

# The Beaver

The Newspaper of the LSE SU

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Four page blink special for Environment Week

## Briefing

### No to female hall

A motion supporting the campaign to save the only University of London women-only residence was surprisingly defeated, but only after the floor was divided, at last weeks UGM. Students voted against the motion by 70 votes to 63.

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### Top-up fees

Formal approval was granted by the School Council for the LSE to charge variable fees of £3,000 for all its courses from October 2006.

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### 4 hour set texts to be abolished?

The Library has decided to recommend to its User Committee meeting on February 11th an increase in the Set Text loan periods, after a survey had revealed that a great part of LSE students believed the current four hour loan period to be too short.

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### The deadly cost

What does India's economic future hold? Alexander George explores how bureaucracy is strangling Indian potential for success.

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### Literature love on the web

Ever wanted to impress a prospective partner on the world wide web? Check out the best Internet chat-up poetry in Literature.

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## Union U-turn saves Atlas bar

Simon Chignell

The Students' Union has U-turned on its involvement in the faltering Atlas Bar at Great Dover Street hall of residence.

LSE SU Treasurer Gareth Carter had originally insisted that "it would make a mockery of the decision making powers of the Admin and Staffing Committee" for the SU to reconsider its decision to pull out of the bar completely at the end of last year.

He however told Thursday's UGM that he had signed "an agreement" that would save the SU "around £10,000". This agreement, which was signed on the 11th of January, would involve the SU not pulling out of the

running of the bar until week five of Summer term of this year.

The Union will continue to stock a reduced number of drink lines, new hot "Tuns-style" meals and take revenue from the bar. They have however passed on the cost of staffing the Bar to North British Housing (NBH), the company managing at Great Dover Street Hall.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Ryan Hearity, hall society President at Great Dover Street, revealed that streamlining measures taken involved opening only four days a week, and cutting lines such as draught beer. He also praised the regular dialogue between NBH, the Treasurer and student representatives saying "we will all continue to work on finding a long-term solution for the bar."

In a statement to *The Beaver*, Carter commented "the 'agreement' that I drafted myself after long negotiations with Paul Noke (the manager of NBH) over the Christmas period hopefully forms the basis of the gradual winding-down of the SU's involvement at the Atlas Bar." Carter also intimated his "delight" at the fact that Great Dover Street residents would experience "not one single day without a bar and only a small amount of, if any, disruption to normal service."

Conversely, Noke spoke of his optimism that improved custom at the bar would actually lead to the SU to extend the agreement indefinitely. "NBH are happy, provided the SU hold up their of the bargain. Over 150 students wrote to Ryan and I in the wake of the

union's decision to close the bar. If they vote with their feet, why can't [the agreement] be rolled on?"

Carter insisted that "this Union has no financial involvement in the bar" but elaborated that he was referring to overhead costs the SU had invested in the bar.

SU Residences Officer Rishi Madlani expressed relief at the agreement saying "it is important that we continue to work to provide this type of service in halls. The provision of communal space is something that we are always working hard to provide."

Meanwhile an attempted theft last Monday night nearly took the gloss off a good week for the Atlas Bar.

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## Guantanamo protest meets Secretary Ridge

John Macartney

Protests by LSE students met US Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, as he visited the School to deliver a lecture last Friday.

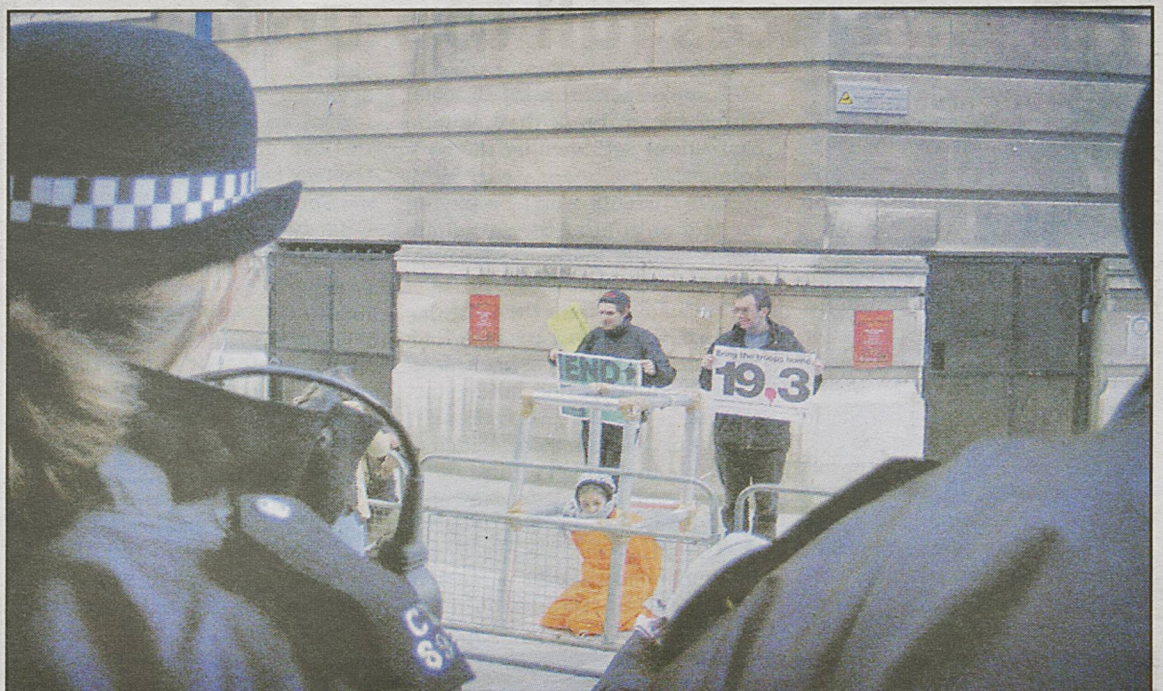
However, despite the high-profile police presence in anticipation for a large demonstration, just seven students took part.

The LSESU branch of the Stop the War coalition were behind the stunt, which featured their secretary, Narzanin Massoumi, sat behind ersatz prison bars dressed in an orange jumpsuit similar to those worn by Guantanamo Bay detainees.

The participants attacked the United States' record on civil liberties and held placards calling for troops to be pulled out of Iraq.

It appeared that the authorities were unsure of what level of protest to expect. The School cordoned off an area specifically for the demonstrators and about twenty police officers were dispatched, with more on standby in case security was breached.

However, some police officers were seen enjoying a drink at the Plaza Café once it was obvious there would be no trouble.



Police outnumbered protesters when Tom Ridge visited the School. / Photo: Stacy-Marie Ishmael

Reactions to the demonstration were mixed. Massoumi claimed it had gone "quite well".

Another protester, Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, said he felt it had got people to take notice.

A reasonable crowd watched the goings on, but it went unseen

by the US dignitary.

One bystander called the stunt "useless". First year Richard Holden remarked, "If this is the standard of political action at LSE, we may as well pack up and go home."

Among the onlookers was Will

Mafarlane, the General Secretary of the Students' Union, though not out of political solidarity.

He was barred from the lecture because he had forgotten his LSE ID card, despite being known to all of the security guards.

## Environment week gets underway

Kheng Soon Lim

The annual Students' Union Environment Week began yesterday and will incorporate the themes of practical conservation and the Asian Tsunami.

A debate titled 'Corporate Social Responsibility - More Than Greenwash?' drew participants from the senior ranks of corporations and charities. These debaters included Teresa Fabian from PriceWaterhouseCooper and Andrew Pendleton, Christian Aid's Head of Trade Policy.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, LSE Students' Union Environment and Ethics Officer, Joel Kenrick said: "With so many students at the LSE going into the corporate sector, I hope that this week will [make] think about issues of sustainable development."

The two events dealing with practical conservation are today's talk on 'Climate Change - Where Next?' by Andrew Sims, Policy Director of the New Economics Foundation and Sunday's practical conservation session, involving LSE students helping out with general maintenance work at Camley Street Natural Park.

Thursday's events will focus on the Asian Tsunami. In conjunction with this theme, Jean Lambert, Green MEP for London will speak on 'The Environment and Refugees'. In the evening, there will be a fundraising party in the Quad with performances by the London School of Samba.

LSE Societies involved with this year's Environment Week include People and Planet, the Gaia Society, Young Greens and Oikos London.

# £1,000 for Tsunami aid in first week. Taskforce examines long term effort

Chris Heathcote  
News Editor

A week of frenzied meetings and activities has meant that already more than £1,000 has been raised for the LSE Tsunami appeal.

Students and staff have come together and collected loose change from generous passers-by in Houghton Street and have promised to explore more avenues of support for aid efforts to ensure that the momentum does not lose pace.

The week began with two meetings organised by the Students' Union aimed at bringing everyone who was interested in helping.

Both meetings were well attended with between 30-40 representatives of societies, religious groups, the School and halls together with ordinary concerned students present.

The Tsunami taskforce that was established agreed to make a concerted effort to collect as much loose change as possible by placing collection buckets and boxes around the Union and in halls and also by assigning society volunteers to stand in Houghton Street throughout the week.

Each day a different society was responsible for the street collection. The Hindu Society, Sikh-Punjab Society, Indian Society, Malaysian Club, Indonesian Society, SPICE Society, Model UN, Krishna Conscious Society and Thai Society were all involved with dozens of members between them taking part.

Not wanting to get left



Society volunteers collected loose change on Houghton Street last week. / Photo: Stacy-Marie Ishmael

behind, hall committees also joined in by arranging for collections of residents and visitors.

At Rosebery, £150 was raised in just one night.

Simon Chignell, the hall President told *The Beaver* that the money was raised through organising a quiz and taking buckets around the hall.

Impressively, the hall bar staff even poured all their tips for the year into the collection.

"Seeing the scale of the disaster, we decided to do a bit of a Bob Geldof and encourage the returning students to give all they could. I was pleased with their response," said Chignell.

Sagar Shah, of the Indian

Society, who first approached the SU with the idea of uniting the efforts of all LSE students spoke of the week's success to *The Beaver*.

Explaining his decision, Shah said; "I knew that a lot of societies would be considering some fundraising events.

However I believed that without some sort of co-ordination, [there] may have the danger of 'saturating' the market.

By co-ordinating the work of all the societies events can be run throughout the whole term which ensures that the Tsunami Appeal continues in the long-term."

"I do hope, however that [the success of the Tsunami effort]

does not divert the attention from other ongoing poverty problems in other areas of the world," he added.

With the first week considered such a success, the taskforce has now resolved to look at organising events in the longer term.

Already the People and Planet society have offered to re-dedicate a Brazilian party planned for this Thursday to the LSE Tsunami appeal.

There is already interest in establishing a scheme for LSE students to volunteer to visit the effected area and work for the relief effort.

The School is to hold a public debate on the Tsunami soon.

## LSE announces full top-up fees

Dharini Nagarajan

The School has taken the decision to charge variable fees of £3000 from October 2006.

Formal approval was granted by The School Council which includes students, staff and governor representatives.

The latest Winter edition of LSE magazine carried an article by Prof. Nick Barr wherein he argued that variable fees are fairer. He also wrote that the obvious disagreement over the higher fees is that they will deter students from poorer backgrounds if they pay upfront fees, which is not the case.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, an

LSE spokesperson said, "£ 3,000 is the upper limit that can be charged, as set down by the government.

But students won't be paying the fees until after they graduate and earn over a specific amount. In the meantime, they can take out a loan so that the fees are paid to the university but they don't need to be paid back until after graduation once they start earning".

The School has also decided in principle to channel a third of all money from variable fees towards student support.

The Office of Fair Access has recommended that 20 percent of income from fees should go towards widening participation

activities, but has yet to give its formal approval before universities can go ahead with charging the fees from 2006.

Speaking to Education Guardian Hannah Essex, vice president of the National Union of Students said, "Students will suffer increased financial hardship once variable fees are introduced whether or not they receive support and will be forced to make decisions about higher education based on cost and not aspiration or potential."

Finally, it was also said that this discussion concerns UK and EU students only and that it doesn't apply to international students, who are not affected by this legislation.

## Agreement reached finds future for Atlas

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The botched burglary, in which an intruder broke into the building, led to nearly £200 in cash being lost.

The thief, who is described as a local man and known to police, is understood to have kicked in the back door of the bar at about 2am last Tuesday.

He then proceeded to empty the till and overturn the pool table and cigarette machines in the search for more money to steal.

As he broke in through the door however, the intruder set off an alarm.

The CCTV cameras also caught the offender on film.

It was then that the security guard at the time noticed what was happening and alerted the Hall Manager, and then the police.

Hearity confirmed that "the thief was apprehended within

minutes" and that no "serious damage" occurred from the incident.

He stressed, "no students were ever at risk from the break in."

The man was charged by police on Tuesday and remanded in custody until the case goes to court.

Noke, commented, "All security systems worked, and this is why he was caught."

"This justifies all NBH's policies on security," he added.

Students have previously called for reduced levels of security at the Hall, especially with regard to the numerous swipe-card doors, which have been branded "restrictive."

Hearity said that the attempted theft would hopefully end such complaints because the security had "surely vindicates the need for high-security and vigilance."

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Students on the march in London last year against the introduction of top-up fees.

To contact *The Beaver* News team, email [thebeaver.news@lse.ac.uk](mailto:thebeaver.news@lse.ac.uk)

# Library reconsiders 4-hour set texts

Kati Krause

The Library is to recommend an increase of Set Text loan periods to the Library User Committee meeting after a survey revealed that a great part of LSE students believed the current four hour loan period to be too short.

The current four hour loan policy for "reference only" texts was introduced last term to cope with the high demand for certain books.

After a number of students complained about the new policy, the Library and the Library User Committee conducted a survey, which was supported by the Students' Union who encouraged students to give their feedback. In total, 1,416 students responded.

As reported in *The Beaver* last November, the results of the survey showed that a great part of LSE students believed the four hour period to be too short and that there should be fewer Set Texts available for a longer period of time, rather than a general four hour loan period.

However, a substantial minority of students said the current loan period was "about right" or "too long".

"This highlights the [issues] in devising loan periods to suit all users," Maureen Ward, Deputy Librarian, told *The Beaver*.

Will Macfarlane, LSESU General Secretary and one of the student representatives on the Library User Committee, said the Committee was delighted the library had listened to students' opinions and would press for a return to the 24 hour Set Text loan period.

However, he said certain problems with the Library system had to be assessed first, to make sure all books are not returned at the same time.

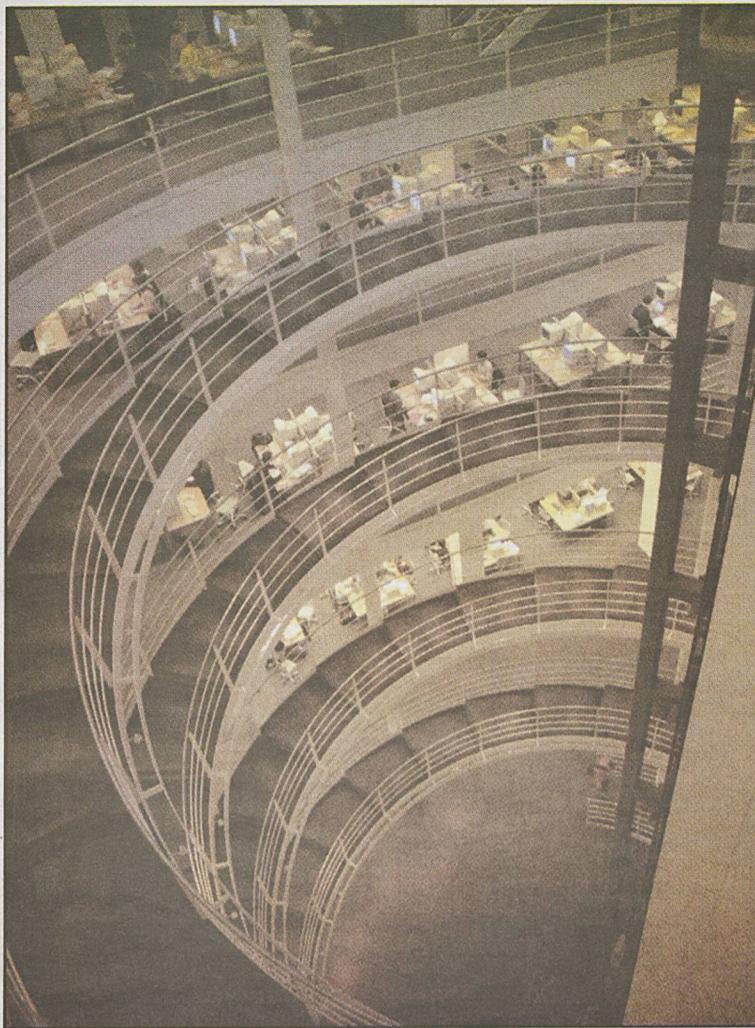
"There [are] still a couple of stages to go through with this issue, but I am confident that the proposed changes to extend set text borrowing hours shall go through and greatly benefit students," he added.

Ward emphasised that the Library's Set Text policy is aimed at ensuring maximum availability of books in high demand.

"This means having to strike a balance between ensuring that copies circulate among users who need the text, by keeping the loan period relatively short, and providing sufficient study time to make use of the text once checked out."

The Library User Committee will decide on the new Set Text loan period and the date of implementation at its meeting on February 11.

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From the summer term set texts could be available for 24 hours.



## Union Jack

Jack almost forgot to grumble at last week's UGM he was having so much fun. As ever, week one of a new term heralds election for the chair of the meeting. A trio of candidates appeared.

Oliver Ranson promised a sing-song and a salute to Her Majesty. James Eyton promised he really will graduate this year, might we give him the chance to sit at the table on stage? No, we mightn't, is what the room said in short. Natalie Black was re-elected and continued to keep the house in order.

There was one contender for vice chair. Jack is highly suspicious of NGOs, usually pleasant-sounding facades with secret ideological agendas. Let's hope Anna NGO doesn't live up to this image.

The queue of hacks then emerged—Comrade Willgress, Whispering Sian, Joel Kenrick, Richi Madlani—so we know who they are when they run for election next month.

Notwithstanding a beard-trimming tip from a former Governor of the School, the highlight of the show was undoubtedly 'Business Motion Two' which sought to perpetuate a relic from the past. College Hall, an all-girls dormitory for University of London students, is apparently being shut down and reopened as a mixed-sex hall! The motion, if it were passed, would have added LSESU to the list of unions moaning about modernisation.

Women, according to the motion, are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are the "right to choose an environment that is conducive to their welfare, religious and cultural customs and personal and parental wishes" (UB Clause 2).

Jack was surprised that some bespectacled constitutionalist didn't complain to C&S that the motion breached "the spirit of the Constitution" or the Codes of Practice or the Memorandum of Understanding or the Human Rights Act or the Geneva Convention, Holy Koran or LSESU Krishna Consciousness Society Vegetarians' Charter.

The debate about the Hall turned into the larger question of the merits of subsidies, positive discrimination and affirmative action. The eventual vote was close, but with many abstentions.

In order to form a more perfect Union General Meeting, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, Natalie Black decided to honour a motion to 'divide the house'. And divide it did. But the motion fell faster than a feminist's guillotine on Ranson's neck.

# Madlani defeated on all-female hall motion

Natalie Vassilouthis

Rishi Madlani, the Students' Residences officer, suffered a shock defeat last week, when a motion he was sponsoring failed to pass the UGM.

As Residences officer, Madlani raised the issue of all-women's halls, which are currently available from the University of London, as opposed to the School, in the form of College Hall.

However, due to reduced demand for such accommodation, the future of College Hall has been put into jeopardy.

Some supporters of the motion have blamed Madlani's poor speech and questioning for the defeat.

Madlani argued that the imminent closure of the only women's only hall in the University of London, will prevent female students who, for religious or personal reasons, are

averse to living in mixed sex accommodation, from enjoying their right to choose an "environment that is conducive to their university experience as well as crucial to their welfare, religious and cultural customs and personal and parental wishes".

He commented to *The Beaver* that a similar motion had been passed by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and that an LSE student had requested his support.

James Eyton, the first speaker against the motion, questioned the effectiveness of a motion that was serving arguably non-existent needs, which was affecting the ability of accommodation offices to provide housing for male students.

As the second speaker against the motion, Ben Chapman, who works at the LSE Accommodation Office, pointed out that this year College Hall

"received just 60 applications out of the overall 6,000 made to LSE and intercollegiate halls, 10 of which were from men, and only six from first year undergraduate women, for whom the hall is designed".

He stressed that this resulted in students who had not requested female-only accommodation being placed in the hall.

Furthermore, he argued, since all-female floors and corridors can be requested at LSE halls, the necessity for an entire hall is questionable.

Madlani said he felt that the motion's aims had been misinterpreted.

It seemed that the main issue raised by Eyton and Chapman, was that the provision of women only flats, corridors or floors would suffice in meeting the needs of students. But this seems to lie at the centre of the misunderstanding the motion caused.

Incidentally, it was this point in particular that generated such fervent debate and necessitated the splitting of the floor.

In subsequent conversations regarding the motion, Madlani clarified that flats, corridors and floors fitted the description of 'all-women accommodation within the University of London' that the campaign was designed to support.

The failure of the motion after a 63 to 70 split in the floor was disappointing for Madlani, who had initially felt it would have been easily approved as a simple "support for already-existing University of London policy".

Commentators suggest, however, that the scale of the defeat could have been much larger had the vote taken place before the end of the UGM, since many students had already left the Old Theatre.

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# SU cleared of culpability over New Year brawl

Sam Jones  
News Editor

The Students' Union (SU) was partially absolved of blame for the New Year's violence in the Quad as further details emerged of the incident after a meeting between the SU and LSE officials last week.

Violence broke out at various points during the evening, with five ambulances being called at various stages of the night.

Two young males and one

pregnant woman were physically assaulted.

SU General Secretary, Will Macfarlane met with senior LSE officials including Director Howard Davies to discuss the situation.

