Chinese government faces increasing international criticism for not fully respecting human rights, while on the other hand, the leadership is worried about the effects liberalisation would have for political stability. Beijing's real problem, however, is not one jailed dissident winning a Western prize—for the leadership, it is merely another manifestation of a problem they will one day have to deal with.

To understand the contentious relationship Beijing has with human rights, we must take a detour via 1978, the year when Deng Xiaoping stepped in to replace Chairman Mao Zedong. During Xiaoping's reign, China went through a period of economic liberalisation but maintained an authoritarian form of government. Towards the end of the 1980's, students and intellectuals inspired by developments in Eastern Europe began demanding for

Although largely unknown among the Chinese general public, the fact that Charter 08 was signed by more than 350 Chinese intellectuals, some of which prominent Communist Party members, is significant

political liberalisation and civil rights. This culminated in the infamous 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, which, to this day, remain a series of events the Chinese government would rather not talk about. Liu Xiaobo was one of most prominent figures in the Tiananmen protests, and him winning this year's Nobel Prize did not make Beijing, well, happy.

The 1989 events traumatised the Communist Party leadership, and it has ever since taken tougher measures in order to consolidate its power. It fears that loosening the grip on power would incur rapid social changes that could ultimately bring the end to Communist rule in China. Beijing doesn't seem to have much choice though—as long as the government continues to suppress political opposition and restrict the media, people are going to demand change.

Charter 08, the petition that brought Liu his eleven years' prison sentence (and was modelled after Czechoslovakia's Charter 77), is an example of this. Although largely unknown among the Chinese general public, the fact that it was signed by more than 350 Chinese intellectuals, some of which prominent Communist Party members, is significant. Another example of discontent came in the wake of Liu's award, last Wednesday, when twenty-three Communist Party elders signed an open letter calling for freedom of speech in China. Demand for liberalisation exists, and will exist as long as some people are ready to voice them.

The status quo truly seems unsustainable. In Western thinking, democratisation is thought to follow economic liberalisation. China has so far defied this logic: despite ditching state monopoly in the economic sphere, Beijing has held a firm grip on the monopoly of ideas and power. However, social undercurrents—these days, mostly online—reveal the grim picture: the leadership is sitting on a social time bomb. If a yearly GDP growth of 7-10 per cent is not enough to fully legitimate the system, what will happen when it goes down to 2-5 per cent, a "normal" growth rate? On top of domestic

This leaves Beijing with essentially a set of three options: radical liberalisation, gradual liberalisation, or even harsher authoritarianism

demands, there are loud voices abroad—the Nobel Committee being one of them—that keep making China's situation awkward. For China, the fuse is getting shorter by the day, and Liu Xiaobo's award just added more gunpowder to the setting.

This leaves Beijing with essentially a set of three options: radical liberalisation, gradual liberalisation, or even harsher authoritarianism. Were the Communist leadership to implement the changes called for in the Charter 08, it would in essence abdicate itself. For them, this is not an option. Gradual liberalisation is problematic in a more subtle way, reminiscent of the dying days of the Soviet Union: every step towards an open society tears open wounds that undermine the legitimacy of the entire system. Glasnost in modern-day China would let everyone know exactly why people like Liu are put to prison. The final option, a tougher form of repression, is unlikely to be appreciated by the international community.

There is, however, always the chance that due to a rise in nationalism, people will be content with their government despite the authoritarianism. In Russia, most people have for a decade now opted for stability and national pride instead of liberalisation. This kind of nationalist, slightly less liberal form of democracy—'Chinese democracy', if you will—is already popular in a number of states. The problem for Chinese nationalism, though, is that there are different 56 ethnic groups in the country which, despite comprising less than 10 per cent of the total population (then again—this translates to 130 million people), can cause problems—as the Tibetan and the Uyghur minorities have demonstrated.

There are plenty of people like Liu Xiaobo in today's China, and it seems increasingly likely that the population will demand more, not less, liberalisation in the future. Whether the process of modernisation in China will continue peacefully depends on the choices Beijing is ready to make. Sometimes that means giving up things you are fond of. For the Communist leadership, that is power.

The importance of being earnest

Pern-Yi Quah believes that international aid is essential to British mentality

After the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda during the summer of 1994, the Hutu killers fled en masse across the Rwandan border into Zaire (now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo). Instead of facing retribution from the international community, the killers were housed in huge refugee camps, which were provided by a host of international aid agencies. This was in contrast to the relative lack of similar provision for the Tutsis, whose corpses filled the land across the border in Rwanda. Refugees were the symbol of human catastrophe, and the world was looking to house and protect them, which meant that the Hutu killers were aided by international organizations, while their victims were left destitute. This famous example is frequently quoted by critics of international aid in their attempts to paint aid efforts as counter-productive and harming the people it seeks to protect.

There is no doubt that there are some flaws in the internal policies and workings of some of these organizations, but the evidence of imperfection does not legitimate the indiscriminate elimination of groups that improve and indeed save the lives of people all around the world. If one decides to take a closer look at these criticisms, one realizes that they are really directed at the adopted procedures and mechanisms, rather than the inherent nature of aid.

Money for these ends have resulted in the building of schools for girls in Afghanistan, the supply of cell phones for adults in Kenya and the provision of loans for small business owners for women in Bangladesh. Tangible improvements such as these are life-changing for most of those affected. These people have now been provided with the resources and

compasses to navigate a trajectory towards a better life, which were previously unavailable to them. The benefits that we see achieved have occurred even though some of these measures were imperfect. Nevertheless, aid organizations all over the world, including Britain's, have been consistently working to ensure that their funds goes to the right places and that maximum benefit is extracted from them.

Now, at this point you may be asking yourself, "well I agree that international aid helps people, but shouldn't the government put its people ahead of those from other countries?". This question is especially potent considering that this coalition government is proposing to cut public spending in most sectors,

with the Department for International Development (DFID) being only one of two ministries which budgets will not be cut. In fact, the DFID's budget is going to be increased to 0.7 per cent of our Gross National Income.

But in actuality, perhaps rather surprisingly, the British people do not hold this kind of view. This sense of charity to the less fortunate around the world transcends the political spectrum, and is felt throughout the country. The DFID was created in 1997, under the then Labour government, and was strengthened in 2010 under the present coalition government. This is a political anomaly; the current conservative-led government champions more conservative fiscal prin-

ciples, as is evident in its drastic cuts on public spending, yet it has been more than willing to increase the DFID's budget. This only goes to show that such charitable sentiments that British citizens hold are deeply entrenched in our ethos.

It speaks volumes that it is largely the people that are faced with financial hardships that tend to agree more with the government's increase in aid budget. This is even though an augmentation in such spending will mean that less money will be available for them in terms of welfare and similar benefits. Perhaps it is because of their situation that they can empathize more with the circumstances of the less fortunate outside the country. The national commitment to such aid is a source of wonder for the G8's other development agencies, which see themselves as bereft of national support.

