

NOUSE



FIGHTSTAR

The 'Famously Monobrowed One' on censorship, the 7/7 bombings and a certain pop-punk band Page M4

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My journey to Guantanamo Bay Page M10

YUSU defy NUS over boycott

- 31 Students Unions sign a petition taking stance against AUT action
- Armstrong opposes NUS stance after students suffer cancelled exams
- AUT and Vice-Chancellors reach stand-still over latest pay negotiations

By Daniel Whitehead
NEWS EDITOR

YORK STUDENTS' Union has sparked outrage amongst AUT and NUS officials by withdrawing its support for the current lecturers boycott.

YUSU and 30 other SUs have been forced into opposition in the face of first and second year exam cancellations.

The NUS has reacted angrily to a letter signed by 21 SUs, including York, and are now in turmoil after a further 10 Unions have voiced their disapproval leaving just 30 in support of the NUS. The letter criticises the NUS's support of the boycott, describing it as "highly inappropriate and unrepresentative of the vast majority of students".

SU President Micky Armstrong (pictured right) said "I'm here to serve the students of York first...we are not dictated to by NUS". He added, "we support [the AUT's] campaign for better funding but we just cannot support action which is detrimental to students".

In response to criticism from SUs including York, Bristol, and UCL, NUS President Kat Fletcher said "We respect SU autonomy and their right to determine their own policy. However it is interesting that students' unions such as York tend to be those where the decision was taken in a meeting to which the NUS, lecturers unions and employers were not invited".

She also defended NUS support of the boycott, claiming "we strongly

believe we are representing the interests of all our members...If an adequate pay deal isn't met, then we may find that less and less people will enter the lecturing profession, which will have a devastating impact on the quality of education".

The split from NUS policy by YUSU has been seen by AUT representatives as criticism of them rather than the universities. National AUT Press Officer Dan Ashley said "there's been a lot of propaganda coming out on the employers' side" and suggested that SUs focus the blame on the senior management, rather than teaching fellows, adding that the best way to stop the boycott was to target protests at the Universities and Employers Association, the negotiating body for Vice-Chancellors.

Dr Simon Parker (pictured left), who has been at the forefront of the boycott in York, said "the Students' Union should be concentrating its attack on the university management...they are causing the disruption".

However, SUs in opposition disagree, stating in the letter to the AUT that "the assessment boycott is "undermining many years of close relations between lecturers and students. It makes it clear that you see institutions, not lecturers, as responsible for students' education."

The letter adds "We cannot support an action which both creates undue stress for them during this vital time of year and possibly threatens them with the possibility of not graduating."



Vanbrugh students angry after secret laundry closure

By Heidi Blake
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE VANBRUGH laundry facility was demolished over Easter to make way for the conversion of C Block into offices, leaving students with no laundry facilities on their return to York.

The Chair of Vanbrugh JCRC, Mickey Masefield, has spoken out against this action by the University, claiming "they have not thought about students' needs again".

The intention to close the laundry was first announced in the summer term of 2005. The laundry, which was originally set to close in January 2006, was to be replaced by a service in Market Square which the University promised would be operational by December 2005.

At the beginning of last

term, the University announced that, despite its failure to obtain planning permission for the new facility in Market Square, it still intended to close the laundry.

Residents of Vanbrugh reacted with a large protest outside the laundry and a petition of 1125 signatures. As a result of this, Campus Services Manager Sue Johnston met with students and agreed not to close the facility until further notice.

However, Masefield claims that he was "not consulted at all" about the sudden closure of the laundry over Easter, and only found out about it through a forwarded email.

Of the University's promise last term to keep the laundry open until further notice, he said "they just say it to keep students quiet. They're very clever in what

they do. They'll tell you one thing and do another."

David Efird, Vanbrugh's Resident Dean, said last week: "While the closing of the Vanbrugh laundry facility without the Market Square laundry opening...was a bit inconvenient, it was absolutely necessary for the important renovation work happening in C Block."

One source, who cannot be named, claims that the University has received a grant of £600,000 for the work. Jane Whyman, Zone 6 Facilities Manager, refused to comment on the matter.

A Vanbrugh student, who did not wish to be named, said last week "I don't know why they do this to us. They treat students like we don't matter. Why can't they show us some respect? We need to keep clean like everyone else."

Efird said "This situation has been handled with as much sensitivity as possible to the residents of Vanbrugh".

However, Masefield was not satisfied, claiming the University "are letting down the students" and adding "I'm disappointed, but I half expected it."

Nat Thwaites McGowan voiced his support for the University on Tuesday, saying "It's a shame the Market Square facility didn't open, but I don't think we've been screwed at all. We all knew the laundry was going to close, including Masefield. I don't know what he's up to."

Plans for a replacement facility in Market Square have been scrapped and a temporary replacement facility is to open in week 2.

Until then, residents are to use the facilities of Langwith and Derwent.



JCRC Chair Mickey Masefield stands by the site of the recently demolished laundry. Photo: Ally Carmichael

Entwistle trial 'unfair' in US

By Toby Green
EDITOR

THE LAWYER representing Neil Entwistle, the York graduate who is currently awaiting trial charged with murdering his wife and nine-month old child, has claimed that his client "cannot get a fair trial" in the US due to the massive media interest.

Elliott Weinstein was speaking earlier this month after Entwistle, 27, appeared before the American Superior Court to enter a plea of not guilty to two accounts of first-degree murder and various firearm charges. The proceedings

lasted for five minutes and Neil Entwistle remained handcuffed throughout.

Entwistle was the subject of a manhunt after fleeing the US for his native England a day after the murders were believed to have taken place. US Officials later arrested him after questioning and he is currently being held in Cambridge Prison, Massachusetts.

Middlesex County Sheriff, James DiPaola, said: "I find it extremely interesting how calm he is - sort of matter of fact about what he's going through. He's very even-keeled."

Two year degrees trial starts

By Charlotta Salmi
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A NEW DEGREE format, which offers a qualification of the same standard as a three year course but taken over two years, may be initiated as an option nationwide after being piloted in five 'trial' universities around the country.

The scheme will allow students to complete three year courses in the time of two by studying in two semesters of twenty weeks and substituting the summer vacation for a third term. To avoid the demands of this system placing a strain on teaching resources, this arrangement is to be carried

out through distance learning, workshops and independent study.

The five universities piloting the scheme, the University of Northampton, the Medway partnership in Kent, Derby University, Staffordshire University and York neighbour, Leeds Metropolitan University, will be providing their students with the option of a "compressed degree" from September onwards before it is to be decided if the scheme will be expanded and applied nationwide.

This "intensive fast track degree" is geared to provide what Bill Rammell, Minister for Higher Education, described as

"flexibility" in the university experience and it is hoped that it will tempt more students into higher education. By allowing students not only to begin work sooner but to leave university with less debt, the scheme seems to be geared towards attracting young people of different backgrounds or less favourable financial standing. Links have been drawn to the government's target of increasing young people with higher education to fifty per cent, and the scheme may be an initiative to aid government progress in reaching its aims.

However the proposals have been met with criticism. Roger Kline, the head of

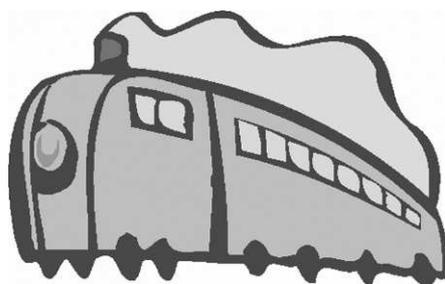
Higher Education for the union fears the new format will encourage "cramming" instead of careful and considered study and result in graduates not developing the necessary skills employers expect graduates to have gained from university.

The National Union of Students has expressed its scepticism and the Union's National Secretary, Gemma Tumelty, has already publicly stated her beliefs that an intensive two year degree will leave less time for part-time work and may cause financial problems for precisely the lower income students which the government is hoping to attract through the scheme.

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Holiday journey not last long enough?
Why travelling by train is great. **M7**

Who's NOUSE

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Moderate success declared for YUSU 'Save the Bars' campaign

By Heidi Blake
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE HIGH profile SU "Save the Bars" campaign met with moderate success at the end last term, when the University agreed not to take any action to reduce opening times before October.

However, the apparent intransigence of the University during recent negotiations with the SU has caused concerns that college bars are still under threat of partial closure.

Talks between University staff, the SU and the GSA are currently underway with a view to finding a way of making college bars more marketable, though relations between the parties involved appear strained.

SU President Mickey Armstrong said in a recent interview that the SU had "met with quite a lot of resistance" during negotiations, adding "I got very angry...we may need to take serious action".

SU Services Officer, Nat Thwaites McGowan, said in an interview last week that he did not "know what direction the University is going to go

in...the ball is in their court", but added that they seem "intent on following the same plan as they had previously" to cut the opening hours of college bars. He added "Certain people in the meeting did not respect the Students' Union".

The possibility of attributing a different theme, such as sports or cocktails, to each bar is one of several options that have been mooted during the talks.

Thwaites McGowan claims that this might remedy a situation in which, at present, "every bar tries to be everything to all its students".

However, a proposal by the University to convert the Langwith facility into a juice bar, has caused concerns among residents that alcohol provision will be withdrawn.

Of this, Micky Armstrong said last week "I see the need for a non-alcoholic space on campus, but not at the expense of a bar. I'd support the idea of a juice bar, as long as Langwith can keep its alcohol provision."

Neither the Bars and Catering Manager Andy Summers or Deputy Vice

Chancellor Felicity Riddy, both of whom have recently played a key part in negotiations, were available for comment.

Speaking for the University last week, Press Officer David Garner said: "Discussions with the SU and the GSA are ongoing. We intend to consult colleges on a range of options over the coming year."

Despite the apparent impasse in negotiations, the SU insist that their "Save the Bars" campaign was "very successful" and claim that it "shocked the university". During the week-long boycott organised by the SU last term, all but two of the campus bars were closed by the university.

Armstrong said last week "We would still like to remind students that if they want to keep their bars they need to use them." The SU will continue to encourage students to use their bars as much as possible.

To this end, a new 'feeder' ticketing system has been implemented, by which tickets for campus events are sold in the bar of a separate college, in order to encourage students to drink there before going on to the main event of the evening.



The SU's 'Save the Bars' campaign posters were put up all over the university

Porters fear negative fallout from ongoing negotiations over hours and rates of pay

By Heidi Blake
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

PORTERS AT THE University have reacted with concern to talks over the restructuring of their role, hours and pay under the Framework Agreement.

The process of negotiation, which is taking place behind closed doors between Unison and senior managers at the University, has led to fears of redundancies and pay cuts.

There has also been controversy over a proposal to pool porters centrally rather than allocating them to specific colleges.

Phil Crampton, a Derwent porter, said on Saturday "We seem to be arguing with fresh air at the moment. Nobody knows



UNISON is currently representing the porters

exactly what we're being offered because they won't tell us.

"There are a lot of arguments now because what they're proposing is that we're losing our time and a half and double time for Saturday and Sunday; we're losing out enhance-

ments for bank holiday weekends and we're losing our enhancement for shift work. We're being screwed basically."

An Alcuin porter who declined to be named said last week "I'm concerned that my job's possibly on the line".

Both porters and students have expressed concerns about the idea of centralised pooling of porters. One student, who did not wish to be named, said "I love the porters in my college. They all know who I am when I come to collect my mail and we have a good chat. If they pool the porters that kind of relationship won't exist anymore."

The ongoing negotiations are in preparation for the implementation of the Framework Agreement, a new grading and pay structure for all University staff that is due to be implemented from August 2006.

According to York University, the Agreement aims to "ensure equal pay for work of equal value, improve the recruitment

and retention of staff, reward the contributions of individuals, provide opportunities for career and organisational development [and] harmonise working hours and conditions so that there is more equality."

The Agreement is part of the nationwide Higher Education Roles Analysis scheme, which grades roles within Higher Education on a points scale and awards salaries accordingly. Speaking for the University on Friday, Press Officer David Garner said "There is no suggestion of redundancies - if anything, the University may need to recruit more staff."

He explained that while working hours for porters will be reduced from 38 to 37 per week, an

increase in their hourly rate will mean that there will be no pay loss.

Of concerns about the possibility of the centralised pooling of porters, Garner said "a smaller total number of staff hours to cover the same amount of work [will mean] that working arrangements will have to be more flexible and a number of options are under discussion. But nothing has yet been settled and negotiations are ongoing."

Ken Batten, Manager of Security and Support Services, refused to comment on the talks on Friday, saying "All discussions are being done in confidence between unions and senior managers. Until they are concluded nothing can be said."

Exams cancelled while pay

By Daniel Whitehead
NEWS EDITOR

HUNDREDS OF YORK students face uncertainty over their academic futures after first and second year students were informed of exam cancellations last week due to the current lecturers' Assesment Boycott.

The cancellations come at a time when talks between the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA) have been described as having reached an "impasse".

The matter, which is being dealt with on a national scale, could also affect final year students if it fails to be resolved in the coming weeks; with the distinct possibility of some York students not graduating in the summer term.

The present concern

over students being unable to graduate has heightened this week as Keele University took the drastic step of proposing that degrees should be handed out to students who have completed only two thirds of their final year.

Gemma Machin, a second-year student from Keele, described the situation as "disgusting" adding "students are in uproar".

York are yet to decide on a policy for dealing with graduation problems. University Press Officer Dave Garner said last week "we have to stand by and be guided by what happens nationally".

Biology is one of several subjects which have been affected by the cancellations.

Second year Biology representative Matt Turley who found out his exam was to be cancelled only days before it was scheduled to take place, said he was particularly angry at

the way the dispute has been handled, stating that students were "not aware of the strike action" and accusing lecturers and the university of not providing enough information. He added "it's really unfair that we have been treated this way".

Turley and other second year Biology students held a meeting last week to discuss how to deal with the crisis. It was decided that a letter would be written to Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brian Cantor, to ask that a solution to the boycott is found swiftly.

Lisa Trickett, a first year Biology student, also felt aggrieved by the current exam situation saying, "I feel frustrated I wasted time revising over the holidays.

"Exams being rescheduled will affect the marks I get for the modules this term".

Despite increasing worries as to students'

futures, neither AUT or UCEA can agree terms on re-starting negotiations, with both parties saying that the opposition is standing in the way of talks recommencing.

AUT representatives admitted that "talks about talks are happening at the moment, but the ball is very much in the hands of the employers who are refusing to talk with us until the boycott is stopped."

In contrast, employers said that they "are continuing to talk about how best to get them back into negotiations" adding "we hope to see that the AUT rejoin negotiations at the earliest opportunity."

The AUT's expressed justification for the strikes is that an agreement was made between them and university Vice-Chancellors that pay for teaching fellows would increase once the £3.6 billion generated by top-up Fees came into the sector this year.

National AUT Press Officer, Dan Ashley said "this isn't an outlandish moon-on-a-stick claim: we're only asking for money that was promised to us".

However, a pay rise of 20% is now being demanded by AUT officials, which they claim is in line with the 25% pay-rise which Vice-Chancellors have received over the last three years. UCEA Press Officer, Matt Granger, argues this "would



Lecturers at picket during strikes last term. Photo: Adam Sloan

account for all the new income in the sector," adding that employers feel that the boycott occurred pre-emptively to negotiations and is therefore unjustified.

In a recent interview Dr Simon Parker, the AUT spokesperson for York

University, accused employers of taking "a feudal Victorian mill-owner attitude".

He went on to say that employers were still offering the same "meagre" pay rise offered last year, asking "what alternative do we have?"

AUT assessment boycott: The story so far

17 February

AUT and Natfhe vote in favour of industrial action

7 March

Lecturers walk out in a one day strike

12 April

A letter signed by 20 Students' Unions, later to be supported by 10 others, is sent to the AUT general secretary demand-

ing an end to the assessment boycott

19 April

Students are informed of exam cancellations

Tony Blair visits campus as controversy grows over the Heslington East expansion

By Toby Green
EDITOR

A LEADING CHARITY designed to protect countryside areas has waded into the argument surrounding the University's plans for expansion; an issue which has recently seen the involvement of Tony Blair and John Prescott.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England has joined Heslington residents in opposition to the controversial proposals for the development of Heslington East at the public inquiry that opened last week.

Tony Blair made a visit to campus last month in a

move seen by many as an endorsement of the University's plans, despite the fact that the Chancellor, Greg Dyke, once said "our democratic system is in crisis as a result of [Blair's] style of government."

The Prime Minister was on campus to open a new Science Learning Centre costing £25 million which he praised for showing "a great vision of how science can be taught."

At the public inquiry into Heslington East at the Guildhall in York, which was given the go ahead by John Prescott, Dr Guy Woolley, district chairman for the York division of the CPRE said "We agree this



The Prime Minister on a visit to campus last month

University should expand because of the socio-economic benefits it would bring to the city, but we submit that the evidence strongly suggests there is scope with expanding the current campus."

However Frances Patterson, speaking for the University, has promised residents that the plans would not constitute "urban sprawl" and that "the University has been sensitive to its local community, and devised a scheme for its expansion which is sustainable.

"There are some negative impacts [but] wherever possible those impacts have been minimalised. The result is a proposal which will pro-

tect a national asset."

Vice-Chancellor Brian Cantor also promised that once the Heslington East campus had been built, the rate of expansion would be halted, and said that the University's aim was to "promote excellence"

The University, which is the sixth smallest in England, has maintained that extra capacity is required if York is to build on its reputation.

Patterson revealed that supply of places is not meeting demand, with nine applications received for every place, and that the new 65-hectare campus will mean that "the ability to attract more applicants can be met."

negotiations reach impasse

Polled students support SU opposition of boycott

By Heidi Blake
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

When asked whether other forms of protest such as boycotting research had been properly considered, as suggested by SUs who have recently withdrawn support of the boycott, Parker said "the long-term consequences of all other actions available to us is much worse". Aborting research projects would cause job losses and be "damaging to people in a permanent way...if we thought there was a way of targeting only university senior management and no one else we would have. We thought long and hard about this".

Parker called the current boycott "a once in a generation opportunity", claiming "UK academics are some of the most successful in the world, and the least paid. We are not being selfish, we are actually protecting the future of British universities".

He added "I think we will be benefiting students in the long term by making graduate careers more attractive".

Conversely, UCEA say they are ready to start negotiating for a higher rise than the current 6% which is on the table, but according to a spokesperson "despite the softening of the employers' line this week, the AUT made absolutely no movement whatsoever".

A POLL CARRIED out by Nouse has revealed that, despite the fact that most students support the lecturers' pay demands, the overwhelming majority disagree with the assessment boycott as a means of protest.

While 59% of those asked said they supported lecturers' demands for better pay, 81% said they opposed the assessment boycott.

The poll also showed that the student body by and large support YUSU's decision to stand against the NUS in openly denouncing the boycott. 89% of students asked said they backed this move.

Vanbrugh resident Adam Foster said of the move by YUSU: "It's good to see they've got a bit of back-bone about something for a change."

A Goodricke student, who cannot be named, said: "The SU have definitely done the right thing here. What the lecturers are doing is appalling, and it's the job of our Students' Union to defend us against this kind of abuse."

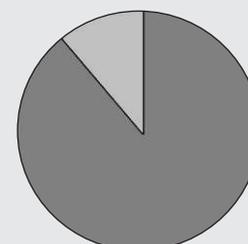
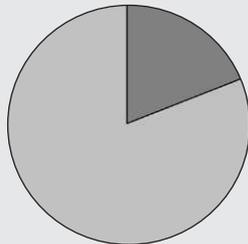
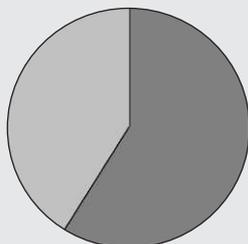
Despite this widespread disapproval of the assessment boycott, students showed considerable sympathy towards lecturers' demands for higher pay.

One Derwent student commented: "The University should cough up and pay them properly. They're the guilty party."

AUT placards outside Heslington Hall.
Photo: Adam Sloan



What the students think: the results of our poll



'Super-buses' to serve no. 4 route

By Toby Green
EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY is soon to be served by a fleet of controversial 'super-buses' that have cost the First Bus Company over £3 million.

From May 8th new FTR buses, named after the text message version of the word 'future', will be running on the No. 4 route.

The new vehicles are air conditioned and fitted with lounge-style seating, described by one tester as like "seating in a night club." There will also be wall cushions for standing passengers. First believe that the new service will increase usage of the route by 6%.

However, the system of payment which is to be implemented has been

described by some as 'unfair'. Pricing will be standardised to £1.50 for a single, £2.50 for a return and £3 for an all day ticket. Payment onboard will be made by machines which do not give change. Instead, passengers are being encouraged to use a system of text messaging to purchase tickets before travelling.

Conor Cooling, a 2nd year Economics student, believes that the new system is flawed. He said "Why should I be punished if I don't have the right change?"

York First's commercial director, John Edwards, has denied that the system is designed to prevent passengers paying by cash but does admit that it will make it "relatively more convenient for people to pre-pay."

Signed bands to play Halifax

By Robin Seaton
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THURSDAY OF week three will see the first Halifax gig by a signed band in years. Ireland's Director will headline the gig, with support from Lamacq favourites The Hair and Battle of the Bands finalists The Memos.

Director recently had an Irish top ten with their single 'Reconnect', and look set for similar success here, on the back of heavy promotion from their record company, Atlantic. The event, which will take place at JJ's bar, will have a late licence.

Director's Owen commented: "We play a lot of small campus gigs in Ireland. Having a band just makes it more of an event, especially in places that don't have much of a gigging scene. Students tend to be more



The Hair are one of the signed bands playing at JJ's

likely to listen with an open ear than people who can go to gigs all the time". The band's tour takes in the London and Glasgow Barflys, but they have decided against playing the York Barfly (Fibbers) in favour of JJ's bar. Support act The Hair are relatively local, based in Leeds and York.

The URY-organised gig is just one manifestation of recent moves among record labels to promote their bands more heavily to students, even on small campuses like York. The organiser, URY's Chris Havergal, claimed "labels want to work with URY to get their acts onto campus. It's the way things

are going". Chris went on to say that "York's campus generally has a complete scarcity of top-level acts, so to get an act who are signed to one of the UK's top labels is quite a coup. This could be the start of something cool".

While signed artists regularly play the YUSU events Fresh and GradBall, York hosts very few individual gigs. The last major gig on campus was in the autumn term of 2004, when Hope Of The States and The Open played in Vanbrugh Dining Hall. "People should turn up and support this event. It's really good to get a signed band to play here for beer money," said Chris Reed, URY's new head of music. "Hopefully, if this event goes well we'll be able to host many more like it".

Tickets are available from Your:Shop, and cost £2.

Counselling service failing to cope with increasing student demand

By Ellen Carpenter
DEPUTY EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY Counselling Service is seriously underfunded and struggling to cope with the volume of students needing help, according to a senior member of staff. A recent small increase in funding has not been enough to keep up with a 30% rise in student requests over the past year.

Dr. Caroline Hall, head of the Counselling Service, has called for the University to put mental health at the top of its agenda, saying that "increasingly universities are run as business concerns" and that the University should concentrate on being "the best possible place in terms of wellbeing". The University has responded by promising a full review of the service this autumn.

Despite a new system whereby every student requesting help is given a 30 minute session within two weeks, waiting lists for actual counselling courses remain long.

Dr. Hall detailed the

difficulties for counsellors of being aware of students' problems but being unable to help quickly, saying "it is frustrating to see problems that we could deal with if we had the resources".

However, she did suggest that the increase may be a sign that students are more aware of what help is available, emphasising that the Counselling Service is not the only means of support accessible to students.

Dr. Hall cited stress as the main cause of students' mental health problems, saying "there's too much testing throughout their lives, and we see a definite increase in requests around exam time", going on to compare York to Oxford and Cambridge for the amount of academic stress suffered by students.

The severity of students' problems has also increased, with questionnaires given to students to evaluate their needs revealing that many are serious enough to merit consulting a GP.

York's rise in students using the Counselling



Exams are causing students stress.
Photo: Georgi Mabee

Service is reflected in a nation-wide increase in mental health problems among students, with recent studies finding that one in four students will suffer from such problems during their time at university, and are more at risk than other groups of

young people.

Dr. Hall criticised the Government for its higher education policy, saying "I get very angry at the government for sending lots of people to university as it doesn't suit everybody", also suggesting that that financial concerns "might

be a part of it".

The need for the Counselling Service to find ways of better serving students' requests with their limited funding has also raised, and Dr. Hall has called for students to suggest ways of improving the service.

The time of your life?

Toby Green examines the worrying trend developing between University and mental health issues, and talks to York students about their experiences **M2**

Flaws revealed in new SU feeder-bar system

By Heidi Blake
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

FLAWS IN A new 'feeder' ticketing system pioneered by the SU were revealed on Saturday when hundreds of students, many of whom had queued over an hour, were denied access to Club D.

Students were told to arrive at Langwith at 8pm to pick up their tickets for the Derwent event Club D as part of the new scheme devised by the SU to increase the usage of campus bars before events. However tickets did not actually go on sale until 9.30pm.

Students were repeatedly reassured by megaphone that, once they had arrived at Langwith, tickets would be on sale until 10.30pm and that there were enough tickets available for everyone in the queue.



Croker, President elect

However at 9.45pm it was announced that tickets had sold out, leaving hundreds in the queue - many of whom were sporting elaborate beach-wear in aid of the Club D beach theme - unable to gain access to the event.

Rich Croker, next year's SU President, denied claims by angry students that the system was "a shambles", say-

ing "Campus events are popular when they are done properly".

He later acknowledged that the confusion was the result of "a flaw in the feeder system", claiming that the new practice of issuing paper tickets instead of wristbands allows students to buy tickets in bulk for absent friends, leaving people behind them in the queue stranded.

Alcun student Helen Tilley, one of the many disappointed on Saturday night, said "I can't believe I've had to queue all this time for nothing. It really makes you lose your faith in the Students' Union.

