

sort US out

A newsletter produced in association with



socialist
STUDENTS

for the USSU campaign of the same name.

www.ussu.net/sortusout

www.socialiststudents.org.uk

ISSUE TWO 7th Feb 2006

demonstrate!

Protest March, Rally and Party

ThuRs 16 february, 1pm library sq.

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

A SAY FOR ALL!

**Whatever it is that ticks you off, come along to the demo and have your say!
Help make the student voice heard!**

Contact hours for all!

A minimum of eight contact hours per week for every course.

Food for all!

Cheap healthy meals available all day and night on campus.

Free education for all!

Do not introduce higher top up fees.

Readings for all!

Core reading should be available for all students in course packs.

Housing for all!

Adequate, affordable and well-maintained university managed housing for all first years. No more rent rises beyond inflation.

Courses for all!

No departmental closures and no cuts to interdisciplinary courses.

Bring with you: Homemade placards with your own demands; club team and society banners; whistles, drums, musical instruments, friends. We will march around campus to show the University we care, after which there will be a rally in which we can discuss the next steps in the campaign.

This is intended as a peaceful, orderly demo.

For a full and detailed list of demands made by the campaign, read the Student Submission to Council at www.ussu.net/sortusout

Fig.1 A rarity from the UoS anthropological archives

The book in question is on three reading lists and is out of print. Yet there are only two short loan copies of it in the library, no long loan, no reserve copies and no photocopies.

From September this type of service may cost £3,000 a year! Where is our fees money going?

There are 2 titles matching your search.

Number 1 of 2 [previous](#) [next](#)



Author/Name Samuel, Raphael
Thompson, Paul

[request](#)
[Other titles by Author\(s\)](#)

Title The myths we live by / edited by Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson

Publisher London : Routledge, 1990

ISBN/ISSN/CN 0415036097

Out of print Out of print

Reading Lists This item is on 3 reading lists. [Search Reading Lists](#)

Copies:						
Location	Shelfmark	Loan Type	Availability	Copies	Loans	
Library	Short / D 3.A3 Myt	SHORT	02/02/2006 23:59	2	2	Show details

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Copies History: [Show summary](#)

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US

social anthropology students have at least one basic understanding of our subject and that is its basis in fieldwork and ethnographic investigation. (Ethnography - the branch of anthropology that gives a scientific description of specific human cultures)

Emma Palizi, Anthropology and Politics, Finalist

The need for ethnographies to back up our understanding of the theories and concepts in anthropology should be taken as a given. Unfortunately, our reading lists have a ridiculously low number of books-to-student ratios. Are the students therefore, expected to materialise their own ethnographies from thin-air?

Why is it that, as a minimum requirement, a sufficient number of photocopies from the CORE READINGS are not kept in the school department or stored in the Library, allowing for space? Clearly, this is also cheaper than buying 10 copies of a book when only one chapter is being used on the reading lists. Above (*fig 1*) is a prime, though extreme example of the disproportionate number of books to students.

You don't have to be a detective to note a few points here. Firstly, and most importantly, this book is on THREE reading lists. In other words three courses require this book. I won't try and work out how many students that is all together, but it's fair to estimate 'a lot'. We then look at the number of copies and see - two! Not surprisingly, both copies are out, and if we look further, there are two reservations on both books (*fig 2*):

Copies:						
Location	Shelfmark	Loan Type	Availability	Copies	Loans	
Library	Short / D 3.A3 Myt	SHORT	02/02/2006 23:59	2	2	Hide details
	Barcode	Due Date	Reserves			
	07122935	02/02/2006 23:59	2			
	09715823	02/02/2006 23:59	2			

Fig.2 Our correspondent learns that she must wait two week for her essential book

To be fair the week in which I write this (week 4) my course at least, have this book on their reading list. This could explain the high number of reservations, but the point is still valid. We did not pay our tuition fees so we could get the book we needed for that weeks seminar, the next week. We had a reasonable expectation that we wouldn't be left to fend for ourselves when trying to find a book on the reading list.

Aside from that, selfish as it may sound, we're in our final year. We don't have time to be looking for alternative books. It's all or nothing for us. The further readings of course are in even lower supply, which is expected but not acceptable. Especially when we are expected to go to further readings if core readings are unavailable.

As I see it, these are the problems:

1. Lack of responsibility for who should check that the books on the reading list are in.
2. Lack of copies or photocopies of CORE READINGS.
3. No consideration is taken of the year of study or the nature of the course.
4. Our degrees suffer.

The first point is this. We ask our tutor if there are enough copies of readings. He/she says to check with the library. We check with the library and either find a) too few copies, b) no copies or c) someone has hidden the only copy there was. Some students have become so ruthless as to hide copies of books, so they will be able to access them later. Although I understand their desperation, is this the kind of attitude we want to promote at Sussex?

