



termly reports

michaelmas 2003

Sabbatical Officers

Helena Puig-Larrauri

President

There is no way I'm going to cover everything I've done since June. Just not going to happen at this time of night. This is a general over view. Ask more if you want to...

I. Representation

It's not just sitting on committees. I do that, but the most important part is actually talking to people who can feed back on what students want. I find talking/emailing CR presidents and OUSU reps very useful, and spend quite a lot of time on this. It's difficult to quantify – questionnaires, individual queries, chats in the pub... OUSU has the ability to coordinate action across colleges, and I think we do that effectively on a number of issues. I often get the boring job of sifting through those issues and referring them on. I've worked on establishing a network of contacts, although I think I've been rather worse at keeping in touch with OUSU reps.

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of sifting through those issues and referring them on. I've worked on establishing a network of contacts, although I think I've been rather worse at keeping in touch with OUSU reps.

I've been working to establish closer links with the Sports Fed. The motion that came to council is proof that we are beginning to work together for students. I also attended Sports Council, which was very interesting. I am still unsure as to the best way to work with the Sports Fed, but will keep looking into it.

There are two areas on which I think we need to work in terms of representation. Firstly, the coherence of what committees there is student representation on and which there isn't (and this goes as much for colleges as it does for the University and the collegiate University, whatever that is, and the City Council). I intend to do a review on this over the holidays and put it right for next term. Secondly, the role of the new VP (Charities and Community) in terms of dealing with the community. I think that it should still be my job to do the representation side of community liaison, and this should be made clearer. I've arranged meetings with several City Council types to discuss representation at that level. (I think, for example, that we could have been much more effective in responding to the drinking ban issue had there been a clearer structure in place.) I'm sorry it's taken me a while to understand this problem, but I will set it right next term.

2. Finance and Funding

There are essentially two complementary ways to fight for a cause: direct action and intelligent argumentation. The beauty of the F&F campaign is that it does both. Direct action: gold ribbons at matriculation (and postcards), the NUS national demo, access denied flyers, posters, protest and stunts, non-payment... Argumentation: interviewing Charles Clarke at the Labour party conference, talking at TU branch meetings, talking at the East Oxford Labour Party branch meeting, talking at Templeton college to a load of business people about the fear of debt, the Alternative White Paper (out on Monday), lobbying parliament next week, letter to respond to the VC's letter, many many a long meeting with Sir Colin, talking to CRs about the white paper and its consequences... Direct action keeps up the press attention and the public pressure on the government and the University. Intelligent argumentation slowly wins people round and educates those who have not thought about the issue. Results? 170 or more Labour MPs oppose the government's proposals, the TUs oppose the government's proposals, HE funding has become an issue of national concern, and the VC is so scared he's dared to speak publicly about it. So don't give me this crap about campaigning not working. Educate, agitate, organise. This campaign is working, we can win this fight, it's on a knife's edge. Don't give up on it now. The Alternative White Paper will be a fantastic lobbying tool. We've had interest from the papers on it already, and some people at the IFS are helping us design the model, so it will be economically sound. Keep talking to people. We are not making unreasonable demands, and we happen to have the numbers to prove it.

3. Rent

The report on the new costing methodology for accommodation as approved by the Conference of Colleges is out. I've circulated it, and am willing to talk anyone through it. I'll produce a summary sheet soon. I'm also arranging an open meeting for CR officers with a few bursars to discuss the principles behind it. On the back of that I'll be putting together a battels negotiation pack over the holidays and arranging battels negotiation training sessions for early next term. The colleges are coordinating to increase rent, and it is my view that we should do the same if we want to stop these increases.

4. Housekeeping and other stuff

Elections – it actually took up more time than I expected. And I learnt some useful things, like I can actually operate on no sleep (read too much red bull). The election went very smoothly, and many many thanks to elections committee and Junour Tribunal for all their help in a thankless task. In particular, thanks to Catherine, Angela and Connor who really worked beyond the call of duty. I was impressed by the quality of all candidates, and well done to the newly elected exec and delegates.

Altered Radio – been trying to figure out what exactly our arrangements are with altered radio. It's all a bit unclear, but Digo and I are working on a written agreement with them that will hopefully make things easier. Also trying to figure out ways in which OUSU can help them run more easily.

NUS – having consulted widely, I wrote to Mandy about the proposal for two tiered affiliation and asking her to come down and visit Oxford. No reply yet, but will keep asking...

Contracts – had a meeting with the University personnel office to try to review the way we do contracts in OUSU. Legal, boring, time consuming and very necessary.

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Contracts – had a meeting with the University personnel office to try to review the way we do contracts in OUSU. Legal, boring, time consuming and very necessary.

Exec, cochairs, delegates – I've been thinking a lot about the way these three components of OUSU work, and I think it would be useful to have job descriptions for all of them. I'll probably bring this to council next term. I'd also like to have delegate meetings twice a term next term because I don't think we ever keep in touch with delegates, and it would be useful for both exec and delegates to meet up.

College Inequality and Clubs & Socs – two areas in which I haven't done as much as I wanted. Now that we have cochairs for college inequality that should be easier. Also, Stuart and I have worked out what a few things that can be done to make OUSU a better resource for cluns and societies. It's mostly to do with putting more information on the web and perhaps holding a couple of meetings. I hope to do more next term.

5. Democracy: council and exec

Council has actually been very good this term. I think we have actually managed to navigate the at times cumbersome procedure of council and thrash out some pretty crucial issues about what you want the student union to be doing. You have mandated us to do things, you have expressed opinions that we can take on board, you have demonstrated that you are more a part of the student union than you thought. Shocker. Council is a very good tool when it works. My thanks to Hinesh for fantastic chairing.

I still think not enough people use their right to bring motions to council, and next term I will endeavour to encourage more people to do so.

Exec is what actually holds the student union together. Part-time exec, it has been a pleasure and an honour to work with you all. I think it's safe to say you started off viewing me with some suspicion, but we have managed to disagree at times, agree at times, not be nasty about it. Which is nice for a change. Exec is a very useful forum for discussing how we can best do the student union's work in all areas, and how we can best go about representing, campaigning and providing services for students. You have been at your best when you have used independent thought to assess what it is we needed to be doing. Thank you for your dedication and hard work.

Someone famous said that it is not the job of the president to wield power but to draw attention away from it. Now you can interpret that in many ways, and one of them is how I've tried to do my job. I sometimes get tired of the politicking that surrounds everything I say or do. There is no need to have a race to see who is most democratic, left wing and revolutionary. There is no need to construe everything as a struggle for power. There is no need to take ourselves *quite* so seriously, kids. I don't have any power, but I do take overall responsibility for the student union, and you cannot have responsibility without authority. Look up the difference between authority and power in a pol theory dictionary. And cut me some slack.

Rightho, and after that rant, it's the fluffy stuff now. Thank yous, in no particular order... Digo – for your manic devotion to your job and raising your eyebrow at me occasionally. Rosie – for your patience at my officiousness and quiet work all the time. Catherine – for your hard work on a cause so dear to my heart. Dan – for your understanding and willingness to always help. Lou – for listening to me rant about OUSU, love, life and other complicated things. Jo – for thankless work and a difficult few months. Edd – for cigarettes and hugs and all the those things you do to get money that I never really know about. Maria – for coffee, cigarettes, patience, rants and smiles all around. Sue and Barbara – for much needed work behind the scenes (we do notice, honest!). Ian, Alice, Torsten, John and Omar – for your work, but more than anything for your enthusiasm, one day we'll change the world. Connor – for a bloody perfect count, for your sensitivity, and for too much red wine (no hangover, not port).

Rodrigo Davies

V-P (Finance)

Six words to describe this term would be exhausting, exhilarating, exasperating, extemporary, exuberant and exigent. In order to make the rest of this report a little more comprehensible, I'll deal with eight of the biggest issues in turn, and address my thoughts on them, suggestions for the future and the role I've played in them.

I. Freshers Fair

Inevitably expensive in time and energy, this proved to be the second most tiring event of the term after elections. Logistically, from my own perspective this was almost exclusively a success, the mendacious reporting of a certain city newspaper and the trashing of what would probably be described by a management consultancy as being "a unique transport and entertainment solution."

alter elections. Logistically, from my own perspective this was almost exclusively a success, the mendacious reporting of a certain city newspaper and the trashing of what would probably be described by a management consultancy as being "a unique transport and entertainment solution." That aside, I was pleased with the way we acquitted ourselves and the commitment shown by all involved. Proof, if it were needed, that OUSU IS CAPABLE OF RUNNING LARGE SCALE EVENTS. More of that later. I think for next year the key areas to work on will be earlier appointment of organisers, clearer plans for the use of the offices (if indeed it is to be tried again) and much more organisation over stewards.

2. Publications

On the whole a profitable and pleasing area to work in, though I frequently found myself mopping up and being Quark gimp (notably in some publications more than others). Not too much of a problem, it must be said, except for the bottleneck of publications over the summer which forced me to work far longer hours than could be justified unless I was really that keen. Which I was. Distribution, the perennial problem, has eventually been resolved with the use of several of the most useful people I've come across this term - Ian Caddy, Stuart Colville and Krassi have been superb. Especially the latter. The OxStu struggled along vis delivery due to somewhat unhelpful delivery people and the abject lack of parking, delivery or any sort of helpful space on the ground floor at Thomas Hull House. Nevertheless this problem now looks to be approaching a solution which will remove at least 30% of the unnecessary stress and unwanted phone calls at unsociable hours and at weekends. The Careers Handbook is now all distributed, which is a relief, and the Living Out Guide is imminent. Following these two there should be two more scheduled for the rest of the year, which will hopefully free up some of my time from being DTP consultant. Not that I didn't secretly like doing it, sometimes. In brief, the Oxford Handbook - a tower of strength, thanks to the marshalling irrepresible Ms Flood; the Survival Guide - proving that thicker is better; the AP - because you're never too old; the OxStu - never have I felt so glad to be able to take credit for something but not have to be involved in the nitty gritty.

3. Entz

Another of the newbies to emerge from this summer and this term's rapid expansion, this really has been a strange one. From the persistent stability and money making of some rather unlikely ventures to the unpredictability and difficulties of others, it's obvious that a good formula is not always enough to be successful in the world of Oxford entz. I hope that following council's decision to back entz that people will continue to back it, since failing to exploit this area, for whatever reason, will only prove to make financial instability and problems more likely for the student union. Next term will be an interesting test for some new ideas and hopefully yet more stable revenue streams. Sadly the conduct of some people has severely curtailed the amount I'm willing to say about entz in terms of deals under negotiation and the like. Thank you for your help on that.