The Union was mostly cleared of culpability for problems with the event after the meeting came to the conclusion that events had got out of hand due to problems with the promotion of the evening.

Though the promoters had

been liaised with prior to the party, it was found that it had not been advertised in accordance with the Union's wishes.

Indeed police who later arrived at the scene were under the impression that the event was a rave, and not the elegant black tie champagne ball it had been billed as.

As Macfarlane told Thursday's UGM, far too many tickets for the event had been sold leading to overcrowding. He also took the opportunity to apologise to staff

that worked on the event.

Initial worries about the Union's liability for the violent events were dispelled after it was decided that the Union had behaved "extremely professionally" in handling the issue.

The meeting concluded that the Union would continue to hold responsibility for ensuring adequate security at its events.

In the future, however, it was decided that the Union is to have far more control over the activities of its external promoters.

# ULU shop raises prices to aid Tsunami appeal

Ben Chapman

Students using the University of London Union (ULU) shop are being asked to pay an extra 10p for coffee and tea as a donation to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Appeal.

The price of a cup of tea and coffee now cost 80p and £1.10 respectively. ULU says it will donate 20p from each cup to the appeal. Similar surcharges are being applied in ULU's bars, though students can pay the old price for their drinks if they would rather not make a donation.

The fundraising tactic differs from those employed across LSE Students' Union (SU) facilities in that rather than relying on customers to donate money through collection boxes placed on the counter, students at ULU have to ask to opt out of making a contribution if they do not wish to do so.

Concerns had been expressed that the scheme might be illegal, due to regulations preventing

charities such as ULU from giving money directly to other charitable causes. Two LSE SU officials commented that they could not understand how a students' union could operate such a system and make it legal.

However, the scheme does not break the law since posters around the ULU shop make students aware in advance of their purchase where the money is going.

National Union of Students Solicitor Michael Mawle told *The Beaver*: "It's ok if they are making it clear that there is a surcharge, which is not compulsory, so the student will know that they are paying over the odds, and the reason they are doing so is that they are contributing that payment over the top to the appeal."

"It's a permissible way of collecting - it's just like having a bucket on the counter and saying 'this is for the tsunami appeal'."

LSE SU Treasurer Gather Carter said that the Union would not be adopting a similar policy to the one at ULU, but had been pursuing other options, such as a

loose change drive, and would be working with societies to get other programmes up and running in the coming weeks.

The system has raised concerns from some who believe that students will be placed in an uncomfortable position if they prefer not to pay the surcharge. ULU Vice President for Finance and Operations, Rob Park, refuted this suggestion, stressing that any donations remained entirely voluntary.

"There is no pressure at all. We have had people asking not to donate, and they just pay the normal price. If there are any complaints that people feel under pressure to donate, then that will be looked at and action taken to ensure that people are aware that it is voluntary" he said.

When asked how many students he estimated had chosen not to contribute the extra amount, Park put the figure at roughly 20%. The manager of the shop, Maria Cao Garcia, said she believed that this was about right, though overall she said that the reaction from customers had



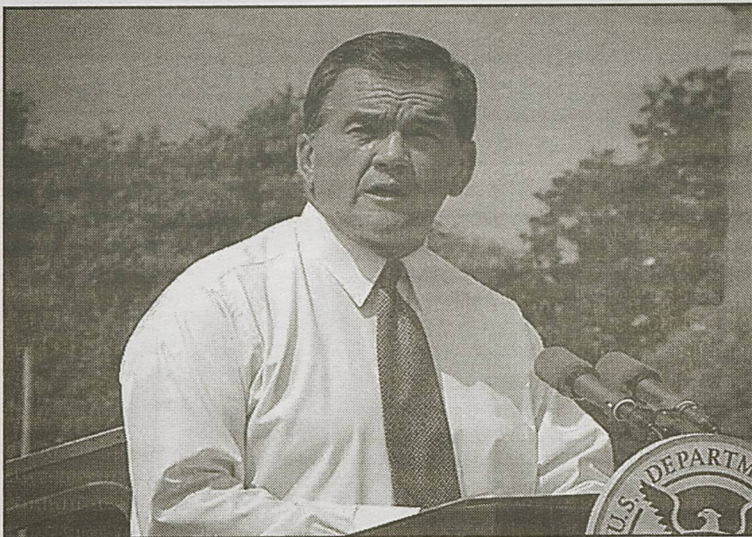
ULU shop: Tea prices on the rise. / Photo: Ben Chapman

been positive.

"I was convinced that we were going to have more complaints," she said, "but the reaction was

very surprising. The students don't really complain. To be honest, it's more the older people that have a problem with it."

## Homeland heavyweight Ridge speaks at LSE



Tom Ridge who spoke at the LSE last Friday.

Alex Hochuli

Tom Ridge, the retiring US Department of Homeland Security Secretary, spoke at the LSE on Friday, addressing border security and wider international cooperation in the War on Terror.

In a public lecture chaired by Dr Alan Sked, Ridge discussed the balancing of civil liberties and security, worldwide coordination of anti-terrorism efforts including technical aspects such as biometrics, and the US's dedication to the spreading of freedom, before taking questions from the floor. The hour-long event was well-attended, and despite the high-security pres-

ence, featured Ridge tackling demanding issues and questions in a relaxed atmosphere.

Tom Ridge, who announced his resignation in November, stressed the need for continuing international partnership in dealing with the many facets of terrorism. Practical measures involved in securing borders as well as in the "wider fight" were mentioned, Ridge demanding "more of the same," with regard to trans-Atlantic vigilance in security operations. The search for "what it is that can turn a moderate to an extremist" was one key aspect in "rooting out the scourge of the international community," according to Ridge.

The last 20 minutes featured

several probing questions from American and European journalists as well as LSE students. Despite a protest organized by the LSE SU Stop the War coalition outside, the lecture itself was relatively calm.

Ridge fielded provocative questions regarding supposed American duplicity towards India and Pakistan, difficulty in achieving consensus between 'allies' and President Bush's diplomacy.

He ended on an ominous note, stating the inevitability of "something else," another

large scale terrorist attack, happening, but once again affirmed the imperative of working together against terrorism.

## Hurndall killer jailed

Dave Cole

A soldier had been charged in connection with the death of Tom Hurndall, the International Solidarity Movement photographer, who was elected as the LSE SU's Honorary Vice-President for 2003-04.

On the eve of the one-year anniversary of the death of Tom Hurndall, Aymad Atawna, a soldier in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF), received a five and a half month sentence from an Israeli military court for taking part in the cover-up over Hurndall's shooting.

The soldiers involved originally said that Hurndall, then 21, was on the edge of a security zone, carrying a weapon and wearing camouflaged clothing.

They have since admitted that he was not in a security zone, was not carrying a weapon and had on a high visibility orange jacket.

Hurndall was in the Occupied

Territories with the International Solidarity Movement.

The soldier accused of shooting Hurndall, Sgt. Idier Wahid Taysin, will appear before the Tel Aviv military court on January 23 and 30 charged on six counts, the most serious being manslaughter.

Diplomats in Israel have said the only reason the case came to trial was the persistence and international lobbying by Hurndall's family.

Hurndall's parents have demanded an end to what they call a 'culture of impunity' by which the IDF operates in the Occupied Territories.

At an otherwise quiet vigil on the one year-anniversary of Hurndall's shooting outside Downing Street, one man was arrested, apparently for standing on the Downing Street side of Whitehall after police had asked him to move to the other side of the road.

## K defends new LSE website

Jeff Berman

LSE Students' Union Communications Officer Khurshid "K" Faizullaev has been responding to recent criticisms made by *The Beaver* and by students at last week's UGM concerning the new SU website and his performance as a sabbatical officer.

Faizullaev admitted that when he finally uploaded the new website over the holiday break, much of the content, including the entertainments page, was incomplete. Although he offered no explanation for this, Faizullaev stated that the entertainments page now included a great deal of useful information that had not existed before, and that other sections such as the "campaigns," "links," and "archives" pages would be made available as soon as they are prepared, later this term.

The Communications Officer

also offered an explanation for the standard of the existing text as well. Some opinions have branded the text as shoddy, containing some areas that had obviously been cut from the SU handbook and other sections of poor English. One sentence proclaimed "This week, the UGM will see election on its Chair and Vice-Chair". The site also included a photo showing only three of the four sabbatical officers. Faizullaev replied that all sections copied from the SU handbook have now been eliminated, and that only one photo of all four sabbaticals could be found.

"The website is under constant improvement," he said. "I am thankful to all those who are giving me feedback. Without them, I would not be able to improve the website."

When it was revealed that the new website included an advertisement for the National Student Survey, which the UGM voted

against supporting during the Michaelmas term, Faizullaev replied that he immediately instructed the website design company, OnCampusUK, to take down the advertisement. Faizullaev said that he "I did not expect NSS to advertise through OnCampusUK, and that is why it was allowed in the first place by OnCampusUK."

The web design company has already entered into partnerships with over 50 student unions including Oxford, Glasgow, Bristol, Leicester and St. Andrews "which collectively represent over 850,000 students"

Finally, responding a question at the UGM that he could not be contacted over the holiday period either via email or on his mobile phone, Faizullaev pointed out that he was on his annual leave, and that the part of the world where he was staying did not have internet access or phone connections.

# HEFCE urges universities to go green

James Caspell

Universities were urged last week to promote sustainable development through a variety of activities, ranging from education and research to making greater use of renewable energy.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) acknowledged that sustainable development encompassed economic, social, and ethical issues as well as environmental activities.

HEFCE's strategy set out a wide-ranging role for higher education including preparing students for their future roles as society's leaders so that they acknowledge the need for sustainability. According to HEFCE, universities should also encourage research into social and technological solutions to climate change and diminishing natural resources.

LSE currently lags behind the likes of Oxford in terms of sustainability, and many other universities have already invested in sustainable construction and development.

The University of Newcastle's new Devonshire building produces its own renewable energy whilst its climate responsive facades optimise daylight and solar penetration according to the time of day and season.

At Reading University, students collected more than 1,000 signatures petitioning for the university to be powered by renewable energy. As a result the university converted to renewable sources for the 40m kilowatt hours of electricity per year it consumes - equivalent to the power used by more than 12,000 homes.

In relation to the 24 Kingsway development at LSE, SU Environment and Ethics Officer, Joel Kenrick stated, "What we [students] need to ensure is that LSE can now turn words into action. In terms of the new building [24 Kingsway] it is an exciting chance to show that LSE takes issues of sustainability seriously...I have already received assurances from the School that they will incorporate many environmental features, and I hope this report will encourage them to do even more."



24 Kingsway: a potential 'green' building / Photo: Stacy Marie-Ishmael

## Brief News

### Black re-elected

Natalie Black was re-elected as chair of the LSE's Union General Meeting (UGM) last Thursday. The third year International Relations undergraduate and hockey club captain ran on her record of getting three or four motions discussed at the UGM every week during the Michaelmas term. She faced competition from Oliver Ranson and James Eyton. Ranson, a former vice-chair of the UGM when he was an undergraduate at the LSE. Ranson pledged to bring more publicity to the UGM, highlighting the high number of quorum counts which took place last term. Both defeated candidates praised Black's chairing of the UGM. Eyton described her as "an excellent incumbent" and Ranson said she "is a sound chair as she exerts some degree of control over the proceedings. She added that she would concentrate on making the UGM more focused on student issues and more representative of opinions on the LSE campus.

Alex George

## Student neighbours

Arthur Krebbers

Students make good neighbours according to a recent study published by urban geographer Darren Smith.

Students bring large amounts of liquid wealth to areas, making for fashionable and more lively neighbourhoods. Among the benefits are cappuccino bars, trendy shops and greater diversity.

"Studentification" has up to now mainly received bad press. The ruling stereotype of anti-social noisy and drunk students as bad neighbours will indeed be difficult to dislodge.

According to Smith "studentification can play a role in improving areas a great deal. You've got

the investment in the local economy and the cultural quality they [students] bring. It's vital this is recognised - by the university, the local authority and every community group."

LSE SU residences officer Rishi Madlani agreed with Smith; "Areas in London with high degrees of students, such as Passfield and Carr Saunders, tend to have a very good atmosphere. One of the reasons is that many LSE students are actively involved in community life through volunteer work.

"Quite a few students are doing tutoring schemes at local primary schools for example. Such students are great ambassadors of our university."

## February course start

Adam Tomczik

Attention has been drawn to a growing trend amongst British Universities of allowing students to begin their courses in February.

An article in *The Guardian* newspaper highlighted the increasing number of students entering British universities at the beginning of the second semester. The new scheme creates the option of a "gap semester" and accommodates mature, overseas, part-time, or non-traditional students.

The second round of freshers at the University of East London will account for nearly 30 percent of this year's new enrollments.

"While it makes sense for most school and college leavers to begin in September, that certainly doesn't suit everybody." Said Carol Elliot, the Head of Admissions at UEL.

The LSE's Academic Registrar George Kiloh explained to *The Beaver* that the School's yearlong classes preclude Lent Term starts.

He added that the LSE contemplated "semesterisation" in 1993 or 1994, but, "it was not convinced of the academic merit" of such a scheme. of teaching in two large blocks rather than three smaller ones; it foresaw difficulties in fitting semesters around traditional breaks such as Christmas and Easter."

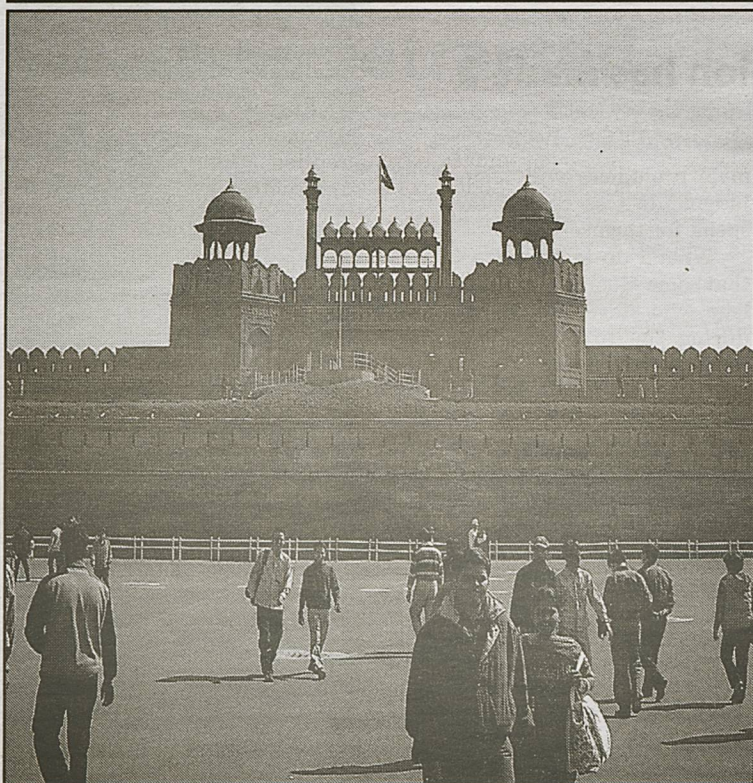
Alex Le-May

### Literate society

With no English or Arts department at the LSE, it is difficult to perceive an LSE student reading any book other than a text book, but it seems there is an ounce of imagination in us, because a new Literature Society aims to awaken LSE students' creative side.

Rothna Begum, a second year law student, Chair and founder of the new society conceived the idea after realizing she missed studying English Literature. She said, "It's so good to read something other than a law text book for a change." The Literature Society is open to everyone at the LSE and will hold meetings every two to three weeks to discuss a particular novel. There will also be a Literature Society Journal for budding authors featuring short stories, poems and book and play reviews. Trips to the theatre and poetry readings are also planned.

Nadine El-Enany



Not the new headquarters of LSE India.

## LSE to open in Delhi

Dharini Nagarajan

LSE is on the verge of setting up an Asian office, focusing on India and China. While nearly 20 percent of the School's students come from Asia, 200 hail from India alone.

The School signed a Memorandum of Understanding last year with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). The CII has offered some office space for the representative of the School in India, Ms. Ruth Kattumri, who was recently appointed and will be based in New Delhi.

When enquired about the need for this Asian strategy, an LSE spokesperson said: "LSE has a long association with India, and Asia as a whole, which goes back almost to its foundation. The School has a strong reputation and profile in Asia and a great deal of academic research concerns Asia".

This strategy involves enhancing and furthering LSE's intellectual agreement with, and reputation in, Asia. It is hoped that this will create the basis for more robust and well-funded academic research collaborations with key Asian universities.

An LSE spokesperson said: "Ruth in the India office will provide more infrastructure to support individual academic visits; assist with contacts with universities and other institutions; identify partner institutions through which collaborative research and teaching can be developed; and support recruitment and fundraising efforts locally, as well as the development of corporate links and executive education.

While part of Ruth's role will be to support recruitment, she won't be dealing specifically with admissions. A similar role for a representative in China is also being developed."

# Questioning authority

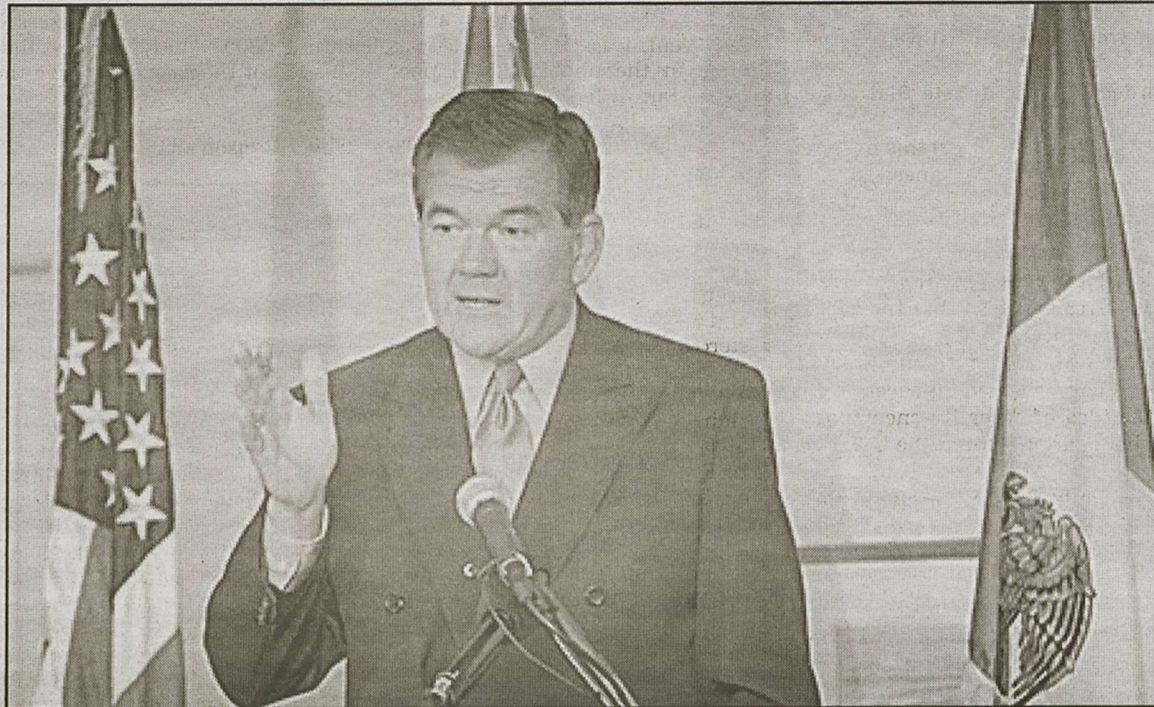
**Shariq Gilani went to the Tom Ridge speech, but left disappointed with the questioning Ridge received.**

A solidly establishment figure who is famously moderate and still a member of the Bush Administration, only the naïve would have expected Director of Homeland Security Tom Ridge to deliver a radically forthright speech.

It would not be too much though to have expected some probing and inquisitive questions from the audience in the Q&A session given the highly controversial nature of American policy in dealing with the spectre of terrorism. Yet for the most part questions ranged from being sycophantic to confusing. Judging from some of the remarks that he made during his speech, I imagine that even Tom Ridge would have left slightly perplexed that the only radical questions he received came from right-wingers.

For instance he indicated rather interestingly that he did not believe that civil liberties needed to be compromised in order to enhance national security and that he expected to be questioned on that. Yet there was nothing. No questions on Guantanamo Bay, the internment of foreign nationals without trial, the impact of the War on Iraq on homeland security, on the adequacy and potential dangers of biometric data - there wasn't even a question on red, orange and yellow alerts.

Although some of it may have been due to people being awed by authority, I think that it is an indication of a wider trend where public lectures are greatly diminished due to the moderator's discretion being limited in favour of



Homeland Security Secretary, Tom Ridge.

audience participation. While the LSE continues to attract excellent speakers, the post-speech discussions where ideas can be challenged contribute greatly to the vibrancy of thought at the LSE and if it is to continue then there is a need for a change in the way the events are run.

Firstly, I think that the chair should play a greater part in the post-speech questioning. Often, that person who may be ideally suited to contribute effectively to the discussion watches on as the speakers are bombarded with a whole host of cringe-worthy questions.

Having said that, this is the

LSE and believe it or not there are audience members who have interesting ideas to contribute which can add greatly to the event. The question therefore is how to filter the good questions from the bad, the incisive comments from the rambling speeches.

I suggest a system whereby before and after the speeches, the stewards who otherwise spend time trying to teach people how to use the microphone, collect on pieces of paper questions for the public. The moderator can then go through them choosing which ones to ask and in which order.

This mechanism which will be

extremely simple to implement would firstly give more time for questions as time which is otherwise lost in people trying to make speeches would not be lost. It would also result in questioning which is not only more incisive but also broad ranging as duplication which is a common feature of questions would be eliminated.

Witnessing Tom Ridge fumbling around attempting to ask the penetrating question on President Bush's admission of the impact of his diplomatic gaffes gave a flavour of what the event could of have been, unfortunately that's all it ended up being.

