

# NOUSE

“8,000 particle physicists, about half the total number in the world, are working at CERN”

Inside the God Machine >> M8 - 10



## Society budgets slashed after ‘closed-door’ YUSU meeting

### Campus assault numbers increase

A SIGNIFICANT increase in attacks on students on campus has forced the University to arrange for extra security patrols in conjunction with local police. Three girls were assaulted in two separate incidents while walking home >> NEWS P3

### 24-hour license bid for bar abandoned

YUSU HAVE dropped plans for a 24-hour alcohol license for Langwith bar following strong pressure from the University. Faced with the threat of losing University support for the project, Union officers settled instead for a standard 2am license, in line with all other campus bars >> NEWS P4-5

### Sports Centre ‘not value for money’

ALEX LACY has slammed both the cost of membership and facilities on offer at the campus sports centre. Claiming that membership was too expensive, AU President Lacy criticised the poor standard of facilities at York in comparison with other UK universities >> NEWS P6

### Football 1sts earn draw with Leeds

THE MENS’ 1sts produced a strong performance to hold a well-fancied Leeds team to a goalless draw. An understrength side kept the talented opposition players at bay throughout the match >> SPORT P19

### As Halloween draws near we look at the reasons for fear

>> MUSE M15



MATT GRUM

MICHAEL BRUNSDEN

ALEXANDRU HRISTEA



### BAD TASTE

### MUSIC SOCIETY

### LGBT SOCIAL

£1,328

£1,245

£617

#### Raf Sanchez Anjli Raval

CAMPUS SOCIETIES have accused YUSU of “closed-door decision making” after budgets were cut dramatically last term.

Music Society, the largest Union society, received a grant of £1,245 last year but will receive no money from YUSU this year. Campus magazine *Bad Taste* saw its budget cut from £4,094 to £2,765 while Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual (LGBT) Social’s budget was more than halved from £1,100 to £493.33.

Many societies have suffered budget cuts after the overall

amount available for allocation fell. In the 2007/08 academic year £35,817 was allocated amongst 56 societies, an average of £639.59 per society. In 2008/09 £31,100 has been divided amongst 67 societies, giving an average of £464.18.

In previous years society treasurers have been invited to draw up a budget to present it to a meeting of Union Finance Committee for approval. The meeting was originally scheduled by former Societies and Communications Officer Sam Bayley for Monday, June 2. It was then cancelled by email on Sunday night and rescheduled for June 9. The rescheduled meeting was then also cancelled.

On Thursday, June 19 Bayley

emailed societies to inform them that he and Service Finance Officer Matt Burton had made a series of “prudent cuts” to budget proposals and that the cut-down budgets would be submitted to Finance Committee instead of the original grant requests made by treasurers.

In the email Bayley described as the proposals made by himself and Burton as a “fair, balanced offer for all interested societies.” He asked treasurers to “be reasonable and sensible about this - this budget is a hard job to put together and we feel we’ve done it as well as possible. Changes at this time still are possible but are difficult.”

Society chairs reacted angrily to the handling of the budget.

Former LGBT Social chair Michael Rutherford said: “From start to finish, the communication from Sam Bayley was appalling. We were never told when the meeting was going to be, and it was only through hounding him that we got any information. Then, our meeting was cancelled and YUSU opted to do the full process without any input. Our budget was more than halved from the 2007-08 figure without any consultation.”

“LGBT Social and several other societies were the victims of a lazy process,” Rutherford added.

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**LEADER >>** Page 10

# Society treasurers protest budget cuts following 'chaotic' consultation process

<< Continued from front

Music Society treasurer James Harper said: "The entire process was poorly managed and we were marginalised in the process without any attention paid to our needs. Sam Bayley just did not care."

In a statement the *Zahir*, which lost £680, said: "We were disappointed to find that our own society grant had been slashed by almost half without any warning or any satisfactory explanation."

Rutherford and the chairs of Lazerus, Fragsoc and Science Fiction & Fantasy Society sent Bayley a joint statement on June 25 claiming "the procedure undertaken made it impossible for many societies to present an effective and accurate budget proposal."

Labour Club Chair David Levene, a society that was given the funding it requested, said: "There was very, very little consultation and it was very disorganised."

Speaking to *Nouse* this week, Bayley rejected claims that the societies had been shut out of the budgeting process. He said: "The Finance Meeting was not cancelled altogether, all of the society budgets were presented to a Finance Committee which had the final say

on how funds were distributed. Societies were able to attend the meeting if they so wished, and in fact some did. The team was busy but did not neglect its duties to society budgeting."

"When people say that communication was poor what they actually mean is that they didn't check their emails," he added.

Burton said: "I think we could have been better at communicating what we were doing and about some meetings being cancelled but there was still the opportunity, and some societies took it, to come and say why they needed more money. We could have been better at communicating how that was done."

Burton said that the smaller amount of money allocated directly to societies this year was the result of a number of factors, including rising overhead costs, but was largely down to the decision to hire a new staff member in the Student Activities Office. The office will provide "front of house support to committees and societies."

He denied that the cuts were linked to the YUSU bar project, currently budgeted at £300,000.

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## SOCIETY FUNDING



### Gilbert & Sullivan Society

Gilbert & Sullivan puts on shows in the spring term and another musical of choice in the summer term. The society performed *Wicked* last term.

Budget 2007/08: **£317.47** Budget 2008/09: **£35**



### FragSoc

The society runs events with multiplayer computer gaming for up to 64 people at each event, usually situated in Goodricke College.

Budget 2007/08: **£827** Budget 2008/09: **£170**



### United Nations Association

The UNA promotes awareness of international politics through discussion groups and members attending national Model United Nations conferences.

Budget 2007/08: **£1,247** Budget 2008/09: **£748.33**



### Zahir Magazine

The *Zahir* is a literary magazine on campus which publishes articles on topics from politics to poetry. The magazine also has a regularly updated website.

Budget 2007/08: **£1,500** Budget 2008/09: **£820**



### Science Fiction & Fantasy Society

For lovers of science fiction and fantasy, members take part in roleplay from live action and tabletop to card gaming, boardgames and wargaming.

Budget 2007/08: **£825** Budget 2008/09: **£533**

## YUSU claims refund for Freshers' Ball no-show

YUSU are currently pursuing a refund from the agency representing intended Freshers' Ball headliners Noah and the Whale. The band, who failed to appear at the event, attributed their absence to frontman Charlie Fink's ill-health. The no-show left many first year students feeling disappointed. "To be honest, I feel like I've paid £30 to go to a race-course and buy all my own drinks," commented one student in Derwent after the event. The Union substituted the nu-folk outfit with a DJ. "It wasn't really the same though, when we'd been told Noah and the Whale would be there," the student added.

## Campus car-share scheme proposed

YUSU Services and Finances Officer, Matt Burton has laid out a scheme to introduce a "campus car" to the University of York. The plan, christened "Whizzgo," by its creator, hopes to see a communal car situated in Market Square which students can book out by the hour. The scheme requires an annual £10 membership per student, and individuals would then be charged mileage after collecting a keycard for the vehicle. Burton expressed hope that the scheme, for which a start date is not yet finalised, would facilitate food shopping for students. The make and model of the "Whizzgo" car is yet to be revealed.

# YUSU to lobby for 24-hour library facilities

**Joe Chapman**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE JB Morrell Library could soon be open 24 hours a day if plans by YUSU get the go-ahead.

The proposal comes after a survey of student satisfaction with library services found that many students are frustrated with the current opening hours, especially in the lead-up to summer term exams.

A motion proposed by YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer Charlie Leyland was passed by YUSU council last week, mandat-

ing Leyland and YUSU President Tom Scott to lobby the University for 24-hour library opening hours during term-time, including week 0, and to extend vacation opening to 8:30am-2am.

However, speaking to *Nouse*, Leyland admitted that the proposal is at a very early stage, and that there are many hurdles to be overcome: "We can't do this half-heartedly, we can't make this change without having the necessary provisions in place," she said. "We need to improve security so that the library is not misused, especially by members of the public," she added.

"Also, we don't want to be seen

to condone people working for 24 hours, so we need to look into welfare provisions and doing campaigns about how to manage your academic workload."

However, citing several examples of other universities across the country that have already implemented 24-hour opening, Leyland is optimistic that the proposal will be successful, and stressed her determination to see it through.

That determination is shared by YUSU Policy and Campaigns Officer Tom Langrish. Langrish described the library hours in the lead-up to exams as "shocking", adding: "A world-class university

like York needs and deserves a world-class library. At the moment, York's library does not cater for the diverse student population at key points of the year."

In response to last term's YUSU's Student Satisfaction Survey, the library extended its opening hours towards the end of the summer vacation, although it continued to close its doors at 9pm each day. This followed another minor extension of hours in January this year, when the opening time was moved from 9am to 8:30am, Monday to Friday.

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## Hes Road students targeted by thieves

York students living around Heslington Road have been the victims of a series of recent attempted burglaries. One student, whose house was targeted last Tuesday, described an attempt by three men to distract residents by putting leaflets through the letterbox, while others attempted to gain access around the back of the house. "It was lucky that some of us were in," said resident Dani Cole. "The fact that my housemate spotted someone looking through our letterbox at the same time shows they were working as a team and trying to check if the house was empty."

**Reporting by James Cousins, Sian Turner and Jack Trewin**

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*Every university offers bursary systems to help students in financial difficulty, but do certain institutions favour particular groups of people? Liam O'Brien talks to the students on benefits*

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ALLY CARMICHAEL

# Campus security stepped up after spate of attacks

**Jim Bulley  
Holly Hyde  
Adrian Choa**

AN UNUSUALLY high number of attacks on students during Welcome Week this year has forced the University to deploy extra campus security measures.

Additional security patrols will coordinate with police after several students were attacked on campus.

North Yorkshire Police are currently searching for a young male after three separate attacks on students on the morning of Sunday, October 19. Three female students returning from Access All Areas were approached while walking back to Halifax College past the 22 Acres sports pitches.

Police are looking for a male described as being of Indian/Asian origin, aged 20-25 with dark brown hair, thought to have been wearing dark trousers, a t-shirt, jacket and a beanie hat. The suspect is thought to have been lurking by the car park near the sports centre or along the path by the sports fields at around midnight on Saturday night.

The University issued a statement describing the attacks and location, stating: "The police have been informed and are actively pursuing an investigation. Extra University security patrols have been deployed

in the area."

YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer Charlie Leyland urged students to be careful on and off of campus. She said: "You are not exempt to attacks just because you are with other people or because you are male, the recent attacks have highlighted this so please remain vigilant."

"Students should not walk around with headphones in at night, which leaves them very vulnerable. Porters can also accompany you if you would like to cross campus if it's late," she added. "I don't want to scare people, York is generally a very safe place but as with anywhere, never take risks, for example, because a certain option is cheaper or quicker."

One victim of the attacks near Halifax, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "It was a frightening experience, and I wouldn't want it to happen to anyone. It hasn't been a nice start to my university career and I would like to thank the University, YUSU and the Police for all the support they've given me. I know they can't guarantee your safety, and the safety guidelines seem tedious, but they are definitely valuable and worthwhile," she added.

Halifax College Chair, David Sharp is currently in talks with the College Provost about improving the

lighting along all entrances to the college, particularly those along the infamous 'rape alley', which runs into Halifax from Heslington village. Sharp and the Halifax College Students' Association echoed Leyland's advice that students should never travel to and from the college alone, and that they avoid the alley after dark.