4. Services

The OUSU Card and OUSU Live have been the bane and the inspiration this term. Very successful in producing stacks of emails and admin, they've also given OUSU another very important string to the bow and need to be pushed very hard in terms of expansion over the next term or so that they are in a very strong position in terms of revenue streams by the beginning of next year. I think most people will agree that we took on a fairly big and ambitious project there, and though it hasn't been perfect in its execution we can take at least a little heart from it. Having somewhere approaching 4,000 people contactable by emails direct from the Student Union is a level of participation that would have been unheard of in previous years, and we need to exploit the potential we now have as fully as possible.

5. Elections

Not only Quark assistant, but ballot box collector, walkie talkie junkie and enforcer on the day. Probably only someone with the dedication shown by Conor would have gotten so much out of the elections committee team. And that's probably why I was so exhausted and felt so trashed the next day. The election period in general disappointed me due to the insincerity that seemed to be rife among so many candidates, and the slightly amazing lack of understanding or thought that lay behind some of the pledges and responses that were given. I suppose this is probably the natural reaction of an incumbent, but I thought it might be interesting to put in this report since next year's sabs will no doubt feel exactly the same and like good sabs I'm sure they'll be reading through the old termly reports. I think the election process was pretty fair and far superior last year's, the only losers being those who were looking for some juicy tribunals and conspiracy theories. There were only a handful of those.

through the old term reports. I think the election process was pretty fair and far superior last year's, the only losers being those who were looking for some juicy tribunals and conspiracy theories. There were only a handful of those.

6. Working at OUSU

I think this might be the area which will tell people most about my work and also is probably the most formative way in which to channel some of my thoughts on the term. Working at OUSU has, up until a few weeks ago, proved to be excessive in time spent in the office, but on the whole benign from a personal point of view. In the weeks that have followed, the working hours have become more regular and less intrusive, but the personal politics have become infuriating. Unfortunately given that I believe it to be deeply unprofessional to test the laws of libel I will say no more, other than some people in the Student Union contribute a great deal. Others do astonishingly little. I'm sure they're entirely aware of this. And it is the latter category who are usually the quickest to bring forth their arrogant and unhelpful points of view. Perhaps it's the seriousness of old age creeping in or the fatigue of a term, but my already limited ability to suffer fools is only decreased by seeing some individuals discredit, and undermine the Student Union for their own childish ends while other people work astoundingly hard to make the organisation work effectively.

On another point, here's the full text of a letter I sent to the editors of Cherwell this week in response to the article printed about Zoo last week. It is of course extremely tongue in cheek.

Dear Sir,

I would like to congratulate your news team on the remarkable creativity shown in last week's article on Zoo ("Zoo flagship event sunk.", p4) Since my own creative talents are obviously not up to the task, I can only presume that the highly esteemed title of 'flagship' was dreamed on our behalf up by your extremely talented marketing team. It was equally inventive of you to have managed to extract a quote from Matthew Richardson, a new source for Cherwell I presume, who commented that OUSU "is incapable of running events on a large scale." No doubt Mr Richardson knows a great deal more about OUSU than I do given that you chose to print his arguments far more faithfully than you did my own. Unfortunately in the light of this incredible pearl of wisdom I hope Cherwell will be able to forgive OUSU if we prove incapable of organising exposure for your upstanding and ever-balanced newspaper at the largest student event of the year, the OUSU Freshers' Fair.

Yours ever,

Rodrigo Davies

Vice President (Finance)
Oxford University Student Union

7. Thanks

A big thanks to the following for being brilliant in various ways: Edd "apart from anything else" Southerden, Helena "we need to talk about this" Puig Larrauri, Louise "Is there gin in this?" McMullan, Ian Caddy, Josefa, The Iron Bulgarian, Zoe "one more thing" Flood and James "Get your coat" Coatsworth, Conor "is it in the regs?" O'Neill, Tamara, Mark W, Adam T, Rob "shall I take it up with the NUS?" Vance, Omar "can you put this on the website?" Salem, Sue, Barbara, Maria, Thirst, Vinca, Marcus Leroux, Vish, Rachel O'B. And of course the Magic Donut, Alex "you don't look... crap" Carroll, "I'll never drink again" Roberts and "You're over the line, Tidball." Merry Christmas everyone.

Rosie Buckland

V-P (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

The term seems to have gone by ridiculously quickly, but it's been one big learning curve and that's no bad thing. My job during term-time is far more 'bitty' than I ever realised, making it often frustrating, but I think I just need a bit more patience; I also intend to get more 'groundwork' done during the Christmas vacation than I did over the summer (prevented by the mammoth beast that is the koala filled Survival Guide) and that should hopefully help, as I'm keen that the Rough Guide to Welfare and Equal Opps and a Disability briefing gets sent out to all cr officers at the beginning of next term. I am increasingly frustrated with poor attendance at the equal opps campaigns however and would like to stress that OUSU's campaigns exist to be run by you, for you. Unless representatives from each common room make an effort to come along to them, they simply will not work effectively. Next term is a pretty big one, with Holocaust Memorial Day and Diversity

however and would like to stress that OUSU campaigns exist to be run by you, not your representatives from each common room make an effort to come along to them, they simply will not work effectively. Next term is a pretty big one, with Holocaust Memorial Day and Diversity Week, so please do get involved...

The University

Things are going pretty well in terms of the Equal Opps Unit review, with Judith Finch, the Equal Opps Officer keen to set up consultative bodies based on our equal opps committees (+ childcare) and I will continue to push hard to ensure that any such bodies/advisory panels that are created are not just talking shops. I have been discussing with her who these bodies will present their findings to and how and am lobbying to ensure that I have representation on the committees they report to. Although the review itself wasn't great, I think OUSU has a real opportunity here to have an input in what replaces the old advisory panels, as Judith Finch is keen that the review's recommendations aren't the only views taken into account. In terms of other university committees, much is coming to the committee on student health and welfare and I was able to have a real input at the last meeting of the committee. The new harassment guidelines are great and I'm continuing to push to ensure that they're sent to students in their entirety (these will be replacing the orange booklet). I have also raised with college doctors the issue of confidentiality and am hopefully going to be allowed to speak at the next meeting of the college doctor's association, since it seems gps are breaking confidentiality too often. The Assessor has been continually helpful and I'm hoping to meet with him more often next term. I do have general concerns that OUSU isn't as involved enough in the consultation process on welfare and equal opps issues that come prior to policy making, and I intend to try to make inroads here next term, though it is problematic in that the structures are quite fragmented.

The Student Advice Service

As I've mentioned in previous reports, all the SAS members wrote a report on their thoughts, from which we held a general meeting and I collated a submission; this will hopefully result in a better-functioning service, though any major changes will of course come to council first. It came to my attention early on that the Service has always been a little confused; it emerged and grew rather than being formed and I think that this has contributed to tensions with the University and resulted in a general confusion about its role and most specifically, the role of the Student Adviser. Considering the differences between a Student Adviser and a VP Casework has helped me to clarify the role and I have also made a concerted effort to ensure that I am as open as possible with the university on the workings of the Service, most particularly its remit; as a result, the statistics I presented to the committee on student health and welfare (and which you should have a copy of) detail the nature of the cases dealt with as much as they do the numbers of cases. This seems to be helping avoid the ongoing and frustrating confusion between the SAS and the university counselling service. I have been holding fortnightly meetings of the SAS and this is something which I feel has helped to flag up and also resolve some of these issues and I hope this will be continued and the Service itself continually reviewed. It is fantastic as one of the best things that OUSU does but that shouldn't mean we should be frightened of questioning its workings. The 5th week blues supplement in the Oxstu (thanks Digo for all your help on that one) was also great and I hope that's something that will also be continued in the future.

Campaigns and Committees

Ethnic Diversity appears to have had a resurgence and this is fantastic; the campaign has new co-chairs in the wake of the conference and the conference itself is something the campaign would like to see become an annual event. As I mentioned last week, plenty of people who I'd never seen at an OUSU event before were there. Hopefully next term the campaign will be holding more events and will play a key role in Diversity Week. DA has, as ever suffered from poor attendance and still lacks co-chairs but meeting every week at an established time and place, thus enabling people to drop in has been good and weekly meetings of all the equal opps campaigns is something I'm keen to continue. QR has been ticking along and continues to be a strong campaign though again, I'm keen that more events are held next term. Common Rooms need to send people to these campaigns however, as there is only so much that OUSU can do with limited input; unless they are prioritised, they will continue to suffer and this is a real worry. Health and welfare is doing well and I've also set up lists for common room officers to post queries and comments to-please do use these lists as a resource-it would be wonderful if welfareofficerslist and lgbofficerslist were used as much as preslist is and I'm not quite sure why it's not.

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Accommodation is mostly the ongoing discussions regarding the housing bank and I'm really pleased that I've been able to get involved with this-it is much needed and if it also manages to act as a quality control mechanism that will truly be fantastic. Equal opps-doesn't meet as a committee but is still in need of co-chairs to undertake a full review of common room equal opps structures and generally help me to lobby the university on equal opps issues. The co-chairship, as with accommodation would suit someone not able to take on such a regular time-commitment such as a committee or campaign involves. I'll also reiterate my plea for co-chairs; the campaigns are yours and unless you run them, they'll struggle; I need 1x health and welfare, 1x queer rights, 2x disabilities action, 1x accommodation and 2x equal opps. In terms of publications, Digo has been a star in reordering the lgbt handbook and this should be out to crs at the beginning of next term. The Living Out Guide should be out at the end of this term. I have also been continuing to go to Pride and attempt to work with the council on 'begging' which is all good fun, but I think that OUSU needs to seriously consider how the community' is dealt with and that we aim to have as much representation and input into the 'community' as we do at the university.

Vice Presidentialness

This is all good fun and comes prior to any portfolio work, as it should. I validated boxes and counted ballot boxes all night on Thursday and were it not for the hard work of the sabs on election night it would have taken far longer than it did. The election is the biggest event in OUSU's calendar and everyone has a responsibility to ensure it goes smoothly. Carrying boxes, helping other sabs and participating in debate in often very long but utterly essential executive meetings is as much a part of being an OUSU sab as our campaigns and committees are and I have enjoyed this as much as anything else. I think perhaps the role of a VP needs to be better defined however to ensure that a commitment to the less glamorous work of OUSU becomes a part of every sabbatical's job description. I hope I don't ever forget that it is as much my job to be accountable for my actions as it is to enact stuff and though this is often tedious, it is democratic, necessary and essential.

Thanks yous

Go to all the wonderful sabs, and a great outgoing exec as well as all my lovely co-chairs (more of you would be great, I like co-chairs...) and good luck (and congratulations) to the new exec in their jobs and sabs-elect in their finals! Everyone I would like to thank more personally knows who they are, I hope, but particular thanks to my fellow broomstick-wielding and pointy-black hatted wearing one, without whom everything would be just that little bit more dull.