## Equality at College Hall?

**After a heated UGM debate, Nazir Hussain wonders if the Union has made a mistake on College Hall**

The voting down of the resolution proposed by SU Residences Officer against the proposed closure of the only female residence, College Hall came as a shock to many students and me. Our Union, I had noticed tried to be inclusive - catering to the needs of all types of students - we are after all possibly one of the most diverse campus in the UK.

Granted that there are valid reasons against the move - as Ben Chapman pointed out, most of the LSE students allocated to the hall did not choose it. But when has our Union policies been based on such crude Utilitarian principles? Having an inclusive policy often necessitates sacrifice on the part of others. This can be easily justified on the basis that certain needs are so fundamental to minorities that the majority

should be living with a something that he may merely find a little inconvenient.

Obviously, it is far more important that a female who does not feel comfortable living in an environment with males lingering along the corridor at midnight because she comes from a conservative background where this is unfathomable, or because she was once a victim of sexual abuse, should be spared the mental discomfort of living in a co-ed environment than that a female should be allowed to experience living in a co-ed environment.

Far more worrying was the argument that living in a co-ed environment is part of the college experience, especially since it was made in response to comments the needs of conservative Muslims and Catholics had to be taken into account. To be honest,

I was disgusted. All this sounds reminiscent of the argument of extreme French secularists that female Muslims wearing the headscarf had to be liberated, even if they made a conscious choice to put it on, without any pressures. For lack of a better word, I shall describe that attitude as 'imperialist'.

A 20-year old female who comes from a conservative background needs to 'assisted' into experiencing a normal college life, where normality is defined as accepting the norms of liberal 'modern' or 'Western' societies as the universally valid ones. An argument students of 19th century imperialism will find all too familiar.

I do not wish to spend too much time rigorously defending why some females might want a women's only hall - because my

male prejudices will temper my judgments - as equals, they can speak for themselves.

What I do know for a fact is that some Muslim girls at our college who stayed at College Hall during the first year want all-females Residences in operation. And that an Asian girl had told me that she the experience of a male walking into the female toilet while she was coming out of the shower rather unnerving.

All I am pleading is for us to stop imposing our allegedly superior values on others who do not see them as such. As a diverse Union, that should be the first step - we may pride ourselves on being a vibrant Union, but we should remind ourselves that we need to ask ourselves why Union politics remain by and large disproportionately unrepresentative in composition.

## The Beaver

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If you have written three or more articles for *The Beaver* and your name does not appear in the Collective, please email thebeaver@lse.ac.uk and you will be added to the list in next week's paper.

*The Beaver* is available in alternative formats.

# The Beaver

## Comment

### College compromise

Though the motion by SU Residences Officer Rishi Madlani at last week's UGM was intended to be straightforward, it was obviously anything but.

The motion itself was poorly worded and the debate that ensued was one that he did not expect.

The *Beaver*, however, supports the vote of the UGM in this instance, simply because Madlani's motion took too hard a stance: surely a women's only hall is a misallocation of resources, a point Ben Chapman aptly articulated.

Though ULU has a role in providing facilities that individual colleges cannot, it would be better served to work towards providing women's only floors on multiple halls of residence so that the accommodation system would have greater flexibility.

The fact is, the concept of equality is grounded on the notion that all peoples, regardless of gender or ethnicity, have equal access to the same resources. In addition, surely the idea of diversity encompasses gender as well as ethnicity. What was being argued for at the UGM was nothing of the sort.

If an all-male hall ever existed, it would have been closed down decades ago on the grounds that it was sexist. If we are campaigning for equality, true equality, how is the issue of an all-female hall any different?

That said, *The Beaver* recognises that many women face difficulties that most men do not and we do not claim to be experts on this subject matter; to that end, it would not be difficult for halls to provide all-female floors or self-enclosed flats. Why is this not sufficient? Women who are not comfortable living in the vicinity of men could maintain a suitable distance and yet still interact with them in some form in communal areas. Isn't that also part of the university experience?

Sadly, though many of our readers have protested against the existence of men, we cannot actually provide for this. Men exist at the LSE and you will have to bump into one or two eventually, deplorable as they may be.

### Set Texts reviewed

The recent decision made by the Library to recommend lengthening the loan period on Set Texts is welcomed by *The Beaver* and, no doubt, the vast majority of the LSE's student population. It has shown itself open to criticism and has acted in the most reasonable way possible.

What is curious, however, is the fact that it feels the need to submit the decision to the Library Users' Committee, something it did not do upon changing the loan period on Set Texts before Michaelmas Term.

The library would also do well to perhaps keep one book available on a short-term loan period for students to peruse in worst-case circumstances.

Nevertheless, many students can now breathe a sigh of relief as they now will now have sufficient time to make the best use of a book without having to photocopy entire chapters.

Now, on to fixing those stairs.

### Reaction retracted

While the re-opening of the Atlas Bar is a victory for student welfare, one wonders why the Union rushed into closing down the bar in the first place.

Though the massive losses at the bar were weighing down Carter's budget this year, recent developments have shown the rewards that could have been reaped had consultation moved out of the ASC and into the wider student body.

We do not claim that students could have negotiated this agreement, but had students at Great Dover Street and around the Union been informed of the decision earlier, at least ideas would have been considered, and we could have avoided a prospective mess.

Now the impetus is on Great Dover Street residents to put the bar to use.

**The Beaver is calling elections for the following posts:**

**Managing Editor**  
**Business Manager**  
**Sports Editor (x2)**  
**Visual Arts Editor**  
**About Editor**

**Elections will be held in S78 at 6pm on Monday, January 24th**  
**Only Collective members may vote. All may stand.**

# Letters to the Editor

*The Beaver* offers all readers the right to reply to anything that appears in the paper. Letters should be sent to [thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk](mailto:thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk), and should be no longer than 250 words. Letters may be edited prior to publication. The deadline for submission is 3pm on the Sunday prior to publication.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to object to the letter in last week's *Beaver* from six LSESU societies criticising the printing of a photo from an AU event. I agree that what was done in the photo was in poor taste, but I feel that these six societies have over-reacted to what they admit was meant as "a bit of fun" and not intended to harm anybody.

It is strange that the letter says that the dress in the photo "is typical of many Muslim men around the world and at LSE", and then says that they "find this stereotype highly offensive and Islamophobic".

Even more questionable is the claim that "it contributes to a climate of fear and intimidation on LSE's campus". Perhaps they could have explained how there is such a climate, and what effect this photo has actually had.

The letter also refers to "the current climate of Islamophobia in the UK post-9/11". A recent documentary by anti-racist campaigner and writer Kenan Malik showed that the claims about such a climate are far removed from the reality, with, for example, only eight convictions for religiously aggravated crimes in the UK last year. Talk of a climate of 'Islamophobia' therefore seems exaggerated and unjustified.

The letter seems the latest in a line of complaints about offensive and 'Islamophobic' items in *The Beaver*, and demands for censorship and apologies. Personally, I prefer free speech and a free press. I was unsurprised to see the Islamic Society, the Socialist Worker Student Society and the Stop the War Coalition signing the letter, but I may have expected Liberty@LSE to have taken a more libertarian or liberal position. Then again, with their chair's record in attempting to undermine the democratic process when Winston Churchill was elected as Honorary Vice President of the LSESU, maybe not.

Peter John Cannon

Dear Sir,

You report that attendance at the UGM has reached all time lows. When I glanced through my collection of *The Beaver* from 2000-2003 over the holidays, I noted that Union Jack or another writer often reports attendance of less than a hundred students.

At no time during the course of this year have I counted less than a hundred students - and I go every week. The UGM still maintains some strength. The reason we speak of so-called 'death' is the disgraceful practice of some members who call quoracy to defeat motions.

This innovation is ungentlemanly and a political fudge. These people should be ejected from the meeting at the first opportunity to show our solidarity against the practice.

UGM attendance, like so many variables, is stochastic and as such liable to fluctuations around a trend. If that trend has been one hundred for some time then the quota for quoracy should

be reduced by constitutional amendment post haste. If the trend is going down, then the UGM is indeed dying, but given the high attendances witnessed through 2002-2004, I suggest that this is not the case. Long live the UGM!

Oliver Ranson

Dear Sir,

The LSESU Islamic Society would like to inform *The Beaver* that some of Daniel Freedman's comments in his column last week were malicious, amounting to nothing less than an attack on Islamic beliefs.

Dr. Al-Qaradawi is regarded as a mainstream and well-respected scholar of Islamic jurisprudence and not an extremist as Mr. Freedman suggests.

It is true that Dr. Al-Qaradawi, in accordance with Islamic jurisprudence considers homosexuality to be a sin. However, this is a belief held not only by Muslims, but shared by orthodox Jews and Catholics, among others.

Indeed, the views on homosexuality held by the Christian Right associated with the Bush administration that Mr. Freedman supports are well known. Dr Al-Qaradawi does not, however, incite hatred and violence towards homosexuals.

It is clear that Mr. Freedman has used his column in *The Beaver* once more as an avenue to selectively target Islam and Muslims, evidenced for instance by his unqualified assertion that Islam subordinates women to men - and his selective association of Islam with intolerance towards homosexuality.

Sadly, the contents of Mr. Freedman's column over the past year have not brought together people of all faiths and backgrounds on our campus, but rather fostered an open and unjustifiable hostility towards Islam.

LSESU Islamic Society

Dear Sir,

As a postgraduate student who has been through schooling and higher education in three different countries, I have become increasingly concerned with the quality of education offered here at LSE.

I am not referring to lectures and seminars offered here on campus but I am increasingly concerned with the conduct of several of our undergraduate colleagues.

It is rather discomfoting to see that many of the racial, sexual and class stereotypes continue to be the subject of humour within both *The Beaver* newspaper, as well as by some students.

From my own recent outing at the Tuns, I witnessed perhaps a 'traditional' Wednesday sports night where both Footballers and Rugby players openly chanted against one another using derogatory and disrespectful language akin to that of football hooligans.

Further, the recent Wheel

Barrow sponsored by the AU proved this point.

Perhaps the issue of political correctness has perhaps been pushed too far nowadays, yet I do not think that it is constructive to promote entertainment and humour at the expense of others.

The recent report by *The Beaver* on the "Picture imperfect" concerning the issue of the Rugby players portraying US soldiers and Muslim prisoners highlights this point.

In a higher education institution such as LSE, I find it disappointing that its students continue to exemplify cases of bigotry and ignorance.

Roger Lee Huang

Dear Sir,

With their dresses blowing over their heads, the Chair of the LSE Liberty Society, the Islamic Society and the Development Society have written a nasty, glib and positively spiteful letter to the *Beaver* complaining about a photo taken at the AU Barrel.

The photo depicted several Rugby players, half of whom were dressed as soldiers, the other half as bearded terrorists.

Appropriately enough, the soldiers were pointing (presumably fake, alas) guns at the terrorists.

This picture, it seems, offended the natural order of things desired by the Liberty, Islamic and Development Societies, which, in any event, reflects more poorly on those societies than on the AU.

What I find especially objectionable about their letter were its implications.

That is, firstly, their assumption that the bearded terrorists depicted in the photos were automatically Muslims.

Secondly, their likening of the AU Barrel to Abu Ghraib, which is a hyperbole of the worst kind that manages to smear one of the LSE's most prestigious groups (the AU) while simultaneously diminishing the severity of what happened at Abu Ghraib.

Lastly, they spoke about this amorphous concept of Islamophobia, which, to be totally honest, is as much a canard as Russophobia during the Cold War and Germanophobia during World War II, and pales in comparison to the anti-Americanism prevalent in most of the Islamic world.

In fact, to the extent one can generalise about such things, the countries at which the label Islamophobic is most often hurled tend to be the freest, most prosperous and most tolerant ones; to wit, the countries where I, as a Muslim, would want to live.

On a more general note, *The Beaver* should not shy from publishing stories and pictures that offend the fragile sensibilities of those who, quite frankly, shouldn't be trusted with books anyway.

In light of her decidedly anti-Liberty conduct, perhaps Miss Anna Protano-Biggs should reconsider her continued Chairmanship of that Society.

Alykhan Velshi

## Features

Features Correspondent: Steve Gummer

## blink

Editors: Tracy Alloway &  
James Upsher

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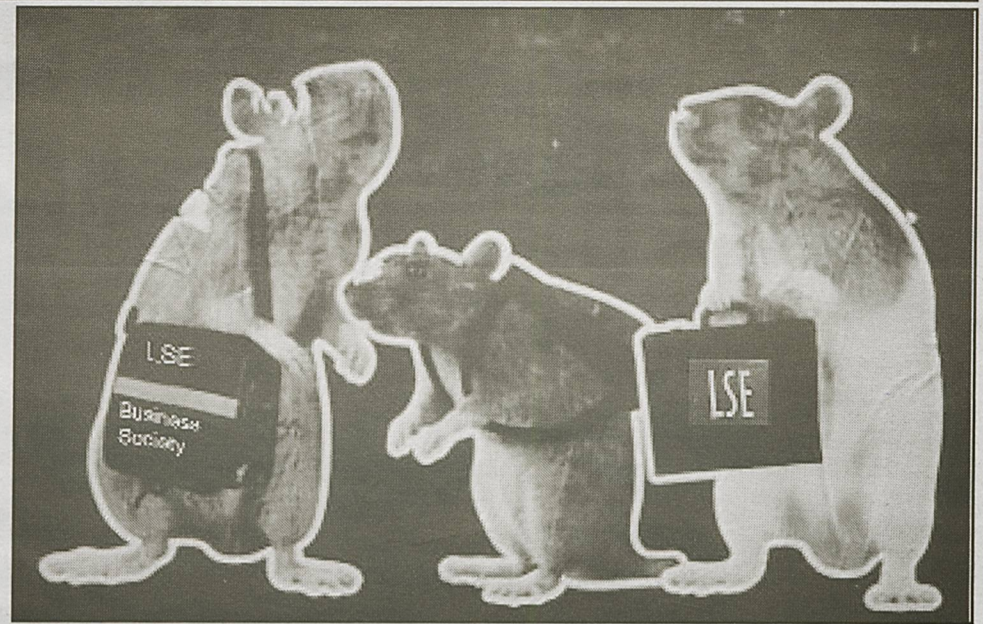
The  
LSE rat  
raceShwetha Janarthanan laments  
the rampant careerism of the  
LSE student body.

Well folks, it's that time of year again. Following a Christmas spent watching *The Sound of Music* for the seventh successive year, I am considerably stressed. The rather petty and frankly, embarrassing reason behind my anguish is that I haven't applied to any work experience programs for the coming summer and the tragic truth is that a second year law student without a vacation scheme is avoided, nay shunned, by their peers and any prospective employers. Or at least, that's what is being whispered on the legal grapevine. The predicament that I find myself in has prompted the need for frantic CV writing and has driven me to reminisce about the high ideals with which I began my law education at this fine establishment.

My decision to study at the LSE was taken in the spring of my Upper Sixth year after about 10 seconds of consideration that briefly glossed over my life in rural, religious Northern Ireland. My heart (and a very glossy prospectus) told me that as a politically inclined individual and a potential pinko leftie, there was only one place where I would belong - somewhere where apparently, there was never only one language, one nationality and one idea - welcome to the LSE. Or so I thought.

The week preceding my arrival was a high of anticipation and excitement. Having not been to an induction day, I half expected to turn up and find girls in floral skirts and DM boots protesting about something, anything, and cerebral individuals meeting in the pub simply to discuss deep philosophical theories based on obscenely complex formulae which I would definitely not understand. In short I expected a forum of intellectual interchange.

I should however, have done more research or even better, talked to a finance student. Imagine my disappointment when on the first Freshers' Night, I was chatted up by a guy who proceeded to explain in intricate detail his entire career plan including exactly what course he was doing, the breakdown of his modules, where he hoped to do his internship (he was a first year for God's sake) and the minimum amount of minimum starting salary he was prepared to accept (30k in case your curious, which of course you are



because you are at the LSE). I spent the whole time trying to politely excuse myself, which of course did not work because the only chink in his CV was that he lacked any kind of interpersonal skills (obviously). When he casually mentioned

"It soon became evident that the second years spent all their time applying for internships and placements."

that he hoped to find his future wife at university, I decided to leave, polite or not.

Hoping that finance freak (which is what I affectionately named him inside my head) was a one-off, I went about the task of making friends. Unfortunately, as I discovered, there are many finance freaks at the LSE. Also prominent among the student population are economics freaks (investment banker wannabes, the professional embodiment of the LSE 'type'), law freaks (recognisable by chain smoking and/or a disconcerting habit of always trying to look important and preoccupied) and accounting freaks (characterised by grey socks and unfashionable clothing). In fact, it was the students taking anthropology, international relations, history and geography that seemed to be the only ones truly enjoying their time at the LSE and worth speaking to. This is of course, a completely unashamed generalisation, but such is life.

It soon became evident that the second years spent all their time applying for internships and placements with each trying to outdo the other in terms of length, pay and most importantly, firms. A one week internship with Goldman Sachs, I learned was worth more than one month's worth of placement with an unknown firm. These students wanted big names to enhance their CV and were prepared to go to terrifying measures to succeed. Of course, there were those who got place-

ments through what they majestically termed 'connections,' but others went to extraordinary lengths to secure a place, with one poor guy forking out £350 for a Hugo Boss suit and another inventing qualifications and extracurricular activities such as former choir member (when he was eight and still at primary school) and former marching band member (not something I readily appreciate anyway, having come from Northern Ireland). When I questioned this individual about the moral issues involved with the creative license he employed to produce his CV, he shrugged (articulately). Apparently, all's fair in love and social sciences.

After spending an entire academic year surrounded by people whose ambition is only matched by their highly inflated ego, I am beginning to wonder whether I was mistaken or merely naïve to entertain the belief that university was education for education's sake rather than a one-stop career shop. I know that I too, am undoubtedly ambitious but there are bounds to this ambition. I want to make money yes, but by doing something I love (or at least happily tolerate) and not by fabricating qualifications. Perhaps this means that as a result of not completing these damned application forms, my immediate earning potential is greatly reduced but at least I'll be enjoying myself whilst writing poetry in a garret and bemoaning my unappreciated genius. It may be beneficial for those career-oriented students to ponder over something somebody (who was probably not that famous anyway considering I can't remember who it was) once said, "the thing about

"I am beginning to wonder whether I was mistaken or merely naïve to entertain the belief that university was education for education's sake rather than a one-stop career shop."

the rat race is that you are still a rat."

## blink management

Thinking about writing for blink? blink welcomes articles from all LSE students. Articles should be around 800-1000 words in length. Please include your name, department and year. Send articles to:

thebeaver.blink@lse.ac.uk

Coming soon: blink - THE SEX ISSUE. Send your stories of love, sex or lack thereof to us by February 14th.





# In defence of the right to joke

**Cliff Chow takes issue with the onslaught of political correctness at the LSE showcased in the recent petition against the AU and *The Beaver*.**

The likes of the AU photo petition as reported in last week's edition of *The Beaver* and the tongue-in-cheek column criticisms as reported in *The Beaver* on November 23rd are driving the LSE further into political correctness orthodoxy. The two claims set forth by the AU photo petitioners: 1) that the photo contributes to a climate of fear and intimidation on LSE's campus and 2) that *The Beaver*, by printing the picture, endorses and promotes such behaviour, are awkward and unintelligible to say the least. Why would otherwise intelligent LSE students make such claims?

Like the political and religious orthodox the petitioners do not understand the nature of a joke. Those who are prompted to tell them to "chill out!" slightly miss the point: the petitioners' real problem was not so much an inability to relax but an inability

*Due to editorial restrictions blink couldn't reproduce the offending photo, so here's an artist's impression using non-offensive giant bunnies and Star Wars characters. No one can find fault with fuzzy animals and pop culture icons, right?*

ity to appreciate the ambiguities of a joke. I would further argue that they are unable to grasp the ambiguities of a joke because they fear the ambiguities. Milan Kundera author of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, writes that a joke "does not serve ideological certitudes [but] contradicts them." The PC orthodox, who judge everything in terms of PC-vs-politically-incorrect bipolarity, feel uncomfortable when they cannot quite fit the ambiguities of a joke in their black-and-white moral universe. They jump to condemn, not essentially because they find the joke offensive, but because they are uncomfortable with its ambiguity. They are eager to denounce a joke in order to make sense of it and to keep their political certitude intact.

**"They are eager to denounce a joke in order to make sense of it and to keep their political certitude intact."**

Furthermore, because the petitioners are so eager to interpret a joke in terms of PC certitude, they succumb to the mistake of confusing the end and the subject matter of a joke. A joke, as author Howard Jacobson puts it so well, "is a thing that comments on itself...because of its essentially dramatic nature." That is to say: a joke, besides those that are genuinely mean-spirited, seeks only to dramatise its subject matter - be it racism or terrorism-but does not become it. Abu Ghraib or terrorism is the subject matter, not the end, of the joke.

This strain of PC absolutism is no small problem both on the LSE campus and in our society at large. Just as we have the likes of the petitioners and James Caspell blindly crying racism and Islamophobia, there are people out there who label *The Merchant of Venice* as anti-Semitic and *Anna Karenina* as a corruption to morality. Jokes, art, literature and free speech are under threat if we take PC too far. In December, the comedian Rowan Atkinson (Mr. Bean) started a campaign at the House of Commons against the "incitement to religious hatred" charge under the "Serious Organized Crime and Police Bill." While the Home Office stated that "telling jokes

**"This strain of PC absolutism is no small problem both on the LSE campus and in our society at large."**

about religions" would not come under the ambit of the offence, Atkinson fears that a wrong joke or a novel that does not reflect popular sentiments might be enough to trigger it. Look at the PC orthodoxy that is so prevalent around us and see that Atkinson's worry is neither unfounded nor far-fetched. Let us keep this in mind: as we united to condemn the fatwa pronounced on *The Satanic Verses*, we should take care not to impose our own fatwa on those who we deem to have acted or spoken slightly or aberrantly.

What can we do to curb PC absolutism at the LSE? We start by engaging it on this newspaper. To this end I would like to see Prashant Rao stop being defensive and start shouting down the petitioners: "Do not impose censorship on the Beaver and, in any case, your allegations are frivolous."

