

The Beaver

01.11.2011
Newspaper of the
LSE Students' Union
thebeaveronline.co.uk
facebook.com/beaveronline

LSE donor charged with corruption

Alexander Young

An LSE Governor, honorary fellow and donor of over £1 million to the School, has been charged with corruption, conspiracy to corrupt and acquiring and transferring criminal property under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 in connection with an alleged £700 million bribery and money laundering scheme.

In March 2008 Aluminium Bahrain (Alba) filed a civil suit against Alcoa claiming that the company had overcharged for its alumina and used the earnings to bribe Bahraini public officials.

Victor Dahdaleh is alleged to have acted as an agent for Alcoa, the world's largest producer of aluminum, in the overcharging of Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), an aluminium producing firm owned by the Bahraini royal family, by USD\$65 million per annum between 1993 and 2007. It is claimed that the money from the overpayments were used to bribe Bahraini public officials.

The bringing of charges against Dahdaleh is the result of a two-year investigation conducted by the Serious Fraud Office, the United States Department of Justice and the Swiss authorities following a civil suit filed against Dahdaleh in the United States in 2008.

According to court documents

filed at the United States District Court of Pennsylvania in 2008, Alba believes that the alleged overpayments were used by "Dahdaleh-controlled companies" to "secretly pay bribes" and thus "defraud Alba."

Dahdaleh is "alleged to have made payments of bribes to officials of Alba," as well as further payments "made in connection with contracts to supply goods and services to Alba," said a spokesperson for the Serious Fraud Office.

According to a statement made by Dahdaleh's Lawyers, Allen and Overy, "Mr. Dahdaleh believes the investigation into his affairs was flawed and that he has done absolutely nothing wrong. He will be vigorously contesting these charges at every stage, confident in clearing his good name."

Dahdaleh is also a significant contributor to the William J. Clinton Foundation, listed in 2004 as a contributor at the "philanthropist level," and has contributed £15,000 to the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), a New Labour-aligned think tank.

Dahdaleh also sat on the LSE's Development Committee, which is responsible for the "solicitation of significant gifts to the School," and was the body responsible for accepting the donation of £2.5 million from the Emirates Foundation in exchange for the naming of the New Academic Building's Sheikh Zayed Theatre.

A cached version, dated 20th October

>> 3



Yuan Guiren, Minister of Education in the People's Republic of China
Photo: Nigel Stead

LSE lecturers broadcast to Gaza

Nicola Alexander

The LSE Palestine Society has extended its academic programme with the Islamic University of Gaza to include lectures by LSE Professors. Academics in the Departments of International Relations, Law and History have agreed to participate in the scheme by delivering lectures via online video conferencing.

LSE applications rise amid UK drop

>> 4 The LSE has seen an increase in applications, despite a drop in the total number of applications to UK universities by twelve per cent in comparison with this time last year. Some people have pointed to the rise in tuition fees as an important cause in the drop, though others have argued it's too early to make such a conclusion. An LSE spokesman said that the School usually sees a peak in applications before the 15th October deadline for Oxbridge and courses in Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine.

The decision to twin the LSE Students' Union with the Islamic University of Gaza was passed at the Union General Meeting (UGM) on 26th November 2009, in order to "show solidarity with the students there who have had their campus bombed and their colleagues killed by the Israeli Occupation Forces." Proposer of the motion, Samer Araabi, stated that the twinning was in "no way a sign of support for Hamas" but to support the people of Gaza and their right to

Islamic Society holds Charity Week

>> 4 The LSE Islamic Society hosted its Charity Week. The International Food Fiesta featured food from all over the world while Krispy Kreme donuts, homemade cupcakes and pies were sold throughout the week. Students with Mario, Luigi and Batman costumes also attracted much attention. The inflated Mr. Blobby was one of the highlights of the day, as he capered happily across campus. Other events include a donation collection at a tube station, sport competitions and a trip to feed the homeless.

education. Prior to this, the Students' Union was twinned with the An-Najah National University in the Middle East since January 2007, but this expired in November 2009.

The academic programme was first established as part of the Palestine Society's "Right to Education" campaign, launched in 2010, under which the UGM motion was also launched. Originally the programme just partnered LSE students with their counterparts at

>> 6

High turnout for SU Election Night

>> 3 Thirteen positions were voted on by 1,782 students last week. The results were announced at the Results Night held in the Quad on Thursday evening, an event that was attended by many students. Several of the attendants noted the high turnout, with Alex Peters-Day noting "It is a great sign that students feel engaged with the Students' Union and want to become more involved with representation and the decision-making bodies within the school."

Chinese Education Minister visits LSE

Bethany Clarke

H.E. Yuan Guiren, Minister of Education in the People's Republic of China, visited the LSE last Friday as part of his three-day official visit of the UK. The LSE was the only university he visited during his trip.

Upon arriving, Yuan was greeted by Judith Rees, Interim Director of the LSE, and Janet Hartley, Pro-Director at the School. He met with academics at the School, as well as with students from the Confucius Institute for Business London (CIBL) and the LSE's Language Learning Centre.

As part of his visit, Yuan donated 100 classical Chinese texts to the School. In a short speech, he thanked the LSE for the care and service the School provides for over 750 students from the Chinese Mainland attending LSE, and discussed on the importance of continued cooperation between the LSE and China.

Rees thanked the Minister for his generous donation and noted that,

with the exception of students from the United States, students from Mainland China and Hong Kong make up the largest group of students from outside the EU at the LSE.

She said, "Not only do many of our academics work in areas that link to China, but we have forged close and mutually beneficial partnerships with three prestigious Chinese universities, so it was a pleasure to host Minister Yuan and introduce him to the School." The LSE currently has partnerships with Peking University, Fudan University and Tsinghua University.

Following the donation, a set of short films outlining the activities of the CIBL was shown. The CIBL, which was established in 2006 and was the first Confucius Institute, works to equip Western businessmen and women with valuable Mandarin business skills.

Before leaving, the Minister spoke briefly with several of the students attending the event.

Chris Cubitt, a third year BSc Government and Economics student currently enrolled in the Beginners Mandarin

>> 6

Editorial Board

Executive Editor

Nicola Alexander
editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Managing Editor

Duncan McKenna
managing@thebeaveronline.co.uk

News Editors

Bethany Clarke
Heather Wang
Sydney Saubestre
news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Comment Editor

Rimmel Mohyidin
comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Features Editor

Alex Haigh
Gurdeep Chhina
features@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Design Editor

Ahmed Alami
design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Social Editor

Shrina Poojara
social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Sport Editors

Maz Fletcher
Maxim Owen
sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

PartB Editors

Kerry-Rose O'Donnell
Aameer Patel
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Photo Editor

Aisha Doherty
photo@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Web Editor

Liam Brown
web@thebeaveronline.co.uk

General Manager

Anoli Mehta
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Collective Chair

Chris Rogers

With thanks to our

Copy Editors

Kanika Singh
Ehae Longe
Lisa Strygina
Alex Alisson

Union Bashō

Spoiling the mood

Always, after each election, the big question: who'll clear up the mess?

Bashō is the Beaver's evasive haiku poet and goes to the Union General Meeting so you don't have to.

That was cancelled last week, so we asked him to write a bit on the election. Unsurprisingly, he just recycled his old work.



The Beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 755

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

Crying over spilt motions

It seems that the new representatives of our student body, whether those elected to the Students' Union, to a society or leading a motion at the UGM, are still in the teething stages of their new-found power. Whilst their faux-angst was cute on the off-set we are beginning to tire of their lack of professionalism. Here are the facts, kids; if you choose to run for or to elect yourself to a position in which you will have significant power, then you will have to be accountable. Democracy bites back. For some reason this seemingly obvious fact has caught the new representatives rather unawares. So let us take this precious opportunity to educate them on what it means to be professional.

Every politician seems to understand that the media is not there to act as a side-kick to their every excessive expenditure, strip club venture or backhand deal. Rather, the position of the media is to pick up on these infi-

delities, scandals and errors in judgement and report it. This understanding managed to permeate through to last year's student leaders and to those of the year before, yet our latest set just don't seem to have caught on yet.

It is unsurprising to us that when you see your name in print, before the eyes of over 9,000 students, you might be upset. I imagine that Kumar, Gerada and Fischer all had tears well in their eyes at one point or another - and yet they never once rang up the Editor to berate or swear at them. I have a feeling that several students who stood up at the UGM were upset to see their motions bashed to pieces by the paper - and didn't run crying to Facebook. I know for fact that the heads of the Palestine and Israel Societies were not too amused by what was written about their societies - and yet they were always available for comment and a pleasure to speak to.

We're going to say this once only;

we show you respect... you need to show us some respect. You will always be approached for a quote and when you see that quote in print it will be accurate and as full as possible. When you have a complaint with the paper, we will always sit down with you and try to resolve the issue. We will apologise where there is a mistake on our part (rare though that is). If you would like to write a letter, it will be published. These are the professional routes to take.

Be warned that we are fast tiring of your immature behaviour. Many before you have handled the media attention that comes with power, with grace, dignity and respect. You have not so far.

Collective

Presca Ahn; Raidev Akoi; Ahmed Alani; Nicola Alexander; Hasib Baber; Fadhil Baker-Markar; Vishal Banerjee; Ramsey Ben-Achour; Alex Blanc; Liam Brown; James Bull; Georgina Butler; Benjamin Butterworth; Adam Burk; Bobby Cee; Simon Chaudhuri; Gurdeep Chhina; Bethany Clarke; Oliver Courtney; Tomas Da-Costa; Aisha Doherty; Eden Dwek; Kareem Elsaawi; Allie Fonarev; Katy Galbraith; Yan Giet; Justin Gest; Ira Goldstein; Aula Hariri; Yisum Heneghon; Charlie Hodgson; Tahiya Islam; Harriet Jackson; Judith Jacob; Felipe Jacome; Alex Jones; Megan Jones; Naeem Kapadia; Sam Tempest Keeping; Pooja Kesavan; Vivek Kotecha; Andreas Kuersten; Ashok Kumar; Daniel Lahey; Dominic Lam; Elizabeth Lowell; Jamie Mason; Duncan McKenna; Nitya Menon; Anna Makeda; Rimmel Mohyidin; Vincent Mok; Maaiké Mossel; Aditi Nangia; Bianca Nardi; Chu Ting Ng; Brett Noble; Kerry-Rose O'Donnell; Kyle Packer; Aameer Patel; Anup Patel; Rajan Patel; Sachin Patel; John Peart; Alex Peters-Day; Chloe Pieters; Shrina Poojara; Danielle Priestley; Pern-Yi Quah; Rahim Rahemtulla; Annika Ranga; Anjali Raval; Ricky Ren; Aimee Riase; Chris Rogers; Leonora Rumsey; Conor Rushby; Ahman Sahni; Thienthai Sangkhaphanthanon; Amrita Saraogi; Lukas Slothuus; Luke Smolinski; Katerina Soukeras; Andre Tartar; Kerry Thompson; Jack Tindale; Vladimir Unkovski-Korica; Aliabbas Virani; Heather Wang; Sam Williams; Matthew Willis; Chris Wilkins; Oliver Wiseman; Natalie Wong; Vincent Wong; Daniel Yates; Alexander Young.

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

collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk

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

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

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

As promised...

The Beaver's highest class of Editors went on their excursion last week, venturing forth into the land of tassels and velvet.

Check out the Social section for a 'blow-by-blow' account of their rather special evening.

Collective Meeting

This is where the whole paper - editors, contributors and fans - come together to celebrate all things Beaver. There will be updates from all the editors and as promised last week (and the week before), the Beaver will be holding elections for Editorial Board positions. The elections will be held on Tuesday 8 November 2011, in room 3.07 Clement House at 6.30pm. The following positions is available on the Editorial Board:

• Photo Editor (x1)

The usual word limit of a 150-word manifesto must be emailed in by 12:00pm Friday 4 November. Send your manifesto to collective@thebeaveronline.co.uk. You will also be required to prepare a 1 minute speech, which will be followed by questions. You must be a member of the Collective to vote, although any non-collective members are also eligible to stand for the position. However, elections are open to all, so whether you're running, voting or just interested in the Beaver, come one, come all and witness the wonders of democracy first hand.

» continued from page 1

2011, of the Development Committee membership list published on the School's website lists Dahdaleh as a current member. At the time of print, Dahdaleh's name has been removed. The Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Foundation funded one scholarship for Palestinian students of £25,000 for the MSc Global Politics programme, co-ordinated by the now defunct LSE Global Governance. LSE Global Governance was the recipient of part of the £1.5 million donated to the LSE by the Gaddafi International Charity and De-

velopment Foundation (GICDF). The School had received £300,000 of this donation before events in Libya and following student pressure prompted the School to refuse the remainder and pledge the money received to scholarship funds. Alex Peters-Day, LSE Students' Union General Secretary, commented that any campaign pertaining to Dahdaleh's donations to the School, in the vein of those related to the GICDF donations, was "undecided" at the current time, but added that the Students' Union would be keeping a "close eye on developments." The LSE is part of the Alcoa Foundation's USD\$8.6 million Conservation and Sustainability Fellowship

programme, a six-year initiative supported by the Foundation designed to "advance the knowledge and support for exemplary work in the field of conservation and sustainability through fellowships to outstanding academics at select universities," and in so doing providing funding for the research of thirty academic fellows. Speaking to the Beaver in 2008, a spokesperson for the School denied that Dahdaleh had any role in the application process or on the programme as a whole. Speaking to the Beaver a spokesperson for the LSE said, "LSE has carefully considered the position of Victor Dahdaleh as a governor of LSE following reports of his arrest by the Serious Fraud Office on 24 October," adding

that, "The School is mindful that Victor Dahdaleh faces serious allegations, however the case against him is ongoing and he has not been found guilty of any crime. Mr Dahdaleh has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty and so will remain a governor of the School while the case proceeds. The School will reconsider his position once a verdict has been reached." The spokesperson also said, "Mr Dahdaleh is one of 80 lay members of LSE's Court of Governors, all of whom carry the honorific title of 'governor'. He is not a member of Council, which is the governing body of the School, or any of its sub-committees."

News in brief

CONVENTIONAL POLICING CHALLENGED

The Howard League for Penal Reform and the Mannheim Centre at the LSE, published its first of a series of pamphlets entitled "What If...?" The title of the pamphlet is "In praise of fire brigade policing: challenging the police role," which aims to challenge the traditional thinking on penal structures. The first seminar was held last Thursday. In the pamphlet, it is suggested that "what the police are really needed for is as the crucial emergency service for a host of troubles of which crime is only a small part."

UK NATIONAL SECURITY AT RISK

The LSE Professor Gwyn Prins warned that the UK can no longer engage in effective national strategy as it once did. To make the situation worse, the National Security Council (NSC) is not able to address the problem of future security threats, as it lacks the method and institutional framework to do so. The paper stated that "the failure to effect a reliable and credible introduction of grand and operational strategic insights into ministerial policy-making, has left the Ministry of Defence without secure guidelines..."

TRIUM SECOND BEST IN THE WORLD

The TRIUM Global Executive MBA programme, an alliance between the LSE, New York University Stern School of Business and HEC School of Management, Paris, has been ranked second by the Financial Times annual ranking of Executive MBA programs. Judith Rees, Interim Director of the School, said: "TRIUM is an international success because its participants learn to think internationally and to combine rigorous academic standards with the drive and passion of their business lives..."

LSE SCULPTURE HIGHLY ACCLAIMED

A Richard Wilson's sculpture, which was installed on the corner of the LSE's New Academic Building in 2009, has been named as one of the top ten public contemporary art works in London by ArtLyst, one of the most comprehensive resource websites for contemporary art in London. The School invested over £500,000 into contemporary art for the New Academic Building. As the corner of building looks like it has been sliced away to facilitate passers-by, Wilson added a new corner section made from vertical slices of the rest of the building.

LEGAL AID REFORM: FALSE ECONOMY

Laura Bradley, a senior research fellow at the LSE's strategic society centre, argued that the legal aid reforms are a false economy and the cuts could mean that taxpayers had to pay more than before. An LSE study showed that the people qualified for legal aid who instead receive other sources of help were more likely to go to court than wealthier people using similar types of services. Bradley further argued: "If legal aid is cut, poorer people who currently consult expert services will need to turn to alternative services whose track record in avoiding court or tribunal is worse."

GOT A SCOOP?

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

Students sleep out for the homeless

Harry Burdon

On Thursday 3rd November from 10pm, a substantial number of LSE students are set to be sleeping rough on Houghton Street. They will be raising money for Anchor House, a charity for the homeless. The rules are no tents and get at least £10 of sponsorship, either from others or from the participant him/herself. Until last Sunday, there were already 42 confirmed sleep-outers on the Facebook event.

Co-organiser of the event Dina Fahmy, a third year Law student, said the students were looking for a "grass roots project" - something "closer to home." There are an estimated 400,000 homeless in the UK. The organising group of students considered their options for helping the homeless, and felt that simply providing food may perpetuate the problem. The organisers were drawn to Anchor House because their approach was considered to be sustainable and have a range of long-term benefits. The organisers contest the view that homelessness can be passed off as self-inflicted. Anchor House does more than

provide accommodation for the homeless and work on rehabilitation; they help them rejoin society and the workforce. They claim to work on the root cause of why the person is homeless. Anchor House provides accredited vocational training courses and job guidance, along with striving to improve the homeless' health and getting the homeless involved with volunteering. Dina Fahmy touts the transparency of the charity, with the use of money made public. Organisers of the sleep out are hoping that the event will raise £1000. Sponsorship can be made online, or alternatively there will be a collection

bucket on the night. Those who find the thought of baring the November weather too much are encouraged to sponsor instead. The event will not be wholly without luxury: tea will be provided. Beyond the sleep out, a "Citizens Rally" is in the works in the coming months. The plan is for members of the government responsible for tackling the issue of homelessness to be speakers, and having homeless people in the audience. This could allow for a dialogue between the policy creators and those directly affected.

Packed ballot inspires students

John Armstrong

Students filled the Quad last Thursday for the results night of the LSE Students' Union's Michaelmas term elections. With thirteen positions up for grabs, 1,782 students voted online, a 50 per cent rise from last year. Candidates were elected to the positions of Postgraduate Officer, Mature and Part Time Students' Officer, General Course President, LSE Academic Board Members (three positions), LSE Court of Governors Representatives (five positions) and LSE Delegates to the National Conference (two positions). Josh Still, the LSE Students' Union Returning Officer, commented last week that, "The candidates who succeed in these elections will be making decisions that may impact on every-

body's experience here at the LSE." Still went on to say that the thirteen positions were filled by "the broadest range of candidates ever." The evening was marked by a sense of excitement and unity among those running for positions. Some candidates noticed a striking difference between this year's elections and those held last year. Jack Tindale, Union General Meeting Chair and newly elected LSE Court of Governors Representative, commented, "I had no issues whatsoever with regards to the conduct of the campaign. Indeed, relations on campus seem a lot warmer and more co-operative than last year. I think this was why so many more people were running for election." James Maltz, Lydia Pointner, Sharafath Khandoker and Ankur Kumar Sharma were also elected to be Court of Governors Representatives. In response to the increased

turnout, Alex Peters-Day, General Secretary of the Students' Union, commented, "It is a great sign that students feel engaged with the Students' Union and want to become more involved with representation and the decision-making bodies within the school." Newly elected Postgraduate Officer Robin Burrett said, "The surprise of the night was the high turnout." Burrett, who is an active member of the Socialist Workers Student Society (SWSS), promised he will work to secure a "fair deal for graduate teachers" and "to build the widest possible fight on campus against austerity." The position of Mature and Part Time Students' Officer was filled by Mairead Moore, who was elated with her victory and later thanked all her supporters via Facebook, a medium which, along with posters and fliers, candidates relied upon for publicity. Alec Webley, Shrey Sanger and Nihad Ahmed became members of the

Academic Board. Dan Roberts gained 59 per cent of the total votes to become General Course President, and aims to use his position to maximise the experience of General Course students. Eden Dwek and Mohamed Harrath were elected as the LSE Delegates to the National Congress (NUS), a role which seeks to ensure "equality of opportunity for all." Harrath, a first year student at the LSE, promises to "fight against the marketisation of Higher Education" and is the self-proclaimed "loud and persistent voice" of the LSE. Peters-Day said of the elections, "It is more important than ever to have students' voices heard within the Union, the school and the NUS. I am confident that all the newly elected students will do a brilliant job campaigning, representing and ensuring that both the school and the wider world are listening to students."



Students celebrated Diwali in the Quad on last Tuesday, 25th October. Photo: LSE SPICE Society

LSE applications rise amid national decrease

Stephanie Gale

The LSE has seen an increase in its number of applicants, despite a twelve per cent decrease in the total number of students who have applied to university through UCAS compared to the time last year.

Although many are pointing to the recent increase of tuition fees by the Government to up to £9000 a year as a possible explanation for the national trend, others argue that it is too early to establish such a causal relationship.

Statistics published by UCAS revealed that only 52,321 students from within the UK applied by 15th

October (the deadline for Oxford and Cambridge and courses in Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine) compared with 59,413 students this time last year. In contrast, applications to the LSE have gone up in the same period in comparison with previous years.

Universities and politicians have been concerned that an increase in tuition fees will be a deterrent to university for many, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It has not yet been investigated whether or not those from low-income families have been deterred, although some feel strongly that this is the case. According to the Guardian, Tessa Stone, chief executive of Brightside, an education charity, commented: "I would bet that

the most disadvantaged young people have been put off." Similarly, academics like Callender and Jackson have found that students from lower social classes are more debt averse than those from other classes and are far more likely to be deterred from going to university or training because of fear of debt.

However, some think it is too early to draw these conclusions. Nicola Dandridge, chief executive of the umbrella group for vice chancellors, Universities UK, suggested that application figures at the end of October are historically proven to be unreliable indicators of the final numbers and it may be the case that "students are taking a little longer this year to consider their options," the Guardian reported.

Moreover, there is much speculation about whether or not the LSE's decision to set fees at £8500 is linked to this new increase in applications to the university. Some have pointed to the increase in applications to the University of Bath and Queen Mary University despite their setting of fees at £9,000 as evidence that the LSE's new popularity is not necessarily linked to its fees. Jenni Black, a second year Bsc Government undergraduate, commented: "It's probably just as likely that as fees are so high now people really want to make a degree worth it by going to a really good university."

Some other students, however, disagreed. "It might not be the only reason why, but it's certainly a factor," said Rosa Payne, a second year BA

International History student. She added that the emerging figures "show that people recognise that the LSE has considered potential students and issues of widening participation" when setting its fees.

An LSE spokesperson said: "The Oxbridge deadline of 15th October usually results in a peak in applications to the School around that time. However, we expect the rate of applications to LSE to even out in the coming months. We will continue to monitor applications received throughout the UCAS admissions cycle until the closing date of 15 January, and report patterns to the Academic Planning and Resources Committee (APRC) as usual."

Putting a fire under the White Paper

Sydney Saubestre

The National Demonstration, a city-wide student protest against the proposed education cuts outlined in the government's Higher Education White Paper, is fast approaching. With 9th November in mind, the Students' Union has increased its effort to raise student awareness and involvement on campus by hosting a lecture this week.

The lecture, entitled "White Paper: What Everyone Needs to Know," took place last Wednesday in anticipation of the Demo. Organised by Amena Amer, LSE Students' Union Educa-

tion Officer, its aim was to clarify what practical impacts the White Paper will have and what students can do to oppose it. The event featured Professor Mary Evans from the University of Kent; Professor John Holmwood from the University of Nottingham; Mark Campbell, University College Union Chair, and student activist Samir Karnik Hinks from King's College London. A dozen students and professors were in attendance.

Amer originally mobilised the four speakers to help educate students about the contents of the White Paper and to encourage the LSE student body to protest if they felt passionately about it.

"A lot of people didn't know that this was an issue. And though feel

that the issue has already been settled, there are plenty of things to be fighting for," Amer said, "while it's important to recognize that this year is different from last year, we've been trying to get more people involved; our hope is not lost, we're just going to have to do some extra work"

Among other things, the White Paper proposes to cap the total number of students in the British Higher Education system, to allow top universities to compete for top students and to allow for private investment into public universities.

At the heart of the White Paper is the commodification of education. All four speakers were concerned with what education and knowledge would come to mean if commoditised.

Increasing fees and asking students to rely more on loan-backed fees, raise the risk of further perpetuating higher education to become a privilege for those of greater socio-economic means. Mr. Campbell was the most vocal speaker in asserting that this was a "social justice issue that will reduce the future number of first generation and minority students attending universities."

The argument for higher fees often sites how teaching quality will increase. However, this actually may reduce the number of hours dedicated to students and the variety of courses taught at a given institution. The unintended effects will be dire, and according to Professor Evans, have not been properly looked at.

"The assumption that the private sector is better equipped to handle issues than the public sector has already been proven wrong," Professor Evans said, "It's an ignorant document, written as an assertion rather than an argument. It's an attack on knowledge, on thinking ideas through."

The other speakers shared Professor Evans' concern that these reforms will fundamentally change the ethos of public education.

Mr. Karnik Hinks argued that when "education becomes commoditised, the idea of knowledge for knowledge's sake becomes lost. At the end of the day, we have to decide what type of education we want to fight for."

Charity Week hits Houghton Street

Shu Hang

The Charity Week held by the LSE Islamic Society ended on a high note with the International Food Fiesta, which features food from all other world including Malaysia, Turkey, India and Bangladesh. Passers-by on Houghton Street were able to satiate their hunger with exotic dishes such as Malaysian Chicken Rice, Bondia, Kalojaam, Turkish pastry and much more. The food sold was freshly cooked and prepared by volunteers, who had stayed up into the early hours of the morning to prepare.

The event was part of Charity Week, which was organised by the University of London Islamic Society and hosted by Islamic societies in universities across the UK. Accord-

ing to Fatema Begum, Charity Week Representative of the Islamic Society, the motivation behind holding Charity Week is for members to unite to achieve something noble, while building up their confidence and "having fun." The money raised will go to orphans and needy children across the world.

Begum said that the society also does it to please their God. "Everything we do is for our God," she said, "doing this will benefit us in this life and the life after."

Charity Week saw collaborations with many societies in the LSE, such as the Palestine Society, the Bangladesh Society and the Mixed Martial Arts Society. Lois Clifton, Ethics and Environment Officer, also lent a helping hand by setting up a second-hand clothes shop on Tuesday.

Throughout the week, Krispy Kreme donuts, homemade cupcakes and pies were sold in a stall set up by

the Islamic Society. Demand for the colourful array of pastries was strong as they were sold out in a matter of hours. Meanwhile, volunteers could be spotted on Houghton Street donning costumes of popular fictional characters such as Mario, Luigi and Batman with a bucket in their hands. Cardboard karts were slung over Mario and Luigi's shoulders, paying tribute to the Mario Kart video game series. However, the spotlight was stolen by Mr Blobby, an inflated monster with a big smile on its face, whose body bobbed as it skipped cheerfully across the campus. Students were amused and intimidated at the same time when pestered by the pink entity to drop their change into the bucket.

The Islamic Society also extended their fundraising effort off-campus. On Wednesday, collectors took their buckets to one of the busiest tube stations in London, Chancery Lane, in a bid to gather more donations. Shara-

fath Khandoker, president of the Islamic Society, lavished praise on Nadia Yasmin, who was awarded "Best Tube Collector" by Charity Week, beating fellow collectors from other universities. Her persistence and enthusiasm in imploring "lawyers and bankers" to donate helped the society collect £653 on that single day alone. Volunteers also collected money from gyms and the Friday Congregation.

Other activities held included sports competitions between Islamic Societies from universities in London and a trip to feed the homeless on

Sunday.

Khandoker is pleased with the range and creativity of the activities held this year, and thanked his "brothers and sisters" who contributed to this event, which took weeks to prepare for. He singled out Fatema Begum for being the main driving force of Charity Week, especially now she managed to persuade members to participate and "put on silly costumes" for the event. He also praised her for her grace in enduring late-night phone calls from him ordering her to perform last-minute tasks for the event.



Photo: Annie Ren



Photo: Shu Hang

IMF Deputy Managing Director talks world economy



Nemat Shafik
Photo: flickr user DFID - UK Department for International Development

Goreti Faria

Nemat Shafik, better known as Minouche Shafik, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), spoke to a packed Sheikh Zayed Theatre at the LSE on 26th October. The lecture addressed the question "The World Economy: How Did We Get Here and Where Are We Going?"

An audience of students, professors and the public filled the auditorium. Tomas Salmium, a MSc International Relations student, said that he came because "as we are surrounded by world crises, it might be interesting to hear the views of the people behind the news."

As a former LSE student, Shafik was introduced by the lecture chair, Professor George Gaskell, in a rather familiar manner. After a couple of jokes, the economics talk started.

The lecture focused on the problems that the world economy is facing, stressing the contribution of a slow underlying growth, crisis of confidence – a change in preferences from risky assets to "safe-haven" ones – and bad interactions. The slowdown of US consumption and the existence of inequalities in several countries were also said to have played an important role in leading to the current situation and in posing potential threats to the future. The downside risks of high saving rates in several countries – the global paradox of thrift – were also deemed to be an importance factor.

Shafik's lecture then went on to discuss possible routes for avoiding

pessimistic expectations turning into reality. Among these possible routes, it was mentioned that surplus countries should import more, more effort should be put in reducing inequalities, and collective action in the form of public finance, fiscal policy and monetary policy is needed. Shafik said that "we are not worried about inflation; right now monetary policy should be worried about supporting growth."

The need to pay attention to emerging market economies was also stressed, as "they need to be ready to be shifted if growth slows down considerably." Shafik also emphasised the importance of globalization and co-operation among countries.

Shafik spoke fondly of her time at LSE, mentioning that she still keeps her notes next to her in her IMF office.