Catherine Wallis

V-P (Women)

Ok, this term I have been mainly a) trying to get the Nightbus running and b) [recently] doing elections stuff. The Nightbus is a complete nightmare and the hassle it involves is the bane of every VP (Women)'s life – I'm sure some of my predecessors still wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat after having dreamt they were still back in the old days of being called up at 4am on a Sunday morning because someone had used petrol instead of diesel and the vehicle was about to explode (to which my response would be "good riddance, maybe we'll be able to get a nice new one"). I spent much time before term started getting the engine overheating problem fixed and later sorting out the phone and even more time later in term trying to get the door fixed – visits to far-away garages approved by the insurers, interminable telephone calls and of course the completion of baffling insurance claim forms have all been eating away at the time I could more profitably have spent elsewhere. It is now repaired, hurrah! and my thanks go to Vinca for her endless ferrying between garages etc. However, I consider the Nightbus to be constantly using up more energy and money than it's worth and I intend to try to get us a new one which will be able to run on more than half the nights we advertise it. I was informed that the contract with Goldman Sachs was conditional upon us not seeking advertising or sponsorship from any other source, but having read the contract thoroughly I find that this is not the case and therefore I intend to apply to various companies to fund a new bus for us; given the ridiculously large profits some of these companies make I'm sure I can wheedle a few thousand pounds out of one or another of them. If anyone has any personal contacts which might be useful here do let me know.

Secondly, elections. I have given up a considerable amount of portfolio time to be on Junior Tribunal, but I consider this to be a part of the job of a sabbatical officer – I was elected on a specific portfolio but I was also elected to help the smooth running of the student union, whether

Tribunal, but I consider this to be a part of the job of a sabbatical officer – I was elected on a specific portfolio but I was also elected to help the smooth running of the student union, whether through elections, carrying boxes, OUSU Live form entry, answering the phone to assorted people, taking part in direct action events etc. and, along with the other sabs (and part-time exec), I have done a fair amount of this. Being on Junior Tribunal was fun overall and a good experience, and I'm sure the RO will go into whatever problems there were in his report.

Save Women's Colleges Campaign. This has brought both difficulties and rewards. I've devoted quite a lot of time to it and feel that it has raised awareness of the issue of why we need women's colleges amongst some people who have never considered the point before and also helped to drum up support for the plight of St. Hilda's – this work will be culminating in a protest on Wednesday of 8th Week, either in St. Hilda's or in the centre of town, so do keep this time free to come along and support us, whether you're in support of women's colleges in general or merely angry at the way St. Hilda's students are being treated by their SCR. I believe St. Hilda's SCR members have received a large number of letters asking them to reconsider their decision to hold a vote again so soon, which is encouraging, but it has not yet produced the desired result. I live in hope however... On the downside, there has been quite a backlash in Cambridge against the campaign; in many ways it appears to have produced much more polarised views than here since it has received strong support and thousands of signatures on the petition but also bad press coverage from some people and a decision not to also the Women's Union to send people to our protest (unless they come as individuals rather than as part of the Union, which some of them will do). So, remember, **Wednesday 8th Week Save Women's Colleges protest** – do come and make our voice heard.

Childcare. Normally I would have spent some time attending various University committees, among which is the Childcare Committee, but since they are all currently non-existent or non-functioning I haven't done this. The planned Equal Opportunities fora and discussion groups will help us to move forward on this issue, I hope. Well, I have been thus far unable to obtain contact details for student parents across the University (previously obtainable from the now non-existent Childcare Officer) so I will try different people in the University administration and, once the OUSU Live forms are all entered, use that system to contact people. Once this is done, I will be able to set up a Student Parent Welcome, an event which I have not organised for this term since I would only have been able to invite those student parents with whom I have had direct contact through casework.

Advance planning. I have started this for a number of future events. I have set the date for the Women's Open Day as Saturday 7th Week Trinity – 12th June and received nearly £2000 funding to run it, yippee! I've discussed with Women's Campaign and set the two events we'll be running for Diversity Week – a Reclaim the Night march and the Women's Cabaret and over the vac I'll get to work in planning these in more detail.

Obviously the majority of my time has been spent in working with my campaigns and committees so I won't give a detailed analysis of everything we've planned and done because you can read about that in their reports. All my portfolios have worked very well, I think. Promoting Choice is getting off the ground and has the opportunity to be really vibrant and interesting by next term, and to get a lot of good work done. Ethics is pushing forward with the Socially Responsible Investment Campaign, but we'd always like to get more people involved so please do come along Wednesdays at 2pm in OUSU. Women's Campaign are stalwarts, as ever, and I think we've had a good start to the year!

So, in total, this term has gone well, I think, and though I'll look forward to the vac as a time to catch up on a lot of my portfolio work which necessarily gets subsumed into other stuff in the hectic term-time, I'll also be impatient for the start of next term and the everyone's return!

Dan Paskins

V-P (Graduates)

It can be hard to get a sense of how things are going overall when rushing about from one thing to another, spending all night counting ballot papers, shifting copies of the Oxford Careers Guide up to the office so that they can be taken back downstairs a few days later and all the rest of it. Overall, though, I think that this term has gone extremely well. This report is a summary of some of the highlights and some of the challenges for the rest of the year.

Mature Students Wine and Cheese Evening

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Mature Students Wine and Cheese Evening

I wish that those who are of the opinion that OUSU is a talking shop, is irrelevant to 'ordinary' students, that people involved in OUSU are in it for their political careers and all the rest of that tiresome drivel had seen this event. It was well attended, well liked and benefited a group of students who are not well provided for at college level. There will be a lot of new events for mature students over the course of the next term, both social and representational. A particular highlight of the term was hijacking a meeting with the University's Equal Opps Officer and turning it into a discussion about how to do more for Mature Students. Oxford is, sad to say, a long way behind Cambridge in terms of provision for mature students, and it is our job in OUSU to change this - if OUSU is about anything it is about looking after and campaigning for those of our members who are least well provided for.

OUSU Elections

I think that all candidates, successful and unsuccessful, have a lot to be proud of. These elections offered students a very clear choice between competing visions of what OUSU should be like, and were for the most part contested extremely amicably, without the bitterness that I remember from back when I used to be involved in such elections. The elections for graduate executive officer were extremely closely contested, and it is noticeable that the colleges where graduate turnout was not completely abysmal was where there were candidates who got people to go out and vote. I hope that all candidates for graduate executive officer will continue to be involved in OUSU, because they all have a lot to offer. I also thought it was hilarious that the graduate executive posts were more fiercely contested than the open places, though it is of concern that yet again the open exec and delegate posts were barely contested, which creates problems both for turnout and for getting people involved in OUSU.

Working with the University

At times this has been extremely constructive, and I am pleased that OUSU will be working together with the University on a number of projects - Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the QAA audit, improving training for Junior Deans and the University's Vision and Academic Strategy. It is a shame that the Vice-Chancellor, the Chair of the Conference of Colleges and some of the other academics on University Council have a rather different attitude, with no interest in working constructively with students for the benefit of the university and (in the case of the Vice-Chancellor) an ideologically motivated desire to refuse to engage with any opportunity to secure government funding except for top-up fees. However, I take comfort from the fact that they don't like student representatives coming along to their meetings and raising issues of student concern, a great incentive to continue to do so.

Casework

I am a member of the Student Advice Service, and have been dealing with a variety of pieces of casework. It is amazing how differently college and university authorities deal with one student on their own, compared to how they treat a student who has come to talk to OUSU. From getting compensation to students beset by accommodation problems to getting a fair academic appeals system for suspended students, this has been one of the most rewarding aspects of a very rewarding job.

Postgraduate Assembly

This has been a bit of a disaster, mainly due to the fact that I didn't appreciate how much publicity work would be needed to make a success of it. There are two main problems with PGA at the moment. One is that not enough people know about it, and the other is that those who do know about it aren't interested in going. I hope to have addressed both of those problems by next term.

Exec and co-chairs

Given how many competing demands there are on students' time, how many different organisations it is possible to get involved in and how unpleasant working in OUSU was at times last year, OUSU should never take it for granted that we shall always be able to get students to come and help run our union. The fact that over the past term we have managed to attract extremely able, committed and nice students to come and get involved in helping OUSU with all its not desperately glamorous work is a great and much underappreciated strength of our union. It is a shame that the part time executive this term did at times have a mentality that their job was to ensure that the sabs didn't do bad things (I can quite understand where this view came from), rather than to take the lead in driving forward OUSU's policy through motions to Council, bringing up new ideas in exec and so on. That shouldn't detract though from the quite exceptional and

to ensure that the sabs didn't do bad things (I can quite understand where this view came from), rather than to take the lead in driving forward OUSU's policy through motions to Council, bringing up new ideas in exec and so on. That shouldn't detract, though, from the quite exceptional and absolutely indispensable support that I received from exec members over the course of this term. I'd like particularly to thank Louise, Nicholas, Helen, Atif, John and Ros (as members of exec who helped with one or other of the committees for which I am responsible), as well Sue, Sheila and Cathy of the Mature Students Campaign and Simon and Emmanuel of the International Students Campaign, but more generally I'd like to thank everyone who served on exec this year.

Campaigning

The F&F campaigns seem to be going really well (I'm writing this before the demo on Wednesday, and hope that will be fantastic). There are a couple of campaigns which I'd like to run next term - one against the visa extension fees and one on improving facilities for graduate students across the university. I'm going to Cambridge on Thursday to meet sabs from many other unions to find out what campaigning work they have done against visa extension fees. If you're interested in helping to organise either of these campaigns, do get in touch. A regret of mine has been that I haven't been able to do much campaigning this term, and that is top of the list for things to do next term, because I believe that it is a big lie that graduate students won't campaign.

That's about all I've got to say for my report - there is a big long list of thank yous that I've got to do at some stage, but I think I'll save those all up for an epic end of year report. I've had a brilliant term, I've finally got some new glasses having had old and broken ones all term, I'm going to spend the Christmas Holidays working out how to sort out the few things that didn't go right this term and it is every bit as good being paid to do OUSU stuff all the time as I ever thought it could be.

