

The Beaver

The Newspaper of the LSE SU

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The most heated debates in London in blink pages 8-13

B:music reveals the glittering gigs of London
b:art page 16



Collective Meeting Monday 4th October - page 7

International students not wanted at NatWest

Ben Chapman
Managing Editor

International students will require a deposit of £5000 to open a student account at NatWest, because they are "not cost-effective" according to the manager of the LSE branch.

Steve Pollock's comments come amidst growing concerns over the quality of package offered by the on-campus bank, as thousands of students arrive at the LSE needing to open UK bank accounts.

Whilst NatWest offers various incentives in its UK student account, international students are provided only a basic 'Step' account, savings account and Solo debit card.

"In exceptional circumstances, we have got the means of

being able to offer better facilities, particularly if a student is able to lodge monies with us," Mr Pollock told *The Beaver* last week.

"There has to be proof that [the student] has paid [their] fees, and after that there has to be a deposit of £5000."

When asked whether he would like to see more generous packages offered to international students, Mr Pollock replied: "Personally I think the balance is about right, because we do have to weigh up the longer term value that we get out of it."

"For overseas students, the likelihood is that most of them do go back after three years, or if they're postgraduates, they're here one minute and they're finishing in June," he continued.

"To give those types of people

incentives is not going to be cost-effective."

NatWest rents its building from the LSE, and is the only bank to open bank accounts on School premises during Freshers' Fair. As such, it is many international students' first port of call when looking to open a UK bank account.

An investigation by *The Beaver* into the accounts on offer across the market suggests that NatWest offers a relatively basic package to international students compared with its competitors.

The International Student Service with HSBC provides a Maestro debit card (accepted more widely than the Solo card); a free driving lesson; 20% off Lonely Planet guides; and £30 cashback on broadband subscriptions. No advance deposit is

required for these services.

Although not mentioned in its official literature, *The Beaver* also has evidence to suggest that the St Clement Danes branch of the bank has been issuing cheque-books to international students: a further service not provided by NatWest.

Barclays can provide a Student Solutions Account at its branch on the Strand, offering a Visa debit card; overdraft and loan facilities subject to application; emergency cash and assistance services; 15% off at Waterstone's and HMV; and commission-free foreign currency and travellers' cheques. There is, however, a £5 monthly charge for this service, unless students have at least £2000 in their accounts.

Continued on page 2
Editorial Comment, page 7

Set texts now 4-hour loans

Mark Power
Executive Editor

In a move that is likely to provoke controversy on campus, the LSE Library has announced that the loan-period for its set-text books will be reduced to just four hours, although the fine system has been revised and will now be only 50p per hour, as opposed to the previous £1.

The set-texts which are largely comprised of books that are key for courses, have always been a controversial issue for Library users because they are often in high demand, and are renowned for being difficult to obtain.

The Library claims that the latest changes have been made after user feedback forms suggested that students were frustrated with being unable to obtain set-texts at peak times, and preferred the provision of reference copies as a last resort.

However, the changes have created frustration amongst the student body and within the Students' Union as the Library failed to consult over the proposed changes before implementing them, and also failed to announce the changes either directly to the Students' Union, or through *The Beaver* which has published information for a Freshers' Guide which is now shown to be incorrect.

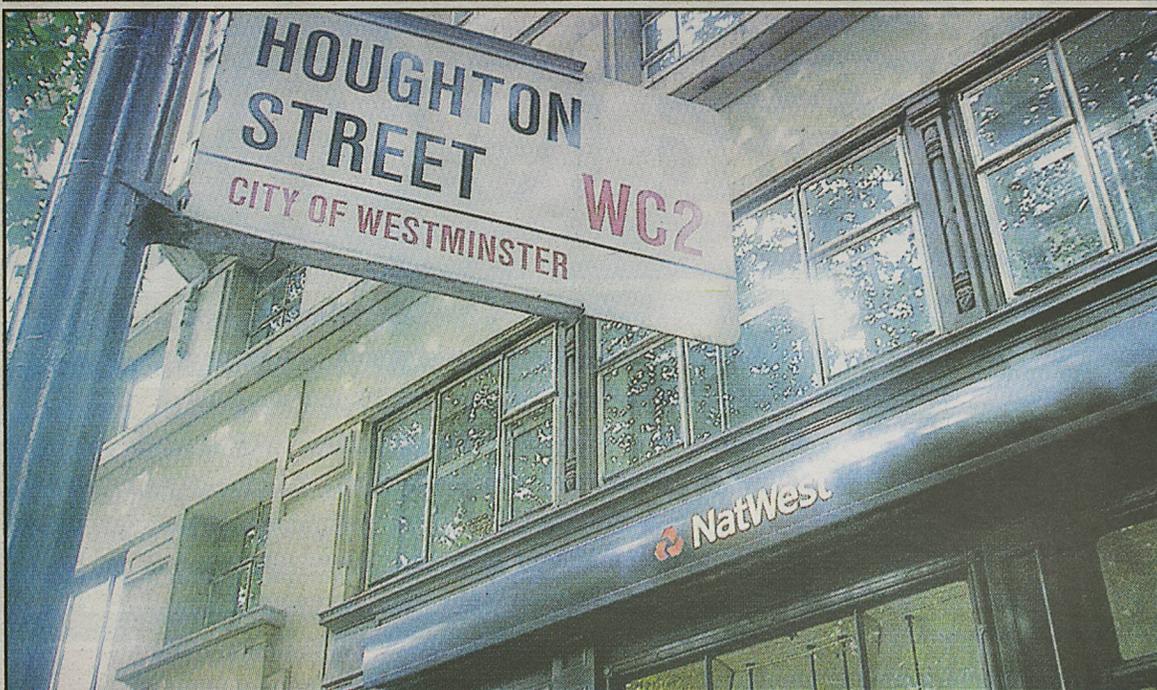
Sian Errington, LSE SU Education and Welfare Officer said, "It's a shame the Library did not consult the SU about a possible change in policy, and the SU is greatly concerned about the possible negative impact this change could have on students."

When asked by *The Beaver* as to why there was no consultation, the Library responded that it "was constantly consulting with users" yet the implementation of the new Library catalogue had given them the opportunity to "introduce this change in time for the start of the Michaelmas term, rather than delaying it until 2005 by getting it rubber stamped by a committee."

Continued on page 2



The new-look Three Tuns Bar opened its doors after a summer of extensive refurbishment last Friday. The project was finished on schedule, though is estimated to be £325,000 over budget. Full story on page 3.



The Aldwych branch of NatWest, whose manager has questioned the business sense of opening international student accounts.

NatWest's 'disgraceful' treatment of overseas students

Continued from page 1

Mr Pollock stressed that NatWest policy was decided centrally, and believed his branch still had much to offer international students.

"We believe that a branch like this is unique - we're the only on-campus branch for LSE. In terms of providing a service for customers ongoing, they can quite freely come in and seek advice, and we offer them an actual relationship, which I don't think the other banks, certainly in this locality, do."

However, one international student, new to the School, told *The Beaver*: "I got information from Barclays and HSBC and they appeared better because they offer student services without the £5000 [deposit]. NatWest is close to LSE, but HSBC is only 100 metres away and offers better services."

Asked why international students were treated differently by NatWest, despite being registered at the LSE, with a proven ability to pay fees and having met all qualifying requirements for a bank account, Mr Pollock replied: "It's just the classification that's

being looked at in terms of NatWest policy...for the reasons of the longer term relationship that we're looking for.

"UK students are our number one priority. That's not to say that we discourage overseas students - that's not the case at all - but we are looking for longer-term value connections."

International Students' Officer Salah Mattoo said: "It's absurd that an international undergraduate student coming for three years doesn't get the same treatment as a home student. It's disgraceful how NatWest treats international students, who are in the majority at LSE. Even if they are only here for three years, their business is still something."

Mattoo also raised questions over the Union's practice of allowing NatWest to use the gym to set up new student accounts.

"I think if the SU is giving space to a bank, it should give space to all three major banks. Otherwise you are helping to create a monopoly on campus."

The Union receives £5000 from NatWest to provide account-opening facilities at Freshers' Fair. LSE SU Treasurer

Gareth Carter defended the policy.

"I think it's important to understand that whilst income from the Fair is obviously important to us, it is not the major motivation behind hosting firms and organisations, etc. The Union has a commitment to supporting clubs, societies and organisations that aim to involve international students.

"We don't favour any bank over another, and we make a point of inviting each of the high street banks to the Fair."

The School was also keen to stress that, despite NatWest's presence on campus, it does not endorse any one bank. A School spokesperson said: "Historically the bank has always been helpful in coping with the volume of students that want to open accounts at the beginning of term, and especially with various overseas payment issues. But there are many other banks in the marketplace."

"As LSE students will appreciate, it is always worth investigating various options when deciding about money."

Editorial Comment, page 7

Now just four hours to read a set-text

Continued from page 1

The Library said they declined to contact SU sabbaticals about the plans, despite the fact that they were available all summer, because they would not expect "one sabbatical officer to represent the views of all students." They were unable to offer an explanation as to why no students were informed of the changes, despite the knowledge that the SU was preparing information for incoming freshers.

Commenting further on the policy itself, Errington raised concerns that the four-hour period was not long enough for students to make use of a book. "A possible consequence is that students will be taking books out and photocopying them, with obvious ramifications for both students' costs as well as the environmental impact of greater paper usage."

This latest change, according to the Library, was prompted by the introduction of a new Library catalogue which enables the Library to specify loan periods in terms of hours, rather than the previous system which only enabled daily loan periods.

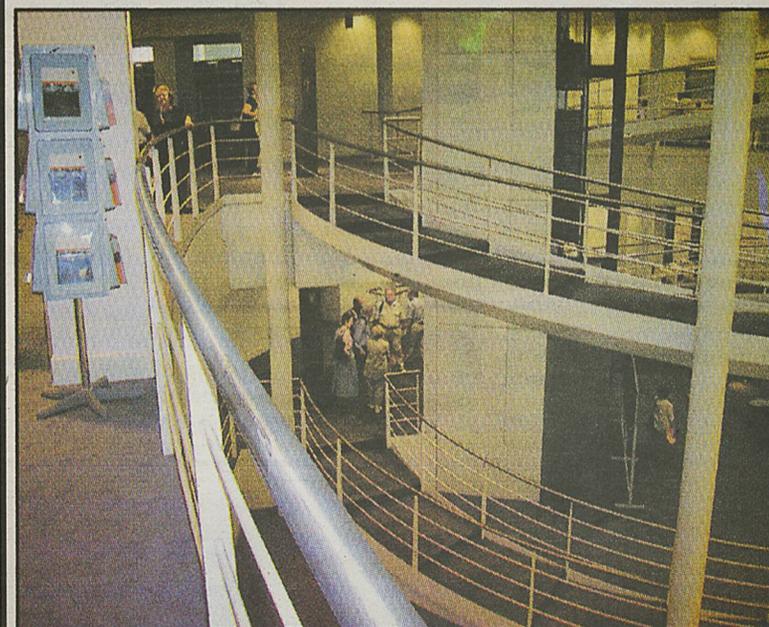
Set-texts were changed, to the general approval of the then student body during Michaelmas term in 2003, from being due back at midday on the day following issue to midnight that day.

The Library claims that the change resulted in an increased pressure on set-texts which students related through feedback mechanisms.

However, the changes appear to have been implemented without any specific volume of requests for shorter loan periods. According to the Library, students requested through feedback that there be reference copies of texts as a last resort, which the Library said on Friday was unworkable because of the lack of in the Course Collection. Instead, they decided that introducing the four hour period responded to students' concerns.

The SU is seeking to meet with the Library this week to discuss the plans. It is thought that they will be raising concerns about the viability of the loan-period, as well as the issues it raises for dyslexic and disabled students.

Editorial Comment, page 7



Aesthetically pleasing perhaps, but Library policy continues to frustrate LSE students.

Wait for grades before applying, says Clarke

Chris Heathcote
News Editor

A-level students will apply for a university place only after they have received their grades, if a plan put forward by Education Secretary Charles Clarke goes ahead.

Mr Clarke's decision is based on the findings of the Schwartz committee, which claimed that because half the predicted grades made by teachers are incorrect, thousands of students do not get the place best suited to them.

"It must be fairer and more transparent for students to know their final results before making

important choices and this also must aid decision-making by universities," said Mr Clarke.

In the biggest shake-up of the system for fifty years, the proposal is to set A-level exams a month earlier, shave two weeks off marking and possibly delay the start of the university term. The shot-gun marriage system of 'Clearing' which matches students who didn't get their ideal grades and courses which are under-subscribed, will be abolished.

The pressure for a change is being driven by those who argue that the current system is simply not fair. The committee argues that using grade predictions

penalises students who do unexpectedly well or those who lack the confidence to apply to prestigious institutions.

In choosing their students, universities would have access to the precise breakdown of marks on exam papers to allow exclusive universities to choose between the brightest students.

Professor Steven Schwartz, the chair of the committee and vice-chancellor of Brunel University, said that too many decisions were based on unreliable forecast grades or "impressionistic" interviews.

He and Mr Clarke called for more "transparency" throughout

the whole university applications process, which was needed to remove "suspicion" over how decisions were reached.

Even opposition spokesman Tim Collins was in agreement. He said the plans were "sensible in principle but will need detailed work in practice". He was, however worried that the committee was looking to expand the "social engineering agenda which clearly does not believe that access to higher education should be determined solely by academic merit", he told the BBC.

His comments were a reference to additional suggestions that universities should also be

permitted to select students of an ethnic minority in preference of white students to encourage diversity. The committee found that there were "compelling" educational benefits from having a more diverse student body, something the LSE can clearly boast.

However, Professor Schwartz did acknowledge that "it is not the task of universities to compensate for social disadvantage".

There does remain the question about whether the new implementation group will have "teeth" to impose its recommendations. For now, the government says it will review progress in three years.

Tuns opens at the last minute amid escalating costs

Mark Power
Executive Editor

The refurbished Three Tuns, the LSE Students' Union bar, opened last Friday after a summer of concerns as to whether the project would be completed in time for the all-important Freshers' Week entertainment events.

The project caused a storm of controversy last year when it was announced by the then SU Treasurer, Jo Kibble, after little consultation, allegedly poor planning and a seemingly high cost of £500,000.

Despite the controversy, Friday's opening passed with the general approval of the assembled students and School employees, who came to celebrate the opening and the first event of the venues, a leaving party for the School's records manager Matthew Stephenson.

The current SU sabbatical team, which inherited the project, was broadly pleased with the results of the four-month-long refurbishment, which has produced a much more modern venue, opened the bar to the street with a new glass frontage, and refurbished the previously decrepit toilet and serving facilities.

SU General Secretary Will Macfarlane said: "We now have two fabulous new venues of which we are very proud. It has been a fantastic achievement to complete this job so quickly."

The costs of the project have escalated dramatically since being announced by Kibble, with current SU Treasurer Gareth Carter estimating the final costs to be at around £825,000, which is to be financed by the Union's reserve fund with some contribution from the School.

Accounting for this increase, Carter referred to initial estimates which he said were "a bit naïve."

He told *The Beaver* that since he had taken office, he had found no reference to the cost of the project being quoted at £500,000, and that the first figure he saw had been £650,000.

Macfarlane described the initial costing of the project as "not at all realistic," laying blame for the discrepancy at the door of the previous sabbatical team.

The final cost of the project to the Union is predicted to be around £725,000, which takes into account contributions from the School totalling roughly £100,000.

The final costs of the project are yet to be negotiated with Bensons Construction, the building contractors, and will be announced in the Union's annual budget submission.

Carter estimates that the costs will be borne by the cash reserves, obviating the need for the Union to sell any of its share portfolio, which is worth £270,000.

Last year, *The Beaver* revealed deep and underlying concerns over the financial viability of the project which has consumed the majority of the Union's financial reserves without an apparent plan for the future revenue of the venues.

The payment for the project comes at a time when SU reserves are also under pressure to absorb the £80,000 budget deficit created by last-year's forecasts.

According to Carter, the money the project cost over the original budget was spent on paying for components such as sound systems and food preparation equipment, the original costings for which were unrealistic and unworkable.



The old Three Tuns was a second home to many a book-weary student: Union sabbatical officers hope the new, more modern version will prove to be as beloved as its predecessor.

Carter also explained that there had been the opportunity to save money in some areas, yet the Union sabbatical officers had felt that because the costs of the project were already so significant, it was worth "doing the job properly and getting a real top-quality venue."

The delays in the project were

attributed to difficulties arising through the construction process, and also accounted for some of the extra cost. #

Carter explained that the original planning for the project had not taken into account difficulties that arose during production, and that he was happy that the contractors had worked hard

to ensure the venue was ready for Freshers' Week.

Carter commented that although there are a few snags to look after, they will be finished for next week. I think it's a great place and I'm looking forward to another year of fun and games in there."

LSE to charge maximum level of top-up fees

Prashant Rao
News Editor

The LSE announced last week that it would be charging tuition fees of £3,000 per year for all undergraduate courses for home students, the maximum allowed under new higher education legislation, ending speculation of whether or not the School would charge the full allowable amount.

Due to be set in place by the 2006/2007 academic year, the increase in fees would add an estimated £1 billion to the higher education sector's income, but would still not be enough to cover the ever-growing costs for educating undergraduates, or bridge the well-publicised funding gap, which sits at an estimated £10 billion.

Opponents of "top-up fees" at the School point out that the announcement contradicts what has previously been stated by Director Howard Davies, and his predecessor, Anthony Giddens: that the full £3,000 would only be levied on some courses, but not all.

Additionally, concerns have been raised over the impact the policy may have on students from poorer backgrounds. LSE Students' Union Treasurer, Gareth Carter, said: "The fear is that the current 'maximum level' of fees may be set to rise in the future...The threat of debt is real, and we must be sure that the LSE provides a comprehensive financial support network if we are not to deter applicants from less well-off backgrounds."

The School has been adamant,

however, that a third of the increase in income generated from top-up fees will be spent on student support in the form of bursaries, scholarships and hardship funds that will be targeted specifically at less well-off students.