Welcome Week also saw a number of clashes between university students and local York residents. A number of first year students found themselves victims of verbal abuse in their new town. Luke Simpson, a first year English undergraduate, faced a homophobic attack whilst enjoying his first night out in York.

"A group of local youths approached me and proceeded to launch a tirade of homophobic abuse at me. It wasn't the greatest welcome to York," he said.

Hattie Buxton, a first year History of Art student, experienced similar intimidation during her first week: "I felt that the fact I was wearing a University of York hoodie made me a target," she said, after being subject to comments on her social background and status as a student by local youths.

In response to the recent attacks, Leyland said: "I have been working closely with the University for better safety provisions for off-campus students."



Three students were attacked in separate incidents as they walked back to Halifax

# First years stranded in off-campus housing

**Daria Karam**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

OVER ONE hundred first year students have been living in shared rooms or housing off campus following a shortage of University accommodation.

The crisis, which follows three consecutive years of similar housing shortages, has forced the University to rent private properties off campus, which were subsequently sub-let to first years who were not allocated accommodation within their colleges.

Some private houses, although more spacious than the typical University halls, are up to four miles away from the campus. Students living in them have complained of being isolated from campus. First year student Katie



Student housing off of campus

O'Malley, currently living in town said: "Our house is nice but the fact that it's a 45-minute walk from campus isn't good enough...Our STYCs have been great but it's defi-

nately harder to meet people when you live so far away."

During Welcome Week, students living off-campus in accommodation provided by the University were given access to a taxi account, allowing them free travel to and from the campus throughout the week. However by Wednesday funds had run out and the students were told that they had to make their own way to and from the campus during the day.

"I don't understand why we weren't just given bus passes," said one student. "We have to pay the extra cost of getting the bus to the campus every day which we wouldn't have to pay if we were living in the college."

The accommodation crisis has distressed many new students for whom moving away from home is already a difficult time. Many were

allocated accommodation on the day before they were due to travel to York, and some students were originally told that they would have to find their own accommodation before discovering, some as late as Saturday morning, that they had in fact been given somewhere to live. "It was all a bit disorganised and stressful," said one first-year. "I was trying to find somewhere to rent privately all day Friday then they rang up to tell me they had a room for me. I was relieved, but they left it a bit late."

Steve Page, Student Support Manager for the University of York, admitted that there had been "a certain degree of confusion" in the weeks leading up to the start of term and that "clearly some things have gone wrong", but stressed that "communication with students" had been one of the major issues

contributing to the crisis. Page rejected claims that administrative errors made by the Accommodation Office were responsible for the crisis.

With the last student moving out of temporary accommodation on Wednesday of Week 2, the crisis seems to have abated and most of the students affected have settled in to their new homes. "I was originally annoyed about not being able to live on campus," said David Price, one of the students living in a shared house with other first-years. "But now I don't mind as much. Our house is nice and we are close to York city centre. The uni did the best they could to get us into accommodation and it seems to have worked out quite well."

Last year first years were housed in a hotel at an estimated £30,000 cost to the University.

# Union abandons 24 hour license bid in

ALEXANDRU HRISTEA

## PRICING THE PROJECT

**£200,000**

Asbestos removal

**£170,000**

Bar refit

**£90,000**

JCR and kitchen refit

**£40,000**

Regeneration of outside area

**£500,000**

Total project cost

**Rose Rea**  
 NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE UNIVERSITY of York Students' Union (YUSU) has been forced to accept defeat over the battle for a 24 hour drinking license for the Union bar in Langwith.

Following YUSU's refusal to withdraw their application for a 24-hour drinking license, the University submitted a formal objection to the City of York Council just minutes before the 5 pm deadline on Friday, October 10. YUSU Services and Finance Officer Matt Burton, the driving force behind the project, remained convinced that the application would proceed successfully.

In an abrupt about-turn, YUSU have now issued a statement outlining their decision to abandon the 24-hour drinking license and to remain in keeping with the 2am closing time of the other campus outlets. This concession has led the University to withdraw its objection from the city council, enabling the license application to continue to move forward.

When asked about the outcome of events last week, Burton said: "We honestly didn't believe that there would be such contention from the University in applying for the license because of the safeguards in place, however the University felt very strongly about the principle of there being a 24-hour drinking license on campus". Burton, who stood for Service and Finance Officer for a second term largely to carry the bar project forward, was quick to confirm that the Union would be pursuing the possibility of extending all the campus outlet closing times.



Langwith bar, closed to students throughout the term while construction work is underway

YUSU Societies and Communications Officer Rory Shanks was adamant that the license issue will not effect the overall success of the project: "Yes, we didn't get an extended license and that's true to say, but by no means is it the death of the project, the license is only one aspect of the Langwith

Café Bar. There are plenty of other aspects, so whilst we didn't perhaps get the result we wanted on this one, we are getting plenty of other results from the University which are just as important as the license."

Speaking about how future negotiations with the University may be expected

to proceed, Shanks said: "By showing that we are willing to compromise, in some ways we may even have come out of this even stronger."

Both Burton and Shanks agreed that: "The University holds all the cards". This state of affairs will not be aided by the fact

## IN THE NEWS



**Nouse**

If Langwith bar succeeds - and this paper sincerely hopes it will - it could be the answer. York students would for once be able to enjoy a night out on campus. The city's clubs no longer an inevitability. The responsibility lies with Burton.

Editorial - May 27, 2008



**York Vision:**

Send our letter. Visit a protest. Spend all day getting drunk on lager bought at Your:Shop in defiance. If we can't get riled up about our right to alcohol, then what else is left?

Editorial - June 24, 2008

## THE LANGWITH BAR SAGA

### February 2008

A UGM motion passes to grant YUSU the right to redevelop Langwith bar into the first student-run establishment on campus. An opening date of Freshers' Week 2008 is put in place.



### April 2008

Plans for a renovated bar are revealed after design company Heron Designs are enlisted into the project. The new layout features an extended outdoor seating area and a revamped interior extending into the lower Langwith JCR.

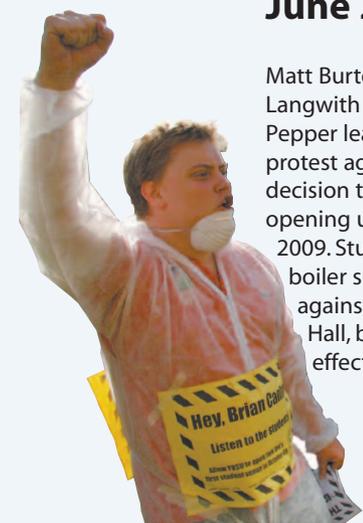


### May 2008

The University retract their support for an October 2008 opening, claiming pressure from a large number of summer construction projects as the cause. A completion date of January 2009 is suggested.

### June 2008

Matt Burton and Langwith Chair Zach Pepper lead students in protest against the decision to delay the opening until January 2009. Students in boiler suits march against Heslington Hall, but to little effect.



# latest setback to Langwith Bar project

## No surprises as YUSU are forced to concede again



**ANALYSIS**  
**Henry James Foy**  
NEWS EDITOR

I THINK THAT BY now, Burton and Co. realise just how much of their beloved Langwith Bar project is out of their hands. At least I hope they do. If this latest setback proves anything, it shows that YUSU is no unmovable object to the University's irresistible force. When Vice-Chancellor Cantor shouts "jump", Burton has learnt to ask "how high?"

There is, unfortunately little else he can do. Rory Shanks may well employ all the spin he can muster to position the University's £200,000

grant to remove asbestos as a victory for the Union and a sign that Heslington Hall backs the project, but in all reality, it means that the Union has little choice but to accept their bankroller's demands.

Granted, the space would not have been viable without the removal of the asbestos, but the grant should not be seen as a friendly gesture. Heslington Hall knows that YUSU would have struggled to find that money themselves, and so now have the Union in their pocket.

So, with the University as landowner and substantial bankroller, YUSU don't have a lot of ammunition. When asked whether the Union would consider organising a similar protest to last term's un-

successful attempt to overturn the first of many University decrees, Burton said that it "remained an option". Signals from the University suggest that would be a monumentally bad idea, and would only sour relations further. I have it on good authority that when the second protest began on the lawns of Heslington Hall, Cantor was heard to mutter with gross annoyance: "Oh god, not again". He certainly wasn't running for the secret escape tunnel.

So what can the Union do? Simply, they can only play the game. The bar will be done when it is done, will open during times that the University sanctions, and will hopefully make enough money to pay back its sizeable investment. Will the

University tolerate a hugely-successful venture that slowly squeezes the life out of any of campus' traditional money-spinning venues? I can't see them sitting back and watching as Derwent or Vanbrugh fail to bring in the drinkers.

It would be both pleasant and professional for YUSU and the University to compete on a level playing field come January. I'm not holding my breath. YUSU still don't even have a signed tenancy agreement. This must be right at the top of Burton's to-do list.

YUSU should tread carefully. It's David and Goliath, but this time the big man has all the rocks. Burton only has a box full of unused asbestos removal suits and a megaphone.



GEORGE LOWTHER



Before (above) and an artist's interpretation of the proposed new layout

## Project on schedule for slated January opening

**Sian Turner**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE REDEVELOPMENT of Langwith bar to become the first Student Union-run establishment on campus is on schedule to meet its completion date for January 2009.

The bar has been a source of contention since its conception last year, suffering a number of setbacks and delays that have left students often disillusioned and dissatisfied with the University and their ability to deliver on accountability.

The Union was granted access to the space in Langwith back in May last year. It was intended for work to take place over the summer, and for the bar to reopen in October 2008, to coincide with the arrival of new first year students. However, an asbestos scare in Easter was the first incident to throw doubt over the feasibility of such plans. In June, the University announced the withdrawal of its support for an October opening, due to

"the pressure on the Directors of Facilities, Management and Estates to complete a large number of high priority projects this summer."

This move was met by a tirade of anger amongst the student population: "I think it's a bit double-standard to be honest," commented Langwith chair Zach Pepper at the time. "People have put a lot of time into it, they approved the idea, and they've now stuck these obstacles in."

The news from Burton that work on the bar is underway and on schedule has been met with pleasure by students across campus. "It's so great to know that we will definitely have a bar by next term," said second year Langwith student and current JCRC bar rep, Max Tyler.

"It's been quite strange so far this term, to be without a college bar, especially for Freshers who are living near a building site without any real social space. The delay is still a huge shame, but it'll be great when it's done," he added.

**LEADER >>** Page 10  
**COMMENT >>** Page 11

### September 2008

Work finally begins on the bar, and it is closed off to students for the duration of the winter term. Due to the building works, first year Langwith students are left without a bar during their first term, and the area remains a construction walkway.



### October 2008

YUSU and the University reach a stand-off over an application submitted by the Union for a 24-hour license for the new bar. Pro-Vice Chancellor for Students, Jane Grenville, threatens to terminate the project if the application is not withdrawn.



### October 2008

The University submits a last minute objection to the City of York Council concerning the license application. The Union acquiesce and withdraw the application, but Grenville admits to a damaged trust between the two bodies.

### January 2009

With the bar slated for completion in mid-December, the proposed opening date for the fully finished and tested venue is set for early January, in time for the Spring Term. Then the real battle begins.



