



termly reports to council

hilary term 2009

Lewis Iwu

President

Termly Report - State of the Student Union

Student Representation

As I have repeatedly stated student representation is the most important function of the student movement. This term I have spent over 60 hours in committee meetings ensuring that students have an input into key decisions. At University Council, the highest policy making committee of the University we have discussed the financial forecasts of the University given the current economic climate and University Governance. In Student Planning and Numbers we have looked at ways in which

Another committee that I sit on is security panel which as the name suggests deals with the security concerns that face the University. One of the more recent security innovations has been the introduction of Police community support officers to help police colleges. After discussions with the University Marshall I am of the opinion that they are a good idea noting the significant fall in crime compared to last year and all measures should be put in place to ensure that funding for these positions continue.

Clubs committee and rules committee are two of the smaller committees that I sit on. Clubs committee gives out grants and loans to clubs and societies for any upcoming projects that need funding subject to committee approval. This term we have given over 1500 pounds to societies but we as a committee realise that we need to encourage more societies to apply for such funding. This term in rules committee we've listened to society presidents and passed an important rule allowing clubs to double the membership of Brookes students in the societies.

As a student union despite making strides compared to where we were regarding student representation we are still campaigning for representation on the Planning and Resource allocation committee and the general purposes committee, two key university committees. This is an issue that I have been in negotiation with the VC, the Joint Committee of Council and various members of University Council. I am meeting a representative from the Conference of Conferences next week to discuss the student voice on that committee and JCC are escalating the concerns that we have regarding student representation in general.

Another important committee we have been trying to secure a seat on is the Donations review committee that scrutinises the donations made to the University over a certain threshold. As students we are stakeholders in the institution and therefore should be part of the consultation if the reputation of the institution is called into question because of a donation. An OUSU petition will be launched this week calling for a student input into this committee.

University Governance

The audit and scrutiny committee has now published its report into the governance of the University and has made some recommendations for change which can be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/governance/>. The governance of the University has implications for the potential to attract world class academics, the amount of money that we receive from HEFCE and on the ability for the University to create change that is needed to allow the University to be globally competitive. In Trinity Term I will be presenting a motion which will act as a consultation on the issue.

Staffing

This council we will present the Staff restructure for ratification. They have been ratified by the University Personnel Department and have also agreed to place the adverts on their website hopefully increasing the pool of applicants.

New space for the Student Union

The Central Student Venue Working Group has several times over the past couple of months. The work of this group has been incredibly productive however the finalised report will be released at the start of Trinity instead of at the end of this term as anticipated due to time constraints in part created by the emergence of a property in the city centre which would be a marked improvement in terms of office space but would only be able to provide office space and not the space required for a central student venue. I have attached a very brief outline of my views regarding this particular property but I am pleased to say that the University has now seen the need to move from Thomas Hull House for many reasons including the poor accessibility for disabled students and the lack of prominence of the current location. I am working with Colin George from the Estates Directorate and Keith Zimmerman, director of student services to push this further up the University's agenda.

Relationships with external partners

Last week I met with the Head of the UCU Oxford Branch to talk about the current dispute that is happening which could affect students if a strike happens. I am of the opinion that any industrial action if it happens will have a limited effect on students in Oxford. The first is the historic reluctance of academic staff to strike here in Oxford. Secondly academic staff in effect have two jobs one working for their college, the other working for the University. As UCU can only get its members to strike with their University hat on, tutorials and college based teaching will still continue.

OUSU-Pulse

OUSU-Pulse club nights are still running incredibly strong with the big night happening at the regal on March 12th with Guru Josh Project, Joshua Roberts from the ministry of sound and Judge Jules. For more information check out

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?pid=3672869&op=5&o=global&view=global&subj=1138490649&id=639750005#/pages/PulseNation/45564827786>

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Rent

OUSU now has a table of undergraduate rent figures from the Domestic Bursars committee. The data in its current form however has numbers listed instead of colleges, however we are making headway on decoding the table.

We should also be able to give common room officers a revamped rent during the holidays to prepare for the Trinity rent discussions.

Rosanna McBeath	V-P	(Welfare	and	Equal
Opportunities)				

Dear All,

First off I apologise for the length (or more accurately lack thereof) of this report. I have been out of the office unwell for most of the last two weeks and I'm now desperately trying to catch up and get everything finished before the end of term.