Louise McMullan

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

My previous reports this term can tell you lots about what I've been up to. In the past two weeks I've been equally busy. Academic affairs: I've been working with officers from the University on JCC reform. Next term you will be hearing more about this but in the mean time it's worth knowing that things will be changing on this front and the University are willing to radically reassess how student representation in faculties works. I've been really pleased with acaff committee this term. I've met lots of the JCR acaff officers and have been in regular email contact with many of them, dealing with day to day issues and casework that has been coming from their colleges. I'm really looking forward to next term when acaff officers will be receiving training in three different sessions (on listening skills and exam stress, academic discipline and exam failure) in preparation for mods/prelims and finals. In terms of the issues we've been dealing with - history at HMC, PPE IT project and the student charter have been the biggest concerns and progress (to varying degrees) has been made on all of them. I've been disappointed with the attendance at JCC forums and at the meeting I arranged for JCR admissions officers but on the former there has been increased publicity for the meeting this week and on the latter I've produced (with much help from Rosie), equal opps resources to send out to CRs. Similarly with acaff officers and JCC reps - they should all have received by now copies of the guide for acaff officers and the guide for JCC reps. Nick and David have been lovely to work with - Nick especially has an exceptionally thorough knowledge of academic affairs and it's been very useful to have his insights. For acaff committee to continue to be successful its is essential that CRs mandate their officers to come along, it's as simple as that really. The institutional audit: was painful to do but it has brought to the University's attention a number of issues that they have shown some commitment to working on.

From now on they will have to take more seriously concerns such as the performance of women in finals, student consultation and workloads.

Targetschools: Has had a great term - it's all in their report. I really want to take targetschools into new direction this year and experiment a little with what we do and I'm really pleased that the co-chairs are keen to do so too. I'd like to thank them all for their contributions and allowing TS meetings to think about new and different things like the Alternative White Paper and the NUS demo. Personally I'm very pleased with how the Balliol Open day went and I hope all the other things we do are just as successful. Special thanks to the co-chairs: Katie, Dave, Charlyne, Ryan/Nigella and burly Paddy for their good company, sense of humour, hard work and enthusiasm. On general access: It's been a pretty mixed term. Admissions stats, the Wilkie drama, BMAT, LNAT and top up fees have been depressing but I'm happy that OUSU's done it's best to respond to all of these in different and thoughtful ways.

The Student Advice Service: Is the best thing that OUSU does. I am convinced of it. I love working in it and for it. It has helped me form so many ideas of what the University needs to do in

these in different and thoughtful ways.

The Student Advice Service: Is the best thing that OUSU does. I am convinced of it. I love working in it and for it. It has helped me form so many ideas of what the University needs to do in terms of changing its policies to best cater for its students and I hope that real change can come about from now on. In a meeting with the proctors on Monday I brought up issues that have arisen in casework: exam failure, returning scripts, student contract, appeals and complaints about marks. I fully intend continuing to annoy the university and colleges until they do things properly and change their practices on all of these issues.

Being a Vice President: Has also been great. I've tried my best to do bits and pieces for the other sabs, whether it's helping out with the Conference on Race, Ethnicity and Nationality, driving the van and doing deliveries for Digo or doing the Overseas Student Scholarship Scheme with Helena and Matt, it's all been good fun. It's really essential that all us Vice Presidents make a real commitment to making OUSU work, not just by saying that we support it but by getting in there and doing the hard graft. A lot of it is not particularly showbiz and there are parts that are dull but things will not work if we don't make our commitment to OUSU prior to our portfolios. Elections and entz are just two of the many things that have demanded huge amounts of work out of hours.

I've made my opposition to all things commercial quite clear but it's all policy now so I'll shut up now. Well not quite – I'll say that Helena, Digo and Edd have worked like absolute Trojans on this and fair play to them for doing so. With regard to elections I firstly want to draw attention to the massive effort that they required. We're really lucky to have people like Catherine to chair Junior Tribunal and Digo to produce top notch JMBs but we all have to do our bit to make things easier for these people. It should be utmost in the conscience of all the full time exec officers to help where and when they can with counting, validating, scrutinising college ballot boxes and aiding elections committee. Turns out it was good fun sitting up all night counting ballot papers but it should be something that all of us sabs feel we have a duty to do. Just a quick word on being part of the executive – I like meetings that go on and on, where we have proper arguments on things that we haven't been briefed on before or talked about with our mates in the pub. Exec is at it's best when everyone there works from first principles on the issues that are being discussed and that's how I've found much of our work to have been this term. Things have got heated here and there but I'm really glad this is the case because it means that we're all being honest, forthright and bringing everything out in the open. We should never be afraid of a good row, just get on with it and go for a pint afterwards. Council has been good this term and we've had some satisfying debates, especially on entz. I'm pleased I've been given a mandate to do things like work more closely with the Sports Fed and the NUT and I look forward to following through on these and many more projects coming to council next term...

As it comes to the end of term it's time to also thank all of those people who have helped. Firstly to Linsey Cole – all the best for the future kiddo and thanks for everything you've done over the summer and Michaelmas from hugs to photocopying to Ronan Keating madness. To all the other exec and sabs for their Herculean efforts and a special word to Paskins, Rosie and John. To Paskins for his acceptance of the ritualised campaign of verbal abuse Rosie and I have concocted for him, for his diary, wonky specs, help with casework and equally hangover state in EPSC. To Rosie for her Eastender moments, backup on lefty rants and generally sharing my brain and to John for so many different things that he's aware of already but mostly for being my friend and drinking partner. Thanks also to Gareth Lloyd and all the Writing Workshop tutors and Coatsworth for his comedy. Finally best of luck to all the newly elected sabs, exec and delegates.

Josefa Henry-Bochan

VP (Charities and Community)

Charity

The term has been full of high and lows and I have never been more busy. Since last council we had our first collection, which raised £965 for Shelter – enthused by that success I have booked collection for 9th week, New Year and many Saturday's next term. A large amount of time, particularly this week, was taken up with the Fashion Show, the Union chamber was packed which means we made lots of money – it was more time consuming than I could possibly have imagined and probably not the most time efficient way of raising money but it was great for raising awareness and getting people involved, which I believe is half the battle. I guess all the events that I do fall under the bracket of RAG but the charities side of this job goes beyond that. I have arranged events for, and provided assistance to individuals interested in charity work, clubs and societies, as well as groups like KEEN, Jacari, Travelaid, OXAB and Oxford Development Abroad.

These groups definitely need to be brought together more, for example out of just one of our meetings TravelAid decided to start up a new volunteer programme in Bangladesh. I hope to do a lot of research over the vac on questions that have been asked to me this term. for example

These groups definitely need to be brought together more, for example out of just one of our meetings TravelAid decided to start up a new volunteer programme in Bangladesh. I hope to do a lot of research over the vac on questions that have been asked to me this term, for example compiling a guide on how to apply for money for charity from colleges. One of the successes of the term has been getting more people involved in RAG. Attendance at RAG meetings has been well up on last year and I think more people realise the meetings are for everyone interested in charity work, not just college reps. We had elections for the new RAG exec – and as has never previously happened people stood for positions - President was even contested! Already they have helped me enormously with events and I am really happy to be planning next term with them.

The outgoing exex – Simon, Omar, Imy, Ian, Crispian and Sarah have really been wonderful and my job would have been impossible without them. Over the vacation I will be going on collections and attending the RAG conference as well as planning events for next term, where I again hope that we can do at least one successful central event a week and offer even more support to college reps.

Community

The community work has largely focused around promoting volunteering, which I think is a major part of the job and something that brings up in line with the structures in many other student unions. A lot of work has been to simply to do with spreading information and facilitating students, for example, I would see the hospital volunteering scheme as beneficial for students as well as the local community. Community Committee has also been focusing on Fairtrade, and although this is now moving into the One World umbrella. We have established Fairtrade reps in most colleges and set up a website. There have been a sizeable number of people involved in the committee in one way or another, but I still have some work to get more people involved especially in helping to define the best way of involving students in community work. Over the vacation I will be doing research on local community groups and fairtrade issues.

Edd Southerden Business Manager

It's been a moderately successful term for the Oxford Student, which is what I've been spending most of my time on. Revenue is higher than it's been for the last two years, and the Ox-Stu should eventually make quite a tidy profit this year as long as costs are kept down. That being said, there is still plenty of advertising out there, and I do feel that the Ox-Stu has under-performed this term. This is because the run up to 0th week, when most of the advertising is being booked, was spent by me sorting out other publications and the Freshers' Fair. It didn't become obvious that this was going to be the case until it happened – I shall warn my successor of this, something my predecessor neglected to mention. It's been a pleasure working with this term's Ox-Stu team, the tantrums, hissy fits and tears notwithstanding. Thanks to Zoe, James, Marcus and the rest.

Zoo is doing ok – I'm pleased with the revenue raised by some nights and less pleased with others. As OUSU's first, tentative steps in to the murky world of serious ents promoting we should be glad of any successes. I am looking forward to the planning of Zoo's future enterprises and would like to thank Rodrigo and Helena for their hard work alongside me on this ambitious project. It hasn't always been easy, but the seeds have been sown, I hope, for a very successful subsequent two terms.

The rest of my time has been spent chasing invoices and other assorted bits of paper, which is never that much fun, but needs doing by someone. That someone is the business manager, though I would question whether that is the most effective use of my time. This is something I hope to address in consultation with the General Manager and the VP (finance).

In general, I am pleased with the revenue raised for OUSU's publications this term and over the summer. The previous VP (finance) left us some extremely ambitious budget goals, and I am pleased to say we have reached or exceeded most of them, indemnifying ourselves against budget under - performers such as the OCCH and the Survival Guide, which were ridiculously over budgeted.

Executive Officers

John Blake

This is now my third Termly Report, and thus my final one as an Executive Officer, so apologies if it

This is now my third Termly Report, and thus my final one as an Executive Officer, so apologies if it is a little long. I'll start with the term: Firstly, I'd like to apologise to Ethics Committee for my low attendance this term ^ over my time on Exec I have genuinely enjoyed working with this committee, and it was a shame that every week a new incident would appear to take away my time. However, I have every faith in Charles and Katie, and know that they have carried on working hard on the matter of ethical investment, which will hopefully start taking hold in several colleges over next year. Queer Rights has been a very pleasant portfolio to have, and I'd like to thank Aiden, Helen, Louise and Rosie and indeed everyone who attended the committee over the term for being very opening and friendly towards me; it strikes me as the model for our Equal Opportunity campaigns, dealing efficiently and effectively with the issues that come before it, notably now the ludicrous bigotry of Kent County Council. I wish them every success. Finance and Funding is now rising to what will undoubtedly prove a defining moment in its campaign ^ the White Paper will pass or fail, and either way the campaign will change to reflect either the most astonishing victory for the student movement or a new phase of the struggle for free education. Whatever happens, F&F has been hard work but worth it ^ Ian, Torsten, Alice and Omar have all been great to work with, full of ideas and enthusiasm, and I hope that they will choose to carry on being involved.

Over the whole year, my experience of OUSU has been an occasionally difficult but ultimately rewarding one. There are problems generally with the role of the Executive Officer, in as much as ^ last year especially ^ it was a great struggle to actually be involved in the running of the student union. This is largely a result of the ill-defined nature of what sitting on the Executive is supposed to involved; it seems likely that the Futures and Funding consultation will solve many of these problems, but the benefits of a proper Executive handover cannot be stressed enough. Good luck to all those elected to the Exec for next year, I hope you enjoy it.

