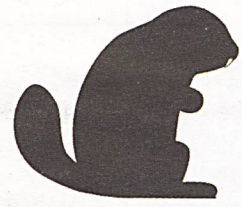


the beaver



21.02.2012
Newspaper of the
LSE Students' Union
FREE

SNP Leader speaks at LSE

Jack Tindale
Staff Reporter

Alex Salmond MSP, leader of the Scottish National Party, addressed a packed Sheikh Zayed Theatre on Wednesday evening. The talk by the First Minister of Scotland formed part of a nationwide speaking tour aimed at extolling his vision for Scottish independence. The lecture, entitled 'Independence and Responsibility: the future of Scotland' was chaired by Professor Paul Kelly, Head of the Department of Government.

The speech, which was broadcast live by the BBC and other national networks, largely focused on the

economic basis for the First Minister's independence movement, attracting attention from a wide audience from outside the London School of Economics (LSE) community.

Salmond, who became the first leader at Holyrood to win an overall majority in last year's Parliamentary election, opened his lecture with praise for the LSE, albeit tempered by his Keynesian views rather at odds with the School's traditional Austrian ethos.

Praising the recent publication of Beatrice Webb's journals by the LSE Library, Salmond cited the LSE founder's then-contemporary criticism of global financial institutions and the results of research carried out by the Grantham Research Centre for Climate Change and the Environment as a basis for the Scottish National Party's

(SNP) vision of a low carbon Scottish economy based around renewable energy.

Commenting on the recent downgrade of the British economy by the credit rating agency Moody's, the First Minister began by critiquing the fiscal policies of the Coalition government, calling for renewed investment by the Treasury in order to promote growth. Salmond has adopted a resolute opposition to current austerity measures, often referred to as "Plan McB," and few in the audience seemed surprised by the First Minister using the podium to promote an alternative perspective.

Citing free university education for Scottish students, a compulsory apprenticeship program for school leavers and the recent establishment of a Scottish Investment Bank, Salmond

argued that his government's record on youth unemployment stood robust against that of the coalition, dismissing their "passive acceptance of the consequences of austerity."

Salmond began his main argument by debunking a number of myths perceived as being spread by the pro-Union campaign, principally that regarding currency. The First Minister made no reference to the SNP's long-standing policy of joining the Eurozone, especially his view expressed two years ago in the Telegraph that Euro membership offered a "strong argument" for independence.

Instead, the First Minister spoke in favour of the continued membership of an independent Scotland in the Stirling Zone. Stating that "no nation can stop another from using a fully trade-

able currency," Mr Salmond defended his view of a monetary union with a rump United Kingdom, speaking in defence of the large-scale oil and gas resources that would fall in between Scottish and British territorial waters by a ratio of around 90 per cent to 10 per cent, respectively.

Since Scotland currently stands as the third most prosperous region of the United Kingdom after London and the South West, the First Minister expressed the view that an independent nation would easily be able to maintain a currency pegged to the Pound.

The First Minister also expressed his vision for an independent Scottish economy in terms of giving the British government "Six of the Best" with regards to establishing competi-

>> 7



Alex Peters-Day, Students' Union General Secretary, getting gunged for charity as RAG Week took over Houghton Street | Photo: Matt Worby

Equality seen in attainment

Timothy Poole

Data published by the LSE has shown strong similarities between the attainment of General Course students and that of all LSE undergraduates. The data, taken from exam results of the 2010-2011 academic year, does not show significant disparity in the results of General Course students in comparison with LSE as a whole. Rather, the failure rates of both are consistent with each other, at around 6.5 per cent (General Course: 6.8, LSE Undergraduates: 6.6), whilst there is also only a two per cent differentiation in the amount of 2:1s received by each group.

One notable difference between the two groups lies in the amount of 1sts and 2:2s achieved. 19.3 per cent of all LSE undergraduates achieved first-class honours, compared to only 13.2 per cent of General Course students, whilst exactly ten per cent more of General Course students achieved 2:2s, at 31.5 per cent. Though, when the amount of 1sts, 2:1s and 2:2s are considered as a whole, the percentages are almost identical at around 78 per cent.

Overall, the data demonstrates a general equality in grades attained between the two student groups. This comes despite significant differences in the overall degree process; General Course students are assessed differently and the admissions procedure is similarly varied.

Mark Hoffman, General Course Dean, explained that General Course

exam results were mainly consistent with other LSE undergraduates, but that various factors affected General Course results. He commented that there is a high failure rate in quantitative courses such as EC220, Introduction to Econometrics, though this failure rate is lower than that of LSE undergraduates in the same module. In qualitative courses, Hoffman revealed that General Course students often struggle to adapt to the different style of essay-writing, but once this transition is made, the top-end of results are often better than that of other LSE students.

Several measures have been taken to reduce the high failure rates in courses such as the aforementioned EC220. An important change has been to introduce the requirement to have the permission of the course tutor to enrol, while many students are directed to MN203, Social Science Research Method for Management, as an alternative.

The need for permission to enrol in a particular course reflects the general admissions process that General Course students undergo, which is rather dissimilar to the UCAS process. Hoffman explained that the General Course admits around 300 students per year, with 308 admitted in 2011-2012. Some of the students, who attend American universities with longstanding ties to the LSE, undergo internal selection procedures at their home universities; such procedures are fairly automatic and result in a much lower level of applications.

The biggest contingent of General Course

>> 6



visit us online at thebeaveronline.co.uk
and at facebook.com/thebeaveronline

Editorial Board

Executive Editor
Duncan McKenna
editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Managing Editor
Alex Haigh
managing@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Design Editor
Liam Brown
design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

News Editors
Bethany Clarke
John Armstrong
Sydney Saubestre
news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Comment Editor
Alice Dawson
comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Features Editor
Gurdeep Chhina
Chris Rogers
features@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Social Editor
Laura Aumeer
social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Sport Editors
Tim Poole
Maxim Owen
sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

PartB Editor
Aameer Patel
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Photo Editor
Matthew Worby
photography@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Online Editor
Liam Brown
web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

General Manager
Konrad Hughes
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Collective Chair
Alexander Young
collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk



Union Bashō

Red Jack

Jack Tindale looks less like Ken Livingstone than he does Boris Johnson.

Bashō is the Beaver's elusive haiku poet. He thinks it's odd no-one pointed out the Boris Tindale phenomenon before.



the beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 767

Telephone: 0207 955 6705 Email: editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Getting involved in student media

The Beaver will soon be covering the Annual Students' Union Sabbatical Officer elections and our place as the voice of LSE's students will be at its most obvious for this school year. This newspaper has been at the heart of this university for 63 years so we have decided, in this week's editorial, to preach the virtues of student journalism and to encourage students to contribute - be it criticism or complement, article or cartoon.

The Beaver, in its illustrious and well regarded history, has seen its hard work appear in national newspapers, and its editors interviewed by the BBC on multiple occasions. Just this year, our work reporting on the antisemitic incident on the ski trip. The Beaver keeps all those within the LSE to account, from the School's committee to student societies while also putting forth all of our successes.

However, it is the contributors, not the institution, that creates the work you see in the Beaver. As a volunteer organisation, the motivation behind what our writers, photogra-

phers, editors, and production assistants do is not financial, but motivated instead by their desire to better their writing ability, put their point across or take part in an activity that they find 'fun.'

We are well aware that some see the paper as a clique, and the valid issue has been raised that coverage of student events sometimes seems more reactive. But this is a natural constraint of the way a student paper has to operate. The problem is that to be a news reporter is to devote a considerable amount of time, possibly to the detriment of your degree, to chasing news stories both on and off campus. It is then a necessary evil to have to ask for event details and have a small dedicated staff write up the majority of the stories. With the other sections of this paper, the freedom to contribute has never been constrained because of the social group within which that contributor happens to sit. The Beaver does its best to include contributions from every viewpoint at the LSE, and balance the interests of groups angling to control the content in our Comment section.

The prickly issue of unprinted content is also one that we on the Editorial Board take seriously. We never

deliberately leave out articles that our writers spend much of their own time creating. However, occasionally - due to lack of space, factual inaccuracies, legal issues or other problems that we do not have time to rectify - articles must sometimes be left out. We attempt to contact writers and those involved with stories to ensure that facts are correct, sentences not plagiarised and that people will not be unduly offended by any pieces. It is inevitable that in some instances we will fail in that regard, however with as many people looking at as many articles as possible we aim to minimise failure and consistently deliver the student newspaper that LSE students deserve.

In summation, we run a volunteer student newspaper. Not one individual on our staff is paid for their time. We only take part in this endeavour for our own personal betterment. We hope that you feel the same way and decide to become involved in the LSE's student media organisations. If you would like to contribute to the Beaver, please contact the section editors on the masthead to the left of this editorial.

Collective

A Alani, R Al-Dabagh, J Allsop, N M Alexander, N Antoniou, J V Armstrong, L Atchison, L Aumeer, H Austin, N J Buckley-Irvine, H Burdon, A Burk, B Arslan, E Beaumont, L Brown, B Butterworth, V Chan, R J Charnock, S Chaudhuri, G K Chhina, B Clarke, L J Clifton, R A Coleman, R A Creedon, R Cucchiaro, A L Cunningham, J Curtis, H Dar, A E Dawson, E Delahaye, S Desai, A Doherty, E S Dwek, E Firth, M Fletcher, A Fyfe, S Gale, P Geder, R Gudka, A L Gunn, A C B Haigh, M C Heffernan, R Holmes, K C Hughes, R Illingworth, N Jaroszek, M Jenkins, J Jones, A Kane, K V Kenney, A Krechetova, S Langton, E A Larkin, S W Leung, S H Low, D McKenna, R Mohyidin, A Moneke, B Nardi, C T Ng, K O'Donnell, M Owen, N Mashru, N Mateer, S Newman, S Nissila, Marshall Palmer, A X Patel, J R Peart, A Peters-Day, K Pezeshki, S Poojara, T Poole, A Qazilbash, A Riese, K Rogers, C S Russell, N Russell, B Sarhangian, S Saubestre, Z Sammour, I M Silver, K Singh, L Slothuus, J M Still, J Stoll, A Sulemanji, J Tindale, L Vardaxoglou, M Veale, A Vora, X T Wang, S R Williams, V A Wong, M Worby, J Yarde, A Young, D Yu

The Collective is The Beaver's governing body. You must have contributed three pieces of work, or contributed to the production of three issues of the paper (editorially or administratively), to qualify for membership. If you believe you are a Collective member but your name is not on the list above, please email

collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

The Beaver would like to thank the LSE students who contributed to this issue.

The Beaver is published by the LSE Students' Union, East Building, Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE. Printed at Mortons Printing.

The Beaver uses pictures from flickr.com which have been issued under a Creative Commons license.

Correction:

In the front page news article, 'Student petition to bring back suspended course,' in last week's edition of the Beaver, Ian Randolph's name was incorrectly cited as Rudolph. The online article has been rectified to correct this error.

Beaver Elections

Three positions have become available on the Beaver Editorial Board. Applications have opened for the following positions:

Executive Editor x1
Online Editor x1
News Editor x1

Election hustings will take place on Thursday, 23rd February for these positions. Please contact Collective Chair for more information.

Those not on Collective can email collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk for more information.

RAG Week rows down Houghton Street

Bethany Clarke

The LSE Students' Union's Raising and Giving (RAG) Society held its annual Rag Week on campus last week, uniting the LSE student body in the name of charity. Money raised was donated to the RAG Society's three sponsored charities: Action against Hunger, War Child and the National Aids Trust.

The Athletics Union's Rowing Club got involved in RAG week by hosting a ten-hour 'rowathon' on Houghton Street last Tuesday morning. The club rowed 412 kilometers, easily surpassing its goal of 360, equivalent to rowing from London to Amsterdam, albeit with help from several of the Students' Union's Sabbatical Officers, who were around to lend a hand. The event raised a total of £364.40.

On Thursday night, RAG held a rematch of the annual 'Battle of the Halls' event it hosts during Freshers' Week at the beginning of Michaelmas Term. The event, which took place at Cheapskates nightclub in Soho, was a roaring success, with Rosebery - who won the boat race and dance off - ultimately losing out to Carr-Saunders.

Another popular activity was "Gunge-A-Sabb", which saw students donating money in the hopes of seeing their Sabbatical Officer of choice gunged publicly. On Friday afternoon, both Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union, and Stanley Ellerby-English, Activities and Development Officer, were gunged on Houghton Street.

On Sunday, LSE students travelled to the Hinton Skydiving Centre in Milton Keynes to participate in RAG's 2012 Skydive. Participants free fell from 13,000 feet to raise money for War Child, one of RAG's sponsored charities. The organisation works

to provide life-changing support for children whose families, communities and schools have been torn apart by war.

Nona Buckley-Irvine, a first year BSc Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method student who raised 225 pounds for War Child through her participation in the jump, said: "It was an incredible, terrifying experience and I can't believe I actually managed to jump. But the skydive has raised a lot of money for charity so I'm glad to have done it and would definitely do it again."

Mohamed Morley and Mohamed Harrath, both LSE students who participated in the skydive event, told the Beaver: "This skydive and RAG week as a whole highlighted one key important thing for me; that when we use non-traditional ways to raise money for good causes, it's not only an opportunity for us to try and experience something new but an opportunity for us to come together as a student body

and unite in our aims."

Throughout the week, RAG ran a stall on Houghton Street, selling 'London School of Alcoholics' and 'RAG me Senseless' tee shirts, as well as RAG themed pint glasses and mugs, Valentines' chocolates and baked goods.

Other activities held throughout the week included a pub quiz in the Tuns, performances of Blake's Doors in the Underground, the Students' Union's Charity Fashion Show and several events pitting various Athletics Union Clubs against each other. Additionally, any students paying off their library fines throughout the week were given the option of donating the payments to charity.

A final event, the RAG & Development Society People Auction, will take place on Monday 27th February, featuring members of the Athletics Union, lecturers and teachers.



Photo: Matt Worby

Anti-discrimination initiative launched

Jack Tindale
Staff Reporter

In responses to growing calls among the LSE student body to oppose discrimination, the Athletics Union (AU) last week launched a 'Team Respect Challenge' aimed at combating homophobia and transphobia on campus as well as promoting a positive attitude towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) rights.

The initiative, launched in collaboration with the LGBT Society, will encourage all individuals within the Athletics Union to make a personal commitment not to discriminate against others on the basis of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.

The pledge will also encourage all members of the Athletics Union to take a position of leadership in fighting discrimination both on and off the pitch. The pledge, available to all stu-

dents on the Students' Union website, is intended as a means of establishing a formal link between the Athletics Union's and the Students' Union's anti-discrimination campaigns.

Alec Webley, an MSc Comparative Politics student and Committee Member of the LGBT Society, informed the Beaver that the pledge should represent "a progressive way for AU members to take a stand against discrimination in light of recent events to prove to everyone that the AU is an open, accepting place for every LSE student."

Webley also presented his personal thanks to Brendon Mycock, President of the Athletics Union, and other members of the Union's Executive Committee, describing them as a "pleasure to work with" and stating that the pledge should mark the beginning of "much more collaboration between the AU and the LGBT Alliance."

The pledge has already received over one hundred sign-ups from members of the Athletics Union's Clubs and Teams. It is hoped that promotion

through the LSE Students' Union and various club mailing lists will encourage a majority of members to sign up before the end of Lent Term.

Pepita Barlow, Club Captain of the Netball Team and Ta third year BSc Economic History student staid that while an opposition to homophobia is already made explicit within the Athletics Union "there is serious groundwork that needs to be done to address the issue of homophobia and transphobia in sport, and so to see the AU make a pledge of respect is an important recognition of this issue."

Barlow also said that owing to her own experience within the Athletics Union, "the pledge's virtue is formal recognition that the AU rightly deserves its reputation as an open and friendly component of the LSE community."

'Out in Sport,' an equitable campaign run via the University College London Union to coincide with LGBT History Month, has already been seen as a success on the Bloomsbury Campus. The campaign there has

focused on challenging homophobia and transphobia as well as increasing the awareness of different sexualities in sport.

In addition to being the year of the Summer Olympics, where a dedicated Pride House will be used to promote LGBT participation in sport, 2012 also represents a number of anniversaries in the history of the movement. Gosling's Swimming Club, the first British sporting organisation to formally support gay and lesbian members, was founded thirty years ago, as were the first Gay Games. The past decade has also seen a vast increase in the number of sports professionals being open about their sexuality, including cricketer Steve Davies and rugby player Gareth Thomas.

It is hoped that the promotion of the respect agenda will serve to improve relations within the Athletics Union, reduce perceived barriers towards coming out and tackle prejudice amongst all members of the Students' Union.

ELECTIONS 2012



NOMINATIONS
13 FEBRUARY / 20 FEBRUARY

VOTING
29 FEBRUARY / 1 MARCH

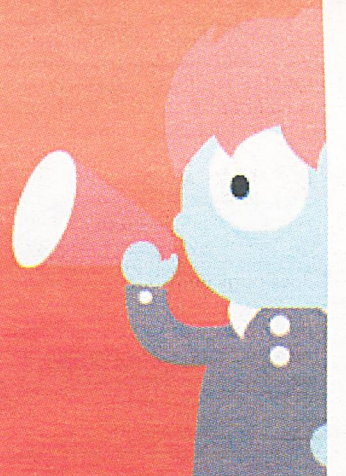
For more information
www.lsesu.com

LSE STUDENTS
UNION
www.lsesu.com

ELECTIONS 2012



ELECTIONS 2012



NOMINATIONS
13 FEBRUARY / 20 FEBRUARY

VOTING
29 FEBRUARY / 1 MARCH

For more information
www.lsesu.com

LSE STUDENTS
UNION
www.lsesu.com

GOT A SCOOP?

Got a story that you think we should be printing? Send us an e-mail: news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Judith Rees addresses ramifications of Woolf report at Union General Meeting

Shu Hang
Staff Reporter

Last Thursday, Judith Rees, Interim Director of the London School of Economics (LSE) addressed the Union General Meeting (UGM) on issues ranging from the Woolf Report to the drop in the number of applicants to the LSE. Despite her presence at the weekly UGM, student attendance remained low.

Rees began her speech with a discussion of the Woolf Report. She acknowledged that "it was not a comfortable read," and that the report highlighted the failures in communication and governance at the LSE.

According to Rees, the LSE Council has "accepted all fees recommendations by the Woolf Report" and is working hard to ensure that they "actually get implemented."

In response to the report, Rees said that the LSE is developing an Ethics Code that is "all-embracing, involving everybody from the students to the government."

The development of the code will involve a consultation group, which the Students' Union will be playing an active role in organising, she added.

"The SU will be leading the discussion with students, and I hope you [the students] will engage in that as it is very important."

Halfway through her speech, Rees

apologised in advance for having a "granny moment" before expressing her disappointment toward a number of students whose "social and political activities have had little regard to the reputation of the School."

She stressed that "LSE is in the eyes of the media," and students should help ensure that it "hits the press for the right reasons."

Rees went on to discuss the drop in applications LSE is seeing for the 2012-2013 school year.

She said she believed that the increase in entry requirements in certain subjects has discouraged "students who wouldn't be accepted anyways" from applying, adding that the biggest fall in applications are seen in those subjects now requiring A* grades (or their equivalent) at A-levels.

Nevertheless, Rees said that the School is "not complacent" and that the conversion rate - the proportion of successful applicants accepting their offer - is being "closely monitored."

Rees then announced that the construction of the Student Service Centre is "back on track" following a delay caused by a block of concrete that had to be broken up, and that the School had acquired an extra 500 student residential places in a hall near King's Cross.

During the question and answer session, Rees talked briefly about Craig Calhoun, the man who will be taking her place as Director of the LSE in September, calling it "a good appoint-

ment."

When asked what piece of advice she would give the future director, she said she would tell him to "listen before you speak."

Rees also mentioned that she hoped her tenure as Interim Director of the LSE has proved that "women can do the job."

After her departure, the Sabbatical and Part-Time Officers briefly updated UGM attendants on their activities over the past week, but not before making generous amounts of donations into Stanley Ellerby-English, Activities and Development Officer's "Gunge-a-Sabb" bucket.

Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union, announced that unpaid internships will no longer be advertised by the LSE Career Service, while Stanley Ellerby-English, the Activities and Development Officer, praised the success of RAG Week. Despite the fact that many students taking to the stage throughout the UGM placed donations in Ellerby-English's "Gunge-a-Sabb" bucket, it was both Peters-Day and Ellerby-English who were gunged on Houghton Street on Friday in support of RAG.

The last item on the agenda was the motion entitled "Freedom of Speech," which called for the Union to "reiterate its unqualified support for the LSE's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech."

Proposed by Noah Howe and seconded by David Landon Cole, the

motion sparked intense debate among the audience members.

According to those opposing the motion, while freedom of speech in the public sphere is important, it should be curtailed on campus to protect vulnerable communities from "misogynistic views" and "racism."

Cole rebutted by arguing that those concerns are already taken into account by the School's policy, and that "we shouldn't say no to someone

just because we disagree with them." He also stressed the importance of freedom of speech in an academic environment.

Certain members of the audience took issue with the motion mentioning John Stuart Mill's 'On Liberty,' saying that the philosopher is known to have made many "racist" remarks.

Owing to time constraints, the debate was adjourned and will be continued at a later date.



Judith Rees | Photo: Matt Worby

Student Higher Education manifesto underway

Sydney Saubestre

In a letter to student's, Judith Rees, Interim Director of the London School of Economics (LSE), affirms that Lord Woolf's Inquiry firstly recommends that "the School establish an 'embedded code dealing with ethics and reputational risk which applies across the institution.'" The LSE Council has established an Ethics Code Consultation Group whose role it will be to "produce the School's first overarching Ethics Code."

The group met for the first time on 3 February and is being led by Dr.

Daleep Mukarji, a lay governor and former Director of Christian Aid, who was elected as the chair. The group wishes to consult students in the process of creating the Ethics Code, as it will have a large impact on the internal dealings of the school at various levels.

The first consultation group was held on 17 April in the Underground, where the drafting of the Ethics code was preliminary discussed by the Sabbatical Officer's of the Students' Union and a few concerned students. The meeting is the first in a series that will look to engage all members of the school community.

"We will only be able to draft a meaningful, workable code if it is drafted with input from the numer-

ous and diverse constituencies that make up our School community," said Rees.

An illustrative draft code as already been drawn up which students can access at a dedicated LSE webpage, which will provide further information on the "consultation process and timetable." The document is merely a template to be used as a starting point for discussion.

Students are encouraged to partake in the consultation process through a series of meetings, the next of which will be a 'Town Hall' meeting held in the Shaw Library on 23 February at 5pm. Additionally, they can email suggestions to ethics@lse.ac.uk. Rees stated "I hope you will join me in supporting the

important work that the consultation group has been asked to perform, and that together we will emerge from an intelligent and good-natured debate with a set of guidelines to help shape our for years to come."

The eleven students and sabbatical officers who attended the meeting on 17 April were largely concerned about how to make a sustainable change and to best ensure that all levels of the student body were actively engaged in the process.

Alex Peters-Day, Students' Union General Secretary, discussed the chance for change through the unprecedented amount of input students were being asked to contribute: "the code that has been sent out is not a draft, just a template. We can write whatever we think an ethics code should be and the school is genuinely listening. There are a number of student consultation groups, everyone will be feeding in, either through the designated sessions or through the dedicated email address."

Peters-Day was one of the many attendants who stressed the need for mass participation in the process. Jack Tindale reiterated the point, asking "for many, it does not seem to be a pressing issue. We need to promote the fact that it's not only the people who are already prominently involved in UGM and student politics." Tindale further suggested "recording the Town Hall meeting and making it widely available."

Alec Webley, candidate for MSC in Comparative Politics, was concerned about the timetable for the approval of the Ethics Code: "there's no discussion of student involvement on the governmental side of the picture. All they seem to promise in terms of involvement is involving us in the discussion, but we need to show

exactly how we are going to take control of the situation. [This way when the Ethics Code reaches] Counsel on 19 June, when students are either occupied with exams or gone for the academic year, they will not be able to dismiss us."

Lukas Slothuus, Community and Welfare Office, agreed with Webley's sentiment, saying that he was worried that "the Ethics Code may be used as an excuse to not properly address various student concerns and once it is established, they will ask students 'why didn't you bring it up in the Ethics Code discussion?'"

Webley suggested that a motion be formulated for the Union General Meeting to take place on week nine, which would "resolve to mandate to reject any ethics code that doesn't involve the [previously decided] requirements, so that there is no way for anyone to implement something during the Summer Term that does not address student concerns as they have been outlined during the student discussion meetings."

Slothuus was concerned about the sustainability of the ethics codes, stating, "we need to think of how we can maintain some sort of influence even in ten years time."

The remainder of the meeting was largely dedicated to various ways to get individual students and societies involved in the drafting process.

The consultation group will present the first LSE Ethics Code for approval at the Academic board on 6 June and to Council on 19 June 2012.

"We have an opportunity here to set a new standard for conduct in Higher Education," said Rees. "An opportunity I hope we will grasp."

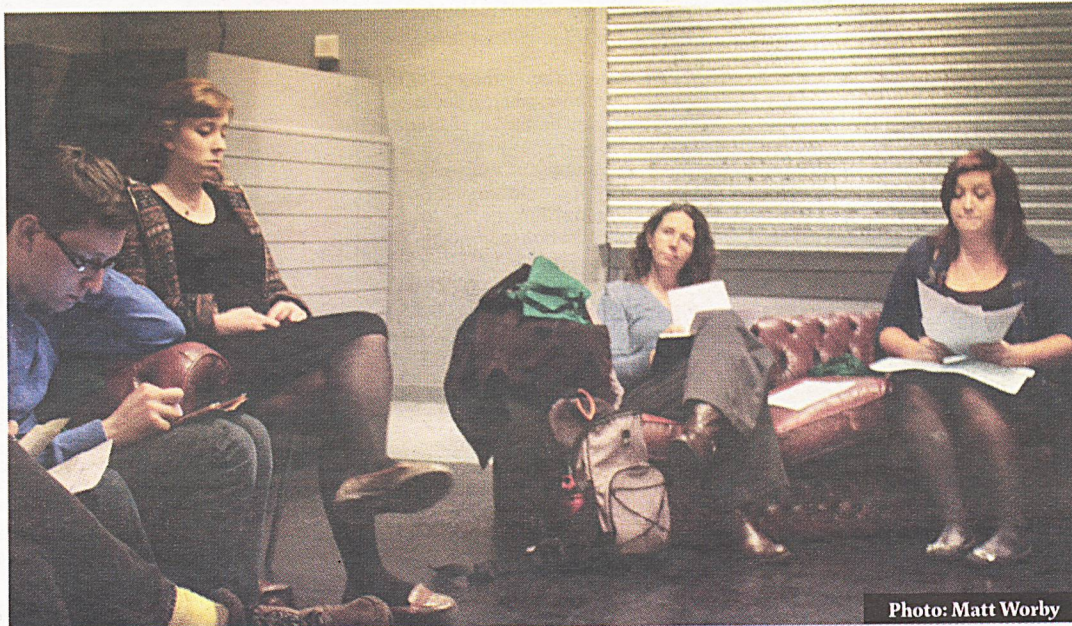


Photo: Matt Worby

European Society celebrates diversity

Emanuela Russo

Last Thursday 16 February, the London School of Economics (LSE) Students' Union's European Society held a potluck dinner featuring food from throughout Europe to celebrate the diversity within the European Union in the Quad. The event was coordinated with the participation of many of the Students' Union's individual European

national societies.