First of all, congratulations to Lucy Edwards our new SWD Officer and Talha Rahman our new Graduate Welfare officer for their election and thank you to Sally Hutchings for all of her help this term.

Since there isn't a lot to say about the last couple of weeks, except thank you to Dr. Schuman for his informative workshop on testicular cancer on Monday, I'll just summarise some of the major things I've been up to this term.

This term I started equal opps officers meetings. They've been held in odd weeks in OUSU and have been a great forum for discussing various issues arising in Oxford.

I've piloted a new welfare training program which involves weekly sessions focusing on different topics. We have had a good turn out at these and are going to continue with them next term

I've also run two listening skills workshops for common room officers, which had a good attendance.

We've run two workshops, one focusing on breast cancer, the other testicular cancer. Both had a good turn out

I've gotten the University to agree to print some emergency phone numbers on the back of bod cards for all new cards issued from this summer.

We had our first SWD campaign meeting this term. We are hoping to get the campaign running properly next term.

We've set up a working party looking at welfare provision in colleges with the aim to create a standard minimum level of provision at colleges

The Student Advice Service has been very busy this term. The members of the SAS have been fantastic. If you need to contact the SAS please call (2)88466 or email advice@ousu.org

I've been working with members of the University administration on creating a new fitness to study policy. This is going well and looks to be a great improvement from the current policies in place.

While there is a lot more that's been going on, I'm going to stop here. Please ask any questions on Friday, and I hope you all have a great vacation!

Welfare love!

Rosanna xx

Rachel Cummings

V-P (Women)

Any keen followers of these reports will have read about some of these events and campaigns throughout the term, but as a general summing up of Hilary, here's what I've been spent my time on:

1) **Women's Officers**- started the term by updating my women's officers information, and doing a mailout of publications, posters and information to Women's Officers. Since, we've had three Women's Officers meetings discussing issues such as student safety, graduate study and self defence.

2) Held the **Sexual Violence Awareness Training** and subsequently distributed handouts and resources. Attendees were from a wide range of offices: welfare officers, chaplains, college nurses, peer supporters, deans, junior deans etc. I submitted a report on the training to the University's Committee for Student Health and Welfare with the aim to get further training supported in various ways by the University administration.

3) **Enough!** celebrated its second birthday this term and had 4 successful meetings in Hilary and a supervision at the counselling service. It will be holding it's last this term in 9th week. After a room change, all has gone smoothly. We're currently in the process of recruiting a new co-ordinator with a number of high quality applicants.

4) Liaising with college officers who work with many **student parents**, work on this issue has continued in Hilary. There have been 5 Tea and Toys sessions since Christmas, while I've also been looking at University provision using the newly launch NUS research and attending a conference on the issue.

5) The **OUSU Women Report** is a work in progress. The material compiled so far has already been useful in responding to student and press enquiries and furthering campaign issues. The full text will be available and fully distributed at the beginning of Trinity.

6) After a meeting with the University Race Equality Officer and Felicity Cooke, head of the Equality and Diversity Unit, I've added information about **forced marriage** to OUSU's welfare resources both on the web and with hard copies of Government resources.

7) Leading the **Publicity Committee** in its inaugural term, we produced posters that should be around college, listing OUSU achievements. A second wave of these posters will be in common rooms shortly. We're also in the process of recruiting a webmaster and designer to ensure more professionalism in both areas of our work. We've got some excellent candidates, and by the time you read this will probably have chosen people for the posts.

8) Organising **finals forums** for this term and next. An English one will be happening in 8th or 1st week, philosophy on Monday 8th week 1-2pm, Classics Tuesday 8th week 1-2pm, History Monday 1st week 2-3:30pm, Politics 8th Week, Law 2nd week Trinity, with dates to be fixed for physics, chemistry and modern languages.

9) Arranging the **Women In Politics Access Day** with Kat Spicksley, student recruitment officer for St John's. We've confirmed speakers including Rosa Prince, political correspondent for the Telegraph and female MPs. Information about it has gone on the OUSU website, the University 2010 prospectus and in the Oxford in Westminster bulletin.

