

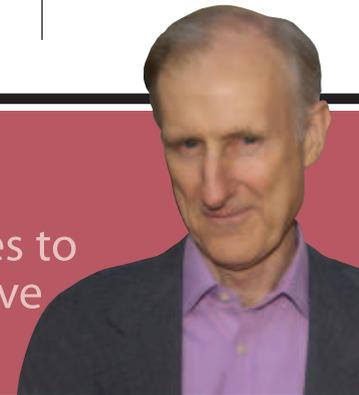


Foreign Beggars

'Multicultural England? My ass.'
MC Metropolis on racism,
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James Cromwell

'Making *Babe* opened my eyes to
the intelligence and inquisitive
personalities of pigs' M4-5



YUSU accused of sexism

● Student and staff anger over 'sexist' goodie bags ● Matt Burton and Sam Bayley defend actions

By Anjli Raval
DEPUTY EDITOR

YUSU HAS BEEN accused of sexism by national groups, academic and administrative staff and students during a controversy regarding the gender-specific "goodie bags" that were distributed at Freshers' Fair.

The bags, which were sourced from Complimentary Sampling by Sam Bayley, Societies and Communications Officer, and Matt Burton, Services and Finance Officer, were colour coded blue and pink and read 'Welcome from your Students' Union'. The blue bags contained a sample copy of FHM (For Him Magazine), a chocolate bar and a full-size tin of baked beans. The pink bags contained cellulite cream, female deoderant, and a half-size tin of baked beans. YUSU have claimed that the bags had no gender connotations.

YUSU has received over 40 letters and emails of complaint about the bags. In an email leaked to *Nouse*, the director of OBJECT, which acts as an advisor to Amnesty International UK, works with NUS and is a member of the Women's National Commission, criticised YUSU's actions. Dr Sasha Rakoff said: "We feel YUSU's decision to promote porno-



Sam Bayley, YUSU Societies and Communications Officer, and Matt Burton, YUSU Services and Finance Officer

graphic and deeply contemptuous material to male students reflects very poorly on the University, is totally counter to any equality commitments and plays its part in contributing to an environment where women - who can be as young as 17 - are, and feel, less safe and

welcome than they have every right to expect."

Members of University staff have also spoken out against the bags. In an email to *Nouse*, the University's Equal Opportunities Officer, Yvie Holder, said, "the contents of the bags will have been inappropriate on cul-

tural, religious and gender grounds and quite possibly offensive to some groups in the University community. We want the first impression of the University to be a welcoming one, not something that makes some students feel uneasy or offends them."

In an email to Amy

Burge, former Women's Officer, Meghan Reid from the Centre for Women's Studies said: "This is absolutely ridiculous. This action seriously undermines the work the University and YUSU do to maintain a high reputation and support our students regardless of gender

or sexual identity".

The initial proposal by Bayley and Burton to distribute the bags was met with vocal opposition from several officers of the Students' Union. The matter was taken to the weekly Union Executive meeting, on which all Union officers sit. Following a heated debate, the motion passed narrowly by seven votes to five, with no abstentions.

Speaking during the meeting, Laura Payne, a YUSU Women's Officer said: "In our opinion, some of the items in the bags, such as the copy of FHM and the cellulite cream, are designed to enforce gender stereotypes; they could potentially be detrimental to students' welfare and the culture of equality we have here at the University."

Matt Burton and Sam Bayley upheld that there was no problem with the bags. Burton said: "Why do we need to baby people? It's political correctness gone mad. There are a lot of people that would get a lot of pleasure out of these magazines." FHM has recently been reprimanded for publishing topless photos of a 14-year-old girl without her consent.

The opposition by the Women's Officers was strongly supported by

>> NEWS P2

Two York students sexually assaulted

Two female University of York students have been sexually assaulted in separate incidents since the beginning of term. In the first incident, the victim and a friend were followed by a man down Fulford Road and attacked.

NEWS >> P3

Students taken to hospital from Club D

Ambulances were called to Club D amidst fears of a repeat of last year's drink-spiking spree. At least four students went to hospital during the event or shortly after. The incident has sparked a debate over the effects of alcohol on campus.

NEWS >> P4-5



Prince of Persia: Iran and the media

The Middle East is often maligned in the media, but what is life actually like for Iranian citizens? *Nouse* sends a reporter to find out the truth. He discovers a region curiously at odds with the public's perceptions

MUSE >> M14

York launch BUSA rugby campaign

York's Rugby Union team defeated Huddersfield to get their BUSA campaign off to a victorious start for the first time in three years. The match was hard fought, with York forced to defend their lead right until the final whistle.

SPORT >> P20

SU officers accused of sexism over freshers' bag distribution

<< CONTINUED from front

Academic and Welfare Officer, Grace Fletcher-Hall and ex-Women's Officer, Amy Burge who also sat in on discussions at the open meeting on October 10. Burge spoke out against the bags, saying "they are not only sexist to women; they also assume that all male students are interested in viewing sexually explicit photographs of women, and completely ignore gay men."

Matthew Pallas, LGBT Officer said he found FHM to be "degrading to women" and thought the bags were "heteronormative, subconsciously sending out the message that everyone is straight."

Leaked emails obtained by Nouse have shown continued disquiet within YUSU since the motion was passed. Sam Bayley sent out emails reminding all officers "that they are required by the Union Code (and thus the constitution) to abide by and carry out decisions of the Executive Committee, and that officers must not campaign against the decisions of a committee once they have been voted upon."

To counter the distribution of bags at YUSU Fair, Amy Burge gave students the opportunity to swap their copies of FHM and cellulite cream for "sexism free" cakes. About 250 copies of FHM were swapped. During the fair,



TOM HOLE

The bags aimed at male students contained copies of FHM

freshers showed mixed reactions to the bags. One female student said: "What I find really offensive

is the implication that women eat less than men. I don't know many women who aren't capable of eat-

ing a full tin of beans and a chocolate bar, yet those items weren't included in our bags." One male student said of the controversy "some people need to be shipped off to the Third World. Then they'd have something worth complaining about."

Pallas will put forward a motion regarding the bags at a Union General Meeting on Tuesday October 23. The motion, which has been seconded by Environment and Ethics Officers, the Academic and Welfare Officer, and the Women's Officers, states that "any Union sabbatical, part-time officer or staff member who orders or receives products...to be distributed free to students during Freshers' Week or at any other freshers' welcome event must consult the Academic & Welfare Officer, Equality & Diversity Officers and Environment & Ethics Officers" to make sure that any products detrimental to the welfare of students will not be distributed.

"I was disappointed by FHM. Not by the sexist images, but the exclusion of the Ladies' Confessions section. It's the best bit, because it's clearly written by men. Real women don't say 'it's just too big' nearly that often"

COMMENT >> P10

Minibars removed from student rooms

MINI-BARS WERE removed from the bedrooms of Freshers being accommodated at Holiday Inn, Tadcaster Road for fear of further expenditure resulting from their stay there, which will already cost the University an estimated £30,000. According to Won Youn, JCRC Chair of Langwith College, minibars were removed from the hotel rooms of 47 new Langwith College residents, who were placed there as a result of the accommodation shortage. Managers of the Holiday Inn were unavailable for comment. One fresher said, "It was a strange way to start my university experience but we had lots of fun, and we weren't too bothered about the mini-bars."

SU chlamydia drive

ON MONDAY October 22, 15 students were tested for chlamydia in the Charles as part of a YUSU awareness drive. The campaign is being fronted by Academic and Welfare Officer Grace Fletcher-Hall and Women's Officer Laura Payne. Fletcher Hall said "1 in 10 students are infected with Chlamydia. It's vital that people get tested, because if they find out they have it, it's very easy to treat." Under the new testing system, labelled the "Take-away Service, test samples can be taken at home and returned to the Clinic. Testing kits can be collected from Fletcher Hall or can be sent through internal mail for discretion. The trial will run throughout October and, if successful, should be permanently available to all students.

100 Toffs and Gallery gold cards for YUSU

YUSU has obtained 100 gold cards for the Gallery and Toffs, which are to be distributed to select members of the Union's committees. The cards permit students to get into Gallery and Toffs for free with one guest. Matt Burton, Services and Finance Officer, has been actioned by the other Officers on the Executive committee to create a list of potential frontrunners out of other committees such as RAG, Student Action, the AU and Ents Tech. Concern was expressed by Executive officers who stated that it was difficult to distinguish which positions would qualify without offending some individuals.

Haleh Afshar takes House of Lords peerage

By Jennifer O'Mahony
DEPUTY EDITOR

PROFESSOR HALEH Afshar OBE, the Politics and Women's Studies academic, has been given a peerage.

Professor Afshar will take up a seat on the House of Lords cross-benches as a non-party political peer in recognition of her work. She is an advisor to the

Government on public policy relating to Muslim women and Islamic law and is the founder and Chair of the Muslim Women's Network.

Afshar was chosen as a 'People's Peer', an appointment for people who will bring distinction and expertise to the House of Lords. She said: "I was really very surprised and very honoured to be considered a 'People's Peer'. In fact, I was lost for words when I

was told. I shall certainly be fighting for equal opportunities for minorities and for women as I have always done."

Born in Iran, Professor Afshar is one of the most prolific Muslims in Britain today. She was an undergraduate at the University of York in the 1960s, became a committed Marxist during the Iranian revolution and describes Feminism as "my most important and constant commit-

ment." Professor Afshar has served on the British Council and the United Nations Association of which she is Honorary President of International Services. She is also Visiting Professor of Islamic Law at the International Faculty of Comparative Law, University of Strasbourg.

In addition to her academic studies, she has written widely as a journalist on Muslim women and the 'War on Terror'.

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Nouse speaks to second year student, Fusion president and professional model Amy Browne about drug abuse, travelling around the world, and how they make her look like that.

MUSE >> 10-11

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Two York students sexually assaulted

By Raf Sanchez
NEWS EDITOR

TWO FEMALE University of York students have been sexually assaulted since the start of term.

The first attack took place around 2 am on October 12 when the victim, who has asked to remain anonymous, and a friend were walking home along Fulford Road on the way back from the Gallery nightclub. The friend, Becca Adams, noticed a man walking behind them.

She said: "I noticed the guy walking on his own and I turned to my friend and I said, 'Let's cross the road.' We crossed but I made sure to keep him in my eye line. He was still walking on the other side of the road so I was like, 'It's fine, I'm just being paranoid.' I really noticed him and had taken in his details." The victim, however, was unaware of the man walking behind them.

The man did not follow them immediately across the road and continued to walk on the other side. Adams said: "He must have been watching me watching him. The point that I stopped looking and started getting involved in conversation, that's when he must have crossed. He must have noticed that I relaxed and stopped looking at him"

The two students continued to walk towards Fulford when the man closed

in behind them and put his hand up the victim's skirt. The victim said: "All of a sudden I felt a cold hand go up my skirt. I turned out and elbowed him in the chest and shouted 'What the f**k are you doing?'" The two students turned to see that the assailant had his trousers open, with penis exposed.

"What had happened didn't really sink in till I had got home and given my statement. I've been crying for the past week. I feel violated"

The assailant stepped back from the victim, startled by her reaction, and started to apologise stutteringly. Adams said: "Her reaction was so quick and so fierce. He said 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry,' and stepped back. He was so cowardly."

The victim said: "I shouted, 'What the hell are you still doing here?' I was more angry than upset at that point. My feeling changed later."

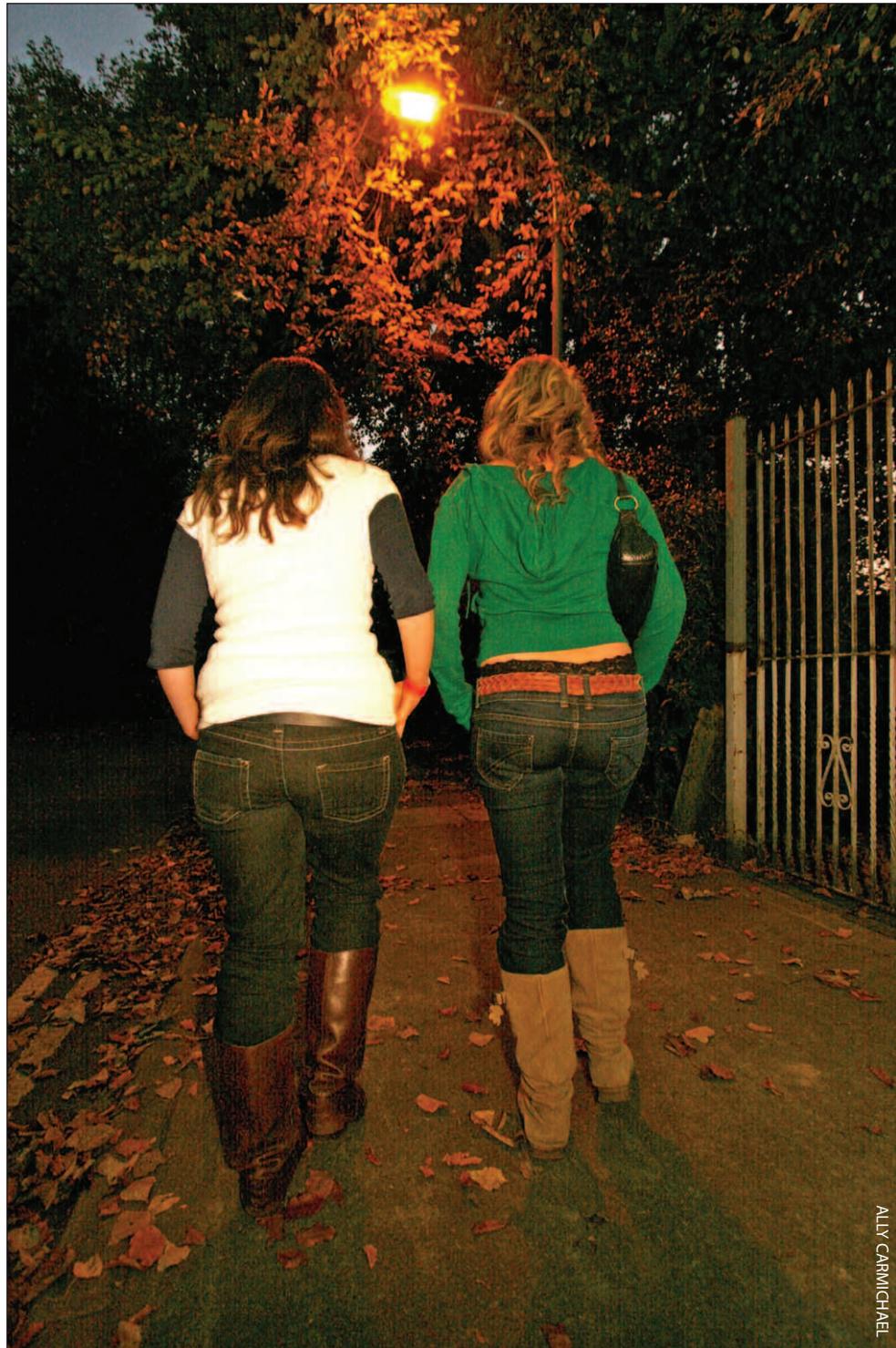
The assailant buttoned his trousers and turned and started to walk back up Fulford Road towards the city. The two students walked down Fulford Road to Fulford Police Station where they reported the attack. The assailant is described as around five foot ten and with a wide face with light brown hair. Adams said that he had very distinctive eyes. She said:

"They were very round. I think that's what I noticed about him - he just looked strange. His eyes were bulbous, no particular colour that I can remember."

Speaking about her feelings since the attack, the victim said: "It wasn't that big a deal at the time. But then when we got to the police station and Becca was like 'Oh my God, we just got attacked,' I started to think 'Yeah, we did.' It didn't really sink in what happened until I got home and had given my statement. I've been crying for the past week. I felt very violated."

The second attack occurred at around 1pm on October 18 on Nicholas Street. The assailant grabbed at the victim's crotch before she shoved him away. Speaking after the attack she said: "There was no one else about and I think he just decided to take a chance. I shouted after him but he just sauntered off. It really unsettled me; I live just around the corner and it seems I can't even pop to the corner shop in the middle of the day, let alone think about walking home alone at night." She described the assailant as being about five foot eight with a slim build and narrow shoulders. She said he looked about 17 or 18 years old.

North Yorkshire Police have urged students to be vigilant at night and have asked anyone with information to call 01904 618 990.



The victim was walking with a friend on Fulford Road coming back from town when she was followed and attacked. Police have made an appeal for information

Students injured in Tang Hall knife robberies

By Raf Sanchez
NEWS EDITOR

TWO UNIVERSITY of York students were injured in separate knife robberies in Tang Hall in the early hours of Wednesday, October 10. Police believe the two robberies may be linked.

The first robbery occurred at around 12.30am on Arthur Street. Second year student and URY presenter Rob Watts was walking home when two men in balaclavas jumped out from behind a car. One was carrying a knife.

Watts said: "One of them grabbed me and started going through my pockets and the other one said 'Give us your wallet and your keys.' I said 'Sod off, I haven't got anything for you.'" One of the attackers slashed Watts's hand with the knife.

Watts said the knife "looked like a kitchen knife to me, but my focus wasn't on the fact that I knew



A police artist's impression of the attacker on Fourth Avenue

the knife was there or what it looked like. My focus was on getting away from it."

After being cut, Watts handed over his wallet and keys and the attackers turned and ran off.

The second attack occurred at

around 3am on Fourth Avenue, when a group of Derwent JCRC members were walking back from Toffs. A single attacker came out from Carter Avenue behind the group. He was wearing a balaclava and holding a knife.

Third Year student Moe Hashim said: "We were walking along Fourth Avenue and we heard this scream from behind us. I was in the back of the group and I turned around and there was a guy in a balaclava with a really big knife."

"The knife looked like a cutlass - it had a golden handle and was curved at the top. I remember the weapon better than anything. My first thought was that it looked like a toy from the Disney store. I thought he had picked it up from a student."

"I put my hand out and grabbed at the blade and as I did he slashed my hand twice really quickly. It wasn't till I looked down that I realized I was bleeding."

As Hashim stepped back the attacker stabbed at him. "He stabbed the knife twice into my stomach. It left me with a bruise but didn't actually penetrate. It

"He stabbed the knife twice into my stomach. I lifted up my t-shirt to see if I was bleeding and by the time I looked up he was already running away."

didn't seem very sharp. I lifted up my t-shirt to see if I was bleeding and by the time I looked up he was already running away."

Hashim suffered a series of small cuts to his hand that formed a 'z' shape. The attempt to stab his stomach left him with bruises but failed to draw blood.

One of the other members of the group threw his wallet on the ground which the attacker grabbed. The attacker turned and ran down

Fourth Avenue, pulling his balaclava off as he went. Derwent JCRC Chair Jamie Tyler was able to get a look at the attacker's face as he ran away and was later able to help police produce an e-fit. Tyler said the resemblance of the e-fit to the attacker was "good to average."

Hashim said the attacker was white and looked like he was aged about 20 years old. He said the attacker was wearing a dark hoodie, Adidas tracksuit bottoms and white trainers.

Speaking about the attacks, a police spokesman said: "Due to the similarity in nature and the timing of the incidents, there is a strong possibility that they are linked."

Police have urged anyone who has any information on the identities of the attackers or was a witness to either of the attacks to call York CID on 0845 60 60 247.

Students are advised to be vigilant when walking home late at night, even in large groups, and to report any suspicious sightings.

Debate over alcohol sparked

CAMPUS DRINKING STATISTICS

81%	Students who drink twice a week or less
82%	Students who believe that drinking should not affect academic responsibilities
87%	Students who have never underachieved on a piece of work as a result of drinking
84%	Students who have never been hurt or injured as a result of drinking
94%	Students who have never been involved in property damage due to alcohol use
85%	Students who have never had an argument or fight as a result of alcohol use
63%	Students who keep track of the number of drinks they consume
71%	Students who stay safe by walking home with friends
83%	Students who drink only in environments where they feel safe

Source: The Social Norms Research Centre
www.socialnorms.co.uk

By Lily Eastwood
and Raf Sanchez

THE EVENTS OF Freshers' Week have sparked a heated debate amongst student representatives about the role of alcohol in campus life. Goodricke JCRC Chair Ben Wardle has called the levels of drinking on the YUSU-organised Viking Raid "obscene" and said that it undermines the responsible drinking message espoused by JCRCs and YUSU.

Wardle, who was a steward on the 1,700 person bar crawl, said: "There will always be a demand for alcoholic events and the solution is not to get rid of those but to get rid of the stigma of not drinking. I think the problem is not helped with things like YUSU Viking Raid. I organised a bar crawl with only six bars. Viking Raid is eight bars in a few hours. It is obscene. It is ridiculous."

Wardle said that he believed the decision to use eight bars was motivated by profit and that "encouraging fast-paced drinking for profit can only be described as wrong."

Wardle added that the message of responsible drinking was further undermined by the heavy alcohol use among union sabbatical officers. He said: "It does not promote responsible drinking if the managers of the union are blind drunk while stewarding."

Alcuin JCRC Chair Louis Wihl also expressed concerns over the levels of drinking on the Viking Raid but said he would not comment until he had had a chance to raise the issue with YUSU.



The YUSU-organised Viking Raid bar crawl visited eight bars, followed by a night club. Goodricke Chair Ben Wardle said the levels of drinking were "obscene"

YUSU Service and Finance Officer Matt Burton has refuted the allegation that the decision to use eight bars was motivated by profit. He said: "That is simply

not the case. If you look at the route you will see that bars have been paired up in order to combat the queuing issues." Burton admitted that the pairing system had

not been advertised but said he didn't believe students felt encouraged to attend all eight bars. President Anne Marie-Canning said: "No one [among the union sab-

Second year to stand in general election

By Sarah Foster
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A SECOND YEAR University of York Politics student has been selected as the Labour parliamentary candidate for the constituency of Skipton and Ripon.

Claire Hazelgrove, 19, originally from Northamptonshire, said she was "very surprised" after beating a much older opponent to secure the candidacy.

Hazelgrove faces an uphill fight in her constituency, as Skipton and Ripon is one of the few Conservative strongholds in the whole of Yorkshire and Humberside. In the 2005 General Election the Conservatives took more than 50% of the vote. Hazelgrove is optimistic about her chances, saying, "It is a Tory



York student Claire Hazelgrove

stronghold but I think we can make definite headway. If we get out there and talk to people in the

community, we can make definite progress. I'll be doing as much as I can because I want to get out there and talk to people"

Hazelgrove has worked with Sally Keeble, Labour MP for Northampton North for the past two years, both within her constituency and in her parliamentary offices.

It was this involvement in local politics, says Hazelgrove, which culminated in her name being added to a 'long-list' for candidacy selection, from which she was picked by the local Labour party to be one of their five short-listed candidates. When asked if she felt voters would take a 19 year old candidate seriously, she said: "I think they'll probably be surprised at first but hopefully see eventually that I can bring a fresh face and

fresh ideas to Parliament."

Hazelgrove's University career remains uncertain and she is planning to meet with Head of Politics Department, Dr. Matt Matravers, about her options. Hazelgrove is currently the head of the Politics Society.

On October 19, Hazelgrove attended a local party hustings, in which she was questioned by Labour party members living in the area. After answering questions on a range of topics, including the possibility of Turkey's inclusion in the EU to nuclear power, Hazelgrove was selected as candidate by a majority of party members.

Hazelgrove said she believed she was chosen for her "enthusiasm, awareness of key issues and the fresh face and fresh ideas that I could bring to local politics."

She is aware of her student connotations, saying she can "appeal to younger, perhaps more apathetic voters. The student and young people's vote is often neglected but I aiming to get as many younger people involved in this campaign as possible."

Hazelgrove said she was unworried about the prospect of being such a young member of parliament. When asked if she felt that parliamentarians would respect a 19 year old she said: "I think they will because a lot of MPs are saying that we need more young people and more women in politics."

In recent weeks, *Nouse* reported that Former YUSU President James Alexander has been selected as Labour candidate for the newly formed constituency of York Outer.

as students are hospitalised

batical officers] was incredibly drunk. Ben also drank as well. Some officers chose to drink, some didn't. Some went home early, some stayed. I think officers behaved responsibly and I don't think there was any issue last night."

YUSU Societies and Communications officer Sam Bayley said that Wardle was "exaggerating".

When asked whether the Viking Raid undermined the responsible drinking message put out by YUSU and JCRCs, Academic and Welfare officer Grace Fletcher-Hall said: "I would say there is obviously an encouragement to get drunk, I wouldn't say there is a pressure and I think the number of bars we include is definitely something to look at in the future."

Speaking earlier in the week, Fletcher-Hall said that her job would be "irrelevant" if students didn't drink so much.

"We have had students who've reportedly had their drinks spiked. We've had students who got so drunk that they've had to go to hospital. We've had a student who got so drunk that he fell in the river on the way home and of course we had a student who drowned this time last year. It's just really, really worrying."

"We need a much less alcohol-centred culture, it's a bit of a no-brainer - if people are going to drink so much bad things are going to happen. Obviously, people need to take individual responsibility but when there are so many opportunities during Freshers' Week to drink it's not surprising people end up ill or hurt."



Two ambulances were called to Derwent during the 'Slag and Drag' Club D. Paramedics refused to give the JCRC details of the incident

THE DRINKING DEBATE



Grace Fletcher-Hall, Academic & Welfare

"We need a much less alcohol-centred culture. It's a bit of a no-brainer - if people are going to drink so much, bad things are going to happen. Obviously, people need to take individual responsibility but when there are so many opportunities during Freshers' Week to drink,



Ben Wardle, Goodricke Chair

"There will always be a demand for alcoholic events and the solution is not to get rid of those but get rid of the stigma of not drinking. I think the problem is not helped with things like YUSU Viking Raid. I organised a bar crawl with only six bars. Viking Raid is eight bars in a few hours. It is obscene. It is ridiculous."



Anne-Marie Canning, YUSU President

"Ben is entitled to his opinion, but I disagree. What he says doesn't worry me because I know that we are acting very responsibly and taking steps forward all the time. I'm not worried because I think we have got a good plan in place with regards to our approach to responsible drinking and also inclusive events, events that don't involve drinking."

Two ambulances called amidst fears of Club D drink spiking repeat

By Lily Eastwood and Raf Sanchez

A NUMBER of students have been hospitalised after alcohol-related incidents at campus events. In the worst instance, as many as five students were taken to hospital during or soon after Derwent's 'Slag and Drag' Club D event, though the exact number has not been confirmed. Initial reports of drink spiking remain unsubstantiated.

Two ambulances were called to the event before 11pm by York Links, the student paramedics who provide first aid for campus events. A Derwent porter confirmed that at least two students had been taken from the event in the ambulances.

Two second years were taken to hospital shortly after the event. One was involved in an accident in which she fell while being carried on the shoulders of another student and suffered several serious cuts to her face. A second was taken after becoming seriously ill from excessive alcohol consumption.

Derwent Ents Rep Sian Thomas said the situation was unprecedented, saying, "I have been the RP [Responsible Person] for a lot of Club Ds and I've never had anyone taken to hospital, let alone four."

Reports that the students taken from the event had their drinks spiked remain unconfirmed, as blood test results are confidential and not released to JCRs or college staff. Last year drinks were spiked at three consecutive Club Ds.

Confusion over the number and identities of students hospitalised has arisen as a result of York Links' policy of keeping confiden-

tial the circumstances in which they call for ambulance support.

Derwent Welfare Rep Charlie Leyland said that the policy led to a dangerous breakdown in communication between emergency services and student welfare. She said: "It is a massive issue for welfare because it means that we don't know if there are drinks being spiked. All we know is that somebody has been sent home in an ambulance - we don't know when they came back, who they are, whether anybody is looking out for them and knows where they've been. They [the paramedics] don't seem to tell anybody."

In a statement, York Links' defended the organisation's policy saying, "The reason we don't give out names and circumstances of patients is that we must comply with the Data Protection Act. The only way we can issue names is if the person treated signs a form releasing that information."

The issue is due to be discussed in Senate next week.

The incidents at Club D have put Derwent under scrutiny. Welfare Rep Joe Pearce denied the JCRC encourages a binge drinking culture, saying, "We don't encourage people to do anything irresponsible."

While feedback from first year students was largely positive, there were reports of STYCs pressuring first years into heavy drinking. One first-year Derwent student said: "Everyone in this block knows that they caused problems. They made me down a drink because they held it up and I got so wasted after that."

Pearce confirmed that two STYCs have been formally cautioned by the JCRC for inappropriate behaviour.

SU loses hundreds of pounds' worth of merchandise in series of burglaries from the Student Centre this month

By Anjl Raval
DEPUTY EDITOR

HUNDREDS OF POUNDS' worth of YUSU merchandise has been stolen in a series of burglaries from the Student Centre. The recent thefts have led to an increase in preventative security measures deployed in the building.

YUSU Services and Finance Officer informed Nouse of the recent spate of robberies. He said: "A newly purchased banner was stolen from outside the Student Centre. It was suspended from the top of the building on rope and was pulled down in the middle of the night", at the end of Freshers'

Week. The banner had cost YUSU £200. YUSU President Anne-Marie Canning has declared an amnesty over the issue, asking the thief to return the banner in return for no action being taken against them by the Union.

In addition, approximately 30 Viking Raid t-shirts were stolen from various locations around campus including the Student Centre and the Physics building over the course of Freshers' week. The stolen t-shirts have cost the Union around £225 in potential lost revenue.

Burton said: "In future, we are going to be far more vigilant over where we store these t-shirts, who has access, and in general are hav-



A YUSU banner, worth around £200, was stolen from the Student Centre during Freshers' Week. YUSU have declared an amnesty for its return.

ing an office security audit to improve security measures and monitor access to the building". The YUSU owned YOUR:SHOP franchise has also been affected by robbery.

A number of bottles of spirits worth approximately £60 were taken in the middle of the day. Weaknesses in security on campus and in University buildings has been an ongoing issue in the last year.

In November, 2006 there was a spate of burglaries in Goodricke, Halifax and James. In one incident a female Goodricke student returned to her room to find a man going through her belongings. A man was later arrested in Halifax.

YUSU members speak out against 'aggressive' CU recruitment tactics

By Jonathan Fransman
and Henry Foy

JCRC CHAIRS AND YUSU sabbatical officers spoke out in a recent Senate meeting against the "aggressive" recruitment tactics employed by the Christian Union (CU) to recruit new members during Freshers' Week.

Many of those present felt that CU representatives not only broke University regulations but acted inappropriately by attempting to gain access to housing blocks to distribute booklets giving advice on settling in and advocating the CU and its causes.

Matt Burton, YUSU Services and Finance Officer, stated that this posed a "serious security issue" and could be even be "deemed as trespassing".

Security guidelines state that non-YUSU-affiliated societies require prior permission from the college provosts when entering residential blocks.

YUSU, who are keen to be considered non-denominational, felt that the CU's recruitment tactics may have led freshers to believe that the literature was produced and distributed directly on behalf of the Students' Union.

Jamie Tyler, Derwent JCRC Chair, said that the Derwent branch of the CU



The CU has been accused of 'aggressive' recruitment tactics for approaching freshers with religious literature

entered Derwent blocks to distribute material in advance of the freshers' arrival without seeking permission to do so.

He expressed concern that this might have given freshers the "wrong impression" that the college was "endorsing" the religion.

Ben Wardle, Goodricke JCRC Chair, described the

CU's approach in Goodricke as "intimidating".

Marco McAllister, Overseas Student Association President, told Senate that he was approached by CU members who wished to take part in an introductory session for foreign students.

McAllister claims that, despite being explicitly told

they were forbidden from taking part, CU members attended the meeting in an evangelical capacity and, when challenged by two students from other faiths, allegedly invited them to become Christians.

Anne-Marie Canning, YUSU President, told Senate that problems with the CU's recruitment strategy has

been a "long running issue" that had been going on "for years and years".

However, she was keen to stress the good relationship between YUSU and the CU, saying that their reasonable outlook would make it relatively easy to find a solution to the problem.

Daniel Gladwell, Evangelism Secretary for the

CU, defended the booklets, saying that "Apart from the fact that it's from a Christian group, I don't think there's anything in there that could be construed as offensive. I mean, some people get offended at just about anything, but the vast majority of people would find none of what's in there offensive."

However, Ed Veale, CU Male President, apologised for the transgressions, saying: "We don't want to go against University regulations, I guess we've been lax in some of the colleges with ticking the boxes to make sure what we're doing is fine."

Friction between university CUs and their students' unions has been an issue at several institutions in the UK.

Late last year the Exeter Christian Union attempted to sue the University and Students' Guild after being temporarily removed from the list of University-affiliated societies.

The society was removed due to its practice of requiring committee members and speakers in the union to sign a declaration of faith which the Students' Guild felt was in breach of equal opportunities policy.

Both Canning and Veale said that, despite their concerns, they hoped relations between the CU and YUSU would never escalate to that level in York.

SU clash with Ftr over ticket cuts

By Jennifer O'Mahony
DEPUTY EDITOR

YUSU CAMPAIGNS Officers are set to clash with the First bus company after the Ftr ten journey ticket was discontinued at the start of term.

Students bought the £11 discount ticket to avoid the flat rate of £1.50 single and £2.50 return fares. The replacement passes of £99 a term and £269 for a full academic year are seen as inadequate. It is thought the move by First is part of an attempt to standardise pricing across the country, and that the ten journey ticket has been phased out as a result.

At a meeting of the Union Senate it was decided that a petition would be the first step in trying to lower prices for students.

Campaigns Officer Chris Swann said: "We will petition them directly at HQ, and petitions will appear across colleges and hopefully in town." If this were to prove unsuccessful, direct action would be taken and sanctioned by YUSU. Swann said: "I'd support a boycott, but what's unfortunate is that some second and third years have to take the bus every day. A boycott might not be in their best interest."

