



Happy Birthday Bob Ross

Celebrating the life and legacy of a true cultural icon the only way we know how: painting
M.16

Leaf stress behind

Can plants be used to improve your mental health at University?
P. 21



Nouse



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Concerns over new Hes East Colleges

Matthew King
NEWS EDITOR

NOUSE RESEARCH HAS revealed more details regarding the new colleges that are set to be built on Campus East by 2021. This research indicates concerning plans for colleges that include a significant bias towards standard and premium tiers of accommodation (flying in the face of campaigns by students for more affordable prices.) Furthermore, plans also indicate that the building of new colleges will have stark environmental impacts: a fact that *Nouse* covered last year in an earlier edition. Plans, as they stand for the new colleges, were approved by York City Council last year, on 21 December 2018.

Our research has revealed the bands of rooms the new colleges will provide. 13 per cent of the new rooms will be economy, 12 per cent will be premium, and the

Continued on P. 6



Bret Crossley crosses the line in 1hr 58mins to win the men's Yorkshire Marathon Wheelchair race: coverage continued on P. 7

Revs: the toughest place to work in York?

Revs denies having received any allegations of employee maltreatment, such as long shifts or emotional abuse

Patrick Walker
EDITOR

CURRENT AND FORMER student employees of Revolution Bars have, in exclusive interviews to *Nouse*, revealed a shocking pattern of poor working conditions at the York Parties staple.

Revs have said that the allegations do not fit with company policy, and denies having received word of any employee mistreatment at its York location.

Nouse has obtained docu-

ments suggesting that while Revs is expected to make tens of thousands per night on some days, it often requires people work shifts without breaks. *Nouse* only began investigating the incident after several allegations of staff mistreatment emerged on YorFest over the summer. Anonymous posters had several allegations, including aforementioned long hours, and wrongful dismissal after difficulties with mental health. Following in-depth interviews with over ten employees, past and present, *Nouse* was able to confirm that most, if not all of those employees were asked to work long

hours without breaks, with one reporting a shift that lasted 19 hours without stopping

This treatment did not just extend to those working for minimum wage in lower positions. Managers were allegedly frequently asked to work long hours too. One employee told us that they technically volunteered to work extreme shifts due to "short staffing." Revs staff do not typically have breaks scheduled into their shifts on rotas, so missing breaks is relatively easy, especially during busy hours.

These allegations of long hours are particularly problematic consid-

ering that a large proportion of the weekly staff of more than 60 at Revs are students, with commitments to academic work. One interviewee told us that they had been forced to seek repeated extensions after working long hours made them too tired to contemplate essay-writing. The same student badly needed money to pay off rent and cover other living costs.

By far the worst offender at Revs were so-called 'resets' on Sunday night, that cleaned and prepared the bar for customers the following week. Resets are typically overnight and well into the

Continued on P. 5



CONTENTS

NEWS

Decolonisation situation P.4
The push to diversify York's curriculum continues

Jack Edwards interview P.8
Nouse editors sit down with the current James Chair

COMMENT

Sex entertainment P.12
The case for venue decriminalisation in the UK

A Turning Point? P.13
No place for TPUK in York?

Clash of Comment P.14
Should XR protests be allowed in London?

MUSE.

Interview: Neal Fox P.4-5
We talk to the renowned artist about pretty much everything

York's emerging bands P.12
Our music scene explored

A Bob Ross Celebration P.16
MUSE paints along with Bob

POLITICS

US Democratic race P.16
Our debate coverage and more

Brexit special P.17
The latest developments

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Robot army P.19
How online Twitter bots are used by businesses in 2019

SCIENCE

House plants P.21
Could your cactus be good for your mental health?

SPORT

Henry Winter Interview P.24
Nouse Sport chat with *The Times*' Chief Football Writer

3 o'clock blackout P.26
Does the system deserve to die?

Men's football 2s out of cup P.27
Referee takes centre stage in gripping game



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

Over the past week, while I've been attempting to decide my Editor's Note, I've wanted this space to be a bit more than details on how many paninis we've bought from the library cafe over the last week (about four) or how our office might slowly be sinking into the lake (maintenance assure us we're fine.) A story was broken by a York alumnus in *The Times* that made up my mind.

York campus security, it emerged, sided with students from the University Chinese Society in partially taking down a wall criticising the protests in the country (our full report is in the page across.) In doing so, they set a dangerous precedent that York's students, Cantonese or otherwise, must refrain from expressing their personal views if it offends others: an idea so damaging it barely needs explaining. What were they thinking?

York's vibrant student media relies on the principles of freedom of speech and expression. We need YUSU's guidance when we get stories wrong, but we can largely expect relative freedom regarding what we print, and whose articles we carry. This edition alone features student voices on a vast range of topics that include the decriminalisation of sexual entertainment venues, the importance of environmentalism in pop music and a piece about the misconceptions surrounding bisexuality: none of which would find particularly enthusiastic support within the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party.

York shouldn't be siding with one group of students over another when it comes to mainstream political views. Doing so sends

the message to other political societies that their voices aren't valuable, that they aren't acknowledged. This decision will ultimately be negative for York if societies like the York Union begin to limit speaker choice. I can't imagine that every student is a fan of Peter Hitchens either, but that doesn't decrease his value to discourse on campus.

Our press freedom is central to everything we write, and although we're aware the University won't like everything we print in our editions, we need to be confident that they respect our right to say it: if not, then York is at risk of losing its uniquely diverse student media.

Frustrated as I am, I couldn't complete this Editor's note without thanking all the people that helped this, my first paper as Editor, emerge. First: Joe Silke for putting up with me as Deputy Editor, and Pat Hook-Willers for the great re-design of our contents and front pages. Also Maddie and Callum, for being the endlessly enthusiastic aids you have been for this edition, and finally our Muse Editors Jonny and Alex, who have moved heaven and earth

to give *Nouse* sections a hand this issue. I look forward to the upcoming year of six *Nouses*, and at least double that in library paninis. I hope you enjoy our paper!

Patrick Walker



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Drug support cut while deaths rise

Callum Tennant
DEPUTY EDITOR

FIGURES SHOW THAT deaths related to drug use are the highest since records began for the Yorkshire and Humber region. The UK Addiction Treatment Centres compiled data for every region of the UK and the extent to which substance abuse budgets have been cut.

In York substance abuse treatment spending has dropped off by nearly a fifth since 2013. While there has been a 19 per cent budget drop off since 2013 for drugs and alcohol treatment, drug poisoning deaths in York have increased by 61 per cent over the last two-year period compared with 2013-2015. The investigation comes following the government's decision to remove councils' ringfence commitment to drug and alcohol treatment. From 2013 local councils had the autonomy to manipulate their budgets. UKAT states that they believe that "this decision was the catalyst for disaster." The Councils' Substance Misuse Review Final Report re-

leased in February of this year had a damning judgement of the changes made to the Public Health Grants, stating that the financial cut to the substance misuse budget should be reassessed with immediate effect. The Council is expected to continue with its aim of finding £350 worth of budget saving over the next two years. Despite this focus on savings, *Nouse* freedom of information requests found that Council spending on refreshments during meetings has increased by 50 per cent since 2015 to a noticeably large £19 700. The report states how planned cuts would increase waiting times to be seen from first referral (currently two weeks) but would also increase caseloads on medical staff. Other impacts included restricted staffing levels which would "impact on the capacity to work responsively" and that "Key Workers are likely to become stretched and will limit their appointments in an effort to cope with demand." An inside source told *Nouse* that an increased number of patients were no longer being seen on a one-on-one basis but in group counselling sessions. The report states that "Changing Lives are looking at how to reach people where

they are best likely to respond, taking advantage of the well-developed space and community groups that exist in York." Members of the task force also accepted that this created a potential "ticking time bomb" for health, criminal justice and social care. From 01 November 2017 - 31 October 2018 46 per cent of arrests in York were linked to drug or alcohol use. 22 per cent of those arrested self-declared a dependency on substances. In 2013, 10 per cent of A&E admissions were linked to alcohol use. This highlights how drug and alcohol abuse are intertwined with multiple public services and the risks that an increase in substance abuse can cause for their provision as well as the effect on the quality. An alarming detail therefore, is that when budget saving approaches were being planned the Executive member was "not presented" with a risk assessment of those cuts and it was "not made available" to them.

The report admits there "have been some past weakness in the process of assessing the impact and risk to residents' health when considering reductions to public health budgets." CYC and Changing Lives have been contacted for comment.



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

York venue fighting for its right to party

Jonathan Wellington
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

CULTURAL SPACES AND developers continue to clash in York as a project puts the future of another top venue under threat. The publishing of a planning permission request next door to the York hotspot has resulted in The Crescent Community Venue being plunged into yet another round of speculation in regards to its future. In a statement by the venue last Thursday, it launched an appeal to fight the current development plan, which aims to turn the nursery next door into a block of flats. The family-owned organisation is anxious about its future in York. The plans would see their current commercial neighbours be replaced by residential ones which The Crescent claims would cause "inevitable" sound complaints from new developments. The Crescent has therefore formally objected to the proposal and has asked others to do the same. They are urging people to object to planning permission based not just on personal affinity to The Crescent, but on behalf of the general cultural scene in York which seems under threat by developers constantly.

The objection is based on three key grounds. The first cites the Local Plan which states that no new development can lead to the loss of either cultural spaces or nursery spaces. The second, that "the national policy framework calls for new developments to have appropriate mitigation from existing noise from nearby music venues." The third argues that the plans are in contradiction of "York's Purple Flag vision for

a vibrant and positive night time economy."

This battle between cultural spaces and developers is certainly nothing new. In events most current students may not be aware of, York lost venue Willow in 2015 and The Duchess in 2016; both were not replaced by other cultural spaces but instead by luxury flats. Both Society and Fibbers are under a similar threat, as Society is scheduled to be replaced, and Fibbers may be demolished for luxury flats to be built. The Crescent however has no intention of selling up. In their statement they made clear "This is our life. We love what we do. Aside from formally objecting to the application through the proper channels, in a statement to *Nouse* The Crescent confirmed that students have an important role to play in the saving, preserving, and bettering of the music venues and other cultural institutions in York.

A spokesperson for the venue said that "the more students engage, come to, and work with independent venues like ourselves, the harder it will be for developers to force us out." Partnerships between YUSU and venues in York were a key part of current Activities Officer Ollie Martin's manifesto and play a huge role in his plans going forward.

Ollie Martin told *Nouse*: "Students benefit from having a broad range of events on offer in their city, from the amazing range of bookings at The Crescent Community Venue and The Fulford Arms to independent student run club nights to the hundreds of open mic nights. If it's something students benefit from, indirectly or not, YUSU should make it a priority to support and protect that."

University sent open letter after it removed pro-Hong Kong posters

Patrick Walker
EDITOR

CURRENT AND FORMER students have written an open letter to the University, criticising the removal of Cantonese democracy posters from a stand at Freshers' fair a few weeks ago.

Cantonese students said that mainland Chinese students had complained about a 'Lennon wall' on the stand, which featured pictures and newspaper cuttings about the demonstrations in Hong Kong.

Although the stand was largely left untouched, an article by the Times reported that any posters in Mandarin were subsequently removed by campus security, who argued that stands at Freshers' fair "should not contain politics." This was self-evidently untrue, as Freshers' fair hosted an entire room of political societies, from the Women's Network, to the York Tories,

In the letter, current and former

students argue that York's Hong Kong students were "bringing this issue to the attention of their peers in a perfectly reasonable way", and were entitled to free speech owing to the 1986 Education Act. It notes that the protest was "peaceful", and calls the removal of material "appalling".

It highlights the tension felt across the country between mainland Chinese students, who remain critical of Hong Kong protests, and Cantonese students who want to highlight the situation in their home country to fellow students.

Universities, too, must strike a balance between retaining goodwill with Chinese foreign-exchange students, who present a lucrative revenue stream, and Cantonese students, who attend British universities in a comparatively smaller proportion according to the article in *the Times*.

In response to a request for

comment by *Nouse*, a University spokesperson said: "We believe universities should provide a platform where a variety of views can be debated and challenged and we remain committed to creating a positive environment which is fair, welcoming and inclusive."

YUSU's official statement regarding this matter reads as follows:

"A number of media outlets have reported that Hong Kong students were told to remove a protest display from the University of York Students' Union's freshers' fair. These societies provide opportunities to learn about difference in a respectful, inclusive and safe environment and work with the Union to support our commitment to promote freedom of speech. YUSU takes its duty of care to all students seriously and is committed to ensuring student wellbeing is a priority in all Union activity."



IMAGE: HONG KONG

NEWS IN BRIEF

Professor Green

On the same day Professor Green cancelled his set at York Freshers' Festival, keen listeners of Beats 1 will likely have noticed that he made an appearance on *Fire In The Booth* with Charlie Sloth. Whether the show was a pre-record is up for debate but it appears his 'man flu' might be just that.

Lights out for Diwali

Just moments after the University wished students a "happy Diwali filled with light" on its Twitter profile, it experienced a power failure across the north side of campus, preventing students in Alcuin and the library from getting work done on a Sunday. Thankfully the *Nouse* offices were unaffected.

Yorkrush taken down

Two weeks ago, the popular anonymous crush confessions page, Yorkrush, was removed from Facebook following reports made against the page due to profanity on posts. It is not yet clear who submitted these reports. A new page, however, has been put onto Facebook, called Yorkrush 2: electric boogaloo.

Lake myth busting

Nouse freedom of information requests have cleared up some of the myths about the lake. The legend that it costs more to face the fine for not cleaning the lake, than it is to clean it is not true - the University is not fined for the lake. Fortunately, the common belief that the lake is a classified biohazard is also a myth.

YUSU organises talks to tackle our homogeneous curriculum

Matthew King
NEWS EDITOR

In support of Black History Month, YUSU, particularly Academic Officer Giang Nguyen, have organised a series of important talks and lectures regarding the issue of decolonising and diversifying the curriculum at the University of York which will take place tomorrow, 30 October.

Black History Month is the time of the year to celebrate and appreciate the achievements of BAME individuals, past and present. YUSU have specifically organised this event in recognition of this celebration, and hope to continue to teach people about what we can still do to increase the scope of academic representation across the curriculum. Talks such as these are integral to preventing the continuation of homogeneity within our curriculum; homogeneity which perpetuates Western voices over natives from countries subdued by empire.

The talks will be primarily led by staff experts here at the University of York. These are: Shazia Jagot from the Department of English and Related Literature, who will be discussing decolonising medieval literature; Indrajit Roy from the Department of Politics, who will speak on her perspectives on decolonising and diversifying aca-

demia, and she will also highlighting the initiatives taken by the Politics Department, which help in diversifying it; Ingrid Kvangraven, also from the Politics Department, Kvangraven will be discussing her views on the decolonisation of scholarship, and will also speak on her perspectives of diversification and decolonisation, with particular emphasis on D-Econ - a network of economists who aim to promote more inclusivity and diversity within economics.

Additionally, Clare Burgess, history course representative, will talk about a student led conference which aims to explore marginalised histories.

The GSA representatives and Environment and Ethics Representatives, Merry Dickinson and Mark Matthews - who are both experienced climate change campaigners - will also be speaking at the event, the latter of these will be discussing decolonisation and the climate emergency, which is particularly pertinent given both the University's pledge to divest from fossil fuels and YUSU's declaration of a climate emergency.

Finally, Academic Officer Giang Nguyen will be speaking about the theme of diversifying and decolonisation, as well as her plans for the year ahead.

Regarding the event, she told *Nouse*: "I want students, staff and the wider community to question themselves and each other about why there is a BAME attainment

gap, why the curriculum we study and deem as universal knowledge is not diverse in terms of the demographics of authors within our curriculum. That is why me and the GSA have organised the event called 'Start the Conversation: Decolonising and Diversifying Curriculum at York' this Wednesday 30th October"

We also got in contact with the Head of Equality and Diversity at the University, Maria Ayaz. She told us:

"The start the conversation event on diversifying the curriculum strongly connects to our activities to embed inclusive learning, teaching and assessment. We encourage all staff and students to engage with this event and share perspectives on this important agenda".

The event in question will take place in the Physics department building, in the lecture hall P/T/005a and will take place from 1pm until 3pm. More details for the event can be found on its Facebook page ('Decolonising and Diversifying the Curriculum at York'). If you are unsure about the event, and whether this topic interests you, the event page says: "If you've ever wondered why your curriculum is dominated by white, Western, male and straight authors; why there is a lack of diversity among staff and students at York; or why attainment is lower for BAME students than their white counterparts, this event is for you."

Nearly £16 000 spent on bird excrement

Emily Hewat
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

A RECENT FREEDOM of information request has revealed that on average the University spends an estimated £15 959.09 per year on cleaning up bird excrement on Heslington East and West.

Bird excrement has long been a problem at the University, with the bird life being allowed free rein across campus, causing mess on the pavements and polluting the lake water.

A single goose can produce up to three pounds of faecal matter every day so while this high spending figure may seem warranted, this is on top of the money spent on feeding the bird life around campus with last years figures reaching £102.

The aquatic wildlife on campus has always been an integral part of the University with the installation of Europe's largest plastic-bottomed filled lake in 1968 being constructed in order to provide the University with a distinct image as well as a drainage basin.

The ducks and geese on campus have long received extra attention from students with one duck having its own social media but they still remain a source of controversy for stu-

dents. In particular, several students have experienced problems with the geese on campus due to their sometimes aggressive nature and recent reports show that there have been 11 goose attacks on students so far this year.

This figure has nearly doubled from the previous year and figures from the past five years show that on average, staff are forced to attend approximately eight goose related incidents per year.

Geese are territorial birds who can become hostile during their breeding season in spring if they feel their nests are threatened, and while the grey goose is more common around campus, it is the Canada goose that can prove to be the more violent. Most injuries from goose attacks are minor and are mainly caused by the victim falling down as they attempt to escape the attacking birds.

Despite this many students enjoy the wildlife presence on campus with social media accounts such as University of York Gardens tracking the wildlife.



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

Turning point UK turned down for third time in a row

Emma Topic
NEWS EDITOR

RIGHT WING student organisation Turning Point UK has been rejected in its request to become a society for the third time this year.

YUSU societies committee have argued that Turning Point UK York "do not adhere to our inclusivity clause" and that the branch's current Twitter feed fails to meet their current code of conduct.

This came after Turning Point UK launched for the first time in February as an offshoot of the pro Trump, student led organisation Turning Point USA.

The organisation aims to voice a new generation of young conserv-

atives on campuses across the UK. In a Tweet, they describe how "the left believes they have a monopoly over young people" and that it was "time us young people fought back" against the socialist biases inherent in universities.

So far, the movement has been backed by a number of Conservative politicians, including Leader of the House of Commons, Jacob Rees Mogg and ex-leader of UKIP, Nigel Farage.

However according to YUSU, ratifying Turning Point UK as a society has the potential to incur "reputational damage" because of their association with a strongly right-wing organisation.

Its association with strong right wing beliefs breaches YUSU'S Code of Conduct, which states that

members "should not undertake any action which could bring the reputation of the Club, YUSU or the University into disrepute."

Despite this, YUSU argues that the organisation is not being no-platformed.

In fact, they say that there is nothing inherently wrong with what the group is doing and that they are more than happy to "encourage and facilitate" discussing right wing politics and capitalism.

YUSU believes that "all students should have a place to express their political views," but the problem lies with the association and reputation of the organisation. This was a similar argument made in the decision not to ratify Stand Up to Racism Society due to its alleged association with the Socialist Worker's

Party, which could therefore damage the reputation of the University and YUSU.

The committee for new societies voted on the organisation's ratification: four no and two yes.

They concluded that for the committee to comfortably say yes, something specific has to change in its application. YUSU acknowledges that there is clearly a demand for this type of group, but a different angle is necessary for it to pass through.

The future of Turning Point UK at the University of York remains unclear, but what is certain, is that they must adopt a different approach if they seek ratification in the near future.

When *Nouse* asked Activities Officer Ollie Martin for his say on

the matter, he told us that "the affiliation of TPUK as a wing of TPUS caused concern around potential reputational damage to the union and the university. I've since met with the group of students that made the application to discuss how a future application can be made successful."

YUSU also ratified 13 other new societies, such as Rubber Duck Society, despite the concerns raised about the environmental impact the society could have on our campus, and its future and sustainability.

Alongside Turning Point UK, Pancake Society were also not recommended to be ratified by the committee. Pancake Society was rejected due to fact that they did not take into account gluten and dairy free diets.



IMAGE: TURNING POINT UK

Revolution falls below the bar

Patrick Walker
EDITOR

>>> Continued from front

morning, with some staff working from 10 o'clock that night until 8am on Monday. While the bulk of reset work was undertaken by workers lower down the bar's payroll, the efforts during these hours were often directed by a few managerial staff, who a former member of Revs bar staff described as "stressed out and equally exploited."

Revs have denied that they ask employees to work without breaks in their statement to us. They have also said that company policy guarantees a 20 minute long break for every six-hour shift. This would place it at the bare minimum allowed by UK employment law. Revs also said that it gives breaks of an hour if shifts are longer than six hours. This did not fit with the criticisms made by employees who spoke to us.

It is likely that that information did not reach Revs central office because employees told us they had "little contact beyond general managers," but also because managerial staff were allegedly abusive and cronyistic. Another sales rep said that during her time working for Revs, she came to work feeling "physically ill" and often ended her shift "crying" after abuse from superiors abuse.

One employee at Revs mentioned an incident they had experienced first-hand, where a manager gave away a large bottle of champagne for free to friends; an act that was especially egregious because new rules had allegedly

stipulated that employees were not allowed anything more than water or soda water from the bar. That said, if it is true, the allegations regarding drink limitations are especially damning considering *Nouse* has documents showing that Revs was, at the same time, aiming for takings of almost £40 000 in an evening.

Part of the problem highlighted by staff working for a shorter period at the bar was that managerial staff were often too young and inexperienced to back fellow employees when problems arose. One called the environment at Revs a "weird, bitchy lad culture" where upward mobility was hard unless employees became good friends with the supervisory staff. Progression in Revs requires training in cocktails and other bar work, which had to be specifically allowed by managers. This training was extremely difficult for many employees to access, despite their having worked long hours already for Revs.

In response to all our comments, Revs said they would be undergoing a full "investigation thoughtfully," and added that "We unfortunately have not received any grievances through our official channels by previous or current team members that echo any of the points you have raised, however I would urge anyone with a genuine grievance to get in touch so we can seek to understand the feedback in

more detail and take forward any learnings."

On the rest of our allegations, a spokesperson commented: "a large cohort of our teams around the country are students and we value their engagement at every level of our culture and operational style."

"Breaks are twenty minutes long for every six hour shift, longer shifts have a break of one hour and we have reminded all of the team what the company policy is so there is no ambiguity around entitlement."

"Our teams are allowed agreed soft drinks while on shift including bottled water plus hot beverages and all team members are entitled to 50% food & drink at any time."

"Revolution Bars Group adheres to all work place health, safety and welfare guidelines across all our operations, with the well-being of our team members and our managers always of paramount importance."

"As well as all the normal channels of raising a concern, we have team meetings, support from a dedicated HR partner, regular Area manager visits and twice yearly engagement surveys where we gather feedback from our employees."

"We also include our Grievance procedure and company handbook in everyone's contracts, so all employees know how to raise a grievance should one arise."



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

LGBT grads welcome inclusivity

Patrick Walker
EDITOR

MORE THAN HALF of LGBT+ graduates value inclusivity programmes in their workplace, research by the University of York Department of Equality and Diversity has shown. The research polled over 4 000 students across the UK on how popular wellbeing programmes were, and found that they were a major factor amongst both graduates and students in deciding where they went for work.

The study found that over half of LGBT+ students and graduates thought that internal support networks were the most effective way to "create a healthy and happy workplace." Furthermore, almost 40 per cent of those who shared their gender and sexuality with everyone felt that their wellbeing was improved.

This was the largest piece of

research conducted by employers on the specific wellbeing needs of LGBT+ graduates, and clearly shows the utility of implementing such programmes in the workplace. It also presents a challenge to employers, many of whom do not have support networks in place at all.

40%
The percentage of people who felt their wellbeing at work was improved after sharing their sexuality

Just this year, real estate advisory corporation JLL became the first ever firm of its kind to be included in Stonewall's Top 100 Employers list for 2019, while London property giants, Allsop, have become the first firm to sponsor a cross-firm network for LGBT+ employees of the property industry. The Stonewall list is currently

led by law firms, with Pinsent Masons, and Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner taking the two top spots. It is expected that more firms will further develop programmes following this.

Nouse contacted the University for a comment. Maria Ayaz, the Head of Equality and Diversity at the University of York told us that:

"The research shows the importance of having the right support services in place to ensure students and graduates feel included and a part of the environment they choose to study or work. There is an opportunity for collaboration between universities and employers to provide better guidance for LGBT+ students when making career choices."

She further stated that: "The research shows the importance of having the right support services in place to ensure students and graduates feel included and a part of the environment they choose to study or work."

The money behind Market Square

Matthew King
NEWS EDITOR

NOUSE RESEARCH FROM Freedom of Information requests have revealed how much income the University makes from rent paid out by the shops in Market Square.

We asked the University to provide the amount of rent it collected from Market Square for this year and the past five years, and we found that over the past five years the University has made £376000 in rent from the shops in Market Square alone.

Surprisingly however, the amount of rent the University makes from Market Square has been slowly depleting each year, starting out at £99000 in 2015, then dropping by £17000 to £82000 in 2018. So far in 2019 the University has made £33000, but with only four months left of the year from when this data was collected, it can be presumed that the amount of rent annually collected may drop again.

Nouse contacted the University as to why this rent has dropped, they said: "At Market Square we've had a number of tenants moving out for re-location reasons or because leases have ended. The space

vacated at Market Square is now occupied by the University for office and storage purposes." Which explains why the rent earned from Market Square has dropped."

It is clear then that, despite the slight drop in the amount of rent collected, the University is making a considerable amount of money from Market Square. We are not aware of how the money from rented properties on campus is being used by the University.

Nouse was unable to obtain the exact figures for the shops on Campus East, as the first rented unit started trading in 2018, and thus the annualised data is not yet available. However, we were told that the shops were advertised to third-party companies at £20000 per annum (including service charge). This leaves the estimated income from Kimberlow Hill at something around £100000 per year, if the four retail units at Campus East are paying this proposed amount in rent per year.

With this added income included in the rent solely made from Market Square, this would leave the University's total income from rented properties (excluding Halifax Nisa) per annum at about £182000, using the Market Square 2018 data.



IMAGE: ANNIE WATSON

VC runs for charity

Callum Tennant
DEPUTY EDITOR

YORK'S NEW VICE Chancellor Charlie Jeffery raised £813 during his charity run last week.

The new Vice Chancellor, who joined the University from his previous position at the University of Edinburgh in September, was raising money for the York Opportunity Scholarship fund. The money was raised from 18 people with an average donation of £45.

The York Opportunity Scholarship was set up by Peter Whelpton who studied Economics at York from 1966 to 1969. He wanted to make university more accessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds by providing financial help. The York Opportunity Scholarship provides with students with over £1 100 per year, a total of £3 300 over the course of a three-year undergraduate course, relieving the

immense financial pressures that many students feel.

The Vice Chancellor talked about how his charity run reflected his passions which he stressed during his inaugural speech. In the speech, Charlie Jeffery emphasised his commitment to widening access to higher education at York, stating that "widening access, opening up opportunity, including for those who have been excluded, is a powerful part of our heritage."

Last year, the scheme received over 300 applications but only had enough funding to pay for 34 scholarships. Meaning they would have to raise £877,800 to successfully fund all the applications. Peter Whelpton passed away in 2017. However, he left a legacy donation to help secure his scheme for the coming year. In order for the charity to continue operating in the coming years it will have to increase the amount it receives in donations.

You can donate to the cause directly on their website.

NUS ten point plan

Emily Hewat
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

LAST WEEK THE NUS published their first ever plan of action for this academic year which outlines the union's campaign for 2019/2020. The plan was finalised in September and has ten points which cover the three key areas of transforming education, making education more accessible to society and breaking down barriers to succeeding in education. A member of the full-time officer team will work with a variety of NUS officers, NUS staff, student union members and students themselves to head up each campaign area.

The priority campaign in the ten point plan is a national education service which will include student and education funding as well as marketisation and regulation. Accessibility for all students is clearly a main theme within the plan as the ten points include affordable housing, transport and healthcare for students. There is also a focus on helping minority groups within education as NUS want to ensure disabled students thrive in all areas and that transphobia in education is eradicated. Combatting sexual harassment in education is also an area that will be targeted.

In addition to these points, NUS' political agenda for the upcoming year appears in the plan with an aim to abolish Prevent-

controversial counter-terrorism scheme introduced by the government in 2003 which is considered by critics to be counter productive due to its nature of reporting students before they can be radicalised. Similarly, NUS wish to stop a No Deal Brexit in an aim to improve the lives of international students.

The Plan of Action is shaped around the vision of NUS to empower students and create a "fairer, more prosperous society." The plan will help NUS' reform preparations in two separate organisations; one for campaigning and one for student union development. Last term, YUSU voted to remain in the NUS with 60.1 per cent of the vote in favour. With an estimated membership of 600 student unions across the country, NUS UK hopes to continue to improve education and society through its members. When speaking to fellow NUS members following the publication of the plan, NUS National President, Zamzam Ibrahim said:

"We've been working hard to pull all our collective thoughts and ideas together, along with the priorities of officers on campuses, and the concerns of students up and down the UK. While our external environment is somewhat turbulent, and continues to be uncertain, we've still been able to launch a priority campaign focused on delivering a sustainable, accessible, life-long, funded solution to our broken education system and our biggest ever annual voter registration campaign for young people, that's already showing results.

Tourism Tax proposed for York

Emma Topic
NEWS EDITOR

PROPOSALS FOR A York Tourism Tax has gained mass support from a number of political parties, including the Greens, Liberal Democrats and Labour.

The tax aims to cut VAT on tourism and limit short stay visits to York in order to boost tourism, support the economy and curb anti-social behaviour that is plaguing the city of York.

York remains an increasingly popular destination, with tourism alone generating over £564 million for the local economy while also supporting 20 000 jobs within York.

Sean Bullick, the managing director of Make it York told the *York Press* that their long-term plan focuses not on growing the number of visitors, but growing the value reaching £1 billion by 2025 by

tempting more visitors to stay for longer.

Despite this, many are opposed to the idea of the Tax, such as Ruth Penty, who owns a guesthouse in York. She argues in the article by the *York Press* that:

"The Tourist Tax would cost us money because we would have to pay to administer it. The smaller guest houses get the rum end of the deal. We have all the taxes and rates to pay whereas those get swallowed up in the larger establishments. In quieter times we can be making only £5 profit on a room. Margins are tight and everything is so price-sensitive, especially when there are more Airbnbs."

A tourism tax would ensure that councillors have the power to limit short-term lets in York, limiting the number of short stay Airbnb holidays in order for residents to enjoy more long-term benefits.

According to Liberal Democrat councillor and former student Darryl Smalley, the proposal of a tourism tax would reduce VAT on hotels

and attractions, which would allow money to go into maintaining the streets in York instead of disappearing into the treasury.

Due to the rise in concern about anti-social behaviour in the evenings, a tourist tax could be used to deploy street rangers to ensure that residents have a safe night out. This could lead to a number of benefits, including increased river safety, curbing stag and hen groups and combatting low level anti-social behaviour. Therefore, it has been argued that a £1 charge per night added to tourist's hotel bills would make a massive contribution to making nights out in York safer, cleaner and more enjoyable. However, the main question remains whether a tourism tax will stop people coming to York.

Smalley told *Nouse*: "Brexit has already had quite a negative effect on various attractions around York" and that the last thing the councillors want to do is for "people to feel that we're pricing them out of coming to York."

Their plans are to keep a mix of free attractions, while also preserving the national heritage of York. When asked whether the tax would affect students, Smalley replied "currently local councillors don't have the powers", but £1 per night is the ball park figure to ensure that York remains a clean and safe town for all its visitors.

York's Tourist Tax has not yet been established. It remains to be seen whether change at a national level may give councils the power they want to implement it across cities with large tourist populations like York.



IMAGE: ANNIE WATSON

New colleges pose a threat to the campus environment

>>> Continued from front

remaining 75 per cent of rooms will be standard, economy or premium, will include an ensuite: this raises questions about the affordability of rooms in the new colleges, which for now, are simply called 'North' and 'South' college.

The new colleges will provide 1 480 more beds to the University, and therefore this will inevitably lead to more admissions being accepted once the colleges are built. However, there is not yet any mention of more University facilities,

such as more retail outlets or study spaces, to help support this presumed growth in student population. With University resources already stretched, it may not be possible to incorporate an extra influx of students. Housing for second and third year students is already a problem. With this in mind, an influx of 1 480 more students a year might serve to aggravate this problem. The University did not provide any specific information regarding the pricing of the new rooms, but stated that the cost of the rooms will reflect the present bands of room

pricing.

However, with the high percentage of premium and standard rooms proposed for the new colleges, it is clear that these colleges will coincide with Campus East's average higher cost of rent to that of West.

This raises the question as to whether these new colleges match the University's commitment to affordable accommodation, as it is clear that rooms offering more affordable rent are needed to achieve this. This is particularly pertinent given that York's accommodation is the 12th most expensive in the country, at £29 more than the national average for student accommodation, as data from 2018 shows.

YUSU Community and Wellbeing Officer Steph Hayle told *Nouse*: "At a time when universities are more aware than ever of the crippling cost of student accommodation, it is concerning to see our institution not prioritising an increase in more affordable economy rooms. A standard room at York does not come with a 'standard' price tag."

In regards to this, the University told *Nouse*: "The majority of rooms on Campus East in the new college development will be priced at what is currently a 'standard' rate

in line with similar room types on Campus West in colleges including Alcuin, James, Halifax and Vanbrugh. For 2020/21 onwards our rates will change to Band 1, 2, 3 and 4 following feedback from the student community. Pricing is in line with university policy to provide good quality, affordable accommodation and in conjunction with YUSU and GSA, the University of York has published a budget calculator and affordability statement on our website to help students make informed decisions."

Using the information within

1480
The amount of beds that will be provided by the new colleges

the planning application documents publicly provided by York City Council, the environmental impact of building the two new colleges can be explored. Before any construction of the new colleges can begin, a Construction Environmental Management Plan must be conducted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The document in question weighs the risks for damage to water bodies, distur-

bance to waterfowl, and disturbance to terrestrial breeding birds.

Overall, it classified the damage or pollution to the water bodies on Campus East to be "high" during pre-construction work, but the actual construction of the college buildings would pose a lesser "moderate" effect on the water. This construction of the colleges however, poses a 'high' risk for the resident waterfowl.

"Whilst water quality should be protected throughout construction, waterfowl are at greatest risk of impact." Ultimately, the report stated that "the proposals do not present any significant impacts on protected or otherwise notable species"

While these new colleges are clearly set to be a great step for the University by allowing for more students to be accepted into York, and therefore more money for the University, they do pose the potential problems of overused University facilities and high rent prices. Additionally, the construction of these colleges potentially threaten the bodies of water within Campus East, and the animals within them - a danger which would both be damaging to the local ecosystem, and for our identity as an environmentally-conscious University.



IMAGE: LANDSCAPE PROPERTIES

Pub closures hit York

Alex Thompson
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

YORK HAS BEEN hit hard by a series of pub closures over the past few years and has seen many pubs disappear entirely due to a variety of factors. This is both an issue for York locally, and for the country overall.

A recent letter sent to Sajid Javid from MP for York Outer, Julian Sturdy, explains that this is something troubling his constituents. Sturdy estimates that “one in every three pounds spent in pubs goes straight to the taxman” and argues that the tax requires “substantial reform” if local businesses are to prosper.

He calls for a “radical, permanent reform” on outdated business rates models that have also led to the closure of many high street shops. The letter details the value of pubs in the community, their role in supplying employment for young people and the pressures placed upon them by a changing industry - something he feels the government is equipped to tackle.

Recent pubs to close their doors include the New Inn Pub as well as the York Arms and The Brown Cow, all of which were owned by the brewing company Samuel Smiths of Tadcaster.