After the lecture, a number of questions were raised by the floor. A question regarding the work of Christine Lagarde was addressed. Shafik responded: "I'm not going to talk about my boss in public... But I think she is doing well." When asked if she enjoyed working at the IMF, Shafik wittily said: "Apart from the bad coffee, it was a very nice place to work."

Sophie Desmidt, a MSc student studying Global Politics, thought the lecture was too "politically correct." She said that the lecture was "quite interesting, but her answers were a bit prepared and suitable for someone who has to defend an international institution. The answers given were a bit predictable." However, Desmidt also added that the overall balance of the conference was good, as it was inspiring for an LSE student to hear a former LSE student who is now working at the IMF.

Leunig ponders "fairer" postgraduate finance

Connor Russell

The current system for financing postgraduate study leads to substantially fewer students choosing to continue their studies, according to a paper published by Dr. Tim Leunig, a Reader in Economic History at the LSE. The document, published by the liberal think tank CentreForum, proposes a postgraduate students loan system similar to the controversial new undergraduate loan regimen coming into force in 2012.

The proposed system would mean the government making a loan of up to £10,000 available to newly graduated students, which would be repayable once the student was earning upwards of £15,000 per annum.

Dr. Leunig said, "The government has the opportunity to increase the number and range of people able to study at the highest level, at no medium term cost to itself. This proposal should be seen as both a contribution to the government's commitment to raising the rate of growth, and to its commitment to ensure that 'No one

should be prevented from fulfilling their potential by the circumstances of their birth."

Dr. Leunig supports his proposition with the calculation that graduate students contribute an average additional £67,000 (men) or £44,000 (women) to the Treasury over the course of their lifetime. To this end, the paper argues that not only would such a system improve social mobility within the UK, but also be one of the most sound investments in human capital that the state can make.

The publication of the paper has been acknowledged within the education sector as well as by the government. Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister, said, "Access to postgraduate degrees is important in promoting social mobility. I welcome CentreForum's report." This has not been followed by any concrete proposals, and with the estimated upfront cost of Leunig's proposition being £0.5-1bn per year, implementing it may not be at the top of the government's policy-making agenda. The paper argues that long term benefits would outweigh this cost, and sets the scene for what could be a more prolonged campaign on the topic, given its wide-reaching social advantages.

The LSE currently charges a variety of fees for one-year graduate programmes, varying mainly within the range of £10,000 and £25,000 for Home and EU students – placing the cost of tuition above Dr Leunig's proposed loan limit. The loan itself would only be open to UK-domiciled students due to its classification as a maintenance loan. In comparison to the current system, whereby 2 per cent of students receive a loan via the government's Career Development Loans system and primarily research-driven candidates are considered for Research Council grants, the proposed system is intended to make it much easier for more undergraduates to take their studies further while maintaining a secure funding stream for universities.

The paper was welcomed by the NUS, despite their opposition to a similar system being imposed on undergraduates, and their stance favours a fees cap on postgraduate study. NUS Connect, the NUS' online publication stated, "The fact that proposals are going forward to address the funding shortfall at postgraduate level is very welcome and we should applaud any effort to address this problem."

LSE SU RAG GETS LOST

is back on Saturday 26th November!



We're having a meeting on Tuesday
1st November in CON 2.04 at 6:30

Come along to find out more

If you have any questions please contact
Dom at d.baldwin@lse.ac.uk

» continued
from page 1

Modern Foreign Language Degree Course said, "I personally thought that the ambassador was impressed by the fact that students from such varied backgrounds...were taking the opportunity to learn Mandarin at LSE as part of our degree."

This year is the first year that the LSE is offering Mandarin Chinese as an option in the Modern Foreign Lan-

guage Programme, which means that students can now study Mandarin as part of their degrees. It is currently being offered at Beginner and Advanced levels, with plans to expand next year. The Language Centre is also working on a summer exchange programme to send students taking Mandarin to China over the summer vacation period.

The LSE also offers Mandarin Courses as part of its Modern Foreign Language Certificate Course programme. In total, there are around 400 students currently studying Mandarin at the LSE.



Yuan Guiren and Judith Rees
Photo: Nigel Stead

Israel society discusses a two-state solution

Naomi Russell

The LSE Students' Union's Israeli Society held a panel discussion in order to provide students with an Israeli and Zionist perspective on "The Two State Solution: Where next?" The event took place last Tuesday evening and was well attended, with over a hundred students and guests turning out to listen to the panel made up of five speakers from across the Israeli and British Zionist spectrum.

The event was chaired by Professor Emeritus Kenneth Minogue and the panel consisted of Michael Brodsky, Director of Public Affairs Israeli Embassy UK, Dr Tony Klug, Special Advisor on the Middle East to the Oxford Research Group, Professor Alan Johnson, BICOM [Britain Israeli Communications and Research Centre], Dimi Reider, +972 Contributing Editor and Yossi Mekelberg, Associate Fellow, Middle East and North Africa Programme.

The topic of discussion was whether or not a two-state solution

remains a viable option in the pursuit of a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. There was a clear lack of consensus amongst the panellists. Some of the most disputed issues included whether or not there is active support for the idea of a two state solution on the ground, as well as whether or not international intervention is either desirable or helpful.

The panellists also disagreed as to whether Israeli desire for international recognition is necessary or demeaning. Mekelberg described it as being as ludicrous as Britain requesting the recognition of France in order to be an Anglican state, an analogy which was hotly disputed by panel and audience members alike.

Reider insisted that a one state solution is no more idealistic than a two state solution, a claim that was not popular with the other panellists and several members of the audience. Emily Lewsen, a student at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), expressed that she was "frustrated to see four two state advocates against a single individual promoting the idea of a one state solution."

When questioning was opened to the floor Hiba Darwish, Vice-President of the Palestinian Society, spoke to offer an alternative view on the issues under scrutiny.

Darwish later commented that "as a Palestinian it was very interesting to hear Jewish and Israeli opinions, and new ideas and voices within Israelis' that call upon their government to end settlement. There is acceptance by Israelis that the Israeli government is putting obstacles in the way of a peace settlement. Tonight we heard five voices, all Israelis, all different opinions."

The event ran smoothly, with lively and, at times, heated debate. The organisers were clearly pleased with the success of the event. Aimee Riese, President of the Israel Society, commented, "We were delighted to host such a panel of distinguished speakers...the quality of the audience engagement with the panel in the question period hopefully demonstrated a successful forum for discussion."

» continued
from page 1

the Islamic University of Gaza in a mentoring initiative. Last year, LSE students partnered with "pen-pals" at the Middle-Eastern university using skype and e-mail. However, the Palestinian Society has decided to invite academic involvement to provide better support for the students there.

Zach Sammour, last year's President of the Palestine Society and main organiser of the academic programme, said that the partnership between the Students' Union and the Islamic University of Gaza "was primarily in-

tended to serve as a solidarity gesture between the students of the LSE and our counterparts at IUG. Subsequently, we have attempted to utilise the twinning to provide as much academic and social support to the students at the IUG as possible."

LSE Professors will be broadcasting their lectures live to an audience of students and academics in Gaza via video conferencing. This will allow the students there to engage directly with the Professors by asking questions. The syllabus for the lectures has not yet been confirmed by the academic staff.

Sammour commented: "The supporting materials will either be written by the lecturers themselves or sourced from open-access online libraries, and as such we do not anticipate there

being any issues relating to infringements of intellectual property." It is hoped that this term will focus on International Relations with two weeks of lectures given by Marco Pinfari, LSE fellow in International Relations. Lent term will focus on History and Law. Professor Gearty, who is involved in the Law lecturing for the programme said he is excited to be part of the project, commenting: "It is particularly great when an opportunity to engage in this way comes from an initiative launched by the student body itself. Education is vital in all societies but particularly those in which, for whatever reason, opportunity to learn is so restricted."

The Palestine Society's programme marks a significant milestone in international academic relations

with students in Gaza. Sammour said, "owing to the intense restrictions on the freedom of movement inside Gaza, social partnerships such as student or academic exchanges are almost impossible to organise. "As such, the work we carry out is primarily geared towards providing academic support and services online, though we have also organised social initiatives with students at IUG, such as online video conferences and a 'pen-friend' programme last year where LSE students were paired with IUG students via skype and e-mail," he added.

The 2009 motion to twin the LSE with the Islamic University of Gaza faced large opposition from many members of the Israeli and Jewish Societies at the time, who launched a "Hummus not Hamas" campaign to

create awareness of their perceived problems with the twinning. The Opposers of the motion alleged that Hamas had built the university, many prominent Hamas members had been educated at the University and that bombs and weaponry were built and stored in the basement of the establishment.

Aimee Riese, President of the Israel Society commented: "Although we do not agree about a formal twinning of the LSE with IUG, because of its alleged links with Hamas, we are of course committed to the principles of academic freedom. We support the sharing of academic ideas to promote dialogue, understanding and peace-values which the Israel Society stands for."

War crimes judge on international law

Alice Dawson

Judge Patrick Robinson, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Barrister of Law at Middle Temple, gave a public lecture entitled "Building an International Rule of Law" at the LSE on Thursday. The event was organised by the Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit.

Professor Christine Chinkin, Chair of the event, opened the event by saying that the Judge's "extensive and long legal experience" makes it "very hard to think of anyone who has a greater knowledge of both the intellectual underpinnings of international law...and practical experience of its operation."

The ICTY was set up by the United Nations in 1993 to deal with the war crimes committed in the Balkans during the 1990s. The trials of 126 defendants have since been concluded at the ICTY, and there are 35 ongoing trials.

Within his role at the ICTY, Robinson must "deal with situations in which the rule of law has failed." Notably, he presided over the trial of Slobodan Milosevic, Former President of Serbia and Yugoslavia, in 2004.

Speaking of his "profound sense of linkage" with the School, Robinson emphasised "the rich and historic relationship between the LSE and the region of my birth." He praised the School's "outstanding contribution" to providing tertiary education to Caribbean students.

Robinson outlined his "core fundamental values" of international law as "respect for the inherent dignity of the human person and the democratic governments." He included three further elements within the first: everyone should be equally entitled to the protection of international law; everyone should be equally accountable to it and all claims should be determined by an independent judiciary "as secured by constitutional guarantees of the highest order."

He went on to discuss the scope of international law, suggesting that it should encompass a range of areas from "the preservation of individual rights and democratic values, to the preservation of the environment, and to trade and economic relations between states."

Robinson argued that the culture of respect for international law is "a culture well worth building", adding that he remained optimistic that a rule of international law can be achieved

despite the numerous challenges facing it.

The Judge was inundated with questions from the audience at the end of his lecture. One member of the audience questioned whether full accountability to international law is an attainable ideal in the light of the ICTY's prosecution of people at the apex of war crimes, such as governmental leaders. Judge Robinson responded that, in terms of prosecuting the "smaller fry," work has been delegated so that the "judiciary in the region is fully able to continue the work," thereby maximising accountability to international law.

John Armstrong, a first year International Relations and History student, said that Robinson's lecture "provided an insight into the ways in which the work of the ICTY has changed the structure of international law."

The public lecture took place following the death of Judge Antonio Cassese, the first President of the ICTY and a leading figure in the field of international law, last weekend. Robinson paid tribute to his former colleague and highlighted his "seminal work in the area of international criminal justice."



Judge Patrick Robinson
Photo: Annie Ren

Comment

Why no one attends the UGM

The radical surgery necessary to revive the dying UGM

Alec Webley



The last three Union General Meetings (excepting the Postgraduate Hustings) have had dismal turnout; this trend looks set to continue into the foreseeable future. The reason is simple: there is absolutely no point to the UGM as it is presently constituted.

I am not making this point polemically. The UGM, which I will define as Thursday meetings from 1-2pm in the Old Theatre... and Jack Tindale, has no reason to exist. If you really passionately cared about student government, you too would not bother showing up.

Let me prove it to you by going through every reason someone who cared about the Union would not attend the UGM. Note: I'm already treating those who don't care, namely 80 per cent of the student population, as a lost cause.

But let us turn to those few – those happy few – who actually give a toss about the university and the Students' Union. They need never attend the UGM because anything you could do at the UGM itself can be done far more easily outside it.

Union Officer reports can be read online. Questions and clarifications can be posed to them in person, or via email, where you can engage in an actual colloquy to get your question answered.

Motions, the heart and soul of the UGM, have been summarily excluded from it. Motions must be proposed

online, amendments must be proposed online, voting must be done online. Given all this, why on earth would you waste an hour listening to debate on them? Why would you encourage your friends to attend a meeting where no matter what happens in it, nothing will change? That's even assuming we achieve the ever-elusive quorum of 250, which has proven just as hard to get online as it was in the days of physical voting.

Motions themselves are seldom powerful because those who hold the real power – the officers and the administrators of the Students' Union – can, quite frankly, ignore them if they disagree with them. The money, wherein lies all power, is firmly in the hands of the Board of Trustees and the Activities Committee. Suppose the UGM decided otherwise – who cares? To misquote Andrew Jackson, seventh President of the United States: the UGM makes its decision; now let it enforce it.

So we have reached a crossroads: should the UGM live or die? We could quite easily kill it and replace it with a Union Council (perhaps delegating to such a Council the functions of the Board of Trustees as well as the making of policy motions), elected each year. That Council could hold public meetings every Thursday from 1-2pm and most likely most students wouldn't know the difference. It would also bring us into line with our peer schools.

But if you're not ready to give up on direct democracy quite yet, then the course is clear. The UGM is dying. Only radical surgery can revive it. Three operations could be helpful.

First, voting must be taken offline and moved back to the UGM. Decisions should be made by those who

show up; LSE schedules nothing during the UGM, so there is no excuse for people to not appear if they want to vote. Perhaps allow supplementary online voting for a week afterwards, but weigh online votes at half of physical votes for the purposes of quorum. This allows for participation of non-attendees while prioritizing actual attendance.

Second, while motions should still be submitted online (using a much easier-to-use system than the present email-it-in system), amendments, votes of procedure, and similar initiatives should be allowed spontaneously.

Perhaps an innocuous motion will suddenly be turned into a stunningly sweeping declaration of liberal market economics – or socialism! Who knows? Find out at the UGM!

Third, devolve much more power to the UGM. Let the UGM vote on Societies and Athletes' Union budgets and event proposals (on the recommendations of the Activities Committee, who can provide the expert scrutiny). Let the UGM approve the Union's total budget. Let a failure of a motion to approve supply shut down the Union. There must be consequences to democratic choice or it is

not democracy.

This program, combined with sensible agenda reform that would banish oral reports from officers and replace them with questions on tabled reports, could well revive and restore the UGM to its former glory. But no half-measures will do: it is the do or die moment for our faded old Union General Meetings. All that remains is the question of whether our officers, who are the only people with enough clout to push the amendments above through quorum, will answer to the call of duty.



The real change we need

Chris Rogers would have us fire half the Sabbatical Officers and stop paying the rest

Chris Rogers



Let's examine the role of the Students' Union Executive. We pay them £27,500 each – that's £110,000 a year. And no-one really seems to care what they do. Terrific value for money. Or we could devote all our money to free pizzas for everyone. Personally, I think that would amount to about the same level of utility, for those utilitarians amongst you. The only other thing I can perceive that one or two do is to use their positions and as a result, the Students' Union budget to try and launch a communist coup d'etat and take over government, or at least bring civilised society crashing down around our ears, using our hard, government borrowed, money to do it.

Ok, don't get me wrong, you rabid Students' Union backers, I get they do

some things. The Education Officer has the strange Education Manifesto thing (no idea what it does) but she promises it will keep education good in the long term. And Activities is doing something with a sports assembly or something.

But the point remains, all their day to day activities could easily be carried out by the Students' Union bureaucrats at the moment. Literally, they do absolutely nothing as elected representatives that makes them in any way special outside what a half sensible UGM motion could do.

I come to the point that the only thing the Sabbatical Officers actually bring uniquely, in my view, is a layer of democratic accountability.

Matt Worby, my esteemed colleague, brought forward the idea of an absolute monarchy last week, I disagree. The veneer of civilization that elections provide is useful for letting people have a say, if a very limited say, as no-one ever votes. But there remains the chance that things will change. I argue that democracy should remain intact, but that the

head of the Students' Union should be renamed President for a start; remove this Miner's General Secretary stuff. Let's have President and a VP to help alleviate some pressure (let's not be too unfair), with the power to fire and hire staff members, within a predetermined budget of course, who will represent us to the school. Yes, the stationary rampant absolutist ideology can come later – I just think we're not ready for it.

The bureaucracy of the Students' Union that is already there would be more than suitable to fulfil most of the functions that the "Elected Officials" currently do. Why not have neutral unelected officials do the job? Representing students to the school being left to the President and VP – and other elected students, like those we just elected to the Court of Governors.

On purely utilitarian grounds, a new set of Sabbatical Officers each year means we have leaders with no understanding of how the Students' Union is run on a practical basis, and can lead to catastrophes like the Freshers' Fayre. A permanent bureaucracy,

with changeable leadership to ensure accountability, would know what they were doing.

The UGM should hold them accountable, perhaps periodic votes of confidence to ensure they are doing their job and that every penny the Students' Union spends should be voted on (and remove that quorum for a start). This might at the same time rejuvenate the UGM which has collapsed, to what, less than 20 people?

My main reform and perhaps "scary right wing loony" idea, would be that these Sabbatical Officers should not be paid for their position. Oh one can already hear the Left cry out, how dare you, securing top roles only for the rich. Tough. I don't want my money spent on what, if we base things on last year's actions would amount to a yearlong subsidised ego trip. The 50 grand saved from removing 2 Sabbatical Officers could be reinvested in so many other ways. We could have a rainbow spewing unicorn for that kind of money. They could potentially receive a stipend, in the form of minimal living costs, but £27,500 that's around

6 Grand above the UK average wage. I reiterate, elected officials should not be paid, This was argued by John Stuart Mill for our representative from Parliament, so don't diss this out of hand as a ridiculous notion of a rich Tory scum bag. Mill owns politics and you know it. I'm not going to bore you with footnote spiel, if you want to know more about that you can read it yourself. Go to the library or try, oh I don't know, a search engine?

Leave the officers with part time positions as bit part players at best, frankly they have little to do. They can work for their money. I'd like to implement some kind of performance related thing. Add that little bit of motivation.

So the change I envision is remove all the Sabbatical Officers, replace them with a President and Vice-President. Let the Students' Union get on with running the day to day stuff everyone is to apathetic to care about anyway.

And if you don't like this set up I envisage, turn up to the UGM and take part in your Students' Union!

My brain made me do it

What does free will look like if neuroscience has anything to do with it?



Who's the puppet master?
Photo: flickruser_mill56

Tom Heyden



What led you to read this article? Did you choose to? More importantly, could you have done otherwise? This concept of free will has been one of the longest and most profound philosophical topics since the dawn of consciousness, with no truly satisfying conclusion. Are we simply pre-determined machines?

It certainly feels as though we have free choice, but that does not necessarily break us free from the illusion. So even if you 'decide' to read no further, you still do not escape the problem! The undoubted sensation of free choice stems from an instinctual dichotomy within humans. How often have you explained a hangover with a phrase like "My brain's not working today"?

This linguistic distinction is of course harmless, but it reveals the common human trait of creating a barrier between "my brain" or "my body" and "me." This dichotomy, this sense of an "I" or a "self" set apart from the brain and body, is an ingrained feature of human thought. It is what we call consciousness, and this notion of some controller or driver at the helm – the ghost in the machine – is what defines our feeling of free choice and the set of assumptions that naturally follow.

Yet 'free will' is coming under closer scrutiny beneath the microscope of neuroscience and advances in the science of decision-making, with potentially seismic implications for our legal system and its underlying principle of moral responsibility.

First of all, however, the notion of consciousness as something distinct from the functions of the brain has been discredited as an illusion, a construct. Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) technology has allowed neuroscientists to study the human mind while it makes ostensibly free decisions. Rather than one area of the brain 'controlling' the operations, scientists discovered that different areas of the brain are independently responsible for varying aspects of decision-making. The "self" or the "I" is an illusion created by the brain.

Arguably more important, however, are the advances neuroscientists have made in their predictive power over their subjects' decision-making. This is where we truly wade into the territory of free will. Most neuroscien-

tists are deterministic – the nature of causality that leads from one occurrence to the next. Why did you eat today? Because you were hungry. Why were you hungry? Because you were biologically determined to feel hunger when your body needs food. And so on goes the infinite regress of reductionism. So to what extent did you actually choose to eat in the first place?

These similar chemical and biological impulses in the brain have been studied by neuroscientists, with the suggestion that our decisions could themselves be caused, rather than freely chosen. In a much-cited experiment from the 1980s, neuropsychologist Benjamin Libet managed to record brain activity several hundred milliseconds before people expressed their conscious intention.

"Several hundred milliseconds?" you may fairly scoff. Well, in 2008, using far superior technology, these results were proved and enhanced. Berlin-based neuroscientist John-Dylan Haynes measured his subjects' brain activity whilst they made "free" decisions whether to press a button with their left or right hand. Haynes discovered that he would be able to predict the decision, by looking at the brain scans, a full 6-7 seconds before the conscious decision was made. Count that in your head now and suddenly it feels like a very long time. In other words, he found that the conscious decision was subverted by the subconscious brain activity, and thus in many cases the 'conscious' decision was irrelevant. It was a 'decision' made after the 'fact'.

It is already established that many processes in the brain occur automatically and without involvement of our consciousness. This is usually beneficial, preventing our mind from being overloaded by simple routine tasks. But when it comes to decisions we normally assume to be made by our conscious mind, this assumption does not fit the experimental results.

Haynes himself admitted that "I find it very difficult to deal with this. How can I call a will 'mine' if I don't even know when it occurred and what it has decided to do?"

Before I spark a whole host of existential crises, it must be said that free will has not yet been destroyed. The predictive power of these tests are not 100% and more complex decision-making than choosing left or right cannot yet be fully predicted despite promising research elsewhere. The fact that decisions are unconsciously 'prepared' before we are aware does not also explain whether these decisions can be reversed by "ourselves." Yet does our shrinking concept of free will simply reside in what we cannot

yet explain?

It appears that whatever concept we had of free will may have been massively overstated, which implies drastic ramifications for our legal system and the idea of moral responsibility. Already we have grounds for 'diminished responsibility' and occasionally frivolous legal defences of childhood trauma or experience. These exceptions are accepted in law. Thus how do we define moral responsibility if we diminish the belief in absolute free will? Surely biological determinism cannot hold up as a justified legal defence. "It wasn't me it was my brain." Further questions arise in conjunction with our increasing knowledge of specific brain areas and injuries, such that an injury in one area may diminish the capacity for traits such as empathy or forethought.

As British neuroscientist Professor Haggard puts it, "What happens if someone commits a crime, and it turns out that there's a lesion in that brain area? Is that person responsible? Is the damage to the machine sufficient for us to exempt them from that very basic human idea that we are responsible for our actions?"

If you believe in determinism, or indeed in the physical laws that electrical and chemical events in the brain obey, then it logically progresses that it could not have been another way. Even critics citing the randomness of quantum activity hit a brick wall, for how much freedom of choice does pure randomness even offer you?

In terms of our legal system, could we ever remove the fundamental principle of moral responsibility? Surely not. Certainly a murderer is still a murderer no matter what the explanatory cause, and moral responsibility remains distinct from being a danger to society. I'm also not necessarily saying that free will does not exist, but we must nevertheless be prepared to adapt its traditional connotation in the face of neuro-scientific advances. The more we know about the brain and thus 'ourselves', the more we may have to accept that we are not as in control as our illusionary sense will have us believe.

However, try to maintain this in the real world and you may come unstuck. Being aware of the illusion cannot break you free of it. If doing something is predetermined, so is doing nothing. So where does that leave us within this cyclical arrangement? You have to subscribe to the illusion of free will regardless. Perhaps with this in mind, you'll understand why Professor Haggard prefers to "keep my personal and professional lives pretty separate."

Who's the boss?

What the Eurocrisis says about European politics

Samira Lindner



Over the past few days we have all been bombarded with news on the Eurocrisis and the long and arduous talks that eventually led to the emergency deal (Don't worry, this article will spare you the highly complex and hard-to-follow details of the rescue package). Instead, this article will focus on what these past few weeks have revealed about the way policy-making in Europe works. This crisis has exposed the dangerously powerful position markets and banks have made for themselves in the world of politics.

As a starting point, let's look at the nature of the past Eurocrisis meetings. Almost all of these important meetings, apart from the last one, took place on weekends. Why is that? Because that's when the stock markets are closed. These weekend meetings are not unusual and have become commonplace to avoid negative affects on markets. But it also means that leaders are under enormous time pressure to find an agreement. So it's of no surprise that these meetings dragged on for weeks.

And, it seems that we're not the only ones left confused amidst the complex financial jargon – some insiders have revealed that even the political leaders themselves seemed to be struggling to understand the complex financial engineering discussed in the meetings. A deliberate attempt to maintain the exclusivity of the world of

Why are banks sitting at the same table as elected politicians?

finance? Maybe.

Another aspect to look at is the differing points within the meetings. The two strongest positions are held by France and Germany because each is dealing with forceful pressures from within. The fact that French banks are more heavily invested in Greek (and Italian) bonds than their European counterparts seemed to be weighing heavily on Sarkozy during the meetings. Throughout the Eurocrisis it has become clear that his policies are merely concerned with not losing his country's AAA credit rating. Thus, the final deal is suspiciously kind to France and its banks.

Germany meanwhile has a lot more going on internally. There is the pressure from voters, of whom a large proportion view the Greek bailout with disdain, as well as pressure from inside Merkel's own coalition, which sometimes appears to be a squabbling mess. But there is also the friction within its own banking sector. This, I think is a crucial aspect to look at. The ever-vocal Deutsche Bank CEO Ackermann is a good example. While this gentleman has a history of controversial statements (some include a somewhat sexist statement of how female executives would make his

board "prettier"), lately he has drawn a lot of criticism on not only attacking the very competence of politicians but also boasting how well Deutsche Bank has done without government support. Of course, Ackermann failed to mention that the Deutsche Bank profited indirectly from the billions of public funds spent to stabilize the rest of the German financial industry. He also failed to mention that Deutsche Bank earns most of its profits from hedge funds and speculative investments, thus helping create the instable financial market we're in.

Overall, this greatly reveals how markets and speculation are pushing politics back and stepping into the forefront. In the classical theory of democracy, we understand that banks and other financiers represent specific interest groups that seek to influence or advise the government – Ackermann represents the reality. Nowadays bankers seem to not only portray a boastful attitude of (false) success as well as an entitlement to bailouts when they fail, but they also claim to be more competent than politicians. The Eurocrisis emergency deal that was worked out was consulted with big banks. But these banks only represent a small and very specific interest group. They are accountable to no one but their shareholders, and sometimes not even to them. Why are they sitting at the same table as elected politicians, determining the future of Greece, and deciding how much to burden taxpayers with bail-out funds?

Of course, the concern with the position of banks in politics is not new. In the so-called "bankers' ramp" of 1931 the UK government was seeking a loan from the US banking house JP Morgan, which agreed only on the condition that the government impose austerity measures. In the end, the UK government ended up resigning, as they were unable to agree on the details of these measures. In this scenario, a bank took a government's financial situation as an opportunity to become policy makers themselves. Not only that, but their interference in politics even led to an administration's downfall. This is clearly a dangerous path to go down. The point of a democratically elected government is that it is chosen by the majority of the people, is accountable and takes on the responsibility to govern. Banks are completely different entities with distinctly different purposes and goals – their place is to advise and perhaps influence politics, not overtake it.

Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the Eurocrisis not only says a lot about the financial sector but also about politics. Greece's hasty entry into the Eurozone was a political decision for which politicians must take responsibility. And the increasingly dominant position of banks in European policy making is also something politicians have let happen. They have adapted their policies to suit those financiers and speculators who brought about an unstable financial market in the first place; policies that have tolerated the destructive role of markets. At least we can breathe easy knowing that with this emergency deal, banks will have to take on at least some of the responsibility and will have to foot part of the bill. But this should not be seen as the end. Instead, this should be a wake-up call to European leaders to guarantee the primacy of politics, not finance.

You must be this smart to vote

Matt Worby suggests an interesting alternative to universal suffrage

Matt Worby



Come with me if you will, on a trip down memory lane. Monday the 24th of October. I was watching the news, as one does of a cool October evening when the segment concerning the EU referendum debate rolled on. With almost stock footage of a protest outside the Palace of Westminster some puffed up protester started frothing at the mouth about politicians breaking promises and how the European Union was wrecking this country. It's the usual theme one's heard before, regardless of whose protesting the recurring idea that politicians are betraying [Insert demographic here] by breaking promises. You couldn't set your watch by it, given the ad hoc nature of protests, but you can be fairly sure that it will be mentioned at some point whenever someone marches/occupies/camps somewhere.

Make no mistake, this isn't an article condemning peaceful forms of protest. On the contrary only by having people so strongly motivated does society keep focus on issues that need debate. No, this article is all about my views on what we can do to reverse

the trend of retail politics, the reason I believe politicians make outlandish election promises.

Unreasonable promises are made because the electorate demands unreasonable things. Why is this? Because the vast majority of the electorate don't have the mental horsepower to examine any sort of issue and look at it from multiple perspectives. The vast majority of those that vote for our political leaders are intellectual lawn-mowers. It's far easier just to promise the sheep a larger feeding trough than your opponent and let them gambol to your side. Rinse and repeat for the next election, it's not like they remember half the crap promised to them. Like a small child at Christmas they only remember the biggest and shiniest (most expensive) promises.

