

The Beaver

The Newspaper of the LSE SU

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Issue number 551



The Beaver has a school trip to meet David Dickinson at the BBC
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It's been promoted in Econ A - read Nicholas Barr's views on student funding
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LSE students: Terrorists, or just a bunch of bankers?

Julia Giese and Catherine Baker

The Students' Union has hit out at claims made by The Sunday Telegraph this week dubbing LSE the 'London School of Extremists' and accusing the School of having harboured a 'terror trio'. The newspaper's allegations mainly refer to past fundamentalist activities at LSE. According to an "intelligence report" the LSE "has been host to at least three al-Qa'ida-linked terrorists", including Ahmed Omar Sheikh who has been linked to last week's shooting in Calcutta and is often said to be one of the key financiers of Mohammed Atta, the pilot of one of the planes that hit the World Trade Center on September 11. The LSE acknowledged that Omar Sheikh registered for an undergraduate degree in statistics in October 1992. While the Telegraph claims that "friends say that in 1993, while in his second year there, he went to Bosnia on an aid mission, and converted to an extreme form of Islam", LSE argues that by that time he had long left the college. "He left before the end of his first year without completing a degree", comments an LSE spokesperson. "LSE has had no further contact with him after he dropped out of his course." As for the other terrorists mentioned but not actually named, one is said to have been involved in the attack on the Indian Parliament in the end of last year. According to the Telegraph, which refers to "the report" as its only evidence, the extent of his LSE link is that he

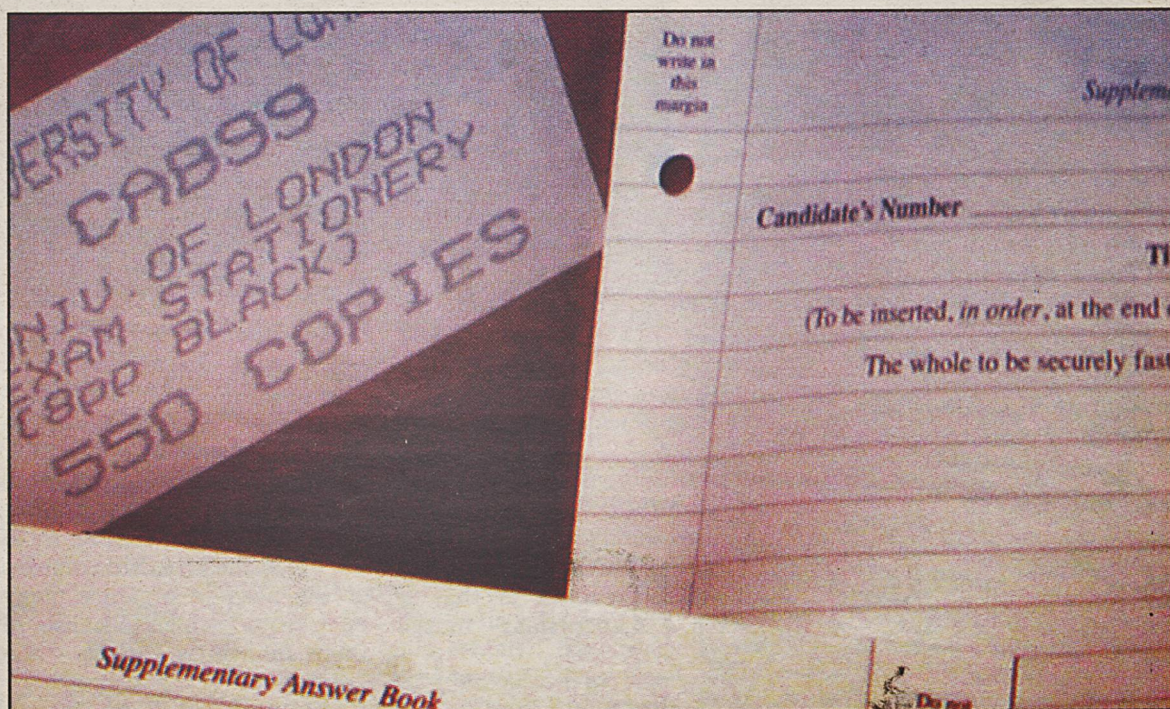
lectured to Muslim students here in 1993. The other one "enrolled on a computer course at the LSE in 1992."

The police are quoted by the Telegraph as believing that he used his position to recruit members for Jaish-e-Mohammed, a radical Kashmiri separatist group closely associated with al-Qa'ida. LSE says that they cannot find any record of these two suspects.

Though it is true that there was some concern at LSE about fundamentalism in the mid 1990s, Gethin Roberts, General Manager of the Student's Union since 1991, says that "actions taken were a response to what was happening at other campuses, not any problem here at LSE, and were at the request of and with the full support of the Islamic Society officers." Furthermore, he argues that "at a time when Islamic Societies at other London campuses were being taken over by supporters of fundamentalist groups like Hizb-ut-Tahrir, the LSE Islamic Society was a real beacon of pluralism, committed to representing a diversity of views within Islam and providing a forum for reasoned debate."

Mohamed El-Darrata, chairperson of the Islamic Society, has also stressed their belief in political neutrality, noting that they have remained silent on Afghanistan or the intifada in the Middle East. 'Anybody aware of our activities, or who visits our prayer room, would conclude that we are one of

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Some of the exam answer booklets that were left unattended by the Hong Kong Theatre. Next stop ebay?

LSE leaves confidential summer exam books in a corridor

Cathy Wallace

Boxes of highly confidential official University of London Examination Answer Booklets and Supplementary Answer Booklets were found unguarded for all to see in one of the major LSE buildings early this term.

The boxes, clearly labelled as containing the answer booklets, were discovered on a Monday morning and were not removed until the following day.

The implications of this

administrative debacle are devastating in terms of exam security and prevention of cheating.

The official ULU booklets are the only documents permitted in examinations - with the exception of open book exams. An enterprising student, upon discovering the boxes, could easily formulate a plan to ensure maximum marks were gained by fraudulent means in the summer exams, with minimal risk.

The Undergraduate Handbook clearly states that "the use of books, notes, instru-

ments, computer files or other materials or aids in the examination room that are not expressly permitted" constitutes cheating and is therefore punishable.

However, the ULU answer books are not only permitted but the only acceptable form of answers. Considering the boxes were left in full view of the student body for at least a day, students would have plenty of time to see, use and abuse them.

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Inside : b:link - this week's best features, 10 - 15; B:art - the latest films, music, and theatre, 16 - 25; Sports - the sports crew meet God, 26 - 28

Summer internships just around the corner at Citigroup Corporate & Investment Bank
imagine no limits: www.citigroup.com/newgrads/recruits

citigroup corporate & investment bank

Schroder Salomon Smith Barney & Citibank

LSE beats Oxford and Cambridge - again...

Armin Schulz

As reported last week, the National Audit Office's report to the government presented a bleak picture to the LSE as it had to face the fact of having the lowest intake of students with a poorer socio-economic background. However, due to a slightly strange set-up of the NAO's findings, the BBC (amongst others) had gotten the listing wrong so that the LSE is actually above Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and the Royal Vets.

The question remains however: What is the LSE doing to change this situation? Jane

'It is a long-term process to gain wider participation at UK universities in general, and at the LSE especially.'

Gibbs, from the Undergraduate Admissions Office, and Philip Moss, the Student Recruitment Officer, pointed out that it is a long-term process to gain wider participation at UK universities in general and the LSE especially.

It is a fact that can't be overlooked that the LSE offers only a limited subject variety, amongst which many of the very popular courses (media studies etc.) are missing. Also, with its high intake of foreign students that are expected (because of the higher overseas fees) to come from better-off families, the LSE has a reputation of being 'for rich kids only'.

This situation is not improved by the fact that living in London in general is more expensive than anywhere else in Britain and that to get into the LSE (as one of the top schools in the UK), one has to face strong competition for entry, which naturally limits the pool of students to draw from.

This last point also makes sense when considering the fact that many of these poorer students come from educational backgrounds (sixth-form college, secondary school etc.)

which are comparatively worse than those of their better-off peers.

This is also a reason, as Jane Gibbs pointed out, why most of the programs in place at the LSE try to convince students to apply to university in general - not just to the LSE. The focus of these programs, due mainly to practical reasons (such as accommodation etc.), is the greater London area.

Some of these (summer, Sunday and Saturday schools), partly funded by the government and private sponsors such as Goldman Sachs, recently more than doubled their intake. Of course, this does not guarantee entry to the LSE, or comparable institutions, but it does make a difference when considered that many students otherwise might not even have attempted to do their A-levels.

Also, the student tutoring system, in which LSE students work as teacher assistants in less well-off parts of London, works by giving young children a type of role model to not leave the education system after taking the GCSE exams. It should also be noted that the biggest question of prospective college students is why to study in the first place.

During the many talks in the State and Visit Program, which featured some 4000 students, Ms Gibbs has found that the most convincing answer is that it means a higher salary in the future.

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By taking copies of the answer books and preparing answers or essays with the aid of notes, books and the LSE resources, all the student needs is the audacity to smuggle the prepared answers into the exam room and substitute the issued answer books with the prepared ones.

The blank answer books could then be smuggled out of the exam room so that no irregularities remained.

Should the student be unsure of what questions will arise, notes could be prepared within the answer books on a range of topics, used in the exam room, crossed out and handed in as "workings" during the exam itself.

Would students be dishonest enough to seize this opportunity to improve their final grades? I spoke to a few students in the Quad about their views on cheating in examinations and was surprised to see that fraud-



Prof Stephen Hill and a satisfied winter school participant

Also, the Student Shadowing Program gives students who seriously consider applying to the LSE a chance to follow an LSE student for one day to get a very clear picture of the life at the LSE. This relieves of the need to organise many open days, which because of their anonymity can give dis-

torted pictures of the institutions involved.

These programs are found to be continually expanding and are showing increasing success, and it should be noted that well over 60% of the UK undergrads come from state schools.

However, another unsolved question is whether this issue of

bringing more students (especially from poorer backgrounds) into Higher Education is truly one to be solved by the universities. It seems that most work should and must be done before the applicants actually sit their A-levels. This would mean more work for the government - much more work.

Exams security brought to book

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ulence isn't something they dismiss out of hand.

While several students answered that they would never cheat, only one expressed the belief that if they found out a friend had cheated they would think this was bad. Most of the students I talked to expressed no opinion on other people's cheating, as one respondent pointed out, "it's their business and I wouldn't care". One student expressed the view that cheating is "more stressful than studying" but my respondents weren't entirely devoid of a "devil may care" attitude.

One student said they would definitely cheat if the opportunity arose, and if they found out a friend had cheated they'd feel stupid for not seizing the opportunity to cheat as well. Another said the opportunity for cheating had never arisen, but if it did they would certainly consider taking it.

As we're not such an honest bunch, it appears that the LSE

must take greater care of its confidential documents in order to make sure the golden opportunity never arises. Derek Cook, the Administrative Officer for Graduate Registry, assured me that when exam answer papers are delivered they are immediately locked away, and the process is supervised either by himself or by a member of the Exams Office staff.

Theoretically there is no way students should be able to get their grubby mitts on these papers - deliveries are supervised and the papers are kept under lock and key. Should the papers arrive at an antisocial hour they would either be sent to the Post Room and kept there until they can be transferred by the relevant recipient, or if the Post Room is closed the delivery is simply not accepted.

Staff at the main reception area of the Old Building are not permitted to sign for a delivery - presumably to stop messes

like this one happening in the first place.

So what went wrong? It is difficult to see how the LSE could be so careless as to overlook the massive security issues surrounding these boxes, and the blame certainly cannot be pointed at the security teams, as they have no responsibilities towards deliveries. Clearly the Exams Office must take greater care of their property - as their system is either negligent or their safe places aren't as secure as they think.

Either the delivery itself was not supervised as it should have been, or people who have access to the secure storage point don't realise quite how important these documents are. Whatever the explanation, the Exams Office must hope that the students I spoke with about the cheating issue are unrepresentative of the LSE body as a whole, otherwise the damage has already been done.

The Beaver News

LSE 'fun-loving' not fundamentalist, say SU and Islamic Society

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the most fun-loving Islamic societies in the country,' unlike Islamic Societies on some other London campuses.

Furthermore, he argues that "at a time when Islamic Societies at other London campuses were being taken over by supporters of fundamentalist groups like Hizb-ut-Tahrir, the LSE Islamic Society was a real beacon of pluralism, committed to representing a diversity of views within Islam and providing a forum for reasoned debate."

Mohamed El-Darrata, chairperson of the Islamic Society, has also stressed their belief in political neutrality, noting that they have remained silent on Afghanistan or the intifada in the Middle East.

'Anybody aware of our activities, or who visits our prayer room, would conclude that we are one of the most fun-loving Islamic societies in the country,' unlike Islamic Societies on some other London campuses.

"There are proactive attempts within the Islamic Society to maintain our political neutrality, and to avoid any attempts by outsiders to use the Society as a base for their political views." It is believed that this alludes to leaflets distributed by Kings' students around the LSE campus.

Moreover, El-Darrata emphasized to *The Beaver* that 'there are also proactive attempts within the Society to maintain its political neutrality, and to avoid any attempts by people from outside to use the Society as a base for their political views.' It is believed that this alludes to leaflets which have been distributed by King's students around the LSE campus.

'Our focus is on promoting Muslim students' rights on campus and providing services for the students,' El-Darrata

told *The Beaver*. Their recent activities have ranged from a paintballing trip to organizing dinner for 80 students every weekday evening during Ramadan.

'If anyone is interested in finding out what views we hold, come over and grab a copy of *Islamica*,' he said, referring to the journal produced by the Society which is circulated to



No alumni association at Guantanamo Bay

British universities.

'One student from the University of Chicago told me he heard about *Islamica* before he'd heard about the London School of Economics.'

El-Darrata also attacked the way in which he was approached by Chris Hastings, the journalist who composed the article alongside Rajeev Syal. 'They were looking for a story that never existed,' El-Darrata told us. 'They were attempting to confirm the story with rumours.'

Suggesting that the journalists had already had their story in mind before they had collected the facts, he also claims that his comment reported by the *Sunday Telegraph* as 'A number of students were brainwashed by outsiders' in fact referred to the members of al-Qa'ida.

'The real dangers of this kind of sloppy and ill informed journalism is that Moslem students, perhaps under pressure from concerned parents, will have reservations about becoming involved in Islamic Societies at University, reducing both membership and diversity of view within the societies', comments Roberts.

'There is some evidence that this is already happening at many campuses. It would be a tragedy for the student body as a whole, as well as for Muslim students, if we were to allow this to happen here.'



Union Jack

This week's UGM opened with Claire Taylor revealing the sad news that Sven-Goran 'God' Eriksson will not be gracing the UGM with his presence. Despite being elected honorary vice-president of the union, the small matter of a distraction. That said, given the difficulty of England's group Jack expects we'll be able to see him before the exams have finished.

Jarlaith O'Hara again insisted on stealing Tom 'Fudge' Packer's thunder, announcing progress with NUSL and society developments. Simply because he attends every meeting, gets paid for it and has been trained who does he think he is making announcements which are clearly in young Fudge's domain? None the less Tom still found reason to make it on to the stage announcing the latest events to occur on the Catering committee. Jack doesn't know whether it was the dubious Brunch Bowl fish cakes he'd had earlier or Packer's infectious power grabbing, but his stomach was definitely going over.

George Idunno announced the upcoming rag week. Jack suggests we implement an alternative 'Losing your Rag' Week, five fun packed days full of annoyance, hissy fits, hysterical screaming and violent disorder. Jack imagines sponsored events such as loiterer slaying and Bernardo roasting could bring in the pennies. Indeed, one well placed exsanguination ought to help kick off the Blood drive, recently announced by Tuns darling Rowan Harvey, in style.

Questions to the only bloke from *The Beaver* who could be arsed to turn up were fired at Nick 'any nick-name will probably be edited out anyway' Stoker, who left us all with the image of fat Americans masturbating in front of their PC monitors over George. Cheers Nick.

Moving swiftly on, the first motion of the day, suggesting the production of an alternative course guide, came and went without incident. Next up we saw AU likely lad Justin Jewell calling for exams to be postponed if they clash with England's World Cup games. Surely this is something that could be easily accommodated, but unfortunately Gidden's isn't a football fan - he supports Tottenham - so it is unlikely the school's mind will be changed.

That though is no reason not to pass the motion. Some members from the exec suggested that passing such a motion would make the School less inclined to take the SU seriously. No, the electorate's desire to send muppets like Tom Packer to the Court of Governors makes the School less likely to take us seriously.

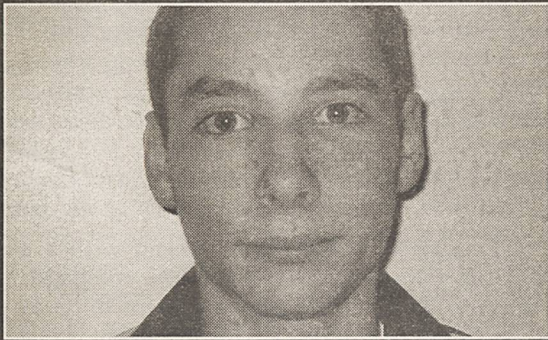
The final motion, asking for more computer availability boards to be put up around the school, gleamed a very interesting piece of information. Apparently our blessed library, built by world-famous architect and stilt wearer Sir Norman Foster, is so badly designed that when they came to install a water fountain they forgot that they'd need two pipes - one to take the water in and, moreover, one to take it out - and so couldn't install it without forcing students to drink their own effluent. Uncharacteristically the School opted not to leave us in the shit this time. ...

Houghton Street's Views on an article in The Sunday Telegraph describing the LSE as a breeding ground for extremism



'I hoped it would be extreme, but it really is just a breeding ground for Tory Wankers. Sorry. Bankers.'

- Jane Edbrooke



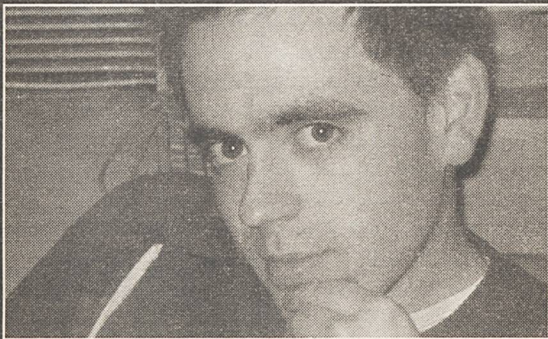
'No breeding ground here - you want to have a look at Strand Poly, that's where you'll find the scum.'

- Craig McGregor



'London School of Extremists? I don't see any courses in Cockpit Control.'

- Charlie Jurd



'What a pile of wank. The Telegraph spouts ill-researched out of date shite. Again.'

- Justin Jewell

The Beaver's weekly round up of student news

with Lyle Jackson & Ju Li Gan



The University of Aberdeen this week releases a story of how their Museum curator solved a '90-year-old penguin egg mystery'. "Dr Martyn Gorman has uncovered a fascinating story connecting Aberdeen and the North-east with the heroic and dangerous epic Antarctic expeditions of the early twentieth century." Says the release. "I found the egg lying in a cupboard, literally under the stairs, in the museum store. I have always been fascinated by Antarctic exploration and on seeing the date 1912 I instantly realised that I had in my hand a relic of those heroic days. The egg had been collected on Macquarie Island, the only place in the world where Royal Penguins breed." Allegedly, later in the day, the chicken egg with best before date 19th of December (only a month out of date) was eaten by Dr Gorman who has since passed the finding off as 'a joke'.



Bristol 'Love Rat' Sean Trangmar came a cropper last week after winning a bet with friends. Trangmar managed to bed all of the female members of the (albeit small) Ju-Jitsu club after a booze fuelled week of passion. Problems only started to occur after a late night 'girly chat' revealed exactly what had happened. Trangmar had unfortunately not planned for the fact that of all the clubs he had managed to choose a martial arts one, and the ladies were prepared to use their skills. Apparently he won't be winning any more bets of this nature for some time.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Star of the Lord of the Rings movie Elijah Wood paid a visit to a semi-secret social organisation - the Lampoon. He gave a speech, answered questions about himself, and joined the students for dinner in one of the university dining halls. When asked what he would do if he could become invisible like in the film, Wood's first response was: "For all the guys here, there are things that I would definitely do". The star also won a "Lord of the Wings" trophy for winning a chicken-wing eating competition without having to eat a single wing because his opponent was disqualified for being part of a professional wing-eating club.

Lancaster University

The University of Lancaster recently went ahead with a project which allows all of the students to have their own webpage on the students' union website. The scheme allows student to really push the boat out when it comes to creativity. This little gem is just on of many available at www.lancs.ac.uk/ug "The nightlife of lancaster [sic]... a short guide. Well, it would be short because it is practically none [sic] existence [sic]." Awesome. A model webpage and a good advertisement for Lancaster.



The University of Durham Student Newspaper, Palatinate, recently won first place in the National Student Journalism awards. With a ridiculous result like this, the awards could only have been held in one place - The 'Great' Hall at King's College. John Nelson, editor of the paper last year, demonstrated the kind of skills used to win the top place with the following speech, "I was very pleased that we won". To many people's surprise, Palatinate managed to win despite having no coverage at all of the LSE AU barrel, but this week we managed to make the headlines over 'our love of David Dickenson'!



It may become very costly for students at any Colorado public university to riot. A bill has been passed but requires further approval to become law. If so, a student convicted of rioting offences is not entitled to pay the cheaper in-state fees for a year and will have to pay as an out-of-state student. The author of the bill thinks this will help prevent tragedies from happening, and while university officials criticise the fairness and practicality of such a law, the former suggests some sort of social security scanning system to keep track of rioters. An interesting point was brought forward by the Vice President of Student Affairs at Colorado State University: "Is it fair to tell a convicted rioter that they can't pay in-state tuition, but you let rapists and murders get it?"



Students at the University of Cambridge may be looking forward to an injection* into their night lives after Prince Harry was seen looking around Trinity College in December. The lively Royal spent a day in the Cambridge area and then went to view his Father's ex-College later, fueling rumours that "he may be thinking about applying there".

*I am not suggesting that Prince Harry has 'made the transition'.



Mind your mobile: how to stop them nicking your Nokia

Cathy Wallace

Most of us have one. They're small, they're sleek and they play a large part in our lives. We'd be lost without them. And they're getting us into trouble, we're approached for them, we're attacked for them, people have even lost their lives for them. Mobile phones are fast becoming a 'most wanted' commodity, and theft of mobile phones is rapidly increasing. You can hardly read a newspaper without mobile phone theft cropping up - be it extremely violent cases, the worrying increase or what the police are doing to try and stop it.