IMAGE: IAN S

This is not just confined to York; earlier this year the *Yorkshire Post* reported a 1 149 pubs have reportedly closed their doors over the past 18 months. This was followed by a report from the Campaign For Real Ale which revealed that pubs are closing at a rate of ‘14 closures every week’: Over 13 000 have closed since 2001. What is interesting to note is that the north east is the least affected area according to statistics from 2018, which show that the greatest losses are in the north west and south west.

Over the past few years, establishments have been hit by what the Campaign For Real Ale calls a “triple whammy” of taxes - higher beer taxes, VAT and business rates.

Many attribute the decline of pubs to cheaper supermarket alcohol and the changing habits of young people, who are drinking less or not drinking at all. With a move towards clubbing, young people are no longer visiting pubs and business is no longer booming like it used to.

YUSU’s storage space success

Emily Hewat
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

YUSU’S STUDENT ACTIVITIES Officer Ollie Martin’s fight for more storage space for societies continues this week with the introduction of additional storage lockers and cupboards. While there are no official timescales for this option as of yet, there is also the potential for some extra storage containers to be kept outdoors.

Increasing society storage space was a key part of Ollie Martin’s manifesto for Student Activities Officer as it has long been a problem at the University, particularly with the growing number of societies. Societies have long had to share rooms with each other leading to unfortunate competition between groups as well as a growing concern of equipment being damaged and moved.

If societies feel unable to leave equipment in a shared space, their only option is to transport valuable and sometimes heavy equipment across campus with the risk of damaging it.

In his manifesto, Ollie Martin stated that he wanted to “ensure spaces on campus are used to their full potential and are as accessible and versatile as possible.”

His manifesto mentioned making Planon and room booking easier to use and to guarantee that the University will consider societies in its expansion plan. Looking

at how the University’s venues can be used as effectively as possible is a key way to improve space on campus.

Ollie Martin also aims to have a full storage audit complete in the next few months via a Google form sent to student groups. This will help student groups be more aware of the storage spaces that are available to them on campus.

Consequently, the closure of certain buildings around campus could prove to be a problem for society storage space. The former Unity Health Building next to the Exhibition Centre is being

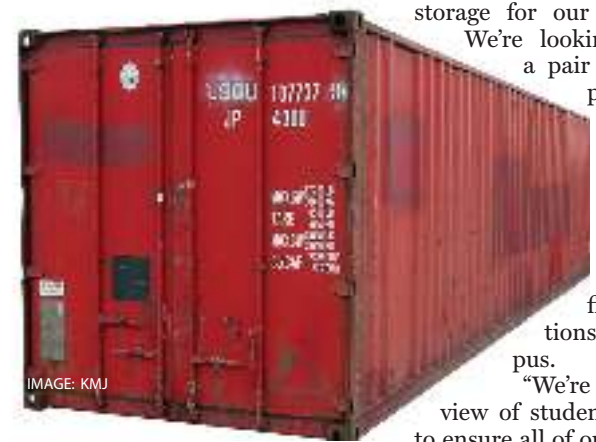


IMAGE: KMJ

considered for storage for societies but the building is due to be demolished in the next few years in order to create new postgraduate accommodation. This is mainly due to the building’s demand not only for storage space but from several University departments meaning the attitude of the University is that it is easier for no one to have

use of it.

The closure of Central Hall is also a massive setback, particularly due to the confusion surrounding the issue but Ollie Martin is working to gain clarity on the subject and hopes that in the future, there will be strong communication links between YUSU and Room Bookings, so that student groups will know with more certainty when venues and rooms will be closed and why.

Nouse asked for a comment from Ollie Martin, and he told us:

“I’ve been working with the estates team to find any additional storage for our student groups.

We’re looking to repurpose a pair of containers to

provide additional storage, we know outdoor container storage doesn’t work for all student groups so we’ve been pushing to find smaller solutions around the campus.

“We’re working on a review of student groups storage to ensure all of our available space is used to its maximum effectiveness. We’ve been applying additional pressure for the use of the currently empty old Unity Health building. These temporary fixes will hopefully relieve some demand for space in the short term but we need to ensure that future estates developments actually factor in students need for storage space.”

Brexit boosts politics applications

Callum Tennant
DEPUTY EDITOR

DESPITE THE PHRASE Brexit fatigue becoming increasingly popular, figures show that there’s been a 28 per cent increase in applications made to politics courses since 2016.

Applications increased from 34 275 in 2013 to 47 445 in 2018. Increases in the number of politics students is a pattern seen across the UK as the number of students accepted to politics courses rose by over 27 per cent over the last five years.

This increase in the study of politics has largely been attributed to the recent prominence of current affairs in news, especially with regards to Brexit, and how conversations surrounding it are particularly prominent online and in every day life.

Nouse spoke to a third year Politics and International student Sorhna Paule. She said that “this whole Brexit thing and European politics thing is becoming more and more present. I think the rise of populism is bringing up political debates. Because they are so contro-

versial people tend to debate it with friends and at the family table. And studying politics is a way of knowing what’s going on.”

Agreeing with this sentiment second year politics student Louis Mosca said, “there’s been a big decrease in political apathy because people want to know what’s going on with Brexit.” He went on to add that the people applying to study politics now are the “Brexit generation” - people who are now being affected by Brexit but who were too young to vote in the referendum. Politics lecturers at the University of York were also keen to highlight that it is not just Brexit that has increased participation and interest in politics. They pointed to

a spate of high-profile political cases over the past five years, including the Scottish independence referendum and the effect of increased youth voter turnout in the 2017 general election.

Recent actions from environmental group Extinction Rebellion have also increased interest in politics. The latter’s protests have gained national media attention and held newspaper headlines for consecutive days. So, while Brexit remains controversial it is clear that one of the effects has been an increase in the engagement with politics courses across the country, with the University of Liverpool even trebling its politics department size in the last six years.



IMAGE: DUNK BEE

York marathon hits the ground running

Louis Mosca
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

WITH THE UNIVERSITY at the heart of the event, last Sunday saw thousands participate in the annual Yorkshire Marathon. Running into its seventh year, the marathon has seen an increase in interest following the addition of the Asda Foundation Yorkshire 10 Mile four years ago, now attracting over 4 000 entries.

The wheelchair racers were the first to set off just before 9.30am, followed closely by the pack of runners, with elite athletes leading the way as they competed for a total cash prize pot of £10 000.

Results collected by the *York Press* concluded that the male winner was Mark Buckingham in 2hrs 21mins and 42 seconds. The female winner was Charlene Jacobs-Conradie with a time of 2hrs 46mins 50 seconds. Although some of the loudest cheers were for the fun run-

ners of the day, and in particular the group of 40 men and women seeking to break a Guinness World record for the fastest marathon in a Viking boat costume. Weighing an incredible 250kg, along with its length it was no surprise that the time to beat was eight and a half hours.

Organiser, Jim Mee, explained the difficulty in the task to the *York Press* “The group of 40 runners are packed closely together in the boat, which means they can’t see any obstacles that might be lurking underneath their feet. Speedbumps and potholes are going to be a real hurdle and the team needs to be in constant dialogue with each other to spot the hazards.” The event also saw a great turnout of support, which proved all the more sentimental with a minute’s applause to remember lost loved ones, including Sean Coxhead, from Holgate, York, who died from bladder cancer in September. The 37-year-old took on the Yorkshire Marathon last year, in spite of his illness, and had raised more than £21 000 for Macmillan before his death.

This year's RAG week commences

Matthew King
EDITOR

YUSU'S OFFICIAL RAG week began yesterday, 28 October, and will run up until Saturday 02 November. This annual event strives to raise money for a selection of charities, and this year's proceeds will go to BEAT, SASH and The Snappy Trust.

BEAT is a charity concerned with helping young people with

£121,000

The amount of money raised for last year's RAG week

eating disorders, SASH strives to help young people facing homelessness, and The Snappy Trust aims to help empower young people with disabilities. YUSU have organised daily events which will take place across the week in order to raise this much needed funding for the charities. Some notable events include a sponsored dog petting from 1-3pm at the Vanbrugh Bowl on Wednesday, and on Friday there

will be both a Sabb taskmaster at Greggs Place between 12-1pm, and just after this there will be an opportunity for people to abseil down Central Hall, which was successfully used last year as well to raise money.

Nouse contacted YUSU President Samara Jones to give some insight into what YUSU will be doing this year, she told us:

"YUSU will be running a wide range of activities for students to get involved with over the week. Our main event we think students will really enjoy is the Abseil, where Students will have the opportunity to Abseil down Central Hall whilst raising money for charity! We also have lots of other fun events to get involved with, like the "Dance in a day," - there's plenty to get involved with!"

The idea of RAG week dates back to the Victorian era, where students would collect rags and use them to make clothes for the poor. It is refreshing to see modern Universities continuing this much needed tradition, and hopefully this year's RAG week will be just as successful as last year's.

Students are encouraged to donate and take part in all the events taking place throughout the week.

The University's black history month lectures face criticism

Louis Mosca
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

WITH BLACK HISTORY month running into its 32nd year in the UK, the University of York ran its annual events, and lectures in support.

However, the programme came under heavy scrutiny regarding the lack of representation in regard to who led the programmes organised by the University. The programmes consisted of various events of talks and meet and greets with BAME officers to familiarise students with the network.

The problem in which students have identified is with some of the lectures being led by white speakers, and the lack of effort by the university to find black lecturers who can speak from personal experience in discussing black history.

Nouse approached YUSU's BAME PTOs for a comment on this issue. They said:

"Black History month is a month dedicated to celebrating black talent and a chance for us to reflect on the struggles overcome by our ancestors and the ones we still face. For this reason, we thought it

was really lazy and offensive for the University to hold a Black History Month event with a predominantly white panel. A white person cannot fully represent the extent to which an issue has affected black people as it is not a part of their lived experience. This is a cause for concern because this is the only month that focuses on Black people and the failure of the University to get black speakers for every event highlights how little they actually care about the black students here."

The actual lectures taken by the white speakers have also fallen under much scrutiny and criticism, with one lecturer sparking debate over appropriate language in consistently using the word 'negro' whilst discussing the impact of colourism in Jamaica. With the university of York statistically being known as a university that is predominantly white, black

history month is a great way to expand discussion and hold debates over why this is in order to raise to raise awareness.

The other speakers that took lectures however were well received, with Kevin Hylton, the first black Professor in over 75 years of Carnegie history taking a lecture on 'Lets talk about Race'.

Nouse contacted the University for a comment on this issue, and they told us:

"We are committed to providing a platform for a range of diverse speakers and voices at the University and we will continue to work hard to achieve that The University celebrates and values diversity.

"Through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan we will continue to improve the diversity of our staff population and encourage ethnic diversity across all levels of employment."



IMAGE: CLIFF

Jack Edwards on freshers', college sport and merch

"I hope that students recognize that there are people in positions of influence that are the same as them"

How has your Freshers' week been?

I personally think our Freshers' has been pretty successful. I think overall the week went really well. The thing we're most proud of in James is our non-clubbing events. We had three really big trips: around 130 people came on the trampoline park trip, and we had to turn away quite a few from the bowling trip because we didn't anticipate the demand. This is because more young people these days aren't drinking, but also because our events were really high quality: they were run really well.

James this year has managed to retain the in-town clubbing nights that it originally had, at three. Other colleges have been dropping them. How did you achieve that?

I think if we had an extra night in the week, people would have been pretty tired. We were actually told by the University and YUSU this year

that we had to have our first night on campus. I get the logic of that: to arrive on your first day at University, and have to then go into town, it would be very difficult. To work out what nights they would go out, I think most colleges looked at capacity of clubs mainly: we have to consider YSJ nights and local nights too.

Before we move on from Freshers' week, apparently you accidentally came out to 400 Freshers' on your quiz night. What happened there?

It wasn't for the first time. I was bullied at school when I came out, and actually had to leave because the bullying got so bad.

I know there was an email that Mike Britland [College Manager of James College] put out last night, saying he was gay. I hope that students recognize that there are people in positions of influence that are the same as them. I know that Mike, and other gay people have gone

through similar experiences of being harassed or marginalised because of who they are. The story with the quiz was that I was doing a round about gay anthems. I didn't think before I got on stage "hang on, I've made a bit of a weird joke here." I thought it probably warranted an explanation!

You wrote an article for us last edition defending your new plan to require a more universal £30 charge to participate in teams. Won't this mean smaller teams subsidising more expensive sports?

No. In fact, I think smaller teams will get a very good deal out of this. For example, for the longest time, James football has had a sponsorship contract worth about £350 that they use to subsidise kit and equipment. If you're a team with ten people, you're not going to get that. All teams now have access to a really generous YUSU grant system. Some teams, like tennis and squash, actually have to pay weekly fees to fund their arena. With this fee, you're getting 25 weeks of sport for a one-off fee.

Do you think your darts team will really be needing that extra funding though?

There are some sports in James that aren't part of the fee: men's rugby, women's rugby, darts, cricket, rounders, and lacrosse. When I was elected, I spoke to all the captains

of sports teams. It was clear that many of the teams had very specialist requirements that meant they wouldn't benefit from the scheme. For rugby, playing on the 22 is free, so I'm not going to be charging them £30 a year to play sport. For darts, they have no regular playing costs, it doesn't make sense to charge them.

The other colleges weren't included in this scheme because they didn't want to be, right?

Yes. **Your college has also been piloting mental health support, which we highlighted two issues ago. How has your pilot been going?**

The college now has two dedicated mental health-trained staff. That's the college manager, and our new graduate tutor. Our college has now moved from four part-time tutors to one full-time graduate tutor. It's a great system because our new tutor, Mark, has a better degree of knowledge about the topic.

We've also introduced peer support in sport. The idea being that men in particular are more likely to go to a mate with a mental health issue than Mike or Mark. The real focus for us is in tackling the male mental health crisis, which is a really important goal.

You've completely re-done James merch this year. I was wondering if you could talk me through what merch does for the

committee?

We held a competition to design it in term one. We've also undergone a James Sport re-brand too. We have termed the new clothing line the 'classic collection', and I've spent far too long over the summer talking to suppliers to get it sorted. Putting it together was a nightmare, but I'm really pleased with the result. On every jumper we make £8, and every fleece we make £10. That may sound like quite a lot, but our philosophy is that we want to make events as open and available as possible, so we can't reasonably fund a committee without having a reasonable revenue stream coming from somewhere. I'd rather charge more for merch and less for events.

The new James Sport logo looks a little bit like a knock-off Nouse logo...

Maybe it does a little bit. It's a flying swan, not a goose... I just wanted to clarify that.

I've got to ask about the coming college election before we wrap-up. What makes a good college chair?

I think you've got to be available to your students. Furthermore, the role of college chair is not operational, it's strategic. You're the student representative for your college, and you should be taking concerns to the University too. The more available you are, the better at this job you will be.



N COMMENT



IMAGE: ANNA CLARK

Stop telling me that I'm not 'gay enough' to be bi

Hanging on to queer stereotypes is alienating bisexuals from their own LGBTQ+ communities

Alex Thompson



I was 17 when I first realised I was bisexual. I found myself at a turning point in my life and I didn't know what to do; I was scared people would judge me if I came out, that friends would find it awkward and that it would eventually come to define who I was. I spent months stressed and anxious until a year later when I found the courage to open up to my close friends and girlfriend. Even now it's still something I'm quite private about, in fact this is the first public space I've spoken about my sexuality at all (Hi Mum.) Since I came out to friends there's thankfully been no real confrontation and it's been easier than I had expected. There is, however, one thing that I still struggle with.

I don't feel gay enough. One of the reasons it took me so long to come out was because I didn't know what it truly meant to be bisexual; there are many vicious stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding the topic that as a teenager it was hard to come to terms with them all. I just didn't know what it truly meant to be bi. I'd never heard it talked about in a positive light, or even really talked about at all.

Growing up I was told bisexuals are "just gay but in denial", "sitting on the fence" or that they "just want more people to get with." Being bi was a playground punchline, a wildly misunderstood concept that became entangled with rumour and stereotype.

There's a variety of reasons behind this anxiety and a lot of them stem back to those stereotypes I've already mentioned. Firstly, I feel like many members of the LGBT community are isolated by the fact they don't look or act in the parameters of what is considered to be gay or bisexual. It sounds ridiculous, and it is. For some, the LGBT community is just *Queer Eye*, *RuPaul* and the occasional camp guy at work - if you don't fit their narrow scope for queerness then you just aren't gay enough. But where does that leave those like me, those who are distinctly masculine but find themselves attracted to both genders? For a bit of context, I look more like a car thief than someone who belongs on a Pride float.

It can often be hard to feel part of a culture that you don't see yourself in and there are so few examples of bisexual men in the media that look and talk like me. I didn't fit the LGBT blueprint and I felt alienated, that maybe I wasn't actually bi because I didn't fit these static ideas of gay culture. For a while I had a sort of queer imposter syndrome where

I found it hard to see myself as bisexual. I didn't feel gay enough but I knew I wasn't straight.

It's a ridiculous situation to find yourself in: sexuality isn't about how you look or act, it's about who you are and how you feel. It certainly shouldn't be dictated by how others might perceive you. Still, I struggled for a while to accept my sexuality due to a narrow view of LGBT culture that I grew up with and that still circulates today.

We need to start properly teaching children about sexuality ”

It's often hard for men to come out as bisexual because it's something that clashes with traditional ideas of masculinity, that men who are bisexual either aren't gay enough or aren't manly enough. Not that this issue isn't also an incredibly important one for women, but a recent study has shown that men are half as likely to come out as bisexual. That leaves an awful lot of men who are too scared to come out and it's not hard to see why. Studies show that men who are openly bi often struggle to find a partner,

straight women might not like the fact that they've slept with guys and gay men might struggle to be with someone who isn't purely attracted to the same sex. I'm so grateful for my girlfriend being comfortable with my sexuality as this was something that I was worried about when I first came out. I know for many this is unfortunately not the case.

These anxieties are also an issue of identity, bisexuals are sometimes told that they don't belong. In the few months I've been out and proud I've been told that I'm "too pussy to admit I'm gay" by a straight person, "just attention seeking" by another and that I'm "not actually gay, like not properly" by a member of the LGBT community. It shattered my confidence and left me doubting why I came out in the first place, or even if I was actually bi. It felt like I just wasn't gay enough.

So you may wonder why I'm telling you all this, why should you care? In brief, I feel like there's an often toxic stigma attached to bisexuality and a distinct one linked to men. It manifests itself in crude jokes, off-hand remarks and misguided opinions that chip away at the confidence of gay and bisexual individuals, leaving many scared to come out. These anxieties are not specific to me, they're not even specific to bisexual men. They're something universal and unless we start tackling them head on, they will

continue to make life unpleasant for members of the LGBT community struggling with their identity and sexuality.

These are some complex and wide reaching issues but they need to be challenged if we wish to create a more open and tolerant space for those scared to come out. Queer people aren't going to feel accepted if their sexuality isn't accepted as legitimate. We also need a greater variety of gay, lesbian and bisexual figures in the media from a broader range of backgrounds. While 2019 has shown far greater diversity in the media, the scope for sexuality from differing backgrounds seems fairly narrow and it's easier to feel comfortable about who you are when you have role models who reflect your upbringing, and how you feel about yourself.

We also need to address the root cause of all these issues, starting to properly educate children on sexuality to break down these insecurities and prejudices that build up as a result of an overwhelming lack of knowledge.

We may live in a more tolerant society than we did 10 years ago but there is still more to be done to make people feel comfortable in their identity and sexuality, no matter who they are. Perceptions of bisexuality need to change - I'm tired of being told I'm not gay enough and I know I'm not alone.

EDITOR'S OPINION

"Big shoes to fill"

Joseph Higgins



This is my first go at any kind of editor's comment or note. Gaming isn't really a big enough section to warrant the opinions of the editor being highlighted every edition. It's daunting taking over one of the three biggest sections in *Nouse*, but I can't help being almost giddy in my excitement. It feels like I'm following in hallowed footsteps; previous comment editors have included my co-editor in Gaming last year Jan de Boer. Jan is the man who essentially taught me what it means to be a part of *Nouse* and how to do everything when it came to making a newspaper and writing an article. The former deputy MUSE Editor Saskia, who helped me in the office a thousand times and worked in Comment with Jan the year before I even arrived at the University. Our current Editor, Patrick, a close friend of mine whose journalistic integrity, chops and ethics are a huge inspiration to me and the rest of the paper. Our current MUSE Editor Jonny, whose non-nonsense resting face still makes me chuckle. They all did this job much better than I think I'm capable of. I'm under no illusions that I am inexperienced and have a lot to prove. However, having these magnificent people and the spirit of *Nouse* that came before to live up to is definitely going to inspire me. Whether it's a panicky weekend trying to meet deadlines and chase articles or a nice casual Thursday afternoon sitting in the office cutting out pictures to go in the spread, I know I have to put in my all to live up to their legacy.

It's that legacy that makes Comment a really exciting section. But I also love it because it's our platform. As students, it can be easy to have political or social

frustrations because the world is a chaotic place, and we're just learning how to cope with it all. I see Comment as our opportunity to express those opinions, to feel like we're not shouting into the wind and I see being responsible for this platform as a great privilege and responsibility. I am honoured to be surrounded by a fantastic team for this next year. My co-editor Izzy is one of the nicest and most helpful and energetic individuals I've ever met. Her attitude is always on point and when she's working it's almost impossible to talk to distract her. We've only worked together on one prod so far but the fostering of such an amazing working environment is certainly going to make future ones much easier. Our deputies, Arthur and Jemima are always punctual and helpful. Their ideas and work ethic are also vital for us being able to offer our section as the voice for students. Without such a cohesive and cooperative team we'd be absolutely screwed.

I want this comment section to highlight as many of the student body's opinions this year as possible. I hope to be approachable to anyone who has an opinion they wish to express. Every student at York is an individual and every individual deserves to be heard, whether it's debating on the lawfulness of banning protests in London like our Clash this edition, or giving honest, beautifully constructed condemnations of the way society has treated marginalized groups. (Thanks again for such an amazing page nine, Alex), we need to have the full range of public discourse and as a Comment editor; that's what I hope to gather and establish in the future.

So there you have it. I'd like to thank you all for the opportunity. This society means the world to me and I hope that you will think fondly of Comment when you want to make use of the platform that we are cultivating here in future.



IMAGE: AYESHA GLEED

"Chinese leader criticises Hong Kong protests"



A tax on tourism is necessary

Disruptive stag and hen dos must pay their fair share

Alexander Francis Davies



The City of York is home to 6.9 million visitors a year, and local councillors along with many residents of the city believe our narrow cobbled streets are gradually becoming bloated within the ancient city walls.

With 500 000 additional tourists visiting York over the past five years, it is no surprise to discover that tourism ploughs a whopping £564m into the local economy. This unprecedented level of growth has resulted in an ambitious target set by City of York Council (CYC) of wanting the 'tourism effect' to smash the £1bn benchmark by 2025.

With this in mind, one cannot help but wonder why CYC should want to appear to reduce these numbers by introducing a so called 'Tourist Tax'? Of course, such a tax is not designed to reduce footfall, but to instead provide an additional source of revenue that can be reinvested into mitigating the negative effects of tourism, and these effects are growing at an alarming rate.

Yet to be devolved to local authorities, tax raising powers are very much in the hands of Westminster. The City Council does however have the ability to introduce a 'Voluntary Levy' which is proposed to take the form of an additional £1 charge per night for hotel guests. In my opinion, this has been grossly misjudged, as across the UK and indeed throughout Europe, 'day-trippers' are identified as posing the biggest hindrance to economic prosperity.

No place on Earth are the effects of mass tourism felt more than the city of Venice. As a frequent visitor to Venice during the Car-

nevale di Venezia season, I find myself to be acquainted with tourism tax. Finding an additional €7-€10 on the end of your nightly tariff is commonplace in any Venetian hotel, and subsequently over €34m is raised annually which is spent on maintaining the historic fabric of the city and keeping the streets safe.

Venice has recently sought to tackle those who contribute the least to the city's economy by swapping hotel tax for a rate of up to €10 aimed at 'day-trippers'. Like York,

Tourism alone can contribute up to £1bn to York's economy ”

Venice's tourists are predominantly those who come and go in less than 24 hours; 15 million to be precise. An additional levy placed on transport, collected by operators and passed onto authorities, will undoubtedly return a healthy income. It is indeed this levy that I believe should be adopted by City of York Council to target the hen and stag do's, and not penalise those who are here to stay in our hotels and contribute most to our local economy.

York Lib Dems' 2019 manifesto proposes to explore "future opportunities for a Tourist Levy to help generate new investment." One hopes that sufficient consultation will be carried out amongst local hoteliers, York's BID, retailers and restaurateurs, to ensure that "investment" is not hindered by a poorly-targeted levy.

At the University of York, we are not strangers to facing a levy in our day-to-day student endeavours. Should you find yourself to be purchasing a 'single-use cup' at any beverage outlet throughout campus,

a 'Latte Levy' to the tune of 20p will be charged in addition to your hot drink. Since its introduction in January 2019, the seemingly nominal charge has amounted to over £22 000 being raised which we are told is to be reinvested into reducing the University's environmental impact and other community projects.

This levy does indeed produce tangible results, and I'm confident that should such a scheme be replicated across the city, albeit in a different form (i.e transport, food outlets etc...) this would provide substantial revenue that could top-up the tourism budget.

There is a taste for the Tourism Tax as long as it avoids creating injustice amongst those who have come to enjoy our enchanting ancient city and not damage its historic landscape.

The prospect of tourism alone contributing up to £1bn to York's economy over the next decade is an exciting one. This prospect must however provide the opportunity to successfully capitalise on the increasing number of 'day-trippers' whose litter and anti-social behaviour is having a damaging effect on the historic fabric of our streetscape, and the ability for local residents and visitors alike to enjoy their once-peaceful surroundings.

Along with other major tourist destinations in the UK such as Bath and Birmingham, it is my conclusion that a 'Tourist Levy' must be sought to provide much-needed additional revenue to mitigate the negative externalities of mass tourism.

After all, it is the sheer beauty and unique landscape of historical destinations such as York and Venice that attracts tourists from around the world in their millions for visits every year.

Isn't it ironic that the landscape they come to visit is being eroded by the visit itself?

Final referendum the only legitimate way forward

You might not like it, but another referendum is the only way to get out of this Brexit deadlock

Callum Tennant



I understand the frustration some people will feel when they read this title. I too am frustrated by Brexit. I'm not frustrated that Brexit hasn't happened. For that, like millions of other people I'm incredibly grateful. I'm frustrated that the same MPs and lobbyists who pushed for Brexit now cannot agree on what form of Brexit to pursue. At the same time, it's these same people who insist that everyone knew what they were voting for, to which their answer is Brexit. Despite the fact that even they can't agree on what that is.

In 2016 we had a referendum on EU membership. The country voted to leave. But what leave meant was unclear. If any of the public want to mistrust Parliament over this Brexit fiasco, it should not be over some fake idea that MPs have "betrayed the will of the people." It should be over the fact that Parliament was ever stupid enough to agree to a tool as crude as a referendum to try and settle such a complex question. Furthermore, it was a question that most people, if asked about five

years ago, would not care about. So rather than getting annoyed at Parliament, let's all get annoyed at the Conservative party, who tried to use us, and the whole country, to settle their internal divisions.

The problem with the original people's vote (because that was also a so-called people's vote) was that we were offering people a choice of something that hadn't been negotiated yet. The result of that is that we

ended up with a Brexit campaign of make believe and unicorns. We ended up in a situation where we

are being promised continued access to the single market, but at the same time we'd be able to go and get amazing trade deals tailored to British needs all around the world. But getting those trade deals means changing standards. And trading standards which don't align with the EU's means no single market access. During the referendum, we often heard what now are obviously ridiculous arguments about how the German car industry would make sure we got a good deal; the reason being that they don't want

tariffs during their production stage as parts move multiple times between the UK and EU. The reality we've discovered is two very different points. Firstly, these multinational corporations are increasingly thinking about moving production out of the UK altogether. Secondly, something the EU cares about much more than losing a member or Brexit is preserving the integrity of the EU's single market.

Furthermore, the idea that the EU 27 would argue amongst themselves, allowing us to negotiate one on one with individual

EU countries has proved to be completely false. The EU has maintained a united face. The UK however feels it has been constantly arguing about Brexit for the last three years, whether that was at a rally, in a pub or in the cabinet.

Back in 2016 we didn't know the options that would actually be available to us. There are still a lot of misunderstandings, such as the idea of a "clean break" or that he UK can just "get on with it." A no deal Brexit is just the start of decades worth of negotiations. And disagreements over whether the UK is complying to a level playing field with the EU will characterise our future relationship. We will be turned into a country that tip toes across the world stage looking for free trade deals. For example, China cracking down on Hong Kong, well, don't expect the UK to say anything. We'd need that deal with China won't we.

Now we know what the options are: leave with Boris Johnson's deal, leave with no deal, or move on with all of our lives and remain. Rather than a general election which will likely produce another Parliament as deadlocked as this one, what we really need is to go back to the people and let them have their final say. A public mandate on the better defined options which are now a reality, not just soundbites. Politicians started this, it's time that we, the people, finish it.



York's black students deserve less whitewashing

Black history month is a great opportunity to listen to minority voices that the uni has missed

Hamza Abdikadir



When it's done right, Black History Month is perhaps one of my favourite times of the year. It serves a dual purpose. One that celebrates black achievement in British society and discovering our hidden potential that we were stopped from achieving as a result of centuries of whitewashing and the societal reluctance to discuss achievements of any other people besides from the white European.

Secondly, Black History Month is a reminder of many historical events that have affected black people, particularly the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, regarded as one of the worst atrocities in human history, which remains a dark stain on the moral fabric of the West. It is also a time for us to remember the suffering of black people across Europe and America and the ongoing post-colonial turmoil that can be seen playing out in Africa.

So why did the University of York think it was okay to have white

lecturers explain the centuries long suffering of my people? The University of York's events team spent months planning these events but apparently did not see anything wrong with the some of the talks in Black History Month being given by white speakers.

This article is by no means attacking the credibility of the lecturers, many of whom have studied the issues they discuss in great detail. However, there is a very important need for the University to branch out and try to find more black academics (they really do exist) that could offer a deeper, passionate take on racism.

Why does it matter if it's a white or black person discussing Black History Month?

A talk that I decided to attend on colourism and racism in which the white lecturer openly said

the word 'negro' while discussing the impact of colourism in Jamaica produced a feeling of discomfort across the room. This was perhaps one of the most important points

White lecturers can't teach black students their own history

of Black History Month that proves the need for black lecturers to discuss the history of our people in our month. The answer is shared personal experiences.

A white speaker will have less to offer from a personal perspective than someone who has struggled as

a result of them being non-white. This does not mean that they have not suffered the scourge that is racism, but there is an element of personal experience that must be present in any talk given about Black History. Especially since the topics being discussed have had such a monumental impact on Western society.

It would be as absurd if someone that was heterosexual was discussing homosexuality, or an able-bodied and neurotypical person was lecturing disabled students on their own oppression.

For many of York's black students, it wasn't a surprise finding out that the University of York somehow managed to partially whitewash Black History Month. This is a university that prides itself on diversity and inclusion yet has a much lower acceptance rate of minority students compared to white students as well as having a poor record on inclusivity of people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Like many other black people at the university, I was really disheartened to see that the University didn't bother trying to find enough black lecturers to discuss black history and even more disheartened by the fact that they didn't seem to

acknowledge that this was an issue. It downplays just how serious the month is to black people when the University's events team decides to just have white people approach the very serious and very relevant topic of race.

Thought it isn't the job of black people to teach white people about racism and other issues surrounding the current and historical oppression of black people, it is important that it is a black academic/speaker discussing black history and The University of York's events team has displayed a sense of ignorance by not looking for entirely black speakers, instead resorting to two white speakers.

In an academic world where diversification and changing the curriculum from a white, Western and Eurocentric outlook is a viral campaign across other universities of the West, the University of York has shown a willingness to maintain this historic ideal of whitewashing.

I believe I speak for many black people at the University when I say that I take quite a lot of offence at this and I condemn the University for not finding more black speakers to discuss such a delicate and culturally important event that Black History Month is for many of us.



England needs to scrap its prescription charges

For long-term kidney patients like me, costs of medication can be a source of serious financial stress

Patrick Walker



Of all the rough aspects of being at University, having my kidney and hearing condition is probably the most irritating. It costs me time each week in lecture catch-up, has forced me to cut down on alcohol to a pathetic degree, and, in the UK, a country with a world-renowned healthcare system, it costs me over 100 pounds a year in medication.

For this reason, I was pretty excited when the Labour Party decided at its latest conference that it would scrap prescription costs, in the spectacularly unlikely chance it wins the forthcoming election. The policy isn't even as expensive as you might think: partial exemptions already exist for those with 'chronic' conditions and children in full-time education, quite apart from the fact that the UK government subsidises most prescription costs anyway: drugs cost a maximum of nine pounds an item in England.

That said, England is currently way behind the rest of the UK: free prescriptions are already in place across Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. That's not the only bizarre inconsistency: people with diabetes or other conditions labelled

as 'chronic' actually get free medication anyway. People with kidney diseases, like me, are left to pay for themselves. It's especially frustrating considering that many kidney diseases are genetic, and therefore not linked to diet or exercise, as diabetes sometimes is.

This free medication isn't just an ideal circumstance for British patients, it actually saves lives, and NHS money in the long-term. A survey of nursing professionals has found that 87 per cent of nurses have seen asthma sufferers skip medication because of its cost. When Scotland abolished fees in 2011 (to the chagrin of the Scottish Conservatives led by Ruth Davidson), it found that medication rates went up: a key indicator that patients had been less likely to use their drugs while the cost was imposed. Removing barriers to medicating is absolutely crucial to ensure that patients actually take their prescriptions.

With regards to my condition, a disease that disproportionately targets young men, patients are even more unlikely to take their drugs. Kidneys don't have nerve endings, which means that patients don't feel any pain when not taking medication harms their kidneys. It's this lack of a good feedback loop that results in early kidney transplants every year around the world, costing health services far more money than if their patients had just taken medication in the first place.

I've done nothing to deserve my condition, but I'm happy to live with its impacts. What I shouldn't have to do is fork out money

each year for the life-saving drugs that I need daily. Let's face it: the reason that diabetics and others have already received free medication is because they're well-known and well-publicised in the public consciousness.

Alport Syndrome, on the other hand, has no figurehead, no large-scale awareness campaign. The most famous patient of Alport Syndrome is Thom Sonny Green, the drummer of Alt-J. Haven't we suffered enough?



IMAGE: KEVIN TYNAN BOWE

If this policy is implemented in even a few more diseases, Labour Shadow Health Secretary Jonathan Ashworth actually reckons it could save the NHS money in

the long run: "£20 million a year if they lifted prescription charges for people with just two conditions: Parkinson's disease and inflammatory bowel disease." It's obvious that scrapping prescription costs might not just be a cheap policy that affects only a few people, it could be more efficient in the long term.

It's also possible that preventative medicine, or drugs designed to prolong 'normal' life could further reduce costs if taken consistently by patients. Blood pressure medication like the type I take is far cheaper than the immunosuppressants required to keep a kidney transplantee healthy for the remainder of their life after their operation.

This policy is probably inevitable, especially as more research is done into its cost in Scotland and Wales that will likely reveal how useful it would be in saving our government money and time.

The Scottish Conservatives have since backpeddled, and now support the scrapping of prescription charges up north. It's also obvious that scrapping prescription charges is also extremely popular in other European countries, not all of them as wealthy as the UK is.

The abolition of prescription costs is no longer just a talking-point for dusty socialists and small patients groups: it's a smart, practical policy for today's NHS that will save Alport Syndrome patients the equivalent of 13 Efe's pizzas a year.

Strippers don't need 'saving' from their jobs

Edinburgh council, and the world, need to listen to and protect sex workers instead of shaming them

Izzy Hall



Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEVs) in Edinburgh have taken a hit this week as a move from the Scottish Government to hand discretionary licencing over the clubs to the local council. Consultations in mid-August saw a 65 per cent agreement to licencing power being given to the council, where the dancers' union was present. In these initial conversations the union representing sex workers who are employed by SEVs saw the change as an opportunity to ensure dancers would not be misclassified as independent contractors and would no longer miss out on rights that all workers, no matter what type of employment, should have; sick pay and guaranteed wage just to name two.