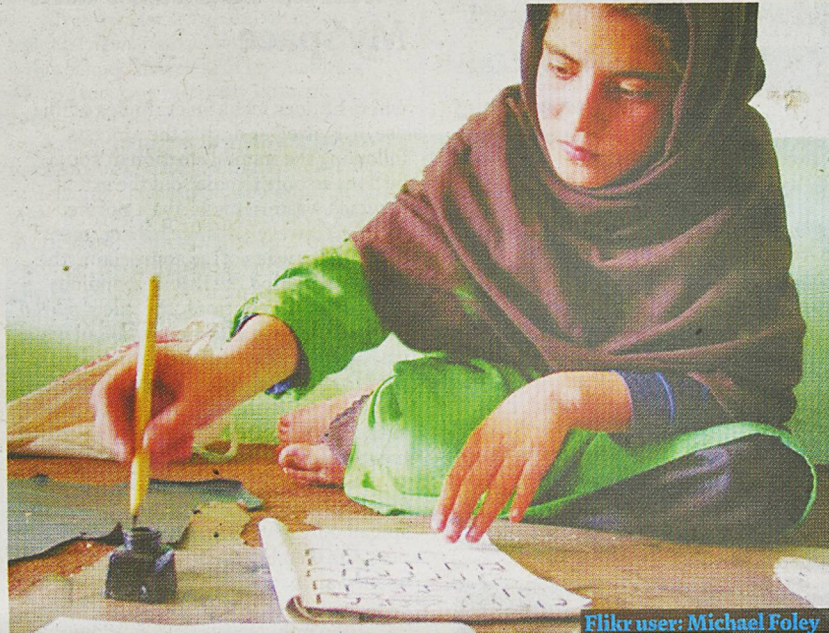
The moral imperative for the government to act is clear – for the money spent to educate a child in Britain can educate fifty children in a third-world nation. The education which these children will receive will provide them with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to make their own money and acquire property. This will ease social mobility and may very well be their ticket to a better future.

Aside from the moral imperative that the British people have for the charity towards the less fortunate from overseas, there are also other more self-serving reasons for the government's act of generosity. Islamist fundamentalist groups have a stronghold in countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan because they thrive on the illiterate and poverty-stricken people there. These people work for terror groups because they are taken in by their angry rhetoric due to naivety and their lack of alternatives – in exchange

for their participation, they are given three meals a day. Therefore when the UK government steps in to provide food, jobs and education, terror groups are made irrelevant. Needless to say, these have great implications for the UK's national security, especially at a time when terror threats are very real indeed.

It speaks volumes that it is largely the people that are faced with financial hardships that tend to agree most with the government's increase in aid budget

In times of fiscal conservatism such as these, Britain alone stands tall in its unwavering commitment towards the betterment of the less fortunate outside its shores. It retains its moral high ground especially at a time when other countries are floundering in their respective aid contributions. Our increase in international aid budget is a source of national pride and should be seen in a positive light.



Flickr user: Michael Foley

The long road to freedom

David de Jong tells of Ingrid Betancourt's turmoils as a hostage of the FARC

Ingrid Betancourt walked off the stage of central London's Congress Centre last Wednesday to a roar of applause from the audience. She has faced harder crowds to please in her previous career as a Colombian presidential candidate, and parliamentary member. But her political aspirations and occupations now seem long forgotten. What is left now is the image of the woman who was held captive in the jungle by Colombia's guerrilla faction FARC. For more than six years, Betancourt was the most famous abductee in the world, her status almost saint like in the eyes of the global public. A woman invested in politics in a state torn by narco-trafficking, corruption and internal violence, kidnapped by guerrillas and kept imprisoned in the jungle under dire circumstances.

Ms. Betancourt, of French-Colombian descent, came to London to speak about her recently published book which details her years in captivity. Not uncoincidentally, the talk was led by John McCarthy, the BBC journalist who survived a similar ordeal. Mr. McCarthy was held for over five years in Lebanon by members of the Islamic Jihad. Betancourt described the day of her kidnapping in 2002 with acute detail. On the campaign trail, and fiercely engaged in the political struggle to become the first female president of the South-American nation, she adamantly took her campaign into Colombia's demilitarized zone, bordering guerrilla heartland. The government and the FARC had just suspended failed peace talks, and Ms. Betancourt went in without her bodyguards and back up, accompanied only by her assistant, Clara. She recalled: "We came to a bridge with a deviation in it. We went around it, and on the other side stood a group of armed men with ski masks. We could see from the fact that the men wore rubber boots, that they were guerrillas. They were waiting for us."

This was the start of her six-year captivity. She was blindfolded, led to a truck, and into the jungle they went. Her captors forced her and other hostages to march daily through the Colombian jungle under gruelling conditions and chained her to a tree for months at a time. The Amazonian jungle, where Betancourt was held,

Betancourt found strength in small things: teaching French to her fellow captors, listening to the transistor radio, and hearing her mother's voice, day in, day out, pleading to the FARC for her release

is nicknamed "Jurassic Park." "A place so dark at night, I could never see my own hands." She tried to escape on several occasions, but none of her attempts succeed. "After one year, just living is not a sufficient reason anymore to survive. You need to find something within you to go on for, because you start to ask yourself: "Who are you, when you are nothing?"

Betancourt found strength in small things: teaching French to her fellow captors, listening to the transistor radio, and hearing her mother's voice, day in, day out, pleading to the FARC for her release. She also recalls a touching encounter in the jungle with a former political rival, a member of parliament who has been kidnapped for many years. "He looked like he had become someone else. Only when he smiled I recognized him," she remembers.

On the 3rd July 2008, through a spectacular release effort involving France, American and Colombian officials, Betancourt was finally freed. She moved to France and was reunited with her family. Then, her fellow captors started to speak up. Three American contractors, kidnapped by the FARC for five years, and having spend considerable time with Betancourt in captivity, described her behaviour in the jungle as "selfish" and "delusional," placing her fate as abductee as more important than others. Due to her previous political involvement Betancourt demanded better treatment and claimed a large part of the scarce food, clothing and personal space for herself. It was also claimed that she had an affair with her captor Luis 'Lucho' Perez. Betancourt denied all rumours and allegations.

Opinions flared up again this summer when Betancourt sued the Colombian government for \$7 million in reparation, claiming that it was the negligence of the Colombian military that led to her abduction by rebels in 2002. A storm of critique ensued, and she eventually dropped the lawsuit.

Betancourt addressed neither of these controversies in her talk, nor did the audience ask her about it, but these incidents do paint a rather different picture than the much publicized image as of a victimized prisoner. While allegations and lawsuits have tarnished the public image of Betancourt, her tale of suffering and survival is one to remember.



