



Passenger

Oxford's satirical newspaper



Totally addicted to Facebook? page 2

Budget like OUSU: Passenger feature page 2

news.ktab.co.uk/oxford

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Issue 1

SPEAK OUT

ALF tops animal rights nutters poll

AFTER DECLARING their intention to "blow these fucking monsters [by which we mean anyone affiliated with the University of Oxford] off the face of the planet", the ALF (Animal Liberation Front) have knocked SPEAK (which doesn't stand for anything, but they still insist on capitalising) from its coveted top spot as nuttiest animal rights protesters.

In a poll of thirty Oxford students conducted by *Passenger*, twenty-eight thought ALF the most threatening group of crazies out to protect animals at the expense of humans, despite their amiable acronym.

"SPEAK might have a better name," explained Marvin Wilcox of St Frideswide's College, "But what I really want from an animal rights group is proper insane activism. Where's the unnecessary violence, the defamation and intimidation, the poo in the post? Over at ALF, that's where!"

The activists' continuing threats and protests are in response to Oxford University's building work on a new animal housing facility on South Parks Road, where animals ranging in cuteness from slimy and slightly unpleasant fish to ickly mice and anthropomorphic fluffy monkeys will live, in between being subjects for medical research.

However, protesters' activities are deepening the rift between their cause and student opinion, with the ALF engaging in such heart-winning strategies as torching college boathouses, and SPEAK supporters deciding

to further their cause by creating noise pollution near finalists by chanting inane soundbites through megaphones.

"If only my degree were in poorly-phrased slogans," moaned Mansfield student Jane Trevor, "the protesters would be a handy revision aid."

In response to the militaristic animal rights types, an Oxford school dropout referring to himself by catchy Internet moniker "Sqr1101" has formed the anti-anti-vivisection group "Pro-Test".

Animal rights groups have hit back at the new group's terminological hijack. SPEAKsman John Allen told *Passenger* "This boy has put us in a rather awkward semantic position. We're either pro-test, which we're not, or anti-protest, which means we can't go out and moan about it! We are currently consulting with an etymologist to investigate our options."

Pro-Test's inaugural march took place last Saturday, 25th February, coinciding with SPEAK's monthly gathering. Pro-Test mustered around four marchers for every anti-vivisectionist, as well as having four times as many chants as SPEAK, with four.

Animal spokesmonkey Barry told *Passenger* that a far better solution was to use animal rights protesters instead of monkeys for the testing of new drugs: "Animal rights activists are a much closer physiological match to humans than other primates. And you won't find us protesting outside if Oxford start building an animal protester lab!"