Considering the stigma surrounding sex work within society and the abuse that performers and content creators are subjected to, these workers (who are mainly women) need all of us in their cor-

ner. The council's gain of power over SEVs will allow them to create a limit on the number of venues in Edinburgh, and most terrifyingly, they could set it at zero. For a city of almost half a million people, the four existing venues are hardly taking over the high street.

Many from the dancing and sex work communities and feminists alike are scared that the reform is masquerading as an opportunity to make conditions for workers safer, when in fact it could drive business underground via bans. This is not a misplaced worry; Labour councillor Mandy Watt wants to shut down every venue in Edinburgh and hopes that this new legislation will provide the path. She went on record to say that, "I think these clubs should not exist. I think the Scottish Government should have banned them outright. I don't think they are healthy in a modern society that's supposed to be about equality."

This harmful rhetoric is common and far too often seen in circles campaigning for women's rights and equality in our society. Suggesting that sex work of any kind is a 'last resort' or 'beneath' people only fuels the fire behind social stigma that is already raging. Frequently the

picture painted by the media, and even the mainly male demographic attending these venues, is that sex workers have no other options and should be 'saved' from 'degrading work.'

Following this potentially damaging new licensing, the council have decided to create a new post to "help sex workers find alternative employment." At this point, it's really adding insult to injury. Mandy Watt stated, "I'm sure the women who work in these venues are intelligent and have lots more potential, skills and talents they could use to get themselves better jobs and build careers and do something more worthwhile with their time and energy." Quite what these new employment ideas are, we are yet to see.

Among the sex work community this is not the common attitude, with many drawing on fourth wave feminist ideas of bodily autonomy and profiting off the sexualisation of their bodies, which doesn't seem to be going away anytime soon. Obviously I would like to state that abuse and trafficking have no place in our world, but far too often upsetting crimes against women involving their bodies are generalised to

those within the sex work industry - and banning clubs will only put performers more at risk of being exposed to this abuse says the United Voices of the World, a union for the sex work community.

New licensing has the potential to create safer work environments

Reform could drive business underground via bans

for performers and create stronger effort to stamp out coercion and trafficking, but will this happen? Or will it be used to punish those who love their jobs and feel empowered, putting them more at risk?

Stacey Clare, an employee of Edinburgh's West Port clubs told the *Edinburgh News*: "We are working very hard with two trade unions to establish workers' rights in our industry, which has long failed to observe correct employment laws. If strip clubs are shut down we lose

the opportunity to do that, and we are pushed further into the precarious gig economy, where it is a lot harder to establish workers' rights."

With Edinburgh's SEVs being dragged into the spotlight, another debate has followed pertaining to sex work as a whole, not just performers in clubs, in terms of legalisation vs decriminalisation. As more conversations develop about this profession, it raises the question: what we are aiming for? Those within the community say decriminalisation is the best move, arguing that paradoxically, further regulation will cause more harm. Legalisation will still criminalise those who cannot comply to what would predictably be strict regulations set in place concerning place and amount of work, and puts marginalised communities such as undocumented persons within sex work at even more risk of being criminalised.

The public and government bodies in the UK have a long way to go with understanding what the sex work community needs. Banning these clubs will only increase the harm felt by workers. It's time to abandon harmful 'equality and saviour' rhetoric and support and celebrate people in this field.



IMAGE: DAVID BASANT

State schools are being ignored

The fee-paying school debate still distracts us from all the wider issues

Arthur Fyfe-Stoica



Amidst the near-constant crashing waterfall of Brexit related updates I receive, an issue that seems to be constantly resuscitated brings some respite for me in the form of the heated private school debate. The prospect of their potential abolition or even taxing their income is divisive and for good reason. The decade following the Great Recession is scarred with austerity and ever-rising wealth inequality. Fee-paying institutions such as these are the epitome of what feels like continuing economic injustice and social immobility. However, I find that the debate is rather symbolic in its nature and it fails to engage with the realities for the majority of the student population.

The real inequality in education is in the wildly varied results in comprehensive schools. For most, an academic upbringing will be shaped by the postcode lottery; whereupon someone's residence will decide which catchment areas they belong in. Personally, I was fortunate to have grown up in an affluent area, a place that I return to now that, comparably, reeks with optimism. An old boys' school whose entrance was packed with cricket bags every weekday morning was my comprehensive experience. Academically, the quality was exceptional. The space, facilities and investment outside of the core curriculum gave numerous opportunities to explore different subjects and hobbies. At the sixth form there, there was always an expectation to not just go to university, but league table-topping ones too. It was never a question of if anyone would go to Oxbridge, but of how many. That's not to say my school was flawless, I remember some pretty dull lessons, some complaints issued that were directed at teachers and it wasn't

the right place for quite a few people. However, these problems aren't of real significance in comparison to other schools across the country.

Moreover, I wasn't financially well-off myself, coming from a rented home with a single parent. Despite this, I didn't miss out on the opportunities I've described because there wasn't an upfront financial barrier that would turn me away. Though I was comparably poorer, my peers elevated me in my expectations, habits and mannerisms. These are some of the effects of growing up in the right area that aren't shown on report cards or academic results, that are hugely influential in life after school and overall social status. My time there will forever be illustrated by the way I talk

UK inequality has been pretty much stagnant since 2014

and conduct myself.

This touches on university applications also, as personal statements are increasingly becoming more important as part of a student's credentials when applying. Upon first glance, this might seem benign, but it further disadvantages poorer families again, whereupon opportunities for internships, certain clubs and societies are crushed with the need for a part-time income or caring for a family member. The point is that currently, whether attending a private school or not, the socioeconomic conditions into which you're born has already rigged your prospects to a large extent. This is particularly bad in the UK where within north-western Europe, the country simultaneously has the single richest and also the nine poorest regions in this part of the continent, illustrating the wealth disparity in disposable household incomes.

There's little indication that

any progress has been made in this direction. For instance, the board of the Social Mobility Commission resigned in December 2017 due to a lack of necessary progress, with the situation remaining "virtually stagnant" since 2014. Since then, the State of the Nation report published in April of this year stated that inequality was "entrenched from birth", describing how those from better-off backgrounds were nearly 80 per cent more likely to enter professional employment than their working class peers. Furthermore, if the recommended changes aren't implemented then a decline would be a real possibility, and that's not accounting for the recession that could be triggered by the country's departure from the EU, which would hit deprived areas the hardest.

I haven't written much, if anything at all, about what it's like to be enrolled at other comprehensives because I really don't know what that experience truly is. Nor have I offered a solution. However, I know that the majority of my friends here didn't share the same privilege as myself, instead missing out because of a lack of investment in their local areas back home and a culture that had very different expectations. By abolishing private schools, merely an emblematic change will have been made as affluent families will continue to have a higher quality of education and future prospects through private tutors and a wealth of opportunities and positions to network into because they have the means to do so. That will never change. It's not about symbolic representation but rather fundamental transformation so that as many children as possible are afforded the same liberty that I had. I'll always be grateful for growing up where I did, my sixth form years in particular. Millions of others should be entitled to that same comparable luxury. Until there's serious discussion about that, the debate will continue to draw attention away from a substance-based discussion that education in this country deserves.

TPUK isn't right for our university

TPUK's ratification on campus would be wrong but not for all of YUSU's reasons

Sam Campbell



At the 15 October Societies Committee meeting, YUSU rejected an application to ratify the conservative student campaign group Turning Point UK for the third time. The minutes for the meeting stressed the committee's position that "there was nothing inherently wrong or problematic with what this group wish to be doing: discussing right-wing politics and capitalism is something which the Committee and YUSU are happy to encourage and facilitate." Still, they expressed concern about the "friction" which may come from associating with a "strongly right-wing" organisation. Similarly, Stand Up to Racism were recently denied ratification for its affiliation with the SWP. The way I see it, it is correct to deny TPUK ratification - but for different reasons to those of the Societies Committee.

Like its US counterpart, TPUK has seen controversy in its short lifetime, with low points including leaked WhatsApp messages in which one member advocates "chavocide." In another instance, Candace Owens - a US member with links to the White House - made bizarre comments at an early TPUK meeting which segued from a defence of nationalism, to Nazi apologism, arguing that "Hitler just wanted to make Germany great and have things run well, OK, fine," before going on to posit that the only problem with Hitler was his 'globalism'. Numerous notable conservatives - including Priti Patel, Jacob Rees-Mogg and Tom Harwood - have distanced themselves from TPUK after initially expressing support, not least because of the reputation accumulated by such controversies.

I have issues with YUSU's position, though: the notion that the organisation is too extreme to be associated with the University is questionable. I believe that between the lines of the decision there is an inherent fear of the politically extreme, a damaging pathology concurrent with mainstream political commentary.

Freedom of speech isn't the issue; if these students wanted to meet and discuss conservative ideas, nobody would shoot them. Rather, it is unhealthy to tip all political discussion to the centre, interfering with organic campus discourse. It is inherently political - quite the opposite of being impartial - to do this. Of course there is an argument that TPUK would culture hate speech, but this is something that could be monitored by YUSU.

The reason TPUK should not be ratified is their shady financial status. Nobody really knows who funds them. John Mappin (a castle-dwelling scientologist who awarded Trump an honorary knighthood) seems to have something to do with it, but he has previously said "the whole idea is to stay anonymous." Recently, some information has come to light about TPUSA's funding, revealing a trend of support from donors linked to fossil fuels - explaining the organisation's persistent climate denial. Some of these donors include the Hanley Family and the Koch Brothers via the Donors Trust, the Heritage Foundation and the Foundation for Economic Education. It is likely that TPUK's funding is linked to that of TPUS, but their huge budget is still unaccounted for.

Until information regarding their funding is readily available, like many other campaigns, we should be extremely wary of TPUK. Therefore, it is a good thing that - for the time being - campus will be safe from TPUK and its shady donors. With that being said, we should be critical of YUSU's posi-



IMAGE: GAGE SKIDMORE

CLASH OF COMMENTS

Was it right to ban the Extinction Rebellion protests in London?

YES.

Tom Reis



Don't get me wrong, it would be impossible for me to debate the importance of Extinction Rebellion's (XR) cause, seeing as the threat of climate change is the greatest challenge of our time. Therefore, I would take this opportunity to critique their methods undertaken as a way of influencing the Government's commitment to maintaining our planet's delicate ecosystem.

The art of influencing government policy is pretty fine, but the keyword here is 'government' and I have found their tactics increasingly frustrating given the importance of their message. In every aspect XR has become the national global hegemon when it comes to the fight against climate change and it's about time they acted with the responsibility that this role entails. What we have seen over the past weeks with the targeting of public transport does not exhibit this kind of responsibility.

I would certainly credit them with their ability to raise awareness over environmental issues, stimulating the government into categorising the issue as an 'emergency', but if real change is on their agenda then they have to do more. XR have crowd-funded over £850 000 but it seems clear this is being invested purely on gaining public awareness and it's time to

move past this. The likes of Greta Thunberg are keeping environment on the front pages and it's her influence at the political level that XR need to learn from.

Andrew Medhurst, XR's finance coordinator, has projected the costs of the protests to be around the million-pound mark, with the bulk of the cash being invested in protest infrastructure such as tents, stages and toilets.

I hope I'm not the only one who finds this data baffling, these protests have gone beyond raising awareness to the point where the public are being alienated as a result of the targeted approach XR are taking towards ordinary workers' daily commute to work.

Just think for a second how far almost a million pounds could go towards lobbying government ministers rather than on toilets or fake blood. The irony of this is how detrimental the media scrutiny in XR's methods is for their lobbying capabilities. In this respect, they are tarnishing themselves with their own brush and shooting themselves in the foot.

It was completely within the interests of XR to be banned from London, it sends a message to them that their strategy needs to change.

They have raised awareness, but it's time to take the next step towards change that avoids these flamboyant street antics and instead takes the issue straight to the legislative arena to institute much needed and much overdue action.

Jemima Hill



Earlier this month Extinction Rebellion activists took to the streets of London in their Autumn Uprising climate strikes. These strikes were even bigger than the strikes we saw earlier in April which brought London to a standstill. This time, climate protesters caused mass disruption and targeted numerous important institutions, blocking the tubes in rush hour and spray painting government buildings. The tube disruption saw angry commuters drag protesters down from the roof of the trains, and the blockage of Oxford Street and Trafalgar Square eventually led to the Met Police banning all XR protests across London under section 14.

But, it is not in the nature of protests to be non-disruptive. Protests would essentially be pointless if they didn't cause disruption and affect people's everyday lives. It is true that the police have a tricky job when such protests are being carried out, as not only do citizens have a right to protest but they also have a right to go about their lives unhindered. However it is entirely unproductive and "unlawful", as the high court have heard, to ban all XR protests across London.

Britain has a long and proud history of protests, and the disruption they cause is what gets results. The suffragette movement is the most obvious example, but the climate strikes in April alongside growing evidence that we are de-

stroying our planet before our very own eyes led to the British Government declaring a Climate Emergency at the beginning of May this year. For the message in protests to be heard, they need to be disruptive. The message that XR protest for, that we are currently in a climate emergency and hurtling towards mass extinction is no exaggeration. And it is up to big institutions and individuals alike to make a difference and halt mass extinction. Protests will continue to be disruptive and anger ordinary people until this message is heard loud and clear.

Banning protests in the same city where the government declared a climate emergency feels like taking one step forward and two steps back. Now XR have taken the banning to court, which is obviously a huge exertion of time and money on both sides; money and time that could be going towards taking action against climate breakdown. It should not be left to protesters to prove the urgency of climate change. The sheer amount of protesters in the XR movement are evidence of how many people are fighting for our planet's future; the government needs to listen and take action.

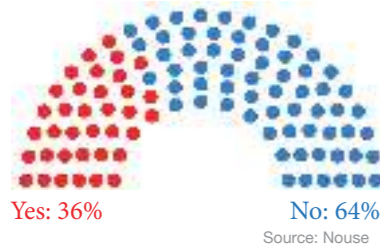
It is up to big corporations and state governments to pay attention to the crucial yet uncomfortable truth: we are living in a climate emergency and it is your responsibility to stop breaking it down.

Banning protests to stop breaking it down. Taking action is.

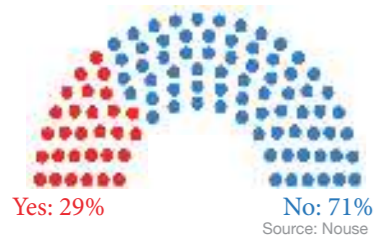


According to the polls

Was it right to ban the XR protests in London?



Do you think a 'tourism tax' would be a good idea for York?



Comment in brief...

Patrick Walker & Matthew King

THE CIRCLE IS A SCAM

About a month ago, we both got hooked on *The Circle*, and like most right-thinking Brits, we were rooting for Woody, the loveable 18-year old star of C4's show. Unfortunately, the winner turned out to be Paddy: an irritating Irishman who only succeeded after tribalism knocked the two frontrunners from the top.



Paddy is Pepsi, hummus, margarine: everyone's second choice, and his winning of 100 grand is an absolute outrage. reality TV hasn't been this disappointing since Stacey Dooley won *Strictly*. #TeamTim

Jemima Hill

STOP THE HUMMUS HATE

If you didn't know already, there is a society here at York devoted to appreciating hummus, and I have somehow found myself as President of it. Now I love hummus as much as the next person, evidently. Understandably, it is a pretty niche society which is bound to have the piss taken out of it. This comes as no surprise to me and I am more than happy to convince people of hummus' greatness - it is a great source of protein, vegan friendly and most of all delicious. So, let's spread hummus, not hate.



Jonny Wellington

NISA CLARITY NEEDED

What is going on with the Nisa self service area? I've not got a particular issue with the machines themselves but they just bring with them so many questions that are so far unanswered. Not only that but so many awkward interactions now come from that point in the queue where there's a space free at the machines but the person in the queue in front of you hasn't moved yet, so you're left with the choice of either creepily tapping them on their shoulder or awkwardly walking in front of them. It is a social interaction minefield please.



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Find more info on our Facebook and Twitter pages, or email editor@nouse.co.uk with any questions.

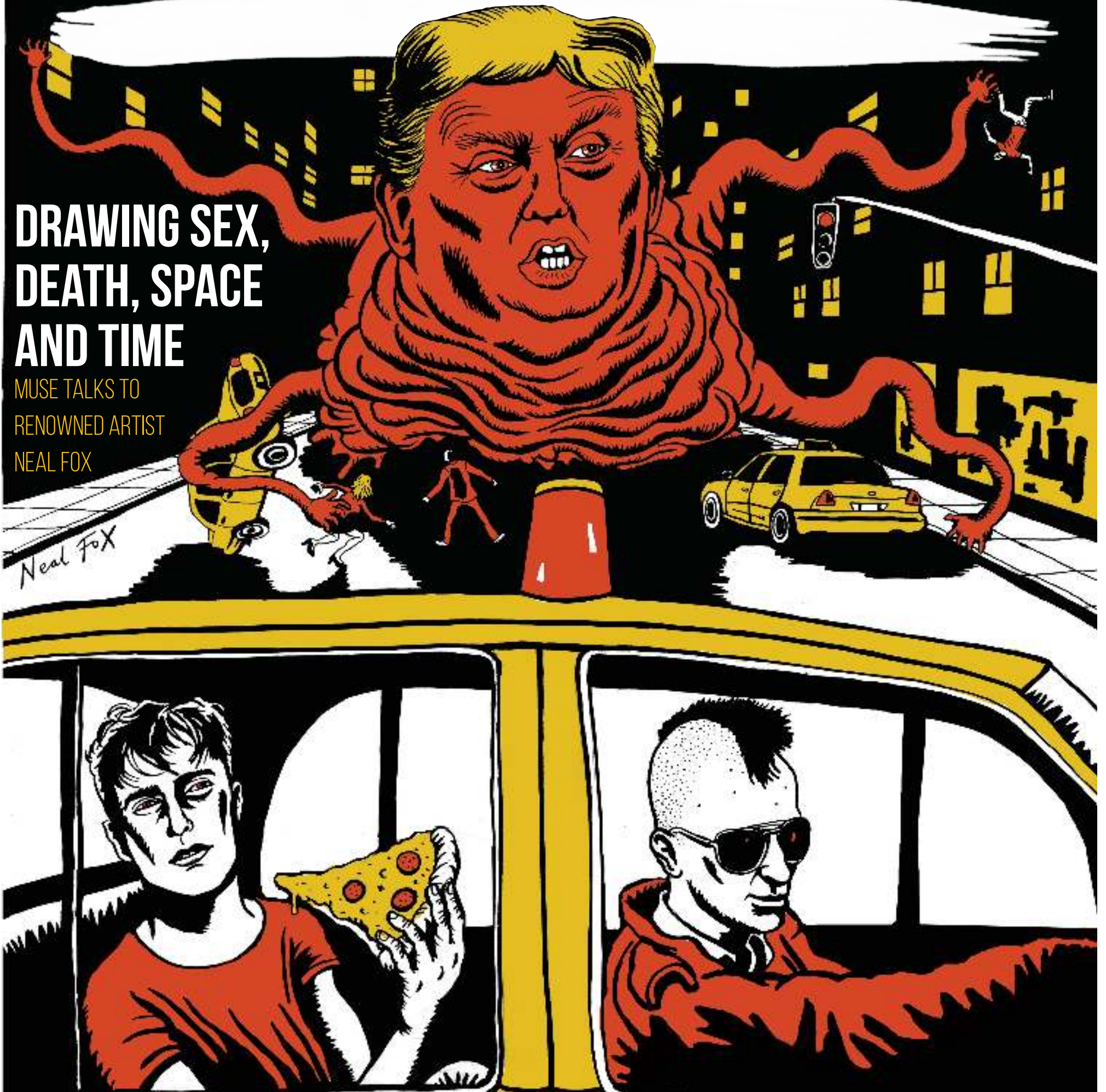
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MUSE!

DRAWING SEX, DEATH, SPACE AND TIME

MUSE TALKS TO
RENOUNDED ARTIST
NEAL FOX



FASHION

M9
Sofia Bielli reports on the latest app that allows you to rent formal wear

Sarah Gatenby-Howells talks Louis Vuitton and their association with Trump

9

FEATURES

M4
Jonathan Wellington talks art, politics and creativity with artist Neal Fox

M8
Chloe Lam looks at Halloween traditions

M16
Megan Roberts explores the genius Bob Ross



ARTS

M6
Hope Jennings-Grounds looks at theatre sparked by the Russian Revolution

M7
Jenna Luxon explores the impact of Douglas Copeland's *Generation X*

Emily Mellows looks at a reimagining of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*



MUSIC

12

M12
Charlie Williams discusses post-punk and its role within activism

Sam Campbell looks at York's unique local talent

M13
Fenella Johnson explores environmentalism's impact on pop

Alex Thompson reviews clipping's horrorcore album

GAMING

M17
Jake Phillips explores the resurgence of couch co-op gaming

Joseph Higgins looks at *Stadia* and whether it's a platform doomed to fail

17

FILM & TV

M14
Malu Rocha discusses why we always come back to our favourite films and tv shows

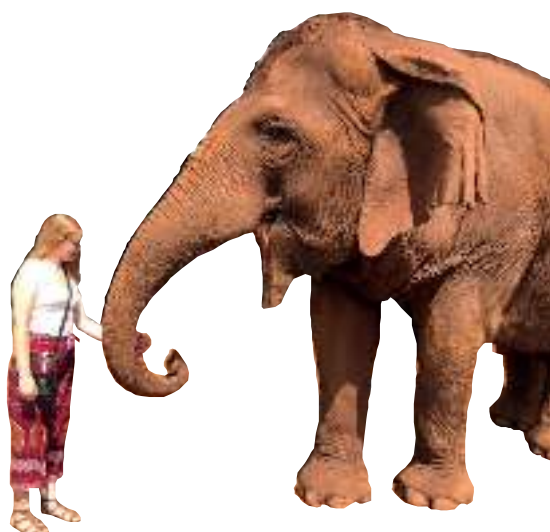
M15
Francesca Iucci talks horror's biggest anti-heroes and their presence in pop culture



TRAVEL

M18
Hannah Clements looks at the impact of elephant tourism

Sophie Brown explores Edinburgh and samples the infamous deep fried Mars bar



FOOD & DRINK

19

M19
Sasha Baker looks at York's Halloween cuisine

Annabel Mulliner gives a recipe for ghoulish green soup

The editors list their favourite cosy winter pubs in York

“I was excited to get the opportunity to help a stranger who’s been unfortunate enough to have to search the register.”



MUSE TALKS TO ANTHONY NOLAN, YORK MARROW AND A STEM CELL DONOR ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SIGNING UP TO THEIR DONOR REGISTER

What is Anthony Nolan?

Anthony Nolan is a blood cancer charity that works to help improve and save the lives of people with blood cancer. We help three people in need of a lifesaving transplant every single day and there are over 2 000 people across the country that are still in need of a transplant each year. Therefore, we have to work to increase the number of people on the register, but we’re always trying to diversify the register to ensure that anyone in need of a lifesaving transplant, regardless of age, gender or ethnicity, is able to find a match.

What is Marrow?

Marrow is a student-led branch of Anthony Nolan that recruit people to the register, fundraise for Anthony Nolan and spread awareness of the importance of stem cell donation. York Marrow is one of over 50 Marrow groups which collectively, since 1998, have signed up over 150 000 people onto the Anthony Nolan stem cell register. Of these, over 1 300 have gone onto donate their stem cells to a patient in need - that’s potentially 1,300 lives that have been saved! Not only has this incredible stranger impacted the patient’s life, but also the lives of the patient’s family, friends and network of people around them. That’s a pretty incredible society to be part of.

What is York Marrow and what have they done?

I’ve just checked the stats and York Marrow, through over 70 events, have recruited 2 643 potential donors onto the register and of these, 13 have gone to donate their stem cells.



How is it best to join the stem cell register?

Find us at an event! We advertise all of our donor recruitment events across campus on our social media platforms, as well as posting why we do what we do. If you can’t make it to an event, you can sign up online using: anthonymolan.org/york-marrow, where the swab kit is sent to you. If you are over the age of 30, you can still sign up if you head over to dkms.org.uk.

How could someone get involved in volunteering for York Marrow / Anthony Nolan?

People can get involved at any time throughout the year, just join our Facebook group ‘York Marrow Volunteers 2019-2020’ and use it to let us know when you are available for an event! If you don’t have Facebook, you can join our mailing list by emailing marrow@yusu.org. If you haven’t been trained before, just let us know and we can train you on the day. There are so many great reasons to volunteer with York Marrow besides from the obvious goal of saving lives! You are a part of a national network of like-minded students that have the opportunity to go to regional and national conferences held by Anthony Nolan each year. Don’t have any time? Consider raising money for York Marrow through a challenge event! We currently have 3 committee members running the London Landmarks Half Marathon so email us if you want to join or have another event planned.

Are there any future events coming up which people should know about?

We have regular events around campus, details of which can be found on any of our social media. You will see our Marrow-

een event on 1 November in Derwent Dining Hall (D-Bar) between 5:30-7:30. We are also planning some events during Hero Week (18-22 November) where we celebrate the amazing heroes that have gone on to donate by signing as many people to the register as possible! Head over to our social media to find out more.

The following Q&A was done by the Story Manager at Anthony Nolan with Dan who through the charity donated his stem cells and saved a life.

How did you feel when you were told you were a match for someone?

I was surprised that I was matched so quick. I knew not many people ever donate so the fact I was matched after just a few months was quite unusual. I was also excited to get the opportunity to help a stranger who’s been unfortunate enough to have to search the register.

What was the whole donation experience like? Was it what you expected?

It’s been such a great experience, the medical I had was just a few hours with the nurses who showed me the place I would donate and described the whole process, answering any questions or concerns that I had. A very friendly nurse came to my house to give injections to stimulate stem cell production at a convenient time and told me how significant the donation would be for the recipient. I donated via PBSC collection where I sat in a bed for a few hours on a dialysis machine while the cells were collected. The process was extremely easy and completely painless; it’s so little to do but it can make such a big difference to someone else. When you get told you’re a match it can seem like a lot of pressure but the Anthony Nolan team and the nurses at the hospital made sure the process went smoothly and that I was fully informed and looked after every step of the way.

What would you say to anyone thinking of signing up to the register?

It’s an amazing thing you can do for someone who really needs a match from the register. Signing up is quick and easy and can make such a difference to someone’s life.

EDITOR'S NOTE



ALEX THOMPSON NEW TEAM, SAME STRESS

This edition of MUSE is very spooky. We’ve got horror films in Film & TV, horrorcore rap in Music, a halloween themed Food & Drink section and, perhaps spookiest of all Trump gets a namecheck in fashion. Despite all of this, the scariest thing about prod week was the looming spectre of InDesign - the Adobe error message haunts me in my sleep. A new year has brought with it a new team, new challenges, new ideas and a new attitude. Shame it couldn’t bring new computers.

I joined Nouse one year ago as Deputy Music Editor and since then I’ve been lucky enough to move up to Deputy MUSE Editor. Unfortunately, due to the similar spelling of job titles, no one outside Nouse thinks I’ve moved up and can’t understand why I spend half my life in a shitty office shouting at computers and the other half complaining about how much time I spend in a shitty office shouting at computers.

“Don’t you just write music reviews?” they ask. Nope.

I’ve loved creating this edition of MUSE; from the Russian Revolution and York’s emerging artists to elephant tourism and our lord and saviour Bob Ross. It’s a diverse and eclectic mix of topics. Jonny’s interview with artist Neal Fox is a highlight, a laugh-out-loud interview with brilliant art and, of course, an incredible cover. I never imagined that we’d have a serious discussion about whether to include a cartoon of a band carving up the Tory party with chainsaws. Despite it being a somewhat stressful week in the Nouse office, there’s been a lot of laughs, good chat and I’d like to use my first ever editors note to thank a couple of people. Firstly to the new team for being thrown in at the deep end and still producing an edition I’m very proud of. Everyone has worked so hard and it’s made this edition brilliant and the office a good laugh. I also want to thank Comment’s Izzy Hall for giving me the platform and encouragement to write my first page nine, one that means a lot to me and that’s been in the works for a while (go give it a read if you haven’t already.) Most of all I want to thank my partner in crime and drinking buddy Jonny, who’s not only made this prod week bearable but also a lot of fun. You are an absolute legend mate, and I’m sorry for my caffeine-induced stress and weird music choices in the office. With, that I’ll let you get stuck into the weird and wonderful world of MUSE.

Enjoy, it’s an absolute banger.

IMAGE CREDITS

Cover: Neal Fox adapted by MUSE
Left (top to bottom) : Haiden Goggin, A&M Films, Hughes Entertainment
Right: York Marrow

NEAL FOX: “DRAWING ABOUT SEX, DEATH, SPACE, AND TIME”

JONATHAN WELLINGTON AND NEAL FOX DISCUSS SOCIAL MEDIA EXISTENTIALISM, SIMULATION THEORY, AND REPTILIAN POLITICIANS

From Donald Trump to Theresa May, from David Bowie to Sam Fender, Neal Fox has drawn countless cultural icons and politicians within his art. As an accomplished artist and founding member of LE GUN collective, Neal's success suggests that his already impressive career has only just scratched the surface of what this artist has to offer. Admittedly showing some of the aforementioned figures more favourably than others (politicians do not tend to come out well), every piece of art Neal creates he does with his own individual brand of idiosyncratic imagery and beautifully unique style.

I therefore start the interview on the topic of this distinct and brilliant style, asking the artist how he would go about describing his style to someone without simply showing them his work. His response: “I always find that difficult so I like to say something a bit over the top like.. they are drawings about sex, death, space and time...” before adding that “when people actually see the work they are usually relieved that it's not that heavy.”

Despite maybe not being as dramatic as that description and the headline might suggest, there is certainly something about Neal's art which distinguishes it from more conventional styles. I ask what drew the artist towards the unorthodox as opposed to the traditional. “I can see what you mean about it being a certain style, but to me it's just the way I naturally draw.” Asking about what then influenced this, Neal explains that “when I was a very young kid, like five or six, I used to be shown psychedelic underground comics from the 60s by an artist called Les Coleman who had a huge collection.”

Neal also attributes his inspiration to the large amounts of surrealist art and pop art that his dad showed him as a child, before adding *Tintin* books, “some pretty out there exploitation video nasties” his cousin had, 2 000AD comics, and Monty Python's *The Meaning of Life* to this unusual list of what

“warped” his brain. “Because I was a compulsive drawer it merged together into how I look at the world.”

Moving away from the many, somewhat controversial, factors that changed and moulded his mind, I ask Neal which indi-

“
Drawing is like an early version of virtual reality where we create imaginary worlds for ourselves

vidual artists have played a role in influencing him and his work: “lately I'm interested in film noir directors and the atmosphere they created after the trauma of World War Two. A lot of them were German directors who fled the Nazis and came from an expressionist background. I'm very influenced by artists like George Grosz, Otto Dix and Max Beckmann who were denounced as degenerate artists by the Nazis. Also, I'm reading about Vincent Van Gogh at the moment; he was my age when he moved out to a remote village to paint, and cut off his ear.” Neal, who has coincidentally made a very similar move to the Greek island of Amorgos for his art, then adds “I'd better take it easy on the absinthe.”

When I ask about this array of pop culture references in his work, Neal gives a surprising answer by simply saying “it evolved from drawing my grandad.” The artist explains that “I was drawing scenes from his life when I was a teenager. He died when I

was four and is a kind of mythical character in my family. He was a bomber pilot, a writer, a publisher, a chat show host on TV. His name was John Watson and he wrote a famous war novel called *Johnny Kinsman*. There used to be photos around my gran's house of him with people like Cary Grant and Walt Disney, and with his plane Z for Zombie in World War Two. Gradually, I started to draw him on an imaginary journey, on another plane of reality, meeting people from history and pop culture who I wanted to meet myself. So he could be in a bar in Paris with Serge Gainsbourg or at a cabaret in Berlin with David Bowie.”

Neal reflects that “really he's me, and I'm taking whatever excites me from books or music or other culture and making connections ... bringing these people and ideas to life for myself ... then hopefully I'm creating portals into other dimensions where anything is possible. I like the idea that we are all consciousnesses living in the theatre of reality. There's this theory now that we are living in a virtual reality game from the future. Drawing is like an early version of virtual reality, where we created imaginary worlds for ourselves, when we drew on the walls of caves and told stories around the campfire.”

Aside from popular culture, politics and political figures also regularly feature in Neal's works. When I ask how he sees the relationship between art and politics he answers somewhat profoundly that, “I think with art there is the possibility of creating an ungovernable space where anything is possible. My friend Peter Bach is a documentary filmmaker and he told me he likes my drawings because they are inclusive. They are about friendship and cosmic connections between all kinds of different people. Maybe in a world where hatred and fear are being used to manipulate and divide people, art that is positive about humans and the imagination can have some kind of effect.” Rather less seriously, Neal then adds “it's also fun to draw

Trump as a giant tentacled blob monster attacking New York.”

The president of the US is far from the only political figure to feature in Neal's work, however. A recent poster for Fat White Family, illustrated by Neal, shows guitarist Saul Adamczewski disguised as Theresa May sitting with Boris Johnson's head on a spike, David Cameron engaging in a sexual act with a pig while simultaneously being massacred with a chainsaw by a band member,

“
It was like a strange travelling carnival of ink drawing from Brussels to Beijing

and another band member inserting a grenade into the mouth of Margaret Thatcher's corpse.

When I ask if he ever wonders what politicians such as Donald Trump or Theresa May would think about his work and his depictions of them, he answers “I think they're the kind of reptiles who probably don't even register art when it's in front of their eyes,” before adding that he thinks “they've probably never read a book.” Neal then references





“the old Nazi quote ‘when I hear the word culture, I reach for my revolver’” and argues that it could easily be attributed to them. He then states that in regards to the aforementioned poster, that he rather enjoyed making it.

Continuing on from the fictional massacrings of the Tory party, I question how Neal thinks that his work has evolved over time. “That’s a difficult one to answer,” the artist admits before deciding that “hopefully it’s always evolving. For the last few years I’ve been living in different countries, bringing different cultures into the drawings. I’ve become more and more interested in the history of mythology and mysticism. At the moment I’m living on a remote Greek island, and collaborating with a poet called Jeremy Reed. I send him drawings

I fear we are all being slowly turned into cyborgs who will be controlled by some kind of all-seeing AI

”

and he sends me poems, and we respond to each other back and forth.

“The different figures from my past drawings have all followed me to the island by boat. They have washed up here and I’m drawing scenes with them, in a kind of psychedelic noir landscape. The term ‘psychedelic’ comes from the Greek words *psyche* (soul) and *deloun* (to reveal) ... to reveal the soul. This island is strongly influenced by Dionysus, one of my favourite gods, the god of wine, sex, madness and theatre. I have a battle going on between him and Apollo the god of reason a lot of the time, and that is playing out in my drawings here. Jack Kerouac is drinking with femme fatales at the local taverna, and Lou Reed is playing guitar under an olive tree.”

There are certainly a lot of art pieces and projects that we should be expecting to see from Neal in the near future, but at this point in his career I ask whether there is a particular piece that stands out from his collection as a favourite and why. “One of my favourites is probably a drawing called ‘Kill Lies All,’ about the time Picasso was visited in his studio by the Gestapo. Another is called ‘Lust for Life,’

about Bowie and Iggy Pop writing the song together in Berlin.” As reasoning, Neal adds “I think I like them because they are single moments in time, but they are exploding and making all kinds of connections.”

These may be his favourites, but a lot of the attention that Neal is receiving at the minute seems to be from his work with Tyneside musician Sam Fender. In light of this work, I ask how this partnership came about. Neal explains that “my cousin Owain is his manager. He discovered Sam a few years ago playing at a pub called The Lowlights in North Shields where he worked. He asked me to do a poster for Sam when he wasn’t very well known, and it took off from there.” Neal adds “it’s interesting to see how fast someone can get famous.” When I ask if this is a partnership Neal hopes to continue he says “I like it because I am pretty much free to draw whatever I want ... it’s evolved into a kind of surreal Geordie Toon world, with different characters recurring ... it’s become stage visuals and animation, and the band are even getting tattoos of the draw-

ings. I am happy to keep doing it as long as Sam wants me to ... he’s a cool guy and I like his music a lot. I love a bit of Springsteen and Sam is heavily influenced by the Boss.”