10) **Elections Training** along with afternoon tea was held on Tuesday 6th week. Caroline Daly, Charlotte Seymour, Meg Powell-Chandler, Madeline Stanley, Dani Quinn and Preeti Dhillon were kind enough to come and help out, meaning there were lots of experience women for those thinking of running to speak to. Katharine Terrell was also incredibly helpful in lending me Hilda's manifestos and sending through words of advice for people to take away. There were lists of hust questions, Preeti's speech, a JCR election motion and manifestos from colleges/OUSU available for people to look at. Women interested in running for common room office, the Union and political societies attended the event.

11) Sitting on the **Committee for Student Health and Welfare** I submitted information on the better publicity of services for those with disordered eating. I also attended the annual joint meeting of the committee members with the Association of College Doctors.

12) I attended the **NUS Women's Conference** from Tuesday this week until yesterday. This is the main policy forming body on issues specifically relating to female students (both campaigning and welfare) within NUS and we discussed motions, potential events and campaigns. The conference also elects next year's National Women's Officer and in the interests of transparency: I nominated, endorsed and voted for Olivia Bailey (whom the older amongst you will remember).

13) Yesterday myself, the St Antony's Women's Committee and Hilda's Women's Officer held an event to promote links between undergrad women **interested in graduate study** and those currently undertaking it. The session was run because fewer women do graduate work, particularly research degrees. A list of resources and advice is being drawn up from the discussion and will be available to anyone interested.

14) On Friday 6th week myself, Melanie Bunce and Lizzie Bauer held a **public speaking workshop** at St Peter's College as part of their Women's Week. It went very well, we did various exercises and practices. From working at the Union on this last term, we have developed a guideline for such workshops; so if anyone wants to see something similar at their college, let me know.

15) **WomCam** - is brilliant, and the best part of my job. This term we've had 4 feminist book group meetings and women's campaign discussion meetings every Monday evening (we've talked about, among other things: solidarity, political lesbianism, parenting roles, female image, religion). We also have weekly committee meeting power breakfasts, while events this term have included a talk by a female GP, our termly open (to men) meeting, a WomCam Walk, WomCam clothes swap, a Climate Rush talk. We also held Larry Flynt to account at the Union and have been working throughout the term on Trinity's LadyFest.

15) **Other events and meetings** I've attended include: a Women's/Welfare-organised Breast Check,

Univ Women's Event, meeting with Elaine Gelman of Atalantas, 2 JCR PresComs, 2 MCR PresComs, Union Women's Initiative (WI) Launch, WI Discussion Forum, WI Meet the Presidents event, Wadham SU Meeting, Univ JCR meeting, Fees Working Group meetings, Exeter MCR welfare tea, Corpus JCR welfare tea, Oxide Radio Interview, GTC welfare officer lunch and an OUSU reps meeting.

Kaushal Vidyarthee

V-P (Graduates)

University Committees: This term I have had a significant number of committee meetings. Moreover, I also made sure that OUSU is represented in the divisional JCC. Various issues were raised at these committees with notable progress. These issues including

- student representation on the divisional review panel and the Quality Assurance Working Group of the Conference of Colleges
- opening hours of college libraries
- membership for 2nd BA, mature and 4th year undergrad to the University Club
- the use of Turnitin software by students
- language support for international students and graduates students with language needs on a priority basis
- user-friendly email/document sharing platform
- induction course for incoming DPhil students, among others.

International Students' Campaign: The campaign organised two open meetings and four committee meetings this term. A new committee for the year 2009-10 is under way. The committee also looked at the constitutional changes required for the better functioning of the campaign.

-The core members of the campaign committee also had two meetings with Dr. Heather Bell, Director of International Strategy to discuss issues relating to the publication of handbook, international festival and other social/welfare events for international students.

-A Cultural Societies' Presidents' Committee (Cul-Soc-PresCom) mailing list was set up to discuss various international societies/students' issues.

-In collaboration with the Career Services, the campaign organised an informal meeting with national societies' representatives to discuss various issues. The campaign is also helping in organising the International Careers' Event on 11th March and the promotion of the International Internship Program and the Graduate Recruitment Fair at Berlin.