The second point is self explanatory. On the third point, is it not logical to plan the number of books on order with the year of study and the nature of the course. For example first year undergraduate students on a compulsory degree means many copies of the core readings are needed. Whereas, third year undergraduates on an optional course require fewer copies. Note that 'fewer' does not equal one or less books. Note also that fewer hard copies of the book, does not equal no photocopies of relevant chapters.

The fourth point is the most important. As a student of not only anthropology but also politics, I know that the money I have put myself in debt for was partially supposed to be going towards resources for my courses. (Continued opposite)

Finally, I understand that tutors are overworked, and the best ones make the most of the insufficient resources we have. I also understand that the library staff are overworked, and have to deal with the time and money they are allocated. Inbetween students live, with equal pressures - of debt, managing workloads and our time. With all the pressures we have upon us, the management of US can lighten the load. Not necessarily by spending more money and putting the University in to more debt, but my efficient management of resources. I have not seen that, and that is not the impression I will be leaving Sussex with in this my final year. EP

COMPUTER CRASH... (BANG, WALLOP)

Toby Osmond International Relations and Politics, Finalist

Two years ago I was a first year. I was well excited when I came to university, I was looking forward to the parties, to making loads of new friends, to learning about the world a bit by doing a degree, and to trying to make the world a little bit better by fighting for change. To be honest, the parties and friends played the biggest role in the first year, and since then the others have taken over a bit. I've got lots of fond memories of my first year. Mainly, these involve parties and friends, and usually both. If asked what my fondest memory was, I would certainly not say my home internet connection.

What's this I hear you say, surely a room internet connection would be very helpful for a fresher student needing to check emails, chat on messenger and do that studying and research thing that tutors keep going on about? True. Did our Internet connection help us do this? No. In fact when people talk about the stresses of university life, I think one of the things they could be talking about is a little thing called KeyCom.

Now when I was a fresher KeyCom and KeySurf were the Internet Company that sorted out our room connections in Kent House. I would say provider, but they provided nothing. Nothing but stress that is. My old hatred was awoken the other day when I read an article in *The Badger* about KeyCom. Apparently, my nemesis is still alive and well despite several students actually launching complaints

to try to get rid of the useless group.

We were told back then that the problem would be sorted out, but not in time for us, just for next years batch of victims (now the second year). This was some compensation. I felt as though our year, the present third years were sacrificing themselves for the future generations. Not So. KeyCom are still here, and they are, according to the badger article, as useless as they ever were. So, why are they still here?

Another *Badger* article which awakened old feelings of first year dread in me was one on water contamination in Norwich house. Some bacteria gets into the water supply, the university knows about it, but doesn't sort out the issue in the holidays whilst students are away. (Would this be far too considerate to the living standards of students?) Instead the university leaves the problem to when the students are back, so they have to either shower in other houses or just stay dirty. The sheer amount of building works, maintenance, grass cutting and fire alarm tests that were carried out during my first year at the most awkward of times was simply amazing. Why can these things not be done at appropriate times so students can either do there studying or sleep beyond 8am to nurse their hangovers?

When I came to university, I thought the biggest problems I would have to tackle would involve fighting the establishment for social justice and finding a job to pay for beer. I was sadly disappointed when I discovered the actual problems were more akin to trying to access my email from my room, finding a way of sound proofing my head with a pillow at 8 in the morning and trying to study on a Wednesday afternoon while the maintenance crew are getting trigger happy with the alarm tests.

Why are these issues still not being dealt with? I for one am fed up of mis-management. I believe it is time to organise and demonstrate. If that's not enough, we'll do what it takes. TO

A TALE OF THREE SEMINARS

Emily Silver - Psychology Finalist

When I visited Sussex back in spring 2003 I immediately fell in love with campus. I was lucky really, as my usual late-in-the-dav planning meant I was

short-listed Sussex on my application. But I was delighted that a University offering so much from its prospectus also looked like a great place to live.

Three years later and I wasn't wrong in thinking I would enjoy my time here. Unfortunately however, it isn't the campus but the prospectus that has failed to delivered on its promises. As a Psychology student in my final year, stories of uninspired (and consequently often uninspiring) associate tutors and absent text books are oh-so-familiar.

A particular complaint over the years has been the department's failure to produce essential reading lists before courses commence. The content of core school courses varies so little from year to year, it ought to go without saying that reading lists are made available at the start of each holiday. I have not once had the pleasure of starting a term feeling that some of the reading is under my belt, or at least that I won't have to rely on the demonstrably under-stocked Library or Book Shop because the text that I need is already on order.

The fact that no particular party is to blame here, but that the whole problem could evaporate with clearer communication between lecturers, administrators and students, merely adds to the wide-spread frustration over this issue.