"They keep going on about campus bars being as good as town, but this kind of thing just proves that the systems can't be relied on. Next time I just won't bother."

Police arrest student for swimming in Ouse

By Jo Shelley
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A YORK STUDENT was arrested in the early hours of Thursday the 20th of April after he was found in a drunken state in the river Ouse.

The student, who cannot be named for welfare reasons, had to be pulled from the river by the Emergency Services following an alcohol-fuelled night in town with friends. He was given a health check and spent the night in police custody, but was let off with a fifty-pound fixed penalty notice for being drunk in a public highway.

The student became separated from his friends after leaving the Gallery at an unknown time "in a horrific state. The next thing I knew, I was floating in the

River Ouse, wondering what on earth had happened. Due to my drunkenness, I wasn't particularly worried - more bemused."

He now suspects he either "accidentally staggered into the River when I was walking too close to the edge or I thought it would be clever to swim home."

The student was spotted by "some good Samaritans" who called the Emergency Services. He was pulled out by the Fire Service with a ladder.

"I have to commend them on their help as it must be annoying to help drunks when they probably have more important matters to attend to. Although I laugh now, I was so drunk I probably could have easily died of hyperthermia had no one arrived to help me."

PC Chris Pool of North

Yorkshire Police agrees that the student was extremely fortunate not to have suffered more serious injuries.

"Nearly everyone who goes in the river has to be taken to hospital. The currents are very, very strong and there have been fatalities in recent years."

The student said "I consider myself very lucky that my strong disposition helped me to avoid a stomach pumping.

"Let this be a lesson to all you binge drinkers out there. Whilst it may be fun to go out and get trolled, don't go swimming in the Ouse because it will catch up with you."

Swimming in the river is not a criminal offence and the student admitted that the fine "was more than acceptable considering my predicament."



The 200ft York wheel has been declared a success after more than 17,000 visitors took a ride on it over the Easter holiday weekend. These pictures, taken on the wheel, show the panorama from the top. It is hoped that it will attract a million visitors over the three years the wheel is expected to remain. Photos by Georgi Mabee

Campus media continue their award successes

By Ben Toone
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

YORK UNIVERSITY enhanced its standing in the world of student media with the success of its television and radio societies. At the National Student Television Association Awards, YSTV collected the 'Best Station Ident' award after being highly commended in last year's awards and winning it in 2003. They narrowly missed out on the 'Best Broadcaster' category to Loughborough's student station. 15 stations participated in the awards and conference, which was hosted jointly at Leeds by YSTV and Leeds Student Television who themselves scooped four awards. This academic year has seen award winning performances on all fronts of the student media, including the URY winning 'Best Student Station' at the Student Radio Associations awards in its

first year of entry. As part of the prize the station gets to broadcast live from Radio 1 on Monday May 29th at the BBC's London studios, with three URY presenters going on air. The bank holiday broadcast will be on in the 4am-7am slot preceding the JK and Joel show. Programme Controller Sarah Forster said "We're really excited to get this chance to be on national radio, our hard work has paid off. Hopefully it means a lot more people will get to enjoy what URY is about, rather than having to limit it to just York's students." The station is planning to continue its outside broadcasts, hosting a live event in JJ's bar featuring Dublin band Director in week 3. The event is supported by Leeds group The Hair and campus favourites The Memos. Tickets are priced £2 and are available from YOUR:SHOP.

Big D clash with Summer Ball creates ticket doubts

By Anna Bevan and Adam Sloan

AFTER MONTHS OF planning and preparation, the final details for the YUSU Summer Ball have been disclosed, amidst controversy over the scheduling of the event which is to take place the day before Derwent College's flagship charity event Big D. The scheduling clash has led to concerns that ticket sales for the events, both of which feature signed headlining acts and fairground rides, will be negatively affected. YUSU Services officer, Nat Thwaites-McGowan, who is responsible for the booking of the Summer Ball, commented: "We had a choice of week ten or week 11. Were it week 11, students would have already left their houses and would have had to return for Summer Ball, and then again for graduation the week after. Week ten seemed the best all round



All-night tickets are priced at £60, while after-dinner tickets are just £30. Tickets can be purchased online

and allowed after dinner tickets too." Thwaites-McGowan does not believe the proximity of the two events to each other will have any detrimental effect on ticket sales for either event. "I think that Summer Ball is going to be a really strong event. Whether it will sell out I don't know, but it should definitely break even. I'm offering as much help to Derwent as I can to make their event also a success."

Big-D organiser Caroline Macfarlane said about the clash: "Ideally we would prefer it if there wasn't an event in the same week, but Big D is going to be really amazing this year. Every year we sell out, it is the biggest event of term and the best event of term." Not everybody is confident that the event will be a sell-out however and there has been some reluctance from Commercial Services to allow Big D organisers use of

both Derwent and Langwith facilities. Bars and Licensing manager Andy Summers commented; "The reason for our concern is I do not feel that the event will sell out with Gradball being the day before." The Summer Ball which this year is open to all students, features the band Straight Outta Newport, Welsh rappers Goldie Lookin' Chain, Abba tribute group Bjorn Again and York University's very own Battle of the Band finalists The Love Apples. Guests at the Summer Ball will be provided with a champagne reception, four-course meal and a chocolate fountain. A casino, racing games, dodgems, a carousel, waltzers and a free Survivors Photograph will also be on offer. All night tickets are priced at £60, whilst after dinner tickets are just £30. Buy online now at www.yusu.org/summerball.

Fugitive mafia boss apprehended in Sicily

By Albi Surlan

Before Marlon Brando, there were two, real Godfathers, who inspired the famous trilogy and many other gangster stories. The first, "Joe Bananas", died in 2002, but the second, Bernardo Provenzano, was captured in a bunker in Sicily two weeks ago, after a 43 year search.

The "boss of bosses", who earned himself the nickname of "Benny the Tractor" for the frequency with which he mowed people down, was tracked down by following his *pizzini*. These were encrypted letters sent out through his network of

helpers to other, smaller fish in the Sicilian mafia, giving them his orders. He was found in his cove, just outside the notorious town of Corleone, which was littered with codes, letters, and notes for keeping track of his underground empire of extortion and protection.

And it's that last word which is splitting Sicilian public opinion according to age: protection. When "Il Capo" was brought into prison, hundreds of people showed up to insult him, chanting: "We are the real Sicily, you are just a shame". The average age in the crowd however must have been below 30. Many elderly Sicilians, at least the ones that

have been protected by the Mafia in its golden days, are more or less openly, supporting the boss. One fishmonger openly shouted "Viva Provenzano" on tv, claiming that there was no proof against him, and many believe he actually protected businesses and families.

The fact is, while the older generations still seem to support the deeds of this real life godfather, one cannot help think if this is what they actually believe, or if it's what they have to say in front of the cameras. The Mafia is as quick at replacing people as it is at eliminating them, and while a heavy blow, the capture of Provenzano does not destroy the whole infrastructure. The smaller bosses and the *picciotti* who "take care of business" are still active, although in decreasing numbers, and Sicilians know that the government allows for freedom of speech, but the Mafia is hardly as forgiving towards people who criticise its sovereignty. It is only a matter of time before Provenzano is replaced.

Provenzano has been put into isolation until his trial starts, and he has many a crime to answer to; going back to 1963. Contact with the outside world is highly monitored as this man is a mastermind that evaded capture for nearly half a century. Conspiracy theorists have gone wild with the fact that he was caught a few hours after the new, left-wing Italian government was elected. It's thought that he was "protected" by them until they won, and his capture used to promote their first great achievement. This seems unlikely however.

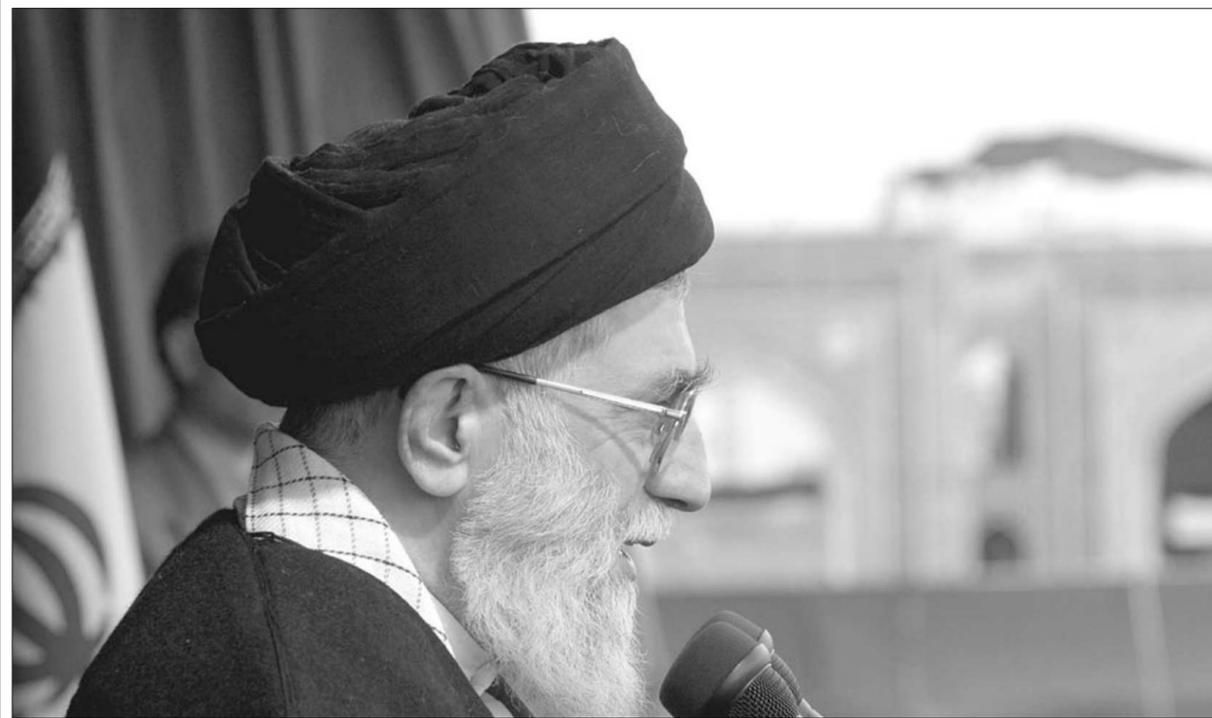
Whatever the speculations, a reign has ended, and no one of Sicily, regardless of age, knows if a new reign is about to begin.



Bernardo Provenzano repeatedly changed his appearance in order to evade detection, as demonstrated by these police photo fits.

Iran defiant in face of US machismo

Mike Maiden discusses the American and European Union's fears over increased Iranian nuclear capacity combined with anti-Israeli rhetoric



Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei threatened that if America attacks Iran, US interests around the globe would be harmed

Ali Larijani, Iran's chief negotiator to the International Atomic Energy Agency, warned last Tuesday that Iran would leave the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) if United Nations sanctions were imposed against them. This follows a statement by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian President, which raised fears of a major international stand-

off after revealing on April 11th that Iran had developed enriched uranium. The UN Security Council issued a statement calling on Iran to suspend its enrichment program, in accordance with the demands of the IAEA. The UN expressed disappointment in response to Iran's revelation. President Bush stated that whilst the international world should strive to resolve the situation

diplomatically, if talks fail "all options are on the table." President Ahmadinejad retaliated that Iran would "cut off the hand of any aggressor," a warning to America.

Members of the Security Council first became aware of the Iranian nuclear question in 2002, when the IAEA discovered that the Iranians had been working on a secret enrichment program for

eighteen years. A further shock emerged with revelations by the Pakistani government in 2004 that Dr A Q Khan, head of Pakistan's nuclear weapons research team, had leaked sensitive nuclear information to the Iranians from 1991 onwards. The Iranians have increased suspicion by renegeing on an agreement to permit the IAEA to perform extra inspections, on top of those that the



America fears the combination of nuclear and missile technology

IAEA already conduct. On top of this, the election of President Ahmadinejad has increased tensions with the West. One month after his inauguration in August 2005, he stated that Israel (a close ally of the US) should be "wiped off the map." In his first speech to the UN Security Council, in September 2005, he criticised the policy of pre-emptive strikes on states, seen by many as a condemnation of the invasion of Iraq. The Russians, a member state holding a permanent veto, is unwilling to impose sanctions on Iran. Talks between Western powers in Moscow in April saw Mikhail Kamynin, of the Russian foreign office rule out imposing sanctions.

He said that fears over Iran "cannot be eased through sanctions and use of force." The Russians however, have significant business ties with the Islamic Republic, which sanctions would be sure to sever. China, another veto power, also has links to Iran.

In their defence the Iranians assert that they intend to use nuclear fuel for civilian purposes only. On August 9th 2005, Ayatollah Khamenei issued a Fatwa (an Islamic legal decree), stating that the "production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons are forbidden under Islam." Iran is also a signatory of the NPT, and as such is entitled to enrich uranium for civilian use.

Energy experts estimate that Iran's oil supplies will dry up within one hundred years, and argue that Iran is looking for alternative energy solutions now. They also point to the fact that the Iranians have only managed to achieve a 3.5% enrichment of uranium, adequate for civilian use, but far off the 80% considered necessary to make a nuclear bomb. As yet, the IAEA's inspectors have found no evidence of a nuclear weapons program, and the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London estimate that it would take from between three to fifteen years for Iran to develop one. The UN called for Israel, who are not signatories of the NPT, to rid themselves of nuclear weapons in June 2004. Israel refused, but no action was taken against them by the Security Council. Muhammad al-Baradai, chief of the IAEA, said that this had caused anger in the region, as it created a "widespread imbalance" of power in the Middle East.

The Iranian standoff comes just one year after North Korea revealed that it had produced nuclear weapons, and was not willing to rejoin the NPT, which it left in 2003. Heavy sanctions have not prevented the North Koreans from acquiring both military and civilian nuclear capacities. China and South Korea have tried to entice the rogue state back to talks with promises of economic aid, primarily through monetary loans. Analysts in The Economist see this as a bad move, arguing it encourages North Korea to rattle the sabre in order to extract more concessions from the international world. After the failures against Saddam in the 1990s and North Korea today, a united front by the Security Council will be essential in dealing with the Iranian question.

'Abolition of Parliament Act' censured

By Nick Dingwall

A controversial bill that some have claimed lays the foundations for fascism and Nazism was given its second reading in Parliament last month. The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill will give ministers power to amend or replace legislation without having to bring a Bill to Parliament.

The man behind this bill is Jim Murphy, Labour MP for East Renfrewshire, and a former president of the National Union of Students. Under his leadership, the NUS abandoned their opposition to the abolition of student grants in line with New Labour education policy.

The new proposals are meant to streamline the process of making new laws: instead of the current sys-

tem of parliamentary debate, a minister will be able to enact a law simply by issuing an 'order'. This is supposed to cut down on bureaucracy and help to update legislation that is perceived to be "outdated, unnecessary or over-complicated."

It will, apparently, help British businesses who have to pay billions each year on regulation. Although similar powers are included in the existing Regulatory Reform Act 2001, they have been described as "too technical and limited" by the Cabinet Office.

So now the government want to remove most of the conditions and safeguards that make the existing bill inefficient, leaving just five clauses that control its use: it cannot be used to impose new taxes or to create a new crime punishable by over two years in prison. Neither can it be used to authorise any forcible

entry, search or seizure, or compel the giving of evidence. The final two clauses limit its use in Scotland and on the functions of the Welsh Assembly.

There are further guidelines that are meant to control its use, such as a requirement that the new provision should not "prevent any person from continuing to exercise any right or freedom which that person might reasonably expect to continue to exercise" and a remarkably vague rule that "the effect of the provision [should be] proportionate to the policy objective."

However, since only the minister involved has to be convinced of the answers, these already fuzzy guidelines could be interpreted as loosely as required.

The powers that the bill provides even extends to altering itself, so ministers could rewrite it to extend

its potential even further and remove its constraints.

As six professors of law from Cambridge University pointed out in a letter to the Times, this bill could potentially be used to sack judges, authorise house arrest, abolish jury trial, rewrite laws on immigration or amend the Magna Carta.

Bizarrely, it has received very little attention in the main-stream press. Proposed the week before debates were held on ID cards, smoking in public places and the glorification of terror, it was drowned out by the weight of comment on these more media-friendly concerns.

But since this bill would enable Labour to pass each of these new laws without debate, perhaps the media should change tact.

Naturally, this Bill has provoked heavy criticism, and has even been

compared to Hitler's Enabling Act 1933 which gave Hitler's cabinet the ability to enact new laws without consulting the Reichstag. Caroline Lucas MEP, speaking at the Green Party conference, dubbed it the "Abolition of Parliament Act", a sentiment that, according to the Times, is echoed by many constitutional experts.

In response to these concerns, Mr Murphy assured Parliament that "the orders will not be used to implement highly controversial reforms." However, a committee of MPs has rejected this assurance and has insisted that the bill must be redrafted to introduce "real restrictions to the government powers," especially since future governments will not be bound by his promise. The bill still needs to pass a second reading and will most likely face opposition from the House of Lords



Reform Bill reaches Parliament

The Campus Soapbox

Alex Rose
Chair of York Tories

Here's a thought: by the time the next issue of Nouse is published, an average of £258 million pounds - enough to pay for the yearly salaries of over 15,000 N.H.S nurses - will have been illegally siphoned off the European Union's budget, according to an Ernst and Young audit from 2004. Or, put simply, £25,000 by the time you have read this column.

Indeed, this is hardly surprising, given that the E.U.'s own Court of Auditors have rejected the budget owing to financial irregularities for the past eleven consecutive years. However, don't just take my word for it: if you log onto the E.U.'s website (www.eurpopa.eu.int), entry number twenty-one under the heading 'what the European Union does' actually states 'fraud!' In this respect, the best example

of the E.U.'s 'financial probity' regards the case of Commissioner Edith Cresson. Apart from suffering the unfortunate handicap of being French, it transpired that the former Premier had been awarding governmental contracts to her dentist, Rene Berthelot. Naturally, Monsieur Berthelot was totally unqualified for such work, being more accustomed to removing people's teeth; nonetheless, he was paid £125,000. Rather like my dissertation, it seems that his work was not up to scratch, and no-one could find any evidence that he had actually done anything productive.

Moreover, apart from being an Aegean Stables of fraud, corruption and embezzlement, the E.U manages to combine the worst elements of two political creeds: socialism and authoritarianism, culminating in a bossy, 'one size fits all' approach.

For example, the E.U had the audacity to evoke the new powers outlined in the European Constitution immediately, several months before the forthcoming referendum. In doing so, it violated the sacrosanct principle of democracy - that people confer power upon the government, not the other way around.

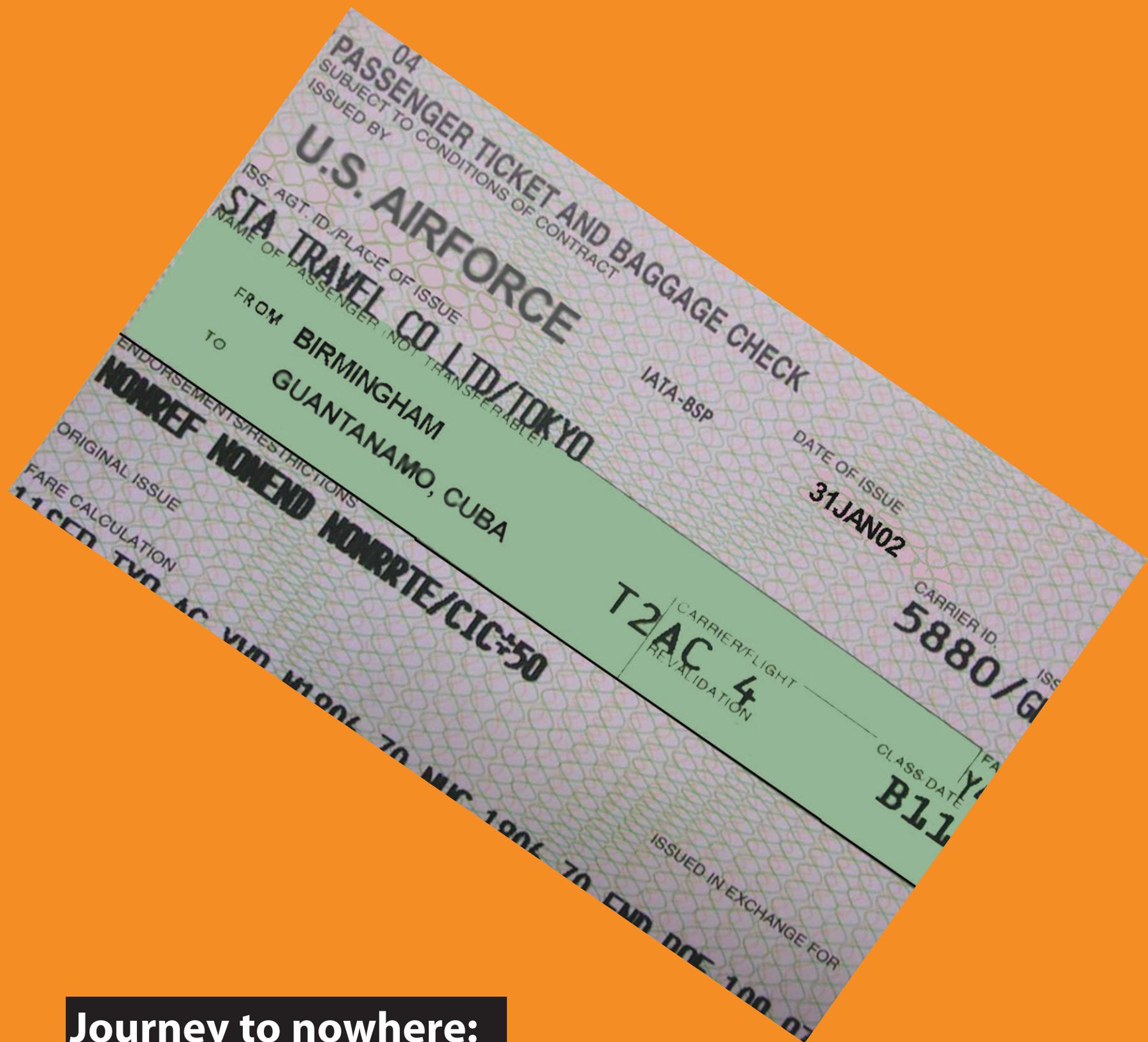
Consequently, the Constitution was rejected by the French and the Dutch voters, but that did not stop one Commissioner from uttering perhaps the most ridiculous remark in recent political history: 'there are some who want to return to the old intergovernmental way of doing things. To those I say come to Terezin [a Nazi concentration camp] and see where that old road leads.' Apparently, therefore, anyone who believes in accountability and financial probity is a raving Nazi;

God only knows the sort of judgment reserved for unelected, second-rate politicians with no appreciation or understanding of democracy and no respect for European history.

Ultimately, there are no doubt those who will insist that we can work from within the E.U to reform it. To be honest, King Canute had a better chance with the tide; Great Britain's influence constitutes just 29 votes out of 321 in the Council of Ministers. If any further evidence were needed, consider the following words of Romano Prodi following his appointment in 2001 as President of the E.U Commission: 'I have executive powers, for which there is no other name in the world, whether you like it or not, than government.'

How do you vote out an unelected President?

MUSE



**Journey to nowhere:
Moazzam Begg's trip
to Guantanamo M10-11**

Having the time of your

The stress of University life is often ignored, yet one in four students will suffer from problems during their time at York. **Toby Green** talks to sufferers of these illnesses that despite an increased awareness, they are still haunted by stigma and a lack of

The appeals of University life are clear for everybody to see: minimal hours in the lecture theatre, constant drinking in cheap bars and late mornings, all resulting in an easy route to an eminent and well paid job. Even top up fees and the increased competition in the graduate job market have done little to dispel the myth that students are lazy tax-dodgers, whose biggest worry is how to avoid their drunken fling the morning after.

Yet the reality is very different, and many students are finding University life an increasingly stressful and worrying experience. The NUS, in conjunction with the Royal College of Psychiatrists, revealed in 2003 that one in four students suffer from mental health problems whilst at University, and that students are more likely as a group to suffer mental illness than any other group of young people. It was also revealed that from 1984 to 1994 student suicides rose by four times.

So why is University proving to be such a difficult time for some students? For Rachel*, a third year York University student, her problems with self harm and depression reappeared when her flatmates started to exclude her after Freshers' week.

"Self harm was my way of punishing myself for not being likeable, which also linked in with the fact that unlike all my flatmates I didn't have a boyfriend. At school I was used to being the cleverest person in all my lessons. Here, I sat in lectures of 140 people and felt like the stupidest person there. Everyone else seemed so much more confident in seminars and was able to get all the reading done and still have a packed social life."

For most students, especially those that chose not to take a gap year, going to University will be their first time moving away from home and spending a significant amount of time in a new place. Not only can this be an extremely lonely and isolating experience, it can also aggravate and bring back problems that were able to be managed whilst at home.

Michelle*, a 2nd year Psychology student, came to York having seemingly beaten her struggle with anorexia. "I'd never lived away from home before and although I came to university having recovered, the moment I was given complete control of my food I relapsed. I found being in a strange environment really stressful and though I realise it is something every student goes through,

for people more vulnerable to mental health issues it is a real strain.

"I think my eating disorder had a lot to do with being the only thing in my life I felt I could control and achieve anything with. It wasn't helped as the people I lived with hadn't had much experience living with someone with a problem like this, so when I wouldn't eat for a few days or eat very little they assumed it was normal behaviour. At home my friends and family would have immediately recognised the warning signs of a relapse."

Amy Foxtan, Academic and Welfare Officer elect and former coordinator of Nightline, has worked to highlight the specific problems students can face with regards to mental illness and made it a key component of her recent election manifesto. "There's a lot of pressure on students to succeed academically, to participate in as many extra-curricular activities as possible (because these days 'a degree isn't enough'), to have an amazing social life and to fund their studies if they don't have financial support from their parents. This all creates a stressful environment, which can only aggravate mental health problems."