Flickr user: fabioglissio

Revolutionising revolution

Marya Hannun thinks Malcom Gladwell misses the point with social networks

There has been a great deal of debate following the release of "The Social Network," Aaron Sorkin's new film about the founding of Facebook, over the extent to which this powerful social medium has shaped the present world. Perhaps being confronted with the tenuous, human creation story behind such an omnipresent force has inspired people to think about what society would look like without it. There is no doubt that most of us would have significantly fewer friends and a lot more free time. Pop culture would feel different without networking sites such as YouTube and MySpace which have allowed for a populist shift in the music and film industries, granting anyone with access to a computer the ability to publish and promote recorded material. However, the most heralded and discussed change wrought by social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter is their impact on political and social activism.

It is often pointed out that these websites have enabled people to organize and engage in unprecedented numbers. Surely, with its ability to amass so many people across the world behind an issue that they otherwise would not have known or cared about, Facebook has revolutionized revolutions. However, in a recent article for The New Yorker, Malcom Gladwell asserts that the much-touted revolution of the digital age is simply a watered down version of what we saw in the 1960's and 70s. Easy to buy into (you can now support Darfur with the mere click of a button), online causes, he argues, require no real sacrifice, and therefore no real conviction on the part of the user. In online activism we see no self-selecting process. The people uniting behind issues no longer have to be personally invested in them. While others see this as the very attribute that makes digital activism so remarkable, Gladwell believes that the "weak ties" generated by Facebook and Twitter, while incredibly useful in other contexts (i.e. online dating), dilute the movements they represent. They make people feel like they



are participating in a cause without actually mobilizing any action.

As Gladwell puts it, such ties "seldom lead to high-risk activism," which he describes as hard work, involving complete devotion and commitment by its participants. It is this brand of activism alone that effects large-scale change.

Gladwell dismisses the benefit seen by many in social media's ability to spread information broadly and quickly. Even

Pop culture would feel different without networking sites such as YouTube and MySpace

where he does focus on examples of this use of Twitter, as during the protests following the Iranian election in 2009, he does so only to point out the extent to which western media over glorified its role. However, despite his argument that Twitter was not, as some claim, the sole force behind the Iranian populous' reaction to the elections, the role it played in disseminating information about what was happening in real time around the world was significant and unprecedented. Good or bad, it partly shaped the character of the protests, giving Iranians both momentum and an international platform.

But we need not look as far as Iran to find a believer in this ability of Twitter to spread information and create awareness. On October 12, the Tate Modern opened an installation by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei. This work consists of a room full of 100 million porcelain sunflower seeds, each hand painted by workers in Jingdezhen, a Chinese town famed for the very material. Visitors are invited into the Tate's Turbine Hall to walk amidst it. According to a profile of the piece in The Guardian, Weiwei consciously likens

this work to Twitter and the way in which ideas and individuals can come together to form an impressive, imposing collective presence. In fact, the artist himself uses Twitter actively after Chinese censorship led to his own blogs being shut down.

Weiwei's use of Twitter reflects its role in disseminating information and promoting awareness particularly when other means of transmission are blocked, but Gladwell suggests that awareness is not enough. He asks pointedly whether Martin Luther King Jr. would have "contended himself with tweets from a Birmingham jail." In fact, throughout his article Gladwell frames his evaluation of the efficacy of digital activism through the lens of the civil rights movement in the 1960s.

But perhaps activism, rather than being a one-size-fits-all mode of changing the status quo is shaped by context. Why should the brand of activism that existed in the 1960s be the yardstick for how we define and evaluate activism today? Is it really apt to think that the tools used by marginalized Black Americans with unequal rights and no mainstream platform to get their voices heard would be the same as those necessary in present day Iran? In his article Gladwell wonders, "What use would a digital communication tool be in a town where ninety-eight per cent of the black community could be reached every Sunday morning at church?"

That is just it. In today's world, more often than not, the church is Facebook or Twitter, and Sunday morning is every minute of every day. Perhaps one could regard this pessimistically and determine that the structure of society is bound by weaker ties and thus the days of generating real change through activism are over. On the other hand, maybe there is something to be said for strength in numbers, quantity over quality. Pessimist or not, when you walk into the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, you cannot help but be impressed by the sheer volume of sunflower seeds. ☘

Inflatable stealth

Bianca Nardi reflects on Russia's 'hot air' deployment and the future of warfare

The Russian army's new 'secret weapon' is as lethal as a bouncy castle. Inflatable fighter jets, radar stations and tanks are used as strategic portable weapons which weigh only 90kg and can be blown up in a few minutes.

These dummies are made of material that tricks the enemy radar and thermal imaging into thinking they are real, through temperature and density control. They are made in Rusbal, a Russian hot-air balloon factory, which also receives orders for trampolines, balloons, pneumatic costumes and inflatable paraphernalia used in advertising campaigns.

Months after the war with Georgia in 2008, Russian military spending increased to £94.5bn. The war exposed the need for Russian military modernization, and its newly acquired oil wealth is being spent towards the upgrade of its military hardware by 75 per cent by 2020. Is the Kremlin's money being wisely spent in fantasy hot air arms?

Fake military stations serve the purpose of creating the illusion that the army is more powerful than it is, and of separating an enemy army into several different locations. The inflatable arms are said to look extremely real even from up close, the only difference to the real weapons being that the former don't actually work. However, military analysts have questioned the effectiveness of these luxury military toys, and claim that it would be more reasonable, in times of peace and wealth, to invest in real weapons.

In reality, Russia's new secret weapon isn't really new or secret. Inflatable tanks have existed since World War I, and were notably used during World War II, by both allied and axis powers. They were employed in the North African Campaign by the British army, and extensively during the Operation Fortitude, where the Allied forces deceived the Germans into

thinking that the invasion of France would occur in the Pas de Calais rather than in Normandy. Through deception, the Allied forces managed to successfully decrease the German army presence in Normandy. Although inflatable tanks and fake infrastructure were placed at Pas de Calais, this was only one of the channels through which deception took place. Forced leaks of fake information, double agents and the feeding of false documents were also means used to fool the enemy.

Fake military stations serve the purpose of creating the illusion that the army is more powerful than it is

The fake infrastructure built for Operation Fortitude was in the end irrelevant, due to the absence of German air reconnaissance. What made the Germans believe that the invasion would take place in Pas de Calais were in most part the German double agents and false wireless messages. If such a tactic didn't work sixty years ago, how would it work now? With nuclear technology, weapons of mass

destruction and extremely sharp means of airborne espionage, I can't help but doubt the effectiveness of air balloons shaped like tanks in a real warzone.

Doesn't the fact that the tanks have become known to the public – the girl band t.A.T.u. ordered a pink inflatable tank for their concert in Moscow – render their strategic purpose irrelevant? Any 'enemy' of the Russian army would have access to the internet, where the BBC interview with Russian soldiers reveals their new weapons and their place of manufacture, in addition to several other news websites covering the same story.