A classmate of mine was recently stopped and relieved of his mobile phone outside Manor House tube station - the thieves kindly returned his SIM card but made off with his handset. Another friend of mine turned up late to a party after having a gun pointed at him and demands made for his property. The police are well aware of the problem: Jenny Harper at Charing Cross Police told me that she and another officer had given talks on mobile phone theft and safety at the beginning of the year, to raise awareness of what can be done to prevent it. However, the police can't be everywhere at once and there is only a limited amount they can do. In many cases theft can be avoided by people taking sensible precautions.

For starters, don't leave your mobile phone out on the table when you are at a pub, bar or café. It may seem like a good idea - you can keep an eye on it and hear if it rings - but it advertises to everyone that you have a mobile phone. In some cases, according to Jenny, thieves will simply snatch the phone from the table, but leaving your phone in public view also makes it a prime target for what is known as 'distraction theft'. The thieves approach you with a card with something written on it, and place the card as close to your face as possible. This means you instinctively move backwards to read the card. Often the card is written in several languages, but the general meaning is always the same, I'm



hungry and homeless, please give me money. By the time you have processed this and refused (or complied), the second operative has taken your mobile phone from the table. By the time you have processed this, the thieves are long gone. Your phone is a lot safer in your pocket, or in a bag within clear eyesight.

Secondly, beware of using your phone in a public place. Striding about blabbing into your mobile not only makes you look like a prat, it displays your phone for all to see and lets opportunists know you're not concentrating on what's going on around you. Jenny advises standing with your back against a wall if you need to use your phone in public, this way you can see what's going on around you and no-one can surprise you by taking your phone from behind. Some mobile phones also come with wrist straps, so if you have one, it pays to use it. A current problem in the Covent Garden area involves a single offender on a pedal cycle, who lifts people's phones whilst cycling past. According to Jenny this is happening on a daily basis, and could be reduced if people utilised the wrist straps on their phones, or made sure they were difficult to approach by standing against a wall.

Keeping your phone as close to your person as possible is a good safety precaution. Phones, wallets and other valuables in a rucksack carried on your back are at risk in crowded places, hands

creep into bags and in the jostle and bustle it's difficult to tell what's going on. I have removed hands from my bag on two separate occasions in my time in London, once the hand turned out to belong to a boy of no more than six. If you are approached there is less you can do to protect yourself. If an individual comes up to you asking for money, Jenny advises refusing politely but keep walking. Stopping means you are engaged in interaction with the individual and opens opportunities for requests be repeated and increased. Similarly if you do stop and hand over some change, it is easy enough for the individual to see where you keep your wallet, purse or

mobile phone, and notify a gang of friends down the road who may stop you with more demanding requests. If however, you are threatened, intimidated or stopped by a gang often the best policy is to simply give them what they want as quickly as possible and get to a safe place and phone the police.

There is no need to walk around in fear, or become unduly suspicious of beggars. Simply being aware of what's going on around you, and taking care with your personal belongings, should be enough to help reduce the risk of opportunistic crime. According to several recent reports in magazines such as 'Cosmopolitan' and 'Company', people are less likely to be approached if they appear confident and aware of what's going on around them. Yet another reason to 'walk tall' like your mother always told you.

As a last piece of advice, PC Harper says that the owner of a mobile phone should always keep a note of the IMEI number of the phone: To bring the number up in the viewing panel you enter * # 0 6 #. The number shown should be given to the police in the event of a theft. "We will enter the number into our computer records, and if we find the phone, or question someone in possession of a phone, use the above code to trace the rightful owner."

Police appeal to Bournemouth clubbers

Murder squad detectives hunting the killer of a soldier in a Bournemouth nightclub are appealing to students across southern England - and the rest of the country - who were at the national party, to get in touch by telephone or email.

Officers also want to hear from any students with friends or associates who attended the national Music Television (MTV) Lick party at the large Elements night club in Fir Vale Road,

Bournemouth, during the evening of Thursday, December 13th and Friday, December 14th, 2001.

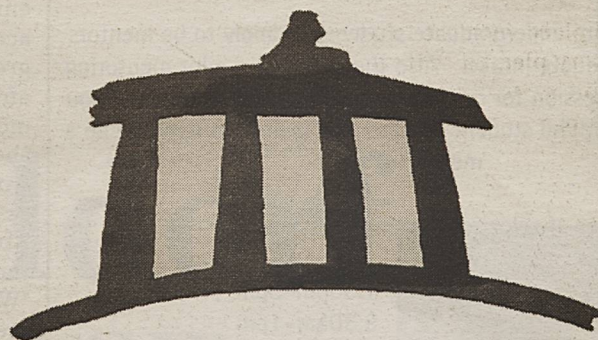
Dorset Police is now making its appeal to students in higher education establishments across south, west and eastern England - as well as the rest of the country - as the students have just returned to their studies after the Christmas and New Year break.

Detectives also want to hear from anyone with video of the MTV party at Elements - or

anyone who knows of others with video footage of the Garage music event that featured top BBC Radio One DJ Trevor Nelson.

The officer leading the murder investigation, Detective Superintendent Steve Mortimore, said: "Many students will not have seen or heard our appeals in the local media for help and information because they will have been out of the region - at home with family and friends for the Christmas and New Year celebrations.

LSE



German Week 2002

February 4 - February 8, 2002

sponsored by:

BASF

Baker's Mullet

A PART from the classy drinking den which is the Tuns, there is no better place for an LSE student to go boozing than at Cumberland Lodge.

Mullet took it upon himself to take a trip to the said establishment this weekend in order to attend lectures and revel in the supposed intelligence of his peers.

After a perilous journey through London, Mullet found out that he was sharing a room with a stylish Craig David look-alike who had a habit of peering into his reflection to check that his beard had not fallen off.

Dinner was great, a loin of pork topped with cheese and tomatoes came as a welcome change for Mullet from the usual Pot Noodle and bag of crisps or Wright's Bar bacon sandwich ('SAUCE!').

The first night passed without incident, after a few bottles of

Newkey Brown, Mullet et room-mate retired to the Lord Huntingberry suite to share a half bottle of smuggled gin and three cans of sprite. While Craig David resisted Mullet's amorous advances, it is clear that he swings both ways.

By the second night things had taken a change for the worse. The night started out innocently enough, Craig David only preening in front the mirror twice and Mullet only thinking of singing a famous Carly Simon song once.

The UCL students had unfortunately arrived and after two

bottles of cheap wine, which would even have made the Tuns' managers blush, Mullet began talking to the UCL students after first insisting that he should be in charge of the music.

After a quick will of words culminating with Mullet asking "Don't you know who I am?" Mullet took to the decks (or rather the cheap CD player) and attempted to turn an unimposing basement in Windsor into a debauched Friday night at Crush. The last thing Mullet remembers is being woken up by Craig

David who insisted that he could hear a Grandfather clock ticking somewhere. A Scooby-Doo style investigation down the corridor wearing nothing but a pair of pants and holding nought but a large magnifying glass and a few Scooby snacks ensued. Upon discovering the Grandfather clock, Craig was happy and Mullet still couldn't give a fuck.

The night had however taken an unexpected twist for one member of Mullet's party. While everybody thought that this mystery man had pulled due to his absence at dinner, it turns out he had been woken up naked in a pool of his own vomit by the Departmental Secretary.

All characters are entirely fictitious and bear no relevance to anybody alive or dead, but I bet you think this column's about you, don't you, don't you?

METHS!



LSE Student Mentoring Scheme 2002/2003

Are you interested in helping the new intake of students settle in at LSE in October 2002? Are you an undergraduate or research student?

If so, why not apply to be a student mentor? LSE wants to ensure that students make the most of their time here, and has established a Schoolwide Student Mentoring Scheme to complement the induction programme for new students.

We would like to invite undergraduate students to apply to be mentors for the new undergraduate intake. Also there will be a pilot mentoring scheme in the 2002 session for new PhD and MPhil students - so if you are a current PhD or MPhil student you are also invited to apply to be a mentor.

Dates of selection/ training sessions:

11 February 2002	1.30pm-5pm
18 February 2002	9.30am-1pm
14 March 2002	9.30am-1pm
19 March 2002	1.30pm-5pm

Each session is a half-day course - you only need attend one. Please note: the training session is also a means by which we assess suitability of students for the scheme. Successful applicants will get:

Skills-based training to build on your communication and interpersonal skills

A Mentoring Handbook to give you all the additional information you will need to help new students settle in at LSE

Valuable voluntary work experience

A Certificate of Participation at the end of the year

The chance to enhance the student experience of fellow students from around the world

For an application form please contact Jane Capon, Registration and Orientation Assistant by email at j.l.capon@lse.ac.uk or phone 0207 955 6167

RAE results: something to be proud of?

Julia Giese

Only topped by Cambridge, LSE has piped Oxford for second place in overall research qualities shows the latest Research Assessment Exercise published in December 2001. These results take the proportion of staff that entered publications into account. Having had assessed a greater percentage than than any other institution (97.2%), most of LSE's departments showed improvements, apart from Economic History as well as Politics and International Studies, which lost points though still getting top marks. "We have achieved this with a great deal of hard work and an ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards, despite the constant financial struggle to balance research with teaching priorities," comments LSE director Anthony Giddens.

That exactly is the point, however: Students have long been complaining about the teaching standards at LSE. Therefore we should ask the question at what price the excellent result comes for the students. In order to achieve a high ranking universities have to invest heavily into research facilities in the departments, taking resources from other areas. Together with the costs of LSE's new library is this a good outlook for teaching?

The clue lies in the system itself as Giddens hints: "We hope these RAE results, in recognising the quality of the work we and

others do, is a catalyst for more funding for research into crucial social science areas." At the moment the council is distributing £868m on the back of the RAE ratings - no wonder that most institutions think along Giddens lines helping to improve the total average research rating by 0.8 compared with the results five years ago. There are more top rated 5* departments than ever before, with Cambridge achieving the highest number with 30. Oxford has the second highest number of 5* departments, with 25, followed by UCL, with 16. The LSE loses out in this comparison (7 5*s) for obvious reasons - it just does not offer the same range of subjects.

The government faces an embarrassing dilemma amid these encouraging results, though. "Overall we think that this is an excellent outcome, but it has been so good that we are unable to fully fund the outcome", says Sir Howard Newby, the chief executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, estimating that an extra £200m a year would have to be found if departments were to be funded as before.

On Monday this week a one-off payment of an extra £30m was announced, alleviating some concerns. The higher education minister, Margaret Hodge, said that the new money for research budgets will be targeted on university departments that secured world-class rankings. Let's hope that this gives LSE scope to transfer other resources from research into teaching.

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The Beaver News

New look LSE Choir hits Shaw Library

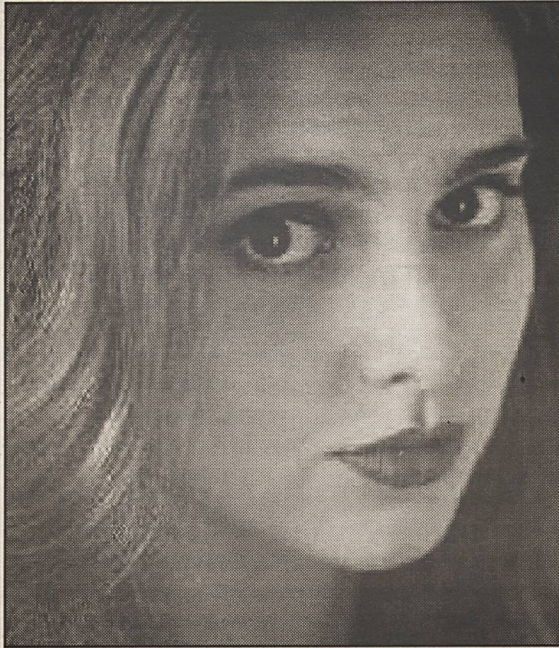
Lively, energetic, full of fresh ideas - that does not sound like the LSE choir we know! This Tuesday the first rehearsal under the guidance of Pamela Hay took place to the relief of the core choir members and the whole music society. Last term, the unpredictable Shaw Librarian, Alan Lowson, who is responsible for general matters concerning choir and orchestra, decided to scrap the choir for this term. "As there are so few students coming to the choir it is just not worthwhile running it and spending money on it", he told astonished students just after the second of two sold out concerts before Christmas last year. The Shaw Librarian seemed to have set the programme already and due to the need to organise music scores early in advance, there could be little hope to make him review the decision. However, the LSE music society organised a campaign to save the choir in the last week of Michaelmas Term to encourage students come to the Carol Service traditionally held on the last Wednesday before term ends. This might have been just the thing to convince the Shaw Librarian of the interest in a choir. The turn-out was heartening - but Alan failed to turn up and many students felt taken aback.

Over Christmas the committee of the music society rushed about to find a solution together with Tom Hammond who conducted choir and orchestra in the Michaelmas Term. Rumours went that Alan partly blamed him for the failure of the choir and he made clear in a meeting with the president of the music society, Lee Khvat, that he would be only too happy to concentrate on orchestra. An trombonist himself, the orchestra members agree that Tom does a brilliant job. However, facing a number of unattractive prospects, the society had to act quickly. It could either set up its own choir (which then would not be accompanied by the orchestra), abandon any cooperation with the Shaw Library and

set up orchestra separately as well as choir or it could just leave things as they were - namely that there was only to be an orchestra in Lent Term. Encouraged by Tom, the committee approached Pamela Hay to lead an independent chamber choir who had worked with the choir for two rehearsals last term already. Pamela is a professional singer and holds a Postgraduate Certificate from the Royal College of Music as well as both a Master of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree from the Peabody Conservatory of Music,

Baltimore, U.S.A. She is in high demand as a concert soloist, having performed pieces such as the Brahms Requiem and Mozart Requiem in London. Facing the prospects described above everyone returned to school only to find the programme for the Lent Term concert in the event's calendar: There were now two short pieces on for choir! Contacting Alan, it was agreed that the choir should work on those two pieces by Mozart but also on further music to be selected by - Pamela Hay. The proposal of the committee to engage her, was taken up by Alan but only under the threat of needing at least 20 choir members in order to keep it alive until the concerts on 4th and 5th March... So consider this a call to arms, whoever enjoys singing and is free Tuesday 6 to 7pm should come to the Shaw Library and support the new LSE Singers. Feel the difference!

If you want to get in touch, you can e-mail the Music Society at su.soc.music@lse.ac.uk



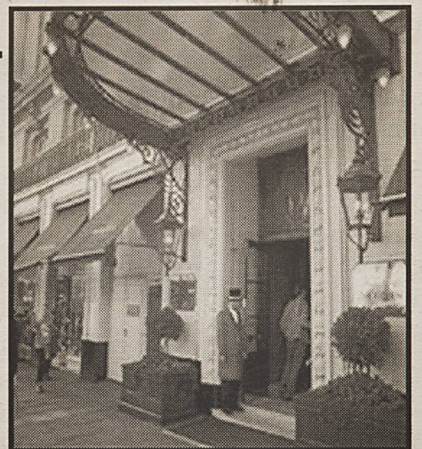
Pamela Hay



Law Careers Fair



at **leMeridien Waldorf**
(100 yards from LSE)



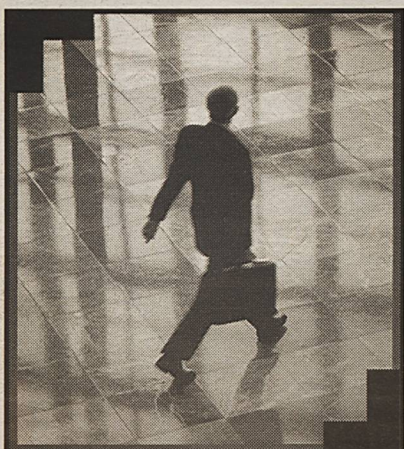
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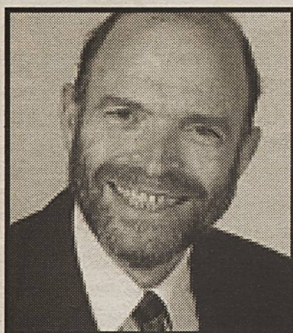
practising barristers

the top 20 international law firms

6pm Monday 4th February



Nicholas Barr on financing student funding



Behind all the controversy about paying for higher education, there are large areas of agreement. Everyone agrees about the core problems: students are poor (you don't need me to tell you), and universities are poor. There is also unanimous agreement about two core objectives: improved access (much needed, as the recent National Audit Office Report makes clear), and improved quality.

Thus nobody - the political parties, the Vice-Chancellors, the NUS, the universities - is arguing about what we are trying to do, but about the best way of doing it.

So, what is right with the present system?

The good news is that student loans now have (in the jargon) income-contingent repayments - repayments calculated as x% of a graduate's earnings until the loan is paid off. Repayments organised this way instantly, automatically and fully respond to changes in earnings: people with low earnings make low (or no) repayments; and those with low lifetime earnings do not repay in full, since any outstanding loan is cancelled after 25 years. Thus the system automatically protects anyone who does not benefit financially from his or her degree.

But the government has been woefully inadequate in explaining the system. Let us start from the argument (NUS, etc.) that higher education should

be paid from taxation. But that means that higher education is paid for by all taxpayers, including low earners, non-graduates, and pensioners. That is unfair, so some people argue that higher education should be financed through a graduate tax paid only by people who have been to university.

But a graduate tax has its own unfairness, since people with high lifetime earnings repay enormously more than they have borrowed (Mick Jagger (non-grad. 1964) is an LSE example; Stelios Haji-Ioannou (grad. 1987, of EasyJet, another). There is an obvious solution: a graduate tax should not go on forever, but be 'switched off' when someone has repaid an agreed contribution towards the costs of his/her degree. That is exactly what an income-contingent loan does - it is a graduate tax capped at 100% of the initial sum borrowed. Income-contingent repayments are exactly like financing via income tax, except that (a) the tax is paid only by those who go to university and (b) total payments are capped. The failure to understand this proposition causes much unnecessary worry about debt.

And what's wrong with the present system?

Loans are too small. Thus the system incorporates upfront charges, students remain poor, and parental contributions continue. The system is so complicated nobody understands it. Interest subsidies are the real horror. Under the present system, graduates pay a subsidised interest rate equal to the inflation rate. The first problem is cost - because of interest subsidies about one-third of lending to students never comes back. Second, expensive student support

crowds out university income; thus interest subsidies conflict directly with improved quality.

Third, because loans are so expensive, the Treasury rations them. Thus interest subsidies, like most subsidies, create shortages. There was an experiment with price subsidies called Communism. It did not work. As a direct result loans are too small and students are forced to use expensive credit-card debt.

The fourth problem is perhaps the worst: interest subsidies do nothing to help students or promote access. They help successful professionals in mid-career. Even in a short exam answer it is worth explaining why.

Interest subsidies do not help students (it is not students who make loan repayments, but graduates). They do not help low-earning graduates, since unpaid debt is cancelled after 25 years. They do not help higher-earning graduates early in their careers - with income-contingent loans, monthly repayments depend only on earnings; thus interest rates have no effect on the size of monthly repayments, but only on the duration of the loan. The only people they help are higher-earning graduates in mid career, whose loan repayments are switched off earlier because of the interest subsidies than would be the case without the subsidies.

Thus the NUS position, defending interest subsidies, is arguing for continued subsidies for those who need it least at a time when they least need it, and the hell with today's struggling inner-city sixth-formers.

What should the government do? My answer has two parts.

First, raise the interest rate on students' loans to

the level of the government's cost of borrowing (not, repeat not, the credit card rate). The resulting savings - with present value of £700 million per year - finance policies to promote access and quality. Thus the proposal is not to eliminate subsidies, but to replace blanket subsidies by targeted interventions - i.e. to steer the money currently gobbled up by interest subsidies away from middle-aged professionals towards the inner city poor.

The second part of the answer is how to spend the money. A strategy for quality and access has three elements. The first leg is flexible fees. These are necessary to reflect diversity and to arrest quality decline. All fees should be fully covered by a loan entitlement.

The second is a good loan scheme. Loans should be adequate to cover living costs and tuition fees, making higher education free at the point of use, addressing student poverty, and freeing students from high-cost borrowing such as credit card debt.

Second, the loan entitlement should be universal, eliminating the means test and eliminating reliance on parental contributions. The combined effect of these twin elements is logically equivalent to bringing in universal grants paid for by a targeted income tax.

The third consists of active measures to promote access. There are

two sources of exclusion - financial poverty and information poverty. Any strategy must address both. It would include grants and scholarships for students from poor backgrounds; extra personal and academic support when students from poor backgrounds reach university; raising the aspirations of schoolchildren (critically important); and devoting more resources earlier in the system.

In conclusion, if my fairy godperson allowed me only one wish for higher education, it would be to get rid of the interest subsidy, whose abolition is the single essential key to solving current funding problems. That is the difficult bit. If government has the bottle for it, we all know how to spend the money well.

Nicholas Barr has been in the LSE economics department for ever. He has advised governments on higher education finance in Australia, New Zealand and Hungary, and been active in UK debate since the late 1980s. This article summarises evidence he will shortly be giving to the Education Select Committee.

Gluttons for punishment could try to understand how fees and loans are assessed by reading http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/ss_admin/content/dsp_section_29.shtm, Chapter 6.

If you would like to comment on this article, please reply, in article form, to j.v.giese@lse.ac.uk.

Nicholas Barr will be speaking on this subject in a debate on February 19 in the Old Theatre at 5 pm

Editorial Comment

'Extremists' explain

As journalists, we recognise that the phrase 'London School of Extremists' trips quite easily off the tongue.

But as LSE students, the prospect of that epithet being bandied around for the foreseeable future should fill us with concern, not least when it appears to be based on the flimsiest of evidence.

We appreciate that *The Sunday Telegraph* may not feel able to give any more indication of its sources than an unidentified 'intelligence report'. The privacy of sources, after all, is a primary principle for every reporter. Yet no matter how confidential the information on which the *Telegraph's* 'revelations' might be based, the conclusions they draw have rightly been condemned by the General Manager of the SU as 'sloppy and ill-informed journalism'.