-I had meeting with the head of the International Student Advisory Services about changes in visa and Immigration rules, international students Orientation day and Meet and Greet Scheme. We have decided to organise a VISA Workshop in Trinity Term in the Examination School and to change the format of the orientation day.

-The campaign has initiated the new project-International Access Scheme to reach to students from less represented countries.

Mature Students' Campaign: This term we had not been able to do much. I am hopeful of organising a meeting of the working group to discuss about constitutional issues before the end of this term.

Student Advice Service: I've had few case-works relating to graduate academic life-some complicated ones but this term has been a relatively easier one. I am working on a resource document for complaint and appeals procedures.

Common Rooms: The MCR president's committee met twice this term and decided to compile a comparison chart for colleges-fees and charges and various facilities. The issue relating to opening hours of college libraries, Postgraduate Assembly, JCC funding model, membership of the University Club, support from college advisors across colleges among others were discussed. MCR officials database were updated.

Junior Deans: I am yet to compile an up-to-date list of graduate students who work as Junior/ Assistant Deans, and would love to set-up a mailing list for them to support them and to allow them to meet each other.

University Club: I had a meeting with marketing manager of the University club. I raised the issue of membership of 2nd BA students, mature students and 4th year undergraduate students.

Postgraduate Assembly: This term PGA was held on Tuesday of this week. A PGA review group comprising graduate members from all divisions has been set up this term. This group has met once and is looking at the role and format of the Postgraduate Assembly.

Paul Dwyer

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

Well, 2 down and 1 to go, and I'm sure you will all be breathing a sigh of relief at the fact that I will not be haunting you for very much longer! If Michaelmas was the term when I was getting into the job and learning what all the buttons did, before taking the first tentative drive through Oxford with the top down and the wind through my hair, then Hilary was the term when I pulled onto the motorway for the first time and put the foot down, going from 30 to funky.

Ok, now that I have had my fun with the extended metaphor and bizarre reference to the 1970s, I suppose I had better get onto the actual report as to what went down this term. I love it when a plan comes together.

Target Schools.

As always, Target Schools is awesome. If last term was the consolidation period, then this term was certainly the time for expansion, something that we achieved in style.

This term saw the glorious birth of the Target Schools Shadowing Scheme, whereby 100 students came to Oxford over 2 weeks (3rd and 6th) and took part in a range of activities. Such activities included attending tutorials and lectures alongside undergraduates, being inducted into the Bodleian Library before being shown around it, as well as being given presentations on life at Oxford and how to apply.

The schools that we decided to invite onto the scheme do not have histories of sending many students to Oxford, and it was our hope that by allowing students the opportunity to actually come to Oxford and live the life of an undergraduate for a day, they would think more seriously about giving an application a go.

The scheme was a huge success, and for that all credit must go to the Target Schools committee. Without their hard work it simply would not have been possible to put the programme together in the way that we did. Special thanks must go to Kaylita, the scheme coordinator, as well as Nikki, Josh, Noura and Elena for all the hours that they put into the scheme!

For next year it is our hope that we can expand the scheme, to take many more students than we currently do. Indeed, with over 300 undergraduates applying to be part of the scheme, we could look to expand our horizons rather rapidly. Thanks therefore must go to all of those students who took part in the shadowing scheme, and made it the success that it was.

Look out for us next term, when we will be running a big recruitment drive with the aim to encourage Oxford students to go out on school visits. We are running sessions towards the end of this term, but will really be hitting the recruitment trail hard come next term! Stay cool with Target Schools!

On top of shadowing, this has also been a term for engaging a lot more with the committees that I sit on. Over the course of this term I have spent more hours than I care to count sat in committee meetings, debating issues ranging from access to facilities when a student chooses to suspend their status, through to the feedback that should be made available to students should they fail their First Public Examinations,

As is always the nature with committees, we are not quite there in terms of having definite resolutions to some of the more pressing matters. After a paper comes to Education Committee or to undergraduate panel, it usually has to be sent to divisions or to colleges for their responses, before coming back after this consultation. It is however pleasing that we are making a positive headway, and hopefully by next term I will be able to report back with definite outcomes.

This term has been rather an intense one in terms of the casework load that I have had. Although I obviously cannot go into any details, one of the definite areas in which I will be aiming to work in the next few weeks is in clarifying appeal and complaint procedures. I personally think that there is a definite need for procedures to be laid out in a more transparent manner, and will be aiming to create a document which does just that.