Beyond that, much of my year has been very enjoyable, and there are many people I have to thank for that ^ many of them, I should hope, know who they are, so I won't fill the paper with Oscar-speech lists. Suffice to say, all of my co-chairs and fellow Executive Officers, Sabs past and present (excluding the obvious), and all my friends at St. Hugh,s who may vaguely remember me from the first year, and all those others who kept me going along the way. Amongst all that, especially those who listened to me through hours of complaining, contemplating, and campaigning: you have all been amazing to me, and I will never stop being grateful.

Lastly, my thanks to the students of Oxford, not just for electing me, but for electing an astonishingly talented team of Sabbatical officers to serve with; and for electing a talented team to precede us. Good luck to them all.

„And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look!, the land is bright.

Ian Caddy

My first full term as an Exec officer and, I am pleased to say, I have enjoyed it and relish the prospect of being here for the next twelve months. Although the beginning of the term was very much spent 'finding my feet' within the structures of OUSU it was made much easier through the friendliness, professionalism and co-operation of the sabs, exec, co-chairs, Maria and everyone else – to whom I would like to express my greatest thanks.

Finance and Funding has had a successful term with the National Demo being the obvious highlight, but also the abundance of gold ribbons being worn at matriculation and hopefully, as a result of this, much greater awareness of the problems of higher education funding. I feel that getting more people involved in the campaign is one of the key things to focus on for the future. Although we have a highly dedicated key group we do need to bring fresh blood into the heart of the campaign. On behalf of everyone I'd like to say a massive thank you to Omar for all the work he has put into the campaign. He told me yesterday that he loves being an F&F co-chair and the work he tirelessly puts in is clear for all to see and will be greatly missed. It is this kind of enthusiasm and commitment that we need in order to run these campaigns successfully and if there is anyone out there with this drive then please do get in touch.

I started the term with the Charities portfolio, which has had numerous successes, as I am sure Josefa will joyfully relay to you in her report so I won't waste your precious time duplicating it here. In operational terms the RAG committee takes on a lot of work and functions very smoothly. In terms of recruiting the co-chairs for other large campaigns and committees I feel this could be a successful approach to take. There are a number of co-chair positions that have remained unfilled for a number of weeks for whatever reason and, although I am no fan of increasing bureaucracy

successful approach to take. There are a number of co-chair positions that have remained unfilled for a number of weeks for whatever reason and, although I am no fan of increasing bureaucracy with endless committee positions to fill, it could help recruitment if these were advertised in a more specific nature. The RAG elections were hotly contested and maybe there is something we can learn from this... I have been responsible for Environment committee for the past few weeks and, although I have only been able to get to one of the meetings, I can relay that it functions smoothly and effectively under the guidance of James, Albert and Max.

We are looking at ways of changing the way the Shop operates in terms of opening hours, stock held, etc. although this is very much an ongoing process. My wonderful idea of franchising it out to Starbucks in time for Christmas so we could all have free Eggnog Lattés doesn't seem to have come to anything sadly... I've spent far too many hours this term delivering shop orders and OUSU publications so please read them and make it all worthwhile!

Having been elected onto the Executive in Trinity as a 'new face' I feel that I have had a successful and productive time since then, being able to bring fresh ideas into OUSU and take a new approach. Our meetings have all been constructive and I hope you agree with what we have done. I do feel that in Council the executive as a whole has had quite an easy time of things – do ask what we've been up to and make sure that we are doing what YOU want us to do. And on that note, I await your questions...

Linsey Cole

Target Schools: This term has been mostly a planning term for the events over the year. I helped Louise with the final logistics of Balliol Open day in –1st week, which was a huge success and heavily oversubscribed – well done Louise for all the hard work and envelope stuffing over the Summer – it was a huge success! The 5 new co-chairs are all very committed, diligent and enthusiastic and will be a huge asset to the campaign over the next few terms. I've helped the committee decide where to hold the Open Days and Regional Conferences and we're now working towards getting the logistics sorted. We've also been trying to raise Target Schools profile in Common Rooms by visiting JCR meetings and getting the Rep system more organised. Target Schools has been the campaign, which I've been most involved in since my time in Oxford and I have thoroughly enjoyed it. I feel privileged to have worked with such dedicated co-chairs, exec officers and sabbatical officers on this campaign and look forward to taking the campaign forward in my sabbatical year. Thanks to Sonia, Louise, Chris H, my fellow co-chairs from last year and this year's lovely bunch!

Academic Affairs: Term started with a bang with the loss of history at HMC and the PPE IT project. The Writing Workshop seems to be going well and I've done lots of photocopying of literature for ac-aff officers and JCC reps. The first JCC forum of term was poorly attended, but hopefully this week's will be better attended. Links between OUSU and JCCs need to be strengthened if we are to have any meaningful representation within the faculties. Thanks to Nick and David for all their work over the past three terms.

Accommodation: Rosie has been working on the web-housing bank and hopefully, that is going to take off over the next few terms. It'd be great to have such a valuable resource on the OUSU website. Much of my time to do with accommodation is spent answering email enquiries from prospective international students about the availability of ensuite accommodation in colleges and various other queries about the nature of student accommodation in Oxford.

General exec: It's been quite a busy term really. Exec meetings have often been heated, but in contrast to much of last year, this was as an inevitable consequence of debate, rather than because of rude or inappropriate behaviour. I've really enjoyed this term, as I feel that as an exec we have worked together well and the new sabs have been a refreshing change which has re-energised us all. I've been to JCC and went to the meeting with the Proctors earlier this week. I've also helped at Freshers Fair, which although tiring and long, was great fun – well done Laura and Saro on a great job! Zoo has led to new exec duties, like standing outside Thirst for 4 hours on a Sunday, but this was also quite enjoyable. OUSU Live meant that I didn't have the task of being inputted by many other TS exec officers of inputting almost 600 names into the mailing list, but OUSU Live forms still occupied many duty afternoons.

I think overall that this year has been a tough one to be an exec officer in. Coming into an environment of hostility and lack of trust between the old exec and sabs did make life difficult at first and financial concerns occupied much of our time in Trinity. But, as an exec, I think we came through it stronger. I am often amazed by the knowledge, dedication and continuing enthusiasm of my fellow exec officers – the role is often difficult trying to balance the pressures of a degree with an allegedly part-time post in the Student Union, but we came through it with our heads held high. Thanks to sabs past and present for all your hard work. To my fellow exec officers – it's been a

an allegedly part-time post in the Student Union, but we came through it with our heads held high. Thanks to sabs past and present for all your hard work. To my fellow exec officers— it's been a pleasure to work with you — thanks for the pink pigs, the muffins and making 9am on a Monday much more bearable! Thanks to Maria for being so helpful and knowing the answers to all my questions about technical stuff in the office. To my fellow sab elects and the new exec - well done on getting yourselves elected - I look forward to working with you all in Michaelmas. To Oxford students generally - thanks for voting for me. And finally, to my SJC friends - thanks for being there and I promise I'll see you all more now this is all over!

Stuart Colville

Here's to a Proper Union...

Ah, my last ever report. "Right. Mustn't make it too frivolous this time." thinks I. Serious observations, constructive advice, polite thanks to everyone involved this year. Then I spot Blake's report. "Ye gads, he's done a poem. Bloody arts students." Clearly I was going to have to outdo that, but a quick google for "goodbye poems" returned the inspiring: "When I think of you/I begin to wish I'd never met you/it's not a bad thing we had,/but it was never good./we shared out thoughts/without saying a thing/we said what we meant/without thinking". Indeed. Moving on then. Clubs and Societies...

I'm happy to say that the Student Union is serving clubs and societies far better than it was before I took up office, and the trend is set to continue. The website now offers comprehensive advice on almost all aspects of registering and operating a club from issues with the Proctors to data protection (check it out kids). Assuming my motion at next Council passes (vote yes, you know you want to) then we'll be in an excellent position to offer a comprehensive range of services to societies. Secondly, due to the lack of options offered by the oncampus website software, we have had to embark on a more roundabout series of preparations that will eventually lead to online databases of active clubs and societies, rooms and resources available around the University and, though it's not my portfolio, a database of accommodation. It looks at this point as though a professional web designer will be needed, and there are various options available to get this cheaply. Expect a motion on this next term. Lastly, we are currently investigating ways of offering clubs a permanent postal address in the Student Union offices that should help overcome difficulties that result when an exec changes on a regular basis.

Battels..

Clearly this is a big issue at the moment, and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. I have participated in a large number of meetings with senior members of University throughout this academic year in which OUSU convincingly put its case against large increases. We managed to gain a number of concessions (notably an admission that a number of reforms - including that of cost allocation methodology - should take place with student input) but the University continues to dismiss many of our points. A well co-ordinated campaign will be absolutely essential in ensuring that next year sees sensible and affordable increases, and then only where absolutely necessary. It will be vital to get common rooms on board, and to gain the enthusiastic co-operation of Presidents. The increasingly used argument of opportunity costs (i.e. that the college "loses" money by not renting out their rooms to conference guests during term-time) is especially insidious and reflects the way some Bursars are beginning to think. They must be resisted.

And finally...

Well, it's been fun. This term has been infinitely better in terms of working dynamics and atmosphere - it's nice to see everyone happy. The obvious conclusion is to prevent Tories running in future elections as they inevitably cause discord among a Sab team, and I recommend a motion to this effect be brought next term. While Exec members have become, unsurprisingly, worn down after three terms (with two of those spent under rather stressful conditions) it is pleasing to see that a very large degree of commitment continues to exist. However, despite this general enthusiasm for the organisation the biggest challenge for next year will be the general lack of interest or knowledge that continues among normal members. The issue is one of perception. The organisation needs to be more aware of how it presents itself and how it communicates with its members. Finally, best of luck to the incumbent Sabs - they're all surprisingly competent people and lovely with it - and the incoming Exec. Thanks to everyone that's been nice and worked so hard over the last twelve months, and apparantly I wish to make a decleration of undying love to Bex Wilkinson. Thankyou, and goodnight,

Ros Dampier

Women's Campaign

Women's Campaign

I have greatly enjoyed my time as the Exec for Wom Cam. I can't claim much credit for the work it has been doing this term as three very good co-chairs have left me with very little to do.

Attendance this term has been excellent with a turnout of 36 people for the Presidential hustings the other week. The Ann Summers night organised by the co-chairs was very successful, drawing in many people who would not normally attend meetings. It is very helpful that so many Women's Officers attend the campaign, often mandated to do so by their CR job descriptions as it keeps the attendance rates high and gives the campaign contacts across the University. I am concerned about the low number of women on the newly elected part-time Exec. Given that we have two Graduate Exec Officers (possibly increasing to four) I think it would be worth considering the idea of having a certain number of places on the Executive reserved for women.