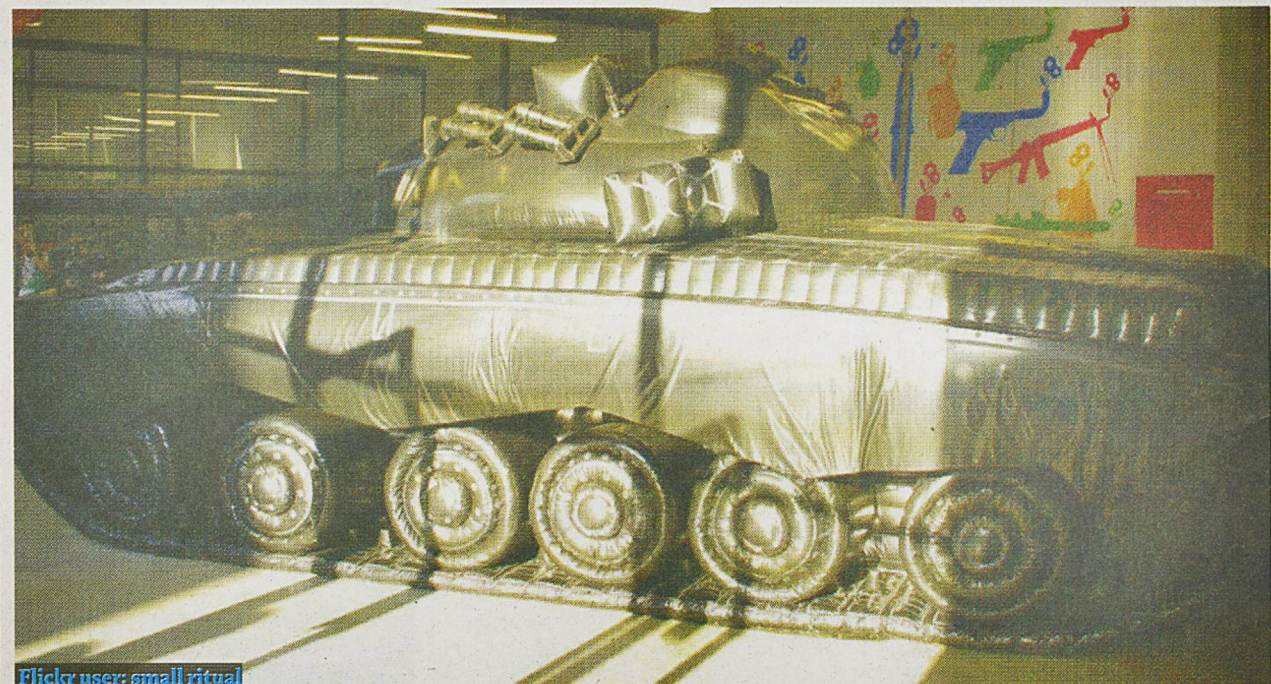
It is claimed that fooling the enemy is an essential part of every nation's war strategy. However, in 2010, I would have expected the Russians to be a little more

technologically forward in their approach. It seems like the Russian army is frozen in a cold war era where these kinds of fake weapons would actually have some use – an epoch when the main aim in war was to keep the enemy in fear of your assumed potential.

The concept of war has greatly changed after the 1980s, as with nuclear weapons came Mutually Assured Destruction and the increased use of computers in the field. A real war between great powers is no longer conceivable; as such a conflict could lead to tragic amounts of destruction for both sides and is hence in no one's interest. In a war with an at least vaguely similarly sized armies, I really can't think of a use for the bouncy castle weapons. I would really hope for the

sake of technology that enemy airplanes have a way of discerning between real and plastic weaponry, and in an age of robots, iPads and 3D television, it is hard to believe otherwise. Even when fighting a state like Georgia – which has very inferior military capacity – deception would be unnecessary: the real weapons would be enough to serve the purpose of victory.

In an ideal non-violent world, balloons would replace all kinds of military hardware, and states would settle their conflicts in a paintball arena or even in a fantasy football competition. Realistically and unfortunately, soldiers won't be sent into warzones with water-guns. Perhaps the Kremlin will be better off paying the extra rubles for weapons than can actually fire. ☘



Flickr user: small ritual

The Stuxnet stop

David Lahey speaks of the evolution of cyberwars and their danger

In an average high school classroom in Montreal, Canada, a seemingly everyday fifteen-year-old student sat in anxious anticipation. It was the 7th of February 2000, and Michael Calce, under the online alias of Mafiaboy, had that morning initiated the single most destructive series of cyber attacks ever witnessed.

Calce's targets included some of the most prominent symbols of the burgeoning Internet age, such as Ebay, Amazon and Yahoo. Over the next week, these and other popular sites were effectively crippled by his web offensive, inflicting an estimated \$1.2 billion USD in damages and prompting United States President Bill Clinton to convene an emergency cyber security summit at the White House.

The principal tactic employed by Calce is known as a distributed denial-of-service, or DDoS, attack. A DDoS attack is to computer hacking what the flanking move is to traditional military strategy. To this day, it remains one of the classic methods of maliciously disrupting a computer network. In basic terms, it works by surreptitiously harnessing control of dozens of other computers through the Internet, collectively known as a botnet, and directing them all to simultaneously bombard the same website with information requests. As a result, the target's servers become overwhelmed with activity and are forced to shut down.

While Calce was by no means the first hacker to implement this type of attack, the scale at which he did so was unprecedented, provoking a vigorous and ultimately successful criminal investigation by the authorities. In a bizarre case of life imitating art, Calce met a similar fate for his crimes to that of fictional character Dade Murphy in the 1995 film Hackers,

creative and economic potential of the networked computer, Calce's actions revealed its equally impressive capacity for destruction. It was only a matter of time before these weaknesses were exploited for political ends, first by non-state actors, then by states themselves.

For talented computer programmers with a sense of patriotism but not a position in government, hacking into the electronic infrastructure of countries with which their own nation has adversarial relations provides a means of expressing national solidarity. The prevalence of these "patriotic hackers," as they are termed, has gradually increased since the Internet's inception, as has the seriousness of their actions.

Over the last ten years, there has been a glut of news reports regarding particularly zealous members of one national group executing relatively innocuous cyber attacks against the sites of an opposing group. Palestinian and Israeli hackers have made a veritable sport out of defacing each other's news and cultural sites, putting a twenty-first century spin on an age-old ethnic conflict. Not to be outdone, Serb and Croat hackers are engaged in the same activity. It was not until 2007, however, in the small Baltic country of Estonia, that the gravity of this development was fully impressed upon international security analysts.

That spring, a highly contentious decision by the pro-Western Estonian government to remove a Second World War-era Soviet war memorial from downtown Tallinn elicited a fiery response from the country's minority ethnic Russian population, as well as Russians in general. Within hours of the memorial's removal on the 27th of April in addition to outbreaks of pro-Russian rioting in

attacks ceased.