The Italian Society arrived late, but bearing more than four kilograms of pasta. "We came to celebrate the international nature of LSE and allow people to taste this heaven!" said Nicolò Regoli, a member of the society.

Erika Arnold, a member of the German Society, said: "we handmade potato salad, meatballs, pretzels etc... I did not anticipate so many people to be here. I am glad that students are enjoying nice food that is handmade and traditional."

"This event shows that we Europe-

ans are united in diversity," said Maria Melo, a member of the Portuguese Society, while Lottie Boumeester, a member of the Benelux Society, described the event as "a great promotion of EU cohesion."

Georg Krasser, a member of the Austrian Society, revealed that the potluck allowed for "connection [between] all EU students and the food is wonderful."

Pan, from the Bulgarian Society, stated: "it's a great opportunity to get to try some traditional food from all over Europe that I wouldn't otherwise



Photo: Matt Worby

LSE law professor tackles burning issues

Bethany Clarke

Emily Jackson, a professor of law at the London School of Economics (LSE), addressed the issue of assisted death last Thursday 16th February in a lecture entitled 'Right to Die,' a part of the Burning Issues lectures. The lecture featured filmed interviews with several people close to the issue, including Tony Nicklinson, a sufferer of locked-in syndrome, who is currently seeking a ruling from the high court enabling a doctor to end his life without facing murder charges.

Jackson showed the audience that while it is currently illegal to assist in euthanasia in the United Kingdom, the line drawn between the lawful and unlawful practices which could lead to a person's death is not always clear.

As part of the lecture, Jackson also interviewed Keven Fitzpatrick from Not Dead Yet UK, who argued that legalising assisted suicide will pressurise people with conditions such as locked-in syndrome to end

their lives, undermining efforts to improve social support services offered to people with disabilities.

Jackson said she felt that allowing people intimately implicated in the debate to address the audience directly, rather than paraphrasing their arguments herself, meant that their arguments were communicated "much more clearly and forcefully."

The lecture was the second of the three part online 'Burning Issues' lecture series run by the LSE in an attempt to showcase the social sciences to non-academic audiences.

In the first lecture of the series, 'Parasites - enemy of the poor,' Tim Allen of the Department of Anthropology considered the effectiveness of the mass drug administration programmes currently used to combat parasitic infections in the developing world.

Conner Gearty, a professor of Human Rights law and a practicing barrister, will deliver the final lecture of the series, 'The DNA of Human Rights.'

LSE Students' Union hosts unofficial mayoral debate

Liam Brown

Last Thursday, the New Academic Building played host to the London School of Economics (LSE) first London Mayoral debate, as students unofficially represented the four main candidates in a heated exchange of policy and ideas.

The event, which was organised by both the Students' Union, the Debate Society and the Politics Society, drew a crowd of interested students who questioned the speakers on a variety of issues including transport and policing.

Jack Tindale, who represented Ken Livingstone in the event, pointed to the so-called 'Boris Bike' scheme, saying that "Ken Livingstone set up the program, that's unusual, isn't it?" Tindale continued, "Boris [Johnson] is very good at taking credit for other people's ideas."

The Conservative speaker, Maxwell Woodger, representing the Conservative Johnson, cited his environmental record: "Boris has planted over 9500 new trees and has created over 800 new green spaces." Woodger also claimed that Johnson is "the second preference of 58 per cent of Liberal Democrat voters" and that many Green supporters also support Boris Johnson.

Mona Naqvi, the Liberal Democrat speaker representing mayoral hopeful Brian Paddick, emphasised her candidate's record on policing, citing his

experience as a police officer with the Metropolitan Police Service and New Scotland Yard. "Brian has had enough of high levels of crime and poor community policing," said Naqvi. "We need a mayor who can win back public trust in the police."

The Green Party also fielded a speaker on behalf of their candidate, Jenny Jones. Jonathan Buckner focused on publicising the party's candidates in upcoming borough elections, stating that the Greens want to "protect public sector workers" because these job cuts "greatly affect the private sector." Buckner also said that Jones "will defend education and the universal right to free education."

The student representatives were asked what their candidates would do for students, with Woodger claiming transportation and the 'Boris Bike' scheme as especially beneficial to students. Naqvi also cited improved transportation stating that under a Paddick administration, one hour bus and tube tickets will eliminate confusion and over-payment by students.

Jack Tindale said that his candidate, Ken Livingstone, will ensure students are fairly treated by employers and that if elected, "Ken will resolutely oppose the blight of unpaid internships." Buckner also said that student unemployment is too high, stating that the Green Party have proposed "a programme over the next four years of 150,000 new apprenticeships across London" and a plan to ensure that students are paid the London Living Wage.

Gareth Robinson, a second year BSc International Relations student,

said that "all the candidates did well, although I think that the Lib-Dem candidate stood out because she presented herself a lot better. But I was also very impressed by the Green candidate." Robinson continued, saying "I didn't know a lot about the individual poli-

cies before I came, but from this debate I have learned a lot."

General Secretary of the Students' Union, Alex Peters-Day, said she was happy to see such "a unilaterally high standard of debate across the board. It is fantastic to see students engaging

with the issues that affect us as citizens of London."

Peters-Day said she was pleased with how the event turned out, adding that "it was a really great evening and it was nice to see such a high turnout."



Photo: Matt Worby

China Development Forum draws over 400 attendees

Heather Wang and Vincent Wong

In calling China's economic growth "spectacular but unsustainable" in his welcoming speech at the fourth annual China Development Forum last Saturday, Xiaonian Xu, Professor of Economics and Finance at China Europe International Business School, summarised the concerns of many in attendance.

The Forum, entitled 'China's Reform Phase II', aimed to provide a platform for dialogue on prominent policy areas such as financial markets, inequality, demographics, entrepreneurship and social media, as well as topics such as education and the role of China's youth, which are infrequently covered in mainstream Western media. The event, hosted by the London School of Economics (LSE) Students' Union China Development Society in partnership with the LSE Asia Research Centre, saw an attendance of over 400 people, with more than 200 on the waiting list.

Since China's transition to a state-centred development model in the mid-1990s, Xu thinks, there have been few events in its economic development worth mentioning, with the exception of China's entry into the World Trade Organisation in 2001. "China needs a return to Deng," he said, referring to the economic reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping following Mao's death.

The day was divided into a series of panel sessions, each addressing a different policy area.

The issue of deregulation dominated the session on China's financial markets, with the panel in agreement that it would allow for a more efficient allocation of capital than in the current system which favours state-owned enterprises. Richard Urwin, head of Investments at BlackRock's Fiduciary Mandates team, said that deregulation would also allow for a greater variety of financial products and thereby cool down the property market. He was confident that China's financial system would be able to weather the bursting of the property bubble. He also warned

about the difficulty of deregulating. "China needs to find out why deregulation has blown up banking systems, and do it differently," he said.

On the topic of the internationalisation of the Renminbi, Urwin's co-panellist, John-Paul Smith, Global Emerging Market Equity Strategist at Deutsche Bank, cautioned against making predictions.

The urbanisation of the urban-rural income gap was explored in the session on inequality. Arthur Hussain, Director of the LSE Asia Research Centre, stressed the social problems associated with the vast flows of rural migrants into China's cities.

Another issue raised by the panellists was the Hukou system, a resident permit system that has been criticised by many. Martin Whyte, Professor of Sociology at Harvard, described the system as "grossly unfair," as it discriminates against the rural population in important areas such as education and healthcare.

In the session on urban planning, the panellists stressed the need to accommodate migrants sustainably. They entertained the idea of using Singapore as a model. The chair, Jonathan Woetzel, Director of McKinsey & Company's Shanghai branch, suggested that Singapore has been "inadequately portrayed" to urban planners in China. Ricky Burdett, Director of LSE Cities, said that where model cities are concerned, Singapore was "so perfect as to be too perfect" and that it lacked a certain "cityness".

Regarding the challenges of China's demographic change, Professor Hussain and Professor Yang Du, Chief of Division of Labour and Human Capital of Institute of Population and Labour Economics at CASS, disagreed on the extent of the problem of China's aging population. While Hussain emphasised that the government still has time to deal with this issue, Du stressed the need to tackle the challenges now.

The talks in the afternoon were very heated and dynamic as they engaged with some of the most frequently discussed and controversial topics in contemporary China, including entrepreneurship, innovation, new media, censorship and education reform. The



Photo: Yuanpu Xia

audience frequently burst into laughter when Xu spoke with a combination of Chinese and English. Xu is the founder of ZhenFund and the co-founder of New Oriental Group, which with more than 3 million students is the largest provider of private education service in China.

With regard to entrepreneurship, Weiyang Zhang, director of the Centre for Market and Network Economy of Peking University, said success in ventures is not related to education as many of the necessary skills for starting a business are inborn. Lan Xue, Dean of School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University, encouraged the development of entrepreneurial spirits, which he said did not only include starting for-profit

businesses.

The speakers, especially those involved in media, strongly criticised censorship imposed by the government. They also talked about the crucial role played by new forms of social networks notably the very popular Weibo, the Chinese twitter, in the society.

While pointing out the problems in Chinese education, Kato Yoshikazu also expressed his confidence in the reform process, saying that "changes will happen." Yoshikazu is a prominent columnist in China and many Chinese youths consider him an inspirational figure.

The audience showed great eagerness in engaging with the panellists, as numerous questions were raised dur-

ing the question and answer sessions. The questions posed ranged from the future of overseas students to the issue of Chinese youth being too pragmatic.

Chen Luo, Chief Director of the Forum, was pleased to see such interaction, and said that "the passion of the audience members shows how interesting the topics are."

Comments made by the attendees were very positive. "The topics are very relevant and well represent the development and problems in China," said Danette Chan, a first year Law student.

Last year's president of the Society, Wensi Lao commented: "this year is definitely better than last year - there are more perspectives from inside China."

» continued from page 1

students comes from George Washington University, whilst there has been a surge in applications directly from Chinese Universities - partly as a result of the LSE-Peking graduate scheme. Many General Course students apply through the IFSA-Butler programme, whilst a small minority make independent applications.

With regards to extra-curricular activities, Hoffman revealed that General Course students are "highly participative" and "join a high number of societies." Many specific General Course social events are arranged throughout the year and boast a high attendance. A theoretical advantage of General Course students is also that they can make other contributions to university life, through suggesting improvements based upon their experience of US universities; this may range from the level of support students receive, to opening times of the library.

In terms of fees, GC students pay slightly more than other international students. The fees, £15,003 per year, are an important source of revenue for

the school, amassing a total of around £4.6 million a year. The fees do vary; for example, IFSA-Butler applicants pay more, whilst three £7,000 scholar-

ships have been made available by the school to the highest academic performers. However, Hoffman spoke of there being a struggle in the market to

attract General Course students. The prospect of studying for an entire year abroad, combined with the self-selection process that narrows the amount

of applicants down, act as substantial barriers the level of applications each year.

Nonetheless, a consistent number of General Course students make it through each year and the statistics show that their contribution to university life - be it academically, socially or otherwise - is of some importance to the LSE. The General Course programme increases the international brand and appeal of LSE, whilst General Course students are amongst the most active once they become alumni. A further consideration is that General Course students are continuously examined on class participation, attendance and presentations. This is assessed in the form of an American-style grade (A,B,C and so on) that is sent to their home universities, the result of which perhaps sees a higher engagement in class than that of other LSE students.

The most definitive statistic is that exam results are very similar to that of all LSE undergraduates; this perhaps indicates that GC students are able to settle in to LSE life well, while the year-long time span they are given may prove an appropriate one in optimising their results.



Photo: Matt Worby

Sparks Entrepreneurship Conference at LSE

John Armstrong

This weekend, the London School of Economics (LSE) played host to the 2012 Sparks Entrepreneurship Conference which was attended by over 200 delegates, students and budding entrepreneurs from across the UK, US and Europe.

This year's event is the second annual conference organised by the LSE Entrepreneur Society after the great success achieved in 2011. The weekend included a series of talks, workshops and networking events hosted by distinguished entrepreneurs and business leaders.

In his opening speech, Paul Schmelzing of the LSE Entrepreneur Society, said entrepreneurs should have the "passion to create and should be people who oppose stagnation."

Furthermore, Schmelzing went on to say that "we believe innovation and progress do not come naturally." Following Schmelzing's introduction, Rajiv Dokhia, President of the LSE Entrepreneur Society hoped that this years Spark conference would serve as "an inspiration both in life and business" and believed that the event "is another reminder of how to promote growth" within a stagnant economy.

The first talk was given by Stephen Wiener, Founder and CEO of Cine-world, the "first and only" Cinema group to be quoted on the London Stock Exchange. Wiener highlighted the importance of friends within the business community saying, "it always helps to help people" citing his own personal experience in entering the world of entrepreneurship. His engaging and humorous talk captivated the Hong Kong Theatre in Clement House providing not only an insight into his own career, but giving advice to young

entrepreneurs. Wiener said that in order to get far in business and engage with others, "don't be a one trick pony...read the news and understand the wider world". For the Founder and CEO, his advice would be to recognise that the "customer is king. Without them we cannot survive."

These principles were also encouraged by the next speaker, Harvey Jacobson, Executive Chairman of the Jacobson Group. In relation to advice for entrepreneurs, Jacobson said "do your homework." The man behind brands including Gola, Dunlop and Lonsdale was "born into the footwear business" and argues that the biggest change in the future will be the "further growth of e-tailing."

The Sparks conference, which was a two day event also included various workshops by acclaimed entrepreneurs notably Rajeeb Dey, the Founder and CEO of enternships.com, a portal that connects students and graduates

to work placements.

The highlight of the weekend was an insightful speech by Melody Hossaini, Founder of InspireEngage and former contestant of the popular BBC series The Apprentice. Hossaini's social enterprise company, InspireEngage was founded in 2009 and seeks to develop skills among young people through training and also offers a tailored consultancy service. The Iranian-born businesswoman outlined some of the key qualities of an entrepreneur stating, "a good leader creates leaders not follower." In her speech entitled 'How we can change the world', Hossaini talked about developing the "British Dream" and an understanding that our best tool is our own "personal brand."

Other notable speakers included Kris Gopalakrishnan, Co-founder and Chairman of Infosys the "global leader" in IT and consultancy services and Julie Meyer, the Founder of Ariadne Capital and who last week appeared on

BBC Question Time.

The Co-founder of Metro Bank, Anthony Thompson also spoke of entrepreneurship in a "low growth environment", while Asif Rangoonwala, Founder of Powerboat P1 gave a lecture on his own personal experience in starting up a global business. Josh Babarinde, a first year BSc Government student said that the "Sparks conference is a great place for networking and listening to inspirational speakers."

The LSE Entrepreneur society hope to emulate the success of this year's event and according to Dokhia, the Sparks conference will reach "new heights" in the future.

» continued from page 1

tive policies against the prevailing orthodoxy in Westminster.

After calling for renewed capital investment in successful state-owned industries such as Scottish Water, the SNP leader also stated the positive case for supporting and incubating certain sectors of the Scottish economy. The First Minister stated that many firms would benefit in the short term from historically low rates of corporation tax, a high level of university-educated professionals as well as a rebate for the computer entertainment industry.

Indeed, Salmond's referencing of popular franchises, developed and programmed in Dundee and Edinburgh, received laughter and applause from the audience, who seemed surprised at the First Minister's deadpan citation of the "Grand Theft Auto" series.

Salmond also stated that the thriving Scottish Whisky industry, currently worth around £4 billion, would be able to survive the Foreign Secretary's threat that British Embassies would no longer serve the beverage at diplomatic gatherings if Scotland left the Union.

The third and fourth policies focused on the overall state of the national workforce. In addition to the high proportion of university graduates and promoting new national headquarters around the country, Salmond also stated the potential ability for Scotland to promote itself as a hub for transport as English airports groan under high taxation and limited scope for expansion.

Finally, the First Minister promoted a vision for a re-industrialised nation, aimed at re-balancing a long-term decline in Scottish industrial capacity since the 1950s. The First Minister has received criticism from some quarters as to the effects of closing bases for the Royal Navy and RAF, but responded by stating the vast potential revenues of the Scottish oil fields, estimated at over £30 billion, Salmond considered the example of Norway as a nation with the potential to invest in natural resources for the

benefit of the populace.

A lively question and answer session then took place, in which Salmond parried statements from both Independence and Unionist positions alike. In response to a comment regarding his belief in protecting Scotland's natural heritage, the First Minister stated that he considered it quite possible to develop wind and wave generators without spoiling the coastline, albeit tempered with his own view that he considered wind turbines to be "rather charming."

In a response to a query from Professor Simon Hix on the legal position for an independent Scotland joining the European Union, the First Minister defended his view, stating that that Edinburgh would be allowed to join as a sovereign nation, or that both Scotland and Lesser Britain would have to reapply as successor nations to a dissolved partnership. Salmond also defended this view against a comment that the Spanish government would veto Scottish membership on the grounds of containing secessionist tendencies in Catalonia, although this was later queried by Hix.

The First Minister concluded his lecture by presenting the School with a traditional Quaich, a ceremonial pewter vessel used to serve whisky at social gatherings. The Celtic inspired design, bedecked with the Saltire, seemed an apt metaphor for the lecture, aimed at an appeal to national consciousness and mutual respect.

Salmond's lecture was hosted under the auspices of British Government @LSE, a group formed to promote greater discussion of public policy issues at the School. The former Chancellor, Alistair Darling MP, is scheduled to speak on 7th March in what is expected to be a defence of the Pro-Unionist campaign in the forthcoming referendum.

INDIA WEEK

ONE WEEK. ONE NATION. A BILLION PERSPECTIVES.

INAUGURATION CEREMONY

Featuring talks on Filmmaking in India by
Mr Rishi Kapoor and Prof Rachel Dwyer

Monday 20th February 19:00-21:30 in the Old Theatre

CORRUPTION IN INDIA

Debate on the effectiveness of the
Jan Lokpal Bill

Tuesday 21st February 13:00-15:00

MICROFINANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Panel discussion with:
Ms Emille Goodall, Dr Maltrish Ghatak

Wednesday 22nd February

SHIAMAK DAVAR'S BOLLYWOOD DANCE WORKSHOP

Thursday 23rd February
The Underground, LSE

CLOSING CEREMONY

Featuring special act by Arjun, performances,
dinner, and a Bollywood club night

Friday 24th February

'LET'S TALK CRICKET'

Indo-Pak Cricket match
Guest talk by Mr. Ajay Jadeja
Sunday 26th February 20:00-22:00
Lords Cricket Ground, London

FOCUS ON INDIA 2012- PHILANTHROPY IN INDIA

Panel discussion and networking event with
representatives from Accenture, Tata,
AncestralMittal, etc.

Tuesday 21st February 18:00-21:00
Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.03)

FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Talk by Ms. Gita Patel
Wednesday 22nd February
Hong Kong Theatre, LSE

THE INDIAN ECONOMY

Panel discussion with
Mr. Rahul Sharma (Executive Director and Co-founder,
Micromax Mobile),
Mr Madhur Jha (Global Economist, HSBC),
Dr. Danny Quah (Professor of Economics and Kuwait
Professor, LSE), and an Ernst & Young Partner.

Thursday 23rd February 13:00 - 15:00
Sheikh Zayed Theatre, LSE

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

Special Indian food served throughout
the week at the
4th Floor Restaurant, LSE

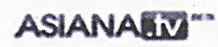
For more information visit our Houghton Street Stalls or contact:

Sheshaya Surtani

Phone: 07585801365

Email: S.K.Surtani@lse.ac.uk

Southall Travel
Reimagining the Travel Experience



LSE Students' Union Energy Conference 2012

Managing the Next Crisis

*Tickets are £10. Buy online at www.energy2012.org.
25th February in the Hong Kong Theatre.*

Confirmed Speakers

Dr Simon Dietz - Co-Director of Grantham Research Institute, LSE

Dieter Krapp - General Manager LNG, CIS & Europe at Shell

Malcolm Grimston - Associate Fellow Energy, Environment & Development Programme, Chatham House

Michael Schuetz - Policy Officer for Indigenous Fossil Fuels at the European Commission

Anna Czajkowska - Clean Energy Policy Analyst at Bloomberg New Energy Finance

Chris Stubbs - Energy Practice Leader at ABB Limited

Dr Aristides Kiprakis - Energy & Power Systems Expert, Edinburgh University

Breakfast & lunch included!

Oil & Gas | Energy Efficiency | Alternative Energy | Climate Change



Scan barcode for details & discount!

The LSE Students' Union
ENERGY SOCIETY

The LSE
Annual
Fund

Bloomberg



Grantham Research Institute on
Climate Change and
the Environment

NISSAN



Image by Aleksandar Rodić

Comment

Somalia: the forsaken “Horn of Africa?”

The world should not succumb to misleading impressions of Somalia's hopelessness



Flickr: expertinfantry

Samira Lindner



Coming across the recent headlines that Somalia's al-Shabab organisation is officially merging with al-Qaeda, I'm sure I wasn't the only one that could not help letting out a big sigh of frustration. Clearly, this is not good news. Put simply, it really seems that Somalia just can't catch a break. There has not been a single functioning and stable central government in Somalia for over two decades. And, with the ensuing problems of rival militant groups, violent conflicts, drought, starvation and piracy, it is unsurprising that many observers have thrown their hands up in resignation. It seems to be the most hopeless place on the planet.

But is that really true? A cursory glance on the issue definitely gives the impression that Somalia is a desolate place with no future. But, actually, there is a lot more going on than a hasty glance reveals.

In order to make this analysis worthwhile, let me give you a quick background to Somalia's present-day troubles. Since the ousting of the dictatorial President Siyad Barré in 1991, the country has been subject to violent factional clashes. Following his overthrow, US soldiers (in collaboration with the UN) arrived to monitor the ceasefire and

deliver aid. However, soon afterwards, some of them were killed in an incident that we all remember from the Hollywood film “Black Hawk Down.” So, both the UN and US troops left, having failed their missions, and a transitional government was not created until 2000. It was replaced by a new government in 2004, which was incapacitated by Islamist militias two years later. Since then, these militias, led by al-Shabab, have taken control of most of southern Somalia, including its capital, Mogadishu, for a while.

As we can see, there is a complete lack of central authority. This has led to another major problem in Somalia: piracy. In the Gulf of Aden, this has become a major threat to international shipping in the area and has prompted the launch of an anti-piracy NATO force in the region. Interestingly, this threat to the profit margins of major Western corporations has been more of a catalyst for action in the past decade than the plight of the Somali people. In 2011 this plight was exacerbated by the worst drought in half a century, leaving millions to starve or flee the country in search of food. Al-Shabab's decision to restrict the access of aid workers into its regions essentially made the areas it controls endless famine zones.

However, there are positive things going on in Somalia. While no central state has managed to restore order, there have been local administrative formations that have tried to distance themselves from the chaos of the south of the country and create their own functioning

government. The prime example that is always cited is the self-declared, independent Republic of Somaliland.

Somaliland has managed to establish a civic life to some extent and has made a positive difference in security and stability, empha-

We see that simple headlines and a cursory glance at the news masks the dynamics and practices that are happening on the ground. Somalia is not a simple case of chaos and doom.”

sising that the erosion of the state does not necessarily have to equal anarchy and chaos. Somalilanders declared themselves independent in 1991 following President Barré's fall. Since then, it has had multi-party elections and established a stable political structure. Many account for this stability by looking at Somaliland's hybrid system of liberal democracy and traditional clan governance - and the fact that its current President happens to be an LSE alumnus, of course.

But not everything is rosy: there

have been some internal problems such as struggles to streamline security forces and potential clan cleavages. But, nevertheless, the sum is positive. Puntland, another autonomous political unit, is a less positive story. Contrary to Somaliland, it advocates a united Somali state and resembles a military dictatorship with severe corruption. It is also home to the Somali pirates. Nevertheless, if we put Puntland aside for now, the case of Somaliland is definitely a source of hope.

Even mainland Somalia is not as bleak and pliable as it seems. First of all, al-Shabab's decision to merge with al-Qaeda is not exactly a surprise. After all, the two groups have long been working together. Instead, we can see the announcement as a result of increased pressure on al-Shabab on its battlefronts. The African Union troops supporting the forces of the UN-backed government have managed to regain control of Mogadishu while forces from Kenya and Ethiopia have pushed the Islamist militias back further.

Also, according to the BBC, al-Shabab's policy of restricting aid workers from its areas may have lost the group some of its popular support. There seems to be some level of scrambling on the part of al-Shabab. Officially associating with al-Qaeda, even for a militant Islamist group like al-Shabab, is a stigmatising decision and can even be seen as a last resort. So perhaps we are actually witnessing the slow descent of al-Shabab.

However, this does not mean

that a successful central government is only a small step away. Firstly, people fear the return of authoritarianism, as under President Barré, so they are hesitant about the idea of a central state. Secondly, although Somalis are very similar linguistically, religiously and ethnically, clan cleavages are still a huge source of conflict. Thirdly, Somalia has often been used as a proxy for its neighbours, especially Ethiopia, which has been accused of conspiring to perpetuate Somali state collapse.

Perhaps the case of Somaliland will enable a new approach toward a future Somali state. Perhaps a centralised state is not the solution. Some have suggested creating a decentralised, federal Somali state using local political units as its federate states. This has obvious advantages, but forcing Somalilanders into a central state will not be easy and may even be counterproductive. I would thus argue that, due to its achievements and experiences, Somaliland should gain international-ly-recognised independence.

We see that simple headlines and a cursory glance at the news masks the dynamics and practices that are happening on the ground. Somalia is not a simple case of chaos and doom. We must give Somalia the time, attention and debate it deserves and not succumb to misleading impressions of hopelessness. ☛

Alcohol reforms doomed to fail

Cameron's new policies are "empty and incomplete"

Harriet

Danby-Platt



David Cameron's recent support for restructuring Britain's alcohol laws has been widely accepted by the majority of the socially-authoritarian right and the anti-big business left as a "good thing." Cameron is right to address calls for measures to constrain the development of a binge-drinking culture, suitably appeasing both sides of the political spectrum in the upcoming election grapple for the "middle ground." Aside from purely politically expedient reasons, the financial and social effects of an alcohol dependent culture demand attention which, even writing as a Labour voter, I can agree went ignored for far too long.