The NUS has also singled out rising student debts as a cause for worry, publicly stating that student stress is "largely due to the ever increasing debt and hardship that students face." The issue of fees can also put students off confiding in parents who have financially contributed to their education, feeling that they have a duty to present a rosy picture even when university is proving an ordeal.

However, alongside work and financial stresses comes an emphasis on the social side of university that can leave students feeling inferior and lonely. This aspect, particularly in Freshers' week, often concentrates on the consumption of alcohol as a method by which to attract friends. This can cause serious problems; for example, students who are taking medication will be loathe to explain to people they have just met why they are not drinking. In particular, this creates an unfair disadvantage for those who can't or won't drink. These students can often find it harder as a result to make friends and fit in, not only during the first weeks of term but when joining societies and sports clubs.

Neil Barnes, the current Academic and Welfare officer, feels some of the blame for this should be taken by the Students' Union. "The University cre-



Photo: Georgi Mabee

"Self harm was my way of punishing myself. At school I was used to being the cleverest person in all my lessons. Here I sat in lectures and felt like the stupidest person there"

ates the amount of studying that needs to be done, but the Students' Union have a large hand in creating a 'standard' for social life. We organise alcoholic events, encourage clubbing and spending money, which all contribute to mental illness, so we have to take some responsibility.

"New students arrive and are told from the word go by some JCRC reps that they have to do this or that, or they're not 'cool'. If a new student doesn't down 8 pints of snakebite on their first night, then they don't become part of the 'in-crowd'. This behaviour is then repeated every night for a week. However, if one student finds that they need more time to acclimatise then they are left behind by those who are over-excited and fit in straight away.

"Homesickness and a feeling of loneliness starts to set in and all because some of the JCRCs who are supposed to make students feel welcome have set an impossible standard for everyone to follow. What kind of responsible person thinks it's reasonable to drag everyone out clubbing in the Gallery, plastered in a strange city they've not been in before, 5 hours after

they've arrived?"

The statistics are continuing to pile up with worrying regularity. A two-year study conducted by the Camelot Foundation and the Mental Health Foundation, entitled 'Truth Hurts', has just been published showing that a startling 1-in-15 youngsters is believed to have self-harmed and the amount of students needing help has meant that the system is starting to struggle to cope. A lack of resources remains a problem, despite the fact that, since 2000, £440m has been spent in England on services for young people with mental illness. Health professionals still aren't satisfied that they are able to provide enough help for those that need it. Dr Caroline Hall is the head of the University Counselling Service for Students and is increasingly worried about the students that she sees.

"We are simply not able to cope with all the people who have requested help, and we have a very large waiting list. Nationally, there's a big concern and we professionals working in the field feel these problems have got worse. We've asked for more money from the University, but obviously they're in a tight situation at the moment financially. However, we simply cannot cater for the amount of requests we receive for support."

The government's push to get more young people into education has not helped the situation, with a degree being pushed as the only means by which to get a decent job.

"The university experience can be wonderful for some people, and working here I tend to forget that as I only hear the negative aspects. However, I do get angry at the government for sending so many people into higher education as it doesn't suit everybody. They link it to a good job, yet if everyone is doing it then it doesn't make sense.

"Since I've been working here (20 years), the proportion of students seeking help has stayed around the 5% mark. However, already this year has seen a 30% rise on that figure and it's not just the numbers that have increased but also the distress of the students we are able to see."

And these are just the students who have decided to seek help and therefore have been officially recognised. The stigma around mental health is, if anything, growing and many find themselves unable to understand their problems and unwilling to

life?

mental health and discovers knowledge

seek help or advice.

Dr Hall has revealed that these problems are indicative of the situation across higher education institutions in the United Kingdom.

"I'm chair of Heads of University Counselling Service (HUCS), and there's a big concern about what's happening nationally. We're trying to be a public voice and want to continue bringing up the agenda of student mental health problems.

"We need to try to understand that by calling it 'mental illness' we almost add to it by saying there's something wrong with it. There is a huge stigma about being mentally ill, yet the problems suffered are perfectly normal and are expected reactions to the situation of a student and doesn't mean they are 'mad'."

YUSU currently offers significant support for students suffering mental health problems but Amy Foxton has highlighted the problem of tackling the stigma attached to it, making it a key objective for when she takes charge of Welfare next year. "I would like to make York students aware of NUS campaigns and to work to remove prejudice about mental health. People who would never make racist or homophobic remarks still think it's perfectly acceptable to label someone who's having counselling as a 'psycho'. Some people perceive depression as a weakness, and are afraid of disorders like schizophrenia because they don't understand them.

"I'd like to create an atmosphere where people who have mental health issues can feel free to disclose this without fear of being labelled or shunned. The media can also work to raise awareness and in recent years

'Freshers' week often focuses on alcohol as a method by which to gain friends, which can leave students who don't drink feeling inferior and lonely'

Hollyoaks has covered the issues of self-harm and alcohol addiction. The important thing is to realise that mental health problems can affect anyone; Johnny Depp, Colin Farrell, Princess Diana and Kelly Holmes have all admitted to self-harming."

Sophie*, a third year student who



Health care professionals are blaming increased pressure for rising numbers who seek help.
Photo: Georgi Mabee

'Self-harming helped me to cope' - students' experiences of mental illness

Rachel, third year

I self-harmed from about sixteen and tried to give up several times, but I started it again in my first year at York. I used to count down the days until I could go home. My best friends from home knew that I self-harmed but at University I just hid in my room and no one came to see me.

Self-harming helped me to cope when I couldn't sleep because I was crying so much. Eventually I managed to stop after going online and reading up on self-harm. I realised that I was lucky compared to others who self-harmed.

I started doing volunteer work, began to enjoy uni and although I sometimes still feel depressed I haven't self-harmed in the last year. My second and third years have been the best of my life and looking back it feels like I'm talking about a different person.

Katie, second year

In my first year, I was depressed and was self-harming regularly. This year, I've had occasional bouts of depression, with limited self-harming.

A lot of the issues I had were to do with events before I came to university. When I was in 6th form, I was a Child and Adolescent Mental Health service user - receiving counselling and seeing a psychiatrist. The main issues I had in the first year were to do with making the transition from being a service user to not receiving any help.

I was aware of the counselling service (which I didn't view as particularly accessible) and nightline, which is quite well publicised around campus. I also found my personal supervisor to be a great source of support, but not for personal issues. I didn't really use any of these forms of support.

Sophie, third year

I told my tutor about my problems but she really played the issue down. Another tutor told me that it would put potential employers off, particularly in my area of psychology.

People like myself are treated as an annoyance or just plain weird. To the general public, suffering depression, self harm or a mood disorder just means you are crazy and lumped into the same category.

A friend of a friend did consult the University doctors about her eating disorder and the doctor was very negative. She was basically told tough luck and she wasn't the only student to be experiencing such distress.

People with eating disorders are often treated by others as time wasters with self inflicted problems. This really is a step backwards for them as it makes them feel worthless.

Michelle, second year

My experience of mental health problems was stressful, exhausting, lonely and scary. It was so confusing because people told me I should be having the time of my life at uni, and I felt nothing.

Everyone around me seemed so happy, I couldn't understand why I couldn't be normal like them. York is full of intelligent, well-off and successful people and while that motivated me to work harder, it also made me feel worse about myself.

However depression is an illness and one that some people are more prone to than others. Whilst I feel my circumstances contributed to my depression, I probably could have been really successful and still would have got sick. In fact, my friends couldn't understand the criticisms I levelled at myself: it's about perception.

*all names have been changed

has suffered from depression, advises people to take seeking help into their own hands. "Demand treatment - you will not get better by yourself. Get therapy and if a certain form or therapist isn't working, switch. Also tell your supervisor - I didn't and it only caused me trouble with tutors when I missed classes."

A new site, www.duckslife.org, has been set up by York student John Campbell to help those with problems

to discuss them with others in the same situation and Amy Foxton recognises the positive benefits of self-research. "Some people may find that looking online helps them to understand what they're going through.

"I want people to realise that they're not the only person going through what they're currently experiencing and that across the University there are people who care about them and want to help them."

Sources of support and information:

JCRC and YUSU Welfare Reps

Counselling Service

Nightline

www.duckslife.org

www.studentdepression.org

You gotta fight (for your right to

Robin Seaton met Fightstar in Leeds on their third UK headline tour. They talked about the metal/punk scene and their attempts to forge a post-Busted fanbase



Fighting the power: Fightstar look threatening in an attempt to intimidate some smaller kids into giving them their dinner money, but sadly they fail

You have to admire Charlie Simpson's optimism, and his bravery. There's something almost American about his desire for reinvention, something suicidal about his courage in forming a metal/punk band after having left Busted, a group who were one of the most successful manifestations of the legalised child exploitation racket that is pop music. There was almost something postmodern in their management's attempts to create a patina of 'rock respectability' to cover the fundamentally teenager-targeted music. Their (unplugged) guitars, their 'personalised' clothes, that bloody endless 'punk' gurning. They weren't fooling anyone, and they knew it. So how did the pretty-boy singer imagine that he could get away with forming a band playing music to punks and metalheads, two groups of music fans notorious for their abilities to sniff out anything fake, popular or safe, then gob on its face and kick its head in? Surely one man and his monobrow could not stand alone against such a tide of beered-up hatred?

I went to Leeds to find out.

Fightstar's an appropriate name for a band who've had to fight against one kind of

fame in order to achieve another. Initially maligned by pretty well everyone, they've had to work hard to attain any kind of respect among followers of their 'scene' (which appears to comprise of pretty much just them and Funeral For A Friend). Finally, however, it seems that the old Busted fans have stopped coming to the gigs, or have been converted. "The demographics have changed, I've noticed a lot more old-school punks turning up to our gigs. It's been..." "it's been fucking awesome!" interrupts Charlie.

"I've noticed a lot more old-school punks turning up to our gigs. It's been... it's been awesome!"

He seems relieved, having been concerned about the reception that his band would face from their target audience. In short: they're a proper band now. At least, that's the line

they take.

They're keen on stressing their position within their 'scene', on being friendly with bands such as FFAF and Bullet For My Valentine: "we know all those guys, and we may not sound that much alike", said Charlie "but we've all got the same kind of ethos". By emphasising their camaraderie with bands whose integrity is not really in question, Fightstar try to go some way to strengthening their claims to 'realness', claims that are still, on their third headlining tour of the UK, based on somewhat shaky ground. "Funeral really opened the door to our kind of music. It's mostly an American thing really, but we really think it's taking off over here in a big way".

Fightstar stick pretty rigidly to the precepts and traditions of their slightly dogmatic genre. Punk and metal have always stuck to their own sets of rules, and it seems that Fightstar's unwillingness to contravene these is a result of their somewhat unorthodox background. They're unwilling to be disparaging about other bands, and emphasise the extent to which they have done things on their own terms.

Despite their handicap, their success

has been impressive so far: "we just wanted to get to the stage where we could play the Astoria on our own. Anything after that's a fucking bonus", said Charlie. "It feels like now we've got to set ourselves new goals - we're here now, what do we do?" said Omar, picking up the theme. Careful to avoid any suggestion that stardom is once again in his sights, Charlie slips into cliché: "We just want to carry on making the music that we wanna make".

He is equally quick to ensure that no-one has the impression that Fightstar are being managed or coached in any way by their record label. "We're really lucky in the sense that we're on a major, but they treat us like a big indie would. They never get involved in our record making. There was no-one coming down the studio every week to see how the songs are sounding. They just let us get on with it, and at the end of our three months in the studio, we handed the record over". Omar sees it as a question of artistic integrity, an issue that, understandably never seems far away throughout this interview: "We thought, with our style of music, and with the type of label we're on, we really needed to take the bull by the horns".

make music)

Earlier, he'd been keen to stress this point: "We just wanna make the type of music we love and believe in, make it the most honest type of music we can make, and I think that comes across. If you listen to a record, and you hear the honesty and belief coming through, that's a really important thing, and I think that's what people hear when they listen to our records".

Fightstar's debut EP, *They Liked You Better When You Were Dead*, was recorded independently by the band - a fact they're clearly proud of. "We did it all ourselves. We were a self-contained unit; we made our own videos, did our own artwork. We did it on our own, literally on our own. I think the label saw that we knew what we were doing, so they were happy to back us up in recording the album the way we wanted to."

The band seem to feel that a strange destiny affected the genesis of their apocalyptic debut album: "When we started writing the album, we didn't even talk about it being a concept album. A lot of the lyrics on the album revolved around this Genesis [sic], apocalypse idea. It was all at the time when the London bombings had just happened. So a lot of the lyrics are related to this. Y'know, the fact is that it was such a disastrous, awful day, but in a way it brought the community closer together."

"We definitely feel there was an element of fate to it" continues Charlie. "We wrote the lyric for Grand Unification Part 2, 'hold my hand until the waves come', and then the next day we stumbled across this image - the woman holding her kid's hand, surrounded by water. It's a bit, like, 'wurggh', that's crazy, man".

They don't seem afraid of becoming involved in discussing what they see as being wrong with society at large. I'm always a little sceptical of bands who mouth off about politics. Having the capability to write and perform music should not lend anyone's views more credibility, yet at the same time an artist should be entirely free to express themselves as they see fit.

Fightstar incorporated some of their concerns into the video for 'Paint Your Target' and saw the video banned by MTV for their trouble. Charlie takes up the story: "Every kid plays at war, and we tried to show what the kids would be imagining. So when a kid pretends to fire a bazooka, a real rocket comes out. Technically, there's nothing in the broadcasting laws that says we can't do that. As long as you don't show actual guns and blood, you're OK." "Unless you're Green Day, in which case you can do what you like!" interrupts Omar - the only time either of them comes close to criticising another band.

I decide that this is a good moment to broach the subject of Nouse's short-lived campaign to rehabilitate the word c***, in an article published a few days earlier. "It's the same thing!" shouts Omar. "The war on c***!" shouts Charlie. Err, not quite. "There's too many things being censored these days",

he continues, referring, perhaps, to Behtzi, the play effectively banned after protests in Birmingham, and to the Mohammed cartoons controversy.

This image of a free-speech supporting radical seems a little difficult to swallow, coming from someone who, hitherto, has been a willing accomplice of the same capitalist system he now derides. In the version of the Busted story that Charlie has told in previous interviews, he was more victim than villain. Now, though, he seems convincing in the role of screamo idol. But is he any more sincere in this role than in his previous one as children's entertainer? He certainly seems at ease with himself, talking fairly eloquently right the way through the interview, a far more willing interviewee than I had been led to expect; more willing, certainly than he apparently was during the last days of Busted.

But should being a former member of a boyband disqualify someone from attempting to attain the status of a credible musician? After all, Joe Strummer was an ambassador's son, born in Turkey. Explosion-fixated ride-pimping hip-hop DJ Westwood's dad was a Church of England bishop. And Mick Jagger was very middle class - the future 'Street Fighting Man' seems likely to have engaged in nothing more testing than a mild fracas in a suburban cul-de-sac. All these people managed to overcome their initial handicaps, and flourished as highly credible



icons of rock and roll. However, (with the possible exception of Westwood) they are bona-fide rock gods.

This is something that the Famously Monobrowed One seems to lack. Strummer and Jagger had an innate ability to make the posturing mean something. Smoking a lot and pulling a baseball cap low over your eyes just doesn't quite cut it. Nevertheless, Fightstar come across as entirely sincere about what they do. It might not be everyone's cup of tea, especially not every student's, but emo is a force in contemporary music. While they are over-keen to prove their alternative credentials, Fightstar seem sincere and committed, despite the detractors.

The scientific briefing with **Luke Boulter**

The medical high life or just a smoky remnant of a sixties dream?



For the last half a century, marijuana has faced a tormented battle in the public eye: still today it is associated with the ever fading ideals of the 'free-love' sixties, or more commonly with the red-eyed 'stoner' of our decade. However, in the smoke of this heated battle over the rights and wrongs of drug use, has the benefit of marijuana been lost, is it salvageable, or are those who endorse its benefits clinging on to the hope of legalisation?

Last week medical use of marijuana was vetoed by The US Food and Drug Administration (The FDA). Marijuana, it is claimed, is not a legitimate medicine because there is no hard evidence to show its safety or effectiveness. Marijuana researchers argue political obstacles are making it almost impossible to conduct research and, as a result, are asking for looser restrictions on marijuana as a medication. The FDA's statement contradicts a 1999 report by the US Institute of Medicine (IOM) suggesting that marijuana had the potential to treat pain, nausea and anorexia. Since then, 11 US states have legalised the medicinal use of marijuana.

Evidence, however, does seem to be more than anecdotal; there have been long and intensive studies that have yielded a plethora of results, some condoning, others deploring the use of marijuana as a medical agent.

Marijuana plants, like all others, have chemical pathways which result in the production of compounds known as secondary metabolites. These metabolites do not generally serve any intrinsic purpose, that is the plant can operate quite happily without them. However, by producing these compounds, the plant in question infers an advantage over its neighbour, (e.g. it is less attractive to caterpillars, thus it is more likely to survive and thrive.) The active compound in marijuana that we can exploit is Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), it is this compound that gives the 'high' sensation. Coincidentally, TCH is a very close relation to nicotine, caffeine and morphine (known as cannabinoids), all legally used in medicine or recreation.

There is an increasingly large body of evidence suggesting that those who smoke a lot of marijuana can develop symptoms commonly associated with acute mental illness, and even light, or occasional smokers exhibit signs of minor psychosis and paranoia, as well as mild memory loss. It is these concerns that are forcing the UK government to reconsider the down grading of marijuana to Class C - a piece of legislation that is still only a couple of years old. Lambros Messinis of the University Hospital of Patras in Greece believes it "definitely fogs your brain." Messinis conducted a series of experiments that showed that those who have been smoking marijuana for 15 years can only recall seven of fifteen words in a memory exercise, those who have smoked the drug for 7 years can on

average remember nine words and those who have never smoked marijuana could recall thirteen words of the fifteen they were given to memorise.

The results of this experiment are contested, however; Nadia Solowij suggests that the memory loss is an immediate result of the drug, but she admits that the degree to which memory returns after a prolonged abstinence is at best under-researched.

There is a glimmer of light for medical marijuana, it appears that like some of its sister compounds it can be used as a medication. Eating low doses of THC, helps prevent arteries clogging up, at least in mice, great news in a nation where coronary heart disease is one of the biggest killers.

François Mach at University Hospital in Geneva manipulated the way a cell naturally recognises THC and reduces the risks of atherosclerosis (clogging of the arteries). Sure enough, when fed 1 milligram of THC per kilogram of bodyweight - a low dose that should not have any psychotropic effects - to mice susceptible to atherosclerosis, it greatly slowed its progress. Ideally, using THC as a basis, the drug can be chemically manipulated to bind only to the required cell types, this way there would be reduced clogging of the arteries, and without the psychotic side effects that seem to blight such medical advances.

A new weight loss drug that works by blocking a cannabinoid receptor in the brain has had "modest" success at helping people both lose weight and keep it off, researchers say. The patients on the drug also showed improvement in risk factors for cardiovascular disease beyond what would be expected from shedding on average 3lbs alone. The researchers found that patients taking the larger dose were able to lose significantly more weight than those on placebo.

The pill also appears to help in maintaining a new, lower weight. In the second part of the study, patients who had received the active drug were offered it for a second year. A 20mg dose in the second year seemed to be ample in allowing people to maintain their low body weights; those taking the lower dose or the placebo put some weight back on.

The researchers suggest that sustained weight loss may require "continuous long-term treatment". That may be good news for drug manufacturers, but a concern to people who may spend decades on a pill whose long-term effects are unknown.

Each drug that is tested goes through a stringent set of tests, but, despite this, marijuana-based therapies seem to have been shackled by their association with the 'high life.' I am not suggesting that recreational use of marijuana is right or wrong, but if we want to manipulate it to the benefit of our increasingly weighty world then the stigma that is associated with this drug must be shed.

The popstars they are a-changin': people who have changed their style

Dee Dee Ramone embarked on a short-lived rap career in the early nineties. Sadly, he turned out to be even less gifted than Vanilla Ice.

When he formed **Gorillaz**, **Damon Albarn** lost a dimension, but found a whole new fanbase.

Bob Dylan first

changed his style in 1961, and hasn't stopped since. He's been folky, country, and even became an evangelical Christian in the eighties.

The MySpace revolution

Nan Flory examines the etiquette and conventions of MySpace.com

MySpace.com is, according to the wonderful Wikipedia, the 'world's fifth most popular English-language website and the eighth most popular in the world'. Created in July 2003 by a graduate from UCLA and UC Berkeley, called Tom Anderson, and currently run by Chris DeWolfe, the company behind the website employs 250 people (though goodness knows what they do) and has a yearly revenue of approximately 20 million US dollars. Users can register for free and are then able to upload information, pictures, music and text, which can be accessed by other internet surfers and commented on or downloaded by fellow MySpace members.

Once you register, you can start building up a profile, listing your various interests – general, music, film – your personal data – name, age, status, sexuality, smoker or not etc. Users can upload different backgrounds and soundtracks to their profile; there is even a MySpace profile-editing programme which helps you to beautify your online personality. Members become 'friends' by sending and accepting friend requests and once two profiles are thus linked you can send each other messages. This interaction happens between complete strangers who find other members with common interests and also between people who are already friends, as an alternative to phone calls or MSN, and as a way to stay in touch over long distances. Some people have taken to giving out their MySpace URL, over their phone number or email, when they meet someone new. It is a slightly less personal, less intense thing to give out to a stranger, and much easier to screen. Members can also write blogs which their cyber friends can read.

In recent years, MySpace's popularity has sky rocketed. Unsigned and more obscure signed bands use it as a platform to launch their music, giving the kids a chance to discover people who will never be on Top of the Pops. The underground credibility of the website has been somewhat knocked by the fact that Rupert Murdoch's media conglomerate, News Corporation, which also owns The Sun, The Times and Sky TV, recently bought it up. The high price of US\$580 million is explained by the highly lucrative advertising opportunity that the 57 million registered members, most of whom fit into the ideal 16-35 age bracket, create.

The MySpace.com homepage

The decidedly capitalist, right wing profile of News Corporation is a little at odds with the MySpace revolution aesthetic, but, having said that, the revolution is persevering. The site has created a brand new way for aspiring bands to crack the industry, Arctic Monkeys being its most famous export to date.

Recently, I've been forced to create a MySpace profile of my very own. Denying that you actually want to get involved in the revolution that is myspace.com is, of course, all part of the ritual. My excuse was that my budding musician of a brother, using the website to launch his tunes, needed more friends; his single figure sum was getting him down. Being a music maker is pretty much the only noble reason for creating a profile; everyone else (cool) takes an ironic attitude to the cyber-

'All good profiles should include a degree of self-awareness about the geek factor and the best ones will have a zillion friends as well'

space phenomenon, acknowledging the geek value whilst loving it really. A popular excuse is that you need to be a member to get access to more tunes; an acquaintance defends herself by explaining that constructing her extensive profile kept her entertained in a boring summer job.

So, in the interests of maintaining my disinterested attitude, I set out to limit my involvement in the network to just one friend – my loner brother. Unfortunately, this plan was quickly foiled when I realised that Tom, the American who started the whole thing, automatically becomes your friend when you sign up. Suddenly I had two friends! I quickly deleted Tom and for a couple of days I was feeling nicely aloof about the whole thing, "MySpace? Yeah, I'm down with that, a necessary evil of

the 21st century music industry, whatever". Things started getting complicated when I signed in (only to add a supportive comment to my brother's profile) to find a little envelope icon on the right of my screen, with the words 'new friend request' in cute type beside it. My one-friend manifesto was looking shaky. The slightly plaintive phrasing on MySpace made things difficult: 'Benjamin wants to be your friend, accept or deny?' If I had not pressed 'accept' the Benjamin in question, unaware of my one-friend plan, would have received a curt little message, 'Nancy Penelope has denied your friendship request', and possibly would never have spoken to me again. I was back to two friends, and this time deletion wasn't an option.

My plan was further ground into the dust when my housemate decided to create a profile for himself. I, in my usual obnoxious manner, had trumpeted my morally superior one-friend policy around the flat, although, in my defence, I did quieten down when the Benjamin issue occurred. My sweetheart housemate asked me if there was any way I could be his friend without him stealing my (by now defunct) one-friend-thunder by being mine. Obviously, I immediately caved, and now I have three friends. This puts me in a wonderful situation where instead of being a cool, reluctant member, I am just a loner with only three friends, much like my brother at the start of the whole malarkey (he is now up to 28 – still very modest since some MySpacers actually have one million, but better than a couple of weeks ago). I think this means I have to go the whole hog and embrace MySpace completely; this in-between phase is reflecting badly on both of us.

As I can't claim amateur musician status, I've decided that, to ensure its validity, my debut as a MySpace friend-wanter, rather than my former cyber-manifestation as an arrogant one-friend with a superiority complex, needs careful planning. First on the list is the

photo you choose to represent yourself with. Obviously you want to look attractive, but the rules of MySpace cool dictate that you don't want to look attractive in an obvious way. A good option is the kooky pose, a shot which, even if it is posed, should look 'random', demonstrating that you have lots of crazy fun all the time. If you do have an unfortunate face that even a well-angled pout won't remedy, a tongue-in-cheek cartoon will do the trick. The internet is a great place to leave your less-than-perfect looks behind and lifting a secondary image gives you the chance to make a nice, obscure pop culture reference to peacock your excellent taste.

A good image choice is complemented by your on-screen name. It seems to me that the coolest Spacers avoid proper names and go for quotes or in-jokes (these are another good way of showing off your crazy fun life). All good profiles should include a degree of knowing awareness about the geek factor of the website and the best ones will have a zillion friends as well. This says "I don't really try very hard at this MySpace game, it just happens to me". However, this postmodernist approach can go on forever, as people start acknowledging the pretensions equally present in this attitude. The trouble is, my new status as a MySpace billy-nomates makes me a badly qualified commentator. For all I know, earnest could well be the new cynical. Maybe admitting to your devotion of time, effort and a little love to the MySpace game is the way to go these days.

