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# Nouse



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Tuesday 7 March 2017

## Leave of absence surge for students

Luke Rix-Standing  
EDITOR

LEAVE OF ABSENCES - when a student drops out of an academic year with intention of returning at the start of a subsequent year - are rising at a rapid rate; almost one York student in 20 was on leave at some point last year, having put their academic studies on hold.

Leave of absence may be taken for a variety of reasons but the most common is ill-health, including mental health. In response to a freedom of information request, *Nouse* has obtained some interesting figures about leave of absences which highlight not only the overall increase in numbers taking time out from their studies, but also broad variation between departments.

Some have fewer than 2 per cent of their students on leave while others have one in ten absent.

Leave of absence can undoubtedly benefit individuals, but these figures raise significant concerns about why so many students require such a break and whether there is sufficient and consistent support to avoid students reaching crisis point that can accommodate the now substantial numbers taking leave of absence.

The general trend is straightforward: leave of absence numbers are going up, and they're going up fast. According to a freedom of information return filed by *Nouse*, last year saw 800 individual students on leave of absence, up 40 from the previous year and 95 from the year before that. Total leave of absence

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The winning SABB candidates celebrate their victory on the results night stage. See profiles for all the incoming Sabbatical Officers inside P.7

## Revs attacked by ex-staff for alleged lack of breaks and forged reviews

• “People were miserable, but couldn’t quit because they needed the money”: students speak out against York bar

Finn Judge  
DEPUTY EDITOR

THREE YORK STUDENTS who have worked at Revolution York bar (Revs) have spoken out against its management, alleging to have worked up to 12-hour shifts with-

out breaks, having been asked to fabricate reviews on the Revs Facebook page, and being witness to lewd behaviour from members of management staff.

Second year Politics student Abigail Eatock, who worked at Revs until she left in December last year, voiced her concerns to the company’s head office regarding these issues. For making this

complaint, she reports that she was initially barred by regional management from Revs.

“I used to go home most days and just cry”, Eatock commented, speaking to *Nouse*. “People were miserable, but couldn’t quit because they needed the money.”

The majority of Revs staff are currently students. Former employee Alex Jee, also a student at

the University of York, claimed that “staff, students and graduates alike were exploited by the management.”

Multiple members of Revs staff, Eatock alleges, were subject to an “illegal” lack of breaks during shifts lasting longer than six hours. Under current employment law, it

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

I think it was Bill Clinton who said: "all the greatest mistakes I've made in my life were because I was tired". I sincerely hope that, on the last day of our last prod week this term, we're not about to back him up.

Bill and his \*ahem\* mistakes aside, a lot of people come to university with romanticised preconceptions of what student life might be like. The clubs, the lectures, the guy down the hall who does enough cocaine to save the Venezuelan economy; it's all part of the adventure, and finding out how true or false your ideas are is a crucial part of the university experience.

But there is nothing more noble in the lore of student chivalry than staying up past the witching hour. Writing an essay, painting the town red, composing an editor's note; it almost doesn't matter, the number is what counts. 1:00AM, that's a pass: a low 2:2 at best. 2:30AM and things are looking up, your Facebook feed is nodding in approval and your caffeine dependency is nearing respectability. 4AM and you've made it: crazy-eyed and greasy-haired, you can triumphantly relate your exploits safe in the knowledge that your next two days are going to be terrible. You can say it was 5AM. No one will notice.

The very word 'tired' has embedded itself into the student psyche to the point where it becomes a Pavlovian impulse. 'How are you?' asks a slightly-low-on-conversation-starters friend on a standard Tuesday morning. Instead of 'fine', or 'drowning in turmoil' (the

standard pre-university responses), many people just skip straight to 'tired'. Odds on it's right, and anyway, you don't have the energy to think about it.

But this deference to dormitory deprivation has consequences that reverberate throughout the student experience. The mental health crisis sweeping British universities is no coincidence: there's something about how students live that damages their well-being, or at least renders them vulnerable. Because if you think about it, being tired is anathema to everything that university stands for. Hundreds of societies, escaping the parental yoke, 17 000 potential friendships: at no stage will enthusiasm and optimism be more rewarded than at uni. Why would you choose to face it after the lifestyle equivalent of five glasses of wine and a valium? You owe it to yourself to be the best version of yourself you can be.

So for god's sake, stop telling that boring dude down the hall that he ought to join your spontaneous, 24-hour all-singing, all-dancing rave crew, he may just have finished editing *Nouse* and need some damn sleep. And it isn't just him, is it, because if you're honest with yourself, you're bloody tired too. So go to bed, before I manage to out-grump the mum from *Malcolm in the Middle*. I'm about to do the same.

*Luke Rix-Standing*

*The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the editors, writers, publishers or advertisers. Contact editor@nouse.co.uk with letters and complaints.*

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# Study shows York as UK Open Access frontrunner

**Dan Hall**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

AN INVESTIGATION into the University's recent publishing record has revealed that 13.1 per cent of our institution's research output has been published Gold Open Access, the 7<sup>th</sup> highest ranked UK university. This raises questions about the Russell Group's publication ethics considering the group averages just 12 per cent Gold OA output.

The OA model poses a serious problem for academic journal publishers, who must overhaul their services to protect their revenue streams. As OA gains momentum, publishers must adapt to the zeitgeist to avoid losing out to new OA competitors. The traditional publication process in peer-reviewed journals works on a 'subscription' business model. The subscription model, in which papers are peer-reviewed by relevant experts for academic soundness and impact, works to a timeline of months or years and makes profit by charging customers to read it. The main purchasers are academic institutions and their libraries, who pay an annual subscription fee for access. Upon publication of an article via this method, it is the publisher, not the academic, that owns both licensing and copyright for the article. Academics rely on their institutions paying consid-



IMAGE: FAUSTIN TUYAMBAZE

erable fees to publishing companies. This can be seen as inequitable when research that has been funded by the taxpayer ends up behind a paywall.

The alternative OA model is divided into 'Green' and 'Gold' categories. Green makes an academic's manuscript freely available on an online archive. However, there is often no peer review of these papers and publishers can embargo their release, meaning articles will remain restricted behind a paywall for a period of time. Gold OA publishes and peer-reviews according to academic standards. The article is free to access whilst the author retains the copyright. Rather than charging readers, the author pays an 'article processing charge', usually provided for researchers as part of research grants or by their institutions.

The investigation, using data from Thomson Reuter's Web of Science, pertains to the publishing years 2014-2016. Though the Web of Science is not a complete picture of a given institution's publishing, it provides a representative sample that can be benchmarked against other UK institutions. Liverpool displays 17.5 per cent Gold OA output, the national highest. LSE came out the worst, publishing just 5.7 per cent Gold OA.

York's institutional library told *Nouse* that over £400 000 of funding for OA publishing was made available this academic year alone, supplemented by money from ex-

ternal funders and research awards. Whilst this study shows promise for York's OA record, the library estimates that publications made through varying OA models may reach around 27.5 per cent.

Alistair Keely, Head of Media Relations at the University, said: "We are committed to making as many research outputs as possible available on an open access basis, and are pleased with the progress we have made with this so far. Besides issuing guidance for staff, limited funds are available to support open access publication. We still face some challenges - academic publishing is largely controlled by a small number of international publishing houses who guard their profits jealously and whose interests are to some extent threatened by the open access agenda."

The Russell Group's official policy on Gold OA is more hesitant. In 2014, the Russell Group stated that it was "concerned about the overall business case for a predominantly Gold open access policy". A Russell Group spokesperson told *Nouse*: "The Russell Group is committed to open access. We would like to see one coherent policy across the UK, with a mixed approach, which allows green and gold routes equally, and with minimal and proportionate costs of implementation." As the Netherlands has committed to making all Dutch research OA by 2024, we may ask why the Russell Group still seems to be dragging its feet.

# Investigation ongoing into missing Goodricke funds

**Amelia Clarke**  
NEWS EDITOR

UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS have confirmed there is an ongoing investigation by the North Yorkshire Police regarding an incident that occurred during the tenure of last academic year's Goodricke Junior Common Room Committee.

The incident in question involved a sum of around £2000 going missing during the process of transferring funds from Goodricke JCRC to YUSU.

This incident raises concerns over the security of how student activities are run, namely on a 'cash economy' with no access to elec-

tronic forms of monetary transfer. Following this event, Goodricke Head of College Matt Matravers said: "When something happens it is incumbent on us to review procedures. That won't be done until the current incident is closed. My instinct is that a cash economy is inevitable in some areas and that for the most it works well."

Regarding a potential shift from a cash economy to a more easily regulated system of fiscal organisation, such as the accompaniment of a second independent person, Matt Matravers said the cost to the freedom of student-run activities "would be grossly disproportionate" to the risk that independently run fiscal elements of student activities pose.

"I am confident that students

are in general honest and the vast majority of those who volunteer to help run colleges, sports clubs, and so on, that I have met in 22 years at York have been great people with whom it has been a pleasure to work." Matt Matravers stated "We should not 'legislate' for exceptions, but of course we will need to look at procedures once we know what has happened in this instance."

It is difficult to establish any further details about this incident during the ongoing police investigation.

When pressed for comment, YUSU President Millie Beach confirmed that: "The accounts held between YUSU and the colleges are confidential and can only be disclosed at the discretion of the college JCRC or CSA".

IMAGE: JOHN ROBINSON



## Fire tackled in Walmgate

On 4 March at 11AM firefighters tackled a blaze in the basement of the Loche Fyne Seafood & Grill, in Walmgate. The blaze was caused by an electrical fault. Crews from York and Huntingdon's Aerial Ladder Platform stopped the fire from spreading with a quick-thinking intervention.

## Treasure found in Acomb

A father and son replacing a fence in their garden in Acomb found a treasure from the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The treasure consists of fragments of brooch, filigree of gold foils and garnets. After being evaluated by an independent Treasure Valuation Committee, the treasure may be bought by York Museum Trust.

## York's bell-ringers banned

York's Minster bell-ringers are not permitted to compete in the eliminator competition at Sheffield Cathedral. The eliminator is one of three being held in March, with the top three teams qualifying for a place in the final at Southwark Cathedral. The York band will formally withdraw from this year's contest.

## York MP receives death threats

Labour's Rachael Maskell, MP for York Central, has opened up about her experiences online after being told last summer "she could be next" to be murdered after the death of Yorkshire MP Jo Cox. She was advised by police not to speak out until now, but is determined to carry on her work as usual.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

# Revs scrutinised for working conditions

>>> Continued from front

Under the Working Time Regulations 1998, it is required that employees are given a 20-minute break within a shift lasting longer than six hours.

"We were denied a break on a particular Saturday because the manager decided the floor was 'a mess'," Eatock said. "When I brought up to another manager that this was said, she accused me of shit-stirring and playing management staff against one another."

Responding to these allegations, a Revolution Bars Group spokesperson provided the following statement: "Breaks are twenty minutes long for every six hour shift, long shifts have a break of one hour between shifts. We have reminded all staff at York what the company policy is on breaks so that no-one is unsure of their entitlement. Revolution Bars Group adheres to all workplace health, safety and welfare guidelines across all our bars and restaurants, with the well-being of our team members, from students through to our managers is always of paramount importance. We ensure that all our staff are provided with adequate breaks, as per the Workplace Regulations Act."

There were also accusations that a 'lad culture' existed among management. According to Eatock, Revs staff held a "best snog" competition on New Year's Eve. The 'winner' of this competition was allegedly a manager, and Ea-

tock claims that their recorded kiss with a customer was uploaded to the staff Facebook group.

A former Revs staff member from the University of York, who wishes to remain anonymous, claimed to have worked within a workplace culture that was "horrifying for what I witnessed and was part of", in which "really inappropriate things were said".

A Revolutions Bars Group spokesperson stated: "Revolution Bars Group takes these allegations very seriously. As an equal employer, we do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, age, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability or colour. Equality plays an integral part in the way our team treat each other as well as guests."

On the same staff Facebook group, a sales coordinator asked employees to write five-star reviews on the venue's Facebook page. When only one employee complied with this request, he told other members of staff "You're shit!" Further to this, he informed them that he would no longer be providing bookings and free bottles of an alcoholic drink - a staff perk - for them, were they to dine at the venue with friends.

Responding on behalf of Revolution Bars Group, a spokesperson stated: "We understand a party co-ordinator prompted staff to do this in error and once brought to the manager's attention, the matter was addressed and halted immediately. Feedback and reviews are important within the hospitality industry, however at no point do Revolution Bars Group request the employees fabricate reviews. If an individual chooses to leave a review on the venue's Facebook page, or otherwise, this is on behalf of the individual and not at the request of Revolution Bars Group."

A separate Facebook group for Revs employees was set up by Eatock, with the permission of management, designed for employees to discuss how the operations of Revs could be improved.

Eatock claims that, after she reported to a manager that the lack of breaks had been repeatedly flagged as an issue by the group, she was informed that she would "need a supervisor" in it.

In response to these allegations, a spokesperson for Revolution Bars Group commented: "We have been in touch with the former staff members and requested meetings with each one to request more detail. We've discussed these matters with one of the former staff members and they felt the meeting was constructive and understood that any concerns they had were now being addressed. The two other former staff members have either refused a meeting or not replied to our request for one."



Turnout in this year's YUSU elections reached a total of 25 per cent, down three points from last year's results

## YUSU miss elections turnout target, lowest in half a decade

Camilla Zurru  
NEWS EDITOR

THIS YEAR'S YUSU elections saw a turnout of 25 per cent, the lowest since 2012, when 36.8 per cent of the student body voted, and five percentage points lower than their own target.

As voter turnout last year was three points higher at 28 per cent, YUSU hoped to gain an extra two percentage points this year.

The full-time positions are those that get more people to vote. In fact, if we consider the average number of people who voted for those positions with respect to all the others, we get a difference of almost a half, with 49.3 per cent.

As with last year's results, the three most active colleges in the

elections are Derwent (41 per cent), James (37.9 per cent) and Vanbrugh (32.8 per cent). Although Derwent, by the same percentage as last year, defeated Vanbrugh, which, after last year's record of 44.5 per cent, lost 11.7 per cent of participants. All other colleges are on a roughly homogeneous average of 23.33 per cent, with a gap of almost seven per cent between Langwith (26.4 per cent) and Alcuin (19.45 per cent). Wentworth is the furthest behind, with four per cent turnout. The four most active departments are: Natural Sciences (66.1 per cent), School of Social and Political Sciences (49.6 per cent), PPE (45 per cent) and History (44.3 per cent).

It is interesting to note that the two highest percentages are from very small departments, 41 and 113 students respectively - which does not help boost the total amount of voters. On the other hand, a depart-

ment as big as Health Science with 1299 students counts only 4.3 per cent of turnout.

Millie Beach, current YUSU President, commented: "YUSU has consistently had one of the highest election turnouts of any student's union in the country and this year is no different. Throughout the election we engaged with a huge number of students resulting in a 25 per cent turnout; no small achievement, particularly given that we were also asking students to consider incorporation and had very recently held a referendum on the NSS - in response to student demand."

"A very minor downturn in turnout is a trend we're seeing nationally and so we will continue to work with students to make sure they know how important student leadership elections are and that elections are as open and as accessible as possible."

## York is safest city for students, new regional statistics reveal

Dan Hall  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

YORK IS THE SAFEST student town or city in England and Wales, according to research published by 'The Complete University Guide'. The conclusion was reached by comparing crime statistics from different regions and police forces in student areas.

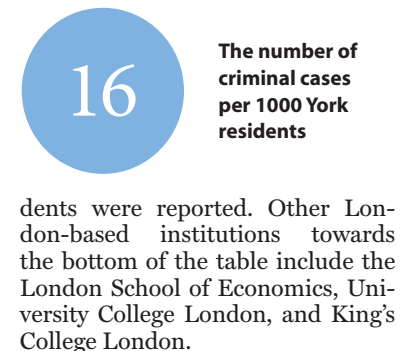
The study focused on crimes that are most likely to affect students. These include robbery, burglary, violence, and sexual offences.

Official statistics about crimes specifically against students are not available, and crimes committed by students were not considered. Rather, the report looked to build a "crime heat map" of England and Wales so that students can see how safe the town or city of their university is.

Within the parameters of the study, York has just 16 criminal incidents for every 1000 residents that live in the city. Close on York's heels in second place is Buckingham, with a figure of 16.1 incidents per 1000 residents, and Winchester in third with 17.8.

At the other end of the table,

the Courtauld Institute of Art comes out bottom owing to its location on the Strand in London, where 70.4 criminal incidents per 1000 resi-



# English dept faces backlash for mark discrepancies

**Lucy Furneaux**  
NEWS REPORTER

THE ENGLISH department has responded to accusations that feedback is “extremely inconsistent”, stating that “we are proud of the work we have done to support students more fully in their assessment”.

Speaking to *Nouse*, English undergraduates raised concerns regarding the department’s Statement of Assessment, claiming that it “only offers a very vague outline of how the marking scheme works”. Students also alleged that different tutors prioritise different elements of essay writing; according to one second-year, “there’s a pressure to cater your essay to suit the tutor who will be marking it in hopes for a better mark”. As a result, a third-year said that students are “left completely at sea regarding how to improve, or what is expected”.

One third-year had submitted two essays which received marks of 55 and 75. “This was particularly surprising to me, as I spent weeks working on the former, and just 48 hours on the latter”, they said. “What specifically made one essay

20 marks better than the other [...] was certainly not clear in the feedback”. A second-year stated that discrepancy of this kind “leads to people sometimes choosing modules because they have ‘easier markers’”.

The Statement of Assessment outlines the department’s marking procedures, which ‘are designed to ensure fairness and consistency’.



The percentage of marked essays received by moderators

All first-year essays are marked by one person. Sample moderation, whereby a range of essays from each examiner is re-marked by a moderator, is undertaken for all second- and third-year assessment. Topic modules are assessed by multiple examiners. Finally, dissertations and bridge module assessments are independently marked by two examiners who then agree a final mark. If no agreement is reached the work is referred to a third examiner whose mark and feedback is final.

All marking by part-time tutors and staff in their first year of an academic role is also moderated. In this case, moderators receive 25% of the

marked essays; otherwise 15% are moderated. These processes “are scrutinised every year by our external examiners”.

Following an enquiry regarding staff training, the department outlined that “all part-time tutors attend a training session” to “discuss the grade descriptors, and different examples of good practice”. Termly sessions are run for part-time tutors and new markers “which [instruct] tutors in marking processes, electronic submission and use of the grade descriptors”. All new full-time staff are trained “as part of a day-long induction session”, and are “supported by mentors through their first year”.

Students also raised the difficulty of appealing marks. A third-year remarked that “on attempting to speak to my supervisor about one essay, and how I might improve, I was told my supervisor could not comment on the matter because it would be inappropriate to question the marker’s ‘academic integrity’”. The student said that “I have also learned that there is no appeal process in the English department, so long as ‘academic integrity’ is being questioned”.

Department staff highlighted their efforts “to more fully support students in assessment”. Tutors now

mark who they teach, allowing students to confer with their examiner regarding their assessment, and formative essays have been introduced for all second and third-year modules. In a statement, the Department said “We have revised



the department’s grade descriptors to make them a more useful tool... [and] adjusted the essay feedback form so that the connection between staff feedback and the grade descriptors is more explicit.”

Further changes are to be introduced, including a “feedback summit” which will involve staff and students discussing actual examples of anonymised marking and feedback”. The curriculum has undergone significant revision ahead of the 2017 intake to include “a year-long writing programme” for first-years, in which “students practice essay-writing and research skills and produce a portfolio which showcases best practice in essay writing”. Finally, “all modules will move from one to two or more assessment tasks” rather than the current system of one summative essay per module.

Continuing students recently made their option choices for the upcoming year, and the extent to which these changes will impact their degree experience remains unclear. However, the department encouraged students “to raise any concerns about assessment with us directly or through your student reps, as we can only act on your concerns if you let us know about them.”

## Tuition fees to rise at a faster rate than academics’ salaries

**Oscar Bentley**  
NEWS REPORTER

ACADEMIC PAY is rising at a lower rate than student tuition fees due to a difference in relative inflation rate calculations being used, *Nouse* has learned. While Academic pay has only increased by 1.1 per cent, tuition fees are set to increase by 2.1 per cent over the coming year.

The difference is to do with a discrepancy between the Retail Price Index (RPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). While both measures calculate inflation by looking at the increase in price of a basket of goods and services such as food and fuel by comparing the price difference to that of a year ago, CPI fails to take into account home running costs including rent or mortgage and council tax, whereas RPI does. RPI also calculates the price change through an arithmetical mean, as opposed to CPI’s geometrical mean. This results in RPI rising as a greater rate than CPI.

While the Government has set tuition fees to inflate in line with RPI, academic pay is set to inflate in line with CPI, a percentage point lower. However, up until

the incoming cohort of freshers in the next academic year tuition fees were capped at £9 000, whereas academic salaries have seen a modest annual rise.

In October University management was contacted by Geoffrey Wall, president of the York executive branch of the University and Colleges Union (UCU), requesting that either York lobbied the Universities & Colleges Employers’ Association (UCEA) to raise the current 1.1 per cent CPI pay increase offer to that of a 2.1 per cent RPI offer, or decrease

planned tuition fee rises for UK/EU students in 2017-18 from £9 250 to £9 150, bringing their increase in line with that of academic pay. The University’s response was “complex and detailed but not essentially persuasive”, Wall added.

Wall commented that: “Across the sector, new buildings and six-figure senior management pay are clearly the priority. Academic pay is being insidiously reduced as a percentage of total expenditure”, and that students “are right to question the priorities at a moment when their increasing fees are not going into enhancing their teaching.”

In response to the discrepancy, University Registrar David Duncan stated: “Annual salary increases are determined through national bargaining between UCEA and the recognised trade unions - UCU, Unison and Unite. They take into account the various measures of inflation but also other issues such as affordability, pensions costs and incremental drift.

“The University of York has no direct control over UCEA’s negotiating position, though we do feed into this through an annual consultation. We are currently considering what we think will be affordable in 2017.”



## Vote tabled against Halifax president

**Chloe Kent**  
NEWS REPORTER

THE CHAIR OF the Halifax College Students Association (HCSA) has been faced with a vote of no confidence by his committee.

HCSA President Roman Rojik is currently suspended from his duties until the next HCSA meeting on Wednesday evening, where a debate and an anonymous vote will take place concerning the President’s position.

The vote of no confidence comes following an email sent by Rojik to his fellow committee members, alleging that poor attendance to a weekly quiz open to all members of Halifax college, in addition to poor club wristband sales, reflected badly on the HCSA, and that a meeting would be necessary on order to amend this.

Rojik maintained that those who could not attend the meeting without a valid reason, as decided by himself, would find their platinum card and position on the committee at stake.

A committee member who wished to remain anonymous states that Rojik doesn’t have the authority to revoke platinum cards or committee membership, and that these

consequences have been put forth solely to try and get committee members to attend meetings.

They also alleged that Rojik “cancels meetings at ridiculously short notice without consulting anyone, and is generally rude and abrasive”, and that the functioning of sub-committees has been impaired by Rojik micromanaging.

If the vote of no confidence falls against Rojik, he will lose his position and a new HCSA president will need to be elected by the entire Halifax student body.

A vote to remove a sitting college chair is not unprecedented. In April 2015, then-president of Constantine College JCRC Usman Khan was forced to stand down from his position after the college committee tabled a vote of no confidence. At the time, Khan described the move as “surprising”, and that no coherent reason was provided for the vote of no confidence.

The position of college chair or president remains one of high prominence in campus life. Incoming YUSU president, Alex Urquhart, was formerly the chairman of Derwent College JCRC, and his predecessor, Millie Beach, chaired the Vanbrugh JCRC prior to her election to sabbatical office.

Rojik has been contacted for comment, but at the time of printing has not yet responded.

# Leave of absences: sharp surge in medical time outs statistically over-representing the sciences

**Luke Rix-Standing**  
EDITOR

>>> Continued from front

numbers have been rising steadily since 2010/11, by an average of over 80 cases per year.

Overall numbers of students at the University have also been rising, but not nearly as fast as absences. Taking the figures as percentages doesn't change the trend: from a ten year low in 2010/11 of 3.2 per cent, proportions of students on leave of absence have risen by more than 0.3 per cent per year. Last year saw a ten year high of 4.8 per cent - almost one student in 20.

## How does it break down by department?

Though leave of absence numbers have been rising almost across the board, some departments have startlingly higher rates than others.

There are two quick caveats to bear in mind with these statistics: firstly in line with HESA (High-

er Education Statistics Agency) regulations, all figures have been rounded to the nearest five (so give or take around 0.2 per cent for a big department, or 0.5 per cent for a small one). Secondly, joint honours students are counted in both departments, so although each departmental statistic is correct, adding them together would come to more than the whole.

Overall, science students are more likely to take a leave of absence than those reading arts and humanities. Last year 7.0 per cent of Mathematics students took a leave of absence in some form, along with 6.5 per cent of Computer Science students, 6.0 per cent reading Health Sciences, 6.1 per cent in Electronics, and 5.0 per cent of physicists (all higher than the University average). However, the trend is not entirely uniform, with Biology recording a below average 4.0 per cent and Chemistry at 2.3 per cent, one of the lowest at the University.

Although several of the most prominent humanities subjects are marginally underrepresented (English Literature and History record 4.1 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively), History of Art presents one of the highest statistics at the University with 9.9 per cent. Only Social Work and Social Work is higher with some one in ten of all its students on leave of absence.

*Nouse* contacted a number of heads of department about these statistics. Some were well aware of the statistics, while others were more surprised.

## Where is the rise occurring?

Again, one important caveat to consider here: students whose leave of absences extend over a period of more than one academic year are counted in both years. Rather than representing the number of students beginning a leave of absence each year, figures record how many students are on leave of absence during that year. What is counted is therefore the number of student

Science Subjects (in order)	% Taking LOA
Chemistry	2.3%
Biology	4.0%
Physics	5.0%
Health Science	6.0%
Electronics	6.1%
Computer Science	6.5%
Mathematics	7.0%

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Absences Begun	470	450	500	530	485	575	640	705	760	800
As a % of	3.9%	3.7%	3.8%	3.7%	3.2%	3.6%	4.0%	4.3%	4.6%	4.8%

The number of leave of absences taken by students in each of the last ten years, as a flat figure and as a percentage

% by reason	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Health Reasons	39%	36%	36%	42%	48%	43%	42%	44%	48%	50%
Other Reasons	61%	64%	64%	58%	52%	57%	58%	56%	52%	50%

The percentage of medical leave of absences (pertaining to mental or physical health) taken over the last ten years

years lost rather than the number of individuals taking leave.

It is nonetheless possible to compare departments and the picture is surprisingly varied. Notably, the department with the most leave of absences, Social Work and Social Policy, has remained at a high but relatively constant level of around ten per cent throughout the last ten years. Other departments not showing an upward trend include Electronics (relatively high and fairly erratic, but not steadily rising), and departments like Psychology and Politics which have remained below 3.0 per cent every year.

History remains below average but almost doubled its numbers last academic year and Philosophy jumped by nearly 2.0 per cent in the same period, while Education has risen by around 0.5 per cent in each of the last five years. The departments with the greatest rises over the past five years are History of Art and Mathematics, adding 7.2 per cent and 5.5 per cent respectively.

Such wide variation between departments in both actual numbers and rate of increase suggests it is time to start asking questions about what support structures different departments have in place, how they differ, and how they are - or are not - working.

## Why is the rise occurring?

It is difficult to say for sure, but the obvious suspect is mental health. Leave of absences can be taken in a variety of situations, but the proportion taken for medical reasons (that is pertaining to mental or physical health) has increased almost as quickly, though not as steadily, as the number of leave of absences themselves. Ten years ago less than a third of leave of absences were medical, 40 per cent in 2009/10. Since then it has fluctuated in the 40s before hitting the half and half mark for the first time last year. This data seems to align with the Graham Report, a year-old University Review into its mental health procedures which highlighted a steep rise in mental health problems among students. It remains to be seen whether the £500 000 since promised by the University for mental health provi-

sion has any major impact upon these statistics.

Other suggested contributors include the introduction of fees - which aligns with start of the upsurge - fears arising from the state of the current job market, and a greater willingness on behalf of both students and the University to use leave of absences as a tool of support. It is notable that the SCC has not seen a rise in leave of absences taken centrally, implying that the increase has taken place mostly at a departmental level. It is likely that with mental health so under the spotlight, departments and students are both becoming more aware of the benefits that a leave of absence can bring.

It is important to emphasise that for individual students taking a leave of absence is often not a bad thing (those who take the step rarely regret it), but the sharp rise still raises questions over the structures in place to support students before they reach that point.

## What problems have been encountered?

*Nouse* spoke to eight students who are either on, are considering, or have been on leave of absences to gauge how well it may be performing. Several had qualms with the way their leave of absence had initially been processed, and most lamented the "deeply stressful" nature of the process.

"I lost where I was living (halls), a major support system (Open Door) and my occupation all in a few weeks" said one third year Education student, "and the uni gave me no help on finding more support, or housing or benefits or anything. Uni really should have had someone in place who could've helped me because I became really stuck".

Others emphasised the problems of obtaining medical evidence at short notice: "The department was supportive but there were constant delays in getting my medical evidence through from the health centre, and by the time I actually got the results through I'd already been out of classes for three weeks. There's no way I could have continued if they'd said no".

While on their leave of absences, the testimonies began to differ substantially. Another third year Education student spoke highly of how University staff supported her during her time away: "My supervisor and college administrator kept in contact with me, as did the Open Door counsellor I saw. It was really helpful because it allowed me to stay a little bit connected to uni". This was echoed by a third year English student, who considered taking a leave of absence and decided against it. "My dissertation supervisor has been amazing", she commented, "it's only because of him that I'm still in my studies".

Others were less complimentary, complaining of feeling "completely cut adrift" and "left out entirely from my previous life". A third year History student went even further, saying: "I received no contact from the University whatsoever before re-enrollment, except for an email chastising me for taking part in a society and demanding that I immediately quit.

"Turns out they didn't even know their rules - you don't even have to be a student to be in a society - but if they had succeeded in enforcing this incorrect rule, my last tie with university life would have been severed and I almost certainly wouldn't still be here now."

The common theme throughout these comments was that it came down to which departments and staff members individuals dealt with - some were regularly contacted and well supported, others were not. The testimonies converged once again on the topic of re-integration: all eight students said they would have liked more support, though all agreed that taking a leave of absence had, overall, been a positive step.

A third year English student said it was "like nothing had ever happened", while a third year Music student condemned a "complete lack of extra provision".

A third year Education student agreed: "I saw my supervisor, but there wasn't really any support. I was just expected to jump back in. I didn't really know anyone in my new classes and to be honest I never really felt like a came back. I never felt part of the University again."

# New SABBs on the block

Still fresh from the campaign trail, our newly-elected soon-to-be-SABBs talk policy, the election, and sheer relief

Mia Chaudhuri-Julyan, *Community and Well-being Officer*

**How do you feel after your election win?**  
Genuinely, I'm so overwhelmed by how many people voted for me and supported me. I feel really lucky (so thank you to everyone). I'm super excited to get started and get to know my new colleagues - it's the start of a new chapter!

**What do you hope to achieve by Summer 2018?**

I want to have achieved all my policies of course but the biggest systematic changes include a centralised welfare request system, welfare advisor system and data collection that I want to ensure are completely future-proofed. Most of all, I want to make sure that whatever it takes, I make this role the most it can be; that when I leave I'm leaving behind a welfare system that kept more people safe and happy, and a community that's more united in its diversity. There's so much every one of us can do to make York



a better place, and I want to make sure I make the most of the time that I'll have to do my bit as well.

