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LSE Director Sir Howard Davies
Metropolitan Police officers surround East Building while demanding surrender of Beaver editor

The Beaver

9th December 2008
 Newspaper of the
 London School of Economics
 Students' Union

Union budget to maintain welfare spending as deficit grows

- > **Students approve annual budget in Union General Meeting**
- > **Union finances poised to ride out recession as income declines**

Joseph Cotterill & Srikanth Narayanamohan

Students voted to approve the Students' Union's budget for the year last Thursday, after a presentation by treasurer Wil Barber revealed that the Union's finances would mostly escape the brunt of the recession.

"You are all loss-making," Barber told students in a special session of the Union General Meeting, paraphrasing (earlier) remarks by the School's Director Howard Davies at a recent UGM appearance.

While the Union's commercial income had decreased this year, current spending on student services and welfare would be maintained, Barber said.

Barber thanked his predecessor, Libby Meyer, for generating a £120,000 surplus that would be used for reinvestment to mitigate the Union's deficit.

Barber proceeded to explain the line items of the budget, displayed across several pages. Students voted their approval at the conclusion of every page.

The process, interrupted frequently with questions from the floor, covered many issues, including sabbatical salaries, the Union's subsidy to the LSE Nursery, money spent on the Freshers' Festival at the start of term, and the Quad party held on the US election night.

STA Travel's departure from the Quad over summer had removed just under £20,000 from the Union's income flow, Barber said.

Costs had also been raised by the addition of a third full-time member of staff to the Students' Union Advice and Counselling Centre, and an increased subsidy to the Beaver newspaper after a shortfall in advertising income.

Barber faced criticism for using the Natwest bank to handle Union funds, in light of its alleged unethical policies and cheaper charges at other banks.

He replied that the Union banked with Natwest because it was over the road. "I don't want Students' Union employees travelling with large sums of money around central London," he said. "It's not feasible."

The cost of Students' Union elections also provoked mild controversy. At a projected cost of £4500 to run elections this year, "democracy isn't cheap," Barber said.

James Bacon, last year's Returning Officer responsible for running elections, asked why the elections overhauled in the

budget included £1800 for roof repairs incurred at last year's Lent term elections count night.

Drunken students had made their way to the top of the fourth floor atrium in Old Building during the counting of ballots, damaging its canvas roof.

Initial School demands for £13,000 were negotiated down after it was found that it had claimed for other unconnected damages.

Barber said the Union had agreed to pay the remaining amount rather than pass the costs on to individual students. "We couldn't rat students out," he said.

Allocation of funds to societies provoked the budget's sole proposed amendment, tabled by the United Nations society. Society members requested a further £250 to reflect their activities and size of membership.

Rumours had been rife before the meeting that the UN society would seek to claim amounts from other societies, including the Economics and Itchy feet societies.

Taking to the stage, committee member Daniel Fountain asked that money be redistributed from the new societies fund in order to help maintain his society's successful involvement in a number of Model United Nations tournaments.

General Secretary Aled Dilwyn Fisher spoke against the amendment. While he supported the UN society, he said its officials could get more money from other means, including filing for a budget extension when they ran low on funds, he said. "It's not fair, new societies have no one to speak out for them," Fisher added.

While voting was close, the amendment failed to pass. The passage of a final vote to approve the overall budget ended the meeting.

Barber remained confident on Friday that the Union's deficit was manageable. Even if budgetary spending remained at the current level, he said, "it would be ten years before there would be any trouble".

He added that this year's level of deficit would be a one-off, and predicted that next year's budget deficit would be smaller.

Barber also emphasised that many Union activities paid for directly by the School were not included in the budget. "The LSE gym is going to be renovated and refurbished during the Christmas break by the School," he said. "The Students' Union requested and won this, but it won't appear on the balance sheet of the budget."

Here's looking at you Miss LSE pageant under media glare



The controversy over the Miss LSE beauty pageant hit the national media this week, with entrants and protestors appearing on television and writing opinion pieces for daily newspapers.
Pageant entrant Sonia Abdul debated with Union LGBT officer Lizzie Merrow on Channel 4 news and Feminist Society chair Anna Krausova on BBC 1's million-viewer breakfast show.
> Full coverage page 3

Sixty years after UN Declaration, LSE debate lauds human rights

Beth Cherryman

The right to be free from torture or inhumane treatment was declared The Right of Rights at a light-hearted celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human rights at the LSE last Thursday.

Shami Chakrabati, Director of the civil rights group Liberty and a LSE Governor, passionately argued that there was "no excuse" for torture whatever the scenario and that any "compromise" in this conviction would result in rights being lost for good.

LSE sociologist Peter Townsend argued in favour of Article 22, the right to social security. Townsend defended the article against claims that it was "second order" and not a survival right, maintaining that it was "achievable" and was the one right that could be practically drawn upon and used. It developed "action, responsibility and welfare," Townsend argued.

Other speakers included Professor Francesca Klug, who argued in favour of Article 1, the contention that we are all born "free and equal", and Professor Conor Gearty, who spoke for Article 8, the right "to an effective remedy... for acts violating the fundamental rights granted" by constitution and law. Both Klug and Gearty are based at the Centre for the Study of Human Rights at the LSE.

The panel agreed that upholding human rights came down to individual ethical judgment. When asked if it was better to protect the "many" by sacrificing the rights of the individual, Chakrabati said that it was not, arguing that "the many is made up of individuals."

One audience member said that the Universal Declaration was a way for the West to impose their values onto the rest of the world. Townsend responded that it was unsurprising the document reflected Western dominance in recent history. Chakrabati countered that human rights are not "culturally relative" but the "ethical standard."

Comment
 Human rights special 7-10



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Apology and Correction

We would like to point out that a news story in the 4 November issue of the Beaver was erroneous and misleading in its reporting of the statements and character of Douglas Murray, which the Beaver retracts. We wish to make clear that Mr Murray has never said "Islam is a terrible ideology". This statement was in fact made by an interviewee of Mr Murray's. Mr Murray has also only ever called for the deportation of known terrorists from the West. We also wish to make clear that Mr Murray is not an Islamophobe. We offer our unreserved apologies to Mr Murray.

Collective

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The Collective is The Beaver's governing body. You must have three articles or photos published in the paper to qualify for membership. If you believe you are a Collective member but your name is not on the list above, please email editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

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LSE research

Time poverty is new threat to children, says LSE academic

Victoria Boggiano

The government should create a "time poverty" target to ensure parents spend enough time with their children, according to a study by LSE's Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE).

The study comes at a time when critics claim new government tactics to curb child poverty could force parents to spend more time away from their children. Dr Tina Burchardt, a senior research fellow at CASE, claims this should be prevented by developing new time poverty targets alongside child poverty research.

Young single parents, who often suffer from income poverty, are at especially high risk of subjecting their children to time poverty, with the government providing them no alternatives, the study claims.

"The government's strategy to tackle child poverty is based on getting more parents into paid work but this does not recognise that children need time as well as money," Burchardt said.

Burchardt cited a recent change to government rules for single parents claiming benefits which "requires them to look for work when their youngest child reaches the age of 12." According to Burchardt, this is an example of government recognition of income poverty at the expense of time poverty.

Burchardt's study found that 1.6 percent of all working age adults are both time and income poor.

She said one way of solving this problem is to increase the educational opportunities for adults who find themselves in this bind.

"More effective support for people to develop their educational potential could be provided through regulation to ensure employers provide adequate time off for studying for work-related qualifications and the extension of childcare tax credits to also cover study hours."

In addition, interviews with working adults for the study revealed a demand for nursery vouchers for parents of three and four year olds working longer hours and for childcare facilities during teacher training days.

OLIVER WYMAN

The secret of joy in work is contained in one word—excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it.

- Pearl S. Buck

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MARSH MERCER KROLL
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University beauty pageants

Guess what? Looks count in a beauty contest

Who could resist a tiara, a sash and the chance to become the object of unbridled feminist looks, it's neither liberating nor a staggering blow to the sisterhood's struggle for equality. It's just a rather unoriginal and unedifying way for

event". There is nothing groundbreaking about beauty pageants, which date back to the 19th century and have more distant antecedents isn't making a bold strike for female equality and dignity. Unlike the previous feminist generation of feminists, I've grown

Women

Betraying the student body?

Beauty pageants are often derided as sexist, outdated and belittling - yet top female students are flocking to take part. **Emine Saner** finds out why

Over the past few months, a series of beauty contests has been held in London. In fact, so many that what distinguishes the pageants is not their format but the fact that they are taking place at some of London's best universities. Last week, for instance, LSE's annual Miss LSE beauty contest was held at the London School of Economics. King's College London also held its annual Miss King's beauty contest at a recent event at a club. And at the British University of London, the annual Miss BU beauty contest was held at a recent event at a club. The Miss University London contest was also held at a recent event at a club. The Miss University London contest was also held at a recent event at a club.



Beauty pageants are often derided as sexist, outdated and belittling - yet top female students are flocking to take part. **Emine Saner** finds out why

older men, the designer, saying about "the new students go to the event". In doing, he says a professional, realistic or, "though I can't say who". At last year's pageant, the London Student newspaper approached the Annual Miss LSE beauty contest, which had a report. "I am here for the party girls. Much has been made of the fact that the contest benefits the charity Cancer Research, but Emine says that's in its company "it's to give you, the event's profits, to be used in how much we can do".

LSE beauty contest becomes trial by media

Michael Deas

The Daily Mail claims to be shocked by students "who'd rather fight to be crowned the campus beauty queen than battle for women's rights". The Sun thinks Students' Union Women's Officer Ruby Buckley is a misguided feminist. Unexpectedly, the Miss LSE beauty pageant and its opponents have been splashed all over the national media. To most observers at LSE, the pageant attendees and protesters did very little than repeat last year's debate. But when protests outside Miss LSE were followed by similar banner-waving and chanting at competitions for other London universities, it became a national news story. The Camden New Journal ran what appears to be the first story outside student media about the protests surrounding Miss LSE and Miss SOAS on 27 November 2008. London Lite picked up on the story last Wednesday, and claimed that protests had taken place outside of events for students at Queen Mary's College and Regent College. By the next day, Students' Union officials were being contacted by the national media. Contestant Sonia Abdul-Rahman debated with LGBT Officer Lizzie Merrow on Channel 4 news and with the Feminist Society's Anna Krausova - who wore a t-shirt bearing the slogan LSE not £5€ - on BBC1's Breakfast show. Photographs taken by The Beaver's Erik Lang have appeared with stories in almost every national media outlet. News reports were quickly followed by opinion pieces that berated both the pageant and LSE's feminists. Miss LSE contestant Sonia Abdul-Rahman told Channel 4's Krishnan Guru-Murthy that "it's just for fun. Personality played an important role in the competition. Nobody said you have to look a certain way to take part." Students' Union LGBT Officer Lizzie Merrow responded by saying, "How were the contestants chosen? They were approached in night clubs. This is not just about gender rights. We are judging people against a very westernised idea of what the female identity should be."

Miss LSE winner Keelin Gavaghan was quoted in the Daily Mail saying "I fail to see what is wrong with feeling glamorous for one night. We hardly sold our souls." "Nowadays I believe that we are post-feminism. Not so long ago women couldn't receive Firsts at university just because they were women, but we have come a long way since." Women's Officer Ruby Buckley wrote a Guardian opinion piece in which she said, "I don't buy their 'post-feminism' malarkey, and I definitely won't be told that following the mantra of 'dumb down breasts out' makes me the modern woman." Buckley told The Beaver that she was initially pleased with the national attention the protest received but that some of the columns that commented on the controversy were "disappointing." "Reporters still think they have to comply with the view that feminism is a dirty word. Despite claims that we are living in a post-feminist era, I am pleased that the coverage has reignited the debate on the progress feminism has made," she said. Sonia Abdul-Rahman told The Beaver that "appearing on television was nerve racking but it was a great opportunity for me to put forward our view. I think we've presented our case very well." "Students today are international, money isn't an issue for them. They are just out to have a good time. Most students don't think that this is an issue," she added. For its part, the LSE told enquiring journalists that what students did in their private time was up to them. Students' Union Communications Officer Dan Sheldon said, "Unsurprisingly, some of the coverage has been very sensationalist, some has been completely inaccurate. However, it's great that this debate has received wider attention. The LSE students featured have all come across very well." None of the media coverage picked up on the debate surrounding the proportion of profits event organiser 121 Entertainment passed on to charity. Promotional material for the pageants claims that they are in aid of Cancer Research UK but LSE student and 121 Entertainment representative Rudolph Graziani said he "couldn't be sure" how much money would be given to charity. The Miss University of London final takes place in February.

"Appearing on television was nerve-racking but it was a great opportunity for us to put forward our view" Sonia Abdul-Rahman Miss LSE entrant

What the press said Beauty pageant culture may be tacky, shallow and vain, but it's not coercive. **Ceri Radford** Daily Telegraph Those who sneer nastily at women who have chosen to celebrate their looks in an innocent way are themselves ugly where it really matters. **Ann Widdecombe MP** Daily Express In these postfeminist times, empowered women are supposed to be able to do whatever they want to express themselves and their bodies. **Jan Moir** Daily Mail The media consensus regarding Miss University London seems to be that it is a bit of fun. I beg to differ. **India Knight** Sunday Times



JAN MOIR Are you thinking what she's thinking? Who's got George deathly dust-doo? Ignore the po-faced feminists. Why shouldn't brains celebrate beauty? get stuffed!



Next year's plans already laid as Union officers look back on term

- > Campaigning on Nursery, teaching quality to extend to 24-hour library opening times
- > General Secretary and Communications Officer already plan to rerun for positions

Joseph Cotterill

Two of the current four sabbatical officers who run the LSE Students' Union have said they plan to run again for a second year, after a term of campaigning on student issues, including working to save the LSE Nursery.

General Secretary Aled Dilwyn Fisher and Communications Officer Daniel Sheldon have both confirmed to The Beaver their intention to stand for re-election next term. Wil Barber, the Treasurer, and Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang, the Education and Welfare Officer, have not confirmed their intentions.

While it is relatively common for students union sabbatical officers at other universities to hold office for more than one year, in the LSE Students' Union's recent history it has been comparatively rare.

This year's sabbatical team, elected to their roles in last year's Lent term Union elections, spoke to The Beaver last week about their work this term, how far they had fulfilled their original manifesto pledges, and their plans for the rest of the year.

Aled Dilwyn Fisher, the Union's General Secretary, is responsible for the Union's overall campaigning focus and strategic development. This includes the Your Union consultation, which was authorised earlier this term and has gathered steam in recent weeks.

Fisher said he was already getting good feedback from the consultation process, which has started with society submissions before moving on to a survey of students next term. "Obviously a lot of people are excited about the new building," he said, referring to the New Union Building.

This will be developed out of the current St Philips site on the north-west of campus, in the School's next big restoration project after the New Academic Building was completed this term.

Under Fisher's leadership, the Students' Union has also run a well-organised

campaign to save the LSE Nursery from the prospect of being shut down next term. The Union secured a consultation process with the School which has encouraged parents and students to make their feelings clear.

So does Fisher think the nursery's future is effectively assured? "I don't want to say that, but we've shifted the goalposts in this campaign," he said.

"It is now politically very difficult for the School to shut it down, because it would cause uproar. We've also impressed on the School how good the nursery is, how valued it is, and how much non-parent students recognise its importance."

Now Fisher says the Union's campaigning focus will also turn to negotiations with the School to have the Library return to opening 24 hours a day. Twenty-four hour opening throughout term time was introduced as a trial during the 2006-07 academic year.

The School decided not to continue the policy into the 2007-08 academic year because it said there had not been enough demand for the service to justify the cost. Last year's sabbatical officers opposed the move, but their campaign, based on the slogan 'Tired Of Being Kicked Out At 23:59:59?', ultimately failed to change the School's policy.

"We didn't really specify what it was we were asking for," Fisher said of that campaign. This time the sabbatical officers would focus on securing 24-hour opening for the times where it was most needed first, such as the summer exam period and Lent term, he said. Still, "last year's campaign came very close," he said.

Fisher did not believe the sabbatical officers have left it too late to reactivate the library campaign, after leaving it dormant through Michaelmas. "The timing is good for next term," where a series of academic and financial meetings with the School will provide opportunities to press the issue, he said.

Reviving the campaign was one of Fisher's original manifesto pledges. What of his other pledges, such as dividing the postgraduate officer position on the Union Executive into Taught and Research roles?

"To be honest, we may well go further," he said. The Your Union process would raise this issue. "We may have a guaran-

teed postgrad sabb, and I would love that to happen. That would be my ideal. But it would emerge out of consultation."

Overall, Fisher is satisfied that he is gradually implementing the policies he promised. "Everything I've put in my manifesto, I've done something on them at least, and some of them very prominently, like keeping Wednesday afternoons free." Fisher has raised the issue of setting this time of the week aside for sports activities at the highest levels of the School's decision-making hierarchy.

Fisher also says he wants to build "a strong and active Union culture" in the background.

That culture may eventually also include course and halls representatives, student groups who currently liaise with the School outside the jurisdiction of the Students' Union. "Course reps are reliant on departments, halls committees rely on halls," he said.

Union supervision of their elections and funding would provide much greater support, Fisher argued, and although their inclusion in the Union remained his personal opinion for now, it could be implemented for next year.

It is after all possible that Fisher will see the first Union course and halls representatives take office. Fisher says he will run again next term for another year in office as General Secretary, confirming rumours that have circled the Union since the start of Michaelmas.

Daniel Sheldon, the Union's Communications Officer, said he also planned to run again. "There's a lot to achieve, and we need more time to do that." Sheldon's responsibilities include promoting Union campaigns and activities, not least through the Union's website and countless posters designed for campaigns and society events.

If this is what Sheldon has done throughout this term, why shouldn't students replace him and get a proper design and web team? "I agree," he said. "I think the Communications Officer job should be more about Communications and Campaigns."

"An in-house graphic designer would be fantastic, and free me up to do the political stuff I was elected to do," he added.

Indeed, Sheldon's manifesto strongly emphasised his links to student campaigning and promised to facilitate the Union's political work.

Sheldon's political communications skills were on display even before the beginning of this term, when the sabbatical officers attacked the School for naming the New Academic Building's largest lecture theatre after Sheikh Zayed, the former United Arab Emirates leader with alleged human rights abuses to his name.

The naming had followed a large donation from the Emirates Foundation to the School to build the theatre. Sheldon was one of the most vocal critics of the decision, not least because of his background in fundraising for the School's Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

"It raised my eyebrows," Sheldon said. "It led me to do a bit of research. Although it's not black or white, I don't think he was an entirely virtuous character, and there were better things we could have named a lecture theatre after."

In the event, students voted against authorising a sabbatical campaign against the theatre naming. "We didn't pursue it," Sheldon said.

Sheldon's other responsibilities include developing the Union's online communications. Compared to the School's own online presence, the Union's website is widely acknowledged to fail to engage students, with out-of-date content and clunky, cluttered aesthetics.

Sheldon acknowledges this more than most - but says his hands are tied.

"The Students' Union website is crap at the moment, due to the system that we're running on. We're tied into a contact until September." Sheldon had however just received news that the School may give £30,000 award through the Annual Fund to develop the website. "Our current one is not fit for purpose," he said. "In the short term, improvements will be made."

Sheldon also raised controversy last week for claiming in a Beaver comment piece that the Union General Meeting was dead unless massive change in the Union's closed political culture was forthcoming.

It is part of Sheldon's job to promote the UGM as a key, weekly Union activity.

After initial high turnouts, two UGMs have been inquorate this term, reviving the debate on democracy and apathy in the Union. How did Sheldon explain the recent run of iniquity?

"I think this is a symptom rather than the problem itself. The disease is disengagement with the politics of the Students' Union, not the Union itself. You can't measure the health of the Students' Union by how many people turn up to the weekly meeting. It is an indicator of how healthy our democratic structures are," he noted, but not only way to measure a students union's success.

It was better to measure participation in the Union through the number of societies and numbers of students involved in them on a weekly basis, he said. Compared to other unions around the country, the LSE Students' Union comes out very well indeed on this score.

In terms of the Union's central organisation, however, Sheldon noted that "students see it as irrelevant to their daily lives, and that's something we've got to counter, showing to students what difference the Union makes to their education."

"It's very difficult to communicate that. But that's what I'm here to do."

Wil Barber, the Students' Union Treasurer, spoke to The Beaver just after students had voted to approve the Union's budget for the year. Preparing the budget had taken up a lot of Barber's time through term, but he said his role as treasurer was far from over. "You select a direction you want to go and things you want to do, and you have to adapt the budget to fit that," he said.

Barber said that he would now work on changing the Union's financial culture. "We need to start to move away from this commercial service focus, and really start the development of the membership side."

The Students' Union's poor performance in the recent National Student Survey was the result of having this wrong focus, Barber said.

This was especially because the Union had failed to keep up with the School's ris-

Students protest against Israeli administrative detention

Sofia Zabolotskih

Over twenty students joined a protest organised by the Students' Union Palestine Society against Israel's policy of indefinite administrative detention on Houghton Street on Friday.

Protesters sat down in single file holding up pictures of 17 year-old Palestinian girl Salwa Saleh, who has been incarcerated since her arrest on 5th June 2008 and has not been charged or told why she is being held. Saleh's family have not been allowed to visit her.

Palestine Society secretary Mira Hammad said, "The Israeli authorities can hold someone under 'administrative de-

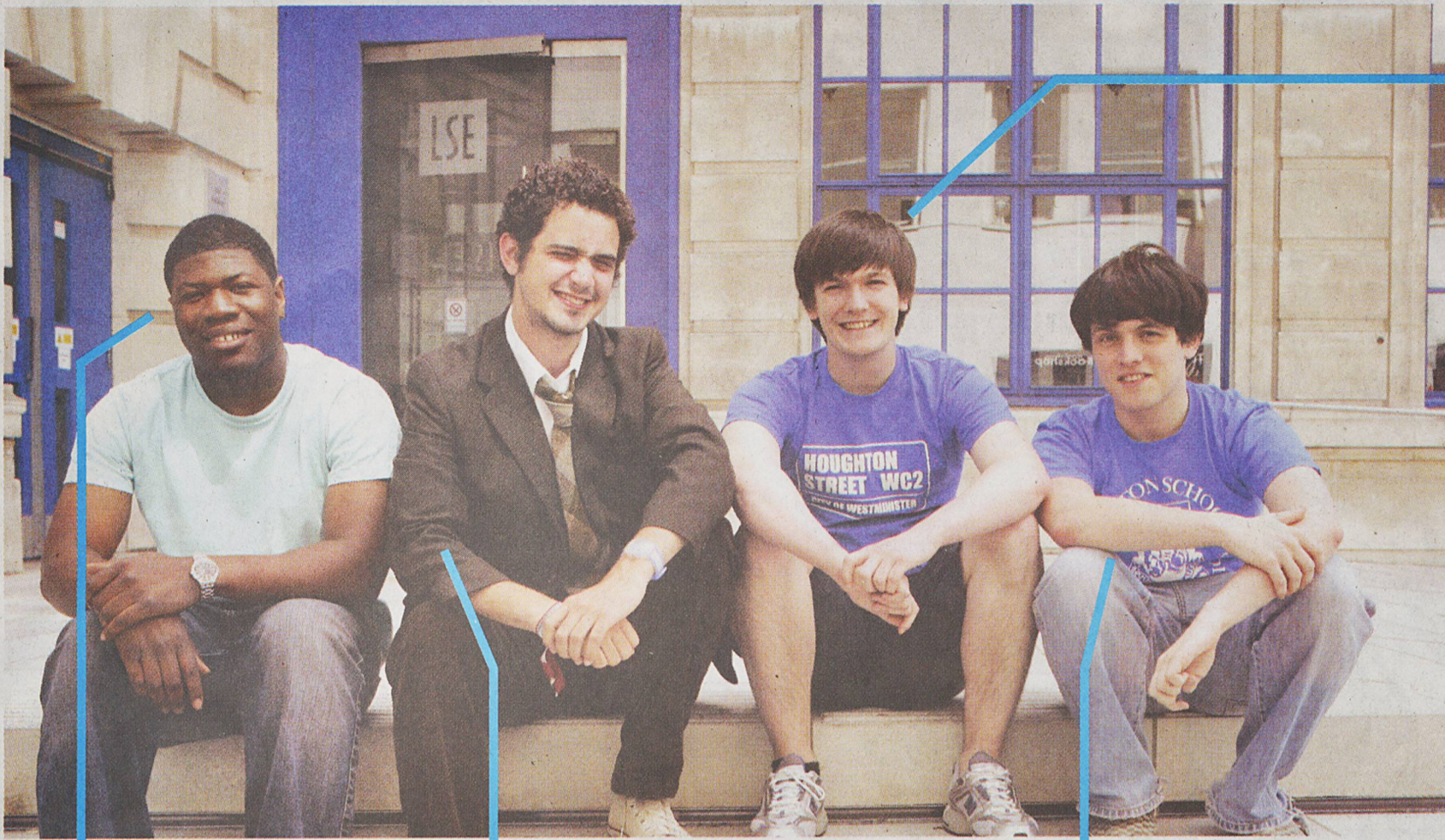
tention' without charge or trial for as long as they wish. Salwa is just one of many people who are having their human rights denied in this way."

Campaigners claim Israel is holding over 570 Palestinians in administrative detention in facilities run by the Israeli prison service. The practice is allegedly aimed at preventing those who are thought of as likely to commit a crime in the future from doing so, rather than punish criminals for a crime that has already been committed. The Palestine Society also argued that administrative detention is used because it prohibits the release of sensitive information in any future court cases.

Protester Ridaa Husaim said, "In Palestine, we would be thinking: 'this could be one of us'. This girl reflects the plight of many".



Students protest against Israeli administrative detention Photo: Manal Massalha



Aled Fisher General Secretary

Manifesto pledges

- **"An Education We Deserve":** campaign for a 24-hour library, lobby for exam feedback, fight for assurance from Director that top-up fees will not be increased
- **"Defend postgrads":** secure free Wednesday afternoons and split Union Postgraduate Officer role into Taught and Research positions
- **"Supporting sports":** increase AU funding and protect ULU sports
- **Promote Media Groups, create an "internationalist Union" with environmental excellence**

Results

Twenty-four hour Library campaign to start again next term. No promise so far from Director on top-up fees. Wednesday afternoons raised at School meetings

Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang Education & Welfare Officer

Manifesto pledges

- **Press for more course packs and online readings**
- **Campaign for smaller classes and more feedback from teachers**
- **More staff and facilities for student advice and counselling**

Results

Participation in ongoing School teaching quality review. Third full-time member of staff at Stu-

Wil Barber Treasurer

Manifesto pledges

- **Cut sabbatical pay and use money saved to create new student bursaries**
- **Carry out renovation of changing rooms and gym over summer**

Results

Pay cut abandoned in light of £25,000 grant from School for bursaries, and counterproductive long-term impact. Changing rooms refurbished over summer and gym to be renovated soon

Daniel Sheldon Communications Officer

Manifesto pledges

- **Reconnect the AU and societies to the Union**
- **Facilitate campaigning on behalf of exam resits, improved sports facilities and free prescriptions for students**
- **Track record of success in Media Group, RAG and website design**

Results

Union website remains moribund until contract change. Several micro-sites created to help Union activities. Creativity brought to Nursery campaign

perhaps the Education and Welfare position that has the most potential to affect individual students directly. Akpan-Inwang has sat on academic misconduct panels and taken on a considerable amount of casework this term.

Isn't it dangerous to leave this work, which could decide a student's academic fate, in the hands of a recent graduate?

Akpan-Inwang said his work rarely engages direct legal liability - he is able to give academic advice, but his role is to refer tough cases on to the advice and counselling centre of the Students' Union, he said.

