

# NOUSE



## Noel Edmonds

M2 - M3

The TV supremo talks about his reborn career, people's obsession with his facial hair and having sex in Warrington

York academics and staff speak out against University policy:

# 'This University needs a kick up the backside'

Teaching standards questioned as Heslington East plans power on



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### SU officers in student sex bingo scandal

Members of the YUSU sabbatical team have denied that a game of "student bingo" devised by them was inappropriate, claiming it was "only a joke" and was never intended to be carried out, amidst accusations of "inappropriate and compromising behaviour" by student and University representatives.

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### Student protest over arms recruitment talk

A presentation by DSTL, an agency of the Ministry of Defence, sparked an angry student protest on November 13. Members of Amnesty International and FreeSoc, dressed in masks and boiler suits, occupied Heslington Hall to protest the presence of "the arms industry" on campus.

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### Christmas Special

We examine the various interfaith and secular alternatives to the festive season, as well as taking a look at the origin of Santa Claus and where to find original gifts in York.

>> MUSE M10

### York XI victorious against close rivals

University of York 3-2 Teesside

York Men's 1sts continued their impressive start to the season with a narrow victory over close rivals Teesside in appalling conditions on Wednesday 22 November. The success of the team comes after an appalling year in 2005/06.

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# Thief caught in student's room after rash of campus break-ins

## King's Manor burgled

KING'S MANOR was broken into on November 22 by a burglar who smashed a 15th Century window with a brick and climbed in, only to steal two sandwiches and some alcohol before falling asleep for several hours. According to Sergeant Hopper of York Police, the incident occurred between 10:30 pm Wednesday and 6:30 am on Thursday. Hopper added "the burglar stole the cash box from a vending machine, but it was empty." The police are currently awaiting the results of forensic investigation.

**By Nicky Woolf**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

Police reports that the suspect, 21, was "detained, arrested on suspicion of burglary, found to have an outstanding criminal record, and has been charged with burglary." He is now "going through the court process."

AFTER A SPATE of break-ins in Halifax and Goodricke colleges, a suspect has been arrested and is facing trial.

A first-year Maths student, Sarah Waite, interrupted the thief in her room on the evening of Sunday November 12: "I opened the door and saw a guy by the window. He was bent over my laptop. He looked at me and I just froze... he came towards me and slammed the door in my face."

Waite raised the alarm and the security services were called, but by the time they arrived the intruder had escaped through the window which he had forced open from the outside.

Later that night, residents of Halifax College reported a "suspicious figure hanging around the college." Security services were again called, who held the suspect until the police arrived.

Detective Constable Avison of North Yorkshire

Waite attended an identity parade, but says she was "not sure my guy was actually on there." DC Fennell described the two burglaries as "probably related", and DC Avison said that the police have "strong suspicions" that the Goodricke break-in was probably perpetrated by "his partner... the second person who was seen to make off from the Halifax burglary." Waite has since been called in by the police to "look at some photos of possible subjects", in an attempt to positively identify the intruder.

When asked how often this sort of incident occurred, DC Avison replied: "It's such a big campus that you're going to have people targeting it from time to time.



Sarah Waite interrupted the thief in her bedroom. Photo: Ally Carmichael

Unfortunately a lot of security people leave doors unlocked, which is a big problem down there, and windows open."

Richard Remington, another first-year resident of Goodricke college, had his wallet stolen from his unlocked room during a

football match. Police dusted for fingerprints, but have so far reported no leads.

Gill MacDonald, Goodricke College Administrator, refused to comment on allegations that some windows in Goodricke had been

secured against being forced open from the outside while others, Waite's included, had not; except to say that "most windows are already fixed, and the rest will be done as soon as possible." She claimed "a series of serious drain-blockages held up work."

## CUs take legal action against Student Unions

CHRISTIAN STUDENTS across the country are taking legal action against their Students' Unions. York CU executive members met on November 23 to discuss their relationship with YUSU. However, the executive decided that their primary concern was to 'speak for Jesus and live for Jesus' and at present that right was not infringed. Legal action is being taken by Christian Unions nationwide as they believe their freedom of speech and association is being infringed by current stance of their Students' Unions. However, at York a compromise has been reached: the CU has no formal relationship with YUSU but receives support from the York Chaplaincy.

## York media success

YORK WAS WELL represented at the recent NUS Student Media Awards, held in association with the Press Association. *Nouse* was nominated for Best Student Publication and Best Features Writer, and *Vision* picked up the award for Best Budget Publication.

# £55k spent on kitchen crisis compensation

**By Hannah O'Shea and Milda Sabunaite**

THE KITCHENS CRISIS that has affected several colleges has finally been resolved after the Deputy Vice Chancellor Felicity Riddy announced a decision to pay out a total of £55,000 in compensation to affected students.

Every resident of

Derwent Blocks C and D, and Vanbrugh A Block, has been offered compensation of £126. Residents of Derwent A and B, Goodricke B, and Langwith A Blocks have been offered the lesser amount of £72 as they had slightly more extensive initial facilities in their kitchens. Compensation for the first nine weeks of term has

already been paid to affected students, and payments will continue until the situation is fully rectified.

According to letters sent out to residents, further improvements of cooking facilities in areas of Derwent, Goodricke, Langwith and Vanbrugh are due to be completed before January 15. The plans include wall extensions

which will make the installation of hobs possible in all kitchens. The University has still not explained why no action was taken before the beginning of the term.

Rich Croker, YUSU President, said "If it had happened in the summer, it would have cost less", explaining that the construction works in the kitchens could have been

completed by the workers that were employed to work on campus over the summer.

The decision to implement changes has come after extensive discussions between YUSU and the University. Students wrote multiple letters complaining about inadequate facilities, and the Accommodation Office was repeatedly con-

fronted by unsatisfied parents. Students also voiced their opinions on the issue by voting in an online YUSU poll, and by setting up an online campaign group. "They have realised they made a mistake", said Croker, "I suppose this one is highlighted by the fact that it hit so many people and it is going to cost a lot to fix."

## In this edition

November 28 2006  
www.nouse.co.uk

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**Our supplement Muse has exclusive interviews with Noel Edmonds, Paul Muldoon, New Year special and Christmas, and features much more.**

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# SU in 'joke' sex bingo scandal

By Jamie Merrill and Heidi Blake

YUSU SABBATICAL officers have claimed that a sex game of "students' bingo" devised by them was "only a joke" and was never intended to be carried out, amidst accusations of "inappropriate and compromising behaviour" by student and University representatives.

Rich Croker, SU President, has confirmed that several sabbatical officers were involved in drawing up a bingo card for the two then single sabbs, Amy Woods and Ben Griffiths, aimed at "pulling" students from various courses, colleges, societies and years, in a variety of locations such as at a campus event or in Ziggy's, during Freshers' Week. Micky Armstrong, the former YUSU President, is also alleged to have been involved.

Croker acknowledged that, while the "joke" was not specifically aimed at freshers, they were not excluded from the categories.

Sam Marsden, a University Welfare Advisor, spoke out on Friday against the actions of the sabbatical officers involved: "As a welfare advisor I can appreciate how comments like that would upset people: It's not constructive in terms of building good relationships with students, or as a demonstration of how the SU thinks of its freshers.



The bingo card was made for Griffiths (left) Amy Woods (right) on account of them being "single sabbaticals"

Sometimes you do things that you think are a joke without thinking about the consequences, but at the end of the day you have to take your role seriously."

An anonymous JCRC Welfare Officer said: "I believe that the bingo card made was intended to be fun, but it's a sad time when upper echelons of YUSU feel it appropriate to pray on the vulnerability of stu-

dents upon their arrival in a new place."

When questioned, Griffiths claimed that no card was made, but added "it was being bantered around during Freshers' Week that this is the perfect time to, you know, as it were... it was almost like a matchmaking thing, but nothing ever came out of it."

Matt Burton, Goodricke JCRC Chair,



claimed that the game was "a joke". He said: "Obviously abusing your position for a game is wrong, but I think it was never carried out. It was meant as a joke, but I guess it's fallen flat on its face."

Woods said "it's a standing joke that you can pull in Freshers' Week, but I would never ever do anything like that... I have a fair background in welfare

things, and no-one has done anything inappropriate in my book."

The YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer, Amy Foxtan, was unwilling to condemn the situation, claiming that it had been "blown out of proportion". She said: "to say that there is a culture of inappropriateness is completely unjustified with our sabbatical team this year. If there was

anything that I did feel was inappropriate or unnecessary I would have stepped in with my welfare hat on and said no guys, don't do this, but nothing did happen."

Dave Jones, Derwent JCR Chair said: "It was just a joke, just a stupid jokey gesture. It wasn't as if the card was passed on to all the lads; Amy [Woods] was involved as well. It was tongue in cheek. They're stupid enough to run for an SU position but they're not that stupid."

When asked what the implications of freshers hearing about the bingo game might be, Griffiths replied: "It was supposed to be between the six of us, because obviously we're really good friends, so the welfare concerns it brings up put us in a very compromising position. If we're having to work with then something like that would be fairly concerning, and detrimental to the hard work we do."

Rich Croker, the SU President, said: "Any situation where anyone's welfare is placed in jeopardy I would not consider funny. The fact that it was just a joke about two sabbs who were single, at the time was funny to us." Croker claimed that the current sabbatical team are the "most clean-cut in years". In terms of allegations of sleeping with freshers he said "I think we're the only who haven't."

## SU Women's Officers propose the censorship of 'lads' mags'

By Anjli Raval and Stephanie Dyson

A UNION General Meeting Motion proposing the movement of 'lads' mags' in Your:Shop to the top shelf has failed to meet the quorum and therefore was not passed, following the recent UGM vote.

The "Sexist Publications" motion forwarded by the YUSU Women's Officers, Amy Burge and Erin McAlister, on November 14, specifically targeted magazines like FHM, Nuts and Zoo and newspapers such as The Daily Star.

Burge and McAlister suggested that these publications should be displayed



The motion to censor lad's mags in Your:shop failed

"where people have to seek them out to see them or to cover the pornographic images."

The motion was based on claims that these 'lads' Mags' are sexist and "often

more explicit than publications classed as pornography".

The debate centered on the issue that Your:Shop is open to a diverse range of customers, including fami-

lies with young children as well as students from religions that might find the images offensive. Opposition to the motion was led by James Flinders.

Rachel Hopkins, a first year student, said the magazines would be come associated with more pornographic material and so "become more taboo."

Tom Seal, a first year Sociology student, described the motion as "political correctness gone wrong."

For a motion to be passed, 206 votes must be cast with a two-thirds majority in favour.

The results for votes for UGM motions show a trend of failure as a consequence of too few votes being cast.

## Attack in Ziggy's

By Raf Sanchez  
 NEWS EDITOR

A CURRENT University of York student was violently assaulted by a York graduate at Ziggy's nightclub this month. The victim, who wishes to remain anonymous, was headbutted at the downstairs bar on the November 1.

Another student who witnessed the attack was in the vicinity of the student when he was assaulted.

The student, who wishes to remain anonymous, described the behaviour of the assailant as "drunk and cocky", and claimed that the attack was "completely unprovoked."

The blow from the headbutting opened up a several inch gash on the victim's forehead, which the witness claimed "splattered my shirt with blood".

The bleeding victim was taken into the back of the club in a condition of shock and had his wound cleaned up. Security staff searched the club but the attacker had already deserted the scene.

The victim was unwilling to comment on the attack, saying "it's in the past and I don't want to dredge that all back up again."

Of the attacker, he said "I know the guy and as far as I'm concerned he's on the edge of the earth. I just don't want to bring any of that up now. A lot of my friends were very upset by what happened and it's for their sake that I don't want to talk about it."

Attempts to bring police charges against the attacker collapsed due to a lack of "neutral witnesses".

His identity is believed to be widely known but cannot be disclosed for legal reasons.

## Full statement from Senior Departmental Administrator

“The University has got complacent: we need a kick up the arse. We’re spending far too much time, money and effort on Heslington East, and as a result we’re forgetting the importance of our students.”

“I am happy for my comments to be made public, but I don’t want my name to be revealed - I don’t want to end up getting sacked and stacking shelves in Tescos.”

# University drops down league table

By Jamie Merrill  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

ACADEMICS AND ADMIN staff have criticised teaching standards at York at the same time as a new study sees the University of York lose its place at the top of a teaching quality league table.

Under a reworking of Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) teaching scores, the University has dropped from 1st to 57th place in a teaching quality league table.

This has come at a time when numerous academics and staff have expressed concerns about declining teaching quality at York as a result of the concentration of senior management on the Heslington East expansion.

A Senior Departmental Administrator told *Nouse* “the University needs a kick up the arse: we have become complacent”. The Administrator, who wished to remain anonymous, also added “I think we are spending far too much time, money and effort on Heslington East”.

The recalibrated league table and accompanying study was first published in the journal *Quality in Higher Education*. The study, written by a team of academics led by Professor Robert Raeside of Napier University Edinburgh, submits that general “bias” has until now favoured pre-1992 universities.

YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer Amy Foxton also drew attention to York’s drop from the top ten universities in the Times 2007 League Table, in which it has dropped from 7th to 15th place this year, as indicative of declining teaching quality.

Furthermore, Professor Tom Baldwin, Board of Studies Chair for Politics Economics and Philosophy, who recently spoke out to criticise University plans to change module structures, said “What’s worth attention are the dramatic differences in staff/student ratios in different University departments, which are bound to



A reworked league table questions York teaching quality

have a knock-on effects on teaching”.

However, some University officials and staff have dismissed the new study. Trevor Sheldon, Pro Vice Chancellor for Teaching said “It is nothing official and is highly contestable and not official either.”

“This is just some research done by some academics which was published which uses a range of statistical techniques to re-analyse the old teaching quality assessments carried out by the TQA.

Amy Foxton said “it is worrying to see York rated so poorly in terms of teaching but I think it’s important to look at the data of these results, which were collected before current York undergraduates had entered sixth form.”

Professor Raeside said of the research paper “the article is about demonstrating that using qualitative ratings as scores is wrong and this leads to the creation of league tables which are unreliable”

Alistair Rider, an academic in the York Archaeology Department, said “it seems highly unlikely that the University will want to maintain a good teacher-student ratio [after the Heslington East development], and so I can only see the academic quality in many parts of the University slipping”.

An academic from the English and Related Literature Department who requested anonymity said “The expansion [Heslington East] appears to be proceeding at the expense of our excellent teaching research profile.”

A 3rd year student of Educational Studies complained about the quality of their department, saying “I’ve applied for a PGCE and failed as my supervisor managed to use the wrong grade on my application form. They down graded my predicted grade from a 1st to a 2:1.” They added “If you get the wrong tutor you’re screwed”.

# Heslington

## Daniel Whitehead investigates the progress of the Heslington East development

York officials express their opinions on the controversial Heslington East expansion:



Mark Hill

Green Councillor

“The large increase in population should not be at the expense of York. The public inquiry is a bit of a farce really, you have to see the inquiry to see how largely it is stacked in favour of the developers.”



Dr Alistair Rider

York Academic

“The reasons for the expansion has little if nothing to do with educational values; it strikes me as having much more to do with commercial interests. The master-plan is very nebulous.”



John Meacock

Head of Heslington East

“If Heslington East doesn’t go ahead we will have to reconsider what that means. It would be far from ideal and set the University back from its current plans quite significantly.”



Ceredig Jamieson-Ball

Lib Dem Councillor

“The University has come up with a formula I don’t agree with. I’m not sure how they’ve done the maths but it certainly doesn’t add up. I’d say 70% of people are probably against it.”

SENIOR UNIVERSITY officials are “very confident” of receiving planning permission from government minister Ruth Kelly within weeks for the controversial Heslington East expansion.

The admission comes during a period of heightening protests from academic staff, councillors and local residents about the legitimacy of the proposals to build a second campus in the surrounding village, and the validity of the on-going public inquiry.

A recent survey by *Nouse* on the thoughts of academic staff about the proposals revealed that 87% of respondents were concerned by the expansion, and 27% were strongly against it. Reasons cited for their disagreement included the legitimacy of the need for expansion, whether it was in the interests of students, and the environmental problems associated with such a large-scale development.

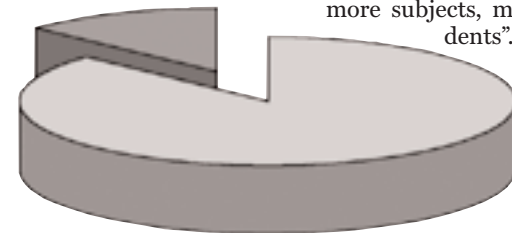
Alistair Rider, a teaching fellow in History of Art Department, was one of many who felt that the motivation behind the proposals was more commercial than academic; saying “The reasons for the expansion have little, if nothing, to do with educational values; it strikes me as having much more to do with commercial interests.”

“Currently the University seems only interested in quantity – more subjects, more students”.

### Professors questionnaire response

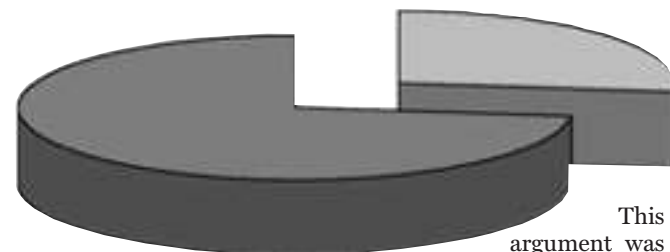
87%

Professors who said they were “concerned about the expansion”



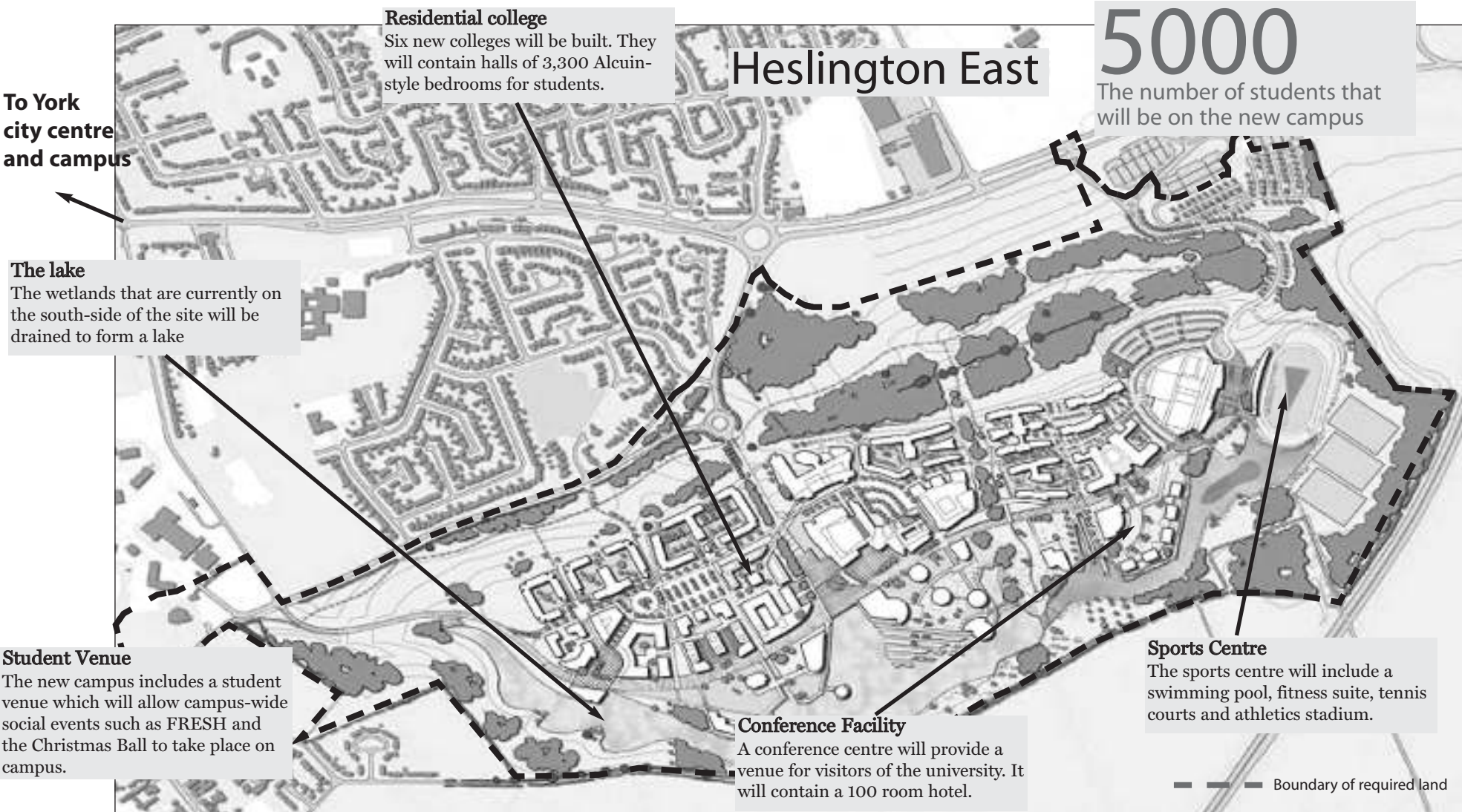
27%

Professors who said they were “strongly against the expansion”



This argument was echoed by Green Party Councillor Mark Hill who, when giving evi-

# East plan battles through



dence to the inquiry, called the proposals "a commercial land grab".

Hill also questioned the legitimacy of the public inquiry, calling it "biased". He said "You have to see the inquiry to understand how largely it is stacked in favour of the developers. The public enquiry system is a farce".

Along with many other councillors and academic staff, Hill agreed that permission was likely to be given but did not reveal whether he planned on taking further action if the decision, expected to be made in January by Ruth Kelly, is in the University's favour.

One of the most prevalent arguments against the proposals is the effects it will have on already disgruntled residents of Heslington village. Since plans for the expansion were announced in 2001, hundreds of residents have voiced strong disapproval. Evidence given at the

**30%**  
Percentage of the proposed Heslington East site designated for commercial development

**'There's no point in building Heslington East to secure the future of the University if the present isn't being properly looked after'**

**Comment >> Page 29**

inquiry stated that a survey of local residents found that 90% totally disagreed with the plans. One disgruntled resident recently stated "I feel like a stranger in a village I have lived in for 60 years",

while another asked "Why are our lives of no importance?"

Ceredig Jamieson-Ball, councillor for the Heslington ward has been particularly critical of the proposal, stating that the vast majority of residents believe there are "insurmountable difficulties", adding "the University has come up with a formula I don't agree with."

As recent figures show the University is suffering from a large budget deficit and with estimated expenditure on the public inquiry at over

£1 million so far, there are concerns from many stakeholders that University finances and teaching standards will be severely affected over the next decade. A senior English academic said "At this point the financial crisis connected to the expansion seems to be having a supremely negative effect on both teaching and research. A few new buildings seems a poor return for decreasing the current excellence of the University."

Dr Helen Hills from History of Arts also ques-

tioned the need to expand, saying "Does anyone really know [what the reasons for expansion] are? The University should not adopt the modes of our competitors who are much larger and richer than we are. Such an approach will set us firmly in the second tier of research institutions in this country."

John Meacock, the director of Heslington East, stated "The overall benefit to the city and the wider region from employment and better education is something

which has to be weighed in." However, he did admit that the University faced several problems, including the effects on the environment, residents and University finances. "If it doesn't go ahead we will have to reconsider what that means. It would set back the University from its current plans quite significantly".

The final evidence is expected at the public inquiry on Monday 27 November, and a decision is to be announced in January 2007.

## Heslington East: The enquiry in context

**By Milda Sabunaite**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

FOLLOWING the results of the public inquiry, the final verdict on the future of the Heslington East project will be received from Communities and Local Government Secretary Ruth Kelly in January 2007.

The need for a public inquiry emerged after numerous expressions of disagreement local people

who signed petitions and established action groups, and along with members of the University gathered evidence against the expansion.

As a part of Heslington East Campaign launched by *Nouse* in May 2005, a dossier of such complaints, statements from University academics and other investigations was compiled and presented to the Vice-Chancellor

Brian Cantor and four Government ministers by *Nouse* journalists in June 2005, seeking their support in fighting the controversial expansion plans.

In response, YUSU passed a policy expressing their position on the matter. The policy states support for the expansion as long as it "favours student interests."

The University expansion would double the number of students on campus, whereas staff members would grow by 436% The new campus would include four new

colleges residing 3,300 students as well as six academic departments introducing new subjects such as Law, Dentistry and Drama. The Computer Science department, along with a part of Electronics and several others, would be transferred.

Students are promised a modern sports centre with a stadium and swimming pool along with a central student venue which would host.