Whatever the facts of the matter, if MySpace leads my brother into a record contract and piles of cash, I will be a devoted MySpacer from the day he pays off my student loan. I will make cyber-friends with people in other towns or even countries, discover new bands, chat with real-life friends, write blogs, upload pictures, even marry someone as a result of our complementary profiles. As revolutions go, it's maybe not the most ground shaking but rather MySpace than, like, communism.

Living life in the slow lane

With cheap airlines and package holidays dominating the travel industry, the pleasures of the journey itself are often overlooked. **Adam Sloan** discovers that there are endless possibilities for experiencing the world at a slower pace by train

What if I were to tell you that tomorrow you could take a train at York station, and, without setting one foot on an aeroplane, you could be in Singapore within two weeks, standing at the edge of continental Asia. Sound good? Of course, getting there would have been no easy feat; you would have passed through around ten different countries (that is, assuming you decided to take the easiest route) and eight time zones. You would doubtless have suffered set-backs of varying kinds: delays, breakdowns, and, of course, the odd stomach upset or two. Nevertheless, you would have taken one of the greatest journeys on earth.

There is practically no destination in Europe, Africa or Asia that cannot be reached by simply walking off the platform at Waterloo International station onto the carriage of one of the world's great trains. The possibilities are endless. The destinations fantastic, but above all, it is the journey itself that really puts this mode of travel above all others. Long distance train travel allows you to indulge yourself and relax, basking in the romantic nostalgia of "how it is meant to be" rather than being cocooned at 36,000 feet up in an environment that is about as sterile as the journey it presents you.

My first experience of long distance rail travel was the journey through Canada's Rocky Mountains, on the 'Rocky Mountaineer' from Edmonton, Alberta, to Vancouver. In

'Long-distance train travel encompasses the romance of great journeys that have been written and read about'

Canada, the trains that pass through the Rockies can be kilometres long, and somewhere in the middle there will be a passenger car. The size and scale of the train reflects the grandeur of the setting it traverses, with the added anticipation of the city of Vancouver as your destination.

Of course, in this 21st century world of instant messaging, broadband internet and trans-continental flights, who can blame those that expect to be transported to their destination of choice, anywhere in the world, in the space of a day? But what should be con-



sidered is what treasures are being missed when you get the brief glimpse of a glowing lake through the gap in the clouds, rather than slowly moving around it, taking it in from a proper perspective. Why get somewhere in the space of a stressful day when you can do it in a relaxed week?

Last year a train took me a thousand miles across Australia, through some of the most barren and deserted landscape in the world, for three days and two nights, on the stunning Indian-Pacific railway. The flight would have taken five hours, but why rush? There was a hypnotic effect, looking out the window on that train, which passed over the longest stretch of straight railroad anywhere in the world. Viewing the odd eucalyptus tree or kangaroo made me realise quite how remote I really was.

The train allows you to experience a time and place in a way that no other mode of travel can. There are no worries concerning falling out of the sky, or plunging over a ravine (depending on how exotic the trains you choose to take are of course); one is left free to relax and enjoy the world passing you by, while making casual conversation with fellow travellers and local commuters.



The train is often slow, and cyclists can sometimes be seen whizzing by; however, this reflects the pace of life that should be taken when on a relaxing vacation, allowing you to ponder, and finish that book that has been gathering dust for the last few months.

Above all, long-distance train travel encompasses the romance of all those great journeys that have been written and read about. You can still step onto the Orient Express as Hercule Poirot did in the classic Agatha Christie novel, *Murder on the Orient Express*, or at least the same-named successor to the original 'Express d'Orient' that first opened in 1883, between Paris and Vienna. Time can be turned back by stepping on one of India's grand former

imperial carriageways, generally regarded as the best place in the world for railway enthusiasts, such as myself, to travel.

For many of course, the 'granddaddy' of all railway journeys has to be the Trans-Siberian railway between Moscow and Vladivostok, in far-eastern Russia. The classic Trans-Siberian route takes around seven days, passing through some of the most remote places in the world. If just Siberia were a country in itself, it would still be the biggest in the world. Of course, you could always take the Trans-Mongolian route, stopping off in Ulan-Baatar (claim to fame: it is the coldest national capital in the world), or the Trans-Manchurian route, which takes you around Mongolia and down to Beijing.

This summer I will be jumping for a night on the historic 'Red Arrow', which travels between St. Petersburg and Moscow. It was this railway that transported the first Soviet government from St. Petersburg to Moscow. The track opened in 1851 and is one of the straightest stretches of railroad in the world. It is said that it was meant to be dead straight, however when Tsar Nicholas I was drawing the route on the map, he ran out of ruler and accidentally drew a small curve around his hand, before moving the ruler down and carrying on the line down to Moscow. The result is an apparently random curve in the otherwise dead straight track between the two cities.

For a solitary traveller, such as myself, a train allows you the choice to either relax in conversation with those around you (provided you speak the same language of course), or slip away into silent anonymity and the comfort of a good book. With careful eyes it can actually be said that a country's trains can reflect a national psyche. Look at the Bullet Trains in Japan, or the Swiss railways, they are fast, efficient and practical. In contrast, the slow-moving, open air carriageways going across Zambia are relaxed and enjoyable, reflecting a more laid back way of life. The train may reach its destination in a day, it may not, but what does a few extra hours really matter?

For time really loses its meaning when there is not just a destination to be reached, but also a journey to enjoy.

Above: the Indian-Pacific railway. Below: York train station. Photos: Adam Sloan

For more information on train travel visit:

The Man in Seat Sixty-One
www.seat61.com
 Advice on travelling by train and boat to Europe, Africa, Asia and America.

Great Rail Journeys
www.greatrailuk.com
 A York-based company organising holidays by train throughout the world.



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Rebecca Gower



Leaving the comfort zone: the terror of life beyond University

I went home for a few days at Easter to give myself some respite from essays and the like. (Not that I particularly needed any time off; my will to work ran out at some point in the second week of the holiday, around the time that I realised I had no idea what I was even meant to be writing an essay about. Still, hopefully it'll never be marked because of the AUT strike, and I can claim that it was, in fact, my masterpiece, and I was robbed of a first class mark.)

Anyway, home was nice enough, except for the fact that I felt as if I had been drugged. All I wanted to do during the day was sleep, and that's basically what I did. In between various naps, however, I saw various members of my family, all of whom said the same thing to me: that they couldn't believe that this was it for me, that three years of university are nearly up and I'm about to be cast out into the world.

Well, I can't believe it either. For a start, I'm not nearly ready to say goodbye to the library. Somehow it has transformed into my favourite place on campus: I get up in the morning and I just feel irresistibly drawn towards it, despite the fact that it takes me forty minutes to traipse there from my house. I've even managed to get over my dislike of the growing number of over-affectionate couples (though I will take this opportunity to point out that nobody – really, nobody – is interested in how much you love each other, or wants to see a graphic demonstration of that love), and mobile phone users.

It's got to the point where I'm pretty upset that term is starting,

because this means that the library will be busy again with fresh faced youngsters, and I prefer it when there are only a select few people to be found there.

Hopefully I'll be able to bid the library a fond farewell when the time comes, though, as I am actually going to be working in a library next year. It won't be the same, obviously, but it'll be comforting nonetheless. But there are so many other things involved in leaving university that I'm just not prepared for.

For example: this year, the washing machine in my house has launched a concerted campaign against me by ripping holes in many of my clothes. (I did suspect that this vendetta was, in fact, sabotage on the part of my housemates, but lately the washer has turned on them too. Even I'm not paranoid enough to think they'd destroy their own clothes to make me buy better ones.)

After being initially devastated – one of my favourite jumpers in the world, which has probably been in my family for generations, was effectively shredded to pieces – I took the attitude that it was probably okay to keep wearing them. I won't be able to do that once I'm in paid employment as I will have to try to look vaguely presentable. I feel exhausted just typing that idea, let alone putting it into practice.

Once I've got a job, I won't be able to go shopping in the middle of the week; I'll have to go on Saturday, and try to suppress all murderous thoughts towards the thousands of people who always appear to be milling around aimlessly. I won't be able to stay up until four in the morning, and get



The library is a haven for those that appreciate a quiet campus

up at midday. (Not that I've done that since first year, in fairness. Who could be bothered? You unflinchingly feel awful when you eventually wake up, and it throws your sleeping patterns out completely.)

I won't be able to spend hours reading about *Prison Break* and *Green Wing* on the internet when

I'm supposed to be working, or to continue in my attempts to bring up the fifty percent mark on my spider solitaire victory rate. All this, and I'll be forced to be doing something that actually involves using my brain, from nine to five every day. I don't know how I'm going to cope.

And, of course, I'm not going

to have any friends, and this is the main reason why I'm so horrified at the thought of leaving York. Back in the heady days of first year, I was okay: not only was I considerably less set in my ways then (eighteen feels like decades ago, seriously), but nobody else knew anyone either, so most people were actually trying to be friendly. What ever mistakes you made, you'd get away with them, because people just forgot.

Now, though, I'm off to Cambridge. I don't know anyone there, and I have nobody to live with. So, I have two options. I can live alone, which is expensive but rather tempting. "You'd never talk to anyone, ever. You'd spend every evening alone," pointed out one person helpfully. "Yes, fine, but I could ... I don't know, go to evening classes or something," I lied. Or else, I can go and live in a house with a load of people that I won't know at all, and that's probably what's going to happen.

It'll be a disaster. Over the past three years, any social skills I might once have had have been eroded away, and I reckon I'm almost totally incapable now of creating a good impression on anyone. More to the point, I'm too lazy to want to try: making yourself come across as funny and pleasant enough, rather than overwhelmingly neurotic, is just too much hard work. I mean, goodness knows, my housemates at the moment have enough to put up with from me.

Don't take my word for it; in the purposes of research, I asked one of them what was bad about living with me. "Oh, you're not so bad," she said cheerfully. But then, after a slight pause: "Actually..." She proceeded to list (at length) things that annoy her, some of them reasonable enough (I rant a lot), others questionable (apparently, I'm not adventurous enough as a cook, and this is a really negative quality).

All this, and I always look as if I'm scowling. I'm not – laughably enough, that's just the way my face falls – but it's not exactly endearing. And these are my supposed friends – people who actually like me. What on earth am I going to do when confronted with people who don't know me, but have to live with me regardless? I'm doomed, I tell you.

Sshh! How to give birth like a Scientologist

A couple of days before writing this, Katie Holmes gave birth to a baby girl, named Suri (apparently it's Hebrew for 'princess', or something similarly pretentious).

I must say, I don't think Suri Cruise is a brilliant name; it doesn't really sound right, rather like Moses Martin, the other celebrity baby of the moment. Anyway,

there's been an immense fuss in the media about Ms Holmes's labour: there were a load of rumours that, due to Scientology's practice of silent birth, Tom Cruise had bought his fiancée a dummy, in order that the baby wouldn't hear any screaming as she entered the world.

Cruise has stated that it's all nonsense, and that Scientology has

been grossly misrepresented. Good on him, I say; L. Ron Hubbard (tragically deceased), the founder of Scientology, sounds like just the kind of spiritual leader the world needs.

After all, his son stated in 1983 that his father was "only interested in money, sex, booze, and drugs" as well as revealing "99% of what my father ever wrote

or said about himself is totally untrue." Indeed, three years earlier, Hubbard was quoted in Reader's Digest as saying, "If a man really wants to make a million dollars, the best way would be to start his own religion." I'm not quite sure how comments like this can be misrepresented; but then, I'm just one of the uninitiated. You carry on bearing the torch of truth, Tom.

Abduction, militants and the US army: my three years in hell

The US military base Guantanamo Bay has long faced allegations of torture and abuse. **Bobby Higson** talks to former detainee Moazzam Begg to find out about his experiences

In 2001 Moazzam Begg, a 37-year-old father of four from Birmingham, planned to move to Kabul, Afghanistan with his family. En-route, in neighbouring Pakistan, he was captured, beginning an ordeal that would take away three years of his life. Begg's abduction was to be the start of a journey to Camp Delta detention centre in Guantanamo Bay and his release, amidst heightened public awareness of the camp's alleged human rights abuses, has been eagerly followed.

As I ask him what he was doing in Pakistan when he was captured, I instantly recognise the uneasy irony that Moazzam has been asked this hundreds of times by his interrogators. "I was building schools," he explains. "I had a plan to go to and help build girls' schools there, as well as help build wells for those who did not have water. It was a plan of mine I'd had for a long while." With the start of the war in Afghanistan in 2001, the family had decided to delay their original plan and avoid the hostilities by taking up residence in neighbouring Pakistan where Begg held dual nationality along with Britain.

It was on the night of the 31st January 2002 that Begg was seized from his house whilst his wife and children lay asleep. "Literally one night there was a knock on the door. I was dragged out by Pakistani police with a gun to my head and then bundled into the boot of a car."

He was first taken to a US detention facility in Kandahar, south of Kabul in Afghanistan, and then on to Bagram Airbase where he was held in what he describes as "appalling conditions". In a letter to his father dated December 2002, Begg writes, "I haven't seen the sun, sky, moon, etc. for nearly a year."

"I am in this state of desperation and I am beginning to lose the fight against depression and hopelessness."

On February 6th 2003 Begg was taken to Guantanamo Bay. He asked to be sedated for the journey: he says it was that or being tied to the floor for two days. In the book he has written about his experiences, *Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey to Guantanamo and Back*, he recounts the time he spent in solitary confinement there.

Camp Echo - or Eskimo, as they called it at that time - was the location of Begg's new home: a cell measuring about 8 x 6ft, barely big enough to walk in. Under such oppressive conditions, I ask if it was hard to occupy himself.

"Yes it was. I spent hours just pacing up and down, which was literally just a few steps. Back and forth for hours. I also

did sit ups - hundreds of different styles - just to try to keep busy. But it was hard." He also began to write a lot of poetry, "once allowed paper and pencils". In order to keep his spirits up and to pass the time, Begg read the Qur'an extensively. He recalls his time there with a calm



Moazzam Begg, 37, was detained at Guantanamo Bay for 3 years



completely untrue and ridiculous.

"They'd built up this idea of me as a serious threat, some sort of mastermind even, and basically picked the allegations that would fit their view of me. You see, they never came to me with any corroborative evidence to prove anything, but just kept trying to get me to admit to these charges." The fact that he had visited military camps in the past, he says, meant that his interrogators "twisted the words into various other charges".

Some of these charges crossed into the realms of the comical. Begg describes how, in Bagram, FBI agents examined his laptop, "my web histories, documents and things like that. Amongst the things on there was an image of the Pope stored on the hard drive. They looked at my history, and seeing this they then claimed I was attempting to assassinate him." We share a laugh about the scene he describes, but if Begg's captivity and his safety depended on such accusations it is disconcerting to say the least.

Of course, stopping to examine the fact that Begg has visited military train-

ing camps makes the issue far more ambiguous. He tells me that he has twice visited military training camps in Afghanistan and he admits to supporting militant Muslims in Bosnia, Chechnya and Kashmir. He recounts how, in 1993, he went on holiday to Pakistan to visit his Aunt and met people who had been wounded fighting in Kashmir and Afghanistan.

"I met people there who told me of some terrible things that had happened to them and other people. It made me want to meet them, so I ended up visiting the camps they told me about in Afghanistan." He insists he was there strictly to meet fighters, observe what they were doing and listen to their stories, not to take up arms with them. "My aim was to help the Afghan people", he argues, "not to train."

His harsher critics, however, simply refuse to accept such altruistic tendencies and claim that he is disguising his radical leanings. Begg maintains he has never wished to train to fight and he ardently believes the killing of innocents to be wrong and contrary to the most fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith.

At one point, he says, the FBI agents wrote a confession for him to sign. On the second day in Guantanamo, they produced a six-page document telling him to sign it, despite being riddled with ridiculous assertions and charges of a long-standing involvement with Al-Qaeda.

In his book he describes the terrible

English used in the document, knowing no-one who knew his style of writing would even believe that he was the author.

Begg was to be interrogated repeatedly, threatened psychologically as his interrogators played on anxieties about the well-being of his family. "I was lied to about friends back home", he says. "I was told that they'd had their houses raided and were under surveillance. I was told to think about my family and what could happen to them. Eventually, though, through later communication with them, I came to realise it wasn't like this."

Callous mind-games weren't all Begg had to endure during his imprisonment. I ask what other methods they used. "I had guns put to my head", he alleges. "After the first interrogation, I was kicked and punched, beaten up to get me to talk. They tied bags over my head. Everything."

In Bagram Airbase it was worst, he claims. "I was hog-tied - the guards tied my hands behind my back, then my hands were tied to my legs. I was then left in this position. Can you imagine that?" It was there that Begg claims he saw people and even children die in custody.

In such a situation, one would think it is impossible for friendships to form, let alone between the prisoners and the guards. Remarkably, Begg was to form an unlikely relationship with a Sergeant who was an old Alabaman Vietnam

Veteran. They came to share thoughts and experiences, despite the power he held over him daily.

"He was the sort of person I'd expect to not get on with. To be honest, I just saw him as a Republican from Texas, who I perceived as a Bible touting southern redneck." Over conversations, Begg would ask him to recount his experiences in the War in Vietnam; a subject Begg was curious in. As the two got to know each other better, it became apparent that the Sergeant was embarrassed that Begg was not afforded Prisoner of War status and was unhappy with the 'enemy combatant' label and the illegitimate treatment of some of the detainees.

"To him it didn't seem right how a lot of people were being treated. He believed even as enemies you were supposed to treat a soldier with respect."

Eventually, in January 2005, Begg and three other British detainees were flown back to the UK by an RAF aircraft. On arrival they were taken to Paddington Green police station for questioning under the Terrorism Act, but within hours all four had been released without charge.

Yet, despite the actions of MI5 and the Foreign Office, Begg still professes a nostalgia for Britain. "I had really come to miss it. Despite what had happened it's my home, it's where I grew up."

But returning home was an adjustment that Begg did not make easily. Life outside after three years' captivity made



Muslim detainees at Guantanamo Bay, live in 8ft x 6ft cells and often in solitary confinement

adapting a struggle. "For a time, I just wanted to be alone."

"It was quite hard for me. Though I had had so much time alone, so much time by myself in solitary, it was for so long that I actually came to value it a little."

Did he feel guilty about those he has met who were still imprisoned? "Yes, every day." Countries whose politics were indifferent to the human rights of those imprisoned was to be an issue that weighed further on Begg's mind, despite being home. "Those people, I met their families, their kids, and in some of the nations they'd come from there were no campaigns to free them. They don't even know what to do with some of these people there in Guantanamo: the Uyghurs could be executed if sent back to China, for example."

George W. Bush has repeatedly described the prisoners of Guantanamo as killers that had been plucked from the

tain areas there and this denial of legal process, alongside a growing prison population that the U.S. administration refuses to even name and reports of hideous methods of torture, means that people like Clive Stafford Smith, the British human rights lawyer who represents 40 people held in Guantanamo, argue that they are even "worse." He has said there are things happening there that would make your "skin crawl".

Some commentators hold that places such as this, and the continuing conflict between the US, its allies and the Muslim world, are proof of the inevitable "Clash of Civilisations", as if the two worlds are doomed to cataclysm. It's not a view that Begg agrees with.

"No, I don't think that's true. In fact I think our communities are more together than we ever have been. If you take, for example, Norman Kember - the 74-year-old Christian aid worker, recently freed hostage in Iraq - there were appeals from all communities, Muslim, Jew, and Christian.

"Even people like Hamas made an appeal." Begg remains optimistic despite the existence of places such as Guantanamo, that there is no need for any further polarising of our communities.

That Begg manages to find humour and friendship in the story he has just described to me makes it one of the most remarkable I have heard. Told with a devastatingly calm tone and sober judgement, Begg's ordeal allows us to hear the voice of reason, and it's a voice often drowned out amidst the clamour of the political debate surrounding the so-called 'War on Terror'. For now, Begg shall continue to try and make his voice heard; he wants people to know what is still going on in these camps today, in our name, and refuses to allow the three years spent captive and taken from his life to be for nothing.

"There was a knock on the door and I was dragged out by Pakistani police with a gun to my head"

"In some of the nations the detainees had come from, there was no campaign to free them"

Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey to Guantanamo and Back
Free Press (2006) - RRP £14.99 paperback

Moazzam Begg's book chronicles his experiences from growing up in Birmingham through to his release from Guantanamo in early 2005.



Carlin's cooking

This may sound strange coming from someone with a regular cooking column, but I personally don't believe in blind obedience when it comes to recipes. They can be a useful source of inspiration, but once you have followed the recipe once or twice you owe it to yourself to put some more thought into it and add your own touch.

This stew was the result of wild improvisation. There is no magic formula here, so don't be afraid to change things around. I have listed some variations at the end to get you started.

Spicy Stew

Ingredients:

1 tin of crushed tomatoes
4 medium-sized potatoes
2 onions
1 tablespoon tomato puree
1 tin of kidney beans
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon cumin
teaspoon chilli powder, alternatively
chopped chilli
grated cheese to taste
cooking oil
salt and pepper

Instructions:

1. Peel the potatoes and slice them into rough cubes.
2. Chop the onions into chunks.
3. Pour some oil into a saucepan and

set the stove to medium heat. Once the oil is runny, add the chopped onions and let them fry for a few minutes.

4. Add the potatoes and fry until they have some colour.

5. Pour on the crushed tomatoes, the puree, and all the spices.

6. Turn down the heat until the stew is simmering nicely, and allow 10 minutes for the potatoes to soften.

7. Drain and rinse the kidney beans thoroughly, and stir them in.

8. Serve as soon as the beans are warm throughout, with some grated cheese sprinkled on top.

Variations:

Need meat? Try chopping some bacon and frying it until crispy. Add it towards the very end, but make sure you go easy on the salt, as the bacon will most likely add enough saltiness in itself.

You can easily substitute the kidney beans for other kinds and borlotti beans, for example, should be worth a try.

Consider adding some broccoli for the last two to three minutes. Other vegetables you could try include sweet corn, black olives, or why not swede? Most vegetables should go in late to retain their crispiness, but you will probably want the swede slightly softer, so add it with the potatoes.

By Johan Carlin

The health

Despite the recent media attention it has continue risking their health volunteering
Toby Green examines whether the cash is

Ryan Wilson was a normal student who just wanted to make a bit of cash. Like so many others, he could have just taken a bar job or work in Tesco stacking shelves. He decided instead to become a volunteer in a drug trial, a lucrative business that can result in thousands of pounds of earnings for as little as a few days in a clinic.

However Ryan enrolled onto the TGN1412 trial at Northwich Park Hospital in London where he was given a dose of a drug designed to lessen arthritis symptoms. He is now better known as the 'The Elephant Man' thanks to the callous nature of the tabloids after the drug caused his fingers and toes to shrivel. He has been left with the very real possibility of having them amputated and remains in hospital after waking from a three week coma. His career plan to become a plumber after graduating has been destroyed.

The tragedy of the Northwich drug trial is undoubtedly a rare event, and hundreds of similar trials are practised yearly without problems. However the continued media coverage of this case has exposed questions about the morality of offering vast and quick sums of cash to convince people to take potentially dangerous and untested drugs. Students particularly continue to volunteer themselves, wooed by a quick lump sum reward without fully considering the implications.

Mark Westall, a 2nd year Sociology student, was feeling the strain on his wallet after a year and a half at York, so in the Easter holidays he decided to become a human guinea pig. "I'd heard about medical research through my elder sister, a Nottingham University student, whose friend had regularly undertaken tests at the Hammersmith hospital I was going to. She

told me that this guy had earned £2,000 for two weeks work so I immediately got the number and registered my details with the hospital.

"The publicity of the 'elephant man' came at the worst possible time. I'd registered to be on the trial already at this point and had abandoned the possibility of getting a job over Easter instead. Now I was left with everyone around me asking 'Did you hear about the guy whose head blown up?' and 'Are you still going to do it?' I always replied with yes and that with every drug in the country going through the same process, the chances of a repeat trial disaster were minimal. I'd be lying if I said the news didn't unsettle me though."

One of the main criticisms levelled at the trials is that not enough information is given to participants. Those on the trial with Ryan Wilson were apparently told that the only possible side effects were mild sickness or headaches, yet he suffered pneumonia, septicaemia and various ailments involving his heart, kidneys and even liver failure. Dr Michael Goodyear, an assistant medical Professor at Dalhousie University in Canada, remains unconvinced about the professed good intentions of the drug companies. "With every death of a healthy volunteer, such as Ellen Roche (a 24 year old healthy volunteer who died during a study on acute asthma in Baltimore), we are assured that this will never happen again, and yet it continues to do so.

"How much accurate information, based on full risk analysis, do volunteers receive? Nobody should be surprised that this disaster happened: even rare events have finite probabilities." Mark Westall's experience is encouraging. "Before I was loosely aware of the risks with medical research, I mean drugs that have never been

Medical testing not for you? The alternative careers guide

1. Become a stripper

Due to the lack of suitable establishments, you may have to commute to Leeds if you want to earn some money this way. Apparently students there have been doing it for years, and you can earn £500 for two nights' work. An added bonus is if you tell your dad this is your only option, he may just reach for his cheque book...

2. Working at McDonalds

On second thoughts, he'll probably prefer for you to sell your body than find work at your nearest fast food establishment. The downsides: low pay, you'll always stink of

frying and limited 'coolness' factor when a ladyfriend asks you about your job. Upsides: Free burgers should ease the stress on your wallet, yet, as Morgan Spurlock discovered, it may be better to stick to their salads.