However, whilst a closer governmental look at alcohol dependency in Britain is infinitely positive, it seems that once again the government has only been able to see the responsibility that young people and the poor must accept, and has tailored the measures accordingly. The hardest step of any addiction is admitting it, and the failure to identify the issues related to middle-aged, middle-class drinking is symptomatic of a government who arguably only represents this demographic. As with the banking crisis, the Conservative-led coalition is blinded by its own proximity to the social group which constitutes part of the problem. Therefore, reforms are only ever going to be partially effective.

Don't get me wrong. I know that ridiculously cheap drinks are going to

be bought and drunk more than their more expensive counterparts. I know that excessive drinking in a short period of time will lead to people being excessively drunk. Similarly, I am aware that excessive drunkenness can lead to, in the short term, anti-social behaviour and increased occurrences of rape and domestic violence. It can also have long term health implications. It is not that I believe these problems are any less important than those caused by other forms of alcohol abuse but, in allowing and encouraging the overwhelming focus upon the drinking habits of the poor and young people, the opportunity for a large-scale, top-down reform of the drinking culture in Britain is missed.

The issue of alcohol abuse must be addressed as a two-pronged issue; the largely public drinking of inordinately cheap spirits and the private alcohol abuse found in many middle-class households.

Figures from a 2007 study featured in the Guardian divide alcohol abuse into two categories: hazardous and dangerous drinking. Dangerous drinking, the type at which Cameron's reforms are aimed, is found largely in less affluent northern cities. In Manchester, 8.8 per cent of the population admitted to drinking in excess of 50 units per week for men and 35 for women. However, hazardous drinking, defined as 22-50 units per week for men and between fifteen and 35 for women, is dominated predominantly by affluent southern regions, such as Surrey. The fact that up to 26.4 per cent of the population in such areas engage in hazardous drinking means that this is a serious problem and must be treated as such by the government.

Anne Milton, Cameron's health advisor, has recognised this issue

publicly in a statement to BBC News: "If you think of the health harms of alcohol and those people who are drinking above the recommended guidelines day after day, those aren't necessarily the irresponsible binge drinker. Those are adults making that decision." The £2.7 billion spent by the NHS each year on alcohol-related illnesses includes the impact of hazardous drinking. Likewise, the £17 - £22 billion of wider social costs are not purely confined to the effects of dangerous drinking.

Despite this, there has been no serious attempt to draw public attention to this issue. The main components of Cameron's drinking reforms, mainly the implementation of "drunk tanks" and a minimum price, do not address this equally prevalent issue. Those engaging in hazardous drinking are generally in their homes, away from the drunk tanks, and can afford to buy something a little more upmarket than a 59p bottle; the minimum price will be of little consequence. The government's drinking reforms fail to tackle a significant part of the battle against alcohol abuse. Instead, through the demonisation of the poor and young people, Cameron's social bias towards the interests of the middle-classes is once more apparent.

Even if you ignore the blinkered approach to alcohol abuse, the reforms themselves are criticised as largely ineffective in dealing with "dangerous drinking." The drunk-tanks may be considered highly dangerous as they isolate drunken individuals, making them a danger to themselves. The minimum pricing strategy is also potentially illegal according to EU free market laws. According to the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, "minimum unit pricing is a blunt tool which would fail to ad-

dress the problem of alcohol misuse. As Government ministers acknowledge, it is also probably illegal."

Therefore, the entire drinking policy can be seen as a failed attempt to address a politically expedient issue. The proposals are empty, incomplete and fundamentally focused on the age-old Conservative scapegoats; young people and the poor. There is no significant attempt to deal with the issue of why alcohol abuse is so prevalent. Why do these demographics engage willingly in what is regarded as dangerous drinking? Surely, the fact that such

drinking behaviour is concentrated in poor, nationally neglected Northern towns with high levels of unemployment and an increased chance of being negatively affected by the government cuts must draw certain conclusions.

This entire policy may be seen as a grand, state-led New Year's Resolution which, like many New Year's Resolutions, is doomed to fail because of the inability, and unwillingness, to identify patterns and triggers behind such behaviour, rendering the entire affair a sorely missed opportunity.



Flickr: urbanshoregirl

US cuts seem ideological, not financial

Why state funding cuts to "Planned Parenthood" constitute a systematic attack on women's rights

Elizabeth
Fraser



America's economy is in trouble. Things may be looking up slightly, but unemployment is still at 8.3 per cent while the national debt is the same size as the economy. One trillion dollars worth of austerity measures loom as the USA desperately seeks to create jobs, encourage growth and cut spending. One of the most high profile targets for spending cuts was "Planned Parenthood." The reason there has been so much uproar around this organisation is that it already has a history of dividing public opinion.

For those who support Planned Parenthood, it is a vital service providing some of the most needy and disadvantaged women with access to essential health care including pap smears, HIV/AIDS tests, breast cancer screening and mammogram referrals, as well as providing family planning, including abortion (although this only constitutes 3 per cent of what Planned Parenthood does). As evidence for its indispensability, its supporters point to the fact that one in five American women has used Planned Parenthood. For its opponents, Planned Parenthood unfairly refuses to allow government criticism of its opera-

tions, yet happily accepts government money, which they perceive as enabling people to be irresponsible when it comes to sex. Much of the venom reserved for Planned Parenthood comes from the religious right, which attacks the organisation from a pro-life (or anti-choice) stance. The President of Americans United for Life has described Planned Parenthood as "dealing in death."

Thankfully, legislation to defund Planned Parenthood failed. But this is by no means the end of the affair. The Susan G. Komen Foundation threatened to retract the \$680,000 it provides to Planned Parenthood to enable breast cancer screenings, although this plan was also dropped. Moreover, and perhaps more worryingly, there has been a barrage of legislation both proposed and enacted to limit female reproductive rights and to remove funding from Planned Parenthood. At a federal level, there are no long threats to family planning services' funding, but at a state level organisations like Planned Parenthood are still under attack.

We can see this in the six states that have already prohibited state funding for Planned Parenthood. One of these is New Hampshire, where the executive council cancelled the state's contract with Planned Parenthood, thus depriving it of \$1.8 million. As a result, New Hampshire's six branches of Planned Parenthood are no longer able to dispense contraception. Another such state is Indiana,

which voted to block patients from using Medicaid at Planned Parenthood. About 9,300 Indiana Medicaid patients use Planned Parenthood annually so this legislation could be devastating for low-income women's access to preventative health care,

"By targeting Planned Parenthood in particular, they potentially endanger the lives of women by restricting access to breast cancer screenings, mammogram referrals, pap smears and HIV/AIDS tests."

STD testing and pap smears.

Don't be fooled that these funding cuts have anything to do with fiscal responsibility and the need for austerity. The way in which legislators have targeted Planned Parenthood, alongside scores of other education and health programmes that provide access to reproductive information, contraception and abortion, is in keeping with a larger trend of the socially conservative attacking female reproductive rights. Ohio recently passed three

anti-abortion bills, including one that would criminalise abortions as soon as a fetal heartbeat can be detected, which can be as early on as six weeks of pregnancy. In New Jersey, Governor Chris Christie eliminated all family planning funding from the state budget, and so forced the closure of six centres that provide birth control and health services to uninsured women. Most controversially, Mississippi tried to introduce a "Personhood Amendment," which would define a fertilised egg as a person with full rights.

It horrifies me that state legislatures are launching such a damaging campaign against affordable sexual healthcare for women and trying to prevent them from exercising control over their own fertility. A woman's choice about when to have children should be entirely hers to make but, by limiting access to abortion and contraception by either prohibiting it or making it unaffordable, this flurry of laws relating to reproduction is effectively denying large numbers of women the opportunity to have complete control over their reproductive rights.

Moreover, by targeting Planned Parenthood in particular, they potentially endanger the lives of women by restricting access to breast cancer screenings, mammogram referrals, pap smears and HIV/AIDS tests. The reasons behind this aren't financial; they are ideological. To take New Hampshire as an example, the \$1.8 million funding removed from

Planned Parenthood represents a tiny proportion of the state's \$10.3 billion budget. Moreover, the abortions that Planned Parenthood provides are paid for privately, by the women undergoing them, and so measures passed that limit abortion under the guise of austerity are really aimed at preventing women exercising their right to make choices about if and when to have children.

This systematic attack endangers the rights of women, particularly economically disadvantaged women, to control their fertility. I believe that America, with its long-held liberal values, should reject the draconian calls of the socially conservative right and protect the rights of women.

Thankfully, there is a current of liberal feminism that runs in the upper echelons of the US government to counter these reactionary forces, and I draw some optimism from the federal government's refusal to withdraw funds from Planned Parenthood, and the expected rejection of the "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act," either by the Senate or presidential veto.

Nonetheless, female reproductive rights are very much under attack, and this cannot be allowed. I think Hilary Clinton said it best when she reminded us that "women's rights are human rights." This is a message we should not forget.

The names we choose

Pondering the naming of LSE buildings in light of the School's recent ethics code

Marina Gerner



While walking from the Old Building to the New Academic Building, I could not help but wonder why the LSE is such an exemplary case of an institution that lacks creativity when it comes to naming its buildings.

The resemblance of "Clement House" and "St. Clement's Building" is a source of enduring confusion for Freshers and visitors alike. "Tower One," "Tower Two" and "Tower Three" are obviously three towers, so why not name them something more interesting? Instead of Tower One (shout out to the coffee cart!) we could name it the "Ivory Tower" or the "Tower of Babel." The "Kingsway Building," which looks a bit like the branch of a bank, because that's what it used to be before the LSE acquired it, is actually on Portugal Street as far as I'm aware. The "East Building" probably lies east of the other buildings, if only I had a compass on me.

Those very original names do not make it easier to find your building, but instead add to the confusing layout and idiosyncratic room numbering system we have. Howard Davies once admitted that, after over five years at the LSE, he still regularly got lost on campus.

As we all know, "one does not simply walk through Houghton Street." When trying to find the right lecture theatre, you're inevitably stopped to take a free coffee from

one of the "Big Four," and asked to attend a play or a dance, to eat a Chinese fortune cookie or to attend an alternative investment conference. Covered in flyers and coffee you then arrive at the other end of Houghton Street, only to realize you're at the wrong end.

I guess we are lucky considering the fact that, 40 years ago, Houghton Street was a traffic thoroughway jammed with cars. In 1971, students protested for days and physically blocked the street for hours on two consecutive days for the LSE to make an official submission to the City council to turn Houghton Street into a pedestrian road. We are also lucky that Holborn is not one of the poorest and most dangerous areas of central London anymore, as it used to be in the early twentieth century. The situation was so bad in the past that there were plans to move the university to a green field site in Croydon or to move it to an iconic temple on the South Bank. Luckily, these plans did not transpire. The area kept transforming while the LSE continued to acquire and haphazardly name buildings throughout the last century.

Now here's a naming that makes sense. In 1939, Charlotte Shaw made an endowment towards opening a library where students and staff could browse books of general literature, which is now the Shaw library. Many assume it to be connected with George Bernard Shaw, author, playwright and one of the founders of the LSE, but it's actually called after his missus.

While the LSE was founded in only three rooms, all of which were rented from the Royal Society of Arts, we are now rich in premises. When the LSE was opened in 1895, it had

no building fund or endowment. Instead, the Webb founders used donations from wealthy philanthropists such as Passmore Edwards and Lord Rothschild, as well as government funding to create their university.

Donations from wealthy individuals have since been a source of funding at the LSE. In 2004, the New Academic Building was built with over 65 monetary donations, four of them worth more than one million pounds. The main lecture theatre which has hosted more heads of state than any other in the last few years, is named after Sheikh Zayed, former dictator of the United Arab Emirates who donated £2.5 million to the LSE. Hang on. Did I say dictator? Yes, I did. His research centre is said to have sponsored lectures and publications claiming that the US military had carried out the 9/11

attacks in 2001 and that "Zionists" were responsible for the Holocaust. At the time the lecture theatre was opened, it was greeted with a lot of protest by the LSE Students' Union, but somehow this now seems forgotten. It is surprising that, after all the LSE has been through in the last year, this issue has not come back onto the agenda. Instead, big names in academia and politics continue speaking in the "Sheikh Zayed." If we still have a lecture theatre called Sheikh Zayed, why don't we name our copy shop after Saif Gaddafi?

The question of choosing a name obviously depends on whose money we take. This week, the new ethics code was released by the school. It states that "research funding and philanthropic gifts received by the School must be subject to ethical review by the Director of Research

Division or the Director of ODAR in accordance with the School's policy on the ethical review of inbound funds, and under the auspices of the Ethics (Grants and Donations) Committee." It concludes that "grants and donations from sources that conflict with the School's core values or legal obligations will not be accepted."

In Russian, there is a saying that "the way you name your boat is how it's going to float," similar to the Latin phrase "nomen est omen". Maybe the naming of the lecture theatre should be investigated again under this new code if we are to take the "School's core values" seriously. Obviously, this code of ethics cannot be applied to the lack of creativity in naming our buildings, but naming a lecture theatre after a dictator, who has supported defamations and Holocaust denial, is a different case. ☹



Flickr: mjonline

Take pride in your Students' Union

LSESU's Returning Officer urges us to participate in the upcoming elections

Josh Still



You may be thinking this is another generic article from the Returning Officer about upcoming elections. If you're sensible,

you probably should skip to the next page of your newspaper rather than listening to more musings from an interfering political hack. But if you'll stay with me for just a few more sentences, I want to emphasise just what the LSE Students' Union is supposed to be; a membership-led organisation. The campaigns it runs, the societies and sports clubs available and even the snakebite in the Tuns are all here as a result of students' needs, input and desires. Channels by which students can air their opinions are improving whilst the advent of the assemblies network alongside a new communications strategy have allowed students' voices to be heard, outside of the 1pm-2pm timeslot on a Thursday.

There are political activists at LSE, and it is absolutely right that their voice be heard. LSESU is justly proud of its acquired reputation for being one of the foremost campaigning voices in the student movement. Not all of our campaigns are particu-

larly divisive or Trotskyite either; in the past few years alone, LSE students have run successful campaigns that have significantly benefited the lives of students and staff, such as keeping open the LSE nursery and ensuring that the London Living Wage is paid as a minimum to all at LSE. And it is inconceivable for an organization representing students not to stand up against cuts to education.

Yes, these campaigns and their campaigners have created discord and conducted themselves in the wrong way at times. However, on balance, they are a significant asset to our Union. But given the chances are that they will vote in these elections regardless of the words I deploy in this article, the remainder is not aimed for their consumption. Instead, this is for the students interested in other facets of the Union, those that are all too often overlooked amidst planning for the next demonstration.

Nominations for the elections have now been made. In voting for the future leaders of our Union, you can publicly express your thoughts on what the Union should be in the future. Becoming one of the four Sabbatical Officers, and working full-time for the Union for the year, provides you with the opportunity to participate in the primary decision-making committees at the LSE. Here you can attempt to effect changes ranging from improving

conditions for PGTs and revamping exam timetables to ensuring greater affordability in the Union shop. Part-time positions include the chance to represent, and campaign on behalf of, particular groups of students here at LSE, such as women and the LGBT community, or causes like the environment. Our Union has the capability to attain numerous great achievements, but those that are translated into reality will be determined by those who succeed in these elections. And these candidates will not acquire their position, regardless of how assiduous and inventive their campaign, if their fellow students do not exercise their democratic right and vote for them.

However, representation in our Union can be improved, and its perception must be. The greatest strength the LSE possesses is its diversity; within our 9,000-strong community, there are people from such a broad spectrum of cultures from across the world, speaking a magnitude of different languages, and we have amassed a cornucopia of shared knowledge and experience.

Consider what a wonderful institution we can build if we can use this to its full potential. It would be a travesty if the Union that represents us is allowed to be dominated by one small group amongst so many vibrant communities. Different students will want to accomplish different things, and by using our Union, even if we cannot create a nirvana,

we can go some way towards achieving that, from our sports clubs to our library.

If you have decided to stand for election, of course it can be daunt-

"The greatest strength the LSE possesses is its diversity; within our 9,000-strong community, there are people from such a broad spectrum of cultures from across the world, speaking a magnitude of different languages, and we have amassed a cornucopia of shared knowledge and experience."

ing, but you are not alone. Every student in this prestigious organization is brimming with ability, so you can take confidence in your ideas and your ability to actuate them.

The Union offers a range of support to candidates including free materials for your campaign, and campaigning workshops held on either this Tuesday and Thursday that fully encompass all aspects of campaigning here at LSE. For more details, and if you want have any further questions about running for a position, or the position itself, then I would be delighted to help in whatever way I can if you contact me on su.returningofficer@lse.ac.uk, or I can arrange for you to speak to the relevant current officer.

So, this is the final plea I will make to you about participating at least in some way during these elections. If you're not interested, that's fair enough, as it must be conceded it won't help you get a job at Goldman's. But it may be a chance to improve your university life or, at the very least, escape from the monotony of preparing the latest presentation or problem set.

Above all, if you thought the Union was merely a clique of far-left hippies occupying buildings and throwing fire extinguishers, please think again. It's also your sports team, your educational experience and that pint in the Tuns after finally finishing your assignment. And with your help, the LSE Students' Union could be so much more. ☹

Gender inequality in LSESU societies

Why do men monopolise committee positions in our societies?

Naomi Russell



In a university without any gender inequality with regards to intake, why do men continue to dominate so many roles that are an essential part of university life? Data, painstakingly compiled by Lee Bunce of the Green Party Society, highlights the gender inequality that is present in the committee posi-

tions of LSESU societies. The data is not exact but the pattern is overwhelmingly clear. Men dominate the top roles.

This is not just a one off; for the past three years around 60% of society chairs have been male. Explaining this is not easy. It may be that fewer females are standing for positions within Students' Union societies, a problem in itself, or it may be that students are choosing to elect male chairs. Without the data about the candidates that ran for a position, we can only speculate, but the trend is worrying. The breakdown within societies also seems to

be along gender lines.

Many society chair positions are monopolised by a particular gender. In the past three years there have been no women out there who want to lead the Hedge Fund Society? Or what about the Law Society? And where have the men who want to lead the campaigns of Amnesty International on campus gone? Whilst the data set is small, it seems that a disproportionate number of societies are dominated by a single gender. Perhaps, this year, whilst lamenting the fact that the roles of chair and treasurer are predominantly male, people can take comfort

in the fact that we have plenty of female secretaries. Unless, of course, they agree with me that this seems like blatant gender stereotyping.

The effort that an individual has gone to in order to highlight this level of inequality surely demonstrates the need for increased transparency and monitoring, in order to ensure equal opportunities? Regardless of your opinion, surely increased awareness of any type of inequality is positive.

And, of course, the data merits a call for women to make sure they put themselves forward for the roles you've got to be in it to win it! ☘

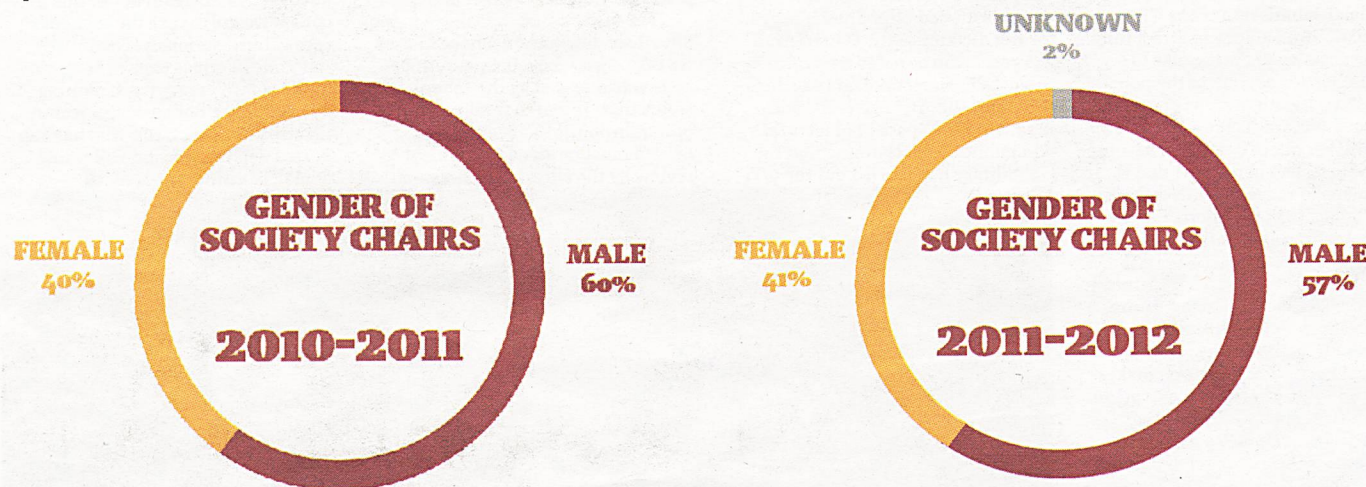


Photo: Beaver Graphics

Want to send us a comment?

Are you outraged by something you've seen in this paper and interested in responding?

You can write about anything, from happenings at LSE, to events further afield.

Contact us by email:

comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Final Comment

Exiting Executive Editor gets some things off his chest

Duncan McKenna



It is a rule within the Beaver, and one that I believe to be both worthy and advisable, that Executive Editor may not write for the Comment section in order to keep the paper neutral and fair. Therefore there are a number of national issues on which I have held my tongue. It is also tradition within the paper that outgoing Editors write a recapitulatory piece to sum up their time at the Beaver. I can't help but feel that to sum up the achievements or failures of the paper for how ever many words would be something akin to narcissistic, and that just doesn't sit with me. And so I've decided, instead, to vent a few political frustrations that have built up this term.

The first lies with a couple of ideas that have stemmed from our Secretary of State for Education. Given that our Coalition has virtually slipped up on its on effluent with the amount it has spewed about austerity, fiscal responsibility and debt reduction, that they would practise what they preach. However, one particular minister took it upon himself to suggest some utterly grandiose wastes of money. The first being that we should buy the Royal Family a new yacht, the potential cost of which has been estimated at around £60m. A new, extra, yacht. For £60m. If we take the average wage in Britain to be around £24,000, then that's around 2,500 averagely paid public sector jobs that the government could be providing instead of, what is essentially, a giant superfluous dinghy for our Royals to play around on. Now, unusually for a someone of

my political persuasion, I take no issue with the Royals. I accept the argument that they bring more to the economy via tourism that they cost the nation in expenses. It is the flagrant hypocrisy of a agent of a government that constantly reiterates the need to save in order to bring our country out of a debt, advocating a colossal waste of money, money that could be far better spent elsewhere, while real families suffer the bite of government spending cuts and a weakened economy.

A second issue that has irked me considerably has been the ongoing saga with the NHS reform bill. The bill, and it's frequently maligned contents, have been batted back by the Lords on multiple occasions and have been multifariously rejected by health professionals, including comprehensive disagreement from the British Medical Association and Royal College of Nurses. The bill has been called 'dangerous' by some but others believe it will reconstitute a jewel in the crown of our nation, and a brilliant health care service. And yet as the governments rolls on with it's incessant desire to reform the NHS, there is a clear wave of public and professional opposition to the bill. This is playing politics with the health and lives of people, and is a truly unacceptable piece of self-service, using the government as a tool of ideology, rather than the betterment of our public good.

I wish to clarify that my grievances with this government are not partisan. I, as I frequently said while in charge of the Beaver, always advocate a 'credit, where credit is due' approach. Irrespective of political association, if a government acts in such a way that it benefits most of the people most of the time, with altruistic rather than ideological motivation, then I'm happy to praise it. Ken Clarke's reforms to individual rights in this country, at-

tempting to piece back together the Habeus Corpus by rolling back at least some elements of the previous Labour government's draconian anti-terror laws, were commendable.

I have always attempted to be fair and balance while at the Beaver, and it would be nice if I felt that our government was doing the same. However, we can, at the Beaver, continue to try to do so, and I hope my successor can. I have been at the Beaver for a long time, and will be sad to leave. I hope my time here will be judged as one in which fairness and equal representation was the driving force, and that people have enjoyed reading it. I wish everyone involved after I leave, all the best for the future. Peace out.

Letter to the Editor

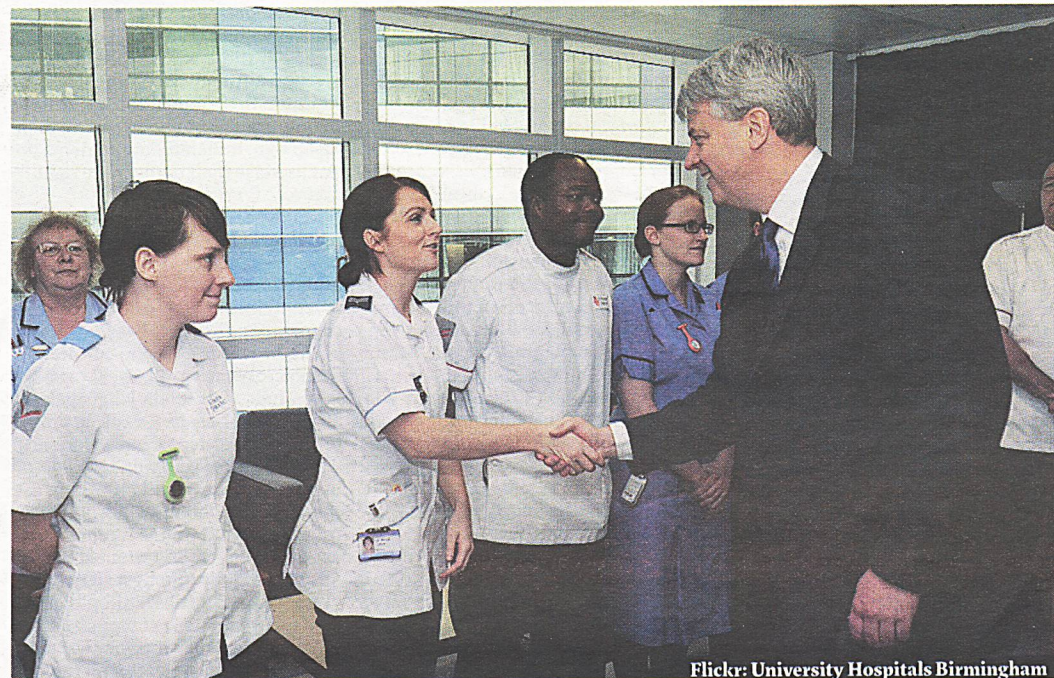
Dear Sir,

I would like to bring to your attention that last week's article regarding the Islamic Society event contained two errors - both the same. The President of the Islamic Society is Nabeel Moosa, that's right, Moosa with an 'a' at the end.