Neal Fox is also a part of LE GUN collective with fellow illustrators Bill Bragg, Chris Bianchi, Robert Rubbish, and Steph von Reisz, as well as designers Alex Wright and Matthew Appleton. According to their website, the collective claims to “create idiosyncratic imagery, which blends a punk, occult, pop and surrealist aesthetic.” When I ask how this collective came into existence, Neal explains that “we met at the Royal College of Art in London in 2004 ... we used to drink and draw together and raised money to publish our own magazine about drawing. Somehow we are still doing it, the latest magazine came out this year. It became about more than the magazine, a lot of parties, exhibitions, giant 3D installations ... it was like a strange travelling carnival of ink drawing from Brussels to Beijing. The latest issue is about a world gone mad ... a response to the crazy times we are

living in.”

Moving towards his perspective on the arts more generally, I ask the artist how he sees the growing role of social media within the arts scene. He admits to finding the “social media stuff pretty weird” saying “I went on Instagram to put my drawings on there and find myself getting addicted to it sometimes ... looking at garbage. It’s like it’s replacing daydreaming, people are putting their interior world outside for everyone to see. I would like to get off it but it seems pretty important for getting your work out there these days. I fear we are all being slowly turned into cyborgs, who will become controlled by some kind of all seeing artificial intelligence in the future.”

When I ask about how else he sees the role of art changing in society Neal states “I think art is important when everything is becoming homogenised ... for trying to stay in touch with the magic in the universe.”

I think they’re the kind of reptiles who don’t even register art when it’s in front of their eyes...

”

I start to bring the interview to an end by asking if there’s anything Neal would like to plug and he refers back to a lot of what we’ve discussed. “The latest issue of LE GUN is out now in all good bookshops and on our website legun.co.uk ... I’m working on an exhibition which will be at Galerie Suzanne Tarasieve in Paris next June, and on visuals for Sam Fender’s upcoming tour.”

How I will end this interview, however, is with Neal’s rather beautiful answer to my question of whether he had any advice for aspiring artists. Neal quotes writer J.G. Ballard in his response by saying “be faithful to your obsessions. Identify them and be faithful to them; let them guide you like a sleepwalker.”



AN ARTS REVOLUTION: FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

HOPE JENNINGS-GROUNDS DELVES INTO 19TH CENTURY RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND THEATRE SPARKED BY REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS

After Peter the Great's extensive reforming of Russia in the early 18th century, along with the other dramatic social and cultural changes, came an influx of literature and arts. Shortly after this, in the 19th century Nikolai Gogol and Ivan Turgenev entered theatre and literature history. Both of them were successful writers of their time during the swift "Westernisation" of Russia, born not long before another celebrated writer Chekov and famous theatre practitioner, Stanislavski.

Gogol and Turgenev were both recognised as great novelists and playwrights, however despite both being born into the same moment of Russian history, they were recognised as such for very different reasons, both of them influencing different strands of literature across many different countries. To be able to write in Russia at the time, both Gogol and Turgenev needed to be aware of certain sensitive subjects to avoid getting into trouble for what they were writing. Art had to be a lot more careful at the time than it does now and writers had to be a lot more cautious about what they were putting on stage and into the literary world.

Turgenev was known for his realistic narratives and being able to offer the readers an often relatable setting and characters that seemed convincingly genuine. Gogol's writing was in fact quite different from Turgenev, offering more abstract writing, especially within his short stories. However, some academics state that despite the madness he often depicts, his literature can often be relatable due to him dealing with universal truths. It's suggested he wrote in such a way that he presents stories in which the only differences between the story setting and where we live are aesthetics. Readers could easily feel just how his characters felt.

Turgenev's work on the other hand is distinguished from other writers of his time by its concern for artistic value and elegant storytelling. Turgenev did engage with the politics and history of his time, writing about Russian peasantry and the Russian intelligentsia that were at the time moving Russia into a new age. He was concerned about what the future held, but because of his time studying at the University of Berlin between 1838 and 1841, he believed in Western superiority and therefore supported the Westernisation of Russia.

He travelled a lot in his life and swore to spend as much time abroad as he would at home. As well as spending time in Germany, he spent time in England and France, which was where he wrote the play that was the main reason he became known in Eng-

land: *A Month in the Country*. The play was set in a country estate in the 1840s and presents a story of romantic rivalry between two women. Love was a theme that often came up in his fiction, which could be due to the fact that he never actually got married himself, although he did have a daughter. Turgenev developed his writing throughout his career and when he looked back at *A Month in the Country*, he decided he actually disliked the

“
Gogol is dead!
What Russian heart
is not shaken by
those three words?”

play and claimed that it was for that reason he had stopped writing plays and instead focused on his other writing. Rumours and thoughts about him weren't always positive. When he was 19 he travelled on a steamboat which caught fire and after he reacted in a way which was considered cowardly; this story followed him wherever he went. While travelling with Turgenev in Paris Tolstoy, another Russian writer, is documented to have once written "Turgenev is a bore," and later in 1861 their friendship became so bad that Tolstoy challenged Turgenev to a duel, although he later apologised.

Gogol had an incredibly religious upbringing and took less of an educational route than Turgenev, searching for artistic success when he was only 19 in St Petersburg. Research states that when he arrived there, his hopes were shattered because all he could find was "a graveyard of dreams." Despite this, he stayed in the town that later became "the cockpit" for the Russian Revolution. Because of his disappointment in seemingly not being able to have the literary career he had hoped for, he decided to enter a government ministry. Here, it is said he hated the work and despised all of his co-workers.

Gogol then went on to release a book of short stories called *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka* which gained him critical acclaim and led the famous poet Pushkin to take him under his wing.

It was after this that Gogol wrote one of his most famous pieces, a satirical play called *The Government Inspector*. The play is about a corrupt group of officials who are misled into

thinking a man is a government inspector. The tsar of the time, Nicholas I, was present when the production was first staged, which was an incredibly brave decision on Gogol's part as the tsar was known for his own tyrannical nature and Gogol had attempted to hide his negative opinions on his regime. After the play, Nicholas I was meant to have said "Hmm, what a play! Gets at everyone, and most of all at me!" After this Gogol fled the country and lived most of the rest of his life in Rome, only returning back to Russia on rare occasions.

When the play was first being put on, Gogol read out how he wanted to play to be performed to his actors, but he did it in such a way that they couldn't recreate it - Gogol saw the performance as flat and not right, however audiences loved it.

His work, *Dead Souls*, was going to be the first part in a trilogy documenting Chichikov's fall and redemption. However, halfway through writing the second part Gogol started to lose his mind. This was followed by him having a nervous breakdown, developing depression, hypochondria and manic religious fervor. Seeking help, he spoke to a priest who told him to burn the sequels to *Dead Souls*. After this he decided to fast for Maslenitsa, a feast before Orthodox Lent, but the strain on his body was too much. Despite this, he would only allow doctors to give him water with a few drops of wine and would refuse any sort of food he was offered despite the fact he was growing very thin and unwell. Eventually, his bowels failed him and he died

“
His favourite
drink was rum
mixed with boiled
goat's milk

as a result of starving himself so dramatically for so long. The effect of starving himself was even worse due to his usual eating habits. Rumours suggest Gogol had always been concerned that he would be buried alive - he is claimed to have wanted an air-hole in his coffin and a bell in case such a thing were to happen. Eating had always been a difficult thing for Gogol. There are several accounts of him writing to people in relation to his struggles which he detailed quite carefully.

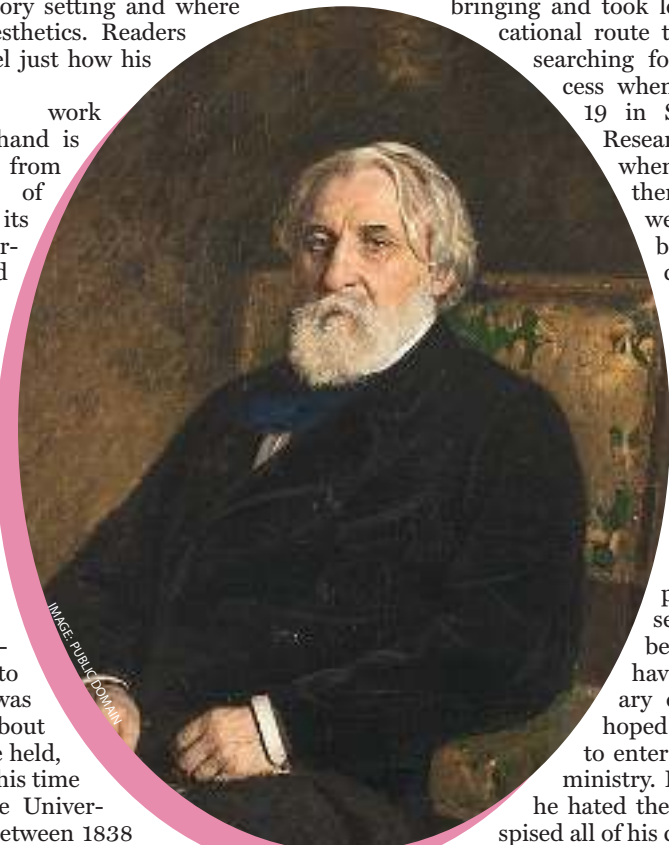
He was sure something wasn't right with him, which was something he claimed French doctors had confirmed for him. Despite this, it's documented that he had a love for rich dairy products and when travelling would even make his own butter out of cream he would find at the top of milk bottles. This is supported by evidence that his favourite drink was rum mixed with boiled goat's milk which he jokingly called "Gogolmogol." His sister Elizaveta documented that Gogol had a sweet tooth and would do things such as finishing a whole jar of jam with a spoon. He would make jokes about demonstrating different ways to eat jam and before long it would all be gone.

Ivan Zolotaryov reported that Gogol had an immense appetite and when they would dine together in Italy, he would very often eat a large meal and then shortly afterwards order himself another full dinner. So, it could be said that his rich taste in food and beverages could have worked against any health issues he did have. He claimed that the illness exhausted him and meant that he often would struggle to get his work done. However, when he could get work done, often his stomach illness and love for food would be written into his stories - characters would often suffer from indigestion or eating and snacking would be commonly found within his texts such as in one of his short stories *Old-World Landowners*.

Turgenev wrote an obituary for Gogol intended for publication in the *St Petersburg Gazette* in which he wrote "Gogol is dead!... What Russian heart is not shaken by those three words? ... He is gone, that man whom we now have the right (the bitter right, given to us by death) to call great." However, the censor of St Petersburg did not approve it and banned the publication. Moscow censorship did allow it so it then went on to be published there. However, the censorship was then dismissed, leaving Turgenev responsible. This led to him being imprisoned for a month and then to be exiled to his country home for around two years.

Both writers lived very different lives and experienced different aspects of the same time in history. Although they both wrote about the time they lived in and the politics they experienced, their different writing styles reveal different aspects, thoughts and approaches to the remodelling of Russia and the leadership it followed at that time.

Both an adaptation of The Government Inspector and of One Month in the Country, titled Three Days in the Country will be performed at the University of York, in TFTI on the 25th and 26th of November.



PLEASE STEP BACK AND MIND THE GENERATION GAP

JENNA LUXON TALKS ABOUT THE LONG LASTING RELEVANCE OF DOUGLAS COUPLAND'S 1991 BESTSELLER GENERATION X

To say this book inspired a generation sounds like a terrible cliché. But in many ways, it did. It inspired but also named a generation – Generation X. Splitting people into groups and labelling them is one of society's specialities, and this doesn't stop for birth cohorts. From baby boomers to millennials, these strange names we give to age demographics are hard to escape. Vague in their descriptions of who they refer to (I can never work out if I'm a millennial, a GenY, GenZ, post-millennial or iGen) what these terms aim to encompass is how the events of a certain period of time broadly affect those living through it.

When Douglas Coupland published his first novel *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* in 1991, he was not the first person to use that term. He was, however, the person to popularise it, offering a description of what it was the 20-somethings of the 90s were feeling. Over-educated, under-employed, the product of families where traditional American values are beginning to wane who are seeing the development of technology right before their eyes, they're living in a state of anomie. Stuck somewhere in between the pressure of having too much expected of them and the sense that society assumes they're incapable of achieving any of it, they're waiting to find out the new norms.

Nearly 30 years on from its publication with a new generation as the 20-somethings of society, it doesn't feel like much has

changed. This novel focuses on the lives of three main characters, narrator Andy and his two friends Claire and Dag, who have moved to the southern California desert to escape the pressures of corporate America. Taking the form of a framed narrative, these characters each tell their own stories throughout the main plot of the novel.

In the first part of the book, Andy describes the ritual the three have of taking it in turns to tell what they call "bedtime stories". With the same policies as an Anonymous meeting, the other two are not allowed to interrupt the story or offer any criticism at the end. While some seem to be true, some blatantly fiction and many of them impossible to

tell, these stories seamlessly blend into the chapters of this book, each telling something about these three people's lives and the generation they exist to represent.

What these stories manage to do however, is not just tell us about Coupland's understanding of the problems and experiences of this generation but to raise a larger point. The point that

fiction can so often tell us far more than fact, as it is through these stories, the facts they omit from them and the facts they make-up, that we really see what this generation's lives are like.

There is one particular line in this book that sums this up for me

and that is when Andy says "History does not record my response." Easy to skim straight past, whenever I read that line it reminds me of the famous Walt Whitman quote "We were together. I forget the rest." They both say so much, without really saying anything at all. They show how it is as much the details of our lives that we forget or choose to omit that hold as much meaning as those we remember.

As Claire says early on in the novel "It's not healthy to live life as a succession of isolated little cool moments ... either our lives become stories or there's no way to get through them. We shape those stories not only through our actions but through the way we record them. There is as much to read into what we choose not to include as there is in what we do. Perhaps for our generation, whatever we're supposed to be calling it, it is not sitting around in the desert telling "bedtime stories", but it is through posting on social media that we exercise this control over our own narratives. There is as much information in the photos we don't post, and the captions we don't write as the ones that we do. We condense our lives quite literally into stories, be that on Snapchat or Instagram, but the limited elements that we remember or choose to share are of course not the full picture. It is through our omissions that you can really begin to see what our generation represents. When Coupland wrote back in the 90s that we "tell stories ... to make our lives worthwhile tales in the process," he could have been writing about us.



IMAGE: UNIVERSAL PICTURES

"QUICK, BRIGHT THINGS COME TO CONFUSION"

EMILY MELLOWS LOOKS AT THE LATEST REIMAGINING OF BELOVED SHAKESPEARE CLASSIC A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Unlike Emma Rice's 2016 production, this version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* doesn't need excess artificial lighting to dazzle the crowds that flock to the Globe. The sheer energy of the cast is enough to arrest and overwhelm its audience. As sunlight streams into the theatre (I know - in London!) the cast squeeze out every bit of comedy and madness this play has to offer, much to the crowd's delight.

The play begins with a swing and a bang, quite literally as audience members are brought up on stage to whack at a piñata and the Hackney Colliery band play. This perfectly sets the tone for the rest of the show: fun, playful, a true celebration of both of Shakespeare's finest comedy and the rare British sunshine. The Hackney Colliery band match the energy of the cast as they progress

through a series of cheesy songs, often at the request of the characters themselves.

The costumes perfectly accent the mayhem and colour the play offers, taking clear influences from both drag and carnival culture. Most of the costumes are architectural, others are purposefully sagging and ridiculous, all are fabulously unflattering. Titania has bubble-gum pink hair and platform boots, the lovers have black and white ruffles splayed across their shoulders and Oberon is decked out in a circular gold monstrosity, reminiscent of an enormous chocolate coin. All that glitters is gold in this production, where excess is celebrated with vigour. Most interestingly, Bottom wears a rainbow coloured piñata in lieu of a traditional donkey mask - an appropriate

choice given that he is often poked, prodded and played with to the amusement of the fairie people and the audience. Perhaps a lesser troupe of actors would have been swallowed up by the costumes, but certainly not this cast, who dare to match the campiness and craziness the costumes offer.

Victoria Elliott's Titania brings the same excess and overt sexuality that Melissa Madden-Gray brought to the role in the 2016 Emma Rice version of the same production, without the seediness. Elliott's interpretation of Titania seems to be heavily influenced by drag culture, in the sense that we are laughing with her exaggerated portrayal of femininity rather than at her. It is far too easy for actors to portray Titania as a simple idiot, even before she has the love spell cast on her. Elliott's wittier, somewhat self-aware version of Titania is a refreshing change on a stage where women are far too often the butt, as opposed to the orchestrator of jokes.

Jocelyn Jee Eisen (Bottom) Rachel Hannah Clarke (Snug) and Nadine Higgin (Quine) are the most spectacular and charming of the cast. In previous Globe productions, the play rehearsal scenes are dull and lacklustre, a trial the audience has to wait through in order to get to the forest scenes. But in this production, Bottom, Snug and Quine have character and a connection to the audience, rivalling that of Titania and the lovers. Overbearing, trashy and loveable, their scenes are something for the audience to look forward to, rather than a bore. Hermia, Helena, Demetrius and Lysander perform against rather than with each

other to generate the biggest laugh. However, this is somewhat forgivable, because while they lack chemistry with each other, they excel in connecting with the audience. Helena, played by Amanda Wilken, commands the audience's love and sympathy with her pathetic Helena. She slouches across the stage, desperately attempting to woo Lysander, and breaking the fourth wall with reckless abandon.

Perhaps Peter Bourke's Oberon lacks the authority and commanding presence the role traditionally demands, largely because of the multiple Pucks who weave across the stage and groundlings overshadowing him and distracting the audience at every turn.

The choice to litter the stage with multiple Pucks certainly adds to the chaos and comedy of the play. It might have been more effective however to have a single Puck for Oberon to unleash his anger upon in Act Two. Bourke does, at least, make the often-forgettable Theseus a loveable fool, a particularly difficult job given the controversial nature of the character.

This production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is more daring and bizarre than ever before, but unlike Rice's controversial production, the craziness complements rather than detracts from the play itself. Casting and costume choices are made to mystify and delight the audience rather than to push and challenge them. One thing is certain: by the end of the performance, the audience trickles out into the courtyard in a stunned daze, half feeling like they're slowly waking up from a bizarre yet brilliant dream.



IMAGE: ROB FARROW

THE HERITAGE OF HALLOWEEN

CHLOE LAM DELVES INTO HALLOWEEN'S HISTORY, AND EXPLORES THE ORIGINS OF THE TRADITIONAL PRACTICES OF THE FESTIVAL

Trick-or-treat! Look beyond the little ghosts, witches and zombies on your doorstep: this is essentially just a plea for sweets. Have you ever wondered why we participate in all these eccentric traditions at Halloween? Its history dates back to an ancient Celtic festival called Samhain – long before the commercialisation of the occasion we now associate with sweets, parties and black and orange décor. Let's explore some of these mysterious traditions that we follow each year without ever really understanding the meanings behind them.

Trick-or-Treating

One of my personal favourites. After all, what other occasion permits young children to knock on the doors of strangers and ask for free sweets? Of course, the many people who turn off their living room lights in an attempt to make the house look empty may disagree with me. But let's have a look at the traditions behind this practice. In Scotland and Ireland, children

the relationship would work out. There is also another, slightly darker story behind apple bobbing. The occasion of Samhain coincided with the date of Halloween, hence the link between the two. On this day, humans would be offered up to the gods. It is said that the Druids in the British Isles would make people in the villages partake in one of two

unappealing options: apple bobbing or burning to death if they did not participate. However, there was a twist: the water containing the apples was boiling hot. Clearly, there was not a particularly pleasant outcome either way. This dark history formed the basis of what has now transformed into an entertaining and light-hearted game.

Costumes

This is another tradition that ties in with the festival of Samhain. During Samhain, spirits would return to Earth and haunt the people living there. In order to disguise themselves from the spirits and avoid being haunted, the Celts would put costumes on so that the spirits did not recognise them as humans, and instead believed that they too were spirits. They also disguised themselves so that the spirits would not be able to single out the people whom they had made enemies of while they were living. It is interesting to consider how Halloween costumes today serve a vastly different purpose – the ghoulish masks lining our supermarket aisles allow people to stand out on Halloween and be seen.

Black Cats

These felines have been around for a very long time. However, their history as superstitious creatures (which do still colour many people's perceptions of them today) have led to their being associated with Halloween. One particular group in history – the Puritan pilgrims of Plymouth Colony – were strict Protestants, and were therefore very much opposed to witches and witchcraft. They were suspicious of black cats

because of their supposed link to witches – some of them believed that black cats were actually just another form that witches could take on. This perpetuated hysteria about black cats and it is why we still associate them with Halloween today.

Sweet Treats

If you think this is mostly a marketing ploy – you're correct. In many past Halloweens, trick-or-treaters were frequently given fruit or nuts as their 'treats' – items that can still be found in the majority of households today. So why has there been a movement towards garishly packaged sweets to mark the occasion? With the marketing campaigns for these sweet treats cropping up several weeks before 31 October, the only explanation is that Halloween has become a very much commercialised occasion. Indeed, in the 1950s, businesses began capitalising on the trend of providing goods at the door, and mass-produced sweet treats specially made for the occasion. So no, sadly those multipacks of spooky shaped treats do not have an exciting history.

Carving Pumpkins

Pumpkin carving: an activity usually delegated to the adults, carefully carving along the children's haphazard, sharpie-marked outlines. The practice of pumpkin carving originates from an Irish myth about a man named Stingy Jack. It is said that one night, Jack and the Devil went out together for drinks. When the time came to pay the bill, Jack managed to persuade the Devil to change into a coin to pay for the drink. Jack then placed the coin (i.e. the Devil) into his pocket. But inside this pocket was a silver cross, which had the ability to stop the Devil from morphing back into his natural form. Eventually, Jack let the Devil back out of the coin – but only on one condition: he was not allowed to attack Jack for at least ten years. As promised, the Devil came back for Jack ten years later – but Jack tricked the Devil again,

making him climb up a tree to reach an imaginary apple. As the Devil climbed, Jack engraved the tree with a cross, trapping the Devil. He struck another bargain – as long as the Devil did not send him to Hell, Jack would free him. The Devil agreed. When Jack died, however, he could not go to Hell, and

“ The practice of pumpkin carving originates from an Irish myth

Heaven rejected him too. This meant that he was forced to roam the Earth. He was given only a piece of coal by the Devil, which he lit and placed in a turnip to illuminate his path. It is therefore said that the people of Ireland soon began carving turnips to create lanterns, in order to ward off Jack's wandering spirit. Compare this to our modern-day practice of lighting carved pumpkins outside our houses to attract trick-or-treaters, rather than to turn them away.

Halloween in York

How does our humble city of York sit in relation to all these Halloween traditions? Well, York Dungeons are hosting a spooky show this Halloween to demonstrate York's place in the history of Halloween. It will feature famous historical figures, including Guy Fawkes, Dick Turpin and Isabella Billington – a convicted witch. All the way back in 1679, Isabella was hanged for witchcraft at York's very own Knavesmire – a place where many public hangings used to take place. This came after it was revealed that she had murdered her mother as part of a ritual dedicated to Satan. The show at York Dungeons will run from 5 October to 3 November, so get your hands on some tickets while you still can, and experience the spookiness of Halloween, mingled with fascinating history, even after the occasion is over. So in a few days' time, when you see the masses of ghosts, witches and various other ghouls traipsing the streets under the lamplights, perhaps you'll take a moment to think about why they're dressed that way. Or maybe you'll consider the traditions that have led to the gaggle of children at your door, holding their buckets out expectantly. What an absolute treat (or trick).

Halloween originates from the Celtic Festival of Samhain

used to offer the people who answered their doors 'tricks' in return for 'treats' – a sort of exchange, if you will. The name attributed to this version of trick-or-treating was called 'guising'. Tricks may have included dancing, singing a song, or telling a joke.

In America, the origins of trick-or-treating are slightly different. 'Belsnickling' is the term attributed to the practices prevalent in German-American communities. On Halloween, children would knock on doors in their costumes and ask the homeowners if they could decipher what they were dressed up as. If no one made a correct guess, then the children would be given treats as a prize.

Apple Bobbing

A game that inevitably features at most Halloween fairs and farms – somewhat unhygienic but highly entertaining for its spectators. Unlike trick-or-treating, this activity stems from something unrelated to what we now call Halloween – apple bobbing was originally part of a courting ritual. There are several fascinating variations of this game. One method of playing was to name each apple in the tub after a potential lover – the player would then try to bite into the apple of the person they were in love with and wanted to woo. If they were successful the first time, then the relationship was meant to be. However, the more tries they needed to bite into the right apple, the less likely it was that



IMAGE: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

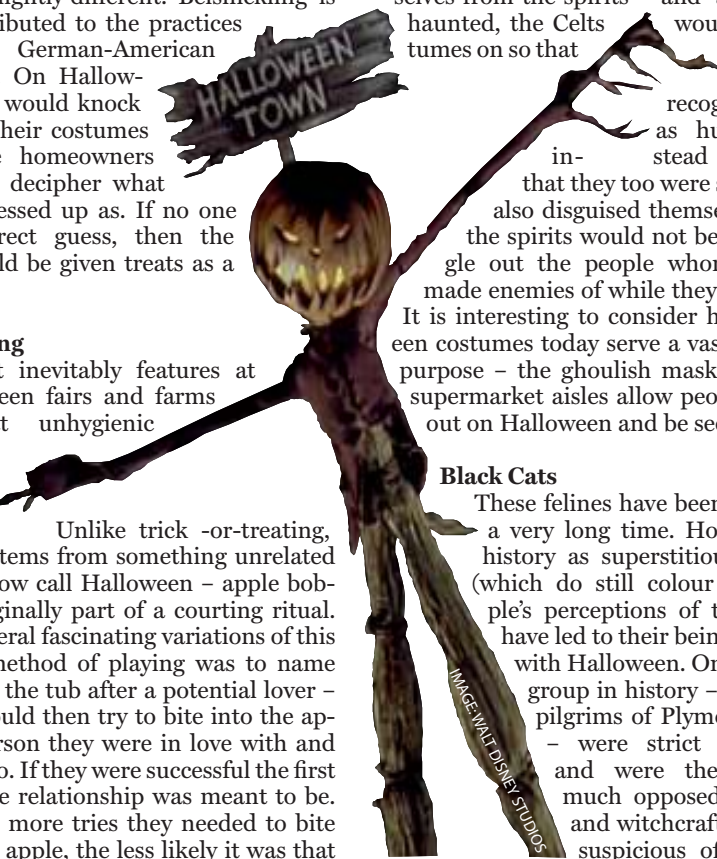


IMAGE: WALT DISNEY STUDIOS



IMAGES: (PUMPKINS) FINE ARTS AMERICA & (BATS) PUBLIC DOMAIN

HURR: VIVA LA CLOTHING REVOLUTION!

SOFIA BIELLI EXPLORES THE NEW ONLINE PLATFORMS FOR CLOTHES RENTAL TO UPDATE YOUR WARDROBE WHILE REDUCING WASTE

It happened again. May 2019, a friend's wedding. The invitation came something like a year and a half earlier, and I had been stressing since to find the perfect dress. As always, the eye wandered towards the 'inspirational' Instagram posts of the most famous influencers, all of them wearing £200+ clothes. But my conscience warned me that in no way could I spend so much money on a dress which would probably end up stashed in my wardrobe forever. Six months to go, I spent most of my weekends roaming aimlessly around the town's high street shops to find a not-too-expensive-but-not-too-cheap-looking dress to wear at the bloody event. It was only three weeks before the wedding that on a short vacation to Rome I found the most perfect and graceful dress I had ever worn, or at least that's what I tried to convince myself of. I was so in love with it that I kept coming up with all the different occasions I could have worn it, like the Summer Ball (which I didn't attend), Christmas (which I always spend in an oversized jumper) and finally my graduation (don't even get me



IMAGE: DEBENHMS PR

started.) Needless to say that after my friend's special day, my dress was not that special after all, and it's now not very carefully folded in my wardrobe. Still too expensive to just give away, I could probably sell it, but I am not very good at that.

But one day, browsing through fashion articles on social media, I discovered that renting clothes is now a big thing, and it's easier than ever. Clothing rentals are not new. The US clothes-rental market established itself a while ago, and the UK followed suit with companies like Higher Studio (which is now on strike to support Extinction Rebellion), HIRE STREET, and Front Row. But while HIRE STREET is targeted to a much younger audience with high street brands, Front Row is exclusively based on top fashion design-



IMAGE: DOROTHY PERKINS PR

ers, with prices reflecting the quality of the products.

On the other hand, the rise of a new startup called HURR Collective could be the right halfway we have all been looking for. Notable is the inclusion of mid-level fashion brands (with items that generally retail for £150 or higher) that embrace timely trends, with pieces by Ganni, Realisation Par and Reformation starting from £28 a week, but also timeless and luxurious accessories like Chanel slingbacks (which could be worth investing in if you want to land that graduate job at Conde Nast.) On the sustainability side of the business, HURR is striving to "extend the life-cycle of goods, making the most of the clothing already in existence rather than buying something new." The platform endeavours to reduce the inclination for fast fashion consumption, offering users a sustainable alternative. To support this, HURR has partnered with award-winning

eco-friendly dry cleaners, and 'green' bicycle courier services, to deliver packages across central London.

The platform is straightforward to use, and it's been described as "The Airbnb of Fashion." New users can pre-register online and then be invited to fully register, and everyone is required to verify their identity so that the website can be 100 per cent secure. The program uses real-time ID verification, geo-tagging and AI-powered fashion stylists to guarantee HURR is the most reliable and trusted way to share our wardrobes; all you have to do is choose whether you want to temporarily add a new piece to your collection for a week or two.

The 'rental revolution' is precisely what I want, for both my wardrobe, my wallet and the future of our planet. No need to start panicking about finding the right outfit for my graduation ceremony or roaming aimlessly around high street stores. No need to worry about wasting money on a dress that will be buried in my closet. I will rent a fabulous dress and return it in a week. This might be a chance for all of us to spend less on clothes, rent fantastic items and contribute to a sustainable economy.



IMAGE: TOPSHOP PR

DONALD TRUMP AND "LOUIS VUITTON" ON LUXURY

SARAH GATENBY-HOWELLS EXPLORES THE FASHION COLLABORATION NO-ONE ASKED FOR AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE COMPANY

Donald Trump attended the opening of the Louis Vuitton (which he failed to pronounce correctly) factory in Johnson County Texas (where 77.5 per cent voted for him) to help the company "Meet the ever-growing demand for Louis Vuitton products in the American market." Inside the factory you are greeted with an oil painting of the brand's founder next to one of George Washington, and there also hangs an American, French and Texan flag.

Bags produced in the Louis Vuitton Rochambeau Ranch (named after Marshal Jean-Baptiste, a general in charge of French forces in America during the American Revolution) will not be made by 'Les petites mains', the French artisans at the centre of the brand's history, but instead Texans, who need no experience to be employed, just the ability to pass drug and manual-dexterity tests to start working at an hourly pay of \$13.



THE BRAND IMAGES: (LEFT) THE WHITE HOUSE FLICKR (RIGHT) LV

pledges to create around 1 000 jobs on top of their existing 33 000 already employed in the US; a strange concept as Louis Vuitton was among the forces driving the mythology of "Made in France" as a factor in brand value. One of the industry tenets is that luxury items must be made where they were conceived for them to uphold their luxury status (and prices.) So, if a French bag is being made in America, by Americans, does that change the commercial proposition?

There are certainly positives for both brand and country: Louis Vuitton has invested \$50 million into Texas where the employment and training of 1 000 local people will minorly help unemployment, which is currently 3.7 per cent in the US (although France is over double that at 8.5 per cent.) For Louis Vuitton, it gives them protection against the risk of trade disputes between the US and the EU (Trump administration has already placed tariffs on a range of EU products) and a ten year, 75 per cent tax abatement of around \$91 900 a year. Finally, Louis Vuitton's parent company LVMH made large revenue in US sales in 2018, around \$12.5 billion, beating their biggest

rival brands such as Gucci and Dior. This came with the help of Mr Trump himself who said Louis Vuitton has "Cost me a lot of money over the years" so their choice of factory location may be very tactful.

However, the negatives of this collaboration (particularly for Louis Vuitton) are plentiful. The old-world craftsmanship (allusion) that came with having a Louis Vuitton bag "Made in France" was what they could use to justify their high prices and customers are already stating they are not willing to spend the same \$1 200 on a bag "Made in America." It's also come to light that the temporary Louis Vuitton workshop included no A.C. with workers denoting it as "literally a sweatshop."

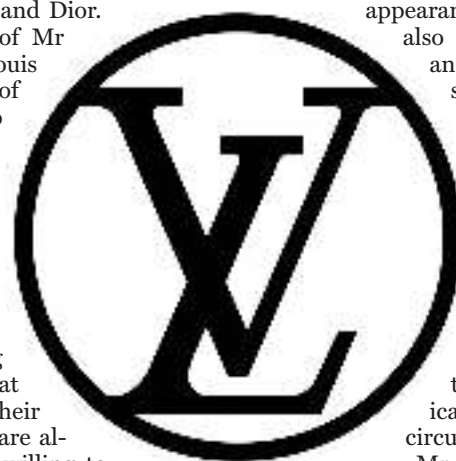
In the days since the opening, there has been a massive backlash from customers who don't appreciate the company's alliance with the president. Shannon Coulter (founder of Grab Your Wallet: a social media campaign used to boycott brands financially connected to Trump) when asked how big an impact this alliance will make, said she is sure "Louis Vuitton is about to find out just how much." In a society where consumers are increasingly choosing to invest not solely on the aesthetic

appearance of a product but also the political aligning and motif of a brand, surely LV is being ignorant?

Both Mr Arnault (CEO of LVMH) and Mr Burke (CEO of LV) have made comments saying they "Have no political role" but they're being naïve if they think they can take an apolitical approach under the circumstances.

Mr Arnault was also the first fashion figure to meet with Trump following the 2017 elections after designers Tom Ford and Derek Lam were publicly averse to dressing the first lady (but I think we were able to gage Mr Arnault's, also known as 'the wolf in the cashmere coat', personality after he publicly scolded Greta Thunberg for "Surrendering completely to catastrophism.")

These events have made it seem more relevant than ever that companies' political positioning can change their consumer climate, but will this association harm LV? And will clients still be willing to spend luxury prices on a bag "Made in America" all for the benefit of appearance? Probably.





**BIG
KIDS!**



This term campus fashion has taken the 'Back to School' memo to new levels. Stroll into lectures with a scrunchie around your wrist, hair scraped back and relive your youth with dungaree dresses and bare legs. Our school days might be behind us but we're still dressing like the big kids we truly are.

Images: Eilidh Hide and Maya Barber
Models: Hannah Waddilove and Amy Cope

ACTIVISM: POST-PUNK AS AN ACT OF RESISTANCE?

CHARLIE WILLIAMS LOOKS AT THE UK AND US POST-PUNK GROUPS REIMAGINING ACTIVISM AND CHALLENGING THE ESTABLISHMENT

As soon as post-punk arrived on the scene in late-70s Britain and America, the genre assumed the mantle of its older brother – punk-rock – in immediately and deliberately espousing pointedly progressive philosophies. Margaret Thatcher's reign and the continuation of Cold War uncertainty meant that, on both sides of the Atlantic, anti-establishment fervour was at its peak, soundtracked by post-punk pioneers Gang of Four, Dead Kennedys, and Wire. Since that dynamic period, post-punk has failed to have the same sense of political magnitude. Most of the 80s and 90s saw post-punk fall somewhat out of fashion in favour of what were per-



IMAGE: PAUL HUDSON

ceived to be more contemporary styles, such as glam-metal and brit-pop, and the early-2000s post-punk revival saw a vibrant re-interpretation of the classic sounds and atmospheres that took place 20 years prior, but perhaps without any overtly political tone.