This would be in addition to the approximately £4.5 million that the School makes available to all students in varying forms of financial aid.

A great proportion of the student population, however, remains to be convinced. According to LSE SU General Secretary, Will Macfarlane, though the long-term consequences of the new system of debt aversion cannot yet be known, "students from lower socio-economic backgrounds will be put off by the prospect of increased

fees and higher debt."

He continued, "One fears it is an ominous first step towards even higher fees and eventually, elite, private institutions."

Not all LSE students are averse to the idea of charging top-up fees however.

Daniel Freedman, chair of the LSE Conservative Association, said, "Does the UK want its universities to compete with American ones, or does it want them to go the way of their European counterparts, which are declining?"

"It's not a great decision, but it is a necessary one."

The LSE faces an interesting situation in that home undergraduates make up a relatively small proportion of the total student population: of approximately 8400 students at the LSE, near-

ly 4100 are undergraduates, and only a little more than 2000 pay UK/EU fees. This means that less than a quarter of LSE students are affected by the decision.

In a recently released survey compiled by *The Guardian* newspaper, of 72 vice-chancellors interviewed across the United Kingdom, 48 have made the decision to charge tuition fees of £3,000 across the board.

The School arrived at the decision through consultation between the Academic Board, Academic Planning and Resources Committee, Court of Governors and Council. All that remains to be decided is the structure of the student support system.

Fees for international students will remain relatively stable, at approximately £10,000 per year.

Tories would still scrap tuition fees, but expect commercial rates on student loans

Tom Jenkins

University tuition fees would be scrapped and students would instead pay a higher rate of interest on loans under a Conservative government, according to proposals announced by shadow education secretary Tim Collins.

Under the plans, were the Tories to control the House of Commons, graduates would no longer be forced to pay fees upfront but interest rates on student loans would rise to a level 2 percent above the Bank of England's base rate up to a maximum of 8 percent.

Grants would still be available for the poorest students but the other means-testing measures built into the current system would be dropped, with students paying the flat commercial interest rate regardless of their means.

Repayment would be triggered by a student's income reaching £15,000 with debt cancelled out after 25 years. Loans would be managed by individual Universities rather than the Treasury owned Student Loans Company, with 100 percent of teaching funding channelled through loan repayments.

The Tories claim that both students and universities will be better off under this scheme; according to Mr Collins, students would leave university with an average debt of £10,000 instead of the £19,000 average under the government's proposals. Meanwhile, he claimed, universities would receive an extra £1bn a year under the Tory scheme.

However, the plans have been widely discredited by politicians, students groups and academics alike. Critics point out that the scheme unambiguously favours students from wealthy backgrounds who do not rely on borrowing money.

Under the Tory plans, they will pay nothing for their education because they will not take out loans and there will be no fees.

LSE Professor Nick Barr, one of the architects of Labour's alternative scheme, has described the scheme as "good policy if the aim is to curry favour with the middle classes" but with "no other redeeming features".

The National Union Students (NUS), which had initially welcomed the Conservatives' pledge to abolish tuition fees, was quick to distance itself from the new

initiative - in an interview with *The Guardian* newspaper, President Kat Fletcher said, "we now recognise that [Tory] promises for a fairer funding situation for higher education were merely rhetoric. It is naïve for the Tories to believe that this will win the student vote in the run up to the general election," she added.

The LSE Students' Union has adopted a similar position - General Secretary Will Macfarlane told *The Beaver*: "Those students who will need to borrow the most to attend university will either be put off through debt aversion or be saddled with significant debts at a high rate of interest throughout their young adult life."

"Both the major political parties are claiming their own scheme will leave students with lower debts after graduation," Macfarlane continued.

"However both are ignoring the fact that these huge debts will lead to reduced application and participation by students from lower income families in higher education."

Universities UK, which was reportedly consulted over the plans, gave them a cautious welcome, saying they recognised con-



Michael Howard's higher education plans would mean less student debt, but the wealthy could escape paying anything.

cerns about getting more money into universities.

"We look forward to discussing the detail with the Conservative team," Universities UK President Ivor Crewe told *The Guardian*.

However, with the fate of universities entirely down to their popularity with students, there are fears among lecturers' unions that some would face the chop: "Without some measure of con-

trol, this free-for-all could prove a disaster," Sally Hunt, General Secretary of the Association of University Teachers (AUT) told *The Times* newspaper.

Eighteen months ago, the then Tory education spokesman Damian Green called tuition fees "a tax on learning" and pledged their abolition. Current Tory policy, while keeping broadly to this promise, is unlikely to be seen by many as being in the same spirit.

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It's good to talk, especially for £64 million

Adrian Li

Sixty-four million pounds has been raised to improve the LSE and it's services through an on-going fundraising campaign, making the target of £100 million from alumni donations another step closer.

Every evening, a team of current students call-up LSE alumni members to update them on developments at the School and appeal for assistance with projects aimed at ensuring the School can provide first-class facilities and teaching as well as financial support for students.

Last year the Annual Fund received help from over two-thousand alumni, parents and governors, making a big impact to a number of projects around the campus.

The current refurbishment of the Columbia Bar, benefited from a £1m donation, whilst the library, got between five and six million from donations, out of a total cost of £32m.

Speaking to *The Beaver*, Mary Blair from the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, who are organising the drive, stressed that this campaign

was not a one-off but a programme designed to maximise alumni donations. Such a scheme was deemed necessary to finance an ambitious expansion programme of the School, which *The Beaver* reported earlier this year.

The Office, however, have no control over how the money is spent. Once collected it is distributed according to donors' wishes with all remaining decisions being made by the School administration.

Besides improving the School's facilities, donations have made a difference to student support. In a city with rising living costs, the fund can give a helping hand to students who are struggling to balance the books. It also contributed to the Student's Union Childcare fund, which was oversubscribed last year.

In addition, money was given to various academic departments allowing them to compete with the financial muscle of US Ivy League universities in hiring faculty members and setting-up schemes for funding PhD students. Out of the £5m awarded in scholarships, £1m comes from donations.

Mrs Blair confirmed that

recognition for donations was one method employed to encourage assistance, adding that it provided a role-model for other donors, but added that a wish to remain anonymous was always respected. She was adamant, however, that the primary motivation for any gift was the desire to make a difference to the School and that no-one was coerced into donating. "People who give generously like doing it", she said.

Managing alumni relations is a challenging business, since more than 50 percent are based overseas. There are seventy associations of LSE alumni worldwide, all of which are totally dependant on volunteers. A visible and active alumni programme is therefore vital.

Fortunately, many alumni members feel they owe their successful careers to the LSE, with a good number maintaining a strong bond with the School. About 5% of LSE alumni contribute financially to the school, well above that of most UK institutions.

The Annual Fund is currently recruiting a new team of student callers, details of which are available on the School's website.



The Annual Fund has helped the School to purchase the Columbia bar. A donation of £1million was essential.

Murder of *Beaver* editor in Russia

Trina O'Driscoll

Paul Klebnikov, a former Managing Editor of *The Beaver*, was shot dead in Moscow outside the offices where he edited the Russian language edition of *Forbes* magazine on 9th July 2004.

Klebnikov was of Russian descent, but his grandparents had fled to the US during the Bolshevik Revolution. He attended Exeter Academy, New Hampshire and the University of California, before becoming a student at the School in the late 1980s where he undertook a doctoral thesis on agricultural reform under Nicholas II.

The launch issue of *Forbes* in April this year included a list of the 100 richest people in Russia, to the fury of the Russian Oligarchs who prefer to keep their business affairs private.

However, his most controversial article during his career was written in 1996 where he questioned the honesty of the now exiled businessman Boris Berezovsky. It was followed in 2001 by his book 'Godfather of the Kremlin'.

It was said that he made himself some very powerful enemies, but Alexander Gordeyev, the editor of Russia's *Newsweek* magazine, was quoted by Russia's Interfax News Agency as saying that "he never felt someone was about to make an attempt on his life. He was always smiling and wanting to get on with his job."

The US based Committee to protect Journalists called for President Vladimir Putin to



Paul Klebnikov, a former editor of this paper, was shot dead

address the "climate of lawlessness and impunity" that has led to the death of fifteen journalists in Russia this year.

He took editorship of *The Beaver* and was known as Kalashnikov to his colleagues. A former News Editor at the time, Brian Boyd writing in the *Irish Times*, speaks of Klebnikov's desire to act as an irritant to the school council by continually using the word 'fascist' at every available opportunity.

Klebnikov's finest hour for *The Beaver* came in reporting the LSE's investment in companies connected to business in apartheid South Africa, which he reported under the grand title of: "The LSE supporting apartheid? Are we learning economics only to skilfully exploit?...We refuse to let our time at the LSE be an initiation into moral degeneracy". The subsequent occupation of the school's administrative buildings and day in court led to the school cutting links with companies even loosely linked with apartheid South Africa.

The LSE Press Office said "the school is always sorry to hear of the death of former students". *Forbes* magazine was unavailable for comment.

Lecturers: Students today are thicker

Elaine Londesborough

A recent survey by The Times newspaper claims that, in the opinion of over a third of lecturers, the academic ability of degree level students is worse than ten years ago. One in four believe that degrees have been devalued as a result.

The survey revealed widespread opinion that the A-level system prepares students poorly for higher education and that many students have insufficient literacy and numeracy skills.

One lecturer at Royal Holloway, University of London, told The Times, "I find that students in traditional subjects such as English are often sorely lacking in the most basic skills of grammar and punctuation."

However, Dr Hartley Dean of the Social Policy Department at

LSE told *The Beaver*, "The issue is not so much changes in the A-level system as in the motivations of students."

"School students these days seem much more competitive and instrumentally motivated in terms of the way they study and what they want out of A-levels - good grades and not necessarily depth or breadth of knowledge."

The survey raises the issue about whether degrees are getting easier in order to accommodate the extra students.

Dr Dean told *The Beaver* "Speaking as someone who has both taught and served as an External Examiner in both the 'new' and the 'old' university sector, degrees are not getting easier."

The Times also revealed that many lecturers blame the government's fifty percent target for

stretching the resources of universities and further devaluing degrees.

Accepting more foreign students is another way universities are attempting to boost their income. One professor of International Relations told The Times, "Every time a home student walks through the door, it costs us £5,000 to £6,000. So it is worth attracting foreign students, because they pay for themselves. You hear a lot of talk these days about going down the LSE road."

However, Dr Dean told *The Beaver* "The foreign student market is probably finite and if institutions compete for it the likelihood is that none of them will benefit very much financially. Having said that, having foreign students is great: it enriches the teaching environment in all sorts of ways."

Kerry daughter to study at LSE

Matthew Sinclair
blink Editor

Vanessa Kerry, daughter of Democratic presidential nominee and US Senator John Kerry, will this year begin studying for a joint masters degree in Health and Economics from the LSE and the London School of Tropical Medicine.

This continues on from her undergraduate course studying Infectious Diseases at Harvard University. She attributes her decision to study medicine to a trip to Vietnam with her father.

With a family wealth of nearly a billion, questions have been raised as to whether she really

needs the Fulbright scholarship she has been awarded. It remains to be seen whether she will engage with the rest of London's student life or if a Secret Service entourage be able to blend into the Tuns.

Ms. Kerry has played a significant role in her father's presidential bid. She toured the US promoting a warmer image of Senator Kerry, often characterised as haughty and humourless. Later she and her sister introduced their father's keynote speech at the Democratic convention in Boston.

Come November we will find out whether the LSE will be home to a member of the First Family.



LSE Fresher: Vanessa Kerry, daughter of John Kerry

Top admissions tutors prefer private schools

Sam Jones

Britain's top universities favour applicants from private schools, according to a report published this summer by one of the country's foremost education think-tanks.

The Sutton Trust found that forty-five percent of privately educated pupils with an A and two B's at A-level went on to attend one of the UK's thirteen highest ranked universities. The same was true for only twenty-six percent of state-educated students with the same grades.

Sir Peter Lampl, chairman of the trust, stated that 'thousands of pupils from state schools are not getting the same opportunity to fulfil their potential'. He added 'Our universities should fairly reflect the ability of the whole population.'

He cited the worsening problem of the 'missing 3000' of well-qualified state school pupils who do get into leading universities.

Analysis of figures released by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) showed that in 1997/98, 2,900 state school leavers had the

grades but did not take up top university places. "Alarming", continued the report, the figure had risen to 3,200 by 2001/02. In many cases it was found state pupils were instead going to the so-called 'new universities'. The report did accept that sometimes this situation was the student's own decision, however.

Among the leading universities studied was the LSE. Others included Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College, UCL, York, Warwick, Bristol, Nottingham, St. Andrews, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Durham.

Thirty-six percent of LSE students come from the independent school sector, which educates around seven percent of pupils in England. However, statistics from the HEFCE suggest that based on attainment at A-level only twenty-six percent of students at the LSE should come from independent schools. In response a School spokesperson said that it was "firmly committed to equal opportunities and treatment based upon individual merit and personal ability."

The report's findings appear to fly in the face of earlier allegations made by independent schools that universities

were actively discriminating against them. The LSE was previously criticized by the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) and the Girls' Schools Association (GSA) for rejecting seventy-two percent of privately educated candidates who applied to read economics in 2002.

Edward Gould, Chairman of the HMC, accused the government of encouraging universities such as the LSE to "tamper crudely with admissions procedures to promote inclusion by the back door."

But Sir Peter dismissed such complaints by saying that "The probability of getting into a top thirteen university was approximately twenty-five times greater for independent school pupils"

Though unclear, the report suggested that a lack of confidence and financial fears could be important factors in putting state-educated students off applying to exclusive universities. When asked to comment, the LSE stressed it's initiatives such as the Student Tutoring scheme and its already extensive involvement with the Sutton Trust.

Over 1/3 of graduates out of work

Sam Jones

With government figures showing that less than two thirds of last year's graduates have found full-time employment, should students be worried?

Recently released studies, including a survey carried out by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), paint a bleak picture for undergraduates.

Taking a closer look at the HESA figures, the picture is not as dark as one might first imagine. 16 percent of those not in work are continuing with their studies, 8 percent are working part-time, leaving just 7.1 percent unemployed whilst actively searching for a job.

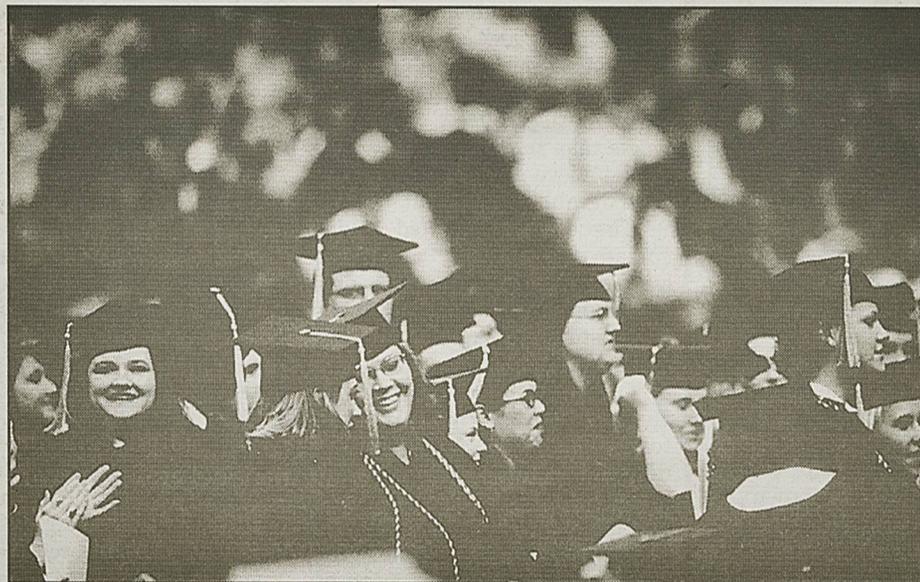
Whilst this closer look might seem more palatable, a poll carried out by the management consultancy firm Accenture, showed that the unemployment rate amongst UK graduates is still the highest out of five of the world's largest economies, including the US, France, Germany and Spain.

Interestingly, British graduates are noted as being amongst the most optimistic about their job prospects. So, are our graduates guilty of unrealistic expectations as regards their employability?

The HESA agrees. It reveals that, of those graduates in work, nearly three out of ten have only managed to find employment in low-level secretarial, administrative or sales positions. This only leaves around a third in fully professional job roles.

Reassuringly, LSE students appear to be faring far better. LSE graduates were placed a solid 9th in the Times newspaper league tables, in terms of employability. The LSE is also ranked 3rd for graduate starting salaries, with an average of £21,011, and an in-house survey found that 20 percent of 2001 graduates are currently earning over £40,000.

However, despite government reassurances, research does indicate that the



Though one third of all graduates are out of work, statistics nevertheless show that only 7% are actually on the dole.

market premium that graduates have previously commanded is being eroded.

Peter Elias, of the Institute of Employment Research at Warwick University, noted in the Times that, "with more graduates entering the labour market, employers simply don't have to pay the same premium they used to in the past."

Nevertheless, the government was quick to stand by its target of putting 50 percent of school-leavers through university, by 2010. A spokesman was widely quoted as saying that "it would be reckless and irresponsible to deny UK firms the extra graduates they need to compete in the global economy" and that "of the 13.5 million total jobs expected to be filled by 2012, 50 per cent are in occupations most likely to demand graduates."

Although graduates are still earning, on average, 25 percent to 30 percent more than their peers who do not hold a degree, Professor Elais's research clearly indicates that this premium is in decline. At

the same time, he goes on to state that "there is still a strong demand for graduates and... there is a significant premium, even if it is going down."

The fact is that a degree alone provides no guarantee of future employment. But, as James Knight, head of the National Union of Students (NUS) in Wales, told the Guardian, "people choose to study for different reasons and it's not just about employability."

The evidence appears to be that employers are increasingly beginning to concentrate on applicants' personal qualities, over and above the precise nature of their degrees

Of course, leaving the LSE with an honours degree will do you no harm, and the advice from LSE Director, Howard Davies, is "for those who use their time at university well, and see their academic qualifications as just one important element of the proposition they put to employers, the prospect remains bright."