## Eyes to the Left



Capitalism is unsustainable

James Caspell

Capitalism is environmentally unsustainable. The unequal and spiralling material wealth that it elicits exacerbates what is increasingly becoming a global emergency.

Whilst capitalism might be the most expedient socio-economic system at producing growth (excluding legal slavery), the social and ecological costs are becoming increasingly evident. Absolute poverty afflicts 1.2 billion people whilst global warming threatens the very existence of the world's poorest states due to rising sea levels.

Capitalists argue that wealth 'trickle-down' will proliferate the economic development required to lift people out of absolute poverty.

Nevertheless, the 10 richest people on earth have a combined net worth of \$255bn - roughly 60 percent of the annual income of sub-Saharan Africa; the world's 500 richest people have more money than the total annual earnings of the poorest three billion.

Whilst the flood of wealth runs distinctly upwards, real floods disproportionately threaten the world's poorest as a consequence of climate change. Even if capitalism 'works' in the future, to place six billion people on par with the average standard of living of a UK resident would require the resources of three planets based on current material consumption. To bring everyone in the world up to the standard of US citizens would require the resources of five planets.

Capitalism rapes the planet in order to maximise profit, permanently destroying the one factor of production which humans do not control - natural resources. The ecological footprint of London is 120 times its geographical size. Such unsustainability is not something we should impose on the 'developing world' - whose ecologically sustainable agrarian societies are forcefully dismantled by the IMF and World Bank, held to ransom in return for aid.

The tsunami in South East Asia is evidence of the power of nature. Capitalism may well be digging its own grave, but climate change will be with us forever. Capitalism can be 'green-washed,' but not 'greened' - corporate social responsibility is a myth. Companies still inhibit freedom of association by prohibiting trade unions and lobby against Kyoto as it threatens their main motive - to make profit.

There are currently around 25 million refugees as a consequence of environmental catastrophes. By 2050, this could be as many as 150 million. Will it take the submergence of Bangladesh - a real possibility within 50 years - before the world sits up and acts?

Only intervention on a global scale can rectify wealth inequalities and save the planet from permanent devastation. Those who deny this will not just have sea water lapping at their feet, but blood on their hands as environmental turmoil causes civil and religious wars conjuring unparalleled economic turmoil.

Any good capitalist should at least be concerned about the latter.

## Law

Law Correspondent: Alykhan Velshi

## Detention without trial

Matthew Axworthy examines the phenomenon of detention without trial of Palestinians in Israel.

On Tuesday 11th of January 2005 the LSE Liberty Society held an event discussing the ruling by the Law Lords (Britain's most senior judges) that internment without trial is illegal under EU human rights law. Currently nine foreign citizens are being detained without charge indefinitely at Belmarsh prison in the UK. A packed Hong Kong Theatre heard three speakers, one of them a lawyer representing some of the detained men, tell how this ruling probably means that it is only a matter of time before these men are either charged with an offence and bought before a jury, or given their freedom at long last. The speakers also suggested that internment without trial may finally be coming to an end in the infamous Guantanamo Bay Camp in a part of Cuba still occupied by the US military.

Since September 11th hundreds of non-US citizens, including several Britons, have been imprisoned without trial in conditions which may have violated the Convention Against Torture. It has even been suggested that some of the detainees have been held solely on the basis of evidence obtained through torture, whether in Guantanamo or elsewhere.

If the speakers at the Liberty event are right, the release or charging of all of these men would signify an important victory for human rights activists and campaigners against the war on terror. Liberty, Amnesty International, the Stop the War Coalition and others have campaigned against what the US is doing to these men. However, even if all the detainees are freed, or at least secure a trial in the US, those of us concerned with human rights should not rest on our laurels.

It seems to me absolutely correct to oppose abuses like imprisoning someone indefinitely without even telling them what they have been charged with, let alone giving them a fair trial. Whatever the international situation, we should defend basic human rights, both in our own country and abroad. As the US is supposed to be Britain's ally and there allegedly exists a 'special relationship,' it also right for us to use this relationship to demand that the US respect peoples' basic rights as well. However, it is common among many who share this view to overlook imprisonment without trial in another of Britain's allies, namely Israel.

"Israel is also known to imprison Palestinian children as young as nine."

A number of Israel's policies have been criticised by campaigners and public figures, including the destruction of thousands of Palestinian homes, the alleged use

of civilians as human shields, the killing of hundreds of children by the Israeli army and the wounding of thousands more. However, despite a number of reports by

"...little action has been taken on Israel's policy of internment without trial."

Amnesty International and other human rights groups, little action has been taken on Israel's policy of internment without trial, known in Israel as Administrative Detention.

According to Israeli human rights monitor B'tselem, there are currently around 7,500 to 8,000 Palestinians in Israeli prisons, (the Palestinians claim the figure is closer to 11,000) of whom approximately 1,000 have been interned without charge under Administrative Detention powers. These mostly young men have been accused of no specific crime, but are apparently held as a punishment for their anti-Israel views or ideological orientation. It is important to note that these are not men accused of acts of violence against Israelis, as Palestinians accused of participating in armed resistance or terrorism tend to be tried and sentenced to extremely long prison sentences, on those occasions when they are actually taken alive (at least 181 Palestinians have been extra-judicially executed by Israeli forces according to B'tselem).

Like many repressive laws in former British colonies, the Administrative Detention powers are actually Britain's fault. During the Mandate period when Palestine was under the control of Britain, the colonial authorities introduced the power to place people in Administrative Detention. During the 1936-39 Palestinian revolt against British occupation, the mandatory authority used these powers to imprison hundreds of Palestinians. These powers are being used in the same way today to enforce the Israeli occupation.

Even for the thousands of Palestinians 'lucky' enough to be told what offence they have committed and given a trial, things are little better. Many receive hasty trials in Hebrew (no Arabic translator is provided) and do not have access to lawyers. In a matter of hours their future can be decided. This experience is becoming part of ordinary life for many Palestinians. In the past 52 months 1.5 percent of the entire Palestinian population in the occupied territories has passed through Israeli custody.

Israel is also known to imprison Palestinian children as young as nine, not taking their age into account when sentencing them, in contravention of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Between September 2000 and June 2003 over 1,900 children were arrested by Israeli security forces.

Amnesty International and other human rights groups claim to have documented widespread use of torture in Israeli prisons. Palestinians are kept in separate jails to the rest of the Israeli prison system (where all Israelis and foreigners are held) and conditions are allegedly much worse. There have been a number of mass hunger strikes by prisoners to protest prison conditions, but these have gone largely unreported by the Western media.

If it is right to campaign against imprisonment without trial in Britain and the US, then the same standards must apply to Israel. Students concerned with human rights should do all they can to make their government put pressure on Israel over its treatment of Palestinians. At the very least all Palestinians should receive a fair trial with a lawyer and a translator if the trial is not in Arabic. All prisoners interned without charge throughout the world should be immediately released wherever they are held.



Inside an Israeli prison.



## Shifting sands in the gulf state economies

The once oil dependent, cyclical economies of the Persian Gulf are increasingly diversified. *Malcolm Bell* explains why the world should pay attention...

**A**rtificial palm trees had a great 2004, especially in orders to the Persian Gulf.

Despite being blessed with the perfect natural climate for real palm trees, the development of indoor shopping malls, retail complexes, airports, cinemas and restaurants in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain and Abu Dhabi has meant that the high demand for indoor palm trees was like never before. These developments are part of a continued trend in the Persian Gulf where economies are becoming much less dependent on oil, less cyclical and more diversified in their growth. In fact, some sectors such as airlines are even challenging their international competitors. This makes the development of the Persian Gulf important and the world should pay attention.

The UAE experienced real economic growth last year of eight percent. Like most of the region, it has benefited from high oil prices, but in an important departure from the past the UAE is much more now than just oil and gas. Despite receiving a record US\$30bn in oil revenues, the oil sector is still likely to account for less than a third of the UAE's GDP - its lowest contribution since oil exports began in the 1960s. This compares with an historic dependence on oil and gas revenues that twenty years ago accounted for 65 percent of GDP. Of course, the UAE is still important to world energy markets because it contains 98 billion barrels, or nearly 10 percent, of the world's proven oil total but it is becoming increasingly important in other sectors too.

One example from the UAE would be the Emirates airline that has enjoyed continued 25 percent average annual growth in passengers over the last twenty years. After beginning in 1985 with just two rented planes, it is now more than doubling its 73-plane fleet by ordering 99 large planes in the last two years. It shocked the airline industry by announcing the purchase of 45 of the massive two-deck Airbus 555 seater A380s - by far the largest order for what will be the largest plane in the world. 2004 net operating profit was a staggering \$330mn, up from \$190mn a year earlier. At

the very time that much of the worldwide airline industry is suffering under the strain of higher oil prices and weak passenger numbers, the state-owned Emirates is feeding off its strategic location between the Far East and the Far West to continue its impressive growth.

In Kuwait, the growth of non-oil business activity has become more widespread as economic growth has gained momentum. The real estate and stock markets were direct beneficiaries of increased optimism after the Iraq war in 2003, with activity and prices in both markets rising sharply. Low interest rates and excess liquidity in the banking system facilitated the flow of investments into these markets.

However, it cannot be denied that Kuwait is an oil-rich economy, containing roughly eight percent of the world's total. Whilst the state is much more oil driven than UAE in its external trade, relying on oil revenues for around 90 percent - 95 percent of total export earnings, its contribution to GDP is 35 percent as of 2004. Furthermore, as part of its diversification away from oil and its forward-looking nature the state has established the "Future Generations Fund" for the day when oil income runs out. As of 2003, the Fund was worth around \$65bn.

The diversification of these economies is driven by a number of key policy measures implemented by their respective governments. These include political and economic devolution, investment in infrastructure and liberal policies towards trade, business and labour.

Since the UAE is a supportive federation of seven emirates with each retaining considerable autonomy over political, economic and financial affairs, they are able to pursue different economic policies. For instance, trade has become Dubai's staple whilst another emirate, Sharjah, has focused on light manufacturing. Often successful strategies are then copied in the other emirates and the resulting increase in competition deepens the market and allows the spread of best practice. There are three major airlines now operating from the UAE. Emirates, which I have already mentioned, will increase competition, lower prices and also on a country

level cement the UAE's position as an important transportation hub. Naturally, world-wide competitors complain that prices are unfairly low.

This process has been supported by the UAE's large investment in infrastructure, principally in Dubai, such as their world class air and naval ports. Over 20 million people passed through the UAE's airports in 2003 and Dubai's ports witnessed a throughput of 41 million container tonnes. Investment has continued to improve and enlarge these facilities. Dubai is undergoing an US\$5.2bn airport expansion and Jebel Ali, the UAE's principal port, is also expanding.

What has been critical in the emirates' success has been the adoption of a liberal business environment alongside government investment that encourages private sector development. The success of Emirates airline is largely due to its open skies policy that has allowed over 100 airlines to connect through Dubai airport.

Perhaps the greatest business-friendly policy has been the establishment of 'free zones' that has led to the UAE, and in particular Dubai, being increasingly used as a business hub for the region. Such zones grant 100 percent foreign ownership and exemption from taxes, tariffs and local regulations. For instance, Jebel Ali free zone alone is home to over 2200 companies from over 100 countries, including many European and American blue chip firms.

However the undoubted economic strengths of these economies does not mean that it can ignore economic reality. If oil prices fall and the region slows, these economies will undoubtedly slow as well. The oil sector may account for less than a third of GDP, but it is still the largest sector and provides much of the momentum for the wider economy. But, rather than being oil dependant economies, held hostage to the movement of oil prices, these countries have progressed to dynamic business regions that have astutely converted their natural oil endowments into dynamos for broader, more diversified economic growth. The world should pay attention and give them far more credit than they have already been given.



The 'E' in the LSE

Daniel Freedman

**A**s an editor of a major newspaper remarked to me a few weeks ago, it's been a long time since the LSE was justified in calling itself a school of economics. Of course much progress has been made since the days when its student led, or rather misled, the protests in the 60s. But it's still far from when Frederick Von Hayek would use his lectern to expound to the world the virtues of the free market and the dangers of socialism.

That a university is filled with unsound left-wingers is not surprising. Winston Churchill reportedly once said: "Any man who is under 30, and is not a liberal, has no heart; and any man who is over 30, and is not a conservative, has no brains." That explains the majority of the students - those already classical-liberal just matured quickly - but what about the lecturers?

One could say they never left university and therefore don't realise that outside of the classroom Marxism was discredited long ago. It doesn't take a doctorate to understand the compelling case for the free market.

Since Adam Smith, people have been preaching its efficiency. As Smith famously wrote: "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages." Individuals spending their own money are better equipped to make decisions and more motivated to be efficient, than government bureaucrats spending other people's money.

Of course the arguments for the free market aren't just about efficiency. There is the moral argument as well. The problem with taxation isn't just that government is inefficient with it. The problem is that it's forcibly taken from the people. As Robert Nozick writes in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, taxation of earnings is "on a par with forced labour." Why? Because seizing what a person earns in n hours, is like seizing n hours from a person and forcing them to work n hours for someone else. Any taxation therefore has to be carefully justified.

The Adam Smith Institute calculates every year when Tax Freedom Day is - the day you stop working for the government and start working for yourself. Last year it was May 30. Meaning people in Britain spent 150 days of the year working, or rather slaving, for the government.

Hayek of course in his famous *The Road to Serfdom* gives another argument for the free market: protection from tyranny. He demonstrates how state intervention in the economy leads to economic distortions, leading to more intervention and so on. With each intervention individual liberty is curtailed more and more, gradually slipping towards totalitarianism.

Three arguments for the free-market. The day that anyone of these is properly expounded from a podium will be the day that the 'E' is put back into the LSE.

## Environment Week

## The positives and negatives of LSE environmental policy

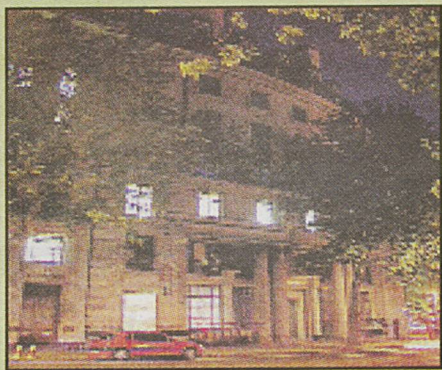
Hanne Thornam examines the environmental credentials of the LSE campus.

### The positive

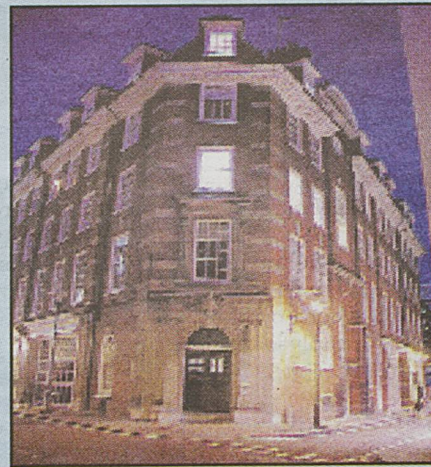
- Nearly all of the urinals at the LSE have been replaced with water-free urinals, resulting in watersavings of 28,000 cubic meters (28 million litres!) per annum and net savings of about £15,000 per annum.

- Green Electricity, which is Climate Change Levy-exempt energy, is being supplied under the new contract to the following LSE buildings: Clement house, Connaught house, East building and the Peacock theatre.

- New refurbishments follow the prescriptions of the Building Energy Management System (BEMS) which includes energy efficient lighting, heating and ventilation and the maximum use of day light, better lighting controls and use of fresh air to cool the building.



### The negative



- Most buildings are not on green electricity; the five year target is a mere 25 percent of buildings.

- Some urinals are still not water-free

- High Holborn and Bankside halls are not on BEMS.

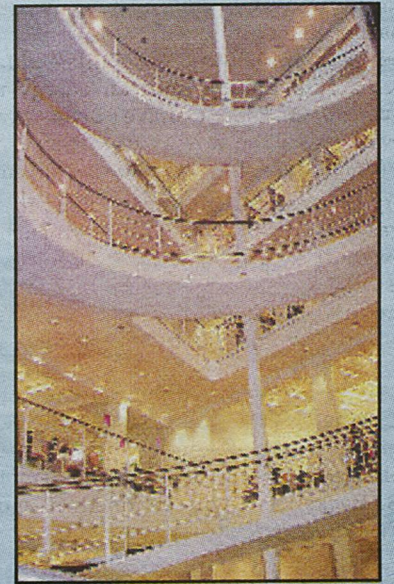
- Electricity is wasted by leaving appliances and lighting on overnight and at weekends.

- Styrofoam cups are used in the Brunch Bowl and Wrights Bar.

- Plastics are not recycled and newspaper, glass and can recycling facilities are highly insufficient.

- Few green areas around campus. As yet no coherent environmental management structure or strategy in place.

- The consumption of electricity last year for the main LSE site was 9,434,000kWh of electricity and 9,250,000kWh of gas with a total cost of £615,000. This energy use has resulted in the emission of 5,814,120Kgs of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. A similar consumption is for all halls of residence.



Corporate Banking & Financial Markets

## Internship Opportunities Presentation & Drinks Reception

Date: Wednesday 26 January, 2005

Time: 6.30pm

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Environment Week

# Carbon trading: a market approach to an environmental crisis

News Editor *Chris Heathcote*, defects to blink to discuss the emergence of carbon trading.

**E**ighteen days ago, the European Emissions Trading Scheme - EU ETS - went live and signs are that it is going to be pretty successful.

The scheme has united the 25 states of the European Union in an attempt to cut emissions of the gases scientists say are giving a human boost to natural climate change and represents the first international scheme of its kind.

More than 15,000 power plants and factories across Europe with an energy use above 20 MW/hour have been given allowances for the amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) they will be allowed to emit.

Every participant will have to limit themselves to within their allotted carbon allowance, either by cutting their own emissions or else by buying unused entitlements from more efficient enterprises. The sites affected account for nearly half the EU's emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, the principal greenhouse gas caused by human activities. In time, the five other greenhouse gases listed in the Kyoto Protocol, the global climate treaty, will be included in EU ETS. Backsliders will be fined 40 euros (£27.54) for every excess tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> they emit.

**"Finally the world has accepted that it is pointless to set ambitious targets one year only for nations to miss them and get away with it."**

Carbon trade is already roaring and set to grow. Between October and November 2004 nearly 2.5 million tonnes of EU CO<sub>2</sub> allowances changed hands internationally in forward trades, at a price of about 8.6 euros (£5.90) a tonne. The price is likely to rise sharply when the scheme starts - it will be set by market traders and driven by supply and demand. The present 10 brokers in five carbon exchanges (London is a hub) will increase as well, though much of the trading will be directly between businesses.

But the question still remains: will the scheme actually make any difference? In many countries, campaign groups say the limits are too soft and some governments are said to have knowingly set fairly relaxed limits. On top of that, transport is not included in the scheme, even though emissions from vehicles are rising sharply. Aviation despite its large participation in producing emissions, is exempt because it was seen as too complex to include yet.

There is often scepticism about the EU's willingness and ability to monitor and police its schemes, but the hope is that this time everything will function properly. One analyst says: "Monitoring and enforcement will work - there's significant political backing for them. There are robust verification rules and the money involved will show up in the books."

Some analysts think electricity prices could rise significantly. Other industries may want to pass on the extra costs they will incur if they have little scope for cut-

ting emissions and therefore have to buy credits. Steel may be an example. But there is huge scope for cutting pollution pretty painlessly. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says we could reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by one-third by 2020 at no net cost simply by using energy efficiently.

The supporters of EU ETS say it has to perform a balancing act. Easy limits would do little to drive down emissions, but very demanding ones could hurt some industries and discourage companies from sticking to them anyway.

For now, the scheme is on probation and will be reviewed in 2008. Dr Steve Howard, chief executive of the Climate Group, says: "If it's well enforced through the next couple of years confidence will grow and we'll

need stronger targets covering more sectors."

Just how successful the scheme will be cannot yet be known, but it is safe to say that it will almost certainly lead to a reduction in the gases that are known to be causing harm to our environment. Aside from that however, what also makes the scheme so remarkable is that it symbolizes a real departure from traditional climate change controls. Finally the world has accepted that it is pointless to set ambitious targets one year only for nations to miss them and get away with it. Carbon trading introduces a market force into climate concerns, which gives industry and commerce the flexibility they need if they are to change the way they operate. When

backed up with real monitoring and enforcement, carbon trading could prove to be the short-term break through needed to make progress after years of impasse on the correct answer to emissions control.

**"Carbon trade is already roaring and set to grow."**



## Environment Week

# What can you do to help the environment?

*Elaine Londesborough considers some ways in which we can make a contribution to the protection the environment.*

There are many different steps that each of us can take everyday to help stop the destruction of our environment. Some of them you will already know, such as saving energy and getting out of your cars and walking. However, my aim is to try and give you a few ideas that you might not have thought of or heard about.

The cleaning products we use everyday do damage to the environment. Much harmful waste ends up in the water through drainage even after passing through water purification plants. This builds up and places a long-term burden on the natural environment and its sustainability. A simple step you can take is to stop buying Persil to do your washing and start buying Ecover. Ecover makes cleaning products that contain no ingredients that are harmful to the environment. Yes, it is more expensive but personally I've found I only have to buy washing powder once a term so it really doesn't make too much of a dent into my drinking money.

London produces enough waste in an hour to fill an Olympic-size swimming pool. Recycling is an easy way to do your bit, especially in the many areas of London where all you need to do is put your recycling outside in those coloured plastic boxes. Look at the website of your local council for details. I was amazed at what Waltham Forest will take away, even batteries. A seasonal tip is to take your Christmas cards to either WHSmith or Tesco who will recycle them for you (without hopefully, just crossing out the greeting and reselling them) until the 1<sup>st</sup> of February.