**You've talked about creating a "centralised welfare system" on e:Vision. How will this work to help students?**

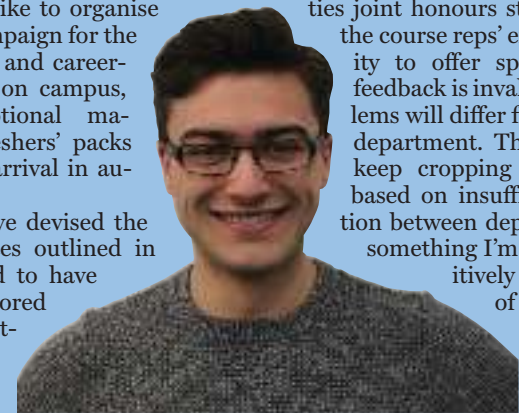
This new system will add a centralised layer to the current welfare system, acting like a safety net. Students in need of help will have a clear, easy access point. They'll be able to fill in a request form and track their request through a welfare advisor who will signpost to the right place first time, liaise with their academic department (if needed) and follow up once the issue has been resolved. The system will also enable anonymous data collection with a mind to establishing a long-term evidence base of the kinds of welfare issues students are facing, and from what demographics.

Julian Porch, *Academic Officer*

**How do you feel after your election win?**  
Somewhere between ecstatic and elated. The election period was wonderful and exhilarating, but also very stressful, and while parts of it were very enjoyable, a part of me is glad to see the back of it. I'm also relieved to actually resume my studies.

**What do you hope to achieve by summer 2018?**

If I had to narrow it down to three major goals, I want like to organise a promotional campaign for the existing academic and career-boosting services on campus, including promotional materials for the freshers' packs in time for their arrival in autumn. I also hope to have devised the electronic resources outlined in my manifesto and to have successfully explored options for investing in subsidised



course materials per department, as well as have tangible plans in place for my successor.

**There's been talk during the election of the difficulties faced by joint honours students. How would you help joint honours students get full representation in both their departments?**

After talking with department reps and students, a lot have outlined the difficulties joint honours students face. Here, the course reps' experience and ability to offer specific cross-course feedback is invaluable, as any problems will differ from department to department. The problems which keep cropping up appear to be based on insufficient communication between departments, so that's something I'm keen to tackle positively by making full use of the whole channel of academic representation.

Alex Urquhart, *York Student Union President*

**How do you feel after your election win?**  
Delighted and pretty honoured really. During campaign week the focus is far more on the campaign as opposed to what you're campaigning for. On results night the host kept referring to Prez as "the big one", since winning I've just been coming to terms with how big it is, and I can't wait to get started.

**What do you hope to achieve by summer 2018?**

I'd like to leave the university with a sense of improved cohesion. Enabling more natural pathways for collaboration and communication between students, departments, societies, sports teams and YUSU is the aim. If I can build a real sense of a shared community, where resources and effort are combined more regularly, I'll consider it a worthy and significant step forward.



**You spoke on debate night about aiming for 'small wins' - what do you think that means in practice?**

"Small", "achievable" wins were a conscious and important element within my manifesto and goals as President. It is important to say the the bigger picture is always of great importance. Accommodation prices and mental health provisions, for example, are broader issues that have planned approaches for. In my manifesto, however, I wanted to focus on what I personally can ensure is achieved. The digital system of feedback is the most ambitious policy, the rest are small things that together should help to make life a York that little bit better for students, and in a 12 month window of opportunity, I consider that the most important route to take.

Mikey Collinson, *Activities Officer*

**How do you feel after your election win?**  
I still don't fully believe it! During elections I was just trying to concentrate on each day as it came, I hadn't even thought about life after campaigning, so coming down after the whirlwind has been fun. Thinking about it now though, seeing that people believe in my ability to make a positive impact on their student experience and represent them is just incredible and I can't thank everyone who voted for me enough. Counting down the days till I start!

**What do you hope to achieve by summer 2018?**

I'd say the main thing I hope to have achieved is to have improved the student experience of as many people as possible, whether that's through implementing my manifesto points or through taking up an opportunity that arises during my time in office. There really isn't a bigger aim



than that as Student Activities Officer, and if I achieve that I'll be a very happy man.

**Your campaign mentioned a 'match-making system' for societies. Could you elaborate on what that means?**

The Activities Matchmaker is based on feedback I got from talking to students who were looking to get involved in activities but were almost too spoilt for choice. Students are faced with a list of over 200 societies, plus volunteering opportunities. Going through all of their descriptions isn't feasible and often means people miss out on things that, if they'd known about them, they would have liked to have got involved. The Activities Matchmaker will overcome this with a few simple questions that will be designed to match students to societies and volunteering projects based on their interests, future prospects and suit their timetable.

Laura Carruthers, *York Sport President*

**How do you feel after your election win?**  
Honestly, I think I'm still in shock! In the run up to results night I didn't want to think too much about what it would be like to win, as I thought it would raise my hopes and only make potentially losing all the more difficult. As a consequence of this, I had no idea how to react when I did actually win! I'm infinitely grateful to everyone who voted for me, and can't wait to get started this summer.

**What do you hope to achieve by Summer 2018?**

In short, my campaign platform! All the points in my manifesto were included after a lot of conversations with various sports representatives across all the different levels of the York Sport Union. They reflect the key aspects of sport at York which



can be improved to make sport even better. If I can look back at the end of my time in office and safely say I gave my all to improving the York sporting experience for everyone, I will be very happy!

**How do you wish to approach mental health in sport?**

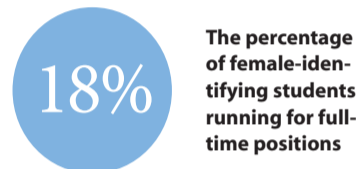
By nature, approaching mental health is complex. I am completely committed to promoting the positive effects that sport can have on mental well-being; focusing on relieving stress, promoting a healthy way of life, and the social support and networks sport can bring too. I'm really keen to bring back the YUSU 'Staying On Track' initiative, with individual player profiles, reassuring that it's ok not to be ok.

# YUSU elections put under the microscope: college chances, campus stances and gender imbalances

**Michael Mokrysz**  
NEWS ANALYST

IN LAST EDITION'S Election Supplement, *Nouse* presented some preliminary analysis of the emerging patterns among the YUSU election candidates from the last two years. With the election over, it's time to take a deeper look.

The People Finder, one of the sources used to provide honorific titles in their data, allows for a sense of the gender balance of candidates



to be determined. Due to the binary nature of the data provided by The People Finder, there is an unfortunate risk that findings may misrepresent trans or non-binary candidates.

The "Gender-related trends in YUSU candidates" graphic representation shows whether candidates applied for full-time or part-time positions in 2017, divided by gender, with "Mx" pertaining to gender neutral candidates.

Upon examination of this graph, two things are immediately evident. First, more female candidates applied than male candidates, overall. This is to be expected, given the student population is majority-female. Taking this ratio of male-to-female in the student population into account, this graphic reassuringly suggests that male and female students are equally likely to run.

However, the second notable finding of this graph is the revelation that female candidates overwhelmingly ran for the more junior positions. Only 18 per cent of female-identifying candidates ran for the full-time leadership positions, in comparison to the 66 per



cent of male-identifying candidates that ran.

This trend raises concerns pertaining to the forces that may be working to discourage female-identifying candidates from applying to more senior, full time positions. A reported trend outside of student politics suggests that women are less likely to seek elected office than men. In cases that women do run, they have equal chances of electoral success. If female-identifying candidates do not run, then they are underrepresented. This underrepresentation is similarly exemplified

in the wider world: only 29 per cent of MPs are women as of 2015. Are women simply not putting themselves forward for these positions?

Again, comparing the situation exemplified in student politics with the wider political sphere would suggest the affirmative. High-profile women have dealt with significant abuse in recent years: York Central MP Rachael Maskell has been sent death threats and abuse in the wake of Jo Cox's murder. Diane Abbott MP has commented that the abuse is "almost as if they want to drive some of us out of politics."

If YUSU is serious about representation, then efforts must be made to limit discouragement to female-identifying candidates who may aspire to full-time positions.

The "First year campus predicts your chance of running." chart displays two sets of findings. In blue is how likely a random first year is to run for a YUSU position. As you can see, nearly 1 per cent of students on Heslington West go on to run for YUSU electoral positions. However, on Heslington East only 0.6 per cent of first years go on to run for YUSU positions. Further to this, in Halifax College only 0.3 per cent of students go on to run in elections. So a first year on York's older campus is far more likely to run.

Displayed in red on the same chart is how likely you are to be

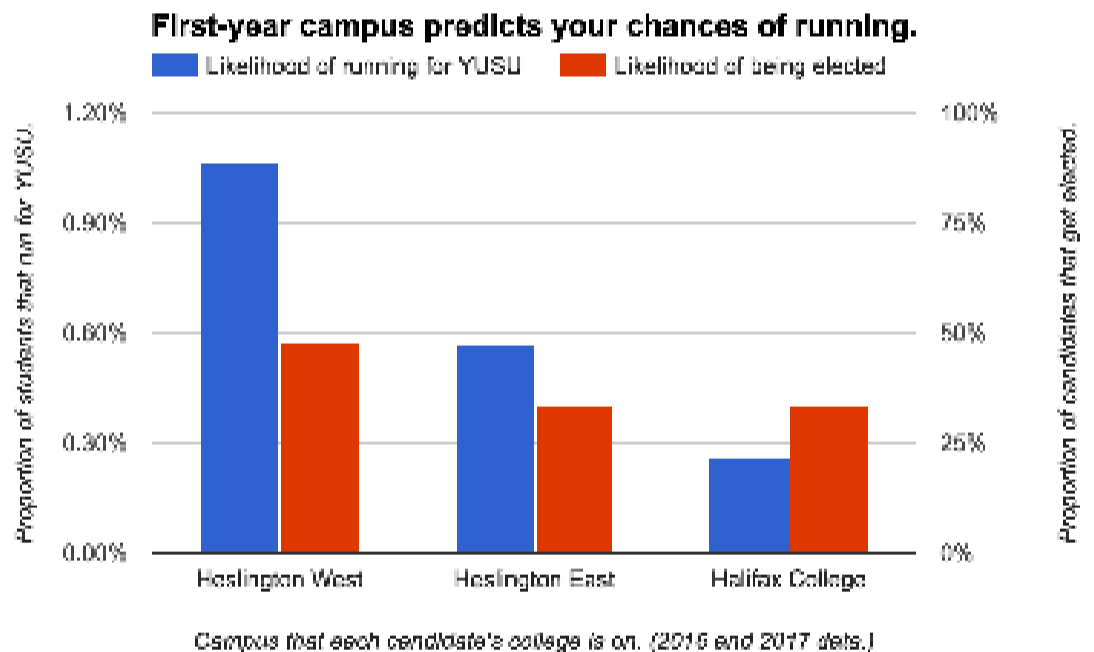
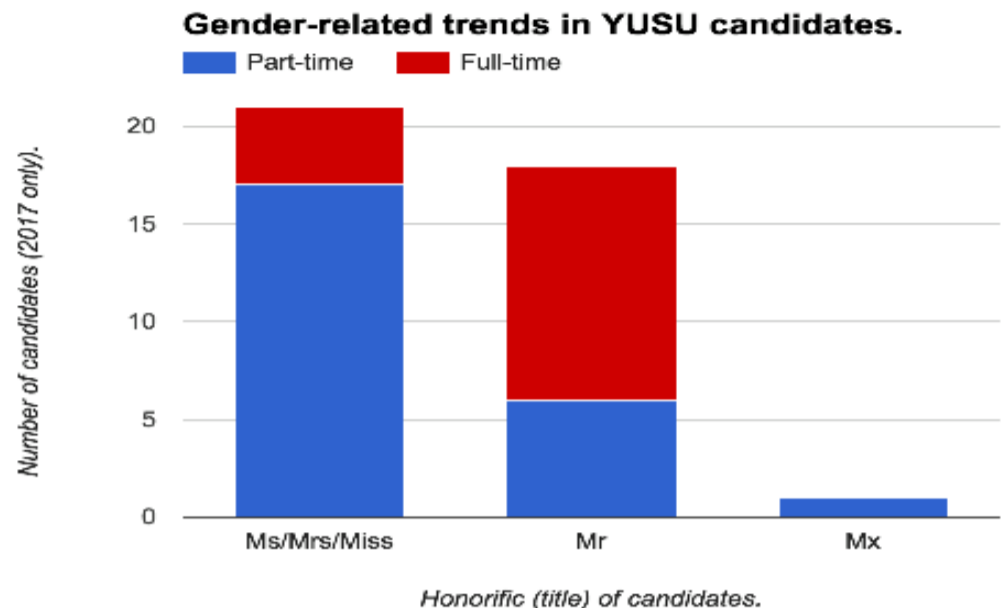


elected if you do run for YUSU - or, in other words, the probability of a first year becoming a YUSU Officer is the blue multiplied by the red. Again, people who began university life on Heslington West do better than those from elsewhere. This is important: someone who spent their first year on Heslington West is more likely to run for a YUSU position and more likely to be elected. Just being on Heslington East or Halifax in first year is enough to halve your chances of becoming a YUSU Officer.

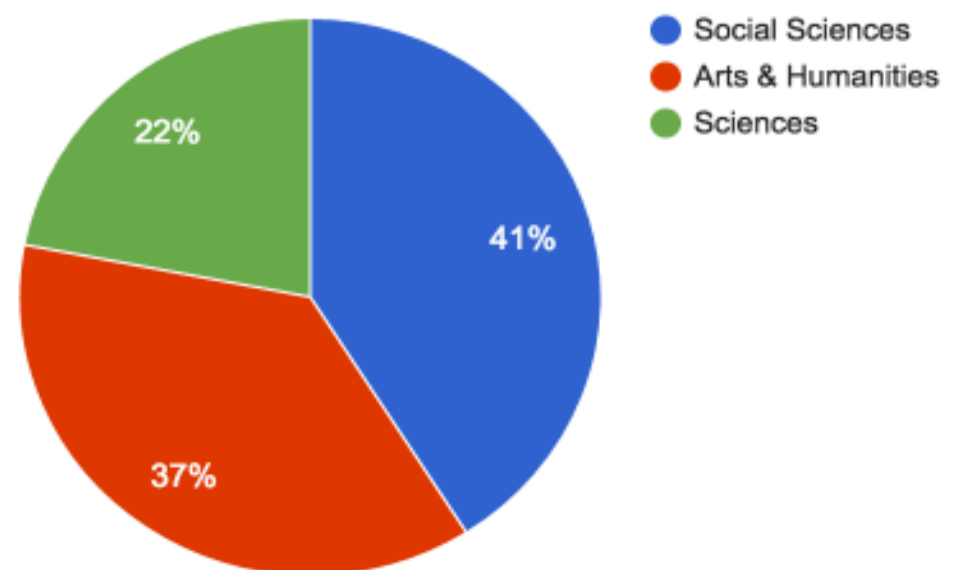
There's also an issue of seniority. 9/10 of our recent Sabbatical Officers come from a Heslington West college. Only our new Academic Officer, Julian Porch, hails from Goodricke.

Lastly, the faculties of Social Sciences and Humanities have been found to be neck-and-neck for candidates running. Sciences students are less likely to run for YUSU - perhaps unsurprising, considering the high number of contact hours, but is worth noting.

Ultimately, trends such as these may weaken evidence-based policy in the wider world, as students who are less exposed to student politics may be less likely to take part in it once outside of university.



Proportion of YUSU candidates from each faculty. (2016 and 2017 data.)







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# UKIP have fallen from eminence to irrelevance

After the defeat of the party in Stoke Central, UKIP's future in a post-Brexit Britain looks increasingly uncertain



IMAGE:EUROPEANPARLIAMENT

**Jack Davies**



The 24 June 2016. UKIP supporters across the country are waking up to the news that the UK has voted to leave the European Union and are rejoicing. Cue fervent celebrations, emphatic hyperbole and a proclamation from at-the-time leader Nigel Farage that the referendum of the previous day would serve as an "Independence Day" for Britain.

Fast forward nine months and things are looking more than a bit different for our fanatically-Euro-sceptic party: the euphoric post-referendum atmosphere has dissipated, Farage is no longer leader, replaced instead by Paul "emphasis-on-the-nut" Nuttall, dissent is rising amidst the ranks. In other words, UKIP's future looks wholly uncertain.

The recent Stoke-on-Trent Central by-election provides one of the most resonant signals that things do not bode well for UKIP. The party was already the second-biggest in the constituency dating back to the previous general election, and with leader Paul Nuttall running as their candidate, there was significant hope that the party might genuinely stand a chance of claiming their second MP. They did, however, fall short again to what is, electorally, the weakest Labour Party since the

1980s, who held onto their seat.

Now, in fairness, it's worth noting that UKIP has never been strongly represented in Parliament. When they gained their first MP in Douglas Carswell at a 2014 Clacton by-election, it was something of a watershed moment for the party. And this was, arguably, only because Carswell had held the seat for nine years prior as a Tory. But even with their own parliamentary representative there is trouble brewing, with the hugely influential Farage in a very public row with Carswell, claiming that he is still, essentially, a

Isn't their work done now Theresa May is hell-bent on triggering Article 50?

Tory hand puppet acting as a blockade to the progression of UKIP as the champions of anti-immigration. Such disharmony among key figures does not an electable party make.

And while Brexit has long been the goal of UKIP, the fact that there is now a popular mandate for it doesn't necessarily play in their favour. Despite their scepticism, the party owes an awful lot to Europe, not least their entire mantra being based on getting out of it – the UK *Independence Party*. Isn't their work

done now Theresa May is hell-bent on triggering Article 50 once and for all?

Perhaps the biggest contributor to spelling disaster for UKIP, however, is their new leadership. Since his election as leader at the end of last year, Paul Nuttall has not found his time at the helm particularly serene. Among various gaffes, a false charity scandal and most shockingly a proven false claim of having lost "close personal friends" in the Hillsborough disaster, have all clouded his first months in charge. To be fair, things haven't been easy for Nuttall, what with him having 'lost his mother' in the 9/11 attacks and 'never knowing his father' due to him dying in action fighting in the Vietnam War...

I digress; Nuttall appears a genuinely dangerous figure to carry the party forward, with a flurry of political faux pas in his career prior to leadership. Such a divisive figure will prove disastrous following Farage who, though also divisive, was an incredibly astute politician in guiding UKIP to the forefront of the political landscape. Support and hype surrounding the more extreme parties often disappears as soon as they reach their zenith. What UKIP needed was a strong figurehead and stability going into post-Brexit Britain, to prove that they might just be a feasible governing possibility. What they've got is Billy Bullshit and swathes of inter-party bickering. It seems to me, the time has come for UKIP to take their place in the annals of political history.

# Without a free press, Trump gets a free pass

For a democracy to function, leaders cannot brand the press as fake simply because they do not like what is being published

**Oscar Bentley**



The media is "the enemy of the American people", President Donald J Trump tweeted on Friday 17 February, after just under a month in office. A week later, the White House excluded major news outlets such as *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Politico*, and the BBC from an informal "gaggle" briefing with Press Secretary Sean Spicer. Even before all this, on Thursday 16 February, the President held an impromptu hour-plus long press conference. This was initially to announce his pick for Labor Secretary, but it was spent attacking the media, calling it dishonest, out of control, and a tremendous disservice to America.

So, if you weren't already aware, The Donald doesn't really like the

media. Actually, that's not quite true. Some of the media – conservative outlets such as *Breitbart*, *One America News* and *Fox News* – he is a fan of, and unsurprisingly these outlets number among those invited to the "gaggle". Others, not so much. The (failing, apparently) *New York Times*, CNN, ABC, CBS, are all 'FAKE NEWS' (capitalised in print, if verbalised shouted with vigour), which is surely the worst insult hurled at a journalist. Trump isn't just implying that reporting is poor or heavily biased, but is declaring that stories are maliciously created untruths simply to spite him.

This is a huge problem. Trump can't continue to declare every outlet to negatively report on him fake. For one thing, it's not sustainable as he'll eventually run out of outlets; even *Fox News* is beginning to turn on him now. Just because the media is reporting stories he doesn't like, that doesn't mean his response can be not only to call the media untrue or question its legitimacy, but to

declare it as an enemy. Surely the White House themselves are a bigger source of fake news. Bowling Green massacre anybody?

Rather than combating negative perceptions by changing policy,

Curtailing a free press is a sinister step towards dictatorship

Trump instead just pretends negative perceptions that the press reports just aren't true.

He's declared reporting of negative polls to be fake; his Press Secretary blasted the press for "under reporting" inauguration crowd sizes despite the visual evidence; his counsellor Kellyanne Conway even asked why journalists who "talked smack" about the President not be-

ing fired. This is dangerous.

I'm all for regulation of journalistic ethics and standards, and ensuring that comment does not descend into hate speech, but without a free press a democracy just simply isn't that. Democracies need a free press in the same way they need opposition: to hold the government accountable. The executive pursuing a monopoly on the press by purging oppositional reporting is a sinister step towards

dictatorship.

The public relies on the press to stay informed through reporting that is as objective as possible, from outlets such as the BBC (a "beauty", and not in a good way, according to Trump).

And while the press may not be doing the best job at keeping the electorate objectively informed, with devil incarnate Rupert Murdoch on the scene, freedom for the press to report facts is too vital a thing for the President to not only disregard, but to threaten with annihilation.



IMAGE:GAGE SKIDMORE

IMAGE: MARIA KALINOWSKA



## Fashion Week's facade of equality is so last season

Although it tries to be inclusive, London Fashion Week is behind the trend

Lucy Furneaux



The 2017 Fashion Week season has been praised by media for being the most inclusive yet. In both the Spring/Summer collection in October and the recent Autumn/Winter showcase last month, there have been more models of colour and greater diversity of age than ever before seen; the launch show by Teatem Jones even featured amputee models Kelly Knox and Jack Eyers in a striking display of diversity. But this just isn't enough anymore.

The *Fashion Spot's* biannual diversity report examines shows and castings from the fashion weeks in London, New York, Paris, and Milan. Following the S/S17 showcase in October, the report announced that the season had been the most diverse in history, and this trend looks set to continue following the recent A/W17 season. For the first time, every single show at New York Fashion Week A/W17 featured at least one model of colour, with non-white models making up 31.5 per cent of castings.

The full diversity report for the more recent A/W17 season is yet to be released, but analysis of individual shows emerges

almost immediately after the closing parties. This year, London appears to have not fared quite so well as NYFW: at last month's show, just over a quarter of models were non-white, and in his show featuring 44 models, Christopher Kane opted to cast just three people of colour. This was, however, at the expense of featuring more models from other marginalised groups.

Generally, models of colour, older, disabled, and plus-size models all fit the bill for conventional beauty other than their particular distinction so as not to diverge too much from typical custom. Even the 'racial diversity pointers' issued to designers by the Council of Fashion Designers of America last year, which received much praise for their upfront addressing of the issue of racial discrimination in the industry, stated that designers should "Make an effort to add diversity to [their] lineup" because doing so "affects... how we are seen as an industry". The motive wasn't to improve the industry itself – just its image.

But even if Fashion Week could represent every social group on the runway, it still wouldn't be enough – for one blindingly obvious reason. Fashion Week isn't about the models at all: it's about the clothes. It's about the market. What matters isn't the people modelling the

clothes on the catwalk, but those who are buying them – and by and large, those are clothes that only a tiny minority of people can afford.

However 'diverse' the fashion industry claims to be, it doesn't care about the people who model the product. According to Model Alliance, an advocacy group for US models, nearly 60 per cent of models have been pressured into losing weight by their agencies. The men and women on the runways, including a great many girls not yet out of their teenage years, are subject to constant criticism of their bodies, habits, and choices. To the crowds who flock to the catwalk, and the designers and brands behind the scenes, they are mere carbon-copy walking mannequins.

The fashion industry is enormous, and arguably crucial to the British economy; it makes up around £28bn of UK GDP. But it manages this only through the commodification, tick-box tokenism, and dehumanisation of its models, at once gazed upon and invisible to the exclusive elite. Given the increase in recent efforts to silence marginalised groups, it's time for the fashion industry – which prides itself on constant innovation – to start again, and provide a real voice, and safe employment, to those on the catwalk.

## 'Moonlight' must mean more than Academy's errors

Our focus should be on film not controversy

Kendall Stewart



Every year, all of Hollywood shows up to the Academy Awards, and every year some controversy rules the news the next day. However, the prominent mistake this year seems to be one of the biggest yet. On 26 February the Oscars played out as usual, until the notable moment when 'La La Land' was announced as Best Picture, only to have its producer clarify that it was, in fact, 'Moonlight' that had won. While there has been outrage among social media websites, many are questioning the significance of this mix-up in comparison to last year's controversy. In contrast to the last two years of all-white nominees, the Oscars this year have both a diverse group of nominees and winners. However, the representation this year is being overlooked by many in favour of the drama over the Best Picture mix-up.

For those who watched the entire broadcast, it is evident that the underlying tone of the award's ceremony was that of inclusion, acceptance, equality, and diversity. With comments and speeches not only being about the racial diversity shown in this year's Oscars, but the current wider political and racial problems of the US. Many speeches given by the winners were characterised by criticism of Donald Trump's administration and the treatment of women and immigration in his first two months in office.

Among the mix-up of the cards, the movie's message was lost in the scandal of the mistake. 'Moonlight' made history on the 26 February as the first all-black cast and first LGBTQ film to

win Best Picture. Correspondingly, its individual crew members also set records as Joi McMillon became the first black female editor to be nominated for an Oscar, along with Mahershala Ali becoming the first Muslim to win an acting Oscar for Best Supporting Actor. These great milestones, and the clear resistance Hollywood has to intolerance, should have been the highlight of the night. These achievements, however, are not what you will see on the cover of most newspapers and magazines; instead a dozen play by plays of how the winner's card was picked up on the wrong side of the stage.

From a marketing standpoint, the mistake seems to be working out in 'Moonlight's' favour. The mass media reaction is giving it free publicity while also drawing the attention of people who may not have heard of it before the Oscars debacle.

Originally, 'Moonlight' did not have a wide theatrical release, with only a few limited screenings despite doing extremely well in ratings. The film is now seeing an increase in showings as it will be expanded to over 1500 locations throughout the US, as well as an increase in screenings internationally. This marks a success for what was a relatively unknown film before its nomination. 'Moonlight' is a film about growing up and realising who you are. The messages of identity and sexuality throughout the movie emphasise the growing acceptance of representation of both LGBTQ and black characters in Hollywood cinema. This controversy demonstrates the willingness of the media to play on scandal and outrage rather than focus on the milestones for diversity in Hollywood. Instead of the dramatisation of the mistake, a film like Moonlight should be praised and celebrated for what it means for the world's largest film industry going forward.



IMAGE: OSCAR

## EDITOR'S OPINION

### Brexit, at home and away

Rory Kelly



As you might expect from the kind of adrenaline-junky that typically writes for this paper, I attended London's International Model United Nations conference this weekend. MUN is one of the few truly international societies that you can join at almost any secondary school or university. As a result, weekends at large conferences, like the one held in London a couple of weeks ago, will be brimming with young Europeans.

Asking these young people what they think of Britain's recent decision to leave the EU was an interesting experience. The overwhelming response was what can only be described as somewhat griggish disdain. A common joke made at the expense of British MUN-ers is that we're the only ones not educated in a foreign language, presumably because of a uniquely British provisional arrogance. Brexit (the event and the

awful port-manteau) emerge from this same mixture. Their disdain comes from the threat that our exit poses to the European political project. The priggishness comes from a mixture of amusement and irritation aroused by our own belief that we are enough of an economic power to go it alone. I didn't know how to respond to their views.

It's always been a staple of populism to pour scorn on elites who see their countrymen as narrow-minded and prefer the company of foreigners. Pat Buchanan, perhaps Trump's closest living political relative, used to deride politicians who are "more at home in Paris, France than Boise, Idaho." Spending time at these sorts of conferences, (a junior of and a pretender to real international conferences) makes one realise that this must, to some extent, be true. This is fine in principle but there was something narrow-minded about the responses I met, most of them wholly unwilling to acknowledge that the EU might have any flaws. As we enter negotiations with the EU, we would be wise to avoid letting ourselves be defined by the prejudices of our interlocutors across a widening channel.



IMAGE: UK PARLIAMENT

## Copeland defeat condemns an incapable Labour leader

After its historic defeat in Copeland, the Labour party needs a rethink

Jan de Boer



Never have I seen such a huge backlash to a by-election. As soon as the result was released, the media jumped on the story like lions to zebra frites, focusing on the failure of the Labour Party to retain a seat it had held comfortably since its creation. Labour's hold on the north seems to have snapped. The media at this stage was highlighting the loss as if they were about to hail Theresa May as the new Caesar. While some took it as the coming of the blue apocalypse, many blamed Jeremy Corbyn for the source of Labour's problems, citing weak leadership as the main reason that they lost. I am here to argue that Labour need a new strategy in order to stand a chance, not just Corbyn.

Before I am accused of being a Corbynista (which I still believe is an advanced coffee maker), allow me to explain. The Labour Party suffers from a distance from the desires of their electorate, a problem that goes way beyond the position of leader. The Copeland by-election was pivotal as it focused on two areas of campaign: the guarantee for the local nuclear business to be sustained, and the issue of cuts toward NHS services in the town. In the post-Brexit economic uncertainty, people desire job security more than the safety of the NHS.

The problem here is that people did not trust Corbyn on the issue as he has had an extremely stanch position against nuclear power before he assumed leadership. It is hard to see how the electorate could trust a man who would seek to end the industry that they rely on if he was in any other role than leader of the opposition. No matter the U-turn, Corbyn is a man of his values, which in this case played against him.

This would indicate a problem with Corbyn, however I believe that it is a problem with Labour in general. The leaders of the Labour Party

The media were describing the loss as if they were about to crown Theresa May as the new Caesar ”

ty are not on the same page as the people they once called their electorate. Labour's stance makes them appear to hinder Brexit, which has dissuaded the masses of Labour voters who voted to leave. Its ideas give a hyper-liberal stance that would be welcomed in metropolitan areas, but practically foreign to those who voted labour for the interest of the worker in rural areas.

The strategy works on middle class champagne socialists but not the working class Labour was founded upon. The Labour Party under Corbyn promises the things that aren't contemporary to the views of the common voter.

I believe that the Conservative Party would absolutely adore keeping Corbyn as leader. In fact the only calls I have heard for his resignation are from other Labour MPs. The Tories will not comment on him because they don't have to. If the polls are correct, which in this day and age is a rarity, it would be a Conservative landslide if an election were to occur. Napoleon once said "never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake". Why fan the flames when the house is already ablaze?

Our democracy thrives on an opposition that challenges the government both on the commons floor and the hustings. At the moment we have neither of those things. Corbyn may be a hero to many in the party, but if he cannot convince the voter on the street of his party's convictions and get people to trust the Labour Party on the issues of its past, we are in for five more years of Conservative domination, along with all the issues that brings.

This leaves the centre ground for the first time as the disenfranchised. However, if the Labour Party turns things around, we can see the opposition fighting again. If not, then the only step towards a thriving democracy would be the ashes of another Labour defeat.

## EDITOR'S OPINION

### Beware the bad news

Oscar Bentley



The news is focused on bad things. It's a simple principle. People are more interested in bad things - they sell better. The public wants to know about things that they think will affect on their way of life - like war, disasters, and the weather - but are less interested in things that will have little effect on them, such as poverty in the developing world.

When studying journalism academically, there is a set of guidelines that make a story newsworthy called news values. It numbers among values such as frequency, familiarity, identification, shareability, and predictability. Negativity, however - the idea that bad news is more newsworthy than good news - is a key value.