3. Merchant banking

Well, Deloitte and Price Waterhouse Cooper are always hanging around campus so they must be pretty desperate? Perfect if you would like to earn a lot (and I mean a lot) of cash and don't mind working twenty hours a day, yet it depends how much you value your soul.

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hazard of a student loan

received, students
to trial new drugs.
worth it

tested on humans before are always going to have risks. But once I'd registered to be tested for the drug I was sent a 7 page document informing all about the drug, the possible side effects and the whole procedure and

'Students continue to
volunteer, wooed by a
quick lump sum,
without considering the
dangerous implications'

rules I would abide to during my 4 night stay."

Neil Barnes, YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer, stresses the need for students to pay attention to what they are being asked to do and not just be swayed by the cash on offer. "Obviously I can't tell students whether they should or should not take part in these trials, however they should definitely make sure they read the contract and the fine print very carefully." Mark admits that although "in hindsight it's easy to say that I would have done the tests even if I hadn't needed the money, but if I'm honest I probably wouldn't have taken the risk if I hadn't needed to."

The NUS have recently seen fit to publish a set of guidelines for students thinking of taking part in drug testing. In it they stress that "no payout, coercion or bullying should colour your judgement and payment must never be offered for risk" and want any students who feel a company is not strictly following these rules to report them to their Welfare Officer.

It seems hard to believe that major drug companies wouldn't adhere to these strict guidelines all the time and that drug trial disasters are rare, unavoidable and necessary. However the evidence suggests otherwise. A BBC investigation published this April discovered that many major corporations have been outsourcing trials to India where it is estimated that by 2010 two millions people in the country will be being experimented on.

Six years ago the drug M4N, produced by an American pharmaceutical company, was injected into cancer patients. Not only had the experimental drug never been properly tested on animals, but many patients were not even aware that they had become test subjects. Dr Narayan Bhattathiri, one of the whistleblowers who exposed the practices, said at the time: "I can only say that



With the government's craze for putting cautionary labels on products could we be seeing warnings like this in the future?

what they did is something unbelievable or incomprehensible.

"I couldn't find any example of such a thing being done, maybe in the last 50 years or so. Maybe something similar could have happened in say concentration camps."

Even Johnson & Johnson, the second biggest pharmaceutical manufacturer in the world, have been discovered to take advantage of the relaxed laws. The BBC spoke to an Indian man who participated in a trial for the company, whose baby oil is one of their many major products sold in the UK, who claimed that he "didn't know that experiments were being carried out on [him]."

"I don't know a lot about all these things. I am poor and I live in a small hut and I don't understand many things. The doctors are intelligent. They write the drugs out for me so I take them accordingly."

Thankfully medical laws in England are tighter for these trials, yet it shows that the people who operate these trials shouldn't automatically be trusted. Ryan Wilson may have been extremely unlucky and the vast majority of these experiments are completed successfully, yet if you are tempted to volunteer, don't let an empty wallet rule over your health.

Subject 049 - Mark Westall's experience

When I arrived I was taken to the volunteer's lounge where I was pleasantly surprised to see a widescreen TV, three computers, a Playstation 2 and shelves of DVD's, books and games. I couldn't believe it: I'd be spending my time watching TV and generally being incredibly lazy. It was like being a first year all over again.

Going to the toilet was a somewhat controlled process. I would have to tell a nurse when I needed to go and she would then take me. On the second day we were given the drug. We had to remain lying down for six hours, only getting up if we needed to go to the toilet. Whilst such laziness

may sound attractive at first, having to lie down for such long periods of time meant that whenever we stood up we would experience quite severe dizziness, which on one occasion nearly resulted in me fainting.

However this was about as serious as the side effects got and we were left wondering whether to whole thing was too good to be true. As I write now, I have just received a cheque for £700 and I am one very happy man. After reading about the elephant man, I also feel very lucky.

The staff were very friendly, always asking if we were OK or if we needed anything, not that they

could give us much. As the trial was for diabetes they had to monitor our sugar levels and thus we could only eat what they wanted us to eat, when they wanted us to eat.

Having the nurses come and call a group of grown men and tell them that its 'dinner time' felt pretty strange and it was almost as if we were pets that needed feeding. I became quite friendly with three of the other guys, and although I knew I wouldn't stay in contact with any of them, we made it more bearable for ourselves. Going four whole days without talking to anyone else would've driven me mad.

It's not just workers who need a union

Not content with what either the University or the city of York has to offer, your dedicated Bar and Restaurant editors **Victoria Hallam and Lucy Peden** have been scouring the country to find the finest student union nights on offer

Although no one can think of the York social scene without a certain degree of affection, the repetition of tired student standards in Ziggy's can wear out the patience of even the most dedicated reveller. Attendance at most campus events is high: Club D regularly sells out and the turnout at the pre-barcott initiative left no doubt that York students have an appetite for entertainment.

Ask York students if they would a) like a proper Union and b) go to it, and the idea is met with as much enthusiasm as a proposition to bomb down the Roger Kirk and build a 24-hour subsidised gourmet restaurant in its place. The campaign to turn the aforementioned MDF palace into an SU building has, however, been unsuccessful; we were told that the transformation could not take place "for fire reasons."

Our aim here is not to declare the failure of campus bars, but rather to continue the push for an alternative alongside what already exists. After all, it is probable that most people who had the chance to experience this year's Access All Areas would have been seriously disappointed by the fact that you were unable to access more than one

play host to campus events, would mean that blunders like this could be avoided and York could up its game in the campus events stakes? Anya Deplin is from Manchester University and whilst visiting York attended a Club D event. What did she think? "It reminds me of a school disco: a converted dinner hall with a DJ at one end and bouncers following you around like teachers. Is this the best your university events get?"

A central venue would allow the university to run regular club nights which might actually encourage more students to attend their respective college bars for pre-event drinks, with the bars running offers in conjunction with the events. It would also provide a place where students could meet together without the pretence of college rivalries and build university spirit. Patrick Chester, a second year at York says, "I'm disappointed we don't have a central bar because it would give the students from all the colleges a chance to mix more and create a unified atmosphere within the university. Having a central bar would enable the uni to hold bigger, more popular events. It doesn't make sense that events like Club D and Langwith Large can only hold a small

proportion of the total population on a Friday or Saturday night."

The success of York's numerous clubs and societies is evidence that the university is not lacking in spirit. York has a successful comedy club that frequently features famous

"I'm disappointed we don't have a central bar because it would give the students from all the colleges a chance to mix more and create a unified atmosphere within the university"

acts, but this event is shunted to the low-capacity Wentworth Bar. There are music societies for every genre from jazz to techno, but it's hard to appreciate the

eclecticism when you're trying to rock out in a dining hall. And, even though York boasts the most profitable student cinema in the country, it's hard to unwind in the distinctly unglamorous Physics lecture room.

We scoured the country's student unions in search of inspiration, and we certainly found it. We returned dismayed at the realisation that York simply does not compare to the variety offered by a union. Take, for instance, Leeds University. Leeds student Scott Drummond told us, "Every Friday night everyone heads down to the union for Fruity. It's a really good night and it's always packed every week. The union also hosts nights for DJs and bands. I've seen MC Skibadee, Killers, Maroon 5 and The Lost Prophets, so it caters for a wide range of music tastes."

In making the decision to charge full top-up fees, York has placed itself within an elite academic set. However, until the University commits itself to successful student entertainment, it may find that prospective undergraduates look elsewhere for the ultimate student experience. The good news is that you can visit any student union in the country with a valid NUS card, so the real thing is only a train ride away.

Sheffield Union



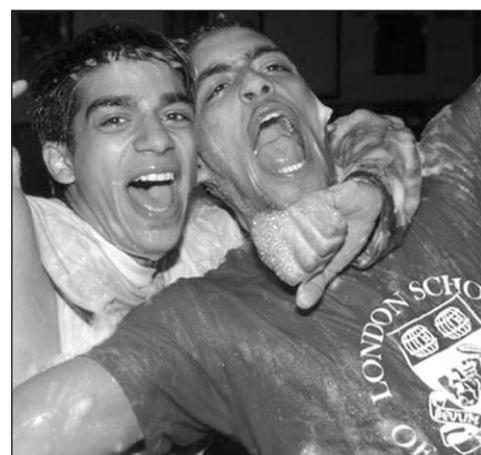
"Have the best night of your life every night", (or so goes the quote on the union's web site.) This is a promising statement to us sheltered York students who have probably experienced the worst night of their life at the (decidedly sticky) hands of Ziggy's.

Sheffield's 'Tuesday Club' features live artists and DJs playing the latest hip-hop and drum 'n' bass. *The Guardian* has described it as "the north's only kicking midweek music fest." With past guests including Jazzy Jeff, Roni Size, Roots Manuva and Mr Scruff, to name but a few, it certainly gives Breakz something to live up to.

'Juice' is a notoriously popular student night at the union and is usually a sell out event. With two rooms of pumping tunes and 2-4-1 on all bottles, Carling and Worthingtons at only £1.60 a pint, it's easy to see why this event is a big crowd puller.

Friday nights see 'Urban Gorilla' playing cutting edge house breaks and techno artists; finally a university that can treat its students like sophisticated consumers as opposed to bombarding them with the Baywatch theme.

Leeds Union



Leeds Union has 6 venues offering a wealth of entertainment and events. The union has a 2100 capacity and has hosted gigs from the likes of the Kaiser Chiefs and Basement Jaxx.

Bar Coda offers a variety of different nights, with the first Saturday of each month being host to 'Rock of Ages' - a witness to metal and rock. 'Brighton Beach', the second Saturday of each month, features soul and freak beats. Finally, the 'Wendy House' on the third Saturday of each month plays indie, rock, and alternative sounds.

Mine hosts the 'Legends of the Dark Black', a monthly drum 'n' bass event, but also offers more sedate vibes in the form of 'The Blowout', which features live Jazz, monthly on Mondays.

'Fruity' is the main student night at the Union and seems remarkably similar to Sheffield's 'Juicy'. But we're not complaining. With a shot of Smirnoff and a mixer, and San Miguel at only £1.50, Leeds' favourite student night gives the pull of town a run for its money. If Oceana puts you in a daze, Fruity is a worthy alternative.

Manchester Union



Manchester Academy has long attracted big name acts; the Kooks, Zutons and the Yeah Yeah Yeahs are lined up to play this coming month. In comparison, the York student body have been treated to the musical expertise of Liberty X, Javine and, who could forget Bradley from S Club...

On a Wednesday night, the Academy is host to Club NME, featuring the "most talked about bands", the drinks are cheap and this is a big crowd puller for those looking for an escape route from all that student cheese. It has been described as, "an ultra-sonic jerk-fest of indie pop prodded with electro punk funk."

Friday boasts "the hottest night in the student calendar:" 'Club Tropicana'. The club promoters tried desperately to draw us in with the promise of cheap drinks and beach related décor, but, despite their best efforts, students were giving the place a wide berth in favour of a wild night on the streets of Manchester. However, their capacity to provide a constant flow of live, new music certainly makes up for this.

Best of the Rest:

FND @ The Union, Loughborough

Super-sleek venue with lashings of chrome and all the VK you can drink. The black leather sofas give the union a sexy, intimate vibe- a clever trick given that the building is the same size and shape as a branch of DFS. The music is not as cheesy as your average SU night, as lots of Lufbra lads and lasses like to bump and grind to R&B, but every effort is made to cater for most tastes (unless you're into death metal). Just when you thought it couldn't get any better, a nice man sells chips from a little hatch on the way out.

Faze at The Strand

An upscale meat market for students at LSE, Kings and UCL, this is the guilty pleasure of choice for the posh-but-cool student scenester set. Non-Londoners will watch with fascinated horror as the DJ segues seamlessly from a Queens of Noize bootleg into the Cray Frog tune. Faze suffers from a severe snakebite deficiency but they do a roaring trade in miniature TVR shooters. The floor-to-ceiling plate glass window in the upstairs bar gives a jaw-dropping view of the city skyline- shame about the sticky floor.

The Ark, Nottingham

This is what Jumpin Jak's would be if they didn't let hen parties in- the juxtaposition of an enormous bar and an enormous dancefloor topped with the roof of a barn. The Ark is the only place to end up if you can survive the rigours of Nottingham's infamous (and illegal) Campus fourteen bar crawl. It's a standard SU, but the DJ does dispense Eastern European alcopops at random intervals during the evening.

Food and Drink Reviews



Which Sandwich?

From May 5th to 12th, Great Britain celebrates its most significant contribution to culinary culture- the sandwich. The official National Sandwich Week is upon us! With exams almost over, and York's eight month winter at an end, what better excuse for a picnic? We've been mainlining carbohydrates up and down the country in order to tell you which rolls to relish and which baguettes to banish to the ducks!

Marks and Spencers, Smoked Salmon and Cream Cheese, £2.19.

It would be damn hard to get this combination wrong, but nobody does it better than the nation's favourite knickers-and-sushi emporium. Thick, salty salmon (which has obviously only been in crystal clear scottish streams) is layered with velvet soft cream cheese. It's almost overdressed by the black pepper and lemon juice, but the spiciness and zestiness make it anything but bland.

Subway, Sweet Onion Chicken Teriyaki, £1.99.

Getting a sandwich from Subway can be a somewhat daunting experience. Once you have finally decided which sandwich you wish to eat, you are then bombarded with a barrage of sandwich related questions. Which bread would you like? Would you like it toasted? Any salad? What sauce would you like? Under the immense pressure of sandwich creation you finally end up with your food! The sweet onion chicken teriyaki is our particular favourite, make sure you ask for it toasted and get extra sweet onion sauce. You'll be on to a winner!

Hog Roast, Pork and Apple, £2.50.

With a wide range of hot meats on offer, freshly sliced whilst you wait, this shop provides mouthwatering sandwich sensations. Even in the summer months you can't help but be drawn in by the delicious pork and apple sauce in a soft white bun.

Prêt à Manger, Crayfish and Light Yoghurt Dressing, £2.85

It's a yuppie take on a Deep South classic, but don't let that put you off. The spicy yoghurt dressing is balanced by the fresh cucumber and the nuttiness of the baguette - enjoy on a verandah with a mint julep.

Reviews by: Vicky Hallam and Lucy Peden

Kapadokya
George Hudson Street

Reviewed by
N. Luke Abraham

★★★

Turkish food is a little more than a greasy kebab after a night on the lash, and you can definitely find a large range to choose from here. Alongside the more traditional (and very well cooked) kebabs are some dishes with a bit more flavour and texture, and I would suggest eating one of these.

I had aubergine stuffed with charcoal-grilled lamb and green peppers which had been finished in a tomato sauce, and then the whole dish was topped with a Bachamel cheese sauce. This also had a large tomato and cucumber side salad and a rather modest portion of rice. For pudding I had kadayif - which has been my favourite pudding since I was a kid, since it's essentially a shredded wheat with honey-pistachio goodness. This was good, although I've had better. The main dish managed to maintain my interest, and

was something I would recommend.

I also seemed to have made the best selection. Most of the other people I was dining with made choices that, although they were very nice, were a bit bland (there is naturally only so much you can do if it's just meat and rice).

I tried a homemade sausage from another dish, and although it was very tasty, there was nothing extra going on. The portions of rice were a little small too, and not all dishes had a side salad like mine. I also tasted somebody else's baklava, which was a little bitter. The prices were reasonable though (except for the drinks, but that's nothing new), and the Turkish coffee at the end of the meal was also very good. In the end I paid about £17 for two courses plus coffee and tip.

I didn't think much of the service - a little too quick and they placed us on a bad table where it was hard to serve everybody and the dishes had to be passed back and forth, even though here was plenty of space in the restaurant and we could have sat somewhere else. Although I might eat there again, it would be only because I knew which dishes to choose and which to avoid.



Varsity
6-12 Lendal

Reviewed by
Laura Herbert

★★★★



Despite not wanting to encourage chain pubs, especially those which offer dubious cards claiming to give you cheap drink at obscure prices ending in 27's and 93's, we gave Varsity a try as its food was cheaper than Burger King's and we were in a particularly classy mood.

We were not disappointed. For a mere £5, two ample sized meals were served complemented with any condiment you might desire. There is a fair amount of variety from chicken to fish, but clearly the 'piece de resistance' is the 18oz Cornish pasty. This beast was of mammoth proportions, and surprisingly tasty with a nice mix of meat, potato, onion and that unknown spiciness that makes up a good pasty- and with the Pasty Shop just down the road offering fierce competition in the pasty stakes, Varsity might not win on a blind taste test, but would win in the sumo ring.

There is also the option of having a main meal and a desert or a main and a starter for a five- chocolate cake with yummy chocolate sauce and bowls of wedges being clear favourites. So if you're hungry in town with a friend and you can't face another Pizza Hut buffet, or have a spare £2.50 jingling around, why not try Varsity for a frugal feast!

Via Vecchia
6 Shambles

Reviewed by
Marisa Tuffnell

★★★★★



It's easy to miss the inconspicuous Via Vecchia - not only does it have an extremely small shop front, but the red sign hanging outside is left enigmatically blank. However, if you do spot it, you are amply rewarded by the treats within. The worst nightmare of anyone on the Atkins Diet, this little shop is a big slice of bread heaven. Once you get inside, you are greeted by a wide variety of baked goods, from olive and tomato focaccia and cheese herb rolls to crusty loaves and cinnamon and raisin bagels; there's something here to suit every set of taste buds.

True, its opening hours are hardly student friendly (it generally closes around midday), but it is well worth a trip into town to nab one (or a selection!) of these tasty morsels before they fly off the shelves. Best to get there early; the later in the morning you go the less bread there is and the possibility of disappointment rises significantly. On one occasion, I had my eye on a rather cheeky looking pesto roll sitting forlornly on its own in the tray when it was snapped up by the woman in front of me - disaster!

However, Via Vecchia definitely offers an incentive worth getting up for, and gorgeous warm bread is a much better hangover cure than a lie-in anyway.

Artful Dodger
Micklegate

Reviewed by
Flora Bradwell

★★



Snugly seated next to Ziggy's, the Artful Dodger is perfectly situated to make it a valuable component of the Micklegate run. Despite the Dickensian name, the internal décor is more reminiscent of a cheap and chintzy Spanish resort than a Victorian drinking hole. This, coupled with the fact that on most Wednesday nights you are likely to find a vast group of scantily clad netball girls downing shots at the bar, gives the Artful Dodger its holiday atmosphere.

Despite becoming a bit more up-market since its change of name and refurbishment, binge-drinking is still the word of the day in this friendly upbeat venue, and customers are encouraged to bulk buy for a cheaper night out. Offers include four shots for five round pounds and a mere two pounds for a double. Not quite the trebles for singles of Nag's Head fame, but still cheap as chips.

Obviously, if you are looking for a quiet place to have a few relaxed beverages in peace and tranquillity, the Artful Dodger is not the place for you. However, if you fancy more of a hazy disorientating boozy night on the town, you could do worse than include this rather tacky, but very welcoming establishment in your crawl from cheap bar to cheap bar.

Arts Reviews

Holly Williams looks at what theatre is coming up in York this summer and our reviewers look back on some modern classics

This term's line-up in the Drama Barn looks set to be one of the most varied and interesting yet, from new writing to musicals, to French poetry and physical theatre. The term high-kicks off to a dramatic start with a fundraising cabaret during week 2, promising to bring together a mixture of comedy, drama and musical numbers for your entertainment and to raise money for student productions planning to go to the Edinburgh Fringe this summer. Go on, show your support! Performances take place at 7.30pm, Friday to Sunday.

One of the plays the cabaret will be raising money for is *Man and God*, on the following week, written and directed by second year Chris Bush. An 'energetic fast-paced, philosophical comedy that takes on mass media, organised religion and celebrity fixation', *Man and God* promises to be thought provoking as well as providing a fun evening of new student theatre.

Week 7 sees another piece of new writing from Nick Payne, following on the success of *Omerta* in the Drama Barn. His play *Flourless*, which has already had a rehearsed reading at London's Soho Theatre, is about 'a brutal act of violence and baking'. It too looks to be a thought-provoking production, tackling racial unease in London.

If these plays give you the bug for new writing, you can hop on a train to Leeds and check out *Janus* at the West Yorkshire playhouse. From the 9 - 13 May, there will be a series of readings and performances by European Playwrights, specially adapted by 'the best in northern New Writing talent.' *Janus* is the exciting culmination of the Playhouse's yearlong project to discover and develop the best writers in Europe. The theatre also offers the chance for budding new writers to get their work read. Their Script Reading Service is open to any writers; see their website for more information: www.wyplayhouse.com.

Taking an innovative approach to a classic, Ellie Bailey's production of *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw will see the barn divided up on the diagonal to create multiple spaces, and will include video footage and a 'fucked-up' Period style. As a Linguistics student, Ellie was attracted to this most famous of phonetic dramas, which should give her cast plenty to get their mouths round in week 4. If you miss out on this Drama Barn production, York Theatre Royal is also putting on *Pygmalion*, from 27th May - 17th June.

Week 9 will see the Barn turn big top, for the 'end of term extravaganza' that is

Cyrano. Combining 17th century French love poetry with physical theatre, *Cyrano* promises to be one of the barn's most unusual productions. And if visual spectacle is your thing, then head over to the Lyceum in Sheffield, where West-End hit *Cats* is prowling around till the 6th May. If you're looking for something a bit more hard-hitting than Andrew Lloyd Webber, then *Bad Girls - the Musical* might fit the bill. Following the current trend for outrageous musical versions of TV shows, *Bad Girls - the Musical* has an original score to accompany the inmates of HMP Larkhall's breakout onto the stage of the West Yorkshire Playhouse. By the writer of the original TV show, it's on from 27 May - 1 July.

Summer is here (as the abundance of fluffy baby geese round campus suggests) and with the theatre that can only mean one thing - outdoor Shakespeare. Over weeks 9 and 10 a double bill of *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be on in Hull Road Park and the Museum Library Gardens respectively, as part of York Council's River Festival. In sumptuous costumes and beautiful outdoor settings, York University students will project the bard's word over balmy summer evenings. However, if it's barmy you want rather than



Pygmalion is on at York Theatre Royal

balmy, then look out for the truly original performance of *Hamlet* that will also be taking place outdoors this summer - on a bouncy castle.

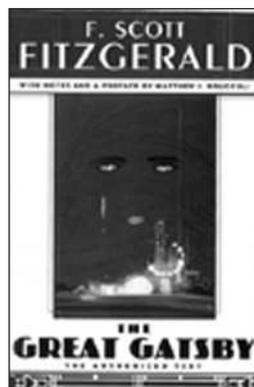
It might seem like a bit of a trek from York, but it must surely be worth a few hours on the train to make it to Stratford-upon-Avon this summer. The Royal Shakespeare Company's ambitious complete works project has opened to enthusiastic reviews, and offers a chance to see truly classic performances alongside unusual interpretations and rarely performed plays. Add to this the incentive of the RSC's £5 16-25s discount tickets, and a summer road trip is surely in order.



Titus Groan: Book 1 of the Gormenghast Trilogy

Mervyn Peake

Reviewed by
Holly Williams



The Great Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Reviewed by
Heloise Wood



The God Of Small Things

Arundhati Roy

Reviewed by
Kirran Shah

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the publishing of the first part of Mervyn Peake's Gothic trilogy. Introducing us to the sinister world of Gormenghast, the novel is dense with Peake's meticulous and evocative detail, creating a tangible other-world for the reader.

We follow various larger-than-life inhabitants of the gloomy castle, the Dickensian-named likes of Swelter, a revoltingly obese and greasy cook; Nanny Slag, a wizened midget who is responsible for the upbringing of the titular Titus, the 77th Earl of Groan, heir to Ghormenghast Castle; the enormous Countess, surrounded by flocks of birds and swarms of white cats, and Steerpike, the Machiavellian youth and anti-hero of the novel. With his rich, poetic writing, Peake creates some of the most vivid characters you'll meet in literature, as well as placing them in an utterly believable, if intensely odd, world that is governed by ancient ritual and hierarchy and is slowly rotting from the inside, as the central character makes his unscupulous way upward in the Castle's society.

While the thickness of description can at times be overwhelming, and make getting through this lengthy novel no mean feat, the rewards for the reader in its memorable characters, evocation of place and lingering sense of a dark, slightly disturbing atmosphere, makes the effort thoroughly worthwhile. The *Gormenghast* trilogy has long been considered a cult classic, and rightly so.

"So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." Fitzgerald's own tormented voice can be heard in this lyrical novel for which he is best known. It is incredibly evocative in its description of a wealthy playboy who comes back to reclaim his past love, at that point married to the brutish and unfaithful Tom Buchanan. Fitzgerald easily captures the poignancy of lost love and plays it off against the vigour of the 1920s Jazz Age, allowing the glittering backdrop to enhance the penetrating loneliness of the book. It is set in the 1920s on Long Island, where narrator Nick Carraway watches as the tragic yet inevitable events unfold.

Jay Gatsby is a fascinating figure: mysterious, broken and established as an icon of illusory glory. Fitzgerald shows the apparently alluring society to be only a superficial game. Gatsby is a Midas figure: he provides legendary parties, exudes charisma and charm, yet the thing he most desperately wants eludes him.

Fitzgerald's narrative often reads like poetry and is crafted with such superb precision that you find yourself turning over phrases in your head, marvelling at how he can describe the seemingly indescribable. The understated description of character is balanced with minute detail of place and atmosphere. It is difficult to judge the characters. Instead you feel a kind of pity, and after the first reading there is a sense of loss, though quite for what, it is difficult to say.

Published in 1996, *The God of Small Things*, Arundhati Roy's first novel, became a bestseller and later won the Booker prize. It is the story of Estha and Rahel, 'two egg' boy and girl twins who recount the story of their childhood in India. After a separation of 23 years, the twins are finally reunited through a story of recollection and traumatic events. Governed by traditional customs, they face a society underpinned by a culture of discrimination as they try to rebuild their lives.

