



Timeless
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**REFORMS MANIFESTOS
INSIDE**

**READ CASES FOR AND AGAINST THE
PROPOSALS FOR REFORM**

The Beaver

9 February 2010
Newspaper of the
London School of Economics
Students' Union
thebeaveronline.co.uk

Sexist and homophobic jeers overshadow publications motion



Photo: Ben Phillips

Sachin Patel

The Students' Union Women's Officer's attempt to ban "Lads' Mags" from the SU Shop was met with sexist heckling and wolf-whistling at last week's Union General Meeting.

Jessie Robinson, addressing a packed Old Theatre, argued that publications such as FHM and the Sun promoted sexism on campus and should be removed from the shelves. Her speech was given short shrift by members of the Athletics Union (AU), seated in the balcony, who held up copies of the contested publications in protest at the motion.

Talking to the stage amidst booring

from a portion of the audience, Robinson asserted that the images contained within FHM and the Sun present women "as if they are only objects in sexual relationships", and that this motion was "a chance for us to say that we reject sexism on campus". Combating claims that this was censorship, the Women's Officer countered that "this is a group using its power to boycott an institution" but that it was "not taking away your freedom of choice [because] sexism should not be a choice".

Further, Robinson suggested that these magazines "promote a hetero-normative image of what constitutes normal sexual relations", and that she had felt compelled to submit this motion in order that "no one should be made to feel uncomfortable or patronized". Finally, she

argued that such images were not only "damaging to women in terms of body image", but also that they were "directly linked to trends in sexual violence". Robinson's speech was received in a negative light by many students present, who were persistent in their wolf-whistling, despite the direct warnings of UGM Chair, Jack Tindale.

The first speaker to oppose the motion was Masters student Sam Tempest Keeping, who gave a concise argument that self-consciously veered away from "demagoguery" and focused on issues of freedom of choice. Accepting that "self-image is something we are all aware of", and that "influences on campus [have] a lot of negative effects on women and men", Keeping said, "I'm not going to tell you what you can and can't do, but by re-

moving it [the magazines] from campus, you're doing just that". The audience's reaction to Keeping's speech was generally positive, though his final comment, that "we all want to read the Sun" was met with some vociferous opposition.

Seconding the motion was Anja Kahlo, who asserted that she was "against the degradation of women in our SU Shop", and that this motion would combat the "systematic dehumanization of women in our society". Having claimed that "young people receive information about sexuality mainly from the media", and so these magazines had a profound effect on the self-esteem of women on campus.

The final speaker against the motion was Marina Boterashvili, who argued that since "we all perve", it was acceptable to keep these publications on campus,

in that men understood that women in reality "don't look like that". Recognizing that these sexually suggestive images are "a fantasy", Boterashvili suggested that these magazines served a demand, and kept her "hypothetical boyfriend busy with his right hand". Finally, she implored students to focus on more serious issues, claiming that the Students' Union was "elitist" to propose this band, since it "sells cigarettes... [and] there is a much clearer relationship between smoking and cancer than between violent abuse and lads' magazines."

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Higher education cuts not affecting LSE yet

Shibani Mahtani

The LSE has no plans to cut staff or courses, despite the recently announced funding cuts for higher education.

Universities across the UK are preparing to cut thousands of teaching jobs, scale back on campuses and drop courses to prepare with the cuts that were announced last week. University budgets are being cut by £449 million, which will lead student places to be reduced by an estimated 6,000 in the next academic year. According to the Higher Education Funding Council for England, teaching budgets specifically are being reduced by £215.

According to the Guardian, who spoke to vice-chancellors and senior staff at 25 universities, UK universities are being pushed to becoming US-style, quasi-privatized institutions. The Uni-

versity and College Union (UCU) believes that 15,000 posts could disappear in the next few years. Russell Group universities are not spared from these cuts, with more than 200 job losses planned at King's College, London.

The School claims however, that statements made by the Director, Howard Davies, in his termly email sent last December still hold true. According to Davies: "We have already suffered a significant (13%) cut in our research funding... And we expect further cuts in public funding in the future"

However, Davies continues: "We are less badly affected than most other universities in the UK, and indeed in North America... by comparison with other British universities, the percentage of our funding which comes from the Government is small"

The LSE still runs a surplus of £18, even if this is significantly below last year's surplus of £25.

Davies did concede that "future prospects are much less rosy, even for the LSE". Due to low student satisfaction scores in the teaching area, class sizes have been reduced and the number of teaching staff expanded. This, coupled with "non-core" businesses affected by the recession, means that surpluses are "below the 3-4% turnover recommended by the Higher Education Funding Council".

To deal with the financial climate, the School is considering more efficient ways to use resources. According to the Director, a subgroup of the Academic Planning and Resources Committee (APRC) has been set up to look at ways to "moderate expenditure growth" and "find more efficient ways of deploying our resources across the school". He also believes that the School can "mobilise the imagination and creativity of different departments" to continually improve the services that the School offers.



Photo: LSE Archives

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The Beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 722

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Sexism in the City

It seems like our General Secretary's post-UGM tweets have become a constant feature in our editorials. This week however, rather than proclaiming that some mystery students were crying out for change that "cannot be stopped", he instead could not be more right when he proclaimed that he was "thoroughly ashamed" at the behaviour of some at the UGM. Behaviour that was, in short, "sexist, horrible, (and) bullying".

Regardless of one's view of feminism, or the link between the Sun, FHM and domestic violence and/or rape, or any of the other substantive issues that were raised by the proposers of the motion -

no one; no man or woman, no "militant lesbian" or otherwise, deserves such treatment. The proposers were heckled at and interrupted so viciously for standing up for a cause, with the practice of paper throwing that we hoped was condemned to UGMs past once again resurrected.

What was even more disconcerting was the fact that the proposer of the motion was the Women's Officer, elected by the student body for the very purpose of representing women's issues. How she should be termed ridiculous or absurd for wanting to make a political statement is incomprehensible, especially as an elected official.

To some members of the AU, this

might just be a little bit of fun on a Thursday afternoon. But for the average on-looker, this was a grotesque misjudgment of appropriate behaviour, whatever your take on the issue may be. Mock wolf-whistling and jeering, shout from some upstairs that "only ugly girls would vote for this motion". This paper has always tried to be a force for debate, discussion and freedom to express views and issues close to the hearts of the members of this Union. The UGM should be no different. And to those sitting upstairs that think such behaviour is not contrary to these principles - please, grow up a little.

iCame, iSaw, iConquered

And so, after eighteen months of consultation, and the prospect of the largest changes ever witnessed by our Union looming just two days away, all it really comes down to is a few somewhat petty, catty, home videos that only a few hundred students will probably get round to watching. It is interesting that the videos in question both parody previous advertising campaigns from Apple, and that both have been made on Students' Union-funded Macs. Steve Jobs would be so proud; lay students, less so.

It says something about the state of student politics that, in trying to widen participation in the Union's activities,

proposers and opposers of the reform proposals alike have succeeded in creating and championing campaigns that are unrivalled in their insular and cliquey style. Engagement, indeed.

Sadly, the face-to-face discussion and debate that was promised in this fortnight of campaigning in the end translated to seven-and-a-half minutes of 'hustings' at last week's UGM. Following a mass exodus on the part of AU members, fresh from their lads' mags success, what followed was perhaps the limpest example of real life democracy in action. Some people got up and said some things; some other people posed some questions that were occasionally answered to a satisfactory degree; everyone else treated the speakers

to some mild applause and then left.

Thankfully, debate or none, the Sabbatical Officers have successfully negotiated the treacherous waters of amendment, with the Media Group being treated to a dizzying array of modifications to their bye-laws in the reform proposals. Thanks to the enterprising efforts of a number of former Beaver contributors, students and Sabbs, this paper's editorial independence has been galvanized; its financial (in)dependence clarified, and its members notably mollified. We can only hope that the concerns of other societies and groups on campus have been addressed in a similar fashion - after all, not every bunch of angry students is so vocal in their uprising as we have been.

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

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ON THE BEAVER PLAYLIST

Hot Chip - One Life Stand
Fleetwood Mac - Rhiannon
Ski Sunday - Theme Tune
Red Alert - Hell March
Owl City - Fireflies
Black - Wonderful Life
Dido - Sand In My Shoes

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EDITORIAL BOARD ELECTIONS

COLLECTIVE MEETING
THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2010

We will be holding elections for the following positions:

News Editor
Design Editor
Sports Editor
Web Editor
PartB Editor

Candidates are invited to submit a 150-word manifesto to collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk by Wednesday 12PM. All students are welcome to attend!



National ID cards launched

Phyllis Lui
Ben Phillips

The national identity card enrollment commenced on Monday for young people aged 16 to 24 in London.

Peter Fawcett, 21, from Redbridge in East London was the first "young person" to enrol for a national identity card. He gave his biometric fingerprints and biographical information at the Identity and Passport Service offices in London, the card will be issued within ten days.

Home Office Minister responsible for Identity Cards Meg Hillier was also at the offices. In an interview with the Beaver, Hillier refuted claims that the identity cards infringed on citizens' privacy, "start by countering that premise". Furthermore, she believed that "we have always had a database for passports...as valuable travel documents, need database to back it up".

Hillier also stated that the card "puts citizen in control" as the information on the chip is encrypted and can only be obtained as border checkpoints, or "with your permission".

Another issue that was raised concerned another form of the identity card, the foreign national card and whether its mandatory nature would lead to a decline in applications.

"When you apply as a student, you need to have a visa. Anyone renewing will need to get a foreign national identity card which would act as a handy electronic visa. Further, 130,000 have applied and in 3 years' time, every foreign national

will have the card. It's been top foreign footballers to students at the LSE, anyone else in between," said Hillier.

She also believed that there is an incentive to getting the card: "For me as a woman, I wouldn't use my driver's license as a form of ID as it my address on it. It will also crink down on underage drinking as there would not be a way to doctor the documents."

It was reaffirmed that there would not be any plans to making the cards compulsory: "You can't even require someone to have it to access public service. It is not in act of parliament, in future, you would need a new act of parliament, voted on and for bill to become law. Prime Minister has explicitly ruled it out for next term."

According to a Home Office press release: "The £30 card provides a secure and convenient way for people to prove their identity whether they are travelling - the cards can also be used in place of a passport for travel throughout Europe - or buying age-restricted goods."

"Young people across the capital buying alcohol, computer games and DVDs, going to the cinema or to a club, know how important it is to have a recognised proof of identity which is easy to carry."

Fawcett believed: "I was keen from the outset to get a National Identity Card. I will be travelling to Holland next month and the convenience of taking the credit card sized ID card with me in my wallet for use as a travel document far outweighs taking my passport with me. If I lose it I only have to pay £30 instead of £77.50 to have it replaced."



Photo: Ben Phillips

Open access campus poses security challenge

Eunice Ng

In light of allegations of rising crime on campus, the Beaver sat down with LSE Director of Estates, and a new report shows that on-campus crime has increased in 2009.

The LSE Crime Statistics Report, which looked at theft on campus between October and December 2009, shows that crime rates spike during term time and happen largely between 3 p.m. and 11 p.m. Still, the timing of many thefts is unknown.

LSE Head of Security Paul Thornbury said that most thefts are of personal belongings, particularly expensive electronics such as laptops. Over £36,000 worth was stolen last year. Thornbury said: "We strongly advise students to take extra care when using this kind of equipment in communal areas and not to leave it in lockers."

After laptops, bicycles are the most frequently stolen items. Most crimes take place in outdoor communal areas and ironically, things are stolen more often from lockers than from classrooms. Over 70% of the victims of crime are students, with postgraduates being affected more than undergraduates.

In a meeting with the Beaver, LSE Director of Estates Julian Robinson said that because the LSE is "not a traditional campus", it poses a "security challenge".

Robinson also spoke at length about the School's new security measures such as locker provisions being increased this year. Last year, £80,000 was spent on upgrading high resolution the School's CCTV system. Three new security posts have been agreed by School as part of the Estates Service Delivery Plan.

The School also has hired Arup, a specialist security consultant, to work on the New Student Centre with the Students' Union and the Estates Division. Opening in 2012, the Centre will introduce "much heightened security". Though it will be an open access building, there will be swipe card access during designated hours and more entry control on different floors.

Meanwhile, the School has opened a secured laptop storage facility in the ground floor of the Old Building. Interested students can ask the building's reception for more details.

Robinson concluded the meeting on an optimistic note: "We continue to review the effectiveness of our security provision but in general I am very confident in the effectiveness and professionalism of our security staff."

Wednesday Afternoons mostly Free



Photo: LSE Archives

Sachin Patel

The Students' Union's major campaign to keep Wednesday Afternoons Free (WAF) has had mixed results with overwhelming successes at undergraduate level but a continuation of problems for postgraduate students.

In previous years, the School has been adamant that, in line with the views of UCL, King's College and SOAS, Wednesday afternoons are defined as starting at 1PM. In the minutes of a Student Affairs Committee meeting, which took place on 25 November 2009, it was noted that "discussions of timetabling policy for Wednesday afternoons began in March last year", and it is now evident that these discussions have brought a positive outcome.

A large part of the success can be attributed to the LSESU, the LSE has to an extent relented, and the vast majority of undergraduates will no longer be dealt classes and lectures between 12 and 1PM.

The WAF campaign, which was launched as a culmination of several years of vocal opposition to the School's policy on classes and lectures, has made significant inroads in securing free Wednesday afternoons for undergraduates, so that

they are free to pursue sports activities. At this point, only one undergraduate course's lectures remain in place between 12 and 1PM - those of the LL106 course in Public Law - but these are being video-captured so that students unable to attend them remain able to catch up on missed material.

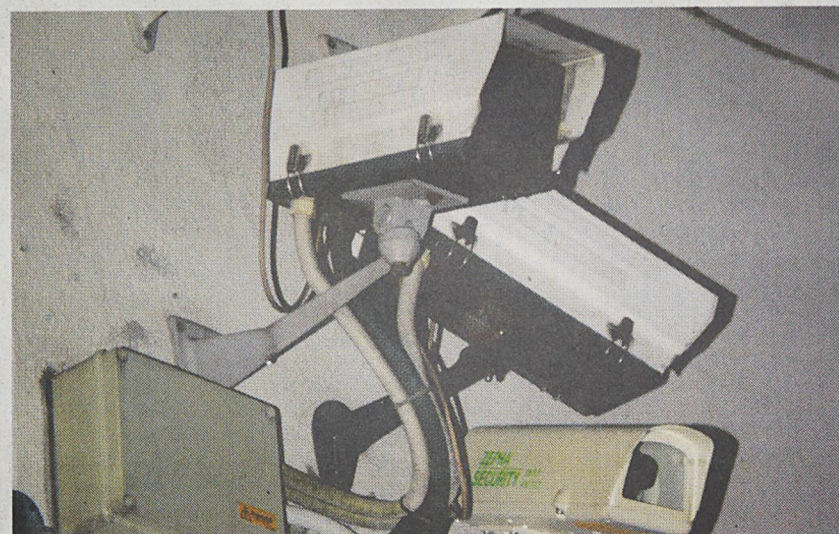
Prior to the recent developments, a major complaint of students had been that the time required to travel to sports grounds in Berrylands, Surrey, meant that it was impossible for them to leave the School at 1PM in time for the start of training sessions and matches. The Student Affairs Committee has recognized "an increased priority to enrichment activities", and the changes to timetabling reflect this. In addition to the LL106 lectures, there is a small number of a language classes that remain in Wednesday afternoon slots, but it is hoped that the relatively small number of students taking these classes will mean that the majority of students will not be inconvenienced.

For postgraduates, however, the WAF campaign has been less fruitful. The Committee observed several reasons as to why "it is not feasible to clear absolutely all Masters teaching": first, the sheer quantity of programmes (100) and courses (600) taught at postgraduate level far outweigh those at undergraduate level; second, that teaching patterns

at postgraduate level are more varied in frequency and length. These factors have made it difficult to enact timetabling changes, in spite of the significant opinion from postgraduate students - in a recent survey which received 478 respondents, 40.8 per cent strongly agreed that "a half day on Wednesday (from 12 noon) should be set aside for non-teaching activity i.e. no classes, no lectures".

The improvements to undergraduate timetabling have come at the expense of flexibility and slack periods elsewhere in the week. The Committee also noted that there is "extensive use of 9-10AM slots, to the point where there is no longer much space available in them across the whole week", and that there is now a "significant volume of teaching on Fridays". Furthermore, there remain a number of departments who do not hold a policy of adhering to the WAF campaign. These are: Economics, Economic History, the European Institute, the Gender Institute, Geography (which strongly opposes any move to put a block on Wednesday afternoon taught periods), Information Systems and Innovation Group, the Institute of Social Psychology, Mathematics, and Media & Communication.

Crucially, it has been possible to accommodate all the classes for the LSE100 pilot course "at times other than Wednesday afternoons."



Reforms campaign kicks off with hustings at UGM

Phyllis Lui

Hustings for this week's referendum on proposed reforms took place during the second half of last Thursday's Union General Meeting (UGM).

Hustings were held in the later half of the UGM, where speeches were made for and against specific parts of the proposed reforms as decided by the LSESU Returning Officer Shanti Kelemen. At the time of print, the Beaver is not aware of another session of hustings being held ahead of the opening of voting this Wednesday.

LSESU General Secretary Alid Dilwin Fisha started the debate by saying that the Articles of Governance is a "fancy new word for constitution". Further, it is a "legal document prepared by the Charities Commission and NUS...which we have adapted it slightly for our purposes."

"Most of the stuff in it, we already do...I need to stress, it doesn't change what we currently do. It makes clear what our objectives and aims are."

The Beaver asked a question regarding specific quorum requirements for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and UGM. Fisher replied that as it stands, the current AGM doesn't have a quorum and he further recognised "some divergence there".

Two further questions were raised concerning first the creation of a Postgraduate Sabbatical Officer and why there is not an International Students Sabbatical Officer.

"I have known only of one postgraduate to run for sabb in my time here. The reason why we have the officer is that postgrads do not get as involved in the Union," Fisher responded.

He also agreed with the student that "there's a problem with involving international students". "At other universities,

it hasn't really made any differences, we want all people working on international student issues."

The next part that was up for discussion was General Meetings Bye-Law which was advocated for by RAG President Charlotte Gerada. Gerada started by proclaiming that the proposed reforms to UGMs is the "best way to make our UGM more democratic, legitimate, inclusive". She also used the Beaver's coverage to point out "how many people feel excluded from decisions made about our university...we strongly support the changes made to the voting system". Further, Gerada maintained that it is "simply not right that the wider student body" are not aware of the policies.

She further believed that online voting, with "campaign before and after the UGM" would lead to "all round informed decision".

Postgraduate student and graduate teaching assistant Robin Burrett spoke against these reforms as he questioned what they "actually mean for democracy?" He highlighted how the "Lad's Mags" motion was a "perfect example of what power to the people means. We get together, we discuss, we make a decision. It can go both ways."

He ended his speech by stating: "This organic discussion will disappear in its meaningfulness."

LSESU Treasurer then proceeded to speak for the proposed Media Group charge.

"The Media Group formed the basis of my student experience at LSE, I wouldn't want damage or jeopardise it for anyone," he began. "Students would have to pay a small fee, just like clubs and societies do. The growth in the past few years has been absolutely brilliant, wouldn't want to stop it for anything."

Wetz further highlighted that if the reforms are passed, it would ensure a

"more democratic process" whereby the media group charge would be a "gesture" which will be seen more favourably in light of budget allocations being dealt with by the Activities Assembly. He concluded that the media group would be "guaranteed funds which nobody can take away from it."

His speech was followed by the Beaver Features Editor Madeeha Ansari, who was against the charge as she believed that the Media Group "has had very wide access and in that sense, it is not a society" as "anybody can join it, anybody can contribute and still be in the loop". She perceives the introduction of a set fee to be "an act of detriment".

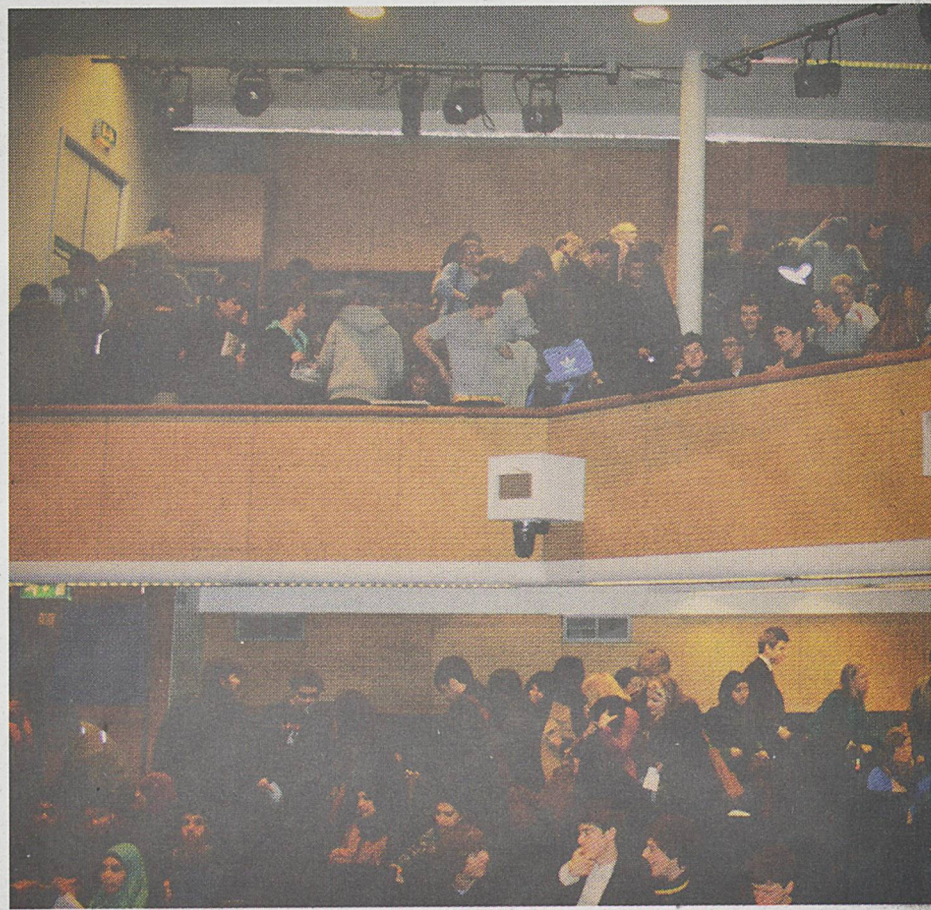
Question was directed as Wetz as to whether students would have to pay to write for the Beaver.

"These are the kind of discussions we have been having with the Media Group at the moment. I don't think you should have to pay a membership fee to write an article. We need people to make some sort of contribution, but it doesn't mean you have to be a member to contribute," said Wetz. "We have been trying to work it out with the media group but we haven't come to a sensible solution."

Pulse Station Manager Rob Charnock asked whether Wetz could address how much the charge is going to raise, what percentage of the current budget and whether it is a significant proportion, whether there are other alternatives.

Wetz replied that he wasn't "quite sure which other ways you are talking about and we can maybe discuss it afterwards". However, "it wouldn't be half the budget, it'd be a reasonably smaller amount but it is a guaranteed amount that no one can take away. So surely this must be a good thing."

Kelemen closed the meeting by informing the audience voting and campaigning procedures.



» Continued from page 1

Seven minutes of questions were initially designated by the UGM Chair, during which members of the floor focused primarily on issues of freedom of choice.

Students' Union LGBT Officer, Scott MacDonald, suggested that this motion "will turn them [readers of the Sun and FHM] against the Union", and asked "why couldn't someone propose to ban the Economist, on the grounds that it perpetuates the capitalist system?" In response, Robinson offered, "I am a woman on campus, and I don't want to see creepy men reading FHM". Third year BA Geography undergraduate Tudor Jones asserted that "the Sun is the most

read newspaper in the UK. If you ban it from campus, we're still going to read it, in front of you, as the AU is doing here." Robinson reiterated that this motion was "a boycott, not a censorship", and that though students would still be able to purchase the publications elsewhere, "any attempts to combat sexism and inequality on campus will be meaningless" without the passing of this motion.

After a student was removed from the theatre for throwing a bundled-up newspaper at the stage, there were also several questions posed regarding the issue of sexist behaviour. Third year undergraduate Estelle Cooch, noting that a Facebook group about the motion was "filled with comments like 'let's ban militant lesbos from the SU'" thus proving that sexism and homophobia "clearly still exists in our society", asked the oppos-

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ers "how would you combat it [sexism] on campus?" Responding, Sam Tempest Keeping argued that though sexism and homophobia "are [not] acceptable per se ... freedom of speech is the cornerstone on which our society is based. You cannot blanket ban across students" because such a decision would hinge on "opinion" and not fact.

After the question-and-answer period was extended for a further five minutes, a student questioned the link between pornographic imagery and sexual violence, calling it a "serious comment" and one allegedly made without adequate statistics to back it up. Other questions were asked, against a backdrop of continued wolf-whistling, sexist asides and a series of attempts by members of the audience to hijack the discussion with inappropriate comments. Much of

the negative response to the proposers' answers centred on Robinson and Kahlo's assertions that images in the Sun and in FHM depicted "hardcore pornography". On one occasion, the microphone had to be wrestled away from a student.

After questions had been drawn to a close, voting took place and the motion fell, causing significant dismay among the proposers. Two of the Union's Sabbatical Officers, angered by the outcome of the vote, later encouraged discussion about the motion via their Facebook profiles and Twitter accounts. The proposers of the motion have since made complaints to the Students' Union regarding the behaviour of members of the audience, resulting in an investigation that is still ongoing.

Aled-Dilwyn Fisher Absolutely disgusted by the sexist, horrible, bullying behaviour I witnessed at the UGM today regarding 'that' motion. Thoroughly ashamed.

04 February at 15:20 via Twitter - Comment - Like

Andrew Wright, Estelle Cooch and 13 others like this.

Brendan Greenfield 'that' motion was rightly voted against, most of its points were patronising towards students by suggesting that people that buy lads-mags are going to become wife beaters or objectify women.
04 February at 15:48

Lenn Kruger Aled - I did not attend because this motion is just another "I dont like x hence lets ban x".
In fact i think the womens officer should step down. Her role is to promote women. And she was so incompetent as to try it with such ridiculous motions that led to even MORE sexism (and rightly so - the motion was extremely offending to a man's intellect ...
See more
04 February at 16:05

Daniel Lemberger Cooper what was the motion about?
04 February at 16:27

Joe Sammut Aled is not commenting on the merits or not of the motion (which called for a boycott of 'Lads mags' in the SU shop) but is rightly condemning the mass heckling and sexist bullying by parts of the audience. Lenn you think that any offense to a "man's dignity" should "rightly" be met by "MORE sexism" - so black activism that offends whites dignity ...
See more
04 February at 16:33

Aled-Dilwyn Fisher I am not talking about the motion at all - rather the conduct of the meeting was what I found appalling.

Numerous students were utterly distressed by the proceedings, and have rightly come to complain. This includes students who were both for and against the motion.

For me, it was a throw back to the bad old days of how the UGM used to be - intimidating, out of control and an embarrassment to the Union. The heckling, cat calling, wolf whistling and intimidating gestures were just too much. However strongly people feel about the debate, that kind of atmosphere cannot be justified. ...
See more
04 February at 16:34

Aled-Dilwyn Fisher I agree with what Joe said, having now looked back and understood the point being made.
04 February at 16:35

Lenn Kruger Aled - it obviously contributed to more sexism (i wasn't there, but) if what you say happened is true. and i cannot understand how you dont like my comparison. say a manger believes playing aggressively is the way to win. they score 2 goals every match but concede 3. they keep losing he is sacked. jessie's strategy was this motion, it failed utterly...
See more
04 February at 17:12

Lenn Kruger ps joe no need to start name-calling. simply because i have a different view makes me a bigot? nor is the false accusation that i "attack women".
04 February at 17:17

Charles Laurence glad to see SU politics is as bonkers as ever
04 February at 17:26

Joe Sammut Having different views does not mean that you are a bigot. Saying that sexism is right in response to a motion is bigoted. Attacking is not necessarily physical, I was commenting on your comment.
04 February at 17:33

Brendan Greenfield I dunno though, sometimes when people are rowdy it makes the UGM more interesting, one of the reasons it is never full is because of the sterile atmosphere that exists there
04 February at 17:41

Aled-Dilwyn Fisher Brendan - I agree that the atmosphere can be a bit sterile, and I'm not against rowdiness, banter and an entertaining meeting. It's just I felt, as many others did, that what was happening was funny - It was just horrible!
04 February at 17:59

James Caspell You could also decide not to sell The Sun and the Star given it trades on overtly objectifying women. The issue is not so much "banning" these publications, but choosing for the SU not to make a profit out of them, which is arguably a breach of the Codes of Practice anyway. Solidarity with whoever was principled enough to propose this motion!
04 February at 18:31

Brendan Greenfield yer it did go a bit too far. on another note i voted against the motion but i do support that the SU stops selling the sun, but thats on the basis of their lies about the Hillsborough disaster see
04 February at 18:46

Dave Cole Agree with James.
04 February at 19:53

Aaron Kiely I could only hope such a motion would be brought here to Kent... well done to Jessie who I assume is the women's officer, and I am saddened to hear it got voted down.
04 February at 21:11

"A pathetic display"

Emmanuel Akpang-Inwang

The Union General Meeting, the cornerstone of our Union is supposed to be a forum for free and open debate. The principle of any student having the ability to table a motion as well as debate and the vote on it is unmatched anywhere else in the student movement. People on both sides of every debate are entitled to have their opinions heard. It is the envy of students' unions nationwide.