This brief history of post-punk brings us to 2019, a point in time in which we can appreciate that, over the last five years or so, bands from both sides of the Atlantic have kick-started activism in the genre, provoking a progressive renaissance within post-punk. Due to the litany of new movements and political developments in the last five years, from the election of Donald Trump to the rise of the #MeToo movement; from the rise of the Alt-Right to turmoil over Brexit confusion, post-punk has almost had no choice but to re-embrace its fundamental values of progressivism. A number of bands have emerged in the last five years or so that exemplify such a political fervour – namely Protomartyr, IDLES, Daughters, Black Midi, and Black Country, New Road.

The most contemporary example of a rejection of current political trends can be seen in the recent work of Black Country, New Road. Their second single 'Sunglasses,' released in July 2019, offers a frenetic commentary on the perceived callousness and ignorance which have arisen since the 2016 EU referendum. With an almost nine-minute run-time, 'Sunglasses' begins with an ethereal yet driving groove, steadily allowing the band to introduce more and more elements to the piece, all steadily building to Isaac Wood's introduction. Soon, the track

erodes any pretence of serenity or restraint, as Wood's David Byrne-esque vocals frenzy almost as if he's preaching. Lines such as "I am so ignorant now in all that I have learned" and "things just aren't built like they used to be" are indicative of the misplaced nostalgia of some Brexit voters who would depict Britain's position in world politics as a far more influential player than it may be in reality. The saxophone breakdown that takes place surrounding these sentiments is reminiscent of Swans' no-wave work and serves as an apt soundtrack to modern Britain's turmoil.

IDLES' more combative post-punk sound focuses on the many inequalities that are prevalent in contemporary Britain. 'Well Done' in particular parodies classism in British society and derides the notion that British society is remotely egalitarian with insistent verses that juxtapose the establishment's attempts to make it seem as if all British people share a common goal. To IDLES, the reality is that, when the veil is removed, statements like "let them eat cake" and "get on your bike" seem far more representative of austerity Britain.

IDLES have also not been shy to lend their support to the #MeToo movement, which has been prevalent in post-punk on both sides of the Atlantic. 'Mother' from 2017's breakthrough record *Brutalism* serves both as recognition of the often-underappre-

ciated role of mothers, and also a critique of men's lack of empathy when it comes to understanding sexual assault. Towards the end of the track, Joe Talbot laments the miseducation of British men, suggesting that the culture of misogyny and sexual abuse is a result of unconscious societal indoctrination in schools and homes.

Detroit band Protomartyr have been instrumental in portraying similar issues, notably the impact of male privilege on their perceived hegemony over women. 2015's 'The Devil In His Youth' tells the tale of a young man's inflated sense of self, and the way in which this affected his opinions on issues outside of his very narrow frame of reference, such as race and gender. Joe Casey's delivery of the line "I'll corrupt them 'til they think the way I do" provides the listener with a valuable insight into the malicious psyche of the privileged in MAGA America. 'Male Plague' also critiques the underlying indoctrination of modern America, proclaiming that "Every boy wants to be a cop," hinting at the internalised authoritarianism which has plagued the American police system for generations. Another phrase from the chorus, "Old days misremembering" echoes the sentiments of the aforementioned 'Sunglasses' with both songs evoking the idea that there are vast swathes of both British and American society who reflect on their past with naive nostalgia.

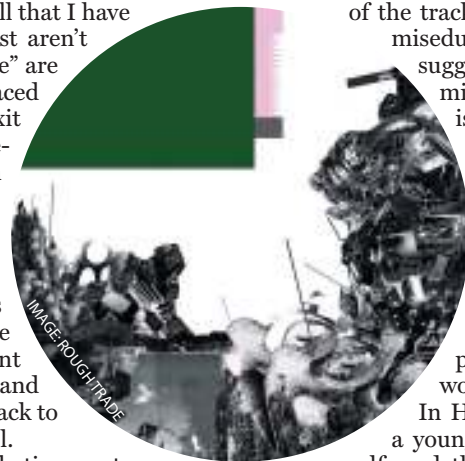


IMAGE: ROUGH TRADE

"A NICE TOWN": THE SCENE BEHIND THE HERITAGE CITY

SAM CAMPBELL LOOKS AT A FEW OF THE MOST EXCITING LOCAL BANDS IN A BRIEF PRIMER TO YORK'S BURGEONING MUSIC SCENE

Last edition, I wrote about York's rich and surprising musical history. This time, I want to turn the focus inwards; it's all well and good reciting cultural trivia from the archives, but there is plenty to experience here and now. Contrary to popular belief, York is no cultural backwater: it is full of strange and brilliant artists who need to be listened to. Besides the Minster, the cobbled streets and the Roman fortresses, York is a city that loves to get weird; full of bold and interesting musicians who at every turn put paid to the idea that this is a place merely for tourists, pensioners, stag-parties and race day. Here I hope to give a whistle-stop tour of what lies beneath the surface of York.

Bull's latest single 'Love Goo' is a brilliant place to start if you want to tap into what York has to offer. After forming in 2011, Bull spent years honing their sound before the 2018 release of 'Perfect Teeth' – a woozy, lo-fi, scuzzy, jazz-inflected single recorded in Amsterdam. Since an impromptu visit to Germany, Bull have spent time touring Europe and even playing at the legendary SXSW festival in the US. You're also likely to catch members of the band busking around the streets of York throughout the year – the bass guitarist also plays the upright for the excellent covers band Hyde Family Jam, who busk in York regularly with a repertoire spanning from Bob Dylan to Talking Heads.

This year, two more tracks of Bull's, 'Eugene' and 'Love Goo,' followed 'Perfect Teeth.'

In each of these singles they combine an idiosyncratic blend of tones and styles; everywhere there is double tracking of organs, chorus-drenched guitars, string-tweaking, quirky backing vocals and sax solos. They match this with an equally charming lyrical style; full of an infectious, chaotically comic turn, it's hard not to giggle in joy at songs like 'Love Goo.'

One brilliant aspect of York's music scene is its open mic nights. From The Hop to The Golden Ball, these are a great entry-point to York's underground scene. You'll find buskers and members of the city's finest bands playing acoustic sets including covers and original tunes in equal measure. The Golden Ball open mic, as mentioned above, is a great place to start. There you'll find Bonneville (a brilliantly talented local singer and songwriter who hosts the evening) along with members of Perspex and

The Black Lagoons.

A current student University of York student Trueman. Both a stellar performer and songwriter, Trueman is a subversive artist who matches Orbison-esque doo-wop and dance moves with a keenly literary sense of lyricism. All of this in a live setting with a charismatic sense of rapport between performer and audience, complemented by ad-libbed lines about pensioners on cruise ships and exquisitely prepared salmon dishes.

Perspex are a York post-punk band, reminiscent of Parquet Courts but with a cutting, cynical and – like Bull – comic bite to their lyrics. Tracks like 'Coffeshop Rock' and the amazingly named 'Jesus on the Valium' demonstrate this perfectly. 'Coffeshop Rock' pokes fun at the "loop pedals" and

"acoustic guitars" of indie soft boys who lurk in artisan coffee-houses, waiting for someone to brag: 'I'm a musician, you know.' This is just one example of Perspex's cutting, sardonic lyrical tone, addressing popular culture's irritating clichés.

Another band mentioned, The Black Lagoons, offer a darkened, snarling brand of psychobilly. Their 2018 EP *Illusions, Incoherence and Fever* features bluesy, country-influenced distorted tracks like 'Night of the Long Knives' and 'Walk' – which bear some musical resemblance and a biting edge similar to the early output of Fat White Family.

Their Facebook page describes the sound as "heavy psychedelic sludge to spooked garage surf," which is always a winner in my book. This is a band which shows a more shadowy aspect of the sounds coming out of the scene, but still there is a sense of carefree independence and commitment to simply making art which is interesting to those making it and those willing to listen – something which seems to be consistent with all of the artists mentioned in this article.

There is so much that York has to offer musically – more than I could possibly squeeze into this article. This is an artistically diverse city brimming with talent and energy from a unique group of musicians. A lot could be gained if a stronger relationship was built between the student community and the music scene.

This is much more than just 'a nice town'.



IMAGE: BULL

'A BRIEF INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE'

FENELLA JOHNSON LOOKS AT HOW ENVIRONMENTALISM IS MAKING ITS WAY INTO POP MUSIC

In 2019, it became harder to put our heads in the sand when it came to the threat of climate change. The mundanity of constant scientific warnings gained new potency in the face of images such as those of the Amazon forest on fire, and a new cultural relevancy in the actions of youth climate strikes and Extinction Rebellion. No wonder then, that pop music has begun to engage with the subject. While it might be naïve to think songs about climate change will always be popular (Paul McCartney's 'Love to the Earth,' anyone?), figures on the fringes of the mainstream are beginning to grapple with the realities of the environmental crisis.

In her best album yet, the fantastically titled *Norman F***ing Rockwell!* Lana Del Rey deals with the subject with her customary languid eloquence. The artist of the title painted images that captured a mythologised vision of 1950s America: Lana destroys them, setting his depictions of American opulence on fire. Malibu is almost hit by a "fireball," LA is in "flames," Topanga is getting "too hot." It's not that she

moves away from her long-held fixation with the agony and ecstasy of ro-

mance, but larger worries dwarf the small, intricate dramas of those relationships. Infused with a contemporary apocalyptic anxiety, the album sees Lana, a woman whose image is based on nostalgia for an old lie, force us to get real. Joni Mitchell once famously warned that they "Paved paradise, put up a parking lot": Lana's long-held dream of an all-American paradise is curdling into a nightmare.

It's interesting to watch her grapple musically with these long-explored themes of Americana in light of the climate emergency, even if she's not necessarily doing anything new. Pop music has and always will be in dialogue with the political and social contexts from which it emerges. Her apocalyptic worry that "We're facing the greatest loss of them all" is an echo of worries she shares with her musical predecessors. It's roughly 50 years since the Beach Boys confessed that they "Just weren't made for these times" and 30 since R.E.M. feared that it was "the end of the world as we know it." Expressions of fear in contemporary pop music about the end of the world, and our ambivalence to it, are partially a re-voicing of a muffled worry, a self-conscious reference to a shared cultural history, even as they remain deeply modern.

It's not that any climate change-focused songs are troubling the charts right now. But, while it's unlikely you're ever going to hear an Ed Sheeran slow ballad about dying polar bears, it probably came as a shock to ravers in Gateshead that Fat Boy Slim sampled Greta Thunberg in a remix of eternal club banger 'Right Here, Right Now.' The 1975 similarly recruited her for the first track of their upcoming album, having her call for "Civil disobedience" over minimal orchestral accompaniment. Most curiously of all, Grimes (the experimental pop musician dating Elon Musk) told *Wall Street Journal* that her next release would be a concept album where she plays a villainous princess who embodies the concept of climate change called Miss Anthropocene. Or as she puts it: "I want to make climate change fun" - an odd proclama-

tion from someone angling to be a pop star, by anyone's standards. Yet, it makes sense as an outlandish statement of ambition from a

woman who became culturally relevant for dating a billionaire who finds weed jokes really, really funny and not her three critically acclaimed self-produced albums. Having previously spent a decade being loved by men who really like craft beers and pitchfork devotees before being thrust into fame, these type of comments about her musical goals aim to turn a new spotlight onto her work. While her quest for climate change banter can be framed in the light of this wish, her exploration of a - albeit deranged - vision of a future dystopia promises to be provoking and unsettling.

However, it must presumably be easy to play with images of climate apocalypse when your ticket is already booked on Musk's rocket to Mars. There can often be a certain disingenuousness to celebrities whose musical efforts seek to bring awareness to climate change. Songs that briefly mention the subject can be seen as opportunistic, an attempt to appease a fan base that skews left in its politics while basking in approving headlines, all while they continue to board their private jets and to not bother to press venues on issues such as removing plastic cups. In short, they can be viewed as lip-service that allows musicians to cash in on the great cultural fears of our age. It is economically sensible after all - in the ever-changing, contrary landscape of streaming, not everyone can afford to take such an alienating position as Kanye actually-Trump-is-pretty-good West. A bland, brief nod to climate change activism is a small price to pay if it allows you to continue to rake in the cash.

In many ways, these musicians are just doing what musicians have always done: attempting to articulate and express the emotional worries of their audience. Yes, it may make them more money or revive their relevancy, but it does not remove the urgency of their subject or its power. As Lana put it, "We're facing the greatest loss of them all."



IMAGE: POLYDOR

REVIEW

THERE EXISTED AN ADDICTION TO BLOOD CLIPPING

ALEX THOMPSON
2.5/5

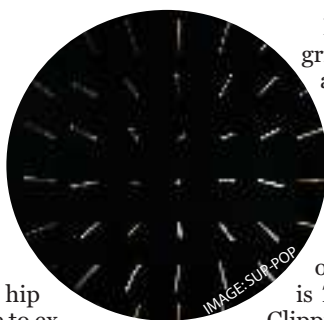


IMAGE: SUB POP

Experimental and abstract hip hop trio Clipping continue to experiment with their latest album, playing with horror themes in a hip hop framework. The album itself pulls its name from an obscure 70s horror film soundtrack and is loaded with gruesome lyrics, horror samples and eerie soundscapes. It's a solid concept for an album, horrorcore hip hop full of energy and violence, grit and gore.

Horrorcore's greatest asset is grit and terror; lyrics so brutal and sinister it's like watching a proper horror movie. The album should thrill and disgust in equal measure.

None of this horror DNA makes its way onto the record; it's almost an awkward parody of the genre - if ThreeSixMafia is *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Clipping is *Scary Movie*.

It's a messy patching of genres that creates a Frankenstein-esque beast of a project, lacking tonal and thematic consistency. There's the cringey refrains of 'Club Down' that sounds like they were ripped from Pitbull's lyric book, weird interludes that are shit even by the B movie standards the group aim for and walls of noise that aren't edgy or un-

settling like Swans or Daughters - they're just annoying like broken speakers.

The storytelling treads an awkward line between bloodthirsty and cringy, a clunky series of blood-soaked narratives that are incredibly graphic but never seem to go anywhere. This wouldn't be a problem if the vocal delivery and performance weren't so dull - speed takes priority over rhythm and charisma takes a back seat entirely as the trio monotonously spit violent verses. At times it's like watching a high-end blender macerate vegetables in an incredibly precise yet mechanical manner.

There are glimmers of hope with a few brilliant bars and some bizarre and compelling instrumentals but for the most part, Clipping fail to deliver on a great premise. While I can admire the idea and certain moments on the album, the execution falls unfortunately short.

THE MUSIC TEAM'S

NEW MUSIC PLAYLIST

This playlist gives you everything you need from the latest releases:

1. DIIV - Blankenship *Krautrocky single taken from the band's new album Deceiver*
2. Perspex - Coffeeshop Rock *Satirical post-punk*
3. Kim Gordon - Air BnB *Sonic Youth legend kills it with another new track*
4. KOKOKO! - Kitoko *Catchy tune from Congolese collective*
5. Cowgirl - All Come True *Raucous local rockers*
6. Thom Yorke - Traffic *Mr. Radiohead gets techy*
7. Kate Tempest - People's Faces *The South London poet addresses the state we're in*
8. Caskets (Edit) - Nehruviandoom *Scorcher combination of MF DOOM and Bishop Nehru from the reissue of their modern classic collaboration*
9. Floating Points - Last Bloom *Experimental dance from the powerhouse London producer*
10. Bull - Eugene *Slacker rock from local heroes*
11. Portico Quartet - Offset *Spacy, thoughtful jazz*
12. Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds - Galleon Ship *Mammoth in dynamic and in heart*



SHIT MUSICIANS SAY.

"I LOVE MYSELF. WILD STATEMENT BUT I DIG ME LOWKEY"
- SZA ON TWITTER

WHY DO WE WATCH OLD FAVOURITES ON REPEAT?

MALU ROCHA EXPLAINS HOW GOING BACK TO OLD FILMS AND TV SHOWS CAN BE A REWARDING EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Having *The Office* on repeat as background noise, celebrating Christmas year after year by watching *Elf* with your family and re-watching the entire ten seasons of *Friends* over summer (oops) are surprisingly not uncommon feats. Some people find real comfort in watching the same films and TV shows multiple times and researchers have theorised that it can even become a positive nostalgic experience.

Of course, some things will never change. People are always going to queue around the block for the release of the newest *Star Wars* film, and kids are always going to rush to theatres to be the first ones to see Disney's next big classic. By all means, do take part in these events and in fact I actively encourage you to do so because this is what keeps the heart of cinema alive.

But I'm not here to talk about that; I'm here to talk about why *Back to the Future* and *Die Hard* are consistently on top of 'Most Rewatchable Films' lists, and why such lists even exist. Online streaming services have become a relentless super-machine of content production, exposing us to a limitless array of entertainment just a click of a button away.

I'd like to think I'm not the only one that feels somewhat overwhelmed when I open Netflix to find a new film or TV show to watch because I feel obliged to take advantage and consume it all at once. The seemingly endless pile of new titles added everyday combined with the new(ish) feature where trailers automatically play when you hover over them, have made browsing Netflix a chore in itself. Unless you're an extremely dedicated person and don't use the 'My List' feature as a black hole for films you could one day potentially venture to watch, odds are you probably waste at least a good 20 minutes deciding what to spend the next two hours of your life on.

The problem is that there are simply too many options to choose from. It's somewhat counterintuitive to think that the more options we have, the more likely we are to be indecisive, but that is exactly what a study conducted by Professor Sheena Iyengar at Columbia University proves. It concludes that having too many alternatives often leads to us feeling dissatisfied once we actually do choose something because we're inclined to think that the other option (another film/TV show in this case) would have been better. To put it simply, making decisions can be hard. After browsing unsuccessfully for a while, some people are likely to settle for a rerun. Why? Because an old favourite will never disappoint.

Re-watching old films can become a symbolic ritual over the years. Some people

look forward to Christmas not because of the celebrations or the gatherings, but because they know the BBC will show re-runs of *Home Alone*, and hopefully I'm not the first to say that there is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

Watching *Love Actually* every Christmas Eve has become so familiar to some people, to the point that it becomes a sort of 'comfort food' for the eyes. A certain sense of power comes with knowing what's going to happen next.

When John McClane is on that rooftop about to jump with a fire hose wrapped around his waist, we all cheer him on because we know for a fact that he's going to make it. And when he (drum-roll) does make it, we feel accomplished and share his success.

When Ross, Chandler and Rachel are carrying that humongous sofa up the back stairs we're anxiously waiting for Ross's burst of impatience. When he finally does yell the iconic "Pivot!" phrase, it comes as an immense fulfilment. Because we know exactly what's going to happen, we get this weird conjuring sensation where

it feels like the characters are taking our commands. Author of *On Repeat*, Elizabeth Margulis, calls this a "conjuring power", and says that although it's all in our heads, the satisfaction from it is enormous and it can only exist because of repetitive viewing. On the other hand, one might argue that the reason we enjoy seeing the same film or TV show over and over again is because repetition breeds affection. We tend to enjoy something more if we've been previously exposed to it. Scientists call this the 'mere exposure effect', which explains that familiar things are easier to process. Therefore, if by any chance you've seen *The Parent Trap* over 15 times (like me) it'll sound like music to your ears. But probably the main reason as to why

many people love re-watching their favourite films and TV shows is because it becomes a nostalgic experience that makes them feel all warm and fuzzy inside. And surprisingly I don't just mean figuratively.

A recent study found that nostalgia can often manifest itself as warm, physical comfort. Back in the 17th century when the Greeks coined the term nostalgia (originating from *nostos* meaning homecoming and *algos* meaning pain) it was considered a dubious disease. It has since become a fuelling power for pop culture and the entertainment industry. An easy way to travel back in time is to watch your favourite childhood film. The sentimental memories associated with watching that film over the years when you were growing up will come flooding back and fill you with fondness.

This autobiographical nostalgia that comes with re-watching things you once loved (and still love) is likely to provoke a very calming and soothing effect on you. Besides, you're likely to feel proud of yourself for choosing that one movie ten years ago that was worth re-watching. This satisfaction, combined with the positive effects of nostalgia becomes an irresistible combination for your brain even though some people might say you're wasting your time watching the same film you just saw last week.

But is this a good enough reason to keep coming back to familiar characters and stories all the time? We know the good guy will always win, that the monster will be defeated and that the cute couple will kiss after the big fight; we already know how these films end.

So why do we invest so much time in them even though the element of surprise is gone? Although you're likely to pick up a few details you missed here and there, this lack of surprise is precisely what translates to comfort for some people. Knowing

the ending beforehand guarantees that you'll have the emotional payoff that you're expecting. This means that watching the same thing multiple times gives you a calming effect that researchers Cristel Russell and Sidney Levy have termed as 'experiential control', which provides you with 'emotional regulation.' Because you've seen that film or TV show before, you already know how the story is going to end, which means that you already know how you'll feel when it ends. Whether it's happiness, relief, sadness or anger,

this emotional payoff is something that only old favourites can guarantee. This means that re-watching something is basically a simple way of controlling your emotions. If your emotions are not attuned this experience can be very therapeutic.

Psychologist Pamela Rutledge confirms this as she explains that watching the same entertainment piece multiple times reaffirms that there is order in the world and that it "can create a sense of safety and comfort on a primal level." No wonder children can easily spend hours watching the same cartoon on loop; they are subject to the same emotional satisfactions that we adults are, and so much more.

A while ago, Netflix revealed that a mysterious UK user had watched the same film an eye-popping 357 times over the course of a year. As it turns out, the user was none other than a one-year-old baby obsessed with *The Bee Movie*, whose mother claimed that he was more attentive and relaxed whenever the film was playing. The reason why children want to watch the same film for the billionth time is the same reason why they ask for that one bedtime story every night; they long for routine and guidelines. Children learn through repetition and their brains consolidate information better when they're exposed to it several times. In this way, their brains start forming connections between the patterns that they are exposed to on repeat, giving them more and more meaning through time, which helps them improve their language and better understand the world around them. Therefore, for children (and for adults too) watching a film over and over again is so much more than a simple pastime; it gives us a sense of security and well-being.

Whenever you feel that intense urge to watch the entire *Harry Potter* series over the course of a weekend and are looking for some validation, rest assured that you're not wasting your time; re-watching films and TV shows can be an easy form of self-care. So next time you catch yourself unsuccessfully browsing for hours, remember that it's okay to settle for an old favourite; you'll thank yourself later.



OUR LOVE FOR THE ANTI-HEROES DESPITE THEIR EVILS

FRANCESCA IUCCI DISCUSSES WHY MICHAEL MYERS, FREDDY KRUEGER, AND JASON WOODHEES REMAIN FAN FAVOURITES

Halloween as a festival gives us the possibility to bring back to life some of the most iconic characters from the horror sphere. From Michael Myers, to Freddy Krueger, to Jason Voorhees, these anti-heroes still manage to be relevant to the public regardless of the fact that their first on screen appearances go back to the 70s and 80s. These specific three characters are considered iconic within their genre, and they are its representative with their numerous pictures.

In fact, what first of all associates Michael Myers, Freddy Krueger and Jason Voorhees is the extraordinary continuity within their respective sagas. The *Halloween* franchise (1978) is composed by 11 different instalments, within Michael Myers appearing in all of them except for *Halloween III: Season of the Witch*. Similarly, the *Nightmare on Elm Street* franchise (1984), which created the character of Freddy Krueger, includes nine films, while the *Friday the 13th* franchise (1980), responsible for the character of Jason Voorhees, consists of 12 films. In spite of the fact that these characters were created so long ago, it is still common today to see people dressed up as them for Halloween. Simply put, they have all somehow become integral to popular culture. But, why is that? What is it that, as a society, we find particularly interesting and fascinating about these anti-heroes? What leads us to maintain a sense of interest towards them regardless of their spiteful acts?

The history behind the creation of each character is more intricate than we may think. Being part of big franchises has meant that the portrayal of these characters has partly changed in each film they've been in. For example, Jason's hockey mask, now a standard Halloween costume, only appears in *Friday the 13th Part III*, as he wore a paper bag over his head in *Part II*. When making the decision to give Jason a mask, none of the creators involved knew what a trademark of the character it would become.

Similarly, the appearance of Michael Myers in the *Halloween* films has progressively been modified, applying changes to the mask itself, depicting Michael at times bald and at others with hair, and changing the physique of the character to make him appear "bigger". Less transformations have been implemented into Freddy Krueger's depiction, except for a gradual

highlighting of the burn marks on his face, as well as minimal modernisation of his clothes. Regardless of this, it is safe to say that the collective picture we have of each character refers to a specific point in their cinematic history. This can lead us to presume that an important element that brings people to be fascinated with these anti-heroes is precisely the use of masks or obfuscations to conceal their identity.

The sense of mystery given to the characters leads the viewer to wonder who is actually 'hiding' behind that mask or, in Freddy's case, behind the burns on his face. The magnitude of the franchises has naturally meant that multiple actors have depicted these characters on screen; in Jason's case, the lack of emotionality of the character and the need for great physicality, led to the casting of stuntmen for the role on various occasions.

The mystery behind Jason's identity, was then heightened by the lack of dialogue and verbal communication of the adult character: observing a character for so long and barely hearing him talk highlights public curiosity in being denied a clear identity of Jason. When it comes to Michael Myers, the enigma behind the

character was an intentional decision by its creator, John Carpenter, who felt that "keeping the audience guessing was better than explaining away the character". The physical changes applied to Michael's appearance in each film have had the objective of showing him not as a person, but as a motif.

Michael is a representation of evil and it is left to the audience to assume whether he is actually human or supernatural, counting his numerous 'deaths' and survivals to each. Michael's mystery doesn't just present itself in his physicality as it is also manifested through his lack of speech. In fact, Michael doesn't speak during the films, and the first time we get to hear his voice is in the 2007 reboot. This was another calculated choice: by having the character not speak, Michael is further mystified and leaves the audience guessing again. The case of Freddy Krueger's representation partly differs from that of Jason Voorhees and Michael Myers as the iconic role maintained one principal actor throughout the original series (Robert Englund.)

Freddy's striped sweater was picked by Wes Craven after reading that the human eye finds it more difficult to recognize particular shades of red and green when put side by side: he was looking to give the audience an unsettling depiction from the beginning. Freddy's peculiarity stands in the fact that, within the dream world, he possesses complete control and force: he is unbeatable. But, whenever the character is 'pulled' into the real world, he gains normal vulnerabilities. It is perhaps this

division, together with the character's burnt face, that make Freddy 'relatable' to the public. The fact that Freddy ends up 'losing' power within the real dimension opens up a discourse of vulnerability that could certainly appeal to the empathy of an audience. Looking at the initial utilization of masks, 'hiding' oneself renders the anti-hero more relatable to the public and it allows a minimal judgement from the audience.

The presentation of the characters' backstories and their personal reasons for killing highlight this fascination even further. In the case of Freddy Krueger, his appearance in people's dreams and the ability to kill them in that context speaks to an imbedded identification with any sort of subconscious fear, but his backstory opens up more questions. Freddy's arrival into this world is imprinted with suffering and, afterwards, he gets adopted by an abusive alcoholic who teaches him to hurt animals and inflict pain on himself. Although the contextual element doesn't justify Freddy's homicidal instincts, it opens up a conversation about the character that renders him more human, and makes the audience understand why he has become such a menace.

Instead, Jason's behaviour is built upon the object of revenge: he spent his childhood in the woods and witnessed the murder of his mother. The character's revenge is based on any individual returning to the site of the murder; there is a sense of isolation and rejection in him (partly because of his deformation), that gives room for the audience to see themselves within him, especially teenagers. Although the case of Michael Myers is more complex, the anti-hero still leaves room for empathy. Michael's homicidal instincts show themselves during his childhood, after which he spends 15 years isolated in a mental facility.

The cinematic universe of *Halloween* does all it can to maintain a vision of Michael as an evil force of nature, but glimpses of humanity still appear in him, making him resonate with the creature from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in the isolated and unknown experience of life. In fact, in *Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers*, the character allows Jamie to see his face (which the audience doesn't see). Jamie tells him: "You look just like me," and we can see a tear rolling down Michael's isolated eye. Although this only leads Michael to act more violently, his inability to control his emotions partly brings the audience closer to him. The fascination with characters in horror films is embedded both within the sense of mystery they bring to the screen, and within the importance of glimpsing the anti-heroes' pasts and motives. These elements lead the public to want to understand these characters and magnifies the interest towards them.



IMAGES: MIRACLE FILMS, WARNER HOME VIDEO, PALACE PICTURES

QUICKFIRE REVIEW: CIARAN BRASS ON THE IRISHMAN

One trademark of Scorsese's which *The Irishman* has in spades is his fascination with and unique ability to submerge the audience in different subcultures. The audience can observe the intersection between organised

crime and the unions through Frank Sheeran and Jimmy Hoffa, who sit at the nexus of the two structures. The close relationship between the two organisations is echoed in the shared language - Sheeran is referred to as a "brother" both by members of the criminal element and the Teamsters organisation. Additionally, after his first phone conversation with Hoffa, Sheeran tells Russ that he feels as if he just spoke to General Patton. One ex-

ceptional scene has Russ gifting Frank with a ring, one of only three in the world, the other two being owned by Russ and Angelo.

Indeed, Scorsese's films are occasionally criticised for being morally careless, or glamorizing a dangerous and harmful lifestyle, particularly concerning films such as *Goodfellas* and *The Wolf of Wall Street*. While this criticism seems to lack bite to those with the attention span to observe the characters re-

ceiving their comeuppance onscreen at the end of the respective films, the character of Peggy Sheeran (Anna Paquin) functions as the film's overt moral compass. Peggy senses something is wrong with Russ, and limits her contact with him even as he dotes on her and plies her with gifts. In contrast, she idolises Hoffa to the point of giving presentations on him at school and is proud of her father's association with him and the Teamsters.

'WE DON'T MAKE MISTAKES, JUST HAPPY ACCIDENTS'

MEGAN ROBERTS AND HER HOUSEMATES FOLLOW LEGENDARY BOB ROSS' TUTORIALS IN MEMORY OF HIS LIFE, WORK AND 'HAPPY TREES'

“Certainly glad to see you today, it's a fantastic day here, and I hope it is wherever you're at". This is how our painting session begins. A few students assembled in the kitchen, crowded around a laptop, precariously balanced on the side of a settee. Our teacher, Bob, was reeling off colours like Phthalo blue, dark sienna and Van Dyke brown, while we dusted off some unused poster paints, all primary colours, exhumed from some long-discarded Christmas present. Our assembly had managed to beg, borrow and steal a couple of old paint brushes, and household plates became a necessary substitute for the artist's palette.

This was far from any ordinary Monday

“ This is the magic of Bob Ross. There are no smoke and mirrors

evening, and we were far from intrepid artists. Nonetheless we had decided to raise our paintbrushes in tribute to the beloved artist and meme icon that is Bob Ross, born on this day, 29 October 1942. For those who don't know, Bob, he hosted the wildly successful television program, *The Joy of Painting*. Characterised by Bob's smooth all-American voice, his iconic perm, and his idyllic north-western landscape paintings, complete with placid lakes, snow-capped mountains, and (of course) Bob's "happy little trees" *The Joy of Painting* beguilingly draws the viewer into a surprising reinterpretation of the 16th century painting technique *Alla Prima* (more fittingly "first attempt") where the wet on wet technique allegedly gets you to finished work in under half an hour...

Over the three decades since *The Joy of Painting* was first aired in 1983 and sadly 24 years since his untimely death at the age of 52, this unassuming painter, with his Oxford shirt and worn blue jeans still has an undeniable pull on the viewer, whether amateur painter or just an avid seeker of ASMR. With this in mind, I assembled a group of

stressed out undergrads, desperately in need of some art therapy, to discover just what makes a first wet on wet attempt with Bob Ross such a pull for over a million subscribers to his Netflix shows today.

It begins badly. Having perused the archives of Bob's painting classes beforehand, I assumed the task at hand would be easy. Photos of amateur painters beaming next to their picture-perfect copies of Bob's flawless landscapes filled me with an enormous sense of misguided confidence. The reality was very different. We discover that poster paints are far too thick and stiff to replicate Ross's light, delicate Alaska skies. The subtle hint of colour Bob adds to brighten the water or dimension to the clouds give way to monstrous overstatements in our paintings; mountains slavered with pinkish snow sludge. Giant yellow waves rearing out of unsettled seas.

Where Bob is producing an arsenal of fan brushes and palette knives to sculpt craggy rock faces and delicately edge in fir trees, we find ourselves "innovating". One amongst us drags butter knives across his page, in the hope of recreating Bob's seamless illusion of mist among the hills. What is left is more akin to Old London Town pea-

below. Are they excellent? No, not by any means. But as our paintings coalesce, something comes over the faces of our little party. A feeling of something accomplished washes over our little band of would be artists.

This is the magic of Bob Ross. There are no smoke and mirrors with his work. Just a man and his canvas, painting away. His infinitely calm demeanour makes him the ideal teacher, but there is more. Bob fosters a one on one relationship with the viewer that draws you in.

You are the protégé at the masters easel, there to do your best work for him. Better still, there are no failures in his class, just "happy accidents". And as you work alongside him, you find yourself painting your own little world. This world is as much a part of the process of painting as the finished result. The mindful repetitions of the brush against the canvas sees you retreat further and further into your creation. The act of escapism is as profound as the images you can't quite believe you are left with, (even with the pink

life; you gotta have a little sadness once in a while so you know when the good times come. I'm waiting on the good times now". And as he says this, he's looking up from where he's



“ We get the best of Bob and the best the best of ourselves too



Souper; unduly thick, and mushy pea green, obscuring everything that was painted underneath (oops.) Another rogue abandons Ross' formula completely, producing luridly coloured squares, surrounded by solid black lines, perhaps reminiscent of Mondrian, with just a touch of Bob's mountain for dramatic effect.

By this point we are all feeling fairly defeated. Not least because Bob keeps insisting: "See I told you all this was going to be a very simple little painting."

We stop and start the video endlessly, replaying certain parts, adding dashes of blue, and green sporadically in the hope that our paintings will begin to resemble something, ANYTHING. I might mention that our own resident Mondrian is exempt from the groupthink, coolly adding horizontal lines to his creation, telling us proudly, that they represent the night encroaching on the day. Sure thing daddyo.

And then something happens. Mountains begin to emerge against an azure skyline. The murky, indistinct foreground gains focus. A strong impression of a forest takes shape. And not only trees but the reflections of trees, rippling almost palpably in the water

snow and the yellow waves).

Bob is an icon because his Television personality and everything that emanates from it is simple.

The relationship he fosters with the viewer does not adhere to the rules and complexities of the real world. We don't see Bob on a bad day. In fact, we don't really know Robert Norman Ross at all. We were not privy to his 20 years of military service. We never saw the strained relationships left in the wake of his hectic filming schedule, nor the intense preparation that went into every painting, episode and manual he created. But every day, for half an hour at a time, we get the best of Bob. And maybe the best of ourselves too. The dynamic is easy, nothing is at stake, and every stroke of paint feels like a step towards accomplishment.

At times, Bob is strangely profound. Amongst all the raucous laughter, frantic painting, and quite exceptional wine drinking, one comment from Bob made us all rather reflective: "You absolutely have to have dark in order to have light." He tells us, painting away all the while, brushing in a little stretch of land, across the lake. "It's like in

mixing paint, and suddenly Bob Ross feels more present in the room than ever.

At the end of the night we decided to sign our paintings. A couple of members, spontaneously sign them Bob Ross, or just ROSS, in prominent red letters. And I suppose that got me thinking. Whatever you take away from *The Joy of Painting*, whether it be his stoic wisdom or his iconic hairdo, Bob has signed himself into a little corner of our lives.

"So from all of us here I'd like to wish you happy painting, and God bless my friend."



IS SPLIT SCREEN MULTIPLAYER ON ITS RETURN?

JAKE PHILLIPS DISCUSSES THE LONG AWAITED RESURGENCE OF LOCAL CO-OP GAMING

For better or for worse, it appears that the height of the social, local multiplayer has given way to a much more solitary gaming experience. For generations, video games brought social groups together. They were the ultimate way to build connections and friendships while allowing our teamwork and communication skills to blossom.

However, long gone are the days where I would return home from a long day of school, three friends in tow, and head straight to the living room to load up the latest *Halo* while sat on my mother's dingy green sofa. I remember being huddled around the TV, straining my eyes to focus on a portion of the screen about the size of a piece of bread and, honestly, they are the best gaming memories I have.

