

NOUSE



Crashing President Mugabe's birthday party and travelling through Italy on a Vespa - **Peter Moore**, the man with 95 Visa stamps on his passport

Presidential result called into doubt after 20% of votes declared invalid

By **Daniel Whitehead and Ellen Carpenter**

THE SU ELECTION results could face being invalidated after concerns were raised by students regarding the number of spoilt ballots following the introduction of the new E-voting system. This comes days after Rich Croker was named York University Students' Union President 2006/07.

It was announced during the awards ceremony on Friday night that 20% of the votes cast in the SU's new E-voting scheme were spoilt. A spoilt ballot occurs when a vote is submitted without a choice of candidate being made. This occurred unintentionally in several cases during the SU Elections when students clicked a button labelled "vote now" before making their choice in a misunderstanding of the wording, which was changed to "submit" later in the voting period. Other cases involved confusion over how to select a candidate using the drag-and-drop system.

Since the vote was announced, discontent has been voiced by several students, including Nik Ljubicic of Goodricke college, who has submitted a complaint to SU Services Officer, Nat Thwaites-McGowan, questioning the legitimacy of the result, calling it an "absolute joke." Ljubicic stated in his complaint that the "spoilt ballots would have clearly influenced the result," and asked whether the result was still legitimate.

When asked his thoughts about the E-voting system, Ljubicic said that online voting has its "good points," but that "there's no point in having a system which people don't understand." He criticised the changing of the submission button, saying, "to me this shows that there was a problem with the



Nat Thwaites-McGowan

online voting system," and adding, "if there's something wrong there should be a review." Ljubicic said that he would be willing to take further action if the complaint was dismissed by the SU and that "this is just one avenue."

Matt Burton, Chair of Goodricke JCR supported the complaint, saying, "I think an investigation should be made," and stating that other students have voiced concerns over the legitimacy of election results. He said, "I think there are genuine grounds for concern that the system has failed, as it hasn't represented the students, so in my eyes perhaps the election results should be void. Numerous Goodricke students have approached me and asked why there have been so many spoilt ballot papers."

It was suggested that the relationship between the two Goodricke members and Colin Hindson may have influenced their decision to challenge the election results. Burton disagreed, saying that he was concerned that "seven other candidates may have been misrepresented in the results." Further contention was raised when Burton stated that HYMS students had been prevented from voting due to being registered as

off-campus residents and those with visual impairments were hampered by problems with the website ergonomics.

Rich Croker, who won the election by only 33 votes over rival Colin Hindson, faces the prospect of having to run again next term if the results of the election are invalidated. When asked about his thoughts on the election results he said that the online voting system was "not perfect" but he that would be "surprised" if anything came of the complaint, saying "I don't think that it really benefits anyone."

SU Services Officer Nat Thwaites-McGowan has also defended the E-voting system, saying there had been "enough testing with users". Although admitting that this was done with a smaller number of voters, he emphasised that "it wasn't that I knew there was a problem and ignored it." He went on to downplay students' concerns over the high number of spoilt ballot papers and said he does not consider it a "big problem" and "has not had a complaint," although he concedes that an official complaint would call the results of the elections into question.

Several students who attempted to vote in the elections found that they had unintentionally spoilt their ballots. Martin Readle, who submitted a spoilt ballot called the system "useless and misleading," adding that when he had attempted to contact the SU regarding the mistake he didn't receive a reply. Lucy Abbey had a similar problem, saying that "voting online was meant to be simpler and easier but it was more complicated." She added that she was "very disappointed" that "people like myself who wanted to vote couldn't because of the system, so it made the elections undemocratic in my view."

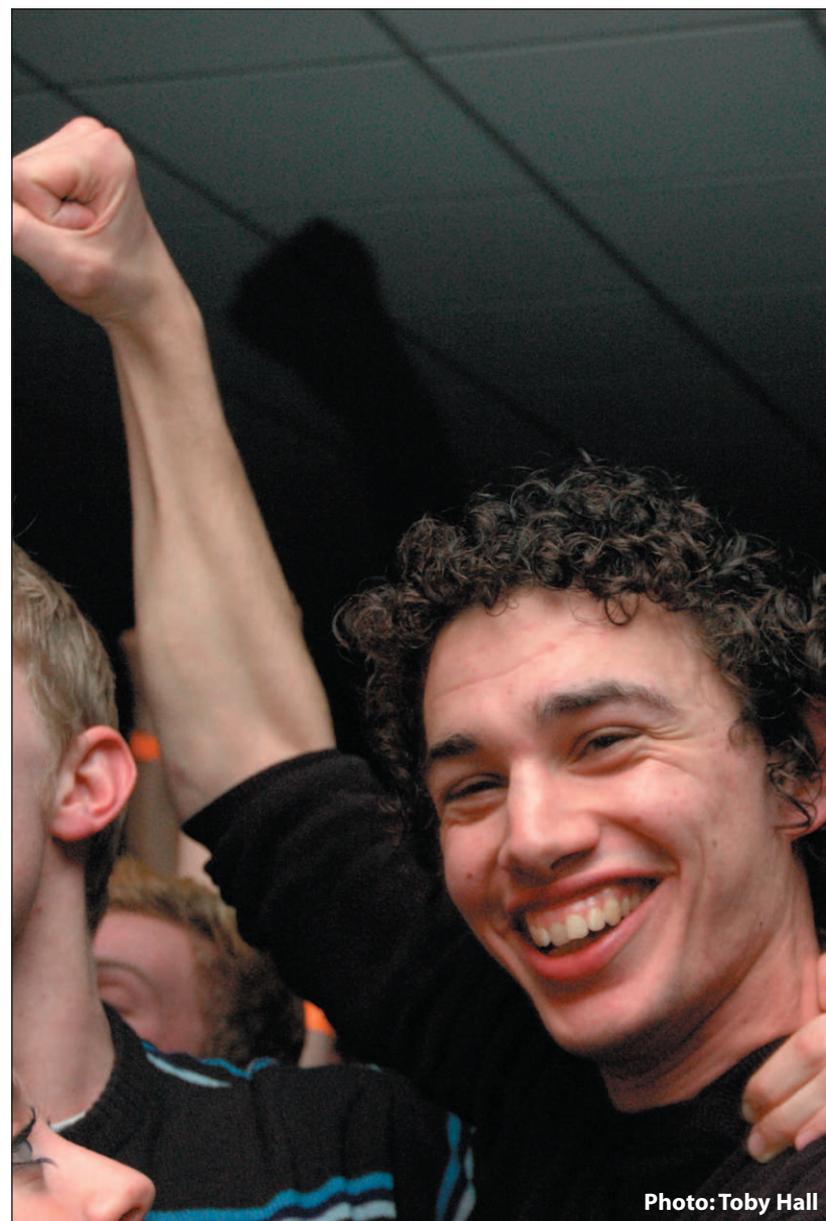


Photo: Toby Hall

SU Elections 2006:

Rich Croker defeats Colin Hindson in closest President's election in years
Full coverage: pages 4 and 5

Students' degrees are threatened by assessment boycott

By Daniel Whitehead
NEWS EDITOR

FINALIST STUDENTS remain in doubt as to whether they will graduate this year, as the University announced last week that no plans are currently in place to deal with the pending assessment marking crisis following the lecturers' strike.

This comes after a nationwide assessment boycott began on Wednesday 8th March, in which participating members of the Association of University Teachers (AUT) across the country halted all involvement in the assessment and examination process. Dr Simon Parker, a spokesperson for the University of York AUT committee, said the action "will continue

until there is an acceptable solution."

Academics argue that vice-chancellors have gone back on their promise of large increases to their salaries since tuition fees were introduced at the beginning of this year. However, Dr Geoffrey Copland of the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA), which represents vice-chancellors, argues that "the academic unions are trying to force the issue before we have had a single negotiation," adding that "at least a third of the money currently coming in will go to academic staff."

Employers commented that figures from the Office for National Statistics show that academics earned an average of £40,657 in 2004-2005, compared with

national averages of £28,210 for employees and £36,984 for professional staff, adding that lecturers' salaries have increased by 20.3% over the past five years.

Goodricke student Joseph Beckeo said that the strike "is unfair on a lot of people especially third and fourth years," who will be hoping to graduate in the summer, and a final year student who wished to remain unnamed added "lecturers are making students suffer for their employees' actions."

Dr. Simon Parker, who is currently participating in the boycott, argued that "the feeling is that the employers are just being reckless, putting off the time to talk to us till the end of this month, and the longer this goes on, the more it affects the students and potentially risks



Above: lecturers show their discontent during last Tuesday's one day strike. Below: a tutor offers information leaflets to passing students on Heslington Road. Photos: Adam Sloan

graduations.

"We hope that the University will have noted the degree of feeling that exists among colleagues and our determination to get Vice-Chancellors to honour their promise."

UCEA and AUT officials are due to meet at the end of the month to negotiate over the current pay demands. The strike will continue until an agreement is reached.



Fairfax House attack 'deliberate'

By Jamie Merrill
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A RECENT FIRE at Fairfax House in the early hours is being treated as an arson attempt. The incident, which occurred at 3.30am on the 3rd of March, has raised concerns about student safety which have led to one student leaving the University.

The off-campus Vanbrugh accommodation on Heslington Road was evacuated when a kitchen caught fire. The police, who were called to the scene, believe the fire to have been

started deliberately. When it was discovered, all four hobs, the grill and oven had been left burning and a sandwich toaster had been plugged in and placed on top of the gas hob.

Two undergraduate residents, Sam Turner and Gareth Williams, extinguished the blaze before the fire service arrived. Turner said: "All four hobs were burning with the sandwich toaster on top. The fire was started deliberately." The kitchen suffered minor smoke damage and is now back in use.

The police have been involved but no arrests have been made, nor have any suspects been named. The Vanbrugh Vice-Chair Ryan Bennett has suggested that most residents appear to share a view about who did it, but that they are not happy for this person to be named.

The motive for the attack remains unknown, but Bennet said: "It might have been a cry for help or attention."

According to Bennet, a Computer Science student, who cannot be named, has

left the university since the fire due to concerns over his safety. A female, who chose not to be named pointed out that the student's room was at a great risk if a large fire had caught hold and that he "would have had no escape route."

Fresh concerns have been raised over health and safety standards in colleges, as one fire extinguisher failed to work when Turner and Williams attempted to use it to put out the blaze. This equipment failure comes only weeks after fire extinguishers were found to

be out of date in Derwent C block, and just months after two students were hospitalised after a separate fire in Fairfax House.

Fire equipment in Fairfax House has now been tested, and faulty equipment replaced. University authorities are carrying out room inspections to check for flammable materials, and in a move to increase security, CCTV has been installed by the front door.

Bennet expressed annoyance by the way the fire was handled by members of security staff, and plans to

write a letter of complaint to the Head of Security about the matter.

He alleges that a member of the University security staff berated students for having come outside in dressing gowns and slippers, calling them "stupid" and telling them they "should have taken a few minutes to put some warm clothing on."

Bennet said on Sunday: "It was ridiculous. It contradicted everything we'd ever been told about fire safety."

The Provost of Fairfax has launched a full investigation into the incident.

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Bar closures look set to continue

By Lauren Carter
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE UNIVERSITY still look set to close campus bars next term, despite one of the biggest campaigns in the Students' Union's history.

During the past week, students have been urged to "use it, or lose it" and flood campus bars in reaction to the university's plans to drastically reduce opening hours.

Over two thousand signatures has been collected and SU President, Micky Armstrong, has commented that all the bars have been "packed out" every night. However, the university have still not made any concessions.

Director of Bars and Licensing, Andy Summers, announced plans to close campus bars at the end of February. Although the decision has not been finalised, the university have said that opening times could be halved by next term.

David Garner, a spokesperson for the university, explained that the proposals were prompted by a decline in students using the bars: "The problem has become acute in the current year after several years of

declining bar profits".

However, the SU have argued that the bars should not just be run for profit. Armstrong said: "The bars are a commercial service so, yes, they have to be commercial but they're also a service for students from the university; they should be able to go to their bar whenever they want."

The bars currently make an overall profit of £100,000 each year.

The college committees took an active role in last week's protests, hosting events every night in all the bars. Halifax College were commended for their efforts after they started the campaign with a thirty-strong bar crawl, claiming that "shutting bars is antisocial behaviour".

The SU remain optimistic that the university will compromise on their proposals and are meeting with the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Felicity Ridly, this week.

Armstrong said: "They've seen the reaction of students and they're now going to talk about it.

"It just proves that the student action's working - it's fantastic", he added.

However, an SU plan to

take over the less profitable bars has been rejected by the university. David Garner confirmed that the SU would not be given control of any of the bars.

To this, Armstrong said: "I don't know where David Garner gets his information from. We're in discussions with the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Head of Commercial Services - we're not in discussions with the Press Office".

The SU are hoping that their campaign will continue on the same scale this week, with the planned "barcotts" in all colleges. The university have decided to close five bars during the protest, and Vanbrugh and Derwent bars will have picket lines outside to discourage students from using them.

However, many students doubt whether the university will take notice. One student at a Goodricke event on Sunday commented: "I've talked to people in the university, including cleaners and lecturers, and its only three people who actually want the bars to close, and they're at the very top. They earn £100 grand and they don't care about the little man".

'Save the Bars' campaign tainted by growing disunity

By Lauren Carter
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A united front on campus for the 'Save the Bars' campaign has been compromised by SU plans to take control of events away from colleges.

The SU announced in last week's Executive Committee meeting that they would assume control of when and where events would take place, a decision which is usually made by college committees.

Matt Burton, Chair of Goodricke College, protested against the plans and has

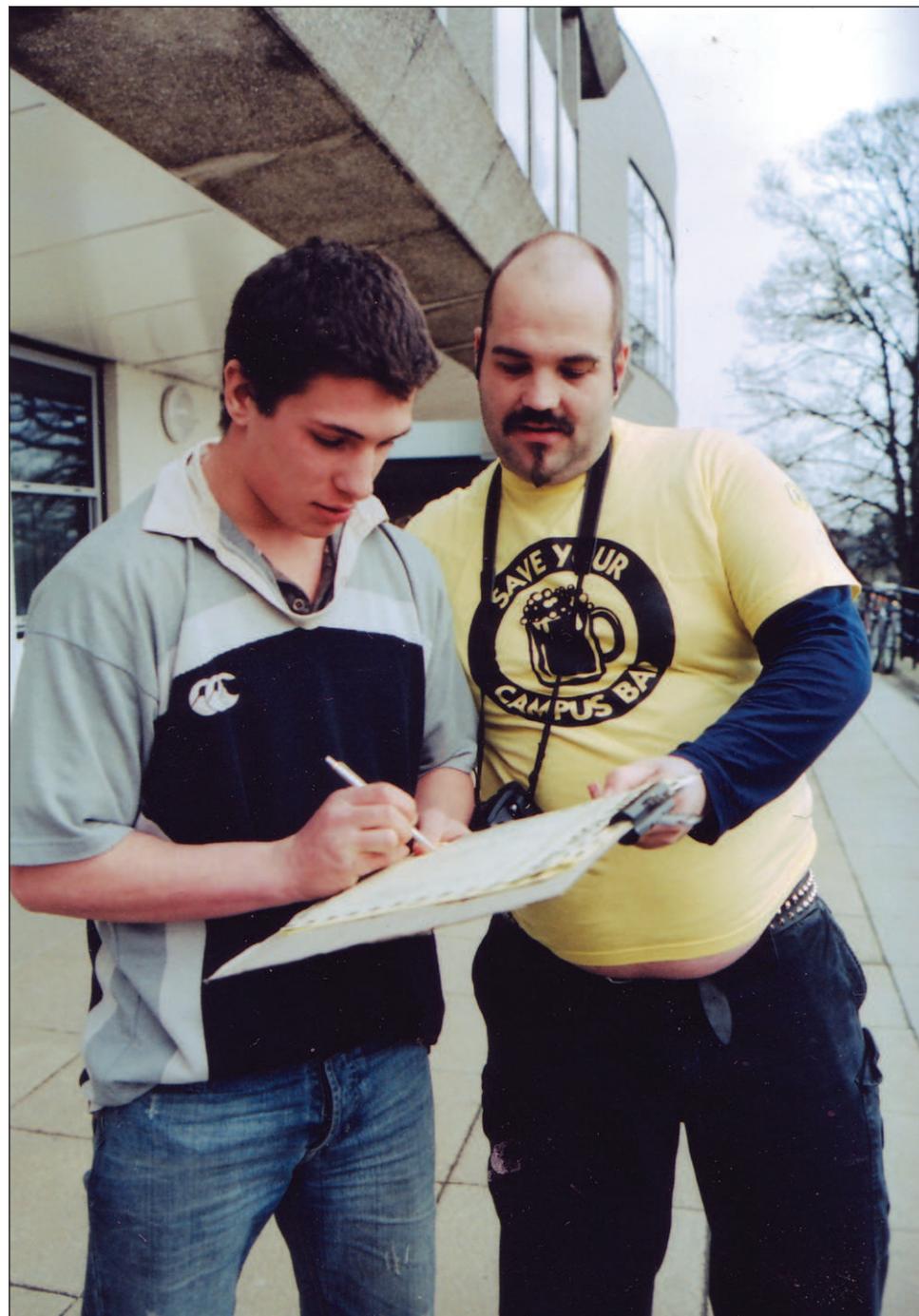
said he felt "blackmailed" by the SU in the meeting. Burton was told that if he did not comply, Goodricke's events would not be signed off and therefore would not be authorized to take place.

The plans are part of the SU's 'Save the Bars' proposal which will be presented to the university later this week. In a paper outlining their position, the SU said: "If the students want their bars to remain open, we must take an active role in their management, and take responsibility for ensuring that they remain profitable."

A mini events planner for next term was distributed at the Executive meeting, outlining when colleges can hold small events such as bar quizzes and karaoke nights.

However, Burton and the Goodricke Committee have decided to oppose the plans which will move the Goodricke bar quiz from Sunday to Monday night. Andreas Masoura, the Entertainments Officer for Goodricke, said: "We have to serve the interests of the people that elected us, not the SU.

"They're trying to get us



Students have collected over two thousand signatures. Photo by Lauren Carter

to change our bar quiz, even though when we run it on Sunday the bar is packed. You can deny it, but just turn up and have a look."

James College are supporting Goodricke's decision, and Chair Anne Marie Canning spoke out against the SU in the Executive meeting. Commenting on the SU's heavy handed approach, she said: "The

thing that's pissed me off is not the planner; it's people's conduct in this meeting. I've been appalled."

SU President, Micky Armstrong, has, however, argued that coordinating events will stop colleges competing with one another and ensure a maximum turn out in all the bars. "Problems this year have seen three speed dating events occur-

ring on the same night", he said. "This way we can see what is right for both event provider and user".

Amy Woods, behind the mini events planner for next term, added: "Unless everyone pulls together, puts a bit of effort in and works together for a common cause then nothing will change and we'll continue to be in this situation for a long time to come."

Row over accommodation for international students

By Heidi Blake & Helen Tilley

RECENT cuts in University accommodation has ignited controversy on campus over the prioritisation of international students in room allocation.

At an SU Executive meeting, Lucy Wickham and Micky Masefield, Langwith and Vanbrugh JCRC Chairs, expressed dis-

approval about the current policy of prioritisation in the light of current room shortages.

Only 500 rooms will be available on campus for second and third years from next October, 250 of which will be automatically allocated to international students and those with disabilities. This leaves 500 students without housing.

A recent poll carried out

by Nouse revealed that 38% of students would describe the prioritisation of international students as "unfair".

Shiraz Lafhajz of Halifax College said on Friday: "Fair enough they need support, but they can all speak English. I've been stuffed. I was holding back private sector accommodation but I had to let it go on the assurance that I'd be

given a room on campus, which I ultimately wasn't. I have nowhere to live."

Steve Page, the University Student Support Officer, said on Friday: "From a student support point of view, there are two main reasons for giving international students priority. First that some international students will really struggle to provide the kind of financial guarantors that

landlords are looking for, and second that they won't understand the system in the housing market, so they're at times more vulnerable to being taken advantage of."

The International Representative for Alcuin, Lewis Rujirawirote, described this approach as "patronising", adding "International students are perfectly capable of finding

housing, especially in our second and third years".

Tom Stratton, the JCRC Chair of Alcuin, said on Sunday: "The fact of the matter is that priority has to be given to those who need [accommodation] most. A better system needs to be implemented, involving liaison between the colleges, which ensures that no-one falls through the housing gap."

Election night 2006: tantrums

By Toby Green
EDITOR

The election night special Club D ended in traditional fashion, with the strains of "We love you Derwent" still ringing. However, this time the partisan home crowd had more to celebrate than usual, as they welcomed the ascension of their former JCR chair, Rich Croker, to the position of SU President elect.

The night itself had a stripped down feel, despite the attempts to emulate the legendary John Rose, who dressed up as a roller-skating Stormtrooper at last year's event, by wearing Cavalier costumes. The team effort

prompted the question, overheard in the queue for the bar, "why are they dressed as pirates?" The last minute passing of the new Constitution meant that nine positions had been cancelled during the voting period and only eight results were set to be announced on the night.

Despite the opportunity for alcohol consumption, there were no ventures onto the dance floor until Christine Barnes and Leigh Kroeger won their election for Events Officers, and provided a victory dance instead of a speech.

The first real challenge occurred for the position of Education and Welfare Officer. It was the Hindson-

approved Amy Foxtan who took victory over Bex Emery in the final round after a close contest.

Next came the position of Services Officer. The exit poll showed a close result, and although the winner was correct, the victory was emphatic, as Woods polled 200 more votes than her nearest competitor, Matt Wareham. Fellow candidate, Carl Nuttall, reportedly left the event in floods of tears without stopping to witness how his friend and co-societies officer, Adam Stevenson, fared in the Presidential race.

The final election started at 1am amid confusion. First, an eager journalist



Amy Wood, Events Officer, won a competitive Services election. Photo: Toby Hall



Last years sabbatical team returned for the election results night. Photo: Toby Hall

Sabbatical team starts to take shape

By Toby Green
EDITOR

With the new posts of Student Development and Charities and Societies Communications officer yet to be announced, next year's sabbatical team has begun to be assembled.

Rich Croker will be joined by Amy Woods as Services Officer after she overwhelmingly won by 200 votes over Matt Wareham, her closest rival. Woods, who came out as the victor in the exit polls, ran on a campaign claiming to be "the most experienced candidate to take the Union forward," and the voters responded well to her promises to provide a campus takeaway service, named YOUR:FOOD, as well as continuing the fight for a central venue in Heslington East and a relaunched Freshers' Fortnight.

Woods also stressed her work with campus events,

having been YUSU Ents Officer for a year and Halifax Ents Rep in her first year. She also played a major role in the creation and promotion of the Revolver event, an attempt to provide a mid-week campus late license for students.

At hustings, Woods stated she wanted to "work for students in the way that they want, so that they get value for money for what they pay for." When probed on what she thought this year's Student Union had got wrong, she said "the constitution" and also promised that the environment "would not be forgotten" on campus as well as in the plans for Heslington East.

The media-friendly policies of Woods' rivals, Carl Nuttall and Matt Wareham, failed to connect with students. Nuttall promised to "meet the full running costs of all the media societies," whilst former URY Programme Controller, Wareham called for a greater

media presence in Your:Shop and union operated screens in campus bars enabling Sky to be shown alongside adverts, which would generate extra revenue to fund the campus bars.

Neil Barnes' successor for Education and Welfare officer, Amy Foxtan, fought a closer election as the result was delayed to a final round decision between her and Bex Emery. Foxtan highlighted the issue of mental health, emphasising the fact that one in four students will suffer from a mental health problem during their time at University. The former co-ordinator and veteran of Nightline also used Heslington East as a focal policy, promising to "make sure that welfare is represented in the plans."

Current Women's Officer, Bex Emery, gave greater attention to the Academic side of the position and called for "a University-wide standard on the feedback given for



Neil Barnes with his successor to his position, Amy Foxtan. Photo: Adam Sloan

assessed work." She also stressed her breadth of experience in the Union, claiming to "know both the campaigning and welfare side of the job."

After receiving the news

of her success, Foxtan declared herself "ecstatic and completely surprised. Obviously in a way I'm the outsider. I don't have any experience in the SU."

She also defended her

self against comments that her campaign ignored the academic side of the job, claiming that "if you have a welfare problem whilst at University it will impinge upon your degree."

and tears

from YSTV sensed an election scoop and announced that Colin Hindson had been thrown out of the event for being drunk and disorderly. Although definitely a touch worse for wear, he was eventually discovered as just being detained on the phone. The second shock came as it was announced that 267 virtual ballot papers were declared spoiled, prompting some wise guy to wonder whether people had tried to scribble on their monitors.

Nuttall's decision to make a swift exit seemed appropriate as Stevenson failed to make an impact, getting eliminated in the third round, just ahead of Robert Griffin and RON.