I find this all rather depressing, to be perfectly honest. At the moment, and I have full confidence that in the past, much like as at present, almost every story you look at seems to be negative in one way or another. A brief glance of the BBC News website as I write this seems to confirm this - top stories include Donald Trump accusing Barack Obama of wiretapping his campaign offices (I'm pretty sure he

didn't); controversy around whether Emma Watson can call herself a feminist for posing "almost topless" (she can); Chancellor Philip Hammond ruling out spending any surplus cash on social care in his upcoming budget (even though he kind of should).

I perfectly accept that I too probably select my news based on conflict and negativity, the drama of the situations make them all the more attracting and interesting. But should we not carve out a section of the news to focus on something positive?

The work of organisations such as the United Nations doesn't always make the headlines. The UN states that each year it vaccinates 40 per cent of the world's children, assists 65 million displaced persons, and provides food to more than 80 million people, and helps keep the peace with over 120 000 peacekeepers in 16 operations on four continents. Would it not be good to feature the positive work that the UN, and other organisations, do across the world? Would it not help to mitigate the negativity by throwing some positivity in there?

The UN is an important organisation that does some amazing work. I understand it's important to tell the public key news, be it negative or not. After all, happiness can be found even in the darkest of times.

# Your degree classification: 2:1 or not 2:1?

The degree classification system is based on arbitrary metrics, that fail to differentiate between the work ethic of students

Dan Hall



You do not deserve a 2:1. This is indisputable. There is no way that you can look at the totality of the mental and financial expenditure that you've put into your degree and arrive at the conclusion that what you deserve, in the end, is a 2:1. Let me explain.

The honours classification system used by universities in the UK is, in theory, a way of demarcating the quality of the degree that an individual student has obtained. Outside of any touchy-feely notion of education's value being something akin to the 'broadening of the mind', the classification system now really serves as a quantitative grouping metric which allows prospective employers to dole out first-glance job rejections with uzi-like efficiency and celerity, sparing them the trouble of having to meet thousands of candidates and assess their aptitude for a certain role based on character. A 2:1 degree is your passport to credibility in a service economy. But is this what you really deserve? Let's take an example.

Imagine that you are, unfortunately, a second year undergraduate student of English Literature. You probably find it difficult to explain how this has happened to you, but

you suspect that it's probably penance for some egregious sin committed in a past life, or a convoluted subconscious career seppuku aimed at your middle-class parents' financial expectations for you.

You work hard. You firmly believe that the value of education is 'autotelic'. That is, you think education is 'an end in itself', but instead

**The system lumps the efforts of the dedicated in with the desiccated** ”

of simply saying "education is an end in itself" you say "education is autotelic" because you heard the word being used by that one really cool lecturer that everyone says is "a legend" because he's sarcastic. So you don't worry too much about job prospects on a day-to-day basis, though you do occasionally have to face the issue head on. Usually, this is during bouts of periodic anxiety induced by particularly intensive Modafinil-fuelled coursework, writing flurries on the top floor of the library, amateurishly palm reading the lines in your clammy hands during one of the scores of bathroom breaks that your study drugging has necessitated.

You really do want to do well

out of university. The 'real world' is still far enough away to ignore for the time being, but you know that it is inescapably coming for you and act accordingly. You care about your essay results. And you're currently averaging 68 per cent. With just a little bit of effort, you can tip yourself over into a First.

At the same time, you have a flatmate also doing English Lit. Academically, he is your opposite number. He does the absolute minimum that is required to not get kicked out of his programme. Most of his contact time is spent in Derwent offices explaining unexplained absences from seminars (which, when he does attend, usually consist of contributions amounting to little more than displaying vital signs). He was really cheesed off about the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 because it meant that he couldn't buy synthetic cannabinoids easily anymore, and so instead has taken to smoking zeppelin-like joints of good old fashioned

marijuana on a tri-daily basis. Fittingly, he exploits York's liberal 'pick your own essay topic' policy by cunningly choosing topics he already knows about, writing night-before-the-deadline landfills of stoner meditations like "The Psychoanalytic Turn in Pink Floyd's The Wall" and "Trauma Theory in Rick and Morty". His essays are sloppy but different, so examiners look mercifully on the glaring grammatical blobs and referencing train wrecks that litter his scholarship. He's currently averaging 58 per cent, with the 2:2 sword of Damocles dangling perilously over his transcript at all times. He spends most of his time in

his room, drinking and smoking, shirking all forms of cleanliness in both environment and personal hygiene. As such his lack of work ethic clearly bleeds into all areas of his existence, and you shudder whenever you consider the thought that this is in fact the guy that people have in mind when they abstractly imagine English Literature students, an avatar for breath-taking laziness and self-indulgence.

You will ultimately both get a 2:1. You will just miss that First, not because you don't work hard enough, but because your marks aren't consistently brilliant. Your flatmate, on the other hand, will just scrape a 2:1, not because he's worked hard enough, but because his work is just consistently inoffensive enough to achieve what examiners call "acceptable". The real iniquity though is not that you deserve a first just because this guy's work is worse than yours, but rather that you definitely deserve to be differentiated from someone who has barely lifted a finger.

Our current degree classification system crudely lumps the efforts of the dedicated in with the desiccated, with no meaningful stratification in between. Come graduation, the same result will feel like a lifelong disappointment to some and a stay of execution for others. No matter which camp you fall into, there's no way you deserve a 2:1.



IMAGE: WILL FOLSOM

# Experts: not perfect but better than nothing

Gove had a point when he lambasted the faulty predictions of experts, but they remain the best guide we have to the future



IMAGE: WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

James Humpish



Saying that Michael Gove claimed: "the people in this country have had enough of experts" is technically incorrect, at least in terms of what he meant. When interviewed on *Sky News* a fortnight before the referendum vote, Faisal Islam repeatedly tried to interrupt Gove who was actually attempting to say "the people in this country have had enough of experts with organisations with acronyms saying they know what is wrong and getting it consistently wrong."

Sure. No one likes it when something presented as fact turns out to be incorrect. It's safe to say there's a lot of disillusionment, when figures are being spouted and forecasts announced by the IFS, ASI, IEA, IMF and many others who are discussed in the media as though they are household names, when in actuality, they really aren't.

A big misstep by David Cameron, Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Tony Blair, and others who are the poster-men and women of the liberal elite is that they have been very good at quoting figures by these bodies and dressing them up as facts on a par with Newton's third law of motion.

George Osborne used these kind of reports as a way of pledging that people would be worse off if they left the EU. People were repulsed by him. Donald Trump's 'facts' were proven false and extraordinary throughout his campaign, but he was able to tap into real feelings. These organisations produce forecasts based on evidence, incorporating up to millions of variables. Estimates can only ever be shaky at best, but that doesn't mean that they should be ignored. If the weather forecast says it will be sunny tomorrow and it's raining, then fine, mistakes can happen. But expectations tend to be closer to the truth than not. If growth is expected to slump when we leave the EU, that doesn't mean voting leave was a safe option with respect to growth.

Far be it from me to support Gove. Last summer he proved that he thought of himself as the Macbeth of contemporary politics and turned out to be a knock-off Iago. Ultimately though, he had a point. When asked exactly which professionals were backing leaving the EU, he didn't need to give an answer.

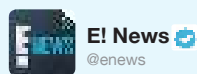
Whether the content of what he was saying was ignorant or blasé or evasive, he was able to tap into the idea that quoting figures from think tanks and institutions wasn't going to be the vote-swing. The evidence-based rhetoric is failing because it's not being presented in a way that connects with people. People shouldn't be fed up with experts, but they are rightly angry with the way that expertise is being used in the absence of a rational, coherent debate all that's been left is to tap into feelings. Inflation and interest figures mean little when it's unclear how easy it will be to feed one's family, or keep one's job, and when forecasts are presented as facts and the forecasts are wrong, it's no wonder that populism triumphs over evidence.



**Jack Davies**  
@jackisgreat

Tonight truly has answered the question "is there anywhere I'd rather be less than my Nan's colonoscopy" #YUSUElections

25 Feb 2017



**E! News**  
@enews

Leonardo DiCaprio and Suicide Squad have the same number of #Oscars

27 Feb 2017



**Steve Dennis**  
@StevenTDennis

"My mummy says you hate foreigners." -Girl after "knighting" Nigel Farage on Vladimir Putin's UK channel. Can't make it up.

3 Mar 2017



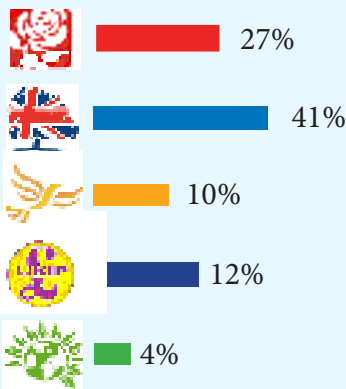
**chloe**  
@chloekentm8

[takes 30 second long drag on cigarette] "son, #yusuelections just aren't as poorly run as they used to be"

25 Feb 2017

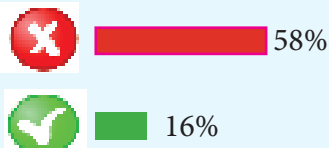
## BY THE NUMBERS

Westminster voting intention 2017



Source: Britain Elects

Would Jeremy Corbyn make a capable Prime Minister?



Source: Britain Elects

# CLASH OF COMMENTS

Should former Prime Ministers speak out over Brexit?

YES.

**Connor Drake**



So, as we all know Theresa May's government seems hell-bent on taking the country out of the European Union and all of its bells and whistles. "Oh, god, you're not discussing that B-word again?" You may ask. Well, not that one, but one with almost as many letters.

Former Prime Minister John Major weighed in last week, claiming that Brexit is being mismanaged. However a more recent former PM's comments have garnered more attention. Tony Blair has attempted to intervene in the situation by implying that the public were misled, saying: "the people voted without knowledge of the true terms of Brexit. As these terms become clear, it is their right to change their mind", before declaring his mission, which is to change people's minds.

Blair's intervention is one which people on both the left and right may be quick to shout down as being rich or hypocritical, using the Iraq War as an example of how Tony Blair led the country into an illegal war. Some detractors would even go as far as to call him irrelevant, however his supporters still herald him as a man who should be listened to, especially after winning three elections.

I would argue that Blair has a substantial point when saying the public were misled when voting in the referendum. This is an opinion shared by many, both inside and outside of the Labour Party, with the Big Red Bus on which the promise of £350m for the NHS was plastered (which no

Vote Leave official seems to remember or acknowledge, funnily enough...), the accession of Turkey to the EU the day after Brexit, and sharp falls in immigration all being promises and predictions made by those on the Leave side, all of which are yet to come to fruition, and some of which never will.

So Blair seems right, but should he have piped up?

As I mentioned, people are always really quick to jump on him when he comments on near enough anything, almost using the Iraq War in particular as a stick to beat him and New Labour with, but is this fair? Yes, the legality of the war, the circumstances under which it was voted for, and the element of public opposition to it are all very valid reasons to view Blair unfavourably; some people also go as far as to say Parliament was misled by Blair himself, which would seem to warrant claims of hypocrisy levelled at Blair, however, the report of the Chilcot Inquiry didn't conclusively find that he had lied to Parliament.

It is also possible to see the Iraq War and its impacts as a source of deep regret for Blair, with him expressing deep sorrow at the situation. When these facts are all taken into account, it seems quite unfair to carry on repeatedly mentioning this every time he has something to say.

One could argue that Blair's interventions are not instances of hypocrisy, but in fact him showing a great deal of hindsight, whether or not you believe he misled Parliament. Brexit and the Iraq War are perhaps two of the biggest national events from the past two decades, and what if, just maybe, Blair has learnt not to rush into things that could be damaging to the country? And anyway, what does Iraq have to do with his opinions on Brexit?

**Finn Judge**



Make no mistake: I am a Blairite. I'm all for the third way, I believe the British centre ground has truly caved in at the expense of progress, and some would even call me a Eurofederalist.

But those talking points are no longer winning arguments. Increasingly, British politics has become defined by a deepening chasm between a radical left and the authoritarian right. With the Liberal Democrats all but invisible, and Blair's legacy forever tarnished by a disastrous war, the battle against Brexit cannot be won by yesterday's ideologies - the very members of which have been swallowed up by the gap in our politics.

Of course, this is by no means an ideal state for our democracy, but who on Earth thought it would be a good idea to bridge this gap with the very bridge that was so passionately burned by Joe Public post-2008? It's a charred, unworkable path, and the only way Brexit can be fought off is by surmounting an energised, effective opposition that can persuade the would-be swing voters in a second referendum.

Everything Blair represents is what people voted against in June 2016. People are fed up of establishment politicians, high and mighty in their perceived ivory towers in Islington, imposing bureaucracy that cast away those left behind in the name of an out-of-reach, new European order. Nobody was a greater Europhile than Anthony Charles Lynton Blair; while I'd gladly defend his legacy

NO.

in supporting the working classes which so heavily voted Leave, but statecraft is all that matters now. Such is the reality of post-truth politics.

Three elections won, I hear you say? Hardly relevant now. Politics is about occupying whichever centre ground is apparent at the time, as the Overton window swings back and forth throughout the decades. I cannot stress how profoundly it has now swung away from Blairism and the entire New Labour project. Through genius realpolitik, the Tories have given the devil a four-letter name.

So therein, perhaps, lies an alternative solution: the return of Major? Not a chance. His wet Toryism represents everything Cameron stood for (even he had the wisdom of resigning his seat so as not to be seen to be sniping at May), and the demise of last year's government was an emphatic realignment with the newly expressed electorate. Rather than harking back to the days these individuals were not represented, it ought to be the job of every Remainer to make the case for them to change their mind.

Of course, this is exactly the project Mr Blair is planning to embark upon. However, to uphold a former Prime Minister as the new voice of the people is to imply that British politics is stagnant - that, somehow, the events of the past decade can be swung back and wiped away.

We are at a massive turning point in our political history: say what you will about 2016, but tomorrow's historians will attach significance to the year not just because of the electoral verdicts, but rather the deeper causes and implications which cannot, under any circumstance whatsoever, be ignored.

## #minstergram

Nouse takes a look at what you've been Instagramming recently in York



@alisongueriel Spring is Coming !

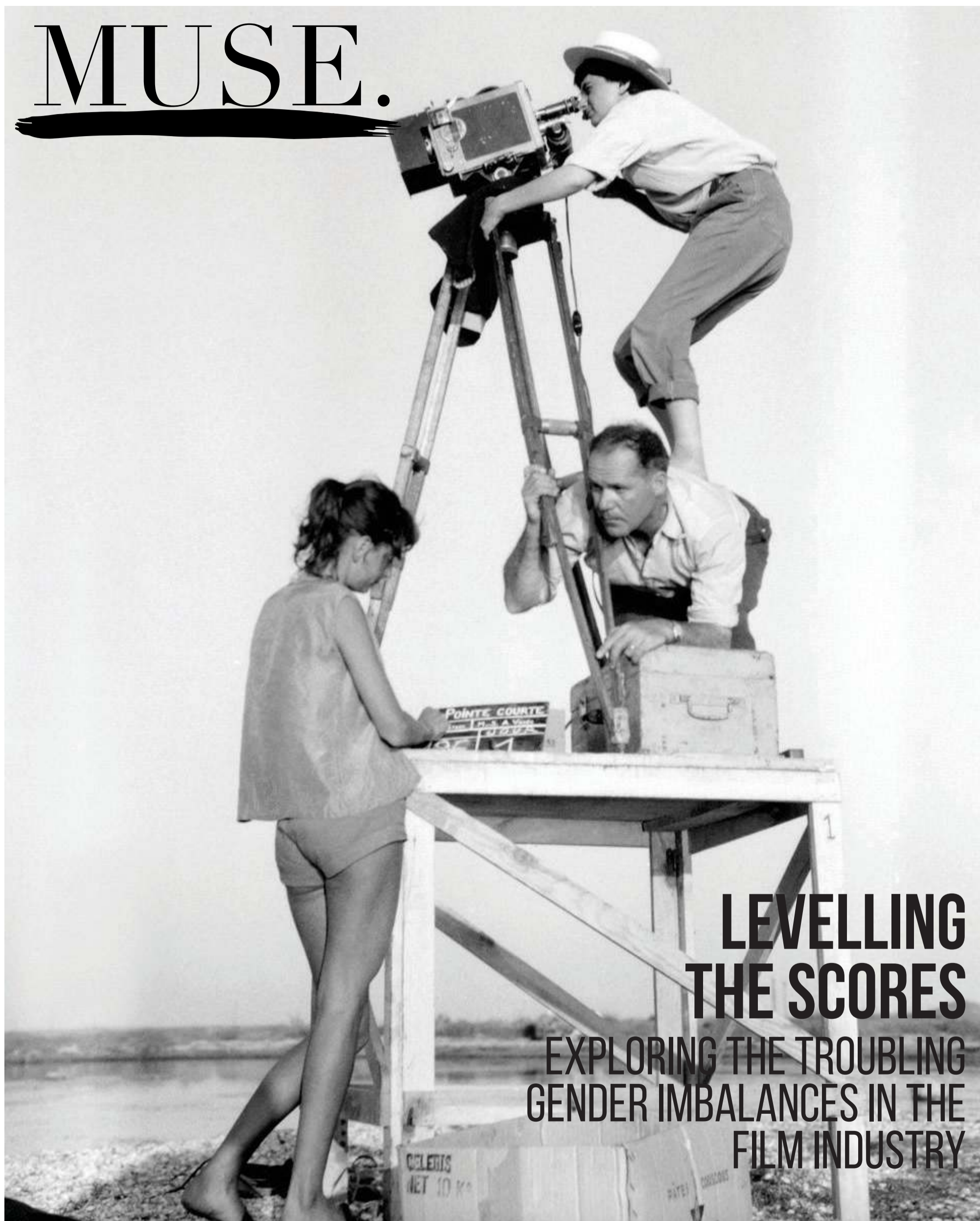


@yorkunisu Toy Story above head today on Hes West #LoveYork



@robertjharrop #paxromanus

# MUSE.



## LEVELLING THE SCORES

EXPLORING THE TROUBLING  
GENDER IMBALANCES IN THE  
FILM INDUSTRY

# 6

## ARTS

**M6** Eliza Hunton speaks to Lorna Petty, publishing veteran, about the ins-and-outs of the industry

**M7** The Arts team pick their top podcasts

## FEATURES

**M4** Tom Harle chats to Josh Bew, captain of the University's football first team, about student mental health and the healing powers of team sport

**M17** International student Trina Khoo explores the impacts of moving away from home to study

**M19** Harriet Clifford explores a taboo subject that is very real for students across the country: dropping out



# 12

## MUSIC

**M12** Henry Brown and Jack Davies guide us through the seminal albums having big birthdays in 2017

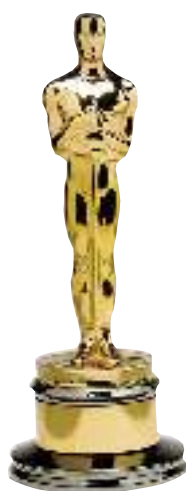
**M13** The team review some of the hottest new albums on release right now, and go Into The Archives for a rap masterpiece

# 14

## FILM & TV

**M14** Deputy Film & TV, Emily Taylor, outlines how to win an Oscar, and there's a nod to *that* mistake...

**M15** In our cover story, Izzy Moore examines the limitations of the Bechdel Test, and explores the representation of women in popular cinema



## GAMING

**M16** James Lees delves into the extensive universe of gaming bundles, while Sam Flint takes a trip into space

## FOOD & DRINK

**M18** Mustafa Chaudhry is having dreams in chocolate as he meets Azra Sadiq, a very original chocolatier



# 8

## FASHION

**M8** Dale Lyster selects some of the best offerings from the growing world of designer socks

**M10** The Shoot explores charity shop style





EDITOR'S  
NOTEDEPUTY MUSE EDITOR  
JACK DAVIES IS TALKING  
HUMAN ERROR

There's a delicate art that humans have perfected over thousands of years, an art that can be powerful and commanding and make headlines around the globe, and yet goes wholly uncelebrated: the art of fucking up.

This, of course, is just a little bit topical, given PwC's incredible fuck-up at the Oscars in accidentally awarding Best Picture to *La La Land*, before a disgruntled producer pointed out that the actual winner was *Moonlight*. Aside from being bone-achingly hilarious, and allowing us to witness, as he stood in his hideous Viennetta-pattern tuxedo, the ecstasy in Ryan Gosling's eyes fade beautifully into agony. A monumental mistake as this, on such a huge stage, demonstrated that human error is still rife pretty much everywhere. And this, in an overwhelmingly technological age, is weirdly comforting.

Film and TV (M14) gives a nod to the aforementioned faux-pas, alongside our cover feature that sees Izzy Moore explore the limitations of the Bechdel Test as a measurement of female participation in cinema, and lament the relative lack of female directors in the industry; something of an institutional fuck-up.

In fact, this issue does carry this as something of a theme. Harriet Clifford's feature (M19) on dropping out of uni gives the heartening message that, while you may initially appear to have fucked up, you've actually just found a new, and, as seen in the article, better path in life. Similarly, in Food and Drink, Mustafa Chaudhry's interview with revolutionary chocolatier Azra Sadiq (M18) demonstrates how it'll take you a multitude of fuck-ups before you even start to near your ultimate goal.

Look closely for the meaning (I promise I'm not clutching at straws), and you'll see that even Fashion's shoot on charity shop style (M10) has this mantra at its core - I mean, just look at how good they've made those clothes you shipped off to the British Heart Foundation shop look. You've really fucked up there.

Oh shit, I almost forgot, speaking of fashion, there's a beautiful 16-page London Fashion Week supplement at the centre of this wonderful publication that our team have put blood, sweat and tears into over recent weeks, with reviews of some of the biggest and quirkiest shows of LFW, accompanied by some stunning photos of the collections to boot (phew, glad I mentioned that, nearly fucked up there).

In many ways, even this note may prove one monumental fuck-up, as the sub-editors tear it limb from limb demanding synonyms for the phrase 'fuck-up'. Fuck.

Alternately, it might add a little humour to their endless night checking over this paper. Just remember, fuck-ups can be beautiful.

## IMAGE CREDITS

Cover: Agnes Varda  
Opposite, from top: Will Palmer, nico7mar-  
tin on Flickr, Azra Chocolates  
Q&A: Kyati Katkoria



*“There is no sense  
of individuality in styles anymore”*

FASHION DESIGNER **CONVOY** WORKS FOR TOKYO-BASED SHOP ‘DOG’,  
FREQUENTED BY THE LIKES OF SKRILLEX AND LADY GAGA...

**What made you choose a fashion-related career? What inspired you from the very beginning to get involved in the fashion industry?**

When I was younger a magazine called *Tune* was in publication, it was a ‘street-snap’ magazine. In there I saw a snap of the previous manager of Dog and thought his fashion was cool. Oh, that’s it really. From then on, I decided to take up fashion as a career.

**What kind of clothes do you sell at Dog? How do they set you apart from other stores?**

Because here at Dog we make our own clothes, essentially that’s what sets us apart from other furugiya (stores selling second hand items of clothing including vintage clothes). On top of that, the stuff we make has a really fierce and powerful vibe.

**Do you have any competition in Harajuku [the district where Dog is based]?**

We don’t have any competition in Harajuku. Actually, we don’t have any competition

across the world. Dog is just Dog.

**Does Dog sell any of your own designs? Explain your thought process behind one of them.**

Yeah, Dog does sell some of my designs. For example, I painted on this denim jacket with an air brush. This whole piece is inspired by Japanese kabuki (old Japanese performance style) and I’ve stuck Swarovski crystals on it. This is probably one of my best pieces of work, I would say it’s quite a strong piece.

**I’ve heard that lots of famous people such as Lady Gaga, Ariana Grande, Skrillex and Karlie Kloss visit the store. Has this influenced the styles of clothing you sell at Dog?**

No, not at all. We haven’t changed what we sell at all. Despite those famous people visiting the store, we haven’t made any customised pieces of clothing for any of them. We just continue and go on to make clothes we think are cool. We don’t change what we make to fit other people.

**Do you think Japanese fashion will become popular worldwide?**

If it’s how it is now then no. At the moment Harajuku fashion is definitely not in the position to become popular worldwide. Because there is no sense of individuality in styles anymore. If in the future people with a greater sense of individuality increase like how they were in the past then it’s possible that Harajuku will gain worldwide attention. At the moment it’s impossible for sure.

**What does the future hold for Dog and you?**

It’ll become more successful. I would like to continue with my work at Dog. I’m not really looking to expand the store into more branches. I would just like to continue to make these kinds of unique and powerful items of clothing.

Interview by Hina Rana  
Translation by Khyati Katkoria

# STRIKING OUT THE STIGMA

TOM HARLE TALKS TO JOSH BEW, CAPTAIN OF THE YORK FIRST FOOTBALL TEAM, ABOUT BREAKING THE SILENCE SURROUNDING MENTAL HEALTH

It's early in the summer of 2015, the height of exam season. One of many, Josh Bew is sitting in the silent section of the library revising for his Maths exams. Nothing to see here, right? Wrong.

"Looking at the paper, I knew I could do the maths. It was simple. My brain physically couldn't work anything out. It was a constant nagging headache at the back of your head. It wasn't a disability but it was debilitating to the extent that I couldn't manage life," he

“ My teammates stopped the rot in my life and helped me get back on the right path

pauses. "Because of the depression."

Josh struggled with mental illness for a year, beginning at the start of his first year at York. Now the captain of the University football first team wants to talk about his experiences.

Throughout his four years in the field of university sport, Josh has been known for his committed and physical approach as a striker. By most conventional measures, he's strong, but when we sit down to discuss his experiences it becomes clear that Josh has used every ounce of a different strength, an inner strength, to forge remarkable clarity in his relationship with mental health.

The Rotherham boy knows he was poorly equipped for the challenges of leaving home. "Maturity-wise, I definitely wasn't ready for university," he says. "I'd let a sheltered life and not had much life experience. It didn't help being thrust into university to live with strangers. Coming from an average school where you're the big fish, to going to university where you're average at best, is tough."

Unsurprisingly, the destabilising effects of losing a network of close friends and family have a clear correlation with student experience of mental

health issues. Student mental health charity Student Minds referred this to the All-Party Parliamentary group on students in December 2015, and they are at the heart of much of the good work that goes on in flagging up student-specific issues.

Early on, Josh 'struggled' to spend lengthy times away from his mother to whom the experience of divorce had bonded him tightly. The former Sheffield Wednesday Academy player continued playing football, but lacked confidence to integrate socially with established friendship groups in the club, having joined late in his second term. "Playing football helped me get out there and meet people, but I kept myself to myself - which was a mistake. I didn't go and socialise. That alienated me a bit and I wasn't part of the big group of freshers."

Josh was swept along by first year, falling into relationships that bent him out of shape psychologically and saw him agree to live with a group of people that he had little in common with. This was a highly turbulent period for someone who clearly sees the certainty of home life as sacrosanct.

"I didn't have people who I could talk to about anything beyond the day-to-day, to negotiate the changes I was experiencing", he recalls. "Things started getting abrasive in my house and it wasn't an environment you wanted to be in. Home is supposed to be a sanctuary and it makes it more difficult to deal with anything if you don't feel you have that."

During this period of upheaval, Josh was competing for a highly successful UYAFC first team. The team gained promotion from their BUCS league in 2014 and reached a cup final. It was the name 'Bew' up in lights at Roses that year, as well, as his two goals secured a 2-2 draw for York in the opening ceremony at Lancaster.

But Josh's depression didn't care that he scored the equaliser in that game. It didn't see his success; it didn't feel his elation. Those moments could not have stemmed its tide, and within months it had consumed him.

Josh's academic struggles in first year had forced a scramble towards resits, juggling revision with a full-time job back at home. This robbed him of the time to process the speed of change he was experiencing and this feeling festered. Packing up his boxes



IMAGE: WILL PALMER

to move back into halls, after relationships with his second-year housemates had collapsed, that night in Lancaster couldn't have felt further away.

Moving back into accommodation in Alcuin only plunged Josh back into another environment that exacerbated his symptoms of mental illness. "I was back on my own again with people who were only there because they were on their own and didn't have anyone else to live with", he remembers. "It wasn't a nice experience living in the house, but at least you had some human contact."

"In halls, you could easily not see another human being for a whole day and nobody would say anything. Nobody would notice." Josh's mouth clams up, and he reaches for a glass of water.

"That made my depression much worse, being so lonely, and I felt it acutely at that point. I couldn't handle going and sitting in lectures. I struggled with my degree. I didn't really have friends on the course."

There was something that helped, though. "Going out and playing football kept me here. It gave me an outlet and helped me start to forge the friendships I needed to get through university."

The day after sitting down with Josh, I am drawn to former YUSU Wellbeing and Community Officer candidate Tom Underwood, and the testimony he delivered as part of Mind Your Head's Mental Health Awareness Week on campus.

Though on the face of it, Josh and Tom are more different than they are alike - Josh is a strapping Yorkshire lad whose main hobby is kicking opposing defenders as far as he kicks a ball, while Tom is a spindly Pembrokeshire boy who plays underwater hockey - what is significant is that which connects them. They have both summoned it in themselves to take a public platform and share their battles with depression.

Tom speaks with moving candour about

his trials, from his parents' denial of his mental illness to his tribulations with the NHS and the clumsiness of their methods. Although he began to experience symptoms of depression from a much younger age than Josh, there are two crucial convergences that rise out of both accounts; namely, the importance of sharing your story with others, and the strength of the link between mental and physical health.

"That's the most important part of the process: co-operation," Tom affirms. "Getting out of such a negative pattern, a downward spiral, is almost impossible on your own. Having someone to talk to forces you out of that way of thinking, and walking into the clinic that day was the best choice I ever made." Josh sought help from his GP, who

“ The link between physical and mental wellbeing is a well drawn one

put him on a course of medication, and several appointments with the University's Open Door team.

Between 2010 and 2015, when the Graham Report into mental health was published, demand for Open Door appointments increased by a staggering 46 per cent. At the time, two students in every seminar of average size would have attended more than one on-campus consultation. The university's recent pledge to spend £500 000 on improving mental health services at the institution is therefore a much-needed injection.



IMAGE: MARIA KALINOWSKA

While Josh found the meetings he did manage to arrange with Open Door to be useful, he reiterates the view that it is “over-subscribed” and that there “aren’t enough” counsellors to deal with ever-growing student numbers. The knowledge that he could take

## There is that macho element... You have to show you’re strong and can’t really show weakness

fellow football club members into his confidence about mental illness was hugely significant.

“When it all kicked off and I left my house, I spoke to Dave Belshaw and Joe Easter who were in the year above me playing in the first team”, he says. “When I was in the process of moving out I spent a night over there and Joey cooked for me. He cooked lasagne, it was a nice little romantic meal - me, him and his girlfriend,” he laughs. “They would help me try to work out the next steps to improve my situation.”

The team’s support only grew from there. “Guy Bowden (Club President) knew about it and made sure there was nothing on the training side of things that was going to antagonise the depression. They just stopped the rot in my life and helped me get back on the right path.”

“The club has given me a lot without realising it”, Josh ponders. “It is like a family. You join the club and have 40-odd lads who will do anything for you.”

Joe was a talented midfielder who created many goals for Josh with his delivery from free-kicks and corners, but he did a lot more than that for his mate in the end. When

we catch up on the phone, Joe remembers much about his team-mate’s mental state at the time.

“He’s quite an aggressive player. He likes to pick an enemy and you could tell that every little thing seemed to be against him”, he tells me. “[Josh] was obviously not particularly happy. I think Dave, Guy and I were older and it helped him to be able to talk to people that, in a small context, were in relative positions of authority. There weren’t any massively noticeable changes in his behaviour. He wasn’t erratic, you could just tell things were getting to him.”