Freshers were thought to be buying the higher priced term and yearly passes without realising that York town centre was just 25 minutes away on foot, and were therefore spending needlessly large sums of money on a service they would not always require.

The latest development in the ongoing dispute between First and its cus-



Ftr ten journey tickets can no longer be used on buses

tomers began at the start of this term, when Your: Shop displayed signs telling students that the popular discount pass was no longer available.

The weekly and monthly passes that First also offers are not as popular because the majority of campus residents, who are the primary

customers at Your: Shop, do not need to use the bus daily. The Ftr is the only bus into town from campus and therefore has a monopoly on student customers. Students seem to be frustrated with the cost of the bus, together with faulty barcode scanning equipment, leaving many with fines for unpaid fares.

Student on bridge in security incident

By Ben Glover
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

SECURITY FEARS were raised in the early hours of the morning on Saturday October 14, when a male third-year student climbed on top of the Goodricke and Vanbrugh Bridge and refused to come down.

The man refused to be coaxed down by security staff or fellow students, and repeatedly shouted abuse at passers by. He was heard to say to one mature student: "How old are you mate? I bet that your mum is dead. You shouldn't be here". Eventually, the student was dragged down by two passers by. It is unclear why he decided to climb on top of the bridge.

The first man, a sig-

naller in the army, put his foot on the rail, stood up and grabbed the student by his shirt, while another man, a York student, grabbed his leg and pulled him down.

The student then fell and was caught by the second man and restrained after a struggle, before being handed over to security staff. The soldier later said: "I don't know why he was up there, but it was clear he wouldn't have been able to get out of the lake if he had of fallen in. I just wanted to get home, the security just wanted to get home but we couldn't have left the obviously disturbed young lad up there, so me and my mate decided to sort it out."

The student has been reported to his tutors and now faces disciplinary procedures.

YUSU in continued row over ethics

By Raf Sanchez
NEWS EDITOR

YUSU SERVICE and Finance Officer Matt Burton has been forced to withdraw a UGM motion that, if passed, could make the sourcing of next year's Viking Raid t-shirts exempt from current ethical merchandise regulations. The controversial motion triggered a furious row with YUSU Environment and Ethics Officers and has led to a number of leaks from within the Union. Two separate sources within YUSU have alleged that the first line of an original draft of the motion read "students have a price on ethics".

The motion, which allegedly described the policy change as a "common sense" approach to ethical merchandise, was withdrawn hours before the UGM final deadline submission following heated last minute talks between Burton and YUSU Environment and Ethics Officer Tom Langley. Sources close to Langley have reported that he considered resignation if the motion was not withdrawn.

The motion noted that the route for the Viking Raid and the design of the t-shirts was difficult to finalise well in advance of the event. It proposed that the shirts' supplier should be able to guarantee a production turn around of one week. If this one week criteria could not be met by an ethically-sourc-

ing company the motion would allow union officers to source from a company without ethical credentials.

The motion was seconded by YUSU Ents Officer Rory Shanks and former Societies and Communications Officer Colin Hindson.

Burton said the purpose of the motion was to reduce YUSU's dependence on the People & Planet Ethical Merchandise guide, a list of suppliers which the current motion mandates the union to source from.

He said: "At the moment we are linked to a webpage that can be changed daily, it could be reduced down to one supplier at whim of the society. It leaves the union vulnerable in that there isn't a pre-defined list and it isn't down to its own officers to decide."

A second source within YUSU emailed *Nouse* anonymously claiming that the aim of the motion was to "revoke the old motion, making the ethical merchandise policy entirely non-binding. The buyers of merchandise had to 'consult' with Environment and Ethics officers, not be bound by a list of approved suppliers."

Burton admitted that no attempt had been made to contact either of the Environment and Ethics Officers over the summer in order to consult them on the proposed policy shift.

Speaking in Senate on Wednesday, before the motion was withdrawn,



York students at Viking Raid III, which took place in week 2 this term. The motion could have exempted Viking Raid shirts from ethical sourcing regulations

Langley stressed that the Environmental and Ethics officers should be consulted on all policy concerning ethical merchandise. He said: "If we give you advice, its part of union policy. We must be listened to or we'll be completely undermined." The speech, widely seen as thinly-veiled criticism of the Service and Finance officer's handling of the situation, came shortly after Burton announced that he was intending to submit the new motion.

Following the motion's withdrawal Langley and fellow Environmental and Ethics officer Tom Williams released a statement saying, "We are pleased that the motion has been withdrawn, although we are bemused that it was submitted in the first place. We are looking forward to working with the other officers of the Union to writing a motion which encompasses the spirit of the current motion's policy and gives increased functionality to the union."

People & Planet Chair Kate Evans said she was relieved the motion had been withdrawn. She rejected claims that students put a price on ethics, saying, "It is certainly not a healthy philosophy, and I suspect that the reason they are arguing this is because a successful ethical merchandise motion would involve a bit of hard work. Students have voted for this motion, and therefore it's the job of the sabbatical officers to make it work."

Friends attend the funeral of drowned student Rob Davies

By Anjli Raval
DEPUTY EDITOR

OVER 40 UNIVERSITY of York students and staff members attended the funeral of third year Chemistry student Robert Davies who died after going missing on a night out with friends. Davies' body was found on October 1 in the River Ouse after a week long search by police and emergency services.

The University organised a coach to take those wishing to pay respects at the service on Monday, October 15. The funeral was held in Davies' hometown of Bury, just north of Manchester.

Davies' father, Tony Davies said: "Rob was a son who any parent would have been proud to have."

Head of Chemistry, Dr. Paul Walton who spoke at the service said: "Telling Rob's year about the tragic events was the hardest thing I have had to do in the 15 years I



The image of Robert Davies used during the police search for him

have been at York".

Davies was a skilled musician whose parents had recently bought him a piano as an early 21st birthday present. Music played at the service including a piano piece by

Davies' favourite composer, Chopin, and the song "Whatever" by Oasis.

Davies' sister, Helen, spoke of the last time she saw her brother. She said: "He came over and gave me a hug and said have a good time at uni. I didn't know how precious that time was." Helen had only just begun her first year at the University of Lancaster when her brother went missing. She returned to university soon after the body was discovered.

Davies was a popular figure on campus. A Facebook group named 'Find Rob Davies', which was originally set up to co-ordinate student effort to assist police with the search for the lost student, has now been turned into a memorial site with hundreds of messages of sympathy and support.

The Chemistry Department has initiated plans for a memorial for Davies, likely to include a commemorative plaque and a bench near the department's base.

University may order fingerprinting in exams

By Anjli Raval
DEPUTY EDITOR

UNIVERSITY administrators are considering using fingerprint recognition as a means of deterring students from cheating in exams. The proposal comes in response to the recent arrest of two students for attempted fraud in an Economics exam.

The idea was first suggested at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Assessment and proposed as a more rigorous alternative to the current system of identity cards used in University exams. The idea originated when a number of committee members visited local schools where the Digital Recognition fingerprinting system was being used.

Thumbprint scanners were used to let children borrow and return books without them having to use cards or money. YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer

Grace Fletcher-Hall, who sits as a student representative on the committee said: "It's the only idea at the moment, and both I and the GSA representative at the meeting raised the point that the initial data collection might well prove unpopular with students. It is likely to be quite expensive."

A spokesperson for Student Administrative Services said: "These ideas are not necessarily where we're going we're just looking at a whole range of technologies to address the problem. We don't want the students to think that those students were caught and that was just a fluke."

Two students, Qiu Shi Zhang, 23, and Elnar Askerov, 22, were arrested on May 11 during an Economics exam for separate but similar attempts to defraud the University by having someone else sit their exams. Both students were expelled for their actions. Askerov is due to appear in court on November 12 charged with fraud.

Film, Theatre and Television set to take centre stage on campus

By Will Tate and
Katy Dennis-Smith

FACILITIES FOR the new University of York Department for Theatre, Film and Television have been hailed as a “ground-breaking and exciting” addition to the University.

The new department has opened this year in its temporary home in the Genesis 6 development of the Science Park.

Professor Richard Woolley, the first head of the department, resigned shortly after its creation for personal reasons.

The Department has been funded by a donation from University of York Chancellor and former Director-General of the BBC Greg Dyke.

The donation was from the severance-pay package that he received from the BBC upon his forced resignation following the Hutton Enquiry of 2003-4.

“The Department will encourage innovation, creativity and the highest level of technical expertise amongst its students,” said Dyke.

The Department is currently only running post-graduate courses, however it will begin to take on undergraduate students from October 2008.



State-of-the-art technology in the new Department of Film, Theatre and Television based in the Genesis 6 development of the Science Park

Facilities include a screening theatre, a post-production lab and the Dixon studio, but will soon boast a new theatre in Derwent College, an audio suite and state-of-the-art blue screen technology.

Phase one of the Heslington East development will see the facility move into a permanent resi-

dence on the new campus. The Heslington East site will contain editing suites, new studios and industry standard software, the number of students in the Department projected at 450.

The Department, which has links with the Department of English and Related Literature, plans to teach courses that cover

writing and direction, along with performance ranging from ancient Greek to contemporary theatre.

A University spokesman said that the new department “aims to provide a modern degree that will provide valuable insight and knowledge into the media industry. Students will also have the invaluable opportu-

nity to use production and post-production technology, using equipment which will rival that of most professional industries”.

The Department will also offer master-classes run by professionals such as Penelope Wilton, a theatre and television actress, and Sam West, actor and theatre director. It is thought that

this will allow students access to first-hand experience and knowledge.

“The introduction of such a modern and technological degree will surely help the University shed its '1960s' image and will open up many new opportunities for aspiring actors, producers and directors,” said a spokesperson.

New clubs and bars to be built at Barbican

By Nicky Woolf
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

BUILDING WORK on a new club, bar and restaurant development at the Barbican centre in Fishergate, just minutes from the University of York campus, is due to begin on December 4.

The plans, which are thought likely to please students, have been met with opposition from local residents. Concerns have been expressed that the development will constitute a ‘superclub’, which may have a detrimental effect on the area.

Dave Taylor, the Green Party Councillor for Fishergate ward, said: “Certainly the potential is there because the licences have been afforded to Absolute Leisure by the council. They’ve got every

licence they could wish to open a very large drinking den until the early hours of the morning.”

Absolute Leisure, the club and bar operator that also runs the Floating Nightclub in Gateshead in Newcastle, deny allegations from local residents’ group Save Our Barbican that the development will constitute a ‘superclub’.

However, a spokesman for Absolute Leisure said that the facility will include “a multifunctional venue which will have a number of bars and restaurants as well as a live music venue which can also be used for club nights.”

Absolute Leisure, who run several clubs and venues across the north-east of England, say that the venue will “be used for seminars, conferences and dances as well as for smaller concerts



Building work on new club complex, which will be called ‘Octopussy’, is due to start on December 4

and local events” and that they “intend to offer food, drink and a meeting place during the day and late into the night.”

Their stated aim, they say, is to “bring in more entertainment” and “create a venue with activities to suit

people of all ages.”

Absolute Leisure, a student-oriented club night company based in London and Newcastle and not affiliated to Absolute Leisure, has been brought in to plan the student club night.

Missy Christey and

Hannah Martin, third-year students, are working with Absolute Leisure to plan the student nights at the Barbican centre.

“The club night is going to happen once a week for students,” said Christey. “Provisionally they’re saying a capacity of 3,000 for the main room, and there’s going to be a VIP area upstairs as well.”

“Because of the very big capacity, we’re not actually going to aim to have that many people in, so there will be things like jacuzzis and a bouncy castle and those types of things to fill it up,” said Christey.

Absolute Leisure, working with the Barbican Venture York Ltd trust, who bought the site from the local council, are investing £2.5 million in refurbishing the complex, which was originally built to house swim-

ming pools and a concert hall.

However, local residents have expressed anger about the fact that their views on the development were not consulted by the council prior to permission for the project being given.

Save Our Barbican, a local pressure group founded by Dr. John Issitt, the provost of Langwith College, have expressed their displeasure with the way the council has handled the bid, accusing them of “spin and truth-twisting” and “breath-taking arrogance”.

“The thing that makes York’s student nights great is that you see everyone you know. Do we need a new, less familiar venue?”

COMMENT >> P12

Liberation fears as date for NUS referendum draws near

By Anjli Raval
 DEPUTY EDITOR

THE STUDENTS' union is set to hold a referendum on whether it should retain its membership of the NUS in Week 6. YUSU Liberation officers have spoken out in recent weeks about the effects that disaffiliation could have on their campaigns.

The motion to hold a referendum, which was put forward by Louis Wihl, JCRC Chair of Alcuin College, was voted for almost unanimously by YUSU Officers and JCRC Chairs in a University Senate meeting in May. Wihl was keen to stress that he was in favour of the NUS and that the aim of the referendum was, in his view, to "promote the NUS and show everyone why it's a good thing".

YUSU officers have expressed mixed views with regards to disaffiliation. Those promoting liberation campaigns such as LGBT, Racial Equality and Women's Officers hold strong views against disaffiliation.

LGBT Officer, Matthew Pallas said: "Being part of a national body means we are connected to debates and ideas that take place on a much larger scale than just one Students' Union alone. Most university LGBT groups only became trans-inclusive after the NUS changed its LGB campaign to an LGBT campaign in 2005. The arguments about trans inclusion were played out and resolved on a national level, in a way that would be difficult to replicate locally in hundreds of students' unions around the country".

Michael Batula, Racial Equality Officer stated: "Disaffiliation, would be like losing the main body of what my position stands for. Racial equality can only be achieved from the grassroots upwards but that has to be facilitated from the people at the top. I use



The NUS organised an anti-top up fees march, attended by York students, in November 2006

my position and membership as part of the NUS to make sure that this happens. My position and moral obligations would be completely undermined if I was not part of the group that lobbies government about these issues."

The referendum, titled "Should the University of York's Students' Union maintain its affiliation with the NUS?", needs at least 650 votes to be cast to reach quoracy, meaning 6.75% of the student population have to vote in order for a decision to be made.

Anne-Marie Canning, YUSU President, will co-ordinate the referendum with Matt Burton, Services and Finance Officer, standing as the Returning Officer.

Campaigns for and against affiliation with the NUS will be spearheaded by two separate Union officers who are yet to be decided.

Services and Finance Officer Matt Burton highlighted an opposing point, saying that even though the University pays £12,000 per year less than other larger institutions such as the Universities of Manchester and Leeds, "they can pay that much without blinking, whereas we have much more trouble finding that amount of money". The NUS affiliation fee that York pays has just decreased from £40,000 to £36,000, but questions are still being asked as to whether this is value for money.

A schedule of events will take

place throughout Week 6, with Union funds being used to promote the events and encourage students to vote. The week will begin with an NUS affiliation panel debate on November 12. The rest of the week will see Pro- and Anti-NUS speakers, together with a talk by John Randal, a past YUSU and NUS President. Students will have the opportunity to vote between midday on November 13 and midday November 16 at www.yusu.org. Results will be published on the YUSU website by November 16.

Talking point: the case for and against NUS disaffiliation

COMMENT >> P10-11

THE NUS AT YORK

Environment and Ethics

The NUS Environment and Ethics Committee provides valuable advice and research to officers, as well as facilitating the exchange of ideas between YUSU and E&E counterparts at other unions, so that environmental issues effecting students can be addressed at a national as well as a local level.

Services and Finance

YUSU taps into the NUS support network for legal advice on the range of legal issues it faces throughout the year. Without the NUS, YUSU may face solicitors' bills.

Liberation Movements : LGBT, Racial Equality and Women's

NUS facilitates liberation campaigns on a far larger scale than could be achieved by individual unions. Solidarity among unions around the country maximises the impact of campaigns. The NUS holds considerable sway as a lobby group, representing student and Union interests at a national level.

Welfare

NUS provides students with a national voice in campaigns and in negotiations with ministers and businesses. Lobbying on issues such as top-up fees is best undertaken by a national organisation representing a large number of students; something individual unions would be unable to do.

Training

NUS training courses equip union officers with the skills and resources needed to provide training within their own unions. Disaffiliation would mean looking toward costly private companies which do not focus on students.

WEB-CANNING

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

YUSU Office Cam Wed Oct 17 11:58:50 2007



Realising that he is not going to get away with the YUSU Fair goodie

bag disaster, Sam Bayley has decided to go into hiding and disguise

himself as an oversized koala bear for the foreseeable future.

Grants, women's rights and top-up fees: a brief history of NUS activism

By Anjli Raval
 DEPUTY EDITOR

Since the inception of the student movement in 1922, students have campaigned for issues affecting them.

The early 1960s saw the NUS developing its capacity as an educational pressure group during a period of growth and development in higher education. The NUS moved from localized actions and campaigns onto national demonstrations, focusing on matters such as students' union autonomy

and grants for students from poorer families.

1976 saw the eradication of student fees, and the 1980s saw a change in student demographics, with more women encouraged to pursue higher education degrees.

Up until the 1990s, the NUS fought continuously for funding for polytechnics and colleges, securing £40 million on two separate occasions. The NUS attracted the attention of certain Conservative MPs who were looking to end state funding of students' unions; howev-

er it was not until after the 1992 general election that the Government eventually brought in primary legislation under the Education Act 1994.

Original aims consisted of splitting up students' union services between those that could be publicly funded and those that could be funded by voluntary contributions from students. It was effective lobbying by the NUS that ensured the survival of students' unions as we have them today.

The end of the 1990s became dominated by top-

up fees, with 40,000 students marching in 14 cities around England against plans to introduce tuition fees in 1997.

Significant measures were taken to prevent universities charging top-up fees and NUS called for a one day shut-down of higher education, followed by a referendum on the issue. Further protests took place in 2003, with the 'stop fees now' campaign bringing over 30,000 to London. In November 2006, hundreds of York students joined an NUS protest against fees.



Bags of fun for boys and girls

Everybody loves a freebie, says conventional wisdom. Organising the Freshers' Fair, YUSU officers must have reasoned along these lines when they accepted the offer of 3,000 promotional bags from a marketing firm. However, in a neat testament to the unfortunate truth that you can't always keep everyone happy, the branding and contents of the bags caused internal rifts when they arrived, which quickly spread to the rest of the student body.

The objections came in two flavours. The first took issue with the way in which the bags were divided – colour coded pink and blue – to cater supposedly for male and female preferences. The very fact of this division is a controversial piece of sexual politics: the idea that the sexes can be so neatly divided in their tastes is, on a strict understanding of equality, an affront to the idea that men and women should be treated equally.

There is a reasonable response to this line, and it goes like this: although the colour-coding might be crass, it's reasonable to think there might be some things that are more desirable or useful to men than women, or vice versa. To say this isn't necessarily to posit an inequality, but simply to assert a difference. Cellulite cream, featured in the pink bags, is marketed to women. The magazine FHM, found in the blue, is marketed to men.

What is less easy to defend is the content of the bags themselves. Cellulite cream is a product from a lucrative industry which thrives on certain assumptions about female beauty. Whatever you might think about the cosmetics trade, marketing it at new students, not all of whom necessarily have a positive view of their bodies, is blatantly irresponsible.

It is also true that FHM promotes a male culture driven by machismo, actively identifies heterosexuality as the only acceptable lifestyle choice, and is often accused of objectifying women. Furthermore, it isn't just offensive to one sex: plenty of men resent the signals it sends out about male culture.

The issue is not one of restriction or censorship. Men's magazines will be sold as long as people buy them. Their promotion at a freshers' event is a different matter. The fault does not lie with YUSU, except perhaps for the sin of omission in not carefully scrutinising the deal beforehand. Rather, it lies with those who aggressively market such damaging products.

This is surely a good opportunity for all those who felt that the giveaway was irresponsible to make the case, as many already do, that students should seek out and support causes, organisations and companies that promote a positive view of sexuality, one that leaves no-one feeling ignored.

Raiding the cellars

Drinking is a solid fixture of student life, and more often than not we are indifferent to sober advice that we ought to know and respect our limits. For many, university is the first opportunity to test those limits, and it's hardly a shock that many exceed them, with painful and embarrassing results.

Both the University and the Union are in a precarious position when it comes to alcohol. On the one hand, both have a welfare responsibility and should urge moderation. On the other, students expect fun, usually meaning the booze flowing freely. YUSU's Viking Raid events are a case in point. Encouraging 1,700 students to descend on York, visiting venues well-known for efficiently causing a near-complete state of sensory deprivation, is not an obvious path to moderation, as ex-welfare officer Amy Burge has pointed out.

Then again, YUSU could – entirely reasonably – argue that it's not their job to regulate students' drinking: as adults, we ought to be able to do that ourselves. If they must get smashed, as many inevitably will, it's surely preferable they do it at an event where there is plenty of help on hand. In this sense at least, Viking Raid is a responsible idea.

Safety is only one part of the equation, though. There are plenty of students on campus who, be it for religious reasons or simply as a matter of preference, don't wish to join the debauchery. For this significant minority, there's little on offer outside of their studies that lets them socialise with other students. Indeed, it's largely left to student societies to organise dry activities on campus, and even then most societies (and here *Nouse* is no exception) indulge in a fair amount of recreational drinking.

It seems naïve to single out YUSU for organising Viking Raid, when all it really represents is an attempt to organise and, to an extent, sanitise what already takes place most nights of the week. It's important that students drink safely, and there's always more YUSU and the University could do.

As a matter of priority, though, both should reassess whether they are doing enough for students who don't appreciate the pressure to drink, drink, drink. This would have a knock-on effect for all students, as it would help give lie to the notion that there's no way to have fun sober.

Congratulations, Baroness Afshar

Anyone who has ventured anywhere near the Politics department at York is likely to have heard of Professor Haleh Afshar. A world-renowned expert on the politics of Islam and feminism, it was last week announced that she will sit in the House of Lords as non-party political peer. Never one to mince her words, Haleh enjoys enormous popularity among students for her lively lectures and profound commitment to fairness and equality.

Expressing her gratitude, she promised to take up her role as the "people's peer". Coming from anyone else, this might sound like an empty platitude. We're confident, however, that Haleh will prove to be the real deal.

Comment & Analysis

Cream for cellulite? Satisfy my appetite Proportionately posh?

FHM, instant mash and tinned goods: YUSU's opened up a great big can of beans



Lily Eastwood
Contributing Writer

It doesn't take a raging feminist to see a problem with the YUSU Bags of Fun. It does, however, take Sam Bayley and Matt Burton to see no problem at all. I am left not so much angry, but bemused - who really thought there would be no objection to the pink and blue welcomes from YUSU this year?

Sexist allegations aside, I am capable of boiling a potato. Why students have to be subjected to the revival of a certain instant mash brand is beyond me. Re-hydrated potatoes haven't become any more palatable and students are bums - or so I'm told - so I have more than enough time to mash my own spuds, thank you.

But I'm skirting round the obvious sexism issue. I must clarify: I am not an angry feminist, but FHM and chocolate versus cellulite cream and deodorant? It's a fairly clear message; boys sit back, while girls get busy grooming. Oh and also, ladies, even if you can eat a full tin of beans, you shouldn't, and because you lack the restraint to eat only a ladylike

portion, then here's a half-size tin. In case you hadn't guessed, it's the beans that bother me the most.

Fact is, having tossed my cellulite cream into the bin of liberation and ruminated over a cupcake I very quickly ceased to be angry about FHM. I knew I was going to go home and read my housemate's sample copy of the "Men's General Interest Magazine" cover to cover and when I proved myself right, I was disappointed. Not by the exploitation of the female form, but to find that they'd missed out the Ladies' Confessions section. It's the best bit, not least of all because it is clearly written by men. Real women don't say "it's just too big" nearly that often in real life.

I object to FHM no more than I object to Cosmopolitan or Glamour. YUSU just got it wrong in thinking that most boys are as interested in nubile bicurious blondes' (aka sexually deprived computer geeks') sexual fantasies, as me. "Heteronormative" FHM may be, but on its own it's just a silly magazine. Yet paired with cellulite cream it carries a much heavier gender message.

It's stating the obvious to say that giving out cellulite cream panders to our image-obsessed society, but if YUSU let it pass then maybe this does need to be made explicit. Perhaps one day I will be fooled into buying a horribly expensive

cellulite cream but I shall buy it myself, not be offered it by my Student Union.

Even the reactionary project at Freshers' Fair was wanting. Ditching your cellulite cream for a munch on the way home may be a statement against YUSU, but it is also a trivialisation of the sexist issues at hand. It perpetuates the idea that if you hold any kind of feminist views, you don't care about the way you look. Contrary to popular belief, you can care about cellulite and womens' rights.

The crux of this overblown situation is not about the offensive nature of individual products. Everyone has their own pet hates about what was in the bag. Boys around campus were reprimanded for reading their FHM; many fresher girls couldn't get over their cellulite cream "hello" and I continue to stare in wonder at my half-sized tin of beans.

The extent of insult caused by each item is all a matter of opinion but nobody can deny what a ridiculous grouping of products it was. I don't know what would be more upsetting: if Sam Bayley and Matt Burton deliberately masterminded the plan to put women in their place, or if, as is tragically the probable case, they didn't see the problem from the start.

And the beans! I just can't get over the beans! I'm going to go and eat a whole tin and hope I find the answer at the bottom...hell, I might even have two.



Freshers' fair proves fertile for 2nd year art history student Dany Horwal

Debate: Should we stay or should we go?

Is NUS affiliation really all it's cracked up to be? And can it possibly be worth £36,000 a year? Nicky Woolf and Francis Boorman debate what we ought to do...



Nicky Woolf
Contributing Writer

Yes, it is a lot of money. We pay 36,000 pounds sterling for the privilege of NUS membership, a membership which, on the face of it, doesn't mean much more than an expensive, fairly pointless ID card and a lot of dull press-releases on purple-headed letter-paper.

But those are not the real things that the NUS does for students. Think about what the letters NUS stand for. National Union of Students. This is not a country club membership, or a discount card company, this is a union, an organisation whereby a large number of people can be empowered by their unity. United we stand, and all that.

When the chips are down, the NUS will be fighting our corner, with amounts of legal and financial clout that YUSU could only dream of, and we pay so that not only can get that when we need it, but also so that other students at other universities can get it too.

They have long experience of fighting for student causes in both the courts and in Parliament, and without them, we in York would be a very lonely and fairly small group of students striking out on our own against a University which prioritises our needs and demands very low and always has one beady eye on the bottom line.

I'll grant you, the NUS did not exactly emerge victorious in the Tuition Fees debate. But they did their best, fighting the student cause with vigour and admirable dedication. Even if they didn't succeed in the end, they still whipped up one hell of a storm in the process, and catapulted the issue into the public arena.

“When the chips are down, the NUS will fight our corner with clout YUSU only dream of”

The NUS is also an invaluable way to share experience and information. They train all our YUSU officers in how they might execute their positions, and while you might scoff at the necessity for such training, it has proved invaluable

in extending York's LGBT, Environment and Ethics, and Racial Equality movements.

Such movements are able, through the NUS, to campaign on issues on a national scale rather than being limited to the local. Their legal team will also be invaluable if any student society, or YUSU itself, is ever sued. Couldn't happen? Try last year at Exeter University, where the students' union was sued by the Exeter Christian Union over a disagreement about the CU's evangelical policy. When your student union stands to lose thousands, professional legal experience comes in handy.

It's about being able to affect issues on a national as well as a local scale. A manufacturing union fights for the rights of its members as and when it is required, and that is exactly what the NUS does for students, and it does it well.

It is our link to government, our lifeline to the corridors of power that we have no real need of... until we do. Sure, we could go it alone for a while, perhaps for a long while. But, sooner or later, a time would come when we would need the NUS to back us up.

It's best to think of them as you would an insurance policy. You don't need it in the short term, and you feel like it's a waste of money, but when something unexpected happens, you're suddenly pretty glad they're there.

Yes, it is a lot of money. But it's worth it.



Francis Boorman
Contributing Writer

The University of York pays a ridiculous £36,000 each year for affiliation with the NUS. Just by going to the NUS website, it is immediately obvious what is most important in attracting their student members: large, colourful pictures of the new NUS Extra cards grab your attention.

Yet these cost the individual £10 and offer some pretty unimpressive discounts (a "stunning" 10% off Matalan anyone?) which are generally available anyway, if you can prove you're a student. My York card has worked fine so far. Money from the NUS Extra cards goes in part to funding our student union, but surely this would be better done at a local level, providing greater accountability.

Given the number of people who manage to get out and vote for YUSU motions, it isn't surprising that, even as members of the NUS, York students are not a particularly active bunch.



Edward Russell-Johnson
Contributing Writer

A recent article in *The Guardian* has revived an age-old educational debate; that of elitism in universities. The article focuses on Oxbridge, stating that 40% of their intake comes from private institutions, schools which make up just 7% of the UK's student population.

So, Oxford and Cambridge are elitist. Not exactly news, is it? But supposing the focus was shifted onto, I don't know, the University of York, for instance.

It is no secret that this University is predominantly white and middle-class. Indeed, you only have to glance at the names of the writers in this humble publication. But where exactly are all these undergraduates coming from?

At the risk of number crunching, let's have a quick look at the statistics. In the 2005/6 intake, just under 15% came from private schools – it's not as high as it is for Oxbridge, but given that only 7% of all UK students are from these institutions, it's still pretty disproportionate.

It is at this point that an ugly question rears its politically incorrect head: isn't this inevitable?

There is a great deal of truth in the old adage that you get what you pay for. If an establishment is earning several thousand pounds per pupil per term, then it will attract a higher standard of teaching, and consequently, its students may stand a better chance of getting into selective universities such as York.

It is also true that students from private schools are less likely to be put off

higher education by the costs involved. Despite government loans, there are still families, particularly those with no history of higher education, who find the idea of getting into debt to fund a degree inconceivable.

In fact, it is a bigger step for many of these families now than it would have been forty years ago, when students were given grants rather than loans.

Students from state schools may well suffer as a result of their inability (or unwillingness) to pay for both secondary and tertiary education, but barring some kind of quasi-Communist educational reform, this will surely continue.

Alternative attempts to remedy the situation tend to fall under the deleterious label of 'positive discrimination' – the process of favouring those from certain backgrounds over others who may be more suitable for the role.

In any case, elitism in education is hardly a new phenomenon. For millennia, basic education was the preserve of the wealthy and the powerful. It is only now, with the growing democratisation of society (thanks largely to the internet) that people are demanding change.

The problem is, however, that systems do not change as quickly as people would like. Attempts have been made, and the educational system has been reorganised many times, but to no avail.

It is, to some extent, inevitable that students from wealthier backgrounds will possess an advantage in education, but perhaps this should change through slow erosion and evolution rather than rash measures and discrimination.

We are constantly bombarded with new ideas, and our modern sensibilities demand equally modern solutions. We expect situations to be resolved at the click of a mouse, but that is something that isn't always, or even often, possible.

Why pay for membership if nobody is particularly interested in the work being done in their name? This is not just a cynical sigh about student apathy. I would be interested to know if most students have any idea what the NUS spends its time and their money doing. And if they did, would they necessarily agree?

To give one example, the NUS LGBT officers have organised a campaign against bullying in HE and FE institutions, entitled 'Bullying Sucks'. They provide materials to encourage awareness of the issue, including 'Bullying Sucks' sweets. This Blue Peter style campaigning is not something with which I particularly want to be affiliated.

“The NUS might be great as a springboard for a career in politics, but for the average student it simply isn't working”

The highest profile campaign that the NUS has recently been involved in was against top-up

fees. This is a situation in which students came together nationally and protested with one voice. But that voice need not be mediated by the NUS, who simply can't justify themselves as leaders of a single issue campaign that most students were passionate about anyway. Failure to prevent the introduction of top-up fees shows that the NUS lacks political leverage, particularly seeing as six of their former Presidents supported the introduction of fees in the parliamentary bill.

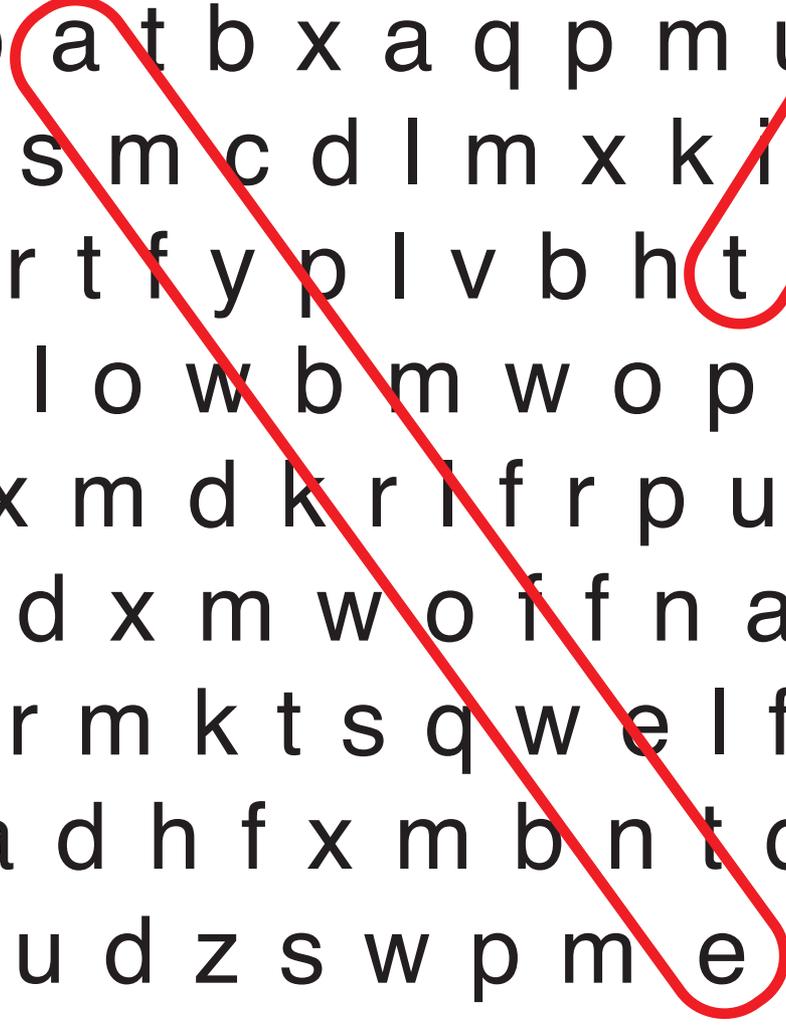
The NUS might be great as a springboard for launching a career in politics, but for the average student it simply isn't working. Leaving the NUS - something several universities around the country have recently done - would not even have the effect of barring us from involvement with national student issues.