Not that scary: a SPEAK activist waging a campaign of ineffective eccentricity

Andy Hutton

Budget like OUSU

Passenger feature

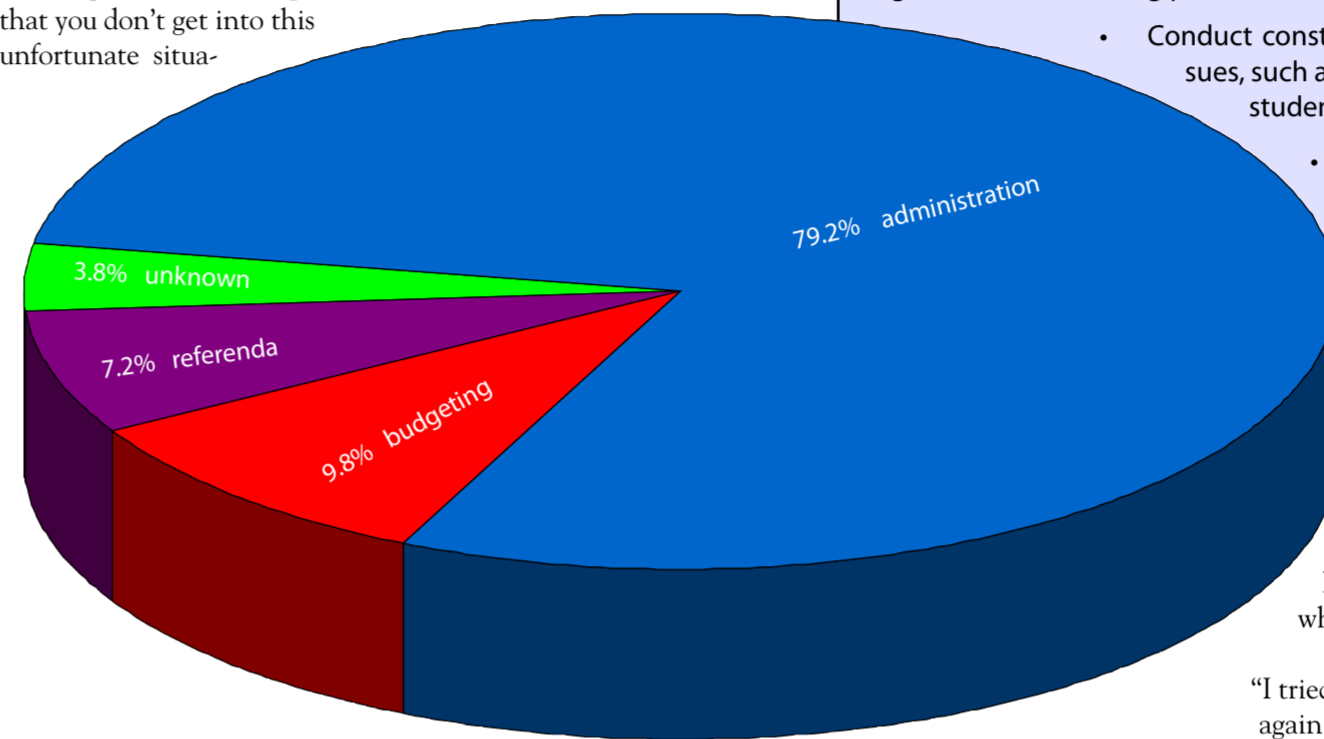
STUDENTS OFTEN find themselves in financial difficulty. There are many options to alleviate this, such as increased overdrafts, bursaries, giving up drinking or entrepreneurial crime waves, but it is often considered preferable to budget such that you don't get into this unfortunate situa-

tion in the first place.

So, *Passenger* looked to a bastion of book-keeping, the financial arm of the student union at one of the World's top universities. Who could budget better than them?

THE OUSU BUDGET IN FIVE EASY STEPS

- Take your probable income for the next year. If you're a student union, this will come from sales of tickets or advertising in newspapers. If you're a student, this will most likely be student loan and paid work. Assume that all of this money will arrive without difficulty of any kind. Then double it.
- Take your expenses. "What expenses?" I hear you cry. That's right. Most people don't actually have expenses, because most things are free, and those that aren't pay for themselves in advertising. Take the advertising profits and add them to your estimated income. Then double it.
- Conduct constant unnecessary polls of student opinion about crucial issues, such as what clothes they like to wear in exams, or what to spend student union money on.
- Your profit is your income minus your expenditure, but subtraction is hard. Addition is easier: try using this as a profit-maximising strategy!
- If anyone questions your financial plans, brush over the details; talking about money is boring, especially when you've not got any! Spend the time you would have spent considering your fiscal situation contemplating how best to alleviate the plight of the beleaguered guanacos in Patagonia.



Don't just believe *Passenger*; read a testimonial from someone who tried the OUSU budget:

"I tried the OUSU budget and I'll never have to visit a bank manager again! He closed my account and nullified my credit rating. I can't even get a credit card! Try the OUSU budget today!"

– Clare Timkins, St Frideswide's College

OUSU Budget 2005

Oxford Webmail blues

USERS OF THE Oxford University Webmail Service, formerly known as Herald, were shocked earlier in the term as the service slowed down to a crawl, causing some to resort to talking to one-another, or using the internal telephone system.

The difficulties, the most severe effects of which persisted for a couple of days, were attributed by Oxford University Computing Services (OUCS) to a wide range of three-letter acronyms which they refused to expand. An OUCS spokesman reassured *Passenger* that "Most of the latest spate of errors weren't actually mistakes; we were just doing a trial run of a new series of error messages."