The Beaver

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If you have written three or more articles for the Beaver and your name does not appear in the Collective, please email thebeaver@lse.ac.uk and you will be added to the list in next week's paper.

The Beaver is available in alternative formats and online at www.lse.ac.uk/union

The Beaver Comment

NatWest service lacking

NatWest's treatment of international students, revealed this week, is a continued disgrace that should be remedied if the bank is to remain the only on-campus bank, enjoying much of the School's and all of the Union's banking custom.

Whilst international students may not be the most profitable in terms of future potential for the bank, given that it enjoys unparalleled access to the LSE, NatWest should provide for LSE students. Their competitors are offering a vastly better deal and the whole process only serves to leave a bad taste in the mouth of students recently arrived in the country and confronted with a bank which is ultimately unhelpful.

Research conducted by The Beaver revealed that whilst NatWest's competitors provided information booklets on the options available to international students, NatWest did not, meaning that they would have to queue just for basic information.

It is disappointing that NatWest does not take its relationship with the School and its

students seriously enough to offer international students, who make up at least half of the School's population, a fair deal on banking. If they continue to offer such a poor deal, then the LSE should reconsider their lease renewal, taking into consideration the bank's poor record on services offered to students.

The School and Union should also look into the issue when they come to renegotiate their custom with the bank. International students, quite simply, should look elsewhere for their banking as NatWest has made it painstakingly clear that they are unwilling to offer competitive or helpful services to them.

LSE students looking to open banking services might well be advised to look further afield in light of NatWest's failings. The only way to change the behaviour of business is to hurt them financially, whatever NatWest might claim about having "a relationship" with students, and NatWest deserve a boycott for their manifest failure to provide competitive and adequate banking for a majority of LSE students.

Lousy Library

The Library's decision to change set-text loans to four-hours has been botched from the start. The most obvious failure was to communicate the issue.

Omitting to consult the Students' Union was inexcusable. The Library's response - that one sabbatical's view doesn't represent the student body - is rubbish.

The process of consultation, whereby the Library took what came back on its feedback forms as a bona fide test of student opinion, and then proposed a solution, without then referring it back for further feedback, makes a farce of the process. The truth is that a consultation process is incomplete if the end proposal does not also receive feedback. If the Library was so concerned about implementing the system before the year started then they should at the very least have consulted with the SU, to get some idea of what students might make of it of the process.

The premise that feedback forms and the Library user survey provide a watertight basis for the opinions of Library users is also dubious. It is the simple truth that these consultations do not attract high numbers of students. The Library's attack on the SU for not being representative of LSE students would thus seem a trifle hypocritical.

The Library itself admitted the real result of its feedback, something the SU has been telling it all along. This is that the problem in the Course Collection is not the loan periods, but the lack of books themselves. Many of the surveys seem to have asked for reference copies as last resort. That this cannot be provided for because of the size of the Course Collection is understandable, but surely then the sensible solution would have been to create a separate loan period of maybe two hours with extra copies as last resort, should the usual set-texts be unavailable.

It is curious how the Library surmised that the average student would be able to work effectively from a book and take adequate notes in four hours. It simply is not feasible, particularly for those students studying essay-based courses and particularly given that there are many books in the Library that are only available as set-texts.

The Library's new policy is flawed in both content and application, and efforts should be made by the Library to properly consult on a new and fairer set-text policy which really does take into account the needs of students. Buying more books, it would seem, would be a simple, yet clearly too obvious a solution.

The brightest, the best, and The Beaver

An introduction to your student newspaper.

Welcome to this country's leading student publication, at this country's leading educational institution. I know you've heard enough of this already, and given it's not strictly true on either count, that's enough of that.

The Beaver is, however, a publication with high-standards that we, particularly over the last year and a half, have worked hard to develop into an intelligent and innovative publication that caters to the interests and aspirations of all LSE students.

It will remain your best source of campus news, in the higher education sector and from sources not usually available in the national

and international press.

Similarly, the *blink* section, despite its vilification of the rest of the paper, is our filler for a bit of a market failure. *blink* carries features of interest to LSE students, be they international issues, making legal jargon more accessible, or a unique analysis of British politics.

The *B.art* section carries a good range of arts reviews from fine art, to theatre, going out guides and the extensive film and music sections.

A separate introduction to the sports section is perhaps necessary. *BeaverSports* contains the week's match reports and tales of the week's events in the Athletic Union. It is not immediately acces-

sible to the new reader, and is what some might call an acquired taste. It's worth remembering that the lighter parts of the section are meant in jest, and that Paul and Louise (Sports Editors) are wonderful people who mean no harm really.

If you are interested in writing for us, please come and speak to us at our stall at Freshers' Fair, or come to the Collective Meeting advertised below. We encourage readers' letters, and if you have a serious complaint that the publication has fallen below the levels you would expect, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

Enjoy your year.

Comments about *The Beaver*, and Letters to the Editor are welcome, and should be sent to thebeaver@lse.ac.uk.

Interested in getting involved in *The Beaver*?
Come to our Collective Meeting to find out more:
Monday 4th October, 6pm
D202

Advertisement

SU Shop Freshers' Week Special Offers:

Niceday Ringbinders:	£1.35 each or 3 for 2
Niceday A4 LeverArch:	£1.99 each or 3 for 2
Niceday 3"x3" Post-It Notes:	60p each or 3 for 2
Niceday 5 part dividers:	40p each or 3 for 2
Rhino A4 Spiral:	£2.40 each or 3 for 2
80 minute CD-Rom:	85p each or 3 for 2

blink

Editor: Matthew Sinclair (M.Sinclair1@lse.ac.uk)

Features

Features Correspondent: Tracy Alloway (t.alloway@lse.ac.uk)

Your thousand typewriters...

blink is on the march.

Whether you are a first year student or returning to Houghton Street this is your section for opinion and analysis. Get more involved or just read and enjoy.

Matthew Sinclair
blink Editor

Here you are alive, at the LSE, reading *The Beaver* and reading blink. Being born was challenge enough, the odds are stacked against you and required some herculean efforts on the part of your ancestors; not starving to death was rare in the 70s. You then did well at school and sidestepped every other university on Earth, a wise choice - LSE graduates get paid well. Next, you didn't pick up the London Student, good work - it's written by a drunken monkey with but one typewriter and is not exactly Shakespearean. Finally you found your way past the other sections in our fine paper, nice move - you didn't come to the London School of Economics and Political Science to read people's opinions on art, there isn't much news so they make it all up and you could accurately recreate the sports section in your own home by injecting your grandmother with bull's semen.

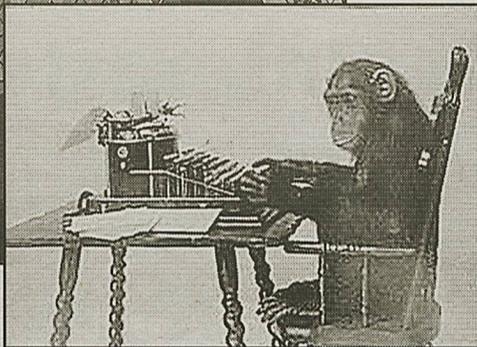
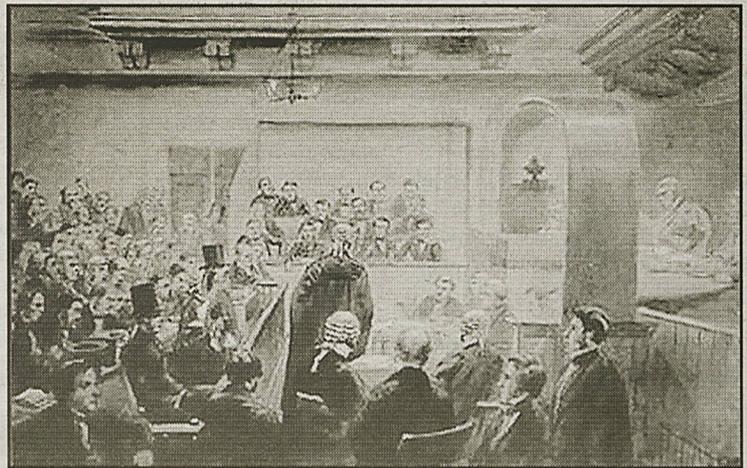
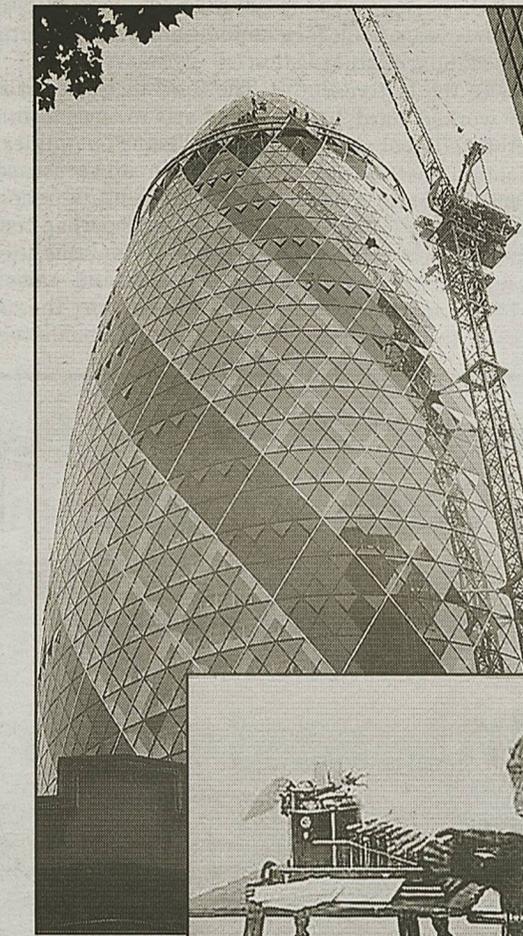
blink is the section that manages to fit all of the "Economics" and "Political Science" material into its compact form and still find room for random crackpots to give their opinions on morality, science, religion and each other. Our section (if you've read this far you're in) is where free speech happens; write what you believe, write it well and make it interesting and blink will make sure you are heard.

blink is united but blink contains compartments.

Features contains pieces with either original research or opinions about LSE life. If something upsets or uplifts you about your environment then talk to us (e-mail our Features Correspondent, Tracy Alloway t.alloway@lse.ac.uk) and we'll guide you through getting the LSE's opinion, getting students' opinion and getting some facts. Features can also be more diverse; early this year we will be publishing an article about Tracy's contact with Carlos the Jackal and his LSE links.

Politics is where you can express opinions about anything. It is the free for all, stamp on each other's heads, section of blink. Let people know what you think about the government, a prospective government, a scientist, a practice, a religion, a movement or any topic that takes your fancy. New writers make us smile; politics articles should be sent my way.

Law is where those of a legal bent can explain the legal ins and outs of a situation. It is where you should be able to read



and learn something new about the complexities of the law without any prerequisites. Law articles should be sent to Alykhan Velshi, Law Correspondent, a.velshi@lse.ac.uk.

International contains articles about issues that aren't at the top of the headlines in Britain or the US, but probably should be. It is a chance to shine a spotlight on something important to you. International is currently seeking a correspondent, send articles to me in the meantime.

In the very near future we will have a Business section in blink. This section should provide commentary on the trends and companies in business today. It should also offer tips on getting yourself recruited (that's probably why you're at the LSE after all) from employers and students. This section will need a correspondent and offers the chance to create something new and wonderful; Business Correspondent will also look great on a CV.

We also have several regular columns. "Musings" is mine and will never die. "The Right Approach" is written by Daniel Freedman and offers right-wing opinion. "Hacktivist" comes from Tracy Alloway, our features correspondent, and looks after the left.

The blink rules are simple. Anything offending a particular group of people gratuitously will not be put into print; racism, sexism etc. is not welcome. There is no

'blink is the section that manages to fit all of the "Economics" and "Political Science" material into its compact form and still find room for random crackpots to give their opinions on morality, science, religion and each other.'

absolute line on what constitutes gratuitous but the editor's decision is final. Articles should generally be 800-1000 words to allow plenty of space for columns, pretty pictures and the formatting that makes my fellow editors and I purr. They should be written in clear English. If writing readable English causes you problems then do not be put off; we are here to help and if we can help someone improve their grasp of the language it makes us feel warm and fuzzy inside. Lastly please be aware that we are writing for readers, keep things interesting and original. This is usually not a matter of subject material but of writing; we can help. Finally there are constraints on blink's size and sometimes we need to prioritise; be understanding.

If you want to get involved further in any of the ways mentioned or just want to help out then talk to me soon. Either come to the first Beaver collective meeting of the year on Monday 4th of October, e-mail me or attend a UGM and ask around for "badger boy" - someone will point you in my direction (don't ask).

Glad to have you aboard the good ship blink as she sails for sunny shores.

Matthew Sinclair is a 3rd Year Economics and Economic History student and the Editor of blink.

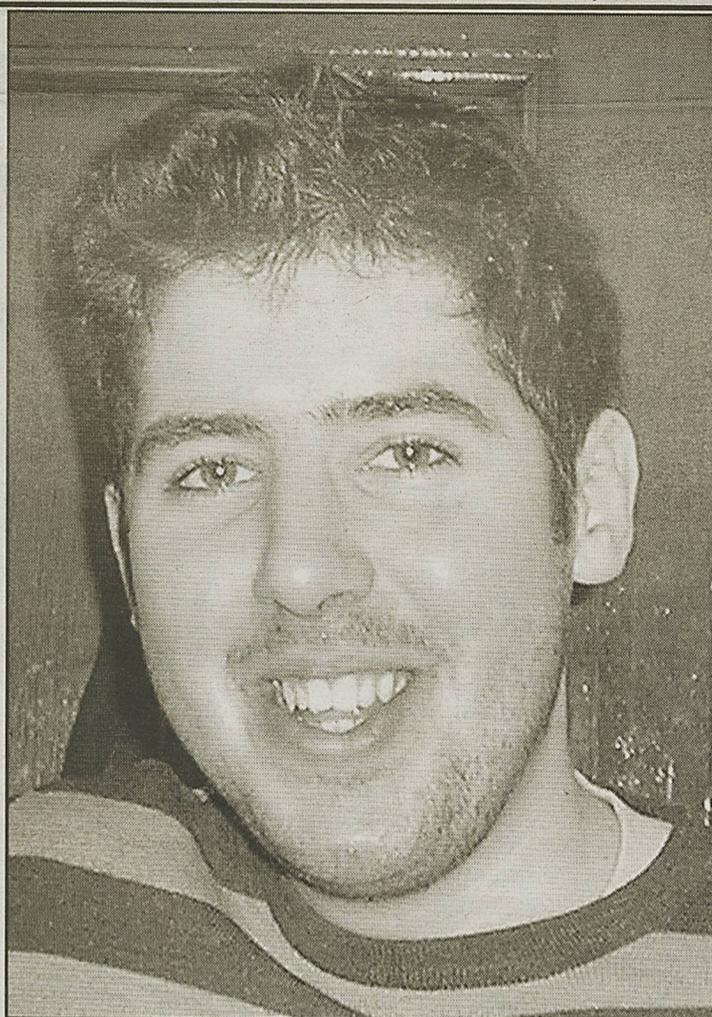
Features

Features Correspondent: Tracy Alloway (t.alloway@lse.ac.uk)

A Room with a Will

At 21 Will Macfarlane has graduated from LSE with a First in Government and History. We should hate him but instead we voted for him to stick around for a year and be our General Secretary. In fact, we'll pay him for the pleasure.

Three floor above the Quad he sits in his cold office but is he twiddling his thumbs or fevering with the excitement of a new year? More to the point, what is a Gen Sec anyway?



Will Macfarlane dislikes the cancerous.

Natalie Black

Will, What is a General Secretary?

The Gen Sec is basically the Chief Executive of the Students' Union. I lead and co-ordinate all its activities. This involves, for example, chairing the Executive Committee made up of the sabbatical and the part-time officers and being the public face of the SU. At the same time, I am a trustee and hold full financial and legal responsibility for the activities of the SU.

Why did you want to be Gen Sec?

Well I was Societies Officer last year and had been heavily involved in rag week, I had no career focus or plan and wanted to stay involved in something that would give me the opportunity to bring about a lot of positive change.

What do you think the perks of the job will be?

Experience and a bit of time to get some focus and think personally about what I want to do with my life.

And the downers?

Long hours and lots of organisation. The pressure will be on for things like the induction speech alongside the Director where you are talking to a bunch of students who would really rather be making their first visit to the Tuns.

What do you expect to be doing on a typical day?

I will probably go to a couple of committees as I sit on about thirty. The majority of the time however, is spent meeting students and helping them with their concerns as well as leading and running campaigns.

What is going to be your number one priority?

Last year the real focus was on the issue of fees but they are happening so we have to be pragmatic. Elliot, my predecessor, did a lot of work on bursaries and

Quick Fire

It's Wednesday night in the Tuns, what is your karaoke tune?
Barbie Girl - there is a reason for that

It's Friday night at Crush, is it the Tuns, the Quad or the Underground?
The Tuns
North or South London?
South
20p Guardian or 20p FT?
FT

Victoria Beckham or Rebecca Loos?
Rebecca Loos

The Economist Bookshop or Alpha Books?
Alpha Books

Blondes or Brunettes?
Brunettes

Wrights Bar or Brunch Bowl?
Wrights Bar

Coffee in Quad or pint in Tuns?
Pint in Tuns

Prague or Amsterdam?
Amsterdam....no I mean Prague

Dot Cotton or Pat Butcher?
Pat Butcher. Dot's got cancer.

'Last year the real focus was on the issue of fees but they are happening so we have to be pragmatic.'

scholarships as a response to fees and this is the avenue we want to pursue as an Executive. It will be one of our three major campaigns. The remainder will focus on

student citizenship and increasing the opportunity for interaction between the students and their Union.

So after surviving LSE what would your advice be to Freshers both undergrad and postgrad?

To take the opportunity. Don't calm down after Freshers' Fayre and stop doing the work or getting involved in all the extra-curricular stuff. LSE offers the amazing opportunity to try new things or pursue your interests at a higher level alongside people from all over the world. The Students Union is there for you so use it.