I think the issue stems from the lack of statesmen and stateswomen left in the political arena, where are today's Gladstone or Disraeli? We no longer have the kind of system that allows politicians to make difficult decisions that may be unpopular, but are in light of new information. Without the other side complaining of utter betrayal not seen since Brutus used Caesar as a receptacle for his knife. For example, Cameron has been attacked for cutting services he promised to ring fence during the election campaign, the NHS being the prime example. My point is not that the NHS should or should not be cut, it's the fact that the promise on the matter should never

have been made in the first place. It could obviously never have been kept. All politicians exaggerate what they can give during an election, Britain is a victim of shopping list politics. I can give you this much of x while only cutting this much of y, but my opponent would cut more of y. We need to return to the time where people of substance

Unreasonable promises are made because the electorate demands unreasonable things

could hold actual opinions and have an overarching ideology, be voted in because of their knowledge and expertise, then be allowed to run the country. My solution would be to limit the franchise.

We've tried universal suffrage, nice idea, shame about lack of critical thought present in society. The system

worked best when those who voted had the time to carefully consider their choice and were of the intellectual capacity to see the merits in voting not just for their own self-interest, but take into consideration the fact that the country might need a certain style of leadership. The electorate was also, on average more informed, not a bad thing when politicians to account at the ballot box. After all, we don't want the political elite to go unchecked.

I initially thought about limiting the franchise to those who have a degree, it would fulfil my aim of only the intelligent pontificators voting, and be a solid step towards, in a millennium, Philosopher Kings. But at this moment it really wouldn't be fair. It would lead to intelligent people being excluded from the electoral system because they chose not to pursue a degree. They would cruelly be denied the right to vote. I also look at some people and wonder how they managed to reach the standard required of the mortarboard hat. Michele Bachmann, I'm looking at you. This system would fulfil the initial criteria but I think the consequences would leave us in an even worse situation.

I've settled on there being a voting test, much like the driving test. Both actions come with great responsibility, it's only logical there should be a required standard, if that standard is attainable by all it can still be fair. Theoretically, given the level of education we could retain near universal

suffrage, with specific classes there's no reason why not. The voting test would require the person to demonstrate they understand how complex running a country is, that sometimes their needs will not be put above others and that policies don't magically make it all better overnight. Hard to convey in the form of multiple choice, but doable, I'm sure. The test would be free, available in multiple languages and be able to be taken, under supervision, in one's own abode. There would be no limits to those who could take the test, only that they have a spare 30-45 minutes, and are eligible to vote. I'm predicting the cost of implementing such a scheme could be recouped easily because politicians no longer have to promise, and then provide, more expensive white elephants than their opponent.

With a more discerning electorate politicians would be free to have more realistic policies, and be confident that an unpopular course, for the good of the country, wouldn't be side-tracked by petulant voters wanting to know why it wasn't them who got the new toy first. It should also increase the level of accountability present at the ballot box, more aware voters and whatnot. Although knowing how crap this generation of politicians are I imagine this would be cocked up before it's implemented. We're doomed Captain Mainwaring.

Master of tongues

Why we need to go beyond borders at LSE

Rosie Hamer



We've heard it all before; a 65 per cent international student intake compromising a body of 9,000 students from 140 countries. 97,500 LSE alumni covering 190 countries across the globe. Over 100 languages spoken on a campus in the heart of the most cosmopolitan city in the world. Why then, in an institution with these attributes, is there a contradiction between LSE's international prowess and the lack of study abroad opportunities for its students?

The lack of positive encouragement for students to take courses in the language centre that exists in some academic departments also refutes the ideal that the school portrays as being an international and multi lingual place of study. Many undergraduates experience difficulty when trying to gain permission to study a language as a part of their degree or take the opportunity to study abroad during their time at university. Granted, students don't choose to come to the LSE based on the range of outreach programmes; one would assume it is a choice based on reputation and specialist teaching. However, opportunities of this kind exist in great numbers at few UK universities and colleges, and for them to not be readily and openly available in a learning institution ranked third by the Times Good University Guide 2012, seriously undermines its credibility.

The importance of languages to students at LSE is paramount, as the

facts already show that a significant proportion is multilingual. However, there are countless other students who have never had considerable chance to study foreign languages to a higher level. There does seem to have been some progress in this area over the last year. The Academic Board passed a policy which is now being implemented, offering certificate courses in languages to all UK undergraduates who have not studied a foreign language in school, free of charge. This step forward was approved as according to Professor Janet Hartley, Pro Director, "it reflected [the school's] concern that not all UK students are given this opportunity." All first years were informed of this opportunity on arriving in September. Maybe now this programme can be expanded to include all undergraduates who want to improve or make progress in a foreign language previously studied.

Another scheme, a two week set of taster courses in languages, proved to be a success in the latter stages of the last summer term. Nearly 200 students participated, showing that the LSE student body recognise the importance of languages. With further advertisement, far greater numbers can be drawn in for the session next year.

There still exists an issue with some academics as to the credibility of courses offered by the Language Centre. They shouldn't be brushed off as "lower calibre" or "less relevant" than other courses. In keeping with the nature of LSE education, teaching is based on the social, cultural, political, historical and economic issues of the countries in which the language is spoken. This makes each language course offered appropriate and fitting to any overall degree. In fact, strong evidence shows that knowing

an extra language can enhance skill and understanding in other subjects. Nick Byrne, Director of the Language Centre (offering 700 degree options and 1700 certificate courses) says, "I would emphasise that we are closely working with departments to ensure that our existing language degree options are available to the majority of the LSE undergraduate students, (regulations permitted) and that in the past years we have increased the offer of courses bringing Mandarin into the offer, which has been a "sell-out." In cases in which regulations don't allow students to take an outside option on a given year, we will keep working with departments to make sure that an exception to regulations can be applied whenever relevant."

As a place of further and advanced study, LSE must take a front seat in the drive to equip its students with as broad a range of skills as it can. This may mean more active encouragement by academics to take language courses, and a broader and more equal availability of year, term or summer study abroad programmes offered to all students regardless of year or course. Links with Peking University in China (PKU) in the form of summer schools, have been reinforced in recent years. Plans are currently being proposed for a new summer school partnership with the University of Cape Town (already one of LSE's five select global institution partners) to begin in 2013. Whilst of course being very successful, these schemes are not as wide ranging or inclusive as they could be and involve large financial costs with no offer of subsidies. An ERASMUS scheme with Sciences Po in France is in its infancy, after being advertised last year to second year undergraduates. There was said to be 'quite an enthusiastic



Giao, Shalom, Bonjour
Photo: flickr user _tv01

response' (reportedly 60 applications for 10 places) but continuation and expansion of this programme will depend on its success this year. Erasmus Student Mobility Grants and LSE bursaries are available for this option, in keeping with equal opportunities. More information on the 2012/13 scheme will be made available soon on the below website. Hopefully this venture will have a positive outcome and it, amongst other ERASMUS links of this kind, will go from strength to strength.

Many monolingual or even already multilingual students who come to the LSE, whilst recognising the benefits of

studying a language, miss the opportunities that are available to them. More must be done in the encouragement of students to take language degree options, or certificate courses open to them. Whilst improvements have been made with study abroad opportunities, the 'elitist' attitude of the LSE towards studying at foreign institutions existing on a wide and varied basis, and the disinclination to allow its students to leave the school, can disadvantage and inhibit learning opportunities.

Smugger than you since 1895

We're not all insecure revolutionaries as much as the LSE Students' Union T-shirts would have you believe

**Marshall
Palmer**



While this year's Sabbatical Officers have yet to really establish whether they want to play Prime Minister or actually represent our interests, one thing is clear: there is something seriously wrong with factions of our Student's Union. To see what is meant by this, look no further than what is on display in the Students' Union shop on Houghton Street. The classic example is the, apparently bestselling, 'Smarter Than You Since 1895' shirt and handbag. Seriously, who designed that? Arrogance is not a quality our Students' Union should be promoting in the student body.

For a university founded upon equality and a rejection of class elitism it seems hypocritical to switch one type of superiority for another. Not only this but the message highlights the exact thing its designers were likely trying to assuage—insecurity. Conceivably, this insecurity arises from the absurd but often asked ques-

tion that if LSE is 'just as good' as the schools most of us unsuccessfully applied to i.e. Oxbridge. (On the note of Oxbridge, I think if it were a truly just world the designers, and proud bearers, of this conceited garb would be mandated to wear a shirt bearing the slogan 'Smarter Than You Since 1895 - I didn't get into Oxbridge'.) What we have now is, in its most honest sense, pathetic and embarrassing. As a proud student of the LSE and member of our Students' Union, it is certainly not an attitude I wish to be associated with. You shouldn't either, if not for reputation's sake then for your own personal well-being. Novelist David Foster Wallace put it best when he said 'worship your intellect, being seen as smart, you will end up feeling stupid, a fraud, always on the verge of being found out.'

However, that shirt is evidently so last year now that it has been replaced in the display windows by activist and politically aligned shirts. It seems that the wretched hangover of Ashok Kumarism (cluelessness?) and the highly politicised Students' Union of last year continue to make an imprint on the school. The new shirts take an anti-coalition and anti-government stance while also warning about 'student's striking back'. This is inappropriate for two reasons. First, it is not within

the remit of the Students' Union to take specific political stances. Not all students were against the cuts and it is unfair that (I never thought I would actually say this) fiscally conservative views are sidelined because the Students' Union has a hard leftist line to promote. Second, the shirts are belligerent in nature. While it would be wrong to promote aggression in students regardless, it seems especially inappropriate given the violence and vandalism that marred the cuts protests last year in London. Being seen as encouraging such violence and immaturity reflects poorly on the student body as a whole and is particularly disappointing for those of us who (a) did not participate in the student riots and (b) hold separate political views.

All of us in the Union, particularly our Sabbatical Officers, need to ask ourselves what we should represent and what our actual role is. The tangible improvement of student welfare ought to be first and foremost. Instead of taking pretentious, anti-establishment and almost certainly unattainable goals that roll along the line of fighting the man, 'striking back' and changing Britain's politics, we

should focus on the day-to-day issues that affect

able (maybe improving the grind too) or selling affordable, non-offensive, clothing at the Students' Union store.



These are the issues that most care about and are the ones we should focus on.

As for the large issues such as the cuts, it is not wrong for the Students' Union to encourage protest vocally provided they roundly condemn any violence that arises (which Kumar and Gerada refused to do last year.) However, as soon as these views are stamped onto a shirt they reflect onto the Students' Union as a whole which consequently marginalises separate political views.

everyone. Issues such as lowering the price of coffee at the Tuns from £2 to something a bit more reason-

The joys of secularism

Even though their strength doesn't lie in numbers, the elite should grow a pair

**Asad
Rahim Khan**



Let me be clear here. I like secularists just fine. All kinds of them; the Pakistani ones and ex-Pakistani ones and half-Pakistani ones. They have a clear, easily-defined enemy in the shape of extremism, which they bash so eloquently in our English press (week after week after week, sort of like Comment and I now). More often than not, they're wealthy, and wealth tends to impress the stupid, of whom, as we all know, there is no shortage. They will never tell me to pray more, or abstain from my own inherently sinful worldliness, or enter a mosque with a sub-automatic. They bash dictatorship, defend minorities, are appalled by ethnic violence, and speak good English.

You must be thinking, why haven't they been handed over the country already? The answer is, they have, and it is because they have (and all the other gentlemen the country has been handed over to) that we are in such a vulnerable place right now. Because secularism in Pakistan is tied to our elite and one cannot exist without the other. And for some reason, while Pakistan has an educated middle-class that is savvy and self-aware, its elite one per cent, many of whom are either doctrinaire secularists or shapeless things that have nothing to do with religion, is woefully ungrateful, and the hypocrisy of something like that is breathtaking.

First, to the elite. For a tiny segment of the population Pakistan has, in some cases, bled itself so as to sustain their lifestyles; one would think that a wholehearted commitment to the country would be the best or even simply appropriate response. If

not, maybe just a few kind words when referring to the place in international forums? If nothing else, maybe just some misplaced feelings of gratitude? No. Instead, the self-loathing, tearing-to-shreds routine begins.

It's usually something like, "We blame all our issues on the CIA or India." Agreed. But inversely our politicians do often report all of those issues to American embassies like precocious brats, and our columnists love bashing the country on the Internet to all kinds of Indian traffic. Or "sympathy for the Taliban is growing." No. Desperation at a lack of alternatives is growing, because our elite has maintained a stranglehold on economic benefit via a network of patronage and third cousins, and this leads to people turning to awful avenues. Maybe I'm an idiot to leave behind all the socio-eco-ethno-religio-political analysis that both our local channels and the Western press has bulldozed me with over the last ten years, but to me, more economic benefit means less Taliban.

Or "the army is a mega-usurping state within a state." No one complains when they're the only force fighting the floods, or getting murdered in their own garrisons by suicide bombers, or sacrificing themselves left, right and centre in Swat. "No, no, the generals. The ones that take over." If they were ever that bothered by how awful the generals and their dictatorships were, they somehow had none of the courage to come out and endure rubber bullets and tear gas and sub-prison to even register that, yes, martial law displeases me.

And then, the catch-all reasons, "Oh, but everyone is just corrupt." If one's lucky, there is the irony that the gentleman saying this usually has a lot to do with that corruption. But leaving that aside, our most fortunate hardly ever choose to upset the established order, because they're too busy functioning as the established order. Lawyers and party workers and

Libyans and Tunisians and Egyptians do that sort of thing. Better to accept a ministry from some brigadier who has a mix of affection and contempt for you (but it's still all the generals' fault). And finally, "But the masses are illiterate, so we're obviously a backward country for it." Each and every time I hear this from the privileged, it is a uniquely sad experience. To dignify it with a response is truly beyond me. Needless to say, those backward masses have been wondrous enough to give just about everyone a chance: soldiers, mullahs, feudal lords, socialists, socialist feudal lords, Oxford debaters, businessmen and telephone operators, to be left hanging by the vast majority of them.

And now coming to secularism, the most popular ideology doing the rounds among these people. This isn't to say that Pakistan is a secular country by any stretch of the imagination, far from it. On a purely political basis, the right is usually in charge of Pakistan. The ruling People's Party once aspired to a sort of diet secularism, and sometimes still purports to be more liberal than its opponents, but it more often than not stands for nothing. Secularism, as our secularists will tell you, is a dirty word here. I agree. You can tell from the comments section under YouTube videos, where DelhiRohan is gang-assaulted by guys going by the names of PakLover420 and TorturedLvr4U, all for advocating separation of mosque and state. After hearing lots of filthy abuse as to what he likes to drink, DelhiRohan sinks to cursing everyone's mother and disappears from the Internet forever.

The fact is that secularism can never be a proper state ideology in Pakistan because the vast majority of Pakistanis are completely opposed to it. Besides the ones that don't really care for the entire argument, busy as they are in the slightly more tangible struggles of feeding their families and so on, the ones that are educated

and well-versed in our own historical traditions don't care much for it either. "But surely," our secularists say, "there's a difference between an Islamic state and a separate homeland for the Muslims." So a separate homeland for the Muslims is distinct from something that has the characteristics of an Islamic state? Bit cryptic.

"But didn't Jinnah say that one was free to go to their place of worship, which was nothing to do with the business of the state? Isn't that a consummate secular ideal?" I'm sure it is, but it's an Islamic ideal as well, pluralism and tolerance going hand in hand with Islam. As historians from both sides of the divide will tell you, Jinnah had enough greatness in him to be able to state the aforementioned, while also rejecting a theocracy 'to be ruled by priests with a divine mission.' Just looking over at the Ayatollah outfit in neighbouring Iran would be enough to tell you that.

The answer lies in moderation, because moderation, and desperately needed economic benefit, are the only two factors that can meld the dreams of nearly 200 million people. Pakistan's last dictator thought along the same lines, but his moderation was instead an inept liberalism married to emergency rule and recycling some of the worst criminals our political sphere has seen, and he was semi-literate economically. To come to the earlier point, it would really be fantastic if our elite could help the process by developing a spine that comes with citizenship of one's own country, ceasing the criticism that should be directed at themselves, investing within the country, using their vast resources for projecting a positive image of the country, and finally, praying that their kids might turn out to be more sincere than they ever were. And secularism? For most of the country, secularism is dead. For the sake of clarity, let's hope it stays that way.

-Quick- COMMENT

Do you think the LSE Students' Union t-shirts promote arrogance?

Definitely! I couldn't believe them when I saw them. But it's true.

—Maxim Owen, Sports Editor, The Beaver

We're largely Oxbridge rejects so it's our short-man syndrome coming through.

—Dina Fahmy, 3rd year, LLB Laws

No. They are essential for playing away matches against other universities.

—Ahmed Alani, Design Editor, The Beaver

We are smarter than most people to be fair.

—Bianca Nardi, 3rd year, BSc International Relations

It makes us look arrogant to other people, even if within the LSE it's taken as a joke.

—Jenni Black, 2nd year, BSc Government

Yes! LSE will always promote arrogance, because the public don't see us in the same league as Oxbridge.

—Priyan Patel, 3rd year, BSc Mathematics and Economics

Well, if people have a problem, we could always change it to "more modest than you since 2011".

—Sumaiyah Khan, 3rd year, LLB Laws

NEXT WEEK...

Are you happy with the new 3-day loan policy in the library?

An illicit affair?

Why we should re-examine Tony Blair's relationship with the Colonel

Ben Rogers

As the dust begins to settle on the troubled country of Libya, the dark secrets of the Gaddafi regime are fast being excavated. The all too inevitable and sinister accounts of torture and rape that surface after the fall of all totalitarian regimes has also been accompanied by the obscene and perverted truths about the private life of Colonel Gaddafi. The images of the regime's discrete and oh so tasteful gold clad palaces have given us an insight into the fantasy world that invariably develops within dictatorships. And an interesting highlight amongst the information pouring out of Tripoli

about the deceased dictator has been his supposed infatuation and crush on the former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

However it has been another one of the Colonel's love affairs that has been the favourite expose of the media, as the now notorious photos of Tony Blair embracing Gaddafi in his Bedouin tent personify for many western corruption and collaboration with Middle Eastern despots and the hypocrisy and insincerity of our former Prime Minister. However if subscribers to such a view could be invited to put such visceral analysis aside for one moment and asked to evaluate the fine details of the deals struck by Blair behind those infamous photographs, then a more interesting and, dare it be said, admirable incite comes to light.

If we cast our minds back to December of 2003 and remember the

extraordinary declaration made by the Libyan regime that it would renounce and dismantle its illegal and clandestine nuclear and chemical weapons programs along with its ballistic missile capabilities, then we can start to gain a more informed standpoint on Libya's relationship with the West. It was in the shadow of the fall of a fellow Arab tyrant for his failure to comply with the non-proliferation treaty that Libya's dictator decided that breaking international law had its consequences. Notably, Gaddafi decided to go to Mr. Blair and President Bush to relinquish his stockpile of WMD and not to Kofi Annan, Jacques Chirac or Gerhard Schroder. Information gained from both the former Iraqi regime and the Libyan regime also led to the dismantling of the A.Q. Khan network which had supplied many of the regions dictatorships with illicit material.

And in exchange for this little know triumph in the field of international arms control, diplomatic relations were renewed with Libya and noted Bedouin tent photo-ops convened. Undoubtedly a small price to pay.

The discussed disarmament was all the more significant for those who remembered it, when in February 2011 the Libyan people joined with parts of the army to rise up and overthrow their dictator in the bloody civil war which has only just come to an end. The haunting question that has to be asked is, if Gaddafi had not been forced to relinquish his WMDs in 2003, would we have seen a repeat of the horrors that we saw in 1991 after the first Gulf War when Saddam Hussein gassed a similar rebellion into submission with truly horrific consequences? Secondly, if Benghazi had been drenched in VX nerve gas and other such devices and

if Gaddafi possessed the chemical or nuclear deterrence combined with a ballistic missile capability which he was developing before 2003, then would the international community have had the ability to intervene? Luckily such images will remain as counterfactuals but only thanks to those much despised figures Tony Blair and George Bush who made sure that Gaddafi's WMDs were in Oakridge Tennessee in 2011 and not falling on Benghazi. So with all this in mind, shouldn't our former Prime Minister receive some token of recognition? Or will it be left to historians to recognise him as a leader who was not afraid to recognise that the truly great moral questions facing the world are not black and white, but instead uninviting shades of grey.

You decide. ☛



Blair and Gaddafi
Photo: Flickr user: doodlebubz collective

Letter to the Editor

Dear Madame,

The article "Suspensions of foul-play in UGM vote" (18th October, 2011) raises severe questions as to the quality of journalism being pursued by the Beaver this year. The factual inaccuracies and breaches of the paper's own guidelines on fact attribution therein lead me to worry for the future of the paper.

The most jarring issue with the article was the lack of fit between the headline and article itself: the leading nature of the headline turns the independently neutral tone of the article into a diatribe against those who proposed the motion. This is a disservice to the readers of the paper, many of whom look to the paper for a fair and impartial take on Students' Union events, as is mandated of the paper by the Students' Union's Media Group Principles to the effect that "all coverage of General Meetings and proposed

motions for General Meetings should be accurate, fair and representative."

Aside from this egregious display of poor taste in headline choice, the piece also contained several factual inaccuracies, chief among them an assertion that the General Secretary had made an "executive decision" to extend the voting deadline of the motion. The extension was proposed by a member of Students' Union staff to the Chair of the Democracy Committee, who then contacted the General Secretary in order that the idea be discussed. Consent being granted here would not be tantamount in any way to an "executive decision."

In less severe aspects of lax fact checking, the piece also stated that voting started at "Thursday, 13th October at 2pm as per the constitutional requirements." LSE Students' Union Bye-Law 2.10, however, states that "General Meeting voting shall take place in an online vote that should

usually open immediately after the meeting but should not open more than two hours after a meeting closing." This means that voting could have started at any time between 2pm and 4pm of that day legitimately.

The article made a series of unsubstantiated claims which smacked of being manufactured in order that the particular angle of the writers of the piece be pursued. "There is concern that the prolonged voting period and additional publicity that the motion received through Peters-Day's Friday e-mail will see the motion reach the threshold for the minimum number of votes" and "several students have pointed to the slight discrepancy in how the voting procedures of the two motions have been handled" are statements that are both misleading and incomplete: both are fundamentally unsubstantiated. Any practical code of journalistic ethics would implore writers of articles to attribute such a quote

to a student, as is the practice in rest of the Beaver's news pieces. The reader is left wondering as to who is concerned and who these several students are, and given the notable exception of this article from the usual sourcing style of the paper, it is not unreasonable to think them to be manufactured.

The fact that the issue of the paper following the one in which the article was published did not feature a retraction or even an apology for the untruths espoused in the piece is further testament to a seeming lack of integrity in the practices of the paper and a lack of concern for the duties of the paper borne of it being the primary source of LSE-oriented news for many students and many of those outside of the LSE. If a more serious issue were to be handled in such a lax manner, the legal liabilities and reputational damage suffered by the paper would be exponentially greater in size and scope than in the comparatively diminutive

realm of student politics.

Hyperbole is not a virtue for a news piece and nowhere is that driven home more soundly than in the Beaver's own Articles of Association which state that news shall be reported in a "balanced and judicious manner." There is very little about this piece that was "balanced and judicious", with the enterprise essentially descending into a character assassination of Alex Peters-Day. I hope that such propensity to sensationalise, such lax fact-checking and such transparent agenda in news article writing be tempered in future issues of the paper and that its reputation for sharp, incisive news reporting be restored.

Alexander Young
Ex-Beaver News Editor



LSE Business Society *presents:*



BEPIC

Business & Entrepreneurship International Challenge

WED 16TH - FRI 18TH NOVEMBER 2011

BEPIC 2011 is a 3 day competition during the Global Entrepreneurship Week consisting of **Apprentice-style challenges, skills-targeted workshops, inspiring speakers and networking opportunities.**

10 best teams from the UK and European universities will be qualified to participate, judged by their applications and CVs.
(4 members from the same university in each team)

£1,000 cash prize for the Winning Team!

Apply now! Application deadline on the 6th of November (SUN)

Application available at www.BEPIC.org

Contact bepicuk@gmail.com for any questions.



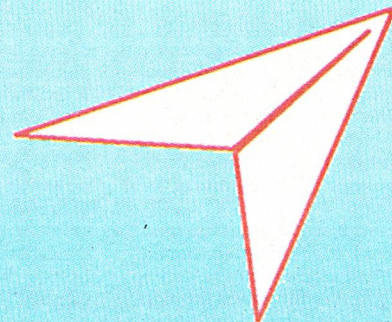
Join 'BEPIC 2011'



Follow 'BEPIC 2011'

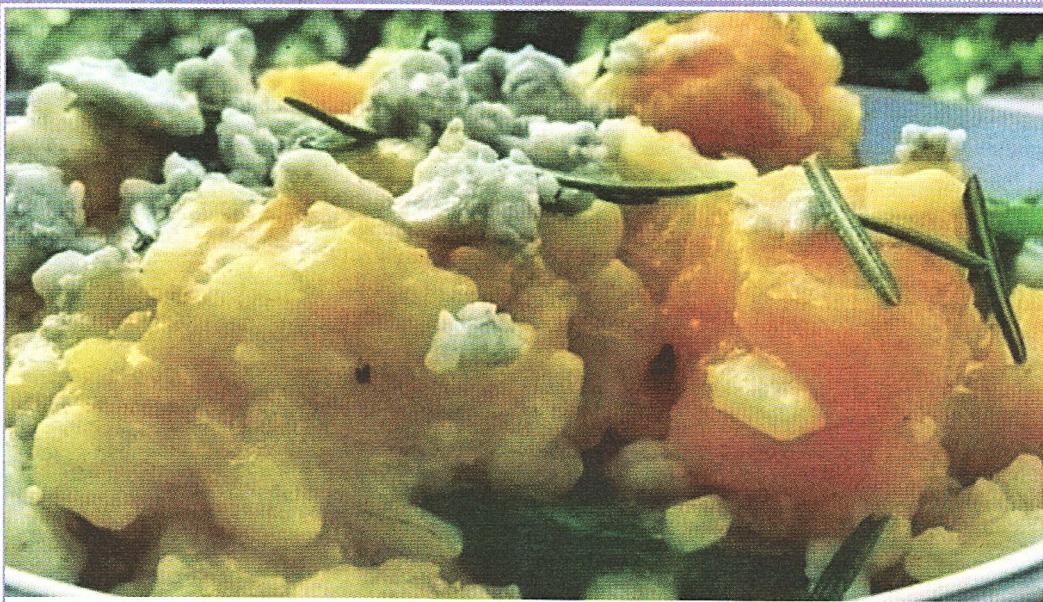
Be.EPIC!

Sponsored by:



Alice Gunn's banging seasonal recipes

Need some easy recipes to impress? Butternut squash is in season and this risotto costs less than a fiver. For dessert, try this chocolate sponge pudding with chocolate sauce underneath. It requires a few baking ingredients but is really delicious and only takes five minutes to cook in the microwave.



Seasonal squash and blue cheese risotto

Serves 4

Ingredients

150g blue cheese (you can use supermarket basics)
1 butternut squash
1 lemon
1 red onion
200g arborio risotto rice
Olive oil
2 vegetable stock cubes
Black pepper

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas mark 6.
2. Peel the butternut squash and cut it into chunks.
3. Peel the red onion and cut it into eight segments.
4. Place the squash and onion in a baking tray and toss in two tablespoons of olive oil. Roast for 30-40 minutes while you complete the next steps.
5. Make up one litre of vegetable stock (pour one litre of boiling water over the two stock cubes and stir).
6. In a deep frying pan or wok, heat one tablespoon of olive oil and add the arborio rice. Coat the rice in the oil and cook for two minutes. Gradually add the stock to the rice, allowing the rice to absorb the liquid before adding more. It should take around 20 minutes to absorb all the stock.
7. Add the cooked squash and red onion to the pan, crumble in the blue cheese and allow it to melt.
8. Mix through the zest and juice of one lemon and season with black pepper before serving.

Microwave chocolate fudge pudding

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

75g self-raising flour
2 tablespoons cocoa powder (not drinking chocolate)
2 eggs
Pinch of salt
100g margarine
100g caster sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla essence
1-2 tablespoons milk

For the sauce:

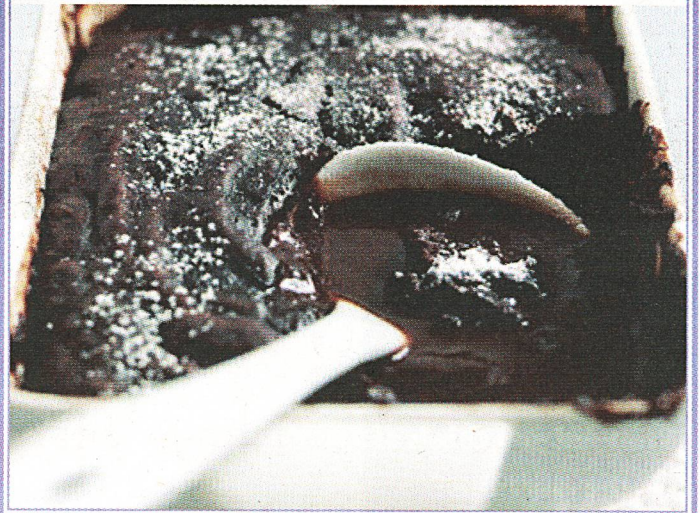
100g soft brown sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
250ml hot water

Method

1. Cream together butter and sugar (mix, pushing lumps out on the side of the bowl) until the mixture is pale yellow and the sugar is dissolved.
2. Beat the eggs and vanilla essence into the creamed mixture.
3. Gradually add the flour, cocoa powder and salt to the mixture, folding it in as you go. Add enough milk to mix to a medium soft consistency.
4. Butter a baking dish (put butter all over the inside of the dish using a little bit of clingfilm, foil or greaseproof paper) and spread the mixture evenly.

For the sauce:

1. Combine the soft brown sugar and cocoa powder.
2. Stir in the hot water and mix well.
3. Pour the liquid over the top of the cake mixture.
4. Cover the dish with clingfilm and put it in the microwave on high for 5-6 minutes. Serve with ice-cream.