# Lacy: York students not receiving value for money gym membership

**Criss Noice**  
SPORTS EDITOR

ATHLETIC UNION President Alex Lacy has accused the University of reneging on an agreement over fitness suite fees. Figures obtained by *Nouse* have shown that York students receive the worst value for money gym membership of any of the Complete University Guide's top 20 universities.

Lacy claims that the Sports Centre and the University had agreed a deal in return for lower fitness suite fees. He said: "I understood the deal between the AU and the university to be that we incorporate the sports centre membership into the membership of the AU, and they would return by meeting us in the middle with fitness suite fees. I feel that the sports centre have made a mistake with their annual membership costs."

Formerly, Sports Centre membership has been optional for York Sport members with the understanding that some sports clubs will not need to use their facilities. Under the new rules, those looking to join a York Sport club will have to pay a combined membership fee of £40 before they can participate.

The current cost of fitness suite membership is set at £180 for 12 months, compared with an average of £120 per year for other universities across the country, many of which having superior facilities.

Lacy said the price should be brought in line with the £120 average gym membership figure, especially as many of the facilities, including the running track and



**"Our fitness suite prices are not competitive with others in the area, or even other universities"**

AU President  
**Alex Lacy**

outdoor courts are still "entirely unacceptable."

Director of Commercial Services Jon Greenwood admitted that there is much left to be done: "Last year, a lot of people weren't using [the sports centre] because it was a state. We desperately need new netball courts and need to invest in the track as soon as possible."

Greenwood also said that he had to "scrounge" for money every year to update sub standard facilities: "I think I've done really well to get the money that I have for sports

over the past three years. If I wasn't here, it would have just plodded along and the university would have left it to fall apart."

According to documents given to York Sport, acting Sports and Recreation Manager Rena Quarton had compiled a set of tariffs much lower than the current prices, but had the proposals rejected by Jon Greenwood. When asked about the figures, Quarton said "I had put through some lower estimates that I thought were competitive, but at the end of the day I have to agree with my line manager".

In a meeting about the raises, Greenwood told *Nouse*: "We've had to tweak the prices so that we wouldn't lose a shed load of money again... The fitness suite is the only place we can make any real money from, and that subsidises the timetable that the AU have been given for club use. I think what we have there now justifies the money we're charging for it."

Concerns are also being raised about the new sports development on Heslington East. Due to a £2,000,000 investment in the project by the local council, Greenwood suggests that student access to the facility will be limited, with more focus being put on supporting local residents: "For students, the centre of sport will still be [on campus], but I think that the new development will be aimed at the public."

The Heslington East sports facility is expected to include a swimming complex and a state of the art fitness suite.

**COMMENT >>** Page 11

## VALUE FOR MONEY



### Imperial College London

A 25m deck level swimming pool, sauna and steam room are included in the membership price at Imperial.

Annual Membership: **£15**



### Stirling University

Sports centre holds a 50 station CV suite, a super centre with five lifting platforms and a 50m pool.

Annual Membership: **£73.50**



### Edinburgh University

The sports facilities include a state of the art 100 station CV suite and three other specialist fitness centres.

Annual Membership: **£95**



### University of Warwick

Includes a weight training room designed by Olympic strength coaches and a 25m swimming pool.

Annual Membership: **£112**



### University of Portsmouth

Annual membership at Portsmouth includes a range of fitness classes as well as unlimited racket sport usage.

Annual Membership: **£130**



### University of York

Recent refurbishments include a second floor added to the fitness suite and a new reception area.

Annual Membership: **£180**



# NOUSE

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tonight, 6.30pm in ATB/056 - Seebohm Rowntree Building

If you would like to write, edit or manage the newspaper, come to our Annual General Meeting tonight.

All positions on the paper will be up for election, from Editor to Social Secretaries, so even if you have not had the chance to get involved, now is the time.

If you would like to run for a position just prepare a few words on why you would like to take on the role.

We look forward to seeing you. Best of luck.

See Facebook event 'Nouse AGM' for more information




# Woodstock to compete for Big D space

ALLY CARMICHAEL

Holly Hyde  
Adrian Choa

RELATIONS BETWEEN the organisers of campus events Big D and Woodstock have soured after controversial proposals to move Woodstock to the space between Langwith and Derwent colleges were mooted by the YUSU Coordination Committee.

Moving the event, which has traditionally been held on Vanbrugh Paradise, would place it in direct competition with the Derwent event for the space.

Derwent College's high-profile Big D event has long been one of campus' most successful, selling out within 24 hours last year and featuring acts such as MC Verse, Chesney Hawkes and Pendulum. In direct competition to this, Woodstock, which runs in the same week of summer term each year, is a RAG-organised festival featuring live music acts predominantly from campus.

YUSU Student Development and Charities Officer Jamie Tyler proposed the move at the Union Coordination Committee last week: "It makes sense to move it to Langwith, as it would coincide with the opening of the Union Bar. It would be a perfect opportunity," he said. "In addition, once our bar is established, if an event this big took place in that area it would be easier for us to provide more staff support, as we will have more in that area whose remit will be to aid events in that venue."



**Woodstock has traditionally been staged on Vanbrugh paradise**

Concerns have been raised by those within Derwent that this proposal could have a negative effect on their event, with the University opposing the pressure of having two large scale events in the same area in one week. When questioned about the knock-on effects of his plan, Tyler appeared relatively unconcerned: "Well that is something that they are going to have to think about," he said. "Big D is in fact never a guaranteed event. Anyway, it's just a thought at the moment.

Nothing is set in stone."

Oliver Lester, chair of Derwent College, remains optimistic and denied that Woodstock's planned move would be at the detriment of Big D: "I promise now that Big D will go ahead like it has for the last 40 years, sell out like it did last year in 24 hours, and be the best end of year party at the University of York."

"Different areas around campus need to be considered in making Woodstock bigger and better; Derwent being one

of them," he added. "There are advantages and disadvantages to each venue, and these will be fully discussed over the year."

Hostility between the organisers of the two events has been long standing, and emerged last year when Big D organisers supposedly undercut RAG by securing a £1,000 grant from Deloitte. It was suggested that the sponsorship was originally intended to fund Woodstock.

Tyler has been keen to quell the fears, saying: "this

move is nothing to do with Big D, nor is it an attempt to take over the event."

The University have declined to issue a statement as regards the proposed move, and have emphasized their desire to support both events. "From a support perspective, it's a purely practical question," said Director of Facilities Management Keith Lilley

"The DFM and the University have always supported these events and will continue to do so," he added.

## York students accused of organising illegal fundraiser for Barack Obama

Laura Connor  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

CLAIRE HAZELGROVE, a third year politics student and Labour parliamentary candidate, has been accused of attempting to illegally raise funds for US presidential candidate Barack Obama.

Her attempt to raise money through a drinks reception was discovered by conservative blogger Donal Blaney, who said it as "flagrant breach of US election law".

Hazelgrove, who worked for the Obama campaign this summer, organised a party on October 23 with Raf Sanchez, editor of *Nouse*, at Pitcher and Piano in York. The Facebook page for the event stated: "American law says that foreign nationals can't donate to political campaigns... But what we can do is have a party, pay £3 each and give the money to Raf, who is an American citizen... Raf can then donate the exact amount made at



Hazelgrove at the Obama event

the party to the Obama campaign."

Under the American Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA), it is against the law for any "foreign national to contribute, donate or spend funds in connection with any federal, state, or local election in the United States."

GEORGE LOWTHER

On October 15, Blaney posted a link to the Facebook event on his blog. He accused Hazelgrove of "co-hosting an event that is designed to raise funds for Barack Obama in a way that seeks to circumvent US electoral law. Hazelgrove then edited the Facebook event, reclassifying it as an 'Obama supporter's party (not fundraiser)'.

Blaney's blog on October 16 suggested Hazelgrove and Sanchez would be prosecuted by the Federal Election Campaign.

In a joint statement Hazelgrove and Sanchez said: "As far as we know it is not a crime to have a bad idea and then not act on it in either this country or the United States. No money was exchanged and none will be. Nor did we solicit, it was just an idea we decided against."

Hazelgrove remains a parliamentary candidate. At the time of going to print, Sanchez is understood to be preparing to resign from his editorial post.

## YUSU cuts Yorker ties

Patrick Harte  
Maks Fus Mickiewicz

ONLINE NEWS website The Yorker has been denied access to YUSU officers following a Union council decision last week.

YUSU Societies and Communications Officer Rory Shanks has restricted further The Yorker's previously limited access to the Union. The organisation will no longer be provided with official press releases or press passes to Union-organised events such as the annual elections and Roses.

The Yorker, which describes itself as "a student-run website which provides news, features and comment" on the University of York campus, has, since its inception two years ago, been a private limited company. This independence means that the society is not Union ratified, and has not signed up to the YUSU media charter media charter, which mandates media societies on certain legal and welfare principles.

The decision to exclude the

organisation followed various discussions within the Union Coordination Committee, where it was decided that since The Yorker does not directly contribute to, and is not accountable to the Union, it should not be treated like other ratified campus media societies.

Shanks said: "Until some sort of compromise, be it through a signing of the fair practise agreement, be it through the signing of the media charter or their eventual ratification we will continue to treat them as an external media organisation."

Despite attempts to move discussions forward to confirm a place for The Yorker within recognised student media, the organisation appears unconcerned by the current developments.

"We are contemplating negotiations but we have to concentrate on protecting our independent status," commented Editor of The Yorker, Dominic Freeston.

Both the Yorker and *Nouse.co.uk* were nominated for best website in the 2008 Guardian Student Media Awards.

# Private Rented Housing report defends student tenancies in local communities

**Henry James Foy**  
NEWS EDITOR

A REVIEW OF the Private Rented Sector (PRS) by the University's Centre for Housing Policy has defended the position of students as important tenants in the sector, claiming that measures to cut student accommodation numbers could be judged to be "unethical and discriminatory."

The report, which was launched last Thursday by authors Julie Rugg and David Rhodes of the University, has strongly rejected myths surrounding the negative impact that student tenants have on communities.

Stating that only 59 of England's 8,000 wards, or 0.7%, have a student population of more than 10% of the total, Rugg and Rhodes argue that while certain areas may feel a negative impact of student numbers, the problem "is clearly not a widespread issue."

"There is a vociferous anti-student lobby, but this is not a widespread problem... A lot of the rhetoric attached to student housing is overblown," said Rugg, while presenting the report.

Some local councils in the UK, including York's, lobbying the government to enact powers allowing local authorities to curb the total amount of Homes of

Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in student-heavy areas. The report has strongly undermined these claims.

Areas in Durham, Oxford, Manchester and Leeds were specifically referenced in the report, with the Headingley area of Leeds used by many anti-HMO lobbyists to illustrate the scale of the problem. Students make up over 60% of the total population there.

Rugg and Rhodes, however, state that measures taken to curb student numbers in certain areas are



**The report denies that student housing harms local communities**

"highly artificial interventions in the operation of the local housing market and underline prejudice against student households... A similar policy attached to any other group in society would be likely to be judged unethical and discriminatory."

Ama Uzowuru, NUS Vice President (Welfare), said: "We welcome this independent review, which is a victory for common sense. The report acknowledges that higher education institutions are a catalyst for regeneration and job cre-

ation and that although there are some problems, these should not be taken out of proportion.