It is pertinent to note here that the aforementioned President was actually quoted a few weeks previously in the Beaver by the same writer, in that instance spelt correctly. Alas, we are but human and life constantly provides us with opportunities to learn.

Therefore I would like to share that Moosa is the arabic equivalent name of Moses - a Prophet in Islam too. Moosa (i.e. Moses) is mentioned 136 times in the Qur'an, significantly more than any other messenger of God. The Qur'an, a must read for everyone!

Yours faithfully,
Nabeel Moosa



Flickr: University Hospitals Birmingham



Hockney | Religion for Atheists | Pina | The Recruiting Officer | Suits |
Burial | A Midsummer Night's Dream | Saul Bellow | Private B

Contact

Part B Editor

Aameer Patel

partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

* * *

Fashion Editor

Louise Kang

partb-fashion@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Film Editor

Venessa Chan

partb-film@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Food Editor

Max Jenkins

partb-food@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Literature Editor

Rachel Holmes

partb-literature@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Music Editor

Ankur Vora

partb-music@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Private B Editor

Jack Tindale

partb-privateb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Theatre Editors

Rory Creedon

Hannah Payne

partb-theatre@thebeaveronline.co.uk

TV Editor

Rasha Al-Dabagh

partb-tv@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Video Games Editor

Hassan Dar

partb-videogames@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Visual Arts Editor

Shyam Desai

partb-visualarts@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Design Editor

Aameer Patel

partb-design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Web Editor

Angie Moneke

partb-web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

* * *

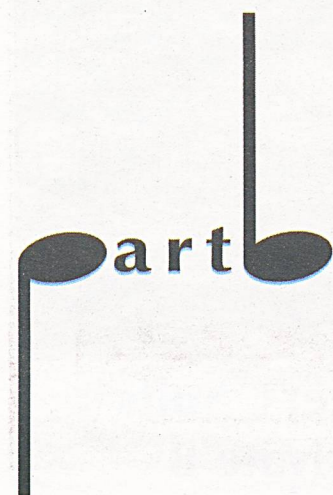
Cover

The Maori, 2012

By Fraser Ward of the

LSESU Visual Arts Society

PartB uses pictures from Flickr that have been issued under a Creative Commons license.



The Recruiting Officer, Donmar Warehouse



Director: Josie Rourke

Playwright: George Farquhar

Key cast: Mackenzie Crook, Mark

Gatiss, Tobias Menzies, Rachel

Stirling, Nancy Carroll

At Donmar Warehouse until

14 April 2012

Over the last 20 years the Donmar Warehouse has become one of the most acclaimed and internationally recognised theatres in London. This was in no small part due to the duo of theatre behemoths that were behind the venue: Sam Mendes (currently working on the new *James Bond* film) and Michael Grandage. With *The Recruiting Officer*, the Donmar welcomes Josie Rourke as artistic director to follow on from this strong lineage. While Grandage ended his reign with a grandiose *Richard II*, Rourke has begun with an elegant and entertaining rendition of an underappreciated play.

A restoration comedy written in 1706, *The Recruiting Officer* follows the plight of Sergeant Kite (Mackenzie Crook) and Captain Plume (Tobias Menzies) in the country town of Shrewsbury, as their elaborate plots to recruit the simple but contented members of this community are met with varying levels of success. Women too are needed, not for battle, but to sate the desires of fatigued soldiers. Boisterous boys, illegitimate children and unwanted love make for a delightfully complicated script, filled with witty dialogue and elegant prose in equal measure.

The staging stuns in its simplicity. Opened up in an effort to make the small space seem larger than it is, the stage consists of wooden planking lit by candle-bearing chandeliers, successfully creating a rural atmosphere. However, Rourke amplifies this initial reaction to the play with the presence of a band of acting musicians, playing the folk music of the period on visibly well-worn instruments, obligatory marching drum included. Composer-in-residence Michael

JOHN PEARSON



Mackenzie Crook as Sergeant Kite

Bruce created a compelling score for these young, highly energetic and incredibly competent musicians, who are ever-present throughout, but thankfully are not over-used, as would be tempting for a less experienced director. Instead, they double-up as the members of a close-knit community.

The inhabitants of the village are led to war through the trickery of the officers enlisting them. This is demonstrated through hilarious yet poignant scenes, such as that of the fortune-teller plot in

which Crook's Sergeant Kite relishes the part-improvised role of gypsy teller who advises his clients to always follow the dark stranger. These scenes demonstrate an informed knowledge of the subject, Farquhar having spent time himself in the town as a recruiting officer. While the maniacal element of such tricks are highlighted to great comic effect, there are those which are simply harrowing, such as that of the bribing of drunkards by slipping a shilling into the pocket as proof of his having "volunteered" to serve the Crown.

This is a perfectly well-rounded play, with a series of stand-out performances from a superb cast, including Mark Gatiss, currently faultless in the eyes of millions as co-creator and star of the BBC's *Sherlock*, who plays a wonderfully foppish and poodle-wigged Captain Brazen. At the Donmar, Rourke has found a good home for her talents, and this shines through in this playful yet poignant opening offering to London theatregoers.

↳ Pip Willett

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Lyric Hammersmith



Director: Sean Holmes

Playwright: William Shakespeare

Key cast: Jonathan Broadbent, Ed

Gaughan, John Lightbody, Simon

Manyonda, Poppy Miller,

Victoria Moseley, Ferdy Roberts,

Rebecca Scroggs

At Lyric Hammersmith until 17

March 2012

This abridged take on the ever popular *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by the theatre collective Filter revels in its own anarchy. Full of surprises, modern references and musical interludes, it isn't your typical Shakespeare. The production makes this well-known comedy feel completely fresh while still feeling true to the story and the bard himself.

Ed Gaughan as Peter Quince kicks things off with an introduction that is more like stand-up than Shakespeare. With warnings of disappointment, a comparison to *The Matrix* and hints of the exciting presence of a certain Oscar-winning actor in the role of Bottom, the tone is set nicely, although not everything goes to plan.

Once we get stuck into the story the text is interspersed with original and modern jokes as well as regular music and sound effects. Despite these interruptions, great relish is taken in delivering the verse itself. It is not overpowered by the alternative staging, nor is any meaning changed, but rather treated with a degree of reverence such that the production in all its glory and eccentricity could still be nothing but Shakespeare.

KEITH PATTERSON



Ed Gaughan as Peter Quince

The music and sound provided by the London Snorkelling Team is a great addition. In fact, it is this as much as the script that guides us through the familiar tale, with the forest, hoards of fairies and infamous donkey-based magic all heard rather than seen. Sound effects are perfectly synced to the actions of Puck, particularly memorable is his playing with the quarrelling Lysander (John Lightbody) and Demetrius (Simon Manyonda) as competitors in a virtual game of pong. The onstage band delve into the world of well-known and somewhat cheesy songs while the actors throw themselves wholeheartedly into

the very same, and Quince declares that such behaviour shows that their years at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) were clearly a waste.

Jonathan Broadbent's Oberon is both well played and hysterical. Laughter is inescapable as he skips on clad in a superhero costume complete with winged shoes, cape and the proclamation in singsong fashion of his title as the fairy king. The costume is somewhat apt for this great portrayal of a hapless, juvenile and, in this case, asthmatic king. The role of Puck (Ferdy Roberts) is similarly transformed, as a tattooed roadie he crashes on and off stage

through walls doing Oberon's bidding and then watches on, beer in hand, as the results of his misplaced magic play out. While these two stand out, there are also excellent performances from the four young lovers and Poppy Miller's Titania is suitably haughty.

Verging on madness at points – notably that of a quite significant food fight – this unorthodox piece is something of a pleasant surprise. While a purist is unlikely to enjoy it, for the rest of us looking at the *Dream* with such fresh eyes is, quite simply, a comic delight.

↳ Hannah Payne

David Hockney RA: A Bigger Picture



David Hockney, *Winter Timber*, 2009

Hockney's new exhibition paints the Yorkshire landscape with a mystical vibrancy, and yet the saturated layout of the Royal Academy does everything in its power to counteract the elegance of his mature style.

There is something oddly nauseating about entering through the gift shop, and amid the flurry of activity witnessing the frenzied faces of people pushing past each other towards the tills to buy postcards by the kilogram. In Jerusalem, Jesus banished the money changers from temple; one is forced to wonder if the Royal Academy requires some kind of messianic intervention to prevent the rooms the paintings hang from becoming houses of merchandise.

Crossing the threshold into the magnificent rotunda that is the first room of the exhibition provides a welcome relief. Four large paintings depict the seasonal changes of three trees in the village of Thixendale. It is an apt aperitif for the rest of the show, which continues to explore the transition of the Yorkshire landscape through

the year, and Hockney's evolution of style that was prompted by his return to England in the mid-nineties as his mother's health ailed.

The second room of the exhibition seeks to provide a context for Hockney's return to landscape painting, and his move away from the provocative images he painted in the sixties of boys slipping through the cerulean water of Californian swimming pools. The room has an almost apologetic tone, as though the works were scavenged and displayed for whatever tenuous link they may have to the present collection on display.

A momentary glance at the first painting of the Thixendale trees in the rotunda from the distance of the adjoining second room transforms its appearance. The rectilinear rami multiply with precision as they fork into the top of the canvas; what seem like crude brush strokes from within the crowded first room take on a new air of refined elegance from afar.

The largest room of the exhibition is dedicated to a collection of 51

drawings created on an iPad. Hockney's commitment to continuing his experimentation with technology is admirable; over the course of the seventy four years of his life, he has experimented with a variety of media, and produced work using anything from Polaroid photographs to faxes.

Speaking in an interview before the opening of *A Bigger Picture*, he remarked that it took him some time to see that the iPad is "a very serious medium." The portability and immediacy of the gadget allowed him to work at an immense speed to chronicle the arrival of spring in the Yorkshire Wolds. As intriguing as the narrative is, 51 repetitions of such similar scenes only serve to highlight the flatness of the digital images in comparison to his paintings.

What they do well in showing is Hockney's meticulous exploration of the technical aspects of painting from observation. His 2001 publication *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters* contextualises his conscious rejection

of the influence of the camera on observational study.

The progression of the exhibition also marks a remarkable change in Hockney's style. The familiar motifs of trees take on unfamiliar, bold colours that could have been borrowed from André Derain's Fauvist palette. The techniques employed in his earlier works, pointillist dotting evocative of Seurat and short, and intensely coloured strokes reminiscent of Van Gogh, are amplified in these compositions.

These works form the core of the exhibition, and have divided the opinion of critics since their unveiling. Some have argued that the tentacle-like appendages of *The Big Hawthorn* look as though they have been painted under the influence of a magic herb, that the flatter compositions are discordant and garish. Others have applauded Hockney's newest reinvention for their imaginative flair.

What is certain is that the show has been in greater demand than the Royal Academy's Van Gogh retrospective two

years ago. The flagship piece of the exhibition is *Winter Timber* (2009). We are reminded of Hockney's wealth of experience designing sets for the opera; the row of blue trees that lines the path curves in dramatically, culminating in a ball of twisted branches. The piece flirts with the idea of death and destruction that can be seen as the catalyst for this recent streak of productivity.

Crowds will undoubtedly continue to flock to the exhibition, and will continue to revel at the grandeur of the new works. Yorkshire's tourist trade will swell as enthusiasts walk, like pilgrims, on "Hockney's Trail." Yet the show does not come close to realising its potential, it butchers the work on display. When Hockney agreed to undertake the gargantuan project, I doubt he envisaged his work being used as wallpaper in the grand rooms of the Royal Academy.

↳ Shyam Desai

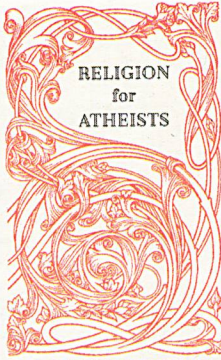
David Hockney RA: A Bigger Picture is at the Royal Academy of Arts until 9 April 2012



David Hockney, *Woldgate Woods*, 21, 23 and 29 November 2006

Religion for Atheists by Alain de Botton

Alain de Botton begins his new book *Religion for Atheists* with a bang: "The most boring and unproductive question one can ask of any religion is whether not it is true... of course no religions are true in any God-given sense." This may seem to be shaping up like another Dawkinsian screed against believers, but de Botton quickly differentiates himself from the well-known crusaders of New Atheism. Despite being a committed



ALAIN DE BOTTON

(how we lack perspective on our ultimate smallness, for example), discusses how religions have successfully dealt with the issue (by centering themselves on something much greater than ourselves), and then proposes a religion-inspired solution for the secular world (in the case of perspective, this consists of "insisting that a large percentage of all prominently positioned television screens" display images of outer space).

As you might imagine from this example, the suggestions themselves are a bit slipshod - one gets the feeling that de Botton is throwing paint at the wall without thinking about what has the feasibility to stick. To be sure, some of the suggestions are charmingly inventive and would be refreshing (if quirky) additions to the modern world, such as dinners with strangers based on set lists of discussion topics, a digital "wailing wall" in large cities that displays people's insecurities and problems writ large, and a day each year to ritually air all our grievances to others.

Others, however, are considerably less wise. He proposes abolishing university history and literature departments in favor of the "Department for Relationships" and "Institute for Self-Knowledge," and grouping art in museums solely towards "concerns of our souls" rather than periods, stylistic themes or artists. Indeed, the idea of ever learning anything for purposes other than to nurture the soul seems anathema to de Botton (he also suggests that we emphasise sermons instead of lectures), and this is a major liability of the work. It is certainly nice to explore art and history in ways that lend themselves towards informing our daily lives, but it is also important to learn without the nebulous cotton candy sentimentality this tends to engender.

Some ideas are simply bizarre - for example, psychoanalytically attuned travel agents that help us decide where to travel based on our emotional state. Another section consists of a strange exhortation of major corporations like BMW and Armani to found liberal arts colleges, political parties and therapy units (so much for the idea of a core competency).

More so than the uneven quality of his suggestions, *Religion for Atheists* suffers from three major problems. First, it deeply overestimates the effectiveness of religion. De Botton describes religious

traditions and the effects they have on believers in with laudable insight, but rarely stops to ask whether these traditions actually work in practice. Take reconciliation - a Christian sacrament in which one confesses sins to a priest and is then ritually cleansed. De Botton waxes poetic on the beneficial effects of ritual purification on believers.

However, as far as I can recall from the haze of my childhood, people unhappily went to confession about once a year due to a feeling of obligation, confessed a few superficial sins to a priest, said a couple of Hail Marys, then left (vaguely dissatisfied) and proceeded to commit the same sins over the course of the next few days.

Second, de Botton seems to view religions in stark, dualistic terms - a set of ridiculous, undesirable beliefs coupled with incredibly effective, desirable practices and institutions that the secular world would do well to appropriate. This underlying dualism prevents de Botton from seeing the downsides of religious traditions - he tends to assume they do not work just because they are coupled to bad ideas. This of course is not the case. Many religious traditions are dying because they are archaic and unfit for the modern world, not just because they are tied to belief in God. De Botton fails to realise that not only do religious institutions need to be borrowed from, they need to be radically modernised.

Finally, he does not consider that secular culture may not be able to simply insert the good parts of religions into its pre-existing structure. He respectfully points out early in the book that believers might take offense with his picking and choosing the best parts of religion, treating it as something of an intellectual buffet. The more important question, however, is whether religious can be picked and chosen from in the first place. Is it possible to separate the best bits of religion from the more unsavory parts?

Although we might have a sore need for sermons in the modern world, can we value sermons and still have an overriding respect for scepticism and the scientific method? Is it possible to be an atheist and still appreciate constant reminders of one's insignificance, or would that simply lead to unfathomable nihilism? Before considering how we might best apply religious traditions to the secular world, we would do well



Alain de Botton in 2009

to ask whether such traditions can be severed from religion in the first place. In the end, I found myself liking the idea of *Religion for Atheists* more than the reality. There is a sore need for atheists who can discuss the legacy of religion in calm terms and explore to what extent various religious practices tangibly improve life on Earth. De Botton importantly fulfills this role.

But the discussion needs to be more intellectually rigorous than the vanilla armchair philosophy that he ultimately offers. While there is little in *Religion for Atheists* that will improve the modern world, in advancing the discussion past the once exciting but now stagnant charges of irrationality, de Botton has perhaps laid the groundwork for precisely that to happen.

↳ Edward Larkin

Religion for Atheists (2012), Alain de Botton, Hamish Hamilton, Hardback, £18.99

Humboldt's Gift by Saul Bellow

As a Nobel laureate who has also achieved the Pulitzer Prize and the National Medal of Arts, and as the only writer in history to win the National Book Award three times, Saul Bellow possesses the type of literary prestige that should make anyone blink. Among his most celebrated works ranks *Humboldt's Gift* (1975), as a novel responsible for some of Bellow's success, and the Pulitzer Prize in particular.

Originally intended as a short story, the self-described "comic book about death" is a roman à clef inspired by Bellow's friendship with the poet Delmore Schwartz (1913-1966). After early success, Schwartz withdrew into mental illness and alcoholism at the Columbia Hotel in New York. Despite receiving earlier praise from literary giants such as T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound, when Schwartz suffered a fatal heart attack in July 1966, his body lay unidentified at the

local morgue for two days. Schwartz's character is resurrected in Bellow's invention Von Humboldt Fleisher, a writer of exceptional genius who nonetheless fades into obscurity, eventually dying a failure.

The narrator, Charlie Citrine, is similarly surmised to reflect to some degree, Bellow himself. He is a successful writer, aware of the mediocrity of his works but nonetheless haunted by a vision of greatness, expressing the legitimate if passive talent upon which his friendship with Humboldt is founded.

The power dynamics between the two writers make for interesting reading, and reflects Citrine's own creative struggle between absolute abandonment to greatness, versus societal acceptance and accompanying commercialism. One of Citrine's best received and most financially fruitful works is a Broadway play and eventually a film, based quite ironically, on

Humboldt. Yet with Citrine's growing success his relationship with his friend and mentor deteriorates. Driven mad by jealousy or sincere disgust, Humboldt disowns him as a traitor.

The characters are assembled in great detail, they drive and give the novel compelling depth, from which Bellow explores the changing status and nature of art in a materialist America. *Humboldt's Gift* has been understood by some as a commentary on the commodification of culture. Elsewhere, on e-zines some readers complain that the novel is not event-orientated enough, and rambles. The novel is very wordy and crammed full of Bellow's spiritual musings, often detached from current action. For some it may not be particularly enjoyable - it is definitely slow going. Nonetheless, it is important, interesting and enlightening, particularly for anyone with any interest in the arts. For others, it may be brilliant all the same.

↳ Rachel Holmes

Humboldt's Gift (2007), Saul Bellow, Penguin Classics, Paperback, £12

V-Day LSESU and
LSE Drama Society
28 February 8:30pm
29 February 6:30pm
Only £3 on Houghton Street

Perspective: The Beauty of "Flim"

This past week a funny jpeg made the rounds. It was a screenshot of an old Facebook post from the wildly popular dubstep producer Skrillex. He linked to a YouTube of Aphex Twin's "Flim" and called it his "favorite song of all time." Below the post, there are responses from his fans that say, "I was hoping for a drop," and, "that track is waaaaay too light to be my face [sic] song." The responses were edited down from hundreds of comments, many of which had Skrillex fans mirroring his praise of the tune. But the reason why it's funny, and why it's been passed around so much, is clear: These bass fiends have no ear for electronic music genius. They just want that drop.

For me, a fun thing about this image was seeing Skrillex's initial post about his favourite song of all time and thinking, "Hey, it's mine, too." I wrote an article once about what I consider perfect songs, and one of them was "Flim." I've played it regularly for years

and always marvel at how perfectly and carefully it's constructed, not a single snare hit or cymbal brush wasted. It has that brilliantly simple Satie-like piano melody, the kind designed to turn your insides into mush, which is something Richard D. James had already mastered completely by "Xtal," the first song on his first album. But the most interesting stuff in "Flim" is happening elsewhere.

I've written about my admiration of the track's drum programming, how each little pause, hesitation, and stutter is so perfectly placed, and how the drums plant ideas in my head about innocence, awkwardness, burgeoning confidence, and growth. I'm projecting pretty heavily there, but Aphex Twin makes the drums feel, and he knows exactly what to do with the bass that goes with it. There is bass in "Flim," and its role in the track is key, even if it never overwhelms the space; it supports the drums and engages in a dialog with them, but the approach is subtle

and precise and intimate, a whispered conversation instead of a shout across the rooftops.

Someone on YouTube has slowed down "Flim." At least one person created a dubstep remix of the song in response to the Skrillex Facebook post, but it has since been removed. More of these will follow. And some people will even like the drop version better. Their ears may work differently from mine, but they are not wrong. Meanwhile, I put on my "accurate" headphones and turn up "Flim" as loud as I can bear, and I picture myself sitting across from Richard James in his bedroom as he works over this material on his computer. It's an illusion, of course, but I like to imagine that I'm hearing what James was hearing right at that moment, that the glass between us is completely transparent. And maybe that's what Skrillex hears, too, even if some of his fans couldn't.

↳ Mark Richardson



Skrillex
my fav song of all time fyi <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z560iPR4r2s>

Aphex Twin - Flim
www.youtube.com
Aphex Twin - Flim Come to Daddy EP Track 2 1997

Abraham Parra I was hoping for a drop..
December 24, 2011 at 5:11am · Like · 👍 1

Adrian Josef Pakula Still waiting for the drop.....no?
December 3, 2011 at 1:56pm · Like · 👍 2

William Gampel I was waiting for a drop that never happnd lol
December 3, 2011 at 7:06pm · Like · 👍 7

Cameron Mittelstaedt i didnt even here a nice dropi thought it was suppose to have atleast a good drop?????
December 3, 2011 at 4:04pm · Like

Taavi Kuusisto where is the drop?
December 3, 2011 at 10:42pm · Like

Tuan Sy Dau Wheres the wubs and the dubs and the bass? Skrillex put me down for once.....
December 18, 2011 at 10:37am · Like

Burial – Kindred EP



Scheduled to be released last year, but held up by production issues, *Kindred* is the latest teaser from Burial. While not a full album of material, indeed, *Kindred* seems less than in a hurry to come out with another full length, *Kindred*'s three tracks, which are longer and denser, take up almost 30 minutes of run time, and, in fact, show a new side to his sound, while still retaining the "Burial" trademarks. While pitch-shifted vocal samples still play a role in Burial's world, they are not the focus here, simply becoming another element in the mix. What is most striking about these tracks, aside from their length (two tracks edge the 12 minutes mark while one is almost 8 minutes), is the density and pure weight of what is going on. Burial's previous work was all about atmosphere, while here, the tracks become all about texture.

Lead and title track "Kindred" is the most "Burial" sounding of the three, retaining the trademark kick and block drum sound, but instead of it being in the front of the mix, it is pushed far in the back, letting the ominously brutal bass line take over, haunting wafts of

choral synths hovering in the distance, the vocal sample insistent and choked up. Over the 11+ minutes, Burial brings in an almost symphonic attention to detail and pacing. In fact, the three tracks together almost make up a symphony in their pacing and structure. "Kindred" begins in standard Burial style with angelic synths and blocky beats before the grime and ash take over, the buzzing bass line smearing its gloom over the beats. There is a muscularity here that has been heretofore unseen, instead of feeling like a passive listener, travelling silently through urban streets, you feel like your feet are on the pavement, the danger around you, the clipped vocal samples are either the passers-by or the voices in your head. Again, Burial is a master at letting pauses and silences speak volumes. The final movement of the track breaks through the grime and darkness, a lighter synth pattern emerges alongside a more ethereal vocal sample.

Probably most shocking on *Kindred* is Burial moving on from his trademarked beat plan. Second track "Loner" is akin to Dylan going electric when

Bevan moves the track up to 130 BPM. There is a bit of a fake out at first, with the opening bars featuring an almost Eno-esque ambient quality, before Bevan shoves an almost house beat in the mix. The track is quite subtle. Echoing vocal samples, which recall some of the vocals from This Mortal Coil's first record, burst in an out of a dense fog of atmospheric effects, arpeggiated synths rising and falling against a throbbing bass pulse. The drums dropping out occasionally, letting the other layers swirl around until jacking the beats back up again. It is the kind of track that definitely "sounds" like Burial but is also completely unlike him.

But nothing quite prepares you for the tour de force that is the final track, "Ashtray Wasp." Over more than eleven and a half minutes, the track takes the listener on a chaotic journey, from fear, danger and loneliness, to a final sense of calm. He trades his blocky beats for a steam pulse with the vocal samples striking a gorgeous chord over the swirling mass of synths. The mid section of the track getting more agitated, the samples becoming more clipped and ambigu-

ous, with Burial even drawing attention back to his work on *Untrue* with what sounds like a synth sample from that epic work, until the track rights itself again back into the swirling mist. Just when you think the track will continue in slight variations on this theme, the track basically drops out completely and morphs into a delicate piano based number with overlying clipped vocal samples that keep the track askew and haunting. What begins as a trip through hell becomes an arrival in bliss.

Kindred is an amazing continuation of the art that Burial makes. Instead of minute changes, he is going full out with pushing his sound to greater and more deeper meaning. These three tracks stay with you for hours, their pulse and haunting melodies lingering in the blood stream. In the 24 hours I have been listening to this record, my hand keeps reaching back to press repeat. Once these tracks have been ingrained in your body, there is no way to resist their pull.

↳ Russell Beets

This week's live highlights

21 Feb: **Kurt Vile** – KOKO

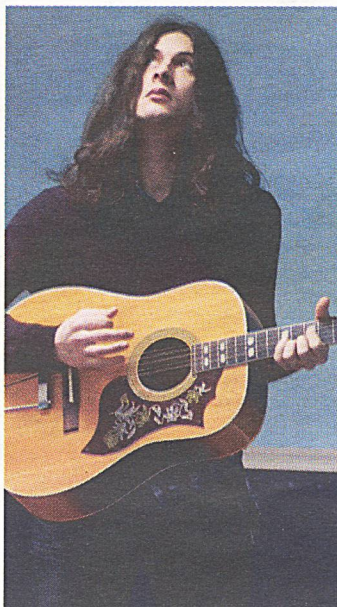
22/23/24/25 Feb: **Tindersticks** – Soho Theatre

23 Feb: **Kaiser Chiefs** – HMV Hammersmith

25 Feb: **Mylo (with Lindstrøm)** – Scala

25 Feb: **Tycho** – Cargo

25 Feb: **Two Door Cinema Club** – O2 Brixton



Kurt Vile, Live in New York

PartBeat

The office playlist this week...