Students' academic lives have also been affected more indirectly this term by Akpan-Inwang's work on teaching quality, conducted in several meetings with School officials as they plan out LSE's academic strategy for the years ahead.

The School's academic culture needs urgent change, Akpan-Inwang said. Planned innovations by the School, like the cross-disciplinary 'Thinking Like a Social Scientist' course, to be taken by undergraduates on a trial basis next year, were part of the solution, he said, but there remained a lot more to be done.

There also remains a lot of work to do within the Your Union consultation in terms of redefining the Education and Welfare job itself. "My position really needs to be sorted out," Akpan-Inwang said, as the LSE student community becomes larger and more diverse.

Some of Akpan-Inwang's colleagues may be around next academic year to implement the changes.

ing student population. "The demographics have changed so markedly over the last decade, but the Students' Union is very much the same."

It is all a long way from Barber's initial manifesto pledges. Barber had promised to cut the sabbatical officers' wages and use the money to fund bursaries for students.

This was effectively abandoned in the budget Barber had just presented.

"We tried to come to an agreement on what would be the best use of the money" amongst the sabbatical officers, Barber said. But in the long term, "all putting it

back in the Students' Union pot would achieve would be a smaller subvention next year by that amount."

Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang, the Students' Union's Education and Welfare Officer, spoke to *The Beaver* on the last day of Mind and Body Week, seven days of Union activities which Akpan-Inwang had designed to consolidate the various awareness weeks of previous years. The week, including a sponsored cycle in the Quad and a blood

donor drive, crowned the Education and Welfare Officer's work this term.

The awareness weeks - from Sexual Health and Guidance, LGBT to Anti-Racism - had suffered low attendance in recent years, but Akpan-Inwang said the new participatory format of Mind and Body Week had arrested this decline. "Students like to not have people talk at them," he said.

Akpan-Inwang has also organised the Unwind series of events this term. There had been "massive involvement" in cycling lessons put on by the Union in partnership

with Westminster City Council, he said. Pilates and self-defence classes had also received high attendance.

Akpan-Inwang's focus on skill development has certainly gone some way to meeting his original campaign pledge of "healthier minds and healthier bodies."

Unlike the other three sabbatical officers, Akpan-Inwang's bid for election last Lent term was not opposed by any other candidates. Akpan-Inwang admits that he did not definitely decide to run until two weeks before nominations opened.

But of all the sabbatical officers, it is

Unicredit CEO: Stop playing blame game

> Bankers' abandon created huge growth

Lorenzo Biondi

Leading Italian banker Alessandro Profumo delivered a public lecture on the economic crisis at the LSE last week in which he emphasised the need for policymakers and commentators to move past focusing on "who is more guilty" and concentrate on how to tackle the global slowdown.

Profumo, the CEO of Europe's fourth largest bank Unicredit, argued that the responsibilities of the financial crisis are shared, and that bankers have to take share of responsibility along with the regulators.

The lecture was chaired by LSE Director Howard Davies, who is the former chairman of the Financial Services Authority. At this Profumo remarked, "I am

quite embarrassed in speaking with a chair who has been a regulator."

On the role of regulation in the future, Profumo went on to say: "We need a more coordinated supervising activity. In Europe, I would like to see the central banker and the regulator in the same position, as wished by the G20 as well."

Profumo emphasised that bankers were at fault for underestimating risks such as liquidity. But Profumo also argued that the bankers' failure to consider these risks led the world economy to grow by 5% a year for three years in a row for the first time.

When asked which of the world's regions will exit the crisis more first, Profumo said, "The world will not restart without the US. China is not enough, and consumer confidence will restart in the States. Europe will be the latest, because we are driven by the exports. It is crucial that the USA and Asia start growing again."



Cherie Blair speaks at School

Phyllis Lui

Cherie Blair, LSE alumni and wife of former Prime Minister Tony Blair, spoke at the LSE last Wednesday about her experiences at during her undergraduate years at the LSE and at the Bar.

LSE Director Howard Davies, who interviewed her, asked questions relating to a new book which she described as "a woman's journey". Blair spoke about her

childhood and being raised by a single parent.

When questioned how she juggled being a Queen's Counsel, Prime Minister's wife and mother to four children, she replied that she had it easy compared to her mother.

Blair also commented on the difficulties she faced at the Bar due to being female, as some chambers already had one female tenant and did not see the need for another.

Davies also questioned Blair about various world leaders and their spouses. With regards to President Bush, she found

that he was a "charming, engaging individual, [and a] nice person to have a drink with".

Although Mrs Blair had an interest in politics and ran for a seat in Parliament as a Labour candidate, she strongly emphasised that there is no place for a spouse in policymaking. Instead she was and remains a passionate supporter of her husband, she said.

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Full Cherie Blair interview 19

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LSE STUDENTS'

UNION



Comment

The Universal Declaration and the missing right

UDHR
SIXTY

Poverty is an important human rights issue that needs to be taken more seriously

Rachel Chhoa-Howard

Chair, LSESU
Amnesty International



Sixty years on, the world has come a long way since the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. The language of rights has become a feature of domestic and international legal documents which span the right to privacy to the prohibition against torture and mean that, even when states do not obey rights, they are at least able to be shamed publicly for their misdeeds.

There is, however, no doubt that there is a long way to go if human rights are to experience continued respect and adherence as well as more widespread adoption. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the continued existence of poverty, which, according to the World Bank, afflicts 1.4 billion people the most severely. Poverty results, amongst other things, in the present malnourishment of 840 million people, and the deaths of 11 million children every year before they reach the age of five. In a world in which it is now possible to provide every person on the planet with enough food, it is clear that the deep poverty prevalent today is a result of the structural order that governs those under it.

If we are to truly realise rights, we must address the poverty endemic in the world which, according to Amnesty International, is "not a just an unfortunate reality of life" but a "human rights scandal of shocking proportions." Poverty is not a natural phenomenon, but a result of policy decisions by the powerful. Developed as well as developing states are complicit in its prevalence.

We have taken a long time to wake up to viewing poverty as a human rights issue, despite the fact that economic and social rights were enshrined into the Universal Declaration at the same time as civil and political rights. As an excuse, developed states have often played down the importance of economic and social rights, drawing attention away from violations and the responsibility of the global North for the continued existence of extreme



Economic and social rights include the right to adequate resources for good health
Photo: flickr user unclured

poverty. If you think this is a problem limited to the developing world, think again. In the UK, poverty has increased more greatly than in many other developed countries and it still has one of the highest rates of child poverty in the rich world.

If poverty is a human rights issue, how are we to address it? Firstly, the proper realisation of economic and social rights requires the proper implementation of civil and political rights. Without a safeguard against tyrannical regimes, economic rights may simply be dispensed with at the will of the ruling government. We need look no further than Zimbabwe's current humanitarian emergency as an example of this. To quote Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga, the country that was once known as the region's "bread basket" is now the region's "basket case". In a state in which civil and political rights have been brutally suppressed by the Mugabe regime, any concerns for social well-being have been silenced, resulting in the calamity we are witnessing today. For human rights as a whole to be fully respected, protected and fulfilled, their indivisibility must be fully recognised. Zimbabwe should serve as a stark reminder of this to

us all - not least those who are currently enjoying basic economic and social, but lacking most civil and political rights.

While the principal role of ensuring basic economic and social rights for citizens falls on the state in question, other states have a responsibility to not contribute to the perpetuation of poverty. This can be traced, not only to moral duty, but to human rights doctrine that has developed over the past sixty years. In an international order dominated by the powerful, it is clear that in order to realise the basic economic and social rights of the desperately poor we must address the structural aspects of the current international order that impede them. Apart from tackling the deeply unfair decision-making processes of international institutions, states must collectively address global development programmes which do not take full account of the rights of those they are meant to be helping. Trade policy needs to adopt fairer positions, and the issue of debt needs to be revisited. Finally, big business, which is often complicit, not only in violations of poverty but also in

conflict situations, needs to be brought to account too.

In this reclamation of economic and social rights, a few things must be remembered. Economic and social rights are not specific to one particular economic system. The adoption of one system over another cannot therefore be used as an excuse not to try and realise basic economic and social rights. Secondly, and very importantly, we must involve the victims - those living in poverty, and the rights-holders of these claims - in the process of realising their rights. If genuine participation is not part of poverty reduction, it will not only result in unsustainable and ineffective policies, but serve to entrench the belief amongst many that rights are a Western or colonialist instrument. Finally, the lives of two billion of the world's population are not the only important things at stake. Failing to acknowledge a global lack of basic subsistence will have a lasting impact on the human rights project of the twenty first century. The language of rights is a powerful tool against injustice. It is time that poverty was included in this vocabulary - and it needs to be included if human rights are to survive.

The UDHR at sixty has a lot to celebrate, but if it is to garner the credibility of much of the world, it is going to have to address the atrocious disparities in wealth that exist today. With the current economic climate, this is a timely issue on which to reflect. Poverty exposes the vast disparities in power of the global order for what they are, and in an interdependent world, implicates all in the continued existence of extreme poverty. It highlights that if we are to truly realise rights, and gain their respect of the world's population, we need to include the rest of the world in the decisions that affect them. The human rights regime has come a long way from the aspirational document of the Universal Declaration, but if we are to move forward, everyone must have a right to participate. Realisation of these rights will not only have far reaching implications for the poor, but those who are seeking the recognition of other rights. We have the means to eliminate extreme poverty so it is time for a re-evaluation of rights - a re-evaluation by those who supposedly champion them, and the inclusion of those who need them most. This is a human rights project, and a global responsibility upon us all.

Union Jack ABM sketch



Jack is the Beaver's anonymous mole at the Union General Meeting, every Thursday at 1pm.

It was supposed to be a cake-walk. Don a tacky, striped suit, put on a goofy grin, get a good swig of beer and off he'd go into the realm of eternal mythology. But Willy Barbican was never meant to be the stuff of legend. For a moment, the good man himself may have believed himself to be marching onward to No.11, but such is the ephemeral bliss of an alcohol-induced psychosis.

It didn't long to bust his balls. It didn't take much either. Jack had barely settled into his cosy little seat when the shots were already being fired across Barbican's bow.

Poisoned on the edge with budget in hand, Jack could almost hear the clock-work machinations in the scheming mind before him. A wily craftsman who had

perched himself conspicuously up in the front, fearing no evil, for his mind was agile and tongue was sharp.

"Why does this service getting so much funds?" he boomed. "What good would funding this society come to?"

But of course, Jack thought. It was blabbermouth Anakin Bacon. The boyish upstart. The jumpy, prepubescent political underlying plotting his journey to greatness.

"What is the square root for 199? Why are you are insecure as to need Dutch courage to even get on stage? Why aren't I doing your job instead? Why am I such a nose-douchebag..."

Caught in the headlights, the semi-sober Barbican was wilting in the heat. Why won't this excitable little prat keep

his hand down and his grossly ungifted gap sealed?

But fortune favours the alcohol-aided brave. Just as the the wobbles were coming close to putting the Willy in the Barbican, entered the deus ex machina from stage left.

Like a ray from a gratuitous holy golden shower of light, the hallowed envoy from the Aldwych chapter of the United Smurfdom descended upon the stage. Overawed and subdued by the aura of the imperial envoy, Anakin fell silent.

"Humans," he bellowed. "We seek your good graces and opulent coffers, to fund our destiny of make-believe world salvation! Lend us your monies, bequeath us your riches! We, the greatest and most impressive body of self-important onan-

ists, are on the verge of immortality and you...can get us there."

Jack had heard enough. This flagrancy, spellbinding as it is, must end. But alas, Anakin Bacon had cowed into his fetal cocoon. Barbican was drowning in his dribble. Who could stop this insolence?

Paff. The offending projectile fell onto the floor, its energies expended upon hitting its mark. The golden shower dissipated, replaced by a torrent of unforgiving missiles. The haughty envoy, faced with an unfamiliar spectre of abrasive violence, beat a hasty retreat.

Praise the horde, Jack sighed. The irritable tempers of the brawling brawns, not for the first time and certainly not the last, had defeated an insidious invader without so much as a rational thought.

ALMOST TERM'S OVER! HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE BEAVER

The Beaver

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The beauty of LSE debate

All of the students that featured as part of the national media's somewhat surreal coverage of the Miss LSE beauty pageant row ought to be proud of themselves. Compared to the supposed professionals who seized on the story, they all came across as the mature and reasonable students that they are.

To hold yourself and express your opinion on national television is a daunting task not many would be willing to take on. But Sonia Abdul-Rahman, Lizzie Merrow and Anna Krausova all did just that. None of them fell for the interviewers' attempts at making them look stupid. Nor did they appear nervous, or speak out of turn. All three presented their arguments articulately and with respect, in the true LSE tradition. Some of the politicians that give such interviews should take note.

Also fantastic was the quality of writing in the opinion pieces penned by Womens' Officer Ruby Buckley and Constitution and Steering Committee chair Antonia Strachey. The style and measured approach their articles took made the Fleet Street hacks trying to attack them

look stupid. Of course (this paper would like to think), this is where apprenticeships on the Beaver's pages get LSE students.

On the other hand, the way the story was handled outside the student community has been greatly disappointing. As budding writers and journalists, the staff at The Beaver would like to think that the newspapers and TV stations that stole its photographs and plagiarised its articles could have done better. The onus shouldn't be on a student photographer to ensure they recoup the proper royalties for their shots when they are used in the national press. Professional journalists should have attempted to add more information to their reports than those filed by student media weeks ago.

Even more shocking was the treatment the female students on both sides of the debate received from commentators. Ann Widdecombe MP has been known to say a few things that belong in the twentieth, if not the nineteenth, century but her declaring feminist opponents of Miss LSE as "ugly where it really matters" was surely a new low. "At the age of 19 and without the benefit of further

education or a moral guidance tutor, I knew what misogyny meant," declared the Daily Mail's Jan Moir. It wasn't just the usual suspects, either. Supposedly respectable journalists at supposedly respectable newspapers jumped on the bandwagon, too.

Was feminism "becoming rather too puffed for its own good?", asked Terence Blacker of the Independent newspaper.

The contestants themselves weren't safe from the vitriol, either. "Nobody with any self-respect" would take part in a beauty pageant, according to David Robson at the Daily Express.

The 'debate' was typical of the twenty-four hour media: it barely scratched the surface, misrepresented the facts and lasted only as long as the news cycle. In an age of blogs and RSS feeds, newspapers cannot afford to appear so lazy.

But again, congratulations to all those involved at the LSE - all, that is, except the former LSE students involved in 121 Entertainment.

Turbulent term

Are we really only halfway through the academic year? Both students and staff would surely agree that this has been a turbulent term, far more than is usual for our busy campus and workaholic student population. School officials rushed to get the New Academic Building, the largest project undertaken by the School in years, finished in time for term. The Students' Union went into emergency mode as it transpired the School's nursery was in danger of being shut down.

The Beaver is often slated on campus (and sometimes quite correctly) for only focusing on the bad news stories around LSE. It is a subconscious fault shared by just about all media outlets.

But the end of term is a good time to look back and point out the achievements that have changed student and staff experience of the School this term. After all, the NAB was opened on time. It still looks truly impressive after a term of wear and tear. It could become as central to campus life as Houghton Street, especially as the School listened to student societies' concerns about being able to book its rooms. Above all, the prospect of the nursery being shut down is receding ever further into the distance thanks to the Union's campaign. And that is truly a good news story.

This is discrimination, not Miss-information

Criticism of the Miss UoL pageant extends beyond it's critics narrow ideas of what feminism

Philip Proudfoot & Lizzie Merrow



This article is a response to two contributions published in last week's Beaver criticising the backlash against the Miss LSE and Miss University of London pageants. We have been told by Keelin Gavaghan, in her letter to the editor, to "lighten up". We would like to explain why we feel we can't.

The Miss UoL pageants have been portrayed as a "bit of fun", an opportunity for contestants to "feel glamorous". We find this "bit of fun" to be offensively and actively discriminatory. A beauty contest exists to judge a human based upon their appearance, on 'beauty'. But whose definition of beauty? In this case a hegemonic representation of femininity, entrenched in 'western' notions of attractiveness. This body image is out of reach for the majority of the population. That is to say, humans whose gender identity deviates from this stereotype are excluded, as are those whose physical impairment or mental disability leaves them out of this category. There is little room for difference, but always room for conformity.

John de Graft-Johnson points out in his Comment article that the media's portrayal of 'woman' is changing. We appreciate his acknowledgment of the existence of a "ridiculous media stereotype", but we fail to see how a beauty contest contributes to its deconstruction. Furthermore, he would have us believe that "widespread knowledge of airbrushing and the existence of a ridiculous media stereotype" insulates the individual from societal pressures to conform to it. We find this extremely naive and idealistic. If no one is fooled by this stereotype, how and why is it continually and successfully used in advertising to persuade people to consume products promising to facilitate their assimilation to it? Indeed, if this were the case, how and why do the Miss LSE contestants themselves aspire to this supposedly "ridiculous media stereo-



Contestants at a beauty pageant: conforming to a certain image?
Photo: flickr user Gil Searcy

type"?

To reduce a person to their physical appearance is to be prejudiced against those who fail to comply with standards of 'beauty'. People are judged by their looks on a day-to-day basis, but surely this is something we should be moving away from rather than institutionalising and thus legitimising. De Graft-Johnson writes that we "should stop belittling women". However, we are criticising, not patronising, the participants for taking part in an initiative which actively discriminates against groups of people based on external characteristics.

The word 'charity' has been used wielded by contestants, attendants and organizers alike as means of justification for the pageants. Throughout the debate before and after the pageant, varying figures and percentages have been cited as an intended donation to Cancer Research UK. Many have construed this inconsistency as evidence of misrepresentation on the part of those organising the event. Call us cynics, but we seriously doubt that the primary objective of the pageants is charity. We would ask those pandering to this

defence to consider the number of less discriminatory means of raising money for a good cause.

We disagree with claims that "Miss LSE was a great example" of beauty being "celebrated". De Graft-Johnson draws attention to the fact that contestants were asked a question, and that the pageant hereby "afforded ample time for 'inner beauty'". Advocates of the pageant have even gone so far as to assert that the women were judged solely on how they answered their question, and 121 Entertainment owner Christian Emile says that this showed the contestants' "personality and charisma." Why, then, the long dress and heels, the hair and make-up? Why was Gavaghan scouted at a nightclub rather than in class or during a pub quiz? Miss LSE is a beauty contest. A beauty contest is by definition not a celebration of beauty, but rather an exercise in exclusion and judgment on the basis of conformity. We fail to see in what way we are "wrong to assume that the pageant objectifies women".

The pageant is not just another extracurricular activity based on interest or ability

De Graft-Johnson hopes to "balance... the feminist viewpoint", and cites numerous examples of societal discrimination against men, which is supposedly ignored by feminism. We would ask readers to take into consideration the other arguments which we have presented and which we would not label as feminist. Furthermore, we would like to point out to De Graft-Johnson that feminism is, contrary to his view, the very opposite of sexism. It is a movement for gender equality, which we feel the existence of beauty pageants rolls back in more ways than one.

Finally, the authors interpret concerns over this particular use of the School's name as opposition to its use in "anything non-academic". Gavaghan may personally be aware that the LSE is "one of the top institutions in the world", but we find it disconcerting that our supposedly progressive university is now represented in the national media in the context of something that many feel is discriminatory, exclusive and regressive. This is not just another extracurricular activity based on interest or ability. 'Beautiful' is something you are, not something you do.

Use it or lose it

Freedom of speech is still being abused around the world - including at LSE. We must continue to protect it.



Brett Noble



The right to free speech shouldn't be some legal abstraction afforded to citizens of certain nations or social classes. As a basic international human right, the practice must be continuously reexamined and vigorously defended in today's increasingly unstable world.

In theory, there seems to be little official disagreement about the importance of freedom of expression. Constitutional charters in the Americas, Europe, Africa

and Asia have all included provisions allowing for free speech or laws prohibiting abridgement of the right to expression. The most encompassing document, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, was adopted sixty years ago this week. In Article 19, it grants citizens internationally the right to freedom of expression: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

Yet in practice, freedom of speech - especially when balanced against other concerns such as security and indecency - can become gradually chipped away by governments in attempts to gain control and influence over communities. African countries such as Sudan, Libya and Eritea continue to heavily restrict media and jail journalists for publishing controversial stories. During recent elections in Russia,

the government aggressively threatened independent media, sent journalists to jail and psychiatric hospitals, and refused to punish murderers of journalists. Although China opened its doors to international media in hosting the Beijing Olympics, over a hundred journalists and bloggers remained behind bars for criticising government policies.

While some offences against free expression are highly publicised and condemned - such as Iran's planned execution of journalist Adnan Hassanpour in 2007 - violations of the right to free speech are still frequently seen in democracies that preach tolerance of free expression. In 2006, American journalist Josh Wolf was jailed for 226 days for refusing to hand over videos that he took at a San Francisco demonstration. In the UK, the BBC reported in November 2008 that

twenty seven Muslims had recently been censored or intimidated from speaking about their beliefs.

Even LSE has seen its fair share of encroachments on free speech. On November 17, an LSE security guard approached members of the LSE Israeli Society and demanded that they take down a poster on Houghton Street depicting two men kissing in front of a rainbow flag. The incident came just over a month after police officers demanded that students stop demonstrating with signs at the opening of the New Academic Building. These issues are not only troubling in light of the School's Fabian history, but in a university community - which should serve as a hallmark for diversity and discussion of ideas - such instances are completely unacceptable and embarrassing.

Members of our generation have a powerful new medium of expression - the internet - that has found itself at the centre of the battle for free speech.



flickr user 'borghetti'

"The internet has been a revolution for censorship as much as for free speech," Jo Ganville, editor of the Index of Censorship, recently wrote in the Guardian. For example, SmartFilter, a programme owned by California-based company Secure Computing, has been used by regimes in Tunisia and Saudi Arabia. While they sometimes use filtering software to block access to pornography, countries such as Vietnam also restrict human rights and political extremist sites. Vietnam also monitors cyber conversations that advance the ideals of democracy. As the internet continues to grow and expand as a global communication network, providing access to information to those who never had it before, such threats against its free access should be carefully examined and fought.

Ensuring that our world remains a place that benefits from the exchange of free ideas, our generation must step forward and speak out against encroachments against free speech. Whether committed against entire nations, social groups, or even student societies at LSE, the precedent that such restrictions set is truly dangerous to the present and future of free society.

Although laws have been set out protecting freedom of speech around the world and internationally, keeping an eye on their application is essential to their continued function. Like any human right, freedom of speech will be practiced, protected - or ultimately lost.

Letters to the editor

Peace requires work on human rights

Dear Sir,

I'd like to suggest to the Israel and Palestine Societies that they consider working together on concrete projects with practical benefit for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

Building peace takes more than advocacy and mobilization, it also takes the compassion, empathy, self-criticism, patience, and humility that comes from working cooperatively to promote and protect human rights across boundaries of difference, real and imagined. Creating the conditions necessary for a durable and sustainable peace begins by transcending the all-too-human tendency to perceive and validate one's own experiences, perspectives, and convictions without taking into consideration those of one's counterparts.

There are a range of community development projects taking place in Israel and the Palestinian territories which are addressing the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged Israelis and Palestinians. Both societies should work together on a campaign that will allow them to reach out to these communities simultaneously. The range of needs is extensive, and by working together to reach out to both communities the Palestine and Israel Societies can demonstrate their commitment to upholding the principle of the universality of human rights.

Such action will have a practical impact in ways that will better people's lives and in a small but significant way lay the groundwork for improved dialogue and understanding on campus between the societies.

Sincerely,

Noam Schimmel
PhD 2012



Photo: flickr user beachblogger42

Fighting for atheism

Dear Sir,

Last week's piece on atheism in politics by Martha Hampson was extremely enjoyable, and I wanted to expand on the small mention of the Parliamentary Oaths Act, as well as the man behind it, Charles Bradlaugh, just because it's a good story.

Bradlaugh was the most famous English atheist of the Victorian era, and much maligned by the Establishment for it. In 1880, he was elected as one of the two MP's to represent Northampton in Parliament but, as such a well-known

atheist, was not allowed to take the Oath of Allegiance necessary to sit in Parliament, owing to its reference to God. He was therefore stripped of his seat.

What followed was an extraordinary series of by-elections, in which the people of Northampton continued to elect Bradlaugh, and he continued to be barred from Parliament. This happened four times in succession, and saw Bradlaugh arrested and imprisoned in Big Ben when he tried to take his seat regardless.

Eventually, and against much opposition from the Conservative Party and the Anglican Church, he was allowed to take the oath and his seat in 1886. Following this, he personally steered the Parliamen-

tary Oaths Act through Parliament, allowing members the right to affirm without reference to God.

A courageous politician who stood up for what he believed in – or in this case, for what he didn't – he died prematurely in 1891; his funeral was attended by some 3,000 mourners, including Mahatma Gandhi. His statue now stands in Northampton town centre.

David Woodbridge
BA '10



Photo: flickr user ** Maurice **

Apathy doesn't rule, OK?

It is no surprise that human rights abuses happen when most people are so indifferent

Rawan Abdulla

Wednesday marks the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 by the states of the General Assembly at the United Nations. However, it is these states themselves who often have the power to abuse human rights. Does the Declaration really mean anything? The significance of the UDHR comes from the power given to the people who, according to the UN, should "have the right to demand that this document be

respected". This is not exactly happening. Defending others' human rights is simply not a priority in people's lives, meaning that after sixty years and various treaties, human rights issues are still battling for attention.

Given LSE's reputation for student activism, it is surprising to find that the School is actually a microcosm of wider society. Those that care about human rights are not the mainstream and they still have to resort to shock tactics and theatrical protests if they want to get any attention from other students. Yet this is not even an issue of lack of awareness; rather, it is an issue of complete apathy. People just don't care. It is true that if a motion was to be put forward in the UGM condemning an abuse of human rights it would pass with flying colours, as has happened many times before. But let's take into account the number of students who actually care enough to go to the UGM to vote. It might be argued that

students do not want to get involved in endless political debate, since they fail to see the point. By their very nature, human rights are different from other political issues because they encompass the idea of universality: that every human, the widest form of criterion, deserves the right to education, the right to a fair trial and the right to freedom of speech. While I doubt any person would argue against this, the problems arise because people don't discuss the issues enough.

It even seems as if the situation has deteriorated, if we compare events and reaction in LSE's history with the present. In 1967, two students were suspended after taking part in a protest against the appointment of a director who had links to the racist regime in Rhodesia. Hundreds of students staged mass sit-ins, boycotted lectures and even went on a hunger strike until the director finally agreed to lift the suspensions.

Of course, I am not advocating a sit in protest until every problem in the world or within LSE is solved. But it is unnerving that even when injustices happen to one of us, an LSE student, only a minority will actually care. Take the recent (attempted) protest against the funding of a lecture theatre in the NAB by heirs of Sheikh Zayed because of Zayed's abysmal human rights record during his rule of Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates. One of the protesters was attacked by the police; another was coerced into deleting the photos that proved it. What more do we need to create a rush of fervour and anger in support of our fellow student and his basic right of freedom of speech? And how about the fact that the LSE's Director, Howard Davies, refused to even consider the claim when it was first brought up by students.

And what if an issue directly affects a majority of the students? Now we have the new issue of compulsory ID cards for

international students, something clearly particularly relevant to the LSE since sixty per cent of the students here are international. The government is taking advantage of those who are not in a position to fight back (or risk getting deported) as a cowardly way of bringing in this new element of police state politics to the UK. What is frustrating is the potential power we students have, if the campaign spread further than simply a UGM motion. But this can only be done with large numbers of people getting involved.