The LSESU has a proud history of progressive action on social justice and liberation issues, and where we have led other unions have followed.

However last Thursday the UGM became the scene of what can only be described as a blatant display of sexist bullying designed to intimidate the proposers of the motion "Stop selling sexist publications in our Students' Union"

So what crime had the proposers committed? Well it seems they dared to suggest that perhaps the Students' Union should not stock copies of a newspaper that they believe promotes the objectification of women.

A glance around the Old Theatre revealed copies of The Sun held aloft open at Page 3 in shameless attempt to cause offence by people unable to actually articulate why they opposed the motion.

That is to say nothing of the abuse on the wall of the Facebook event for the debate where posts questioned the proposers sexual orientation or claimed that female biological functions must be the reason for the motions proposal.

This is a common thread that runs through much sexist abuse and this incident shows that sexism is alive and well at the LSE as some are willing to gather in it's name. We can only be thankful that we have an excellent Women's Officer and a strong women's campaign at LSE to continue the ongoing battle against it.

Let's be clear, as is the case with most issues discussed at the UGM there were perfectly valid arguments on both sides. Regardless of which side of the debate you sided with, the treatment of the women's officer a student who has been elected to promote, defend and extend the rights of female students on campus and Anja Kahlo was shocking and appalling.

In fact what instead the behaviour of many who attended only sought to stifle debate and the proposers attempt to deliver their speeches over wolf whistles and taunts such as 'man haters and 'feminazis'.

It's ironic that the very people decrying the apparent attack on freedom of speech and expression appeared unable to allow the women on stage in from of them to exercise their inalienable right to say as they wish and express their opposition to two of the publications that our Union sells.

Some (predictably) bemoaned the fact that the SU was not discussing subjects that matter to students, yet were the first to make a speedy exit after the debate had come to a close and before the debate on the biggest reforms in the history of the students union; reforms I can only hope will mean such a pathetic display will never again be repeated.



Timeless raises over £10,000

Medeoha Ansari

After the live trailer on Houghton Street, the third annual production of the LSE cultural show "Timeless!" was staged at Sadler's Wells Theatre last Saturday.

The largest show of its kind at the university, "Timeless!" involved 200 participants from a range of diverse backgrounds to cater to an audience of over 1400 people. This year, it was executed along the lines of a musical, with the dance sequences being tied together by an overarching story. Creative Director Ashwin Desai worked with Music Director Joshua Bernstein to come up with an original script as well as soundtrack.

Amid concerns that it was beginning to have a predominantly South Asian character, the script and the casting reflected a conscious effort to take the multicultural nature of the LSE into account.

According to producer Filipe Martins: "We made an effort to be as inclusive as possible. We had post-grads involved...we had students from five different religions on our committee. Other universities have things like 'One World Week', but for us this was a really good way of bringing people together."

The traditional Indian classical, garba, bhangra and Bollywood acts were woven together with salsa, hula, swing-dance, contemporary and hip-hop routines. In order to make it "LSE's Global Fairytale", the story revolved around an investment banker from the LSE who is transported to the "World of the Beat". There he finds an eclectic mix of people as well as talents. Among the most popular sequences were the fusion of kathak with tap-dancing and

beat-boxing with hip-hop. The original songs included numbers like "I'm a Little Investment Banker" and "The Unrequited Love Song of the Poor Village Girl". There was also an operatic rendition of Pamina's Aria.

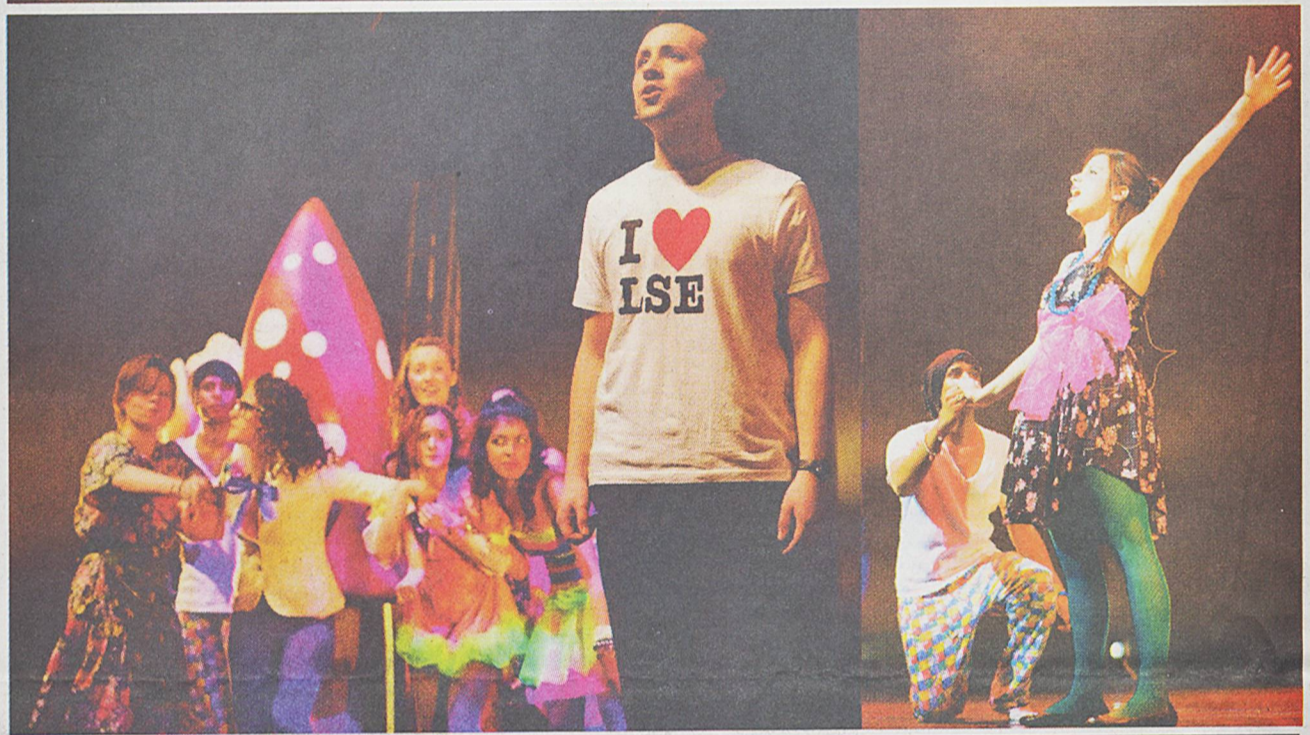
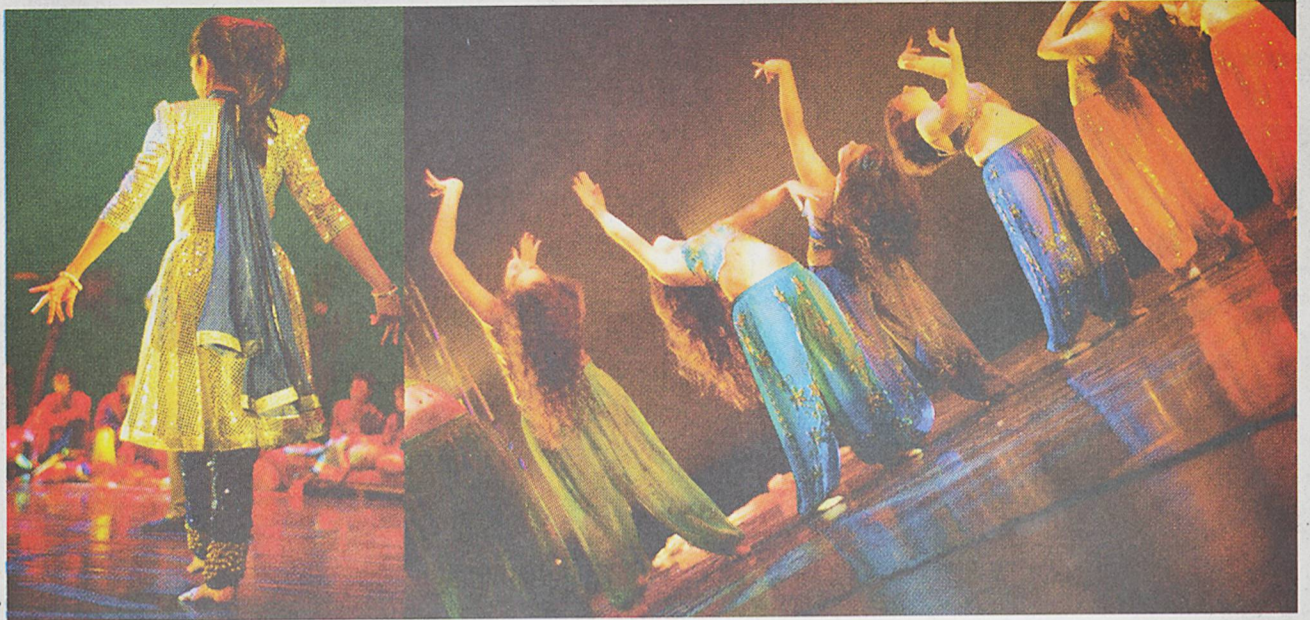
Desai claimed he "wanted to keep it really simple so no one would get confused", while also making subtle statements about materialism and social class. The script aimed to fuse the real world with fantasy, describing the I-Banker's world as one where "every few years they hold this magical festival called 'financial crisis'."

The audience was largely appreciative, especially of the spontaneity of the jester/narrator. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with LSESU Education and Welfare Officer Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang describing it as "fantastic".

Third year student Ankita Dutta, when asked how she felt, replied: "Inconsequential. I feel like I have no talent."

Despite having trouble with room-bookings, the performers had been putting in up to twenty hours of practice a week. The efforts were geared towards raising money for two charities, "Kids Company" and "Invisible Children". Both are concerned with the development of youth, the former providing support to inner city children and the latter to the victims of conflict in Central East Africa.

The event was supported by LSE Arts, while the main corporate sponsors were Standard Chartered Bank, Price Waterhouse Coopers and J.P. Morgan. After accounting for technical costs, a net revenue of over £10,000 pounds was raised by the end of the evening.



MISSED PIRATE WEEK?

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Comment

Leave Boris alone

The Mayor of London is at the centre of unfair and unfounded criticism over Tube works

Maitiu Corbett

As a Masters student, I moved to London just this year, but it hasn't taken me long to get used to the undercurrent of cynicism that clings to this place like a cold sweat. First, I discovered how little people care about their jobs sometimes: from the morose drones that judge and begrudge me at the checkout in Tesco, to whoever does the photocopying for Xerox packs. They seem to merely have thrown the relevant book at the photocopier, in the hope that 'magic' will do the rest: every single bloody article has a bit cut off the side so you're reduced to guessing the missing four letters on each line.

Also, only in London do people react to someone committing suicide on the subway lines without sympathy or shock, nor respectful indifference, but an actual groan of annoyance. I'm sorry generic-suited-balding-man, did stereotyped-whingeing-layabout/young-professional-under-pressure make you late for your morning human resources presentation? I most deeply apologize, I'll ask them to kill themselves at a more convenient moment next time. They could do it on a Sunday.

Thankfully, this is a relatively rare source of disruption to daily Tube trail. A far more pervasive one is delays and closures, and if you listen carefully it has a distinctive sound. First the groan, then the sigh, then that trusty conversation-starter: Boris. This has always confused me on two fronts. First of all, and correct me if I'm wrong: Boris Johnson doesn't actually run Tube lines, the public-private partnership (PPP) engineering company responsible for the ubiquitous 'improvement works' on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines. In fact, when Tube Lines was set up it was vehemently opposed by the Mayor's office under the previous mayor, Ken Livingstone. It was pushed through by then-Chancellor Gordon Brown, who is, after all, currently world champion scapegoat for the second year running; why isn't Johnson pushing the blame his way? This is like the dog blaming the smell on the granny.

And come on, how can you be mad at



that face? Perhaps this will wear thin as me and Boris's relationship goes on, but right now I just can't escape the charm of his idiotic grin, the babbling speech punctuated by disarming honesty, that hair that looks like it's only trying his head on for size. And who could doubt the fortitude of the Pagan Federation of Great Britain National Journalist of the Year 1998?

Perhaps in an effort to distance himself from the most recent revelations about the Tube – that the Northern line will close at evenings and weekends for the next 20 months – Boris has insisted that "the programme suggested is intolerable and there has to be a better way". This is the next stage in Tube Lines' game of

Oyster Card bingo in preparation for the 2012 Olympics, which will (like, totally) fix the recession. Well okay, it probably will help rather a lot, but damn it if I don't get this train I'm going to miss How I Met Your Mother. (True story.)

So the platform is packed with chitter-chatters with muttering Boris this and Boris that. But how much of this is actually his fault? People tend to assume that the Mayor of London is a sort of Cosimo de' Medici figure, with his tentacles in every nook and cranny of our lives. The Mayor's office doesn't help this in the case of transport, what with 'Mayor Of London' appearing alongside 'Transport For London' on every second

poster that wallpapers the subterranean labyrinth. But the Medici model is quite inaccurate – he is actually often meekly deferential to TfL. Furthermore, in the case of Tube Lines Boris looks more like middle management, the awkward Tory being leapfrogged by New Labour's project of stakeholder capitalism.

In fact, so far has Labour's mongrel economy gone that the mayor is being forced, absent the political option of full privatization, to let TfL threaten to take public ownership of Tube Lines, like they did with its other engineering contractor Metronet in 2007, in order to save the public from such draconian closures. More de-privatization from a Tory mayor?

Most confusing. Nevertheless, whatever his methods and relative power, he is primarily worried about what the disruptions will inflict on London's 800,000 daily Northern line users and this shows one thing: Boris Johnson seems to be one of the precious few people who care about their jobs. The fault here lies with the New Labour PPP oligarchy, which keeps expectations low, costs high and schedules laughable. So, to parody the infamous "Leave Britney Alone!" guy in prose: leave Boris alone, at least for now.

Short changed

Analyzing Clare Short's performance at the Chilcot Inquiry last week

Will Longhurst

We were all expecting fireworks from Clare Short's evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry, and in many ways we were not disappointed. The former International Development Secretary delighted the audience with her highly charged terminology and her impassioned attack on Tony Blair and Whitehall; she has been the only witness that I have seen to receive applause at

the end of her questioning. At the risk of swimming against the tide of public opinion then, I have to be honest; I just can't stand her. Clare Short is certainly a crowd pleaser, but this is more based on her bitter personal attack on Blair, than any lasting relevance as a witness. Stripping away the emotive language, her evidence was of limited use to the Inquiry and actually quite dull.

Aside from her deeply irritating scarf, I came away from watching her evidence with a sense that this was an individual more sour about her marginalisation within Cabinet than morally outraged by the war in Iraq. Take the central issue of her resignation in May 2003. I wholeheartedly support and admire those who resign because of an ethical opposition to a certain

policy. The late Robin Cook, for instance, stepped down as Leader of the House of Commons on the eve of the vote on the war. This was a clear demonstration of his opposition to it, taken when doing so could still influence events. Short however did not resign over the morality of the war per se; her resignation came two months later, over the issue of rebuilding Iraq.

If Short was the one voice in the Cabinet calling for extra support for Iraqi reconstruction, then surely she should have continued to lobby for this in government rather than resigning in protest? However marginalised she had become, her voice was surely stronger in the Cabinet than from the back benches? It seems to me that if Short was so committed to 'getting the job done properly' in Iraq, she would

have stayed in her position. Resigning after the war had begun must surely be seen as a hollow gesture; whether it was a case of her jumping before she was pushed we may never know.

There were other points in her evidence that just did not add up. For instance it is curious that this same woman, who having attacked the Attorney General for changing his mind on the legality of intervention, sees no problem in a reversal of her own position: Short clearly changed her mind between the invasion and resigning two months later. Furthermore, if Short was marginalized to the extent that she and others have suggested, then surely her evidence is just hearsay and conjecture? It certainly sounded like the well rehearsed opinion of a bitter and dis-

gruntled ex-employee. Loathe as I am to agree with Alastair Campbell, I think most people would accept that Clare Short gave the impression of a woman who was extremely difficult to work with. It may well have been one of the more exciting performances before the Inquiry, but beyond her rhetoric, Short's value to the investigation is extremely limited.

I stand by my convictions surrounding the former International Development Secretary. Her evidence was overshadowed by a bitterness that has clearly only festered in the last seven years, and a resentment for her political marginalization. Strip away the theatrics of her comments, and what is left is politically and morally hollow – nothing more than a character assassination, however justified, of Blair.

Choice over force

France is wrong to consider banning the burka - after all, no harm is being done

Nina Lazic

A couple of weekends ago, right before I settled in to watch the cinematic masterpiece, *Sorority Row*, I made a slip-pant remark to a certain, French bombshell of a flatmate. "Isn't it horrid", I asked her, "that France could even consider enacting such a barbarian, anti-civil libertarian law?" As someone weaned on Professor Conor Gearty's expositions on civil liberties, human rights, and the like, it never crossed my mind that my intelligent flatmate could possibly support a ban of the burka in France's public sphere.

The topic of our subsequent heated debate was the French examination into the veil's place in French society - prompted by Nicolas Sarkozy's denouncement of the burka six months ago, as 'not welcome' in France. France, like my friend, justified her arguments using one of the bedrocks of French thought - the constitutionally enshrined principle of secularism (*laïcité*).

Secularism, to my mind, is to be welcomed with wide, open arms, allowing as it does move away from medieval notions that those who do not practice current socially mandated religions are in some way not part of society. Secularity, when successful, removes religion from the sphere of the State's influence, and protects the State from the interference of the religious. Practically speaking, this should leave me free to practice my unholy brand of worship at Dawkins' feet, whilst next-door, my neighbour burns an incense tribute to her wicca goddess.

Hence, to my mind, our ability to wear religious adornments should be celebrated as the utmost triumph of a secular state. If I choose to wear a symbol of the Antichrist, no one should stop me on the street, demanding that I remove it. Similarly, if a woman feels that her faith in Islam requires her to wear a Burka, no State pronouncement should take away that freedom.

However, some argue that the state must forcefully remove obstacles to liberty's achievement. In a nutshell, it seems that this line of thinking is premised on the view that the choice to wear a Burka is not really a free choice - being instead the end-result of an intolerant, male-orientated subjugation of the female will.

Like the Marxist thesis of 'false consciousness' (the only reason that one does not support Marxism is because one is under the influence of false consciousness), this argument is hard to defeat, and where, precisely does it stop? Can we say that, homosexuals aren't really exercising their freedom in expressing their sexuality, because their choice is actually subject to internal constraints of coercion? What about girls wearing short mini-skirts (aka Leicester Square on a Friday night)? Can we say that their outfit is a barrier to their true liberty, encouraging as it does, men to ogle, objectify and sexualise them - thus justifying restrictions on such garments? To my mind, saying that a Burka diminishes the identity of the woman wearing it, and thus takes away a vital part of her liberty, is no less ridiculous than any of the other examples above. The point is, the majority should not be voicing their opinion on how the minority exercises their freedom. We shouldn't be able to say that the veiled woman is not exercising her freedom properly. We shouldn't be able to tell that woman that the only way she is really, truly exercising her freedom is if she chooses not to wear the Burka. Saying such things, banning the Burka, imposing fines on those wearing it, is paternalistic, condescending, and fundamentally misguided.

To those who don't except my argument above, then let me turn to a consequentialist reading of the proposed ban. The ban is enacted. What then? There seem to be two categories of women who wear the Burka. Those who support the ban wave around the example of the poor, defenceless woman, bowing down to the expectations of her societal environment. "See!", they hark, "She will no longer be oppressed!" No, actually, I don't see. If a woman is in a situation where she is forced to wear a Burka, I don't see why this wouldn't translate to simply being forced to stay at home. If her society can pressure her into wearing a Burka, then why can't they pressure her into remaining indoors?

The other category of women who might wear the Burka are those who, shock horror to our Western sensibilities, might actually choose to. Because, you know, she actually believes and respects Islam to a literal degree. What happens to this class of women? Women who actually feel they are disobeying divine law by exposing themselves to the preying eyes of men? They, like the first category of women, will suffer a curtailment of freedom of movement. They will be faced with an impossible choice - commit an act of treason against their own will, and own considered judgement, or commit an of-

fence against French law. Of course, here false consciousness could be brandished again - those women who choose to follow the tenets of Islam in this manner, are not actually free. This kind of thinking, I reiterate, makes me feel ill; it is no better than the thinking of those peasants in rural villages who used to burn redheads. I want my ability, my capability to choose atheism, to be respected. Accordingly, I also think that those who choose a different path should be accorded the respect and recognition that they might know their own minds.

Women who might wear the Burka are those who, shock horror to Western sensibilities, might actually choose to

I could argue ad infinitum, about Western Orientalism, J.S. Mill's harm principle, and the like - but instead, I'd like to conclude by drawing an analogy to the wise, eloquent words of George Carlin: if "fighting for peace is like screwing for virginity", then the imposition of liberty is a similar contradiction. I hope that France's dalliance with such restrictive laws is a short one, accompanied with the realisation that secularism isn't about destroying religion, it's about allowing it to co-exist with, with minimal impositions in either direction.

Clash of the latter day titans

Discussion on the importance of liberty and equality is more relevant than ever

Sam Williams

Liberty and equality have always been uneasy bedfellows, and the tension between the two has tightened recently as a result of Pope Benedict XIII's comments on the increasingly controversial UK Equality Bill. The Bill, introduced to Parliament in the Queen's Speech in 2008, seeks to stamp out inequality in all areas of British life, starting with making employer-employee discrimination illegal unless it is based on anything other than pure merit.

The crucial problem with what otherwise sounds like a perfectly noble and praiseworthy project is that it falls foul of the fundamental dichotomy that is identified in most political thought since Hobbes' *Leviathan*. By imposing draconian measures aimed at brutally purging the last remnants of inequality from British public and private life, the Equality Bill tolls the bell for a significant chunk of the liberty that is currently enjoyed. It is patently clear that the incumbent Labour government's values enforced freedom over natural freedom.

The most high profile conflict of interests that has arisen from the Equality Bill is that between the Catholic Church and the UK's homosexual community. Last week, the Pope faced a vicious backlash when he raised his concerns that the Bill would infringe on the Church's right not to have to hire homosexuals to Church positions in accordance with traditional Catholic doctrine. His comments were widely criticized as being homophobic - and as far as these criticisms are directed towards the traditional Catholic doctrine itself, they are probably correct. But it would have to be a particularly shallow and superficial interpretation of events that sees the whole incident as being merely another episode of papal gay-bashing, worthy of being condemned out of hand, or at the very least, ignored. It seems clear that the Pope's concerns extend not simply to the relatively trivial issue of Church's rights to not have to employ homosexual bishops. Rather, his comments highlight the more significant view that more general liberties, which have evolved over centuries, are under threat from the 'fundamentalist equalitarians' behind the Equality Bill.

The reason why I am critical of the

people behind the Equality Bill, and the possible implications of it, is not that I am opposed to equality - because I am absolutely not. I fail to see how any reasonable person can identify an inherent badness in the notion of equality. Indeed, I fail to see how any reasonable person cannot identify an inherent goodness in the notion of equality. Rather, it is because I resent the lack of respect that the Bill affords to individuals and organisations to make choices as they please. The Catholic Church's discriminatory policy against homosexuals might be abhorrent, but is that a sufficient reason for a bill to be proposed that would render it unlawful? If the Bill is passed, this practice would be unlawful, and the rights of gay people to seek employment in the church would be enshrined; presumably, of course, for the sake of consistency, it will also have to tackle such discriminatory practices as Islam's refusal to allow females to be Imam to men, and the Army's refusal to allow women in the Infantry. A good thing? Perhaps, but it comes at a distressing cost. I am not a Catholic, nor am I a libertarian, but I still feel distinctly uncomfortable at the thought that a group of politicians - under the influence of some self-serving bureaucrats in a department that has the word 'Equality' in its title - feel that they have a legitimate right to dictate to us that equality is more important than liberty. Moreover, that they have the right to tailor the policies of any number of independent and historic institutions to satisfy political ends.

My point is that like most people I would love to live in a world that is perfectly equal. And, to a certain extent, I feel that this can be achieved without the generation of any unpleasant political externalities. However, after a point, I don't think it can. The Equality Bill, in my view, is on the wrong side of this point. By legally enforcing equal opportunities, it conveys the message that customary, historic and traditional liberties are perfectly sacrificable for the sake of equality. If inequality is resulting in someone being hurt, then by all means, enforce equality. But when it isn't, I believe that freedom of choice deserves at least consideration; even if that freedom does go on, unfortunately, to manifest itself in disagreeable, discriminatory ways. And of the question, which is more important: liberty or equality? I don't think it is right for the Labour Party, Pope Benedict XIII, or anyone else, to make an official judgement. If even Hobbes couldn't provide a conclusive answer to the problem, I highly doubt that Harriet Harman can.

First past the post is possibly toast

What a change to the British general election electoral system in 2011 could mean

Teresa Goncalves

I am not too sure myself how I feel about the possible changes to the electoral system in Britain. First past the post (FPTP) takes me back to those halcyon days, when, as a budding politics student in secondary school it was ingrained into my brain as the most important component of our political system. It has offered a clear majority and a balanced government, we were told, but as time has gone on and in the midst of the new debate, I begin to wonder at the truth in praising FPTP.

In FPTP, also known as the (suitably) simple majority system, the candidate that acquires the most votes wins. You walk into your booth, tick the box you want and don't have to worry about anything else until the results come through. If the candidate you voted for doesn't get the majority of votes, tough, your vote counts for nothing. Easy to understand and seemingly effective in terms of raising a parliament, but there is the nagging question of all those wasted votes.

The new system that is being promoted in the proposed referendum, and now backed by Gordon Brown, is designed to be much more favourable to those wasted votes. The Alternative Vote system allows the electorate to rank candidates by preference; if no candidate receives 50% +1 of the vote then the candidates that have received the least votes are dropped

and the second choices of those voters are redistributed until a candidate receives more than the 50% threshold. It sounds much more complicated than our beloved FPTP, but essentially what it aims to do is secure candidates with a clear majority but also allows for the electorate to have their votes counted, even if only a second preference, instead of losing the vote. It works in Australia and could feasibly work here.

However, given the ever rising apathy in British elections I wonder whether such a change would be beneficial. The thought of making the act of voting more complicated may dissuade many. This then raises the issue of how representative the AV system would really be. If no candidate receives 50% +1 in the first round of counting, what happens if there is still no super majority in the second

count, or the third? Would this diminish the legitimacy of the winning candidate? Perhaps not in that at least they were a second or third choice of the electorate, and certainly at least there is an element of more proportionality than in FPTP. In theory it is a good system in terms of trying to incorporate as many of the votes as possible, and the electorate would be less inclined to vote tactically (again, in theory). In practice however, I am more sceptical. AV can only be said to work truly effectively if voter turnout is high. Would we then introduce a compulsory voting system, as Australia has done? Can we expect public opinion to be receptive to this? Furthermore, could a more complicated system and greater choices cause more apathy? Indeed, being able to choose more candidates and know that your vote is not doomed to be lost is, at least to me,

encouraging. However, how will it affect those that are already feel strained in time to vote, or those that do not vote at all?

In terms of the current debate in Parliament, it seems Labour MPs are more concerned with depicting the Conservatives as opposing electoral reform than what it would actually mean, while a few others are worried about how it will affect their position. The fact that it worries them at all is perhaps an argument in itself for change.

The result of these discussions will be seen in the next few days as the proposal makes its way around Parliament. It would not affect the next general election, however, as the referendum would be set for 2011. Maybe we should concentrate our efforts as to what the next election holds for us, but alas, a topic for another day.

Lads' mags in SU Shop spread controversy

Following a tempestuous debate in UGM, lads' mags are set to remain an unavoidable facet of campus life. Have we missed a chance to tackle sexism on Houghton Street, or is this a victory for freedom of speech and choice?

Anna Krausova & Jessie Robinson

It was shocking to see the level of sexist ridiculing and heckling at last week's UGM in response to the 'Get lads' mags' out of our Students' Union' motion. It is sad that at university we cannot have an informed and reasoned debate about issues of sexism and pornography without wolf whistling and other sexist and homophobic bullying. More importantly, however, it proves precisely that sexism is still alive and well, that "lads' mags" form a part of a patriarchal culture and that they cannot be seen as a bit of harmless fun.