Freeway

Kurt Vile: *Constant Hitmaker* (2008)

Blister in the Sun

Violent Femmes: *Violent Femmes* (1982)

Long Distance Call

Phoenix: *It's Never Been Like That* (2006)

Shutterbugg (feat. Cutty)

Big Boi: *Sir Luscious Left Foot – The Son of Chico Dusty* (2010)

Here Comes Your Man

Pixies: *Doolittle* (1989)



Subscribe to the PartB playlist:
www.partbonline.co.uk/spotify



Follow us: @partbmusic

The Other Cinema: Brief Encounter

●●●●○
Director: David Lean
Screenplay: Noël Coward
Key cast: Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard, Stanley Holloway, Joyce Carey
Year: 1945
Runtime: 86 minutes
Presented at The Troxy from 14 February to 18 February 2012

There was a convivial buzz around The Troxy tonight, in contrast to the rest of the slightly drab Commercial Street. People in lines chatted as they waited to verify their place on the guest list. I was glad to get away from the cold wind after the commissionaire found my name, and once inside the sumptuously art deco lobby it was clear how much thought went into the event.

Lily Farthing and her Mechanical Flower greeted us while usherettes with coiffed hair in charming uniforms fluttered about, flashing coquettish smiles. A grander occasion than the usual Odeon fare – suggested attire was black tie – all the ladies and gentlemen in evening gowns and dinner jackets were complemented by a seductively lit interior. While others took their seats at the round tables, Benoit Viellefon & His Orchestra provided some stylishly nostalgic jazz accompaniment. At this point, The Other Cinema seemed more a variety show than a film screening. There was a sing-a-long followed by a quaint little farce performed by the commissionaires and usherettes. The Lady Greys then gave us some hilariously terrible burlesque dancing and a glamorous Lili La Scala sang songs from the era of Gracie Fields and Vera Lynn, both of whom had treaded the

same stage. Approximately an hour after settling into our seats, the lights were finally dimmed for the best and final collaboration between David Lean and Noël Coward.

Brief Encounter is a superbly fitting choice for the inauguration of The Other Cinema. A classic in every aspect, the quintessentially British film is perfect for this occasion of throwback cinema. Laura Jesson (Celia Johnson) is a middle-class housewife who leads a dull but content life with husband Fred (Cyril Raymond). She travels to Milford every Thursday to shop and go to the pictures. She meets Dr Alec Harvey (Trevor Howard) by chance when he removes a piece of grit in her eye in the refreshment room of Milford Junction Station. An affair ensues.

The fate of the lovers is made known immediately, but its emotional potency is intensified by subsequent flashbacks before a final crushing blow is dealt in the denouement. Laura and Alec meet every Thursday and go rowing on the lake, driving in the country, and to the cinema. These colourful outings starkly contrast with Laura's domestic life where Fred favourite leisure activity is The Times's crossword. The two are undoubtedly in love yet their mad longing is constrained by an inherent sense of propriety. Their furtively stolen moments of intimacy are shrouded in shadows and claustrophobically captured by Robert Krasker. Lean and Coward owe much of Laura's characterisation to Celia Johnson. No one else can match her sincerity and heart-breaking anguish. The pain is obvious as Johnson's soulful eyes stare in horror at the abyss her hopes and dreams have disappeared into. Laura and Alec's

CHARLES THOMPSON: THE OTHER CINEMA



Actors playing the fated couple of *Brief Encounter* at The Other Cinema

instinctive feelings for each other are smothered by the artificial constructs of society, a distinct tragedy of the human condition still relevant today.

The Troxy was briefly restored to its former picture palace glory by The Other Cinema to rediscover the sense of community and mutual affinity cinema brings, and what an experience indeed. The wit of Noël Coward's script

is brought to life as laughter erupted from every corner. The poignant clamour of every train to Churley reverberated throughout the theatre. We even had our own Laura and Alec who made a dramatic descent from the staircases on opposite sides of the dress circle to take their seats at a special reserved table before the stage. There was an equally dramatic separation under

strobe lights and the violent roar of a train. To round off a fantastic night, couples made their way to the dance floor to celebrate their happiness in lieu of the fated lovers. My first viewing of *Brief Encounter* seems terribly boring in comparison to this spectacle – the music, the dance, the drama – which was truly captivating cinema.

↳ Venessa Chan

Pina

●●●●○
Director: Wim Wenders
Screenplay: Wim Wenders
Key cast: Pina Bausch, Regina Advento, Malou Airaud
Year: 2011
Runtime: 103 minutes
Screening as part of The Tricycle Theatre's international Oscar season, until 23 February 2012

If this film were to be described in a few words it would simple: truly inspiring and deeply emotional. *Pina* is a documentary about the eponymous director of the Tanztheater Wuppertal – Pina Bausch – and her unique and highly-acclaimed style of dance. Bausch's dance was praised for its modernism and experimental qualities.

The film kicks off with a performance in a theatre. There are many people, large and abrupt movements, over a stage covered in soil accompanied by loud and hectic music. At first, it made me feel uncomfortable, but it was then all put into context with Pina's comment: "Some situations leave you speechless and this is when dance comes in. It is not necessary to be said or named. It just hints at an emotion." The dancers were requested to express their yearnings and emotions, in order to create the most naked, truthful, and thus gripping performances.

Throughout the film we see extracts from Bausch's theatre pieces, including *Le sacre du printemps*, *Kontakthof*, *Café Müller* and *Vollmond*. Wenders manages to neatly weave in other performances in everyday locations as well as interviews with her fellow dancers and video excerpts of Bausch at work. The outside locations range from a sidewalk, woods and a lake to a gravel pit with dancers usually wearing long silken dresses and their hair down. Everything serves as an extension of their movement and further adds to the expressiveness. Wenders skilfully conducts an orchestration of colours, music, and dance. This richness



Wim Wenders's *Pina*

brought through to the screen makes for a compelling film experience.

In addition to the dancing, the comments of dancers regarding Bausch illustrate the deep emotional bond they had with her. It is interesting to note that these dancers are all very international and came from all over the world to work with her. Some described feeling lost in the process because initially they did not understand how she worked.

A few of the choice comments these dancers recall Bausch making to them include pithy sayings such as "go on searching" and "what are we longing for?" The brevity of such statements reflects Bausch's understanding of dance as a substitute for words.

Pina as a film may be less able to carry across the vim and vigour of Bausch and company's dynamism, yet it is no less affecting. Wenders adds layers to

the experience through the intercutting of performances and interviews, which add an extra emotional heft. The film may be seen as a eulogy in response to Pina Bausch's untimely death in 2009, a moving tribute to her craft. It caters not solely to admirers of dance as an art form, but for anyone who is willing to embrace the raw and visceral state of human emotion.

↳ Helene Andreas

Events

Close-Up Launch Party

24 Feb at the Bethnal Green Working Men's Club

An evening of film and music in the fashionable East End to celebrate the relaunch of Close-Up's website. There will be a screening of Alfred Hitchcock's classic, *Vertigo*, at 8pm. Best of all, entry is free!

Don't Look Now

26 Feb at the Close-Up Film Centre

Nicholas Roeg's adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's short story is often remembered for its explicit (rumoured to be unsimulated) love scene. But this detracts from the fact that it is quality film and study in grief. Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland star as the couple who travel to Venice to recuperate following the death of their young daughter.

Eyes Without A Face

28 Feb at the Close-Up Film Centre

George Franju's classic horror has influenced countless films in the genre. A brilliant plastic surgeon attempts to restore his daughter's face which was disfigured in a car crash. This radical surgery comes at a gruesome price.

Michael

26 Feb at The Aubin Cinema

An Austrian film that perhaps draws inspiration from the Kampusch case. It follows five months in the life of a paedophile, Michael, who keeps a 10-year-old boy locked up in his basement. An eerily chilling film reminiscent of Michael Haneke, for whom director Markus Schleizer did the casting in several films.

You're Gonna Need a Bigger Boat Film Quiz 90s Special

21 Feb at Hackney Picturehouse
 Tickets are on sale at the door from 18:00 (£3.50 per person). Get there early for some food and trivia fun.

Beyond the Box



Leia Clancy wearing Soraya Fernandez

By 20:00 on Monday 13 February, a sizeable crowd had gathered outside the Hong Kong Theatre in anticipation of the LSESU Fashion Society's annual fashion show, this year entitled Beyond the Box. As was the fashionable custom, the show was starting late.

Once inside, however, the sight of the clothes was enough to make any sign of a technical difficulty a distant memory. Starting the show with dresses in bold primary colours from Russian label XO, the distinctive digital prints had a fluid feel as if looking down into the heart of a volcano, tempered with delicate pink chiffon and sharp tailoring. The hottest spring/summer trends were all present with a feminine and elegant collection from Avneet Rehal, who showcased floaty dresses and silky separates in ice cream

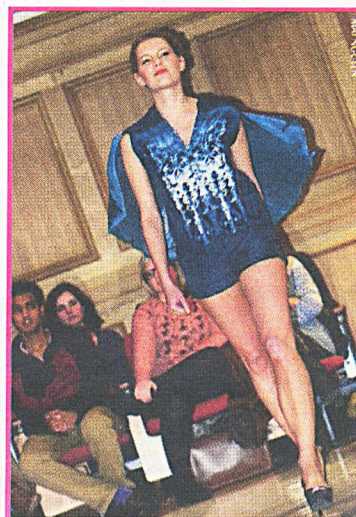
colours including pistachio, peach and rose. The pace of the show oscillated between serene episodes where the models, dressed in floor length maxi dresses in tranquil blue, brought out candles for the audience and a sleeker showing of minimalist silhouettes, perfect for power dressing, set to the sounds of "Moves Like Jagger." Jewelled embellishments, delicate fabrics and intriguing cuts were all a delight to see up close, with some of the 1920s drop-hemmed dresses a particular favourite.

Proving that fashion is not just for women, the menswear also did not disappoint. Felipe Rojas Llanos presented an excellent collection of silk capes vis-à-vis academic gowns over jewel-toned sheer T-shirts and satin trousers. Also seen were interesting interpretations of the traditional shirt and trouser combo with layered copped shirts in delicate

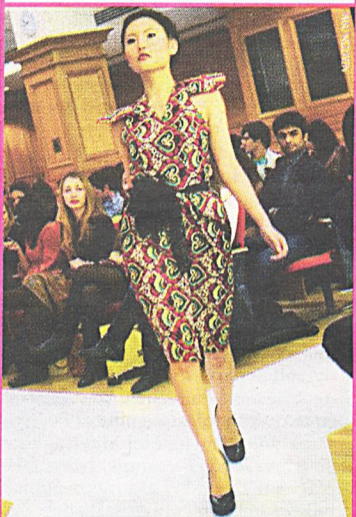
variations of white, light blue and lavender and black trousers. Another reinterpretation of a classic trend saw cricket jumpers in lemon yellow and mint green and head-to-toe outfits in black that wouldn't look out of place on a posse of fashion assistants trailing Anna Wintour herself.

The enjoyment of this show for all present could only be enhanced knowing that the proceeds would go to Afghanaid, a charity which for the past 30 years has helped support poor and vulnerable Afghan communities by providing grass-roots development. Representatives from the charity were present on the night and it was truly inspiring to see the contribution Afghanaid's work made to ordinary people's lives. A night of giving and receiving, what more could you ask for?

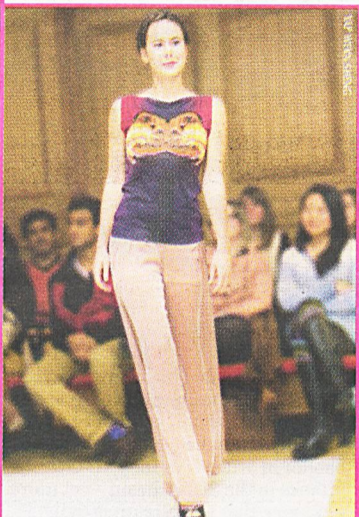
↳ Louise Kang



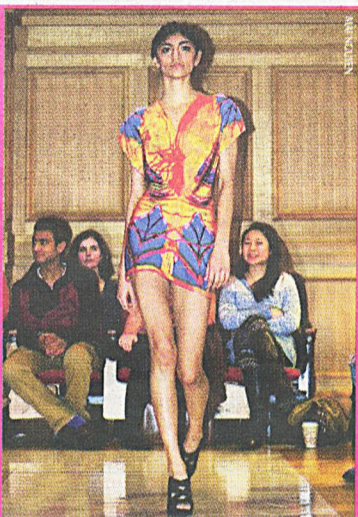
Lisett Luik wearing X&O



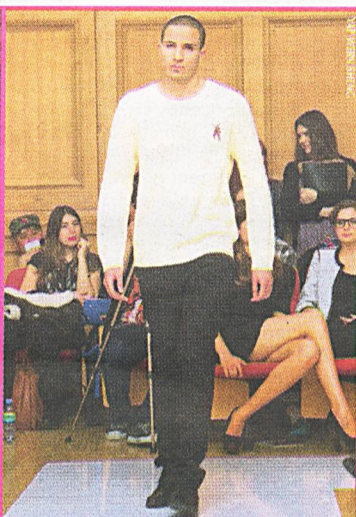
Rosa Ng wearing Soraya Fernandez



Luba Koroleva wearing X&O



Anika Bhagani wearing X&O



Ahmed Zbidi wearing Inkwell and Ivy



Alice Whalley wearing Cristina Dami

Impeccably tailored suits

Whenever I watch a legal drama I find myself envious of law students, imagining them jumping straight into a life of perfectly tailored suits, \$500 haircuts and a salary that will make you act like a douche bag. Unfortunately for them, it doesn't take too long for my envy to subside as I am reminded of the real life prospective law graduates face, filled with horrific tales about obtaining training contracts with a dumbfounding ratio of sixty applicants to one vacancy. So, as I settle for every bank's favourite degree, Economic History, I start to enjoy Dave's new show, *Suits*, even more.

Here we have a high-powered attorney at the firm Pearson Hardman in Manhattan, Harvey Specter. His char-

acter has the superiority and demeanour of *Wall Street's* Gordon Gekko and Gabriel Macht carries himself with a bit of Ryan Reynolds's "I know I'm a handsome man" swagger. Nevertheless, his perfect lawyer arrogance melts away during interactions with his secretary, Donna, his driver Raj and with the firm's managing partner, Jessica Pearson (Gina Torres of *Firefly* fame).

The other lead character of the show is Mike Ross (Patrick J. Adams), a young man with an eidetic memory and a bad choice of companions who fell into a life he never intended. His life is turned upside down when a desperate situation forces him to walk into Specter's office with a bag full of dope that would ultimately land him in a makeshift interview

with Harvey, who is reluctantly seeking a new junior associate. It is at that crazy moment when you go from being a broke college dropout to a kickass lawyer at a prestigious firm, wearing nice suits and making the money that defines this show. No complaints about the girls either, as far as I can tell.

So we get an almost predictable bromance series that leaves you with a satisfying feeling every time another one of Tom Ford's suits are displayed on Harvey's frame. Extra bonus points for those who recognize how much Patrick J. Adams looks like Simon from *The Inbetweeners*.

↳ Rasha Al-Dabagh

Suits, Tuesdays, 21:00, Dave



The sharply dressed cast of *Suits*

TV Picks of the Week

The Celebrity Apprentice USA

BBC One, 23:35 Sundays

The BBC has decided to show us how they do business in the USA, with Lord Sugar replaced by Donald Trump. The eighth season is filled with familiar faces including Clint Black, Claudia Jordan, Brian McKnight, Tione Watkins, Tom Green, Andrew Dice Clay, Dennis Rodman, Herschel Walker, Scott Hamilton and Brande Roderick. In honesty, the series is much more entertaining as a reality show, with over-manicured contestants in comparison to its more down to earth British counterpart. Nevertheless, the drama is there for those who enjoy watching the glamour of Hollywood business.

Psych

BBC One, 19:00, Saturdays

The annual show returns and comedians, sports stars and other celebrities gear up to dance for charity. First to slip into their dancing shoes are Ulrika Jonsson and Angelos Epothemiou, Terry Alderton, Laurie Brett and Tameka Empson, Tony Blackburn and David Hamilton. The judges are Graham Norton, Keith Lemon and Greg Davies.

Watson & Oliver

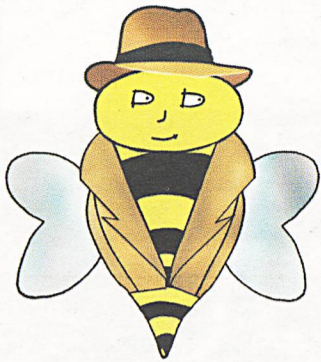
BBC Two, 22:00 Mondays

In this hilarious sketch show, filmed in front of a live studio audience, comedy duo Lorna Watson and Ingrid Oliver (best known for their three consecutive sell-out Edinburgh Festival shows and their appearances in *Peep Show*, *The IT Crowd* and *We Are Clang*) deliver sharp humour. It includes characters of Wills and Kate reminiscing about their wedding day and two insatiable Georgian ladies. Guest stars for the series include John Barrowman, BAFTA winner Daniel Rigby, Adrian Scarborough, Sophie Thompson and Perry Benson.

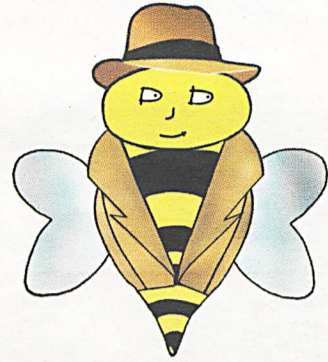
Luck

Sky Atlantic, 21:00, Saturdays

A new show starring Dustin Hoffman and Michael Gambon, following a vengeance call Ace (Hoffman) embarks upon once released from prison. Ace is deeply involved in the gambling around the horse race track and along with gamblers Marcus, Lonnie, Renzo, and Jerry, he learns a thing or two about make heaps of money after discovering the tactics of one of the racers. There is an undeniably large amount of jargon used in the pilot episode, however with a little bit of careful listening the meaning of almost all of it can be easily understood out and you can absolutely enjoy this show.



PRIVATE B



... Why have you deserted me

LSESU Rowers in Geo-Political Cox-up

Senior management at the London School of Economics have announced a full enquiry into the workings of the Students' Union following the news that the LSE SU Rowing Team made a mistaken attempt to enter Afghanistan on Tuesday evening.

As part of a tradition within the Athletics Union, now suspended, a dozen crew members have made the "Row to Amsterdam" an annual event as a means of raising money for LSE Raising and Giving (RAG). Previous fundraising efforts have historically taken place on Houghton Street using improvised rowing devices. It is understood that rowing machines were hired as a back-up by the Athletics Union but were not intended to be used.

As a further means of apology to the School, the machines were granted temporary teaching contracts and were tasked with running LSEero Classes for the remainder of the week. Following positive feedback from students, the arrangement is to be made permanent from September.



BEER MONSTER/CINGER WHOREBY

After intensive research carried out by the B, it is understood that a number of members of the Rowing Team chose to embark on a physical voyage to the Dutch capital by means of the Thames, North Sea and IJsselmeer. The conclusion of the voyage was intended to be marked by a celebratory tour of the Rijksmuseum followed by lunch in Belgium.

In a mistake believed to have been caused as a result of the number of Geography students on the team, the coxless four, led by Jock Curtsy, departed from the team boathouse early on Wednesday morning in a mistaken belief that their destination was located in Central Asia.

Flying-Spaghetti-Monster Palmtree, a second year Government student

who accompanied the team, informed the B that he became aware of a possible mistake when he found himself "having to use the boat as a makeshift shelter in order to evade NATO drone attacks in the Sistan Basin - yet more evidence that all religion is evil."

Although the whereabouts of three members of the team are currently unknown, LSESU RAG have

announced that the £34 raised by the missing rowers will form part of general fundraising efforts over the past week. It is expected that the majority of the donations will be given to the newly established charity aimed at finding the missing rowers.

The incident represents one of a number of oversights by RAG with regards to fundraising efforts this year. Other incidents have included the failure to properly explain the concept of "Battle of the Halls" to a number of students from Passfield. The miscommunication resulted the purchase of a remote Scottish island, acquisition of various illegal weapons, barricades around the building, and the hiring of a modified minibus, before students were informed that the event referred to a sponsored club night rather than an all-comers fight to the death. A statement from RAG has since informed the B that given that the discotheque hired was "Cheapskates," and as such, the mistake made little difference to the overall experience.

The President of the AU is expected to make a full statement at the first weekly Union General Meeting that he is awake for. Meetings always take place on Thursday afternoon, which follows immediately after Wednesday night in AU tradition.

↳ Tanned Ale

That Beaver Collective Missive in Full

Dear plebs,

I have been forced to send you this appeal for more candidates to put themselves forward for two positions within the newspaper's executive. It's not looking good so far, and despite my best efforts to be Machiavellian, I don't seem to have many means for mischief. Still, here are some manifestos I made up for rumoured candidates. They might or might not stand, like they (and we all) might or might not exist.

'Executive' Editor

Antihistamines: I want too bee teh bestist eggesut....xeequit...head newspaper guy ever. If u elect me to the possession, I will make sur that I devote as much thyme to teh papper as I usually do to the 3 Tonnes.

Lambert & Butler: As a member of one of the most underrepresented minorities on campus, I am fighting for the chance to represent the values of any self-respecting member of my community. I want to white for the paper at an executive level, I will Angle for better marketing opportunities, I shall reestablish the Saxon Gender column. Finally, I assure you that I will Protestant any attempts by the Students' "Union" to infringe our historic rights.

Before Christ: Withdrew owing to institutional chauvinism within this right-wing rag. Probably.

Webular Editor

George Washington: I am only running to split the RON vote. [Cont. on page %]

That is your lot. Remember, haters gonna hate.

Rolex Young
Collective Weight Around the Neck

That LSE Language Day Special in Full



LSE to Français



Lesson One: Dans l'UGM

Le chaise (pour il est lui): Où l'enfer est tout le monde?

David Lanmètre-Charbon: Le minutes s'il vous plait!

Le chaise: Urgh.

Lesson Two: Dans la bibliothèque

L'ascenseur un: [...]

Rolex Jeune: C'est merde d'taureau!

L'ascenseur deux: Rez de chaussée!

Rolex Jeune: [...]

Le Boucanier (descendre les stairs): Yaaaaaaaaa!

Lesson Three: Dans le Office de Castor

Arrérages Pétales: Où est la critique de film?

Tanned Bière: Dans mon arsel!

Arrérages Pétales: Ah! Le nouveau David Lynch.

Lesson Four: Dans le Conseil LSE

Le Chevalier de Douvet: Merci pour les conseils!

M. Doigts Gaddafi: la vie sans cheveux est difficile!

Professeur Lieu: Merci pour la mémoire, merci pour l'argent!

M. Doigts Gaddafi: Merci pour l'thèse!

That LSESU Mayoral Debate in Brief



Libour:
Ken is not Boris!



Tory Scum:
Boris is not Ken!



LimpDems:
Brian is neither Boris nor Ken!



Kermit:
It's not easy being in the Greens

WHAT DIDN'T COME AWAY

Features

Beat Eating Disorders

Rosie Hamer highlights eating disorders awareness week

It is very likely that you know someone with an eating disorder. It is also just as likely that you know somebody suffering, but are oblivious to their problem. Your sibling, best friend, team mate, flat mate, yourself...?

Eating disorders exist in today's world as one of the most wide-reaching and hardest hitting problems for young people.

Yet anorexia, bulimia and other similar conditions are still highly taboo topics of conversation. Commentators put the increase in the number of anorexic sufferers, particularly among teenage girls, down to a surge in magazine and fashion culture.

This leads to a mistaken conception in the causes of eating disorders. Far from being about food itself, by and large, eating disorders are brought on by internal and emotional stresses. The stigma that is attached to sufferers is removable, and voices can be heard in the discussion around eating disorders and their related illnesses.

Monday 20th February marks the beginning of Eating Disorder Awareness Week 2012; seven days that Beat, the national eating disorder charity, focuses their energies into raising awareness of Anorexia, Bulimia, Binge Eating and Compulsive over Eating Disorder.

Amongst young people the incidence of eating disorders is high; amongst university students the numbers are also some of the greatest. "Epigram", the independent Student

newspaper of Bristol University noted a 175 per cent recent rise in eating disorders amongst female students in Bath and Bristol at the start of the month. Eating disorders however, are not something to be reduced merely to statistics.

For each and every individual the causes and effects of an illness of this kind are distinctive and unique. There is no singular recognisable symptom

"Eating disorders exist in today's world as one of the most wide-reaching and hardest hitting problems for young people."

for diagnosis, nor is there a prescriptive cure that will see the recovery of the sufferer.

For many sufferers who have eating disorders, the road to recovery is a long and endured one. Such a recovery can seem out of reach and impossible, even with help from friends, families and professionals. In some cases, the outcome can be the most feared of ends.

Eating disorders are diverse in

nature. Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa, the two most commonly known of illnesses, appear only as examples of a range of disorders that relate to compulsivity, obsession and control of food.

Both Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa tend to stem from low self-esteem and a difficulty in one's ability to cope safely with worries and problems. They cover the spectrum of the mind and body, often causing significant harm and damage to both and making diagnosis and treatment complex and multilateral.

Regardless of the physical strains that a condition such as anorexia can bring, such as drastic weight loss, dizziness, stomach pains, growth of fine hair all over the body or hair falling out, the internal struggle that is going on within the sufferer is the symptom most worrying. Sadly it is often the most difficult to overcome.

It is a myth to think that Eating Disorders only affect women, or specifically middle class white teenagers. It is a dangerous view to suggest too that eating disorders are limited to certain social groups.

As studies have shown, eating disorders affect people regardless of background, ethnicity, gender or financial status. An estimated 10-20 per cent of sufferers are male and it is believed that many men with eating disorders will not seek help at all, making some claim that numbers are actually much higher.

However, research within the field

is advancing all the time. Only 30 years ago so little was known about eating disorders that many did not recognise Anorexia, Bulimia or BED as a medical condition at all.

Stubbornness has led to stagnation; it has taken many years for eyes to be opened and attitudes to have changed.

This has contributed to the difficulty in the frankness of discussion around eating disorders, and has

"It is a myth to think that Eating Disorders only affect women, or specifically middle class white teenagers."

encouraged controversy and obstinacy in place of education and help. Eating disorders awareness seeks to change this.

So you may know somebody with an eating disorder. You may not. You may still think that you are clued up on the nature of illnesses of this kind, how to recognise them and promote recovery.