What is the craziest thing you ever did in your Freshers Fayre?

I can't really remember to be honest. Lots of drunken moments in Passfield Halls mainly.

Natalie Black is a 3rd Year International Relations student.

Musings

Vegetarianism and Cliff Richard

Matthew Sinclair

blink Editor

I don't trust vegetarians; neither should you. Vegetarianism may seem terribly endearing and idealistic now but we can't rely on the herbivores to root for homo sapiens when push comes to shove. When the animals revolt and attempt to avenge their compatriots that we've merrily sauteed humanity will rely on the fact that we're all in on the crime, we've all burnt our bridges. Vegetarians could be a fifth column for the animals that would reject our right to eat their children.

A prototype for this sort of behaviour is the rise of the animal rights extremist. Animal testing is required for the approval of new drugs and therefore essential to the continued efforts of modern medicine at keeping us alive over forty despite supersizing.

SHAC (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty) et. al. lost the battle for public opinion and, hence, cannot get the law changed to end the effective requirement for animal testing. They then failed to intimidate testing companies themselves into closure and are now spending their time attacking the livelihoods and families of businessmen with only the slightest of connections to the pharmaceutical industry. While this hurts the wider economy, its main effect on animal testing is likely to be making it less productive (Huntingdon Life Sciences are good at what they do) requiring more animals, making testing less humane (Britain has high legal requirements of those testing on animals), and increasing the size of testing companies (small companies can't afford security).

MI5 are now being sent in to deal with the worst offenders; hopefully soon to be followed by the SAS. I shouldn't think they'll have a hard time. Animal rights madmen are presumably vegetarians and lack the protein for a protracted struggle. Of course, that didn't stop the Irish.

What worries the economist in me (a loud and rather nasal individual) is that just when we as a country finally work out how to make money again we'll get all overconfident and screw it up in a fury of well meaning activism; animal rights activists could be the new unions. British unions will be a hard act to follow. Unionists got so ridiculous there was a serious campaign to ban the synthesizer, led by Cliff Richard.

An underground worker was recently fired after being caught playing squash while off work complaining of a sprained ankle, fair cop surely? The underground union went on strike. One of the original Union campaigns was to oppose the entry of women to the labour market; "inclusivity".

It's nice to be a rich country again. It's nice to know that we can power through a world down turn. It's nice to have an overheated labour market rather than mass unemployment. We are now a leader again; the timing of a Labour government creating a Union "modernization" fund to help them recruit and regain lost strength could not be more unfortunate.

We're finally wealthier than the Germans but could screw it up so quickly by subsidizing Bob Crow or failing to keep the hippies in line. God damn hippies; they think they're saving the world but all they do is smoke pot and smell bad.

Hactivist



Predictions

Tracy Alloway

Features Correspondent

Welcome freshers and continuing students. This is of course, Hactivist - the outpost of left-wing thinking in *The Beaver*. As you all know the LSE has a vibrant history of socialist political association and general hippie-ness. This is where you can find the info that will help you fit in at The Three Tuns when the "Marxist 'till graduation" crowd starts talking politics.

Summer has seen plenty of exciting headlines: Olympic scandals, 2004 US elections and a renewed offensive in the Mr. George "My views are one that speaks to freedom" Bush Jr.'s war on the English language. Meanwhile Saddam bin Laden has been replaced as Bush-enemy #1 by Michael Moore (who shall be praised here forth for providing me with enough liberal-political fodder to write this column for the next five years).

In the UK, Tony Blair's been busy countering charges of government failure over pre-war intelligence on Iraq, claiming, "We have found the WMD's but are saving them as a surprise for Bush's birthday - he's a tough man to shop for you see." Ok, maybe not. Actually I wasn't in Britain at all this summer, hence we shall pretend it doesn't exist for the duration of this particular column.

Based on these exciting summer events, let's look at my predictions for the world in the 2004/2005 school year.

1. Bush will win the US election, helped no doubt, by the fact that 52% of American votes will be cast using Election Systems & Software, a large Republican donor, whose machines incidentally, don't produce a paper record of votes. Re-election will of course lead to 4 more years of embarrassment to be half-American for me, but lots more chances to take cheap shots at Bush's intelligence.

2. The US will declare war on Christmas Island, citing their "obviously made-up name" as evidence of terrorist activity. Tony Blair will later corroborate claiming the Island's title "mocks everything we love about the holidays."

3. North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, in a bid to get the world's attention after his nuclear threats fizzled out, will enter World Idol. Simon Cowell will later criticize the dictator for his choice of song (Queen's "I'm Going Slightly Mad") and outdated platform shoes.

And there you have it, the 2004/2005 school year predictions. If I'm still writing this column come spring we can go back and see how many of them were right, or erm, not. Seriously though, this column will get (slightly) less sarcastic as the school year progresses and the summer hangover starts wearing off. 'Till next week then.

Politics

Combating Islamophobia

Islamophobia is on the rise; confronting it will require an effort from Muslims.



James Topham

As I sit down to watch the news every day I become increasingly concerned about the way the world is going. Terrorist attacks, foiled terrorist attacks, this many dead, this many injured - it is almost too depressing to watch. With the vast majority of such acts perpetrated against "Western" targets in the name of Islam, it is perhaps unsurprising that there is a real worry about the rise of Islamophobia all around us. It goes without saying that this is an undesirable occurrence. We are told by the politicians, the Metropolitan Police and the moderate Muslim community that such fears are irrational as the vast majority of Muslims in the UK are peaceful and law abiding. However, this approach is evidently not working, and further it is clear to me why this is the case.

The moderate Muslim community needs to do more. It needs to be more proactive in its condemnation of and separation from the fanatics who kill hundreds in the name of Islam. At present the status quo is: Islamic terror group suicide bombs soft target, innocent people (indiscriminate of race or religion) are killed, Muslim Council of Great Britain issues press release: "we condemn all terrorism". This is simply not good enough. As taught in micro-economics, a forgone benefit is considered a cost; just as inaction in this case should be considered a form of support.

The solution is right on our doorstep. If the majority of British Muslims condemn terrorism - as I believe they do - then they need to stand up and tell the world that this is the case. In opposition to the Iraq war 400,000 protesters brought central London to a standstill in an awesome spectacle of people power. In the words of one protester, they showed Blair and Bush that they "were fucked off with all their shit."

'At present, all that the average British person sees on the news concerning the actions of Muslims in Britain is an old bearded man with a hook instead of a hand preaching racial hatred in the road outside Finsbury Park Mosque, while his followers set fire to Union Jacks and vow to kill infidels.'

Personally, I feel the same about Islamic terrorists, and if the same is true for Muslims then march through London holding banners saying 'Not in my name' is what they need to do. I am not a religious person, but if I were and some mad man was trying to murder a load of children on

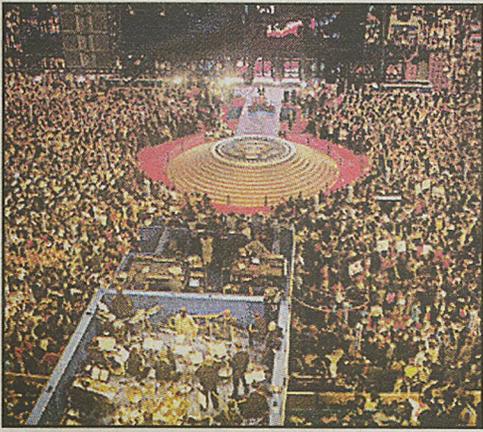
a school bus in the name of my religion, I think I'd feel strongly enough go out into the street and say so.

At present, all that the average British person sees on the news concerning the actions of Muslims in Britain is an old bearded man with a hook instead of a hand preaching racial hatred in the road outside Finsbury Park Mosque, while his followers set fire to Union Jacks and vow to kill infidels. This is only partly the fault of the media. It is not difficult to see where the Islamophobia comes from. Instead of this, imagine not being able to get to LSE on time because the Kingsway is blocked off with thousands of protesters, with a healthy Muslim turnout among them, actually condemning terrorism - not just saying that they do. That should go a long way to counteract out some of the current sentiment on campus and in the country generally. The central point here is that a clear demonstration is needed to show would-be BNP members that it IS only a tiny minority of Muslims who support terrorism, because look - the majority are out on the street demonstrating against it. Also, perhaps some of the brain-washed fanatics would see such a protest and wonder why their fellow Muslims are acting like this when their cleric has clearly told them they will be dying for Islam and every Muslim will thank them for it. I don't know if this is the best idea around for addressing the problem of Islamophobia, but it is clear that it is better that something rather than nothing were done. If there is a successful attack on the UK the problem is going to get a whole lot worse, especially if people believe that the Muslim community could have done more to prevent it. Just a thought.

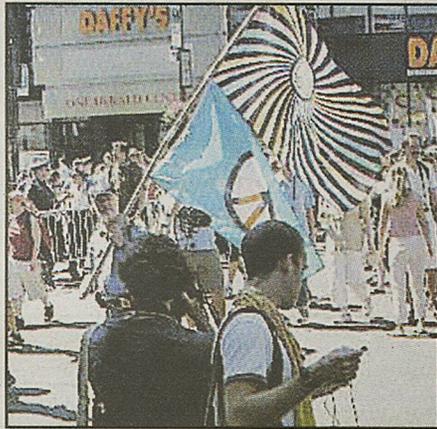
James Topham is a 2nd Year Economics student.

Politics

Republican Conventions



The GOP Convention; inside and out.



Joel Kenrick

While journalists were inside dissecting Arnold Schwarzenegger's speech and how the Bush daughters will play with voters, hundreds of thousands of protesters were outside rejecting what they see as George W Bush's extremism in the War on Terror and his mishandling of the war on terror. A popular slogan on badges, t-shirts and bumper stickers in the USA is simply 'Redeate Bush in 2004'. With 9/11 clouding our memories it is easy to forget that Bush lost the popular vote in 2000 by a million votes to Al Gore. Bush only won through the complex Electoral College system after the Supreme Court handed him the state of Florida.

With many progressive Americans fearing the same will happen in a few weeks time the ABB doctrine - Anyone But Bush - has shaped the tactics of many Democrats and campaigning groups. When I visited New York at the end of last month to join activists from across the USA in opposition to the policies of the Bush administration, I was unsure of what to expect. This was the country that gave birth to a new phase of the global justice movement in Seattle and saw millions of people take to the streets against the War, yet it was also the country of the PATRIOT Act and a crackdown on civil liberties, and the heart of global capitalism.

I was in a city deeply scarred by the events of 9/11 and I was unsure of who would take to the streets under a perceived threat of terrorism. How would the people of New York, and through the media other Americans, view the demonstrators they had heard labelled as dangerous anarchists?

I arrived in the city and was met by a grassroots response to the Convention far bigger than I had imagined. Never before had I seen such a consistent level of demonstrations, rallies, meetings, art shows and creativity in a national action. A week long programme of actions had been planned by dozens of different groups all sharing a common desire to see Bush out of the White House. Many, however, still viewed John Kerry with a great deal of cynicism.

Two days before the Republicans arrived a 'critical mass' cycle ride attracted over 5,000 cyclists highlighting the environmental agenda, the following day over 15,000 took to the streets in a pro-choice women's march. Then on the day that Republican delegates arrived from across the US they were met by the biggest demonstration ever seen at a Party Convention.

Well over 250,000 (some put the figure at almost half a million) people marched passed the convention site at Madison

Square Garden in a protest organised by United for Peace and Justice, a broad based coalition of groups opposed to Bush's policy of 'permanent warfare and empire building'.

In some British demonstrations the placards and banners of the Stop the War Coalition or the Socialist Workers Party can seem to dominate. Yet in New York on August 29th 2004 hundreds of thousands of people came armed only with home-made signs signalling their background, beliefs and views on the presidential contenders.

Veterans against Bush marched together with Students, Quakers with Muslims, trade unionists side-by-side with feminists and environmentalists while former Republicans found themselves next to anarchist youth.

Parts of the march - which snaked for miles through central Manhattan - were full of music, street theatre and dancing while in others a thousand coffins draped in the Stars and Stripes were carried through the streets representing the American soldiers killed in Iraq.

In later days 5000 people marched under the 'Still We Rise' coalition of New York housing groups, AIDS campaigners and immigrant groups and 4000 people took part in an unofficial 'Poor People's March from the UN to the Convention site.

One day was given over to 'direct action' when many thousands of people took part in dozens of events. Despite the peaceful nature of the protests the police arrested over 1000 people in that single day.

When I joined a silent vigil and procession from Ground Zero to Madison Square Gardens over 200 people were surrounded and arrested by police - despite being on a sidewalk and following all police instructions. I only narrowly avoided being arrested - by chance I was in the second half of the protest and outside the arbitrary police pen.

At 8.13am the next morning a 5000 strong single-file 'Unemployment Line' snaked for miles from Wall Street down Broadway to the convention site - unemployment has increased dramatically during Bush's time in office.

Protests continued even when George W Bush made his acceptance speech, with some demonstrators even making it into the conference hall.

It has been about more than just protests though and a group of New York artists planned an 'Imagine' festival with over 50 different art events, theatre shows, parties and movie premieres. There were readings of the names of all those killed in the 'War on Terror', and a powerful outside exhibition of 1000 army boots, as well as civilian shoes, to represent those killed in Iraq.

With the American presidential elections almost a month away, At the Republican Convention in New York thousands of delegates and journalists were joined by over 250,000 demonstrators on the streets.

In many ways the American movement seemed imaginative and inclusive; both fun to be a part of and with serious aims - something the European Social Forum in London on the 14-17th October will do well to try and follow. Yet throughout my time in the America I was struck at how different the progressive movements are in the USA and in Europe. In Europe the abolition of the Death Penalty is enshrined in treaty, HIV/AIDS treatment is assumed, a women's right to choose is accepted and Universal Healthcare is considered standard.

But to argue for these things in many parts of the USA is to brand yourself as a dangerous radical. A discussion about the merits of progressive taxation and welfare benefit is often dismissed before it begins with: 'no, but that's communism'.

To many of the protesters in New York George W Bush was a uniting figure - they view his handling of the 'War on Terror', his promotion of abstinence programmes at the expense of family planning, and his tax cuts for the wealthy with almost universal disdain. Yet beyond that they were a very diverse group of people.

Many were convinced Democrat supporters, or would support Kerry as the 'lesser of two evils'. Some were supporting independent candidate Ralph Nader, believing the two-party system offers little for ordinary people. But many were also among the 50% of Americans who chose not to vote at the last presidential election.

For some being on the streets is their most political act this election year, because living in 'safe' states their vote is unimportant. While Bush and Kerry battle for the swing voters the silent majority who don't vote remain, believing they have nothing to vote for.

In the end the protesters were peaceful and colourful and without any pictures of violence the mainstream media did their best to ignore them. Even then pictures of the United for Peace and Justice demonstration were too important to ignore and made the front pages of most newspapers.

The impact of the protests in the final result will probably be minimal, but they do have an important role to play. Kerry is the only alternative to Bush but to win he must positively enthruse voters that he can be a better President. The protesters showed that there is real anger against Bush, and real desire for change. After falling behind in the polls for failing to distinguish himself Kerry is now finally trying to put space between himself and Bush on the War and other issues.

Only time will tell whether Kerry can be a different type of leader, or if as many of the protesters fear, he will merely dress up the same policies in kinder clothing. It seemed to me returning to Europe that America has so much catching up to do. Despite all of Kerry's faults surely defeating Bush is a start?

The Right Approach

Lies, Damned Lies and the Left

Daniel Freedman
blink Columnist

"A communist is someone who reads Marx and Lenin. A non-communist is someone who understands Marx and Lenin." - Ronald Reagan

Welcome to a new term at LSE. This column is dedicated to exposing the hypocrisy of the far-left, the follies of socialism, and hopefully will provide a refreshingly sound look at world events and topical issues.

Walking around campus, you'll notice many members of the far-left. Beyond the easily identifiable unwashed and Che-t-shirt wearing crowd, they come in various other guises, including all the societies with "Socialist" in their title, most of those claiming to be campaigning for some noble-cause or another, and they've even taken over LSE Labour. Why the deceit? Probably because trying to convince people to sign up for mass-murdering totalitarianism isn't too easy these days.

If they do try to sign you up, have some fun and ask: Communism has led to the death of over 100 million people (China: 72m, Soviet Union 20m, Cambodia 2.3m, North Korea 2m, Africa 1.7m, Afghanistan 1.5m, Vietnam 1m, Eastern Europe 1m, Latin America 150,000), why should I give it another chance?

If you're against capitalism, what's with the Nokia and Marlboros? You claim to represent "workers," have you ever actually worked? What's the difference between fascism and communism? Oh you campaign for human rights, when was the last time you marched against the genocide of Christians in Sudan, the oppression of Blacks in Cuba, or against the concentration camps in North Korea?