“It’s really nice to hear that it helped him,” Joe adds. “It’s the sort of thing that we assume a friend could be able to tell us, but it can go unsaid it times.”

That such conversations happened at the time they did was absolutely crucial. Somerset cricketer Craig Overton recently spoke emotively about losing his friend, Warwickshire player Tom Allin, who committed suicide earlier this year. Craig has had to come to terms with the fact that he never started such a conversation and now he won’t ever be able to. None of Tom’s friends in sport knew what he was going through.

For Josh, the relationships he had with his team-mates helped insulate him from potential problems in the dressing-room. If he didn’t feel able to come to training or go on a team social, there wouldn’t be any questions asked.

Josh has clearly found the club to be generally understanding of his situation – but he insists that there remains a stigma attached to mental illness in certain environments. “There were never any negative comments, nothing like that at all,” he asserts, but “I think there is still a stigma of being open about what has gone on. I only felt like I could talk to a very select set of people. There is still a worry of judgment. That’s not just in football, that’s in the wider population as well.”

He goes further: “There is that macho element. You have to show you’re strong and can’t really show weakness. There are a lot of egos. That’s not always bad but it can make it a lot harder to open up. It grinds you down, knowing that there is something wrong but



IMAGE: MARIA KALINOWSKA

not being able to show it to the outside world.”

This stigma will remain in York’s sports clubs as long as society struggles to find a way of making mental health something to talk to people about, as well as merely discuss in general terms.

By telling his story in this way, Josh is bringing forth exactly what he suffered with remarkable bravery. “I felt like I was living a lie, until I accepted what was happening to me,” he explains. “I felt like I wasn’t being true to myself and to other people. Although I’ve had people to talk to, I’d still feel I was hiding it.”

The link between physical and mental wellbeing is a well-drawn one, but it cannot be made often enough. Josh underlines that his work to keep himself fit in the summer of 2015 helped immeasurably in setting his

their experiences. The Sport Union will continue its efforts to keep mental health on the agenda here, with charity York Mind set to have a significant presence at the Roses tournament in April.

To go further, it must ensure that those suffering from mental health disorders are factored in at every stage of their participation. The University of Birmingham has set up a badminton scheme which is only open to students registered with the in-house mental health service, with a trained professional present at every session. Such programmes should

be shouted from the rooftops, but you have to burrow to a corner of the BUCS website to find details.

Now well into his fourth year of his degree, Josh is able to look back on depression as something in his past, and hopes that agreeing to talk about it can encourage others to come to terms with how they are feeling.

“A couple of the freshers have asked me why I’m still here in my fourth year and I’ve not shied away from telling them the truth”, he explains. “Talking about it now lets other people that are suffering know that they need to spot the signs so it doesn’t continue. At the time, you can’t see it happening. You can’t imagine what it could feel like to be alright again. It might take a while, but you can do it.” He stops. “That’s why I agreed to talk about this. It’s not until people actually come out and talk that others will begin to stand on their own two feet. To say for themselves: yeah, I suffered from depression.”

Whether in the corner of en-suite room in Alcuin, or in the corner of the dressing-room of a top university sports team, Josh can only add his voice to those that implore anyone suffering in silence to ask for help. Because it really will get better. M

## There remains a stigma attached to mental illness in certain environments

mind right for the task of resitting the whole of his second year.

In a study by Minds in Sport in 2014, 91 per cent of those surveyed felt that regular physical activity improved their confidence and self-esteem, while 82 per cent believed it helped allay incipient depression. Following this, York Sport Union’s ‘Staying on Track’ campaign ran a series of profiles on social media of sporting figures at the University and their relationship with their mental health.

Even in an academic sphere, the storytelling approach is recognised to be an effective tool in reducing isolation and it is vital that the likes of Josh feel comfortable in sharing

student minds



IMAGE: WILL PALMER

If you or anyone you know is affected by any of the issues raised in this article, there is support available at:

Student Minds: [studentminds.org.uk](http://studentminds.org.uk)

Nightline: 01904323735

Open Door: 01904324140

[student-support@york.ac.uk](mailto:student-support@york.ac.uk)

# FLOURISHING IN PUBLISHING

ELIZA HUNTON TALKS TO PUBLISHING VETERAN LORNA PETTY ABOUT THE BEST WAYS TO BREAK INTO THIS COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY



IMAGE: PAUL WATSON

Working in publishing is many a student's dream - for some, it becomes a reality. Lorna Petty, a Cambridge English Literature graduate, initially worked for Amberley Publishing (a publishing house specialising in local, historical non-fiction) as an assistant editor and then as a junior commissioning editor, before going on to work in Japan as a freelance editor for Darkhorse Manga. Plenty of undergraduates strive for such, but what's the reality actually like?

Many people assume that getting into publishing is a case of "who you know" and not "what you know", especially with the rise of London-centric unpaid internships which many graduates cannot afford. While major publishing houses such as Penguin do offer competitive graduate programmes, it's easy to wonder if a starting salary between £12 000 and £15 000 makes it really worth pursuing.

Petty was eager to remind publishing-minded graduates that there's not just one, standard route into the industry. After all, not all the industry myths are true; Petty hadn't done a publishing internship before her first job, and she simply applied for it "on a whim" online. For her, highlighting different, unexpected skills made all the difference: "In the interview, they were most impressed that I had a fundamental level of digital literacy: I could use basic Photoshop and later learned to use other digital software to prepare images. I'd also been running and illustrating a literary blog of my own for about a year previously. It wasn't so much that my blog was popular or particularly flashy - it wasn't! It just demonstrated I had some aptitude for learning how to use new programmes and that I had been invested in my own self-development."

Publishing is no longer about merely reading books and writing notes in the margins. As the world becomes more digitised by the day, so too does the publishing industry. Programmers with no literary background but a wealth of technology expertise are increasingly being recruited, and Petty believes that Humanities graduates should ensure that they've got similar skills. She was surprised by the level of variety in a junior editor's role, from photocopying to digitally editing images yourself. "Be fluent in social media," advises Petty, a tip that will be a relief to many aspiring publishers. "Lots of older publishing houses have no idea so that really helps. Show that you've written in lots of different formats and have basic digital fluency - you don't have to be excellent, but having a basic knowledge of how websites work is invaluable."

Believe it or not, but the fact that publishing internships are so hard to find might not be such a bad thing. "Any experience which involves you writing and producing media is useful. Charity work is a really good one. For example, when I lived in Japan I worked for Stonewall Japan and produced a whole bunch of material with a Japanese editor on health-related issues in their community, which was not something that had ever been produced bilingually and it ended up having a very wide circulation. I never expected all that and I was able to put on my CV that we'd had this circulation of hundreds of thousands of people and this amazing print run. You can get opportunities anywhere."

Wider experience in another field is definitely something Petty encourages, as "nowadays, they're demanding way more from graduates in publishing." A marketing background

“  
The people publishers employ can be just as diverse as the books they sell

would never go amiss, but graduates shouldn't keep their horizons too small. The people publishing houses employ can be just as diverse as the books they sell. "It's an industry currently struggling to change its business model to maintain profitability. It's worth trying to diversify yourself and make sure you're able to do multiple different things so you have more flexibility. You knowing how to convert and upload photos might be what gets you the job because that's what they're missing."

Even when you land the publishing job, don't just stop there. "Try to diversify your working portfolio. That's something I didn't do when I started out and I wish I had," admits Petty. "The most successful people had various different jobs; they worked informally online while they worked their internships. Someone I know edited for mugglenet.com, and Pottermore's the same. It might sound a bit strange and informal but they're very popular and you're editing content that millions of people will see so you can stick that on your CV."

The fact is, work in publishing isn't consistent. Workloads vary depending on the sizes of the print run and the different stages of the process, but many are able to turn these lulls to their advantage and carve out the time to pursue additional work. "Some people study for foreign languages while they're [working as a junior editor] so they can add something to their CV and could go into translation work. Other people, now they've got an inside look at publishing, write their own material just for entertainment. Other people worked in political activism - which is really useful given the high level of writing and marketing there. Work isn't very consistent, so have something else to keep you entertained during an unpredictable workday schedule." Having some time on your hands at work is no bad thing if you use the time right; it offers a valuable chance to build your profile and accrue as much experience as possible.

The publishing house that could provide your big break doesn't necessarily need to be a well-known name. Petty worked for Amberly Publishing, a small company based in Stroud, Gloucestershire - not quite the cosmopolitan London location aspiring publishers dream of. "Pick your publishing house based on how you can live, not just the job itself - that's why I picked Amberly," Petty advises. Smaller companies often have more room for progression, offering a chance to develop your skills and improve your chances of landing that dream job editing fiction. Petty recommends "Aiming for non-fiction first", especially since "Historical non fiction tends to be more regional so there's always a demand for it, it's way easier to get into so you'll progress faster and then you can move sideways into fiction."

Petty's greatest personal editing success came as something of a surprise: a book about steam tractors, proving that victories can come in strange places when working in such a varied industry. Her book sold four times its initial print run: "I was so embarrassed because it was about steam tractors!" Petty laughs. "But when you see the first thing that you edited on the shelves in a bookshop, that's really exciting - even if it's about steam tractors! It's exciting to see that it's yours, and you can get a bit possessive about it. Make sure you take the small victories because it's never going to be big, nobody's going to give you the new *White Teeth* to edit, or any other big novel. You have to start small, but that's not a bad thing."

Nowadays, many authors and editors are eschewing publishing houses altogether,

instead moving into self-publishing. For prospective writers, this can actually be a truly positive aspect to a publishing industry that's increasingly moving online. Petty's noticed that "A lot of people self publish". Surprisingly, publishers may be more interested in your teen fanfiction than you ever realised. "This can be done anonymously, for instance, via archiveofourown (a fanfiction website). It sounds unusual but a lot of published authors hone their writing skills that way. Also, it's good because there's a digital community there who comment on people's writing with advice and it's a good way to work out how you want to market yourself. Smaller companies and small magazines are useful as well, try short stories! Really, it's worth starting small, say to yourself 'I'm going to publish an article' rather than 'I'm going to publish a novel' - a novel is a very ambitious starting point. And be aware that your work won't necessarily be accepted first time around - that's fine and that's normal."

However, with a bit of market research, those keen to be published might find their stride selling work online. "At the end of the day you're selling a commodity," reminds Petty. "If there's no market for it there's no point producing it. This might mean you end up writing on something you're not particularly keen on, or in an area you find a bit ridiculous like romances, but if that's what people want to read that's what will sell. A lot of authors have honed their skills by churning out formulaic romances. It's worth trying your writing out on someone from your target audience and seeing if it works. Have fun with it, try to enjoy writing it otherwise it probably won't be enjoyable to read. That's also a good way of making a boring genre interesting, - always a useful skill because publishing's full of that!"

The publishing industry is growing exponentially and while there's still room for traditional progression, it's important to remember that the industry is constantly changing. "*Gardening Weekly* was a friend's starting point in publishing, and now she's working in fiction, because she'd done an internship at a greenhouse and knew what the flowers were and could spell all the names. She had this random knowledge and was able to apply it," remembers Petty. It's the kind of story which sums up all of Lorna Petty's advice: diversify your skills, don't focus all your energies into getting into Penguin or Random House, and keep yourself busy. It might be a "who you know" industry, but what you know is becoming more and more important. **M**

# CAST A SPELL ON YOU

PODCASTS MAY BE OUT OF SIGHT BUT THEY'RE NOT OUT OF MIND - LARA MEDLAM CONSIDERS THEIR INCONSPICUOUS RISE

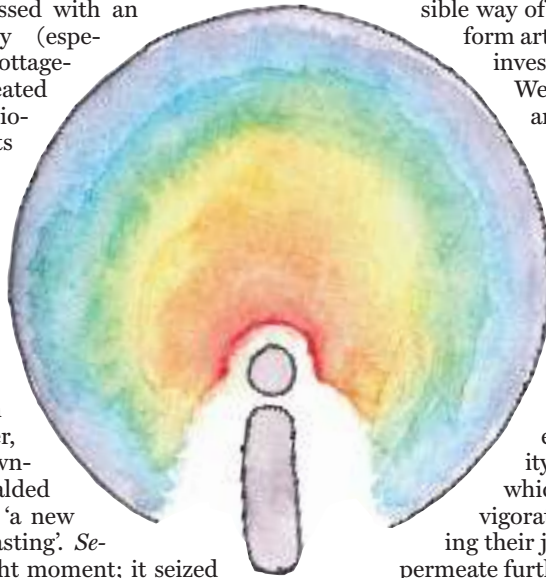
Podcasts have made a distinct dent in contemporary cultural consciousness - but in a very discreet way. Their rise has been pure and simple, created by people who are interested in something and want an uncomplicated way to extend that interest to others.

However, it's this very unobtrusive, back-passage rise to success that has seen podcasts overlooked. It appears that aspects of the modern media machine work against them; it's a real challenge to snappily advertise podcasts, they're still predominantly made by smaller, independent companies or individuals, and people have to make an active effort to seek them out in the first place.

As such, podcasts are afflicted by a 'discovery' problem. You can't produce clickbaity podcast titbits and there's no visual element to catch the eye of relentless internet scrollers. Similarly, there's very little concrete data on podcasts themselves. Who listens to them, when, for how long - all these specifics that media companies ordinarily use to guide consumers are absent in the podcast world. It's refreshing, but also shrouds them in mystery.

To the uninitiated, podcasts are something your dad's into, or your friend won't shut up about. It seems like the podcast form bubbles under the surface. Mention your interest to a fellow listener and they'll leap, enthusiastically swapping recommendations and glowing with the satisfaction that they've found a fellow member of the podcast 'secret' club. For

a solitary activity, they're surprisingly sociable and intimate. You've got a voice speaking directly to you, and know someone's gone to great lengths to pull together research and information, but it still remains relatively cheap and simple to produce a high-quality podcast. They're blessed with an inherent informality (especially given their cottage-industry roots, created by experimental 'audio-bloggers' in basements and garages). Free from the constraints of radio schedules and mass-media guidelines, podcasts straddle the line between amateur and professional. In 2014 *Serial* broke through the podcast barrier, garnering 40m downloads and *Wired* heralded it as the catalyst for 'a new golden age of podcasting'. *Serial* struck at the right moment; it seized the public's appetite for a juicy true crime narrative, delivered it with a sprinkling of effortless panache, and catapulted a podcast into 'must-listen' territory. The media looked up, and also saw the gleaming possibility of some real commercial opportunity.



One area where podcasts are really shaping the field is journalism. There's a distinct ring of truth to 'print is dead' lamentations, but podcasts could plug a slowly encroaching gap: readership may fall but podcasts are being listened to. It's a much more accessible way of approaching a long-form article, essay or piece of investigatory journalism.

We want things instant and effortless, with information easily digestible. Take *The New Yorker*, long heralded as the pinnacle of the great American tradition of long-form journalism. They're leaders in the podcast game, currently producing eight different, quality programmes, all of which have helped reinvigorate the 'brand', allowing their journalistic insight to permeate further.

Indeed, while it's undeniably tricky to get a podcast off the ground, they can make some serious money once established. Nearly all podcasts are introduced with 'supported by so and so' and these deals provide some valuable cash. Podcasts offer a chance to extend

thoughtful content to a new audience, and establishing a fresh revenue stream is godsend for media companies. Be it *The Guardian's* podcast, *The Newstatesman*, or *The Spectator*. They all offer additional scope to current affairs and culture. However, podcasts aren't just churning out yet more instant gratification content. With so many to choose from out there, you've got to create something intriguing and worth a listen.

The fact that audio is a secondary medium works also in the podcast's favour; you can multitask to your heart's content. Grey-faced commuters can soak up some news without brandishing a broadsheet. You can walk the dog or clean the oven and by listening to a podcast use the time more efficiently. Although the need of many today to stay perpetually plugged in can cast an unpleasant, tech-reliant shadow, podcasts are thought-provoking. They offer a frisson of possibility; capturing that can-do spirit of the internet's early days, the freedom to create and broadcast whatever you fancy.

It's still early days and the full potential of podcasts is yet to be realised. But for now, despite the growth in popularity, they remain fundamentally overlooked. While they will always be cheap to produce, their monetary, commercial potential is slowly dawning. Podcasts are a well-spring of eclectic information and culture for which there's still no rule book or guidelines, so it makes sense to start paying attention.

## THIS AMERICAN LIFE

*This American Life* is like the mothership of podcasts, the life-force and the how-to guide for creating an hour of thought-provoking but easy-going quality broadcasting. Frankly, it's about lives all over the world, not just American. Each week explores a different theme, offering a variety of intriguing stories. They did a fascinating, on the ground investigation of the Greek refugee crisis last summer, but they can just as easily flit from light-hearted, whimsical investigations to serious, hardhitting journalism. The sheer number of eminent podcasters who've honed their skills on this series is staggering and it's the ideal starting point for a podcast novice. **LM**



## THE RICKY GERVAIS SHOW

Truly the caviar of comedy podcasts, *The Ricky Gervais Show* remains as one of the most downloaded of all-time, 12 years after its original run. Featuring Gervais and prolific collaborator Stephen Merchant, the real star of the show is Mancunian everyman Karl Pilkington and his incredulous and hysterically funny ramblings, a source of great amusement to his mocking co-stars. The show was so successful, it made a star of Pilkington, who went on to appear in the critically-acclaimed *An Idiot Abroad*, and it was turned into a popular animated TV show, but the true majesty lies in the original audio editions. **JD**

## THE SPECTATOR

Podcasts are not only for the alternative media and *The Spectator's* weekly half-hour chat show shows that the old dog has learned a new trick. Centred on that week's magazine, the writers and editors sit down for debate and discussion about pressing political issues. Listening offers a sense of what televised journalism could be. The discussion illuminates important topics, with more detail than television, and debate that is serious without being overly earnest. Plus their pro-Brexit stance makes it mandatory listening for us students who can always do with a taste of opinions outside the somewhat stifling consensus of university life. **RK**

## THE 90S FOOTBALL SHOW

A sports show with a twist, *The 90s Football Show* sees comedian Josh Widdicombe host a fondly-reminiscent half-hour dedicated to the halcyon days of football in the 90s - garishly-coloured and baggy kits, players who you'd more likely spot in a nightclub than on the training pitch, and of course an England side crashing out of major tournaments on penalties... three times. In an age when football is supremely commercialised, this is a refreshing look back for sports fans to a pleasingly different era, delivered with Widdicombe's relatable humour and accompanied by a string of guests from the world of 90s soccer. **JD**

## YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS

Karina Longworth's relaxed LA tones betray the sheer amount of intensive, meticulous research that goes into each of her podcasts. Revealing the clandestine (and often chilling) corners of Hollywood's potted history, *You Must Remember This* is like a well-informed, mystery-debunking gossip column. Longworth examines the lesser-known figures and features of Hollywood days gone by, whether it's the enigmatic beauty Frances Farmer (whose tragic tale inspired Nirvana) or the real events behind Charles Mason's massacres. The current mini-series is titled 'Dead Blondes' - offering the glam and the gory. **LM**



## THE ALLUSIONIST

This is a cute little podcast, and it's nice to hear an English voice amongst the saturation of Yankee twangs. Helen Zaltzman is fascinated by words and aims to share that with her listeners. She examines language and etymology, guided by experts, curious listener's questions and cracking words of the day. While you're definitely learning something, this podcast is pun-filled, intelligently gleeful, and doesn't feel at all like some dry, one-ended conversation with a word nerd of the Susie Dent mould from *Countdown*. In particular, the episode charting the origins of the 'C' word is a very good introduction. **LM**

# SOCKS GLORIOUS SOCKS

DALE LYSTER TAKES A LOOK AT SOME UNDERSTATED BRANDS OF THE MOST UNDERSTATED GARMENT

IMAGE: @NICELAUNDRY



## NICE LAUNDRY

A 'Graze' of socks if you will, Nice Laundry aims to refresh and reinvent your underwear through their recycling service. From sending your boring, tired socks to Nice Laundry, you build a box of seemingly limitless combinations. Their designs come in a great range; from polka-dot and stripes, to designs far from our own imaginations, Nice Laundry manage to retain their minimalistic approach through aptly block-colouring, remaining unoffensive to even the most conservative of sock wearers. Not simply a scheme to keep you on the sock wheel, Nice Laundry live up to their name by combatting textile waste. Once your outgoing socks arrive in the hands of the company, acceptable socks are sanitised and sent to areas of need, while the rest are shredded and recycled into insulation.

IMAGE: @DRZOKUM



## DR ZOKUM

Launched in the spring of 2015, the desire of Dr Zokum is to create socks of the highest quality using minimalist, yet innovative designs at prices catered to all. Not just a company creating socks for all, Dr Zokum position themselves in the market with an ethical stance. They explicitly believe in the importance of diversity and individuality, and it is reflected in the design of their socks. They are fashioned through recognisable objects, repeated onto block-colouring of opposing colours. They come with a sophisticated and traditionalist approach, though distinctive to separate themselves from their peers. All of them come personified with their own non-traditionally human name, if you are looking for your first pair, go for the Alva.

IMAGE: @HAPPYSOCKS



## HAPPY SOCKS

A more recognisable name of the line-up, Happy Socks truly live up to their name. With origins from the not-so-historic 2008, the founders of Happy Socks have a simple mission - to spread happiness to all through the power of the humble sock. As an owner myself, I can vouch that there is a science to this ethos. Happy Socks bid goodbye to traditional, tedious black socks, with each of their pairs engineered to combine quality, craftsmanship and creativity. Most of them arrive in a stylish box, appropriate for an occasion. However Happy Socks are not alone in their vision; they have collaborated with the most unlikely folk, from Terry Richardson to Minecraft, and they have been adorned by everyone, from A\$AP Rocky to myself.

IMAGE: @JOLLIESOCKS



## JOLLIE'S

One of the most ethical in the current line-up, Jollie's are a company one would not regret in a post-purchase conundrum. For every pair that are purchased from the company, they match this in donating another pair to a local homeless charity, thus the pleasure does not solely arrive from simply the sock itself. The more-than-profit company position themselves behind three main beliefs: giving tangible goods to the less fortunate of the local community; inspiring activity within local charities; and providing employment to those transitioning out of homelessness. Aside from their good deeds, the socks live up to scratch too, arriving in a recycled can with a neat and stylish design that caters to all. With prices beginning at £15, they are certainly worth it, considering their charity.

IMAGE: @LONDONSOCKCO



## LONDON SOCK CO

The most dapper of the line-up here, The London Sock Co believe style is quintessentially about individuality and inspiring extraordinary from the ordinary, one sock at a time. Catering to the modern gentlemen, it is by no surprise that the company have collaborated with the architectural British gentleman David Gandy. Gandy, alongside the London Sock Co, aimed to create the height of luxury, catered to every gentleman's money clip. The collection range from traditional colouring to the Prince of Wales check in the finest of cashmere, in single-pairs to a 15-set box, with 10 per cent of all profits donated to Style For Soldiers. Founded in 2008, Style For Soldiers exists to rehabilitate and rebuild the confidence of veterans through style and fashion.

IMAGE: @QUIETREBELLION



## QUIET REBELLION

Fashioned in the latter half of 2014, Quiet Rebellion have the humble origins of two friends that met at university. Once thrown into post-graduate life, they were dictated by capitalist constraints to don the boring black sock. However, this is where the quiet and rebellion meet - the socks themselves appear to be boring and black on the surface, though what lies underneath one's shoes is where the design comes to life, and thus the rebellion. Each sock pays homage to a historical figure who challenged the accepted norms of their time to leave the world a more interesting place. The socks are composed of 80 per cent combed cotton for softness, 18 per cent nylon for strength and 2 per cent lycra for that little stretch. One note to take from this sock is that nothing is as it seems.

# THE DEPARTURE OF DONATELLA

DALE LYSTER AND WILL ROBINSON TALK DONATELLA VERSACE'S RUMOURED RETIREMENT

The ever-changeable nature of the fashion industry is, by no surprise, one which comes with an ambush of both ardent passions and rumours. Versace's SS/17 'Metamorphosis' collection was explicit, concealing no secrets, yet rumours circulated which depicted the moment as being the pinnacle of Donatella's reign.

Although it is rather unconventional, and in many ways takes on a highly masculine theme throughout, Versace has rendered a twist upon their latest collection. The pieces themselves were distinguishably different from Donatella's typical, indivisible approach to her work.

The show took a distinguishable sports aesthetic approach with nylons and floating silhouettes being omnipresent against Versace's trademark shades of blue, purple and greens. Due to its athletic approach, many deduced this was a foreshadowing of Donatella's handover to Riccardo Tisci, her long-time collaborator, due to his devotion to sports-fashion. Words embellished the pieces of the Metamorphosis collection, with some alluding to it being the description of how Donatella wishes for her art to be remembered, a commemoration of her fashion if you will.

However, others depict the display as Donatella's homage to women. Before the show, she noted: "I wanted to say these words to women because the world is a strange place at the moment, and everything we have achieved as women could be gone tomorrow. We must unite to protect what we have achieved."

The collection was minimalistic and simple, yet striking. Donatella's trademark palette was frequently adorned throughout the collection. The collection translates directly to "the beauty of transformation" and comes as an ultra-modern and experimental uptake to the iconic German novella.

There is certainly a whisper of military throughout the theme, paralleling the current state of the US, hence the feminist emblazing upon the collection. Alike every output from the designer, extravagance exuberates from every corner, with 110 metres of Swarovski crystals adorned upon one dress alone. It appears to be both utterly exuberant, yet lavish



and delicately ornate.

Additionally, there were transitions

throughout the collection; from materials, to the choice of palette, cuts and details, as well as the models themselves. Hence, Donatella is simply not recognised as an extravagant out-putter, but instead, a kind of pioneer to expand borders and push fashion continuously forward. Versace is highly avant garde and innovative, as demonstrated through her opulent displays of fashion.

Aside from the appearance of the collection, there is one generated idea that comes direct from the pieces; as if the 'Metamorphosis' of the collection alludes to the transition from Versace to Tisci. Following the latter's stepping down from the French brand Givenchy,



rumours circulate that he will attempt to fill the void Donatella will leave. However, nothing is as of yet confirmed.

Such a transition seems wise, as Tisci was the first designer to place hoodies on the catwalk, he has proved through his work with



Givenchy that he can transition the demographic audience of a collection, with many now associating the label with Beyonce, rather than Audrey Hepburn.

However, this is by no means to say Versace is a fashion capsule from times passed, though Versace is typically segmented to the ultra-expense of the world. Though in recent times, the brand is currently rebirthing itself to a new market, with an upcoming collaboration with Zayn Malik in the works and Gigi Hadid signed up as a committed model for the brand.

## FAUX ELITISM

JENNY CAO EXPLORES THE WORKINGS BEHIND AN INDUSTRY OFTEN UNQUESTIONED BY ITS CONSUMERS

Fashion is global. Fashion, whether we think we care about it or not, is a significant part of our public identities and in an increasingly socialised world, it is no wonder people are becoming more self-aware about their own presentation.

Despite corporate high street shops existing in slightly smaller numbers (H&M, New Look, Zara are a few that come to mind), it is surprisingly difficult to walk into someone who may be dressed just like you. We live in a capitalist society in which clothes shops and markets dominate our high streets, yet it remains a mystery as to how many pieces of clothing we feel we need to own ourselves.

That's why Fashion Week is so important to both designers and consumers. In an age where it's cool to be different, we are constantly seeking easy ways to dress ourselves. Mimi Wade merges naturalistic imagery with kitsch school uniform with her blue cloud dress (see Editor's Pick in LFW supplement), and Ashley Williams brings an influence of cowboy culture to make sportswear less serious.

Yet for many, fashion is considered an inaccessible industry; designer labels cater to the wealthy. When speaking to someone who is generally ignorant about fashion, GUCCI, Chanel, Louis Vuitton are the very few names that spring to mind. But many fail to believe that fashion is so much more diverse than this. Many designers this year incorporated trends

that have been prominent throughout high street fashion. Most importantly, fashion is an industry that allows people to manifest their creativity through clothing. Essentially, it is an art that takes time and patience.

Yet, fashion is still considered elite - not everyone has the time and money to pursue their passion after art school. Whilst LFW gives space to both young and older designers, it's still an industry that many find difficult to integrate into. Researchers show that less than 25 per cent of Fashion graduates do not end up in the industry post-graduation.

Despite this, credit should be given to or-



rganisations that help to recognise new talent, bringing them to the forefront of the industry. NEWGEN is a scheme, funded by the British Fashion Council, devised in 1993, that offers emerging designers financial support and mentoring. Fashion East, a pioneering non-profit initiative established by the Old Truman Brewery in 2000, is another organisation that works similarly to NEWGEN, helping emerging young designers through "difficult early stages of their career".

In addition, Fashion East also receive sponsorship from brands that we buy from. Topshop, Topman and a pioneering non-

profit initiative established by the Old Truman Brewery are two labels that fund sponsorship to Fashion East. Furthermore, £28bn is contributed to the UK economy from the UK fashion economy.

At LFW, 120 designers showcased in the Designer Showrooms at The Store Studios on the Strand. See Fashion is also a company whose mission is "to create a new era of fashion production where designers have the tools to grow and consumers have the power to set the latest trends".

Behind these showcases lies a large team of make-up artists, models, hair stylists, runners, PR companies, as well as providing jobs to those behind organising the location of presentations, the people who aren't part of fashion but help run it, the lighting and tech team etc.

Essentially, without designers and Fashion Week, we lose a large part of the consumerism in our society. It's up to you to decide whether this is a good thing or not. High street labels need Fashion Week to inspire their brands, and most importantly, we need fashion as a continuing way to express ourselves.

Whether that's investing in high designer labels, or using it to form your own style (see the charity shop shoot), before we undermine fashion, let's think about what goes behind all of this.



# CHARITY SHOP *style*

*Photographer:* MARIA KALINOWSKA *Model:* AMELIA CLARKE

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# SEVENTH HEAVEN

HENRY BROWN AND JACK DAVIES PICK OUT THE MASSIVE ANNIVERSARIES IN MUSIC IN 2017

1 9 6 7  
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**The Beatles - Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band**

The Beatles are remembered for a reason. The Scouse legends transgressed genres and sound in their eight years at the peak of popular music, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the masterful *Sgt. Pepper's*. Skipping through swathes of legendary tracks ('A Day in the Life', 'Within Without You', 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'), *Sgt. Pepper's* remains the biggest selling studio release in Britain today. It is rightly considered one of, if not *the* best, ever to grace the annals of pop music.



**The Jimi Hendrix Experience - Are You Experienced**

The group's debut album demonstrated Jimi Hendrix's innovative guitar-playing and songwriting that helped establish psychedelic rock music as a genre in its own right. The album features some of the best rock tracks to come out of the sixties, with the unmistakable riff of 'Foxy Lady', the mesmerising cover of 'Hey Joe', the soothing 'The Wind Cries Mary', and the iconic 'Purple Haze'. This album paved the way to a short, but game-changing career for Jimi Hendrix.

**Sex Pistols - Never Mind The Bollocks**

Their only ever studio album, Sex Pistols' iconic *Never Mind The Bollocks* is as recognisable today by its crude artwork as it was back at the time of its release. But the cover art is simply a well-fitting addition to what is a stunningly aggressive assault on both the ear drums and the musical establishment. The pinnacle of punk, the album features outrageous lyrics delivered in a scintillating snarl by Johnny Rotten ('Anarchy in the UK', 'God Save the Queen'), some genuinely remarkable guitar riffs as heard on 'Pretty Vacant'. Influential to the end.



**David Bowie - Low**

Much has been written about the 'Thin White Duke' since his passing over a year ago, and his music has seen a resurgence, exposed to a whole new generation in the process. *Low*, however, is one of his more inaccessible releases, but one of his finest. Devoid of the more radio-friendly tracks of his other albums, *Low* stands as an exquisite collective masterpiece, exhibiting Bowie's innovative experimentations in style, as he sets out on an avant-garde musical journey through the stunning tracks 'Sound and Vision' and 'Subterraneans'.