However, plans of the expansion are not consistently concentrated on student needs, as more

than a third of the new campus territory would be dedicated to non-academic activities. In cooperation with companies such as 'Yorkshire Forward', who describe themselves as a "business led organisation that aims to help improve the region's relative economic performance", the University plans to establish projects similar to York Science Park.

Much attention is also paid to expansion of research-related activities and establishment of spin-off companies on campus.

# YUSU officer runs for Heslington Council election on student ticket

By Nicky Woolf  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

GRACE FLETCHER-HALL, the current YUSU Campaigns Officer, has been selected as the official Labour candidate for the York local council election. She will go head-to-head with the incumbent Liberal Democrat councillor Ceredig Jamieson-Ball, a former York University student. The council elections for Heslington ward will take place next May.

Fletcher-Hall, a third-year student of Philosophy and Politics, has previously held the position of YUSU Women's Officer, and is currently serving as Vice-Chair of the York University Labour Society, as well as YUSU Campaigns Officer.

"I want to see students better represented," Fletcher-Hall said, adding "students are very vulnerable on a lot of issues - housing, employment. Many of the issues that local councils deal with are issues where students are in need of representation."

The electorate in Heslington ward is dominated by students. Non-students, including the residents of Heslington village, represent just 20% of the

electoral roll. However, while students form the vast majority of the ward, there has been a continuous record of low student turnout. This has meant that in previous elections the population of Heslington village wields a disproportionate amount of power at the polls.

Fletcher-Hall, however, identifies the difference between this election and those of previous years: "I do think the student turnout will go up because, for the first time in an election, there will be a ballot box on campus."

There has occasionally been tension between residents of Heslington and students at the University, and the proposed Heslington East development has only served to exacerbate this problem. Of this Fletcher-Hall said, "what I really want to do at this election is to find a way of talking to both parties and getting them to get along, because I think the relationship between the students and the villagers really needs to be sorted out."

The current Liberal Democrat councillor, Ceredig Jamieson-Ball, was also a student at the University, finishing a post-graduate degree in History

here in 2001. Jamieson-Ball won the council election in 2003 with a total of just 381 votes, a figure that reflects the overall low voter turnout.

A major advocate of recycling in Heslington and on campus, Jamieson-Ball noted his achievements in this field, which include "ensuring that landfill tax credits are passed on directly to students, to enable students to carry forward their recycling schemes."

Jamieson-Ball, who is standing for re-election, described the upcoming election as "really a two-horse race" between himself and Fletcher-Hall, adding that the Labour candidate is "standing, basically, for Tony Blair's policies, including the war on Iraq."

Fletcher-Hall claims that she has laid aside national issues, saying "there are things that the Labour government has done that I agree with, and things that I disagree with; and for this election I really want to try to remind people that there is so much that the Labour Party stands for. I don't want to see people manipulated, I don't want to see students manipulated."

The election will be held on Thursday May 3, 2007.



Grace Fletcher-Hall will run for Labour Councillor in May. Photo: Ally Carmichael

# £2 million to York for stem cell research

By Alex Stevens  
STAFF NEWS REPORTER

CUTTING-EDGE research by University scientists has been rewarded with a £2m investment from an American stem cell research company.

The study, which involves identifying the precursor cells of prostate cancer is being conducted by Pro-Cure Therapeutics, a business venture based in the York university science park. It was set up in 2001 to "commercialise output" from the Biology department's Cancer Research Unit.

The investment is coming from StemCell Ventures Inc (SCVI), an American biotech company which specialises in finding "highly innovative scientific projects" in which to take a joint interest, so as to "maximise



£2m goes to the Biology dept. Photo: Adam Sloan

its commercial input".

Dr Alan Raymond, the CEO of StemCell Ventures, said that the investment represents "a major milestone in the transformation of both companies by combining world class science in York with global access to capital markets".

The founder and chief scientific officer of Pro-Cure, Professor Norman Maitland, announced that "this investment by SCVI gives Pro-Cure the ability to translate our basic scientific knowledge generated in the YCR laboratory into the first steps towards a cancer stem cell

treatment for prostate cancer."

The work which has so attracted SCVI is an ambitious project to identify prostate cancer stem cells. It is, according to Maitland, "a completely new concept in cancer therapy".

Researchers at the Cancer Research Unit have isolated stem cells which are unique to prostate cancer. They believe that this will lead to better targeted treatments, and consequently a better quality of life for patients.

Stem cell research, particularly into the most potent embryonic cells, is an area which has frequently been the subject of controversy. However, research which involves mature, rather than embryonic, cells is generally agreed to be ethically sound.

Pro-Cure's revolution-

ary new technique allows them to isolate cancerous stem cells, meaning they can identify the particular genes which are present in - and specific to - prostate cancer. Pro-Cure and the CRU have established a 'toolkit' for drug discovery which should help advance both cancer research worldwide, and progress towards the development of a new prostate cancer therapy.

Prostate cancer spreads to other parts of the body in approximately 30% of cases. It is in these cases that Pro-Cure's research is thought to have particular potential. At present, if the prostate cancer spreads from the prostate to form secondary cancers in bone marrow, there is no effective treatment available.

Simon Newton, head of the University's Enterprise and Innovation Office,

believes the investment is an indicator of York's position at the forefront of the world research market.

"We are extremely pleased that Stem Cell Ventures Inc has made this investment in one of our key spin-off companies. It is significant that SCVI is a US biotech company and we are thrilled that the US is looking to York innovations for investment."

But Beckie Cooper, a Biochemistry student and Chair of the Biosciences Society, sounded a note of caution: "I'm obviously proud to be connected to a department which is doing such groundbreaking and useful research. But only as long as the aims of the department remain academic rather than in securing lucrative contracts such as this one."

# Heslington Hall arms protest

By Raf Sanchez  
 NEWS EDITOR

A PRESENTATION to undergraduates by an agency of the Ministry of Defence sparked a student-led protest and occupation of Heslington Hall.

The protest, which was headed by members of York Amnesty International and FreeSoc, aimed to disrupt a presentation by representatives of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), which produces a range of aerial, naval and land-based weaponry.

On the night of November 13, 16 protestors, wearing surgical masks and boiler suits with spray-painted logos reading 'Weapons Inspector' on their backs, stormed into Heslington Hall minutes after the presentation began.

Their original plan was to occupy the room in which the presentation was taking place and carry out a 'weapons inspection' before causing disruption by playing games and singing songs. Upon entering Heslington Hall, however, their access to the room was blocked by security, when one protestor claimed she was "smashed against a wall" by the attending porter.

The protestors then occupied the hallway outside the presentation room for almost an hour. They began by chanting statistics through a megaphone from a pamphlet entitled 'DSTL: A Job to Kill For'. According to one such statistic, "More than 500,000 people on average are killed with conventional arms every year: one person every minute". The protestors then began to sing and hand out cake to



Students dressed in white boiler suits occupy the lobby of Heslington Hall in protest against the presence of DSTL. Photos: Adam Sloan

security staff.

The talk by DSTL was organized by the Careers Service, whose representative Angus Ferguson was present. He said he recognised that the protestors were "exercising their democratic right" to protest, and could understand that some students were upset. However, he maintained that

DSTL is a "legitimate employer".

The Careers Service offered to let a single representative of the protest make a five minute presentation to the assembled graduates to put across their argument, an offer which the protestors declined.

When asked whether the Careers Service felt it was

right to invite members of the arms industry onto campus, Ferguson replied that the Service's job is "to provide information for students to make their own decisions." The University charges £175 for use of presentation rooms by companies like DSTL.

As the undergraduates emerged from the meeting

room they were forced down a narrow corridor lined on either side by shouting protestors.

Dan Constable, an Electronics student, described the protestors' behaviour as "outrageous" and "counter-productive" and said it would have been more effective to have taken up the offer of the 5 minute

presentation.

Nina Gora of Amnesty International claimed "the natural progression of these talks is people getting killed".

A DSTL spokeswoman said in a recent statement "This incident will not deter DSTL from giving future presentations and we are keen to encourage graduates to pursue a career in science".

## 'Safe space' for LGBT Christians

By Hannah O'Shea  
 STAFF REPORTER

A FORMER MEMBER of the Christian Union has announced her aim to create a "safe space" for LGBT Christians at York.

Deborah Fenney, whose position as Social Action Representative in the Christian Union became "untenable" after the emergence of her liberal views on LGBT issues, is now seeking to set up a forum where LGBT Christians can discuss issues and experiences, religious and otherwise.

The initiative aims to look objectively at different Christian points of view on LGBT issues, to study the



St. Paul's church in Heslington village near campus

Bible and possibly to make visits to LGBT-friendly churches all over the country. It also looks to provide an environment in which members can experience what

Fenney terms, "acceptance and fellowship." A similar group was set up in the past but was closed after the graduation of its leading members. According to

Fenney, "Getting together Christians in this situation is really important because a lot of us may come from backgrounds where homosexuality is perceived negatively." The initiative has the support of the YUSU LGBT Officers.

Ben Nichols, the LGBT Chair, said "As an SU officer responsible for the welfare of LGBT students I supported the idea and hence offered to provide an initial point of contact for other people who are interested". Fenney has asked other University Christian groups to advertise the group, but claims that "It's not about having massive numbers: it's about reaching those it applies to".

## Man falls from 20ft balcony in Gallery

By Jenny Corbett and  
 Tim Human

A CLUB-GOER narrowly escaped serious injury after falling from a 20-foot-high balcony in The Gallery. York students present on the night of November 17 watched as the man was taken away by paramedics.

The main dance floor was cordoned off for over an hour by police, who remained at the scene to take details from remaining witnesses. A police spokesman has since stated that they are treating the case as an accident.

The injured man, a

York resident, was taken to intensive care. However, his injuries were not found to be serious and he was discharged over the weekend.

Security staff disallowed entry to the club while police and paramedics worked at the scene of the accident, leaving a crowd outside, only reopening the doors once the injured man had been removed. Ben Masters, a History and Politics student, said "I knew something wasn't right when I saw the ambulance parked outside."

Luminar Leisure, who run The Gallery, refused to comment on the incident.



# Comment & Analysis

## Heslington East

Next January marks the culmination of years of planning by University chiefs, as a public inquiry returns a verdict on plans to build a second campus on greenfield land, a move that will eventually see student numbers swelling by as much as 50%. Complaints that the inquiry has been prejudiced from the beginning toward developers and against local residents, coupled with the University's knowing confidence that Government backing will be secured, suggest a foregone conclusion that ought to be alarming to all whose main concern is that York maintains its high academic standards, and offers the best possible experience to future students.

Equally important is how the expansion will affect the ten thousand or so students already here, and those who will arrive in the years to come before the new campus opens for business. Although York's minor slip in this year's league tables is hardly cause for panic, it might be a harbinger of problems to come if resources are diverted away from day-to-day concerns to pay for spiralling construction costs. This must not be allowed to happen, and bland assurances from University bosses will not suffice to ensure that it doesn't.

If handled properly, expansion could be a great step forward for the University and its students: indeed, as often as they might seem at odds, the two have mutual interests that run far deeper than the skirmishes that so often distract from them. The University needs to attract the best faculty, who want to teach the brightest students; in turn, students want to be taught by academics who are capable of exciting and inspiring them. So it is that staff and students depend entirely on each other: both are equally crucial to the University's success.

The challenge is to satisfy all the competing concerns that are involved in any change of this scale, a balancing act that University bosses must acknowledge in deed as well as word. That means working to improve the lot of students today who, behind all the petty complaining, have genuine grievances that are being ignored. Like what? Try a library preserved from the 1970s, residences stuck in the 1960s, and a campus social life moored securely to the 1920s. In short, if things don't get better now, campus two won't change a thing. A kick up the arse? Take note, Brian: we'll keep on kicking until we're moving into a shiny new *Nouse* office, built upon Heslington's green and pleasant land.

## A matter of principle

If this edition seems unusually high in moral fibre, it shouldn't come as a surprise. Blame Bob Geldof, blame Al Gore, but ethics are no longer the preserve of German philosophers and smoke-damaged beatniks. Nowhere is this more true than on campus, where students are increasingly looking for a worthier outlet for energy once expended on the older, nobler pastimes, like casual sex, and binge drinking.

An argument often made is that once moral standards are hoisted by the masses they lose all their meaning and become empty slogans. It's no coincidence that those found towing this line tend either to be the previous sole occupiers of the high-ground, reluctant to share their patch, or else the philandering, city-driving, watt-guzzling objects of ethical scrutiny.

Nonetheless, more ethics don't necessarily mean sound ethics. John Stuart Mill sagely advised that unargued opinions breed tired dogmas. Tedious as his own tortuously argued opinions often were, it's still something worth remembering as the cake flies past your head. All the same, the more people are talking about the right thing to do, the better the chances that one fine day we might do it.



**Rich Croker**  
SU President

When deciding what area of life to cover in this edition's comments, I had just watched *Cloud 9* – a superb performance by some of York's Writing and Performance students. The play explores a range of issues that are still present in our society now, such as gender, sexuality and race. You could be forgiven for thinking I was going to go into a piece on gender, race or imperialism, but I'm not. For this article, what the play itself is about is irrelevant. That I went to see it instead of going to Toffs or Vanbrugh bar isn't.

The winter cold tells us that the summer and freshers' buzz is over and everyone has started to begin the weekly routine again every Monday. The end of term is approaching and money is tight; the Sunday morning after Club D is a bigger struggle than it was eight weeks ago.

So what now? Why not try to break the student stereotype and do something that won't cost you a fortune or leave you with a mouth like the badger's proverbial in the morning? Why not try something that doesn't involve spending half your student loan on a few snakebites and double vodka red bulls?

Take Drama Soc for example. With a different performance running every week of term, there is little doubt that something should catch your eye. Whether it is a mind-engaging play or some light humour, there's something to cater for all tastes. Indeed, if you fancy a couple of hours of playful banter that will leave you with tears in your eyes, the YUSU Comedy nights in Wentworth could be for you.

Or why not do what everyone always means to do, but never gets round to doing and go to see a speaker put on by a society or attend a debate. Maybe even go one step further and debate yourself. All of these opportunities are available through the huge array of societies YUSU offers.

If you fancy taking some time away from campus then why not check out the 'The Ice Factor' ice rink next to Clifford's tower. They also serve superb cookies in the rink-side cafe! What could be better? Or maybe take in some real York heritage and take a tour of the Minster, which is free with student ID. Alternatively, if you fancy meeting the bracing winter air head on, then take a walk with Outdoor Soc and enjoy a tasty pub lunch along the way (the accompanying pint of real ale is optional, of course!).

I guess what I'm trying to say is that next time you're wondering what to do on an evening when the money's tight and you don't feel like the same old, take a look around the poster boards and see what else is going on around you that you never even realised. There will always be something on – it is just up to you to find it!

## Nice and sleazy does it

### A joke is just a joke, but students won't take their Union seriously as long as it keeps managing to turn itself into one



**Sam Thomas**  
Comment Editor

As any seasoned campus observer will be aware, the Students' Union can work in mysterious ways. Rarely, however, have its limbs managed to pull so violently in opposite directions. As one metaphorical hand snatches risqué magazines from the shelves of Your:Shop, another is making jokes about pulling students. Meanwhile, University bosses look on with studied indifference, siphoning cash off into a cavernous pit a few miles to the east. What is all too easily forgotten amid the light and heat so effortlessly generated by Union officers and keen-eared campus hacks is the real object of the whole enterprise: looking after the interests of students.

All those involved with the bingo hall nudge-winkery insist that despite anything that might have been said, or any scoresheets that that were drawn up, it was all nothing more than a bit of fun; a joke easily made, and even more easily forgotten. It's perfectly likely that they're telling the truth. Moreover, anyone tempted to throw down moral standards for others must first realise that they may well end up standing accused of hypocrisy. After all, there are few traits less attractive than criticising the moral pratfalls of others whilst behaving little better one's self. So, with that in mind, what right do we have to stick our necks out and cast the first stone?

There are two good reasons, and both are matters of that most unfashionable of concepts: integrity. The first and most basic problem is the responsibilities that sabbatical officers take on when they agree to accept a salaried position representing students. What they do in their time off is their own business; they have social lives outside of student politics (at least, you really have to hope that they do) and ought to be allowed to keep them separate and private. So far, so very uncontroversial. When it comes to the welfare of students during Freshers' Week, however, what they say publicly ought to be no different to what they say behind closed doors. To promise students their welfare is being taken seriously, then to fail to do so when you think that nobody's listening, is totally indefensible.

That in itself is sanction enough for a slap on the wrist. But there's another problem, one that goes deeper, and lies at the heart of the uncomfortable truth that most students at York regard their Union as a harmless but ultimately impotent talking shop: If students elect people to

fight their corner, not to mention help to pay off their loans into the bargain, they have a right to expect that they'll stick to the principles on which they were elected. Whatever you think of covering up *Nuts* to protect Jodie Marsh's modesty, and there are plenty of reasons to think it's a pretty silly idea, it is at least easy to square with the Union's objective of promoting sexual equality. The motion was proposed by the womens' officers, who are students and work for free: there's no reason not to trust that they genuinely think it's the right thing to do by the Union's policy.

Sabbatical officers are not students. They have no reason to be on campus other than doing the job they are paid for. That's not to say they can't still be involved in student life (it would be difficult for them not to be) but it does mean they should take the Union's policies seriously, in private as much as in public. If they don't feel they can do that, they can propose whatever changes to them they like. But as long as the YUSU charter contains no explicit mention of the

right of officers to the sexual favours of students, they should leave the bingo to women of a certain age: they are, after all, much more likely to win something.

None of this is to say that sabbs aren't capable of taking their jobs seriously. That would be unfair: anyone unfortunate enough to have experienced a campus election season will know that those who reach the top of the greasy pole are immensely, perhaps even irrationally proud of their positions. It would also be dishonest to ignore the good work that the Union does: for all its shortcomings, its officers do more than anyone else to help the student body limp slowly and reluctantly towards being a vibrant community. But here's the rub: without the full and active support and, crucially, the respect of every student, the Union has no hope of ever making a lasting difference, especially with University bosses standing in the way. It hasn't even come close to securing this support, and nothing could do less to stop the rot than the fraternity-style antics of people who really ought to have grown out of it by now.



*"You're sure this is how everyone gets in with the Students' Union?"*  
Cartoon by Chris Turner

## Punching above our weight

### There are lies, damned lies and teaching statistics: still, University bosses should tread carefully over Heslington East



**Francis Boorman**  
Contributing Writer

The age-old dilemma of quality or quantity has presented itself to University of York administrators in recent times. The University is going to get significantly bigger if the planned Heslington East expansion gets the final go-ahead. But can it keep improving at the same time?

Not if some recent league table results are anything to go by. A reassessment of teaching quality figures has seen York plummet from 1st place to 57th. At the same time, York has moved from 8th to 15th place in the Times league table.

Officially, the University isn't too worried, particularly by the reassessment. And yes, it is just a rehashing of old figures; but with worried staff voicing concerns in *Nouse*, perhaps it shouldn't be dismissed out of hand.

It's worth noting that dissenters from within the University have chosen to remain anonymous. If this is a non-issue, then what are they worried about?

With all the debt involved in doing a degree, value for money is an increasingly important consideration for your average student, and some students don't feel they're getting the service they paid for.

I don't agree with this highly marketed view of education, and I don't think the quality of a degree course can be measured by the number of teaching hours. However, if standards at York don't keep pace with other universities then resource allocation has to be questioned, and the Heslington East development can't escape that questioning.

Perhaps, with more money coming in from top-up fees, it is time to consider whether teaching standards are slipping and, if so, shouldn't the problems with existing departments be corrected before any more are built?

A couple of reservations must be noted. First, teaching quality is a pretty ephemeral subject to be captured in league tables. The lower positions York now occupies are, in one instance, thanks to the re-interpretation of statistical data and, in the other, only apply to one league table amongst many. Many would question the value of league tables to begin with.

Second, it's not quite as simple an issue as taking money from construction projects and spending it on teaching. A

balance must be struck. In the past, York has figured in the top ten of most newspaper league tables and continues to do extremely well. That should make everyone here proud, but at the same time the University must be vigilant. It has never fared particularly well in comparisons of staff-to-student ratios and per-student spending on facilities and equipment.

This would suggest that York punches above its financial weight, which means it should be even more careful about where money is spent. This is a teaching institution, and the students need to take precedence over business developments and conference facilities. There are complaints that Heslington East is working to a different agenda. If York is to continue being a top university these complaints must be answered.

There's no point in building Heslington East to secure the future of the University if the present isn't being properly looked after. Maintaining excellent academic standards is the only way to persuade the brightest and the best students to continue coming here.

So, is the University aiming for size or stature? It looks like the decision to grow outwards has already been made. Let's hope the University can remain committed to growing upwards at the same time.

## Shooting themselves in the foot

### FreeSoc's brand of anarchism might make a lot of racket, but it won't change the world, or our insatiable appetite for killing



**Ben Martin**  
Contributing Writer

FreeSoc break into Heslington Hall during a recruitment presentation hosted by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, a Government agency responsible for military technology. They make a racket and throw cake around: an unmitigated triumph for ethical and human-rights conscious students.

A self-styled "anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist, activist society", FreeSoc, stand, in my view, as the quintessence of everything wrong with student politicisation. Their hackneyed anti-Bush-Blair-Oil-Iraq-Conspiracyism has become such common pub-chat currency that it has lost all political resonance. Their garbled anti-everything stance means that the act of protest itself has become more important to them than the cause being

protested. The Heslington Hall demonstration is a perfect example: what was it about? One would be tempted to suggest that they object to the University Careers Service's association with DTSL. The literature they handed out at the protest focuses on Britain's arms export policy, the Iraq war, and even the training of Osama bin Laden by the CIA, all testament to the woolliness promoted by their brand of anarchism.

One gets the feeling that FreeSoc may in part have been protesting against the mere existence of 'war' and 'weapons', debates that are both incredibly anachronistic (it's not the 60s any more) and ultimately pointless. Even the most beautifully baked chocolate cake will fail to satisfy man's insatiable appetite for conflict and killing. FreeSoc, either unclear about its position, or else simply unable to express it, refused an offer from Career Services to present its case to the assembly. Clearly, the great coup, provoking a visit from the police, was enough to render the protest a success, despite leaving students none the wiser about the debate.

I see a subtle yet important differ-

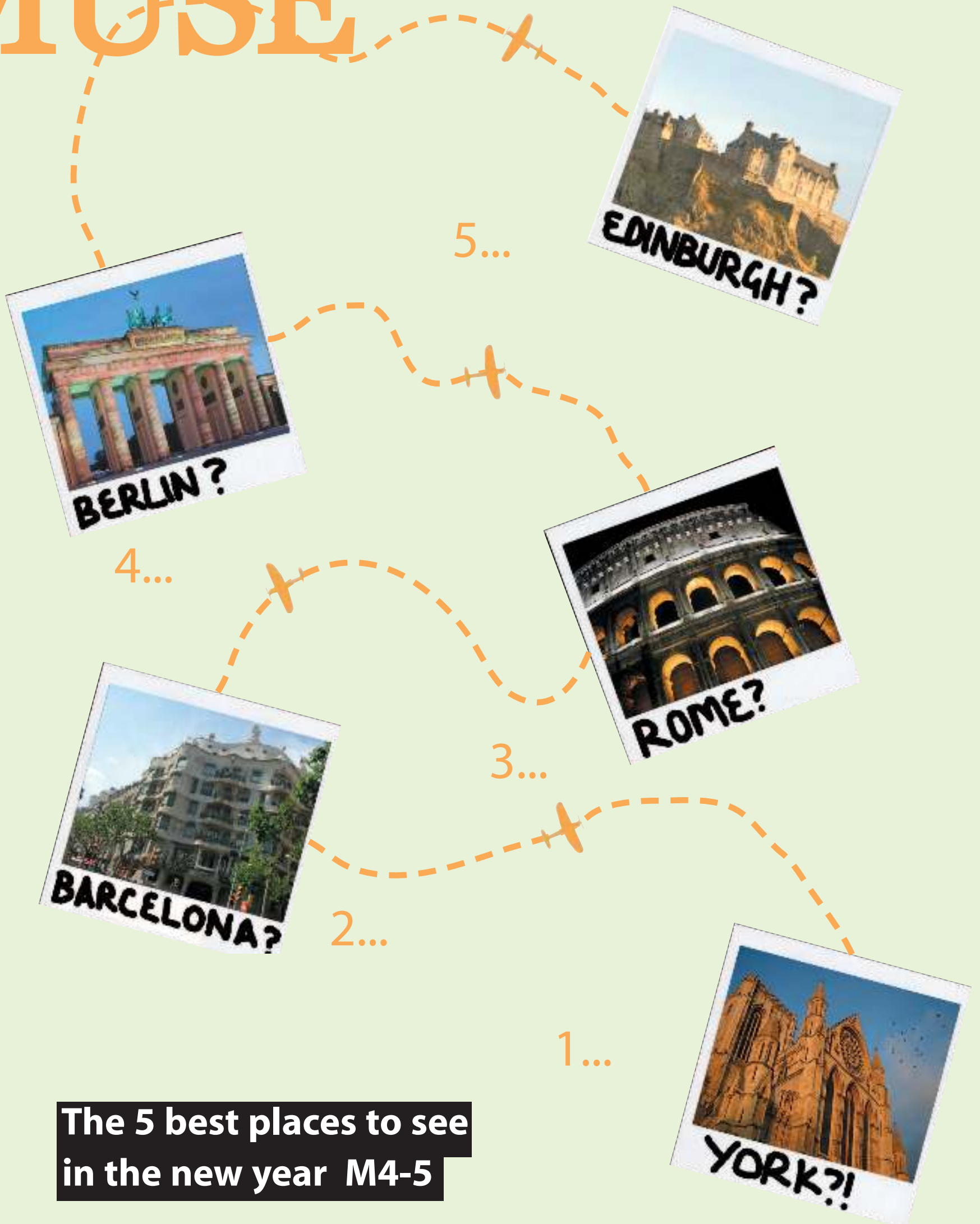
ence between Careers Services' association with DTSL and the issue that arose last year surrounding the University's investment in BAE systems. The latter was an issue that concerned all students and forced them to decide, as members of the University of York, whether they wanted to be associated with an ethically dubious company. DTSL's presence in Heslington Hall was not such an issue.