In the character of Ammu we see the beautiful, gentle mother who has tried to run away from the strictures of her middle class Syrian Christian upbringing. Meanwhile, the injustice of the story is often led by the embittered Baby Kochamma, the twins' great aunt, who casts a spiteful eye on all happenings in the family, seeking to take advantage of Ammu's "mistakes" to ingratiate herself to the matriarch. The dilemmas of post-colonial India play a key role in the book with an emphasis on the caste system and how it touches their lives.

Roy makes a point about the suffocating nature of family and environment, making the book incredibly dense. The past is weaved into the present with startling revelations, and Roy's use of language is effortless yet thick. This prose reaches out to all the senses portraying graphic images while alluring to the 'sicksweet scent of the warm jellyandjam-laden breezes.' A very stimulating novel.

Film Reviews



American Dreamz

Director: Paul Weitz
With: Hugh Grant, Mandy Moore

Runtime: 107 min

Reviewed by
John Parkes



It could have been so different. With a great comedy cast and an interesting premise, *American Dreamz* seemed quite promising, which makes it all the more galling that it proved to be such artless tat. *American Dreamz* is a reality T.V talent show, obviously parodying American Idol. Its host (Hugh Grant, doing an unflattering impersonation of Simon Cowell) is bored of the format and wants new 'freak' contestants. Chief among these are Mandy Moore's manipulative cow, destined to be Hugh Grant's latest unconvincing love interest. Also selected is Omer, an unwilling terrorist from an Afghan camp, planted in the competition in order to blow up the President (Quaid) who is the celebrity judge in the competition final. With hilarious consequences. Of course.

It is a brave and imaginative concept, attempting a social commentary attacking both high politics and mass entertainment in one short movie. It is not the premise that I have any problem with, it is the execution. The film fails utterly, and the fault lies almost entirely with Paul Weitz. The man behind *About A Boy* and *American Pie* has inflicted upon us a film so monumentally awful that I will forever regret the precious time and money that I wasted on it. For a satirical

romantic comedy, it is unsuccessful on every count. The romance is a tacked-on afterthought, almost coincidental to the plot. The satire is ham-fisted and artless. Most criminally for a comedy however, is that it just isn't funny. In the slightest. I laughed properly once, and I remain unconvinced that it was a deliberate joke. The rest of the 'humour' barely made me grimace. It is cheap and puerile comedy, and totally unpalatable.

While Hugh Grant was once in danger of being type-cast as the bumbling romantic hero, he has settled into a new rut, and now only plays the anti-hero, in this case a crass, sleazy, predatory cad. Normally this is fine, because he does it very well, and is always good value, but not when he plays a character so poorly created and developed that he is nothing more than a caricature. The same is true for every other character in this pathetic trash. The characters are weak and underdeveloped. Regardless of how talented your cast is, such crass, lazy stereotyping undermines any semblance of talent. Not a good thing for Mandy Moore.

I've desperately searched for a bright spot. At a push I would congratulate Willem Dafoe for his performance as the President's aide. The original idea is also imaginative, and somewhere in here there might be a good film, if handled in a completely different fashion. Some of the subject matter is fairly controversial, and people will be critical of it for this, but there is no need for outrage on moral grounds. You don't need to search that hard. This is the cheapest comedy around, and I feel ashamed now for laughing at it that one time.

Scary Movie 4

Director: David Zucker
With: Anna Faris, Craig Bierko

Runtime: 83 min

Reviewed by
James Howlett



The fourth in an increasingly popular series of spoof movies, *Scary Movie 4* is just like the others, but more stupid. This time around, Cindy Campbell, (Anna Faris) has found a new house to live in, which she discovers is haunted by a little Japanese boy (see *The Grudge*) and she is led to a mysterious village to find out how he died. At the same time, in the house next door lives Tom Ryan (Craig Bierko), whose story comes straight from *War of the Worlds*.

Hilariously, instead of aliens, giant ipods- called 'Tr-ipods', in a clever product placement - are destroying the world via a

playlist called 'Human Destruction'. The two of them fall in love, and, along with Cindy's old friend Brenda Meeks (Regina Hall) overcome various obstacles, including being trapped by *Saw*-like dummies, all of which is smattered with the usual serving of gross-out humour.

This is for true *Scary Movie* fans only. Interestingly, it is the first of the series to be shot in high definition video, not that it does it any favours. With Shawn and Marlon Wayans, who wrote the first two in the series, absent as writers, *Scary Movie 4* just doesn't work. In *Scary Movie 4*, the franchise seems tired, though Anna Faris, through her wide-eyed naivety, does a pretty good job in the lead. Furthermore, the only true horror movie that is spoofed is *The Grudge* (apart from the more thriller-esque *The Village*), which just seems to expose the whole Hollywood moneymaking scheme behind the franchise. Indeed, the spoofing of *Brokeback Mountain* and *Million Dollar Baby* means it is hardly a film, more like a series of skits where you play guess-what-they're-spoofing at the beginning of each scene.

That said, the film's funniest moments come when any reference is made to real-life politics, and Tom Cruise's increasing weirdness. Leslie Nielsen is brilliant as America's President Harris, particularly in a parody of Bush's reaction to September 11. There is also a hilarious spoof of Cruise's 'I love Katie', couch-jumping stunt on *Oprah*. Carmen Electra is, however, ridiculous as a blind village girl, as is Bill Pullman as her father.

Some may argue that this new genre of films-spoofing-films are created for entertainment, and this does provide it - to a very narrow extent. Although there are some funny moments, any sense of humour is undermined by the practical absence of plot and character development. Again: for fans only.

The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada

Director: Tommy Lee Jones
With: Tommy Lee Jones, Barry Pepper

Runtime: 121 min

Reviewed by
Tom King



Three Burials, the directorial debut of Tommy Lee Jones, sees Pete (Tommy Lee Jones) a Texan ranch foreman going to extreme lengths to keep the promise he made to his dead friend Melquiades Estrada, which was to return his body to his hometown in Mexico after he is found murdered. The tale that ensues is heart wrenching and ridiculous, but terribly, terribly real.

From the opening scene there is no doubt that you are watching a Western. The bright and dusty cinematography and the slow, southern drawl of all the characters, with the country and western blaring out in

the background lets the earthy grit of the South enter every pore of the film, creating a kind of micro-universe, in which the characters play out their lives.

This Western, however, only contains one shoot 'em up, seen from different perspectives, which not so much glorifies such acts of violence but shows the reality of what it means to take a man's life.

Tommy Lee Jones is perfect for his role; he is every part the cowboy, with cracked, tanned skin like old leather and a slow, reserved manner, saying only what he needs to when he needs to and nothing more. Barry Pepper's turn as Mike Norton, the border patrol officer responsible for Melquiades' death, is also impressive, as we watch him confront his demons quite literally and come to terms with what he has done.

Screenwriter Guillermo Arriaga (*21 Grams*) is true to form, blending key themes of life, death, friendship and forgiveness in a typically complex narrative: the film has no chronological sequence and although this is not immediately obvious, once you have picked this up, it adds a depth to the film that would otherwise be hard to come by. It feels like a bit of reality has been cut out and put on screen as you jump from scene to scene and character to character and slowly build up the overall story. The film kind of trundles along, not rushing over its themes and leading you to various squeamish and ludicrous moments that bring you to laughter despite the distasteful nature of what you are seeing and remind you how crazy life can be.

This is not a light undertaking, but the story is resolved in a bold, satisfying conclusion. If you are patient it will offer you a little bit of everything. The true nature of what it is trying to say is not something you can pin down easily and the chances are you'll leave with more questions than when you arrived but it contains a truth and beauty not easily matched. A definite must-see.

Music Reviews

Singles Reviews



Arctic Monkeys

Live at the Arena Hull

Reviewed by Camille Augarde 25/04/06

★★★★★

Equipped with fluorescent Adidas zip-ups designed to blind, Penguin polos buttoned to the brim and lethal amounts of warm, overpriced Carlsberg, the 'Arctic Army' (die-hard fans to you and me) are out in force tonight. Their rain-sodden French crops and eyes black with bags confirm that yes, Monkeymania lives on... and on.

Any critics bemused as to why such extreme adoration is being draped around these four acne-adorned Sheffield lads-next-door achieve enlightenment as soon as 'Riot Van's opening plucks of perfection greet their eardrums. A seemingly odd opening choice, this blissfully lethargic number was probably intended to calm the crowd.

However, Alex Turner's melancholy mumbles, underwhelmed expression and wilting posture somehow manage to trans-

port the sweaty pit into new realms of loudness. Indeed, the scrawl across Helder's violently shaking drum kit, kindly warning us that 'the funk might fracture your nose' becomes an understatement, as the band slide effortlessly into 'The View from Afternoon', hurling the crowd towards white lights.

Contrary to the latest rumours that, in true Radiohead 'Creep' style, the Arctics now refuse to play Mardy Bum, the anthem makes a more than welcome appearance, along with the remainder of their debut album, 'Whatever People Say I Am That's What I'm Not'.

Having been furiously banging out these tunes for years, inevitably the wind-up Monkeys look a tad unexcited, yet still they are tighter than their pursed lips, and sound fantastic.

The band appear to perk up upon the exhibition of their new EP's gems, with the jazzed up oldie 'Cigarette Smoker Fiona' being the highlight; its snarling vocals and gritty guitars introducing a new, more mature side to the band, confirming that, thankfully, the Arctic Monkeys are in it for the long-haul.

Film School - 11:11

Initially, it sounds a little like a cynical medium pretending to channel Joy Division in order to rip off unsuspecting customers. Nonetheless, it's atmospheric, in a slightly second-hand way. The insistent rhythm section is fairly hypnotic, and the effect is reinforced by the robotic vocals. A record that would probably seem much better if it was released during the autumn, it's redolent of rain, damp streets, and slight colds.

Boy Kill Boy - Suzie

Boy Kill Boy return with a track that's more catchy than avian flu. Somewhat inevitably, Ritalin-deprived New Zealander Zane Lowe has named it his Hottest Track in The World Today. He's not too far wrong either: the vocals flirt with notes in a Morrissey-esque manner, never quite touching, and the band provide a thrillingly danceable backing. A bit short on instrumentation, but just about the best thing around this week.

Breaks Co-op - The Otherside

Talking of Zane Lowe, here's his band's single. It's just about as far from expectations as it could go. It's got that Jack Johnson ethically-concious-surfer vibe, the sort of thing that cubicle workers can play on their way to work to reassure themselves that they are different from their colleagues. The harmonies are pretty, but it's a little vacuous.

Corinne Bailey-Rae - Trouble Sleeping

Nowhere near as good as the not-too-bad-really 'Put Your Records On', 'Trouble Sleeping' is a pleasant enough song, but it drowns under the waves of faux-jazz brass and loungey noises. The instrumental B-side could well be the last thing you hear after an automated voice says 'please hold' and you disappear into a phone queue.

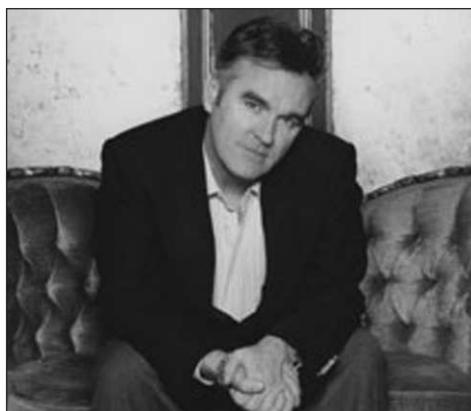
The Spinto Band - Did I Tell You

Vaguely reminiscent of Britpop, this single has probably been released a month or two early. Like Supergrass, it's clearly a song for the summer, and like them, it doesn't quite make sense at any other time of year.

Hot Chip - Boy From School

A really bizarre song, it sounds like the result of an evil-minded DJ's remix of two totally unsuited songs. The vocals are technically proficient, but clash horribly with the repetitive, sub-Daft Punk beats.

Singles were reviewed by Emma Fite-Wassilak, James Morgan and Robin Seaton.



Morrissey

Live at The Lowry, Salford

Reviewed by Charlotte Bonner

18/04/06

★★★★★

"So this is Salford" Morrissey grinned at the audience before launching into what he called a "night of torment". In the town he made a Mecca of after the famous Smiths photo of the 1980s, he did not disappoint.

Playing at the Lowry's intimate Lyric Theatre, Moz proceeded with renditions of songs from the new album, the comeback *You Are The Quarry* and, of course, a few Smiths classics. Highlights of the night included the caustic 'I Will See You In Far Off Places', 'Still Ill' and the recent masterpiece 'Life Is A Pigsty', demonstrating his band's immensely underrated abilities.

Disappointingly, however, compared to previous occasions, the Smiths quota was considerably reduced, with the crowd pleasing 'There Is A Light That Never Goes Out' notably absent.

Moz was also on fine acerbic form, responding to a shout from the audience of "Get your shirt off Moz" with a smirking "You can't be that starved!". Radio 1, Bono and 'Madogga' all received tonguelashings.

Concluding with a one song encore of 'Irish Blood, English Heart' as they had to "be quick, Shayne Ward is on next," he said a final "ciao" at the end. He may be too old for Radio One, but we know it's far from over.



The Futureheads

News and Tributes

Reviewed by Ben Toone

Out 29/05/06

★★★★

The difficult second album. So often a failure for many bands, but what of Sunderland's finest? This offering takes a much darker tack than their self titled debut, echoing the punk rhythms and socially concious lyrics of The Clash and The Jam. They have also learned from the success of 'Hounds of Love', expanding on the successful backing harmonies throughout.

Fans of the songs 'A to B' or 'Hounds of Love' may be disappointed here. Although 'Favours for Favours', 'To the Sea' and 'Skip to the End' are standout tracks, they don't quite share the same anthemic resonance or catchiness.

Several songs indicate a change in style without losing the distinctive Futureheads mark. This is most obvious in 'Thursday', which oddly echoes the intro to the Beach Boys' classic 'Wouldn't it be Nice'. The bass driven 'Burnt' channels the Pixies' loud/quiet sound in The Futureheads' own unique way.

Nonetheless, it doesn't pulsate with raw passion in the same way as *The Futureheads* did and, although the new ideas are interesting, sometimes they fall short. The closing track 'Face' starts promisingly, ends abruptly and feels like an injustice, closing an unsatisfactory album in an unsatisfactory manner.



Kaiser Chiefs

Live at Alexandra Palace, London

Reviewed by Jenni Marsh

22/04/06

★★★★★

It's packed and sweaty, and drunken indie-kids are spewing. Who said the Kaisers weren't rock and roll?

For the 'Chiefs, this evening the pressure is off. All this crowd want is to pogo like hyperactive six year olds and 'na-na-na' outlandishly to the hits that have been on their iTunes for the past two years. This is high-energy unpretentious fun on a big fat stick.

The evening kicks off with the ultimate ode to relationship-carnage: 'Every Day I Love You Less and Less', and continues to rumble through the choon-happy album *Employment*. Wilson is every inch the showman, riding a high-wire cable across the auditorium to perform a few hits to the rear end of the crowd. And just to keep the laydees happy, every now and then the pace is taken down a notch, at best with the dreamy 'You Can Have It All'.

But what the beady eye and greedy ear really want this evening is a taste of things to come. The few new tracks thrown in are mostly in the same vein as their first album: bleepy flippant musical mayhem. But as seems to have been the Kaiser Chiefs' general ethos thus far, if the formula for good music ain't broke, then don't try to be a clever sod and fix it.

The last word

Andreas Masoura reflects on the week's events

Club D

Saturday evening saw the unveiling of the Students' Union's latest bit of business innovation, designed to increase bar revenue in order to ensure the bars remain open. This comes shortly after the bar closure fiasco at the end of last term that saw hundreds of rowdy Goodricke occupants storm McQs, demanding that it remain open. Given the shanty town living conditions that these people face on a daily basis (apparently several conference guests complained about the rats over the holidays) the bar had to remain open so they could continue drowning their sorrows. Club D on Saturday provided the platform for the introduction of the "Feeder Bar" system.

No, this is not a new society for people who like feeding each other. Rather, seven hours of arduous negotiations in the last exec. meeting resulted in a bright spark of genius with business potential that would make Alan Sugar bounce off the walls. From now on, campus events will be structured so that students are forced to go to another bar before the actual event itself since they will only be able to buy wristbands there. Apparently the reason behind this is to spread the custom to other bars too, not just the bar adjacent to the actual event.

Saturday's feeder system resulted in a chaotic situation that saw many students dressed in beachwear stranded in Langwith bar like a bunch of marooned tourists, since there were not enough tickets to go around. Perhaps it's time to go back to basics. Like the

night before in Goodricke that saw people waiting for up to 40 minutes to get a drink. One student commented that the situation was an absolute disgrace, leaving his mouth as dry as the bottom of Ghandi's flip flop. This would not have been the case if there were an adequate amount of bar staff. Employing more staff would ensure people remained happy whilst ensuring that maximum revenue would be gained. Amazingly, I came up with that despite not having a BA in Management. I'm so clever.

Pigeon hysteria



It's summer time again and the ducklings are everywhere. You've probably already stepped in their shit. The university finally has enough birds to rival Nottingham's 7 to 1 ratio. The place is full of so many birds that a pigeon managed to fly into my politics exam the other day. Rather than nail the winged rat with a bat of some sort, several invigilators followed it around and flapped at it for about 15 minutes whilst it cooed hysterically. Meanwhile I was trying to concentrate on my paper, but found it quite difficult since I

couldn't stop laughing. I think I should get some extra marks at least.

Nan's war on c***

I have to congratulate Nan, our features editor, for managing to find herself the subject of an entire Evening Press article. This piece of journalism attempted to mock Nan for writing a feature about a word that somehow inspired the question, "...fancy someone's Nan knowing so much filth." Get it? Nan and nan as in granny/ old person. Oh dear. At least they tried. Given the fact that Grape Lane was formerly known as C*** Lane as it was the former York Red light district (If anyone knows where it's gone to could they email in) I think Nan's feature was quite relevant.

'Degrees'

Those of you lucky enough to have had exams cancelled due to lecturers strikes will be interested to note that the University of Keele is offering to let students graduate with two thirds of a degree. So if York screws you over turn up and graduate there.

York St. John

By the way, I bet you didn't know Nouse gets delivered to York St. John. Turns out they can read after all.

No. 09, Environmental Science

Blag your degree



Environmental Science; it's a barrel of laughs.

Essentially, this is a degree about recycling and how it is the best thing since landfill sites became commonplace. If you want to blag this degree I suggest to take a leaf out of my book and create some environmental damage around the place where you live (this applies mainly to those of you who live off campus.)

Shortly before the end of last term, the accommodation office demanded that my two housemates and I immediately attend an urgent meeting regarding the environmental catastrophe that we had created on our road. Apparently we had turned the place into a caravan site. The reality of the matter was that the wind knocked our bin down and a crisp packet fell onto the pavement.

Subsequent complaints by our neighbour resulted in the university summoning us, lecturing us about the environment (they managed to do despite union strikes) and warning us not to upset the locals.

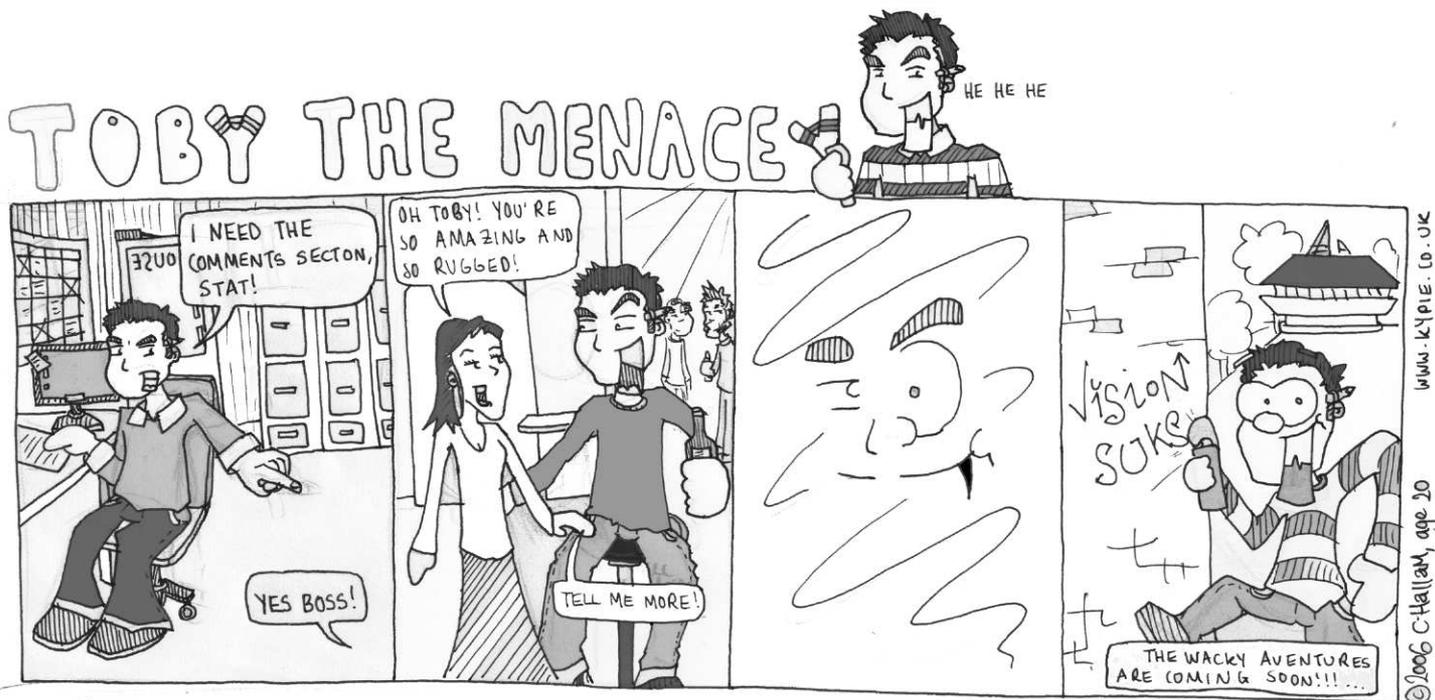
Additionally, we were subject to numerous visits from the council's "Waste Disposal Consultant". This glorified bin man with a suit proceeded to teach us environmental things like put our rubbish in the bin, and recycle plastic bottles. We learnt a lot and felt that we could pass any environmental exam based on this new found knowledge.

I also recommend you attend an environmental society meeting. I did. I picked up various environmental ideas from people's contributions to the discussion. The best one by far suggested that rather than take the train to a conference trip to London they all walk, as it would be better for the environment. He was serious. So serious that when I suggested this might not be a good idea, I was met with the deathly glare of an eco warrior.

So, apart from recycling, what does an Environmental Science degree involve? I'm not too sure, but I suspect that the textbooks are printed on recycled paper.

Here's a tip for the budding environmental scientist: don't say 'the dog ate my homework' when you can earn brownie points by describing the event in terms of habitat and dietary requirements. For the non-environmental scientists among us, remember above all else not to make the mistake of calling an environmental scientist an ecologist: they are not the same thing; they're totally different, honest.

However, environmental scientists have the upper hand, since they can justify cheating on their partner as the fulfilment of their role as an organism as dictated by evolutionary theory.

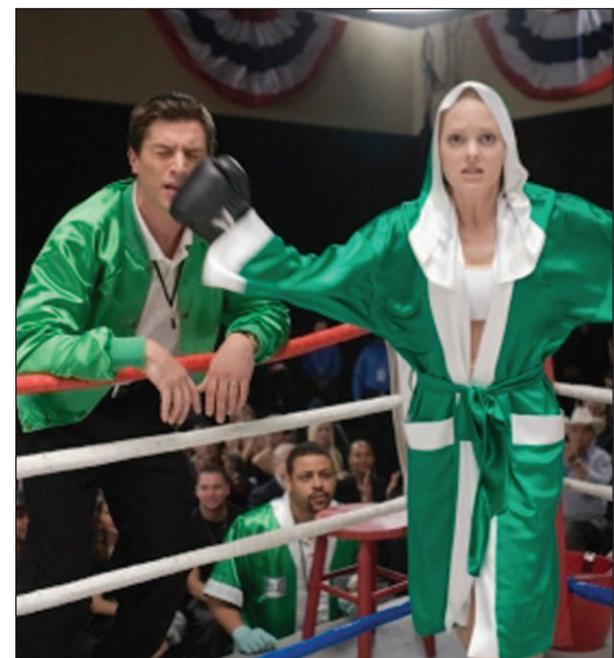
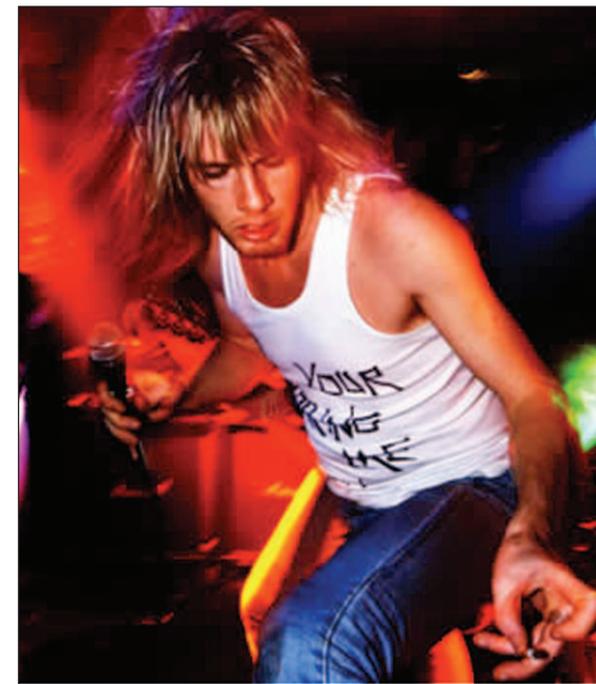


THE GREAT TOBY IS A HIGHLY SKILLED AND OH SO RESPECTED EDITOR OF NOUSE. IDOLISED BY ALL WHO WORK WITH HIM.