One member of the so-called 'terror trio', for instance, is supposed to have visited LSE to give a lecture to Muslim students in 1993. Between them, LSE societies play

host to several lecturers every week, including on occasion government representatives and heads of state, and the fact that a certain society has invited a certain speaker cannot be interpreted as meaning that the society shares that speaker's political views. Indeed, it is surely in our interests, and in keeping with LSE's tradition of intellectual enquiry, for us to have access to the widest possible range of opinions. It appears that only one of the trio can be confirmed as having enrolled on a degree programme at LSE (the third is supposed to have taken a 'computer course'). Bankrolling a terrorist network is probably not the sort of high-ranking position in finance that is most commonly associated with LSE, and even so, Omar Sheikh would have been unlikely to get very far with Accenture after dropping out of his mathematics degree here in the first year.

We trust that our report has gone some way towards setting the record straight.

Books of blame?

Not only LSE officials should be concerned at the breach of examinations security *The Beaver* can reveal this week.

Potentially, no student who will take an examination this summer can be fully certain that they will be competing on a level playing field with their fellow examinees. Moreover, since this examination stationery is common to every college of the University of London, the same doubts must now extend from QMW to Royal Holloway.

Of course, just because it would be possible to gain an unfair advantage by making use of mislaid blank answer books does not make it likely that any student will attempt to do so, still less that any attempt is likely to succeed. The

sock which would comfortably house a full-size answer book ready to be unrolled during a surreptitious trip to the lavatory has not been seen outside the Ugly Sisters' dressing-room during pantomime season.

No matter how minimal our practical concern should be, it is nonetheless clear that a regrettable oversight has occurred in the security practices of the Examination Office. Had proper procedures been followed in this instance and the delivery been collected as was intended, the examination stationery would not have been left open to abuse.

We are confident this incident is unlikely to be repeated. But perhaps we are entitled to be thankful that better care has been taken of the exam papers themselves.

TV heroes

Being the responsible newspaper that it is, *The Beaver* obviously cannot be drawn on the accuracy or otherwise of the time-honoured picture of students who abscond with traffic cones.

But what we can wholeheartedly confirm is that every student has their daytime TV heroes, and *The Beaver* is no exception. Richard and Judy lost any sympathy we might have had when they began playing to the gallery by dressing Richard up as a television personality whose own sell-by date had been approaching rapidly in any case.

Yet just as we were searching aimlessly for televisual leadership, David Dickinson has risen to the occasion. Not only is the chirpy antiques dealer with the unerring eye for a deal and the mullet to end all mullets the unchallenged Duke of Daytime TV, but a charming bloke to boot, as any Beaver hack present at *Johnny Vaughan Tonight* will tell you.

As news of our Christmas publicity coup in which he starred in our very own gossip magazine, *Hiya!*, sweeps through student media as far afield as Durham, all *The Beaver* has to say is: David Dickinson, we salute you.

Dear Sir,

Elliot Simmons inadvertently scored an own goal in his article on student funding (All spin but no delivery - 24 January). He tells us that Oxford students refused to pay their 'tax on education', referring to tuition fees. May I ask who else he expects to pay this tax to sponsor their education!? It's rather obvious that someone is going to have to pay for universities- why should it be anyone other than the students who benefit from the education? Or is Mr. Simmons suggesting that the public (72% of whom will not use this education) should pay for them? The end result is that the very rich (who pay more taxes) and the very poor (who send fewer kids through university, but still pay taxes) will have to pay for the middle class. Typical.

Of course there's a problem in Higher Education funding, but I suggest to Mr. Simmons that he should look elsewhere for solutions.

Yours,
Stanley Pignal

is a result of the expenditure on the Library. Neither of these assertions are correct. Rigorous examination was made of the available machines on the market, and funds were made available should their introduction be deemed advisable. However, after examination of the machines' capabilities, coupled with an extensive risk assessment of the threat to the School, staff and students, it was not felt that these machines would benefit the School's security to a significant degree. You are certainly not going to detect anthrax with them - this can be seen by the fact that the US postal service has had to invest over \$6million in machines that bombard the post with radiation in an attempt to kill anthrax germs. They realise that detection machines are not efficient.

In addition to this, it should be borne in mind that the end recipient is much better placed to highlight an unusual package for them, as opposed to the Post Room staff who are dealing with thousands of items of mail for hundreds of different people each and every day.

Turning to your comment about staff training, the School's Security department has issued guidelines to staff, including those in the Post Room, of what to look for with regard to suspect packages. Posters, information sheets and one to one guidance on this, and has been, freely available to all. I myself have visited departments that have expressed concerns, to deliver this information.

The School takes the safety of it's employees and it's stu-

dents extremely seriously. This can be seen by the way that immediately after the events of September 11th we put resources into investigating the risk and possible action. Advice was taken from the Police, our own Security department, and those working in this field. The School engaged with other Universities across London to find out what their arrangements were. Intensive discussions took place with the main service providers, such as Royal Mail, DHL, FedEx etc to ensure that their own security was at the highest level. All this information was used to ensure that the School had, and continues to have, adequate protection.

The best possible advice we have received is that there is no specific or general risk to the School, its staff or its students. Rest assured that if information was received that changed this, it would be acted upon immediately.

Yours,
Bob Marsh
LSE Office Services Manager

Dear Sir,

I write in response to your article, "Anthrax? We've got silk underwear" (Issue 550). As the School's Office Service Manager responsible for the Post Room, I would like to make some comments.

Firstly, your reporter mentions that the purchase of a scanning machine to detect suspicious packages was not implemented because of the cost. It is also implied that this

Dear Sir,

On Friday 1st February, a Teaching Quality Review of the International History department will be taking place. International History students are invited to take part in room E509, where refreshments will be provided. The Review Team would like to meet with MPhil/PhD students at 11.45 am, Undergraduate students at 2 pm, and Taught Masters at 3pm.

Yours,
Rob Traynor



Bang Bang Bangs On

"We live in a loveless world you know. I've been watching that old man feed the birds for weeks. I wonder how long he's been dead?"

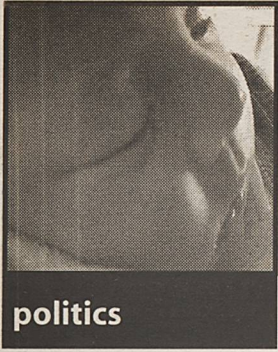


This week, Chloë is eleven weeks old.

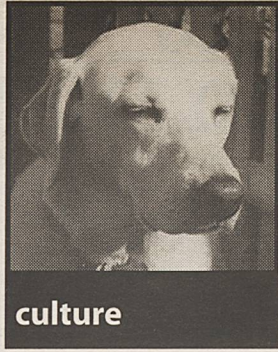
To submit letters or articles, please email them with your name and contact details to thebeaver@lse.ac.uk.

Letters should be in a text format.

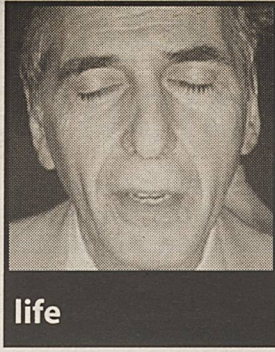
Articles for the News Section should be no longer than 600 words and should be emailed to us by Monday morning. If you require photographs to be taken for your article then please email jj.kraljic@lse.ac.uk well in advance.



politics



culture

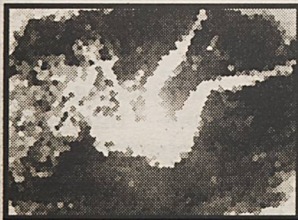


life



words by jane edbrooke

barbie has partied her head off



along the lines of the relationship between Claudio and Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing*, woman in western society is forced into male created roles, unattainable expectations are put on woman, standards that we unsurprisingly rarely meet. Women are faced with inevitable failure and censure, but this is because we ourselves choose to measure ourselves against the standards men set for us. The high expectations mean a long fall off our podiums.

All around us we are bombarded with the mediums that create this imbalance. *FHM*, with the reliance on sex sells, Internet porn, perfect shaped women, with perfect hair and mostly smiling at you from the silent two dimensions that is the screen or page. These women don't talk back, never have bad hair days,

never look hung-over and certainly don't get the munchies for *McDonalds*. Easily accessible through the computer or the turn of a page they make no demands, are always there and, if you read the small print, they coincidentally love doing things to please men. It doesn't stop there. Having lived in Chester I can assure you that Hollyoaks like Sweet Valley high, *Saved by the Bell* and *Beverly Hills 90210*, does not quite represent reality. I can assure you that the city is far from awash with twentysomething models.

I too, like most females, had a number of Barbie dolls as a child. Barbie was beautiful, perfect, what every girl hoped to grow up to look like her. In reality she would have to crawl around on all fours because, statistically speaking, she's so top heavy.

My point is that men are receiving an unattainable picture of what woman should look like and we, as women, are spending too much time trying to conform to an image that is unnatural. I keep pointing this out to friends. Jordan is plastic and shouldn't look like that; it's not what a woman looks like! The peak in

this ranting came recently whilst watching the TV programme *Designer Vagina* which cannot fail but create more paranoia about cosmetic enhancement and therefore an exploitable market. Plastic surgery is being extended to all aspect of woman and women are aiming for an image almost exclusively created by men. I'm convinced, for example, that it wasn't a woman who designed Barbie - just as it's geeky sex deprived blokes who draw woman with 4-inch waists and 42 inch breasts in comics such as *Marvel*. This is an image with little relation to a proper healthy every day woman.

Society expects different standards of behaviour from women and men, it judges them by different yard-sticks and women tread the line between the labels of slut and frigid precariously. Men, meanwhile, can jump easily between labels and categories. The labels of fun and stupid, boring and intelligent follow woman around and LSE, just as the wider society, often falls prey to the categorisation of women. There is obvious censure on women who fail to conform to traditional female roles and women often

lack the confidence to try and break the barriers. I cite in LSE that the women's football team is taken far less seriously than the men's. Women hall presidents are few and far between and the AU exec is entirely male this year. There are more male Presidents of societies and the higher you get in the world of academia in LSE the more males dominate.

Women are stuck in a catch 22 situation: if we conform we are able to succeed in the male dominated world; if we don't we are stigmatised, even by other

women. The only escape is if the people who control these images consider the implication, and the consumer acts with more responsibility. Otherwise it's a bleak future.

This is Jane Edbrooke's first article for b:link- though she is a regular in BeaverSports. She's taken a great interest in gender relations and has a number of gripes over the issue she's happy to discuss with anyone in the Tuns.

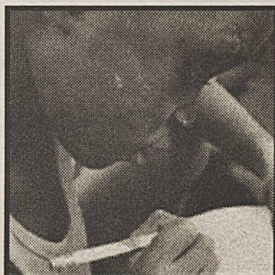


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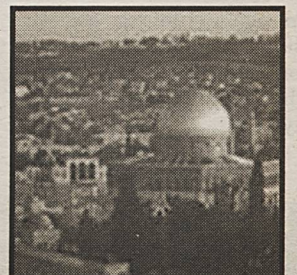
let mugabe win



school in sudan



is israel worth a war?



let mugabe win

Fresh from victory in Afghanistan, the British government needs to quickly realise that Zimbabwe is a different kind of war. Their best strategy would be to let Robert Mugabe win the next battle.

Is it possible that Grace Mugabe, second (and current) wife of the corrupt President of Zimbabwe could be among the six richest people in the world, who account for 59% of the world's wealth? Her reportedly-bulging *Harrods* account and untold foreign expenditure allowance will no longer thrive, however, as the British government, as signalled by Jack Straw this week, hopes to "put Mugabe on the spot" by freezing his assets in Europe, banning him from travelling to the U.K. (and *Harrods*) and suspending Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth.

Targeted sanctions are, even for the most amateur of economists like myself, a better method than general sanctions, the likes of which Ian Smith's Rhodesian 'government' laughed at in the late 1960s. However, by following 'Peter Hain-like' methodology, a type of strategy more likely to aggravate rather than accelerate the journey on any path leading to a return to democracy in Zimbabwe, New Labour's newly proposed measures are likely to harm rather than harmonise international efforts.

Few Zimbabweans (black or white), journalists, world-leaders or historians with a close interest in Zimbabwe's fate, past and present, would disagree that Robert Mugabe is a highly intelligent (if somewhat mistaken) man. He survived the repercussions of the slaughter of thousands during the Matabeleland massacre, established and maintained an opposition-free state for 20 years, and 'won' the last election in Zimbabwe against the highest odds (albeit those of decency and fairness from international pressure). His tactics have never changed, though sometimes the media spotlight on these issues does vary in intensity. Intimidation, vote-rigging and coercion rule while Mugabe rules. One thing is certain: Should Straw's ideas come to fruition, Mugabe will enact revenge immediately. Those most likely to suffer: the white (mostly Rhodesian-born) businessmen in Zimbabwe, and, of course, more suffering guaranteed for the remainder of those already bruised white farmers still managing to cling on to their vast plots of land, while squatters remain at the

foot of their drives, merely a stampede away. That which the British government taketh away, Mugabe will take back from their 'white' brothers, wherever they were born. Britain's measures are too little, too late.

International intervention in Afghanistan has been hailed a success, at least in terms of increasing the democratic nature of the government there. Bombs benefited these ends. Targeted sanctions are different. They do not disarm Mugabe's government. While Zanu-PF remains, with their fingers on the triggers, with their hands gripping axes, and with the white Zimbabweans in their sight, they should not be prodded from outside Africa.

The incredibly vain man Mugabe is, he may simply want a chance to exit in honour. He remains bitter from being overshadowed by Nelson Mandela, who took his mantle as 'statesman of Africa' sometime ago. This was a transfer that proved absolutely correct, as Mandela's own incredibly noble, bold relinquishment of power proved. Mugabe is also furious at his portrayal in the British and American press. Perhaps the fate of the country would be better served if, upon winning the upcoming Presidential election, he allowed for a voluntary transition of power, without a civil war.

The British government must understand the crossroads at which the country currently rests: a turn Left would lead to the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Yet, there is no evidence to draw upon that indicates the current opposition party would be better rulers; even if many think the country could not get any worse. Worryingly, the MDC leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, allegedly demanded that South Africa withhold energy, fuel and transport from Zimbabwe. Meanwhile, the Zimbabwe Democracy Bill in the United States is gathering pace. Though no sanctions prescribed within it have so far been introduced, it may yet alter things. The consequences of either of these measures could be chilling, as sanctions do not always work. Iraq has survived sanctions for 11 years. Yes, the suffering has been considerable - but it has not made the undemocratic

domestic situation their unsustainable. Rhodesia withstood sanctions for 15 years, as did apartheid South Africa pre-1994. Even if sanctions are limited, they could still result in enterprise failure affecting a country with current projected unemployment figures of 70% of the employable population. 80% of Zimbabwe's popula-

tion falls below the poverty line. Inflation rates currently exceed 110% - and would soar with sanctions. Under sanctions, import needs would likely become scarce while business closures would reduce domestic production. Worst of all, if the sanctions applied affected the community at large, the real offenders are provided with scapegoats to blame for the ills, which they have created. Alternatively, a turn to the Right would require faith in the quiet transition of a man corrupted

absolutely.

Either way, any role Britain could play is highly dubious and, though no one says so, possibly dangerous. New Labour's newly formed strategy could wipe out the whites, once and for all. Alternatively, a war in the country would create thousands more black graves under Zanu-PF's rule. Civilian lives are once again in the international firing line, but the real bombs lie at the incumbent government's door. Take care, Mr. Straw.



of pathos in sudan

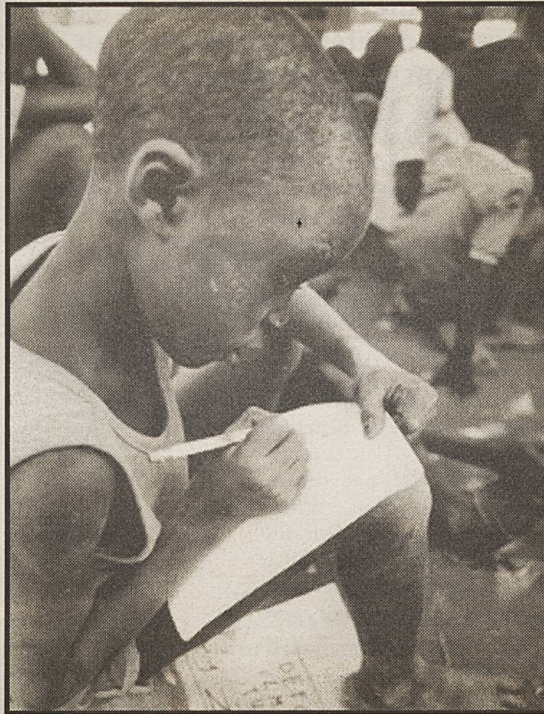
words by catherine mahoney

learning the meaning

work I have been doing for the Student Volunteer Programme in Sudan. The head teacher proudly showed me her two classrooms in the mud built school that had been scraped together from nothing. It's an amazing achievement; members of the displaced community were concerned about their young people roaming around unemployed and without an education and wanted to give them some opportunity of escape from the abject poverty of the settlement. The displaced people frequently arrive in Khartoum with nothing; not even skills that would help them to adjust to life in a city. This means that displaced families are often so poor that they either can't afford to send their children to school (even state schools charge) or it's more economical to send them out to work. The people in this community saw a long term investment in a good education as the solution and so managed to motivate parents to build the school themselves and to make financial contributions in order to pay the qualified teachers, who earn \$30 a month. The budget stretches no further. The staff are positive and enthusiastic, and the students get good results, against all odds they struggle on and have been doing so for the last 6 years.

I went into a dim and dusty little classroom. On the walls were the painstakingly drawn signs made by a teacher that are a familiar sight in most nurseries: 'home corner', 'water corner', 'reading corner', 'construction corner' etc. Here, though, the corners were all empty. They had all the corners they needed, they had the all signs prepared, they were just waiting for the toys, the materials, the books. It's the kind of sight that confounds a response, like when someone tells a sick joke and you're not certain whether or not its ok to laugh, or even if you want to laugh. The comedy of the enormity of the task and the earnestness of the attempt, the tragedy of unfairness, the effort expended and yet still the optimism. The school simply has no funds to buy resources and they get no help from the government.

In fact, the opposite is true. In case I still wasn't certain about 'pathos' I was told about another perfect example. Recently some shadowy, mid-ranking, government official became interested in



the kindergarten and instead of commending their initiative or offering support, the kindergarten were informed that they were required to pay the government a large chunk of money. If they didn't comply, as they surely could not, they would be forced to close, if necessary enforced with the customary gun-toting security forces. It beggars belief that the kindergarten should be punished for making an effort to help the community, knowing that no one else will. Again, it seems ridiculous, totally lacking any sense or reason. Fortunately, the head teacher prevaricated for long enough and eventually the bureaucrat got bored and gave up the chase, leaving the kindergarten to carry on as usual.

So, having established my dramatic terms, it seemed about time to begin performing. I've been going to the kindergarten once a week to read stories from books borrowed from the wealthy Khartoum American School. Being bigger than the children, new and white guaranteed that I would have a captive audience, much to my satisfaction. But I found myself up-staged by the books I brought. The children have never seen brightly illustrated stories like

these before and were absolutely enthralled. A mass of wide eyes and open mouths surged forwards to peer at the pages. One particular story was about a rather crusty looking giant - the children squealed and gasped with excitement at the sight of him. On the final page the giant gobbled up some people (as giants will) which produced screams of horror from the class and I even saw a few of them jump after they had realized what had happened. I held the book out to let them have a closer look and little fingers wavered

with trepidation towards the page. They daringly put their fingers in the space inside the giant's mouth, gingerly fingering the outlines of his teeth, to check and see if they really were sharp, genuinely unsure that he wouldn't suddenly chomp off their fingers. It's beautiful to see the children really appreciating the books, but a shame that I have to return them to the American School when I leave. It would be nice if the children could paw through them in their own time. Maybe one day in their reading corner.

As well as reading stories, I've been trying to teach them songs and games. The "Hokey Cokey" has proved to be a big international hit. By the third time we got to the chorus the boys had realized that the rush to the middle was a chance for a scrum. Little minds in every part of the world work in exactly the same way and "Hokey Cokey" is now a firm favourite as a good excuse to give your mates a surreptitious kicking. "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes" eventually sunk in, and every child now knows where to find their 'kneesans', but my manic and whiny rendition in front of 40 perplexed little faces did little to assuage the conviction that white people, or 'Hawajas' as they're known, are curious but entertaining things. I'm not certain that the kids aren't just humoring me when they join in; perhaps they're learning about pathos too.

Catherine Mahoney is in Sudan taking a year out from her International Relations degree at the LSE.

I think I finally understand what pathos is - if I'm right - it's a blend of comic and tragic, the one verging on the other. I don't know why but it was always one of those words that took a while to sink in, I was never exactly certain of what it was or what it really described, I suppose because it's quite a strange combination. Was it Basil Fawlty or Richard and Judy? I think what was missing from my understanding was the element of the absurd, something so bloody awful it becomes ridiculous.

It finally clicked when I went to visit a kindergarten in a settlement for displaced people as part of the



world war III over israel? absolutely

words by blake bailey

Last December, French Ambassador Daniel Bernard, in a discussion of Mid-east policies, remarked that Israel was a "shitty little country," no larger in area than two French departments, causing him to wonder "why should the world be in danger of World War III because of those people?"

Now, despite the fact this remark suggests certain prejudices in the French government, the question merits due consideration. Is Israel worth fighting a world war over? Should France, or any nation, sacrifice their treasure and children to save a tiny nation? Defending Israel against the Arab world would undoubtedly result in oil price shocks, political turmoil, and further hostility toward the West. Isn't it worth sacrificing Israel, a nation of only 6 million, to prevent these calamities?

The answer is an adamant no. The West must defend Israel. World War III over Israel would be a worthy confrontation: pitting the proponents of freedom against the enemies of democracy.

Israel is an island of democracy awash in a sea of despotism. Unlike her neighbours, Israel is not a Republic where no-one votes, but a genuine democracy. Citizens vote with regularity and everyone, including minorities, is assured essential freedoms and liberties. The Israeli media is entirely independent, regularly criticizing government officials, much to their chagrin. Their parliament serves the public interest with reasonable success, and the army has remained subordinate to the government, not vice versa. With the rise of faux democratic regimes during the course of the past century, *bona fide* democracies

are a rarity that the West must guard with zeal.

The repressive neighbours of Israel stand as a stark contrast. Freedom is non-existent and rule is by decree. Lacking the most basic of political rights, ethnic and religious minorities live in a world of fear and desperation. The military is not a defender of sovereignty, but an enforcer of tyranny. His oppression of political opponents allows Egyptian President Mubarak to run unopposed every election and receive nearly 100% of the vote. Besides actively supporting terrorism, Syria's ruling Ba'ath Party forbids any written or oral criticism of their hereditary President Assad. Jordan is little better, while Lebanon is the marionette of Syria.