Not everyone realises the extent to which burning of fossil fuels to make electricity is damaging our environment. In fact, it is the single biggest cause of climate change in our country today, responsible for 30 percent of our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Saving energy, and reducing the amount of electricity you use is a great way to help the environment. There are many little steps you can take to save energy around

the home. Things like buying a nice jacket for your boiler and turning lights off and only boiling the amount of water you need for you cup of tea.

One further step you can take is to give Ecotricity a ring and get them to supply your electricity. Ecotricity provide 100 percent renewable energy, mainly from wind turbines. They supply the likes of The Body Shop and The Co-operative Bank. They promise to match the price of your local provider, so it isn't even more expensive. They will supply any home in Britain and any profit they make goes into building more turbines. This is one of the biggest single steps you can take to reduce your emissions and help the environment.

**"Always make an effort to find out what your university/place of work is doing to help the environment and keep pushing until they are doing even more."**

Use this environment week to find out more about what you can do and take the opportunity to question yourself and the LSE about what more can be done. This is my final tip, always make an effort to find out what your university/place of work is doing to help the environment and keep pushing until they are doing even more. This week will see opportunities to talk to the people in charge of energy at the LSE and we should all make the effort to put them on the spot.



Things you can do to help the environment.

# A sustainable vision for the LSE?

*Joel Kenrick explains why the LSE should embrace a sustainable development policy in its academic work and in its day to day work*

Sustainable Development is generally defined as being the ability to "meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Yet it is generally accepted that current human behaviours are undermining the ability of humans to survive long into the future.

As well as the destruction of natural capital through climate change, toxic pollution or deforestation, human behaviours also often fail to protect the social capitals, such as education or health, that are so important to society's wellbeing. To start to protect social and natural capital will take a fundamental change in our current mindset and view of economic growth, and here universities have an exciting contribution to make. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce) finally recognised this last week when they

published their sustainable development action plan.

The speed with which public institutions have embraced sustainable development has often been painful slow. The Hefce consultation comes over two decades after the Brundtland Commission first put sustainability on the global agenda and 12 years after the Toyn Report set out a strategy for universities.

The latest strategy should be warmly welcomed. The Chief Executive, writing in *The Guardian* last week, said that sustainable development is 'fundamentally a social and economic issue, one that demands change in human behaviour and relationships.' So what is the importance for us at LSE? We must realise that as a 'leading social science institution' LSE has a three-fold role in helping society's efforts to achieve sustainability.

Firstly we must recognise that sustainable development is probably the biggest challenge that the world faces in the coming century. The skills, values and knowledge that our graduates learn and put into practice will help shape our future. We must strengthen our awareness of how social, economic and environmental factors interact in all our learning, as well as how our own personal careers – in both the private and public sector – can help sustainable economic or social development.

Secondly we must realise that LSE can play a major role in researching the social, economic and political barriers to sustainable development and how to overcome them. The School should support its academic and research centres in realising this goal, building on the good work many of them already do.

Finally we must take practical steps to

turn LSE into a visionary example of sustainable development in action. We must improve our impact on the environment, society and the economy. LSE should conduct a thorough and far-sighted environmental audit, to see what we are doing well and what we must do better. The School must adopt a powerful environmental policy by which to judge ourselves, continually reassessing our progress. Sustainability should be taken into account in decisions the school makes, and staff must be given proper leadership and support from the senior management of the School.

LSE has repeatedly led the way in visionary thinking and action since it was founded in 1895. The LSE is and has been an influential and positive agent of change and development – we must learn to embrace sustainability if this is to continue.

Environment Week

# A forgotten community of millions: environmental refugees

*François Gemenne welcomes the international response to the Boxing day disaster and hopes this will initiate a new world concern for environmental refugees.*



In addition to the tens of thousands killed, the tsunami disaster has also displaced millions of people. Along with the international community, NGOs and other UN agencies, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - UN specialised body for refugees - has joined the relief operations, planning a six-month, US\$ 75 million emergency response operation. One might be surprised to know that, despite its fifty-five years of experience in assisting the refugees throughout the world, the UNHCR had never before assisted the victims of a natural disaster. And, actually, it is not part of its mandate. As stated by Ruud Lubers, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "this is indeed a very special situation" because the tsunami refugees are not refugees. Officially.

According to the terms of article 1 of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is a person who has fled his/her country (and therefore crossed an international boundary) due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. This definition was shaped in the aftermath of World War II with the aim of protecting war refugees, and does not include environmental 'refugees.'

Environmental refugees are people fleeing an environmental disruption, natural or manmade, brutal or slow-induced. This can include desertification, earthquakes, floods, deforestation, pollution, industrial accidents, development projects and climate warming. It is estimated that there are currently about 25 million environmental refugees around the world, outnumbering the 'regular' refugees recognised under the Geneva Convention, who are about 10 million. But environmental refugees are particularly difficult to identify and to count. It can be difficult to establish a clear linkage between environment and migration, since environmental degradations often mingle with other factors of migration. For example, desertification is often associated with poverty or land-property issues. Environment is also an economic and political stake, often used in

wars in order to displace people: let us just recall here the napalm bombings during the Vietnam War, or the widespread dispersion of land mines in many conflicts. Environmental refugees are also often refugees within their own country: they don't flee their country, but their land and are often internally-displaced persons (IDPs). This, as well as a lack of empirical research, explains why the environmental refugees are difficult to identify and why their number is still imprecise and poorly documented. One thing is for sure however, they are millions and their number is growing in an exponential way.

**"It is estimated that there are currently about 25 million environmental refugees around the world, outnumbering the 'regular' refugees recognised under the Geneva Convention, who are about 10 million."**

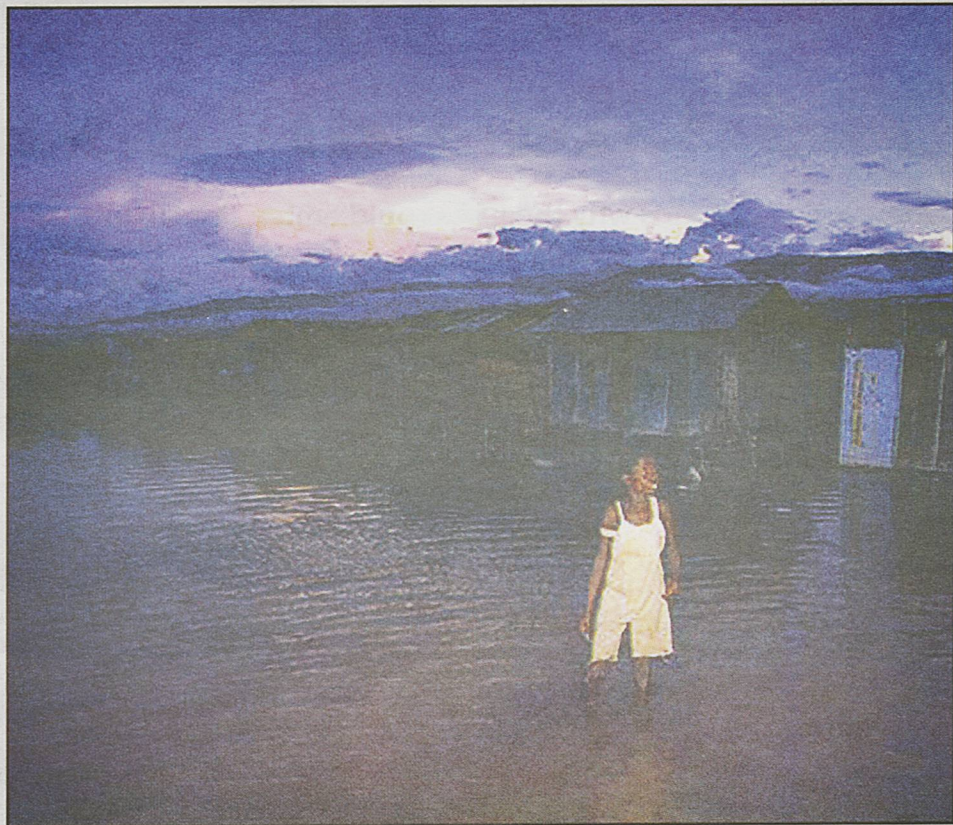
Climate change is expected to dramatically worsen the situation. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a group of 2,000 international experts mandated by the UN to assess the impact of climate change, estimates that global warming will provoke a rise of the global sea-level comprised between 9 and 88 centimetres by 2100. In the worst-case scenario, this could result in the displacement of 200 million refugees around the world, according to environmentalist Norman Myers. A conference held in 2001 at the University of Fribourg estimates the amount to be around 150 million. Even in the best-case scenarios, most of the coastal and deltaic regions, which are amongst the most densely populated in the world, will be affected. A report of the World Bank

shows that a rise of 50 centimetres of the sea level (half-way between the best- and worst-case scenarios) would flood two-thirds of the territory of Bangladesh, threatening its very existence and the life of 140 million inhabitants.

Particularly at risk are the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Gathered in Mauritius at the beginning of this month, their representatives have accused the industrialised countries of 'eco-terrorism.' The SIDS, bearing almost no responsibility in the emission of greenhouse gases, yet have to pay the price of climate change: soil erosion, floods and cyclones have already become part of everyday life on these small islands. Some of them are expected to simply disappear in the next few decades, like the small island of Tuvalu. Constituted of nine tiny atolls, independent since 1978, situated in the South Pacific Ocean and populated by 11,000 citizens, Tuvalu is one of the small-

est countries in the world, and the lowest elevated: its highest peak culminates at four metres above the sea-level. The country is sinking in to the Ocean and its leaders have given up the fight against sea-level rise. They have agreed with New Zealand to relocate Tuvalu's population there over the next few decades. In a time when the international community welcomes about two new countries every year, it is particularly sad to record the slow disappearance of one of its members. And others are still to come.

Climate change is not only a threat for the future; it is also a reality now. People fleeing environmental disruptions are always more numerous and form a community of millions whom we ignore. As well as fighting climate change, we need to provide them an appropriate protection. The relocation of Tuvalu's people, as well as UNHCR's unprecedented response to the tsunami, might open the way.



# Focus on: Serbia



Photos: Marta Skundric

## The Starting Point:

Our two subjects share some of their initial knowledge of Serbia

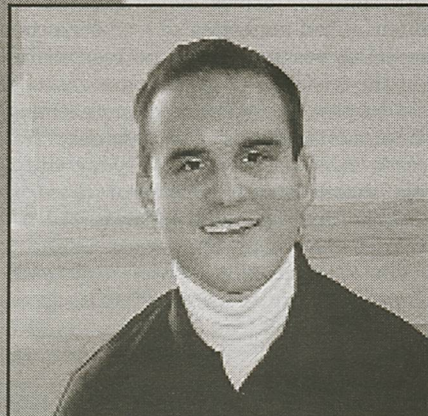
### Misha's Serbia Facts:

**Computer illiteracy.** Fewer than 10 percent of the population use the Internet.

**There are 200,000 abortions per year.** Clearly there are contraception problems among Serbia's population of eight million.

**We've been in five wars between 1870-something to 1918:** Two Turkish wars, two Balkan wars and the First World War. We've won all of them.

**People hate tattoos and piercings on women.** Men love working out. Everyone goes to the gym.



### Raphael's Serbia 'Facts':

**Great relationship with Russia.** Russia always tries to show that they're protecting the Serbs but the Serbs think otherwise.

**It's a war torn country.** There was the First World War and the Yugoslav War.

**People don't really have a good opinion about Serbia because of what's happened there.**



**Branislav Radulovic (Misha) was born in Serbia, he educates his course mate, Raphael Bossong, about his country.**

**Where is Serbia and what are its neighbouring countries?**

**Raphael:** It was part of the former Republic of Yugoslavia. And before that it was an independent state.

**Misha:** It was known as the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenians and Kraags before the 1st World War.

**Raphael:** I think its neighbours are Croatia, Bosnia...

**Misha:** Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Hungary, Macedonia, Slovenia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**What is the best thing about Serbia?**

**Raphael:** You've had some pretty bad press lately. I suppose you've got contemporary cultural exports like Kusturica, the famous film director.

**Misha:** Yes, he's an underground film director. He's done a movie with Johnny Depp called Arizona Dreams. I don't really agree that he's promoting our culture. He's more about promoting the quality of life, especially among the poor. There's also a lot of focus on the lifestyle of the gypsies.

**Raphael:** Serbia's moved on just as the rest of the Republic of Yugoslavia has. Apart from the fact that Milosevic's gone, the country has indeed progressed.

**Misha:** That's a complex question. From a non-political point of view, we like to call it the big shade: You can just sit and enjoy yourself as much as possible. You can go out at 4am, you don't need seatbelts, you can play loud music in the middle of the night and if someone complains you just say, "Shut the f\*\*\* up."

**What are its main imports?**

**Raphael:** No idea. Flashy German cars?  
**Misha:** We import mostly finished products. What's most noticeable is Italian fashion. You notice a lot of 'brandamania' when you walk down the street.

**What are its main exports?**

**Raphael:** The First World War!  
**Misha:** Natural resources and agricultural

products. Coal, steel, iron, textiles and wool.

**What is the significance of the 28th of June?**

**Raphael:** Was someone shot then? Oh, there was a medieval battle with the Turks.

**Misha:** That battle was in 1389. I don't really know the significance of that date. We don't really know our national anthem, let alone our national flag. Everything's so confusing.

**What is its form of government and who's in power?**

**Raphael:** I don't know which party is in power but it's a republic.

**Misha:** It's a federal republic. It's called the State Union of Serbia-Montenegro. We're an autonomous state now but we'll be independent soon. The main party makes up 40 percent of the government. Some people say that the main party has stable supporters so they don't lose any support, but neither do they gain. As long as Milosevic is out, we don't really care. We all know that we're going to join the EU anyway.

**What is its national sport?**

**Raphael:** Hanging out? Is football big in Serbia?

**Misha:** Basketball. We've been champions for 10 years - European champions. We've got 10 players in the NBA.

**What are Serbian people like?**

**Raphael:** Umm...Great! Amazing! Relaxed. The population seems to be pretty nationalist. People whom I've met from the former Republic of Yugoslavia are generally quite good party people.

**Misha:** You're right. We enjoy food, the nice weather - I guess we're very Mediterranean. We're also quite a conservative nation due to our nationalist streak.



# Afternoon Coffee

Learn more about the European Internship opportunities available for summer 2005.

**Tuesday 25 January, 2005**

**14:00 to 16:30**

**CSFB, London**

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You must register for this event by emailing [graduate.recruitment@csfb.com](mailto:graduate.recruitment@csfb.com) no later than Thursday 20 January, 17:00.

[www.csfb.com/standout](http://www.csfb.com/standout)

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# The deadly cost

Recent events in the east have unmasked the deadly results of inefficiency and bureaucracy, Alexander George considers a future for India where things will have to change.

The tragedy wrecked by the recent tsunami highlighted – in the saddest possible way – the contrast of present day India. A lagging state on the one hand. A potentially great power on the other.

More than 8,800 people have been confirmed dead on mainland India. The real figure is probably much more. As aid tries to reach those afflicted, there has been criticism of how slowly it has been arriving, often with much difficulty. The bureaucratic structures which exist in parts of India are rightly blamed.

More disturbing were revelations by a columnist in the *Indian Express* last week, which illustrated these structural flaws. Firstly, the Indian Meteorological Department had been instructed to only warn ministers of a potential earthquake should its epicentre be in Indian territory. Therefore, a quake near Sumatra, although measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale and so close to India, was not officially important to the department. Secondly, once it realised the tsunami could strike India, its warning report was sent to the former Science and Technology Minister in the previous Vajpayee administration, not the present one in the Singh administration.

If the last error were not associated with so much death and destruction, it would be comic. No one knows whether lives would have been saved had these mistakes not occurred, but they would have had a better chance.

The major obstacle to progress in India has been a bloated bureaucracy. Already established by the British, this bureaucratic framework was constantly added to by successive Indian governments. This spawned a culture of inefficiency, a lack of initiation and an obsession with trivialisations.

The first example I mentioned epitomises this.

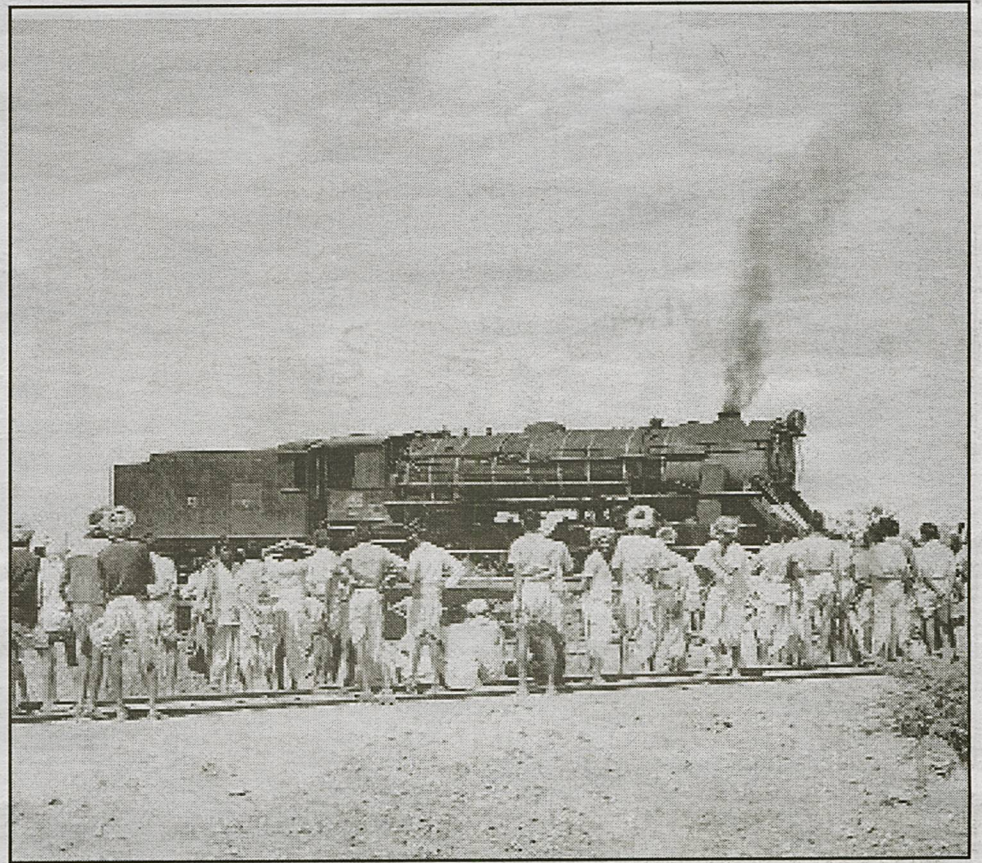
Because of the top-heavy, rigid, hierarchical structures in place, people often do not – indeed, sometimes are not encouraged – to show their own initiative. Hence the staff in the Meteorological Department obviously stuck to the letter of the law of their workplace, rather than thinking about the consequences of an earthquake so close to India.

This culture has seeped into most areas of work, not just the government. I saw this for myself when I did a brief internship with the local branch of one of India's national newspapers during my gap year. The associate editor was barely interested in producing high-quality articles, merely churning out reports like a robot. The attitude towards trainee journalists and editors – and those on work experience – was that you learn simply by watching rather than working on tasks yourself.

In fact, bureaucracy has dominated

**"India is expected to emerge as one of the world's great economic powers in the next 20 years or so."**

Indian life. Try buying a rail ticket and it can be a Herculean quest. Depending on the ticket office, you must pay with combinations like either only cash, credit card with passport, or cash or credit card with passport and the address of one's departure point and destination. The result? Many



auto-rickshaw journeys trying to find a suitable office or the nearest bank. Some stations do not even stack copies of timetables. When I bought a ticket from Calcutta to Varanasi, the rail official would not process it until I had written down the phone number of my hotel. We had not even checked into one yet!

In such a system it is little surprise that mistakes such as informing the wrong minister, frequently happen.

Change is in the air however. Since economic reforms were introduced in the early 90s – by the current Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, then Finance Minister – India has enjoyed high levels of growth and the boundaries of the state, albeit slowly, are rolling back. India is expected to emerge as one of the world's great economic powers in the next 20 years or so.

This change comes not just from the government, but is directed by the people as well. The influential foreign affairs columnist on *The New York Times*, Thomas Friedman, commented that when he visited Bangalore, India's IT capital, ambition and aspiration could be found in abundant quantity and the most popular hero there was Bill Gates. Indians have traditionally done well overseas. Now that they are becoming freer from economic constraints, they are beginning to reap similar rewards at home.

Although traditional attitudes still monopolise many provincial areas, visit Delhi or Mumbai and the young people there could easily be in London or New York: chatting to friends in Baristas (India's version of Starbucks) or enjoying the pulsing bars and nightclubs.

Of course, this does not mean that India's terrible poverty is less conspicuous. Far from it. Credit Suisse First Boston estimated that the tsunami damaged just 0.07 percent of India's GDP. This figure displays the vast number of victims who lie on the margins of India's economy.

Yet, the effects of the economic boom are bringing positive effects in assisting with relief and re-development. The state of Karnataka (where Bangalore is situated) had provided 250 million rupees (roughly £3.25 million) and 300 tonnes of relief material to the stricken areas. This has been raised not wholly by the state government, but in partnership with its burgeoning private sector. Although the figure is small by Western standards, it is important

to remember that this is in a country which until recently, was thought incapable of feeding its own people.

Furthermore, Karnataka's state government has proposed to 'adopt' several affected villages around the former French colony of Pondicherry on the south-east coast, and supply technical knowledge and expertise to assist its re-development.

I visited Pondicherry last year. A fantastic place with miles of beautiful beaches, and a wonderful melange of Gallic and Tamil culture. I wandered into a local fishing village, and became friendly with a local fisherman who took my friend and I on his boat into the Bay of Bengal. It became obvious that the local fishing industry suffered from a severe lack of progress in terms of investment and technology. Tourism is what is able to sustain them. Just about.