The Careers Service has a duty to provide as much help as possible in finding jobs for graduates. Students must have the power to challenge the ethical policy of the University, but equally the University must refrain from asserting any type of moral agenda onto its students.

The presence of arms manufacturers on campus is a highly charged issue. Clearly most of us would like as little association as possible with such companies, but the debate is complex and multi-faceted. Groups such as FreeSoc simply hijack such issues to feed their narcissistic desire for publicity, and have succeeded in obscuring the debate behind improvised balaclavas and badly drawn banners.



# MUSE



**The 5 best places to see  
in the new year M4-5**

# Making the deal of his life

90s icon Noel Edmonds is back on our screens and proving a greater success than ever before. **Toby Green** talks to the bearded wonder about his extraordinary comeback

It may not come as too much of a surprise, but Noel Edmonds is a pretty contented man, and so he should be. Following a six year absence from our TV screens after the axing of Noel's House Party in 1999 (he denies that this time was a wilderness: "I was farming in Devon, I was running a number of companies and I was enjoying life very much indeed") his career was reborn; he was chosen to front Channel 4's smash-hit game show *Deal or No Deal*, in 2005. His positivity is obvious from the start. When I enquire how he is, his first response is, "You know what? It's pretty good being me at the moment."

As honest as he has been about his self-belief and success, he's been equally truthful in addressing his lows. In various papers he has openly discussed the recent deaths of his mother, aunt and 20 year marriage. "The thing is, I would rather talk about my problems myself rather than having it distorted by tabloid journalists. I've had setbacks like everyone else, and I don't think there's anything wrong with admitting that; although the image may be to the contrary, it has been tough at times. I've had a few ups and downs, but fortunately for me the downs have been few and the ups have been pretty high."

His latest venture is promoting his new book, *Positively Happy*, in which he extols the virtue of 'Cosmic Ordering', a New Age belief that involves connecting to the Cosmos, using its energy

to make your desires come true. The blurb on the back of the book claims that Edmonds's "belief in himself and the cosmos have brought him back to our screens in *Deal or No Deal*." I asked him whether he had encountered any, God forbid, cynical reactions to his crusade. "You know what? The feedback has been extremely positive. I make it clear at the beginning of the book that I'm not an expert or a guru. We live in a challenging time: we've got terrorism, worries about multi-cultural Britain and people are unsettled by their neighbours. It can be really easy to be negative, and all the book says is if you can find a positive focus you will have a better time in life."

The belief system has worked wonders for him, at least. He's recently signed an extension to his *Deal or No Deal* contract, and he predicts that its runaway success can be sustained with him still at the helm, at least for the foreseeable future.

"I think it would be a very brave or foolish person who could predict the show's life expectancy, but I'm certainly having a good time and the audience reaction remains very positive. My career is completely focused on *Deal or No Deal*, and why wouldn't it be? It is so successful and people have been generous about my role, so what else can I take on?"

One key - and often ridiculed - aspect of the show is the strategies that the contestants implement in order to choose the boxes that they open, attempting to add some façade of skill to what is essentially a game of luck. But Edmonds denied being as incredulous as many of the show's detractors about the reasons that crop up. "I love it, I absolutely love it, all the analysis and spiritualism. However, as far as I can see it's reasonable to say no system has ever worked. The only one I've admired is when a chap turned up with a Chinese takeaway menu, started with the prawn balls and worked his way through to the sesame seeds."

Although *Deal or No Deal* has built a considerable student following in its teatime slot, many in our generation (or at least those of us who spent Saturday nights in front of the TV) will fondly recall Noel as the host of the (I suggest to Noel "ground breaking") Noel's House Party.

"I think House Party has had quite an influence on the entertainment genre, I mean Ant and Dec have made no secret of the fact that on Saturday

Night Takeaway they lift a lot of our ideas, and they do it very well. I did always think history would be kind to House Party and just six years on people are now bemoaning the fact there aren't more shows like that for all the family. I'm very comfortable with it, although maybe not so comfortable about the pink and yellow thing."

Ah yes, Mr Blobby. Apparently the chart-topping performing artist and primary mischief maker on Noel's House Party is as detested by Edmonds himself (who owns the rights but claims not to have had any part in his creation) as by those who ever had the misfortune to be exposed to his music (after 'Mr Blobby' reached number one in December 1993 the follow up,



"My jumper days are happily over. I'm a complete fashion disaster to be honest; I work on the idea that fashion is cyclical and I'll come back in"

'Christmas in Blobbyland', managed number two) or the computer games that followed.

"I don't think I will be forever haunted by Mr Blobby, although if I am I hope it will be because he's still a very big commercial success" admits Edmonds. "Until recently people would shout 'Blobby Blobby Blobby!' at me when I walked down the street, and now they shout 'Deal or No Deal!', and I'm much more comfortable with that."

Edmonds' entertainment legacy stretches still further back: he started off at Radio Luxembourg in 1968 before hosting, amongst other shows, the Radio 1 Saturday breakfast show, Swap Shop and the recently-defunct Top of the Pops. Although he finds it sad, the demise of the latter has not come as a complete surprise.

"The reason that it lost its appeal is pretty straight-forward. The whole climate had changed, time just passed it by and I'm surprised it lasted as long as it did. I have to say that ever since I

stopped presenting it, it has been in decline." I give a nervous chuckle, wondering if his self-confidence knows even greater bounds. "And for once that's with my tongue firmly in my cheek."

He certainly recognises his own achievements, and you can see why people can gain a dislike for him on the grounds of what they perceive to be arrogance, but the way he deals with the low points in his life suggests that he is simply honest about himself. However, one area which he doesn't address with confidence is his unlikely status as a sex symbol. Although I quickly apologise when I describe this status as "unlikely" he protests with a chuckle. "Nah it's OK, you should stick with unlikely."

"I am most grateful, now that I am single, for the attention of certain members of the female sex, but I do get sent some really peculiar letters and objects, some of which I suspect have been used." He reads my mind when he suggests we shouldn't go into the specifics. "I've got teenage daughters and they just cringe whenever I say anything of a personal nature. I've been asked before about the most peculiar place I'd ever had sex, and I said Warrington. I think that's as far as Noel Edmonds can go on the subject."

Sex isn't the only controversial topic on which he regularly fields questions. For many the 'Edmonds beard' is his defining feature. "Yeah it's strange, I don't know why people are so obsessed with my beard, I really don't know. I always get criticisms like that though: people make reference to my height, they make reference to my beard and they make reference to the fact that I've got a lot of hair on my head, which I'm most grateful for. Thinking about it though, maybe it's because it's changed very much down the years."

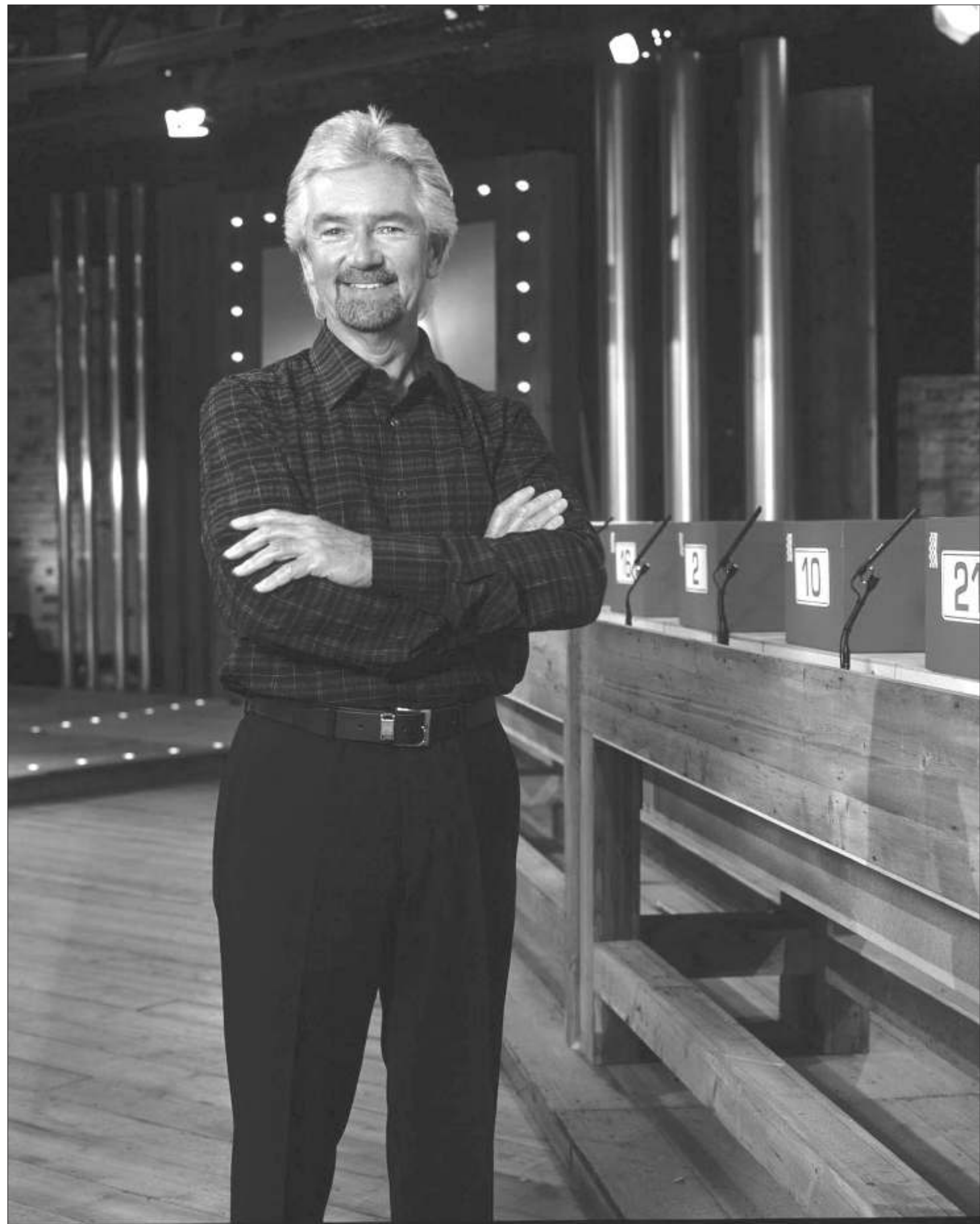
I suggest that to distract attention from his facial hair, he should bring back the equally notorious jumpers. "Haha, my jumper days are happily over. The show we recorded for Bonfire Night had everyone wearing woolly jumpers, and the Boxing Day show has a woolly jumper gag, but I don't participate in that any more."

"I'm happy with my look at the moment on *Deal or No Deal*; it has to be practical as we do three shows a day. To be honest I'm a bit of a fashion disaster and I'm very lucky that my wardrobe lady chooses all my shirts. I work on the idea that fashion is cyclical, and therefore one day I've got to be fashionable as things come round. It's safer that way."

Without wanting to sound like Noel's biggest fan, I find the fact that he is so aware of his place in 'culture' but refuses to understate his own success and talent somewhat appealing. Like Chris Tarrant and Who Wants to be a Millionaire, Noel Edmonds is synonymous with *Deal or No Deal* and makes it the show it is. Love him or hate him, it seems the latest ascendancy in his career is set to continue for a little while longer.

**Positively Happy: Cosmic Ways to Change Your Life** by Noel Edmonds is available to buy now at RRP £9.99.

Nouse has made a deal with Noel to give away a copy of his new book, *Positively Happy*, as well as the accompanying CD. To have a chance of making your life happier through the cosmos, just answer: On which satirical programme was Noel duped into pledging his support for a campaign against 'cake' (a made-up drug)? Send answers to socs12@york.ac.uk.



# Budget breaks for New

New Year's Eve doesn't have to mean kissing a spotty drunk in your local. **Emma Gawen** explores the alternatives

If you're anything like me, you will be looking to this New Year's Eve with a feeling of dread rather than excitement. Last year I spent the evening rather thrillingly in my local Wetherspoons, which I think justifies my unenthusiastic attitude toward this annual event. This year though, I will be ignoring the cries of local environmental activist Rose Rickford and jetting off somewhere exciting to see the New Year in.

To get the most out of New Year travel you need to embrace budget airlines, not be over-bothered about where you sleep and be flexible. Flights to Prague too expensive? No problem. Just look for somewhere else to go.

The beauty of spending New Year abroad is that once you get there, you don't necessarily have to spend lots of money to have a good time. You can save money on taxis by staying at a hostel in the centre of town, and alcohol is cheaper too. Add to this the excitement of being in a new place and you won't have any trouble having a good night. You can even stay in your city of choice for a few days afterwards and soak up the culture. Again, this doesn't have to be expensive: you can sample a city for free if you do your research and avoid museum admission fees. What better way to bring in the New Year?

## Rome

Rome is a place of excess: beautiful and passionate people, a wealth of architectural wonders and an incredible cultural heritage. With the short time available you could attempt to see a bit of everything, but I would suggest you pick your poison: churches and cathedrals, the Vatican City, art galleries, roman wonders, or even some kind of Dan Brown quest. However, even better is to think like an Italian: kick back, relax and enjoy fantastic food and wine in beautiful surroundings. Any self-respecting Italian would spend at least three hours over a decent meal, so be prepared to do some serious relaxation. Avoid the main tourist areas for eating, as you may well end up with an over-priced pizza. Seek out a traditional trattoria for good value and delicious food - the translation troubles will be well worth while. Or if that's out of your budget, go into a local super-

market and buy some bread, mozzarella and salami, then eat in style at your chosen viewpoint, all for roughly £2.

**Must Sees:** The Colosseum, the Trevi fountain and St Peters Basilica.

**Nightlife and New Year's Eve:** The popular option on New Year's Eve is the Piazza del Popolo, with the usual crowds, music and fireworks. There's also a concert of classical music on the square in front of the Presidential Palace, the Quirinale. For nightlife head to Monte Testaccio. Be warned: Italians are known for their style for a reason, so dress smartly. Think of it as an opportunity to dress up a bit more than you would for Ziggy's.

**Getting There:** Travel from December 30 until January 4 could cost you as little as £45 with Ryanair. Try staying in the hostels in the centre of town for New Year's Eve and then moving further out to more budget options for the rest of your stay.

## Berlin

Berlin is a thoroughly modern city with a reputation for buzzing nightlife and fantastic culture. It is also a very old European capital with a chequered past. The city's charm lies in this juxtaposition of the past - with its Prussian statues and harsh communist facades - and the present, a vibrant and exciting example of modern urban development and architecture. Be sure to visit the last remaining parts of the Berlin Wall, whilst historians should take the time to visit Checkpoint Charlie or the Jewish Museum. To sample the more modern delights of Berlin, visit the Reichstag Dome and Potsdamer Platz, home to high-rise offices, shops and restaurants. For a truly budget visit, just wander where your legs take you, as this is one of the best cities to simply explore and absorb.

**Must Sees:** The Reichstag, the

Brandenburg Gate and the Communist television tower in Alexanderplatz

**Nightlife and New Year's Eve:** Berlin plays host to the world's largest open air New Year's Eve party. The Silvester celebration is held along Strasse des 17 Juni, and is a massive street party stretching 2km from the Brandenburg Gate to the Victory

**Clockwise from top: New Year's Eve celebrations in Edinburgh, Berlin and Rome**



## Useful information for the New Year Traveller

**www.skyscanner.net**

Search for, compare prices and book flights from a variety of cheap airline companies.

**www.hostelworld.com**

Find and book hostels all over the world. Also features country and city guides, and a network of other travellers.

**www.lonelyplanet.com**

Find information on pretty much any country in the world and exchange ideas and tips in the Thorn Tree forum.

# Year's Eve

Column, with food stands, beer tents, live music, DJs and a spectacular fireworks display at midnight. The party goes on all through the night, and is a loud, colourful event: last year over a million people partied into the early morning. Best of all, it's completely free. Make sure you get there early as it's incredibly popular. To find out more visit [www.silvester-berlin.de](http://www.silvester-berlin.de) or pick up Exberliner for the very latest bar, club and restaurant reviews.

**Getting There:** Travelling from the 30th until the 4th could cost you around £90 with Ryanair. Book accommodation as soon as possible for the best deals.

## Barcelona

Barcelona is the city of Gaudí, and if you visit here your first stop should be La Sagrada Família, his awe-inspiring fantasy cathedral. Construction started 100 years ago and continues today. But there is much more to Barcelona than Gaudí. It's a busy, noisy, dynamic city, buzzing with enthusiasm and a passion for the good things in life. Barcelona is not a city for museums, so try taking a walking tour. Make sure you visit the Gothic quarter and lose track of time in the maze of small streets and alleyways, stopping at a small tapas bar for lunch. If you want something more mainstream, try Las Ramblas, a busy boulevard that has enough shops, cafes and restaurants to keep you occupied all day. The beach is also the perfect (and free) place to drink and rest after a long day.

**Must Sees:** La Sagrada Família, L'Aquarium, and the Picasso Museum, which houses over 3500 works of art.

**Nightlife and New Year's Eve:** There are no big publically-organised New Year's Eve celebrations in Barcelona, but this doesn't mean you can't have a good time. To welcome in the new year in true Spanish style, spend the evening eating good food, drinking cheap wine and soaking up the ambiance. The party doesn't get started until much later than in England, when the crowds gather in the bars and clubs of Las Ramblas.

**Getting There:** Travel from the 31st until the 5th for just £45 with Easyjet.

## York

If you have exams or dissertations, or are simply really short of cash this holiday, you may just end up back in York. All is not lost, however. York is one of the premier tourist cities in England, and there's plenty to see and do. Try taking a walk around the City Walls, or visiting the Minster Gardens. If you haven't yet visited Betty's, stop in for a cup of tea before you head home. The easy option for New Year's Eve is to have a house party. It's cheap, it's fun, and it's the one time of year when your neighbours aren't going to complain about the noise. If you don't fancy the post-party clean-up, there are plenty of options in the city too. Lots of bars are

running special events, and to end the night in style, take some champagne/cheap alcohol and join the crowds waiting by the Minster to see in the New Year.

**Must sees:** Central Hall at dawn, the physics block.

**New Years Eve Events:** There's a Black and White Ball at the Gallery and most likely an event at Toffs. The alternative option is a Rock 'n' Roll New Year's Eve at Fibbers. Tickets are £10 on the door.

**Getting there:** Walk out your front door, or get the FTR for £2.50 return.

## Edinburgh

For the ultimate New Year's Eve experience head to Edinburgh's Hogmanay festival. If you're lucky, you'll know someone whose floor you can crash on. If not, with beds going for over £50 a night it may not be possible to sample the full four day festival. However, if you want to have an epic New Year's Eve and feel happy sleeping



**'A discerning attitude towards your airline, combined with any kind of concern for air pollution, will get you nowhere'**

in train stations, there's a train back to York at 8am on New Year's Day. The city will be packed with visitors enjoying a party atmosphere, so find yourself a bar, soak up the ambiance and then head out at midnight to see the 7 Hills Fireworks. There are launch sites across the city including the castle, and can be seen for miles around, so stumble out of the pub at midnight and you'll be sure to catch site of them.

**Must sees:** Edinburgh castle, the Royal Mile.

**New Years Eve Events:** Buy tickets quick for the ultimate street party. The Royal Bank Street Party hosts 3 stages: An indie stage (featuring the Fratellis), a folk stage, and a cheesy pop stage which will surely be the favourite of any self-respecting York student. Tickets cost £5. Live acts from 10pm-1am.

**Getting There:** A standard return fare with a travel card costs £43.90, but if you book in advance you could get there and back for £25.

## The scientific briefing with Luke Boulter



### Space can be so cold and alone: Pluto's ordeal

**A**s a biologist, I know that a scientist has to work hard; there is a lot to remember, but the physicists' workload has just been chopped back a little with the reclassification of Pluto. They only have to memorise the names of eight planets now, instead of the weighty nine they once had to contend with.

On August 24 2006, a vote by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) at their 2006 General Assembly saw Pluto stripped of its planet status. For fans of Pluto, it was a sad occasion. But it came about because astronomers have never really formalised what a planet actually is - until now.

The debate started after the recent discovery of new objects in our solar system that were larger than Pluto. A Planet Definition Committee, comprised of historians, writers and astronomers met in July to draft a new planetary definition. The much-publicised proposal to add three new planets to our solar system failed to gain approval by astronomers.

A celestial body in our solar system must now meet three conditions to be a planet: It must be in orbit around the sun; have sufficient mass for its self-gravity to overcome rigid body forces and assume a hydrostatic equilibrium (nearly round) shape, and have enough mass to clear the neighbourhood around its orbit.

Pluto does not have enough mass to satisfy the third condition, but it does fit into a new category of 'dwarf planet', which describes a non-satellite object without enough mass to clear its orbit. Of the three new planet contenders - Ceres, Eris and Charon - Ceres and Eris have also been placed in this category and Charon simply remains Pluto's moon.

It has long been clear that Pluto is different from other planets. Not only is it much smaller - about 1600 miles in diameter - but its elongated orbit is tilted in relation to other planets, causing it to be nearer to the sun than Neptune for part of its 248-year journey.

The discovery of an object nicknamed 'Xena' (but now officially named 'Eris') put Pluto under pressure. Using the Hubble Space Telescope, they showed that this icy Kuiper Belt object, 10 billion miles from the sun, was slightly larger than Pluto. Astronomers reasoned that if Pluto is a planet, so is Eris. But what if, using ever-improving instruments, they make further discoveries in the Kuiper Belt? To avoid a large and confusing number of planets, many of which might not merit the title, the committee chose a more restrictive definition.

By declaring Pluto the first in a special subcategory, astronomers may have hoped to console Pluto fans, but online petitions indicate that they have failed. At the meeting, disagreements were also evident, most notably between dynamicists and geologists.

The meeting failed in a close vote

to approve the name 'Plutonians' for the dwarf planets orbiting beyond Neptune, which was an alternative to the original suggestion, 'Plutons', to which geologists objected. Owen Gingerich, chair of the committee, said that the process of arriving at a workable resolution was like diplomacy in the Middle East. Of 10,000 astronomers, only 428 were present for the vote, a minority voted on the last day to add the third clarifying criterion.

For 100 hours after the decision was made, a petition circulated amongst planetary scientists and astronomers as evidence of the strength of feeling. It said, "We, as planetary scientists and astronomers, do not agree with the IAU's definition of a planet, nor will we use it. A better definition is needed." The petition was signed by 300 prominent planetary science experts.

Even Gingerich is not satisfied with the new category of 'dwarf' planets, describing the term as linguistically preposterous. Likewise, Alan Stern, Principal Investigator of NASA's New Horizons mission to Pluto, describes the decision as a 'terrible mess' and dislikes the unscientific idea of limiting the number of planets. Although the third criterion is intended to cover objects orbiting in the Asteroid or Kuiper Belts, Stern claims that other planets have also failed to absorb or knock away their orbital debris.