This is why there is little to celebrate on Wednesday. If we, at a university that was built on social ideals and the fight for the betterment of society, cannot spare five minutes to take some action, then it is not surprising that human rights are being violated around the world, and that groups that advocate human rights are still at the fringe, as if they were radical and human rights were not something that every human being is entitled to.



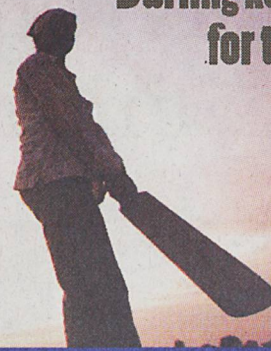
Student protests, like this one against the bank bailout earlier this year, are becoming increasingly rare
Photo: Zeeshan Malik



Strictly lego dancing
 >>Waltzin B2



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The flawed, fraudulent
 and fact-free paper

the beaverian

Director refuses student bailout

● Warns against setting a bad precedent

● Kicks off world media tour to justify decision

I'm a journalist. Get me out of here.

LSE Director Howard Davies announced last night that the LSE would reject any bailout for thousands of loss-making students.

The announcement came after a dramatic meeting of the LSE Council – the School's highest decision-making body – which unanimously voted to approve Davies' decision to suspend discussions of a rescue package.

The Students' Union have issued a statement condemning Davies' decision, demanding an emergency session of Council to "urge Sir Howard to reconsider his position."

But Sir Howard was defiant: "If we start bailing out students it would set a

bad precedent for the future. The market must be permitted to weed out inefficiencies without massive School action. I have committed School policy to a 'light touch' approach to the issue. It is an approach that has been tried and tested successfully and I refuse to take lectures from loss-making students on the matter."

Early this morning, senior Students' Union officials were seen exiting the East Building with cardboard boxes filled with their personal effects. Among them were General Secretary Aled Fisher.

Fisher said: "We never thought it would come to this. This is a massive dent to my ego."

When asked what he thought of the recent dropping out of the loss-making students, Sir Howard responded: "It's a storm in a teacup."

Shortly after his announcement, Sir

Howard kicked off a tour of the international media in order to justify his decision to reject the bailout package.

International reaction has been mixed so far with Howard winning praise from many notables, while drawing criticism from others.

Former US President Herbert Hoover said: "I knew he'd come around in the end. I'm just glad he stuck by his instincts and did the right thing."

Other supporters of Howard Davies included Karl Marx who issued a statement late last night saying: "I'm absolutely delighted that Sir Howard has made a conscious decision to aid our cause. Mass immiseration is the prelude to any champagne socialist revolution."

However, world economists lined up to attack Sir Howard.

Recent Nobel Laureate Paul Krugman

"I have committed School policy to a 'light touch' approach to the issue."

LSE Director
 Sir Howard Davies

said: "It does not surprise me in the least that the man who triggered the crisis by talking down the value of his student assets in the first place has made the equally absurd decision to let the assets crumble."

Sir Howard has come under fire in recent days for his initial comments that LSE students were "loss-making", which some economists say acted as a catalyst for the crisis by leading to a plummet of the share price of LSE students.

Sir Howard has since justified his comments, saying that he made them "in a fit of rage" and that he was "only telling the truth."

Howard is set to return to the LSE from his international media tour in late 2012. However, he has not set a definite date for his return.

Stand-off at the LSE Metropolitan Police officers surround East Bulding while demanding surrender of Beaver editor



Flickr user CharlesFred

LSE scales summit in Uni league table

CH Melchett

The LSE finds itself in the unusual position of top dog in the latest university rankings, completing its meteoric rise from relative obscurity in just three years.

In the new Beaverian Uni100 index published yesterday, the specialist social sciences institution scored the full 100 marks in every category, and leapfrogged perennial rivals Harvard into first place.

The strongest British challengers, Oxford and Cambridge, faltered into fifth and sixth respectively.

Instrumental in helping the LSE overcome its main rivals was the full score awarded in the peer citations category, which came as a surprise to many.

LSE Director Howard Davies reportedly broke a Biro pen in shock as much as jubilation upon learning of the new rankings.

School Pro-director for Academic Planning and Resources George Gaskell too could hardly contain his excitement. The success was especially important for him, as he had been "wrongly blamed" for poor results in the past.

"I've paid my dues, time after time," he said. "I've done my sentence, but committed no crime."

Fellow Pro-director Janet Hartley expressed similar sentiments. "I've had my share of sand...kicked in my face, but I've come through."

Gaskell later went before the Union General Meeting to announce the news. "Thank you all. But it's been no bed of roses, no pleasure cruise," he said in appreciation of the students' efforts in boosting the School's ranking.

A student asked if the School would be able to maintain its recent excellent performance. Gaskell replied confidently: "I consider it a challenge before all human race, that I ain't gonna lose."

"We'll keep on fightin' till the end," he added.

Editor arrested over Guardian rip-off

● Intellectual property theft exposed

● Plot to improve quality foiled

CH Melchett

Joseph Cotterill, Executive Editor of LSE Students' Union newspaper the Beaver, was arrested yesterday on suspicion of intellectual property theft.

The arrest followed allegations made by rival publication the Guardian that Cotterill and his editorial team had deliberately copied major design elements from their newspaper.

According to a police spokesman, the design elements which Cotterill is alleged to have copied include the masthead, paper size, layout styles and a general tendency

towards spelling errors.

Charges of racketeering could also be brought against him, the spokesman added, if the Guardian's claim of the Beaver's misuse of the Guardian Print Centre can be substantiated.

The Beaver's publisher, Students' Union General Secretary Aled Dildo Angler, was disappointed with the Guardian's decision to make a police complaint, but admitted that the arrest was not unexpected.

"I warned that douchebag so many times not to send any submissions to the Guardian Student Media Awards," he said. "Of course [the Guardian] were going to realise how much of a rip-off our paper is."

The Beaver Managing Editor, Michael Deas, could not be reached for comment. However, the Beaverian was able to access his voicemail message, which said: "I'm not taking any messages, and Joseph Cotterill definitely did not flagrantly plagiarise from the exquisitely designed Guardian."

Verbatim answers were received when the Beaverian attempted to contact other members of the Beaver editorial board.

The Beaver has been withdrawn from distribution as a result of the investigations. The resultant loss of advertising revenue will likely hit the newspaper hard, and could also trigger run on its coffers by anxious investors.

"No one likes to be part of a loss-mak-

ing venture, you know," said one such wary prospector, who would like to be identified only as Sir H.

But the chips are not down for everyone. Daniel B. Yates, head honcho of rival student publication Clam Market Review, was thrilled by the news of Cotterill's arrest.

"Oh my god, that's brilliant," he exclaimed, "This means the office and all those iMacs are ours now, doesn't it? We could do with some new editors as well."

Cotterill, currently remanded at Charing Cross Police Station, will be formally charged at a court-martial next week. If convicted, he may face cessation of his chocolate rations, or death by firing squad.

Students' Union slams Farrell for stealing nursery lollipops

Alistair Moosovsky

LSE Director of Finances and Facilities has come under fire from students for his unilateral decision to confiscate lollipops from the LSE Nursery.

Farrell, claimed that the confiscation was part of an increased health and safety drive on campus facilities.

According to confirmed reports, Farrell was responsible for the confiscation raid personally.

Farrell led a crack team of Health and Safety inspectors on to the premises of the LSE Nursery.

After knocking the door down, the inspectors, led by Farrell made entry into the play-den and asked the children to hand over their lollipops.

The children were obedient at all times and immediately surrendered the candy to Farrell.

The Students' Union have expressed concern that the confiscation occurred unilaterally and that Students' Union Officials on the Catering Services User Group were not consulted about the raid on the Nursery.

Students' Union General Secretary Aled Douchebag Fisher said: "It is extremely concerning that such decisions are being made behind closed doors without consulting students."

Executive Officers are rumoured to be meeting next week to discuss the possibility of launching a campaign to save the lollipops.

The campaign is rumoured to include submissions on the back of postcards.



Davies opens Mugabe's Meals as replacement to Garrick



Two of the leading donors to the LSE, Robert Mugabe and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad have come together to make a £16 million donation to the LSE to open a new diner called "Mugabe's Meals"

You've probably got better things to do but....

Get involved! The Beaverian is currently looking for:

Corrections Editor (Full time job)

PA to the Managing Editor

Hatchet man

Lucie Goulet

Two replacement sports editors

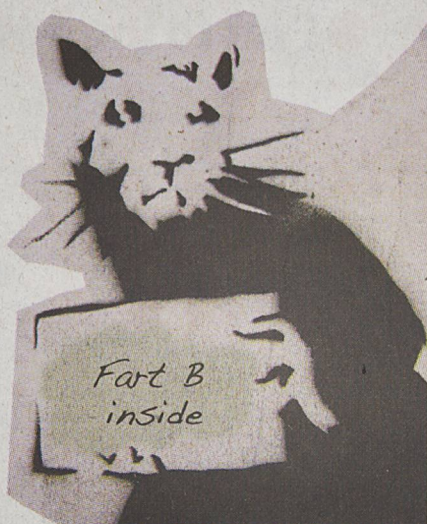
Layout slave

Website magician (alchemy skills essential)

Soulmate for Philosophical Barry

getinvolved@thebeaverian.co.uk

thebeaverian



National

Facilities

Student gets lost in NAB for weeks

A law undergraduate was rescued from a storage cupboard in the New Academic Building after getting lost and suffering six weeks of solitary confinement.

The student claims that he was shouting for help but no one was using the NAB to hear him.

After emerging from the NAB, the student was quickly wrapped in a blanket by LSE Security. He looked dazed and confused.

The student's mental state was also questionable. He told reporters that the LSE is hiding a nuclear silo underneath the Sheikh Zayed Theatre.

LSE have denied all allegations and have placed the student under 'protective custody'

School implicated in global destruction

LSE Director Howard Davies, LSE Chair of Council Peter Sutherland, LSE Director of Finances and Facilities Andy Farrell, and lots of other people most LSE students know very little about are responsible for the majority of the world's problems, The Beaver can reveal.

According to a student who wished to remain anonymous, an alliance of businessmen and academics have purposely taken over LSE and caused the credit crunch, honoured dictators and invested in arms companies as part of an unconscious desire to perpetuate the global capitalist conspiracy.

Former US President Ronald Reagan referred to the LSE as an "evil empire".

A grown man said: "If enough people come to the UGM, the world will be a much better place."

Misogyny at LSE

Buckley crowned Miss SU Exec

Despite vehement protests from the Students' Union Misogynist Society, the annual Miss SU Exec competition went ahead as planned last week.

Women's Officer Ruby Buckley was crowned Miss SU Exec in the quad on Friday night. She faced tough competition from Lizzie Merrow, Zoe Cooke, Jessica Brayne and Helen Roberts.

Buckley said: "It's a great honour to be objectified. The LSE is an academic institution, but every once in a while its nice to be judged by the same standards as the rest of society. I'm just glad that they chose me."

Allegations of gusset use have yet to be verified.

The Beaverian expects the lazy mainstream media to plagiarise its coverage and steal its photos.

Health

Russian students deny polonium link

After a spate of mysterious radiation poisoning cases on Houghton Street were traced to the Hare Krishna food stall, the Russian Business Society has come under scrutiny for their alleged involvement.

IAEA President Dr Mohammad El-Baradei thought he could "smell the polonium in the air" after delivering a public lecture at the LSE and immediately demanded a full LSE health and safety investigation.

A spokesman for the Society, Vladimir Vladimirovich 'Boris' Vladivostok said, "We deny such allegations foolishly. We are legitimize byusinyessmyen."

General Secretary Aled "I'm strangely proud of my middle name and get angry when the Beaverian doesn't use it" Fisher welcomed the news.

Public Relations

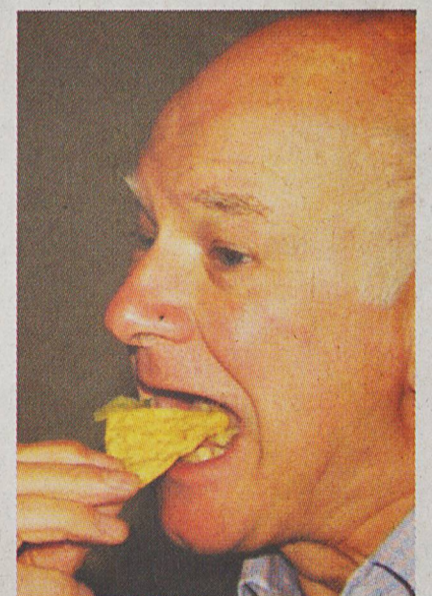
Howard smashes his own world record

LSE Director Howard Davies has achieved international acclaim for smashing his own record for media appearances in one day.

Davies who in the wake of the credit crunch has been touring the international media with solutions to global economic problems, recently came under fire for behaving like "an arsonist who called the fire brigade".

Davies' latest public relations binge has won plaudits from seasoned pundits impressed by his unique stamina and commitment to self-promotion.

PR guru Piers Morgan said, "Davies is a machine. First he caused the credit crunch, then he raced around television studios around the world to tell people the solution. What genius!"



Media watch

Editor demands jokes not answers

Michael Deas, the Beaver managing editor, has tendered his resignation from the newspaper, and will pursue a career in stand-up comedy in the Houghton Street chuckle circuit.

"We had joy, we had fun," he told the Beaverian after dropping the bombshell on his fellow editors at a secret meeting yesterday. He added: "Learned of love and ABCs, skinned our hearts and skinned our knees."

But the Beaver was not entirely a happy memory for Deas. "Too much wine and too much song, wonder how I got along," he revealed.

When asked about he was likely to perform his comic acts in the future, Deas said: "Pretty girls are everywhere, when you see them I'll be there."

Health

Students evicted by LSE Security

The Students' Union has slammed LSE Security for their heavy-handed treatment of tired left-wing students seeking a quiet place to sit down on campus.

One student said, "We were sitting on the benches in Houghton Street thinking about social justice when a phalanx of security men came up and hustled us off campus."

It is understood that LSE Security believed the students were holding an impromptu sit-in in support of an unknown left-wing cause.

This was denied by the students. One said, "We didn't have the energy for anything as coordinated as a sit in to support some well-defined objective. We were just waiting for the Hare Krishna man to rock up with his free lentils."

International

Obama shortlists Howard for financial regulation tsar

- >> LSE shoots up World University Rankings
- >> School praises "objective and unbiased" methodology

Alistair Moosovsky

LSE Director Howard Davies has been shortlisted by President-elect Barack Obama for the post of financial regulation tsar in the new US administration.

Davies, former sub-prime Director of the UK Financial Services Authority has had a distinguished career in 'light-touch' regulation.

On hearing the news, Davies commented: "I'm honoured to be considered. I sent in a resume months ago. I really hope they choose me. I can teach America a lot about economic crises."

When asked whether he would be sad to leave the LSE, Sir Howard responded: "No. I can't stand loss-makers. I want to be surrounded by high-margin products."

President-elect Obama has come under fire from Senate Republicans for his supposed choice. Senate Minority Leader

Mitch McConnell said: "I can't believe he's even considering him. We don't ask the guy who set the barn on fire to help put the fire out. That's just plain un-American."

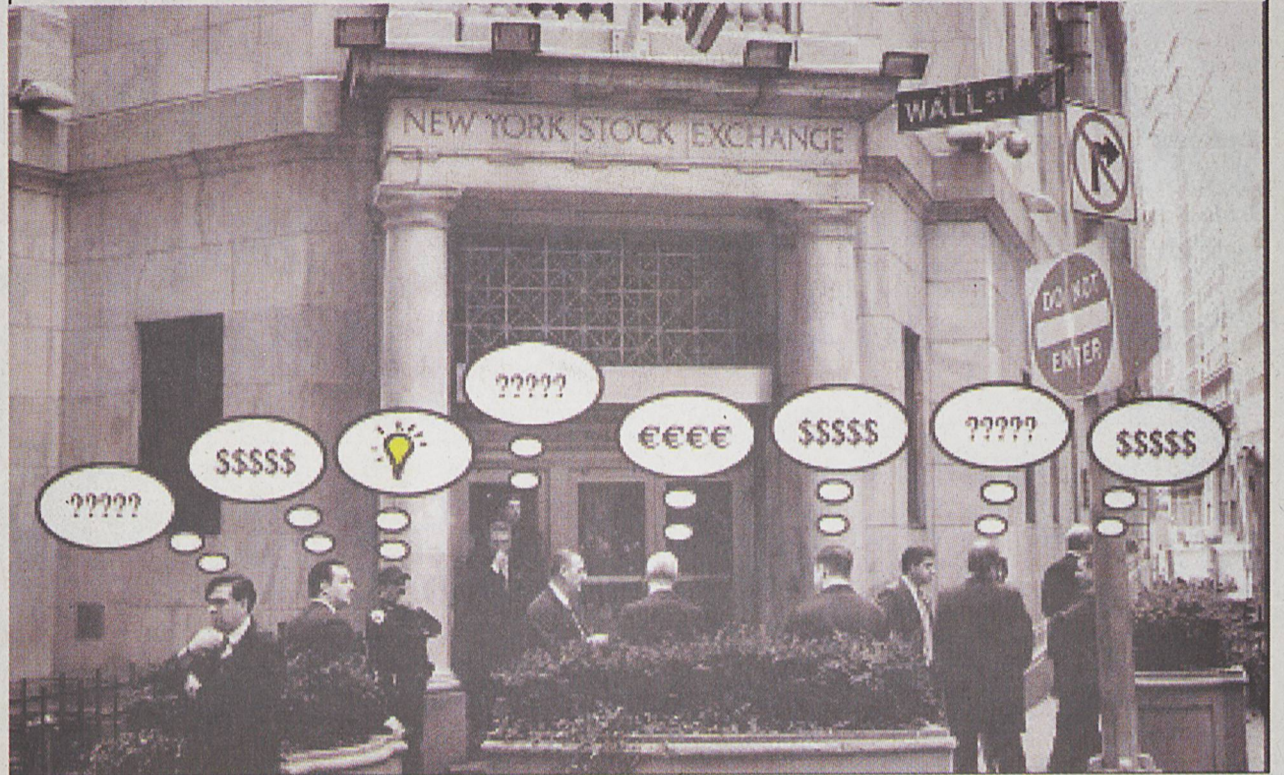
The Obama transition team refused to comment on the short-list saying that the President was considering "a government of all the talents, even the misinformed and politically inept, who have the public relations instincts of Idi Amin."

Meanwhile, news of Sir Howard's departure led to a rise in LSE's share price on the world stock exchanges as well as a leap in the Times Higher Education Supplement's (THES) World University Rankings.

Pro-Director for Academic Planning and Resources George Gaskell praised the recent rankings saying: "The THES has always pursued an objective and unbiased methodology. We feel that our recent soar represents our true value as an academic institution. We applaud the THES for their consistency and quality."

In our pages: October 1929

LSE Careers Service: Don't panic, diversify



Wright's Bar pull 'Italian Job' on Hare Krishna man

- >> Foul play suspected in disappearance of popular Hare Krishna free lunch distributor
- >> Italian mafioso links suspected, following stunning statements from eyewitnesses

CH Melchett

The owners of Houghton Street cafe Wright's Bar have been alleged of pulling an "Italian job" on a popular Hare Krishna free lunch distributor.

Eyewitnesses have approached the police with accounts of a mafia-style hit perpetrated by "several men with thick Italian accents" on the Hare Krishna follower, known as Andy, last Monday, which they believe explains his disappearance from the LSE campus for the past week.

The police confirmed yesterday evening that a criminal investigation has been opened into the Hare Krishna follower's disappearance, and that their list of suspects include the "proprietors of a small family-run cafe located on Houghton Street".

Wright's Bar is the only such cafe located on the main thoroughfare through the LSE campus.

The Beaverian has gained exclusive access to one of the prime eyewitnesses, who agreed to speak on the condition of anonymity.

The witness, who wished to be identified only as Mr Pink, was living in the neighbouring apartment block to where Andy stayed. He was also acquainted with the victim from having eating some his free lunches.

Mr Pink had been able to witness the entire hit from his balcony. A single person, likely a woman, had made the actual hit, he alleged. The attacker gained entry into the flat by smashing through a window.

"As she came into the window, it was the sound of a crescendo," recounted Mr Pink. "She came into the apartment, she left the bloodstains on the carpet."

At this point, the shocked Andy tried to escape from his assailant. "He ran underneath the table, he could see she was unable."

"So he ran into the bedroom, he was struck down, it was his doom," Mr Pink

said, now visibly uncomfortable as he tried to relate the horrific events to the Beaverian.

After witnessing the attack, Mr Pink tried calling out to Andy, who had by then disappeared into the darkness of his apartment. "Andy, are you okay? So, Andy are you okay? Are you okay, Andy?"

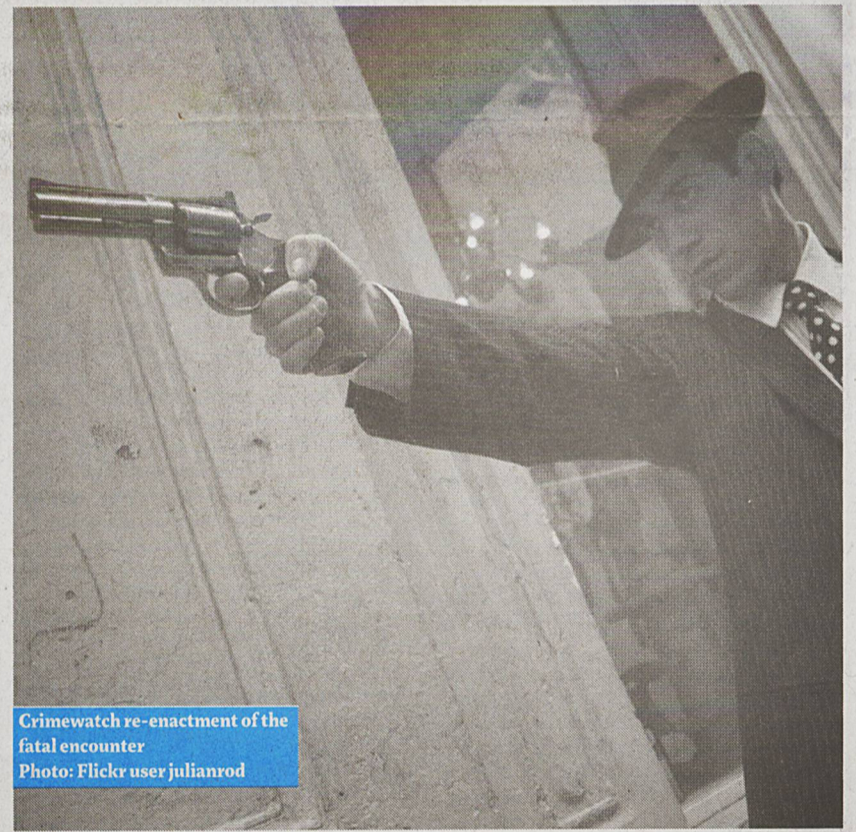
There was no response. Mr Pink then tried to alert the police, but found that his telephone lines had been deliberately shorted out with a generous helping of 'spaghetti coppola' sauce.

As he raced to raise the alarm at a public phone booth, he saw a posse of "Italian-speaking men" leaving the building with a "man-shaped bundle".

"The circumstantial evidence is as conclusive as it gets," Mr Pink declared.

Following the alleged hit, several LSE students have sought out the LSESU counselling centre for help.

"We've definitely seen a rise in the number of post-vegetarian stress disorder cases," reported Education and Welfare officer Obi Akpan-Inwang Kenobi.



Crimewatch re-enactment of the fatal encounter
Photo: Flickr user julianrod

AU Exec: Wednesday PM ends on Thursday AM



AU team comatose
Photo: Flickr user One_0

S. Wild Honkaboob

A motion has been tabled to extend the Wednesday afternoon campaign to also include Thursday mornings. Supporters claim this is more than fair in light of the '1pm noon' scandal.

After an emergency meeting of the AU Executive was held last Wednesday in Zoo Bar, it was decided that there was no other option but to fight for an allocated time for its members to convalesce after their afternoon exertions. This has come after more and more Union members registered complaints that they were unable to concentrate in their Thursday morning classes and lectures.

Weight has been added to the campaign after Sir Howard Davies claimed that the School does not regard the afternoon as beginning until 1 o'clock, a full sixty minutes after its normal start time. Athletics Union communications officer Edward Methusala Healy was unavailable for comment but a spokesman, "If they

can literally shift the goal posts in this way, then why can't we do it also?"

AU president Sophie De-la-Hunt is believed to be the primary instigator of the amendments after she was overheard by Beaverian sources complaining about the pressures of her "packed schedule".

The official line is, "One afternoon for extra curricular activities is a violation of our fundamental human right to self expression. Even Palestinian students get more time for sports."

The AU will hold a referendum with compulsory voting on the issue early next week. This will render them the only fully democratic body within the Students Union.

However, the motion seems doomed to failure after some Athletics Union members, allegedly mostly drawn from the Chess and Table Tennis clubs, voiced their opposition. "We love studying" was their opinion on the matter.

When asked whether the move was simply an attempt to boost listening figures for her AU hangover show, De-La-Hunt refused to comment.



Director comments start donor run on LSE

"Loss-making" jibe to UGM students terrifies markets

Donors fear School has unsteady asset base

Petra Sanderland

The Emirates Foundation has demanded a £2.5 million refund after discovering from LSE Director Howard Davies that LSE students are loss-making.

This has led to a run on the LSE's Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

The money was given on condition that the main lecture theatre in the NAB be named after Sheikh Zayed.

A spokesman for the Emirates Foundation, Sheikh Abdul Rahim bin Wahed ibn Rashid al Ali bin Salem confirmed that the Sheikh was turning in his grave.

Salem said: "Howard had assured me personally that all subprime loss-making assets had been moved off the LSE's balance sheet and on to those of UCL and SOAS. I was appalled to see students who were applying for student loans when I came to the LSE."

In the wake of the Emirates Founda-

tion's demands, donors have been scrambling to withdraw money from the LSE. Students manning the phone banks at the Office of Development and Alumni Relations (ODAR) have seen a spike in the number of calls from angry Sheikhs and Russian oligarchs.

One student employed by ODAR said: "Usually it's just the odd call about why we didn't offer their daughter a place, but now they're threatening to withdraw millions immediately. When I asked him why, the man, who sounded Russian, demanded to speak to Howard Davies and claimed that he didn't trust me because I was a loss-making asset."