"It is important to remember that students often contribute a great deal to their community – not just through boosting the local economy, but also through their charity and fundraising activities," she added.

The report highlights that the speed with which the student market has been forced to grow in line with government moves to increase the total university population is the main reason for the problems associated with student housing.

"In some locations, student populations have increased rapidly, which has driven a rush to broaden the PRS in locations close to the [University] concerned over a relatively short period," the report states.

"Students need to be near their institution. There needs to be better frameworks to deal with student housing," added Rugg.

"NUS encourages students' unions to engage with their local communities and local government to address any problems that might arise. It is critical, especially in light of government plans to expand university provision to 20 new cities, that all parties take a thoughtful approach to these problems," continued Uzowuru.

ERIC FIRLEY; UNIVERSITY OF YORK PRESS OFFICE



Headingley is a popular student area; report authors Julie Rugg and David Rhodes

## Convicted rapist found not guilty of second sexual attack on woman

**Christina Dimakoulea**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE MAN responsible for a sexual attack on a University of York student in May 1996 has been found not guilty of another rape. Despite holding a 23-year long record of sexual assault, Steven Sellars has been cleared of another attempted assault near Clifton Bridge in June of the same year.

Sellars was arrested last May for his assault in May 1996 and pleaded guilty to that offence. He has been remanded in custody, awaiting sentence over a crime that on conviction carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Following the arrest, intense media coverage led to the victim of the Clifton Bridge assault recognising Sellars as her attacker from pictures in local papers. She



Convicted York rapist Sellars

pressed charges immediately.

Sellars pleaded not guilty of the most recent accusation, and stressed that the disgust he felt for himself after the former incident led him to a suicide attempt and a

subsequent life change.

Sellars' wife broke down in tears of relief as the not-guilty verdict for this attack was read out. Her husband has already served seven years in prison for previous sexual assaults, among which was an 'indecent sexual attack' towards two eleven year old females, an incident the jury was unaware of at the time of the trial.

Sentencing for the assault in May 1996 has currently been postponed following a request from Sellars' barrister. Nicholas Johnson requested the delay until a conclusion has been reached by psychiatrists as to whether Sellars could pose a threat to women, and to what extent, after his release. Judge Stephen Ashurst, the Recorder of York, claimed that the report of psychiatrists would be of the utmost importance in reaching a decision upon the sentence.

## YUSU rebrand planned

**James Richardson**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A RE-BRANDING of the University of York Students' Union is currently underway, with the hope of uniting all branches of YUSU under one, large "umbrella brand."

YUSU Societies and Communications Officer, Rory Shanks, expressed dissatisfaction with the current branding of the Union, after feeling that students did not recognise many campus institutions as part of the Union.

Speaking of a "disjointed situation," he commented that students generally "recognise individual entities rather than one large Union body." He also hopes the rebrand will help to reinforce to students the "Your Union: Your Profit" initiative.

Proposed at the Union Co-ordination Committee, the move has been welcomed by much of the

Union. Early reservations were voiced by LGBT representatives, who were concerned as to the funding of the process, and whether their section of the Union would still receive equal representation under the new branding.

"We wanted to be sure that any necessary costs for rebranding wouldn't come out of the diversity budget, and we were concerned about visibility. We wanted to ensure that the new brand represented us as well as the old one did," commented LGBT Officers, Ben Humphreys and Sarah Fennell.

"However any initial concerns about possible financial ramifications or loss of visibility for the campaign have been comprehensively dealt with by the consultation process," they added. "LGBT is now very happy with the principle of creating a united and visible YUSU brand in which LGBT has its own distinct sub-brand."

Re-branding across campus is planned to begin in January 2009

# Battle for tuition fee caps sharpens as NUS adopts more pragmatic policy

NUS Vice-President Aaron Porter outlines the Union's new plans to fight for affordable degrees to **Henry James Foy**

The NUS, it seems, is changing. A fresh team appears to be taking a fresh look at Union policy, specifically the NUS's oldest but most ignored demand: free University education.

Aaron Porter, NUS Vice-President for Higher Education, feels that the time for overblown and far-fetched dreams of a degree without expense is over, and wants to focus on making sure they don't get any more expensive.

"In my eyes, historically the NUS hasn't been good enough and has lost lots of campaigns due to outlandish positions based on ideology rather than a pragmatic opinion of the political landscape," says Porter, who is visiting York during his first year as an NUS officer.

"Both the NUS President and I are committed to the principle of free education, but are pragmatic enough to enter the actual debate that will happen in the House of Commons. That debate will be about how much students will pay and by what mechanism. It is simply not winnable, in the next two years, that higher education will be free," he adds.

It is a tone that does not sit well with the die-hard lefties in the National Union of Students, but has been welcomed by those who feel it must evolve and adapt to the current economic and political climate.

"We're in the second year of a three-year campaign," Porter explains. "Last year we spent a lot of time speaking to MPs and Vice-Chancellors to try to work

out who supports the NUS and who advocates fee rises."

Porter and the NUS will have their work cut out. While all the major political parties appear to be currently erring towards a rise in tuition fees, opposition to retaining the £3,000 cap is not limited to Westminster. Many Vice-Chancellors from the prestigious Russell and 1994 groups of Universities are thought to be strongly in favour of increasing fees for full-time undergraduate students.

Porter states that the 1994 Group, which includes the University of York, have so far remained tight-lipped on the issue, but he anticipates that they are likely to support a system that allows them to increase their income.

"Ultimately, they don't care where [the money] comes from, whether it's from government, students or business. I think that they think the easiest place, the most likely place it's going to come from, is students. So, I think it's inevitable that universities like York and the Vice-Chancellor here will be pushing for an increase in fees," he predicts.

The former Leicester SU Officer believes that York Vice-Chancellor Brian Cantor may even be lobbying for the cap to be scrapped completely. "York could be one of the Universities that are looking not for the cap to be lifted above £3,000, but to be scrapped altogether," Porter claims.

"There are lots of Vice-Chancellors that are rampantly



**NUS protest against fee rises; Vice-President Aaron Porter**

and unashamedly already lobbying MPs to raise the cap on fees," he adds. "Sometimes it's easier to deal with VCs that are more honest. We have robust exchanges, and it's not uncommon for me to have quite a forthright exchange with VCs that are clearly pushing for fees to go up."

Although he hasn't met Cantor, Porter relishes the chance to dispute the grounds for a rise in fees. "I challenge every single Vice-Chancellor, including the one at York, to happily confront them in public debate. Many have accepted



that debate. I'd be more than happy to take on [Cantor] in a public debate in front of students," he says.

For him, the reasons behind a hike in fees will seriously compromise the UK's higher education provision: "I have serious question marks over whether an increase in fees will lead to the increase in student numbers needed [to take the UK to the required level of 40% of adults with degrees]."

"Short term increases in fees are detrimental to individuals as it would create a system where some universities will

begin to charge maximum fees," he says, explaining: "If [certain students] are not willing to take on that level of debt, then they will decide not to attend those universities. There is a potential problem where the leading universities will not necessarily recruit the most intelligent students."

"We are seeing countries like India, China and Australia outstripping us in terms of the numbers of students in higher education, and I think this seriously jeopardises the UK's position in terms of the international economy," Porter adds.

## WEB-CANNON

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



**Iron Chancellor Burton was powerless to stop the raiding of YUSU**

**funds from determined smurfs. Tiddly-wink society will have to**

**do without its tournament travel budget this year. Unlucky.**

## 'Right to feedback' campaign launched

**Beth Gandy**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

LOW LEVELS of satisfaction amongst York students over the support provided by academic departments has prompted the Student Union to develop new policies to safeguard the welfare of its students.

YUSU Academic and Welfare Officer Charlie Leyland has compiled a "wish-list for Assessment and Feedback" in the hope of making both students and departments aware of what support is expected and required of them.

"I really hope to empower students [with] their rights and what they are entitled to," commented Leyland. "We hope to put into practise the mechanisms of what should be

going on in department assessment and feedback, and then implement policy whilst disseminating the information to students", she said.

The wish-list has six main points of focus: "a clear service-level agreement between students and departments", the "clear publication and distribution of this agreement", a "Student Union led plagiarism awareness campaign", an accessible look at problems of referencing, a focus on joint honours students, and the idea of "feedback request stickers".

The plagiarism awareness campaign has already seen particular success, receiving a £6,000 grant from the rapid-response fund FELT, the university initiative funded by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC). The campaign hopes to put in place a series of departmental "road

shows," with prizes and competitions to help inform students. Leyland hopes this will "provide a different way of actually getting through to people without the use of leaflets."

The wish list also aims to produce study skills guides for departments, to target problems associated with online resources and to tackle issues of language barriers for international students. Its overriding aim, according to Leyland, is to "enable students to help themselves" and show them that they are entitled to feedback from their departments.

The list is being looked into by the university, with its policy currently being written into a set of mandatory requirements rather than just guidelines for departments. It is hoped that these new regulations will be in place by the spring term.



## Financial mismanagement

The Student Union has upset some of its students. This is nothing new. But when they're taking away from societies – one of the largest and most valuable aspects of university life – the issue gains considerable weight.

Extra-curricular activities broaden your University experience, make your time here more enjoyable and facilitate socialising. It is worrying, then, that YUSU have taken the decision to slash society funding for this academic year.

While it's understandable that expansion and developments within YUSU lead to cuts elsewhere, the nature in which this has been executed seems inexcusable. Whilst attempting to streamline the system by cutting out the laborious number of presentations that must be sat through to hear the budget proposals of 67 different societies, YUSU appear to have isolated themselves from the needs of campus societies and issued budgets that don't correspond with their needs and situations.

The lack of effective communication between the Union and society treasurers has led to confusion and misunderstanding. Questions may be asked whether a Union that isn't in touch with its members and their needs can be the effective organisation it needs to be.

Lessons must be learnt from these potentially very damaging miscalculations. Last year's finance team were testing a new system of society funding, that was obviously not a success. YUSU should expect societies to be extra vigilant when the budget for next year is drawn up.

## Expensive games

An argument ensued last week between Athletic Union President Alex Lacy and Director of Commercial Services Jon Greenwood over the membership prices of our newly refurbished sports centre. Both parties agreed that there was much left to be done at the facility, but the man behind the finance was in no position to budge on the £180 annual fees. York students are paying through the nose to access the fitness suite, which remains unfinished two weeks after the planned finishing date. Worse still is the fact that Greenwood claims to have to scrape together whatever money he can to fix out-of-date features before they fall apart.

It's a real shame that the outdoor sports facilities at York are in such bad condition that some areas are being considered health and safety risks. Progress is being made slowly at the moment, but with the opening of a new sports centre on Heslington East drawing ever closer, it is difficult to believe that our current facilities will be remembered in future investment.

For a University that has defeated Lancaster in the country's largest inter-sport contest on three consecutive occasions to have the worst value for money fitness suite memberships is simply appalling. It can clearly be seen that York has significant talent in the sporting department, but without significant investment in the area in the near future – most of it will remain untapped.

## Library fine

The importance of a proactive SU is not to be underestimated. Overactive and misdirected crusades, on the other hand, are distinctly less helpful. With the broad successes of their campaign for twenty-four hour portering in one hand, and the uncertain outcome of the ongoing bar fiasco in the other, YUSU clearly feel the need to tip the balance of their campaigning record. So lo and behold, without much call from the students, a 24-hour library campaign.