But coming up with a new definition was no easy matter. The committee was specifically charged with considering social and historical context when coming up with defining criteria. The choice of 'roundness' as a criterion for planetary status reflects the committee's sensitivity to the broad cultural significance and use of the term. Likewise, moons were maintained as distinct entities from planets.

Robin Catchpole of Cambridge University Institute of Astronomy believes that the new definition is the lesser of two evils. Although he would have preferred to keep Pluto on historical grounds, he had been unhappy about the original proposal to allow 12 planets. He would have preferred the term 'minor planet' to the term 'dwarf planet', but believes that the names given to objects are not too important.

Perhaps the IAU's task was an impossible one. As far as the public was concerned, the scientists were in the familiar position of being unable to provide the certain and watertight definition required of them. Conversely, some astronomers feel that they accommodated cultural context at the expense of good science.

With the IAU currently considering a dozen candidate dwarf planets, the argument about how to categorise them may have only just begun, and where does this leave Pluto? Probably just in a cold dark place somewhere teetering only just on the edge of our defined universe!

# ‘I’m glad I’m not in...’

Lepers in Halifax? Posh boys in James? Losers in Langwith? Fresher and ‘Alcuinite’ **Collette Kerrigan** asks whether there’s truth in college stereotypes on campus

“Pretend you’re not from Alcuin” were the wise, if slightly worrying words said to me by a third year on my first nerve-wracking night in York. Being a naïve fresher, I didn’t understand quite what he meant. Great accommodation, lovely people - what could be the problem?

Later, after a week of what the cynical might call ‘community spirit force feeding’, I began to see his point. While being encouraged to identify with and cheer for the college we had moved into a mere 24 hours ago, we were also, absurdly, warned by college veterans to keep a low profile around certain students. Having not ventured too far outside our Alcuinite clique, rumours about the other colleges had begun to circulate like wild-fire: did James College really have cleaners who did their washing for them? Did Goodricke’s infamous Cell Block C actually have iron bars in the windows? The ‘Alcuin Freshers’ Guide’ was particularly good at labelling college stereotypes: Wentworth’s hostility towards undergrads, Halifax’s cliquy tendencies, Langwith - “the weedy little brother of Derwent”. It was only when I met someone from Derwent who, with surprising sincerity, asked whether or not our flats all had private butlers, that I realised what the Alcuin label meant, and it dawned on me that perhaps these other stereotypes were just as ridiculous.

But from where do these stereotypes, as old as each of the colleges themselves, derive? Without wanting to over-hype the issue, I put it down to institutionalised college rivalry. Whether it’s Derwent hoodies - in your eye-line wherever you go on campus - or Langwith’s vocal pride in their “fit duck” mascot, as students we are constantly reminded of where our loyalties should lie. That is not to say we are openly hostile towards others, but most of us certainly have a soft spot towards the college that adopted us at the start of our university life.

Some colleges have a history of making radical statements of college patriotism. Back in 1990, Alcuin’s issues with the Students’ Union encouraged an unsuccessful Alcuin Separatist Movement. In an attempt to isolate themselves from the rest of the University, they painted a giant pair of scissors across University Road, dividing Alcuin’s green pastures from the rest of the concrete campus. Needless to say, their covert operations didn’t achieve much, but it definitely put their name on the map. The Separatists’ activities were resurrected last year by the new and improved Alcuin Venom, who tore up turf on the quad to form the letters ‘AV’.

Alcuinites may suffer from the semi-seclusion of being situated on the



other side of University Road, but they are currently blessed with the residence of Vanbrugh students in Blocks P and Q. Far be it from Alcuin students to withdraw into their own community, the presence of these affectionately named “Valcuins” has eased their solitude and, more importantly, created a

**College rivalries taken to messy levels. Photo: Georgi Mabey**

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‘It was only when someone from Derwent asked if all our flats had private butlers that I began to realise what the Alcuin label meant’

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ground for harmless rivalry on their doorsteps. Vortex balls thrown around at ungodly hours and baking powder missiles have made for an interesting night when no one can be bothered to face the delights of B. Henrys.

Other colleges have made attempts to achieve recognition through insult-

ing other colleges. The melodic chant “You Can’t Spell Goodricke Without Dick” can often be heard by groups of intoxicated James students on a night out in town, but their apple pie attack on the same college was taken as light humour. Similarly, some students finally found an advantage in the cold weather last Christmas when they declared a snowball war on Langwith.

A Tuesday night at Toffs will inevitably involve rapturous screaming whenever the DJ shouts a college name and many go to the extent of wearing their college sports kit on the dance floor. It’s when the all-consuming world of Facebook becomes involved that you realise how engrained the rivalry is. After succumbing to the addictive website, you will find the majority of York students are members of a group that either celebrates their own college or slates another, such as the cleverly named “I’m glad I’m not in Halifax/Alcuin”. Their reasons for this, however, are far less obvious. Is it Halifax’s distance from the rest of the University that makes us ridicule them?

Or are we just insecure about our own college-worthiness?

On top of this, some even stretch to inter-block rivalry, wherein blocks or flats form cliques and pit themselves against each other. For example, Goodricke’s B-block is generally laughed at by other blocks for being the ‘quiet’ block. Low-key block parties feature highly on campus, but also have the potential to go wrong. A few weeks ago, Alcuin L block organised an event that, strictly speaking, was prohibited. As with many college parties, this was advertised on the legendary Facebook. Big mistake. Students from an external college, having come across and been unimpressed by this “exclusive” party, reported it to Alcuin’s supervisors, and thus prevented the event from ever taking place.

The popularity of the various JCRs is an important part of the cultivation of college spirit. It goes without saying that the bar scene is a large part of university life and this makes many people believe that James’ lack of student bar must lead to poor college unity. By contrast, Goodricke’s “Mc.Q’s” is a big hit among most students and with its pub theme and general lively atmosphere, they are likely to congregate here on a week night flaunting their “squalor spirit”. Derwents bar’s popularity generates a large turnover, resulting in more money to spend on college spirit necessities - namely their copious items of DCUK merchandise.

Whilst York’s colleges seem to have struck a good balance not prevalent elsewhere, individual college events such as Planet V and Club D are a potential threat to this harmony. Oxford University stands as a warning to those too immersed in college life. Along with college “bops”, tutorials and lectures are largely based within the college, so students often feel no need to venture any further. Is this really the sort of narrow-minded reputation we’d like to fall in to?

It is possible that York’s ‘friendly banter’ is becoming a little unfriendly, and perhaps we should heed warnings from other universities that have taken the joke too far. Durham’s song “who the f\*\*\* are Hatfield college”, while characteristically witty, has led a large part of the University to ostracise them.

I’d like to believe that York hasn’t quite reached that stage, and that our college division is far more tongue-in-cheek. At the risk of falling into strained clichés, I’d like to believe that York’s healthy rivalry paradoxically cultivates a collective University spirit, and that while each student has a corner to represent, each student wears the York Uni jumper with pride. Yet the fact remains that whilst I won’t be pretending not to come from Alcuin at all, I won’t be shouting it from the rooftops either.

# These heels are made for walking?

High heels give joy and pain to fashionistas worldwide. Trainer-devotee **Emma Fite-Wassilak** trades her Converse for stilettos for a week

**A**ccused of female stereotyping, viewed as constructs of a patriarchal society and even compared to the painful practice of Chinese foot binding, high heels have certainly tip-toed that proverbial line. But is slipping on a pair of stilettos really succumbing to subjugation by men? Granted, wearing heels seems geared towards attracting male attention; they simply make women look sexier - lengthening the legs, lifting the bum, making your hips sway - you get the picture. However, I know plenty of men who dislike heels (though most of them, admittedly, are vertically challenged) and the recent trend for flats has quashed any claims that women are expected to wear heels.

They may be painful but they're also, quite simply, beautiful - and this, in my opinion, is why so many women stockpile hoards of unworn heels. I myself have seven pairs of heels sitting in my wardrobe - and exactly the same number of pairs of Converse, which I live in. So I undertook a week of 'training' myself to walk in heels, wanting to test my opinions and others' attitudes towards me - and finally decide whether these beautiful yet painful shoes are worth the trouble.

Aside from comments about my newly-imposing height (I'm 5'8" normally, so in stilettos I'm about 6ft), the first reactions from my housemates all focused on how good and "leggy" I look. Not a bad start.

Imbued with confidence, I head for my first serious stomping ground - Fulford. Immediately I feel uncomfortably conspicuous. As well as towering over the majority of sensible shoe-wearing pedestrians ambling by me, I'm far from used to the resounding clack emanating from my feet and I feel as though I must be - literally - putting my foot in it.

Since the shoes force me to take tiny, deliberate steps, I feel more dithering than dainty and to top it all off I'm suffering from the internal turmoil of being more frustrated with myself than the pakes of tourists in York city centre. While blushing furiously at my ineptitude, I notice another girl in heels walking at a normal pace, and suddenly I can empathize with Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon in *Some Like It Hot*, watching Marilyn power past. Not quite how I envisaged it.

Despite my trusty Converse stashed in my backpack, I am determined: I teeter slowly on, simultaneously concentrating on keeping my heels on and attempting to hide the look of consternation on my face. Regardless of whether or not they are, any passing person seems to be judging

me and laughing. On my way, I notice I get a lot more stares from the male population than usual (or maybe I'm just more aware of it in heels). Forced to scamper (that's right, not strut) across a road to avoid a right-turner, I eventually get to Aldi. Even though my feet twitch when I stand still, I feel proud. (Until I almost fall over a display, and remember that this is just the beginning.) On the way home I start to acquire a slightly halting, but consistent, rhythm. The next day my arches and calves ache ferociously and I'm suddenly aware of muscles I never knew existed.

My next attempt is shorter, to campus. Though I thought I'd got the hang of it (or at least of avoiding the embarrassment of spontaneous falls), I still find myself halting awkwardly to reinsert my heels back into my shoes. Remembering that you're supposed to walk heel-to-toe, I attempt it - and catch myself repeating "heel... heel... heel" in my head with each step. Of course, as soon as I alert myself to the fact, my foot pops out of the shoe. On campus I tend to get startled looks. Could it be: a) I look too dressed up - heels are worn by most women on nights out, after all, b) my imposing height, or c) my stunning beauty? I decide it's option c) and accordingly adopt a look of confidence in my own aura of cool. It may be an act, but in heels like this, who can tell?

Next up, ankle straps (the days of my foot popping out at inopportune times are no more!). Now stepping more confidently and less gingerly, I can't gauge whether the difference is in me or the staring eyes, but I definitely feel less judged and more respected.

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**'I envisaged heels as a male invention for the lazy men who didn't want to bend down for a kiss and the leery ones who couldn't chase their victims'**

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The height feels like a pedestal, empowering, and the sounds of my footsteps reverberating against the concrete no longer embarrass me; instead, they seem to be an audible testimony to my power.

Things that made me nervous about heels now seem to be the best bits. The major issue, the pain, is still present. That too, however, diminishes with practice and a little Panadol. By the end of the week my calves no longer ache, and the only reminder of the so-



**Wearing high heels proves a challenge.**  
Photo: Georgi Mabee

called torture of wearing heels is a slight tenderness of the balls and the arches of my feet.

The power (and problems) connected to the wearing of heels is partially from the physical elevation - you can't use body language to hide yourself. In part, however, the elation comes from a feeling of raw sexuality connected to heels: it's not for nothing that pole dancers, street walkers and even Egyptian belly dancers all wear them. Perhaps it has something to do with the power that the sexuality of heels gives women, the knowledge that manipulation is possible by highlighting 'feminine virtues'. It can't have been for nothing that seduction by the use of heels was punished in the same manner as witchcraft in Puritan Massachusetts.

Admittedly, I used to envisage heels as a purely male-serving invention, specifically for the lazy men who didn't want to bend down as far for a kiss and for the leery ones who didn't want to chase their runaway victims when they tried. (Trust me, Carrie Bradshaw is the only woman who can run fast in heels, and that's only after multiple takes.)

The invention of heels for vanity's sake actually turns out to be female. Does this mean that women are subjugated to such an extent that it is just ingrained? Maybe in the old days, but for the modern woman, it's a matter of harnessing the seductive power of fem-

inity and stomping rough-shod over patriarchal conceptions and expectations. Since the 1980s women have been using heels as a means of repossessing the 'feminine', of playing with identity as an act of rebellion. 'Power dressing' is a common concept, although these days it's mostly associated with the drab suits of female politicians. Heels are a means of expressing authority and independence: if you can conquer the pain of walking in stilettos, what can't you do?

On the other hand, the persistent choice to wear heels may permanently wreck your feet. The entire experience of feels like a performance. Interestingly, it was Greek actors who donned the first platforms to improve visibility for their audiences.

Maybe that explains my elation, mixed with acute embarrassment, at wearing them; it requires huge consciousness of self (and banishment of self-consciousness in the conventional sense) and feels intensely self-preening. This is not to mention that the attention makes me feel somewhat dirty, as if I were somehow prostituting myself.

But it's that very charged attention that brings so much power to the experience and makes it so enjoyable. Despite getting slowly accustomed to walking in them, I won't be switching my everyday Converse for heels. Now that I can walk in them, however, I'll savour the power whenever I do decide to unleash it.

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# NanFlory



## The ha-ha ditches of student life

**S**chadenfreude: the malicious enjoyment of the misfortune of others. It has always been a resoundingly German concept, in that it has not been British. The word's import into the English language in its original form is a sort of linguistic get out of jail free card to avoid cultural ownership of a rather disconcerting emotional response. A very British hand fits into that German glove; our instinctive recognition of Schadenfreude forces us to admit that the foreign label is just there to grant us a little bit of exonerating distance. Distance which, I've recently discovered, we can claim NO LONGER! As it turns out, the British representation of Schadenfreude just happens to be cunningly disguised in architectural terminology.

Brought to my attention by December's edition of *Vogue* magazine – apparently it's being resurrected as a “stylishly invisible alternative to a fence, for those with a garden and a park” – the ha-ha originates in the 18th century, and proves the vindictive streak I've always suspected in landscapers. Designed by Charles Bridgeman, it is “an ‘invisible’ ditch, first used to separate Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park.” Its name comes from the possibility of the ditch being disguised, an unsuspecting promenade falling into it – evoking ‘ha-ha’ in the poor thing's audience. Now isn't that just Schadenfreude embodied?

Excited by this revelation, I skipped off to tell my friends Jood and Methane all about it. “Guys!” I said, filled with the buzz of superiority which comes from knowing something other people don't know.

“I've found evidence of a native, organic construction of Schadenfreude! It's this thing called a ha-ha ditch!”

“Wow,” said Methane but Jood cut me short.

“Oh a ha-ha, of course I know what a ha-ha is.” My buzz was silenced as my hopes of winning a round of one-upmanship were quashed. It was as if I'd unknowingly stumbled straight into a

metaphorical ha-ha of my own and Jood was staring down at me, laughing away.

The whole episode got me thinking that the last year of university is full of these metaphorical ha-has. Everyone's lives stand to go in a totally new direction after graduation and we're secretly all hoping that it will be a good, successful one. A direction that might lead us to having to face *Vogue's* dilemma of owning both a garden and a park, rather than one that leads to sleeping on the streets, trying to blag a few pennies with a big sign which reads “My parents got killed by ninjas. Please help.” All this anxiety about the future makes for a student community which enjoys people corpsing during presentations or failing to meet deadlines or not getting employed; in the mind's ha-ha they go! Perhaps mostly because it make the ranks of the unsuccessful seem a less lonely place to end up.

Oh dear, I don't mean to support the narrow definition of success it's all too easy to adopt as a finalist. Of course it's not all about money and status, but, come July, we will all be released into the fabled real world and be faced with the prospect of making something of ourselves. However we define that something, we all want it and when people around us fail hurdles in their way (or fall in ditches for that matter) there is a part of us which cries out: ha-ha! The ethos being, if they don't make it, maybe I will and it will be less bad if I screw up because they have too.

## Regaining my reputation the Smash Hits way

**S**earching for strategies to raise my stakes in the popularity game after my smugly-headlined column in last month's edition, I turned to the people who play it professionally – pop stars. All Saints, having just re-launched their pop career are now popping up all over the press trying to revive their former status. This weekend, one of the Appleton sisters (the pair who don't sing that much) was inter-



The physical version of the mental ha-ha ditch that we delight in our fellow graduates falling into

Now I really don't think that all this ha-haing is a very nice way to go through the graduation process. I'm sure things would be far more pleasant if we were all a bit more generous to each other. But there is no denial of the tension, pre-emptive of the end of the education safety net, which is travelling in great waves through the class of 2007 – and how are we to release it if not through mental ha-has? I think the key lies in individuals being less afraid of failure and having more self-belief. My unlikely guru in this is Fergie, the perma-young singer for The Black Eyed

Peas. Quote of the month is: “Singing is a gift from God, and when people say I can't sing, it's kind of like insulting God.”

It really doesn't get much more fool-proof than that, does it? Hand over responsibility for your ambitions to someone else – it doesn't have to be an all knowing deity, it could be your mother, or your pet dog, or perhaps your favourite celebrity. Then, when you balls it up, you can blame them, which takes the pressure off and means you'll have the charitable magnitude to be nicer to other people and not shove them in your

mental ha-ha when things go wrong for them. Whilst laying the blame for not getting into the foreign office's fast track programme at Noel Edmund's door won't bring you any closer to actually becoming a diplomat, it will make the whole experience a little less threatening.

I've decided to give Jood the honour of being my life patron. I know this isn't in the spirit of the thing but I'd quite like to let her take on the burden of all my shortcomings. Quote of the month take two: Nan is a gift from Jood, any problems, talk to the latter.

**What is your most treasured possession?**

My face.

**Would you rather be clever and ugly, or thick and attractive?**

Thick and super hot!

**What is the worst thing anyone's ever said to you?**

No way are you too damn popular.

**What do you owe your parents?**

I owe my dad a birthday present.

**Who would you invite to your dream dinner party?**

I'd invite Michael Jackson and Jarvis Cocker and try and make them fight.

**What song would you like played at your funeral?**

‘I have a Ghost, Now What?’ By Jaga Jazzist – good one right?

**How would you like to be remembered?**

As popular.

**What is the most important lesson life has taught you?**

Never trust an aspiring journalist.

# How the sitcom stole Santa - and other festive stories

Commercialism has all but killed Christmas. **Sara Sayeed** looks at the festive cults being created in its wake

Let's be honest, Christmas isn't just one day of festivities: it's an entire festive season that plunges us, for at least a month, into a hyped-up, commercial frenzy. Mid-November rolls around and before you know it, Starbucks is already serving up Eggnog Lattes in new 'holiday season' cups and the checkout boy at your local corner shop is wearing a Santa hat and acting eerily chirpy.

For many followers of non-Christian religions, however, Christmas just seems like an overly-extended birthday party that they weren't invited to. Josh Schwartz, the Jewish creator of cult Californian drama *The O.C.*, bemoans this exclusivity: "What Jewish boy or girl growing up doesn't feel a little jealous? They get all the good songs, the tree, Frosty and Rudolph. We get dreidels. It's just not the same."

Oi Humbug. Well, if there's no room at that inn, make another one. Schwartz has managed to do just that, resolving all his childhood angst through Seth Cohen - the *O.C.*'s infamous and endearing skater-indie boy with a "Jew fro". Growing up with "Waspy McWasp" for a mum, and dad having unresolved issues about being a "poor struggling Jew growing up in the Bronx", every year little Seth was faced with a seasonal crisis. His solution: Chrismukkah, the interfaith amalgam of Christmas and Hanukkah (for those of you who were in doubt). Who

**Christmas decorations in York city centre. Photo: Georgi Mabee**

knew that Seth's words to an eternally baffled and bemused Ryan would be so prophetic? "It's the new holiday Ryan" he says, with a

knowing, adorable grin. "And it's sweeping the nation."

And swept away it has. You can now buy a Chrismukkah cook book and enjoy a Matzah Pizza, Meshugga Nog or a Yule Plotz of your very own. Not that culinary-inclined? Go to [www.chrismukkah.com](http://www.chrismukkah.com) where you can buy 'Yarmauclaus', 'mish-mash-menorahs' (they come with candy-cane candles) or tree-shaped 'December dilemma Dreidels'. Strapped for cash? Just peruse Chrismukkah blog. Chrismukkah has now propagated a consumer market to rival (and possibly conquer?) the billion dollar Christmas paraphernalia industry.

Surprisingly, however, Seth's feat of genius creativity isn't unprecedented. Chrismukkah was actually created by German Jews in the 1800s, who called the holiday Weihnukkah (Weihnachten being the German word for Christmas.).

Neither is the *O.C.* the first T.V. show to spawn an entire festive cult. Approximately ten years ago, *Seinfeld's* Frank Costanza created Festivus, a non-denominational, anti-commercialisation alternative to Christmas. Costanza's genesis story differs a little from Cohen's though:

Frank Costanza: Many Christmases ago, I went to buy a doll for my son. I reached for the last one they had, but so did another man. As I rained blows upon him, I realised there had to be another way.

Cosmo Kramer: What happened to the doll?

Frank Costanza: It was destroyed. But out of that a new holiday was born... a Festivus for the rest of us!

Cosmo Kramer: That must've been some kind of doll.

Frank Costanza: She was. Indeed. Aside from the heart-warm-

ing anecdotes and the obligatory Festivus pole, (an aluminum pole utilized for its 'high strength-to-weight ratio' and because Costanza "finds tinsel distracting") Festivus is founded on two main principles: The Airing of Grievances and The Feats of Strength. In 'The Airing', each person at the Festivus dinner table informs their friends and family of all the times that they have been disappointed by them that year. After this collective slating comes the "Feats of Strength", where the head of the family wrestles with other members until they have been pinned to the ground. Just a more structured version of most family gatherings then.

As ridiculous as this ritual sounds, it has nestled itself quite comfortably into contemporary seasonal proceedings. Jennifer Galdes, a Chicago restaurant publicist who has been hosting Festivus parties for three years now, remarks: "[More and more] people, when they get an invite, respond with, 'Will there be an Airing of Grievances and Feats of Strength?'"

However, do these kitschy elements threaten to render the occasion more parodic than meaningful? Virgin Mobile USA's 2004 television commercial certainly seems to endorse that suggestion. The advert is based on yet another multi-holiday fusion, combining Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa to create the bizarre and completely unpronounceable Chrismahanukwanzakah. Intended to satirise the secular effects of political correctness on the holiday season, the cartoon showed bizarre, hybrid characters - such as a Vishnu-esque, turban-wearing Santa, which sings a Chrismahanukwanzakah song extolling the virtues of "an all-inclusive celebration/No contractual obligation" and



**A festive funfair brings Christmasy cheer to York. Photo: Georgi Mabee**

attempts to soothe religious tension with a camera phone: "Whose faith is the right one, It's anybody's guess, What matters most is camera phones for \$20 less".

More crude than catchy, the advert unveils the covert, profit-orientated ethos of inventions such as

Chrismukkah, Hannumas or Festivus. Arguably, commercial corporations are exploiting inter-faith tensions to breed a new wave of highly marketable, kitschy paraphernalia to replace the old, somewhat tired, Christmas trimmings. The *O.C.* website is selling Yarmauclaus' for \$15.95, Chrismukkah Holiday, and the book *Chrismukkah: Everything You Need to Know to Celebrate the Hybrid Holiday* sold out in its first print run, only four days after being released. Seems like the creator of Scientology had a point when he said "the quickest way to make a million is to start your own religion."

There certainly seems to be a Chrismukkah backlash, which protests the creation of an ostensibly inter-faith holiday that negates the respective significance of the originals. Weeks after publication, the author of Chrismukkah, Ron Gompertz received a slew of angry emails lambasting the holiday. Here's a particularly Grinchy one: "You should be ashamed of yourself making money on trying to reduce the already shrinking Jewish population. I picked up your book and felt sick. To tell you the truth, you should be shot. I spit on your whole marketing scheme".

Seth also voiced concerns in season two of the *O.C.*: "What if it's starting? The Chrismukkah backlash... What if it's getting too big and commercial? It's like it started out as this really cool, cult hol-

iday, and then all of the sudden there's too much pressure!"

But this seems overly puritanical and just a bit paranoid. Firstly, as Seth points out, having "Jesus and Moses on its side" gives it "twice the resistance of normal holidays". Secondly, Chrismukkah is simply re-vivifying the holiday season with some much needed

## 'Corporations are exploiting inter-faith tensions to breed a new wave of kitschy merchandise that will replace the old Christmas trimmings'

irreverent spark - a new panto-humour of sorts. Christmas is meant to be a 'merry' time: it's 'the season to be jolly' for Christ's sake (no pun intended). As the author Mary Ellen Chase suggested, "Christmas is...a state of mind", but the only state of mind those Eggnog Lattes put me in is bored bemusement. Yarmauclaus has more of an "Oy Joy" effect. So forsake the usual Crimbo, log onto [Chrismukkah.com](http://Chrismukkah.com) and surprise your friends with a Merry Muzeltov. In more traditional terms: 'And then Seth said, "let there be Chrismukkah." And it was good.'