While some Estonian officials suggested that the Russian government might be involved, it is generally believed that the attacks were conducted by a loose agglomeration of pro-Russian hackers without state ties seeking to compel the Estonian government to backtrack on its controversial decision. Their actions were ultimately unsuccessful, as the memorial was never restored. Nonetheless, the 2007 Estonian "Internet War" demonstrated the degree to which cyber warfare could be harnessed for political ends, as well as the increasing vulnerability of states to such attacks. As one might expect, the national security sectors of many governments took notice.

The interest of states in the strategic uses of computer networks originates in the area of intelligence gathering. As early as the late 1990s, the American government accused Moscow of hacking into a number of government systems for espionage purposes. Since then, the scale of this online reconnaissance has dramatically escalated, with China gradually but surely displacing Russia as the principal cyber threat to western governments.

Over the last several years, a series of extremely serious breaches of American political and military computer networks have been pinned on East Asia's rising economic giant. In the fall of 2007, for instance, the same year as the Estonian incident, a Pentagon computer network was successfully hacked into, requiring it to be shut down for three weeks. The American government stopped short of accusing the Chinese government of direct involvement. However, the extraordinary sophistication of the attack led many analysts to suggest that it was the work of the People's Liberation Army. The PLA

war effort. A computer worm is a self-perpetuating malicious software program that spreads rapidly through a computer network and severely disrupts its ordinary functioning.

The sophistication of the worm and the apparent involvement of a foreign intelligence agency in planting the infected

Hacking into the electronic infrastructure of other countries provides a means of expressing national solidarity

memory stick within Centcom's premises strongly suggest state involvement.

Any suspicions that this unprecedented form of state-backed cyberwar could be brushed off as a fluke were dispelled just this September, when it appears Iran's nuclear programme was deliberately targeted for a cyber attack by a foreign government. As with the Centcom incident, it is believed that the worm, known as Stuxnet, was introduced into Iran's nuclear facilities by way of intelligence operatives. Once there, it proceeded to infect the systems at Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor, causing a delay in its planned opening and, by extension, hampering the country's quest for nuclear weapons.

Regarding the origins of the attack, one analyst is quoted as saying, "It is of such complexity it could be only be a state behind it." It is widely believed that only the United States or Israel would have both the motive and the means to carry out such an operation.

"The sky above the port was the color of television, tuned to a dead channel." That is the opening line to author William Gibson's startlingly prophetic 1984 novel, *Neuromancer*, in which the word "cyberspace" was first coined. In it, Gibson imagines a dystopian future where the ubiquity of computer technology has been harnessed by criminal elements to wage economic war. Does the Stuxnet incident herald our entry into the Gibsonian world? What it does confirm is that we have indeed entered a new era of warfare, where states deliberately target other states not just through bullets and bombs, but also through computers and code. What started out as the youthful mischief of a Canadian teenager only a decade ago has developed into a new theatre in which states wage war in the shadows, without overtly breaching international law or risking soldier's lives. One can only speculate as to how this new form of warfare will develop over the next ten years, but it's safe to say it won't be pretty.

WHAT IF...

... Napoleon had stayed in Elba?

Jack Tindale

The Principality of Elba, like its fellow European micro-nations, has a curious history. The Treaty of Fontainebleau had been drafted with the intention of creating a humiliating place of exile for the deposed Emperor of the French on the tiny Italian island. To the surprise of many commentators, Napoleon Bonaparte proved himself to be an able administrator, building roads, improving education and turning the formally insignificant Tuscan island into a diplomatic and mercantile powerhouse.

The question of why the former master of Europe chose to remain on the island is one that has baffled many historians. Clearly, the uneasy return of the Bourbon monarchs to France gave numerous chances for Napoleon to return to Paris. Indeed, many of his former supporters openly expected him to. It is possible that the regular payments granted to him by King Louis XVIII's treasury acted as a sufficient placating influence on the Prince of Elba. The costs of running even the smallest royal court in the 19th Century were huge, and without a steady stream of income, it is quite likely that Napoleon would have gambled everything on attempting to regain the Imperial throne.

Another possibility is that the Congress of Vienna established sufficient checks on the Great Powers as to render the chances of Napoleon successfully re-establishing a new, expansionist Empire minimal. The military occupation of Paris by the forces of the Sixth Coalition were sufficient to prevent the pro-Napoleon lobby from becoming anything other than a minor irritation. Whilst Europe would suffer numerous uprisings by radical movements over the next three decades, France never returned to republicanism during the "Age of Revolution", instead only having to endure a change from the autocratic Bourbons to the more liberal House of Orleans.

Regarding the reasoning behind their founder's decision to stay, the House of Bonaparte has remained as the ruling dynasty of Elba ever since, although their powers were greatly curtailed with the adoption of a new constitution in 1886 which established the present parliamentary democracy. Today, the quaint capital of Portoferraro is awash with merchant banks, many of which moved there following the disestablishment of the Swiss Confederation following the Prusso-Bavarian War. It is also an important diplomatic centre, hosting the headquarters for the Mediterranean Alliance and embassies ranging from the grand edifices of the Great Powers, such as the Russian Empire and the Danubian Federation, to far more humble consulates occupied by relatively junior players on the world stage, such as Bukhara and Gran Colombia.

In many ways, nothing is more telling of the rapid rise of Elba than the fact that only fifty years after the other Great Powers had deposed his grandfather, Prince Napoleon III hosted the same nations in drafting the solution to the "German Question" which finally ended the expansionist aims of Prussia towards Bavaria and Austria. Whilst it remains a vital financial centre, most modern tourists to Elba are motivated more by the island's balmy climate and excellent casinos.



serving eight months in a juvenile detention centre, with one year of probation and restricted access to the Internet.

In retrospect, the Mafiaboy episode can be understood as marking the humble, almost innocent, opening of a new theatre in international conflict. To be sure, Calce's motivations were entirely non-political in nature, involving a juvenile form of online brinkmanship with an underground community of elite hackers. In an interview years after the attack, Calce said that hacking was "an adventure for me. I wanted to see how far I could go."

Nonetheless, at the peak of the overheated dot-com boom, his attacks demonstrated the existence of fundamental vulnerabilities in the rapidly growing electronic infrastructure, and upon which we were increasingly beginning to depend. While the world marveled at the stunning

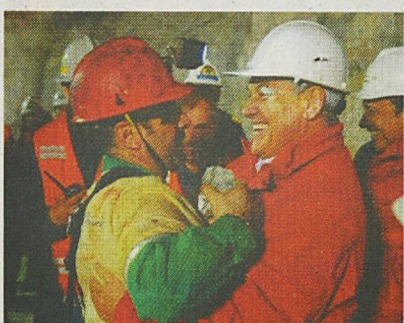
the streets of Tallinn, Estonia's electronic infrastructure began to suffer a series of heavily damaging cyber attacks that would last three weeks.