Calvin Kwan, who had been tipped as the first overseas President, Dan Thornton and Joe Hedges were eliminated in the penultimate round, leaving just Croker and Hindson to battle it out.

Despite Steve Hill, former Langwith chair and close friend, forcibly telling Croker he had it in the bag even before the first round of announcements had started, the celebrations didn't start until the Returning Officer, Nat Thwaites-MacGowan, confirmed that he had won by a mere 33 votes. As Croker took the stage the crowd went wild for their champion, but what else would you expect from a Club D?

“I don't like politics, to put it into the SU is wrong”

By Daniel Whitehead
NEWS EDITOR

“Guys, guys, guys. I just fucking love this fucking university. Get in!” screamed Rich Croker to a jubilant Derwent home crowd on Friday night, as he overcame Colin Hindson to be named as York Students' Union President 2006/07.

Croker's campaign was built on the idea that York University should be “for students not conferences,” a policy that appears more important than ever, considering the challenges faced by the University's expansion into Heslington East and their failure to provide satisfactory accommodation for 2nd and 3rd years. He highlights his election aim to ensure that “current student facilities are not sacrificed in the desire for improved conference facilities”: again, particularly apt at a time when college bars are facing their most sustained threat.

Main rival Colin Hindson was the candidate Croker classed as the “favourite” and he praised his closest competitor, whom he beat by only 33 votes, for his “strength in organisation of events.”

“My strength lies in the coordination and representation of groups, and we have worked well together over

the past year. If I didn't win then I honestly wanted Colin to.”

When asked about the effects of the University's proposed Heslington East expansion, Croker said that even though the expansion is a “good thing,” he wants to prevent Heslington East from becoming “a conference park.” Other priority campaigns were a call for more involvement in external SU affairs, such as the National Top-Up Fees campaign, and producing an SU cookbook which would aim to introduce cheap and easy nutritional meals into the student diet.

Croker, who grew up in a rural village in Buckinghamshire and attended Grammar School, claims not to have any political allegiances. “To put politics into the Students' Union is wrong, and something I would ensure doesn't happen this year. I think a Students' Union which works for students rather than political benefit is what I believe.” He added that the only political belief he feels strongly in is the benefits of single sex education.

He also defended his experience record, claiming “if I honestly believed someone else could do the job better, I wouldn't have run. I do believe I'm the best person



Croker hears the news of his victory. Photo: Toby Hall

for the post.

“What I have done in the past has made a difference. I haven't taken one central route which means I've seen a lot of different areas of student life, including RAG, Student Action and the Athletic Union.”

When asked to elaborate on his profession of love

for his University whilst making his victory speech, he chuckled. “Because York is small, it has such a great feeling and I think it's good that everyone knows everyone. There is a lot more potential to be released in York, and I think this will be a great experience both for me and for the Students' Union.”



Rich Croker's supporters celebrate. Photo: Toby Hall

Access Officer

Sally Rhymer



Sally Rhymer's sunny demeanour prevented students choosing R.O.N and gave her the chance to follow up her promise to “make everyone's life easier.” Her own experience of disability has led her to an understanding of “how frustrating it could have been, yet how simple it is to make life that bit easier.” Again, aware-

ness was the key word for her campaign, and although specific policy was sparse, a role in the construction of Heslington East can be expected. A ‘stunt’ that is sure to prove popular is organising days in which York students can experience life with a disability, for example spending a day with a blindfold on.

Events Officers

Christine Barnes and Leigh Kroeger



For many students, Kroeger and Barnes, elected unopposed, the promise of “musical diversity” is a breath of fresh air in a cheese-dominated University. As their publicity states, “variety is the spice of life!” Another innovative idea is to bring sports and society socials onto campus – surely a rugby team night in Alcuin would provide

it with funds for at least a term. The promise they will struggle to achieve is providing a regular YUSU event that, in their words, “works better.” The failure of Revolver, despite sponsorship and promotions, means they will have an uphill struggle to rescue the brand and find a way to tempt students away from town bars.

LGBT Officers

Rose Rickford and Ben Nichols



Rose Rickford and Ben Nichols, who faced no competition, have already had the experience of fighting for their position, being heavily involved in the campaign against the removal of LGBT Officers from the SU Exec. Their heavy involvement in the blood donor protests shows they're not afraid of hard hit-

ting campaigns. In their acceptance speech, Rickford reiterated their point that they are fully behind keeping the transsexual aspect of the position. As well as the usual promises to provide greater publicity of welfare help available, they vowed to reintroduce a specific LGBT committee for the first time in years.

Training Officer

Chloe Hutchings



The only person contested for a non-sabbatical position, Hutchings, a second year History student who boasted of experience “working in the training department of a large company,” triumphed over Alcuin Vice-Chair, Chris Roberts, who had JCRC-based experience. Perhaps the most interesting and

novel of Hutchings' ideas is that of providing training sessions concerning the working of the Students' Union itself. For many students, the role of training officer is unclear: many students have queried what the job entails. It remains to be seen whether Hutchings can change this perception.

Constitution passed on false pretences

By Heidi Blake and
Lauren Carter

THE STUDENTS' UNION have admitted that they misrepresented advice from experts when passing the new constitution in an Executive Committee meeting last week.

The Committee had to decide whether abstentions from a UGM held in the previous week should be counted towards the vote, which would determine if the proposed constitution had passed.

The online UGM in week eight had initially ruled that the proposed constitution had failed to receive enough votes, with 64.9 per cent in favour not enough for the two thirds majority it needed.

However, this verdict was disputed by a student who argued that if abstentions were discounted, the constitution would have passed with 66 per cent of the vote in favour.

After holding two inqurate Emergency General Meetings, the Executive Committee were called into a late night session where they decided that abstentions should not count towards the vote and ruled that the new constitution had therefore passed.

When asked how they came to a decision, Students' Union President, Micky Armstrong, assured students that they had based it on "substantial research".

"After seeking advice and receiving information from various sources, the Executive Committee was given the decision to make regarding the interpretation



Thwaites McGowan, pictured at SU elections, has been criticised over constitution. Photo: Adam Sloan

of the constitution" he said.

Armstrong and several other SU officers claimed to have sought advice from a variety of constitutional experts, including law professors from Durham, Warwick and UCL, as well as Dr. John Cagle from California State University, the Electoral Reform Society and the Electoral Commission.

The Executive Committee were advised that these experts had been briefed on the situation at York and had told the Students' Union that the new constitution should have passed.

However, the Students' Union's research reveals that none of the experts consulted

were able to give a conclusive answer and all had said that they needed more time to look into the situation.

Dawn Oliver, a Professor of Law at UCL, said: "I am afraid I do not know of any case law or academic articles on this topic off hand, and unfortunately I do not have time to do research into it".

George Meszaros, a Professor at Warwick, told the SU that he would not be the best person to consult and they should instead contact one of his colleagues. Unfortunately, the SU did not follow up this lead.

Iain Leigh, a Professor of Law at Durham University, stated: "This is obviously a complex issue

where I hesitate to give a definite answer."

He did, however, add: "In your present situation the amendment would fall below the required threshold and would not pass", a conflicting account to the one given at the Executive Committee.

Gemma Thomas, Press Officer of the Electoral Commission, said: "We really wouldn't have given advice on this, because we only give advice on statutory elections.

"I've worked here for a long time, and I can't remember ever giving advice on any one else's election."

When questioned on the reliability of these sources, the SU President commented: "Obviously what people

deem as advice is different."

Commenting on the episode, one student said "This is the most disgraceful move YUSU has made during my time at York. I am saddened at the complete disregard for the principles of democracy on which YUSU is supposedly based."

Nouse Poll:

Nouse has polled 206 students - the number required to reach quorum at Monday's EGM - about their views on the recent events concerning the constitution.

■ 38% of students said they agreed with the new constitution

■ 15% of students said they didn't agree with the new constitution

■ 43% of students said they didn't know anything about the constitution

■ 51% of students said they would have voted against the motion to discount abstentions had they been at the EGM on Monday

■ 22% of students said they would have voted for the motion to discount abstentions had they been at the EGM on Monday

■ 27% of students said they would have abstained from voting had they been at the EGM on Monday

■ If abstentions are discounted from the poll, as the Students' Union would probably interpret it, the percentage of students who said they would have voted against the move to discount abstentions rises from 51% to 69%

The Union's panel of experts

"I am afraid I do not know of any case law or academic articles on this topic off hand, and unfortunately I do not have time to do research into it" Dawn Oliver, UCL

"This is obviously a complex issue where I hesitate to give a definite answer" Iain Leigh, Durham University

"I've worked here for a long time, and I can't remember ever giving advice on any one else's election." Gemma Thomas, Electoral Commission

Services Officer apologises as Nazi gaffe on Ask YUSU leads to outrage among students

By Heidi Blake
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

A RECENT STATEMENT by the SU Services Officer, Nat Thwaites McGowan, has caused outrage among Jewish students at the University. The statement, which implied that the people persecuted by the Nazi regime were "stupid," has been described as "disgusting" by a representative for the University of York Jewish Society.

In response to a comment on the web facility "Ask YUSU" which likened him to a Nazi over his handling of

the constitution, the Services Officer wrote: "You should be glad I'm not a Nazi, because I believe Nazis killed the stupid people." This comment has since been removed from the web-page.

Speaking on Sunday, Rabbi Treblow of the University of York Jewish Society said: "I am offended on behalf of all humanity. I'm utterly shocked and disgusted. He's really bitterly hurt a large segment of the student population."

"One should really remember and keep in mind that what happened [in Nazi Germany] was a tragedy

beyond all comprehension and a perversion of society and culture, not something to be used lightly as an insult. Whether he was referring to Jews or to the mentally ill, it's violent language to use and tars all the victims of the holocaust."

The Rabbi also expressed his disapproval at the comparison of Thwaites McGowan with a Nazi, saying: "That was offensive as well. I would be offended by anyone who called anyone else a Nazi, because it weakens the term. Nothing short of genocide deserves that title."

Thwaites McGowan was keen to assure students that he meant no offence by the comment. In an interview on Friday, he said: "To anyone who was offended I will apologise, and I've removed the comment so that no-one else can be offended."

"It wasn't intended at all in that way - it was meant as a quick get-back at the person who asked the question, because obviously I was livid when I read it."

He refused to comment on which group the term "stupid people" was meant to refer to, saying "I don't want to get into who the Nazis did

and didn't kill. It's not my business. I'll say something that will offend more people, and I think we should just let things lie."

The Services Officer added: "If we're going to concentrate on anything, it should be the fact that the Students' Union, as a result of making a decision about abstentions, was compared to the regimes of Hitler, Mugabe and Mussolini, which I think is absolutely and completely out of order, and really highlights the downside of student politics."

Emails have been sent to all the SU Sabbatical

Officers threatening to pass a vote of no confidence against the Services Officer following the comment.

Micky Armstrong, the SU President, expressed his support for Thwaites McGowan, despite acknowledging the offensive nature of the comment.

Grace Fletcher Hall, an SU Women's Officer, said "It was an incredibly stupid thing to say. I wouldn't defend it, and I doubt Nat would either."

She added "I don't think he was making a racist comment: he was just generally making a stupid comment."

Students join in festivities as University celebrate one year Fair Trade anniversary

By Justin Weber
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A week of events held last week to mark the national festival of Fairtrade, and the first anniversary of the university achieving Fairtrade status, has been judged a success by campus representatives of the Fairtrade movement.

The festival of Fairtrade Fortnight, which runs until the 18th March, is organised annually by the Fairtrade Foundation to raise public awareness of the Fairtrade brand, as well as celebrating success stories like the University of York.

Last March the University became one of only 15 universities in the UK to gain official Fairtrade status following the City of York itself, which had achieved Fairtrade status in 2004.

The awarding of Fairtrade status was based on it adopting a series of policies laid out by the Fairtrade Foundation, including a commitment to expanding the range of products available to staff and students, as well as the continued promotion of Fairtrade in bars and shops

throughout the year.

On campus, the centre-piece of activities last week was a Fairtrade Gig in Derwent Bar attended by over 350 people. Including performances by The Memos, Lowground and Fenna Rhodes & The True Ingredients, the gig also helped play a part in the SU's week of action to support campus bars.

Rachel Cavill of York Fairtrade Forum said, "it is clear that awareness-raising events are key to building support for the Fairtrade mark and what it stands for. The importance of both students and staff at the University forms a big part of this."

The expansion of the Fairtrade mark from its establishment in 1994 has been dramatic. Retail sales of Fairtrade products reached £195 million last year in the UK alone.

Ric Lander from People and Planet society explained, "the growth of Fairtrade in the last decade or so has been incredible. The challenge now is to achieve universal recognition of the Fairtrade brand and to increase sales beyond established products such as tea and chocolate."



The University is one of 15 institutions to gain Fair Trade status, which is based on Fairtrade Foundation rules

Rising rent prices hit York

By Nick Dingwall
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

ACCORDING TO THE latest study by industry experts, propertyforecasts.co.uk, house prices in York are set to increase between 60 and 70% over the next five years. Three York postal areas, including the University's YO10 district, are predicted to experience one of the ten highest price-increases in the country.

The popular student areas of Badger Hill, Fulford and Tadcaster Road are all included in the top-ten, with projected price-increases of up to 100%.

The concern for students is the effect that increased house prices will have on rent levels. A 26% increase in house prices in the last 10 years has corresponded with a 100% hike in rent.

John Waterhouse, director of Hunters Estate Agents, played down the situation and described the idea of a



House prices and rents in York are predicted to rise

100% increase in house prices as "wildly optimistic", suggesting that even the 60-70% projection is at the top end of possibilities.

However, Laura Dalton, a third-year student at the University, said "We've been looking for a house for next year and have already noticed a dramatic increase in rent prices in comparison to what we've been paying for the last two years."

Even with John

Waterhouse's more modest prediction, the rises are likely to be substantial enough to force students into the cheaper Hull Road and Tang Hall areas.

There are worries this could lead to the kind of student 'ghettoisation' that has plagued some other university cities like Bristol and Leeds.

Residents in Badger Hill have already been complaining about the recent influx of

students and are worried that greater numbers could change the character of the estate. The Black Bull pub has been criticised for its re-orientation to the student market.

This comes at a time when the University has announced cuts in the availability of campus accommodation for second and third year students.

Another concern is that the development of Heslington East - with an anticipated 5,400 extra students and 2,000 extra staff, as well as 2,500 employees in the research facilities - will put the housing market at risk of saturation.

Despite this, the University has planned only 3,300 new rooms for the extra students.

Many, including Professor Mark Stephens, Assistant Director of the Centre for Housing Policy at the University, fear that demand could outstrip supply, driving rent prices even higher.

Alcuin burglary startles students

By Emma Hutchinson
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Fresh concerns have been raised over the security of college accommodation after thieves broke into a new block in Alcuin despite the presence of students nearby.

The break-in happened at around 8pm on Friday the 3rd of March, when thieves gained access to the building through a window on the bottom floor and stole electrical items estimated to be worth over a thousand pounds. The victim of the burglary returned to the University after a weekend in London to find his laptop and amplifier missing.

The robbery went unnoticed by his flat mates, despite the fact that four of them were sitting in the kitchen eating dinner at the time it occurred. They claim not to have heard or seen

anything. It was a resident from the floor above who eventually alerted them to the robbery.

The resident who saw the burglars leave does not wish to be named. She described them as "three young men, one of them on a bike" and said "I was looking out of the window and saw three youths running away carrying electrical equipment so I went downstairs to tell [the residents] to check their rooms." It was later discovered that a window-pane at the back of the building had been ripped out. Bike marks left by the departing thieves were clearly visible in the snow.

The Alcuin porters and University security were contacted, who then informed the police. Forensic tests and finger printing were carried out on the room and window after police had interviewed the residents. No suspects have yet been identified.

Jowell row unresolved Shia and Sunni Muslims scholars condemn sectarian attacks as civil war threatens Iraq

By Jessica Levy

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, remains in office despite weeks of accusations about her knowledge of suspect financial dealings on the part of her now estranged husband.

Ms Jowell was cleared of wrongdoing on March 2nd when Cabinet Secretary Sir Gus O'Donnell reported the conclusions of his speedy investigation into the affair in a letter to Theresa May, shadow Leader of the House, who had requested the inquiry.

Sir Gus ruled that the Secretary of State had not broken the ministerial code of conduct by failing to declare the gift of £350,000 that appeared in her husband's Swiss bank account in October 1999. The argument from Ms Jowell, and supported by the government, being that the Secretary of State did not

know the gift existed.

As Ms Jowell returned to work this week to face the House for departmental questions, her husband, international corporate lawyer David Mills, continued to grapple with accusations from Italian magistrates that the £350,000 gift was a bribe he had taken from Italy's Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi. Judges in Milan allege that the sum given to Mr Mills was a reward for testimony that he gave to keep a 'Mr B' out of trouble during corruption trials in 1997 and 1998. Both Mr Mills and Mr Berlusconi deny the charges. With Italian elections in a few weeks predicted to be a close contest for the Prime Minister, Mr Berlusconi argues that the charges are politically motivated.

When the allegations first arose Jowell claimed that the family finances were no business of hers, and that she knew nothing of the controversial sum of money. Up to

this point the situation appeared embarrassing for Ms Jowell, if not a little incredulous that such a large sum of money would have passed her notice, but it did not transpire that the Secretary of State had done anything wrong.

It was evidence obtained by the Sunday Times that Ms Jowell had signed a form authorising a loan of more than £400,000 on the couple's North London home, which has ensnared Tessa Jowell in her husband's web of complicated financial dealings. The loan was swiftly paid off with the money Mr Mills had received as a gift.

Despite repeated calls for a full and comprehensive independent inquiry from a handful of government and opposition MPs, nothing as yet has been forthcoming. This comes as the Committee on Standards in Public Life this week published its annual report, warning that the system for policing the ministerial code is undermining public confidence in politicians and government.

Described as a popular minister, Ms Jowell is praised for her role in helping London secure the Olympic bid for the 2012 games. But it seems hard not to conclude that she has been tainted by this episode. The Prime Minister and other colleagues are rallying around her to send out a signal that she will not resign. Even if blameless, however, the affair may still damage Ms Jowell's ability to do her job.

The Local Government Minister, David Milliband, dismissed as a "grotesque suggestion" claims that she had announced her separation from her husband as part of a spin operation to save her job. While he may be right about the hurtful nature of such comments, the truth is that the distance placed between Ms Jowell and her husband will make her position in government more secure.

Tim Holmes examines the Iraqi insurgency and discovers it is not driven by foreign fighters but by ordinary Iraqis who oppose the occupation



American forces have faced criticism for heavy handed measures and a poor human rights record that have fuelled the Iraqi insurgency

With the bombing of the al-Askari "golden" mosque in Samarra on the 22nd of February, Iraq seemed to have taken a step closer to civil war. Over the following week, according to Baghdad's main morgue, the ensuing sectarian vio-

lence claimed 1,300 lives - making it "the deadliest of the war outside of major U.S. offensives", *The Washington Post* reported, most of the killing coming "at the hands of self-styled executioners".

The aftermath of the bombing also saw significant calls for unity

between Shiite and Sunni leaders - and a good deal of condemnation directed at the occupation. Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr demanded an end to attacks on Sunni mosques, even sending members of his Mehdi army to protect Sunni mosques within 24 hours of the attack.

"We are not enemies but brothers," he said, "And he who assaults sacraments and mosques shall get his just punishment." He also called for a peaceful demonstration in Baghdad, "involving Shiites, Sunnis and others, in which you will demand the withdrawal of the



1,300 bodies have arrived at Baghdad mortuary after recent attacks

Occupying forces". On the 26th of February, Representatives of Al-Sadr later met with members of the influential Association of Muslim Scholars, widely seen as the most significant public voice of the Sunni insurgency. Both groups condemned attacks that might lead to civil war.

The aftermath of the bombing has demonstrated an underlying tension in the nature of Iraq's insurgency between sectarian conflict and popular resistance to foreign occupation.

The occupation of Iraq is opposed by a substantial majority of Iraqis. Last October, for instance, *The Telegraph* reported the results of a secret Ministry of Defence poll of Iraqis, which concluded that 82% of Iraqis were "strongly opposed" to

the presence of coalition troops; indeed 67% felt less secure because of the occupation.

It is not difficult to see why: Human Rights Watch's 2006 report on "the absence of basic precautions by the U.S. military to protect civilians, including at checkpoints". One marine lieutenant, cited in the *Economist*, summed up the characteristic trigger-happy attitude: "If anyone gets too close to us we fucking waste them; it's kind of a shame, because it means we've killed a lot of innocent people." Torture of detainees, HRW report, is also far from unusual, U.S. Military personnel attesting to "routine and severe beatings of detainees".

A more recent poll by the Project on International Policy Attitudes

found similar attitudes among Iraqis: 87% of Iraqis want a timeline for withdrawal of troops. 64% that the number of violent attacks would decrease; 61% that inter-ethnic violence would decrease; 67% that the availability of public services would increase.

There can also be little doubt that the occupation is the root of the Iraqi insurgency. According to a recent report, U.S. intelligence agencies informed the U.S. Government as early as October 2003 that "the insurgency was fuelled by local conditions - not foreign terrorists - and drew strength from deep grievances, including the presence of U.S. troops." The insurgency, they warned, "was likely to worsen and could lead to civil war."

Despite this, the Bush administration has continued to portray the insurgency as constituted by "former supporters of Saddam Hussein, criminals and non-Iraqi terrorists," the report notes, "even as the U.S. intelligence community was warning otherwise." As a study last September by the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies concluded, the US government has been "feeding the myth" that foreign fighters form the backbone of the insurgency: the real percentage of foreign fighters is "well below 10%, and may well be closer to 4% to 6%."

But whether popular discontent does ensure an end to the occupation, or its replacement with UN peacekeeping forces, most Iraqis, it seems, would be glad to see the back of it.

The Campus Soapbox

I'm grateful to Nouse for allowing me some column inches to explain why most lectures and seminars were cancelled last Tuesday and why as part of action short of a strike many lecturers will not be marking assessments or exams until further notice.

We in the Association of University Teachers (AUT) believe the current action could have been avoided if Vice-Chancellors had responded positively to last October's pay claim which asked them to honour their pledge to devote at least a third of new money coming into the sector to staff salaries. Instead of responding with a serious offer, in January we were told that we had to give up our right to take industrial action and that we had to link our pay claim to that of the non-academic unions who still have yet to announce one. This is an

old ruse of the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA)—which has consistently sought to pit union against union, and to drag out negotiations until late into the summer when university budgets have already been set and

'Chief executives have given themselves a 20% pay rise'

when any action is likely to have minimal impact.

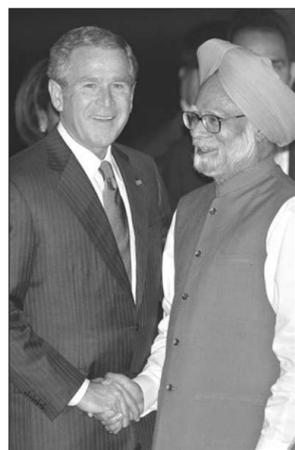
More than £3.4 billion pounds from fees and government grants will flood into universities in the next few years, and a proportion of that money we argue should be used to close the 40% pay gap that has

grown up between university academics and equivalent professionals in the public sector such as senior teachers, civil servants, and doctors. Few people realise that many of the university staff that are paid to train nurses are paid less than the nurses themselves, or 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. Meanwhile, pay has stagnated over the last thirty years, staff-student ratios have climbed from an average of 1 in 9 to 1 in 23—an increase of 133%. The growing demands of teaching and administration are such that increasingly lecturers are forced to conduct their research outside of working hours. A recent TUC survey calculated that academics work nearly two and half months of overtime 'for free' each year.

Dr Simon Parker
Vice-President, York AUT

Vice-Chancellors do not have to stand on rain soaked picket lines to get the salaries they feel they deserve. They have specially appointed remuneration committees which put together attractive packages to recruit and retain 'chief executives of complex, multi-million pound organisations'. The Times Higher Education Supplement revealed this week that these 'chief executives' increased their salary by an average of 25% in the past three years, taking some above the £200,000 mark and many above the pay of the Prime Minister. AUT's claim (which the University of York describes as 'substantial') is for just over 20% spread over three years. As the THES writes: 'Until the leaders of higher education show the same restraint they are demanding from the unions, disputes like the current one are bound to be well supported.'

US nuclear deal with India angers Iran



Bush meets Indian President

By Philip Parnamets

As negotiations continue over Iran's nuclear programme with threats and pleas being swapped in a global relay race, President George W. Bush travelled to India with a completely different geopolitical message. Prima facie it might seem to the casual observer that the world suddenly leapt another mile down the path of inconsistency. At the centre of the argument lies the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970.

Most countries of the world are party to the treaty (187 out of 192) and the most notable absentees are Israel, Pakistan and India, of which the latter two are confirmed nuclear powers and the first is widely believed to be. Non-proliferation and disarmament are two of the pillars of the NPT; the third is the safe-

guarded use of nuclear technology for peaceful energy means. The wording of this third pillar in two articles gives rise to varying interpretations. It guarantees the "inalienable right" of states to use and develop nuclear technology for peaceful energy means, as long as it doesn't involve the manufacture of nuclear weapons. It also requires non-nuclear weapon states to accept safeguards under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) "with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons." These safeguards usually take the form of regular inspections of nuclear-related sites.

This is the heart of the issue between Iran and the IAEA, with Iran claiming it has the right to develop a nuclear programme as long as it is peaceful. The IAEA has

never declared Iran to be in violation of the NPT, but matters were complicated in 2002 with the discovery of several clandestine nuclear facilities. This is what gives rise to suspicions that Iran is intending to develop nuclear weapons. However, countries like Israel have committed themselves to take unilateral action to prevent any form of potential for nuclear weapons arising. This in turn gives a rationale for keeping nuclear programmes secret, as Iran realises countries like the USA or Israel are disposed to suspect it.

The issues surrounding Iran's nuclear ambitions are not confined to worries concerning the NPT. This is illustrated by the deal reached in early March 2006 between India and the USA regarding nuclear cooperation. It entails India splitting its nuclear programme into a civilian and a military component and

allowing the IAEA to inspect its civilian facilities. In return, the USA will provide civilian technology to India, in effect signalling a definitive end to its isolation in the nuclear scene. However, it is feared that this means a tacit acknowledgement of India as the world's sixth nuclear power, something that could plausibly strengthen the Indian bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, and that this deal will hollow out the NPT.

The world thus risks a further erosion of international relations. Labelled a 'crisis' in Iran and a 'landmark achievement' in India, how the situation develops will depend largely on the actions of China. Traditionally, China has been opposed to Security Council action against Iran, and the energy hungry nation buys a lot of gas and oil from Iran. This opposition may fuel the

efforts of diplomatic solutions, but it may also provoke military actions from a frustrated Israel fearing its very existence. China also insists that any Indian nuclear activities be brought within the auspices of the NPT, which would of course mean total unilateral disarmament for India. If Beijing decides to interpret India as an emerging rival this might lead to geopolitical alliances destabilising the already fragile region marred by tensions in Kashmir and civil war in Nepal.

What is clear is that whatever solutions are reached, these will largely be geopolitically determined, with trade and energy policies being key determinants unfortunately, as these are unlikely to be conducive to strengthening the authority of the NPT and this treaty is still the best protection against global nuclear armament.

FASHION **M4**

We examine vintage fashion

FEATURE **M10**

The homeless situation in York

SPRING WEEK TEN

March 14th 2006

MUSE



**The most controversial
feature. Ever. M7**

Intrepid travel: the search

For most people, travelling involves getting your hair braided and washing off your
intrepid travel writer, tells **Adam Sloan** how he prefers to hitchhike in Bosnia and

When most of us go to work, it involves waking up on a cold morning, digging your uniform out from the back of the wardrobe and waiting in the rain for a bus that never seems to come on time. When Peter Moore goes to work, it involves travelling to a far flung corner of the globe and embarking on the kind of adventure that most can only dream of. Peter grew up in Sydney's western suburbs and while studying at University for a degree in Medieval History became hopelessly addicted to travel. Now he is able to fuel his habit by writing books about his adventures. Peter has so far published five books as well as writing articles for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian and formerly a regular column for TNT. This has led to him becoming the voice of alternative travel in both Australia and the UK.

At last count, Peter had visited 95 different countries, including some of the most conflict-ravaged regions on the planet. He tries to explain to me exactly where it all started: "When I was about 19 and had just started at Uni, my dad, who's a plumber and Seventh Day Adventist, took me out with him to a mission school in Vanuatu to help build a shower block. The principal of the school rewarded us for our work by taking us to a neigh-

bouring island which was home to two tribes, called the 'Big Nambas' and the 'Small Nambas'. All the men wore a piece of cloth around their penis and since the Big Nambas believed a big penis was good, they used a lot of cloth, whilst the Small Nambas believed a small penis was good so used less! This was my first moment of realisation that the world is full of interesting places, and, after that, every chance I got I would go travelling. Each trip I did whetted my appetite further and I was never disappointed."

Peter's most popular travel book so far in the UK has been *The Wrong Way Home*, in which, after a spell working in Britain, he decided he was going to use the remainder of his budget (just over £2,000) to get home to Sydney without going on a plane; "I wanted to travel home overland - without flying - as a way of blowing my mind and enriching my life." The trail followed by Peter was originally popular with the hippies of the 1960s, who often took the journey to the Far East in droves.

On his way back to Australia, Moore decided he would use this opportunity to take a jaunt through the war-torn Balkans. "I was in Budapest during the time of the Balkan War and I thought a trip down to the former Yugoslavia was in order." Peter ended up travelling down through Croatia,

Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina. "I saw this bus with 'Mostar' on the front, which is a town in Bosnia, and I



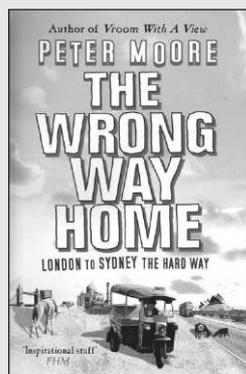
At Mugabe's birthday - 'It was like a comic book scene, his guard opened his jacket and revealed a gun. I realised at this point it was time to back off'

thought if the buses were going there then it must be ok!" This sense of adventure coupled with an apparent disregard for self-preservation sometimes has the tendency to get Moore

into fairly harrowing situations, as he found out when he eventually arrived in Mostar. "The bus arrived and I saw it was still a war zone. I decided I would just sit on the bus and wait for it to turn back, but it turned out that it was stopping for the night. Understandably, the town was pretty much deserted and anything resembling a place to stay was shut long ago. I was even considering heading down to the police station and asking them to put me in a cell for the night! As it happened, I bumped into a couple of guys who offered me a place to stay at their uncle's flat. I later found out that when the war started their uncle had taken the family to safety over in America and left the keys to his flat with his nephews."

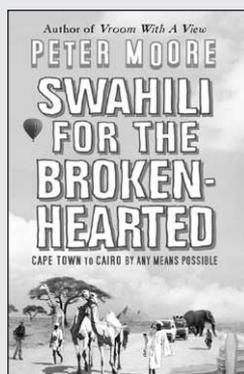
One of the major motivations for Moore to continue exploring the world is the frequent kindness he experiences. "The thing I love about travelling is the people. When I go somewhere, the hospitality of the people I meet sticks in my mind rather than a monument or grand vista." During his trip from London to Sydney, Peter ended up spending some time travelling through Iran. "I have never in my life been anywhere where the people are so pathologically hospitable! Everywhere I went people were coming up to me and inviting me to have tea or offering to show me around."

The openness of his books is the essence of why Moore is so popular with his audience. Travelling on his own, he always seems to be able to go with the flow, allowing him to meet some of the most genuine, interesting and friendly people in all corners of the globe. For his book, *Swahili for the Broken Hearted*, Peter travelled overland from Cape Town, the most Southern city in Africa, all the way up to the Egyptian capital of Cairo. At one point he found his path taking him through the coastal country of Mozambique. Whilst on the bus between South Africa and Mozambique, he started talking to Claude and Leonard, two people on their way to the capital Maputo, who invited Moore to go and stay with them. "It just so happened that Claude's mother had just arrived back from Portugal. It was this big occasion and they brought the old Portuguese pop records out and had a big family celebration. It didn't matter that I was just this weird foreigner they had never met before, I was still included in it." Peter believes that after you have travelled for a while you develop a sixth sense which allows you to gauge whether a situation is dodgy or not. "I guess I have this thing where if people invite me somewhere I size them up,



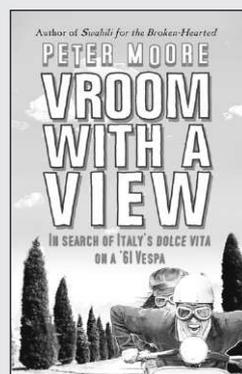
The Wrong Way Home

Bantam (1999)



Swahili for the Broken-Hearted

Bantam (2003)



Vroom With A View

Bantam (2004)

Having spent some time working here in the UK, Peter decides it's time to head home to Australia. With only AUS \$5,000 to his name, Peter tries to make his way thousands of miles back to Sydney without stepping on a plane. Following the trail set by the hippies of the sixties, not even the threat of civil war or the prospect of breaking international law will deter Peter in eventually reaching his goal. Peter's eight-month journey sees him dodge mortar fire in Bosnia, have tea with the local Muhajeddin in Afghanistan and make a pilgrimage to see the legendary 'Willie Bob' in Nepal.

After breaking up with his girlfriend back in Sydney, Peter does what any sensible guy would do in the same situation: he runs off to Africa! The route he will take will be that of Cecil Rhodes' dream when he decides he will travel overland from Cape Town to Cairo. This book is a brilliant read for anyone who is looking to reassure their faith in humanity since Peter is helped in reaching his goal by all manner of people as he makes his way through 12 countries surviving student riots in Addis Ababa, attending Robert Mugabe's birthday party and also finding his way into a role in an Academy Award Winning movie!

Peter is turning 40. Despite having travelled in over 90 different countries, there is a niggling feeling, something that he feels he must do and that has been building up since childhood. After becoming enchanted by old Sophia Lauren movies in his youth, Peter decides that he is going to travel in style around Italy on a 1962 Vespa, the same age as him, a little rough around the edges but overall still in good working order. Peter ends up seeing a side of Italy rarely encountered by the beach-goers and inter-railers and makes some friends-for-life after a truly *magnifico* journey through the country's heart.

for Moore

henna tattoo. Peter Moore, the
attend dictators' birthday parties

think 'is this a con?' and then just go with the flow."

Despite having travelled through regions plagued by civil war and conflict, Peter says the only time he has really felt in danger while travelling was in Birmingham. "It was midnight and I was sitting outside the Bullring, which hadn't been done up at the time, and I could see all these guys stumbling by and checking me out. The sixth sense was telling me 'shit, I'm going to get robbed here.' It was my first trip to England and I just wanted the bus to come and take me to Stratford. Eventually a drunk guy rolled up to me, looking threatening, yet he ended up befriending me and we went for a beer together."

One trip that Peter decided not to take alone was the six-month trip around Central America, which was the subject of his book *The Full Montezuma*. He invited his girlfriend whom he had only recently started going out with, along with him, which turned out to be a mistake. "My advice is don't do it," he chuckles, "it really puts a relationship into hyper mode. You have just started going out with this girl and she is sitting in the bathroom making noises like a cappuccino machine, it really advances the relationship to a whole different level! Besides that, it also limits the possibilities of interacting with the locals, which is the reason that I really love travelling."

One of Moore's first major trips was taken back in 1991, aged 26, when he decided to quit his job and spend a year travelling around the equator. This trip took him through places such as Indonesia, Somalia, Uganda and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo). Talking about his travels through Central Africa, Moore's passion for the unpredictability of travelling becomes apparent. "When I was in Zaire I wanted to get from Kisingani down to Kinshasa, and was planning to travel by a river that goes all the way. I ended up getting on this barge where I was assured by the captain that the trip would only last four days, but it ended up taking six weeks! My walkman batteries went after two days, my food was gone after three, but luckily I befriended the captain's wife, who would bring me a bowl of watery fish soup and rice every day." This turned out to be a saving grace for Peter, as the only other food on offer was the charred monkeys that people were selling wherever the boat pulled up (or more commonly broke down) along the river.

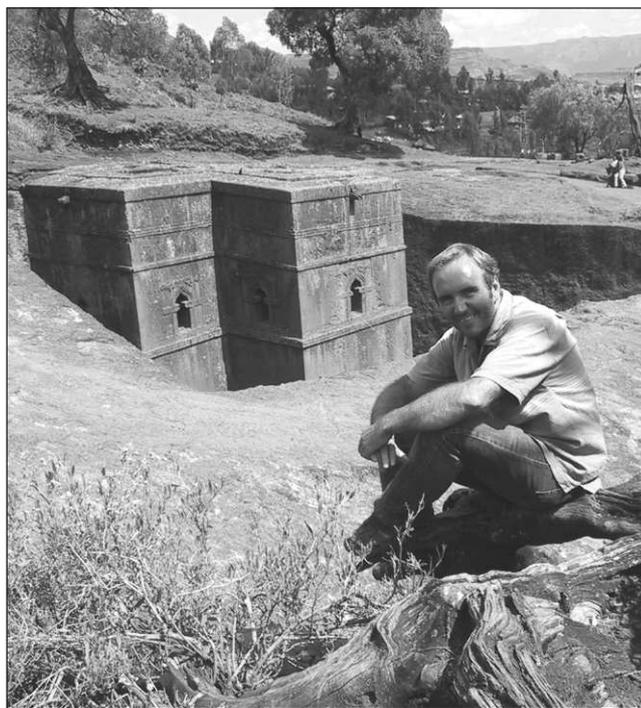
In 2001, on a trip from Cape Town to Cairo, Moore happened to be travelling through Zimbabwe at the time of

President Mugabe's birthday. Mugabe's birthday bash was taking place at Victoria Falls, the town where Peter

'The Vespa was a real ice breaker with people, and I saw a new side of Italy'

was staying. He decided he would try and go along, and managed to get into the stadium where the party was being held by accompanying a guide he had met a few days ago. Before he could catch a glimpse of the man himself though, Peter was singled out in the crowd and approached by one of Mugabe's security team. "It was like a comic book scene, this guy opened his jacket and revealed a gun. I realised at this point it was time to back off."

Later on in the journey, Moore ended up going through Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, just as the student riots were breaking out. "I got out of the mini van and suddenly I see this angry mob waving sticks and placards advancing down the street. Luckily this guy grabs me and drags me into a little mud brick shop at the side of the road. As I hid, I looked around and found out it was actually a coffin shop. Outside there were gunshots and cars being turned over and I was thinking 'I wonder if I will have to end up hiding in one of these', but luckily it never came to that." When he did go outside though



Moore is currently working on his latest book, *Crikey!* All photos courtesy of Peter Moore.

he was approached by some angry protesters who started yelling at him "American! American!" in a rather threatening manner. "Luckily, the guy from the shop went over to calm them down, and they were having a conversation for a while. He came back over to me and said 'It's ok, I have explained to them you are Australian, they have seen your Skippy!'"

Peter's latest book is *Vroom with a View*, which saw him move away from the kind of travelling he had previously done in order to travel around Italy on a forty-year-old motor scooter. "When I was a teenager I remembered seeing these fantastic old black and white movies of people going around on Vespas and I always thought that was something I really wanted to do." Moore made the trip shortly after his 40th birthday and was very aware of the differences between this journey and his other adventures. "The thing that worried me before I went on the trip was if I was on a Vespa, am I going to just be passing through places rather than becoming involved with the people? As it turned out the Vespa was often a real ice breaker with the people, and I got to see a side of Italy I had never previously seen."

For two weeks of that trip, Sally, a girl from London whom Peter had just started going out with, came out to Italy to spend some time travelling with him on the Vespa. They are now

happily married and have recently become first-time parents. Moore is unsure if being married with a child will affect the audaciousness of some of his future travels. "I don't know, I haven't done a big trip since my daughter was born, so I guess we will find out later if it affects the way I go about things. Once you start travelling it gets addictive, and I'm still constantly scanning the horizons for new places to go."

As for the future, he is currently working on his latest book, *Crikey!*, the story of when he and his wife bought an old car and headed off around the circumference of Australia. *Crikey!* is getting finished and there will also be a sequel to *Vroom* on the way, which will see a return to Italy and a reunion with his beloved Vespa for a trip through Sardinia, Sicily and the Amalfi Coast. "After that it's going to be something big, possibly around the former Soviet States or South America, something with the hardships."

Although the devil-may-care attitude of Moore towards travelling may be daunting to many, he has a simple word of advice for would-be explorers. "If you want to travel, go and travel, it is a fantastic world out there. If you really have the time and the inclination you can do it."

To find out more about Peter's travels and writing visit his website: www.petermoore.net

Lamb dressed as mutton: the cult

The Granny might just be the most unlikely style icon. Yet, if recent trends are anything to go by, **Holly Williams** explains, it is indeed your aging relative's wardrobe which will get you most outfit envy from rival fashionistas

So just how do you pull off the vintage look? Well, anything that's old, is good. It's an eclectic sort of fashion trend - you can choose your era, or mix them up. Anything goes, as long as you've got the confidence to wear it; from 20s flapper beads, to 40s tea dresses, to 70s flares, you can pick 'n' choose your favourite retro look, or just choose an accessory to make that H&M outfit (which is probably copying a retro look anyway) seem a little more interesting.

Back in the day, getting your clothes from charity shops was considered seriously

embarrassing but, in recent years, the trend for clothing that is second hand (read vintage or retro) has become far more popular.

One of the best shops is Oxfam, which is successfully mining the lucrative cross-over between second hand and vintage with its Oxfam 'originals' section, where they specifically collect clothes that might appeal to the retro-trend seeker. With an overflowing vintage salebox, a new 'Eastern' section and a jeans corner, Oxfam has an impressively large stock. The walls are adorned with retro photos and prints, as well as their proud little disclaimer about Oxfam Originals - 'Many



Penelope, Sophie and Henrietta model pieces kindly loaned by *Expressions*, a vintage and retro clothing boutique at 35 Walmgate. The shop stocks a wide range of interesting and affordable men's and women's wear and some beautiful old fabrics. They offer a 10% discount for students so your granny wear won't break the bank.



of vintage clothes

of the items are originals from the 50s, 60s and beyond. They are not highstreet reproductions. You will not find anything like them elsewhere – they are truly unique!

Of course, the other brilliant thing about charity shops is the, er, charity bit. Not only are you getting choice garments for at least half their original price, but all the money is going to a good cause, leaving you with a warm-and-fuzzy feeling that's far preferable to the instant guilt of spending textbook money on an overpriced dress in Miss Selfridge. If you're going to fritter away your overdraft on clothes, then it may as well go to help someone who really needs it.

If you're too lazy to trawl round the charity shops, you might have been pleased to find the monthly vintage stall on campus. The friendly folk from retro clothes shop Expressions had a regular stall in Goodricke, offering a 10% discount for students on their specially sourced stock. Shop owners Bob and Jonty Davies are keen to establish a relationship with York students, recently providing the fabulous costumes for *Fame* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The campus stall is no more but check out their treasure trove of a shop on Walmgate. Sourcing clothes from America and Europe as well as hunting out the best in second-hand gear in Britain, Expressions has a wide selection of clothes for men and women and still offers that bank-balance friendly student discount. The stock is mostly one-offs and the Davies also do some in-house designs. If you fancy something that is truly unique, check out their 'quite wacky' skirts, made from cut up tea-towels – truly fulfilling their aim to bring 'creativity to the people'!

So what is the appeal of vintage clothing? For a lot of people, it's the unique nature of vintage clothes. It's nice to know that no-one else in Toffs will be wearing the same top as you. We all like to think our fashion taste is a little bit unique and rare retro finds can become a signature item that makes your look that bit more original. (Having said that, my friend does have the exact same, supposedly unique, vintage belt as me – mine raided from my mum's wardrobe, hers an e-bay purchase – what can you do?) Bob Davies, from Expressions, suggests that 'people like to be individual – to create their own identity instead of a corporate identity', and retro clothing can offer something a little bit different from your average high street purchase.

There's also the thrill of the chase. While there are some brilliant pieces in second-hand shops, there's usually plenty of truly hideous things to sift through first (most vile item spotted recently: high-waisted, tapered, neon pink and orange paisley sateen pantaloons. Nice). But this is all part of the appeal. It increases the sense of satisfaction when you discover a bargainous item hidden away. The whole shopping experience becomes an enjoyable rummage in a dressing up box, rather than just grabbing a jumper off a shelf like a tin of beans.

This hunting attitude can be taken further and for some, vintage clothing is all about labels. By being second-hand, but last millennium rather than last season, designer clothes can finally be within the student budget – a Valentino ball dress for £40 anyone? You never know what you might find, tucked away in the back of Help the Aged!

Retro clothing is also the antithesis of

quick, disposable fashion, where clothes are seen on the catwalk or a celebrity and cheap copies are in the major high street stores by the next week. Buy a cheap, currently fashionable outfit, and you'll probably have to throw it away next week because it will have fallen to pieces. By contrast, vintage clothing has stood the test of time. That I can still wear a pair of my grandmothers 1940s satin wedges, that my mother also wore when she was a student, says something about the enduring quality of really well made clothes that have been cared for.

Of course, there is a danger that you can find yourself becoming a bit of a vintage snob. There's a level of pride that comes with a really good find, and the knowledge that it's unique can lead to dangerously inflated levels of smugness. There is an undeniable satisfaction in being able to tell admirers of your handbag that no, they won't be able to get another one like it – it's genuine seventies.

However, the unique nature of vintage clothing and that whole personally put-

'There's undeniable satisfaction in telling admirers of your bag: no, they won't find one like it, it's genuine 70s'

together, second-hand style is increasingly becoming a very familiar look. 'Vintage' has become a fashion buzzword, and a plethora of style icons have embraced the look. Suddenly, a style that was individual, almost anti-fashion, is the norm – and unsurprisingly, fashion giant Topshop is all over it. Upstairs in York's branch, there is a vintage section, with an array of handbags and a few rails of sourced vintage items, as well as customised tees and dresses.

Somehow, this is just very wrong. The second-hand snob in me rears its ugly head – you don't go to Topshop for this stuff! It's about finding your own look, not having it handed to you in a branded Topshop bag. Plus their selection of retro clothing is as prescribed as the stuff on the regular racks. You can do the retro look, but only if you want the following – 80's polka dot skirts, cut off denim minis and oversized granny jumpers. They do have a pretty good selection of dresses – but at £40 a go I can't help but feel they have missed the point. Topshop takes the fun and originality out of retro clothes shopping, and they're seriously overcharging you for it.

So, if you can get the eclectic look without actually having to have any of your own style or creativity, by just going to a high street store and whacking it on the plastic rather than mooching round back street shops, market stalls or the back of your mum's wardrobe, what do you have to do to look original? Even if you know your top is a fantastic one off that you also customised, chances are it'll still look like it could have been mass-produced. Maybe the quest for originality is hopeless. Or maybe you just need to get more extreme – now what happened to those pantaloons . . .

The scientific briefing with **Luke Boulter**

A mechanical step for mankind?



They can walk, talk and carry a tray of coffee: the new generation of robotics is here, but how far do they live up to 1970's sci-fi predictions, are robots set to take over the world, or are we taking giant steps into mechanical servitude?

It is tricky at best to exist nowadays without having experienced robotics at some point, from the car you may drive, constructed on a robotic production line, to the antibiotics you take, cultured using a robotic system. It will, however, in the coming years and decades become increasingly obvious that robots walk amongst us. At present there are some 1.5million domestic robots. Known as Roomba and Scooba, these robots are about the size of a small dinner plate and will happily wheel around a room either vacuuming your carpet or mopping your floors. Okay, not quite the submissive android of TV, but the technology used by these robots is extraordinary, set them down on any piece of ground and they will survey the area by trial and error, creating a virtual map of the floor plan, next time the robot is set down it will adhere to this floor plan, 'knowing' where obstacles are and how to avoid them. These technologies are not just for the domestic situation, but are of benefit in bomb disposal and isolating the survivors of earthquakes.

There seems to be a notion that an effective robot must be human-like; should stand like us and act like us, in essence it should be us, but an us we can command and dominate. The problem with this theory is that we have evolved over hundreds of millions of years and that for each evolutionary 'success' many species have fallen along the wayside, but still we try to impersonate evolution by building humanly biased robots...and it must be said to some success. Honda's Asimo robot is wonderfully humanoid; it has flexible joints, doesn't seem to struggle when walking but has a gait that is regimented and plodding. Fortunately there is an answer to this, human legs work in a pendulum type way, there is very little muscular involvement once we are on the move, instead we allow gravity to do what it does best.

Based on this idea Tad McGeer of Simon Frasier University attempted to produce the whole walking step using what is a very nearly passive process. The Cornell walker uses passive walking strides more like a human than Asimo and uses up to 15 times less energy than its motorised counterpart. There are flaws in the human based idea. Passive walking only works on a consistent terrain; the robot couldn't really change from gravel to carpet without toppling over. Passive walkers cannot control their direction either, once one the move, the robot can't turn around and head somewhere else.

Overcoming cumbersome walking is one thing, but if a robot is really meant to be humanoid then it should be able to talk like one. Waseda Talker in Japan is one of the first robots to use

a mechanically synthesised voice. Compressed air is forced over a synthetic vocal tract and tongue, this coupled with a contortion on the mouth allows the robot to form sounds without resembling the BT talking clock. This technology is still in its infancy but if successful the long term implications are immense. Initially we would have robots that, when the robot brain catches up, have the potential to talk to us, but we would also have the means to allow people with damaged vocal chords to talk again. In the past 6 years scientists have managed to form all 50 Japanese speech sounds.

So robots can walk and talk, but do we really just want a mechanised Mrs. Haversham wandering darkly around college halls? Robots without hands lack the essential dexterity to perform all of the tasks required of them, so robotic limbs are a key area of research. Despite being massively complex, scientists at MIT have planned to have a robotic limb with the dexterity of a six year old child before 2020. The limb should be able to tie a shoe lace and turn a page without being programmed to do so. The robot will rely on over 150 sensors per finger and calculate the relative pressures and movements it is applying and combine these in order to achieve its goal.

The combined robotic idea will achieve a mechanistic humanoid, who can at least in theory walk, talk and act like us (providing that 'electronic brains' catch up with the rest of the machine). Despite all of this, robots will still be just that, a humanistic machine, how do you make a robot live? You give it an organic component...such as a slime mould!

A bright yellow slime mould has been put in the pilot seat of a six-legged robot. The slime (*Physarum polycephalum*), which naturally shies away from light, controls the robot's movement so that it too keeps out of light.

Klaus-Peter Zauner at the University of Southampton says the idea is to find simpler ways to control a robot's behaviour. The mould uses a network of tubules to sense its environment and decide how to respond to it.

Researchers grew slime in a star shape on top of a circuit and connected it via a computer, to the six-legged machine. Any light shone on sensors mounted on the robot were used to control light shone onto one of the six points of the circuit-mounted mould, each point corresponding to the limb of the robot. As the slime tried to get away from the light its movement was sensed by the circuit and used to control one of the robot's six legs. The robot then scabbled away from lights as a mechanical response of the mould.

Biology is already influencing the evolution of robots in other ways. Chris Melhuish at the Bristol Robotics Institute has developed robots that generate power by consuming flies, so at least our mechanical friends will prove worth while for one thing!

Ethical living for students

Ben Toone and Luke Boulter
explore the science behind ethical living and propose some first steps

It's easy to get caught up in the doom and gloom of man's folly with nature; the increasing risks and freak weather patterns from global warming, the destruction of natural habitats, pollution of the natural world and the extremes of desperate poverty. However, rather than wading through swathes of pessimism, a few minor changes could be all that's needed to change the world (albeit in a small way, one step at a time).

Small changes in the amount of electricity and gas we use, for example, could have an enormous collective impact. By turning down the thermostat one degree and turning off lights when they're not needed, we can all live a more energy efficient lifestyle. Turning appliances off from standby is also a good idea. Domestic appliances as a whole account for more than 30% of energy consumption and 12% of greenhouse emissions - an estimated 5% of which is caused by so-called 'vampire appliances' being left on standby. A television on standby, for example, still uses 85% of the energy that it would use if it were fully switched on.

It has been calculated that 50 litres of water can be saved if you shower rather than bath, with an additional 24 litres being saved by turning off the tap when you brush your teeth. You can also prevent 33% of water from being unnecessarily flushed down the toilet by putting a brick in the cistern. Saving water is particularly eco-friendly; water is probably the planet's most precious resource and all our water, including what we flush down the toilet, is fit to drink. Therefore, it is especially wasteful to over-use.

When buying food, the best option is to buy local and organic produce and thereby boycott intensive agriculture. Intensive agriculture, among other things, destroys natural biodiversity in its use of pesticides and pollutes river systems with fertilisers. However, the ultimate benefit of organic food is debatable, since intensive methods are probably needed to provide all the world's food. Nevertheless, the West vastly over-produces and so a reduction in intensive methods is still beneficial. Organic is an expensive option, so it may be best to buy one or two organic

products, by way of protest. Buying organic sugar, for example, won't break the bank and will help reduce the amount of intensively farmed sugar beet, which is one of the most intensively sprayed crops on the market.

Otherwise, simply buying local produce can make a huge difference; it cuts down on air miles (and thus pollution) and also puts money into local economies. The regular farmers' market, local greengrocer's or York's permanent market are all good places to buy locally sourced food. Supermarkets, on the other hand, sell fruit and vegetables which often come from far afield and even their local produce may have been transported many miles to be cleaned and packaged.

The veggie option might seem a bit extreme, so why not just cut down? Cut out meat from your usual campus eatery lunch, for instance. The Eat Less Meat campaign, run by Compassion in World Farming (CIWF.org.uk), points out that rearing cattle for a kilo of beef requires around 100,000 litres of water, whereas only 900 litres of water are needed to produce a kilo of wheat. By becoming a 'meat-reducer' you can help prevent the situation where, by 2050, global livestock will require the equivalent amount of land and water as 4 billion humans. Going veggie for a day can save money and present a culinary chal-

'Organic is an expensive option, so it may be best to buy one or two organic products, by way of protest; organic sugar, for example.'

lenge for the more adventurous amongst us. It is a good excuse to try new vegetables too, though remember to try and buy vegetables in season to avoid those food miles!

Vegetarian is best of course, and the ecological footprint (that is the amount of land required to sustain all our needs) of vegetarians who eat fish ('piscerians') is not much lower than that for meat eaters. The world requires



Eating organic, local food reduces both air miles and intensive farming

2.3 hectares per person to support current trends but only 1.5 hectares per person of productive land is available for consumption, resulting in habitat destruction and agricultural degradation.

Most of the resources being consumed are, of course, consumed by the West (the wealthiest 20% consume 83% of the world's resources) so it makes sense for us in the United Kingdom to cut back. There are also plenty of fairtrade items sold on campus now that York has achieved its official 'fairtrade university' status, and Tesco is encroaching on the market that the Co-op has held for some time. If you want to carry on with the local shopping theme (keeping money within local businesses rather than out to large multi-corporate businesses) then there are plenty of local fairtrade sellers as well as Oxfam shops which provide a wide range of fairtrade products. Not only are they often of a superior quality, but also the amount going to farmers is set at a fair price which doesn't fluctuate with market prices.

Do you take the lazy option to travel? As we all know, cycling or walking is a healthier option than driving and reduces car emissions. You might justify a quick car journey or bus ride in York by saying that it's not far, but even fairly short distances in York are often jammed full of congestion problems, with constant stopping and starting leading to a greater amount of emissions.

Wasting time on the campus computers instead of doing work? Why not use that time by giving to charity, but for free! There's a multitude of one click sites which automatically give money to charity in return for viewing the sponsors' ads. In the space of any 20 minutes you could save 73 feet of rainforest habitat, donate money to act against cancer or even to improve child literacy. www.ecologyfund.com is a good start for various environmental donations, and care2 and thehungersite.com for

various other beneficiaries.

If you're getting enthusiastic by now and really want to push the charity boat out, your enthusiasm may happen to coincide with one of various organisations' volunteer days. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Conservation Volunteers, Millennium Volunteers and Student Action all have such schemes.

If you're thinking of making a more long term environmental impact, though, rather than participating in a one-off scheme, why not buy clothes which are made to last? The textile industry has a huge impact; although cotton is not the world's largest crop, it uses 25% of all the world's agrochemicals, and 100 litres of water per kilo of textile. Man-made chemicals are not much better, with poisonous azo-dyes finding their way into water systems and dioxins escaping into the atmosphere. With this in mind, the old-fashioned concepts of 'make do and mend' and 'Sunday best' are very green. If you are a slave to fashion this prospect may seem daunting, if not impossible. However, try trawling through charity shops for vintage bargains and customising old clothes. Not only will this support charities, but it will save you a lot of money too.

The opportunities for ethical living are endless, both in number and in scope. If you start small now, you may want to aim bigger in a few years time - an allotment, perhaps, with homemade compost and your own seasonal vegetables, or maybe even a green career, such as recycling officer, environmental consultant, or fairtrade/organic buyer? But that's quite a leap from turning the occasional light off.

Useful web-links

www.sustainweb.org (seasonality)

www.allotment.uk.com

www.soilassociation.org



The world's rudest word

Nan Flory examines the role of the most infamous and taboo word in the English language. Or tried to until the Evening Press took legal advice, and decided we weren't able to print the full uncensored word

The word of the moment is currently c***. One need only refer to the March edition of Vogue and its three-page, Deborah Orr feature on it for confirmation. On campus, the Drama Barn production of *Electra* prominently featured the word and then there is the recent revelation (it was news to me, at least) that innocent little Grape Lane, in all its El Piano, vegetarian glory, used to be called Grope C*** Lane - the red light district apparently. It is a word that everybody needs to tackle at some point or another.

I remember the first time I heard the word 'c***' or at least was introduced to its existence. My older sister, 11 years my senior, home from university, was discussing swearing. She was saying how she liked it as it was a refreshing, cathartic thing to do when she was pissed off. An aggressive release, but not towards another person, just harmlessly expressing anger, like punching walls without the pain. But, she said, 'I don't much use the c-word, that really means something.' I had no idea what this c-word was, ran through my stock of rude words to no avail. Can't be c**p or c**k, the c-word turned into a mystical holy grail of adult meaning. I was waiting to graduate from f*** and s*** and the like on to the big C. Soon, (maybe I watched *Trainspotting*?) I identified the next three letters. I'm sure I'd probably heard the word before, but without my sister's signposting the seriousness of the syllable, I'd never taken any notice of it. Now, when it came up in films or books, I felt a certain reverence - they're REALLY being rude right now. I still didn't know what it actually meant, however, I just developed an awareness of its status as the rudest word around.

Now, of course, I am aware of c***, not only as a swear word, but also as a word for ladies' private parts. A prude at heart, personally, I'm not a user. I don't really say c*** much at all. I sort of wish I did, but it's a very intimidating word. Using it in any manner is a bold action which immediately draws attention to the speaker - for some, it is a little too hot to handle. I do appreciate the linguistic power 'c***' contains, I'm just not confident enough to wield it.

Separated from what it signifies - female genitalia - the fact that such a weighty word exists is useful. Possibly my favourite line from a movie ever is "Monty, you terrible c***" in the cliché student cult classic, *Withnail and I*. The usage there arises out of fear; Withnail is about to wet himself because he thinks he's going to be murdered. His anger and relief when he realises he isn't is so great he has to go beyond regular abuse. The strongest term society can provide him with is 'c***', so he uses it - totally apolitically, just because it is the only word with enough status to be capable of expressing his feelings. C***'s existence is also a good backdrop to more casual insults - yes I called you a d***head, but I didn't call you a c*** now, did I - like a sort of swearer's safety net which prevents all out war. A tacit agreement exists in all brawls - you haven't crossed the line until you've called someone a cunt. The problem with c***, however, is that this power is so intimately tied up with its meaning.

C***'s etymology is complex and contested. It is suggested that the word comes from various words for woman, for example the Arabic 'khunt', the Nostratic 'kuni' ('woman'), and the Irish 'cuint'. However, an Indo-European word, 'skeu', which means 'to conceal' may also be related. Then there are similarities with the words for female animals - ku, Frisian for cow - with the Roman for vase, 'cucuteni', or the Middle English 'cunne', knowledge.

Whatever its origins, today it definitely means vagina (just being on the safe side). Feminists' issues with their definitively feminine bits being the most powerful insult in the English language are obvious. Yes, men's privates get taken in vain too - d***, c***, p*** etc - but the issue is that those terms are pretty throw away as insults. C*** is a much

bigger deal. It does seem a little unfair; why are c***s so much worse than c**ks?

As an enlightened member of society, I think we have to begin taking a stand. We can't just throw it around like we do most other derogatory slang. If you do- if you're a c*** user- you have to be pretty sure of the company you're in before you launch it into general banter. When 'c***' enters an exchange as more than just a signifier, you have to reassess your conversational founda-

'Why are c***s so much worse than c**ks?'

tions. It's like you're moving into uncharted territory and you have to be sure everyone is willing to go with you before you try and make the move. Otherwise, it can get messy. Even if you are a tongue-in-cheek c*** artist, if the people around you aren't on the same wavelength (as I have found out to Nouse's detriment) you can either horrify them with your rudeness, or, perhaps more damagingly, find yourself locked in an ideological battle about whether c*** should ever be used as an insult at all.

Germaine Greer used to campaign for the reclaiming of 'c***' in much the same way as the gay community did with 'dyke' and 'queer'. Greer encouraged women to use the word as the standard term for vagina, but has since changed her tune. She now thinks that c*** should be allowed to maintain its power; having c*** be the strongest word in English writes female authority into the language. In the end, c***s are rather essential to life itself - perhaps this is where the word's power originally stems from.

Eve Ensler, author of the *Vagina Monologues* is also an advocate of female ownership of the word c***. Her work, recently performed on campus in honour of International Women's Day, includes an orgasmic celebration of the sexiness of c***s - both the things themselves and the sound of the word. She wants women to improve their relationships with c***s and use their power rather than be scared of them.

In their own quest to reclaim 'c***', some friends went to Argos to try and get necklaces made with c*** pendants - like the 'Carrie' one in *Sex and the City*, but with cunt on it instead. The idea being that by confronting the world with a bold, glitzy love of the word and its literal meaning, its threat to femininity is removed. Argos refused to make them, claiming the service only covered proper names. Disappointing feminist values there, but seemingly a widely held view. There is other merchandise of empowerment on offer, however. A quick search on Amazon.com comes up with the c*** colouring book - apparently you can even make them into puppets.

Another way of tackling the issue is to bring it down to the same level as other rude words. Remove the added kick it has by using it all the time, not saving it up for when you really want to hit out. If c*** becomes only as insulting as d**k or even b**b then the issue is solved. Janet Street-Porter is an advocate of this method, using the word to describe pretty much everything and everyone at some point in time. Taking the secrecy and taboo away from c***, sterilising the whispered 'c-word' and making its power a manifestation of pure femininity is a much more constructive use of its linguistic stature. Instead of trying to separate it from its literal meaning, the two should embrace and dispell any negative connotations.

We shall have to find some other really, really insulting word, something totally asexual perhaps, something which doesn't mean anything at all; a sort of guttural noise that you can't even spell. C***'s power should be put to good use, not abused by violent football hooligans. Maybe we should introduce some sort of qualification, a test you have to pass before you can use the word.



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Rebecca Gower



Tennis and cricket: the kings of sport



A chubby nose and charming smile means Roger Federer can get away with crying like a little girl.

Ah, the Six Nations rugby championship. Who to support? Well, if you think along the same boring lines as my brother, then I ought to be backing England. He rang me the other day, distraught, after they had lost. "But... you support Scotland, don't you?" I said, confused. This was apparently the wrong response, but I thought it was fair enough: we've lived there for the past nine years, and recently, he's started to affect a Scottish accent. But in rugby, it would seem, Matthew is firmly on the side of the English.

He's just not open-minded enough. I mean, for me, it's not a question of England or Scotland: I reckon I would have valid reasons for supporting any of the competing teams. France, for example. I've been learning French since I was seven, and anyway, the French team have a rather fine-looking player called Dmitri. Then, my grandmother is half Welsh, so I have loyalties there; and I went to Ireland once, and I really liked it. And as for Italy, well they're undoubtedly the worst team around, so I have that inevitable sympathy for the underdog.

Not that I'm particularly bothered about rugby. There's too much mud involved, the points system is overly complicated, and I've honestly never understood people who rave about Jonny Wilkinson. I'm sure that he's a great sportsman, and a lovely person; but he comes across as criminally boring, and his neck is too big. As for that other great supposed heart throb of the game, Gavin Henson, if orange skin and alarming hair are your idea of attractiveness, then great. He's not exactly a laugh-a-minute kind of person, either: after Wales lost to Ireland, he declared that he felt "pretty depressed", which I can understand, but he followed this up by describing himself as "suicidal". It's good to see he's got things in perspective.

I do actually enjoy watching other sports, though. Football's okay, though people get much too upset about it. When England

were beaten by France in their first match of Euro 2004, David Beckham cried, and all of the commentators afterwards ranted about how unfair it was. I watched the match, and, as far as I could tell, it wasn't unfair at all: France scored two goals, England one, so England lost. That's just the nature of the sport, surely. When England lost to Portugal in the quarter-finals, all of my male friends were distraught ("We could have gone all the way" was a recurring comment in conversation afterwards), and the referee, Urs Meier, received death threats and over sixteen thousand abusive e-mails from English fans. That all rather put me off the idea of supporting the English team. When the World Cup rolls around, I'm just going to pick as obscure and unheralded a team as possible, and root for them. It would have worked at Euro 2004.

The real problem with rugby and football is that the matches don't go on for long enough. I prefer watching tennis, where they can take hours, and where the crowd are less likely to shout mindless abuse at the players. I can't convey to you how much I love Wimbledon, which unfailingly takes over two weeks of my life every summer. There's just so much human drama. Last year, for instance, there was pure soap opera: Lleyton Hewitt played with

his pregnant fiancée Rebecca Cartwright (Hayley from *Home and Away*) looking on, while Kim Clijsters, to whom Hewitt had been engaged until only nine months previously, was on her own. Roger Federer won for the third time, and cried for the third time (and for some reason – maybe just because he's got a big nose, and a lovely smile – it's so much more forgivable than Beckham's weeping), and Venus Williams beat Lindsay Davenport in the longest women's final of all time.

I used to cheer Henman on at Wimbledon. Yes, it was partly because he was British, but more because he wanted to win so badly and yet, in four quarter-finals and four agonising semi-finals, he never quite managed it. Now,

though, I'll support anyone. I like Andy Murray, because he always pre-empts humiliation by saying that his opponent is going to beat him (that is the kind of thing I'd do, though unlike him, I'd always lose); but he's distressingly monotone: you'd never be able to tell anything about what he's feeling from the sound of his voice. My favourite, though, is undoubtedly Marat Safin, a Russian who gets into the game to such an extent that he's continually breaking rackets.

The best sport that there is, of course, is cricket (and, yes, I say that as someone who only really started to care last summer). It lasts for days on end, there are tea breaks involved, and the players are sweetly polite to each other a

lot of the time. The likelihood of any of the umpires receiving death threats is minimal; if anyone actually swears, there's a massive commotion about it, and the offender is normally fined. And, while I think that supporting a team on the basis of nationality is both arbitrary and pointless, and can cause real xenophobia, nevertheless, I am an England supporter.

The Ashes series was awful to watch, because you never knew how things were going to turn out: Australia couldn't believe they were losing, and England couldn't believe they were winning. That's what made it so compelling, and that's why they made such a meal of every Test. And yet, at the end of it all, we won. Oh, it was brilliant. Really, all sport should be like that.

Next big thing? Only if they learn some manners

Traditionally, award ceremonies are terribly boring affairs, consisting as they do of the losers simpering (with varying degrees of graciousness) that it's an honour just to be nominated, and the winners rambling on about the honour of being chosen from such a great selection of nominees.

Good to see, therefore, that the Arctic Monkeys, Britain's most exciting musicians (or so I'm reliably informed), are bucking the trend. Accepting the NME award

for Best British Band, the lead singer, Alex Turner, asked, "Who else was going to be the best British band at the moment?"

I'm sorry, did I say "good"? I meant, of course, "how obnoxious". I find false modesty as irritating as the next person, but out-and-out arrogance is just plain distasteful. (Yes, it may be that Turner was simply making the point that, having been glorified to such an extent by the musical press, it was inevitable that they would win; but if that's what he meant, then he

didn't make it all too clear. He sounded more like a man who believed all the hype.) I'm never going to win any awards, so I can't know for certain, but I do believe that it is possible to give an acceptance speech that is neither insincerely humble nor a withering assessment of fellow nominees.

Anyway, more to the point, why was Turner so self-satisfied? "We did the triple", he declared, as if the NME awards were the very pinnacle of the musical calendar. Well, let's keep in mind the fact

that Pete Doherty was named 'Sexiest Man' at the same event; yes, Pete Doherty, he of the drug taking, the pasty face and the disturbingly skinny legs. ("He probably smells", said one of my housemates helpfully.) How he won, unless it was meant ironically, is beyond me, though I suppose that going out with Kate Moss must somehow make you more attractive. However it happened, it seems to me that this farcical award rather devalues what the Arctic Monkeys won.

Room for the night? The hidden homeless

Despite the affluence of York, shelters for those without a bed for the night are struggling to cope, as **Bobby Higson** discovered whilst volunteering

If asked to list the first images that come to mind when thinking about York, it's fair to say poverty, desperation and substance misuse are not top of the list. Instead, we think of a prosperous tourist destination, an affluent student population and the postcard-picturesque streets and lanes, which we students flit through day to day. But beneath the gothic towers of the Minster, the greenery of the campus fields and the china teacup charm of Betty's, there exists a pertinent lack of affordable housing for many people; a problem which in many instances is exacerbated, if not begun by, the issues of mental health, domestic violence, irreconcilable family breakdown and substance addiction.

The situation in York for the homeless today remains precarious. The City of York Council's Homelessness Review and Strategy points towards part of the problem: excess demand for affordable accommodation, a thriving higher education sector and rising land and property prices. In addition to this, a projected population growth of 21% between 1996 and 2021 assures us that homelessness is a serious issue to be tackled and will continue to be in the future. In 2004/2005, 1,489 homeless presentations were made to the council with an acceptance rate of 28%.

But government statistics do not reveal the true extent of the problem. There are also the so-called 'hidden homeless' - those who are not yet included in government statistics because they haven't made contact with the council. The Government only collects statistics on those people who have applied to local authorities for help, which tend to be families with children and others considered to be especially vulnerable. Official figures, therefore, do not include overall statistics on the number of single homeless people. The levels of homeless single people and childless couples is continually under-recognised and so remains 'hidden' - 'hidden' because friends and families of members of this group are more likely to give them food and a bed for the night. In an attempt to identify the scale of the problem, the charity Crisis has suggested that there are 400,000 single homeless people in England.

So who are the homeless in York? Though there are some who may have been on the harsh end of insurmountable rent and mortgage arrears, the sad fact is the majority comprise those whose circumstances are of a far graver severity - young offenders, care leavers, ex-offenders, those leaving institutions or teenage parents with nowhere to go. The second most common reason for homelessness in York involves the breakdown of relationships, a majority of which comes about as a result of domestic violence. Though York has been successful in keeping the number of people sleeping on the streets down, there remains huge challenges in the anticipated increase in homelessness figures; a challenge York City



'The streets reveal the harsh realities beyond the government figures and council literature'

Council have acknowledged and are determined to fight.

But as I walk through the streets of York, covered in snow and bitterly cold, I come across one homeless man who reveals the harsh realities beyond the government figures and council literature. As the cars speed past, spitting sludge onto the blanket covering his legs, Graham talks about his situation.

"I've been homeless for fourteen months, yet the council won't recognise me as homeless and so I can't get help." But why is this, I ask. "I dunno," he says. "It's fucking stupid. I've got three kids here in York, I've had a council house, I was born in Fulford hospital yet the council won't recognise me as homeless." He speaks with an indignant and angry tone; a product of more than a year of living on the streets and hand to mouth. Why the council won't recognise him, or can't recognise him, he doesn't say. However, situations such as Graham's affirm the problem of homelessness that won't register on official figures. I ask him whether York is doing enough to re-house the homeless, and his answer is clear: "No. No way." I offer him some soup and tea and ask what he thinks about the work of the night shelters that offer a bed for the night: "Yeah they help," he reflects, "but they're always full. Always turning people away. There just isn't enough room." It's a desperate situation and as I leave him, the weather turns slightly colder. Tourists flock past, cameras poised at the Minster.

He is not alone in being hidden from the statistics. The numbers only go so far. Beneath



Youths under 18 make up a large proportion of the homeless population, and many of them are young offenders or have grown up in care centres. Photo: Ally Carmichael

the economics, volunteers like myself see the human face of homelessness issues - often, the harsh realities of spiralling patterns of drink, drugs, domestic violence and depression. It's the statistics regarding young homeless people that really drive the point home. Government figures show that a significant proportion of young homeless people are young offenders or care leavers. In the period of 2004/2005, the second biggest category of priority needs acceptances of 'homeless households' were sixteen and seventeen year olds and vulnerable young people. The fact that some sixteen year olds have nowhere to live, don't know where their next meal is coming from and have no-one to depend on is an incredibly unsettling truth, especially in modern Britain.

The situation does not bode well given the statistics regarding the levels of education of the homeless. Compared to the general population, homeless people are less likely to have acquired educational or vocational qualifications. Crisis indicates that around 30% to 50% of homeless people are reported to have no qualifications. According to a 2001 review for Scottish Homes of life skills training for homeless people, "many homeless people do not have the basic literacy and numeracy skills

required to deal with day-to-day living". The undertaking of re-housing and resettlement programmes are likely to be more of an arduous task, given this stubborn disparity in literacy and numeracy levels. Attempting to resettle someone into the community with a lack of a basic education is therefore an uphill struggle.

There are groups in York that do work tirelessly against the tide of homelessness, such as the Peasholme Resettlement Centre in Stonebow, Baseline, the Salvation Army and the Arclight Shelter on Leeman Road, whether it is trying to re-house somebody or merely providing them with a bowl of hot soup and a bed for the night. Such organisations desperately need more help, and are fraught with problems of excess demand over supply. Though the Arclight shelter has been operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year since December 2003, beds are just in too short supply.

Talking to the staff at the Arclight revealed some of the problems. Though they can offer someone a bed for the night and a hot meal, there just isn't enough room for everyone. The work of Arclight thrives on the hard work of a dedicated staff and group of volun-

teers, but with only 42 beds to offer, people are often turned away back into the streets from which they've come. Staff can only provide them with some food - a few sandwiches

'Night shelters need more help and suffer problems of excess demand over supply'

maybe to see them through the night. The current building is cramped and does not meet hostel inspectorate standards and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) considers the living conditions to be amongst the worst in the country.

However, the ODPM suggests that the problem of national homelessness is getting better and is encouraged by recent findings. The 2005 rough-sleeping estimate shows 459 people were sleeping rough in England on any single night, while in 1998 there were 1,850 rough sleepers on the streets on any single

night. The Government trumpets the success of this reduction as a result of effective partnership between local authorities, voluntary sector agencies and others.

In recent months though, the situation in York for hostels hasn't been so rosy. Plans for the creation of a new Arclight hostel and relocation to the former Shipton Street School were halted because of opposition from nearby residents with worries of the levels of noise and crime that such a move would entail. Arclight was eventually forced to drop the proposed move and, because of the delay, lost £750,000 of the £2.58 million of Government funding allocated to the proposed project. Furthermore, though the number of rough sleepers may have declined, the long-term 'entrenched' rough sleepers - those with drug or alcohol problems - have become proportionately more significant.

Though York City Council has met national targets on cutting numbers, there remains a significant challenge in the prevention of a new generation of rough sleepers. In attempting to rebuild the lives of those made homeless, the maintenance of suitable and stable accommodation can be troublesome. Tragically, some will simply pursue the cyclical



The Arclight night shelter can only offer 42 beds each night. Photo: Ally Carmichael

Charities in York: how you can get involved

Peasholme Charity
18 The Stonebow, York, (01904) 627228

The Peasholme Centre is a Charitable Company. Founded in 1988, it provides crisis and resettlement services to single homeless people. The Peasholme Centre Charity enables individuals to access accommodation for their needs.

The Salvation Army
York Corps, Gillygate, (01904) 630470

A charity and social services organisation offering a variety of programmes including soup runs, breakfast clubs, evening support groups (emotional, spiritual and physical), provision of food and clothing, and advice and referral.

You can also contact Ben Pickett, YUSU Student Action Officer, on studentaction@yusu.org or extension 3133 for more information.

Women's Aid (York)
PO Box 457, York, YO1 9YJ
Refuge (01904) 646630, Outreach (01904) 646036

Provides accommodation, advice and support for women and their children escaping physical and/or emotional violence.

Arclight Foundation
Bullnose Building, Leeman Road, (01904) 630500

Arclight works closely with York City Council, The Peasholme Charity and The Salvation Army as a key player in the delivery of York Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies. A night shelter, providing food and beds.

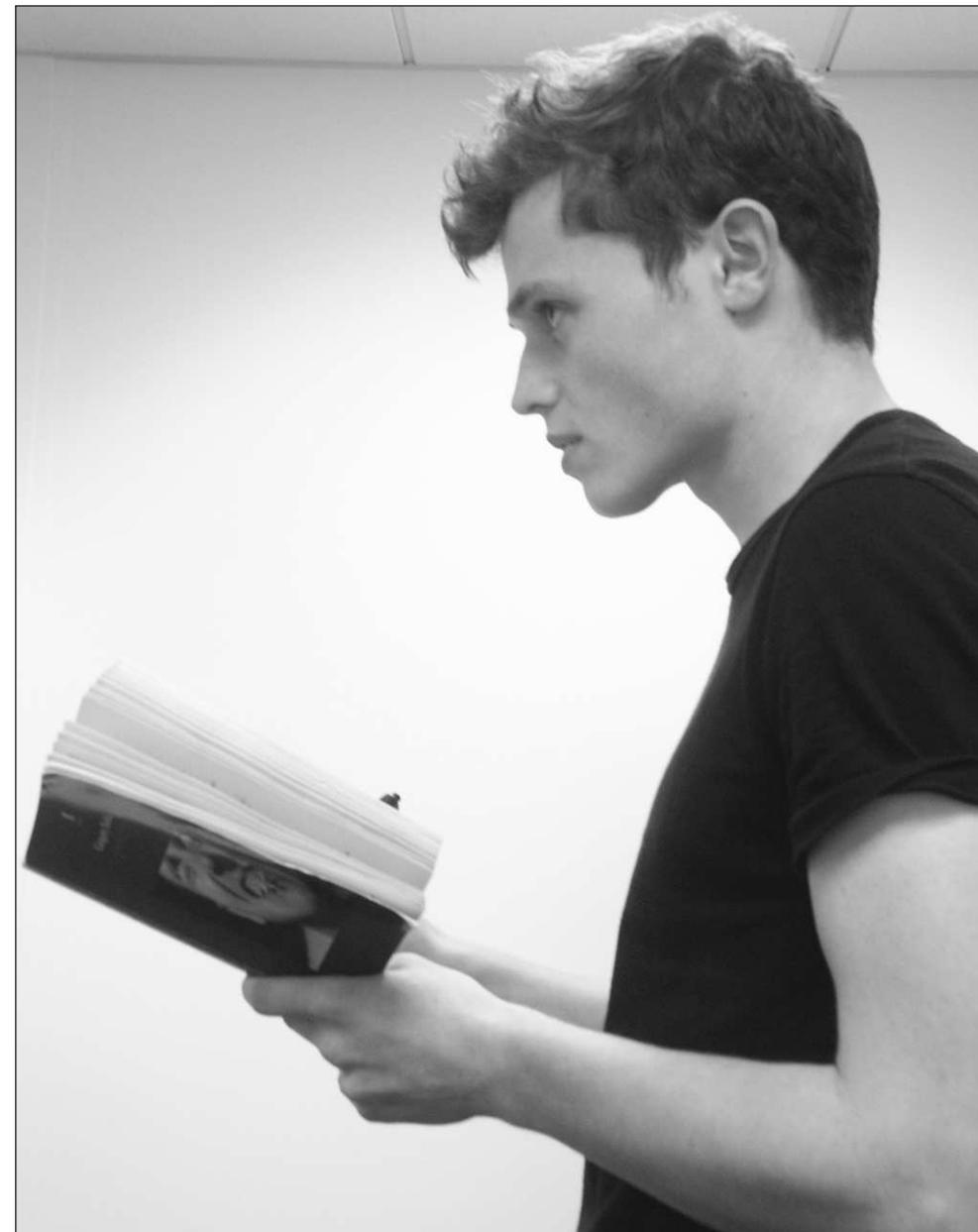
path of rehabilitation and the subsequent falling into old habits - as one worker put it, "to be clean, yet to be back on the gear in a matter of months." It's a sad fact that many people who have been resettled, provided with housing, merely end up back at shelters such as these, unable to hold down a job and unable to silence their addictions.

Student worries of debt and fees appear to be battered into insignificance. Though we may have anxieties about our finances as students, watching our loaned pennies along the way, let us remember that at least we have somewhere to go home to. In a city of affluence and a nation of rising living standards, it

seems starkly disconcerting that homelessness remains rife. So, what can we, as students, do to help? Well, whether it's donating to homeless charities, wandering over to the Student Action office to volunteer or putting our hands in our pockets to buy a Big Issue, we are doing something. Surely, it's time we raised greater awareness of the problem here in York and engaged practically, helping where we can. Should accident of birth or circumstance have dictated otherwise, it could have been us climbing into the bunk bed of a shelter tonight and it could have been us with our hands stretched through the hatch of a soup kitchen. Let's be grateful it's not.

Gagarin Way is going to Scarborough

Nan Flory spoke to Will Bowry about his production of Gregory Burke's *Gagarin Way*, set to be performed at the prestigious National Student Drama Festival this coming April



Will Bowry gets serious during rehearsals for the Scarborough performance.

The National Student Drama Festival, or NSDF, is the most prestigious student theatre showcase in Britain. Held annually in Scarborough and now in its 51st year, the week long festival is an opportunity for students to share their work with their peers and with an illustrious

audience of theatre practitioners who, almost more importantly, also lead workshops and discussions with attendees. Getting selected, or even short-listed, to perform in Scarborough this April is a great and rare honour, with 120 productions from various educational institutions across the country

vying for a place. This year the University of York made the cut with Will Bowry's production of Gregory Burke's play, *Gagarin Way* - one of just twelve shows set to be performed, which will be playing at the Ocean Room from the 1st until the 7th of April. The venue is purpose built and has a capacity over three times that of the Drama Barn - a chance to experience working in a more professional setting than the University can offer.

Any production which is predominantly a student work can enter the festival, for a fee of £95. If selected, they must also pay all their own expenses, including travel, accommodation and subscription tickets. The money is well spent, however, when you look at what's on offer during the week. Past festivals have seen the likes of Timothy West, Michael Billington, John Godber and Henry Godman in Scarborough to give talks and guide workshops. The chance to have such prominent industry names see and discuss students' productions is obviously valuable, as is the networking that takes place within the student drama community. In addition, the Times runs a feature spread on the festival, opening the student productions up to a type of national exposure which would never usually be available. A £99 (concessions) or £135 (adult) subscription ticket enables any member of the public to attend all shows, workshops and speeches; alternatively, you can buy tickets for individual events. Tickets are available now, with details of how to get them provided on the website, www.nsd.org.uk.

Gagarin Way follows two frustrated factory workers, Eddie and Gary, who turn anarchist and kidnap a visiting company executive, eventually murdering him, in order to make a statement against the capitalist system they are trapped in. Unfortunately for their polemic, the executive they kidnap, Frank, turns out to be as much a servant of capitalism as they are, rather than a representative of oppression. Burke stresses this point with the revelation that Frank comes from the same tiny, left-wing mining town of Lumphinanns, Fife, as his idealist captors. Eddie and Gary's action becomes impotent and brutalised as we see that bucking against those above you in capitalism's hierarchy will get you nowhere. Eddie dresses up his actions with French philosophy but ultimately he commits a cold-blooded murder. The play heightens our awareness of how con-

structed the political world is, and how dangerous it can be to act on behalf of unfiltered principles, rather than on a case by case basis.

Director Will Bowry explained that what originally interested him about *Gagarin Way* was the fact that, since its debut in August of 2001 at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the events of September 11th instantly dated the play and transformed its message. Bowry says "any revival of the play, must try to make a reappraisal of the idea of the 'powerless individual.'" He explains that the terrorist actions against the US, by changing the political environment from which audiences approach the play, have 'subvert[ed] [Eddie and Gary's] actions into terrorism, which I

'The NSDF offers the chance to have industry names see and discuss students' work'

don't believe was the playwright's initial intention'. This awareness of the added complexity the progress of history has given Burke's play, without any changes to the text itself, has not gone unnoted by NSDF judges. *Gagarin Way* is the only production out of the twelve playing Scarborough which is a revival of an already existing text; the other eleven are all original writing.

The play was performed in the Drama Barn in week 5 of the Autumn Term. Amongst the audience was Laurie Sansom, lately appointed Artistic Director of Northampton's Royal and Derngate theatres. He assessed the play, (the NSDF provides feedback for all the productions their representatives see, regardless of whether they qualify for the Scarborough event or not) which was then discussed by a panel of judges who deemed it suitable for performance at the festival itself. The four strong male cast is made up of Ed Watson, Tom Hunt, John Hoyle and Nick Payne. Naomi Glass is producing and Katie Kelly is stage managing, with Chris Lewis as technical director.

Note these guy's names, you never know, one day you might be trying to convince people you knew them before they were famous.

Johan Carlin presents: The Ultimate Pizza

Week 10 is here, and let's face it, you have nothing to do. You have called all your mates from back home, you have packed your bags, and you have now resorted to reading Nouse. Time to spend an afternoon making pizza! There is a fair bit of effort involved, but the end result will be miles beyond anything the local takeaways can manage, and at a fraction of the cost.

The dough

1 x 7g sachet of dry yeast
400 ml water
1200 ml plain flour
1 tablespoon of salt
2 tablespoons of olive oil

Mix warm and cold tap water until you end up with something that is finger-warm (37° C), and pour it into a cook-pot (or a mixing bowl, if you have such luxuries). Add the yeast, salt and olive oil. Stir, before adding most, but not all, of the flour. Use a sturdy spoon to mix, and poke at the dough with your finger. If the dough sticks, you need more flour. If the dough is falling apart and crumbling, you need more water. Once your dough is cohesive and flexible, yet not sticky, cover it with a damp tea towel and let it rise for an hour. Meanwhile, let's start the sauce.

The sauce

1 tin of crushed tomatoes
1 healthy squeeze of tomato puree
2 cloves of garlic
2 teaspoons of honey
A drop of red wine

1 teaspoon of thyme
1 teaspoon of oregano
olive oil
salt and pepper

Start out by chopping the garlic finely. Heat up some olive oil in a cook-pot and add the garlic. Let it sizzle for half a minute before adding all the remaining ingredients. Bring down the heat to low and let it simmer until the dough has finished rising.

Toppings

I have two suggestions as to what toppings to put on your pizza. Firstly: broccoli (boil for 2 minutes first), red pepper pesto, mushrooms, and mozzarella. Another pizza idea is one topped with black olives, mushrooms, tomato slices, and mozzarella. But use whatever you like! As a general piece of advice, try not

to get greedy: don't use more than 2 or 3 toppings per pizza, and don't cover the pizza completely, or the crust won't cook properly. Also, don't cut corners with the cheese. Cheddar has no place on a pizza.

Assembling the pizza

When the dough has finished rising, chop it into two equal chunks to make thick-crust pizzas, or three parts to make thin-crust pizzas. You should have finished that wine bottle you had to open for the sauce by now, and it will now make an excellent makeshift rolling pin. Mangle each chunk out into a roughly rectangular shape. Make sure you oil the pans lightly before putting in the dough. Add the sauce, topping, and cheese on. Bake each pizza at 225° for 10-15 minutes if you are using a thin crust, or for 15-20 minutes at 200° if you are using a thick crust.

My secret life as a Viking

For one week every year the Vikings return to York, and as **Adam Sloan** explains, provide a spectacle enough to make a bearded man cry

Living in York, it is almost impossible to escape the city's ancient, and sometimes bloody, history. This takes on a whole new meaning for one week in February where history buffs like myself break out the chain-mail and crack open the mead for the week long Jorvik Viking Festival, characterised by feasting, fighting, dancing and drinking in the manner of those fierce Scandinavian raiders from across the North sea.

A love of history can take on many forms. Some may read the odd book about Hitler or tune in to Tony Robinson and *Time Team* on occasion, and some poor souls even choose to study it for a degree. However since my arrival in York (unfortunately not in a longboat), I have become involved more literally in history and been transformed into a 'Medieval Re-enactor'.

Now there are many stereotypes that come with that label, most of them thanks to *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. However I would like to re-assure you that during the week we are indeed ordinary and everyday members of society. We sit next to you in seminars and possibly even take some of your lectures. You might think the estate agent that sorted you out with that house down at Sinclair Properties is dull and uninteresting, but come the weekend he could be just as easily marching into battle dressed as a fierce Viking, side by side with hundreds of other battle hungry warriors who are also ready to transport themselves back to a time of honour, heraldry, and when you weren't frowned upon for having a beard.

Viking festival week allows all of us like-minded people to show our true colours. Throughout the week there are period mar-

kets and historic walks, taking in the city's many Viking treasures. However it is the final Saturday of the festival that we get our main event, the longboats arrive down the River Ouse and the stage is set for the great battle, the evening finale that everybody has come to see.

Each year of the Viking Festival, of which this is the 20th, a different tale gets re-enacted from a period of our Viking past. This time our tale took us back to 939 A.D. and the royal wedding of Princess Edith to King Sihtric. On the afternoon of Saturday, 25th February 2006 (or 939, depending on how into it you were getting), there was a re-enactment of a battle waged by Vikings opposed to the marriage. Hardened warriors in armour and chain mail marched through York, spears aloft, and entered the battlefield to the roaring cheers of the crowd that had assembled to witness the spectacle. Fighting was fierce and all we could hear was the sound of swords hitting shields and armour.

After the battle, the wedding was allowed to go ahead in the atmospheric candle light of York Minster. The full ambience of a candle-lit gothic cathedral created the mood that everyone attending was hoping for. It was definitely unlike any wedding I had ever previously been to, partially because of the costumes and partially because both the bride and groom had died over 1,000 years ago.

As the festival drew to a close, I even saw a glint in the eye of the large bearded fellow sitting a couple of seats away from me as everyone left to exchange their armour for business suits, and their swords for laptops, until the next great call from the battle field when the Vikings come marching again.

The Jorvik Viking Festival culminates in a day of costumed re-enactment.
Photos: Adam Sloan



Oscar winners: who got one?

As the brightest night of the Hollywood calendar ends for another year, the main awards came as no surprise, except for one major exception



Crash, Best Picture

The biggest and only surprise at this year's Academy Awards was that a low-budget, low-intake film about racism won Best Picture over a low-budget, low-intake film about gay shepherds which for some reason had the entire U.S.A. talking about gay cowboys. The latter had been named best film of the year at a wide range of ceremonies, from the Baftas to the Golden Globes and the Independent Spirit Awards. *Brokeback Mountain*, like Philip Seymour Hoffman, was going to win the Oscar all the way.

Come to think of it, all of the nominees this year were of this genre except *Capote* (which is why it didn't win Best Picture): *Good Night*, and *Good Luck*, George Clooney's television parable, went home empty-handed, as did *Munich*. Steven Spielberg's latest outing generated some mild outrage for its relativisation of Israel's revenge strategy following the 1972 Olympic massacre, but the general consensus was that the *Master* is well taken care of, Oscar-wise.

It doesn't matter that *Brokeback Mountain* lost to *Crash*, deservedly or no; Ang Lee won Best Director, after all. The Academy tries, at least, to breathe of its own accord. They are not, after all, critics, and neither film left without deserved reward.

Hoffman was so widely tipped for victory for his performance as effete celebrity author Truman Capote that it seemed written in the stars. The fabled 'Oscar Buzz' had reached a tumultuous fervour for him months before the ceremony itself and from the moment *Capote* was released in America, the groundswell of support began on websites and public forums like the IMDB. Critics have consistently raved about Hoffman's performance, heaping compliments at his feet, and proclaiming him as dazzling, powerful and utterly compelling.

This acclaim has, however, obscured the fact that this was actually a competition for the Best Actor award, not a coronation. The other nominations included some fine performances from great actors: Heath Ledger (*Brokeback Mountain*), David Strathairn (*Good Night and Good Luck*) Terrence Howard (*Hustle and Flow*) and an honourable mention must go to Joaquin Phoenix (*Walk the Line*).

Capote is certainly the kind of film that is traditionally rewarded at the Oscars. The Academy is historically amenable to biopics, especially those which portray a contemporary and notorious figure (*Ray*; *The Pianist*; *The Hours*; *A Beautiful Mind*; *Ghandi*). While Hoffman said he never considered it to be an 'award role', it is clear that by immersing himself into a character role like the writer of *Breakfast at Tiffanys* and charting his emotional disintegration as he attempted to write his masterpiece *In Cold Blood*, Hoffman was guaranteed at least a nomination. It is the kind of character that the Oscar's love.

After missing out on an Oscar for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, it was only a matter of time before Ang Lee got this much-earned reward. With its sweeping Texan landscape and delicate storyline well-told, *Brokeback Mountain* was an excellent contender.

Attracting a media furore throughout production, and ultimately proving itself at the box office, Lee has it all to win. Looking at the competition, it is no surprise. The likes of Spielberg, Haggis, Clooney and Miller all produced award-worthy, excellent films (*Munich*, *Crash*, *Good Night and Good Luck*, and *Capote*), but the Academy is neither in the habit of giving awards to new blood, nor the long in the tooth. Also clasp the prize for Best Score and Best Adapted Screen Play, it was certainly a good outing for this film, and deservedly so, since this was undoubtedly one of the year's strongest films. It is a shame, perhaps, that the two leads missed out, because they were a large part of the film's success, but it can't be ignored that the industry is still haunted by conservatism, and considering that (and the fact that 2005 was a very good year), *Brokeback Mountain* did very well indeed.

It was almost certain that the Best Actress award would go to Reese Witherspoon for her role as June Carter, the wife of country singing legend Johnny Cash, in *Walk The Line*. It was a brilliant, difficult performance, involving a specific midwestern accent and some masterful country singing beside co-star Phoenix. I barely heard a mention of her fellow nominees: Keria Knightley and Dame Judy Dench, along with previous winner Charlize Theron and Felicity Huffman. It was certainly Witherspoon's night.

Yet though Witherspoon was modestly surprised at her win, it has been a while in coming. I first noticed her when she appeared in *Pleasantville*, as Tobey Maguire's self-obsessed sister, and in *Cruel Intentions*. Witherspoon's choice of feel-good films (*Sweet Home Alabama*; *Legally Blonde*; its sequel *Legally Blonde 2*; *Red, White and Blonde* and the recent *Just Like Heaven*) have simultaneously made her one of the most popular Hollywood personalities, as she is loved for her warmth and honesty.

Witherspoon, at just 29, has surpassed Julia Roberts as the highest paid actress in the history of Hollywood. She is being paid a huge US\$29 million for her role in the upcoming horror film *Our Family Trouble*, US\$5 million up from Roberts, who was paid US\$24 million for *Mona Lisa Smile*.



Ang Lee, Best Director for *Brokeback Mountain*



Reese Witherspoon, Best Actress for *Walk the Line*



Philip Seymour Hoffman, Best Actor for *Capote*

Film Reviews



Capote

Director: Bennett Miller
With: Philip Seymour Hoffman

Runtime: 114 min

Reviewed by
Steph Crewes

★★★★★

Capote is a nuanced study of one of America's most intriguing and celebrated authors. Director Bennett Miller explores American writer Truman Capote's fascination with the brutal murder of a Kansas family by two men in the 1960s. Capote (Philip Seymour Hoffman) develops a growing obsession with the trial and subsequently forms a close friendship with one of the men, Perry Smith (Clifton Collins Jr.).

Capote's friendship with Smith is honestly presented, and the unravelling of the truth behind the murder is thrilling to watch. Capote, however, had an underlying motive: to increase his own literary reputation. Indeed, the author loved celebrity - he coveted attention and was the darling of New York's literary society. Miller explores, through Capote's personality, two central aspects of American life: celebrity and an obsession with violence.

The film is visually stimulating. Miller creates a powerfully atmospheric composition, through monotone colours that emphasise the pathos of its subject and leave us locked in Capote's world until long after it ends. Kansas is presented in an isolated and claustrophobic Texan landscape, resonating American Gothic and, interestingly, contrast-

ing with Capote's distinctive character.

The film also explores Capote's close matter-of-fact friendship with Harper Lee (Catherine Keener), the intensely private author of the classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Keener impresses as Lee, bringing to life an intriguing woman and enlivening certain dinner conversations with a fantastic, startling laugh. Miller presents a fascinating and contradictory friendship that greatly affected Capote's struggles in writing *In Cold Blood*. It was interesting to see how much influence Lee had on him, and I wish the film could have gone into more depth.

Inevitably, the film rests largely on the intensity of Philip Seymour Hoffman's performance. He embodies Capote entirely, inheriting all his mannerisms in a passionate and believable performance that leaves us with a true sense of the man, who was not particularly likeable. Hoffman's true skill emerges through his conquering of Capote's unusual voice, and one of the best scenes in the film is when Capote gives a reading in front of American critics - it is the voice that we remember.

At first *Capote* appears to be more about the novel than the author, yet by the end, you emerge with the realisation that the creation of *In Cold Blood* allows for a detailed reflection; for that is all Miller can hope to achieve in an on-screen reworking of Truman Capote himself, his vivid personality, and his annoying, child-like and sometimes incomprehensible voice. As I watched *Capote*, I realised that Miller presents a unique vision of America through the eyes of an intriguing man, who changed the face of American literature.

Syriana

Director: Stephen Gaghan
With: George Clooney, Matt Damon

Runtime: 126 min

Reviewed by
Lewis Charlesworth

★★★★



company, 'Section 8' - which is a US military term used to describe the discharge for physical or mental unfitness for service. The aim of their company was to allow filmmakers greater artistic freedom, at the expense of major box office receipts.

With Clooney's well publicised democratic ideals and Stephen Gaghan's interest in American socio-politics (*Traffic*, *The Alamo*, *Rules of Engagement*), Robert Baer's memoirs seemed like the perfect source to inspire their collaboration.

The film starts by establishing an alien Middle Eastern setting, through the use of semi-voyeuristic handheld cameras. It then subsequently splits into four loosely inter-linked storylines: CIA agent Bob Barnes (George Clooney) is sent on a mission to assassinate two terrorists; Bryan Woodman (Matt Damon) is an energy analyst; and Bennett Holiday (Jeffrey Wright), is a corporate lawyer investigating a Texan oil conglomerate; Mazhar Munir plays a disenfranchised teen on the journey towards Islamic Fundamentalism. The separate narratives are connected thematically, each portraying the relationship between family and politics, the tensions created as one attempts to balance family with moral values.

What is refreshing about this film is its refusal to indulge in sentimentality. It focuses on the events that take place, and the political justification for actions rather than representing the emotional turmoil that fuels a desire for justice. *Syriana* presents us with a much more objective account of geopolitical conflict, as it swiftly moves to develop the narrative rather than urge emotional engagement. Watching the film, however, I was gradually yearning for emotion or suspense to help my engagement with the film. Unlike previous fact based epics such as *Traffic* and *The Insider*, we are constantly expected to process new information without little reason to actually want to.

Syriana: a geopolitical thriller revealing the hypocrisy and corruption that pervades American oil conglomerates, Arab regimes and Islamic fundamentalists in the Gulf States. Yes, this film has a vast and complicated subject matter. Yes, it is an epic portrayal of the mixed beliefs, prejudices and tensions that surround the control for that lovely energy source, oil. Does it make an interesting and thought provoking two hour plus movie? Steve Soderberg and George Clooney seemed to think so.

Syriana is the latest film to be released by the twosome's newly formed production

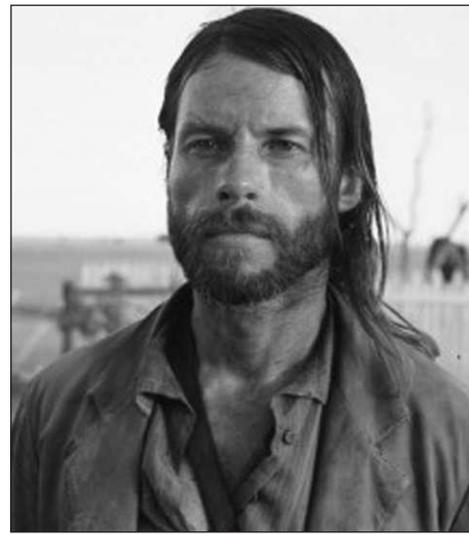
The Proposition

Director: John Hillcoat
With: Guy Pearce, Ray Winstone

Runtime: 104 min

Reviewed by
Paul Becker

★★★★★



The opening sequence of *The Proposition* is a hypnotically beautiful evocation of a strange time and place: grainy black-and-white photographs show men, women and graves, while a child sings of a happy land and happy times. Then, with a slash and a crash, we are in a squalid hut, littered with sunbeams that shine through bullet holes in the walls, and we see a band of people fighting for their lives against some unseen enemy on the outside.

The intersection of past and present, innocence and horror, shelter and wilderness, and family and outsiders is what powers director John Hillcoat's film: a patient, at

times slow yet exceptionally and painfully consequent Australian Western.

The people in the hut who aren't torn apart by bullets are outlaw Charlie Burns (Guy Pearce) and his kid brother Mikey (Richard Wilson), their assailants the forces of law and order, led by Captain Stanley (Ray Winstone). Stanley has a proposition for Burns: either he tracks down and kills his older brother Arthur, or by Christmas Mikey hangs.

"I will civilise this land" is Stanley's catchphrase, but beneath the badass persona he likes to cultivate dwells a startling impotence which comes to the fore in several touching scenes with his wife (Emily Watson). Their little world, complete with christmas tree, turkey and rose garden, is about to become the grave that Stanley digs for himself with his every action. The irony and pathos in their struggle to make sense of a barbaric world is essentially more unbearable than the physical mutilations on screen, of which there are plenty.

Benoît Delhomme's precise cinematography emphasises the stifling heat and astonishing Australian countryside with its wide plains and sporadic hills, a foreign place which haunts and inhabits each character. John Hurt, playing a flamboyant, chilly bounty hunter, resembles a character straight out of Dante's *Inferno* with his head twisted in grotesque angles, his eyes hollowed out by the play of light in his pitch-black home.

The plot steers towards a sort of purgatorial fire where each conflict is indiscriminately resolved in one final, triumphant circus of violence: by the end the film has drained itself. This is a Western where every character can be seen as some kind of parasite. Brutal, bloody and brilliant, this is a parable with obvious roots in popular mythology, a mostly homogeneous and astoundingly rich yet simple tale.

Arts Reviews

Amy Scott enjoys a revolt at the Drama Barn, despite a few technical hitches along the way

Tom Stoppard's *Travesties*, directed this term in the Drama Barn, by Francesca Seeley, presents a hypothetical meeting between James Joyce, Lenin and Tristin Tzara in Zurich, 1917. Events are re-told by the aging Henry Carr, who was immortalised in *Ulysses* by Joyce after a court case revolving around his involvement in a production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Carr's fabrications, real events and Oscar Wilde's work become intertwined, leading to a fast paced, thought provoking and witty play that, if staged successfully, is sure to provide a great night of theatre.

Seeley's production took some innovative moves given the restrictions of the venue. Firstly, the audience faced the opposite direction to standard Drama Barn practice, and although I'm sure techies are lovely people, I did find their visible presence behind the action somewhat disconcerting. Presumably, this change was to accommodate the projection screen at the back of the stage, which opened the play with footage of a train being derailed. The programme notes informed us that this represents Old Carr's erratic memory, however, I suspect this would be slightly lost without the written

explanation - it entirely passed me by.

Aside from making me feel inadequate about my theatrical analysis skills, the use of projection caused further problems. Having been too late to bag a prize seat (where you don't have to lean on a stranger's knees) I unfortunately chose to sit where the light from the projector half blinded me every time I dared to look upstage. As it was not just used for video sequences but also, somewhat unnecessarily, to project backdrops showing a library or a living room, this remained an issue for a number of the audience for the duration of the play. Another issue was that the blocking of the action masked at least one character from at least one section of the Barn at all times.

The performance began shakily. Although clearly meant to be fast paced, the snappy dialogue often seemed rushed and gabbled, leading to many of the funniest lines not getting due presentation. One scene was performed in verse and the timing and speed were woefully off the mark, perhaps due to first night jitters, leaving the meaning disjointed and this audience member baffled. However, the performances were engaging and, when speaking clearly, funny. The highlight of the first half came

from the interplay between Joyce and Tzara, played by Joseph A. O'Leary and Alexander Hargreaves respectively, who managed to reign in the timing to give a sparky and memorable end to a mixed first half.

Having returned from my interval trip to Vanbrugh bar, the white wine and my cunning switch of seats had set me in a much better mood. The second half gives more stage time to characters who earlier were more peripheral. Duncan Grieve and Kate Lovell played, respectively, Lenin and his wife and skilfully handled emotive material and, most impressively, scenes spoken entirely in Russian. But the real highlight of the second half came in the form of Rebekah Brazier's Cecily. Although not bad, the performance up until this point had been missing something and, as it turns out, this something was Brazier. Her performance was sharp, funny and well judged, raising the game of the others on stage and improving the production as a whole. The second attempt at a scene spoken in verse was much improved and Cecily's striptease on the library counter is sure to go down as one of the most memorable moments in the Drama Barn this term.

Overall, despite some irritations

regarding staging, *Travesties* was entertaining and funny, showcasing the theatrical talent at York in a very positive light.



Travesties, staged at the Drama Bar



Before We Began

Tania Unsworth

Reviewed by
Ailin Chin

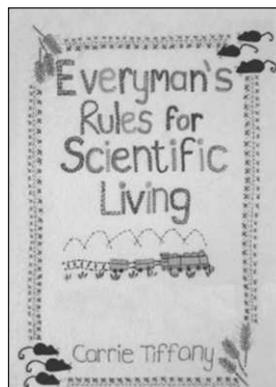
£10.99
Fig Tree

★★★★

In *Before We Began*, Unsworth intertwines two threads of narrative, both involving the central character Sophie Barrett. The first, chronicling the friendship between a 14-year-old Sophie and two other girls, Julia and Nancy, is perpetually interweaved with the second, focusing on Sophie as a 30-year-old stuck in existential stasis. Staring into a blank void of a future, she remains haunted by the past, yet at the same time equally unwilling to relinquish it.

Unsworth recreates successfully the feeling of adolescence as "the borderland between one territory and another". The use of flashbacks gives the childhood memories the feeling of having happened in a time vacuum, dead and perfectly preserved, even as they have scarcely begun. The past spills over into the present as childhood friends creep into conversations with current acquaintances and the suicide of Sophie's co-worker in 1994 evokes hazy memories of 1978 which move inexorably towards tragedy.

Appealing to the part of us which yearns to change the past, Unsworth has written a novel that is melancholic, poignant, and yet cautiously optimistic, capturing beautifully an image frozen in mid-motion — of a figure with one foot tentatively set forward, even as the other is mired in the past.



Everyman's Rules for Scientific Living

Carrie Tiffany

Reviewed by
Klara Patterson

£12.99
Picador

★

Tiffany's debut novel attempts to reconcile the differences between art and science in a fictional narrative punctuated by the precision of a scientific experiment. This results in an awkward hybrid that satisfies neither category fully.

The novel is set during the inter-war period in Australia. Jean Finnegan is part of the 'Better Farming' train's quest to educate the country about all things arable. Reminiscent of a Big Brother style government, their mission is to increase productivity based on a scientific approach to farming that must be adopted by all. The human focus lies in Jean's growing relationship with soil specialist Robert Pettergree. They embark on married life in the Australian outback attempting to cultivate a barren land. Gradually their idealism is eroded as they suffer many natural disasters, and personal disaster in Jean's miscarriage. These individual tragedies are echoed on a global scale, with the world on the brink of war.

The failure of the 'Better Farming' train's quest to tame the environment with science does pose interesting questions about the futility of man's attempt to control nature. However, the central relationship between Jean and Robert often seems unrealistic, failing to provide an outlet from the overriding agricultural theme, which makes this unlikely to be a big hit with students.



White Blood

James Flemming

Reviewed by
Amy Milka

£12.99
Random House

★★★★

From the author of *Thomas Gage* and *Temple of Optimism* comes a gritty new offering: Fleming takes us on a journey which spans continents and makes and breaks lives. Through the eyes of his naturalist protagonist, Charlie Doig, we encounter a fascinating world of science and intrigue, with enough political and romantic confusion thrown in to keep the pages turning. Fleming's descriptions are detailed and uncompromising without being tiresome, while his characters are edgy and complex.

We follow Doig as he attempts to avenge his father's death by creating a vaccine against the plague which killed him. This foray into the natural world becomes complicated, however, as Doig matures and other interests, such as his family's honour, his love for his cousin Elizaveta, and the outbreak of war, interrupt his travels. Tension builds as Doig gets the girl, but their life together is threatened by the instability of 1914 Russia.

The couple are forced to shelter soldiers and other endearing characters from the bitter winter, and, whilst in close confinement with the army officers, Doig becomes convinced that one of them is a Bolshevik who will "destroy them all". Don't expect light Easter reading, but be prepared for a gripping story which might come as a refreshing change to the usual holiday paperback.

Music Reviews

Singles Reviews



Babyshambles
Live at the
Manchester Academy

Reviewed by
Mike McGovern
26/02/06

★★★★★

As the crowd waits, the apprehension builds. This is, after all, the infamous Babyshambles; no-one can be sure if they'll actually turn up. In fact, it takes an hour and ten minutes before Doherty eventually saunters on stage with a wry "What time do you call this then?". But the crowd doesn't mind; when the band launches into 'Pipedown', we are swept forwards, and at the same time the entire venue turns hysterical.

It would be difficult to overstate just how much the crowd worship Pete Doherty and as the band tear through their set, I too begin to love him. The man's charm is infectious. He skips around the stage in a state of complete nonchalance, obviously enhanced by illicit substances. He attempts to grab every crowd surfer who tries to break through the bouncers. He knocks himself and

Patrick Walden over and ends up singing on the floor. He and Walden pick a fight with a bouncer during 'Killamangiro', which ends with them squaring up on stage. It's the sort of behaviour which should make you agree with the tabloid readers who write him off, but you don't - instead, you join the masses cheering him on.

In fact, I can't help but feel sorry for the rest of the band. Walden, the guitarist, is also a fine stage performer (also looking as fucked as Pete), but no-one cares. The drummer, who obviously fails to indulge as excessively as the front pair, begins to flag after 'Fuck Forever', but Pete continues. Babyshambles live up (or down?) to their name when they seem to run out of songs; Doherty begins to jam, often with only himself, trying out each instrument. This should be boring as hell, but it's not. The house lights come up but an electric Doherty won't stop; the crowd continues to surge in waves, reaching out to him. It's not until the bouncers line up on the stage-side that Babyshambles finally call it a night, and even then Doherty seems reluctant to leave. Clichéd as it may sound, and despite everything, on stage at least, Pete Doherty is a giant.

The Fratellis - *Creepin' Up The Backstairs*

It's got the same infectious quality of the early Libertines songs like 'What A Waster', but without the poetry: it's a bit rough around the edges, but the production matches the feel of the song exactly. It may be just dumb rock 'n' roll, but sometimes that's exactly what you need.

The Upper Room - *All Over This Town*

A bland pastiche of the Killers' 'Smile Like You Mean It', the track never takes off, despite the apparent build up. The singer's range is too small, his voice too weak, and the band's imagination too poor to give this song the sort of rousing chorus it clearly needs.

The Victorian English Gentlemen's Club - *Amateur Man / Ban The Gin*

'Ban The Gin' is the better of these two A sides, partly because it sounds even more like a post-punk Pixies than the first song. With demented yelping and hollering that suggest the singer is going through some dirty withdrawal symptoms, it's a hymn to abstinence, and, inevitably, you'll love dancing to it when you're completely wasted.

The Crimea - *White Russian Galaxy*

Another track about alcohol in this week's singles column: it's similarly ace, but totally different. As ever with the Crimea, the sound is dense, occasionally permeated by the unexpected; here, a beautifully clear classical piano repeatedly pierces the wall of sound.

Regina Spektor - *Us*

The best track around this edition, 'Us' left the entire office in stunned silence at the unalloyed brilliance of Regina Spektor: the brilliantly effective simplicity of her piano, its interplay with the cello accompaniment and her distinctive voice which she deploys with such versatility.

The Streets - *When You Wasn't Famous*

The Streets has always been the urban music that's ok for indie kids to like. No longer: unfortunately, they've gone all rubbish. As Mike Skinner's fame has increased, his wit appears to have become less acute, and his ability to assimilate different sounds from diverse musical styles seems to have changed into a tendency to throw noises at a track in an effort to keep things interesting.

Singles this week were reviewed by Kathryn Bromwich, Emma Fire-Wassilak, James Fanning, Mike McGovern, Melissa Read, Robin Seaton, Kate Smith and Ben Toone.



Stereolab
Fab Four Suture
Reviewed by
Kathryn Bromwich
Out Now

★★★★★

Fifteen years on, Stereolab can still be considered one of the most unique bands in Britain. *Fab Four Suture* is a mesmerising fusion of effortlessly simple melodies, majestic music, and a hypnotic voice weaving in and out of tinkling pianos, upbeat brass and lively keyboards.

It's half detective movie soundtrack, half alien invasion computer game, featuring funky basslines, bouncy trombones and what sounds suspiciously like a Sony Ericsson ringtone. The song titles alone are worth the wait - 'Visionary Road Maps', 'Excursions Into "Oh, a-oh"', 'I Was a Sunny Rainphase'. The half French, half English singing - you can't always tell which - gives the album a mysterious and elegant edge. The individual songs are evocative enough, but to grasp the full extent of its enigmatic atmosphere *Fab Four Suture* has to be taken as a whole. It's virtually a concept album, with recurring melodies framed by the droning, dreamlike 'Kyberneticka Babicka' parts One and Two.

Those expecting a break with tradition will be disappointed. *Fab Four Suture* doesn't radically depart from their distinctive formula of cool futuristic jazz, power pop and ethereal singing. And with a band as experimental as this, newness is nothing new.



Matt Costa
Songs We Sing
Reviewed by
James Fanning
Out Now

★★★★★

Songs We Sing, Matt Costa's debut album, is a self-assured work of credible guitar pop, buzzing with infectious melodies. One stand-out track is 'Cold December', a real folk-pop gem, which races along with jangly acoustic guitars and soaring, catchy melodies. Costa subverts our expectations, pinning some truly dark lyrics on a deliriously poppy song structure. Such Trojan horsemanship is amplified by Costa's voice, recalling the Thrills or Death Cab, he appears simultaneously joyful and painfully wounded.

What is most refreshing is Costa's unwillingness to be influenced by his generation. The folk arpeggios and casual style of 'Astair' and the gorgeous vocal harmonies on 'Sunshine' recall a richer songwriting tradition. The simple folksy beauty of 'Wash Away' is transformed into something much more vital and epic, with violins and cellos accompanying half whispered vocals.

Unfortunately, Costa's influences sometimes overwhelm him. 'Sweet Rose' is practically a Cash song sung in a high voice. Similarly 'Oh Dear' would be revolutionary if *Sergeant Pepper* didn't exist. These are nit-pickings though; as a debut album, *Songs We Sing* has some brilliant, awe-inspiring songs, suggesting a great musical future.

Archie Bronson Outfit
Derdang Derdang
Reviewed by
Camille Augarde
Out This Week

★★★★★

Think dirty drawls, love-riddled lyrics, itch-inducing melodies and drums tighter than your emo pal's skinnies. Think a danceable Radiohead. This is the Archie Bronson Outfit, and their second album *Derdang Derdang* is quite frankly brilliant. Vocally it will rip your little heart out, lyrically it will mash your mind, and instrumentally it will burrow under your skin and bluntly refuse to leave until your muscles pulsate and your head is dizzy-sick from bopping. Let it in.

The seduction begins with 'Cherry Lips'; a haze of hypnotic riffs, teasing pauses and moans of cruel seduction. The first single to be taken from the album is 'Dart for My Sweetheart'; a menacing affair of nails-down-the-blackboard guitars and a death-march rhythm. The album exhibits many other gems, the most glistening being 'Dead Funny'; a dark, psychedelic track, laden with smirk-worthy irony. This welcome offering is rounded off with 'Harp for My Sweetheart', an altered, acoustic version of 'Dart for my Sweetheart' - pure, unadulterated bliss.

Therefore, hurrah, the Outfit have officially decapitated today's rock 'n' roll rule-book: the album doesn't slope off down a half-hearted spiral after track four, the whole thing is actually entrancing.

Food and Drink Reviews



Which Fair Trade Treat?

It's *Fairtrade Fortnight*, running from 6th-19th March, and with over 1,300 certified product now available it has become even easier to choose fair trade. You can also get involved in the York Fairtrade festival, Saturday Week 10, from 9am till 4 on Parliament Street. In the push to 'Make Fairtrade Your Habit', an increasing number of retailers are stocking fair trade products. We were glad to see that the fair trade revolution has now reached York Uni as both Costcutter and Your:Shop have a surprisingly large range of foods to choose from. We took a trip to Your:Shop to try out a selection of treats.

Dubble, Crispy Chocolate Crunch, 42p.

Dubble chocolate bar not only bears the fair trade mark, but is also supported by Comic Relief. This milky bar of chocolate is mainly aimed at a younger market, increasing awareness of fair trade at every level. The ethos of dubble is to offer 'fair play for cocoa growers', not only are you helping them achieve this goal by making the purchase but you also get a delicious bar filled with crispy chocolatey goodness. You may be under the impression that these products may skimp on size but this is certainly not true as the large pieces of chunky chocolate were more than enough.

Geobar, Raisin and Apricot Cereal Bar, 39p.

This cereal bar made a nice change from the usual nurgtrain bars which seem to have saturated the morning snack market. It was lovely and sweet, and not at all sticky or chewy. The combination of oats, raisins and apricot was really effective, and you should defiantly try the rest of the selection available in the range, including cranberries, honey and pineapple.

Divine, Orange Milk Chocolate, 55p.

Divine's cocoa comes from a farmers' group called *Kuapa Kokoo* whose motto is "pa pa paa", which means "best of the best" in their local language. When buying Divine you get the best of the best chocolate and the cocoa farmers get a fair and secure price for their crop. Divine is also supported by Comic Relief but also has links to Christian Aid, making it a truly charitable treat!

Words by: Vicky Hallam and Lucy Peden.

El Piano
15-17 Grape Lane

Reviewed by
Amy Milka

★★★★★

If you can find *El Piano* in the maze of streets surrounding the Minster, it's well worth a look. This kitsch café/bar/tapas restaurant has a comfy ethnic vibe, with friendly staff and a diverse clientele. As a (lax) vegetarian, it was lovely to have the whole menu at my disposal, as opposed to the usual token pasta dishes found in so many restaurants. Don't be put off, however, by the wholly veg and vegan menu (they also specialise in catering for gluten-free and other special diets), it's really more than just rabbit food. My wholeheartedly carnivorous companion seemed quite happy to tuck into a selection of Indian-based tapas, ranging from onion bhajis to chickpea curry and spicy mushrooms.

You can choose your own dishes and the size to suit your appetite - from just a couple of pounds for the small "chica" size up to the

larger "racion", so you can have anything from lunch to a light snack with drinks, to a full blown dinner. The dishes have many different influences: Indian, Mexican and Oriental, as well as portions of crusty bread and chips for dipping! This makes for a thoroughly hands-on meal; very informal and relaxed. Yet another way to eat El Piano-style is to order a takeaway wrap from the serving hatch - this is faster, cheaper and available from 10am until closing.

Whilst we nibbled away at the delicious potato cakes, I revelled in the eclectic décor. We were seated in what can only be described as a fairy-themed room, whilst downstairs a relaxed café atmosphere matched the latin music. This would be the perfect place for a group meal, as the private rooms upstairs can be booked for functions and parties, and the larger platters are great for sharing.

Some might find this wholesome and friendly approach a bit overwhelming, but subscribe to it as much or as little as you like, and rest assured that at least you're not having to deal with snotty waiters and the same old menus. An interesting alternative to pizza and more pizza.



The Raj Tandoori Restaurant
Bootham

Reviewed by
Ben Toone

★★★★★



A stone's throw away from Kings Manor, this restaurant is excellently situated for both history and archeology students wandering around for a decent meal in town. *The Raj's* main offer is a discounted business lunch, an advertised five courses for £4.95. Though I would debate whether this is actually five courses (can you count popadoms and rice as separate courses?) it is a good deal as it also includes bhaji starters, selected curries and an ice cream or coffee for dessert. For lighter appetites there is a light snack lunch for £3.50, the same as above but without the curry and rice.

Although fairly empty when I went in (though it was Tuesday lunchtime) the waiters were prompt (so much so I'd only just finished my starter before my mains came) and the meals were well presented and cooked. There were plenty of poppadoms for starters and a whole array of sauces, and the bhaji and salad starter was also very good. The ice cream at the end was slightly disappointing, only one scoop! It was also a shame that I felt so rushed, but with four staff on for the three people present it's understandable. In all it's a good place to get a good quality meal for just under a fiver, probably even worth paying extra for an evening dinner.

enjoy
10 Feasegate

Reviewed by
Clare Croskery

★★★★★



I was in desperate need of shelter and a warm drink when I stumbled upon *enjoy* coffee shop on Feasegate, and thankfully it did a good job of providing both. The upstairs and downstairs seating areas were completely empty, but I was told that the apparent lull in trade was due to the miserable weather. After experiencing the food and friendly service at *enjoy*, I can only imagine that it was the snow that was keeping people away.

The waitress came to my table to take my order, something that I found refreshingly different from the queue-at-the-counter culture that has taken over so many cafes nowadays. I ordered my usual hot chocolate and cake combination, which arrived within minutes. The triple layered hot chocolate with cream, frothy milk and rich chocolate syrup at the bottom of the glass was quite a novelty to me, and came complete with marshmallows and a wafer. The generous slice of carrot cake was delicious, and just that tad different to what you normally expect.

At excellent prices to suit the student pocket and with a wide choice of sandwiches and light bites, *enjoy* coffee shop is somewhere I would definitely recommend - whatever the weather!

Evil Eye Lounge
42 Stonegate

Reviewed by
N. Luke Abraham

★★★★★



Most people would associate the *Evil Eye* lounge with cocktails - lots and lots of cocktails. I didn't know that the *Evil Eye* also did food, in this case, the 'Monster Sunday Lunch'. The food was excellent - all home cooked, even the deformed and oh-so-tasty Yorkshire puddings. There is a lot of range in terms of veg as well: broccoli, roast parsnips, carrots, red cabbage, white cabbage, roast and boiled potatoes as well as home made stuffing.

There are four meat options: beef, lamb, pork and vegetable. I have been informed that the lamb isn't as nice as the other three options, but the beef was excellent, not fatty or gristly, and of a decent size (three slices). For six pounds this is a very good value - I may be tempted by the child's portion next time. There is a 'Monster' sized portion as well, and I pity anyone who attempts it.

There is supposed to be live music playing during the Sunday lunch period (12-6pm), although I couldn't see where. We didn't have any problems getting a table either, which is a usual issue in the evenings. The only thing that put me off is that the kitchen seems to be right next to the communal toilets on the top floor, but I guarantee it didn't reflect in the taste!

The last word

Andreas Masoura reflects on the week's events

Democracy

Have you exercised your democratic right recently during the YUSU elections? I thought not. Well, for those of you who bothered I'm sure the choice of president adequately represents your desires. Those of you who went to the trouble of trudging through the website just to spoil your ballots must be equally satisfied.

Oh no, you probably voted before Tuesday, when the button to submit your vote was deceptively labelled in such a manner as to suggest another penultimate stage of voting before submission. Well never mind, I'm sure those people who spoilt their ballots, possibly in this way, would have had no influence on a presidential election won by around 30 votes.

YUSU's example of legitimate democratic behaviour does not stop there. Another technique involves JCRCs being told when to hold events. Even so I'm sure the new constitution allows for this anyway.

By the way, was I the only one who just realised yesterday that the Treasure's position has now been removed? I'm sure I voted for it online.

Inferno

On entering their Fairfax kitchen, several students were met with ferocious levels of smoke. No, this time they hadn't burnt their baked bean and tuna pasta or created fire works by grilling something using a meat fat encrusted grill pan that they were too lazy to

ever clean. Given the asbestos ceilings had not internally combusted and no, Fairfax's scheduled demolition had not come early, from the fire service's report I can confirm it was no accident.

The unnamed suspected York University arsonist (his boys wouldn't grass him up even though he could have killed them) made a prolific attempt at setting the kitchen on fire, which could have potentially killed an unsuspecting student. It was a poor attempt. In fact there were not even any flames. Thank God, you must be thinking, but if the matter were to be addressed objectively it might be seen as a pathetic reflection on York students.

Kitchens are not difficult to set on fire. His technique urgently needs to be addressed since it consisted of turning on the hob, then putting a sandwich toaster on top of that and turning that on too. It resulted in a melted sandwich toaster rather than a September 11th style destruction of Fairfax.

Perhaps that last cheese toasty was one too many and set him on a violent, destructive rampage against the responsible sandwich toaster. Even so, it was dire attempt at arson. To help this poor chap out, I have compiled a few steps that would ensure a successful arson attempt:

1) Rummage through the rubbish to find that old copy of Vision that you threw away moments after reading, and that hadn't been utilised when your toilet paper ran out.

2) Carefully pick off any chunks of pasta stuck on to Vision and any other large pieces of food and hang to dry out. Don't worry if

any stains have obscured the text, fortunately you will not have to read any of it again.

3) Once Vision has dried out, shove it into the toaster and activate the toaster as you would if you were making toast.

4) Add petrol for maximum effect.

I hope these instructions are easier to follow than YUSU's online voting was.



A toaster burnt properly - petrol was used

Congratulations

On a personal note, I would like to wish a certain publicity shy BBC correspondent and York student (who cannot be named for welfare reasons) the best of luck after being nominated for the national Graduate of the Year award.

No. 8, Applied Social Science - Crime

Blag your degree



A burnt out Metro in Tang Hall - crime is everywhere in York

Apparently this degree teaches students about the way today's society responds to crime. Well, I think I can inform you about this in a single column. It is quite simple really. The only reason Applied Social Science Crime exists is because of the increasing amount of attention paid to crime by the media and political debates. Given that crime is generally quite a bad thing, I thought this in itself would be a sufficient reason.

Regardless of that, studying crime in York is particularly fitting since York's crime level is abnormally high, making places like Brixton seem like a McDonalds playpen covered in tomato sauce. Yes. In York, gangsters run the place red. Especially outside Toffs, where in one instance the kicking over of a dustbin (OK, it was a large one) led to eight squad cars arriving on the scene within a minute.

But when a group of (I like to assume) racially motivated chavs outside McDonalds kicked my car light in, claiming they could speak better English than me even though they were Northern, the mighty police took about 45 minutes to turn up. When they finally turned up, they threatened to arrest me on the basis that I referred to the chav in question as a "bastard".

Take note fellow Crime students, when the police sense the possibility of trouble they take a fair amount of time to turn up. Therefore if you are applying your degree to reality and therefore committing a crime yourselves, make sure it's a particularly rowdy affair and you will get away with it. This also applies to drug dealing.

Moving on to how you can blag a Crime degree, there is no better way to learn but to take part and try it. Get involved. Next time you see a carefree student with an iPod Nano walking along Rape Alleyway, rob him. This will ensure you experience both the mindset of a criminal as well as the psychological trauma of the victim.

You cannot beat first-hand experience. Being a Peckham boy, I can thoroughly confirm that you cannot beat a criminal (there are usually more of them than you) so you have no choice other than to join them. This was seen earlier this evening with the riotous behaviour of several Goodrickers who, on refusing to leave Mqs in protest of impeding bar closures, decided to try and steal beer by using a stick to push down the bar taps. Take note fellow students, this is a fine technique for future reference.

YORK'S STRANGE MYTHS #003: Stereo Boy!!!



IN 1985, THERE WAS A SLIGHTLY UNPOPULAR STUDENT LIVING IN JAMES COLLEGE, WHO THOUGHT BLARING OUT NEW ROMANTIC CHEESE MUSIC WAS A SIGN OF COOLNESS.

HOWEVER, FUNNILY ENOUGH, THIS DIDN'T GO DOWN WELL WITH THE OTHER STUDENTS, WHO PERSISTENTLY WENT OVER TO COMPLAIN.

COMING TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THIS 'STEREO BOY' WAS NOT LISTENING, THEY STOLE HIS STEREO AND CHUCKED IT INTO THE UNIVERSITY LAKE. HURRAH!

THE PROOVUST FOR JAMES HAD NO SYMPATHY FOR STEREO BOY AND DIDN'T TAKE ANY ACTION.

MORAL:
WHEN PEOPLE TELL YOU TO "SHUT UP THAT MUSIC!" DO IT.

Visit the relaunched Nouse website at www.nouse.co.uk for web exclusives, comments and the new Nouse forum where you can register your views on the stories and features appearing in the paper.



Clockwise from top left: Mrs Pat; Steve Martin donning a little moustache for his role in *The Pink Panther*; the Cosmic Rough Riders; George Clooney starring in his latest film *Syriana* and Charlie Simpson of former *Busted* fame plays in Leeds with his new band *Fightstar*

Live Music

Wednesday 15th March
Evelyn, Angel Bass, Tsunami and Testtone 3, Battle of the Bands, Round One, Heat 6, Fibbers

With the grand final of this annual battle in July, the heats will be continuing through the summer term. Who will win? You decide.

Thursday 16th March
Cosmic Rough Riders, Fibbers

This unmissable tour will showcase the band's new album *The Stars Look Different From Down Here*. Tickets in advance cost only £6 and can be obtained from www.fibbers.co.uk.

Tuesday 14th March
Fightstar, Leeds Met University

The band that were said to be the main reason behind the devastating split of boyband *Busted* hits Leeds tonight. See Charlie Simpson adopt a more rocky edge to entertain the crowds. Tickets bought in advance cost £12, slightly more than most gigs but surely worth it.

Saturday 18th March,
Against me! Cockpit, Leeds

This band, signed to Fat Wreck Chords, claim to play 'smart pop punk' and for £8.50 plus the train fare to Leeds you can find out for yourself.

Campus Events

All week, Week 10
Barcott

With campus bars under threat of opening times being dramatically reduced, the Student Union is urging all students to campaign against this by taking part in the Barcott. To get involved simply means travelling the little bit further into town and not drinking in the campus bars to show what the University is like with no atmosphere.

Thursday, Week 10
Planet V, Toffs

Planet V but with a difference. The infamous Barcott climaxes with this traditional campus event being taken into the city centre.

With buses running students into town and several bar crawls organised, this promises to be one of the busiest nights Toffs will have seen. So celebrate St. Patrick's Day in traditional York style by stumbling out of Toffs at about half 3 in the morning for only £3 pounds.

Tuesday, Week 10
Derwent College Easter Ball, Moat House Hotel

If you are a finalist from Derwent this will be your last college ball as unfortunately there are no more this year. For £22 you can enjoy a three course meal and after dinner coffee at the up-market Moat House Hotel.

Art and Performance

Monday 13th March- Saturday 1st April
Mrs Pat, York Theatre Royal

It's not often that there is any kind of world premiere in York but this biographical play, celebrating the life of Mrs. Patrick Campbell who was one of the most acclaimed actresses of the twentieth century, holds it here. With tickets at just £3.50, why not try something a bit cultural?

Monday 27th March-Saturday 1st April
Sweeney Todd, Grand Opera House

For anyone staying in York over Easter, John Doyle's *Sweeney Todd* is a must. With ex-Neighbours pin-up Jason Donovan in the title role, what more could you possibly

ask for?

Until 23rd April
A Sense of Place, Bootham Bar

Something completely free and totally different to anything else. Bootham Bar has become the venue for a unique experience. Visit this famous entrance to the city and be told 2000 years of history through sound and light.

Until 24th March
Femininity: Sugar, Spice, All Things Nice?, The ArtSpace

The York based artist, Sasha Consiglio, returns with another controversial show.

Cinema

Syriana (15)
 George Clooney recently won the Oscar for Best Actor in a supporting role for his part as a CIA operative in this political thriller. Matt Damon also stars, which must count as reason enough to go and watch this otherwise confusing but satisfying movie.

The Pink Panther (PG)
 Promises to be the funniest film of the moment but can Steve Martin, of *Father of the Bride* fame, pull off the role Peter Sellers made his own? It's debatable. Martin's Inspector Jacques Clouseau has the help of Beyonce Knowles and Kevin Kline in order to pull this off.

In My Country (15)
 Samuel L. Jackson takes on the role of Langston Whitfield, a US journalist, in this heart-warming tale. Based on the Antjie Krog book, *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow and the limits of forgiveness in South Africa*, the story focuses upon the aftermath of the apartheid era.

The Proposition (18)
 Startling and shocking, this epic and dramatic action film is set in nineteenth century Australia. Whilst maintaining historical accuracy, director John Hillcoat has managed to create an emotional yet awe-inspiring film.



Local MP, **John Grogan**, talks about his faith in the BBC

Free market bad for quality broadcasting

What makes you proud to be British? In recent weeks following Gordon Brown's speeches, perhaps more people than usual, in a nation where understatement is quite rightly seen as a virtue, have been asking themselves the question. For me the BBC has got to be near the top of the list. Last week in Parliament I initiated a debate on the closure of the BBC World Thai Service. This has resulted in demonstrations outside the British Embassy. In a country where media freedoms are still being established, the BBC's presence with its traditions of impartiality has for sixty years provided information that local people can trust. It has also put pressure on domestic broadcasters and newspaper to aspire to higher standards.

Whether the BBC's radio service in Thailand can be saved remains to be seen but the good news is the broadcaster appears set to get Parliamentary approval for its Royal Charter in Britain for another ten years. Some people complain the BBC distorts the market but for me that is the whole point. To see what a free market does for radio and television you just have to look at the USA. Sure the system produces some top quality drama but for the most part this is surrounded in the schedules by wall to wall games shows and chat shows where the lowest common denominator rules. The BBC's mission has

to be to make the good popular and the popular good. Planet Earth, Radio 4 and Radio Three's patronage of orchestras are one part of that tradition where as Radio 1's promotion of live music and new bands and the cult show The Office are part of the other. The public service values of the BBC have an influence on commercial broadcasters. If it was left simply to Rupert Murdoch's instincts, for example, Sky News would just be an imitation of the American equivalent of Fox News but that simply would not be acceptable to viewers in a British context. Moreover, as a keen sports fan I have to say there is a particular pleasure to watch the the 6 nations and this year's World Cup uninterrupted by adverts.

There are many challenges facing the corporation in the next decade. Research last week indicated that younger people in particular spend more time on-line than watching television. The BBC's excellent presence on the web is essential in maintaining its future relevance as the world's of TV and broadband come closer together.

Nobody has yet been able to devise a system of raising revenue other than the licence fee which would protect the BBC's independence. For students and others on fixed incomes it is sometimes difficult to find the cash but I would argue we are all paying for the very best of British.

Comment



SU President **Mickey Armstrong**, offers his congratulations to the election victors and looks forward to a year of stability.

The elections are over, the year of reform is coming to an end; with one term remaining and a president-elect in the wings we all look to the future. Now is the time for stability and some honest thinking, it is a time for action and a time for solidarity. Many

officers have received abuse lately for the decision taken by our executive committee. This is wrong. At all times we have followed the rules laid out in our constitution, many are unhappy with the situation that has occurred, but now is the time to move for-

ward. A decision has been made and we as a Union must move on to a more beneficial future.

We have had our elections and every candidate ran a successful campaign; due to the new system all were allowed to introduce their policies and debate

them in an open forum, democracy was more open and accessible than ever before. We saw the largest turn-out in elections that we have ever had and a fantastic contest for my job. Why? Because this year, more than any other, students understand their importance in the running of our Union. More UGM decisions have been made than ever before, the year of reform is continuing but as many have said, next year is (and should be) a year of stability. Now is the time to consolidate the large and much needed changes that have been made. Now is the time to

move forward. Now is the time to work together for the benefit of our membership.

For almost every column I have written for *Nouse* I have pushed for the student body to get more involved in the running of our Union. We have come to this point. Now, more than ever, students are having their say, using our Union to do what

'Now is the time to work together for the benefit of our membership'

they want to do. Look at our bar campaign, more students are involved in that than any campaign in my memory. That's my point, if we get involved and work together we can have an effect. It's up to all of us, if we don't make our say we cannot be heard. Congratulations to all successful candidates and let us now move forward in the most successful Union York has ever had. I look forward to handing over to Rich Croker in a terms time, and I wish him and his new team all the best in their year in office with huge potential. Now is the time for action. Now.

and Analysis

James Coldwell comments on a difficult week of stalled reforms and commotion as the SU election results are called into question

Election commotion ends week of disorder at YUSU

It has been a chaotic week for York Students' Union. The commotion over the new SU Constitution, problems with the online voting system resulting in a remarkably high percentage of spoiled ballots for the presidential election. These are indicative of the general pandemonium which seems to be dominating the SU at the present time. I dare say that Union President Mickey Armstrong is relieved that the end of the road is within site.

Of all the troubles which have beset the SU in recent weeks, the saga over the new constitution stands out for its sheer ludicrousness. Having failed to inspire enough students to back their new proposals for the union, the SU Executive Committee "re-interpreted" the voting rules regarding abstentions, thus ensuring the two-thirds majority needed to ratify the new constitution. As justification for what has been regarded as an essentially an arbitrary act, Services Officer Nat Thwaites-McGowan cites

the approval of 'parliamentary experts at the California State Department.' Quite who these experts are, and under just what circumstances they contacted the SU to offer support for the Committee's decision, remain unclear.

As a History student, I have come to hold dear the practice of good referencing - stating specifically from which source/s a particular argument comes is a fundamental obligation on the part of any historian worth his salt.

The same reasoning should hold true for this instance of what appears to be an entirely arbitrary decision to change election rules in order to ensure the passing of the motion. Such vague - not to mention downright bizarre - rationalization as has been offered cannot be taken seriously, and important questions remain over the authority of the new constitution.

Not to be outdone by the chaos surrounding its dubious implementation,

the constitution itself wasted no time at all in adding to the disorder of student politics at York. The new ruling - supposedly buoyed by its backing from across the Atlantic - meant that the elections for several Students' Union posts were to be cancelled.

Not only, therefore, does this mean that several candidates wasted hours of their time, and that of their campaign teams, which should really have been spent working towards meeting end of term deadlines, but also that we - the student body - will have to wait until after the Easter break before we know who will comprise the new Students' Union. After having my kitchen walls covered with dozens of garish posters, all containing indistinguishable promises of 'reform' and 'rejuvenation' to the way the SU is run, the news came as a crushing blow. The Students' Union aims - according to the documentation - to 'constantly improve the services to its membership.' Save the

unlikely - although by no means inconceivable - abandonment of this goal, Rich Croker, newly elected as President of the SU (in an election in which a large percentage of the votes submitted turned out to be spoiled ballots, incidentally), well and truly has his work cut out. For at the present time, the SU appears to be contributing to the very problems of university life it attempts to solve. The perception of the student body is that the Students Union is seen as unproductive and inefficient, to the extent that the invaluable good work it does to better the lives of all students at York goes ignored.

We can hope, if the promises of the newly elected SU are to be believed, however, that the forthcoming change of personnel will result in the creation of a Students' Union with a sense of purpose tied more closely to an ability to get things done. Then the organisation can really make the a difference to student life.



Julian Hammerton talks up the importance of our campus bars Closures are end of college system

*Outside in the rain
I see groups of three,
Making points to the university.
Stopping work they try for a greater good,
I think everyone agrees that they should.*

I am talking not about our striking lecturers, but about truly important things, this of course being our campus bars, and their protectors.

Dressed in yellow t-shirts collecting signatures are students. I have been pleasantly surprised at how well the students and the SU have organised all this action. I will be surprised if they can't get almost everyone they ask to sign!

In extreme cases some bars will only open twice a week, and this all in the name of saving £50,000. I grew up with the campus rumours that only Derwent was profitable and that there was a catfish which ate ducks. At first I thought maybe closing unprofitable bars is not so unlike the real world. Then I realised that the catfish was probably just a carp, ducks can dive underwater to feed and that overall the bars make a profit of £100,000.

The attempt to save money is pure short term thinking. If a bar is hardly open, then who visits it? If you want to go to a bar on campus you don't go through the hassle of making your way to a venue that could potentially be closed. Consumers think with their

feet - they will flock to the seven day a week bars in town. This short term saving could mean more cuts in the future. It reminds me of when a new kebab shop opened in my village. It was closer and better than the Chinese take-away, but some of us stayed faithful. Others knew nothing of that faith

'Having your own bar gives a sense of having a sanctuary'

and the Chinese now struggles.

Having your own bar compounds a sense of having a sanctuary. Imagine in Fresher's week having to go to another college's bar (James makes up for being bar-less with nice toilets). A college will become nothing more than a badge of honour. What if we end up with a few large bars on campus, will we really be collegiate anymore? How about if there is event in Bar one, Bar two is karaoke and Bar three is too far to walk in the rain. Do I really go with my friends to karaoke? These actions really makes me worry that the university life I so loved will be dead to the next generation of York students.

Sadly, the university will not be swayed by a one week boycott. We students can do nothing but sit back and watch the nature of the collegiate system change.

Ali Allam voices his concerns over the recent industrial action

Lecturers' strike damaging students

University lecturers' ongoing industrial action is putting students' futures on the line as we are being drawn into a protracted dispute between staff and the Vice-chancellor over pay issues.

Thousands of students' are being threatened yet this point is being neglected in the discussions. Moreover, current concerns are being allowed to outweigh future financial considerations.

The Association of University Teachers (AUT) representing 720 out of 1000 academic staff at the University of York want a twenty per cent pay rise,

potentially taking a third of the scheduled extra £3.5 billion entering the sector through top-up fees. With a projected eleven per cent rise in student numbers, much of this money will have to be distributed evenly to tackle workload problems, research, student bursaries as well as the introduction of a new pay structure for all staff members.

Ideally these increased funds could contribute to the general financial health of the University. However any rushed decision on how the money is spent could jeopardise the value of education

provided to new students, who will have paid the extra top-up fees. Yet, if the dispute continues then the AUT's promise of a 'boycott of all assessment and examination activity' could put thousands of current students in the dark over their futures.

Initial sympathy could lie with the academics at York who have seen their real wages drop by about 40 per cent over the last 30 years, when compared to other professions. Their work here is crucial to society in developing a new breed of hungry graduates every year.

But the AUT cannot afford to alienate the support of students, nor the attention of the media on their grievances. 2006 is an important year for a consistently underfunded sector. This year alone universities will be receiving £6.5 billion including additional income from top-up fees, and there will be other such significant boosts of revenue over the coming years. The potential for academics to receive what they are truly owed has never been greater. Students in turn should demand the same equal recognition and respect.

EST. 1964

NOUSE



SU should look to the long term

The Student's Union has come under fire in the last week on two separate issues, both involving students votes: the case of spoiled ballots in the recent elections and the interpretation of abstentions with relation to the vote on the reformed constitution. Both have shown the danger of how trying to rush through changes can threaten the good work of those involved.

The constitution is a perfect point in question. It is widely accepted that the changes it brings in are a good and necessary step forward. The first constitution was voted on by students and failed to pass: a clear sign of democracy working as the resulting amended document brought back in Welfare posts onto the Senate, granting them the influence they deserve. Although both Armstrong and Thwaites-McGowan, the key authors of the original document, had no role in the timing of the second constitution being resubmitted, the way in which the voting was handled has brought yet more confusion to an issue which most students feel sick of. Simply put, you can't change the way in which student votes and the implementation of democracy are interpreted, however good or honourable the cause.

The constitution should not have passed, and the discussion of abstentions and whether they count should have come as a separate issue afterwards. Then it could have been done in an in-depth manner, and avoided accusations that it is all part of a legacy plan. If the ideas are good enough then what is the problem with planning for the long term and putting it through later in the year. Rich Croker has already expressed his support for the plans, so what difference does one year make? If it means getting the process done in a just and democratic way, and avoiding accusations of sab-batage officers wanting to make their 'visible mark' on the Union, then it is a surely worth the wait.

Similarly, the role of e-voting has brought into question the election results. Whilst those involved in the complaints, and those such as Colin Hindson who have distanced themselves from any action, are not challenging the eventual result, the fact that students who voted did not understand the system, some finding their ballot paper spoilt, means an air of distrust has been created around the whole process. Again e-voting is a good idea that will save the Union valuable funds in the long term, and has also boosted participation, but elections are just too important for these questions to be hanging over them. The vast majority of students accept Croker as their President-elect, but problems resulting through haste have once again devalued and overshadowed the positive work that is being done by this years team.

Letters

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

Win!

Best letter receives a party camera from Snappy Snaps



Star letter

Thespian has the Last Word

At the risk of being accused of having a thespian tantrum, I am writing in response to last issue's 'Blag Your Degree' column: Writing and Performance. In a self important piece journalistic snideness worthy of *York Vision*, the writer proceeded to air his/her badly spelt, factually incorrect venom in such a way that this usually witty article was completely undermined.

I can only assume that the writer was consistently cast as the 'Third Shepherd' in the school nativity play and has since harboured an envious

hatred for the talented. Firstly, Writing and Performance is not 'actually a degree' as is, it is available and a joint honours BA course alongside English Literature, with W&P modules approaching texts intended for performance from an analytic perspective. Non academic indeed.

Secondly, with over 600 applicants each year for 25 places, English/Writing and Performance is the most competitive Arts course in the country, including English at Oxbridge. Just ask the plethora of WAPPers on *Nouse's* editorial team. As for being 'capable of passing any Writing and Performance exam' simply by watching *Neighbours* or owning Sky TV, well that's just ridiculous. There are no exams in Writing and Performance.

Ben Wilcock
Comment sent via email

Tories speak on lecturer strike

With regards to the current Association of University Teachers (AUT) industrial action, we are disgusted that the government has allowed it to come to this. Whether or not you agree that striking is the right solution is not the most important issue here. The fact that lecturers feel that this is their only option shows dereliction of duty on the part of their employers.

A high standard of university teaching is absolutely vital to the United Kingdom in an ever more competitive world and this absolutely cannot be maintained without equally competitive salaries. If the levels of pay currently given to academic staff continue, then we will see an ever accelerating brain drain across the Atlantic to the United States,

and more and more of the country's best and brightest will decide to seek alternate careers. The resulting decline in the standards and reputation of British universities will do far more damage to the value of our degrees than the strike action will do.

Tuition fees were championed by the government as a means of preventing the decline of our university standards, if this influx of new money cannot provide academics with equivalent pay to other equally skilled professions then the money seems to have been completely wasted.

Serious reform of our higher education system is needed in order to cope with increased student numbers living in an increasingly competitive world. It is growing ever more clear that our present government is not up to the task they are faced with.

**University of York
Conservative Association**



Housing worry

The lack of campus accommodation for returning students is absolutely ridiculous. I'm on a years placement, with no chance of being able to move in with friends (as they're all graduating next year) so I either have to move in with people I don't know, or rent a flat on my own. Either way my results will suffer as I'll either be working part-time for more hours, or fighting with a bunch of equally disgruntled people I don't really know.

The uni should make more of an effort to arrange housing for people with nowhere to live - I'm not suggesting that they subsidise us, but it'd be nice to have a little help just FINDING somewhere!

Isa Smith
Comment left on website

Privacy issue

Rob McMillan has raised interesting points ["Internet success story google damaged by privacy battle" *Nouse*, Feb. 2006]. Previously, many were largely ignorant of the issue regarding information held by Google on it's users.

It seems vitally important that we are aware of what Google is storing on us, as to my knowledge, there is no obvious disclaimer on the site that indicates they will be holding our info. Additionally if a company is able to have such a huge effect on the business of BMW, then surely something should be in place to ensure that it is unable to control the market.

Oliver Turner
Comment left on website

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 support the lecturers in their strike action?
2. How do you feel about campus bar closures?

3. Did you cast a vote in this years Students' Union elections?
4. Do you think abstentions should count in the constitution ballot?



Name: Diane Propsting
College: Vanbrough
Course: History
Year: 2nd Year



Name: Liam Baker
College: Derwent
Course: Economics
Year: 1st Year



Name: Jenny English
College: Halifax
Course: Psychology
Year: 3rd Year

1. Yes I think they deserve more money. Well some departments at least anyway!
2. It is really bad. Students should have a place to go. They haven't given good enough reasons.
3. No. To be honest the fliers didn't really help me understand. I think it needs better advertising.
4. If they want all students to get involved they should let every vote count.

1. I don't honestly think they get paid enough. I say give it to them, as long as money isn't taken out of sports.
2. Well, it's clearly detrimental to college spirit so I'm not happy about it at all.
3. Yes I did. I really wanted Rich Croker to win. He is such legend, and has better hair than me!
4. I think they should count because they still show someone trying to make a point.

1. Obviously I want to graduate this year, but if they need to take action they need to take action I guess.
2. It's not necessarily bad if some close at some times of the week. But all colleges should have a central meeting place.
3. Yes, although I do think the SU can appear very cliquey and this might put some people off.
4. No, and I think the way the SU decided was the right thing to do.

Arsenal FC's failure to field English talent has negative implications for the domestic game

By Robert Cantarero
SPORTS CORRESPONDANT

THERE WAS a general hype in the British footballing world following the qualification of four British teams out of five to the last 16 of the Champions League. The optimism after England's last-gasp win against Argentina, and the fact that two British players had made it to the podium for the 2005 Ballon D'Or Award indicated that the British Leagues (but more specifically the English League) was taking huge steps forward in the quality of its players and profile abroad.

Now, three months later, we have only one British representative in the Champions League, if "British" is the adjective you want to give to an Arsenal side who haven't fielded a single British player in its starting line up since the February 4 win away to Birmingham and didn't see any British players in action in the tie with Real Madrid.

The number of foreigners in European leagues nowadays is an issue which concerns big and small clubs alike, but Arsenal have got to the point of ridiculousness. West Ham manager Alan Pardew, who does have foreign players in the squad, but keeps a good crop of English players too, accused Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger of "jeopardising 'the soul of English football'", underlining the fact that it is impor-

tant that top clubs especially shouldn't forget that "it's the English Premier League and that English players should be involved". Having a foreign manager does not justify Arsenal's situation. Jose Mourinho's Chelsea, together with their array of superstars, have a healthy number of Englishmen in their squad, some of them in the first team (Terry, Lampard, Cole). Equally, Martin Jol's Tottenham has Robinson, King, Dawson, Jenas and Carrick in the starting line

"The FA should set a minimum number of English Players at every club"

up with Defoe on the bench, and five of these are in England's senior team.

PFA chief Gordon Taylor also showed his disapproval after Arsenal's tendency to just field foreigners: "Arsenal getting to the Champions League quarter-finals was not an English success, but a reflection of the talent of youngsters from France and elsewhere in Europe"; he offered a pessimistic form of hope however, suggesting that "If England don't do well at the World Cup there may be a greater willingness to address the situation."

One of the reasons why Premiership managers do not buy British is because it has proven to be so expensive. Pardew, for one, had to splash out £7million for Under-21 striker Dean Ashton. He maintains however that "top clubs should not lose sight that it's the Premier League and English players should be rightly involved", adding that "the FA should set a minimum number of English players at every professional club". Arsene Wenger, in response to Pardew's criticism, replied by saying that Arsenal do have English players in their squad (Cole, Campbell, Walcott) but that Arsenal "represent a football club and not passports", and that "football is about quality, and nothing else."

The English Premiership, since its creation in 1992 has seen plenty of foreign players make a massive contribution towards not only the quality but also the profile of the English game abroad - Zola, Cantona, Bergkamp, Klinsmann, Schmeichel, Di Canio and Henry to name just a few. But the Premiership not only risks losing its English spirit by seeing an excessive number of foreigners in its squads, but may also compromise the future of talented English youngsters who, because of this, risk not being able to break into a squad in their homeland.



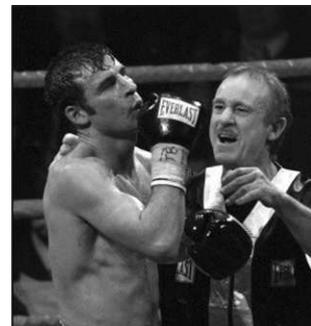
Arsenal did not field one homegrown player in their recent Real Madrid clash

Boxers overlooked as role models

By Sean Henderson
SPORTS CORRESPONDANT

LET ME INTRODUCE you to a world champion in a sport that most people will know, but you will have probably never heard of him. Meet the boxer Joe Calzaghe. Last Saturday Calzaghe won his second championship belt and became the IBF and WBO Super Middleweight champion of the World. He is now ranked first by two of the four sanctioning bodies and he is ranked third by one and fifth by the other. Think he's a new boy? He's been boxing professionally for 12 and a half years and has held his WBO championship for the last 8. Just to put that into a boxing context, Calzaghe has been champion of the world for longer than Ricky Hatton has been fighting professionally and before Amir Kahn was even in high school. He saw off Chris

Eubank to win his WBO belt and has seen the likes of Nasseem Hammed come and



Calzaghe wins second belt

go. He has consistently been top of his game for 8 years and hardly anybody knows who he is. And he's British.

Calzaghe is hugely respected within the sport. Boxing fans will know him well; he's a super-fast southpaw with the stamina to match. He can keep up the pace for the full twelve rounds where most opponents will be flapping by the

eleventh. He has never lost a professional fight. 41 wins out of 41 over a 12 and a half year career. The fight on Saturday was one of the best boxing displays I have seen since the Lewis-Tyson fight that effectively ended Tyson's career. He pummelled Lacy for 12 rounds non-stop and won every round on points, which is rare in boxing, after going into the fight as the underdog. After the fight, Barry McGuigan rated him pound for pound in the top 6 boxers in the world, quite a complement from a famous ex-world featherweight champion and Britain's leading boxing critic. Most of the boxers you can recall are probably not as good as him. Ricky Hatton is on a similar level to Calzaghe, holding 3 championship belts in his respective weight but has not fought for as long, and he holds Calzaghe in very high esteem. He is one of the

longest standing British champions we have and in one of the toughest sports. Calzaghe is comparable to Tiger Woods in golf but we have never really heard of him. In my opinion, he is the most underrated sportsman we have.

So how is it that he has been overlooked? Media coverage could be a possibility. We have seen many sports come into fashion and disappear as quickly. Remember curling in Nagano? If you don't I would propose that you knew all about it at the time. We always seem to resort back to football for our 'sports' coverage. I would argue that we sometimes make heroes out of the wrong type of people. Take Robben or Drogba from Chelsea. They cheat every week by diving and roll around like they have been shot. On Monday morning, children go to school think-

ing that cheating to win is ok. I take the point that if we followed boxing as a national sport then children might think it is ok to fight each other but there is an honour and virtue in Boxing that a lot of people miss. There is a beauty in the beast. Boxing is still upstanding in maintaining the basic founding principle of sport; let the best man win in a fair contest. Unfortunately, this is something we seldom see in some of our mainstream sports.

The BBC's Sports Personality of the Year is the best example of how the media influence our choice of sporting 'heroes'. This year's winner, Andrew Flintoff, beat the three-time World champion Ricky Hatton to the prize. Flintoff was outstanding in the Ashes but when the romance of the long, lost summer is behind us we are left asking what, in real terms, has he done to

justify the acclaim when the England team are struggling and the prospects for the Ashes in 18 months time are not looking good. We got caught in the romance. Maybe we love it too much when the underdog wins. So why don't we glorify Joe Calzaghe and our other great champions? Maybe his success is his biggest failing.

Maybe also our attitudes towards Boxing are too cynical. The truth is that all of our Boxing champions are normal, working class boys who have worked hard to achieve their goals. They are the perfect role models. They show that you can achieve anything if you want to. So maybe we should be looking more towards our true champions. So if there is British success in Germany in the summer, don't forget our other World Champions when you're toasting our winners.

Surf Club compete in their first BUSA event



York University surfer, Alwyn Spencer, prepares for the BUSA tournament in the sunnier climate of California

Alwyn Spencer
SPORTS CORRESPONDANT

THE SURF CLUB has come a long way over the last three years, from humble beginnings as a group of students seeking "the supreme pleasure of being driven so fast and so smoothly by the sea" that Captain James Cook observed when watching surfers on a visit to Hawaii to an fully fledged AU club with regular trips to the closest surf spots.

After two years spent on the sidelines, surfing and mingling with other universities at the BUSA Universities Surfing Championship, March 2006 saw the first ever entry from a team under the York banner. Nick Maxwell, Alwyn Spencer, Jon Stammers and Nick Ward-Foxton formed York's first ever surf team

and took the water undeterred by their underdog status and the bemusement of some rival teams at the York entry. Despite some large swells, conditions were far from ideal, with strong currents making it difficult to stay within the designated competition area, crosswinds and cold water combining to make the 15 minute heats very intense for competitors, and the experience and talent of the more established teams soon began to tell. Nick Maxwell, Alwyn Spencer and Jon Stammers were all eliminated in the first round (despite edging out surfers from some big teams), leaving Nick Ward-Foxton as the lone team member as he progressed to the second round of heats on the following day with an excellent heat win.

With deteriorating con-

ditions, it soon became apparent that surfers were going to have to be at their best in order to progress, being required to compete in up to six 15 minute heats in order to take the title. Nick Ward-Foxton gave a highly impressive display of duck-diving, paddling and wave selection, and was placed second in his second heat before finally

being eliminated in the third round, narrowly edged into third place in a very close heat and finishing a creditable 17th overall in a field of just under 250 that contained three professional surfers and the reigning champion. The tournament was eventually won by Matt Le Maitre of Plymouth who bettered his rivals in a close-

ly fought final, laying down a series of powerful snaps and slashing cutbacks to take the title with a radical display of new-school surfing, also helping Plymouth Team A to take the title for the third year running. In the ladies division, Ulster University's Shauna Ward, the reigning Irish Women's Champion, claimed the Ladies' Open

title in impressive style. Overall, it was a highly successful debut for the University of York team and it will be returning next year to build on this success. However, ideally York's 2007 entrants will include more entrants and a women's team competing alongside the men, as this popular AU society continue to grow.

League victory for Men's Lacrosse team sets up top two clash against arch-rivals

Edward Cassels
SPORTS CORRESPONDANT

THE YORK LACROSSE team has had the most successful season of any of the clubs in the AU. This is a fact. In the League, they have carried all before them, notably destroying Lancaster and Newcastle.

Both these teams were completely outclassed throughout the season, with scores as high as 17-1 and 9-0 in York's favour. Against Durham it has been much tougher. Every successful sports team needs a nemesis, an agreed rival who provides a real challenge, and in the case of the York Lacrosse team, this is Durham. They have a professional coach, imported American players, and they are captained by the identical twin of our England international defenseman, Chris Armstrong. In York's first game of the season, on Durham's Maiden Castle playing fields, they were nar-

rowly beaten 4-6. This made the return match, on the 22 acres, an incredibly important one for York, and it was here that the tone was set for the rest of the season, with a fantastic game ending 6-3 in York's favour. There was not to be a similarly challenging game for the rest of the season in fact, and York's unbroken succession of victories and massively superior goal difference means the League has now been won, even though the last game, fittingly against Durham, is yet to be played. If anyone wants to witness one of the best Lacrosse matches you can see in England, then they should come down to the 22 acres early next term, and watch York's yellow and blues take on the Durham purples.

In addition to the League is the Northern Universities Lacrosse Tournament, which was held on Sunday 19th of February in Newcastle. York, Durham,

Newcastle, Lancaster, Leeds, Stirling, Glasgow and Edinburgh fought it out in shortened 15-minute matches on a rainy day, and on pitches that increasingly resembled a cowfield. Newcastle seemed to have placed themselves in an easier group, with Lancaster, Stirling and Glasgow, and as a result, two of the better teams of the tournament, Leeds and Edinburgh, went home early when they probably deserved to stay. Leeds managed to beat Durham 2-1 in the group stage, although they lost both other matches, and Edinburgh, a thoroughly decent team, were unlucky to lose all three of their games. In the short 15-minute matches, maintaining intensity for every second of the game was vital, and when Durham came out all guns blazing, scoring two goals in the first few minutes, York were able to post only one in reply, despite a strong fightback. Having beaten

Leeds 4-1 (four goals being an impressive tally in 15 minutes), and Edinburgh 2-1, they went through as runner's up, however, and put Newcastle in their place in the first elimination stage. Durham can only really have seen Glasgow as pre-match practice for the final that everyone had known was on the cards from the start of the tournament. The final, a longer 20-minute match, was as tense a game as this writer has ever played. With the ground a morass that made quick moves around the crease of the goal extremely difficult, defending was a grim business, and attacking turned into a gritty sloggy match. Suddenly Twinny Armstrong's familiar tongue-in-cheek exhortations of "play up, play up and play the game!" seemed to be taking on a distinctly Somme-like relevance. At one point, play was even stopped because the fist-sized rubber ball had been

NULT Champions York			
York vs. Durham			
York vs. Newcastle		Durham vs. Glasgow	
A	Durham York Leeds Edinburgh	B	Newcastle Glasgow Stirling Lancaster

'mired', that is pushed so far into the mud that the violent ground balls became a shovelling contest. In this environment, Bill Parker showed his outstanding class to score with a ripper of an underarm shot after five minutes, in virtually York's only attacking play of the match. Durham had done a fantastic job of retaining possession and continued to do so, mounting a ceaseless assault on the York goal that lasted fully 15 minutes. York's defence, based around Twinny, Joe Hedges, Neil Murray and Ben Mills, is

widely acknowledged to be among the best that a British University possesses, and they did themselves proud, staving off the Durham attack in the face of all adversity, and holding out for a 1-0 win. In winning the highest available accolades in a physically tough and extremely skilful sport, the York Lacrosse team has proved itself to be among the best teams that the University possesses. I can only hope this results in a wider recognition from the AU and the general student population.

York City continue good form in campaign for Conference promotion

Ben Masters
SPORTS CORRESPONDANT

THE REMARKABLE turn around of events at Kit-Kat Crescent gathered pace on Saturday with York City registering a 1-0 win against mid-table Kent side Gravesend and Northfleet. James Dudgeon's header on nine minutes was enough to secure all three points in a game where City failed to produce an especially flowing performance - but that will hardly bother manager Billy McEwan as his side chalked up their sixth successive win.

A season that was stumbling towards an innocuous mid-table finish in January has been revitalised by recent good form and York now find themselves in fourth place and inside the play-offs, the winner of which will be promoted to League Two. As many as five teams below the Minstermen also hold play-off hopes in a congested upper half of the table but City fans are becoming increasingly confident that York can maintain their late season promotion push. In no small measure this is due to the goal scoring prowess of Clayton Donaldson and in particular Andy Bishop, whose seven goals in the last six games have propelled him to top of

the Conference top scorers chart.

Bishop's future at York is unclear - he has yet to be offered a new contract for next season - but former Hull City striker Donaldson is proving himself a favourite with both fans and manager. Speaking on national radio station talkSport, Billy McEwan went as far as to compare Donaldson's development with his ex-Derby County colleague and current Costa Rica international Paulo Wanchope, and City fans will be hoping his impact can lead to League Two football.

Promotion would certainly ease the financial problems that continue to plague York. A £100,000 repayment instalment of a £2m loan from the Football Federation is now overdue and fans are again being asked to help out. Significantly, this is due to the Kit-Kat Crescent playing surface needing changing during the summer - despite the pitch being in no worse state than has been at Stamford Bridge of late - and the £10,000 needed for this has led to the ever growing sight of buckets around the ground in the form of the 'Pitch in a Pound' campaign. During the recent home game against Forest Green Rovers this raised in excess



York City FC dominate Gravesend and Northfleet in Kit-Kat Crescent contest despite winning by a single goal.

of £2,000.

The financial constraints on McEwan make City's recent revival even the more impressive and the York faithful can count themselves fortunate that

the Scot has thrown himself into a club that at one stage last season was threatened with relegation to the Conference North.

Attracting experienced players to York has proved

tricky. This is to a large extent the result of, and as McEwan himself has stated, new players' signing-on fees take the form of a Kit-Kat rather than pound sterling - but in last-minute January

transfer window acquisition Neil Bishop the Minstermen seem to have found some much needed strength in midfield.

York City's forthcoming games will ultimately decide whether or not a play-off place is secured. Grays Athletic hover dangerously just beneath the play-off zone with a game in hand and York City's next home game is against runaway leaders Accrington Stanley. Coupled with a devilish last three games York City's task is thus a difficult one but with the energy of McEwan, and the bonus of a prolific front-line, there is every chance the York City Minstermen could be appearing in the Conference play-off final on May 20th.

Cryptic Crossword

Tuesday 14th March, set by Cornius

Across

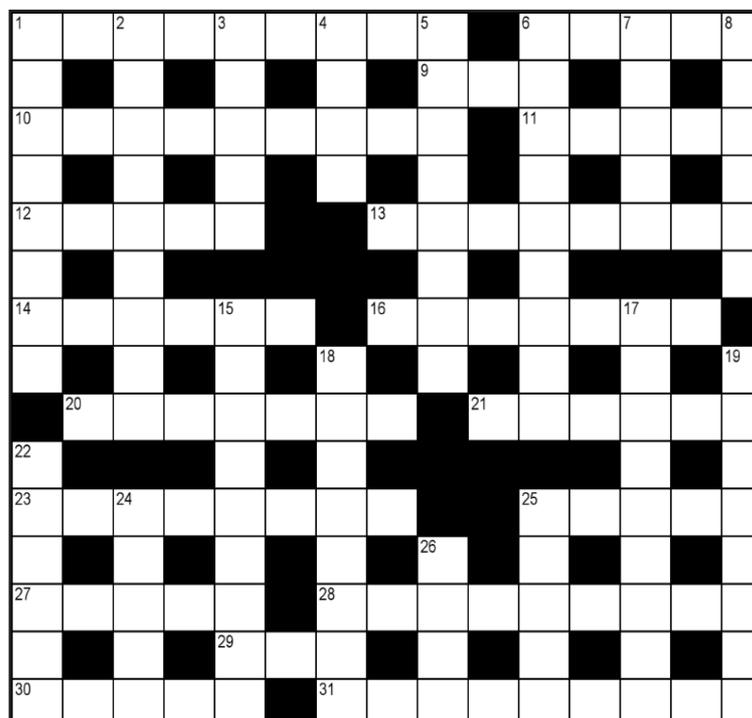
1. Experienced member of 6, 10, 15, 16, 19, 22 or 23? (9)
6. Preserve points for college (5)
9. Spell makes goddess lose her head (3)
10. Start song about Wakeman's college (9)
11. Arrived with nothing in guest appearance (5)
12. China lost heads of provincial rice loading industry to the Atlantic (5)
13. Set up scrabble for English student? (8)
14. The Spanish crook's joints (6)
16. College bank (7)
20. Topless broad in hovel is smelly (7)
21. A green discolouration of many types of animals (6)

23. Many thawing out in college (8)
25. Reach for cold member (5)
27. Supporter hides in colour Germans wear (5)
28. Evil tunes for a vampiric creature (9)
29. Draw a match (3)
30. Initially not one to court heartthrobs, but now one of many found on lothario's bedpost (5)
31. Conceal no colours in this laundry run (9)

Down

1. Raised animal to be adored after gauntlet's laid down (8)
2. Boo! Destiny is awful without constant help (2, 4, 3)
3. Old episode of E.R. shown in cycle (5)

- Corrode alien church (4)
5. Number of drinks called for when "not drinking" (8)
6. Card king rips up fine for weapon (9)
7. Chairman embraces doctor for a dance (5)
8. Turbulent tale about Maidenhead (6)
15. You and I neglect hollow quality of college (9)
17. Uncle Sam's way of life: reforming drinkers embrace violent crime before next autumn starts (9)
18. How are things going with Derby's novel? (5, 3)
19. College truck initially hideous after grub decomposed (8)
22. College from local uni is a shambles when heads of laundry office go missing (6)



24. Close to time when you sleep (5)
25. Paper pancake (5)
26. "___ _ boy!" pick up the wine (4)

Cryptic clues involve a definition part and a cryptic part. Explanations can be found at www.nouse.co.uk.



With AU President Nik Engineer will return next edition



Uncontested AU Presidency election victory for Tom Moore

By Sam Cartwright
SPORTS EDITOR

THIS WEEK'S Student Union elections saw Tom Moore voted in as AU President as the sole candidate for the position. The AU Referees Coordinator stood alone in an election campaign that produced intense competition for many of the other Union posts.

Despite the inevitability of his success, a none-the-less jubilant Tom Moore admitted to being "really nervous" in the run up to his success on Friday, and even expressed a wish that others had run for the post. This sentiment is likely to have been shared by the AU.

With the elections over, Moore can now look forward to a year which promises good things for the AU. York is to host this year's Roses clash with rivals Lancaster, an event that the new AU

President claims to be "coming along nicely".

To Moore, however, continuing the "good work" of this year's President Nik Engineer promises to be his biggest challenge, with increasing University sport's standing in the eyes of the University. "The University has a tendency to focus on the academic side of the University" claimed Moore, and as such his priority for the year will be to continue to convince them that "sport is important too."

Moore however does not consider the widely publicised lack of funding this year to have warranted the attention that it has received. Indeed, for Moore, the supposed underfunding has only really manifested itself in the realm of transport - a problem more than outweighed by the significant expansion of facilities, most important of which being the eventual

completion of the light-weight structure on Heslington campus.

Despite its "early teething problem" Moore considers this to have been a great success, offering greater opportunities for training time for sports teams on both a University and college level. One of Moore's priorities will be to push for a continuation of this funding. Other priorities will be to ensure that students are the main beneficiaries of such investments, with "less time for the public and more for the students", and a greater emphasis on college sport.

In light of such an involved campaign, the AU does not seem to have been disadvantaged by the uncontested election for Presidency, and can instead look forward to a promising year, both in terms of funding and sport itself.



Tom Moore in full swing at the results night in Derwent bar. Photo by Adam Sloan

AU press ahead with electronic vote

Sam Cartwright
SPORTS EDITOR

THE ATHLETICS UNION is to press ahead with the installation of the electronic voting system in this year's second phase of elections. The decision has been made to do this despite the problems experienced by the Students Union at last week's elections, which saw complaints being made to the Services Officer, questioning the reliability of the system.

A lack of understanding of the electronic voting system at this year's SU election has been blamed by some members of the student body for the election controversy. This is all the more significant given that eventual winner of the Presidency Rich Coker won by a mere 33 votes.

Despite this controversy, the decision has been made by the AU to implement the same system for next term's AU elections, at

which positions such as Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary will be decided upon. "Voting will be online this year" was Nik engineer's definitive answer on the subject. The AU President's confidence in the system is perhaps justified given that unlike with the AU Presidency vote, only the AU are in a position to vote at the second phase of elections, reducing the scope for error. It does however raise the issue of how to ensure

that only the AU vote online.

For this, the AU plans to cross reference those who vote with the database of fully-paid AU members. Indeed, though the system is not fully in place yet, Nik Engineer, does not consider it to be a problem at all, and considers the new system to have been a "fantastic success, as it has functioned flawlessly." The system has the added benefit of saving the Students Union £4,000 a year.

All the elections of positions, except the (already decided) position of Presidency are to see a reshuffle, as the AU seeks to increase the professionalism of the occasion. For the first time, the elections will not take place at the customary AGM, but will take place on a date of their own. Newly elected AU President Tom Moore hopes this will result in a "more official" air to proceedings. Though current AU President Nik Engineer

claims it is "impossible to gauge" the numbers of candidates for the vacant posts within the AU, the amount of interest expressed has been "no less than normal, or perhaps a little more than normal". President-in-waiting Tom Moore was similarly enthused by the extent of the interest. This is an encouraging fact that perhaps suggests the uncontested AU Presidency elections are to prove to be something of an aberration.