One of the areas in which I definitely need to work more on for Trinity term is in interaction with common room officers. Over the coming weeks and months I will be getting in touch with individual officers to try and arrange meetings, alongside the new academic affairs officer, Tom Perry, and the access and admissions officer, Elena Lynch. My hope is that study skills sessions and finals forums can be moved into the college, where I think that they can be more successful in reaching out to students.

That's very much my term in a nutshell. I have tried to be brief as I know that reading council reports is about as riveting as reading the racing post, but if you do have any questions then please don't hesitate to get into contact. As always, if you have any problems, blame Jack.

Funky access and academic affairs love,

Paul

Jack Wellby Community)	V-P	(Charities	&
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It's that time again to report back to council on the past weeks. This term has been hugely busy but also hugely rewarding. The highlight of the term for me was RAG week in 5th week, which was a terrific success. But there have also been a large number of successes which, although less visible, are still very important. If you have anything you'd like to ask me about this report, my job or life in general just drop me a line.

Charity

- I have continued to liaise with student charities to help their continued success. There is such a range of charitable activity which I have been lucky enough to be involved in including new projects such as Christian Aid's new Oxford student based activity, Oxford READ international taking off, Oaktree UK and many more. I hope to be able to continue to advise and assist wherever I can whether that is through providing references, advertising, materials etc.
- I meet with charity/rag representatives from all colleges each week with attendance in excess of 30 people and around 70% of colleges represented each week. Of the large colleges only **Brasenose** hasn't had a representative this year (Oriel and Trinity just once though!). Through these meetings we share ideas, best practise and knowledge so that events in college are more successful. On Friday and Saturday of 5th week almost every college held some kind of charity event to mark the end of RAG week.
- In conjunction with The Oxford HUB we have set up a working party to look into the best practise of common rooms contributing to charities. We will report back after Easter.
- I remain on the trustee board of The Oxford HUB and have attended both trustee and steering group meetings this term.

RAG

- RAG week was a terrific success with events including Blind Date, Bug photo competition, Mr and Miss Oxford, Condom roses etc.
- LOST was the main event last week with 55 participants being dropped off in a village in Wales and having to try to get back to Oxford without spending any money. Everyone got back (eventually) and we hope to have raised over £3000 for charity.
- We had to postpone Wax a Hack but a similar event will hopefully be run next term.

- We have elections for RAG exec positions on Monday, 5pm, OUSU.
- RAG Dodgeball is on Sunday – if you want to take part speak to me!
- We're holding a street collection (raid) for Action Aid tomorrow all day in the city centre
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Environment and Ethics

- Daniel and I coordinated the sending out of a book named 'Kyoto 2' by Oliver Tickell to ALL the representatives from all the countries invited to the Copenhagen discussions on climate change in December 2009. This involved lots of heavy lifting, lots of stamps but will hopefully have a very positive effect in the long-term. www.kyoto2.org.
- Daniel attended the Environment Panel meeting as I was at the community consultation meeting (see below).

Community:

- The main thing on the community side of things was a Public and Community Engagement Internal Stakeholder Consultation with Hall Aitken Associates. This was organised by the central university with a view to improve how they interact with the community and how they can highlight the good work that is being done. The consultants are being paid to produce some kind of formal report in a few months. I'll report back when this appears.

Big Brother/ Big Sister:

- Paul and I have been taking the lead on this new scheme which OUSU is running involving student mentors mentoring children provided by the council who have been in care and who may be able to benefit from having an older brother or sister to mentor them. The main focus of the project is on regular contact between the two – mainly using e-mentoring. There will also be chances to meet as a group via organised activities. The pilot scheme will run over Trinity with a view to launch properly next year.

That's all from me. Come along to Dodgeball on Sunday – promises to be great fun.