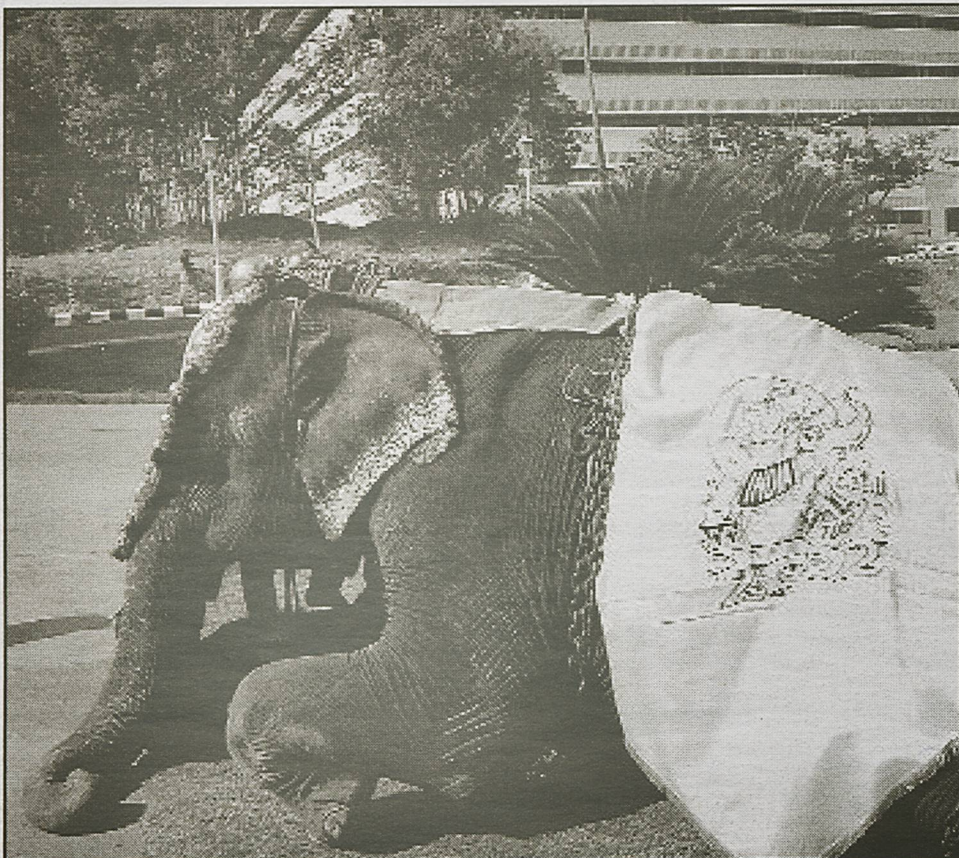
It saddens me to think about what may have happened to this fisherman and the fishing village. Hopefully, under this initiative a better infra-structure will be put in place to benefit local communities beyond the tourist season.

Finally, the aftermath of the tsunami displayed India's emergence as a political force. While the United Nations prevaricated, India – a victim of the disaster – became a leader in responding to it alongside the United States, Japan and Australia in President Bush's 'core group.'

This group has now been disbanded under pressure from those who view the United Nations as a panacea for the world's ills and see attempts to form alternative and sometimes more effective solutions as sacrilege.

This partnership, though brief, illustrated the growing relationship between India and the United States. This is how it should be between two large countries, with a shared history of fighting for their freedom and possessing the common values of liberty and democracy.

There are many challenges in the next 50 years or so. We do not know how long the fight against terrorism will take. We do not know whether China's rise will be as a friend or foe to the West. However, if it breaks the shackles of its flawed bureaucracy and unleashes its full potential, an economically powerful, free market, democratic India will be a benefit to the free world.



# What the Left stands for...



**The left fights for everyone, and for good, argues Cagdas Canbolat as he challenges Daniel Freedman's critique.**

I would like to start this article by referring to a recent column, *The unprincipled Left* by Daniel Freedman - the man who believes that profit comes before human values and who defends the fascist views of Zionism. How much I regret to say my fellow student, Freedman, ought to know that many Left organisations have dignity and pride. Most left organizations stand for the defence of human rights and stand against people like himself who deny it. It is not the Left who defended and aided dictators like Saddam, it was the Right, such as the right wing Margaret Thatcher who sold chemical weapons to Saddam enabling him to kill innocent Kurds. It was not the Left who were supporting dictators when Saddam was funded to attack Iran. It was not the Left who supported the Taliban in Afghanistan and funded them millions. While the right wing states were doing all this, it was the Left organisations who were on the streets to protest against these dictators. Yes, it was mostly the Left, human right activists, Muslims and normal citizens who were on the streets to stop the killing of innocent people in Iraq. Where were all those people who supposedly want to spread peace and security across the globe when Saddam was really causing damage? They were sitting back and watching because they were reaping the benefits of having sold him the weapons in the first place!

It was the left (and others) who used every means to stop the killing of more than hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis. It was the Left who predicted that the war would turn out the way it has now. How can one ignore the following questions: is there peace in Iraq? Are the Iraqis happier under the American and British occupation? Have the capitalists liberated

**"It is the Left who believe that human morals and life should be the priority and not sacrificed for profit."**

the thousands of dead Iraqis? Did they liberate the children who lost all their family members and are living in far worse conditions now than under Saddam? A natural disaster caught Eastern Asia but a man-made tsunami wrecked hundreds of thousands of innocent lives in Iraq. What makes it far worse is the fact that some still think it was about taking democracy to Iraq.

The Left have struggled for the need of the oppressed and not for the interests of the oppressors. They've struggled for a world without classes, a world where everyone can live in luxury and happiness, not just a small number of elites. It is the Left who believe that human morals and

life should be the priority and not sacrificed for profit. It is the Left who have worked and struggled to defend the oppressed in a society where the Right are paid to defend neo-liberal views and produce anti-propaganda against the Left because the Left pose a threat to the interests of the oppressor. Some people, just like Freedman, argue that the Left were not anti-war but pro-Saddam. How can one be so ignorant? How can one turn a blind eye to the truth? The people of the world were against the war, not because they supported Saddam but because they saw the attack on Iraq for what it was; an imperialist occupation motivated by oil and ultimately by profit!

I think this type of attitude, which is degrading and insulting to the millions who demonstrated for peace, is a disgrace to civilisation.

The Left have also organised the Respect party along with Muslims, humanists and the many others whose views are ignored by the people in power. Respect is a party not full of White middle class people like the Conservative, Labour, Lib Dems etc. It is a party which appeals to and is established by Blacks, Whites, Asians, Africans and all the people whose views are unheard. Respect works and will cooperate with people of all backgrounds and religions because it will always stand up for and to defend what is true and just. This is why Respect belongs to the people who want to live in a better world where there is peace, prosperity and a better life for all and not just for some.

My last point with regards to Freedman, is that in his last article he also argues that the Palestinian gays are being

tortured by Hamas and the Palestinian authority. First of all, do we really think that the Palestinian people have the time to think about other peoples' sexual choices when they are all too busy trying to save their own lives. Palestinian citizens' ultimate concern is whether they will find food the next day. Furthermore, taking into consideration that on average 50 Palestinians are killed every week, I'm sure that Palestinian citizens are worried, above all, that it will be them next who are killed at the hands of the Israeli army. Of course, exceptions there may be, but my belief is that most Palestinians are not delusional or stupid enough to think about whether someone is gay, lesbian or straight while their lives are under dire threat.

The people of the world ought to defend those people who are being oppressed and stand up for those who are fighting with dignity to defend their country from occupation.

The Left will defend the Palestinians, who are being tortured by the Israeli authorities, just as the world stood up for the Jews who suffered under the Nazis. The Left were also on the streets to stop the torturing of Jews then and it is yet again the Left who are on the streets to stop the same happening to Palestinians by Israel. The difference is that Israel is not only tolerated but actively supported by America and Britain. It should be the duty and struggle of all mankind, not just of the Left, to fight against and defeat the source of oppression all over the world.

## Your Guide to What's On This Week

## Political

## LSE People and Planet

Climate Change - where next?

Andrew Simms, Policy Director of the New Economics Foundation and author of the report 'Cast Adrift', will be talking about our future response to Climate Change, looking at Kyoto and beyond. 5pm, D302

Meet with LSE Energy Manager

LSE Energy Manager Fayyaz Malik will be on hand at the stall to answer your questions and discuss what LSE is doing

to improve energy and water efficiency.

2.30 - 3.30pm, Stall in the Quad

## The LSESU Conservative Association

Mary Ann Sieghart - Assistant Editor and columnist at The Times

On: "Same old Tories: Why the conservatives can't score a hit on Blair."

6.30pm, Room S300 (St Clements Building)

## Entertainment

## LSE SU Salsa Society

Everyone is truly welcome to join the Salsa Society. We have classes weekly ranging from beginners, improvers, intermediate to advanced! These classes are conducted every week throughout the year even during the holidays. 7.30-9.30pm, SOUND, Leicester Sq.

## Debate Society

This Tuesday we will conduct a regular debating session. The motion will be announced shortly before the round begins.

7pm, Z129

## The Eurasia Society

Vodka Nite  
Free Vodka  
Armenian Dancers  
Hip-Hop, R'n'B and House Music  
Free to all members and £1 on the door for non-members.  
8 - 11pm, The Underground Bar

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## Political

## LSE People and Planet

Robin Hanson from BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), including advice on how to get into a career in a Conservation charity. Organised by LSE Volunteer Centre and Gaia Society.

Volunteering for the Environment  
1.10pm, D211

## Careers

## Maths &amp; Stats Society

Homework Helping Session

1pm, S221

Subjects include: MA100, MA103, MA200, MA201, MA203, MA208, EC102, EC202, EC210, EC221, ST102, ST202, PoF

## Entertainment

## Global Show Auditions

Last chance to audition for the BIGGEST and BEST show at the LSE!

General Audition for Acts: Wednesday 19th January

Email Su.Soc.International@lse.ac.uk to book a 30 minute time slot from 9am-6pm

## GO society

12pm, D206

## LSE SU Film Society

Three Colours Blue

"A stunning film from one of the world's pre-eminent directors"

The first of a trilogy of films dealing with contemporary French society concerns how a composer deals with the death of her husband and child.

7pm, New Theatre (E171)

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## Political

## Christian Union

Weekly Main Meeting

Every Thursday at 7pm in G1, unless otherwise advertised.

Prayer Meeting

Every Thursday 5.30pm to 6.30pm in the chaplaincy, room G9.

To be on mailing list, email su.soc.christian-union@lse.ac.uk

## Tsunami Fundraiser Party

LSESU Environment Week present a

night of entertainment to raise money for the survivors of the Asian Tsunami Disaster. London's premier Samba band 'London School of Samba' will be providing the entertainment, with great prizes in a raffle, cakes to munch and music to dance the night away. 8pm, Quad, £2.

## LSE SU Green Party Lecture

Jean Lambert will discuss the relationship between the environment and refugees in the wake of the Tsunami disaster in South-East Asia. Jean Lambert is Green

Party MEP for London and Vice President of the Green/EFA Group in the European Parliament.

This event is free and open to all with no ticket required. Entry is on a first-come, first-served basis.

2pm, New Theatre

## Entertainment

## Debate Society

This Thursday we will conduct a regular debating session. The motion will be announced shortly before the round begins.

7pm, Z132

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## Political

## LSE SU Green Party

"Drugs and Crime: The corruption of society through the prohibition of drugs"

Shane Collins - Green Party Drugs Spokesperson

2pm, D111

## Entertainment

## LSE SU Salsa Society

Everyone is truly welcome to join the Salsa Society. We have classes weekly ranging from beginners, improvers, intermediate to advanced! These classes are conducted every week throughout the year even during the holidays.

8-10pm, MINISTRY OF SALSA, Elephant & Castle

## Global Show Auditions

Last chance to audition for the BIGGEST and BEST Show at the LSE!

Audition for MCs: Friday 21st January

Audition for models for International Fashion Show: Friday 21st January

Email Su.Soc.International@lse.ac.uk to book a 15 minute time slot from 10am-6pm

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## Political

## Indian Society

Mr Steven Pound MP

- chairman of Labour Friends of India

- ex-LSESU President.

- one of the stongest supporters of top-up fees.

24th January at 7pm, Old Theatre

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# B:art

Edited by Carolina Bunting



## About

Having a gay time  
in London page 19



## Film

Bill Murray in Life  
Aquatic page 26



## benhowarth meets Sunderland's great new hope, **The Futureheads**

"Do you fancy some cake and pop?"

Ross and Jaff of Futureheads fame beckon me into their carpeted squash court in London's far from luxurious ULU venue. Perhaps not the most orthodox of dressing rooms, but probably the one with the most light refreshments, boasting plentiful supplies of the essential Tizer pop and Skittles. There is even a swimming pool next door. Living the dream.

Onto the serious stuff. "We always said from the start that we didn't want to change who we were, it's an insult to the North East if you try and change the way you sing to fit in with other people." I sense The Futureheads are fiercely proud people, hoping to help people from the Sunderland and North East area to achieve and create music. They are proud of where they come from, and are not going to hide it for anyone. "It's a way of maintaining some honesty, if you've got a message then the most important way of conveying that is by being as pure as you can be."

"You hear old folk music and it's very colloquial and regionalist, currently British rock music is very much in the same vein."

### Popularity

"The bigger the gigs are; the more morons tend to turn up."

*The law of averages then?*

"Exactly, at the same time it's nice to have the opportunity for our songs to be heard by that many people, so hopefully we'll grow and play to bigger and bigger audiences."

*What is it like to be riding on the crest of a wave?*

Ross - "Good"

Jaff - "Are we?"

"I think we've been in a bit of a bubble about it, we've been on tour for the last three months. We have the same day every day, wake up in a different place, soundcheck, meet some people who want you to sign some things, then you get back on the bus and do the same thing the next day."

### Troubles

*How did you find recording the album?*

Ross - "We had a really hard time making it, we recorded it all once with Andy Gill, guitarist from Gang of Four, and we only kept five out of fifteen tracks from those sessions. We listened back to them and thought they were pretty 'balls' really. So we went back into the studio with a friend of ours, Paul Epworth. I was worried we were just going to be a 'live band' and never be able to commit that sort of energy to tape, so I guess I'm very pleased the way it turned out. There were lots of crisis talks..."

Jaff - "but it was also quite exciting at the time, working with Paul especially and getting those tracks back. The light at the end of the tunnel."

### Conformity

I ask The Futureheads how they think they fit into the current UK scene.

*How do you feel Ross, that according to the NME you are the 21st coolest person in Britain?*

Ross - "In the world"

Jaff - "In existence"

Ever?

(Laughter)

Jaff - "Anyway, how do we fit in?"

Ross - "We always just said we'd try and

do our own thing. I think back to when I was 15 or 16 and there was Blur, Pulp and all these great bands and you just think how it must have felt.

We met a guy in Brighton yesterday who was in the band Sleeper and he was talking to us about the Parklife tour with Blur, how amazing it must have been. They were playing their songs for the first time, a really exciting moment part of a big cultural revolution in Britain.

I think the bands that are coming out right now are equally exciting, the Bloc Party record is going to be really big this year. There's a lot of stuff happening in London that is pretty proactive, and whether you like it or not at least some individuals have taken things on their own terms and have been fairly uncompromising about it. In our neck of the woods there are a lot of bands who have just signed deals and will have records out soon, it is an exciting time hearing so many British bands on the radio."

### Camaderie

Jaff - "To do tours of America and being able to have British support bands now is just so refreshing."

Ross - "I think there is a sense of camaraderie about it too, very rarely do we play with a band (who are on a similar level to us) who turn out to be...dicks about anything. Everyone has the same sort of approach, people who have songs and want to play them, people who are bored of having a 4-chord routine that you hear

to death these days. The beauty of most of these new British bands is that they're not really working inside any conventions."

*Was it a lot different touring in America than in Britain?*

Jaff - "We were surprised we went down so well to be honest, we were a bit nervous and didn't really know what to expect."

Ross - "We weren't really sure if we'd be playing to eight people, but all the shows were pretty full, and all the people were 'as into it' as people were on this tour back home. Its just exciting to play out there, there's nothing really glamorous about playing The Roadmender's in Northampton anymore but if you play El Paso there's something different and exciting. That's not to say gigs in Northampton are rubbish but...it just doesn't have the same level of excitement now."

### Pass Notes

And there sadly I must leave them, stranded between Northampton and El Paso, as the soundcheck calls them away to noisier, less-carpeted climes. Later that evening, joined by their bandmates onstage they were very loud, sharp, and pointy producing glorious pop songs hidden by jagged riffs and the odd occasional yelped vocal. Glorious.

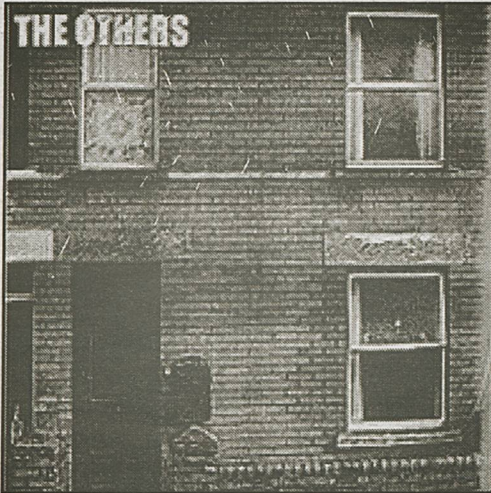
## Competition

To be in with a chance of winning a signed Futureheads CD simply answer the following question and send it to [thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk](mailto:thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk)

The Futureheads forthcoming single, The Hounds of Love, was originally released by which singer?

The winner will be drawn randomly from all correct entries

## LP's

The Others - *The Others*

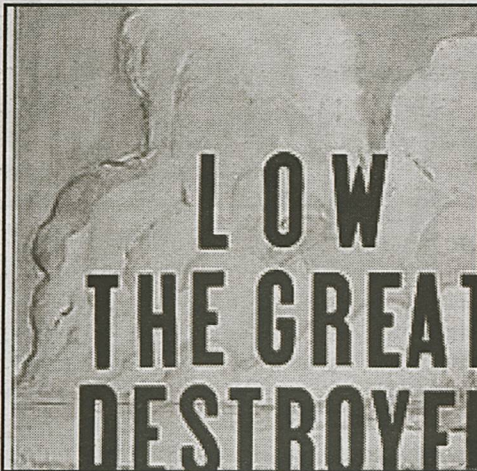
The Others, a four-piece band from London are already the new media darlings of 2005. The Guardian, the NME and even the Sunday Times have tipped the Others for great things in 2005. A spontaneous gig on the tube (well, by some coincidence the NME was traveling on the same train), surprise club appearances, secret gigs and not so secret mobile phone numbers of the lead singer, Dominic Masters, have helped to draw attention to the Others. The Others were not really the first to tear down the barrier between artist and fans. However, they are part of a new breed of bands who try

not to be distant, untouchable idols. The fans are an integral part of the concept. The Libertines started the deconstruction of old-style rock n roll, encouraging fans to invade the stage. The Libertines continued to play small pub-style gigs. After show parties were moved to club nights. Dominic Masters, the singer has put his phone number on the band's website: [www.letskilltheothers.net](http://www.letskilltheothers.net).

The track 'Community 853' is a song about the fans following the Others around. It's a statement of community and equality. 'This is for the poor' is a

song for the disenfranchised class. It's a song for the poor/not the rich kids. It then branches out to 'every disappointment'. The lyrics offer a modern take on the challenges and difficulties of the disenfranchised in modern Britain. The album shows that London is bursting with energy and 2005 promises more guerilla-style gigs. If The Others are part of a bigger school which engages fans with the music and the artist, this album and this band are good news.

jandanieldormann

Low - *The Great Destroyer*

Low's prolific discography up to 2001 seemed to leave them pegged as capable of just one sound, with the word 'slowcore' dubiously kicked about in an idle manner. Then the darker album 'Trust' followed in 2002, shocking everyone to near disappointment with its new ultra slit-wrist direction complete with raw beauty that had to be worn-in to be properly appreciated. However 'The Great Destroyer' cultivates the saccharine middle ground between the two with front-man Alan Sparhawk reportedly retorting 'you want a rock record? Here's your stinkin' rock record.' - Prey, do I smell the

wretchedly pungent smell of rock? No forget it Sparhawk. I'll be the first anal wit to point out there's nothing that stinks on this record, it's still pure Low.

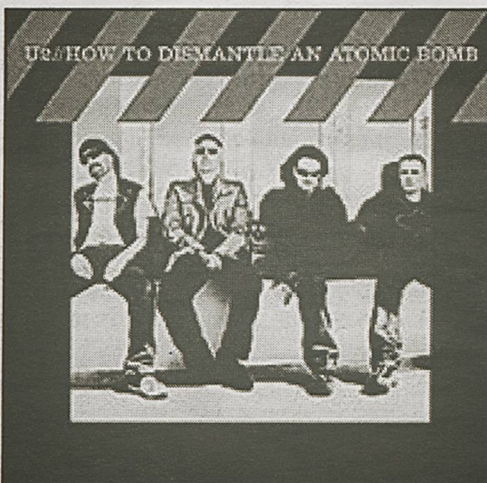
The press-release carries a warning. Between the lines it screams at devout Low followers to brace themselves - 'this is not your ordinary Low record.' But as a Low fan, I say 'pish' to that, so what? Cos that's not the point.

The greatness that is Low and the mesmerising delight that epitomises their sound continues to redefine the ever

redundant cliché that is the term "genre defying", still scuffing the patent shoes of those obsessed with pigeonholing.