## How to avoid a nightmare before Christmas: gift shopping in York

Christmas might not just be about the presents, but it's definitely a lot about the shopping. If the story of Jesus' birth was made into a modern-day narrative, the wise men wouldn't just pop up with the gold, frankincense and myrrh - we'd see them trawling Bethlehem's streets weeks (if not the night) before Mary's due date to find the perfect wrapping paper.

Today, only the ultimate Christmas scrooge makes it through the festive season without feeling compelled to buy at least a few presents for their friends and family. It's lucky for us in York, therefore, that this city is the perfect place for the discerning shopper to source the perfect gifts. Not because of its stunning array of chain stores, that is - if you're in the market for mass-produced tat, you'd be better off heading to Leeds instead. If you're prepared to resist the high street's dazzling window displays, however, and diversify a little this Christmas, all the romance of the festive season can be found and packed into a little box in and around the quaint little shops in the Shambles. I know, I know, it's weeks away yet - but do you really want to leave it all until the holidays? With this quick guide to the pick of York's Christmas markets and gift shops, you'll save time, avoid the usual high-street hassle - and get yourself into the festive mood as well.

Your first chance to search out something original to produce on Christmas morning comes in the colourful form of the **'Made in Yorkshire' Craft Market**, which takes over the central thoroughfare of Parliament Street from November 30 until December 10. York does markets well (its heritage as a commercial trade centre is founded on this - not on its having a decent-sized Topshop), and losing yourself within the little dens of miscellaneous, material goodness is as much a sightseeing experience as a successful shopping trip. Search out unique gifts from contemporary art to hand-made jewellery, to bedspreads and garden sculptures; hot tips include hand-painted ties for a twist on the traditional 'man present' (sunflowers is the favourite, if unseasonal pick) or hand-made silk underwear from the provocatively titled 'Mistress Collection' for your girlfriend.

The market can't fail to inspire you but if it doesn't actually offer up the goods, head for the plethora of gift shops scattered just beyond the city centre. The most popular of these is probably **Give the Dog a Bone** (17 Fossgate), a London export that epitomises quirky city-chic and makes much-appreciated attempts to offer the disillusioned shopper a choice of more 'individual' Christmas presents. In amongst the slapstick comic books, retro paraphernalia and - wait for it - Jesus action figures, is a treasure trove of affordable items. Where else in York could you find a pink flying pig watering can for your

mum, a giant rubber duck for your sister, or a 1950s-style toy robot for your brother?

If your Christmas afternoon usually culminates in eating left-over turkey while slouched in front of the television, a trip to **Compendium of York** (1 Grape Lane) could turn things around. This kooky little store stocks a wide and unusual range of games that provide, as it says on the label, "fun for all the family", including the usual favourites - beautifully crafted Backgammon sets, sparkling marble chess boards - and more contemporary tools of amusement, like table football and poker apparatus. The main items of appeal, however, are the giant Connect 4 and mega-sized Jenga - ideal for a friend, and a fantastic addition to any Christmas house party worth its punch.



Getting tired? Finish up at **Cusp** (28 Back Swinegate), another favourite gift emporium that looks like a miniature gallery but is actually full of attractive, purchasable items. With its accessories and home-ware, glasswork and ceramics, it looks like one for the girls. A hint for the boys, however: don't peek in and then fly past; make it your one-stop last shop for an assortment of cards and wrapping paper.

There are, of course, always the stock fall-back options: alcohol and chocolate. Luckily, even if you do need to rely on these, as a term-time York resident you can still put a spin on old favourites. **The Whiskey Shop** (11 Coppergate) means that, instead of picking from the measly selection at Costcutter, you have a whole shop to choose from - and clued-up staff who can help you choose so that if you don't know your malts from your blends, you can still confidently hand one or the other over to someone who does.

Satisfying someone's sweet tooth with a box of sugary titbits is another easy temptation to succumb to - and one often welcomed by the receiver. However, while chocolate is a cop-out, fudge, on the other hand, says originality, style and taste. **The Fudge Kitchen** (58 Low Petergate) makes and sells delicious, creamy fudge out of its little shop in the Shambles. With countless flavours to choose from, it's a real treat - not least for you, weary shopper, who can put down your bags and sample each before you buy. A perfect end to the shop for the perfect present; a perfect little gift for the giver - even one who knows it's better to shop than receive.

## A corporate sell-out? Venetia Rainey pleads Santa's cause

What has happened to Santa Claus? Where did that jovial fellow in red, who has been telling you that "holidays are coming" for the last month, go? But before you disregard Santa completely due to his multi-national corporate affiliations, reconsider.

Once upon a time there was a devout Christian called Nicholas who loved to spread goodwill to the poor over the festive season. One year he gave gold and cookies to an old man who was so poor he was about to sell his daughters into prostitution. St. Nick saved these women's virginity, and after his death was canonised.

This saint made

his way into the legends of the Germanic tribes during the middle ages. Dutch Sint Nikolaas comes from Spain each year with several 'Zwarte Piets' (Black Peters), Moorish slaves that St. Nicolas freed. This now controversial and racist tale tells of St. Nick coming on the eve of his own death to give good children presents, whilst the Zwarte Piets steal away naughty children in sacks. The new, only slightly more politically correct version, describes the Black Peters as modern servants who are black from the chimneys they descend.

The country to which Santa owes the most for his modern identity is America, particularly New York. Originally a Dutch colony, New York was left with a mix of British and Dutch mythology. 'Santa Claus' is an Anglicisation of

Sinterklaas, which in turn is a bastardisation of Sint Nikolaas. The turning point for Santa was when the New York Sentinel published 'A Visit from St. Nicholas'. This famous poem (now known as 'The Night Before Christmas') brought together the idea of a 'sleigh full of toys' with Santa's 'beard white as snow', and his 'round belly'. Santa's red robes and general image were further established by Coca-Cola's advertising campaign, whose conception of Santa still prevails today.

Just as England originally celebrated not Santa Claus but a more general entity called Father Christmas, many parts of the world continue to do so. In Russia, people speak of Ded Moroz, a character who emerged as an alternative to St. Nicholas. He too had a long beard and only visits good boys and girls.

Ded Moroz was especially popular during the Soviet era, because of his secularity and differences from the Western Santa Claus. He was given blue robes instead of red ones, to further the contrast between Western and Russian ideas. Siberians tell of another version of events, wherein a shaman enters homes via the chimney during the holiday season. This flying shaman carries a sack of mushrooms and hangs them to dry in front of fireplaces.

This festive season, I advise you to ignore Coca-Cola's all-penetrating vision of red heartiness (St. Nick would have thought it too sugary anyway) and instead celebrate one of the other alternatives. Personally, I'm looking forward to a half-blind Odin and his fatigued horse Sleipnir in my living room on Christmas Eve.

# A plague for the 21st Century

As World Aids Day approaches, **Luke Boulter** and **Jonathan Fleming** examine the future of the infamous HIV virus

To look at it, you wouldn't suspect a blob of cells of being on the world's most-wanted-list-of-viruses-to-find-a-cure-for. In an age where, let's face it, size really does matter, this one only has nine genes in its arsenal, after all.

Yet Human Immunodeficiency Virus, or HIV, is one of the most dangerous organisms on the planet. It takes hundreds of thousands of victims, allowing killer cancers and other fatal infections to invade their systems. With antiviral treatments it can be warded off - but never stopped. But why is it such a natural-born killer? And if the HIV virus is really the best of the molecular best, will we ever be good - or smart - enough to stop it?

'The gay disease.' Not only is this a homophobic categorisation of HIV but, today more than ever, it's an ignorant one. HIV is now more prevalent in the heterosexual community than ever before. If we're going to get statistical - and in health debates, that's near impossible to avoid - 75 per cent of HIV sufferers are not gay; the only label we can assign most of them is that of living in sub-Saharan Africa.

Delving further into the statistical well, then: by the end of 2005, according to the World Health Organisation, 25 million people had died from HIV/AIDS-related illnesses. A further 2.9 million died this year (and we're still counting) - 0.38 million of these were

**A World AIDS day gathering in the Amhara region of Ethiopia**



children. Between 2005 and 2006, the number of infected individuals jumped from 38.5 million to 39.5 million - close to the total population of Argentina.

If we zoom in on individual countries, our view becomes even bleaker. When two-fifths of any sub-Saharan nation are carriers of HIV, 'crisis' seems a reasonable label. What is a reasonable response? The support of the interna-

cult one, however. HIV/AIDS is accelerating, with the rate of new infections flying from 4 million in 2005 to 4.3 million in 2006. Most worryingly, 95 per cent of new infections are in regions unlikely to have the resources to respond. Consider Lesotho, in which over a quarter of the adult population carries HIV. In 1995, life expectancy was nearly 60 years. AIDS-related mortality has slashed predictions of life expectancy in 2015 from 69 to a disastrous 34 years. AIDS primarily strikes young adults, unlike other threats more likely to kill the very young or old. Half of new infections are in the 15-24 age group, with 6000 new cases every day.

Economies, denied their most active workers, will suffer too. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, slowed growth in agricultural output will lead to food insecurity in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia by 2010. Weakened economies will have fewer resources to invest in the education, health and nutrition of the young.

6.8 million people in developing nations are in immediate need of life-saving drugs, but only 1.65 million will receive them. Antiretroviral drugs are simply too expensive. James Cochrane, director of Glaxo's international division states, "Even at 10 cents a day, many African governments can't afford it, so at \$2 a day, there's no way."

One prevention strategy backed by the current American administration is the "ABC" approach. It seeks to replace risky behaviour among young people with safer alternatives: "A" stands for abstinence; "B" stands for being faithful; "C" stands for condom use. This approach has shown some success - in Uganda, for example, although this resulted from a combination of factors, including behaviour change, post-war

social stabilisation, strong Government leadership and emphasis on voluntary testing and counselling.

Nevertheless, there are influential dissenting voices. President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa sparked controversy with his belief that poverty, rather than HIV, is the cause of AIDS. Pope Benedict XVI believes, "The traditional teaching of the church has proven the only failsafe way to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS". Archbishop Raphael Ndingi Nzeki goes further, opining "AIDS... has grown so fast because of the availability of condoms". It is difficult to conceive of any rational mindset in which condoms, which reduce the risk of HIV infection by 90%, could represent a greater evil than the global HIV epidemic. A divided message is dangerous. Who should we believe?

So is it bleak news for future generations, or can we counter what has become the plague of the 21st Century? There are hopes. The ideal strategy is to vaccinate against HIV infection, and many believe this to be achievable, but the reality of it is not an easy one. The way HIV replicates means that it can induce massive changes in its genome known as mutations. Its mutation rate is so high that in several generations of viral replication the new viruses are almost entirely different from the original viral infection. Anti-viral drugs are also being developed to prevent those who are infected with HIV from going on and developing AIDS. Again, with such a variable virus, this will be tough. There are, however, parts of the virus that remain the same, and current research suggests that it may be possible to make a universal vaccine. There is currently no viable cure for HIV. But, with continual investment and research, the likelihood of one being discovered is higher now than ever.

**'It is difficult to conceive of any rational mindset in which condoms could represent a greater evil than the global HIV epidemic'**

tional community? Yet it's not a simple hand-into-pocket job. Although modest resources can yield valuable returns - if targeted effectively - combating HIV on a global scale will not be cheap. The Copenhagen Consensus of 2004 estimates that \$27 billion is needed to prevent 28 million cases of HIV. Investing in HIV prevention, however, makes sense, in both warm humanitarian and cold, hard financial terms. Experts predict that economic benefits outweigh investment by a factor of 40. The billion dollar question, then: can the world afford not to make this investment?

Philanthropy, an evermore popular choice for the benevolent celebrity, may provide part of the solution. The "fondlest dream" of Bill Gates's wife Melinda is the discovery of an HIV vaccine. The couple have pumped \$32 billion into their Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, lending serious financial muscle to this search.

The hunt is an increasingly diffi-

Rank	Country	HIV rate
1	Swaziland	38.80
2	Botswana	37.30
3	Lesotho	28.90
4	Zimbabwe	24.60
5	South Africa	21.50
6	Namibia	21.30
7	Zambia	16.50
8	Malawi	14.20
9	Central African Republic	13.50
10	Mozambique	12.20
93	United Kingdom	0.20

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# The political poet: from Ireland to Iraq

## Holly Williams talks to Pulitzer-winning poet Paul Muldoon about his new collection, *Horse Latitudes*

Think of Irish poetry and it's likely that, after pausing on canon heavyweights like Heaney and Yeats, your thoughts will turn to Paul Muldoon, one of Ireland's most successful living poets. Muldoon's cultural influences, however, are more complex than the 'Irish' label allows; he has lived in America for the past 20 years and visits to Britain now come as an occasional "mad dash" around the country. York was lucky enough to be on the itinerary for his latest trip and I had a chance to ask him about this issue of nationality before he read from his latest poetry collection, *Horse Latitudes*.

"We certainly understand the terms 'American poet' or 'Irish poet', but honestly I'm not too interested in any of it," he says, "particularly when we live in a world, which, for better or worse, is so much smaller. I would love to be thought of as an Irish poet. I would love to be thought of as a poet at all, you know? I mean the chances are quite strong that one won't be thought of as anything."

Of course, Muldoon has already proved that the chances are high that he will be thought of very highly indeed. The large and refreshingly varied audience in a Langwith lecture room was testament to the broad appeal of his work, as is his impressive array of awards, including the Pulitzer and T.S. Eliot poetry prizes. But such self-deprecation seems typical of this rather gentle, smiley man. Despite his poems sometimes seeming terrifyingly clever, Muldoon insists that he doesn't know

**Paul Muldoon is chair of the Princeton University Center for the Creative and Performing Arts**



might be why writing poetry was so enjoyable. "Absolutely!" he answers. "That's one of the reasons why it's enjoyable, and also so hard. Because if you don't know what you're doing, that's a bit scary."

It may also be why Muldoon's poetry is so full of strange leaps and connections, constantly surprising the reader, and he confirms that this is partly the intention: "I want to be doing something unexpected, so that when you read it you think 'Ah Heaven! I would never have expected that.' It's the idea of the reader being in the poem in which one has been oneself, and then one leaves and the reader is in there then having much the same experience."

*Horse Latitudes* begins with 19 sonnets, titled with battles beginning with the letter 'B', from the well known, such as Bosworth, to the willfully obscure - Bronkhorstspuit, anyone? Muldoon has always shown a fascination with structure and form, and we discussed the appeal of the strict sonnet form which, "despite being quite short is extremely effective." While he insists that, as with content, the form doesn't come first - "I don't sit down thinking: I'm going to write a sonnet here" - it often informs the writing process.

"The truth is, of course, that I'm pre-disposed to it. So what started by accident certainly ended up becoming the informing, pattern-making device of the poem. Rightly or wrongly, easily or otherwise, it helps me to get the thing out into the world."

Of course, the series of sonnets appears incomplete - there is surely a missing 20th sonnet entitled 'Baghdad'. The collection was written as things were getting messy in Iraq, and *Horse Latitudes* criticises the Bush administration. We discussed the anti-American feeling that has been so prominent since the Iraq war and how the Brit-in-America dynamic has changed. Muldoon recalled having to defend America at dinner parties, since it became so acceptable to "whine about America and what a terrible place it is."

However, Muldoon was keen to make the distinction between the country, which is "not a terrible place, not at all", and the current administration (the "idiots who are running the country"). He isn't too complimentary about the British government either; but there is a sense of hope in the transient nature of governments. "This country will survive Tony Blair. It has survived Margaret Thatcher, it has survived vari-

ous creeps, as has America. There have been various American administrations that have been problematic - I don't think any quite so problematic as this - but the country is still basically a place where most people want the decent thing to happen and in that respect it's way ahead of the world. The world is a mess. It's too easy to be down on America."

I wonder if there was pressure to be down on America, and Muldoon agreed. "I am taking a few shots, as it were, in my new book, at the Iraq fiasco and in a strange way it's a bit of a soft target. Still, it is such a fiasco, such a terrible thing."

We expect our poets, it seems, to tackle awkward issues, and during the Troubles in 1980s Ireland there was pressure on the generation of Ulster poets - Muldoon, Seamus Heaney, Michael Longley - to tackle the politics of the day. Muldoon's poetry, however, has always been somewhat slippery and if it dealt with such issues at all, it was with the inherent ambiguities of the conflict. Comparing, then, Muldoon's open attack on the US government with his earlier poems dealing with the Irish conflict, there might appear a discrepancy. Muldoon explains, however, with a somewhat wearied sigh, that the "Irish situation is much less cut and dry than the US situation. I don't think I would ever have found myself coming down quite so vehemently on one side in the Irish context." In any of Muldoon's actual poetry though, infamously dense and rich with references, meaning remains negotiable and his poems are as elusive as they allusive.

A professor now at Princeton University, Muldoon is Chair of the University Center for the Creative and Performing Arts, teaching creative writing, and is certainly enthusiastic about students: "I love them! They're interested and they're interesting and they're trying to do something and I'm trying to help them do something." While being taught by such an eminent poet might sound intimidating, he comes across as an encouraging tutor, with absolute belief in the potential of his students.

"I say to my students that there is absolutely no reason why you can't be publishing your writing and poems, that are every bit as good as anything that's been done anywhere, by anyone, of any age. In fact, the chances are maybe higher of them doing something interesting."

Of course, Muldoon had his first collection, *New Weather*, published while he was still a student at Queens University. He was lucky in having around him the cream of Irish writing at the time, and was taught by Seamus Heaney. But even without such luminaries surrounding you, Muldoon considers university the perfect time for experimenting with creative work.

I asked if he had any advice for the would-be writer at York and he comes back to the need to be humble and to allow yourself a "sense of ignorance - which is hard to manage, especially at university. You need a sense of unknowing, brought to the fore." Suddenly that lecture seems less crucial.

**"This country will survive Tony Blair. It has survived Margaret Thatcher, it has survived various creeps, as has America"**

what he's doing when he starts writing a poem, where it might go or what its 'meaning' might be. I wonder if that

### Blaye

Her wet suit like a coat of mail worn by a French knight from the time a knight could still cause a ruction by direct-charging his rouncy, when an Englishman's home was his bouncy castle, when abduction and seduction went hand in glove. Now Carlotta would climb from the hotel pool in Nashville, take off her mask, and set a spill to a Gauloise as one might set a spill to the fuse of a falconet and the walls of her chest assail. The French, meanwhile, were still struggling to prime Their weapons of mass destruction.

# Arts Reviews

## Amy Scott, Helen Citron and Molly Bird check out some on-campus theatre

This autumn has seen an impressive array of theatrical productions on campus, from the Drama Barn to the University's Music department. *Dead Meat* looked as if it would win the mantle of Most Unlucky Production (until the cancellation of *The Fire Raisers*), with its final night postponed due to an injured actress and the lead actor perhaps biting off more than he could chew in his first term, taking part in three campus productions.

Despite these setbacks, the production remained a success. The lead performances were very strong, with Anouska Flower playing the sparky chav Steph and newby Alex Forsyth as the predatory, middle class Alain - justifying his popularity with this term's directors.

*Dead Meat* is the latest theatrical work from student writer Sam Haddow, who provoked controversy last term with his violent re-telling of Electra. And violence is certainly on the agenda again this time, with directors Hana Morgan and Mark Kelleher, anticipating complaints, defending the piece against accusations of gratuitous violence in their programme notes. In practice, the violent scenes are not in the least shocking. Although death-by-lasagne is certainly unexpected, in these post-Tarantino times vio-

lence no longer has the impact it once did. Haddow is clearly a very intelligent and talented writer and hopefully he will prove able to move past this technique and find some new and more challenging taboos to break in his future work.

The Music Department sold out both of its performances of this year's practical project, *Paul Bunyan*, in the Sir Jack Lyon's Concert Hall, and with good reason. Omar Shahryar and Dr John Stringer's thrilling revival of this underperformed operetta, was truly a testament to themselves and the musicians involved.

*Paul Bunyan* is the result of a collaboration between composer Benjamin Britten and poet W. H. Auden. The opera tells the story of giant lumberjack Bunyan and the colonisation of America. Bunyan is an allegory for the complexities of the American Dream, with the lumberjacks clearing the forest to make way for the emerging modern America.

The most striking thing about this production was its contrasts. Characters like the narrator (Tom Appleton), who delivered lines of rhyming couplet with aplomb, and his grinning sidekick (Edward Winslow) created an effect which can only be described as kitsch, with the cartoon-like set design back-



*Dead Meat*. Photo: Timothy Ngwena

ing this up. However, there were also sobering moments, with the heartbreaking 'Quartet of the Defeated' reminding us that the American dream also led to downfall and ruin.

The chorus were enthusiastic, involved, and as you'd expect from the department, highly talented. York's musicians provided a witty, colourful performance, which made for a wonderful evening.

The Dixon Drama Studio is rarely used for student drama productions, but recently housed three performances of Caryl Churchill's *Cloud 9*. This peculiar two act play, which explores the relationship between colonialism and sexual oppression, is a heady mixture of British Africa and late 1970s London. Act One, directed by Will Bowry, instantly highlighted the play's central themes of role reversal and stereotype. Bowry teased out the farcical hilarity and dark sincerity of this scene with pace and wit. Music, costumes and some priceless comic timing were delivered with professional flair, in particular by Marcus Emerton as the hilarious Clive.

The second act, directed by Beth Pitts, surprised us completely with its dramatic change of style to explore changing sexuality in modern times. Out of the brassy confidence of the first act, Pitts crafted nuanced relationships driven by sexual politics and set just the right tone of uneasy oddity. A bare set and directive lighting opened up the stage, for reflection on the politics of the piece. Special mention must go to Becca Morgan who held us rapt as Betty, with beautifully detailed confidence and style. Let's hope the Dixon sees more high-quality student drama sometime soon.



*Vanity Fair*  
William Thackeray

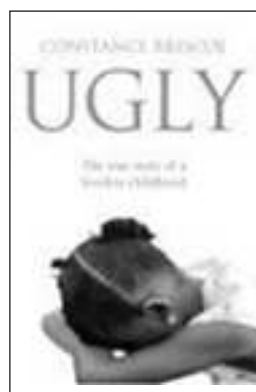
Reviewed by  
Stacey Go



Full of sarcastic wit and satirical humour, *Vanity Fair* is a scathing social commentary that skewers the values of shallow, class-obsessed Victorian society. Thackeray's classic Victorian novel follows the selfish and manipulative Becky Sharp, orphaned at a young age with little fortune left to her by her alcoholic artist father, and determined to establish her place among the wealthy elite of Victorian society. Her companion Amelia Sedley is the polar opposite of Becky - despite being innocent and naïve, her privileged background ensures that her future is fairly secure.

The novel charts the lives and relationships of these two very different heroines over the span of 20 years as their stories intertwine and change dramatically, for better and for worse. Along the way we encounter other interesting characters, such as the arrogant George Osborne, whom Amelia longs for, and the awkward but benevolent Dobbin, secretly in love with Amelia.

Set against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, *Vanity Fair* explores the greed of human ambition through Thackeray's combination of irony, pathos and sadness, ultimately creating an epic and profound novel about the nature of humankind.



*Ugly*  
Constance Briscoe

Reviewed by  
Rachel Hopkins



Similar in plot to Dave Pelzer's *A Child Called It*, this personal memoir gives a harrowing account of a young girl growing up surrounded by extreme abuse. At times upsetting, Briscoe relives her childhood and allows us to witness her growth from a terrified child into a strong and brave new woman. This story of courage and willpower is a must for anyone who enjoys a good read.

The humour with which Briscoe tells her story is made even more shocking when juxtaposed with descriptions of extreme sexual abuse and neglect, and a gripping plot-line. Although it's impossible to help becoming emotionally engaged, the narrative falls a little short with a somewhat stilted writing style and a poorly-structured account of events, which spoils the effect a little.

Briscoe's ability to detach herself emotionally from the ritual humiliation she recounts will sicken and disturb you and you may finish the book with a sigh of relief that the ordeal, for you at least, is over.

A tale of bravery and inspiration, this book is well worth a read as long as you are prepared for some shocking revelations.