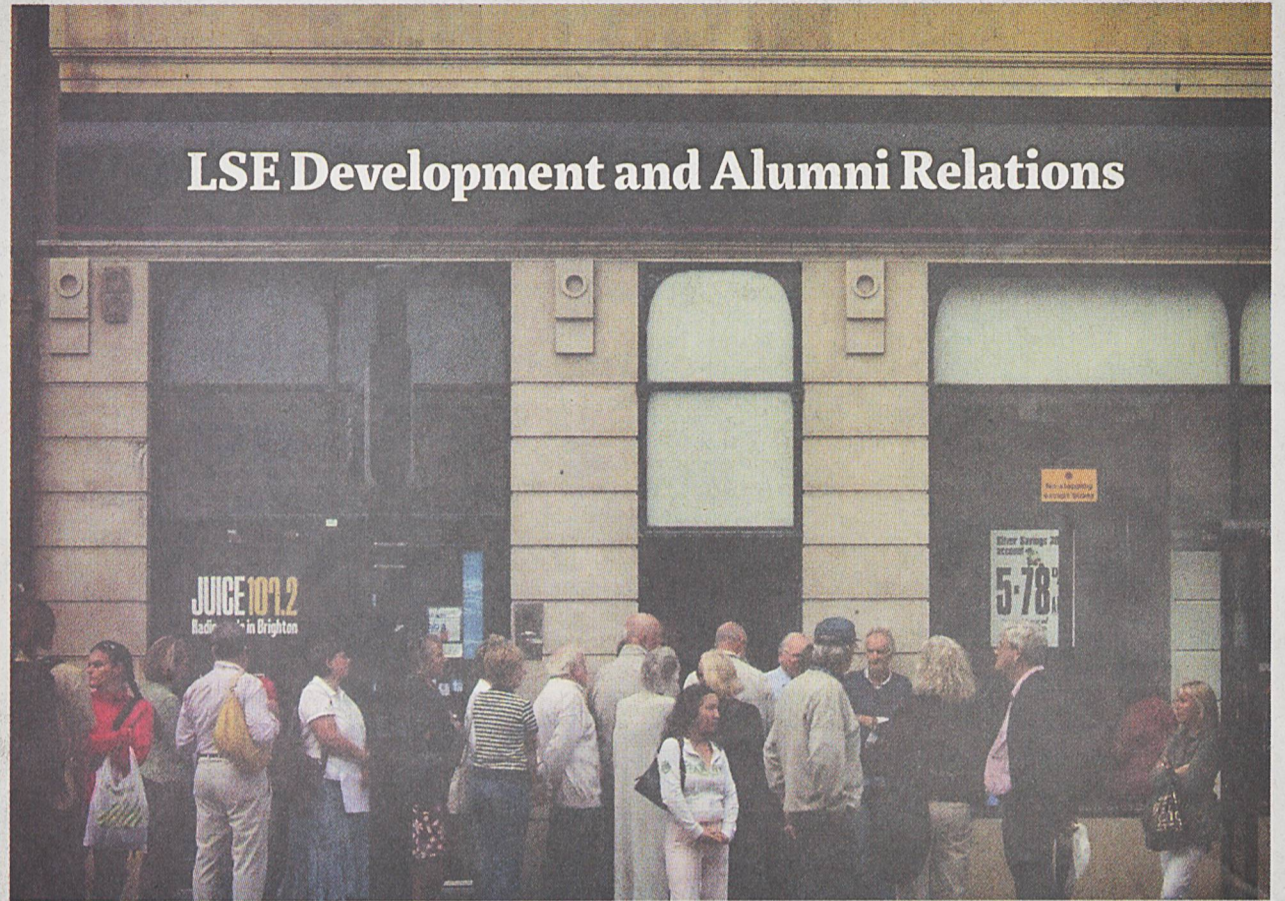
The student has since resigned his position at ODAR due to high stress.

It further emerged last night that LSE Professor of Monetary Policy Rajan Patel had warned Davies against talking down LSE equity and causing the Northern-Rock style panic on campus.

In a detailed policy memo, Patel said: "Confidence in the value of our student assets is a fundamental concern."

Last night, Davies defended himself stating that the comments were off the cuff and that they were made in a fit of rage because he was being made to feel accountable to students during the Union General Meeting. He denied any wrongdoing and refused to return the money.

Davies continues to reject calls for a bailout of the loss-making students.



mediabeaverian

Pulse radio finds MDMA in MGMT

Martina Marrison

In a move almost guaranteed to attract record listeners, Pulse Radio has taken the bold and radical step of distilling the very essence of their sound, from now on the only song played will be MGMT - Kids, the best song in the world.

The idea was born from the waves of correspondence Pulse receives, begging them to play the song on repeat forever. One student, who really wanted to be named but we wouldn't let him, said, "It's a brilliant song. Every time it came on in the Quad I thought it was brilliant, then when it stopped the next song was never as bril-

liant, so I'd just wait around for an hour until they played MGMT again because it's brilliant." Another student added, "This is what student radio is about, finding the best song in the world and just playing it as much as possible because it's the best song in the world. Even though you can hear it on every other radio station and on every post from every music blog from like two years ago, this is exactly what student radio is about, man."

Pulse DJs are all in agreement that this is exactly what they want to be doing. "Sure, you could say it makes our job easier, because we don't have to pick songs, but the point is that given the choice we'd all just play MGMT - Kids as much as possible because we all think it's the best song in the world."

Pulse had to write to OFCOM to obtain special permission. The regulator normally imposes a rule of allowing only one song from a particular artist every hour, but Pulse felt their previous policy of playing MGMT - Kids on the hour every hour was just not enough MGMT for their student listenership. OFCOM agreed, stating, "We are granting Pulse the right to turn homogenous ubiquity into not just a business model, but an artform."

There was initial disagreement amongst Pulse DJs, with a small break-away faction wanting to play the Soulwax remix every three hours, but the common sense of the overwhelming majority won the debate, Pulse will now play MGMT - Kids on repeat every minute of every day from now until forever.



Hub revives union

Denise Smeldon

Union officials have congratulated themselves for transforming the area of the Quad formerly occupied by STA Travel.

Now known as the Hub, Communications officer Dan "what does he do" Sheldon said that the room has revolutionised the Students' Union.

"It's great. The Sabbatical Officers can put rubbish, UGM sovereignty and anything else that is of slight annoyance in there. The £20,000 the Union used to be given each year by STA Travel was useful, but under the prudent Barber budget we can just dip in to reserves."

"It's a shame that students can't make use of this part of limited Union space, but

it's a small price to pay," Sheldon stated.

Sheldon refused to confirm or deny reports that several student politicians who had been planning against him in Lent Term elections had been put in car crushers and added to the mountains of trash in the Union hub.

Union General Secretary Aled "I don't have a middle name" Fisher said, "It's okay, but all of the nursery postcards are in there somewhere. If we don't get enough postcards written, terrible things will happen. Where are all of the postcards? Please fill out a postcard. Where have all of the postcards gone?"

A spokesperson for STA Travel said, "We were actually going to offer the Students' Union a rise in the 20k contract but after the manager started receiving strange telephone calls about post cards in the night, we had to leave."

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The Ahmadinejad Centre for the Study of Uranium Enrichment

The Kim Jong-Il Dictatorial Library

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Tel 020 7955 6285



Listings

Palestine Society campaign week

Mon: Skydive for justice
 Tues: Seph's chest wax for justice
 Wed: Trampoline for justice
 Thu: Moot, Justice for the sake of justice?
 Fri: Justice Fresh

Israel Society campaign week

Mon: People not Skydive
 Tues: People not Seph
 Wed: People not Trampolines
 Thu: People not Justice
 Fri: POLITICS!

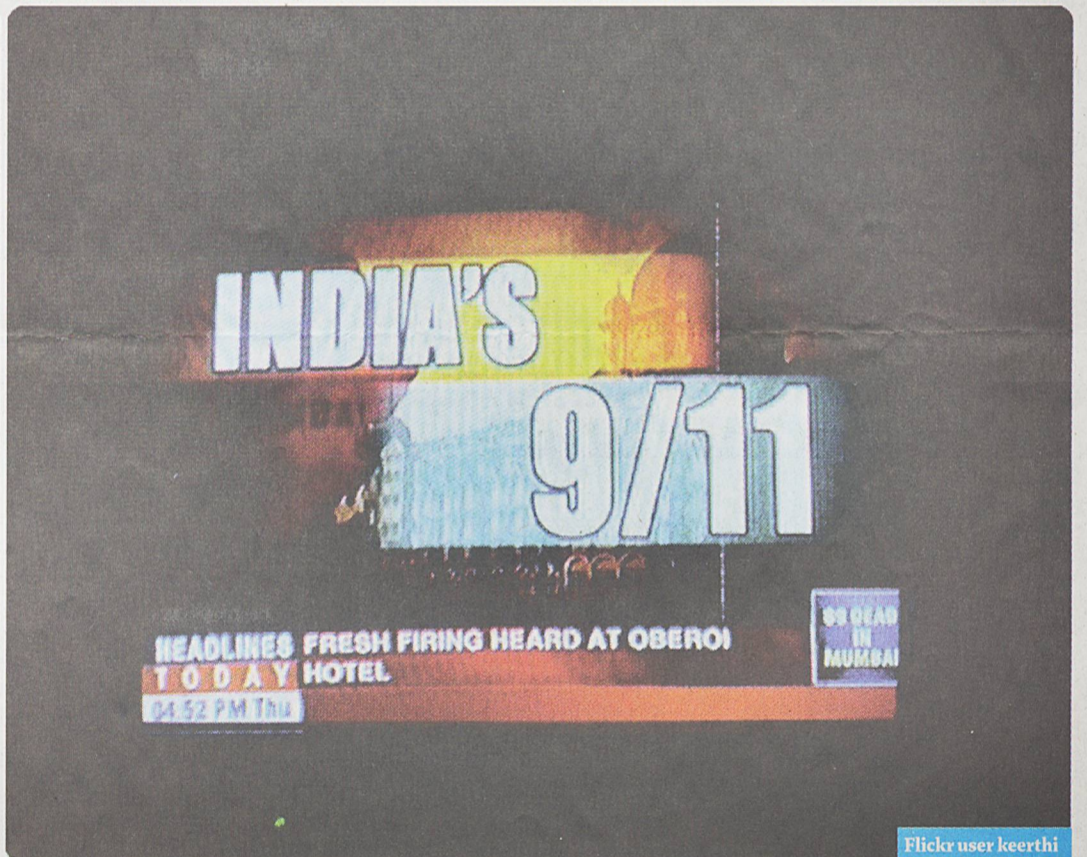
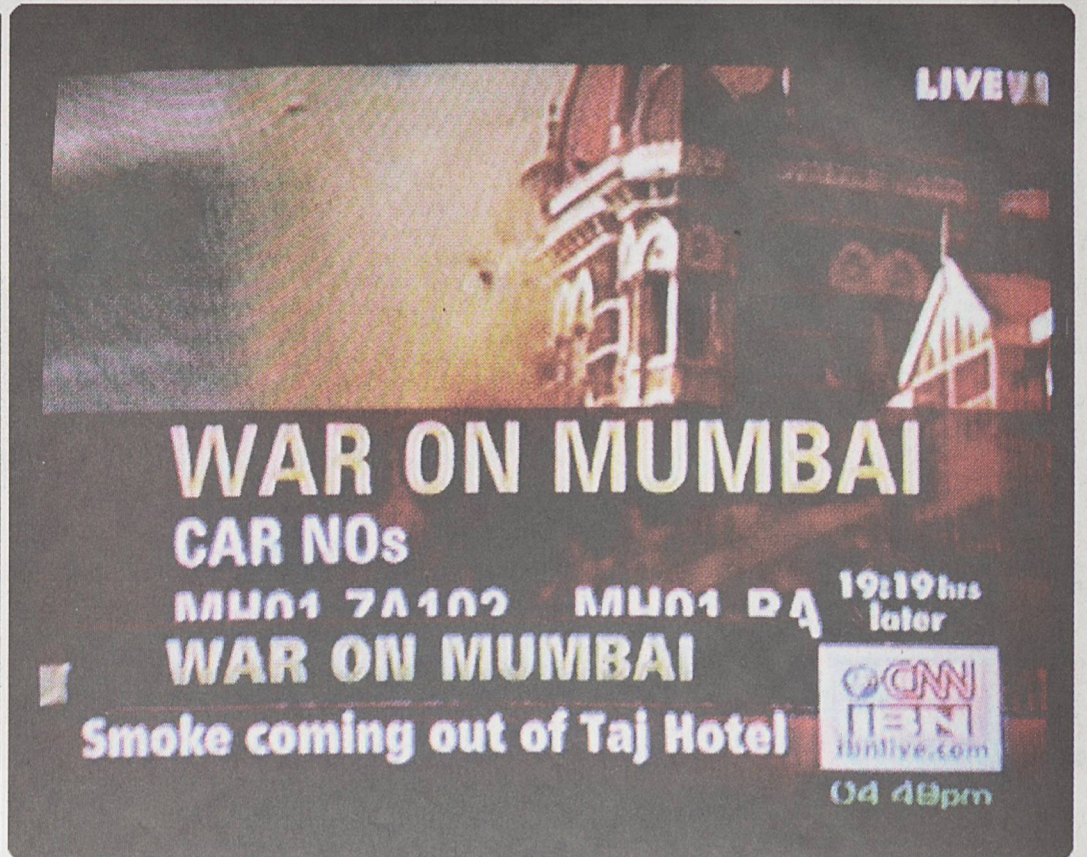
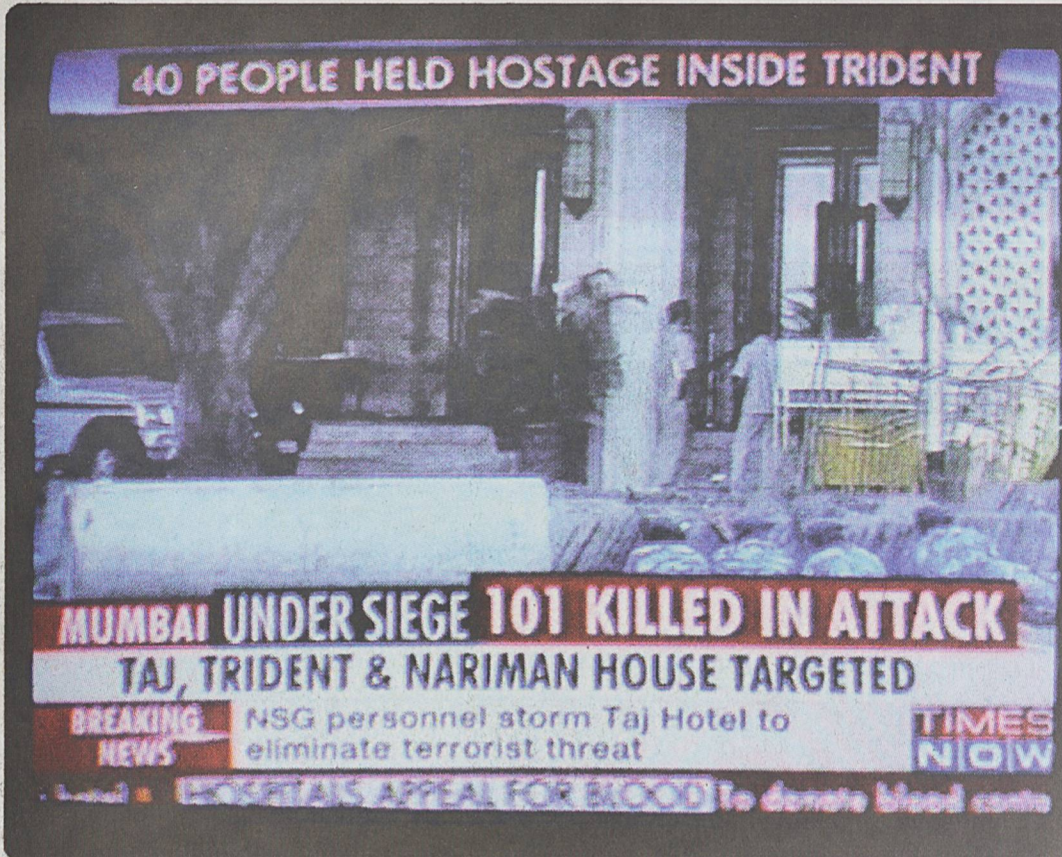
Model UN Society special event

Workshop: Pilfering money from other Societies in the name of global friendship
 December 25 - 1pm - Sheikh Zayed Theatre

Inns of Court Society

Film screening: How to lose friends and alienate people
 Next Monday - 5pm - Quad

Features



Time for media culpa

Nizar Manek thinks irresponsible reporting exacerbates an already tense situation in India

When a terrorist attack strikes so suddenly and with such devastation, among the many casualties – beyond the killed and wounded – is journalistic integrity. Shortly after the attack in Mumbai two weeks ago, a reputable Indian newspaper declared the terrorists to have hailed from a Pakistani town in Punjab, called Faridkot. Yet if they had bothered to undertake the most elementary of research, the journalist would have realised that Faridkot is in fact to be found in the south-western corner of Punjab, in India.

Several British newspapers too were quick to jump the gun. They spontaneously claimed that the Mumbai terrorists were British citizens, despite the absence of evidence beyond a few uncredited stories in the Indian press. Indeed, upon investigating the possibility of a British connection, the UK intelligence services - MI5, MI6 and GCHQ – all confirmed last week that no such evidence yet existed.

This series of apparently fraudulent press responses, which Indian CNN-IBN programme host Karan Thapar described as “an emotional one, fed by unofficial

sources leaking information”, is hardly what is needed right now.

An act of irrational violence requires a rational, fact-based response. It is the dividing line between fact and opinion that distinguishes responsible from irresponsible journalism. During events of such emotional and political gravity, the quality of reporting is of great consequence, for the media has the capacity to heighten tensions and to damage diplomatic relations.

I found at the LSE similar sentiments related to me, when I spoke to Rhea Chaterji, an Indian first-year law student. She had attended the candlelight vigil held in honour of the Mumbai attack victims, held two Sundays ago outside the Indian High Commission. “The media have become very jingoistic,” she said. “But the time is not to be aggressive, rather to be rational and measured. There should be no trial by media, which should have allowed the investigative agencies to do their work, without misleading the public with irresponsible speculations.”

For the Indian press, such speculations were intended to cement the gut-reaction that had taken root in the popular imagination. It is the product of over sixty years of mistrust between India and

“I hope the common Muslim on the street will not have to suffer for this abuse of ‘jihad’ ”

Pakistan, who have been in a continual state of conflict, with only intermittent hiatuses. Given the history of large-scale violence in Mumbai itself – such as the December 1992 riots inspired by the Hindu nationalist group Shiv Sena, in which two-thirds of those killed were Muslims, and the March 1993 retaliatory bomb attacks – the media should have been more circumspect in their approach. They will have been aware of the political response and the social disunion caused to communal groups, as will indeed the terrorists.

Professor Werner Menski, Professor of South Asian Laws at the School of Oriental and African Studies, expressed his concerns: “I hope the Indian state will react with calm and coolness and not give up on its path of secularism and inclusion of Muslims, despite all the negative publicity. I am deeply concerned, but just criticising governments and bureaucrats does not get us anywhere.”

“I hope the common Muslim on the street will not have to suffer for this abuse of ‘jihad’ ”

Though the Pakistani government have condemned the attacks and denied any involvement on the part of “state agencies”, the events will likely energise

the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) opposition for the upcoming elections, which are just six months away. BJP general secretary Arun Jaitley has already set the tone for their electoral campaign, claiming that the Indian National Congress government has “lost the moral authority to survive”. Even as the attacks were still unfolding, leader of the BJP L K Advani already started to milk political capital in a speech in which he drew comparisons between the current government’s response to his own reactions to terrorism during his former term as Home Minister. Blood-red advertisements have appeared in Indian newspapers urging readers to “Fight Terror” by voting for the BJP.

One can only ponder what may become of the noble ideals recorded in India’s constitutional preamble – those of secularism, pluralism, democracy – first drafted in 1947, the year of Indian independence. The Indian government ought to prioritise the prevention of any Hindu nationalist backlash against Muslims in Mumbai. Otherwise, the episode may find itself cast into a similar mould to that which fuelled the communal



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Down in the dumps in London

Yorkshireman **Chris Westgarth** thinks we're all strangers in the big city

Margaret Thatcher once famously declared that "there is no such thing as society". A BBC report last week, unfortunately, would suggest that the 'Iron Lady' had indeed done her best to create a Britain without one.

According to the new report, there has been a weakening in communities throughout the UK over the past thirty years, with many former industrial cities showing the most significant symptoms of this trend. The demolition of coal, steel and other industries since 1979 broke the backbone of communities that thrived on closely-knitted ties with neighbours and fellow workers. The report also found a significant difference between levels of loneliness in the North and the South. Economically speaking, the South is certainly leading the way into the twenty-first century. But it comes as no surprise to someone from the Yorkshire Dales to see that the leading region in this list of loneliness and social fragmentation is none other than our beloved London.

When I came to London last year, I found myself thrown into a sea of 7 million people from every walk of life. But far from the cosmopolitan party London is sold as, I found a city filled with grey suits

and expressionless faces. I knew to expect the concrete jungle, the sharp landscapes and towering buildings – these were in fact the very things that attracted me to London. But I was grossly unprepared for the sense of isolation that a city driven by finance could fill you with, when you get surrounded by dozens of people.

When I get a bus in Yorkshire, there is a fair chance I'll run into my dentist, teacher or even just Florence from down t'road. But whoever it is, the least you can expect is a friendly smile. Now, try giving your average Tube or bus rider in London the same and I guarantee the least you'll get in return is a look of distaste and at worst a punch in the face. For people used to living in a city, perhaps I'm sounding a little rural and weird. Why should people acknowledge one another's presence, when chances are you'll never see them again anyway? True, but they're still people, and being friendly doesn't cost anything.

The world we've grown up in is very different one to that of our parents. Even in the north of England, the study indicates there has been significant loss in sense of community. Before the ascent of neo-liberalism and the individual during the 1980s, most people grew up on the same street that they would one day

We've paid a price for the extra disposable income and it is our once ironclad community spirit

die on. Increased mobility and massive expansion of university places now sees children often live in half a dozen different places before they even leave school, before relocating to a city half way across the country for further education. This way of living is undoubtedly one of the major factors in the rise in social fragmentation but it is not the most worrying. Ultimately one day we'll all settle down, find a place that we call home and it won't necessarily be the one that our parents chose. Just thirty years ago, the chances were that you would have known every person on your street but today, even in the friendliest of towns, more and more people cut themselves off and hope others will 'mind their own'. The more ignorant would point to immigrants, others to rising levels of crime and disorder, but the reality is exponentially more and more of us fear the stranger in street or even the house next door.

The truth is that Thatcher's Britain; the introduction of military style policing, the promotion of the individual over the communal and the privatisation of everything from coal to dentistry; has destroyed a society that once cared about looking after more than becoming number one. Indeed, quite a lot of us now live comfortably, but more and more the

poorest sections in society are becoming further fragmented and separated.

We've paid a price for the extra disposable income and it is our once ironclad community spirit. I can only hope that what Thatcher began, the destruction of the fabric of society, doesn't continue to engulf the whole of northern England. London has already lost itself the millions of indifferent pavement-watching masses and research suggests that the rest of Britain is on its way. For all those overseas students that have yet to venture beyond the M25 I recommend a trip to Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester or any of the former great industrial cities. While they might not have towering financial districts, they have wonderful character that is equally reflected in the people that live there.

I spent much of my life growing up wanting to escape the small world where I knew everybody's name and they knew mine. But it took only a week in London to get me to appreciate not just the beautiful countryside I grew up in, but also how the friendly nature of people around you is worth far more than a couple of extra quid in your pocket. London can wallow in its own loneliness; I'm going North for Christmas.

Opportunistic politicians use attack for electoral gain

>> Continued from page 15

disputes of 1992 and 1993.

Pakistan too, can play a part. As US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had appealed, Pakistan ought to provide "absolute and total" co-operation in rooting out the perpetrators. Yet Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari's attempts to improve relations with India has unfortunately coincided with this attack. With the Indian government having raised their security alertness to "war level", the Press Trust of India – India's official news agency – has reported of government plans to suspend the four-year-long peace process. It is a concerning state of affairs, for Pakistan may very well feel obliged to withdraw troops from the Afghanistan border in order to strengthen defence against India, which represents a setback for Pakistan's own anti-terrorism efforts.

Thankfully, indications seem to suggest that such a violent religious fallout is not likely. Aditya Jhaveri, a first-year International Relations and History undergraduate, was confident about the situation within Mumbai itself: "Secularism will not be affected. The situation rises beyond partisan politics, and none of the perceived communal parties have

blamed Muslims as a social group. This is not a communal occurrence like 1993." There is some truth in this: there has been an unprecedented response from Muslim organisations in Mumbai, who have decided that Muslim cemeteries will not open its doors for the militants' last rites, denying them the martyrdom they seek.

Nonetheless, the political consequences are already evident. The latest in a series of violent terror attacks in India has only served to lay the ruling Congress government open to BJP attacks. After all, one of Congress Party's first moves after taking power in 2004 was to scrap a federal anti-terrorism law – the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, which had strengthened witness protection and enhanced police powers.

On one level it may seem prudent for Indians to compromise civil liberties for the prevention of terrorism. But Professor Conor Gearty, Director of the LSE Centre for the Study of Human Rights, disagreed. Pointing to the lessons of the British experience, he advised caution: "We have to be very careful about allowing our natural horror at violent, politically-motivated crime to lead us to a point where we feel we have to change the nature of our society in order to counter it."

"We should not try to protect our institutions by destroying the freedom upon which they depend. Instead we should redouble our efforts to bring all perpetrators of political violence to justice."

Yet for this to happen, the media will have to exercise greater restraint. The media must refrain from whipping popular sentiment up into frenzy, which can then facilitate a conciliatory move by both India and Pakistan. Pakistani News anchor Hamid Mir, admitted as much: "The peace process between the two countries is the main casualty of this media war." For the attacks to fuel communal discord at the expense of an electoral campaign would be a deep shame, and would be an ideological victory for the terrorists, who, through creating fear, seek to change the nature of our societies.

Rather than simply moving on to fresh controversies when the current supply of bad news has been exhausted, the Indian and Pakistani media should provide more constructive journalism which can help nurture conciliation. Only when providing a voice of measured rationality and moderation, can the media serve as a progressive and constructive force in society.



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From Right to Left: the political columns

Hayek

Alex
Blance



Legitimacy of an African union

We all remember the nervous excitement around the end of March this year, when the results of the presidential elections in Zimbabwe were rolling in. Or rather, weren't rolling in. For a moment it seemed that, although the authorities were again trying to fiddle the votes in Robert Mugabe's favour, this time would not be the same. Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition MDC, might have pulled it off. The mood felt different, and change was in the air.

However we now find ourselves approaching the end of 2008, and after a second round of voting, based on disputed results from the first, and months of cross-party negotiations mediated by foreign leaders, Zimbabwe still appears to be going nowhere. The political situation remains in a deadlock. However, the country is also in the midst of economic chaos, and all this is having a very tangible effect on the country; people are starving and diseases are spreading as food

becomes scarce and the infrastructure of a once relatively prosperous nation breaks down. Zimbabwe is no longer just bogged down by fraudulent elections and a dictatorial government. It is now a country in meltdown, and its people face grave peril.

Despite all of this, there appears to have been little consensus amongst fellow African leaders as to how they should try and deal with the Zimbabwean problem. It seems imperative that they should get involved to help get the country moving. After all, it is no secret that Mugabe and Zanu PF have only been able to keep their hold on power with the help of the army and other state security forces, ensuring that nothing topples them from the inside. But this week, there appears to be hope, as Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga has conceded publicly that "it's time for African governments... to push [Mugabe] out of power," following talks with Tsvangirai. The recent freeze on a wider African movement may be thawing, and this is furthered by the fact that the prospective South African President Jacob Zuma

appears to be equally keen on making decisive progress in Zimbabwe, in stark comparison to his predecessor.

All of this is essential because the action taken over Zimbabwe has to be African. Mugabe has built his popularity and career on the basis of his being one of the primary liberators of Africa from colonial rule. This means that too much direct involvement from Britain, America and France will only play into the dictator's hands, as he rails against the 'Western imperialists' who are returning to interfere in Zimbabwe. However this does not mean to say that we should do nothing. The role of Western leaders must be to keep Zimbabwe at the top of their foreign policy agenda, and push their partners in Africa to communicate to the Mugabe regime the message that it is time for them to go. With a united front of African leaders encouraged by a strong-willed West, ready to pour aid and resources into a newly-free country, we may see Zimbabwe and Zimbabweans emerging from this most horrific of times with renewed hope.