Using the same tactic employed by Mafiaboy seven years earlier, the perpetrators used a series of sophisticated DDoS attacks to shut down the websites of the Estonian president, parliament, government ministries, and various major commercial enterprises, including Hansabank, Estonia's largest bank. What made the attacks particularly serious was the inordinately high level of dependence Estonians have on the Internet, using it commonly for activities such as banking, voting and the ratifying of legal documents. On the 10th of May, after severely disrupting Estonia's normal functioning for several weeks, the perpetrators could no longer maintain their assault and the

is suspected in recent years of actively recruiting Chinese citizens and training them in cyber warfare as a means of partially bridging the immense gap between the conventional military capability of the United States and China.

As serious as these incidents were, however, they seemed to suggest that state involvement in cyber warfare would remain largely in the area of reconnaissance. That is, at least, until the 2008 cyber attack on the United States Military's Central Command, or Centcom, which oversees military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Just this August, it was acknowledged that in that year a damaging computer worm that took fourteen months to extinguish was inadvertently introduced into Centcom's computer network via a memory stick, thereby compromising the United States

Measured musings



"...And that's the first miner sporting a beard!" The demands of rolling news were clearly taking its toll on the weary Sky News reporter, one of the thousand or so journalists who had flown, driven and trekked to a dusty corner of the Atacama for the circus that was the miners' rescue. The challenge of teasing points of interest out of the sight of four rescue workers standing around a mine shaft was one of the many instances of ridiculousness present at the hole in the desert. From the utter improbability of the thirty three men's survival, to the

notion of a global fixation on a hole no more than a metre wide, the mouth of the San Jose copper and gold mine must have been a site to behold. A mining tragedy has become a national rebirth; ordinary working men, national heroes and global celebrities, and a billionaire president, a man of the people.

As the trapped miners were strapped into the rescue capsule - a comic if patriotic device that would surely be more at home at a school science fair - they faced the stratospheric if rickety transition from close to seventy days in the dark to potentially a lifetime in the limelight. As Don Lucho and his team huddled and hoped they'd be reached in time, the outside world obsessed over their life stories, the

Dig for victory

drama of one miner's mistress and wife arriving at a vigil with a picture of the same man. What one might speculate will be yet another tragic tale of the corrupting power of celebrity has at least started promisingly. The miners plan to remain silent, saving their accounts of the ordeal until the details of a contract to evenly split the income from book deals and the like between the team; an honourable promise that those with more salacious or heart-wrenching back-stories will no doubt come to regret. Surprisingly, the obscenities, comedies and excesses of Camp Hope failed to detract from the passion on display. The Features section of such a (self-proclaimed) cultivated newspaper isn't

the natural habitat for the corny but this week, let's leave the political conjecture and social commentary aside and marvel at human emotion.

Oliver Wiseman
Features Editor

Gossip Gollum floats through the flange

YOU SHALL NOT PASS ON THIS CHLAMYDIA! Always use a condom



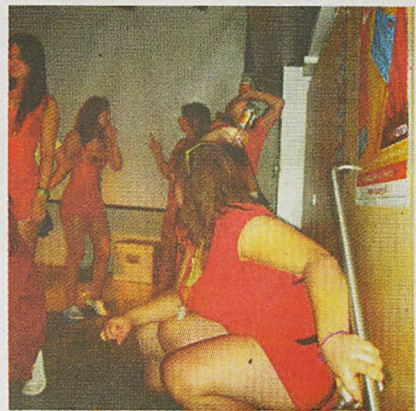
All things Baywatch descended on the AU this Wednesday, with amnesia inducing consequences (no seriously, GG couldn't remember anything either). But fear not, gossip lovers, everyone's favourite social networking site helped jog GG's memory and slowly piece together the debauchery.

Netball's Social Comrade Deevy turned the tables on the entire club as her Initiations brought all players, young and old, down a peg or five. It seemed many a fresher fared better than their elders, and even the esteemed Comrade Hacker succumbed to a curious bout of narcolepsy on



the Zoo sofas. Although photographic evidence seems to suggest to GG that a laced beverage courtesy of Andy Lawrence was involved, the Deevster came forward and took full credit for the Hacksters fall from grace.

Netball Initiations seemed to set the tone for Wednesday's shenanigans, with the AU's usually classy and sophisticated ladies dropping like flies. Speaking of classy and sophisticated, a Ms L. Bacon, continued the amnesia trend and lost all her possessions in Zoo bar. For the third week in a row. Could one of the WRFC please point her in the direction of the free cloakroom in future? Bacon then went on to display typical Salou-esque symptoms and proceeded to assault numerous items of the ladies room, perhaps in some vain search for her lost items, no-one knows.



When one genuinely turns to the topic of classy and sophisticated, GG immediately thinks of Miss Tara- "Midget lover" - Lee. This woman's penchant for the gentleman of diminutive stature has not been unnoticed by GG, and will be observing most carefully to see if this trend

continues. Tall guys, sack off the Cuban heels if you're after a classy pull.

The utterance of the word 'pull' immediately fires GG's synapses into action, and gossip lovers will be pleased to hear that your very own Communications officer was not idle this week. Rumours of a 'Torso of the Week Challenge' are yet to be confirmed by GG, though it certainly seems to be a train of thought the Proper-hoe was on. "Male? Check. Kit off in the Beaver? Check. Fit? Irrelevant." Though with the sneak peak of this week's Torso afforded to GG, if the Proper-hoe wants to slay the torso of Jordan 'This is England' Emery, GG must warn that a Ms Strivlah may be the proverbial spanner to the completion of such a challenge.

The addition of the SU's finest administrators, H&H, at Zoo bar this week was also duly noted by GG. Sporting their best attempts at Pam attire, their merriment soon led to awkward encounters with students; frankly such esteemed figures should know better than to aggravate Zoo bar security staff with their attempts at raunchy sofa-top dancing.

It's safe to say that GG was able to draw parallels between the last days of Rome, and last week's Zoo bar escapades, upon spotting various pockets of orgies across the LSE VIP section. But if you don't want yourself named and shamed for the slut that you are, try and keep a low profile this week at Verve. GG suspects this venue will be a welcome change to the weekly sauna that is Zoo bar, yet is not naive enough to think that you will heed my advice.