There is a slight hitch in the plan. It might be that the money paid to the NUS for affiliation would not be made available for other purposes, thus removing the financial incentive for leaving. If this is the case it's a real shame. Jealous holders of budgets so often stand in the way of change for the better.

Looking through the very glossy NUS impact report for the last year, I just wasn't convinced that they make a real difference to students at The University of York. It's time we set our own agenda and leave the NUS to theirs.

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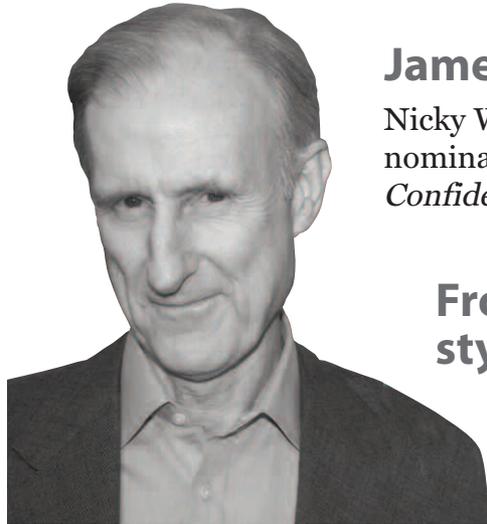
MUSE



foreign beggars

female politicians

Muse 23.10.07



James Cromwell

Nicky Woolf chats to the Oscar-nominated star of *Babe* and *LA Confidential* >> M4

From student to style god?

Nouse reveals how to break free of student style stereotypes without blowing your loan >> M6

Foreign Beggars

Nouse chats to the UK hip hop collective about the best music in the world and gang culture >> M7

Textbooks vs. payslips

We ponder the pros and cons of the part-time job. Which side are you on? >> M10

Amy Browne

The Fusion chair and international model chats to us >> M12



From Maggie to Hillary

Jennifer O'Mahony takes a look at the impact women are having in the political world >> M15

Arts: We chat to the writer and producer of new student play *Wake Up Call* >> M18

Music: *In Rainbows* and an interview with Vampire Weekend >> M20

Film: *Control* and *The Conversation* >> M22

B&R: York's best eating establishments >> M23

Listings: Dizzee Rascal and karaoke >> M24

Sara Sayeed



Why chivalry has met a watery end

After the traumatic early weeks of term, a couple of friends and I fretfully searched for methods of soothing the twitching and general mania of essay-induced insomnia. One dismal day, while walking off the convulsions, we chanced a glimpse of the campus lake – and for the first time it spouted inspiration and not spurts of watered down bird sewage. It was time for a date with Darcy. Mmm, Mr. Darcy – the emblem, nay beacon, of masculine perfection. What better antidote to the last dregs of essay frenzy than slurring heatedly at the screen, “They just don’t make ‘em like that anymore, chivalry’s dead!”

But then, as with most morning afters, I took some time to reflect on what induced the night before’s throes of passion. Despite the wine, which as always mollified inhibitions, I found it difficult to believe that it was Darcy’s acts of gallantry that got us all hot and bothered and declaring his unparalleled glory, while lamenting the comparative failings of what we’re stuck with today. The Darcy of iconic status is the one moodily surveying the lake, plunging in and then emerging all soaked shirt and drops of water glistening from his perfectly tousled hair, trickling down his sideburns... sorry, I’ll refrain. But you have to agree, this is the Darcy we want, not the stifled, polite-conversation-rehearsed-

to-a-tee version, whose flawlessly cut breeches are only attractive because they give the impression of being a tad too snug. Chivalry isn’t dead, it’s just not desired.

A brief review of literary folklore heroes would suggest that conventional swoon-inducements are often grossly misconstrued. Emily Bronte’s Cathy and Heathcliff (from our very own Yorkshire moors) offer an instructive example. In a recent poll of the greatest love stories conducted by *The Guardian* (even the news has occasional lulls, it would seem) the fraught affair between Cathy and Heathcliff topped the charts. Now, describing Heathcliff as decorous would be like referring to a pony with alopecia as cute and fluffy. Heathcliff would probably be more likely to smack a door in Cathy’s face than open one for her to delicately step through. Furthermore, she would probably re-open the door just to thwack it back in his face. Their bond was a complex one of fraught passion – so tempestuous in fact, that the ‘zenith’ of this passion was accompanied by scrabbling, scratching and a smidgen of strangling. Yet, it seems, the nation loves it. Probably because the majority shares in the notion that real ardour is better marked by a few bruises than exhibited via some affected hanky dropping.

So from whence came all

this chivalry malarkey? Shall we blame those medieval legends of coyly dropped Kleenex and hard-to-get minxes with unfeasibly long hair extensions? Yet, let me remind you that the most desired knight of that era, Sir Lancelot, eschewed decorum and ravaged his best mate’s wife. For the most part, Arthurian Legend skipped over ‘nice guy’ Arthur and tended to focus more on his rakish band of knights. Arthur always gave the impression of being just a tad too civil, the kind of guy who may have pulled out the Sword from that auspicious stone but probably had no idea how to, erm, wield it. Practiced courtesy just isn’t what most women want. Mr. Collins tried it – and his bandy legged dancing and simpering flattery got him a verbal bitch slap from Lizzy. Frankly the only ‘wet’ men that women want are of the post-lake Darcy variety.

Our modern equivalent of ‘courting’ offers a useful example. A friend of mine recently went on a romantic dinner date with her long-term boyfriend. Yet when I caught up with her, she rather forlornly sighed: “Yeh, it was alright, I guess. It’s just that he was being a bit too nice, he wouldn’t stop complimenting me”. Obviously, my heart bled for her. But in all seriousness, after getting over the initial resentment, I oddly enough found myself empathising. Being treated like a delicate

Amy Scott

Turn on the water works

Human beings have a remarkable capability to adapt to new surroundings and situations. However, instead of this enabling us to conquer any circumstance and triumph over all adversity, in the case of students it usually seems to mean we can adapt to feeling short-changed by any situation. En suite students in Alcuin will manage to find just as much to complain about as the kitchenless masses in Langwith, because we adjust to what has been provided for us, and then whinge accordingly.

All of which makes it even more of a shock when something that millions of people take for granted goes wrong. Clean, safe, running water may still be a dream



for many, but for those of us who’ve never known life without it, plumbing problems are a nightmare. My first real moment of homesickness during my fresher year came when our hot water abruptly halted. As I boiled the kettle for the third time to wash my hair, the comforts of home had never seemed so distant. Halls, however, are by no means as bad as a ‘real’ house. In halls, just like when you were at home, plumbing problems are inconvenient, but it never falls to you to sort them out.

There’s nothing like a flooded kitchen greeting you in the morning to spur you into genuine adult decision-making. Staying in all day waiting for the plumber still feels like playing ‘house’, not least when his arrival makes you feel like you’re in a bad ‘70s sitcom. And I use ‘his’ here deliberately. I’m sure there are plenty of female plumbers out there, I’m just yet to meet one, and am also yet to meet one that

hasn’t thought of me as an especially stupid little girl. This problem is exacerbated by the sheer hilarity of negligence that can be found in some student housing when it comes to the water works. One house I had the pleasure of residing in, termed ‘the house that Jack built’ by one jovial plumber, had the remarkable ability to flood whenever the water was turned off at the mains.

Explaining this occurrence to already condescending plumbers became a chore, until I would eventually give up and resort to simply standing in the kitchen with my mop ready and letting them work it out for themselves. Ultimately though, the vast majority of us live in accommodation that is more than sufficient, and of considerably nicer quality than we would have faced a few decades ago. It’s just difficult to remember that sometimes, and extremely easy to moan instead.

An indulgent few lines



The dawn breaks lazily over the lake. It is no longer freshers' week, and there are no longer a large amount of people up to see it, other than the odd third-year and postgraduate student staying up late to do their dissertations or theses. This is a pity, because the dawn is rather nice today, crisp and blue and gold.

We, in the *Nouse* office, are up to see the dawn, but we are bleary-eyed and weary-headed, and we have a lot of work yet to do.

Every edition of the newspaper requires this ordeal. The night before the pages are sent in electronic form to the print press, every page, and there are 44 of them, must be laid-up - a process requiring a visual mind and some serious software - and checked, and double-checked, and signed off.

All of which culminates in the fabled Production Night. This is an experience which many people have to suffer alone; the essay all-nighter is a fairly common phenomenon here. Few people experience the bizarre sensation of going slowly insane in a cosy, but irritatingly small office with a group of people with whom, after a few such nights, you have to either develop a sense of rapport with, or kill. There is no middle ground.

There is an exacerbated air of tension this morning. The team in the office at the moment is one in flux. This is the very last edition of the current *Nouse* dynasty. Heidi Blake, as Editor, and Ellen Carpenter, as Muse Editor, have presided over a year of - if you will indulge me in a little sopppiness and pride - unprecedented, glorious newspaper success. They have led us as a team, taught us everything we know about journalism, student or otherwise, and generally been all-round good sorts. They will be deeply missed by all of us, from their synchronised caffiene-induced hallucinogenic breakdowns at 5am to their bizarre giggling fits. From Heidi's inspired battles with the powers that be to defend a story that one of us has worked on from arbitrary censorship, to Ellen's stunning layups that wouldn't look out of place in a design showbook, let alone the *Guardian*.

Special mention this year must also go to:

Dan Whitehead, for his dogged and heroic determination to plough on, despite all jests and jibes, to rescue whatever section is in need, whether it be sports or the website.

Sam Thomas for his pin-sharp but feather-light observations on every aspect of life, from the stories we cover to the faux pas we make - and of course for his general wizardry.

Sara Sayeed for consistently being there with help or a joke, and for continuing to call us "Nouselets" despite all evidence to the contrary.

Jo Shelley for always, always having a new idea, and always making sure the old ones work out.

Amy, Amy, Ben, Dave and Albi for generally being awesome, and for not calling us "Nouselets" the whole time...

The past year has been a real pleasure. The next will, if we are very, very lucky, be half as good. We can't wait for another year working with all of you, if you'll have us.

Signed, The Nouselets



Go on, gobble this one down

Apparently there's a new national calamity brewing, or indeed swelling, into existence. Forget terrorism or global warming, they veritably wane in comparison to this far more hefty issue. Yes, the fearfully termed 'Obesity Crisis' has descended upon us.

The other day while hanging around the gym, doing my bit to alleviate this catastrophic crisis, I caught my first sighting of the 'combat obesity' campaign. A bunch of cattle, sorry children, were being herded onto a slew of stationary bikes and then forced to peddle away while being verbally abused by GI Prick.

I can't say I wasn't momentarily amused when one of the little hamsters was dragged off his bike and made to perform jumping jacks in front of the others, but after he collapsed I got bored and sauntered off to

watch Fern and Phil. While Fern, Phil and a child trainer chatted about the perils of the Crunchie, the kids valiantly bounced around on inflatable animals and chucked Frisbees at each other. Conveniently, said Frisbees kept slipping through the little tykes' already waning fingers (result!) causing them to waddle off a few miles in retrieval missions.

Unfortunately, while busy spawning a generation with thighs of steel, little has been done to market the salad leaf as more appealing than a Burger King burger. Perhaps, if those M&S food-porn adverts employed Bono to teasingly sigh: "Crunchy, succulent, iceberg lettuce leaf, tossed in a melange of grated carrot and juicy cucumber", the crisis could be averted. Or not. Whichever way you cut it, the fact remains: the cow still tramples the foliage.

flower all night is suffocating and a little insulting. Darcy never really flattered Lizzy. He may have muttered a few veiled compliments about her reading under his privileged breath, but in the pivotal scene when he finally declares his passion for her, the way he chooses to do it is through a series of insults.

Camille Paglia once described the Elizabeth/Darcy rapport as a sequence of "epigrammatic thrusts"; suggesting that what makes their verbal sparring so engaging is that it essentially constitutes 20 hours (this is the BBC version, not pouty-face-Knightley version) of purest foreplay.

Flattery will only get you so far. Some wit may get you a little further and if you top it all off by jumping into a lake clad in a precariously thin white shirt, who knows, we might even return the affections.

Venetia Rainey & Charlotte Kirkbride

Should, or shoe-ldnt, you?

Dragging on cigarettes and sharing a lettuce leaf, Ms C and Ms V pondered an alarming message that had arrived in an empty Pinot Noir bottle that floated through the morning mists that hug the campus lake. 'Ms C and Ms V', it read, 'my faux Uggs combusted quite spontaneously the other day. I am now reduced to cowering shoeless under my bed. Immediate assistance



required.'

A call for help. A call to arms. A call, in fact, that, by happy chance, allows us to get a few little things off our chests; have a wee rant, if you will.

Ah shoes. Blister-inducing, pain-exciting adornments of the feet. Glittery, patent, heeled, flat, pointed, clackety, night-defining shoes. So many poor little toes rammed mercilessly into so many unforgiving, limp creating shoesies. So much choice, so many wrong decisions. Sadly it appears that here, in our very own

mini Northern paradise, we have fallen into a rut. Ladies and gentlemen, we appear to have forgotten the endless possibilities of: The shoe.

However, *Nouse* readers, do not fear. Grey Goose Martini and Vogue in hand, we have identified the three worst offenders on the York shoe menu. We ask only that you hear us out.

1. The Ugg boot. Mocked mercilessly even by those who themselves don them (and to this sin we remorsefully raise our hands). A cross between a teddy bear and a Wellington boot, and an opportunity for us to emulate having the feet (and stunted, shuffling walk) of a caterpillar.

2. Hiking boots. Are you really about to climb a mountain? Do you really, really like computers? Just buy

some decent trainers. Please. We entreat you.

3. The high heel on campus. Girls, you have seen campus, yes? Concrete does not appreciate the stiletto and, from that grating sound when you walk, the reverse is also true.

So there it is. Our short yet unforgiving list. We do not demand a revolution, nor banner waving, nor indeed drug-induced chanting. Instead we ask only this: an exploration of the unknown, dear children.

Greek sandals, S&M platforms, shoes made out of bin bags, even those little trainers that have wheels in the bottom favoured by ASBO children. Get creative. We would say the world is your oyster, but this is the University of York, so perhaps we'd better just go with 'whelk?..

James Cromwell: King Lear, Babe and the Black Panthers

Actor, activist and self-styled philosopher James Cromwell has starred in everything from *24* to Shakespeare. **Nicky Woolf** talks to the man himself about bringing the Bard to life and fighting for justice for the innocent, whether human or porcine

James Oliver Cromwell has enormous hands. His handshake is crushing, certain and intense, and goes on for slightly longer than is usually comfortable, giving me the feeling I'm being weighed-up, considered. "Shall I send you a script, James?" a brazen but ambitious student playwright asks, jokingly, and for a moment he feels the force of Cromwell's gaze. "Yes," says the Hollywood star loudly and deliberately. "Yes, absolutely do so."

The room, previously filled with the low buzz of conversation, momentarily quiets. "Oh... ok." says the student, nervously, as Cromwell fixes him with a look his namesake might have fixed on a traitorous cavalier. There is a momentary, awkward pause before Cromwell's face cracks into a mischievous grin. "Always looking for more work," he drawls, "acting pays peanuts, didn't you know that?"

James Cromwell – Jamie, as he swiftly has everyone in the room calling him – has acting in his blood. The son of a successful big-screen actor and director and an equally successful actress, he was transplanted from Los Angeles to Manhattan when very young. He has an expansive East-West American drawl, which slightly blindsides me. A Jamie Cromwell with an American accent is unfamiliar and incongruous to a British audience who associates him with the immortal Yorkshire growl of, "That'll do, pig."

Cromwell is an imposing figure. Six feet seven inches tall, he towers over me as I retrieve my slightly crushed hand from his grip. His height gives him a powerful stage-presence, even when he isn't acting, which hints at a lifetime of treading a variety of boards and studio floors. His eyes have an almost trademark twinkle to them.

He is here at York accompanying a friend of his, fellow American and York Theatre Royal's Playwright-in-Residence, Donald Freed. Freed is running a series of master-classes in York, and on campus, on writing and performance, and Cromwell is magisterially in attendance. When Freed has finished his monologue, Cromwell stands up and makes an impassioned speech about Shakespeare's words in Hamlet from an actor's point of view. "When he's in the room," he begins, meaning Shakespeare, "his ideas, his words reverberate, they ping off us like skip-

ping a stone across the water. They come out, because those notes, that chord..."

He pauses and breathes deeply, like a preacher waiting for an "amen". His gestures are exuberant and expressive, but also awkward and halting; the gestures of a tall man who perhaps has never become truly comfortable with his size. He speaks with arms out and palms upward, and his metaphors are almost entirely musical, of Bach and of Mozart, of chords and of notes. He talks of a bad Shakespeare performance in terms of a Mozart recording played on a bad gramophone, but then implies that the fault lies with the listener who cannot hear the genius beneath the "crackling static".

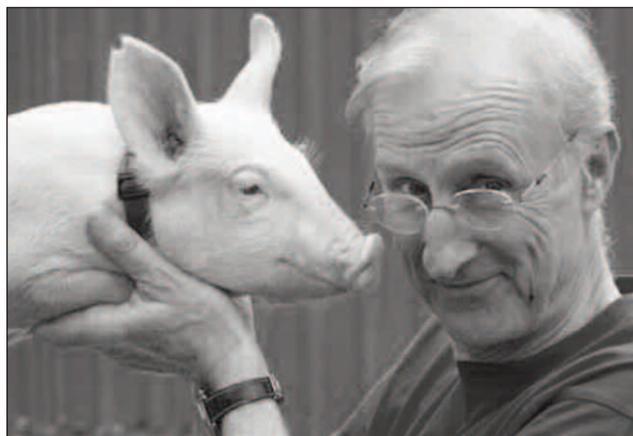
"You may be only playing the simple melody because that's really all we're capable of as actors," he goes on. "We're pretty straightforward. You have your feelings, you have your instrument. If you're really good at your instrument you can know where to pitch it, what the various tones mean. If you're very, very good as an actor you can begin to breathe with the audience. If they begin to inhale when you inhale, and exhale when you exhale, they'll begin to feel as you feel."

He talks as if educating a child. He radiates an air of caring paternalism, which may go some way to explaining how often he plays the wise father. He played Jack Bauer's father in season six of the TV drama *24*, was a father figure to the world's best-loved pig in *Babe*, and father again to the love-interest in *Blackball*. He was father of the American nation as a former President in *The West Wing*, and to the British nation as Prince Philip in the movie *The Queen* with Helen Mirren.

But Cromwell is haunted by visions of another father. He once told a CNN reporter: "It's like people say, 'Why would you ever want to climb Everest?' But those that do, those that climb, those that have... that's the deal. To have gone up Everest." His Everest? "For an actor, there's no greater climb than Lear. Lear is the ultimate mountain. You're not going to make it, but it's OK."

Shakespeare is of vital importance to Cromwell. He is the ultimate exception that proves every rule about theatre and performance art. In his speech after Donald Freed has intro-

duced his master-class series, Cromwell explains the meaning of acting, as he sees it, to a room of amateur actors, directors and producers. "It's not about meaning," he begins expansively. "It's about full self-expression. It's about who you are as an artist. Your instrument, your breath, your life, your passions, far exceed any text you will ever deal with." He pauses for effect. "This... is not necessarily true of Shakespeare."



"Yes, I did work for the Panthers," he says, with an air of finality, then turns a fierce gaze on to me. I take the hint

Cromwell is not a man who shies away from such a challenge as Shakespeare presents, however. A man who seems to accumulate causes as fast as he accumulates acting parts, he even became a member of the Black Panthers in 1969 when he joined the 'Committee to Defend the Panthers'.

This group was set up to free the 'Panther 13', 13 members of the radical civil rights group that had been imprisoned in New York on conspiracy charges. The campaign was successful in winning freedom for the interred activists, who were acquitted of all 156 charges against them in 1971.

I ask about his work on the Committee. "Yes, I did work for the Panthers," he says, with an air of finality, then turns a fierce gaze on to me. I take the hint, and move on. I suspect that Cromwell feels there are more

causes that define him than this single, high-profile case almost 40 years ago.

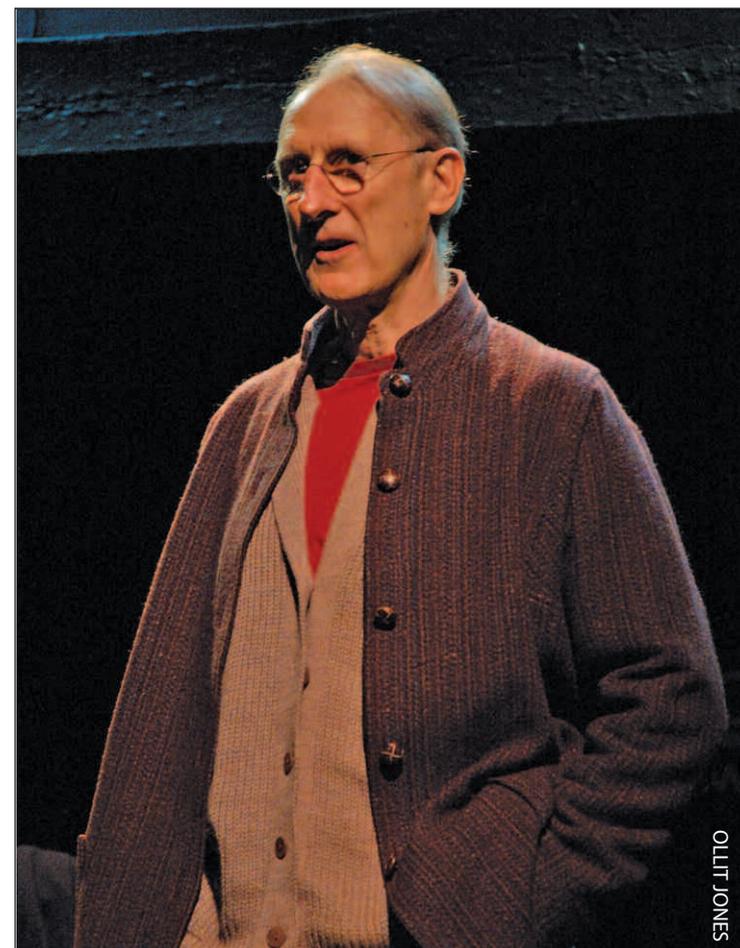
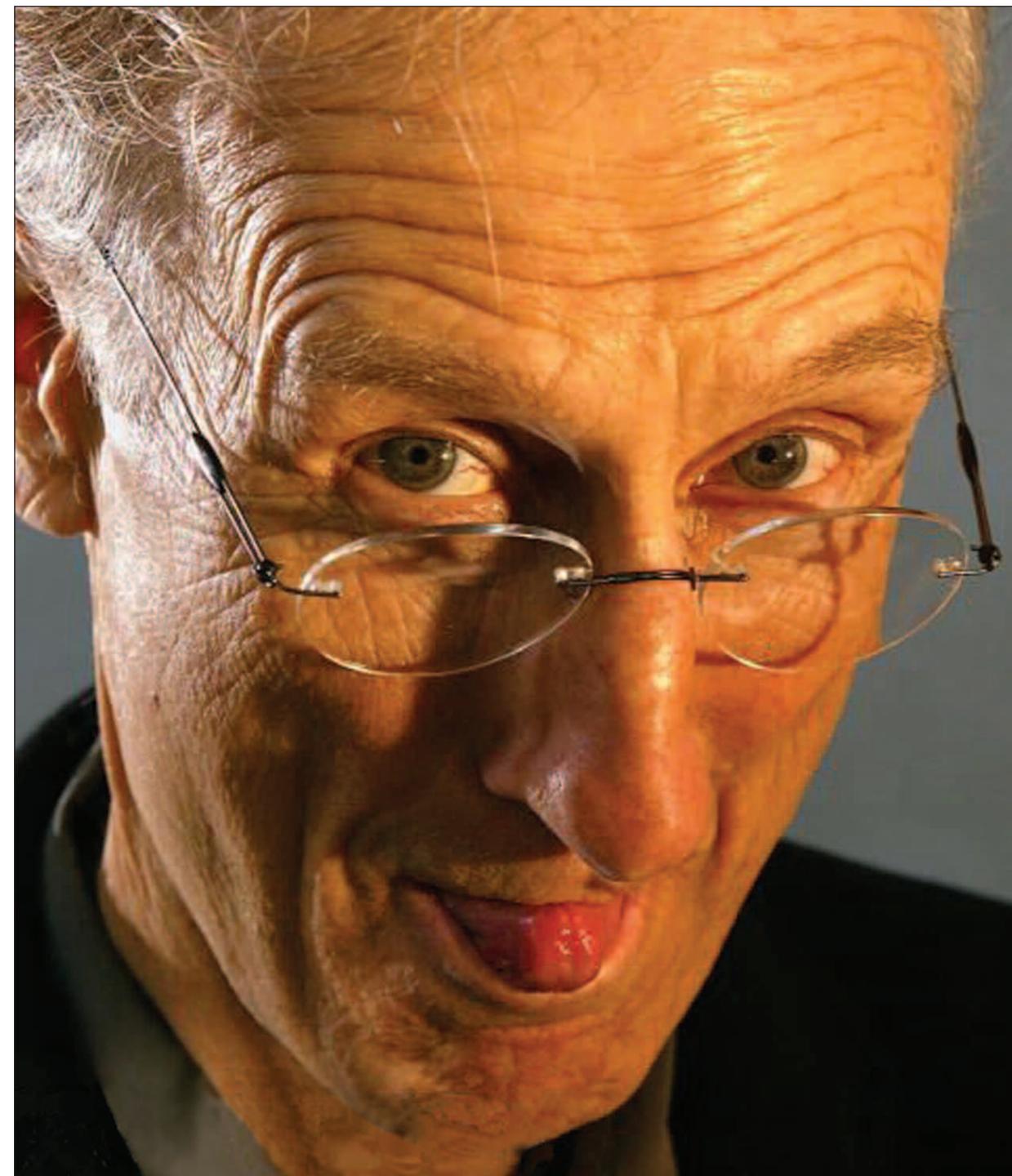
Indeed, Cromwell has nailed his colours to a forest of masts. A former treasurer of the left-wing actors' union the Screen Actors Guild, Cromwell became a vegetarian in 1974 after witnessing the "fear and horror" of a Texas slaughter-yard, and an ethical vegan after making the film *Babe* in 1995. He is also a campaigner and patron of the SaveBabe campaign in Australia, which "highlights the suffering of factory farmed pigs in Australia."

"Making the movie *Babe* opened my eyes to the intelligence and the inquisitive personalities of pigs," says Cromwell in a press statement for SaveBabe. "These highly social animals possess an amazing capacity for love, joy and sorrow that makes them remarkably similar to our beloved canine and feline friends. In fact, the scientific advisor to the British government says that pigs are smarter than dogs and even do better on intelligence tests than 3-year-old human children."

My impression of Cromwell is of a man with a very active conscience. He talks to me of lofty ideas, reluctant to even acknowledge the existence of the mundane and the lacklustre. He refuses to acknowledge the concept of playing a part in a 'true' story like *The Queen*. "Art is always a fiction," he says insistently, "because it's not happening. It doesn't co-exist in the same space at the same time, therefore art is always an abstraction." I think I understand. So often, a so-called 'true story' will bend the truth, even lie, to retell history the way the writers want.

I ask if there is a danger that people will take the story for history, but Cromwell reacts violently to the word. "History!" he exclaims, "History is only the record of those people who won, and most history is just... a bloody lie. The more you dig," he says, his contemptuous sneering tone betraying a very personal grievance, "the less you know about what actually happened. It's only the history of those very wealthy individuals that history chooses to point out."

"What happens to the guy who fought the war?" he says, waving his long arms about his head in a gesture of frustration. "What happens to Joe Blow, who fought the Irish campaign under Cromwell?" Ah, and the namesake returns. I begin to wonder exactly



OLLI JONES



how Jamie Cromwell feels about the man who killed a king, with whom he shares a name.

If, as Cromwell suggests, time and death are relative things, and through thoughts, through art, a man can live again, then surely there is a twisted symmetry to Cromwell's critically acclaimed portrayal of Prince Philip on the silver screen?

Cromwell seems at his core to be in a state of ideological flux. He is grasping for a set of ideas, about truth, about leadership, about right and wrong, but is confronted at every turn with problems and paradoxes. He is tangibly proud of his homeland, yet berates it for having "a very classist theatre that mostly puts on crap."

"In America there was no tradition of the theatre. They tried to impose one, but America is polyglot. You couldn't take immigrants from Germany, Poland or even Ireland and show them a work - mainly melodrama and mainly crap - and hope to develop any sort of theatrical community," he says sadly.

Unlike Europe, where for the most part Cromwell observes a class system in decline, "America was actually stratifying into classes. We don't have a literary tradition. We're anti-intellectual." He catches himself, and his left hand twitches upwards, as if to catch the statement before it can reach me. "I mean in terms of popular culture. I

Oscar nominee James Oliver Cromwell is renowned for his left-wing firebrand disposition

don't mean to say that we don't have some wonderful intellectuals and some wonderful writers, but they tend to be more for the cognoscenti than to be understood and appreciated by the general public."

This is the duality of Jamie Cromwell. His hope that everyone can understand the truth and art encompassed in theatre is set violently against his almost paranoid doubt that the general public is capable of understanding it. In fact, a little while after I met him, he had a shouting match with a particularly stubborn student who had asked him to whom exactly he kept referring to by a sinister "them".

I think I have pinned down what I find so intriguing about Jamie Cromwell. Like a preacher losing his faith, there is a barely detectable sense of melancholy to him. His on-screen character has all the answers, all the wisdom, and in person you can almost buy into that for a while. It's only when you go back and look at what he's actually said that you realise that this is a man who can feel himself coming so close to understanding - an understanding that he has translated into Shakespearean imagery; the perfect Lear, the perfect Hamlet, the bard "speaking directly to you from the ether".

But in a very human way, Jamie Cromwell finds himself unable to reach this understanding or, at least, unable to truly vocalise it to himself or others. He speaks in very definite terms, every sentence constructed vehemently and with conviction, and loves to set challenges.

"Make something of that, I dare ya," he says with a grin at the end of our interview, as if he's left me a puzzle. But Cromwell is tortured by the puzzles he sets himself. He is a genuinely fascinating man, and a genuinely wise one. However, I am left feeling somewhat saddened. Jamie Cromwell is a puzzle, and I don't think there is an answer.

DONALD FREED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL

James Cromwell was at York to support the masterclass program put on by Donald Freed, a man whom Harold Pinter called "a writer of blazing imagination, courage and insight." Freed, who can boast three Rockefeller awards, an NEA award for 'Distinguished Writing', a Hollywood Critics Award and a Pen Drama Prize, is currently Playwright-in-Residence at the Theatre Royal in York.

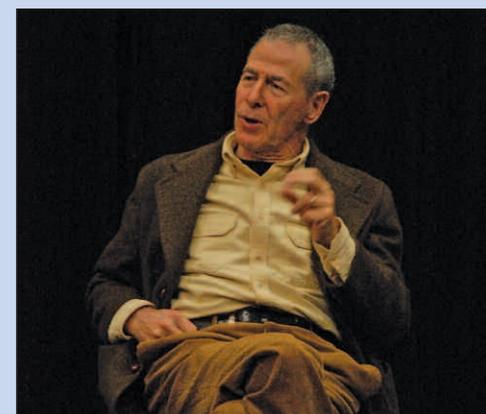
Freed is a mesmerising speaker. It is impossible to tell from his speech whether he is speaking off the cuff or performing a pre-rehearsed monologue, but it hardly matters as the audience is just as spellbound either way.

His insights into Hamlet are both insightful and interesting, and I am wholly taken in by the way he switches with schizophrenic suddenness from persona to persona. First roaring with Hamlet's voice, and then instantaneously and seamlessly becoming the calm commentator again.

Based on this experience, the masterclasses that Freed is running over the next few weeks at the Theatre Royal promise to be fascinating at the very least.

Freed has a new play coming out in early 2008 called *Patient No. 1*, which will be performed at the York Theatre Royal. For tickets and info visit:

www.yorktheatroyal.co.uk



Dominic Freed, winner of several awards

Student life doesn't lend itself to sartorial elegance. **Liam O'Brien** and **Venetia Rainey** hit town to help one hapless second year



Above: our fashion team's victim, Nicky Woolf, in his own student attire. **Above right:** Nicky finds his smart side with Topman. **Below right:** a picture of 'rocker-cool' in Joy jacket, t-shirt and jeans

Nicky Woolf, like many men, and especially male students, has cast the shackles of fashion from his daily routine, proclaiming it too much effort. All too often the idea of choosing an outfit with a sense of proportion and taste taps into that most sensitive of male neuroses, the one involving perceived manhood. In the same flippant way ancient man would kill, eat and wear an animal, Nicky shops haphazardly, incorrectly and with bitter notions of social obliga-

'He turned up wearing a potato-sack of a jacket, dire sneakers and a one-size-fits-none Goodricke College t-shirt'

tion. Luckily, the high street's miraculous improvements in regard to both women's and men's fashion over recent years means that it is relatively easy to purchase clothes that work a look other than hobo-chic for a relatively low

price. Mannequins provide a reference point, as do the more styled individuals in society. It is just the mental hurdle that remains the problem.