Education by rusty beaver

Stalking at LSE

Where to look

If you are yet to find the object of your amour, hit up the library. It is a truth universally acknowledged that the fittest students are to be found in the library (although, let's face it, most students can be found in the library). People are keen to sticking to favourite seats, and strategic seating is encouraged. My friend started starting seeing someone on the mere basis that they had been sitting near each other during revision - sleeping in the library doesn't have to be a solo experience.

Tip: Best seats are the computers by the stairs - perfect for scouting.

Who to go for

Stick to someone within your subject. Let's face it, there is nothing more romantic than finally finishing that tricky problem set together. If you try dating out-of-subject, it just gets tiresome putting up with your prospective lover and their pals' incessant econ/anthro/law banter that you don't understand. On the other hand,

if it doesn't end well, at least you won't have to see them every lecture.

The peaks and troughs of Zoo Bar

If things are getting desperate, head to Zoo Bar with AU on a Wednesday.

Pros: You will find someone to get with. If you are lucky they may be a sporty (ergo fit) young thing.

Cons: You may regret your rendezvous when you see them in the plain light of day, or worse when they are vomiting up snakebite on your bed. There is also a good chance that everyone will know about your liaison (particularly if you are named and shamed in "I know who you did last Wednesday"). And if they don't look too bad? There is a high probability that they will have previously gotten with your friend/flatmate/most of AU.

Facebook etiquette

We will be forever thankful for the "researching" opportunities that Facebook provides us. "Researching" your prospective partner on Facebook

can tell you their hometown, education, social activities, what they looked like when they were younger... Some call it stalking, but when you consider how long we spend researching companies before applying to them, it seems only wise.

"Accidentally" turning up to your target's favourite bar is tactical, not weird. Also, quite frankly, we've got enough reading/job applications/lashing to do without wasting our time lusting after someone who we later find out has completely different interests/a girlfriend/a bizarre

enthusiasm for dressing in drag, when you could have found out with a quick stalk. It is a mystery how people risked dating prior to Facebook.

Bad News

Accept that after all this effort you will still come second to their work and/or finding a job. If they dump you during revision, don't take it personally.

Next week: Pulling etiquette

Romantic text of the week

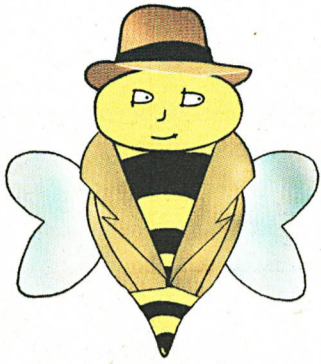
Messages

Eager Beaver

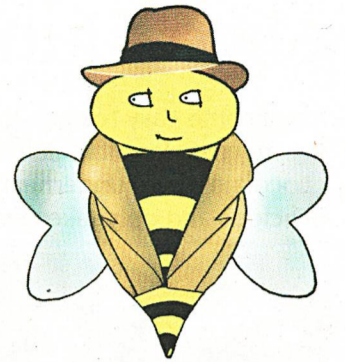
Edit

When are you coming over?

My cock's not going to suck itself



PRIVATE B



GenSec returns from Liverpool

New Academic Board abolishes capitalism

Governments around the world collapsed over the weekend, shocked as they were by the scale of the left-wing victory for the three student positions upon the LSE Academic Board.

In the early hours of Friday morning, the German government had been forced to deploy troops to Munich in a failed attempt to subdue an uprising by representatives of the Bavarian Revolutionary Committee who had announced the formation of the Workers' Republic of the United German Soviets. By lunchtime, Chancellor Merkel and her Cabinet had fled to Sweden, citing "the impossibility of maintaining a united front against the LSESU."

The capitulation of Berlin, coming mere hours after newly elected Board Representative Nihad Ahmed vowed to "Provide full exam feedback to students entering second and third year," was followed by popular uprisings in Tokyo, Cape Town and Vienna. An attempt to depose the Belgian "government" proved inconclusive.

The Dow Jones Index, after originally opening thirty points higher in early trading, had fallen to zero after US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner issued an emergency statement suspending Federal transactions



and announcing the nationalisation of all private assets.

"Given the astonishing mandate for global change inspired by the LSE's Michaelmas Term Elections," Deputy Secretary Wolin stated at a press conference over the sound of Kalashnikov fire, "it is only prudent for the United States government to formally

renounce neo-liberalism throughout the entire Western hemisphere." The Treasury Building was then dynamited, paved over and replaced with a joint memorial to Trotsky and the LSESU Penguin.

Leaving the Élysée Palace last night, former President of France Nicolas Sarkozy was unavailable for

comment, having been bound and gagged by representatives of the Revolutionary Council. However, it is understood that he had attempted to devolve power to the Academic Board in a last-minute attempt to preserve a final vestige of support for his administration. This attempt was called off following the President's allergic

reaction to a guillotine. The United Nations has announced that it will be replacing the Security Council with the LSE's Academic Board with the handover to take place at an extraordinary meeting on Wednesday afternoon.

Once again, if you have any complaints, please forward them to the Cultural Attaché at the Japanese Embassy.

Union Rubbisho

Autumn voting's odd
It ends rather suddenly
Rather like this hai-

The abolition of the capitalist system has met a measured response from the LSE's Economics Department who have announced the launch of a report into the "exciting intellectual developments within the international community."

L Tanned Ale

-Quick-Comment
What did you think of the elections?

"They came in at a bit of a tangent for me, it wasn't the optimum time to be honest."
-Lah Fur, 2nd year, BSc Economics

"Oh, are they real people? I thought they were a parody or something."
- Noh Wai, 2nd year, BSc Economics

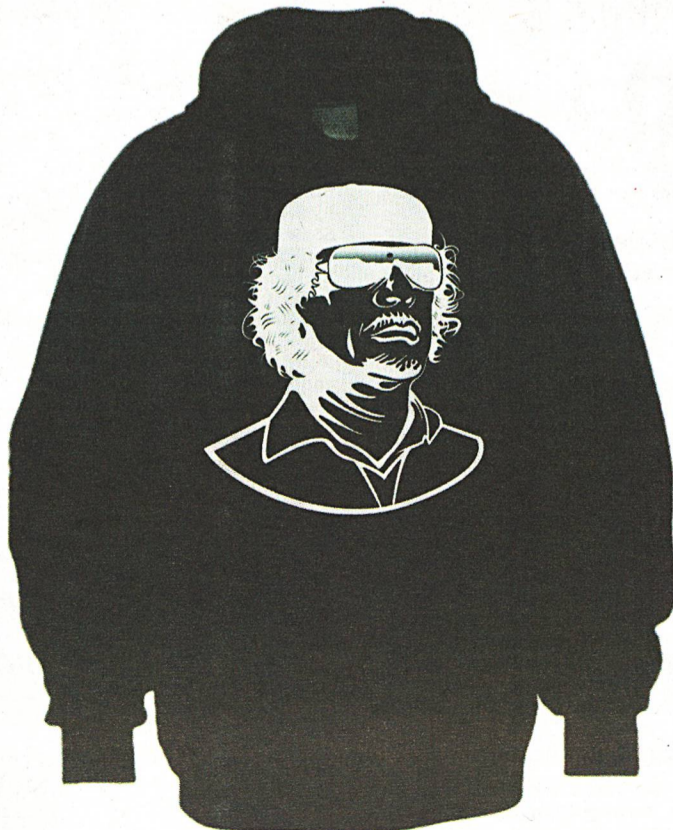
"Will any of the candidates help with my KPMG application?"
-Ah Counting, 2nd year, BSc Economics

"I use all the leaflets to write my notes on asymptotic theory!"
- Hu Ah Yu, 2nd year, BSc Economics

"Elections?"
-Won Ton, 2nd year, BSc Economics

NEXT WEEK ...
What is your reaction to the allegations that the people cited in "Quick Comment" are fictional people?

LSESU Shop Launches New Hoodie Range



That Postgraduate Sabbatical Satire Corner in Full

For those postgrads who aren't interested in student politics, I shall explain the joke shown below.

- a) Robin Burrett is seen as a bit of a left-winger within the Students' Union
- b) He has been supportive of #Occupy and 99% Movements
- c) This is a hilarious juxtaposition of the two

0.0223% OF POSTGRADS HAVE 100% OF SABB POSITIONS

#OCCUPYBURRETT

New band: Mazzy Star

Anyone familiar with Mazzy Star will notice that this week's column fails to live up to its name. But rather than hype a new band, I've decided to give some long overdue praise to a band returning after a 15-year hiatus. Formed out of the ashes of the Rain Parade, a seminal Paisley Underground group, Mazzy Star combined the delicate, often psychedelic guitar work of Roback with the detached, smoky, pining vocals of Hope Sandoval, crafting a warmth which induced hypnagogic catharsis in even the most resilient of '90s alt-rock fans. That is, it would have done, had it not been for their criminal lack of commercial success. The band are perhaps best remembered as having scored an unusual hit with "Fade Into You," a wistful, achingly romantic waltz which contained a pedal-steel solo.

They scaled similar heights when their song "Into Dust" was popularised by teen dramas such as "The O.C." But Mazzy Star's catalogue runs



Hope Sandoval of Mazzy Star

far deeper than that, perhaps not in terms of its variety, but because it is as enigmatic as its creators, and yet as

affecting as the drug-induced states of psychedelia which influence it.

└ Ankur Vora

Feist: Metals

I'm trying to figure out why Feist's new album is called *Metals*. Iron, titanium and platinum are not natural bedfellows for her softly sensual voice. Instead, her previous albums: *The Reminder* and *Let it Die* remind me of herbs in a French spring and the warmth of a wood fire. The idea of metals, a stainless steel factory, totally opposes her most stirring ballads "The Water" and "The Park."

Has Feist abandoned her sentimentality and replaced it with a cold, sterile and hard music style? Further listening has led me to a conclusion: no, she has not taken bunker in a stylised skyscraper. Rather the reference to metals in her title denotes a shift to a stronger, darker and deeper style. Her album starts with a stirring base in the "The Bad in Each Other" which continues throughout. The height of this is felt in "Commotion" and "First Discovery," where one can detect the rattling of chains and cog-like whispers. The reversion to a marching beat

in the latter song does not mask but rather heightens Feist's melodic fragility. The darker disposition of this album is expressed in the most striking song on the album, "Pine Moon." She builds anticipation, curiosity and pain faintly in the introduction to the song, which she bravely proceeds to punctuate with a deep brass undertone. One cannot help but feel that although this song completes the album, it would have been an uncomfortable addition to her other records.

On balance, it appears as though Feist has had a dose of reality. A dose of pain that is more than whimsical. But this is indicative of her new-found strength. She is able to combine deep, strong sounds and imagery with her voice, and still lead the way. This album is more raw and real than the poppy *The Reminder*, and is stronger than the melancholy and fragile *Let it Die*. In fact, it lies between the two, oxidising with reality.

└ Alicia Cunningham

Book Review: Before Adam – Jack London

Jack London is a name usually associated with merciless desert landscapes, where the weak are trampled underfoot as those over them beat their hairy chests victoriously – grizzly giant men or dogs. There is probably a wolf howling in the distance, the same one who will soon rip open your throat. *Call of the Wild*, *White Fang*, and *Sea Wolf* are London's most celebrated literary contributions, three books that I would recommend to any reader. Especially if you are beginning to find the unblinking city spires, faceless suits and gleaming Mayfair dance floors suffocating, you can escape under London's starry skies, where the law of the jungle is all man reveres.

In a lesser known work, *Before Adam*, London departs from his typical fixation with wolves and sleighs. It's a short read, barely 150 pages, and revolves around the dreams of a young boy. It reaches back in history to sometime around Pleistocene, when human beings were still evolu-

ing. In his terrifying dreams this young boy looks through the eyes of a distant relative, the early hominid Australopithecine. Australopithecine appeared about 4 million years ago and were a bipedal species (walked on two feet) and were also "dentally similar" to our species.

Serialised in *Everybody's Magazine* between 1906 and 1907, *Before Adam* captures something of the evolutionary hysteria of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century following the controversial publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). By the turn of the century the idea of evolving organisms and species had become the new frontier for scientists.

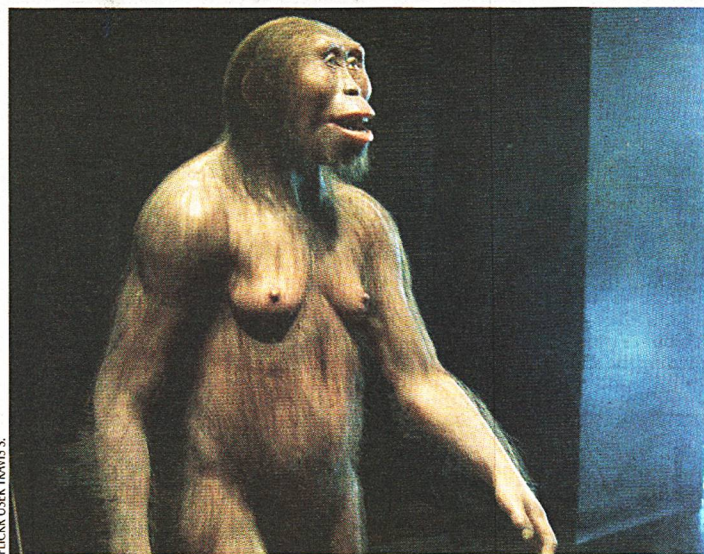
Before Adam permeates with this sense of naïveté and excitement. London's characteristically elevated language and sense of awe gives away, again, the fundamental fascination with purity which seems to drive all his novels. In *Before Adam*, rather than manifesting in vast plains of virgin snow, "purity" is conceived as a

time before human beings walked the earth (for students of political theory, London attempts to describe the ever confounding "state of nature"). Unfortunately, he reverts to his old coming of age plot, in which the protagonist grows up, finds his mate and is drawn into a duel with the local alpha-male for her hand in marriage – or cave co-residence, thereby asserting his manliness in the face of the great wilderness and so on.

Nonetheless, there is still something exciting about London's reappearing plot, even once you've identified the old friend behind his latest guise. Vivid imagination, combined with an appeal to maybe quite unsophisticated sentiments, makes London an enthralling read. He is adventurous and wild, capable of writing books loved by adults and children alike.

£6.99, Paperback, Dodo Press

└ Rachel Holmes



A reconstruction of a "Lucy," a female from the Australopithecine species *Australopithecus afarensis*

PoW hits hard

For most of us, the ability to read and write is so basic we can't imagine living without it. What we don't realise is that 1 in 6 young people in the UK struggle with reading, writing, speaking and even listening, according to a DfES Skills for Life Survey. What's more, we fail to contextualise the idea of literacy in twenty-first century terms. It encompasses the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use materials associated with varying media.

Power of Words (PoW) aims to combat the problem of illiteracy. We are a new RAG sub-set group, and make up part of the LSESU Literature Society. We have delved deeply into the issue of illiteracy and are committed to working towards a solu-

tion, alongside the charities Words to Inspire and the National Literacy Trust.

Words to Inspire targets parents, student mentors and teachers to encourage literacy development among children, and also provides necessary learning tools such as libraries and computers. Meanwhile, the National Literacy Trust focuses on families, young people, children and adults. It is involved in areas ranging from "early years" education to health, sports, schools and teaching. Furthermore, the National Literacy Trust encourages children and adults to make use of library facilities and participate in literary events organised by their local community.

Working in a two-fold method, PoW will organise fund-raising events

and publicise our cause with public events. Our debut fund-raiser was a Pub-Quiz, held in partnership with LSESU Literature Society. It took place on the 13 October 2011 in the Three Tuns, raising money for the National Literacy Trust.

Our next event will be held in support of Words to Inspire's latest project, which aims to establish an IT database for public schools in Turkey. This project will provide computers for public schools; teaching students computer skills and building a network for interactive e-learning. This event will be held in December, but the date is still to be confirmed.

On 9 November 2011 we will host our first public talk. The director of Words to Inspire, Dicle Kortantamer, will speak on the topic "Rising up

to the 21st Century." We are also pleased to welcome Jonathan Douglas, director of the National Literacy Trust, to the LSE on 24 November 2011. Jonathan will be giving a talk on the importance of literacy and the meaning behind the Trust's mission.

But Power of Words knows there's a lot more to do. By the end of the this academic year, we aim to raise a significant amount of money. We hope to inspire our audiences and attract speakers with similar enthusiasm. By raising awareness and contributing both time and money to these exceptional charities we hope to touch as many lives as possible.

We welcome all support, related ideas and comments. Please come along to our free public lectures, or drop in anytime at our fund-raising

events! They will be advertised around campus, on Facebook, and circulated with LSESU Literature Society's weekly newsletter.

For further information, please visit the websites of the National Literacy Trust:
www.literacytrust.org.uk
 and **Words to Inspire:**
www.words2inspire.org.uk

With your initiative, we can do our part!

└ Aylin Yildiz
 LSESU Literature Society and Power of Words
 A.Yildiz3@lse.ac.uk

Top Boy

Channel 4, 22:00, Mondays

New series. Drama focussing on inner-city gang culture. Dealers Dushane and Sully have their stash raided by a rival, leaving them with debt of £2,000 to their boss. Meanwhile, depressed Lisa ventures out to do her shopping, but is sectioned when she is unable to cope. Fearing her son will be taken into care, she neglects to mention him.

The Big Bang Theory

E4, 20:00, Thursdays

New series. Penny worries about the consequences of spending the night with Raj, while Sheldon takes command of the paintball team

Him & Her

BBC Three, 22:30, Tuesdays

New series. Becky has moved into Steve's flat, and Laura, Paul and Shelly come round to congratulate her. However, their visit is marred by the fact they have also invited Julie Taylor, Steve's ex-girlfriend. Comedy, starring Russell Tovey and Sarah Solemani, with Katie Lyons.

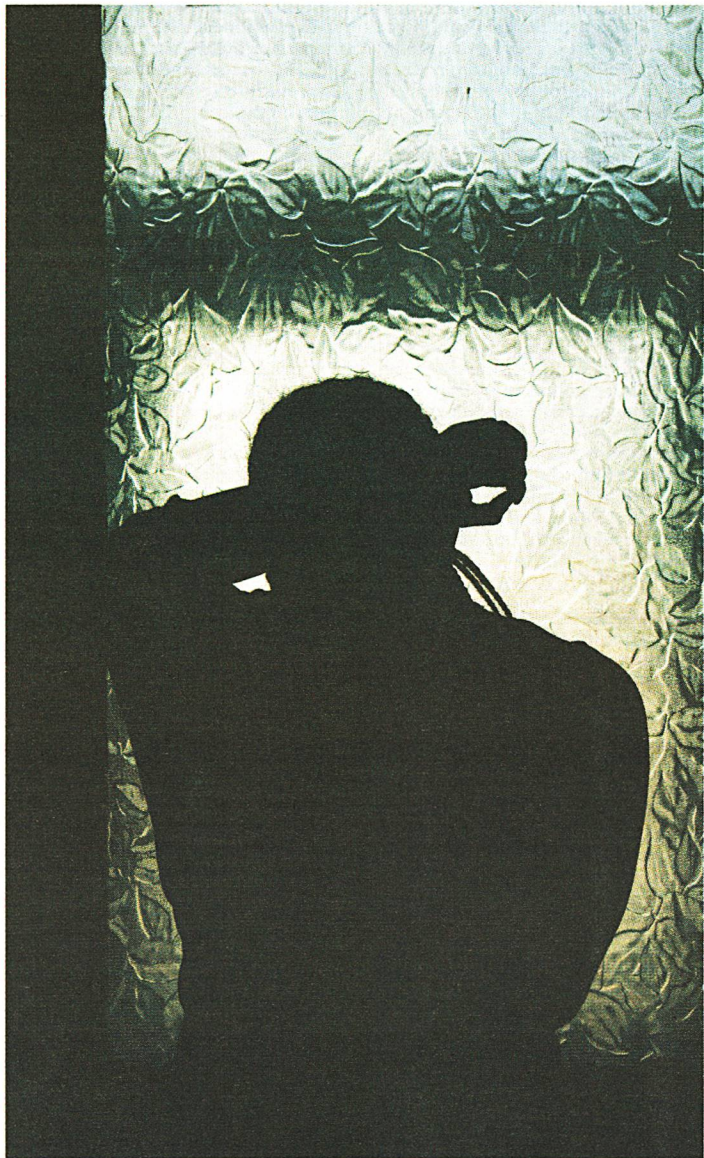
Persons Unknown

Syfy, 21:00, Mondays

New series. Seven strangers are abducted and wake up in a deserted town with no memory of how they got there, or why they were kidnapped in the first place, but they soon discover their every move is being monitored on CCTV. Thriller, starring Jason Wiles and Daisy Betts

TV Tips for the week

A close look into the capital's modern slavery



"Sarah," a survivor of child trafficking and domestic servitude

When my friend came to visit from the Netherlands, we went to Soho one night.

Soho is obviously not Amsterdam, but crude displays of sex symbols, shop after shop, were enough to thrill her.

At that time however, I had not known that along the streets I walked through, Elena, a young woman from Moldova, had leapt out from one of the windows of the numerous small apartments in an attempt to escape from her pimp. While I was staring at the photograph of the shoddy, neon orange tube light twisted into an Italic "Sex," easily recognisable in any Soho street, I regretted not pointing out these dark facts to my friend.

Elena's attempt to escape was successful but left the young woman with lifelong back pain. The experience of being trafficked stunted her confidence and posed an insurmountable psychological obstacle even to walking the streets alone.

London is one of the most modern and vibrant cities in the world, but also one where modern slavery thrives. Currently, the Museum of London is hosting a photography exhibition, "Modern Slavery in the Capital," in liaison with Anti-Slavery International, to raise awareness and expose the cost of flamboyant London life at the expense of those less fortunate.

Chris Steele-Perkins, a Magnum photographer whose craftsmanship captures both the reality and the sarcasm of urban life, was commissioned to take 11 photographs for the exhibition. The photographs portray both the victims of trafficking and those involved in bringing justice to the victims.

The photograph of the neon word, for instance, is a representation of Elena and is indeed a very clever technique to raise awareness. By linking everyday objects with the victim, the audience is constantly reminded of the tragedies whenever they come across the objects again.

Another powerful representation is a pair of well-worn construction worker's boots. They are the prism through which the audience perceives the physical and psychological lethargy of the worker. Those boots tell the forceful tale of Peter – not only women but also men are trafficked. Peter was deceived into leaving his home in Eastern Europe to come and work as a construction worker, so he could pay for his daughter's school fees. He did not realise he would end up on the black market. Nor did he expect to be denied his pay and being forced to share a twin bedroom with six other men. "I don't think people in my country will treat me like this," was his outcry during the investigative interview with Anti-Slavery International. He, like Elena, also attempted escape. But less fortunate than Elena, the organisation was never able to contact him again.

Both men and women are exposed to the danger of trafficking. According to UN estimates, the slavery population around the world today still surpasses twelve million, despite the official abolition of slavery in most countries over 150 years ago. In the UK alone, according to House of Commons statistics from 2009, at least five thousand people are victims of trafficking. Victims are most commonly asked to participate in prostitution, domestic work, construction, agriculture, food packaging and hospitality. Children are often forced into cannabis cultivation and begging, and women in particular are easily subject to rape when trafficked for prostitution and domestic servitude.

Traffickers are usually previously known to the victims. In most cases displayed in the exhibition, they were family friends of the victims. Yet, the traffickers exploit this bond of trust for their own gain – trafficking is an extremely lucrative business. According to research by the Museum of London, a trafficker can earn up to £1,000 per woman per week, and even

more from children.

Furthermore, the level at which these transactions are made is outrageous. Mende Nazer is the only victim posing for a portrait in the exhibition. She leans on the door frame of her home, her piercing gaze confronting the audience. She was abducted by Mujahideen raiders during the Second Sudanese Civil War and subsequently sold on into domestic servitude in Khartoum. She endured further dehumanising treatment and only escaped the ordeal when, ironically, she was given as a gift by her master to a diplomat in London. Her experience was not unique: in 2009 and 2010 at least 9 cases of trafficking involving diplomats were referred to the British government.

It should not be a surprise that victims of trafficking suffer from long-lasting psychological damage and traumatisation. Nazer, who was able to come out from the shadows using her courage and faith, has now set up an organisation raising awareness for modern slavery. However, there are still other issues. As barrister Catherine Meredith, who also poses for the exhibition, observes, instead of being vindicated, victims are usually assumed to be in the wrong, as immigration offenders. The protagonist for another portrait, Carolina Albuerne, a crisis worker at the Poppy Project, an organisation which pioneered services for victims of trafficking in the UK, laments on the withdrawal of government funding.

The road to rescuing all of the victims and terminating modern slavery is long, but the Museum of London has done an excellent job in documenting the facts that the audience need to know and be aware of.

"Freedom from: Modern slavery in the capital" is at the Museum of London in collaboration with Anti-Slavery International until 20 November 2011. Entry is free.

↳ Zoe Leung

Looking back at Frieze

Every year, the fabulously rich art students and the occasional novice at one of the largest and most prestigious modern art fairs: Frieze, held in Regent's Park. Attended by over 170 galleries, it is a bewildering maze of white cubicles, which with all of the unique art pieces hanging on them, successfully manage to discommodulate the thousands of visitors that swarm through the doors.

Frieze regards itself as something of a cultural pilgrimage for art lovers, a showcase of the next Tracey Emin (and her legacy was indeed everywhere) and a cultural phenomenon that shapes the narrative of the art world every year. All this sits rather uncomfortably with its purpose as a glorified catalogue where men in pink shirts and chinos and women groomed to within an inch of their lives can fritter away more money than they know what to do with.

Which of these two views you take on Frieze seems to depend largely on whether you'd done your research beforehand. Being woefully under-prepared, the artwork for me veered from the bewildering (enlarged manila wallets on the walls?) to the downright superficial. With the constant reminder that artists were here to sell rather than just display their work, most of the pieces seemed a poor pastiche of well-known artists with the same tried and tested message, namely an ironic statement on what we regard as art and more importantly, how much we're willing to pay for them. A single cardboard tube, from the inside of a toilet roll, sat on a plinth, apparently the work of internationally

renowned artist, Gavin Turk. It would all be a rather clever statement on how we define art if Marcel Duchamp hadn't already been there 85 years ago. It all just seems like a not-so-cheap excuse for its new owners to boast at their next cocktail party about their impeccable faux cultural awareness. To what degree, one wonders, can an artist use his name to impose meaning on a work and make a lot of cash in the process?

The answer could be found apparently at the centre of the room, where a luxury super-yacht was on sale for a mere €65m. It had been brought to the fair by artist Christian Jankowski, who, for no less than an additional €10m, would sell you the exact same boat but as a "sculpture" rather than just a seaworthy vessel. Jankowski himself lists Duchamp as among his influences, but I suspect the €10m was an even stronger one.

There were, however, nestled among the pomposity and overpriced sandwiches, a few hidden gems. A live hermit crab, wearing a bronze cast of Brancusi's *Sleeping Muse* (1910) as a shell and moving serenely around its tank, blissfully unaware of its own cultural message. This Frieze-commissioned work by Pierre Huyghe was oddly calming among the chaos. Elmgreen and Dragst's chimp tottering on a pile of art books reaching for a banana also brought a smile to the face.

As a first-time Frieze visitor, it was disappointing to see so much work that was derivative and shallow. Recreations of the graffiti found in public toilets, a sculpture merging Mickey Mouse with Rodin's

Monument to Balzac seem no more than a trite throwaway comment on society today. Among these novelties, the harsh reality of the recession seems a world away, unless you count the very literal interpretation of the machine which ate up credit cards.

One hopes, however, that the artists soon realise how much more incisive their artistic statement on society can be when they leave greed to the financiers.

↳ Louise Kang

Closing soon ...

Emerging New York-based artist Jacob Kassay is only 27 years old, but his artworks have a depth which usually only characterises well-established artists.

On exhibition now at the Institute for Contemporary Arts (ICA) are a series of monochrome silver-plated canvases embedded in a wooden framework. The atmosphere given by this monochromatic feel is of constant change depending on the strength of the light filtering throughout the day and the movements of the audience.

What, however, is not mentioned at the ICA is that notwithstanding the young age of the painter, those silver monochromes have been sold at for as much as £145,250 at Sotheby's.

This exhibition is definitely an opportunity to view the artworks of an emerging artist whose name is most likely going to appear more and more in art magazines.

"Jacob Kassay" is at the Institute of Contemporary Arts until 13 November 2011. Entry is free.

* * *

The iconic minimalist paintings by American Frank Stella are on display at the Haunch of Venison for just a few more weeks.

Born in 1936, Frank Stella is one of the originators of minimalism and a big name in the art world.

This exhibition is one of the most inclusive collections of Stella's artworks to ever be seen in the UK. The exhibition is set in a thematic rather than chronological order, emphasising the rich style and diversity in his work. Throughout the exhibition a lot of emphasis is put on his lesser-known works from the 70s: multi-coloured, bright, geometric and almost visual illusionary wall-works.

"Frank Stella: Connections" is at Haunch of Venison, 6 Burlington Gardens, W1, until 9 November 2011.



Pierre Huyghe, *Recollection*, 2011, commissioned and produced by Frieze Foundation for Frieze Projects 2011

The Descendants

Director: Alexander Payne
Screenplay: Nat Faxon, Jim Rash, Alexander Payne
Key Cast: George Clooney, Judy Greer, Matthew Lillard
Year: 2011
Runtime: 115 minutes
Festival Screening; in cinemas 27 January 2012

Introducing *The Descendants* at the BFI London Film Festival, co-writer and director Alexander Payne asked his audience to allow themselves to "view this as if you have never seen an Alexander Payne film, and for that matter, as if you have never seen a George Clooney film."

Returning to feature films six years after winning the Academy Award for Original Screenplay for *Sideways*, Payne's latest outing continues his trademark approach of combining tragic plotlines with refreshing comedic notes, on this occasion following Matt King (George Clooney) as he struggles to wrangle control of his adolescent daughters in the aftermath of a catastrophic accident involving their mother.