The impact publications such as FHM have cannot be seen in isolation from society. Perhaps in a society free of sexism, sexual violence and gender discrimination, selling "lads' mags" in the Students' Union shop could be seen as irrelevant. Unfortunately, we don't live in such a society. In the UK, women are paid on average 17 per cent less than men, one in four women are sexually assaulted in their lifetime and two women die each week from domestic violence.

Pornographic publications, such as FHM, inevitably dehumanize women, objectifying them into instruments of sexual pleasure. Dehumanization has always been part of any discrimination. In the mind of the oppressor, it is impossible to justify abuse without resorting to a mental justification that those they are discriminating against are inferior or less than human. As is the case with racism, the dehumanization of the "other" is a crucial part of sexism. An industry which promotes the objectification of women supports and promotes the sexist attitudes which underpin violence and sexual abuse.

An argument against "lads' mags" is not an argument against sex or sexual freedom. It was feminism that led the way for sexual liberation. But in a society of deep inequality between men and women, of systematic discrimination based on gender and sexual preference, publications presenting pictures of women as objects for the sexual pleasure of men must be seen as regressive in their reinforcement of sexist attitudes in society as a whole. The claims that these magazines representations of women engaging in

Pornographic publications turn women into instruments of sexual pleasure

supposedly homosexual activities are evidence of their anti-homophobia are false. These fantasy lesbians are non threatening to homophobes such as those that were in the audience; whilst in real life feminists and lesbians are often vilified by these groups as evidenced by claims that the proposers of the motion were "militant lesbians" and "dykes". "Lads' mags" objectify and dehumanize women for the pleasure of heterosexual men,

thus forming part of the bigger picture of sexism, homophobia and patriarchy in our society.

The images in "lads' mags" assume that women are sexually passive objects and that relationships between men and women are equivalent to the relationship of predator and prey. The FHM survey that sought to show that women fantasize about rape is a case in point. Even though an LSE student might argue they are able to take such images "with a pinch of salt", 66 per cent of young people say that they find out about sex, love and relationships through the media. Of course, removing such publications from the SU shop will not stop other people buying them - but it would have sent a political message that we as students at the LSE find such publications offensive and sexist.

It was suggested that the proposers of the motion should concern themselves with 'real' issues, such as sexual violence. And we do. Sexists find it easier to belittle campaigns of equality at home by attempting to focus the lens on abuses committed by the orientalist "other", presuming that the fight is won here. The struggle against sexism in Britain has to be against the cultural bulwarks of sexist practise: the overt objectification of women present in pornography, which turns active, thinking women into passive objects designated as providers of male sexual satisfaction.

Our task is to look at the whole world through a critical feminist lens. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, we should think global and act local. As students at the LSE we can send out a political statement challenging the sexism in British culture, and the removing of "lads' mags" from our SU shop would have been a good beginning.

Anna Krausova is the Chair of the LSESU Feminist Society. Jessie Robinson is the LSESU Women's Officer.

Marina Boterashvili

About half an hour after Thursday's UGM, a few friends and I were sitting in the Tuns, enjoying our usual afternoon of casual procrastination. Imagine my amusement, when so shortly after a rather heated debate about the impact of the Sun and FHM on the objectification of women, I look around our beloved Students' Union and see the following. In the corner, an attractive girl is spotted sporting her Crush school girl's outfit, revealing far more leg than is healthy in the UK's less than Mediterranean weather. On the TV screens, Basshunter's "All I Ever Wanted" video is showing more skin than a nudist beach on the Costa del Sol. To my left a group of girls is discussing how "X is suuuuuuch a slut" and "Y has put on soooooo much weight". On the table, an old copy of the Beaver and 'Sex and the Shitty' grabs my (pained and slightly disgusted) attention.

So where do you draw the line between 21st century and just plain distasteful? In my opinion, the line is inevitably blurry. By boycotting FHM and the Sun, this line will not become any better defined, nor will it change the fact that sex sells better than any other commodity on the market. I consider myself a feminist, a word so often abused and misused, and believe to be entitled to the same rights as any male student at the LSE. As part of that bundle of rights, however, I consider the right not to be patronised, a feeling which a large portion of the student body, male and female, felt as a result of the proposed motion. I have no doubt that its proposers had noble intentions and genuinely have a desire to improve our Union by making it a more inclusive and supportive environment. However, referring to FHM as 'hardcore pornography' and calling it misogynistic, only ridiculed their argument further.

What struck me the most about the motion, was the double standard it so actively yet subtly advocated. It proposed to ban FHM and the Sun on the grounds of objectifying the human body, yet mentioned nothing of Beaver's Torsos of the Week and Heat's weekly spreadsheets on

'Who's Hot and Who's Not'. Moreover, it spoke of a predator/prey relationship between men and women, yet remained silent about the fact that the average marketing campaign objectifies the male body just as much to appeal to the female buyer. It brought up domestic and sexual violence, yet failed to acknowledge statistics, which illustrate that porn actually provides for a release of sexual aggression.

The press cannot be blamed for violence in all its horrible shapes and forms

Sadly, the printing press cannot be blamed for violence in all its horrible shapes and forms. The press is out to make money and in that pursuit it will print what sells. Let's give our student body some credit. We know that Katie Price's breasts, although useful as a floating device in case of an airplane crash in the open seas, are not something to aspire to. We also understand that these women (who for the record, despite being airbrushed, are still very much real), have 'looking good' as their job description and are not the only definition of what is attractive. To quote a beloved Geordie: "we all know how to take things with a pinch of salt."

Through the proposed boycott, the motion would not have helped to clear the line between harmless fun and sexism. The symbolism it represented would have remained hidden behind accusations of censorship and pointless activism, ultimately portraying the feminist movement in a petty, and off-putting light. Perhaps, the Women's Officer, instead of greasing the slippery slope, should look around the Union and realise that not everything disagreeable should be banned. You don't like it, you don't buy it. Shimples!

Letters to the Editor

Madam - I was startled when reading last week's Beaver at the decision to print the story "Bankside embroiled in comms controversy". The article was explicitly vituperative, aimed at tearing down the Bankside Communications Officer and his supporters rather than at delivering news. I am not writing as supporter or detractor of the Bankside Committee; unfortunately despite reading the article several times I still have very little idea as to what actually happened and the order of events. The article breaks the first *raison d'être* of news reporting, which is to report news. There is no attempt to present the story objectively. It is surprising that news editors saw no need to remove sarcastic references to "Team Tindale" or claims that Bankside Committee emails "spat". The story should speak for itself; news reporting should be about reporting an event and allowing readers to draw their own conclusions. Opinion should be reserved for the Comment section. Unfortunately by jumping backwards and forwards between events the article didn't even illuminate the issue to an outside observer beyond letting us know that there was some kind of issue and that the Bankside Committee had been very bad. The Beaver has recently come under a

great deal of executive scrutiny and there is a prevailing climate where criticising our student newspaper is seen as a vote of confidence in the Sabbatical Officers (and vice versa), which is not how things should be. The Beaver's editors should have gone over the article with a red pen at the very least. By not removing such blatant editorialising and by moving away from a professional, neutral news style, The Beaver unfortunately merely plays into the hands of those calling for greater management of its content. We only have one students' newspaper, and we should be able to rely on it for independent and balanced reporting - not 'fair and balanced'!

Regards,

Chloe Pieters
BSc International Relations & History '11

Madam - Three weeks ago I emailed the Communications Officer regarding the reinstatement of U: space for societies and sports clubs. As many will know, the LSE provides all staff and students with personal webspace ('U: space') to publish sites online. This was also true for societies and sports clubs until a few years ago, when the Students' Union ended the arrangement.

Since the new SU website seems - inexcusably, in my opinion - unlikely to

Madam - I am writing to express my utter disgust that I felt at the UGM last Thursday. As a first year student I applied, and came to the LSE with the belief that it was an institution for debate, discussion and the sharing of a range of opinions. This is something that did not occur in last weeks UGM, specifically in reference to Motion 2 (Banning 'Lads' mags' from campus). I am by no means naïve enough to think that this motion was going to unanimously pass, in fact I expected a healthy debate from such a motion. However, what I did not expect was 'wolf whistling' and paper throwing as the proposer and seconder of the motion went on stage, the exact derogatory behaviour which I believe links

ever materialize, I raised the possibility of the restoration of this School-provided webspace to save on the costs of hosting externally. This was on the 18th January; as of the time of sending this letter, I am yet to receive a response.

While the belief amongst the Union's Executive appears to be that the Union is unresponsive because of its current structure, and that passing the proposed reforms will magically solve this problem, I feel that in this case and in many others,

perfectly to the motion itself. In addition to this, the fact that people who were asking questions were boo-ed if they so much mentioned the terms sexism and homophobia suggests to me that the liberty and freedom speech, arguments of the opposers, was stripped away from those who expressed their opinions in favour of the motion. Perhaps I should have expected such behaviour after reading the comments on the Facebook event page for the motion (<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=280267152682&ref=mf>), but after the 'incident' which occurred at Christmas within the AU 'carol' I would have thought that the group of people who seemed to be involved in both of

these cases would have realised that when they make racist, sexist and homophobic remarks, people do get offended. Finally, as a student who right now feels almost embarrassed to be part of our Students Union, I would hope that any necessary action is taken against these people and that those involved feel ashamed of what they have done over the past couple of months.

Regards,

David Woodbridge
BA International History '10

Yours sincerely,

Emma Clewer
BSc Sociology '11

Features



Flickr user lewishandreamer

Enquiring on integrity

Kyle Packer deplores the lack of accountability of the current political elite

As Mr Blair left the Chilcot inquiry last month, family members of service personnel killed in Iraq spat the words "Liar" and "Murderer" to the man that had been facing them throughout the proceedings. There was an overwhelming sense that, at least for the remorseless ex-Prime Minister, this was a shabby end to a shabby affair. It is unfortunate and appalling that the struggle is ongoing for those who did not choose it.

It was no shock that Mr Blair did not express regret, after all the futile debate of the past years, those are waters he dares not traverse. He is a consummate professional among the manipulative class of politicians, and a skilled lawyer to boot. Anyone who was naive enough to expect even crocodile tears from this man was destined to be disappointed.

Many feel as though this entire affair has been a nasty joke upon public intelligence; whether through deliberate lies or reckless idiocy, the reasoning that has been applied has precluded any realistic scrutiny. Tony told the inquiry with a straight face that the world is "safer" now because of the war, that old Saddam was a "monster... who threatened the world". The non-existence of WMDs was trumpeted as an irrelevant technicality, as Mr Blair's anaemic reasoning shifted still further away from tangible evidence towards "intentions" and "the possibility that he could develop WMDs". Why don't we just declare an open house on global military interventions based on the mere

suspicion of future hostility, and descend into international state terrorism?

It is self-evident that more questions should be raised than answered by these circus proceedings. Mr Blair's obligatory statement that he would not have backed military action if Attorney General Lord Goldsmith had not agreed with its legality, as defunctive as it is, provides one such example. Here we have Lord Goldsmith who, having judged the war to be illegal for two years, altered his conclusions over a period of one week after having met with the legal advisors of George W. Bush – the proud sponsors of Guantanamo Bay, water boarding, disappearance, and a myriad of other such "counter-terrorist" hypocrisies.

Perhaps some people look upon British history with rose-tinted glasses, and perhaps relations of power in Britain were always like this. However, there was a time when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Hugh Dalton, faced resignation for revealing to a journalist some contents of the undisclosed budget; when Minister for War, John Profumo, was forced to leave public life indefinitely for his sexual affairs! In short, there was a time when dishonesty on the scale that has been demonstrated, such as in the Chilcot enquiry, would have resulted in the immediate destruction of the political careers of those implicated. How diminished is democratic accountability today if these people, who have been exposed as liars and public threats, are still running the country? These individuals face an overwhelming consensus that charges

There was a time when dishonesty on the scale that has been demonstrated, would have resulted in the immediate destruction of the political career of those implicated

them with forcing what the Nuremberg tribunal called the gravest of all crimes: the launching of an aggressive war.

The truth of the matter is that every one of these 'inquiries' serves to hide from the public the true nature of this struggle. There is a media-perpetuated mentality that is determined to make scapegoats of individuals and groups, in order to divert attention and conceal what is really happening in the world. The nature of the anti-war movement has never been based upon personalized battles against individuals or even cabinets, neither does it suggest at its core that real change can be brought about by anything other than a complete overhaul of the resources-profit-war machine. Merely ousting the current government will do nothing, and to focus such 'examination' upon one man – no matter how defiant and smug he appears in the face of the public to whom he is supposedly subordinate – is to obscure the point.

Terrorism is growing, the al-Qaeda mentality is spreading, the discrediting of the British and American political systems is well underway, and the armies are trapped in an imaginary conflict that cannot be won. Our government has led us into disaster, and if we do not hold them to account, they may lead us into further disasters yet. However, a glance at the bigger picture is needed: what is it about the ruling elite in the past decades that has resulted in the utter proliferation of naked self-interest, irrespective of the social and environmental costs? The issue of Iraq

has been a poison that has spread through the British body politic, the result has not just been the halving of Labour party membership and a desperate rise of fringe party-politics – the entire British political class now lacks credibility. This much the government fails to understand or admit, if they did the Iraq inquiry would have been used to turn a page and finally leave "Blairism" behind. Instead, proceedings have continued in virtue of the system's cringe-worthy nature: the inquiry team consists of the ruling elite's most obsequious servants. Sir Chilcot is deemed "an old-fashioned English eccentric", Sir Lawrence Freedman is one of the authors of the intellectual case FOR the war, and Baroness Prusher of Runnymede has illustrated her ignorance of the evidence with overbearing bouts of silence.

The inquiry is a joke – Goldsmith has harped on about Iraq's imaginary "breach" of United Nations resolutions – but, as has been said, the inquiry is merely a symptom of a more encompassing problem. We are witnessing spasms of violence from imperialist countries, but they are signs of weakness rather than strength. George Galloway recently described them as "double your money bets" that always lose – the time has come to address the selfish mechanisms in the plundering of oil and resources that drive our institutions and conduct at the expense of human life.

VOTE NO

Article 3- General Meetings Bye-Law

Article 4- Student Activities Bye-Law

Article 9- Sub-Committees of the Trustee Board Bye-Law



Think different.

Our best upgrade yet.



Can Vote Yes

REFORM:

A beginner's guide to crazy SU politics

CONTAINS: Referendum rubric, reasoned debate for and against the proposals.

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT REFORM PROPOSALS BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK:

WHAT IS THE REFERENDUM?

This is the first time LSE has held a campus-wide referendum outside of the usual elections. In Week 4, the UGM voted to send proposals for changes to the Students' Union to the entire student body. This week, expect to see campaigners out on Houghton Street asking for your votes.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR THE REFORMS TO BE ADOPTED?

A new document will be adopted if more people vote for it than against it. Abstentions will not factor in the voting. There is no turnout requirement for the referendum, since there is none in our current Codes of Practice. In Students' Union elections, generally 1,000 – 2,000 students vote.

WHAT ARE THE PROPOSALS ABOUT?

Changes have been proposed to the Constitution and Codes of Practice relating to everything from the Trustee Board Membership to how funds are allocated to Societies. To view the current and proposed documents, log on to www.tinyurl.com/LSESUReforms.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

This information about the forthcoming referendum has been compiled and written by the Students' Union Returning Officer, Shanti Kelemen. She can be contacted at returningofficer@gmail.com.

HOW DO I VOTE?

Voting will open at 10am on Wednesday, February 10th and close at 7pm on Thursday, February 11th. You can vote by logging onto any computer on campus (or using your own laptop) and going to <http://elections.lse.ac.uk>. This isn't an all or nothing vote. There are nine questions, so that it's possible to vote for the new Constitution, but against the changes to Election rules.

LSE STUDENTS'
UNION

A circular icon containing a stylized globe of the Earth, positioned between the words 'STUDENTS' and 'UNION'.

MANIFESTO

Students have been encouraged to campaign abstain. Listed here and overleaf are the manifestos

FOR

AGAINST

ABSTAIN

ARTICLES OF GOVERNANCE

Lame title, important document - the Articles of Governance will effectively be our new Constitution, the main governing document of the Students' Union. This document is based on a template, approved by the Charities Commission and the National Union of Students (NUS), that all Students' Unions must adapt and then adopt in order to comply with the new Charities Act, which states that all Students' Unions must register with the Charities Commission. The new Articles are clearer about the objectives and powers of the Students' Union, and make sure that we comply fully with the law. It doesn't change anything that we do currently - we can still go on doing the same campaigns, societies, sports clubs and other activities - but it gives us the scope to do offer even more in the future. If we don't pass the new Articles, we will not be able to register with the Charities Commission for some time, making life unnecessarily difficult for the Union going forward. I can vote YES for the new Articles of Governance



Lots of good points here, But who really wants to read The constitution?
****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

GENERAL MEETINGS, POLICY & REFERENDA

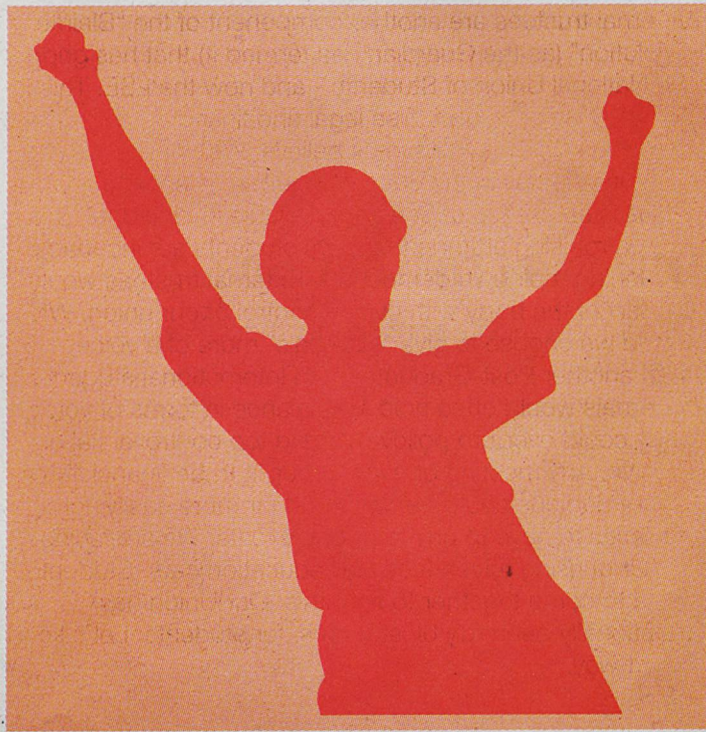
Our Union is unique - our weekly Union General Meeting (UGM) brings hundreds of students together to have their say. But there's no doubt that UGMs, and the policy process as a whole, needs to improve. The Old Theatre itself can only hold around 400 students - around 5% of LSE's student population - making it difficult to claim that our policy has any sizeable democratic mandate. Furthermore, the style of on-stage debating at the UGM is not to everyone's taste, and can be intimidating. More students could and should be involved in making the policy of their Union which is why we are proposing online voting for the UGM, whereby voting would be open after the meeting until 5pm the following day, allowing students who could not attend the particular meeting to watch a video of and vote on the proceedings. This will massively increase the number of voters on Union policy, making our resolutions more legitimate and democratic. Beyond the UGM, there will be more regular referenda, meaning that very important issues can be put to the vote of the entire student body. I can vote YES for new General Meetings, Policy and Referenda Bye-laws

The 'General meetings Bye Law' introduces online voting for two days after the main meeting. This turns voting into a pick and mix; fine for picking your itunes, not so fine for creating serious policy. Currently we are forced to listen to both sides and make a genuinely informed decision. Think of the number of times you may have come to a meeting and changed your mind about an issue. When students come together they get angry, debate and even shout. By debating the issues both sides, however vociferously they may disagree, come out of the meeting wanting to take action. If a motion passes the proposers are fired up to act, while the opposers are eager to campaign against its implications. None of this would happen if voting is reduced to clicking a button. We would be destroying the most democratic part of LSE life and replacing it with a weekly debate club. LSE is the only union to still have a weekly general meeting. In recent years attendance at the meeting has dropped. This is a real problem. But turning voting into a passive, apathetic action is not the answer. LSE students are better than that.

UGM, good bye. Like CDs, porn mags and books, Internet killed you. ****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE AND APPEALS

Every working political system needs people to ensure the smooth running of governance. Currently, the awkwardly named Constitution and Steering Committee ('C&S') performs part of this function. However this structure is confusing and unwieldy. C&S's remit is unclear, and not taken very seriously. The Returning Officer is poorly supported, often carrying the difficult elections process on their own. As the UGM Chair and Vice-Chair change every term, there is little continuity in the way order is kept at the meeting. Inconsistent chairing can turn people off the UGM altogether. Arguments between the UGM Chair and C&S during the meeting can also lead meetings to descend into disorder. A new Democratic Committee - a five-member team responsible for overlooking the entire Union structure - will be responsible for passing motions to the UGM/referenda (like C&S), the smooth running of the UGM and the running of elections. This crucially means that the committee has a larger and more serious remit than the current C&S, and can take a view across the organisation of how our democratic structures are functioning. I can vote YES for the Democratic Committee and Appeals Bye-laws



Goodbye C and S. Democracy committee. The same, but different. ****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

ESTOS

for and against the proposal areas, or even to abstain from voting on proposals submitted by the relevant campaign groups.

FOR

AGAINST

ABSTAIN

ASSEMBLIES

The Union's current structures offer very few ways for students to get involved, except running for election (which isn't everybody's cup of tea). The UGM provides a short window of opportunity - but only once a week for one hour, and in a format that doesn't suit everybody. Other than the Executive Committee and other elected officers, there are few areas for detailed discussion of issues, and there is far too little discussion of how to put things into action. The creation of Assemblies will solve many of these issues. Assemblies will be open forums of debate and discussion. There will be Assemblies for key areas, such as Education, chaired by Executive Officers. They will discuss motions passed at the UGM relevant to that Assembly and decide how to put them into action; they will allow longer, more detailed discussions of key topics in their area of activity; and they will involve more students than ever before in debating and enacting policy. Students can bring small issues to an Assembly that can be enacted immediately. Furthermore, Assemblies will hold officers to account and make sure that they are acting in accordance with UGM mandates. iCan vote YES to the Assemblies Bye-law



Assemblies, sounds fun. Because that's what the world needs. More damn committees. ****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

MEDIA GROUP MEMBERSHIP FEES

The Media Group is a vibrant and active part of the Students' Union. They are integral to holding the School and the Union to account, and for informing students about what is going on, both on and off campus. The Union has a clear responsibility to ensure that the Media Group has financial and institutional support so that it can remain a viable, high quality activity. Currently, joining the Media Group is free - unlike joining societies and the Athletics Union (AU), which requires a £10 membership fee. Many who contribute to clubs, societies and the Media Group work extremely hard, but the amount of funding the Media Group dwarfs that of all societies combined, which doesn't seem fair. We believe that the Media Group should contribute a small amount to its operating costs. This will be fair on societies and clubs, which already charge members. This money would be guaranteed for Media Group activity only and would therefore provide a much-needed additional source of income, helping ensure the long-term viability of media activities at LSE. This small contribution is in the best interests of the Media Group and the wider student body. iCan vote YES to a Media Group Membership Fee

The impartiality of journalism depends on free access and a symmetry of opinion; in other words, that anyone should be able to contribute to a journalistic endeavour, without discrimination of any kind. In the context of the proposed Media Group charge, we believe making students pay for the nebulous concept of 'membership' would be harmful with regard to participation and adhering to the principles of journalism. How can we expect both sides of an argument to be adequately represented when a financial obstacle is in place? How can we have responsibly elected editors when the electorate could be hijacked by enterprising students duly handing over money for membership? If the Media Group is to be more representative of and accountable to the student body, its governing body must be more transparent and open - not an exclusive club. Further, this charge is being waved through under the disingenuous premise of raising revenue. We accept that the cost of printing a newspaper is high - and to the uninformed eye, unreasonably so. However, other steps can be taken to fund this, instead of the pitiful and pointless sum that would be raised by a membership charge. Knock down the Media Group charge!

The media group. All arguing constantly. Whatever happens. ****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

EXTERNAL TRUSTEES

Having 2 external trustees can only add to the security of the Students' Union. The option is not between having a board of students or a board of externals, nor are we handing our Union into the hands of those who want to destroy it. The make-up would be 9 students and only 2 externals. What these externals would bring is professional knowledge that would be guaranteed on the board year on year. It would be up to all students to ratify any external trustee, so if one was suggested that the students didn't want, then they wouldn't become a trustee. Similarly, if students want a trustee out, they can petition to remove them. Drawing on knowledge from the financial world, audit, HR, and policy-making to name but a few, would only enhance our Union, rather than taking anything away. The key point to make is that students will always be in the vast majority on this board, but will be able to draw on the experience these professionals can offer to make informed decisions about the Union's future. Voting Yes to external trustees will ensure the long-term stability and success of the Union.

External trustees are another component of the "Blairite revolution" (as the Guardian has termed it) that has gripped the National Union of Students - and now the LSE. This is not an attempt to gain 'free legal and financial advice', as the proposers would have us believe. We are at one of the best universities in the country in terms of law and finance. There is an excess of free and available knowledge. This is a patronising attitude that says students are incapable of running their own democracy. External trustees would be part of the body with overall control of our union. Why would we choose to give "externals" more of a voice than another Post-Graduate or an International student? Externals would often hold the balance in terms of votes. They could overturn policy deemed too controversial or divisive. Any meeting or event thought to be financially or legally dubious could be cancelled far more easily, forcing societies to have to pay to put on events. We are facing a year of rising tuition fees and education cuts. Students need to come together to fight this. Our Union has traditionally been run by students, for students. Let's keep it that way.

Trustees, good or bad? Depends who they are really. Just vote to abstain. ****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

FOR

AGAINST

ABSTAIN

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Our current Executive Committee is empowered to put policies passed at the UGM into practice, and the officers are also the trustees (legal and financial guardians) of the Union. The committee sometimes works well, but also comes with a host of problems. If an Executive Committee decides to ignore policy passed at the UGM, it is impossible to do anything about it without censuring or 'no-confidencing' officers, which is time-consuming and difficult. The current roles on the Executive are not wholly appropriate. The current Sabbatical roles of Treasurer and Communications Officer are ill-defined and too internally focused. Our proposals will create a new part-time Postgraduate Sabbatical Officer, putting the majority of our membership at the heart of the Union. A new Activities and Development Sabbatical Officer will mean we finally have someone working full-time on the development of societies, sports, the Media Group and other activities on campus. Education and Welfare will be split into a separate Education Officer, and Community and Welfare Officer - making more manageable roles so that education, campus and wider community and social issues can be addressed. iCan vote YES for the Executive Committee Bye-law



New Sabb officers.
Community and welfare. Sounds like New Labour.
****VOTE TO ABSTAIN****

ELECTIONS

We can be proud of the vibrant, interesting and engaging election campaigns seen in the Students' Union over the years. Nevertheless, there are key problems with how these are run. Although we currently have one of the highest turnouts proportionally of any students' union in the country, turnout could and should be much higher; the rules should allow more creativity and activity on behalf of candidates rather than stifling it; and students need more ways in which to get information about how to run in election and about the candidates who are going to lead their Union. We do not have nearly enough postgraduate and international students running and voting in elections. The new election rules do not change much of what happens currently. But they do streamline the rules, reducing bureaucracy and putting the emphasis on action and involvement from all parts of the students' union. By voting YES for the Elections Bye-laws you will be making elections more accessible to all students, remove unnecessary restrictions on campaigning and, free up candidates to engage students through their creativity and ideas. iCan vote YES to the Elections Bye-Laws

Thatcher's not the only one who likes to destroy Unions



This week you will be told to vote for reforms that will destroy the remnants of student democracy in our Union. You will be told that you are not capable of hearing debate and that unaccountable others should speak for you. You will be told to choose faceless bureaucracy over genuine student participation. Don't let them tell you what to do. Vote no to Articles 3, 4 and 9. Don't vote your voice out of existence.

Don't let career politicians destroy the Students' Union
Vote no to articles 3, 4 and 9

Want to destroy the student voice?



There's an app for that.

This week you will be told to vote for reforms that will destroy the remnants of student democracy in our Union. You will be told that you are not capable of hearing debate and that unaccountable others should speak for you. You will be told to choose faceless bureaucracy over genuine student participation. Don't let them tell you what to do. Vote no to Articles 3, 4 and 9. Don't vote your voice out of existence.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Societies, sports, Media, RAG and volunteering; student activities are the lifeblood of the Students' Union. We have the most active student campus in the country but the Union needs to do more doing far more to support our amazing societies, clubs, groups and volunteers. Our current procedures over-burden societies with bureaucracy, red tape and delays. Our activities have to wait until Week 9 of Michaelmas Term to receive their budgets, curtailing their ability to be active from the start of the academic year. There are also problems with room bookings, which have not been effectively dealt with because there is not enough representation for student activities on campus. The creation of an Activities and Development Sabbatical Officer will mean that someone is working full-time solely on representing the extra-curricular needs, and personal development, of LSE student. Budget allocations will be devolved away from Sabbatical Officers to those that directly benefit from the funds: societies, clubs and the Media Group. The Activities Assembly (the place where all student activities' ideas and concerns can be heard) will decide on the budgets with one vote per student activity group - less bureaucracy, more democracy.