Saddam Hussein governs Iraq and that is indictment enough. His genocidal actions against the Kurds alone warrant his destruction. Despite recent progress, neighbouring Iran likewise sits as an oligarchy of hardliner clerics. From 1979 to the present day, Iran has financed groups dedicated exclusively to barbarism and terror. As recently as this January, Iran sent 50 tons of weapons, including tools for suicide bombers, to assist the Intifada in the West Bank.

Serving neither the cause of peace, nor the interests of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian Liberation Organization has yet to honor any peace agreement, regularly supports terrorism, and brutally suppresses any sort of political decent. In 2000, Yasser Arafat unilaterally rejected a peace plan returning 95% of the West Bank and east Jerusalem. Instead, he encouraged the recent Intifada that results in nothing but misery and death for the Palestinians.

Even more disturbing than

their tyranny is the propaganda of their state run press agencies. The Egyptian Al Ahram paints Jews as subhuman monsters: "The bestial drive to knead Passover matzahs with the blood of non-Jews is [confirmed] in the records of the Palestinian police." Lord George Weidenfeld, in an appearance before Parliament, testified that Syrian education advocates for the "ultimate extermination of the whole Jewish people." Televised Palestinian sermons grant Allah's blessings "to whoever put a belt of explosives on his body or on his sons' and plunged into the midst of the Jews." The Egyptian newspaper Al-Akhbar, gives "thanks to Hitler" for slaughtering "the most vile criminals on the face of the earth [Jews]."

Nor is the West free from such mendacities. According to the Saudi Arabian press, "the American press demanded that the Koran be barred from mosques," - an obvious lie. Egypt's Al Ahram plays the infamous Zionist conspiracy: "A compilation of the 'investigative' work of four reporters on Jewish control of the world states that Jews have become the political decision-makers and control the media in most capitals of the world." The London based *Palestinian Times* actively ignores reality by blaming America for the lack of democracy in the Middle East, claiming, "America...robs hundreds of millions of Arabs and Muslims of their right to freely elect their governments."

Many claim that Arab hatred of the West would cease if Israel simply granted the Palestinians a state. This is simply not true. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered the Palestinians their own state and the answer was the Intifada. The Palestinian situation must be resolved, but NOT with regimes that advocate genocide (Syria), promote suicide bombings (Arafat), or paint Jews as subhuman monsters (Egypt). Surrendering the West Bank to such arrogant oligarchs is analogous to the West surrendering the Sudetenland to Adolf Hitler. It did not create peace in the 20th century and will not create peace in the 21st.

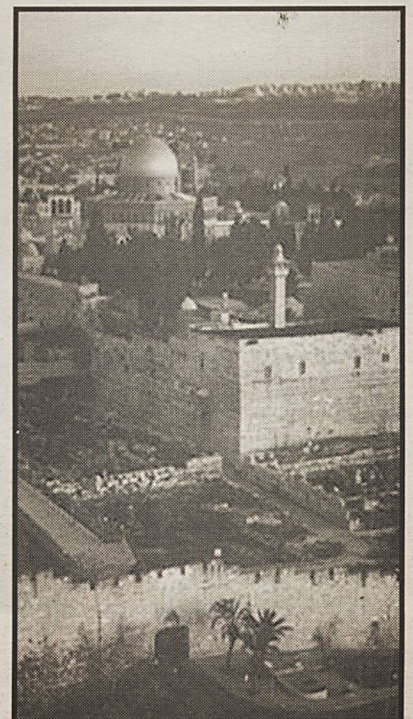
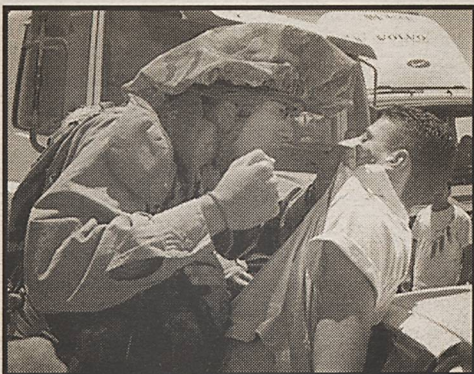
Defending Israel against the Arab world would indeed be worth World War III, for while Israel stands as a beacon of democ-

racy, her enemies lurk as corrupt pretenders. To surrender an authentic democracy to these repressive, corrupt, and genocidal regimes would be tantamount to appeasing evil - a strategy with disastrous conclusions. If saving France, a "shitty" little country barely the size of two American states, from German tyrants was worth World War II, saving Israel from Arab tyrants is worth fighting World War III.

Blake Bailey is an American General Course student.

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Articles in response are welcome.



eileen barker: well-informed (not least on cosmic orgasms)

words by catherine baker

Just when I'm on the point of comparing Professor Eileen Barker, the founder of INFORM, to my old headmistress, I'm forced to give up the attempt. True, they have the same genial nature, the same mellifluous voice and the same devotion to intellectual enquiry. But I would have had to sit in Janet Gough's study for a long, long time before I ever heard her mention cosmic orgasms.

The intergalactic pleasures in question are a core belief of the Raelian sect, a primarily French-speaking group who hold that their founder, Rael, has been carried off by a mother ship which will shortly return to claim the rest of his adherents. Barker characterises them as an 'atheistic religion,' but still classifies them among the new religious movements which, 'in a secular society, give permission to discuss questions of ultimate concern, such as who I am or what is the purpose of life.' I recall that perhaps the most prominent Raelian is a French-Canadian singer by the name of Nayah, who, three years ago, competed for France in the Eurovision Song Contest, only to come into difficulties with the Israeli authorities reluctant to allow cult members into the country in the run-up to the millennium. Allowed to take the stage nonetheless, she did so in the largest necklace that even Eurovision has ever seen, and concluded her chanson with a piercing shriek which must have had every

dog in Jerusalem pricking up its ears. Performing on the television screens of several hundred million people really isn't the best place to experience a cosmic orgasm.

Whatever might have attracted a histrionic singer with a pendant penchant to the Raelians, it seems that those who commit themselves to new religions are far from the impression many of us might have of a typical cult member, vulnerable, suggestible and unsure of themselves. Aside from religious reasons, 'they might join because they just want a womb-like community: lots of them say they feel they've come home,' admits Barker, but she has found in the course of her research into the Moonies that the members who stay dedicated to their movements fit a different pattern. After establishing which members would be thought of as suggestible independently of their connections with the Moonies, her results were very dissimilar to what someone relying entirely on the depictions of cults put about by the media would expect. 'The most suggestible people would go along to the workshops and either not join, or just join for a week or two and then leave. So it wasn't true.'

Her decision to establish INFORM, or Information Network Focus on Religious Movements, came after she observed the effects of popular stereotypes about cults and sects in the 70s and 80s. 'It seemed to me that there was a lot of unneces-

sary suffering because people had the wrong information, and they were using that to carry out inappropriate actions, which actually produced the opposite effect to what they wanted.' For instance, she has in mind the enthusiasm for forcible deprogramming of cult members, which she denounces as not only unethical and illegal but also counterproductive. 'People were going back to the movement far more fanatical, or being forced out and having to leave rather than leaving because they were ready to leave.' In fact, her study of the Moonies indicates that the majority would leave of their own accord within a couple of years.

The remedy, as Barker saw it, was to take the work that she and other sociologists had been doing on religious movements and make it available to the general public. 'Sociologists don't tend to write popular novels,' she laments, 'so I got the idea of setting up an information centre from the social science perspective, which wouldn't just select the good things or the bad things.' With the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Home Office, INFORM was launched in 1988,

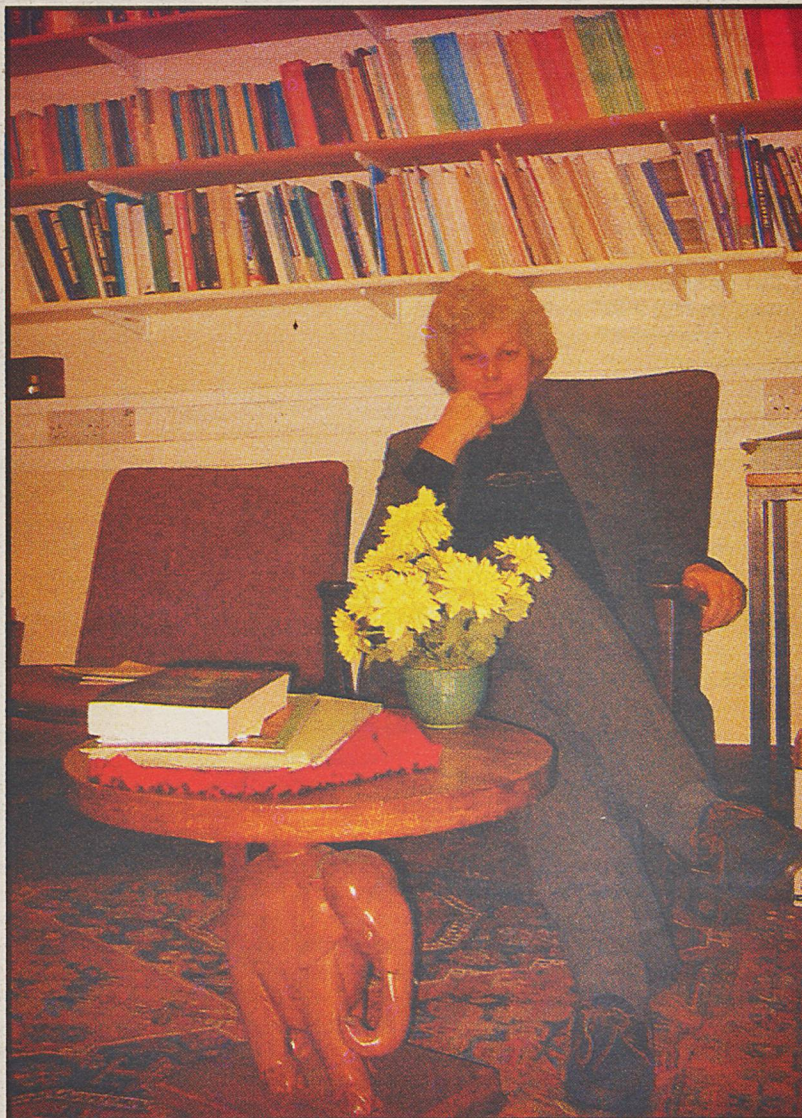
although not without controversy. 'There was a petition to Margaret Thatcher, questions in the House of Commons and the House of Lords.' Perhaps one might imagine that this opposition would have come from the movements themselves, 'but on the whole,' apparently, 'they're quite happy to work with us. We've mainly been attacked by the anti-cultists, who say we're too soft and that because we're not dead against the cults we must be for them. Which is rubbish.' Nonetheless, the end result has been valuable for INFORM: the official inquiry conducted into the network resulted in their start-up funding being extended, 'because they said we'd done very good work. So in a sense it was almost helpful.'

Barker takes a moment to scotch the idea of brainwashing, on which the anti-cultists rely. 'I'm not saying that the movements wouldn't like to be able to control people and brainwash, but they can't. They don't. People are leaving all the time; there's a very high turnover rate.' While the movements themselves can be unhappy about this being made public - 'They don't like people

knowing that they don't offer perfection and the kingdom of heaven' - so too can their more implacable opponents. To illustrate the drawbacks of branding all new religions as dangerous by extrapolation from the shocking actions of a few groups, she offers the example of France, where a government report into 'dangerous sects', commissioned after the mass suicides of 74 Solar Temple members in Switzerland and Quebec, listed 172 names passed on by anti-cultists.

'The lists are not government-sanctioned, but they are in a government report, and although it's an unofficial list, people won't let them go to schools, won't employ them for jobs, won't let them rent or buy property, if they're on the list.' The Belgian version of the list, composed in the same way, contains certain Baptist organisations and even the YWCA, although their male counterpart has for some reason not been included. In Russia, meanwhile, laws designed to guard against cults have resulted in the prohibition of the Salvation Army.

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Of course, the anti-cult groups are very varied, and INFORM has good relations with many. I'm very sympathetic towards parents who have had bad experiences, because some of them definitely have. The ones I have less sympathy for are the ones who are in it for the money. When the deprogramming was going on, they would persuade parents that if they wanted to see their child again they had to hand over tens of thousands of pounds.' It occurs to me that these are the same people who accuse the cults of playing on people's vulnerability, and pots calling kettles black fleetingly come to mind. Noting that deprogramming has now been largely discredited, Barker adds that the anti-cultists have changed since then in any case, and she will shortly visit the USA to talk at the invitation of the chief American anti-cult group, the American Family Foundation. 'I've talked there before, and we get on very well because we realise we're asking different questions. They're asking what the harm is, and we're asking what the new religions are like.'

Indeed, we seem to have reached the ideal that underpins INFORM's ethos. 'What we try to do is not say that this is a good group or a bad group, but this is what they do and what they believe.' While it can't be denied that certain new religions can do harm, Barker sees it as just as important to point out occasions on which no harm is being done, and to accurately present the activities of the groups INFORM studies. 'One group may take all your money but they have a normal sex life; another may not be after your money but they stop you going to college.'

She vehemently refutes the possibility that this objective stance might make the network 'cult apologists.' 'Obviously, if a group is sacrificing virgins on the altar or killing people off, then it is a bad group, and we'll tell about that.' INFORM maintains contact with the police and the FBI, and will pass suspicious information on to the appropriate authorities. In fact, the police have found them more constructive partners than other sources they have approached in the past: 'When they come to us, they will get details about that particular movement and what it does. And what it doesn't do.' On the other hand, Barker and INFORM do not involve themselves in actual



policy-making: 'We can't do that. But we can try and get information which is based on social science, so then the policy-makers can act on the best information that's available.' INFORM, she suggests, is firmly rooted in the LSE tradition.

Yet INFORM's work is intended for public consumption as much as for the police and the government. One example is Barker's book, *New Religious Movements: A Practical Introduction*, a popular guide based on her own and others' research which describes new religions and their potential problems, as well as offering advice for those anxious about a movement a friend or relative has joined. Furthermore, a large part of the work of INFORM's permanent staff, all three of whom are graduate students researching with Barker, consists of fielding enquiries from the general public. 'On the computer, we've got a program with over two and a half thousand different groups, so that if someone phones up and says their son is interested in something called 'CARP', and you didn't know, you'd put in 'CARP' and immediately 'Unification Church' would come up.' On the mention of 'CARP', I'd almost been hoping Barker might be about to reveal the existence of a little-known fish-worshipping sect. But no interview is perfect.

INFORM has been quick to adapt itself to world events which have focused interest on certain sects. 'We respond to things when they happen, like Waco, or Aum Shinrikyo,' she says, referring to the mass suicide of the Branch Davidians in 1993 and the 1995 sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway. 'When 9/11 happened, we immediately got someone in to update and expand our list of Islamist groups.' Beyond this, the

network has been broadening its international links by hosting researchers from foreign universities. 'There are little INFORMs popping up all over the place. We had somebody from Prague who studied with us for a term, and somebody from Széged in Hungary who was setting up an INFORM at the university there. We've had the Belgians come here, I've been over to France, and we have a lot of relations with, particularly, eastern European countries.'

Barker has recently begun to study new religions in eastern Europe, and has found that several decades of atheistic socialism have left the traditional churches in a disadvantaged position. 'They've got a lot of problems: all their prop-

erty has been taken away, and all the priests are either very old or very young.' I realise that this might explain Father Leonid, the Russian Orthodox Church's answer to Joseph Fiennes, about whom I recall an entire contingent of schoolgirls being shown around the Church of the Holy Saviour in Moscow harbouring somewhat unholy thoughts.

What, finally, does the future have in store for INFORM? Barker has various plans, but recognises the limitations imposed by time and money. 'I spend quite a lot of time working for INFORM, but I'm a full-time teacher, I like writing books and doing other kinds of research. And the students that we have at the moment are paid by the hour.'

But we have got various other projects that we could do if we had the time and money.' These projects include the production of an education pack for schools or university chaplains. 'It would provide basic information, like what's in the book, with perhaps some video clips, so that they can see that people haven't got two horns. Therefore in some senses you shouldn't fear them, but in others you should be more alert.'

As our conversation draws to a close, I find that I'm coming away with some of my own assumptions corrected: precisely, I suspect, the effect INFORM hopes to have. 'Every year,' Barker tells me, 'I offer my students a box of Smarties if they can find something that applies to all new religions other than the fact that they're called 'new religions,' and I haven't had to give them away. I give away Smarties for other things,' she laughs, 'but not for that one.'

Now what was that, I ask myself, about my headmistress?

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Half Century for NFT

Steve Parkinson looks at the British National Cinema on it's 50th Birthday



I can't remember the last time I went to my local cinema and the film I was watching wasn't interrupted at least once by a mobile phone. Although this represents an annoying draw-back to the text messaging revolution, there is a remedy to this common cause of cinematic unrest, as 2002 marks the 50th anniversary of the National Film Theatre (NFT), Britain's premier repertory cinema. Over the past half century the NFT has established itself as one of the foremost cinemas in the

world, recognized by film industry luminaries the world over for the range of work it exhibits and the recognition it has brought to some of celluloid's greatest talents. The NFT has always strived to live up to its title as a national institution though, offering programmes for all ages as well as regularly previewing upcoming releases alongside its commitment to bringing the best films, both past and present, to a wider audience through themed seasons and extended retrospectives dedicated to some of the world's most important film-makers and actors. Now, stronger than ever, the NFT enters its 50th year with the largest ever single retrospective devoted entirely to the legendary Japanese director Akira Kurosawa (running throughout January and February), a decision which in itself pays testament to the NFT's position as a truly global cultural venue.

Now of course you may well ask yourself what the NFT has to do with you. Well, for starters it is to be found on the South Bank of the Thames, slap bang under Waterloo Bridge, only ten minutes stroll from that other great global cultural venue, the LSE. Correct me if I'm wrong, but by my reckoning this makes the NFT the closest cinema to Houghton Street, a fact which by itself is appealing to anybody who, like me is less than prone to physical exercise. Secondly, at only £5.25 a ticket for students (£4.25 for members), the NFT is easily cheaper than most West End cinemas. Finally, if nothing else you can just hang around looking hip in the new cultural heart of the capital (the South Bank).

Despite all this, it really is the films that matter at the NFT, and if you have any sort of passion for the cinema, this really is the place to visit. Just think of any film that you've been told you really have to see and you can be sure that the NFT will be showing it sometime soon, from New Wave (last year's Jean Luc Godard retrospective) to a season dedicated to the Coen Brothers. Alongside all these, the NFT also plays host to the Regus London Film Festival in November each year, as well as the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, which this year takes place from the 3rd - 17th April. So if you are desperate to see one of your all-time favourites as truly intended, or just want a break from the Hollywood-driven monotony of your local multiplex, then the NFT is thoroughly recommended.

Oh yeah, and I've never heard a mobile phone go off once at the NFT.

The NFT is open to all. NFT members are automatically members of the British Film Institute and are entitled to a discount on all tickets. Members receive a monthly programme booklet (worth £1.25) and enjoy priority booking. Student membership is £13 for a year and all new members receive one FREE ticket when they join and every year they renew. Application forms are available from the LSE Student Union Reception or by phone on 020 7815 1374.

Find out more at www.bfi.org.uk/nft

Kumonosu - jo (Throne Of Blood)

Showing as part of the NFT's Kurosawa retrospective, *Kumonosu jo* (Throne of Blood) sees the legendary Japanese film maker enter the cinematic minefield that is Shakespearian adaptation. As with the later *Ran* though (Kurosawa's take on King Lear), what emerged was a masterful retelling of one of the Bard's greatest tragedies, *Macbeth*. In an interpretative style common to many of Kurosawa's films, the action is relocated to a medieval Japan inhabited by the Samurai warrior class.

Throne of Blood remains largely faithful to Shakespeare's original plot and characters. Kurosawa regular Toshiro Mifune takes on the role of Washizu, Shakespeare's tragically flawed Lord Macbeth. While returning from victory in battle, Washizu and his close friend and fellow general Miki (Minoru Chiaki) find them-

selves lost in a foreboding forest, where they stumble upon a mysterious old woman spinning thread. The old woman informs Washizu that he will soon gain promotion and that he will eventually become Emperor of Cobweb Castle and that Miki's son will become his heir and succeed him. Upon returning home to inform the Emperor of their victory, Washizu's promotion duly occurs. Washizu's own lust for power and at the behest of his cold and calculating wife Asaji (a brilliant Yamada), Washizu sets about ensuring that the rest of the old woman's prophecy comes true. Washizu ultimately betrays Miki and his son but loses the loyalty of the rest of the armies, including his own, sealing his own tragic downfall.

What initially appeals about Kurosawa's take on one of Shakespeare's most daunting plays is the almost brutal simplicity of it all. The dialogue (aside from what may be lost in the translation to subtitles) departs from the original text to present it in a much simpler and accessible form, without losing any of the drama. The less essential elements of the plot are shorn (the whole piece comes in at less than two hours) in such a way as to actually heighten the whole atmosphere. The performances are uniformly impressive, with Mifune portraying the tragic Macbeth in a refreshingly original way, and Yamada as a splendidly understated Lady Macbeth.

It is stylistically though that Kurosawa raises this film to classic status. The transporting of location from the Scotland of Shakespeare to wind-swept medieval Japan is inspired. The seemingly omnipresent fog-bound landscapes perfectly capture the mood of the film, while the cavernous Cobweb forest and daunting Cobweb Castle are both stunningly photographed. However, it is some of the little touches and additions that

Just The Facts...

Starring: Toshiro Mifune, Isuzu Yamada
Directed by: Akira Kurosawa
Release Date: Part of Season Running Time: 110 mins



Kurosawa himself creates that stand out most. The prophesising old woman (replacing the three witches) and the birds in the banquet hall which hails the finale are additions that the Bard himself would have been proud of. The finale itself meanwhile, an arrow-studded spectacular, is unquestionably one of cinema's great set-pieces.

Watching a film like *Throne of Blood* involves taking on three of the main prejudices that often confront the casual viewer: Shakespeare adaptations, Black & White photography, and foreign language. However, in the hands of a master like Kurosawa, this can be a truly enriching experience. While it is commonly accepted that great theatre can make good cinema, a film like *Throne of Blood* reminds you that at times cinema can make great theatre.

★★★★★

reviewed by Steve Parkinson



Training Day 18



Just The Facts...