**U2 - The Joshua Tree**

U2 themselves, a band who have consistently endeavoured to forge new popularity away from their large back catalogue, rate this release so highly that they've decided to play it in its entirety on an upcoming 30th anniversary world tour. And with good reason - the album stands quite clearly as one of their best. 'I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For', 'Where the Streets Have No Name' and 'With or Without You' are some of the band's most memorable tracks, but the entire album exemplifies a band at the top of their game.



**Michael Jackson - Bad**

Following *Thriller* (1982) was no easy task, but somehow Michael Jackson managed to add to his impressive list of decade-defining hits with *Bad*. Tracks such as 'The Way You Make Me Feel', 'Smooth Criminal', 'Man in the Mirror', 'Dirty Diana' and the title track dominated the charts, and MJ continued to innovate with the accompanying music videos. Despite only releasing two albums in the 80s, Michael Jackson cemented his reputation as the icon of the decade, shaping popular music for years to come.

**The Prodigy - The Fat of the Land**

Dance albums don't often come as seminal as this from The Prodigy. *The Fat of the Land* sees the Essex electronic/big-beat pioneers truly reach the peak of their powers. 20 years ago, Liam Howlett and co achieved something unprecedented in making their frenetic brand of dance music hit the mainstream, with popular hits such as 'Firestarter' and 'Breathe' both delivering number one singles, and other album tracks 'Smack My Bitch Up' and 'Serial Thrilla' further showcasing the group's exhilarating calling card.



**Radiohead - OK Computer**

*OK Computer* is one of those rare albums that sends shockwaves through the music world. Like Nirvana's *Nevermind*, *OK Computer* brought with it a shift in popular culture. The major hit, 'Karma Police', shows the band's ability to produce an accessible, widely loved track. However, the true masterpiece of this progressive album is 'Paranoid Android', a song constantly shifting direction, comparable only to 'Bohemian Rhapsody' before it. The experimental tone and thought-provoking lyrics place it at the peak of 90s music.



## SHIT MUSICIANS SAY.

Ed Sheeran remembers how he lived the dream

"I got hammered and hit Justin Bieber in the face with a golf club"

# INTO THE ARCHIVES

HENRY BROWN LOOKS BACK ON THE BEST SELLING RAP ALBUM OF ALL TIME, THE MARSHALL MATHERS LP



It's hard to believe that Detroit rapper, Eminem, would only take the music world by storm a mere year before releasing what would become the biggest selling hip-hop album of all time, *The Marshall Mathers LP*. In early 1999, Eminem released his first album signed to a major label, *The Slim Shady LP*; nobody anticipated the whirlwind year that would follow. Not only would he go on to win the Grammy for Best Rap Album, he would also gain even more recognition within the hip-hop community working on Dr Dre's 2001. However, with his newfound commercial success, continuing on into the 2000s, Eminem's lyrics would be heavily scrutinised by angered parents and politicians alike.

Despite this, *The Marshall Mathers LP* is regarded as one of the greatest rap albums of all time. The opening skit, as well as the album's first track, 'Kill You', acts as Eminem's rebellion against those who had attempted to censor his art and suppress his freedom of

speech, hence his excessive use of profanity, and over-the-top depictions of violence, drug use and misogyny. Delivered over a Dr Dre and Mel-Man beat, this opening track introduces the themes of rebellion and protest that are prevalent throughout the entirety of this album.

Moreover, there are also tracks that give an honest insight into the mind of the rapper, highlighting the personal impact of his newfound fame, an idea perhaps expressed best on 'The Way I Am'. Here, Eminem addresses his frustration with being approached in public while with his daughter and being hassled by fans, resulting in his wish that he would just "die or get fired", or even dropped from his label. 'Marshall Mathers' is another confessional song, this time delivering some of the most memorable disses of this era of hip-hop, over the interesting choice of an acoustic guitar, contributing to the uniqueness of this rap album.

Furthermore, the disses found on tracks such as 'The Real Slim Shady' and 'I'm Back', do give the album a comical feel at times. However, these celebrity put-downs are intertwined with more serious criticisms of society, including a comment on the timeless issue of US gun laws in 'Who Knew'.

'The Way I Am' was also one of Eminem's most impressive lyrical displays at this point of his career, utilizing anapestic tetrameter throughout each verse. In fact, even on more light-hearted tracks such as 'Drug Ballad', which Eminem claims to have written in 20 minutes, Mathers produces technically impressive verses. Just look at the tight internal rhyming when he raps: "And everything's spinnin', you're beginnin' to think women / Are swimmin' in pink linen again in the sink / Then in a couple of minutes that bottle of

Guinness is finished". He consistently produces impressive rhyme schemes on this album; this technical ability results in him being considered one of the best lyricists in the rap game.

Another talent that Eminem demonstrates on this record is his storytelling prowess, most impressively on the gripping short story: 'Stan'. This tale of a fan with an unhealthy obsession with his favourite rapper is the pinnacle of storytelling in hip-hop. The song gets progressively more disturbing, with Stan's frustrations leading to him acting violently, taking the lyrics from *The Slim Shady LP* literally, ultimately drowning himself and his pregnant girlfriend. The eerie beat, with its rain effects and pencil scratchings, is aided by a generous sampling of Dido's 'Thank You'.

However, the other stand-out example of storytelling on the album, is the most disturbing and controversial song of the rapper's career. The track 'Kim', which

depicts Eminem murdering his ex-wife, was removed from the clean version of the album.

Eminem claims he had intended to demonstrate how much he cares about his ex-wife; the listener hears him shout, "Oh my God, I love you". Interestingly, by looking past the lack of rhyme scheme and the harsh delivery, 'Kim' is actually an incredibly unique track that is full of emotion, and can astonishingly lead the listener to sympathise with him at moments.

The album also hosts a number of guest rappers.

The most impressive collaborative effort takes the form of 'Bitch Please II', featuring Dr Dre, Snoop Dogg, Xzibit and the late Nate Dogg. Each artist delivers over a trademark Westcoast Dre beat, harking back the glory days of G-Funk.

Its subject matter challenged the boundaries of popular music, the lyrical technique was unrivalled and the production flawless.

*The Marshall Mathers LP* is not only one of the truly classic rap albums, but also one of the most culturally important albums of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## STORMZY

### GANG SIGNS & PRAYER

MARTHA WRIGHT



Well before this week's release of *Gang Signs and Prayer*, London's Stormzy was already becoming a household name. After a campaign to get 'Shut Up' to Christmas #1 back in 2015, his recognition continued to grow.

A genre that developed in the early 2000s from the likes of Wiley and Kano, grime often delves into issues of disgust and outrage. 'First Things First', the opening track, sounds like a storm brewing; facing the matter of LBC "tryna blame your boy for knife crime". Yet alongside these themes *Gang Signs and Prayer* also shows Stormzy revealing himself emotionally, and we gauge his vulnerability from 'Lay Me Bare' entering into talks of personal depression.

Grime has seen a surge in popularity in recent years, with other artists such as Skepta taking the genre into the mainstream. However, Stormzy transcends the usual boundaries, producing an album with such a variation in style; revealing previously unknown talents. Perhaps his public friendship with popular singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran, as well as ap-



pearing in his BRITs performance (despite the awards still not fully appreciating the genre) should have made us anticipate the gentle in among the grime.

'Big For Your Boots', released a week earlier, meets our expectations from Stormzy's record, yet the body of the album wavers from the bouncy yet rhythmically sound 'Cold' to him singing in an unexpectedly dignified manner, alongside Kehlani in 'Cigarettes and Cush'. 'Velvet' may be full of emotional clichés but its melancholic vibes establish the artist as a multifaceted individual, leading his fans on an unpredictable journey.

## RAG'N'BONE MAN

### HUMAN

ANDY TALLON



Love him or hate him, Rag'n'Bone Man is a big deal in 2017. Not only did he win the BRITs Critics' Choice Award, but he also won Best Breakthrough Act; the first time a Critics' Choice act has won two awards in their first year of nomination. What's more, it seems as though his success has come as something of a surprise - the Sussex troubadour finding himself thrust into the limelight at the late age of 32.

Casual listeners will undoubtedly be aware of the album's anthemic title track 'Human', but the track to be listening out for is 'Skin'. It's the best track on the album, and particularly moving. Other highlights include the striking, haunting production of 'Bitter End' and the desperation of 'Be the Man'.

Rag'n'Bone Man's appeal is partly built on his commitment to raw emotion, and this is a constant thread throughout the album. There's not a single track without substance or feeling - quite the feat in a time where songs with a one-word chorus can get Ri-



hanna nominated for a Grammy. Rag'n'Bone Man has a very rich vocal tone, so the simplicity and understated nature of 'Grace' was welcome. Rag'n'Bone Man's mighty brand of bluesy-soul needs light and shade to work, so the stripped-back nature of songs like 'Grace' and 'As You Are' are essential to this album's success.

Some of the tracks on the album are somewhat lacklustre, like 'Ego' and 'Innocent Man'. But the latter still offers something compelling in its juxtaposition of his rough growl, and surprisingly clear falsetto. Ultimately, *Human* is just a beautiful record.

www.ey.com/uk/careers

## TOP 5 FILMS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED

### HANNA

An action-adventure thriller-come-fairytale featuring Saoirse Ronan at the dawn of her career.



### BRONSON

A metafictional biopic of one of Britain's most notorious criminals, this is Tom Hardy's fiercest performance.



### ATTACK THE BLOCK

Aliens invade a downtrodden South London estate - but they might have met their match in British youths.



### FOUR LIONS

Who knew terrorism could be so funny? Chris Morris, apparently.



### HARD CANDY

A chilling moral conundrum with stunning colourwork, by the time the credits roll it's hard to say who's the real victim.



# HOW TO WIN AN OSCAR

EMILY TAYLOR LOOKS AT OSCAR CLICHES AND WHETHER THEY ARE A BAD THING, OR EVEN MATTER AT ALL

'Oscar-bait' is a term that is bandied around a lot this time of year. It's inescapable that the Oscars like to go after a certain kind of film, and there seem to be three main generic camps into which we can sort Best Picture nominees.

Firstly, it's the Hollywood flick about how fantastic the movie industry is. You think the ceremony itself is just rich celebrities patting themselves on the back? Well, that's not quite enough for them - they want to pat each other on the back about a film they made about how great they are. And they say Hollywood is narcissistic. Notable entries into this camp include *La La Land*, *Birdman* and *The Artist*. *La La Land* even has LA in the title. Twice.

The second genre is 'based on a true story', because nothing will make a film seem more important than if it's actually grounded in reality. Bonus points if it's to do with war - here's looking at you, *Hacksaw Ridge*.

The third genre is your archetypal tear-jerker; *Manchester by the Sea*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Room*, et al. Because what's so deep about happiness? Art is in the misery, and awards shows are in the happiness of this misery. Think I'm exaggerating? The last six big picture winners slot nicely into these categories, as well as most of the nominees.

Trends in the Oscars cannot be denied, but is this an inherently bad thing? The term 'Oscar-bait' is used as a derogatory term, often regardless of the quality of the film itself. People cry that nobody watches the Oscar films, that they are all just pretentious, arthouse affairs. Still, there are some exceptions - *Lord of the Rings*, *Inception*, and *Mad Max* all made appearances during

awards season, so blockbusters do get some nods. Still, Marvel films and *Transformers* aren't going to be nominated for Best Picture anytime soon.

However, Oscar winners aren't only immensely arty, pretentious films. They only choose the edgier pictures that also have some mainstream appeal - ones which often fit nicely into the three categories listed before. Less out of touch, and more bent over backwards trying to appease everybody.

Another thing people dislike about 'Oscar-bait' is predictability - it's not hard to guess the outcome, and people like rooting for the underdog. The Oscars is a show like any other, and people want drama. The whole Oscars rigmarole becomes more tiresome when everybody knows the outcome from the start.

Because the movie industry isn't one of pure creativity and sudden inspirations, like all arts there are fashions and trends, and never are they so heavily shown as in the Oscars. It's important to remember that the Oscars have a long and renowned history of being wrong nearly all of the time.

Many Best Picture winners end up unseen and forgotten, up for discussion only when they're the answer to a question in a pub quiz. Q: 'What was the film that beat *Citizen Kane* to Best Picture?' A: '*How Green Was My Valley*'. A film that I haven't seen, and I doubt that anybody else has, about a Welsh mining village. The film pantheon will be dictated by those in the future, and from our seats in the present we must concede to fads and trends and wait in anticipation for the very sad film based on a true story of a skinny white man sobbing for three hours straight, coming to theatres near you.



## OOPS...THE OSCARS DID IT AGAIN

CHLOE KENT

The 89<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards last week managed to be potentially the most awkward installment in the event's history, hotly contested by the Oscars Streaker of 1974.

You've most likely heard about the *La La Land*/*Moonlight* blunder, but just in case you've recently taken up residence on the dark side of the moon, events followed as such: *La La Land* was announced as Best Picture. The cast and crew flocked to the stage and began to thank the Academy, but there appeared to be quite the commotion going on behind them. Eventually, producer Jordon Horowitz was forced to retrieve the microphone and announce that, in reality, *Moonlight* had won best picture. There'd been a mix up. Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway were given the wrong envelope.

PricewaterhouseCoopers, the accounting firm which counts Oscar ballots, admitted full responsibility for the mix-up, explaining that the presenters were given the back-up envelope for the award of Best Actress, which read 'Emma Stone - *La La Land*'. This obviously caused a certain degree of confusion, which wasn't resolved until the damage was already done.

But it's not just the la-la-lapse in judgement which led to

an uncomfortable clearing of throats - there were plenty more cringeworthy moments on the red carpet that night.

*People* magazine editorial director Jess Cagle managed to merge the names of *Hidden Figures* and *Fences* - two big names this awards season, both of which also happen to be about African Americans - into as yet unreleased duo-sequel *Hidden Fences*. This casually racist Freudian slip cropped up twice at the Golden Globes this year, and while *Nouse* is sure that every time it's been but a harmless slip of the tongue, one has to wonder if this isn't symptomatic of a tendency among high-profile cinephiles to subconsciously sort all films which feature predominantly black characters into one category.

Worse still was the 'In Memoriam' blunder. The Oscars attempted to honour costume designer and four-time nominee Janet Patterson, but identified her with the wrong photo. Said photograph was instead of Jan Chapman, a producer who once worked with Patterson, and is currently very much alive. Chapman was understandably upset, describing herself as "devastated" her image was mixed up in what was supposed to be a tribute to a woman she considered a great friend.

We conclude our roast of the 2017 Oscars thusly: Auli'i Cravalho, *Moana* star, was performing the film's Oscar-nominated song 'How Far I'll Go', when she was hit in the head by a flag onstage. To her credit, the young singer didn't even flinch. All in all, though, this provided the cherry on top of a fantastically embarrassing evening.

# BECHDEL BLUES

IZZY MOORE QUESTIONS OUR RELIANCE ON THE BECHDEL TEST AS A MARKER OF FEMINIST FILM



The “Bechdel test” is fairly simple. First take a film and look for the following three criteria: the film must have at least two named female characters in it. Okay, that seems pretty average. These women must have a conversation. Also fairly simple. The conversation is about something besides a man. How revolutionary. How demanding.

Unfortunately, a plethora of films still manage to fail this test. Some recent and high profile examples include *The Grand Budapest*

Gender politics are complex when put to screen - the Bechdel test doesn't represent this complexity

ism while maintaining stereotypes and poor writing. The Bechdel test has its uses, but provides a simplistic proposition of what makes a positive depiction of female characters - i.e. they don't mention men within a conversation with another girl. Good writing is more complex than that, and there are many other issues which have become more important since the test's feature in the *Dykes to Watch Out For* comic strip of the 1980s.

Films that fall short also run the risk of being branded misogynistic should they fail the test, which ignores the fact that it wasn't proposed as a serious measure of a film's credentials, but a joke which was surprisingly accurate in its commentary of cinema. These lowly origins might suggest perhaps we're taking this all a bit too seriously. The cinematic depiction of any gender is more complex than simply looking at dialogue. *Fight Club's* depiction of women is consistent with its exploration of hyper-masculine fantasy. Marla Singer may be the only main female role, but she challenges the narrator's connection with Tyler, and the general absence of women mimics the narrator's disturbed perspective. The Bechdel test doesn't accommodate for this more nuanced portrayal of gender and would instead deliver a blanket statement of “sexism!”, without an exploration of why the film presents gender in this manner.

*Ex Machina* is another example of a film that fails the Bechdel test due to technicalities, but provides an interesting portrayal of gender which is important to the overall narrative. The premise of the film revolves around Caleb, a programmer who wins a competition and becomes part of the testing process for a humanoid robot named Ava. Said robot is played by the extremely beautiful Alicia Vikander, and the attraction Caleb has towards her is impactful to the progression of the film. It doesn't take much reaching to see some underlying gender politics when there is exploitation of her body and personhood, and that of her fellow humanoid robots - who are also female - by their male creator, especially when the film ends with the emancipation of Ava. It's not a coincidence that the exploitation of machines is framed through the exploitation of female bodies.

*Ex Machina* and *Fight Club* might fail the test, but they still succeed to provide interesting female roles and justify their supposed failings. Does that mean that

every film that fails the test has a hidden deeper meaning? Unlikely. We, as fans and critics, whether you're taking a feminist standpoint or not, need to acknowledge that gender politics are complex when put to screen. The Bechdel test doesn't represent this complexity.

A particular area where this becomes important is the presentation of exploitation. As mentioned earlier, *Ex Machina* involves this to make a point, not just for shock value. Another example where exploitation is used “appropriately” is in *Mad Max: Fury Road*. In another director's hands, this post-apocalyptic world with enslaved wives wearing chastity belts could easily become fetishised. Under George Miller, this is thankfully not the case. The wives may have been exploited by Immortan Joe, the dictator of this barren landscape, but throughout the film they are presented as individuals with separate character arcs. Furiosa, played by Charlize Theron, is also given agency upon the plot and reconciles vulner-

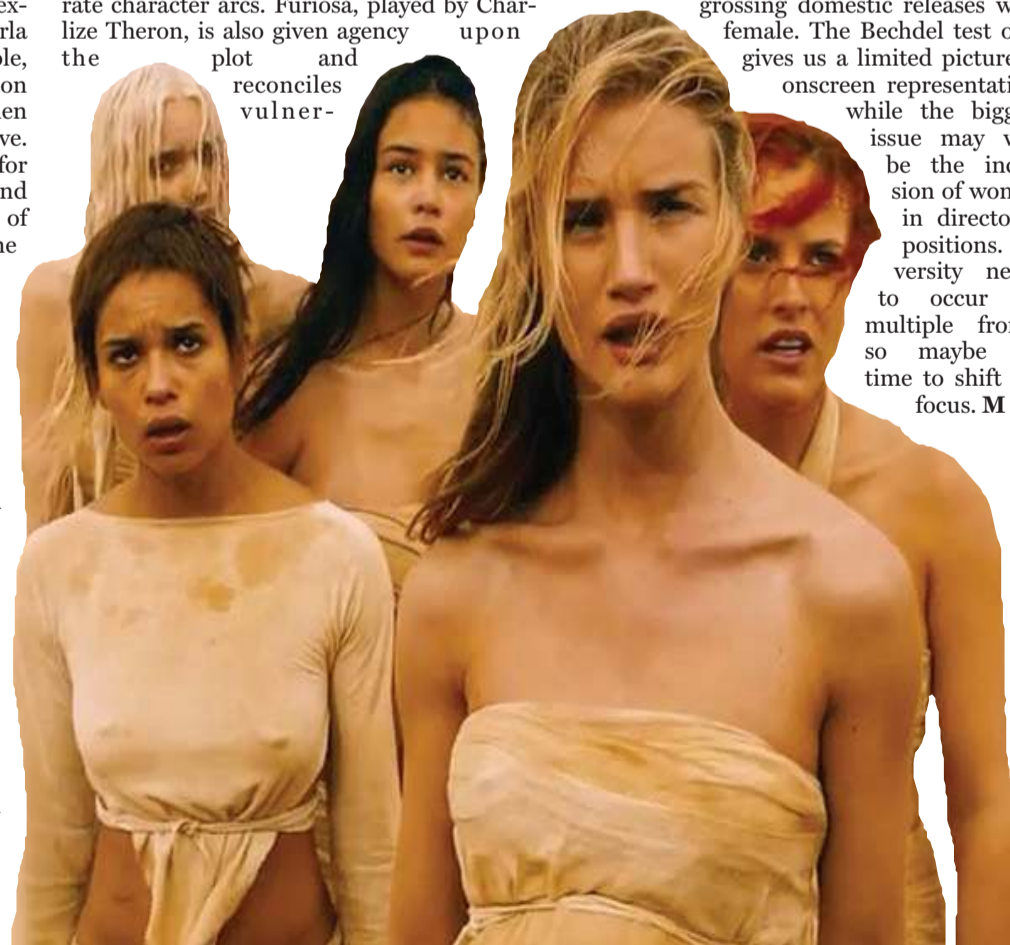
ability with strength - two character traits which are often never paired in any action hero, never mind female ones. Miller achieves this all within the action genre, which is probably one of the more notorious for having token female characters. They are not props to Tom Hardy's Max Rockatansky, and this reality is what the Bechdel test attempts to assess.

Women aren't the only group to undergo erasure, and while feminism becomes more intersectional and inclusive we should perhaps apply similar tests for other groups. How many people of colour are in the film? Are there any LGBTQ characters? If there are any, are they still a walking-talking stereotype? The Bechdel test doesn't address these other issues, perhaps showing its age.

As reported by the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, only seven per cent of directors from the 250 highest-grossing domestic releases were female. The Bechdel test only gives us a limited picture of onscreen representation, while the biggest issue may well be the inclusion of women in directorial positions. Diversity needs to occur on multiple fronts, so maybe it's time to shift the focus. **M**

*Hotel*, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, *Batman v Superman*, and Oscar winning films *Manchester by the Sea*, and *Moonlight*. The Bechdel test is not strictly related to the overall quality of a film, but it's still noteworthy that high profile movies don't manage to meet the fairly basic criteria. The test has grown to be synonymous with feminism, as it is said to assess the presence of women in a narrative, and how important this presence is. It's quite akin to the 'Sexy Lamp' test, which poses the question: can the female character be replaced by a sexy lamp and the plot still work? If so, there's clearly an issue. Personally, I would prefer to use the test as a measure of poor writing, which probably extends beyond its female characters.

The main issue with the Bechdel test is that it's a fairly rudimentary process of judging a film; naturally films fail Bechdel because they don't meet the specific criteria desired by the test. The test doesn't inherently show if a film has terrible female characters, only if they don't talk to one another. It doesn't show if the film neglects these characters, because a film can pass by only just meeting the three measures. A film could easily shoehorn in a conversation in order to avoid the cries of sex-





# FEAR OF FORGETTING

TRINA KHOO EXPLAINS THE UNCOMFORTABLE DUALITIES OF BEING AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Integrating into York's University community comes easier than I'd expected. Freshers' Week had none of the awkwardness and jarring culture-shock that I'd been bracing myself for, and there was none of the 'flat drama' I'd been dreading. Conversation flows easily with my course, and flatmates - we laugh at the same things, and have somewhat similar attitudes and personalities. I got lucky, I admit, but I've discovered something new: as an international student, it is not culture shock that I should have feared when coming to a new country. It is forgetting.

I forgot the first day of Chinese New Year when it came. Waking up in the morning and seeing wishes in my WhatsApp inbox, and Chinese New Year outfits, oranges and steamboat pictures on my Instagram feed reminded me that it was the first day, and people were out visiting. The eight-hour time difference between England and Singapore meant that it would have been evening in Singapore already. Had I been back home, my day would have started with noise - a flurry of slamming toilet doors as we hurried to get dressed, car honks and yells to get in quickly, and the fa-

I'm not sure how much of my culture I'm allowed to claim as mine without feeling like a fraud

”

miliar chatter of cousins, aunts and uncles. My day here starts with a quiet, early breakfast, scrolling through Instagram on my phone.

On the third day of Chinese New Year, small talk with a Chinese student on the bus out to town flowed jerkily, with me in my hesitant Mandarin, struggling to recall words

that have slipped into the deepest corners of my memory and eluded me. The Chinese student told me my pronunciation was very accurate, and I laughed, telling her sheepishly I do not use the language often enough to know the colloquial register. I struggled to find the Mandarin words for my favourite Chinese New Year goodies, and settled for googling a picture of them.

Lack of use, despite spending a good six years in a Chinese school - even studying Higher Chinese for four years - meant that my proficiency in the language is shamefully poor. Some Singaporeans brush off their weak Mandarin skills self-deprecatingly, and in my later teenage years I admit being guilty of that at times, when saving face meant a slighting of my heritage. Most times though, my halting speech causes nothing but immeasurable embarrassment and makes me scared of speaking Mandarin, for fear of being laughed at. I compare her easy flow of rapid Mandarin, lilted and lyrical, to my slow trickle. We are both Chinese, but my words sound foreign even to my ears. I second-guess my pronunciations - did I use the correct intonation? There is no acceptable way to explain why I am a Chinese girl who cannot speak Mandarin well.

The *Cambridge English Dictionary* defines 'mother tongue' as: "the first language that you learn when you are a baby, rather than a language learned at school or as an adult". This definition makes English, not Chinese, my mother tongue, and this knowledge that I am a Chinese-Singaporean whose first language is not the language of my ethnicity, but the language of our colonial masters, sticks me in a state of liminality. I am not sure how much of my culture I am allowed to claim as mine without feeling like a fraud.

It takes being in a land far away from home and speaking to a mainland Chinese student to trigger in me a full-blown fear - that I may one day forget my roots. It is equal parts alarming and sad that Chinese New Year was not important enough to register in my memory. What does this say of me as a 21<sup>st</sup> century Chinese-Singaporean, if I don't remember such an important cultural celebration simply because there weren't any reminders of



IMAGE: QI WEI FONG

it where I now live? For all those years, back home, was it the Chinese New Year sales in shopping malls and the glossy advertisements of consumerist Singapore - not to mention a public holiday students looked forward to - that reminded me of the approaching Chinese New Year?

I see on social media platforms posts by Singaporeans who study or work overseas speaking of missing the celebrations back home, missing the annual *tuan yuan fan* (reunion dinner), and the morning-until-night visiting. But there also exists another group, one who with each passing month living in a foreign land feel a slow-rising panic, a paranoia that one day they would slip further and further from their roots to a point where one forgets what home is (and sounds) like.

With academic and work commitments, I don't call home as much as I should (7PM here is 3AM back home). Most promises to close friends that we will Skype and catch up don't end up materialising. I hear a lecture replay of a British voice talking about poetry instead of the staccato Singaporean accent from a video call. I have found that it takes a quick three weeks of not hearing the distinct intonations of Singapore English, coupled with constant interaction with my British friends, to notice slight changes in my speech - from the way I pronounce 'thank you' to slang terms.

As a Literature and Linguistics major, this phenomenon is not strange to me, but knowing full well that it is an unconscious modification of one's speech to be more like the person one addresses does not silence the ever-increasing fear that there might come a day where I forget my Singaporean accent, like one forgets lyrics to a song not listened to in ages. The linguist in me labels what she sees occurring - w/dramatic irony at its finest, for try as I might, I cannot speak in my Singaporean accent when talking to British friends.

Singaporeans pronounce the 'th'-sounds (as in 'think') without the tongue in between upper and lower teeth. The tongue instead touches the back of the upper teeth. The Singaporean accent is not stress-timed like British accents, but is instead is syllable-timed. This means that each syllable in Singapore English occupies roughly the same amount of time, whereas in British variants, some syllables have more emphasis (as in BOOK-let). I can feel this new rhythm make a home in my voice, settling in quickly and effortlessly, sharing a space with my musical home accent.



IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

A three-hour long Skype call with a dear friend from home recalibrates my speech. Hearing the familiar sing-song tune of Singapore English and its shortened sentence structure constructions, and being able to reply in kind, was a relief to me - reassuring me that I have not fully lost my accent, despite my fears.

In the wake of Chinese New Year celebrations in Singapore, posts by friends and family on my Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds celebrating with relatives or hosting an all-Singaporean Chinese New Year dinner in their various flats overseas have petered out finally. I can scroll without being reminded shamefully of how I had forgotten this celebration. Funnily enough, it takes leaving home to develop some semblance of attachment to my homeland.

International students leave home for a new place and miss the food, the culture, and the language of their home country. But for those of us more free-spirited and people-oriented, those for whom independence means they miss home and people a little less, attachment to home waxes and wanes more frequently. It is with conscious effort and paranoia that I cling to my roots, and I'm sure I'm not the only one out there feeling this way.

At a late Chinese New Year gathering here with the Singaporeans in York, we sit around and speak with each other with the English from home. I wonder how many of them feel the way I do, the fear of one day not knowing how to be Singaporean.

A friend asks me what makes me think of home. I tell her it is the fear of forgetting my roots and feeling like a stranger in my own skin. **M**



IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

# GOOEY VUITTON

MUSTAFA CHAUDHRY SPEAKS TO AZRA SADIQ ABOUT HER INNOVATIVE TAKE ON ALL THINGS CHOCOLATE

Chocolate shoes and chocolate purses. These aren't really the first things that spring to mind for people when they think of potential chocolate related treats, be it for themselves, or as a gift to another. For Azra Sadiq however, this conflation of chocolate and fashion is one which has proved very successful.

Her business, 'Azra Chocolates', which currently operates out of her family home in Harrogate, is a testament to this, going from strength to strength over the past four years having been featured in the likes of *The Times*, *The Independent* and *Glamour*. The journey undergone to get everything to its current position, is one that is almost as interesting as the wide variety of products themselves. *Nouse* spoke to Azra to find out more about the business' beginnings, the different products on offer and what the future holds for 'Azra Chocolates'.

It is fair to say that not many people would fail to acknowledge an affection for all things chocolate, and Azra confesses to being the same - "When I am not making chocolate, I am constantly thinking of new products and

tion, Azra decided to start making her own individual chocolates. This involved teaching herself vital yet conventional techniques necessary to chocolate making such as tempering and making ganaches.

Interest began to pique amongst friends and family and the quality of the chocolates produced quickly became evident to many. She also mentions a fondness for including different fillings in her individual chocolates, ranging from the likes of an Earl Grey or raspberry filling to a coffee or ginger based one. pralines and truffles were other products that featured as part of the things she made while there.

It was visits to Manchester and then Belgium around 15 years ago that actually prompted the introduction of the products on which 'Azra Chocolates' is currently centered - chocolate shoes. She spent time at a week's intensive course at Slattery Chocolatiers, in Manchester whereby she was able to add to her burgeoning chocolate-based knowledge and pick up techniques (such as tempering in a microwave as opposed to solely using a marble slab) that she mentions have helped her with her current business.

Belgium, specifically Brussels, was where she first procured a mould that would allow her to experiment with making shoes. Returning to Saudi Arabia gave her the opportunity to start testing out what she planned, and from there the origins of her current business truly began to blossom.

"Carving a niche and focusing on one product" was a key basis behind introducing her shoes to the UK chocolate and confectionary market. This was added to by the fact that shoes have a shelf life of 12 months at optimum temperature and thus can be stored for a while much unlike individual chocolates and truffles.

Having moved back to the UK from Saudi Arabia with her family around six years ago, Azra took a break for a couple of years before pursuing a business in a location that she admits she wasn't "too familiar with" at first. Building a reputation and name for herself was subsequently imperative and saw her take part in several markets and fairs in which she was able to showcase her products and make her presence known.