Juxtaposition exists throughout; the idyllic setting of Hawaii acts as the backdrop for a reminder of the stark reality of mortality, as Matt King discovers that endless riches do

little to affect ordinary relationships and issues. *The Descendants* contains many familiar elements of the genre, such as a fiery rebel teenage daughter, Alexandra (Shailene Woodley), and issues of infidelity, but manages to steer clear of any stagnant clichés that could have easily crept in. The unconventional is a strong theme, stemming from seeing George Clooney on screen as a dishevelled, grey islander, and extending all the way to Alexandra expressing her hatred towards her comatose mother, through a family stalking mission across the scenic Hawaiian archipelago.

The plot moves dynamically as the

characters stumble their way along in an altogether real fashion, remaining unpredictable instead of exhausting the familiar sentiments of a family drama, with Payne expertly allowing the levity to integrate seamlessly with the drama, rising and capitulating at just the right moments throughout.

George Clooney meets his match in a handful of young actors, as they develop strong emotional and playful chemistry with the veteran screen idol, at times stealing moments thanks to a capricious screenplay. Clooney looks entirely at home in a distinctly different role to what he usually plays, showing his interminable range and

diversity as a leading man. Much like Payne's previous endeavours, *The Descendants* is able to find humour where perhaps there shouldn't be any, but does so in a creative and engaging way that does not detract from nor debase any of the seriousness of the content. It does not follow the path of a traditional feel-good film, yet after both clutching your sides laughing and wiping away a few tears, it is hard to walk out of the film without a broad smile on your face and a warm feeling in your stomach.

↳ Maatin Patel

Jack Goes Boating

Director: Philip Seymour Hoffman
Screenplay: Robert Glauudini
Key Cast: Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Ryan, John Ortiz
Year: 2010
Runtime: 91 minutes
In cinemas 4 January 2011

No-one doubts Philip Seymour Hoffman's acting credentials, with his Oscar-winning tour de force in *Capote* still in the memory, but on the evidence of *Jack Goes Boating*, his directorial debut, his talents behind the camera will not be troubling the Academy just yet. Perhaps that does Hoffman an injustice: the trouble lies not truly with his direction, which shows flashes of the quirkiness which have made him a darling of the independent film industry, but also with a script that does not quite work on the big screen. *Jack Goes Boating* is an adaptation of the Robert Glauudini play of the same name, and it is clear from the start that both audience and cast would have benefited by leaving the story on the stage.

Hoffman plays Jack, a forty-something loser obsessed with reggae, with the terrible dreadlocks to match, who works for his uncle as a limo driver.

His co-worker Clyde (John Ortiz) takes pity on Jack's plight, and sets up a date with the almost equally reticent Connie (Amy Ryan). It is this encounter that is at the centre of the film, as Jack resolves to improve himself for Amy, not least learning to swim so he can take her boating come summer. As Jack's budding relationship blossoms, Clyde's own marriage to Lucy (Daphne Rubin-Vega) unravels amidst infidelity. Indeed, the film boils down to an assessment of the actualities of love: the wild and sweet optimism of Jack contrasting with the bitter, weary realism of the collapse of his friend's marriage.

Taken simply as a yarn on love, *Jack Goes Boating* very nearly works. Hoffman is effortlessly natural as the shy but good-natured Jack, although the part is far from challenging for an actor so well-versed in playing vulnerable, complex underdogs. It is Ortiz, however, who really shines, something of a surprise given his cinematic career to date. His Clyde is at once impeccably charming and unbearably tragic, and his muddled command, "let's smoke a toast," during a coke-added party scene provides one of the biggest laughs in a comedy otherwise



Philip Seymour Hoffman as Jack

short on jokes. Ryan is pleasingly self-effacing as Jack's love interest, although Rubin-Vega is patchy as Lucy and is not helped by a script which veers between the wonderfully astute and the painfully banal.

It is the transition from stage to screen that really lets the film down. Lines that carry weight in a theatre

seem forced and written in the naturalism of a cinema, while the sparse staging that would work so well in a theatrical character-study leads to claustrophobic and monotonous settings in the film. Jack's apartment is all we really see, while the few other locations feel like they have been bolted on in an attempt to give some

much needed variation. Perhaps most importantly, the tone of the film feels confused. Yes there are a few laughs, but the collapse of Clyde and Lucy's marriage is not heart-breaking, it is boring. As excellent as Ortiz is, we are never shown enough of the relationship to really care what happens, and without either laughter or passion for the plight of the struggling characters we are left with an aimless, if charming, story plodding along for an hour and a half.

No doubt this film will find an audience, and it deserves to for the excellence of Ortiz and Hoffman, but it is a shame that a story so well suited to intimate theatre has been unnecessarily transformed into a rather forgettable big screen yarn. The actors mostly emerge with reputations enhanced, but Glauudini's patchy screenplay limits Hoffman's ability to really stamp his authority on this debut. It is full of all the quirks and charms that we have come to associate with the actor, but lacks the bite, passion and originality to really stand out as anything other than standard indie fare.

↳ Mark Heffernan

13, National Theatre: Olivier

Director: Thea Sharrock
Playwright: Mike Bartlett
Key Cast: Trystan Gravelle, Geraldine James, Helen Ryan
At National Theatre: Olivier until 8 January 2012

The new play by Mike Bartlett, *13*, is not clear-cut protest theatre. Although the central theme is certainly public protest, there is an ambivalence in the message that gives only wavering support for the youth-driven, social network fuelled, revolutionary movement that is pitted against the politically entrenched and dominant neo-liberal Conservative government. Yet, it is this ambivalence that makes the play work as more than a foolhardy attack on capitalism, and also makes it pertinently real. For while one may sympathise with those currently occupying Wall Street or

Finsbury Square, and share in a sense of ill-defined disquiet directed toward bankers, banks, government, business or any other maligned public bodies, it is difficult to identify any one thing to particularly support.

Set in a dark dreamlike landscape of London, we meet a host of characters seemingly related only in their anger or disaffection: Sarah and Amir are protesting the student fees, Holly is a lonely student seeking answers at an Alpha course, and perhaps most endearingly, Edith (Helen Ryan) is a Rihanna-singing old lady furious enough with the bank charges levied on her account that she pushes a shopping trolley through her branch's window. Like the Britain we know today, the voices of these people and their anger is lost in the cacophony of people shouting in different directions

and for different causes. Unlike our present reality, a mysterious political entrepreneur called John (Trystan Gravelle) returns from an unexplained period of absence to unite those voices setting the stage for a large and focussed debate between him and the Prime Minister, Ruth (Geraldine James) that runs along fairly well trodden left-right rivalries.

There is a huge amount of drama here; each of the opening scenes is at most a couple of minutes long, perhaps echoing the short-termism of the YouTube generation's attention span. As a dramatic style it takes some getting used to, but the energy builds through the first act to a fever pitch, recreating the adrenaline rush that comes from subversion or protest. This is complemented by the sparse yet meaningful production of director

Thea Sharrock, which makes powerful use of a dark and menacing black mainframe-like cube around which the action is based.

The grassroots movement with John as its leader gets sufficient traction through social media and public performances to gain him access to a prime minister on the brink of declaring war on Iran. However, in a series of twists and turns the social media and technological spread of information that John believes to be the lynchpin behind modern social change turn on him and upset things. Much was made in the media of the role of Facebook and Twitter in the Arab Spring, but what Bartlett is saying here is that such media cannot but reinforce old fashioned anger and organisation. While it is so simple to "like" a social cause, or repost it as

your status, it is much harder to get people out on the streets to scream for change. As John learns, governments have a finger in the online world, and as such over-reliance on protest through the internet also provides governments with an opportunity to control and manipulate the act of social coming together.

While the debate in the second act felt a little forced, and Geraldine James a little too icy even for a Tory woman, *13* is a riveting play. Bartlett has captured many of the subtleties and contradictions of modern Britain and public protest in a time when the debate is far too often framed in oversimplistic terms.

↳ Rory Creedon

His Teeth, Only Connect Theatre

Director: Maggie Norris
Playwright: Ben Musgrave
Key Cast: Dymond Allen, Kareem Dauda, Junior Miller, Eleanor Wyld
At Only Connect Theatre until 12 November 2011

His Teeth is a new production from Only Connect, a creative arts company that works with reformed ex-offenders to help young people at risk of crime avoid going down the same route. The play exposes for all to see the criminal underworld that lurks just beneath

the surface of British society, and the cast are excellent throughout. They portray difficult issues by using their experience, while displaying genuine talent on stage.

Eric Adegeye (Kareem Dauda) is a restless young man who leaves Lagos hoping for a more fulfilling life in London. His initial enthusiasm is infectious, but Dauda soon dampens the mood; Arriving in England he is struck by the "cold" - that of the people as much as the weather. Eric develops a fascinating relationship

with the head of a human trafficking gang, Derek (Junior Miller). Derek relishes in his ownership of Eric, abusing and humiliating him in several sinister scenes - safe in the knowledge that he holds Eric's passport, and with it, his freedom.

Sarah (Eleanor Wyld) becomes "lost" in their dark world - dependent on Derek for affection as much as she is heroin. Wyld is brilliant as Sarah, a character noticeably haunted by her past, whose inner turmoil sees her dart from snappy exchanges to

compassionate words as her mood changes accordingly. Roger (Dymond Allen), a quintessential pimp with an overtly effeminate streak, provided a welcome respite from the gritty drama - sprinkling humour over otherwise chilling scenes.

The stage, covered on each side by designer Joshua Carr with a transparent fabric resembling a cage, is used to great effect in creating the impression that the characters were trapped - trapped in a small, too often unseen pocket of our society. Short films were

projected on to its fabric walls and were most effective when the drama was projected live, transforming standard monologues into engaging streams of consciousness, offering a very frank insight in to the character's mind.

There is a warm welcome at the Only Connect Theatre, and the standard of theatre on offer is evidence of their excellent work.

↳ Laurence Vardaxoglou

Live: Bon Iver, Hammersmith Apollo

The first thing that struck me about Bon Iver was the band's dynamic. I, much to my chagrin, never managed to see Bon Iver when they toured their first album, *For Emma, Forever Ago*, but I was aware that it was written by front man Justin Vernon while suffering from glandular fever, in a cabin in Wisconsin, after breaking up with his then girlfriend. This speaks for the wistful, wintry sadness that cloaks *For Emma* and its relatively low-key, natural feel. So from this – although I admit the new, eponymous album has a much bigger feel – I was expecting a relatively intimate group. However I was greeted with a sprawling nine-piece, multi-instrumentalist plethora of musical talent. From guitars, to brass, to woodwind to electronics they were tooled up with almost everything you can imagine, which lent them a huge sprawling sound peppered with organic soul and autumnal forest noises akin to those found on *For Emma*.

The diversity of their load-out afforded them a great variety of sound and consequently this was not a gig that Bon Iver played by the book – and thank God for it. They opened with a fairly stock version of "Perth," the first track on the new album, though given the beauty and gravitas of the track this is no bad thing, before moving on to an eclectic and exciting set of performances which featured reinventions of the wonderful "Holocene," the oddly haunting 80s revival track "Beth/Rest" and a cover of Björk's "Who Is It?" While refusing to bow to repeated calls for "Skinny Love" from the audience was perfectly warranted – an encore appearance of their anthemic track was obvious and almost necessary – they also played a set list mostly comprised of tracks from the new album. At times this was a little frustrating, as many of the first album's tracks fell by the wayside (including the stunning, and sadly



Bon Iver at Hammersmith Apollo, October 2011

missed, "For Emma"), however, someone who continued to bemoan this throughout the gig would have been missing the point entirely.

On this tour, Bon Iver are not just a band reproducing their new album,

but one reinventing it and, in the process, looking like a group of artists revelling in a playground of their own brilliance. Songs frequently avoided their conventional album representations, with Vernon toying with vocals,

changing chord progressions and inserting devastatingly sweet harmonies. But it was not all sweetness and light. One of the most noticeable departures from the recorded versions were the almost frequent sound jams that the band embarked upon towards the end of tracks and the complete revamping of others. While they gave several tracks from *For Emma* a big band re-tune, such as a brassy and exaggerated re-telling of opening track "Flume," the very best example of this – and the turning point of the gig from a good into a great one – was a thoroughly raucous, thumping, rock-out version of "Blood Bank" from the *Blood Bank EP*. Vernon and his cohort toyed around, creating eerie waves of sound for at least a minute before the stage burst into a wreath of red light and the scorching brass and guitar leapt in, accompanied by the band's two drum kits, to create a truly incredible revamp of what was already one of their best tracks accompanied by a descent into noise and whispered voices that a *Kid A*-period Radiohead would have been proud of. Not even the drunken, lecherous, spikey-haired, bespectacled, smelly, beer-dropping cretin in front of me could ruin it, and for a man with as much rage as me, that's something special.

This was followed up by arguably the best, and certainly the most haunting, enrapturing, beautiful – call it what you will – moment of the night. I've always been a huge fan of the closing track from *For Emma*, "re: Stacks", but on this stage, on this night, Vernon did something truly amazing with it. The rest of the band left him to face the crowd solo, armed only with his electro-acoustic. Normally, when I truly love a song, I secretly will the band to leave the vocals and the melody alone and let me just revel in the moment. Vernon didn't, and I didn't mind. He threw vocals up into the air well beyond their pre-ordained

pitch, crooned in a golden baritone and changed timing and riffs and I just didn't care; this was something else. His soaring falsetto took the song, and the audience, through ascension into sheer astral beauty. I couldn't help but draw parallels to some of the live performances of Jeff Buckley, and feel that I was witnessing something truly great.

As with all genius, Vernon's appears to be accompanied by a certain degree of oddity. His stage presence is beguilingly shy and in between songs he often meandered through sentences with little structure but oodles of charm. However, the overriding feeling was that he genuinely is in love with music and with performing. He could barely contain his delight at the full house and the atmosphere of awed hush in the venue, broken by rapturous applause between each song, and continually, genuinely, thanked the audience for being there. For the encore, the band opened with a stark and gorgeous version of "Skinny Love" that saw Vernon, once again, alone in vocal and instrumental performance, with the rest of the band stood behind him clapping a beat for the song. They closed with a rousing audience participation version – definitely not a sing along, Vernon doesn't like those – of "Wolves I & II". As the band opened the song he told the audience to start singing the song's principle lyric "What might have been lost," and to keep getting louder and louder and then to "just lose [our] shit." There would be "no tune, no notes, just shout[ing]" – and we did just that. The full arena burst their lungs belting out the song to be part of this special moment and then segued into a full and genuine standing ovation from all parts of the crowd as the band left the stage.

This was not your typical gig, but those that are truly special seldom are.
└ Duncan McKenna

Live: Flying Lotus, Roundhouse

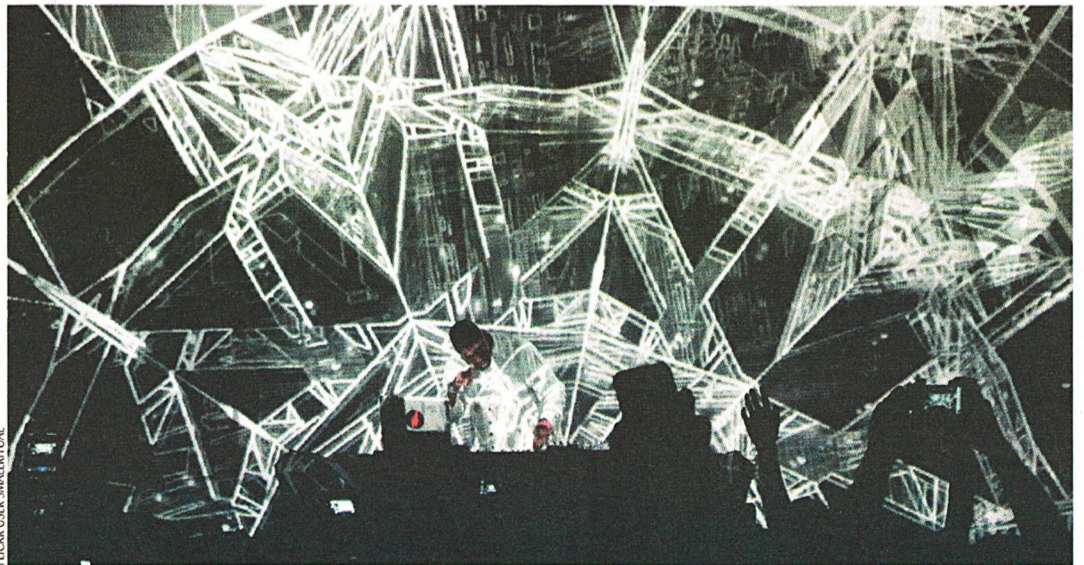
Stephen Ellis, the LA-based producer otherwise known as Flying Lotus, can be difficult to predict. He went from the pared-down hip-hop of his second album, *Los Angeles* to the border-crossing jazz-infused electro of last year's *Cosmogramma* in a single stride. Likewise, his live shows have veered from straight, beat-heavy DJ sets to stripped-down instrumental sessions with jazz musicians. However, his recent one-off show at Camden's Roundhouse saw him return to a more audience-friendly style.

With solid support from fellow Brainfeeder stalwarts, Martyn and Kutmah, Flying Lotus enraptured a crowd of predominantly male hipsters (myself included) over the course of ninety minutes. In characteristic style, FlyLo mixed old favourites, such as "Massage Situation" and "Do the Astral Plane" with brave new renditions of the cream of this year's alternative hip-hop: hearing him dubstepify Waka Flocka Flame's "Hard in the Paint" was a particular highlight. This

heady mix was accompanied by an equally frenetic light display, which complemented the glitchy, bass-heavy hip-hop coming from the speakers. Ellis himself was also on true form, surprising the overly self-aware audience with his crude shout-outs and by playing goofily with the visuals – at one point we saw him imprisoned by a set of blue lasers emanating from the light display. At another point he launched into an impromptu rendition of The Rolling Stones's "Paint it Black."

By the end of the set, the bulk of the 2000-strong audience were dancing in the usual narcoleptic glitch-hop style and, at the concert's peak, the venue was dominated by the smell of sweat and marijuana. Once again, Flying Lotus had failed to disappoint. For a similar experience, fellow label-mates Samiyam, Tokimonsta and Kutmah will be playing Shoreditch's Plastic People on 16 November 2011.

└ Tom Dilke



Flying Lotus at Roundhouse, October 2011

This week's live highlights

1 Nov: **Ryan Adams** – Cadogan Hall

2 Nov: **The Rapture** – KOKO

5 Nov: **The Juan Maclean** – Queen of Hoxton

6 Nov: **The Antlers** – The Borderline

7 Nov: **Red Hot Chili Peppers** – O2 Arena

7 Nov: **My Morning Jacket** – Roundhouse



Follow us: @partbmusic

art

1 November 2011



London Film Festival | Bon Iver | 13 | Jack London | Modern Slavery
| His Teeth | Jack Goes Boating | Feist | Private B ... and LSEx

Contact

PartB Editors

Aameer Patel
Kerry-Rose O'Donnell
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Fashion Editor

Emma Beaumont
partb-fashion@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Film Editor

Aameer Patel
partb-film@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Food Editor

Max Jenkins
partb-food@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Literature Editor

Rachel Holmes
partb-literature@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Music Editor

Ankur Vora
partb-music@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Private B Editor

Governor Jack Tindale
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Theatre Editors

Rory Creedon
Hannah Payne
partb-theatre@thebeaveronline.co.uk

TV Editor

Rasha Al-Dabagh
partb-tv@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Video Games Editor

Hassan Dar
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Visual Arts Editor

Roberta Cucchiaro
partb-visualarts@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Web Editor

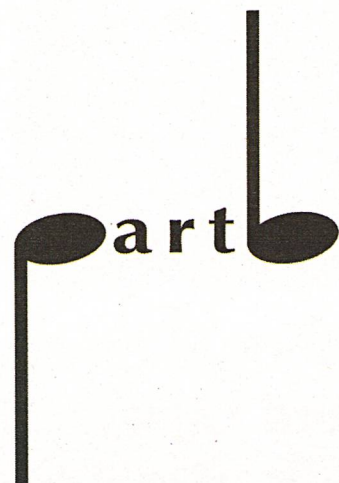
Angie Jude Moneke
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

* * *

Cover

Self-portrait, 2011,
Sundus Tauseef of the
LSESU Visual Arts Society

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



BFI 55th BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

Beauty

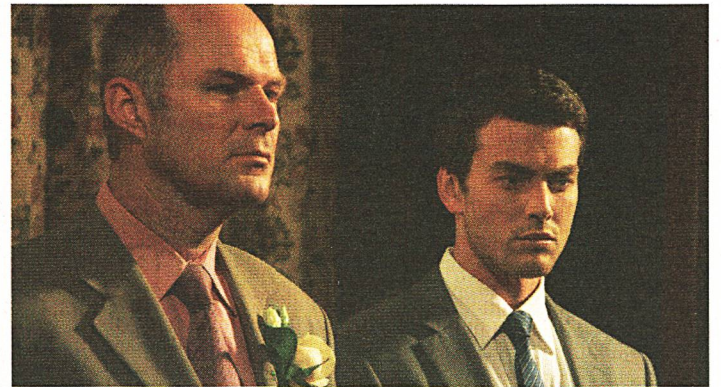
Director: Oliver Hermanus
Screenplay: Oliver Hermanus
Key cast: Dean Lotz, Roeline Daneel, Sue Diepeveen, Charlie Keegan
Year: 2011
Runtime: 98 minutes
Festival Screening

South African director Oliver Hermanus's second film, *Beauty* (*Skooneid*), is the story of a middle class Afrikaner man's self-loathing and repression. Winner of the Queer Palm award at this year's Cannes Festival, it follows the lead character, Francois (Dean Lotz), living an outwardly ordered married life in Bloemfontein with his wife Elena. The film opens at his daughter's wedding when Francois is taken aback by the beauty of Christian, the 23 year old son of an old friend, from across the room at the reception and this encounter sparks an obsession with the younger man.

It becomes clear early on that Francois and Elena's marriage is loveless. They are going through the motions while Francois sneaks off to gay orgies with other men of a similar age and class at a bleak country farm during his lunch hour and that Elena is also doing some sneaking around of her own. A visit to the doctor reveals

that his frustrated lifestyle is making him ill and that he was, in the past, prone to aggressive outbursts. It is when he fabricates a business trip to Cape Town to see Christian and he has to compete with his younger daughter for Christian's affections that the film gets more complex. Christian's part-time job as a model alongside his law studies and comfortable demeanour around both men and women feed Francois's desire.

Dean Lotz rises to the challenge of the subtle acting required to make believable a character that is stuck in a tense self-denial and is, underneath, terrified by the truth that he is gay and might be happier breaking out of the white, middle class Afrikaner etiquette he is so comfortable in. Throughout the film you are struck by a man who is undoubtedly trapped, but who is resigned to trapping himself. His marriage is redundant, his attempt to stop everything from changing is clearly making him ill but he can't imagine things not staying as they are. More than anything else, Francois has become a voyeur, spying on Christian, and in his own life, only occasionally dabbling with things that actually interest him and being used to being an observer rather than an active



Dean Lotz as Francois and Charlie Keegan as Christian

participant.

The film has a very art house and independent feel. Those not of an indie disposition could find the pace too slow and the plot too narrow for this to be more than a glorified short. But the advantage of the slow, unfolding style with lots of close-ups of Francois is to watch his thoughts and intentions progress in each scene. It also adds a layer of vulnerability, for instance a scene in which he visits a gay bar in Cape Town that could easily

have been foregone. The title doesn't quite seem to fit, though the beauty in the film is two-fold. On the one hand is Christian's spritely, young beauty that is organic and honest because he is hardly aware of it, versus the false veneer of beauty Francois is trying to impose over his own personal and married life because a veneer of "happy" and "ordered" is what he prefers to any possible alternatives.

Francesca Washtell

Two Years at Sea

Director: Ben Rivers
Key cast: Jake Williams
Year: 2011
Runtime: 88 minutes
Festival Screening

Two Years at Sea is shot using old 16mm cameras in black and white. Apparently, the imperfections from development process add something to it. It depicts Jake Williams, an old man, on his own (cameraman not included), performing mundane activities in solitude. It's

not a story, this guy is real. Director Ben Rivers does an Oscar-winning job of really making you feel the mundane monotony of his life. Essentially, it's like a zombie apocalypse, without the zombies. Or even shotguns. If you appreciate watching an old man boil a kettle, and then have a drink, this is the film for you. The drink scene is followed by a real smasher: an off-camera toilet scene. It's almost poetic, the way you see the hand reach out for toilet roll. This is followed by a two

and a half minute scene of him undressing and showering (at least we're spared frontal-nudity). Oh, and just so you know, this film has nothing to do with the sea. In fact, the title refers to the method that Williams was able to finance his present lifestyle. That's got to be the best justification for a film title ever.

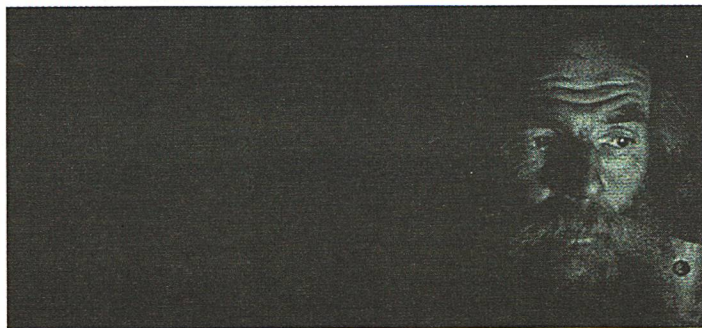
A lot of *Two Years at Sea* consists of non-moving silent shots. You view a washing line in all its beauty, followed by thirty seconds of the base of a tree, which slightly leans. When Rivers has some freak episodes of compassion for the audience, there are the odd bits of dull music. There is never any explanation (or dialogue). It just has shots of still stuff. While some of the shots are quite nice looking, I get the impression Rivers thinks they're a bit more beautiful than they are. I've read the digitised version (which I saw) doesn't capture everything of the 35mm print, but I struggle to believe the difference could be that significant. How does one draw pleasure from watching a man paddle onto a small lake, and then for more than 5 minutes show him motionlessly drift-

ing? The one moment when he moved the paddle and the raft changed direction almost excited me.

What happened to traditional film making? How about a good script with actual dialogue - that takes talent. A couple of mumbles don't count. How about some character development? His face remains fairly expressionless throughout and I felt absolutely no affection for Williams. A bit of plot wouldn't hurt either - the film doesn't go anywhere. Showing a couple of photos of people and explaining nothing is not a plot! This film made me miserable. I wish I was kidding.

Two Years at Sea has received many positive reviews, but in my opinion, this emperor definitely has no clothes. I've seen his butt, and it was not art! I'm hoping that I simply lack the intelligence to appreciate this film, but as far as I'm concerned, it's a pretentious, one and a half hour eternity, uninteresting, suicide-inducing, tree-staring, bird song-listening, dull, walking-through-snow, old guy-show-ering pile of horse shit.

Harry Burdon



Jake Williams

Ninjas

Director: Dennison Ramalho
Screenplay: Marco de Castro, Marcelo Velloso, Dennison Ramalho
Key cast: Flávio Bauraquí, Juliana Galdino, Carlos Meceni
Year: 2010
Runtime: 23 minutes
Festival Screening

Ninjas is a Brazilian short that follows a policeman whose life descends into a hell on earth. And no, it's not about ninjas.

To write a decent short is no mean feat. With limited time you have to bring multiple dimensions to at least the protagonist, and some form of plot is appreciated. And, of course, never forget a good script. In the case of character development, *Ninjas* is fairly lacking. The lead, Jailton, combats internal demons whilst seeing physical representations, but is intrinsically

good. This is pretty much the full extent of Jailton and the whole film's character development. I guess this is passable, considering the constraints.

Ninjas starts well. It begins in a church, with lots of chanting and a huge amount of passion over religion. This is fairly atmospheric and drew me in, as well as being nicely shot. However, a first scene does not constitute a plot. Sadly, it becomes more "creative" after this. The story is strange and unpredictable, but not in a way I would describe as good. In fact, a certain scene is highly unpleasant, with gore and yelping and screaming. This does not make for a pleasant watch.

In a full-length film, there is the opportunity to justify such unpleasantness by giving it some meaning in the context of a larger story. In a short,

I think this is quite a challenge. Since there is little character development, there is no meaning to take from possibly the most graphic and horrific torture scene I've ever seen. Rather than art, I see plain gratuitous violence. This scene and the movements leading up to it span nine minutes of the film. It doesn't add up on paper, or in execution.

I am further prevented from being drawn into Jailton's world since the film is dark from start to finish. I'm given no opportunity understand him. This left me feeling alienated by the violence that ensued. *Ninjas* deserves some credit as a mood piece, but that is outweighed by its unjustified violence.

Harry Burdon



Features

Live by the rolling pin, die by the rolling pin?

Josh Babarinde reflects on 50 years of parliamentary pantomime.

Half a century ago last week, the nation's political bear pit, Prime Ministers Question Time (PMQs) was born. Created in 1961, the weekly exchange of questions between MPs and PM has transformed from what was another dull Times New Roman, black-and-white-print item on the House of Commons order paper to the phenomenal display of political tribalism that it is today.

Described by politician after academic after citizen as "Punch and Judy politics", a session dominated by the exchange of bumper stickers and numerous blows to the head using rolling pins, PMQs has the ability to make or break British politicians. You could be forgiven for fast-forwarding past the initial questions from back-bench MPs, many of them posing slimy and sickeningly loyal questions to the Premier in desperate attempts to shamelessly climb up the political career ladder, and skipping directly to the clash or pantomime of the political titans. Prime Ministers and Opposition Leaders alike have had numerous flops at the golden despatch box of the Commons, with Gordon Brown's claim to have "saved the world" at the forefront of these blunders. On the contrary, many have used what is now a 30-minute session on a Wednesday afternoon to their advantage.