I would be happy, however, if I could tell you that this was the biggest problem with my course. Perhaps unsurprisingly this is not the case, and since my first year I have watched contact hours drop to the extent that currently certain final year courses are taught with a less than impressive one hour weekly lecture and just three short seminars to a term. Now and again, I have experienced some really brilliant teaching, which can almost make up for shadowy contact time, but students should not and certainly cannot rely on this as a substitute.

The very fact that certain aspects of my degree have been so entirely enjoyable is what makes the deficiencies in other areas so disappointing. Students cannot afford to pass up the current opportunities for sorting things out, in order that future students are not left with a familiar bitter taste in

Why will students be demonstrating on 16th February? Max Kalininskij (Infomatics) gives a history of our troubles at Sussex University.

DONT FORGET: USSU SABBATICAL ELECTIONS, TUES 7TH- THURS 9TH FEBRUARY. VOTE IN FALMER HOUSE LOBBY, LIBRARY LOBBY AND CHICHESTER LECTURE THEATRE LOBBY BETWEEN 10.30 AND 4.30PM

sort US out

Edited & designed by Richard Mullin with thanks to Adele Burrow

Cuts Ouch!

Over the course of the last few years the university has succeeded in failing it's own students in quite a number of unique ways. From the increasing bureaucracy to the decreasing amount of student-lecturer contact time, it is clear that even if our university does have our interests in mind, it obviously has problems expressing itself.

Recent budget cuts to such a wide spectrum of university facilities and services only serve to rub salt in the wounds, hampering not only student education, but also campus life, subsequently bringing the university down in the Guardian and Times rankings that the university so desperately wants to look good in.

The university is increasingly relying on cheaper/easier solutions, like the flawed system of associate tutors (ATs), whereby graduate students deliver and teach large amount of the course material, often with insufficient training and preparation, or while pre-occupied with their research projects.

Cutbacks in the Library and in I.T services (i.e. not enough computers), are also problems that makes studying and academic work even more difficult, and are likely problems many have already experienced.

The lack of university accommodation for the start of this academic year is already a problem that has been well publicised, in combination with the inadequate provision from host family residences. What is less publicised, however, are the current problems with on-campus accommodation that many students are experiencing. From lack of hot water in East Slope to the waiting times for general maintenance in other residences, there are clearly problems in paradise, which won't simply be fixed by the university closing its eyes and pretending they

It is barely even worth going into the broadband internet/network that has been promised for 2 years now in all the residences. The university has also made a poor effort in providing for other non-academic facilities, resulting in cutbacks to sport clubs (both the amount of them AND the budget for each one), as well as the minimalist approach to food & entertainment facilities on campus.

While of course it is understandable that rising costs and pressure from the government on Sussex (and many other universities) will necessitate some short-term sacrifices from the student body, these sacrifices and cut-backs have been going on for far too long now. The university policy of blaming others while not admitting to it's own share of the blame through mismanagement and misunderstanding is only going to serve to make deeper the pit in which it is now lying in. MK

Autonomous Café: An Experiment in Self- Management....

**Tuesday 31/01/06, the disused
EDB Café, around 11:30:**

A group of students meet to set up a café run entirely on donations and co-operation. They are in the EDB Café, another café shut down by the University and the financial disaster that is our Vice-Chancellor. Another group of students organise a free-shop, run on a give and take principal, to happen simultaneously with the café. Just before the setting-up begins, a campus security guard enters the room. He patrols around a bit, as if to assert his authority, but eventually decides he's wasting his time.

Autonomous Café serves home-made vegan/veggie food on a donations basis. As soon as the café is open. the students talk to people

All seem positive if not delighted with the reopening of a café in EDB. Someone puts on a CD. There is soon quite a gathering of students, serving themselves food, rummaging through the second hand clothes and things that people have brought along. EDB Café is looking lively for once.

The security guard comes back and sees his chance to maintain university authority when he hears the music playing; he announces that the music is disturbing people in the room. The students remain defiant to his demands that the music be turned off : his attempts fail because the people in the room stuck together.

The day turns out a full success: the café is busy for the 2 and a half hours it's on and the free shop supplies most of them with something new to take home.

Students can and should protest about university policies and mismanagement, but it is in taking direct-action that senior management is really hit. When they realise that we can get what we want by ourselves, they will do everything to restore past domination. For me, and I think for all the people involved in the running of the café, this experience was both empowering and inspiring.

In fact, we felt it was such a success that we want to try and run it on a weekly basis. So keep your eyes open and visit us – bring along some junk for the free shop, too. Location for now: every Tuesday in EDB café from 12. K&A

Meetings open to all:

**Sort US Out, 4pm every
Wednesday, Meeting Room, Floor
Two, Falmer House**

**Socialist Students, 5pm, every
Tuesday, Training Room One,
Falmer House.**