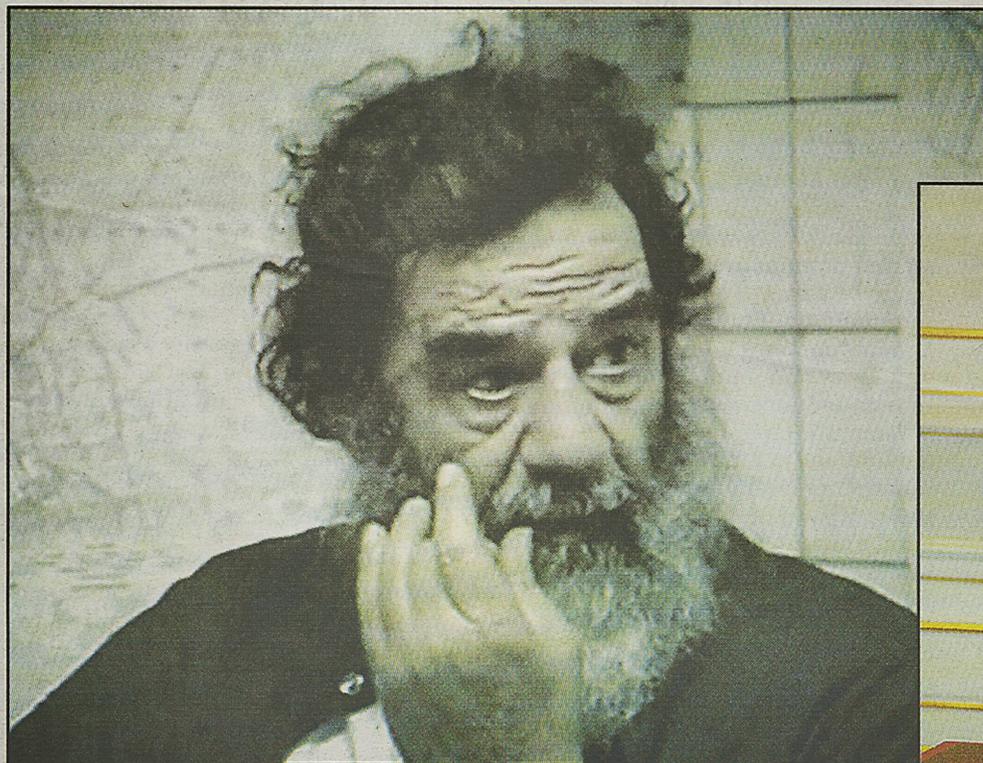
And if the person trying to rope you in is less communist and more socialist or environmentalist, ask: Why support Kyoto, when it's estimated that the amount it costs could instead ensure that the entire free world has clean water and sanitation for life? Why raise the minimum wage when its principle effect is to put people out of work? Why support a system (CAP and other free-trade barriers) that result in the average cow in Europe having around twice the average daily income of an African farmer? Or why should an organization dominated by dictatorships (the UN) be respected?

The "um, ah, yes, but, let me ask the leader," response is because the causes the far-left champion are just fronts, convenient pawns in their quest for a global revolution. (The non-communist socialists and environmentalists are two other unwitting pawns).

Communism should be feared just as much as fascism. They're similar ideologies: both are authoritarian, mass-murdering, and ruled by self-appointed elites--hence the ease with which the infamous Nazi-Soviet pact was made--and they're rivals for the same pundits--hence the hatred between the two. The only difference is the excuses they give for their autocracy, and that communism has murdered millions more. Both are evil ideologies, and both should be fought.

Human Rights Lawyers: Neither Lawyers nor Human

More interested in paycheques and ideological extremism than the rule of law, the attempt by LSE academics to impeach a sitting Prime Minister is a travesty, a mockery, and an affront to all things good.



Spot the war criminal.



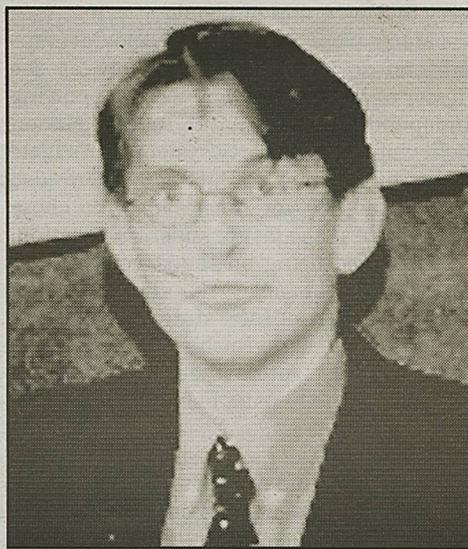
Alykhan Velshi
Law Correspondent

Human rights lawyers are an odd sort, not caring very strongly about human rights or the law. LSE employs a couple of them, though mostly outside the Law Department, as they are to lawyers what herbal-healers and naturopaths are to doctors: intellectually sub-standard and vaguely tartuffish; like the dim-witted third-cousin whose rantings are politely and quietly ignored.

Two human rights lawyers associated with the LSE are Professor Conor Gearty and Rabinder Singh QC. The first is Rausing Director of the Centre for the Study of Human Rights and the second is a former visiting professor of law. Both are practising barristers (British-speak for trial lawyers) at Matrix Chambers, the law firm whose world-view most closely resembles Castro's Cuba.

Their recent media sensation is a campaign to have Tony Blair impeached for "high crimes and misdemeanours." Impeachment, very briefly, is a criminal trial initiated by the House of Commons with the House of Lords acting as judge. It turns the House of Commons into a judicial body and Parliament into an inquisition. It is, accordingly, a symbol of the worst aspects of British parliamentary democracy. Little surprise then that human rights lawyers are at the vanguard of its returning popularity.

Historically, impeachments have been followed by the execution of the offending party (typically by hanging) through a parliamentary Bill of Attainder. An impeachment has not been attempted since the 19th-century, and has not been successful since several centuries before that. The first impeachments were in the 14th century.



Professor Conor Gearty

A 1999 House of Commons committee found impeachment procedure "obsolete", and noted, rather presciently, that impeachments have often been a tactic of political partisanship. It was assumed until recently that impeachments had been consigned with other antiquated Parliamentary traditions to the dustbin of history.

The dubious legality of impeachments is of no concern to Gearty and Singh, for whom the law's content is of secondary importance to scoring cheap political points, grabbing headlines and earning money. I called their law firm, Matrix Chambers, and was told that "Rabinder Singh charges £340 an hour, and Conor Gearty charges half that." More troubling is that the two "will receive a full fee" for their impeachment-related work; and no, in case you were wondering, the fee does not include a "happy ending."

'Public funds that could be building hospitals and endowing universities will instead increase the acreage of the two lawyers' estates.'

'Keeping to the spirit of human rights law we should avoid letting the facts interfere with a Daily Mirror headline.'

What's worse is that, according to the Guardian newspaper, "House of Commons authorities have ruled that MPs can use public money - their researchers' allowances - to fund the impeachment process", meaning that funds that could be building hospitals and endowing universities will instead increase the acreage of the two lawyers' estates.

What grumble do these bumptious, bewigged brahmins have with Blair? Blair's high crime and misdemeanour, they allege, is violating international law in the run-up to the Iraq war, and their solemn duty, it seems, is to bring him to justice.

I suppose they see themselves as modern-day Sir Edward Cokes; though Cromwell, I think, would be a more fitting

comparison. What they prefer not to mention is that both the Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith and Professor Christopher Greenwood QC, two lawyers of great distinction, concluded that the use of force against Saddam Hussein was in accordance with the laws and customs of war. The Hutton and Butler inquiries refused to call into question the legality of the war in Iraq. What's more, the House of Commons, by a considerable majority, backed the war and its legal reasoning. And no court, either domestic or international, has ruled against the British government's legal justification for invading Iraq. But, keeping to the spirit of international human rights law, as practiced, we should avoid letting the facts interfere with a Daily Mirror headline.

While we are on the subject of international law, it is worth remembering its erstwhile violator-in-chief: Saddam Hussein. Recall that it was him who ordered the use of mustard gas against the Kurds, organised rape squads to terrorize young women, waged two wars of manifest aggression, tortured dissidents by submerging them in acid, celebrated September 11th, bankrolled suicide bombers, and had two of his own sons-in-law assassinated. These are undeniable, indisputable violations of international human rights law and common standards of decency.

Human rights lawyers were never interested in deposing Saddam (or impeaching him, depending on their wont), no lawyer's fees being forthcoming in that endeavour.

Alykhan Velshi is the Law Correspondent and Vice-Chair of the LSE Conservative Association. He is a 3rd-year Law student.

The Immorality of Cloning



Cloning for therapeutic purposes requires creating embryos that are never meant to live. This is morally unjustifiable, particularly given the high failure rate involved in creating clones.

miseries, they are producing future material misery in the form of the negative karma accrued from the killing of these innumerable embryos.

Treating cloning as any other scientific technique is just wide of the mark. 97% of cloning attempts fail. Even the successful embryos are likely to be damaged while being handled in the laboratory, and as a result many of the animals cloned are born abnormally large. Also, until the embryo grows to 120 cells, it is not even nurtured in the mother's womb so it receives artificial care in a laboratory and this causes the various problems that we see with cloned animals. To think that the case would be any different when cloning human embryos is wishful thinking. Isn't it clear that this is nature's way of showing that cloning is something that is simply unnatural and inappropriate?

The real problem lies in the fact that scientists seem not to be able to accept disease and death as a natural part of the material condition. Science will never be able to solve these problems, yet there exists an illusion that cloning will be able to preserve the same 'self' or 'consciousness' of the cloned animal simply because the genetic material is identical. This is an erroneous assumption because there are already identical twins in terms of genetic material - yet there is no doubt that even identical twins have different, independent consciousnesses.

The most logical conclusion is to realise that the soul and the consciousness, being a symptom of the soul, are not made of matter; they are unidentifiable but undoubtedly exist, just as thoughts undoubtedly exist even though one cannot see or touch them. There is a higher, spiritual dimension than this material condition. In this dimension, there is no disease and death, because there is no longer identification with matter - a temporary manifestation that will undoubtedly cease to exist. It makes rational sense to instead identify with antimatter, or the one eternal aspect of ourselves - the soul. What follows is a realisation that it is perfectly acceptable to try and look after our material condition within the obvious confounds that God has already provided in the form of the material energy. However, this is not the be-all and end-all of life, there is a higher purpose to strive for. Death should not be feared as the end of life, but should be seen as the moment we spend our lives preparing for, so that our consciousness is focussed on God in order to attain liberation at that crucial moment.

Nimesh Mistry is a 2nd year law student and member of the Krishna Consciousness Society.

Nimesh Mistry

The recent news that Dr Ian Wilmut is applying for a license to clone human embryos has rightly attracted outrage amongst most observers as to the ethical considerations of such a move. The fact that Wilmut is one of those responsible for the appalling experiment on Dolly the sheep should be enough of a reason not to grant a license. The case of Dolly the sheep was originally hailed as a landmark success of science's aim to immortalise life by creating genetically identical mammals. Yet Dolly died just seven years after being born, as a result of developing fatal lung disease and arthritis.

Dr Wilmut claims that this new cloning scheme is justified because of the possibilities of finding out more about the effects of motor neurone disease on cells, in the hope of possibly finding a future cure. There are so many weaknesses in this argument that it would be extremely naive to trust his claims. First of all, he considers simply studying a disease as justification

'Treating cloning as any other scientific technique is just wide of the mark. 97% of cloning attempts fail. Even the successful embryos are likely to be damaged while being handled in the laboratory, and as a result many of the animals cloned are born abnormally large.'

for creating an embryo and subsequently killing it once the 'research' is complete. He fails to express the probability of actually finding a cure to motor neurone disease and so it is reckless to allow such formation and destruction of embryos simply on a hunch that it may aid research.

In any case, it seems that scientists have lost sight of the function and purpose of an embryo. Its function is to grow and develop into a living organism. According to the Vedic scriptures, once the genetic material of the male is implanted into the female egg, material life begins. The soul, or the self, enters the embryo at that moment. Hence, destroying the embryo from that point onwards is in effect killing life. The law of nature dictates that every material action performed has a reaction, and the principle of karma applies a positive or negative quality on every conceivable action. Scientists have failed to realise that although there is nothing wrong with trying to cure disease, the karmic effect of an action has to be taken into account. Ironically, instead of helping cure material



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B:art

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B:music -	P. 15-16
B:film -	P. 17-18
B:theatre -	P. 19
B:TV -	P. 19
B:fine arts -	P. 20
B:about -	P. 21
B:literature -	P. 22

B:music

edited by Matt Boys and Ben Howarth

Matt's Editorial

Greetings Freshers and Returners. If I could offer you one piece of advice, sun-screen wouldn't be it. Oh no. It would be this: take your inaugural loan check, and buy the most kick ass stereo you can afford. We're not talking some Argos mini system here, we're talking hi-fi separates, floor standing speakers: the works. Why? Take a look at your record collection and figure out how much it all set you back. Don't you want something worthy of that expense to listen to it on? Don't you want something that will shake your walls when cranked up? If you're new and moving into



halls, waking your next door neighbour up at 3am by rattling their teeth with the bass is easily the best way to endear yourself to them. If you've just rented a flat with your close buddies, what better way to introduce yourself to your immediate neighbours than with a bassline to loosen their bowels? To say nothing of parties: they live or die on the sound system used, and we all know that throwing a party is the easiest way to get laid. Q.E.D. Big sound systems. You know they make sense.

Mistakes and Regrets

or, Ben's guide to what not to do...



Don't, where possible, buy gig tickets over the net/phone. It's much cheaper to buy in person, e.g. for all Mean Fiddler gigs purchase them at the Astoria (Charring Cross Road), all ULU tickets at ULU, etc, etc.

Don't buy a round of drinks at any of the following: Electric Ballroom, Camden Barfly, or Madame JoJos. You were warned.

Don't go to Camden over the weekend. Unless teeny Goths are your thing of course...

Don't piss off the bouncers, funny at the time, less funny when you can't get into your favourite club.

In fact just don't talk to bouncers. It's an especially good idea not to suggest that they need elocution lessons.

Don't talk to DJs either. It's not cool, and always regretted in the morning.

Don't go into a club without a flyer, it's a lot cheaper and also removes the possibility of going into the wrong club by mistake. The corner of Tottenham Court Road/Oxford Street, and Camden tube station are flyer laden.

Don't wear your cool-as-fuck band t-shirt to a gig by the same band. You'll either seem too keen, or just a wanker.

Gig Guide

Our choice of upcoming shenanigans...

06/10The Bazookas - LSE Freshers
LSE's finest return to the place that they call home.

The Golden Virgins - 93 Feet East,
Up and coming Sunderland rockers touring to promote their ace new album, Songs of Praise. Catch them before they die.

09/10Clinic - Hackney Empire
Rare live show from the one and only Clinic. Part of the Vapour Festival of Independent Music.

11/10The Young Knives - go native! (LSE)
Nonsense pop from Pavement-esque Oxford boys. Playing at Alternative Music Soc club night with

ace LSE DJs afterwards.

12/10Har Mar Superstar - Mean Fiddler
The sexiest short 40-year old Jewish man you'll ever have the pleasure of seeing gyrate naked 2 inches from your face.

14/10Seafood - ULU
2005's must see band? Their big breakthrough is getting closer.

20/10The Zutons/The Futureheads - Shepherds Bush Empire
Scouse/Wearside double bill. Two great bands, one great night.

B:MUSIC WANTS YOU!!

We need writers and photographers for the coming year. No matter what kind of music you're into, there's a warm and cozy place for you at the Beaver. Sign up at Freshers' Fair, and you'll be in line for free CDs and free guestlist tickets to all the shows you can stomach! Failing that, email Matt (m.c.boys@lse.ac.uk) or Ben (b.howarth@lse.ac.uk) pronto!!

The Queer ear gets in gear: part 1 of the B:Music guide to getting your rocks off in London

Your Guide to the musically superior side of the Scene by Simon Rees

Queer eye for the straight guy. Okay, we possess aesthetic talents, but our eardrums have not always had such high standards. But no longer, my furry little club-monsters! Prepare yourselves for enlightenment. Gay boys, gay girls and everything in-between have been doing it until the early hours, musically, in more ways than one. The teen-queen-pop-princess-Britney-bopping-head-nodding house (fit-inducing lasers provided free of charge) is no longer the sole force in Queers-Ville. The revolution is here. It's cheap, it's sexy, it gets you jumping like a bunny on Prozac; the alternative gay-guide is at your fingertips. Slim (this is after all the beginning of the revolution), but 100% prime-quality meaty musical goodness. This is like soooooooooo good

Club nights

Monday Heaven (Charing Cross tube)

Believe it or not "Popcorn" on Mondays has been subtly infiltrated by Franz-Ferdinand frolics, Nirvana floor-fillers and a bass-line to boot. Indie-boys and ladies with higher hairstyles than Marge Simpson bounce away until the early hours. Head for the first floor and be there before midnight for FREE entry with your NUS card/ £1 after. Red stripe and single mixers are £2.50 a go. For air-conditioning needs head for the VIP room where you will be confronted with a very tall, very bitchy door-mistress. "Sorry this is members only," to which you reply: "Oh, I'm a guest of Steven, you know the _____ (insert random nationality here) guy." It usually works.

Wednesday NagNagNag at The Ghetto (TCR tube).

A mixed crowd of girls and boys and occasionally Boy George don some fantastic eye-catching outfits to get their weekly electro dose. Go wild on the dance floor or just people-watch the night away. Friendly folk, £3 entry before 12. As far as drinks go though, make sure you're sufficiently beered to the gills before you get there. A good place to bring your straight mates as it really is a rather poly-sexual place.

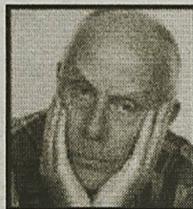


Thursday Miss Behaviour at The Ghetto.

Predominantly female with a DJ enjoying apparent iconic status working those decks on an early spot at Popstarz as well. Suit jackets and stripy T-shirts all round, indie, electro and the occasional live act. However, having seen better microphones at a Karaoke, the performances are more comical than catchy. Red Stripe at £2.80 a can. £1 entry with NUS before 12 but I've turned up at one and got in for the same price. Friendly staff, crazy dancing and smiles at the coat-check. The size of a shoe-box but one of those endearing places where they'll turn all the lights on at 4a.m. and you'll still be dancing.

Friday Popstarz at Scala (Kings Cross tube)

Popstarz. Luckily a beautifully ironic title. This truly is the king, yes KING of the alternative queer-club scene. Their suggestion that they are the biggest alternative queer night in the world is no hollow boast; this place is huge. Three dance floors; the obvious choice being the Rubbish room (which is not rubbish at all, it's really rather good), fantastic DJ's, a sound system with enough bass to sink a ship and it can be cheap. Print off a flyer from their website and be there before 11 for free entry and BOGOF on beer to boot. After 11 you'll pay £5 with NUS and be confronted with a £2.50 price tag to Red Stripe or Reef. Free moustaches, balloons and hats are regularly thrown into the bouncing crowd to keep the party going (which doesn't stop until 5am) and you're likely to see a few famous faces. With no VIP room, you can even dance with them and feel like the coolest kid on the block. All in all, a place of madness with security staff who'll probably offer you a cushion if you fall asleep at the bar.



Life's a bitch...