According to the British Psychological society "it can be difficult for

students and young people to identify warning signs that may suggest eating disorders among their peers." The research shows that students tend to believe that eating disorders should be put down to a "vanity issue", rather than recognise the obsessive behaviour of their companions as a way to cope with stress and anxiety.

Females show to be more aware of the signs and risks to do with eating disorders than males. However, it is worrying that compulsive behaviour used as a coping mechanism appears to be a norm within the typical student body. Professor Andrew Hill at the University of Leeds thinks that "behaviours characteristic of disordered eating are commonplace in the lives of young women."

Looking around you, this may be true. With challenging, dynamic and busy student experiences come stressful, intense and anxiety ridden moments.

These feelings can manifest themselves into the everyday behaviour of your companions, and it could be you who picks up on these signs.

Whatever your take on Eating Disorders, whether you're sympathetic and informed or hardened and ignorant, this week is about opening your eyes to the true nature of eating disorders and how you can help those in need.

Visit www.b-eat.co.uk for more information on how to recognise and deal with signs, or follow @beatED on twitter. 🐦



The Agony & Ecstasy of Breakfast Bars

Edward Larkin examines how our food is marketed

I woke up the other day and opened a newly bought a box of Multigrain Cranberry & Raspberry breakfast bars.

Having failed to find the Fudge Graham Protein Bars that had fueled me through four years of college in the States at Sainsbury's (and having found out that it is illegal for Amazon to ship this particular brand of bars to the UK), I had eventually settled on these breakfast bars as the closest possible substitute. Vaguely disappointed after the first bite, I casually grabbed the box and turned it around, glancing at the back of the package only to find a phrase that shocked me.

"We don't advocate skipping breakfast, but if you are on the run and don't have time to catch a bowl of cereal these Breakfast Bars will keep you going."

A modest assertion on the face of it. But consider the medium: the back of a package. Back of the package statements aren't exactly the genre of literature most conducive to modesty. The number of books that claim to be the seminal text of the Twentieth century is almost certainly in the high three digits; DVDs feature breathless reviews in large type with tiny attributions to obscure newspapers as small as possible without deleting the name altogether; even mundane foods use words like savory, succulent, velvety.

Given the context, modesty all of a sudden becomes avant-garde.

Let's deconstruct this.

"We don't advocate skipping breakfast." First of all, they are explic-

itly telling us not to substitute their product for breakfast.

"...If you are on the run and don't have time to catch a bowl of cereal." Second, they are giving a healthy alternative to their product – they're not just saying "don't only rely on us," but rather, "don't only rely on us, and here's how not to rely on us: eat a bowl of cereal."

"...these breakfast bars will keep you going." Third, this isn't some overarching claim that their bar will solve all the problems in the world. It will simply "keep you going." It won't invigorate you, it won't have you wired for 24 hours on end, it won't replace a nutritious meal. It will just "keep you going."

I was struck by the sheer humility of these words on the back of a box of Breakfast Bars. Humility is not a word that is often found in modern marketing, mostly because the modus operandi is to make your product sound as much as possible like all things to all people.

To illustrate exactly how bizarre the company's strategy is, try to picture other companies doing this:

"We don't pretend this is the absolute car out there, but if you don't want to burn half your savings, our product will get you from Point A to Point B reliably and efficiently."

"We're not going to give you the most comprehensive insurance in the world, but we do cover a good amount and are pretty cheap, so if you want at least basic insurance, come to Barely Legal Auto Insurance Corp."

"This isn't the most prestigious degree in the world, but if you want to learn the fundamentals of a specific trade, make yourself more marketable, and save a lot of money in the process, come to RedForest Community College."

"We realize that unlike our posters, you're not going to find yourself in a blissful situation wearing five layers of shirts coupled with a scarf, a trendy pair of boots, and rolled-up khaki pants frolicking with a really attractive girl (herself wearing only a bra, seductively looking at you) in a scenic field somewhere in the middle of nowhere, but if you want cool clothes, shop here at Plantain Republic."

"Quite frankly, this beer is not going to win any awards for taste or quality, but if you're a college student who is a.) broke b.) quickly nearing a.), or c.) just wanting to get drunk on the cheap because you can't differentiate a good beer from a bad beer, buy KeyLight Smooth."

"We don't recommend eating a lot of chocolate, because quite honestly it's not very healthy, but if you want to indulge once in a while, a Venus bar is a good choice."

(Instead, the Candy mottos usually follow this vain: "Hungry? In a rush? Take a 'Venus' Break" This simple sentence is perhaps more valuable than any academic text in defining, exemplifying, and summarizing the avaricious instant gratification social psychology that has laid low countless insulin receptors over the past few decades and provided the raw

fuel for the ever-increasing waistline. The opponents of consumer capitalism could not possibly ask for a more effective straw man than "Hungry? In a rush? Take a 'Venus' Break." Each exquisite syllable is pregnant with the hope of immediate pleasure. It is the Veni. Vidi. Vici. of the 21st century, the "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" of marketing, the "voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir" of the postmodern world. These six words cast their net and it falls over the world. Anyway, back to the body of the article.)

As you might have imagined from how foreign these advertisements sound, one would not dare market their products like this. I'm sure there are quite valid reasons for this – presumably, executives would not bend over backwards to hire marketing gurus if they did not have to.

Now let's do a more ambitious thought experiment. What if this kind of humility were applied to the entire world?

"Yes, I want to do investment banking for the money. Do you seriously think I would spend 17 hours a day working like a slave on spreadsheets for \$50,000 a year just because I love finance, I'm a "team player", and I enjoy access to the senior management, and, most of all, I like the culture here? The other reason besides the money is the exit ops. Which, since the ultimate goal is more money, probably reducible to money."

"Yes, I am going in to medicine for the prestige. Do I really want to

help people? I would like to think so. I hope so. But there are a lot of ways to do that. I chose medicine because I like the idea of being a god among mortals in my white coat, and it's a safe profession, so there's not much risk involved."

"One of the major reasons I chose this school was the league table rankings."

"Hey... what's your name? I actually really want to dance with you and then hopefully have sex later tonight!"

As you can see, some of this unvarnished honesty is good, and some is not. As with everything, there has to be some sort of golden mean somewhere in the middle. I would argue, however, that we as a society are too far towards one side of fabrication. And Breakfast Bars' humble, down-to-earth advertisement exhibits what the industry seems to consider anathema: straight-shooting.

"We don't advocate skipping breakfast, but if you are on the run and don't have time to catch a bowl of cereal these Breakfast Bars will keep you going." Perhaps we are entering a bold new world of honesty. In the end, despite the rather sawdust-glue taste of the bar exacerbated by the uneasy duet between cranberry and raspberry, this single sentence was enough to give me hope.

That is, until I realized that it was a cereal company. ☹



**MAY CAUSE
DEATH**

Cancer, Cancer, go away

Matthew Worby investigates the development of new Cancer drugs

Cancer. There are more than 200 types of cancer that could affect someone over the course of their life, and with one in three people developing cancer over the course of their lifetime the effects and ramifications of the problem are enormous. The National Awareness and Early Diagnosis Initiative released a poll in late 2010 revealing that the biggest fear of Britons aged over 16 was contracting cancer. What's more, there seems to be few real statistical indicators, it's down to "fate." It is unsurprising, then, that scientists around the globe are working to develop vaccines and cures for the disease. This short article will take a brief look into some of the more promising vaccine developments in the world of science happening now.

The most common form of cancer in the UK presently, breast cancer, currently has two promising drugs being developed that appear, in the very early stages, to be better than the current gold standard. Respectively these are NeuVax, which has permission to enter stage 3 testing, i.e. testing is on humans, first for side effects on fully healthy volunteers, and then a double blind test on those with the disease. There is also AE37, which is presently in stage 2 that which is done on animals or on clumps of lab grown cells.

The gold standard in pharmaceutical testing is that which is better than the current benchmark under the best

reasonable conditions, in layman's terms it is better than the current market leader. While this does not necessarily mean that the side effects will be equal or better, regulatory bodies are more hawkish than ever before about side-effects, so it would be extremely unlikely for there to be a noticeable increase in risk for new drugs hitting the market. While this means there is

“with one in three people developing cancer over the course of their lifetime the effects and ramifications of the problem are enormous.”

a certain level of murkiness as to the exact conditions of what is reasonable and how you define "better" in some instances. But the bottom line is that these two drugs, currently, appear to be an improvement on what is presently being used.

NeuVax seems to be able to delay disease resurgence and progression by stimulating T-Cells to attack any patient whose tumor is expressing low levels of the HER2 receptor. In other

words, instead of finding every cancer cell and killing it, or targeting the area with radiation or chemotherapy in the medical equivalent of a blunderbuss, the body's own, vastly more efficient, defences are retargeted to attack the harmful cells in the body. What makes this drug particularly exciting is the way in which it uses HER2 to target the cancer, because this specific receptor seems to be significantly linked to more aggressive forms of breast cancer. While it is a slight downside that this drug is not a "catch all" cure industry experts are hopeful that despite this the drug will become the "go-to" alternative to Herceptin in the future.

The other promising drug is AE37, that Genex Biotechnology argues is an off-the-shelf cancer immunotherapy product candidate that is easier and less costly to produce than comparable cell-based approaches." Much like NeuVax the aim of the drug is meant to instigate a response from the body such that the cancer is removed by already existing cells. In this case the drug is hoped to act as a vaccine that will enhance the patients system so that a relapse back into cancer is dramatically reduced.

There is similarly positive news for pancreatic cancer, in a way reminiscent of a low budget sci-fi movie *GlobeImmune* are aiming to defeat the disease with baker's yeast. The process itself is complicated but apparently is along the lines of specifically

mutating a yeast culture such that it contains a mutated protein responsible for certain types of cancer. This yeast is then introduced to the patient because, in the words of David Ape-lian "it looks horribly dangerous to the immune system if it goes where it doesn't belong." By removing this from the body the immune system learns to target other cancerous cells, given the extreme levels of testing these drugs have to go through it should be

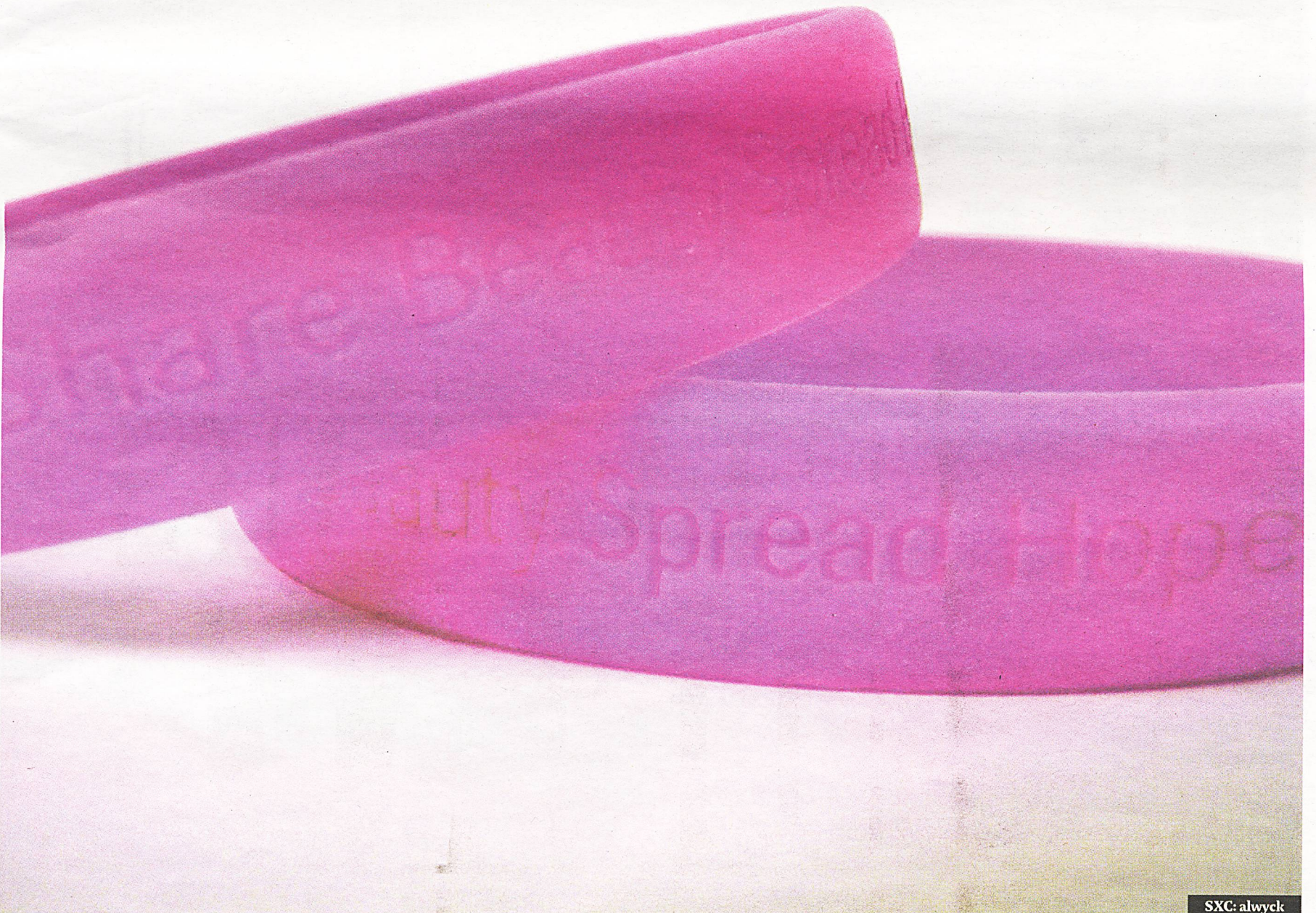
“targeting the area with radiation or chemotherapy in the medical equivalent of a blunderbuss”

perfectly safe, even if to the alarmist it would initially appear like a prequel to *I Am Legend*.

Finally, this type of research has wider applications that are also garnering attention. Notably in that a possible vaccine for Celiac disease. Celiacs disease is the incapability of the body to absorb gluten, meaning wheat, barley, rye are all off the menu for particularly adverse sufferers. Imagine a life where the potential eating of couscous, batter, pasta, mayonnaise or pasta could provoke a reaction. The

availability of gluten free alternatives is increasing, but this really only mitigates the problem. NexVax2 is being touted as the vaccine to help sufferers by altering our trusty little friend, the T-Cell. In this case the body sees gluten as poisonous to the body and reacts accordingly. The reaction's cause has been identified to three peptides, gliadin, secalin and hordein, the current method involves gradual desensitisation via relatively frequent injections and according to INOVA diagnostic tests roughly 90 per cent of sufferers would qualify. But one must be cautious about being over-optimistic. NexVax2 is only in stage one of clinical trials thus far and while this approach could theoretically apply to asthma or even autoimmune diseases only time, and the correct identification of antigens, will tell.

There has been a paradigm shift in the targeting of cancer in the world of science that is now coming to fruition with the development of technology. While it would be naive to suggest that the traditional methods of curing cancer are on the way out, one can be increasingly hopeful that advances will mean certain types of the illness can be cured in less invasive ways. It is also exciting to see this type of science being put to use tackling other diseases, such as Celiac disease. Hopefully this period in discovery will be seen as a watershed moment in the history of combating diseases, who knows what the future will hold. ☘



David Cameron

Emily Delahaye highlights Cameron's failures

At a time when the government is proposing and implementing massive spending cuts, the particular background of the Conservative leader does not much help his cause.

Before the general election in May 2010, a video changing the lyrics of Pulp's "Common People" song aimed to dissuade voters from voting Conservative became popular.

It highlighted Cameron's awareness that he must hide his party from the common people, for if the voters saw them they would never vote him in, before he can embark on cutting welfare.

Joking aside, a millionaire privately educated at Eton, David Cameron cannot pretend to be affected by many of the cuts his government is supporting. While most of Britain will be touched in some way by the changes to local education, the spiralling cost of higher education and job cuts; the Prime Minister and his cabinet will not suffer to quite the same degree.

This has raised criticism that the Prime Minister is out of touch with ordinary people and cannot understand how damaging the cuts will be. This suggests he is in the wrong position to make the "right" choice.

Cameron is closely associated with his "Big Society" pledge, a conscious response to Margaret Thatcher's claim in 1987 that there was no such thing as society, at a time of similar recession and government cuts. But many have been left wondering what, if anything, this nice-sounding word means, with even Conservative MPs seeing it as one of David Cameron's biggest mistakes for not winning enough voters in the election.

From what has been seen so far, the Big Society has meant big cuts to welfare and state administration, with private firms being encouraged to take over the old jobs of the government, from parents (or in many cases private businesses) running free schools to outsourcing the budgeting and accounting of primary care trusts to independent groups. The student and public sector protests, as well as the summer riots last year, underlined the deep cracks in Cameron's society which his party has done little to heal so far.

In the face of mounting unease and unrest towards the proposed government cuts, the government has been unrelenting and plans to press ahead. Is this sensible?

From a leftist Keynesian perspective, Cameron and his party seem to have got it all wrong - in times of economic hardship it is better to spend more in order to stimulate growth, putting confidence into members of the public to go out and spend money themselves, supporting British businesses. It is feared that Cameron's support for George Osborne's cuts will put Britain into a double dip recession, by strangling British economic growth, making full recovery even further away.

For critics of David Cameron, the coalition government has been a long string of mistakes and damaging decisions. One of the most prominent of these is the health care reform the Prime Minister is currently trying to push through - this seeks to introduce more competition into the health care system, moving away from the current central planning of the NHS.

This is anathema to Labour supporters obviously, who cherish the idea of the big state, but is Cameron's reform really that beneficial? Like with education, health care may not benefit from being turned into a market where the main concern is profit.

A poll commissioned by Unison last week revealed that 62 per cent of those questioned do not trust the Conservatives with health care, which comes at a time when several Conservative MPs are querying Cameron's reforms themselves.

It also emerged last week that many health groups such as the British Medical Association (BMA) and the Royal College of General Practitioners, which have both expressed their disapproval of NHS reform, had not been invited to an upcoming summit on Cameron's proposed bill.

This does nothing to help the impression of Cameron as out of touch with what people affected by his reforms are feeling.

The Prime Minister was also seen as scoring an incredible own goal in December by refusing to sign the European Union Treaty on eurozone rules. His veto was seen by Europhiles as symbolising a desire to distance Britain from the continent, twenty years

after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty which bound Britain up in a European Union. Cameron's move only serves to make Britain less relevant in world affairs than it currently is, as Europe has a greater influence in international relations when its states combine their voices together.

Cameron's veto also created animosity in Europe towards the British, which did little to help Anglo-European relations or to help to solve the euro crisis for which the Conference was called. Cameron himself was also personally criticised for his behaviour at the conference in December, appearing cold and aloof while the other European leaders networked and seemed committed to reaching a consensus.

The fact that even his coalition partner Nick Clegg publicly criticised the move suggests how Cameron has little support in this decision, bar the acclamation of die hard Conservative Eurosceptics. For someone of the Left on the political spectrum, Cameron appears to have spectacularly misfired not only in terms of the European gaff, but also through his cavalier method of cutting welfare spending, the increased emphasis of privatisation and competition in education and the NHS and his general lack of awareness of how ordinary people are suffering in the recession.

What do you think?



Have your say at
thebeaveronline.co.uk

Iain

'E

ment is wea
fact that he
must acknow
leader are c
had to lead
coalition go
handled situ
now the Fall

I must f
first Prime M
a coalition g
be working f
policy issues
have disagre
coalition has
was forecast
likely due to

Secondly
ter attemptin
recession. Sp

is the best w
and boosts co
the coffers ar
government,
even deeper i
circle of debt
crippling the

ment is invest
improvement
has and will b
nomic benefit
Policies such
sighted Prime
cies with the p
long-term pol
of Britain in m

Cameron
foreign policy
Scotland, and
eron helped re
many other W



Cameron: A Review

Iain Ramsay praises Cameron's efforts

'Bullingdon club' this, 'rich, toff w****r' that... Many people who dislike David Cameron base their views on his privileged upbringing, and, quite frankly, this argument is wearing a little thin. Nobody disputes the fact that he had a privileged upbringing, but we must acknowledge that his abilities as a political leader are cannot be judged on this. Cameron has had to lead through difficult times: he has led a coalition government, faced a recession, as well as handled situations in Europe, Libya, Scotland, and now the Falklands.

I must firstly comment on Cameron being the first Prime Minister in a long while to have led a coalition government. The government seems to be working fairly well, and where there have been policy issues over which the Tories and Lib-Dems have disagreed, this has been managed well. The coalition has not fallen apart quite as rapidly as was forecast by many commentators, and this is likely due to Cameron's prudent leadership.

Secondly, David Cameron is a Prime Minister attempting to lead the country out of a global recession. Spending your way out of a recession is the best way. It helps stimulate the economy, and boosts confidence in business. But when the coffers are left less than bare by the outgoing government, this option is not available. Going even deeper into debt would create an inescapable circle of debt with unsustainable debt payments crippling the British economy. Where the government is investing; for example, infrastructure improvement such as "High Speed 2"; the money has and will be well spent, with enormous economic benefits spread over more than thirty years. Policies such as this juxtapose David with short-sighted Prime Ministers of late who enacted policies with the pure aim of getting votes. Cameron's long-term policies show that he has the interests of Britain in mind.

Cameron has also had to handle a number of foreign policy issues as Prime Minister: Libya, Scotland, and now the Falklands. In Libya, Cameron helped remove a tyrannical dictator, whilst many other Western countries stood by without

acting. Concerning the Falklands, Cameron is defending the islands as British, and will not let Argentina take them. Cameron has taken an equally "no nonsense" approach to the situation in Scotland. The United Kingdom should, in his opinion, remain united, but the Scottish are, of course, entitled to a referendum on the issue. This strong stance on foreign policy is reflected in all that he has done as Prime Minister.

Certainly, one issue that cannot be ignored is Cameron's vetoing of the EU Treaty. It was claimed that Britain was going to become isolated from Europe because of Cameron's veto, but Britain is a key player in the European Union, and the last thing that will happen to us is that we will become isolated. Now, there is some confusion about the EU veto. Cameron's veto was in fact concerning new budgetary rules in the EU, and his veto was used to prevent further European integration (particularly of countries within the Eurozone), and therefore aimed to prevent British isolation from Europe. The whole British economy was at risk due to the treaty, not just the financial sector, as many people may portray. It was still claimed that Cameron had created a 'two-tier Europe,' but Europe has been a 'two-tier Europe' ever since the Euro was introduced, and Cameron's veto has changed nothing in this regard.

David Cameron has made his mark as a great Prime Minister not only here in Britain, but globally. His choices as Prime Minister show that he is doing the best for Britain by securing a safe recovery from the recession, fighting successive attacks of bad regulation from Europe, as well as handling matters of foreign affairs with commendable pragmatism. David Cameron's long-term vision for Britain is something that British Prime Ministers have been lacking for a long time, and I hope that this fact is soon recognised by his opponents.

ch
ron's
t in
s a
en its
Europe
glo-
crisis
a him-
vour
l and
cked
as.
ck
w
rt the
otics.
um,
ed not
ough
g, the
eti-
lack
ring in

?



Flickr: bobaliciouslondon

We are the Social Sharers

Joanna Hirst looks at the generation of the “social consumer”

Seventeen years ago, in a little village near Frankfurt am Main in Germany, my English mother held a Tupperware party. All the mothers in the village came over for some “Kaffee und Kuchen” (coffee and cake), and to buy some shiny new Tupperware. My mother recalls that this method of marketing proved to be extremely successful with these small-town housewives, who all left that day clutching their beloved plastic boxes with pride. That was the 90’s, and since then, much has changed. Scrunchies are no longer an acceptable as a hair tie, and the nature of consumerism has been radicalised by the coming of the internet. We are the generation of the social consumer, and more of us are swayed towards

particular products or brands through the internet than we may realise.

It seems that these days every brand or product has a Facebook page, a Twitter feed, and some form of interactive website. But does this always work? Is social media really the way to push forward a product? Brands use social media as a way of reaching consumers in a place where they spend so much time - the internet. Information today is constantly thrown at us from a variety of channels, but the link between social media engagement and actually purchasing a product has been hard to trace. Digital agency, Beyond, decided to embark on the difficult quest to discover this relationship. They found that all digital channels do play a role in the path to purchase, and that sharing and recommending things

online plays a crucial role in connecting customer and brand. Brands have picked up on this, and are thus shifting more and more of their advertising and marketing budget toward digital, just as an example, financial services corporation Visa has recently announced its media investment is being increased from 11% to a staggering 36%!

This leads us to examine why social consumers share information. I don’t repost a link to Nike’s new Nike+ Fuelband on my Facebook and Twitter because I want to support Nike as a company. I repost because I can be classed within a group of ‘altruistic’ sharers, those who share because they feel it will benefit others. Social consumers share information for a variety of reasons, and The New York Times’

influential study, *The Psychology of Sharing* (2011), found that getting the word out about a brand is actually the least likely reason why we share content online. They found that the majority of consumers share content because they feel it will be valuable and entertaining to others. Some share to define themselves online, or to grow and forge relationships with others.

In the past month, university-based meme groups have been popping up everywhere on Facebook. Once reserved for gamers and eggers alike, memes have been shared over and over again by thousands of students across the UK. The LSE Memes group alone has 1,464 members and counting. Those who know what I’m talking about, we are part of the 19.27 million Britons that use social media in one form or another. 42% of these users are active content sharers (Source: Marketing Online). Posted a meme online? You’re one of the 42%.