## What's on in December

### Other Side Comedy Club

Every Sunday, 7.30 for 8.00 start  
City Screen Basement Bar  
Acts including Steve Day, Dan Atkinson and Silky's Christmas Baubles.

Entry: £8 or £7 in advance, student discount available

### Madama Butterfly

Sunday 3rd, 7.30  
Grand Opera House, York  
Tickets priced between £23.00 and £35.50

### What the Dickens 2

Wednesday 6th, 7.30  
National Centre for Early Music  
Tickets: £8.00 (concession)

### Beyond the Barricade at Christmas

Thursday 7th, 7.30  
Grand Opera House, York  
Tickets: £8.00

### Russell Brand

Saturday 9th-Sunday 10th, 8.00  
Grand Opera House, York  
Tickets: £14.50

### Aladdin

From Thursday 14th, 7.00  
Grand Opera House, York  
Tickets from £7.00

### Cinderella

From Thursday 14th, 7.30  
York Theatre Royal  
Tickets from £10

## Spotlight on...

**The Spoken Word, 7.30 - 9pm, every first Tuesday at the Exhibition Hotel, and 'Third Thursday' at Starbucks in Borders.**

"We stayed at home to write, to consolidate our outstretched selves". Whilst Sylvia Plath apparently stayed in of an evening, here in York you have the opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas at two open poetry and prose nights held on the first Tuesday and third Thursday of each month. Budding writers with short stories, poetry or even songs to share can meet in a relaxed, receptive atmosphere - either to perform their pieces or to be part of the audience.

Rose Drew, who runs the evenings, is a vibrant and encouraging host with an obvious passion for words. The tone of the night is controlled by the speakers and often it is

not only works that are shared, but ideas, opinions and, in Rose's case, fiery political views.

'Third Thursday' is held every month at Starbucks in Borders, on Davygate, and is aimed specifically at university and secondary school students, although numbers have turned out to be unexpectedly low. The busier night at Exhibition Hotel, Bootham, guarantees a more impressive turnout and variety of performances. The Thursday meeting is not being held in December (due to some obscure religious holiday), but I urge any aspiring writers to have a coffee and step up to the mic in the New Year.

# Film Reviews

## Casino Royale

Director: Martin Campbell  
With: Daniel Craig, Eva Green  
Runtime: 144 min

Reviewed by  
James Fanning

★★★★★

*Die Another Day* was a sham, a soulless slideshow of invisible sports cars, product placement and referential gags that plunged a once respectable franchise into the depths of self-parody. *Casino Royale* is a distinctly different film, returning to Ian Fleming's first novel concerning Bond's development as a 00 agent. Though elements of the classic Bond formula remain, (exotic locations, beautiful girls and car chases) *Casino Royale* is a darker, grittier affair, exposing its protagonist as morally dubious and borderline psychotic.

The fantastic opening sequence roots us in reality, as Bond assassinates two spies to gain his 00 status. Rendered in black and white, these opening scenes stress the psychopathic undercurrents so prominent in Fleming's novels. The film works best as a revisionist exercise, dismantling preconceptions of what a Bond film should or should not entail. After losing millions in the pivotal poker game, a barman asks whether Bond likes his martini shaken or stirred, to which he retorts "Do I look like I bloody care?" Daniel Craig plays this re-imagined Bond, with a charm and physicality not seen since Connery, instilling the role with a palpable sense of menace and danger. He is certainly a Bond for our time, no longer the fantasy fig-

ure lending itself to parody, but a terrifying, mentally unhinged killing machine.

With this dehumanisation of Bond comes an intensification of action scenes. With the exception of the leaden airport bomb sequence, these are perhaps the best Bond action sequences committed to celluloid. The best stunt in the film is the flipping of Bond's Aston Martin, just when the audience expects a huge car chase to begin.

Though it is a difficult film to dislike outright, there are fundamental problems preventing it being truly satisfying. Thankfully, there is no nefarious scheme for world domination; the villain's diabolical plan is foiled at a poker table. However, the game is laboriously handled. Seemingly aware that it is just not that exciting, Campbell throws in sword-wielding terrorists and poisoned champagne, but the tension is just not there. After the game the film meanders into narrative uncertainty: chief baddie La Chiffre is killed off 40 minutes before the curtain, and Bond and Vesper wander into the obligatory soft-focus montage, only for the plot to resurface in a twist unpredictable only to the lobotomised. The film is too long, and whilst Campbell succeeds as an action director, he fails in gearing the film towards a successful climax. Similarly, the film suffers from a lack of memorable characters; the villains are instantly forgettable and Craig, wonderfully adept as the sadistic hard man, is wholly ineffective as the irresistible playboy. Such factors hold *Casino Royale* back from true greatness. One only hopes future Bond movies will capitalise upon its successes and avoid its mediocrities.



## The Prestige

Director: Christopher Nolan  
With: Christian Bale, Hugh Jackman

Runtime: 128 min

Reviewed by  
David Coates

★★★★★



Christopher Nolan has cornered the market in grim movies about zealously determined men and their obsessions. Where *Batman Begins* excelled in its contrast of theatricality and brooding introspection, and where *Memento* tormented the audience in its twisting plot, *The Prestige* trumps both, and by some way.

Ostensibly, *The Prestige* concerns two rival magicians - Christian Bale as the technical genius Alfred Borden, Hugh Jackman as the passionate performer Robert Angier - at the turn of the 20th century, Michael Caine's Cutter bringing them together in

their first job as stage hands. The film is largely told in flashback, as plot twists are gradually and creatively unveiled. The first of these flashbacks sets the story in motion, as an accident apparently caused by Borden results in Angier's wife being killed on stage. Driven mad with grief, Angier vows to avenge his wife's death, sparking a deadly contest between the two men as they each try to crack the other's secrets. This, however, is a slight description of a story that refuses to stay unrevealed for long, constantly misdirecting the audience til the film's incredible and wonderfully conducted final act.

In the hands of a less talented director, *The Prestige* would have fallen prey to its own trickery long before the final curtain, but Nolan's script (co-written by his brother, Jonathan) captivates and refuses to relent. The mood is never relaxed, and the darkness of the two contending professionals is relayed effectively by Bale and Jackman alike. As their battle becomes increasingly personal, Nolan never gives an inch, forcing the audience to confront the most unpalatable aspects of the characters' obsessive behaviour. The supporting cast of Caine, Andy Serkis, David Bowie, Scarlett Johansson and the excellent Rebecca Hall copes well with the small roles they are given, Bowie particularly effective as the glassy, mysterious scientist Tesla.

While Bale is once again flawless in his portrayal as a borderline psychopath, and Jackman capable as his damaged and occasionally inhuman adversary, the film does lose something in its lack of warmth. While their battle is fascinating, both men are emotionally cold, and it is difficult to decide which, if either, should come out on top. However, as a piece of filmmaking, *The Prestige* has few peers, and is a highly rewarding visual experience. In the opening scene, the film asks, "Are you watching closely?" By the end, you won't believe your eyes.

## Nouse Recommends: The Third Man (1949)

Director: Carol Reed  
With: Joseph Cotten, Orson Welles

Runtime: 118 min

Reviewed by  
Emily Cleary

★★★★★



*The Third Man* was directed by Carol Reed, from a story by Graham Greene. Starring such actors as Orson Welles and Trevor Howard, it could hardly fail to be great. Set in post-war Vienna - a city split between the Allied powers and overflowing with racketeers - it has some of the most evocative cinematography in the history of film, and it was for this that *The Third Man* won an Oscar for Robert Krasker. Many of the camera angles are off-centre and the use of shadow underlines the feelings of alienation and uneasiness that the characters - many of them foreigners to Vienna - might be feeling.

It is to this city that Holly Martins (Joseph Cotten), an American author, travels to visit his friend, Harry Lime (Orson Welles), only to discover that he has died in rather dubious circumstances and has been branded a racketeer by the British Major Calloway (Trevor Howard). Holly decides to find out exactly what happened and attempt to clear his friend's name. In the process he meets Harry's girlfriend Anna Schmidt, an actress who very much loved Harry. The story itself is extremely well written: the dialogue is sharp and peppered with bleak humour; it never gives away too much or over-explains anyone's motivation - it is, in other words, classic Greene.

Of course, no film would be complete without a musical score, and *The Third Man* provides in style with the iconic zither music performed by Anton Karas. It is one of the most memorable aspects of the film and perfectly compliments the uncomfortable atmosphere. *The Third Man* is classic British noir: it perfectly creates feelings of claustrophobia and disquiet and the acting is impressive - especially that of many of the minor characters who were often played by prominent Austrian actors who would probably not be recognised by the film's British and American audiences. Orson Welles' performance is striking as Harry Lime, although it is probably not accurate to see it as an 'Orson Welles film' - he had no real hand in the directing and only came up with one line of dialogue - albeit possibly the most famous line of the film; "In Italy for thirty years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder, bloodshed - but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love, they had five hundred years of democracy and peace, and what did they produce? The cuckoo clock." This late '40s film is rightly hailed as a classic and I would urge anyone to watch it.

# MusicReviews

## Singles Reviews

### James Morrison – *The Pieces Don't Fit Anymore*

James Morrison tries to melt your brain with his new single as he replaces the upbeat soul of his previous releases with an aptly insipid 'Christmas Number 1'-geared ballad. "It's time to surrender", he croons in the chorus - no James! NO! We will not give in to your middle-of-the-road musical stodge.

### Jeremy Warmesley – *Dirty Blue Jeans*

Like the musical equivalent of a hyperactive child, Jeremy Warmesley cannot seem to focus his attention on one melody or rhythm for more than a few seconds. The newest single from *The Art of Fiction* jerks from sublime moment to sublime moment, somehow managing to rise above the fragments with a soaring chorus. Wonderful stuff.

### Jamelia – *Beware of the Dog*

Following the trend of sampling large parts of 80s hits and singing something vaguely associated with the original lyrics over the top (step forward Rihanna...) Jamelia pilfers the good bits from Depeche Mode's *Personal Jesus* and hollers something empowering and feminist over the top. To put it proverbially - a lot of bark and not much bite.

### Lily Allen – *Littlest Things*

The London belle stops smiling for a while to deliver a collection of her feelings following a break-up. The fairy-tale melody means that it comes across a bit like the sad part in a musical before everything is alright again. This is the sound of the energetic Lily Allen of the summer months deciding to stay in with a bottle of Pinot and have a good moan.

### Phunkin DJs ft. Pamela Fernandez - *Kickin the Beat*

Who needs new rave when old rave still has a pulse? Pamela Fernandez has the classic voice of 90s dance music, so by re-recording the vocal of the 1992 house stomper with the newly assembled Phunkin DJs she's ready to blow away 2006's indie dance pretenders. Get in early with the tune that you will be dancing your neon socks off to in Toffs next year.

### Gruff Rhys - *Candy Lion*

It's a hard world out there for band members gone solo. For every Robbie Williams there's a Mel B, and for every Justin Timberlake there's a Lisa Scott Lee. Fortunately the first single from the Super Furries' lead singer's second album is a lovely slice of wistful pop with the cheekiest strings put to record in living memory.

*Singles this week were reviewed by Sara Sayeed and Ben Rackstraw.*

These Monsters, Alex Clegg and A Band, Yesterday

Reviewed by Kathryn Bromwich

17/11/06

Live at The Artspace,

★★★★★

One year ago to the day, I saw Bob Dylan perform in Birmingham's infamous NEC Arena. Impersonal and enormous, it's the typical show after which old men brag about how much better it was when they saw the not-yet-famous band in a small, cosy café in the 60s. Lucky them. But surely, few things can be more snug than this free, Burn the Jukebox-organised event in York's tiny painting studio The Artspace, opposite Clifford's Tower.

The airtight audience is face-to-face with the band, atmospheric flowery fairy lights offer the only illumination and the stage is framed by a selection of abstract paintings - shows don't get much more intimate than this.

And the setlist is fittingly staggering, offering an eclectic mix of genres. A Band,

Yesterday opens the night with a breezy overture of elegant electronica. Next up is Alex Clegg, an inspired singer-songwriter performing tragicomic songs about elephant religions, castles and trains. Angel-faced and cardigan-clad, you hardly expect the explosion of his powerful, primal voice over a lone frenzied drum for the Leadbelly's cover he opens his set with. His voice is a mix between a particularly droll Conor Oberst and an incensed Thom Yorke, with that studied roughness that Bob Dylan himself does so well. After he goes off, Leeds band These Monsters hit the stage (well, the floor) with a distinctly different set: a passionate, instrumental fusion of post-rock and jazz with just enough distortion. A quick post-concert enquiry of whether they'd ever considered adding violins to the mix reveals that they do in fact usually have a violin player, which makes them even cooler. Violins aside, the saxophone and guitars complement each other impeccably as they go from twee sax solos to rock and back again with easy grace, making for dramatic contrast and grandiose crescendos.

All of this is while surrounded by paintbrushes and turpentine. Take that, NEC.



Blue October  
Foiled

Reviewed by Sara Sayeed

Out Now

★★★★★

Once in a while a band comes along with a genuinely innovative, exciting sound - one that prompts you to think "wow" without even a tinge of irony. Blue October are not one of these bands. The album's derivative mediocrity simply leaves you apathetically pondering "why?". Why does singer/songwriter/guitarist Justin Furstenfeld cite The Flaming Lips as influences and then produce enough self-indulgent emo angst to rival My Chemical Romance? And why on earth did Imogen Heap even deign to collaborate on one of the tracks?

Possibly, Furstenfeld suffers from an aural colour blindness and Heap needed to fill her quota of charitable deeds for the year. Yet, there is hope - single 'Hate Me is the US' was most requested track on alternative radio. Ignoring the opening voicemail from Furstenfeld's mum, the verses possess a melodic facility reminiscent of the Goo Goo Dolls when they were "dizzy[ing] up" that poor girl. Tolerable stuff, until the "feel my pain" guitar solos kick into gear. Apparently Furstenfeld started work on "Foiled" after a nightmare which prompted him to proclaim, "My brain melted that night". Well, after a few listens, one feeling the album certainly doesn't fail to inspire is empathy.



The Charlatans  
Forever: The Singles

Reviewed by Oliver Elliott

Out Now

★★★★★

Following the underwhelming *Simpatico*, The Charlatans have decided (or perhaps been contractually obliged) to release a compilation of hit and not-so-hit singles drawn from their sixteen or so years of existence. The collection's chronological order lends a strong feeling of the band's development - important for a band that's shown a constant willingness to change direction. The Charlatans have distinguished themselves as survivors, perhaps thanks to their ability to constantly re-invent themselves, from the Madchester baggy of 'The Only One I Know', to the gritty northern soul of 'One To Another', and the Dylanesque blues of 'Impossible'. Many of these songs will be familiar, perhaps even overly so, but this collection gives them a fresh lease of life, showing how timeless The Charlatans are; none of these songs sound at all dated.

There are missteps - the awful dance remix of 'You're So Pretty We're So Pretty' tucked away at the end of the album, possibly a worrying sign of things to come. But this is the only deviation in an otherwise remarkably solid, lively and interesting collection. Proving The Charlatans to be an adept singles band, this collection will tempt many to delve further into their back catalogue.



Shiny Toy Guns  
Live at Night and Day, Manchester

Reviewed by Steven Williams

17/11/06

★★★★★

Stepping onto the tiny stage at Night and Day, Shiny Toy Guns look as if they've just arrived from another world: one where emo fringes and face paint go hand in hand with throbbing synths and rave bass lines with such electrifying results you're left wondering why nobody's ever thought of it before.

That this other world turns out to be Los Angeles explains a lot. Covered in tattoos, with black/blonde hair sprawled across her face, singer Carah Faye renders a formidable force onstage. Her punk rock-charged emo vocals are joined by the gothic stylishness of drummer Mike Martin and pulsating synths of keyboardist Jeremy Dawson.

It's this complete disregard for convention (as they don't so much hop between genres as smash a bloody fist straight through them, collecting the debris along the way) that makes Shiny Toy Guns so refreshing.

Although at times they struggle to match the Pretty Girls Make Graves reminiscent vocals to musical innovation, Faye and Petree's lyrical interplay enraptures male and female members of the audience in equal measures. Managing to pull songs the calibre of 'You Are The One' out of the chaos is just an added bonus. Expect to hear these lot filling up indie dance floors near you soon.



# Food & Drink Reviews



## Which Tapas?

Are you the sort of person that avoids restaurants to prevent an outbreak of dreaded "meal envy", when you decide that the food you have chosen simply isn't as good as that of your dining companion? Do you feel frustrated living in a society that declares that it is simply not good manners to reach over and help yourself to someone's food as they are eating it? If you are afflicted by any of these problems, then fear not! Help is at hand in the form of Melton's Too tapas, where each item is £2.50 on a Monday night on presentation of a valid NUS card. Alternatively buy any bottle of wine between 5-7pm and any tapas is also £2.50!

### Prawn and Whitby Smoked Salmon Salad: 7.5 /10.

The smoked salmon was thick, firm and had a decadent slippery saltiness that was indulgent to the extreme. The prawns were a good size, being large enough to use in order to give your fellow diner a reprimanding rap across the knuckles as they hogged the rest of the tapas. The paprika dressing was a good touch, balancing out the delicate flavour of the fish.

### Battered Squid With a Chilli Dip: 9/10.

The squid provoked a little squeak from one of the more squeamish members of the editorial team, but this dish turned out to be the surprise hit of the session. The squid was firm and not rubbery, the batter was buttery and melty, and the chilli dip was searingly sweet and left a pleasant burning sensation on our collective tasting tongue.

### Courgette Fritter with Feta and Walnut Sauce: 7/10.

This got a Marmite-type response from the tasting team, not because it was made from yeast, but because opinions tended towards a love so intense it verged upon vegephilia, or a hate so great that some of us believed we were being poisoned. The presentation was excellent as the sliced courgette was laid out to look delicious, green and appetising (some of us thought this was a cruel deception) and fans praised the subtle flavour and texture of the dressing.

### Deep Fried Polenta and Hummus: 5/10.

The polenta is coated in golden batter and tastes like an up-market hash brown. Sadly the hummus lacked flavour, texture and depth, but the polenta worked well when submerged in the leftover chilli dip.

Tasters: Laura Street, Hannah Burnham, Missy Christey, Rebecca Jones, Laura Nicol

**Vudu Lounge**  
37-39 Swinegate

Reviewed by  
Lucy Peden

★★★★★

Gather round children, listen carefully and I shall tell you the story about the two blind restaurateurs. The blind restaurateurs travelled for miles to reach a small city east of the Humber, let's call it York, because they had heard good things about its balmy climes, beautiful people and endless cultural diversity. The good restaurateurs thought "surely such a city must be packed with pretentious watering holes" and they searched high and low, but not one pretentious watering hole did they see. To remedy this, they summoned the restaurant fairy who muttered "but this damn town is full of nothing but pretentious watering holes, of course you can't see them BECAUSE YOU'RE BLIND!". Her cries fell on deaf ears, as the blind restaurateurs were also hard of hearing, and so despite her reservations, she magicked up a bar called Vudu

Lounge. The cocktail list was plentiful and the bar well stocked, the lighting was dim, the leather sofas were comfortable, and thus another identikit yuppie bar came into being. Sadly, the fairy had consumed too many classic Mojitos ("and at six quid a go", she thought, "it's a good thing they're so bloody strong") and was not using her full set of fairy powers when she lazily waved her wand to produce a menu. She summoned bread, which she enchanted with the bewitching herbal properties of foccacia, so that they would be fit to cushion the meaty slabs of beef that mortals call 'burgers'. She was so pleased with her work that she knocked back a gin Martini, her gossamer-delicate wings shuddering with distaste as she nearly choked on the lemon twist. Although her magic made everything tasty and perfectly cooked, the range of wedges and chillis were just not diverse enough to reflect the exciting Creole heritage that is implied by the name 'Vudu'. "Ah, well", slurred the fairy, "it'll do, I s'pose", and with that she stumbled out and fell upon the Stonegate pavement, and displayed her fairy knickers to all the world - for she was completely lashed.



**Villa Italia**  
69-71 Micklegate

Reviewed by  
Jonny Dack

★★★★★



Pieces of the Italian legacy lay dormant in every person's mind. The history lessons of an earlier eruption are now seasoned in a thick ash, preserving a taste of youth. Today, legions have turned to legend. This age of an army, epoch of empire and realm of the Romans is now remembered in their vast cultural influence across Europe.

Sadly, this country's cuisine does not offer the same breadth. At Villa Italia the menu is changed twice yearly. This biannual budge sees the passing of pizza to the coming of circular shaped dough, topped with the cheese of a different goat. As all Italian restaurants offer the same Corinthian pillars of pasta, baths of bolognese sauce and Julius Caesar salads, this restaurant shows one crucial distinction: quality. Of the eight, almost, identical menus around York, Villa Italia boasts the finest ingredients and most agreeable ambience. As operatic whines fermented in my ears, I selected the Soave from an impressive list. As for food, try the stuffed red peppers to start or the funghi mamma mia (mushrooms with white wine, cream, garlic and cheese). For mains there are risottos, pastas, pizzas, fish and meat dishes. The price reflects the quality, so maybe one to save until you get paid!

**Big Bite Sandwich Bar**  
71 Main Street

Reviewed by  
Laura Street

★★★★★



After another challenging night at Toffs, there is nothing better to cure a hangover than a takeaway sandwich from Big Bite Sandwich Bar, located on 71 Main Street Fulford - open from 8 am til 3 pm.

Big bite is unlike the repetitive chain sandwich bars so often found in town, it offers a variety of fresh sandwiches, made to order with a large choice of fillings. It also has a bakery offering homemade apple pies and cakes. There are hot roast sandwiches, traditional fillers and an artery-clogging Full House sandwich at £2.80, which has eggs, bacon and sausage to name only a few of its ingredients. Warning: this sandwich must be approached with caution and is not for the faint hearted as it comes in a super big baguette size. I chose the popular Chicken Tikka bap at £2.10, which was swiftly prepared in front of me. It's always reassuring when an eating establishment is happy to prepare food in front of you rather than hide away in a kitchen that is about to be condemned by the food safety people. The chicken was moist and deliciously covered in Tikka sauce and the tomatoes, cucumber and lettuce fillings were fresh and crunchy making a mouth-watering monstrous feast which would satisfy anyone's appetite.

**Cafe Concerto**  
21 High Petergate

Reviewed by  
Lauren Mendes

★★★★★



By day a delightful little cafe and by night an exclusive and beautiful restaurant, Cafe Concerto truly has it all. Situated right outside the Minster, I discovered this gem in my first term at York and have not been able to stay away since, despite frequent complaints from my tutors who maintain that 'having coffee' is not a mitigating circumstance for skipping seminars. For lunch the range of baguettes, wraps, salads, croissants and bagels is so wide and delectable-looking that if Calista Flockhart was resident in York she'd be back on the carbs.

I defy anyone not to find something they like. Personally, the chicken, smoked cheddar and red onion marmalade baguette gets me every time. Served with a small salad and just the right amount of homemade dressing, this lunch is worth any time you might have to wait to get a seat in this extremely popular place. Desserts are also fabulous. Like the rest of the food here, they are homemade and you can definitely tell. The gooey chocolate cake is worth sacrificing your first born child for, and the portion sizes are suitably generous. You may leave feeling extremely indulgent and possibly slightly overfed but Cafe Concerto is not to be missed. A truly wonderful location with delicious homemade food.

# The last word

**Andreas Masoura** takes a satirical look at York's main activities: bingo and stripping

## Full House

Apparently the calm around campus during Freshers' week was unsettled one evening after Toffs. Screams of "Bingo" cracked through the night air after yet another Full House was achieved. The mystery surrounding campus was soon unearthed as yet another pure, innocent and naïve student was deflowered. As well as having an unquestionable concern for the welfare of students, the Students' Union allegedly adopts a hands on approach when it comes to helping freshers settle in.

Inspired by the legendary Mecca Bingo in town, YUSU Bingo merely replaces cash winnings with a student's virginity. Once each sacrifice has been made and the bingo sheets inspected, the participant would then move on to another college until a Full House has been achieved. The final victim would then be traumatised with "Full House" being screamed in their unsuspecting face, of course in the presence of an SU superior who would be standing outside the game's venue listening, simply to verify the result. A fine game, almost as entertaining as 'Drink or no Drink'.

If you have been affected or traumatised at all by any of the above, please contact

Nouse with your story, and you can attend our complimentary counselling session. Otherwise simply adhere to the following guide in order to avoid such misfortune: YUSU Officers are easily identifiable by their vast array of YUSU hoodies, which are worn on every occasion, so make sure you watch out for them. The lure of a free queue jumper to Toffs is a sleazy, yet formidable weapon used by the Students' Union. Please try your utmost to resist, even if it's raining. Also remember, you are most likely to be

B I N G O				
7	26	35	51	73
14	23	44	55	63
6	19	FREE 14733	48	64
12	22	32	54	70
11	16	33	47	69

approached in a York drinking establishment, which will then be ruthlessly capitalised on with the offer of several free VK Blues. Ask for a VK Tropical instead.