Disabilities Action

I only took over DA early this term and whilst being immensely impressed by the dedicated people who do attend, the campaign is severely hampered by low attendance and lack of co-chairs. Whilst I have attempted to combat this by advertising the vacancies in Council and asking CR Presidents to send their Welfare/Equal Opps officers along, the situation has not improved. I think this is indicative of how little is being done for students with disabilities in the vast majority of Common Rooms. I would really hope that Common Room Presidents will take this problem on board; CRs either need to have a SWD Rep (like Univ and Balliol currently do), or a Welfare/Equal Opps Rep who is mandated to attend DA. Disabilities Action needs people to attend in order to be effective but can also offer a lot of help and support to Common Room officers which they are currently missing out on.

One World

One World Committee has been inactive during my term as Exec although it will probably be having its first meeting for a long time this week. It has been agreed that the division between Community Committee and One World will be that the former will deal with volunteering and local community projects and the latter with international and development issues. There is a lot of interest amongst students in international issues which is currently not really being catered to by OUSU. It was extremely unfortunate that the Statutory Annual Elections clashed with George Bush's visit to London in that this both disenfranchised a large number of students who went to protest and were then unable to vote and prevented those involved in the election process from taking part in the protests. OUSU has policy against the war on Iraq and I hope that, in future, it plays a part in organising transport to major anti-war demos such as this, something that One World Committee can play a part in.

General Exec Stuff

The difference between this term and last in terms of time on Exec has been immense. There are, of course, still disagreements amongst the Executive but these are now, in the main, dealt with in a mature and civil manner. The next Executive should look at instituting safeguards to prevent the degeneration of last year from ever being able to happen again. All of the committees I have worked with have and will be hampered by the ridiculously small budgets they were allocated by the last VP (Finance). The VP (Finance) must not be able to make decisions about the amount going into the Surpluses or any other major decisions without the input of consent of the rest of the Executive; this is too much to place in the hands of one individual especially when that individual may well have personal and/or political rather than financial motives for making the decisions that (s)he does. I think that this year's Sabs are beginning to address the artificial divide between full- and part-time Exec members. It is difficult for this divide to be breached when some members of the Exec are in the offices all day and every day and others only a couple of times a week, but for decisions to be made in any other forum than Council or the Executive is anti-democratic and in breach of the Constitution.

I wish the full-time Exec all the best for the rest of their year in Office and congratulations and good luck to the newly elected part-time Exec. Thanks to Saoirse Cowley, Helen Lewis and Laura Moys for all their hard work on Women's Campaign. To Nancy Mendoza for everything she has done for DA and all of the Equal Opps Campaigns. To Andrew Copson. To all of the Exec, especially John, Rosie, Dan, Louise R, Louise M, Bex, Colville (for putting all the OUSU Live forms back where they came from) and Linsey.

Louise Radnofsky

Have fulfilled my general duties as an Exec Officer, attended almost all Exec meetings and other assorted bits and things that seem to get thrown into the job (Fresher's Fair and the Race and Diversity Conference are two particular highlights of the term). And it's been rewarding and frustrating in equal measure and I'd do this next year again without hesitation. Congratulations to

assorted bits and things that seem to get thrown into the job (Fresher's Fair and the Race and Diversity Conference are two particular highlights of the term). And it's been rewarding and frustrating in equal measure, and I'd do this past year again without hesitation. Congratulations to the new Exec, who I hope get/ give as much out of it as we have. The extent of experience (Exec and otherwise) amongst the Sabbs-elect is so promising for OUSU members.

Of my portfolios,

Mature Students: This committee is one of the best examples of something I've been involved with as an Exec Officer that only OUSU can do. And what a success it's been so far. So much potential for Dan, Sue, Sheila and Cathy to continue with. The Wine and Cheese evening organised was outstandingly run, outstandingly well-attended, outstandingly useful. CR/ SU people here - please keep telling your mature students that it exists (you do probably have them at your college, freshers are not automatically 18-year-olds, but that assumption is very isolating), encourage them to get in touch with Dan and find out what else is planned.

Equal Opps: An odd portfolio, an odd committee whose purpose remains unclear. By the time of 7th week Council I will hopefully have made some headway in telephone surveying CR/ SU presidents as to their equal opps structures within college, to produce some further suggestions as to best practice. Because the response through the green paper surveying was pathetic. Will hopefully present these next term to Council. Scope for 2 new co-chairs to get involved, contact Rosie.

Queer Rights: Stint reform really sucks. Through compulsory classes scheduled directly for the weekly QR slot, I haven't been able to attend any of the Thursday meetings this term. However, with the consent of the Exec and the co-chairs, a very successful solution was produced, with John Blake attending meetings and offering Exec facilitation there, and me providing 'behind-the-scenes' support. Thanks to all involved in that being possible, since I'm still especially proud of this campaign and its achievements over the past year. Section 28 died finally last Tuesday, we do need to party again. And to fight to kick it out of Kent. Phil, Sarah, Laurie, Helen, Aiden, Rosie and Andrew - wow. Still much more to do. 'Open Place' (i.e. male or female) co-chairship still up for grabs, talk to Rosie.

Health and Welfare: I'm sorry that I only took this portfolio on halfway through the term in our last reshuffle - it's a fantastic committee, a really good opportunity for Welfare reps across the University from both CRs and relevant Societies receiving central training (in listening skills, sexual health so far this term) and swapping best practice. CR/ SUs that don't demand as part of the job description of your welfare people that they go - you really should. Great work being done by James, but he'd like co-chair company I guess! Vacancy, so talk to Rosie if you're interested.

Now, to another excellent two terms from the Sabb team. Have very much enjoyed working with you this term - things *have* been different. Singling out Rosie because I've worked closest with her - I am so impressed with what you're doing. Thanks to everyone else from the last three terms who've helped me as an Exec Officer (including but not limited to, those not named already here: Phil Thompson, Nancy, Jack, Mark, Mel, Chris Hanretty and sixteen fellow Exec Officers). And for the thug from St Hugh's, She Who Rows, the VP (Working Hard So You Don't Have To), Ian (not 'cac'), representation from Old School Exec, and a political deviant - Merry Christmas, looking forward to more great things.

Rebecca Wilkinson

Working on OUSU executive I have been to all but two exec meetings, and all my exec duty afternoons, plus I have primarily been the exec officer for NUS committee and Promoting Choice. NUS

As ever remains a sticking point. Following failed discussions at the end of last term over subs, a meeting this term has come up with a new proposal. I hope this proposal can be pushed forward and that the more optimistic among the group are happily proved right and the pessimistic are forced to reassess their opinion of the NUS. Whether this will work out remains to be seen, and is currently in the hands of the NUS. It is my firm belief that the NUS is a forum we as a student union should be a part of and yet there is much need for reform; it may be up to future NUS reps to consider whether ideological affinity is enough to retain membership.

PC

Has the potential to be a committee campaigning for good but owing to its past history it currently seems to be stagnant and somewhat unsure of its purpose. This term I have been attempting to compile a survey of college policy regarding the issue of choice and advertising bans. Sadly JCR Pres/OUSU reps have been less than overly responsive, so this is a task I handover to my successor uncompleted. The hope of this survey was to gain some insight into what general university consensus on these issues were. I would like to thank my co-chair Bridget and also Cat, and hope they can continue to move the committee forward.

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OUSU

There has been much discussion over the various pros and cons of every aspect of our student union, but even after two terms on exec I continue to think it is the greatest asset to the university, and a fantastic forum for good. I think, used correctly F and F 2 offers an excellent opportunity for driving through much needed change and clarity. Without meaning to sound reactionary I stand firmly behind the retention of the delegates and exec elected without portfolio, and hope that the discussion [at least about the former] has been soundly curtailed following thorough debate.

Thanks to all the sabs I've known and worked with - they've each helped to shape my understanding of OUSU, thanks to everyone I've been on exec with - esp to Stuart (for the sanity), Blake (for the insanity), Laura (for the alcohol), Ros (we'll never agree), Louise (for the inspiring anger) and Lindsey (for the reassuring happiness)- also to the whole of OULC (for constant support and worry), Maria (I still can't use the photocopier!), Rachel (for sucking me in), Anna (for above and beyond) and Georgia (there aren't words). It's been fabulous.

Laura West

Looking back over the year on what I have helped to achieve as an exec officer, I feel pleased with what I have done, but also like many opportunities have been missed to do much more.

In general terms, this term has seen some progress on important issues. Exec on a number of occasions has discussed the bloc grant, and its relationship to subs, and it has also appointed two very able co-chairs to the future and finances initiative. I look forward to reading the finished report, I believe it will form the basis of OUSU policy on the bloc grant and the way in which it is administered, as well covering issues such as delegates, co-chairships, and the responsibilities and duties of the executive. I think its really important that we continue to assess the way in which the structures of the SU work, and make sure that they are not placing unnecessary constraints on the officers of the SU, and as such the report can only be a good thing.

I'm also pleased that the issue of complaints procedures is back on the agenda, particularly in terms of complaints about press and publications. I think its important that we get this resolved and an internal dispute procedure in place, so its good that Digo is working on it at the moment.

Thanks to all the sabs and exec who I have worked with over the past year (well, nearly all!) Overall it has been a great experience, and lots of fun. More detail about my portfolios follows below.

Entz

In terms of Entz, the work put into developing links with companies such as Rockstudent in the early part of the year paid off in one sense, with the very successful Freshers' week event, which made a substantial profit for the SU, but was also in some ways a waste of time. The change of course in terms of the way in which we provide entz is in my eyes, a very positive one. Whilst I respect the views of those that feel that the nature of OUSU shouldn't be changed in terms of focusing on this above our other priorities, I do feel that creating Zoo as a separate company will maintain that distinction adequately, and as such should be welcomed as a means of providing increased services for our members and also as an exciting potential source of income.

I feel that the Zoo brand at the moment has the potential to go from strength to strength. The majority of the nights we have run have proved a great success, and it particularly pleasing to see the success of Scratch, it being one of the nights that we have had the most influence and creative control over. Having said that, Disques Voques was not a success, and I am aware that it is important to take stock and work out exactly why that night faltered, so that we may apply what has been learnt there to the nights we offer next term. Lessons such as this need to be learned quickly, if the SU is to follow a responsible entz policy.

I am sad to have missed opportunities to have organised events in support of, for example, the Terrence Higgins Trust and other charitable organisations, however, it is very difficult to take on one off projects such as these when there is no specific pool of man power to draw on within colleges. I hope that this is something which can be remedied in the future, I am sure that it is possible to get Zoo reps in every college as we are trying to and to put together a knowledgeable

one off projects such as these when there is no specific pool of man power to draw on within colleges. I hope that this is something which can be remedied in the future, I am sure that it is possible to get Zoo reps in every college as we are trying to, and to put together a knowledgeable group of trustees, and in future we may be able to organise dinners and balls, etc, as well as the regular nights.