According to Beyond, there are seven types of social sharers: altruists, which make up 39.6% of people who share content online, selectives (26.1%), passionate (16.7%), connectors (7.9%), trendspotters (5.6%), provocateurs (2.6%), and finally careerists (2.5%). Selectives share because it’s relevant to a friend, passionate share because they share a passion with someone else. Connectors share to inspire, trendspotters share because it shows others they are on top of what’s new, provocateurs share because they want a reaction, the former share because they want to further their career and network. Apparently, our sharing personality type

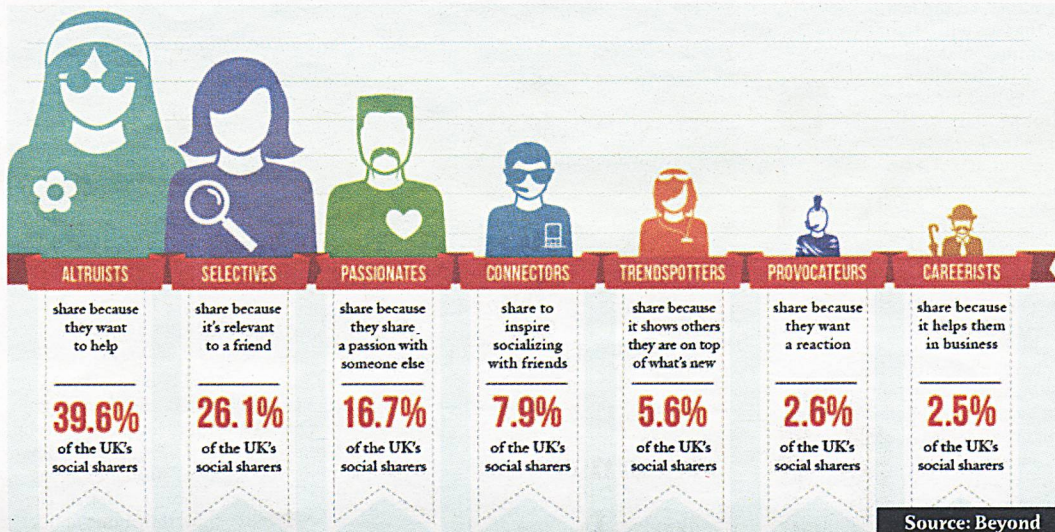
defines which social channel we use to share content. Altruists are more likely to use Facebook and e-mail, whereas provocateurs, who share because they want a reaction, are more likely to use a combination of Youtube, Wordpress, Blogger, Twitter, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Flickr, and Delicious.

Like Tupperware parties, social media has provided brands with a new pane on which they can hawk their products. Whether you are a sharer or not: engaging with a brand online means you are more susceptible to purchasing a product. I am a fan of the ASOS page on Facebook, and as a result I’m told about last minute sales and special offers directly on my newsfeed. Beyond found that 43% of UK consumers go on to purchase a product after engaging with it online. With this new information about different types of sharers available, brands will soon learn to delve more deeply into which channels their consumers use to deem which is most appropriate for the brand itself.

We’ve come a long way since the days of word-of-mouth sharing, and as our world becomes ever more digitised, the way in which we interact with brands and with others is due to change drastically. Who knows what lies ahead?

Joanna Hirst is a member of LSESU - AMP

To find out more about the future of digital, come along to the Advertising, Marketing, PR Society’s Annual Conference on March 6th. This year’s theme is “How to survive in a Digital World”. Details can be found at www.lsesu-amp.com.



Measured musings | The decline of faith and the Church of England

“God is dead”, the phrase coined by Nietzsche, is apt perhaps to describe modern society. Nietzsche argued that Europe had moved on from the time of religion, and God was drifting into irrelevance. To quote Lord Cutler Becket: “The immaterial has become immaterial.” This is the common view of Religion today, particularly Christianity. Richard Dawkins and the New Atheists have helped transform the nature of society. Once being Christian was a natural part of British Society. However, Atheism seems to have triumphed, particularly among today’s students. Led by a strong contingent of secularists, it is frequently broadcast that there has been a fundamental shift away from the Christian heritage of Britain.

Even last week Baroness Warsi asserted in a speech at the Vatican that Britain is being taken over by “militant secularists.” This week has certainly seen evidence to support this theory. Council prayer meetings have been banned by the High Court. Catholic adoption agencies have been forced to close. The head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission compared Christians who wanted exception from certain parts of the equalities bill to Islamists who wanted to impose Sharia law in part of Britain.

Certainly many Christians in Britain feel their faith is being marginalised. Where Christianity once dominated the discourse in modern Britain, it has been pushed to one side. Where the King of England was once forced to abdicate because his desire to remarry a divorcee went against the teaching of the Church, the doctrine of the Christian Faith has been all but forgotten by the majority of British society.

As if to prove a point, shortly after Baroness Warsi made her declara-

tion at the Vatican, Richard Dawkins released a poll finding the majority of those who identified themselves as Christians were unable to name the first book of the New Testament, rarely went to Church, and didn’t believe Jesus was the Son of God.

This seems to destroy the façade of David Cameron assertion that “we are a Christian country and we should not be afraid to say so” and Baroness Warsi’s claim that this government would “do God”. Perhaps they have taken a wrong turn?

However, does this mean that Christianity has been pushed from the stage, or at least on an inevitable trajectory away from public life? This doesn’t seem to be the case either.

The claim that religious beliefs must be completely removed from public life, as Richard Dawkins would advocate, seems to profess a great ignorance of British tradition. Britain is not at year zero, rather there are 2000 years of Judeo-Christian tradition that influences the nation.

Perhaps it is time for a fundamental rewrite of the British Constitution, but to do so with no respect for the last 2000 years seems naïve at best. Indeed, faith may not be waning. The Queen rallied to the defence of her Church, of whom she is still the Supreme Governor, proclaiming the significant position the Church has in our nation’s life. Saying “The Church of England has created an environment for other faith communities and indeed people of no faith to live freely.”

On top of this, after councils were banned from holding prayer meetings, Eric Pickles, Minister for Local Government, personally fast tracked and signed a Parliamentary order which should render the judgement irrelevant, protecting the freedom to pray in council meetings. Indeed Eric Pickles said: “Last week’s case should be seen as a wake-up call. For too long,

the public sector has been used to marginalise and attack faith in public life, undermining the very foundations of the British nation. But this week, the tables have been turned.”

Pinning the blame on secularist forces undermining the religious fabric of the nation is certainly a bit misleading. After all, the National Secular Association boasts around 7000 members, the same as the Sausage Appreciation Society.

Certainly it is important to draw a distinction here, what is happening in Britain cannot possibly be called persecution. As Lord Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, noted in an interview with the Spectator, “Christians are very lucky in this country.” However Lord Carey argues, “It’s up to us to do something. We’ve got to shake up our clergy, shake up the people, encourage them to get over the attitude of ‘We can do nothing about it, this is now a post-Christian age.’”

The contrast with Africa: “For them, faith is so important that they would face death for it if it came to that.” In this light it is clear that for the vast majority of people Christianity just isn’t taken as seriously here.

Perhaps Britain is fully in the clutches of secularists, but probably not, most likely there has been a cultural shift. Cultural Christianity has been replaced; the done thing today is to be an Atheist or just not to care. However, that doesn’t mean that faith is a complete irrelevance to public life.

Just looking at the LSE, founded by Christian socialists, the campus is filled with issues of religious affiliation. Even in Dawkins’ poll, only 33 per cent of respondents classified themselves as having no faith. Clearly, faith remains an issue in Britain, if not the one with the most political salience.

Chris Rogers
Features Editor



Flickr: jpundt79

Social

THE TRUTH ABOUT LIES

BY: KIRSTY KENNEY



Flickr: niznoz

We all lie. Fact. Whether it was this morning, yesterday or last week that you last felt your nose go "Pinocchio", we are all guilty of a little fib here and there.

Deception, sadly, is part of human nature. You might tell the odd white lie just to make someone feel better or perhaps you are more of the exaggerating type. But when does a fabrication of the truth become myth? You might use a false positive, a harmless way to ease initial social tensions with comments like "I love the new shirt" or "nice hair." While

"Girls are particularly prone to being economical with the truth to avoid upsetting someone's feelings; men tend to be the ones exaggerating their attributes"

girls are particularly prone to being economical with the truth when it comes to avoiding upsetting someone's feelings, men tend to be the ones exaggerating their attributes. I seem to remember there being quite a few Mr. LSE contestants boasting of their larger than average penises.

I am by no means saying that we are all compulsive liars, who routinely come up with whopping great big bare-faced lies, but equally, nobody is truthful all of the time. We learn to lie early on; we pick it up from our parents, just as we do speech. Even at the tender age of three, most children know how to lie and by your sixth birthday chances are you were fibbing a couple of times a day. This makes perfect sense, after all who was it that assured you Santa Claus was real and that carrots would make you see in the dark?

Society though relies on the majority of people being honest most of the time, especially when it comes to the "important" stuff. Most people only tell the odd white lie when they really believe that it is better for someone not to know the truth. Sometimes you might tell a white lie because you know you are likely to be rewarded, or less likely to be punished for it. It is much better to say in an email to your class teacher that you have an emergency doctor appointment/lady problems rather than "Hey, heavy night last night, not going to make the 10am class. See you next week."

Technology brings a whole new dimension to the lie. Have you ever found yourself sending a text/bbm/

email ending a conversation by saying you're having dinner/seeing a friend/watching a film, when actually you just cannot be bothered to chat? Yes, I thought so. This is a new phenomenon known as the "Butler Lie". Or perhaps you are guilty of deceiving your class teachers, sending a blank file titled "Essay" to give yourself that much needed deadline extension. I have not tried that one myself YET, honest.

Unsurprisingly, it is your parents who are most likely to be hearing, and believing, your little lies. Experts reckon teens try to deceive their parents in up to half of conversations and admit that parents are not always very good at picking up on signs of deception.

I have to confess that recently I have been lying to my parents about something. I entered myself for a beginners Mandarin examination at SOAS and my mum offered to pay the exam fee. On the day I felt that I was ill prepared and my head was further blurred with a hangover, I just didn't turn up.

When my mum asked over the Christmas holidays if the results had come through, I lied and told her they had not yet. I lied because I thought she would be disappointed and maybe a little annoyed. In hindsight, I really regret not being honest. I hate being forced to tell more lies as my Mum asks again and again over the dinner table or on the phone about the results. I know this may seem like a trivial example, but it illustrates the point that once you tell a lie, it might just creep back up on you.

While it is not really the case with the Mandarin exam, the tricky thing is that some things are better left unsaid. We all like the idea of knowing the truth, but sometimes the truth hurts. Telling the truth can be destructive and it's easy to see why keeping things to yourself at times seems well intentioned.

"Unsurprisingly, it is your parents who are most likely to be hearing, and believing, your little lies."

Call me cynical, but I'm just not convinced that the world would be a happier place if we knew what was going on behind people's eyes. It is true that we are not always in the position to judge what is best for people and there is only one way to find out if someone really does want to know the truth. While I am not advocating lying for fun, for self-gain or being down right deceitful, sometimes your skeletons in the closet are there for a reason. I am not quite sure we would be able to handle the pressure if we always knew what our family, friends, teachers and colleagues had to say.

A life outside of banking

Timothy Poole on the importance of a “counter-culture” at the LSE

When I first arrived at LSE, I soon got the gist of what was on the school's priority list. An inevitable emphasis was placed by welcoming teaching staff and student mentors on achieving that elusive 2.1 or 1st, while students were also encouraged to join as many societies and apply for as many internships as possible. Within a few days, the word “bank” virtually became synonymous with the name “LSE” in the back of my mind. This perception was confirmed and permanently lodged at the Freshers Fayre, when I was bombarded with leaflets and freebies by the Finance Society, Investment Society, Hedge-Fund Society and the like.

Even my own Human Resource Management degree, seemingly virtuous upon application, turned out to be geared towards the investment banking industry. I discovered that the EROB department (Employment Relations and Organisational Behaviour) has close ties with “the Gold Man” (Sachs). My world was becoming rather one-sided. Indeed, it was hard to look beyond a future in the City that already seemed pre-determined for me. Yet, thankfully, several months on and approaching the end of Lent Term, it has dawned on me that, in a sort of protest against LSE's image as the “investment banker's nursery”, our student body is actually enriched with a rather fantastic cultural variety.

After that unavoidable first impression we all get of this university, it is hard to imagine the LSE as a hub of anything other than the next generation of economists. Okay, it is the London School of “Economics” after all. But this surely doesn't have to restrict us to one discipline of interest alone, does it? After all, our degrees

range from Social Anthropology to Management Science, contrasted with a hint of Philosophy and a sprinkle of International Relations. I'm not for a second suggesting there is anything wrong with aspiring to become the world's next top banker or financier. However, I'm also aware that many of you out there, like me, do not hold such a dream. My initial worry was simply: what is there at this university to really engage those of us who aren't following the mainstream and are not crossing our fingers for Barclays whilst settling for Deutsche Bank?

Alas, this is where our fantastic cultural variety comes in. What I have discovered about LSE throughout my first year here has been truly encouraging and offers hope to those of us that grow wary of rather generic and empty 24-hour talk of the FT and Economist. My personal experience has been hugely influenced by this very newspaper, and the larger Media Group it is a part of. It occurred to me what a testament to variety it is that the student newspaper of the LSE does not include a Finance section. The Beaver and Media Group represent a much wider concept: that of a student voice. In my eyes, this student voice has spoken out in remonstrance against the inherent banking culture that LSE has become known far and wide for. This is most evident through the SU and AU, who are both so important to the everyday existence of the university and its students. The latter is perhaps the most under-valued organizations at the school, with many choosing to ignore the unrelenting service it provides for the thousands of undergraduates and postgraduates studying here.

At no time is this sentiment more applicable than in the wake of RAG week, when you name it and they are

doing it, all in the name of charity. A wealth of events catches the eye, demonstrating that there is more to LSE life than books and problem sets. Moreover, sensational one-off performances like Timeless further highlight the vast range of hidden talents the LSE has to offer. Religion, perhaps rather surprisingly, is also well represented, with many religious societies having a strong presence within the school's community - something commendably not in the spirit of market domination.

It can, of course, be argued that these are all basic features of any university. But, here at the LSE, it is remarkable that areas such as media, theatre, sport, and religion are so well catered for, when these are principally not in the interest of the oh-so prominent culture of economics and finance. It is these areas that are so fundamental for most of us to keep our sanity and alleviate our stress; fortunately, our needs have been met - one way or another.

And so, whilst the LSE is relentlessly “big on banking” - understandably so in an ultimately capitalist-driven economy such as ours - it is wonderful to witness the mini-revolution many of us have chosen to undertake. Indeed, the great foundation on which this school was built remains strong and an appreciation of the finer, non-bonus-driven things in life is still plentiful on campus. One can only hope that this continues for a long time to come, expanding rather than subsiding. After all, “to understand the causes of things” requires more than understanding which consulting or accounting firm is ranked highest on the London Stock Exchange.



Rowathon for RAG Week | Matt Worby

Making moments in the library

Angelina Castellini & Susan Sebatindira on improvisation at LSE

Whilst searching for a computer last week, you might have seen the slow-motion fight that broke out on the lower ground in the Library. Or you may have wondered about the group of students frozen in place around the Library entrance. Maybe you heard a student chanting pleasant phrases through a megaphone down Houghton Street. Either way, a group of LSE students have made the LSE campus its stage. Why does this keep happening? Why else, but to have some fun! A great moment can make someone's day. A few minutes out of the daily routine can turn a day of studying around.

Those of you who were here last year will have remembered the epic flashmob in the Library during the exam weeks. The event gladly broke up the dreary routine of stressful cramming with spontaneous dancing. We want to keep up this spirit of doing things out of the ordinary with weekly events this year. The highlight of the year will be a huge library event during the exam period, larger than last year. This could very well become a tradition. In order to make it an event that YOU and LSE will not forget, we need a large number of students willing to participate. No experience is required. If you have been taking part in drama for years or have never participated in improvisation before then no worries; you don't need any experience for any

of the sketches we're involved in, just a smile and the willingness to make other people smile too.

I must admit, I was a little bit hesitant at first. The idea of fully submerging myself into a slow-motion fight, in front of people I might know, was very daunting. But soon enough, I found myself throwing out a round-house kick with as much intensity as I could muster. Although in slow-motion of course. Often it is easy to get caught up in the stress of LSE studies and this brief interlude was just what I needed to remind me that university life can be creative and does not have to be constrained to just filling out applications for summer placements.

The only aim of the Improv group is to spread happiness and the occasional thought. The overall point of the group is to get comfortable enough to truly get loose, be it in front of a small number of people or the various students milling about on the Lower Ground. Many of us in the Improv group had trepidations at first about not being courageous enough to run round the library in the name of some good old fun. Join the facebook group: “Improv V Atlse” to find out what is going on. Try it out once, there's no need to keep on coming back next week if it turns out that it is not for you. So go on, take a step out of your daily routine, do something out of the ordinary. You won't be disappointed.



2011 LSE Flashmob | Beaver Archive

Down and out in London

Cleo Pearson on being a country girl in the big, bad city

I am a country girl through and through. I come from a place called Ham, it doesn't take a geographer to realise that "Ham, the Hamlet" is likely to be pretty remote. Getting lost in fields of oil-seed rape in an attempt to find a "short-cut" home, running over gravel without a grimace and making mud pies are amongst my favourite past times. However, by 18 I felt that the merits of counting deer on the walk to the bus stop were outweighed by the mud, rain and the 40 minutes it took to get there. So I decided to move to the big smoke. Despite the fact that on paper I am not an international student, at times I felt like a foreigner in this urban domain.

On closer inspection it would appear that some things are not as different from home as I might have thought. I was able to handle the pollution from congestion because of the wind atop of Parliament Hill. I didn't

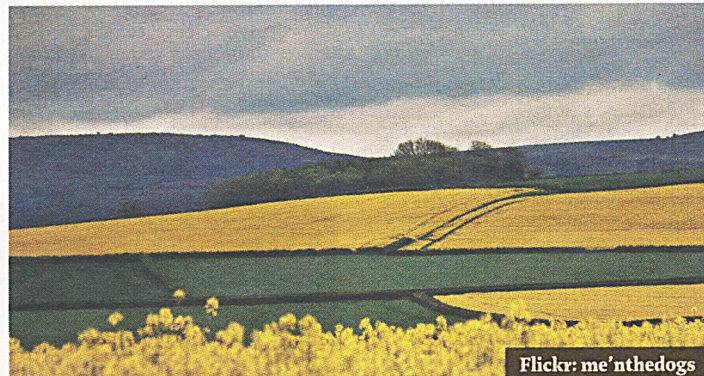
miss the kamikaze pheasants on country roads because of the squirrels and the heron at Regent's Park. I felt at home without the ant and ivy infestations in my kitchen because of the greenfly that attacked my basil and the grain beetle that infested my room. Yet, there are still aspects of city life that make little sense to me.

Let's do a riddle. What am I referring to: people tend to dislike them, they are not the prettiest of things, they tend to emerge from dark corners and move in funny ways? I do not blame you if you are confused, am I referring to spiders or some of the creeps you might find in the dingier London clubs?

I have never had a fear of the former, because I know how to dispose of them; simply find a glass and a piece of card to slip underneath. In contrast, I feel totally unequipped with the tools or methods for avoiding the particular kind of pest found in

bars and clubs.

I learnt a lot in childhood through the method of look, sniff, and bite. Applying this technique at university has almost as bitter an outcome as that of trying crab-apple. I swiftly reconsidered tactics. For parts of the year our family fridge is filled with fresh but sometimes unidentified produce. My Mum loves nothing better than the wild mushrooms from our garden and assures us they are not the dangerous kind. Personally, I would not make the judgement on what would harm us. Neither would I contemplate what a London friend of mine was considering the other day. The million pound question was: should she consume the ominous bag of white powder she found stuck to the bottom of her shoe after a night in a club? As far as my very loud and logical conscience is concerned, why would I consider any drug for that matter? The cost, the risk of addiction



Flickr: me'nthedogs

or getting caught, the disadvantage of a comedown and obliterating the next day are not factors that I would take into consideration when offered drugs. Instead a very loud voice in my head says "I DON'T WANT TO DIE", whether tonight or without a septum when I'm 64. Perhaps I'll stick to mushrooms for now, but not the happy kind.

I used to walk around bare foot all the time at home, rough house with the dogs occasionally; do my homework in the grass and the like. At the end of the day I could have passed as an extra on a production of "Oliver", no make-up needed. We washed, but weren't obsessive about cleanliness. Getting dirty builds up your immune system, or at least I was made to believe it did. At school we all knew of a girl with porcelain skin, so white it was if she had never been exposed to the sun. Apparently she got ill whenever she left the house because everything inside it was kept so clean. Primary school myths aside, think of all the hands that touch the keyboards in the library or the hand rail on the

tube. How often do these things get cleaned? But normally, how often does that even cross your mind as you lick the last taste of cheese and onion off your fingers? Many cosmopolitan people seem to have this obsession with being "clean" despite being oblivious to the beautiful filth that they are living in.

I am always irritated by the generic phrases people use to describe one another, especially in dating ads and lonely hearts columns. What does "down to earth" even mean? I have decided to construct my own definition. It is not about whether you were born in a shed or a penthouse suite. It is also not just about being on the ground either, because even the guy on the top floor takes the lift down occasionally. Instead "down to earth" is about being international. From the villages of the world to cities, if you speak my language I will try to speak yours. So please do not grimace at the thought of the thick soles of my feet that enable me to walk barefoot and I won't cringe at the bunions on yours from wearing heels.



Flickr: damo1977

Travel Diary: Damaraland, Namibia

Manjula Kalliat on another side of Namibia

We were in one of the most sparsely populated parts of the world. Speeding along the gravel road on a scorching December morning, the greenery of the Etosha plains gave way to mellow Savannah. It had been more than a hour since we had seen another vehicle. Despite being one of the least visited parts of Namibia and only a last-minute addition to our trip, our delightful guide Willem, asserted that Damaraland was the most beautiful. Even though we cynically dismissed it as the zealous observation of a spirited native, there was no denying the beauty of the stark landscape of this region of Central Namibia. A geologist's dream, it had some of the most stunning rock formations in Africa, and arguably the world.

Damaraland gets its name from the dominant Damara tribe that inhabit the area. Despite having embraced the modern way of life, the Damaras still hold on steadfastly to many of their ethnic traditions. However, one of the most fascinating aspects, which made me unabashedly eavesdrop on many a Damara conversation, was the language, generously smattered with clicks. Differing in intensity, the four clicks are like letters of the alphabet, which in the written language take the form of slashes and dashes.

The Twyfelfontein Country Lodge is a relatively low cost, eco-sensitive project set in the most spectacular of surroundings. Although camping options are aplenty in the area, even confirmed campers give into the charm

of the lodge. The lodge is surrounded by red rocks, which are home to several families of baboons that make their presence known to visitors with their nocturnal calls. Having checked into the lodge, we headed out in the blazing afternoon sun to see the Twyfelfontein rock engravings the region is most famous for. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, these engravings, which are estimated to be more than 5000 years

was a good way to work up an appetite for the sumptuous Christmas Eve dinner that awaited us at the lodge.

Food in Damaraland, like in the rest of Namibia, is meat-heavy and game in some form is always part of the spread. That day it was Kudu, one of the indigenous antelope species. The well-done steak tasted like a meatier version of beef and, slathered with gravy and mustard, it went down

of this opportunity to sample what Willem insisted was the most unusual of meats - with the texture of fish and the flavour of chicken. I'm happy to say that I survived a full bowl of soup, with no gastric emergencies to report. And yes, Willem's description was spot on. But the highlight of the evening, indeed the most surreal moment of the trip, was the impromptu rendition of Silent Night by the lodge staff in chaste

tree trunks that are no longer trees but solid rock. It is believed that these tree trunks were washed down to the valley millions of years ago. The passage of time and the silica that seeped into the wood due to the pressure of the sand above caused this transformation. The distinctive dolerite pillars, called Organ Pipes and the volcanic lava covered Burmt Mountain were other interesting sights in the area.

Rocks and stones apart, Damaraland, like the rest of Namibia, is a virtual treasure-trove of fauna and flora. The region is rich in wildlife with sightings of desert adapted elephants and rhinos not being uncommon. We had no such luck and had to content ourselves with springbok, oryx and the odd ostrich. This area is also one of the only two habitats of the bizarre two-leaved Welwitschia plant, considered to be a living fossil by virtue of not having any close living relatives.

Before long, it was time to hit the gravel tracks once again and head towards our next destination. As the mist rolled in from the Skeleton Coast, the tantalisingly barren Damara landscape gradually disappeared from sight. Two months on, reflecting back on my holiday whilst sitting in the cold confines of my London flat, I realise that Willem wasn't exaggerating. Despite having visited Namibia's star attraction - the dunes - and having gone on some fantastic game drives, my most enduring memory of the country remains Damaraland.

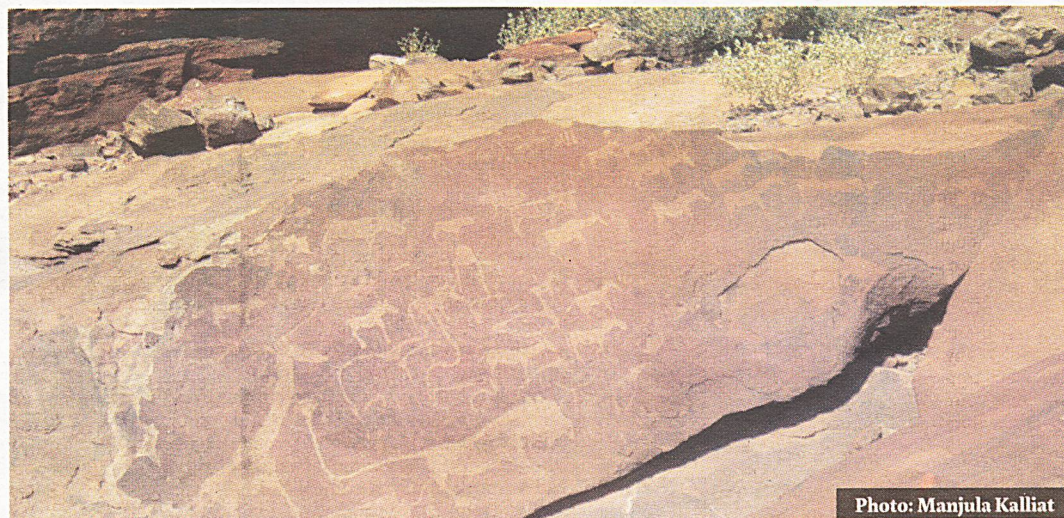


Photo: Manjula Kalliat

old, are attributed to bushmen. They are believed to have used these engravings as a means of story-telling, life-documenting and even as maps. The engravings are scattered over rocks at different levels and seeking them out

a treat. This was second course to soup of the day: crocodile and coconut. Having heard horror tales of crocodile meat-induced indigestion, I was admittedly apprehensive. The foodie in me however didn't want to let go

Damara, clicks and all!

Having witnessed yet a spectacularly starry night, the following morning we set off to the Petrified Forest. As the name suggests, the intriguing Petrified Forest comprises

LSE 1st XV Rugby: LSE 22 - 5 RUMS

George Melhuish

Where my Hounds at? Champagne! Hussar!

After a week's break due to the necessity to play "Paris 5's" the 1st XV Rugby team entertained the RUMS (UCL Medical School) with high hopes at fortress Berrylands. This year's season has been disappointing and Brendan Mycock is believed to have been quoted saying that "this season has been dog shit since day one, if only I'd been captain again." However Dan Reed has responded that Mycock could not be captain again "due to the defamation of his character regarding intimate affairs with his would be cousin alongside specific fitness requirements necessary to be able to warm up." Putting this debate aside the 1st XV have fallen from the successful heights of the previous 2 years as the 2nd XV and, most successful ever, 3rd XV have led the RFC's triumphs on the pitch. After missing a game earlier in the season, due to powers beyond their control, the team started the day on -3 points and without a victory in the league.