You know I'm watching, xo xo, GG

LSE SPORTS RESULTS

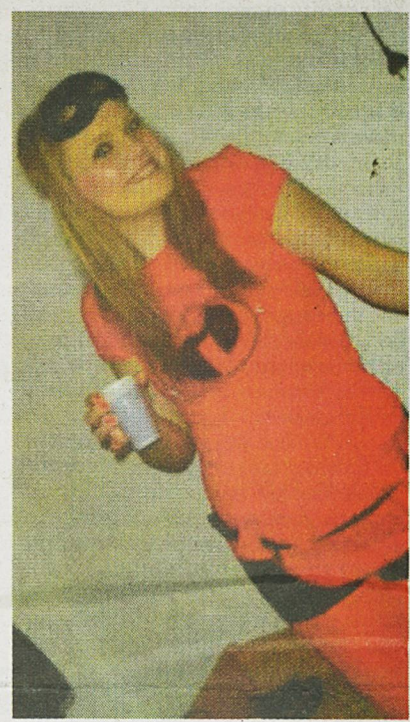
Attach: Share Options

- Matthew Box** LSE Football 1st XI 7-0 University of The Arts (Alex Casimo scoring TWO hat-tricks) 2 minutes ago Comment Like
- Matthew Box** LSE Netball 4ths 20 - 28 Imperial 3rds 4 minutes ago Comment Like
- Matthew Box** LSE Rugby 2nd XV 19 - 10 Buckinghamshire New University XV 4 minutes ago Comment Like
- Matthew Box** LSE Football 3rd XI 0 - 0 LSE Football 2nd XI 5 minutes ago Comment Like
- Matthew Box** LSE 1st XV 20 - 0 Hertfordshire 1st XV 9 minutes ago Comment Like

Alex Casimo, if you so desire you can cut this section out and show it to your Mum and tell her how good your six goals were.

However, future sports results will be independently verified.

If you want your results printed in Sport, please contact Megan "Torso-Slayer" Protheroe at su.aucomms@lse.ac.uk



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Play-off Profiles: This week it's Badminton vs Tennis

Alex Avlonitis

Who is she?

Badminton Club Captain, part-time WAG.

Where is she from?

Greece. Or Sparta. Or North London. One of those at least.

Natural Wednesday Night Habitat:

Dancing in a fashion that would make Johnny Castle blush. Or shouting at freshers.

LSE Sporting Career Highlight:

Getting through more shuttlecocks than the Malaysian Olympic women's doubles team.

Profile:

Avlon is a lynchpin of the LSE Badminton club, single-handedly making more of an impression on Zoo bar than all of the other Badminton players put together. Her status as a Greek deity ensures that there is a seemingly never-ending supply of enraptured and impressionable fresher men to satiate her Spartan appetite.



Nikhil Walia

Who is he?

Tennis Club Captain, The only man in the UAE to still own a Blackberry

Where is he from?

Dubai

Natural Wednesday Night Habitat:

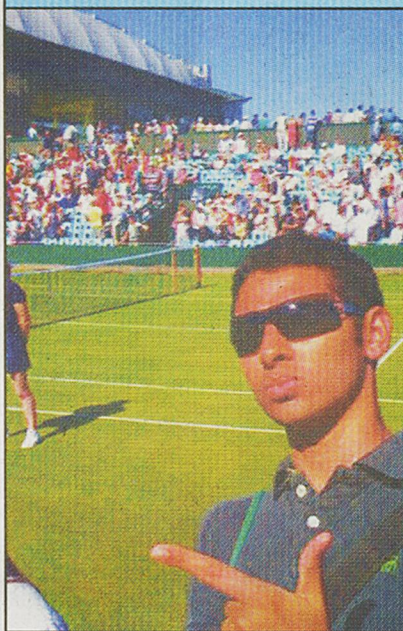
Part timing as Zoo Bar's newest topless dancer. (Watch this space Uncle H)

LSE Sporting Career Highlight:

Projectile vomiting in O'Neill's in last years Pub Golf

Profile:

Having found love with a girl so hot she wouldn't have made it into LSE, Nik can often be a quiet one. However when he decides to step up and perform he does it in style. Nik's finest moments include knocking teeth out, surviving a near stabbing by a girl and being thrown out of Crush for taking his clothes off.

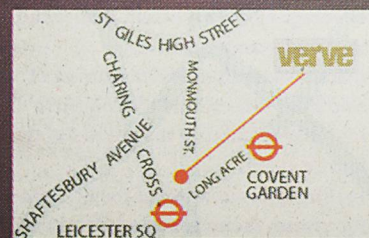


This week sees the first of Wednesday nights' new venues at:

verve

1 Upper St. Martin's Lane
WC2H 9NY

Remember to bring your wednesday nights cards for free entry on the door



Just a 5min walk from LSE - even closer than Zoo!

TORSO OF THE WEEK



Sport



Inside: All the Gossip on last week's AU Welcome Party

This is not just any ordinary Rugby... this is LSE Rugby

Tom Lennon

As the sun set on the previous season back in March the Rugby Club sat firmly at the top of the greasy social pole of the AU. The first team had stormed to promotion after losing only one league match all year, and a chosen few men marched on the sordid streets of Salou, taking it upon themselves to lead the LSE contingent in a glorious display of international d*****g domination whilst others were content to take the night off. Mission accomplished.

Alas, a new season must begin and Rugby is hungry to conquer the Tuns once



more. Who better to lead the charge than Vice Olomolaiye, recently cleared of allegations of match fixing in Nigeria's World Cup campaign, and Brendan Mycock who completed a half-marathon on his micro-scooter.

Initiations were a mixed bag this year. Some men, entirely of their own free will, saw it fit to imbibe their very own vomit; several were confirmed unconscious by an adjudicator, whilst others had to flee their

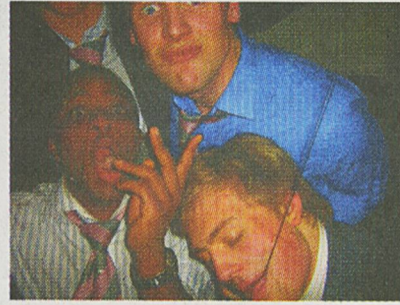
location of initiation after encountering machete wielding Pikeys at gam on a Sunday.

After racking up enough sin to make Smedlington's warrant card finger itchy we embarked on our pilgrimage to Church, and managed, after several hours, to finally usher all survivors into the heaving congregation. This year, no teeth were lost at the hands of "women's" Rugby, yet our brave freshers entered once more unto the breach to deal with the baying hordes of the WRFC.

However, the fun that was being had

"The rest of the male teams were still chewing through their second beverages by the time Big Dan O'Conor had completed Rugby's Rout"

by all was postponed as Boca proceeded to drop his Human Growth Hormone pills all over the floor, sending the hired heavies into a violent feeding frenzy, with



our freshman turning out to be the meat of choice. Congratulations to Prince Kareem who was on the receiving end of a selection of tasty UFC style manoeuvres.

But despite a huge number of freshers that are as strong on the sauce as they are on the pitch, many in the Rugby Club have been disheartened over the first two weeks on the lash, with DJs at both Zoo Bar and Crush seemingly struggling at life and failing to deliver our iconic battle-cry across the sound systems. However to our great relief AU Treasurer Alistair Darling was absolutely adamant that this year's welcome party was to be Baywatch



themed - despite suggestions from other members of the Right Honourable Robinson's cabinet that this would play into our favour.