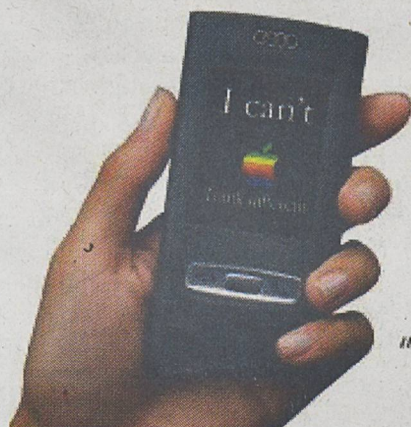
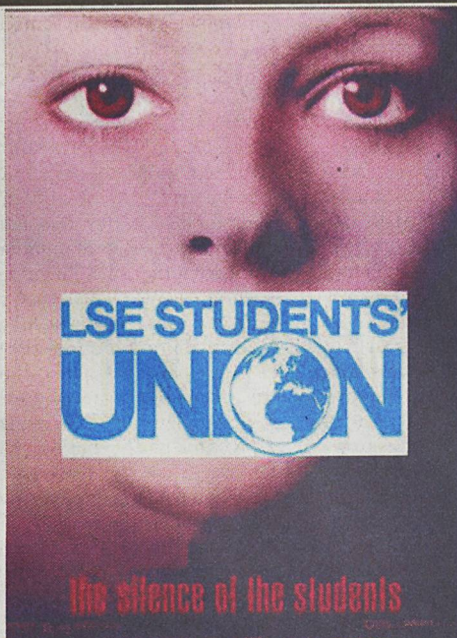
Introducing the amazing new UGM

Old

- 150 people making decisions for everyone
- Must vote in person at the UGM
- Can't vote if you're busy
- Debate only 1 hour long with no heads up
- If you miss the meeting you're stuffed

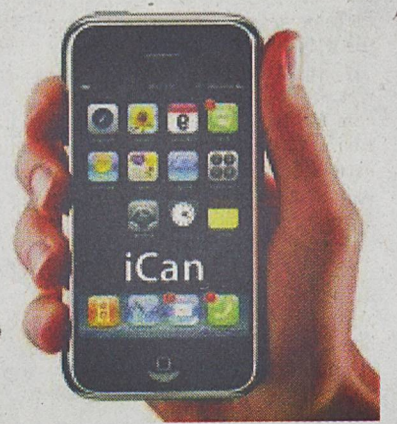
New

- Every single student will be able to vote
- Vote online for a day after the UGM
- A day long window to cast your vote
- Motions published a week in advance
- Debate is streamed and summarised online



iCan vote Yes for a better UGM

Available on Facebook group
"Vote Yes to Students' Union Reform"





Flickr user applejan

The receding recession

Sandra Smiley is drinking branded coffee again whilst pondering on intervention

Sizing up the UK's economy, some are directing their attentions to their demitasses. Much has been made of the Starbucks Coffee's surprising reports of fourth-quarter sales figures on the upswing – in sharp contrast to last year when recessionistas passed on pricey specialty blends for filter brew. Self-styling as a 'luxury good', the company commands upmarket prices for its fair-trade, organic and otherwise soi-disant socially responsible products. Like other non-essential expenditures – from lotto tickets to Lamborghinis – Starbucks coffee closely mirrors the economy. Reading the Tazo™ tea leaves, then, it looks like the hardest hit of the world's economies is finally on the mend.

Another potentially positive omen was the Monetary Policy Committee's recent suspension of its £200bn quantitative easing plan. The scheme – simply put, an extreme monetary policy measure under which the central bank generates credit by purchasing assets from financial institutions using money it has created *ex nihilo* – was but one effort extended by the Bank of England to enliven the UK's perennially pathetic economy. Billions more have been borrowed to finance other fiscal stimulus efforts, large-scale writeoffs and guarantees to banks in the aftermath of

2008 – 2009's financial crisis.

Though such government intercessions have yielded a few shoots to a yet insipid crop, they have not gone uncriticised. Intervention sets a precedent, say analysts and intellectuals, creating the perilous situation of moral hazard. Indeed, implicit guarantees of bailouts in the off-chance of crunch were the brass tacks of 2008's banking crisis. Cinched by the 'too big to fail' credenda, banks handed out loans and mortgages to dodgy debtors. They built profit-expanding business models more complex and ingenious than Mary Kay, but with permissive regulation in the facultative place of pink Cadillacs. Of course, John Q. Public was inclined to take advantage of the concomitant cheap credit. He lived a financial libertine, borrowing and spending way beyond his means and sucking back frappuccino after frappuccino until the economy's cogs came to a grinding, agonizing halt.

There's no doubt that the current government's fiduciary fancy footwork saved us from the worst of it. In the end, though, the taxpayer will have to have to bear the brunt – whether he be pulling down the paltry minimum wage or living the seven-figure fantasy. According to new estimates by the BBC, each of us has already pre-emptively paid an average of £30,000 to fix last year's financial embroglio – by

There is much evidence to suggest that the government response to the economic tragicomedy of 2008 wasn't trivial

anyone's calculations, a lot of macchiatos. A media-fuelled frenzy has made financial institutions into lightning rods for populist ire; the Labour government, too, has attracted its fair share of the resultant anti-establishment animus.

The whole thing has cast serious public doubt upon the dot-connecting skills of regulatory bodies under the Labour government. It's little wonder that two new pecuniary priorities – prevention and payback – have figured prominently in Labour's pre-election manoeuvrings. To ballast an already shaky reputation, Gordon Brown and his Labour offshoots are courting draconian restrictions on banking activities. Inspired by US President Obama's salvo of modified Glass-Steagall reforms, such measures would ban banks from proprietary trading or operating private equity or hedge funds in-house – in other words, from using their own cash to gamble on the money market's craps table.

This follows in close step the Brownian bonus-slashing that so obfuscated the financial sector in December. In keeping with public kibitzing, Brown's corrective will see some City titans taking home still sizeable golden eggs, but banal by comparison. Investment giant Goldman Sachs responded in kind to Brown's diktat: a redemptive bonus payout regime that obligates its 400 partners to donate

a combined \$500m to its charity, Goldman Sachs Gives. For Goldman, like its fair-trade-hucking homologue Starbucks, moral rectitude doesn't come cheap. Creative accounting, however, will see the same emblematically bloated bonuses scored by bank execs for whom no specialty drink is too overpriced, no human skull too bejeweled, no transcontinental flight too ecologically costly.

Again, there's much evidence to suggest that the government response to the economic tragicomedy of 2008 wasn't trivial. And the English economy is projected to expand, albeit in piddling figures, over the next few years. But projections count for little with voters. For all the chastening rhetoric of pundits and politicians, what the latte-chugging English electorate is most concerned with is which party can best secure a speedy, sustained recovery. For its part pre-election, Labour says it will hold off on fiscal retrenchment this year as the economy is too weak to start stabilizing. The Tories, meanwhile, warn of the peril in burking bloated public debt: investors could lose confidence, which would eek up the cost of borrowing. Labour and the opposition will have in mind these next few months: voters want normalcy served up Venti extra hot no whip, whatever lessons we've learned – if any – about lavishness.



Extending the ladder

Bernardo Jurema analyses the role of the state in integrating the consumers of Brazil

The great obstacle in the path of Brazil's economic development is faltering integration of the economy - a consequence of regional and social disparities, analogous to the North-South divide in Italy. The merit of Lula da Silva's administration in Brazil is that this has been recognized and policies have been adopted to promote the inclusion of more Brazilians in the consumer society. This translates into the expansion of the domestic market and has been strategic for the country's current competitiveness in the international economy.

Brazil has come a long way since the end of the authoritarian regime in the mid 1980s. The political opening of the 1980s gave way to a process of 'redemocratization'. It was an elite arrangement established according to a framework planned out by the outgoing military regime: "slow, gradual, and secure." In the next two decades, Brazil experienced the steady inclusion of new societal sectors within the political process. One fact that eloquently illustrates this point is the extension of the right to vote to the illiterate for the first time, in a country where, according to Unesco in 1991, 20 per cent of those older than 15 were illiterate. Civil society organized itself into political parties, trade unions, social movements, business associations and non-governmental organizations, starting to express itself by means of the newly established democratic institutions. All of this culminated in the 1988 Constitution, dubbed the 'Citizen

After a decade's work for democratic consolidation, Brazilian society was then able to tackle its next autocratic heritage

Constitution', which was approved after incorporating input from civil society groups. This laid out the framework for the universal healthcare system which is considered a model for other developing economies.

The redemocratisation process, which began in the 1980s, was deepened with the economic opening and stabilization of the 1990s. After a decade's work for democratic consolidation, Brazilian society was then able to tackle its next autocratic heritage: economic instability. Indeed, inflation rates that had until the early 1990s reached 4 per cent a day were finally stabilized to 4 per cent a year.

With consolidated political participation and a stable economy, democracy reached its climax in the 2000s with the beginning of a process of national wealth redistribution. This took place both socially and regionally. The Northeastern region, being historically left behind in economic growth cycles and a net population exporter to the more prosperous Southern and Southeastern parts, grew above the national average levels for the first time since Independence in 1822. A corresponding phenomenon happened to the lower sectors of society. Policies such as increasing the minimum wage, the Bolsa Família Programme (a money transfer scheme to extremely poor families), the expansion of micro-credit to the popular sector, and Pronaf, a family agriculture programme, all combined to facilitate the extension of prosperity to more Brazilians. In short, the enlargement of the domestic

Effective public policies... allowed Brazil to be one of the last countries to enter the global recession and one of the first ones to get out

consumer market ensured the integration of the peripheral and poorer regions of the country.

Last year, for the first time in Brazil's history, the lower ranks of society are consuming more, in aggregate terms, than the top ranks. In the past years, 20 million people have climbed up the social ladder and joined the new lower-middle class. Effective public policies have started off the process of social-democratisation that Brazil is undergoing right now. And it is this process which has allowed Brazil to be one of the last countries to enter the global recession and one of the first ones to get out.

The lessons that can be drawn from Brazil's case are that the empowerment and incorporation of the popular sector is good for economic strength and political stability, which feed into each other in an enduring positive cycle. This is only possible by means of a democratic regime. Political and economic liberalisation have been fundamental to Brazil's recent growth; but another important lesson is that the State has a key role to play in balancing out the contradictions inherent to political and economic openings. The challenge for the Brazilian model is to continue growth by means of the further incorporation of Brazilians both in the political process - by having more of a say in government policy-making outcomes and in the economic system - by having higher purchasing power. Only then can Brazil truly continue its positive pattern of socio-economic development.



A scene from *Mississippi Burning*, one of Frederick Zollo's acclaimed films
Photo: flickr user Steve Punter

“It was a life changing experience”

RICHARD DEWEY speaks to theatre and film director **FREDERICK ZOLLO** about his work and his memories of the LSE

Frederick Zollo is a four time Tony Award winning theatre producer. His work on stage includes *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Private Lives* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. Mr. Zollo is also a successful film producer and his 1988 film *Mississippi Burning* was nominated for an Academy Award. He first studied at the LSE while an undergraduate at Boston University. Mr. Zollo subsequently returned to the LSE, earning an MSc in International Relations.

What attracted you to the LSE?

Well, the LSE had a huge reputation for me, even when I was a kid. I think it was something to do with the connection to George Bernard Shaw and that Harold Laski was there. More than anything the LSE seemed to be a place that stood for something. There is a famous quote by Daniel Webster in the case regarding the University of New Hampshire [now Dartmouth College] where he said, “It’s a small school, but we love it.” That’s how I felt about the LSE, even before I went there. I attended a lot of schools and there was no school that fulfilled my expectations more than the LSE. It was a life changing experience.

What was the atmosphere like when you arrived at LSE as a graduate student?

I was there at the end of the Vietnam War, so to be in England during this remarkable time and at the LSE, where the debate was so acute and present was very refreshing

compared to the atmosphere in the US at the time

Was there a professor or class that was particularly interesting?

The two closest professorial connections I had were sort of bookends in the IR department. One was Fred Norwich and the other was Phillip Windsor: old guard, new guard. I spent more time with Windsor and engaged in tutorials with him that were life changing. For me to sit across from someone of consequence who took the time and energy to debate with me was just incredible. Those sparring matches with him had a great impact on me. As I said before, I went to many different schools, but I got my education at the LSE.

Could you talk a little about the differences in stage vs. film production?

I remember people saying to me when I made my first film “Oh, great you’re doing

We failed to do the right thing, and since then there has been nothing but cover-up and denial

movies now,” as though I was moving up from the theatre. I didn’t think this way at all. I’ve always thought I was the luckiest guy on earth to produce plays on Broadway and in the West End next to the likes of David Mamet, Marsha Norman, David Rabe, and Christopher Hampton. To be in the presence of great artists working at the height of their powers is just a phenomenal experience. In most cases I’ve also been fortunate enough to offer something brand new, that no one has ever seen before. I just can’t imagine a better job.

Making movies has always been about making something that is of real interest to me. An old friend of mine, named Chris Gerolmo, wrote the first two films I made. The first was about the farm crisis in America and the second was about the murders of civil rights workers Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney and the subsequent investigation. With both of those films we said “let’s make a movie about this,” and just sort of struggled along through the process. Sometime the process is different though. I made *Quiz Show* because I thought it was just a great story that should be told. It was really a film about ethics, and Robert Redford (who directed it) was one of the first people to read the script and understand this aspect of the work.

What is the key to making headway in a creative field? What advice would you give to a student at the LSE right now looking to take an entrepreneurial path?

Well, I stumbled into this stuff because of the writers I was working with and because I was blessed with a father who had an interest in the field. I did a couple of things with my father before he died, one with David Rabe, and I wanted to continue that relationship. I always did one project at a time; I didn’t think I would keep going as long as like I have.

The LSE imparted the notion that the theatre could be used for important ideas – political, social, cultural ideas – and that was very important to me. An example of that would be the anti-Vietnam play *The Basic Training of Pavol Hummel*. Another would be *Hurlyburly*, which was an attack on the lapse of morals in America. In film and theatre I saw a way of making statements that were important to me. How one goes about it is a tough question. I wish more people would want to do this job. I wish more women and people of colour would want to do this or write plays or direct plays, because we desperately need them. The route into this business is a tough question - the only way, as stupid as it sounds, is to just do it.

LSE Diary

The intervention debate

Umahmah Basit discusses the role of consent and sovereignty in times of crisis



Photo: The US Army

Flickr user IERC

'Humanitarian intervention' is a term that is employed often in the world today; we often come to hear states talking about 'their responsibility to protect' innocent civilians. The Haiti crisis is a prime example. The catastrophic earthquake, over a fortnight ago, left the city torn apart. Figures show that almost 200,000 civilians may have been killed and an estimated 1.5 million are now homeless, with no access to food, water and medical supplies. I doubt that anyone would seriously question the presence of UN forces and international aid agencies in the region. Given the grand scale of the disaster, international support is more than necessary.

But can all intervention be termed as 'humanitarian' and thus be justified? In a recent debate at the LSE, a number of interesting issues were raised in this regard, making me question whether this was really as simple as it sounds. We can certainly appreciate the efforts of the international community in the aftermath of crises such as the Asian tsunami and the Haitian earthquake. However, what about the cases where the purpose of the intervention has not been sufficiently justified, either legally or morally?

The war in Iraq, for instance, is undoubtedly a contested issue. According to Bush, the 2003 invasion was called for because it was important "to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people." Tony Blair

later consented despite conflicting views within his cabinet and in Parliament. To any ordinary person, the reasons given would seem rational at the outset. We all want to live in a secure world, free of terrorism, where we can be free to voice our opinions, and where our basic human rights are guaranteed.

If, however, we as individuals wish to have our rights protected, so do states wish to preserve their territorial sovereignty and the power to determine what is best for them. At the same debate, it was interestingly argued by the opposing team that in any type of intervention, the issue of 'consent' is paramount. The question then is what kind of consent are we looking for - implicit or explicit? In the case of Haiti, the international community immediately assumed consent and continues to send ever more aid. Since the disaster was of a degree never experienced before, the Haitian government recognized that it would struggle to cope on its own. In such cases, therefore, it can be said that "consent reaffirms sovereignty but makes it conditional".

Iraq, however, is different primarily because the legality of the war continues to be questioned by many. As part of the Chilcot Inquiry currently taking place, Lord Goldsmith, ex-attorney-general, admitted that before the invasion he consistently said it would be 'safer' to get a fresh UN Resolution before giving the green signal. It was thought that other justifications such as self-defence, prevention of a human disaster or regime change would not be 'lawful'. Even if it is

established that there was a legal basis for the invasion, it is still important to consider the moral side of the argument. In a personal capacity, I agree that Iraq was a failed democracy. I also agree that under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, the country experienced extreme turmoil and conflict. Yet, I am somewhat hesitant to accept that intervention in both Iraq and Afghanistan can be described as purely 'humanitarian'.

Even now, the purpose of the intervention remains unclear. Conspiracy theories abound, claiming that it was prompted by a thirst for oil and territory. I would tend to steer clear of those; progress in Iraq has been substantial, there have been advances in security and stability and there are high hopes that the upcoming elections in March will continue to build upon these.

Nonetheless, from a purely moralist perspective, how far has military intervention created a better world? At least 900,000 civilians have been killed in both countries, suicide bombings are still recurrent. The fundamental problem is that there has been no clear-cut strategy. The US has claimed that it will remove troops by the end of 2010 but is that a realistic goal? The escalating dangers of the War on Terror have led the Obama administration to revise its policy on Afghanistan and send more troops to the country. It seems that the big states are making decisions as they go along the way, putting at risk the lives of innocent people.

In no way am I proposing that the right to state intervention should be prohib-

ited. I believe that where there is a real 'humanitarian' issue, states should be allowed to intervene. At the end of the day, the international system is designed to protect the interests of the individual. Nevertheless, it is important to set certain standards, or as it was argued in the debate, a 'threshold' that can make intervention not only legal but also morally and ethically right. Moreover, states need to be able to devise concrete objectives and goal before they decide to intervene. The challenges in Haiti are, without doubt, real and long-term. The international community needs to be prepared to offer its support for the next few years.

WWWThe War on Terror is an issue that creates much uncertainty. I strongly believe that the US and the UK should seriously assess the objective of intervention. Is it really protecting human rights and if so, is the net outcome of the actions taken by the governments a positive one? Are we losing more lives than we are saving?

Challenges, of course, cannot be met immediately but how far can we go before severely intruding upon a state's sovereignty? At some point, the US may have to decide an alternative solution because 'humanitarian' intervention is only justified to the point where it is restoring international peace and order. When this phenomenon is understood, national governments will realize the need to draw a line and hand over power where it really belongs.

WHAT IF...

Russia had won the Cold War?

Shibani Mahtani

The concept of "winning" a war that was fought mostly on ideological terms is a tenuous one. Nevertheless, with the collapse of the USSR, American hegemony that followed and Russia perhaps turning towards a more "democratic" capitalist system, it is clear that the Cold War had a winner - America.

But what if democracy and capitalism as a global ideology had been discredited, instead of communism? Perhaps we would now see Ronald Reagan lecturing in universities on the merits of collectivization, rather than Gorbachev in Louis Vuitton or Pizza Hut ads. Perhaps the world would be littered less with Starbucks, and instead Soviet-style propaganda posters that would be commonplace, rather than merely kitschy remains of a bygone era adorning the walls of modern art museums.

These little trivialities aside, the sphere of international relations would undoubtedly be vastly different. If the American dream and capitalism were seen as laughable idealistic ideologies, the term "rogue states" might be used on countries that are adamant on following this path, the Asian Tigers perhaps, rather than North Korea, Cuba or Venezuela.

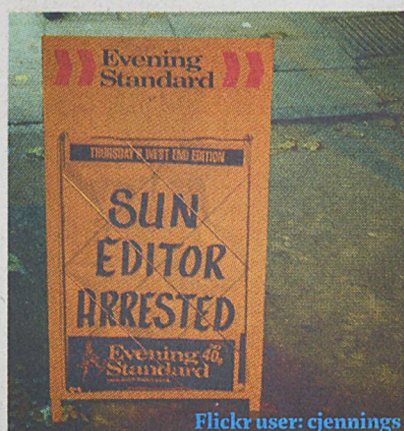
What we view as tantamount to society would be vastly different. If the discourse on democratization was a Marxist one rather than a liberal one, social justice would be more important to society compared to freedom of the press or freedom of expression.

A new overarching global ideology would also mean vastly different systems of public services in the state. Privatized health care would be outlawed rather than just being frowned upon by the more "socialist" European states, and education would cease to be a luxury but a right for anyone who choose to pursue it. The standard of this education, however, is something that is hard to predict. The legacy of the Soviet Union, free public transport, would be a requirement in all the its satellite states and something for all nations to aim to; the quality and efficiency of this transport is, again, questionable.

Free education, public transport and health care perhaps sounds like an ideal world - or at least a better alternative to vapid consumerism and the decrepitude of our current society, but what about purges? Show trials? Gulags? Snaking queues for bread, or soup kitchens? Should socialism as a global ideology have triumphed, it is hoped that this would be without its more unsavoury aspects. Perhaps the system would have been closer to perfection, hence its triumph. After all, liberal, Western-style democracy has its flaws and hypocrisies as well; Guantanamo Bay is only now meeting its end under the Obama administration.

The world would be a more equal place, whether or not this equality means a better standard of living for the average man. There would undoubtedly be trade-offs, and hypocrisies, and the curtailing of certain elements we believe to be fundamental rights in our liberal democratic society. But by no means would this be a nightmarish, 1984-esque, horrific dystopia of a world, unlike American triumphalism would have you believe.

Measured musings



Flickr user: cjennings

It is not easy to make a paper. It is even more difficult to see it being trampled upon by careless boots, discarded without being read or used as a substitute for an umbrella. Why, then, are there so many free newspapers in a city of nothing but careless boots?

The paradoxical explanation is that if they "sell", free publications make money. Tabloid newspapers cater to a vast readership, often being recycled several times on the way to the bin. Since the "Evening Standard" went free in October 2009, its readership has climbed to 1.37 million. With a distribution of 600,000 copies, this means there is an average of 2.3 readers per copy. Bless the London transport system.

With affordable labour and low distribution costs, there could be a huge potential margin for profits from advertising. That would explain why there

London's freed press

are several competitors in the market at present, all vying for access to contracts for wider distribution. The latest entrant is the "London Weekly", officially launched last Friday. Feedback so far has consisted largely of ridicule from self-professed "real" journalists, whose sensibilities are offended by the glaring typos and technical mistakes.

At the same time, one has to admit that the original purpose of a publication was communication. The kind of communication has to depend on the target audience. A paper that offers "entertainment, light politics, music, sports ...outside all main line tube stations" is essentially popular, and will attract interest from those who take it seriously as well as those who don't. Advertisers realise that even a casual glance has immense power of suggestion, whether it falls on a motorway billboard or the space next to a horoscope. It would be a real pity if this power of

wider access went unrecognised by all but eager commercial hawks.

Ours is a world where the role of the print media could potentially become confined to the lives of those with the time and inclination to read instead of watch. As an advocate of the written word, I would argue that there is so much more room for balanced and well-researched analysis in print as opposed to broadcast journalism. At the same time, there is a place for intellectual elitism and a different one for mass accessibility. If, as one LSE student put it, writing is little more than "intellectual masturbation", then it would restrict readership to the esoteric few. If substance is replaced entirely by sensationalism, it would be veritable journalistic suicide. The trick is to strike the balance, in order to achieve effective dissemination of information and create a better educated, more aware populace.