Starring: Denzel Washington, Ethan Hawke
 Directed by: Antoine Fuqua
 Release Date: 01/02/02 Running Time: 120 mins

Training Day is one of those films that has been out in the States for ages. Not a member of the new round the world, simultaneous release blockbuster club, Warner Brothers have wisely been more than happy to let this be a 'sleeper hit' in the US and now almost 6 months after it's initial release over there, it's finally getting a release over here.

Jake Hoyte (Ethan Hawke) is an ambitious young LAPD officer, intent on working his way up the

ladder to detective and his next step is breaking into the narcotics division. To do this he is given one make-or-break day to impress his new boss, the street savvy Alonzo Harris (Denzel Washington). From the start of this Training Day it's obvious that whilst Alonzo does get results, he doesn't exactly get play by the rules and Jake isn't entirely comfortable with his boss' 'let them wipe themselves out' attitude. The film is basically set in Alonzo's Chevrolet Monte Carlo as they drive round LA stopping whatever crime

Alonzo feels is worthy to stop. One scene that brings their difference of opinion out early on occurs when they're driving through the streets and both see a teenage girl being raped down a side alley. Whilst Alonzo is content to turn the other way and look for the bigger fish, Jake jumps out of the moving car to go to the girl's help, an act that proves very important.

The film is helped along by a fair few 'oh look it's them' cameos, most notably by Macy Gary,

Snoop Doggy Dogg and Dr. Dre. In her big screen debut Macy Gray is suitably sassy yet downtrodden as the chain-smoking housewife of 'The Sandman' and it's around her entrance into the film when you start to feel uneasy with Alonzo's methods as he makes Jake hold a gun to her and her kid whilst he ransacks the house with a fake warrant. Snoop Dogg plays the wheelchair bound, crack dealing Blue and is once more very effective in a big screen crime movie. Dr Dre is less convincing as 'Paul', one of Alonzo's cronies in the narcotics department who is called upon to help his boss out of a tight spot

on a 'bust', and is just wooden and unnatural despite getting a much bigger role than his partner in rhyme.

Denzel Washington is excellent playing against type and could well be up for an Oscar nomination at least. Whilst Ethan Hawke is one of those actors that you know but can't really place where you've seen him before, this and several other movies this year (in particular Richard Linklater's

"...Alonzo is content to turn the other way to look for the bigger fish, Jake jumps out of the moving car to go to the girl's aid..."

Waking Life and *Tape*) should help to raise him to one of Hollywood's hotter properties. The script and the set piece action helps move the film on at a fast pace and whilst at some points you do question the question the credibility of what is going on you never really find yourself bored. The film does have it's flaws, especially in the believability stakes but is very enjoyable and raises important issues about crime and policing in the 21st century.

★★★★☆

reviewed by Ian Vinten

Just The Facts...

Starring: Justin Theroux, Naomi Watts, Laura Harring
 Directed by: David Lynch
 Release Date: Out Now Running Time: 145 mins

David Lynch's latest offering is enthralling, and often very funny. And most notably, very confusing. It all begins with a fatal accident on said Drive, where a sultry brunette (Laura Harring) sees her car rammed into by a vehicle full of hard-partying teenagers just as her would-be assassin is about to pull the trigger on her. The thoroughly shaken and now amnesiac beauty is the only survivor of the wreck, and she walks around in shock before stumbling into an empty bungalow. It does not stay empty for long, however and wide-eyed Betty (Naomi Watts), a small-town aspiring actress, soon moves in as her aunt has left her the place for a while. Betty surprises the naked intruder in the shower, accepting her presence there with commendable calmness. The two then proceed to begin the search for her identity (she calls herself Rita for the moment) and to find out exactly why she has thick wads of cash rammed into her handbag.

Elsewhere in LA, an ominous meeting of the movie mafia is taking place, where director Adam Kesher is being bullied by a couple of scary execs to take on an actress he doesn't want for a role in his movie. He refuses, proceeds to total their vehicle with a six-iron, cronies and all inside, and duly sees his life turned upside down until he relents on the actress front. His downfall begins humorously when he goes home and catches his wife cheating on him with the pool guy, country singer Billy



Ray Cyrus (who has an extremely funny cameo, along with a fantastic mullet), but things soon get more serious when his bank account is mysteriously emptied and he gets threatened by the heavies. The strings are being pulled by a wonderfully shady arch-villain with a misshapen head.. Adam is extremely cool and the scenes featuring him are hilarious. But what does he have to do with our lovely leading ladies?. It all comes together in the last mind-bending third, which is part utterly gripping flashback, part steamy lesbian sex (also utterly gripping). It also

contains several elements which are quite incomprehensible, such as the mysterious blue box, and the scary homeless monster living in a dark grotto. The only thing scarier than him is Betty's landlady Coco, who bears a frightening resemblance to Michael Jackson.

The collection of oddball characters contributes wonderfully to the overall spook effect of the film and scenes like the one in shady nightclub 'Silencio' give it a dreamlike edge. The two lead actresses perform brilliantly. Is there a single

rational explanation that can link all the pieces of the puzzle? It seems that the answer is no, but its fun trying to figure it out.. Although some critics have portrayed the movie as being a jumbled piece of work from a director who delights in drowning his audience in a sea of artsy devices, it is extremely cool, brilliantly done and you'd be a fool to miss it.

★★★★★

reviewed by All Nawaz Khan

Vagina Monologues

Absolutely brilliant! This is a down to earth woman dialogue about her relationship with her most intimate part. But what a dialogue! The essence of this show is that your Vagina is the story of your life, but often that story goes unspoken, partly because for a long time vaginas have not been visible, not been part of the dialogue. Eve Ensler, the writer of the show interviewed over 200 women to write the story of their Vaginas. These included, Jewish matrons from Queens, attendees at a 'vagina workshop' where women discovered the wonders of their clitoris and the many ways to have orgasms, survivors of Bosnian rape camps, sex workers, college professors, a girl born in Oklahoma without a vagina and young girls who talk about the terror and excitement of menstruation.

She appeals to trivia lovers by giving alternative names for vagina ranging from pooky to coochysnorcher! Caprice, Gina Yashere and Helen Lederer are fantastic in their depiction of these women's tales. It is a show to watch and not to be missed, The Vagina Monologues is not about being politically correct, its about women and their sexuality.

★★★★☆

Reviewed by **Shola Babington-Ashaye**

Arts Theatre, Great Newport Street, Covent Garden, WC2H 7JB 020 7836 3334 Covent Garden

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

WRITTEN BY EVE ENSLER

STARRING

CAPRICE

HELEN LEDERER

GINA YASHERE



Life in the Folds

Life in the Folds is one of the most inventive and unique performances I have ever seen. The two women who perform it, Sinéad Rushe and Jenny Boot, manage to flawlessly intertwine dance and theater and poetry into an enthralling, exuberant festival of the bizarre. The performance is based on the poems of Henri Michaux, a Belgian painter, poet and avid mescaline fan. The poems loosely revolve around a central character, a poor hapless traveler named Plume. Using only very minimal props and the fluid movements of their bodies, the women seamlessly pass the role of Plume between them. Poor Plume encounters nothing but bad luck throughout his story, as his accounts of things become more grotesque, absurd and fantas-

tic. Sinéad Rushe and Jenny Boot maintain a hilarious, though twisted, comic sensibility, culminating in one scene with both women dancing around in laundry sacks. The entire performance crackles with an exuberance and vitality that is delightful to watch. It is certainly not a conventional night out at the theater, but if you're looking for something new and different, you will be pleasantly surprised with this rare blend of the comic, the macabre, and the intimate.

★★★★☆

Reviewed by **Emily Gray**

Life in the Folds is playing at the Battersea Arts Centre Box Office: 020 7223 2223

Age of Consent

This is a chilling dark insight into the mind of child killers. There are two views one can have of the play: one that it is opportunistic and was produced just in time to bank off the tabloid interest in the Thompson and Venables story or that it is a hard-hitting tell it as it is drama. I'll choose the latter. Ignoring the fact that there are certain similarities with the Thompson-Venables case and also the Jon-Bennet murder, the play invites the audience to ask themselves certain questions regarding the age at which a child for example consents to be treated as an adult. One cannot avoid the glaring humanity of the characters who one could so easily have dismissed or even hated. With a fusion of both comedy and drama, the audience is carried on a roller-coaster of emotions.

The cast consists of only two actors: Katherine Parkinson who plays the mother

of a child entertainer, and Ben Silverstone who plays Timmy, the child killer who was only a child himself at the time he committed the crime.

For an off-West end play, this is very powerful. The actors are talented and the monologues are very creative.

This performance lasts approximately 80 minutes without an interval, so be sure to take your drinks in.

★★★★☆

Reviewed by **Joke Babington-Ashaye**

Bush Theatre, Sheppard's Bush Green nearest underground: Sheppard's Bush station (central line & Hammersmith & City line) <http://www.bushtheatre.co.uk> 02076104224, £8.50 concessions, (can sit anywhere- but best to avoid the front row next to the stage)

Twelfth Night

Director Lindsay Posner brings Shakespeare's dramatic creation of separated identical twins to stage. It is better described as a dramatic comedy because it leaves you in no doubt that Shakespeare wanted lightness to a situation that could call for soberness. This is a tale of identical twins, Viola and Sebastian who are cruelly separated by fate when their ship is wrecked in a storm. Viola is washed up on shore of Illyria and fears her brother drowned. She disguises herself as a man and calls herself Cesario. She finds a position as page to Duke Orsino who she immediately falls in love with but also the Duke is in-love with the lovely Olivia who has eyes only for Cesario. What a tangled mess! As though this is not enough, Sebastian who survives the shipwreck meets Olivia who mistakes him for Cesario. He does not hesitate to submit to her advances and marries her. Confusion reigns, Orsino and Olivia are both convinced that Cesario has deceived them. Only until the twins come face to face are their identities. Zoe Waites plays a convincing Viola. Guy Henry is consistent in the portrayal of the comedic and emotional nature of his character. He was fantastic as Malvolio. Matilda Ziegler is not believable in her character as Olivia. Jo Stone-Fewings is an adorable Orsino. Thumbs up to Barry Stanton and Christopher Good, who were absolutely hilarious in their characters as Sir Toby and Sir Andrews.

★★★★☆

Reviewed by **Shola Babington-Ashaye**

Barbican Theatre, Box Office 020 7638 8891



Prisoner's Dilemma

So you think your introductory economics course was hell on earth? You're not alone. Regardless of how you feel about the subject, though, the fascinating new play 'The Prisoner's Dilemma' deserves at least a second look. It's a powerful piece of political drama where game theory is not a simple matter of classroom discussion, but a real-life determinant of who gets to live and who gets to die. Set on the eastern fringes of Europe, the play revolves around two cultures and their destructive battle for control on a small island ravaged by ethnic strife and lingering post-Cold War tension. Rather than dwell on scenes from the civil war that inevitably results - though they are indeed juxtaposed vividly throughout the play - 'Dilemma' chooses to focus on the hush-hush negotiating that takes place behind the scenes. It is at this bargaining table where the precepts of game theory come to life. The

essential problem: to flesh out an agreement that ends the bloodshed, each side must put their faith in an opponent they bitterly mistrust.

The action happens largely on an intellectual plane - this means a substantial amount of mental attention from the audience, but is rewarded by a thought-provoking message and a collection of wonderfully versatile performances. It's a demanding but ultimately rewarding play for the LSE economist and IR specialist - and anyone who prefers their theatre high-minded.

★★★★☆

Reviewed by **Vince Lampono**

Now Playing At The Barbican (RSC) - The Pit Theatre, Student tickets £7, can be booked in advance. Tube: Barbican/ Moorgate

Venue of the Week

The Royal Court Theatre

Whether or not you enjoy the shows as much as we did, a trip to the Royal Court Theatre has its own entertainment value. The innovative design and overall vibe of the place is in tune with its mission to promote young, outlandish, quality shows. It is the type of place you want to arrive early, sit back at one of its two bars, and start feeling slightly altered off a full bodied glass of red wine.

'The most important theatre in Europe', according to the New York Times. Loaded with history, it is here that the first production of John Osborne's 'Look Back in Anger' was staged. Hardly anyone disputes that this performance commenced the age of the modern British play.

The Royal Court Theatre, now commits itself to the promotion of the new generation of playwrights. Looking at the number of shows it transfers to the West End, as well as the number of critic's awards the shows receive, you can see it fulfills the mission. If you are looking for theatre that's fresh, this is the place to check out.

The Royal Court Theatre, 020 7565 5000
Sloane Square, SW1W 8AS

The York Realist

Peter Gill's 'The York Realist' is set in York in the early 1960s. Peter Gill is one of the most talented playwrights in modern British theatre and his class shines throughout this production. Set in an old farmhouse a tender love story emerges against a backdrop of the conflict between rural and urban ways of life. An amateur dramatic production brings together the local farm labourer, George, and a young theatre director from London, John. Their intense relationship is doomed to fail as the differences between them grow, a metaphor for the general class conflicts of the time. The play is tight and well polished. The individual performances are wonderful especially the lead, Lloyd Owen, who portrays the outwardly strong yet inwardly fragile and deeply emotional George, and Lynn Reid who perfectly depicts the decline of the elderly mother. The play deals with many issues specific to an era where many social changes were taking place - class allegiances, sexuality, importance of the family and the north-south divide. The relationship between the two lead men is dealt with in a touching and sensitive manner which is a refreshing change for the portrayal

of a homosexual relationship. The slow pace enhances the mood as it effortlessly changes from comedy to drama to suspense to romance. A highly enjoyable play, a must for those interested in innovative and dramatic theatre.

★★★★★

reviewed by **Laura Rainford**

The Royal Court, Jerwood Theatre downstairs
through Feb. 9th, £7.50-£26 (all seats £5 Mondays)

Bedbound

Awkward and enticing, watching bedbound is like experiencing dizzy victims emerge from a car crash and having no voice to tell them the way to find help.

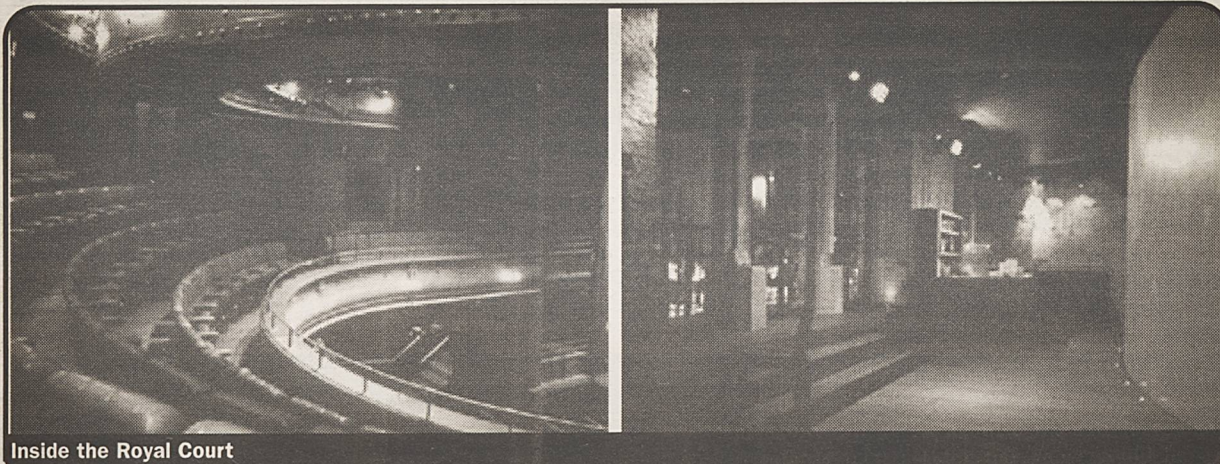
The play centers on a father and daughter confined together in a bed, for reasons that are not immediately apparent. In a struggle to distract herself from reality, the daughter hangs on every word of her father's and begs him to keep talking. When he doesn't she fills in the gaps. No silence! Can't handle the silence! As the truth of how they came to be in their present state unravels amidst the chatter, the daughter at first experiences grave anger for the atrocities committed by the dad, but can at last find peace.

This sans intermission hour long marathon of ambiguity will leave you restless and wanting more.

★★★★☆

reviewed by **Sarah Greenberg**

The Royal Court, Jerwood Theatre Upstairs
through Feb 2nd, £12.50-£15 (all seats £5 on Mondays)



Inside the Royal Court



Norma Sheehan in Bedbound

Een Hond Begraven

Combating the deconstructionist trend of the cynical art world, the If performance collective attempts to RECONSTRUCT an actual event of their lives. This group from Amsterdam is hysterical and creatively gifted. Interacting with the audience, Bart, Muriel, and Peter turn late-comers into entertainment and acting pitfalls into part of the show.

The show contains the right amount of unbelievable elements, such as Muriel's 'I'm not pregnant but everyone thinks I am' phantom pregnancy (she has a pregnant belly, morning sickness, gargantuan chocolate cravings, but insists she's not pregnant and drinks like a fish). The title refers both to the burying of open communication between the brothers Bart and Peter, as well as the burying of an actual dog picked up by Muriel in the street. Watching this Time Out Critic's Choice Season's production, you will feel like you just arrived in a familiar living room filled with all your closest, most comedically eccentric friends.

★★★★☆

Reviewed by **Sarah Greenberg**

BAC 020 7223 2223 / 176 Lavender Hill, SW11 / Clapham Junction Rail / £10.75-£6.50 concessions

Win Big Time!

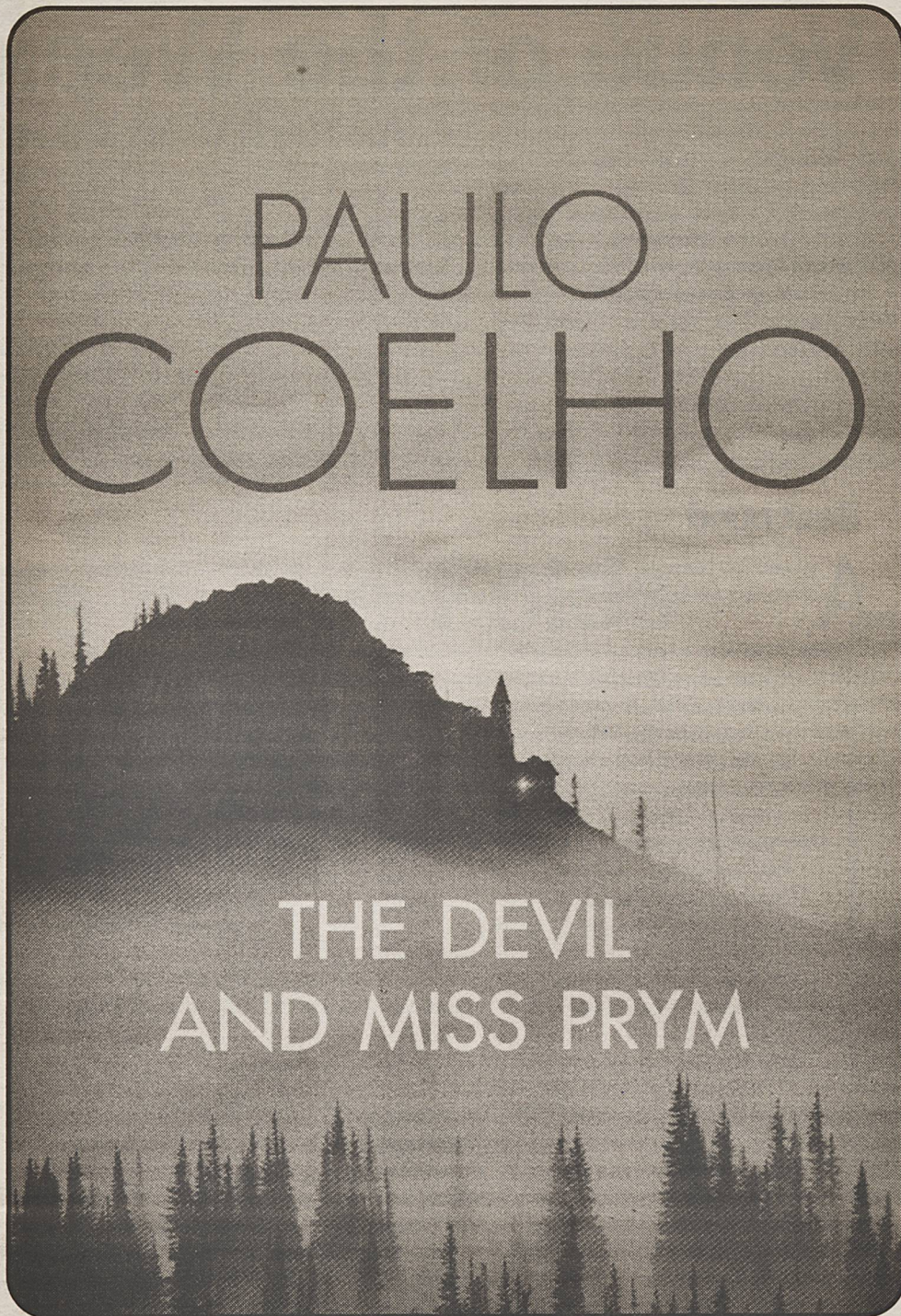
1) For free tix to Twelfth Night: The famous playwright who wrote the screenplay, 'Shakespeare In Love', also wrote a theatrical spin off on one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies. What was the title of the play?

2) For free tix to 'Age of Consent', tell us the age of consent in Honolulu. a)12 b)14 c)16 d)18

3) Now for the 'York Realist': Who wrote the shortest play in world drama? a) Shakespeare b) Harold Pinter c) Samuel Beckett d) Andy Warhol e) Andrew Lloyd Webber and it's called CATS

4) Our kindness continues. To see 'Prisoner's Dilemma' tell us which musical got the most advance sales a) Phantom of the Opera b) Les Miserables c) Miss Saigon d) 'The Musical Beaver', by Sarah and Shola

e-mail us the answers, or propose to us your bribes at sstheatre@hotmail.com



Just The Facts...

Author: Paulo Coelho
 Publisher: Harper Collins
 Price: £10.99 [Hardback]

Date: December 2001

Having reviewed *The Alchemist* a few months ago, I was eager to get my hands on *The Devil and Miss Prym*, to see how it would fair in comparison. I read the cover, 'A novel from the internationally best-selling author of *The Alchemist*.' I turned the first page and kept on reading until I had reached the end, at which point I thought, mentioning the name of that other book Coelho is famous for, in order to promote this novel, wasn't necessary. *The Devil and Miss Prym* speaks for itself.