Laski



Vlad
Unkovski-
Korica

The terror of spinmeisters

Several newspapers last week sought to use the recent tragic events in Mumbai to foster greater fear and hatred of Muslims in Britain. The Daily Express ran with 'Butchers Of Mumbai Are Brits', while the Mail on Sunday screamed 'India's Muslim Terrorists Were Funded By Cash Raised In UK Mosques'.

Such claims not only reflect a level of racism inherent in the imperial order, but also highlight the extent to which any conflict in the region between North Africa and East Asia cannot be separated from the US-led 'War on Terror'.

That is not to say that the events in Mumbai might not have arisen within a troubled local context with its own long history. One perfectly plausible account is that the attackers were motivated in large part by the long-standing tension between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. The dispute had already triggered four wars between the two countries between 1947 and 2001. The complexity of the planning and logistics apparently required for the Mumbai attacks have raised observations from various commentators linking the operation to elements in Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency.

India has certainly made moves that suggest it believes 'elements' from Pakistan were to blame. The government has called in Pakistan's High Commissioner to India demanding "strong action" from Pakistan against these "elements".

Yet other commentators have suggested that there is a possibility that the perpetrators of the assault on Mumbai's five-star hotels were in fact Indian Muslims. Tariq Ali has for instance explained: "It's hardly a secret that there has been much anger within the poorest sections of the Muslim community against the systematic discrimination and acts of violence carried out against them, of which the 2002 anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat was only the most blatant and the most investigated episode, supported by the Chief Minister of the State and the local state apparatuses."

Whatever turns out to be the case, the main factor that leads back to the 'War on Terror' is that the targets in Mumbai were overwhelmingly symbols of Western influence. The focus of the assault was, as Mumbai-based author Farzana Versey described, on the "cocktail party circuit".

None of that mitigates the brutality of the acts perpetrated against civilians.

But it does indicate that radicalised layers in Muslim communities across the globe feel anger at the humiliation and injustice perpetrated against Muslims by US forces.

Yet even President-elect Barack Obama now thinks that the 'real' war America should be fighting is in Afghanistan. There is, however, increasing evidence that the war in Afghanistan cannot be won. The most senior British military commander in Afghanistan, Brigadier Mark Carleton-Smith, said in October that the public should not expect a "decisive military victory". Instead, he suggested a possible deal with the Taliban.

The matter is even more pressing since it is Taliban-led warfare uniting fellow Pashtuns on either side of the Afghan-Pakistani border that has brought Pakistan, a nuclear power, to the brink.

So, it is about time to stop demonising Muslims as the problem. The problem lies first and foremost in the White House and in Downing Street. They have brought a whole region to the brink of a nuclear holocaust while American and European soldiers continue to lose their lives in a war that has already been lost. It is time to recognise this and pull out before it is too late.

Viridian Speaking louder, acting faster

Justus Rollin
Environment and Ethics officer

Yet another United Nations climate conference has been organised, this time in Poznan, Poland. Many flight miles are being wasted to assemble governments, NGOs and business representatives. But what about the indigenous and marginalised communities? The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change does not recognise them, even though they are among the hardest hit groups?

What will yet another conference bring about? The UN hopes for a "shared vision" as well as a roadmap to the climate conference next year in Copenhagen, but the negotiations are not going well. Unlike past conferences, the European Union lacks commitment - especially Poland, Italy, and Germany - yes, even Germany - are weakening the EU position.

There have been hopes of reaching an effective Kyoto II agreement. And the fronts are already changing in international climate change diplomacy, exemplified by the ambitious commitment of the US President-elect to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 80 per cent by 2050. Even China and India are taking action, even though their emissions levels per capita are far below that of the US or Britain. China is often named and shamed for their massive coal-fired power plant expansion, yet they also invest heavily in renewable energy. Plans are being laid for reforestation and to generate 15 per cent of their electricity by wind by 2015.

Even though every part of me wants to believe that concerted global negotiations can bring about substantial climate change agreements, I do not want to buy into the false hope that mere words and documents will make a difference. The issue at hand requires something that cannot be allowed under the present political and economic system - we need to drastically change our lifestyles. Only if the global consumer class reduces its carbon footprint, can we truly hope to deal with climate change.

There is a huge gap between international rhetoric and actual action at the national level. Even though a number of laws and directives are being produced, the actual effect on reducing greenhouse gas emissions has been very moderate at best. Economic growth has not yet been decoupled from carbon dioxide emission. The more our economies grow, so does carbon dioxide levels.

While governments say they are changing, they are not really, even as millions are already seeing the effects by climate change and have to adapt now. Only if we join in demanding to leave fossil fuels in the ground and switch to community controlled renewable energy can we make use of our time and support the struggles worldwide. People are suffering now due to our destructive lifestyles, dictated to us by corporations and the "growth" imperative - so make your voice heard!

Measured musings



Learn to look in the mirror

One doesn't need to look quite as far to the United States and its notorious offshore detention centre for a whiff of Western hypocrisy in the espousing of human rights.

Having been in the business of promoting and nominally defending human rights and civil liberties for a good sixty years (if we accept the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as some sort of official starting point), it is rather unfortunate that citizens of the West still have to point accusing fingers at themselves for various transgressions within their own borders.

Forget for a moment, important as they, about 42-day detention limits and the constitutionality of the arrest of Conservative Member of Parliament David Green. Look instead to the National Health Service, which the Guardian revealed yesterday to have been procuring surgical instruments produced by child workers.

Quite a jarring thought, to know that the equipment with which your GP is treating you may well be the fruits of child

labour.

An estimated 5,800 child workers in Pakistan labour in poor conditions, and for as little as £1.40 a day, to produce the likes of scalpels and forceps that doctors and nurses over here use.

In Sialkot, where a great portion of the NHS's instrument demand is met, children as young as eight could be found working in harsh conditions for a pittance. Workshop accidents are commonplace and injuries are usual fare. Sanitation is poor and work spaces are often cramped.

Hardly a conducive environment that facilitates individual development and realisation of potential.

But how far should we blame the NHS for their predicament?

Obviously, the Pakistani manufacturers would necessarily need to shoulder the blame for unethical employment practices. But buyers, who now have learnt of the undesirable consequence they indirectly contribute to, have to take steps to mitigate the problem.

The only step taken thus far, issuing of draft procurement guidelines which ulti-

mately will not be made compulsory, can be described, in a rather polite manner, as disappointingly inadequate.

Although a consultation on ethical trade guidelines is in the works, individual NHS trusts will retain autonomy over their procurement policies - and thus are free to disregard the guidelines even if they do get introduced.

The frivolity of the NHS's attitude is one to marvel. If setting real targets with significant consequences for failure wasn't good enough to achieve practical results, one can only imagine what the Department of Health hoped to achieve by counting on pure altruism.

Saving lives and healing the sick is all good, but hardly can we use this noble end to justify unethical means that deprive other equally deserving people, young children at that, of proper working conditions and opportunities for education.

If people in the West are clueless as to why critics from elsewhere are quick to decry human rights as a parochial concept, some of the answers they seek may be found in their own hypocrisy in action.

Realising the rights of your citizens by trampling on that of ours? Developing nations are more than entitled to say "no, thanks".

For sixty years, such doublespeak and divergence of rhetoric and action has done nothing but harm and discredit to human rights across the world. How can we lay claim to conceptual universality if all we ever do is accentuate the disparities in reality?

Perhaps it's time to realise that the seemingly discrete issues like this count. That, more than the disgraces of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, it is the indirect exploitation of the poor and the retardation of Third World economic development that truly hurts the human rights cause. If we ever hope for others to take us seriously at our word when we claim to be champions of human rights and liberty, then we will do well to start with a long, sobering look at ourselves in the mirror.

Chun Han Wong
Features Editor

Academics' views on human rights



Eileen Barker OBE
Professor Emeritus of Sociology with Special Reference to the Study of Religion

Which human right do you see as the most fundamental?

I suppose the right to life is the most fundamental as the rest are not much use if that one is denied. But I am most interested in and concerned with is the right to freedom of belief. Freedom to manifest one's belief is pretty important too, but there will be limitations to this - as in Article 29, which can be misused.

What do you regard as the greatest progress we've made in the promotion of human rights in the last 60 years?

The increased awareness that people - all people - are entitled to human rights and the proliferation of human rights organisations such as Amnesty International. Clearly organisations such as the United Nations, are important, as is the growth of the Helsinki Committees and NGOs, giving us information about human rights abuses. The work of journalists, such as those who produce 'Unreported World', many of whom risk their lives. Of course, abuses do not diminish - in many ways they become more sophisticated. And I'm proud of LSE's contribution to human rights!



Conor Gearty
Professor of Human Rights Law,
Director of the Centre for the Study of Human Rights

...in some important, subliminal sense the world needs the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the conscience of a war-torn generation, placed on our shoulder as a guide to a better future and as an obstacle to the (re)doing of terrible wrong.

- from 'Something to Declare' in the *New Humanist*, 123/6 (2008)



Chris Greenwood QC
Professor of International Law,
Judge-elect on the International Court of Justice

Which human right do you see as the most fundamental?

It is always difficult to single out one human right, but for me it would have to be the right not to be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as I think that this is, in the end, the most fundamental right of all.

What do you regard as the greatest progress we've made in the promotion of human rights in the last 60 years?

I think that has been moving human rights from the periphery to the centre of international dialogue.



Francesca Klug OBE
Professorial research fellow,
Director of Human Rights Futures Project

Which human right do you see as the most fundamental?

Article 1 states that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

The entire UDHR is summed up in this article. It tells us why we need the UDHR - because all human beings are endowed with both reason and conscience. This is why we need protection and how it will be delivered. It tells us what human rights are - freedom, equality and dignity. It also tells how they should be respected - by acting towards one another in a spirit of solidarity.

Article 1 is the UDHR's inspirational and aspirational mission, containing values which Renee Cassin described as "higher than life itself".

OUR HUMAN RIGHTS

SIX DECADES AFTER THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION, CHUN HAN WONG CAST HIS EYES OVER THE PLACE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE LSE

Quest for the right of rights

Chun Han Wong witnessed an intellectual and philosophical battle royale

Six decades since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, humanity seemed to have made precious little advancement from the colossal horrors of an extraordinarily sanguinary twentieth century.

A cursory glance across the headlines of the day will reveal a plethora of human rights violations across the world. From Gaza to Darfur, the contemporary reminders of the darker side of our nature are countless. Even the sole superpower of our time, whose declaration of independence stressed the Lockean concept of individual rights, has stooped to justifying torture and indefinite detention without trial.

Even the concept itself was subjected to perennial barracking from academic commentators, enduring countless critiques of cultural relativism, false universalism and legal impracticality.

Thankfully, for all the trials and tribulations, on the eve of its sixtieth birthday, the Declaration retains yet its place on the moral pedestal for humanity.

To celebrate its continuing hallowed status as, in the words of Professor Conor Gearty, a 'mission statement for humanity', the LSE Centre for the Study of Human Rights hosted last Wednesday a panel debate to decide which article in the Declaration represented the 'right of rights'.

Six esteemed experts in the field, all bristling with qualifications, experience and intellectual stature, would argue for and prove the case for their chosen rights.

The first round, "loosely based" on BBC Radio 4's comedy game show 'Just a Minute', would feature two-minute

speeches by each panellist for the right of his or her choice. Each panellist began with ten points, which could then be won or lost through challenges on 'deviation', 'hesitation' and 'repetition'. The chair for the event, Professor Laurie Taylor of Radio 4 fame, would "loosely base" himself on the original host Nicholas Parsons.

Professor Francesca Klug, an LSE professorial fellow and director of the Human Rights Futures Project, initiated the proceedings with an extolment of the virtues of Article 1. "If we don't have the first article, we have nothing," she declared. "Everything else [in the Declaration] is detail."

Shami Chakrabarti, the next panellist, was only ever really going to back one right that evening. The director of human rights pressure group Liberty threw her weight behind Article 5 - 'No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'. For her, this principle is "non-negotiable", not even in times of emergency.

Even for a light-hearted affair that this first round of debate was set up to be, Chakrabarti refused give in "even one iota", for any compromise would cause the "whole framework will collapse like a house of cards."

Article 8, which professes the common right of people to 'an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals' for any violations of fundamental constitutional and legal rights committed against them, followed on. Professor Gearty, director of the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, was charged with its defence - a task he performed admirably with vivacious oratory.

The article, he argued, puts the "emphasis where it belongs - the need to secure outcomes" in the practical exercises of protection of human rights. "Without remedy, all the rest [of the rights] you will hear of tonight are so much as moonshine."

Baroness Helena Kennedy QC was the next to state her case. Her choice of article 9, which states 'no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile', was founded upon the fact that it was "a wrong perpetrated around the world" and one that is the "most egregious".

"Article 9 is about Palestine!" she exclaimed, succinctly summarising her argument and hoping to gain some votes into the bargain.

Following her onto the stand was Jonathan Cooper, editor of the *European Human Rights Law Review*. The experienced barrister argued his case for Article 12, which expressed rights against 'arbitrary intervention' into personal 'privacy, family, home or correspondence', by focusing on the "physical" and "moral identity" of people - things which are dependent on the preservation of privacy.

Professor of International Social Policy Peter Townsend rounded out the first session with his argument for Article 22, which professes the right 'to social security' and the realisation of 'economic, social and cultural rights [that are] indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality'.

And then, there were three. Only half of the panellists would enter the next round - the decision based on points and audience acclamation.

Chakrabarti's verve was compelling

enough for the crowd to book Article 5 a place in the next round. The charm of Article 1 ensured its progression, while the leftists in the crowd brought Article 22 through.

The debate then took a more academic turn. "Losers" of the first round would narrate specific test scenarios under which the "winners" had to defend the right they have chosen to profess.

Professor Klug again led the proceedings, faced with life-or-death choice in a hypothetical case of a newborn baby stricken by a medical condition that meant it had no hope of ever gaining consciousness. She declined to make a judgement on legal terms, and emphasised the worth of Article 1 as a philosophical guide in "difficult situations". While not a legally-enforceable document, it "gives you an argument and a basis for a [wider human rights] movement."

There were no prizes for guessing the test case laid out for Chakrabarti. "It's no surprise," she stated tersely. "The infamous nuclear ticking bomb scenario."

The LSE alumna and governor moved quickly into her element, conceding nothing in her spirited defence of the right against torture. "If we start recalibrating the rules now," she warned, then there was grave risk of the "human rights of people [being] lost forever."

Professor Townsend was then presented with a political dilemma, between the sovereignty of a new democratic state that denied its people social security for economic development, and the primacy of the rights expressed in Article 22. In the course of his defence, he expressed a need to redress the skewed attention given to individual rights over collective rights.

When it came to the vote again, the closet leftists in the crowd may have been inspired by the persuasiveness of Professor Townsend's articulations. Article 1 was unceremoniously dumped, and the audience would have their go at the two remaining finalists.

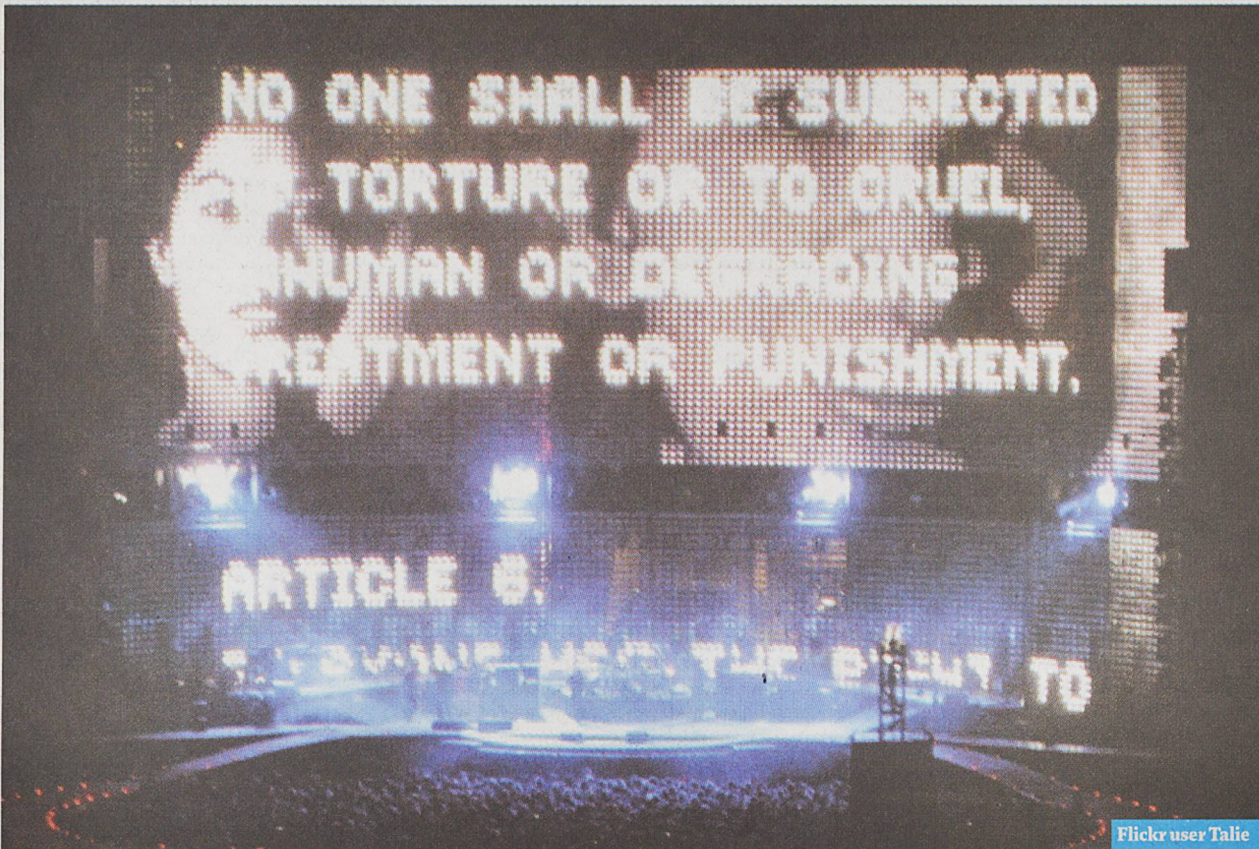
By now, it was apparent that the irresistible force lay with Chakrabarti. Audience questions tended to focus on the topic of torture, over issues of unreliable answers gleaned by means of torture and the rights of the many against the one. Chakrabarti reserved a strong comeback for the poser of the latter question: "The many is made up of individuals."

"If you start treating individuals like that, then you are helping to recruit more terrorists than it would prevent," she argued. Cue a rapturous applause.

When the final vote was called, there could be no doubt about the outcome. A sea of hands rose in unison, bringing Article 5 to an overwhelming victory.

The contemporary resonance of the issue certainly did her a big favour, but interestingly, the decision was not unanimous - a handful stuck to their left-wing guns, myself included. "There are still some Stalinists left at the LSE," quipped a triumphant Chakrabarti, tongue-in-cheek.

Perhaps socialism isn't quite as passé as believed.



Flickr user Talie



Photo: Anca Dumitrescu

Fighting for right side of the law

Cherie Blair sat down with **Chun Han Wong** for a chat on human rights and discrimination

In the year since her departure from the pressure cooker environs of No.10 Downing Street, Cherie Blair has found time she had not had in a decade for her personal pursuits.

More time for her legal career, new-found time for penning an autobiography, and the even spare evening for visiting her alma mater.

Last Wednesday, Mrs Blair returned to the LSE, armed with thirty-three years' worth of wisdom and anecdotes since graduating in 1975 with a First-class degree, and a couple of hours for a public dialogue with the School's director, Howard Davies.

The LSE boasts a substantive addition since her last visit – the New Academic Building. The Moot Court room, centrepiece of the Law department's spanking new facilities, would be her first port of call.

In a room where students normally try their hand at playing barrister, I would, for this evening, try my hand at playing journalist with a Queen's Counsel on the receiving end.

Mrs Blair, a part-time judge herself, was aptly ushered to a seat behind the bench. Court was in session, and I wasted no time.

She seemed rather pleased with the splendid new building the School now enjoyed. I suggested that this was possible through the increasingly corporate manner with which the School was being run.

Given the fact that her choice of the LSE back in 1972 was partly due to her appreciation of the School's Fabian values and commitment to fight inequality, I asked her what she felt about this recent corporate turn.

She quickly disagreed with my premise that such a direction might be undesirable.

"I think that in the twenty-first century, if you are still doing things the way they did when Sidney and Beatrice Webb were here, then that would be rather sad."

"There is absolutely nothing wrong with the School competing as it does as one of the best universities in the world. The idea that you can do that without running it like a business is just not sensible."

"What is important for the School is what you teach in the School...the values that you teach, of independence, of enquiring minds, of always looking for new ideas."

Those values probably stood her in good stead as she made her ascent in the infamously misogynistic legal profession of the 1970s. In spite of overt gender discrimination, she forged a successful career nonetheless, taking silk in 1995 and appointed a Recorder (part-time judge in County and Crown courts) in 1999.

Quite appropriately for a lawyer of LSE pedigree, Mrs Blair specialised in employment law in the early part of her career, before extending her expertise into other fields – human rights among them.

Her curriculum vitae reveals as much, listing several major human rights cases which she has brought in the past few years.

In 2002, she brought the Ministry of Defence to court, accusing them of institutionalised discrimination against Gurkha soldiers amounting to a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights.

She took on another high profile human rights case in 2004, representing Shabina Begum, a Muslim student who was barred by her school from wearing a head-to-toe jilbab.

Given her admirable track record in this field, and with the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights just a week away (this Wednesday), I thought it quite apropos to seek her thoughts on what she believed to be the most important human right.

But the 'leading Silk in public law and human rights', as described on her chambers website, was not going to be drawn into a snap judgement.

"Rather than select any one of the individual articles, I think the most important idea you have to grasp about human rights is that idea that there is an inherent dignity in each and every person," she replied.

"If you can grasp that, not just as a lawyer, but as a policy administrator, as a politician, as a fellow human being, if you can look at each other as a dignified

human being, then you wouldn't go too far wrong."

She might have been more decisive and simply offered Article 1* as her choice, but perhaps her political instincts – honed by a decade of Downing Street experience – got better of her.

Ironically, it was during that time which she spent at No. 10 that her husband attempted a major rollback of civil liberties.

In 2005, Tony Blair proposed an extension of the detention limit for terror suspects from 14 to 90 days. The move was voted down in the Commons, but the 28-day proposal passed in its place.

Only last month, his successor Gordon Brown was forced to drop the 42-day proposal after its defeat in the House of Lords.

Mrs Blair was not prepared to comment directly on the proposals her husband and her political party made.

"One always has to remember that human rights is always about balancing. It's about balancing the rights and freedoms of one person with the rights and freedoms of others," she said.

"When we're talking about terrorism, when we're talking about things like what happened recently in Mumbai, [where] people are prepared to not see the dignity in other people, but actually just to see them as objects and use them in [what's] essentially a political campaign, then you'll have to take hard measures.

"The important thing is that in our country we have a system whereby Parliament can propose [legislation], the judges can review [them], and then Parliament really has the last word. And so far Parliament has decided that 28 days is enough."

It wasn't too surprising for a lawyer to take refuge behind the lawmakers so as to skirt around a controversial issue like this one. Hoping she would be more forthright if she didn't have to tread into a political minefield, I steered into another field of her expertise – education.

Discrimination in providing access to education has been a common refrain in critiques of admissions policy at top universities like Cambridge and Oxford.

"The most important idea you have to grasp about human rights is that idea that there is an inherent dignity in each and every person"

With the laws of the land barring discrimination against prospective students on grounds of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and disability, I wondered if she saw the law having a role in mitigating admissions discrimination based on social background?

No, would be the short of it. Legislation would only scrape at the surface of the issue. "You always have to decide," she said, "are we just doing tokenism, are we doing quotas, or are we actually examining what the criteria are and checking whether the criteria selection are actually getting the right people?"

She suggested that the admissions process at top universities may be sub-consciously favouring public school-type applicants. "Sometimes the criteria can be slanted to say that we want people who are like 'us', and that 'us' may be white, male and middle-class."

Solutions to the problem then, should involve a revamp of the admissions criteria to eliminate undesirable biases. "You have to always be looking at the criteria – how are we selecting people, how are we judging how competent [the applicants] are."

The under-representation of students from less-privileged backgrounds in top universities might also not be entirely due to admissions policy.

Culture, she believed, is an important part in a student's choice of university. She only knew it too well herself. After graduating from the LSE, she turned down an offer to read for a Bachelor in Civil Law degree at Wadham College, Oxford and instead took on a scholarship from Lincoln's Inn.

"I didn't feel comfortable in the culture there," she explained. "The LSE was a much more relaxed and egalitarian place."

For a moment, I was tempted to ask why she then chose to marry an Oxonian. But I kept it to myself.

* Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.



Photo of the week Trafalgar Square Christmas lights go on

Who're you gonna call?

Chun Han Wong

When one leaves the LSE, degree in hand, the next port-of-call is more often than not a financial institution, chambers of law or even the halls of power in various governments. But contrary to popular imagination, alternatives do exist in the third sector – non-governmental organisations which are geared towards social, environmental or cultural objectives.

Such a career path may seem unusual indeed for an LSE graduate, but for Marie Tan, it was a case of following her passions.

It was hardly a new experience for her too, having worked as a social worker on various community projects in Iowa, where she did her undergraduate studies, and back home in Malaysia.

After leaving LSE with an MSc in Political Sociology, it was no surprise her next job, in London, would bring her back into the rewarding line of social work.

Interestingly enough, her year at the LSE did help push her along this particular path, deviant from the orthodox it may have been.

"In some ways, for me, attending the LSE and becoming aware of the big push for its graduates to enter the economics related job market made me all the more determined to make something out of my experience here work for me in a non-traditional way," she said.

A search on the LSE Careers Service website yielded something that matched her desired field of work. A chance to work on a project that helps victims of domestic violence, with an environmental twist into

the bargain.

Mobile phones are at the heart of the project, and recycling the vital cog in its wheels.

Her current project, fonesforsafety, is a scheme aimed at helping victims of domestic violence, by providing them with personal alarms, for use in times of crisis.

The project takes in unwanted mobile phones and converts them into 999 emergency calls-only personal alarms. The police and domestic violence support agencies then hand these alarms out to individuals at risk, enabling them to contact the emergency services whenever necessary.

The phone collection also provides a source of income, making the project a sustainable one in the long-term; phones that cannot be reconfigured into personal alarms will be recycled for money to fund the project at local and national levels.

For Marie, there was more to the job on a personal level. "Getting mugged at gun-point a week after handing in my dissertation, while not entirely similar to living with domestic violence on a quotidian basis, definitely gave me a jolt of feeling powerless and being at the mercy of others," she explained.

"Coming across a this particular position that allows me to indirectly help empower those who need it most made applying for it a definite no-brainer."

For victims of domestic violence, Marie believes, a personal alarm provides great practical utility and the much-needed psychological support. "It's not even about being able to make that 999 call," she said. "Just having it alone can be reassuring enough to allow a person to go about their day to day routine, to go to work, take care of their children, to main-

tain some semblance of normality while living a life that is tinged by domestic violence."

The utility of these alarms over normal mobile phones cannot be underestimated either. "There are other individuals out there who will bash [their victim's] phone so that they can't contact friends and family for support, and thus allowing them to intimidate and abuse others physically and emotionally or even sexually," she explained.

Much help can be given to these victims, and at almost no cost. "It's free to help out and it takes very little effort. Just put the phone in an envelope and free post it to us. Or to host a collection bin for old mobile phones, with free delivery and collection," she said.

Recent progress with the expansion of the project only makes for more exciting times ahead for Marie. Already with support from the Home Office, Association of Chief Police Officers, Women's Aid and the Body Shop, the project has recently received funding from the City Bridge Trust and Comic Relief, which will go into funding a London-wide and regional rollout of the scheme over the next two and a half years.