But as PMQs turns 50, the big question to be asked isn't about its influence in the making or breaking of individual politicians, but about whether half-century-long tradition is making or breaking British parliamentary politics. Does it do our political system justice? Our friends across the Atlantic seem to love it, tuning into C-SPAN on a Wednesday evening to watch the repeat. And there's no doubt that PMQs is a legendary institution, a national treasure up there with Stephen Fry, Bruce Forsyth, Dot Cotton and the rest, but is that all it is? Is PMQs nothing more than a "big performance", to use the words of David Cameron, in order to portray a 'gripping' perspective of Parliament in what House of Commons Speaker, John Bercow, calls the "shop window" of British politics?

Former Tory leader William Hague seems to agree, remarking that Prime Ministers Questions "had been exciting

and fascinating and fun and an enormous challenge, and from my point of view wholly unproductive". The sad thing is that many believe this is true. But we've only heard one side of the story - what about Nick Clegg, someone who isn't a Tory leader and who comes from a third-party perspective? "The only saving grace is that most people don't watch Prime Minister's Questions". Another damning report.

So PMQs isn't getting a particularly good review - and that's from the people at the centre of it.

Does it do our political system justice?

The questions we have to answer then, is how and why exactly did PMQs become like this? And if this use of Parliamentary time is just seen as "fun" and "wholly unproductive", then why hasn't it changed?

The simple answer is: Prime Minister's Question Time didn't start this way, and was not, at least at the beginning, intended to end up this way. It began on a grey October day in 1961 where the only people that really knew and cared about the session were the Parliamentarians themselves. The conduct was pretty tame compared to what it is now. What's happened over the last 50 years is that the character of PMQs and the House of Commons has dramatically changed. The first step came in the late seventies when PMQs, at this point taking place for 15 minutes on Tuesdays and Thurs-

days, was broadcast on radio. It was at this point that party leaders had to start playing to the public, not the party.

Step two was the revolutionary move for our democracy, under the Iron Lady in '89, in which PMQs (and other House of Commons coverage) was first broadcast on TV screens across the country. Not only did our MPs have worry about what the public heard, but about what the public saw. Now these developments give good reason for MPs to become more disciplined; surely they wouldn't have wanted their childish behaviour on show? We could now watch their every move after all. Surely these changes, brought about by the demand for political accessibility, could have changed the way our politics works for the better and changed the way our MPs act. Widespread broadcast could have, or maybe should have, forced MPs to reassess their priorities, triggering a move away from a culture of constant attempts to woo their party bosses towards a constant desire to impress their political, electoral and democratic bosses; us.

MPs, party leaders in particular, had the chance to put our parliamentary politics on a respectable level. When arriving at the junctions at which respective landmark radio and TV transmissions were introduced, a path to productivity and effectiveness could have been taken. Instead, Westminster walked, or, more accurately,

sprinted, down the path of Punch and Judy politics. But who led Westminster to take that route? MPs certainly had a part to play in this. While all three party leaders claim to detest Parliament's "yah-boo" antics, it is them and their parties playing along with this pantomime that provides the steam in the Commons' train of rowdiness. This became totally overt when a leaked Labour Party memo, at a time when Ed Miliband was seen to be struggling in the PMQ arena, instructed the Labour leader that he must "have a cheer line that goes down well in the chamber",

"yah-boo behaviour is a complete turn off to the public. We don't want it. We don't need it".

leaving MPs quite literally crying out for more.

The House of Commons was designed to separate Government and opposition benches two swords' lengths apart to prevent duels, but these duels are now happening; just in a

different form than was expected. What might seem more appropriate today is that each side be separated two rolling pins' lengths from each other to stop Mr. Punch from beating Judy around the head (and vice versa).

During one session of PMQs, Speaker John Bercow beamed to the House that "yah-boo behaviour is a complete turn off to the public. We don't want it. We don't need it". This, being a very easy thing to say, enforces the argument above, and could well be true. But if the public detests the rowdy nature of the Commons, then why hasn't it changed? Maybe PMQs, in all its rowdiness does have a comfortable and rightful place in British politics. Maybe it is actually making our system, not breaking it. It's certainly helped to boost accountability, and encouraged PMs to play a more active role across all their departments for when they're quizzed at PMQs. Not least is it entertaining, given the competitiveness of the exchanges, plus the spur of the moment hit-and-miss jibes. Maybe we do like it.

Perhaps it's not the playground politics we like itself, but the effect that it has on our elected representatives. Maybe we relish the fact that our politicians, usually large in stature, can have their feet put back firmly onto the ground through their belittling in PMQs. Maybe we like the fact that it leaves our representatives quaking in their boots, so much so that former PM Harold Wilson, according to a former adviser, felt the need to calm his nerves by "open[ing] the brandy bottle" before and after the fight in the lion's den. Maybe we like the fact that Blair saw PMQs as an "arena that sets the heart beating a little faster"

and like that David Cameron "very glad it doesn't happen every day". Maybe politicians aren't scared of each other, but scared of us. Maybe they're scared at how they'll come across and how we'll judge them.

So, after a stream of 'maybes', who knows what to make of PMQs on the week it turns fifty. Should it say? Should it not? Those questions can be met with varied answers, but as things stand, PMQs probably has many more birthdays to come. Besides, everybody likes to watch a bit of Punch and Judy from time to time; the puppet show isn't bad either.



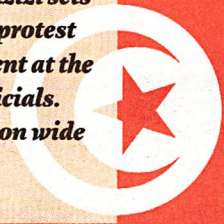
The Arab world's 11

The 51st state

Emily Delahaye examines deadlock in Israel

17th December 2010

Mohammed Bouazizi sets himself on fire in protest at his mistreatment at the hands of local officials. This sparked region wide protests.



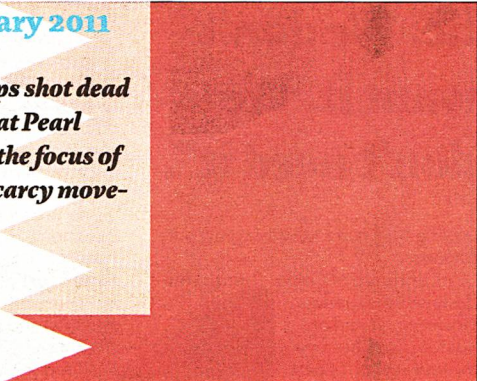
11th February 2011

Following protests that began on 25th January President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt stood down and exiled himself to Sharm-el-Sheikh.



18th February 2011

Bahraini troops shot dead 15 protestors at Pearl Roundabout, the focus of the pro-democracy movement.



24th February 2011

Following almost two months of protests, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria lifts the state of emergency that had been in place for 19 years.



14th March 2011

Troops from Saudi Arabia and UAE invaded Bahrain, following an invitation from the government. Signalling the beginning of the end for the Bahraini government.



This year has all been about rapid and unpredictable change in the Middle East. Last week free elections were held in Tunisia for the first time ever, leading to the election of the Islamist An-Nahda party. Two weeks ago, Muammer Gaddafi was killed in the last stage of the overthrow of the Libyan dictatorship by the Libyan people. Elsewhere leaders such as Hosni Mubarak in Egypt have fallen to popular protest, whilst in Syria the terrible spectre of civil war between the government and its opponents looms. Yet change has not come to Palestine and Israel. The deadlock between these two countries continues to create problems and spark violence on both sides. In contrast to enthusiasm for the spread of freedoms and democracy in the rest of the Middle East, Barack Obama in his recent speech on the 21st of September promised to block Palestinian calls for statehood at the UN, arguing that there needed to be negotiations for peace instead.

When he came to office in 2009, Obama in an interview with the Arab News Channel al-Arabiya told Arabs of the commitment of America to "start by listening" in the Middle East, breaking away from a tradition of "dictating". Today, the feeling of Arabs on the ground in Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip can hardly be that the US is listening to their problems. A shop owner in the West Bank city of Ramallah, Marwan Jubeh, told The Guardian: "Israel and the US are one and the same: the US is Israel, and Israel is the US...Obama can't do anything without Israel because Congress is pro-Israel". While

Israel and the US are one and the same: the US is Israel, and Israel is the US... Obama can't do anything without Israel

the West may hope to have influence in the Middle East through its role in the destruction of Gaddafi's regime and backing of Libyan protesters, the US runs a serious risk of losing the respect and belief of the Palestinians for good. An independent Palestinian politician Mustafa Barghouti said that the recent US refusal to back Palestinian statehood "clearly shows the double standards of the US when it comes to the Palestinian issue. Obama spoke about freedom, human rights, justice in South Sudan, Tunisia, Egypt - but not for the Palestinians". This is an example of widespread disappointment in Obama and his country felt by many Arabs - contrary to the President's hope of showing Arabs that the US is not their enemy.

In a speech made in September Obama talked of the US' "unbreakable" commitment to Israel's security needs and the need to put this at the forefront of lasting peace. Admittedly this was said in front of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Yet surely there can be no lasting peace while the negotiations for this are conducted by two countries of unequal stature - previous peace negotiations have come to nothing because the Israelis have no cause to respect Palestinians, who lack international and UN sup-

port. Obama condemned Palestinian calls for statehood as a "short cut" which would not help the development of understanding between the two sides. But Palestine has been the state left out in the cold for too long, and

"the wind of change is blowing" through the Middle East. Who can predict where the dust may settle.

without international recognition from the UN this will only continue. Peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict needs new conditions and a better context for conciliation after decades of diplomatic deadlock. Changing the status quo by giving Palestine recognition as a nation may just provide this.

Full scale uprisings have occurred in the West Bank and Gaza previously in the two Intifadas (meaning "shaking off" in Arabic) of 1987-1993 and 2000. The root of the first Intifada was the proliferation of illegal Israeli settlements in parts of Palestine

involved in this, as defenders of Israeli peace or asking for concessions for the Palestinians, remains to be seen. French President Nicolas Sarkozy has emerged as much more dynamic than the once adored Obama in the recent debate over statehood, declaring passionately, "We cannot wait any longer [for peace]. If the method used so far isn't working, then change the method". He proposes setting out a timetable for a year in order to achieve peace. This may seem a touch too naive, as the present conflict has raged for almost a hundred years creating animosity and hatred in the hearts of both sides. Yet this is 2011, the year of the Arab Spring. To take the words of former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, "the wind of change is blowing" through the Middle East. Who can predict where the dust may settle. ☘

given to the Arabs in the original 1948 partition, while the second was sparked by the controversial visit of Ariel Sharon to the compound surrounding the Al-Asqua mosque in Jerusalem. Bloody clashes between Arabs and Israelis are a constant backdrop to life in the occupied territories. On September 25th of this year, eleven years after the Second Intifada, President Mahmoud Abbas declared that the "Palestinian Spring" had begun. Despite the US intransigence, you can be certain that Abbas and his people will be pushing with the same passion for freedoms and independence as their Arab brothers and sisters across the Middle East. Whether or not the West will try to be



months of Spring

To the bitter end

Diane Yu explores faltering revolutions

As the conflict in Libya finally reached its gruesome end, human rights activists around the world could finally rejoice after a seemingly interminable struggle for freedom. Yet, perhaps many watched the Libyan revolt with increasing unease, initially buoyed by the short, month-long revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, only to see Libya spiral into a long civil war.

At first, the Arab Spring was miraculous. People power swept across the Middle East as citizens flooded the squares in peaceful protest and toppled dictators in Tunisia and Egypt with their plain cries for change. At the time, the wave of peaceful revolutions seemed unstoppable. Similar protests cropped up in country after country. Syria, Yemen, and Libya were the next targets for freedom, but expecting the same clean and quick success was too optimistic. As Libya descended rapidly into fighting, Yemen, Syria and Iran remained mired in stalemate. If the victory in Libya demonstrates anything, it is that dictators who have ruled a country for decades will do anything to hold onto power and perhaps revolution is not as easy as it first seemed.

Even before the Arab Spring, President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen was the centre of competing pressures from the United States and Al Qaeda. At the same time, Yemen has the highest poverty rate of all Arab Spring countries with 41.8 per cent of its citizens living on less than £1.25 per day, according to the

its people few political freedoms. According to "The Shoe-Thrower's Index," a 2010 study performed by the Economist, Yemen has the highest level of unrest in its citizens, at 86.9 out of 100.

And yet, in Yemen the protests have made arguably little progress. The government alternates between concession and crackdown, one day promising that President Saleh will resign in a month, and the next day initiating a brutal crackdown against militant rebels. Since the first protests, the violence in Yemen continued to escalate, with many fearing civil war, until a 3rd June bombing outside the presidential compound injured Saleh. As he fled to Saudi Arabia for treatment of his wounds, the fighting wound down as many protesters hoped he would be gone for good. However, after three months, Saleh returned to Yemen and the violence intensified.

After being in power for more than 30 years, amid separatist revolts and threats from Al Qaeda, President Saleh refuses to relinquish power. He has promised to step down four times, only to back away from the deal at the last minute, proving that he is unwilling to make any genuine concessions. On the other hand, the protests have ignited longstanding animosity between tribes. The protesters themselves have remained mostly peaceful, but the most powerful tribes have aligned themselves either with Saleh or the opposition and taken the fighting to the streets.

"It's clear that neither side can actually win this, so it's basically posturing for political gains either domestically or internationally," said Ali Obeid, a director of the Ministry of Defense, said to the New York Times.

The conflicts between the heavily-

It's clear that neither side can actually win this so it's basically posturing for political gains either domestically or internationally

armed tribes themselves have aggravated the situation in Yemen. In the midst of the violence, the tribal leaders themselves are seeking to further their own interests and expand their power. Just as in Libya, the loyalist elements in Yemen are willing to fight for their leader so it may be that Yemen is on the brink of civil war.

Syria has followed a path similar to that of Yemen and Libya. At the beginning, many were sceptical of the possibility of revolution, as President Bashar al-Assad remains popular among sections of the population. However, during attempts to quell the protests, he has opened fire on his own people and mood is souring quickly. Al-Assad has made moder-

ate concessions, such as releasing 200 political prisoners, but demands for him to step down have been met with violence by the police. Brutal government crackdowns have scattered opposition forces, leading many to flee into neighbouring Turkey. There still needs to be a greater, coordinated opposition effort across the country. Without more support from Damascus and Aleppo, the two largest cities, the uprising may not succeed. According to the United Nations, 2,900 have been killed by security forces.

Yet, despite the violence and oppression from the government, some Syrians remain reluctant to join the uprising, particularly religious minorities. Stories from cities such as Homs report sectarian violence in the opposition forces. Minority groups, including Christians, were given religious freedom under Al-Assad's rule. Fear of sectarian conflict under the opposition's rule may be what is prompting some Syrian citizens into siding with the government. Last week, tens of thousands of pro-Assad civilians demonstrated in Damascus. As long as the opposition forces promote religious conflict, many Syrians will still oppose revolution.

In Saudi Arabia, an absolute monarchy under King Abdullah, the

As long as the opposition forces promote religious conflict, many Syrians will still oppose revolution

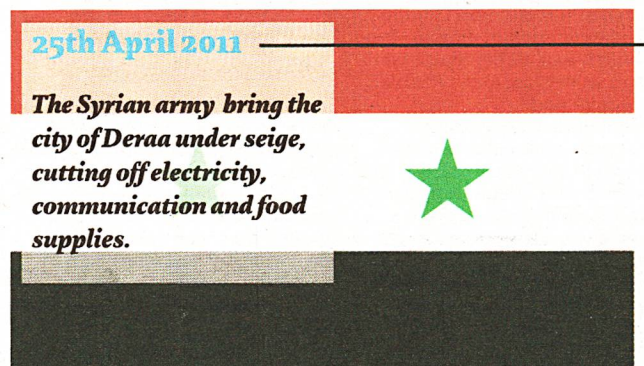
protests have resulted in arrests and government efforts to appease the populace. Many protesters have been held without charge, often only for speaking to foreign journalists. The government also pays off its citizens, in the form of benefits in the billions, but is unwilling to enact political reforms. One marked difference between the protests in Saudi Arabia and those in other Arab countries is that the people are calling for rights and civil liberties, as opposed to demanding that King Abdullah step down. Women in particular have recently played a big role in the protests. They have since won the right to vote, which is mostly symbolic seeing as the elected body has only nominal power, and are now fighting for the right to drive.

As the Libyan Revolution demonstrated, enlightened, non-violent revolutions may not be possible with dictators who have ruled a country for decades, especially when deep tribal rivalries and sectarian conflict exist. The Middle East remains an amalgamation of many complex factors. Opposition forces in these countries need to address these factors and promote greater unity among the citizens, otherwise alienated groups will continue to support the government. With hope, countries like Yemen and Syria will succeed in replacing their rulers, but it is not much of a success if all that awaits is civil war or sectarian chaos.



17th March 2011

The UN instated a 'no fly zone' over Libya.



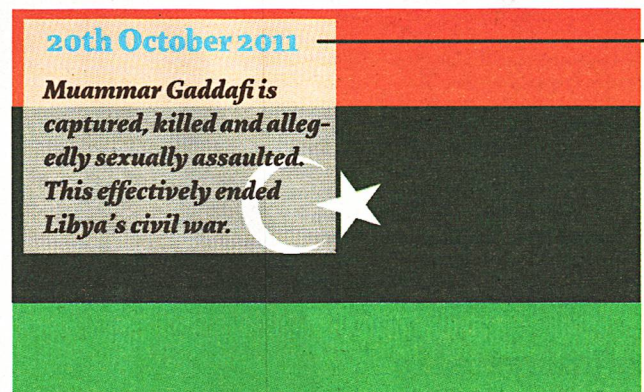
25th April 2011

The Syrian army bring the city of Deraa under seige, cutting off electricity, communication and food supplies.



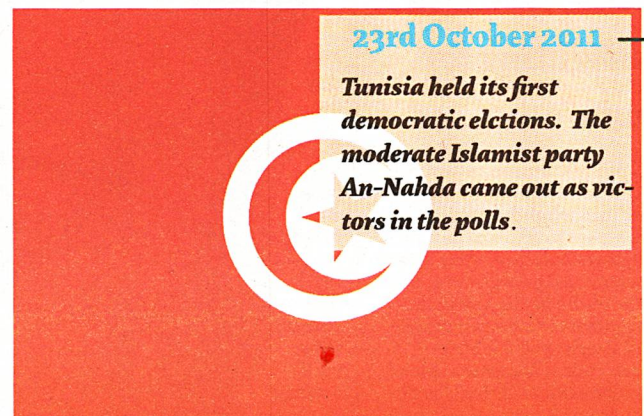
17th October 2011

King Abdullah of Jordan sacks the government following pressure of demonstrators.



20th October 2011

Muammar Gaddafi is captured, killed and allegedly sexually assaulted. This effectively ended Libya's civil war.



23rd October 2011

Tunisia held its first democratic elctions. The moderate Islamist party An-Nahda came out as victors in the polls.

The end of the coup d'ETA

Sofia Horta e Costa looks back at the violent past of the ETA

After having used violence for almost 50 years the Basque nationalist separatist group Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) has declared a "definite cessation" to its armed struggle. This signals the beginning of a peaceful campaign based on dialogue rather than terror, and sends an important message to other radical paramilitary groups. But considering the unsuccessful ceasefires declared in 1989, 1996, 1998 and 2006, what can make it different this time? And whose victory is it?

ETA has assumed responsibility for over three thousand attacks and assassinations since the group's inception in 1959. Even children are included amongst the estimated 900 deaths and many more injuries that the organisation is responsible for. This includes the 1973 murder of the then Spanish Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco, a failed assassination plot on the King in 1995 and an almost successful attempt on Jose Maria Aznar's life in the same year.

Its attacks often target specific groups or individuals rather than large crowds, and ETA has often called in on its own bomb plots to allow sufficient time for police officials to clear the area in question. Even though it might be claimed that violence is used to raise international awareness for the Basque cause and not for mindless killing, ETA's use of terror is widely seen as unacceptable, horrific, and ultimately inefficient.

The Spanish newspaper El País highlights the uselessness of decades of crime in an article published on the day the ceasefire was declared on

Oct. 20, 2011. It claims that the choice to use peaceful methods should have been made years ago and that this should not be seen as a victory; ETA's "patriotic revolutionary pride is a cover for what the group really is, men and women with blood-stained hands." The article also rebukes the idea that the decision to declare a permanent ceasefire could have been reached organically, and states that "ETA wishes to clear its conscience saying that it wants to abandon violence because 'a new political age is opening', and not because it has finally surrendered to a defeat before a democracy that has not

The plight of the Basque people goes far beyond a mere squabble. It concerns the universal principle of the right to national self-determination.

changed since its campaign started, except for the incommensurable pain it now carries."

In fact the Donostia-San Sebastián International Peace Conference held just three days before ETA's declaration not only opened a door for ETA but also put immense pressure on the organisation to renounce armed struggle; prominent political figures like Kofi Annan, Jonathan Powell, and Gerry Adams were amongst some of those present at the conference. This pressure has been building up on the group since the hardened anti-terrorist measures implemented post 9/11.

But there is a little more to the organisation's story that the Spanish newspaper fails to address. The plight of the Basque people goes far beyond a mere squabble. It concerns the universal principle of the right to national self-determination. Professor Michael Walzer - a prominent proponent of the Communitarian framework in political theory - argues in his book 'Just and Unjust Wars' that where all peaceful options have been exhausted, acts of violence can be morally justified as a desperate last-resort to save a community that faces the extreme threat of extinction. This controversial claim raises questions as to why ETA has never considered diplomatic solutions to its woes. It is however a fact that all political parties linked or sympathetic to the organisation have been banned

from registering or have been rendered illegal under the Spanish Supreme Court. In addition, two Basque political parties and one NGO were banned in 2008. The Spanish aggressive illegalisation of the "diplomatic" Basque effort has all but locked the doors for the beginning of peaceful negotiations.

But herein lies the problem with ETA; its views and its methods are incoherent with the Basque effort. The Communitarian argument essentially relies on the consensus principle, or in other words, it assumes the legitimacy of the separatist unit representing the national struggle. ETA's legitimacy as the leader of the Basque nationalist cause has suffered in recent years as revealed by the Euskobarómetro (biannual polls carried out by the Universidad del País Vasco). The most

recently published report shows that in May of this year 64 per cent of the population completely rejected ETA, and amongst the nationalist camp the figures reach 56 per cent. Complete support for the organisation adds up to merely one per cent of the Basque population, and only three per cent see ETA's actions as justifiable. These statistics show the lowest support for the organisation since the same findings were published in 2009.

ETA's decision to declare a ceasefire is therefore a product of internal de-legitimation as well as international pressures. The Spanish government insisted that it will not negotiate on demands for Basque self-determination until ETA disbands. In light of ETA's inability to secure support in the Basque region, this does not only seem fair - democratically speaking - but is also necessary so as to renovate the public image of Basque nationalism.

If ETA can disband and thus honour the wishes of the people it claims to represent, this could win a victory for Spanish democracy. The legislative elections are to be held on 20th November this year. They will be the first since the establishment of the 1978 Spanish constitution that will be held outside the shadow of terror. Surely Spanish political party campaigns will bring the problem to the forefront and will highlight strategies to begin negotiating a peace process. In the midst of huge economic instability and insecurity, the new Spanish government will have yet another pressing issue on the agenda. This is by no means an achievement; it is merely a relief.



Cameron's three line gambit

Joe Attueyi examines possible party splits over Tory Euro-scepticisms

Was David Cameron's use of a three-line whip a good idea? He hasn't come out of the last week looking good, the 81 MPs that defied his three-line whip leave the Conservatives looking divided. More importantly divided over an issue that has ended the careers of the last two Conservative Prime Ministers. This infighting can only hurt voters' perception of the party or as Ed Milliband said it confirmed that the "Tories [are] more interested in fighting each other than fighting for Britain". Though Mr Milliband seems to forget that he had a smaller rebellion on his hands, as 18 of his MPs defied his three-line whip.

The "Tories [are] more interested in fighting each other than fighting for Britain"

So why did Cameron risk splitting his party for this? After all it was a non-binding motion that was unlikely to pass because Labour and the Liberal Democrats were already voting against it. Cameron could have given his MPs a free vote on the matter safe in the knowledge that the motion wouldn't pass and sidestepped this issue completely. Instead he seems to have incurred the wrath of his backbench-

ers who felt that the motion was their big chance to free Britain from the shackles of the EU

So why did he do it? Well think of it this way; Imagine you are a new Tory MP, part of a crop of self-avowed eurosceptics and now think of the dilemma you face a result of this motion. Do you support the mo-

tion, defy the

three-line whip and in the process consign your self to the backbenches

for the rest of this parliament and probably the whole of the next. Or would you follow the party line and vote against the motion in the hope of a ministerial post sometime in the future. David Cameron has effectively gambled that MPs are a fairly ambitious

foot early on in this parliament by defying the three-line whip. This would then alienate careerist MPs from the actual rebels that were willing to defy their party and risk their careers for a cause that they believe in. Cameron has in effect abandoned the easy route so as to divide and conquer the euro-sceptic faction of his party, the PM also realises that the EU isn't really at the forefront of the minds of the British public with concerns over Unemployment, Inflation, the NHS and Crime being far more salient.

The problem right now is that we don't know how Cameron's gamble will work out, because if it does work out as the PM plans it will prove him to be a shrewd Machiavellian manipulator able to play party factions against each other. However this gamble also carries a big risk; the risk the 81 MPs that defied him continue to grow in numbers and in strength by recruiting more backbenchers to their cause. If this does happen it means that there would effectively be three parties in the coalition. This would make governing much harder for a Coalition government that really is still in its infancy and if the bad blood within the Tory party intensifies as a result of this motion, Mr Cameron could end up back in the backbenches. This is due to the fact that the Tory parliamentary party need only 15% of MPs to trigger a leadership vote and the 81 rebels account for 26% of the Tory MPs so he is well within booting distance. Only time will tell whether Cameron's gambit will be worthwhile or potentially destroying all I know is that it will be interesting to say the least.



You, Quantified

Edward Larkin looks at the use of cloud technology to aid weight loss

There are various methods of arriving at the scale in the morning. Depending on the activities and intake of the previous day, approaches can range from a confident straight-shot to treating the thing and its radius as a veritable land mine. After gaining a competitive advantage by relieving yourself of the previous night's accumulated fluids, judgment is passed down in the form of four digits, the specific nature of which can evoke a proud feeling of accomplishment, a rather indifferent feeling of stasis, or, perhaps most often in the developed world, a call to arms.

Yet despite the potential for drama, the results are usually mundane – you're up or down a few tenths of a

motivational. What Withings has done is not exactly novel. Rather, it simply makes the process passive. Consider: someone could have done the same years ago by simply stepping on the scale every morning and entering their weight into a spreadsheet. Between opening Microsoft Excel, typing four digits, saving, and closing, this perhaps takes two minutes. Yet the unfortunate reality is that the vast majority of people are not willing to commit the requisite time. Not only is it more than we're willing to commit to, but it smells faintly of obsessive-compulsive disorder in our modern social psychology. Take the difference between these two scenarios: a.) Someone proudly tells you that they log their weight every

that better is achievable through "self-tracking", or analyzing constant streams of data about yourself.

Currently restricted to mostly San Francisco Bay-Area techies and early adopters, the movement is gaining steam quickly, and has been covered recently by the Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Times, in addition to the more traditional tech publications like WIRED and MIT Technology Review. Besides the Withings, a few other devices have emerged as darlings of the movement. The "FitBit" is a thumb-drive size clip that you put on your pocket or key-chain, recording steps taken, calories burned, and miles walked every day. It wirelessly syncs the data to your computer, where you can see activity

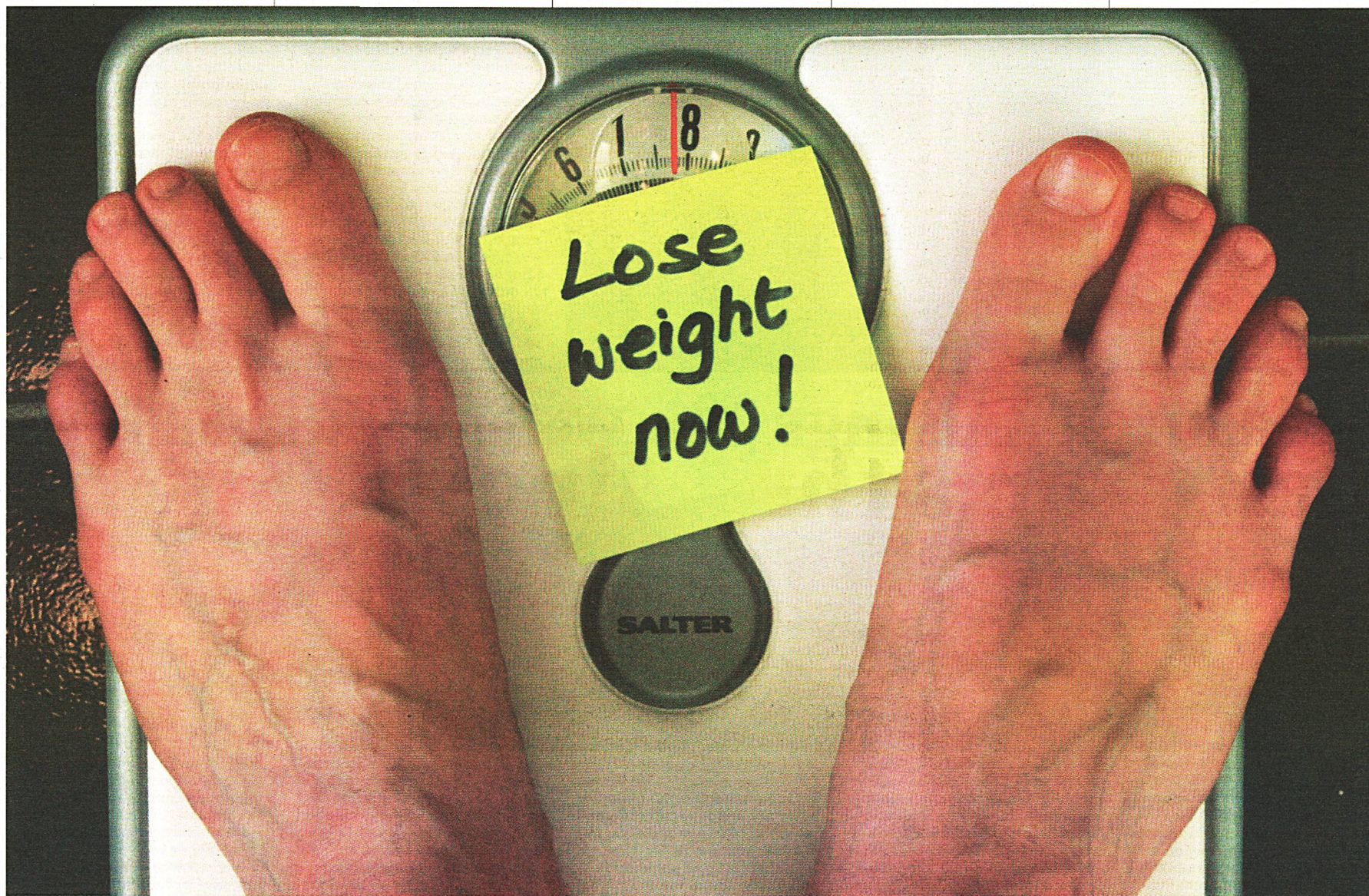
in a user-dependent manner: the more users who buy into self-quantification, the more data exists, and thus more potential to understand what happens to various body metrics during crucial times such as stress, anxiety, sleep, exercise and illness.