Low are a band that don't need a 'best-of'. Everyone could do with buying all their albums. But if you like, 'The Great Destroyer' serves as a culmination of all the avenues and directions which their sound has passed, every scenic route with every shortcut, the perfect synthesis of over 10 years exploration, its all here moulded into one record.

neshwaboukhari

U2 - *How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb*

Purveyors of hugely smug stadium rock for most of the 1980s, U2's transformation in the 1990s into a semi-hip outfit, with albums like *Zooropa* and *Pop*, was only partially successful. A growing ability to poke fun at their own preposterousness may have made for U2's most interesting music since the minatory sound of their seminal debut, *Boy*, but though critics were happy, the paying public was not so impressed and sales consequently dipped. *How To Dismantle An Atomic*

*Bomb*, if not quite as reactionary as its predecessor, 2000's *All That You Can't Leave Behind*. Still represents something of a turning back of the clock to the radio-friendly, unit-shifting days of the late 1980s. True, there are catchy tunes like frantic single *Vertigo* and the equally highly-charged *All Because of You*, and there is a depth of self-awareness in Bono's lyrics that is rare among performers in the superstar league, but it's hardly profound and fails to do justice to the

pronouncements Bono is so keen on proffering when not fronting the band. But perhaps I ask too much: an inability to articulate Chomskyan philosophies in a three-minute pop song is not yet a war crime, and if stadium rock flips your wig, then this is about as good as it gets in 2005.

dominical-badri

## SUPER 7's

Athlete - *Wires*

*Wires* sees Athlete deviate from their usual upbeat brand of cheerful Sarf Lahndan acoustic songwriting to produce a much more sombre and overcast track. *Wires* wheezes mournfully, without really going anywhere, much like a broken down hearse. With the appalling rhyming of "lights" and "eyes" this single is best avoided.

paulmcaleavey

William Shatner - *Common People*

In theory this shouldn't work, yet William Shatner successfully covers a seminal Pulp track with astounding results. It is the sonic equivalent of watching Big Brother coverage on E4; you invariably feel wrong and slightly dirty for enjoying it but you can't help yourself from becoming addicted to it.

annango

Hell is for heroes - *Models for the programme*

I didn't think I liked HIFH, but this rockin' new single, from forthcoming album *Transmit Disrupt*, changed my mind. It sounds a bit Muse, a bit At The Drive In, but as though it would be more at home in the pages of the NME than Kerrang. Recommended.

sarahataylor

Le Tigre - *TKO*

The first single from the electro-rock trio's new album "This Island", is a cracker. Three-and-a-half minutes of raw, gritty guitar and fizzy electronica creates a sublime indie club stomper; the best thing being Kathleen Hanna's primal, in-your-face vocals. Makes Daft Punk look distinctly pedestrian.

nathancapone

Hanson - *Penny & Me*

Mid-90s American teen-pop stars make their comeback here with a grown-up, radio-friendly, pop-rock track that manages to retain a sliver of the pop charm the boys had when they were still pups. The MOR production job is catastrophic, however, and the histrionic vocals just compound the tragedy.

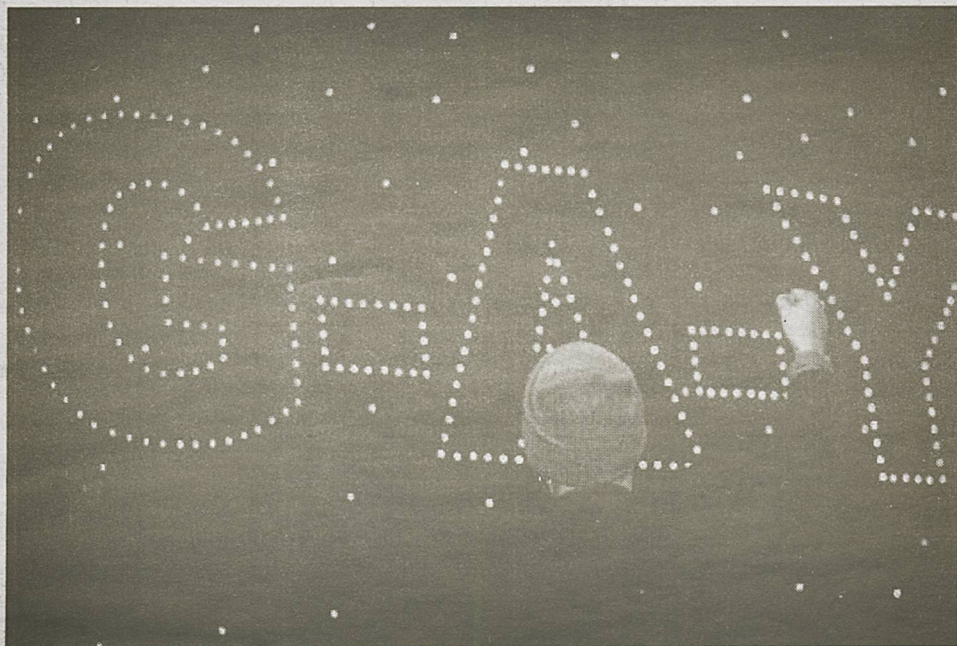
dominical-badri

# about

edited by Joanne Lancaster

## An Alternative Night Out

baberzaka on how to drink lots, fall over and embarass yourself in public

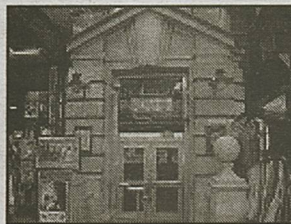


If you're looking for a really different, but nonetheless fun, night out - try this on for size.

It goes without saying that for any great night out you are going to need one vital ingredient (lots and lots and lots of drinking and alcoholism). Hence, the first stop in a great night out has to be a nice (and cheap) bar.

Bars are a great place to start off a night out (as opposed to going straight to a restaurant) - not only because of the booze but also because if you meet in a restaurant there's always going to be the first person who arrives and has to sit all alone by themselves on a big table - looking like a complete geek. It's much nicer to wait for people in a bar, and you can get a couple of drinks to give the night a good kick off.

**Itinerary: First Stop - RoadHouse (Bar, Club, Restaurant) Covent Garden**



Roadhouse I think is a real find of a bar. It's nicely

done up (although excessive cheesiness seemed to be on the designer's mind when this place was designed), the theme is american diner/truck stop: it works well but can be a bit too much after a while...

During happy hour the drinks are reasonably priced (Beer @ £2.30, Cocktails @ £3.50, Wine - half price). So you can get the drinking started nice and early.

Another positive is the easy to find location (bottom end of Covent Garden - quite close to Pizza Hut), but the highpoint of this bar has to be their live bands. On many nights they have live bands playing a range of music- we got to watch some wacky sixty-year-old rock wannabes - but they played a fun mixture of songs. "Sweet Home Alabama" and "Knocking on Heaven's Door" were among some of the better songs.

If you get here early enough you don't

have to pay to get in, but if you leave it late (depending on the night) you might have to part with some cash.

**Itinerary: Second Stop - Dinner at Café Pacifico, 5 Langley Street, Covent Garden**

Just on the opposite end of Covent Garden is this amazing Mexican restaurant (it's easy to find it's just on the side street leading away from Covent Garden tube station next to M and S). The restaurant's atmosphere is lively and busy (it was fairly packed when we went so I'd ring up and book if you are going as a large



group) and definitely loud - this is not the place to go if you're after a quiet one, but more for a rowdy, boozy, drunken, make-a-fool-of-yourself-in-front-of-everyone kind of night out.

The prices are a bit on the steep side, but the food is amazing! Everyone loved what they ate and the portions are just huge so you will be filled up (don't worry they have tonnes of alcohol available so you won't sober up too much).



**Itinerary: Third Stop - More drinks at Oxygen Bar, Leicester Square**

I lurve oxygen bar, unlike some other Leicester square bars which are shite, mentioning no names (\*\*cough cough "Zoo Bar" cough cough\*\*), oxygen bar is a gem. The bar has three floors; the top floor featuring a fireplace and big cosy leather sofas, ground level is your typical bar, and basement is a bar/dance area. It's main down point is that despite the three floors each one can become a bit crowded, but it all adds to the atmosphere. The music is generally quite cool, can be a bit too alternative at times but it's all cool.

But by far the most unusual aspect of the bar is what's on offer. Some clever people came up with the idea of bottling oxygen and selling it to gullible drunk people who are stupid enough to buy it (take me for example, bought tonnes of the stuff, loved it, still to this day don't have a clue why!). All in all it's a great fun bar and a great place to continue the evening.

**Itinerary: Final Stop - Clubbing at G A Y, Charing Cross Road (just down the road from Leicester Square)**

Now, I guess some people are going to be quite sceptical about this choice of club. However, let me assure you that, regardless of your party's sexual orientation, it is a GREAT place to finish off the night.

Let me explain why:  
1) Unlike many other places G A Y is open until past 4 am, so you're not faced with having to finish the night

while its still dark (that's just for wimps) - though must warn you the club is only open on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

2) Great Music! You generally have a brilliant selection of tunes - there are two floors. The top floor plays the camp classics (80's pop, Kylie, Madonna etc) - everyone is dancing, everyone is up for a great time, everyone is very tipsy (especially if you've done all the prerequisite drinking beforehand). The main dance floor plays a great collection of new chart dance and R and B, it's better than amazing (a whole collection of music from Kelis and Cristina to Scissor Sisters).

3) Okay, down point. Unless you're gay your chances for pulling will be drastically decreased... But seriously, anyone whose scared for some reason for going to a gay club, don't be, no one is going to pounce on you (well not unless you want them too...)

There you go- the vital ingredients for a great night out - enjoy! If you're still sceptical, try it out and prove me wrong. Have fun, get drunk, make a fool of yourself, puke on a sidewalk, grab a hotdog, go to bed (hopefully not alone) - and you'll have what all students wish for, fun.

## Mitsukoshi

helenbutler reviews authentic Japanese food- at authentic Japanese prices

Though it is just a stones throw from Piccadilly Circus in Lower Regent Street; Mitsukoshi's location in the basement of Dorland House means it could be easy to miss if it weren't for the TVs screening Japanese cookery programmes in the window. Head straight downstairs to the sushi bar (known for the high quality and freshness of its fish) and main restaurant.

Extremely popular with Japanese visitors to London and especially those with younger children, there's definitely a family atmosphere here, though there are also usually a number of lone diners, reading Japanese newspapers and sipping oolong tea.

A selection of hot and cold sakes are offered (from £3.80), but I recommend plum wine (£3) as an aperitif. Sweet and mild, it's how wine should always taste. The menu boasts a selection of tempura dishes: vegetables and prawns in a light batter, but if you're going to have tempura try agedashi tofu (£5), served in a light soup, it makes an ideal starter. For main course, special sashimi (£22) provides a selection of seasonal fish. If raw fish isn't your thing, trying shabu-shabu (£22, minimum 2 people) is definitely an experience. A huge pot of boiling water is brought to your table and thin slices of beef, green vegetables and udon noodles are cooked in front of you. Few desserts are offered, but do try kisetso no wagashi (Japanese confectionary, £3): tiny, but tastes divine.

Simply and elegantly decorated, the staff are attentive and polite and most portions are reasonable. The prices are the main downside; but to get high quality Japanese food costs. However, if you're on a tight budget Mitsukoshi run monthly offers, which presently include an 'early bird' (order before 7pm) set dinner from £20. You might be better off ordering a la carte though, there's a huge choice and you might get away for under £20.

So to sum up: a great restaurant with a



great atmosphere and great food, as long as you can stomach the prices.

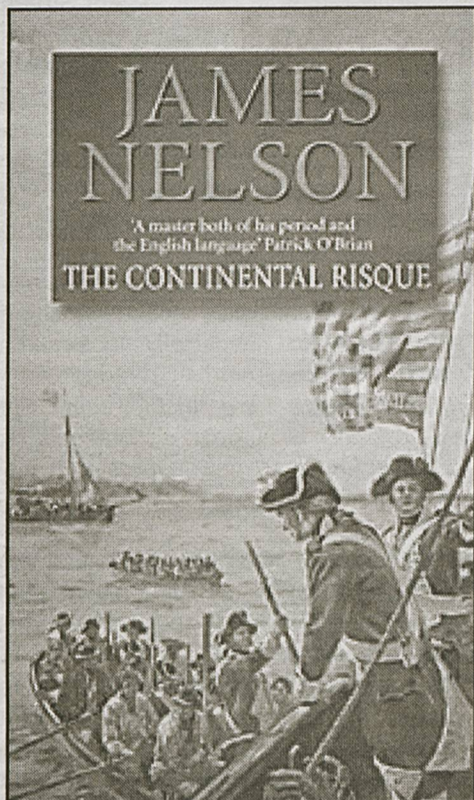
## literature

edited by Ion Martea

## The Continental Risque

by James Nelson

irinajanakievskasails on full speed ahead



*The Continental Risqué* is the third instalment in James L. Nelson's *Revolution at Sea* series, and as the title suggests the genre is maritime historical fiction.

In this instalment James Nelson captures the moment in history when the American war of independence was about to move into the high seas in a bold challenge against British naval supremacy. The rebel government of Philadelphia commissions the formation of a Continental Navy of the United Colonies in 1776.

What Nelson manages to convey successfully is that despite the pride generated as a result of the formation of a navy by Congress, political considerations, namely sectional differences and suspicions among the Northern and Southern colonies which affected any organized efforts in America at the time permeated even the newborn Continental Navy. The majority of the first naval captains were New Englanders, as that region had the greatest maritime tradition in the colonial Americas. The result? The Southern recruits were suspicious of a "Yankee" conspiracy, and nowhere more so than on the brig-o' war *Charlemagne*, previously a merchant ship now commissioned into the navy, and captained by Isaac Biddlecomb.

The *Charlemagne* was being used by Congress as a political olive branch to

assuage Southern suspicions, through the appointment of a Southern First Lieutenant. Biddlecomb has to captain a ship with a new undisciplined near mutinous crew, half recruited from the jails of North Carolina, obey naval orders to seize British ships and raid British provision stores in New Providence Island in the Bahamas, as well as maintain his untainted reputation as a hero.

The author's knowledge of sailing and period maritime practice is quite astounding. Initially the seamanship jargon was rather overwhelming - however I now know the difference between the Fore Topgallant Studdingsail and the Fore Topmast Staysail!

This does not impede the narrative significantly and after a rather slow-paced start comparable to the *Charlemagne* being repeatedly frozen in on the Delaware River, Nelson's tale is invigorated by a welcome sea-breeze, and the tale sails on to open seas full speed ahead.

I found myself page-turning faster than you could say "Ahoy, there!". The battle sequences were superbly depicted, action-packed and extremely tense.

**Publisher:** Black Swan  
**Release Date:** 1 June 2004  
**List Price:** £6.99  
**Paperback** 464 pages

Nelson manages to capture the sensations of a ship roaring into battle, the crunch of round shot wounding the ship, down to the fear, anger, anticipation and exhilaration of the men on board. There are some memorable characters and also, watch out for those cameo appearances by Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams and other founding fathers.

This is not a genre I would normally indulge in, but despite my initial reservations, I was pleasantly surprised by this carefully constructed brig-o' imagination through historical waters.

**Nelson's *Revolution at Sea* series includes:**

*By Force of Arms* (Corgi Adult) - Out Now / £6.99

*The Maddest Idea* (Corgi Adult) - Out Now / £6.99

*Lords of the Ocean* (Corgi Adult) - Out Now / £6.99

*All the Brave Fellows* (Corgi Adult) - Out 1 February 2005 / £6.99

## Lyrical Effigies

## The Lie

by Natalie Marlow

"Hold me" she begged "just hold me. Please"

But he couldn't  
And he didn't

Tears swelled in her throat and blurred her movement as she begged him again to stay.

"No".

One word and it was over. Gone forever. In slow motion he turned and left her. Alone. Alone with no one, nothing, nothing but a pain that started in her chest and spread to her arms, her legs, her stomach. And the intensity of it killed her. She fell and cried out, not even clutching for something to support her convulsing body. And the tears dripped and squeezed running into each other in their haste to be free.

And he turned. And looked. And left.

"Just hold me," she whispered.  
But no one heard.

\*\*\*

Love. What is love? Is it even real? Is it not just a feeling: a small, thrill that wakes the senses with bitter intent

before numbing them  
to a faint pulse of pain?

"No. Love is beauty.  
Love is divine"

Where is beauty?  
Where is the divine? Is  
it here in this broken  
shell of existence? In  
this fractured bone of  
life? In this crippled  
world of too many  
words? Show me love  
and I'll show you pain.

"No, no that's not it, its  
here all around us. In  
my eyes and in my  
heart."

Is it? To me you're your eyes are wet and  
there's a dart of a lie and a hint of regret.

"No, no I love you. I am you and you are  
me and we are one, and we are everything  
and I'll hold you and kiss you and make  
you safe. This is what love is"

Hold me, just hold me.

(But he didn't)

Internet Dating - A  
Fragment

(written in a favourite copy of Pope's *Iliad*)  
by Junius

Scrolling through some profiles, I  
Met with one that caught my eye.  
'Who's THIS girl?' to myself I said,  
And 'what's that white stuff on her head?'  
Then she changed her photo to  
One with no snow plain in view.

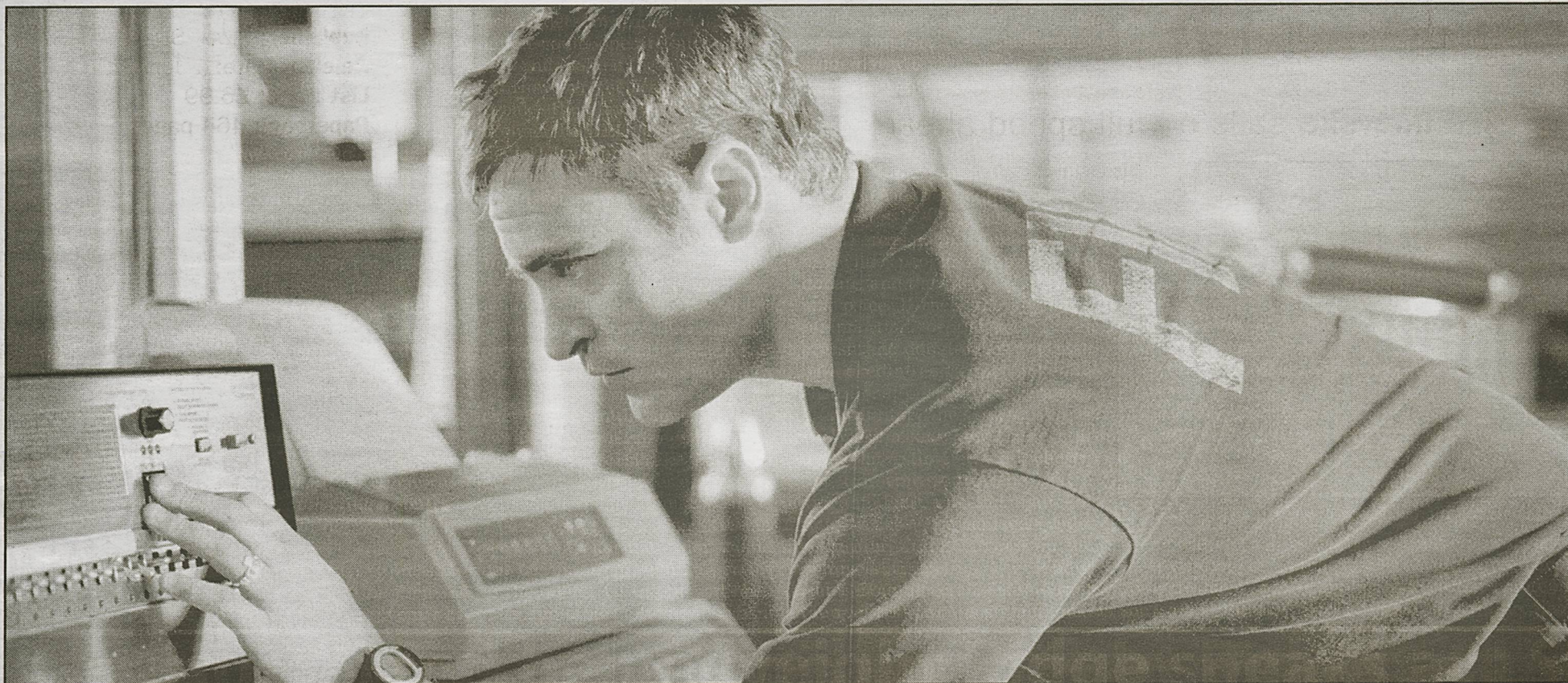
This second enticed me even more  
Than the first had done before.  
It showed much better her charming face,  
Her naughty smile, and style, and grace.  
But it wasn't only her picture that  
Made me want to have a chat,  
Thought that was the baited hook  
Which drew me in to take a look  
At her profile, in which it seemed  
I saw the signs (perhaps I dreamed)  
Of varied interests and love of fun,  
With other virtues. (Shall I go on?)



# film

edited by Dani Ismail and Sarah Coughtrie

Why does it always have to be the 12th floor? Why cant they be on the 4th?



## Ladder 49

alexsimuyandi has bad dreams about watching *Swordfish*...

**Director:** Jay Russell

**Starring:** John Travolta, Joaquin Phoenix, Jacinda Barrett

**Release Date:** 21st January

**Certificate:** 12A

I always get nervous before seeing a film with **John Travolta** in it. I hate uncertainty. Sure, maybe I'm going to see another *Pulp Fiction*, or even the guilty pleasure of *Grease*. But I still haven't forgiven him for the mind-numbingly awful *Basic*. I don't even want to talk about *Battlefield Earth*.

Having said that, this film wasn't as bad as I had feared. It follows the story of Jack Morrison (**Joaquin Phoenix**) whose

life hangs in the balance; in responding to the worst fire of his career, he gets trapped inside a structurally unstable, twenty-storey building. What follows is a series of flashbacks that documents the progression of both his personal and profession life from a socially awkward rookie to a full member of the fire station and father of two.

The flashbacks detail the usual rites of passage, from first day pranks and the usual male bonding, to his wedding day and birth of first child. However, they are clumsy and, in their drive to make us empathise with the main characters, often strike a false note.