Where have the countless late nights spent on *Ratchet and Clank* with my younger brother disappeared to? That's not to say that local multiplayer has disappeared entirely, and many of the latest titles still support it, but it has certainly taken a backseat with the rise of online gaming.

Local multiplayer brought people together, whether that be siblings or best friends. Despite all the fights, arguments, ceaseless mocking and

never-ending claims of cheating, it was all part of the friendship bonding charm.

I absolutely love online multiplayer. It's opened up endless possibilities for gaming that 10 year-old me could never have even comprehended. If you had told me that my friends didn't need to go home for dinner by six o'clock and would be able to stay up all night playing video games with me, I most definitely would have been in awe. Maybe I'm blinded by nostalgia, but the freedom that online gaming has brought to the industry has, in my opinion, caused casual gaming to lose that special spark. The magic appears to have been lost somewhere in translation.

Now, I think with the rise of E Sports, we can all agree that competitive multiplayer games (*Call of Duty*, *League of Legends*), are doing just fine.

They benefit from the online revolution and have embraced it with open arms. Thankfully, most of these games also support local multiplayer despite the decline in interest. Could it be argued that the lack of interest is due to a shift in social trends, or is it simply because the game studios are not investing enough into making it worthy of our time?

But what's happening to the casual multiplayer games? Unfortunately, the market of multiplayer gaming seems to have taken an overwhelmingly serious turn - casual local multiplayer is slowly being omitted from

the feature list one title at a time. Many iconic games are no longer supported with local multiplayer, and are instead placing all their focus into the online platform or solo adventure. In the latest entry to the *Halo* franchise, *Halo 5*, the controversial decision was made to completely omit local multiplayer despite it being one of the franchise's largest selling points. Many players were outraged, and like myself, begged for a post-launch addition. Developer 343 noted this backlash and has stated that all future *Halo* games will include local multiplayer. This proves a hunger for the casual multiplayer genre, and it shows that local co-op still has a place in many of our hearts.

In a world that is becoming more disconnected, video games are often blamed. This is something that we are able to change. So, what can you do to help the revival of Couch Co-op?

You need to support the development studios investing their time and money into making these games for you. Nintendo has always been a huge player in the local co-op scene, and can be argued to be almost single handedly keeping the genre alive. From the Wii to the Switch, they have offered support for local multiplayer in a huge portion of their proprietary titles, while also providing the perfect platform for indie titles to flourish.

Instead of complaining about the lack of support from franchises, let's focus on the rare gems that still provide the support and support them the best way we can. So, who's up for a game of *Mario Kart* or *Super Smash Bros*?

I'm calling dibs on Yoshi!



IMAGES: RAINMAKER ENTERTAINMENT

GOOGLE STADIA: DOOMED FOR FAILURE?

JOSEPH HIGGINS QUESTIONS WHETHER GOOGLE CAN SUCCEED WHERE SO MANY HAVE FAILED

Google's new foray into the gaming world 'Google Stadia' has just sold out of its pre-order 'founder editions' in all of the 14 countries it was originally available for purchase. It's quite an impressive feat for such an untested and unknown platform to even be able to sell itself out before it is released, but what does that actually mean for the world of gaming? Does Stadia have legs or is it doomed to fail like so many alternative platforms before?

Google Stadia isn't a conventional gaming platform. It's essentially a streaming service that you subscribe to in order to stream your games instead of the conventional method of purchasing games where you pay to keep your games on your own storage. That's not to say this technology is entirely new. Other platforms like Steam have toyed with cloud based storage for game files and specifically saved games, so that games can be played on multiple platforms. And Microsoft's Game Pass is also a subscription based service for games. All Stadia appears to offer is a combination of these technologies with bits left out. Its only real unique selling point is that, through a partnership with YouTube, players using Google Stadia will be able to load the save-state of a streamer and play using their progress.

Being able to use a streamer's data is an innovative idea, but it does defeat the purpose of much of the gaming experience. Gaming is about the sense of accomplishment and

achievement that you get for completing a level or overcoming a boss fight. In certain games, it's about bonding with your character and progressing their goals. If you can just jump into the characters of your favourite streamer then surely those experiences will be diluted and become less fulfilling. Gaming as a whole may continue the trend of valuing instant gratification over a prolonged experience, which would be a grave shame as RPGs are some of the most fulfilling games in existence.

Google Stadia also isn't the first service to try and offer competition in the massive gaming market. Not many gamers today will remember experiments like the Gizmondo or Virtual Boy that wanted to throw their hats into the ring of gaming platforms with unique gimmicks akin to Stadia's cloud streaming. There is a reason those names are forgotten - they were total disasters. Which is a shame, because competition in the market is not always a bad thing. Steam has practical-

ly had a monopoly on PC gaming for the past decade and it had a multitude of scandals to do with how it hosts independent games; offering alternatives is one way to force the current big dogs to adopt better business practices.

The fact that Stadia is forcing people to pay a subscription and not offering a library of games (except within the founders packs which have all sold out) may end up putting people off in the long run. Stadia itself just doesn't seem worth the money, especially considering it's not offering any enticing exclusive games to its players. Who wants to pay a subscription to play a game they already own which just looks worse and plays worse because it's being

streamed over an internet connection that can't keep up? Maybe it's targeted at casual gamers and not people like me, but aside from this flurry of initial interest, I can't see Stadia standing on the proverbial podium anytime soon.



IMAGES: STADIA PRESS PACK

GAMING TEAM RECOMMENDS:



5 RECENT COUCH CO-OP GAMES

Whether it be with your best friend, a younger brother, or a significant other, here are some of the best local co-op games to give a try.

OVERCOOKED 2



Overcooked 2 is an astoundingly entertaining party game with more than enough difficulty to keep you coming back for more. If you can successfully complete *Overcooked* with your relationships still in tact, I salute you. The game prides itself on being easily accessible to non-gamers with its intuitively simple controls. However, this does not, by any means, mean the game is relaxing or easy.

BORDERLANDS 3



Borderlands has been established as a staple in the couch co-op shooter genre since its humble beginnings and the third installment does not disappoint. Expect more wacky characters, the largest array of firearms I've ever seen, and enough tongue-in-cheek humour to keep you giggling for the 30+ hours of gameplay.

RAYMAN LEGENDS



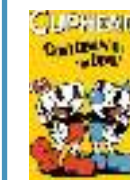
While not as shiny and new as the other entries on this list, *Rayman Legends* provides an epic platforming which proves that the genre is far from exhausted. Despite the short completion time, the game never fails to impress with each new level proving better than the last and easily scoring a spot as one of my favourite platformers of all time.

TEAM SONIC RACING



Expanding on the tried and tested arcade racing formula we've all come to love with the likes of *Mario Kart*, *Team Sonic Racing* manages to offer something completely new with the impressive and innovative team mechanics making the game much more interactive and cooperative than one would expect of a competitive racer.

CUPHEAD



Prepare yourself to experience frustration like never before with the addictively adorable homage to 1930s cartoons with *Cuphead*. Every scene feels like a piece of watercolour art fit for a gallery and paired with the jumble of swing, jazz and big band soundtrack, this game proves a sensory masterpiece. However, don't be fooled by the welcoming face, this game is HARD. Like, really, really hard.

OUR GUIDE TO ETHICAL ELEPHANT TOURISM

HANNAH CLEMENTS ANSWERS SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ON HOW THE ELEPHANT TOURISM INDUSTRY CAN BE SO CRUEL

So, you have travelled abroad and are excited to see some elephants! But how do you know the right places to visit? Many tourist attractions profit off the abuse and anguish of these creatures for their own benefit, so it is crucial to find an ethical place to visit. This simple guide will help you make the right decisions, and explain why the elephant tourism industry is so dreadful.

How to find an ethical sanctuary

The first step to finding a respectable attraction is by looking at the recreational activities it offers. If you can't picture an elephant in the wild doing the advertised activity, stay clear of that organisation. These can include circus tricks, giving rides, painting, dancing and anything you can think of that is unnatural for an elephant to be doing. Instead, invest your time and money into sanctuaries that allow the creatures to roam free and stay happy.

Secondly, know what signs of torture to look out for. An elephant that is being abused will often have scars and deep cuts on the most sensitive parts of their bodies, namely the ears, face and feet. The mahouts (those that work with and train the elephants) of tortured elephants will often be holding sharp objects such as nails or bullhooks, if not to use, to remind elephants of their past experiences with the object.

Finally, do your research! A quick google can be the difference between funding an elephant's happiness or misery. If you are not sure of the morals of a particular place, always check its methods and values.

An example: Elephant Nature Park

Founded in the 1990s by elephant enthusiast, Lek Chailert, this organisation is

responsible for rescuing hundreds of animals, including over 80 elephants, from lives of misery and abuse. The money this organisation makes is only used for the welfare of the animals, so you can ensure that you are not funding any inexcusable maltreatment of these beautiful creatures.

Unfortunately, in the modern world, it is just not feasible for elephants to comfortably live in the wild, especially those that have previously been tortured. With that in mind, Elephant Nature Park is the next best place for them. The influence elephants have on booming tourist industries have formed many people into wicked creatures of greed, and an elephant released into the wild will only be captured and exploited by another. At ENP, the elephants are protected and cared for, while allowing them to naturally interact with each other as much as possible.

How are elephants mistreated?

Contrary to common belief, elephants are not domesticated animals. Every single one, at least in Thailand, that is deemed suitable for human interaction has been through a torture process known as Phajann, or 'to crush'. The purpose of this process is to 'break the elephant's spirit' and render them submissive to their trainers and mahouts.

What is Phajann?

Phajann is the process of taking young elephants from their mothers and training them for the tourist industry using extreme torture methods. The elephants are forced into tight wooden cages,

known as crush boxes, and are ruthlessly beaten with bullhooks until they cease to fight back. They can be contained in these cages for days or weeks, until they lose all hope and begin to obey the humans that have captured them.

Why is it cruel to ride elephants?

Any elephant that gives rides has been subjected to Phajann, but they are also forced to work long hours. It is not unusual for an elephant to work 12 hour days, 7 days a week. Despite their thick skin and large size, the heavy metal saddle com-

combined with the constant weight of the riders makes the process unbearably painful for the animal. And finally, a mahout is often sat on the elephant's shoulders, forcing them to keep walking by the threat of a bullhook.

The main thing to take away:

Watching elephants bond together is an incredible experience, and far more rewarding than the unethical alternatives! So,

if you have the opportunity to visit elephants on your travels, please consider what may have happened behind the scenes of the local attractions.



EXPLORING EDINBURGH: A WORTHY WEEKEND AWAY

SOPHIE BROWN SHARES HER VISIT TO THE SCOTTISH CAPITAL AND TALKS ABOUT THE BEST THINGS TO DO (AND EAT) IN THE CITY

Medieval castles, dramatic highlands, majestic bagpipes, tartaned fabrics, and last but certainly not least the infamous deep-fried Mars bar. Having never visited Scotland before, I was unsure what to expect from its enchanting capital. So, with my keen sense of adventure I decided it was about time I put these clichés to the test and found out what really lay beneath the kilt!

After securing a return ticket from York to Edinburgh for just under £30, I sat back on a train for just over two hours before arriving at Edinburgh Waverley Station. I was met by a misty drizzle which only added to the sombre atmosphere and mystery of the city.

Eager to explore, I made my way to the hotel a two-stop tram journey away in Haymarket, just west from the heart of the city, to drop off my suitcase. Not forgetting my umbrella, I then headed back on the tram to Princes Street Gardens, an urban space separating the old town from the new laying in the shadow of Edinburgh castle. Sat proudly upon

dramatic towering crags, Edinburgh Castle truly dominates the skyline of the city. For its aesthetic alone this formidable fortress is worthy of a place on anyone's Instagram! Not to mention the pivotal role the castle has played in Scottish history as a royal residence, military garrison and prison.

After strolling through the gardens and struggling to climb all 287 steps of the Scott Monument, a gothic tower built in honour of the Scottish writer Sir Walter Scott, the shrill sound of bagpipes filled the air. A street piper stood on the corner of busy Princes Street in traditional Scottish attire emblazoned with tartan. I now felt like I was truly embracing Scottish culture, although the sight of bare legs underneath a kilt on a rainy day was enough to make me shiver.

Princes Street, part of the new town, is Edinburgh's main shopping area filled with all the well-known shops and restaurants. Perhaps, most notable is the Jenner Department Store, the oldest independent depart-

ment store in Scotland until its acquisition by House of Fraser in 2005. After a necessary visit to Urban Outfitters, which left my purse feeling much lighter, it was time to head over to the old town.

Walking over Waverley Bridge towards the dimly lit cobblestone streets and turreted buildings it wasn't long, being the *Harry Potter* fan that I am, before I started making connections with the wizarding world. J.K. Rowling herself said in a 2008 speech accepting the Edinburgh Award, "Edinburgh is very much home for me and is the place where Harry evolved over seven books and many, many hours of writing in its cafes." If like me you are a Potter fan, I would recommend visiting The Elephant House, a gourmet tea and coffee house which proclaims itself as the 'birthplace of Harry Potter', where J.K. Rowling penned her later novels. Here you can experience the magic and enjoy a locally roasted coffee.

Next, I attempted to navigate my way through a maze of wynds (narrow alleyways) and found myself on the Royal Mile. The Royal Mile

is culturally and historically important to the city, home to museums, restaurants and shops filled with cashmere, tweed and tartan. Unable to resist, I bought a tartan scarf and then with only one thing left to do I headed to Bertie's Proper Fish and Chips to try the national delicacy, the deep-fried Mars bar.

Edinburgh truly is a magical city, a mix of old and new, so is perfect for those looking for a taste of both modern and historical Scottish culture. With its close proximity to York, there really is no excuse not to pay the city a visit.

The Deep Fried Mars Bar

Say 'aye' to the national dish best washed down with a glass of Irn-Bru

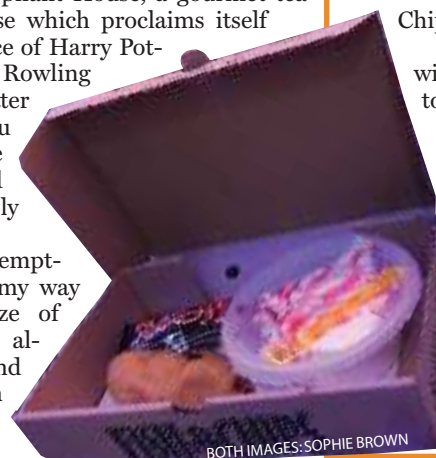
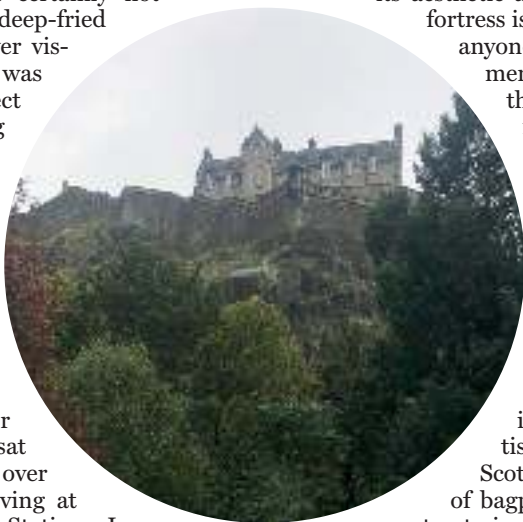
Where: Bertie's Proper Fish And Chips

Served: Battered and deep fried with a side of vanilla ice cream and topping of raspberry sauce.

Taste: Chocolatey and rich, this delicious treat is perfect for those with a sweet tooth.

Texture: Crunchy, crispy and gooey. This multitude of textures further adds to the indulgent experience.

Overall rating: This unique and flavoursome treat is definitely worth a try, but for the sake of your health, it might be best not to over-indulge.



BOTH IMAGES: SOPHIE BROWN

SPOOKY SPECIALS TO DEVILISHLY DEVOUR

SASHA BAKER WALKS YOU THROUGH ALL THE BEST HALLOWEEN SPECIALS YORK HAS TO OFFER

With Halloween just around the corner, it's the perfect time to test your taste buds with delectable Halloween flavours: from a spider mallow shortcake to spookily twisted cocktails. Thematic food and drink can add variety, nostalgia and excitement to our diets. To assist your craving for a taste of Halloween, or even just a warm autumnal feel, here are a variety of establishments that have altered or specialised their menus for you to enjoy.

1. Costa @costacoffee

With four stores in the city centre alone, there is no excuse not to try at least one of this classic cafe chain's new creations for Halloween 2019. Decorated biscuits of mummies and spiders usher in the joys of Halloween celebrations in the form of these sweet treats. To accompany the dessert, Costa are offering a Bonfire Spiced Latte that presents a more traditional reminder of the holiday.

2. Revolution @revolutionyork_

Teaming up with Bacardi, Revolution have amped up this year's Halloween, with exotic twists and new cocktail mixes to tingle your taste buds. From their recently released 'sneak peek' article, cocktails such as the Choccy Horror Freak Shake, Poison Apple Frappe, Spooky Juice and p-IT-cher show just how horrifyingly mouth-watering their specials are going to be.

3. Goji Café @goji.cafe

Goji Café is an independently run vegetarian café and deli, producing wholesome, appetising and nutritious foods whether on the go or for a relaxing lunch. On their menu they have the spiced apple cake, which is served with caramel sauce and ice-cream; inviting enough for anyone to try. Although not

explicitly a Halloween special, the autumnal flavours have earned Goji its place on this list. You can find this cute cafe over on Goodramgate.

4. The Rattle Owl @therattleowl

An independent restaurant with flair and elegance produced through its meals, The Rattle Owl has an exciting autumn menu coming up. On 24 October, they held a Gin Pairing Evening with Sloemotion, to introduce their new autumnal dishes and cocktails. For example, their autumn mains feature dishes like seasonal sweet-corn risotto and black bread with fennel jam. You can find The Rattle Owl on Micklegate.

5. Bills

Bills have excitingly launched their new autumn menu, with a keen desire to highlight their vegetarian and vegan meal options. Just a couple of examples from their exceptionally flavourful menu are: the roasted butternut squash and feta risotto with baby spinach and courgette, topped with shredded fennel salad and toasted pumpkin seeds, and the spiced pear and raspberry e-ton mess. Bills have successfully produced tantalising tastes that should not be missed out on this autumn, with the inclusion of pumpkin seeds to add a

hint of Halloween flavour.

6. Mr P's Curious Tavern

@mrpscurooustavern Using imaginatively created dishes cooked by Michelin-trained chefs, pub traditions have been transformed in Mr P's Curious Tavern's Late Autumn Dinner event to pleasure anyone's palette with new combinations; perfected to produce a five course tasting menu perfect for any autumn evening. The event contains perhaps more niche constructions, such as the caramelised rice pudding with Ampleforth apple brandy and the Boozy Prunes & Baked Cats' Tongues: something worth experimenting to truly experience Halloween through taste on Wednesday 6 November.

7. Las Iguanas @lasiguanas

Due to the Latin American theme of this restaurant, Las Iguanas have instead likened their menu to the Mexican Day of the Dead event. To celebrate this Mexican holiday, new cocktails have been released. The Agave Fields and Smoky Margarita bring vibrance and colour to your drinks to ensure true celebration this October. They've also added some new editions to their tapas menu, such as their Winter Ceviche.



EDITORS' PICKS:

COSY PUBS

Annabel, Food & Drink Editor: "Ye Olde Starre Inn. It's a little touristy, but what's going to be cosier than the oldest pub in York? I'd recommend their rhubarb cider personally"

Lucy, Food & Drink Editor: "The Charles XII. It's always got a great atmosphere, and is buzzing with students. Plus, you can't beat their two-for-one desserts, which come to £2.50 each"

Alex, Deputy Muse Editor: "Waggon And Horses. It's got a Hunter S Thompson quote on the wall and Brewdog on tap - how can you possibly go wrong?"

Jake, Gaming Editor: "Chopping Board. This is the place for a blend of fine dining with a cosy pub feel."

Callum, Deputy Nouse Editor: "The Habit. Cosy, inviting and likely to be filled with live music."

Alice, Features Editor and Ellie, Politics Editor: "The White Swan. There's a great pub quiz on a Thursday, and it's perfectly versatile - a great summer spot too. Plus, they also serve great pie."

Andy, Former MUSE Editor: "Golden Fleece. Small and old-fashioned - perfect for winter months."

Molly, Science Editor: "Fossgate Social. Just for the blue velvet lounge."

Patrick, Editor: "York Arms. Cheap and cheerful so it's always full of locals but I love it for the year round good food and beers."

Sam, Music Editor: "The Punch Bowl (the proper one). Cosy but there's ghosts as well."

Jemima, Deputy Comment Editor: "Ye Olde White Swan - cute, small and nice chairs."

Jerry, Business & Finance Editor: "The Corner Pin". I got lost once and wondered in, the crowd fell silent when my mate ordered a raspberry gin but the pints are fairly cheap and there's nice upholstery.

Matt, News Editor: "The Black Bull. Might not be great but it's near my house."

Bex, Chief Sub-editor: "Cosy Club. It might not strictly be a pub but it's certainly cosy."

James, Sport Editor: "The Black Bull. Just for the quiz, I've been every week."

Pat, Design Director: "Beeswings Ale House. It's cheap, cheerful and has good pints on tap."

Jonny, MUSE Editor: "Punch Bowl Spoons. Simply because no one else has said it and it deserves a spot. Yes it's not got candle lighting and no it doesn't have a roaring fire but what's better to warm you up on a cold winters night than £2 Carling."

TRY GHOULISH GREEN HALLOWEEN SOUP

ANNABEL MULLINER TAKES US THROUGH HER EASY, CHEAP AND DELICIOUS VEGETABLE SOUP

As the nights draw in and spooky season begins, what better way to nourish yourself than with a delicious Halloween-themed soup? This recipe was passed on to me by my lovely co-worker, Jackie, as it was one of her staple recipes when she was at university. Though my housemates were all very skeptical when I began boiling up a load of green vegetables in a huge pot, when they tasted the end result, they were quickly proved wrong. So, don't be put off by this soup's ghastly green appearance - it's bewitchingly tasty.

Finding time to cook nutritious meals in between other commitments can be tricky. But keeping up a good diet can really make a difference to your overall mood, energy and health. There's no better way to avoid fresher's flu (other than getting a job) than keeping yourself nourished. Whipping up a batch of soup is an easy way to do this, as it means that all you have to do is heat it

up whenever it is convenient. You could even take your soup into the library, to keep you going through a long day of reading. Just don't make so much at once that you end up dominating the fridge with your tupperware... (sorry housemates!)



To make this soup even cheaper, why not take the time to visit the Shambles Market to gather your veg? The produce that you'll find there is often twice the size of what you'd find in supermarkets. This soup is great served with wholemeal toast, with some cheddar cheese grated on top. One portion is two of your five a day, and contains 15g of protein; effortless nutrition, if you ask me.

So, this recipe is especially great if you're a newly converted vegetarian or vegan like myself, and are struggling to pack protein into your diet.

This ghoulish green soup lasts three days in the fridge, or up to a month in the freezer.

Ingredients (serves 6)

2 tbsp olive oil, 1 large onion, 2 cloves of garlic, 2 green chillies (optional), 3 leeks, 1 large courgette, 200g split red lentils, 200g frozen peas, 1.5 litres vegetable stock, 1 bay leaf

Method

- 1) Prepare for cooking by chopping up your onion, garlic, chillies, courgette and leeks. Ensure that you've rinsed your lentils.
- 2) On a low heat, fry the onion and garlic until soft and fragrant. If you're using chillies, you should also add them at this point (include the seeds for extra spice).
- 3) Add chopped leek and fry for another five minutes.
- 4) Add your vegetable stock and stir well.
- 5) Add your courgette and lentils to the mix. Stir gently and bring slowly to a boil.
- 6) Reduce the heat and add the bay leaf, salt and pepper, then cover your pan with a lid.
- 7) Leave the mixture to simmer for 20 minutes. After 15 minutes, check on the thickness of the soup. If it seems too thin, add more lentils. If it seems too thick, add more stock or water.
- 8) Once the mixture has finished simmering, add your peas. Take the pan off the heat and leave the mixture to cool for ten minutes.
- 9) Blend to a smooth consistency using either a hand blender or food processor.
- 10) Serve topped with cracked black pepper, and chilli flakes if you want a bit more spice.



Maddie's Musings

MADDIE THORNHAM: THE HEALTHY PARTS OF INSTAGRAM

I've always found it fascinating the way people proclaim that social media is a detriment to everyone's wellbeing and will, through this revelation, delete all social media accounts: Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, only to go and re-download them the following day or even after a few hours.

Why is there such drastic action to protect ourselves from the highlight-reel of Instagram, or the Twitter beef, or, having lost a 300+ day Snapchat streak, call it quits with the app, but only for the amount of time it takes social media to infiltrate our minds and crawl back into our lives?

Social media can contribute to a lot of harm in self-perception, comparison to other people, and pretence of our own lives. But it can also do a lot of good. This is something I wanted to highlight because we do have a high level of control over what we see on social media, and we shouldn't, therefore, torture ourselves by looking at the things that don't help us. A study by The Female Lead and Dr. Terri Apter called 'Disrupting the Feed' found that young people who follow advocates and positive influences on social media, such as Emma Watson, Greta Thunberg and Jameela Jamil, were more likely to feel empowered and inspired than before following these positive influences. This tells us something about the way we choose to interact with social media. We should be choosing to follow accounts that make us feel empowered and not indulge in a fixation over accounts that make us prone to comparison and feelings of low self-worth.

Taking images of people out of the picture completely are some Instagram art accounts that I've found quite mesmerising; they are good at sending across short, positive messages that are both relatable and meaningful. These Instagram artists have used their platforms in different ways: some

of the messages may be based on the stimulus of worries that people have sent in; other accounts draw on personal experience and the messages that come out of that; some are more satirical, making light of the quirks and mishaps of the world; accounts may even be more focused on serious relationship advice or funny, relatable dating errors. In this context, it seems Instagram can be used in a really productive way. People can, by scrolling past one of these art pictures, find a lot of comfort. People online may be writing or creating something wholly identifiable with someone's experience that may have felt isolating before. Seeing our own thoughts or feelings spelt out by another is a liberating feeling and comes as a sigh of relief.

We could think about it this way: the same feelings we get from relating to a character in a book could be applied to the feelings we get when we relate to online content, such as the positive snippets posted by art accounts. When people have stories to share, even if only in bite-size chunks of a couple of sentences or through pictures and drawings, we are tapping into both their experience and how we relate to ourselves too; the awareness generated by relating to someone else's experience means we understand our own as well.

This is the magic that can be taken away from social media. When social media is broken down, all it really is is media that is meant to bring people together, hence the 'social', rather than making everyone repelled and repulsed by our online social interactions. Lastly, if I were to recommend a few, but by no means an exhaustive list of the accounts that I think spread good messages: [@bymariandrew](#), [@the.holistic.psychologist](#), [@lianafinck](#), [@morganharpnichols](#), [@positivelypresent](#)

Ask The Editors...



WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL FAVOURITE SONG OF THE DECADE?

"Heartbeat - Childish Gambino. I'll be honest this decision was a lot harder than I thought it would be, and I now understand how a group of people could feasibly have a breakdown and give it to 'Video Games.' In the end, I wrote a list of contenders, numbered them one to ten and got a random number generator to pick for me. Heartbeat is an amazing song though" - **Jonny, MUSE**

"No Parties In LA.' Two of my favourite rappers Kanye and Kendrick trading verses over an utterly brilliant beat from all time great Madlib. *The Life Of Pablo* was the first album I ever properly reviewed and came out just as I was getting obsessed with music" - **Alex, Deputy MUSE**

"Foundations' by Kate Nash. "If you disagree then you're just bitter" - **Eilidh, Fashion**

"Xiu Xiu - 'Falling.' A stunning cover of the Twin Peaks theme. It's a beautifully arranged homage to an iconic part of pop culture history, and a real representation of our generation's retro obsession" - **Sam, Music**

"Macklemore, 'Can't Stop Us'. My best party trick is doing the entire rap in the club" - **Lucy, Food & Drink**

"Primadonna', Marinna And The Diamonds." - **Alice, Features**

"Lizzo 'Truth Hurts,' I like that yodelling thing she does you know, 'da da DA da DA da.'" - **Maddie, Social Sec**

"Giant Peach' by Wolf Alice. It's hands down their best song and it's one I always come back to, no matter what mood I'm in" - **Annabel, Food & Drink**

"Brockhampton - 'Boogie'. America's self-proclaimed favourite boyband deliver the most fun, maniacal, addictive song of the decade with each member of the group on top form" - **Charlie, Deputy Music**

"Hard Feelings/Loveless' by Lorde, *Melodrama* was pop music done right and this was its greatest moment" - **Fenella, Deputy Music**

"Lorde - 'Royals'. Reminds me of long car journeys with the fam" - **Matt, News**

"Muse's 'Resistance'. Includes the greatest drum performance in British music history. Clever; so clever." - **Dom, Sport**

"Nights' by Frank Ocean, my most listened to song on Spotify" - **James, Sport**

"Taylor Swift's 'We Are Never Getting Back Together' - just because it's a fucking banger" - **Pat, Design Director**

"False confidence, Noah Kahan - it's mainly acoustic guitar, but it's got a great rhythm and really smart lyrics." - **Patrick, Editor**

IMAGE: PETER JANICK DJISTRA, NICHOLAS PADOVANI, MUSE.MU, DEF JAM

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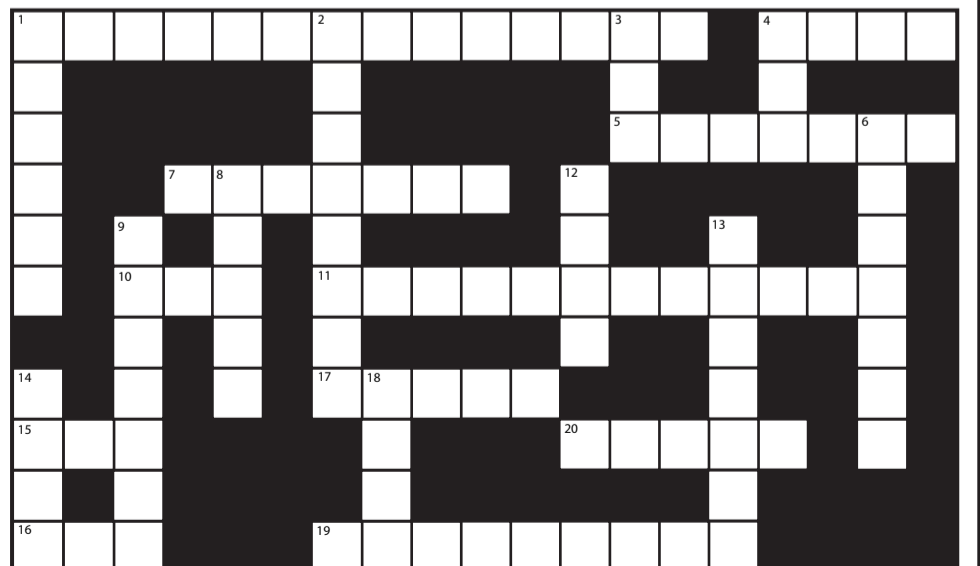
* APPEARS IN THIS EDITION OF MUSE

Down:

- 1) Google's cloud gaming platform (6) *
- 2) The only mammal that can't jump (8) *
- 3) An animated picture for online reactions (3)
- 4) Horror franchise and DIY tool. (3)
- 6) How did the Vice-Chancellor recently fund-raise? (7)
- 8) What post-punk band released the single 'Mother' in 2018? (5) *
- 9) Which York band has a track 'Jesus on the Valium'? Transparent Plastic (7) *
- 12) ___ Del Ray released *Norman F**cking Rockwell* earlier this year (4) *
- 13) Who said "there are no mistakes, only happy accidents"? (7) *
- 14) 1968 film, *Planet Of The ___* (4)
- 18) Synonym - Authentic, true (4)

Across:

- 1) Most watched TV show on Netflix (8, 6)
- 4) One third of the Rice Krispie trio (4)
- 5) Fifteen percent of women buy what for themselves on Valentine's Day? (7)
- 7) By law, what is banned Japanese restaurants? (7)
- 10) Snake-like fish (3)
- 11) Blood and cancer charity working with York Marrow (12) *
- 15) *Great Expectations* protagonist (3)
- 16) "Drawing about __, death, space and time." (3)
- 17) Opened Louis Vuitton's Texas factory (5) *
- 19) What Halloween animal were Protestants suspicious of? (5, 4) *
- 20) Ross quote synonym of 'axle' (5)



Erdogan's offensive in Syria endorsed by Russia

Harry Ward
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

IN A CLIMATE of growing political tension, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has promised to “crush the heads” of Kurdish fighters if they fail to withdraw from a planned “safe zone.” This recent announcement came in the wake of Turkey’s ‘Operation Peace Spring’. Moreover, it was declared only days after President Trump’s widely criticised decision to withdraw American troops from the war-torn country.

The offensive, involving 15 000 troops from the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), commenced on 9 October with the stated aim of creating a ‘safe zone’ reaching 30 kilometres into neighbouring Syria for 480 kilometres along



the border. Erdogan declared the action was also aimed at “neutralising terror threats against Turkey”. However, the Turkish capture of over 60 settlements has brought the TAF into conflict with the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) based in the proposed zone, with the town of Ras al-Ain witnessing some of the heaviest fighting.

This large-scale military operation is taking place in a complex environment of shifting alliances and allegiances. The SDF’s military wing is led by the Kurdish People’s Protection Groups (YPG), a group which Ankara sees as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) fighting for autonomy inside Turkey. Conversely the US and its allies view the SDF as a vital ally in the fight against the Islamic State. The organisation has also assisted in the American campaign to topple Bashar al-Assad, but now accuses Trump’s administra-

tion of “backstabbing” after the last US ground forces withdrew earlier this month. Although committed to the stability of the region, American decision-makers seem unwilling to risk casualties.

According to Erdogan, the disputed territory will be used to resettle 2 million of the roughly 3.6 million Syrian refugees currently displaced in Turkey. Yet, critics claim the resettlement plan is an effort to ethnically cleanse an area with a large Kurdish population along Turkey’s southern border. The Turkish government has denied this by arguing that it is simply trying to ‘correct’ changes in demographics caused by the SDF.

The international response to Operation Spring Peace has been mainly hostile. The European Union, Arab League, and United Kingdom have all condemned it as an unprovoked attack on a sovereign state. President Trump originally praised the Turkish strategy, but his Secretary of State Mark Pompeo has subsequently said the US is prepared to use military force against Turkey if the rights of Kurds in the region are not respected. It’s an odd division in the Trump administration: Trump himself is often quick to denounce the policy of his own government, even as his leaders express different opinions.

Amidst the fighting, there have

also been accusations of war crimes carried out by militias allied to Turkey. Amnesty International has claimed it has evidence of atrocities, while the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is investigating allegations that white phosphorus gas has been used against SDF personnel. In a volatile and unpredictable environment, it is proving difficult for the documentation of the situation on the ground. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) estimates that at least 70 civilians have been killed in addition to 400 soldiers on all sides.

So far diplomacy has proven ineffective at halting the spread of violence. Although a meeting between Vice President Mike Pence and President Erdogan resulted in a ceasefire, the SDF has since reported shelling and explosions around Ras al-Ain and other

locations on the border. With little trust between the Kurdish and Turkish factions, it was only a matter of time before key international players got directly involved. Russia has deployed forces to the Turkey-Syria border as part of a deal to remove Kurdish troops. The same deal gives the Kurdish troops 150 hours from noon on Wednesday 23 October to withdraw 30km along the border.

After eight years, the conflict in Syria shows little sign of abating. The differing responses to Operation Spring Peace have illustrated the ideological divisions within the international community, which is proving unable to resolve the conflict or the humanitarian crisis it has caused. As tensions between Turkey, the SDF, and the US continue to escalate, the next few weeks could decide the potential future of not only the region, but for the millions of people that call it home.