Those who are especially optimistic even believe that such data will help usher in a new era of preventative medicine. Perhaps heart rate, blood pressure, and other metrics change significantly before a heart attack, which, if detected, could alert you to visit a physician. Indeed, many companies are already working on creating apps that track user text messaging data – how many texts sent per hour, message content and length – to detect dangerous depressive bouts for

completely.

Yet despite the promise of these technological advances, gadgets and data are not a cure-all for ill health. Human behavior remains absolutely integral. It's one thing to see your weight marching upwards, but it's entirely different to forego the cookies and French fries in response. It's one thing to see that you're walking less than 5,000 steps a day, but entirely another to commit to taking a daily run. It's one thing to know that your blood pressure reaches high levels when angry, but entirely another to restrain yourself when the next thing sets you off. We are still the critical link in the system.

If the history of technology has taught one thing, it's that technology



pound. Every morning you readjust your expectations, and, in a manner similar to that of the apocryphal frog in slow-boiling water, all of a sudden you've gained seven pounds in a few months without thinking twice, the long march upwards essentially invisible.

Not any more, if Withings, the manufacturer of the WiFi Body Scale, has anything to say about it. How do they plan on changing this? Simple data transfer: the scale uploads the aforementioned four digits to the Internet. You then log on to the website (or, naturally, a smart phone or iPad) where aesthetically pleasing graphs are automatically compiled so you can visualize trends in your weight over time. The results are effective – there is a certain imminence in visualizing the slopes and curvatures. All of a sudden, time dependent changes that slipped beneath the veil of consciousness become strikingly apparent. The steady creep upwards is remarkably startling, and the appearance of a peak followed by a downslope quite

day on Microsoft Excel and create time-lapse charts to view long-term trends and analyze their data, and b.) Someone proudly tells you they have this cool new scale that uploads weight to the cloud and lets you see long-term trends. My guess is that in the first instance, you will smile awkwardly and change the subject, and in the second, you'll be curious and feel faintly jealous of your friend's technophilicity.

The WiFi body scale is only the beginning. There's an increasing realization in the worlds of health and medicine that wirelessly capturing continuous data about the human body and sending it to the Internet can have a large impact, especially if the user can interact with and interpret it. Importantly, the engineering and economic stars are aligning as well – miniature sensors are very cheap, and thanks to Steve Jobs, most of us possess beautiful bite-sized devices that are a natural fit for connected health. This convergence has spawned the "Quantified Self" movement, a loose conglomeration of people who believe

levels and calories burned for every five minute segment of the day. Zeo's "Sleep Monitor" is a thin headband that analyzes tell-tale brain waves indicative of different stages of sleep and compiles them to show you patterns of rapid-eye movement (REM) sleep, deep sleep, even when you transiently wake up in the middle of the night. All this information is integrated into a "ZQ" score, a measure of the sleep health, which can further be compared relative to others in your age group.

These tools are still largely in the realm of wellness, tending to appeal to those who had an 'a priori' interest in maintaining good health. But the devices will become more sophisticated over time. There are many companies currently working on fascinating new health gadgets – band-aids that track calories eaten, watches that detect blood pressure and blood glucose non-invasively, iPhone electrocardiograms (ECG), even sensors that can detect heart and respiration rates from across the room. Importantly, like social networking sites, the data gets richer

those with Depression and Bipolar Disorder. While some of these possibilities may not pan out in the end, some certainly will. And as genome sequencing becomes more affordable, sensors will increasingly be allocated based on genetic predisposition to disease. For example, if someone has heightened susceptibility to acquiring Type II diabetes, perhaps they could preferentially be given a continuous glucose monitor.

Some are taking the next step – not only capturing health data, but actually using it to immediately administer therapies. WIRED magazine recently featured an extensive profile of Dr. Christofer Tomazou, a leader in the field of biomedical engineering at Imperial College London. Among other things, Tomazou has created an artificial wireless pancreas for diabetics, which consists of a blood glucose monitor device that wirelessly communicates with an implanted insulin pump to dispense insulin when glucose readings get high. Perhaps this is the ultimate telos – closing the loop

itself is never the answer: we always find a way to contort new inventions to serve ancient purposes. The FitBit isn't going to solve obesity overnight, and the Withings isn't going to prevent weight gain. But what the Quantified Selfers inherently understand is that each of us, just by virtue of being alive, is trailed by a long wake of trends, be they good or bad, reassuring or worrisome. They were once invisible to all but the keenest observer, but that is changing quickly. And while knowledge of their existence doesn't inherently lead to change, the enemy is always better seen than unseen.

Hong Kong's social dawn

Dr. Dennis Yip discusses Hong Kong's future

Fourteen years ago, while all eyes were focused on celebrating the Reunification of Hong Kong, few had realized that with the Reunification would come a new list of social, political and economic propositions which could only be validated by the objective reality moving forward. We all understand that "There are no rots in a running stream" and being at a high point of prosperity, Hong Kong would need a sustainable growth to maintain stability. Any form of stagnation would bring social unrest. Patriots of Hong Kong cannot afford not to be concerned with the potential impact of a hard to foresee future has on the concluding remark for this historical event.

The intricate course of history has prompted many opportunities ahead of time. The momentum with respect to the development of Hong Kong has stemmed from the ability of the people (the social mechanism for embracing changes and the quality of the people) and not the availability of wealth (fortunes created by predecessors). Strengthening the position as a leading international financial centre is the prerequisite for a steady development in Hong Kong and the key to advancement in society is the cohesive force arising from the great traditions established by the respectable forebear. The foundation for social stability relies heavily on the present regime to properly manage changes and to align the people's livelihood with that which existed prior to the Reunifica-

tion. History has already shown that past and present Chief Executives have been unable to draw adequate attention to topics critical to the rise and demise of Hong Kong. Furthermore, they have been leading Hong Kong in the opposite direction. The SMEs once a protection and lubrication to this international financial centre are being neglected. They are slowly declining and suffering from erosion to the core entity. The notion of replacing ability with riches further develops into promoting wealth to represent strength, preparing the way forward with money, paying for government positions and pursuing the minimal as government officials. All these have led to a break down of the underlying

values supporting the momentum of development.

Not knowing prevention is better than cure; the doors are left wide open for infiltration of negative elements to upset social values, weaken personal integrity, bring about indecent practices and dampen the passion to maintain the union of a booming economy with the entrepreneurship of the previous generations. As a result, succession gaps are gradually emerging with the newer generations being drawn further apart from the traditional mainstream views. With little thoughts for the coherent of a multicultural society, lopsided affairs have been stirred up in a massive scale creating ideological confrontations

between typical Chinese and Western cultures. Under this unsettling climate the general mindset has drifted away from the commitment to longer term prosperity. Aims are set on taking quick profits, looking for easy way out, opting for shortcuts over comprehensive solutions and deploying quick-and-dirty implementations. The undesirable conditions have effected waves of corrupt values, leading to rising public resentment and an increase in extreme verbal and physical behaviours.

Despite the above, the will of the public to advance Hong Kong is still bubbling. Many people in Hong Kong will continue to pin their hopes on the proper positioning of Hong Kong and the new Chief Executive to turn this into a reality. Compare to the starting point at Reunification, Hong Kong has experienced scores of complex social conflicts on top of the changes in the economic barometer. Therefore to resolve the inner differences, reunite Hong Kong, restore competitive advantages and reshape renovations are the top priorities to get Hong Kong out of the current predicament; making the mission for the new Chief Executive an even more challenging endeavour. A selfless Chief Executive with commitment to the well-being of the people and dedication to the affairs of Hong Kong is urgently required. The additional qualities should include a fair and righteous mind, the skills to turn around an administration in distress and being a man of both virtue and competence. The father of the Chinese

Taoism Lao Tzu once said: "Know your ability, keep your words, seize the opportunities and get results". This is exactly the kind of Chief Executive Hong Kong needs right now. The new Chief Executive and his team should reinstate integrity to the government and non-government organisations, regain the trust of the people, recruit notable talents and respond to every chance in delivering full accomplishments given half the effort. Should the way to attain office is through arrangement by the authority and the support of powerful connections then the resulting Chief Executive would not be a fitting one for Hong Kong. Forcing the issue against the will of the people would undoubtedly lead to greater repercussion. To ensure a fair and effective election, potential candidates should devise realistic policies addressing immediate social and economical inadequacies and bring forward their election objectives to be examined and scrutinized by the public.

With the Chief Executive's position comes not only personal honour and warm praises, but also risks associated with being put under harsh criticism by both public critics and historians. This position is not a paradise for politicians to gain wealth and power but rather an arena for them to gain experience and refine their political skills. Any aspiring politicians should stand up and accept the challenge for this tall order born out of a special chapter in the history of Hong Kong.



Measured musings | The World reaches 7 billion

According to the United Nations, the world is now home to over seven billion souls. In 10,000 years the world's population has rocketed from 1 million, with almost 6 billion of that increase being seen since the turn of the 20th Century. Many in the western world decry this increase as an affliction that will oversee the destruction of environment and cause social and political problems across the globe. However, how likely are these problems and are there any benefits to our booming - and very young - population?

Tremendous improvements in healthcare have seen life expectancy increase steadily and death rates fall, particularly among infants. Birth rates have remained high as moth-

ers are slow to respond to the fall in death rates - a phenomenon known as 'cultural inertia' - as a result, population has increased by four billion in 50 years. This has resulted in a dearth of youth, 43% of the World's population are under-25, a figure considerably higher when developed countries are left out of the equation. 97 per cent of new births (260 a minute) occur in developing countries, the countries least able to accommodate rapidly rising populations and their associated welfare costs. Education, sanitation, healthcare and housing are constantly under stress. In China, the world's most populous nation is in the grip of a water crisis affecting over 160 million people and in Punjab, in India, the earth is sinking as non-renewable groundwater sources are used up. The

UN estimates that we will need two Earth's to support global population by the 2030s but does this neglect an important, and potentially life-saving, global raw material that has just reached 7 billion units?

Thanks to HSBC's ubiquitous advertising, anyone who has stepped off an aeroplane at Heathrow or Gatwick will know that two-thirds of people who have ever reached 65 are alive today. As the global population skyrockets and people become comfortable that they will likely live a full and healthy life, innovation and enterprise will blossom. The energy-giving potential of the Sahara - which receives enough solar energy to power the world on 3 per cent of its surface area - could be pioneered by an increasingly educated and rapidly grow-

ing African population. Indeed, the World's youthful and educated population could serve as a springboard for positive change in environmental protection, human and social rights and the economy. The Arab Spring has shown the power of an empowered citizenry, perhaps this potential can be used to promote sustainable economic development in the areas of greatest population growth that unfortunately coincide with the countries most under threat from climate change.

All this remains to be seen and the failure of national governments to agree on how to combat inevitable climate change and resource depletion does not bode well for the protection of the environment. However, as countries begin to see the impacts on a national scale of the historical pillage

of global environmental capital, countries may respond individually if they cannot agree internationally. Population increase will eventually decrease - after reaching around 10 billion by 2050 - but we cannot rely on the hope of eventual decreases in population as a panacea for contemporary problems. If we continue on our apparent crusade to destroy the environment and provide a completely uncertain future for future generations we will destroy the Earth as we know it. We must harness the amazing potential of the World's population to overcome the problems that are being predicted as we reach the new billion.

Alex Haigh
Features Editor



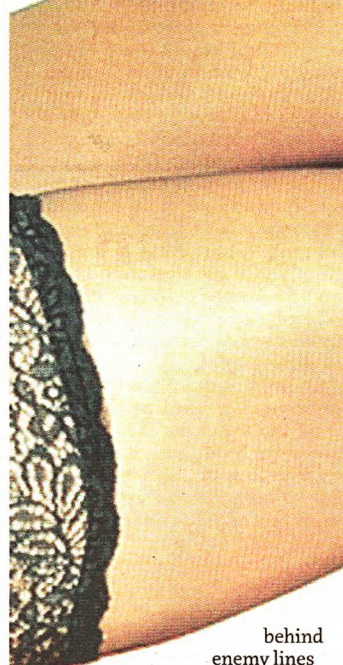
Social

Nicola Alexander and Rimmel Mohydin venture behind enemy lines to understand the male psyche

We had good intentions at heart - a research mission (for the sake of journalism, of course) that could answer the question that women have asked for an eternity; "what the hell do men really want?" So we took the

Which came first the stripper or the man?

plunge and went



behind enemy lines into the den that supposedly represents all that men desire, the hub of happiness... the Spearmint Rhino strip club. And boy was it a dark, dark place. But, before we unravel this tale of scandal, intrigue and Oedipus, be warned that this is a

The neon colour playsuit, the bleached blonde hair, the pink bunny ears. A male dreamland

tragedy, not a comedy.

Strip clubs raise that age old question of the chicken and the egg; which came first the stripper or the man. Did the stripper indoctrinate the man in his perception of "sexy," or did the man

come first and demand that women wear red lace thongs and tassels? After several hours of an anthropological stake-out observing the stripper-stripee interaction, we reached the following conclusion; men are powerless before women, but equally women enjoy being the object of their desire. From our studies we bring you our conclusions on the players, the played and the most beautiful game.

Upon entering the strip club, you could be forgiven for mistaking this as a simple commercial interaction. Women sell their femininity in exchange for

ey. Closer inspection reveals that this market is less Adam Smith and more Moroccan meat market. There is no clean transaction, no invisible hand, just several sweaty groping ones, the kind that haven't had a vacation from you know what in a very, very long time..

There is no doubt that any man who steps foot in a strip club is captured or at the very least intrigued by females. To pay £25 for just a few moments alone with one of these beauties leagues more self-help book that line after line, that

get whatever they want if they really just put their mind to it. According to our experience, any woman, no matter her shape, size or hair colour, can create putty of a man with the right lingerie, a pair of hooker heels and a leather sofa. After several compulsory comments about how "men are scum" and "this is, like, total subjugation of women," we began to see that amidst the butt cheeks and cleavage was a sense of total empowerment. Here were men from all races, ages and walks of life, equally entranced by these scantily clad ladies. From what we can ascertain, these women did not feel exploited - they felt incredibly sexy and powerful. When interviewed one leather-clad Brazilian bombshell of a stripper said that her job made her feel "feminine and strong."

In an attempt to perhaps emulate her, ahem, 'confidence,' we asked her what makes a woman sexy to which her high pitched laughter revealed, "Feeling it, gurrlls." Certainly useful advice, whether near naked or not.

But why should women have to wear corsets and grind on poles to be sexy, to

feel powerful? Surely we

Surely we should be able to have the same rush fully clothed? This question was not going to be answered at a strip club

speaks than any proclaims, women can

should be able to have that same rush

fully clothed? Needless to say, these questions were not going to be answered at any strip club. One forty-six

Before we're accused of condoning prostitution, let us be clear.

year old homeboy, lets call him Martin, kindly took some time out of his lap dance to try and educate us on what it exactly was that makes women sexy; "I'm a boob man. Simple as that. You just can't see boobs in a sweater. But you can see them in a bra." Thank you Martin. And there you have it. The male is a visual creature and strippers cater to that demographic by putting on a spectacularly creative show. The neon coloured playsuit, the bleached blonde hair, the pink bunny ears... inside those dark walls there is a dreamland where men can indulge in the object of their every desire. (Incidentally, Martin was there on account of his "failing marriage - we really do wonder how a woman could ever let a man like him go).

But the greatest discovery was how the strippers and the strippees interact with one another. In any other transaction you see two parties who both have a value on a commodity and enter into exchange immediately. In the strip club, the men have already at-

tained commodity, which is being in the women in their underwear, by paying an entry fee. It

And the men ate it up like dogs

is now for the stripper to gain their income by selling an exclusive interaction in the form of a lap dance.

We can't help but be reminded of Samantha from Sex and the City (granted she may not be the greatest role models but hey, they don't all have

to be Jane Austens) when she recollects that sex is power, money is power therefore an exchange of sex for money is simply an exchange of power. Before we're accused of condoning prostitution, let us be clear. Stripping is not prostitution, although they certainly keep it in the family. And believe us when we say that the 'look but don't touch policy' probably proves to be far more effective in bringing home the big bucks. We lost count of how many women made a comfortable nest for the faces of men in their cleavages (hitched up to their chins, of course) but the second a hand (or worse) was in the vicinity, it was snap up and walk away. Unless you wanted a lap dance, which was of course another £25.

And the men ate it up like dogs. Not only are we full of admiration

With muscles like that, we're pretty certain that they could take out any man who happened to have his hand in the wrong place at the wrong time

of these women for their ability to hypnotise men with the direction that their

swirling tassels take, but their upper body strength is Herculean. We wish they could climb all the way to the top of the pole in under 10 seconds and then twirl all the way to the bottom using just clenched bottom cheeks. Ballerinas couldn't do it better. With muscles like that, we're pretty certain they could take out any man who happened to have his hand in the wrong place at the wrong time, with a discreet kick or two.

All in all, we still don't know what the hell men want and we're pretty certain that 'feeling sexy' shouldn't translate to plunging necklines and pearl thongs (not that we have the bodies for it either). But we can tell you that whether he's an ass-man, a boobs-man or a man's man, sex is control and if you're smart, you'll use it wisely.



Laura Aumeer on getting attention on Houghton Street

Photo: Laura Aumeer

If you are rushing to a lecture or just killing time, you can't escape Houghton Street. You go down it whether you're going to hit Wright's Bar for a caffeine/greasy food fix, get your free curry from the Hare Krishna man or meet for a relaxed chai latte in the Garrick. It's the benefit of being such a compact university that most of the LSE is confined to one little street, where students meet and mooch.

It comes as no surprise then that it is a prime spot for campaigning, and Houghton Street is filled with people trying to get your attention as you make your way down. With nearly the entire population of the LSE coming down it at some point during the week, it's the best place to get maximum visibility for your cause.

You can't escape the chalked up floors, the stalls enticing you over with sweets, and the people handing out flyers. When you're in a rush or tired, sometimes the busyness can be tiresome. We've all been power-walking to a class we're already ten minutes late for, only to be stopped by several

people handing out information about events you are not interested in. At other times, it is a pleasant distraction.

But I hadn't actually been on the other side, or even just thought about what it was like to be the person trying to grab your attention, until last Tuesday. All day, I was there behind the table rather than in front of it, trying to get your attention with a white bed sheet, some marker pens, 66 Hummingbird Bakery cupcakes, Teach First pens, posters and other paraphernalia.

We were meant to be letting people know about what Teach First does and promoting the Teach First Milkround presentation at their head offices this Tuesday. For those of you who weren't drawn in by the waft of icing, Teach First is a charity organisation that places top graduates in schools in challenging circumstances. While it is a truly amazing organisation, I will admit at the LSE, despite the fact we have many students who would do very well on it, it isn't something everyone would consider. As you will be aware, even if you've only been here for a mere four weeks, when people think

of jobs after a degree at the LSE, rightly or wrongly, banks are still primarily the first option considered.

But, we did have two tricks up our sleeve. Firstly, "What makes a good teacher?" scrawled on a white Primani bedsheet for everyone to comment on. With teaching standards at LSE a controversial issue to say the least, it sparked debate. People had their horror stories of bad teaching, as well as the inspirational stories of inspirational teachers. The comments ranged from the expected, "enthusiasm," "passion," to the more thought-provoking, "clarity of purpose" and the...well, rather original responses, such as "say no to corporal punishment" (a sentiment I think most of us agree with, but one we just didn't expect).

While this sparked debate, a plain bedsheet was never going to be enough. We needed the vital ingredient that every successful stall or campaigner on Houghton Street has: food. Poor students that we are, we can't seem to resist a bit of free food, especially if it contains sugar: perhaps this is to help keep us going with the

seemingly impossible problem sets and never-ending reading lists. This is where the cupcakes came in, given to us for free from that fine purveyor of sweet cupcakes with lashings of creamy icing impeccably swirled on.

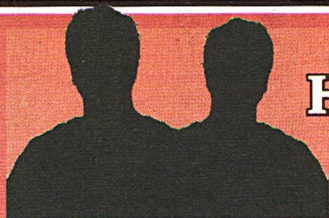
People will seemingly do anything for a cupcake: they queue for ages and pay nearly £3 at some of London's leading cupcakeries. However, for some talking is clearly far much harder than forking out money. We had several people look away despondently when we said no, the cupcakes weren't for sale and we were actually promoting a charity. There were those who stood speaking to us for a good while, begging for a cupcake, yet refusing to talk to us about Teach First. This included the person who responded to the question, "Are you interested in Teach First?" with, "No, but I'm very interested in cupcakes." At least she gets marks for honesty, in contrast to the girl who slyly sneaked up to the table, picked up a leaflet and a cupcake and ran down to St Clements, before we could even open our mouths. I did have to stop myself running after her,

screaming, "cupcake thief!"

I'm not going to lie, the day was cold and tiring. We were out there from 9.30 am setting up and stopped only as it rained at 3.30 pm. Outside, standing up and we didn't even get a cupcake. But in those six hours we saw a day in the life of the LSE. You could see who was having an awful day, who was clearly very late, and those feeling (very) rough from the night before. There were the visitors to the university who seemed lost and bewildered, the unexpected and sometimes awkward meetings people had and the academics having seemingly intellectual conversations.

The hard work was worth it. Some people were interested: perhaps in the cupcake at first, but then in Teach First as they heard the facts, like that only 16 per cent of children on free school meals will go on to university (96 per cent of children at independent schools will).

Yet the experience of being behind the stall... well, it was an experience to say the least.



HOUGHTON ST HEADACHES

This week, our Agony Uncles answer your questions on fornicating with faculty, keeping your girl in check and dealing with less attractive females

Q I've recently developed feelings for a rather spiffy little hottie, let's call her Anna.

She loves me the way no other woman could and I feel we have an unequivocal connection that lies deeper than the incredible sex. But there's one problem. Anna's my head of department... What should I do?

A I remember my first year when I met Anna. I, and several of my peers, are now on our way to graduating with a First. Keep it up... literally.

Q This girl told me that she wouldn't sleep with me if I was the last person on Earth. What do I do?

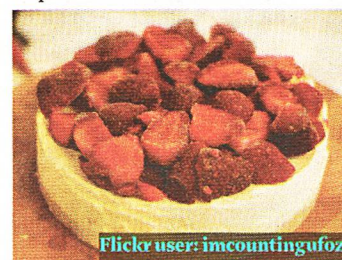
A If you were the last person on Earth, she wouldn't have a choice in the matter.

Q I have had my doubts about my girlfriend's faithfulness for a while. It all started about a month ago where she claimed that her sex drive had gone down for no apparent reason. Recently she has been meeting up with her friend, let's call him Ash, and this has further enhanced my apprehension. She talks to him on the phone all the time and I feel that she has been lying about meeting up with him to me. What do I do?

A There appear to be many issues with your relationship that you probably haven't realised. Firstly, the fact that your girlfriend's sexual appetite has decreased is your fault. I won't beat around the bush but maybe you should. Approaching intercourse with more feisty (or fisty) attitude will certainly keep your hands full. You have to learn how to utilize

your one eyed purple headed yoghurt slinger to really spice things up. Try the well known Donkey Punch, One Eyed Pirate or, our personal favourite, The Strawberry Cheesecake (please consult Urban Dictionary if you require an explanation).

As for Ash, I also strongly recommend that you forcibly give him a Strawberry Cheesecake. Always remember: it's not rape if you shout surprise.



Flickr user: imcountingufoz

Q I am trying to get my girlfriend to watch porn so she can learn from it, but she is having none of it. What do I do?

A Three lessons from porn:
1. All men that come to my house bone my mum and possibly my sister.
2. If I walk in on someone having sex they, will let me join in, no problem.
3. I have the smallest dick in the world.
These are perhaps lessons that your girlfriend doesn't need to know.

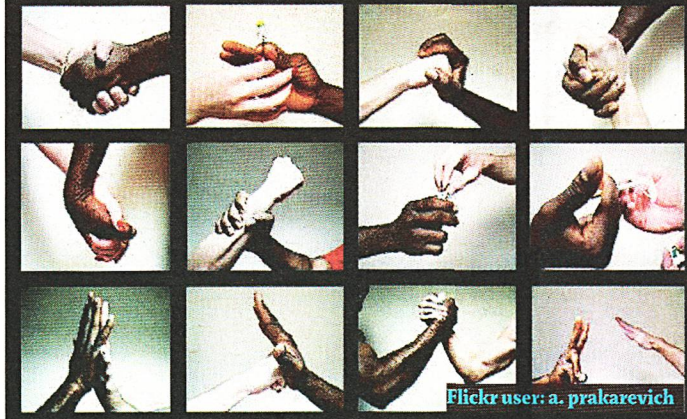
Q I like this girl but she's not the best looking. I always try and follow my principles of 'looks don't matter' but she is butt ugly. What do I do?

A You are right, looks aren't everything, but you can't wank over personality.

Got a burning question that can't be answered by Judith Rees, the Hare Krishna man or Lord Stern?

E-mail your question to our team at social@thebeaveronline.co.uk, with subject line AGONY AUNT or AGONY UNCLES for free, impartial (to a degree), anonymous advice.

Is this Progress?



Flickr user: a. prakarevich

Tola Ariyo on Black Civil Rights

Emmett Till was horrifically murdered in 1955 for doing something any 14-year-old boy would do today: liking a girl. If I liked a white girl today, I don't need to be scared of white men, simply because I am afforded state protection and the state itself would not tolerate such. In Emmett's case, he was bludgeoned to death for it after repeated torturing. Emmett Till's story is pivotal to black

history's importance today, because black history must be a celebration of Emmett Till's soul, not its loss. It must also be known that Emmett Till's death is not to be recognised and celebrated by black people alone, this is the world's problem: the apparent notion that black is black and white is white therefore whatever happens to my race affects myself alone. I now seek to put forward the notion that whatever happens to you, regard-

less of your race, has also happened to me. I pray that one day, we can all start to realise that we as humans and non-humans, alongside nature and the world beyond, are an interconnected whole. No one else could have put my hopes and prayers better than Emmett Till's mother herself (Mamie Bradley Till): "When something happened to the Negroes in the South I said, 'That's their business, not mine.' Now I know how wrong I was. The murder of my son has shown me that what happens to any of us, anywhere in the world, had better be the business of us all".

What we now know is Black Civil Rights was ignited by Emmett Till's death; it was worked into the American nation and recognised by the world through important personalities such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks and Jesse Jackson. Of particular importance was Dr King's hope that many more Emmett Till's won't be perpetuated. This is vividly reflected in his "I have a dream" speech, which is undoubtedly one of the finest speeches in world history. Dr King's "dream" by analogy to Emmett Till's murder was that a black boy could like a white girl and not get bludgeoned and lynched to death for it. Do you believe this has been achieved? I believe it has, and I wish Dr King could see it today. The context in which it has been achieved is, however, debatable. I believe we have embraced equality because it seems expedient to do so, not because our hearts welcome it fully. I believe the world

we live in today is a semi-reality of Dr King's dream; this can be illustrated by pointing to poverty and the Third World, a place of plain injustice, versus the Western world, a place of relative comfort and happiness. This illustration brings out the contrast of the world as a whole, the suffering of one people and the enjoyment of another. I am not suggesting that Dr King was an international activist who sought to fight for people of the world, even though some may argue this point and it is true that he contributed to world peace. What I am suggesting is that the suffering of Negroes, the slavery of our forefathers, the discrimination of our generation and the death of Emmett Till must drive us to love and affection for one another; the contrast above is a good enough reason to do so.

Ironically, a significant contributor to the love and affection I pray we adopt is Eleanor Roosevelt, a central figure not just to blacks but to the world in general. If an upper class white woman can champion the cause of black freedom alongside strong activism for women's rights and equality, I refuse to believe that our hearts cannot accommodate love and affection. More importantly, it points out our interconnectedness; the vigilance of Eleanor Roosevelt in promoting fairness and equality up until her death shows that we are but one people and the sooner we realise it, the better the world will be. Moreover, the death of Emmett Till and every other victim of hatred is a reason to bring out the

goodness of our hearts. The belief that there's good and there's evil could not be more true in this area: racial hatred is evil but simple toleration of race is not "good", it is simply a step towards it. The definition of "good" in this context is my acceptance of you in my heart regardless of your race. Eleanor Roosevelt was seen as "her own body-guard"; today, I believe we are all each other's bodyguards.