However, the turning point, she feels, came in the form of recognition from former *Dragon's Den* star Theo Paphitis and his 'Small Business Sunday' initiative - one



ALL IMAGES: AZRA CHOCOLATES



When I am not making chocolate, I am constantly thinking of new products and designs

designs. I wish I could be let loose and make weird and wonderful chocolate products everyday".

During her time in Saudi Arabia (where she lived prior to moving to Harrogate) she mentions that something she noticed a lot in the chocolate there, was the amount of preservatives they contained, likely a result of much of it having been imported. Having taken inspiration from New York-based chocolatier Jacques Torres' shows on the Food Network, and wanting to try chocolate that focused on taste as opposed to decora-



that involves him retweeting a business to his Twitter followers. After several attempts, 'Azra Chocolates' were picked up by him and "things began to pick up from there".

Since then, the business has really developed, both in terms of its reputation and the products on offer. Events ranging from York Chocolate Fair to the London Chocolate Show have offered further opportunities for exposure. One thing that has remained constant is the fact that, until now, the business has been supported single-handedly by Azra's efforts, something that has required a lot of hard work and determination. She mentions for example how "you require a lot of patience as chocolate is not an easy product to work with. Lots of factors affect the outcome of the chocolate like room temperature, humidity, cooling temperature, storage etc."

The actual process of making the shoes requires her to temper the chocolate (which she buys in pellet form from Belgian supplier Callebaut) and then mould the shape while adding several layers, allowing each to set. This is then followed by applying the design which can vary depending on what it happens to be - the most taxing, in her view, would be the 'Marilyn' shoe, which requires individually adding several diamantes to the heel using a tweezer.

The shoes also require utmost care in the handling and delivery as a lot of business is conducted online, thus packaging is prepared in such a way that the shoes arrive to the customer intact. As the business develops, so too do the range of products on offer - Azra touches on the range of baby shoes and men's

brogues that have recently been introduced.

All the products, in her eyes, require "passion and creativity", and it is a further belief of hers that "if you have a good product it will sell itself". Thus plans for the future of the business are already manifesting in thought - wanting to introduce flavours into the shoes themselves is one thing she hopes to accommodate. Further increasing the number of trade shows is included in her plan of action - "chocolatiers tend to operate for only six months of the year" she informs, with summer not being an ideal time to sell chocolate.

Hiring a production unit will also be on the agenda - a place to which she hopes to see her business move. One thing is clear for certain; the expansion and development of

the business owes itself to the pertinacious efforts of one specific individual - Azra Sadiq. Her efforts have helped establish an impressive and innovative business that has over the past few years received much warranted acclaim across the country. What the future holds for the business is thus exciting to see and worth looking out for. M

## IF YOU'RE INTERESTED...

...in finding out more about Azra Chocolates and their incredible chocolatey designs, visit their stand at the upcoming York Chocolate Festival taking place between Friday 14 April and Monday 17 April - or visit their website at [www.azrachocolates.co.uk](http://www.azrachocolates.co.uk)



# BURSTING THE BUBBLE

HARRIET CLIFFORD TALKS THROUGH DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES OF DROPPING OUT OF UNI, AND EXPLORES WHAT HAPPENS NEXT



With UK university dropout rates continually on the rise, it comes as no surprise that most people know of someone who has dropped out of higher education. What is surprising, then, is how little this issue is discussed and how closely it veers into taboo-territory. If the person you know of is a friend, you are probably very supportive of their decision and are convinced that it was the right thing for them to do at the time. But when it comes to the fifth member of your presentation group, last seen in Week 2 and whose name may or may not have been James, the more common reaction might be annoyance, followed by a hint of contempt at the fact that you've managed to make it thus far with only two minor breakdowns and 11 bags of chilli-heatwave Doritos. While most of us are quick to make a fleeting judgement and brush poor James under the Dorito-stained carpet, we often don't think about the opportunities that lie ahead for someone who has left the university bubble without completing their degree.

During a conversation with an ex-York student, Hannah, who made the decision in 2015 to drop out of a Maths degree at the end

I had never properly failed at anything before and I had no idea how to cope with that

of her second year, she speaks openly about her motives. "My main reason was how little I was enjoying my course, as well as the position I was going to be in if I completed my degree without a high enough classification to get into the kind of work I was interested in."

The pressure to pick the right course can be overwhelming during sixth form, particularly when coupled with the fact that there

often doesn't seem to be many options available for those students deemed even vaguely 'academic' during school. For me anyway, university was posed as the inevitable destination, the be-all and end-all of A-Level results day. Feeling my only options to be either a no-expenses-spared gallivant across south-east Asia to 'find myself' (who knows why I didn't choose this), or a reluctant shot at university, I went to Durham for five miserable weeks. As is also the case for a small proportion of other students who give up their studies, my reason was primarily mental illness, which was exacerbated (if not caused) by my not wanting to be at university in the first place.

I wonder whether Hannah enjoyed the rest of university life, and whether it was only the "learning for the sake of learning" that accompanied a degree for which she had no passion that made it impossible to stay. "As cheesy as it sounds, I really lived the dream, partly due to the fact that I spent more time than I should have doing the things that made me happy! York is still one of my favourite places in the world after providing such a wonderful bubble for my uni life to take place within."

While Hannah definitely made the most of her social life here at York, most of us probably know something of the stress that comes with having to sit exams with very little motivation to revise and do well. "I found the whole exam period very emotional, largely due to not being sure that it was really what I wanted to be doing."

We then talk about what happened next. While Hannah tells me that the logistics of dropping out were very simple, she admits that "the mental side of it turned out to be the part that caused a lot more stress. I had never properly failed at anything before in my life and I realised that I had no idea how to cope with that. I was very worried that people would see me as a failure." Sadly, but inevitably, these are the natural feelings that most people experience when leaving university prematurely. Even the very phrase 'dropping out' implies a kind of shameful fall from grace, an embarrassed ducking out, a literal dropping off the face of the earth.

But when I ask Hannah what she's doing now, it becomes clear that she definitely hasn't fallen from grace: "I am now on a school-leaver program at KPMG, one of the

Big Four financial services firms in the country, gaining a chartered level qualification and being paid a decent salary. I do the same work as the grads and will end up with exactly the

University isn't the be all and end all - you can still do great things without a degree

same qualification as them, it will just take me a year or two longer."

After hearing how well Hannah is doing for herself, I want to know whether she has any regrets about leaving university. She gives me an honest answer, saying that "sometimes I wish I had made myself work harder so that I had finished my degree. However, I have come out of my university experience much more comfortable in who I am and what I want from my life, and I don't think it's anything to be ashamed of that I'm doing it without a degree. Compared to some of my friends who have completed their courses, I'm actually in a better place!"

While today's competitive world of work is leading many young people to seriously consider whether they can achieve their goals without spending at least nine grand a year on tuition fees, it would be a shame if going to university were only about getting a degree. Hannah admits that she may not have got the work-life balance quite right, but leaves me with some thought-provoking advice: "Whether you finish your degree or drop out, I think it's always important to remember that the academic side of the experience is not necessarily the part that will have the most impact on your future."

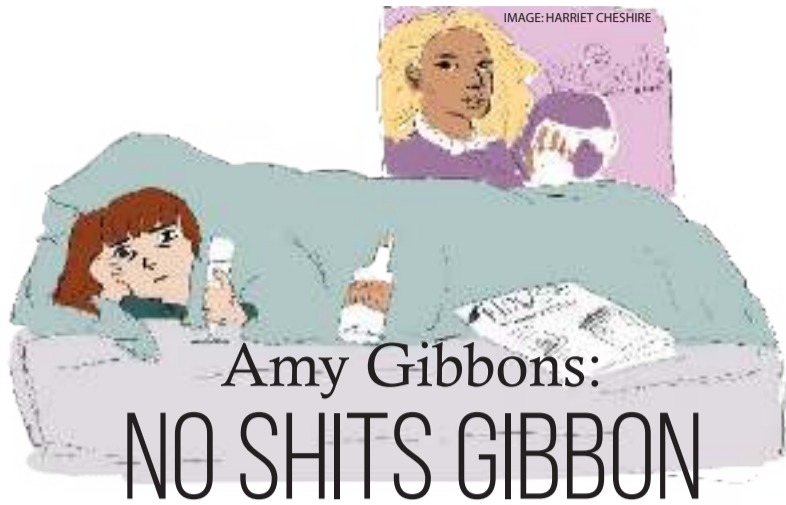
Of course, the majority of students would never dream of leaving; your subject is interesting enough, you've made some friends who

seem alright, maybe you play a sport, maybe you're a keen member of the Louis Theroux Society - you've got something generally resembling a work-life balance. But what is clear is that it's very difficult to thrive, or even survive, at university without this balance, particularly when moving beyond first year.

Oddly enough, I found another Hannah who also decided to leave her Maths course at York in 2015 (seriously, someone should do some research into this), who is also now doing very well for herself. Working at PwC, she is in the same position many degree holders, something that wouldn't have been possible had she finished university with a classification lower than a 2:1. Being very honest, she tells me that she blames her lack of self-discipline at university for her inability to complete her course, but also the fact that she had a full-time job while here, which ultimately "took priority". Despite this, Hannah says, "university changed my outlook and approach to a lot of things in life, and on the whole, made me more of a well-rounded person."

Again, I am intrigued as to whether she has any regrets: "I would love to say that I don't, but this isn't entirely true. Getting into university to study Maths was one of my greatest achievements to date and I will always regret not working harder. But I do not regret my decision to drop out as I put myself in a better position. What I have taken away from it is that university isn't the be all and end all - you can still do great things without a degree, you just have to work hard for it!"

The two Hannahs seem to have had fairly similar experiences of dropping out and have ended up leaving university behind them with a better understanding of who they are and what they want to do with their lives. However, just as people have different reasons for leaving, people also go about picking themselves up in different ways. Fast-forward three years and I'm back in the bubble, having made it to just beyond the half-way point of another degree and having a great time doing it. By rather spectacularly throwing myself off the conveyer-belt that was rapidly propelling my reluctant 18-year-old self towards a life I didn't want, I was able to take a break and work out exactly who I am as a person. Turns out you don't need to go to Thailand for that after all. **M**



Amy Gibbons:  
**NO SHITS GIBBON**

Right now I have seven tabs open on Microsoft Word. That's too many tabs. Essay season is upon us, comrades, and I'm currently grappling with the task of writing two 3000 word essays before the end of term in order to make way for my, as yet non-existent, dissertation.

Life at York can be rather like a whirlwind, or a colossal pool of stagnant water. I've found that the past few weeks in particular have shown me both, such that an accumulation of high-speed and slow-rolling events saw me so spaced out mid-Dickens seminar yesterday, that I'm pretty sure even Little Dorrit herself could not have made sense of what I was saying.

Rewind a couple of weeks, and it's the YUSU election results. We all know the general attitude towards election season at York: mates rates, or no one cares. But despite any disenfranchisement with the system (as reflected by the lowest voter turnout in five years, no less), there is something incredibly dynamic about campus. Maybe it's because we're all ambushed in our (lectures/seminars/labs/aerobics classes) by Prez candidates every half hour, or maybe it's because there's one too many 'It's Clear Vote Mia' signs on every corner. Regardless, somebody is shouting louder than the geese, and that's difficult to ignore.

Equally, election season can certainly drag; and not only because, on finding out I'd made the conscious decision never to bother with *Lord of the Rings*, my boyfriend is forcing me to sit through the trilogy. (We are three hours into the first extended edition. Help. I have so far been presented with the question: "Would you like to see an orc being birthed?", and Gandalf's said that one line; I just assumed it ended there? Guys?!) But back to YUSU: I'm sure we've all seen some fine election-based satire this month, but one film made by *The Lemon*

*Press* stood out for me in particular; that is, of the sad, sad cardboard campaign signs drowning in the Yorkshire drizzle and floating, defeated, in the general direction of the waterfowl.

This, I thought, was a perfect representation of many of our feelings, captured in black and white and set to the atmospheric 'Mad World' by Gary Jules. Not feelings of sadness, necessarily, but somewhat of helplessness, and of pity. Does it really matter who is successful in the election less than a third of us deem worthy of a vote? Is it indicative, perhaps, of our collective carelessness that only two candidates each ran for three of the five pivotal full-time officer positions, and we saw more joke candidates for Prez than genuine contenders?

The reason over 6000 of us watched that video just goes to show how much of a farce the whole process really is to students. In a collection of cliché campaigns, predictable year after year, it transpires parody effortlessly. Maybe we don't vote because we don't actually see ourselves reflected in the faces on the back of the 66 bus, or perhaps (and I think more likely) we don't care because we know, however dedicated, YUSU elected officers are actually here to lobby the University for us, and not make the final call on what we pay; or where we're taught; or how many contact hours we have; or even whose needs the University prioritises.

We elected representatives, and they will represent us. Whether we'll see any noticeable change by the time the fresh faces of 2018/19 take office is a completely different matter.

Also, the CGI for *The Fellowship of the Ring* is genuinely not bad. I'll let you know what I think at the end. Although at the rate we're watching this you might have to wait till I get a column in *The Guardian* on Saturday.

# Jack Richard Sonnets

## Cardboard

*Duck and waterfowl pick at the edge  
O'th' massy lake now lit by radiant Dawn;  
Beside them floats a cardboard-plastered pledge  
To fix YUSU, and to all students fawn.  
Where once it hung, lit up by colours bold,  
Surrounded on all sides by more and more,  
Now squats an empty railing, black and cold,  
The cable ties still wrapped around its core.  
How sad and flaccid paper mush now seems,  
That filed our campus 'gainst each runner's word!  
How did that which now jostles in the streams  
Create such nuisance when all the names were blurred?  
Few now remain, awaiting mortuary,  
At least until we reach next February.*

## The Final Stretch

*This term has yet a little more to go  
Before the day of reckoning begins.  
That rush which sweeps up all into its flow  
And makes them pay for all their term-time sins.  
This term, dear reader, has not been one of note,  
If by 'of note' you mean that things have changed.  
Nay, standard it has been as words connote,  
Familiarly the structure's been arrange.  
Why then, has Term 3.2 broken  
Everyone who previously was fine?  
Those who had but in jest of stresses spoken  
Now clutch themselves and for sweet first year pine.  
Verily, we have reached the final stretch,  
And th'thought of postgrad life doth make us retch.*

NIAMH MURCHAN WANTS TO START HER OWN SOCIETY...





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# Bye-election blues for Jeremy's Labour Party

**Joseph Silke**  
DEPUTY POLITICS EDITOR

BY-ELECTIONS ARE typically fertile ground for electoral progress by the opposition and other smaller parties. The government is typically faced with lagging mid-term poll ratings, and by-elections are an opportunity for the public to voice their discontent through voting against the ruling party, dealing a clear blow to the government's programme.

The recent by-elections in Copeland and Stoke-on-Trent on 23 January, however, will be remembered as distinctly atypical affairs. The events in the two previously thoroughly safe Labour constituencies could signify existential crisis for the British Labour Party; the rejection of a potentially redundant UKIP; hints of a Liberal Democrat revival and the triumph of the Conservatives as the natural party of government.

There are multiple elements to these historic by-elections that warrant exploration. Firstly, the defeat of UKIP leader Paul Nuttall in Stoke-on-Trent was a crushing blow to the once insurgent band. Labour candidate Gareth Snellman -

aged to retain the seat for the party, albeit with a reduced majority, after former Shadow Minister and historian Tristram Hunt resigned to head the V&A museum in London.

From the beginning, Mr Nuttall's campaign had been dogged by an effective character assassination by his opponents. Questions regarding the UKIP leader's residence during the campaign quickly arose as allegations were made that he had

falsely listed his address to be a property in Stoke on his campaign application, claiming to reside in a property which remained unoccupied.

More damaging were allegations that Liverpoolian Mr Nuttall had lied about witnessing and losing friends at the Hillsborough Disaster in 1989, allegations he vehemently denied citing mistakes made by his staff on his official website.

This latest failure by UKIP to send more MPs to the House of Commons begs the question of the relevance of UKIP when the Conservatives in government have embraced leaving the European Union.

Labour met a much more damaging result in Copeland, a constituency which has returned Labour MPs since its conception in 1983 and its predecessor Whitehaven had

returned Labour MPs since 1935, which was taken by the Conservative candidate Judy Harrison. To find a comparable two-horse-race victory for the government in a safe opposition seat one must go as far

**Theresa May has real reason to feel validated right now** ”

back as 1878. The humiliating defeat of the Labour Party has resurfaced the discontent with leader Jeremy Corbyn.

The Labour Party may have won the Stoke-on-Trent by-election but the party may have been more advantaged had it lost both contests. A loss in both would have likely forced an open challenge to the leadership and perhaps finally a new direction for the party. A victory in Stoke, despite how safe the seat should have been and despite the vote share swing to the government, gives Corbynistas a victory to cling to.

When asked by ITV News journalist Chris Ship whether he considered himself to be the problem, the Labour leader responded emphatically: "no." It didn't take long, moreover, for Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell to claim in an article for *Labour Briefing* that "dark arts" were involved in an underway "soft coup" to depose Mr Corbyn, reflecting the deep divisions within the party.

The *Huffington Post* revealed in a recent article that former Shadow Defence Secretary Clive Lewis, a popular figure also on the left of the party, registered website addresses indicative of a future campaign to lead the faltering Labour Party titled 'cliveforleader' and 'cliveforlabour'. Perhaps this suggests that Mr Corbyn has real reason to fear a second coup attempt.

There is one other party, though, which has reason to be optimistic: the Liberal Democrats. As UKIP and Labour crashed and burned it was not only the Conservatives who secured a favourable swing in the vote share. The party was still far from gaining both seats in these by-elections but, on more favourable terrain, the swing could potentially see some success in the future much like the victory in Richmond Park.

This could be interpreted as the beginning of the much-discussed lasting realignment in British politics along the fault lines of the European Union referendum.

For now, the Conservatives seem dominant and the opposition as an institution seems in crisis under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn. UKIP risk falling into obscurity and the return of the Liberal Democrats as a national force presently seems a relatively distant prospect.

The Prime Minister was beaming in Copeland the day following the election, with victorious Ms Harrison. Theresa May has real reason to feel validated right now. Whether or not this new state of affairs can survive the heat of the impending EU exit negotiations, though, remains to be seen.



IMAGE: HARRIET CHESHIRE

# Crisis for ISIS as Iraqi military seize Mosul

**Sam Flint**  
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

IT SEEMS A LIFETIME ago that Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the so-called Caliph of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, declared his caliphate inside a mosque in the heart of Mosul, in the summer of 2014. In that same month, a force of roughly 30 000 Iraqi soldiers fled a determined assault from around 1500 IS fighters - a humiliating defeat for the Iraqi government, and a particularly sour one for the United States. The circumstances today could not be any more different. The reformed Iraqi army, fuelled with fresh recruits from the Shia militias, has forced its way back into the city, with the latest offensive beginning last week, seeking to finally liberate the western half of the city. The task is not an enviable one, however.

The easiest objectives of the offensive have already been reached, with remarkable speed. Key outlying towns such as Bashiqa have been retaken, clearing the road to

the west of the city, but Iraqi and American commanders are wise to be wary of counting their success as given. From the information gathered by fleeing civilians and Stratfor satellite images, IS fighters have created a web of trenches, tunnels and booby traps in the city, and are most likely to launch devastating car

**IS may choose to focus on striking foreign nations in terror attacks** ”

bomb attacks as they have done in previous engagements. Combined with western Mosul's maze of small, confined streets, and it makes for a conventional army's worst nightmare, but an insurgents dream.

As of writing on 25 February, Mosul's airport has been recaptured, meaning the final stage of the attack is imminent. It is likely to be a bloody and protracted affair.

Make no mistake, this is a fight IS cannot win. They are outnumbered, bombarded from land and from the air, and surrounded on almost all fronts, but they will not give up their prized city without inflicting a heavy cost.

For the Iraqi army, this will be their greatest test. There is a reason attacks have been spearheaded by their special forces, keen to restrict tensions among Sunni villagers wary of Shia militias. For the rest of the world, this could signal the long overdue demise of the Islamic State, at least as we know it. With their territorial ambitions scuppered, it is likely they will be driven further underground, scattering across their shrinking caliphate.

The scenario most foreign observers fear, however, is the resultant shift in tactics. IS may choose to focus on striking foreign nations in terror attacks, of the kind seen in Nice and Brussels - an idea ever more worrying with many of the major European countries heading to the polls this year.

The Islamic State may be down, but they certainly aren't out, and the west will continue to wrestle with their brutal ideology for many years.



IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Fighting has intensified during the army's struggle against the Islamic State

# Riots flare again in South Africa

**Ed Smith**  
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

SOUTH AFRICA HAS been a hot-spot for violence, hatred and discrimination from the earliest days of colonialism. Under British rule during the Boer War, it hosted the world's first concentration camp, causing unprecedented suffering, pain and misery for many Boer farmers. In addition, the apartheid regime that systematically ruptured an already fragile society and ruled between 1948 and 1990, casting a formidable legacy on the country.

The regime of apartheid and the long term effects of the inhumane system casts a long shadow. This is evidenced in the recent violent anti-immigration protests that took place on 24 February in Pretoria and Johannesburg, demonstrating the extent to which the South African society is severely fractured. The protests have been primarily in response to rising unemployment as black South Africans believe they are being overlooked in favour of migrants who are prepared to work for a lower wage. Police were dispatched to restore order, and were authorised to use stun grenades, rubber bullets, and water cannons.

These protests have rapidly descended into lawlessness as lootings and xenophobic attacks take place against migrants and refugees from central and eastern Africa, who have sought a better life in the most developed nation in the continent. As a result, President Zuma of the African National Congress has condemned actions on both sides of the dispute but has placed a particular emphasis on the 'mob-like' attacks on African immigrants, which have exposed the animosity and racism that still exists within South African society. Furthermore, generalisations by many black South Africans that these migrants and refugees are sub-human, thieves and job stealers have highlighted the dissemination of racist culture, causing South African society to become even more fractious and divided.

The growing anti-migrant sentiment in South Africa draws stark

similarities to the spread of xenophobia in Europe and America as denunciations of 'fake news' and false populist allegations supersede basic facts and accurate intelligence.

In addition, many worry about the impact of the long term effects of apartheid and the dire record of riots in South Africa upon those in power. This is clearly why the government have taken a proactive stance as the Home Affairs Minister, Mr Malusi Gigaba, announced last Thursday, that surveillance plans have been drawn up to inspect workplaces to see if undocumented workers are being employed. Diplomacy will be used to negotiate with protesters.

Nonetheless, the crackdown may not be enough, particularly as Abike Dabiri, a Senior Special Foreign Affairs Advisor in Lagos, released a statement describing Mr Gigaba's statement as "discriminatory against law abiding Nigerians" and that he was contributing to the problem through his generalisations.

The newly-elected South African government therefore has a difficult battle facing it as it tries to create a civil and harmonious South Africa, like the one that was hoped for when Nelson Mandela

## The protests have rapidly descended into lawlessness, lootings and xenophobia

was elected President in May 1994. As he remarked: "Never, never again will this beautiful land experience the oppression of one by another". However, this will not be easy considering how endemic racism and unemployment is in South Africa, creating a perfect storm of issues. Therefore any chance of a prosperous and harmonious future for South Africa is unlikely, considering the political economic and social context of the African continent at the moment, which will only add to South Africa's diverse range of problems.



# Erdogan's election gamble

**Megan Field**  
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

DEMOCRACY IS AN essentially contested concept, but ahead of a constitutional referendum in Turkey there is little doubt that the country's political system is under threat. The vote, which is scheduled for 16 April, would create what appears to be a presidential system akin to the US. However, to bestow such substantial power in the hands of one individual is only legitimate when accompanied by adequately rigorous checks and balances, alongside a free press willing to scrutinise contentious policy. For this reason, critics fear constitutional change would signal a move towards authoritarianism.

If successful, the draft constitution would abolish the position of the Prime Minister, replacing it with as many as three Vice President positions. The President would then become head of the executive, as well as the head of state, and retain ties to a political party. The

governing AKP party are attempting to present the move as a vote for stability; arguably, the constitution enshrines a struggle for power between the President and the Prime Minister. On these grounds, the case is made that the change would fix this longstanding conflict, do away with the relic of the military constitution imposed in the early 1980s, and eradicate the instability of coalition government.

Of course, critics are far from content with accepting this justification at face value; Bülent Tezcan, an opposition MP with the Republican People's Party (CHP) voiced his concerns that: "The democratic regime in Turkey will be replaced with one-man rule". Indeed, the amendments would grant President Erdogan sweeping new powers to appoint both ministers and the majority of senior judges and enact certain laws by decree- alongside the ability to unilaterally announce a state of emergency and dismiss parliament. While there is an argument to be made that such measures would streamline decision making and avoid the cumbersome parliamentary coalitions which have crippled Turkey in the

past, this begins to crumble when one examines the context in which these amendments would occur.

Referendums are controversial at the best of times, as was demonstrated via the political point scoring on both sides of the Brexit debate. However, in light of the attempted coup d'etat last July, we must consider the ever shrinking space for free speech in Turkey. Accordingly, the media saturation of the UK almost looks appealing. It is not surprising that Turkey is now 151 of 180 on the press freedom index of Watchdog Reporter Without Borders, given the fact that throughout its three month state of emergency the government has ordered the closure of 102 media outlets and issued arrest warrants for more than 100 journalists. Although there is not a ban on saying no to the campaign, this does not necessarily mean the opposition will be heard. All these events make for a sensitive time in Turkey to be pro-democracy and civil rights.

Until such issues are resolved, the referendum can be seen as nothing more than a democratic facade for an otherwise dictatorial power grab.



## LEFT WING RIGHT WING

*Thoughts from the Politics Editor*

IT HAS BECOME increasingly difficult to ignore Putin's role on the world stage. Many in the west are both cowed or in awe of the Russian strongman. Thus, history must inform us. February 2017 marks the 100th year of the Russian Revolution, arguably the single most sig-

nificant event to happen in the early 20th century. Having overthrown the Tsar in favour of a form of liberal parliamentarianism, this left a power vacuum in Russian society, allowing Lenin and the Bolsheviks to seize power in a coup in October and set about exporting Leninism

abroad in an effort to start a worldwide workers' revolution. This arguably prompted Hitler's Germany to both crackdown on dissent, and possibly scapegoat communists, notably with the Reichstag fire incident. It may have even prompted the Axis to invade the USSR. It goes without saying that we all know how invading Russia in winter always goes.

Thus we find ourselves in the present, the USSR having collapsed 25 years ago. The comparisons are stark. 40 years before 1917 were

years of liberal triumphalism, with a system of worldwide free trade underpinned by a sole superpower. 40 years before 2017 were years of liberal triumphalism, with a system of worldwide free trade underpinned by a sole superpower. We have, as in 1917, seen the return of economic populists, and America is once again poised to retreat in on itself, as signalled by Trump's admittedly mixed messaging on international institutions such as NATO. However, in Russia itself, the story is different. Putin is firmly anti-revolution. Pro-

moting as much may risk undermining the centralised control he holds over the Russian Federation. Thus, he finds himself cornered, unable to promote his nation's founding myth and at risk that he may himself find parallels with Tsar Nicholas' experience in 1917. Even in February, huge protests were recorded outside the Kremlin, demonstrating against the assassination of Boris Nemtsov two years ago, one of Russia's last truly liberal voices. Thus, how he reacts to domestic events will have effects for all.

# If robots take our jobs, will they be taxed?

**James Humpish**  
BUSINESS EDITOR

TAX FOR ROBOTS may be the only way that businesses will be able to ease into the future. Well, if not robots, the machinery that replaces jobs must be taxed.

As it becomes more and more efficient for machines to do the work currently done by people, the way the technological revolution is reacted to will be decisive regarding whether it is a society-maker or society-breaker.

Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, has raised a view that in order to maintain public services, it will be necessary to tax jobs which become automated. Gates claims that "right now, the human worker who does, say, \$50 000 worth

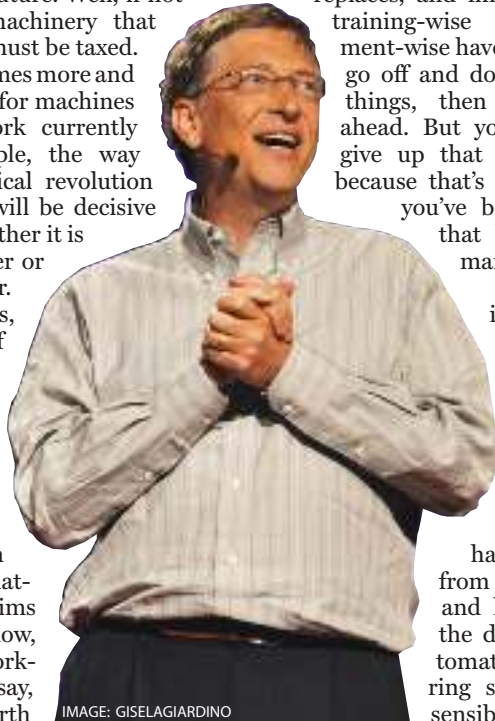


IMAGE: GISELAGIARDINO

of work in a factory, that income is taxed and you get income tax, social security tax, all those things. If a robot comes in to do the same thing, you'd think that we'd tax the robot at a similar level.

"If you can take the labour that used to do the thing automation replaces, and financially and training-wise and fulfilment-wise have that person go off and do these other things, then you're net ahead. But you can't just give up that income tax, because that's part of how you've been funding that level of human workers."

It's an interesting idea. In order to maintain the same level of public finance, funding will have to come from somewhere and linking it to the degree of automation occurring seems like a sensible idea. If

fewer people are to be receiving incomes then revenues on income tax will be lost. Not only will there be less which governments can spend, but there will also need to be some means of sustaining those driven out of the workforce. Being able to hoist this slack through taxing the machines that replace the job may be necessary.

In effect, it is essentially an application of corporation tax, but heterogeneity would be applied as it would depend on how capital intensive a particular firm was. As a tax, it would disincentivise efforts, but by using it to compensate the losses made from reduced unemployment, it shouldn't change overall produce made.

What Gates says brings about wider points rather than his justification though.

While creativity and new ways of doing things should be encouraged, to promote businesses there will need to be planning around the direction that it will take the economy. If machines are going to be taking jobs, it will be the owners of capital who make the gains and the owners of labour, workers, who are going to lose out. Ultimately, it's going to make the rich richer with capitalists having no need whatsoever to work to obtain this.

This isn't an advocacy for adopting socialism, far from it. Incentives should be aligned to get the most out of the means available, but by nature pushing out the demand for labour, Gates has identified that less so for the state but more so for society it will be important that there is a mechanism to enjoy the gains from automation while dodging the losses on both an aggregate societal level and on an individual human level.

Gates makes a point about one particular element of the future, but more difficult existential questions will need to be made along the same line. At the moment, society is geared around being educated to work and contribute to the economy and that this is a form of self-fulfillment. In a

post-work future, there will be no place for this structure. Those who were geared to farm hundreds of years ago became those who worked industrially later on. However, it's unclear what to do in the meantime when automation occurs. Beyond personal finance, unemployment can be personally difficult for those affected with clear evidence linking it to depression and family breakdown. As well as being able to financially compensate people, there will need to be action taken to understand how people will be empowered when the future has the full capacity to change work as we understand it.

Even a capitalist can understand that conditions for business won't be healthy if a society isn't healthy, just as a business won't work if no one is able to buy its products. It's good that Gates has asked this question, because someone must.



IMAGE: PIXABAY

# Portugal: making the case against austerity

**Jack Harmsworth**  
DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

IN THE DEPTHS of the financial crisis of 2008, Portugal's economy faced a plethora of mounting problems. Unemployment increased to 17 per cent, the fiscal deficit was well above the 2.5 per cent mark stipulated by European authorities, and the economy was locked in a downward set of recessions.

Across the west, such macroeconomic decline was increasingly the norm. In response, many European countries, including the UK, turned to austerity as a means of growing the economy by cutting government spending and liberalising stifled labour markets. This was presented to the public by politicians across the continent as a common sense reaction. Indeed UK PM David Cameron empathetically declared that "we are not doing this because we want to...we are doing this because we have to."

So when socialist candidate António Costa was elected leader of Portugal in 2015 with a leftist coalition that included the communists, alarm bells rang throughout Europe. Was this a return to boom and bust economics, filled with unchecked government spending and blatant economic inefficiencies?

Two years later and Costa has achieved the unthinkable. His anti-

austerity government has presided over a resurgence in the Portuguese economy. According to the OECD, unemployment has consistently fallen to its lowest level in 10 years to 10 per cent. The budget deficit is at the lowest it has been for 40 years at two per cent of GDP. All four quarters of 2016 experienced economic growth, with the third quarter outstripping the UK at 0.8 per cent. Economic budgets since Costa's election have restored civil servant salaries, invested in social services while at the same time encouraging economic growth. All this in a country once branded by financial markets as one of the 'PIGS' of Europe, derided for its high government debt to GDP ratio and spending under the implementation of the Euro.

It is not just the macroeconomic signals that indicate a Portugal on the rise. The vibrant economy is starting to make a significant name for itself in the tech start-up industry. Portugal Ventures, a government investment initiative, has created a €450m access fund to promote innovative start-ups. This has had real effect, with Bloomberg describing Lisbon as the "New West Coast", highlighting its similarities to San Francisco. The industry's growth was underlined when Portugal hosted the 2016 Web Summit. Portugal is identifying and promoting key new industries which will aid their short-term growth into the long term.



IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

**In Portugal, António Costa can claim credit for lowering unemployment to 10 per cent without the use of austerity**

Portugal does however need to be realistic about its current position. Although on the right track, it is far from its desired destination, with government debt still a staggering 129 per cent of GDP.

This is then reflected in government bond yields at a high European level of 4 per cent. Although its tech industry certainly looks promising, it still lacks any substantial international firms of which to boast.

Overall though, Portugal shows that a different economic model is possible. That might be pleasing to hear for people in other European countries, tired of the seemingly relentless axe of austerity.

# IFS claim degree values are sinking

**Boris Arnold**  
DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

WHETHER IT IS for the love of the subject or simply because it is the norm for one to attend university, one question always lies at the back of our minds: what is the earning potential of holding a degree?

In our highly skilled economy, a university degree is effectively required to get a decent job and definitely offers higher chances of getting employed. Thus, on average the return on investment of a degree is positive. However, there are high disparities among graduates' salaries which can be explained by three main factors.

First, the type of degree. A report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) looking at median annual salary ten years after graduation ranked degrees in Medicine (£55 300), Economics (£42 000), Engineering (£31 200) and Law (£30 000) at the top of the list. By contrast, creative arts and design graduates have the lowest salaries,

averaging at £17,900, no greater than non-graduate average earnings.

Second, institutions issuing the degree. The IFS report shows that graduates from Oxbridge and LSE enjoyed the highest salaries. Contrastingly, the returns to lower-quality higher education are meagre.

Thirdly, and more worryingly, the graduates' parents' financial situation. The IFS said that "graduates from richer family backgrounds earn significantly more after graduation than their poorer counterparts, even after completing the same degrees from the same universities". As

more people get university degrees, the "graduate premium" - the difference between graduate and non-graduate earnings - is dwindling. No matter the type and the issuer's reputation, a degree alone will increasingly not be enough to stand out and secure a good job.

Today, employers put more and more attention on employability skills and real-world expertise. This pushes students and new graduates on an intense internship hunt. Having a list of several valuable in-

ternships on your CV nearly constitutes a prerequisite for a well-paid job. However, in the internship hunt not everyone is playing by the same rules. Graduates from wealthy families enjoy larger access to informal networks and contacts.

Universities, whose survival relies on students taking up loans, must cope by expanding their careers services.

But even if graduates from poorer families are able to find an internship place it is not certain that they will be able to accept it. Most interns are unpaid. Internships that are incompatible with part-time jobs are thus inaccessible to those who do not get parental help to afford the current high living costs. This means it is difficult for graduates from low income families to enter London where the UK's leading jobs are, but where the housing costs are the highest.

Access to a university degree is fairer now, but its value as a ticket to a job has become obsolete. Internships are the new tickets, yet their accessibility is undemocratic, creating thereby a barrier to social mobility.



# Nero pays zero in corporation tax

**Matt Freathy**  
BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

NOW AN ESTABLISHED staple of high streets across Britain, Caffè Nero delivered strong profits amounting to £25.5m last year, yet did not pay tax on a penny of it. In fact, through entirely legal exploitation of Britain's tax laws, the business has avoided paying even our relatively low level of corporation tax for years.

How can such a well-known business avoid paying anything in tax year after year without running afoul of the law? The answer lies in the company's shady ownership structure.

The Caffè Nero Group is a direct subsidiary of the 'Rome Pikco Group', who are themselves owned by a succession of corporations, such as 'Rome Immediate Holdings Sarl' and 'Saratoga Ltd', about which there is suspiciously little freely available information beyond that they are headquartered in the notorious tax havens of the Isle of Man and Luxembourg.

A comparative glance at the two companies' financial reports shows that they are almost identical, suggesting that despite being referred to in Caffè Nero's statements as a 'wider group', Rome Pikco do not conduct any real business activity outside of the coffee shop chain.

The main difference in the two companies' finances is Rome Pikco's £41m expenditure on inter-

est payments on loans from third parties as well as their own parent companies, which eclipses Caffè Nero's profits and shows a £24.2m loss in Rome Pikco's accounts.

It is these payments, repeated each year, which are eligible for tax relief that allow Caffè Nero to avoid taxation on its significant profits, although the exact nature of the payments and their recipients is massively unclear. What is obvious is that Caffè Nero and their string of owners will go to great lengths to avoid paying their dues to a country from which they have profited greatly.

However, Caffè Nero are far from the first major corporation to capitalise on the loopholes in our tax system. Indeed, one of their big-

gest competitors, Starbucks paid only £8.6m in tax in their first 14 years of operation in the UK, despite revenues of £3bn in the same period.

Starbucks also serves as an example of the potential efficacy of public outcry against corporate tax avoidance. In 2015, they folded in the face of a growing PR nightmare and paid almost as much in corporation tax that year than they had in the previous 14 combined.

Tax avoidance costs the taxpayer an estimated £2.7bn each year, although the government appear to lack either the desire or the means to rectify the problem.

Last August's ruling by the European Commission that Apple must pay the Irish government

a record-breaking €13bn should send alarm bells ringing for those in Britain opposed to corporate tax-dodging. There are suggestions that the Conservatives' strategy for keeping British business competitive post-Brexit is to transform the country into a shelter for multinationals wishing to avoid tax and punishment for their unethical behaviour-free from the jurisdiction of the EU, to the detriment of public finances.

If the government intends to turn a blind eye to such activities, then it is up to those among the public who feel that corporations should pay their fair share to take what action we can to pressure them into changing their ways, as with Starbucks.



With profits of £25.5m last year, the major chain joins some others in being able to avoid paying corporation tax

## Business Unusual

IT'S LESS THAT Snapchat is a bizarre business model, but rather it is how it is conducting its business that is causing some brows to be raised.



Its engagement is huge. With 158 million daily users, the number of pictures sent between users is in the region of 2.5 billion. Though social media giant Facebook can claim significantly greater users in the ten figure region, the average user of Snapchat is much younger and spends about half an hour every day on the service.

Having gone public last Thursday at \$17 per share, its closing price of \$24.48 exceeded the initial public offering by 44 per cent. Its overall value is \$22 billion. Yet this comes despite Snapchat never having turned a profit.

Developed by Snap Inc. it is unclear why investors are placing so much faith in the cultural phenomenon.

Perhaps the optimism surrounds the way that Snapchat has helped catalyse a complete transformation of the way millennials communicate with one another. It decreases formality and stimulates frivolity.

All revolves around the default temporary setting of Snapchat. Media sent gets evaporated after ten seconds, though it is possible to save anything sent. This means both that sensitive material isn't sent because it can be caught, but also that, because the default is to delete anything sent, most media tend to be of low value, in high frequency and tends not to be particularly meaningful.

Indeed, a 2014 report by the University of Washington and Seattle Pacific University found that 59.8 per cent of users primarily used Snapchat for sending comedic content, while only 14.2 per cent said they had sent sexually explicit material at any point. Because it is ultimately possible to capture the messages, 74.8 per cent said they would never send anything classified as sexting and 93.7 per cent would never send anything cruel or offensive.

# Telomeres: our cells' biological ageing clock

**Eleanor Mason**  
SCIENCE EDITOR

IN 1953, JAMES Watson and Francis Crick were co-origina-tors in the discovery of the double helix structure of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). This discovery marked a milestone in scientific progress that has given rise to research into the function, structure and control of our genetic material. DNA is the macromolecule that allows our genes to create proteins and control chemical processes within the human body.

The discovery of the 'ACTG' DNA bases, and since then the discovery of introns and exons, promoter regions, insertion elements, 5' and 3' ends, enhancer sequences and the understanding of many other functional and structural components of DNA have contributed to the understanding of our genetic makeup.

However, the mechanism in which our long, string-like DNA structures, or chromosomes, encode a biological ageing clock within us was a more recent discovery. The method by which our chromosomes can be replicated completely during cell division without degradation was a question scientists were pondering for a long time.

In 2009, the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to Elizabeth H Blackburn, Carol W Greider and Jack W Szostak for the discovery of "how chromosomes are protected by telomeres and en-

zyme telomerase". Telomeres are repeated nucleotide sequences found at the ends of chromosomal DNA. During cell division, the two complementary strands of DNA separate, with one strand (the leading strand) elongating continuously using only

one primer (a short strand of DNA). However, the lagging strand requires smaller fragments and multiple primers in order to produce a complementary strand due to the direction of replication. It is this lagging strand that falls short each round of cell division. Even if a primer were built at the very end of the chromosome, it would still not be complete.

Therefore, chromosomes would progressively shorten during each replication cycle. However, the three Laureates of the Nobel Prize in 2009 discovered how some of our cells combat this degradation: telomeres and the enzyme that forms them - telomerase.

As early as the 1930s, scientists had discovered that the structures at the end of chromosome DNA (telomeres) prevented the chromosomes from attaching to each other, and therefore held a protective role.

When the ends of the lagging strand shortens, telomerase recognises the tip of an existing repeat sequence (telomere).

Using an RNA template within the enzyme, telomerase elongates the template strand and adds additional repeats - the telomere returns around its original length. It was discovered that if these telomeres are shortened, cells age. Conversely, if telomerase activity is high and telomere

length maintained, cell death is delayed.

However, this may not prove the answer to a longer life; somatic cells (all cells apart from stem and sex cells) do not express telomerase. In these cells, telomeres do not maintain their length throughout DNA replication, hence why our cells inevitably die, whereas cancer cells are considered to have an eter-

nal life and have high telomerase activity.

Telomeres have three roles: they prevent chromosome shortening; they protect the ends from being used in 'repair' which would lead to chromosome fusions and genome instability, and they act as a damage sensor and trigger senescence if there are any problems.

In bacteria, the answer to this problem is simple. Bacterial organisms contain a circular structure of DNA called a plasmid. Their replication occurs from a single point, called bidirectional replication. Adenoviruses do not use primers. Instead, they use terminal proteins that bind to the DNA and

provides a ligand to prime the synthesis of a new strand of DNA (replication).

As higher organisms, such as some human cells, use telomeres, they also require telomerase, which is a reverse transcriptase (an enzyme used to produce a complementary DNA molecule from an RNA molecule). Without telomerase, the tel-

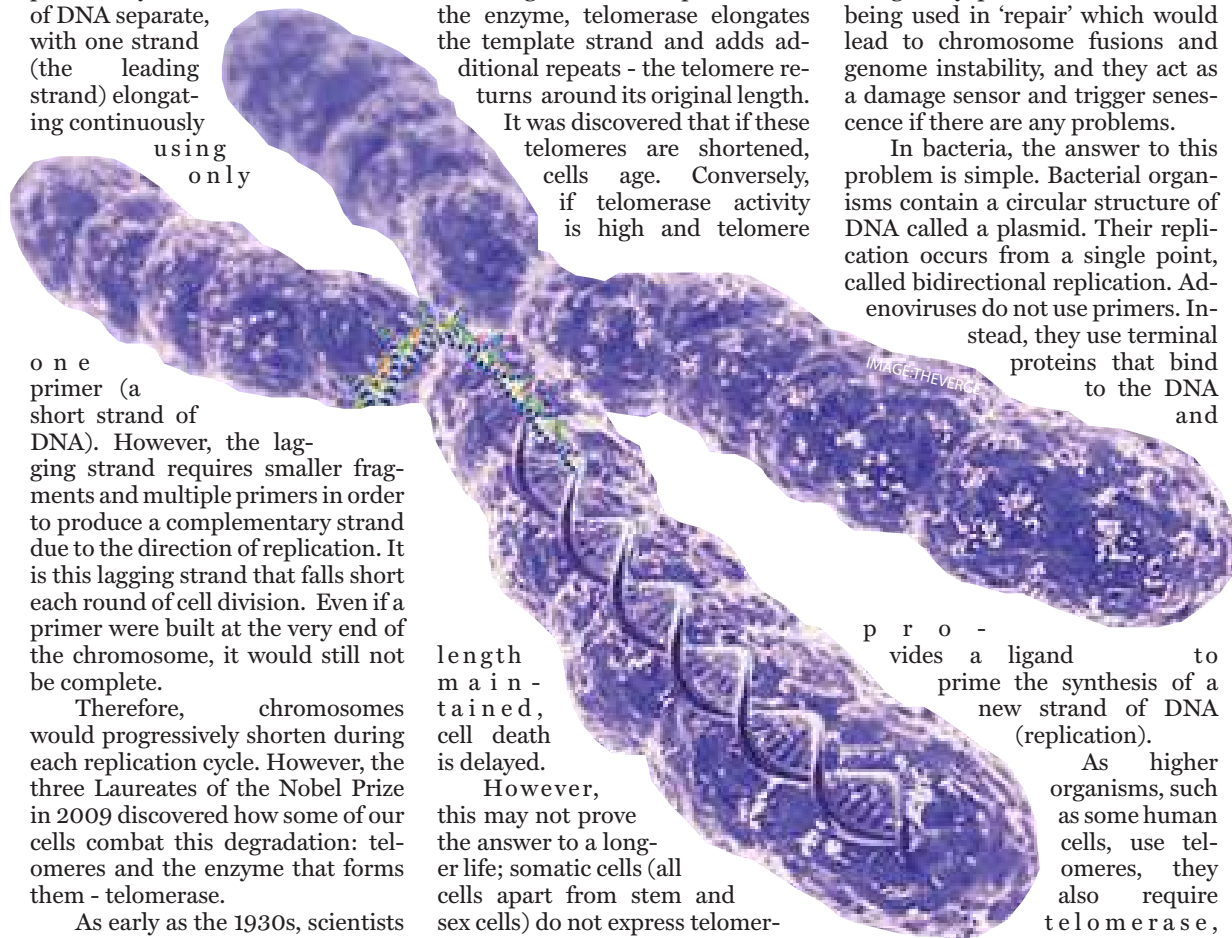
omeres shrink and once completely gone, the cells die via senescence or proliferation arrest, which explains the inevitable death of our cells. The number of times a human cell can divide on a static medium is around 50. Once this number has been reached, the cell can no longer replicate, thus provoking the onset of age-related factors.

The mechanism of controlling telomere length is impressive. Artificial lengthening, or shortening of telomeres in yeast, showed that the organism has homeostasis between telomere lengths as the cells prefer maintain uniform length. The way in which cells measure their telomeres is via a protein called Rap1; when modified, Rap1, which binds to normal DNA, was added and the cells thought the telomeres were longer than they were so they destroyed their ends.

This shows that the presence of Rap1 dictates the length of the telomeres. Although the role of telomerase on slowing telomere shrinkage has been discovered, environmental stress and genetic defects can speed it up.

Previous experiments have also shown that expressing telomerase in cells increases lifespan, but also causes cancer in some rodents such as mice. It seems telomere shortening could be the reason for ageing - not just individual cells but the organism as a whole.

However, research in this field has shown ageing to be extremely complex and to depend on several factors - telomeres being one of them. Research in this area remains intense.



# Exoplanets and the search for life in the cosmos

**Thom Shutt**  
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

EXOPLANETS, planets that orbit stars other than the sun, are being discovered at a tremendous rate - upwards of three thousand in the last decade alone. The prospect of finding life beyond our own solar system is an enticing one, and a lot of money and research is being channelled into the endeavour. One recent discovery has got the scientific community particularly hot and bothered.

On 22 February, NASA announced the discovery of seven Earth-sized planets packed tightly around TRAPPIST-1, a tiny star in our own cosmic backyard. The star - named for the Belgian telescope that carried out the initial research - is a minuscule and comparatively

cool dwarf star which is around eight per cent the mass and 0.05 per cent the luminosity of the sun.

The alien worlds were found by looking for dips in the star's infrared light output caused by one of the planets passing between the star and observers here on Earth - events known as transits. Astronomers can analyse these light dips and infer information about their respective orbits, sizes and even compositions. They found that three of the planets are comparable in both size and density to the Earth, which implies that they are also rocky in composition. The planets all complete their orbits between 1.5 and 13 days, meaning that they are incredibly close to their tiny host star.

What makes this discovery so enticing is these apparently very tight orbits position three of the

planets within the 'habitable zone' of the star. The 'habitable zone' is the area around a star where an orbiting planet would receive just the right amount of heat to enable water to exist as a liquid - meaning conditions are just right to support life. Of course, the first question to ask is "can we go there?"

Well, even though it is close in galactic terms - around 40 light years away - that is still too huge a distance for our feeble technology to surmount.

Even at the speed of light it would take 40 years to get there, and the fastest spacecraft we currently have - the New Horizons probe - travelling at a fairly zippy 36 000 miles per hour would take the best part of a million years to get there. It's a very long way.

So traveling to the TRAPPIST-1 system is out of the question - at least for the time being - but that doesn't mean we can't pick up signatures of life from right here on Earth. By using spectroscopy (analysing the light from the star that passes through the planetary atmosphere), it is possible to determine the chemical composition of the atmosphere. Detection of key chemicals such as methane, oxygen and of course water would be tell-tale signatures of life.

Several new telescopes are being built with this exact challenge in mind - with the James Webb Space Telescope launch next year, finding the chemical fingerprints of water - and perhaps life - on these planets is a real possibility.

"Answering the question 'are we alone' is a top science priority", says Thomas Zurbuchen, NASA's Associate Administrator of the Science Mission Directorate, "Finding so many planets like these for the first time in the habitable zone is a remarkable step forward toward that goal."

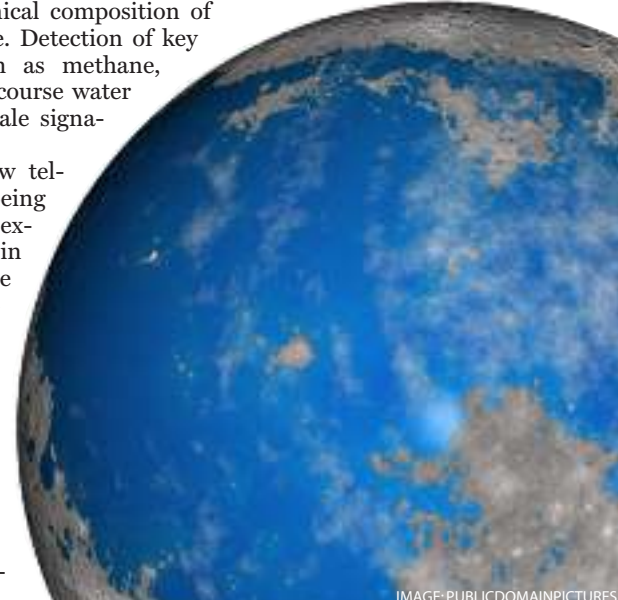
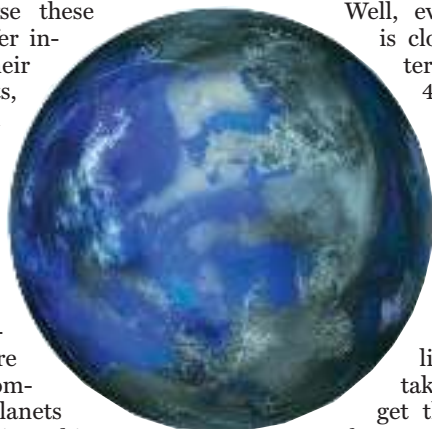
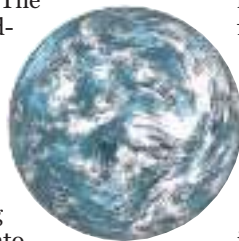


IMAGE: PUBLICDOMAINPICTURES



# Feeding ducks: killing with kindness

**Rachel Abraham**  
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

IT IS NOT uncommon to witness the excitable frenzy that accompanies feeding waterfowl white bread. Our intentions are harmless, but increased consumption of white bread in waterfowl can cause the metabolic disease or deformity known as 'angel wing'.

As with everything in life, too much of anything can be problematic. Angel wing can be due to genetic defects, calcium, manganese, or vitamin D deficiencies and unbalanced diets due to human intervention. A diet that is not nutritious can cause birds to have an accelerated growth rate in flight feathers. This increased weight on juvenile wings applies pressure on flight muscles, and the carpal joint is unable to provide the support needed. Gravity encourages the wing to hang and twist outwards - an irreversible deformity that reduces the ability to evade predators and is problematic for migratory wildfowl (i.e. Canadian geese).

Angel wing is asymmetric, damaging primary flight feathers on mainly the left pinion but can affect both wings. Wings appear 'stripped', leaving only the shaft

and the odd barbule to protrude from the remiges (symmetrical pennaceous flight feathers) and around the carpal joint.

There are three environmental factors to be considered when caring for birds in captivity to reduce the risk of development of angel wing. Increased time to eat due to artificial lighting leads to increase growth rate and insufficiently sized enclosures result in reduced exercise of flight muscles. Excessive incubation of enclosures reduces the amount of ATP used to keep warm; this excess ATP is reallocated and increases growth rate.

Although angel wing has the potential to be fatal in semi-wildfowl, if administered early enough, treatment can be effective. Feathers can be taped up to the wing for three to seven days maximum and it is important to note that this method is most effective in juveniles. Levels of protein and carbohydrates should be reduced. Wildfowl/waterfowl are grazers and natural grazing should be encouraged. If grazing grounds are insufficient, placing food bowls distances apart will also act as a preventative method. If necessary, an osteotomy to realign of the distal carpometacarpus by insertion of a pin into the radial metacarpus can be performed to help correct the deformity. The last option is pin-

ning. This is controversial when used to restrict flight in domesticated birds as an alternative to surgery (there is always risk when putting any animal under anesthetic).

In many parks and areas open to the public, there are signs prohibiting the feeding of wildlife. Bans on feeding wildlife have been implemented to protect them, reduce human dependency, defend against invasive pest species like rats, and encourage natural behaviour. Feeding wildfowl can result in overcrowding, as everyone rushes to get the tasty morsels. Overcrowding puts that particular patch of habitat under stress due to competition and contamination of resources, leading

to outbreaks of disease and a weakened immune response.

The culture of feeding wildfowl and waterfowl causes flocks to delay or forfeit their migration. This can be fatal on population numbers as juveniles are not able to learn migratory routes. If there is not a ban in cer-

tain areas and you would like to feed the wildfowl/waterfowl or any other wildlife, it is important to research and get advice from nature centres and feed them food suited to their needs. This will help prevent unintentional harm that could affect the health of the animals.

This advice is applicable to all forms of wildlife, even in your own garden, as feeding birds during the winter can be lifesaving, but the wrong seeds can be fatal too. Don't be afraid to approach wildlife centres to ask for advice.

Do your bit and prevent, preserve, protect, and keep the wildlife wild.

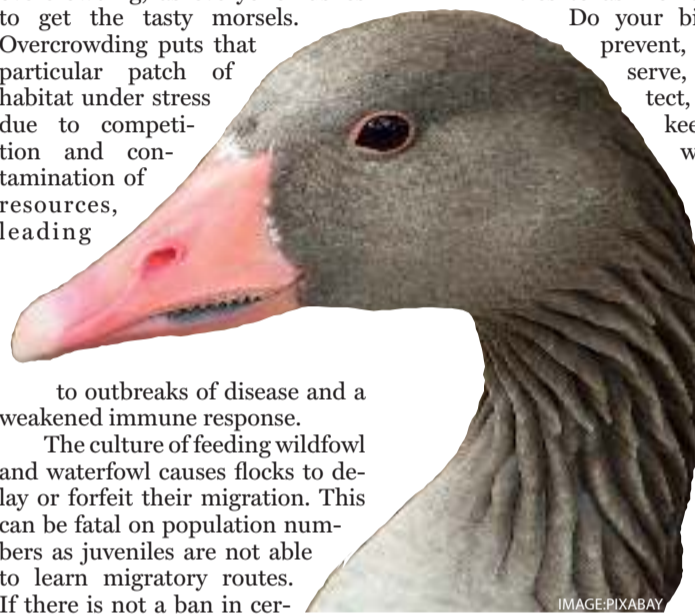


IMAGE:PIXABAY

## Science snippets

### Bumble golf

Bumblebees have learnt to push a ball into a hole in exchange for a reward. Previous research has shown that the insects are quite intelligent, although all earlier studies had focused on mimicking natural foraging behaviour.



IMAGE:WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

### Reproducibility

Dr Tim Errington at the University of Virginia runs the Reproducibility Project, where he attempts to repeat findings from landmark cancer studies. Since 2011, the team has only been able to confirm two out of five of the studies' original findings. According to a survey published in *Nature*, more than 70 per cent of scientists have tried and failed to reproduce another researcher's experiments. Reproducibility of medical research is vital for the progress of research and patient safety.

### Lunar Trip

The private US company SpaceX has announced that it will fly two tourists to the moon in late 2018. The private citizens have already paid "a significant deposit". Elon Musk, CEO of SpaceX, declined to identify the passengers, but stated, "it's nobody from Hollywood". The passengers will conduct their health and fitness tests later this year. Although the mission will cost \$250 000, they will not get to experience a lunar landing.



IMAGE:WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

### Gene therapy

A French 15-year-old has been cured of sickle cell anemia through gene therapy. A research team took bone marrow stem cells from the boy, and gave them extra genes that encoded for the correct beta-globin protein. The edited stem cells were then put back into the boy's body and after two years the patient was announced symptom free.

# A new approach to childhood obesity

**Imogen Breen**  
DEPUTY SCIENCE EDITOR

METABOLIC SYNDROME, sometimes referred to as insulin resistance syndrome, is a term used for the group of various medical conditions including obesity, elevated blood pressure and high fasting blood glucose levels. It is associated with the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.

Approximately 25 per cent of the world's adult population exhibit the cluster of risk factors that make up metabolic syndrome, and one of the highest risk factors leading to adult metabolic syndrome is childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity has reached epidemic levels in many developing countries as well as in most developed countries. In the UK, 28 per cent of children aged 2 to 15 are at least overweight and half of those are obese.

Childhood obesity can have a serious impact on a child's health, both physically and mentally. It may affect their social and emotional well-being, and obesity is associated with lower self-esteem and bullying, despite it becoming more common.

A recent report by the NHS

has shown that many parents of overweight children wrongly thought their child was a healthy weight - 91 per cent of mothers of overweight children and 48 per cent of mothers of obese

children and their parents from all over the country, and tried to identify problems in tackling childhood obesity. Although the root causes of obesity can be hard to challenge, spotting the

those around them are obese.

There is also the key factor of denial: parents don't want to accept that there may be a problem. Simply telling a child they are fat is not the solution, however, as this can lead to stress, comfort eating or ill-informed diet options. In fact, the children are likely to be aware that they are overweight, even when the parents fail to notice.

A better approach is education. Lessons in cooking and nutrition are becoming more common in schools, along with better food labeling standards. A study from the University of Michigan last year taught children and teenagers about how fast food companies use advertising to manipulate your desires, and disguise their poor nutritional content. It turns out that being informed about your choices leads to better decision making.

The junk food market is manipulative and targets young children in its ad campaigns. Simply informing young people of the unfair practices of the food industry can lead them to making their own decisions in an almost social justice-oriented, rather than focusing efforts on diet or weight-loss.

Healthy habits are important at a young age, and of course parents should lead by example. Early intervention to prevent childhood obesity can have a very positive impact on future health.

children.

Factors that impact obesity, both in childhood and adulthood, are complex. They include environmental factors, socioeconomic status, lifestyle preferences, and the culture around you.

The study looked at 60 000

problem early is key in healthcare.

A 2007 report in the *New England Journal of Medicine* showed how obesity can spread through a social circle. Both adults and children are less likely to acknowledge their own weight gain if



IMAGE:GOING HOME TO ROOST

# Solo travel: a new form of female liberation

**Maria Kalinowska**  
TRAVEL EDITOR

THE CONVERSATION about women travelling alone seems so worn out now. Yet, as a female solo traveller I still can't talk about my experiences without at least one person asking "weren't you scared though?" or exclaiming "you're so brave!" What is even more distressing is that a lot of women that I speak to often add, "I wouldn't be able to do that." Yes, there are aspects of solo travel that perhaps are not for everyone, no matter their gender, but it would appear that women in particular see travelling alone as something that is very 'out there'.

The simple fact is that it appears a lot more farfetched for a woman to travel alone than for a man. Worried friends and family members asking "but can you not take [insert male friend/relative here] with you?" is far more common than I would ever like to admit. I have always travelled on my own. But last year, for the first time ever, I decided to travel with a friend, who yes so happened to be male, and my family members could have not been any happier to hear that I am going to a place like Greece with a man. I mean, Greece. Really?! Frankly, I knew much more about travelling safely than he did as he had never travelled before, so this sense of safety for me was completely unjustified. The point stands. It doesn't even matter which place in the world, a female solo

traveller is considered to be in danger. Technically that is true, but any traveller is in some danger in one way or another, in some places more than others.

The wonderful thing about travelling is that any given situation is completely subjective to the circumstances and one person's experience can and will not be recreated by another. The most important thing is to keep your mind open to new settings and situations, as well as meeting other travellers along the way. Safety tips when travelling

**It doesn't matter which place in the world, a female traveller is considered to be in danger** ”

should also not be disregarded; always make sure you have some technology in case of emergencies. So why are female solo travellers clumped together as a group that is seen to be fragile and needs the most protecting? The answer 'sexism' is unfortunately and glaringly obvious, but that is not what I want to talk about, before one of you disregards this, rolling your eyes.

Instead, what I wish to talk about is the fact that a woman travelling on her own is one of the most fearsome, smart and cautious peo-

ple you can encounter: because she has to be. That is what the travelling experience will require of her, whether she is a naturally confident person or whether those qualities build during her experience. She is not a damsel in distress that will need saving.

As controversial as the book 'Eat, Pray, Love' has been, it has done two things for female travellers: inspired them while also giving the clichéd reputation that they desperately need to 'find themselves'. This idea undermines the experiences that any woman encounters when travelling alone because people can nicely fit it into those words. It would seem that women are also discouraged from travelling not just because it is dangerous, but also because they then fit into the stereotype of a woman not knowing what she wants and seeking answers through travelling. The idea that a female solo traveller is just trying to pass the time before she finally decides to settle down and/or finds the man of her dreams is a rather distressing one. Don't get me wrong, I'm very happy that Elizabeth Gilbert found the love of her life at the end of her great self-discovery journey (which seems ironic, doesn't it), but it should not be viewed as the end goal for all female travellers.