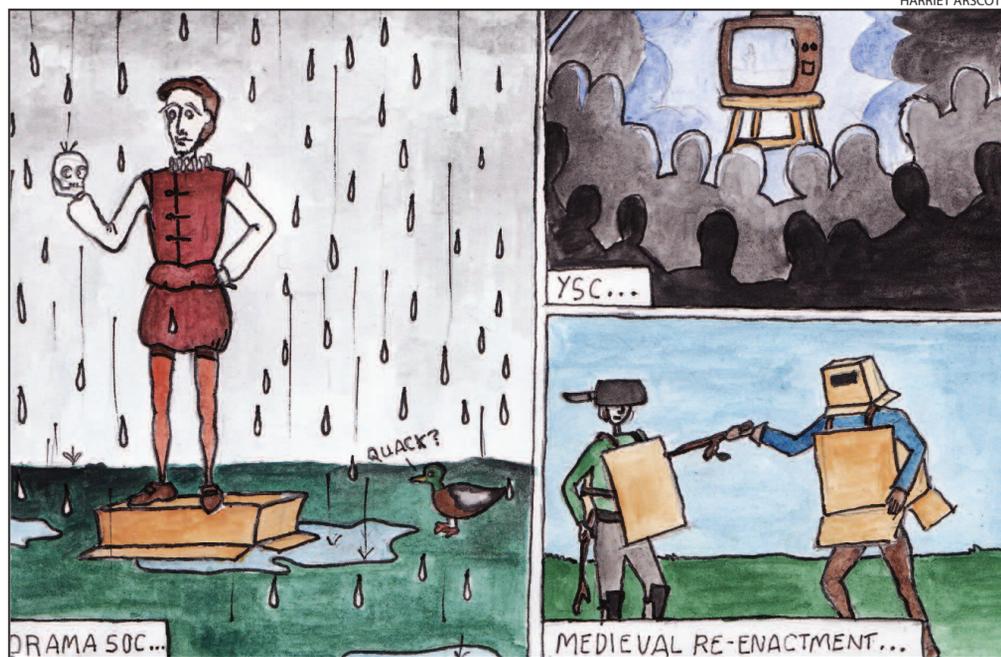
At the University of York students can currently enjoy a 24 hour computing service, giving one 24 hour access to a broad selection of e-books and journal archives. Not to mention the bonus of 24 hours access the little known phenomenon that is the Internet. Where other Universities have centralised their computing system under the umbrella of their library we have the collegiate sprawl of campus computing.

With computer rooms humming through the night it seems an uncalled-for extravagance to light up the J.B. Morrell library too. At a time when we're battling with complaints against the environmental crimes committed by Heslington East, it hardly seems to be appropriate to pour funds and energy into such a campaign.

With 84 hours of library opening time, there must be one in which the average student can drag themselves in to get a book. Indeed, perhaps it's about time we woke up and adjusted to a more mainstream body clock anyway.

# Comment & Analysis

## Closed-door decision making has no place in a democracy



**Jenny Draper**  
Contributing Writer

YUSU's sly attitude to decision making is an obstacle to student democracy.

**"Leave someone without information and they'll make up their own."**

Things haven't been going all that well for YUSU recently, all things considered. Between the bitter, vicious scrap over the 24-hour bar in Langwith College and the racist slurs banded about at the NUS seminar, not to mention last year's vote of no-confidence against Welfare Officer Grace Fletcher-Hackwood. So perhaps YUSU can be forgiven for putting off thinking about the societies' budgets this year. Perhaps it can even be forgiven for postponing meetings, changing the dates and generally messing everyone around. After all, it's been a chaotic time for all concerned. But to decide the budget on their own, without negotiation, discussion or conciliation, is sinister in the extreme.

Decisions taken behind closed doors, while sometimes necessary, are an impediment to democracy and justice. Indeed, many societies will feel unjustly disregarded. Debating Society York Union, Bad Taste Magazine and Music Society have each lost over £1,000. Furthermore, funding seems not only significantly reduced but badly thought through. Bad Taste, for example, still receives £43 per member, an extraordinary amount of money and Filmmaking Society has inexplicably received £1,500 on

top of what it received last year. Meanwhile the Gilbert and Sullivan Society have been given just £35 to run an entire series of topsy-turvy operettas.

Just as matter cannot be created or destroyed, only rearranged, so funding may not be increased or decreased, only re-allocated. It leaves us to wonder where the remaining money has gone, and the finger, to my mind, appears to point squarely at the YUSU bar.

Now, the infamous bar has already received a lot of condemnation from all fronts, but it is still necessary to add that it is a heavy, although some would say desirable, drain on funds and with the ongoing dispute between University and Union it seems our SU cash could be better spent.

In a time of such turmoil for YUSU, I am instinctively inclined to believe the best of them. Surely they would have loved to give all the societies everything they asked for? But times are tight, and when there's a ravenous money-swallowing black hole like a controversial student bar to be funded, the simplest solution seems to be to take a little from something that isn't crying so loudly. All at the expense of student development.

YUSU's thinking could very well have been along the

lines that they couldn't give up the bar now, after everything, just because it is underfunded. It could have course been some other reason. But who knows? No-one, because no-one was in on the negotiation process.

With this closed doors policy and reluctant quotes from the sabbatical officers, YUSU have opened themselves up to every fresher columnist with an over-active imagination and the ability to process a few numbers in Excel to throw any kind of accusation at them about what happened to the societies' missing money. You leave someone without information, and they'll make up their own.

Whether or not students would rather have funds diverted to a bar than poured into their societies' is irrelevant. In fact, I'm sure that if you asked the student body about their views on bars versus societies (particularly on a Friday night), the answer would be a resounding, drunken roar in favour of the former. The salient point is that the decision was made for them, without explanation, by a body that is supposed to represent them.

In this sorry tale, there are no winners: not the students, not the societies, and certainly not YUSU, who have some real explaining to do.

## Not a sporting chance with AU fees



**Lizzie Liprot**  
Contributing Writer

It's ridiculous to be paying top prices for such sub-standard facilities.

As students, watching our money and learning to budget have become harsh and unwelcome realities into our normally sheltered lives. The shock of losing the best part of our student loans to rent, bills and food leaves us with little to spend on the important things like Vodkat and Gallery.

The University of York is not renowned for splashing out on its students, despite being the second most expensive university in the country. Charging us £40 for York Sport membership is therefore ridiculous. When you join a sports team, you're prepared to pay something; however, you don't expect to be paying for something that you might never use.

Originally, membership for the sports centre was optional as some clubs don't need to use the gym. Now you're charged an extra £40 fee on top of the club membership regardless of whether or not you'll be using the sports centre. Sports clubs are already more expensive than other societies - is it really fair to charge more?

As an occasional gym goer, the kind that will go until it stops being new and exciting, i.e. after the first session, I was appalled to find we are paying £180 a year for membership. This is £60 more than other universities who may also have luxuries such as their own swimming pool, to which they would have unlimited access, and better facilities in their gym.

It's understandable that we are going to have to pay some sort of a fee to use the gym and the other rather limited facilities on offer, but a line should be drawn at paying to take part in college sport. £5 annual admin fee might not sound like an enormous amount but people should be encouraged to have a kick about with their college chums and charg-

**"As students we will go for the cheaper option and that is the Efes pizza."**

## Fear not the rainbow-wielding maniacs



**James Townsend**  
Contributing Writer

LGBT are making progress and shedding dated and off-putting stereotypes.

Student politics is a messy business. So much time and effort is put into apparently noble causes which tend either to be entirely ineffectual, or to get distracted from their initial purpose. Too often the things that make a difference to people's lives are left behind while campus bandwagons roll down the road of irrelevant hysteria. Anybody familiar with the name Fletcher-Hackwood will know what I mean.

There are, though, many things happening at York that we should be proud of. One place you can find such things is in the gay community.

Many gay people steer well clear of the campus 'scene'. Admittedly, over recent years events have tended to be more of a meat-market than a genuine chance to engage with new people, and welfare support has often been tediously unimaginative. Currently, though, we can see on campus a dramatic shift in a direction which should be given the applause it deserves.

ing them to do so is not encouraging.

Surely the University should be looking for some way to extend or rearrange their budget in a way that will allow a decent share of it to be given to York Sport. The fight against obesity is still on our hands and the University should play their part. If Jamie Oliver is able to take on Rotherham and invest time and money into improving eating habits and people's lifestyle, then surely our University can invest in its students, and encourage us to put down the Efes pizza and hop on the cross trainer.

As students we will go for the cheapest option and currently that is most definitely an Efes pizza. When Heslington East opens, there promis-

es to be a £2million swimming complex and fancy gym. Something that could get people quite excited and maybe want to take up sport for a little while. However, due to the £2 million being invested by the local council, it is looking likely that this fantastic new place will be aimed at the local community, not at the students who are paying to be here.

As the 7th best university in the country, ranking 54th in facilities is frankly a little embarrassing. As someone who would dabble in sport and exercise if it were readily available and affordable, I know I won't be dabbling here. If I were someone who felt passionately about it and enjoyed the thrill of competing I know I'd be pretty annoyed.



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## STYCs should stick to their responsibilities



**Adrian Choa**  
Contributing Writer

Role model defined for STYCs: 1. Do not pressurise Freshers into doing anything. 2. Do not, in particular, pressurise Freshers into drinking.

That's funny. I'm pretty sure that is exactly of what a majority of STYCs seem to follow. Upon arrival, freshers are met by the cold embrace of a vodka bottle, thrust into their grasp by a friendly STYC. For someone used to drinking this is not an issue. However, for some, this could be profoundly intimidating. It seems to me that volunteering for such a position is, behind the façade of altruism, an excuse to get wasted and get others wasted for a week. In fact that was pretty much spelt out by several of the STYCs I have encountered.

Whether it's drug talk or hall-way drinking games, reams of freshers were made to feel 'secure' and totally 'un-pressurised' at such a turning-point in their respective lives. The definition of role model was particularly affirmed in Derwent and Langwith. In Derwent, STYCs apparently educated freshers on the tradition of pissing on Langwith. A Derwent fresher I spoke to commented on the night the incident: "In a bizarre spontaneous fashion, which happens when lots of men are drunk, a mob of people in drag descended on Derwent and proceeded to empty their bladders on a nice wall." At first, one cannot help but laugh. But comedic or not, is this correct behaviour for a group of students representing the University of York?

And what about the stories of STYCs across campus encouraging freshers to skip dinner so as to accelerate inebriation? Funny? Good banter? Perhaps not.

Fundamentally, the STYCs have a responsibility to uphold. Leaving home can be an extremely daunting experience. STYCs must be sensitive to the needs of everyone, not just binge-drinkers. Peer pressure is an ominous force which holds a particular sway in a week where people wish to make an impression and not feel left out.