BOTH IMAGES: PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA

Latest debate creates frontrunners for Democrats

Patrick Walker
EDITOR

AFTER 12 CANDIDATES, three hours, and over 25 000 spoken words, the fourth Democratic debate is finally over, and while many of the candidates will have simply been happy for the exposure, the race is increasingly becoming centred around the frontrunners: Senator Bernie Sanders, Senator Elizabeth Warren, and former Vice President Joe Biden. The debate, as focused as it was on the ‘big three’ in the race, drew criticism from a mounting wing of the party that argue that Democrats must slim down in order to present a sufficiently coherent message in the forthcoming election. As the Democrats remain locked in a 19-way battle to spearhead their 2020 effort, Donald Trump is building his campaign: a campaign that, with over \$736 million so far, will likely be the best-funded in American history.

In the meantime, the fourth

Democratic debate was all about Elizabeth Warren. Polling at an average of 25 per cent in national polls, Warren has undoubtedly made herself a target, and she came under heavy fire from moderates on stage on Tuesday. Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar was particularly cynical of her Medicare-for-all plan saying that Warren was “making Republican talking points right here in this room” at a tense moment in the debate.

Despite this challenge, Warren’s polling average makes her Biden’s closest challenger. Sanders, steady at 15 per cent, is not even close. The debate on Tuesday highlighted the difference between the candidates: Warren appeared lively, with slick arguments associated with large debates, Biden once again appeared flustered, while Bernie stood out with carefully-prepared humour and flair. This debate once again highlighted what *The Washington Post* is now calling Warren’s “unique political teflon.” Despite concerted attacks from Buttigieg and Klobuchar, the Mas-

sachusetts Senator remains popular in FiveThirtyEight’s initial post-debate favourability ratings.

For Biden, this debate was yet another disappointment in a line of underwhelming appearances. In this debate alone,



the Vice President confused “exponentially” with “expeditiously”, and mixed up Afghanistan with Iraq. Despite the lack of evidence, allegations about his son’s dealings in Ukraine also continue to vex Biden. His attack on the moderators for “elevating a lie” earned him few favours on the night, and it is

possible that Trump’s impeachment proceedings will keep Biden’s problems in the limelight. Nonetheless, his campaign’s popularity has remained consistent at 30 percentage points in spite of his lacklustre debate performance.

Furthermore, Warren’s rise has not been at his expense: crucial if he is to maintain popularity going into the primaries next year. Amongst the remaining field, few candidates stood out, for better or worse. Andrew Yang scored a clear win after his Universal Basic Income idea was discussed at length

by Castro and Gabbard, who both signalled their possible support. Reaction to Pete Buttigieg’s combative style was mixed. A poll in USA Today reported that his popularity was boosted by his aggression against Warren and Biden, but it remains to be seen if support remains consistent in the key state.

Most of the candidates from Tuesday are likely to proceed to the next debate, which has led to criticism that the field remains simply too large for adequate policy debate. There is simply not enough time to put forward their various agendas. Even Warren, the most frequent speaker in the debate, managed just 3 600 words of the 25 000 total. The Democratic party remains divided: not just on policy, but on how to strike a balance between giving smaller candidates sufficient time, and letting their current frontrunners adequately speak on policy. For now, that discussion is punctuated by a stark political reality: for American liberals, four more years of Trumpian politics would be simply unacceptable.

GLOBAL POLITICS

Black, white and (not) read all over

Major newspaper rivals across Australia have displayed a rare moment of unity in a fight against media censorship. The outlets published front pages with blacked out headlines in protest against national security laws which they claimed infringed upon Australia’s free press. The federal government has countered by supporting the cause of journalists, while stating that no one was above the law.

Chile’s inequality crisis

15 people have been killed in Chile during protests about the lack of equality in the country. What started in response to a spike in Metro prices in Santiago, has kickstarted tensions concerning widespread national inequality. The policy has since been overturned, yet tensions are still rising over increasing living costs. The President Piñera has called a meeting with opposition leaders to find a solution.

Johannesburg’s new mayoral race

The Mayor of Johannesburg, Herman Mashaba, has resigned from office and the Democratic Alliance party over how issues of racism are handled. Mashaba was elected to the role three years ago and was seen as the DA’s chance to loosen the ANC’s power grip on the country. With his resignation to come into effect in November this now seems unlikely as the DA may lose the post.

Ethiopia’s Nobel efforts awarded

The 2019 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed. This decision was made after his diplomacy and efforts to seek peace ended the 20 year military stalemate with Eritrea, that began with the 1998 border war. This is the 100th year of awarding the prestigious prize, which the Prime Minister will receive in December in Oslo.

Brexit special: Parliament divided on Johnson deal

Eleanor Longman-Rood
Patrick O'Donnell
Hayoung Oh

Brexit in the latest polls

How do you think the Government is handling Britain's exit from the EU?

YouGov, 20-21 Oct: well/badly

18% to 75%

In hindsight, do you think Britain was wrong or right to leave the European Union?

YouGov, 20-21 Oct

47% to 41%

Which of the following do you think would make the best Prime Minister?

YouGov, 20-21 Oct: Johnson or Corbyn

43% to 20%

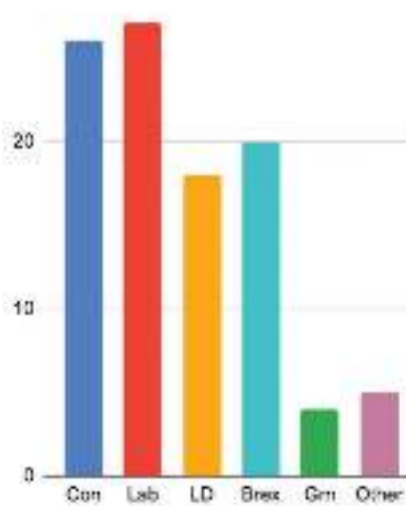
On an immediate general election: support vs. oppose

YouGov, 20-21 Oct

50% to 23%

Voting intention for a general election held after extending the Brexit deadline past 31 October 2019.

(Source: ComRes, 04-05 Sep)



Progress is made in the Commons as the Johnson agreement clears its first hurdle...



AFTER MEETINGS with the Irish Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, and other EU leaders, Boris Johnson has achieved what many critics said he could not – a revised Withdrawal Agreement.

The new deal remains similar to his predecessors'; however, the most significant change is the removal of the UK-wide backstop and its replacement with different goods and customs regulations in Northern Ireland – an attempt to prevent a hard border with the Republic of Ireland.

However, while managing to unite a majority of Conservative MPs behind him, Johnson's deal has received widespread criticism. Some of the biggest opponents of the Prime Minister's deal are his former partners in the DUP – the

largest unionist party in Northern Ireland. They see the creation of a Customs Union for the island of Ireland and implementation of a border effectively in the Irish Sea as something which reduces their link with Great Britain and threatens the union.

Meanwhile, many Labour MPs expressed concern over the lack of dynamic alignment with the European Union on worker's rights after Brexit.

While a vote in Parliament last Tuesday saw a majority of 329 to 299 voting in favour of Johnson's Withdrawal Agreement Bill, MPs also voted to delay the timetabling of the bill, which essentially enables them to table further amendments and hold the Government to account for longer than the currently

proposed timetable of three days.

19 Labour MPs – mainly from leave-voting constituencies in the north of England – rebelled against their own party. While a majority of the 21 MPs recently suspended from the Conservative Party for voting to stop a no-deal Brexit voted in favour of the Withdrawal Agreement.

While it remains unclear whether the new Withdrawal Agreement will be approved by Parliament in the near future, it is almost certain that the UK will not be leaving the European Union on the 31 October. The odds of the EU not accepting the Government's extension are just too low: it knows that a no-deal Brexit would not be expedient for Britain, or itself.

With the EU alluding to an extension until 31 January

2020 and thus preventing a no-deal Brexit, a General Election draws ever more likely the current House of Commons remains unable to reach a compromise.

In fact, Johnson has now offered one as a compromise to allowing MPs more time to debate the Brexit deal: potentially a politically useful move in the coming election.

He has suggested 12 December, with a vote planned for 28 November, meaning, for most of us, that a Christmas election is all but inevitable.

However, this has still been dubbed a 'flexextension' as if an Agreement is ratified by Parliament and the European Union, the UK could leave the European Union before this date and the two-year transition period would begin.

But the Letwin Amendment presents the possibility of even worse delays for the PM

SIR OLIVER Letwin, an ex Conservative MP, now sits as an Independent after being among the 21 rebel MPs who were suspended for supporting the Benn Act against the Johnson Government on 3 September. On 19 October, at a "super sitting" of Parliament, Letwin proposed an amendment that would withhold approval of Boris Johnson's Brexit deal until Parliament has passed the necessary legislation to enact it safely. This amendment would automatically bring the Benn Act back into relevance. Johnson

must plead to the EU for further extension until 31 January if his deal fails to be approved by 19 October in a meaningful vote.

Letwin aimed to keep in place the "insurance policy" provided by the Benn Act, to safeguard the country from "crashing out" without a deal. It stemmed from the fear of possible loopholes. If the deal is supported by MPs, the essential conditions of the Benn Act will be fulfilled which, in turn, would dissolve the need to call an extension. A no-deal exit remains a viable option

nonetheless. If complications in the legislative process surface and prove difficult to be solved by the deadline, a no-deal exit will be forced by default.

The House of Commons voted in favour of the Letwin amendment, 322 to 306. In the likely case the EU accepts a postponement, the UK's departure will be put on hold. Supporters argue that the delay will provide sufficient time for legislative scrutiny, to ensure a steady exit from the EU. Opponents, however, view it as an unnecessary ob-

stacle to procrastinate, and perhaps even block, the Brexit process as the deadline looms. This will, of course, be heavily dependent on whether the EU announces an extension.

The question of whether to remain in the customs union is still also present. While many view remaining inside the union as a betrayal of the goals of Brexit, others believe it is the safest option for the UK. MPs must determine whether to trade with EU countries without tariffs or to obtain our own trade deals elsewhere.



LEFT WING RIGHT WING

Thoughts from the Politics Editor

THE AGE OF 22 seems premature for feelings of nostalgia. Yet, watching both sides of the Commons debate the ins and outs of leaving the

EU, I found my mind wondering back to 'the good old days'. Back to the time of the political trio of Cameron, Clegg and Miliband. Suddenly

shoddily eating a bacon sandwich, corruption scandals or even 'Pig-Gate' seem benign in comparison. Headlines were not dominated by Brexit, in fact it was a term that was in the early stages of its creation. Reuters estimated this domination has cost us £500 million each week as we negotiate our way out of the EU. To take inspiration from the

colloquial phrase, money seems to make the UK go round and round in circles.

Comedian Ellie Taylor quipped that she would be furious if the Channel 4 coverage of the EU debates delayed the airing of Bake Off. Her sentiment is not unusual. While protests for a People's Vote have engaged many, others are simply

fatigued by the entire debate. Brexit updates are so frequent that asking the public to keep up is a tall order. Ironically, it also makes journalistic efforts very hard tasks. While hugely important, three years is a long time to focus on one issue. Now is the time for decision in order for other worthy concerns to gain the attention of the Commons.

The IMF: its role in global economics explained

Jerry McMichael
BUSINESS & FINANCE EDITOR

THIS WEEK THE IMF published its economic assessment report for the third quarter of the year, in it the IMF has warned of increasing risks to global financial stability due to what it termed “high financial risk taking, encouraged by historically low global interest rates”. This report represents just a modicum of the economic influence and advisory role that the IMF undertakes in the global economic community in order to ensure greater global market stability and security. Both knowing that IMF stands for the International Monetary Fund and that it plays a role in lending capital to developing countries, I found myself unsure of what it really is, what it does, and why it matters? I therefore thought it inappropriate to write an article commenting on such a report without examining what the IMF is and how it effects the global political economy on a foundational level.

The idea of the IMF was first formed in 1944 as part of the Bretton Woods agreements and was primarily the idea of two economists, Harry Dexter White and John Maynard Keynes. The need for the IMF was created 15 years earlier with the outbreak of the Great Depression in 1929, the economic catastrophe resulting in nations sharply raising their barriers to trade in an attempt to improve domestic consumption and fix their failing economies. The result however that all mercantilist trade policies and the global economy stalled and resulted in economic

stagnation that prolonged the effects of the crash until 1939. This breakdown of international cooperation created a need for non-governmental oversight of the global economy and a need to build a framework for international economic co-operation after the end of the Second World War.

The two architects of the IMF therefore argued that the international economic organisation should have two essential roles. Firstly the US delegate at the Bretton Woods conference Harry Dexter White asserted that the IMF would act as an international bank, providing the necessary funding to European nations post the end of the war to allow them to rebuild their economic infrastructure so that they would recover at a faster rate and resume global economic trade. He, however, also stated that the IMF could not function as a charity and it was essential to the stability of the system that nations were held to account and made to remunerate their loan as soon as they were able. The British delegate John Maynard Keynes on the other hand, adopted a far more neo-liberal opinion of the IMF. He imagined that the IMF would be a cooperative fund upon which member states could draw to maintain economic activity and employment through periodic crises. It would therefore be an institution based upon the principles of economic statism, aiding the economy through periods of economic slumps by direct interventionism.

The IMF came into existence formally on 27 December 1945 when the first 29 countries ratified its articles of agreement; by the end of 1946 the IMF had

grown to 39 member states. The IMF became one of the key organisations of the international economic system in the 20th century; its design allowed the system to balance the rebuilding of international capitalism while maintaining a level of independent economic sovereignty for the nations that borrowed from it.

However, what relevance does the IMF bear today within the context of the contemporary global political economy? Today the IMF now consists of 189

member nations, has the ability to lend up to one trillion US dollars to its members and provides interest rates of 0 per cent to low-

income countries to foster economic development and integration. In 2018 Argentina received the largest loan in the IMF’s history at \$57bn (£44.5bn.) Since its creation in 1945, the IMF’s principal activities have included stabilising currency exchange rates, financing the short-term balance-of-payments deficits of member countries, and providing advice and technical assistance to borrowing countries.

It is debatable what degree of success the international organisation had played in stabilising the global economy in the last 74 years.

While many nations now associate the IMF with negative connotations of failing economic performance, commonly referring to it as “the lender of last resort”, it has played an undeniable role in supporting the global economy in the last three quarters of a century. Most notably this has been after supporting Mexico in the

early 1980s when it defaulted on its debts and more recently in 2002 when Brazil was

forced to obtain a loan from the IMF to avoid also defaulting on its debts. However the organisation’s methods and conditions it enforces as a precondition of bailouts have been described as “stringent” and “restrictive” on recipient states. In the past, these have included lower government borrowing, cutting corporate taxes and opening up their economies to foreign investment. Greece was the progenitor of the Eurozone crisis in 2009 and the worst affected economy, after it received bailout loans from the IMF, Greece was forced to adopt more stringent lending laws and was forcibly made to accept certain streams of foreign direct investment. Critics say the austerity intended to get government borrowing needs down was excessive and did damage to the economy and society. The unemployment rate in Greece today still remains high at 17 per cent, down from a peak at over 27 per cent in 2013.

The IMF plays a crucial role in providing stability to the international economy. Since its formation in 1944, it has provided aid to the global economy, from stabilising currency exchange rates to financing the short-term balance of payment deficits of member countries; its interventions may have helped avert numerous global economic crashes and downturns. Since 1944 there has only been one significant global economic crash and it was not as a result of international mercantilist trade policy but of private corporate banking irresponsibility and greed. The IMF is therefore, an international non-governmental organisation that provides assistance to the global economic community when it’s needed.



Will tax reform mean real change at the OECD?

Cassian Frost
BUSINESS & FINANCE CORRESPONDENT

ONLY TWO WEEKS ago the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (an intergovernmental economic organisation, designed to stimulate world trade and progress) revealed their new policy for taxing multinational corporations. Their new taxation system overhauls the old understanding that countries which trade in multiple places should only pay tax on their revenue in the country with which they have a headquarters.

This has been pushed through due to a trend of transnational corporations (TNCs) putting offices in low-tax jurisdictions so as to minimise tax.

“We’re making real progress to address the tax challenges arising from digitalisation of the economy” said the OECD secretary-general Angel Gurría, the hopeful result being that TNCs “Pay their fair share.”

The old system, which was implemented in the 1920s meant corporations paid tax wherever they had significant consumer facing activities, but this definition is no longer relevant in an age of tech giants that can trade in countries without having a physical presence there.

Just last week the G20, the forum for leaders and finance ministers of 19 countries and the EU, pledged their support for the tax.

Taro Aso, Japan’s (host of the G20 meeting this year) finance minister said the G20 “reaffirmed, firm support for a final report in 2020 and stressed the importance of an inclusive framework”. Another programme run jointly between the OECD and the United Nations Development Programme has also contributed hugely to this cause of increasing the tax revenue from TNCs.

Tax Inspectors Without Borders have now been running for a number of years with the goal of “providing hands-on assistance and peer-to-peer learning, the programme improves understanding of global tax challenges and helps authorities claw back unpaid taxes.” With this new tax regulation, TIWB could potentially do even more as it could now clamp down on all kinds of TNCs, including tech-based firms like Google and Facebook to make sure they are not avoiding tax. However, analysis by the Tax Justice Network, a tax campaigner group, has found that the proposed reforms will only reduce profits of TNCs by 5 per cent and could likely end up worsening global inequality.

Their analysis suggests that the OECD plan would redistribute a much higher proportion of revenue to higher income countries instead of the emerging economies that arguably would benefit most.

They analysed the International Monetary Fund’s plan and revealed it reduced profits registered

in tax havens by 43 per cent. Their own proposed system would reduce the amount of profits registered in taxhavens by 60 per cent. The main difference lies in that the OECD’s regulation would redistribute tax

The OECD have failed to provide reform

revenue based on where the country gains its revenue. The TJN would instead also include where they employ their workforce. According to them the OECD tax reform would “Give greater taxing rights to richer countries at the end of the sales process.” Alex Cobham, Chief Executive for TJN said, “After promising the radical shift in international rules that is urgently necessary, the OECD seems to be lapsing back into tinkering at the margins, and even less for the lower-income countries that lose the most to corporate tax abuse”.



IMAGE: GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

The bot armies providing likes for sale

Charis Ramsey
DEPUTY BUSINESS & FINANCE EDITOR

AN INTERNET BOT is a software app that runs automated tasks over the internet. These tasks are usually simple and repetitive, performing at a much higher rate than a human. Social media bots, however, are used for tasks such as generating messages, acting as a follower, liking and commenting on posts. It is estimated that 9-15 per cent of Twitter accounts may be social bots, so someone must be paying for them, but who? Social media bots are known to help influence public opinion, creating believable online personas to help push certain ideas, or feign support for these ideas.

Just one example of a website where you can buy a social media bot is monstersocial.net. Bots can "pretend to be a human on a normal web browser so it can't get blocked." Prices are typically about \$14.99 per month, and the customer can "automate unlimited accounts" across multiple social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Many assume that the people buying followers are wannabe social media influencers. However, in reality, political campaigns have been accused of using bots, with recent calls by commentators that bots are acting on Boris Johnson's Facebook

page. Luca Maria Aiello from the University of Turin helped to prove the influence of social media bots. In September 2009 he conducted a study on aNobii.com, a site where users can recommend books to each other. He made up a user called lajello who visited different users' profiles daily, leaving a trace, and people began to respond. Aiello noticed that when lajello began its round of visits, it triggered a burst of comments on its public wall. By December 2011, Aiello's profile had become one of the most popular on the entire social network. Aiello said of the experiment "it gives strong support to the thesis that popularity can be gained with continuous social probing".

Aside from using social media

bots for gaining support politically, or gaining user specific popularity, they must be acknowledged as incredible tools for marketing. Bots can help to build stronger relationships with customers, just by delivering targeted content and anticipating user reactions. Furthermore, in the age of social media, an inflated follower count can do wonders for a new business, as it makes the customer see it as a more legitimate brand while also encouraging them to want what others "have."

The social media bot business has now gone beyond the scope of marketers looking for sales success. Bots are now big government business, with the US Air Force revealing that it solicited intrepid, a California based company, to create software that would enable it to

mass-produce bots for political purposes. The \$2.76 million contract was for "online persona management" whereby the company would make a new technology allowing blogging activities on websites outside of the US.

It is clear that whilst social media bots were originally created for people and businesses to feign influence and gain popularity; they have now entered the political sphere. With more and more tools being used on social media, as demonstrated by the Cambridge Analytica scandal, political campaigns may continue to support the business of social media bots.

Understandably, the backlash from some governments has been harsh: especially that of California. As of October 2018, California passed the BOT Act, prohibiting online bots from hiding their identities to appear as human. According to lawmakers, the human-like persona is used to deceive California residents about matters involving sales and political elections. Therefore, as long as the bot clearly discloses its identity, the user is not in violation of the Act. Those that do act in violation could face draconian fines of up to \$2 500 for each transgression under the California Unfair Competition Act. As other nations follow California, could the days of the paid social media bot finally be nearing their end?



IMAGE: NEOTAY

Payday lender QuickQuid to leave UK

Sam Goodall
BUSINESS & FINANCE CORRESPONDENT

QUICKQUID, ONE of the first payday lenders to emerge in the wake of the financial crisis, has confirmed UK operations will cease. Owners, US firm Enova, have complained of "regulatory uncertainty" as being their primary reason for leaving the UK market.

It is the latest same-day lender to go out

name brands such as Wonga Loans and The Money Shop have also had to close their doors.

Many critics of these firms complained over their predatory practices, sky-high interest rates, and their offering of loans to those with bad or little-to-no credit history. Many of QuickQuid's quoted Average Percentage Rates were well over an eye-watering 1 000 per cent. To put this into perspective, the Bank of England base rate currently stands at 0.75 per cent.

Enova was keen

and the UK Financial Ombudsman broke down when a solution could not be reached.

In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and subsequent 'credit crunch', many consumers quickly found themselves locked out of the market for easy-access credit. Very quickly, television adverts began appearing on our screens offering quick, no questions asked loans. During their peak in 2009, payday lenders issued £1.2billion worth in loans, with an average loan coming in between £210 and £270, loaning in far greater proportion to the section of UK society with the lowest income.

Many of the firms offering these loans were lambasted for their highly uncompetitive interest rates. While many seeking short-term finance were locked out of mainstream lending as a result of constrained incomes and employment opportunities, payday lenders such as QuickQuid soon became a lender of last resort.

This, coupled with the dramatic squeeze in income and employment opportunities experienced by many due to the recession, allowed QuickQuid and others to soon dominate the UK credit market.

Calls to regulate these sorts of practices were being heard as early as 2008 when Vince Cable ex-

pressed concerns over the growth of payday firms. Opposition parties in Parliament also began pledging tougher legislation on these firms. By 2013, the FCA was established in order to curb the endemic problem of payday lending. And in 2016, Google formally announced all payday lenders would be barred from advertising on their platform. Many have sought redress through the Financial Ombudsman. So far just under two-thirds of complaints have been upheld, with 59 per cent of those seeking recompense being awarded compensation. This has hit the company hard, being the main source of their difficulties in the UK market.

How will this affect customers? While QuickQuid's UK operations will likely need to begin to cease, customers need to recognise the obligations they have to fulfil their loan agreements to the company. Avoiding payments voluntarily or involuntarily will result in additional fees, charges and penalties, as well as affecting an individual's credit rating.

Those seeking redress from the company over their objectionable lending practices are advised to wait for further information from the firm before taking further action. It is probable that claims may not be awarded until Grant Thornton have wound up UK operations.



IMAGE: TORANGE.BIZ

of business following the squeeze that has been imposed on such firms through greater regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), a body created to ensure good practices are upheld in the credit market. Since the imposition of tighter regulations, big-

to stress the work they have done with the UK financial regulatory body, the UK Financial Ombudsman, to resolve the complaints made against the company in recent years. Enova claimed they wanted to secure a "sustainable solution," however talks between the firm



WEEK IN NUMBERS

Digest of the week's most important figures.

\$1tn

Total budget the IMF can allocate in a financial year



IMAGE: THE ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND

£900m

Cost to RBS for the repayment of PPI this year

£1.5bn

The amount miscalculated into the UK national budget deficit



IMAGE: LAND ROVER

8%

The rise in Jaguar-Land Rover pre-tax revenue following a strong year in Asia

3.9%

Historic low of UK unemployment rate



IMAGE: ZENBU UNIVERSITY

6.1%

China's lowest-ever GDP growth rate since 1992

IMAGES (TOP TO BOTTOM): RBS, MMISULTALHR, CHINA

The research driving the meatless meat revolution

Oscar Bentley
SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

RECENT YEARS HAVE seen the rise of awareness in regard to animal ethics, and, consequently, dairy-free or vegan products. A promising development, which is predicted to encourage people to live healthier lives, reduce their carbon footprint, and adopt a lifestyle which will substantially contribute to the fight against climate change, is the introduction of meatless meat, or plant-based and lab-grown meat.

Plant-based meat from companies such as Impossible Food and Beyond Meat are already being offered in restaurants and supermarkets in North America and have recently started their expansion in Europe. Their



signature products, Impossible Burger and Beyond Burger were developed in order to provide meatless alternatives to meat and help reduce the great impact that producing, distributing, and eating meat has on the planet. However, beyond claims made by the creators of these products, it is useful to look at the science of producing meatless meat products and the implications of switching to a meat-free lifestyle.

Current research by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has shown that the livestock sector is responsible for 15 per cent of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. Cattle produce 65 per cent of livestock emissions alone. Reducing the amount of meat humans eat will reduce pressure on land use, meaning that biodiversity loss and water pollution will be less, as well as health

benefits from a decrease in pesticide and antibiotic use. According to Joseph Poore, a University of Oxford researcher, avoiding meat “is the single biggest way to reduce your environmental impact.”

Producing a meatless burger, in contrast, requires using just 5 per cent of the land used for raising and feeding livestock, uses 75 per cent less water, and produces an eighth of the greenhouse gases produced by the livestock industry.

Currently in the UK, about 8.5 per cent of the population follows a meat-free diet, that is, they are either vegetarian or vegan. While this percentage keeps growing, albeit steadily, it is unlikely to cause any real positive environmental change, especially given that global meat consumption worldwide is skyrocketing at an unprecedented rate, fuelled by an increase in global disposable income, and a rise in population. The meatless meat industry, however, is targeting not just vegetarians or vegans but primarily meat eaters and aims to provide a meat alternative which looks, tastes, and even bleeds like meat, but which is not meat.

You may ask, how is this possible? Some key ingredients used in producing meatless burgers which give them their taste, look, feel, and smell are leghemoglobin and heme.

Leghemoglobin is an ingredient from soybeans which chemically binds to heme, a non-protein molecule and gains its blood-red color. Heme, an iron-containing molecule, gives the meatless burger its appearance, smell, and taste.

However, the introduction of meatless, or plant-based, burgers, is not safe from criticism.

Opinions are mixed as to whether people can tell the difference between meatless burgers and burgers made from actual beef. Moreover, there is no consensus as to whether soy leghemoglobin is safe to eat. Despite Impossible Foods’ claim that “all of the studies we did indicated there was no risk of allergenicity or toxicity,” more independent studies and additional research should be conducted before approving meatless burgers for large-scale consumption.

Meatless burgers include ultra-processed ingredients such as soy concentrates and oils and include much more sodium than regular beef burgers.

Furthermore, the fact that leghemoglobin has genetically engineered yeast in its ingredients, makes the yeast a GMO when the soybean gene is added to it. Thus, there has been some opposition from vegan groups who support that a GMO product cannot be con-

sidered vegan, essentially meaning that plant-based burgers are not vegan products. However, this is not a widely held view, even among the vegan community.

Even if plant-based burgers have not been widely publicised in the media, and are often viewed with scepticism by the meat-eating general public, scientists can already predict what the next step is by food industries in battling the environmental effects caused by livestock: lab-grown or cell-based meat. Lab-grown meat will use actual animal cells and thus will not just taste, smell, or look like meat, but it will be meat. Meat which will, however, not necessitate the killing of an animal, or the degradation of the earth’s natural environments in order to be mass-produced on a global scale.

Despite the fact that there are some important issues with plant-based meat which companies such as Impossible Foods and Beyond Burger will have to address through future research, it is certain that this sets the path for switching to a diet and lifestyle which takes into consideration animal rights, sustainable development and protection of the environment, without, at the same time, sacrificing standards of living or putting human life at any health risk.

Human Mars landing: so much more than a ‘small step’

Angelos Sofocleous
DEPUTY SCIENCE EDITOR

ABOUT 70 000 YEARS ago, in an event which would fundamentally change the course of human history, homo sapiens set foot out of Africa. Today, the descendants of those humans, having conquered Earth’s four corners, are preparing for their next big step: Mars.

Human’s aspirations for setting foot on Mars appear in literature as early as the 17th century AD, in the works of German scholar, Athanasius Kircher. In recent years, numerous space agencies, including NASA, ESA, Roscosmos, and SpaceX have all set their plans for sending humans to Mars before 2050. In fact, SpaceX plans to land the first humans on Mars in just five years’ time - in 2024.

Sending humans to Mars is by no means an easy feat; once achieved, it could very justifiably be viewed as humanity’s greatest achievement. However, while human missions to Mars are expected to be regular throughout the 21st century, establishing permanent settlements on Mars and colonising the Red Planet will, most likely, not happen anytime soon. There are immense hurdles which space scientists and astronauts have to face and overcome.

Whereas Mars was once a warm planet with liquid water and a thicker atmosphere, making it a - potentially - hospitable planet, today, temperatures on Mars can reach as low as -60°C. Mars’ incredibly thin atmosphere, which is about 100 times less dense than Earth’s, means that the planet does not have a shield which protects it from cosmic radiation. Exposing astronauts to large amounts of radiation poses a serious neurocognitive risk that effects can persist if astronauts are not protected against it. A number of solutions have been proposed as to how we can overcome this problem, the most prominent being thickening Mars atmosphere, part of our plan to terraform Mars, or establish human-made ‘lava tube’ shelters.

In thickening Mars’ atmosphere, scientists can take advantage of the large amounts of carbon dioxide which are trapped beneath its soil, especially in its poles. Release of carbon dioxide is expected to thicken the planet’s atmosphere and also cause an increase in its average temperature. Increasing the planet’s average temperature through the release of carbon dioxide already present on Mars will create an insulating layer around the planet and will prevent heat from dissipating into space, allowing the planet to release its own carbon dioxide, thus becoming a self-sustaining system.

Lack of a global magnetic field on Mars, however, does not help in retaining an atmosphere as it does not protect against solar wind and is another issue which needs to be resolved. The idea of providing Mars with an artificial magnetic field by placing a satellite in orbit

between the planet and the Sun has been proposed in order to protect Mars from high-energy solar particles, and to allow it to restore its atmosphere causing an increase in its atmospheric pressure and temperature.

The process of terraforming Mars to make it habitable to humans, however, is expected to take hundreds or thousands of years to complete. In the short-term, then, humanity must turn to other solutions which are more feasible and will make it possible for hu-

mans to start building martian colonies. This will be possible through paraterraforming Mars.

Paraterraforming refers to the construction of an enclosure on a planet that’s atmospheric pressure,

atmospheric composition, and environment, are Earth-like and thus allow habitation by humans. Thus, instead of exploring the ambitious plan to fundamentally alter the climate and atmosphere of a whole planet, scientists can only choose to focus on a small part of Mars.

The Biosphere 2 project at the University of Arizona is considered the world’s largest earth science experiment and tested whether Earth’s ecosystems could be recreated in a closed, controlled, artificial environment in which humans would live for a long period of time. From 1991 to 1993, eight courageous individuals lived in the Biosphere 2 dome on a permanent basis, without breaks. Although the mission produced both successes and failures, an overlooked aspect of colonising another planet was unveiled, and that concerned the social aspect and group dynamics of cohabiting with other humans. Besides the scientific hurdles, psychological and sociological aspects must also be taken into consideration.

As the day the first humans will step on Mars comes closer, we can be certain that that will not be a ‘small step’ for humans. Landing on Mars will establish something that humankind has only been dreaming of: the idea that it could spread out amongst the stars and become an interplanetary species.

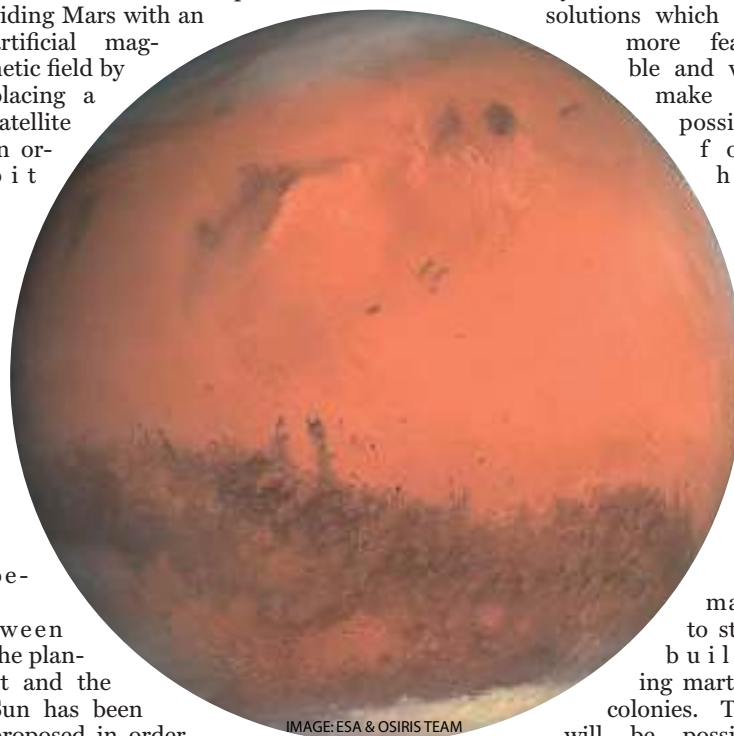


IMAGE: ESA & OSIRIS TEAM

The psychological benefits of plants in a busy world

Molly Taylor
SCIENCE EDITOR

85 PER CENT OF your life is spent indoors. The living space of the average person has moved with a shift in modern technology, away from the outside world and into our houses, offices and libraries. It is suggested that so-called 'technostress' - the diffusion of information technology - has led us to an inability to cope with technology in a healthy way; a bit harsh, but we know it's true. There are plenty of studies on how to manage this 'technostress', and many other stresses, mostly carried out from the 1980s onwards, and these strategies are pretty well-known like planning, social support and denial. More recent research however, has

provided a much better stress managing mechanism: plants.

The general gist is that this works by stimulating the four senses in a variety of ways. One study tested this theory, where participants were

Plants have the added benefits of improving task performance ”

exposed to a Peperomia Dahlstedtii, a common indoor plant. They were hooked up to an electrode on their chest and their feelings were measured using a self-rating assessment, rating their feelings as comfortable, relaxed or natural. They found that with the presence of indoor plants,

not only did their own feeling ratings improve, but also showed an improvement in physiological responses. The researchers found that with the presence of the plants, the activity of the autonomic nervous system was reduced by suppressing sympathetic activity. This is the part of the nervous system that reacts when we are exposed to stress, it's because of this system that heart rate increases and we eat and drink less when stressed. So without as much stimulation in this system, it was inferred that the participants were less stressed when exposed to interaction with a common house-plant.

This study was done in a greenhouse though, and I doubt many people live in those. Nevertheless, there is also evidence to suggest that indoor plants enhance job satisfaction, improve mood and have

even been found to positively affect resistance to diseases and chronic stress in some cases. This is fairly early research but still, it's a really cool insight into the benefits of our IKEA cacti.

In 2007, another study looked into the psychological benefits of indoor plants. They suggested that plants have the added benefits of improving task performance, emotional states, productivity and symptoms of ill health. The list goes on! They found that after controlling gender,

age and physical and psychological workplace factors, the number of indoor plants had a statistically reliable association with their productivity. They did note, however, that the size, shape and colour of the plant may have a role in how effective they are and that other research is required to find an answer to this. There may be a solid positive correlation between more plants and doing better work, so make your student house a greenhouse.



IMAGE: KIMGREENHALGH90

The secret circadian clocks driving your night's sleep

Molly Taylor
SCIENCE EDITOR

OUR INTERNAL BODY clock, which governs when we need to sleep and when we need to be alert is dictated by circadian rhythms - our sleep/wake cycle. The National Sleep Foundation explains this as a signal from the brain to the body to release the hormone melatonin (commonly known as our 'sleep hormone') which makes your body tired. The part of the brain apparently involved in the release of melatonin is called the suprachiasmatic nucleus - or, the SCN.