The small quiet village of Viscos and its 281 inhabitants are changed forever, one night, with the arrival of a stranger named Carlos. Propped against the hotel bar he makes the acquaintance of Chantal Prym, the barmaid and informs her

that, 'I'm 52, my name isn't Carlos, and everything I wrote on the form at the hotel is false.' So who is this man? Tormented by the ghosts of a painful past, he takes Chantal to the mountains where he has hidden eleven bars of gold. A young woman desperately searching for happiness away from Viscos, Chantal sees the gold as her chance to escape. But surely there must be a catch? The stranger wouldn't just give her the gold, would he? Well that wouldn't make much of a novel and as the title suggests, this is a novel about, good (which comes in the form of Miss Prym) versus evil (which comes in the form of Carlos-the Devil).

A stranger comes looking for the answer to a question that haunts him, a question that is forever playing on his mind- are humans essentially good or evil? Thus, he tells Chantal to go back to the village and tell the villagers about the bars of gold, 'I am willing to hand them over to the inhabitants of Viscos on condition that they do something they would never ever dream of doing... I want them to break the commandment "Thou shalt not kill"... I'm giving them a week.'

"I want them to break the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill...' I'm giving them a week"

Coelho dramatizes the turmoil present within everyone- the struggle between light and darkness and the implications this has on our everyday lives, 'to dare to follow our dreams, to have the courage to be different and to master the fear that prevents us from truly living.'

Welcoming this stranger into their community, the inhabitants of Viscos become accomplices to his warped plan. They will each come face to face with questions of life and death, power, greed, destruction and fear. What will they do? Will they choose good or evil? What would you do? A novel fuelled with intense emotion from start to finish, *The Devil and Miss Prym* epitomizes humanity at its very best and worst.

★★★★★

reviewed by **Seniha Sami**

The Beautiful Coat

The woman with the milky white skin and the small frosty smile had been sat in the bar for well over an hour. She was drinking a gin and tonic and I never would have noticed her, but for the beautiful coat she was wearing. It was really some piece of work and I wondered which one of the great London tailors could have made it. It was undoubtedly British in the same way that certain foods and handshakes were.

It was an incredibly exquisite coat for such a plain woman, I couldn't help thinking, but she must have been very rich. The coat was dark black and came down to her calves, with an elegant Jacobean cut. The collar was beautifully shaped and the cloth was of an exceedingly fine and expensive material. The material was hard to place from where I was sitting, so I decided to move a little closer and introduce myself.

'Hello,' I said. Wool, I thought to myself.

'Hello.' She pushed a shy frosty smile at me.

I told her something about it being a sort of sin to allow a lady to sit in a bar so long by herself.

'Oh, how sweet of you,' she said. 'Actually, I'm expecting someone.'

'I hope I'm not interfering,' I said. Size six, I thought.

'Not at all.'

She was a very reserved kind of girl, I thought, I am very good looking and I was used to women who were usually warmer to me. This is not conceit - I would hate to give that impression. But it is a characteristic of mine to recognise both my strengths and weaknesses. At cricket, for example, I

was something of a failure, but with women I was on equal terms with the greats. Undoubtedly.

She said that she was from Derbyshire, but it I found it hard to tell from her accent. She was waiting for her brother and he should be here any second. She seemed just a little tipsy. I brought her a few more drinks and said that her brother must have forgotten. She laughed, then looked a little sad, so I invited her to my hotel room to try and cheer her up a little.

We went to the room and fooled around a little bit, but by then she was very drunk, so I let her go to sleep. I took her coat and left her in bed. I paid for the old room and booked a room in a different hotel.

The coat I thought looked very beautiful on me, a perfect fit for a size six blonde. It makes the other women very jealous.

written by **Suneel Mehmi**

"She laughed, then looked a little sad, so I invited her to my hotel room to try and cheer her up a little."

Cookery Competition Winners

The winners of last week's Bookery Competition are Ben Bloch, Riyan Itani and Andy Swann. Boys if you want come on down to The Beaver Office to collect your prizes...

The Answers were: 25g, Corn Flour and 500F.

Deckaid for Afghanistan

@ Fabric, Charterhouse Street, EC1

As 2001 drew to a close it was clear that the horrific events of one day in September and the violent repercussions which followed it would mark all memories of that year forever. The bombings may have largely stopped, but for the people of Afghanistan and its blighted and broken towns and cities, a protracted period of recovery is only just beginning. So it was that Damon Albarn (Blur/Gorillaz) and a number of supporters, prompted by the inescapable feeling that the countries of the

west which financed and carried out the attacks that devastated many parts of Afghanistan owed the those affected some recompense, organised two club nights (in Bristol and London respectively) to raise money for the Red Cross.

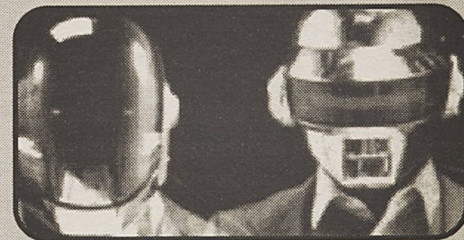
The result was a line up to make any clubber salivate: **Gorillaz**, **Trevor Jackson** (Playgroup), **Massive Attack** (dj set), **Howie B**, **Unkle Sounds** (James Lavelle), **Richard Fearless**, **Plump DJs** and **Daft Punk** (playing their first dj set in the UK

for over two years). All the artists were performing for free, whilst all entry fees (at £18 each quite a hefty amount for a Monday night) were donated to charity. So, essentially, a grand excuse for a decidedly phat night out, all accompanied by a warm charitable glow and a sense that on this occasion at least you were getting battered for a good cause.

Our night began upstairs in the fine company of Trevor Jackson. His upbeat and eclectic set included a moment of near comic genius with a version of Bros's 'When Will I Be Famous?', cut in over the top of another tune. However, as Jackson's set neared its conclusion I couldn't help noticing that the room was becoming severely overcrowded and

there was an ever growing chance of being suffocated and/or trampled to death. This was due to the slightly absurd decision to put Massive Attack on in the smallest of Fabric's three rooms, into which far more people than it could feasibly hold were trying to force themselves. In need of the toilet and considering survival more important than watching Massive Attack dj, I managed to struggle out. The reports I heard claimed that the Bristol legends' set was a bit too downbeat for the peak time they were on, something I can neither confirm nor deny, as I was never able to get back upstairs to hear them. As a general rule Fabric seems to have a 'pack them in like sardines' policy which can make things just a little too hectic when they have big names playing.

Last up, and surely the biggest draw of the night, those Gallic masters of the twistedfilterdisco-house universe, Daft Punk. Howie B had preceded them in the main room and had succeeded in getting the crowd worked up into a sweaty and jubilant state of anticipation. Unmasked, the French duo opened up with their own tune, fittingly entitled '(It's Been) Too Long', before embarking on a set that kept everyone at fever pitch for the duration. At one point the atmosphere almost became too much when a spontaneous group hug resulted in people sprawling on the floor in a state of over-excited mirth. 'One More Time' and DJ Falcon's 'Together' had a



thousand people leaping up, hands in the air, simultaneously, one of those moments of unadulterated, pure joy that you go clubbing to

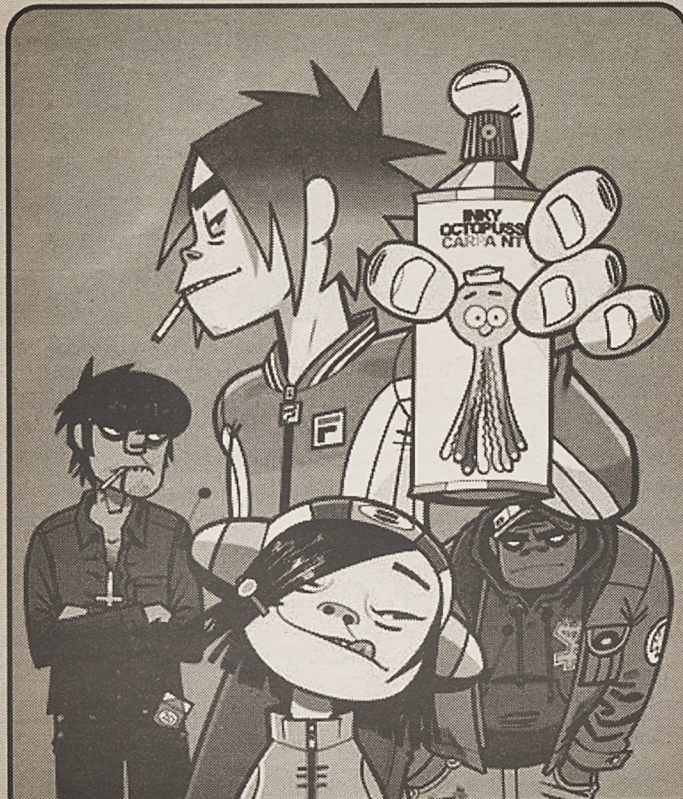
experience. A suitably inebriated Damon Albarn rolled onto the stage to thank everyone for the money raised but, admirable as his intentions

"At one point the atmosphere almost became too much when a spontaneous group hug resulted in people sprawling on the floor in a state of over excited mirth"

were, the people simply wanted more Daft Punk, and were rewarded with one more encore, who rounded off the night in euphoric style with Joe Smooth's 'Promised Land?'

And then it was out into the cold Farringdon night, where a disagreement with the taxi coordinator left us with no option but to catch a night bus, with an obligatory stop at the 24 hour off-licence to fetch supplies to keep a magic night alive for a few more hours. Immense.

Ruth McCormack



Gorillaz: made everyone go ape

THE TOP FIVE

Thursday 31st January 2001

Movement @ Bar Rhumba, Shaftesbury Av, WC1. £3 - £6, 020 7287 2715.

Yes I know we're always bangin' on about it but it really is that good. Sweat and sweat some more with the ever consistent Andy C and residents. Essential.

Friday 1st February 2001

Bugged Out! Meets the Boutique @ Heaven, Villiers St., Charing Cross. £10 - 15, 020 7930 2020.

Oh la la! The big beat big boys are out in force with the Brothers Chemical and Mr. Norman Cook grabbing the headline slots. The excellent Jon Carter (perhaps you'll see Zoe and Sara, joy of joys) and those Scottish techno monsters Slam! ensure this 'll definitely be a positive education.

Saturday 2nd February 2001

Metrogroove @ Turnmills, 63b Clerkenwell Road, EC1. £10 -£12, 020 7250 3409

Danny Rampling's residency here means the top jocks are always willing - Lottie, Angel Moraes and your friend and mine, Robert Owens will be whipping up a funky house storm this month.

Hullabaloo @ The Rhythm Factory, Whitechapel Road, E1. £10.

Long time Cream reident Andy Carrol will be joining residents and Bedroom Belam winners at the little club with the big heart. Friendly crowd, no pretensions, just good music and good company make this a night worth noting.

Sunday 3rd February 2001

Lets be Friends @ Salmon & Compass, Penton Street, Chapel Market, Islington E1. Free!, 020 7377 9494

O.K. O.K., more pub than club but what more could you ask for than a bit of funk and reggae to ease that battered head into the struggle that is the week ahead. The Rosebery residents definitely have no excuses.

COMPETITION

Win VIP tickets to the launch of TWISTER, a new breaks night at Turnmills

TWISTER launches on Thursday February 21st 2002 at one of London's premier nightclubs - Turnmills. Acetate Ltd and Kilowatt Records are collaborating to bring you a monthly treat in the form of 'breaks with a twist of house'. The opening night sees former World DMC mixing champion Chad Jackson, DJ Hyper (Bedrock), Jody Wisternoff (Way Out West) and Terminalhead performing in room one, whilst Acetate's Steven Neal and Darren Taylor provide the tribal/prog tunes in room two.

With future headliners set to include Danny Howells, Lee Burridge and Anthony Pappa it looks like this night might have the makings of a classic. So if you fancy it, and frankly who wouldn't, and want to get in there for the opening night, just answer the following simple question and email it to us at

lseclubbing@hotmail.com:

Jody Wisternoff and Nick Warren are part of which dance outfit?

- Faithless
- Way Out West
- The Prodigy

Good luck and godspeed; answers to us by next Thursday

World at their Feet

Jimmy Eat World
@ London Astoria
25:01:02

Emo-pop rockers Jimmy Eat World were at the Astoria tonight in support of their highly acclaimed fourth album *Bleed American*. With a venue packed out with pre-pubescent MTV lobotomised kids, who had obviously only heard their first commercially successful singles, *The Middle* and *Salt Sweat Sugar* (p.c. title for *Bleed American*, post September, 11th), the band were playing to their largest UK audience to date.

Opening with the bruising *Bleed American*, the band made a storming start before launching into the ultra-melodic *Praise Chorus* with its lustrous "Crimson Clover" refrain. Thankfully J.E.W. were also more than willing to satisfy their longer standing fans by playing an extended number of tracks from their standout album *Clarity*.

Despite this, the excellent performance of classic tunes such as *Lucky Denver Mint* and *Bliстер* was somewhat ruined by the lyrical ignorance and general apathy of the crowd. An outstanding live version of *For Me This Is Heaven*, which sent shivers up and down the spines of those present, purified the residues of harder rocking beats with an ethereal breeze.

The band then returned to fresher material, the perfect pop of *Authority Song* and the Fugazi-esque *Get It Faster* delivered in impeccable fashion. Their later performance of *Table of Glasses* was the musical translation of the crowd's feeling towards the gig; "it happened



too fast".

J.E.W. duly returned for an encore, pleasing the MTV kids with the corporate cock sucking anthem *The Middle*. Cue moshing, crowd surfing and teenage girls booties shaking. They finished on *Sweetness*: a fitting end to a superb gig marred only by the piss-poor crowd and the inexplicable absence of *A Sunday*. Despite well-documented problems with their record label, the band look now set for world domination!

Peter Davies & Valeria Severini

Home James

James
@ Wembley Arena,
10: 12: 01

This promised to be an excellent show, and the expectations were more than fulfilled, even though things were a bit slow to kick off. First of all, I would just like to point out that Wembley Arena is probably one of the worst venues London has to offer to go watch a rock concert. You are not allowed to smoke at all, and those in the pit have no access to the seated area, and vice versa. The staff are very annoying by their omnipresence and watchfulness, you feel like you are in a nursery.



Stars in their Eyes?

The guests were the Turin Brakes, and they did not do a great job of warming up the crowd, although to their credit the room was still three quarters empty. By the end of their set, however, they had proved that they were capable of delivering some real rock'n'roll tunes, with some funky wah-wah pedal guitar riffs.

Finally, James came on to set the record straight, and they did one of the most amazing

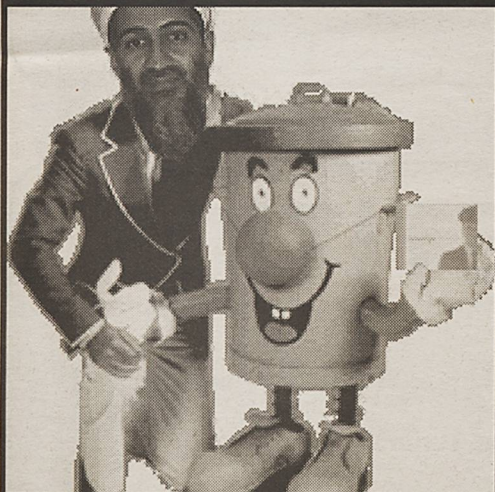
live rock performances I have seen. Their music was accompanied by their trademark laser lightshow flashing colourful flowers and other psychedelic designs all over the place. This being their last show, you could tell that they were really enjoying themselves and were really doing their utmost so that everyone would have a good time. They played all the good songs, including my personal favourite, *Born of Frustration*. They came back for two encores, including one where the guitarist came back standing right next to me, playing the violin. James had also managed to reunite a few ex-members, such as Larry Gots to perform a few of their older classics.

On top of it all, by the end of the concert, we realised that we were in the VIP box, and that all the people around us we wearing afterparty badges. The guy sitting next to us was Tim Booth's childhood friend, and had been a dancer for the band.

This was a concert any rock fan would not have wanted to miss, and it will take a lot for newer Britpop bands to create such a feelgood atmosphere.

R.Le Frogge

The Sin Bin



The De-bin-itive guide to the week's singles

No Doubt
Hey Baby

Thoroughly dreadful. Gone are the bouncy ska-laced melodies that made them famous, and instead No Doubt offers up this whiny, repetitive, synth heavy track with a rap interlude by Bounty Killer which does nothing but remind you how desperate No Doubt are to give their hopeless chant of a song something special. Much like jack-hammering, 3 minutes of this will have your ears ringing and head aching all day.

☆☆☆☆
Rob Banerjee

Lo Fidelity Allstars
Sleeping Faster

This is a really powerful track, the first release from Lo-Fi's forthcoming Album, which is due out on February 13th. It seems to trumpet their return onto the Breakbeat scene, with a very heavy bassline and drum rhythms contrasting well with singer Andy Dickinson's voice.

This song went down amazingly well during their live set at The Fabric in December, and will be sure to boost your energy levels and make you jump around like a bouncing ball.

☆☆☆☆
R. Le Frogge

Custom Blue
EP One

Reminiscent of Doves at their most spaced out, this EP is nonetheless a slow-burner, which would make fantastic accompaniment to late-night coffee or a bath. Each of the four tracks would sit well on an executive chill-out CD, but each also contains that extra something, hidden within gentle layers of grey.

☆☆☆☆
Victoria Peckett

Hell is For Heroes
You Drove Me To It

Hell is for Heroes. A band formed by ex-members of 1997's indie-pop pinups Symposium. The intro's interesting, with thrashy ROCK! guitar parts. However, the originality stops there. The whole thing is generally too formulaic, sounding like any other 'sugar metal' guitar band around- think Feeder/My Vitriol with some nu-metal riffs thrown in. Still, it is the sort of thing you could mindlessly bounce around to like a kangaroo on speed-should you be that way inclined...

☆☆☆☆
Jazmin Burgess

Neil Halstead
Two Stones in my Pocket

Two Stones In My Pocket is a very relaxing piece, which would fit in very well on a compilation of soul music, such as those produced by Nova Records. The lyrics murmured by Halstead's soft voice are also very poetic, accompanied by smooth guitar strumming.

Another plus is the fact there a 5 tracks in total, including remixes but also another genuine song, called See You On Rooftops, which means that for once you get a decent deal when buying a single.

☆☆☆☆
R. Le Frogge

Leaves
Breathe

Breathe is about being stuck in a rut and feeling lonely. The pace is so slow it's eerie. It's so inoffensive; you'd play it loudly when hungover on Sunday mornings. Someone has obviously sat in his bedsit and constantly played *Lucy In The Sky* and *Dark Side Of The Moon*.

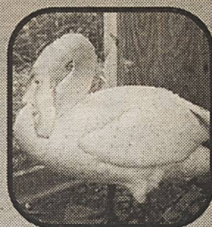
☆☆☆☆
Nazia Rahim

Biffy Clyro
57

'Oh for crying out loud', pretty much sums up Biffy Clyro on first hearing them. Obviously inspired by Nirvana, 57 sounds like 1,057 other songs. They go in heavily for itsy-bitsy verses combined with a LOUD chorus, and the lyrics aren't all that and a bag of chips either. However, there is something endearing about this band, and the song may quite possibly grow on you.

☆☆☆☆
Clare Kearns

Swann's Song



'I tell you, if it was my old man taking those sorts of liberties, I'd fucking do him...' Anyone to e-mail me with the name of the film that particular quote originates from, will win praise.

This week, nothing has happened. Having been falsely lured into thinking no column was required by the new Burn/Babies editorial empire, I spent the weekend hammered and walking many miles home instead of carefully crafting the song to an article fit for, well, reading. Anyway, all blame of crapness passes me by.

Talking of crapness...music. It's all crap. Turkey? It's just a fat bastard chicken. Peter Davies, he's just a fifteen year old Tom Jones. Talking of old men, let's think about crooners. Sinatra, Davis Jr and the lads, played and wowed old women and drunken juke box users everywhere. However, is the art of crooning lost or will there ever be a young blue eyes?

With the current trend for boy bands and meaningful-looking, jumper wearing solo artists, it seems certain that the notion of singing well for fun has gone. The idea of music to watch girls by; blatantly sexist but recalling an era of Butlins, men wearing hankies on their heads and such things. Not the case these days. The piers are closed, the big bands are small and the most powerful singer we have is Bob Williams, whose recent attempt to recapture the glory of the ol' boys proved he sings straight from his colon. If 'Swing when...' had actually been good, just think of the copies it would have shifted. The fact it sold millions anyway just proves how a concerted effort by a skinflint industry to produce reams of faceless bollocks has led to mass brainwashing. It seems to me that when Hitler devised the gas chamber, he was only preceeding a Pete Waterman 'Best of' listening booth.

Talking of Waterman, 'Pop Idol'- how shit is that. Darius, come on. If anyone deserves it he does. Anyone so intent on making a cunt of himself in front of millions deserves to get paid well for it. As for those who complain at the criticism handed out by the judges, for fuck's sake... if you don't like it, don't watch it and if you're a contestant upset by the remarks of Cowell, get over it, most of us would be much harsher. The media will be when your first single comes out.

There we are dear friends, a column not worth the paper it's printed on. Maybe I'll be back next week, but that is by the grace of Burn Babies inc. Unless they get some other idiot to bother writing this, be prepared for more last minute dross next week...

Andy Swann

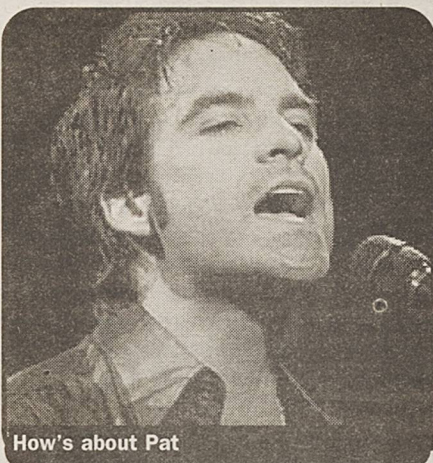
Big Train

Train
@ Shepherd's Bush Empire
16: 01: 02

If you haven't heard of Train, chances are you've heard of their song *Drops of Jupiter*. The 5-piece band hailing from California had enjoyed moderate success a few years back with the hit, *Meet Virginia*, from their first LP, but exploded onto the scene last year with their CD and single, both entitled *Drops of Jupiter*.

