

The Beaver

27.09.2011

Newspaper of the
LSE Students' Union
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Gender Institute sued by former student

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A former LSE student, Tom Martin, is suing the School's gender studies course, claiming it was sexist against men.

Tom Martin attended the LSE on the MSc Gender, Media and Culture course last year and left after 6 weeks.

Martin has claimed in papers filed at the Central London County Court that male issues were ignored by the courses and teachers. He is seeking £50,000 in damages citing breach of contract, misleading advertising, misrepresentation, and breach of the Gender Equality Duty Act.

He said there was "systemic anti-male discrimination" on the course. Martin added "the core texts we had to read before each class were typically packed with anti-male discrimination and bias - heavily focusing on, exaggerating, and falsifying women's issues perspectives, whilst blaming men, to justify ignoring men's issues. There was no warning of this sexist agenda in the prospectus."

No evidence of bias was found by an internal investigation, however, carried out by the School in response to his allegations. Reports from external examiners stated that it was "exciting to see such a broad range of issues/debates being addressed and the faculty deserve credit for inspiring this in the students" in relation to the MSc Gen-

der, Media and Culture course.

"They simply refuse to acknowledge the research which contradicts the 'women good/men bad', or the 'women victims/men perpetrators' storyline... Science does not come into it at LSE's Gender Institute. Like a religion, the curriculum simply insists, by repetition, attempting to drum the anti-male agenda into the students." Martin said.

The LSE's legal team has asked to that the case be dismissed with the justification that the core texts were not compulsory and that the texts were accessible for both men and women, therefore men were not directly discriminated against. The legal team further claims that "any discriminatory effect [against men] was plainly justifiable".

The School told the Beaver that "[Martin] was unhappy with the course and was offered, and accepted, a full refund in January 2010." The School added that it was made clear to Martin that this was intended as a goodwill gesture and did not represent an admission of liability.

Anne Phillips, Director of the Gender Institute, told the Beaver that "I find it almost surreal when the Gender Institute is portrayed as representing 'women as good, men as bad'; the criticism we more commonly get is that we make things too complicated. Gender research isn't about apportioning blame, and certainly isn't about uncovering timeless truths about an unchanging patriarchy, but it does, inevitably, address power and inequality, and that can be unsettling."