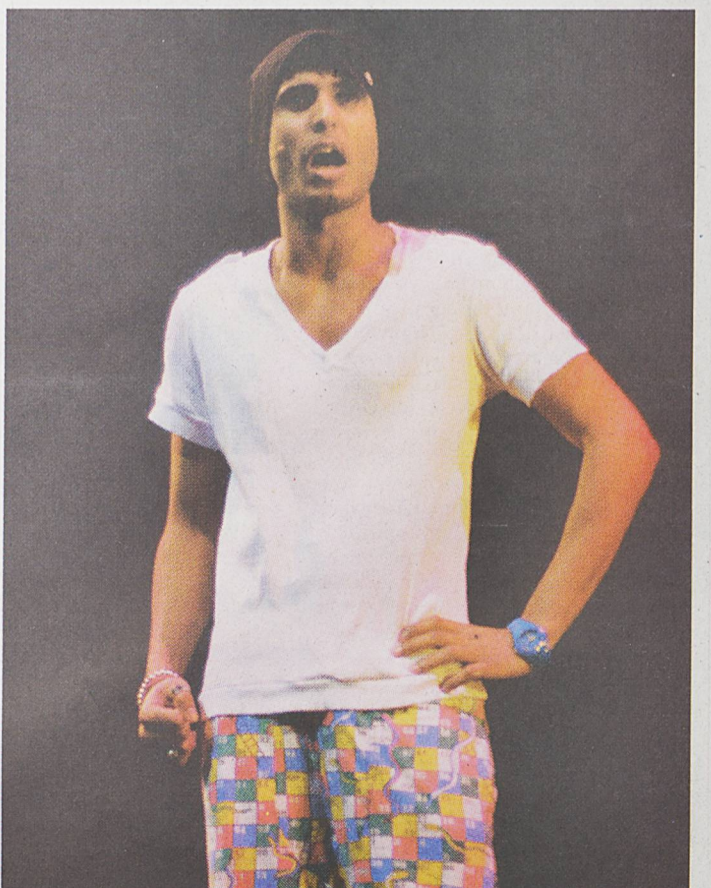
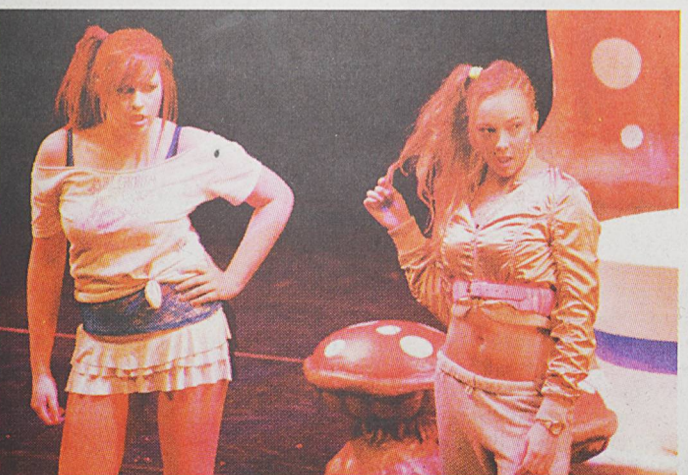
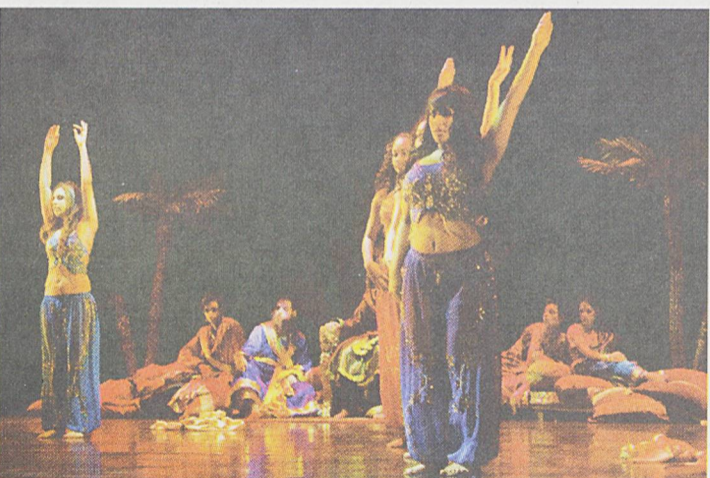
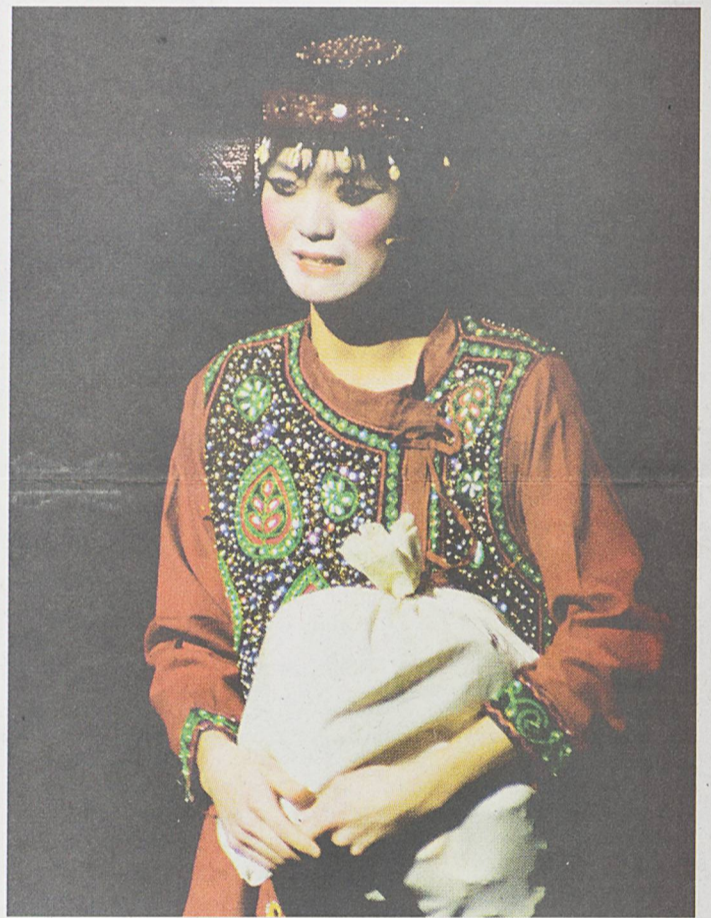
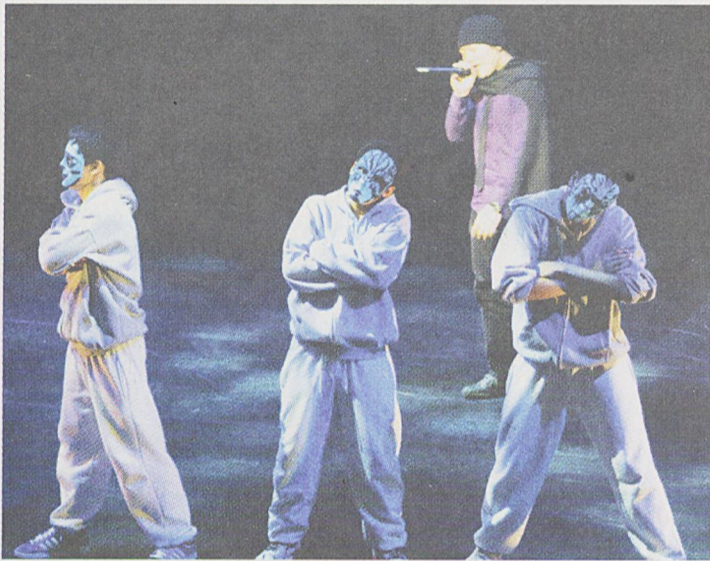
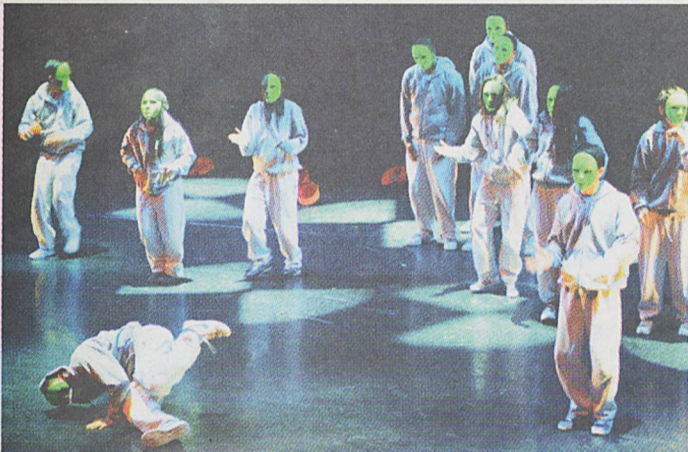
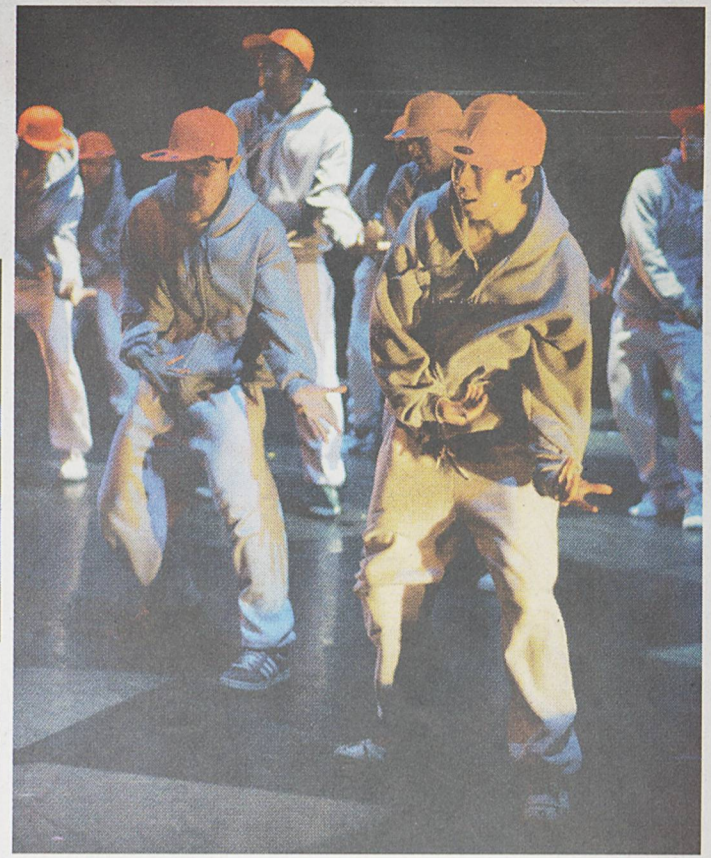
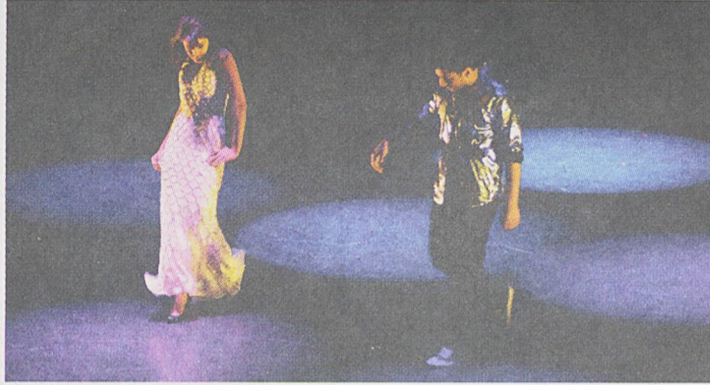
The Colorado Daily was among the

pioneers of free daily papers, and was created when it was banned from the Colorado University campus for editorials against the Vietnam war. At the end of the day, tabloids can be about more than just Page 3.

Madeeha Ansari
Features Editor

TIMELESS!

Photos by Bobur Ashurov and Jaynesh Patel



Timeless! took place at Sadler's Wells Theatre in Islington on Saturday evening. Held in aid of two charities, Invisible Children and Kids Company, the show was a fruitful collision of global cultures, and succeeded in raising over £12,000. The audience was treated to a mixture of dance, theatre, vocal performances and even beatboxing; furthermore, much of the show's music and choreography was composed and designed by the students themselves.

Want to join our photography team?
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Social

Meeting a Muslim

Mizha Mizver and Nihad Ahmed demystify Islam



Flickr user Stuck in Customs

The faith of more than 1.6 billion people across the globe, Islam is shared by people who are diverse in colour, ethnicity, language and culture – but unified by their belief in five pillars. In this cosmopolitan world that we live in today many questions have been raised about Islam and there are many that are yet to be answered. There are so many basic misconceptions and questions raised about the religion, so buckle up as we take you through a journey of understanding.

First the basics: what is Islam and who is Allah? Allah is the monotheistic conception of God. Islam means 'One God' and the word Islam means 'submission to Allah'. Islam is derived from the Arabic word Salaam which means 'Peace'. Anyone who submits to the will of Allah is called a Muslim. Thus, Muslims believe in the oneness of God and hence do not ascribe partners to him. It should be noted that Islam is not merely a religion, but a way of life.

The next question then would be who was Muhammed (PBUH)? In order to answer this it is necessary to briefly document his life; born in 570 CE in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, up until the age of 40, Muhammad (PBUH) was a very ordinary man of little note. He was neither rich, nor one of the elite of his community and did not demonstrate the slightest pretension to power or position. He worked as a tradesman under the direction of a wealthy business woman whom he eventually married. However, at the age of 40, his life transformed dramatically, and in the remaining 23 years of his life he transformed the backwards society in which he lived into one of the greatest recorded civilizations. From his humble beginnings, Muhammad (PBUH) unexpectedly and almost instantaneously became successful as a social reformer, diplomat, merchant, philosopher, orator, legislator, spiritual leader and military leader; achievements which were the reason behind the decision to name Muhammad (PBUH) as the most influential figure in history in Michael Hart's definitive 1978 list.

This abrupt and spectacular rise to greatness dates from the day of Muhammad's first divine revelation, in which Muslims believe that the Angel Gabriel delivered Allah's word to Muhammad (PBUH) informing him of his role as a messenger to mankind. In the consequent 23 years of his life Muhammad (PBUH) continued to receive these revelations, upon which Islam remains based.

Muhammad's (PBUH) role as a messenger does not, in the eyes of Islam, set him apart from the rest of humankind. On the contrary, Muslims believe that to each nation or civilization there was sent, through a messenger, divine revelation to mankind. The five greatest messengers are cited as being Jesus (PBUH), Moses (PBUH), Abraham (PBUH), Noah

(PBUH) and Muhammad (PBUH) himself. However, Muslims believe that Muhammad (PBUH) was the last prophet, and they see him as the restorer of a permanent and uncorrupted monotheistic faith. The Qur'an is the book, which Muslims believe, contains the divine teachings revealed to Muhammad (PBUH) through the Angel Gabriel.

One mystery of Islam is that of the Muslim prayer. Muslims pray a minimum of five times a day to remember Allah. Prayer is considered a gift from Allah, as it is a direct form of communication with no intermediaries involved between the worshipers and their Lord. The main reason for prayer is to attain spirituality, but it comes with the added bonuses of physical well being and work organization. Muslims observe different postures during prayer. These different postures have been scientifically proven to help reduce cholesterol levels, sinusitis and orthopedic problems. It also helps strengthen the mind as prayer requires great concentration and the 'prostration position' results in extra blood flow to the brain thus helping to keep it healthy. Prayer does not reduce productivity; in fact it increases it. It as a short break in our hectic lives and helps us to rejuvenate and to meditate our purpose and intentions in life.

To some the month of Ramadan, the month of fasting for those in the Muslim world, may appear to be some sort of mass weight control regime. But fasting in this month involves abstinence from so much more than food; in Islam fasting is to abstain from bad character, eating, drinking and sexual engagement from dawn to dusk. Yes, one does usually lose weight during this month, however, Muslims fast because they are prescribed to do so by Allah. Fasting helps strengthen, one's devotion towards Allah, develop self-restraint and patience. Scientists suggest that fasting should be regarded as an effective means of restoring youthfulness and longevity as the fasting process hastens the destruction of the decaying tissues of the body by means of hunger and helps build new tissues through nutrition. If you want to experience 'the fast' first hand, come along to Discover Islam week taking place on campus this week, and participate!

One of the most important principles of Islam is that everything belongs to Allah and that wealth is held by human beings in trust.

The Prophet (PBUH) said: 'Charity is a necessity for every Muslim.'

He (PBUH) was asked: 'What if a person has nothing?'

The Prophet (PBUH) replied: 'He should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something out of such earnings in charity.'

The Companions asked: 'What if he is not able to work?'

The Prophet (PBUH) said: 'He should

help poor and needy persons.' The Companions further asked 'What if he cannot do even that?'

The Prophet (PBUH) said 'He should urge others to do good.'

The Companions said 'What if he lacks that also?'

The Prophet (PBUH) said 'He should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity.'

Thus a Muslim is strongly prescribed to partake in charity. Zakat, which means 'purification' and 'growth', is an Islamic tax and is given to those who are less fortunate and is done by giving 2.5 per cent of one's accumulated wealth per annum. The giving of Zakat inculcates in one qualities such as generosity, kindness, sharing, helps reduce wastefulness and takes away from one the feeling of greed.

Islamic banking, a mystery of special interest to the future bankers at the LSE, is allowed for Muslims and non-Muslims. The main difference between Islamic banking and the conventional banking system is that Islamic Banking functions according to the Shariah Law i.e. the Islamic law in which Riba (usury/interest) is forbidden. The Islamic financial model works on the basis of risk sharing, where the customer and the bank share the risk of any investment on agreed terms and divide any profits or losses between them. Also, in addition, investment should not include those practices that are forbidden i.e trade in alcohol, betting and pornography are not allowed.

These however are a very few of the many questions out there. One of the great questions which have always been posed is that concerning equality amongst men and women in Islam. It should be noted that Islam is a way of life, not simply a religion and hence it is just. For example though some state that Islam degrades women, and does not treat them equally to men, it is a false notion. Men and women are treated equally, the religion is very fair, that mathematically, the word man appears 24 times and the word woman too appears 24 times in the Quran. 'Islam grants women numerous rights in the home and in society. Among them are the right to earn money, to financial support, to an education, to an inheritance, to being treated kindly, to vote, to a dowry, to keep their maiden name, to worship in a mosque, etc.' The veil worn by women in Islam is in fact a symbol of modesty. However this is a very vast topic and so are many others and cannot be covered by pen on few pages of paper.

Discover Islam Week is taking place on campus this week and will be offering a deeper insight into Islam. Many interactive activities and surprises await, including inspiring talks from some world famous speakers, mosque trips and a first hand 'fasting' experience.

For well over a century now, British public schools have been offering a nineteenth century education at 21st century prices. They have lived on long after the Empire they were designed to buffer faded primarily because these institutions instill in young minds something called 'good character'. A Victorian value which today's Anglophone middle-classes seem hell-bent on resurrecting, whatever their bank managers might say about the cost of such righteousness.

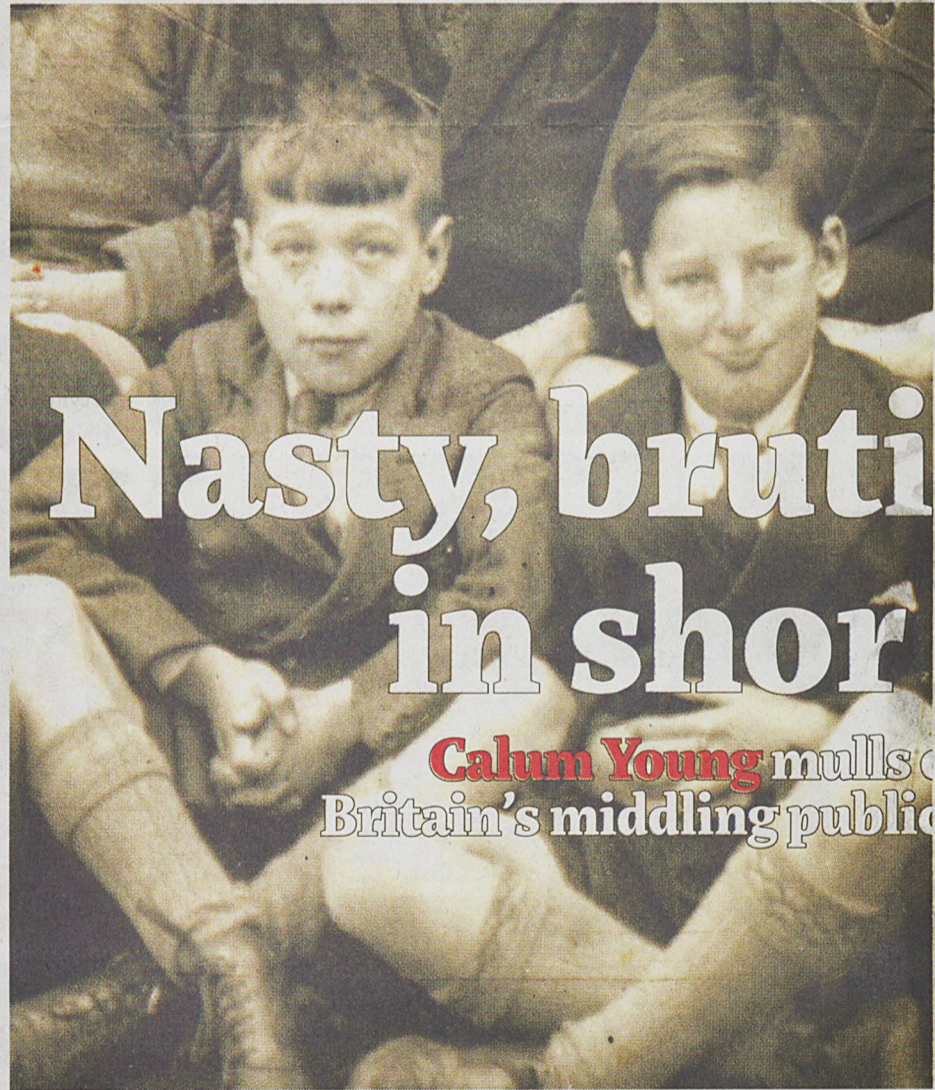
This is not about the really elite schools. The ones populated by millionaires and billionaires which really do have something akin to heritage, or whatever the pejorative variant of heritage is. I am not writing about the nine institutions which earned the title officially through the Public Schools Act of 1868. Instead this is about those schools which ape their better-off rivals and supposed social superiors which did gain recognition from the State. These schools have blazers, not tail-coats, their PTAs are populated by middling accountants, not Statesmen and they originally existed to administer the world, rather than govern it.

Curiously these educational anachronisms are not aware of their own imminent mortality. Indeed, they operate in a world where old is synonymous with good. At the establishment I attended the schools founding charter when I arrived was dated 1815, but through the historical equivalent of creative accounting this figure was revised during my senior year to 1513. Never mind that the schools' buildings, house system and teaching syllabus were all products of the nineteenth

ing, mid-winter runs, the consistent drill of prayer and boisterous hymn singing whenever the opportunity presented itself. Yet this was not by any means fanatic religiosity, it was just senseless activity, designed to prevent the mind from wandering and to make sure we were all roused in time for registration. Alongside this ran an undercurrent of patriotism or nationalism, which one it was, I could never tell. The Queens' portrait hung over the main entrance and her birthdays (both of them) were marked with half-day holidays.

Any institution wedded to the twin precepts of monarchy and deity is unlikely to engender intellectual curiosity. And sure enough the results my school achieved were never above mediocre when one accounts for the extra resources it received. No amount of sophistry could hide our inexorable slide down the national rankings at Speech-Day. Rather it was usually left to one pasty-faced sixteen year-old to tell us about his Orienteering success 'at national level', in the absence of any real achievement to fill the occasion. Like all things that yearn for a standard that is evidently beyond them, the Public School is pathetic in its self-congratulation.

To the endless disappointment of the staff, my Christianity, like my strength, remained of the feeble rather than muscular variety. A handicap which meant I was neither well placed to join the Rugby team nor partake in the schools Combined Cadet Force. An organisation which, following the Columbine Massacre, still felt the need to ensure all fifth years were well-versed in the assault rifle. It's interesting now to look back on the multitude of my



Nasty, brutish in school

Calum Young mulls Britain's middling public

century, we were assured that the way we were learning was practically medieval – how the first year parents swooned.

Such promiscuity around truth should come as no surprise. Fact is triviality at the public school because they are not primarily institutions of learning. Something much more important is at stake. As my ex-headmaster put it proudly 'we mould men'. Thus, as we callow youths departed, A-Level certificates in-hand we could consider ourselves shaped by the vessel that had housed us for the previous 7 years. Like every other commercial enterprise, the public school provides a service between the hours of 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. Factories make sausages, my school made men.

Characters were moulded on two levels, the spiritual and the physical. Majestically both dimensions were catered for through the doctrine of Muscular Christianity, which preached early morn-

ing fellow classmates who on leaving school joined the army, a group of individuals as they were who certainly had something to offer the world, but what, neither they nor the world knew. Public School blessed each of its participants with exactly that sort of confidence.

Brutality was also omnipresent. It is in many all-male parts of society, but there is something about the peculiar concentration of growing-pains and the expense of a public school which ensure an unrivalled level of insensibility. Teachers used second names in class, in conversation and if you were really unlucky, in the showers. Whilst an abysmal performance on the sports field on Wednesday morning was sure to be all round the school by the afternoon. Humiliation was the primary means of learning. And people were always ranked, ranked by godliness, ranked by athleticism, ranked by intelligence and most importantly by wealth. There were

few members of my year of whom I could not have told you their father's employment and which of the city's surrounding suburbs they called home.

But then the old boys who left weren't bad chaps really. They were the sort of people whom one would advisedly pass up the opportunity of dining-out with, but with whom a life wouldn't seem any bad thing. None were keen on asking penetrating questions. For them enquiring 'why?' was as sure a marker of working-class status as coal dust on the cheek. But by far their most remarkable feature was a sense of entitlement which was due to nothing more material than having been born to a comfortable station in life. Their self-assured superiority was founded on nothing so rational as merit.

They suited war well. The army was also a popular career path because the way we were taught favoured unmitigated aggression. After all nobody won a famous victory through diplomatic channels, did they? And what Englishmen did in the past was flavoured with the sort of slight exceptionalism which finished every Historical anecdote with, 'of course, we would rather have killed them off by peaceful means'. Never will I forget the solitary tear that trickled down the face of my Geography teacher the day he explained Hong Kong would never be ours again. And the pandemonium which ensued when our class's collective mind debated what our disgraced ex-politicians would do now, if ruling over minor parts of Asia was no longer a possibility.

Empire permeated everything. Even our poetry was sequestered from one or other imperial mind. Each Monday and

Economical Poetry

Neil Hampton describes a night of poetry and an attempt to rival Basho's Haiku'



Flickr user Flowerpot Wang

Consciousness and the city, an evening of short poetry hosted by The Languages Centre and, incidentally, the first event of the LSE Literary Festival 2010, took place last Wednesday in The Underground, pre-dating the official opening of festivities by just over a week. Those enrolled on the various literature courses had been invited to submit their own Haiku, along with other short poetry and the evening was a celebration of the talents of these proto-Zen masters, cynical city-dwellers and miniature modernists in the LSE's midst.

On the night, after an address by Dr. Angus Wrenn, and two particularly clever apologies expressed as Haiku, composed by none other than Nick Byrne and Howard Davies himself (the former delivered

in person), those present settled down to compose their own short poetry. Some of which, despite the free-flowing complimentary alcohol, was particularly prolific and of a standard that might have made the famous Japanese writer of Haiku, Basho (1644 - 1694) blush. Accomplished jazz, provided by the spectacular Kuriev Experience, may have contributed to the spontaneous outflow of powerful feelings which overtook many present during the composition process. There was also competent, firm and strategic direction from Writers' Group bigwig, Madeeha Ansari, keeping the less inspired and more anarchic members of the audience in line.

The evening's only sustained disruption came when an unkempt young man in a grey hoody ascended to the stage, waving a speech and demanding that his

Poetry... of a standard that might have made the famous Japanese writer of Haiku, Basho, blush

slide-show be loaded onto the projector, claiming to be the Poetry Officer of the Literature Society. The audience listened politely for fifteen full minutes before he relented and returned the stage to the more talented.

The event closed with some sublime sung Haiku, accompanied on ukulele by Simon Wang.

All in all, it was a very enjoyable and culturally enriching, albeit often quite unusual evening. A number of the same faces will be popping up for an encore in a production of Sweeney Agonistes, again hosted by The Languages Centre, this Wednesday, in the Shaw Library at 6.30 pm.



Flickr user Their History

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schools

Friday our Headmaster bellowed out the same trite verses of Kipling's 'IF'. And every Monday and Friday the school hoped he spoke metaphorically when having listed man's ideal virtues he suggested 'yours will be the world and everything that's in it'.

And when only a young boy, sat in my little corduroy shorts, I knew this was nonsense. That it wasn't acceptable to call members of the cleaning team 'proles' as many of my school friends did or that such things as 'servile races' did not exist. Most of all though, I knew then, as I know now, that education is the ability to find your own path through life, it is not having a way of being thrust upon you.

OVERHEARD AT LSE

Two presumably third year guys in C120 talking about job offers from and interviews at investment banks, last week of Michaelmas term:
"It's ok though, because I don't want to do it forever. I want to be a surgeon or a pilot."

Two law students in the NAB:
"So he disappeared for about three months in Thailand and his parents ended up calling the world police."
"You mean Interpol?"
"Yeah."

In the Old Building lift this afternoon:
"Bless the LSE, but it doesn't have the most attractive students."

Girl 1: "Hey, did you just get a text?"
Girl 2: "Yeah, he sent me a blank text."
Girl 1: "Well, what did it say?"

"There's a very real rumour running wild around Bankside that you two had a moment of passion in the bathroom at Nicolas room party last Friday."
"What's a real rumour?! A rumour adjusted for inflation?"

UGM chair introducing the motion:
"And now, for all of you who give a toss, quite literally, it's time for the motion on banning sexist magazines from the LSE campus..."

A discussion following a Facebook post that said Person 1's superpower was the ability to turn things into gold:

Person 2: "What if the value of gold drastically depreciates?"
Person 3: "Then hedge against it."
Person 4: "Stop turning things into gold then."

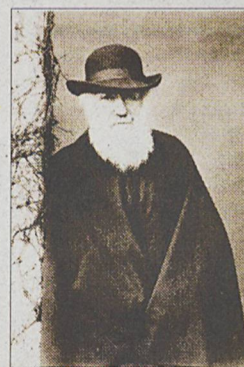
Person 5: "It's part of his over-arching plan to boost the value of his investments in silver."
Person 1: "The complete plan is to short both gold and gold companies, go long on silver producers, then run around touching small hills etc. Then hoard the now worthless gold, before pronouncing that I will cease to use my powers, then selling the gold as the prices rise again. This can be repeated indefinitely."

After a lesson where our teacher has expressed his outrage at being quoted on Overheard at LSE...
Anon - "What IS Overheard at LSE?"

In Z329: "I feel like a banana. No, a strawberry. Or an ice cream."

Lecturer talking about probability:
"When you flip a coin there is a fifty per cent chance you get head."

Girl 1: "How do you spell BBM?"



Atheist & Humanist Society Presents:

Science Meets Religion: The Intelligent Person's Guide to the 'Intelligent design' Debate.

D302 Monday 15th Feb 18:30

By
John Worrall



Beginner's guide to rugby!

Beaver Sports takes an educational approach this week; bringing you guides to the main sports of the AU

With the 6 Nations kicking off this week, we thought we would give those of you out there who don't know how rugby works a quick crash course. So whether you're a netballer trying to impress that fit first-teamer, or a women's rugby player trying to work out what you're meant to be doing on the pitch on Wednesday, pay close attention, everything you need is right here!

We'll start with some key terms, as there are a lot of phrases and jargon you'll need to know before you even try and get your head around the rules:

- 6 Nations:** Annual tournament held between England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France and Italy. The teams play each other once in a table, and the team with the most points at the end wins.
- Home Nations:** England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
- Triple Crown:** If one of the home nations beats each of the other 3 home nations, then they win the Triple Crown.
- Grand slam:** If a team beats each of the other 5 teams then they complete the Grand Slam.

- The basic rules are as follows:
- 15 players per team, split into 8 forwards (generally the bigger and stronger players) and 7 backs (generally quicker and more skilful)
 - You cannot pass forward
 - If you are on the floor then you are out of the game (that is, you cannot do anything to affect the game until you are back on your feet)
 - Points are scored as follows: **Try (5pts)**
 - touching the ball down over the op-

ponent's try line; **Conversion (2pts)** - the kick at goal following a try; **Penalty (3pts)** - a kick at goal following a law infringement; **Drop-goal (3pts)** - a drop-kick over the posts in open play (like Jonny Wilkinson did to win the World Cup in 2003)

Within this general plan, the following take place as one team tries to get from one end to the other to score:

- Tackle:** What each player is packing in the front of their shorts. Also, the way of stopping an opposition player who has the ball. You must wrap your arms around them anywhere below the neck, and generally try to take them to ground.

- Ruck:** If a tackle successfully results in the ball carrier going to ground then they must release the ball and both teams can compete for possession. Rucks are the heaps of bodies frequently seen in open play. When the ball is in a ruck, no one can use their hands. Rucks are won by pushing the other team off the ball or hooking the ball back with the feet. Generally, the team that takes the ball in to a ruck wins it back.

- Maul:** If the tackled player stays on their feet then the ensuing (upright) horde of players scrapping is called a maul. Generally, the team that takes the ball into a maul wins it back.

- Scrum:** This is a way of restarting the game, usually after a knock-on or a forward pass. Both sets of forwards bind together in formation and push against each other to contest for the ball. Generally, the team that puts the ball in wins it back.

- Lineout:** This is how the game is restarted after the ball goes into touch.