One study into this removed the SCN of genetically abnormal hamsters who had a sleep/wake cycle of 20 hours, rather than the usual 24 hours. They then implanted the SCN cells from those hamsters into the brains of genetically normal hamsters and found that their sleep/wake cycle was shortened to 20 hours. So largely, our sleep patterns are dictated by an array of biological systems which we do not consciously control.

There are also external factors that can impact these systems such as levels of light and cultural norms around when it is appropriate to sleep, wake, work and eat. Crucially, as of this year, studies have suggested that higher intensity of brain activity can drive a need for sleep, and there may be a gene linked to needing less sleep than the average person.

The genetics of circadian rhythms have been studied in depth but the other types of genes that play a role in sleep are not as heavily researched, particularly on the topic of how much sleep we actually need each night. Recently, family studies have been conducted in families with several members who require much less sleep than the average person.

One study looked into this phenomenon in April this year. The gene is known as ADRB1 and was identified using genetic linkage studies. The researchers conducted several experiments on mice carrying a mutated version of the gene and found these mice slept an average of 55 minutes less than regular mice, and people with the gene need

to sleep around two hours less than the average. The researchers noted, however, that this gene is not a dictator, and do not entertain the idea that there is one gene telling our bodies to sleep or wake, it is simply another piece in the extensive jigsaw of human behaviour.

People with the gene need to sleep for two hours less than the average ”

Some of this jigsaw is understood to be made up by environmental aspects beyond genetics, and this goes for most of our traits, but is definitely an important consideration for sleep analysis. Brain activity intensity - how active you are during the day, notwithstanding how long you've been awake, increases your need for sleep, if you have had four lectures in one day, you are naturally more tired despite the fact you woke up at midday, for example. The process involved in this is the homeostatic system, which is what causes us to feel really tired after a 'long day'. A study into this idea was done on zebrafish - they are really useful because their bodies are almost transparent and they have a similar sleep/wake cycle to humans. The drug-induced brain activity found that they slept for significantly longer after the drugs had worn off - confirming their idea that an increase in brain activity contributed to a greater need for sleep. They concluded that they have identified a good drug target for sleep disorders as a result of research into this, and may help understand conditions that impair sleep such as Alzheimer's disease.



IMAGE: MAGDA EHLERS

Riptides: dangers on the shoreline

Callum Tennant
DEPUTY EDITOR

RIPTIDES AND rip currents are some of the most dangerous water features that exist. The reason they're so deadly and dangerous is simple, a lack of understanding. Knowing the science behind rips and crucially knowing how to work with the science of one could one day save your life.

Riptides, and their commonly confused similar water feature: rip currents, can both be deadly. Both of these water effects pull you out to sea, before releasing you a certain distance from shore. Riptides and currents occur due to the gravitational pull of the moon. Riptides form where there is an inlet along a beach, a lagoon, a tidal flow in an estuary or any situation where tidal forces are squeezed into an enclosed spot. During low tide, the moon's gravitational pull pulls water out to sea. In any area where there is a narrowing of space in which water can flow back out to sea then a section of water will move at an increased speed as it is funnelled through this space. It's this action which causes people to be pulled out to sea. Rip speeds can range from three feet a second, upto eight feet a second. For context, the best Olympic swimmers can swim at seven feet a second for short amount of time.

The science behind surviving being caught in a rip is to fight your instincts and stay calm. 80-90 per cent of rips move in a large circular motion. Most rips will pull you between 100 to 300 feet offshore. But these circular motion rips will also bring you back to shore. There are two pieces of advice given to survive and overcome rips. The first, which

is contested, is to swim parallel to the beach if you are a strong swimmer. Because most riptides and currents come away from the beach the theory behind this is that if you swim parallel with the beach, you can break out of the area of active rip. After this, you can swim back to shore.

However, some experts warn how even some of the strongest swimmers still can't break out of rips in this way. Furthermore, they stress that multiple riptides are likely to operate along a stretch of beach. The risk is that you swim out of one and straight into another, while thinking that you are free. The advice which is almost universally accepted is to stay calm and let the rip carry you. The rip will either

Even the world's strongest swimmers can't break free of rips ”

spit you out allowing you to swim laterally before returning to shore. Or you can float until rescue.

It is important to note that rips can last for months, weeks or can appear just for a few hours. Rips can be incredibly strong, and can also operate in shallow water. Rips will not pull you under, the danger with rips is that panic leads to drowning. If caught in a rip do not swim against it. Let it take you out to sea. Rips are the cause of 46 deaths annually in the US alone. The tragedy is that the science behind riptides is relatively simple, the real issue is that there is a lack of awareness surrounding rips and their danger to human life.



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Nouse Interviews... Henry Winter

New Sport Editor, Dom Smith, sits down with Henry Winter, Chief Football Writer of The Times at the home of the England setup, St. George's Park.

Together, they talk all things England and the differences in reporting on football at international level.



IMAGE: HENRY WINTER

Do you approach England match reports differently from other match reports, if so how and why?

If a game is just on satellite, I write more "headers and volleys", actual match incident, as fewer people have watched it live. They tend to be more emotional pieces, as you inevitably get caught up in the occasion. This, of course, can lead to mood swings, hero to zero, in headlines.

Is it the case that you have to suppress your emotions when you're covering England, or does the emotion help to enrich your writing?

Emotion's vital. Just look at the last World Cup (any World Cup) and you appreciate the level of interest in the team. It's the time of year when I get football-related texts from friends or relations who usually have absolutely no interest in football. England matter hugely.

It's easier to be emotional about England now because they are such a likeable bunch under Gareth Southgate. There are some very impressive role models, Raheem Sterling, Danny Rose, Harry Kane etc, and one inevitably warms to them. Plus they are playing good football, reaching semi-finals, so after years (decades) of lows, it's a joy to cover some highs.

It's vital to pour any emotion into the screen. It's cathartic, so I often walk out of the ground very relaxed, having let rip (I hope) with the piece. I'll be chatting to fans and admire how still

buzzing they are. Like all the football writers, I've left a lot of the adrenalin in the piece.

Do journalists tend to have favourite players and managers? If so, who are your all-time England favourites?

Wayne Rooney never ducked a question, always spoke well. Sven-Göran Eriksson was not a great coach, but I admired his laconic approach to life. Southgate is always very impressive, as a player he came out and talked after that penalty miss at Euro '96 when it would have been easier to hide, and he's the same, open and friendly, as a manager.

Raheem Sterling is special as a man and a player. I have huge respect for Steven Gerrard, Frank Lampard and Paul Scholes from the Golden Generation. Paul Ince is always great company. I spent a year writing a book with Michael Carrick and as a character and player, few are better.

Would you say England's long underachievement post-'66 can really be attributed to pressure from the media? Have you been able to rationalise results like Germany 2010 and Iceland 2016?

Not good enough, not hungry, not well-coached enough, not brave enough. Too fearful. Southgate has removed the fear that used to affect past England sides at major tournaments.

What would you say is England's best ever performance? Is it re-

ally the 1966 final or have we ever topped that?

Far more experienced journalists than me always say the 1970 squad was better. There were moments at Italia '90 and Euro '96, against the Dutch, was special.

What has Southgate done right?

Removed the fear, got the players to express themselves to the media, to their families, to the fans, reconnecting, and expressing themselves on the pitch.

He's also got some very good players. He's made turning up for England fun again. As there are more age-group games, the players are building up relationships before reaching the first team.

Why do you believe that impressive England tournaments unite the country to such a strong degree?

A sense of longing, a deep passion in football and this is a team everybody can share.

You wrote the book *Fifty Years of Hurt* a few months after England's Euro 2016 capitulation against Iceland. You've followed England at high and low points, where do we stand right now?

In a good place. I was indebted to the publishers for inserting the words "and why we never stop believing" because there's always hope, never more so than now under the guidance of Gareth Southgate.



IMAGE: SOCCER.RU

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Dom Smith
SPORT EDITOR



THIS LITTLE BOX marks my very first piece as *Nouse* Sport Editor. It's an exciting moment, because for the next three-hundred-and-something words I can write sarcastically. It's a British thing.

Alongside fellow Sport Editor, James Moultrie and plenty of other contributors along the way, I hereby promise to offer high quality coverage of uni- and also non-uni-related sport for the next year.

This issue is headed up, to the left, by an interview I conducted with The Times' Chief Football Writer, Henry Winter. He speaks about what makes a cracking match report, adding his insight as to why covering England over the years has been so rewarding but so painful.

Our campus match reports are of the Women's 2s in netball and the Men's football 2s. These two fixtures had a couple of interesting plot-twists along the way. All I can say is... read them. Please.

James' feature article covers the brand spanking new 'York Games', which happens in November. What an event that will be, by the way. His second feature piece is a must-read; it outlines the controversy around so-called 'shoe technology' in marathon running.

Alex Woodward returns with a column piece, explaining his thoughts on a UK football broadcasting dispute. We also look at Andy Murray's return to tennis, following his two-year battle with a lingering back injury.

Finally, the back page article considers two key issues. These are the oversubscription that many of our most-loved sport societies are experiencing at the moment, plus the dilemma of trying to keep as much uni sport as possible on campus.

When there are this many pressing issues to cover, some key stories inevitably miss out. I think it's vital to give a wholehearted shoutout to the England men's rugby side. The All Blacks were on the ropes for almost the entire match. England played so unbelievably well that, to be honest, it's almost a story that wrote itself on the day.

Savour the sport,
Dom

NOUSE STAT ZONE

The Women's rugby 1s XV have just two players in the side that know the feeling of losing a 1s game at university level, last losing away to Leeds in the spring of 2017.

UYNC's goal attack, Becky Allen, scored 19 of the team's 23 second-half points, in their 43-30 win over Durham 5s.

Men's 1s won three disciplines out of three in their comprehensive fencing win over Manchester.

Playing in a derby against Sheffield 1s, York Men's Volleyball 1s scored 104 points on their way to victory.

In the college rugby, James College conceded zero points, winning 28-0 against Halifax.



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

Has Andy Murray returned as a doubles player?

Dom Smith assesses whether or not a post-surgery Andy Murray has a career left in singles tennis

Dom Smith
SPORT EDITOR

WHAT A RESULT IT used to be – to draw Andy Murray at Wimbledon. It was any player's dream; Centre Court would be packed, that was a guarantee. But it goes without saying, the man that drew Andy Murray was the villain of the day.

The joy and pride and buzz around SW19 when the Scotsman went storming into the later rounds was an intangible energy of belief, brilliance, strawberries and cream. In 2017, the taste became distinctly more bitter though, as Murray struggled with a lingering hip injury. Bad form set in, culminating in a quarter-final defeat to Sam Querrey at Wimbledon.

With his ATP World Ranking plummeting from 1st to 839th in one year, Murray ummed and aahed about retirement. Ultimately, he proceeded with hip-resurfacing surgery.

Ever the philosopher, Murray deliberated heavily over his return to tennis. Indeed – would it even happen at all? It would. Murray reappeared in June at Queen's, one of his favourite destinations on the tour. But this wouldn't be a wildcard Andy Murray battling through alone. He had a partner; playing

doubles with Spanish veteran Feliciano López.

Driven by a fierce and dedicated following, the pair knocked out the top seeds in Round 1 and the defending champions at the semi-final stage on their way to an inspired title victory.

But the trophy itself paled into insignificance when the quality of tennis these two were producing was observed. Murray, in particular, made ridiculous winners and audacious lobs, delving into his dusty catalogue of scintillating tennis to truly capture a British tennis audience again.

There were to be no more titles over the rest of the summer though, as Murray's continuing return to the sport he loves yielded first, second and third round exits in his next three competitions. These were the men's doubles at Eastbourne and both the men's and mixed doubles at Wimbledon. Murray was back competing in his favourite tournaments of the year. It was great to see.

In the mixed doubles at SW19, Serena Williams was Murray's faithful partner. Here she displayed just how supreme she has been for the last 20 years. Murray was good too; very good – but still maintained that a return to singles was a good while away, yet.

Further appearances at doubles events with his brother Jamie and López again offered yet more stun-

ning tennis, but not more titles. Murray's next move was the biggest crowd-pleaser of all. He confirmed his return as a singles player.

It wasn't easy. Murray's charisma and superhuman belief in himself doesn't always see him through every time. Defeats to the likes of Richard Gasquet, Alex de Minaur and Fabio Fognini were to be expected at this stage, but Murray was producing victories, too.

At the China Open, he produced an exceptional performance at the net to defeat 13th seed Matteo Berrettini, of Italy. This was a significant scalp for a still rough and ready Andy Murray. Tapping into this fire and form, he followed

up with another impressive win, knocking compatriot Cameron Norrie out in the next round.

Defeat at the quarterfinals to Dominic Thiem was an expected outcome, however. Thiem is world number five and Murray's return was never going to be completely seam-

less. ATP Final with such emotional and poignant context.

A familiar foe awaited Murray: an old rivalry with Stan Wawrinka was about to write its newest chapter. Again, Murray lost the first set. And then just as in the semi, he focused, regrouped and upped his levels.

Wawrinka was firing on all cylinders in that first set, but Murray dug deep and broke back for 3-3 midway through the second. He gave out one of his almighty roars, igniting a similar reaction from the Antwerp crowd. And then a number of minutes later, he broke decisively again – stealing the second set to level the match.

In the third and final set, the man-that-never-stops-running outfoxed a fellow three-time Grand Slam winner to edge a pulsating contest. With that, Sir Andy Murray claimed his first ATP title in two-and-a-half years.

Deeply drained after the match, he acknowledged the crowd, before politely sitting down on his bench and sobbing into his hands.

Andy Murray won Queen's as a doubles player on his return from potentially career-ending surgery back in June. But does that make him a doubles player? No.

This brother from Dunblane was born to take centre-stage at Centre Courts around the world. Long may that continue.



IMAGE: CARINE06

Technological doping: is it killing the marathon?

James Moultrie challenges whether the advantages Nike have in the running shoe industry has gone too far

James Moultrie
SPORT EDITOR

ELIUD KIPCHOGE AND Brigid Kosgei stole sports headlines with the two greatest long-distance running performances in history.

This article is in no way trying to take away from either of the athlete's skill or the amount which they have inspired people, but simply to address the future of running shoe technology and Nike's overwhelming growth in dominance over the last five years.

Kipchoge ran a 1:59:40, breaking the two hour barrier which commentators have built up as an unbreakable ceiling showing a landmark moment in the sport.

His truly inspiring story as a boy who used to run two miles every day to school, to reaching the absolute pinnacle of long-distance running – you can say nothing more or less than that he is the best marathon runner ever. Brigid Kosgei's performance in the Chicago Marathon just the day after Kipchoge's rounded off a great weekend for the sport as she broke Paula Radcliffe's 16-year-old record by 81 seconds

with an unheard of 2:14:04.

Her obliteration of the old record showed a truly amazing performance; arguably much more impressive than Kipchoge's given that her time will go down as the official IAAF recognised record of finishing six minutes ahead of the next female finisher. She also would have finished 23rd in the men's event. Put into context, in the recent York marathon, the highest finisher in the women's event finished slower than 81 male runners.

Running as a sport, or even just as an activity, is great because just about anyone can do it, anywhere, with very limited equipment; the only essentials being clothes and shoes. This makes for very limited room for unfair advantages when it comes to kit.

This is very similar to swimming in how stripped back they are; not much can be said on what the athletes are using. Despite this, swimming as a

sport experienced a huge advancement (and subsequent banning) in equipment following the 2008 Beijing Olympics where Speedo's LZR elite suit took all the headlines. 98 per cent of all medals went to athletes wearing the suit along with the fact that only a year and a half after its release, 93 world records had been broken. The athletes not wearing the suit were at a huge disadvantage. This was due to the oxygen saved through drag reduction and higher core stability. With Speedo already being the leading name in the industry this bridged the gap too far and took away from the nature of swimming and athletes' abilities.

Long distance, and specifically marathon running, is suffering from a similar issue as Nike have gained a huge dominance in the running shoe industry. Both Kipchoge and Kosgei were wearing Nike shoes in their record-breaking attempts – with Kipchoge's being a bespoke unreleased model with added carbon plates in the midsole

providing propulsion forward every time his foot hits the ground. Kosgei was wearing the regular Vaporfly Next % which is at the forefront of current Nike models available – both designed around the basis of percentages – referring to the added running economy gained by wearing the shoe. Four to six per cent Running economy amounts to minutes advantage solely from the shoe, according to South African sports scientist Ross Tucker minutes advantage solely from the shoe.

Both athletes broke huge boundaries and are undeniably the two greatest marathon runners ever. However, the argument is not so much about them, but more that Nike has gained the same advantage Speedo did in 2008 and the technology should either be made available to all or removed completely. The top five men and top four women in the 2019 London marathon were all sponsored by, and wearing Nike running shoes.

The final issue is whether this is simply a business-driven movement, with the shoe Nike sells retailing for £240 and the event being held by the Multinational Chemicals company INEOS.

Kipchoge's inspirational breakthrough won't count as the official

world record given the nature of the attempt being done at near perfect conditions, with a group of elite pacemakers, on a flat course with limited corners (which slow down runners) in Vienna's Prater park. There was a previous attempt the year before, spearheaded by Nike, but Kipchoge missed out on the two hour barrier by 20 seconds.

Nike's shoes and marathon running will undeniably benefit from this one weekend of long-distance running history as people will want the best shoes possible which both Kosgei and Kipchoge proved to be made by Nike.

However, the poorer athletes from less developed countries won't have access to the expensive Nike trainer – an issue which Speedo's LZR Elite also got criticised for (£320). This added to the other factors leading to the swimsuit being banned and similar steps should be taken by the IAAF to remove this seriously worrying advantage one brand's technology holds, unless Nike are willing to give up the technology to other brands unlikely, given they have already obtained a patent on the specific use of three carbon plates. It's going to have to be either all or nothing.



IMAGE: MARCO VERCH

The three o'clock blackout needs to die

Alex Woodward puts forward a strong case that 15:00 games need to be televised

Alex Woodward
DEPUTY SPORT EDITOR

ElevenSports, who own the rights to Serie A in the UK, have chosen to have audio commentary only for the opening 15 minutes of matches, displaying a message about their disagreement with this policy. They point out that only the UK and Montenegro are affected.

So why is this policy so dreadful? Let me start by addressing the main concern presented by Bob Lord in the 1960s. I understand his concerns considering the fact that televised football was very new back then and the effects were unknown (even if the idea of skipping a football game to watch it on a 9-inch colourless TV is laughable now). This idea though is completely flawed. While watching TV games in the past week, I have still seen sold out grounds, both here and in countries where the blackout does not apply. It's understandable though; the atmosphere at a live match makes it an altogether different experience. Most football fans would argue it's a better experience.

There are those who

might not have the means to go to every game, who will want to watch some on TV. This is the reality for many students and people who can't afford their club's season ticket price (hello, Arsenal.)

Next, I would like to ask who actually benefits; who wins by keeping the blackout in place? The owners don't, as they cannot make as much TV revenue as they would if the blackout wasn't in place and again, would not lose any attendance from having 15:00 games aired. The fans don't win as it means fixtures get moved around more (though there would still be games moved, there would probably be fewer) and they don't have the option of watching the game at home if they cannot make it to the ground. The FA don't win as it doesn't help with any of their aims of getting more fans into the grounds or encouraging them to watch grassroots football.

So, there just isn't a winner, no one gains - everyone loses. From all of this, you could

assume that people who can't or don't attend a game can't and don't watch games banned by the 15:00 blackout.

In reality, I could have watched all these matches quite easily online. For example, EFL clubs either use iFollow or have their own streaming service for viewers outside the UK, for a small fee. However, a VPN can easily get around these barriers and there doesn't seem to be much incentive to make it harder for British football fans to make sides even richer.

The Premier League and its teams don't have anything like this, despite rumours of it coming soon. However, there are many illegal streams that can be found through a simple search.

These streams, according to The Drum, cost Premier League teams £1m per game.

So, to conclude, we're left with a 1960s system that doesn't work today.

The blackout is detrimental to fans, owners, clubs and the FA. If common sense prevails, the Premier League and EFL's pushes against it may prove too strong.

The blackout may be on its last legs, and that is nothing but a good thing.



Saturday 26 October saw many great football fixtures in Britain and on the continent.

Bayern Munich were taking on Union Berlin in the Bundesliga at 14:30, there were Premier League and Championship fixtures at 15:00 and Inter Milan were playing Parma in Serie A at 17:00.

Unfortunately for me, I couldn't watch any of the games mentioned before five pm, or the opening 15 minutes of the Inter game, due to a rule set in the 1960s.

Then-Burnley Chairman Bob Lord argued to fellow chairmen of clubs in the Football League that the rise of televised matches on a Saturday afternoon would lead to the inevitable reduction in attendances, even of games that were not being televised, meaning less revenue.

As a result, the FA introduced the blackout - no game is allowed to be televised live in the UK between 14:45 and 17:15. The FA Cup final used to be an exception, but has since been moved to 17:00.

York Games fills void for autumn sport

York Sport Union introduces new sporting event in this term to add to Varsity and Roses

James Moultrie
SPORT EDITOR

made teams in a range of events. The teams will need to be a mixture of genders amounting to 10 members and a total of 28 teams in total.

This diversity in teams will come through, those not involved in sports teams, (and therefore won't be competing in Varsity or Roses), and also gives a chance for people who can't commit fully to a sports team for the whole year round to play.

Financial commitments and university timings make it very difficult for some people to stay involved in a sports team or even join one in the first place so a one-off tournament will provide some solution to that.

While it is a competition like Varsity and Roses, it adds a different element of inclusivity anyone of any sporting ability can compete also given the timing of the event, it is a good chance for freshers to get involved as well allowing them to compete with their flatmates, for example. It also won't be held back through commitment to revision or

coursework it is a relatively quiet time of the year with people just getting settled in.

It also gives a chance to show off some of the facilities York Sport has to offer with events taking place all across campus - such as the gym in the Sports Centre and the swimming pool in the Sports Village.

This will be beneficial to both students new and old showing how accessible sport is for everyone on campus. The places I found intimidating at first (such as the gym,) aren't so much as they may seem and are very friendly environments.

This will also add to the events already happening in York such as the Get Active programme getting as many people as possible staying active and healthy. The money taken from entry to the event (£10 per person) will be re-invested back into York Sport adding essential funds to the growing sporting participation in York.

This will contribute to greater quality and quantity of facilities to be created and maintained on campus. If all 28 team spots are filled this will amount to £2 800 being generated for York Sport a significant amount which is vital to keep funding the ever-growing number of people participating in sport at York. Other events such as the 5-a side football tournament for RAG will round off a brilliant first term for sport, giving as many opportu-

nities to get involved with sport as possible.

It brings an 'Olympic' spirit to a campus event

The tournament will hopefully headline the start of the sporting calendar in York's first term, setting the tone for an inclusive University that wants all students to participate physical activity to benefit their physical health as well as their mental wellbeing. Also, there is the added incentive of a Black Card for each member of the winning team, something which will surely draw people in every year, with the promise of better access to York's best club nights.

Day 1 Schedule:

- Tug of War on 22 Acres
- 10km row in the ~YSC Gym/Arena
- Swimming in the YSV pool

Day 2 Schedule:

- Capture the flag on 22 acres
- Netball in the YSC Arena
- Olympics style event on the Athletics track.

SPORT AT YORK IS undeniably dominated by two events: Varsity which takes place in February and Roses in May. York Sport Union have now tried to change this with the introduction of the York games.

A new event which will take place in Autumn term filling this void where a sporting event was missing. Autumn, Spring and Summer will now be covered giving the whole campus some sport to look forward to. Chris Oldnall, the Equal Opportunities Officer for York Sport Union said that "it brings a very good 'Olympic' spirit to campus and creates an Autumn term event, since Spring and Summer terms are devoted to college Varsity and Roses this allows York to focus on York."

The Games are a chance for friends to create these 'Super Teams' and compete against other student-



England and South Africa set for replay of 2007 RWC final

After England's dominant performance over the All Blacks on Saturday, South Africa followed suit with a less convincing win over Wales in a hard-fought match in Yokohama. They face off in the final on Saturday at 9 am.

York Sport Talks presents: The Game Changer

Sir Ian McGeechan, former Rugby Union player and coach who led the British and Irish Lions to famous tour wins in 1989 and 1997; Alistair Gray, author of *The Game Changers* and video input from Baroness Sue Campbell - Head of Women's Football and the FA.

York Sport Centre recognised for success.

York Sport Centre had a big night of success winning the award for Best Large Gym at the Minster FM Listeners choice awards.

FA Cup Proper awaits York City FC

Helped by a piercing drive from Sean Newton, York City reached the First Round of the FA Cup on Saturday 19 October. 2 870 were in attendance to watch City see off Stockport County.

Yorkshire to gain batsman

Middlesex and England batsman Dawid Malan is odds on to sign for Yorkshire.

Leicester City break Premier League record

Leicester City thrashed Southampton 9-0 in the Premier League on Friday. No team has ever won an away match in England's top tier by as many as this. Jamie Vardy and Ayoze Pérez both hit hat-tricks on the night.

York Sport teams volunteer at Yorkshire Marathon

York uni teams, such as women's rugby and men's football, braved cold and wet weather to provide drinks and support for runners the weekend-before-last.

Great Britain's rugby league Lions lose on return

After a 12 year absence from playing, GBRL lost 14-6 to Tonga in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Men's 2s lose on pens, but the ref steals the show

A spirited York 2s side crashed out in the first round: Dom Smith explains how new laws influenced proceedings on the day

Dom Smith
SPORT EDITOR

SUNDERLAND 1ST TEAM prevailed on penalties against York's 2nd side to reach the Men's Northern Conference Plate on Wednesday 23 October.

In what was a tense and tactical encounter, the match ended 1-1 – Sunderland successful at the penalty shootout stage, by a scoreline of four goals to two.

The visitors, Sunderland, started the match the better side, scrapping the game's first big chance over the bar from little more than six yard out. Moments later, referee Peter Hartley adjudged Sunderland's Number 7 to have slid in dangerously and duly presented him with the game's first booking.

Proceedings then entered a dull period, before livening up again just past the half-hour mark. Twice within three minutes, Sunderland striker Joe Tunc was denied well by York's debutant goalkeeper, Jack Leonard – first saving with his leg, then with a firm hand down to his right.

Another booking and thus an

increased matchday fine was suffered by Sunderland in the 41st minute.

Then, in the clearest opening yet, a defensive mix-up from a University of Sunderland centre-back allowed striker Kenny Pearce to steal in and shoot on goal. As it happened, it wasn't a very good shot and not even a teammate diving in at the back-post could prevent the ball from tricking wide harmlessly. Sunderland had got away with one; how had York not scored?

50%

The percentage of York's penalties that were saved by Sunderland's Karl Beggs

The second half began; the second half of a game delicately poised at 0-0. Suddenly, the fixture burst into life as York's Tom Guffick benefited from a big deflection, watching his effort nestle into the corner past the hapless Sunderland goalkeeper, Karl Beggs. The home side had stolen the lead in an otherwise even contest.

However, they couldn't hold it. Tunc was felled in the box three

minutes on from York's goal, and a penalty was given instantly. York defender Joe Cunning, vocal throughout to both his teammates and the referee, pleaded his colleague's innocence.

When he continued to do so, even after referee Peter Hartley had warned him not to, he was given his marching orders. York were down to 10 men. Or were they...? Hartley had put him in the sinbin for 10 minutes. Everyone was perplexed.

Questioned on the incident after the match, the referee explained that "the player showed dissent and kept going on about the decision. It's dissent, and dissent is a ten-minute sinbin [as of] this season. It's step seven [of the football pyramid] downwards, so you're not going to see it in the professional game."

Joe Tunc stepped up to hammer his penalty past Leonard, despite the goalkeeper getting a sizeable touch on the ball as it went in. It marked a shift in the match – Sunderland now had the psychological advantage, as well as the man-advantage for 10 minutes.

But this tie started to die out. The 68th minutes, brought a double chance for the away side, who couldn't find the net despite two

presentable chances close in. And that was almost it for drama in normal time apart from a late third yellow card for Sunderland, this one for tugging a York midfielder back to thwart a counterattack. That was it; York and Sunderland were heading for extra-time.

The home side were no longer the threat they had been by this point, but Sunderland kept pressing for what they felt would be a deserved winner if it ever arrived. It didn't. The lottery of a penalty shootout beckoned for these two well-matched teams.

York 2s captain, Casper Montgomery, was the first to step up. He struck the ball well but telegraphed his intended destination, allowing Karl Beggs to read it and save well, down to his left. Joe Tunc stepped up, belting a fine penalty into the top left corner, improving on the spot-kick he'd scored in normal time.

Four penalties in a row were then scored, taking the scoreline to 3-2 in favour of the visitors. Kenny Pearce stepped forward to strike a pressure penalty. He struck it tamerly though, allowing Beggs to block once more.

All Sunderland needed to do was score. They did just that, con-

firmed a First Round exit for York 2s in this year's Men's Northern Conference Plate.

How long will York have to wait to get their revenge? Well, potentially seven days. These two play each other in exactly a week's time again on 22 Acres, but that will be a league encounter.



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

UYNC 2s second wind proves too much for Durham

UoY Netball club 2s win by big margin over Durham Uni 5s following on from an even, end to end first

James Moultrie
SPORT EDITOR

ATTEMPTING TO continue on from their form last year, the University of York Netball Club 2s faced Durham University 5s in the York Sport Arena. The match started tentatively with both sides getting penalised in their own goal Ds – allowing easy unopposed points to go in.

It was end to end with both centres finding early room and control of the match. Durham's goal attack and shooter proved difficult to deal with early on, rarely missing any opportunity that came their way in the D. First quarter was plagued slightly by penalties however this just highlighted a nervous start from both teams, with numerous calls of contact being made against both teams.

York found themselves constantly chasing in the second quarter with Durham's attack proving ominous – every York response was met with ease by Durham who didn't appear to be working as hard for the points they scored. Both their goal attack and goal shooter were finding the net from anywhere within the goal circle.

With six minutes left in the quarter, York finally retook the lead,

getting the crowd going a similar atmosphere to Roses even without the same quantity of spectators. Numerous members of the York Sport Union committee were there constantly getting the crowd fired up.

The half, however, finished even at 20-20, a good roundup of the whole half of netball from two clearly evenly matched teams failing to outscore each other. The story of the half was quite a tentative one with no side rally having complete dominance but York had worked very hard to stay in touch and not yet Durham pull away. A big effort was going to be needed to turn them over.

The second half was set up nicely by the events of the first, York's support trying to really motivate the players.

This was met with ripe response from the players. With aggressive defensive play from the goalkeeper, intercepting a pass off Durham's initial move from the centre pass. However, this was

not followed up and York's heads started to drop, going 24-21 down in the first five minutes of the half. Passes were failing to go to hand and Durham's centre easily found space in all thirds of the court.

With some position changes and more communication, team morale was up as York yet again responded to Durham's charge, not letting them run away with the game.

York's goal attack Becky Allen started to really take control in the goal circle finding the final few points for York to level up the scores and take the lead again at 26-25. York was gaining the momentum shift key in the psychology of netball as a team sport and for the individual players it was clear Allen had found great shooting form and took any advantage available to her in the goal circle.

A seriously prominent second wind in the half highlighted UYNC's commitment to fitness as all posi-

tions chipped away at Durham's confidence allowing them to take

19

Goals scored by UYNC's Goal Attack Becky Allen in the second half.

a 27-25 lead into the final quarter of the match. No drop off in effort was evident throughout the entire contest.

The final quarter started to really expose a poor attitude from Durham as they dropped point after point with no response. Credit must also go to York's final third defence and link up play through its Wing defence, wing attack and centre. The momentum was all in York's favour taking the lead by five points with every pass seeming to stick and Durham seeming to lose the ball and the run of penalties each time they had possession.

The discipline was really starting to drop off for Durham with some of their players resorting to increased aggression to retain the ball a frustration which will not go in a non-contact sport. York's GD went down in a heavy collision but got straight back up to contribute to her team's big defensive effort.

York had full control of the game at 34 to 27 and the Durham

GA and GS early barrage of points was not continued, missing on numerous attempts with the rebounds being collected by York's goal defence and goal keeper.

Home advantage definitely played a key part in the 2s success given how much appreciation the crowd had for every blocked pass, steal, rebound and point scored. The Durham players started to crumble and they were even penalised for an elbow to the chest highlighting again the decline in discipline.

The pressure was never let off even in the final five minutes of the match with a small response from Durham getting within five points. However, York moved the ball around still at a fast pace, scoring seven unanswered points with attacking plays in which nearly all players on the court touched the ball. Even in the final 11 seconds of the match, York's GD got a rebound capping off a strong performance.

The match can be summed up as a huge success and portrayal of character from the 2s as they were defiant against a talented Durham opposition. After going and staying behind for numerous occasions in the match, they were able to stay in touch and proceed to take complete control and run away with the match, the final score being 43-30. Any early worries were squashed setting the up for a positive season.



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

Henry Winter

Nouse speaks with *The Times'* Chief Football Writer on all things England
P.24



Techno doping?

James Moultrie assesses whether Nike are ruining the art of the marathon
P.25



York Games

Inaugural York Games to get underway in early stages of November
P.26



SPORT

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Tuesday 29 October 2019



Campus can't cope with sport interest levels

James Moultrie & Dom Smith
SPORT EDITORS

SPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY of York is struggling to keep up with growing demand. Facilities on campus have barely expanded, despite the University's population growing rapidly by nearly 3 000 in the last five years. The current level stands at nearly 19 000.

This has inevitably increased the level of interest and participation in sport on campus. Maddi Cannell, YUSU Sport President, feels the situation has reached "crisis point."

The University of York Badminton Club, to take an example, averages an attendance of around 120 people for their Monday sessions.

It's quite a task to facilitate space and time for this number of people to play. What clubs don't want to do is turn people away because of a lack of playing space. Something has got to give.

College football on the JLD, the YSV 3G pitch and 22 Acres has a current turnaround time of just three minutes between fixtures.

These are positive problems to have, however, they still need addressing. Derwent College has seven men's football teams. That's a brilliant effort, but it requires a lot more effort to cater for this level of interest.

Places like 22 Acres are entirely weather-dependent for usage too, of course. To ensure the packed rugby calendar didn't suffer in the recent rain, the groundsmen spent an entire day improving drainage on pitches on Wednesday 23 October.

Sports such as college rugby are an example of what the Uni doesn't want to have to move off campus (as they have done in the past) because this simply costs the clubs more money on transport.

Also, this will reduce the number of spectators, which is consistently high at matches – something which wasn't evident when matches were played at the York RI Rugby Football Club.

Additional problems were unravelling because of the early times at which afternoon matches were being called off. Games starting at 2pm had cancellation deadlines of 10am on 22 Acres. Improved communications between the Sport President and groundsmen had this successfully changed to 12pm, allowing for improvements in the weather, on the day.

If this limits postponements,

then it will go down as a successful policy change. However, if sports teams keep missing games or training sessions, they may decide to move off campus due to frustration alone.

A club that has no choice but to leave campus for sport is the Mountaineering (Climbing) Club. They take part in bouldering and climbing at two separate venues, both at least two-and-a-half miles away from campus.

For members that don't own a bike, it not only costs the club in borrowing the facilities but also themselves in their transport costs.

The University of Nottingham does not have this problem; they built a state-of-the-art climbing wall for their students recently. It was a reactionary investment to Nottingham Trent's 30ft climbing wall, erected as part of their City Sports

Centre which opened in 2013. Both universities identified climbing as a good way into sport for those looking to find that something new.

York Sport should identify opportunities like this, investing long-term into sport on campus. Short-term solutions of pushing certain clubs off campus takes money from students – money which doesn't go back into campus sport.

A long-term larger investment into greater quality, quantity and variety of facilities is a must. It could contribute to an improved reputation for York as a leading university for sports facilities in the UK.

All these changes and prospective changes are ambitious, to say the least. But the most pressing of priorities has surely got to be encouraging sport at the University of York. We've simply got to make sure we're not driving people away.