Students can and should feature greatly in the expansion of the scheme as well.

"There is a huge capacity for mobile phone recycling among students, and for spreading awareness about this project outside of London, to family and friends," she said.

"If your unwanted mobile phone could become an emergency alarm in these situations, often serving as a lifeline in critical times such as there, why wouldn't you get involved?"

Feel like a Clothes Swap?

Lucie Marie Goulet

It's the latest fashion craze: between the recession and the new concern of the fashion industry for ethical and environmental issues, clothes swap have boomed over the past year. The idea is simple: you bring your nice unwanted clothes or accessories and you can leave with an updated wardrobe.

The Students' Union Environment and Ethics Forum, in collaboration with RAG and People and Planet will run a frock exchange on the 22nd of January, in the Quad, from 12 to 5pm. All you have to do is bring those unloved outfits to one of the Clothes Swap stalls in the week running up to the 22nd. You will be given a voucher you can redeem against clothes on the day of the swap. If you haven't brought any clothes, you will still be able to leave with some by giving a donation.

The Knitting Society will also be running workshops and selling their handiwork. It's January, it's cold, and you will have the opportunity to either buy or learn how to make a fancy, comfy scarf. The Hummus and the Food Appreciation Societies will be running food-tasting sessions. To wrap things up, the Live Music Society will be putting on a gig in the Underground Bar.

Proceeds from all donations will go to the charity Africa Now.



Flickr: Cuellar



Photos: Anca Dumitrescu

Groper on the tube

Cam Paige

I had just read an article on the civil war in Mozambique in which one of the army leaders explained that different rules applied in war. Soldiers recognised that difference and they were going to be fine in peacetime. They would go back to being regular human beings. The shift from years of murderous rampage to family building and 9-to-5 jobs would be seamless. It made sense: war was rape and pillaging, peace made everybody into good neighbours. I looked out of the window, and the country seemed at peace. People were walking to work, parents were taking their children to school, shops were opening, and I was late for class.

The tubes were packed as usual. I stood squashed in a corner near the door, reading the paper over the shoulder of a man in front of me and desperately trying to hold on. We came to a stop and more people got on, but the man to my right wouldn't move. I pointedly glanced at the still-available expanse of the floor behind him, but he looked set to stay where he was. As the train shuddered out of the station, he brushed against my raised arm. Suddenly, I felt uncomfortable. The rest of the carriage was packed full. I had nowhere to go. He brushed against my arm again. It was a busy train, I thought, but couldn't shake off the impression that something was very wrong. We arrived in Holborn and the man was now between me and the doors. I turned slightly to indicate I was getting off. He hesitated, but turned around as well. The doors slid open and he made to get off. I was just about to breathe a sigh of relief and to step off as well. But I was still watching him. He reached his hand behind him, keeping it low, the inside of the palm facing me and the fingers spread out. Then, he

abruptly stopped and leaned back. Had I started walking as soon as he did, I would have walked straight into that hand and he would have had a good grope. Instead, I jumped to the side and pushed past him. But I was shaking.

I'm no feminist. I don't believe in equality. Not among genders, but among people in general. I believe in meritocracy instead. I believe people should be judged on their abilities. I believe in a level playing field. But when it comes to sexual abuse, there's something about being a woman that, short of sewing it all up and lopping off your breasts, makes it impossible to avoid being at a disadvantage. We can get equal rights, equal pay, equal opportunities. Then a sleazy bastard comes along and manages, without doing much, to make you feel filthy, vulnerable and exposed. There is no equality. No amount of belligerent feminism will ever change the fact that people have sex. That it is easier for a man to force himself on a woman than the other way round. Rape may be the ultimate violation, but no, I don't think that by comparison a man brushing against a woman is a minor overstepping of social boundaries.

I think of myself as a strong, independent woman. I'm good at what I do, and have no qualms when it comes to demanding the recognition I deserve. I don't care whether the people I compete against are men or women. As long as I'm better, I want that to be a known fact. A feminist dream? Far from it.

Unless people stop obsessing about sex there will never be gender equality. Meanwhile, my fiancé tells me I should have screamed blue murder, made sure the whole carriage knew the guy was a pervert and talked to security as soon as I got off. Men. They think it's that easy.



Flickr: Karolajnat

This week around campus

Listings:

WEDNESDAY

10 DEC 2008

6pm - 7pm

Where: D302

Description: A debate on the Government's ID Card scheme. Each speaker will outline their party's stance, followed by Questions from the floor. Post-debate drinks in the Tuns afterwards. Chaired by Dr Tony Travers. Everyone welcome.

Event: Swingin' Christmas Party

Society: Swing Dance Society

When: Wednesday, December 10, 2008; 8pm - 11pm

Where: Parish Hall, LSE

Description: It doesn't matter if you are not part of the society, everybody is welcome to lindy hop with us on Wednesday, 10th December 2008 at Parish Hall from 8-11pm. There will be fantastic food and good jazz music, as well as an intro to swing dance lesson to get everybody in the mood for a Swingin' Christmas Party! Hope to see you all there!

Entry: £1
(Includes: Intro to Swing Lesson from 8:30-9:30pm)

THURSDAY

11 DEC 2008

Event: Carol Service

Society: LSE SU Christian Union and Catholic Society

When: Thursday, December 11, 2008; 7:15pm-9pm

Where: St Anselm and St Cecilia's Church, Kingsway (near the Shakespeare's Head!)

Description: A traditional carol service and a short talk from renowned speaker Rico Tice, followed by festive refreshments

Event: ID Cards Debate with Chris Huhne MP and Nick Palmer MP

Society: Lib Dem and Labour

When: Thursday, December 11, 2008;

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

Event: End of Term Film Bonanza

Society: Film

When: Wednesday, December 10, 5pm-7pm; Thursday and Friday, December 11-12, 7ppm-9.30pm

Where: NAB 206

Description: Join us for our marathon End of Term Film Bonanza. Motorcycle Diaries on Wednesday. Cities of Light, The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain on Thursday, and Iron Man on Friday. Free food and drinks.

Write for The Beaver in Social

1) **Photography in Social:**
photography@thebeaveronline.co.uk

2) **Promote your society:**
thebeaveronline.co.uk/listings

social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Falling at the first hurdle

Greg Opie

to Wimbledon two weeks before. Luckily for him, nobody noticed the sly texting of directions from social sec Anoushka back at LSE.

After avoiding the very real danger of the ancient CCTV camera falling on someone's head as they entered the rundown lub house, Greg proceeded to give his only team talk of the year. Our tactics were to run as fast as we could.

We had been warned that the walk from the changing rooms to the course could take a while, but the team were not prepared for the epic journey that awaited them. A "shortcut" across a wildlife reserve ended in the smaller members of the team squeezing through a gap in a fence, while the rest of us had to climb over. Treasurer James refused, claiming he "didn't want his bollocks ripped off", and ran off in search of another way.

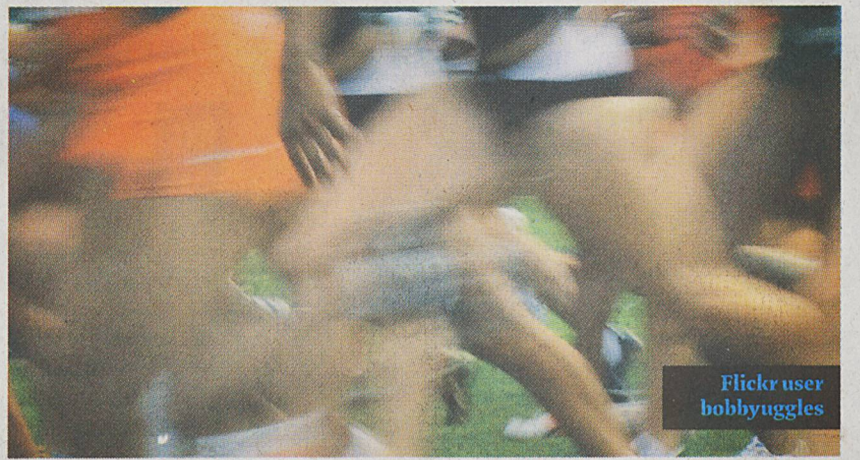
The team managed to get to the start with a few minutes to spare, although

warm-ups were out of the question, but arming up is for polys anyway.

Domien stormed in first for the LSE men's team in an agonising fourth place, mere seconds away from a medal. Ex-UCL captain Vikram and Saji, returning from an injury after the last race, came in close behind in 7th and 8th. Rounding up the first team, Armour finished in a very respectable 16th position.

Then there was a bit of a gap, before Sunny and Greg tried to make it look like they'd been running fast all the way round by sprinting along the last stretch and finishing 32nd and 33rd. James, who managed to knock another runner into the mud this week and is developing a bit of a reputation for underhanded tactics, followed in 34th. Kevin and "Secret Birthday" Pete finished 35th and 36th.

Bearing in mind there was no women's team at all last week, the fact that a whole team showed up was impressive enough.



Flickr user bobbyuggles

After weeks of aggressive reminders and enough emails to legally qualify as harassment, the LSE "home" fixture of the University of London cross country league was finally here. Since the race at Hackney Marshes is a couple of laps around some football pitches and is therefore flat and fast, it also counts as the UL cross country championship race. This meant that if LSE wanted to win any silverware this year, Hackney was the chance to do it, as the polytechnics that usually thrash us don't compete.

With possibly the highest attendance from LSE all year, it was also an opportunity for captain Greg to show off his organisational skills, especially following the navigational disaster incurred in getting

But they also ran quite well too, with Jess leading them in at 9th. Harriet, regretting ruining her chance to finish first for the LSE women last week by not turning up, finished strongly in 19th, and Rachel rounded up the team in 27th.

On the way back, we decided not to take the short cut, but we did come across a house on its own in the middle of nowhere that could have been taken straight from 'Deliverance'. All it needed was a small

child on the porch playing a banjo. The final result? The women's team did well to finish 5th overall against tough competition, but the men's team came 2nd, winning silver medals and beating Strand Poly into 3rd. Some may say it was because our best runners turned up and remained free of injury, but I'm sure it was the inspirational team talk.

Good Term

Bad Term

1st Team Football

Challenging for silverware on three fronts, and have the tightest (and fittest) defence in the league. Big Fat Jacquesy continues to let the side down though.

5th Team Football

Pre-season fears over being possible relegation candidates have turned full circle as the fifths are now placed as genuine title contenders.

Beaver Sports Editors

What can we say about this duo. A monumental turnaround in just a single term, top marks.

Tom Jackson

Rumours are rife that senior members of the Rugby Club are crying out for the return of PW Burlmisher.

Ultimate Frisbee

Failed to have a single article printed in The Beaver despite numerous e-mails to a Mr W Ong. Sort it out Winston.

Netball

Have had an average Wednesday night Tuns attendance lower than their sixth team's league position.

Results

Netball
LSE 1s 23 - 19 Royal Holloway 23-19
LSE 1s 19 - 19 King's Medics 2s
LSE 4s 19 - 28 RHUL 4s

Mens Tennis
LSE 1s 9-1 Portsmouth 1s
LSE 2s 10-0 Queen Marys 1s

Men's Hockey
LSE 1s 3 - 3 Kings 1s

Women's Hockey
LSE 1st 2 - 0 Brunel

Squash
LSE 4ths 4 - 1 St Georges

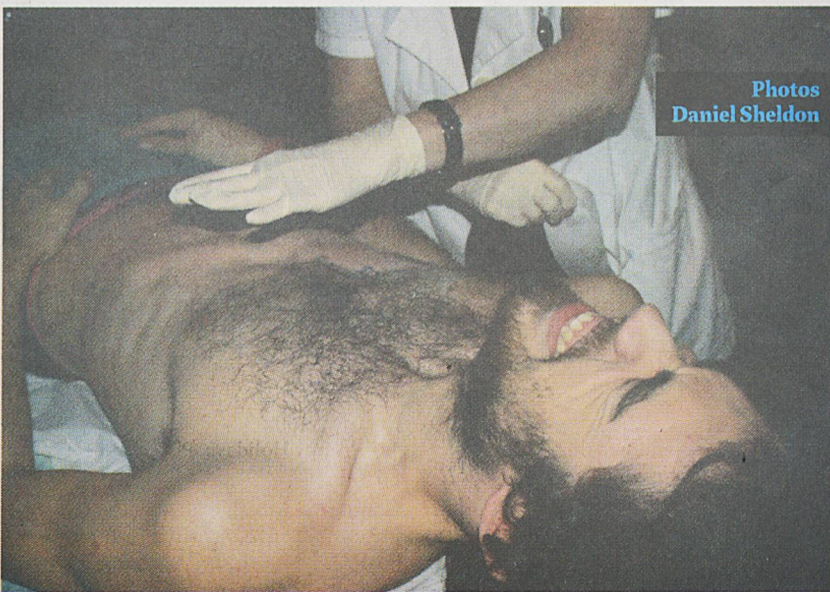
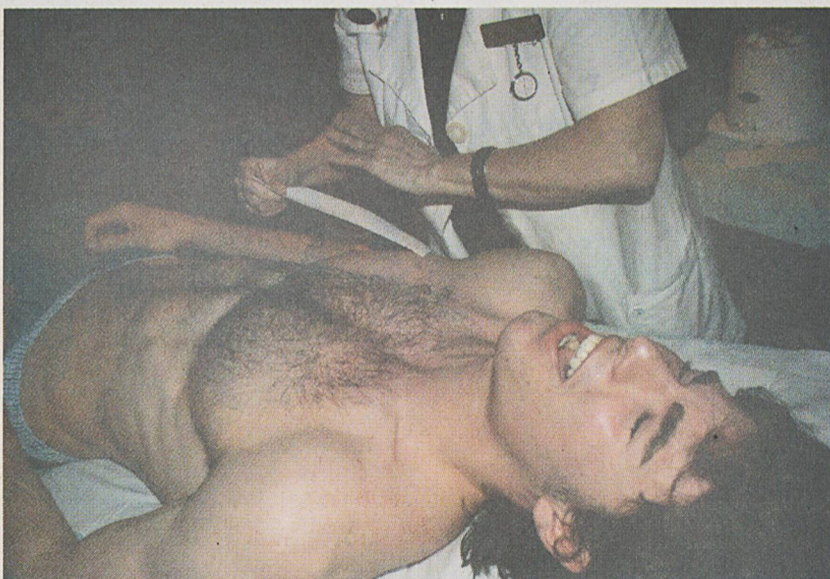
Women's Badminton
LSE 1s 4-4 Hertfordshire 1s

Women's Rugby
LSE 1s 0 - 500 University of Sussex 7s

Boy's Rugby
LSE 1s 7-22 St Barts 1s

Football
LSE 1s 1 - 1 Roehampton 1s
LSE 4s 0 - 0 UCL 5s
LSE 5s 1 - 1 QM 3s
LSE 5s 0 - 1 Imperial 5s

Wax on, Wax off



Photos Daniel Sheldon

Samurai Tempest Keeping

This first ever AU Wax in took place this Wednesday in the Three Tuns, with a partisan crowd watching on. Rumours are as yet unconfirmed as to whether many revellers were actually present for the Australians v Barbarians Test match, but it made for a great atmosphere either way.

The event was the brainchild of Rugby Second team captain and owner of the worst shot at the posts in history, witnessed by all who attended the England v ROW match, Oliver Townsend. Thanks to the hard work of all those in the RAG society, the dream of the hairiest man in Western Europe was turned into a reality.

Four men put their bodies on the line and signed up to be waxed in order to raise money for Hope for Children, Action against Hunger and Cancer Research UK. Over £1000 was raised - so a big thanks to everyone who was kind enough to donate. Obviously, special mention has to go to Oliver Townsend, Daniel Fountain, Ben Jones and myself, who braved the hot wax - and also to Marlene from The Beauty Therapy room, who gave up her evening and made the whole experience as enjoyable, and painless, as possible.

On the 5th day of December, my true love gave to me...1 AU Carol



Booze, balls, and brilliance

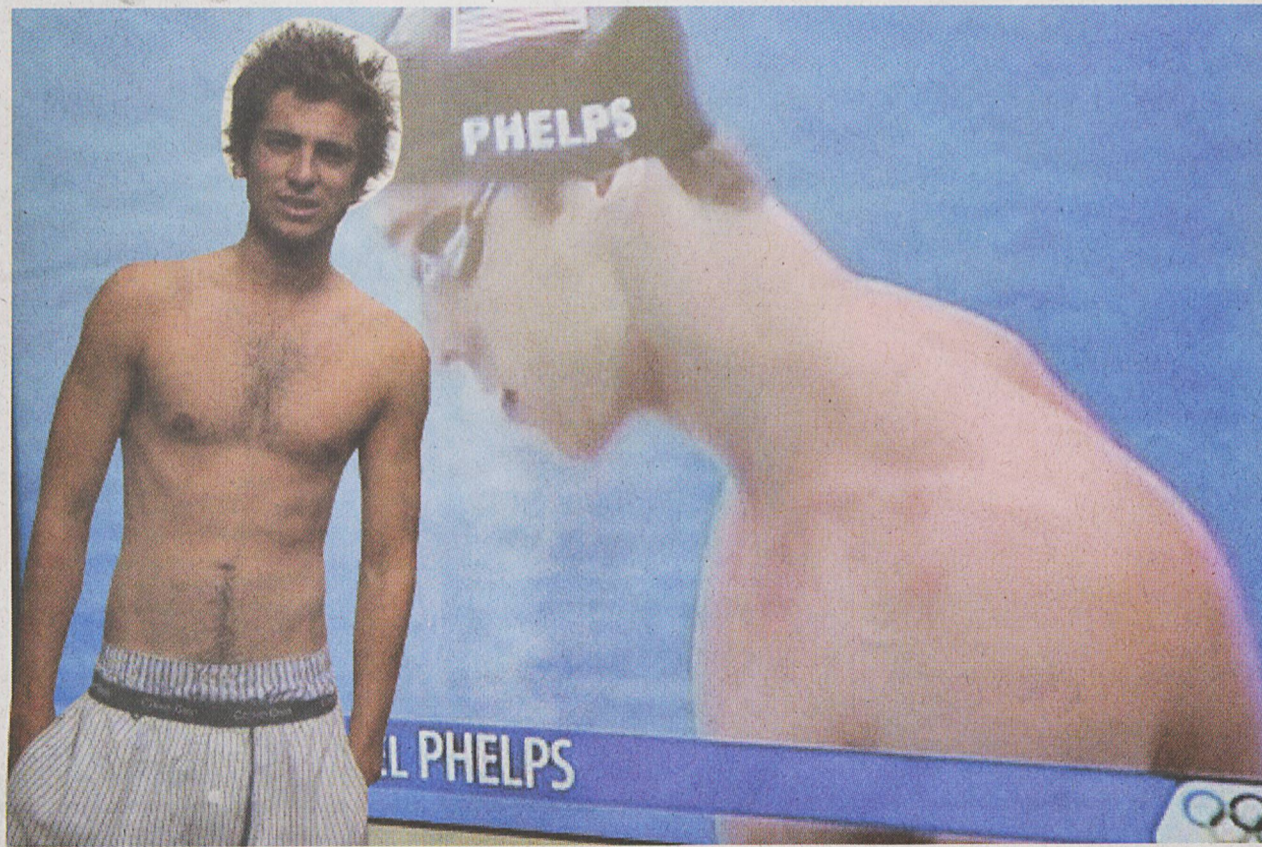
Philosophical Barry



Looking out from my unique vantage point in the pit of Sin on Friday afternoon, I suddenly thought I had been thrust back to the garden of Epicurus himself.

As thunderbirds and chilli peppers, Sir Francis and Power Rangers all embraced in the palm of sweet amour, a lone Hare Krishna lay still, ravaged by the joys of rich foods and exotic drinks. The LSE's conflation of Mr Blobby and Benjamin Netanyahu did his best to denounce the Carol at Thursday's poo-gm but to little effect. Surely much to Daniel Sheldon's annoyance, this year's annual assembly of all those souls who downright refuse to bow in the face of LSE convention and settle for solitary confinement with a textbook proved to be a resounding success.

It was interesting to note that



Opposite ends of the spectrum: Swimming superman Michael Phelps alongside 1st team football linesman Lawrence Rugeroni.

present among the filth and chaos were many of this institution's finest physical specimens. A member of X Factor contestants JLS, fortunate not to be voted off the show this weekend, was unable to withstand the rigours of an all day drinking session despite being more ripped than a copy of avid Aston Villa fan Aled Dilwyn Fisher's CV after passing under the eyes of a recruiter. So, employing the standard Socratic method, why do those who reach their physical optimum seem to abuse their bodies so much more than the rest of us?

Cases in point are George Best, Paul Gascoigne, Ian Botham, Andy Fordham and any of a number of rugby players which have been arrested for beating up innocent bystanders after a few too many 'ales'. However, while these were some of the most talented sportsmen of their generations, they were never the most physically gifted. This self destructive tendency appears to be innate in the greatest among us, stretching across many disciplines.

Comedians wallow in a melancholic mist, politicians buckle under the corrupting temptation to abuse their power (ADF take note) and philosophers are tormented by existential crises which are of their own inception.

It has often been said that the gym culture prevalent in England's rugby clubs is in part responsible for our national team's fall from grace. One can deduce from this then that fitness is necessary but not sufficient in the quest for greatness. Perhaps this debauched self-destructive tendency is hence more of a shield against the obvious deficiencies in the games of those who spend hours on end trying to gain entry to the gun club.

But is there more to this. Is there some characteristic which we all possess that prevents us from reaching our optimum, be it physical, social or intellectual? One can't help but feel that real happiness is actually found in the pursuit of what we think will ultimately make us happy. Once this goal is attained, we simply move

on to the next one decided upon by the whim of our subconscious person. What other explanation is there for our desire to remain active and involved in projects long into our twilight years. Although, by the author's own admission, this fails to explain the sedentary attitudes of benefit cheats and netball players.

I hope you have enjoyed this term's insight into the mind of 'Philli Bazza', as I'm known in the ghetto I call home. Please feel free to contact me over the Christmas break if you wish me to write on any subject which you have a vested interest in or just fancy blowing off some steam as your mum shouts at you to lay the dinner table.

Happy Holidays. Philosophical Barry.

philosophicalbarry
@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Gamblers Anon

Avid Manchester United fan Robert 'Casanova' Fenton was so sure that his team were going to smash Sunderland this weekend that we put a whopping £20 on them to win in a five goal thriller. Sadly this was not the case, as the only goal came during second half injury time. Needless to say we will not be listening to his mindless rants in the future; we also suggest that you stay well clear of this loose cannon.

As we go into our very own Christmas break (Premier League take note) we have decided to try our luck in the BBC Sport's Personality awards. We are certain that three time Blue Peter badge winner and youngest ever Formula One World Champion Lewis Hamilton will win the main award, and will stake £10 to this affect. Rebecca Adlington and Chris Hoy were discussed, but Lewis's overall achievements seemed to be that much more impressive.

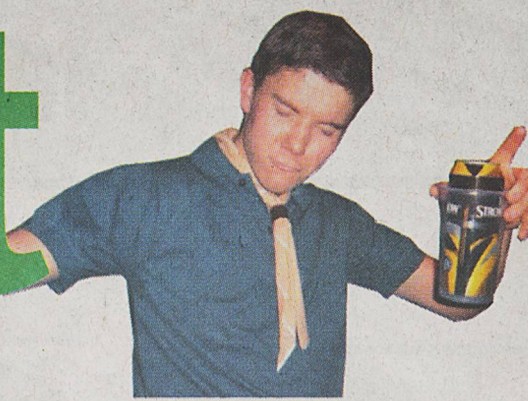
Having picked up the World Player of the Year award this season Cristiano Ronaldo looks a good pick for a £5 bet to take the Overseas Award. If the award was given for cockiness then there is only one man on the planet who could overtake him, so we will stick another £5 on Usain Bolt to be crowned champion for the second time this year.

As the first term of gambling comes to end it has become apparent that we need to find a better system for how we place our bets if we are to be more successful next term. At present the figures don't look too rosy, however we have our fingers crossed that our bets over Christmas might help out in this respect. We will give a full lowdown of the figures for the first term in the first issue of next year, however depressing they may look.

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Sport



**Carol Photos
Inside!**

<< Page 23

LSE win fight to the death

Ju Jitsu team triumph in BUCS & Ateimi national championship

Nooreen Kara

Forget "Tekken" and "Street Fighter": this is the real thing! Knife attacks, strikes, hip-throws and choke holds are far from your average scene walking down Houghton Street, but the LSE Jitsu Club took street defence from the Old Building gym straight to the Jitsu Nationals and came back victorious last weekend.

Bringing four gold and three bronze medals back to the London School of Economics makes this year's fighters some of the best the club has ever seen. And if that wasn't enough, the London School of Economics won the overall BUCS and the Ateimi (which means 'striking') Nationals competition as a whole, putting LSE's name on the map - or on a shiny shield, as it turned out to be - a position dominated in recent years by University College London. Alas for UCL, things change.

While Jitsu teaches you to do the minimum necessary to your opponent in order to defend yourself, it is very real. After a punch to the face, a senior student told first-year Noosha Razaghi that she was "The first novice to ever make me bleed," while Stephen Pulickal, another beginner, nicely managed to tear some ligaments in a Green belt's arm while he was competing.

When asked why he hadn't immediately let go when the guy started to tap to show submission, he said simply, "I didn't notice, I was in the heat of battle..."

It's this spirit of budo that Jitsu, the ancient martial art of the Japanese samurai, teaches. Fighters or practitioners of Jitsu, also known as jitsuka, develop both the mind and body simultaneously and are trained to react ruthlessly to attacks. It is vital that, if needed, you are able to apply a dynamic framework of skills, including weapon-disarming techniques, locks that can break limbs and potentially fatal strikes to pressure points in real or life-threatening situations.

This year's National Competition pitted fighters against attacks involving real-life coshes, baseball bats and chains, kicks, punches, rubber knives and plastic bottles are also thrown into the mix. Jitsuka defend themselves through two rounds of attacks - the first is a gauntlet where you walk through two lines of attackers and defend yourself against surprise attacks from any direction. This is immediately followed by a "V" where you are subjected to at least 14 or 15 high paced and continuous attacks from other fighters, who stand ready for their cue to strike.

With the preliminary rounds on the Saturday, three novices - Noosha, Max Comer and Fraser Murray - most of whom



had only been training for 6 weeks or less, got through to the second round, with Fraser reaching the finals on Sunday. All of LSE's graded fighters went through. Lanre Ibitoye, who attends some of LSE's classes, was with his Kings College club, but we weren't hating (we know how to love too) and we celebrated him also getting

Everyone was expecting a good show at the finals

through.

We had overheard the judges talking on the Saturday about our light blue belt Konrad Swiecicki, being the best so far in his category, so everyone was expecting a good show at the finals. Despite a customary hard night out the evening before, which included too much wine, fine wom-

en and cheesy songs, Konrad and orange belt Jiang Yue both showed solid skills and samurai spirit to win Gold medals in the student categories for their respective belt groups, while Konrad also came first overall in his category. Leonard Chew, showing us what we might look like after a few months of training, also won two medals for his great efforts against the other yellow belt students. All three showed an unfazed mentality and stillness of mind, making it all look so simple - simply arm-lock one attacker into submission, simply floor the next, and then move simply and swiftly onto another.

For Jiang, this competition was just an opportunity to add another couple of medals to her already illustrious collection and full mantelpiece. Earlier in the year, up against black belts and the best in the country, and then fighting just as a yellow belt (that's right, a yellow belt), she won the overall Women's Randori (grappling) Open Championships, a competition that focuses on throws and groundwork.

The Ateimi Nationals Open competition this time around gave us a display that wouldn't be otherwise available outside of a Bruce Lee or Steven Segal movie. Instructors from around the country, or "Sensei", as they are known in Japanese, competed against one another, performing stunning throws with precise and fluid movement that can sometimes be as mesmerising to the person watching as it can be to the one who is being thrown, a very heavy few feet down to the ground.

The points-based competition meant that as well as gold medals for individuals, the club won the overall Shield for best club in the country, beating local rivals UCL and Kings. With only a three-year history, this was the first time LSE have won the Nationals and the first time that a Dojo with such a short history has won the overall competition. Of course, we're looking to go back next year and make it tradition.

Jitsu adds a little bit of practicality, entertainment and energy in between a week's lectures. Every lesson is intense but this gives an unrivalled opportunity to pick things up quickly and effectively for use both inside, and if required, outside the "Dojo". Training at LSE takes place at 6pm Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday in the basement in the Old Building and students are typically introduced to moves applicable to their belt level, but even for a beginner these are very effective for street attacks, and are the building blocks for some of the more spectacular moves performed by the Graded fighters.

If you're interested in joining the Jitsu club at LSE, contact our instructor Alexander A Air Sensei via sensei@lsejitsu.com.

As a wise man once said: "Write for Beaver Sports."

Beaver Sport is looking for budding sports writers to contribute to the section. Do you have a story to tell about your team? Are you winning games but sick of only your mum knowing about it? Is there a burning sporting issue you wish to comment on? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then contact the sports team at:

thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk



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Dear Holli,

All I want for Christmas is yooooooooooooo.

Love from Anonymous x

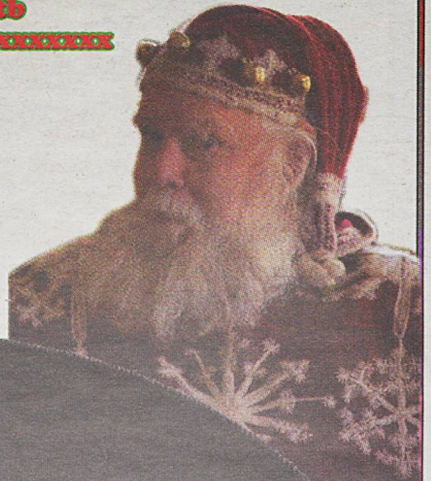
Dear Father Christmas,

You forgot to bring me any presents last year, I've been extra good this year, so please visit. The lump of coal you dropped down my chimney really upset the greens, they started accusing me of hating the environment. This year I would like a pay rise, more time off and for you to get rid of the undergraduates. Thanks.

H. Davies x

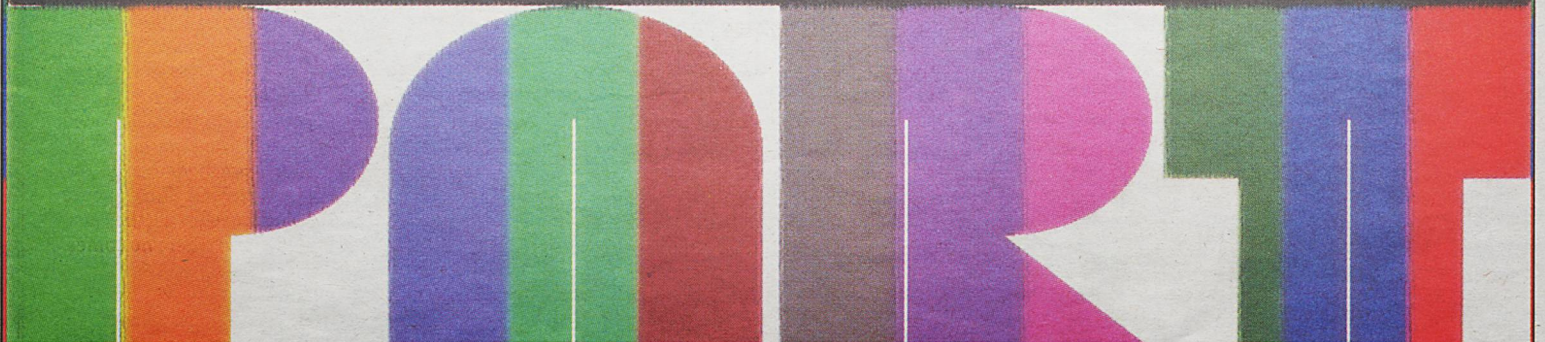
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

love partb
XXXXXXXXXXXX



holli eastman

Hiya! This week's partB is an amalgamation of all things christmas. The season of love, peace and turkey is finally upon us, whoopla! Over the next sixteen pages you'll find a plethora of festive wonder to keep you entertained in week ten lectures... music discusses the joys of Britney, rant questions the third coming, literature voyages on a trip to remember. Boy wonder, Ravi Mistry, whipped up a seasonally sensational centrespread. The lyrics are so amazing that puLSE have tipped it to hit the number one spot this christmas. We're off to Barbados to drink as much rum as the royalties can buy... its been fun. Slaterzz.



For the last five days I've been living the easy life, spending my days tucked up in bed, watching TV and sleeping for fifteen hours a day. Nothing to do, just keep warm and enjoy the butler service and the opportunity to act like a teen Paris Hilton. The reason? I thought my face was going to fall off. I checked NHS Direct for the symptoms of meningitis. I even called my mum. This was flu of 28 Days Later proportions, a full on sensory experience where every muscle, gland and nerve was throbbing like a Brit with sunburn.

However, this seasonal burden does have its upsides. When you have nothing to do, the time between lunch time and tea time Neighbours is a void of considerable magnitude, so in steps the saviour of the student and sickly - Sir Jeremy Kyle. He is so intensely, so deliciously evil. As Mr. Burns declared in the Simpsons; he's like a lion, with the face of a shark that has guns for eyes. Another clue? Never trust people whose second name is normally a first name.

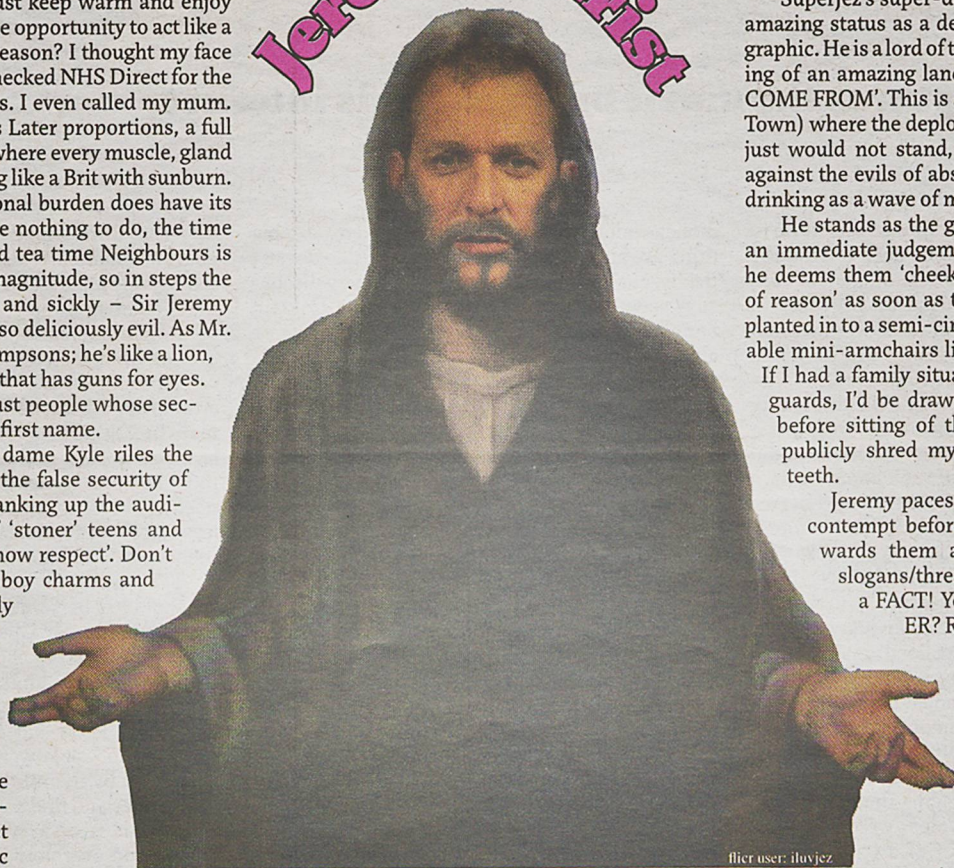
Like a pantomime dame Kyle riles the crowds, stalking about the false security of the pastel stage and cranking up the audience with promises of 'stoner' teens and 'daughters who don't know respect'. Don't be taken in by his Del boy charms and cheap suits, he will gently encourage you to share a deeply traumatic experience with his sympathetic audience; before violently berating you until you cry. He's like the child catcher, coaxing the weak in to a net of stigma and public humiliation when all they want is a bloody paternity test.

The reason The Jeremy Kyle Show does so disturbingly well is its beautiful simplicity. One - all the shows are the same. People who watch television for more than six hours a day love simplicity - making tea becomes a mammoth task when you haven't moved for that long, so the last thing you want is anything as complex as a storyline. Two - Look! It's just like you and me! But much, much worse! The combined emotions of empathy and perverted fascination take over, as the guilt of watching another human cry on television makes you feel all warm and dirtied inside. Three - all guests fall in to one of three categories; goodie, baddie or 'it'.

Goodies are typically slightly better dressed and have overcome a monumental struggle in life - they get great applause and Kyle likes to interrupt them with pearls of wisdom such as 'you're strong'. When somebody has been wronged, SuperJez will make the perpetrator pay, live on ITV. 'It' is the 'innocent' victim; usually the only party who isn't really to blame. They are usually young children or dead. While obviously being the whole focus of the travesty SuperJez has been sent in to neutralise, they don't make enigmatic guests and are generally not even on set (which is a good thing too in the latter case: corpses won't sit up straight in chairs).

Now for the money shot - those members of society who Jez has been sent on a mission from the God of television programming to personally exterminate. You can tell when they're about to enter - not because

Jeremy Christ



on the pitch at the Boxing Day derby. Bless Jeremy for his hard work on perpetuating negative stereotypes.

SuperJez's super-duperest super power is his amazing status as a deity of the daytime demographic. He is a lord of the disadvantaged, preaching of an amazing land that is called 'WHERE I COME FROM'. This is a mythical place (Canning Town) where the deplorable actions of his guests just would not stand, where civil society rises against the evils of absent fatherhood and binge drinking as a wave of moral indignation.

He stands as the gatekeeper of hell, offering an immediate judgement day for his guests as he deems them 'cheekie chappies' or 'the voice of reason' as soon as they step on set. They are planted in to a semi-circle of cheap, easily throwable mini-armchairs like a chav Question Time. If I had a family situation that needed security guards, I'd be drawn towards social services before sitting of the board of contempt to publicly shred my dirty laundry. With my teeth.

Jeremy paces before his motley crüe of contempt before going on to charge towards them and scream motivational slogans/threats in to their faces. That's a FACT! You call yourself a MOTHER? REEEELAX! And that's just to the goodies; sometimes he has to 'walk away' when faced with actions so truly vile that even SuperJez can't stomach them.

Jeremy Kyle is essentially a 'bit of fun' at the expense of consenting fuck ups; they are the ones after all who really do text INFIDELITY to the JK hotline as if it is a command from God. They know full

well what is coming - they see hundreds of similar souls driven to tears on a daily basis; and they know that the lie detector tests never give you the answer you want. That is what makes the whole pantomime so enjoyable - you know what is going to happen. They choose to participate, put themselves through social suicide and humiliation on their own impetus.

The show becomes too immoral even for my cold scouse heart when members of the audience are involuntarily drawn in to the public trial. If I was an old Arabic man I would be tempted not to sit on the second row of a show called 'Britain's most racially abused man confronts a self-confessed racist'. I would not look SuperJez in the eye as he leered out in to the audience, searching for a victim to cajole in to participation. I would certainly not let him reduce me to tears by asking me, live on air, if I would have a face off with the shows resident racist. It was wrong, and I think behind SuperJez's pious indignation even he felt bad. He made somebody face abuse for the sake of television, albeit semi-consensually.

But as Jeremy knows so well - the show must go on. There are more binge drinking teen mums to berate, more absentee fathers to track down with his immorality ray gun. The pantomime of poverty is a tough gig, but somebody has got to do it. And that's what SuperJez is all about; setting the world to rights. After all, they just wouldn't stand for it - not where he comes from.

lizcheesbrough worships at the feet of SuperJez

of dramatic suspense but because of the split screen with the headline EVIL flashing beneath the nervous man in the 'green' room.

SuperJez eases the wide-eyed audience in slow, building up the depraved tale of treachery, debauchery and 'who's the daddy' feuds as if it were a biblical verse. He whips up the crowd as if he's telling a ghost story at a girl's sleepover party; a torch shone up his flaring nostrils as he describes the disgusting, vile inhumanities that the next guest has committed. As the tension reaches an orgasmic crescendo the killer on trial storms on to the set, sometimes screaming obscenities before magician Kyle works his moral voodoo shit on them and sends them in to 'rehab'.

It's like watching a snake stalk, hypnotise and then slowly swallow its weak prey. This pantomime of pain is the same every weekday between identical episodes of Neighbours - a time vortex of depravity and Australians. The baddies all have bad teeth, wear tracksuit bottoms and have a strong regional accent. It's not a matter of prejudice, it's a matter of programming - the audience would get so confused if the baddie was posh they would probably eat their own socks and start defecating all over the set.

It's a probable cause for all the stigma against Liverpoolians; we do not really all wear tracksuits and smoke crack, it's just that every third guest on the Jez panto is a scouse crack-head wife beater and you just can't fight that sort of publicity. I think people are a little let down when they meet me - they hear the accent and presume that I have killed, maimed or at least had an abortion



sleeping with the fishes

julianboys captures the music press with his internet

We all have things in our past which we're ashamed of - I for one used to read the NME. The memories of those dark times still haunt me. I'd queue up breathily in the newsagent of my dismal seaside town and gladly fork out £1.35, expectantly shuffle home and pore over the glossy tome. Wide-eyed, I earnestly consumed the latest vapid Pete Doherty interview, genuinely delighted at the prospect of a solo record and sympathising with his dreadful victimisation at the hands of the tabloid press. I was convinced of the worth of the Pigeon Detectives, the Ordinary Boys, and numerous other trite bands pedalling derivative pub-rock. Unscrupulous writers for magazines like NME lazily hop aboard passing band-wagons, and, if the band wagon doesn't exist yet, they just create it. Nu-rave anyone? Their artificial manufacturing of scenes to try to create an air of excitement around average bands has fooled many a susceptible teenager, to the detriment of their musical exploration. When I was dutifully trying to enjoy the The View, I could have been listening to Neutral Milk Hotel. While giving the time of day to the Klaxons, Guided by Voices were languishing in some forgotten corner of a P2P network.

"Wide-eyed, I earnestly consumed the latest vapid Pete Doherty interview"

Deliverance came in the form of online music 'magazines', especially Drowned in Sound, a website which features the usual CD reviews, gig reviews and interviews found in printed magazines, as well as a forum for informed musical discussion. Set up in 2000, it has grown over time in both readership and breadth of coverage and last year won the award for Best Online Music Publication at the Record of the Day awards, having been nominated by The Observer Music Monthly and 'godd ol' NME for similar fancy titles. When I chatted to its founder and editor, **Sean Adams**, appropriately via the internet, he explained what prompted him to set up Drowned In Sound. For him it was "a mixture of frustration and that feeling of liberation the web had a decade or so ago. I couldn't believe how few of my favourite bands were being covered by the mainstream media - at the time, 1998-99, that was bands like Muse, Idlewild, Symposium, Weezer, Deftones, etc."

Since that time it also became a record label and has released records by Metric, Kaiser Chiefs, Bat For Lashes and Youthmovies. But it seems to me that its strengths lie in the community aspects of the site, where people who are insanely obsessed with music argue, mostly constructively, over subjects like whether the feedback drone of Sunn_0)) counts as music, which is the best Ra-

diohead album, and if the over-hyped next big thing are alright or just plain shite. If this doesn't tickle your fancy though, practically every discussion seems to contain a reference to a brilliant band you wouldn't have heard about anywhere else. Apparently even the editors pick up tips from site visitors - Sean told me "it was a discussion about a CocoRosie gig which led me to checking out and then releasing Bat for Lashes' debut single"

"I'm not sure if some music brands, like the NME and Q, have their best value in being a print magazine"

It is almost impossible to imagine a printed magazine being that responsive to reader's opinions, in fact music magazines mostly see themselves as taste-setters and would scorn the idea of a two-way system of recommendation. But thanks to the internet, the know-it-all lofty mystique of the music journalist is being rapidly deflated. A feature allowing readers to comment on gig or CD reviews means that writers can't get away with lazy pigeon-holing or unsubstantiated throw-away derision. As a direct result, the writing is considered and constructive, rather than the gushing hyperbole of magazines which have to find something new to waffle about every week. It sometimes seems questionable whether such publications are relevant today, though diplomatically Sean disagrees, "I think they (printed and internet magazines) can co-exist but I'm not sure if some music brands, like the NME and Q, have their best value in being a print magazine. They should be offering lengthy pieces, rather than browseable comprehensive coverage, which is the beast the web was made for. I wouldn't be shocked if some of these 'classic' print brands moulded together or began doing the music pages for Metro, The Times, etc."

Technology has drastically changed the way we access music with the growth of downloads, so it is apt that the way we find out about music changes too. Reading about music can seem pointless at times, as while a writer is clumsily scrabbling around trying to convey the intensity of a great song it would often be far more rewarding to listen to it. A website makes that possible, as YouTube videos or Myspace links can be embedded into articles, allowing for instant satisfaction of curiosity.

One possible drawback of the community aspect of music websites is that the presence of a highly critical swarm of music lovers in cardigans raving about their favourite band which you've never heard of can make it all seem a bit elitist.

"The worst thing is that those into highly obscure music are also the most vocal and although they make up less than ten percent of the readership, they post about fifty percent of the comments, and often skew the perception of what the site is about and who reads it.

To counter this, sites like Drowned in Sound attempt to attract newcomers by featuring more mainstream artists, in the hope that visitors branch out and explore while they're there. As most revenue comes from adverts on the site, it needs to keep up the numbers of new visitors for less noble reasons too, though Sean emphasises the almost Reithian values he hopes to uphold:

I've always wanted to cater for everyone, music shouldn't be some elite ghetto and for me I'd much rather a My Chemical Romance fan wandered onto DiS and checked out Wolf Parade and realised that's the kind of music they were always going to be into. Same with someone who vaguely likes Katy Perry but knows little about music checking out Cat Power and being blown away and enthralled by it, and then maybe browsing a few weeks later and find a whole new world of music."

This idea of a 'whole new world of music' may sound overblown, but that's precisely what I and many others have found through websites like Drowned in Sound. Artists, new and old, who aren't popular enough to receive coverage in mainstream media, or who wilfully avoid it, can be discovered. But you need to unearth them, hunt for them, and this search will make what you find all the more valuable. There are many places to look, and living in London means that magazines like Plan B and Artrock are available, but overpriced. Others, like Loud And Quiet and The Stool Pigeon are free though only available in a handful of shops. Often the writing quality and breadth of coverage is better on sites like Pitchfork.com and Stereogum.com. The ingenious www.last.fm recommends music which people with similar taste like, avoiding all conventions of music media entirely.

"I've always wanted to cater for everyone, music shouldn't be some elite ghetto"

Despite this, music journalism still plays a role in helping us broaden our musical horizons. The sheer number of free media sources available on the internet means this role has changed drastically, and intelligent music writing needs to try doubly hard to differentiate itself from drivelling bloggers. Sites like Drowned in Sound bring together such writing with its readers and allow for interaction between them which benefits both, so give it a try before reaching for the dreaded eNMEy.



kill your timid

amyfoulds goes avante-garde

Kill Your Timid Notion is an event run by Arika, an experimental arts company based in Scotland, the overarching theme of which is an attempt to investigate the relationship between sound and image, specifically the gap that can exist between the two. In doing so they showcase how artists have explored the many possibilities of sound and image and how they have used film to subvert the expectations and boundaries created by mainstream narrative cinema.

But even film art cannot escape the allure of Hollywood.

Volker Schreiner's *Counter* (2004) and Manuel Saiz's *Specialised Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar* (2005) both explore the distance between the worlds of art and cinema, Saiz's much more explicitly. In it, we see a man framed by what looks like his work desk. He starts to speak in Spanish but what we hear is not his voice, it is dubbed into English. He tells us that his name is Luis Porcar and that he dubs the voices of foreign actors for the Spanish versions of films, including John Malkovich. He goes on to explain who Saiz is and that he asked him to record the video with the aim of having Malkovich dub it into English, although the distance between the art world and cinema may make it a difficult project to complete. He ends by saying that if what you are hearing is in English it is the voice of Malkovich. If it is in Spanish, it is his.

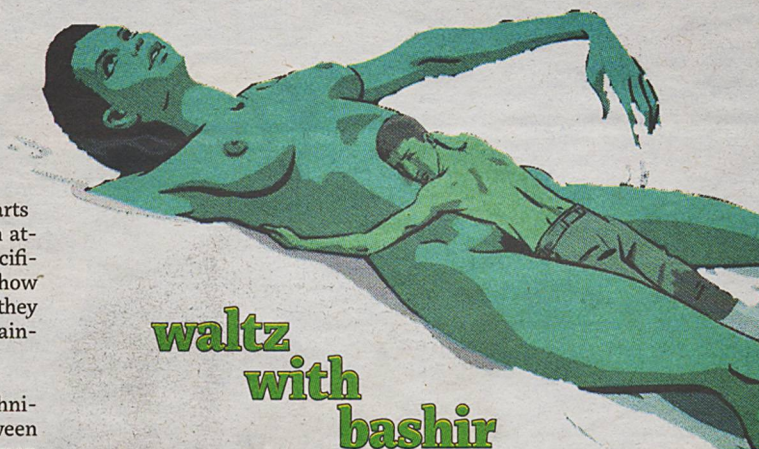
It is a simple film, simple in that the purpose of the film is explained within the film itself. However, as Saiz himself says, its "humbleness is in contrast to [its] immoderate production requirements." This 'immoderateness' is what stops it being simply an explanation of a concept and in just over a minute Saiz manages to perfectly illustrate the vast gap between the worlds of Hollywood and art, and simultaneously close it, if only for the duration of the film.

Schreiner's is also conceptually simple but his execution of it transforms the idea into a statement about film cliché.

Counter is a sly, exhilarating dash through familiar film moments edited into an extended countdown montage that manages to be both a suspenseful drama and an hilarious film spotting exercise.

While it would be going too far to say that the rush of images creates an imagined narrative, the clips being too familiar to allow that, it is lifted above novelty by its structuring. Schreiner groups narrative tropes into sequences while maintaining the steady countdown to zero, punctuated by the constant return to the metronomic Goldfinger bomb countdown. It is also worth mentioning that Schreiner keeps the original audio intact from all the clips giving us an insight into the similarities and differences in film sound over the past few decades.

But these are just two of the films shown in one of the screenings, the depth and breadth of the ideas and execution in all of the films on show is staggering. They all point to a new form of cinema, one based on ideas rather than narrative and requiring only that one has an idea and attempts to put it across. In the case of Saiz's film, even the failure to execute the concept completely would not render it worthless.



ahmedpeerbux reviews the hot new animated war film

I first became aware of this film on the tube, where I saw the poster and the vast array of 4-5 star ratings it boasted. "You have to see it" says *Empire*, "extraordinary" insisted the *Guardian*. I'm going to have to jump on the bandwagon here and attest to every one of those great reviews.

Waltz with Bashir focuses on director Ari Folman's attempts to uncover his forgotten past involvement in the first Lebanese war, in which transpired The Sabra and Shatila massacre of Palestinian civilians. Through visiting past comrades and a shrink, he begins to uncover the trauma buried deep in his subconscious.

The film begins with a pack of rabid dogs sprinting down a street, eventually reaching their destination; a man, only to relentlessly growl and bark at him. We learn in the following scene that this is the recurring nightmare of Folman's friend; twenty-six dogs, because that's precisely the number of guard dogs he once shot dead. It's interesting in that the characters seem to be able to process the killing of animals, yet when they've killed another person, their minds can't cope with it and thereby repress it into the furthest depths of the mind.

The animation is beautifully crafted, making the film somewhat more interesting than just a series of consecutive interviews. It also makes a chilling contrast to the last scene; a collection of real life footage of the aftermath of the massacre.

The brutalities of war throughout the film are touched on in a rather blasé and insensitive manner; but to a terrifyingly stirring effect. A Hebrew rock song plays whilst bombs miss their targets and pulverise civilians; an enemy vehicle zigzags through a bombardment of destruction in somewhat of a perverse game of cat and mouse. It in a sense desensitizes you from much of the horrors that transpired, just as I suppose Folman was desensitized so much so that he forgot most of it.

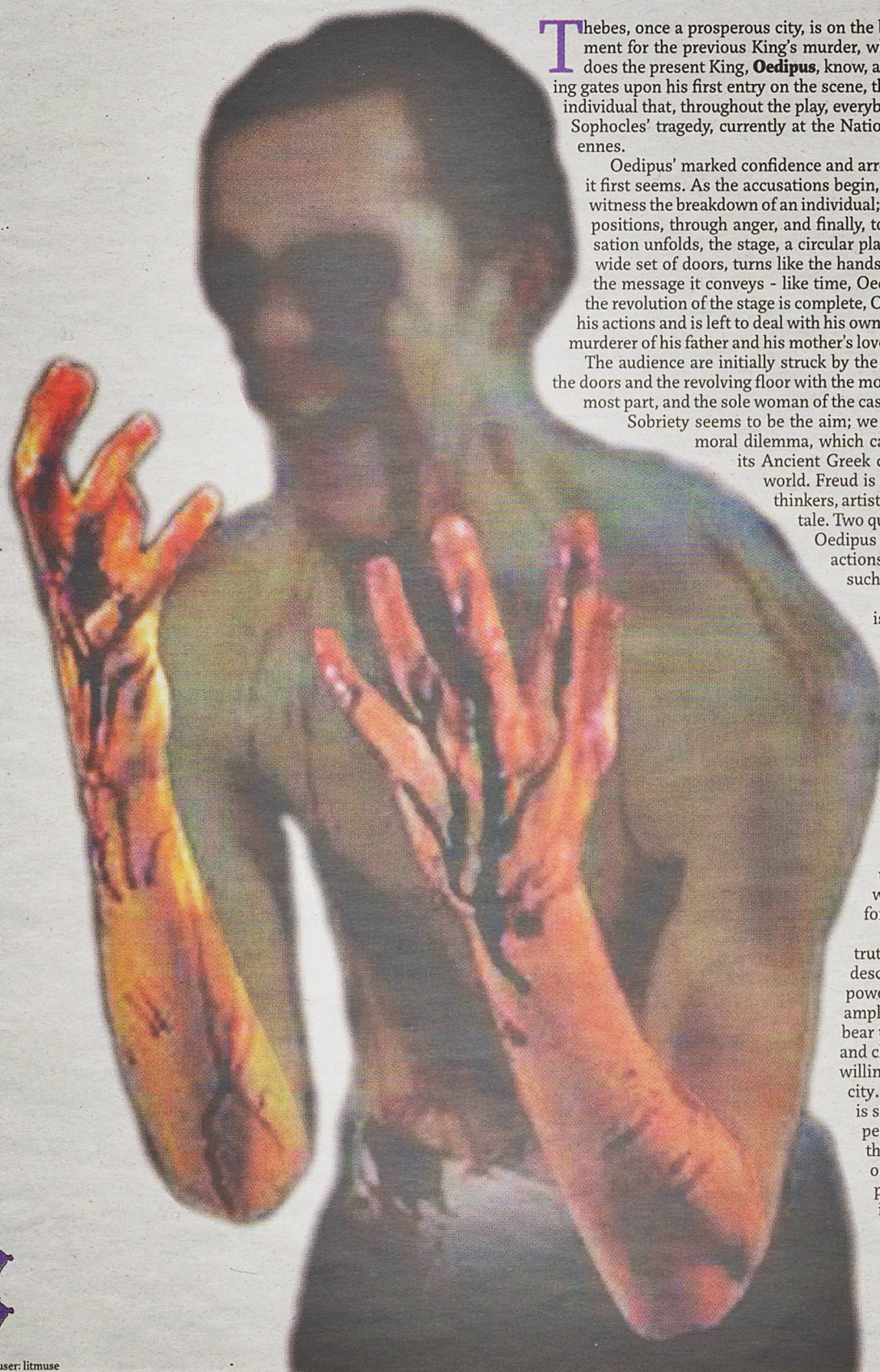
It's disappointing the film has been branded with an 18 rating though, considering it's all down to a greasy army officer watching a cheesy German porno at one point. "Fast forward, fast forward" he says, until he gets to the part where a second woman's pipes 'need cleaning'. I say it's disappointing because it's probably something that many of us young'uns don't know much about; I for one didn't know anything about the Lebanese-Israeli war of the eighties.