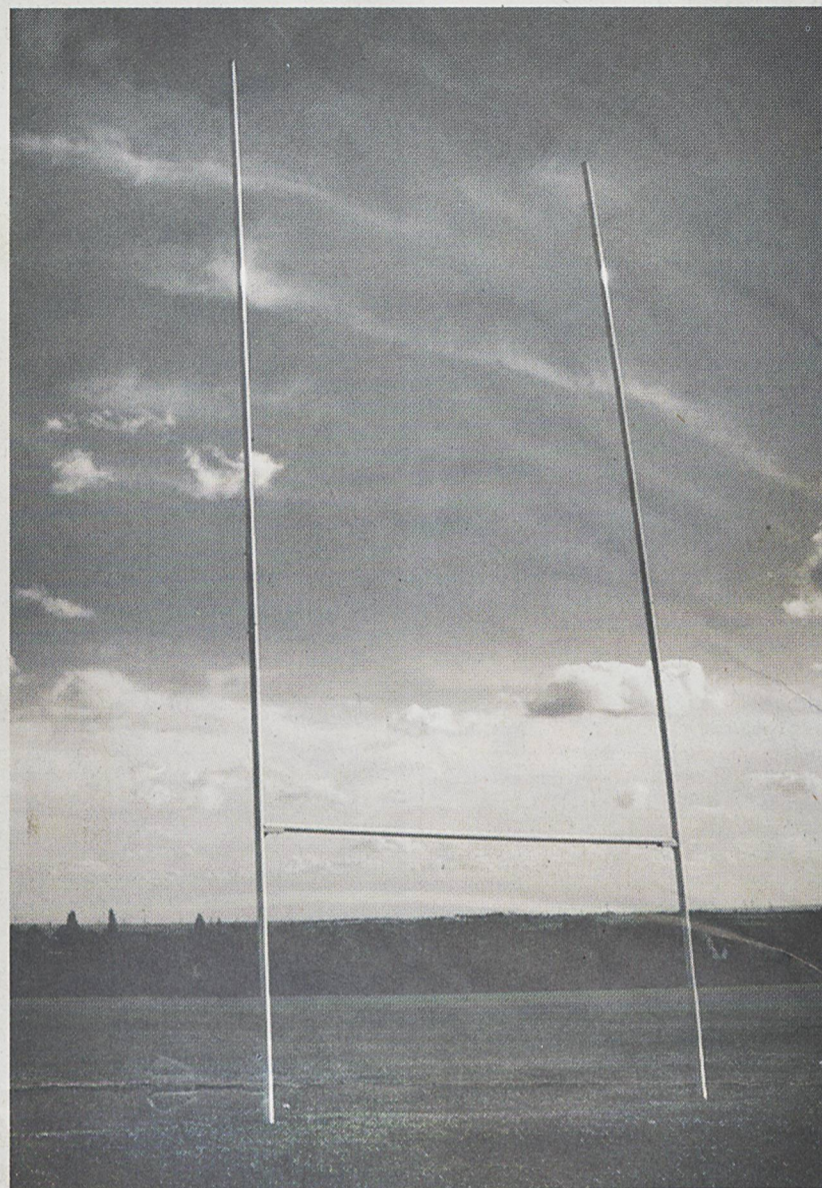
- Knock-on:** If the ball spills out of a player's hands and goes forward, this is called a knock-on, and the opposing team is awarded a scrum to restart the game.

- Turnover:** As previously stated, usually the team taking the ball into contact or a tackle situation retains possession at the end of the ruck or maul. However, if the other team steals and wins the ball, this is called a turnover.

- Penalty:** If a law is broken, then the opposing team is awarded a penalty. Examples of this include not releasing the ball when on the floor having been tackled, being offside, tackling above the neck.

- Overlap:** When the attacking team has more players outside of the contact area (ruck/maul) than the defending team, they are said to have an overlap.

If you really want to get into rugby however, there's nothing like watching it with a Welsh person!



In the interests of diversity, and to counter claims of a rugby bias in the section, we considered it only fair to explain how some of the other main sports in the AU work too.

Football
Firstly, and most importantly, there's the offside rule. As everyone knows there's nothing sexier than a girl who knows the offside rule, so here it is for you girls (a minority as we revealed last week) out there looking to bag yourself a round-baller:



"If an attacking player has fewer than two opponents between him and the goal when the ball is played to him then he is offside. As there is usually a goalkeeper in goal, the 'last defender' marks the offside line."

Netball
AKA 'basketball for simpletons', or 'basketball with all the fun bits taken out'. The main simplifications include:

- As for the rest of "the beautiful game", it goes as follows:
- 1) 22 overpaid prima donna sissy young men run around trying to kick an inflated pig's bladder into the other team's net (also known as a 'goal').
- 2) Whenever one footballer goes near a member of the opposite team, they fall over and roll around in simulated agony while the referee gets abused by the other 21 players on the field as he tries to decide who is cheating most.
- 3) When someone scores, they generally take their shirt off and join an emotional team bundle, involving lots of kissing, hugging and looking at the cameras.
- 4) The team that scores the most goals wins.

- You cannot run with the ball
- There is no tiered scoring system: 1 point per goal no matter where in the scoring zone it is scored from
- No time limit on how long you have before you have to shoot once you enter the opponents half (this is because women don't like to be rushed)



An apology...

Dear Beaver Sports,

I was deeply saddened to read of the FC's 'death' in last week's Sports Section. The passing of a Wednesday night stalwart such as this indicates troubling times for the Athletics Union, and it would never have happened on my watch. From what I can tell the FC 'died' around the same time I stepped down from being Club Captain, and Snaville and Fenton were given positions requiring leadership, responsibility and banter. Surely this is to blame for this untimely passing? Indeed, it is shocking that such news has come at the same time as Calella has been displaced from the Easter calendar of the AU - where the fuck is Salou and who wants to go there anyway?

Perhaps this will put the final nail in the FC coffin - and there is no-one in house to blame for this atrocity; it stems from the inadequate poly background of those responsible for 'CalellaFest' and their ineptitude to simply organise a coach to Spain, a hotel, and some lash. In my opinion, the FC is nothing but a sleeping giant, waiting to stir from its slumber at such a time as is necessary - and that time is now. 'Malibu' Stacey, this is your chance to shine. If one man ever had a calling in life this is surely it. We must have a fresh face to lead us in this battle, as the current leadership is suffering due to its inability to fend off Snaville.

Certain facts shall always remain true, regardless of the FC's condition: Rugby will always be fat and ugly; the remaining contingent of the FC will always be the no.1 choice for every woman in the land; and Tom Jacques will always look like Screech.

Is the FC dead? No, it just requires the kiss of life. If you could provide such a kiss please contact Rob Fenton and he will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible, if he's not still doing porridge that is.

I can only apologise for handing over the club to such inadequate replacements, and I hope you can forgive me,

Lowster

Results...

FC

LSE 1s 2 v 2 Portsmouth 4s
LSE 2s 2 v 1 Holloway 3s
LSE 3s 2 v 0 South Bank 1s

Rugby

LSE 1s 19 v 24 Canterbury 1s
LSE 3s 3 v 41 LSE 2s

Hockey

LSE 9 v 0 Kings 2s
LSE 4 v 0 Queen Mary's

BeAUtiful babies!

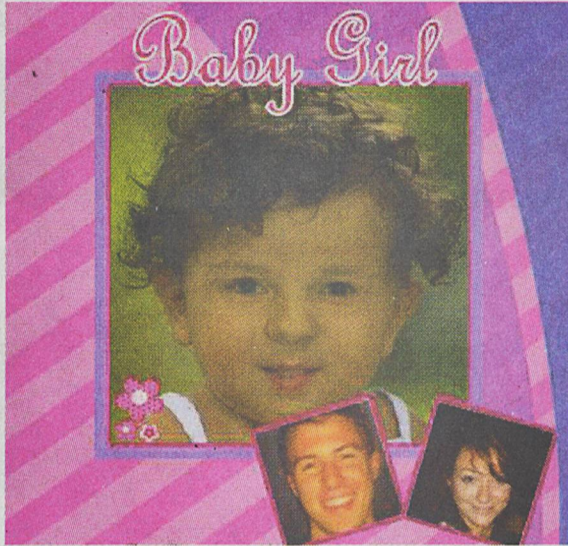
With Valentine's Day coming up, we thought we'd investigate what some ultimate AU mating could produce courtesy of makemebabies.com... as Neil Buchanan would say - try it yourself!

Sports Editor Baby

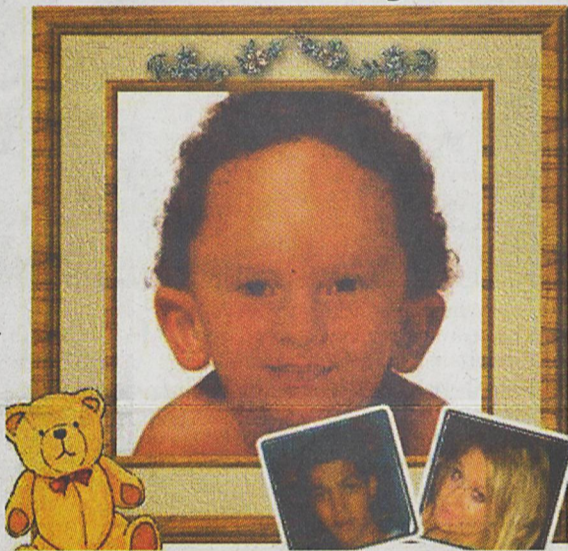
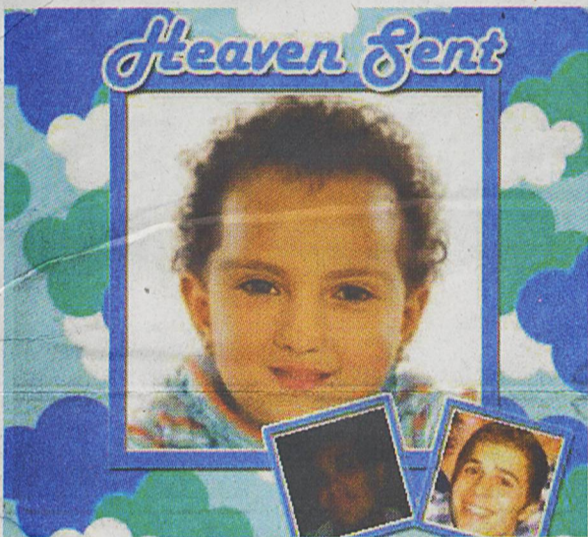


Gayby

AU Exec Baby



Lash Baby



Jonas and Xisco tell it like it is

This week, **Jonas and Xisco** speculate on the recent cancellation of Calellafest and the sorry excuse for a replacement, Salou-pit, and speak out against male objectification on campus.

"MINGE GLORIOUS MINGE, GET INTO THE CUPBOARD!" Were the cries heard around C120 this week as fans favourite Roberto di Fentonio finally got his arse into gear and sent the Calella list. Even the normally placid BJ Watson couldn't hide his excitement, screaming at serial turtle rapist Hannah Dyson; "Put a Johnny on, roast you in the sun, then I'm gonna fuck your mum... ohh Calella here we come." This jubilation was short-lived however, as the idiots at 'I Love Tour' and [a member of the SU staff] conspired against us and changed the tour venue to Salou.

The popular seaside resort in Catalonia, Spain, is around 10km from Tarragona and little over 92km from Barcelona. Originally used as a port by Greeks and Romans, it appeared again in an important historic event, when

will go on tour and not a single ball will be kicked, thrown or netted. After allegations in a national tabloid newspaper regarding his short temper and quick fists that would make Ike Turner envious, perennial Sun reader and constant FHM wankee, Jack Follows, initiated a university wide inquisition into the legality of the above publications. The incident which sparked such consternation was witnessed by the official Jonas&Xisco political correspondent, Santiago Tthiago Keepio; although all he was able to confirm was that there was no coitus experienced in the vicinity that sad evening. The so-called political boycott was quickly thrown out of the UGM as it was apparent to all that not only is Marina pretty fit, but third year Law student Matthew 'Cardboard' Box gave an extremely convincing argument that he was more hench than the men on the cover of 'Men's Health'; a magazine known for its objectification of males who should be treated as subjects, not objects.

... literally couldn't keep his hands out of Alex Avlonitis' cookie jar

in 1229 the fleet of James I of Aragon departed from Salou to conquer the Balearic Islands, creating the Kingdom of Majorca. Recently, however, the town has become popular for its beaches and local attractions such as the Port Aventura complex. For one week at the end of March, the delight that is Salou will be turned into a hell-hole for its residents as penises will be exhibited, anal sex will be the dish of the day, Ginger Chris, Norayr, Nadir, Malibu and Follows may lose their virginities, Hannah Dyson will definitely rape a turtle, polys will be abused, Latif

Best Lad: Owly (standard) and John Rajaretnammam: Massive lad points for Raj for being a huge lad in Sports Café and then stealing Calella veteran and virgin Andrew Roger's new love.

Worst Lad: Chubby Pete Rickett: The man everyone knows as Frank 'the Tank' literally couldn't keep his hands out of Alex Avlonitis' cookie jar on Wednesday night.

Been to Salou? Met anyone called 'the Crawler' on Chatroulette? Ever been woken up by being told that you're sleeping too quietly? Fended off Snaville?

Email now; jonas&xisco@thebeaveronline.co.uk. Or alternatively post any stories on our Facebook fan page; Jonas&Xisco.

Love Calculator

Inspired by our school day doodling, in preparation for Valentine's Day we thought we'd work out some love calculations.....

Handwritten love calculator doodle with names and percentages:

- Tim Cooper loves ugly girls = 200114112633961 = 1.1%
- Oliver Townsend loves stealing girlfriends = 32043524776111372 = 1.1%
- Mr & Mrs clooney = 1.1%
- George Luther loves bag? = 12021323235255 = 99.1!!!
- F.O'D = 92
- C.H = 4eva
- Megan Prother (Hoe) = 100%
- Ashlee Snow = 100%
- Rosie Boyle loves Fola Fawehinmi = all < 50%!
- Tom Davies loves His Reflection = 121323345679 = 94%
- Mrs Rosie? Charlie Sara Yoshida = 100%
- D.H.E & L.D sitting in a tree.....

..... to try yourself; add up the number of times each letter in 'loves' appears in your and your respective partners names, keep adding to finally reach your love percentage.

TORSO OF THE WEEK



Sport



Inside - AU babies!

Seconds shit on turds...sorry, Thirds

If only Dewi's beloved national team had done a job like his Seconds did on Wednesday...

Finn O'Driscoll
Dewi Hall Evans

Two months after their last league outing, and without even a meaningful training session in between, the seconds were back in action this week. And what better way to get the season back on track after the Christmas break than with a game against the "savage" thirds. Whilst on paper that may sound like a foregone conclusion, in practise, derby matches are notoriously unpredictable. Indeed, both captains were confident that their team would win: Dewi because his side were the better players (being the seconds); and Ben Leith because of the work they had put into training. After Dewi's pre-match team talk, the seconds were under no illusions as to the importance of not only the result but the performance as well, especially if we were to continue to compete at the sharp end of the league. We knew the thirds would be well drilled and well motivated, being if nothing else a team with a point to prove, and nothing to lose.

We lined up with a slightly changed team from the one that ran out for most of the Michelmas term, mainly due to the firsts calling up Russian Greg and Tim Cooper for their top of the table clash. However, until we started, few of us can have had any doubts regarding how we thought the game was going to go. We were in for a bit of a shock. To say that the 3s were up for it would be an understatement, and they came flying out of the traps, surprising us by taking control of the breakdown and actually often out-rucking us. Fortunately, for all of our failings up front, the backs were on hand to rescue the situation. The first time we managed to string together a couple of phases with some quick ball, we spun the ball out wide and Josh put Townsend over for the first score of the game, though had there been a TMO he may well have

ruled that the grounding was more than a little suspect. Thankfully, in the absence of television replays, the score stood, and we moved 5-0 ahead. Undeterred, the thirds almost replied straight from the restart, with a knock-on giving them a strong attacking platform from which they earned a penalty. Up stepped Campbell to bring the score back to 5-3. Fortunately, it wasn't long before we extended our lead with a lightening fast breakaway from our own 22, courtesy of Josh Olomahsudy-emndandysdiaiye, who once again drew the last man to put Townsend away for the second try. Soon after, it was Josh's turn to put his name on the score sheet with a dazzling break through a gap in the centres from inside his own half, running over half the length of the field to score and give the

He dropped the perfectly weighted try-scoring pass in a way that even Tom Davies would have been proud of

seconds an important 3 score cushion. For a sustained period, the seconds managed to keep the pressure on the thirds, moving the ball quickly through the backs and winning quick ball at the rucks. Whilst we were able to turn some of this pressure into more points, unfortunately the most impressive, sweeping move of the day ended fruitless. Some slick passing and support play saw us rip through the thirds out wide, and as the ball came back inside as we approached their line, the final pass went out to John, who just had to catch it and run in unopposed for a Barbarians-esque end-to-end running move. Unfortunately for John, who was later



monstered for it, he dropped the perfectly weighted try-scoring pass in a way that even Tom Davies would have been proud of. A birthday try from Youssef (who disgustingly celebrated like a footballer with a 'shoe-shining' routine) and one from Alexey (who many noted had lost a yard of pace in gaining more than an ounce of paunch over Christmas) saw us go into half time comfortably up.

The second half was a rather boring affair, characterised by handling errors, refereeing errors and poor fitness. However, fortunately Finn was on hand to brighten things up with his first try of

the season, although he did appear to do everything he could to not score it, letting out a high-pitched yelp as he juggled the ball as he crossed the line. In the last 10 minutes, having moved to fly half, Townsend rounded off his hat trick with a break through the 10-12 channel, although many doubted that he would make it to the line given how he appeared to be struggling to run (more likely due to his shape than the injury he 'claimed' to be carrying). With Finn knocking over 2 of the conversions, and Zahran adding another, the game finished 41-3. Unfortunately, the score line doesn't really seem to reflect the

match, as it understates the thirds valiant and organised performance, especially in the forwards, and overstates the second team's performance, which Dewi made no secret of his disappointment with at the end.

Fortunately, all these things are forgotten afterwards, and a superb team dinner prepared by Tom Manley and Youssef helped ease the pain of what was a fairly bruising encounter on the field. Following this, a Gincathlon was enjoyed on Houghton Street, before we all headed off to fully obliterate our memories of the night elsewhere.

Imperial: Brains but no balls (kills)

Another week of shanter (shit banter) from the rugby girls....

Katerina Soukeras
Nil Sangarabalan

On the 31st of January, LSE Women's Rugby, the fittest and loveliest team around (contrary to what The Beaver published last week), got ready to take the train from Waterloo to Fortress Berrylands. Set to have a team of 16, we were confident that we could beat the whole game with the luxury of a sub. Unfortunately, just as one of our team members reached the station, she spewed everywhere like a netballer on a Wednesday night, and was sent home with a bad bout of food poisoning. This sudden bad omen was further amplified when another of our team members called in ill. Left with a meagre team of 14, we set off to face Imperial.

We arrived at the pitch a little early, allowing for some focused mental preparation and an intense pep talk from Kirsty. We also had the chance to boost our sugar levels and spirits courtesy of some phallic shaped sweets provided by Freddy; it's common knowledge that nothing makes a girl happier than biting into a bit of willy.

Once Imperial arrived we negotiated to play 14's, dropping number 8. After an extensive warm up, we kicked off at 2:15. Imperial got exceptionally lucky, catching our kick and passing it down their line quickly till it reached their outside centre. She outpaced our team, who seemed a little tired from the warm up, and scored

a try. Thirty seconds into the game it was 0-5. T assured us it was a lucky try and we got our game heads on.

From then on in, LSE dominated play. Not only was most of the game in Imperial's half, but we had most of the ball possession and were winning rucks and mauls left, right and centre. You took an early injury to her lip, yet still beavered on like, well, a beaver. It was unfortunate that Imperial's scrum half was an exceptional player; not only was she speedy but she had a brilliant kick, so at any opportunity she would kick the ball far into our half and we would lose all our gained ground.

Kirsty was our superwoman - she was team captain, coach, water girl, medic and line runner. Yet she still managed to shout and support us at every opportunity she got; it was just a shame that we couldn't understand a word she said.

Eventually we managed to create overlap and Jenny saw the gap, ran like the wind and scored a try. This left us level at five all at half time despite having had at least three other try scoring opportunities.

LSE lined up to receive Imperial's kick off at the beginning of the second half. Despite the referee always seeming to be in the way of the team and the ball, LSE still managed some brilliant plays with Nadine and Nil running excellently in support of Agnes 'Eggs' on many occasions. Imperial were either dirty players or, more likely, clueless for most of the match. One player, clearly new to the game, tried to come in the side of a massive ruck. Rookie mistake - and one that Katerina was not so quick to forget, choosing to both yell at

and throw over the poor girl in the time it took for the referee to reach the action.

There were some close calls, with Kate performing a textbook tackle to push one of Imperial's centres into touch. Imperial's lineouts were weak, being unable to lift, so when it was our lineout it was inevitable that we would win it. Saying that, one of our lineouts didn't work in our favour when we knocked, the ball, on slightly, leading to a scrum down at the five metre line in Imperial's favour. At this point, the opposition's blond prop decided to stop actually playing the game and take it upon herself to waste as much time as possible: first making an issue about a drop of blood on Katerina's leg, then deciding to retie her hair and finally proclaiming she had to massage a cramp out of her leg. After what seemed like a century we could set the scrum. They won the ball and tried to score a try, but due to Anna's quick thinking, the ball was held up and another scrum was set. Fortunately, Imperial's hooker was useless. Not only was she wearing the wrong number on her shirt, she was unable to contest the ball in the scrum. The ball kept on coming straight out, and after about fifteen minutes of pointless and tiring scrumming, the referee gave Imperial a penalty for their own uselessness! Their scrum half ran at our line managing to score another try leaving the score 5-10.

The frustrated LSE side then upped their game. Bacon, after hearing Kirsty yell "she's yours", threw herself at one of Imperial's team members so spectacularly that it was hard not to applaud. Agnes got

a little too involved when she handed off poor Jenny who went flying a good 2 meters. A heart-stopping moment followed when Imperial's number 9 managed to steal the ball like John Terry stealing a girlfriend and kick it half way down the pitch. Luckily Sarah has brilliant hands and caught it before storming up the pitch like Madonna with her sights on an African child. Unfortunately, she was pushed into touch, and so was unable to score. At the next opportunity however, due to a brilliant set up by Laura, who had her debut as scrum half, Agnes scored a try right between the posts. Vicky 'golden boots' then converted, making the score 12-10.

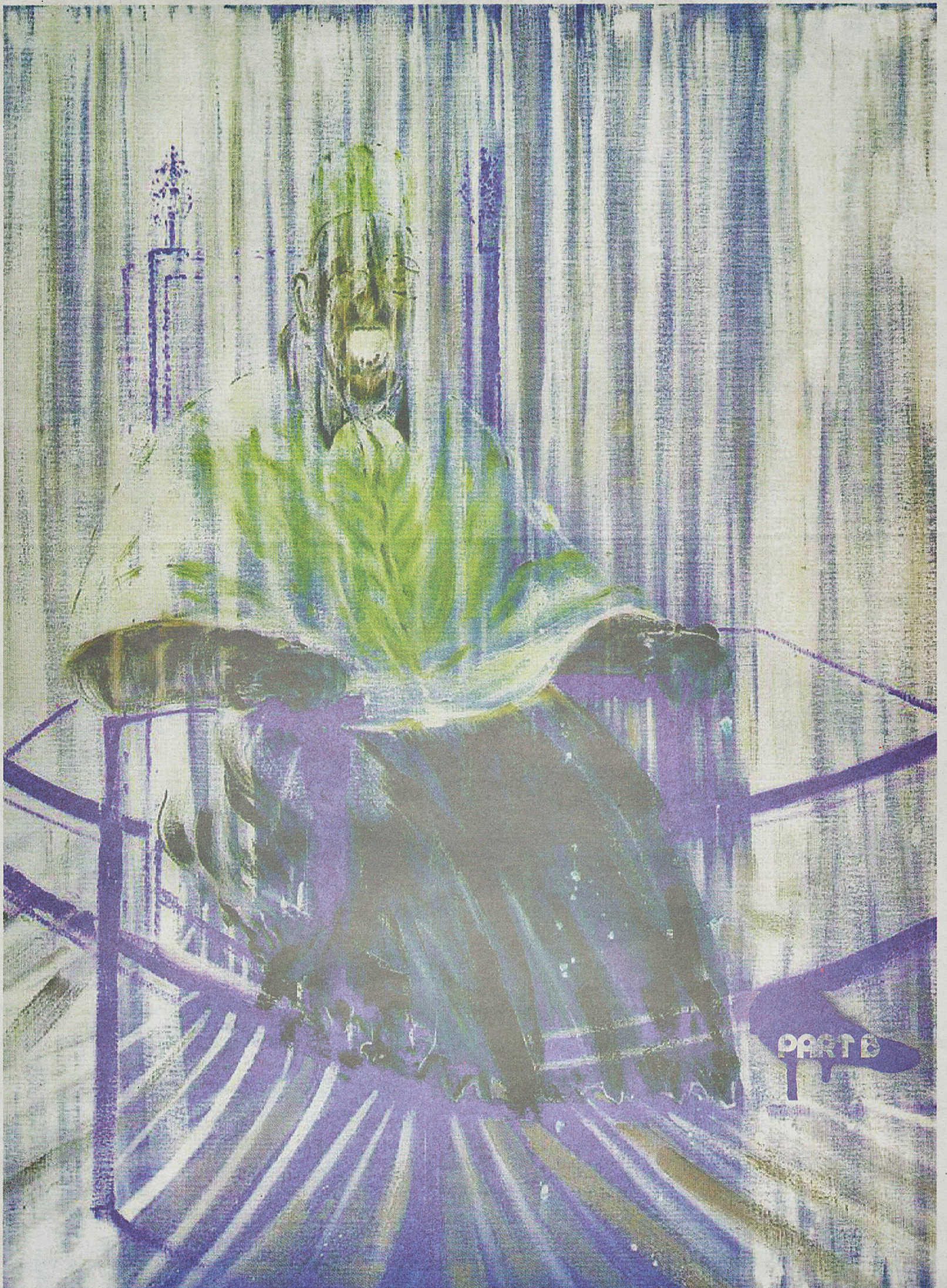
Imperial were lucky with their next try. As the clock counted down to the final seconds, they managed to knock the ball out of a lineout. Not being able to tell the difference between rugby and football they kicked the ball along the ground towards the try line, diving on it seconds before any of our superior team could catch up.

As the final whistle blew many of the team felt annoyed. We had outplayed Imperial in every way. They had two exceptional players, but otherwise the rest of the team were unmemorable. All of the LSE ladies had shone in that game, and should be proud of themselves. Imperial got lucky with their first try. And last try. Actually, with all their tries. But if there's anything we've learnt in our rugby careers, it's that luck runs out, but good play and team spirit will carry on!

the home of petty slander

BEAVER

SPORTS



PART B

09.02.10

ALEX WHITE – PARTB-RANT@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

RANT

GARETH LEWIS – PARTB-LITERATURE@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

LITERATURE

VICTORIA TERRY – PARTB-FOOD@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

FOOD

INTERVIEW: EDDIE REDMAYNE

LIAM MCLAUGHLIN & CATHY DRUCE – PARTB-MUSIC@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

MUSIC

IMO OTORO – PARTB-FASHION@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

FASHION

JONATHAN STOREY – PARTB-TV@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

TV

SOPHIE MARMENT – PARTB-THEATRE@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

THEATRE

SARA DOWNES – PARTB-VISUALARTS@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

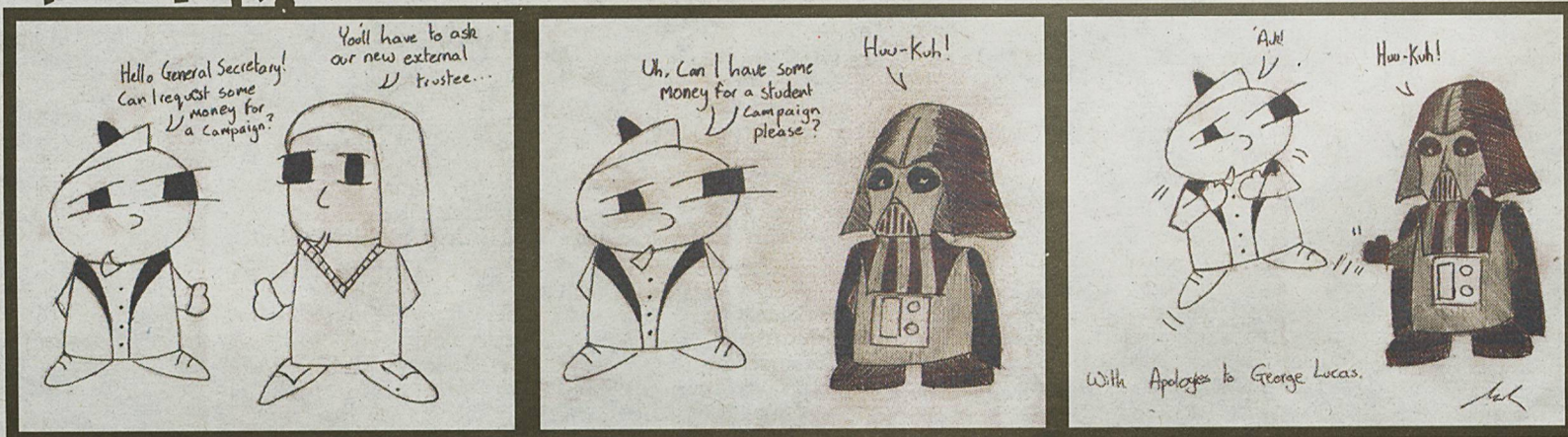
VISUAL ARTS

ALICE PELTON – PARTB-SEXANDGENDER@THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK

SEX AND GENDER

Frank!

by Mark Twyford



EDITORIAL

And so it goes,
My time has come
To leave this place,
My work all done.