Even once the teething troubles had subsided, however, some users remained unconvinced by the new service, which inserts apparently unnecessary confirmation steps in as many parts of the e-mail checking process as physically possible.

OUCS, who recently signed a lucrative sponsorship deal with a company who produce mouse buttons, claim the extra stages



have been inserted "to add to users' interactive experience."

"People like to feel in control, they hate it when computers do things automatically, rapidly and conveniently for them. This is why Microsoft software is so popular."

The problems were caused by the rolling out of the new 'webauth' system, which allows users to log in not only to their webmail, but also to myriad other useful services: weblearn.

Having looked up the definition of 'myriad', OUCS are planning on branching out webauth's capabilities, with trials underway of a new login-only OUCS search engine which will allow users to search the web in just eight clicks of a button. "We

can't have people accidentally searching the web, so we make you log in, and throw up a few notices explaining to them what they're doing a couple of times first," OUCS Development Chief Tim Parkinson told *Passenger*.

The new portal seeks to plug a gap in the market missed by rivals such as Google, Yahoo! and MSN Search, all of whom have rapid engines, accessible through easy-to-use interfaces.

"People at a university where you still have to wear a crazy archaic uniform for exams don't expect the latest in high-tech wizardry. They find things which work as you'd expect a bit creepy. We at OUCS aim to meet these expectations."

The Farcebook

A SMALL NUMBER of Christ Church students have been mildly amused after a wily undergraduate created a fake Facebook profile for the college's Mercury

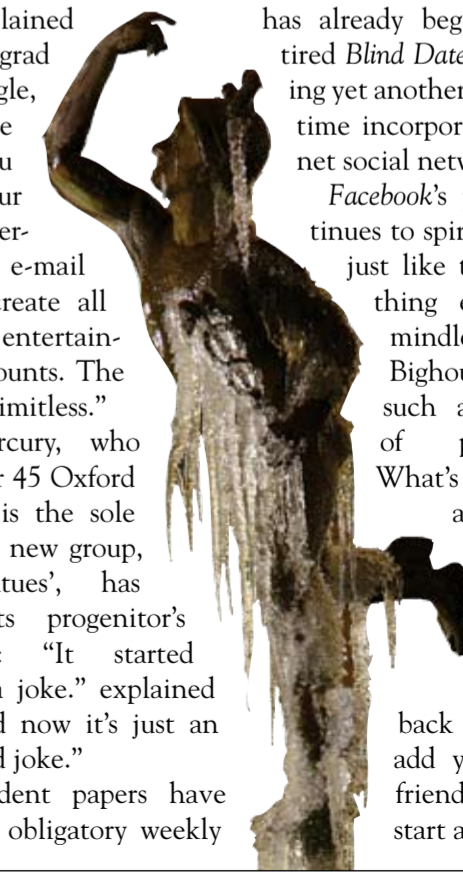
statue. "In case you haven't noticed," explained geeky undergrad Francis Barge, behind the ploy, "you can use your abcd1234@herald.ox.ac.uk e-mail address to create all manner of entertaining joke accounts. The fun really is limitless."

The Mercury, who now has over 45 Oxford friends and is the sole member of a new group, 'Bronze statues', has exceeded its progenitor's expectations: "It started out as just a joke," explained Barge, "And now it's just an over-reported joke."

Both student papers have now written obligatory weekly

mention of Facebook into their charters, with rumours abound that *The Oxford Student* is thinking of abandoning its arts section, replacing it with a collection of Facebook-related articles, trivia and games. The transformation has already begun, with their tired *Blind Date* section receiving yet another a Face-lift, this time incorporating the Internet social networking tool.

Facebook's popularity continues to spiral. "Facebook is just like totally the best thing ever," slavered mindless hack Roger Bighouse, "It's like such a random way of procrastinating! What's your name, anyway? Rather than sticking around and getting to know you, I think I'll nip back to college and add you to my 461 friends, then we can start a poke war."



written & produced by Andrew Steele