The Shepherd's Bush audience sang along throughout the 90 minute set, suggesting a large part were fans of the whole CD, and why not? *Drops of Jupiter*, the CD, features a consistent range of catchy tunes. Show highlights corresponded to the best songs on the CD, from the *Drops of Jupiter*-like second single, *Something More*, to the more rockin' future single, *She's On Fire*.

Train's brand of radio-friendly pop/rock with the occasional country twang is not exactly original or compelling, but they do it well. Despite the traditional pop devices like the



How's about Pat

climactic key change in *I Wish You Would*, such songs are plain fun to listen to and sing along with. The band's honesty and genuineness more than make up for their conventionality.

Only when the band played their slowest songs did the audience drift and start to wonder when they would break out *Drops of Jupiter*. For the record, it came last, transforming an enthusiastic yet conservative audience into a bunch of screaming maniacs, and transforming Shepherd's Bush into the biggest karaoke bar outside of Japan. Train played the song wonderfully, which is admirable considering the amount of times they must have played it since their album came out last year, and toyed with the audience a bit by delaying the final chorus and throwing everyone off their mark.

A live Train show doesn't add to the music but still entertains. The musicianship was excellent all around though the band was not very tight. Regardless, the strength of the band clearly rests in the impressive voice of lead singer, Pat Monahan. Pat was very friendly and chatty and obliged the audience in any way, reaching out to them, playing with things they threw up on stage, and even taking a break mid-song to say hi to someone on the other end of a mobile phone thrown up to him. His dancing was



another story. It was some bizarre combination of awkward chicken-like moves and swan dives, but at least it offered some entertainment during their occasional boring songs. Equally amusing but more impressive was how he seemed to have a different instrument in front of him for every song, be it a tambourine, sleigh bells, trumpet, saxophone, or bongo drums.

Even if, like myself, they're not your favourite band, Train still put on an enjoyable show, enough to warrant a double encore from the audience. They scored big points by playing a cover song they recorded the day earlier at Abbey Road studios for an upcoming soundtrack, Cheap Trick's *I Want You To Want Me*. They didn't change the song at all, which is probably for the best. They also played what Pat described as his favourite of their songs, the somber *Let It Roll*, before turning the lights on and completing a successful whistle-stop in London.

Rob Banerjee

Plain Fonda?

Fonda 500
@ London Metro
23: 01: 02

Hull is hardly a city synonymous with cutting edge, innovative music; that is until you hear their finest sons Fonda 500. The band specialise in quirky, daft, irreverent yet shit-hot songs which encompass a variety of influences, including Cornelius style elektrickery and Pet Sounds-esque harmonies.

Having released the storming debut *8 Track Sound System*, the band deliver a brief set in support of up and coming Indie outfit the 45's. The eclectic marriage of shimmering harmonies, juggled melodies and snatches of scratchy noise wins over the crowd, proving that they are certainly an act to watch out for this year. Weird and wonderful!

Peter Davies

Kast No Shadow

Outkast

Big Boi and Dre Present...

As far as most of us knew, last year's brilliant *Ms Jackson* single was the first and rather excellent release from Atlanta's OutKast. But the fact was that *Stankonia* was their fourth album and in the States they'd been massive for ages, with double platinum sales. This album tries to explain the whole story to us ignorant folk...

As much as this is a 'best of' collection, incorporating all the highlights from their four previous albums, there's no need for familiarity to appreciate any of the tracks. The whole affair is very easy on the listener right from the beginning, with the weird Intro where they fart, giggle and lead you by the hand into their world, introducing themselves and making you feel very welcome indeed.

New track *Funkin' Around* even has them attempting cheeky cockney accents, which makes Dick Van Dyke's attempt at cockney in *Mary Poppins* sound good. So *Fresh, So Clean* is a stand out track, sparkling with its sexy P-funk beat and jazzy seductive vibe. Other tracks also inspired by the ladeez, such as *Elevators (Me and You)* are a little less exciting, but then the ace, slinky *Spottiottiedopaliscious* hits the spot, marrying a bass-heavy reggae vibe with Prince at his horniest and best. *The Whole World* is a funky, bouncy psychedelic romp, really reminiscent of the great George Clinton, and the rousing *Bombs Over Baghdad*, is a total classic of insistent machinegun drum and bass beats. Things then take a rather more chilled turn on the brilliantly titled *Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik*, and



Kast aside?

Crumblin' Erb reveals rather obviously where inspiration may have come from. Then, of course, there is the joy that is *Ms Jackson*, which still sounds as taut and funky as it ever did, with its weirdly funny, sad story.

"there's humour and a true funky beat at the heart of the whole thing"

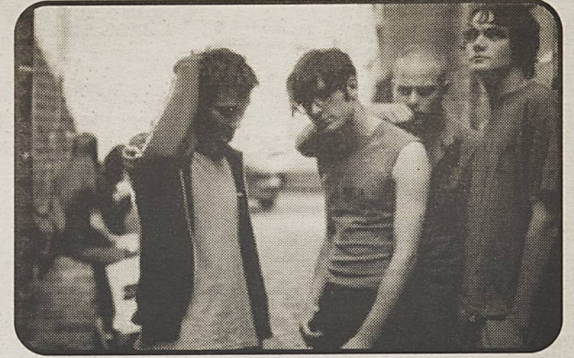
All in all then, this rather fine hip-hop album could very well be more of an introduction to OutKast, rather than a summary of their career so far. They never seem to take themselves too seriously and there's humour and a true funky beat at the heart of the

whole thing. As they say on *So Fresh, So Clean*, "we are the coolest motherfunkas on the planet." Yeah, they're not too bad at all...

★★★★☆
Aditi Mene

Black Out

Miss Black America
@ Camden Monarch



Miss Black America, touted by John Peel and very much considered to be 'up and coming' perform at London's favorite toilet venue the Camden Monarch. Packed out with hip indie kids this is a high-profile showcase gig with NME blessings.

Miss Black America have the music and the attitude to be the next big thing. Unfortunately front man Seymour Glass thinks he is, or at least wants to be Ritchie Manic. Manicisms and pseudo-politics aside Miss Black America are a notable live act and worth catching if you can.

The frenzy of 80's B-line Matchbox Disaster then ensues. Controlled aggression at it's very best. Hoggboy finish the night in style. Well delivered, glamorous punk rock.

The future of rock 'n' roll seems to be unveiling itself to us every week and here you have three bands who promise the world.

Mike Burn

Ghostbustin!

Ghostface Killah

Bullet-Proof Wallets'

Much has been made of the Wu-Tang Clan's failure to successfully re-capture the form that saw them rule hip-hop in the mid-nineties; many of the Wu's sophomore releases both individually and collectively, especially after *Wu-Tang Forever*, have failed to live up to their explosive debuts such as *36 Chambers*, *Liquid Swords*, *Iron Man* and *Cuban Linx*. The only exception to this is the Ghostface Killah's second album, *Supreme Clientele*, which managed to re-capture the essence of their debuts. Maybe, it was the fact that the Clan wasn't as close as it was back in '93: Method Man had moved on to bigger things with Redman; The RZA, who seemed to have lost his patented sound, was concentrating more on the albums of Wu-affiliates and on top of this ODB was spending more time in jail/court/rehab than in the studio.

It was in this environment that *Supreme Clientele* was released, and whilst the production relied on outside beats rather than solely on Wu-production like before, it was overseen and mixed by the RZA. With such sterling beats, Ghostface did not fail to deliver, his lyrics and collaborations with most of the Clan meant that he dropped one of the hottest hip-hop albums of 1999. This was best exemplified in *Wu-Banga 101*, which was as good as *Shadowboxin'* and *Chessboxin'* had been all those years ago. Hopes were high for the release of the third Wu album, *The W*. Although the album was an improvement its predecessor, it didn't sell as well nor did it win as much critical acclaim as Wu releases had in the past.

During 2001, it became clear that there were plans to release the sequel to the hip-hop classic, *Strictly 4 Cuban Linx*, which is regarded by many to be the best solo Wu debut album. The end of the year saw the return of the Ghostface Killah, the Wally Champ, who dropped his third album, *Bullet Proof Wallets*, which is a follow up to his classic *Supreme Clientele*. Although *Bullet Proof Wallets* isn't *Cuban Linx 2* (which will probably be released



by Raekwon this year), it does reunite Ghostface Killah and Raekwon the Chef.

Lyrically, Ghostface is his usual incomprehensible self, yet his voice is sufficiently distinct enough to carry his mixture of slang and ghetto stories. There is also a change in the subject matter, this time Ghost seems to be rhyming more about the ladies and this probably is the reason for the change in the sound, for whilst *Supreme Clientele* had a true hip-hop feel to its production, *Bulletproof Wallets* is more mellow and has a more R'n'B-style-

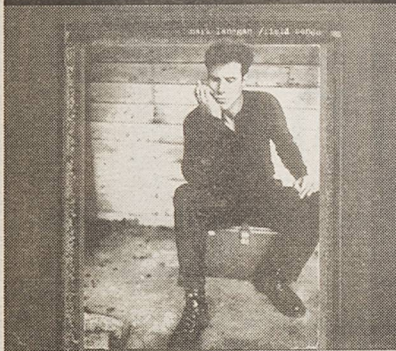
sound, which will probably ensure increased radio and TV airplay, which is so necessary to ship platinum these days. This is also reflected in the collaborations: aside from Raekwon and Methodman (on the jump-off single, *Flowers*) the rest of the clan don't make an appearance, which is a pity, considering their memorable performance on *Supreme Clientele*. Also missing are the old Marvel Ironman cartoon interludes, which like 36 Chamber's old Kung-Fu interludes and skits are the Clan's signature sound, and made Ghostface's last album seem like a return to the golden age of the Wu.

This is not to say that *Bulletproof Wallets* isn't good, it is just different from what is expected of a Clan release and it certainly isn't a *Supreme Clientele 2*. The infectious R'n'B sounds provide and show a mellower side to Ghostface, distinguishing this album from any of its Wu-tang predecessors. This is evident from a pretty commercial release in the form of *Never Be The Same Again*, which is dominated by slow beats and a sappy chorus. Yet classic Wu-tang story telling still abounds, especially with *The Forest*, where Ghost animates a cartoon caper. Raekwon provides a good counter-balance to Ghost's rapid rhymes, and it is always good to hear Raekwon rather than see his face. But the album is similar to most Wu releases over the past few years; it is sporadic. The album seems to promise so much, through Ghost's deep voice and some dope production, yet leaves you disappointed. While it has been well received and hopefully for Ghost it will give him the cross-over success that he deserves, the Wu surely still have a lot to prove in terms of a follow up. A lot lies for true Wu-Tang Clan fans on Raekwon's *Cuban Linx 2: Ragu* later this year in the search for another classic Wu-Tang solo lp. Are the Wu really back? We will soon see.

★★★★☆

Owen Lysak and Akhilan Theiventhirampillai

Album Round-Up



Mark Lanegan
Field Songs

The Screaming Trees were perhaps one of the most underrated bands to be associated with the US grunge scene of the late 80's and early 90's, and in Mark Lanegan, a close friend of Kurt Cobain, they possessed one of the most talented vocalists of the era. His deep, ghostly croon provided the focus for classic releases such as *Sweet Oblivion* and *Dust*, yet Lanegan's love of country and blues also induced him to write a string of solo releases, on top of his day to day Screaming Trees duties. Since the demise of the Trees, Mark Lanegan has continued to record and release solo albums, and his fifth album *Field Songs*, carries on in a similar vein to its predecessors, with its chilled mix of country, blues and folk.

Although diametrically opposed in style to the Trees material, Mark Lanegan continues to excel as an artist. With mournful, introspective songs such as the acoustic gem *One Way Street* and *Kinko's Dream House*, co-written with Jeffrey Lee Pierre from Gun Club, *Field Songs* will undoubtedly pacify his existing fans. It does, however, lack the passion and drive of classic Screaming Trees releases, and although the understated formula works well, it doesn't quite maximise his vocal talents as did the Trees when they rocked out. Nevertheless, this is fine within its field.

★★★★☆
Peter Davies



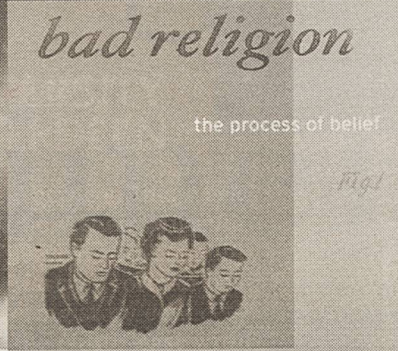
Blaze
Tenth Dimension

Blaze Bayley after leaving Iron Maiden, where he replaced Bruce Dickinson formed Blaze (wonder where the band's name cam from) with four young hopefuls. (Why name a kid Blaze? I mean you are just asking for a pyromaniac as a son).

First song of the album and straight away its old style guitars, no nu-metal here, just eighties guitar metal. Then the vocals come in ... and well basically this is just like Iron Maiden. Not necessarily a rip off, but however unintentional, this sounds just the same. The only difference is the lyrics, no "Bring your daughter to the slaughter" found here. Instead the lyrics are allegedly on a futuristic, space travel theme. If some comedy lines were added, voila another Spinal Tap is born.

There are no outstanding songs on the album, hell there are no good songs on the album. So what we have here is a traditional metal band in an era where nu-metal is king. They will probably go down well in Germany and The Netherlands then.

★★★★☆
Ryan Cooray



Bad Religion
Process of Belief

Legendary Californian punks Bad Religion have made a stylish return to form with their twelfth studio album. Following the patchy *No Substance* and *the New America*, the band have welcomed back their former guitarist and Epitaph records founder Brett Gurewitz, and the result is their finest album for years.

Stylistically, the album is the natural successor to 1994's *Stranger Than Fiction* (by no means a coincidence, the last album to feature Guerrewitz). Opener *Supersonic* sets the pace, with its frantic minor key riff, and throughout the album we are treated to Bad Religion at their very best; epic guitar solos, superb backing vocals, articulate lyrics (from vocalist Greg Graffin Phd) and above all, killer tunes, something which has been sadly lacking from their recent releases. Indeed, *Broken* and *Sorrow* represent some of the strongest material that Bad Religion have recorded to date, and they certainly rival classics like *American Jesus* and *Infected*.

With the host of MTV shagging, corporate backed pretenders pervading the current punk scene (Sum 41 Blink182 et al) it's refreshing to see a band as influential and dedicated to the independent movement as Bad Religion serve up a great punk rock record. Keep the faith.

★★★★☆
Peter Davies



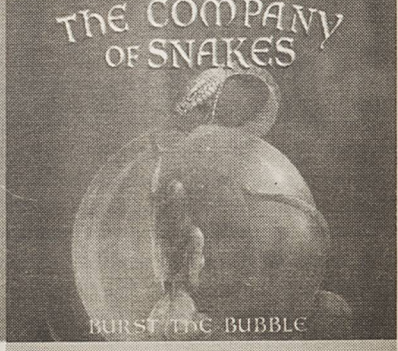
FABRICLIVE. 02
Ali B

Fabric
Live 2: Ali B

Based in an old abattoir, Fabric brings a whole new definition to the idea of a "meat market", one not based on a tired brand of alcohol-fuelled sexual machismo. Based in Farringdon, it has so far escaped the familiar troubles of the superclub. Where the Ministry of Sound or Oakenfold's Home always seemed to attract musical tourists; the atmosphere at Fabric remains its best feature. In the early hours of this year the crowd danced all the way from Kylie Minogue to Kings of Tomorrow. The Scratch Perverts, James Lavelle, Terry Francis and Craig Richards continued to serve up a unforgettable mix of tunes until a time I do not remember.

The eponymous record label has been releasing a series of mix CD's with Lavelle and now resident Ali B representing the Friday night breakbeat sound. Released Feb 4, the 22 tracks here start funky, move deep and end mellow. DJ Spice's twisted Sugarhill Gang bass-line, *Groove Operator* is a (rapper's) delight, and Laidback's classic *God Can't Stop* brings old-skool samples back to reality. Though it lacks darkness it's best played too loud - an ideal party soundtrack. No doubt they'll be packing sardines instead of meat at Fabric from now on.

★★★★☆
Joe Rudkin



The Company of Snakes
Burst the Bubble

Back in the late 70s and early 80s, when men could wear long hair and tight stonewash denim without fear of ridicule Whitesnake were among the elite of a hard rock scene dominated by British bands. The albums *Ready and Willin'* and *Lovehunter* put Whitesnake at the forefront of the scene populated by bands such as AC/DC, Iron Maiden and Black Sabbath. Now Mickey Moody, Neil Murray, Bernie Marsden have reassembled themselves as The Company of Snakes and *Burst the Bubble* is their first release with Stefan Berggren on vocals and John Lingwood hitting the tubs.

Fans of the 'Snake will not be disappointed. Moody and Marsden's fretwork is as polished and exact as one would expect of the rock veterans. Songs such as *Sacrificial Feeling* and *Labour of Love* kick off the album in an uncompromising fashion, with riffs that are chunkier than Simon from Fat Club. The latter part of the album is slower, more ballad based but maintains a pleasing standard buoyant in no small part to stellar axework.

In some ways it is a tragedy that, given their centrality in the history of British Hard Rock, The Company of Snakes are releasing *Burst the Bubble* on German label SPV. However, this says more about the way in which our record industry has gone than the standard of this album.

★★★★☆
Charlie Jurd

Japs I-con

Cornelius
Point

In this era of post-everything where there is, it would seem, almost a genre of 'post-music' there seems to be very little point in calling anything post-modern. The term attaches very little meaning to anything. But this is, in a sense, the angle Keigo Oyamada (aka Cornelius) is taking. *Point* could be viewed as an archetypal 'post-modern' album. It delves into genres and decades with finesse, coming out with only the best. Conversely *Point* could quite simply be viewed as pure perfect pop entity.

Not for one second can this man's genius be doubted. From the album's tentative, subtle and piecing opening of *Bug* through the pastiche parody of *I Hate Hate* with it's retro metalism and ferocity and *Another View Point* which is a sublime slab of disco funk with a corpulently sexy bass line. A logical progression from 1998's *Fantasma*. *Point* is the sound of the acoustic colliding with the digital and embracing. An intelligent chillout album.



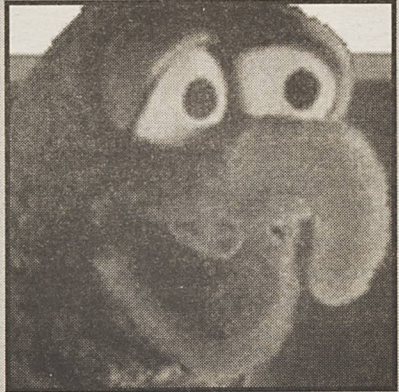
The Cornelius vortex is a whole world of sonic eccentricities and experimentations. *Point* is a indeed a view point, a standpoint. The philosophy of Cornelius is certainly a wise one. This music is an escapists delight, music to listen to whilst walking around the dirty and the urban London or drifting asleep to. It's easy to lose yourself in the many delicious sounds and forget about your woes.

Keigo Oyamada juggles what is essentially beautiful pop music with the avante-garde. Subtle guitar stabs dropped over floating soundscapes; the way pop music should sound. Shimmering, ethereal and upbeat.

★★★★★
Mike Burn

LSE Sporting Legends: BILLY

After a hasty dash from the Royal Courts of Justice following the Ed Cook Legal writ the Sporting Legends Committee has met again to raise another member of the AU to god like status. We once again turn to those loveable boys of the Football Club to provide us with someone, who, like a lamb to the slaughter, seems all too willing to offer himself for ridicule, sorry, praise. Who else but the rock of the 1st XI defence, the man who works on the dance floor alone and sure enough goes home alone, yes you guessed it
..... Billy.



ALIAS:
"Bisexual Billy Muppet", "Solo Operator" (You go out with the lads to a club, will you see him getting the beers in? Will you f***, he will be attempting the legendary grind on some poor unsuspecting girl), "Asian David Hasselhoff" (Not really sure how he got this one we couldn't find any German blood in the family tree), "Gypsy" (Buy your own clothes!), "Enraged Customer at Peteborough All Night taxi rank" (What can we say other than it was his 21st and his 'mates' got him a one way ticket to Peteborough from Hombres station), "Oscar's Parisian Bitch" (aaahhh Paris the city of love who could forget Kent and Billy hand in hand down the Champs Elysee starry eyed, and Billy limping like John Wayne)



WORST ITEM OF CLOTHING:
Doesn't own any - he steals, he pinches..... hence the name 'Gypsy'. Loves to wear 'best mates' clothing for two week period at which point they magically become his. Typical exchange -

House Mate: 'Alright mate.... hang on that's my shirt!'
Billy: 'No its not I bought it in West Brom' (in Brummie accent)
House Mate: 'But my mum bought it me for my 21st'
Billy: 'No she didn't'
House Mate: 'NO! - it is my shirt'
Billy: 'Oh..... sorry mate'



AMBITION:
To own some clothes and finally get laid at university, Billy was caught in a shock clothing scandal last year when it was rumoured he had bought his own underwear. On closer inspection all was forgiven as clearly marked was the name of former lover O Kent. Former and current housemates label his room 'The Quiet Room' - a chance to get away from women, in a room full of

your own belongings. One of his greater ambitions is to finally pass his 2nd year.

FAVOURITE TOTTY:
Anything as long as they don't mind watching him flicking his own cock to keep up his 'legendary' semi hard-on. Also any women that don't mind being ground into the dance floor with said semi hard on. Basically any bird that's come round to see someone else in his house, or come round to see anyone in his house in the biblical sense, or if they have come to get work off someone else, within his own flat. He lies in wait in the 'Quiet Room' and then pounces until he corners the prey and his room, stays quiet for about 30 seconds then they leave.



PAST CONQUESTS:
The ubiquitous American General Course Student, MeJulie, Scottish 'innocent-but weird' Ruth. Also Pixie Jenny behind the bar. 'Dirty' Laura Anymore please let us know but we ran out.



FAVOURITE HOBBY:
Completing exams to a 2:2 standard and then erasing all work declaring. "No Questions answered- I deserved a 2:1". Then failing another and being forced to resit the **WHOLE YEAR AGAIN**. Hence the term "Muppet". Another one is the Grievous Bodily Harm of any striker, including our own, with semi-hard-on and grinding manoeuvre. The phrases "Filthy F***er" and "That's the worst tackle I've ever seen" (notice the double entendre here) are commonplace when BBM is prowling around the pitch.