## 1 AM

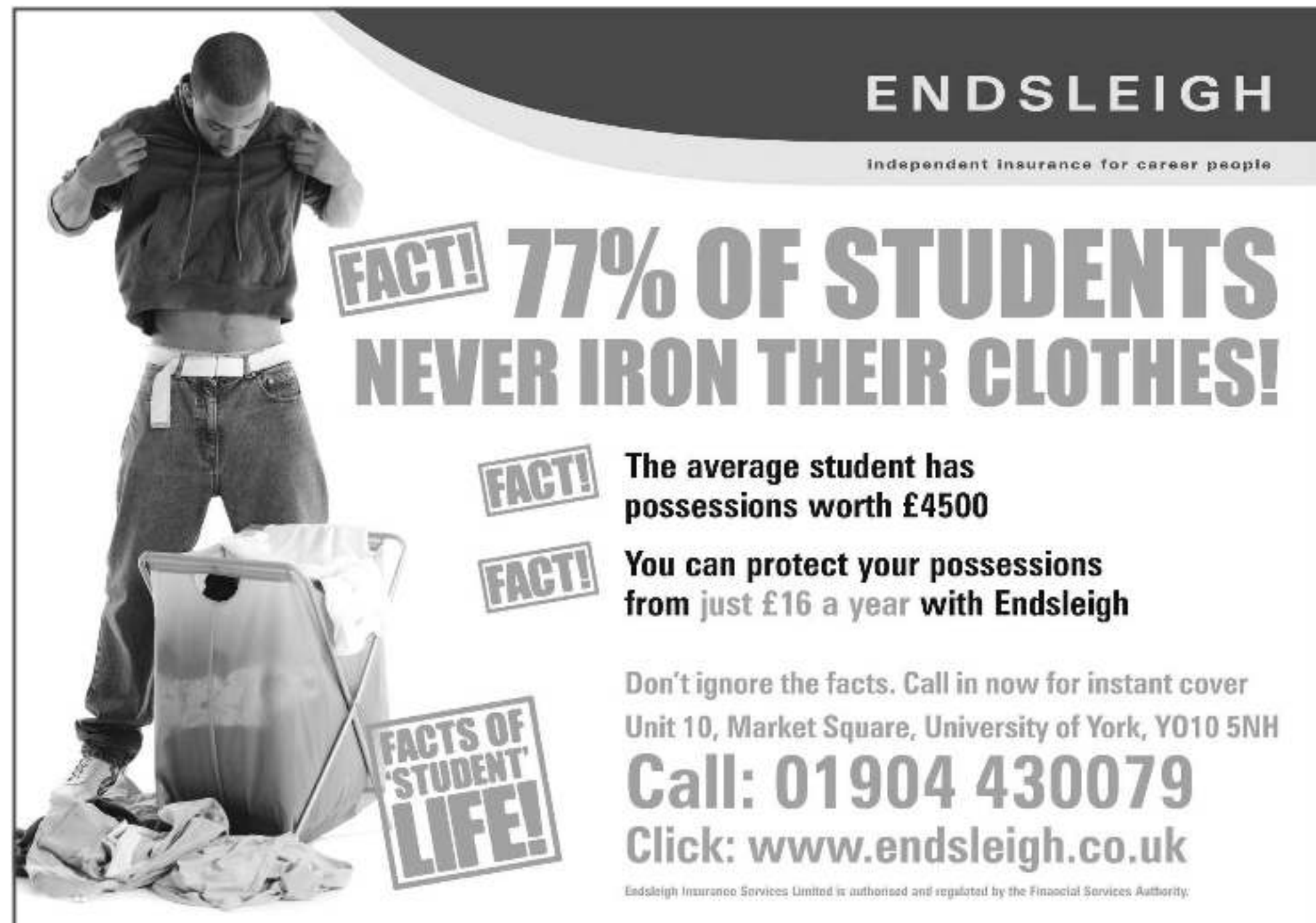
As I'm sure most of you have come to realise, everything in York shuts by about one o'clock. Well, not anymore. Ziggys' has come to the rescue by providing some after hours entertainment at the weekend by providing York with what its craved for for so long: attractive women. Unfortunately you have to pay, but then again, that string of VKs purchased at Toffs on a Tuesday does not come cheap either.

In a ploy that has regained the levels of sleaze that Pole Soc worked so hard to get rid of, Ziggy's has given York a good old fashioned strip club. So, having stumbled inside, (purely for journalistic research purposes) we were given campus event-style wristbands and ushered to the top floor. I can assure you that this was no Club D. With more women than you could acknowledge with a fleeting glance, simply because they were so tall, Ziggy's has more than compensated for the lack of talent usually on display on a Wednesday.

Even if you are not appreciative of the art of lapdancing, I recommend a visit simply to experience the cultural diversity within the club, a level unseen in York until now. With women from many different ages, nationalities and races, every taste is catered for and at a tenner a go it is an absolute bargain. Once inside, we were greeted with a surgically enhanced female called Sarah. Sarah was a Langwith College student until she dropped out of University to pursue her career. Sarah had amassed a significant portion of our student loan that evening, leaving me to question who was in fact being exploited in this exchange.

Grace Fletcher-Hall may not agree, but it appears that men are being sexually manipulated to the point where they are powerless to do anything other than hand over their hard earned cash. Perhaps Grace could address this if elected as York's Feminist Labour Counsellor? Meanwhile the fight continues to ban *Nuts* and *Zoo* from Your:Shop.

As many students lament the drop in teaching standards I am merely relieved. Given that beauty is inversely proportional to intelligence, this year's crop of freshers has been distinctly above average. To think that I had given up hope.



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Clockwise from top left: *The Pale Man in Pan's Labyrinth*; *Hunting Cat Rag Rug* made by Louise Creed on display in the *Cats and Frogs* exhibition in Langwith College; *Infadels* ham it up in *Fibbers*; and Roald Dahl's *The Witches* gets adapted to stage by the 1812 Theatre Company at Helmsley Arts Centre.

## Live Music

**Tuesday 5th December**  
**Jam Factory Presents, Certificate 18s**  
 Atom presents up-and-coming electro and "Intelligent Dance Music" talents, featuring Mass Movement, Dataline and loads more. Entry is £2.

**Saturday 9th December**  
**Moneen, Fibbers**  
 High-energy epic emo rock hailing from Toronto, likened to Alexisonfire, Dashboard Confessional, and Thursday. These Canadians play reportedly amazing gigs, including back flips and thrashing stage antics. Entry is £7, or £6 in advance.

**Tuesday 12th December**  
**Infadels, Fibbers**  
 Favourites of the venue, Infadels (no longer 'the') have opened for the likes of the Scissor Sisters, Faithless and The Prodigy. They provide fun, innovative electronic rock and roll, guaranteed to get you dancing. Entry is £8 or £7 in advance.

**Thursday 14th December**  
**More Addiction, The Junction**  
 York Uni's own Battle of the Bands semi-finalists will be playing their last ever gig together. Come along to say goodbye and enjoy the riffage one last time. Doors open at 7.30pm.

## Campus Events

**Thursday 30th November**  
**Comedy Night, Wentworth**  
 YUSU and The Other Side Comedy Club are again putting on a night of top comedians at Wentworth. If the appeal of campus and town bars is starting to wear thin, head to Wentworth for a different evening out on campus.

**Friday December 1st**  
**Full Stop, Goodricke**  
 In honour of World Aids Day, Goodricke are holding a huge event involving DanceSoc performances, break dancers and live music from Fenna Rhodes and The True Ingredients. Dress code is red and white.

**Until Friday 8th December**  
**Cats and Frogs, The Norman Rea Art Gallery, Langwith College**  
 An exhibition by Louisa and Lewis Creed, displaying their skill in the art of hooking rag rugs. Also available in greeting card form. Open 9am to 6pm daily.

**Saturday 9th December**  
**JCRC Election Results Night Party, Goodricke Hall, til 2am**  
 If you're standing in your college JCRC elections, know someone who is, or simply want a good night out on campus, head down to Goodricke to join in with the celebrations and commiserations.

## Art and Performance

**Wednesday 6th December**  
**What the Dickens?, National Centre for Early Music**  
 One for hardcore Dickens fans: an evening of classic readings and songs from the musicals based on his stories. With excerpts from *Oliver*, *Scrooge*, *Pickwick*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Great Expectations*.

**Thursday 7th to 10th December**  
**The Crucible, Drama Barn**  
 Drama Soc presents Arthur Miller's treatment of the 1692 Salem Witch Trials, written as a comment on the nature of America during the McCarthy witch-hunts.

**Wednesday 13th December**  
**The Witches, Helmsley Arts Centre**  
 1812 Theatre Co. presents an adaptation (by David Wood) of Roald Dahl's creepy classic. Worth going to just to see how they portray the witches taking off their disguises on stage. [www.helmsleyarts.co.uk](http://www.helmsleyarts.co.uk) for tickets.

**Thursday 14th December to 7th January**  
**Aladdin Panto, Grand Opera House**  
 Not the Disney version, but still lots of tacky fun. Featuring gaudy costumes, groan-worthy humour, and questionable acting skills demanded at any pantomime. Good for a laugh at least. [www.LiveNation.co.uk](http://www.LiveNation.co.uk) for tickets.

## Cinema

**Stranger Than Fiction**  
 Will Ferrel breaks free of his usual role to play a boring tax man who discovers that his life is being narrated by a depressed novelist (Emma Thompson). Upon hearing his predicted death, he consults a literary theorist (Dustin Hoffman). Interesting treatment of the nature of authorship and identity.

**Pan's Labyrinth (El Laberinto del Fauno)**  
 A dark and disturbing fairytale from Guillermo del Toro about the adventures of a young girl, supposedly the long-lost princess of a magical kingdom, and her mother, newly married to a captain in Franco's army.

**Big Nothing**  
 An almost cartoonish dark comedy starring David Schwimmer and Simon Pegg. Schwimmer, as a blackmailing teacher, finally breaks free of his Ross-from-Friends annoyingness, though still ends up playing the loser.

**London To Brighton**  
 A documentary-style film framed as a thriller, following a prostitute (played by Lorraine Stanley) and a young runaway (Georgia Groome) and their pursuers as they flee to Brighton. A gritty and gripping portrayal of the darker aspects of contemporary Britain.

# The Trident Nuclear Debate

**Josh Dodd** discusses the government's proposals to replace Britain's nuclear deterrent, the Trident submarine force, and whether such a deterrent really has a role in the twenty-first century.

The Trident II (D5) is a submarine-launched missile, armed with about three nuclear warheads. Their destructive power is estimated as that of eight Hiroshimas. The details of the British nuclear armament were only finalised in 1998, with Labour's Strategic Defence Review. The Trident system was planned to be in service at least until 2024. So why is this a hot issue all of a sudden?

Any programme to develop replacements for the Trident submarines will be a lengthy one. Tony Blair recently announced that a white paper will report on the issue in December and, after a three month consultation, MPs will be voting. Naturally, this will not be a free vote for Labour MPs.

Gordon Brown, in stark contrast to his usually cautious fiscal policy, has publicly backed the most expensive option available: a full replacement for the Trident submarine force - warning against compromising on the British nuclear deterrent. But the truth is that this is estimated to cost anything up to £40 billion over its lifetime. The important question, then, is are we really getting value for money here? £40 billion is an awful lot of cash to be spending: it is £2 billion more than this year's total defence budget or, to put it in a different light, almost half an NHS.

Frustratingly though, the answer is that a Trident replacement is a poor way to



**HMS Vanguard - one of Britain's nuclear submarines equipped with Trident D5 missiles at Faslane naval base**

spend British tax money. The very notion of a nuclear deterrent is a hang-over from a bygone era - one of towering superpowers and diametrically opposed, utterly incompatible ideologies across continents. During the Cold War, a nuclear deterrent was seen as vital - theories of Mutually Assured Destruction bounced alongside flashpoints that came scarily close to a full-scale war. But the Cold War is long over and the world is a

markedly different place. There is no USSR-esque bloc of territories that we can aim our guns at anymore.

The threat now, as our Prime Minister spends so much time telling us, is from those ambiguous and elusive terrorists. If, God forbid, a small cell of perhaps ten people manage to detonate a dirty bomb in a city centre, against whom should we retaliate? Whom should we bomb into submission?

What else can £40bil-

lion buy then? Quite a lot, really. Perhaps the best way to decide how to use this money is by examining national threats. Terrorism, yes. But I hardly think that the 7/7 bombers had second thoughts when they considered the British Trident submarine patrolling the ocean. Surely an even more compelling danger is that of climate change - this much money would help Britain to tackle the problem and mitigate economic fallout as far

as possible. I'm sure that the fight against terror could use more resources, if security is your thing. There is only so much the intelligence forces can do on their current budget. There are plenty of better, more cost-effective ways to spend this cash.

It is not inconceivable to rid Britain of nuclear weaponry. Indeed, Labour have already started such a programme with the Strategic Defence Review. The numbers of warheads

maintained was dropped by a third to 200; nuclear submarines were limited to 48 warheads, from 96 (though due to technological advances, this was actually a 50% increase on the Trident predecessor); and maintenance of other types of nuclear delivery systems, such as "free-fall" aircraft weaponry, was discontinued.

True, this is a moderate reduction, but even this sadly strikes Britain out ahead of the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council - the other four designated Nuclear Weapon States on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In fact, this is the very treaty that obliges us to reduce our nuclear holdings. The three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty include disarmament. Of course, none of the Nuclear Weapon States have done any such thing - any such discussion over the last three decades has been shelved on one pretext or another.

What would happen to Britain if she were to shed her nuclear capabilities? Would she be endlessly bombarded with nukes from manifold enemy states? Would she be vulnerable to invasion? Well, the 186 UN-recognised, non-nuclear countries seem to get by okay. Maybe if we can step out in front of the pack by disarming our nuclear capabilities, we can start leading the world towards a more peaceful future. Britain may not be a military superpower, but she could be a moral one.

## Assassination sparks political calamity

By Tom Smith

The high-profile assassination of an anti-Syrian government minister has sparked tensions in an already tense Lebanon. Pierre Gemayel, the industry minister, was assassinated last Tuesday whilst driving his car. The killing marks the most high-profile political assassination since the death of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February of last year.

The shooting came just hours after the UN security council announced its approval of a tribunal to try those accused of the murder

of the former Prime Minister.

Officially, the identities of the assailants are a mystery, but numerous conspiracy theories are abundant - not only from members of the public and media, but from governments too. Prime Minister Tony Blair was among the few who did not couple his condemnation with an implicit accusation, commenting that it underlined the "urgent need for a strategy for the whole of the Middle East". President Bush was less neutral, pledging to "defend their [Lebanon] democracy against attempts by Syria,

Iran and allies to foment instability and violence in that important country". Anti-Syrians have been blaming the Syria-Iran-Hezbollah "triangle", whilst pro-Syrians deny Syrian involvement, and even point the finger at Israel.

There were fresh fears that this could be a precursor for something more serious. John Bolton, the United States ambassador to the UN, claimed that this may be the "first shot" in an attempt by "Syria and Iran, acting through Hezbollah" to stage a coup against the Lebanese government.

Syria has been a con-



**Protest after the murder**

stant presence in Lebanon in some form or another in the last 29 years. It was only

forced to pull out of the country last year, in the aftermath of the Hariri's assassination and a wave of international protests.

Lebanese politics have been paralysed between pro-Syrian and anti-Syrian blocs, reaching a high-point after the UN's conclusion of Syrian involvement in Hariri's murder. Six pro-Syrian ministers resigned over the cabinet's support for a UN tribunal to try those accused. This political crisis seems to be perpetuated by those who seek to bring frown the Lebanese government.

But politicians shouldn't rush to pre-judge the investi-

gation. Just because the assassins are likely to be pro-Syria does not mean that they represent that country in any meaningful way. Any attempt to label Syria as the perpetrator, particularly by high-ranking US officials, must surely be bad news for those who wish to engage with Syria and Iran, to help smooth the situation in Iraq.

The Iraq Study Group, which reports next month, is likely to recommend diplomacy with Syria and Iran as a means of heading off a civil war in Iraq. Any anti-Syrian sentiment from the United States is certainly not a good omen.

# Government guidelines for Muslim watch on campus

By Anjali Raval

The Higher Education Minister has issued guidelines on how to alert students to extremist behaviour on campus, with a view to preventing radicals from manipulating vulnerable students into terrorist activities.

Last Friday, Higher Education Minister, Bill Rammell, issued guidelines to tackle "extremism in the name of Islam", a phenomenon which has apparently acquired strength on some university campuses.

The measures call for tutors to work closely with imams and the police in order to combat the "real, credible and sustained threat" of radicalism, ultimately with the aim of protecting vulnerable students and promoting safety on campus.

Mr Rammell has highlighted the extent of the problem, saying that this is a dangerous sort of extremism whereby innocent students are being recruited to terrorism through university societies.

In order to prevent these young, Muslim students from becoming radicalised, lecturers are encouraged to be more vigilant in spotting signs of violent extremism. This includes looking out for the circulation of Islamic literature on campus, the use of the university computer network to download Jihadist images

and even the take over of multi faith prayer rooms.

In order to prevent the "serious, but not widespread, Islamist extremist activity in [higher education institutions]" from amplifying further, radical speakers and groups with a history of inciting racial hatred are being banned from campuses.

Although groups such as Al-Muhajiroun, recently prohibited under the anti-terrorism legislation, have been removed from campus communities, it is a worry that such groups could resurface by changing their name or taking over apolitical Islamic societies.

The document states that students should have published information on how to identify violent extremists. It is also seen as necessary to set up a support network between the student unions, imams and mosques so that vulnerable students are not targeted.

To further encourage integration between different faiths and ethnicities, volunteer programs are being used to encourage students to mix with others from different backgrounds. More importantly, a plan of action would also have to be formulated in the event of an arrest of a student for terrorist offences.

Gemma Tumelty of the National Union of Students (NUS) has praised the more moderate tone of these guidelines. This is in contrast

to the polemic appeal made to academics last month by the former Education Minister Ruth Kelly, who requested students to be monitored. There is concern, however, that some of the points are too vague and universities could end up taking too harsh a stance.

The focus of extremism "in the name of Islam" could also, in effect, be counter productive, where instead of opening the lines of communication for better integration and detection of terrorism, it could instead close them, provoking a backlash against Muslim students.

The new guidelines are fully supported by the British Muslim Forum (BMF), a pressure group backed by a membership of almost 300 mosques. The BMF have made a statement saying, "We believe that extremism of all forms needs to be tackled, in particular the radicalism of Muslim youths on campus."

It also backed any initiative to rout out "any form of criminal activity undertaken in the name of Islam", while still urging the government to consider producing the same sort of guidelines for attacking the anti-Muslim extremism from the far right.

Nouse first reported on the proposed extremism guidelines of November 7. When Professor Haleh Afshar of the Politics Department urged the government to engage rather than target Muslim students.



Bill Rammell has issued guidelines for students to spot extremism on campus

## The Campus Soapbox

### European Society

Jean-Claude Juncker, the former President of the European Council, is correct in his assertion that "whoever holds doubts about the European Union should visit a military cemetery."

After having experienced two World Wars, Europe needed a fresh start. Political and economic agreements were settled in order to ensure peace. An economic union of the coal and steel industries was advocated by the then French foreign minister.

The logic was that the mutual trade would disable another destructive Franco-

German conflict, and ensure long-term economic and political stability in Europe, which was badly needed so Europe could heal its



The future of the European Union is still undecided

wounds from the War. By establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the foundation was laid for what is now the

European Union.

It was not until 1992, however, that the EU was formally created by the members of the European Community. The Treaty of Maastricht divided the EU into three key pillars: the European Community, Common Foreign, Security Policy and Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters. Supranationalism is still developed distinctively within each pillar depending on how sensitive states are concerning their national sovereignty.

Today the EU consists of a confederation of 25 member states and over 460 million inhabitants. It is the most developed intergovernmental organisation worldwide. Nevertheless, numer-

ous problems and questions remain unanswered.

How to resolve the issue of the democratic deficit? What about a common foreign policy? And how does the idea of a multi-speed Europe come in?

Structural deficits and lack of electoral support continue to hinder the democratic legitimisation of the Union. Furthermore, recent events have shown the EU still cannot act as a single player. Not all the member states, it would seem, are ready to proceed with further integration.

What impact does the rejection of the European Constitution by two of the original founder states have on the future of the EU? Is the future of the EU itself at stake? It is the opinion of

this society that the refusal of a common constitution by the French and Dutch voters should rather be seen as an opportunity to rethink collective goals and cope with current problems in order to strengthen the Union.

Coming back to Juncker's quotation, we must recognize the incredible developments that have been achieved since 1945.

In 50 years, the zone of peace has been established, the level of prosperity has increased significantly and economic imbalances have been compensated. Overall European integration has been successful, but there is still a lot to be accomplished. Therefore, further consolidation should be pursued until one day we are unified as the "United States of Europe".

# Nicky Woolf Goes way back

It was around three o'clock Thursday morning when the peaceful Goodricke air was shattered by the sound of "I'm Henry the eighth I am, I am", sung just out of key and with volume enough to crack the concrete and scare every duck on campus. It was, of course, the regular and familiar sound of the rugby players returning home from the weekly post-game Ziggy's social and bar crawl. Our vocal's own rugby chap was himself in fine vocal form; he managed -if memory serves- nearly twelve renditions of "Glory glory hallelujah," each with a different sexual nuance, before his performance was tragically cut short by an inconsiderately-placed floor.

Oh what depths of depravity the British binge-drinking culture has sunk to, I hear the more hysterical readers amongst you cry. It wasn't like that in my day, I hear the elder readers amongst you answer.

Sorry, oldies. In fact, it was exactly like that in your day. Forty years ago, the rugby team had just the same reputation for drunken, disorderly fun. An edition of this paper, dated the 23rd November 1967, featured an interview with the outraged

provost of Derwent college, in which he describes how following a rugby match the players "made the bar uninhabitable because of the mess and rowdy singing." Not only that, but the players also got into the toilets in Derwent, where they "ripped off a £10 towel dispenser and removed a bowl of flowers and several scarves." We can only imagine why. The Professor's most biting accusation, one that I suspect may affront the current rugby team as much as it did 1967's, was "It seems that the rigger teams can't drink for half an hour without getting p\*\*\*\*d!" For this antisocial behaviour, Derwent college stripped the rugby team of its meal-credit.

It seems as if being accused of disorderlyness was par for the course, but then just as now, calling the captain of the rugby team a lightweight was absolutely not on. In the following edition, on the 9th of December 1967, there was an answering letter from David Jenkins, the president of the rugby club. "If Professor Ree," he seethes, "would care to get in touch with the landlady of the Charles XII" - the good old Charles was just as popular then as today - "he will learn that on the very many occasions the rugby club has used her premises there has never been rowdyism and drunkenness." I should bloody well think so too.



# Letters

## Star Letter

Dear Nouse,

I am disgusted to hear that the University of Manchester's *Student Direct* has been the victim of a 'coup' perpetrated by an alliance of thier Islamic Society and the Socialist Workers' Party. Consequently, the paper's content has degenerated into a barely literate combination of paranoid Islamo-fascist rantings and ill-informed middle-class pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric.

Amidst the uproar over the DfES's proposed covert surveillance of 'Asian-looking' students by academics, it is ironic to note how easily the student paper of the country's largest university has been taken over by extremists. Not only was a complete novice with 'no journalistic experi-

ence' installed as editor, but experienced staff members have been forced out amidst accusations regarding the editor's 'bodyguards' and 'cronies'. Views which are in opposition to that of the Editor are now banned: the letters page has been removed (not to mention the sex column).

Apparently, spelling, punctuation and grammar have fallen to appallingly low standards, and much of the paper's material is plagiarised.

Disappointingly, it seems that only two student newspapers have covered the story: Cardiff's *Gair Rhydd* and Cambridge's *Varsity*. Where is *Nouse's* sense of solidarity with its fellow student journalists?

*Anonymous*



**John Grogan**  
Local MP

BSKYB's raid to secure 17.9% of ITV in an apparent attempt to crowd out any other potential investors is an unfortunate and timely reminder of where the real threat to plurality and diversity in British broadcasting comes from. Will Sky now use their position as the leading shareholder in ITV to 'materially influence' whether or not Sky News replaces ITN when their news contract comes up for renewal in 2008? Will Sky now try and scupper joint BBC / ITV plans to promote a freesat service to compliment Freeview?