However, Venetia and I did not allow this problem to rise from the dark recesses of the male psyche during our shopping trip around York, and managed to give this most unstyled of creatures a new image which we hope he will carry around campus. The full extent of the problem had become clear the night before, when Nicky unintentionally wore a summer shirt inside-out, a look he would apparently normally accompany with a straw hat. He turned up on the day wearing a potato-sack of a jacket, peasant cloth roughly formed into the shape of jeans, some dire sneakers and a one-size-fits-none Goodricke College t-shirt, the job to improve his look would at least be easy. Perhaps we learn in primary school that shapelessness is acceptable, when mother is on a crazed mission to buy anything bearing the school logo two days before the start of term. It isn't.

The first outfit we cajoled Nicky into trying on was an H&M beige mac (inspired, like all the clones, by Burberry) with a decent pair of fitted jeans. Anything belted around the middle gives immediate cut and a waist, a look which men should get used to and practice, as puffer jackets and traditional men's coats rarely look good. The part of the leg that appears from under a mac is generally the thinnest and best defined and, crucially, can make the outfit effortlessly stylish.

Topman proved a revelation. I endeavoured to provide Nicky with outfits that were realistically wearable

(rather than the Hoxtonite colour clash that I parade around in). I chose a muted grey shirt and patterned tie to provide a look for a smarter occasion. Nicky, however, was by this time fully engaged with the whole process, and adventurously selected a pink shirt (a key colour for this season), a red version of the same tie to complement it, some decent shoes (winkle pickers), and suit trousers. After a bit of experimentation, we found that a more casual waistcoat worked better with the ensemble than a fussier, more tailored one ripped with unfathomable lack of shame from Hedi-Slimane's Dior Homme catwalk collections. The look was a success because whilst it was neither overly serious nor ostentatious, it did embrace Nicky's natural humour and vitality. Smart outfits have a tendency to produce discomfort in those not accustomed to wearing them and this is because most men opt for the 'box suit' - unfitted, dull and selected so that if drinks are spilt over the awkward garment, it is not a matter of any great importance. Topman is usually best for the 'Rexy' brigade, but does decent, fairly cheap clothes for most occasions and sizes.

Our final venture of the day was Joy. Nicky, perhaps endowed of a newfound knowledge of clothes, or, more likely, desperate to please Venetia and myself (who felt that he should buy



One man's journey from scruff to buff

something as a show of gratitude for our stylish selections and changing-room espionage photography) actually reserved some clothes for future purchase. Joy takes ideas for a great many of its clothes from MAN at Vivienne Westwood, resulting in excellently structured cardigans that make the body look taut regardless of whatever faux-pregnancy horrorshow you may be carrying around. The shop also provides a good range of inexpensive jeans that aren't exclusively for the 'Two-Twigs' battalion. Nicky's outfit from Joy works because the short, checked jacket evokes not only a kind of 'rocker-cool' but additionally screams 'investment purchase' in that tone that people use to justify high-priced items. It's classic and could go with most things, other than, of course, check trousers. (Unless you're from Tokyo's Harajuku district or are modelling 1980's Vivienne Westwood, which is about as fun to look at as the polar bear dying on 'Planet Earth'.) The t-shirt it is teamed with is designed with a simple 'smiley' motif. The jacket also served to cover any bumps that the t-shirt exposed, and so even when teamed with Nicky's gleaming white Armani trainers, the outfit was successful.

The murky world of campus dressing definitely needs an overhaul, and not only is it possible on a student budget, it also helps to escape the campus bubble. You may not feel the need to dress up when you see the same people every day, but even if you believe that dressing for them is a plastic, superficial affair, then at least dress for yourself. 'I'm a student' may be a look, but it's not always a good one.



'Blame the f***ing government'

From the sick to the very ill indeed, **Venetia Rainey** talks to UK band Foreign Beggars' Metropolis about all things hip hop

UK hip hop is a tricky genre to define. Some people argue that it is just a pale imitation of the original American hip hop, a music born in the basements of New York at the moment when MCs and DJs decided to mix together their respective talents. Some people daub it with the tainted brush of grime, calling to mind more mainstream artists like Dizzee Rascal, Wiley or, dare I say it, Lady Sovereign.

There is, however, a middle ground. A genre of music which has taken the best of both worlds and has ended up with a versatile sound with attitude, soul-crushing beats and an incredibly high standard of rapping, or rhyming. Foreign Beggars encapsulates everything good about UK hip hop. From the chilled out melodic vibes of 'Mind Out' (ft. Skrein), to the notorious aggressiveness and tongue-tying raps of 'Hold On', Foreign Beggars' style is not easily pinned down or summed up. So when they came to play in York earlier this year, in the suitably incongruous arena of the Working Men's Club on St Lawrence Street, I seized the opportunity to see what they were all about.

The result was not quite what I expected. Never mind the fantastic performance, by the end of the night I was chatting to Metropolis himself, who, for those new to

all this, MCs along with Orifice Vulgatron as part of the Beggars crew.

Months later, having listened to their various albums and EPs (for an introduction I suggest *Asylum Speakers*), I decided to catch up with Metropolis and try to get an insight into the state of UK hip hop today.

"I guess it's easy for guys to say we're an imitation of what's happening in the States," Metropolis begins, "To some extent we are, but that doesn't change the fact that there's some serious shit happening here. We're where US hip hop was at before everyone got big and they started churning out bland shit. I can easily draw parallels between Taskforce and Organised Konfusion.

"I think the scene has some pretty sick rhymers and producers, and it's getting bigger and better everyday. I think we need to have more infrastructure though, more hip hop nights, and we definitely need more support from the industry." Support from an industry which, as becomes more and more evident, would rather promote mainstream "bland shit" than new and more financially risky material. Thus, presumably, why Foreign Beggars felt the need to set up their own label, Dented Records, to promote UK hip hop artists otherwise neglected and voiceless. Sadly, it is still very much "the industry" that controls what and who we get to hear in terms of music. Unless, of course, you go looking for the un-championed, slightly less glossy stuff.

"Dubbledege, Ghost Town, Hudson Mohawke, Jid Sames, Fallen Angel, Mr Dick, Stig and [Dr.] Syntax, London Zoo", Metropolis lists without pausing for breath. "Skrein's got some dope stuff coming out, and I know Mad Head's doing ill shit from all different genres" There is no shortage of artists pioneering UK hip hop, apparently, they just don't necessarily get played on Radio 1 or Choice FM as much as, say, American hip hop.

We move away from the UK "ting", and onto the music-makers he rates, British or otherwise. "I'm gonna be a bit cheesy here and say Orifice is definitely up there. Dude works hard. From running the label, to being the craziest guy you've seen on stage, to dropping the illest verses in the studio; he gets the most respect.

On a less cheesy note, guys like Doom for his originality and general sickness, Pharoahe Monch for being the illest lyricist alive, Jehst for being the sickest producing lyricist on the face of the earth, or maybe that would actually be Necro - naah! I can't support that bullshit! - El-P [El-Producto] for constantly showing the mainstream the middle finger. Jay Dilla was the man though. Actually he gets the most respect on all levels." 'Ill' by the way, means good, as does 'sick'. This is London slang, and it is this quintessential London mentality that oozes from Foreign Beggars' every

'We're where US hip hop was at before people got big and started churning out their bland shit'

song that, for many, makes them so addictive. It is, as he astutely puts it, "a London ting", and anyone from London is able to instantly connect with this aspect of their music.

But despite the obvious talent, ambition and energy that pulses through hip hop (UK or not), for many there will always be the shadow of the inescapable dark side: the gangster and gun culture. "It's part and parcel of hip hop music, but it's not the be all and end all. When you think about it, guys like N.W.A, [Ice] Cube, the whole Death Row collective, whatever, all started out giving social commentary on what their situation was like in the ghetto. You wanna know who's to blame? Blame the fucking government! Rappers wouldn't rap so dang violent if young blacks weren't neglected by a racist mainstream society, born into a situation of severe poverty where crime and sport are the two main ways young people feel they can get rich."

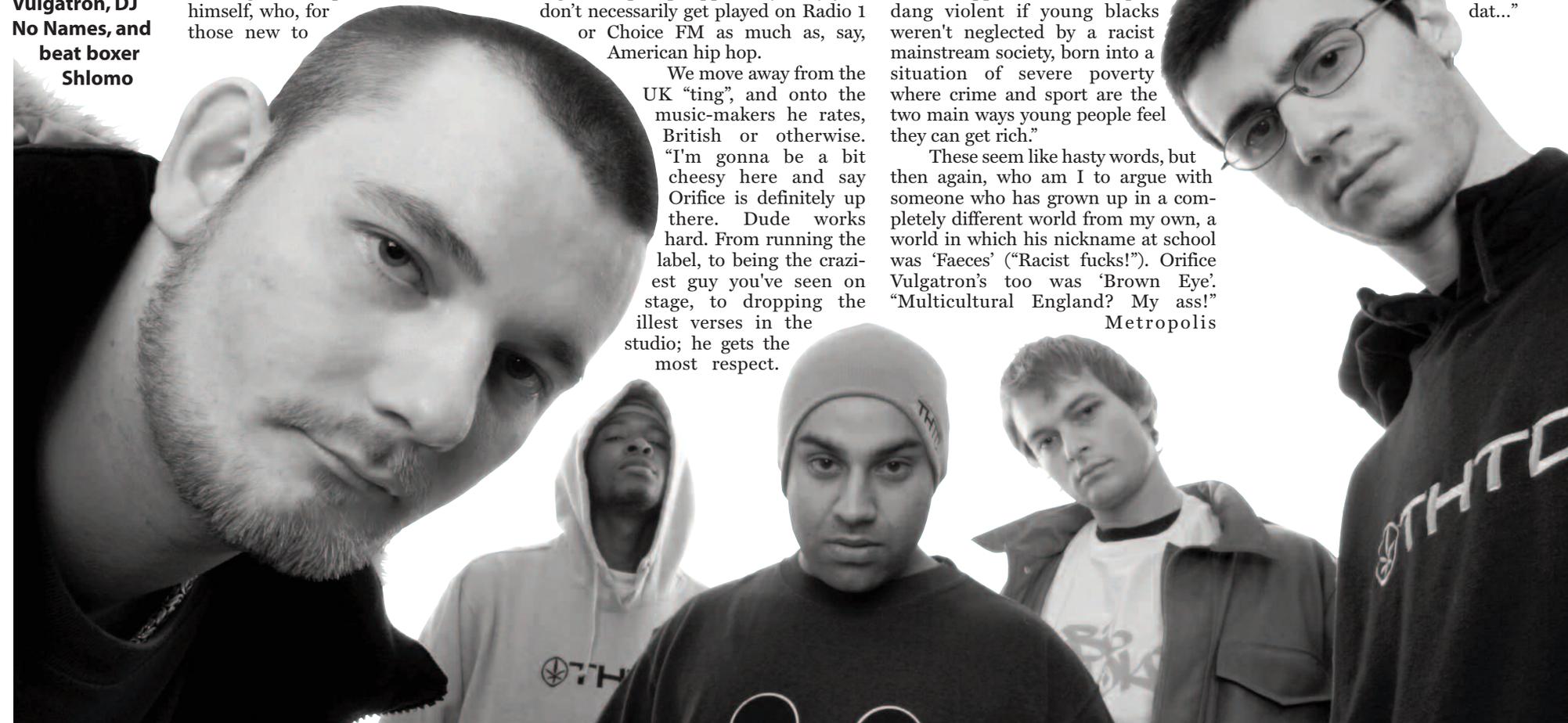
These seem like hasty words, but then again, who am I to argue with someone who has grown up in a completely different world from my own, a world in which his nickname at school was 'Faeces' ("Racist fucks!"). Orifice Vulgatron's too was 'Brown Eye'. "Multicultural England? My ass!" Metropolis

spits vehemently. "The funny thing is middle-class white America made that shit popular! And it's a similar situation over here now where middle-class England are championing grime music, 'cause it gives them a sneak peek into a world they're fascinated by but could never, and would never, want to be a part of." That, along with how the music actually sounds, I think silently, being myself a middle-class girl who avidly consumes a genre of music concerned primarily with a world which, I admit, I would never want to be a part of.

Their wide ranging fan base (from middle-class to pretty much anyone) is clearly reflected in the various locations that Foreign Beggars have been sneaking us a peek of their phenomenal beats and lyrics across the UK (and Europe). Including, of course, York. "Yeah, we played in York. Mad love to what we call 'Bobcat' who've brought us out there the past few times. Those are our peoples. Shout out to Fenna Rhodes as well." This "shout out" is curiously fitting considering that was how rappers first began, by literally introducing, or shouting out, their friends and the DJs at a show. Thus they became 'MCs', which of course normally stands for Master of Ceremonies.

Our conversation draws to a close as I ask about any particularly insane performances. "There's been some hectic ones. We played a gig at an Oxford ball and had the guys moshing in their tuxedos and ball gowns. We even made them stamp out the expensive-ass geraniums and shit! We got mad stories, but I won't go into depth about any 'cause I don't wanna incriminate the mans dem. What happens on the road and all dat..."

A London thing; Foreign Beggars L-R: producer Dag Nabbit, Metropolis, Orifice Vulgatron, DJ No Names, and beat boxer Shlomo



The bigger picture: a month

From Oxfam's Stand Up Against Poverty to York's first ever Black History Week organised by the Afro-Caribbean Society, look beyond your books and bevvies this month, says **Emily Cousins**

Fears ranging from rain to arrest raced haphazardly through my mind as my alarm clock heralded, with chirpy optimism, that dawn had finally broken. International Poverty Eradication Day had finally arrived. Despite sounding terribly melodramatic, this was certainly a big deal for four Oxfam activists freshly graduated from the 2007 Change Programme. We felt committed, we felt impassioned. We were ready.

Neon t-shirts, street percussion, fluorescent whistles, four-foot banners, new friends, old friends and 24 metres of white sheet combined to form our stand against poverty as we joined millions of others around the world celebrating this event. Our objectives were dual pronged: we wanted to raise awareness about those suffering in economical inequality and also gather signatures of support for a petition on climate change. This December, world leaders will attend the UN Climate Change Conference in Indonesia to decide on a proactive policy to prevent and stabilise our impact on the environment; an issue that massively affects the poor. Global warming however also carries a local warning. The floods of this summer in the UK show us that it is becoming an increasingly prevalent problem in our own communities, especially here in North Yorkshire. We hope that the names of those who signed the Oxfam petition will carry some authority of conscience and force action in the smoke filled board rooms.

Sadly there were only a dedicated few and a sprinkling of confused bystanders on campus to witness our efforts there. Though numbers were down, spirits were up, and come the golden fifteen-minutes-past-the-hour that is lecture change overs, we had



quite a steady crowd of students entering the smile, sign, sticker production line. Later in the day a carnival lead by a fantastic samba band erupted in St Sampson's Square. We pledged our dedication to the Millennium Goals in front of a crowd of around 80 people and even managed to get home in time for tea - quite literally, at the Ethics and Environment Teaparty where we continued to petition our fair trade cotton socks off.

It was humbling to think that all over the world, for that moment, we were all the same. As the day wore on, however, I began to think about what we were trying to promote. Tomorrow, I would return to my cushy campus lifestyle where a looming essay deadline was my most immediate worry. But for thousands taking part in Stand Up Against Poverty there is a vested interest beyond that of philanthropy.

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to stand up and be counted

Through no fault of their own, poverty is their life.

The struggle to cultivate ground cracked with drought and to harvest crops ruined by flooding occurs all over the world. Every drought and flood that occurs knocks back the economy of a developing country by roughly seven years. Starvation, famine, exploitation and injustice: these words epitomise a global problem that peaks at unacceptable levels in the developing world.

In truth, the unequal distribution of international wealth is so staggering that we cannot even begin to picture the 1.3 billion faces of those trapped in the cyclical drudgery of poverty. But these numbers become still more harrowing. Remove the decimal point and change a letter and you have a rough estimate for how the poverty trap manifests itself on a local level. 13 million: the number of people in the UK living below the poverty line. Worse than that,

Other page: showing worldwide solidarity.
This page: spreading the word on campus. **Below:** Afro-Caribbean Society rehearse.
Photos by Emily Cousins and Venetia Rainey

One day is not going to change all of this, but I hope we contributed to laying the foundations of thought that may help to solve the largest problem facing our generation. And this is just the beginning: we've many more Oxfam events coming up over the next few months. These will include film showings, Oxfam concerts, ethical consumerism awareness, and some work to improve gender equality and access to education.

So a huge thank you to all who supported the 'Stand Up' campaign in York. It was a real team effort brought to fruition by the commitment of many individuals and I felt hugely moved to be part of it. We contributed 270 to make the world record attempt this year. That makes me pretty proud. And now that I've overcome the potential awkwardness and embarrassment of that first time campaign I'd like to shake it up a bit, get creative and make some noise. Things are about to get wild...

To get involved please check out our 'Oxfam in York' Facebook group or email ec522 or ke507. We'd love to have



'Starvation, famine, exploitation and injustice: these words epitomise a global problem of frankly unacceptable levels'

nearly half the world's population lives on less than two dollars a day. That's 2.8 billion people. 2.8 billion people have one pound available to share between themselves and their families every day. In Vanbrugh, that would buy you just half a baguette.

BLACK HISTORY WEEK AT YORK

MONDAY, October 22

Traditional Wear Day
Traditional African Caribbean attire will be worn throughout the day.

TUESDAY, October 23

Honour Day (6pm-9pm), V/045
Including a black history debate with the Debating Society. Followed by a guest speaker, personal presentations, drama and dance performances by ACS, and a film.

WEDNESDAY, October 24

Hair & Beauty Day (7pm-8pm), G/020
A fashion show displaying the latest trends in African and Caribbean clothing, hair and beauty.

THURSDAY, October 25

Debate Evening (6pm-8pm), V/045
Join ACS and the Debating Society to discuss current issues related to black history.

FRIDAY, October 26

MoTown (9pm-2am)
ACS & Platinum host MoTown at Alcuin's B. Henry's with a karaoke hour.

SATURDAY, October 27

Love Music Hate Racism (9pm-2.30pm)
Live DJs, a live band (Apply the Brakes) & performances by ACS, Dance Soc, Capoeira, Samba band plus a special guest from London.
Music: R&B, Hip Hop, Bashment, Funky House, Drum & Bass, Chart and Cheese.
Venue to be confirmed.

SUNDAY, October 28

Dinner at Vudu Lounge.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: A PERSPECTIVE.

BY IKE OGBODO

This month, Africans and Caribbeans in Britain and the United States will be celebrating the origins of their forefathers during Black History Month. At our university this will be celebrated in Week 3, between October 22 and 28, with a different theme and different events occurring each day of the week. Hopefully yesterday you will have seen people donning traditional clothes for all of York to see, and appreciated, the variations in styles and the colourful features of African wear.

I had never really celebrated Black History Month in past years. Yet, whenever the month came around (every two years in October), discussions detailing the struggles of peoples of African ancestry in Britain and the United States would occupy the headlines and be at the fore of discussions. Martin Luther King, Jr, Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela are among many that have

recently strived to help improve the rights of Africans and Caribbeans in their newly adopted homes and regain lost power in their own lands. Often there are lost stories and struggles where the histories of our countries are forgotten. It is easy to celebrate and talk about what has happened in Britain and America, but we forget the daily struggles of those in Africa - the civil wars that have gripped and ripped our nations apart and the atrocious episodes of genocide that have destroyed and drastically restricted the great potential Africa possesses to be the most prosperous of continents. The great leaders that strived for the independence of the African nations never really seem to be realised in Black History Month.

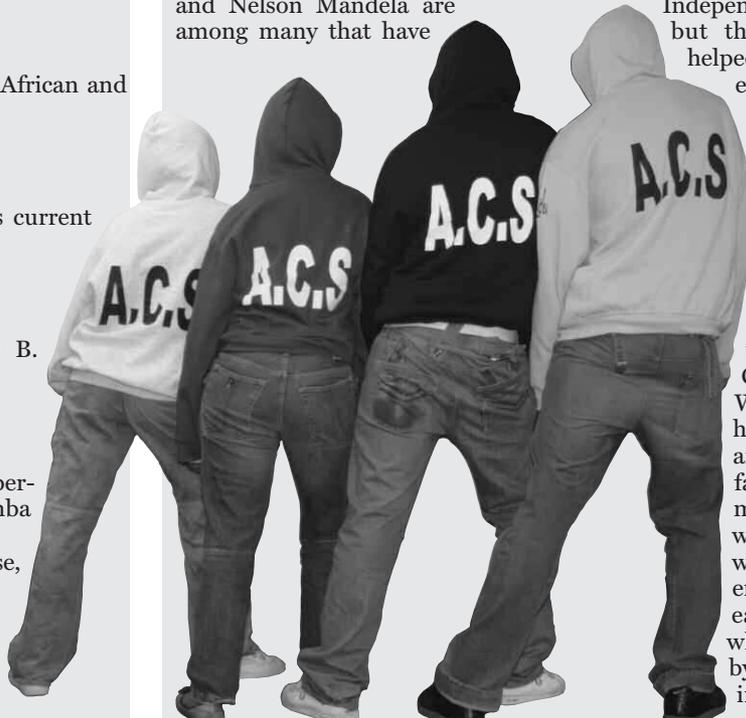
In both British and American society there are large numbers of Nigerians that celebrated Independence Day on October 1 but the names of those that helped Nigeria gain independence from the British Empire in 1960 are omitted. Nnamdi Azikiwe might ring a bell for the masses in Nigeria that celebrate their independence but for those abroad it is simply another name. While England prepared for their victorious World Cup in 1966, the Biafra War (Nigerian Civil War) had begun between Biafra and Nigeria. Yet another fact people forget. For the majority that have no idea what or where Biafra was, it was a short-lived independent country in the south-eastern region of Nigeria which was occupied mainly by the Igbo-speaking sector in Nigeria. Conflicts and

killings in the northern states of Nigeria against Igbo immigrants prompted the then eastern governor, Colonel Chukwuemeka Ojukwu, to declare Biafra an independent entity from Nigeria. This was an attempt to free the Igbos from persecution from the new Hausa-Yoruba (the other biggest sectors) political alliance. The Civil War ended on January 12 1970, but only after it had claimed the lives of more than 2 million people.

Ahmadou Ahidjo, who formed the Union Camerounaise political party in 1958, fought for the independence of Cameroon from its British and French colonial masters. After a few years of unrest and relatively small riots (compared to those experienced in Nigeria and Biafra), Cameroon managed to gain full independence on New Years Day, 1960. It was then that a unification of the French-speaking south and the English-speaking north was finally established.

In April 1980, Rhodesia gained independence following civil war and was given its current title of Zimbabwe. Following years of battling against the Smith government who had been pushing legislation through in favour of white rule, Abel Muzorewa and Joshua Nkomo helped the people of Zimbabwe to regain power over their land. The initial works of these courageous men succeeded in giving back the people of Zimbabwe control over their country, something they had lost just under a century before.

The names I have mentioned are some of the names I think we should be hearing in Black History Month. The stories behind these names and the stories of what they fought for are the true stories of black history. Currently, all we celebrate is the history of rights in other continents and the fight for changes to their constitutions. For me, history starts at home, and we should be careful not to forget that.



Many students pale at the thought of adding a job to their degree timetables but, says **Helen Citron**, part-time work can provide more than extra cash

I'm stressed, I'm sweaty and I've just spilled soup onto a businessman's crotch. 'Why on earth am I here?' is a question that runs through my mind on a not infrequent basis during my shifts as a waitress at one of York's upmarket eateries.

The answer for me and for most students who choose to get a job during term-time is, of course, primarily financial. Being a student is an expensive business and for those that receive no financial help from parents the student loan simply doesn't suffice. I do count myself lucky; for me a job is not a strict necessity. Having one means I don't feel anxious about dwindling funds come the end of term and keeps the bottom of my overdraft at a reassuring distance.

The general consensus seems to be that getting a job at university will be damaging both academically and socially and this can be true. Obviously each case is different. For those with heavy academic timetables, factoring work shifts into the already loaded equation of lectures, assessed work and revision can be tricky. I would argue that Arts students such as myself, who only have around six hours of teaching a week, can't really say they don't have time for a job. But as long as you cast off the lay-in-bed student stereotype by exercising a degree of organisation and time management then holding down a job, a degree and a social life shouldn't

be a problem. Keeping shifts limited to weekends, when the pace of university life slows, and ensuring that you are clear about when you cannot work should ensure a healthy balance.

'Answering questions about the soup of the day is refreshing after a day in the library'

Aside from the financial gain, my job has brought quite a few less expected benefits. Being a waitress is by no means relaxing, but it does provide something of an antidote to university life. Having to answer customers' questions about whether the rib-eye steak comes with chips or what the soup of the day is, is strangely refreshing after a day cooped up in the library struggling through two hundred pages on some obscure Icelandic war poet. Also, as a student it's sometimes easy to forget what it's like to function in a group of people who are not well-educated 18- to 25-year-olds. At my work, communication with surly kitchen boys, temperamental French chefs, a slave-driving

manager and fellow, equally harassed waiting staff is essential if you're going to deliver any kind of service.

Many students work at restaurants and bars for cash during term time

Being part of an industrious, practical, profit-making environment is stimulating in a different way to the academic rigour of university life and is good preparation for the majority of graduates who will enter the business world. Many of us hope to achieve a good final degree mark whilst working part time. If, despite the apparent difficulties inherent in maintaining a job alongside studies, we manage to do this it is surely indicative of an industrious and organised character.

It may be difficult to believe, but work can also be fun. Never have I experienced so much gossip, rumour and intrigue circulating amongst one group of people. The manager and his deputy have an amusingly tempestuous relationship and I can't wait for the fireworks that will erupt when the owner finds out that three of his chefs are planning to defect to the restaurant next door.

Ultimately, though, there's no denying that being a waitress – or, I imagine, a shop assistant or barmaid – is for the most part pretty tedious. I

only have to face the endless demands of customers and the boredom of polishing cutlery twice a week, but for most of my colleagues it's a full time career. It may sound cheesy but having a job has really made me appreciate what I've got. That it's really important to pursue a career that is stimulating and challenging is something that doing a bog-standard job brings home like nothing else. I'm hoping that with a bit of luck and a lot of hard work, I'll be the one sitting at the table being served in a couple of years time.



Work: a way to make a living?

Making the most of your time at university should not include pulling pints, says **Henry James Foy**

Students who work part-time often find they have less time to spend in the library

Let's get one thing straight here. Jobs are bad things. They get you up early, they're demanding, time-consuming, stressful, infuriating. And the worst thing about jobs? As soon as you graduate, you're going to have one. Forever.

Sure, I can hear those aspiring bungee-jumping instructors or computer-game testers shouting that jobs can be fun and yes, some jobs are more fun than others. But believe me, even

'Milk the government for every last penny. The exchequer will pick up the tab while you're playing Ultimate Frisbee or joining LawSoc'

Shane, who earns his living taking tourists scuba-diving off the Great Barrier Reef has mornings when he can think of nothing worse than getting in the water.



There's the infuriating colleague who screws up even the most basic tasks, or the demanding boss who shouts for the sake of it. I haven't even started on dealing with the public.

So coming to University is a three-year cushion of not-really-work-but-kind-of before taking the big plunge, and getting a job is simply wasting the time you have here.

For sure, many students feel the pressure of having to pay for their education. Tuition fees, accommodation charges and living costs all need financing. But why pay for it now? Put it off, live a little – there are loads of schemes and fancy finance packages out there to help. The trusty student loan is naturally the best example. That system has been designed to allow us to concentrate on enjoying university, rather than worrying about how to pay for it. You

are safe in the knowledge that it only needs to be paid back after graduation, and only when you are financially secure. As a student, you're expected to be a 'burden on the state'. So be it. Milk the government for every last penny – that's exactly what student loans do. The exchequer picks up the tab while you're playing Ultimate Frisbee or joining LawSoc, and then you pay it back, when you can afford to. I wouldn't knock it, that's the best loan deal you'll ever get.

As far as I see it, two things will suffer as a direct result of getting a job during your degree. The first is your educational experience, and by that I really mean the all-important grade. The second is your social life, including the number of societies you can join, the number of people you can meet and the amount of time you have to enjoy

these great new friends.

Students who engage in employment during their degree take precious time away from study – and this has an adverse effect on their grades. A study in 2005 found that the chances for students working 15 hours a week of achieving a first or upper second class degree were only 62% of their non-working peers' chances. Of those who worked, 80% said they had less time studying and preparing for assignments. So there you go; get a job, and you're already 38% less likely to get a top degree than the chap sat next to you in lectures.

And what about all your mates? Even more importantly, what about all those great people you could be meeting? This is especially pertinent for freshers – meeting friends and developing bonds with people is crucial to enjoying university. If you're out serving pints while the rest of your block are out drinking them, you may well find yourself drifting apart from them. Simply put, if you spend your evenings and weekends in employment, you will end up with a less enjoyable university experience than everyone else.

Our time at university is precious. It's a time to expand horizons, stretch knowledge and get involved with things that you might never get another chance to try. So go play quidditch, run for President, learn how to pole-dance, drink your weight in snakebite, or – god forbid – learn that Poetry Anthology off by heart. You've got decades to pull pints or flip burgers if you really want to, but make the most of your time here first. It's all about priorities.

MusicReviews

SINGLES REVIEWS

ARTIST: ONE NIGHT ONLY
SINGLE: YOU AND ME

The ever feral and increasingly corpulent Zane Lowe has dubbed this track his 'Hottest Record in the World'. Not a bad start, considering most of the band are only just exiting puberty. Accordingly, the track retains a sense of cheery, youthful buoyancy. I guess you have to admit, albeit with reluctance, it's refreshing to see a band that isn't afraid to admit that they might be, well, happy.

ARTIST: THE PROCLAIMERS
SINGLE: WHOLE WIDE WORLD

The Proclaimers, of "I would walk 500 miles..." fame are back, it seems - and not squandering away their pension fund on some cottage in Scotland (as I'd always assumed). Perhaps not the "stirring sing-along rock number" claimed by the press release, but this cover of the Wreckless Eric '70s track trundles along quite pleasantly and only occasionally falls prey to monotony. The boys aren't quite back in town, but at least Craig and Charlie seem to be 'on their way...'

ARTIST: TIMBALAND PRESENTS ONE REPUBLIC
SINGLE: APOLOGIZE

Not your conventional Timbaland track - mostly because at first listen you could easily mistake it for the Backstreet Boys' comeback record. Granted, that's slightly harsh, but really, after all the saccharine melodics we've been inundated with this week, I really was hoping for something a bit more gritty - at the very least a bassline that doesn't lull you to sleep. Is that really so much to ask, Timbaland? Is it?

ARTIST: VINCENT VINCENT AND THE VILLAINS
SINGLE: ON MY OWN

Finally something with bit of zest, something just about sparky enough to haul me out of the general musical apathy that this week's singles have thrust upon me with their unflinching mediocrity. Kicking off with a syn-copated bluesy (bordering on reggae) beat followed by some a cappella style harmonizing and then practically prancing into some good honest indie-guitar strumming - genre wise, it keeps you on your toes. Besides, the rhythm's infectious in that shoulder-shrugging kinda way - and so, it falls upon me to admit, it's quite good, actually.

ARTIST: WILLY MASON
SINGLE: GOTTA KEEP WALKIN'

I'm not sure why it is, but record companies never tire of sending me Willy Mason records. Unfortunately, since Willy basically has one sound, they all tend to meld seamlessly into one another. Yet, whereas with most bands, monotony usually spells disaster, Willy-wise it's quite a different story. Mason may stick to a formula but it's one that he executes perfectly and this latest offering showcases his unique ability to fuse the soothing with the haunting - like the perfect cup of coffee, it doesn't taste much different with every sip, but it still goes down good.

Singles this week were reviewed by Sara Sayeed

ARTIST: THE VINCENT BLACK SHADOW

ALBUM: FEARS IN THE WATER

REVIEW: SARA SAYEED

DATE: 05/11/07



Upon listening to the first track, I was pleased to find that this band was going to pose me with some cerebral challenges; it sounded so familiar, I really had to wrack my brains to come up with a valid reference. There were the commanding female vocals, the jaunty but not chirpy rhythms that all sounded vaguely reminiscent of the Long Blondes but, you know, worse. After a few more tracks my mental anguish eased slightly as, thankfully, they were all so derivative that a plethora of comparisons just flooded in - but I'll be selective.

First up there's Evanescence, who until now I thought were unparalleled in morose, artless crooning. But then, they also sound like Placebo, if just a shade less self-indulgent and just tad more, well, awful. Yet, one must give credit where it's due and where



ARTIST: DREAM THEATER
VENUE: MANCHESTER APOLLO
REVIEW: PETER CAMBELL
DATE: 06/10/07



For those of you who have not heard of Dream Theater, all you need to know is that they are essentially five virtuoso musicians, all classically trained, who collectively write some of the most complicated and original music of our time. Although they saw and influenced the transition from progressive rock to progressive metal in music, only this year have Dream Theater headlined a tent at the Download Festival. On their current world tour they are only playing a handful of dates on British soil, and have sold out Wembley Arena.

What particularly stands out in a Dream Theater show is not only the band's phenomenal precision but the synchronisation of that tightness with the breathtaking lighting and visual displays that comprise their two-and-a-half-hour set. Despite having over 20 years of music to choose from, the band predominately stuck to a selection from their new album, *Systematic Chaos*. Every one was played absolutely perfectly, and highlights included 'Take the Time' (closing with a solo duel between keyboardist Jordan Rudess and guitarist John Petrucci) and 'In the Presence of Enemies' (a 25 minute beast of a song).