Giving up this portfolio will be a wrench. I have really really enjoyed working on all the projects I have been involved in, the Freshers' week entz, the VP Charities and Communities launch, and the launch of Zoo, and I really hope that I can pass the portfolio on to someone with lots and lots of energy and enthusiasm for it. Entz is something we have the potential to do really really well, which will make a real difference to the SU in terms of income, With Digo and Edd now on board we also have the skill, creativity and drive to make it work. Knowing that the current portfolio transfer from President to VP Finance makes it a little easier to hand this over to someone else.... There is a good chance one day I will get it back!!!! Future exec, please drop me a line if you want to know more about being exec officer for entz.

OUSU Reps

If I were to be honest, I am overall disappointed with the limited progress which OUSU reps has made. At the start of the year we did a consultation exercise where we asked reps what exactly they wanted from the Committee, and tried very hard to act upon their wishes that the Committee be a forum for the sharing of information above being a forum to discuss motions in council. The prioritisation of agenda items to reflect this (in a similar fashion to the way it is done in council) has helped, but I still feel that there is a lot more which can be done.

Undoubtedly, there are still internal changes which OUSU can make which will improve the use of OUSU reps committee, most obviously ensuring that it is an open and approachable forum for reps.

However, I believe that changes must also be made in common rooms. Many common rooms have something (quite often negative things) to say about OUSU, and the way that it spends their subscription fee, or the fact that CR's don't like they get value for money from OUSU. OUSU reps is the prefect forum to discuss such things on a fortnightly basis, reps could use it to keep track of the way in which their subs are being used, but instead most reps don't even turn up. This is thing that disappoints me the most.

I believe that for this forum to reach its potential, we need to see a change in the job description of the OUSU rep in the constitution of most common rooms. OUSU reps shouldn't just be mandated to attend council, they should be in almost constant dialogue with those OUSU officers who are meant to support all common rooms officers, they should be constantly updating and informing their common rooms of the work being done in OUSU to extend the provision of services for students, and feedback to OUSU all the time about what their students want, how OUSU can serve them better etc etc. I realise that it is easy to criticise, but it is pointless to continue to improve the OUSU reps Committee when it is not attended. OUSU is much more than just council, and it is time that the majority, rather than the minority of OUSU reps recognised this.

One of the best OUSU reps meeting I attended was the where I took the proposed budget to the Committee. That meeting is an example of the way in which OUSU rep Committee should function. There was real input from reps about what their common rooms and students thought and wanted, be it negative or positive. There was also the opportunity for reps get detailed information about the way in which the budget was going to be structured, allowing them to gain greater understanding than if they had simply read over an e mail summary, and hopefully that information was then taken back to colleges and passed on to those at the CR open meetings. Sadly, it took a motion of such significance to engineer such a meeting.

Thank you to those reps that do come along every week. I always feel that this term we have had some productive meetings in terms of disseminating advice to common room officers, getting feedback from CR's and using that to shape the work of the exec, and also to flag up problems early on.

It is possibly a good thing that next term there will be a new co-chair and a new exec officer. Maybe what is needed is a new perspective on the issues.

It is possibly a good thing that next term will be a new co-chair and a new exec officer. Maybe what is needed is a new perspective on the issues.

However, I hope that OUSU reps will come to the social which is being organised (I think for Thursday of 8th week) and maybe it would be useful to undertake another consultation exercise to reassess the priorities of the committee at that social.

My thanks go to Dominic, and also Ollie, for their support and help with the Committee over the last year.

Greg Stafford

Firstly I must state what a joy it has been to work as an executive officer for the last few weeks. It has certainly opened my eyes to the intricate workings of OUSU. Also please bear in mind that I'm writing this whilst rather inebriated. I have done a duty morning in OUSU where I entered data for OUSU Live forms. I was also taught how to use the phones by Maria (who I have to say is a complete star!) and promptly forgot everything I'd learnt leading me to cutting people off and redirecting calls around the university. The only interesting call was about VAT on condoms and having no knowledge of contraception I made up the answer after a straw poll of Mr Richardson and myself. I also discovered that printers do not work within the OUSU offices.

I have attended a few executive meetings but have found them time consuming and pointless. The first two meetings I missed because my powers of telepathy aren't what they used to be.

In terms of my portfolio, I have attended one Charity meeting to get a drink of water but as I'm against charity as a principle I felt that my contribution could only be limited. I also accompanied the Vice-President (CaC) to the Oxford Union where we finalised the details of Marcus Walker's arrest. I believe my input was invaluable. My other portfolio, Diversity Week, has been less of a success since I believe it to be next term and out of my areas of expertise. Despite being college rep for Diversity Week last year, I felt that I was unqualified to understand the ultimate aims of the event, so ignored it.

I did get the opinion that I was assigned portfolios that were deliberately out of my areas of interest and experience, in order to make me seem incompetent and divisive. I hope I haven't disappointed.

I also attended a meeting with the Proctors and Assessor and was sorely disappointed that I was the only officer to turn up in full sub-fusc. It is the small forms of courtesy that OUSU seems to forget. A brief reading of Debretts's Guide to Etiquette should be compulsory for all future OUSU officers. Perhaps then the University might take OUSU seriously. The Senior Proctor did have a great sense of humour.

My general view of OUSU hasn't changed. What Oxford students want is a students' union that represents the whole of Oxford, that provides relevant campaigns and services and that is value for money. OUSU at the moment provides none of these things and it's only when the colleges of Oxford start to leave OUSU that those OUSU officers in their ivory tower in Bonn Square will realise that OUSU is failing its constituent members. But for them it will be far too late.

On the upside, Bex has agreed to bear my children and the whole experience has been most ferocious.

OUSU Committees and Campaigns

Academic Affairs

Acaff committee this term has had three meetings – our first had an attendance of 17 college acaff officers, which was amazing. Attendance for the rest of term has been steady and we hope to continue to attract lots of college officers next term. In terms of what we've been doing, acaff committee has been investigating things like the changes to the PPE IT project, library opening hours, encouraging colleges to adopt the student charter, supporting the caseworking role of JCR acaff officers, the end of history at Harris Manchester, the prospects for a reading week...and

hours, encouraging colleges to adopt the student charter, supporting the caseworking role of JCR acaff officers, the end of history at Harris Manchester, the prospects for a reading week...and much much more. Next term we're hoping to provide substantial training for JCR acaff officers.

This will take the form of three sessions across the term. We're hoping to have one session on listening skills and exam stress with the help of the student adviser, another on academic discipline led by a college senior tutor (if anyone knows of a good college senior tutor, please get in touch) and one on exam failure, appeals and complaints, hopefully led by the Junior Proctor (if he agrees to come!). The one disappointment of the term has been the poor attendance of the JCC forum in 2nd week. Only three JCC reps came along and the meeting had to be cancelled. Another is being held this week and will take place after the submission of this report – so hopefully we can improve on the attendance this time. This time the meeting has been better publicised (posters in every faculty) and we've invited along acaff officers and any interested JCR presidents.

In terms of support for those involved in acaff we've produced a guide for JCC reps which has been sent out to every faculty (some have even rung up and asked for more copies to be sent) and a guide for acaff officers which has been sent to every CR acaff officer.

Very many thanks go to the outgoing co-chairs – David and Nick and to the lovely Linsey. All three have been great to work with.

Disabilities Action

Disabilities Action has been meeting every week this term (4pm Thursdays in OUSU). The regular meeting time has been helpful in enabling people to drop in when they want to attend without having to wait for an email to tell them where/when it is. Many issues have been discussed, including plans for diversity week, a poster campaign, the nature of student consultation and ways to raise awareness of the issues affecting students with disabilities. We have talked a lot about mental health and how that needs to come under the remit of DA.

The campaign has, however, been hampered by underattendance. Most weeks, we only have representatives from Hilda's, Balliol and Univ. Those who do attend are very committed and hardworking and full of ideas, but it is difficult to run a campaign with so few people. Common rooms aren't taking the issue of disability seriously enough and I urge CR Presidents to consider mandating their welfare / equal opps officers to attend DA or, preferably, creating the post of SWD Rep. The campaign can continue as it is but it will be able to reach out to far more students with greater CR participation. Common Rooms are also missing out on the support that DA could provide them with on the issue of disabilities awareness and it is concerning that students with disabilities are in a position where they are receiving very little support from within their Common Rooms. OUSU can only do so much.

The other pressing issue for DA is the minute amount of money allocated to it by the previous budget. It is not possible for a campaign to run effectively on so small a sum. Particularly one like DA, which needs to do a lot of work on awareness raising, through poster campaigns and high-profile events. The VP (Finance) needs to increase the budget of DA (and the other Equal Opps campaigns) if we want them to carry on functioning effectively. Equal opportunities must be one of OUSU's main priorities.

Ethnic Diversity

Following last term's restructuring of the Anti-Racism campaign, this term the rebranded Ethnic Diversity campaign has been relatively more active. Two reports ago the co-chairs noted: "while Oxford is largely a tolerant environment, and we would all like to believe that racism does not exist, there are real instances of disaffection, discrimination and racism and the Campaign will do all it can to combat these." The fifth week conference on race, ethnicity and nationality in the university (Thanks to Rosie who conceived it as a response to the Wilkie affair, which the campaign also wrote to the university about), which was considerably better attended than previous events, succeeded in showing that students still faced the issues cited above. To ensure the university works on resolving these issues, the Campaign is compiling a list of issues (and grievances) to do with race, ethnicity and nationality that individual students and student societies feel the university needs to resolve. This can cover anything and everything from racist porters to insensitive tutors, from a Euro-centric curriculum to lack of provision in halls. We will submit the list to the university's equal opportunities officer at the end of 8th week, and it will be something we hope the campaign can monitor as an indicator of how colleges and the university have progressed from term to term. We encourage submissions from everyone and we hope you will publicise this – and we look forward to receiving your submissions for this list by Tuesday Week 8 (2 December) - at ethnicdiversity2003@yahoo.co.uk. All comments will be anonymous.

publicise this – and we look forward to receiving your submissions for this list by Tuesday Week 8 (2 December) - at ethnicdiversity2003@yahoo.co.uk. All comments will be anonymous.