From the outset the forwards made a lasting impression and within 10 minutes had RUMS pinned back in their own 22. With a series of Prop "injuries" (notably Lennon's broken heart) Matthew Stimson stepped into the front row from 7 and the scrum remained dominant throughout. LSE struck early driving a lineout over from 10 meters out. At last the lads had started with the energy and clinical finishing they are capable of and Guillaume Padeloup added a valuable 2 points with an impressive conversion.

As they have done all season though the 1st XV made life difficult for themselves by immediately allowing a careless try in after a number of

handling errors. It seemed Lush Sam was too busy considering his Facebook relationship status to get his head in the game.

The forwards maintained their dominance in the scrums and suc-

cessfully stole lineout ball with Dodds using his huge natural physical gift (photographic evidence is available upon request) to penetrate the RUMS and the LSE ball carriers battered the

Medics defence. The backs tackling kept the opposition under pressure and forced turnovers as LSE continued to force them back in this physical encounter. The hard work led to Patrick Dixon powering over from 5 yards out

which were fortunately unpunished as RUMS missed two penalty kicks leading into half time and going into the interval LSE had a deserved 7 point lead (12-5).

The second half was brutal as LSE

deserves a mention for making his debut appearance off the bench for LSE rugby and marked his entrance by immediately crunching his opposite man, hopefully this is a sign of things to come from future LSE talent. Max Owen also stamped his mark on the game and after successfully robbing the ball 20 meters out in the tackle area he somehow found himself through for a sure try. In his amazement he slowed down to enjoy his success and was subsequently smashed from the side as their winger chased back. All this emotion seemed too much for John Whinnett the serial cuddler as a tear or two were seen streaming down the poor man's face for the second time this week. Despite all their dominance the LSE failed to find the finishing touch as white line fever continuously struck, only managing a 3 point penalty for their efforts. Eventually the titanic battle of the packs with numerous "pick and go's", driving mauls and even some quick hands, leading to calls of "champagne rugby", saw Daniel Reed (Captain) secure victory with 10 minutes remaining.

Many of the LSE team emerged from this struggle bloody mouthed, black eyed and bruised, but ultimately victorious. This outstanding team performance and the new air of confidence should bring with it a good run at the close of this season.

As the season comes to an end some have reminisced that "Ever has it been that love knows not its own depth until the hour of separation. As soon as forever is through, I'll be over you." (Facebook 2k12) Following this victory there was a flooding of applications for masters from the Rugby veterans and it appears next year will be as entertaining as is it successful.

LSE 22 - 5 RUMS. The 1st XV now find themselves on 0 points, they are officially WINNING.

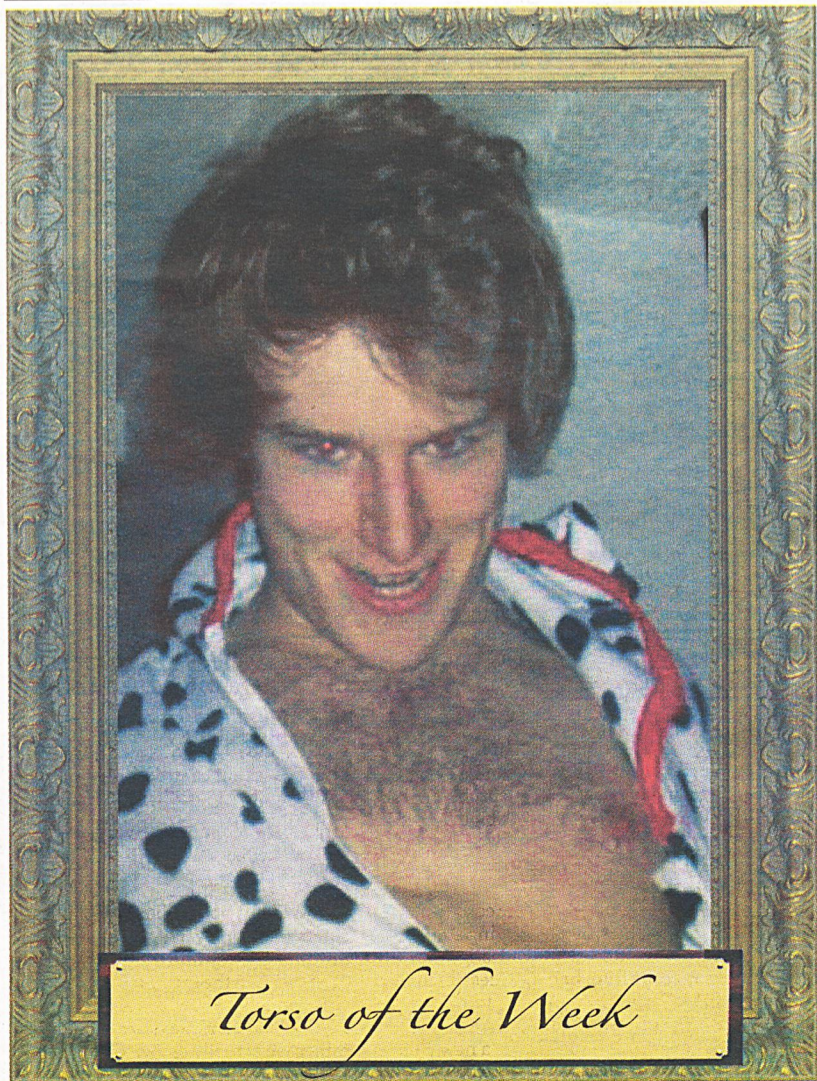


Photo: LSEAU Rugby

cessfully stole lineout ball with Dodds using his huge natural physical gift (photographic evidence is available upon request) to penetrate the RUMS and the LSE ball carriers battered the

after 25 minutes, taking a number of RUMS players with him and giving LSE some breathing room. LSE were in control of the game from the outset but continued to make unforced errors

showed their strength and determination. This provided them with both possession and territory as the RUMS valiantly defended their own try line for the majority of the half. Eric Tate



Torso of the Week



With the Tuns crowd disappointed at the lack of waxation that occurred on Wednesday, the more subdued nature of Zoo Bar was sadly inevitable. Fear not though, I'll never fail to scrape together a few sordid stories to share with you all.

I can honestly say that I was surprised it took so long, but it seems that after 16 weeks of dodging one another, two of the people who are all too often featured for in this column finally got in on. In a landmark move, it seems Captain Mateer finally pounced upon Creepy G-B, who was more than happy to reciprocate. He seemingly devoured her mouth, but clearly had his eyes set on another lady, and the swine was seen going home with our regular, Miss social DeBeer.

It seemed that it was Rugby's lucky week this week, with Curious George nabbing himself an apparently unrecognized girl and choosing to go for a round of volleys in a game of tonsil tennis. Fresher Eton #1 also managed to score a home run, sealing the deal with yet another random: note to all, please only get with BNOCs and make my life easier. Thanks.

Smithy bom bom, another charming "gent" from FC also had himself an interesting evening. With a night that was seemingly reminiscent of "the Hangover", the second team lad apparently had no recollection of bedding a fresher, then awaking to piss in the communal kitchen bin (still wearing his socks), before returning to a flatmate's bed. Here's hoping this will help jog his memory and allow the poor guy to piece together his night.

It seems "too many men" Norris was once again perusing through the catalogue of men. Executing her right to try before you buy, she felt

she needed to sample the different flavours available, this week deciding that Malibu didn't take her fancy, nor did another one of his fellow 4th team FC. You can't blame her, though - after all, he did take her on a "date" to Pizza Express, only to whip out a 50% off voucher. Classy. Eventually, though, like so many others before her, she fell for the charming accent of the AU's most infamous Gaelic Footballer, allegedly inviting him back to "Action" street. No doubt he already knew his way back, bringing his total tally on that street to three.

On a separate night, but definitely one that warrants a mention here, it seems that there is far FAR more to Women's Hockey than we would have guessed; what started off as an innocent game of "never have I ever" result in telling tales, with two ladies from hockey willingly explaining how they have "accidentally" engaged in "lana" sex (read: backwards). When quizzed as to how they could undertake such activities "accidentally", the ladies were baffled at their lack of an explanation, but suffice it to say the mental image will forever scar the 20-odd participants. Let's keep them away from hockey sticks shall we...

This week is Hustings, and it's sure to bring a more interesting round of gossip. We'll see who feels arrogant enough to run for a position in the AU Exec, or more arrogant yet, for AU President. As the self-proclaimed (or wannabe) BNOCs take to the stage, feel free to heckle if they're shit and come with suitable questions to grill them and destroy their souls - after all, it should more or less be a case of Battle Royale for who gets to run the AU next.

To Lin-finity and beyond!

The meaning of Jeremy Lin

Linda Yang

Unless you've been living under a rock lately, you've heard it by now: Linsanity. Linning. A Linderella story. Of course, I'm talking about breakout NBA star Jeremy Lin, the young man at the helm of the New York Knicks' recent surprise comeback. By now his Harvard career, couch-surfing adventures, and struggles as an undrafted point guard have become parts of the Jeremy Lin mythology. But while Lin is busy pulling the Knicks up to .500 on the season, people are scratching their heads. Where did this kid come from? Why do we love him? And what, if any, will be his lasting impact?

The arc of the Jeremy Lin story is as high as his game-winning three-pointer last Tuesday against the Toronto Raptors with .05 seconds to spare. It's been blogged about, tweeted, podcasted, and debated, but just in case you missed it, here's a quick primer on all things Lin: The Linsanity started Feb. 4 when the Knicks took on the New Jersey Nets. Lin, a D-league call-up and fourth-string point guard, came off the bench to rack up 25 points and seven assists. Since then, coach Mike D'Antoni has been starting this 6-foot-3 phenom with astounding results: An average of 24 points and 9 assists per game, and the most points – all 136 of them – in a player's first five NBA starts since the NBA/ABA merger, topping household names Allen Iverson, Shaquille O'Neal and Michael Jordan. Add in 38 points against the Lakers and the aforementioned go-ahead three-pointer and there's no denying Jeremy Lin can play.

But that's not all. Lin has also attracted a cult-like following and it's not hard to see why. First and foremost, in an industry fascinated by Cinderella stories, Lin's life is the stuff of legends. From getting snubbed for college scholarships to being undrafted and later cut from two NBA teams, Lin's



Flickr: DvYang

history screams "underdog". That a previously-unheard-of 23-year-old can suddenly galvanize a team, a city, and a league is nothing short of amazing. That he's got a Linsanely punnable name doesn't hurt his chances of grabbing headlines, either.

Personality is also a factor. Lin's interviews are filled with compliments for his teammates and his humility is especially refreshing after this season's lockout. For Lin, it's about the game and it's about the team. As ESPN analyst Tim Legler said, the Knicks now

feel collegiate in the way they react to their wins and to each other. This Lintervention has injected the verve the Knicks desperately needed, not to mention the beleaguered NBA.

Lastly, people identify with Lin. As an Asian-American, I returned to watching the NBA because of Linsanity, inspired by this young man putting Asian-Americans on the map and becoming a role model. Lin also appeals to the Christian population, drawing comparisons to Tim Tebow. And for everyone else, he still reso-

nates because we all know how it feels to be doubted. Lin is a pioneer defying the odds and that's exciting whether or not you can tell your fade-aways from your floaters.

Besides charming the crowd, Lin's got impact on and off the court. His play has energized his teammates: Tyson Chandler and Landry Fields have been lighting it up thanks to Lin's frequent dishing. Steve Novak has come alive sinking threes. And the game against the Kings last Tuesday was the first since April 2009 in which the Knicks had seven players in double digits, displaying Lin's ability to add balance. From a business perspective, Linning is winning. Since Feb. 4, stocks of Madison Square Garden have gone up 9%. Lin jerseys are now the number-one seller at NBA.com and ticket prices for Knicks games have increased an average of 27%. Sporting business consulting firm SportsCorp estimates Lin to be worth between \$10 and \$20 million a year for the NBA.

While these short-term boosts are noteworthy, the main question now is whether Linsanity is sustainable. What's next for this young man? And after his poor showing against the Hornets last Friday, what if he fizzles?

The answers depend on a couple of factors. First, the return of Carmelo Anthony. Melo's habit of taking the clutch shot and playing one-on-one seems at odds with the offensive Linnovation but I think the disruption will be minimal. At the writing of this article before Melo's return, I've got a few thoughts: While Melo said playing with Lin would be "Like a dream come true" we all know this is a seasoned celebrity speaking. However, he's also previously said all he cares about is winning, so with Lin on a roll, the pressure's on for Melo to put his game where his mouth is. I'll give him the benefit of the doubt, especially since I know both Melo and his agent recognize if he doesn't play nice, he'll be forever vilified as "the guy who screwed it up".

My prediction? Melo's return won't

be seamless but after 3 or 4 games the Knicks will get their rhythm. Lin won't contribute as many points as assists but he'll give the Knicks what they really need: leadership at the point. They could be contenders in the playoffs if they start at home but at this point I don't think they can stack up against quality teams. Yes, they've got raw talent, but they lack the finesse and cool-headed experience of teams like the Spurs, currently 10-0 with their last six wins on the road. The Knicks' loss to the Hornets came largely because Lin couldn't adapt to their defense in the paint. Until he learns to change up his game, he is definitely not Linvincible. Add the possibility of Melo disrupting the team chemistry and rough waters may lie ahead.

While the playoffs are a bit too unpredictable, I'll hazard a guess at the future of Jeremy Lin. Barring serious choking (or injury) within the next game or two, he'll develop throughout the season and prove Linsanitary for his team. The fervor won't fade until he does – or maybe even after. Linsanity has truly reached fever pitch. His account on Weibo, the "Chinese Twitter", has nearly reached a million followers; there's a Jeremy Lin Random Word Generator online, and Bloomberg has created the LINdex, valuing Lin's performance like an investment based on four key metrics, one of which is online news stories mentioning his name. Since Feb. 4, the LINdex has risen more than 20%. At this rate, it's doubtful we'll be cured of this Linsanity any time soon.

Over the past few weeks, we've watched a young man's life change before our eyes. True, he hasn't faced the league's best teams. True, his turnovers are alarming. And true, the answer to many of the questions about his future is, "It's too early to tell". But until then, for all the newly-minted basketball fans, the people who love a Cinderella story, and those who believe in basketball as a microcosm for the struggles we all face in life, Linsanity is a fun wave to ride.

The relationship between LSE & the AU

Imogen Butler-Biggs

"We do actually play sport sometimes, you know"

On entering the NAB for a class I realised I had forgotten my LSE card. Standing in full LSE netball kit, I asked to be let in. The security guard, trying to ascertain whether I went to LSE, asked me where the philosophy department common room was. I replied that I did not know but that I clearly went to LSE, indicating my head to toe purple and black. He laughed and said, "Oh, so I will see you drunk on Houghton Street on Wednesday night then?" I responded rather curtly that no, you would probably see me playing netball. Although I attributed most of my irritation to my Monday 9am, it got me thinking about how the stigma attached the AU in general and the bad reputation of netball girls affected our performance.

The BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) knockout cup incorporates all the university sports teams within a certain area, so for netball, there are 124 teams from the whole of the South East. LSE 1sts recently beat the team who were the favourites to win the entire cup and both the 1st and 2nd team are in the quarter-finals. In other words, in the final 8 teams (out

of 124) in the whole of the south-east, LSE make up two. The 1sts, if they continue at the level they are playing, should make it to the final. We both beat teams 3 or 4 leagues above us, whose universities are roughly 3 times the size of LSE (not to mention the fact that the percentage of girls at LSE who know what netball is, is probably about 45). Yet recently, while at an LSE party, someone mentioned in passing that I play netball. The boy I was talking to smugly remarked, "Oh you play netball? Apparently all the netball girls do is get drunk and get with the rugby guys!" Why is it, that at the universities we are beating, that being 1st team captain might command a response vaguely related to athleticism, yet at LSE it triggers a frankly rather boring and inaccurate reply about the type of girl who plays netball. I acknowledge this might have something to do with the indirectly proportional relationship between the amount of time you spend at Zoo Bar and the level to which you play, but still.

Although the negative experiences you have when someone finds out you play netball are generally among the students, it is the lack of support from the SU that is the root of the problem. It is also the ease with which the AU can be misinterpreted as a threat to the prestigious reputation, rather than an opportunity to demonstrate the

diversity of excellence that LSE stands for, that is the problem. Let us compare two components of my time at LSE, neither of which have any effect on my actual degree: netball and LSE100. The amount of provisions made for LSE 100 students to improve was ridiculous. There were writing labs and 10 minute long verbal feedback, personal help session and whatever you could possibly want. For netball, if you want to improve, you have to organise and pay for it yourself. Why is this? I think partly it is because of the reputation of the AU and the Student Unions' attempts to separate itself from controversy. However, essentially I think it is a product of the limited conception of success in LSE in general. Among the sports clubs, and particularly netball, it is not a lack of commitment or talent that puts a ceiling on our possible achievements.

It is at this point that I think it important to mention the Annual Fund. The Annual Fund is undoubtedly a good thing. However it is a highly competitive scheme and its emphasis on "collaboration" and "innovation" leads to clubs funding things that look good, rather than actually allowing students to excel. One of its main aims is to create clubs that are self-sustaining by funding coaching qualifications and umpiring courses. However, we must ask how useful this actually is

in the long run? Firstly, LSE students are ridiculously busy and find it hard enough to play sport three times a week as it is; who has extra time to coach other teams? Besides, everyone plays sport at the same time and either you are playing or you are coaching, you can't do both. Secondly, generally the club has completely new members every three years, what is the use of a graduate, with an umpiring qualification, that has left London? Finally, and crucially, as sad as it is, better teams cost money. You can pay for the courts for a term, and pay someone to get a coaching qualification but the money is a one off sum so where do you play next year when it has run out?

Both the 1st and 2nd teams are on track to be promoted this year, and probably next. We are far surpassing any expectations (not that there are any) of what LSE sport can be like. So what, you may ask, is the problem? The problem is this; it is obvious that LSE is never going to hold sport in nearly as high regard as any kind of academia, but the poor reputation that the AU is allowed and the constant battle against an unflattering stereotype, counteracts any prestige that may come from being successful in this field. Furthermore, good players are being put off netball because of this. When it comes to electing a new club captain, a role that is hard work but at

other universities would be competitively fought over, we are struggling to find any willing candidates. We want to train, but the SU won't cover non-match travel costs and refuses to pay for courts that are anywhere remotely near central London. We have amazing players, but there is not a single team with enough dresses for every player, despite the exceptionally prominent KPMG branding over all our kit (where does this sponsorship money go exactly?). Off our own backs, we are beating universities that pride themselves on their sport, those who have coaches and indoor facilities. Even if we do not expect any sort of recognition for our achievements, you would expect the SU would have some kind of interest in us wanting to improve, yet they don't. The LSE seems to have unofficially labelled the AU as the embarrassing underclass that continuously bring the LSE reputation into disrepute and disappoint everyone on campus with its ignorant and often offensive attitudes. This, I think, is short-sighted. LSE100 was created to prove to employers that LSE students could do more than just sums. If only they had invested their time and money into the skills and interests that the students already possess, we could have avoided the pain of LSE100 and continued to excel in the things we actually enjoy.

Sport

Inside

- 1st XV Rugby Match Report
- Jeremy Lin & 'Lin-sanity'
- LSE & The AU

The bad business of boxing

Was the post-match brawl premeditated?

Maxim Owen

For those of you who may have missed it, Vitali Klitschko and London's very own Derek Chisora fought out a highly entertaining WBC heavyweight title fight last night in Munich. The fight went the distance - all 12 rounds - and was by all accounts a gripping boxing match. Not many had expected such a strong, lionhearted performance from the challenger who was unfortunately unable to fell the resilient defending champion. Many commentators have said that Chisora gave Klitschko his toughest night since his defeat to Lennox Lewis in 2003, and this one would find it hard to disagree.

As enjoyable as the fight was, what will have caught the attention of boxing's more casual observers will almost certainly have been the pre- and post-match antics, most of which are largely attributable to Chisora's ill-disciplined behaviour in and around the ring. From his weigh-in slap of Vitali Klitschko, to his spitting of water into his non-competing brother Wladimir's face, right down to the post-match press conference brawl. At first glance, these farces all look like the product of an immature fighter's attitude problem. At closer inspection however, something far more sinister and calculated may well be at play, especially vis-a-vis the most recent incident: the post-match brawl.

The brawl occurred during the post-match press conference when David Haye, beer in hand, gatecrashed the party and got drawn into verbal fisticuffs by the Klitschko's promoter Bernd Boente who was claiming that Haye had shown no heart in his bout

with Wladimir. He then went on to ridicule the fighter asking him how his toe was (a reference to the Brit's comical excuse for losing the fight), a comment that Chisora picked up on and took it upon himself to drive home, repeat-

like a perfect plan'. Leave it to Frank Warren to seal the deal with 'Right then, we've got a fight'. After this Chisora, riled by Haye's comments, gets out of his seat to go and square up with his tormentor and the whole

of things' and beyond that, finding answers for the causes of these 'things'. The LSE100 graduate inside me refuses to swallow this whole episode as some sort of spontaneous testosterone-fuelled brawl, as we are being led to

ber my surprise at the outcome of the first bout between Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield: a draw. 'A draw!?!?' I remember my father exclaiming. I also remember him trying to explain to me that that is the way the sport of boxing works: by scoring a fight that was so clearly won by Lewis a draw, they would be able to stage a rematch meaning more money would be made for all involved. At the tender age of 8, I found this logic rather difficult to understand. However, after this brawl that I am convinced was staged or at the very least structured, that logic rings truer now more than ever.

If I turn out to be right - something we may never truly know - then surely the responsibility for 'disgracing the sport' lies not with the boxers (as many sports commentators have presumptuously declared), but with the money-grabbing, pseudo-Machiavellian promoters hell-bent on making a buck off boxing and its ambitious but arguably naive fighters. They may not realise it at first, but boxers are almost entirely conditioned by the money they make and the money they generate for the people around them. A glance at any defeated boxer - Leon Spinks being my favourite example - shows that these men are as much rewarded as their are ultimately bound and imprisoned by the money they do or do not make. Sadly for them, it is not they who control this money but an elite set of profiteers who call themselves 'promoters'.

It was Bernd Boente who teed up the rematch with his antagonistic comments and Frank Warren who smashed it beyond the green, past the rainbow and into the pot of gold.



Facebook: Chisora

edly asking 'How's your toe David? How's your toe? How's your toe?'. Mr. Chisora then exclaimed that he would very much like to fight Mr. Haye in London, to which Haye replied 'You've lost three fights in a row'.

At this point, Frank Warren - Chisora's promoter - interjects with 'Hold on David, I've got a great idea! I'm sure you do Frank... 'How about you two fight, and the winner fights Vitali!' To which his German counterpart unsurprisingly replies 'Sounds

thing escalates into a full-on brawl in which the two British boxers and their entourages exchange blows with one another (it should be noted that Haye landed a cracking right hook on Chisora's chin which lent itself to a rather amusing line from Haye, 'That's for in a row now! That's four in a row! As @rioferdy5 would have put it 'you got merked!').

If my two terms of LSE100 have taught me anything, it is undoubtedly the questioning of 'the causes

believe. In a sport where the Wu-Tang Clan's aphorism 'cash rules everything around me' is more relevant than in any other, I find it very difficult to believe that this episode was anything other than a premeditated organisation and publicity of not one, but two very big-money fights. First the All-British ruckus of 'Chisora v Haye', followed by the second installment of the 'British Challenger v Klitschko' bonanza.

As a child I can distinctly remem-

LET'S TALK TACTICS



Are you taking the Mick?

Timothy Poole

On Monday February 13th, the Premier League saw its third managerial victim of the season as Wolverhampton Wanderers owner, Steve Morgan, dismissed manager, Mick McCarthy. The decision came in the wake of a 5-1 pummelling at home to fierce Black Country rivals, West Brom - a result which compounded a dismal run of just two wins in 23 games. As hiring and firing goes, Morgan's decision came with heavy statistical backing; despite claiming that he was 'the right man for the job', McCarthy's talking on the pitch virtually made his position untenable. Now the hunt for a new Wolves manager is on, whilst McCa-

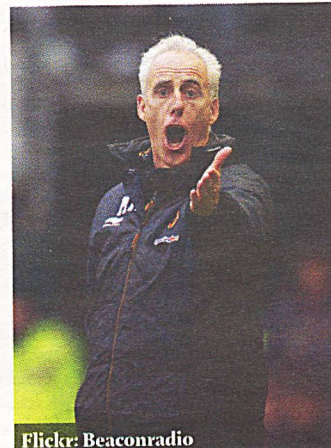
rthy's five-year reign at the club has come to a less than glorious end.

Thierry Henry's hopes of a final flourish for the club he so dearly loves were well and truly dashed last Wednesday as AC Milan overcame Arsenal in comprehensive fashion. A wonder strike from Kevin Prince-Boateng, a brace from Robinho and a Zlatan Ibrahimovic penalty have all but sealed Arsenal's exit from the Champions League before the second leg has even begun. Questions will be asked of manager, Arsene Wenger, whose side simply did not turn up, further succumbing to a 2-0 defeat three days later, at the hands of Sunderland in the FA Cup. Is Wenger right to keep his faith in the likes of Rosicky, Walcott,

Djorou, Arshavin and co.? And can Wenger ensure Robin Van Persie will still be at the Emirates to spare his teammates' blushes come the end of the season? The voices of dissent have started to grow. One thing we can ascertain for definite is that Arsenal are no longer the 'Invincibles' they once were.

Gus Hiddink was appointed head coach of super-rich Russian outfit, Anzhi Makhachkala, last Friday, ruling him out of contention for the England job at Euro 2012. In the Dutchman, Anzhi have a highly-qualified candidate who has overseen the likes of Chelsea, Real Madrid and several national teams - not least of all, Russia. Fabio Capello was heavily linked with

the job initially, but it is Hiddink who will take up the reigns for a reported £8 million a year. England have lost a chance here. Whilst it is now only a matter of time before Harry Redknapp is offered the national job, it is surely too soon for him to try and salvage any success at this summer's European Championships. Hiddink would have been the perfect interim - the FA could have and should have acted rapidly to snap him up. As things stand, England remain managerless, but Anzhi's ambitions of playing Champions League football have received a sizeable boost - Hiddink will have them there in no time.



Flickr: Beaconradio