BIGGEST MISMATCH:
Billy v Train to Peteborough
Billy v Hygiene
Billy v purchasing own clothes
Billy v Womankind
Billy v Oscar
Billy v Legal tackle
Billy v Drinking
Billy v 2nd year Econometrics

And there we have it, another shining star of LSE's legendary Athletic Union enters the dubious Hall of Fame that is, Sporting Legends. Any comments, suggestions or fanmail, or indeed clothes for the Bisexual Billy Muppet Fund, please e-mail us at sportinglegends@hotmail.com.

Ricky Steele is a virgin!

Ricky
"I have never even kissed a girl"
Steele

Before I launch into ecstatic praise for the mighty eleven who so arrogantly slapped UCL into submission, I feel it only polite to make some passing comment surrounding the controversy of the first game of 2002. The fixture I refer to has been dubbed 'the battle of berrylands' more times than I care to remember, so I'll just call it LSE Vs v LSE 6s.

Whenever two LSE teams play each other it is always a massive occasion, be that in friendly, league or cup games - this game was even bigger than usual - the winner would take top spot in ULU 4. For once, however, the LSE Vs weren't up to

tain was, Hancock would simply not give a free kick our way.

1-1 at half time. Confidence restored. Bring on the arrogance. You shall be our bitches. 'Your daddy works for my daddy' and all that. We are at our best when we take the piss, and Tom Mythen is the biggest piss taker of all. Once again, Tom oozed quality, and Nick having forced his way back into the first team after being dropped against the 6s is no stranger to the odd moment of brilliance. Jewell stopped flirting with their left mid and Simon guided 4th team Duncan to a faultless game at centre defence; Simon himself finally connected with a Mythen corner - there was no question about where it was going once he got his head to it. Dan pulled his socks up and scored a second dirty goal, dribbling round the keeper this time - 'oh, I thought I was offside' was his response to our cries of joy.

To everyone's immense pleasure Yaz

Men's Football

LSE 5ths (saviours of the known world)

5
1

the challenge. 'Mincepietis' had afflicted most of our team, notably the captain, who was looking a little rounder than usual, and the team ... actually, fuck it. We lost to a team that were better than us on the day. I'm not very happy about it, and I'm not going to rub it off with shit jokes and innuendo.

So, on to more enjoyable escapades, having beaten UCL 5s 5-0 last term, we couldn't wait to sample some mockery of a 7th team. We started off the game against UCL just as we had finished against the 6s. Looking tired, failing to pass to feet, getting caught in possession etc etc. Tears started to well in my eyes as we conceded after half an hour, our left back raped for pace by some ringer who appeared with the ball at his feet from nowhere. This was it, there would be no glory this season, no historic league and cup double, no vicious LSE 5 v 6 cup final. My dreams were shattered, and all because UCL refused to lay down and submit like all other good teams.

What happened next escaped me. The remaining hour of football was a whirlwind of lightning quick passes, arcing through balls, bone crunching tackles, reflex saves (from the keeper and his assistant on the line) and premiership quality strikes. The first goal (I think this is accurate, but am not totally sure) came from Dan spotting an opportunity to crack one through the UCL backline and sock it past the keeper. However, the Vs plight was not helped by the man in black. The blind, deaf and prematurely balding ref had obviously been up all night blowing his pet alsation, as the only time he had the energy to blow the whistle was to mark half and full time. no matter how heinous the challenge, how filthy the mouth or how ugly the UCL cap-



Anymore virginal and he would be the father to the second cumming!

netted a couple of delightful goals, proving that he can in fact play up front despite his attempt to conceal it against the 6s. Yaz will be pleased to hear that Ben Loewy (built like a brick shithouse, kicks a football like a brick shithouse) broke his finger half way through the second half. Ben played on, but an 8 hour wait in casualty informed him that he wont be in nets for a while.

Onwards in the cup we go, but its the league on Wednesday - and a double header against the whipping boys should shorten the odds at the bookies for our league-



Fat Angry Man on LimeLight



This week's article is concerning the ongoing debate over whether the pantheon of the sporting legends of the LSE should remain the elegant and divine Limelight or the debauched den of madness that is Cheapskates. In my mind there is only one winner and that is Limelight and here is why.

The standard argument in favour of Limelight is always that it is tradition. This argument is complete bollocks as the students of LSE have been going to Limelight for a relatively short time in the big scheme of things and tradition shouldn't ever hold us back. No the reasons for staying at Limelight are several and based on other more grounded arguments.

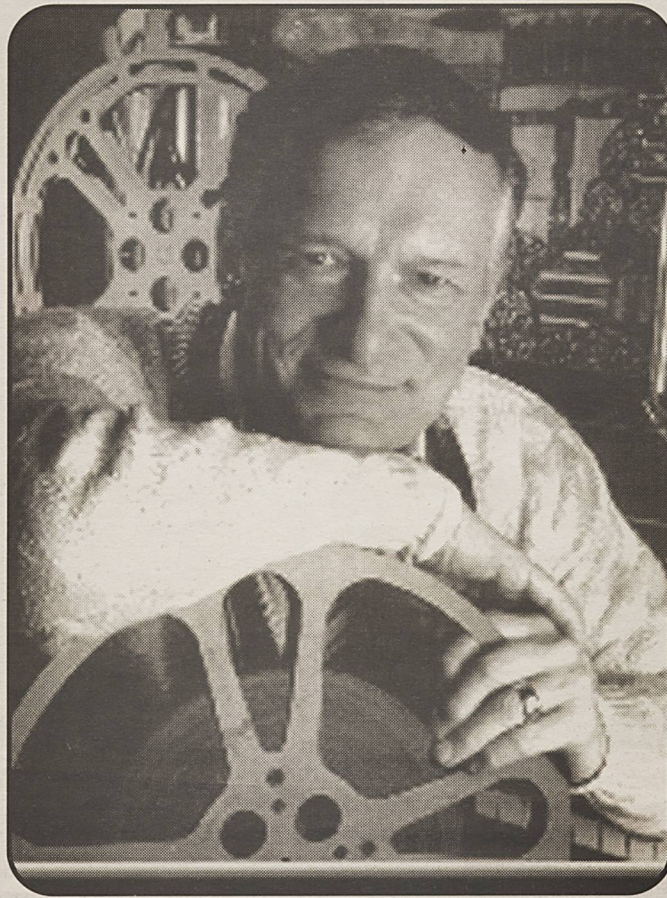
Firstly Limelight wins hands down on style points when I sit in Limelight's VIP room such as it is I feel like I have descended into a crack den brothel in Victorian England (I have actually been to brothels decorated like Limelight). I sit there expectantly waiting for a topless Philippine girl to fill my glass and proffer forth a crack pipe which is exactly what happens in my post Tuns alcohol addled delusions.

Secondly Limelight wins in term of staff. Although Cheapskates does sport a rather amusing Ron Jeremy impersonator they all look like disheveled refugees who have been offered jobs by the kind crack dealers who own

Cheapskates. Limelight is undoubtedly filled with even more refugee like eastern Europeans but the one in the VIP bar is a cute little Russian thing which adds to the whole Bond in Istanbul flavor I feel anyway.

Thirdly price of drinks. Here you may think Cheapskates wins hands down and it is true that it is a lot cheaper. However, this does have its problems: firstly the alcohol formerly known as Vodka in Cheapskates is actually closer to Mentholated Spirits. Secondly the remarkably cheap price means that you spend all your time queuing at the bar not talking to anyone frantically trying to order as many as you can.

Drinking in Cheapskates is the most dehumanizing and anti-social experience since Hombres. Limelight on the other hand May be



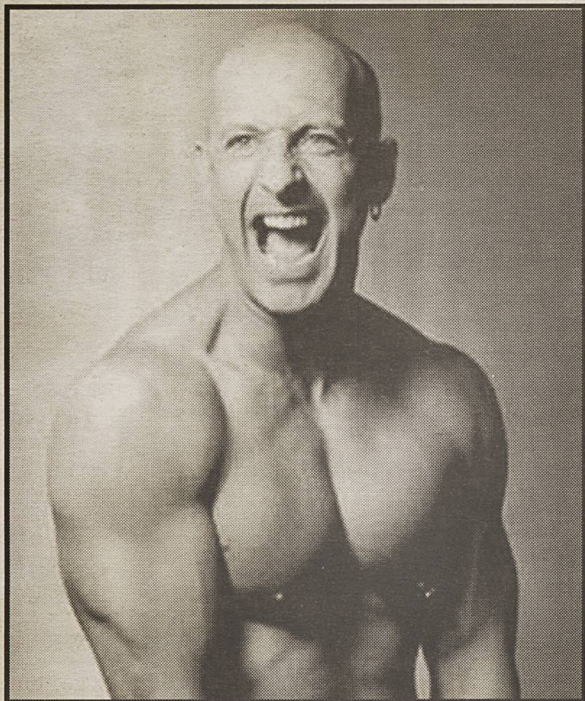
Hugh Hefner: "I go to Limelight all the time, you can't beat the ambience!"

expensive but at least you have the charm of whisking up a bottle of champagne and pretending you live the high life as the cheap sparkling white wine sears the skin from your throat.

Fourthly we are LSE. We may not be any richer than any other students but we do deserve a more sophisticated atmosphere. Call me elitist call me a snob but I really like the atmosphere at Limelight and I think that Cheapskates is for Poly scum and their Caravans and lack of Job prospects. Thus if I go anywhere post Tuns from now on it will be Limelight which I think is the discerning rugby man's choice. I have full respect for all those who go else where but I would love to see you at Limelight in the that little crack den in my mind.

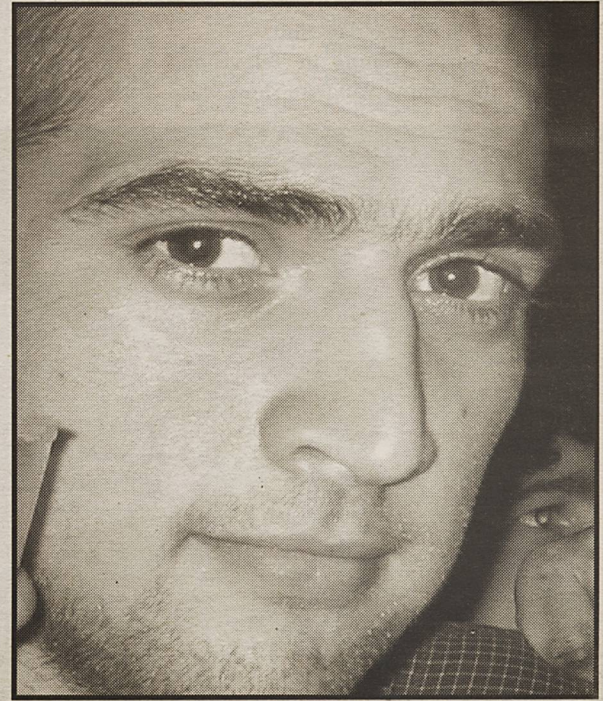
Finally a little quote from last academic year week one by a LSE footballer who is a drinking legend. "You know Oscar this year I am going to do the 20, that is 20 Limelights out of 20". This was said with relish and pride. Gav Russell you know who you are.

LSE Sportingalikes!



Mark Buttery

Today the Sportingalike is none other than footballer Mark Buttery, who shares all the trademarks of Right Said Fred. Yup, that's right both are narcissistic men who devote all their time to pulling the same sex.



A talentless man completely obsessed with men!

The great
Limelight
debate: the
fat angry
man casts
his vote



"Cheap as Chips!"

Justin Jewell
reports on an incredible
BeaverSports exclusive

Everyone has to have a dream - only a few are ever lucky enough to live them. Jimmy Saville used to slog his guts out trying to help little kids to live their dreams, whilst creating a variety of home movies for his private collection. Well, on Tuesday I got to be Jimmy Saville for a day. Well... not in that sense... I'll explain.

My housemate, a certain Rupert Walker is an enormous fan of the eponymous, dapper and mulleted David Dickinson. After a hard night out with Charlie Brown and Martha Higgins Rupert claims that Dickinson is the only man who can ease him into his day with a dosage of "antique watching, joke-quipping brilliance". Well, on Tuesday Rupert lived his dream - he met the perma-tanned star of Bargain Hunt. A seminal moment in his life has been and gone. He was not alone, however, in shaking the hand of the glowing celebrity. I too was there, along with my fellow sports editor 'the fat angry man' and around a dozen of the beaver's most intrepid explorers in the art of gonzo journalism. This is where I came in, sorting a ticket out for the biggest Dickinson lover this side of Bournemouth's "Rest" homes. We were joined by the three people spending the next fortnight on work experience in this bastion of quality journalism. (More on them later if I can be arsed).

You may wonder how this happened -everyone is of course jealous. I am sure you beaver watchers will remember the Hiya! pullout in the last edition of the Christmas term and the feature on the "big guy". Well those in charge of that supplement have stayed in touch with Mr Dickinson and were invited to join Him, as His special guests, on the Johnny Vaughan show on Tuesday night and to bring along their fellow journalists. Robbie Coltrane somehow sneaked in as well, but in this world without justice we missed Anastasia by one day. Shit.

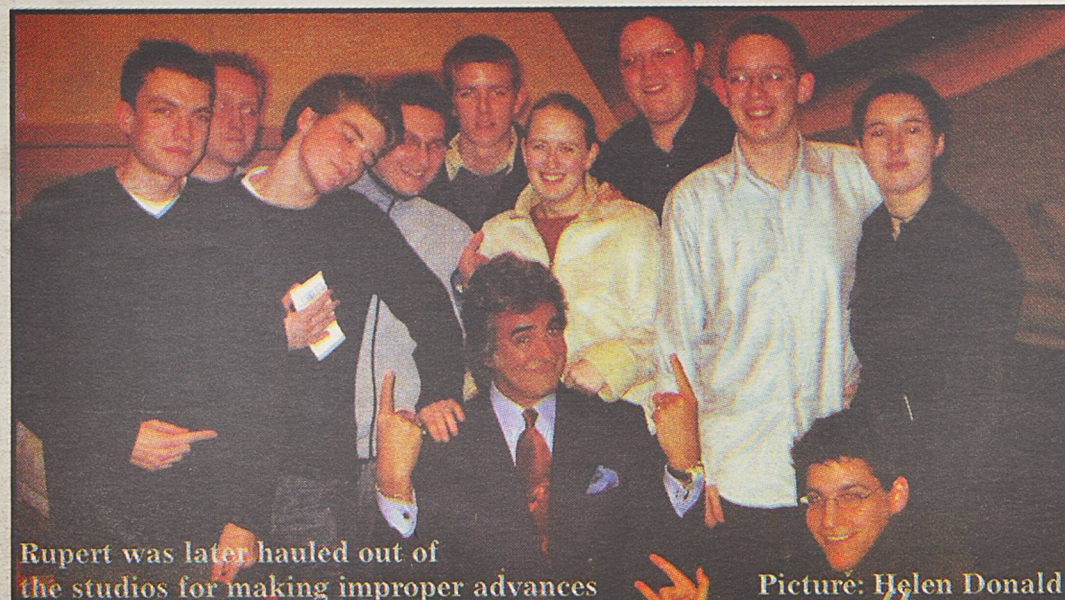
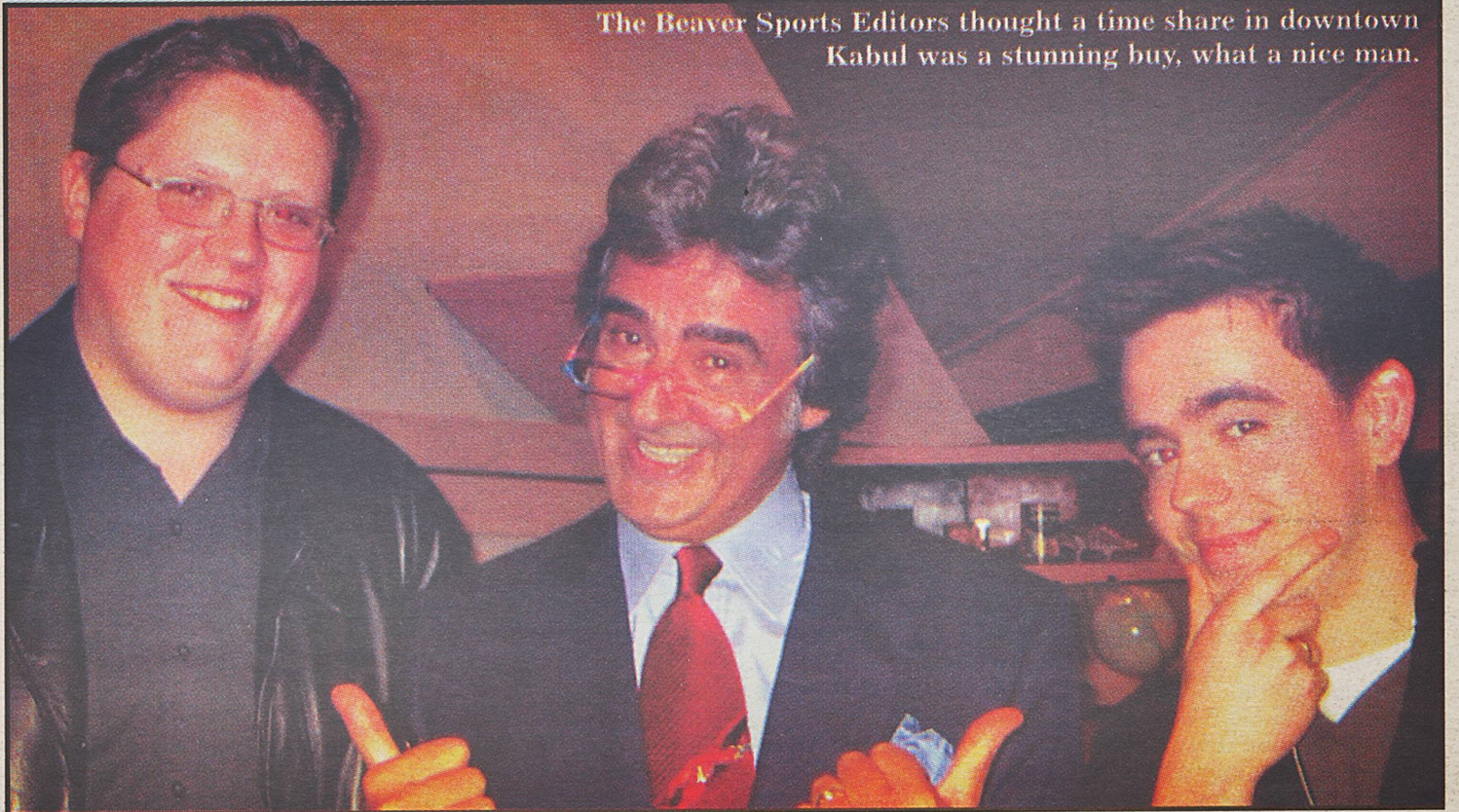
So we spent an early evening in Television Centre watching as the Johnny Vaughan show was

recorded; the experience was amusing and I can assure you that he really is a larger than life character with odd glasses and a Barbados tan. He stayed with us for 20 minutes or so after filming to chat and get a few copies of the Beaver for His collection but thanks to some cunt at the beeb we didn't get to join Dickinson in the green room for a beer or two after the performance. They tried to blame Meg Ryan not wanting to share her relaxation area with students but I am sure it was the work of some jumped up jobsworth cunt at the BBC. If I get my hands on him, whoever he is, I shall insert a bottle of complimentary chardonnay into his quivering gaper.

In short - I shook the hand of Dickinson: He is real and He is actually a really friendly guy. Got His number and all.

Anyway, enough of this tatty article, it's just to fill up space. The point of the back page is to print a copy of the picture so Matt and I don't have to fork out for one ourselves.

The Beaver Sports Editors thought a time share in downtown Kabul was a stunning buy, what a nice man.

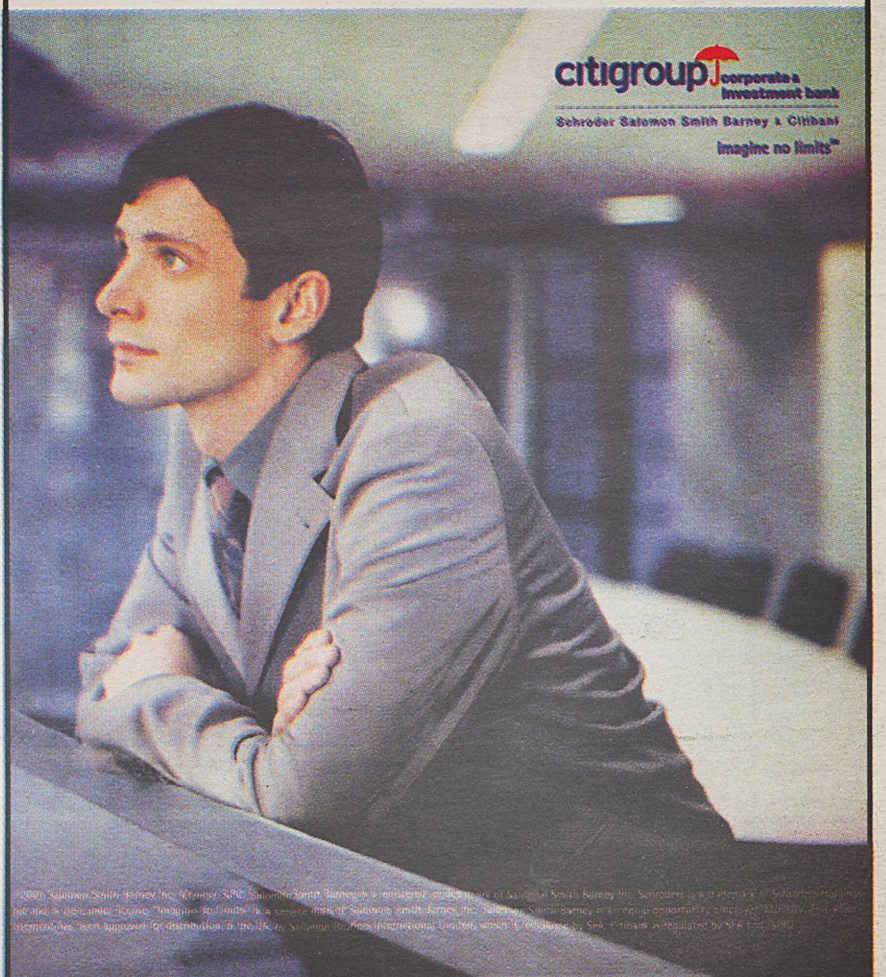


Rupert was later hauled out of the studios for making improper advances

Picture: Helen Donald

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at the watercooler or in the conference room?

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