On January 20th 2009, the first black president was sworn into the American White House. This is progressive but not the epitome of progress. I also don't necessarily see this as black progress but as the progress of people. Barack Obama's entry into the white house contrasts starkly with Emmett Till's 1955 murder: it shows the acceptance that a United States president can be black. However, the important question is whether you want him there as a black man or as a person who is interconnected with you and the beggar on the street. What then is the epitome of progress, as a people? I strongly believe it is accepting others in our hearts with all the love it can give. What then is the point of progress? The answer to this brings us back to the topic: the point is to honour Emmett Till, to honour the slain lives and Dr King in the form of Black History Month and to honour all the fallen soldiers who fought for a better today, a today that is devoid of Emmett Till type injustice and progressive towards Dr King's aspirations.

A Tale of Two Continents

From Patagonia to Canada: Sorcha Pollak on her adventure through the Americas

There's no doubt about it: when I began to share my travel plans with friends and family they looked at me like I had gone slightly mad. After my year spent living in Peru, I had developed an insatiable desire to discover new places and cultures. What's more, I had also discovered a passion for all things Hispanic and was dying to get back to Latin America. However, I was determined to do things differently. So, I made the decision to travel from Patagonia to Canada over a period of eight months.

My decision to travel the whole way through the Americas was based on a number of factors. I wanted to do something a little different. I have countless friends who have 'done' South America, Central America, South East Asia etc. If there is one expression I cannot abide, it is to 'do' a place. Visiting the Lonely Planet recommendations, eating and drinking westernised food in your cosy Australian run hostel: is this really travel?

Yes it does provide us with the young backpacker experiences yet there is nothing unique about it. Of course, I too indulged in some 'Hostelworld' moments but to constantly follow this predetermined trip is neither travel nor adventure. It's a ready-made path laid out for the supposed 'discovery' of a new destination. I wanted to move away from that.

Secondly with my passion for the Spanish language, Peru and general Hispanic culture, I knew I had to make it back to South America. Central America, on the other hand, was a place I had always viewed with some distrust and unease. I grew up hearing stories from my father of the civil unrest and revolution of these tiny countries during the 1970s. Yet, I had also heard stories from friends of towering volcanoes, white-sand beaches and mysterious lakes. I decided to trust my contemporaries and extend my travels into the isthmus of Central America.

This brings me to North America - not exactly a road-less travelled. Or at least this is what we are led to believe

in relation to the US. Even though I was born on the tiny island of Ireland on the edge of Western Europe, I grew up believing that I knew everything there is to know the United States of America. As my passion for travel grew, I threw the possibility of a trip to the US aside. It was far too conventional - exactly what would be expected of a young Irish woman travelling. In retrospect, I see this opinion I held was somewhat arrogant. Who was I to judge a country that I barely knew? Watching a television show from a place does not provide you with a true insight into the life and culture of that destination. In order to understand the USA, I needed to go there.

Eight months sounds like a long time, yet in reality, the period I spent travelling from South to North America disappeared in the blink of an eye. A road trip down through Argentina, a trek through the jungles of Colombia, a car-crash in Bolivia and two natural disasters in the USA - my travels were not lacking in exciting tales to recount to those back home.

Arriving in Colombia, I couldn't help but acknowledge the growing sense of dread creeping through my body. Colombia was a country I had become fascinated by in recent years, especially because I had been assured by Colombian friends that it was safe for travel. Five years ago, arriving into Colombia as an Irish traveller would have been quite a task. As a result of alleged connections between the Irish Terrorist Organisation the IRA and the still functioning FARC in Colombia, any Irish visitors were viewed with a slightly higher degree of suspicion. In fact, on arrival in Bogota airport I was questioned by a passport official quite seriously as to the nature of my trip and whom I would be visiting. It was only when I affirmed that I came from the south of Ireland and not the north that the immigrations official relaxed.

Colombia is a country that is filled with negative connotations. Kidnappings, drug cartels, journalists disappearing into the jungle - it's completely understandable that people

view this place with trepidation. Yet, the reality is that Colombia is one of the most welcoming countries in Latin America. After years of violence and strife, it seems that Colombians are willing to be as open and generous as possible in order to attract tourists to their shores. The truth is, they really do have a lot to be proud of. Caribbean white-sand beaches, dense tropical jungles and soaring Andean peaks are just a taster of what the country has on offer. Add that to a quick snack of melted cheese with hot chocolate in central Bogota and you've got the unique, fun-loving lifestyle of "Los Colombianos".

Another place I was pleasantly surprised by during my trip was Mexico City. Like Colombia, I arrived at the border of Mexico with preconceptions of a dangerous country filled with overcrowded cities. Mexico city is crowded, but it is also one of the most culturally rich places I have ever been to. The murals of Diego Rivera, the home of Frida Kahlo, the ancient city of Teotihuacan and the world famous anthropology museum are just a small number of the places to visit when walking the streets of this bustling metropolis. Being a young European woman travelling alone did attract some unwanted attention, but for the most part, I was completely enthralled by what the city had on offer. And this is before the mouth watering Mexican cuisine. If I could drink fresh fruit juices and eat quesadillas from a street vendor everyday, I would be perfectly content.

My travels in North America were always going to require slightly more effort in order to acquire the exciting and exhilarating feelings I gained from my time in Latin America. The reality was that the USA was always going to be reminiscent of Europe and the cultures and traditions that our two continents share. Yet, surprisingly enough, it was my travels through the US and Canada which had the most profound effect on me. Obviously it is not only the places we visit but the people we meet who play a huge role

in creating the adventures of travel, and for the duration of my time spent in North America, the enjoyment came predominantly from the wonderful personalities and characters I encountered.

That's not to say that hiking through the mountains of Glacier National Park in Northern Montana wasn't breathtakingly beautiful. In fact, even though I had explored the Andes, swam the waters of the Caribbean and danced salsa till dawn in Colombia,

it was the natural beauty of Montana that stole my heart. For Irish people, a holiday to the US tends to be a shopping trip to New York. Unfortunately, very few people stop and think about the natural wonders that are on offer in North America. It is a continent brimming with wide-open

skies and towering peaks just waiting to be discovered. For me, it was the perfect way to bring my eight months travel to a close.

Ten months ago, I stepped on a plane with tears

streaming down my face. There are moments, like when you're sitting alone in a mosquito-infected bedroom in central Peru or standing on a street in Tegucigalpa with no money, that you question why any sane person would undertake such a journey. We only reach the good points in life by working through the more difficult moments.

Not only did I have a wonderful time on my travels, it also helped me gain a clearer insight into where I would like my life to take me both professionally and emotionally. In fact, if I had not taken that journey I probably would not be sitting here as a student in the LSE to tell the story. Travel not only opens our eyes to a wide and wonderful world, it provides nourishment, solace and guidance for the soul.



Photos: Sorcha Pollak



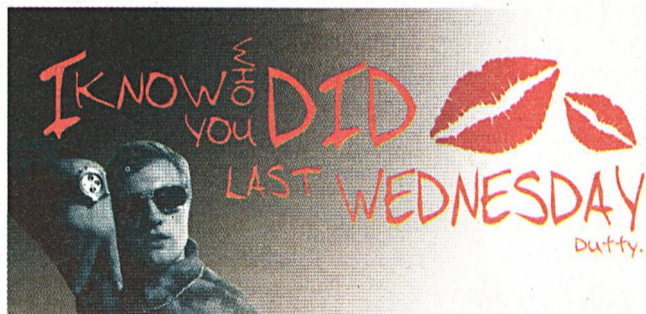
Unfor-

Watch out for...

Beaver
on the
LOOSE



**A WEEKLY COMEDY NEWS SHOW
PREMIERING 2 NOVEMBER
WWW.LOOSETV.NET
WWW.THEBEAVERONLINE.CO.UK**



So this Wednesday saw the AU lose their standard dresses, heels and messy tuns sesh - we picked up our visors and golf clubs to hit Holborn hard - Pub Golf people!

It would seem that this year's crop of AU ravers are not quite cut from the same cloth as last year's. There were a distinct lack of you all in Zoo Bar after the golf rounds, which suggests that 9 holes may have been slightly too much for the faint-hearted amongst you. Sort it out, its only Week 4! How are you all going to deal with the 24h hour booz-a-thon that is All I Want for Christmas is AU (aka CAROL!).

The night started well but the casual mess that we see every week returned. It appeared that everyone was going to make it to the 9th hole in splendid form but it all began to go downhill at the 2nd hole. Cricket social sec was on top form, he learnt one lesson: challenging netball social sec is a really poor idea. Not only did she drink him under the table but he vommed all over his fellow cricketers and was sent home in a rickshaw: classy.

When everyone finally reached zoo bar we were greeted with the usual smell of stale beer and sweat, that's when we knew we had reached the final hole. A certain second year rugby player, 'Gash' Dasari, was seen preying on fresher's and succeeded in taking a particular blonde fresher back to his crib. The night ended well for a certain AU President, who was seen escorting an unknown out of the VIP area. The one-armed rugby fresher also made it 3 for 3 in Zoo Bar as he was seen with

yet another pretty young thing. This boy is fast becoming the most successful Zoo reveller - fresher ladies beware.

Also spotted was a certain 8th team netball captain more than socializing with a tennis socialite. The pair were sighted dining in China Town at 3am; guess there's no stopping those hungry lovers!

Everyone's favourite American bow-tie-wearing, karaoke-singing rugby player was up to his usual visa tricks and this time decided he would pursue Swedish nationality. Two Swedish dames in one night, how is that visa application going? The welsh rugby player and tanorexic tool were caught canoodling on the sofas AGAIN. Wedding bells are ringing people.

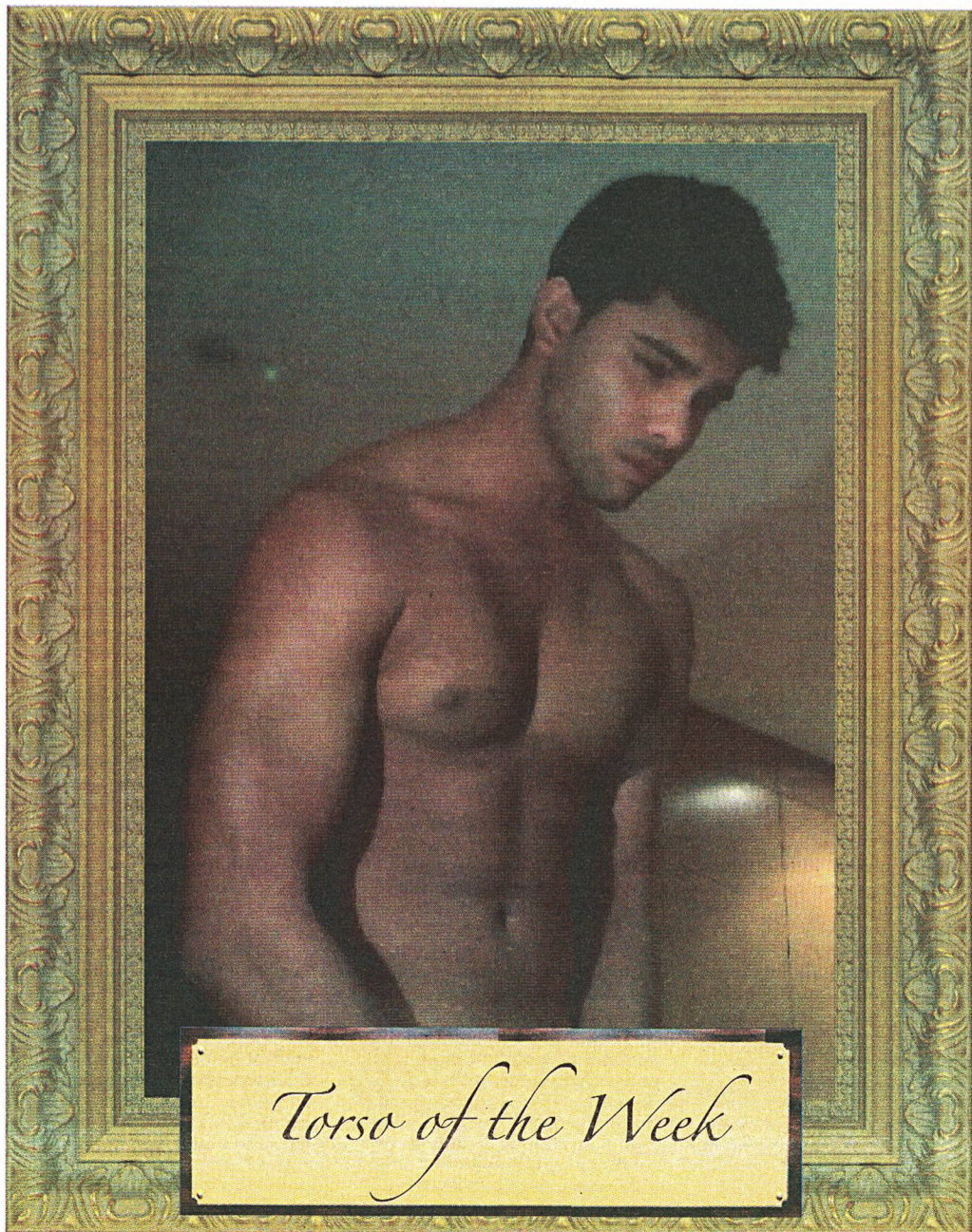
The Netball 1st Team's Fuschia was seen straddling/full-on horizontal planking a random chunky male. If ever there was a time for call of 'get a room!', this was definitely that time. Boys of the AU beware, this was is a keen one.

Interestingly it was not all hugs and kisses in Zoo this. The badminton social secretary took it upon himself to start a little fisticuffs in the smoking section and ended up eating a punch or too. Handbags ladies.

Next Wednesday is Fright Night at Zoo Bar - The AU's halloween event. Costuems at the Welcome Party were of the highest quality, so let's see that again!

As your own AU president once declared, 'people in shit costumes don't shag'

Until next week darlings. xoxo



Mourinho's legacies (or lack thereof)

Read more of Amit's work at www.thinkfootball.co.uk

Amit Singh

There have been four managers at Inter Milan since Jose Mourinho left the club last Summer. None of Gasperini, Benitez or Leonardo have managed to replicate his success at the club both domestically and more importantly in Europe and so far its speculative to suggest that Claudio Ranieri will.

He is certainly a difficult act to follow with unique charm and charisma as well as a seriously strong bond with his players. Wesley Sneijder described him as 'the undisputed number one' manager in the World. Following this must be difficult for any manager and it has been the same for Mourinho's successors at Chelsea, as well as at Porto.

Andre Villa-Boas is the only exception, bringing domestic and European success to Porto but this was seven years after Mourinho's departure. AVB also marks the fifth manager to take over at Chelsea after Mourinho. The 'us against the World' mentality Mourinho installed at his clubs was a huge contributory factor to his success but as stated made it incredibly difficult for anyone else to succeed as they struggle to get that same bond with the players.

Mourinho's huge reputation and ability to bring about success has certainly raised the bar of expectation at the clubs he has managed. For Inter Milan the Champions League had evaded them since 1965 and in winning the most coveted title in Europe Mourinho raised the bar of expectation ridiculously high.

Porto had not won the league in three seasons or experienced European success since the 1980s. Mourinho delivered success on all fronts including a treble in his final season as well as being unbeaten at home during his time there, as he also was with Chelsea.

Mourinho's success has been incredible, he is one of only three

managers to win the European Cups with two different teams, six league titles, and seven domestic cups with four different teams. Despite this it is no coincidence that he has left clubs in such disarray, it is not just his reputa-

quite unlikely. As a result Ferreira and Carvalho followed Mourinho to Chelsea and playmaker Deco moved to Barcelona. This no doubt led to their failure to have any real impact in Europe in the direct aftermath of Mour-

inho's departure. He equally brought through no such young players at Inter Milan. His transfer policy was further evidence of this, Diego Milito was 30 when he signed for the club. Lucio, a

Canales have barely featured despite being so highly rated in Spain.

Nobody is under the illusion that Mourinho will remain at Madrid for a long time, he will probably do his best to topple Barca and then leave. The reasons behind his short-term mentality are simple, he is desperate for success at multiple clubs winning multiple trophies. He has a short term goal for success and thus bleeding young players is counter-productive for his plans, why bring through young players if you won't be around to reap the benefits? There is simply no incentive for him to do so if he doesn't envisage a future with the club.

Mourinho's success is great but with regards to his managerial rivals in England such as Ferguson or Wenger, when they leave their respective clubs will leave behind a legacy of both success and of great football, as well as of a solid youth policy. Wenger has changed the way Arsenal play forever, turning a boring defensive side into an expansive attacking team made up of some of the brightest young stars in Europe. Ferguson has rebuilt his side countless times over the years and it is mainly due to him that the club have turned into such a marketing giant, the recent DHL deal being testament to this. When either of these men leave both clubs will be safe in the knowledge that the managers have left behind the structures for anyone to step in successfully.

If Mourinho wants to be remembered as one of the greatest, if not the greatest manager of all time he will need to settle somewhere and really build a side such as Ferguson has with United. Mourinho is only 48 and what he has achieved so far is remarkable, he still has plenty of time to adapt and build a team to be remembered for footballing generations to come in the same way Ferguson has. Whether this will be at United or not remains to be seen.



Flickr user: americanistadechiapas

tion that managers have struggled to fill, much of his predecessors failure to bring success is down to Mourinho's own failure to leave any sort of legacy at the clubs he leaves.

At Porto he massively over achieved and the clubs best players were aware of this. Winning the Champions League was probably as far as that set of players could go and future success seemed for the majority

inho's departure. and there were no top young players waiting in the wings to step up. Success with Porto acted as a springboard for Mourinho to move to a higher-paid, higher-profile job.

One thing in particular he was guilty of at Chelsea is failing to bring through any young players. He is very much a short term manager with a short term plan. Thus far nobody can doubt his success but he's never left

cornerstone of Inter's solid defence that season was 31 on signing for the club. These are short-term signings with no sell on value, but the sell on value is irrelevant to Mourinho as he would leave before they do.

At Madrid it should be noted that he has signed several young players, Di Maria and Ozil in particular have enjoyed great success for the side, but younger players such as Pedro Leon or

Mario Balotelli: why always me?

The most interesting character in the Premier League

Amit Singh

Whether you love him or hate him, Mario Balotelli is proving to be one of the Premier League's most entertaining characters.

In recent months his antics both on and off the pitch have earned him countless national news headlines, a cult-like following amongst football fans and most recently a position fronting the City of Manchester's 'TREAACLE' campaign to encourage fireworks safety.

The centre-forward first signed for Manchester City in August 2010 following a controversial three-year spell with the Italian Serie A side, Internazionale. It wasn't long before he established a reputation within the Premier League as a gifted yet explosive player and prompted his manager, Roberto Mancini, to state that "[Balotelli will] age me prematurely and make me visit a psychiatrist," in an interview conducted by the Daily Mail in January of this year.

Balotelli's unusual behaviour can be typified by the moment he was caught on camera struggling to put on a training bib before a Europa League match against Dynamo Kiev last season. This juvenile episode has earned the player over 4 million Youtube hits alongside countless other videos of his pitch-side shenanigans (just type

the phrase 'Balotelli trips Dzeko' into any search engine.) A similar incident occurred in March 2011 when Balotelli was witnessed throwing at least one dart in the direction of youth-academy players enrolled in Manchester City's Carrington training academy. This act solidified his reputation as a prankster alongside the revelation that police found over £5,000 in the footballer's pockets following a high-speed car crash in September 2010.

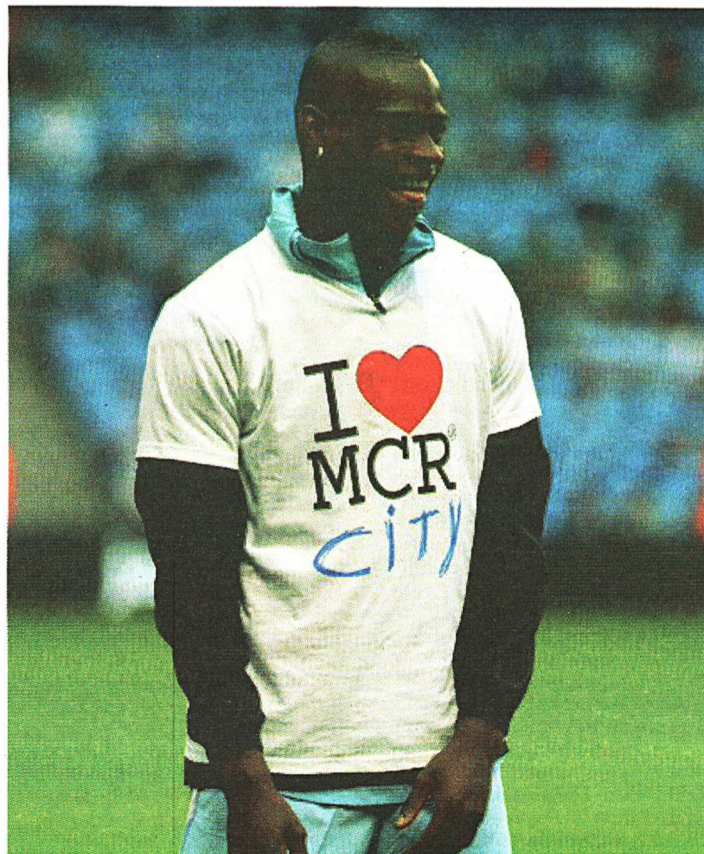
There is no telling what the future holds for Mario Balotelli

Although the young striker may seem immature, he is also capable of great acts of public generosity and compassion. Upon meeting a young fan in May 2011 and discovering that he was a truant forced from school in fear of a classroom bully, Balotelli drove the boy back to his school and confronted his aggressor. On another

occasion, Balotelli handed a homeless man £1,000 after winning £10,000 in a Manchester casino. A lesser known fact about the young striker is his purported love of wildlife and that he made regular visits to Liverpool's Knowsley Safari Park last year. It is this contradiction within the young Italian's character which makes him a fascinating player to follow.

Despite the 21-year-old's temperamental attitude, there is no denying that he is a strong and skilful player who possesses incredible potential. This potential was demonstrated during this October's Manchester derby in which he scored two impressive goals. In celebration after the first goal, Balotelli lifted his jersey to reveal the message, 'Why Always Me,' inscribed on his sky blue undershirt. This bold statement references an incident that occurred the night before the match when fireworks were released from Balotelli's bathroom window and his home set alight.

There is no telling what the future holds for Mario Balotelli. Although he has cultivated a reputation as a volatile and difficult player to work with, the flashes of brilliance that he displays on occasions such as the Manchester derby give a glimpse of what he might be capable of. In time he could become a credit to both his club and country but for now he continues to divide opinion.



Sport

Inside

- **Mourinho's Legacies (or lack thereof)**
- **I Know Who You Did Last Wednesday**
- **Mario Balotelli: Why Always me?**

Robin Van Persie: Will he stay or will he go?

Maxim Owen

Transfer talk? In November? It does seem a little premature, but with RVP's current form it is almost impossible to resist hypothesizing on the talismanic number 10's future at this stage of the season.

One would have thought that 30 goals in 36 games in 2011 (a Messi/Ronaldo-esque tally) would be enough to delight any fan in the world, especially an Arsenal fan whose club have been struggling for years, even more so now that their Spanish former midfield maestro of the Fabregas variety has departed for greener pastures and been replaced with a slightly older and considerably less impressive compatriot, in the form of Mikel Arteta. Alas, a conversation with a dear Arsenal friend of mine late on Saturday night revealed that RVP's sensational form is cause for much more concern than it is joy, especially for those who have a more long-term perspective and accordingly can see past the pseudo-orgasmic joys of hat tricks against Chelsea.

Rich goal scoring vein, combined with being in the final year of a contract at a club with a very rigid wage structure, who have not won an important trophy in several years and who's core squad members have been leaving faster than Usain Bolt on chicken nuggets is the perfect recipe for a mega-money sky-sport-news-25h-a-day-8-days-a-week-coverage



Robin Van Persie and Theo Walcott celebrate one of the Arsenal number 10's numerous goals
Flickr user: RonnieMcDonald

summer transfer bonanza. If the season were to finish today, RVP would have the world at his feet and the pick of Europe's elite clubs. With that in mind, I, like many other football fans, am finding it increasingly difficult to

picture the Dutch marksman in a red shirt come August 2012, unless of course it is the red of Bayern (admittedly unlikely) or the red of dare-I-say-it Manchester City's poor Dennis the Mennis impression of an away kit.

However, all is not bad. Wenger, as always, is 'confident' that RVP will commit his future to the club and will sign a long-term deal at the end of the season. When asked about the contract situation after his side's 5-3

triumph over Chelsea the Frenchman firmly declared that he had 'Nothing to add'. Similarly, Van Persie himself is making all the right noises that Arsenal fans will be wanting to hear, saying things such as 'I have every trust in the things we are doing within the club'. His teammates are equally supportive of their club and of their number 10, no one more so than new summer arrival Gervinho (who, if you have played FIFA 12 you will now know is actually called Yao Kouassi - thank you Mr. Tyldesley). The Ivorian winger recently declared that 'Frankly, we need him to stay at the club. He is an excellent player and the team needs him'. A strong statement indeed.

If you follow football, or most professional sports for that matter, you almost certainly will not be drinking this overwhelmingly positive Kool-Aid for the simple reason that you know that it doesn't mean turd. Arsenal fans do not need to be reminded that Messrs' Fabregas and Nasri were more than keen to publicly pledge their futures to the Gunners, yet the former now plies his trade at FC Barcelona where has won more trophies in 2 months than he did in 7 years at Arsenal, while the latter is now at Manchester City busy being one of the highest paid footballers in the league. This all begs the question, why would he ever stay?

LET'S TALK TACTICS



Champions League: who's going through?

Timothy Poole

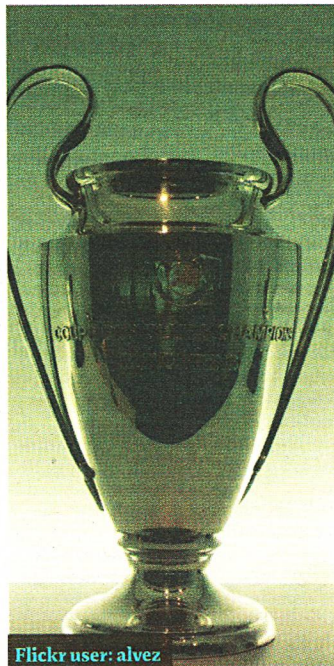
As we all know, we love our football here at the LSE, and there are two tournaments in particular that get the pulses racing of undergrads, post-grads, members of staff and lecturers alike. One is, of course, the Barclays Premier League, whilst the other is simply the greatest club competition in the world: the UEFA Champions League. We're now halfway through the group stage and all is to play for; the action so far has provided many twists and turns and set the scene for many more to come.

First off - the Group of Death. Group A sees one of the most competitive groups ever drawn in the Champions League, with 4 equally matched teams vying for qualification. Bayern lead the way so far, hitting supreme form, and only conceding 1 goal in 12 games in all competitions of late. Behind them, Napoli trail by 2 points, whilst British interests, Manchester City, revived their campaign with a

late Sergio Aguero winner against Villarreal. Villarreal themselves lie bottom of the group, pointless; nonetheless, a team of their quality could still make it with 3 games left.

Group B has provided no surprises, with Inter top, whilst any of the other 3 teams still have a good chance to go through. As things stand, CSKA Moscow hold second place, but only on goal difference. Another team that are, shockingly, second in their group is Manchester United. Group C has provided United with only 2 draws and 1 win (via 2 Wayne Rooney penalties) so far, whilst Benfica hold top spot. In stark contrast, Real Madrid are holding Group D hostage; the only team with a 100% record can guarantee progression with a win in their next game. Ajax and Lyon are in contention for 2nd.

Chelsea lead the way in Group E, thanks to an unbeaten opening, including a 5-0 home win against Genk and a respectable 1-1 draw at the Mestalla. Former Chelsea midfielder, Michael Ballack, will eagerly await Chelsea's return trip to Leverkusen,



Flickr user: alvez

as his team are in second, only a point off the Londoners. Another London team also tops Group F; as opposed to their mediocre league form, Arsenal have accumulated 7 points from their 3 games, leading Marseille by 1.

Group G has been the most tightly-contested group thus far; only 3 points separate 4 sides, with APOEL the surprise leaders. 2009 UEFA cup winners, Shakhtar Donetsk are bottom, whilst the 2010 winners, Porto, are third. Amazingly, second place Zenit were the 2008 winners, thus, APOEL's excursions so far have been deeply impressive. Finally, Group H sees the big guns, Barca and AC Milan holding the top 2 spots on equal points. It will most probably be the winner of their next encounter that tops the group, with Lionel Messi, the world's best player, playing as well as ever, and Zlatan Ibrahimovic adding

immense firepower to AC Milan's attack.

So, that's the story so far; come 6 weeks time and we'll know who has qualified for definite. I could be boring and say 'it's too soon to tell who'll go through', but I'll put my neck on the line and carve some predictions in stone. Bayern will definitely go through, but I think City have the strength to join them. Meanwhile, the odds would suggest that CSKA Moscow will qualify alongside Inter in Group B. In Group G, I think APOEL's dream run will lose steam and the experience of Porto and Zenit will see them through, whilst Lyon will just edge out Ajax in Group D. In all of the other groups, I think things will stay the same, as the best teams have all but cemented their places in the last 16 already.

Want to write for the Sports section? Email us your articles at:

sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk