

NOUSE



'When you see what's going on in the world, you've got this rage. My therapy for that is to write songs.'
Manu Chao >>M9

Ex-student pleads guilty to charge of conspiracy to defraud University

- Askerov and accomplice admit attempt to cheat in exam
- Judge refuses to rule out possibility of prison sentences

Henry James Foy
NEWS EDITOR

A FORMER York student and his accomplice have pleaded guilty to one charge of conspiracy to defraud the University, and will return to court next month facing potential jail terms.

Judge Stephen Ashcroft, who presided over the hearing at York Crown Court, said: "All sentences, including custody, will be considered," adding that it was "an unusual yet serious case of dishonesty."

Elnar Askerov, 22, from Azerbaijan, and his French accomplice Jerome Drean, 34, stood charged on Monday 11 January with 10 counts of fraud against the University of York, dating from January 2006 to May 2007.

The pair pleaded not guilty to the nine other charges, relating to eight dates on which Drean is accused of impersonating Askerov in examinations. The men bear no physical resemblance to each other.

The fraud charge to which the pair pleaded guilty

included charges of acquiring a University of York identification card with intent to defraud the University.

Drean, who previously held senior positions in the investment teams of Credit Suisse and Bank of America, was also charged with two counts of possessing criminal assets totalling £20,000, believed to have been paid to him by Askerov, who now lives in London. Drean pleaded not guilty to both of these additional charges.

Both men were arrested at the University on 11 May 2007, when it is alleged Drean was caught impersonating Askerov in his final year Economics exam. University of York Press Officer David Garner declined to comment before the case is formally closed.

Defending Askerov, Alexander Cameron QC notified the court that his client "did not conceive [his actions] to be a criminal offence." He added that the best outcome of the case would be that the legal position on academic misconduct would be clearer.

Both men spoke only to respond "guilty" or "not

guilty" to the charges read against them. Askerov was impassive throughout the hearing while Drean was visibly agitated.

The case now proceeds to a further hearing in the week beginning February 25, at which the judge will deliver a pre-sentencing report. Both defendants had their bail extended until that date.

Cameron requested that Judge Ashcroft sentence the pair during the hearing, and remove the need for the adjournment. "Is it in the public interests and the interests of the public purse to adjourn to a pre-sentencing report?" he asked the court.

Cameron, who travelled from London for the hearing, said that it was difficult to fit accusations of cheating in a university exam into the criminal justice system, and urged Judge Ashcroft to impose justice with a "financial penalty or unpaid work in the community."

Judge Ashcroft rejected this suggestion on the basis that it "would be eliminating certain sentencing options,"

>> continued on page 2



Ex-student Elnar Askerov (right) and accomplice Jerome Drean leaving York Crown Court

YUSU officer to face no confidence vote

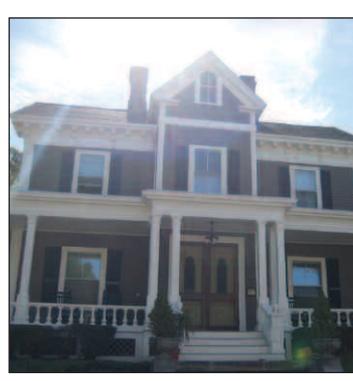
YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer Grace Fletcher-Hackwood is set to face a no confidence vote in the next UGM after a student she assaulted submitted a motion against her. She has thus far resisted calls for her resignation.

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University cited in report on arms trade

The University of York has been criticised in a report on the relationship between UK universities and the arms industry. York took £7.7m in funding from defence companies to carry out 59 research projects between 2001 and 2006.

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Finding a house

Nouse presents the definitive guide on how to find not just a decent house, but a happy home. Our step-by-step guide will take the stress out of house-hunting.

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Netball hat-trick win over Varsity rivals

All three University netball teams defeated rivals York St John to secure an important psychological victory in the run up to the annual Varsity tournament in February. The 1sts match was hard fought but strong shooting late in the game secured a 32-30 win.

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Rising Hes East prices spark worries of campus inequality

Sian Turner
STAFF REPORTER

GOODRICKE STUDENTS moving to the Heslington East development in 2009 look set to face higher accommodation fees to compensate for rising construction costs.

The campus expansion project, which began in 2007 at a cost of £500 million, will become the new home of Goodricke College by next year. However, the cost of the build looks set to disadvantage students financially.

Speaking at Senate last week, YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning revealed that "the rents on Heslington East would be higher than anywhere on Heslington West."

"This build has cost a lot of money and it has to, basically, wash its own face," she added.

In order to maximise the profitability of accommodation in Heslington East, plans have been put forward to make all rooms en suite, or to charge an equal fee for both standard and en suite rooms.

The move has sparked great debate within the Union, creating fears that a situation of 'Collegeopoly' will develop, with only the wealthiest students able to afford the newer, 'Mayfair-style' accommodation.

"We went through this campaign for differential rent years ago



GEORGE LOWTHER

Rising costs of the Heslington East development could push up accommodation charges in the near future

and for a reason," said YUSU Services and Finance Officer Matt Burton, "and that was to prevent different colleges becoming different classes. I think that by differentiating rents it would become a situation of the rich and the poor."

YUSU Environment and Ethics Officer Tom Langley echoed Burton's comments, saying: "You're looking at a university where you have segregation according to ability to pay. I personally find it a really horrifying thought and I don't like the idea of basically having

people in ghettos according to what they can and cannot afford."

Canning also expressed concern the divide could grow. "It poses the question about having two campuses," she said. "which is a real worry actually, creating an old and a new campus, a rich and a poor campus."

YUSU Societies and Communications Officer Sam Bayley believes that the divide could lead to falling standards of maintenance in existing colleges.

"If rents on Campus West are

lower, the pressure is on the university to keep refurbishing and improving other colleges," he said. "The issue is that some colleges, like Derwent, may fall behind on their maintenance in comparison to Hes East."

The suggestion of the university abolishing the 33 week let on Hes East was also criticised, with some claiming that it would cause a decline in the cultural diversity of Goodricke College.

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Hitch to Morocco fails ratification tests

This year's Hitch to Morocco will not take place with the backing of YUSU after it was deemed too great a risk to Union liability. The decision was made after YUSU Communications and Societies Officer Sam Bayley described the Hitch's destination as "too much of a risk", and it was revealed that the Union's insurance does not cover the kind of risks undertaken by participants. Despite the decision, YUSU continues to support the initiative, providing them with free advertising and use of university rooms. "We don't have any problem with their aims and objectives," said Bayley, "and they're working for a worthy cause."

Derwent kitchens hit by microwave arson

Residents of Derwent C and D blocks face disciplinary action after a series of explosive incidents involving foodstuffs in their microwaves. During the early hours of Friday January 18, a can, a bottle of gin and a variety of foods were exploded in microwaves in the block kitchens, causing extensive damage. Derwent Provost Ron Weir warned: "If the facilities continue to be used inappropriately, they will be removed," while Administrator Chris Unwin told residents that "these incidents are highly dangerous and whoever is responsible is putting the lives of their fellow residents, at risk." A culprit is yet to be identified.

University bridges to remain closed

Two major bridges on campus have been closed following a structural survey which revealed "concerns about their loading." University Press Officer Dave Garner said that "the University decided to err on the side of caution and close them. We will either refurbish the bridges or adopt some other approach." However, a notice on the Vanbrugh to Goodricke bridge suggests that a decision has already been made and that "the bridge will be subject to building work prior to its removal." Garner attempted to reassure students that a solution would be sought as quickly as possible.

Reporting by Jennifer O'Mahony, Peter Campbell and Chris Etheridge

Cheating student pleads guilty to fraud charge

<< Continued from front

and that he wanted to be confident he had read and considered all the material involved. Describing it as a case with "unique features" and "very few precedents," he again refused to rule out any potential sentences.

In light of the guilty plea, the prosecution, lead by Simon Kealey QC, called on Drean to forfeit

£16,000 to the court within 56 days. Drean had previously forfeited £4,000.

Few details of the pair's relationship emerged during the hearing. It remains unclear as to why former investment banker Drean involved himself with Askerov.

This case follows a similar, though unrelated offence by another York student, Qiu Shi Zhang and accomplice Xian

Zhang. They were convicted and sentenced for fraud after being arrested at the same exam in May.

The two Chinese students, who pleaded guilty to multiple fraud charges, were sentenced to 100 hours of community service each.

Both Askerov and Qiu Shi were expelled from the University due to the severity of their offences.

YUSU Academic and Welfare

Officer Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, commenting on the guilty plea, said: "We are pleased that this has been uncovered. If students are getting away with fraud it lowers the quality of degrees achieved by honest, hardworking students. If students feel that their exams are going to go badly and are so desperate they turn to such measures, they should seek help from their department or from us."

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Nouse sweeps up the tinsel and pine-needles and takes an offbeat look at the festive season; first at the thankless world of professional elfing, then at the difficulties of following New Year's resolutions.

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Fletcher-Hackwood defiant in the face of looming no confidence vote

Jonathan Fransman
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

YUSU ACADEMIC and Welfare Officer Grace Fletcher-Hackwood is set to face a vote of no confidence at the next UGM after admitting assaulting a student. A member of YUSU Senate has broken ranks to call for her resignation.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, the officer said they thought Fletcher-Hackwood would not survive the vote. "I don't think she'll make it and she should resign. I think it's quite serious and it undermines her position, it undermines the Union and her position is untenable," they said.

Fletcher-Hackwood has said repeatedly that she will not resign over the incident, saying: "inappropriate" is the most serious word you could use to describe it. As far as I'm concerned the matter is now over."

The assaulted individual, second year History and Politics student Dan Taylor, said that Fletcher-Hackwood must "seriously consider her position." Taylor said he plans to submit the motion of no confidence to the next UGM, which will take place on January 30.

YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning has thus far stood behind her, saying: "I have full confidence that Grace can fulfil her academic and welfare role, and I think she is doing a great job for students. However, if Dan wants to take the matter any further, I will go through the whole complaints procedure with him and investi-

gate the incident fully."

JCRC Chairs have also spoken out on the issue. Derwent Chair Oliver Lester described Fletcher-Hackwood's actions as "disgraceful" and said: "people should actually consider whether she can continue in her role. If a lecturer or a tutor actually hit a student, I expect they would be asked to leave the University, and in this sense it's kind of the same. If a YUSU employee punched a student it's completely unacceptable."

Halifax President Dave Sharpe, said that "there definitely needs to be some action taken," and that Fletcher-Hackwood will "have to do a lot of work to get students' trust back". This view was echoed by James Chair Chet Khatu who said that Fletcher-Hackwood had "let the University down as a role model."

Vanbrugh Chair Matt Oliver said: "There should be serious consideration as to whether the Union feels she is able to continue in her role." He added that he felt it was important for the JCRC chairs to present a "united front" on the issue in the event of formal action being taken against Fletcher-Hackwood.

All students will have the opportunity to vote on the motion in the UGM. If passed, Fletcher-Hackwood would be removed from her post. Current constitutional arrangements mean that it is unlikely the post would be filled until the beginning of the next academic year.

According to second year Derwent student Adam Clark, who was with Taylor at the time,

the incident occurred at roughly 1.30am outside Derwent bar during the Chav-D event. Taylor and a friend had been ejected from the event by doorstaff earlier, and met Fletcher-Hackwood after she followed them out of the venue.

Taylor said Fletcher-Hackwood taunted him for being thrown out and he responded by pointing out she had been carried out of the last Club-D event for excessive drunkenness.

By both Taylor's and Clark's account, the argument escalated, and on making a comment regarding ethical merchandise, Fletcher-Hackwood punched Taylor in the ear.

Fletcher-Hackwood maintains that "there is absolutely no way that I would try to hurt anyone" and that she did not intend to injure Taylor. When questioned with regards to the details of the incident, Fletcher-Hackwood admitted she did not remember the event. By her own admittance, Fletcher-Hackwood was extremely inebriated during the Chav-D event.

Fletcher-Hackwood said her and Taylor's relationship "should be taken into account" although "it should not be considered less of an incident because of who it is". She admitted that they have a relationship of "mutual disagreement". Facebook groups have appeared supporting and condemning Fletcher-Hackwood.

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COMMENT >> Page 11



Grace Fletcher-Hackwood has "let the University down," said one college chair

MICHAEL BRUNSDEN

Library budget cut for second time in two years

Alberto Furlan
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE JB MORRELL Library is facing a second round of budget cuts in two years.

The cuts to the library's budget in the last financial year amounted to £500,000, while this year the level of cuts have been reduced to £145,000, bringing the budget for the entire Library for this academic year to approximately £4m.

Library Budget Manager Tracy Stanley said: "What we tried to do as much as we could is protect the information budget, because obviously it has the most impact on students requirements and staff as well. So last year the savings were really achieved by some



The University Library has been hit with further budget cuts

delays in replacing some staff who had left."

Speaking to *Nouse*, Stanley said: "We took some of the savings on our staff, but it would be pretty rou-

tine for us to review all posts every year."

When asked if the information budget, which covers books, electronic journals, binding and document deliv-

ery, had been cut last year, Stanley said: "We did have to make some cuts to the information budget as well, last year we made a cut of £150,000 for the whole information budget." She added that the cuts were spread evenly between all of the University's academic departments.

According to Head Librarian Stephen Town, the decision to cut the Library's budget was made by the University to "cope with a one-year reduction in income." "The cuts aren't really intended to generate investment money," he added.

Contrary to predictions however, last year's financial report shows a growth of £2.7m for the University, compared with the £500,000 of the previous

year. Despite this resounding success, the University Library will still be experiencing cuts in the next two years, albeit smaller ones than were initially projected. The same report quoted the Vice-Chancellor's expenses at £250,000.

Stanley said it was "inevitable" that cuts would affect the Library in the long term, while Town was more confident in the Library's ability to manage the cuts. Both said that the University had actually supplied additional funding in Library areas needing expansion, such as Law and Theatre Film and Television.

"There was some disquiet from departments, but we have assuaged those fears," said Stanley.

Professor Miles Taylor,

Head of History, said his department had not yet been asked to make cuts. He said that if cuts were made "they won't come in areas which affect the student experience". In fact, according to Prof. Taylor, the Library has been able to enlarge the History Department's American History section in the past year. Dr. Simon Parker, Library Fellow of the Sociology department, stated that he was "surprised" to hear of budget cuts to the library.

Town said the Library had received numerous complaints about the availability of texts. Town said the problem is currently undergoing "serious analysis", and a review of the lending process is underway.

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Arms trade report criticises York

UNIVERSITIES RANKED BY MILITARY FUNDING

1. Cranfield University	£382,907,327
2. University of Southampton	£43,251,201
3. University of Cambridge	£42,565,637
4. University of Sheffield	£41,886,131
5. Loughborough University	£29,206,101
6. University of Nottingham	£29,133,566
7. Imperial College London	£24,642,446
8. University of Oxford	£19,222,724
9. University of Liverpool	£17,581,758
10. University of Manchester	£15,812,903
11. Bristol University	£12,109,941
12. University of Birmingham	£11,606,978
13. Newcastle University	£9,129,147
14. University of York	£7,764,687
Source: 'Study War No More' www.studywarnomore.org.uk	

Johnathan Fransman
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY OF York has received just under £8m in funding from British arms companies, according to a recent report.

The report, entitled 'Study War No More', was produced in 2007 by Campaign Against The Arms Trade (CAAT) and the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FoR), and provides details the funding of military research and development projects at 26 UK universities between 2001-06.

The report claims York accepted over £7.7m for carrying out 59 military projects based primarily at the Computer Science and Electronics departments. The money provided by research comes from BAE systems, QinetiQ and EPSRC - all of which are involved in weapons production.

Symon Hill, a spokesperson for CAAT, said: "it is appalling that the University of York allows arms companies this level of influence into what should be an independent academic establishment." He said he believed "[York] students and staff will be horrified to discover the level of military involvement at UK universities."

David Garner, a spokesman for the University, rejected Hill's assertion saying "We do not accept the assumption that any contact with the defence sector is reproachable. The University's research in conjunction with defence companies or government departments does not involve weapons."

Garner went on to defend the University's academic autonomy saying "Our research grants in this area operate in exactly the same way as any other research agreement - with academic independence and authority guaranteed. No research funder has 'influence' in the University in the way that

Symon Hill implies."

Garner also said the University did not believe an issue existed on ethical grounds saying: "Research at York in this area includes safety critical aircraft computer systems to make sure that planes are unlikely to crash - systems that are used in civilian aircraft. Other research looks at radio communication systems and computer security. There is nothing reprehensible about this research. On the contrary, it is extremely beneficial to society. It is patent nonsense to suggest that there is any inappropriate military influence in this University."

Garner said that the University was not currently carry-

"Systems Engineering for Autonomous Systems" (SEAS-DTC) and was conducted in conjunction with 11 other British universities including UCL, St Andrew's and Bristol.

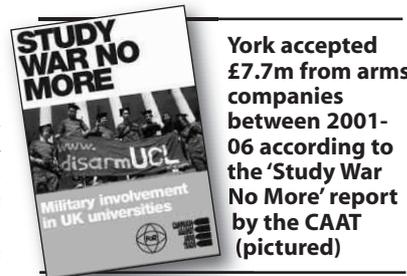
According to the report, "Defence Technology Centres were introduced by the Ministry of Defence in 2002 so that military, industry and universities can collaborate closely in the developing new military technology". The MoD claims to utilise the centres in order to produce "innovative, cutting edge research for enhanced UK defence capability." The centres are jointly funded by the MoD and private arms companies, in the case of the SEAS-DTC project including BAE systems, MBDA missile systems and Rolls Royce.

YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning said: "Research investments are a growing area within the University. Investments are judged on an ethical basis by a mixture of academics and student reps at departmental ethics committees. If students are concerned about such issues they can submit a motion to our next UGM and I will lobby upon their behalf."

The University of Cambridge conducted 283 projects from 2001 to 2006 making it the institution with the largest number of arms company projects in the UK. Below Cambridge ranks Loughborough with 126 followed by Oxford with 124. York ranks 13 of the 26 in terms of numbers of projects accepted.

Cranfield University received the most money from arms companies with a minimum amount received for research projects amounting to just under £383m. It is followed by Southampton which received a minimum grant of £43.2m.

LEADER >> page 10



York accepted £7.7m from arms companies between 2001-06 according to the 'Study War No More' report by the CAAT (pictured)

ing out any weapons research.

York People & Planet Chair Robyn Heather said: "Even if the research does not directly contribute to the creation of actual weaponry, it is still irresponsible for an influential university to be affiliated with arms companies such as these, who do develop weapons."

The report showed that the University of York conducted 59 separate projects funded by arms companies, ranking 13th out of the 26 institutions covered in the study in terms of the number of projects. The University also participated in the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) Defence Technology Centres project in 2004. The project was entitled

INVESTMENT IN UK UNIVERSITIES 2001- 06

£725m received in research grants from the arms industry

1,900 military research projects carried out in in UK universities

2/3 of research projects funded by Rolls Royce, BAE Systems or QinetiQ

York taking ethical investment motion to NUS

Beth Gandy
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

YUSU HAS TAKEN its campaign against unethical investment to a national level by submitting a motion to the NUS for consideration by delegates at the Union's annual conference.

The motion, 'Ethical Investments in Universities' condemns investment in unethical companies by universities, and has already been taken on board by the University of York.

If the motion passes through the NUS conference held in Blackpool from April 1- 3, affiliated unions will begin to put their respective universities under pressure to implement a similar policy to the University of York's.

YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning, who lead the movement



NUS President Gemma Tumelty addresses the 2007 Annual Conference

in favour of submitting the motion to the NUS, said: "It is great that our University is setting an example to others as to how to invest ethically. We are setting a pressing

national agenda."

This will also be the first YUSU motion submitted to the NUS Conference for over 5 years. "This is important for YUSU. We

are not an NUS confident Union and looking at the result from our recent referendum, if we're going to stay in NUS we want more of a stake in it, not just pay our affiliation fee. It would be good to get more of an exposure to national politics as a student union," Canning said.

The motion grew from the work of Environment and Ethics Officers Tom Langley and Tom Williams. Through their lobbying, a paper has been accepted by the senior University administrators. York will undergo a process of creating a new reformed policy.

Other universities, such as the University of East Anglia, have had successes in investing in ethical sources, namely their pension scheme.

The motion calls on the NUS to lobby and pressurize universities to "adopt a socially responsible

investment (SRI) policy," and "Divest where possible, its shares in any company that does not meet the mentioned SRI criteria." It also mandates universities to allow their students' union to "access and monitor" their university's investment portfolios.

YUSU Societies and Communications Officer Sam Bayley said: "We hope that the motion can make a difference to the lives of the ordinary students on a wider level and are pleased that it's been accepted for debate."

The motion will now go forward to NUS Composite, where Union delegates will argue over what motions should go forward to the Blackpool conference, and what order they will be scheduled in. At the conference, representatives from either side will speak for and against the motion. A simple majority is required for it to become NUS policy.

for taking on 59 military projects

University ethics committee told to exempt research

Anjali Raval
 DEPUTY EDITOR

THE MANDATE of a proposed ethical investment steering group will not be extended to research, *Nouse* has learned.

The steering group, designed to establish a University-wide ethical investment policy, has already cleared a number of key committees and is likely to be voted through University Council next month. However, it will have no jurisdiction over what research the University agrees to commit to.

YUSU Environment and Ethics Officer Tom Langley, who has been involved in the planning for the steering group, said the University would not empower the group to use ethical conditions to reject research.

Langley said: "We were told when planning the steering group to not bother trying to extend its mandate to research because the University just wouldn't accept it."

He added: "The University want to keep the scope of research open to students as wide as possible and want to keep their departments as active as possible. If they cut down on certain things I would imagine they would struggle

especially within the science departments and the University do not want to do anything to damage the academic side to research".

Registrar Sally Neocosmos, the lead University official with responsibility for the ethical steering group, declined to answer when asked why the group's mandate would not extend to research.

She said that the development of an ethical investment policy "has the support of the Vice-Chancellor and other senior colleagues and is now in its final stages."

The University agreed to the establishment of a new ethical investment policy following pressure from students which culminated in a widely attended 'die-in' occupation of Heslington Hall in June 2006, organised by student group People and Planet.

The University currently holds a 'Code of Practice and Principles for Good Ethical Governance' which is upheld by a University Ethics Committee as well as departmental committees. The departments of Computer Science and Electronics, where the majority of arms company-funded research is carried out, both fall under the Physical Science Ethics Committee.



BAE systems is responsible for the development of a wide range of military technology used across the world. Examples include: (clockwise from top) the Eurofighter Typhoon, the Challenger II Tank, and the 155mm Lightweight Field Howitzer.

BRIEFING: YORK AND THE ARMS TRADE

OCTOBER 2005

A *Nouse* investigation discovered that the University held 115,000 direct shares in BAE Systems in addition to shares held through investment funds which are managed externally. The University Payroll and Pensions Manager, Bill Hemmingway, admitted that there were problems with the current situation and that the ethical investment policy had left the "trustees in a catch 22 situation". "They [the University trustees] felt that their first duty was to the Scheme members and they would not be fulfilling their duties if they did not secure the best investment possible for the fund.

MAY 2006

Student activists staged a 'die-in' occupation of Heslington Hall as part of a campus wide 'No Share in Killing Day' to protest against the University's investment in arms

companies. The University agreed to develop a more stringent ethical policy as a result.

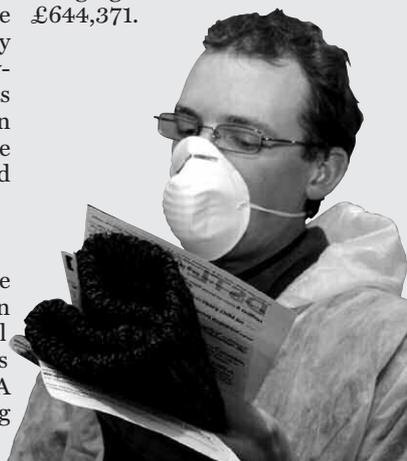
NOVEMBER 2006

Members of York Amnesty International and FreeSoc dressed in white boiler suits (pictured) and occupied the lobby of Heslington Hall in protest against the presence of representatives from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) who were giving a presentation. The students aimed to disrupt the presentation by DSTL, which produces a range of aerial, naval and land-based weaponry.

MAY 2007

Nouse uncovered evidence that the University holds indirect shares in Petrochina, a major Chinese oil firm which is thought to have links to the Sudanese government. A number of insitutions, including

Harvard University had sold their shares for ethical reasons. The investigation also discovered the University still held 147,100 shares in the arms company BAE Systems. Between May 2006 and May 2007, the University benefited from a £25,448 increase in value of its shares in BAE Systems, bringing their value to a total of £644,371.



COMPANY PROFILES

BAE Systems - 439 university projects

It is thought that 80% of BAE's products are exported abroad, where it seeks new markets experiencing military build-ups or recently discontinued from arms embargoes. The company was thrust into the media spotlight in 2006 after the Serious Fraud Office began investigating charges of corruption related to a BAE deal with Saudi regime. In December of that year Attorney General Lord Goldsmith ordered a halt to the investigation, citing "national security" reasons.

Rolls-Royce - 495 university projects

Rolls-Royce is the world's second largest manufacturer of turbine engines, used from military transport aircraft and helicopters to combat, tactical aircraft and unmanned air vehicle. It is currently the world's 16th largest defence contractor. University of York Vice-Chancellor Brian Cantor worked for the company in a consultant role before coming entering academia full time.

QinetiQ - 394 university projects

QinetiQ is a leading international defence and security technology company. It acts as the leading supplier of defence research to the British government which provides half its turnover. It also provides technological and security solutions to clients from both the civil and public sectors. The government recently sold a majority stake in the

Financial statements reveal UYCU annual turnover of £29,000

Henry James Foy
NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY of York Christian Union (UYCU) has reported a £29,000 turnover in the past year, including an expenditure of over £22,000 on its two major events, the Minster Ball and the UYCU Houseparty.

In total, the group recorded a loss of over £4,000 in the year preceding November 30 2007, with both income and expenditure falling by £1,000 compared to 2006.

According to YUSU Societies and Communications Officer Sam Bayley, these figures show UYCU as one of the richest student societies operating at the University, despite the fact that they are not YUSU-affiliated and receive no funding from the Union.

James Sharpe, UYCU Treasurer 2006-2007, said: "I think that we realise that we do turn over a lot in comparison with other societies, but most of that is on the Minster Ball. The rest, some £6,000-£7,000, is basically what we get in from donations."

Bayley said that the only campus society with a greater turnover is the York Student Cinema.

In the financial state-

ments acquired by *Nouse*, the annual ball makes up nearly 60% of the expenditure. Last year's event cost the organisers £17,161, while ticket sales, at £30 each, only raised £10,934, resulting in a loss of over £6,200. The ball has a capacity of 650 people.

By comparison, the 2007 Freshers' Ball, according to YUSU Services and Finance Officer Matt Burton, cost approximately £40,000, and was attended by around 2,500 people.

Sharpe justified the spending as a part of the UYCU's religious mandate: "The idea is that the event is primarily just an evangelistic outreach event, so it's not a real loss. Obviously we aim to break even," he said.

"The Minster gives us the building for free, we just pay reinstatement charges, such as wages to the Minster Police and the costs of clearing chairs and building the stage," said Sharpe, who revealed that the bulk of the expense is on food.

"Catering costs around £12,000-£13,000. We have to hire in outdoor catering facilities, and as we're not allowed to cook in the Minster, they have to erect a marquee outside. Hiring a band also costs around £2,000," he said.

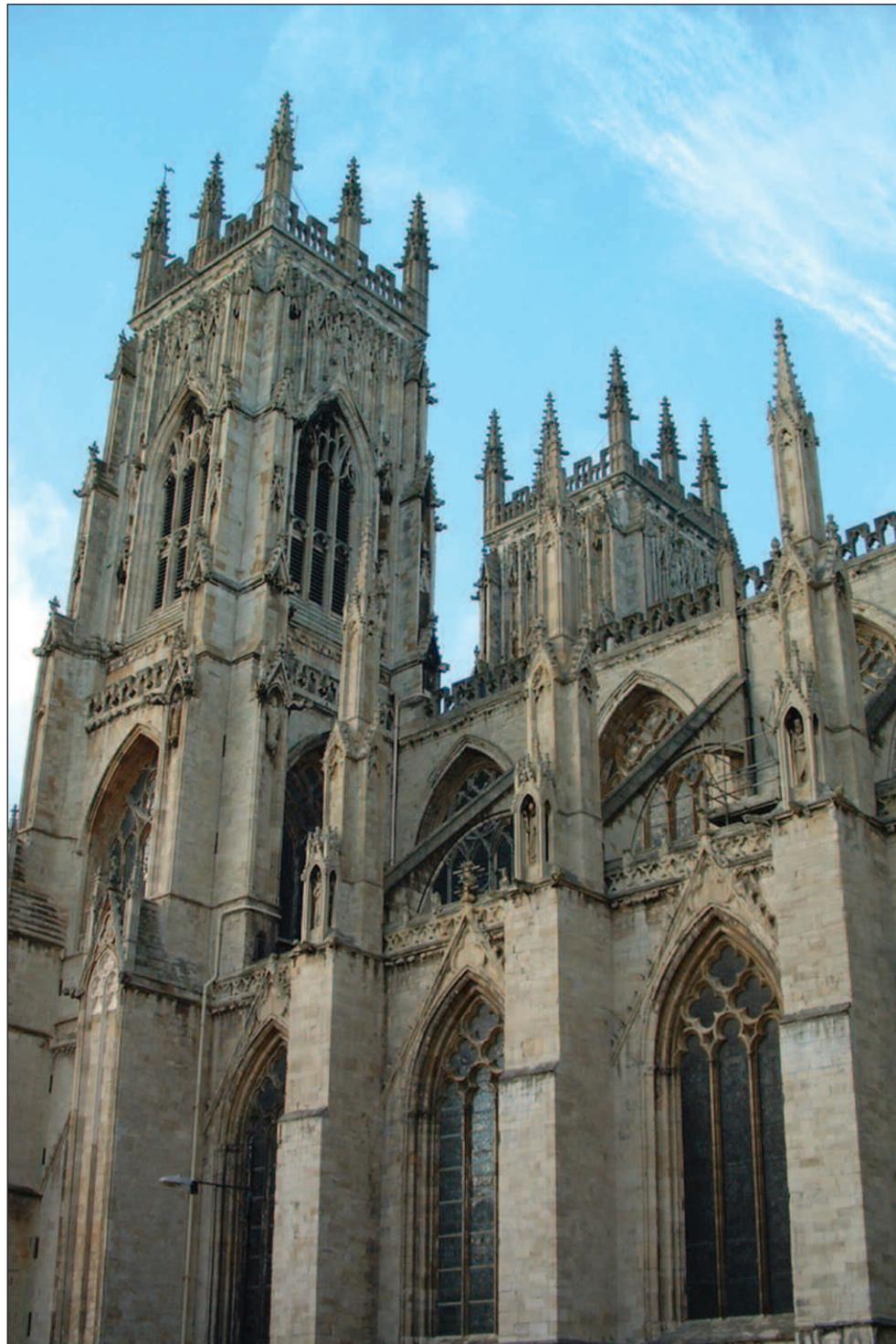
The accounts show that

the loss incurred on this event was offset by the £7,500 received in donations. "Donations come from alumni and current members; there is no membership fee," said Sharpe, who suggested the average donation from the 150-strong membership was around £10-£15. The remainder originates from outside sources, including local churches and national organisations.

These donations also pay for other outlays, such as guest speakers, press and publicity, and the Freshers' booklet produced to welcome arriving students and attract newcomers to the society. This year's Freshers' Week budget was £2,225. "[The £2,225] is allocated from the donations, and on some occasions we turn to local churches and ask them to fund specific parts of it," said Sharpe. The UYCU itself donated £918 to charitable causes over the year.

Sharpe said the figures shown did not necessarily signify a loss for the UYCU since a large amount of the money raised from the sale of Minster Ball tickets was not included. "At the point at which the accounts were produced, not all the money raised from ticket sales had come in," he said.

COMMENT >> P12



The UYCU's Minster Ball held in January costs over £17,000 to organise and hold

Funding cuts threaten NSDF

Elly Veness
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE FUTURE OF the university led National Student Drama Festival (NSDF) is under threat following the withdrawal of crucial funding from the Arts Council England.

The Council has discontinued fourteen years of annual sponsorship worth £52,000 to "refocus" their investment, causing outrage among students. York has a history of sending plays to the NSDF, with *Stone Cold Dead Serious* appearing last year.

The diverted funds will instead be focused on "increasing participation in high quality arts" by subsidising permanent public buildings, such as the West Yorkshire Playhouse, and funding "top-quality" touring companies and theatres with education programmes that "support the changing nature of theatre."

In response, an online petition



York's *Stone Cold Dead Serious*

was set up to protest the Council's decision. Although now closed, it attracted more than 3,300 signatures, and was promoted by leading members of the York Drama Soc.

Jamie Wilkes, Drama Soc Chair, expressed anxiety at the

University's lack of commitment to funding its societies, in particular those focused on the arts.

"Serious respect was paid towards NSDF last year, whilst with normal, run-of-the-mill productions they don't care. They're happy to flatten the Barn and put up some accommodation blocks."

Wilkes also claimed that the University doesn't recognise the potential of its celebrated societies in attracting students. "The role of drama is important here. I came here because of the drama society. They're missing out on a great opportunity to sell something and they should recognise that," he said.

The NSDF has supported student drama for 53 years, and productions go on to receive national attention, which Wilkes describes as "a great opportunity to give student drama the respect it deserves."

The final decision on the grant withdrawal will be revealed at a board meeting on January 25.

POLITICS >> P16

Support for poor students safeguarded by University

Jonathan Fransman
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY has decided to increase its total bursary budget by 9% in order to accommodate government changes in bursary brackets, while maintaining the current levels of support enjoyed by those in the lowest bracket. Under the new scheme no students on existing bursaries will suffer financially, while many will benefit.

YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning was delighted with the changes implemented. "The key achievement is a 9% rise in the bursary budget for 2008/09 and this shows a significant commitment to social justice in ensuring that the poorer students have the highest level of support," she said.

"The changes support more students with more money, a bigger budget and a wider bracket of income. I think it is a victory for

students, and it is also nice to know that the University really does care about us," she added.

The initial bracket changes proposed by the government will largely benefit the majority of students by raising the cut-off amount for bursaries. However, decreases in each category could have potentially left poorer students with less financial support than previously.

The University raised the total bursary budget from £781,000 to £827,000 in order to accommodate the changes, a decision Canning described as "brave" in lieu of its non-conformity with governmental changes.

Overall, the changes are set to be beneficial to lower-middle and middle income students, while maintaining current levels of funding for low-income students.

Over 150 eligible students have not claimed financial support this year, according to the Student Financial Support Unit.

Presidential candidates begin to emerge

Sian Turner
STAFF REPORTER

THE RACE for the next YUSU President is beginning to take shape as potential candidates reveal their intentions to succeed current President Anne-Marie Canning.

Friends of both Ryan Bennett, the former Vanbrugh Chair, and Nadeem Kunwar, current YUSU Ents Officer have revealed that they are considering running for the position. Under YUSU election rules neither is allowed to speak publicly about their potential candidacies.

Bennett, currently in his third year studying Economics, comes with a glowing recommendation from Vanbrugh's next college provost.

"I think that Ryan Bennett would be an outstanding YUSU President," said Vanbrugh Provost-elect David Efir. "He was an exemplary JCRC chair - entirely professional, hard-working and enthusiastic. He helped re-establish Vanbrugh's profile on campus and managed a highly effective JCRC. What is remarkable is that he did all this with a 'light touch' - he never seemed to make hard work of what was clearly a hard job."

Bennett's ex-boyfriend, Adam Quigley, echoed Efir's praise, saying that "the good thing about Ryan is that he knows what needs to be done, but he goes about



Both Ryan Bennett (left) and Nadeem Kunwar are tipped to make a run for YUSU President in elections later on this term

it in a light-hearted way. He knows where the rules lie, and he gets things done, but always in a cheerful and easy-going fashion."

Bennett was elected chair of Vanbrugh extension Fairfax House within six weeks of arriving at university. He followed this up two weeks later by winning an unlikely victory against

JCRC veterans in the race for Vice-Chair.

Bennett scraped by in the 2007 Vanbrugh elections, winning the post of Chair by one vote. He presided over a year of uncertainty for Vanbrugh, with concerns raised that the Bleachfield extension would break up the college's spirit.

Bennett acted as a rep-

resentative for all JCRCs during fraught negotiations over whether students should be allowed a vote on the powerful Student Services Committee. He was seen as instrumental in convincing University officials of the importance of student representation and securing a positive result.

Ents Officer Kunwar, a

third year PEP student, has been hailed by friend Chris Maclay as "not just another SU crony."

If elected, Kunwar will break the tradition of YUSU Presidents coming from JCRC positions. Both Canning and Rich Croker, her predecessor, moved up from chair positions to the presidency. JCRC chairs can

rely on strong turnouts from their colleges to boost their electoral prospects.

Kunwar made an abortive run for Derwent chair in 2007 but was defeated comfortably by Jamie Tyler. He was successfully elected to YUSU in partnership with Rory Shanks and played a key role in the organisation of Freshers Week. The pair have been amongst the most conservative and business minded voices on Senate.

Kunwar currently sits on the board of directors for the Yorker Plc.

"As a guy he's really cool and really fun, not just an SU politician. He's also the most generous guy I know, and always has time for everyone," Maclay added.

Former Goodricke Chair, Ben Wardle, worked with Kumar and admitted he felt that "Nadz would bring attributes to the position of SU President that are not there at the moment. During my time as Goodricke Chair, I found that the most important thing is for an SU President is that they are approachable. Nadz definitely is; he's one of the nicest people I've met."

Canning comes to the end of her year's term this June. Online voting begins on Monday of Week Nine and the results will be announced on the Thursday.

Last year a number of YUSU officials, including Service and Finance Officer Matt Burton were kicked out of the results event for inappropriate behaviour.

York on University Challenge offensive

Dan Hyde
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

YEARS OF underachievement on BBC Two's University Challenge are set to come to an end as YUSU announced a reinvigoration of the selection and training processes this week. Apart from making the Quarter Finals in 2007, York has failed to reach the second round on all but two occasions since the beginning of the modern series in 1994.

This record, described by current YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning as "embarrassing", now serves as the inspiration behind a revamped approach to the competition.

"We will be a lot more proactive," Canning said in regards to YUSU's organisa-

tion of the team.

YUSU's focus will be on implementing innovative training schemes to give the selected team "the best possible chance" of success. Senior members of the University will be recruited to better prepare the candidates and Canning is currently devising a 'staff versus students' event to aid this process.

Former team captain John Bull defended York's efforts, describing the difficulties of facing "larger universities who fill their teams with graduates".

However, Canning was unequivocal in her condemnation of institutions "playing dirty" by submitting all-graduate teams, and vowed to endeavour for a high quality but diverse squad.

YUSU begin negotiations with FTR

Jo Lysons
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

YUSU OFFICERS have challenged the recent price hikes on the FTR buses in a meeting with FirstYork officials last week

The officers met with FirstYork in an attempt to address the issue on January 18, to make students' discontentment known, and to provide "positive suggestions" for a solution. Possibilities such as the reintroduction of the previously popular 10-journey tickets and a special student rate of £1 journeys into town were discussed. "I proposed 'Town for a pound' during RAG week. If they treble their trade and still make a profit while students are happy, then FTR will be doing well," said YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning.



FTR ticket price rises have caused outrage among students

FTR spokesperson Jonathan Stewart described the meeting as "constructive," and that FirstYork would now "consider other options." When questioned about the price rises, he claimed that the prices were part of a network fare review

and that, as there had not been a price review in 2007, the rise in fares this term was a form of "catch up".

FTR single prices rose by 20% and return prices by 16% following the introduction of zonal fares instead of fixed prices. An online group

against the rises states: "The rise in price is far more than the inflation rate."

Canning admitted that the price increase this term has caused a "significant backlash from students." She maintains that the core issue is that "journeys to town are too expensive".

Canning stated that FirstYork were "not keen" to reintroduce the 10 journey ticket despite its previous popularity amongst students. Despite Stewart advocating the £99 Term Passes, Canning believes "students simply won't want to pay £99 at the beginning of term."

YUSU have also arranged a panel discussion on campus in order for students to pose questions directly to FirstYork. "I'm throwing them to the lions," joked Canning. "We will keep the pressure on First to show some action."

External consultant to assess 'ongoing problems and pressure points' in YUSU

Holly Thomas
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

YUSU HAS commissioned an external consultant to assess both sabbatical and non-sabbatical officers in response to concerns over growing workloads and pressurized roles. A sum in the region of £10,000 was set aside from the 2006-07 YUSU budget to cover the audit, in addition to the implementation of any changes found to be necessary.

YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning said: "I think there are ongoing problems and pressure points, and I think this is a good way of resolving them in a professional way." Judith Court, a freelance consultant, is to undertake the investigation. She will review work distribution, uncovering areas where officers may be particularly stressed or struggling to cope with their workload, and determine whether there is room for manoeuvre within the team.

Canning was quick to stress that this is not a knee-jerk reaction to a human resource crisis, instead describing it as a necessary procedure. "We don't feel the need to go through these sorts of things," she said, adding: "We're prudent with our money. We've seen this as an investment".

If changes are advised, it is likely they will be enforced alongside the governance review later this term. "If there are changes to be made, I want people to understand them. I



The roles and workloads of YUSU Officers will be externally assessed

think we've been in situations before when constitutions have just 'appeared,'" said Canning.

On whether the Union anticipates any resentment from JCRCs over this use of YUSU money for such a project, she said: "I don't think the college chairs would criticise. I think everyone's getting a fair slice of the pie at the moment".

Although the predicament

has not been tackled internally prior to the audit, Canning said, "sometimes we shuffle around; if an officer is overloaded, I email out the team saying 'Can we help here?'" YUSU Student Development and Charities Officer Joey Ellis said: "everyone in the office works very hard, they do what they have to do."

Canning denied that pres-

sure had been placed on YUSU to assess the roles, saying: "We all knew it needed doing," adding: "I'm not saying we're in a mess or anything."

A similar audit four years ago revealed the then Education and Welfare Officer was under "extreme" pressure, resulting in the creation of a Union Manager post, currently filled by Jolene Jesserman. Canning sug-

gested YUSU have struggled with both intensive workloads and confusion over officer's responsibilities in the years since.

Court will also address fears that Union work is detrimental to non-sabbatical officer's degrees. Officers will be interviewed, and welfare officers will be consulted over the number of officers seeking support in coping with their positions.

New Vanbrugh provost selected

Liam O'Brien
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

CURRENT DEAN OF Vanbrugh college David Efrid has been appointed as the new Vanbrugh Provost, a role that takes effect on October 1 2008 when current provost Alan Warren retires after 24 years.

Despite having wanted a provostship for some time, Efrid declares that he has an "identification with Vanbrugh", and praised its "strong JCRC, central location, commitment to volunteering and college spirit".

As a senior lecturer and director of graduate studies in the Philosophy Department, and dean of four years, Efrid said he feels he has a lot of experience in "helping students in what is a very exciting and sometimes difficult time in their lives." He added: "As dean, there's not a lot in terms of compensation for it, you have to want to do it." Efrid expects to stay in the



New Vanbrugh provost Dave Efrid

role for at least five years.

The new provost aims "to see the JCR and the SCR interact more", and wants, "an academic focus in the college, because if it's just a place where you eat and sleep then it's a hall of residence." He

believes this can be achieved with personal development portfolios, increased academic welfare and the development of what he describes as a 'College Colloquia' series.

The series would aim to boost academic focus by launching a series of accessible presentations by research students and academics to Vanbrugh students.

Another interesting aspect of Efrid's application to the role was his suggestion of an online questionnaire that would be put to Vanbrugh students after Fresher's Week, and after their first, second and third years have concluded. His idea is to gauge perception of Vanbrugh, and identify areas of the college that could be improved.

Efrid is also in the discernment process for ordination into the Church of England. He hopes to be allowed to train as a non-stipendiary, meaning that whilst he would retain his academic and welfare positions in the university, he would perform additional unsalaried duties for the Church.

QAA returns report of confidence in University

Sian Turner
STAFF REPORTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF York has received a 'full confidence' judgement in its institutional audit, conducted last term.

The audit, carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) assessed the University's ability to maintain its high standard academic awards, whilst keeping a range of high quality learning opportunities open to students.

Visiting the University in Autumn 2007, a team from QAA held discussions with groups of both staff and students. They also visited the departments of Languages and Linguistics and Biology in order to understand how the institution's policies and procedures work in practice.

The result of a judgement of 'confidence' was revealed last week, along with a small number of

recommendations for further action. The report itself is expected in February, when it will become available to staff and students.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Trevor Sheldon, expressed pleasure at the result, saying: "We are very pleased at the QAA's endorsement of our approach to managing the quality of the student learning experience and the standard of our awards. The Audit process is also a useful opportunity to reflect on how we can make further improvements that are likely to be of benefit to our students, so we look forward to receiving the final Audit report and its recommendations."

The Academic Support Office has issued a statement of congratulations, saying "a big thank you to everyone who contributed to last term's Institutional Audit," with a promise "to keep you all informed about the details of recommendations and institutional actions in response."

Stepping into the breach

Profiles and Analyses of the 2007-2008 JCRC Chairs



ZACH PEPPER - LANGWITH

SECOND YEAR Language and Linguistics student Zach Pepper has taken over the position of Langwith chair from predecessor Won Yuan. Pepper, from Leigh-on-Sea in Essex, is passionate about raising the profile of his college. "Langwith is the oldest and one of the smallest colleges at York University, but over the next year I aim to raise its profile." A venerated advocate of the renowned Langwith spirit, he confesses that "I will be making sure that each and every member of my college feels the benefit of being a part of the original college of the University of York." Pepper will preside over further negotiations on the future of Langwith bar.

CHET KHATU - JAMES

A CLOSELY fought battle for chair resulted in first year Chet Khatau emerging victorious. It's a shame Khatau only enjoyed a brief spell in James before he was forced to relocate to Vanburgh due to essential building maintenance taking place in his block. During his time as chair he intends to create more of a collegiate atmosphere by introducing an alumni project and changing the college logo as well as being more closely involved with the running of events. Despite not having any York JCRC experience, Khatau was instrumental in the Student Union at Reading where Chet was year president before transferring universities.

JOE CLARKE - GOODRICKE

THE STRONG favourite, Joe Clarke became JCRC Chair after effectively playing the role for two months prior to the election. He campaigned with a cringeworthy YouTube video, in which students were told by members of the YUSU Exec to "Vote Joe for Goodricke Chair because he's... good." Clarke, who apparently "bleeds Goodricke" has promised college students the Roger Kirk Centre as a social venue, hoping to out-class all other colleges, presumably with more chocolate-themed events than he organised last year as one of the college's Ents Reps. He has also guaranteed a more streamlined JCRC through the creation of a sub-committee. It is yet unknown whether Clarke's close relationship with his predecessor Ben Wardle will help or hinder his ideas.

DAVE SHARP - HALIFAX

HALIFAX'S NEW President ran a campaign fought on practicalities rather than idealistic promises. Whilst stressing the need to save JJ's bar, he accepted that opening hours may have to be further restricted. Although pragmatic, this is unlikely to delight Halifaxers, though his pledge on daytime TV access should prove to be more popular. Critics may detect a frivolous streak, however, in his proposal to alter JJ's seating to improve its interior look. Sharp held the position of Bar Officer last year. From Staffordshire, 'Sharp' fosters an image of the average, affable man in the pub. On degree completion he hopes to move into venture capitalism. Halifaxers will hope his aims for their college will be realised with similar ambition.

OLIVER LESTER - DERWENT

ORIGINALLY THOUGHT of as an outsider for the position, the anarchic Lester went on to defeat his more conventional opposition by a wide margin. Lester decided to join the race late and ran on a ticket of bar refurbishment and general Derwent exuberance. In a carefree first year Lester busied himself with a line of clothing emblazoned with 'Rich Croker is my home boy' and weekend trips to Oslo. Since taking over as chair Lester successfully faced down a critical editorial in Derwent newsletter, *The Flying DCUK*, by going to every kitchen posting a leaflet response. How Lester will cope with the minutiae of JCRC work remains to be seen.

MATT OLIVER - VANBRUGH

LAST YEAR'S Valcuin representative for Vanbrugh College Matt Oliver was elected with a comfortable majority. An efficient campaign, involving getting to know freshers and a competent showing at hustings, secured the victory. Oliver describes Vanbrugh as a "liberal" college where it is possible for the JCRC to make a difference to college life. He aims to renovate the college JCR and build the profile of college events. He claims to have no desire for a YUSU position, unlike his ambitious predecessor Ryan Bennett. After disagreements with YUSU over college ents, Oliver SAID, "College should be about fun. Political correctness can and is getting in the way."

ERIK O'CONNOR - ALCUIN

SWEDISH O'CONNOR ran a popular campaign to take his post. Previously branded with a "if it aint broke" attitude, he seeks to continue solving issues brought to attention by predecessor Louis Wihl. He will focus on improved facilities, the walk across the library bridge being too strenuous to reach the ATM for most Alcuin students. His appointment follows a year as Entertainment Officer, which saw the successful re-launch of bar B Henry's. O'Connor says he is "a passionate supporter of the collegiate system, with hopes of clearer communication within the college, solving the unresolved issues or loose ends of last year."

WEB-CANNING

This week's snapshot from YUSU's web-cam

YUSU Office Cam Sun Jan 20 17:59:58 2008



With Viking Raid in danger of being cancelled, Joey Ellis was

forced to turn to less rather less productive ways of raising money.

Unfortunately, Matt Burton claimed he had "no change"

Bennett urges new JCRC chairs to focus on students and ignore tempting politics

Henry James Foy
 NEWS EDITOR

FORMER VANBRUGH JCRC Chair Ryan Bennett has urged the new group of college chairs to use their time in Senate campaigning for their college's students, rather than getting involved with the politics that he feels belaugures the committee's decision making.

"Please, everyone who is on Senate next year, remember: You are not the Labour party, you are not the

Conservative party. You are not government, and you are not ruling the world. You are a group of students representing other students. Don't get involved in the politics," Bennett said.

Speaking in his final Senate at the end of last term, Bennet implored both the incoming Chairs and the current YUSU officers to ensure that the meetings are used efficiently.

"Do what the students want, get it done, and don't sit around here arguing about it," he said.

His passionate plea was met with appreciation and applause from his fellow Senate members, including YUSU Training Officer Tom Langrish, who had earlier congratulated all the departing chairs for a successful year on the committee.

"It's common practice in the life-cycle of a committee that when a large portion of a membership is leaving, to formerly offer thanks to their hard work," said Langrish.

YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning expects the new chairs will need little

encouragement to get involved in Senate debates and affect the decision-making processes. "I think we have a really good bunch and we will all get along well. They are all very competent, and I look forward to working with them all," she said.

Major issues that the new-look Senate must deal with include creating a manageable and workable ethical merchandise policy, keeping student issues at the top of Hes East plans and finding a solution to the problematic campus bars.



NOUSE
Est. 1964

More than 'inappropriate'

Like so many of the ministerial scandals splashed across national front pages, the Grace Fletcher-Hackwood affair is rapidly taking on a momentum of its own. There is a victim who couldn't be more pleased at having been attacked and having the opportunity to initiate formal proceedings against his long-time political nemesis. There is a loyal opposition that rallies around their champion, too quick to allow the sour motivations of her detractors blot out the genuine need for accountability. And there is a bemused majority, watching on as the ruckus grows and the spittle flies.

The fact remains that Fletcher-Hackwood's behaviour has been disgraceful and very serious questions need to be asked as to whether she is fit for her job. Neither of her contextual circumstances, that she was blind drunk or in "a relationship of mutual disagreement" with the student in question, are in any way mitigating. She should never have let the situation degenerate to such a point nor let herself veer so wildly out of control. It is questionable if she can ever be taken seriously again after this.

But another fact: if Fletcher-Hackwood resigns the Union will be left without any Academic and Welfare Officer and her duties will be split between the five remaining sabbs, whose workloads are already being audited due to apparent "problems and pressure points". Regardless of what you think about the YUSU's efficiency there is no getting around the point that the current structure is designed for six elected officers supported by Union staff. To lose an officer would stretch the remaining five even further.

This is a situation which would benefit no one. If they are truly serious about student welfare, and not just gaining petty political satisfaction from watching her fall, then her detractors would do well to remember this. This is the same reactionary crowd who railed against the NUS without any responsible contingency for what we would do in the event of disaffiliation. The fact that Fletcher-Hackwood's continued tenure is the 'least-worst' option should be of little comfort to anyone, but it seems to be the only one. A quorate vote in the UGM will draw a line under this affair one way or another, but it is difficult to imagine a bout of executive blood-letting feeling like a good result.

Face up to reality

The University of York is not yet ready to admit its business partners behave unethically. This paper is. The government of Saudi Arabia is a deeply repressive regime and these companies irrefutably provide the tools of that repression. It may sound sound like doughy student rhetoric but unless Heslington Hall is prepared to endorse the House of Saud then it must face up to the reality that the companies with which it deals so closely are playing an intimate role in tyranny.

That is not to say that the University should have no dealings whatsoever with them, but it is impossible to have a frank discussion about the ethics of the situation until it is prepared to admit this. The morality of weapons research is an issue for another time. It is not currently happening at York and there are more immediate issues to address, the most important of which is the sway that these arms companies have over very senior levels of York's administration.

For all the University's protestations, £7.7m pounds will buy you an excellent seat at the table and the undivided attention of some of its most important decision makers. Indeed, on its website the Computer Science Department brags of the strength of its relationship with the industry and in some ways this is undeniably beneficial to students. The opportunities in research and development can be exciting and worthwhile. But in other respects it is extremely frightening. There is no denying that as universities jostle for lucrative research contracts there will be moments when a sturdy ethical policy will seem like a hindrance. It's a slippery slope and one we can't afford to let our mercenary business partners drag us down.

Ending in tiers

Over the summer Heslington East has gone from a vague concept, existent only in the white binders of its planning documents and the minds of ambitious University administrators, to a building site south of Field Lane. The diggers and workmen have moved in but the University has still to successfully excavate the anxieties of students. The most recent spectre is the prospect of two campuses, segregated by prohibitive pricing. In the worst imagining Campus East flourishes, funded by astronomical room prices and growing shinier and more magnificent by the day, while Campus West crumbles slowly from neglect.

Let's be clear. It's neither practical nor sensible to dig one's heels in and oppose the campus expansion; it's going to happen. The focus now must be on striving to retain what works about the University's current form. Chief amongst these positive elements is the intimacy such a small campus affords. Some of this will inevitably be lost but the problem will be massively exacerbated if we allow a situation to develop where the two campuses are barely recognisable as being of the same entity. Talk of 'collegopoly' is not an exaggeration - a scale of colleges from Old Kent Road to Mayfair is real a possibility and a disastrous one.

Comment & Analysis

We have to be realistic about military research

It is time to look past our initial reproach



Lida Mirzaei
Contributing Writer

The knee-jerk reaction to military multinational companies funding 59 academic research projects at York is bound to be one of reproach. In the age of the student as a marching ethical pioneer, the involvement of BAE, the world's fourth largest arms company who also happened to clinch a £10bn Eurofighter jet deal with Saudi Arabia, can hardly be seen as keeping in line with ethical investment. It's the consequences that make you question the outcome of military funded research on a broader scale, or to put it metaphorically; there wouldn't be the atomic bomb without Einstein's theory of relativity. Crude as this is, if the end result is a weapon, this surely makes the university complicit in international conflict.

Although I'd find it very satisfying, it is in no shape or form this simple. Scientific advancements and the military have always been connected. The Second World War spurred the development of digital computing, the Internet and the mass production of penicillin. Scientific research is fuelled by a certain childish competition for discovery; and war has often acted as the catalyst in this race for national glory through science. Practically all materials science research has some potential in military usage and researchers are often unfairly condemned for creating what can be seen as the blueprints for destruction. Dr Alfred Nobel, the creator of dynamite, was one such attacked scientist, who on reading a premature obituary entitled 'the merchant of death is dead,' felt compelled to establish the Nobel Prizes to leave a better legacy.

Now, it's the international setting that's important. With constant global economic, intellectual and political contention, it is only to be expected that the UK's military budget is now the second highest in the world. It's naive to think that Britain would ever let the quality of its military research drop and allow other countries on the international stage to supersede it. Now I'd be the first person to point out the UK's shady arms deals, (Saudi Arabia, anyone?) but surely it's better that we're at the top than countries like, say, China, which has become Sudan's largest weapons supplier.

It also shouldn't be forgotten that a lot of research has either been transferred to or created for the civil field. QinetiQ, one of the companies of the condemned, developed the bulletproof vest, for example, and a research programme to be set up at York is investigating safer landing techniques for civil aircrafts. Such multinationals not only provide financial aid, they give a certain credibility to departments seeking pres-

tige to bolster their research. But there's something that just doesn't sit right with BAE. Its political and economic power is formidable, it receives contracts worth more than £1bn from the Ministry of Defence and has been investigated for bribery in no less than seven countries, Saudi Arabia being one, naturally.

So what is of concern is how corrupt military involvement in research can stunt intellectual autonomy and manipulate the academic community. The pressure for universities to maintain their status as leading research-based institutions, means it is often easier for a department such as Electronics to secure funding through the military. The somewhat Orwellian termed 'Towers of Excellence' scheme combines eight commercial government bodies and nine academic partners for research into guided

It is naive to think that Britain would ever let the quality of military research drop'

weapons, sensors, radar and electronic warfare, which looks worryingly skewed towards military and opposed to civil research. Undoubtedly, there should be a large portion of funding devoted to peace building and environmental issues, in addition to transparency involving government, military and university transactions.

The fact that the government dropped an enquiry into BAE's accounts of fraud emphasises their allegiance to company's researching military development over environmental. But the fact is that the military is an ingrained part of a nation state that will want to absorb the greatest minds across the academic fields.

In an ideal world research would be dedicated to finding solutions to the most pressing humanitarian problems we're facing at the moment, it's just a great shame it isn't.



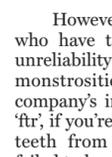
Lily Eastwood
Comment Editor

I don't think I know anyone who didn't at least smirk when they heard the news. Between the "mutually disagreeing" pair, feminist Grace Fletcher-Hackwood and notorious conservative activist Dan Taylor, it is hard to work out who has more critics on campus. This means that when it comes to passing judgement it is very difficult to discern who is really thinking objectively, and who is acting out of spite.

The primary concern of everyone involved should remain student welfare; whether that means Taylor's welfare, or the welfare of the entire student body. Unfortunately, seeing as Fletcher-Hackwood is usually the final word on what is and is not for the welfare of the students, things are a little complicated. The fact of the matter is that Fletcher-Hackwood is meant to be responsible for our welfare and she had undermined her position herself, way before Dan Taylor could set up an inflammatory Facebook group.

I am, of course, not without sympathy. Other people are free to settle their personal disputes without a campus furore. Other people are free to get wasted without such allegations of gross irresponsibility. However, Fletcher-Hackwood stopped being other people when she chose to become Welfare Officer. Let's not be overdramatic; being a sabbatical officer doesn't entail a sainthood. However, it does require an awareness of one's actions, and more importantly, taking responsibility for one's failures.

But therein lies the crux of the problem. Fletcher-Hackwood's main mistake was not the punch itself. That was, I'm sure, a temporarily lapse in concentration, if quite a major one. It was rather her awkward subsequent handling of the

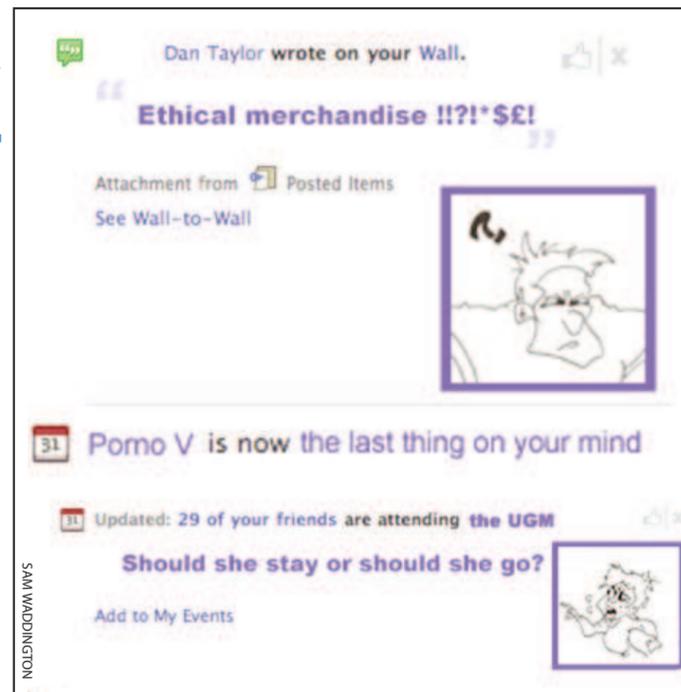


Nick Staines and Joe Chapman
Contributing Writers

First's decision to increase fares for buses across the city of York earlier this month received little press or public attention. It was an inevitable and unspectacular reaction to an inflation like any other.

Give Hackwood one last chance

People need to put petty vendettas aside and look at the welfare situation objectively



situation, and her failure to admit adequate responsibility. In her recent statement she fully admits it was a "fuck-up" on her part. How much weight does that really carry? A fuck-up? Such a term hardly smacks of remorse, let alone indicates that she's taking the issue even a little seriously.

In addition to this, she described the incident as at worst "inappropriate". Perhaps it was, but I think Fletcher-Hackwood is underestimating the gravity of "inappropriate". On what level was her behaviour inappropriate? Was it because she, our main advocator of safe drinking, was so excessively drunk? Was it because the event she was at was a campus event, where she should reason-

ably be expected to set some kind of example? Or was it because she hit a student, a student whose welfare she is nominally responsible for? Take your pick; people have cited any number of these reasons for the inappropriateness of her behaviour. It's a justifiable and damning critique; but does inappropriate really amount to so much that she should lose her position?

I do think that there is a sustainable defence for her to remain Academic and Welfare Officer. As a starting point, though she is ultimately responsible for her own actions, it is difficult to see that Taylor is doing anything other than relishing every continuing minute of the scandal. As somewhat of a celebrity

political figure on campus, Taylor is not without his influence in rallying the troops against Fletcher-Hackwood. I have never seen evidence of someone enjoying being hit in the ear so much as Taylor appeared to.

No doubt anyone jumping to the defence of Fletcher-Hackwood will be accused of making allowances because of her diminutive size, as well as her passion for student welfare. If Matt Burton had done the same would we have called for his resignation in a heartbeat? He may be the villain in far more campus dramas, whilst Fletcher-Hackwood rides in like a beacon of moral justice, but I like to think that in both cases we would afford them at least a second chance. As I said at the beginning, this isn't about spiteful vendettas against those we love to hate; this is about student welfare.

Grace Fletcher-Hackwood behaved absolutely unacceptably, but for several reasons, she should not be made to leave. Firstly, for the sake of keeping a welfare officer who has consistently appeared nothing short of passionate about what she does, and secondly, though by becoming a sabbatical officer she gave up the liberty of being quite so ridiculous in public, there is no point calling for her resignation based on the opinions of a viciously vocal minority.

By keeping Fletcher-Hackwood in her position we are not condoning her behaviour; far from it. We are merely preserving a necessary position and setting a precedent for how we as a student body should react to sensationalised campus morality battles. Indeed, you'd be naive to think she won't be punished at all for her misdemeanour, because it'll be quite some time before anybody can take her remotely seriously.

The prospect of the upcoming UGM brings with it the opportunity of reaching a final decision. In this way we can hope to come to an end of the whole messy situation. Whether Burton and Bayley will advertise it as much as they planned to, to get their ethical merchandising bill through, is another matter.

Tired of prejudice towards religion



Jonathan Fransman
Contributing Writer

It's a fairly common scenario. Another tedious evening in York which, being a first year, is really rather depressing. I'm sitting in a pub with a large group when the discussion wanders into the vaguely political realm. One of my drinking companions decides to take that oh-so-original pop at the evils of organised religion. He reels off a long list of atrocities fuelled by people acting in the name of their respective deity; September 11, the Crusades, conflict in the Middle East. The list is endless.

Lots of people seem to believe a deeply flawed hypothesis; that the world would be a better place without organised religion. The problem is that the formation of organised religion is inevitable. This is due to two principal factors: the first of these is that throughout history we have seen a psychological trend for human beings to believe in (or create) some form of deity.

The second factor is that societal groups form naturally. I personally believe one of the reasons is a human necessity to constantly define oneself but I know there are myriad other explanations. In a purely empirical sense I believe the fact that societal groups are naturally forming is a fair assumption to be made.

When we consider these two assertions in unison we arrive at why organised religion does, and would always have, existed. Societal groups are inevitable and sadly, the animosity and power structures which accompany them are also. We have countless examples of corruption by the church throughout the ages but is this not true of so many non-religious institutions as well? If, hypothetically, there hadn't been religious crusaders needlessly slaughtering each other there would have been other groups fulfilling that role in any event; look at the Rwandan genocide if you need a case study.

Organised religion is in itself nothing negative. The ability to believe in the existence of something higher facilitates the ability to accept moral realism; put simply, to believe in the existence of wrong and right. On a personal level the existence of something higher than oneself can help provide one with a sense of perspective and assist in guiding one through the moral maze that is everyday life.

The question of whether god exists, however, is completely immaterial to the argument. It doesn't matter what form societal groups take. Be it religion, race or even football teams, it is inevitable that the uglier aspects of human nature will sometimes prevail and manifest themselves through these institutions. Pretentious students need to remember the flip side: sometimes the positive aspects will prevail as well. This is just human nature.

scope and duration to have any impact. Last Friday's meeting between First and YUSU was a step in the right direction. It alerted the bus company to the concerns of so many of its most lucrative customers. But it would be naive to expect any knee-jerk response.

In the meantime, it is important to point out the alternatives. To get from uni to town, try the Veolia 28 that circles campus. Or there's the 746 East Yorkshire service, every 90 minutes from the library stop.

If you're in a group, a taxi ride can be a snip, or if you have the time, and it's not pouring down with rain, you can

always walk, or cycle along the city's many bike-friendly routes.

And if you're unlucky enough to live in Acomb and need to use the bus to get to campus every day try the student term card. Just four return journeys per week later, you will have got your money's worth, even at last year's prices.

The fact is, First will not change their monopolistic ways because of a short-term boycott. Only a sustained, systematic refusal by Ftr's most lucrative customers to use the below-par service will make them take any notice, by hitting them where it hurts the most - their 'pkts'.

MUSEE

The house headache: what does your dream home look like?
M12 - 13





HeidiBlake

Screw the World- I'm heading West

It's unfortunate that Christmas – the most wonderful time of the year, so we're told – is always directly followed by at least three months of drab, grey misery. No sooner has the last of the turkey been devoured than the twinkling lights are torn down, the trees are cast out of doors to rot in the street, and batches of misguided presents are returned to the shops to raise funds for that last hoorah of feverish consumption, the January sales. Once this distasteful process has run its course, there is nothing left but to hunker down for a very long, very dark winter.

Ennui sets in first, then despair. Productivity is impossible. "I'm bored!" You wail at your housemates every morning. "There's nothing to do! I'm going mad in this post-apocalyptic winter hell!" "Can't you start your essay?" they suggest, helpfully. "Of course not!" you bark. "I don't have any of the books I need!" They blink at you. "Perhaps you could go to the library?" they gingerly enquire. "Go out?" you squeak, incredulous. "Out there? You're expecting me to trudge for miles through rain, sleet and snow for a few crumby books?"

Even as you utter these words, you catch a glimpse of the view from the window. Outside, the sky is blue, and a pale, winter sun is shining gently through the bare trees. Birds are singing. Children are playing on the grass. You draw the curtains. "I'm staying here", you say, firmly. "Suit yourself", say your

housemates, and continue going about their busy, fulfilling lives.

Now the house is empty, and you are forced to entertain yourself. Perhaps you could have a stab at one of those job applications? Not wise, you think. You're riddled with Seasonal Affected Disorder; potential employers will sense the lethargy a mile off. How about finally getting started on *Crime and Punishment*? Well, maybe. But just one episode of the *West Wing* first. Oh, and there might be a bar or two of chocolate in the fridge...

And this is how, night after night, my housemates return, flushed and bright-eyed from long days of rewarding endeavour, to find me sprawled on the sofa, surrounded by half-eaten snacks and discarded wrappers, and embarking upon episode fourteen.

It's a curious thing, the obsession among some students with fast-paced, dizzyingly scripted American dramas like the *West Wing*. My theory is that we're bored enough to crave high action and stimulating dialogue, and listless enough never to try creating it for ourselves. These shows are the perfect antidote to the monotony of undergraduate life.

In the onscreen corridors of power, the likes of Josh Lyman and Sam Seabourn stroll faster than I run, sipping coffee and communing in urgent tones. In the Situation Room, Leo McGarry slams his fist on the table, enraged by the truculence of yet another rogue state. The

Leader of the Free World (Martin Sheen) rises to his feet, thundering "I'm tired of waiting, dammit! This is candy ass! We are going to draw up a response scenario, I'm going to give the order, and we're going to strike back today!" "Yes!" I cry, reaching for another doughnut. "That's exactly what I would say if I were President!"

On my own for hours, watching the *West Wing* with the curtains drawn, the boundaries between fiction and reality can become alarmingly blurred. Why isn't real life like this? These glowing, wisecracking stars make my real friends look like pasty, vapid zombies. They don't understand me! They don't see I'm a world-class strategist and policy maker; my searing wit is lost on them. Perhaps they're jealous? Perhaps I should go to Washington, hurl myself into the cut and thrust of U.S. politics, and start a new life...

Suddenly I am C.J. Cregg, striding back and forth the Oval Office. I counsel the President. I brief the press. I practise whipping off my glasses and slipping them back on again for maximum effect. There's a commotion in the office. We're polling to establish our job approval; bad results could scupper our chances of a second term. Others have become bogged down in detail, but I see the bigger picture. "This is an important poll!" shout Josh and Leo. "I'm well aware of its importance" I reply acidly, swinging my glossy auburn hair. "I'm also

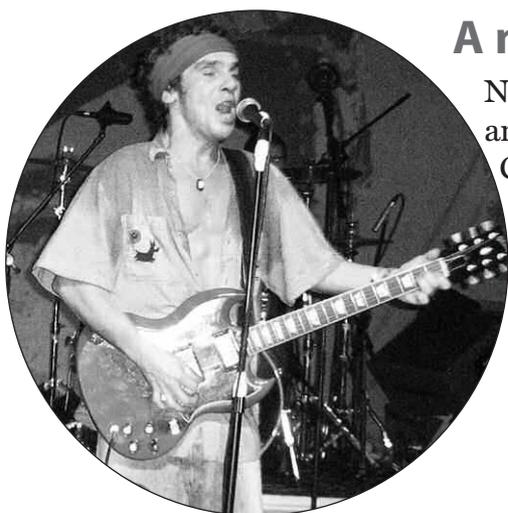
Muse 23.01.08

A new hatred

Nicky Woolf investigates anti-semitism in the 21st Century >> M6-7

Manu Chao

The South American music sensation talks to Gina Heslington about his influences >> M9



SPECIAL: Finding a house

Antonia Shaw and Liam O'Brian go through how to get a happy home in a good location >> M12-13



Misery literature

A brand new genre is emerging; harrowing true-life stories. Alex Forsythe explores its roots >> M15

The new capital of Peru

Venetia Rainey got bad food poisoning on the way to Macchu Pichu. Stranded in Cusco, she discovers a city stuffed to the brim with hidden gems >>M14

Arts: DramaSoc's *Body Shock* season and *Have I Got News for York* >> M18

Music: We look back on 2007 in music and check out *New Zealand Dub* >> M20

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Listings: Events to brighten your January >> M23



RobinSeaton

The old git mutters into his pint

The first few weeks of any new year are apparently a time for doing things that will prolong the first flush of youth; joining the gym, giving up drinking and other such stupid pursuits. I've even engaged in some of these desultory activities myself in my younger days. However, in the first weeks of 2008 I seem to have been coming into contact with the elderly with more than usual frequency.

The first of these was my octogenarian next-door neighbour, a woman with possibly the most Yorkshire name in the world (I paraphrase somewhat to protect the good lady's privacy): Edna Thucklewaite. She may as well wear nothing but flat caps and dine on

nothing but Yorkshire puddings and coal. She also happens to be the only woman in quite some time to give me her phone number.

The other day some friends and I went for a walk across Millennium Bridge, to Bishopthorpe and beyond. Aside from the usual youth social interaction with the youth; ("Got any fags mate?" "I don't smoke." "Bet they 'ave, let's mug 'em to check") we encountered an annoyingly cheerful old man who demanded to be referred to by the fairly inaccurate moniker of 'Grumpy Gramps', despite having a perfectly serviceable given name of his own – Joe, or something. A man with an impressive knowledge of Anglo-Russian rela-

tions in the nineteenth century, and their relation to Fulford street names, he claimed that, despite having spent thirty-eight and a half years going round the world with the army, he still knew twenty ways to get from York to Hull with a caravan. Twenty. Why, I wondered, why on earth would a man who knew nineteen ways from York to Hull (with a caravan) attempt to find a twentieth? After all, the two cities aren't so very far apart; surely one or two of routes one through nineteen must have distinct advantages over the others – pubs with comfy seats, for example; cafes selling scones perhaps, or an absence of low bridges.

But this man's insatiable thirst for knowledge had led him to search out new and innovative means of getting from York to Hull with the impediment of a caravan. Arguably, the most curious aspect of this already curious tale is the complete absence of a caravan from this man's garden and

driveway, suggesting that these days his knowledge sadly resides solely in the realm of unrealised potential. It seems that this man's caravan had been disposed of in his absence, never to return. Alas, his twenty routes are destined to remain forever Platonic, ideal, never to be realised in our all-too frail and mutable reality, victim of a callous God ignorant of the joys of caravan ownership.

Still, as an example of practically applicable information, his search for new caravan-friendly routes between the Humber and the Ouse certainly knocks my most useful achievement of 2007; an essay I wrote last term on pictures of witches in Elizabethan England, into a bloody cocked hat. Which just goes to show that even if we've completed our annual visit to the gym, or drunk one pint fewer this week than last, all our achievements are as nothing next to the elderly and their compendious and arcane knowledge of the local highways and byways.



THE WEST WING

aware that if we don't start the phone banks right now, I won't have time to leak the internals to media outlets before we hit the weekend!" The others nod sagely, wowed by my lucidity and candour. "Start the banks!" I cry, and 30 men and women obediently pick up their phones and start dialling.

My telephone rings. I snatch it up eagerly, yelling "Give me some good news, god-dammit!" into the receiver. It's my mum. She wants to check I'm eating properly. I survey the carnage of comestibles around me, and utter a low, guttural groan.

I am not in Washington. I am not eating properly. And it is still winter. "Have you made any progress with your work?" she asks, nervously. I tell her that she should not expect too much too soon. Checks and balances make rapid change impossible. We have to take Congress with us.

Blake 13:32: the parable of Chav D

My personal congratulations go out to Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, YUSU's diminutive Academic and Welfare Officer turned free-marketeer, who lent clout to the Union's decision to scrap its Ethical Merchandising Policy last week by swinging the clunking fist of student welfare directly into the beatific face of Dan Taylor, self-appointed Guardian of Public Morals and sometime scourge of the NUS.

If the slurred reports of onlookers are to be believed, the spat occurred when Taylor, a giant among men in physique if not in subtlety of thought, approached Fletcher-Hackwood outside Chav D.

Drawing himself up to full height and salivating visibly, he bellowed: "You guys are, like, well hypocritical about all that ethical merchandise stuff!" Whereupon, Fletcher-Hackwood, who makes up in pluck what she lacks in stature, shrieked

"Ethical merchandise? I'll show you ethical bloody merchandise!" and swung in a stiff right hook.

Quite how she managed to reach his hairy earlobe, which is where the clunk apparently landed, is a matter still under investigation.

However, few would deny that the episode is a modern fable of biblical proportions. Move over David! Step aside, Samson! This spunky heroine doesn't even need a slingshot - she'll floor Goliath and strike a blow for feminism with a mere flick of the wrist!

"Sound the alarm! Call the police! I've been assaulted!" the stricken giant I've heard to roar, as Fletcher-Hackwood beat a hasty retreat to higher ground. "Gutted, mate. You've just been whacked by a midget," his loyal companions helpfully intoned.

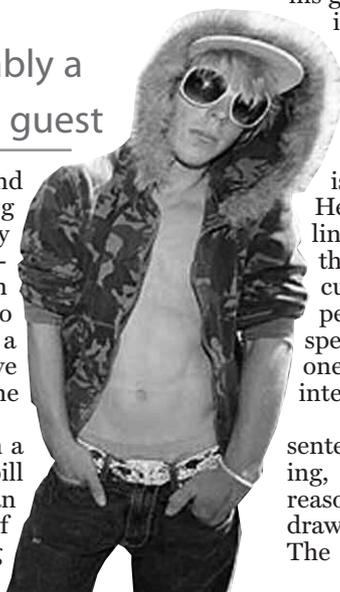
Surely, this is the stuff that dreams are made of.

Will Heaven

Corey Delaney is probably a tool, argues this week's guest

Both nipples pierced, topless, and only interviewed when wearing oversized yellow sunglasses - Corey Delaney has made a rude impression in the Australian media. When his parents went on holiday to Queensland, the 16 year-old threw a Myspace-organised party for five hundred teenagers in his Melbourne home.

The night ended messily, with a police dog-squad raid, a \$20,000 bill for damage and, after some delay, an arrest for Delaney on charges of child pornography. Photographing



his guests playing naked twister was, in retrospect, a bad idea. So was the idea to relocate the party onto the street - a move which ended in his neighbours' cars being wrecked.

But to many, Corey Delaney is the "patron Saint of partying". He is the epitome of cool, masculine, I-don't-give-a-shit-what-you-think adolescence. And it's difficult not to admire his resilient performances on Aussie TV. He speaks in a surly monotone, giving one-word answers which rile his interviewers.

Asked by a Channel Nine presenter "what on earth" he was thinking, Delaney's answer is blunt and reasonably to the point. "Um," he draws, "I wasn't... really thinking." The interviewer moves on. "What,

she asks, are you going to say to your parents when you finally speak to them?" He pauses, seemingly unsure of the answer. "Um, well, sorry?"

Irritated, and now determined to get a full apology from the teenager, she takes a firmer approach. "Why don't you take your glasses off so we can see you, and then apologise to your neighbours for frightening them?" "Uh, I'll apologise, but I'm not taking off my glasses - they're famous." He's right - they are famous. He has been interviewed live several times, offered a place in the Australian Big Brother house, and has work lined up with a some of Australia's lad mags.

So, there it is. For many teenagers, the more debauched the party, the better. The more nipple-piercings the host has, the cooler.

They could have a point - when did you last play naked twister at a Badger Hill house party, or have to go home when the police dog-squad turned up? More likely, you drank saffron-coloured punch before quietly staggering to the garden where, in the pouring rain, you miserably realised its potency. Are we missing out on true, untainted debauchery?

Maybe Corey Delaney is, secretly, an idol to us. He represents the uncaring, uncompromising attitude of someone who has fun no matter what the consequences. Honestly, though? Delaney's probably a tool. Forget his nipple rings and yellow sunglasses. Give me a York house party any day - sickly punch and vaguely sensible, almost adult fun. I hate to be boring guys, but I've got a nine fifteen.



Social Pariah

Lily Eastwood is the fly in the ointment

You thought you were bumbling and charming. A sort of Hugh Grant method; it works particularly well if you're a little bit well spoken, and a fair bit middle class. Stuttering and stumbling your way into his heart, the perfect cover for social awkwardness. But it's all a little bit Rain Man really, when you're sitting in the middle of your seminar, awkwardly, if not actually sweetly, muttering to the group. "Um, uh, err..." Look at me! Look how endearing I am - don't you want to protect me? Ecstasy bubbles up inside you as he finally opens his mouth to talk to you. "Are you drunk?"

Your eyes meet across the bar. Accidentally of course, but then you accidentally look again and he winks. By some glorious serendipity he ends up next to you in the club. Once more unto the breach, dear friends, in search of a real man. He's tall, he's got facial hair; maybe he's not the freak the others have been. Can I get you a drink? Of course you can. All brushing fingertips and coy smiles. I am the envy of everyone. But wait? Did he just say "actual choon"? He must be so cool he's ironic. He hands his phone across. A flirty message? "U r a qt". Shit. He can't even read.

A friend once told me that as the New Year chimes in your state of mind is indicative of the rest of your year. Two minutes to midnight, smelling slightly of sick and leaving rubber gloves and my little sister's friend crumpled on the floor, I scamper down the stairs. My nearest and dearest are gathered around the TV, arm in arm. Jools is leading us into 2008. New year, new hope, let the good times roll. Three, two, one... My sparkler doesn't light and my champagne fizzes down my chin. I am fated to spend 2008 coughing, spluttering and playing with fire, whilst my friend is in the garden vomiting onto my mum's bush.

There's nowhere colder than the night bus stop, nowhere in the world. I huddle knee to knee with my gig-going buddies and share the come-down after a wild night. Three pints, then chips and cheese. Like I said, wild. Suddenly, someone taps me on the shoulder. I turn round to be greeted by the happy face of a clubber. "Do you know how to get to Exeter?" He enquires. I am a little puzzled, but ever willing to help. I begin: "Well, there probably won't be a train until morning, but-" "Nah mate! I said where to get some ecstasy!" Note to self: I am not rock and roll.

"Why would you take them off?" "They were really hurting!" "You could hurt yourself going round barefoot." "I could have hurt myself continuing to wear them!" The way I saw it was simple. Shoes equal crippledom, no shoes equal ability to go get a drink. I could see them from the bar, nestled under a sofa in the Ziggy's champagne room. A couple were conveniently warding thieves off by snogging on the sofa. A minute later, I look back. Couple still snogging, shoes gone. Last I heard of them they were confiscated for being thrown around the dance floor, but were reclaimed by some girl. Shoe-thieving tramp. I wish I'd had verrucas.

Aunty Sara

Uncle Sam

Our resident cross-dressing agony couple tell us what to do when faced with a dispute of the worst kind: a food feud

Dear Uncle Sam and Aunty Sara,

I am engrossed in a feud with the girl who lives across the corridor from me. She started it; she finished my milk which was clearly labelled "Do not touch". To teach her a lesson, I ate her chocolate cake and left a note saying "Now you know what it feels like". Instead of writing me a chastised apology, she poured my Marks & Spencer apple juice into my bolognese! The fridge has become a war-zone, and our other flatmates have started to complain. What should I do?

Yours in desperation,

Hungry, Derwent



Ah yes, the "Fresher food-feud" – so memorable...so pitifully clichéd that I wonder if it deserves any more attention than the concoction of the alliterative term which I have just achieved with such linguistic dexterity. Unfortunately, now that the dazzle of my genius has subsided and the gin is nigh-expired, it seems I am left only with your little quandary. You appear quaintly unaware of what a "special" person you are. Due to my inherently benevolent nature, I feel it is my duty to explain yourself to you.

From many years of observation, I have concluded that the tiresome drunk-baby antics of University students are generally symptomatic of separation-anxiety from the mother. So accustomed are you to continual petting and feeding that when thrust out of this cushy environment Freshers soon become aware of a gaping, empty hole inside. After frenetic attempts at bonding, and occasionally copulation, with anything with a pulse, some rejected and lonely Freshers form strong ties with food in an attempt to fill the void. While some such students simply keep out of the way by hoarding the food in their rooms and muttering "mine", others feel the need to put their issues out there. You are undoubtedly the latter. Luckily for you, judging by your combatants reaction to your incessant stick-note posting, you have found a fellow freak.

Unlike normal people, who probably would have just smacked you on the head and suggested you get over yourself, this girl has gleefully played along with you. Judging by the complete lack of verbal exchange it is obvious that both of you have trouble communicating like normal human beings. Like you, this girl is just looking for a friend; perhaps for her, eating her cake is as intimate as a little cuddle or ear-rub. It seems you are both seeking to connect with something. Normally I would recommend cats; they are easily coerced into love if food is rationed appropriately, provide excellent sources of heat and respond very suitably to heavy doses of gin when their mewling becomes tiresome. Unfortunately, as the University looks askance at pets that hunt ducks, this is not an option for you. Consequently, suggest to this girl that next time she requires milk you will be more than happy to lend her yours, provided that you bake a chocolate cake together. Thus you can both partake in frolics in the flour and post-coital sharing of cake. Furthermore, if this girl is scorned for much longer and possesses any natural female instincts, she will probably put lighter-fluid in your next culinary concoction.

Last year, the four big supermarkets artificially raised the price of dairy by £270 million, meaning you; the hapless consumer paid more for your precious milk. Understandably, you are hypersensitive to milk and its exorbitant price tag. This girl should have been more aware of this despicable underhand financial coup. But then, perhaps she is too aware and felt the pinch. The only way she can enjoy a cup of tea is by scrimping from people like you. Poor cow.

So, kiss and make up. Feuds, especially wars of culinary attrition, will only end in tears. By the sound of yours, this means that what lies in store is a massive and disastrous escalation campaign that will end in her setting fire to both you and the fridge. You've clearly been affronted, and in response lashed out at her vicariously through her chocolate cake. This is a common problem; but food is the innocent party here, so don't let your pudding, gateau or trifle get caught in the middle of any domestic. Before more milk is spilt, sit down and talk over your feelings. Is it really about the milk? Or is it the latent sexual desire, flirtatious instigations to something more? If that is the case, I hear food can provide an interesting dimension to spice up your love life.

If your advances go unanswered, then it is time to end this anally retentive behaviour. It's just milk. So what if she just finished the remaining inconsequential dregs? She is not your enemy. Instead, combat those supermarkets; traverse to the country side, share the price of milk by buying from an out-sourced Yorkshire farmer, while enjoying the benefits that only cooperative udder-yanking can afford you. As you stroll back into town, oblivious to your original predicament, you will inevitably wish to progress in your dietary liberation.

Not only can you then share your milk, and so befriend your complaining flatmate, the two of you can abandon the Westernised culture which inculcated this theft and pithy selfishness to join a farming collective in Cornwall, where you grow vegetables, milk cows and engage in many communal trysts where more milk and apple juice is spilt than ever before. You will be happy and contented, and thank this girl for awakening your spiritual self.

Or, you buy another carton of milk, share the creamy goodness with all your flatmates, and if someone takes liberties with the milk, then breathe, sagely nod in stoic acceptance and recycle that empty carton. You are the bigger, more generous man for letting such a minor affront slide.

Anna Metcalfe

Notes from Switzerland

Switzerland may not seem the ideal exchange destination for students right now. After a highly controversial poster for the U.D.C – the most popular party

in Switzerland – depicting three white sheep over the Swiss flag ganging-up on and pushing out a black sheep over a slogan for "more security", concerns over racism within the Swiss government have never been higher.

The posters made international news, triggering U.N. involvement in order to cool the situation. However, the events have provoked a huge counter-reaction promoting

equality and acceptance, and if there is anywhere that this can be seen to work most effectively it is amongst the international student population. At l'Université de Lausanne, I have been made wonderfully welcome.

The student-run body 'Xchange' takes care of all foreign students, while an internet site known as the "Tandem Server" allows students to search for native speakers of any language they wish to learn. Contact is made through the server before meeting face-to-face, and in many cases long-lasting international friendships are forged. A Canadian friend of mine, Phil, met Melanie, a Swiss girl from Verbier, through the server and only a few weeks later he had wangled me and five others rooms in Melanie's family

chalet in the mountains for a weekend of skiing. Melanie's dad just happened to own a ski school, and was conveniently training new staff in time for the opening of the new season. We were his guinea pigs, so we all ended up with two instructors each, all completely free of charge, and 3 days of wonderful, snow-filled fun on some of the world's most spectacular slopes. One of my friends was cursing fluently in French by the end of the weekend after a dramatic fall involving a button lift, some moguls and six other innocent, unsuspecting skiers.

It was the continual displays of warmth and hospitality that touched me the most. Melanie's family invited us all for fondue after our first tiring day in the mountains, providing Swiss wine and cheese. After the sixth or seventh bottle was open, everyone was chatting away, though some in considerably better French than others. Much amusement ensued as our communication

frequently broke down into drunken, and therefore widely expressive, charades. Still, I have never experienced such brilliant hospitality and it remains one of my favourite soirées en Suisse. I think many people here are anxious to take care of foreign residents to rescue the reputation of their nation from the pit of white-supremacism into which it seems to be falling.

Sadly, my own luck in finding a Tandem partner did not come close to matching Phil's. Whilst he and Melanie are now friends for life, my quest for a beautiful Swiss friendship rapidly turned into something like speed dating as every email I received asked what kind of clothes I like to wear or would I be free for drinks on Tuesday at his place. My favourite, from someone called Lionel, swiftly asked me to meet him for 'fun time' in his flat in Montreux. I politely declined. Perhaps I'll have better luck next time.





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Anti-Semitism in the 21st

Nicky Woolf investigates
Holocaust, post September

Facebook's upcoming 'Hug-a-Jew-day' has more than 150,000 people listed as attending it, both Jewish and otherwise. As such internet groups do, it has instigated some interesting discussions. Many have accused the group of encouraging anti-Semitism, saying that it highlights a difference; the hugger and the huggee. Others have defended the group; it is about spreading 'the love', they say, and that accusations of anti-Semitism highlight a serious oversensitivity. A worrying number have taken the opportunity to make racial slurs; one comment simply says "damn kikes".

The creator of the 'Hug-a-Jew' event, Nadav Karon, from Atlanta, Georgia, is quick to point out that the group was "just for fun". He casts aside my suggestion that the concept of the event might be construed as anti-Semitic. "I wrote in the description for the event that anyone who has something against Jews or Israel should not join the group," he insists. "All they are doing is making more work for me on deleting the posts. I believe that people who are anti-Semitic are using another people, Jews in this case, to blame for their personal problems and faults."

There is some precedence for this. Rabbi Alan Garber, the Jewish Students' Chaplain for Yorkshire and Humber, says: "The Jews are the moral conscience of the world. That

comes from, to a certain extent, the claim that Jews have of being the 'chosen people.'"

"So often people who are not that moral will be anti-Semitic," continues Garber, "because as long as a Jew exists

"No Jews were killed in the 9/11 attacks," he said. "Number of wrongs the Jews did to Adolf Hitler: 911. Coincidence?"

then that stands as a conscience against what they want to do in the world."

It seems an odd claim for any one group of people, purely by merit of religion or race, to be able to be morally superior or inferior to another. In any case, surely any moral high-ground is sullied by the inarguably aggressive defence strategies adopted by the state of Israel? I put this question to Garber, and his answer is disappointingly inconclusive. "The media doesn't report all the good things that come out of Israel. The state of Israel still has a moral conscience, even though in the media it is not often perceived like that."

The state of Israel, at its inception, was constructed as a defence from anti-Semitism following the Holocaust. If it has since been attacked on a dis-

turbingly regular basis, it does not necessarily follow that these attacks are anti-Semitic; but neither does it follow that they are not. Rabbi Garber seems unsure: "Even now the Palestinians, the Arab neighbours, would not want to recognise Israel as a Jewish state. That's not because of territory, that's an anti-Semitic thing." He pauses. "Well, it's a bit of both. But it's not solely a territorial thing."

Rabbi Aharon Cohen of the anti-Zionist sect Neturei Karta gave a controversial talk at the University of York in February last year entitled "Anti-Zionism is not Anti-Semitism". He claimed that the inception of the state of Israel ignored the fact that the massive influx of Jewish settlers would be "depriving the Palestinians of their hope for self determination on the land they had occupied for centuries," and expressed his hope that "the state known as 'Israel' be totally peacefully dissolved, to be replaced by a regime fully in accordance with the aspirations of the Palestinians, [so that] Arab and Jew will be able to live peacefully together as they did for centuries."

Garber argues that Israel is "very important for the growth of the Jewish people, the growth of Jewish culture, the idea of self, the idea of security and national pride of the people. Most Jewish people relate to Israel. I think it's very, very important." Its importance is because the stakes in the

Middle East are now so high; but they were not always. If the state of Israel was created as a safeguard against anti-Semitic attacks, it has succeeded in creating a new group of anti-Semites where before there were none. It makes identifying anti-Semitism incredibly difficult. Where does racial hatred stop and hatred of the occupation tactics of a powerful military force begin?

Richard Bessel, a History Professor at the University of York specialising in the aftermath of the World Wars, clarifies the fact that the late 20th Century saw "the mixing of hostility towards Israel with hostility toward Jews, and the framing of contemporary anti-Semitism within political and cultural hostility to Israel in large measure as a result of Israeli expansionism in the Middle East."

The relative merits of Israel's existence are far too complex to debate here. There is no doubt, however, that secular, territorial issues are behind a section of modern anti-Semitism. This means that a seed-change has occurred; for before the holocaust and the subsequent founding of the state of Israel, Jews were a transient race with no national identity that could be pinned down to a specific geographical location.

I ask Bessel what effect the Holocaust had on anti-Semitic feeling. "It spelled at least temporarily - and one hopes more than temporarily - if not the end then the downfall of popular racialist anti-Semitism," he tells me. "Obviously there are still people out there who think there is a racial hierarchy of human worth and might frame their anti-Semitism within that, but my sense is that the era of racial anti-Semitism as both a meaningful concept and a political power stretches more or less until the middle of the 20th Century. What we have seen post-1945 are rather different concepts."

Some of the most high-profile people who still subscribe to what Bessel describes as "racialist anti-Semitism" are the British National Party, who now control 46 council seats in the UK. Mark Collett, one of the more vocal Nazi-supporters amongst the BNP's leadership, told a reporter from Channel 4: "I'm going to level with you. I'd never say this on camera, yeah, and you can say this to whoever you want, 'cos it's true; the Jews have been thrown out of every country, including England. There's not a single European country the Jews have not been thrown out of. And let's face it, when it happens so many times it's not just persecution. There's no smoke without fire."

Assuming therefore we can write people like Collett and his cadre of Hitler-fetishists off as either delusional psychotics or dinosaur throwbacks from a bygone age, there are still several visible types of anti-Semitism

The Israel-Palestine conflict has invoked a new kind of anti-Semitism



Century

the ways in which anti-Semitism has adapted to the post 11 age of Facebook, White Supremacy forums and the BNP

around.

I ask Bessel to elaborate on his “rather different concepts.” “It strikes me as undeniable,” he says, “that hostility to Israel does get mixed in with hostility to Jews. There is a fair amount of hostility to Israel in and around the Middle East and in the Muslim world which is all mixed in with hostility to Jews. We also know that *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* is being published in Arabic and is being circulated in Muslim countries in a way that it really isn't any longer in Europe.”

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion is a pamphlet originally published in Russian in the early 20th Century which purports to be the transcripts and decisions of a meeting of Jewish elders in which a plan for world domination was set out. It's all very conspir-

Right: The Hug-A-Jew-Day facebook group, and anti-Zionist protesters. Below: Former BNP Youth leader Mark Collett



‘It is now possible for internet discussion groups to exist identifying ‘my favourite Jew’ without any hint of irony’

acy-theory, but it was a catalyst for many of the pogroms and massacres in Eastern Europe in the early 20th Century. That the Arab media are reprinting this text, and circulating copies of Mein Kampf, is extremely interesting. It implies that anti-Semitism in the Middle East is a fairly new affair finding grounding in older Eastern European anti-Semitic literature.

Bessel, however, is not sure that's all. He comes to the conclusion that “there's more to it than just Nazism and contemporary anti-Zionism.” If he's right, there is a new thing to identify; an anti-Semitism that is not racially-motivated, at least not in the way that the Nazis or even the perpetrators of the Clifford's Tower massacre in York more than 800 years ago were.

The Facebook ‘Hug-a-Jew-Day’, meanwhile, has gained another 25,000 members since I began writing. One comment on the group's forum meekly asks: “Is it me or is this group horribly racist?” Another simply says: “Uncool.”

Yet another asks “So you're saying... no-one else is worthy of hugging?”

When I dig a little deeper on the page, I find comments that are more worrying. “I'm gonna wear my face mask because I don't want to get my eye poked out by a hook nose,” says a student at the University of Texas who goes by the surreal alias of Reverend Diamond. He defends his statement further down with his bizarre statement of what he obviously thinks is a fact: “No Jews were killed in the 9/11 attacks. The alleged hijackers were never confirmed to be deceased. Number of wrongs the Jews did to Adolf Hitler: 911. Coincidence? Or just evidence that America is a farce controlled by dirty, hook-nosed, circumcised Jew bastards”. A schoolboy asks: “In the process of the hug, will the Jew claw come out and take my money?” Another states: “Stereotypes are usually true, because all Jews have large noses and large saving accounts. Stereotypes don't just come out of thin air.”

While this seemingly provides evidence of the remnants of a Jewish conspiracy theory, its language seems to be updated for a post-September 11 world. Meanwhile, the more racial-trait based abuse is much older; imagery of clawed hands, hooked noses and the concept of “penny-pinching”.

A Jewish student named Jason answers Diamond's post. “This is a group about trying to bring everyone together... I don't understand [how] so many people can hate one another based on their beliefs,” he argues. “I'm a scientologist,” replies the Texan. “It's better than all religions because poor people can't really be a part of it, and Jews don't like spending money so there aren't many of those in it either.”

Is the internet home to the emergence of a new kind of casual anti-Semitism? Or has it simply allowed grass-root anti-Semites like Diamond to contact others, giving them a forum on which to rant on Facebook? There are lots of white-supremacist pages dotted around the web; I checked out one of the larger ones, Stormfront.org. Carrying the tagline “White Pride World Wide”, its conversation topics make for unpleasant reading; terms like “race mixing”, “holohoax” abound. As far as I can tell, however, the internet racist community seems to be little more than a few distasteful but ultimately harmless shut-ins, ranting and raving about “negroville” and “the jew”, than anything more sinister. Racism, like radiation, at a fairly safe background level.

Mr. Diamond on the ‘Hug-a-Jew-Day’ forum fits this profile of ‘internet wacko’ neatly. When challenged on the Scientology question, his answer is wonderfully bizarre. “My parents couldn't afford to transcend to the next



operating thetan,” he writes, “and they disappeared, and my dianetics advisor told me that they were consumed by the ghost-slaves of Xenu.”

That's not to say there isn't a more mainstream internet anti-Semitism issue. Debbie Addlestone, of the Leeds Zionist Council, tells me of her own internet experiences: “When just playing online bridge, you get people abusing each other and it's usually with anti-Semitic, vitriolic language. Complete strangers who don't know each other at all, when they start being displeased about something in the game, they'll suddenly start with ‘you Jew’ and things like that. It's really shocking, and it's happened a few times.”

This is the most mysterious of all kinds of anti-Semitism, and the hardest to pin down. “Jew” as a slur, often, but by no means always, still linked to the old implications of financial miserliness and large noses, is still used; though often harmlessly between friends. It is used almost in defiance of

any challenge; accusations of over-sensitivity may be levelled at anyone who objects to the idea that a Jew is a different entity, with identifiable characteristics. It is now possible for discussion groups to exist identifying “my favourite Jew” without any hint of irony; or for lists to be made of Jewish celebrities or Jewish “hotties”. While it does highlight a difference, this may well be anti-Semitism in a dying form. Often, the same words are used but the malice seems to be gone.

It is certain that anti-Semitism has undergone fundamental changes in the last half-century. Radically altered by the existence of the state of Israel and the internet, it has separated into several separate components; the remnants of Nazism, territorial anti-Zionism and a strange new form of informal, vernacular anti-Semitism. Discounting the issues surrounding Israel, it may just be possible to foresee the end of anti-Semitism, at least in any guise that would have been familiar to the Nazis, in our lifetimes.

Famous students

Not all students are fighting anonymity, says **Raf Sanchez**, some are battling fame instead

subsequent appointment to her position of Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party has made Zardari one of the most recognized people of his age group, with a number of Facebook groups springing up including the fairly tasteless 'Let's not assassinate Bilawal Bhutto because he's hot, ok?'. With well over 1,000 members the group's creator has ordered members not to discuss Pakistan or politics but to simply "REPSECT [sic] THE HOT-TNESS!" Zardari is a regular attendee of the Oxford Union, of which his mother was president during her time at Oxford, and former president Luke Tryl said Zardari was "very charismatic and engaging; he speaks confidently and eloquently." Thames Valley Police have made special security arrangements for the student since his return to Oxford this month.

First Twins **Barbara and Jenna Bush** started college (Yale and the University of Texas, respectively) in 2000, weighed down with the usual student accoutrement of pots, pans and heavily armed government bodyguards. Both followed in the footsteps of their parents - First Lady Laura Bush went to Texas, while the somewhat intellectually mediocre George was a fourth generation Yalie. Like her mother, Jenna was a member of national sorority Kappa Alpha Theta. A blogger at Vanderbilt University described the sorority as "Jesus-loving, bible-hugging and Southern bred." In 2001 both Bushes were arrested in Austin, Texas and charged with being minors in possession of alcohol. A month later Jenna was charged with using a fake ID (the ID read 'Barbara Pierce', the maiden name of her grandmother and the former First Lady) to try and buy alcohol. In 2003 a member of the Whitehouse leaked to the press that Jenna and Barbara's Secret Service code names were 'Twinkle' and 'Turquoise' respectively. It's still unknown whether the names were directly lifted from, or simply inspired by, the 'My Little Pony' playset. After her graduation in 2004 it was reported that Barbara's possessions were flown back to Texas by Air Force One.

From L-R: **Chelsy Davy, Martin Sheen, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Barbara and Jenna Bush, and Natalie Portman**

anything more exciting than walking around in big coats and leggings or drinking coffee could be worth thousands. Despite claims that Davy was dropping out (the *News of the World* ran the headline 'Leeds... my a***'), she remains at the University, often seen in her local Vodka Revolutions.

Aged 66 and after completing two successful (and fictional) terms as US President, *West Wing* star **Martin Sheen**, took up a place at the National University of Ireland, Galway in September 2006. Sheen embarked on a tightly focused course of English Literature, Philosophy and Oceanography. As a reformed alcoholic, Sheen opted out of most fresher's week activities, allegedly spending much of his time in debate with the university chaplain instead. Well known for his left-wing political views, there was an unsurprising scramble amongst student groups to enlist his celebrity in the activist's arsenal. He soon became involved in protests against the Irish government's decision to allow US bombers to refuel at Shannon, as well as against the exploitation of mushroom pickers. Proposals were also mooted that Sheen front a campaign against the rising price of baked potatoes in the university canteen. One student speculated: "He's got an Irish background hasn't he? He'd probably love to have a baked potato."

Natalie Portman was already a target of resentment after

her role in *Léon* at the age of 13, and gaining admission to Harvard for psychology (one place per 11 applicants) while performing in a Broadway version of Anne Frank's Diary probably didn't help. More frustratingly still, it seems Portman is actually intelligent enough to deserve to be there. She enjoyed straight A's, speaks five languages, and contributed to a major

'It was suggested that Sheen front a campaign against the rising price of baked potatoes, "Well, he's partly Irish isn't he?'"

study in 2002, pithily entitled 'Frontal Lobe Activation During Object Permanence'. To the disappointment of the tabloids, her only major foray into the public gaze was neither an unexpected pregnancy nor a leaked sex tape, but a resounding rebuttal to Harvard Crimson's article which accused Israel of "racist colonial occupation". She signed her response with her real name, Natalie Hershlag. During her summer break Portman would unwind by filming *Star Wars*: Episodes I-III, each of which took hundreds of millions of dollars at the box office. What a slacker.

As the world's shock at the assassination of Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto began to subside, its gaze turned to her son and political successor, 19-year old Oxford student **Bilawal Bhutto Zardari**. Zardari left Oxford at the end of last term as the reasonably anonymous Bilawal Lawalib, (the adopted surname is his first name backwards) a History student at Christ Church College. His mother's death and his

'The student body' is a distinctly dreary phrase, and for all the plaudits draped over our collective personage, it can be difficult to feel like anything more than another tea-drinking, perpetually-hungover microbe in a body that already has thousands of them. You, my little platelet friend, are nothing special. But what about those that are? What of the students that; due either to personal achievement or famous lineage, stand out enough to merit the attentions of the outside world? Here are six of these peculiar creatures and the stories of how they balanced the pressures of international celebrity with their student duties of drinking, sleeping and eating.

Zimbabwean heiress and Leeds law student **Chelsy Davy** shot to tabloid fame after being photographed with Prince Harry in Argentina in 2004. When Davy moved to Leeds in September 2007, the paparazzi dutifully migrated north, setting up a permanent encampment outside Davy's Headingly flat. The Daily Mail's discomfort was palpable as it reported: "The living-room walls of these houses are typically covered in posters of rock bands. A penis, 3ft high, has been drawn on a mirror in shaving foam in one." Her student neighbours have allegedly been offered £300 for pictures of her, whilst university security have gleefully adopted their new job of frogmarching unwanted photographers off campus. Snaps of the post-graduate student doing



La Revolución del Fortuna

Manu Chao's rebellious lyrics have led fans to call him South America's Bob Dylan. **Gina Heslington** catches up with him after a gig to talk politics over a cigarette

A riot of intoxicated fans crash into each other. Dreadlocks fly as voices rise in sporadic chanting to exotic beats. Marijuana smoke clogs the air, and as a thousand arms lift the crowd crushes in a heave forward to get closer to the stage. This is the electric sensation of Manu Chao live.

In a small room adjoining the after-show party Manu - born Jose-Manuel - Chao raises a Fortuna cigarette to his lips, casually offering me one. I accept, nervous in the presence of this international music legend. Chao is famed for his ability to cross cultural, social and political divides with his left-field compositions. In France, the stunning success of *Clandestino* has made it one of the best-selling albums of all time and his follow up, *Proxima Estacion: Esperanza* has already sold over three million copies. In Mexico he plays to audiences 100,000 strong.

Compared with this, his following in the Anglophone world is curiously lacking. When I ask him how he feels about this, Chao gives an enigmatic response. "All the English-speaking culture of the world has been imposed upon us, by television and the radio. I sing in whatever language I want; French, Spanish, Portuguese, English, Galician. I don't respect language. I invent my own words. My father goes crazy sometimes, but it's my way."

Born in 1961 to communist Basque and Galician parents, the strong anti-globalization flavour to his tracks are easily construed as an anti-capitalist, anti-Western methodology but Chao swears this is not the case. "I don't think about an international message. When you write a song it's not you that decides, it's the moment - inspiration - that you write. The influence for the language you are going to use is the surroundings. Right now I'm talking a lot of English so later if I get a stupid idea in the bus maybe it's going to be in English. I spend a lot of time in South America so that explains why a lot of my songs are in Spanish."

Chao's music is as diverse in style as it is in language. A fusion of reggae, punk, ska, French chanson, Ibero-American salsa and Algerian rai, it is as difficult to define as Chao himself. Though raised in Paris, he passionately renounces his country of origin as a defining part of his identity. "What is France? A banner? A border? Politically, this border is only made of killings. I don't respect this. I'm not nationalist. That way of thinking is very old school. More and more I try to live in the present. Years ago I used to say I was a citizen of the world, now I'm an individual of the present, that's my moment, that's my house. Part of my philosophy is that when you're some-

where, you're somewhere. Don't think about tomorrow. Think about the present, it's your present."

Compared to a modern day Bob Dylan for his rebellious songs of protest, it is hard not to be moved by Chao's gusto. His new album *La Radiolina*

'Then, I question his current guiding influences. He laughs. "Right now, only my mother; and she always says the same thing: 'Stop smoking!'"

captures the dizzy force of his concerts, melded with the passionate cries of his ideals.

"You know, it was the Zapatistas who first told me what was coming?" Chao leans forward, exhaling smoke. As his eyes narrow in recollection fine wrinkles web his face, lending an air of perceptive wisdom. His look is strangely compelling. I struggle to recall images of the Zapatistas. I vaguely remember images of Balaclava-clad revolutionaries fighting for the rights of indigenous Mayans in Chiapas, Mexico, and I return his intense gaze.

"The message from Mexico back in '93 was very clear, a general caution about a lot of things that everybody talks about now, such as globalization. The Zapatistas were the first people that warned me. What I respect a lot about the movement is that it is still clean, there are no shadows. It has not been ruined by ego. With each revolution there are the same old problems, they start good, but after a certain amount of time everyone in the same movement starts fighting each other. In Chiapas, in fifteen years, it hasn't happened. That's magic."

With 'Tristeza Maleza', the second track of his latest album issuing warnings to George Bush, Chao is an attractive icon for supporters of the anti-Republican leaning that has enveloped global youth politics. Chao however remains resolutely on the fence. "I don't try to give a message with my music because I'm lost in this world. I have no better idea of

what to do than anyone else. For every song of mine, take ten people and ten different meanings will come out. That's what I like. That's why I never explain my songs. When you see the world, you've got this rage and you have to find a way of putting it out positively. My therapy for that is to write songs to get rid of my negative emotions. After that it's up to people to find their own meaning with-in."

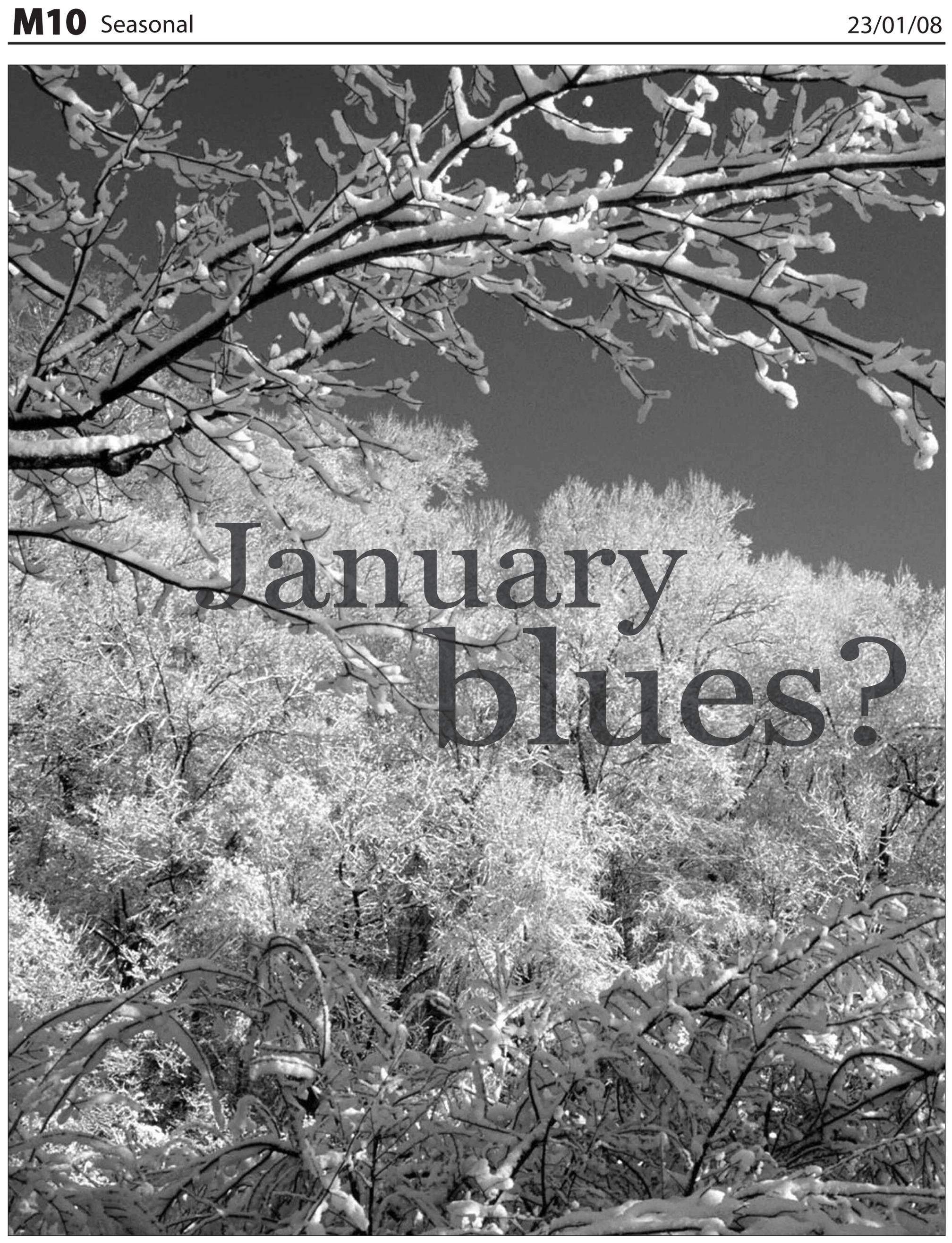
Despite Chao's mysterious answers, his refreshingly humanistic approach to music production is revealed in his projects and collaborations. After a chance meeting with Amadou and Miriam, a blind couple from Mali, "good química" - good chemistry - made him agree to produce their album, *Dimanche A Bambako*, that has since sold over half a million copies.

Future plans include an album produced with members of a psychiatric hospital in Buenos Aires which he hopes will be released next year. Eager to know how Chao's music will progress, I question his current guiding influences. He laughs. "Right now, only my mother; and she always says the same thing: 'Stop smoking!'"

I figure it isn't the best time to inform Manu about the recent smoking ban as, like the rebellious soul he is, he reaches for yet another Fortuna.

Manu Chao's new album has already sold more than 3m copies





January
blues?

Some people spend their holidays in fulfilling and stimulating work experience placements. Others spend them not working at all under the canny guise of having too much revision to do. The rest of us are thrust into the cut-throat world of temporary employment. It's not glamorous, it's not usually fun, and one should be prepared to accept unsociable shifts with unsociable colleagues.

The Christmas season offers special working opportunities for your average student. Not only could you be heading up the Turkey Team at a Waitrose near you, but you could also spend some quality time with Santa down at the grotto. Only a few lucky people get to work with the big man himself. Many people think you have to be four feet tall with naturally pointy ears, but there are plenty of opportunities for us taller folk to get in on the festive action.

I was ahead of the curve already, having started my elfing career at the tender age of fifteen when I would receive £10 and a couple of free mince pies for extracting screaming toddlers from the arms of their mothers and dragging them into a darkened room to see a bearded man. Things have moved on since those days. Working in a certain London department store I made a very merry £100 per day. Easy money? Perhaps.

My job basically consisted of waving and jangling bells as the children entered, delivering a family to Santa, taking their picture and returning them to the shop. This is fairly standard elf fare, but a vast amount of technology lies behind it. In addition to ten

pairs of sleigh bells and Santa tummies for the slender Santas, each elf and queue supervisor had an ear piece and mic, linking us to a central control desk. The airwaves were hummed with frantic and entertaining messages: "We're going to need elves one, two and three for the next batch, I repeat elves one, two and three." "Control, tell Santa number two that he can bloody well wait until his break to have a piss." "Hold the kids in the cabins, hold the kids in the cabins! Santa on the shop floor! Don't let them see another Santa, I repeat, no double-viewings!"

The constant banter in your left ear goes some way to break up the monotony of Nintendo DS requests. The Santas also did their best to spice things up occasionally. "I know!" said one, "Why don't we sing a song?" The parents look less than impressed but the toddler grabbed my bells and belled along enthusiastically. "Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way!" It's a heart-warming sight, four children, two parents, grandma, Santa, and Twinkle the Elf packed into a single non-air-conditioned cabin. "Everybody say cheese!"

The odd bit of casual racism and impromptu napping from the Santas perked things up a bit. I first picked up on the vibe when, following a black family coming through, the jolly bearded fellow nudged me and said: "It's their adults who make all the problems in the world isn't it? Their kids are just the same as ours, aren't they?" And I nearly died when he told a Muslim family that it was great that they were "getting involved" and he thought that they looked "charming" in their "out-

fits". Apparently he won't be returning next year.

At least he didn't let any of the children sit on his knee - that's very much against the rules nowadays - and the falling asleep was an altogether less serious issue. When I led a family in to find Santa snoring I tried to make out that it was part of our little comedy routine, "Oh no! Look! Santa's fallen asleep! Let's wake him up!" Slightly perturbed parents were reassured as their children squealed with laughter and Santa spluttered to life with an instinctive "Ho, ho, ho!"

Of course, it's not just the Santas causing havoc in the grotto. The customer can be somewhat demanding too. Messages come through from the control desk saying that little Talullah, Noah and Apple expect Santa to magically know their names, or magically know what all they want for Christmas. These kids have serious expectations. One flustered parent asked me to pretend I'd broken my arm, and apologise to her little darling for not being able to make a Nintendo DS on time.

Another surreal moment came when a mother stormed back from the photo collection desk demanding to know why her child looked fat in the picture. I didn't really know what to say. "It's because your child, Mrs Billing-Smythe, is fat" didn't strike me as an answer that would placate. It was also her little boy who kicked me and told me I couldn't be an elf because I was a girl. I told him it wasn't nice to kick, particularly since I didn't get out of the North Pole much and he was spoiling my holiday.

Somewhere amidst the casual

Ever wondered what goes down in the Grotto? **Lily Eastwood** infiltrates the frantic high-tech world of international Elfing

racism, the horrible children and the vast and gratuitous consumerism, there was something charming about the whole charade. If there was one thing that everyone was united in, it was preserving the illusion for the children. Not just for the spoilt and ungrateful children, but for the boy who asked for a pair of socks for his granddad and the girl who asked for an egg timer so she'd know how long to brush her teeth for. Despite nudges from their parents and their mutters of "ask for something normal", it was at those moments that I felt I was really a part of the Christmas magic.

Most of the work you do over the holidays may not look that impressive on your CV, but holiday jobs are a rite of passage for students and a precious chance to get out of the campus bubble. As a hint for first years; if your parents resent your slovenly lifestyle, showing them that you can do a decent days work goes a long way, and you're one step closer to convincing them that university is equipping you with a skills other than elaborate fancy dress or toastie making.

As the tinsel-dust settles, **Sarah Foster** looks back on her New Year's resolution to clean up her lifestyle, stop drinking, eat her greens and make an attempt at exercise

Resolutions are a bad idea. In theory, I can understand the idea of improving yourself, reflecting back on past wrongs and striving to right them. But in practice they tend to do little more than make everyone a bit depressed. After all, no one really likes examining their own faults.

If anything is to blame, it's the calendar. New Year just happens to take place after that most indulgent of times, the festive season. A time when you're expected to eat more than your own weight in food in one sitting, and where a mug of mulled wine is a perfectly acceptable breakfast. It is a heavenly few days for most, but it is also inevitably followed by the painful realisation that you must pay for your hedonism.

It was this which led me to my New Year's resolution. A friend casually asked what mine was going to be, and, chin-deep in guilt, I replied with the stock answer: that I was going to be a healthier person. I won't abuse my liver, I said. I won't eat a 500g bar of chocolate in one glorious sitting. I even promised to myself that I would do some form of exercise. In all honesty, I would have said anything to repent for the fact that I had probably eaten enough to feed a sizable village in the preceding week.

For the next few days I almost found myself enjoying my new way of life. I felt quite good about turning away dessert or suggesting that we

'My smugness increased tenfold. Contrary to my former beliefs, this new healthy living wasn't making me that much nicer'

walk the couple of miles to a friend's house instead of driving. But then I re-entered the University bubble, and things rapidly began to go downhill.

It was only when I had stopped drinking that I realised exactly how much of my social life revolves around alcohol. I had hardly unpacked when I was invited out to the pub. Upon arriving to catch up with friends, I looked enviously at the bottle of red wine on the table. Would my new health regime allow for one glass? Two? A pub dinner? If I thought that was hard, it was nothing compared to the pain I felt when we ended up in Evil Eye, where I longingly eyed up the cocktail list. But alas, I was being very good this week, and so I looked further down the menu and discovered the amazing selection of fruit juice cocktails; one point to healthiness. I woke up on Tuesday morning feeling refreshed and ener-

getic, so I decided to go for a run. Oh dear. It was wet. It was cold. The ground was muddy. And to make matters quite a lot worse, I had misjudged my ability to be a healthy person. I had assumed that I must be at least capable of running for longer than a couple of minutes. I was wrong, and was soon forced to return home looking like a drowned rat. There was no way that feeling like this could ever be good for me, could it?

Then came Wednesday. Have you ever tried to order an orange juice in The Nags Head? I got a strange look from the barman, certain that I must want some vodka with it. But no, there would be no alcohol for me. So I sat in the corner, slurping my orange juice, and thinking about how much my body was enjoying all that fruity goodness. Only when a friend turned to me, and yelled - people seem to talk much louder when they're drunk and you're not - "We're going to Ziggy's now" that a little part of me died. Ziggy's was not the place for a sober me. I attempted to dance, but found it much harder than I'm used to it being. In the end, I succumbed to my fate and told my friends that I was going home. They looked at me quizzically; surely I was going to stay until the end of the night like normal? They were going to go to Efes, like we always did. I sadly declined. A takeaway at three in the morning probably wasn't allowed under my new fitness regime. I wandered out into the rain, feeling dejected and stupid, and damn-

ing my new found ability to have no fun ever.

That said, I did manage to feel rather smug come the next day. I woke up well before midday and decided to prepare for my seminar next week, so I headed over to the library. I had made pages of notes before I eventually got a text message from one of the friends I had been out with the night before. We had planned to meet up for tea (coffee was out of the question, far too much caffeine in that), but she had spent most of the morning vomiting up her takeaway and so would be unable to make it. My smugness increased tenfold, although it did now seem that, contrary to my former belief, this new healthy living wasn't making me that much nicer.

But it was only four days into the term and I was already feeling the strain. Friday brought with it a house party, and I had barely been there five minutes before a glass of punch was offered to me. I tried to decline, but just couldn't. With that glass of punch, my resolution went gurgling down the plughole. I probably ate a pizza, I don't remember. I felt amazing. I had set my goal too high, denied myself far too many things. There's self restraint, and then there's self sacrifice. I didn't want to become that girl who felt guilty after drinking full fat milk. I couldn't appease the gods of health. I was a failure. But I was much a happier failure for having taken a few days off; I appreciated my failure more.

The housing headache has well and truly begun. Friends must be vetted, property details sifted, and houses inspected. First-years will be starting to grasp the size of the task ahead of them, forging alliances and breaking friendships as they tentatively suggest housing combinations in covert conversations behind closed doors. Older students will be weighing up the idea of having to re-enter the York property chaos against staying with people they can no longer stand. To make the next few months easier, *Nouse* have provided you with a step-by-step guide to the housing process. Good luck...

Step 1 - Choosing your housemates

This can be the hardest bit of the whole process. Before you even begin to search for the perfect student house, you must first find the perfect housemates. Living in shared accommodation takes tolerance and, unlike in halls, you can't just walk down the corridor to get away from whoever is irritating you. Most houses do not come with cleaners (although some do), and attitudes towards tidiness and hygiene tend to be the biggest points of contention. Try to assess your friends objectively. Smell of smoke make you wretch? Check whether any of your new friends nurture secretive night-time habits. That disorganized girl who is sweet at the moment will be much less endearing when her late bill payments incur extra charges. If your day doesn't really start until the afternoon and goes on well into the early hours of the morning, it is advisable to live with similarly nocturnal animals. Finally, avoid couples. Seriously. Whether get-



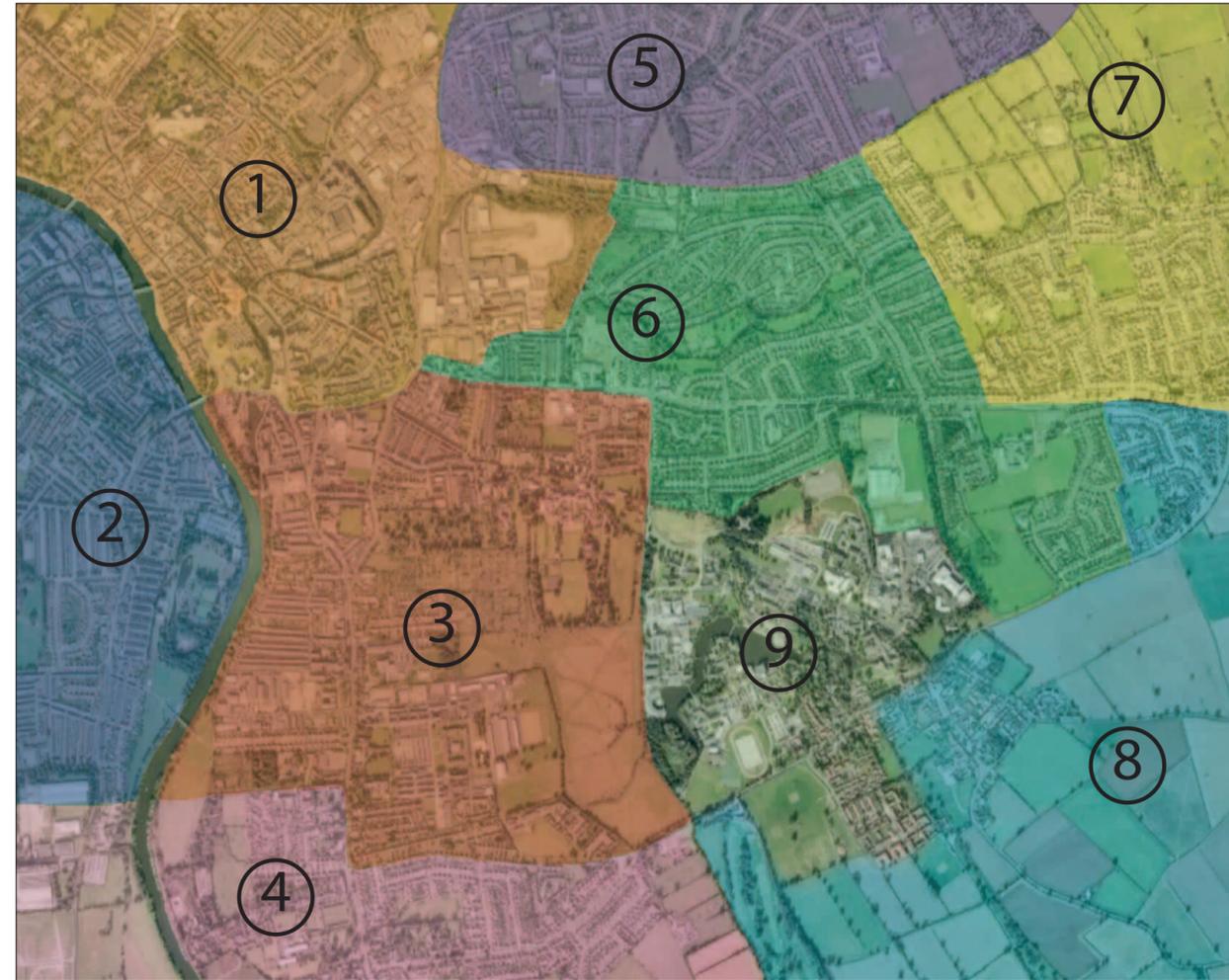
ting on (sometimes too well) or breaking up, they spell stress and sleepless nights.

1 Guildhall
Otherwise known as town, not many people tend to live in this area. Houses are fairly expensive, and a good walk from campus, but bars and shops certainly abound on your doorstep.

2 Micklegate
Known mainly as being the side of town with Ziggys, Toffs, and all things triple for the price of a single. If a short walk home after a night out is what you're looking for, this is the place to live. Houses in this area will probably be out of the city walls in an area called Southbank. The best area to live is between the local shops and Rowntree Park, a really beautiful part of York during the summer, which spreads over both sides of the River Ouse. The only drawback is that it is on the other side of the river, making it quite a walk to campus.

3 Fishergate
Covering everything boxed in between campus, the barracks, the river and town, this is an excellent area to live in. With a Sainsburys, an Iceland and an Aldi; cheap food shopping is on your doorstep. Fairly close to both campus and town, quite a large number of students live just West of Fulford Road, where rent prices are low and the living is easy. The most popular and convenient road to live on (or just off) is Heslington Road, where Efes and Ebor taxis can also be found.

4 Fulford
An area often largely neglected by the student population, houses around here are generally fairly cheap, and can often cater for the larger groups, as the houses are more irregular in size and build. Fulford Broadway provides little more than a Post Office and a bicycle repair shop, but also has a very good fish and chip takeaway. At about half an hour away from campus, and at least 40 minutes by foot to town, although there is a bus, its location is not ideal.



5 Heworth
Just north of Tang Hall, this is a slightly cheaper area, equipped with its very own Costcutters and a slightly grotty Nag's Head. At only half an hour walk to campus, and a mere quarter of an hour to town, the only downside is an increase of York St. John students.

6 Hull Road and Tang Hall
This is probably the most popular place for students to live after Heslington Road. Covering quite a large residential area, including Badger Hill, the houses are normally small to average in size, and uniform in build, but there are plenty of them. Hull Road provides the backbone, with shops such as Somerfields and the aptly-named Chubbies. Well-placed between town and campus, the only downsides are the possible safety problems in an area nicknamed Wu Tang Hall (complaints of menacing-looking children sitting on bins are commonplace), and the Billy Elliot style streets. You will never be far from fellow students in this residential zone.

7 Osbaldwick
With a B&Q, a village shop that delivers newspapers and the best chippie in York (apparently), this is a fairly good area to live in. Not many students do, however, making much less studenty. The fairly large houses in this area are only 20 minutes from campus, and a bus ride from town.

8 Heslington
Incredibly close to campus, and a lot less depressingly residential than other areas in York, this is one of the few areas you will probably already know a bit about. Great pubs include the Charles and the Derry (ahem), and if you get bored, you can always stroll through a field. The houses are also very pretty, and town is an easy (if expensive) bus ride away.

9 University
Sadly, only first years can really live here.

Step 2 - Letting agents and landlords

Now you know who you'll be living with, you must decide whether to go through a private landlord or a letting agency. Renting with a private landlord avoids the intermediary of the letting agency and so cuts your costs. Most privately let properties charge cheaper rent as the proprietor won't charge administration or referencing fees. They also are usually more flexi-

Looking for living space?

Enough of all this confusion and stress. **Antonia Shaw** and **Venetia Rainey** are here to guide you through the chaotic process of finding a house in just four easy steps

ble than letting agents and you may be able to negotiate concerns such as smoking, keeping pets and reduced summer rents. Even better, you are often allowed to paint your own rooms, a definite perk considering the drab interior of many student houses. This may all sound idyllic, but be warned, the rented accommodation industry is largely unregulated. As landlords are not compelled to belong to a professional body or trade association they have no reputation to uphold. This not only means that it is easier for them to swindle you, but also gives you very little to go on if anything problematic does happen. If you do choose to use this route make sure you know your rights (see box for useful websites).

Consequently the oft-favoured option is to use a letting agent. This should ensure certain levels of service as letting agencies have a reputation to uphold, as well as a greater range of properties. Your pocket will have to pay for this privilege, however, and there can be a degree of inflexibility regarding house rules and regulations. You

should also expect to put in a fair amount of legwork to find a property. Expect to leave details with several agencies, but don't be surprised if you are not inundated with calls. If they have nothing suitable for you at the time, usually they simply won't contact you, so make sure you keep in contact with them. According to the Accommodation Agencies Act of 1963, it is illegal for letting agencies to ask for payment for property viewings and details. If this does happen, walk swiftly away and call the local council. Agencies are often able to sneak in

Step 3 - The house

Whichever route you choose to go through, you will quickly be in a position to start looking at properties online. Think about local amenities, transport options - which almost always means buses - then distance from campus and town, general area safety, and, of course, rent.

Choosing a base rent price can be tricky to negotiate amongst friends, particularly if there is a massive disparity between housemates' accommodation budgets. The average price of student accommodation in York is around £65 per week, but if you can stretch to £70 per week, you should be pretty cushy. At the moment prices are being raised across York, so keep that in mind. It is also worth remembering you could be asked for three month blocks of rent in advance and that you will be always be asked to pay a deposit, normally of around £250. Bills aren't usually included in the rent - so leave money in your budget for that, roughly

an extra £7 per week. Once you have found a few properties that fit your criteria, organise viewings with the appropriate letting agent or landlord. If possible, all housemates should attend the first viewing as there is no guarantee of a second, and you don't want people to be signing for a house they have never seen. For your own personal safety, never view a property on your own. When looking round a house, you should take the following into consideration on top of the more obvious



things like room size: Security, smoke detectors and fire alarms, proof of servicing of the gas and electricity, power sockets, furniture that stays with the house, storage space, signs of damp, mould or infestations, plumbing, cooking and washing facilities, communal space, parking (if applicable), and double glazing. That's a lot to think about, and the more eyes the better. Remember, if using a private landlord be extra vigilant when viewing the property as they are less likely to stick to health and safety regulations.

WORST CASE SCENARIO

I was one of the unluckiest first years I know. My corridor, if not my whole block, was full of idiots. And not even the kind of idiots you can have a bit of fun with, idiots that I didn't even want to waste energy trying to put up with. Maybe I'm a little intolerant, perhaps even a little strange. I certainly don't get excited about getting dressed up in a ridiculous costume and plying myself with drink in order to enjoy a night.

Last spring I found myself in the awkward position of being greeted by hurried silences and forced greetings everytime I walked into my kitchen. I didn't particularly care, I definitely wasn't planning to share so much as a postcode with any of my blockmates come second year, but the tension in the air did mean that cooking lost much of its previous enjoyment for me.

To be fair, I didn't hate them, they just weren't my kind of people. They didn't get me, my sense of humour, my idea of fun, or the way I dressed, and consequently I had to face the prospect of finding some people who did, or else apply to live on campus again on the grounds of having no friends.

My next step was to attend a college social for students looking for housemates, and also, contrary to my pride, start asking if anyone knew of a house looking for a room filler. Alas, I missed the social, and out of laziness and an unwillingness to confront the idea of being homeless, I ignored the issue for the rest of that year. It was only over summer, after a particularly worried inquiry from my parents, that I realised I had to do something. A friend of mine (I did make some) put me in contact with a group of complete strangers who were rumoured to have a spare room in a large house in Osbaldwick. I called them, explained my situation, and agreed then and there to move in.

So far my year has been OK. It hasn't been as much fun as I would have hoped, but my new housemates are bearable, if a little noisy. At least this way I have a roof over my head. So if you still don't have a house for next year, don't worry, it can't get worse than this.

Step 4 - What to expect next

So you've found your perfect house. Now get a move on and snap it up! You will have to sign a contract, and arrange a guarantor for your rent, normally a parent. Remember that a contract is a binding agreement, so any negotiations that you wish to make over rent, etc. must be done before you sign. Check for a clause that enables you to give leave notice during the contract, otherwise, if you have to change accommodation before the contract has terminated, you may still be liable to continue paying rent until your lease is finished. Take your contract along to the accommodation office who will check over it for you, and keep a hard copy of it. Don't take this too lightly, as you will all be responsible for each other's damages and debts. If you are with a letting agency you may have to give over post-dated cheques (cheques banked at pre-specified dates throughout the year), and don't forget that most leases will be 12 months long and will start in early July. This effectively means you will have to pay for those few months over summer when no-one will be in your house. Irritating, but unavoidable.

Finally, remember to take pictures of every room in the house before you move in; those can be used as proof of carpet stains, etc. not caused by you, and will prevent problems getting back your deposit when you move out again. All that's left is to pick rooms, and decide who gets stuck in the cupboard under the stairs...

THE OFFICIAL LINE

As people are manically booking house viewings, the University is recommending that its students hold off, and take care before signing on the dotted line. Student Welfare Adviser, Mo Onyett warns that "people don't leave it long enough before they start looking for houses in their first year. You don't have enough time to know the people you're moving in with." She advises students to wait at least until the University Code of Practice on Private Sector Accommodation is published on the February 1. It comprises a list of private landlords and their properties that have been regulated by the university set guidelines. Onyett continues, "there is a plentiful supply of student accommodation in the York private sector and the properties that advertise first tend to be more expensive." In fact, Onyett believes that a student can delay property-hunting to as far as the summer term and that "the latest you should have it sorted by is the beginning of June". Phillipa Clare, creator of the 'Finding a House in York' Facebook group, deems this

information "really misleading". She feels so strongly about this that she is refusing to add the information to her helpful house-hunting guide, despite being asked to do so by a University official. Clare believes that there is a "real difference between what the Uni is saying and what the landlords actually want". She adds that she thinks "it is important to get it done sooner than later, but it's a real catch-22 for first years". Onyett, however, stands strong. She firmly believes that "there is a lot of scare-mongering, and there is really not any need to panic. Landlords and letting agents will sometimes put on the pressure... but there is no rush to finding a property". She was taken aback when an unnamed letting agent littered Alcuin college with flyers in December, alarming the students to property shortages which quite simply didn't exist. The University does indeed have a valid point; there is an abundance of student property in York. However, the vast majority of students have begun to view houses. Whilst the University's principles work in theory,

they don't take into account the fact that hordes of students will be searching for houses and are all fully aware that they are in direct competition with each other for the best houses. Inevitably, good houses go quickly. Clare laughed at the notion of waiting until summer term to start looking for a property "you'll end up living in a shed!". **www.direct.gov.uk** - follow the links to university and higher education and then click on student housing. Also contains advice on legal rights and contracts. **YUSU** - Although there is nothing on their website at the moment, there is a housing fair in the pipeline for later this term. Students are also advised to pop into the YUSU building for advice and help. **'Finding a house in York; information to make life easier' Facebook group** - Set up by Phillipa Clare, this group includes lists of letting agencies, and provides a forum for students to discuss areas and housing issues.

The forgotten capital of Peru

Unable to reach Machu Picchu by the conventional route, **Venetia Rainey** explores the former Inca capital of Cusco, where history fuses with South American vibrancy

One of the world's most spectacular treks is the Peru's Capaq Nan trail, otherwise known as the Inca trail. The classic route covers 70km and reaches heights of over 4,200m above sea. It takes about four days to reach the legendary lost Inca city of Machu Picchu, officially named one of the Seven Wonders of the World last year. The sense of victory after such a hike makes for a once in a lifetime (and fairly costly) experience. At least, so I have been told.

I had the misfortune of suffering what all travellers must endure at one point or another: food poisoning. After drinking impure water whilst staying on an island in Lake Titicaca, I was crippled by the illness and utterly unable to keep food or water down. On the third day, I found myself being roughly pulled out of bed, and my pyjamas swapped for hiking boots, shorts and a t-shirt. Three hours from the starting point of the trail, I had to admit defeat. My family went on without me, and a rather put-out porter travelled back the five hour journey with me to the nearest town, Cusco.

Thankfully I was in one of the best possible places to amble around for a couple of days and wallow in self-pity. Cusco was once the capital of the whole of the Inca empire (its name comes from the Quechua "Q'osqo" which means "navel of the world"), and it was only centuries later when the Spanish conquest arrived in South America that the capital was moved, eventually to its current location of Lima. With a population of only around 300,000, it is positively rural in comparison to Lima's 9.2 million strong demographic. This is evident in the safe and relaxed atmosphere of the city, relatively sheltered from the crimes that seem to pervade so many other South American cities. Tourists are rife, but easily avoided when you step away from the main attractions, which are hardly worth the money in the first place. Most will visit the Coricancha, the architectural ruins of the Temple of Sun where mummies were supposedly kept by night and taken into the sun by day. Its former splendence was based on the sheets of

gold which once coated most walls, but the Spanish plundering of the region left nothing of any worth, and now the site is fairly uninspiring. The cathedral that sits imposingly in the main square of Plaza del Armas is another main tourist attraction. Whilst fairly impressive, it is also very typical of its type.

'Garish Virgin Mary dolls perch on every stand, and glass boxes provide voyeuristic coffins for wax models of bleeding Jesus'

The attitude to church interiors in South America is on an entirely different level from anything the average European Christian will have experienced, and even to my Catholic eyes, used to lavish embellishments, the effect took some getting used to. Garish dolls representing the Virgin Mary perch on every stand, and glass boxes provide voyeuristic coffins for wax models of Jesus, complete with crown of thorns and bleeding limbs. The area around the altar is so overwhelmingly richly adorned with colour and gold (often fake) that one begins to wonder at the concentration of any praying church-attendee.

Cusco is a city to be explored on foot, and discoveries made on your own will be infinitely more rewarding. One of the most beautiful, and quietest, churches I came across in my days of recovery was La Merced, unlisted in my guide book. I meandered my way through small burrow-like sets of rooms carved out of stone with religious murals depicting hell splashed across the walls, apparently used as inspiration for the

religious poet that used to live there. In one of the rooms was a holy bread receptacle adorned with the world's second largest mother of pearl, presented to me as just another standard relic exhibited alongside the religious plastic effigies.

In terms of less cultural entertainment, one of the quaintest things about Cusco is the cinema. Forget any ideas you have about giant multiplexes with huge screens and overpriced popcorn, and instead imagine having the upstairs room in a café to yourself. You choose your own film from a wide selection of DVDs in a variety of languages, bring in your own food and drink, and make yourself comfortable in front of a wide-screen television on a few battered sofas. The perfect way to pass an afternoon; cheap, relaxing, and with the added benefit of meeting people (so long as you can agree on a film). At night these cafes become nightclubs, where foreigners and locals alike meet up to dance and drink. Whilst the older generations sit by the windows, cooling themselves in the night breeze, the younger ones either linger in the dark corners or gyrate on the bar, an apparently far less frivolous activity in Cusco than in York. Nightlife here is by no means exclusively for the pretty young things, which makes for a much more relaxed atmosphere. With a few Pisco Sours (a mouth-puckeringly strong regional brandy served straight up with lime and egg whites) in the stomach, I felt ready to join my new local friends...

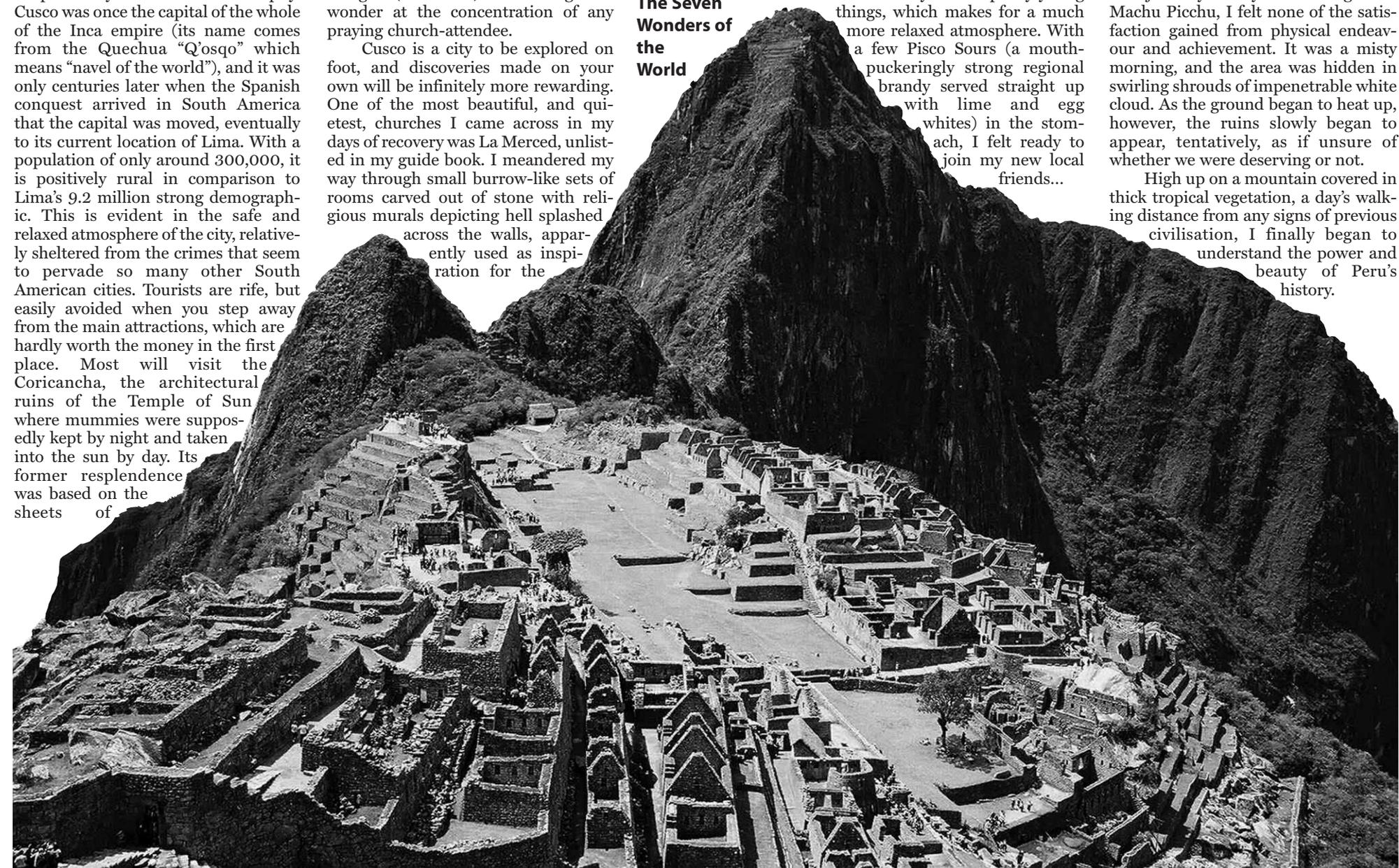
Breakfast came in the form of yuca, a fried plant root native to Peru and very popular due to its high carbohydrate content. They are chewy, and taste of very little, but become better when dipped in guacamole, a dip served out to most obviously non-Peruvian diners at all hours of the day. Bored of museums, I decide to chance the local artisan market, where Inca Kola t-shirts are shamelessly flogged beside dishevelled piles of alpaca wool jumpers. Their sales techniques are aggressive, but by no means the worst I have come across, and a firm, "No, I'm not interested" soon forces their pinching hands to retract from my arm.

Horse riding is one of the best ways to view the countryside and the various Inca ruins splattered across the surrounding hills. Sprawling cracks in the rocky landscape act as a reminder of the earthquakes that yearly raze Peru's cities. Last year an earthquake of magnitude 8 killed over 500 people and destroyed over 20,000 buildings. The earthquake was felt as far away as Bolivia and Ecuador. As a result, Peru is in a state of constant recovery, as stability is constantly undermined by natural disasters.

When the day finally came for me to rejoin my family at the heights of Machu Picchu, I felt none of the satisfaction gained from physical endeavour and achievement. It was a misty morning, and the area was hidden in swirling shrouds of impenetrable white cloud. As the ground began to heat up, however, the ruins slowly began to appear, tentatively, as if unsure of whether we were deserving or not.

High up on a mountain covered in thick tropical vegetation, a day's walking distance from any signs of previous civilisation, I finally began to understand the power and beauty of Peru's history.

Machu Picchu in Peru is one of The Seven Wonders of the World



Addicted to misery

Alex Forsyth investigates the new genre of harrowing real life stories currently making the bestseller list

We are understandably apprehensive about criticising books dealing with non-fictional accounts of child abuse. Yet now that the market is glut with titles like *Shamed*, *Damaged*, *Abandoned* or *Don't Tell Mummy*, and swathes of eager readers compile their 'Top Ten Tragic Life Stories' lists on the web, it is time to take a closer look at this genre. Are people really choosing these books in order to learn something new? Or are we as readers addicted to the twisted misfortunes of others?

In 2005, a last minute book purchase at Heathrow landed me with Dave Pelzer's *A Child Called "It"*, one of the first misery-biographies. An enthused Amazon.com reviewer describes this disturbing tract as a "vivid memoir...which moved the world to appreciate the extent that child abuse can reach." I assumed this was a literary glitch, a shocking whistleblower certainly; but ultimately a one-off. Yet I was forced to watch in disbelief as their popularity grew. A year later, they had even earned their own genre: 'Tragic life stories,' which is absurdly placed, without the slightest hint of irony, in the 'Entertainment' section in many big bookshops. Now it seems you cannot pass a bestsellers shelf without a parade of pastel-shaded children staring miserably at you from their front covers. They are unofficially known as "Misery Lit" - though let's call them miseographies, if no-one has already coined that phrase.

The miseography movement was kickstarted by the success of Pelzer's book in 1995, although the genre was arguably evidenced earlier. Since then, countless books have surfaced, each with their own "harrowing story of redemption." The publisher Hodder deals with the majority of them but were silent when approached on the subject and did not return any emails. Their cover designs are comfortably homogeneous; usually a soft-focus photo of a child gazing into the distance from behind a title scrawled in a child's handwriting. The titles range from Christopher Spry's sentimental, *Child C* to Stuart Howarth's unpleasant (but unintentionally darkly-comic) *Please Daddy No!*, followed by short descriptive taglines inevitably including the words "damaged", "struggle", "abandoned" and other equally emotive buzz-words. Each book purports to be

more shocking, more harrowing or more inspirational than the last, anxiously trying to stand out from the miasma of misery and earn its place as a bestseller.

According to Kate Elton, of Arrow Books, the reason these miseographies are so popular is that they are "genuinely a testament to what the human spirit can endure. We all have problems in our lives. This is a way of putting things in perspective."

This idea, that by reading these catalogues of abuse we would gain some inspiration for our own problems, is put forward by author and publisher alike to justify them. Yet it is hard to see what inspiration we may glean from the graphic detailing of how "...she was the slave of her stepfather - in every way imaginable," as detailed in the synopsis for Jane Elliot's *The Little Prisoner*. Surely the most we stand to gain from reading such books is a gentle schadenfreude and a sense of relief that it is not happening to us; which might be charitably rephrased as 'putting things in perspective'. The Observer columnist Carol Sarler believes the books are bought not for advice or for self-help, and show instead "that, as a nation, we seem utterly in thrall to paedophilia. We are obsessed with it. With these books we are wallowing in the muck of it. It's all rather disgusting."

I spoke to a victim of child abuse, who wished to remain anonymous, in an attempt to explore the concept of publishing books as a way of dealing with inner pain. "I know why people would maybe write it down in a diary or a letter," he said. "I've done that. That can help. Once you have written it then it's yours." He offered some advice for those who might be in a similar position: "If you want to talk about it, find someone you trust, a support group or a close friend, someone you know is going to listen. Selling your stories won't help you; though it might make you money." I ask him whether he thinks publishing can be a redemptive or empowering process for the author. He laughs sarcastically; "Yeah, that's why they publish 10 books - they want to be empowered 10 times."

However, as public demand continues to grow, some authors have decided to be liberal with the truth. James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces*, a harrowing tale of drug abuse, was



A selection from the real life stories shelf of a major bookshop chain

redubbed 'a million little lies' by the media when it turned out to be a fabrication. Interestingly, Frey had previously submitted it as fiction and had been rejected by publishers. It was only picked up when it was a 'shocking true story'. Clearly verifying the testaments of these cases are difficult, but does veracity really matter? Should the reader feel cheated and demand their money back because a child was not

"Publishers love them because they're money-spinners, and the public's appetite will ensure that they remain big business. I'm glad to say that the 'misery' genre hasn't really found its way into the audiobook lists... Personally and professionally, I wouldn't touch them."

Less discerning publishers, however, show no signs of slowing, as a new sub-genre emerges that sweeps the problem of 'truth' under the carpet: the Fictional Misery Memoir. One such book, drawing publicity because of its recent film adaptation, is *The Kite Runner*. Written in the same testimonial style, the only difference between *The Kite Runner* and other novels is that it's set in Afghanistan. How wonderfully topical.

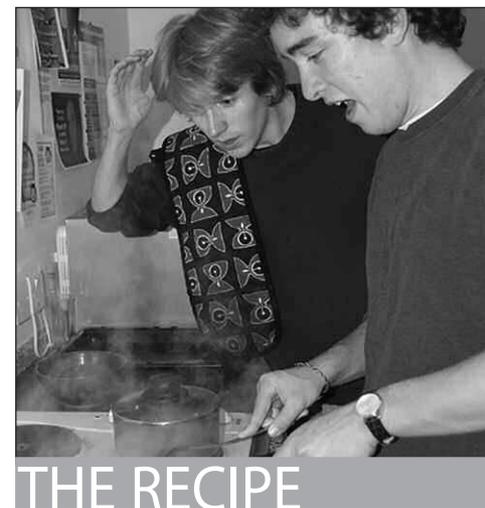
The future seems bright for the miseography enthusiast. A new wave of sequels to the most disturbing classics are scheduled for release over the coming year. So while people anticipate Sebastian Faulks' new Bond novel or the next McEwan, I will be on the lookout for *Daddies Little Earner*, *Beyond Ugly* and my personal favourite, *My Lobotomy; A Memoir*.

'Does veracity really matter? Should the reader demand their money back because a child was not actually abused?'

actually abused? Many of the public did seek refunds, claiming to having felt cheated out of real life misery, causing Random House to eventually pay out \$2.35m in compensation.

So where next for miseography? Pippa Vaughan, from the Audiobooks Publishing Association, explained,

Food&Drink



THE RECIPE

Will Heaven

RISOTTO ALLI STUDENTI

2 plump chicken breasts,
250g risotto rice, 1.5 onions,
1 clove of garlic, 1 bell pepper,
4 closed-cup mushrooms,
1 cube/50ml vegetable stock,
1 lemon and some fresh basil.

In case you haven't noticed, this is Farmhouse Breakfast week. Greedy, overweight farmers everywhere are hoping that the nation will eat a 'healthy' breakfast to fill their already overflowing purses. Their insidious plans will have you reading this stuffed with Free Range eggs, smoked bacon and honey-covered, whole-grain muesli. But let's not pander to them. Based on an in-depth survey of freshers viewing my house, the average student eats around 5 eggs a week - that's 50,000 at York alone. So forget breakfast. Lets talk about the evening meal.

Poaching chicken avoids overcooking, reduces sunflower-oil intake and lets you flavour the meat. So cut two chicken breasts in half lengthways and place them in a couple of pints of boiling veg stock for about 20 mins or until cooked. While you do this with an air of importance, order your minion to chop stuff. As the chicken bubbles away, take a large saucepan and lightly brown the onion in a splashing of oil. Add the garlic, pepper and mushrooms in that order. This should all be done on a low heat - if it is too hot the result will be a ruined crispy mess, which happened to us twice.

When all of that is nearing mulchiness, add the risotto rice (cheap and delicious) for a minute or so. If you do all this as slowly as we did, the chicken will be cooked. Remove this from the stock and place out of the way - possibly covered in aluminium foil if you didn't use it all making your space-man costume. Gradually add the now chickeny veg stock to the risotto as the rice absorbs it and begins to cook - don't drown it. When the rice is *al dente*, tear the chicken into strips and add to the risotto. Chuck in the juice of a lemon, salt and pepper, a glass or so of the wine and the minion-chopped basil.

The final stage: find something that resembles a casserole dish and heat in the oven on pizza-cooking heat for ten minutes. Take a deep breath. It's done. Sprinkle your risotto with parmesan, open another bottle of white and look for a clean fork.

Recipe provided by William Clarke (send us your recipes - foodanddrink@nouse.co.uk)

RESTAURANT: NINETEEN
ADDRESS: GRAPE LANE, SWINEGATE
AVERAGE MEAL PRICE: £25 (SET MENU INC. WINE)
REVIEW: JAMES MACDOUGALD

★★★★☆

In the run-up to Christmas, Will and I decided that dinner at Nineteen would be the way to go when we returned after the holidays. We took our paramours along to avoid looking too much like conspirators or a couple.

Now, I won't deny we forked out for this one. If you cannot comprehend paying £15 for a main course and you think that the whole economic register of the restaurant business is just unreasonable (and you may be right), don't punish yourself. On a student budget the price is very rarely right and if you think you're being ripped off, naturally, you won't enjoy your meal.

Yours is no disgrace. I would not enjoy, for example, being forced to flog lesser-known inner organs to stump up the funds for some laboured, ever-waning designer-label zip-top, replete with 'hoodie' and one of those bombastic numerical logos that looks like it's been stitched on by a 4-year-old. For all these reasons and more, I never shop at Abercrombie and Fitch.

I prioritise food. If you, like me, invest frequently, heavily and unflinchingly in your appetite, you will find Nineteen delightful - and affordable. All four of us went with the

Christmas set menu - three courses for less than £20! Mine was the Curried Parsnip Soup with croustons - iceberglike in their almost-but-not-quite total immersion - bobbing happily across the ample surface. It was unsurpassable and, I thought, typified the very inclusive character of British food, which does not hesitate to 'curry' as High English a vegetable as the parsnip.

For the main I had grilled salmon and "spinach crushed potato" in a chive butter sauce. The salmon was pink, sleek and delicious and the sauce complementary. We were for a long time entirely mystified by the spinach crushed potato; the complete absence of any punctuation on the menu had made it difficult to know what would be crushing what, and in what quantities. It turned out not to matter very much; however constructed, the standard template for potato accompaniments had been vastly improved upon.

I am reminded at this point of a lamb shank I ate once in Oxfordshire. The potatoes on that occasion (mashed, as it so happened) had been enlivened with squat gargoyles of black pudding; I remember them

EDITOR'S PICK: BUZZ BAR (REFURBISHED)
ADDRESS: SWINEGATE
FEATURING: SUSHI, TEMPURA, KATSU

★★★★☆

Tokyo, you may not know, is now the world's *haute cuisine* capital. Its restaurants have 191 Michelin stars between them compared to Paris's 97 and New York's 54.

These are not hollow statistics. Japanese food is imaginative, sophisticated and steeped in tradition - Buzz Bar comes highly recommended from the F&D pulpit (see website for full-length review).

The tempura and katsu dishes are very approachable:

the former involves a selection of vegetables and *fruits de la mer* fried in batter; the latter is a preparation of deep-fried meat - usually pork, sometimes chicken - coated in breadcrumb.

Less accessible for some is the sushi, and more terrifying still are some of its not-so-conventional incarnations: octopus, eel, salmon roe... You'll hear people complain that it's raw fish, that's it's 'weird'. Tell them to get over it - it's food.

Competition

F&D are looking for York's next food writer.

Forget the essay - instead write 350 words about how you made your favourite meal using cheap, easy ingredients

A bottle of Moët & Chandon for the best entry. Make us laugh.

Send to foodanddrink@nouse.co.uk by February 1...



Nineteen, off Swinegate, proved an excellent location for a Food & Drink double-date; though its prices reserve it for special occasions

crouching darkly between waves of mash, seething...

Our companions ordered bloody steaks; I think they were trying to impress us. When they arrived I was startled to see that the steaks were *actually* rare - a rare thing to behold in North Yorkshire, where any meat that hasn't been scalded to within an inch of the gates of Hell is commonly regarded with a mixture of suspicion and disgust.

Now, a word on the ambience; once upon a time, 19 Grape Lane, a higgledy-piggledy, early Tudor affair, was a brothel. Grape Lane is apparently a cor-

ruption of 'Grove Lane' - but the incumbent proprietor and chef has gone some way to improving the restaurant's image.

The furniture, though powerfully modern, sits comfortably beneath the beamed ceiling; the plates are huge and white; we even had one of those pressure-sensitive table lamps which cycles through four different degrees of brightness when you touch the base - so our companions had something to play with when their attention started to drift from the conversation.

All-in-all, an excellent place to splash out.

PUB: THE LOWTHER
ADDRESS: 8 CUMBERLAND STREET
REVIEW: JAMES THOMPSON

★★★★☆

We have settled on a pair of sofas in the back of the bar. The floodwaters were blocking the front door when we arrived, but chalk signs led us to a darkened alleyway side entrance. We are on our fourth round of drinks, which ranged from cider to triple vodkas with Iron-Bru (my personal favourite).

Conversations have included a loud and tasteless discussion of theoretical offensively-themed Goodricke socials, and a debate as to whether or not the well-dressed (if slightly unwashed) elderly gentleman sitting at a table full of buxom young women is, in fact, a pimp. We have had to fend off the attention of two disgracefully-dressed underage girls who refused to leave us alone until we gave them cigarettes, and a young man claiming to be in the army who wanted to know if we had any cocaine.

Where else could we be but the Lowther? It is truly the shining jewel in York's crown of licensed establishments. There is



no better night out to be found in this city. We sit, we drink, we deliberate endlessly about juke-box choices, we send appallingly abusive text messages to the fools waiting in the Toffs queue across town.

We wonder if somewhere in the world there is a bar that releases a swarm of angry bees at closing time to clear the punters out. Bees, gentlemen, bees.

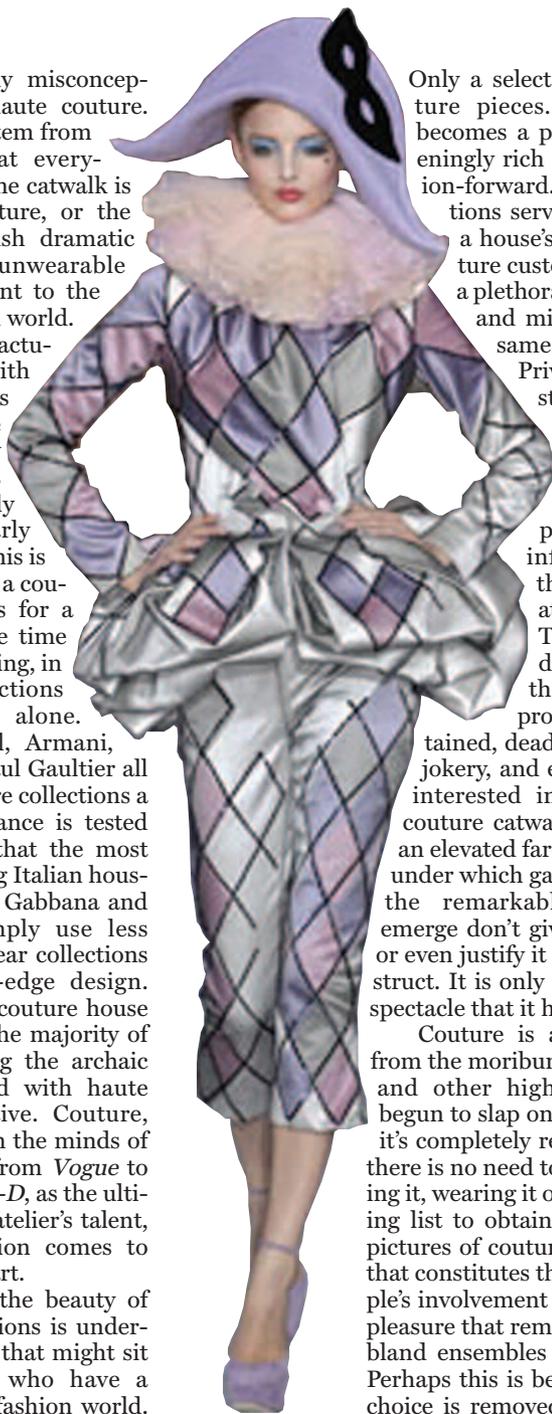
Style&Fashion

Haute couture need not be confined solely to the rich and privileged, says **Liam O'Brien**, it is also art in its own right

There are many misconceptions about haute couture. These either stem from the belief that everything modelled on the catwalk is classed as haute couture, or the opinion that the lavish dramatic displays featuring unwearable clothes are a testament to the delusion of the fashion world.

Haute couture is actually a legal term, with only 13 fashion houses (10 of which are French) currently operating under this label, of which only around seven regularly show. The reason for this is the sheer expense that a couture collection creates for a fashion house and the time constraints of producing, in Dior's case, 13 collections per year for women alone. Though Dior, Chanel, Armani, Valentino and Jean Paul Gaultier all show two haute couture collections a year, the term's relevance is tested when one considers that the most notorious trend-setting Italian houses - Prada, Dolce and Gabbana and Balenciaga - all simply use less expensive, ready-to-wear collections to showcase cutting-edge design. Despite once being a couture house Versace now follows the majority of Italian houses, finding the archaic regulations associated with haute couture too prohibitive. Couture, however, still stands in the minds of most fashion media, from *Vogue* to the younger, trendier *i-D*, as the ultimate showcase of an atelier's talent, and the closest fashion comes to being living, walking art.

Discomfortingly, the beauty of these biannual collections is underpinned by constraints that might sit uneasily with those who have a romantic view of the fashion world.



Only a select few can afford couture pieces. Consequentially it becomes a purchase for the sickeningly rich rather than the fashion-forward. At times the collections serve the expectations of a house's mere 100 or so couture customers. There's always a plethora of suits from Chanel and minor variations of the same dress from Armani Privé. This may appear strange, given that the houses rarely make money from couture collections, so essentially what they pay for is the loyalty of influential women in the hope that it generates profit elsewhere. The process which decides who occupies the front row is the product of years of sustained, deadly serious fashion in-jokery, and even to most of those interested in fashion the haute couture catwalks are something of an elevated farce. The strict controls under which garments are made and the remarkable products which emerge don't give it social relevance, or even justify it as a high society construct. It is only when viewed as pure spectacle that it holds any significance.

Couture is a welcome diversion from the moribund trash that Topshop and other high street stores have begun to slap on the catwalk. Because it's completely removed from real life there is no need to worry about obtaining it, wearing it or being put on a waiting list to obtain it. Looking through pictures of couture collections, a habit that constitutes the extent of most people's involvement in haute couture, is a pleasure that remedies the stress of the bland ensembles we put on everyday. Perhaps this is because the element of choice is removed and we can simply

indulge in a thoughtless aesthetic fantasy.

When thought is required of us by the designer, the conceptual transparency is often hilarious. Dior by John Galliano is perhaps the most anticipated show of all, and each year he painstakingly researches a theme for his exhibition to revolve around. A few years ago, this theme was Marie Antoinette, a conceptual Aladdin's cave. What resulted was some white dresses with blood on them. Last autumn, it was historical figures, so out came the wonderfully crafted outfits so heavy that the models had to boot the wooden frames holding them up and down the catwalk and then stop for a breather. And what was the fashion world's reaction to these fantastic absurdities? People were reported to have cried at their beauty.

Criticism of couture is inevitable but pointless. No, it doesn't work financially, and it doesn't set the trends anymore (that is now the prerogative of Italian and Japanese houses). What it does do is to amalgamate the skills of ateliers, makeup artists, photographers, writers, models and marry them with the vision of a designer. The purpose of couture is not to create an image to sell perfumes or bags as some believe. Its purpose is to explode through the rigidity of normal fashion; it's art in a different frame.



ONES TO WATCH

by Liam O'Brien

DESIGNER: SIV STOLDAL

Siv Stodal uses the relationship between clothes and the wearer as the basis for all of her designs. She graduated from Central St Martins in 1999, years before its more recent high calibre students such as Gareth Pugh and Christopher Kane. Her latest designs promote wearability, physicality and have a sense of mute, industrial despair about them. Her hotly anticipated shows at last year's London Fashion Week were well received and she features in *i-D* and *Dazed and Confused* on a regular basis.



MODEL: MASHA TYELNA

As close as a human can possibly get to looking like the girl from Chris Cunningham's Playstation advert, Ukrainian Masha Tyelna stands out from the current crop of Eastern European models. 'Otherworldly' is a much abused word in fashion vocabulary, but Masha's eyes and pale features justify its usage here. Rival model Egle has been touted as the model to watch for 2008, but Tyelna is an interesting prospect. Last year she walked for McQueen and Nina Ricci, and is Miuccia Prada's new muse.

SHOP: OCTOPUS

Located on Coney Street, Octopus provides colourful variations on products found in places like Utility, marking it out as a lifestyle shop. Astroboy T-shirts, watering-can handbags, Dolly Brollies and Pop Art-esque bags, however make it seem like a Harajuku den.



TREND: ARCHITECTURE CLOTHING

Perhaps not so much a trend for the season as a concept slowly becoming part of most high fashion. The idea of clothes as architecture originated in Japan with designers Yohji Yamamoto (currently known for the more subdued Y3 line with Adidas) and Junya Watanabe of Comme Des Garçons fame. They created clothes that draped in a way both elegant and without regard for the body's natural contours.

Vivienne Westwood and the Prada collections last year both reduced the top half of the figure to a rectangular box. Current darling of the fashion media Gareth Pugh further tested the concept with alien-looking outfits inspired by DNA and extraordinary geometric shapes.



VENETIA RAINEY & CHARLIE KIRKBRIDE

Miss C and Miss V tramped through the soggy landscape of York campus, cursing their sodden Uggs for their permeability and general inappropriateness in the face of the harsh elements of the North. As the sole of Miss V's left boot flopped off and dissolved in a puddle-shaped acidic potion of goose poop and puke, they both simultaneously realised that there had to be another way. The abuse of their feet could not continue in this manner, or else how would they be able to wear cute peep-toe shoes to various campus events with any sense of dignity or pride? No-one likes an

ugly foot, least of all aspiring fashionistas.

The question, Miss C ventured aloud, was whether there was a fashion forward way to protect ones footsies. Was there, for example, some sort of prettily patterned protective bubble-wrap that could be adhered to the outside of shoes and used as a water and mud repellent? After a short debate amongst themselves they decided that there was no such thing, and that their precious time would be better spent in tracking down boots made of something more substantial than cardboard and children's craft fuzz. Their mis-

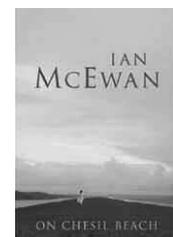
sion, in effect, was to find a York-worthy boot, no mean task, considering the propensity to flooding in these parts, and their disinclination to wade in anything reaching above the upper calf.

To their surprise, they were everywhere. Pirate boots, cowboy boots, biker boots, Wellington boots, moon boots; wherever they looked people were embracing the foot-snuggling option. From leg-hugging over-the-knee lambskin affairs to worn-out ankle-skimming leather bootlets. Even at night there was no escaping from them. Ugly feet and sweaty toes were prevented from even being an issue by the cunning employment of a double bluff. Leopard-skin, heeled ankle boots competed for attention with lurid suede calf-constrictors, all seemingly screaming, "Look at my feet!" Was this a ploy to divert the gaze away from season-fattened stomachs? Who knew? Who cared? All they knew was that it worked.

Arts Reviews

BOOK: ON CHESIL BEACH
AUTHOR: IAN MCEWAN
REVIEW: AMY SHACKLETON

☆☆☆☆☆



McEwan's novels are often rightly praised for their close and beautiful analysis of human relationships. However, most of the time, these relationships are well-established before we encounter them and McEwan leans heavily on the narrator's benefit of hindsight. Even in *Atonement*, the new-born relationship and its failures are only closely analysed years later.

In this sense, *On Chesil Beach* is a must for any McEwan fan. It places us in real-time, on the eve of a wedding night. As usual for McEwan, background information interrupts the narrative, but our minds are kept firmly in the room with the newlyweds, trapped by their naïvety and embarrassment.

Unfortunately, the symbolism doesn't quite work, and the formulaic switches between past and present are getting dangerously close to being boring. There is not enough complication. We appreciate his concept within a few pages, an unexpected weakness for McEwan. In essence, this book is worth a read, but feels sadly like a failed experiment; McEwan without his tools. Go back and read *Atonement*, and feel better. Or possibly worse.

BOOK: COUNTERKNOWLEDGE
AUTHOR: DAMIAN THOMPSON
REVIEW: WILL HEAVEN

☆☆☆☆☆



The CIA masterminded the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Jesus sired a dynasty of Merovingian Kings, homeopathy cures illness. There exist many people who believe those statements to be true.

Conspiracy theories, along with quack medicine, fake history and bogus science, all form "Counterknowledge"; "misinformation masquerading as fact." Thompson's argument is that the 21st century faces a "pandemic of credulous thinking" even as our ability to evaluate claims made about science or history is better than ever before.

With the internet, "Counterknowledge" has a larger following than ever before. But, we are warned, it's not all turtle-neck wearing novelists and bible-wackos; Westminster University offers, astonishingly, a degree in homeopathy.

Fans of the Guardian's Bad Science column will love this book. Thompson fights Counterknowledge using only reason and, crucially, systematically-tested evidence. With his razor-sharp prose, he not only rubbishes the credulous world we live in, but calls on us to challenge the "guardians of intellectual orthodoxy" and waken them from greedy, slothful indolence.

EVENT: HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YORK
VENUE: VANBRUGH COLLEGE
REVIEW: TOM FITZ-HUGH

☆☆☆☆☆

Last Wednesday, ComedySoc brought satire crashing onto campus with the self-proclaimedly triumphant return of *Have I Got News For York*.

After a pilot show at their fundraiser, 24 Hour Comedy (no sarcasm intended), the go-ahead was given for a full-blown series this term. With an audience of no less than 159 to impress, not to mention a fantastically popular format to live up to, expectations were high indeed. But far from being intimidated by their namesake, the comedians used it to its fullest advantage by shamelessly copying it.

For once, this was no bad thing. It provided a fully-fledged, and, more importantly, well-known structure into which York-based material slotted with ease. In tandem with this were loving parodies of the BBC show - led by smooth host Sami Hussain - featuring a famous lard-based incident and the verb "to lurpak".

Team captain Jay Foreman was comfortably the sharpest of the troupe, and won the most laughs; though Hussain's deadpan irony and opposing captain Liam Butler's bemused ranting had them snapping at his heels. The odd-one out round allowed

Foreman to slam joke after joke into the open goal of the Vanbrugh-Goodricke bridge, to great comic effect. A little while later Butler ranted entertainingly about the FTR, striking a chord with much of the audience and providing another of the successful setpieces of the night.

However, the same topic highlighted one of the problems with the show. By inviting YUSU Officer Sam Bayley onto the show as a guest, the team had obviously opted to mock the powers that be - just like having an MP on *Have I Got News For You*. At first this worked quite well, Bayley's attempts to offer serious answers opening him up to ridicule. However, as the evening progressed Bayley began to be funny in his own right. The funnier he became, the more the others began to lose confidence.

One other downside was that not everyone was aware of all the stories used, leaving some spinning headlines slightly lost on the audience. The team also slightly over-used the guest publication; the word "carp" is funny, but perhaps not endlessly so.

A little more self-assurance will almost certainly come as the series progresses and accrues its

EXHIBITION: PASSED AS PRESENT
VENUE: YORK CITY ART GALLERY
REVIEW: SARAH-JANE SILVESTER

☆☆☆☆☆

This recently opened exhibition sees pieces from the gallery's permanent collection paired alongside fresh contemporary works from The Lodeveans Collection. Each grouping, united by subject matter or inspiration, encourages people to find new ways of looking at old favourites.

This exhibition is a clear example of just how remarkably differently artists over time have responded to similar subjects. With ancient holy triptychs juxtaposed with enhanced photography and audio-visual presentations, one cannot deny the originality.

On the other hand, some of the connections in the pairings feel a little tenuous; a classic seafood still life hangs alongside a highly sexual sketch, entitled 'Smoking the Salmon'. Visitors are challenged to draw similarities between works in a way that is unlike typical exhibitions, but perhaps the novelty is slightly transient.

Considering that York City Art Gallery is relatively small and can afford access to only a limited number of pieces, the father-and-



Old favourites meet modern classics in *Passed as Present*

son curating team have been adventurously creative in offering the people of York a varied and unusual grouping of works.

Entry is free to all, and the exhibition will be on in the central gallery until April 13.



Have I Got News For York provided a great evening's comedy

own conventions, but to expect all the laughs of *Have I Got News For York* that its BBC inspiration delivers, with professional comedians, writers and an editing process, is insane. ComedySoc

gave themselves a gargantuan task in actively chasing comparison with such a brilliant comedy institution; the fact that they did so well - on the very first night - is very impressive indeed.

WHAT'S ON: ARTS 2008 HIGHLIGHTS

Comedy Night, York Theatre Royal

Following in the footsteps of City Screen's 'Other Side Comedy Club', York Theatre Royal launches a new stand-up show, 'Comedy Night', featuring Red Dwarf's Norman Lovett and Radio 4's Robin Ince and hosted by Marcus Birdman. The show is expected to be a huge success. February 1, with a further show April 21.

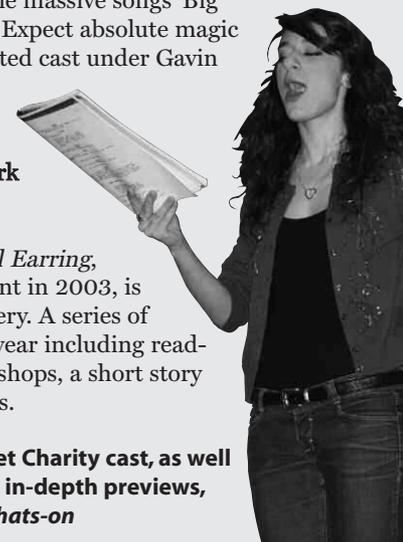
Sweet Charity, Central Hall

The Central Hall musical this year promises to fizz with glamorous energy. Directed by Michael Slater, *Sweet Charity* - a relatively unknown and undervalued musical about the love between a New York working-girl (Alice Boagey) and a sheepish tax accountant (Jethro Compton) - includes the massive songs 'Big Spender' and 'Rhythm of Life'. Expect absolute magic from the large and vastly talented cast under Gavin Whitworth's musical direction. February 7-9, £5 for students.

Tracy Chevalier Residency, York City Art Gallery

The author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, given the silver screen treatment in 2003, is taking up residency at the gallery. A series of events are scheduled over the year including readings of her work, writing workshops, a short story competition, and book signings.

For an interview with the *Sweet Charity* cast, as well as comprehensive listings and in-depth previews, check out www.nouse.co.uk/whats-on



TheatreReviews

Helen Citron looks forward to Drama Soc's up-and-coming Bodyshock Season

This term brings something slightly new for the University of York's Drama Society. The 'Bodyshock Season', in which the run of Drama Barn plays will challenge us to think in new ways about our perception of the human body, is upon us. With typically theatrical aplomb, one society member has summed up the concept behind the season with the phrase 'Body Exalted, Body Destroyed'.

Certainly, the first play on the bill, Berkoff's adaptation of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, is likely to live up to this exciting tag line. The play charts the misfortunes of worker Gregor Samsa, who finds himself quite literally dehumanised when he wakes up one morning to find himself transmuted into a massive insect. Charting the experiences of a paralysed car-crash victim, *Whose Life is it Anyway* also considers the experience of losing control over the body.

The theme that dominates the season, however, is that of body image and the sexual body. In week four's play, *The Shape of Things* by Neil LaBute, the attractive but manipulative Evelyn takes on average-looking Adam, attempting to mould him into a more

attractive person, a process in which the body is seen as central; even suggesting plastic surgery. The power of the female body will come under scrutiny in week nine's *The Balcony* by Jean Genet. The Barn will be transformed into a brothel where the prostitutes participate in role-plays, manipulating their bodies to fulfil their patron's fantasies of authority. Next, another Genet play *The Maids*, sees three male actors – Tom Powis, Ed Duncan Smith and Jonathan Kerridge-Phipps – take on the task of playing women, further challenging our perceptions of the gendered body.

There are, however, two plays which one feels stretch the theme a little too far. Alan Bennett's *Habeus Corpus*, a lewd farce about breast size and frustrated marriage, certainly offers a focus on the body but is not really suited to the dramatic and startling ideas suggested by 'Bodyshock'. Furthermore, although Martin Crimp's *Cruel and Tender* does deal with disability and physical violence, considering the play under the 'Bodyshock' title places a rather strong importance on these aspects of the play, perhaps to the exclusion of the play's important reflections on betrayal and corruption.



This term, DramaSoc's Bodyshock season offers us an array of plays with themes of the body and sexuality

Overall though, the decision to have a theme is helpful, giving a sense of cohesion to the term and making sure that all the plays are considered under the DramaSoc umbrella. Jamie Wilkes, the DramaSoc chair, was keen to stress that these plays were not chosen specifically in order to fit the theme. "It happened by accident," he explains. "We noticed the reoccurring importance of the body and decided to bring them together under the title of 'Bodyshock.'" I ask him if from now on every term will have a theme. He explains: "DramaSoc could never pick plays to fit specific criteria as that would be against our constitution."

Wilkes is keen to push the idea of seasons, rather than terms, as part of a plan to change the image of the society to reflect its increasing professionalism. "We need to start pushing the DramaSoc brand; a logo on every poster, season tickets, a strong sense of identity." He finishes, however, with the observation that "pushing for higher standards and quality is essential, but we need an atmosphere where people can make and learn from mistakes because that's what being a student is all about."



PRODUCTION: PROPHETESS LIBUŠE
VENUE: FRIARGATE THEATRE
REVIEW: CHRIS SHAW



After productions of Dahl's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and *The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me*, an adaptation of Czech fairytales seems a stark departure from the Rubber Duck Theatre's usual repertoire. The company clearly strove to broaden the work's appeal by exploiting the comic potential of the tales.

The three male actors provided some light-heartedness by acting in a highly camp style, most notably through an array of comic accents. These ranged from an evil cackle of which any pantomime villain would have been proud, to, oddly for a play about Czech folklore, a gruff Yorkshire burr, which proved uncannily apt for the cynical grumbles of a simple labourer.

However, whilst the

male actors appeared convinced that they were in a farce, the female members of the cast were earnestly going about their business in what seemed to be an altogether more grave play. This jarring combination was mirrored in the awkward union of theatrical techniques such as the shadow puppet stage that stood redundant for most of the play.

Equally disconcerting were moments in which it was unclear whether the comedy was intentional: during an apparently serious scene the entire audience seemed tempted to laugh, and were prevented only by the forbidding looks on the faces of the cast. An oddly schizophrenic production, it did not quite reach its potential.



PRODUCTION: THE TRIAL
VENUE: DRAMA BARN
REVIEW: TOM FITZ-HUGH



From the very start, the audience were immersed in a disorientating world: disconcertingly blindfolded and led beyond a curtain by eerie guides. Standing isolated on the other side, unearthly music wafted through the darkness, punctuated by a scathing voice from above and the unnerving, childlike attentions of the unseen cast.

By the time the action began, the audience were just as unnerved as the protagonist Josef K (James Duckworth). As he was bombarded with conflicting explanations of his arrest, the audience were inescapably sucked into his confusion. None of the characters could be trusted, not even K himself.

Director Alexander Wright did a fantastic job of

forcing the audience into the protagonist's shoes - it was a perfect exponent of empathy. Although most of the original directions were scrapped, the production adhered rigidly to the conventions of performing Berkoff, using very few props or costume to add to the surrealism of the story.

The play's minimalism allowed the setting and characters to change at any moment and gave the actors licence to display the range of their talents. The dystopic atmosphere relied entirely on their performances, and they delivered brilliantly.

At the end, as the audience were ushered away through a tableau of K on his knees in despair, the only disappointment was the lack of opportunity to applaud.



PRODUCTION: THE PANTO
VENUE: CENTRAL HALL
REVIEW: BETH GANDY AND ESME ANDERSON



Peter Pan-tomime was an all singing, all dancing, though at times crude feast of mishaps and misfortunes. The audience could expect to be overwhelmed by the combination of a porn-star badger-corn, a Peter Pan with just a bit too much teenage angst, a video pirate-extraordinaire Hook with a seedy, transvestite wife and Wendy, our token Jack Wills wannabe-girl.

The pantomime was based on a satire of society's obsession with Big Brother. Nicola Carter's convincing Davina McCall(ish) character, shadowed by her silent but dutiful film crew, led the way through the trials and tribulations of life in Neverland. This was followed by Peter Pan's visit to our beloved campus, with a

roll down Clifford's Tower on the way. A one night romp following a night at Ziggy's was shown through an audio-visual display, leading Pan to save the lost boys from Hook's "lazer-tazer 4000" grip. An extravaganza of costume and set (think your average Jolly Roger vision), and quite a clever script made this a memorable production.

Even considering this was a pantomime, the characters we met along the way were just a little too perverted to make for comfortable watching. The show contained too many borderline homophobic jokes for our liking, and the almost three hour long performance meant that the production felt overstretched toward the end.

MusicInDepth

JAMES COUSINS



Right, who's next?

A list of the bands that reformed in 2007 reads like 'A Brief Introduction to Twentieth Century Popular Music', with everyone, great and the good or truly woeful, well represented. From mystical heavy metal progenitors Led Zeppelin, to The Police's reggae-inflected New Wave, to that most angry of bands, Rage Against The Machine, it seems that every genre had ancient musical skeletons just aching to be brought out of the closet, dusted down and propped up on a stage. Even the Spice Girls are getting in on the act, miraculously finding time for music amidst pouting and promoting their latest perfumes.

You'd struggle to read the full list without running out of breath, and that's only including the most famous groups. Start adding in indie legends such as My Bloody Valentine, The Jesus And Mary Chain and Dinosaur Jr. and you're really starting to test your lung capacity. Now, I don't want to start a purely theoretical argument about the motivations behind the reformations of these musical behemoths, but I think that it's obvious that not all of these groups will have been prompted to reform by the same factors. While Led Zeppelin's motives may have been applaudably altruistic, reuniting to perform in honour of their longtime friend and Atlantic Records boss Ahmet Ertegun, with all proceeds going to charity, surely nobody expects the Spice Girls to reach such artistic heights as Jimmy Page's solo in Stairway To Heaven? The Sex Pistols, hardly novices at this reunion business, named their 1996 reunion The Filthy Lucre Tour; admirably honest, if a poke in the eye for any remaining die-hard punks lurking around London.

Nothing seems to be able to stand in the way of these bands' determination to once more appear in all their glory on a stage near you. Or, seeing as we're York students, it would probably be more accurate to say appear soon on a stage not-particularly-near you-at-all. But let's leave that minor inconvenience aside for the moment, shall we. I mean, Led Zeppelin's drummer has been dead for over a quarter of a century, which would seem to put a bit of a dampener on any possible reunion talk. But fear not! John Bonham thoughtfully passed on his rhythmically-gifted DNA, begetting, as he did, a son. The day is saved, and The Great Band Reunion grinds forward.

Well, if death isn't an insurmountable obstacle, how about total personal incompatibility? Sting once got so angry at Police drummer Stuart Copeland that he scrawled a certain four letter word beginning with 'C' across Copeland's drums in vivid red letters, yet they're once again polyrhythmically gracing stages after a twenty-year absence. Drug addictions? A minor inconvenience - Smashing Pumpkin Jimmy Chamberlain is clean and ready to rock after a reputedly monumental drug habit.

No hurdle is too great to overcome in the grand scheme of The Great Band Reunion. Maybe we could be seeing The Beatles live for the first time since 1969. And I'm not talking about replacing John and George, I mean the original Fab Four. We can always dream...

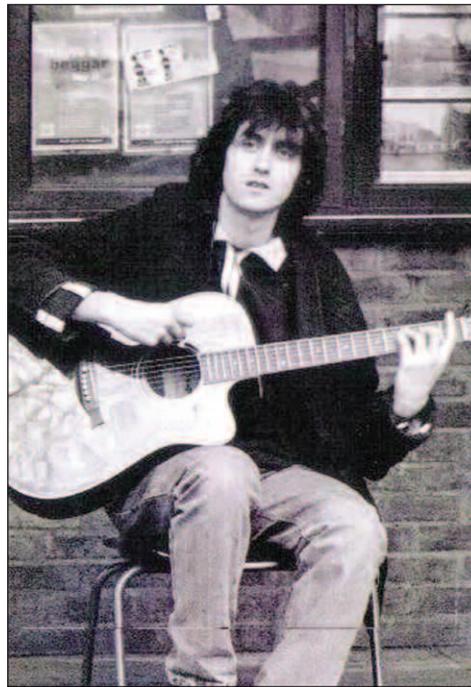
ARTIST: JAY FOREMAN
ALBUM: 20 SONGS
REVIEW: OLIVIA HAUGHTON
DATE: OUT NOW



Everybody loves a laugh, right? York's resident musical comedian Jay Foreman has been cashing in on this fact since 2005 when a charity fundraising idea got big. Four CDs later, including a recently released 'Best Of', Jay has become something of a campus legend. No, let me clarify - just a legend. The song 'Moon Chavs' has generated a bit of a cult following in students across the country, as a quick search of YouTube testifies. But it's not only students who are fans of Jay's; the BBC showed considerable interest in '20 Songs for Free', the show he brought to last year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Jay confesses that he "loves to make people laugh at things they shouldn't find funny", and *20 Songs*, a compilation of the best songs from his previous three CDs, does just that. Titles such as 'Chained to a Radiator' and 'Stealing Food' give a feel of what's in store, although nothing can fully prepare you for the gleeful, yet slightly guilty, feeling the album will leave you with. The songs range from the downright silly ('Spirograph' and 'Balloon') to the lewd and terribly funny ('Buggery Club'). And somewhere along the way Jay touches upon more sensitive issues in 'Little Japanese Baby' and 'No Christmas' where his skillful wit and complete lack of taste give way to dry humour.

Jay ventures into mildly political territory with 'Calypso' and attempts a "non-funny" song in 'Hundred Perfect Days'. This, with a



catchy guitar riff and melancholic melody, works well; if it's a little out of place among 19 comic songs then it's heartfelt words and musicality are all part of the charm.

Jay's arrangements are simple and primarily acoustic, using mostly guitar, with occasional synthesizers. If you manage to catch him live you're in for a treat because as good as the album is, when it comes to comedy, live performance can't be bettered. Be warned though, this album is hardly a tasteful work. But who cares? At £5 (only 25p a song, he points out) Jay capitalises on our guilty pleasures and so we must thank him.

ON THE UP

ARTIST: THE BRASCOES
PREVIEW: JESS POWERS

The Brascoes were born early last year when old friends Dan Jones and Nove drunkenly decided to form a band. Add mates Jonny and Clymo to the mix and they have gone on to cause a stir in the Birmingham unsigned scene with what they describe as 'spiky, danceable indie'. They have been compared to Bloc Party, We Are Scientists and the Pigeon Detectives, with singer Jones bearing more than a passing resemblance to Kasabian's Sergio Pizzorno. Last year they were crowned winners of the Surface Unsigned Festival and have just released their first EP by digital download. Next month sees them heading out from their native Birmingham and Nottingham to play Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester.

I met up with the band in Birmingham before they played a gig at the Old Wharf in Digbeth, ironically supporting the band that came second in the Surface Unsigned Festival. The four-piece clearly get on well, Dan exclaiming that "you'll never meet four people who like the sound of their own voices more than us," which certainly proved helpful for what they termed their third "proper" interview. The band seem really enthused about breaking out of the Birmingham music scene, although whether this is a move to widen their fan base or just to fulfil a curious obsession about visiting Flamingo Land is in some doubt.

To read Jess's interview with The Brascoes visit www.nouse.co.uk/whats-on

IN-DEPTH: KIWI DUB

If names like Fat Freddy's Drop, The Black Seeds, Kora or Little Bushmen mean something to you then you're part of a special minority in Britain.

On my travels through New Zealand I was irresistibly taken in by the funky grooves that were all around. I was struck by the duality of the music; mellow enough for a day spent lounging in the sun, yet rhythmic enough to get up and dance to. It's the feel-good factor that got to me. There's something about the tranquility and easy-going vibe of New Zealand that instills in these artists an ability to create music quite different from that of any other country, and pass the feeling on.

Dub musical genera-

began back in the 1960s. An offshoot of reggae; dub tends to focus on heavily manipulated and rhythm-centric remixes of pre-existing tracks, with deep, throbbing basslines and echoey production. It is seldom found in our neck of the woods, and you could be forgiven for thinking it had almost fizzled out entirely, certainly if the British musical mainstream was your only field of reference. But New Zealand has done something magical with this genre; it has taken dub to a new level and blown the roof off.

Salmonella Dub formed in 1992; instrumentally weighted electro-acoustic dub fit for the dance floor put them at the forefront of this New Zealand

exploring. The typically earthy

tunes with more than a touch of funk often refer to poignant, existential and political themes. Take, for example, Kora's 'Politician' which, true to their roots style, expresses resistance to oppression. But by the same token, this organic feel gives life and character to the less profound songs; one of my favourites, 'Fire' by The Black Seeds, is guaranteed to lift the spirits. Fat Freddy's Drop, the icing on the cake, have broken into the international market on a much larger scale than any other Kiwi band and last year played on the Glastonbury Jazz World Stage.

You might have to dig deep to find this Kiwi Dub, but it's well worth the effort.



MusicReviews

TRACK REVIEWS

ARTIST: DAVID FORD
TRACK: THERE IS A LIGHT

★★★★☆

There's nothing quite like a cover version of a much loved song to cause a little debate, especially when its creators were The Smiths. 'There Is A Light' is regarded by many as their most brilliant song, so it is a brave soul who takes on the challenge of trying to make it their own. Step forward David Ford, a singer-songwriter who, despite building an ever-growing fan base following two albums, has never been able to stand out from the overflowing crowd of radio friendly melodic singers.

Ford must be credited though for the tremendous passion and honesty instilled into his better songs, with bitter rants like 'State Of The Union' being well worth a listen. His daring cover of 'There Is A Light' is also a great achievement, adding a new dimension to a song that many may feel should be left in its original state. Just as Mark Ronson successfully re-interpreted 'Stop Me', Ford succeeds in giving the song a new angle. A haunting rendition compared to the original, his voice is accompanied only by a beautiful piano melody. This is a cover version that is unique enough to be recognised as an excellent version of one of the most popular songs around.

ARTIST: KATE NASH
TRACK: PUMPKIN SOUP

★★★★☆

Here, the owner of the broadest shoulders outside of the England rugby team surprises all by not releasing a single that can be wittily reviewed just by changing the first letter of her surname. Taking a leaf from the one-paged book of Mark Ronson ("Hey guys, wouldn't it be CRAZY if we used trumpets on this one?"), most of the song is taken up by the quite terrifying prospect of Ms. Nash ordering some unfortunate to lay one on her. If you manage to avoid hearing this with the obligatory "Maybe deaf people don't have it so bad" frequency, with which it will undoubtedly be played on Radio 1 and the Topshop stereo, then it's a reasonably enjoyable, and enjoyably short, three minute pop song.

ARTIST: HOT CHIP
TRACK: READY FOR THE FLOOR

★★★★☆

I must confess something: I never really got Hot Chip. Apart from their obvious indie-dance hybrid 'Over and Over', they seem to be a band suffering from genre identity issues. The closest comparison I can make is to LCD Soundsystem; yet the 'Chip's slow songs don't create the emotional engagement of James Murphy's troupe and their lack of genuine dance credentials is obvious when they turn up the tempo. 'Ready for the Floor' is easily the second best thing they have done, the opening "doitdoitdoitdoitdoitdoitnow" is destined to become a call to arms in Toffs' Indie room every week for the next six months. But it's content to plod where it should smash. It seems they just don't know what to do with it, and I'm afraid that neither do I.

Tracks this week were reviewed by Matt Crawford and Steven Williams

Ollie Elliott looks at the music of 2007

1. Radiohead changed the course of human history - Or so it was claimed in some quarters. Their novel album release method certainly started a debate but it remains to be seen whether it was anything more than a gimmick.

2. The alternative goes mainstream - Previously niche, alternative bands like Modest Mouse, Arcade Fire and The Shins all see commercial success to the horror of hipsters everywhere.

3. Reunion frenzy - See page left.

4. The 'difficult' second album - The first of the newest wave of indie bands, such as Arctic Monkeys, Bloc Party, Arcade Fire and Maximo Park released their second albums this year to generally excellent reviews.

5. An ever more desperate music industry took things up a gear this year with the closure of the beloved Oink - a very popular music sharing site. The media, true to form, covered the story using grossly inaccurate information.

6. Festivals overdo themselves - As the interest in live music continues to renew itself,



ARTIST: CSS
VENUE: MANCHESTER ACADEMY
REVIEW: LIAM O'BRIEN
DATE: 04/12/07

★★★★☆

CSS are in danger of becoming overexposed. It's no longer cool to say you saw them on the January 07 NME tour; you have to have liked them when Lovefoxx had blonde hair and sang in Portuguese.

Metronomy were first on at the Manchester Academy for a pleasant but uneventful 45 minutes. I got bored and went to the toilet only to find fourteen-year-olds with hair like bad architecture and ill-fitting day-glo skinny jeans doing speed. Justice came onstage next and, except for the preppy 'D.A.N.C.E.' and 'We Are Your Friends' it was normal, dirty electro. This is fine in a club, but in a setting where you have expectations of performance, it became dull.

CSS arrived dressed as presents accompanied onstage by a dancing fat woman attired as a Christmas tree. Lovefoxx sampled Missy Elliot's 'Work it' to great effect, but had previously tested the idea during their stint as Gwen Stefani's support. This was CSS's problem; all of it seemed like tired ideas forced on overfamiliar songs. Their new stuff, though, showed great progression; the seductive 'Alala' retained its bite when performed live and the encore, 'Let's Make Love and Listen To Death From Above' was as raucous as could be hoped. Live, CSS need more effort and less desperation.



more and more festivals appeared to pick up some of the slack. Although just about any musical genre now has a festival representing it, some of the new ones suffer from criticisms of lacklustre organisation as organisers tend to focus on getting attention-grabbing acts rather than having, for example, toilets.

7. Kanye vs 50 Cent - In the hilarious music industry spat stakes it didn't get better than Kanye West vs 50 Cent. Following West's phenomenally successful Daft Punk hip hop conversion, 50 Cent decided it would be a good idea to claim he'd quit music if Kanye's album outsold his. It did, by a massive margin, resulting in 50 Cent quietly disowning his promise.

8. Hardcore Punk'd - That self-appointed guardian of musical integrity NME spent the year gushing at a new breed of hardcore punk bands. Although it's difficult to assess exactly how popular any band drooled over by the NME actually is, the likes of The Horrors and Gallows represent an interesting change.

9. Pussycat Dolls for Kyoto - The post-live 8-cause bandwagon continued to roll as Live Earth tried to save the world amid accusations of hypocrisy and ulterior motives. Either way, recycling statistics have apparently remained stubbornly resistant to the combined pleas of Madonna, Metallica and Spinal Tap.



ARTIST: PATRICK WOLF
VENUE: SHEPARD'S BUSH EMPIRE
REVIEW: OLLIE ELLIOTT
DATE: 02/11/07

★★★★☆

The relationship between Patrick Wolf's music and his live performance is an interesting one. He has concocted a powerful stage persona - all glitter, high camp and spectacularly shiny fancy dress. But this kind of spectacle can all too easily turn into garish and narcissistic self-indulgence. Sadly, in this special Christmas gig Patrick Wolf fell into that trap. The performance itself ultimately distracted from, rather than enriched, the music.

Perhaps part of the problem was the music itself. Wolf's newest album *The Magic Position* has received a frosty reception from his fan base as a result of his switch to a more poppy sound. His trademark complex instrumental arrangements have generally taken a back seat to simpler and more orthodox song structures. At the same time, the brooding quality that made his first two albums such dark pleasures has been misplaced. It was this quality that made Patrick Wolf work so well live - his frenetic camped up style contrasted with the darkness of his songs. Without this juxtaposition, his performance came over as just a little too saccharin sweet. Nonetheless, Wolf is still fun and there were moments where we were reminded of the magnificence of his song writing ability and musical



ARTIST: ORANGE GOBLIN
VENUE: FIBBERS, YORK
REVIEW: ALEX RUSHFORTH
DATE: 11/11/07

★★★★☆

"This is the first time that we've been to York" proclaimed Orange Goblin lead singer Ben Ward "it's taken us ten years to get here." Well, better late than never.

It's not often you get to see stoner rock in York and one look at a less than packed Fibbers might suggest that there's not much of an appetite for such music around these parts. However, despite the fact that Fibbers must have seemed like something of a comedown after their performance at the 2007 Download Festival, British outfit Orange Goblin unleashed their ferocious riff-tastic music to a depleted, but nonetheless fired-up audience.

Goblin loosely resemble Black Sabbath, with a healthy injection of punk added into the mix. Their sound is more 'no-nonsense' than that of their American counterparts, which can often be of a more psychedelic bent, but this is an approach that has thus far heeded them well. 2007's *Healing Through Fire* appears to be business as usual; there is little of the unexpected to be had, but as their live performance attests, that is perhaps no bad thing.

This may have been the first occasion Orange Goblin had played in York, but hopefully the crowd's enthusiastic reaction will mean we don't have to wait so long again.

FilmReviews

DAVIDCOATES

Opportunity knocks; will cinema answer?



The Writers' Guild of America strike continues unabated, with issues of plummeting DVD residuals and profits and 'new media' sources - mostly from the internet and other digital services like *TiVo* - causing sticking-points.

For now, mainly late-night talk shows like *The Daily Show* and *The Tonight Show* have suffered, with viewing figures slumping since reruns began in early November. On January 2, Comedy Central began running new episodes (without writers) under the temporary title of *A Daily Show*, allegedly after the hosts were told to work or have their non-writing staff fired. While most American studios have enough serialised television to last the current season, their stockpiles won't last forever, and the longer the strike continues, the stronger the writers' hand may become. The truth in these reports is not as important as the fact that they indicate the dispute is taking a turn for the ugly.

The effects of the strike may become farther-reaching than legal issues over residuals; the performance of the *I Am Legend* in the box-office is remarkable in itself. In claiming nearly \$80m in its opening weekend, it became one of the highest-grossing movies outside the summer blockbuster period, and has taken over \$240m since its release. Added to the nine-figure takings of *National Treasure 2*, *Enchanted* and *Alvin and the Chipmunks*, it is becoming clear that one of the big winners in the writers' strike has been American cinema - for the moment, at least.

Perhaps this should come as little surprise - back in the early sixties, during what was considered a 'golden age' in television, box office takings took a dive as patrons found they could be just as entertained at home, and more cheaply. As a result, the quality of English-language cinema dipped as studios struggled to recoup their budgets. Then, as now, it took broad-appeal blockbusters to draw back the crowds and provide funding for great works of the seventies; *The Godfather*, *Apocalypse Now* and *Taxi Driver* are amongst the best of American cinema in a decade of resurgence.

Though many big-budget projects have stalled, and many fear the Oscars may go the way of the Golden Globes, British writers and directors (unaffected by the strike), may find a marked increase in demand for their work. To all of the striking writers stateside, more power to you.

FILM: CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR
 DIRECTOR: MIKE NICHOLS
 STARRING: TOM HANKS
 JULIA ROBERTS
 REVIEW: AMY-CLAIRE SCOTT
 RUNTIME: 97 MINS



Charlie Wilson's War is the latest offering from screenwriter Aaron Sorkin, better known recently for his work in television, having created the extremely successful *West Wing*, and the underrated *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*. The film tells the true story of Texan senator Charles Wilson (Tom Hanks) who, during the 1980s, helped to fund covert arms deals in Afghanistan to aid the war against the Soviet army.

Julia Roberts plays wealthy Texan donor Joanne Herring, who convinces Wilson that something needs to be done about the Soviet advance into Afghanistan. After a harrowing trip to refugee camps in Pakistan, Wilson teams up with CIA operative Gust Avrakotos (Phillip Seymour Hoffman) to decide what can be done to best help the mujahideen. He earns a congressional award for his part in the collapse of the Soviet Union, increasing the budget for covert operations in Afghanistan from



\$5m to \$1bn along the way.

Wilson is presented as a somewhat unattractive character, with a tendency towards womanising and a problem with the justice department over his cocaine use. At times it feels like this side of his personality is used as an excuse for the film to descend into puerile sexism. When questioned as to why the female staff in his office are so attractive, Wilson's response is that "you can teach 'em to type, but you

can't teach 'em to grow tits." The line gets a laugh and is part of the overall picture of Wilson's character, but the characterisation does not justify the superfluous bikini shots of Roberts, nor the long tracking shot of Amy Adams' buttocks as she walks through the halls of congress. For filmmakers to portray sexist characters is perfectly justifiable, but to treat serious female characters as sex objects, whilst simultaneously hoping the

audience will take their role seriously, is absurd.

However, the major flaw with *Charlie Wilson's War* is Sorkin's script. The scope of characters in this film seems far beyond his reach as a writer, the slow southern drawl of Hanks and Roberts jarring with the fast-paced banter provided for them. When Pakistani government officials are speaking in their second language just like Josh from *West Wing* (quick, sharp and sarcastic as anyone) whilst on official business, you wonder if Sorkin can write anyone who doesn't sound this way. Hoffman gives by far the best performance in the film, but is tellingly playing a character similar to those commonly seen in Sorkin's more successful works.

Charlie Wilson's War is by no means a terrible film. It has some entertaining comic sequences and some harrowing scenes set in the war-zone. But the interesting topic here, surely, is how funding the mujahideen for largely positive reasons prompted the beginnings of the war on terror. This topic was left until the dying minutes of the film, where it is summed-up in Wilson's failed attempts to obtain funding for Afghan schools. The changing nature of America's relationship with Afghanistan was left frustratingly underdeveloped. It would certainly have been much more stimulating than watching Tom Hanks chasing skirt.

FILM: LUST, CAUTION
 DIRECTOR: ANG LEE
 STARRING: TONY LEUNG
 TANG WEI
 REVIEW: LIAM O'BRIEN
 RUNTIME: 158 MINS



Based on Eileen Chang's short story, Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution* explores emotional brutality in a way that eschews *Brokeback Mountain's* worthiness and recalls the more subtle approach he used in *The Ice Storm*. Only in the last act, when Lee wishes to justify its setting in the Japanese occupied Shanghai, does the film begin to make you feel every minute of its two and a half hours.

Lee personally cut the film by 7 minutes so that it could be screened in China. The sex scenes were cut, yet upon watching the film this decision seems impossible. In a conceptual sense they are absolutely essential. The initial scenes of Wong Chia Chi (Tang Wei) training herself with a co-conspirator are the confirmation of a predatory nature already insinuated through her status as the theatrical group's leading lady, and is developed in a fascinatingly acted power-play. The first union between Mr Yee (Tony Leung) and Wong is a frightening, borderline rape. Its intensity is drawn from the knowledge that the towering masculinity on display is being undermined by the fact that



we know his victim is to be his executioner. The sex is never embarrassing, perhaps because it lacks both *Showgirls'* zoological noises and *Irréversible's* grittiness.

Refreshing too is the absence of complete emotional breakdown in a film released for the awards season. The only scene of sentimental vulgarity happens in the theatre, where Lee is perhaps suggesting such nonsense should remain. It could even be a nod to himself, given that he directed the *Brokeback* scene in which Michelle Williams rains her Hollywood tears onto cheap dishes, as her husband forgets his ranch-hand day job.

A masterclass in restraint, control, and precision acting, *Lust, Caution's* only faults lie in its shoddy editing and the meagre characterisation of all the characters outside the leading pair.

CLASSIC FILM: ALL ABOUT EVE
 DIRECTOR: JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ
 STARRING: BETTE DAVIS
 ANNE BAXTER
 REVIEW: PETER MASSEY
 RUNTIME: 138 MINS



Joseph L. Mankiewicz's acclaimed dark comedy takes us on a trip behind the red curtain of the theatre business, showing the audience a society of ageing divas, backstabbing friends and ambitious wannabes. Margo Channing is the queen of the stage; successful and at the peak of her career. However, when she offers a poor young actress the chance to work as her assistant, Margo finds not only her career, but her relationships with her partner and friends under threat. Eve's youth, talent and ruthless ambition, combined with Margo's fear of growing old, leads to a battle of wills and downright bitchiness between the two.

Led by screen queen Bette Davis, giving a delightfully pompous performance as Margo, all the female actors are fantastic. Full of "fire and music", she plays a strong character who is by turns menacing and fragile, odious yet sympathetic, and strangely reminiscent of Gloria Swanson's turn in *Sunset Boulevard*. Anne Baxter impresses as the young pretender, whilst the supporting roles, including Thelma Ritter as a cynical old



maid and Marilyn Monroe as a dippy young star, are uniformly entertaining. The two male leads do not fare as well, failing to instil their characters with much personality. But when a film receives five Oscar nominations for its acting alone, you know you are watching a quality cast.

The biting, intelligent screenplay is a treat. Filled with caustic one-liners, smart dialogue and seemingly endless quotable lines, it's perhaps the classic example of how good writing, story and characters is all a movie needs. Like *Sunset Boulevard*, which also takes a sardonic look at Hollywood, there is much ironic pleasure to be found in watching the bickering of deluded actors, writers and other hangers-on of the industry. Whilst not as successful as that excellent film, *All About Eve* is a must-see.

What's On

For comprehensive listings and in-depth previews, check-out www.nouse.co.uk/whats-on

LIVEMUSIC

EVENT: WE ARE THE PHYSICS
VENUE: FIBBERS, YORK
DATE: JANUARY 25, FRIDAY
PRICE: £6

These purveyors of "completely fictional mutant science-punk" (eh?) first graced a stage in 2005 by mistake when someone else cancelled. Robot dancing, eccentric leg manoeuvres and bad eyesight apart, they sound like fireworks from somewhere left of Mars. The spindly-legged boys beg, borrow and steal from Devo, The Skids, Polysics, Buddy Holly and Ex Models and from now on it's going to be all spitfire guitars, rattlesnake drums and racing car vocals.

EVENT: TRUMANS WATER
VENUE: FIBBERS, YORK
DATE: JANUARY 31, THURSDAY
PRICE: £9

San Diego slackers and cult indie-darlings inspired by Pavement, Captain Beefheart and The Fall, Trumans Water have adopted the musical term "squigglycore" - old-skool hardcore meets old-skool punk in a dirty backstreet garage, recorded in one take on a crappy cassette-recorder. Counting Sonic Youth, Beck and Stereolab as devotees, the 4-piece whose breakthrough album is called 'Spasm Smash XXXOXOX Ox & Ass' are so lo-fi it's ridiculous.



EVENT: THE SUGARS
VENUE: FIBBERS, YORK
DATE: FEBRUARY 2, SATURDAY
PRICE: £6

Sweet or bittersweet, your choice. Detroitesque street corner harmonies collide with tricked out hot-rods drowning in doo-wop. Bluesy duets of heartache and jealousy with candy and hairspray 'n' all. So banish all thoughts of sad old bloke blues bands, get a few spoonfuls of two gals and one guy heavily influenced by Jackie Wilson, The Sonics and the White Stripes. It helps that they look like they're straight out of the retro 1950s milkshake parlours.

ART&PERFORMANCE

EVENT: THE SHAPE OF THINGS
VENUE: DRAMA BARN
DATE: FEBRUARY 1, FRIDAY
PRICE: TBC

Theatre by students, for students, about students. A compelling and compulsively watchable drama is unleashed exploring the lives of four students and the intimate and personal boundaries they are prepared to cross; boundaries set by the complexities of art and life, directed by Rachel Finnegan. The Drama Barn is an excellent venue, balancing close intimacy with an astonishingly flexibility; you genuinely can never know what to expect next.

EVENT: COMEDY NIGHT I
VENUE: YORK THEATRE ROYAL
DATE: FEBRUARY 9, SATURDAY
PRICE: £10/£5 (STUDENTS)

Top Stand-up comedy at York Theatre Royal featuring some of the Britain's and world's best comedians. You will recognise them when you see them. Acts include Norman Lovett or 'Holly' from BBC2's Red Dwarf, Robin Ince who's toured with Ricky Gervais and written for Have I Got News for you. The night also features Nick Doody and compered by Markus Birdman. An event not to miss.



EVENT: MY FAIR LADY
VENUE: YORK THEATRE ROYAL
DATE: FEBRUARY 12 - 23
PRICE: £5 - £19

Henry Higgins, an arrogant, irascible professor of phonetics boasts to his colleague Colonel Pickering that he can train any woman to speak so properly that he could pass her off as a duchess. What Higgins hadn't taken into account when making this bet with Pickering was the hot-headed nature of his new student. The story of Eliza's transformation from common Cockney to distinguished lady warmed the hearts of Broadway and West End audiences for decades.

EVENT: SWEET CHARITY
VENUE: CENTRAL HALL
DATE: JANUARY 7-9
PRICE: £9/£5 (STUDENTS)

The Central Hall musical is always a show worth seeing, and this year's will be no exception. Under Michael Slater's direction, Sweet Charity will excel at both dancing and snappy dialogue; and, of course, the singing will be top-notch. Watch out for Ian McCluskey as a scat-tastic Daddy Brubeck, and Vicky Jones as Charity's world-weary best friend Nicki. Sexy costumes, sexy dancing and a sexy show guaranteed.

CAMPUSEVENTS

EVENT: VIKING RAID II
VENUE: MOST BARS IN YORK
DATE: FEBRUARY 7, THURSDAY
PRICE: £7.50

Despite the t-shirt worries and YUSU's 'organisation', one of York's best nights out has survived to terrorise the city once again. For those new to the event, the t-shirt colour determines your route of eight bars and includes entry into one of the predetermined clubs at the end of the route. Choose your route and club carefully, not that you should be able to tell where you are by the end anyway but it's best you get the same colour shirt as your friends.

EVENT: RAG WEEK
VENUE: YORK
DATE: WEEK FIVE
PRICE: VARIOUS

The highlight of York students' social calendar, RAG week, is here yet again. Look forward to cheap booze (in responsible amounts), high profile events and ethical t-shirts (hopefully). Events include comedy at Wentworth on Monday, a murder mystery at the York brewery on Wednesday and the famous RAG parade in the centre of our glorious city. Guilt-free fun.



EVENT: NGS KENNEDY LECTURE
VENUE: V/045
DATE: JANUARY 31, THURSDAY (7:00)
PRICE: FREE

The New Generation Society of York is playing host to the NGS's keynote 'Kennedy Lecture' for 2008, welcoming this year's guest speaker, Sir Crispin Tickell. He coined the phrase "climate change" and has also worked closely with British government since the 1980s, influencing Britain's environment policy from Margaret Thatcher through to the present day. He is probably the best-qualified person to talk about climate change in the world today.

EVENT: BATTLE OF THE BANDS HEATS
VENUE: GOODRICKE
DATE: WEEKS FOUR & SIX
PRICE: FREE

Entry for the annual competition to find Campus' hottest new musical talent has now closed unfortunately; but there's still no excuse to not get down to Goodricke College and support excellent campus talent. The heats will be going throughout week four and the Battle semi-finals will continue in week six (also in Goodricke). The final will be in Vanbrugh, in week six.

CINEMA

EVENT: NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN
VENUE: ALL CINEMAS
DATE: IN CINEMAS NOW
PRICE: £4 - £7.50

A mesmerizing new thriller from Joel and Ethan Coen, based on the novel by Cormac McCarthy. A modern day Western begins when Llewelyn Moss (Josh Brolin) finds a pickup truck surrounded by dead men. A stash of heroin and two million dollars in cash are still in the back. When Moss takes the money, he sets off a chain reaction of catastrophic violence that not even tough-as-nails Sheriff Ed Tom Bell (Tommy Lee Jones) can contain.

EVENT: SWEENEY TODD
VENUE: ALL CINEMAS
DATE: JANUARY 25 (RELEASE DATE)
PRICE: £4 - £7.50

The Demon Barber of Fleet Street returns. Based on the long running Broadway musical of the same name, *Sweeney Todd* tells the infamous story of Benjamin Barker, a.k.a Sweeney Todd (Johnny Depp), who sets up a barber shop in downtown London which is the basis for a deeply sinister, murderous partnership with his beautiful fellow tenant, Mrs. Lovett (Helena Bonham Carter). Also starring Alan Rickman and Sacha Baron Cohen.



EVENT: BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS
VENUE: ALL CINEMAS
DATE: IN CINEMAS NOW
PRICE: £4 - £7.50

Before the Devil Knows You're Dead tells the story of two brothers who organize a robbery at their parents' jewellery store. Inevitably the job goes horribly wrong and triggers a drastic series of events that sends both brothers, their father and one brother's wife hurtling towards a shattering climax in which the brothers learn more about each other than either of them had ever wanted to know. Starring Phillip Seymour Hoffman and Ethan Hawke.

Last Word



Geese 'n' Ammo

The University of York is designing weapons technologies. So what? Just suppose some banana republic is daft enough to buy our weapons. Firstly, they will be vastly overbudget, so El Presidente will find himself digging deep into his gold-plated-Mercedes fund. They will not be completed on time, so the good folk of the Democratic People's Republic of A will find themselves overrun by the Democratic People's Republic of B, which sensibly bought weaponry from Warwick. The tanks will sink, the smart bombs will not be, and the top-of-the-range fighter-jets will, due to budget cuts, just be Geese with cute little saddles.

The armoured transports will have been clamped in Vanbrugh car park, so El Presidente's forces will have to break the boycott and take the testicle-squeezingly expensive FTR to the battlefield. In the two hours before one of the stupid purple bendy-buses arrive, the People's Democratic Republic of Warwick will have glided in, taken control of the oil-fields, won the hearts-and-minds of the locals and sat down to afternoon tea.

The Goose-riders sweep down like a wolf on the fold, except that geese are not strong enough to hold a

fully-grown soldier on their back and not obedient enough to try. Chaos ensues, during which the enemy can finish their tea.

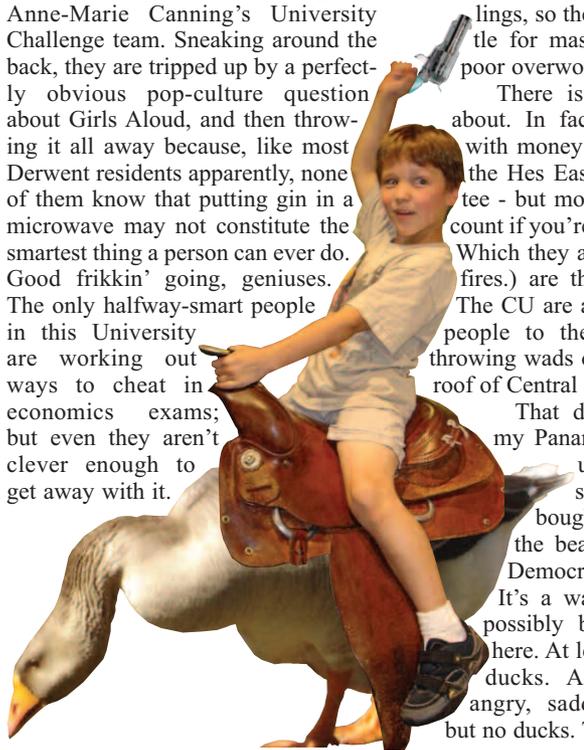
The only remaining hope is Anne-Marie Canning's University Challenge team. Sneaking around the back, they are tripped up by a perfectly obvious pop-culture question about Girls Aloud, and then throwing it all away because, like most Derwent residents apparently, none of them know that putting gin in a microwave may not constitute the smartest thing a person can ever do. Good frikkin' going, geniuses.

The only halfway-smart people in this University are working out ways to cheat in economics exams; but even they aren't clever enough to get away with it.

Meanwhile, YUSU are finally working hard; on an audit to find out if they're working too hard. I suspect this will discover that they are working too hard, the poor overworked darlings, so they will miss the battle for massages to heal their poor overworked bodies.

There is very little money about. In fact, the only people with money to burn (except for the Hes East planning committee - but money to burn doesn't count if you're actually burning it. Which they are. On big hot bonfires.) are the Christian Union. The CU are attempting to attract people to the Minster Ball by throwing wads of banknotes off the roof of Central Hall.

That does it. I'm getting my Panama hat and digging up my Hawaiian shirts. I've just bought a little place by the beach on the People's Democratic Republic of A. It's a warzone, but it can't possibly be any worse than here. At least there aren't any ducks. A lot of confused, angry, saddle-wearing geese, but no ducks. Thank God.



Moment of Zen

Gingerly dipping a finger into the mysterious, unlabelled jar of current affairs and licking it

Famous campus feminist and part-time model YUSU socs'n'-coms officer Sam Bayley got a copy of men's magazine FHM for his birthday in a recent exec meeting. "I'm not going to read it; it's just a little joke," explained Bayley, tucking the magazine into his briefcase "for safe keeping."



Following 'condomgate', the Porno V debacle, YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning was asked whether Chav D had experienced similar problems. "No," Canning reportedly replied, with a twinkle of mischief in her eye. "Chavs don't need condoms..."



...And in a similar vein, MoZ hears that former YUSU Pres and current Parliamentary candidate James "the Badger" Alexander is in the habit of buying his condoms on eBay. "It's cheaper," he explained to our rumour-monkey. "And there's always an element of surprise."

MoZ's undercover source in York's DramaSoc brings us new insight into the bizarre world of Drama males. "They all seem to get off with each other all the time" our source wailed, "It's all so incestuous!" "And another thing;" he added. "Why are they all such lightweights?"

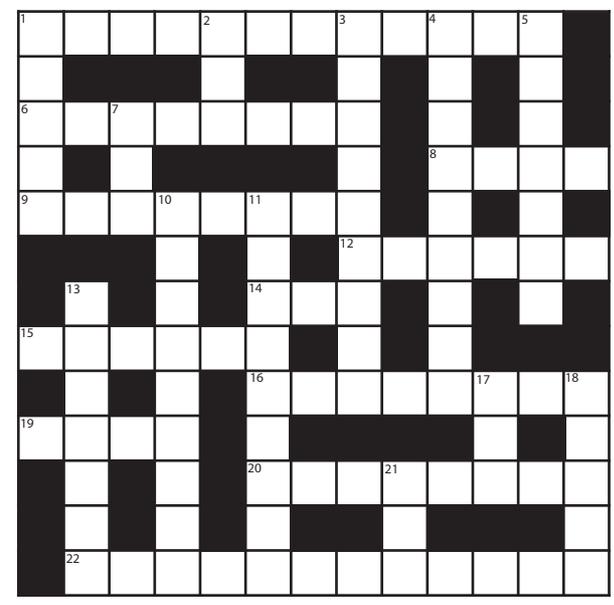


MoZ recieved a press-release from Cadbury's: "The UK's favourite gooey egg (?) is back, with a brand new mission: to set the goo free!" Apparently, Creme Eggs want to "splurge their goo all over the place". Sounds a bit immoral.

If you have any juicy tidbits or gossip to share, send them to: socs12@york.ac.uk



Nouse Crossword



- 19. Cab (4)
- 20. Condition leading to baldness (8)
- 22. Artifical town (12)

Down

- 1. Woodland path (4)
- 2. Runner worn in mountain sport (3)
- 3. Anticipated (9)
- 4. One of the third kind? (9)
- 5. Come after, win (7)
- 7. Of Green Gables (3)
- 10. Exactly the same (9)
- 11. Not animated (9)
- 13. Nihilistic art movement (7)
- 17. And the rest [abbrev] (3)
- 18. Satyr (anag.) (5)
- 21. Desperate Dan's favourite food (3)

Across

- 1. Ironing board substitute, often found in hotel rooms (12)
- 6. Ducks (8)
- 8. Previously, when (4)
- 9. Strand of Communist philosophy (8)
- 12. More rosy (6)
- 14. Stern (4)
- 15. Large gun (3)
- 16. Implied (8)

Answers available on www.nouse.co.uk/crossword



Crossword compiled by Dexter

Cuts in funding leave York tutors very well fed

The students at York are left starving for some financial support whilst university staff feast off our tuition fees.



Jenny O'Mahony
Contributing
Writer

If you were to read the University's Annual Financial report, an exercise that is quite an enlightening experience, as mind-numbing as it sounds, you would discover something rather amazing. If the figures alone were anything to go by, any York student would think they were attending an institution so awash with cash as to put the vulgar little nouveau riches colleges of Oxbridge to shame.

Snippets read "there has been a 12% rise in the University's total income over the past 12 months" and "operating cashflow was the highest it has ever been" or even "the increased consolidated income of £187 million is almost £20 million more than the previous year". These would suggest that we

walk along pathways of gold, sipping Dom Perignon from champagne fountains in Vanbrugh as we chat to each other on complimentary BlackBerries about the difficulty of employing good staff these days.

Instead, it is nigh on impossible to walk around campus at the moment, with bridge closures and swamp-like conditions on the routes which are open, and if you avoid the physical pitfalls there is always the constant money grabbing by the University for, books, gym membership, course packs and fees. Reports that YUSU officers have begun assaulting students to steal their phones and wallets remain unconfirmed.

So where is all this money going? Not to the Library, which has faced massive funding cuts, or to Your:Books, which is shutting down after. And certainly not to *Nouse* and *Vision*, whose courageous reportage is currently in jeopardy because of increased print costs which the union, and by implication the university,

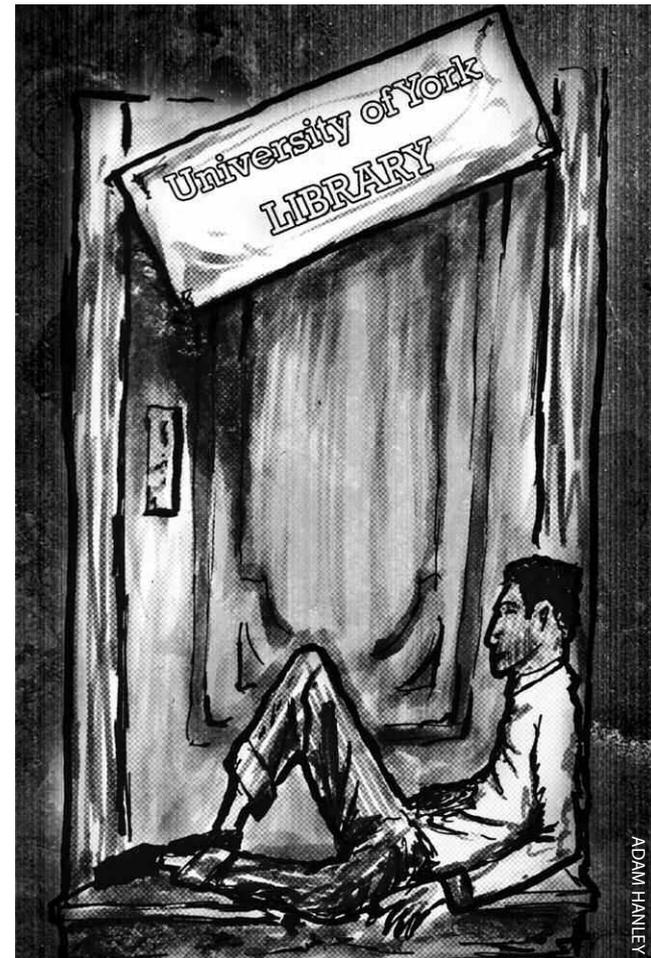
cannot cover. So although the campus and our education is supposedly "a priority", according to the University, it seems that money is actually disappearing down two metaphorical black holes.

The first is Heslington East. The development, estimated to cost around £500 million, will double the size of the student population, give us a swimming pool, student union venue, and basically our dignity back. We will finally have the features of a campus which most other students across Britain take for granted. However, the second reason is altogether more mundane and predictable, and all the more depressing for it.

The restaurant where I work in York, which shall remain nameless, is one of the upmarket eateries on Fossgate. The average bill for two people usually comes to around £80. And who do I see traipsing in, week after week, and whipping out credit cards with 'University of York' embossed on them for meals of £500+ for par-

ties, or the odd couple of hundred pounds here or there in groups of three or four? Thus far, I have served and chatted to members of the English, Philosophy, Law, Politics, Psychology, Physics and TV, Film & Theatre departments, some of them a handful of times each. The need for expense accounts to attract clients is understandable, but I only work two shifts a week, which means that I probably meet a fraction of the actual number of university staff who are spending our fees drinking yet another £25 bottle of wine to go with their venison in truffle juices.

Bloated expense accounts are why, to return to the financial report, "plans to manage resources more efficiently failed to reduce expenditure overall". Perhaps a quick glance at their receipts would remind the departments who casually consume our money that the implications for students, and for York's financial future, are far-reaching and a shameful mark on the record of this university.



ADAM HANLEY

Playing with numbers

The CU can be criticised for a lot, but not for their funds



James Macdougald
Contributing
Writer

'Numbers were never my strong suit,' quipped silky-smooth Pierce Brosnan in *Goldeneye*. I sympathise. The 'medium' Sudoku I attempted during a particularly uneventful pub-shift the other day did not look very intimidating, but within fifteen minutes I was reduced to an effing and blinding wreck.

Statistics? A different matter entirely. Statistics are a suit that anyone can play. Disraeli was right to condemn them, not only in their capacity as a rhetorical smokescreen to disguise a bad argument, but because the person brandishing a tight set of statistics does not actually need an argument. Stats have a life of their own; they will, it is often claimed, speak for themselves.

Take, for example, the University of York Christian Union's financial audit sheet for the years 2006 and 2007. It would be grossly unfair of me to appropriate the figures for the money spent on

UYCU's Minster Ball last January (£17,161 - £10K of which was in fairness, raised through ticket sales) and place them provocatively beside the figure afforded to a 'homeless project' (£45). Speaking as a compassionate atheist with a heart of unyielding flint, I do not feel able to pass judgment on the actions of an independent, non-profitable and, for the most part, harmless organisation. Nevertheless the statistics look bad, do they not? Really bad.

On the other hand, my presentation of these 'facts' has been unforgivable. I have selected only those statistics that advance my argument and have marshalled them to the worst possible effect. My treatment of the issue has depended entirely on rhetorical sleight of hand and a complete refusal to see the bigger picture.

Here follows my redemption. The CU may be wealthy by the standards of most York societies, but it is not affiliated with YUSU, so there is no question of them being leant upon by the latter, with whom they try to cooperate unofficially. The CU are funded entirely by donations which they spend at their discretion.

Furthermore, they

might very well argue that, as an evangelical institution, their first priority is the widespread articulation of God's word. This explanation, which I would advise them to learn by heart and repeat to their detractors, justifies the CU's three most expensive annual ventures: the Minster Ball, the 'House Party' - a gastronomic, Bible-oriented weekend sojourn in the country - and, finally, a £3,000 expense marked somewhat chillingly as 'Freshers'.

The CU does not exist simply to funnel money from donors to receivers. Their aims, though often charitable, are not exclusively so. It is also worth considering that a lot of charitable work is voluntary and does not require financial support - working in a night-shelter, for example, would be done gratis. So a figure for how much was spent on a certain CU project does not necessarily denote the real scale of their input.

I am loath to defend the CU, an organisation which, I believe, is benighted and corrosive. Nevertheless, though I revile and mistrust them, I will not see them persecuted on financial grounds. Liberty, as always, is the last word on the subject.



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QA research is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes people of all ages

Matthew Jeynes Goes way back

In this age of political compromise, when both left and right-wing parties slide towards the centre, and University students are struggling to maintain their liberal reputation under the crushing weight of private schooling, it is refreshing sometimes to look back at a simpler time - when the establishment consisted of crusty old conservatives, and the youth saw themselves as revolutionaries.

The February 19 1970 edition of Nouse provides just such a moment. We are greeted by an all-new Nouse logo, with the name of the paper bracketed by two very Communist-looking stars. Unfortunately, the socialist message that this conveys lasts about as far as the double-page spread on pages five and six, which is entirely dedicated to advertising careers. The paper turns from a rebellious socialist organisation into a shrine for the intimate workings of capitalism, in about the time it would take to say, 'I love Adam Smith'.

Occupying pride of place in this printed capitalist utopia is a fantastic advert, encapsulating all that is wrong with advertising in one massive lie. The advert contains a picture of someone wearing a badge on their arm saying 'I believe in Freedom', with the caption underneath reading '...then become a Chartered Accountant'. Brilliant. Suck in the liberals by appealing to their ideals, then condemn them to a life of mind-numbing pointlessness.

Elsewhere in the edition, there is a report on an event that all of us have at some point considered, briefly, then rejected on the grounds that we would rather not die. I am, of course, referring to swimming in the lake. The two brave/idiotic/drunk/now impotent (delete as applicable) students were doing it to raise money for charity. Although I much prefer the explanation from first-year Christopher Clarke, quoted in the article; "I did it because it was there". How very profound. If I could track him down to wherever he has ended up, likely to be a facility somewhere, I would shake his hand - wearing gloves of course.



Letters

Nouse welcomes your letters. Please indicate if they are not intended for publication. Email letters@nouse.co.uk or write to:

Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College

Star Letter

No Nouse will be bad news for York students

Dear Nouse,

I was shocked to hear of the funding crisis facing your paper. I wait with baited breath for each issue and would be dismayed if you were only able to publish twice a year.

Nouse as a student-run newspaper has become an institution; it's the reason some students apply to the University of York, and it would be a great shame if all your hard work and dedication to giving students the news were to be taken in one fell swoop.

As the only serious newspaper on campus, I rely on Nouse for a reliable source of campus news in addition to interesting features on a range of topics. Without it, I feel I would be a less well-informed and rounded student. A paper such as this should not find

itself restricted by financial threats and I'm sure the whole student body stands behind you.

People seem to be harking on about the FTR raise, but this is obviously the more pressing issue; think about the consequences. For one, who'll make YUSU accountable when they run amok? Oh and has anyone thought of the thespians; think of their disappointed faces when, alas, their Drama Barn productions are not reviewed. I don't think I could face it.

All I know is this: I'll be doing whatever it takes to ensure Nouse gets published on time, I'll even create a facebook group!

Heather Males

Third year English Literature student

Not a very bright FTR

Dear Nouse,

When I was asked for £1.80 on one of my frequent bus journeys into town I thought I was hearing things. £1.80, you have to be joking! But to my dismay the small bus conductor man still insisted on this absurd price for a single ticket. A thirty pence rise, for what exactly?

It's not like my bus experience has taken a turn for the better, infact, all I feel now is the burning hole in my pocket. FTR know that students are dependent on the buses to get into town, they're just exploiting the fact that we'll have no other option than to cough up the change.

But guess what, I am one lady who's not for turning. Yes I've joined the facebook group, and yes I've moaned enough to make my friends walk with me into town. Students can make a difference, and if we all boycott FTR they'll have no other option but to listen. Lets face it, apart from the odd pensioner and actual York resident, we fill those buses, and we can empty them.

Iris Tumblebridge

First year Management student

Dear Nouse,

I am writing to say how much I enjoyed your coverage of the NUS referendum on campus. I found your reporting balanced and your analysis insightful. However, I must ask whether it was really necessary to include quite so many photos of NUS President Gemma Tumelty. She may be an inspiration to us all as a dedicated campaigner for students' rights but you can have too much of a good thing. Could you please include more photos of Rich Croker next time? He's dreamy.

Julian Bassey

Second year Agriculture student

Best of the web: your comments on Porno V

I really don't think that the Academic and Welfare officer of a Student Union can be expected to support an event with the tag line "dressed to get screwed". If it isn't sexist, then it's encouraging promiscuity and random drunken sex. It would be completely wrong for YUSU to effectively say that all students want random sex with strangers.

This event wasn't banned, but YUSU still stayed away from supporting it. I think that is the best decision. No point in banning this sort of thing, but someone in a welfare position encouraging it would be crazy.

Michael Rutherford

Isn't it enough that, with minimal effort and forward-planning, we can pick up FREE condoms at a number of places on campus (YUSU building, health centre) - you're probably never more than 100 yards from a condom.

It's typical of students to demand as an inalienable right something that would, in any normal set of circumstances, be considered a remarkable freebie. Not satisfied? Buy your own damn condoms!

James MacDougald

All articles can be commented on at www.nouse.co.uk

Little campus: Big Mouth...

Are facility's on campus up to scratch? From bridges, or lack of, to bars, we ask you whether the University of York is giving us value for money or leaving students high and dry.

Name: Amelia Hogg
College: Vanbrugh
Year: Second
Subject: Psychology



" I play quite a lot of sport so I'm often in and out of the sports centre. The tent is the bane of my existence; freezing during winter, boiling in summer! For a student, I think the gym is too expensive, although I'm not really a gym person and don't know anyone who is! The recently built stuff is great, but it's taken so long to build. I was supposed to live in Bleachfields last year but ended up in Alcuin. As for lecture halls, they're all the same aren't they? They're just a bunch of chairs and tables!"

Name: Claire Webster
College: James
Year: First
Subject: Social Science and Crime



" I think the section in the library for my degree is pretty amazing, they have any book that you need and there is enough space to sit in a quiet environment to work, which is very important for me. For a small campus university I think the facilities are generally good; it has the basics such as Costcutter and Blackwells, and it isn't that far to get into town if you need something. I'm keen on sports and York has a lot of field space, which is great, but we definitely need to sort out those bridges!"

Name: Tom Parry
College: Alcuin
Year: First
Subject: History and Politics



" They're not bad, but not great either. I've heard that's the case with most unis. The abundance of computer rooms is helpful when finishing essays and the noise of halls is proving too much to overcome. There seem to be plenty of sports equipment and a decent gym as well. Having said that, I've made very little effort to actually venture round and inspect them. I like the bars, I'm more familiar with them than most areas of campus! Vanbrugh's bar lacks atmosphere, but the others are all good to go for a drink."

Name: Harriet O'Brien
College: James
Year: First
Subject: Chemistry



" My department generally has better facilities than the other universities I visited, especially in terms of the lecture halls which have comfortable seats! But to get from my college to a lecture I've had to take five different routes because the bridges keep on closing and that's a real nuisance. I do ballroom dancing and there's always a space to dance but it would be nice to have a more developed sports centre with a swimming pool. It's a shame that James doesn't have a bar, but I'd rather go to town anyway!"

York's American expats split evenly between Obama and Huckabee

Allison Kjergaald takes a look at York's expatriate US community and asks for their opinion on the American Primaries

The US student community in York is a small but lively one, with new members arriving every 'semester' on study abroad programs, both at the University of York and the Calvary Chapel Bible College York, located just outside the city walls.

With the US primaries in full force, *Nouse* carried out an opinion poll, interviewing a number of the American students studying in York to see how the expatriate US community here will vote. Results of the poll show Republican Mike Huckabee and Democrat Barack Obama to be the frontrunners.

Huckabee's supporters defend his socially conservative stance and evangelical Christian values and stand by the three main points of his campaign; faith, family, freedom.

Josh Arnold from California said that Huckabee "seems the most respectable and godly man there is running at the moment. I like his views on Israel, homosexuality and abortion. He is against the last two for biblical reasons and believes in bringing families back together."

Casey O'Keefe from Virginia was in agreement, rating Huckabee as the best candidate because he is "pro-life, conservative, and a strong Christian." However, while Huckabee tries to emphasize his Christian ideals, he strives to make sure his vision of 'faith' goes along with the notion of 'freedom.'

On the opposite end of the political spectrum, students sup-

porting Barack Obama highlight his heavily advertised "ability to bring about real change in Washington."

Like many other candidates, Obama's 'blueprint for change' includes a comprehensive environmental policy supporting "clean energy and plans to increase funding for the usage of wind power, bio-fuels, and low-carbon fuels."

However, more broadly, as Britain Brady, a PhD student from California advocates, Obama's nomination would be "the first step in the right direction for the rebirth of American greatness." Obama "seems to be the only person who understands the seriousness of the plight of America."

The key to Obama's 'Change We Can Believe In' campaign is to separate himself from what a student dubs, "the game of politics." For Democrat-inclined students, Obama does not "play the game of politics in an effort to try and 'win' an election. Obama tries to change the game of politics entirely, in the effort to 'win' a new America."

John Edwards similarly plays into liberal America's push to see dramatic changes in government, presenting himself as a champion of social change. One student from New York, when asked who they supported, said "John Edwards. All of the Democrats prioritize the war in Iraq and Healthcare. However I agree with many of Edwards' views and more so than the other candidates, he emphasizes the importance of rapidly addressing the

issue of climate change."

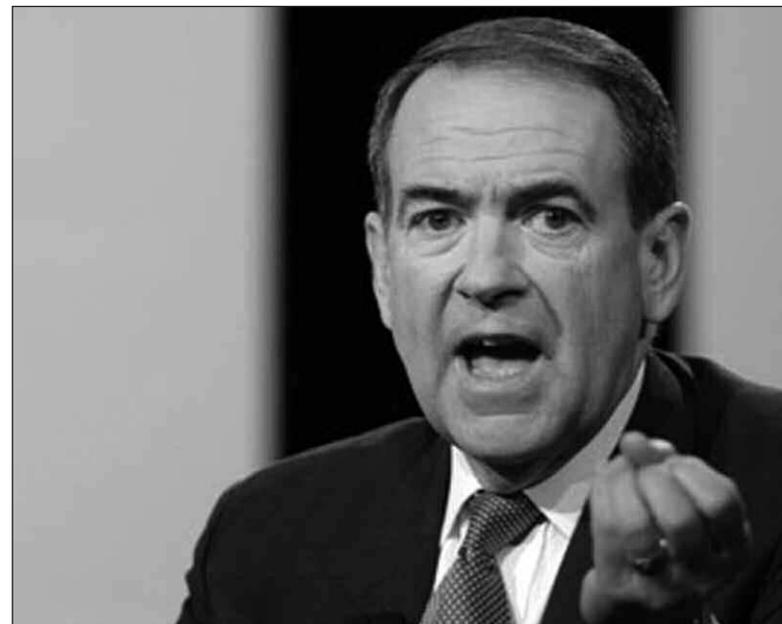
The issue of Iraq does play a huge role in the campaigns of candidates and subsequently has an impact on voters. For those who disagree with the 'War on Terror', Obama seems to be a safe bet. One student said Obama "has a comprehensive plan for getting American troops out of Iraq, and beginning to help rebuild the country rather than continuing to destroy it."

Although the American student population at this university is not large enough to provide a fair assessment of US voting trends, these individual opinions to some extent reflect how and why Americans support certain candidates.

Plans regarding the environment, health care, and the war in Iraq vary slightly across candidates of the same party; in effect, personality and personal values of the candidates seem to weigh heavily on voters' minds.

Obama as the energetic fighter for political change, Huckabee - in the words of one student - as a "bold, upstanding, godly kind of guy," and Edwards as the experienced senator endorsing equal opportunity are only a few of the contending character portrayals that Americans have taken hold of.

As the 2008 presidential election draws nearer, polarized American voters will fall in step with their party of choice. In the meantime, however, those parties must decide who can best succeed in the race to the Whitehouse.



Above: Charm and rhetoric are key to Obama's success among students
Below: Huckabee builds up supporters with his strong religious beliefs

Primary candidates make bid for youth vote

Anjali Raval

ALL CANDIDATES taking part in the US Primaries are relying on the youth wings of their parties to entice young people aged 18-29 to vote. The age bracket will make up 25% of the US electorate in 2008.

In the past the College Democrats of America (CDA), the official student outreach arm of the Democratic Party has had great success. It was due partly to the hard work of College Democrat's activists based on campuses all over America that John Kerry won a landmark 54% of the youth vote in 2004.

Like the College



Hillary Clinton addresses the College Democrats of America

Democrats there are currently over 250,000 College Republicans around the country who come together to help elect candidates, support the Republican agenda

and are the grassroots branch of the Republican Party.

Campaigns in this nomination race have not only tried to make the most of

these organisations, they have taken to using new media technology. Candidates have campaigned heavily through their own websites as well as through blogs, videos and podcasts on websites such as Facebook, MySpace and YouTube.

No contender seems to have the same appeal to young activists as Barack Obama. His charm and rhetoric, combined with his youth-orientated campaign, drew a record number of voters under the age of 25 to the Iowa caucuses on Monday January 14; it was these supporters that gave him most of his margin of victory. Obama finished roughly 20,000 votes ahead

of former Senator John Edwards and Senator Hillary Clinton.

According to *Time* magazine the turnout at these caucuses among the youngest tier of the electorate had more than doubled from 2004, when Democrat Howard Dean's intense campaign on college campuses produced far more modest results. Whilst the overall turnout for the Democratic Party jumped 90%, the number of young Democrats participating also soared by 135%.

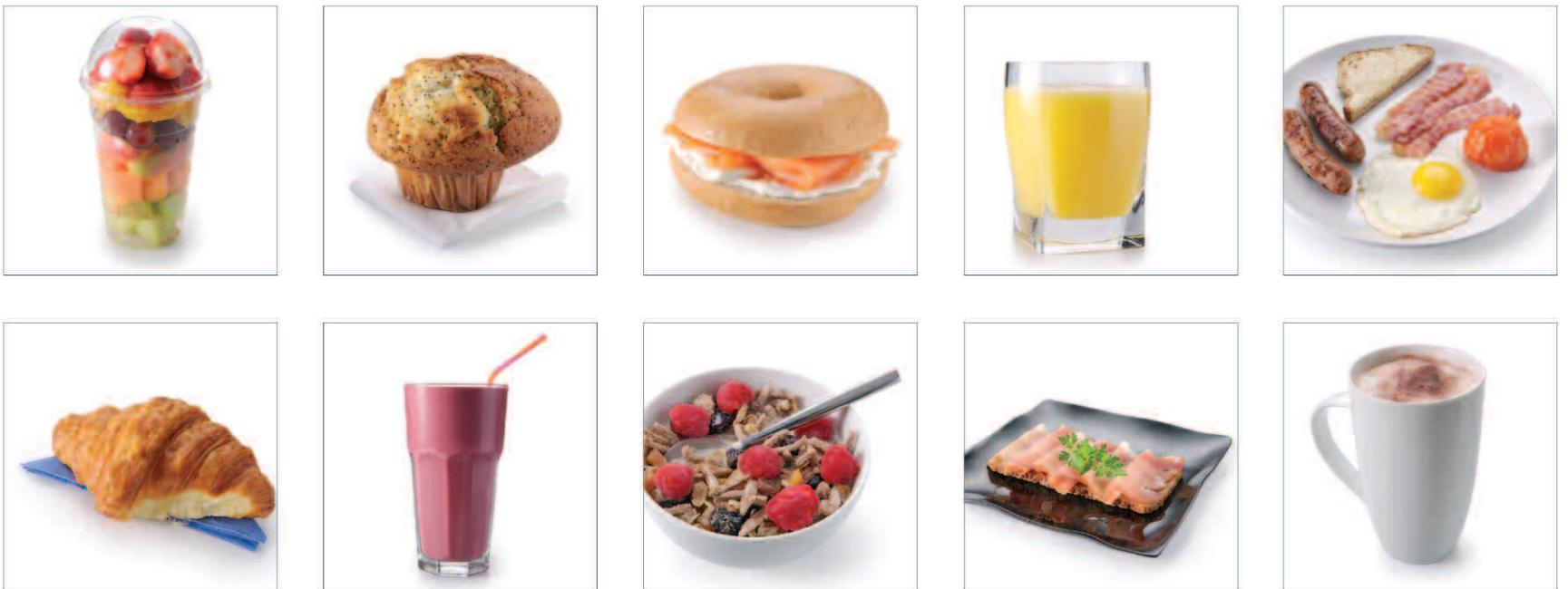
According to the CNN entrance poll it was the youth vote that pushed not only Obama but Mike Huckabee to the top in Iowa, with the latter securing 40%

of this category of vote. Both candidates are known for appealing to young voters, having succeeded with promises of new beginnings. Even Hillary Clinton has taken a page out of Obama's policy book, continuing a belated chase after the youth vote, by embracing the internet and by promising more government transparency.

More young Americans are doing their part by registering to vote, paying more attention to issues and party politics. Candidates have realised that in order to succeed it is most definitely a time for political leaders to reach out to younger Americans and run campaigns that address their concerns.



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Kenya's riots run deeper than politics

Normally a stable and a peaceful country, the recent elections have ripped open Kenya's society along tribal lines. **Peter Campbell** and **Christiana Hambro** speak to locals caught in the sweeping violence

“Youths plan arson and loot, houses were torched last night, and there are sounds of gunshots nearby,” Elijah Masira, a 24-year-old Kenyan living in the slums of Nairobi, told *Nouse* via email last week.

Elijah, who was in the city of Kisumu, the epicentre of the rioting, when the violence began, was notably shaken. “I am so distressed by this, I can't stand to see Kenya turn into hell on earth because of individuals who are so heartless to understand that defeat is part of life.”

Kenya had always been a stable country when compared to its neighbours Sudan and Somalia. However, since the Boxing Day elections it has been engulfed by conflict, with the failure of transparent elections splitting the country over Mwai Kibaki's rule.

The delayed election results gave Kibaki, the incumbent President, just over 4.5 million votes, a mere 200,000 votes more than the main opposition leader, Raili Odinga. Odinga, who secured the poor vote by promising wealth redistribution, immediately called for a re-run.

Kenyans are divided into 42 tribes, and strong ties to them are one of the major contributors to the spiralling violence. Both Kibaki and Odinga are from two of the largest tribes, Kikuyu and Luo respectively, and the problem has descended into tribal violence rather than party politics.

The two worst affected areas have been the city of



Kisumu, Odinga's birthplace, and its neighbouring town of Kericho, the centre of Kenya's thriving tea industry.

Following Kibaki's refusal to step down, Odinga's Luo tribe have formed violent gangs which have “sworn that there is not one Kikuyu that will live in Kericho.”

Local communities are normally widely diverse and tolerant of multiculturalism, but the recent political

upheaval has caused divisions within the multi-ethnic group, sending certain tribes back into isolation amidst prejudice and superstition.

23-year-old Venessa Monyangi, who lives in Kericho, talks about a lack of freedom of speech, to the extent that she will not discuss the current political situation in public for fear of being beaten or shot. She explained how “the schools within the main tea estate have

been closed indefinitely with desolate villages replacing the vibrant communities which once flourished”. She continued: “I am no longer able to speak with lifelong friends due to differences in our cultural heritage. There is no peace at all; Kenya is no longer what it once was.”

In Kisumu, after the elections, people did not dare venture out of their houses for three days. One woman in

Violence is spreading through Kenya

Kisumu, who was housing 28 people for safety, said it was “difficult to keep everyone fed. Prices are trebled, but we don't have a choice: We have to eat. We have cut down to one meal a day. One boy went out alone to get food, and suffered a severe beating and a deep cut that had to be stitched up at home.” She blamed one of the main tribes that supports Odinga for why Kisumu was badly hit, as it is heavily mixed in with the Kikuyus,

In Kisumu, the police have been given orders of shoot-to-kill. A woman in Kisumu said: “after five years of stability, free primary education and economic growth, it is a shock and deeply distressing to see the current turmoil.”

On visiting a refugee camp, Elijah commented: “I saw thousands of displaced people, most of whom were women and children. Police vehicles were still bringing more people. I was very concerned about the sanitation.”

People are too frightened to sleep, and herd together for protection. The tea estate outside Kericho has been razed, the villages destroyed, and workers accused of supporting Kibaki have been macheted to death. The employees have been urged to return to their tribes in a desperate attempt to stem the flow of violence.

“The killings will not stop until Odinga is president,” is a commonly heard cry, but since tribal warfare has become an intrinsic part of the battle, the scars may run deeper than we think.

Debate over value of drama as Arts Council funding is slashed and A-level is denigrated

Polly Ingham
DEPUTY POLITICS EDITOR

AS THE NEW Year dawned, Liverpool was crowned this year's European Capital of Culture. The award is intended to celebrate cultural diversity and development in the chosen city, whilst promoting future projects.

However, late last year it was announced that the Arts Council England, who are responsible for funding thousands of arts groups, was to have a £112.5m budget relocation.

The Arts Council has said that there will be fewer organisations getting

money, with 194 seeing funding cuts. However, 80 more are being added to its portfolio.

Nonetheless, events such as the National Student Drama Festival (NSDF) and more obscure arts professions such as literature translators will be deeply affected.

The cut will most directly affect grassroots projects entering the British mainstream being submerged beneath their financial burden.

Simultaneously, the most respected universities in this country are fraternising with the anti-culture bandwagon. Earlier this month Russell Group of uni-



Cambridge considers drama a 'less ideal' A-level

versities announced a series of 'less ideal' A-level subjects for their candidates.

These spurned subjects include many culturally enriching ones, such as

Drama and Theatre Studies and Art, as well as newer subjects, like IT. This disregard for formal, creative endeavours seems to echo the government's apparent

disregard for grassroots creative projects. A University of Cambridge spokesman even described the subjects as “unacceptable”.

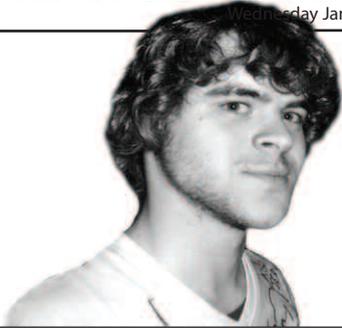
One suggested reason for the move made by the Russell Group was to make the application process “transparent” and makes it easier to differentiate between candidates. But for some universities, creativity is superseded by a ‘safe bet’, ensuring their reputation is maintained, even though, as School's Minister Jim Knight asserts, “all subjects are rigorously measured against each other to maintain standards”.

The University of York, as a member of the 1994

Group is one of the exceptions. John Cooper, the Admissions Tutor for History in 2007, said: “I was struck by the commitment of York's admissions and School's Liaison Department to retaining an open mind about the relative merits of different A-levels.”

If the country continues to neglect the arts and those with a passion for culture, then there will be five words for Gordon Brown to describe Britain by: “Desperately Needing a Cultural Renaissance”.

For extra content, visit our website:
nouse.co.uk/Politics



Matthew Jeynes

The sporting calendar is made up of a series of rivalries, but what is the point?

With the Varsity clash looming ahead, and the debate over the relative merits of York's two rivalries in last week's *York Vision*, I thought it best to examine why sporting rivalries occur, how people react to them, and whether they are in fact a good thing.

In most people's eyes, the debate of Varsity over Roses is a fairly pointless one. Roses dates back to 1965, barely two years after the University was founded, has an tenuous historical link to the 15th century Wars of the Roses, and features three days of competition over 37 different sports. In contrast, Varsity is entering its fourth year and, in all fairness to York St. John, is far less of a contest than Roses, over far fewer sports.

The winner is therefore clear. What isn't immediately clear is why these rivalries come about in the first place. The Varsity rivalry is obvious, with St John sharing (some would say sully) the same city as us, but is it really worth a sporting rivalry? When Varsity Wednesday comes around, St John will only participate in the small number of sports in which they have a chance of competing, and will still get heavily beaten. A sporting contest in which the victor wins by such a score as the 56-17 rugby demolition of St John last year is hardly worth the tag of 'contest'.



York is notorious for annual rivalries with Varsity and Roses nemeses York St John and Lancaster

Still, it's always fun to rub St John's face into the mud (and after all this rain, the presence of mud is about as inevitable as a York win), and who can resist a whole day of sport. This cannot however be the only appeal of sporting rivalries and it is also unnecessary for the rivals to inhabit the same city or area. Games between teams from

the same city are derbies, not necessarily rivalries. I'm sure Sunderland fans would disagree with me, but they can hardly be said to have a rivalry with Newcastle because they are a far poorer team. The same can be said about Varsity. Yes, it is a derby, but it's not really a rivalry. That honour surely belongs only to the Roses

clash.

But why are York and Lancaster such rivals? Apart from Roses, York students barely have any contact with their Lancastrian counterparts. There is also no reason for us to be rivals. The Wars of the Roses link is completely ridiculous; the war wasn't fought between York and Lancaster. We

don't even battle it out in all the BUSA leagues. It is simply that we play them every year. It is the history of the Roses fixture itself that makes it a rivalry. No one is exactly sure why supporters should hate Lancaster, pour out in droves and cheer for York until their throats feel hoarse - but they do. It is just the feeling that this is something we have to win. That is a true sporting rivalry - where no one is exactly sure why they want to win so badly, but still give everything they have to try to do so.

That still leaves the question of whether such rivalries are beneficial. Every year there are a few unsavoury incidents that leave people questioning the wisdom of having the event. Fortunately, the answer is simple - of course such rivalries aren't wise, but no-one is going to pretend that they are. What they are is a chance for the whole university to unite together, to be part of a unique atmosphere, probably in the entirety of British university sport. It is true that people are occasionally hurt, and there do need to be safety measures, but that should not detract from the experience. Varsity will need to keep going for another 30 years, and will need St John to improve massively, to generate the same experience. It's still a good warm-up, and who would pass up the possibility of a whole day of sport?

No gear, all the ideas - the state of sport in York

Criss Noice
SPORTS EDITOR

WHEN APPROACHING the topic of the state of sport at this university, it's important to tread carefully. Although the sporting teams at York are admittedly not in the top flight when it comes to national rankings, there is a great deal of pride within the teams themselves - and so there should be. The basis of a successful team, evidently, is teamwork.

However, one of the most significant factors influencing the long term performance of our sports teams at York is the lack of modern facilities on campus which could be used to improve a team's conditioning and skill. It's almost the antithesis of the age old sporting collocation: "all the gear, no idea". Teams at York know what they're doing, they just lack the support and funding of the university.

When prospective students are shown around Universities like Loughborough or Brighton, the sports facilities are generally the first stop on the tour. They are proud of their sport and have the accolades to show that the money being poured into sport in these places isn't going to waste. There is no reason why York can't be one of the universities with a strong national reputation.

When you first come to York as a potential future student, the sporting facilities hardly stand out in your mind. Those of us who show new students around campus will generally gloss over the Sports

Centre with disparaging remarks like: "It's ok, just not great. You learn to deal with it".

Sport in York should be something to shout about. We should have a strong national standing. We have one of the biggest inter-university competitions in the country in the annual Roses event and yet we still lack competence and consistency in the most basic of organisational skills, like finding referees for college matches.

This inadequacy spreads right through to the campus sport coverage, with *York Vision* - the "number one source for college sport" recently reporting wildly inaccurate

versions of the college rankings table last term.

In other words, if the powers that be can't get the basics right, we'll never be in a position to move forward as a sporting university. What's disappointing about the situation is that the talent is here. It's just the facilities that hold back this talent, even drawing it elsewhere in some cases.

When speaking to several people at the University who are at the very top level in their sport before coming here, it became clear that many of them don't play for the university teams. They may play a little college every now and again to keep themselves fresh, but they are put off by the lack of quality coaching and see participating at a university level here as more of a hinderance to their degree, instead of a source of extra curricular pride. Even those who excel within the university teams are forced to train elsewhere to

improve, leaving the rest of the team to suffer. The University of York Boat Club is one of the biggest casualties of this, having a number of their top rowers leave to train in better surroundings in hopes of a place in the national squad. The society itself is largely kept afloat by handouts from neighbouring York City and St Peter's.

I am by no means saying that the University teams are in a state of disrepair, but there is definite room for improvement. The level of competitive sport here at the university is impressive considering the circumstances, but it should be on a higher plane. We have the potential, but we need to embrace our teams and promote them to prospective students. Only then will the situation improve, and only then will funding come. Until that time, we will be stuck in the vicious circle of talent and top quality coaching being put off by the reputation of our sports facilities.



York defeat Varsity rivals in netball victory

>> Continued from Page 20

York asserted themselves in the crucial second quarter, turning a single-point advantage into a game-winning margin by half-time. York's domination continued into the third quarter with two quick-fire triples from Sahin and three more from Ireland, opening up a 24-10 lead. By the end of the game, York had added another eight points to the tally and finished the match 32-12 ahead.

In the third team confrontation, York continued their impressive season with a comprehensive 41-21 victory over St John. Imaginative movement gave the team a convincing win despite being forced into unforeseen team alterations before the start.

Attacker Livi Coward was given goalkeeping duties prior to the match and showed her versatility by stifling St John's efforts on the net. The home side remained compact in defence whilst making the most of scoring opportunities.

York 1st captain Amy Smith praised the team, saying: "Our fitness made a difference today. It's a credit to the girls that we outlasted them."

Club records broken at BUSA championships

NOVEMBER SAW the BUSA short course swimming championships and resulted in a strong performance in the pool from York's swim team at Pond's Forge, Sheffield. The event proved successful for the club, with several club records broken. Club captain Steven Knight led by example, breaking both the 50m and 100m butterfly records. He also swam in both the 4x50 freestyle and medley relays, along with Mark Pietkiewitz, Paul Cox, Ian Smithson and Tom Mcglashan, while Pietkiewitz broke the 100m freestyle club record. In the women's team, Katie Paxton set a personal best in the 100m butterfly.

Derwent begin college hockey term with win

DERWENT PRODUCED a dominant performance in their opening game of the Spring hockey season to beat James 2-0. The early stages saw the ball constantly in the James half, but with the Derwent attackers unable to find the net. At the other end, the solid defence of captain Luke Featherstone restricted the James attackers to scarce opportunities.

In the same fixture last term, James romped to a 3-1 win, but a repeat looked unlikely when striker Nick Harris fired the ball home from 10 yards with five minutes of the first half to play. The second half saw no respite for the flagging James defence as Derwent looked for a second timely goal to seal the game. This came from the talented Ian Sheridan after some excellent build-up play. Despite Derwent attackers shooting at will for the remainder of the match, the score remained unaltered from then on, and the whistle seemed to come as a great relief to the beleaguered James goalkeeper.

Tandem jumps and front flips

Try something different this term with the *Nouse* guide to the most original societies offering membership to students at York

CAPOEIRA

Mixed: Yes
Cost: £5 per term
Email: info@capoeirayork.com / www.capoeirayork.com

Capoeira is a unique and colourful fusion of Brazilian dance rhythms and acrobatic martial arts, which develops agility, flexibility, strength, speed and co-ordination. York's Capoeira club, which has links with the local community, welcomes everyone to improve their fitness and self-confidence to the accompaniment of traditional and uplifting South American music and song. With so many benefits, what better way to fulfil those New Year's resolutions, while having a tremendous amount of fun. As well as Wednesday classes at the University, instructors Edy Alves and Cris Gonsalves run classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings on Priory Street and on Friday evening at Next Generation Gym.

Training: Wednesdays, 5.00-7.00pm, Langwith or Goodricke Dining Room



Skydiving is for the adventurous thrill seekers among us

SKYDIVING

Mixed: Yes
Cost: £175 for training, including three jumps
Email: parachute@yusu.org

For the more adventurous, Skydiving is the sport of choice. It is an incredible experience, leaving the everyday world behind and entering a completely different environment. The sport which people probably have the most misconceptions about, it is much safer than you'd think and anyone can have a go. The University club and team have been making a mark recently with some incredible achievements: Student Skydiver of the Year; Winning the UK National League (Rookie Class); Winning the European Championships (Rookie Class); and Team of the Year. The club will also be running a charity tandem skydiving campaign for RAG, with jumps taking place on weekend of RAG week (23/24th Feb).

Training: Introductory course taking place on the weekend of February 2/3.

OCTOPUSH

Mixed: Yes
Cost: £5 per term + £3-50 per session
Email: socs599@york.ac.uk / www.yusu.org/octopush

Imagine the hustle and bustle of hockey, and then imagine it played underwater. That's octopush - a vibrant and quirky game where the emphasis is on having fun - as mixed teams of six, sporting snorkels and flippers, attempt to score with a weighted puck (or squid). Octopush certainly rates as a unique experience; a must for all adrenaline-junkies. York offers a flourishing and welcoming club, where no previous experience or equipment is required. Participation in octopush also allows the chance to compete for the University in regional and national competitions at the forefront of the sport. The club is staging a 'Bring a friend' social on Thursday of this week (January 24th - meet 7.30pm Vanbrugh bar) to encourage new members, featuring curry and copious alcohol.

Training: Bootham School Pool, Sundays, 7.00-9.00pm - meet Information Centre 6.15pm



The Octopush club offers fast and furious underwater action

ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Mixed: Yes
Cost: £5 per year
Email: socs311@york.ac.uk / www.yusu.org/ultimatefrisbee

Requiring lightning speed of thought and sleight of hand, Ultimate Frisbee is an exhilarating and hugely enjoyable team sport. Teams of five compete in intense match-ups, played at high tempo, where movement and vision are all-important. York boasts one of the longest-established Ultimate Frisbee clubs in the country, welcoming all newcomers to compete in its indoor and outdoor training at any level. The club's range of teams also allows the possibility to compete in regional and national tournaments, including the annual Roses contest and bi-annual BUSA competitions. The club will host the prestigious National Ultimate Frisbee tournament on the first weekend of May this year, so there's never been a better time to check the sport out.

Training: Indoors - Fridays 6.30-9.30pm / Sunday 7.30-9.30pm and Outdoors - Wednesday 1.30-3.30pm / Sunday 1.30-3.30pm.



Jo Carter
AU President

AS SOMEONE WHOSE entire year ultimately hangs on the result of Roses, I may seem a little hypocritical here. Trust me, I would sacrifice a lot to win Roses, but sometimes winning isn't the most important thing. At the risk of sounding like one of those annoying motivational psychologists, sport is as much about challenging yourself as beating the opposition. Ultimately, the greatest sportsmen and women, such as Billie-Jean King, Lance Armstrong, Tiger Woods and Ellen MacArthur, who will be remembered as much for what they achieved away from the sporting arena as in it.

In June last year I cycled from York to Amsterdam and back, raising over £500 for Marie Curie Cancer Care. For me, it wasn't about seeing how quickly I could do it; it was about giving it a go to see if I could cycle for 250 miles. And that's why I'm running the London Marathon. Yes, I want to finish in under four and a half hours, but the real reason is to push myself and see if I can find the motivation to train and, come April, be able to say that I've run a marathon. Perhaps the next challenge is to swim the channel, although I think I would call the line at rowing the Atlantic.

Sport is an amazingly powerful thing: it is universal; it transcends boundaries; speaks many languages, and has exceptional reconciliatory qualities. Sport has helped ease conflicts in countries divided by faction and strife. I think MP Tessa Jowell summed it up quite nicely when she said, "Sport has the ability to motivate, inspire and empower people".

I have finally come to terms with the fact that I am not going to make it as a professional athlete and the only involvement I am likely to have in the London 2012 Olympics is as a volunteer, but just because we're not elite, doesn't mean we can't make a difference.

I'm organising the Ride of the Roses, a sponsored bike ride from York to Lancaster to raise money for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. There are places still available, so if you fancy a challenge, email au@yusu.org for more details.

On Sunday March 16, the University of York will be hosting a Sport Relief Mile. The event is open to everyone and will be happening as one of over 250 events nationwide. If you fancy challenging yourself, sign up now on www.sportrelief.com/themile. And if you want a test, why not do it three-legged with a mate? It's a chance to make a difference. And if running a mile is the last thing you want to do, we're looking for volunteers to help out on the day too.

Whether you choose to run a marathon, jog a mile or cycle to Lancaster, make sure at some point this term you drag yourself off the sofa and go out and do something different.

Promotion hopes for York clubs as BUSA form begins to improve

Matthew Jeynes
SPORTS EDITOR

AFTER A FAIRLY successful term of BUSA action, several of York's clubs are handily placed to take a shot at promotion, or even trophies. The only two current certainties for promotion are the Women's Hockey 1sts and the Men's Badminton 2nds. The Women's Hockey have recovered from an early slip-up against Hull to take their league by storm, and have already won the league with two games to play.

The Men's Badminton have been even more dominant, recording eight wins out of eight, including a remarkable five 8-0 whitewashes, to win their league as well with two matches to play. In fact, the Badminton Club enjoyed a fantastic term, with the women likely only just to miss out on promotion while the men will be praying for the currently dominant Leeds Met to falter and give them a chance for promotion.

Elsewhere, the Men's Football 1sts are sitting proud at the top of league 3B with four matches still to play this term, and will be looking to continue their six match unbeaten run today in a pivotal game against their nearest rivals, Leeds 2nds. With the other male football teams languishing in mid-table obscurity and the Women's 1sts almost certain to be relegated, the hopes of the club rest on the Men's 1sts continued form.

The Squash club will be looking to rebuild for next year following a disappointing showing last term from all three teams. The Men's 1sts need to beat Durham 2nds convincingly away and hope



Both Men's Badminton 1sts and 2nds in action - the club was one of York's most successful in BUSA last term

that the latter team gets soundly beaten by Leeds' 2nds to avoid relegation, whilst the Women's 1sts are facing the daunting task of beating league leaders Leeds Met 1sts and hoping other results go their way to avoid a similar fate.

There is better news for the Rugby club, whose Men's 1sts occupy a good position in their league, within striking distance of promotion. They also face a crunch game today, as they play league-leaders Durham 3rds, hoping to avoid a

repeat of the 36-0 thrashing of last term. The Men's 2nds occupy the top spot in their league after two scores of over 100 points, and must be favourites for promotion, while it is still early days in the Women's season.

It was another good term for the Fencing club. Both clubs were in with a chance of going through to their respective trophy competitions with only a single round of fixtures still to play, although both will miss out on the chance to com-

pete for the Championship.

It was, however, a frustrating term for the Netball Club, with both the 1sts and the 3rds left regretting devastatingly close defeats, 34-36 to Newcastle 2nds and 28-29 to Leeds Trinity 1sts respectively, that have ended their chances of promotion. And in an interesting twist, the 2nds team will remain in the same league as the 1sts if the latter team defeat Teeside 2nds in their final fixture next Wednesday.

Vanbrugh dominate in basketball clinic

Dan Hyde
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

Vanbrugh	26
Derwent	12

VANBRUGH STORMED to a convincing win over struggling Derwent to set the early pace in college basketball this weekend. Fielding an experienced team, they dominated every facet of the game and looked deserving of the victory, even able to substitute star player Sam Tuck mid-way through the second half.

The college will be keen to build on this victory and make a serious challenge for the basketball title this term in what has become a hotly competitive area of college sport. 2008 has seen the introduction of set benches and an electronic scoreboard for the first time at college level, emphasising the

growing reputation of basketball within the university.

The match itself was controlled by Vanbrugh point guard Richard Williams whose speed and dribbling skills were too much for a shaky Derwent defence, causing them numerous problems in the first half. Williams's fluent combination play with David Merifield and Tuck had built Vanbrugh a convincing lead by the half-way stage and it appeared that there was no way back for Derwent.

The efforts of guards Kevin Bates and Luke Steers in the second half were all too late for Derwent and Tuck's dominance in and around the key limited Derwent's big men, Paul Mertenskoetter and Andrew Marriott, to very few chances at the basket.

Vanbrugh will take a good deal of confidence from this performance, but will face much tougher



Vanbrugh had most of the possession and looked stronger throughout

competition during the term from other, more organised college teams. After the first round of fixtures, college basketball appears to be headed for an exciting term,

with Vanbrugh joining Alcuin, Goodricke, Halifax and even Wentworth in vying for the title of college basketball champion this year.

SPORT

Women's Hockey 1sts promoted in their league with games to spare in a successful term all round for York's clubs in BUSA >> P19



York's netballers defeat York St John in three pre-Varsity friendly matches



TOM HOLE

All three of York's netball teams claimed victory on Wednesday, beating York St John and boosting confidence ahead of the upcoming Varsity competition in February

NETBALL

York 1sts **32**
York St John 1sts **30**

Adam Shergold
Dan Hyde

A HARD-FOUGHT win for York Netball 1sts rounded off a day of triple victory against rivals York St John. With the matches being a precursor to the upcoming Varsity competition, both sides were eager to gain a psychological

advantage.

York started the game the more confident of the two sides, with captain Amy Smith dictating the pace of play. However, the home team struggled at the defensive end of the court and St John took an early lead.

It took some steady shooting from goal attacker Sarah Pycroft to inject some much-needed momentum into York's attack. The GA made several testing shots to bring her team within two

points going into half time.

York's defence was boosted by the success of their attackers and the contest began to flow with the teams trading points for the majority of the third quarter. Pycroft's eye for goal influenced attacking partner Sarah Fisher who looked unstoppable in a stunning four-minute spell that took the home team three points clear of their rivals. However, the spell did not last as St John scored several times in

rapid succession to bring the score to 25-24 going into the final quarter.

The tension was tangible after the break and the pressure told as St John's instrumental GA and GS struggled to hit the target against some excellent York defensive work.

The scores were tied late in the quarter at 29-29, and the match hung in the balance when a decisive interception from wing defender Katie Brunskill on the

halfway line found its way to Fisher in the goal circle. The in-form shooter scored, putting the home team into the lead as the University of York hung on in a tense finale to finish the match two points clear at 32-30.

York's second team sent out a resounding message ahead of the forthcoming Varsity competition with a clinical 32-12 victory over St. John. The teams had fought out a close contest in December, but this meeting

was far more one-sided, with confident performances from the defensive line, fluidity and imagination in the centre and a near faultless showing from the attackers.

Goal shooter Fran Ireland and goal attack Sophia Sahin were on outstanding form, showing alertness to create scoring opportunities, ensuring York a narrow ascendancy after the first quarter.

>> Continued on Page 18

Vanbrugh strong against Derwent

In a convincing performance, Vanbrugh dominated Derwent on Sunday in college basketball to continue their impressive recent form and boost Vanbrugh's standing in the overall inter-college league table.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL >> P19

The reasons behind campus rivalries

Matthew Jeynes examines the debate on Varsity or Roses, looking at why these rivalries come about, why they mean so much to the participants and supporters, and whether the rivalries are actually good for the University.

MATTHEW JEYNES >> P17



Alternative AU sports clubs

For anyone who wants to take up a sport that strays further from the norm than running around a field, Nouse has compiled a guide to some sports that may have been overlooked in Fresher's Week.

TRY SOMETHING NEW >> P18

Facilities hinder top flight sports

Criss Noice looks at the University facility issues that limit the level of coaching and talent available to our sports teams, as well as examining the stereotypes associated with sport in York for prospective students.

CRISS NOICE >> P17