HIS CHARISMA AND WIT FILL ANY ROOM THAT IS GRACED BY HIS PRESENCE. HE IS THE MAN THAT EVERY WOMAN (OR BLOKE) DREAMS OF.

HOWEVER, THIS IS ALL TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. A COUNTER BALANCE MUST BE MAINTAINED IN THE EXISTENCE OF THE UNIVERSE!

THIS CREATURE IS... TOBY THE MENACE! HE RUNS AMOK THROUGH THE CAMPUS OF YORK, TORMENTING ANY STUDENT (OR SOCIETY) THAT GETS IN HIS WAY! BE AFRAID! BE VERY AFRAID!



Clockwise from top left: Towers of London show their true rock roots; Take the Lead's publicity poster; the cast from Grumpy Old Women, a scene from Scary Movie 4 and James Franco and Sophia Myles in Tristan + Isolde.

Live Music

Wednesday 3rd May, Foreign Beggars, Fibbers

Having won Best New Act at the UK Hip Hop awards 2004 and Best Group and Best Single at the Lyric Pad Hip Hop awards 2005, this group of five rappers went on to perform live at Glastonbury and recently at the world-famous Fabric in London. Now playing in York, this gig promises to be something that hip hop fans will not want to miss.

Wednesday 3rd May, Okkervil River, The Cockpit, Leeds

For those into a more relaxed music scene, Okkervil River also play this Wednesday.

Influenced heavily by the 1960s American folk scene, they offer something slightly different.

Thursday 4th May, DJ Premier, Leeds Met University

DJ Premier, infamous for working with Nas, Notorious BIG and Jay-Z in the 1990s, is showing Leeds what he now has to offer the ever-changing music scene.

Thursday 11th May, Towers of London, Fibbers

Hailed by NME as 'London's most controversial band' this gig is not for the faint-hearted; the band reinvents '70s punk.

Art and Performance

Until 19th May Retro-Techno exhibition, Artspace.

Fans of Andy Warhol beware. His work is being showcased alongside York artist Milladdio. While the local artist is renowned in this area, can his work really compete with the genius of Warhol?

Wednesday 3rd May - Saturday 6th May Journey to the River Sea, York Theatre Royal.

The children's classic story by Eva Ibbotson is adapted to be told through live music and dance. Tickets range from £8.50 to £18.00 - prices to fit even the smallest of student budgets.

Tuesday 9th May Grumpy Old Women-Live, Grand Opera House.

In York for one night only, comedienne Jenny Eclair stars alongside Linda Robson of *Birds of a Feather* fame and Dillie Keane in this show. Adapted from the extremely popular BBC2 series, this show promises to make you laugh. Surely you wouldn't want to miss this?

Wednesday 9th May-Saturday 20th May Oklahoma, York Theatre Royal.

With all the original songs such as *Oh What a Beautiful Morning*, this is a must for musical fans.

Campus Events

Friday, Week 2 Planet V, Vanbrugh

Always one of the most popular events on campus, Planet V returns this summer and promises to be as good as ever. With the bar open until 1am, be sure to get your tickets in advance from Your:Shop.

Thursday, Week 3 URY Live Music event, Halifax

The University's award-winning radio station joins with Atlantic records to create a night of live music from JJ's. With the recently signed band Director headlining and support from local bands, The Hair and The Memo's, this promises to be a good night.

Thursday, Week 2 and 3 Bar Quiz, Vanbrugh

If you don't manage to make it all the way over to Halifax (let's face it, it is a bit of a trek!) then why not head down to Vanbrugh bar and take part in the weekly quiz?

Friday, Week 3 Langwith Little event, Langwith

The theme is as yet unannounced, but, with previous Langwith Little events being 'Wild Wild West', 'Bedrock' and 'Pimps and Ho's', you can rest assured that this night will involve dressing up and making a fool of yourself, whilst taking advantage of the late bar. What more could you ask for?

Cinema

Tristan + Isolde (12A)
James Franco of *Spiderman* fame returns to the screen to star as a noble knight who has an affair with the married future queen of England in this medieval style Romeo and Juliet. If you like romance, then this is the one for you.

Take the Lead (12A)
Antonio Banderas gets to show off his moves in this film as he plays the ballroom dancer Pierre Dulaine who decides to try and reform a group of problem kids through dance. The film, based on the real life story of the inspirational dancer, is visually stunning and many young stars showcase their talent.

Scary Movie 4 (15)
The original cast are reunited to play out spoofs of recent movies including *Million Dollar Baby* and *War of the Worlds*. How many more of these films can be made? Are they still funny? I'm sure diehard fans will still love this film, but, as for the rest of us, I'm not so sure.

Alien Autopsy (12A)
Geordie duo Ant and Dec try their hand at starring in their own movie. Jimmy Carr also plays a small role so this film really tries to show off British talent. The humour may be quite childish but it's definitely worth giving it a try.



Westminster words from our local MP, **John Grogan**

Comment

Sunday should not be about the shops

Twenty years ago this month, before many York students were even born, a minor political earthquake struck. The Shops Bill being piloted through the House of Commons by the Thatcher Government, which aimed to deregulate Sunday trading, was defeated at Second Reading. This defeat was the result of a clash between the free market and more traditionalist wings of the Conservative Party, with the latter winning out.

Indeed, the issue was so contentious that it was not revisited for another eight years and even then the Sunday Trading Act 1994 was only able to offer up a compromise which led to smaller shops being allowed to open all day on Sunday but larger stores and supermarkets restricted to just six hours of trading.

Whether we have a religious faith or not I think most of us like to spend Sunday doing something a bit different from the rest of the week. It may just be having a lie-in to read the Sunday papers, enjoying a traditional Sunday lunch in the pub or more energetically playing for a football or cricket team.

Parliament and the Government have a decision to make later in the year as regards possible further changes to Sunday trading legislation which could make a big difference to thousands of staff employed in retail throughout York – including many York students under-

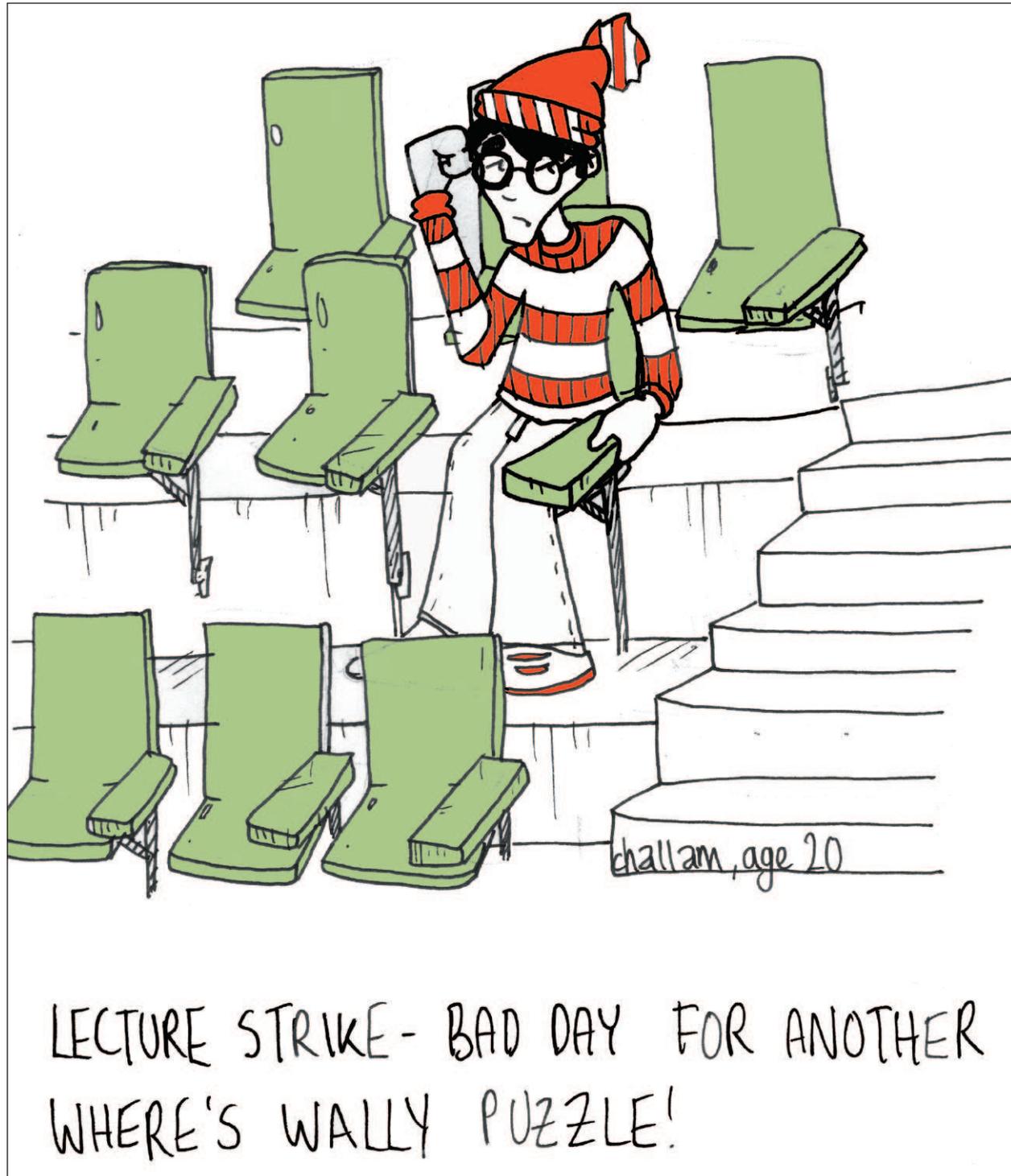
taking part-time work.

Some of the big retailers like Asda and Tesco are pressing for all restrictions to be abolished. I tend to agree with the unique alliance of the shopworkers union USDAW, small shop owners and the churches who want to keep the rules as they are. Currently, people have the chance to do their shopping on Sunday whilst also preserving a more relaxed and different Sunday atmosphere in our towns and cities.

Moreover, large retailers opening for three extra hours would probably not create new jobs – people working six hours at present would simply have to work longer. This has been the experience in Scotland where there are no limits on Sunday trading.

In addition, many convenience stores rely for their profit margins on the extra trade they pick up on a Sunday morning or evening when the supermarkets are shut. A recent opinion poll found that 64% of respondents did not want large shops to open for more than six hours on Sundays. Even amongst those polled who did want large stores to open longer, 52% of them said they would change their mind if it meant local shops might be put out of business.

I myself think that the current balance is just about right and will do my best to defend the status quo which is, I think, an example of a great English compromise. Sundays should surely not just be about shopping.



SU President **Micky Armstrong**, presents a summary of the numerous campaigns that YUSU are currently involved in.

Welcome back! I hope that you all had a fantastic Easter, and that those of you with important assessments aren't too stressed. We've had quite a busy Easter here at the Students' Union, with the bar campaign, Heslington East and the industrial action by the

Association of University Teachers (AUT), so I thought it was worth mentioning some things.

The bar campaign: this is never over, the University have decided to consult us to try and come to a situation that pleases everybody; which suggests one thing

and on thing alone: if you want your college bar then use your college bar. If you are 'warming up' for a night of fun in Toffs or the Gallery, do so in your bar and not somewhere off campus. Its safer and cheaper (check out the poster around campus). Since coming to University I

have been a great fan of my bar, and it is good that someone is as usually it's not the busiest; I can remember many nights sitting in Langwith bar with several groups of friends talking, laughing and generally relaxing. I would hate for this not to be available for future students, please continue to use your bars.

The AUT, as you probably know, are continuing to boycott assessments; this is serious action. It is serious action because they are campaigning on a serious cause. For too long now lecturers have been overworked and underpaid. Class sizes are always increasing, workloads

are expanding, if this continues standards of teaching will differ; with an increase in students there must be an increase in lecturers and an increase in pay. Poorly funded for years, promised a portion of top-up fees, you can understand why the AUT is taking action; however as a union we decided that we can't support the AUT in action that is detrimental to our students.

'we can't support action that is detrimental to our students'

If you are worried about how this action affects you or your degree, contact us; there should be as little disruption as possible. If you are affected, do not be angry at your lecturers, they deserve better pay and should get it, if you would like to help in any sort of campaign, again contact us.

Other than that I wish you all the best for the new term and remember if you have just finished an exam or don't have work on, there will be others working so try not to be disruptive and be singing and shouting all through the night. Good luck to all taking part in Roses.

and Analysis

Lecturers' ongoing industrial action is detrimental to students and should not be condoned by the NUS, says **Julian Hammerton**

Lecturers shouldn't campaign for pay at expense of students

Graduates' jobs are being jeopardised by the ongoing AUT industrial action. Prospective law students or those awaiting confirmation of placements are left waiting in limbo.

York terms already finish late enough as it is, compared with other universities, but now students may be leaving in the summer without degrees. Students will be left alienated by this action. It is indefensible that the NUS has allowed itself to be used to justify this - by proxy it says that students agree with what is happening.

Students are supposed to be represented by the NUS yet it is clearly failing them by its support of the AUT industrial action. This is why I am glad YUSU is standing up for the students and condemning the lecturers' current action.

Final year students not receiving their degree, and others having exams cancelled, is a dangerous waste of time. The graduate career market is harmonised with summer graduations, jobs are made available for when

the students leave university. Disrupting this, by potentially forcing a years worth of students on a gap year, will have a large knock on effect for the years to follow. Current second years may end up competing with third years.

When analysing this industrial action, what should be looked at is who it is affecting, and also what is happening to the popularity of those partaking. The current assessment marking boycott is affecting only the students and is thus making the lecturers very unpopular. Rather than attacking the students, why not disrupt the university. It is not the students that have the power to determine pay rises.

Affecting the University's and College's Employers' Association (UCEA) should be the aim of the action. The UCEA is the association that handles all matters connected with employment within the higher education sector. These are the people responsible for deciding salaries, so naturally should be the tar-

get of any action. A good plan would do this without disrupting students' futures.

The UCEA acts as a representative between the unions and the Government, funding councils and other external stakeholders. The unions should direct their action at the UCEA by these relations. The best way could be for lecturers to stop releasing research, which would lead to many important people plucking up their ears due to their vested interests. Simply put, this is more pressure on the UCEA. If handled correctly, this would make the UCEA unpopular, and thus increases the chances of salary increases.

Their current course of preventing the handing out of degrees will eventually awaken the Government, after the local elections, but has high risks of dragging out and being too costly for students. I almost feel lecturers have not shown the empathy needed to teach. Soon students will see lecturers as only being there because they are working on a piece of research they find

interesting - not out of any respect to students. This demeans the whole profession.

Their cause has some validity. Lecturers' pay has risen only 5% in the last 20 years. Lecturers used to earn the same as doctors and politicians. The UCEA has offered inflation following pay rises for two years to end the dispute.

University Chancellors told lecturers that a third of the money from top-up fees would go straight to them. Now, with the arrival of the first third of the money, the lecturers decided to act. It would have been more responsible to wait until all students are paying full fares.

Higher wages are required to attract a better calibre of employees, offering a better service for students. The effect is very quickly noticeable, within a few years all new jobs will have more applications allowing the best to be selected.

Lecturers should get their salaries increased, just not at our expense.



Heidi Blake, calls on students to unite against corporatisation Services scrapped in name of profits

Perhaps I should not be surprised that the University ordered the closure of Vanbrugh's laundry over the Easter holidays, despite earlier promises to the contrary, in order to pave the way for the development of offices. It represents no deviation from the prevailing motion towards corporatisation.

Why is it that this issue seems so pertinent in the modern climate of Higher Education? Perhaps because the keenness of students to maintain anything resembling normal standards of cleanliness seems something heartily to be encouraged. Perhaps because this subjugation of student needs and blithe ignorance of their demands represents a wider malaise.

The vocal protest organised by the Vanbrugh JCRC at the start of last term in response to plans to demolish their laundry betokened the determination of students to withstand the submersion of their needs by the swelling tide of corporate greed. Their efforts were successful, and they were promised their laundry would remain open until further notice. Yet, when the decision was finally made to close the laundry, no single member of the JCRC was consulted.

Similarly, the University made promises to lecturers regarding increased rates of pay, and has brazenly refused to honour them at the negotiating table, with the result that students are now suffering the Assessment Boycott. The apparent success of

the "Save the Bars" campaign last term may appear encouraging, but don't be fooled. The University willingly made placatory noises in order to quell the protests, but is proving predictably intransigent in ongoing negotiations surrounding the fate of the bars.

This University sees itself increasingly as running a business more than provid-

'Extra money is now ploughed into research, not education'

ing a service, and is quite willing to see students suffer as a result.

Tuition fees are soaring, yet the extra money is ploughed into research, not education. Accommodation prices are rising, yet availability is declining.

Now our bars face closure, because profit margins are "not high enough". The University is not willing to invest time and money in running a service for students unless it pays off in sterling. They choose, instead, to haemorrhage money on developments such as Heslington East and endless investment in conference facilities.

We must take heed of this rank hypocrisy and corruption and unite against its growth. If we are to prevent the student voice from being drowned out entirely by the cacophony of commercialisation, we're going to have to make one hell of a racket.

Who else but the porters can help in crisis, asks **James Coldwell** College porters' invaluable service

A new term brings with it opportunities for new beginnings. The new term is indeed a time for optimism and anticipation of great things to come. The same holds true, to an extent, for those in the unenviable position of being responsible for the University's finances, for whom the start of term traditionally brings with it first and foremost the chance to implement some exciting and original parsimonious policies.

Now it would appear, as hard as it may be to believe, that the University has run out of novel penny-pinching

schemes, and as such is once again considering restructuring portering services. It is a universally accepted fact that the porters at this University are brilliant, amongst the best of the best in their field. Without them, students living on campus would struggle immensely, as sheep without a shepherd, or an England World Cup side without Wayne Rooney.

The porters do so much more than distribute post and issue new key-cards. The porters are a team, fighting daily for the force of good, alerting the appropriate people with regards to repairs,

removing unwanted pigeons and geese from kitchens and bedrooms and providing directions so clear and precise that even total scatterbrains like myself are able to navigate around what remains a bewildering and incomprehensible campus (indeed, the Goodricke porters this year have acted as a personal GPS system for getting to seminars on time). Even more crucial than tasks such as these, however, is the security provided by the porters. In the event of fire (which, given the volatile nature of kitchen microwaves, is inevitable

sooner or later), it is the porter on duty who will take charge of the situation until the fire engines arrive. Being trained in first aid, furthermore, means that the porters are able to treat minor injuries and incidents, whenever they may occur. And although I am of the view that people who regard campus as a 'dangerous' place need to seriously consider changing their daily newspaper, it cannot be denied that having a college specific porter on duty around the clock is an advantage and a comfort we should all try to preserve.

EST. 1964
NOUSE



A show of strength

As the lecturers' strike starts to affect fee-paying students, it's refreshing to see one of the institutions that supposedly have our interests at heart stand up for our rights. As the University continues to say and do seemingly nothing and the lecturers hold us to ransom whilst insisting it's all the fault of the University, the Students' Union have decided to stand up not only to the lecturers but to the NUS as well.

Admittedly they have been actioned by the students to do so but the ambiguity of the statement could so easily have been interpreted so as to let them fall in line behind Kat Fletcher and have an easy life. Instead they are prepared to say that yes, the lecturers are not fairly paid but that students should not be forced to suffer as a result. Of course they deserve more money, but they are not the only ones. Nurses, teachers and even doctors (although maybe not every GP) are consistently undervalued and underpaid and provide a service that is arguably more beneficial to the population. Whilst the University of York bigwigs do seem to set their own salaries pretty high, cancelled exams, unmarked essays and postponed graduations costing students thousands are not the methods by which to remedy lecturers' perceived injustices.

So let's applaud the SU for taking this step: it can be easy to grow cynical about student politics but at least someone in this situation is taking into account what we want.

A worrying situation

One area in which more money is needed is that of students' health, both within the SU and the University as a whole. Although those providing support for students suffering mental health problems seem to be doing a good job with limited resources, the constant flow of new statistics show that the need is greater than ever. As many are finding university life is not what they expected, they also find long waiting lists for help. As people struggle to cope with feelings of depression and academic and social failure, they also face the stigma of being called 'mad' and the hostility of a community that simply doesn't understand.

That is why mental health is an issue that can never be marginalised, that can never be forgotten and that we should never stop striving for improvement in. Hopefully students won't be put off seeking help because of the low resources available, but the University need to take immediate action to provide the care that students need and deserve. Students suffering from mental health problems are not 'special': it's an illness and deserves to have the support and accessibility that you can get with any form of physical illness.

Your: Platform

Enough of what our writers and editors have to say, we sent reporters to find out what York students think of today's issues

- 1. Do you agree with lecturers' ongoing industrial action?
- 2. How do you feel about YUSU's stand against the NUS?
- 3. What do you think about a possible pooling of college porters?
- 4. Will you be going to this year's Summer Ball or to Big D?



Name: Patrick Burns
College: Derwent
Course: Politics
Year: 3rd Year

- 1. I like the idea that they are standing up for what they believe in but I don't like how it is affecting students.
- 2. I would support YUSU's position as I think the NUS should be backing the students rather than the lecturers.
- 3. That is poor because you get to know porters and they help you out and everything.
- 4. Neither really, Big D is usually rubbish and Summer Ball is too expensive.



Name: Jo Bailey
College: Halifax
Course: English and Philosophy
Year: 1st Year

- 1. To an extent I agree with it but I am worried about its potential to jeopardise students.
- 2. I can understand both perspectives. I think it's right for YUSU to support the students if they think they will be jeopardised though.
- 3. I think it's better to have porters in colleges all the time.
- 4. Neither actually! Big D doesn't really appeal to me and Summer Ball costs far too much.



Name: Alena Aliakseyeva
College: Alcuin
Course: Economics
Year: 3rd Year

- 1. No because it is unfair on the students. If we are going to study they should mark, it is very wrong.
- 2. It's good but I really don't think they will achieve much anyway. Other universities' students' unions do much more and I think the York one is really a bit of a waste of time.
- 3. Wrong, wrong, wrong! York is a really open campus so there should always be porters there!
- 4. Summer Ball I think! Maybe Big D as well though.

Letters

Please send your comments and complaints by email to letters@nouse.co.uk or by post to Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College

Star letter

Student voice

I just heard on my return to York that despite everyone's best efforts, the University has only granted a 'temporary extension' to current bar opening hours and, come next summer, they will push through their plans to cut hours down anyway, when there aren't any pesky students to get in the way.

How can the university continue to trample all over the students even after such unifying action as we saw in the last few weeks of last term, lead by the "Save the Bars" campaign? Am I alone in thinking that a university should be run for the benefit of its staff, students

Win!
Best letter receives a party camera from Snappy Snaps



and the fields of research it partakes in? Not conference guests and those wanting to make money off the back of students that are already amassing debt.

We need to make sure we keep the pressure up on the powers that be, so that we are not just winning minor victories, as we have seen so far, but making a real lasting difference, and imprinting our stamp onto the face of this University.

As a body of some 10,000 students, we have seen that with unified action that is well organised and swiftly executed, we can have an effect. I applaud the SU's organisation of the campaign last term and hope it will continue.

Hayleigh Barnett
Comment sent via email

Graduate pay is all relative

With regards to last editions' 'Campus Soapbox', Dr. Simon Parker said that "an Economics graduate with a modest degree can expect to start on a City salary paying several thousand pounds more than a new lecturer with a Ph.D."

It might be worthwhile Dr. Parker noting that graduates who go in to investment banking are expected to work 100+ hours a week and although they receive a substantial salary in absolute terms they are effectively on minimum wage on an hourly rate. Lecturers on the other hand do not have to surrender their life to the University and are able to have an enviable work/life balance.

Complaining about levels of overtime is totally unjustified compared to what other professionals have to endure. It was your career choice and you knew all about the drawbacks of working in academe-

so I find this action hard to comprehend.

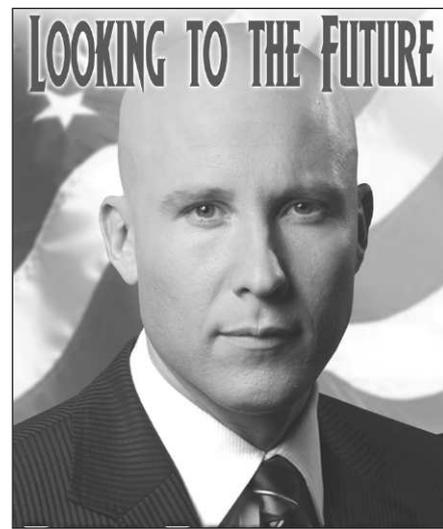
Anonymous
Comment left on Website

No 'eco' crisis

I am appalled by the small-minded, penny-pinching attitude to the wonders of modernity displayed in your cringing article "Ethical living for students": You are thinking too small. There's the opinion part.

The sky is not falling in. There is no looming eco-disaster. You will not change the world one iota for the better by growing your own veg. We are not merely consumers who have to mind what we eat etc. This Green buffonery is the consequence of not demanding more of the best for everyone. Think big!

A. Hirst
Comment left on Website



Election fury

A few things bothered me about this year's SU election campaigning...

Out of nowhere, people who I'd never heard of before suddenly invade campus kitchens. Some of the candidates that entered my kitchen deserve jailtime if smugness was a crime. They put up the posters, but how do I get to speak to any of them? They put some ambitious, vague policies on their posters, trying to vainly emulate real politicians. However, as crap as real politicians may be, I can challenge them by mail, fax and phone. I didn't see a single poster with a contact email address. What made me laugh was lines on the posters like "I was headgirl at school", "I know how to manage people", "I'm hardworking and well liked". Oh dear another set of public school sloanes on a popularity drive. Jokers...