From whence I came
I must go back,
To save myself
With mind intact.

It's been a laugh,
It's been a jolly,
With hopefully
Not too much folly.

Before I go,
Bid you all adieu,
To all at PartB
(and the Beaver):
Thank you.

-Graeme Birrell, Feb 6, 2010

**Graeme Birrell &
Calum Young**
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

**WHAT OUR CENTRESPREAD
WOULD HAVE BEEN IF WE HAD
ONE THIS WEEK:**



AUNT BEVERLY

Do you have problems? Stuff on your mind that you can't sort out on your own? Why not email PartB's own Agony Aunt/Slut at partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk and see if she can help.

Dear Aunt Beverly,

I think I'm pregnant. I don't know for sure but I have gained 8 pounds, am craving nettle tea and peanut butter sandwiches and am pretty sure I had sex. See, this is the problem. There is only the one way to get pregnant right? So I've been watching episodes of 'I was pregnant and didn't know' trying to figure out where I went wrong. What do I do now?

Not-sure-if-I'm-knocked-up-or-not, 3rd year

Dear Possibly Preggers,

Good Lord, what are you waiting for? The best way to determine whether you are pregnant is to take a pregnancy test. For something as important as this I would buy a recognised brand, none of this Tesco Value Pregnancy Test malarky. Contrary to popular belief, you do not actually need multiple boxes, but I understand it can bring you a sense of relief so 3 or 4 boxes ought to do it. While you wait the agonising 2 minutes for the little thumbs up sign, try thinking of all the lyrics of a favourite song, "Bohemian Rhapsody" is a particularly good mind-boggler. This way, when you see the result you won't have been mulling over it in a panicked manner but rather will be slapped in the face with the truth. Then you can decide if it's good or bad. Make sure you go to the doctors and set up an appointment if you are pregnant, they can advise you from

there, pet. You'll need to take vitamins so your baby isn't ugly. Secondly, we need to sort out this rubbish in your head about sex dear. Yes there is only one way to get pregnant. Traditionally, pregnancy occurs when a boy's little swimmers travel their way up your tubes and makes magic with one of your eggs. This usually works best if his penis enters your reproductive tract, not any other orifice. You should probably have noticed this. If it really was so unmemorable I would advise finding a new partner who might be better able to push all of your sensitive and glorious buttons. One last thing dear, before you take the test, consider this: your recent weight gain could just be from all the peanut butter sandwiches. Put the plate down, porky. And cravings are common in women, particularly around that time of the month; personally, I crave watermelon daiquiris and offensive novelty rap. All the best pet.



Just a Thought

Some people think that the world was made by God because there is evidence of design. Nothing so beautiful and mesmerizing could possibly have been created by coincidence, they hold. The Earth also seems perfectly suited to human needs, we have air that we may breathe and water that we may drink. Doesn't this all show evidence of contrivance rather than coincidence?

The natural theologian William Paley certainly thought so. He argued that the Earth was like a watch, it showed clear evidence that something sentient had made its constituent parts fit together. Just as in watches we can see regulated motion, in life individual constituents fit together nicely.

David Hume disagreed with this position. He argued that Paley's Watch Analogy was flawed because it required prior understanding on the onlooker's part of how a watch works and how one might be put together. Any conclusions of contrivance are based on a fore-knowledge of the object in question. Thus, without an understanding of what it is to create a universe, we cannot draw analogies with other things we consider contrived.

The odds of such a universe occurring through chance also cannot be arrived at, according to Hume. For us to calculate possibility we need to have examples of worlds which have failed; probability can only be derived from something occurring multiple times. We have only one world so calculating other chances are beyond us.

10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT MY LIFE

NINA LAZIC CAN'T GET NO STUDENT SATISFACTION

10. Freshers.

It's Lent Term and they're still in need of a smack. They will remain so until they've survived exam-season at the LSE, accompanied by self-loathing, depression, and the urge to kill anything making noise. Also, Freshers: "On Anon", "Tiger Tiger" and the like are never to be referred to, unless ironically, as 'classy' clubs. Or at all.

9. Second Years

The only thing worse than a silly fresher is an earnest second-year. The second-year specimen is a whole new level of annoying, characterised by a cocky attitude and a feeling of invincibility. These attributes are only exaggerated in the classroom setting. The second-year is endowed with the assurance that it knows best. It is focused. Studious. Irritating. I come to class to listen to the teacher, not your tosspot commentary.

8. The Starbucks on Kingsway

Overpriced, overcrowded, full of LSE ingrates.

7. Queue jumpers

I'm patiently waiting my turn to go to the loo. I really need to go to the loo. You can tell because I'm standing in the bloody queue. By waiting I am by no means inviting anyone to stride in, look at the opening door and stroll into the cubicle. There is a queue. Respect it.

6. LSE Library

I dash in to borrow the requisite book but find myself impeded by a hoard of students blocking the entrance to Course Collection, whinging about their courses. Piss off. The library is there for sheer necessity or desperation. Don't try and turn

it into a social space, why do you think everyone thinks we're geeks? Admittedly, there is something of an armistice during exams, where it is the duty of all LSE students to stand and bitch, but for now, don't do it.

5. Path-blockers

Speaking of getting out of my way, why are there only narrow staircases at LSE, with barely enough space for one person, let alone two? This is exacerbated by the students who walk in pairs. Slowly. This is unacceptable: in London, we walk on the right, run on the left. Understood?

4. PhD teachers with inadequate grasp of English

Every year, as LSE dips further down the rankings and edges towards poly status, Howard Davies spouts bollocks about us being specialist. We're slipping because LSE has no quality control for class teachers. How many times have you discovered that the English-deficient student is actually the English-deficient PhD teacher? I don't care they're amazing: if they don't speak English sufficiently well to teach, they shouldn't be teaching.

3. Lost Sheep Syndrome

A term into LSE, all students decide that really, what they want to do with their lives, more than anything in the whole world is to become



an investment-wanker. Just because everyone else around you is applying for internships and attending DeutscheWanke presentations doesn't mean you're wrong not to do so. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that you're actually showing backbone and initiative. (Disclaimer - mea culpa. I, too, am going into the commercial world - my bad).

2. Exam Season

I read an article about how LSE exam season had made one student prone to panic attacks during the night for years to come: he was haunted by the memory of a girl howling into the void of the library-staircase-spiral. It's stressful, and we all become prone to odd behaviour; I for instance, gain a liking for apple pies as pre-breakfast. However I don't become an evil conniving bitch. Remember kids: LSE does not grade on a curve. Share the note-love! Buck the LSE trend.

1. Being a Third Year

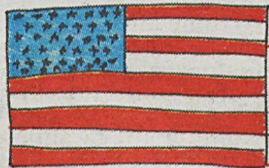
The thing that I hate the most? In a couple of months, I'll no longer be an LSE student, and neither will my friends. Instead, we'll all be working 16 hours a day, slaving into the dawns that in first year were spent gloriously in Walkabouts.

LITERATURE

THE GENIUS OF CHAMPIONS

GRAEME BIRRELL INTRODUCES YOU TO HIS BEST FRIEND, KURT

I have a friend named **Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.** I have never met him in the flesh because he is dead. Our existences did overlap briefly since he was born November 11, 1922 and died April 11, 2007 and I was born June 29, 1989 and am still alive in the present. During his Earthly existence, he lived most of his life in a country called the United States of America, and I in a country called the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This is why we never met in the flesh. You can tell our respective countries apart because they have different national flags. America has a flag like this:



and the UK has a flag like this:



The two countries are also quite far apart in the world. Because we are so far apart I thought before I got to know Kurt that maybe his ideas and philosophies wouldn't be relevant to me, so it's perhaps strange that we ended up being friends.

A further explanation of Kurt Vonnegut, accounting for how we became friends: Kurt is a writer. He wrote books and short stories and essays and letters and sold them for money because people liked to read them. I am one of the people who paid money for the things he wrote because I like to read them.

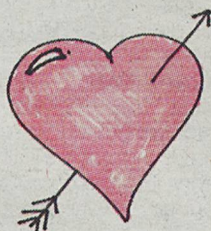
As it turns out, Kurt's ideas and philosophies are relevant and interesting to me, despite our differences. Hey-ho, who'd have known!

One of the reasons that I like Kurt's work so much is because he is a Humanist. This means that he – along with all other people who call themselves Humanists – believes in rationalism, doubts the existence of a higher existential being called God, and puts human rights, ethics, and morality foremost in his mind. A deep appreciation of humanity, and utmost faith in it, is what makes Kurt's philosophies so beautiful to read.

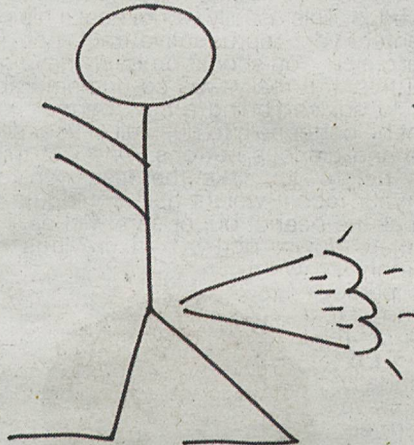
An example: Kurt once said in his book *The Sirens of Titan*, "a purpose of human life, no matter who is controlling it, is to love whoever is around to be loved!"

But then again, he also said "I tell you, we are here on Earth to fart around, and don't let anybody tell you different," so who knows what to believe?

Love is that feeling you get when you're all warm inside because someone else has made you feel like the centre of his or her world. It often looks like this:



Farting is when wind comes out of your asshole. It often looks like this:



Both are rational observations of human behaviour:

Kurt has an alter ego. An alter ego is a bit like an imaginary friend you have when you are a small child. It is a second persona of a person; a way for someone to express traits of their personality or beliefs that they wish were part of their God-given character, but aren't. In literature an alter ego is a technique used to express intentions and thoughts of the author without attributing them directly to the author. In some of Kurt's stories he appears as himself and talks to his alter ego. Perhaps this means that Kurt is crazy. Certainly, alter egos were associated in the nineteenth century with a psychological condition, disassociative personality disorder. Sorry Kurt, hope it's not serious!

Kurt's alter ego is called **Kilgore Trout**. Trout – like Kurt – was a writer, and wrote more than 117 novels, 2000 short stories, an autobiographical memoir, a play, and one poem. Trout's one poem goes like this:

*When the tupelo
Goes poop-a-lo
I'll come back to youp-a-lo*

He wrote his only poem on the penultimate day of his life, before he died in 2001. A tupelo is a tree that produces a mild honey and is very beautiful and red in the autumn. It looks like this:



One of the things about Trout that is one of the best things also about Kurt is that they both

write things only for the pleasure of writing, and not to please anyone else. In Kurt's novel *Timequake*, Trout feverishly writes short stories and then throws them away into a rubbish bin immediately. A rubbish bin looks like this:



It is where people put things they don't want any more. But instead of being unhappy with his work, as might be expected of someone putting his or her work in a rubbish bin, Trout is very happy with his work. His short stories bring him great pleasure. This is because he writes them for himself and no one else. He doesn't need approval or acclaim for his work to make him happy.

Kurt once said "I am eternally grateful... for my knack of finding in great books, some of them very funny books, reason enough to feel honored to be alive, no matter what else might be going on." I understand what he understands. I find in his work what he finds in other people's work.

Kurt also once said, "Still and all, why bother? Here's my answer: Many people need desperately to receive this message: I feel and think much as you do, care about many of the things you care about, although most people do not care about them. You are not alone."

The beauty in Trout throwing his work in the rubbish bin in Kurt's novel *Timequake* is that other people find them in the bin, read them, and find in them what Kurt and I both find in other people's works. You are not alone.

The British author **Douglas Adams** once said of Kurt's novel *The Sirens of Titan* this: "you read it through the first time and you think it's very loosely, casually written. You think the fact that everything suddenly makes such good sense at the end is almost accidental. And then you read it a few more times, simultaneously finding out more about writing yourself, and you realise what an absolute *tour de force* it was, making something as beautifully honed as that appear so casual." See, I'm not the only one. Kurt is a genius.

Kurt often drew pictures by hand and put them in his novels. He sometimes looked like this



I didn't draw this picture.

PASTA. PAELLA AND PUDDING

VICTORIA TERRY GETS EUROCENTRIC

English: It occurred to me while writing this week that I actually go to very few restaurants whose focus is English food. Perhaps I have no need of such things thanks to my grannies who often whip up delicious roasts and stews, or maybe it is just not the fashion right now to enjoy a hearty English meal. But for those of you who are not in the possession of culinary-minded English grannies, it would be a shocking shame to miss out on the joys of a traditional Sunday lunch. Do not make the mistake of wandering into any old pub and expecting to enjoy a good roast for you will come away thinking 'never again'. My personal recommendation would be the Bull & Last on Highgate Road, NW5, which serves a traditional Sunday lunch with all the lashings of gravy you could desire every week between 12.30-4.30PM. Of course, not all English delights are the traditional ones, and gastropubs are where the high quality, innovative yet affordable food can be found. Try out the established favourite of many, the Anglesea Arms, Wingate Road W6 for modern British cuisine galore. Finally, I cannot leave out the wonderful establishment that is Fuzzy's Grub just around the corner from LSE. Located off Fleet Street, Fuzzy's a takeout place that serves

a full roast meal in a sandwich, which has to be seen to be believe. Trust me, it's well worth a try!

French: Personally, I'll take any opportunity to slip into one of the numerous Café Rouge with their affordable and delicious *prix fixe* and what are called sandwiches but which are so much more. For those chain-snobs among you, an award winning French restaurant that definitely warrants a trip to Farringdon's Charterhouse Street is Comptoir Gascon which specializes in classic dishes from the south-west of France served in a relaxed atmosphere. Another wonderful little find is the tiny Passage Café in Jerusalem Passage, near the Barbican, which serves brasserie style food but at much better prices. But surely the best option for a French meal has to be Le Mercury on Upper Street, for great food in an intimate setting for an incredibly low price. Finally, a trip La Crêperie de Hampstead for a dessert of the most wonderful crêpes I have ever had; unfortunately, this outdoor stand is a local favourite and so expect to wait while savouring the smells and choosing your flavour out of the extensive list.

Spanish: A definite favourite of mine is San Miguels, Edgware Road. It is a family run restaurant serving North Western Spanish food and is

not to be missed. It is hard to find and certainly classes as a hidden gem with a very cosy feel, great service and most importantly great food. As I am a sucker for a rustic feel to a restaurant my recommendation for tapas has to be Meson Don Felipe, which is conveniently near to the Old Vic theatre on The Cut. While the service may not be the best in the world the atmosphere can not be beaten and you are surprised to be back in London when you step out of the door. You can also easily pop in by yourself when feeling peckish and sit at the central bar to enjoy some traditional tapas.

Italian: The number of Italian restaurants in London is astounding, yet understandable as it is an incredibly varied and delicious cuisine. Most Londoners have two favourite Italians: one chain restaurant and one local. My personal favourite chain is Carluccio's and now is the perfect time to try it out thanks to the 2-4-1 voucher you can get online. My favourite local is the lesser known Giacommos on Finchley Road but I would argue against traipsing all the way to North London. My advice to you would be to go explore your local area and find that authentic Italian restaurant that will become a staple of your dining out.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

PAELLA- A Spanish recipe by Antony Worrall Thompson

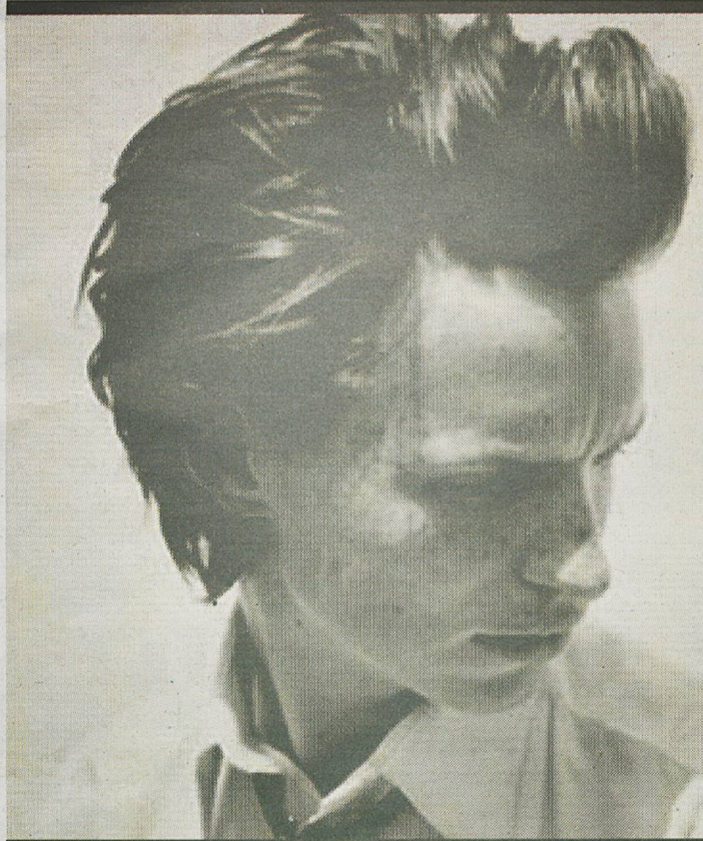
(taken from bbc.com/food)

Ingredients

- 170g/6oz chorizo, cut into thin slices
- 110g/4oz pancetta, cut into small dice
- 2 cloves garlic finely chopped
- 1 large Spanish onion, finely diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1 tsp soft thyme leaves
- ¼ tsp dried red chilli flakes
- 570ml/1 pint calasparra (Spanish short-grain) rice
- 1 tsp paprika
- 125ml/4fl oz dry white wine
- 1.2 litres/2 pints chicken stock, heated with ½ tsp saffron strands
- 8 chicken thighs, each chopped in half and browned
- 18 small clams, cleaned
- 110g/4oz fresh or frozen peas
- 4 large tomatoes, de-seeded and diced
- 125ml/4fl oz good olive oil
- 1 head garlic, cloves separated and peeled
- 12 jumbo raw prawns, in shells
- 450g/1 lb squid, cleaned and chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 5 tbsp chopped flatleaf parsley
- salt and freshly ground black pepper



1. Heat half the olive oil in a paella dish or heavy-based saucepan. Add the chorizo and pancetta and fry until crisp. Add the garlic, onion and pepper and heat until softened. Add the thyme, chilli flakes and calasparra rice, and stir until all the grains of rice are nicely coated and glossy. Now add the paprika and dry white wine and when it is bubbling, pour in the hot chicken stock, add the chicken thighs and cook for 5-10 minutes.
2. Now place the clams into the dish with the joint facing down so that the edges open outwards. Sprinkle in the peas and chopped tomatoes and continue to cook gently for another 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil with the garlic cloves in a separate pan and add the prawns. Fry quickly for a minute or two then add them to the paella. Now do the same with the squid and add them to the paella too.
4. Scatter the chopped parsley over the paella and serve immediately.



Meeting someone you've never met before can sometimes be awkward. Meeting a rising actor who has played Angelina Jolie's son in *The Good Shepherd* is a completely different matter. So you can imagine the state of my stomach before entering Cafe 171 of Southwark's Jerwood Space. To step in or not to step in? That is the question. As I listened to that song that gets me in the mood, also known as Haddaway's "What is love?", I took a deep breath. I couldn't possibly cancel on **Eddie Redmayne**. An Old Etonian, turned Cambridge graduate, Eddie is now one of Britain's foremost aspiring actors. Farewell Jude Law (I know it's hard) and hello Eddie!

I try acting casual as I enter the Jerwood Space. The place has a very modern feel to it and is simply... white. An art gallery by day, it also functions as a rehearsal space, where Eddie is currently practising for his new play *Red*, a study of abstract expressionist painter Mark Rothko wrestling with fame. To distract myself, I flick through art books. It's always nice to pretend to be cultured but honestly, I was more concerned about my next encounter than cubism. Moments later, a stunning man with flaming ginger hair arrives. He looks very laid back and gives me a massively warm welcome. "So you do actually have ginger hair", I gasp. When he had warned me the day before, I actually thought he was joking. "Yeah I know, I've just finished this film called *Pillars of the Earth* in Hungary and had to dye my hair". After ten minutes of getting to know each other, buying lunch (he orders salmon and noodles, crisps and diet Coke), I already feel that:

a. He is the most adorable and nicest person ever.
b. Funny and so down-to-earth.
c. Will you marry me?

Jokes aside, I am very glad that we finally meet. Eddie is very unique and his huge modesty is absolutely refreshing. His passion for acting came at a very young age, and since then, he has been involved in many projects both on stage and screen.

In 2002, the 28-year old got his big breakthrough while still at Cambridge. To celebrate Shakespeare's 400th-anniversary, Redmayne took part in an all-male production of *Twelfth Night* where he played Viola. His performance

got him noticed by an agent and the rest is history. After graduating, Eddie decided to take a gap year and pursued theatre, by playing Billy in *The Goat or Who Is Sylvia*, which won him the Outstanding Newcomer award at the London Evening Standard Awards in 2004. He has also starred in many Tudor-themed movies, including *The Other Boleyn Girl*, Stephen Poliakoff's *Glorious 39*, which he can be seen in currently. Did I forget to mention the Burberry 2008 ad campaign? Having done many films with top Hollywood actresses such as Julianne Moore and Scarlett Johansson to name a few, we can clearly say that Eddie is on the route to success.

Let the interview begin.

So Eddie, what have you been up to this year?

This year – 2009 – basically, I've been working a bit like a trunk. I started the year doing a film about the plague, called *Black Death*. Then I went to Budapest, in June to shoot *Pillars of the Earth* which is based on Ken Follet's bestselling novel. Even Oprah had it on her show! It's set in, England in the 12th century in a fictionalized period of history. The story is about the war and monarchy. It's funny because in filmmaking there are always trends. Years ago, when *Gladiator* came out, people were like: "we need to do a classic epic". So *Troy* was made, and then *Alexander*...this year, it's definitely medieval.

What's your character like in *Black Death*?

I play a monk. A naughty monk with a girlfriend. He basically leads this group of soldiers with Sean Bean to this village which is meant to be free from the plague and all this mysterious stuff starts happening like witchcraft.

Did you enjoy it?

Um yeah... the director was Chris Smith, who is at the moment one of the greatest horror directors of England. I don't know anything about horror; I don't even enjoy horror, so for me it was a completely different challenge. I spent two to three months in a monk's outfit, in swamps in Germany, having the shit beaten out of me by Sean

Bean. Was it fun? I dunno, but it was interesting...

Did you have to shave parts of your head to get the whole look?

What happened is that the day before I was going to film it, I got a call from my agent saying that they wanted to shave my head. But because I was going straight on to *Pillars of the Earth*, in which the only feature that's really important in my character is that he has big red flaming hair, I wouldn't be able to do the job. So I had a fake tonsure which was so funny. I actually have stills of it, I'll show you. (Eddie proceeds to show me hilarious pictures of him as a monk and of course his tonsure they had to glue every morning.)

So now you are doing *Red*.

Yes, it's a play about Mark Rothko set in 1956 when he was commissioned to paint the walls of this restaurant of the Four Seasons in New York. Huge commission. He painted the paintings and he then decided that he was so disgusted with the restaurant and the idea of the commercialism of it that he pulled out. Anyway, there's always been a mystery on why he did that. John Logan, who wrote *Gladiator* and *The Aviator*, wrote the script and fictionalized the account that [Rothko's] young assistant, the character I play, has a lot to do with the decision. The play is really about that moment when the apprentice overtakes the master. At that time, pop art was emerging with Warhol, and because [Rothko] represents abstract expressionism, he was considered old-fashioned. So my character represents the youth, the overtaking. It's a play about art, about passion, the father/son relationship, it's amazing and I get to paint.

Oh perfect. Very convenient as you were a History of Art major, right?

I hadn't studied his work specifically in huge amounts. But it's great. That's why I'm smiling at the moment. This is my dream job.

You seem to never stop. What do you do in your spare time?

I've been very busy, especially this year. It's great for employment, it's shit for your life (giggles) it's quite hard to keep friendships, relationships and

ETON MESS

From public school to the silver screen, **Charlotte Rabate** catches up with bright young thing **Eddie Redmayne** to discuss life, work, and dinner arrangements.

family. It's tricky but again I made a decision at the beginning of the year when these jobs arrived, whether to do it or not. Firstly, as an actor, you're very aware of how lucky you are to be employed. At some point, you need to balance your life – I thought: I was single, I was 27 and I was like "fuck it, it's now or never", if you have no commitment, nothing, just do it.

Do you prefer theatre or cinema?

I started doing theatre, I knew nothing and still know very little about film. The process of filmmaking is so different; it kind of adds variety to your life. With filming, you get to travel a lot, what's amazing also, is that film is this meeting of science and art, camera and all that stuff is so technical and the costumes and the design, everything is theatrical and artistic. It's kind of amazing to be with these people, to watch those two worlds collide. That sounds really pretentious.

Nah. Isn't it more boring to have to redo takes?

Well yeah but at some point in your life, you want that boredom. The problem in film is you only get a few times to get it right. In theatre, if you fuck it up, you can always do it better another night. In film, if you're not in the right frame of mind a particular day, it stays forever. Ideally you get to do both [theatre and cinema].

How do get into the mood for a scene? When the director says cut, do you just snap out of it?

It really depends on the actor. Some will spend the whole day locked up and some will use humour. I remember doing this movie *Savage Grace*. There's this really intense love scene with Julianne Moore who plays my mum. For weeks, I had been reading these disturbing things and my character is kind of freaking out at some point. But Julianne was such in a normal chatty mood and I had to be brooding. On that specific day, the character is going mad, I had to keep going to a corner of the room whereas she was absolutely laughing all the time. I felt a bit of a dick for doing that but there are other days where it's the other way round.

How did your mum react to *Savage Grace*?

Ahha. You know what's really funny is for my first play *The Goat*, in London, I was playing a young gay New Yorker. In the last scene, I had to kiss Jonathan Price who played my dad. My brothers would come and watch the play in order to watch my dad's reaction. It was a funny thing. And when there was a film festival for *Savage Grace*, my family were there to watch... I feel I put my parents through a lot. Bless them; because they don't come from this world, I think they are so shocked that I actually get work. They are very supportive. They're like "if this is what you need to get work, go ahead".

In *The Other Boleyn Girl*, you play alongside Scarlett Johansson and Natalie Portman. If you had to choose between the two, who would it be?

Genuinely? They are two completely different people. But both wonderful. Natalie [Portman] is incredibly, incredibly cute, bright and spunky. Scarlett is incredibly instinctive, beautifully smart and grown up. I couldn't believe she was younger than me! The dream woman would be a mixture of both but they are both extraordinary in their own ways. I loved working with both. Scarlett was my wife so it was the high point of my career.

Do people mistake you for another actor?

The hilarious thing that happens is that they recognize you...but recognize your face. And think: do I know you? And either they think you are a friend, alternatively what they do is they go: you're an actor. What have you been in? Which is a completely natural approach. You then have to go through your CV. And on the rare times that I have done that I go: "*The Good Shepherd*? No. *The Other Boleyn Girl*? Nah. *The Golden Age*? Definitely no. I haven't seen it. And you're like: do you want me to keep listing my CV to you? which is really humiliating.

Do girls come up to you?

It really depends on where you are. I went to a picture gallery recently and sat in a café. Schoolgirls came up to me and that was incredibly weird. When you're doing a play, people know where you are and then they'll come in. But it's not like I get sent knickers. **If you had to have dinner with four people, dead or alive, real or fictitious, who would it be?**

I was asked this question recently for a magazine. And I'm thinking of whether to give you the same answer. One would be Yves Klein who I'm a bit obsessed with. The other is a random Australian singer called Missy Higgins. Do you know Tom Sturridge? He's my best mate. We did a film together in Australia about 4 years ago [*Like Minds*] and we would just stroll around New Zealand in a car and there was a singer called Missy Higgins. A songwriter. And we can't work out whether she's straight or gay from her song lyrics. We became quite competitive over her. We genuinely believed that one day we would find her and ask her who she'd rather. So I'd have to invite Missy Higgins. Only 4? I can't pick family. Who else... (long pause). I'll throw in Rothko to see what they thought of each other and I've always been fascinated by Barbara Baekeland who's Julianne [Moore]'s character in *Savage Grace*, to see how she really was.