John Arnold gets all hot and bothered

Certain things piss me off in life: people who buy clothes for their pets, idiots that wear t-shirts with 'wacky' slogans (i.e. 'Take me to your dealer', 'This is Hardcore Pawn', any FCUK garment), the very fact that Jo Wiley has to exist. All of these would be high up the 'first to be shot' list when the revolution comes. However, one category more than any provokes intense homicidal tendencies, yes kids, it's the casual festival goer.

During the summer I had the grave misfortune of actually having to get a job. Now, of my summer-time colleagues I could get on with the vast majority. There was the Jonathan Creek look-a-like who wore Beach Boys and Simon and Garfunkel Tees (sounds cool, looks shit), there was Big Pete the metal fan who lives by the phrase "if the song's got words then it's gonna be turd" and also we had the ex-farmer girl who seemed to get sunburned when she simply looked at an unused bulb. One Monday she came into work after a day of 'sunbathing' (or 'being fried') with a body that was completely red. Except her eyelids. Cos she'd worn sunglasses.

Someone used the phrase "human panda" but I preferred "ha ha, you look mental". Anyway, each of these people were perfectly nice, as were the vast majority of the people I encountered at work.

However, there were two. For 11 weeks it was non-stop tales of Glastonbury debacles. How the two of them (who had never previously met) had much hilarity and nearly caused a modern day Hiroshima when they were putting up their tents. How their friends got "totally wrecked" on about half a magic mushroom and started trying to steal grass from fields and talk to strangers (wow! hardcore!). Or how they can't understand why people go to Glastonbury to see bands. Perhaps because it's a MUSIC festival?

These people are not exceptions. Anyone who wears a festival wristband or one of those t-shirts with the full line-up list, these are your enemy people.

Join the campaign and let us wipe out this scar on modern society.

B:film

edited by Dani Ismail

Welcome back!

I hope everyone's enjoyed the plethora of films that have adorned our cinemas over the summer, and thanked the lord that such blockbusters as Hulk and The Last Samurai remained

where they should be - in the past. I think however, we're all beginning to feel the strain of not having any sequels/ trilogies to look forward to - or are some people still excited for Star Wars? I lost interest after seeing Ewan McGregor's strange hairdo.

Well it's the time to try and recruit more writers. So please do get in touch if you want to write for the section this year.

Lotsa love, Dani



Released Soon...

The Manchurian Candidate

janewakiwaka, a beaverfilm virgin, writes...



Director: Jonathan Demme
Starring: Denzel Washington, Meryl Streep, Leiv Schreiber, Jeffrey Wright
Certificate: 15
Running Time: 130 min
Release Date: Very soon!

Based on the best-selling novel by **Richard Condon**, this psychological and political thriller/suspense is an updated remake of the 1962 version playing upon the themes of mind control and abuse of political power.

So what's the deal? Not too much can be said as it's supposed to be a suspense, but the plot is centred around two brainwashed soldiers, who served in the Gulf War together. Set in modern day America, Major Marco (**Denzel Washington**), whom everybody thinks is a nut, attempts to find the truth of what really happened during the last few days of the war. Marco's

quest to find the truth and uncover a major political conspiracy is heightened by Sergeant Raymond Shaw's (**Leiv Schreiber**) surprisingly quick rise to becoming a candidate for vice president, under the watchful eye of his manipulative mother (**Meryl Streep**).

The movie does start off a bit slowly, and definitely has some bizarre moments - the whole concept of mind control, brainwashing and implants is a bit sci-fi. Despite being suspense, the outcome is a bit predictable in the sense that inevitably 'good prevails'. But, I have to admit, I actually did enjoy it, mainly due to the acting, which was really incredible. Washington was extremely convincing in playing the part of a man who everybody thinks is insane. Streep is equally amazing, in her portrayal of Senator Eleanor Prentiss Shaw - a calculating,

influential politician, but also Raymond Shaw's controlling mother. The directive style is entertainingly edgy and the plot does throw a few twists at you that keep you wondering.

Me personally? I'm not totally into violence (can't stand the sight of blood), so if you're a fan of all things soft and fuzzy (i.e. romantic comedies and all that), then maybe this is not the best film for you. There is moderate violence (the usual guns, blood, murders - typical war movie stuff) and plenty of suspense and tension - and being a bit of a music addict, I have to say that Wyclef Jean did a brilliant job with the soundtrack, which really added to the atmosphere of the movie. Obviously, it's not going to be a barrel of laughs - although the audience, myself included, were amused at some odd moments - think a mother pulling her son, drilling holes into people's heads, biting implants out of a person's back..... However, despite criticism, and having watched the movie, give it a go, as it does provide some food for thought; the parallels of the themes of the movie to reality is scarily true and relevant to our everyday lives.

4/5

RESFEST IN THE UK ON 30 SEP - 3 OCT AT THE NATIONAL FILM THEATRE, LONDON

The festival showcases the year's best short films, music videos and animation through a mix of screenings, parties, workshops and live music events. The programme this year includes a retrospective of the works of director Jonathan Glazer (**Sexy Beast, Birth**); **Bushwhacked**; the music video programme **Videos That Rock!**, among others,

COMPETITION TIME!!

We have 3 pairs of tickets to go see **VIDEOS THAT ROCK!**, on Saturday 2nd October; a survey of rock oriented projects with edits of such videos as **Badly Drawn Boy's** Year Of The Rat, **Modest Mouse's** Float On among others.

To get your hands on the tickets just answer this question..

Which Badly Drawn Boy video is of him busking outside Waterloo Station?

COMPETITON 2: SHORTS TWO

Men's heads go missing; sex, babysitting and pizza spell trouble on **Sunday**, and there's even a bit about commuting in this program of shorts. To win tickets - **Which very popular animated series features a boy constantly telling people to "eat my shorts"?**

Send your answers to beaverfilm@yahoo.com ASAP for a chance to win!

Out This Week...

Cursed

Werewolves attack LA in Wes Craven's latest. Sounds pretty dumb. Extensive reshooting of scenes and cast shifts lends doubt to the credibility of the film.

Saw

A serial killer on the loose, nicknamed Jigsaw, makes his victims do the killing. Worth watching for the originality, and high creepiness factor.

De-Lovely

Kevin Kline depicts the American composer Cole Porter in this musical rendition of his life. The focus on his sexual orientation, however, takes away much from the actual film.

Metallica: Some Kind Of Monster

A documentary about the making of Metallica's album, *St Anger*. Over 1200 hours of footage were shot to bring to light the numerous problems plaguing the band over the past few years.

Layer Cake

Daniel Craig stars as an English cocaine dealer in this mafiosa movie, planning an early retirement before being handed one last, tough, assignment. He's pretty sexy so I'd recommend this one.

Mambo Italiano

An Italian man doesn't know how to tell his immigrant parents that he's gay. Lots of movies like this coming out these days. And if it's anything like *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* we should all just go egg cinemas' nationwide in protest.

Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow

Umm, this is one of those movies that are really annoying to talk about because the name is so long. Good cast, though. And it's about giant flying robots

Dead Man's Shoes

This tells the story of 2 brothers going back to their hometown after 8 years of absence. The older brother is hell bent on wreaking revenge on local gangs that used to bully his mentally handicapped younger brother.

B:Film Preview...

Inside I'm Dancing

tagliamsi isn't impressed. and is pretty harsh too.



set in a residential home for the disabled in Ireland, Michael (Steven Robertson), who has cerebral palsy, has lived in residential care all his life and is a quiet, bland character who's never caused any trouble and is completely unaware of anything outside the four walls of his safe, monotonous environment.

Into this depressingly grey world (where the residents - of all ages I might add, sit about watching Bagpuss) comes loud, rebellious

Is it bad of me to not be overwhelmed by and full of great things to say about a movie that tackles the ever so sensitive subject of disabilities? Don't get me wrong, the idea behind the film is a good one, the acting is, on the whole, quite sound - showing off the talents of a couple of unknown actors and potentially launching their careers into the mainstream and there's a nice mix of both comedy and drama. It just didn't work for me.

Quick rundown of what it's all about: it's

Rory (James McAvoy), who is all about trying to live life to the fullest, despite, or perhaps, *in spite* of the fact that he suffers from a form of muscular dystrophy which not only means that his only source of independent movement comprises of two of his fingers, but also that his life expectancy is severely reduced. Bummer.

And you can guess what happens from there... Rory tries to wreak as much havoc as he can in the home - he is determined to get out of residential care fast, and in the process strikes up a

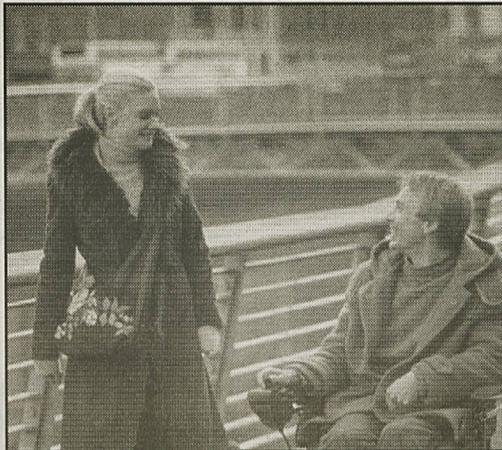
friendship with Michael. After a couple of botched attempts (on behalf of Rory), Michael applies for, and is awarded an independent living grant, and, with Rory in tow, they embark on a new life together out in the big bad world.

A couple of semi-amusing, semi-unbelievable incidents later, the two lads are set up in their new home with their newly recruited carer - the inexperienced yet very attractive Siobhan (Romola Garai). And you were wondering when the love

interest was going to appear! Anyway, more happens, it's part funny, part sad, and depending on how emotional you're feeling, it could have you in tears by the end of it - what were you expecting? It's a film called Inside I'm Dancing and it's about two disabled young men.

I won't give anything else away, in case you still want to see it. The acting was good considering that both Steven Robertson and James McAvoy are non-disabled, Scottish (well, one of them is) actors - their performances were, on the whole, convincing. Romola Garai's character was weak and needed to be developed more. I just felt that there were too many clichés involved, beginning with the home itself. It was exactly what you'd expect a home to look like, i.e: very quiet, colourless, the residents all have that sedated 'One Flew Over Cuckoo's Nest' look about them, everything moves in slow motion etc. and ending with, well, the ending.

2/5



B:Film Classic Review...

Dogma (1999)

daniismail digs this Kevin Smith great

Director: Kevin Smith

Starring: Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, Alan Rickman

Certificate: 15

A smart, funny and engaging film from the director of **Chasing Amy**, **Clerks** and **Mallrats** (notice the exclusion of **Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back**, and, ahem, **Jersey Girl**).

Kevin Smith is on top form again in this slick comedy questioning the basic belief system that supports organised religion, and more specifically, Catholicism. It's a different direction for him, mainly because there's no mention of comic books, comic book geeks and/or malls, but he carries the whole thing off remarkably well, and still manages to infuse the film with his trademark misogynist, pervy sex jokes and scatological references (thanks, in large part, to the ultimate stoner-Jay).

The film also boasts a stellar cast: those regulars that we've come to expect to see in any Kevin Smith film - **Jason Lee**, **Ben Affleck**, **Matt Damon**, and, lest we forget, Jay

(**Jason Mewes**) and his 'hetero life-partner' Silent Bob (Smith himself); and a few new faces such as **Alan Rickman** as the voice of God, **Linda Fiorentino** as a lapsed Catholic now working in an abortion clinic, **Chris Rock**, **Salma Hayek**, **Janeane Garofalo** and **Alanis Morissette**, of all people. Now don't get excited, a couple of those named above only make cameos in the film but it's still pretty impressive and makes for great watching.

What really struck me about this film, though, was the dialogue. Yeah, we knew Smith could get his characters to chat all day about pop-culture, sex and relationships and Stan Lee comics, but to take on Christianity and produce a film that is not only scathingly funny but also smart, eloquent and thought-provoking (so maybe I liked it a bit too much..) is quite a feat.

I realise I've not said much about the actual plot; not wanting to spoil it for anyone whose not seen it yet,

I'll keep it short. Two renegade angels manage to find a loophole in Catholic Dogma that would enable them re-entry into Heaven, which in turn would prove God fallible (as he had decreed them banished), which would in turn unmake existence itself. Into this unholy mess enters a number of unlikely world saviours who have to stop these rogue angels before it's too late. Chaos ensues. Profanity and vulgarity litter the movie as you'd expect, the actors are all pretty much on top form, as is the script, which I think I might have already mentioned, and apart from a few weak moments here and there, it's a great movie and a must-see for any Kevin Smith fans or for anyone who's ever wondered what an angel's genitalia would look like.

4.5/5

The Corporation at the Curzon Soho

To celebrate the release of the new documentary, **The Corporation**, coming out on the 29th of October, The Curzon Soho presents a month of films that look at the all-pervasive influence of corporate culture. The docu-movie boasts a well known, politically active cast, including Naomi Klein of **No Logo**, and the especially prolific Michael Moore. They are brought together in this film to help chart the rise of an increasingly dominant entity in our day to day lives. Watch this space for updates on the upcoming films..

The first of the films stars the well-renowned Noam Chomsky, whom also features in **The Corporation**, and is inundated with warnings of the increasing links between governments, corporations and the use of propaganda.

SUN 3 OCT 12.30PM

Tickets £6/£5 members

Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky And The Media

Writers Needed!

If you have a burning desire to watch films for free, months before they come out; and to get your name and opinion in the paper, then email me!

beaverfilm@yahoo.com

B:theatre

edited by Carolina Bunting and Keith Postler

London Calling: A rough guide to performing arts in the capital

The choice and diversity that London can offer to performance-goers is perhaps unrivalled by any other city in the world. The options are basically limitless. For the LSE student based in and around the centre of the capital, the vast majority of the most significant venues will be easily accessible.

Those London venues of perhaps the greatest stature are the grand Repertoire theatres, subsidised in part and not as commercial as the theatres of the West End, these venues are willing to take risks with new and unknown writers. **The Globe**, **The National Theatre** and **The Royal Court** are probably the most famous, attracting many of the best and brightest talents.

The National Theatre (Southbank) opened in 1976 and comprises three venues, providing a varied mix of musicals, classics and new plays.

The Globe (Bankside) is a faithful reconstruction of the original open-air playhouse that Shakespeare originally

wrote his plays to be performed in. Modern audiences can sit in the galleries or stand informally as a groundling in the yard - just as 400 years ago. It is closed throughout the winter months.

The Royal Court, based at their theatre on Sloane Square, are a company dedicated to performing new work by innovative writers from the UK, they are one of Britain's leading national companies.

The commercial theatre of the West End, comprising venues such as the **Duchess**, the **Donmar Warehouse**, the **Criterion** and the **Savoy**, largely consists of big productions involving large amounts of money. Some shows have been running for decades, particularly the perennially popular musicals like 'Fame' and 'Les Miserables'. You can find tickets for as cheap as £7, depending on the day of the week (although you may not get a great view!) There are a large number of musicals but also many great plays; the standard of performanc-

es is usually very high and the vast number of competing venues (there are approximately 45 West End theatres now performing!) assures great diversity.

Fringe theatre provides a third category of performance-going, of which the **Almeida** (Islington), **Bloomsbury**, and the **Lyric** (Hammersmith), are notable examples. Although this somewhat broad grouping takes in performances of vastly varying scale and type, these plays are generally in smaller, mostly pub theatres, dotted in and around London. Some can be very small and are run as clubs, membership being included in the price of the ticket. A visit to one of these venues can be a superb choice; ticket prices in most cases will be substantially cheaper than in the case of West End performances, although for the more remote the additional costs involved in getting to the venue must be weighed in too.

For fans of Opera and Dance, the most obvious venue of note is the internationally renowned **Royal Opera House**

(Covent Garden). Twice destroyed by fires, the refurbished, modernised and extended buildings stand on a site that has attracted performance-goers for centuries. Ticket prices are high and demand even higher but the interior is gorgeous, the performances world-class and a visit can be glamorous and special. Other options in these categories include **Sadlers Wells**, the **Coliseum** and the modern, contemporary and ethnically diverse programmes on offer at the **Peacock Theatre**, right on the doorstep of the school.

One further performance venue worthy of mention is the **Comedy Store**. Founded on the 19th of May 1979 above a strip club in Soho, this night has progressed a long way from the cramped conditions of the Gargoyle club, where it is claimed, comics were forced to change in the broom cupboard and relieve themselves in the sink! The Comedy Store is now a leading name in British comedy.

MATT RUSHWORTH

Calling all thespians and critics: If the idea of getting into sold out plays (for free at times!!) and giving pretentious "AH-tists" a piece of your mind sounds attractive then sign on up. Just send us an email at bartheatre@yahoo.com It's that easy!

B:media

The page that pleads guilty to charges of dumbing down the Beaver

Greetings freshers,

I imagine you are reading this slumped on a nice comfy chair, possibly after a harrowing day at Freshers Fair. (Don't worry, this page is not written entirely in rhyming couplets.)

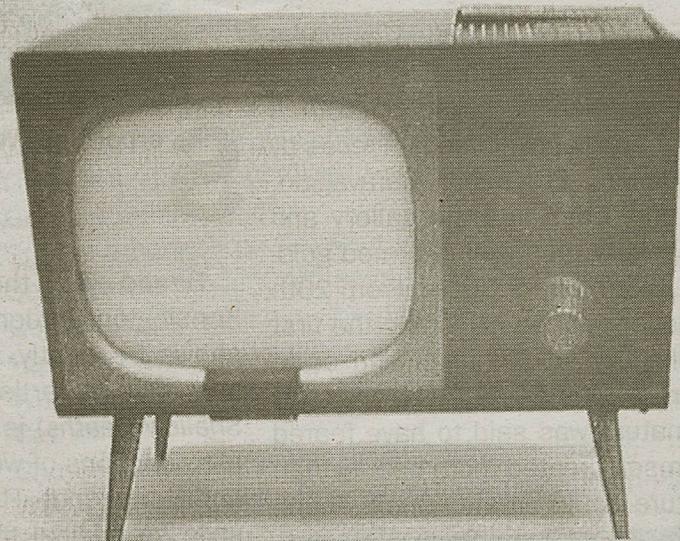
My experience of the aforementioned typically involved joining the societies that give away the best free gifts (surely one can be in both the Jewish and Islamic societies,) meeting any number of people who look frightening due to excessive amounts of luminous hair dye or facial piercings, as well as joining the Scandinavian Society entirely due to the 'persuasive' nature of the young blonde behind the counter.