Deeply moving. You might find yourself sitting there a while after the credits have rolled, struck by a chilling sobriety that isn't just the air con. Either that or you wish you'd seen *High School Musical* instead.



oh mama!

marionkoob gets a complex



Thebes, once a prosperous city, is on the brink of collapse; the gods' punishment for the previous King's murder, which still stands unpunished. Little does the present King, **Oedipus**, know, as he marches through wide, imposing gates upon his first entry on the scene, that he is the source of it all, the one individual that, throughout the play, everybody will seek to unmask. So begins Sophocles' tragedy, currently at the National Theatre and starring Ralph Fiennes.

Oedipus' marked confidence and arrogance as a leader is not as solid as it first seems. As the accusations begin, and the evidence is underlined, we witness the breakdown of an individual; from jeeringly laughing off the suppositions, through anger, and finally, to fear. As this process of self-realisation unfolds, the stage, a circular platform refurbished only by a high and wide set of doors, turns like the hands of a clock. Simple, yet powerful in the message it conveys - like time, Oedipus' destiny is inescapable. Once the revolution of the stage is complete, Oedipus has discovered the horror of his actions and is left to deal with his own fate: unbeknownst to him, he is the murderer of his father and his mother's lover.

The audience are initially struck by the contrast of the antique patterns of the doors and the revolving floor with the modern costumes; men in suits for the most part, and the sole woman of the cast, Jocasta, in an elegant black dress.

Sobriety seems to be the aim; we are after all dealing with a serious moral dilemma, which can be (and often is) removed from its Ancient Greek context and applied to the modern world. Freud is only one example of the numerous thinkers, artists, writers, who were inspired by this tale. Two questions emerge from the play; does Oedipus really deserve punishment for his actions? And why are we all fascinated by such a sordid story?

To answer the second question, it is easy to turn to Freud's argument, which in a simplistic form states that children dream of killing their fathers and sleeping with their mothers (a theory which can be interpreted to various literal degrees). But, paradoxically, this cannot be applied to the play. Oedipus did not know whom he was killing, neither was he aware of whom he had married and had children with. Rather, when his fate was foretold to him, he ran from those he thought were his parents, in a desperate effort to protect them.

Once Oedipus finally learns of the truth he violently blinds himself, the description of which is an especially powerful moment of the play and an example of exceptional acting. He cannot bear the sight of his children any longer, and claims to want only to be exiled, still willing to sacrifice himself to save his city. Ralph Fiennes, in this final scene, is skilful; his moans and cries, his desperation, are clearly contrasted with the suave, confident way he had stood only an hour and a half before. This progression, of a proud man to his internal destruction, punctuated by the chants of the traditional Greek Choir, is breathtaking.

Oedipus runs at the Olivier, National Theatre until 4th January. A limited number of tickets are available each day for the performance.





Twelve Days

On the first day of Christmas L

On the second day of Christmas LSE

On the third day of Christmas LSE ga

On the fourth day of Christmas LSE gave to m

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On the sixth day of Christmas LSE gave to me, Six students a-freshing, five gra

On the seventh day of Christmas LSE gave to me, seven 'Wright's bar coffees, six

meetings, and

On the eighth day of Christmas LSE gave to me, eight unmarked essays, seven 'W

less years, Two tutor me

On the ninth day of Christmas LSE gave to me, nine library fines, eight unmarked e

three sexless years, two tut

On the tenth day of Christmas LSE gave to me, ten banks a-rejecting, nine libra

of debt, four useless sabs, three sexless

On the eleventh day of Christmas LSE gave to me, eleven drunks a-stumbling

fees, six students a-crushing, five grand of debt, four usele

On the twelfth day of Christmas LSE gave to me, Twelve Hare Krishna's
marked essays, seven 'Wright's bar coffees, six students a-crushing, five grand of de



Years of LSS Christmas

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gave to me, two tutor meetings, and a 2.1 in Econ b.
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a-feeding, eleven drunks a-stumbling, ten banks a-rejecting, nine library fines, eight un-
ht, four useless sabs, three sexless years, two tutor meetings, and a 2.1 in Econ B.

music

bah humbug

all natasha bannister wants for christmas is good music

Why do things always dawn on me slowly? Alas, the other day, after a horribly long time, I finally worked out what had been making my headache worse and my ears bleed. Christmas time in retail land is repugnant. If you have ever been given the 'opportunity' to work in a shop during the Christmas period, you will know what I'm talking about: that solitary CD that is on repeat over your six hour shift. For the past eleven months it has been happily covered in a protective layer of dust, but now someone has discovered it in the pile of papers in the backroom and decided to polish it up for the forthcoming season.

At first you don't even notice the sound of bells seeping into your ears and you wonder why you're humming an obscure Christmas song that you haven't heard for twelve months and that you don't even like.

Every mainstream Christmas CD has the same tracks - a slab of Wham! peppered with some Slade and Frank Sinatra, a dose of Band Aid (1984/1989/2004 - do we need another one?) served up with Mariah Carey and The Pogues on the side. While Christmas songs do essentially give you the warming comfort of the festive season, when on repeat in every shop on the high street it gets a bit too much. By

the end of your shift or shopping session you want to hurt someone, break the disc and tear the wires from the speaker system.

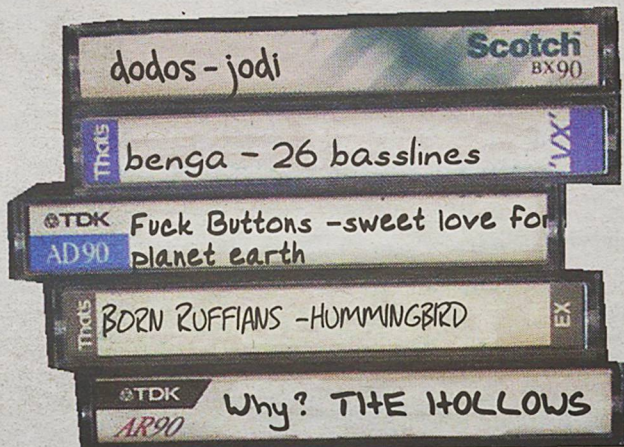
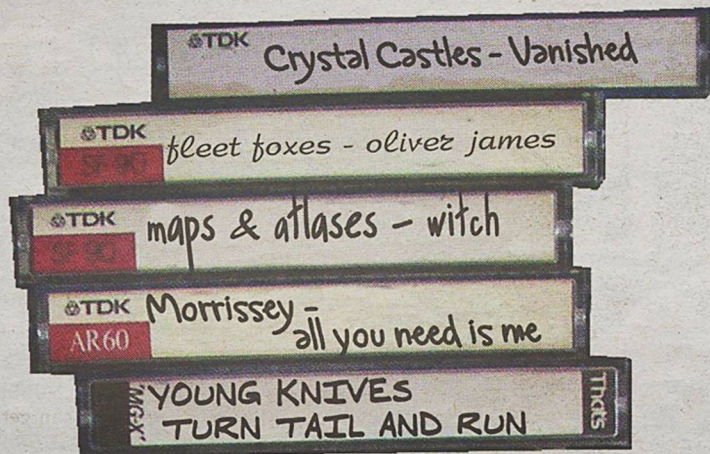
Every year I wonder if this shall be the one which will introduce a new, iconic Christmas single that will actually be bearable at any other time of the year. Thus far, nothing has brought itself to my attention. Some have said the only track that has come close was the Mystery Jets' Flakes last year. Although I appreciate it, even this would tire if put on repeat for the best part of a week. Yes, the classics are indeed good fun; you can jiggle around to them in a mulled wine induced daze, singing in the wrong key at the same time as nibbling on your festive chocolates while the paper crown gradually slips down your forehead. But quite frankly, that's all they are good for.

So this Christmas, I only want one thing from the rotund, bearded fellow who rolls down my chimney every year and exploits my generosity for a mince pie and tumbler of whisky, and that is a bloody good Christmas song that everybody will want to dance to, that will be celebrated for years to come and that I'll never grow weary of. That would be perfect, thanks.



2008 mixtape part 3

we round up the best songs of the year



ain't what it used to be

liammclaughlin argues that oppression breeds great art

With an eruption of tears and impassioned screams of joy the world has witnessed Martin Luther Kings dream come true: America has a black president. Hundreds of bands belted out rallying cries for the election of Barack Obama and never has politics been so important to music than now.

However, forty to fifty years ago when Martin Luther King was still alive, politics was also an important factor in the creation of music during the black civil rights struggle. But music was a bit different then. In fact I can see a clear discrepancy between the music made during the bloody fight for equality back in the 60s and the relatively stable movement for change today. Could it be that oppression and inequality breed the best music?!

Martin Luther Kings inspirational and now prophetic 'I Have a Dream' speech was made in 1963 during the civil rights movement and throughout this time of riots, poverty, broken glass, hunger, death and hopelessness emerged some of the most powerful, beautiful music ever created. Somehow black people managed to find an outlet for their frustrations in music and a barrage of groups and artists like The Impressions, Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield and The Staples Singers howled out their anger and hurt in a series of incredible, life affirming yet often painful songs, many of which were released by

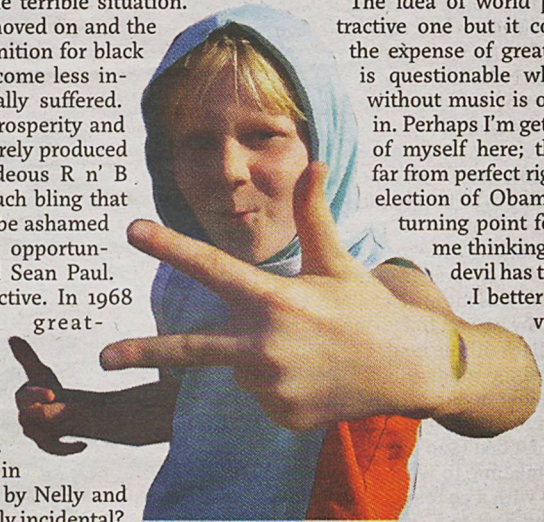
the phenomenally successful and famous black-run Stax and Motown record labels. All these artists and more were preaching a message of love and solidarity yet also one of black empowerment through their songs which were bought by black and white music fans alike. Through this medium they managed to raise awareness and mobilise support for their cause whilst also expressing their own feelings about the terrible situation.

However, as time has moved on and the fight for equality and recognition for black people in the West has become less intense, the music has actually suffered. These days of reasonable prosperity and rights for everyone have merely produced hundreds of identically hideous R n' B singers, rappers with so much bling that the Sultan of Brunei would be ashamed and repulsively sexualised opportunists like Shaggy, Akon and Sean Paul.

Lets put it into perspective. In 1968 two of the best-known and est soul tracks ever were released: Otis Redding's "Sittin' On the Dock of the Bay" and Marvin Gaye's "Heard it Through the Grapevine". Exactly forty years later in 2008, we had Body On Me by Nelly and Closer by Ne Yo. Is this merely incidental?

When there's nothing left to fight against, artistry is diminished because it is the very thing which humans use to express their deepest feelings. Sure there'll always be the age old inspiration of unrequited love but when there are no feelings to express on a collective level inspired by poverty, disenfranchisement and disillusionment, there is little left for art.

The idea of world peace is an attractive one but it could well be at the expense of great music. And it is questionable whether a world without music is one worth living in. Perhaps I'm getting a bit ahead of myself here; the world being far from perfect right now, but the election of Obama seems like a turning point for us and it got me thinking...They say the devil has the best music... I better become an investment banker at this rate.



lip sinking

amierogers wants britney baby one more time

Britney has never really suffered from a lack of exposure. Whether it's from a lack of underwear or from a lack of restraint from the people around her (Mama Spears' new biography is meant to be most illuminating), the girl is always making news. Which is why it's nice that she's finally making headlines for her music again...well, kind of.

Britney's comeback has been a long time coming and it's taken a couple of times to get it right; her disastrous performance at the MTV Video Music Awards is something I think we'd all sooner forget. It was perhaps because of this that expectations of her weren't all that high. Which is just as well really, because her performances haven't been anything to sing (or should that be lip-synch?) about.

Britney's songs are as catchy as ever, her body is once again worthy of envy and that sunny, butter-wouldn't-melt smile seems permanently etched on her face. And yet... there's still something missing. Her performance on X Factor just didn't have the energy that had once made her so exhilarating to watch, she barely seems able to keep up with her dancers and singing live is apparently out of the question.

Fans seem willing to settle for what they



can get though, and their loyalty seems stronger than ever. Hundreds crowded into G.A.Y., a club in London, after it was leaked that she'd be making an appearance. She did show up, but not to sing, and despite the efforts of the club owner to lure her on stage with a birthday cake, Britney refused, preferring to stay out of sight in the VIP area, much to the disappointment of the crowd.

Call me nostalgic, but the old Britney wouldn't have done that. The old Britney loved the attention, lived for the limelight, and would have been up there graciously accepting birthday wishes and dazzling her fans with her star power.

The media however, seem hesitant to pick up on this though. It's as if, were we to begin to point out the cracks, if we see through that polished image and stare into those vacant eyes, it'll all fall apart. And I genuinely don't think that anyone wants that. Because when it comes down to it, we love Britney, not because of all her problems that the tabloids seem to thrive on, but in spite of them. It may not be the same as it used to be, but it's true: we'll settle for what we can get. Welcome back, Britney. We've missed you.

music

think

james lancaster reckons huxley talked twaddle

Aldous Huxley was one of the greatest novelists of the twentieth century, and he was also a drug user. But for Huxley this drug business is not simply a matter of fun and games. It's about life changing experience and intellectual furtherance. It's just a shame he missed one of the most manifest and fundamental aspects of drug use: it makes you think, and talk, absolute twaddle.

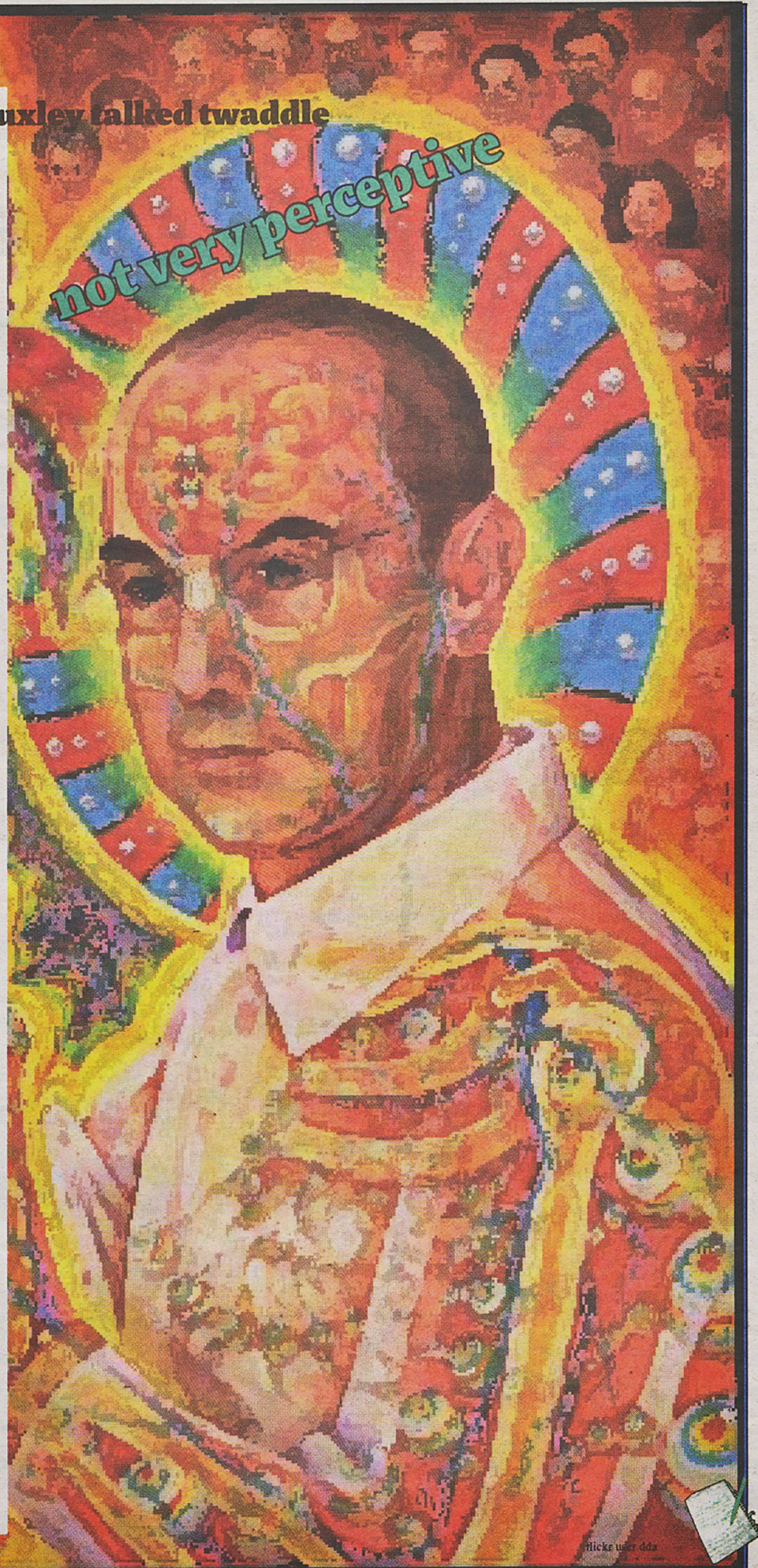
In 'Brave New World', Huxley's most famous novel, drugs are used to pacify and mollify the population of his dystopic vision. Yet in 'The Island' drugs are presented in a profoundly more positive light, as they are used for intellectual growth and self-improvement. Which begs the question, exactly what led to this change of opinion? The short answer is simply that Huxley took a lot of "recreational" drugs. Huxley first took mescaline, a psychedelic alkaloid found in the South American cactus peyote, in 1953. It was this experience which he describes in his best known essay *Doors of Perception*, the title being derived from William Blake's 'Marriage of Heaven and Hell'. From this first experience Huxley never looked back. He first took LSD two years later in 1955 and carried on doing so literally until the day he died, taking one hundred micrograms of LSD as he lay on his deathbed.

The first of Huxley's experiences yielded some interesting conclusions. He refers to Plato as a "poor fellow" who could never have "seen a bunch of flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they were - a transience that was yet eternal life, a perpetual perishing that was at the same time pure Being, a bundle of minute, unique particulars in which, by some unspeakable and yet self-evident paradox, was to be seen the divine source of all existence." Beautiful words for what was undoubtedly, for Huxley, an incredibly profound experience. This encapsulates the central point of the article; that we should work harder to appreciate *Istigkeit*, or the essential "is-ness" of things. He believes that our minds have evolved to cut out information which is not essential for our survival. For Huxley, our minds and our senses are there to limit what would otherwise be overwhelming volumes of information, as what he calls *The Mind at Large*. We could perceive and know everything, but alas, it would be detrimental to survival.

While I was in South America, someone I met ate a cactus called San Pedro, albeit it not exactly the same substance Huxley ingested, but one which also contains mescaline, the result of which was that, among other things, he thought a pack of stray dogs were talking to him with my voice, and those of several of our fellow travellers. I digress slightly, but my point is this; while my friend was fully aware, at least afterwards, that his experience was utter nonsense, Huxley seems to be incapable or unwilling to reach the same conclusion, and naively believes that his experience constituted something of great value to humanity. His experience, while amusing, can surely not be held relevant to our everyday reality.

So in short Huxley's most famous essay may, it appears, be adequately synthesised with my South American acquaintance's reflection; "What just happened? I was inside and backwards for a while."

not very perceptive



here's looking at you kid

jenbarton on the houghton street catwalk

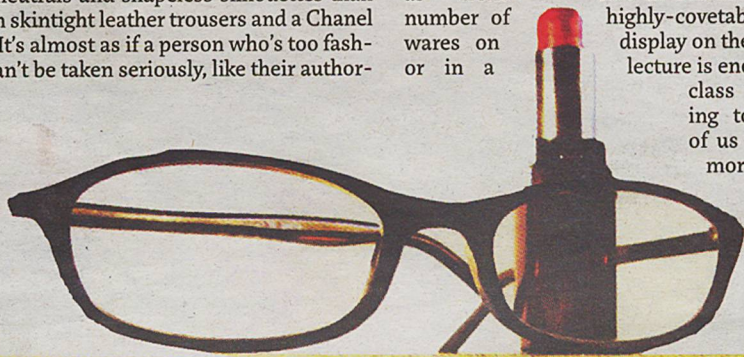
It is a truth (almost) universally acknowledged that sartorial pursuits and studying don't exactly go hand in hand. In fact, it seems that people with any kind of academic pretensions who happen to also love fashion and shopping are generally viewed with suspicion. How much time can you really spend in the library if you're head-to-toe in Prada's lace? It's far easier to pigeonhole people: academic types are far less threatening in bland neutrals and shapeless silhouettes than they are in skintight leather trousers and a Chanel 2.55 bag. It's almost as if a person who's too fashionable can't be taken seriously, like their author-

ity is undermined.

Students are particularly interesting to look at because they've adopted a style of their own. In the US it often involves coming to class in pyjamas for just-rolled-out-of-bed-chic, whereas in the UK it's more jeans plus sweatshirt (with baked beans stain?) plus Uggs, which then equal certifiable student chic. However, those of us at LSE are far luckier. Coming to campus is almost as good as front-row at Fashion Week. The number of highly-covetable designer wares on display on the way to class or in a lecture is enough to make class worth coming to (for those of us who may be more interested in fashion than fascism). YSL bags, Her-

mès Birkins and Kellys (both vintage and new), Miu Miu totes (and matching wallets, naturally) and more greet us on a daily basis, paired with sky-high stilettos, riding boots and tight leather bomber jackets. Even men here accessorise well – raising a hand in class displays that Breitling statement watch to great effect. Of course, the LSE phenomenon may mainly be a graduate thing – I am speaking more as an observer of the graduate community – and certainly also has to do with the fact that a high proportion of LSE students are from comfortable backgrounds where designer items are par for the course. The fact that campus is in the middle of an international fashion capital can't hurt students' awareness of their dress sense either.

For me, this fashion interest is refreshing because it subverts the all-too-typical view that if you like to shop, it's something shameful, you're revealing that you're really a vacuous individual (see *The Devil Wears Prada* for reference). The reality is, stylishness and studiousness can coexist peacefully; French Vogue can nestle next to Foucault. And the proof is not only in LSE present but in history as well: in Baudelaire's art criticism, he devotes several pages to an homage to make-up. Talk about brains and beauty.



flickr user: hola



needs you.
writers
editors
designers

New year, new you, new Partb. Get involved in the one and only arts and culture scene at LSE. Write once, or every week. Come hang out in the office, we'll feed you. It'll be fun. I promise.

We need sub-editors: music - design - tech - nights

thebeaver.partb@gmail.com



reading between the lines

aliciafry is a real recessionista

The average age a woman gets married has jumped from twenty-six to thirty-three, freeing up lots of time to have rip-roaring fun. This time for women is called 'The Decade of Indulgence' because all earned money is spent on personal lavishes. Women are now able to live the high life from their college degrees; get a high-paying job, buy fabulous designer clothes, go on holiday in the tropics, and have sex with as many people as they want.

The illusion of these extravagant indulgences would be great if perhaps we weren't living in one of the most expensive cities in the world, sexually transmitted diseases didn't exist, and our future high paying jobs were somehow done telepathically, giving us ample leisure time. Indulgence implies we will be receiving a salary comparable to Oprah Winfrey, or at least her personal assistant. Looking at my budget, I see an enormous dent in my future pocketbook from the cost incurred in attaining my LSE degree. I will be paying off this loan for the next ten years, not lounging in Barbados sipping on a margarita and shamelessly flirting with the sexy bartenders. The decadence they are speaking of is what comes after your twenties; after breaking your back and proving yourself loyal then the money comes in.

The twenties should actually be called 'The Decade of Consuming'. After working so hard and penny pinching our way through school, a bona fide pay-check



starts coming in, and it will be the first time we see a substantial figure on it. What better way to celebrate graduation, financial freedom and a new job than blow all the money on clothes and throw-away-fashion. Women's magazines prove to be biblical in encouraging the quest to environmental degradation and promoting a false sense of happiness through excessive shopping sprees. The glossy pages were once filled with advice on how to cook chicken properly, talk to a friend who just had a family member pass away, or handle a pestering coworker. Now

they're filled with ads cover to cover. The advertisers even control the soft news pieces that are put into magazines. There will never be an article on the toxins inside cosmetics or hair dye, an article will never be printed on handfills over flowing with Primemark clothes, and it will never be mentioned that a purse the size of a French horn could possibly be harmful on the back.

These magazines have turned into catalogues, and women have been marginalised to unintelligent shoppers. If you flip through any Women's magazine you can't find a single article tackling an important issue we deal with in our daily lives. Apparently

modern women live stress free lives, and the biggest quail is choosing acid wash or powder blue high-waisted skinny jeans. Even the credit crunch was a spin

into a beautiful web of consumerism; twenty-somethings are now being called "recessionistas," and are encouraged to buy investment pieces, such as a black pencil skirt, which can be worn even on the day of your funeral.

The end of Michaelmas term marks the beginning of job searching. These so called Woman's magazines cannot offer me one bit of practical information regarding this momentous time in my life. I know interview attire is important, but that is the least of my worries. They should provide articles discussing the seventeen per cent pay gap between men and women in London, cost benefit analysis of child care, or appropriate presents to bring to a boss's birthday party. These magazines seem to think women are only capable of learning how to dress to impress. Everything is diminished down to how a woman looks, and sat- isfying the male-gaze. Women's magazines of the 19th and 20th century published articles by Edgar Allan Poe and Virginia Woolf, and within the last ten years they have turned completely worthless, with sensationalised tales of celebrities and decorated pages of unaffordable merchandise and where to buy the ghostly looking knock-off.

The constant demeaning and marginalising done by these magazines has led me to stop buying them. Until they start to deal with practical issues in my life and stop promoting the idea of shopping yourself into a success, I see no use for them. I can get all my celebrity gossip and fashion tips for FREE online! That is what I call a recessionista.