In the Burberry ad you did a lot of jumping, was it tiring?

No. Not really. I wasn't the one in 9 inch heels like Agy [Agyess Deyn]. What Burberry do is get people from different industries. So you had musicians, there was a golf player, and Martin [Tomlinson], from the band Selfish Cunt, the most flamboyant charismatic person ever. So there was a very interesting dynamic too. Mario Testino is wonderful and hilarious, he'd be like (*Eddie does a Peruvian accent*): "you're a supermodel", "you're a star..."

Any advice for aspiring actors?

Be driven but don't be overly ambitious. I think ambition hurts a lot of people in our industry... and it changes a lot of people.

ALPHABEAT INTERVIEW BY RUBY BUCKLEY

Anders seemed quite taken aback to be asked about the genesis of the band. I can't imagine he's bombarded with that one too often. It's not the sort of question you'd really ask the manufactured rising MTV star or even need to ask, in the case of the reality TV pop phenomenon. But **Alphabeat** aren't your typical perfect pop ensemble, despite being trapped in the pop machine. The story that follows is extremely familiar to the pages of the likes of NME or Q magazine; friends of friends got together through a love of music and worked really hard to try and catch a break. For them, this came in the form of winning Denmark's "Live Contest". No **Cheryl Cole** taking your hand or Simon Fuller placing you, perfectly choreographed, with five other fresh-faced individuals.

"Because we were a band people didn't really seem to think that it was really pop. When we started playing pop music everyone in our town was playing indie or metal. We wanted to play something completely different."

Recruiting Stine as a back-up singer was fulfilling one of pop's rules: thou shalt have a female vocalist. Or "Demz da rulz" as we say today. This tradition, harking back to the godparents of fantastic pop, the **Human League**, is the yeast that makes the pop band rise...

Did you start singing in Danish?

"At that time, when we started out, there was a wave of bands singing in Danish and we just hated it. That fitted in quite well with the fact that we wanted to play pop music. It wouldn't have made sense to play pop music and make music that was accessible to everyone in the world and

then sing in our own language. It's not a good idea to sing in a language spoken by only 5 million people!"

What was it like starting out in the music business as a pop band?

"We had an indie approach to it. We did exactly what the indie bands did. We went out and toured, played lots of gigs. We wrote different songs and became a lot more radio friendly. In that way we felt like any other band in Denmark."

How do you cope with the pop music machine? How do you keep things under your control?

"One thing that is really important, if you know exactly how you want to look and you have a good view of what you do then you'll be fine. When you start, in the big pop machine, if you don't

have a feeling of how you and your videos should look like, then people make that decision for you. People that don't have many ideas about what they want to do have other people take those decisions for them. It's never been a problem for us because we've always had loads of ideas about what we want to do and how we want to look. No one's ever tried to put something down over our heads."

How important is your live show to you?

"That's where we stand out as a pop band compared to what is in the charts. I think our live performance is our big strength. We don't really rehearse more than the basics of the songs. We feel very natural around each other. All we want is to give people a good experience; you can't beat the feeling of giving 100% at a gig!"

You covered Public Image Limited's 'Public Image' on your first album. How did that come about?

"It was our guitarist, another Anders. The song is about not about being special, about not feeling like you belong anywhere. We really felt, doing pop music, that as a band we didn't fit in any kind of box. Because we were a pop band but still have the indie mentality."

Alphabeat are a credible band standing out in a genre filled with clones and mouthpieces. The fact that they were chosen as **Lady Gaga's** support act on her forthcoming UK tour is indicative of their relevance and brilliance. Both their 80s inspired debut, *This is Alphabeat* and their forthcoming offering of 90s dance, *The Beat Is* are superb pop experiences. There is no room for snobbery in the world of pop. Dismiss this band at your peril!



NEW RELEASES IN THE CHARTS

FOURTET // THERE IS LOVE IN YOU - N° 35

Kieran Hebden is known for sampling and moulding sounds of life into beautiful pieces of music that naturally distinguish themselves from fashions and fads. In this sense *There is Love in You* is no different from previous releases yet its sound feels more matured, smoother and the tracks fit almost perfectly. Expect to breathe some fresh air.

HADOUKEN! // FOR THE MASSES - N° 19

With track names like "Evil", "Ugly" and "Lost", it's like they've written the review for me. This album is an almost intolerable barrage of heavy beats, screaming vocals and snotty adolescent lyrics. Poor man's **Prodigy**.

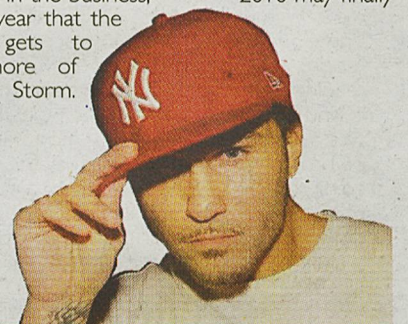
THE ROUNDUP

Last week saw the music industry's biggest event of the year – the Grammy awards. Big winners were **Beyoncé** and **Taylor Swift**. Despite a very shaky vocal performance during the awards itself, 20 year old Swift's seemingly unstoppable rise was later solidified by winning the ultimate Grammy-accolade, 'Album of the year' for *Fearless*. The internet has since been rife with backlash, with claims that someone whose live performances are often described as inconsistent should not then trump artists such as Beyoncé and **Lady Gaga**, who both delivered fantastic performances on the night. However, I think we are forgetting something that Taylor herself pointed out in her acceptance speech – that her record label allowed her to write every song on her album. This is something of a rarity, not forgetting that these songs were written by a girl in her late teens. The Grammys, in my opinion, were recognizing Swift's song writing ability which is way beyond her years – and she sure can pen a hit. With her album sales topping 10 million, I think the bloggers need to pipe down – these figures speak for themselves. Shouldn't they be more concerned that the biggest selling female artist in the US at the moment is **Ke\$ha**, who not only shouts her way through her album, but somehow justifies including a chorus to an upcoming single with lyrics, "D-I-N-O-S-A You are

HOLLY RUBENSTEIN REPORTS ON THE LATEST EVENTS IN THE WORLD OF MUSIC

a dinosaur; O-L-D M-A-N You're just an old man, Hitting on me what? You need a cat scan". I mean, come on people. And she can't even spell dinosaur.

My tip of the week this week is... **Avery Storm**. Those of you who are R&B and hip-hop fans would probably recognize Avery's, well, frankly amazing voice, which has featured on many other artists' tracks, including hits from **Rick Ross**, **Nelly**, and most notably, "Nasty Girl", the **Notorious B.I.G.** all-star tribute. Over the past 5 years or so, Avery has repeatedly leaked mixtapes on the internet, which as far as I'm concerned, were full of hit singles, but somehow did not get the recognition they deserved. Currently signed to Nelly's label 'Derrty Ent', and working with a who's who of the best in the business, 2010 may finally be the year that the world gets to hear more of Avery Storm.



FASHION Who's a sexy mo' faux?

KAMILLAH KHABIBRAKMANOVA GETS HOT UNDER THE COLLAR

There is a new crisis emerging in the fashion world. Known as the Fashion Fur Battle, or FFB, it has pitted **Brigitte Bardo** against Sophia Loren, Michelle Obama against Kate Winslet, Oprah against Lindsay Lohan, and Tyra Banks against J.Lo. Choosing the wrong side can have dire consequences, as Paris Hilton realised when PETA activists assaulted her with flour bombs. Even the most powerful cannot escape the wrath of the other side: **Anna Wintour** herself, the Editor-in-Chief of *Vogue* and head dictator of fashion-land, had a vegetarian tofu tart mashed into her face!

Yes, it has become a dangerous world out there, when the simple act of taking a stroll down Oxford Street exposes you to the dangers of having rotten veg chucked at that precious fur stole you spent months saving up for. Even for those of us who have no fur in our closets, there is always the risk that these vagabonds will mistake your fake leopard coat for the genuine kind and leave your face plastered in tofu goo for the mere crime of looking stylish. If you manage to avoid such attacks, there are the constant interrogations to deal with: "Is that a real animal you're wearing?", or, better yet, "How does it feel to cover yourself with a corpse?" Of course, such questions are always asked in the presence of a large group of people with the goal of decimating your social life. And that cute guy you've been chatting to all night might just lose interest if he thinks that you're the cause of a baby bunny massacre.

I remember one day last December: I was running to my room to grab my notebook before class when I bumped into one of the girls from my floor. She was wearing a wicked fox fur scarf that made her look like a 50s movie star. Unfortunately, I was already late for class and only managed a quick "Hey!", and thus was not able to tell her just how glamorous she looked. Well, when I came back to my room, I noticed a Facebook message from her. Apparently, she was embarrassed to have been seen in the scarf, and wanted to present her apologies, as I had caught her in the process of bringing it back to her friend who had left it in her room the previous weekend. I was appalled. Why in the world was this girl so burdened by the guilt of wearing fur that she felt the need to write an apologetic message to me? After all, had I not been in a rush, I would have actually complimented her on it!

The act of making a fur garment kills just as many animals as making a leather one, yet no one gets questioned about their affinity for leather shoes and handbags. And as for those die-hard

vegans out there who swear by pleather shoes and canvas totes, there is still the environmental damage to account for: The lifespan of fur and leather is virtually limitless: I wear the same fur coat my mother wore in her university days sometimes, and no one would be able to guess its age. You would have to buy quite a number of jackets to last through all the winters a single fur coat can withstand. All the factory fumes emitted in the process of creating a dozen jackets will surely kill more forest creatures than the amount it takes to make a single fur coat. In the end, whether you choose fur,

outfits, while most of her subjects were eating cabbage soup for dinner. Others object because while leather is mostly made from cows and sheep, fur is associated with bunnies and baby foxes. For some reason, they believe that we have a right to kill ugly animals, but not the cute ones. Sounds a bit elitist to me.

Fortunately, it seems like fur wearers are gaining ground in the Fashion Fur Battle. In the 90s, fur started to disappear even from haute-couture fashion shows. Denouncing fur became the cool thing to do, as designers from **Betsey Johnson**

to **Ralph Lauren** pledged to stop using it in their clothing lines. PETA then decided to take the cult even further with their "I'd rather go naked than wear fur" campaign, featuring countless top models and celebrities who bared everything in front of the camera for the sake of the anti-fur group. Somehow, objectifying women and using them as sex images in advertising campaigns was OK because they were trying to save poor, helpless animals. I doubt that anyone actually renounced fur after seeing a picture of Cindy Crawford in the nude, but at least it gave some celebrities an excuse to feel good about themselves (and show off their perfect PhotoShopped bodies while they were at it).

But one can never expect to retain the support of the Hollywood crowd for long. Almost everyone has gone naked for PETA by now, and they are ready to move on. Cindy Crawford and Claudia Schiffer, for example, have now decided they'd rather wear fur than go naked. Top designers have been using more and more fur in their collections and this in turn has inspired popular fashion chains to sell fur garments again, both real and fake. The anti-fur coalition has even lost one of its most loyal troopers, designer **Stella McCartney**, who once made headlines for eliminating all animal products from her collections. She has realized that the fake version can never replace the real thing and has reverted to ecological leather.

What is even better is that production of faux fur has become so advanced that unless you live in Siberia or the Arctic

Circle, there is often no need to choose between glamour and keeping those baby bunnies alive. But those pesky anti-fur types continue to assume it is real, so it does not seem like those annoying questions and risk of tofu attacks will go away anytime soon. But we must continue our fight. After all, our grandmothers fought against incredible odds for the right to wear pants. We must not let them down: here's to the freedom to wear fur without fear!



leather, or plastic, you still carry the burden of a dead animal on your shoulders.

So why does fur receive so much bashing? Perhaps it is the glamour factor that irritates so many people. A nice fur coat can make any woman look more fascinating and sophisticated. Throughout history, it has always been a sign of wealth and high social status. Even today real fur is too expensive for common folks to afford. It thus becomes a symbol of the same social system where a queen could justify killing 2000 minks for one of her evening ball

TV

NO LIKEY, NO LIGHTY

WEILONG LIANG WANTS TO BE TAKEN OUT

When I first saw the trailer for *Take Me Out*, I thought that ITV could not have stooped lower in attempting to entertain on a Saturday night. But now I realize that I have stumbled upon a throwback to the Golden Age of Saturday night television, when shows like *The Generation Game* and *Play Your Cards Right* graced our screens. Of course Paddy McGuinness has some way to go before he can emulate Bruce, but he has an audience with a superhuman propensity to clap and whoop, and a 'no likey, no lighty' catchphrase that is easily as grating and grammatically apocalyptic as 'nice to see you, to see you nice'. So in a sense he's half-way there.

The format is straightforward; one guy picks a date from 30 girls. First he must negotiate three 'rounds' of interrogation and such, when girls can declare themselves out by turning their light red if they lose interest. He then whittles the remain-

ing few down to two before ultimately choosing his date.

In between the rounds Paddy chats to the girls, and they tend to come out with anything from the cringeworthy to the downright outrageous, including some shockingly bad innuendos relating to yoga and bending, sausages and instruments. A couple of highlights include: the time when a girl was asked why she turned her light off, to which she replied that she didn't mean to, but she pushed her button while bouncing along to the music. Another was when one of the chunkier girls (said by some to resemble a whale) described her ideal date as a picnic on the beach. Suffice to say that the irony was not lost on me and my aching ribcage.

It's also hilarious how picky some of the girls are. Even the uglier ones, who should probably abide more by the 'beggars can't be choosers' mantra, give bizarre reasons for buzzing guys out, ranging from having tiny feet to wearing bad

shoes. But then you realise that it's probably a tactic to avoid the pain and humiliation of being buzzed out by the guy later on - kind of like euthanasia in a gameshow context. In fact there are about ten girls, who I would compare to the Strawberry Delights in my box of Quality Street - still left untouched after several weeks. I particularly enjoy it when the guys mercilessly march up to the dodgy ones and buzz them out straight away, but some like to prolong the agony before the guillotine falls. When asked about a girl they happen to not find attractive, most hesitate give a false compliment and fail to hide that brief look of horror at the prospect of being stuck with her.

Although I'm not proud to indulge in such cruel mockery of others, trust me when I say that you won't be able to help yourself when you watch this show. It is brilliant and appalling in equal measure, but there can be no doubting its entertainment value.

EMMA KELLY IS BUZZING THIS SHOW OFF

Take Me Out! I'd rather stick my head in a deep fat fryer. You might have heard of it, especially if you like poking your eye out with glass for a laugh. I saw an advert for it over the holidays; my brother and I decided it looked like the worst programme ever made, and made sure we watched it. Needless to say it is most certainly one of the worst programmes ever made.

Even before anything happens, you know it's going to be bad. The set is the cheapest thing ever. It's as though the set designer was given 20 quid to knock something up in about ten minutes. Whoever thought Paddy McGuinness coming down a clear lift tube thing was a good idea needs to be shot.

Talking of Paddy, who thought he was a good presenter? I mean, he hasn't done anything

since *Phoenix Nights* and *Max and Paddy*, and in those he was just playing himself. The trouble with Paddy fronting a show like this is that he isn't really natural or even adequate at presenting. His catchphrase 'no likey no lighty' is awful. Who thought that would catch on? Just because you can make up something that sounds like a catchphrase doesn't mean its going to become a classic catchphrase.

The cheapness of this show is hammered home with the bar, Fernando's, where the lucky couple go for their date. The thing is that Fernando's is probably some unused bit of the ITV studios in Manchester. They didn't even put in the effort to make it look like a nice place you might want to go to. Every date takes place in this Fernando's; they don't even eat anything, they just sit and make tedious chit-chat!

Another confusing fact is that whoever commissioned the show thought that the basic concept was a good idea. The premise of the show is that men come down in the lift thing and the women then turn off their lights if they don't like the look of the unsuspecting man. They will then do some sort of talent bit where inevitably more women turn off their lights. Then you get the obligatory home video where their mum says something embarrassing like "He wet the bed until he was 6" - you know the sort of thing. Then the guy chooses from whoever still has their lights and they go for a date at the wonderful Fernando's (aka a room down the hall). And that's it!

So if this Saturday you're stuck in the house and you fancy watching some TV, I beg you, watch anything but *Take Me Out*.



THE ABDUCTION OF ELIZABETH CANNING

SOPHIE MARMENT IS WAITING FOR A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE

This week sees the international premiere of *The Abduction of Elizabeth Canning* on the stage of LSE's Old Theatre. Written by a learning technologist **Steve Bond** here at the LSE, the play, set in 1753, tells the true story of a young woman who disappears on her way home to her mother's. One month later she returns, starving, frozen and barely conscious. It seems clear that she has been abducted, and the perpetrators are quickly brought to justice. But was she really abducted? If so, who really did it? As the ques-

tions multiply, all London becomes caught up in the case. Everyone, from the coffee-shop gossip to the Lord Mayor of London, takes sides, and Elizabeth's fate hangs in the balance...

Bond stumbled upon Elizabeth Canning in 2003 on an engraving in the British Museum. "My colleague Harriet and I were bored one Friday afternoon, and decided to bunk off from work [he wasn't working at the LSE then!], and spend the afternoon at the British Museum's 250th anniversary exhibition instead. There, among a collection of engravings from 1753, I found a courtroom scene featuring Elizabeth, which told of her alleged abduction and imprisonment in a house in Enfield - my home town. I was intrigued; soon I was obsessed. Coinciding as this did with my then new-found interest in drama, writing a play about it was inevitable."

What makes Elizabeth Canning's story so fascinating is that it is not known to this day what really happened to Elizabeth during her lost month and Elizabeth Canning's case represents the second greatest conflict of contradictory evidence in English legal history, outdone only by the Tichborne case (Google it!). Bond says, "Various authors down the years have told Elizabeth's story, and the prevailing opinion is that there was in fact no abduction; that she made the whole thing up." One notable exception from which Bond takes his inspiration for the play is *The Appearance of Truth* by **Judith Moore**. Having read Moore's book, the play changed in Bond's eyes, he sums up the reasons for this using Moore's words, "The legal conflict... would be carried out in practice by two increasingly antagonistic and vehement bodies of men... All of the women and none of

Various authors down the years have told Elizabeth's story, and the prevailing opinion is that there was in fact no abduction; that she made the whole thing up.

the men would suffer legally before the battle was over." The play therefore, is not just a courtroom detective drama, its aim set upon finding the crime's perpetrators. What Bond hopes he has achieved, "is a story about the experiences of the women involved and how they were affected by the (albeit well-intended) machinations of the men."

The play has been a six-year labour of love for Bond and its first production by the LSESU Drama Society promises great things. This story of a young girl from where the Barbican now stands today is a rare opportunity to see a forgotten piece of London's history on our very own LSE stage. Don't miss out on your chance to see it!

THE ABDUCTION OF ELIZABETH CANNING BY STEVE BOND PLAYS FROM 8-9 FEBRUARY AT 7.30PM IN THE OLD THEATRE, HOUGHTON STREET



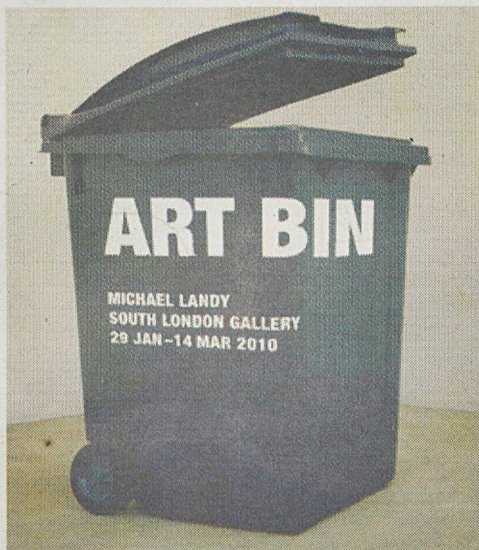
CHUCK IT IN 'THE ART BIN

SARA DOWNES PEERS INTO MICHAEL LANDY'S LATEST INSTALLATION

Anyone who mutters that eternal phrase 'contemporary art is rubbish' will be pleased (or dismayed) to find that the latest installation by **Michael Landy** is in fact a 130,000 gallon *Art Bin* in which to throw all those useless, unwanted pieces of art, ready for them to be destroyed when the exhibition comes to a close.

Landy is inviting any artists to contribute by simply filling in a form on his website which will then be assessed for its worthiness for the big trash can. Alongside lesser known artists will also be contributions from bigger names; he has managed to persuade such famous figures in the art world as Turner-Prize winner **Gillian Wearing**, **Sir Peter Blake** and has even nabbed a print of one of **Damien Hirst's** numerous skull paintings. All these will be chucked in the bin over the next couple of months before it finally closes its lid on the 14th March 2010. All the contents will then be destroyed; this is not simply a storage facility for hundreds of pieces of art, it is an actual bin which will literally rid the world of hundreds of valuable and not so valuable artworks.

The artist has been doing similar things for a while. In *Break Down 2001*, Landy pulverized all of his possessions in a building on Oxford Street which formerly housed C&A; from his car to his stereo to pairs of old socks, everything was broken down into tiny parts then blended, shredded, and pounded down into dust. His *Closing Down Sale* of 1992 saw him recreate a bargain sale in a gallery space with shopping trolleys and Tannoy



announcements persuading people to buy. His work often deals with consumerism and our disposable and materialistic society using attention grabbing methods common to his Young British Artist contemporaries and *Art Bin* is no different.

The 2010 installation is a comment on throw-away consumerism too; pointing out that art is no different to other commercial industries in its drive for profit and mass production. In many ways *Art Bin* sides with those 'contemporary art is rubbish' critics, providing a place for all that is considered worthless and in need of destruction. It is not, however, saying that all art is rubbish and does not encourage the destruction of valuable pieces in a fashion reminiscent of the Nazis. It is instead supposed to be a place for art which has failed in its purpose, which artists or owners of the pieces do not like. In reality though, many of the contributors so far have seen throwing their art in here as a good thing, something to be proud of as a part of art history rather than as a recognition of their own failure.

Of course they will have been noted down, forever immortalized by the bin, but whatever the motive, the contents will eventually be destroyed or recycled because they are no longer wanted. The *Art Bin* will therefore simply become a place for failures, so it is perhaps quite fitting that one of Hirst's skull paintings has ended up there.

MICHAEL LANDY'S *ART BIN* CAN BE SEEN AT THE SOUTH LONDON GALLERY, SE5, UNTIL 14 MARCH

no glove, no love

ALICE PELTON GETS CONNED BY NO CONDOM-TOM

This weekend, Valentine's Day approaches fast. Before you get scared that this column will deteriorate into me dishing out the kind of watered-down girly magazine bullshit that frequents this time of year, don't worry. I'm not going to give you singletons another dose of that *Cosmo* crap to pin on your fridge to remind yourselves why you're 'totally, like, gorgeous' and 'like, so, gonna lose weight and bag the man of your, like, dreams!'

This time last year, I had the funniest and most annoying Valentine's Day of my life. It almost beat the one the year before, when I was sat at home with two massive black eyes from breaking one of the frontal bones in my skull. Put it this way: watch out for people's elbows at house parties when the strobe lights come on, and if you get hit and knocked out by one, don't end up crying in the dog basket in the kitchen while simultaneously telling the mother of the boy whose house party it is that you're totally in love with their son, and have been for two years.

Anyway, for those of you who have been paying attention, February last year was the post-Banjo stage; still smouldering from the sting of finding out - eight months after it happened - that Banjo had cheated on me with a good friend, I was finding every reason to live at the bottom of a can of Strongbow. The fact that I was the proud recipient of the 'Athletics Union Biggest Pisshead Award' exemplifies this point well.

So Valentine's Day fell on a Saturday; housemates in tow, along with a few of their friends from home, I dropped past Topshop to find a pretty dress and necked several pints, before teetering down the road to our favourite bar. Our student loans haven't afforded us the luxury of living north of the river but living in Kennington has its upsides; South Pacific, the Hawaiian paradise themed cocktail bar is right round our corner.

Going out on Valentine's Day is a fantastic idea. Why? Because everyone else out is single. This theory held true, and upon arrival I was soon being ground like a black pepper-corn on the dance floor. My much loved housemate had unfortunately broken her leg after a recent trip to Vauxhall roller-disco. (another one of our favourite local haunts) and was lapping up the sympathy and attention from several creepy men-in-suit types. In no time at all, we'd stolen her crutches and instigated a mass Limbo competition on the dance floor, with drunken men - daring to impress - trying to defy gravity but flattening themselves in an instant. Needless to say, this was an epic night.

I would say that our eyes met across the crowded bar, but instead, when I met Tom, I was far too battered and busy chanting 'Lower! Lower!' to notice. He caught my attention when, like Yoda from *Star Wars*, he walked up to me and shouted 'fiesty one you are!' Without any effort on my behalf, two hours later we spilled out onto the street together and starting walking back to my place.

I remember thinking, 'God, a one-night stand on Valentine's Day, and my first ever one-night stand - is this a good idea?' 'What underwear have I got on...more to the point, do I even have a vagina anymore?' It had been a while

and I was distinctly hesitant as to how things would pan out. I'm sure that being in long-term relationships for several years does this to everyone. (I'm fully aware that telling this story will inevitably lead to boring accusations concerning my promiscuity - a few weeks back one Rugby fresher came up to me and asked 'didn't you like, lose your virginity, when you were like, twelve?!' Err no, sorry mate, I met Matty-bigwilly-Marsh when I was fifteen. Get your facts right.)

The house I lived in last year was an upside-down house, with the kitchen on the top floor and our bedrooms beneath. We got back to it alone, and after he politely slipped on a condom (not too

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much of an awkward silence for this one, thank God) we got down to it, on the kitchen work surface. It was quite good - although, as I said, it's hard to compare when an ex-boyfriend's penis is like a loyal friend who never lets you down.

Then - because one's ears are familiar with the sound of one's own front door shutting - I heard my housemates get back. It was a 'save yourself!' moment, and I immediately jumped off the work surface, and ran downstairs with my dress still on, giggling. I ran past my friends on the stairs, who were completely confused as to what the hell was going on, until they all walked into the kitchen to find a terrified, speechless, King's student, failing to pull up his boxer shorts in time.

For some reason drunken logic told me to go and wait in the toilet. I wanted to get Tom's attention and shout at him to come downstairs, but I couldn't for the life of me remember his name. Waiting in the toilet I heard a man yelp. I ran into my bedroom to find Steph, my housemate's best friend from home, holding my duvet in defiance. A naked defenceless Tom, trying desperately to hide his package, sat writhing on my bed starkers. It emerged that after Tom had fled the kitchen Steph had found out his name from one of his bankcards in his wallet. She had then marched into my room, switched the light on, stole the covers, and screamed 'TOM! TOM! YOU OLD DOG!'

'TOM!' Yes! That's it! Thanks mate! I clicked my fingers and gasped - course his name was Tom, every bloody boy born from 1988-1989 in this country is called Tom.

Anyway, with that sorted, Steph soon left us alone to reconvene where we left off. Things were going relatively well, until mid-intercourse, I asked, just out of interest,

'You're still wearing a condom right?'

There was a long silence.

'Er...well actually I'm not'

Tom, you absolute prick, was my instant reaction. When I attempted to communicate this to him, he gave me a vague response along the lines of 'hey it's all gravy baby!' and 'Chill Winston.'

Don't get me wrong, putting condoms on is a mood killer, but not wearing one, that's a life, career, and sexual health killer: I want a career goddammit. By the time I'm thirty I want to marry a man I don't want to be a young mum with no income married to the State. More to the point, I don't want my child-bearing abilities marred by chlamydia.

Once I'd made this point, he got up to leave, and thinking he'd be all smooth, he threw his trousers on and fled. Barely realizing what had happened, I looked on my bedroom floor to find he'd left his shoes. 'Haha, not so smooth are you now Tom!' I walked downstairs semi-naked, and dangling his two shoes on my fingertips, and stood at my front door, looking at my watch. Four minutes later, Tom arrived, as expected, out of breath, with a mixed look of bemusement and embarrassment on his face. I said nothing at all, just dropped the shoes on the floor, and slammed the door.

Then I went and woke my housemates up at 6AM to tell them all about what had happened, and curl up in bed with two of them so I could get some good spooning in before sunrise. A lot of people frequently make the mistake of thinking sex is the *raison d'être*, but in fact I think it's all about the cuddles people. You can't beat a good old spoon to top off the night. More on that coming soon...

Anyway, the next day my parents came over to my house after watching me play a football match. Just as my mum started to make a cup of tea, she spotted the open condom wrapper on my kitchen worktop. Do you know what she said? 'Well at least he used protection darling.' Ahh mum... that's what you think.

Come and watch me judge MR LSE this Wednesday at 8pm in the Quad- It's the most naked flesh you'll ever see at LSE and I might dress up as Simon Cowell.