The blistering virtuosity and the perfectly executed lighting display put the show at the top of any live music event I have ever been to, including last year's Reading Festival, which is not something I would say lightly.

this band excels is in offering so many delightfully interesting talking points. Visually, they remind me of those bands that used to sing on Buffy - you know the ones that did 'live' gigs, but then were skilfully worked into the episode by actually being vampires? The only place where VBS fail in this comparison is that the Vampires in Buffy were more subtly disguised, whereas these guys, with their blood-stained lips, black fishnets and generally dreary attire, probably would have been staked the minute they stepped on stage. Shame, as then you would miss their intensely sombre lyrics. Although some are a tad too subjective for a mass audience ("new life has found a place, it's laid eggs in someone's eye"), there are also those that many can relate to. For example, 'Valentine', which you can sing to your loved one: "Promise you'll stay awake tonight when I load the barrel. You owe me another night! A pony, a glass of wine."

VBS have so much to offer our world, that you can't help worrying, who is looking after these benevolent creatures? Perhaps someone should suggest psychiatric care, or a brownie? Something to lift the spirits. Bless them, but really, all this darkness can't be healthy.



ARTIST: STARS
VENUE: BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB, LEEDS
REVIEW: SAM THOMAS
DATE: 02/10/07



Stars' hometown Montreal is a very long way from Leeds in every conceivable sense, and the well-worn charm of the Brudenell was a strange fit for a band who specialise in writing quirky, earnest lovesongs then swathing them in a lush sound with big, bold hooks.

Three of their number moonlight in Canadian supergroup Broken Social Scene, but it's clear from the start they're a different proposition entirely. Opener 'Take Me To The Riot' isn't the strongest song on their new album, but Torquil Campbell delivers the refrain with manic relish and co-vocalist Amy Millan's relentless enthusiasm wins over a reluctant crowd. Often they join forces Gainsbourg and Bardot-style, creating a little sexual tension to keep things from getting too mawkish. Take the whimsical 'The First Five Times', where a giggling couple recollect their courtship - or rather, places they left embarrassing upholstery stains.

Big singles 'Ageless Beauty' and 'Set Yourself on Fire' go down best with the devotees down front. Ultimately, it's 'Elevator Love Letter' that seals the deal. Millan and Campbell wring every last ounce of emotion from it, belting out the chorus with wide eyes pleading: "Elevator, elevator, take me home."

Stars aren't trying to be sea-deep or razor-sharp: they just want you to come along for the ride.



ARTIST: MY AMERICAN HEART
ALBUM: HIDING INSIDE THE HORRIBLE WEATHER
REVIEW: STEPHEN MITCHELL
DATE: OUT NOW



Attitudes to certain types of music are inevitably shaped by preconceptions that have grown to summarise an entire style. 'Emo' is a case in point - since evolving into a mainstream category it has been plagued with accusations of self-pitying lyrical tendencies. It is apparent that My American Heart have nothing further to offer, or so the first track's opening couplet: "Your name is devastation, you filled us with frustration" would suggest.

Granted, My American Heart have enthusiasm and there is definitely an occasional catchiness to wannabee guitar anthems such as 'Moving On' and 'Fantasy'. Yet it appears unlikely there will be anything genuinely attractive to a listener hoping for more than a few self-absorbed sentiments presented in a slick but essentially empty fashion. Perhaps it is telling that the few impressive moments are when the band stray from the formalism of overly robust numbers such as 'Boys! Grab Your Guns'. 'Dangerous' just about deviates from the emotionally unconvincing furrow of the rest of the album, with its slower pace and an organ-enhanced, multi-textured guitar piece.

Unfortunately, despite the (very) brief glimpses of complexity shown at (rare) points, the inclusion of a track named 'Tired and Uninspired' appears apt.

Going undercover with a cover girl

The glamorous, jet-set world of international modelling is one far removed from the tribulations of student life. Or is it? **Nicky Woolf** talks to someone who has found a way to balance both and stay sane

“Ok. So the agencies that I have are in... Barcelona, Madrid, Milan, New York, uh, Tokyo, Cape Town, Athens, Lisbon, I think... and London, obviously. That’s it, I think; I can’t really remember. Oh, and Amsterdam. I get booked by people directly at the moment, so I don’t need to go to any castings, thank God.”

Amy Browne doodles nervously on the table with an elegant finger. Her tone is apologetic, embarrassed almost. “This is awful. I can’t think of anything to say.”

She takes a deep breath and a sip from her black coffee as I ask exactly what a casting entails. “Ok. Ok. So when I’m in London, my agent will send me nine or 10 addresses to go to each day, which will be for magazines, advertising companies, casting production agencies, and I will go along, take my book...” she pushes her hands outwards and upwards in the motion of an opening book, a gesture of humble supplication, “and then if they like me they’ll book me through my agent, or... you just never hear from them again.” She shrugs. “So that’s how a casting works.”

Fusion President and international fashion model, Amy Browne has every right to be the most arrogant, commanding figure I can imagine. But when I meet her for the first time, in a crowded pub, she is endearingly down-to-earth; with an unassuming, pleasant air that is stopped short of shyness by her quiet self-confidence. She dresses stylishly, but not extravagantly, today in whites and greys. Her figure is implied rather than expressed, and her very long blonde hair is worn loose, voluminous and messy.

The world she’s describing is one of tightly controlled rigour, though. “Last term, I got called and they said, ‘Ok, you’ve got a flight booked to Valencia’ or, ‘You’ve got to be at Leeds airport by seven in the morning and you’ll get back the day after and you’re going to be working for this company.’ So I just had to be like,” she swivels at the table and addresses the air to her right, “Ok guys, I’m going to Madrid tomorrow, or wherever, see you in a couple of days...”

She pauses. “Um. In fact the last one I did was in Ibiza. I went, and everyone was so jealous – but then I didn’t get to see any of it at all. Everyone said, ‘Did you go to some cool parties?’ Nope. I got there – the plane was delayed so I got to bed at three in the morning – woke up at five to get hair and makeup done in time for the sunrise, then worked until seven at



“I just did a photo shoot in Ibiza. Everyone said ‘did you go to some cool parties?’ Nope”

night and got a plane back at ten. I did a job in Antigua once, and I was there for less than two days. A nine-hour flight from London to Antigua for a day and a half. It’s ridiculous. Such a huge carbon footprint. So that’s literally how fast it works. And you never, well, rarely, hear about a job more than a day in advance.”

I ask what the people she meets are like. “Some are very nice,” she says, then grins, “some are really not very nice at all. I haven’t met any models who I’ve really kept in contact with, apart from my best friend, but I met him through school rather than through modelling. The thing is, you meet people – like in Athens, the first time I went abroad to stay with an agency, I was with a girl from Slovakia non-stop for three weeks. We were sharing a room, we were going to the same castings, and we got on well – but then after that three weeks, she goes away to New York, or Milan, I come back to London. I go to university, she goes to Tokyo, and then we never really cross paths again, and even if we do it’s just for, like, a day. It’s really difficult to make good friends in the business. It’s a really lonely business, actually.”

I am finding it very difficult to imagine this distinctly illuxurious view



of the modelling profession. It would seem that far from being a life of first-class tickets and champagne receptions, it is actually more like an industrial production-line: flight, through make-up to photography, then another flight home, all in swift succession. It seems mildly depressing, and this is all before we have even started to talk about issues such as anorexia and drug-use.

Is it really all that bad, I ask? Is there not a sense of glamour to it, a sense of self-satisfaction at least?

“You meet people who you’ve seen in magazines millions of times, all the models from all the big campaigns. You meet them in a casting room and they look just like everyone else, chatting away and being completely normal. You see these girls, some of the girls who’ve been in the most glamorous campaigns, they look completely ordinary. They don’t look particularly happy, they’ve always got problems with money – I mean, you do get the few who don’t have problems with money at all, but that’s a very select handful – but the rest... it’s not a good lifestyle, it’s not healthy at all.”

“Also, some of these girls, especially the ones from Eastern Europe, they get pushed into it when they’re like 14 or 15, and they have to be professional from the day they start, which means that they don’t have any childhood. It

Amy Browne is both a successful model and the chair of one of York’s largest societies, Fusion, co-ordinating the dance and fashion extravaganza



just gets completely wiped away.”

Upon further discussion of the health problems in the modelling business, I notice her wince slightly. “When I went to Cape Town for a month to work with an agency there during my gap year, I was meant to be staying in a flat full of girls. But when I turned up to the agency they were like: ‘Nice to see you. We’ve decided to put you in a two-bedroom apartment with a male model from London.’ So I turn up at this flat and this guy opens the door, really muscular, gorgeous boy, but half an hour into the conversation it turned out that he’d run away from rehab a week ago for crack and heroin addiction, two

months before he was supposed to leave.

“You quite often meet people like that. He started modelling really young, like 12 or 13, and this brought him a lot of money at a very young age when he had nothing to spend it on. So he would just go out. He was with an agency that is notoriously bad for male models and drugs. There’s a crew of them who all get wasted all of the time. Once you get into that set you’re a bit messed up really, especially if you’ve ended up leaving school early.”

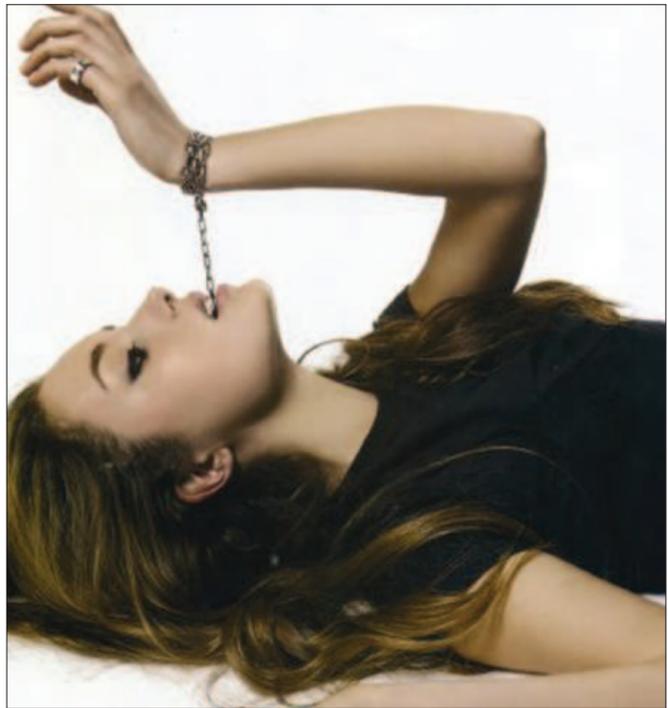
Browne herself seems to be remarkably free from this influence. In fact, she professes almost allergic dislike to alcohol. I ask her whether it’s her double life, student and jet-setter, that has kept her sense of reality. “It’s alright as long as you surround yourself with family and friends, and keep your feet on the ground,” she says, nodding. “That’s why I don’t really like hanging out with other models that much, apart from a few.” Her tone turns serious. “It’s not good for your self-esteem and it’s not good for your general view of life, because if everything rests on your looks then you’ve got nothing left for when you get older, have you?”

“It’s taken up to five hours to do some hair once. Once I had to have ribbons stuck to my eyelids and then,” she puffs her hair up and threads her hands through to illustrate ribbons,



“I don’t look like I do in the pictures. So much goes on: make-up, hair for five hours, and another ten hours with people photoshopping”

“they took them round, fed them through and...” I must have looked lost, “Do you understand?” I thought I did, and it looked, I have to say, extremely painful, or time-consuming, or some-



thing.

I ask her what she thinks needs to be said about modelling, and her answer is instantaneous. “You can be too thin to be a model. And I want people to know - I don’t look now like I do in the pictures that come out in these things, it’s just, so much goes on between the moment the photo is taken and when it finally comes out to print. Make-up, hair, five hours, you know, or whatever it takes and then another ten hours in production with people photoshopping it and retouching it.

“Everything in a magazine is photoshopped, absolutely everything. I went into a shop once, and I couldn’t work out if that was me on a poster or not. It looked like me, but I couldn’t remember wearing that hat, or something, and I stood in front of this poster for ages. I was like ‘Hmmm - yeah, I think it is actually.’ I had to call up my mum and take a picture of it on my phone. Without make-up and without photoshop, I don’t think I’d have a career.”

Was it always this way? What happened to the diva-tastic supermodels of the ‘80s and ‘90s? The Twiggy and the Naomi Campbells? “I don’t think there’s space in the market any more for the egos that those supermodels brought with them. Now there’s so many people in the market who want

to work with you that if you’re not a nice person then people just aren’t going to book you anymore.”

I ask if Amy thinks this has anything to do with the new Dove adverts, the ‘real beauty’ campaign. She laughs musically. “I was on an airplane coming back from a job the other day, and the guy sitting next to me was the head of the advertising campaign for that whole Dove Campaign for Real Beauty thing. It was quite amazing actually, he seemed to be really guarded with me, because he thought I was going to be really angry with him for having done that. I was like ‘It’s ok!’ In any case, the models in those Dove adverts are just as airbrushed as in any other advert.”

I had not realised quite how much of a dangerous world modelling is. When the media splash vivid pictures of Kate Moss’s latest drugs scandal on the front pages and her marketability suddenly increases, it is those at the bottom, the youngest and most vulnerable, that get the message. Publicity is publicity; this is how you make it in the fashion industry. The sheer artificiality of it all is incredible.

But it also seems to be fulfilling. Browne, certainly, seems to find it rewarding in a very real way, and I genuinely believe that, for her at least, it goes beyond the simple ego trip of seeing yourself reworked and airbrushed to the pinnacle of beauty.

Iran: a land of contradictions

The Middle East is often presented in the western media as a frightening dystopia. **Alex Forsyth** travels around the region and discovers a surprisingly different reality

Propaganda is a wonderful thing. It involves striking headlines, bright colours and memorable slogans. What's more, it can be funny. Of course, today, propaganda seems a distant concept for those living in the west, and it's certainly not what we expect from our 'liberal' media and democratic governments. Unfortunately, however, western political and media culture is riddled with inherent prejudices, which contribute to a gulf of ignorance in the public consciousness. On a three month trip around the Middle East this summer, I stopped off in countries that are black-listed by tourism boards, branded as rogue states by western governments, and written into the proverbial 'axis of evil' by the western media. Iran, which was my main port of call, dominated the international headlines for the weeks leading up to my departure. In going, I wanted to find out whether these places really are as hostile as is commonly made out, or just misunderstood.

Before I left, I glanced over various media sources, and found that the BBC website and various newspapers presented the Middle East as a dangerously hot climate to be stepping into. In the previous months, the Iranian military had taken 15 British marines hostage. Riots had broken out over Salman Rushdie's OBE award, and the British embassy had been surrounded by angry mobs who shouted "Death to the British" and threw stones with such frequency that jokes were made about the embassy starting a rock garden.

Furthermore, there were reports of the vehemently righteous Moral Police cutting men's hair in the streets and arresting women for bad hijab. The most frightening article was headlined 'Behead those with long hair', and chillingly spoke of execution threats for those whose hairstyles are deemed homosexual (essentially anything longer than a few inches). I got my hair cut first thing the next day.

No matter how seriously you take the media, no matter how finely tuned your propaganda antennae, incessant bombardment with fear-mongering tales has probably left you at least a little reluctant to pack your bags and go a-holidaying in the Middle East. Though I felt just about prepared with my short hair and bag full of plain t-shirts, my first steps on Iranian soil were nonetheless taken with trepidation.

This mentality lasted approximately seven seconds. The moment I stepped out onto the streets of uptown Tehran at night, I knew that the truth about Iran had been distorted. Older citizens in traditional dress mixed freely with young men sporting coiffures to rival Noel Fielding's, teenagers garbed in glittering Franz Ferdinand t-shirts and skinny jeans, and glamorous women wearing oversized sunglasses

and bright headscarves. That night, I met with Behrouz, a wealthy, Canadian-born Iranian who was repatriated when he was 15. When I inquired about the Moral Police and their impact on Iranian civilians, he replied, "Oh them? Dude, they come out for a few weeks in the summer just to remind people they exist. Yeah they piss us off and sometimes some really bad shit can happen but usually you just give them ten bucks and they leave you alone." He went on to explain how mostly, for young, affluent, liberal Iranians like himself, life is a cycle of "going to house parties, smoking up, getting wasted and choppin' girls" (which to my relief was slang for picking them up, not hacking them to pieces). But how, I wondered, did that work under such a stringent Sharia law?

The only way to find out was to try it myself. As it turned out, to my surprise, it is still possible to break the rules in a country that is ruled by an extreme Islamic theocracy. At night, Behrouz and his friends drive shiny vehicles to meet a dealer, who sells both drugs and drink in whatever quantities are required, and then, after 'choppin' a sufficient number of women, head back to a large house for all-night parties, Iranian style.

After this turning point in my perception of the country, the more time I spent in Iran, the more it became apparent that the frightening situation presented in the media back home was a fabrication. The people, for one, are incredi-

bly warm. The word 'hospitality' does not even begin to describe the friendliness that Iranians will bestow upon you. Not an hour would pass without someone, somewhere, offering something for free. Smiling old men prof-

"The Moral Police? They come out in the summer to piss you off, but they'll leave you alone if you give them ten bucks"

Perceptions of Iranian culture are often distorted by media bias

ferred cigarettes stuffed with 'herbs'; laughing vendors offered ice creams, and people I'd only just met welcomed me into their homes. While it is true that a system of Tarof (a code of hospitality) applies in Iran, the people, along with practically all those I came across in the Middle East, were unquestioningly generous and gracious.

So, why should this have surprised me? The answer, of course, is the portrayal of the Middle East in the media. Iran is presented as a dystopia where crazed police roam the streets, machete in hand, itching to deal out Moral Thought Justice, while rioters explode anything they can get their dissenting hands on. And yet here were children chasing each other round roller-skates and BMXs, whilst plump mothers invited me to join enormous family picnics that

continued



until sunset. Of course, one should not become carried away with idyllic notions of Iranian life and forget the country's problems. Something is definitely rotten in the state of Iran. Singing and dancing are illegal, the right to free speech is essentially void and women are subjected to what I would consider inhumane treatment (although that is another discussion). What is crucial to understand, however, is that the danger is not from the Iranian people to us, but from the government to its own people. Countless Iranians I spoke to expressed disgust at President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his band of Imams, rather than at the British people. More importantly they also distinguished us from our government. Over a Nargile in Esfahan, I spoke to Khalid Houssein, who commented: "I love the English, but your government will rule the world in the end and you won't have to fire a bullet." This chimed with an earlier report I had heard about a media fostered conspiracy theory that the British, 'the little Satan', were behind everything in Iran (even the attacks on the embassy.)

Media propaganda works both ways. The US branded Iran's revolutionary guards as terrorists so Iran branded the CIA as terrorists. Amnon Levy, an Israeli, told me how "the Israeli news tells us how groups from Gaza want to kill us on holiday." The Palestinians have created a Micky Mouse lookalike, 'Farfur', who gets beaten to death by Israeli settlers on live television. Then there is the Turkish pro-US television news which flashes up numbers of killed terrorists to a soundtrack of gaudy, Wagnerian synth.

There is a somewhat questionable saying that every country gets the government it deserves. Perhaps it gets the media it deserves, too. We may ask ourselves why we are being told that the Middle East is full of people who threaten our freedom and jeopardise democracy. Or why there is more negative media about Iran than China, whose government executes far more of its own people and has Tibet to answer for. What is clear to me is that the public perception of Iran panders to leaders' political agendas, and that the media greases the wheels of government propaganda. What better way to break down communication between countries and cultures than to present them as hostile, radical and unapproachable?

If the time finally rolls around for the west to invade Iran, the public will probably perceive the country as an abstract land of Islamic violence, stubborn dictators and intolerant people. Even if you believe that you are worldly enough to spot a lie when you see one, the fact remains that all the while your perceptions are vicarious: you are already submitting yourself to somebody else's version of the truth. So do it. Go travelling. Find out for yourself.

Not such a man's world

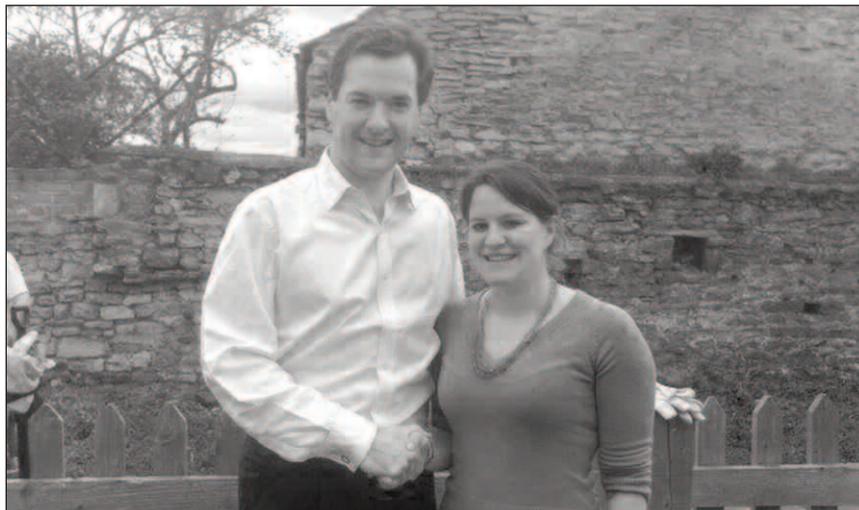
From the Iron Lady to Blair's Babes, women in politics have struggled to be taken seriously. **Jennifer O'Mahony** looks at the implications for 21st century politics

The pictures emerging from the Conservative Party conference this month were all very similar. David Cameron and George Osborne with their glued on grins, and a couple of Samantha Cameron looking bashful. The photo of William Hague, aged 16, speaking at his first conference was once again dug up and ridiculed. And then there was Theresa May. Who would have thought a pair of leopard-skin patterned wellies could cause such a fuss? 'Tragic' was the word bandied around the most, but why was there no mention of what May had said during the conference that day? Or, in fact, the speeches of any other female?

There is now a fairly vocal minority of female politicians in Britain, but they are routinely ignored - or worse, subjected to derisive comments by balding, middle-aged male journalists, generally on their outfits, or in Jacqui Smith's case, their cleavage. Theresa May's shoes have had far more coverage than her views or responsibilities as an MP ever have. What about Ken Clarke's belly? David Miliband's haircut? Nicholas Soames in general? The truth is that the media finds it difficult simply to accept female politicians as representatives of the electorate and of the country.

There are, generally speaking, two clichés of female politicians: ruthless bitch or weak woman. Hillary Clinton apparently falls under the first category. These women are unafraid of power, and that scares a lot of men. Articles describe Clinton as "ambitious" in an entirely negative way, and words such as 'calculating' crop up all too often. It is surely naive to assume that any person running for the Presidency of the United States isn't calculating. That is how elections are won. Clinton is well on her way to achieving the Democratic nomination; a far cry from reading out cookie recipes for the 'Soccer Mom' demographic her husband courted during his second campaign. The cliché of the weak woman takes human form in Ruth Kelly. She was always accused of being a Blair loyalist to the point of having no opinion of her own, or criticised for being strongly Catholic (despite there being no material evidence that her religion impinged on her job in any way) and was generally felt to be an annoyance who didn't deserve to be in power. These stereotypes allow the public safely to categorise these women in their minds, reducing their achievements to: "She's the one whose husband cheated on her, right?"

Another assumption women face is that they are only there to represent other women. Whilst women's issues are obviously important, it seems strange when Patricia Hewitt, the former health secretary, or Jacqui Smith, the Home Secretary, were asked about issues that had nothing to do with their



Above: Hillary Clinton and Margaret Thatcher took different approaches to their positions as women in politics. Below: Chair of York Tories Julia Heaton with Shadow Chancellor George Osborne

department, just because they were the appropriate gender. Women are expected to adhere to certain roles, even when they do make it to the upper echelons of government. Julia Heaton, Chairman (she doesn't mind the 'man' as she finds any variation patronising) of the York Tories describes the way women are perceived when at conference and in Westminster: "People assume that any women around are assistants to MPs, wives and families of MPs, not there as politicians. When I did work experience in Parliament there were two women and one man. The women always showed guests around, and the man talked about the hardcore politics."

What do women really bring to politics, and what are they changing? Heaton thinks that women are making politics "softer". Not in the sense of making it less substantial, but rather

making it easier to digest. The '90s are well and truly dead, and the work-life balance and paternity leave are hot topics. Is it any wonder that so many felt alienated by a political system consisting of a bear pit of antagonistic ex-public schoolboys? A softer politics could lead to a softer world, where logic and reason dominate. Harriet Harman and Jacqui Smith were said to support legislation to criminalise men who buy sex rather than the women who sell it. This is entirely logical; obviously the prostitute is not the only guilty party in the exchange. It is amazing that it has taken until 2007 for someone to think about enshrining this in law.

There is a sense of immense bravery surrounding many female politicians. Think of Aung San Suu Kyi, who was held under house arrest for 10 years in Burma; democratically elected

by her people but unable to serve them, unable to see her family, but always smiling in photos, as though the knowledge that she is in the right is enough. Another example is Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan. Deposed by a military coup and living in exile in Dubai for the last eight years, Bhutto finally returned to Pakistan last week despite the Taliban's death threat. She escaped unscathed from the promised attack, and in the press conference which preceded it, her daughter Bakhtwah simply said: "I am so proud of my mother". These two women have a selfless dedication to their country which surely allows them to transcend their perceived traditional roles, and puts them above any criticism of being "too girly" for the job.

One woman who was never accused of being too girly, and who looms large in this debate, is Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher had to make herself almost sexless to counter any gender-based criticism, avoiding taking a stand on women's issues and surrounding herself with men. She was the original alpha female, and TV show Spitting Image wasted no time in mocking her for this. However, the implication seemed to be that she was less of a woman because of it. For Heaton, Thatcher's influence is undoubtedly a factor in her own politics. "Thatcher was about not being afraid as a woman to say exactly what you think, and exactly what you feel. She was never under pressure from anyone else to say what they wanted her to say." This is undoubtedly true, but not necessarily considered positive by many women, who feel that femininity is a part of who they are. Today, politicians are using their womanliness as an election weapon. Clinton has been especially good at this. She commented, "The fact that I'm a woman and a mom is part of what I am." Since then she has jumped 33% ahead of her closest rival, Barack Obama, in the polls.

'It is simply amazing that it has taken until 2007 to criminalise the men who buy sex, rather than the women who sell it'

The new generation of female politicians have overseen the revival of the NHS, the introduction of civil partnerships and massive improvements to schools. They have created greater equality, not just of gender, but also of race and sexual orientation. Long term change will be gradual, but groups such as Women to Win and energetic student political debate should ensure that the future for these women does not centre around leopard skin print footwear.



Uncle Matthew

He would care, but he just doesn't want to...

'It is nature's way that some individuals should be afflicted by premature hair loss. Try and become one with nature's vagaries and take these people under your wing'

Dear Uncle Matthew,

Before I arrived at York I dumped my girlfriend from home, in the expectation that everyone else would have done likewise, thus leaving me free to enjoy a university career of unattached dalliance. However, it has since transpired that most other people have taken a rather different approach, and my efforts at playing campus Casanova have so far fallen dispiritingly flat. How can I persuade my old girlfriend to take me back under such circumstances, and recommence her duties as cook, cleaner and bed-fellow, without the shame of admitting that I may have made an error?

Misogynistic,
Langwith

.....

Dear Misogynistic,

"All too often we only truly appreciate what we have once it is gone, so any opportunity to retrieve what was lost are few and far between". I propose you use this very phrase to explain to your girlfriend the lesson you were trying to teach her by your seeming rejection: that she needs you in her life and that if she wants to keep you she had better buck up her ideas. She will almost certainly prove hopelessly grateful for your generosity of spirit (and puritanical chastity during the interim) and will, should you add that such bounty must be "seized with both hands", resume all her womanly duties without demur.

Yours patriarchally,
Uncle Matthew

Dear Uncle Matthew,

Hearing second and third years reminiscing about Trevor (or 'fit duck'), my block mates and I have been left not only inconsolable, but also tragically cheated of any prominent wildlife to 'hilariously' anthropomorphise. If you could advise us as to any animals or other members of the campus community we could adopt, or alternative sources of entertainment to fill our days, we would forever be your humble servants.

Bereft,
Derwent

.....

Dear Bereft,

The great cycle of life and death can seem unfair, but sometimes we just have to sit back and accept that it is nature's way. It is also nature's way that some individuals should be afflicted by premature hair loss. Try and become one with nature's vagaries: should you find one of these poor invalids on campus, rather than merely point and laugh, take them under your wing and lavish on them the care and attention always shown to the late Trevor. Such philanthropy can prove entertainment enough, and there is no shortage of others in need of such TLC - witness YUSU's heroic campaign to raise awareness of the universal affliction of cellulite amongst female students.

Yours anthropologically,
Uncle Matthew

Dear Uncle Matthew,

Over the past fortnight, I have cultivated a reputation for being 'kerray-zee' and an all-round fun guy, but ever since the end of Week 2, my housemates seem to have been less than keen on spending time with me. In an effort to overcome their despondency, I have upped the practical joke count, and they can now count on being soaked at least twice a day. However, they now seem intent on blanking me entirely. How can I rectify this situation, and does it involve using weed killer to write 'Dave is a nobber' (sic) into the verge of University Road?

Dazed and confused,
Alcuin

.....

Dear Dazed and confused,

It may be that your housemates feel intimidated by your comic genius. Perhaps it would be best if you showed them that not all your humour depends on them being the victims. What if next time you soaked yourself instead? Better yet, why not combine this with the weed killer and add a generous helping of that to the water before immersing yourself in the contents? Don't forget to add plenty of bleach, to help clean up any mess - you want to show you aren't any hassle, remember. In fact, for something really 'zany', why not drink the contents at the same time? I guarantee your housemates will enjoy the results.

Yours corrosively,
Uncle Matthew



NOUSE elections

If you want to get involved in York's quality student newspaper, all positions will be up for election today, 7.00 in P/L001 (unless you hear otherwise). Positions to be had include:

- writers
- editors for all sections
- deputy editors for all sections
- advertising
- photography
- finance
- administration



Only the most senior positions require experience, so come along and stand

Photography competition

Nouse and Photosoc are searching for talented photographers from across campus. If you think you've got something to show us, send it in to photosoc@yusu.com. The best entries, as judged by Photosoc, will be printed in Nouse and exhibited by Photosoc in Goodricke Dining Hall on December 7.

photoSoc*



1. The competition is open to all University Students
2. Pictures must be taken within the last year
3. The closing date is November 12 (Monday Week 6). Submission after this point will not be regarded
4. Your submission must be your own
5. You may enter a maximum of two photographs (Black & White or Colour)
6. Digital jpeg must be submitted high resolution to photosoc@yusu.com
7. You must include in your submission your Name and College, and any information or blurb relevant to the title
8. No photoshop restriction are in place for this competition
9. A panel of independent judges will choose the winning entries. The decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into
10. Any winner in breach of the rules will have their prize withdrawn
11. By submitting images you grant photoSoc/Nouse the limited licence to use/edit/publish the photograph in reference to the competition. In Print, and in exhibition format



Nicky Woolf

Baked beans are for girls

Another murky tale

What a surreal time of year this is. The drunken freshers have, to a certain extent, tuned down their drunken shenanigans at least to the point where it is possible to cross a bridge without one of them threatening either to throw themselves off it (a less than fatal action in a two-foot deep lake, unless you are unlucky enough to land on a broken bicycle), or perhaps actually throw up off it. Or stagger drunkenly into you wearing (be it man or woman) a pink fluffy thong and a pair of tattered bunny-ears glued comically onto the outside of a blue NYC baseball cap. Special congratulations go to Ken Batten's security operation, which took longer than an hour and a half to retrieve a single drunken student from the roof of a bridge.

really care if they gave girls half the beans they gave boys. I mean, come on. Anyone who has ever talked in depth to a girl would know that this was going to go down very badly indeed.

Oh. Actually, now that I put it that way, it makes perfect sense.

Unfortunately, my exasperation gland is on the fritz after an allergic reaction to a dose of ridiculous gigantic overpriced purple phallic bendy-bus turd. Therefore, it will have to suffice to say that I, personally, don't really like baked beans anyway, and am frustrated that there was no caviar alternative. Additionally, I was grossly vexed that the free cream in the pretty pink bags tasted like Roger Kirk Centre mayonnaise and did absolutely nothing for my toothache. Still, it was much tastier than the Smas

violently sociopathic, until it is all you can do to lie, quivering with fear and curled up in the foetal position, in your freezing cold campus bedroom listening to the fearful tap-tap-tap of beak on glass.

Free drinks on me...

YUSU should have a sign up on it that says, "Please wander in at your leisure and take whatever you want, the key is hidden beneath Matt Burton's pubic wig box." I say it should have a sign up on it because a sign put up on the YUSU building is, and I can't get over how funny this is, instantaneously stolen. I would like to take this opportunity to say in complete honesty that if the ingenious thief makes himself known to me in a drinking establishment, and brings a photograph of the sign next to, perhaps, a copy of today's newspaper (*Guardian* preferred, *Vision* not accepted) as proof of possession, I shall buy their drinks for them for the whole night.

As if Chlamydia was a useful indicator of suitability for responsibility, the YUSU Women's officers are insisting that the whole YUSU team get tested, though this does not render them safe. Chlamydia-free or not, for God's sake don't sleep with them anyway.

FILLING IN THE GAPS

Sam Starsky and Matt Hutch were off-duty in the hot police station when a strident shout interrupted their sedentary torpor. Spilling his coffee across his slightly foxed copy of FHM, Starsky was the first up, nervously straightening his pink tie and name-badge. He was quickly followed by Hutch, whose more stylish leather jacket crackled in the Californian heat. The twosome were quickly developing a reputation as mavericks within the SUPD. Matt Hutch, the curly-haired ambitious young cop who got results the unorthodox way, had been reluctant to be paired with the by-the-book square Sam Starsky, but they had quickly developed an almost inappropriate friendship. Trying not to look rushed, they sidled into Chief Inspector Canning's office. "What have you idiots been up to now?" growled the Chief Inspector through her cigar. "The Chronicle's on my ass about these bags, boys. You better go clean up your mess." Bickering

wildly, the pair almost fell down the front stairs of the SUPD building into the waiting lowrider of Grace Huggy-Bear, who was wearing a fair-trade pimp-outfit including fair-trade pimp shoes with goldfish in them made of actual gold. She drove them in her fair-trade pimp-mobile to the local club where the mob boss hung out. As they sit in the car waiting for something to happen with the crime scene (or between the two of them), munching their smash, disaster strikes. The thugs of mob boss Kin "the military policeman" Bitten creep up behind our two heroes and try to kill them with guns and things. But they get the car into gear just in time, miraculously missing some crates in an alley, which is unusual. As they drive they continue to bicker, but in a mildly flirtatious way. Then Grace Huggy-Bear turns up with a cake sale gun and drives the baddies away in a hail of muffins and cupcakes. There is icing everywhere. It's a massacre.

It's a girl-boy thing

Every so often, for any administration, there comes a moment of truth. For Blair, it was Princess Diana's tragic death. For Lynden Johnson, it was the decision to put more troops in rather than take them out of Vietnam. For Sam Bayley and Matt Burton, it all came down to a desire to read FHM, and the assumption that nobody would

Return of the bird

So now it is more possible to see the more pressing problems of the University. Real problems that should by no means just be brushed off with a laugh and a covert, orange-peel banishing rub. The geese, which you freshers have probably gotten on quite well with in the last few weeks, will slowly get less and less tolerant and more and more

Moment of Zen

Gingerly pushing a hand into the mysterious, jewel-encrusted box of current affairs



"I hate James Blunt more than I hate racism," Grace Fletcher-Hall, Academic and Welfare Officer, told YUSU senate last week. "Wait," she added, after some thought, "don't print that in *Nouse*."



Well done to Holiday Inn, who sensibly removed the minibars from rooms before their displaced Langwith occupants arrived. Disappointed freshers responded by barricading themselves in the rooms and smearing the walls with faeces. No, not really.



The 'CU Hotties' bar crawl ("It's called CU hotties coz we're pretty hot!") took place on Friday. A subtitle of the evening on the event's inevitable Facebook page was: "An evening with the spirits: what would Jesus drink?" I have no idea, but whatever it turns out to be, I'll have one too.



MoZ was recently informed of *York Vision's* secret to success. "We don't need spellcheckers," said disgraced ex-editor Adam Thorn, excitably bouncing up and down outside the office window, "we have creativity." Alright, alright Adam, keep your hair on.



Moment of Zen spotted Anne-Marie Canning last week trying to enter the male toilets in Montey's. As she was far too inebriated to even operate the door, MoZ felt that the occupants were in no imminent danger from the President and there was no need for backup.



If you have any juicy tidbits or gossip to share, send them to:



socs12@york.ac.uk



Arts Reviews

BOOK: THE HOUSE AT RIVERTON

AUTHOR: KATE MORTON

PUBLISHER: PAN

PRICE: £7.99

REVIEW: STEVEN WARD

★★★★★

One-time housemaid Grace Bradley, now 98, is approached by a young director making a film about the suicide of a poet at the house she once worked in. As the director attempts to exhume history, Grace finds herself drawn back into the past and forced to confront the secrets and ghosts she had buried long ago. As Grace recounts life as a servant girl, the mystery behind the young poet's death becomes increasingly clear until she is unable to hide her knowledge. As her memories resurface, tales of tumultuous love affairs, political intrigues and social upheaval begin to sneak out from the woodwork.

Set in the immediate prelude and aftermath of the First World War, the novel suffuses a sophisticated historical milieu with a breathtaking narrative brimming with melancholy delicacy. By describing post-war Edwardian society with astonishing brilliance and breadth of insight, Morton succeeds in creating a historical novel with depth and soul. It glimmers with the same atmospheric tone as *Atonement* and *The Blind Assassin* and is destined to share their literary prestige. Delicate, articulate and heartbreaking, *The House at Riverton* is most aptly deserving of the label "modern classic".

BOOK: REVELATION SPACE

AUTHOR: ALASTAIR REYNOLDS

PUBLISHER: GOLLANCZ

PRICE: £7.99

REVIEW: IAN MASKERY

★★★★★

Around AD 2200, archaeologist Dan Sylveste, scion of the infamous House Sylveste and one of the most important men in civilization, has made a discovery. On the planet Resurgam, Dan has uncovered an ancient alien artefact. Unfortunately, he slowly realises what his discovery really mean for Resurgam, and his safety, and it isn't good news.

We skip to the tale of Ana Khouri, a young assassin kidnapped and brought aboard the lighthugger (read 'spaceship') *Nostalgia for Infinity* to serve a triumvirate of entrepreneurial pirates. It is at this stage that Reynolds's rather unique writing style comes into its own. The various strands of the story are drawn together in ways so beautifully complex that the general effect is to leave the reader awestruck. Although on paper the story seems almost impossibly complicated, it is deliberately so, in the anticipation that a veil will be lifted and the bigger picture grandly revealed.

Revelation Space is simply one of the finest examples of that most rare sci-fi find; the space opera. Reynolds uses his scientific knowledge and an array of techniques to tremendous effect in creating a universe that is as darkly realistic as it is uniquely breathtaking.

Helen Citron looks at Frank Skinner's awaited comeback tour

Frank Skinner has just hit 50, and it shows. His one-night-only stop-off at York's Grand Opera House was a predictable jaunt through the well-worn comedic favourites of one night stands, race, paedophilia and middle age. Skinner's un-PC treatment of these topics may have shocked 10 years ago, when he last performed on the stand-up circuit, but these days it can take a lot more to make an audience uncomfortable. His gesture of appointing a 'moral referee' from the audience to warn him in case he 'goes too far' seemed pretty pointless in the face of a series of paedophile gags which fell noticeably flat. "Oh, swings and roundabouts" was the Christmas-cracker-joke reply of an experienced paedophile when asked by a sex offender new to the area where to find children.

Skinner is well known for his unashamed, candid discussions of his sexual encounters. There is something about his unimposing physical stature and trademark self-deprecation that adds to the

hilarity of these lewd sexual confessions. However, after at least half an hour of listening to Skinner talking about 'the sex' and 'the orals', the joke became distinctly tired and it started to feel like now that Skinner was 'over the hill' he felt the need to prove his virility.

A second half in which the 'laugh-a-minute' pace of the show seemed to slow a little was considerably more successful. His impression of his neurotic self in the early stages of a relationship manically over-analysing text messages ("No fucking kiss at the end!") was Skinner at his best. His decision to talk about his wealth was a brave one, considering his status as an icon of working-class, lad culture and it led on to a sharp and witty dig at Heather Mills. However, his discussion about his involvement with Comic Relief coupled with a gag about a Ugandan prostitute, delivered with particularly vulgar aplomb, was simply too offensive to be funny.



Frank Skinner, who performed at York's Grand Opera House

Nevertheless, his engagement with the audience – arguably the most important skill in a stand-up comic – was dazzling, even in a fairly big, impersonal venue like the Opera House. His ability constantly to weave the crowd into the proceedings, especially in a novelty song played on his banjo, was remarkable. There's no doubt that the audience thoroughly enjoyed the majority of Skinner's performance and, whilst the show may not have been innovative, Skinner does seem to have a winning formula.



EXHIBITION: TRACEY EMIN

VENUE: YORK ART GALLERY

DATE: UNTIL 27/01/08, 10AM-5PM

PREVIEW: KIRRRAN SHAH

★★★★☆

With an MA in painting from the Royal College of Art and solo exhibitions in cities including Istanbul, Helsinki, Paris and Berlin, Tracey Emin promotes her art by participating at the Venice Biennale for the British Pavilion. This coincides with York Art Gallery's current exhibition; a very intimate and personal display of her autobiographical works. It is a small selection of art, an insight into her confrontational personal world. While Emin is widely known for her controversial piece *My Bed*, York Art Gallery's exhibition highlights her individuality with etchings, lithographic prints and photography.

In contrast to the competitiveness of the Venice Biennale, Emin's power in this exhibition is in memories and how objects and images can evoke them. Her self-portraits are sketchy, almost crude; they are fragile portraits, one based

on Frida Kahlo's *Two Fridas. Insane Reflection of 2006* represents her "endless imagining new life, faced with the questions of how that might ever be," referring to her abortions. A solitary fabric flower is sewn into the cotton screen print, distinguished from the scratchy line and blank space surrounding. The display allows you to give Emin more thought, with reference to other artists, and to look up close at her dense, often aggressively drawn lines.

The exhibition also features one of her range of travel bags for Longchamp, *Always Me*, illustrating Emin's focus on the importance of the self through design. Throughout the exhibition, I am reminded of Kahlo's statement: "I am the subject I know best." It is worth spending some time to look at each piece; the exhibition will allow you a fresh view of her diverse styles, from photography to her studio space.

WHAT'S ON

Drama Barn:

Week 3, October 26-18

Love and Understanding
by Joe Penhall

Week 4, November 3-5

Wake Up Call
by Rasheeda Nalumoso

Week 5, November 10-12

The Barnarama

Grand Opera House:

Tickets £11-20, available from
www.grandoperahouseyork.org.uk

"Where You From?" Lenny Henry
November 2, 7.30pm

Dancing in the Streets
November 3, 7.30pm

Other Side Comedy Club

Every Sunday, at the City Screen
Basement Bar. Tickets £7/8, book in
advance from 08707 583219

October 28: Andre Vincent, Martin
Davis & Mat Reed

November 4: Lucy Porter, John
Gordillo & Dan Atkinson

November 11: Mick Ferry, Simon
Bligh & Dan Willis

Theatre Royal:

Located at St. Leonard's Place. Tickets
£5-£18, available from www.yorkthe-
atreroyal.co.uk or by calling 01904
623568

Pinocchio
October 19-27

Enjoy by Alan Bennett
November 3-24

Scribbler & Spouse
performed by the Yellow Leaf
Theatre
November 6-7

Kevin Tomlinson: *On The Edge*
Improvised comedy
November 8-10

York Roman Festival

Various displays, marches and re-
enactments around York, including a
Living History camp. Will be running
from October 26-28. For more details,
visit www.yorkromanfestival.com

Lenny Henry
will be at the
Grand
Opera
House



PREVIEW: ILLUMINATING YORK

The annual series of exhibitions returns to light up York's historic monuments. Usman Haque's 'Evoke' will allow members of the public to create light patterns with their own voices, which will be projected onto the Minster's western facade.

The highlight promises to be 'The Keys to the Kingdom', an after-dark play in the Minster Gardens, revealing the secret revelries which ensue once the gates of the Gardens are locked. Performances are at 7pm and 8pm throughout the festival.

26 Oct - 13 Nov, www.illuminatingyork.org.uk

Theatre Reviews

Alberto Furlan talks religion with one of Dramasoc's up and coming student writers

Identity is what defines someone, but how does one define identity? Perhaps a while ago we would have pointed to the categories of class and geography, but in an increasingly globalised and media-dominated society, the categories are more fluid, the choice not as strict. *Wake Up Call*, a new student-written play, deals with the situation of being forced into thinking of yourself as defined by a single category, in this particular case that of 'Muslim'. Imagine being defined simply as a university student, by the media and everyone else around you. You are no longer from the north or south or abroad. No longer a member of a college. No longer a science or arts student. You are a lazy, promiscuous drunk, wasting taxpayers' money.

As Rasheeda Nalumosu, the play's writer and producer, puts it: "The publication of the *Satanic Verses* was the moment people were forced into thinking of themselves as only 'Muslim'". For many British Muslims, it was not a case of getting off the fence into one of the two categories: it was the moment the fence was erected, and lined with barbed wire. The right to free speech is one we hold dear, as is the right to

protest. Some British Muslims, born and bred in England, took to the streets in peaceful demonstrations, but while a minority resorted to violence, the majority had to suffer the consequences.

Wake Up Call lucidly shows how Rushdie's book also created a rift within the Muslim community itself, strangely polarising the moderate elders against the more ardent youths. The protagonists' identities are torn between questions of religion, gender and age. Although tension had been present previously, *The Verses* was the defining moment, the genesis of that transformation no individual should go through - being forced to define oneself in relation to a single idea, interpreted in a single way, and the struggles this brings.

The play also shines the spotlight on the role of the scoop-driven media, a huge polarising agent in such situations. Through the newspaper's coverage, one violent person can become symbolic of an entire religion or ethnicity in the eyes of society, and the negative image reflects back upon those who share that person's belief. Often, the choices are few: either embrace the



negative image, or forsake what used to be an integral part of your identity.

20 years on, has the situation changed? The play gives its own answer; gloriously open to being contested as anyone may wish, surely the right of all individuals. But do not think of it as a play only about Muslims, or only about women, or only about the media. The play's identity,

Student-written drama *Wake Up Call* premieres in the Drama Barn next week

like that of individuals, is a fluid tapestry of changing ideas and beliefs. Whether these create contradictions and fallacies is for the individual to solve (if a solution is necessary) and it is not for us to erect a fence.

Wake Up Call will be performed in the Drama Barn on November 2, 3 and 4 (Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Week 4). Tickets are available from Vanbrugh stalls from Wednesday until Friday of Week 4, 12-2pm. Tickets are £3.50 from Dramasoc members, £4.50 for non-members.

WHAT'S ON

Love and Understanding
Fri, Sat, Sun, Week 3, 7.30pm.

"One night with your lovely girlfriend and your old pal. Marvellous."

Is one friendship capable of breaking the bonds between those you love the most?

Tickets: Vanbrugh stalls, Wed - Fri Week 3, 12-2pm.



PRODUCTION: LIMBO
VENUE: YORK THEATRE ROYAL
REVIEW: GURMEET SINGH

★★★★☆

Declan Feenan's *Limbo* has a central motif of water; it nourishes, cleanses, and gives life, but it also takes life away. On a cold, wet evening on the edge of Camlough Lake Clair, a young Irish girl, tries to absolve herself of the guilt and love of several months' turmoil.

The set is decidedly minimalist, but every neurotic movement, every surge and cadence, every crackle in the accent fills the room and all eyes focus on the solitary space on stage occupied by Claire (Caroline Williamson). The coldness of the night is palpable, her story is haunting, her anxiety too becomes ours. The dialogue is detailed without being dense and honest without being too simplistic. It is Williamson's youth-

ful and affectionate portrayal, however, that ensures the script works onstage and not merely as a piece of writing. Nothing seems to be calculated; no action (though these are sparse) seems contrived.

The narrative is suggestive and haunting and Williamson's sensitive portrayal of Claire creates a fragile veneer of strength that is undermined by her own fundamental insecurity. The closing moments of the play are its darkest.

Near the lake, Clair makes suggestions of the most despairing agony. The conclusion alters the play so that the audience is left craving some confirmation of peace. They will be left unsatisfied with their own reflection.



PRODUCTION: DON QUIXOTE
VENUE: WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE, LEEDS
REVIEW: AMY MILKA

★★☆☆☆

Until I saw Joseph Galindo's version of *Don Quixote*, I didn't realise it was possible to produce a play that focussed more on stage effects than acting. A bemusing array of lighting, projections and two-way mirrors, the production really encapsulated the unpredictability and bizarre nature of Cervantes's classic.

Unfortunately the clever staging of certain scenes was undermined by what can only be described as ridiculous and grotesque costumes (a St Trinian's schoolgirl, a nurse in PVC and a chorus of chavs) and out-of-place props (space hoppers, a Coke machine and a giraffe on wheels?) which certainly contributed to the chaotic atmosphere, but ultimately failed to raise

a laugh.

The only saving grace here was Greg Hicks's emotionally aware portrayal of the disillusioned Don, which was worthy of a much better production. Tony Bell occasionally shone through as his trusty squire Sancho Panza, but it was not enough to save the show for me.

At times there was the potential for brilliance, such as the staging of three scenes at once, or retelling the tale from a different perspective, but I got the feeling that those who were unfamiliar with the novel didn't have a hope of understanding what was taking place. Incomprehensible for those who don't know the original, and pointless for those who do. Overall, not worth the trip to Leeds.



PRODUCTION: TONY! THE BLAIR MUSICAL
VENUE: PLEASANCE ISLINGTON
REVIEW: MATTHEW LACEY

★★★★★

It would be easy to claim, in hindsight, that *TONY! The Blair Musical* was blessed with so many publicity advantages that it was bound to be a hit, but to claim as much would be lazy and would miss the point utterly. If one could distil the secret of their success, it would surely be that the production managed to convince us that we were looking at the world as Blair sees it. The script (and quite possibly the whole universe) revolves around him, and does so with all the wit, charm and unshakeable self-confidence that seemingly defines its 'hero'. That this delusion should take the form of a pastiche of musical theatre is a hilariously logical extension of Blair's own showiness.

Plenty of the credit must go to Chris Bush and Ian McCluskey. It is clear that much of the satirical power of their writing comes from an affection for both Blair and musicals, even as they hold the excesses of both up to ridicule. Of equal triumph, though, is James Duckworth. His performance as Blair was a masterful combination of acutely observed mimicry in gesture and speech, and fine vocals.

Nothing better captured the overall cast spirit than the show-stopping barbershop quartet of Tory leaders, sung by Michael Slater, Ed Duncan Smith, Jethro Compton and Alex Stevens. They, apparently, "move without originality or flair". The same could not be said for this production.

MusicPreviews

SAM NOBLE

Somewhere over the rainbow



Like most people with any musical inclination, upon hearing Radiohead were releasing their new album on October 10, I rubbed my eyes, pinched myself and dribbled an awful lot with excitement. Guitarist Jonny Greenwood had only announced the release ten days before on their blog, without any ceremony but with huge lashings of understatement: "Well, the new album is finished, and it's coming out in 10 days; we've called it *In Rainbows*. Love from us all." Christmas, Hannukah and Chinese New Year had all come early.

Of the 1.2 million (is that all?!) people who downloaded it on the first day, all paid an optional price. As Jonny told the world: "It's just interesting to make people pause for even a few seconds and think about what music is worth now. I thought it was an interesting thing to ask people to do and compare it to whatever else in their lives they value or don't value." Judging from my friend's contributions, most have paid over £3, and considering bands on major labels make £1.61 after the label takes the lion's share, they're set to make an absolute mint.

Inevitably, message boards, music sites and most other facets of the media have noted their bold move as revolutionary. Side-stepping the record industry as Prince and the Charlatans have, as well as preventing the album from leaking by, well, leaking it themselves, they've succeeded in bringing back a long-gone feeling of excitement. Putting the ramifications of a download-only release aside for a second, is the album actually any good?

Radiohead are a band who are no strangers to hyperbole, so it seems pointless to add to it. Instead, what I like about the album is the band's continuing quality control (it has been four years since their last release), which puts any Radiohead release absolutely miles ahead and vast distances apart from any of their contemporaries or aspiring experimentalists. No band can make music as interesting, densely layered and surprisingly melodic as Radiohead. 'Bodysnatchers' begins with a funky, distorted bassline which meanders into soaring ethereal guitar lines, while 'Nude' sounds the nearest to floating you're ever going to get, as strings accompany a trip-hop octave bass line and Thom Yorke gives the best vocal performance of his career. My personal favourites are 'All I Need', with its antagonistic piano chords and 'Jigsaw Falling Into Place' whose acoustic arpeggios, mournful harmonies and haunting vocals shatter into twinkling chords and sparkling guitar lines in a dramatic ending.

The secret of Radiohead's commercial popularity and indie god-like credentials is their ability to straddle a song between an epic anthem and perplexing song structures that can keep even the most introspective of listeners satisfied. As Yorke sings on the beautiful album ender: "No matter what happens now, you shouldn't be afraid, because I know today has been the most perfect day I have ever seen." Don't be afraid, *In Rainbows* is endlessly engaging and a progression of their unique musical journey. A most perfect day indeed.

SHOW: THE SUPER FURRY ANIMALS
VENUE: LEEDS TOWN HALL
PREVIEW: STEPHEN MITCHELL
DATE: 30/10/07

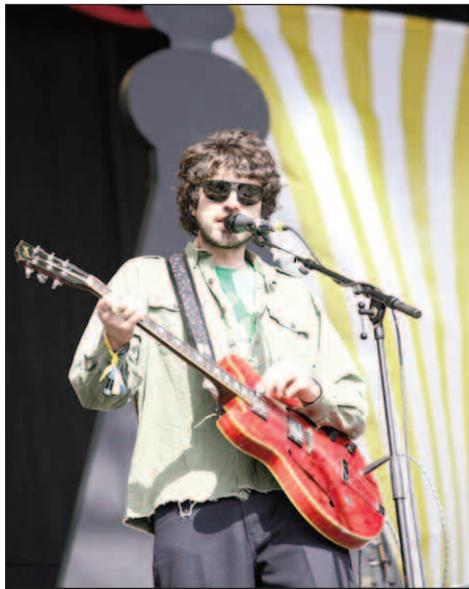


This October sees the welcome return of cult rockers Super Furry Animals from a two-year tour hiatus. Clearly, this is pleasing news for all indie-psych-techno enthusiasts, or those seeking a fashionably skewed alternative to Oasis/Blur/Pulp Britpop nostalgia.

Yet, as the Super Furrries embark on a fifteen-date British trek with current work *Hey Venus!* in tow, it appears that the previously unclassifiable Welsh innovators are settling into territory that is fast becoming familiar. Their new album, a semi-abortive concept piece based around the travels of the eponymous hero, *Hey Venus!* appears cosmically disconnected from former exploits in genre evasion; instead, the beguiling choral catchiness of more recent releases *Rings Around the World*, *Phantom Power* and 2005's *Love Kraft* have once more been recycled, swirling keyboard enhancements, cartooned album artwork and all.

Thankfully, this also means that Gruff Rhys's current compositions carry the same characteristics that have made the psychedelic tones of the SFA so irresistible; standout track 'Run-Away', almost as cinematic as a faux-tragic love story from the beginnings of pop, is played out to a fleshed-out guitar and the lyrics are uttered in the fashion of a man in a melancholic haze.

Nevertheless, it is clear that in their live performances the band retain the spirit of



The more appealing form of 'Furry'

invention, freedom and lunacy found in abundance in their early days. The Super Furrries are a band that thrive on the creative possibilities of live performance. Those who have attended previous tours have been blessed with all manner of visual ostentation, from golf cart entrances in day-glo green raincoats to song-specific animated epics and a costume wardrobe to rival even the Flaming Lips.

With a new concept to illustrate, one can only speculate what forms it might take: what is certain, however, is if Rhys's perfect pop creations flow into every corner of the room, and the crowd is illuminated by the group's flower-power projections, somehow it will all make sense.

SHOW: THE WAREHOUSE PROJECT
VENUE: PICADILLY STATION, MANCHESTER
PREVIEW: ALICE GREGSON
DATE: ONGOING UNTIL 01/01/08



For a while, Manchester has been dark and silent on Friday and Saturday nights but for a hub of hot light and splitting noise sounding out from deep beneath Manchester Piccadilly train station and into the recesses of the city. Returning from its 2006 triumph, the Warehouse Project is blowing minds once again until New Year's Day with its mesmerizing concoction of brain-battering beats and urban surroundings.

Housed in a WWII air-raid shelter, the eclectic mix of DJs are dropping their own shells of rave mayhem. From Aphex Twin to Mark Ronson and Hot Chip there is something for all tastes. On October 27, supported by Boyz Noize and Late of the Pier, it's 'krack' for electro-heads as the part-DJ, part-band outfit Soulwax present their shuddering anthems from 2005's *Nite Versions* to a screaming crowd of 3,000. Renowned for transforming any arena into a pounding dance haven, Soulwax will surely be the jewel in the Project's grimy crown.

The mostly sold-out Project aims to beat last year's 100,000 tally of sweaty party-goers, with 30 live acts spread over a period of three months. With promises of better acoustics and a New Year's Eve line up so exclusive the whole music industry is practically buzzing, the 2007 Project is the biggest event to hit a British city all year.

ON THE UP: VAMPIRE WEEKEND

Ben Rackstraw

With a name that sounds like a snappy title for a goth mini-break, you could be forgiven for thinking that Vampire Weekend would be a minor-key led, eyeliner-wearing group of misfits. In fact, they are the latest darlings of the New York indie scene and the hottest American export since Heroes - if Heroes were an '80s referencing college-based drama shot in the style of an African soap. As that pilot episode in the making suggests, the main cultural touchstone for the band is Paul Simon's masterpiece *Graceland*, an influence most obvious on the track 'Cape Cod Kwassa Kwassa,' a glorious slice of summery afro-pop that manages to reference both the

United Colours of Benetton and Peter Gabriel. By taking inspiration from world music, Vampire Weekend have created a sound that has far more humanity and emotion than other recent American indie groups like Clap Your Hands Say Yeah or Tapes n Tapes.

With this aspect of their sound they are also a distinctly college band, at times bringing to mind cool kids organising indie parties with red cups of beer then spending the evening talking about Lou Reed, but fortunately this comes across in a very charming way. With lyrics about grammar snobbery ('Oxford Comma' reads as a rant against a

pedantic arts student) and roofing styles (see 'Mansard Roof', a handy method of creating more attic space) the band don't shy away from their intellectual foundations, but like all intelligent indie, from Talking Heads to Tom Vek, they understand the need for a great beat to carry their quirkiest aspects.

'Walcott' revels in a syncopated rhythm that should be ruling dancefloors in indie discos across the land upon its release this week, and the aforementioned 'Mansard Roof' drives its way through a wailing guitar riff to emerge as a pulsing organ-enhanced stomp, before a viola breakdown - a rarity in

even the quirkiest of indie pop.

Recently signed to XL, the band are currently working on their debut album, earmarked for release in the new year. Early indicators suggest that the record will be more complicated than the early singles, with lead singer Ezra Koenig saying that the songs "have such a more complete picture".

Hopefully the new material won't lack the directness and fun of the songs available on Myspace at the moment, something backed up by reports of the band's first gig in Manchester on Saturday. It might not be summer any more, but Vampire Weekend's off-beat anthems could be just the ticket to speed you through to next August.



MusicReviews

SINGLES REVIEWS

ARTIST: ONE NIGHT ONLY
SINGLE: YOU AND ME

The ever feral and increasingly corpulent Zane Lowe has dubbed this track his 'Hottest Record in the World'. Not a bad start, considering most of the band are only just exiting puberty. Accordingly, the track retains a sense of cheery, youthful buoyancy. I guess you have to admit, albeit with reluctance, it's refreshing to see a band that isn't afraid to admit that they might be, well, happy.

ARTIST: THE PROCLAIMERS
SINGLE: WHOLE WIDE WORLD

The Proclaimers, of "I would walk 500 miles..." fame are back, it seems - and not squandering away their pension fund on some cottage in Scotland (as I'd always assumed). Perhaps not the "stirring sing-along rock number" claimed by the press release, but this cover of the Wreckless Eric '70s track trundles along quite pleasantly and only occasionally falls prey to monotony. The boys aren't quite back in town, but at least Craig and Charlie seem to be 'on their way...'

ARTIST: TIMBALAND PRESENTS ONE REPUBLIC
SINGLE: APOLOGIZE

Not your conventional Timbaland track - mostly because at first listen you could easily mistake it for the Backstreet Boys' comeback record. Granted, that's slightly harsh, but really, after all the saccharine melodics we've been inundated with this week, I really was hoping for something a bit more gritty - at the very least a bassline that doesn't lull you to sleep. Is that really so much to ask, Timbaland? Is it?

ARTIST: VINCENT VINCENT AND THE VILLAINS
SINGLE: ON MY OWN

Finally something with bit of zest, something just about sparky enough to haul me out of the general musical apathy that this week's singles have thrust upon me with their unflinching mediocrity. Kicking off with a syn-copated bluesy (bordering on reggae) beat followed by some a cappella style harmonizing and then practically prancing into some good honest indie-guitar strumming - genre wise, it keeps you on your toes. Besides, the rhythm's infectious in that shoulder-shrugging kinda way - and so, it falls upon me to admit, it's quite good, actually.

ARTIST: WILLY MASON
SINGLE: GOTTA KEEP WALKIN'

I'm not sure why it is, but record companies never tire of sending me Willy Mason records. Unfortunately, since Willy basically has one sound, they all tend to meld seamlessly into one another. Yet, whereas with most bands, monotony usually spells disaster, Willy-wise it's quite a different story. Mason may stick to a formula but it's one that he executes perfectly and this latest offering showcases his unique ability to fuse the soothing with the haunting - like the perfect cup of coffee, it doesn't taste much different with every sip, but it still goes down good.

Singles this week were reviewed by Sara Sayeed

ARTIST: THE VINCENT BLACK SHADOW

ALBUM: FEARS IN THE WATER

REVIEW: SARA SAYEED

DATE: 05/11/07



Upon listening to the first track, I was pleased to find that this band was going to pose me with some cerebral challenges; it sounded so familiar, I really had to wrack my brains to come up with a valid reference. There were the commanding female vocals, the jaunty but not chirpy rhythms that all sounded vaguely reminiscent of the Long Blondes but, you know, worse. After a few more tracks my mental anguish eased slightly as, thankfully, they were all so derivative that a plethora of comparisons just flooded in - but I'll be selective.

First up there's Evanescence, who until now I thought were unparalleled in morose, artless crooning. But then, they also sound like Placebo, if just a shade less self-indulgent and just tad more, well, awful. Yet, one must give credit where it's due and where



ARTIST: DREAM THEATER
VENUE: MANCHESTER APOLLO
REVIEW: PETER CAMBELL
DATE: 06/10/07



For those of you who have not heard of Dream Theater, all you need to know is that they are essentially five virtuoso musicians, all classically trained, who collectively write some of the most complicated and original music of our time. Although they saw and influenced the transition from progressive rock to progressive metal in music, only this year have Dream Theater headlined a tent at the Download Festival. On their current world tour they are only playing a handful of dates on British soil, and have sold out Wembley Arena.

What particularity stands out in a Dream Theater show is not only the band's phenomenal precision but the synchronisation of that tightness with the breathtaking lighting and visual displays that comprise their two-and-a-half-hour set. Despite having over 20 years of music to choose from, the band predominately stuck to a selection from their new album, *Systematic Chaos*. Every one was played absolutely perfectly, and highlights included 'Take the Time' (closing with a solo duel between keyboardist Jordan Rudess and guitarist John Petrucci) and 'In the Presence of Enemies' (a 25 minute beast of a song).

The blistering virtuosity and the perfectly executed lighting display put the show at the top of any live music event I have ever been to, including last year's Reading Festival, which is not something I would say lightly.

this band excels is in offering so many delightfully interesting talking points. Visually, they remind me of those bands that used to sing on Buffy - you know the ones that did 'live' gigs, but then were skilfully worked into the episode by actually being vampires? The only place where VBS fail in this comparison is that the Vampires in Buffy were more subtly disguised, whereas these guys, with their blood-stained lips, black fishnets and generally dreary attire, probably would have been staked the minute they stepped on stage. Shame, as then you would miss their intensely sombre lyrics. Although some are a tad too subjective for a mass audience ("new life has found a place, it's laid eggs in someone's eye"), there are also those that many can relate to. For example, 'Valentine', which you can sing to your loved one: "Promise you'll stay awake tonight when I load the barrel. You owe me another night! A pony, a glass of wine."

VBS have so much to offer our world, that you can't help worrying, who is looking after these benevolent creatures? Perhaps someone should suggest psychiatric care, or a brownie? Something to lift the spirits. Bless them, but really, all this darkness can't be healthy.



ARTIST: STARS
VENUE: BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB, LEEDS
REVIEW: SAM THOMAS
DATE: 02/10/07



Stars' hometown Montreal is a very long way from Leeds in every conceivable sense, and the well-worn charm of the Brudenell was a strange fit for a band who specialise in writing quirky, earnest lovesongs then swathing them in a lush sound with big, bold hooks.

Three of their number moonlight in Canadian supergroup Broken Social Scene, but it's clear from the start they're a different proposition entirely. Opener 'Take Me To The Riot' isn't the strongest song on their new album, but Torquil Campbell delivers the refrain with manic relish and co-vocalist Amy Millan's relentless enthusiasm wins over a reluctant crowd. Often they join forces Gainsbourg and Bardot-style, creating a little sexual tension to keep things from getting too mawkish. Take the whimsical 'The First Five Times', where a giggling couple recollect their courtship - or rather, places they left embarrassing upholstery stains.

Big singles 'Ageless Beauty' and 'Set Yourself on Fire' go down best with the devotees down front. Ultimately, it's 'Elevator Love Letter' that seals the deal. Millan and Campbell wring every last ounce of emotion from it, belting out the chorus with wide eyes pleading: "Elevator, elevator, take me home."

Stars aren't trying to be sea-deep or razor-sharp: they just want you to come along for the ride.



ARTIST: MY AMERICAN HEART
ALBUM: HIDING INSIDE THE HORRIBLE WEATHER
REVIEW: STEPHEN MITCHELL
DATE: OUT NOW



Attitudes to certain types of music are inevitably shaped by preconceptions that have grown to summarise an entire style. 'Emo' is a case in point - since evolving into a mainstream category it has been plagued with accusations of self-pitying lyrical tendencies. It is apparent that My American Heart have nothing further to offer, or so the first track's opening couplet: "Your name is devastation, you filled us with frustration" would suggest.