But yet, what of the Beaver? You now hold in your hands the much-hallowed, much-spoken about newspaper of the LS of E. Eagerly flicking through its pages, devouring every syllable of genius and wit, you await for something to truly catch your eye. Well this is the page for you. (It might not be legal students - don't hold me to it.)

Bored of Bush? Couldn't give a fox about hunting? This page is about the more important things in life, namely the oxygen thieves on reality television, the pisspoor quality of daytime tv, and whatever happened to Ed the Duck?

Each week, this page will give you the lowdown on the latest television and media news, review the top programmes and attempt to give a humorous spin on the goings on in tvland. Yes, I know we're in the 'arts' section of the paper and hence should be reviewing sculpture or old toss like that, but see b:media as the Rolf Harris of the arts pages. Can you see what it is yet?

So whether you're widescreen or Plasma screen, Sun reader or a Guardian reader, I hope that this page has something to interest you. If your daily read consists solely of the FT, I hope it doesn't.



If at any point of this term you wish to contribute a review or a joke to this page, feel free to email in your thoughts to e.pollak@lse.ac.uk If it's good, it will go in. And let's be honest, I haven't set the comedic bar too high with this first piece.

B:fine arts

edited by Carolina Bray

Welcome to... The London Art Scene

Close your textbooks, open your minds and take a step inside the weird and wonderful world of the London Art scene...this week I bring you a short introduction to some of the best galleries in 'The Big Smoke'!

Tate Modern, Bankside, SE1.

As one of the largest modern art galleries in the world, the Tate Modern hosts one of the finest displays of art in the city. Every artwork you have ever seen in a book, magazine or on television is lurking in this enormous converted power station. From Pablo Picasso to Damien Hirst, Claude Monet to Jackson Pollock, the space is brimming with international artworks from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Entrance is free but special exhibitions such as 'Time Zones: Recent Film and Video', starting October 6th, call for an admission price of £6-£8. Check out great cheap film showings, lectures by artists such as Hume, the Chapman brothers and critics such as Cork and cheap courses for those who want to learn more. *Open: Sun-Thurs 10am-6pm. Fri and Sat 10am-10pm.*

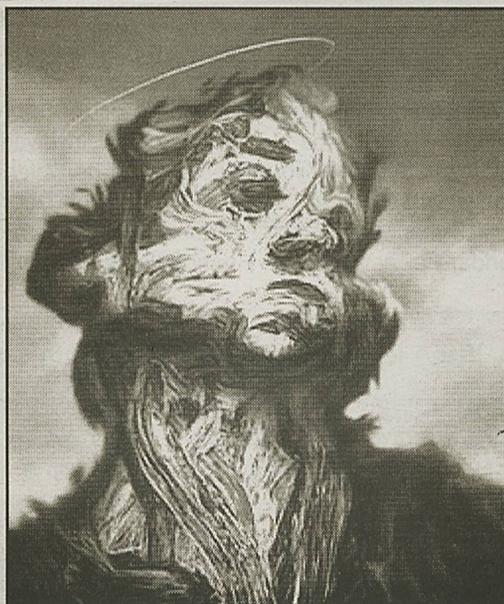
The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, WC2N.

Housing an expansive collection of works from 1250 to 1900 the National allows free access to the permanent collection with a small charge for special exhibitions. Pieces by Van Gogh, Holbein, El Greco, Caravaggio, Michelangelo and Titian line the gallery and every day the gallery runs well informed guided tours at 11.30am and 2.30pm. From 20th October, the Gallery will be exhibiting the first ever major collection of paintings and drawings by the great master Raphael, the only artist mother nature was said to have feared because he himself created more beauty than any scene nature could create. *Open: Thurs-Tues 10am-6pm. Wed 10am - 9pm.*

The Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington

The V&A holds 3000 years worth of art and design, unrivalled anywhere else in the world. Mediums covered in the gallery include sculp-

ture, fashion, photography, ceramics, furniture, jewellery and paintings and entrance to the permanent collection is free. Although the scope of the collection may seem overwhelming at first, when tackled section by section any visit is a truly rewarding experience. The current exhibition 'Encounters: The Meeting of Europe and Asia 1500-1800' has received rave reviews and explores exchanges between Asia and Europe in the fields of art, culture and technology over the past 300 years. *Open: 10am-5.45pm daily, until 10pm on Wednesdays and last Friday of every month.*



Serpentine, W2 3XA.

Based in the beautiful setting of Kensington Gardens, the Serpentine changes shows frequently, is free and hosts great up and coming artists. Glenn Brown (above: *Shallow Deaths*) is currently on show with his reproductions of works by artists such as Dali and Rembrandt. His works are executed in a style so original the works are given a completely new edge. Brown typically adopts somewhat garish colours in his paintings and uses a painfully thin brush to create an illusion of larger brush strokes. Finally, after the deluge of conceptual art following the 1990s yBa movement, a return to skill and technique is happening...catch the this millennium's Renaissance whilst you can! *Open: 10am - 6pm daily.*

The Photographers Gallery, WC2H 7HY

This is so close to University you have no excuse... a favourite London Gallery of mine (admittedly mainly for its fab café to hang out in!) the space is open and relaxed, displaying some of the best photography from around the world. If you need a rest from conceptual paradoxes or symbolic paint splatters ease on down to the current show 'Mediterranean: Between Reality and Utopia.' A thought provoking show, ten photographers exhibit photographic documentation of their perceptions of the Mediterranean. The responses are diverse with photographs ranging from urban regeneration in Tel Aviv to the celebrity lifestyle of St Tropez. Entry is again free and a permanent exhibition is also on display. *Open: Mon - Sat 11am - 6pm, Thursdays until 8pm and Sundays 12noon - 6pm.*

The Estorick Collection, Islington, N1 2AN.

A small gallery hidden away off the beautiful Cannonbury Square (just two tube stops from uni!!!) this collection concentrates on contemporary Italian art, specialising in the modernist Italian Futurist movement. Artists such as Severini, Balla and Mondigliani grace the walls and rare preparatory sketches from each artist may be seen. Free entry with an NUS card and housing one of the best café's in London this gallery is a must see. The 30th September sees the arrival of a new exhibition entitled 'Still Life in 20th Century Italy'. If you coil in horror at the thought of Still Life then take another look. This exhibition considers the Italian divide between artists such as Morandi (who enthused passionately about the genre) and the futurists (who saw it as alien to the Mediterranean culture and merely as a Northern European export). Look out for free lectures at weekends by some excellent speakers. *Open: Tues to Sat 11am-6pm, Sun 12noon-5pm, closed Mon and Tues.*

Art at LSE - Finally, if you would like to get involved in art whilst you are studying at the LSE why not join the Art Studio Society? The Society runs weekly Life Drawing Classes, an annual art trip abroad, holds regular trips to galleries and an extremely popular annual art exhibition with live jazz. Sign up in Room D002 at the Fresher's Fair or email me on c.a.bray@lse.ac.uk for more information.

B:about

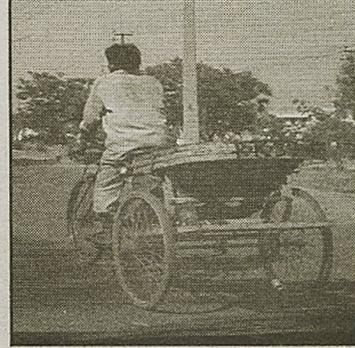
edited by Joanne Lancaster

London is one mad city. Who knows what wild things you'll be up to before you graduate? But before you start believing the LSE library is the greatest hangout spot in town, check out the things we insist you try out before graduation:

Walks and Sports

- * Stroll through Spitalfields on a Sunday morning
- * Spend an afternoon in Camden market
- * Go on the Jack the Ripper Walk
- * Visit Marx's grave in Highgate Cemetery
- * Swim in the ponds at Hampstead Heath
- * Join a Monopoly pub crawl
- * Join the London Marathon
- * Paddle (naked) in the fountains in Trafalgar Square

On the Move



- * Visit the Park and Palace at Greenwich
- * Go on a boat ride on the Thames
- * Rent a cycle rickshaw
- * Go on the London Eye
- * Sail a boat or feed sawns at Round pond, Kensington Gardens

Food



- * Eat jellied eels at a pie and mash shop
- * Have a curry at Brick Lane
- * Get Chinese at Wong Keis
- * Eat kebab in Manor House
- * Drink coffee at Bar Italia until 4am
- * Get a bagel from the 24 hour bagel bakery in Brick Lane
- * Eat delicious Pizza over at Gourmet Pizza Company, Gabriel's Wharf
- * Buy some of the nicest foods in the world at Borough Market
- * Eat Mouth watering tapas at Canteloupe
- * Drink and eat at the "Duke of Cambridge"- London's only organic pub (near Angel station)

Activities

- * Go to an Arsenal Match
- * Catch a film at the National Film
- * Go to the Rocky Horror Show at the Prince Charles Cinema
- * Fly a kite on Primrose Hill
- * See the Christmas Tree at Trafalgar Square
- * Listen to Speakers at Speaker's Corner on a Sunday
- * Go to the centre court in Wimbledon and eat Strawberries and Cream in the rain
- * Go to the Catford Dog track
- * Paddle (naked) in the fountains in Trafalgar Square
- * Pose like wax-works at Madame Tussaud's
- * Go to the longest running show in London: Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap"
- * Go on a political march
- * Smoke a hookah on Edgware Road
- * See strange modern offerings of the Saatchi Gallery
- * Go see some monkeys at London Zoo
- * Have a day at Chessington World of Adventures
- * Whisper across the whispering gallery at St. Paul's Cathedral
- * Check out a case at the Royal Courts of Justice
- * Watch the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace

Out on the town

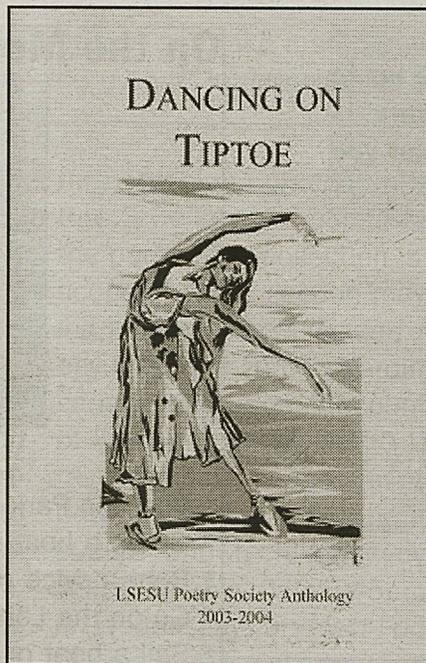
- * Party at "Did we mention our disco?" at Plastic People
- * Go to a gig at the Brixton Academy
- * Listen to jazz for free at the Royal Festival Hall (Friday 5:30pm)
- * Go to Fabric or Egg and stay up all night
- * Get thrown out of Hombres
- * Get refused entry to a posh celeb club like China White
- * Dance the night away and bang the bongos at Dogstar
- * Go to the Jazz Cafe (especially for the dancers)

B:literature

edited by Ion Martea

Dancing on Tiptoe LSESU Poetry Society Anthology 2003-2004 Eds. Gareth Davies and Clifford Middleton

A new year, a new literature editor. There was only one book which could have opened the new year for B: Literature, the last poetry anthology written by LSE students. *Dancing on Tiptoes*, a title adapted from the opening stanza of *Briggflats* by Basil Bunting (LSE student 1920-1922), is an anthology that tends to reflect quite openly our adolescent concerns, both mocking them, and passionately succumbing into them. Davies and Middleton seemed to have worked rigorously, delivering a product that is mature, and yet full of the studenty flare. Judge it for yourself. The anthology includes poems by Ros Sweetman, Ruby Bhavra, Bea Richardson, Gareth Davies, Holly Dawson, Laurence Kavanagh, Junius, Rhona Trauvitch, Esther Wanjie, Euclides Montes, Marta, Harald Nax, Arun Kutawaroo, Vishal Sharma, Natalie Marlow, Deniz Besim and Ion Martea.



ION MARTEA

Poems from Dancing on Tiptoes

Love Poems (I) evening

Asphyxiated by her knowing lips,
and guide-dog hands,
he traces her face with the tips of his first-time fingers
reading her in delicate braille.

the aftermath of their love left her

ruby stained.

dissolving diamonds of sweat
bejewel her flushed flesh.

He worships
a sticky shrine,

her satin gown
adhesive
to his new Eden nudity

HOLLY DAWSON

Sixty Lights by Gail Jones Harvill Press

ION MARTEA writes with light through an album of photographs.

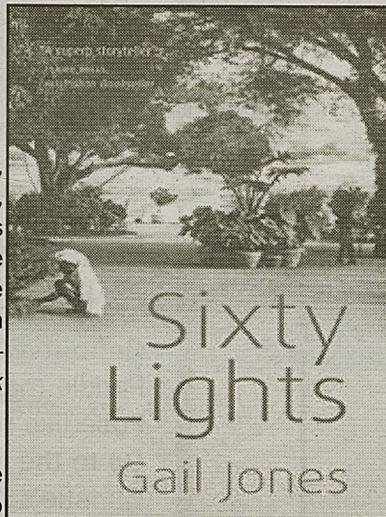
The photograph, like death, has no future. It lives only in the past, drowned in the story of the frozen image; a short story, an ordinary story, but one which benefits from (un)fortunate writing. Photography assumes in its process the certainty of death, however, and so at some point the writing must stop violently, in its most pulsing state, refusing any chance of redemption. An album of photographs, *Sixty Lights* is but an essay on death, and through death Gail Jones celebrates life. Light writing (photograph) becomes life writing in this quiet novel from the author of *Black Mirror*.

Gail Jones must be a poet at heart. Words collide with each other like small stones in a river, producing a melody so soothing that it alludes to a lullaby. Each chapter stands on its own, as if independence would improve its status, would better its quality. And yet, the novel doesn't appear to be a collection of scattered images; more than that, it is a web of memories interwoven in a carefully constructed design. The characters slowly gain shape, and ultimately existence, through a description of ordinary events and unremarkable episodes, all painted two-dimensionally, to fit the boundaries of the photographs they inhabit.

Lucy Strange is the novel's protagonist: an Australian girl living in the late nineteenth century, who loses her parents at the fragile age of eight, moves to London, and then to India where she learns photography, only to return to London and die at the age of twenty two, leaving behind a plethora of photographs and a small girl to carry her memory in the future.

Sixty Lights is not a novel of intrigue and suspense. Nothing extraordinary happens in the short life of this ordinary Strange girl, the knowledge of which can change our understanding and appreciation of the book. Jones's novel lacks a dénouement; nor is she interested in having one. The only end is death, and its certainty is hardly surprising at the moment of its happening, especially because it happens sixty times. Almost everyone and everything dies at the end of each chapter: Lucy's mother, her father, her uncle, loneliness, virginity, love, passion, pain, desire, hope, and the list continues till we get to Lucy, and the novel itself. Its repetitive structure is at first distracting, the morbid setting becoming both clichéd and off-putting. Only in time do we realise that there is a mathematical formula at work there. Each chapter is constructed with intense visual acuity to obtain a complete photograph, a melancholic reminder of lost times, and cultural traditions of the generation of Charlotte Brontë and Charles Dickens, a generation we look up to as the zenith of classical art.

A novel about love and friendship, about sorrows and happiness, *Sixty Lights* encompasses life in a most ordinary manner. It is not a psychological or philosophical treatise on human existence, nor is it a social-political critique, though it strives at those from time to time. It is just a glimpse of reality, but one seen through our own desires and conceptions. Photography offers Gail Jones that special advantage of capturing abbreviated sequences of life and, in the short existence of Lucy Strange, the author has found an excellent way of celebrating the thing we all cling to for better and for worse - our inexplicable desire to go on living.



N/one day, For Chris

Eyes see beige samey stills
One wo/man's security is another's prison
Fog of stuffiness make iron bars
Around ears, hearing passionless hums

But, you?

Dulled though they be
At least this n/one day can be lived,
Forgotten, lamented on the page
I know I breathe,
Do you?

If acknowledged, these mutings can be exploded
With fore/sight, limitless hope, with cut-glass crystal
choice
Tomorrow might be....forever

Do these questions shuffle behind your nameless eyes?
Or, (heart goes crack) are you no longer there?
My faithless head pounds proofless claims
Of your soul's recognition.

I celebrate this n/one day
I know I breathe
For me if not for you.

BEA RICHARDSON

Colour

Colour is losing herself in this city.
Poised truncheons stride past her glow.
A bloated auburn sun rises
And falls
Swiftly
Bruised by the hardened scrutiny
Of hearts that already have the whole world at their bay.
RED buses cruise like snails on the placid roads
Drenched passengers, overcome with fatigue
Simply
Close their eyes.
Shamefaced daffodils on the roundabout force a
chuckle Secretly suicidal
They have lost their worth.

ESTHER WANJIE

Make Friends and Influence People - the A to Z of the AU!

Athletic Union - the most regularly inebriated society at LSE. Incorporates sports from basketball to badminton, and regularly schools lesser universities at them all. (For lesser universities, see 'Euston Tech' and 'Strand Poly').

Anus House - this den of urbane living in South London host the legendary Anus House parties. Hello magazine bid £250k for the photographic rights, but were turned down by proprietor Silver Mike. See also 'You can't afford me'.

Airhorn - a sound that gained cult status on Calella '04. The theft of one from a French express train by a member of the footy Sevenths is still under investigation.



Pikeys, Pirates and Pimps go on the infamous Barrel run.

Barrel, The - The wrongest day of your life. Held on the penultimate Friday of the first term, every LSE sports team gets into fancy dress and drinks for free in the underground bar from 9am. Culminates in the infamous Barrel Run around campus, led by a strangely up-for-it stalker, terrorising innocent Chinese general course students. On average, hospitalises three students per year. (See also 'Wheel (Spin the)' and 'Handoncock, Doug').