The acting is of a generally high level, however. Questioning the intensity that Phoenix brings to a character would be like playing kiss-chase with the ugly, fat kid at school: it's simply not done. And whilst his eye occasionally glowers, he brings a welcome lighter touch to this performance. Travolta also puts in a strong performance as Captain Mike Kennedy, Morrison's mentor. Apart from the two leading males, only other character that is really developed is his wife (played by the lovely **Jacinda Barrett**).

What's interesting about the film is that it isn't an all-out action movie. Whilst the fires in the film are certainly impressive,

the focus is on the lifestyle of the fire-fighters, and why they would choose to continue in such a hazardous job. The strength of this film is that it doesn't portray these men as superhuman. Instead, it's the story of Joe Average, and hints at the darker side of his life: the fact he may not be as devoted a father as he should be, and the sacrifices in his personal life that he pays for the job.

This film isn't too bad. It does err on the side of sentimentality (reinforced by the melodramatic soundtrack) but it could be a lot worse. It could have been *Basic*.

### In Your Local Cinema...

#### Million Dollar Baby

Clint Eastwood follows up *Mystic River* with this white-trash-Hilary Swank-cum-boxer film which is being heralded stellar. Never a fan of his old school films, Eastwood seems to have gone from strength to strength and has an eye for detail and knows how to make a heavy-weight film huge, box office-wise. Also starring Morgan Freeman, Swank seems to have fallen into an "I'm a girl but act like a boy but" rut.

#### Closer

Originally a play, *Closer* is branded for being overly wordy, especially in intimate or sexy scenes, where we all know, words are not necessary. However, on the surface it looks interesting – in a nutshell, Julia Roberts, Jude Law, Natalie Portman and Clive Owen are all clambering over each other to shag at least one person of the opposite sex.

#### Team America: World Police

I'm so dying to see this I don't know what to do with myself. Singing marionettes aren't necessarily my cup of tea, but the adverts give us a peek into puppet sex and that's probably the final, funniest frontier. The makers of *South Park* give a refreshing and hilarious take on American politics, terrorism and everything in between.

#### 2046

Director Wong Kar-wai does an almost sequel to his 2000 smash *The Mood For Love*, where we left the protagonist of 2046 mourning the departure of the married woman, Su Lihzen, he was having an affair with. He then embarks on sexual encounters with 4 different women that occupy the room – the obsession being that he and Su had shared that same room. This tender, futuristic romance observes the inability to move beyond the past and the memories that haunt people.

### In Your Local Blockbuster...

#### Collateral

Released amidst a hail of praise for director **Michael Mann** (*Heat*), this is one to watch, especially since Oscar nominations will probably come a'calling soon enough. **Tom Cruise** plays a psychopathic contract killer ferried around Los Angeles by **Jamie Foxx's** terrified and reluctant taxi driver, both turning in fine performances. The real star of this film is perhaps the tense, oppressive atmosphere created by Mann's portrayal of Los Angeles, a character in it's own right.

#### Hellboy

Amongst the disproportionate amount of comic book movies released in 2004, *Hellboy* wasn't slated quite as much as most. In fact, some people have been down right vocal in their praise of this history-skewing, fast paced story around a

demon raised on earth to fight evil, against all his natural tendencies. If you like that kind of thing...

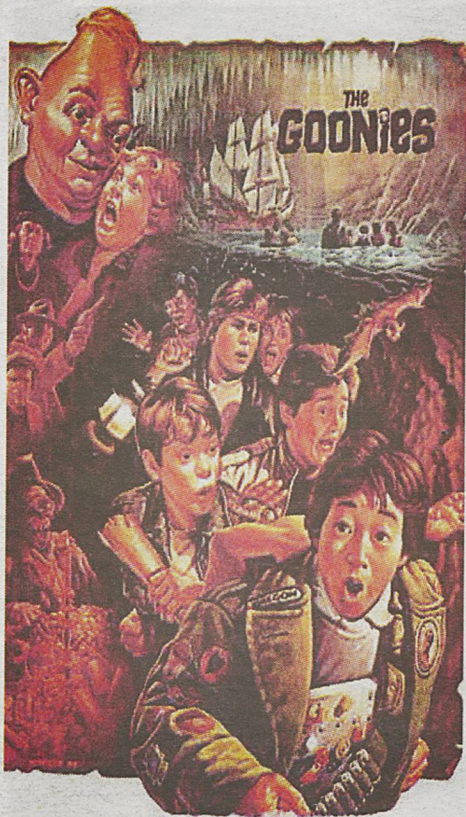
#### The Village

Atmospheric love-it-or-hate-it creep fest from the twisted mind behind *The Sixth Sense* and *Signs*. Lots of people waste 95% of Shyamalan movies waiting for a twist: don't be one of them. There's more to a movie than a surprise ending, and this one is either a beautiful, chilling ghost story or a pretentious piece of wank. Either way, it's worthy of your time, at least to decide which. Also, if you like boys and the picture of star **Joaquin Phoenix** above doesn't persuade you to rent this, you have a heart and loins of stone.

Classic Review...

## The Goonies (1985)

simoncliff reminds us of a time when 'adventure' movies were actually pretty damn good...



**Director:** Richard Donner  
**Starring:** Sean Astin, Josh Brolin, Jeff Cohen, Corey Feldman  
**Release Date:** 29 November '85

All of us harbour guilty yet harmless pleasures from our juvenile past which, sooner or later, will return in earnest to whimsically preoccupy jaded minds once more. They remind us of a life less complicated, a time more innocent, a world infinitely more mystical and mysterious than the colourless orb we inhabit as adults. My nomination for Classic Film status, my guilty pleasure, is Richard Donner's *The Goonies*, which is probably the most entertaining and thoroughly accomplished kids' movie of all time.

Based on a story by Spielberg, *The Goonies* follows a group of misfit friends as they attempt to find the valuable lost treasure that will save their homes from imminent demolition. That's it. No socially subversive sub-plots or politically analogous narrative. Just quality acting by the pint-sized players (**Corey Feldman** standing out amongst a terrific ensemble cast)

and a thrilling pirate-themed storyline which is sure to swash the buckle of big kids as well as small.

The real winner though is the thoroughly daft yet amazingly deft script from Chris Columbus; surprisingly intelligent humour (look out for some riotous references to James Bond, Errol Flynn and a fleeting but brilliant nod to Groucho Marx) and good old wholesome slapstick are blended with some truly touching moments. In particular, Mouth's Wishing-Well monologue and the simple yet moving exchange as Data is reunited with his father are sure-fire heart-wrenchers (even if Chunk's 'I love you Sloth' is just slush, and actually rather disturbing slush at that).

**Look it! I got an idea. Why don't we just put chocolate all over the floor and let Chunk eat his way through?**

The kid actors themselves had differing fortunes post-*Goonies*. Feldman (Mouth)

made the exceptional *Stand By Me* the following year, before falling career-first into DTV (Direct-To-Video) hell, winning such inspirational roles as 'Sarah's Gynaecologist' in *Citizen Toxie: The Toxic Avenger IV (2000)*. Other's had more luck; asthmatic Mikey (**Sean Astin**) found fame as Samwise in the *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy. With this in mind, watching *The Goonies* retrospectively enhances its themes of sanguinity and innocence; constantly reminding yourself that these brats are now pushing forty makes you realise the briefness of life all by itself.

At a time when computer-rendered pixellation and genre-spinning profit dominate the children's movie market, here is a reminder of a time in cinema when the protagonists were real actors, the intentions harmless and the stories just sublime. *The Goonies* has all the adventure, humour and thrills of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (there's even an Indy fedora for the sharp-eyed among you), with the pursuit of faith being replaced by an exploration of friendship and hope. The DVD is less than a tenner - you have no excuses.

## The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou

jameskent calls the latest Bill Murray flick "Film of the Year"



**Director:** Wes Anderson  
**Starring:** Bill Murray, Owen Wilson, Cate Blanchett  
**Running Time:** 118 min  
**Release Date:** February 18

From acclaimed director Wes "*Rushmore*" Anderson comes another mint **Bill Murray** vehicle. This time though, the streets of Tokyo are swapped for the fantastical water world of Anderson's imagination. Think *Moby Dick* meets *Rushmore* and you get, well, this, and *Thunderbirds* - complete with string.

Murray's character Zissou leads film-making expeditions around the globe, complete with a family of misfits, on an old minesweeper - complete with a Swedish masseuse, a sauna and an exploding helicopter. The ship, the *Bellafonte*, had more character development than the 'caricatures' - but maybe that is the point.

As always in Anderson's films, a series of subplots develop - Zissou's marriage with Eleanor (played by Oscar winner **Anjelica Huston**) proves once again that although opposites attract they still repel one

another. Zissou's naive long-lost maybe/maybe-not son Ned shows up, played by the delightful **Owen Wilson** (*The Royal Tenenbaums*); **Cate Blanchett** is the suspicious, pregnant and looking for a 'bit more' reporter; there's a Portuguese, Bowie-playing guitarist Pelé and pirates, talking dolphins and red beanie sporting militia a-plenty. Enough to keep all amused - Anderson fans anyway.

Zissou, as one would expect, is a severely flawed hero. Having survived the death of his best friend, his marriage, and the

respect of all, he sets out to find his *Moby Dick* - the elusive leopard shark. For this task, the crew and ship are well out of their depth, and thus procure the resources of their nemesis Hennessey - played superbly by **Jeff Goldblum** (*Jurassic Park*).

Murray once again shows that he is more than just a comedic actor, which is fortunate as most of the movie is so subtly comedic that it's easy to miss completely the first time round. My theory is that the better at acting you get, the less funny you choose to become - oh well.

The more technical aspects of the film are all exceptionally done, from the amusing bi-polar score, the smooth stop-motion animation through to the true blue choreographed costume and palettes. Technical awards are in the post, lads.

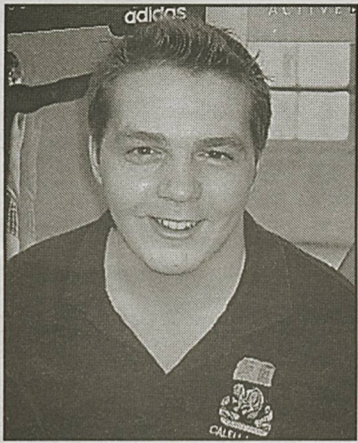
The *Life Aquatic* floated just below the surface at the US box office... will it sink or swim here? It gets a 2 out of 5 on the slapstick *Ghostbusters* rating, but a 5 beanie-wearing Murrays out of 5 in the "Film of the Year" category - and it's only January.



Anyone interested in writing for beaverfilm? Contact us on [thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk](mailto:thebeaver.art@lse.ac.uk)

# AU Exec set the record straight on netball courts and UBS

Now we are entering the home leg of the AU Exec's term in office, The Beaver gets some answers as to what we can expect this term

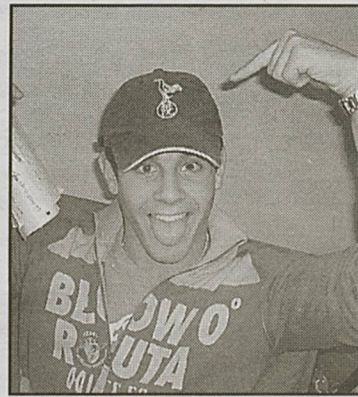


Unfortunately, due to the campaigning of local residents in the surrounding area of Berrylands, the planning permission for the netball court installation has been delayed so far but we are hoping it will push through as early as possible this term and all being well we will have them up and running by the end of Term.

All in all I think we, as the Athletic Union, can be very proud of our progress over the last six months. The successes of our events so far have also been reflected on the field of play, once again putting us in a very strong position to go on and win some trophies this term. The best of my wishes go to all involved.

Until I catch up with you all, as always...don't be rubbish. Cheers.

Shetters - AU President



Hope you all had a good break. Just to tell you all that all is well in the AU coffers. As promised, we have renewed our sponsorship deal with UBS after a brief hiatus in 2003/4. They have given us a decent amount of cash, and a figure that we will look to play with in 2005/6. We have continued to look into other legit forms of sponsorship to supplement the UBS agreement, and seem to be making strong headway in that area.

This year's budget is the largest of recent years. The final figure is pretty astonishing, and put me in a sweat at first! However, a combination of new clubs and increased membership is justification enough.

Next up for the AU is the ball. There will be a bunch of changes for it this year, and it promises to be a great crack.

Jez - AU Treasurer



Plans for the ball are moving swimmingly, I'm still looking into several new locations. The ball will take place on the 9th March, Wednesday of week 9. We hope to start selling tickets in week 5/6 so that people aren't so likely to use lack of finances as an excuse. We're also aiming to increase the number of people who can come by finding a more accommodating venue. than the Connaught Rooms have been in previous years

After the success of the AU Beach Party and the Barrel, we thought we would start the term off on the right note with a party in the underground from 7pm. Just to make things a bit more interesting there will be a theme. The theme is 'When I was younger I wanted to grow up to be...'. It's kind a welcome back party, so try and get everyone out to have some fun before

the irksome work ethic which descends upon LSE in Lent term.!

Wednesday nights will continue as last term but just as a reminder bring some form of legal identification.

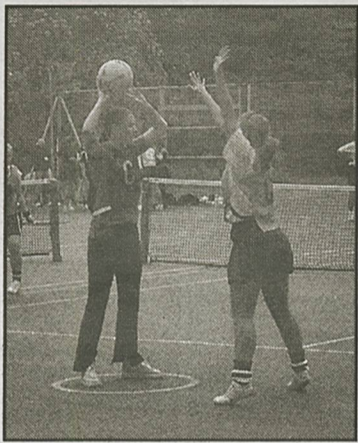
Next up we have RAG week which is taking place in week 7. The AU will be holding a 5-a-side tournament at Berrylands on Sunday 27th February, which we hope to make even more successful than last year. We also want to get the AU more involved in RAG week so amongst other plans is a pub crawl.

Claudia - AU Social Secretary

Welcome back to another term of sport-packed mayhem whether at Berrylands, Lincoln's Inn or in the Surfer's Bar. Week 2 will see the return of many of you to the sporting arena and let us hope that this term we can reel in a few trophies from as great a scope as possible.

As far as BUSA leagues stand at the moment, a special mention must go to our Women's Badminton side, still unbeaten this season and top of the top division in the South East of England.

Further congratulations must go to the rugby club, whose Third team is having the most successful season they've ever had, a testament to the hard work of the respective Captain Rob Donnellan. The men's firsts Squash team are also pushing for a place in the BUSA playoffs after competing excellently.



Everyone on the AU Exec would like to wish you a Happy New Year and remind you that lateness is rudeness.

# Seconds Turkeys take Christmas Stuffing

Second's lard army taken to the slaughterhouse by a dazzling Jimmy Little goal despite Tiwari appearance

Gaz  
'In it for the money'  
Carter



Mighty 1sts.....Many  
Stuffed Turkeys.....Little  
Fortress Berrylands

The Mighty Mighty Firsts returned to LSE this January disappointed at the lack of Abi Titmuss-shaped parcels under their collective Christmas trees, but all ready to return to the righteous fight of mocking those less footballingly able than ourselves. Before we could re-embark on our First Team odyssey we felt it prudent to shake the dust from our holiday-weary joints and so set about carving up the Christmas turkeys that are the LSE Second XI. Unfit and mildly rotund even before the vacation feasting, Brummie and his lard-army stood little chance against the unfeasibly attractive First Team. Lambs to the slaughter.



We each agreed that the Seconds should be given a one goal head start and so, sportingly, the BFG let his man amble sloppily through the caring, sharing First Team defence and take it round our comedy angry-man goalkeeper and slot it home. Clearly the Seconds had awoken Christmas morning to nothing more than lumps of coal in their stockings (due to various alco-

hol-related misdemeanours all year round, I'd warrant), such was their joy at having this gift-wrapped present from the Firsts defensive line.

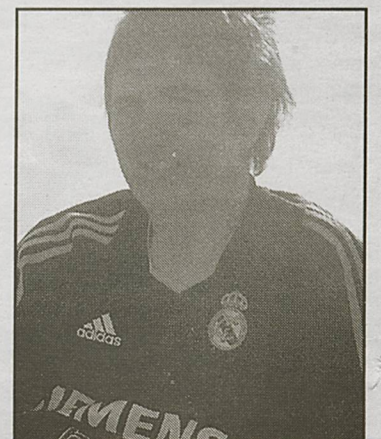
With a benevolent, charitable feeling deep down in our stomachs, the Firsts' community service was satisfied, and so we reverted to the footballing malevolence of old. Stelios trod on people's toes like

the mean bastard he really is, and Jimmy Little poked fun at Brummie's appalling lack of a first touch. It was Big Tom Bray, however, whose holiday inactivity caught up with him first, as he attempted to shin a backpass over Gaz Fishlock, who made no mistake from just inside the box. The boy became an Uncle the day after that - a perfect excuse to indulge in his

favourite hobby of hanging around primary schools with bags of sweets.

The seconds looked weary, and despite the Firsts having Shiva 'Tit' Tiwari making a most unwelcome appearance back in the midfield, we seemed to be all over them like... no, I won't use that one.

Jimmy Little rounded it off with a spectacular (really, it was I thought) finish from 20 yards after good work from the Roosht. The Tuns, and Walkabout, and subsequently Crispy Duck were made by many, though sadly that included Dom as well. The Mighty Mighty Firsts, as ever, rock on.



What hope is there for Brummie's army?

## 'Boom Boom Boom' LSE Women's Hockey Crush UCL

Lucky charm Tara's presence helps secure unexpected victory against UCL Hockey

Claudia Whitcomb



LSE Hockey Beauties.....7

UCL Failures.....1

On top of the world



It's a new year, and LSE Hockey have turned over a new leaf. With our gorgeous new playing kit, we hit the pitch eager to play on Wednesday. We hadn't really thought about how unfit we would be and we were playing UCL, so to be honest we had pretty much dashed all hopes of a victory. Little did we know that out of the 10,000 students swamping Gower Street, they couldn't muster a worthy eleven.

Naturally the game got off to an awful start, as true to the cause Tara so bluntly put it why exactly were we bothering? UCL managed to get a goal within the first few minutes, thanks to some pretty

sloppy play, it wasn't our fault we hadn't hit a ball in 5 weeks, had wallowed in the mulled wine and mince pies, and had turned up too late to have a knock about.

We decided we still had plenty of time to get a few back, so we carried on with high spirits, we couldn't let the poly scum beat us. Thanks to Sarah and Louise who had outstanding games in the mid-field, we kept balls flying into the D. Nat missed a few sitters and we

thought everything was going against us. That was until Louise finally hit the back board, it was 1-1. We kept possession and managed to make it 2-1 just before the break with Nat finally scoring.

The second half turned into somewhat of a comedy performance, we were running circles around them. In their defence, they did have one or two, no maybe just the one decent player who was getting seriously upset with her team

for missing every ball played to them. The defensive line up of Amanda, Verity, Ju and myself were getting pretty cold standing around and probably saw literally minutes of action throughout the game. As for Kristina in goal, she was just thankful for the new socks we had given her...

At least she had something to laugh about when Jade came on, we do love Jade and her new haircut, but her major concern was

how the wind and rain would affect it, at least she kept the bin bag off this time. Ryland and Melissa had good games, in fact the whole team did.

Throughout the second half Louise and Meenal continued to perform well and each added another goal to their tally. Nat managed to get a hat-trick, something she won't let us forget for a while! Tara's now sure she's the teams good luck charm, she has a hundred percent winning record this year, not something anyone else can say! We couldn't believe it, not only had we won, but we'd scored 7 goals, hence you'd think everyone would be up for a great night out, but no!

The hockey turn out in the Tuns wasn't too bad, and we collaborated with the rugby girls for a great rendition of 'Boom, Boom, Boom', after which people started to disappear. Only myself and Lizzie made it to Walkabout, and how Lizzie actually made it there remains a serious question.

So finally the hockey team is getting better, but still no joy on the social front, something hopefully time will heal.

## Scoring some hoops with Women's Basketball

Captain Solange Chatelard-Guo reflects on the skilled diversity that has led to LSE Basketball victories

Solange Chatelard-Guo



In the past three years there has not been much printed about the LSE women's basketball team in the AU pages of the Beaver. Does the LSE even have a team? Are the girls any good? Can they shoot and can they do defense? It is time the silence about LSE women and hoops be broken, and the some of the facts about the successful team revealed.

To begin with, despite an average of about 45 girls who come to the try-outs at the beginning of each year, LSE has only one women's team, in contrast with other sports which have various.

This team competes in two inter-collegiate leagues: the University of London Union league (ULU) and the British Universities Sporting Association league (BUSA). The LSE have done well in both, winning the BUSA South Eastern Conference last year, and being finalists in ULU for the last two years, (and confident to take the title in February).



Despite the difficulties of building a new team every year, because about 50% of players are General Course and Masters students, there is a balanced core of undergraduate and PhD students that have kept the stamina and drive of the team alive. From

Canada to Singapore, via the United States, Portugal, Denmark, Spain, Germany, France, India, Vietnam, Malaysia and China, the LSE has probably one of the most international women basketball teams in London and south-east England. Where most teams in

competition are (sadly) qualified as smart-ass Londoners or country bumpkins, LSE's diverse body of players, both horizontally for it's different nationalities and vertically for it's level and topic of study, makes it harder for us to be qualified on the courts. Moreover,

because of varying backgrounds and experiences, each player adds her own skills and style to the team's performance.

For some, basketball offers the only few moments of peace away from the pressures of studying, or marking essays. Others do it to remember their college years in other parts of the world. But most play for the love of playing, for the physical and mental drive a team sport offers, and for not losing touch with a particular and important aspect of one's self which sports shapes and moulds over time. It's important to remember that you're active and playing because you still derive pleasure from a sport, and that because you have that pleasure you will not stop it.

Being at university gives us the privilege to have courts, practise time and organised leagues to play in; for those who love sport, we must take advantage of this vital framework while we still can.

Our next ULU game will be against Royal Holloway at the end of January where we hope to recreate our convincing 59-32 victory over UCL. So remember there are some less obvious but equally deserving women's teams in the AU.