Granted, My American Heart have enthusiasm and there is definitely an occasional catchiness to wannabee guitar anthems such as 'Moving On' and 'Fantasy'. Yet it appears unlikely there will be anything genuinely attractive to a listener hoping for more than a few self-absorbed sentiments presented in a slick but essentially empty fashion. Perhaps it is telling that the few impressive moments are when the band stray from the formalism of overly robust numbers such as 'Boys! Grab Your Guns'. 'Dangerous' just about deviates from the emotionally unconvincing furrow of the rest of the album, with its slower pace and an organ-enhanced, multi-textured guitar piece.

Unfortunately, despite the (very) brief glimpses of complexity shown at (rare) points, the inclusion of a track named 'Tired and Uninspired' appears apt.

Film Reviews

DAVID COATES



Independence Days

Remember *The Blair Witch Project*? Made for next to nothing, with no script and no stars, it garnered over \$240m in box-office receipts. Back in the innocent days of '99, there was a lot of talk about changing power structures and movie economics; a democratised movie business, combined with the blossoming force that the internet was becoming, was to change the way films could be made. It didn't happen. Not in the way it was expected to, anyway.

The internet has proved itself to be a false friend at best. The much-hyped *Snakes on a Plane* was not a complete failure, but underperformed massively by getting sidetracked into a congratulatory discussion about its own web-based buzz. It ended up pushing a self-indulgent publicity campaign under the guise of 'internet phenomenon'. As a result, not enough mainstream cinema fans took the project seriously, and box office takings were disappointing, despite its respectable critical reception.

What could be attributed to The Blair Witch Effect is its technical forward thinking, in that it became the most commercially successful independent film at the time, and was all shot on highly-affordable digital cameras. Although this was largely down to practicalities of the plot – the idea being that the footage was genuine – it still paved the way for future independent productions by providing a viable alternative to 35mm film.

As this development introduced a variety of new talent to a fairly conservative-minded industry, bigger budget studios have found themselves unable to count on big-name vehicles. At the same time, deeply personal and previously unattractive projects have found a receptive audience, and – perhaps more importantly – one that has proved profitable. The result being that in the last few years the growing clout of independent movie festivals like Sundance or Cannes have given a platform to a number of great movies that shake off mainstream fluffiness; the success of productions like *United 93*, *Little Miss Sunshine* and *Half Nelson* argue that unconventional ideas are worth getting behind.

The Oscar season is more or less underway, judging by *Atonement's* grating worthiness. It will be interesting to see how Hollywood's finest react to the increasingly heavy footsteps of independent film.

FILM: CONTROL
 DIRECTOR: ANTON CORBIJN
 STARRING: SAMANTHA MORTON
 SAM RILEY
 REVIEW: JAMES PATTERSON
 RUNTIME: 121 MINS

★★★★☆

Anton Corbijn's Joy Division biopic, *Control*, is a complex piece of work. Following the short life of Ian Curtis (Riley), the band's lead singer, and his wife Debbie (Morton), Corbijn presents an unflattering, unflinching account of Curtis's inability to cope with the mounting pressures in his personal and professional life, culminating in his suicide. From his schoolboy days of stealing old women's medication and listening to David Bowie, Curtis is portrayed as a flamboyant loner with poetic pretensions. The film follows the trials of the band as they make their name, tour Europe and try to convince Tony Wilson they're not Nazis, while keeping Ian and Debbie's relationship firmly in the spotlight.

Control is, first and foremost, excellently cast. Riley holds nothing back; when Curtis tries to explain that his work onstage has left him exhausted emotionally, he

could easily be referring to Riley's own performance. His struggle with epilepsy, which he feared was getting progressively worse, is played with subtlety and sympathy, as his fear of death gradually levels out with his fear of living. Curtis is never excused from his behaviour, however; the film – based on Debbie Curtis's autobiography – tries to explain his shortcomings, but it does not give him the benefit of the doubt, and Curtis often comes across as a self-centred, almost heartless young man. His affair with a Belgian music journalist, for example, seems based on nothing more than convenience. In a touching scene, months into their relationship, they try to get to know each other, Curtis revealing his favourite colour to be 'Man City blue', much to her confusion. Ultimately, the film gives a balanced account of Curtis's short life, admirably confronting the fact that many of his problems seemed self-inflicted and avoidable.

This is not to say the film is completely without warmth – *Control* is fleshed out with a number of excellent supporting roles, in particular Morton's performance as Debbie, doggedly fighting to justify her love for a man who continually turns his back on her. Also of note is Tony Keble's turn as the band's manager, Rob Gretton, a mixture of father figure and big brother, who has the majority of the movie's fun-



niest lines. Craig Parkinson is economically employed as the late, great Tony Wilson, used mostly as comic relief, wisely avoiding comparison to Steve Coogan's outstanding *24 Hour Party People*.

Control is beautifully shot, its black and white depiction of the late '70s north west is suitably bleak, and provides a number of great moments, such as a brief homage to the cover of *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, trans-

posed to Macclesfield. Corbijn often draws attention – sometimes clumsily – to the background, as posters are deployed to reveal significant character traits. In a key moment, Curtis finds himself unable to leave the dressing room in what would prove to be his last gig; on the wall beside the door is a flyer advertising a production of Peter Pan. I can't imagine this will be the last we'll hear of either Corbijn or Riley.

FILM: RATATOUILLE
 DIRECTORS: BRAD BIRD
 JAN PINKAVA
 STARRING: PATTON OSWALT,
 PETER O'TOOLE
 REVIEW: LIAM O'BRIEN
 RUNTIME: 110 MINS

★★★★☆

Everyone loved Pixar before *Cars* happened. Despite showing some of the same flaws, such as almost relentless optimism and saccharine dialogue that wouldn't sound out of place on an episode of the abhorrent *Brothers and Sisters*, *Ratatouille* has been greeted with almost undiluted critical praise. Perhaps this is because, compared to the torture of *Happy Feet* and the capitalism in bright, choking, green-dollar-form in *Shrek 3*, it's a masterpiece.

While Pixar, with their infamous levels of research and technical innovation, are incapable of making a bad film, there are certain things about *Ratatouille* that mark it out as being a lesser work than their seminal *Toy Story* movies. Brad Bird recycles the theme of *The Incredibles*; class escapism for the naturally gifted and promoting the American Dream while bashing mass marketing soullessness. Though the film depicts the hectic world of haute cuisine, it often resembles a rained-off children's tea party, so soporific and patronising is it at times. Its nadir wades ingloriously



from the Parisian sewers when Remy and his father clash over the role of the rat – a squabble that is resolved in triumphant fashion before the feature's end. Here it is: father rat says: "This is the way things are." Remy interjects, vomit-inducingly reminiscent of Al Gore, "Change is nature and it starts when we decide."

Considering the rating, you may wonder what I'm talking about. These issues, though, only prevent a good movie from being great. It is a delightful film overall; Peter O'Toole's withering critic is fantastic but underused and the Parisian stereotypes are hilarious. The slapstick humour, something incredibly difficult to pull off, is very well done and achieves a remarkable success rate. On the Champs Elysees this summer, it probably deserved its ovation.

CLASSIC FILM: THE CONVERSATIONS
 DIRECTOR: FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA
 STARRING: GENE HACKMAN
 REVIEW: ALBI FURLAN
 RUNTIME: 113 MINS

★★★★☆

If this movie were to be filmed in modern times, it would last under half an hour. This is not, however, a criticism, merely a reflection of how movies have changed, as have the expectations of viewers.

Gene Hackman is Harry Caul, a snoop, one of the best in the business, recording people's conversations and habits for whoever offers the right price. Harry Caul himself is an introvert and a devout Christian who does not like to be spied upon and on his latest assignment realises he is collecting information for a potential murderer. What follows is a gripping performance by Hackman who switches from cold and reserved to manic obsessive in seamless fashion. Also look out for a fresh-faced Harrison Ford.

Coppola's direction fleshes out the character in a way that has perhaps been forgotten in modern blockbusters and I must admit that, at first, I simply was not intrigued.

Long silences and unimpressive visuals did not attract the eye, and while the reasons to stay interested are there, the movie pro-



gressed far too slowly for the patience-deprived modern viewer. The movie switches between reality and Caul's mind at times, with a scene reminiscent of *Shining*, but don't expect special effects or jaw-dropping camera pans. The soundtrack is mostly minimalist piano, although it is used to great effect and the concept of sound is itself crucial to the movie.

In the latter parts of the movie, however, things become clearer and I suddenly realised something interesting was afoot that merited paying attention. Although coming late, the single, simple twist in the movie makes the whole experience worth it, and you might want to watch it a second time to spot the subtleties you missed. All in all, the movie will test your patience, but stick through it and you will be rewarded.

Food&DrinkReviews



A FRESHER'S MINI GUIDE: YORK'S RESTAURANTS

York's city centre is full of really great places to eat and has something to suit every taste. Japanese, Mexican and Turkish restaurants sit side-by-side with the more traditional favourites of Italian, Chinese and Indian. So, for those despairing of their ability to produce anything even vaguely resembling a decent meal, a trip into town to investigate York's restaurant scene should definitely be on the menu.

RESTAURANT: OSCAR'S
ADDRESS: LITTLE STONE GATE

Tucked away in a particularly picturesque part of town, this classy yet relaxed restaurant provides a truly pleasurable dining experience. The portions are generous, the service efficient and they're really student friendly with a great happy hour at the bar. The burgers are definitely the menu's highlight, although the steak sandwich, salads and Cajun chicken are also worth a try.

RESTAURANT: AKBAR'S
ADDRESS: GEORGE HUDSON STREET

Home of the famously huge 'family naan', Akbar's is the place to go for a curry in York. Specialising in pan-cooked baltis from Pakistan, the restaurant has a huge range of choice, ensuring something to suit every taste. The set menu is great value and will certainly satisfy those with big appetites. There's even a great range of vegetarian dishes.

RESTAURANT: TUSCANY PIZZA
ADDRESS: CONEY STREET

If you are seeking an alternative to the generic pizza restaurants in York, try Tuscany Pizza. They have a stone pizza oven, ensuring delicious, crisp pizzas and their lasagne is great. It's pretty reasonable too, with pizzas starting at £4.95. The wine list is wide-ranging and reasonable and the staff are charming.

RESTAURANT: BETTY'S TEA ROOM
ADDRESS: ST. HELEN'S SQUARE

The tea room is a quintessential part of the York experience and you can't do better than Betty's. With traditionally dressed staff serving you high tea platters amongst the quaint decor you feel really looked after. It serves a great cup of tea and the cakes are to die for.

By Helen Citron

RESTAURANT: THE CHURCHILL HOTEL
ADDRESS: 65 BOOTHAM
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £15.95
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £5
REVIEW: PETER HAGAN

★★★★☆

Students grace the restaurants of decent hotels about as often as they make it through the readings lists for their seminars. It is even less common for them to consume three courses, not one of which consists of sandwiches or baked beans. This needs to be put right, and I shall explain why. For the cost of £20 at the Churchill Hotel, beautifully located in a lovingly restored Georgian mansion near the Minster, which boasts three well-deserved stars, you can eat that many courses and not feel as though financial Armageddon has brought ruin upon your beer money for the rest of the decade.

The menu is surprisingly high quality for this reasonable a price: of particular note is the duck, which is tender, vibrant, and generously portioned, as well as the satisfyingly

RESTAURANT: J BAKER'S BISTRO
ADDRESS: FOSSGATE
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £30
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £4.50
REVIEW: NADEEM KUNWAR

★★★★☆



Looking, from the outside, like a greasy cafe you'd find in the *Truck Driver's Guide to Healthy Eating*, J Baker's elegant, minimalist interior provides a quiet yet intimate atmosphere. The staff at this Michelin-recommended restaurant are welcoming, friendly and attentive throughout.

The menu, though considerably limited, provides a wild concoction of different mixes. In the end, I plumped for East Coast Cod and Spinach Tortellini for starters - described in the menu as "poor man's caviar" - highlighting the tremendous modesty that surrounds this exquisite eatery. The fish theme continued as I opted for Grilled Brill Fish accompanied with Roasted Vegetables in a tangy lemon sauce as a main course. All the food was fantastic; the dessert of Chocolate Orange, made from Manjari and orange liqueur, was to die for. The evening was completed with a divine North of England Cheeseboard and an Earl Grey.

J Baker's is located at the higher end of the market - it isn't somewhere you would go armed simply with last night's pay-packet from a shift at Asda. But if there's one time you think to yourself, "I deserve a treat" - then J Baker's is certainly the place you should head to.

large, healthy side plates of fresh, local vegetables which accompany many of the meals. Besides this, the selection is perhaps a little safe and traditional, but nonetheless delicately tasteful despite actually serving something (stomach-churningly) called a 'Winston Burger'. The restaurant prides itself on its seasonal menu, with ingredients sourced from farmers in the Vale of York. Most notable of all, however, is the rib eye steak, which is supremely succulent, sizzling and flavoursome, as only a truly well cared-for cow can be. The dessert menu offers all the traditional favourites - apple crumble, sticky toffee pudding and bread and butter pudding - as well more unusual, but by no means less mouth-watering options, such as raspberry brulee and rhubarb cheesecake.

For this reason alone it is worth enduring the painfully slow service on a busy night - which in fact may be a test of your strength to never give in, never, never. Sadly, the significant wait we suffered before having to personally retrieve our bill was certainly not their finest half-an-hour. Overall, though, for a student, pretty damn good food and a tasteful night out for less than a few weeks' worth of library fines.

RESTAURANT: DANISH KITCHEN
ADDRESS: HIGH OUSEGATE
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £3.50
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £1.60
REVIEW: SELENA DHANAK, AMY BENZIANE

★★★★☆



It was the half price offer on pastries (when purchased with a hot drink) after 3.30pm that initially attracted us to this little cafe situated in the heart of York's shopping area. We discovered, however, that, aside from the various enticing deals, there are many other impressive aspects to be discovered.

Danish Kitchen operates a self-service system with helpful staff who cater for a wide range of dietary needs, including gluten free products and vegan friendly options. The menu comprises jacket potatoes, sandwiches, baguettes, quiches and omelettes, all reasonably priced and freshly made on the premises.

One of the main attractions of this cafe is the mouth-watering pastries. We sampled the apple and currant pie with fresh cream, which struck the right balance between fruity and sweet. Accompanied by a rich and creamy hot chocolate, this makes the perfect treat if you want to indulge yourself. If you'd prefer a more substantial meal, a filled sandwich of fresh salad and ham won't set you back much, at only around £3.00 for a generous portion.

Overall, Danish Kitchen is definitely worth popping into for a quick bite or a leisurely lunch on a wintry day in York.



RESTAURANT: KENDELL'S BISTRO
ADDRESS: ST PETER'S SQUARE, LEEDS
AVE. FOOD PRICE: £10
AVE. DRINK PRICE: £2
REVIEW: AMY MILKA

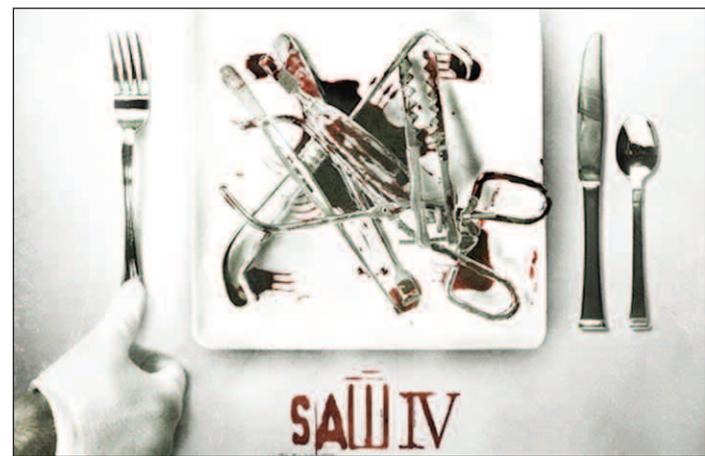
★★★★☆



Tucked below ground-level in a cosy candlelit retreat, Kendell's offers a variety of French dishes at reasonable prices, including a handy pre-theatre set meal. Despite the chic modern interior, it avoids pretension, with the menu displayed on large chalk boards on the wall, and the guests quietly chatting over the laid-back strains of Madeleine Peyroux. The open kitchen adds to the relaxed atmosphere and while we waited for our main courses to arrive we enjoyed a glass of wine with fresh bread and brochettes with sundried tomatoes and olive paste.

The main courses were ample and well-presented; a wild mushroom tart with garlic, cheese and spinach for me, and a confit of duck leg with roast potatoes for my friend. No nouvelle cuisine here: the dishes were rustic in flavour but with a modern twist, fancy inedible trimmings being exchanged for a rocket and red onion salad.

Unfortunately, as the start of the play drew near, we didn't have time for dessert, but the choices certainly were tempting: authentic creme brulee, tart au chocolat or a frangipane with pears. Next time I am in Leeds, I will definitely be back to sample some more French cuisine at this hidden gem.



Clockwise from top left: The new scare flick *Saw IV*; one of the many big names at Wentworth Comedy, Russell Howard; Dramasoc's *Love and Understanding* and not so worried about Ray - *The Hoosiers*

LIVEMUSIC

Thursday October 25

The Hoosiers, Fibbers

The Hoosiers are pretty weird. Joined by Martin Skarendahl over a shared love of The Cure, Buckley and XTC; they buff up a shiny great dollop of what the band like to call Odd-Pop. Tickets £9.

Sunday October 28

Spunge + Make It Better Later, Fibbers

The mighty ska legends Spunge are coming to York Fibbers this month with support from brilliant London pop-punk band Short Warning and York's own Make It Better Later. Tickets £12 or £5 with special flyers.

Wednesday October 31

British Sea Power, Leeds Cockpit

The legendary British Sea Power, a Brighton-based band, have been around for over four years now with some great venues under their belt (like the Carling festival). This is a rare chance to see the psych rockers so close to home. Tickets £12.50.

Friday November 2

Dizzee Rascal, Leeds Refectory

British hip hop's golden boy Dizzee Rascal will be playing the University of Leeds's Students' Union venue and promises to put YUSU's usual offerings to shame. Tickets £14.75.

CAMPUSEVENTS

October 22 - 29

Black History Week

A whole week celebrating the variety and history of a diverse culture, including guest speakers, debates, clothing and beauty, a fashion show and live music and DJs. More information from Afro-Caribbean Society's Facebook page.

Friday October 26

MoTown, B. Henry's

As part of Black History Week, ACS and Platinum will be hosting a Motown night with a £50 bar tab raffle prize. A rare opportunity to escape the cheese of campus events. Tickets £2.50 or £3 OTD.

Monday November 5

Derwent Stars in their Eyes

Derwent will be hosting its own version of the pop-tastic talent show. If you want your chance to reinvent yourself, check out the Derwent college website (Derwentcollege.co.uk) or Facebook.

Thursday November 8

Comedy Night@Wentworth

For those who enjoyed the YUSU Freshers' Week Comedy Night. Wentworth comedy attracts huge international acts, with past performances including Ross Noble and Russell Howard. Tickets £4, available in YourShop.

ART&PERFORMANCE

November 3-24

Enjoy, York Theatre Royal

Wilf and Connie seem familiar: getting on a bit, bickering, wondering if the kids will visit their two-up two-down in Leeds. They're just normal, aren't they? So why is there an 'observer' scribbling in the corner? The generation gap, sexual politics and new sociology. Both hilarious and unsettling.

October 12 - November 3

Limbo, York Theatre Royal

A young Catholic gives her confession from the edge of Camlough Lake. She speaks of her first love and a relationship with a man twice her age. As the lake's darkness calls to her, she will do anything for peace.

October 26-28

Dramasoc's Love and Understanding

This play, written in 1998 by celebrated British playwright Joe Penhall, will appeal to a wide audience. With themes of the medical profession, contemporary culture and infidelity, old barn enthusiasts as well as new are encouraged to come along.

November 2-4

Wake-up call

"It would be absurd to think that a book can cause riots". The Rushdie affair, the fatwa: an inescapable, probing spotlight seeking out the British Muslim. *Wake up Call* examines a pivotal moment in the history of multicultural Britain. £4.50 for non-members.

CINEMA

Rendition

Friday October 19

A CIA analyst questions his assignment after witnessing an unorthodox interrogation at a secret detention facility outside the US. Starring Reese Witherspoon and Jake Gyllenhaal.

Saw IV

Friday October 26

After hearing of Detective Kerry's gruesome murder, two veteran FBI agents, Agent Strahm and Agent Perez, assist Detective Hoffman in sorting out the remains of the Jigsaw's last game. However, SWAT Team's Commander Rigg has been put into a deadly game himself, despite the death of both Jigsaw and his apprentice.

Stardust

Friday October 26

In a countryside town bordering a magical land, a young man (Charlie Cox) makes a bizarre promise to his beloved that he'll retrieve a fallen star by venturing into another realm.

The Last Legion

Friday October 26

Veteran director Doug Lefler brings you *The Last Legion*. As the mighty Roman empire crumbles beneath its own pressure, young Romulus Augustus flees the city and embarks on a perilous voyage to Britain to track down a legion of supporters. Starring Colin Firth (Mr Darcy) and Ben Kingsley (Lucky Number Slevin).

Meet Edward Cider-hands

Alcohol consumption is not central to a university education



Will Heaven
Contributing Writer

Have you ever met Edward Cider-hands? Edward is a hapless fresher with a very large bottle of cider gaffa-taped to each hand. Neither bottle may be removed until its contents are gone.

Thankfully, I have never met Edward in York, but encountered him at another university. He was desperately seeking someone to help him with the inevitable problems arising from drinking large quantities of cider and not having the use of one's hands.

Unlike many universities, York is fairly tame when it comes to the drinking culture and initiation ceremonies that go hand in hand with student life. Many sports societies go out of their way to ensure freshers won't have to humiliate themselves in order to play. But the news that a Derwent bar rep forced freshers to 'down' pints of milk and ginger beer in order to make them sick certainly made me queasy. And it wasn't the noxious mixture of the drinks. It was the repellent idea that some twisted individual thought it was fun to watch people vomit, plus the sad fact that others felt pressured into demeaning themselves in front of their peers.

As a naïve fresher I once sat in my college kitchen swigging from a bottle of vodka being passed around. It was one of the lowest

points of my time at York. God, I thought, is this what's expected of me? Am I going to do this for the next three years until I learn to like it? Fortunately, I soon realised my fellow freshers weren't enjoying it much either, and we now look back amusedly on our early student days. But some people don't.

How many of us know people who never go out to drink and feel less accepted because of it? Or people that came out once in Freshers' Week and never again? It is time the JCRs realise that many students have come to York to study and make good friends but fail to do the latter because of what they feel is expected of them. Freshers' Week was alcohol-fuelled and still fun, but I propose that next year, York offers students one mainstream sober event.

Picture perfect?

Our University brochures tell a false story



Joe Chapman
Contributing
Writer

Heslington East, the massive expansion of our university that gained approval from the Government in May following a protracted planning application process, has been debated in this publication and elsewhere far too much for it to be worthwhile for me to add my two penn'orth.

However, it struck me that this huge and extremely expensive construction project was just the tip of the iceberg. When I returned to York at the beginning of October, I found a campus that in places better resembled a building site than an esteemed educational establishment.

This has caused some significant inconvenience to many freshers (as *Nouse* reported in the previous issue) – hardly an impressive start to their university career. But what about those who haven't already committed themselves to coming here?

It may have escaped the attention of many of you, but the Friday before Freshers' Week saw the annual October Open Day, when thousands of starry-eyed secondary school kids wandered along the concrete banks of our beloved artificial lake, parents in tow, to get a taste of what life is like at one of Britain's best universities.

What they saw surely could not have impressed them much. New accommodation blocks still in the state of a building site, an ugly chipboard wall lining the Vanbrugh bank of the lake, several 'automatic' doors that need a bit of encouragement, and countless areas in need of a good lick of paint.

Let's hope none of them got as

far as Derwent, where that big green sign (still) proudly predicts completion of work by the end of September. As for the accommodation blocks, is it really any surprise that tours were largely restricted to James and Alcuin?

Because of course, when one ascends that twisting walkway, crosses the University road (maybe catching a glimpse of one of those beautiful buses as you go) and sets eyes upon the striking library and its neighbouring buildings, one's impression of the University becomes quite different.

And that's exactly my point about Heslington East. The new campus, when – if – it's eventually finished, will undoubtedly be a learning and living environment to be proud of, and the University will rightly be proud to advertise it to prospective students, but one fears for the future of the original buildings – once-impressive concrete structures, some of which must surely be reaching the end of their shelf life.

The next few years, in particular, is likely to see a serious dearth of investment in the maintenance of what is after all the nucleus of the University, as money is pumped into giving some nearby green-belt fields a spectacular new look. Not to mention the on-campus construction of the new buildings at Vanbrugh, which will only stick out like a particularly ugly opposable digit in the midst of structures from a different age.

But so long as the website and prospectus can continue to carry pictures of shiny white buildings and smiling students (with the odd picturesque shot of Heslington Hall thrown in for good measure), those dreamy teenagers will continue to set their hearts on this place. It's a shame they will experience the kind of nasty surprise that has greeted so many freshers upon their arrival at York and its campus of contrasts.

Waste not, want not, YUSU

Ditch the Freshers' Fair freebies and stop sucking our souls



Jim Durdin
Contributing Writer

Waste, excess, extravagance: Freshers' week in a slogan, and nowhere was this clearer than in the aftermath of the Freshers' Fair. The ravaging hordes came, went and left only wreckage, like some barbarian-ravaged border outpost. Discarded fliers drift like tumbleweed across the floor, posters hang limply and impotently from walls. If ever there was a case of university as microcosm of society, it was

this: a scrum for time and money that sucks at the soul of the unwary individual.

University Societies do a lot that's worthwhile, and I would not say otherwise for a moment, but the developed world should be past the point where it treats resources as playthings. Take your pick of environmental issues, but underlying them all is an uncomfortable bottom-line: our society uses too much stuff, and the first thing to go should be nonsense like this.

Freshers' week is hardly an exception to the consumerist rule. Rather than seeking out what we want, we say: "go on then, impress me; and if you don't, I have options." The onus is on the producer to constantly provide better this, improved that and new the other. In this case, it means bigger

and brighter posters, more fliers, more free sweets, more gimmicks.

Here's my dream. YUSU limits the resources used on P&P to a handful of posters. Fliers and free sweets are banned. Lets say a third of the resources then saved, confiscated from societies, are spent on getting freshers to the Fair, informing them about student services and societies, and buying everyone an impartial tasty treat. The other two thirds could then be used for something more worthwhile than the extra advertising for Go-Down-The-Pub-With-Your-Mates Soc.

And if there are any liberals objecting to this authoritarian proposal, please look into your souls and ask: is the right to shove pieces of paper into the hands of bemused first-years really a fundamental liberty?

Do you want to appear on these pages? Email socs12@york.ac.uk for details of our next meeting.

'Super', perhaps, but does York really need a new club?

The council is at fault for favouring student wants over the needs of the rest of the community



Tom Simon-Norris
Contributing Writer

Often when I'm asked the question, 'is York a good night out?' I give a confused answer. There's nothing wrong with York at all – who could honestly imagine life without the "terrible triumvirate" of Toffs, Ziggys and Gallery? The thing is, it's not what I would call a "crazy student party city". I pity the fresher overheard in Vanbrugh bar the

other day, saying how they had "only" been to Toffs and Ziggys so far. What to say?

Maybe that next June, a new 'super-club' will open on the site of the former Barbican leisure complex. York's last super-club, Ikon/Diva, is now almost forgotten, having closed down in 2005. Nothing against the existing clubs in York, but they're certainly not 'super-clubs'. However, this is connected with what makes student nights out in York great – you see everybody you know. This is totally different to the 'massive party cities' of Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield, where the choice is much greater and your mates much harder to

find. Do we want or need a new venue?

I recognise that this argument might not go down well with the student population. Of course we're not going to turn down a 3000-capacity super-club on our doorstep.

More rooms of music, big-name DJs, hopefully more new cutting edge electronic music and less of the old cheese: it all sounds pretty good, especially when you consider the restaurants, bars and concert hall that are to be included. Maybe we'll get some decent bands again, without night-tripping to Leeds.

It's worth mentioning, though,

that local opinion is divided on the project. Obviously York residents aren't too mad about hordes of rabid students passing by their doorsteps, but this isn't the real reason for the opposition. The Barbican complex used to be a massive publicly owned sports and leisure centre.

It seems the council couldn't run the facility competently; the long-derelict site has now been sold off to Absolute Leisure at what appears to have been an absurdly low price. Therefore, all the community facilities, including two swimming pools, two gyms and a climbing wall, will not be replaced if the plans go ahead.

It seems to me that the council may be seriously at fault for the situation. However, I suppose that, to most students, these 'outside' issues just aren't important at all, encased as we are in the bubble that is university life.

I'm not even sure whether they're that important to me; I'll be leaving York in a few years anyway. All the same, it might be worth considering whether a new superclub is such an indispensable boon.

More information

>> www.saveourbarbicanyork.org.uk

Website campaigning on the plans, with the responses of local residents.

Sara Sayeed Goes way back

NOW, WHILE THE resident goes way back columnist uses historiocity as a convenient excuse to indulge his micro-film fetish, I don't really equate the library with play-time. So we'll take a briefer amble down memory lane and skip back two, rather than twenty years. The bygone days of the Fresher epoch, circa 2005: somewhat best recounted by that wayward reveller Dickens as "the best of times, the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief..." Apart from the permanent troughs under my eyes and an ingrained dose of nourishing cynicism, quite a bit has changed within those seemingly brief twenty-four months. We came, we saw, we faltered (mostly on Micklegate) and life just passed the sozzled ones by. In my day, Ziggy's was a place where the scantily clad ventured to be appraised by the grope happy, and now on Friday's it is a "Strip Club". Ok, so really only a semantic alteration there, but some progression at least. Even Goodricke wasn't built in a day. We have seen the demise of the baby-belling. Once upon a time, Freshers could strive towards their aspirations of culinary innovation - it provided a different experimentation outlet for those "late bloomers". Indeed, in times past gastronomic mountains have been conquered with the baby-belling. I heard tell of a full Christmas dinner being executed with one - albeit that abandoned Fresher probably had a bit of time on their hands to hone the necessarily skills to achieve that feat, but what are today's Freshers going to do when heartlessly discarded by mummy and daddy come Christmas holidays? They can't even go make friends with Fit Duck for some comforting conversation - because he's dead. Fit Duck's nesting/resting grounds have also altered. With the removal of the lake fountain, gone are the days when sporadic bursts of pond spew dropped most delightfully in one's hair and coffee on the way to morning lectures. So there we are - changes. And I didn't even have to fondle any micro-film.



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

Getting Extra from the NUS?

Dear Nouse,

I think it is ridiculous that students are now forced to buy an NUS Extra card to attain proof of student status. It should be the right of any student to be able to prove that they are a student without having to pay for it.

From what I am aware, the NUS have changed their voting system to an online one so that the 'democracy card' available last year need not exist. I see this as a very sneaky move that undermines the interest of the students they are meant to protect.

I imagine that NUS got rid of the democracy card as students were still getting discounts from shops using the democracy card as proof of student status,

which would discourage people from paying for the extra card. I think it is fair enough to give students the option to pay for the extra card as it gives special discounts with certain companies, but making people pay for discounts they will never use is out of the question.

Once again the NUS has let everyone down with its selfishness and lack of consideration of students' interest. I really hope things improve after I finish this year.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Baume
Fourth Year Student

By email

Tea breaks and incompetence

Dear Nouse,

I was pleased to see Jenny O'Mahony's piece on the Holiday Inn fiasco (Nouse, October 9 2007). As a second year who was severely fucked around by the accommodation office last year, it's about time something was done. Their incompetence and lack of communication was astonishing. Despite calling on a weekly basis, it took until about a week before the start of term for anyone to realise they'd never got my accommodation application. God bless the Royal Mail.

I just think in a university where we're constantly being reminded that welfare reforms are being made, the inept hags - who by the way are always on a tea break - are a gross oversight. It takes a special kind of

bitch to say to a trembly voiced fresher "well you'll just have to send it quickly and hope we have something left".

On receiving a letter detailing local B&Bs, I am not ashamed to say I cried. There are times when there is no shame in getting your angry dad to call on your behalf. In fact, in this case, it worked.

If all it takes is a pushy parent to solve a problem, I'm sure some changes could be made that meant there were fewer homeless freshers and fewer students turning up disillusioned with university beaurocracy.

Gretchen Revuelta
Second Year Student

By air mail

Well done, Prof. Afshar

Dear Nouse,

I want to congratulate Prof. Haleh Afshar on her appointment to the House of Lords.

Haleh taught me at the University and her knowledge and integrity are not easily matched. She has always stood up for students, equality of opportunity, for women and for minorities. She has basically spoken up for fairness and those who cannot speak up for themselves.

Her work has been very inspirational to my politics and I wish her all the best. She will definitely be a "people's peer", and I know she will do a great job.

James Alexander
Labour Councillor



Then and now: Haleh in 1964, and today

Corrections

In last edition's feature on decorating student rooms, one of the pictures featured candles. The University have asked us to point out that lighting candles in University accommodation is against regulations due to the fire risk. Therefore, please ensure you leave your candles unlit, as we did. Maybe turn a light on though, or else you'll bump into things.

Getting a bit fresh...

Now that they're seeing York in the cold light of day, what do its newest students make of the big issues on campus? This time, YUSU's sexy (or is it just sexist?) freebie giveaway...

