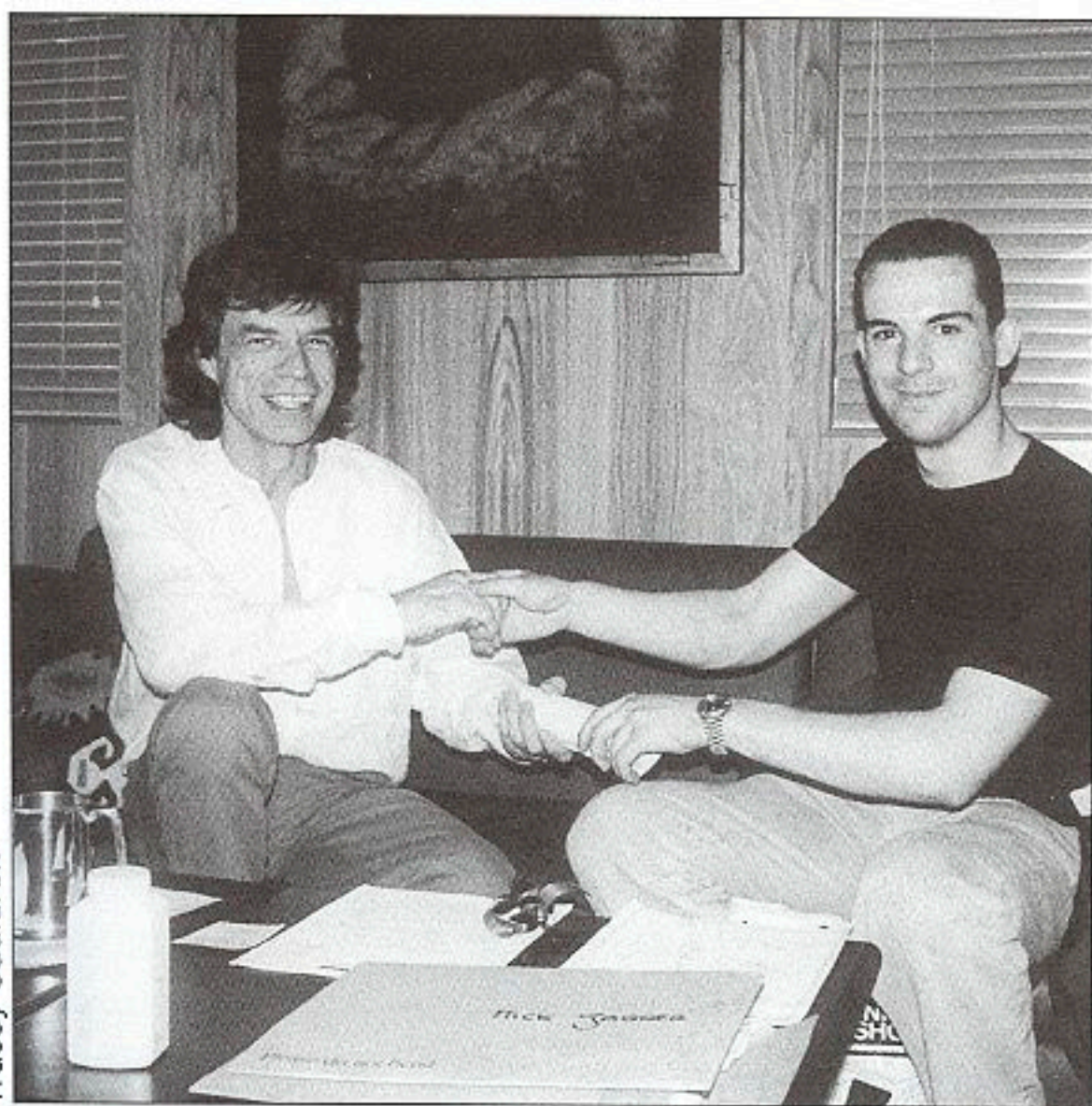


# Mick Jagger: SU Centenary President

**Martin Lewis, General-Secretary of LSESU 1994/95, goes to Wembley to make a presentation, armed with a VIP pass.**



Tracey Cauldron

**M**ick Jagger was elected Honorary President of the LSE Students' Union 1994/95. The post of Honorary President has previously been held by eminent world figures such as Aye Yung Suke, the Burmese President who was recently released from house arrest, Terry Waite, Arthur Scargill and most notoriously Winston Silcott in 1989. It consistently attracts attention and thus the departure in electing the 'International Statesman of Rock and Roll,' although without the usual controversy, was not without its critics.

Proposed by the Entertainments sabbatical, Gary Delaney, Jagger's electoral triumph over, amongst others, Carlos the Jackal, Mother Theresa, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat came as something of a surprise. The international media took hold of the story and it was catapulted around the world, via CNN, CBS and CBC in North America, ABC in Australia, and MTV News in Europe.

On being informed of the honour Mr Jagger wrote back to the Students' Union: 'I am delighted to accept the position of Honorary President of the LSE Students' Union... I hope that I will be able to visit some of my

old haunts at the LSE when I return to England some time in 1995. Thank you all for your support.' A letter now sitting in pride of place in the Three Tuns Bar.

Unfortunately, clashes of tour dates and term times meant that the Honorary President was not able to collect his Presidency in the traditional manner at the Union General Meeting (UGM). Therefore on 15 July, Gary Delaney and I were dispatched to Wembley Stadium to make the official presentation. After much thought, as well as the official certificate of office, we took a pewter LSE tankard and a 'Class of '95' graduation T-shirt.

Armed only with our VIP passes and the names of those we had to meet, we headed into the stadium. Ushered through the standard VIP section to the much more glamorous hospitality suite, we bided our time, awaiting the meeting with the living legend.

Guided into a back trailer dressing room, there he was, sitting on a brown suede sofa, in amongst reams of loud performance clothes. Tastefully dressed in a white shirt and blue jeans, he invited us to sit with him. Before I could open my mouth Gary greeted Mick with: 'CONGRATULATIONS! Mr President.'

I made the presentations informally – it suited the atmosphere and the sentiment of the occasion. Mick seemed genuinely pleased, especially with the certificate, which will be placed on his wall at home. After that we sat down and started to chat. The conversation ranged from his memories of the LSE, which included UGMs and a disastrous accountancy exam. It was this exam which was the catalyst for his decision to talk to his tutor about leaving. It was decided that a provisional year off to pursue his musical career would be the right move\*. At this point I interjected that his degree was still open for him to return and finish, but he graciously declined. We asked if he had any plans to visit the School in the future and he agreed that once the tour was over, he would do a question and answer session for the students. A quarter of an hour later, he excused himself: 'I've got to get ready for the show!'

We left and returned to the hospitality suite, gorged ourselves on the food and sat subdued next to Charlie Watts talking to his family. The concert afterwards was almost, but not quite, an anti-climax.

Mick Jagger's victory may reflect the apolitical mood of current students. However, it may also be that, with ever worsening student hardship, the huge overhaul of the higher education system and limited employment opportunities, this was simply escapism from the deepening intensity of student life and a wish to honour a former member of the School's student body. After all, how many others are there, connected with the LSE, whom students of 136 different nationalities would be able to identify?

*[\* His tutor recalls warning him he would make no money at it! – Ed]*