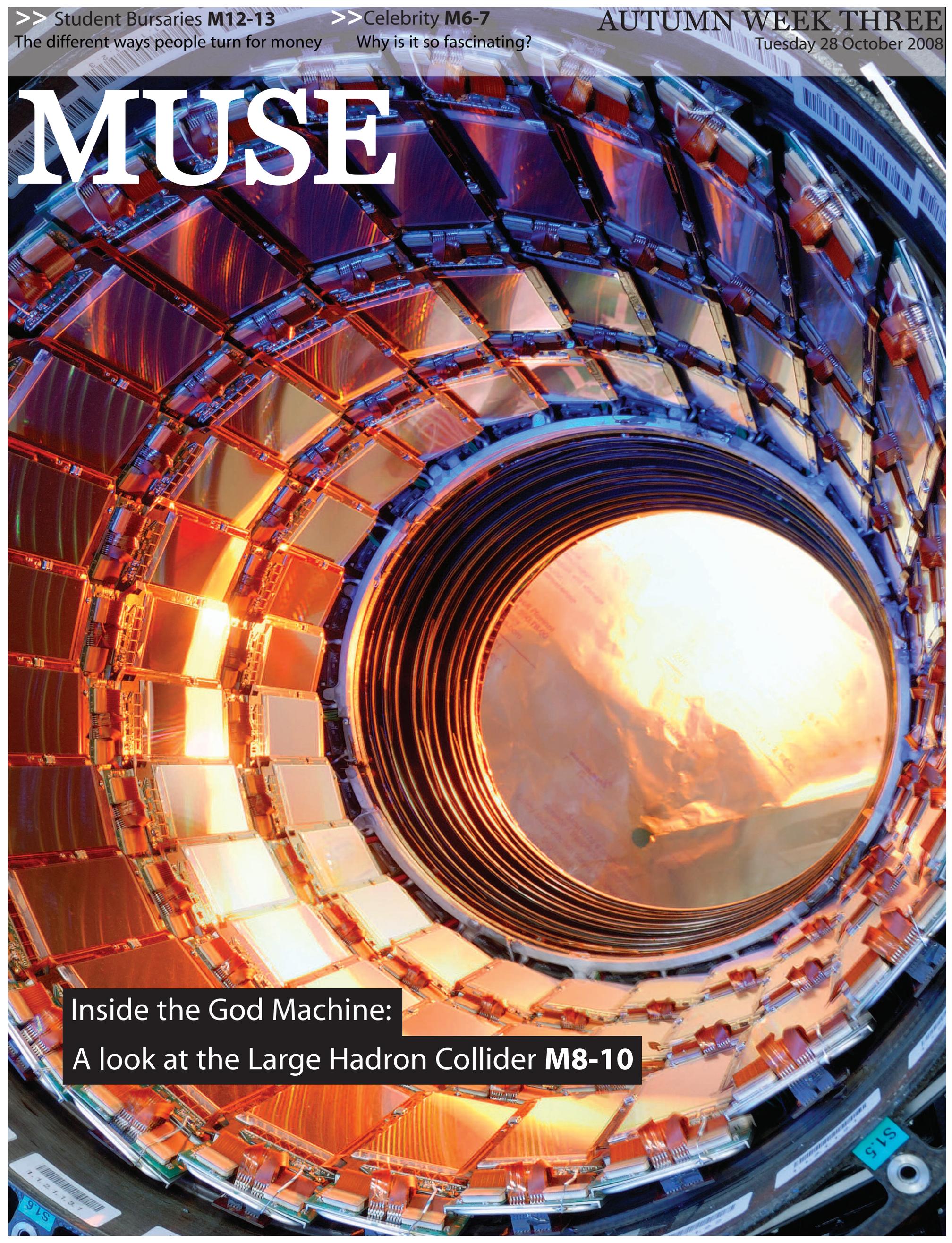
Of course these comments do not apply to all of the STYCs. I have also met many who were thoroughly welcoming, making sure that all their freshers had the best time possible within an environment not dominated by any form of pressure. This is welfare system stands for and was illustrated by the sheer variety of events which could be undertaken. It is therefore a shame that such a number of these STYCs could not adequately represent the University.

>> Student Bursaries M12-13  
The different ways people turn for money

>> Celebrity M6-7  
Why is it so fascinating?

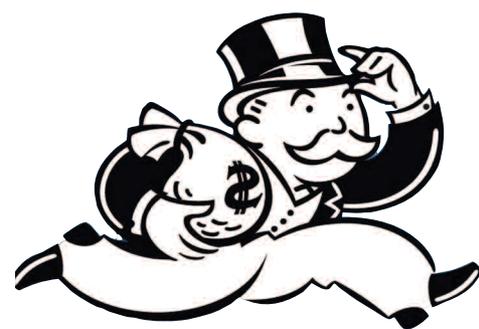
AUTUMN WEEK THREE  
Tuesday 28 October 2008

# MUSE



Inside the God Machine:  
A look at the Large Hadron Collider **M8-10**

# Muse 28.10.08



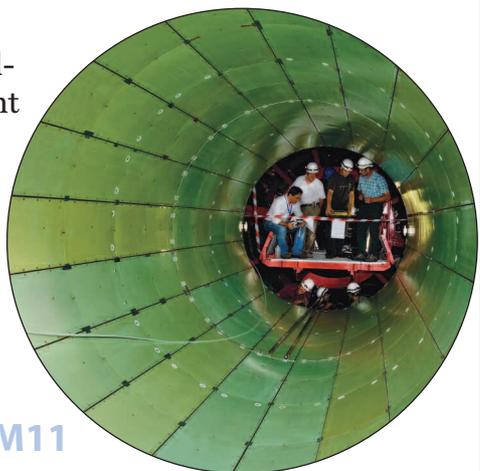
## Bursaries

We examine where exactly the money in our pockets is coming from and if those given money by their universities are as deserving as we'd like to think

>> M12-13

## SPECIAL: Inside the God Machine

We lift the lid on the Large Hadron Collider, the 6.4 billion euro science experiment that hopes to further our understanding of the Universe at the most fundamental level >> M8-10



## Breast Cancer

We look at one of the world's deadliest and least-understood diseases >> M11

## Celebrity Island

Has our culture become too obsessed with the bodies of celebrities? And what does that say about us? >> M6-7

## Up a GUM tree

Freshers Week is over, for some with unpleasant consequences. This is how to deal with them >> M14

## Halloween MMVIII

It is the year's scariest night... but why? >> M15

**F&D:** Where to go in York to find a real Italian >> M16

**Fashion:** What to wear, and what to avoid >> M17

**Arts:** A new art exhibition at the Norman Rae, plus we preview Grease

>> M18-19

**Music:** We take a look at The Cure's new album, and review lots of gigs all around York >> M20-21

**Film:** Gomorrah, La Zona and the classic film Wall Street reviewed >> M22

Muse front cover courtesy of STFC

# Lily Eastwood



## It is clear to me: young people suck

My sister has a boyfriend and I have a conspiracy theory. My theory is that said boyfriend is older than me. She says, he says, my parents say, that he is 20. Frankly I'm already disturbed. At 17 she should definitely only be holding hands, maybe, with a boy of 17 and a half, maximum. That is the absolute limit. Maybe they could pass notes to each other in maths, notes about puppies and Blue Peter. Unfortunately her chosen *man*friend can drive and he has no respect for me his (apparent) elder.

But anyway, this boy is not 20. Or at least he is not like any 20 year old I know. He has a job and excellent facial hair. My pseudo-maternal wiles have no hold over him. He makes me feel, at best, like his equal. More usually I feel like his junior. If he really is 20 then I am a very important year older than him and he should back right off. At 21, I have ascended the marble staircase to womanhood and can happily pay him no more heed than to wave down from the lofty heights of maturity. If he is any older than 20, then I'm probably going to have to kill him. Sister toucher.

The younger generation, in short, need to learn some manners. I'm beginning to think you can't tell sixteen to eighteen year olds enough to shut up. I still consider myself several steps from adulthood, and that's three happy years of crippling self-analysis later, so why so many school kids I know feel the need to appear so assuredly self-

important is beyond me. Since watching *Skins* (and whose clever idea was it to let sixth formers assist in the writing?) the whole world can see that they're emotionally underdeveloped and their opinions don't matter. Give an 18 year old a pen and wait for the self-indulgent drama to emerge. Trust me, I went to my fair share of A-level plays and I even kept a diary of my 'thoughts' and 'feelings'. I have since disposed of it in shame.

So after they've been edu-

*I even kept a diary of my 'feelings'. I have since disposed of it in shame'*

cated on manners, with a swift beating for good measure, they might begin to learn their place. Their place is not, I feel, hitting on me. Nothing quite says Greek tragedy like feeling motherly towards your suitor.

I was standing at a bus stop one September evening, smudged and slightly swaying after some tragic indie disco fare, when suddenly he appeared: the little lost boy.

"Excuse me, were you at New Slang?"

"Um," I looked around to see if there was anyone more pre-pubescent he might be talk-

ing to, "Yes, yes I was." And there it was, I'd invited this little man into my journey home.

He sat alarmingly close on the night bus, gabbing about the bands and marvelling at my profound wisdom.

"Did you see The King Blues? I missed them."

"Oh yes, but they played last year too, and they were much better."

"Last year?" Blank face.

"Yeah." Oh of course, it wasn't even worth trying to get into clubs last year for the wee lad. Long silence.

"So like...how old are you?"

"Twenty-one." No silence at all, in fact every age nightmare moment in my life seemed to rush towards this point: "Oh my GOD that's so OLD!" Very long silence.

"It's my shift as a life guard tomorrow afternoon at the Malden Centre if you want to come?"

"Um. Probably not."

"They're going to get the wobstacle course out?"

Exceptionally long silence, in which, bizarrely, my main concern for my bus companion was that he didn't have a jumper. It was pretty cold.

In another world I went to Family Funday, complete with wobstacle, at the Malden Centre. I scampered in, bikini clad, coyly waving at my gangly lothario atop his watchtower. Giggly and girlish I would splash in the shallows, until he finished his shift and we could share chicken nuggets and a milkshake in the café.



## Richard Lemmer

Our pet fresher squawks from his cage

"Alcohol may be man's worst enemy, but the Bible says love your enemies". Frank Sinatra (a man who enjoyed a good martini) distilling some age old wisdom that many a fresher took to heart recently. In the last issue of *Nouse*, it was revealed that £11million is spent every year on alcohol by York students - £4million more than groceries. After experiencing Freshers' Week, it's not hard to see how such a bar tab could be easily created.

I kept tabs of much I drank during Freshers' to help me budget (and because I'm just a little bit OCD like that). In total, I drank:

- 13 x beers
- 10 x shots of Absinthe
- 3 x VK Apple

- 2 x vodka cokes,
- 2 x southern comfort,
- 1 x shot of straight vodka,
- 1 x shot of tequila,
- 1 x glass of vodka lemonade
- 1 x glass of red wine.

While it sounds like an alcoholic's Ten Days of Christmas, I stumbled through the week without making a complete tit of myself.

Sadly, the same can not be said of others. Ambulances were called at Volume: Planet Pop, paramedics were on standby, people put to bed early, reeking of urine, alcohol and embarrassment. It became painfully evident that many freshers in our block had never

really experienced the 'joys' of parental absence and 70% absinthe.

Meanwhile, I met freshers who survived the week without drinking a single drop of liquor, scared they would turn into a character from an Arctic Monkeys song if they succumbed. Finally free of any parental control and with a massive cash windfall, many students struggled to walk the literal and metaphorical line between drunk and sober.