Name: Katie Williams
College: Vanbrugh
Subject: English and History



“ The really sad thing is, this University hadn't even been built when the idea of separating the sexes started going out of fashion. This sort of gender specification is completely outmoded. I always imagined university to be a place of ideas - new ones, exciting ones; somewhere to push boundaries and defy stereotypes. The fact that someone even considered this segregation is worrying - that it actually happened and that it was the Union that did it, is, frankly, disturbing. I am very disappointed in YUSU. ”

Name: Elly Veness
College: James
Subject: English Literature



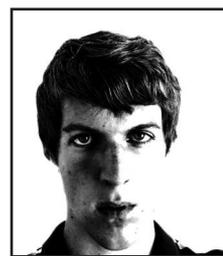
“ This demeaning use of 'his-and-hers' bags is outdated and wrong. For YUSU to pigeon-hole the students they should be defending is just embarrassing. I was affronted to find cellulite cream amongst the pamphlets and paper, as if having had free pizza at the Fair I should want to use it! The difference in items for guys and girls may have been an attempt at tongue-in-cheek humour, but it's a step too far. I wish YUSU would stop dividing us by gender and see us collectively for what we are: York students! ”

Name: Mark Pickard
College: Halifax
Subject: Gender Studies



“ As a gender studies student, I am well-acquainted with gender. I like to think I have a firm grasp of women. Although it's easy to understand why plenty of people were offended by the distribution of FHM, YUSU handed them out in good faith and in my opinion the whole incident was blown out of proportion. Ultimately who are we to complain about free stuff from a fresher's fair? Especially free stuff that has the potential to bring pleasure to so many. Let's keep our hair on, shall we? ”

Name: Alex Russell
College: Vanbrugh
Subject: English and Philosophy



“ Obviously, it was only meant as a bit of fun: YUSU wouldn't have intended to offend people. However, more consideration should have been given to the contents of these bags. Although FHM may be popular with the British male population, that doesn't mean everyone likes ogling half-naked women. These bags should instead be of more use to Freshers during their first week. The Baked Beans were a great idea, so something similar would be more appropriate. Toilet roll? Pasta? Toothpaste? ”

Pakistan's short, sharp handshake

Will Heaven examines Pakistan's international relations in light of the recent assassination attempt on Benazir Bhutto

The bombs which killed more than a hundred of Benazir Bhutto's supporters in Karachi on Thursday night marked the beginning of a new episode in Pakistani politics. It was not the start that the former Prime Minister, returning from eight years of self-imposed exile, had hoped for. But over the course of her political career, Bhutto has made numerous enemies.

Ms Bhutto's father, Zulfikar Ali, is the reason behind her career in the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP). His controversial execution in 1979 for allegedly ordering the killing of a political opponent launched his daughter's political career and tied her to politics in a way that mirrors the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty in India. She has twice been Prime Minister and twice been sacked for charges of corruption. But Bhutto's return to Pakistan has been on the cards for over a year: she is often referred to by the Pakistani press as "the lady-in-waiting".

Anyone who has witnessed the border closing ceremony at Wagah between India and Pakistan, which I was fortunate enough to see this summer, will have some idea of the relationship the two countries have. The ceremony is full of pomp, military splendour and one-gunmanship, and the fiercest and tallest soldiers from the sub-continent are hand-picked to stomp and scream every evening at sunset in front of cheering crowds. But

an interesting change has occurred in the last few years. Now, just before the nations' flags are lowered, one soldier from each side approaches the border gates. These are opened and the sharpest of handshakes is exchanged. It is symbolic in its brevity, but is a visible sign of a real improvement in international relations. In 2002, a million troops lined the Kashmir border and the world feared full-scale nuclear war. Now, the two countries are engaged in long-term peace talks.

But Pakistan has had a difficult year. Since 2001 and Musharraf's decision to side with the USA in the 'war on Terror', the struggle with pro-Taliban Muslims has proved difficult for the General. It culminated in the infamous Lal Masjid siege in July this year. Hardline militants took control of the Red Mosque in Islamabad to protest against a government demolition programme aimed at illegally-built mosques. The army operation to end the siege, which killed more than 50 militants, rekindled the Waziristan war as pro-Taliban rebels rejected a 10-month-old peace deal with the Pakistani government and began attacking near the Afghan border.

As military dictators go, Musharraf has never been a fearsome leader. Anti-government protests have usually been allowed to proceed, and although media censorship has been imposed on occasion, in the day of the internet (or even pirate

radio) it has only given the pro-democracy lobby more to shout about. The General's dismissal and quick reinstatement of Pakistan's Chief Justice in March was another blunder. But Musharraf has soldiered on, a neutered and ineffective dictator.

Pakistan has two main issues to address. First, its international relations, most importantly with the USA and India. Second, the political chaos that has enveloped the country, chiefly the surge of Muslim extremism. Clearly the two issues are linked: if Pakistan cannot effectively combat pro-Taliban rebels then US support will wane. Pakistan's relations with India may have improved, but with no stable government there can be no long-term solutions.

Many think Musharraf now lacks the political support of the Pakistani public and a return to democracy seems inevitable. But, realistically, how long will Bhutto survive? She had only been in the country a few hours before an attempt on her life was made. The finger was naturally pointed at Taliban sympathisers, but why were the streetlights off where the bombs were detonated? The assassination attempt could easily have been organised by the secret services, the army or even Musharraf's sympathisers. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto famously wrote from his prison cell, 'My destiny is in the hands of the people. Only the people have the right to sever or seal their affinities with me.' His daughter shares his fate.



Benazir Bhutto returned to Karachi this week from Dubai; the corruption charges against her have been dropped however her life already seems to be in danger

Facebook and Myspace: the new political weaponry

Matthew Hogarth

THE POSSIBILITIES of using sites such as Facebook and MySpace as political tools have only recently been realised. With each attracting over 20 million regular users, and a system that allows voters to be targeted individually as 'friends', campaigning through social networks is increasingly important for reaching young people.

The shrewdest users of online networks so far have been the 2008 US Presidential hopefuls, who are using the sites to reach a vast, diverse and notoriously

Profile	edit	Friends	▼	Networks	▼	Inbox (1)
						
Barack Obama						
Networks:						
Sex:						
Relationship Status:						
Birthday:						
Religious Views:						
Election 2008						
Position:						
Party:						
▼ Information						

Barack Obama's Facebook page gives details of his 2008 Presidential campaign. He has 155,679 friends.

incohesive American population.

Democratic candidate Barack Obama is at the fore of this campaigning method: with 154,795 Facebook friends and regularly updated statuses, his 'wall' is filled with tributes from supporters and is linked to the group 'One Million Strong for Barack', which attracted 278,000 members within a month of being created. "I'm making Paris Hilton look like a recluse", said the Senator of his online exposure.

There are few US election contenders that have not yet grasped this opportunity. Republican Rudy Giuliani

has a MySpace page that allows donations to be given directly to his campaign, and Mormon Republican Mitt Romney charms visitors with an Elvis tune.

But for every compliment, there is an equally passionate attack. The divisive Hilary Clinton provokes the most hostile reaction. 1,035 Facebook members promise to move to Australia if she is elected President, while 1,757 would prefer to vote for a trained chimpanzee.

Republican Senator John McCain faced problems in March this year when his MySpace page was hacked by his own software designer.

An apparently genuine letter accompanied by McCain's picture appeared, stating 'Dear Supporters, Today I announce that I have reversed my position and come out in full support of gay marriage...particularly marriage between two passionate females.'

UK politicians are warrior of the sites. David Cameron and Gordon Brown do not officially have profiles, but Boris Johnson's 'Appreciation Society' boasts 17,000 members. There certainly is a conversation going on, even if it is entitled 'David Cameron is a hottie' (736 members).



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To die for an honour not your own

Two hundred murder cases in the UK have been reopened to investigate whether 'honour killings' were the real cause of death. **Anjali Raval** explores the growing phenomenon within UK Asian communities



Honour Killings' continue to be a problem in the UK with Home Office figures suggesting that there are around 12 such murders each year, although police believe the genuine figure is much higher. In a recent BBC poll of 500 Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Christian UK Asians, 10% said that they would condone the murder of an individual who had disrespected their family honour.

Killing in the name of honour is often considered a private matter. However, in recent years, more and more cases have reached UK courts. Nonetheless, many crimes still remain unresolved and undetected. The crime is usually

committed by male family members against female relatives, and in some cases mothers and sisters are also involved.

The practice of honour killings is most prevalent within Muslim families in the Middle East. Victims in the UK tend to be from Middle-Eastern and South East Asian backgrounds and common reasons for the murder of a family member, include the refusal to enter into an arranged marriage, committing adultery, seeking a divorce, or adopting a Western attitude. In some cases, victims of rape and sexual assault are murdered for the 'dishonour' they have brought to the family.

Dr Aisha Gill, a Senior Lecturer at Roehampton University and an expert on the

issue said, "The cases that have been reported in recent years show that there is still limited knowledge of the impact of 'honour'-based violence and little resistance to so-called 'honour' killings in communities where it is prevalent."

This statement comes in light of the murder of Banaz Mahmood, a 20 year old Kurdish woman who was found buried in a suitcase in a garden in Birmingham. Her father and uncle were found guilty in June 2007 of murdering her, because she had fallen in love with a man her family did not want her to marry.

YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer, Grace Fletcher-Hall said, "People need to get it into their heads that 'culture' is

no excuse for denying women their basic human rights - every man and every woman has the right to live their lives without fear of violence."

It was disclosed in court that Mahmood had told the police on four occasions that her family were trying to kill her, but her claims were dismissed as melodrama. The Metropolitan Police Force has been criticised for its handling of Banaz's case with five officers facing an internal disciplinary inquiry.

Since the death of Mahmood, police chiefs have re-opened 200 cases of deaths and murders between 1996 and 2006 to see if 'honour killings' were the actual cause of death. Since then, 19 have fallen into

Most victims of honour killings are Muslim women from families in the Middle East

this category with a further 20 involving some element of 'honour' violence.

Kate Nevens from End Violence Against Women, an organisation allied to Amnesty International, said, "we believe that a more holistic, strategic approach needs to be taken with regards to violence against women. The government lacks a coherent and concerted approach to preventing violence happening in the first place."

Marie-Anne Rogers, YUSU's Women's Officer, said, "The media attention given to recent 'honour killings' can only be beneficial in making the public aware of the horrific crimes some women have suffered. Whether in Britain, or elsewhere, it is never acceptable".

Campbell resigns to leave Oxbridge majority

Peter Campbell

WHETHER OR NOT you like Gordon Brown, at least he didn't take the typical route to leadership: he didn't go to Oxbridge. David Cameron did. So did the two candidates to succeed dear old Glasgow Graduate Menzies Campbell: Chris Huhne and Nick Clegg. Both Ed Balls and David Miliband, the likely successors to Brown, are Oxbridge alumni, as were Blair, Thatcher, Heath and Wilson. In recent times, the only two British Prime Ministers who weren't Oxbridge graduates



Lib Dem leader Menzies Campbell has resigned

were 'University of Life' men Callaghan and Major.

So what hope is there for those who are not at Oxford - like we poor beggars at the University of York?

A week after Freshers' Fair, ambitious young students embark on a three-year slog to the top. Those hoping to hack their way up the hierarchy of YUSU, NUS, or even the national Tory/Labour/LibDem student groups may well be disappointed.

Hack away; but be prepared to tug your forelock to your Oxbridge betters when

it comes to the top job.

I'm not saying that non-Oxbridge students won't succeed. Many of you will be very successful (Harriet Harman is an ex-Yorker!). However, the Oxbridge gang always seems to beat us to the very top. To paraphrase Ali G, "Is it cos they is clever?" Or is there another reason? Does it matter? Surely it makes sense for the country to be run by the most apparently intelligent people?

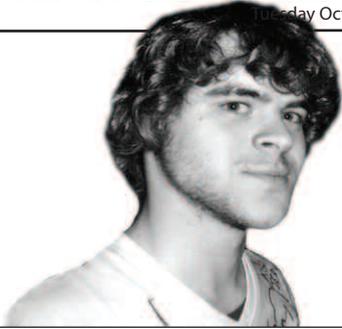
But that is where the elite system falls short. Regardless of the academic brilliance or reputation of

Oxbridge, it remains an Ivory Tower. The Institute of Public Policy Research, states that "Oxbridge currently take 40% of their students from private schools, which account for just 7% of the national student population."

The question "do we want our country run by Oxbridge graduates" is irrelevant: it already is. York is one of the best universities in Britain, and is beginning to enjoy worldwide acclaim, but it's still not Oxford. That is no bad thing, but does it mean you should not be considering student politics as a

way to the very highest positions, since the old Oxonians will always win?

I am not saying, "Avoid student politics!" YUSU, NUS and the student political party groups are all a good way of getting young people to engage with current affairs and, like all student societies, are a chance to meet like-minded people. But unless you fancy you can overturn centuries of precedent, when you begin your ascent of the greasy pole in the humble environs of the Students' Union, you might do well to accept that the top job may elude you.



Matthew Jeynes

‘It doesn’t really matter whether you play for University or College - just play some sport!’

As you freshers reach the end of your opening two weeks, blink your drink-hazed eyes and emerge, grunting probably, into sunlight, stumbling around like Bambi after a particularly hard night on the mossy ale, exercise may not be high on the list of priorities. (I am simply remembering my own discovery of a world outside alcohol). Anyway, when the need for exercise does rear its ugly head, each one of you is faced with the age-old problem: do I play college or university sport?

It is commonly assumed that people who play university sport are better than their college counterparts - that college sportsmen are the University’s rejects. Anyone who has ever played college sport would contend this, and not just because no-one particularly wants to be called a reject. It is simply that university sport is not everyone’s cup of tea, and there are really only a small percentage of people who are truly suited to playing consistently competitive sport. That does not make the rest “worse” in any way

It takes a definite level of commitment, passion and love of your sport to train five days a week and consistently compete for the University. To have that drive is an admirable attribute, but it is not very common. Neither is it a particularly genetic attribute, as a sportsman’s drive can come and go. Compared to that, college sport is very laid back, with hangover - or



You don’t have to play for York’s Rugby 1sts against Lancaster in the Roses to enjoy playing sport

even drunk - participants not only tolerated but actively expected, even in the more competitive sports, such as football. While the games can still be heavily competitive, the focus leans far more towards enjoyment than it does for university sport. Apart from some notable exceptions - football having already been mentioned - college sport is more of a social event, with a bit of competitive pride thrown in to the mix; sort of the youthful equivalent of a pub team, where the socialising matters almost as much

as the actual playing.

Come to think of it, I’m not sure how many college sportsmen would appreciate being compared to a bunch of paunch-ridden middle-aged men doing anything to stay away from home on a Sunday afternoon.

I guess college sport is whatever you make of it. You can trundle on down to the sports hall in a spare few minutes for a spot of table-tennis, or you can put the effort in and try to get involved with some football or netball. You

can do it simply for the enjoyment of the sport, or you can engage in all the other accompanying social aspects, such as the infamous Langwith football ‘punch’.

University sport is not nearly so open or friendly. You play hard, you socialise just as hard. Participants will argue that it is just as sociable as college sport - most even recommend the social side of their clubs as one of the main incentives for joining - but there just seems to be something slightly different to club socials compared

to college ones.

In college sport, you are pretty much socialising constantly - during training, matches and in between. By contrast, sports club events seem to be the social equivalent to binge drinking, in that you train and play all week, then dress ridiculously, consume obscene amounts of alcohol and (for the men, anyway) produce laughable attempts to dance in Ziggy’s.

Incidentally, surely the impulse that causes most sportsmen to remove their tops in clubs should be the subject of some sort of scientific enquiry - surely it would be worth the funding, more than most other inane studies carried out.

Up until now, I perhaps haven’t given university sport a fair plug in comparison to college, but it does have its positive aspects - and many of them. As it is so driven, with so much work involved, the rewards, both in a physical and a mental sense, are greater. It is beyond doubt that the sense of achievement is higher in university sport - the commitment that the players put in ensures that the emotions from both winning and losing are certain to be higher than if one just turned up slightly hungover for a bit of a kick-around.

Whatever you decide to do, just make sure you play at least some sport during your degree, even if it is just for 10 minutes every other weekend - just to halt that slide towards that ever-increasing beer belly.

Do gender stereotypes discourage sportswomen?

By Jenny O’Mahony
 DEPUTY EDITOR

Sport is characterised by stereotypes. Hysterical footballers, Neanderthal rugby players and shrieking tennis aces abound, and all too often the stars of sport feel compelled to live up to the public’s image of who they are. Campus is no different when it comes to the stock characters which supposedly exist, such as the butch female sportswoman. How many women have been put off from even trying a particular sport because of the abuse they are sure to receive from their friends? How many are discouraged by how men will see them if they become “butch”?

The problem is that sport as a whole then becomes gendered, with



Venus Williams, tennis player

female and male sports divided up from school age, when it is really unnecessary to do so.

This unhealthy preoccupation with the ‘right’ sport for your gender has wider implications. Women are 15% less likely to participate in sport than their male counterparts, and in organised team sport this figure is much higher. Female boxers, cricketers, even plain old netball players are accused of being ‘manly’ just for having muscles, so it is no wonder that by the time many of them get to university they give up.

This also means that the pool of talent for clubs to pick from is shallow, lowering the overall standard of sport, which inevitably encourages yet fewer women to follow their example.

My own record with sport has

been marred by this kind of experience. After my Year 7 PE teacher laughed out loud at my skinny legs, I instinctively shied away from sport. I spent Games lessons standing at the back of the line, pretending to be ill or just making snide remarks about the teacher. Aside from my own personal tragedy, I also have a lacrosse-playing friend who says that she rarely tells any new people that she meets about the sport she plays, principally because of the reaction she gets. She says that it is especially bad from other women.

The stigma can also be to do with the assumptions about sports teams. Not every sports player drinks themselves stupid on punch every week, even if, to be completely honest, most of them do. However, the Nouse office can be a

difficult place to be a sports fan, with emphasis on the inner workings of the hallowed corridors of *The Guardian* taking precedence over the rough-and-tumble of campus Hockey fixtures, let alone Rugby. One gets the distinct impression that the people around me were the ones picked last for teams as well, and most would have rather be ignored altogether and not be picked.

Gender stereotyping does not help the cause of sport and neither does it make our chronically obese nation any less so. All forms of physical exercise are beneficial, and when young people are put off by needless stigmas, it only serves to further entrench negative attitudes towards the healthy lifestyle we constantly claim to be striving for, but which few achieve.

York demonstrate efficient performance to begin new BUSA season with style

WOMEN'S NETBALL

York 33
York St. John 14

By Beth Cornwall
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

THE NETBALL season got off to a flying start this week with the York University 1sts strolling to a convincing 33-14 win over local rivals York St John. Despite only a few days of training and numerous changes from last year's squad, the home team displayed great cohesion and confidence on court, leading to a comfortable triumph.

During their pre-match huddle, the team, captained by centre court player Amy Smith, showed determination and a sense of unity before the players even stepped onto court. Coupled with the amount of support coming from the sidelines, the game promised to be an exciting one.

The match started with a St John centre, but tight marking in the centre third led to St John being penalised for a held ball, gifting York the possession. Unfortunately this was not taken advantage of due to a throw-away ball in the goal third. A stunning interception by GA Sarah Pycroft on the defensive gave York their first opportunity to push the ball into the circle, and a well organised back up on the circle edge by the attack



York's women 1sts strolling to a convincing and comfortable win in their opening match of the new season

secured York the first goal of the match.

From the second centre York produced a flawless display of netball, and within seconds of the whistle had secured their lead with a four-ball set piece move, which lead to the second goal of the match. By the end of the first quarter spirits were high among the York players

as they led the match 11-5.

Due to the success of the first quarter no changes were made to positioning and the strength displayed at the beginning of the match was further evident in the second quarter. Efficient consistency and effective communication between the players allowed the York team to dominate all areas of the court. WA

Clare Shaw in particular displayed excellent skills when being double marked at the centre passes, where she was able to manoeuvre herself into an unmarked space each time.

York made a number of positional changes going into the third quarter, including captain Amy Smith, which resulted in less communica-

tion and cohesiveness on the court. This meant that a number of chances to intercept were squandered. Although the team retained their lead, they lacked the fluidity seen earlier in the match, as was shown by the number of throw-away balls and missed opportunities at goal.

Although York had a

substantial lead that was unlikely to be taken away from them, they displayed great skill and determination in defence, fighting tirelessly to prevent the St John shooters from getting the ball near the post. York WD Hannah Martin made a number of successful attempts to keep the St John GA out of the circle, leaving both circle defence, Tess Olsen and Katie Cowper-Johnson, able to put considerable pressure on the remaining shooter. This immaculate display resulted in York only conceding three goals in the last quarter to take the victory easily.

Credit must be given to the two first-year circle attacks, Sami Briggs and Sarah Fisher who, despite constant pressure and hassle by the St John defence, were able to consistently work the ball around the circle to receive it under the post, resulting in numerous goals, and therefore in impressive debuts.

York Lineup

GK-Tess Olson, GD-Katie Cowper-Johnson, WD-Kate Brunskill/Hannah Martin, C-Amy Smith (c), WA-Clare Shaw/Laura Longworth, GA-Sarah Pycroft/Sarah Fisher, GS-Sami Briggs

Woman of the match

Clare Shaw - Showed great skill creating space with her movement and passing

Doubles' strength ensures close York victory

MEN'S BADMINTON

York 5
Sunderland 3

By Matthew Jeynes
ACTING SPORTS EDITOR

A FAST-PACED and closely contested encounter between York As and Sunderland As ended with York clinching the deciding game to start the season with a 5-3 win.

York 2nd Doubles convincingly overcame Sunderland 2nd 21-5 21-8 to complete a 4-0 whitewash in the doubles games that saw York through to the victory. Their superior strength in depth made up for the lack of any stand-out singles performance and ultimately proved the difference.

The York team went into the fixture full of confidence, doubles player Ricky



The dynamic Duy in action winning his singles match

Kanabar stating that "you can't go into a match thinking anything other than that you are going to win".

On first viewing, the York team did seem more impressive, with their matching 1st team kits. In comparison, the Sunderland outfit looked fairly ragged in mismatched kits. While kits

may not seem like much, they contribute towards a sense of being in a team, and the organisation that goes with it.

The match began with simultaneous singles matches on courts 1 and 2 in the main sports hall. York's Duy Hung secured a 21-15 21-18 victory in the opening game

to give York the perfect start. Duy's brand of no-holds-barred, throw-yourself-around-the-court badminton certainly got the (admittedly small) crowd behind him, while also earning him a few bruises from particularly nasty falls.

Unfortunately, York captain Rob Walker was unable to capitalise, losing his game by 2 sets to 1, citing a lack of fitness after winning the first set in dramatic fashion 23-21, though it took the expertise of Sunderland captain David Shariff to exploit it.

However, York's superior doubles play soon saw them take a 3-1 lead in the match, as they displayed excellent teamwork and touch play, using their height advantage to deliver repeated unreturnable smashes against their smaller opponents. Both York teams

showed superior speed around the court, working their opponents around, before delivering the unreturnable shot.

Sunderland once again pulled level through consecutive singles victories, with Walker, looking increasingly fatigued, going down again and the dynamic Duy defeated by the court control of Shariff, who rarely strayed far from the base.

The stage was then set for the final doubles showdown. However, Sunderland failed to put up much resistance, with their 2nd doubles team not even reaching double figures in either set, handing the match to York. The Sunderland 1st doubles team put up more of a fight than they had done in their first game, but were still no match for York's pair. Walker admitted he was "pleased" with the win and attributed

the victory to "a solid doubles performance", but admitted there was "work to be done on singles".

Shariff, the stand-out singles performer, stated that while he was happy with his own play, he was "annoyed" at his doubles pairs. "We haven't had a good doubles pairing in three years. Plus, we are missing our best doubles player, while York have good strength across the board", he explained.

This strength in depth was further highlighted as York cantered to a 6-2 victory in the B's match, also against Sunderland, completing a great day for York on the badminton courts.

York line-up:

Doubles: Ricky Kanabar, Will Wiseman, Patrick Clarke, Jonty Hiley
Singles: Duy Hung, Rob Walker

Langwith's striking problems hand Vanbrugh the win in opening match

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Vanbrugh 1sts 3
Langwith 1sts 0

By Matthew Jeynes
 ACTING SPORTS EDITOR

A BRIGHT but cold Sunday afternoon saw the start of the new college football season, with Langwith taking on Vanbrugh down on the 22 acres.

It being the start of the new season, both sides were adjusting to having lost recently graduated players and attempting to integrate freshers into their teams. Because of this, the majority of the game was a scrappy affair with little free-flowing football.

The game began in the same sloppy fashion that would continue throughout, with neither side able to retain the ball for any serious amount of time. There was a shortage of clear-cut opportunities as neither side seemed to have that many ideas up front.

Langwith perhaps started the better side, in that they were the only team who could keep the ball for more than 10 seconds, but it was Vanbrugh who had the opening chance, with a long-range free kick striking the wall, before the ball was blazed over the top of the goal from the resulting throw-in.

This seemed to wake Langwith up, and they came close to taking the lead when a dipping volley from the edge of the area by Tom Eskell hit the top of the crossbar, leaving the

Vanbrugh keeper completely beaten.

Langwith continued to dominate possession, but still lacked cutting edge in attack. They resorted to taking pot-shots from outside the area, a tactic which failed to trouble Wilkinson in the Vanbrugh goal.

Midway through the half, and slightly against the run of play, Vanbrugh snatched the lead when pacy striker Oliver Regan was played in down the inside-left channel by an inch-perfect through-ball and slid it past Langwith keeper Dave Lowe.

Within minutes, Vanbrugh had succeeded in stretching their lead to 2-0 when a poor clearance from Langwith left-back David Cox was seized upon by Vanbrugh striker Dan Radford. Radford intercepted the ball 25 yards out and unleashed a powerful shot into the bottom-left corner of the net.

Briefly dispirited at the score-line, Langwith managed to re-compose themselves quickly and dominated the game leading up to half-time. A difficult header from Mikey Cotterill went narrowly over, before Harry Prior was slipped through by midfielder Dan Aked. However, his shot was blocked by the on-rushing keeper.

Langwith should have pulled a goal back just before half-time, but Prior somehow managed to nod a free header wide from 3 yards out, leaving the score 2-0 at half-time.

The second half was perhaps even more of a non-



The new season of firsts' college football began at the weekend with four games

event. With Vanbrugh content to defend their lead and Langwith lacking any cutting edge up front, the game seemed to meander along without much action. With

both of their forwards dropping back, Langwith were limited to taking long shots, which failed to trouble the Vanbrugh keeper.

Vanbrugh defended

brilliantly though, soaking up the pressure and hitting Langwith on the counter-attack numerous times, using the Regan's speed to great effect.

With the Langwith defence unable to cope with his pace and movement, Regan had several opportunities to put the game beyond doubt, but was sorely lacking in composure in front of goal, and regularly blazed his shots over the bar.

Langwith did manage to hit the crossbar again with a thundering header from a corner, but luck did not seem to be on their side. The match effectively ended as a contest soon after, when Langwith conceded an own-goal from a Vanbrugh corner. The Langwith keeper simply palmed the ball in the air before defender Owain Palmer, going for the overhead clearance, succeeded only in hitting the underside of the crossbar and the ball rebounded into the goal.

The result being assured and neither side in peak physical condition, the game wound down slowly to its conclusion. The referee finally blew the whistle to hand Vanbrugh a comprehensive winning start and leave Langwith with a lot of work to do - and sorely in need of striking options.

Team Line-ups:

Langwith: GK-Dave Lowe, RB-Charlie Morgan, CB - Tom Foy, CB-Dave Coulson, RM-Ash, CM-Dan Aked, CM-Harry Prior, S-Mikey Cotterill, CF-Matt Pretty.

Vanbrugh: GK-John Wilkinson, CB-Sam Whittaker, CB-Sam Tuck, RWB-James Sweetman, LWB-Tom Sheldrick, CM-Jack Weavis, CM-Johnny Macwilliams, CM-Jack Nicklas, CF-Oliver Regan, CF-Dan Radford

Claims that freshers don't participate are false

By Criss Noice
 ACTING SPORTS EDITOR

RUMOURS ON campus amongst freshers that first year students are less likely to be picked for sports teams just because of their age are entirely unsubstantiated, several teams have told *Noise* this week.

The rumour, which circulates in many universities, especially institutions heavily grounded in sport such as Loughborough and Brighton, has resurfaced at the start of this year during trials. Although it is unclear



Rowing's fresher boat is used to get 1st years involved

whether this has discouraged freshers, it is a problem that societies face.

However, it is evident

that in all of the teams - wherever feasible - squad hopefuls have been judged purely on their ability and

not their status in the University.

First teams, which comprise largely of second- and third-year students, such as the rowing team, are formed in this way because many students are trying the sport for the first time. To make up for this, Boat Club do have a specific fresher's team to cater for those who would not otherwise get into established boats.

Although there is no official requirement for first-year students to be included in the first teams, successful York teams such as the rugby and netball teams as well as

others all included a number of freshers in their first teams last year.

On a smaller scale, college sport has also suffered from the 'no freshers' stigma, with claims that the teams are clique-based and comprised purely of groups of friends, as opposed to all students who have an interest in playing.

While in some cases this can be true, the majority of the college sports, especially the slightly more specialist ones, such as squash or Badminton, don't have enough people turning up to every match as it is, so any

participation from first-year students, whatever their skill level, is welcomed by the captains.

The message to first-year students being given by all of the sports teams at York is that the level of ability and competitive experience is the deciding factor in selection, not the age of the applicants.

In fact, freshers may even have a better chance of filling vacant sporting positions as it is likely they have come straight from playing at school, whereas second-years will have had at least a year of not playing the sport.

SPORT

York's netball victory:

The University of York triumph over York St John's in a promising opening to the BUSA season. Full match report >> P18



Wilson brace spares York in tense encounter

RUGBY UNION

Huddersfield Men 14
York Men 22

By Alex Corp
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

YORK'S RUGBY Union team got their BUSA league campaign off to a winning start for the first time in three years after negotiating a tricky away encounter in Huddersfield. York made the task all the harder for themselves by not capitalising on their superiority, and were made to sweat in the closing minutes before securing the win.

With the narrow pitch playing into the hands of Huddersfield's sizeable forwards while all but negating the benefit of York's mobile back, the away side spent the opening minutes defending. Fortunately for York, Huddersfield's lack of ambition in their back's play rendered the task easier, if bruising. Despite the perfect playing conditions, the ball rarely ventured beyond 9/10 channel, and committed gang tackles ensured Huddersfield never looked like encroaching on York's tryline.

Once York's backs had found their range and running lines on the diminutive playing surface - shorter and narrower than a standard field at just 80m by 50m by 20m - they began to look dangerous. Their breakthrough came midway through the first half when York's rapid recycling at the breakdown took its toll on the defence. Slick hands in the midfield meant the ball reached Nick Mason before the tiring cover, and the winger sped over in the corner for his first try of the season.

But with York's lineout

misfiring and their scrum stuck in reverse, the backs' most reliable stream of good ball came from the Huddersfield set-piece, which was suffering similar travails. One such turnover found York's James Wilson at first receiver, and he produced a piece of individual brilliance by taking a deep pass from the base of a ponderous ruck before beating three Huddersfield defenders to score a try. York's advantage was further stretched as Warwick Burrows coolly slotted his second conversion of the game. The centre then very nearly extended the visitors' lead close to half time, but was judged to have been held up over the line.

Immediately after the restart Huddersfield somehow found themselves back in contention, despite having looked toothless in attack for the first 40 minutes. York number eight Ally Handy secured the kick off cleanly, but the Huddersfield hooker managed to collect the ball from a suspiciously offside position before his bullocking run took him through the tacklers and crashing over the white-wash.

York gathered themselves and responded immediately, determined not to lose a game they had been dominating. Fly-half Tom Benbow sped around the outside of the flat-footed Huddersfield defence before flipping a speculative pass inside to Wilson just five metres out. The full-back gathered it in and scrambled over in the corner for his second try.

After this setback, Huddersfield never looked like getting back into the game. With York locks Mike Callis and Jon Kume-Davy disrupting their lineout and

the breakdown, they could not get any good ball, and ferocious tackling from the York pack, led by skipper Paul Goodall, quickly snuffed out any opportunities that they could create.

York managed to stretch their lead still further when replacement wing Seb Hurst was handed an easy three-pointer when Huddersfield infringed inside their own 22.

York survived a late scare when Huddersfield managed to score another converted try, again in controversial fashion, but they managed to negotiate a tricky last few minutes with an ultimately comfortable eight-point lead.

Goodall was delighted with the result: "The build-up to the game wasn't great, and we were playing a big physical side, who had beaten us heavily last season, on a very small pitch. To come away from the match with a win says a lot about us as a team."

And with the 2nd XV's 43-6 mauling of Sheffield Hallam, there are some promising signs for the season to come: "I'm really pleased that we've got the strength in depth to put out two very good sides at the moment, and that was reflected in two excellent wins today."

York team lineup:

1.Hugh Wigzell, 2.Alex Corp, 3.James Stone, 4.Mike Callis, 5.Jon Kume-Davy, 6.Jack Waking, 7.Paul Goodall (c), 8.Ally Handy, 9.Sam Dudley, 10.Tom Benbow, 11.Nick Mason, 12.Warwick Burrows, 13.Nick Brown, 14.Lionel Owusu, 15.James Wilson, 16.Luke Brazier, 17.Chris Carrington, 18.Fraser Monaghan, 19.Seb Hurst.



York made an encouraging start to the new season with a win over Huddersfield

Vanbrugh trounces Langwith in first college football >> P19

York Netball team begins new BUSA season with style >> P18

York Badminton doubles win over Sunderland convincingly >> P18

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