James Rand
Comment left on Website

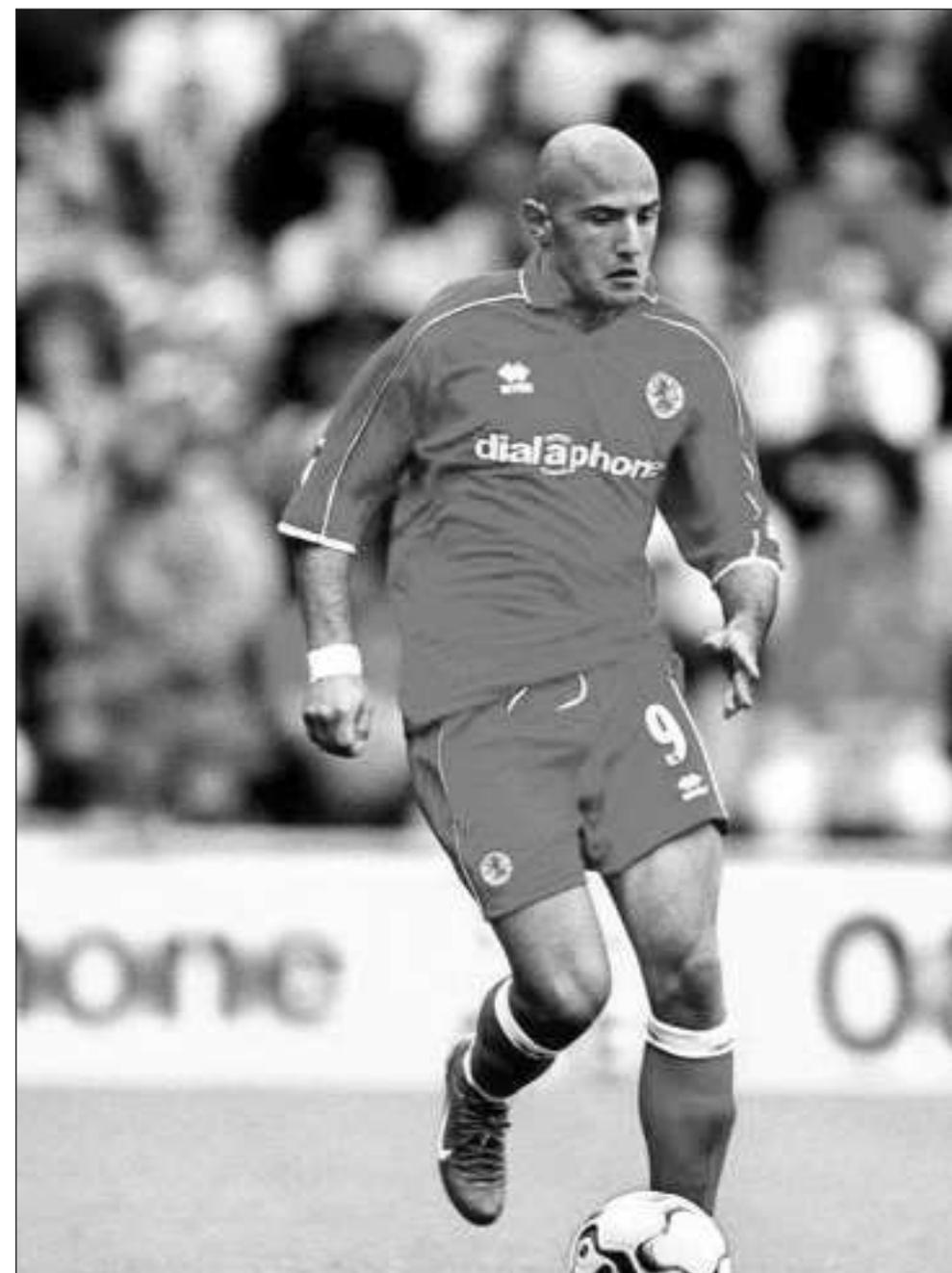
Northern pride

Is there any chance we can not stoop to Northern bashing please? In the latest edition of Nouse, page 27, Article - Blag your degree, 3rd paragraph, "... Claiming they could speak better English than me even though they were Northern..."

Need you be reminded that York is in the North? Even though there is a large percentage of "Southerners" attending, it is not the south. I would be grateful if you could ensure language like this does not creep into to future editions as in my mind it is equivalent to racism.

Will Eboral
Comment left on Website

Middlesbrough rely on British grit



Macarone's two goals helped Middlesbrough FC pull off an incredible comeback

By Sean Henderson
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

THERE WAS A real danger of this article sounding like a society newsletter, simply going through the formalities of listing the successes of its members over the Easter period. I would have to congratulate Arsenal on reaching the European Cup final. I would also congratulate Chelsea on a fine Premiership season and an almost certain back-to-back championship. I'm sure these will be revisited if and when these successes are realised, but with so much still to be decided it is hard to praise or criticise the efforts of teams at the top and bottom. Will Spurs or Arsenal be playing Champions League football next season? Who will go down? Who will get the last UEFA Cup spots? With so much to be decided, and taking account of the number of shocks the Premiership has thrown up this season, surely it is best to just see where the wind takes us. So I did. But it was not the rigour of the domestic campaign that provided me with inspiration. It was the magic of the continent.

Sitting at a steady but modest 14th place, Middlesbrough's Premiership campaign is finished. Knocked out of the FA Cup in the semi-finals, 'Boro were left only one chance for glory. As one of the longest surviving English participants in European football this season, they have outlasted Man United, Chelsea

and Liverpool; no mean feat by anyone's standards. Thanks to a spectacular, gritty performance against Basle, 'Boro managed to secure a semi-final tie with Steaua Bucharest in the UEFA cup. At home after a 1-0 defeat away in Bucharest, it was not looking good after conceding 2 early away goals. Just in case you didn't know, they scored 4 and won the tie. A repeat performance of the previous round which, in some sense, parallels the closing minutes of the 1999 Champions League Final. To do that twice is an unbelievable feat, possibly, a footballing miracle, securing a place in the final where they will meet Sevilla. Admittedly, this is a pretty poor match report. To merely deliver a match report, however, would be selling it far short of how great this actually was.

Contextually, they have only done what Arsenal have done and haven't actually won anything yet. But Middlesbrough have done something great that only we do best: perform under pressure and overcome adversity. This is why we love the 'magic' of the FA Cup. It's refreshing to see a re-emergence of the underdog. Like Liverpool a year ago, Middlesbrough defied belief by digging deep and getting the job done. We see the epitome of Britishness in an age when we are asking how British our game actually is. Inspired by their valiant captain Steven Gerrard, Liverpool fought

back 3 second-half goals to take Milan to penalties and win. That took ultimate belief, courage and mental strength in arguably the second biggest game in the world. Middlesbrough, a rising club with a strong British backbone, have overcome adversity with little experience at the highest level. Now they have the chance to win only their second piece of major silverware in the club's history.

It seems bizarre that it's a British thing to do. All these teams, United in '99, Liverpool in '05 and now Middlesbrough, all have a very strong international influence and other teams do make comebacks like this. Do we just love it more? It seems, in these cases, that the British influence has been the edge. From player's reports, the inspiration of Ferguson and McLaren gave them the lift they needed and the belief to never give up. Gerrard's visible impact on the game in Istanbul was more than clear to those watching. I can't decide whether it is fair to call it a British trait as it is often labelled, but it seems that the underdogs thrive on British grit. I started by looking at the questions this season still has to answer. We still seem divided when it comes to our English representatives in Europe but I think, if not purely for the truly remarkable performances alone, we all want Steven McLaren's Middlesbrough to succeed in Eindhoven, for the sake of British grit.

Do England need an English coach?

Ed Humphreys evaluates the choices facing the FA in their search for the next England manager

THIS TIME LAST week, the big cheeses at Soho Square were musing over the two remaining candidates for the 'biggest job in football': Luiz Felipe 'Big Phil' Scolari, and Steve 'Super Coach' McLaren.

The CVs of the two are very different. On one hand the FA had the multi-paged CV of a highly successful manager who has won the World Cup, the Brazilian league, the Brazilian Cup, South American Champions League and the South American Supercup. On the other hand, the shorter CV of a Carling Cup winner.

However, Scolari is not English. For some (Howard Wilkinson) this is a big problem. Furthermore, he has never managed in the Premiership. Yet, last year,

Rafa Benitez, in his first season in the Premiership, was guiding Liverpool to European glory. It did not take him long to adjust to the English game, with Steve 'Super Coach' McLaren.

'Just because Scolari is not English, does not mean he cannot speak English'

Steven Gerrard and Jamie Carragher key components of the team.

Also, just because Scolari is not English, does not mean he cannot speak English. Not long ago he told BBC Radio Five, in clear English, that he was an

admirer of Brian Clough's Nottingham Forest team of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Martin O'Neill, a member of that Forest side, curiously descended from favourite to outsider as Middlesbrough's results picked up. The prospect of an England manager being selected on the basis of a couple of admittedly astonishing Uefa Cup comebacks was an alarming one.

The FA appeared to put that part to bed, by choosing the Brazilian. The Gene Hackman lookalike is just what England need.

Scolari's teams play a passionate, physical game with flare in the right half of the pitch. This style is surely preferable to McLaren's cautious game designed to disrupt the opposition.



Scolari has had international success with Brazil

Perhaps the most remarkable Big Phil attribute is that he can make bad players perform. How else can he have turned Kleberson into a World Cup winner? McLaren does not appear to have this

string to his bow, despite persisting in playing the uniquely awful Fabio Rochemback.

Scolari twice outwitted England in the last two major championships. In

Euro 2004, while Sven Goran Eriksson was bringing on Owen Hargreaves and Phil Neville to give the ball away, Felipe Scolari replaced captain Luis Figo with the once maligned Helder Postiga. Unfortunately, we all know what happened next.

In the post-match press conference, Scolari claimed that his wedding ring signalled a footballing marriage with Portugal. Divorce from Portugal is essential and not altogether impossible. He is still quoted between 8 and 14 to 1 at the bookies.

The Football Association, having set a precedent by paying Sven Goran Eriksson almost five million pounds a year, should not balk at Scolari's wage demands. They will be paying for one of the best.

Cricket Club looks to benefit from Ashes fever as season begins

Fickle fans risk ruining players

By Rob Cantarero
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

AS JIMMY GREAVES once said, football's "a funny old game." Not only can it provide drama and tension in those vital ninety minutes, be it a goal, a save, a sending-off or two back-to-back astonishing comebacks (ring any bells, Middlesbrough fans?) - it can also see a player's profile and popularity change dramatically from even a single episode.

Most football supporters can be very demanding, expecting their team to win all of their matches (unless you're a Sunderland fan) and scrutinizing each player's performance in detail to rival the knowledge of a pundit. Even one episode can lead to a player going from "zero to hero" or vice-versa. Take a certain David Beckham for example: in the famous loss to Argentina in the 1998 World Cup second round, he was public enemy number one after being sent off. Three and a half years later, he was voted Sports Personality of the Year by BBC viewers, and later became the country's golden boy.

Perhaps another good example could be the most unlikely hero at all, Arsenal keeper Jens Lehmann. Up until a few months ago, Lehmann had been heavily criticised by both commentators and supporters for his erratic performances, which cost Arsenal dearly last season. Now, nearly a year after his heroics in last season's FA Cup final, he has actually achieved the unprecedented task of being the first German goalkeeper to be popular with English fans: first by keeping ten clean sheets so far in the Champions League and later by saving Riquelme's last-gasp penalty in the semi-final against Villarreal, putting them in the final for the first time in the Gunners' history.

The perfect antithesis to Lehmann's fate can be found in AC Milan's Brazilian keeper Nelson Dida. Considered the exception to the rule that Brazil don't have good goalkeepers, his saves led to AC Milan's Champions League triumph in 2003, but he has since seen his form and confidence drop dramatically. Endless mistakes against even Serie A's lowest-ranked teams have resulted in a very public rebuke from Milan coach Ancelotti, who has warned that "any more mis-



Dida's form fluctuates

takes" might be "the end of Dida at AC Milan unless he rediscovers his form for our sake and his own."

Another keeper to have seen his profile plummet is Man Utd keeper Tim Howard: dubbed as "the new Schmeichel" when he arrived in 2003, he has not played a single Premiership match this season and could be loaned out to Everton next year for the sake for his career.

Outfield, Real Madrid's Ronaldo is equally subject to drastic oscillations in popularity. Although he has been the club's leading scorer

'Even temporary loss of form can signify the end of a player's career at a club'

every season since joining, he has never managed to win a place in the hearts of the notoriously fickle Madrid fans who repeatedly boo him at every game, bringing his future at the club into question.

Or how about Ibrahimovic at Juventus, or Van Nistelrooy at Manchester United? Both are world-class strikers who have bagged loads of goals for their respective clubs, and yet a sudden fall in form has not only led people to question their commitment and ability, but also to the potential risk of being sold.

Are we justified in judging so rashly? Is it possible to find a degree of humanity in football or has the game truly deteriorated into a ruthless money-making machine in which the slightest, if even temporary loss of form can signify the end of a player's career at a club? Unfortunately it would seem so.



York Men's Cricket club set to enter three teams for BUSA as summer cricket season begins . Photo: Toby Hall

By Andy Exley
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

AS DAYLIGHT CREEPS in, the smell of freshly cut grass lingers in the air and the sun beats down on sunbathing bodies, it seems at last that summer is upon us. Of course many of you will decide that the oncoming good weather is the perfect excuse to ignore essay deadlines, get a suntan and drink a lot of Pimm's, but for a hardy band of men there could be nothing further from the truth. From the

beginning of May, they will be dressing up in white, chasing a piece of cork around a field and occasionally shouting at an OAP standing behind bits of wood. The cricket season is upon us.

With memories of England's all-conquering victory in the Ashes still lingering, the University of York Men's Cricket Club will be looking to build on such sporting success. Currently fielding three teams in the BUSA leagues, it promises to be another mouth-watering

season as the sound of leather on willow cascades throughout campus. Having been crowned BUSA plate champions, the 1st XI, lead by the indomitable Andy Exley, will be looking to build on last year's glory in the Northern Men's League 2B. However within the murky depths of Northern Men's League 5B there will be a clash of sporting titans as the 2nd XI (lead by the Herculean maestro Andy Butterfield) will be battling against the dashing suavity of Greg Bonne's 3rd XI.

Back chat and swipes outside the off stump are sure to ensue. Of course if anyone wishes to join the legion of cricketing heroes at UYMCC then training takes place Monday and Thursday 5-7pm at the cricket nets behind the sports club.

If you played at school, played for a village side or have never played at all then feel free to come down to training, as all are welcome. The 'organised loafing' of UYMCC may be the perfect way to enjoy your summer.



With AU President Nik Engineer

In four days time over six hundred York students will make the two hour journey across the Pennines to Lancaster to take part in the 100 fixtures that constitute the 42nd Roses Tournament.

The 2006 competition is set to be one of the closest in recent years. Whilst Lancaster have a slight advantage in their majority of well established BUSA sports such as hockey, football and rugby, we will be hoping that our recent domination of the less mainstream disciplines continues. As ever we will be looking for strong performances from the Boat Club and Badminton Club, who it is hoped will continue their near perfect record against Lancaster.

Apart from the expected sporting fixtures, Lancaster University will be hosting a wide range of community events, including a fun run and activity day, and with so much going on I thought I would recommend some events not to be missed.

The Men's Rugby 1st XV has a well-deserved reputation as being a highlight, with the fixture drawing one of the largest crowds of the entire weekend; the badminton fixtures provide an excellent insight into the extremely high standard of sport at both universities; and the volleyball and basketball fixtures will be an opportunity for our most successful teams to complete their outstanding seasons in style.

To see the biggest sweat of the weekend don't miss the squash events and finally, to witness what is predicted to be the outclassing of the tournament, be sure to catch our men's lacrosse team achieve what is hoped will be their biggest victory in club history.

Of course there will be countless great events taking place over the three days, and trying to squeeze so many fixtures into three days makes it impossible to see all the great performances, but regardless of what you watch, make sure to end up at the last event of the weekend - the Men's Football 1st match - for a great and entertaining finish to this truly unique and wonderful tournament.

Tickets for buses to Lancaster and for the Friday and Saturday night events are almost sold out, so be sure to stop into the AU office soon if you want to be part of the largest competition of its kind in the UK.

I look forward to seeing you there.



Billy McEwan's York City crash to a disappointing defeat at the hands of second-place Hereford United despite best attacking efforts

2006 offers hope for the Minstermen

By Ben Masters
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

YORK CITY'S SEASON ended in disappointment on Saturday with a 3-1 defeat to second-placed Conference side Hereford United. The Minstermen coming away empty-handed will be more frustrating than soul-destroying for City fans, who had seen their side's chances of making the play-offs dashed last week away to Stevenage. Failure to win any of their last five games will come as a disappointment, but the club can still reflect on a season of improvement.

City boss Billy McEwan is unlikely to make a late surge on the bungling FA's shortlist for England manager, but the Scot has neverthe-

less carried out his work at Kit-Kat Crescent effectively this season. But York undoubtedly find themselves in a far better position to make a challenge for promotion back to the Football League next season. Such hopes at the start of this season existed only for the most optimistic of York fans.

The capture of striker Clayton Donaldson at the start of the campaign proved the early season catalyst for a surge towards the top of the table, but consistency became a problem for City around Christmas. Only a tremendous run of results in February and early March reignited promotion dreams.

Donaldson's strike partner Andy Bishop played the leading role throughout the

season though, and his 23 goals this campaign ensured he finished as Conference leading marksmen.

Bishop's consolation goal against Hereford could well prove to be his last for the club. Bury keen for his signature before the January transfer window slammed shut and now Walsall are being linked to the striker. Bishop's goal celebrations have been somewhat muted of late and the fact that his car was vandalised outside the training ground last week, coupled with his rocky relationship with McEwan, will surely only hasten his exit from Kit-Kat Crescent.

City will meanwhile be waiting anxiously to see if bitter local rivals Scarborough have been rele-

gated to Conference North. According to the league table The Seasiders should see themselves fall further down the pyramid but that decision will be made inside Conference HQ as Altrincham are facing a debilitating 18 point deduction. In addition, Canvey Island are set to resign from the league. While fans may rejoice at their rivals' potential fall from grace, the club would lose out financially with the Christmas and New Year double header this season resulting in combined crowds of nearly 10,000.

Ex City player-manager Chris Brass meanwhile - the man who masterminded York's relegation to the Conference two seasons ago - last week had the misfor-

tune to be the scorer of probably the greatest own goal of all-time. Playing for Bury, the centre-back managed to hook a clearance straight into his face, only to see the ball end up in the back of his own net. To add injury to insult, Brass was said to have broken his nose in the process.

But City's fortunes have differed this season. With attendances up and stability restored, the club can look forward to a close season in the knowledge that they will be among the favourites for promotion at the start of the 2006/2007 campaign. Bishop or no Bishop, York are heading in the right direction.

The Cryptic Crossword

Wednesday 3rd May, set by Cornius

Across

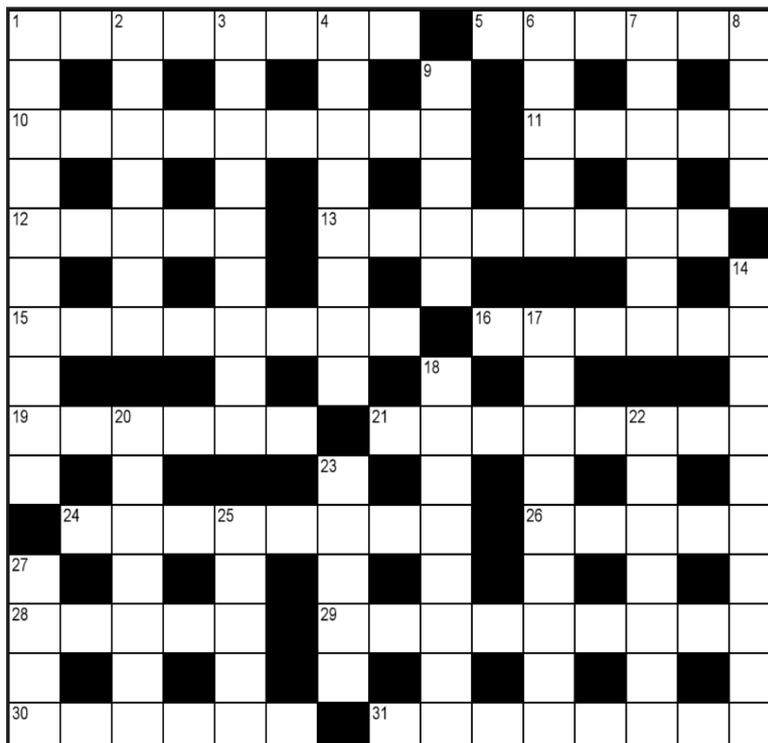
- 1. Japanese 24 across knew some viola was, or ukulele was held back (8)
- 5. French 24 across gets religious education by film genre (6)
- 10. Squishy citrus? No problem! (4-5)
- 11. In France, a single Italian 24 across (5)
- 12. No time for coffee right afterwards (5)
- 13. American 24 across sees blurrily after unfinished orchestration (8)
- 15. The doctor's embarrassed chant for prostitution (8)
- 16. Apes provide life force for politicians (6)
- 19. Take out working American 24 across (6)
- 21. Broken lancet

- 24. Terrible cold reverses deterioration of guide (8)
- 26. Dreams that house overlooks partially eroded Snowdonian peaks (5)
- 28. Greeting for Hawaiian with a cracked halo (5)
- 29. Traveller to harm company sport (5, 4)
- 30. Wanting work on the radio with boss (6)
- 31. Monday to Friday is a languorous narcosis, I hear (8)

Down

- 1. Polish 24 across, Kelvin, is therefore a sluggish runner (10)
- 2. Formal address raised by German chancellor

- 3. Batman destroyed our sphere (9)
- 4. Achilles' heel is to wake groggily on location (4, 4)
- 6. Letter is for Bret Easton or Havelock (5)
- 7. Marsupial makes puss moo (7)
- 8. Gape up at strip (4)
- 9. Poetic lord is neighbour to Atkinson (5)
- 14. A filthy prisoner makes allusions (10)
- 17. Marry rooster to British 24 across (9)
- 18. Partridge's perch shown in landscape art reel (4-4)
- 20. Fatty's swim in a non-river (7)
- 22. Policeman is an almost extreme American 24 across (7)
- 23. Japanese 24 across has no right argument on the day after today, fol-



- 25. Delete age of Kent (5)
- 27. American 24 across' Stuck? Solutions can be found on our website at www.nouse.com

SPORT

Howzat! York University
Cricket Club gear up
for start of new season
Page 14



York's athletes aim to emulate successful 2005 Roses campaign

By Sam Cartwright
SPORTS EDITOR

IN A WEEK'S time, the White Rose of York will attempt to overcome the Red Rose of Lancaster, as York seek their fifth win in six years at this year's Roses event. The event is the largest sporting competition of its kind in the United Kingdom, and is expected to involve in excess of 1,500 students in total, competing in over a hundred fixtures and in over forty different sports.

Last year's Roses saw a 159.5-91.5 home demolition of Lancaster. In light of this, and combined with York's impressive record in the tournament over the past five years, York might reasonably look forward to the event with some degree of confidence. However for Nik Engineer, to approach the event in a such a mentality

would be naïve, as "the host team should always be seen as the favourites" in the eyes of the AU President. Historically, it would indeed seem that this has been the case. An away side has been victorious only twice in the past twenty years and, as such, Engineer's reservations seem well informed. Indeed, even last year's emphatic points victory offers Engineer little comfort. "The event is always closer that the points suggest".

But whilst our AU President is reluctant to take anything for granted, he is confident that "everyone would do their best" but could offer no clues as to which events York should be most comfortable in. "You can't guarantee anything at Roses" was Engineer's conclusion. At a push he was willing to concede that the non-BUSA league events are an area where York has been

successful in the past.

Indeed, last year's archery event saw a flawless victory for York and similar success was achieved in the Badminton events. However to Nik Engineer, "the important events this year are going to be the big BUSA sport events". The only fact that the AU President is entirely confident over is that the Roses "will be very close this year".

Win or lose, the highlight of the occasion for many of the 1,500 students involved with the event are the social events at the end of each of the two days.

The 5th of May's event is to be held at the Sugar House and the following day will witness an event at the Carlton. More often than not our athletes attend these events victorious. 125 points are all that are required: let us hope that we can get there first.



'04/'05 AU President Leslie holding the Carter-James trophy. Photo by Toby Hall

Riders' success in run-up to Roses

By Chris Lowther
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

WHILST SOME OF us only see horses as a means to a bet, it transpires that some people see a horse for what it really is, a noble creature and man's best friend.

The University's riding club has an active membership of around seventy members from beginners to advanced riders with two teams competing in the BUSA league. Beginner and intermediate lessons are held at Naburn Grange on Wednesdays and advanced

lessons are staged at the Yorkshire Riding Centre on Tuesday evenings. The club also has regular cross country and polocrosse sessions and are in the process of forming a horseball team, which is essentially rugby on horseback.

The BUSA equestrian leagues have four teams in and the competition involves two component parts; a dressage test and a show jumping round. The dressage section helps to develop a horse's athletic ability and willingness to perform, helping to realise its potential as

a riding horse. Jumper courses are held over a course of jumping obstacles with many turns of direction. This makes it an exciting test for both horse and rider.

This year the B-team narrowly missed out on qualifying for the Shield Final after losing to Bishop Burton. However the A-team won three out of four of their competitions, defeating previous winners York St. John, thus qualifying for the regional finals. Captained by Kat Boyd, a mixed A and B team defeated their rivals to win the regional stage and

progress to the national championships. Three days of hard competition resulted in the York team finishing in sixth place, and a surprise fourth place in the show jumping phase. A great confidence boost to take into the all-important roses clash with Lancaster.

So, with both teams performing well in their respective leagues, now is a great time to join this fast-growing society. If you are interested in riding and want to compete against other universities, then this is the club for you.



Dressage is one of the riding events offered at York