Meanwhile, the crucial announcement of the BBC licence fee settlement is expected imminently. Rupert Murdoch and other prominent commercial interests have been keen to advocate the lowest possible fee increase on the grounds that commercial broadcasters have been facing ever-falling advertising revenues, and that in any event the BBC should be drastically limiting its ambitions.

The truth is that when it comes to total

industry revenues, the BBC is an entirely less dominant player in the television world than it was in the 1990s. For example, Sky today controls 40 per cent of total television revenue, nearly twice that of the BBC at 23 per cent. The BBC also has a track record of delivery and innovation unsurpassed amongst our public services. Freeview is a classic public-private sector partnership which has made Government ambitions for digital switchover possible. The BBC's online presence has underscored the absolutely key role of an impartial public service provider of news and information for a new generation. Most importantly, the last decade has arguably been a golden age of BBC programming, with quality output now consumed by a much broader section of the population than a generation ago. For example, one million people tuned into the groundbreaking 'Civilisation' in the 1970s, with six times that number watching 'Plant Earth' thirty years later.

The Office, Strictly Come Dancing, Bleak House, Doctor Who and The Apprentice all demonstrate that the BBC adage of 'making the good popular and the popular good' lives on in good health. Not surprisingly, independent DCMS research indicates that 75 per cent of the population are willing to pay more for existing and expanded BBC services over the life of the Charter.

Of course, the BBC is not the only provider of public service broadcasting UK,

## Corporate courtesans and happy customers

Dear Nouse,

I found it striking that the Chair of the Biosciences Society, Beckie Cooper, when pledging her support for StemCell Ventures Inc.'s investment, gave explicit assurance that she would back such projects 'only as long as the aims of the department remain academic rather than in securing lucrative contracts such as this one.'

Naturally, most students at York would rather see managerial focus directed at themselves and the departments than at business goals. But there are murmurings abroad suggesting the university is some sort of corporate courtesan, leaping into bed with investors and snapping up shares in 'unethical' companies.

There is such a thing as unethical investment: as students we may feel culpable by association. But education cannot be removed from the grubby world of finance and placed aloft in some rarefied, eternally democratic haven. A university is a business like any other, and the assumption that universities are democratically accountable to their students leaves a very bad taste in the mouth. As a customer, there is only one way to vote, and that's with your feet.

**James MacDougald**  
Goodricke College

but it is primarily responsible for the fact that the UK's creative sector of television content has the highest rate of investment per head of home-produced programming of any developed country, including the United States. It is also perhaps worth noting that the BBC is shedding 7,000 jobs to shift more resources into programming. It falls to that most eloquent defender of British values, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to make the final call on the licence fee in the upcoming weeks. Will he back what can perhaps be called the greatest British brand with costed promises to deliver digital switchover, quality programming, and a transfer of production to the north of the country, or will he give further comfort - and profit- to Rupert Murdoch?

*John Grogan has been the Labour MP for Selby since 1997.*

# Your:Platform

## Where the great unwashed speak their troubles

### What we asked Vanbrugh...

1. Do you think SU officers playing freshers' bingo is something worth worrying about?
2. Should arms companies be allowed to recruit on campus?
3. Are you at all concerned about campus security?
4. What are your feelings on the quality of teaching at York?



**Luke Brazier**  
English & Philosophy

1. I can see it could have been a joke; but with their responsibility, you'd have expected something different.
2. Seems to be a matter of freedom of speech versus pacifism. I'm a big supporter of both.
3. Never had problems myself.
4. My lecturers are varied. Some are insightful, but one turned up late, was unprepared, and taught us next to nothing.



**Tamsin Urquhart**  
English

1. I think it's all a bit cliché, and rather pathetic.
2. The University shouldn't be expected too have ethical obligations: if people want to choose to do something like that, they should be able to.
3. I can't comment, as I haven't lived on campus since my first year.
4. I've always thought that English is taught really well.



**Mark Kelleher**  
PPE

1. I think it would be funny if it were played on them.
2. I don't think arms manufacturers should be allowed on campus at all: it's a real shame we're bankrolling our education out to private enterprise.
3. Never, ever go to Halifax.
4. I feel the teaching is good, but I'm glad this study has come up, as it'll stop academics from resting on their laurels.

# British snooker champion beaten by Langwith student at campus bar

By Liam Paul  
 SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

DING JUNHUI, the reigning UK Snooker champion came to the University last week and played a few frames of pool with some lucky students. The 19 year-old is regarded as one of the hottest new talents in World Snooker, and his victory last year in the UK Championship, hosted at the Barbican Centre in York last year, established him as a rising star.

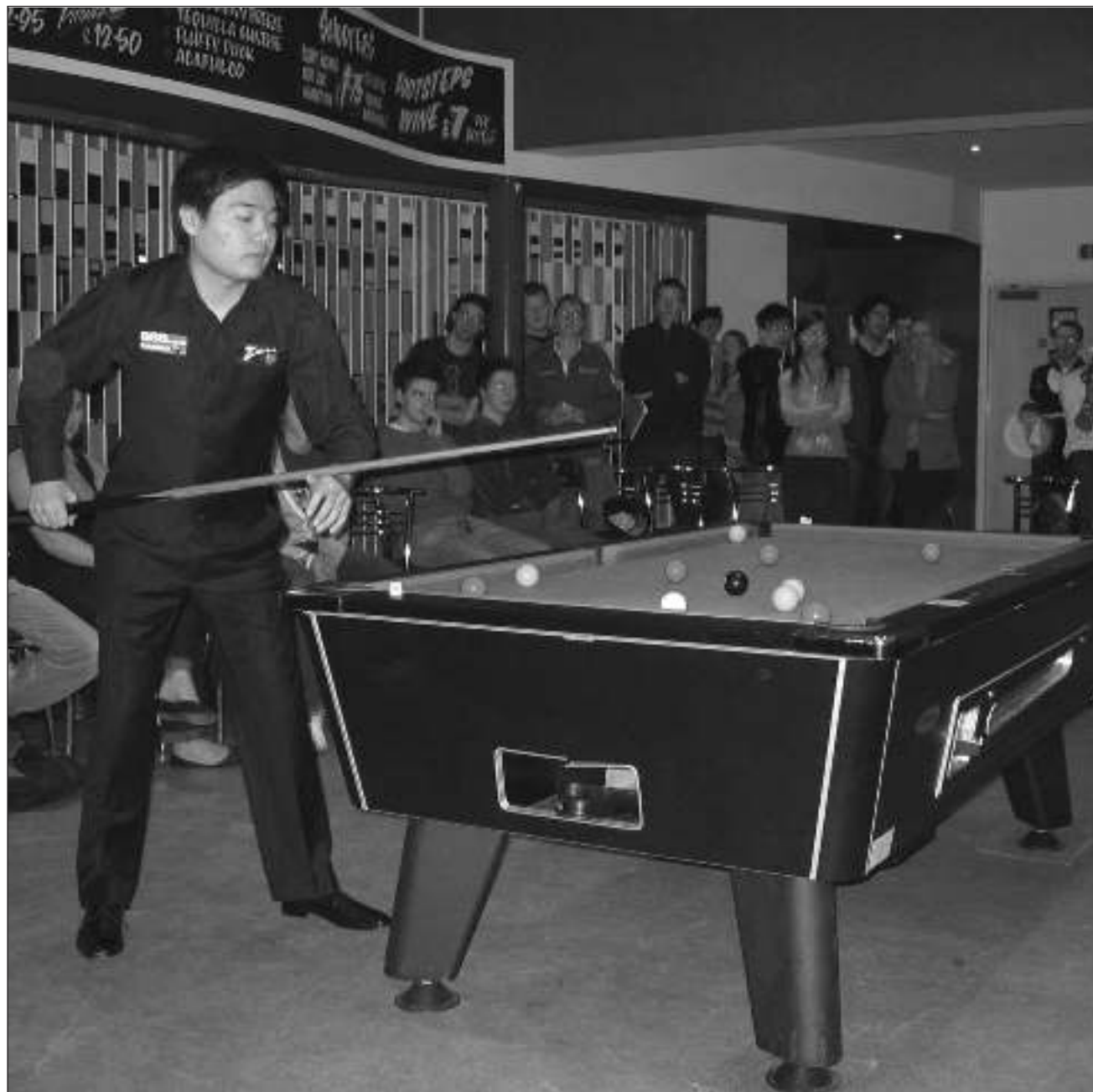
Organised by the Athletics Union, Junhui's visit to JJ's in Halifax College last Wednesday, came ahead of this year's championship where he hopes to successfully defend his crown, which he won as a relative unknown, in last year's final against perennial favourite Steve Davis. Accompanied in JJ's by his agent, translator and a local TV news crew, the youthful protégé nicknamed "the Star of the East", played the winner of a fiercely competitive student pool tournament, that decided who had the right to face him.

The competition, which began at 10:30 in the morning, had by the time of Junhui's arrival whittled down the challengers to Luke Fleet, the University pool captain, and Mike Walsh, the University snooker captain. After a three frame decider Luke Fleet was the victor and gained the chance to test his skills against Ding himself.

The Chinese star seemed relaxed, as befits someone who turned professional aged only 16, and he illustrated his undoubted ability with a show of slick positional play and easy, precise cueing skills that makes him a serious challenger for more ranking wins in this year's forthcoming championships. Playing Junhui was obviously never going to be an easy task, although all those who attempted to rise to the challenge throughout the afternoon made good shows of themselves, in the face of some shots of pure world class.

In fact, only one student was to beat Junhui, during the whole of his flying visit. Philip Radford, a third Year from Langwith college, won his chance to play Junhui in a raffle and kept his nerve following a good start and a couple of mistakes by the UK champion to seal a win, which will surely give him bragging rights at the pool table for a few years to come.

A good turnout of snooker fans turned up despite the overcast and blustery weather, and after playing frames of pool with the chosen Students, the diminutive maestro was happy to sign autographs and have his photo taken with enthusiastic snooker fans before being swept away to prepare no doubt, for the UK championships which begin on the 4th December.



Ding Junhui, winner of last year's British Championship at the Barbican Centre shows his talent at the Halifax bar. Third year Langwith student, Philip Radford stole the show with an unlikely win against the champion

# Minstermen look to continue good form

By Sam Craft  
 SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

HOME DEFEATS against League One side Bristol City in the FA Cup and Conference high-flyers Dagenham & Redbridge marred an otherwise encouraging month for York City. Two wins from their three Conference fixtures in November, including a notable victory over promotion rivals Weymouth, leave Billy McEwan's side still perched on the edge of the playoff places as they approach the halfway point of the 2006/07 season.

The Minstermen did not disgrace themselves in the FA Cup First Round

against Bristol City either. Playing in front of their highest crowd of the season at KitKat Crescent, it was the home side who dominated the first half. However in the second, a mix-up at the back allowed Bristol City defender Jamie McCombe to head the ball over Tom Evans in the York goal, which ultimately separated the two sides at the final whistle.

City faced another daunting task the following week when they faced Weymouth. Living up to their nickname of the Terras, Weymouth boasted an unbeaten home record going into the game. However City captain Emmanuel Panther set the tone early in the sec-

ond half by scoring his first goal for the club in over fifty appearances. Weymouth levelled through Wayne Purser but a headed goal by Jason Goodliffe made it 2-1 to ensure that York became the first side this season to take three points from a trip to the Wessex Stadium.

City had a chance to gain ground on another side challenging for promotion when Dagenham & Redbridge travelled to the KitKat Crescent. However, it was the visitors who took the spoils in an entertaining match, as they twice fought from behind to triumph 3-2. York opened the scoring early on when Martyn Woolford struck from twen-



York City in action

ty yards, but Dagenham pegged them back before the interval thanks to Craig Mackail-Smith. City's advantage was restored when Clayton Donaldson pounced from close range, only for Glen Southam to thunder in the equaliser

from even further out than Woolford's earlier effort. York's woes were compounded further when Mackail-Smith raced away to slot home the winner, and Dagenham held on for victory

York's hopes of reaching the playoffs rest largely on the shoulders of young striker Donaldson, whose impressive form has not gone unnoticed by many. Not only has he been called up to the national non-league squad for a fixture against Holland, but Wolves manager Mick McCarthy was spotted in the stands during City's 1-0 home win over Altrincham, triggering rumours that Wolves were

ready to pay up to £200,000 to secure the Bradford-born striker's services in the January transfer window.

It would be unfortunate to lose such an integral member of a squad who so far look capable of avoiding a repeat of the mid-season slump suffered by the club in the last campaign. Nevertheless, Billy McEwan and his players must remain focused on their goal during the busy fixture schedule in the festive period, which includes a home derby against local Yorkshire rivals Halifax Town, if they are going to keep pace with the Conference's leading pack.

# York Hockey club enjoy term success

By Andy Hook  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

THIS WEEK, the hockey club furthered the club's growing status on campus by cementing a clean sweep of wins in BUSA matches.

It was a tireless effort for all four teams involved, but special mention must go to their women's second 11 for the formidable 6-0 victory. In the men's first team, a 3-1 victory over Sheffield allowed them to stretch the lead in their BUSA table, can they be stopped? It has however been not as successful within the Yorkshire league. Defeat and a draw last weekend showed us that some lapses in concentration and scrappy play will be punished, however these problems have been rectified and on Saturday, the first eleven played some outstanding hockey and got back to their winning ways, and as a result progressed up the table. It is

an honour to be involved in a club that has been winning so frequently, and what is even better, hockey now seems to be getting the positive exposure it deserves, long may it continue.

Perhaps the best evidence for this has been the ladies hockey team. So far this season they have proven themselves to be fiery competitors. In the Wednesday match against the current leaders of BUSA, Newcastle University, York showed their worth. Despite incurring many injuries during the match, one involving the defender Gemma Cheney who had to be taken to hospital for stitches, the team pulled together and played well as a unit. The 1-1 draw was a good result. Missing their skillful and strong defender in the weekend match, the Ladies XI's still managed to put in another excellent performance, finding the back of the goal six

times. Anne Coleman and Lucy Horrel got two goals each and Jamie Unsworth and Lindsey Walker scored one each.

Scoring had previously proven to be tricky for the York team but the coaching from Pete Bartlet has helped the team in their performance. Finding a hole in the York press is proving a tricky business for the opposing team thanks to its strong defence. The Canadian medic; Andrea Pisesky, the blonde Dutch; Marieke Hampshire and the third Year Brit; Lindsey Walker, were the players of the week. Yet what is refreshing in this sprightly team is the ability of all of the players and how well they play together. The oncoming Saturday sees York play Leeds Uni who are notoriously dirty players. Fingers crossed that no more visits to hospital will occur and that Gemma Cheney makes a speedy recovery!



The men and womens team powered to a clean sweep of wins in the BUSA league

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As I sit here trying to think of things to write that might interest you more than your course books, I have to admit, I'm struggling.

I absolutely love this job, but I appreciate that a lot of what I do would be very boring to read about. I do, however, sit on various University committees. The one and only one that's vaguely interesting is the group that discusses the new Heslington East campus.

It is very widely recognised that York University punches above its weight in the BUSA rankings (other institutions of our size come well below us in the table). This is why the new development is so exciting. It will double the number of students that study here and bring with it state-of-the-art facilities.

At the moment, the University are aiming to build a top-quality gym, numerous grass pitches (one with a small stand), indoor tennis courts, squash courts, a badminton hall, sports hall, a rubber crumb pitch and a water-based hockey pitch. As well as a 50 metre swimming pool. Now, you're probably sitting there thinking this will never happen, but I am very optimistic that it will. The University has started to realise that sports facilities have a major impact on an institution's reputation. This improvement in facilities and increase in numbers should allow us to climb the BUSA rankings and allow York to compete with the established sporting universities. Although planning permission has still not been granted, we are all hoping that the new facilities will be in place by 2010, soon enough for next year's freshers to benefit from the improvements.

Other news that may interest you is the AU race night. This event is on this Saturday in Derwent bar. Tickets cost £3 from the AU office, and you can then exchange your ticket on the door for 10 AU pounds. You then bet on races and win the prizes. Prizes so far include VIP tickets, cinema tickets, bar tabs, free meals, and champagne. Oh, and all the money goes to charity.

If you find yourself free on Wednesday afternoon, then go along and support some of our teams. Highlights of this week's fixtures include the Badminton Men's 1sts v. Durham 1sts (1.00 main hall), Netball 2nds v. St. Johns 3rds (1.00 in Tent), and the Basketball Men's 1sts v. Manchester 1sts (4.00 main hall).

# Is college sport harming not helping sport at university?

By Daniel Whitehead  
DEPUTY EDITOR

IT'S SUNDAY, York is cold and damp; I'm hungover and the 22 men stumbling over a ball in front of me, each showing the first signs of the inevitable beer belly developing, are all hungover as well. Welcome to the wonderful world of college sport.

The newly re-branded Deloitte Inter-College Sports Championship is a York tradition which began in the early years of the University when there were only a few colleges, all boasting similar numbers of students. Since then the introduction of new colleges such as Alcuin, James, and, most recently, Wentworth to proceedings has meant a much larger and potentially more intriguing competition.

However, the changes have had the opposite effect. Colleges have been built by the University to house students, not provide an equal footing in sport - meaning those which house more students such as Halifax have more resources and a greater chance of finding talented players.

This adds an unquestionable bias to proceedings, meaning that colleges such as James and Vanbrugh which have fewer students are the outsiders. No longer is college sport about which team has the best individuals or the best team ethic, it's about who has the largest squad to pick from, render-



The inter-college championship doesn't tend to generate much passion amongst the majority of students

ing the competition a pointless bore. Currently, Goodricke College, one of the largest, look set to top the table at Christmas and, unsurprisingly, Wentworth will lie at the foot of the table.

Personally, I don't know anyone who plays for their college, and it's questionable as to whether I want to. While University sports clubs are composed of eager, willing competitors who play either for pure enjoyment, to make new friends or to improve their ability, college sport is more about the

clique, staying in with the crowd and excluding anyone who plays for a rival, or, dare I say it, doesn't play sport at all.

Take a recent case of students taking the collegiate system way too seriously. An infamous Langwith student whom I will not name, sent me an e-mail asking if he could write an article about how unfairly his team were treated in their recent men's first's football match against Derwent "for taking things too seriously", and that both himself and fellow teammate were victimised by

"over-zealous AU officials". I'm sure our readership would be captivated by such an opportunity to learn about the woes of such legendary figures.

So what does this mean? Perhaps the AU should focus less of their attention on providing facilities and man-hours into organising games which are meaningless (and of interest to very few), and more time to promoting the benefits of playing University sport. Competing against other institutions and specialist clubs which have better facil-

ities and coaching, and provide greater opportunities for improving individual ability is surely better than playing in a merry-go-round of pointless banter.

Who knows, maybe if university students stopped trying to beat each other we may even become a respectable sporting institution; instead of concentrating on a tournament which does not win the heart and minds of the majority of York university students.

## Latest College/University Sport Results/Standings:

### BUSA Results:

#### Badminton:

a	Sheffield Men's 2nds	5-3
h	Liverpool Women's 1sts	3-5

#### Basketball:

a	Manchester Met Men's 1sts	38-87
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#### Hockey:

h	Sheffield Men's 1sts	3-1
h	Sheffield H Women's 1sts	3-0

#### Rugby Union:

a	Sunderland Men's 1sts	24-8
h	York St John 1sts	26-42

#### Squash:

a	Northumbria Men's 1sts	1-4
h	Newcastle Women's 1sts	1-3

### BUSA Standings:

#### Badminton Men's 1sts - Division 1A

	pld	pts
1. Leeds Met	5	12
2. Manchester Met	5	12
3. Leeds	6	12
4. Newcastle	5	9
5. Manchester	6	6
6. York 1sts	5	-3

#### Hockey Men's 1sts - Division 3B

	pld	pts
1. York 1sts	6	14
2. Newcastle 2nds	6	11
3. St John 1sts	6	11
4. Hull 1sts	6	7
5. Newcastle 3rds	6	5
6. Sheffield 3rds	6	1

### College Results:

Langwith vs Derwent (Football 1sts)	0-2
Alcuin vs Vanbrugh (Netball 1sts)	17-4
Halifax vs Langwith (Hockey 1sts)	1-0
Wentworth vs Derwent (Basketball 1sts)	24-10
Goodricke vs Alcuin (Squash 1sts)	6-2

### College Standings 26/11:

	pts
1. Goodricke	98
2. Halifax	80
3. Langwith	79
4. Derwent	74
5. Alcuin	67
6. Vanbrugh	57
7. James	50
8. Wentworth	40

Reigning UK snooker champion Ding Junhui is beaten by a Langwith student at Halifax College Bar:



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# Tenacious football 1sts hang on to maintain winning run

By Tarun Patel  
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

York University 3  
Teesside University 2

AFTER A HUGE disappointing season last year, with just a single victory and relegation from the BUSA Mens 3B Northern Conference, the York Mens 1st XI came into a new season hoping to banish those miserable memories. So far this year, they have gone a long way towards doing just that. The season began with an impressive 4-1 victory over Teesside 2nd XI. A disappointing 2-0 reverse against Newcastle 2nd XI followed, but since then York have produced a string of impressive performances and, consequently, the results have followed. Most impressive of these was a 2-1 victory over Manchester 1sts in the Northern Universities League. This was followed by a 6-2 thrashing of city rivals York St. John 3rds in the BUSA league and a 2-1 victory over Newcastle 1sts. Despite a defeat to Leeds 2nds, another victory over St John, this time a 1-0 win over their 2nd team meant that York came into this fixture against Teesside 2nd XI full of confidence that their good run of form could continue. Overall, York produced a professional footballing performance, taking into consideration the miserable weather conditions, to see off Teesside Mens 2nds 3-2, a result which Teesside will be quietly relieved about, having been pegged back in their own half for long periods of the game. Despite the flow of the game being jolted at times, largely due to the persistent rain and blustery winds, York did enough to record their sixth win of the season, allowing them to continue the rich vein of form they now find themselves in.

Dan Brown is keen to continue: "I'm really pleased with the way things are going for us, but it's important we don't rest on our laurels and push on between now and the end of the season." Despite a slow start to the game, Teesside's first meaningful attack resulted in them taking a 1-0 lead after a slashed clearance from Martin Daubney fell at the feet of a Teesside attacker. York re-appeared unscathed and made much of the first half, with Dan Brown, Dominic O'Shea and Pardeep Singh flashing shots wide of Teesside's goal before Henry Smith netted the equaliser after a sweeping four-man move which fully deserved its outcome. The half-time break seemed to alter little in the game's make-up, as York continued to dominate the possession afterwards, with Teesside happy to sit deep and aim to exploit any possible counter-attacking opportunities. Hence it was no surprise when York took the lead, albeit in controversial circumstances, from a quickly taken free-kick from Pardeep Singh, which nestled in the left-hand side of the goal as the Teesside players were still organising their wall. Whilst the Teessiders were evidently aggrieved with the manner in which the goal came, the scoreline was no more than York mer-

ited after a wave of chances, with both Andy Ridell's cut into the box and shot, and Henry Smith's grasscutter minutes before both narrowly missing the target. However, York gifted Teesside a backdoor entry into the game once more when Daubney misjudged the bounce of the ball in an unforgiving position in the 69th minute, and Teesside were on hand to capitalise on the generous offering. Although it would have been easy at this stage for heads to drop, York rallied and got their reward when Henry Smith flashed a cross into the box which Tom Moore, a 2nd half substitute, was on hand to convert. There was no third reprieve for Teesside, and York hung on for a crucial win in a week when it was important for footballing matters to resume centre stage after the docking of points they suffered in the last week. If the point reduction is lifted, an outcome York will certainly hope for once their appeal is lodged, the players will certainly be holding legitimate aspirations for a league winners' medals come the end of the season. York were hoping for more success on Saturday when they came up against Hull 1st XI, but the game was postponed owing to waterlogged conditions.



York Mens 1st XI braved the appalling conditions to beat Teesside 2nd XI 3-2

**Football 1sts Autumn Term:**

**BUSA Men's League 4B**

Current standings		York 1sts Results:	
1. Leeds 2nds	6 15	a	Teesside 4-1
2. Newcastle 2nds	6 13	h	Newcastle 0-2
<b>3. York 1sts</b>	<b>6 12</b>	a	St John 3 6-2
4. St John 3rds	6 9	a	Leeds 2-1
5. Teesside 2nds	6 3	h	St John 2 1-0
6. St John 2nds	6 1	h	Teesside 3-2