“If you have time to whine and complain about something then you have the time to do something about it.” Anthony J. D'Angelo

PART TIME OFFICERS

Elena Lynch Officer	Access & Admissions
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Hi Council,

This term has been a very busy, but also quite successful one for access! Having been mostly newly elected, the Target Schools Committee has settled in well and are preparing to really up the recruitment and training in summer term. As far as this term goes our shadowing scheme has been an enormous success. We can't quite believe that the idea that was suggested in Trinity has now actually happened, with just over 100 sixth form students coming to Oxford this term for a day and shadowing 100 undergraduate volunteers, touring the Bodleian and receiving workshops regarding how to apply for Oxford. With the snow in 3rd week, shadows not turning up, and various other issues, it's been quite a stressful but also very rewarding time for the committee. It seems to have paid off though, as the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and we will definitely be running this scheme again next year, but hopefully extend it to include much greater numbers.

A huge thanks must be given to all the undergraduates who volunteered, the Target Schools past and present committee members and particularly to Noura Abdul-Cader, Interview Training Coordinator, who has pretty much given up a whole two weeks this term to give back-to-back workshops to shadows, the shadowing sub-committee, Josh Fabian-Miller and Nikki Zywina, and most of all, to Kaylita Chantiluke, Shadowing Coordinator, who has been responsible for organising the whole scheme despite also doing her medicine degree, and has done an absolutely fantastic job. It could not have been done without her or any of the others. So, thank you very, very much!

By the time Council reads this, we will hopefully have elected a new shadowing sub-committee and shadowing coordinators to start the planning for next year.

As for next term, we really want to recruit a lot of students in time for school visits in the summer. Last year I believe around 60 schools were visited, this year it'd be good to double that. There'll be lots of information sessions with free food going on throughout term, and training sessions will be regularly organised and hopefully move from college to college. In line with this, we're also going to work more with JCR Access Reps to increase recruitment. After a very successful couple of training sessions at Regents and Magdalen, we're going to try and move Target Schools out to colleges more, at the moment focusing on Regents, Magdalen and also Worcester and Pembroke. Having now met the access reps at these four colleges we're looking to build a closer relationship with them. We'd like to get as many access reps involved as possible, so I will be contacting access reps soon to have a meeting with them about Target Schools and access in general. If you're particularly interested in this idea, and want your JCR rep to be involved then please send me an email to accessandadmissions@ousu.org.

Any questions etc, don't hesitate to ask me!

Access love,

Elena

Jack Matthews

Common Room Support Officer

Dear Council

This term has been a busy first one. The main things I've been doing are as follows;

1. Having personal meetings with as many OUSU Reps as possible.
2. Running OUSU Reps meeting on Wednesdays of odd weeks.
3. Listened to the needs of common rooms and reacted - I am part of a group in OUSU looking into decreasing SKY TV subscriptions for common rooms.
4. Attended MCR Pres Com.
5. Attended OUSU Exec, putting forward the views of common rooms.
6. Have begun to arrange common room for the end of this term and for next term.

As always, I apologise for not being able to attend council - if you have any questions, please do email me at commonrooms@ousu.org.

Regards

Jack Matthews
OUSU Common Room Support Officer

Daniel Lowe

Environment and Ethics Officer

Hello Council,

This term seems to have gone so quickly; I can't believe I'm writing this already. Anyway, aside from such important events as my 21st birthday, E&E has been a little hotpot of activity.

Environment

January saw the council's commingled recycling scheme hit colleges, allowing them to recycle plastic for the first time. This should save colleges (an hopefully they'll pass the costs onto you) a batload given that landfill collection prices are rising at about 40%/yr and recycling only 10%/yr. On Valentine's day a student contingent told the Vice Chancellor to go green and he listened, pledging the university's commitment to implementing a comprehensive waste management strategy and recruitment of a sustainability officer. Lastly, after the student

led enterprise of college bags for life, it looks as if the university shop is going to start selling them full time. Chalk one up for bright ideas!

Ethics

The world of ethics has been largely dominated by investments and donations. Sadly, no further developments to report. We're stuck in bureaucratic limbo whilst the university are assembling the SRI review committee (11 months and counting), but we will be bringing moves to create standing policy as soon as possible. On the subject of donations, we're talking about the acceptance of money by the university from suspect/dodgy/evil sources. We're hoping to get a student on the review committee (formerly, but appropriately known as DARC) as its meetings are unminuted and closed, yet they are charged with gauging how students feel about things... hmm. Anyhow, we're organising a petition, maybe a protest of sorts. Summer will be fun.