"However to our great relief AU Treasurer Alistair Darling was absolutely adamant that this year's welcome party was to be Baywatch themed"

Democracy prevailed and come last Wednesday everyone was sporting their red and yellow beachwear. Some customary chants were traded between Rugby and the roundballers, but then came the boat race. Rugby of course haven't lost a boat race at LSE since 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell down and this year was to be no different, although emphatic seems a

cheap word to describe what transcended. The rest of the male teams were chewing through their second beverages by the time Big Dan O'Connor had completed Rugby's rout. The stage was promptly mobbed and those drum beats came crashing over the waves of euphoria.

Perhaps I haven't been quite hubristic enough to warrant a space in the sports section. But I digress. The real issue is who Strivens cast as the lead stud in her Pamela Anderson inspired sex-tape on Wednesday night. MI5 have analysed all the relevant intelligence and it seems the plaudits go to former SAS boot polisher



Jordan 'Combo' Emery. This week's torso of the week capped off an eventful day having started a brawl whilst still on the bench versus Hertfordshire Poly. What a lucky youth. Gentlemen: prepare for glory.

Can England win the next World Cup?

Stuart Smedley

It was quite fitting that less than 24 hours after Gary Lineker asked the poignant question whether England could win the next World Cup in the true tear-jerker of a documentary, "Can England Win the Next World Cup?" that current Three Lions' boss Fabio Capello called up uncapped, 33-year-old forward Kevin Davies. That is after attempting, unsuccessfully it must be added, to lure Emile Heskey out of international retirement.

Surely that answered the question posed by the jug-eared face of Walkers' Crisps and Match of the Day there and then, by demonstrating how bare the cupboard the Italian has to choose from

actually is. When you're considering giving debuts to players closer to the end, rather than the beginning, of their careers it suggests the future is rather bleak.

Merely to float that particular question though - after the shower of shit produced

"Currently, the list of young English players who are appearing in the Premier League on a regular basis is miniscule."

during the summer in South Africa - was ludicrous. Particularly so given Lineker witnessed firsthand the tragicomedy enacted by Capello's merry men, most of whom comprised what was billed as English football's 'Golden Generation'.

Having failed miserably to live up to that hype not just this year, but at every tournament since 2002 - failure to qualify for the 2008 European Championships in Austria and Switzerland being the nadir - a less precious metal should really prefix the term 'generation' used to describe the era Gerrard, Lampard, Owen, Terry et al have been a part of. Tinfoil, with its shiny exterior but culpability for crumpling under the slightest of pressure, perhaps?

Strangely though the lingering post-World Cup malaise - demonstrated by Lineker's forty minute autopsy that didn't really delve deeply into the multitude of problems holding the national team back and only really offered the one solution: copy Spain - has been mixed with a faint but noticeable rekindling of optimism.

And all because of a pair of positive results against middleweights Bulgaria and Switzerland to begin the Euro 2012 qualifying campaign, and the promotion of a couple of talented, albeit highly inexperienced, youngsters to the main squad.

Whether or not they become permanent fixtures - something which will go hand-in-hand with whether they can become permanent fixtures at club level - is another question. Currently, the list of young English players who are appearing in the Premier League on a regular basis is miniscule.

And it is an environment in which young talent can flourish that is - above all else - needed in this country. But that is just not going to be compatible with the ethos of clubs in the top flight, particularly that of those at the top.

By all means, Capello could have plumped for 21-year-old Newcastle United forward Andy Carroll, who has so far transferred the form he showed last season in the Championship to the highest level of English football, instead of Davies; indeed, the last time the Italian overlook the ponytailed Geordie he was branded as a jackass by the bastion of serious journalism that is the Sun.

In addition to him Marc Albrighton, Phil Jones and current media darling Jack Wilshere have all been receiving extensive

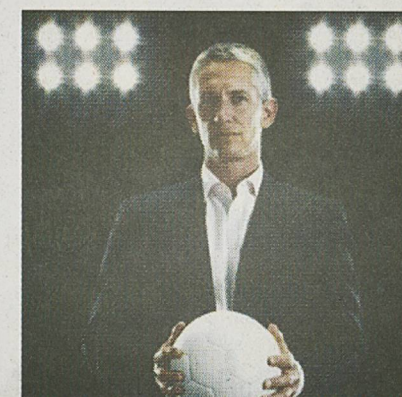
playing time so far this season. But the spotlight being placed on the latter's young shoulders through comparisons with the likes of teammate Cesc Fabregas so early into his career is worrying. During their formative years, players need to be given



the chance to grow without such lofty expectations hanging over them.

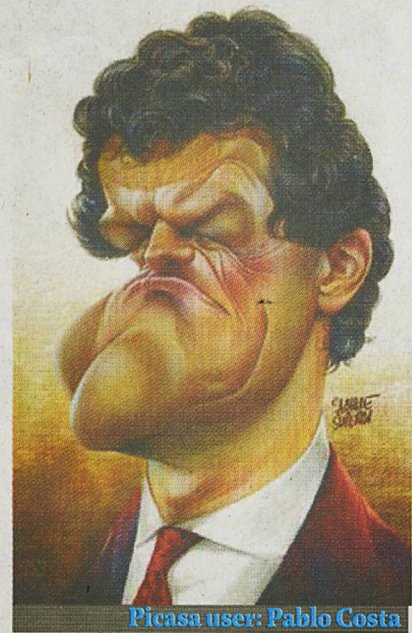
Yet the majority of their peers - including the likes of Kieran Gibbs, Daniel Sturridge and Chris Smalling, all highly touted and at a critical period in their development - continue to see their opportunities limited.

Unless given the chance to do more than just perfect the art of bench warming, no doubt more introspective documentaries will be available for Lineker to front.



Boyle's Top Ten AU Welcome Party Moments

- 1) Netball and Rugby "standing by" one another by stealing the FC's karaoke pride and joy;
- 2) The ultimate Baywatch dance as The Quad lights dimmed, tops off and buckets of sweat;
- 3) Women's Rugby and Football showing Netball how it was done in the Boat Race whilst Dyson took three minutes to down a Reef and nearly chundered on stage;
- 4) Brendan's going all Butlins Redcoat and initiating a group Hokey Cokey to keep the crowds happy;
- 5) 5th Team Football remaining in The Quad for an hour after everyone went to Zoo dancing with themselves. Rumour has it George "Billy Elliot" Luther was the main instigator of this;
- 6) Steph Moffat getting her Pamela Anderson on by braving it in just a red bathing suit in Zoo Bar;
- 7) Jaz Bradfield's 40 second surf board domination. She attributed her success to intense training with a certain Ne-Yo lookalike, although apparently 40 seconds was a PB for both training partners;
- 8) Chris Catermole's AU comeback consisted of spilling his Boat Race beverage all over himself. Before the race had even began.
- 9) Boca's less than PC compering of said Boat-Races, and his complete inability to identify the winner of the female event.
- 10) Rugby decimation of the FC Boat-race team, their victory whilst the FC were still a full two drinks behind.



Picasa user: Pablo Costa