This term the campaign also met the Police Community and Race Relations Liaison Officer to discuss race crime in Oxford, and will get the message about third-party reporting of racial incidents out. We've also prepared a short guide for ethnic minority officers in common rooms, a post we hope more common rooms will look into having. The campaign has also recently elected two new co-chairs – Ruiling Zeng (St Hildas) and Tsin Zhen Koh (Brasenose) – who are keen to bring the campaign forward and especially to forge stronger links with the numerous active cultural and national societies so that the campaign and OUSU can better represent the interests of ethnic minority students as well. OUSU and lobbying (which is really the campaign's main thrust) are, from anecdotal experience, two things many societies that provide support for ethnic minority students tend to avoid, and we're sure the new co-chairs will bridge that gap. (There is also one more co-chair post to be filled soonest.) The campaign has the potential to do much more to bring about an environment that better caters to diversity, and we feel that at the end of the day, the best way forward is for it to work jointly with student societies, one of whom has already expressed support in a joint Diversity Week event next term. We've also made links with the NUS Anti-Racism Campaign, and hope in the near future to encourage voter participation in upcoming elections to prevent the BNP from gaining further seats, and certainly not at the European Parliament. A Holocaust survivor speaking at a recent anti-racism event quoted Hitler as having written: "The one thing that could have stopped us is if they had taken us seriously when we were still small". The danger posed to society by any form of racism cannot be underestimated.

Finance & Funding

NUS National Lobby of Parliament

Shameless plug - This is happening on Wednesday of 8th- come along! E-mail torsten.henrichson-bell@mansfield.ox.ac.uk for more info.

Freshers' Fair

5,000 flyers handed out and 1,000 plus signed up to the mail list. All hail OUSU Live!

Matriculation Ribbon Protest

3,000 ribbons were too few to go round as take up was really high and central Oxford looked pretty indeed - awash in a sea of gold. Apologies to those JCRs that didn't get ribbon.

National Demo

About 200 Oxford students made it down to the demo, roughly twice as many as last year. The route was absolutely brilliant and whilst the national press coverage could have been better we made our point.

Webpage

The webpage has been overhauled and, despite the regular attempts of one of the co-chairs to delete it (along with the rest of the OUSU site in attempt to give the VP Finance (geek) a heartattack), is turning into a really useful resource, particularly for F&F reps. Check out the brand spanking new poster gallery and banner making guide.

Alternative White Paper

Hopefully, the alternative white paper will be out on Monday and make it to council. It has the potential to really add to the national debate, in addition to being a good campaigning tool within the university. It is well worth considering going back to congregation with the alternative white paper. Only 20% of tutors voted in the last round and we now know the process better. The combination of a better planned campaign, lobbying of tutors within colleges, use of OUSU Live to contact tutors directly and a well set out alternative can be successful.

Rent

Rent could have been dealt with better this term. The executive decided in 0th week to have three separate committees to deal with fees, rent and graduate finance. The co-chairs believe that the suggested division of F & F between rent and fees is misguided. Our concerns are that interest would be split between the two campaigns, rent is cyclical and therefore maintaining a rent campaign over the year would be difficult and that there may be difficulty recruiting co-chairs. Further both rent and finance are matters of student finance, there's a value to having a single focus for campaigning on student finance issues. The executive should appoint a battels officer in addition to the battels executive officer (as policy requires) and ensure that they liaise with the F&F Co-Chairs and Campaign - as this did not happen last term. Rent generally divides into two fairly distinct areas: campaigning and technical support to Common Rooms. We believe that the co-chairs should deal with the cross-campus campaigning (e.g. organizing cross-campus direct action, campaigning literature etc.) and the battels officers should deal with the more technical side (e.g. compiling figures for suggested rent rises, keeping them up to date on the website and organizing the battels

deal with the cross-campus campaigning (e.g. organizing cross-campus direct action, campaigning literature etc.) and the battels officers should deal with the more technical side (e.g. compiling figures for suggested rent rises, keeping them up to date on the website and organizing the battels pack). There is however a good case for having a separate graduate committee as it is an issue that (undergraduate) sabs, co-chairs and executive officers can't deal with adequately. Regardless of how rent is handled structurally the new executive need to decide the appropriate structures and implement them, as rent has been in a vacuum for most of this term.

Budget

The current F&F budget entirely unrealistic. It is simply impossible to run a campaign on 400 pounds.

F&F - 'The Future'

Finance and Funding ought to represent the will of council. If we want a really successful campaign that mobilizes students the whole of council needs to actively engage in the campaign. Almost every JCR/SU has policy against fees but policy is pretty much meaningless without action. The relationship between campaigns and common rooms is something that the future and finances review will deal with but in the meantime we need to look at how common rooms interact with the campaign. Having F&F reps attending meetings is great, and many of them work very hard. However, the people best placed to mobilize students on the ground are JCR committees working together. The constituents of council need to decide how important fighting fees is. When a big demo etc. is taking place F&F can happily organize it, produce and send out flyers/posters etc. and so on but ultimately ALL the common rooms need work on the ground in colleges and make the campaign more of a mass student movement rather than the purview of those with a particularly strong interest in the issue. Forwarding an e-mail does not a revolution make. F&F can do more to help with this. F&F reps need training and better support and F&F needs to get better at strategic planning over the course of a term and become less reactive. The campaign needs to broaden its structure and get more people coming to meetings involved in doing stuff within the campaign - having a specific person in charge of the webpage, for example, would make a big difference. F&F needs to do more to support groups using forms of direct action other than marching or demos (they do get boring after a while), which will help increase interest in the issue. Ultimately, if F&F is to be successful it needs to be a bit more than one among many campaigns or the interest of one rep per JCR. The constituent parts of council; exec, delegates and common rooms need to actively and consciously help drive the campaign to make it really work.

Thanks to

All the Sabs (especially Helena), Exec (especially Ian Caddy for being cuddly and John Blake for being well, red. Oh and of course Matt Richardson for reminding us that there is more to direct action than marching), Charlyne Pullen for an ace banner making guide and Andrew Dilnot for his learned advice.

Target Schools

This term started with a tea party to celebrate 20 years of Target schools. Attendance was not too bad (around 30 people) but it wasn't the massive crowd we would have liked, mostly due to the fact that OUSU live forms were still waiting to be inputted. Nevertheless, people have been coming to our Thursday afternoon meetings in consistent and steady numbers. The average attendance is about 20 people, of whom most are freshers. We get lots of great feedback from them and meetings have been quite light hearted but very constructive. Meetings in alternative locations have also worked well – GandD's was a great success and we're hoping to have a good meeting this week in the KA in conjunction with the Access Scheme and the OCAO. We've been discussing things like changing the format of open days to make them more interactive, involving more than one college in one open day and our contribution to OUSU/CUSU's Alternative White Paper. We've made good progress on the Target schools handbook – most articles are now in and it will be off to print over the vacation. Progress on the website has been a bit sluggish but we're hoping to improve this next term when the new handbook goes up there along with new interview profiles and the e-mentoring scheme. We now have e-mentors for every subject (but we would love to have more!) and email addresses that actually work (thanks Digo!). We've successfully bid for our block grant – so £15,000 is now in our account. With this cash we will be doing a number of new things. Firstly we will be introducing new ways of booking open day places. We're going to reserve a number of places for students with disabilities and for those from FE colleges. To increase the number of schools visits we are going to send out a booking form to schools along with asking for undergraduate volunteers from Oxford. In terms of regional conferences we're going to Sheffield and various places in Northern Ireland and we're looking into the possibility of adding a regional conference in the summer to encourage applications from people who have just completed their AS levels. Lots has been going on and the co chairs have

conferences we're going to Sheffield and various places in Northern Ireland and we're looking into the possibility of adding a regional conference in the summer to encourage applications from people who have just completed their AS levels. Lots has been going on and the co-chairs have been incredibly busy. We've all had different responsibilities for things like liaising with other Access initiatives in Oxford, editing the handbook, researching conference locations etc etc and we've been going along to a couple of JCR meetings to introduce ourselves and Target schools in our lovely blue t-shirts, which have proved very popular (curiously among the people manning the Oxford Union stall at freshers' fair). Unfortunately two co-chairs are now leaving to join the OUSU Exec, so we're looking for two new co-chairs to join the happy family. We'd like to thank everyone for coming along to our meetings this term, everyone who's written articles, made suggestions, argued over college open days and volunteered to be e-mentors. Special thanks also to Linsey, who will be sorely missed, Charlyne and Dave (best of luck for all your new projects), Ryan for being a domestic goddess and Digo for being our Quark teacher. Bring on next term.

Women's Campaign

This has been a busy and productive term for womcam. Congratulations to our Exec Officer Ros Dampier on her election as next year's VP (Women) - we are sure she'll do a fantastic job. We had a big turnout to watch the Husts, which is encouraging. Last weekend, womcam held an Ann Summers party in aid of Oxford Rape Crisis. It was a great, fun event and we raised some money for a deserving charity. Unfortunately, the pressures of Christmas mean we can't hold our planned Lush party, so look out for that next term. On a campaigning front, we are currently selling white ribbons in aid of National Stop Violence against Women day. We are collating information for a Rape Awareness handbook and an online reference guide to Women's Health, both to be produced next term. Laura and I will be stepping down as co-chairs, so we thank everyone for all the work they have put in, and look forward to handing over to some fresh minds.

Queer Rights

Queer Rights has suffered from a few problems this term - an unfortunate time slot, lack of LGBT rep attendance, and a very small budget. Still, we have done some small scale campaigning - letter writing, for example - and have more plans for next term. We will be organising an event for Diversity week, working with the Oxford Pride committee, launching PRISM (our media monitoring campaign) and capitalising the repeal of Section 28 and the planned civil partnership scheme. We hope to visit FE colleges and talk to students about 'growing up gay'. Onwards and upwards!

OUSU Reps Committee

I've come to the end of my stint as co-chair of OUSU reps' committee. So I'd like to offer a few thoughts on where it's going. At the start of the year, Ollie and Laura's feedback exercise was successful in creating a bit of energy and momentum in repcom. But it only lasted for about a term. Since then, we've probably averaged an attendance of about 6-8 ordinary reps per meeting. It doesn't matter that I consider the meetings often to be productive and useful for those that attend, this isn't reflected in the figures and repcom is looking pretty moribund.

This is rather unfortunate given that CR OUSU reps are as important as anyone in presenting OUSU to their members and ensuring that OUSU's initiatives are delivered on the ground.

Perhaps we need to have a serious think about doing things in a different way, abandoning a fortnightly committee "round table" forum and instead doing less frequent events with more input from others - for example, have a meeting now where the Future and Funding co-chairs come along, introduce their remit and gather responses. Anyway, it's not up to me now - I'm just throwing in some ideas. I would still encourage people to apply to take over co-chairing - I've enjoyed it as far as it's gone.

And I'd like to thank Laura for her untiring work as exec officer, and the stalwarts - particularly Mike Girling and Joss Paulley - for bothering to turn up and having quite a fun and interesting time.