Berrylands - the Wembley of university sports grounds. As imposing as the San Siro, as magnificent as the Millenium Stadium and scarier than the New Den, Berrylands makes visiting teams tremble like a patient in Shipman's waiting room at the thought of stepping onto its famous turf. (See also, 'Southwest Trains').

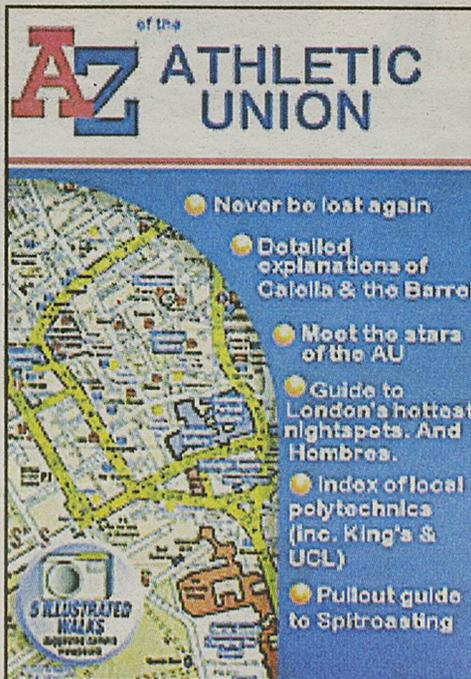
Badminton - the club that boasts almost as many members as men's football. Send us reports sometimes. All the male members have very strong wrists, so I've been told.

Battersea - the first area in Britain to down class possession of weed, and also where women and men's hockey play. (Not related).

Crush - held every Friday night and is responsible for 14 of the 15 total sexual encounters between LSE students per year. Has seen its traditional home of the Tuns transformed from its previous pub-like cosiness to a newer, slicker bar-style environment. It'll make fuck all difference, the floor will still be sticky, people will get pissed for a total of £2.56 and you're going to vomit at some point. Just like Jonathan King, an 'early entry' is essential for a successful Crush session.

Crispy Duck - a favoured post-Walkabout eating hole for inebriated AU members. An ideal place to eat something that may have been a cocker spaniel in a previous life. Don't bring a prospective boy/girlfriend here for a date though.

Calellafest - if the Barrel is the wrongest day of your life, Calella is the wrongest week. Last



year's event featured various LSE students pissing like dogs beside a football pitch, thieving a trophy from some Anglian poly and smoking cigarettes from their arses. (See also, 'Keegan, Kevin').

Champagne - the Seventh team's style of play, the rugby club drink of choice, and generally an all-round representation of LSE's sporting brilliance.

Davies, Pete - AU President for the 2004/2005 year. Rugby player, enjoys a Stella. Memorably embarked on a 24 hour bender at the AU Ball last year. Allegedly woke up in Belgium.



The Champagne Sevenths celebrating winning their league (Linsey Dawn Mackenzie unfortunately out of shot)

Euston Tech - The University College London (UCL). Lower in the league tables than us.

Fabs, Joseph - captain of the 3rd Football XI, labelled 'The Most Dangerous Man in ULU' following an unfortunate altercation with a referee last season. Smoked a cigarette from his own arse in Calella last year.

Fancy Dress - What you'll be wearing at the Barrel. Previous efforts have seen entire teams come as sexy Santas, characters from Finding Nemo, Tube Drivers, Prince Charles, Pikeys, Polyphonic Spree and Maxine Carr. Yes, someone always gets offended.

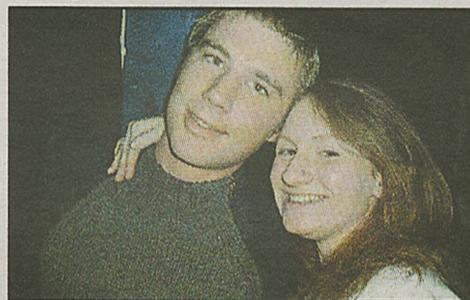
Gimperial - Imperial College London. Inhabited by nerds dreaming of dungeons and dragons, who have wet dreams over installing new motherboards on their PCs. Their sports teams are generally wank as well.

Hombres - Is to central London's nightclub industry what Jordan is to womanhood - dirty,

cheap and tacky, but you still would. Its £1 drinks (now £1.50 unfortunately) are the stuff of legend - the vodka smells distinctly like petrol, and has led to many a nightbus journey going wrong. Features cockney DJs that shout over the 'music' and an abundance of sweaty men of middle age and questionable morals. (See also 'Nightbus').

Hancock, Doug - Graduated from the LSE over a year ago, and wishes he hadn't. Fell off the Peacock Theatre stage at last year's Barrel, attended hospital for his stitches, then returned to continue the drinking. Commendable commitment.

Incompetent - See also 'Kibble, Jo'.



Ain't she pretty?

Joy - This American exchange student brought a lot of joy into the lives of many male LSE students last year. The inspiration for at least two Calella tour shirts, this 'popular' Yankee girl enjoys long walks in the park, cinema, and cooking meals for three.

Keegan, Kevin - The coach driver from Calella last year. Famously attempted to put on a Jim Davidson standup performance on the in-coach video system, prompting a near-riot. Fell asleep at the wheel near Nantes, but bribed us not to tell his employers.

Karate - One of the most successful LSE sports teams. Got offended with Mr. Miyagi references made in a report about them last year.

Loppy, Simon - an ingenious attempt at wordplay. Take the first letter of a word, find a Christian name with the same beginning, then place it before the remainder of the word. Thus Barry Arrel (Barrel), Simon Loppy (Sloppy) and Kevin Wality (Kwality) arise.

Limeabout - see also 'Walkabout'.

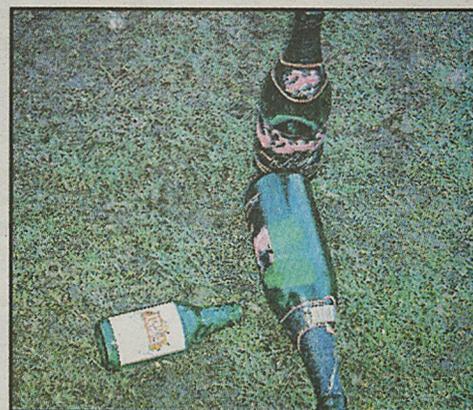
Mixed Grill - Procured from Wright's Bar, blended and mixed with Gin at the Barrel and forced down the neck of whoever is deemed unfortunate enough. (See also 'Wheel, Spin The')

Netball - arguably LSE's fittest team (in the physical or sexual sense - it's up to you). Legs like young racehorses.

Nightbuses - not much of an issue for Freshers living in halls, but for those living further than the WC postcodes, London Transport's nightbuses play a vital role in a successful night out. Don't fall asleep on one though, unless you fancy an exciting trip to the bus depots of Beckton, Streatham or Crouch End.

O'Clock, Gin - To be proclaimed at a time when it is deemed that the consumption of gin is nigh. Or whenever you fancy getting fucked up on booze.

Pink Lady - The preferred tippie of the Fifth foot-



Pink Lady in her usual pose

ball team. An exclusive sponsorship deal between Pink Lady and the aforementioned team was rumoured to be on the horizon last year.

Prison, Womens - Royal Holloway, a pikey university situated in the wild suburbs of London. Features the highest number of students with criminal convictions of anywhere in the UK. Their sports teams are good though, and have the annoying habit of beating LSE teams. Punch-ups during matches common.

Roast, Sir - Matt Bawden, Captain of the Sixth football team. Superb player; intimidating in the tackle, runs over all the pitch, simply terrific. Likes cooking pork on barbecues. (See also 'Joy').

South East Trains - providers of (well, most of the time) free journeys to and from Berrylands for LSE's sporting finest. They don't like it if you try to hop into the driver's cab though.

Spitroasting - A popular method of cooking meat for several AU members.

Strand Poly - King's College London. A mere 200 metres across the Aldwych, 200 miles below us in terms of academic and sporting prowess.

Stand By Me - Song bastardized (quite well, it must be said) by Silver Mike to reflect the fortunes of one of the AU's longest serving members, Caustic Steve.

Tuns, The Three - Spiritual home of the AU. You're not a proper LSE student until you've thrown up in here. One of the cheapest boozers in London, with friendly staff to boot.

U Can't Afford Me - To be uttered upon ejection from Walkabout by burly bouncers. (See also, 'Walkabout')

Very Sick - How you'll feel the morning after the Barrel.

Walkabout/Limeabout - Similar to the seventh level of hell, this Shaftsbury Avenue 'nightspot' is a popular destination for post-match celebrations on a Wednesday night. Should be preceded by a course of Kareoke in The Tuns. Your night at Walkabout is not complete unless you (a) get in an altercation with the bouncers, (b) do a 'Begbie' and throw a glass over the balcony, or (c) pull a member of the opposite sex who looks like their mother smoked during pregnancy.

Right, I know there are still x, y and z to go, but it's Sunday afternoon, Spurs are on Sky in a minute and there's an interesting photo of Abi Titmuss in the News of the World I want to study in depth.

Paddy

Like what you hear? Sign up at Freshers' Fair!

Keep an eye out at Freshers' Fair for the various sports clubs' stalls - usually located in the gym in the basement of the Old Building. LSE has sports to cater for every taste, and every skill level - from the very best players to those who just enjoy playing. Sports clubs at LSE include: Aerobics, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Cricket, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Hockey, Horse Riding, Muay Thai Boxing, Netball, Rock Climbing, Rowing, Rugby, Running, Shotokan Karate, Squash, Table Tennis, Tae Kwon Do, Tennis, Volleyball and Yoga.... Phew! Find them all at freshers' fair and sign up. You won't regret it.

BeaverSports

Tuesday 28 September 2004

Issue 601

Michael Griffith 1983 - 2004

BeaverSports is sad to report the passing of one of the most popular and well-known faces in LSE - Michael Griffith. Mike, or 'Scouse' as he was affectionately known to his many friends in London, was tragically killed in a car accident in his native Liverpool on Saturday 21st August, after playing in a cricket match for his local side.

Mike was a first team footballer throughout his time at LSE, and became overall Club Captain in his final year. He had just graduated with a degree in Government and History, and was due to begin a career with Deloitte.

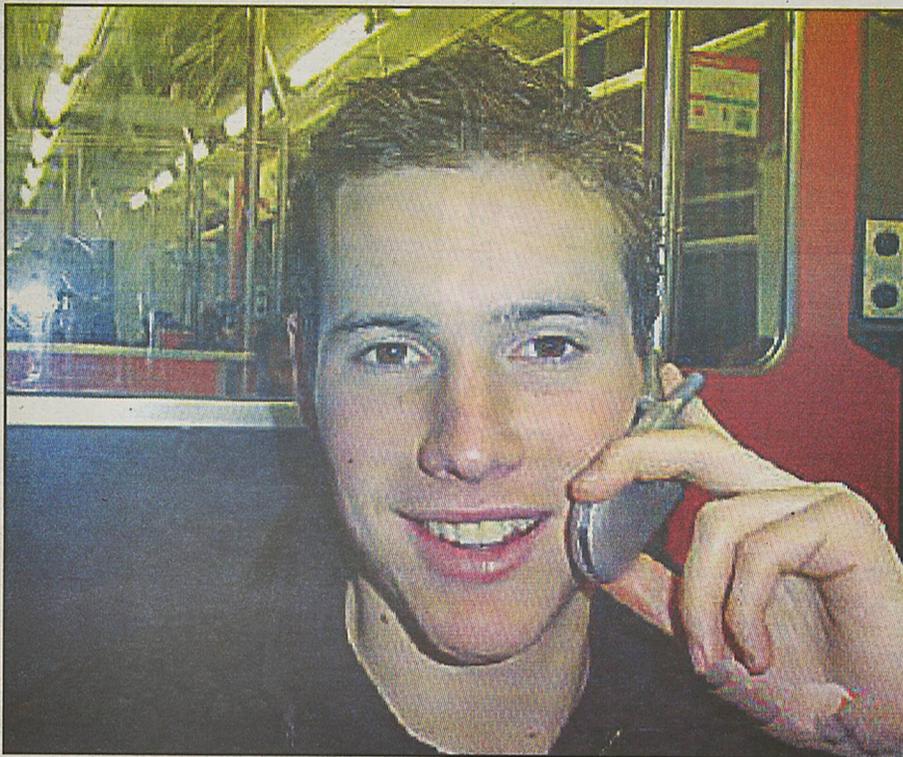
Without over-sentiment or hyperbole, Mike was genuinely one of the nicest, most popular and down-to-earth people on campus - which was manifested in the busload of friends from LSE which made the journey to Liverpool for his funeral on the Third of September. The thoughts of everyone who knew him are with his parents John and Karen, his brother David, Gemma and all his other friends and relatives. He will be sorely missed.

We have compiled a collection of tributes to Mike, which you can read below.

From New York the grieving process is no different to Athens or Honk Kong or London or Singapore. The image of this daisy-fresh kid from Liverpool, shirt collars flicked up, smiling like a Cheshire cat, beers in hand, consumes. That jokester glint in his eye, and adoration among a loyal following, reappears with strange clarity. It is impossible to rationalise his death but I have found comfort in the image and life of a comet, journeying with boundless energy and luminous colour and triumphant air, short-lived but yet an eternal sunshine. *Billy D.*

Mike you always had an unrivalled ability for putting a smile on my face. I will miss you deeply but take comfort in the fact that I was fortunate enough to be considered your friend. I will always hold you in my heart. Love always, *Sazzle.*

Mike always filled us with a belief in ourselves, and he actively took it upon himself to make everyone new to the team feel welcomed, not because he had to, but because he cared and because he was a gentleman. Truly, one of the great great guys. *Shiva.*



Mike - thank you for always lighting up the room - I will miss you forever. *Kate.*

For me, Mike's most important qualities were not his academic excellence or sporting prowess, but his unambiguously friendly, positive nature and caring dedication. It is so unfair that a great guy like Mike should die so young but nobody I know will have a bad memory of him. *Oslo*

'Alright El' as you would say, then you would tell me how good you looked and we would embark upon a conversation where I didn't even know what half the words meant. But you still made me laugh and brightened up my day. A true friend who I miss. (And Mikey, you always looked good). *Ellie.*

Think of the complete guy: talented, smart, funny, respected by everyone yet respectful of everyone, an excellent example, but above all a great friend. You're thinking of Mike Griffith. *Dom*

Mikey was the best guy and the best friend. There are so many happy memories of him and every time I think about them, it makes me realise how lucky I was to know him and be his friend. He was always there for you, to make you laugh and cry, I'm just glad that I got the chance to be there for him too. This is the most tragic thing that could happen to the most loved guy, but we should think about how he lived and not how he died and he lived a beautiful happy life. Mikey, we will always remember you. *Tammy.*

Having completed the internet quiz 'What breed of dog are you?', the response for Mike was:

"No bones about it, you're a good-hearted, people-loving Bernese Mountain Dog. Down-to-earth and loyal, no one works or plays harder than you do. You put your nose to the grindstone when it really counts, but you never neglect your social calendar."

Couldn't put it better myself about the most loyal of friends and a true legend. *Tom*

Griff's accomplishments and total dedication to the Club will always be remembered with the utmost respect. His efforts in making everyone feel a part of the Club and "getting them playing footy for the club they love", as he set out as his main goal, remain a great legacy to a great guy.

Most sorely missed though, will be his true friendship to all those he knew - this will never be forgotten.

The LSE Football Club

Mike was a true leader and a true gentleman. Possessing humility in abundance with an inherent cockiness and merry wit, Mike demanded respect and received it with grace. Forever forthcoming with advice and assistance, he was a rock to any player, new or old, in the football club. A master of the art of banter, aided by a grin a mile wide, Mike could lift your spirits at the darkest hour. And of course, without any shadow of a doubt, the fastest man at LSE.

Jonny

The sadness caused by Mike's death is ineffable. His affect on all who knew him was immense, and his good cheer and unswerving dedication to his friends was appreciated by all who knew him. He was the first person you would celebrate victory with, the first to console you in defeat, and was above all a great, great friend.

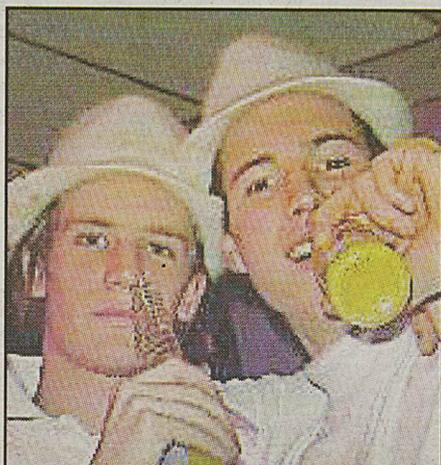
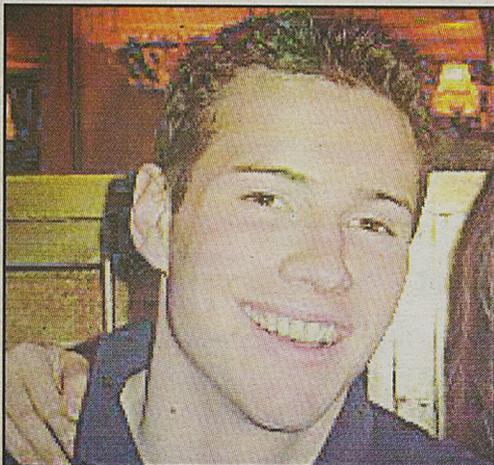
Gareth Carter

Mike was quite simply a top man. He was a genuine, caring and lovely person and always had a smile on his face. I have not met anyone who ever had a bad word to say about him. He will be sorely missed by both family and friends... Take care mate.

Dean Lochrie

Good bye buddy. Not a day goes by when I don't think of you, and all those poor women. On a more accurate note, in case you didn't know, you meant the world to me big guy and don't worry, I'll never forget, it's a marathon, not a sprint.

Freddie



This issue of BeaverSports is respectfully dedicated to the memory of Michael Griffith.