Surrounded by shrieking couples, kebab gobbling 'wide boys' and semi-naked, semi-conscious party girls on a Friday night, I'm so glad I began my engagement with binge drinking at an early age. I may have failed my GCSEs through partying, but it left me with a more mature and experienced perspective on the binge culture.

Doing my best impersonation of the old drunken stereotypes at an age where I could afford to fuck up allowed me to grow up. Had a drunken fight with a best friend? Check.

Been sick in my own shoes? Check. Woken up next to a girl who could fetch a good price at a cattle market? Sadly, check. I enjoyed it at the time (well, maybe not Bovine Girl) but you have to face facts: being so drunk you wet yourself isn't so fitting when you spend your days writing essays using the feminist perspective of post-colonial literature.

Freshers' Week's antics should be a one off, not a template for every week's shenanigans. I'm sure we'll learn to love our enemy responsibly.

[*Re-muzzling Richard's mouth with duct tape and re-enacting passages of Less Than Zero, Muse delicately launches him back into his fresher cage, amongst the mould and lingering toxic apocrypha cast on the Nouse office floor. One day making coffee, the next proclaiming the ills of freshers acting like twats, Richard leads an exciting life. This sound good? Our AGM is on Tuesday.*]



In most possible worlds, however, any attendance only led to awkwardness. As a lone 21 year old at a family event, I attracted attention, and was asked to leave because I was hogging the floats. As a pair of fifteen year olds, perhaps my presence would have sustained only low-level awkwardness, only to be surpassed by the subsequent embarrassments of adolescent swimwear posturing, and, from what my male friends tell me, public erections.

And yes I am justified in talking about the 'younger generation'. I have been doing my own washing for at least three years now: that's important. I've also seen my sister poo in the bath, and that puts a world of experience between me and her. Which is remarkably convenient, because I'm going to need some serious justification when she finds his body under my bed.

## This week, [REDACTED] will mostly be...

...Dispelling vicious rumours that I have started about myself. Five missed calls and three texts after I submitted my last column it became apparent that such a dark foray into my psyche had proved a little disturbing for some – and not just friends.

"[REDACTED]? [REDACTED]? As in from *Nouse*? I knew I'd seen your face somewhere."

"Um...yes." This was alarming from the outset as, contrary to popular opinion, campus journalism does not usually bring with it fame and/or notoriety.

"Oh my God, you're scary."

"I beg you're pardon?"

"I read your thing. You hate life and men and people and popular culture. You're well scary. We all thought so."

"All?"

"Yeah, me and everyone else who read it. Anyway, nice to meet you.

Bye!"

Nice to meet me? Nice to meet him. Tossler. I could feel all the bad stuff bubbling. The people hate, the man hate, the hate hate. Had he never heard of a persona? Or comedy? Or exaggeration?

"I hate freshers. I hate people. I hate life," I muttered, scuffing my boots and kicking absent-mindedly at a passing kitten.

I am at risk of becoming what I have created. Some rebalancing is in order. More: some evidence of a "zest for life". Unfortunately I'm not very zesty. Energetic and flappy sometimes (that's a good mood) – but zesty no.

But I'm on the look out. I'll probably take up Tai Chi or flower arranging, something nice and calming. But please be nice if you see me, I'm recovering from a bitter campaign of distrust and fear, even if it is one that I started myself.



## Social Pariah

Hugh Morris is a warning to us all

There's always the sober bloke at the urinals who is uncomfortable when the drunken, over-weight, bald, sweating man pushes into a space no bigger than 12 centimetres wide, and proclaiming with a belching, humour, "Room for a small one? Ha." I was the sober one. The aforementioned 'fat man' proceeds to unbuckle himself, swaying as he does, setting off a domino effect, where the poor guy on the end finds himself watering the floor. In this case, I was the 'poor guy' on the end as well. After regaining my balance, I notice my spot has been filled, "err... room for a small one?"

Fresher's Week; a time for the third years to trim their moustaches, put their slippers aside, and show the greenhorns who owns this town. Yeh. That's right. We may be a little older and more knowledgeable but this doesn't mean we can't let our hair down, (what's left of it) and shake our tail feathers. This bravado approach to a night out ends well when my housemates and I outlast the freshers at a Yates' fancy dress night. We thought we'd won. However, it turned out the kids had all headed off to Gallery already, leaving us pole dancing to Eminem. Oh dear.

From the Stone Age through Victorian times to today's metrosexual climate, men ponder; when a fellow hunter-gatherer starts courting your lady, at what point to step in and with a gentleman's tone remark, 'enough's enough'? I'm fairly laid back, so it takes me a good few arm brushes and hair touches before I move in. But when I do, o boy, you better watch out. I put my appletini down on the bar with intention, stride towards the imposer, well, imposingly, and interrupt with a firm hand on my girlfriend's shoulder. The man turns to me. "Excuse me mate, we're having a conversation." "Right, sorry, I, err...left my applet...pint over there anyway." Darwin would have me slaughtered.

Ever since I got my bike up and running it has been the pride of my life. Shiny handle bars, beautifully-pumped tyres, and a broken seat, which I feel helps tone one's buttocks, as you have to balance as you ride along. I can only assume that when I zoom past people- that's right, zoom- they are immensely jealous. This becomes more evident when well-wishers heckle me on the street. However, it is mostly, foul-mouthed youths who vent their envy at me. Hmm. "Nice Granny bike" Thank you. "Cool bike, dickhead". I think so. "Put your legs away." Sorry.

Stairs are a problem at the best of time. All that leg up and forward business. Then there are spiral stairs, strewth. The ones down to the basement of Ziggys are particularly treacherous. Whilst dodging oncoming traffic in fancy dress, I attempt them with a VK in each hand. Bouncing from wall to wall, I see a friend I am eager to gain the respect of; easy peasy. The quickest way to anyone's heart is humour, right? I glance my eyes upwards and throw a warm smile, then drop my VK to the floor, and slip in the subsequent spill. I pick myself up and move on; bloody stairs.

## Sarah Foster

Sarah experiments with televisual art-smack

I already had my plans for the first couple of weeks of term started. Once I'd finally managed to fight my way through the mountain of work that all seemed due at the same time (a tip: never be a third year) I would be free to, and I believe these are the exact words that I used, "drink my body weight in cheap alcohol". I wasn't all that successful, but only because I'd obviously set my goal slightly too high. I was well on my way to drinking at least the weight of my left leg when things all went a little wrong. I was distracted from my



plans of pure hedonism by something rather unlikely: *The Wire*. For all you who don't read Charlie Brooker, *The Wire* is an American crime programme dealing with street culture in Baltimore. I didn't necessary think it was the sort of programme that I'd enjoy. As a rule I tend to prefer my shows a bit... nicer. With less drugs, shooting, and naked women. My previous television obsession was *Project Runway*, in which people designed really nice clothes. It was much less harrowing.

But I needed to give *The Wire* a chance. It's a critically acclaimed show. Yes, very few people actually seem to watch it, but isn't that mostly a sign of quality? And it's Barack Obama's favourite television show. If he likes it then it must be good. Although to be honest

all of this had nothing to do with my decision to start watching. I wasn't giving it a chance in an attempt to step outside of my comfort zone. I decided to do it because my boyfriend threatened to leave me if I didn't. He was probably joking. Probably. I mean, he does really, really like *The Wire*. Possibly discovering that I didn't like it would be akin to his discovering I liked to kick puppies in my spare time.

So with this (possibly empty) threat hanging over me I sat down with season one, willing it to be the best television that I've ever watched. I like my boyfriend. It would be a shame to lose him over this.

Thankfully, I didn't have to pray too hard. The show opened with a dead body, but after I'd reminded myself that a dislike for dead bodies

was just being closed-minded, I found myself sucked into a world of ambiguous characters who speak in a language that only resembles English. There were some more dead bodies, but if I looked past those I saw a complex story unfolding in front of me, and one in which the assumption had not been made that I was some kind of idiot, who needed reminding how narrative works every five seconds. It does mean that I still don't know the names of half the characters, but doesn't that just make it even more like real life?

So in short, I've become just a little bit addicted to *The Wire*, I gave up on my attempts to pickle my liver and I've realised that half of what my boyfriend had ever said to me was actually a reference to *The Wire*. Pretty much your average week then.

Halloween

Name: All Hallow's Eve  
 Fighting out of: The Shadows  
 Likes: Scary noises, hollowed-out pumpkins, free sweets



EitherOr

What rules the roost this Autumn

This autumn, there are really only two things you filthy hippies care about: dressing up in unfamiliar and uncomfortable clothes in an unholy attempt to impress your peers, and Politics, the noble attempt to radically change society for the better, you judgemental swine. **Dave Coates** explains...

Round 1: Origins

The ancient roots of Halloween may be traced back to the Gaelic festival of Samhain, a time at which the boundaries between this world and the otherworld were thought to dissolve, allowing all manner of wraiths and nixies to have their way with the crops and livestock. Traditionally, you fend off the wrathful spirits by dressing up, making huge fires and getting shitfaced. Politics began when Plato commissioned the Senate to

build him functioning wings made of wax and feathers so he could fly to the treaty of Versailles, but, when he flew too close to the sun, the wax melted and he fell, landing on David Hume, who was philosophic about it all. The Senators who built the right wing blamed the Senators who built the left wing, which was fine because the left were feckless liberals who did a half-assed job. And so, politics was born. Politics: Aye, Halloween: Boo.

Round 2: Dedication

Heading into politics is a major commitment. No-one might like you. This is not such a concern for Tories, who are generally born with a large degree of political sway and only pursue votes out of manners. Unfortunately, one can only be born a Tory, just like being a Jedi. Those who turn Tory surely possess a degree of the toff within, some manner of blot upon the soul that marks them out as being doomed to success

and influence from the beginning. Otherwise, one must profess to give a care about the revolting underclasses and spout nonsense about 'the community' and 'values'. In some ways, Halloween is a similar excuse to externally manifest the darkest places of one's psyche. Confronting a twenty-stoner in hot pants and devil horns is certainly enough to provoke questions regarding the meaning of life. 2-0 Politics.

Round 3: Socialising

Halloween is an opportunity for humans of every colour in the personal worth rainbow to throw off their inhibitions and act like a total douche. Worse, this Halloween falls on a Friday, meaning people cannot enjoy their precious moments of privacy in peace. On the other hand, Halloween is an opportunity for people to forget about their inse-

curities or everyday concerns and act against restrictive norms, recognising precious moments of freedom as something worth taking and enjoying as they pass. Better yet, this Halloween falls on a Friday, meaning that even those of the shyest disposition may be coaxed into letting go, albeit for a single night. Politicians are Satan's spawn. Halloween takes the round.