The campaign #ITravelAlone (although they claim it is not a campaign or a movement: it's a revolution) has been set up by Worldpackers, which is a website which helps you find accommodation in exchange for your skills. The campaign even provides an 'I Travel Alone' guide which is download-



IMAGE: MARIA KALINOWSKA

able as a PDF, which not only covers safety while travelling but also practical tips and concerns that female travellers may have before, during and after their travel experience. Its purpose is to liberate women and make them realise that solo travel is not out of their reach and dangerous and not just as a way for them to fill

the days until they get in a relationship.

To join the network of more than 251 000 women from 93 countries, find out more information about travelling alone and download your free I Travel Alone guide visit [www.travel.worldpackers.com/itravelalone/](http://www.travel.worldpackers.com/itravelalone/)

# Spirited Away to the forgotten wonders of Taiwan

**James Hall**  
TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

APART FROM computer components and the occasional international crisis, Taiwan doesn't feature as a country of interest to the average European, particularly as a holiday destination.

This is something that should change. With 90-day visa exemption travel for most EU citizens and cheap onwards flights across south-east Asia with a growing number of no frills airlines, Taiwan can provide a perfect stepping stone to Asia.

Despite an independent military and a democratically elected government, only 22 states recognise Taiwan (officially titled the Republic of China), as an independ-

ent country. The People's Republic of China (mainland China) asserts that Taiwan is a renegade province within its borders, which it enforces by breaking off diplomatic relations with any country that recognises the ROC.

Despite its confused political situation, Taiwan has a very modern society compared to many east Asian countries, with a modern system of infrastructure and orderly queues for the metro system Londoners on the Underground could learn from.

The level of English proficiency is very low among the average person. However, this is more than made up for by the willingness of people to try and help you and

their surprising level of patience for the ignorant western tourist, which is perhaps aided by the relative lack of western tourists.

A somewhat comprehensive tour of Taiwan can be made in 2-3 weeks, making use of the fantastic railway network that follows the coast of the small island. A basic outline of a tour would include such sights as: Taipei, Jiufen, Wai-ao, Hualien, Tarako Gorge, Green Island, Tainan and Sun Moon lake.

Taipei, the capital of Taiwan is a modern metropolis with a far more relaxed feel than other Asian cities of a comparable size, such as Ho Chi Minh City. The skyline is dominated by Taipei 101 which previously held the title of the world's tallest building. However, a better view of the city can be found atop Elephant Mountain, a short walk from the centre.

The tea house in the old wooden city of Jiufen is purportedly the inspiration for the architecture found in the acclaimed animated film Spirited Away; Wai-ao, a short train journey away, is a great place for beginners to experience surfing for the first time from the town's black beaches.

To reach Green Island, you need to take a ferry ride from Tai-

tung. Don't be deterred by the need to hire a small electric motorbike as there is hardly any traffic on the island. A half day ride around the coastal road taking in the dramatic scenery is a must, ending in a trip to one of the world's only salt water hot springs below the dazzling night sky.

The old capital Tainan is rich in history and featured many of the battles between Chinese warlords

and the Dutch, who maintained the existence of their trading posts through force. Reconstructed and repaired versions of the original forts and temples can be found scattered around the city.

If the listed highlights haven't convinced you that Taiwan is worth visiting, perhaps the return flights from £380 (EVA Air) and onwards flights to Manila one way from £20 (Air Asia), will.



IMAGE: ANTON DIAZ



IMAGE: TAIYO FUJII



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# NOUSE TRIES... Gymnastics

Jake Tattersdill tumbles about at University of York's gymnastics club



**Jake Tattersdill**  
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

JUST HOW EXACTLY I found myself mid-way through a front flip completely upside down, suspended above a mat, reassured only by a tenuous grasp of physics, still remains a complete mystery to me.

It had all started innocuously enough. The warm up had begun straightforwardly: jogging, side-steps, stretching. Then it ramped up a level. I could manage forward rolls. My backwards rolls were clumsy and awkward, I still haven't quite worked out what space my head should occupy that doesn't make the entire thing slightly uncomfortable.

My handstands were more than a little rusty though, and club president, Ben McCarthy, had to step in to keep me upright and moving forwards. I've never had the co-ordination nor the need to attempt to get my legs above my head while balancing on my hands.

These handstands were no ordinary handstands as well; optimistically I was forced to tumble over my head in a hazardous forward roll once I had achieved the handstand positioning.

Inhibition levels gone I tried the earlier mentioned front flip and at about halfway through, when my head was rapidly return-

ing to the right way up, I got it. There is something exhilarating about a front flip. Maybe the first time it was sheer relief that I was going to land on my arse and not my neck. The feeling persisted with each revolution though, and it was almost deflating when my time with the University of York Gymnastics Club came to an end.

Thankfully there was no time to try a backflip or three! I had a brief chat with Ben before I left: "It can look scary and intimidating from the outside, but you just need to have a go, once you've had a go, you actually feel quite safe, there's always someone here to help you and guide you through it."

The session itself had been informal. After the group warm up, the members were free to move between the club's apparatus and practice in smaller groups or alone. I've always played more team oriented sports and so it was quite refreshing not to be put through drill after drill. With the club currently not competing in BUCS due to an equipment storage restriction imposed by the York Sport Centre, training was quite a social affair with a proper Friday night feel.

The club still trains quite regularly though; twice a week at the York Sport Centre, and also runs club sessions, mostly with transport, to a gymnastics centre in Leeds all for £3. I've paid more to train in York! Vice-President, Tori Tucker, was keen to point out that without a fixture list to meet the majority of members have a genu-

ine love for gymnastics.

Members also varied wildly in terms of experience. Some had been practicing for years, while others had only decided to take up the sport at university. I found it hard to spot the difference between the veterans and novices. Everybody seemed capable of a decent tumble or a fairly aggressive box split.

I was also told that the club currently shares training with York's recently established free running society, though there were none of its members in attendance that night.

Despite their inability to compete, President Ben McCarthy was keen for people to know that this is a "Really good, well-rounded sport. It feeds nicely into other sports. A lot of sports focus on one area but gymnastics is full body. It really helps to develop strength all over the body. It's good for balance and there are skills that can be exported into other sports."

If you're interested in joining York's gymnastic team, you should probably know that the morning after taking part in it, I ached all over. I clearly didn't stretch very well and hunkering down to write in *Nouse* Central probably didn't help the issue. So keep that in mind, but I'm sure that the majority will come into gymnastics with better balance and core strength.

While I was unable to experience the full extent of gymnastics - I did not manage to vault orommel-horse - I had an interesting experience taking part. I thoroughly enjoyed myself but did push myself to the full extent of my flexibility. I'll probably stick to football... and being upright.

*If you would like to know more or if you are interested in gymnastics, contact [gymnastics@yusu.org](mailto:gymnastics@yusu.org).*

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

**Robyn Aitchison**  
SPORTS EDITOR



WE AIMED to get into the *Nouse* office earlier than usual in the hope that we wouldn't get in the way of the Fashion supplement. As you probably guessed, we didn't provide that much help with the Fashion supplement itself, but we were keen to provide whatever help we could from our end. But in true *Nouse* Sport style, our hopes of early completion were dashed.

It was earlier for sure! But probably can't be defined as early. One day we'll be finished before all the other sections. One day.

I'm particularly excited for you to read our very interesting comment articles. James Voyle is getting ready for boxer Nicola Adams' move to professionalism. We've managed to pull in a big name to write for us, with York Sport President Isaac Beevor providing his opinion on college sport and its role in the wider context of university sport, a time-appropriate subject considering the loss at College Varsity.

It was a sad day for York when we ended up losing College Varsity to the superior Durham teams. It was disappointing for all York students who attended, as well as those who couldn't make it.

Yet the fact we managed to take over 400 players to Durham's the Maiden Castle sports centre was a feat in itself, no matter how badly we may have done. I'm sure it wasn't the outcome our competitors would have wanted, but despite having to wake up at 6AM to get there on time, it was a fantastic day; with exciting games and a supportive playing environment. (It was particularly fun for me, because I managed to make fellow editor James Voyle have to go outside for all the games while I stayed in the toasty sports hall, sorry James.)

We've been given information about upcoming events for the rest of the term, and one I'm particularly excited about is the LGBTQ and disabled sports days, which will provide a fantastic opportunity for people who might not have had the chance before to get involved in sport.

Despite the losses, it's important to remember that even when matches are lost, and teams are beaten, the next week of matches will come along and you'll forget about getting thrashed at College Varsity.

## TEAMMATES

*Nouse* talks to men's waterpolo captain Ryan Jago

**Name:** Ryan Jago

club comedian in waterpolo is: James Curtis

**Position:** Point

**Course:** PPE

**Year:** 2ND

**Best Motivator:**

Sam Timpany - can't fault it

**Most Dedicated:**

Peter Dowsett

**Most Intelligent:**

Ryan Jago - would be out of a job if I wasn't

**Club Comedian:**

There is no debate as to who the

**Most Natural Ability:**

Young Gawthorpe - looks nothing like a polo player but fuck he's good, don't know how he does it

**Biggest Lightweight:**

Matt 'Two Pint' Chapman - this one is also quite obvious

**Best Trainer:**

Pete Dowsett - still waiting for him to miss a session

**Biggest Snake:**

Crispin - enough said



# 'The College system allows sport to flourish'

Isaac Beevor explores how college sport helps to create a competitive and inclusive environment for York students

**Isaac Beevor**  
YORK SPORT PRESIDENT

WITH THE RECENT College Varsity I thought it appropriate to reflect on college sport. Even though we lost the tournament, it was an amazing day. We took over 400 students from York with over 120 staying for the closing event, darts. That is the same number that we take on an away day at Roses. With a home College Varsity next year I expect this event to continue to grow!

College Varsity created an inclusive environment for all people to partake in sport. The Varsity qualifiers ensured that we took the best of college sport with us to Durham, but this doesn't mean that the other teams aren't showing high levels of ability.

York should aspire to have the same levels of commitment to college sport that Durham do. It is a key feature of sport at York and de-



serves a high level of respect in accordance with the high playing quality.

We have a system at this university which allows those who may not be able to compete at the highest levels of sport to still get involved.

College sport provides more

York should have the same level of commitment to college sport that Durham do ”

opportunities for everyone to get involved when they struggle with the levels of commitment that are associated with taking part in university level sport.

Spending hours on the sideline watching mouth-watering fixtures such as Langwith 5s vs Derwent 6s made me appreciate how much college sport means to people.

Personally, I was heavily involved in College Sport. Derwent AFC was where I found my strongest community and formed

my closest friendships.

I am passionate about the impact that sport can have on an individual. The communities formed in sports teams are what makes sport such an important part of university life.

We don't just have five Rugby Union teams on this campus. We have 13. We don't have three basketball teams, we have 11. We don't have six football teams. We have 37.

This year I have undertaken some initial work in trying to work out how many people play college sport. The figures are incredible and I estimate that in total there are around two thousand people involved in college sport. Even if you take out those who play both university and college sport, we still have around one thousand people whose main way that they get involved in sport and physical activity is through their colleges.

However, there does need to be work done to improve college sport. I think the three main issues for college sport are space, cost and coverage.

The University has

invested heavily in new facilities and this has greatly helped the majority of teams, but there will always be work needed to expand further.

In terms of cost, (as a part of a college sport Forum) YUSU and the colleges have taken steps with the introduction of college sport bank accounts, currently being taken up by JCRCs and individual clubs. This would remove student liability for large orders such as merchandise, which is incredibly important.

Furthermore, something that has been trialled this year and has been a success with Vanbrugh College is the up-front bookings of all their club trainings. This means that Vanbrugh College teams have been able to know exactly when their training is for

the entire year. This is something could be expanded in the future to other colleges, if the funding was there. Regarding the issue of coverage, we do need to shout more about our college sport system, but we also need those involved to shout louder too.

One of my other concerns is the lack of consistency in college sport. If you are in one college, your experience may be completely different to the experience you would have in another. The cost can also differ substantially between colleges and I think that this is something that also needs to be worked on.

Whatever college you are in, there should be some level of support if you want to play sport.

It is the college sport system which really allows sport at York to flourish and I know that it will continue to be greatly expanded in the years to come.



# Nicola Adams set for her first professional fight

Still smiling, the two-time Olympic champion from Yorkshire is preparing for the next stage in her illustrious career

**James Voyle**  
SPORTS EDITOR

PRIOR TO THE 2012 Olympic Games, boxing promoter Frank Warren said that he was "not a fan" of women's boxing.

He had expressed concerns, perhaps bizarrely, at the dangers the sport posed to a woman's reproductive system, along with its marketability and the general quality of the fighting.

Perhaps he had never heard of Nicola Adams.



The 29 year old flyweight from Leeds had just won gold at the European Championships and was on the verge of entering an era of unprecedented dominance in the world of amateur boxing.

After winning the first ever gold medal in women's Olympic boxing at the London games, Adams emerged victorious in the next five competitions she entered. In 2014, she added the Commonwealth title to her haul. The World and European Championships soon followed, as well as another Olympic gold in Rio de Janeiro last summer.

No British male boxer has

ever won the coveted quintet of Olympic, Commonwealth, World and European titles.

Adams' successes become all the more remarkable when we frame them in the context of her onerous rise from an exceptional yet

unknown fighter sparring in the boxing clubs of Yorkshire to double Olympic champion.

Adams was bedbound for two months in 2009 following a serious back injury. After she finally made her comeback, winning silver in the World Championships, the harsh reality of life as an amateur sportsperson set in. The riches of boxing are monopolised by prize-fighters who fight in the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas' hotels. Very little trickles down to those at the bottom of the ladder.

As such, Britain's brightest boxing talent was forced to carve out a living in other lines of work. As well as working as a builder, Adams appeared as an extra in a number of soap operas. Thankfully, the IOC decided to instate women's boxing as an Olympic sport, and supported by the commercial, coaching and medical support of Team GB, Adams got back into the ring.

12 medals in amateur championships followed, including eight golds. Deservedly, Adams' achievements have also been recognised outside of the boxing world. Now one of the UK's most recognisable athletes, her contribution to sports

has been acknowledged through being awarded both an MBE and OBE for services to boxing, along with a BBC Sports Personality of the Year nomination. In 2012, she became

12

Amateur medals won by Nicola Adams, eight of which are gold

the first ever female boxer to receive an award from the Boxing Writers' Club of Great Britain.

In 2016, *DIVA* magazine named her the UK's most eminent lesbian and bisexual woman on their power list. Her medals highlight her considerable talent, but her awards and recognitions in the public eye accentuate her influence on aspiring boxers and sportspersons everywhere, regardless of their gender, sexuality, or skin colour.

The decision to go professional would not have been taken lightly. She runs the risk of forfeiting her chance of entering the 2020 Olympic games, and thus the possibility of winning a third successive Olympic gold.

Yet this a golden opportunity for her to move onto bigger and bet-

ter things. The financial rewards will be above and beyond anything she has ever earned before. Her debut fight next month is expected to easily sell out the 21 000 seater Manchester Arena, and will be watched by hundreds of thousands on subscription television.

Perhaps more pertinently, her well-reported switch will provide a huge boost for women's boxing as a sport. Reporting on the 2016 Olympic Games, Steve Bunce of *The Independent* wrote that: "Adams was eloquent, she was brutal and she never stopped smiling. Adams has made more girls turn to boxing than Anthony Joshua and the other recent male Olympic medal winners have managed with the boys"

Fast forward to January of this year, and Frank Warren (yes, the very same) is the man signing up Adams for her first professional bout. He admits to having eaten 'humble pie', and says that, "Of all the signings I have made in my 35 years in the sport of boxing, this is among the most I have been excited about."

Regardless of the outcome of Adams' professional debut, her career will make another worthy addition to the catalogue of remarkable sporting stories.

# Adam Peaty meets record breakers

**Rebecca Hall**  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

YORK'S SWIMMERS continued their impressive season as they competed in BUCS long course in Sheffield, so much so that even Olympic gold medallist Adam Peaty wanted to get his photo taken with them.

Spirits were high after a hugely successful short course competition last term and the captains were optimistic of record breaking performances. The women's freestyle relay team of Rebecca Britten, Jodie Alder, Nisha Desai and Ellie Griffin threw down the gauntlet early on by setting a blisteringly quick time of 4:16:23 and qualifying for a national final for the first time in recent memory.

More success came with Britten getting her second club record of the meet in the 200m freestyle, and Alder coming an impressive 16th in her 50m backstroke heats.

York's men also looked promising in the 50m backstroke, 31.32 for Tom Langford in his last BUCS competition and a record 29.68

4:16:23

Time recorded by women's freestyle relay team

for Peter Schlichter. Sam Timpany smashed the 50m breaststroke record with a time of 31.28 in an event that saw him pitted against Peaty and Commonwealth gold medallist Ross Murdoch.

Griffin then chalked up a record of her own in the same event with

her 37.52. Captain Victor Amara then closed out the morning session with a 1:01:92 in the 100m butterfly.

The afternoon began with a club record each for Alder and Schlichter as UYSWC continued to dominate in the backstroke events. Griffin then snatched the 200m breaststroke record, narrowly missing out on a top 20 finish.

The Saturday heats finished with the hotly anticipated medley relay and UYSWC did not disappoint. The men's team of Schlichter, Unsworth, Timpany and Amara just missed the top 20 after the ladies qualified for their final, chalking up another record in the process. The women still had enough in the tank to fly through their freestyle relay final, finishing 8th and sending out a strong message to Lancaster in the lead up to Roses.

With the absence of Bill Timpany there was no interest from York in the 200m butterfly so Sunday's heats began in earnest with the 100m freestyle, Sarah Peacop registered a time of 1:10:48. Griffin then completed her hat-trick of breaststroke records by breaking the longest standing club record in the 100m event and Timpany added another one of his own, taking a second off the old club record with his time of 1:10.85.

Schlichter powered to another record breaking swim, continuing his individual medley dominance with a 2:22:94 in the 200m heat. Alder was then unlucky to miss out on an individual final by less than a second when she smashed her 100m backstroke event, rounding off a fantastic weekend for the newcomer and the swimmers as a whole.

Women's captain Fiona Whiting was thrilled with how well her young team performed, as well as



IMAGE: REBECCA HALL

impressed by the number of records broken by the team. "This is the best result we have ever had from the women. Our relay team is made up of four super talented freshers, they've broken so many club records this weekend and I'm so excited to see how far they'll go".

Men's captain Amara had similar praise for his team. "We've performed really well and Timpany did a great job in getting two new breaststroke records. I think that if we keep training we will have a great chance of beating Lancaster in a few month's time".

# Comedy of errors sinks York's rowers

**Jacob Phillips**  
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

AFTER UNFORTUNATE circumstances Tyneside, York's eights men's rowing team witnessed a comical series of errors to see them finish 14th at BUCS Rowing 8s Head 2016-17.

As a result of the team currently not having a boat suitable to race in, the squad were forced to hire a boat in order to compete at Newcastle. However, when the team turned up to examine the boat they found it to be dissatisfying and nowhere near the standard required for the competition.

The poor quality of the boat was immediately shown by one rower's footplate breaking as the team warmed up. The damage caused to the boat proved to be unfixable, despite the team's best efforts.

Although heavily disheartened there was still a silver lining for York's rowers. The team had enough



IMAGE: ELLIE HOPLEY

time for the squad to speak to their coach and replace the boat with another hired boat.

However, in true Chuckle Brothers fashion, the seat of the second hired boat immediately broke. To make matters worse, it also transpired that the boat proved to be

too light to support the team. It was in fact a women's boat, designed to hold less weight than a men's would.

Left with just minutes before the start of their race, the team were forced to move towards the start line without enough time to return to the riverbank and modify

the boat. With options now severely limited, the team decided that their best chance was to try and compete in the vessel as it was.

Out of sheer panic and desperation the team turned to the officials for assistance. Yet that proved only to add disaster for the team. The official's verdict was to not allow the team to race unless they could resolve the issue of the broken seat.

Like every clichéd sports film, it seemed like it was time for someone to be a hero and save the team from a watery disappointment. All was finally resolved at the final hour as York's cox arranged for a new replacement seat.

Against all the odds, the YUBC still managed to race. The team were able to improve by 12 positions from last year and will hope to avoid any more incidents when they travel to London on 25 March to compete in the eights head of the River competition.

York recorded a time of 14:45:3 to finish 14th. Newcastle University won the event at home.

## Active York Sports Awards

On 30 March the Roger Kirk Centre will host the Active York Sport Awards for the City of York. Several students and supporting staff have been nominated for the award, including Stuart Hsieh for Male Sports Person of the Year, Elspeth McLeod for Female Sports Person of the Year and Matthew Tomlin for Student Sports Personality of the Year. Pete Glanville, who has been goalkeeper coach for UYAFC for over 30 years, has been nominated for the Outstanding Achievement award.

## Disability and LGBTQ Sports Days

YUSU has announced that there will be a Disability Sports Day on 6 March. LGBTQ networks will be teaming up with several sports clubs for an informal sports day. Those from LGBTQ groups have reported feeling nervous about participating in sports. Small informal sessions will help to create an inclusive and safe environment, with sessions of rugby and badminton, among others. YUSU are hoping for an increase in LGBTQ awareness throughout sports teams and increased participation of LGBTQ people in sport.

## University of York Charity Tennisathon

On 12 March Zac Sheppard and Greg Ineson will be attempting to match the world record for the longest tennis match by playing 11 straight hours of tennis in order to raise money for York Mind. Helping them through this challenge will be various university personalities, including university registrar David Duncan, Head of Sport, Keith Morris and Sport Union President Isaac Beavor.

## BUCS Northern Conference Cup

The BUCS Northern Conference Cup will be hosted between York and York St John on the 8 March to determine who will be crowned champions of the north. York have six teams entered ranging in sports from Men's Lacross to Woman's water polo.

## Charity Swimathon

YSUWC held a swimathon on 3 March in order to raise awareness and money for target ovarian cancer. The team swam from 6AM to 6PM in the pool in the Sports Village. The swam the equivalent distance of York to Lancaster and back. The final amount of money raised was £1355.

# Durham's finest prove too much for York

**James Voyle**  
SPORTS EDITOR

YORK'S RUGBY representatives fell short in two entertaining matches. In the A fixture, Derwent lost 14-27 to Collingwood, while Heslington East enthralled onlookers in a back and forth match against Hatfield before falling 12-36.

Collingwood are by some way Durham's strongest rugby club. They have won 27 of their last 29 league fixtures, a record that stretches back nearly three years.

Derwent, on the other hand, are having one of their poorest ever seasons. This year they experienced an unprecedented loss to Heslington East, have failed to beat James, and in the Autumn term lost to Vanbrugh for the third time in a row. As such, the home side entered the tie as favourites.

The game started well for Collingwood, scoring an early penalty and converting a simple try to put them ten points clear in as many minutes.

Derwent began to grow into the match with a series of pick-and-goes that nearly led to a try, but the ball was deemed to be held up directly under the posts. Derwent lost the resultant scrum, despite it being their own put in, with Collingwood turning the ball over and passing it out to the wide backs who waltzed in for a try. The team from York were made to rue their terrible defensive



IMAGE: CESAR FALCO

effort, as the consequent conversion meant they went in at the break behind by 17 points to nil.

Derwent started the second half encouragingly, but with 20 minutes to go the score line remained unchanged. Derwent winger Tom Flather broke the deadlock as he cut infield, receiving the ball from his centres and running in unopposed for a converted try. Minutes later, William TP scored the try of the

match, running over half the pitch and dancing past four tacklers, sending the crowd into delirium. His amazing solo effort was duly converted to narrow the score line to 14-17.

Yet just as the comeback looked to be on, the Durham side crossed over for another try. Their superiority was accentuated when they scored their fourth try of the match after the 80-minute mark, despite

having been reduced to 14 men.

The final score read 27-14, giving Durham another five points in the Varsity. Man of the match was awarded to Derwent prop Karl Keunecke, whose tireless effort at the breakdown, resilient defending and faultless lineout work went a large way to keeping Derwent in the tie for much of the match.

Heslington East demonstrated just how far they have improved this

year with a commendable display against Hatfield College in the B fixture. Hatfield led at the break 14-7, although throughout the second half the team from York dominated the scrums against a much larger pack and built up momentum under the opportunistic mindset of fly half Hilton Jones.

A try from Hes East's Henry Duff silenced the crowd who were expecting an easy ride for the Durham team, now holding on to only a two-point lead.

Hatfield were employing a number of members of Durham's university teams, including an impressive fly half. His influential kicks provided Hatfield with plenty of attacking opportunities in the first half, yet without the wind on their side in the second half his side's kicking game was nullified and they struggled to add more points to the scoreboard.

Hes East nearly took the lead after a single free-flowing phase of incredible liquid rugby which bought them to within 15 meters of the try line, only for a clumsy knock-on to deny them the score.

Thereon in the game slipped from their grasp. Four unanswered tries from Hatfield in the last 15 minutes sealed Hes East's fate, while a yellow card for Matt Metcalfe and injuries to a number of key players only compounded problems. The full time result was 36-12 to Hatfield. Nonetheless, the visiting side played some exhilarating rugby, showing just how far they have come over the past season.

## James beat Chads

**Robyn Aitchison**  
SPORTS EDITOR

THE VOLLEYBALL A team match was James College vs St Chads of Durham and as one of the first matches, Captain James Durcan did a fantastic job of pumping up the team, and was looking forward to "bringing back another win after beating Durham last year".

There were fears of Durham overtaking with a close score in the first set of 20-15. Julius Alesiunas used his height to his advantage as he continually managed to slam the ball to the other side, resulting in several point gains for the James College team.

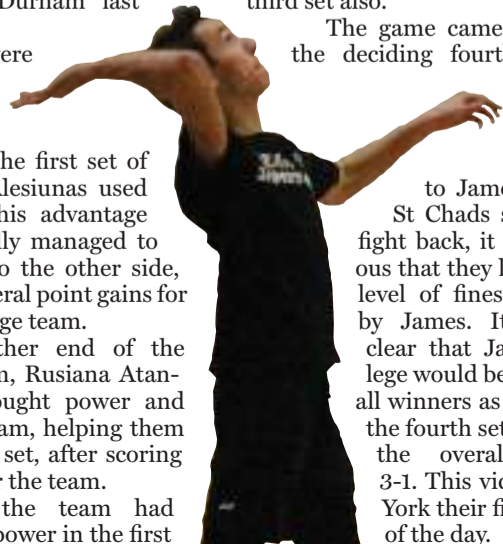
On the other end of the height spectrum, Rusiana Atanasova who brought power and attack to the team, helping them to win the first set, after scoring several goals for the team.

Although the team had overwhelming power in the first

set, they eventually allowed it to go to St Chads of Durham, despite impressive work from Nicholas Jones and his powerful serving skills.

In the third set, James College were eager to regain the lead, bringing their attack with the team captain providing some much needed enthusiasm and support for the team. The third set was tense with James and St Chads starting to fight back as the score was tied. James College eventually took the third set also.

The game came down to the deciding fourth set. It started off positive with 8-3 to James, but as St Chads started to fight back, it was obvious that they lacked the level of finesse shown by James. It became clear that James College would be the overall winners as they took the fourth set, winning the overall match 3-1. This victory gave York their first points of the day.



## Aiden's triumph in thriller

**Adam Philpott**  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

ST AIDEN'S and Constantine did not disappoint in College Varsity's basketball A game, with both teams capable of playing fast and exciting basketball, moving the ball from one end of the court to the other within a matter of seconds.

However, the quality that edged all five points to St Aiden's was that they were better at converting their counter-attacks, coupled with a tighter defence performance.

From the first whistle, St Aiden's showed their deadly nature from inside the three-point arc and were soon 12-0 up. By the end of the first quarter, they were leading 16-4 and had York on the ropes.

Constantine lacked the same conversion rate; the attempts were certainly there, yet many of them tip-toed around the hoop before dropping back into play. The score was 29-15 by the end of the second quarter, with Aiden's lead extending to 42-24 at the third buzzer.

As the game progressed further, Constantine decided to try



IMAGE: DAN POWELL

a more shots from outside of the three-point arc. The tactic was either a response to their opponents having greater success in defence, or that they felt going for shots would help them mount a much needed comeback.

Doing so, however, bought down even lower their conversion rate at a time when St Aiden's con-

tinued to convert two-pointers with almost every attempt.

York were behind from the off-set, yet the comeback was always within touching distance. In the end, St Aiden's proved to be more clinical as the final buzzer sounded with the score at 60-44. A disappointing result for the visiting team, but an exhilarating game.

## Nouse Tries

Jake Tattersdill heads to gymnastics to channel his inner Max Whitlock P. 24



## SABB Comment

College sport is the pride of York, says Sport President Isaac Beevor P. 25



## Varsity 2017

Reports on key fixtures from last weekend's intermural competition P. 27



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## Durham reclaim College Varsity on home soil

**Tom Harle and Robyn Aitchison**  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENTS

YORK WERE defeated by Durham in the 2017 edition of College Varsity at Maiden Castle Sports Centre.

The Black and Gold have failed to retain the Varsity title after winning the tournament on home soil last year. The result was confirmed with St Aidan's 60-44 win over Constantine in the basketball B fixture, taking Durham over the 64 point threshold for victory

"Despite the loss it's been a great day", York Sport President Isaac Beevor commented. "Taking over 400 players is a testament to the strength of our College Sport and our colleges. We will be back

next year, fighting hard on home soil."

Durham College Sport Manager Jack Coates said of the win, "It's brilliant to reclaim the trophy after a tough loss to York last year. It's even nicer to do so on our own turf.

94-31

**The final result  
of College Varsity  
2017**

We very much look forward to the return event back at York next year."

York mustered 36 points in their last trip to Maiden Castle in 2015 and failed in their goal to improve on this, despite an extra 29 points being on offer.

The visitors made a slow start

in the early morning, losing six of the first seven fixtures, despite a win in the volleyball A game for James College. Defeat was sealed by the six straight losses that came in at around 2PM, including heavy ones in both lacrosse games, squash and tennis.

There was success in the volleyball, however. York's A representatives from James College continued this impressive run of form in the Varsity competition by defeating St Chad's 3-1, providing York with their first points of the day. Captain James Durcan said that he was, "proud to qualify as the A team for volleyball" and to "bring back another win after beating Durham last year"

Despite the volleyball win, it went swiftly downhill for the York team in the afternoon, as defeat af-

ter defeat began to take its toll, with the next 22 points going to Durham.

The hosts started to pick up points around lunchtime, with four badminton victories. Langwith College provided a ray of sunshine for the visitors with a 2-1 win in the hockey A and a defeat of Stephenson in the basketball.

In many events, it was a close call between York and Durham. In the volleyball B match, the result nearly went to York with the game coming down to a decider on the fifth set, although the game eventually went to Durham.

York's laudable efforts were further punctuated by events such as the football men's A match, where Van Mildert of Durham scraped a 4-3 win against a gutsy Langwith team.

Durham's victory was discovered just after the basketball game,

but there were several matches yet to take place. The York Select pool team were eager to prove their worth against Hild Bede, but ultimately fell 5-3. Routine wins in the darts matches capped off a successful day for the Durham Colleges. They celebrated their most successful Varsity since the tournament began in 2014.

Though Durham may have won the title, the tournament itself was not without its problems. The badminton matches experienced scoring issues whereby the umpires themselves were sometimes dumbfounded as to who was leading. Changing rooms were also high in demand but short in supply, possibly due to Durham's University squads continuing to train at Maiden Castle while the Varsity event was ongoing.