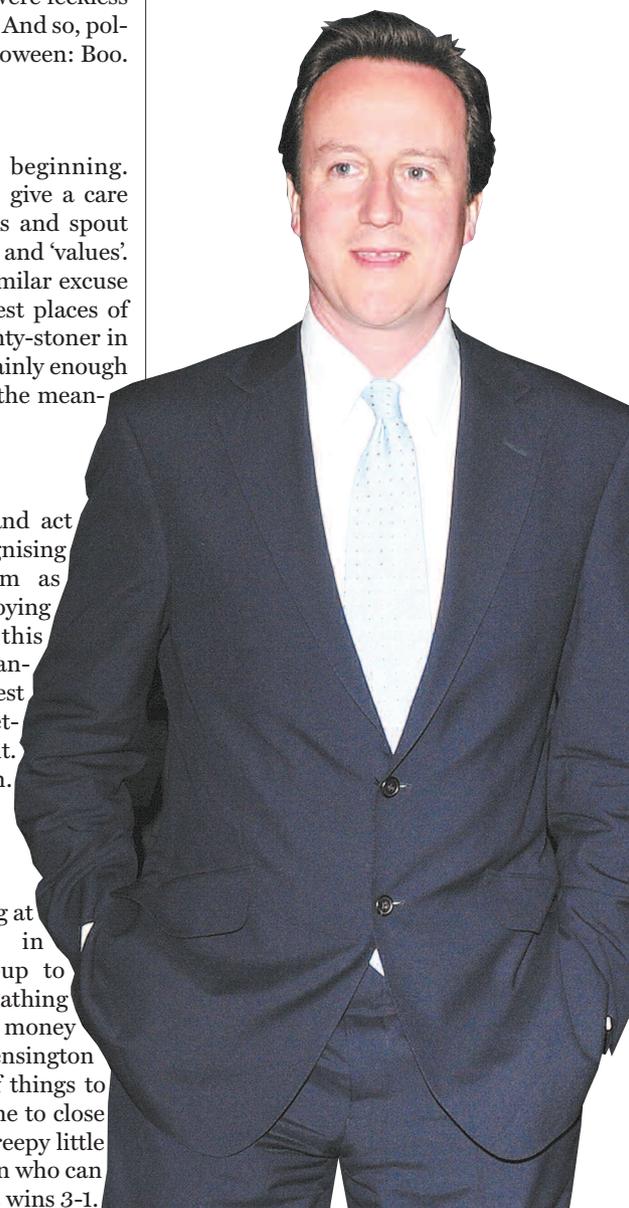
Round 4: Representation in the Media

If you're reading *Nouse*, then chances are you've watched *The West Wing*. Aaron Sorkin is just so insightful, he just gets it. Why couldn't real politicians be like that? Well, real politicians are like that. When he cycles back to his bedsit flat in Kensington, Dave Cameron boils the kettle on the hob and sits down at the dinner table, where he remains locked in intellectual battle over the country's ills, often long into the

night. When he isn't volunteering at the community youth club in Kensington, he brings hot soup to Kensington's homeless, often bathing their feet in oil he bought with money from his second job in the Kensington branch of Netto. I've run out of things to say about Halloween, so allow me to close by saying that Tim Burton is a creepy little man with a preference for women who can survive dismemberment. Politics wins 3-1.

Name: Uh, Politics  
 Fighting out of: The Will of the People  
 Likes: Counting, sound-bites

Politics



TheStrip





# AlmostOverheard

DAVE and JERRY, two new housemates, meet to compare hauls at Fresher's Fair.

DAVE So what'd you get then?  
 JERRY Pens, condoms, pot noodles – you know, the usual. You?  
 DAVE Three spatulas and a Chlamydia testing kit. You can have one if you want.  
 JERRY I'm alright thanks.  
 DAVE Got it already?  
 JERRY Chlamydia?  
 DAVE No – the free spatula.  
 JERRY Oh right. No, didn't see the point. I don't have any pans yet. Or a kitchen. Or electricity.  
 DAVE I see. Still, could be worse. I hear there's one guy camping out on a raft in the lake. Or you could be in Goodricke.  
 JERRY True. Derrwent till I die. Club D, Big D...  
 DAVE ...STD  
 JERRY Was that last year's theme?  
 DAVE Something like that. You signed up with the health service yet?  
 JERRY Nah. They're still queuing round the block. I reckon until things start turning green I might just leave it.  
 DAVE Can't be too careful- not with all the action we're getting.  
 JERRY Uh, yeah. Hey, what's that?  
 DAVE Freshers' Calendar.  
 JERRY No, behind the Freshers' Calendar. It looks like a tea towel with a picture of Adolf Hitler on it.  
 DAVE Oh yeah, that – it's just a bit of fun. I got it from ReichSoc.  
 JERRY ReichSoc?

DAVE Yeah, they're new. Not ratified yet, but freedom of expression and all that. Thought it was a bit of a laugh.  
 JERRY Are you serious?  
 DAVE I didn't have to pay anything. Just had to join their mailing list – you're taking advantage of them, you see – everyone does it. It's not like I'm going to go to the rallies. Look – they've got a flyer.  
 JERRY Did you deny the holocaust for a free tea towel? A free tea towel with a picture of Hitler on it?  
 DAVE Look, we're not all like you Jerry – we can't all rely on our parents and Marks and Spencer's ready meals to see us through – we've got to get by on what we can. Anyway, I'm pretty sure it's iron ic.  
 JERRY Ironic?  
 DAVE Yeah. Or kitsch – camp – subver sive; you know – student shit. Oh right, I see. Are you sure?  
 JERRY Yeah, yeah. And it's like totally a statement about... apathy, and challenging the system, and all that kind of stuff.  
 JERRY Right. Maybe I'll check it out later.  
 DAVE Yeah. Anyway, it was right next to the Dominoes stand. I only signed up because I thought I was getting pizza. Besides, you want something to make you stand out.

Chris Bush

# DeFacebook

Profile edit Friends Networks home sweet home account privacy? never logout

Alice Dill's Photos – Freshers Week

Photo 34 of 41 | Back to Album | Alice's Profile

Previous Next



In this photo: Shaun (photos) James Norton (photos) MY BIG BANANA (photos) Added September 29

From the album: Freshers week by Alice Dill



James Norton wrote:

MATE! LOLZZZ!!!!111 I have no idea what happened!!!

Delete



Freddy Bartle wrote:

You were JOKES man! It was like you just couldn't see and shit like you got this sheep and it was like woah, that's not right man! And the girl - she looks pretty butters in the pictures and like that's sick man. I'm so glad I went home cos you lot were trashed and being proper dicks man.

Delete



James Norton wrote:

Mate. You didn't go home. The girl in the pics is you.

Delete

## RafSanchez

Nouse's Editor has his say



I'm pretty sure the salsa instructors can smell us. And that they have some sort of secret code signal to each other: "Oh shit, third year who just realized that university is coming to an end and desperately trying to pick up hobbies at 10 o'clock." Maybe there's just

something distinctive about the clamminess of the hands of somebody who's realized that if they don't get the basic step now, they aren't going to get another chance.

Up and down the line it feels like all my friends are grasping out desperately for new and exciting interests. Something tangible that can be presented to people in the imminently approaching real world as proof that we deserve to exist outside the university bubble. Something to impress and make us memorable when having a hoodie with your name and lofty committee title on it no longer adequately explains who you are and what you want.

As the mist that always surrounds returning to York clears it shows just how quickly post-university life is racing up to meet us. We all seem to clutch at these hobbies in the hope they can break our falls. One friend has developed an interest in sky-diving, which seems appropriate. Another is

doing hair modelling which seems to involve mainly allowing other people to shape your hair into whatever coloured helmet shape she wants as long it's aubergine. Another, who in our two years of knowing each other has been almost entirely sedentary, has taken to the gym with a self-flagellating fervor. I'm doing salsa, which has gone well for precisely one lesson. A nameless friend has started doing boys, though whether this is a part-time hobby or a genuine lifestyle choice still isn't totally clear.

Yet all of these, regardless of the excruciating lengths we all have to go before it can count as a genuine "interest", seem to have a certain credibility in the real world that society and union positions never will. I often imagine the fear, hurt and bewilderment that YUSU officers feel when they get off a train in London and no one knows who they are, wants to hear about their ratified minutes or is impressed by their black cards.

To greater or lesser extents I think we all probably suffer from the same fear - that the 'us' of university isn't going to cut any metaphorical mustard with 'them' of the outside world. That we need, in the depressing language of the Careers Service which we seem to be visiting now, some sort of "transferable skills set" to take away from uni and into real life.

It isn't even really about Freshers making you feel old. Somebody suggested weirdly to me the other day that "at least all these first years were born before Desert Storm". I couldn't quite share in my friend's relief that these people were older than Saddam's scuds. But then maybe it didn't mean as much to me as it did to him. The point is that they aren't really that young. They've just got a little more time before graduation hits them with an all-levelling smack. You know what I hear helps soften the blow? Having done two terms of Street Dance.

1.58 pm, Tuesday night. Waiting in the ladies toilets of a much-frequented York club (go on, guess), I am joined by a pair of girls tripping over their stilettos. One is thin, and pretty in a 'four hours ago' sort of way, the other much curvier, also pretty, and somewhat constricted by her ill-fitting top. In a bid to seek distraction from my boredom, I eavesdrop on their conversation.

Thin girl (striking a pose in front of the grimy mirror): "Oh my GOD I am SO wasted!"

Curvy girl: "I know, I was going to give it a break after Freshers' Week, but then when I got your text I was like, this year doesn't count anyway!"

Thin girl: "True that!" (Pauses to re-arrange her artfully messed-up 'bedhead' hair). She turns sideways, and places a hand against her pancake-flat stomach.

"Oh my God I have put on SO much weight this week, I am SO never going to Efes EVER again."

Curvy girl (struggling with the strings of her top): "Oh my God shut up, I would kill to look like you. I was looking at myself earlier and I can actually grab CHUNKS of my stom-

ach. It is so not funny."

Thin girl: "Whatever hun, you are SO skinny at the moment. And I would KILL for boobs like yours."

At this point I decide that maybe I'm not that desperate to pee, and I slide past the two girls, and back out into the anonymity of the scrum.

The following day, standing in line in Your:Shop, I overhear a similar exchange. A girl is holding a Mars bar, and bemoaning the devastating effect it will have upon her figure/complexion/life in general. As she and her friend pass the magazine section they pause and one stoops to pick up a copy of a popular weekly magazine. Emblazoned on the cover are the words 'Posh's weight plunges' set between two pictures of Victoria Beckham demonstrating the shocking effect of some trauma or other.

"God", she says, looking at Posh.

"I know, it's awful," says her friend. "How could someone do that to themselves?"

Looking slightly cheered, the girl holding the Mars bar joins the queue.

Society seems to have reached bizarre levels of contradiction. Never before have we been so wise to the

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'People want to see how the 'other half' live, look, and how they got there, so that, in some way, they could get there too'

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magical properties of broccoli and omega 3s, so clued up on the perils of drinking, drugs, and deep-fried chocolate bars. We are bombarded with self-help books and agony aunt columns, telling us how to make ourselves more fulfilled, well rounded and balanced individuals. Obesity has reached unprecedented levels. 'Happiness classes' for children, intended to combat discipline problems and encourage positive interaction, are reportedly having the opposite effect, leaving youngsters depressed and insecure. Students, supposedly enjoying the first flush of independent adulthood, are the group most vulnerable to mental illness; one in four of us reportedly suffer from some psychological disorder.

Conversely, media coverage detailing our sorry state seems only to engender a morbid fascination from

the general public. Imperfect though we doubtless are, we devour with glee tales of the inferior; we may be eating a ready meal, but the poor sod being interviewed by Jamie Oliver in Rotherham can't even boil water! Imagine! Sure, a student may enjoy a drink (or several), and a bit of a bop (or deferred collapse) on the tiles, but compared to the most recent reports of Amy Winehouse's sorry spiral, it all appears rather more acceptable. So how did we come to this?

Let's start off with that perpetual source of angst, our bodies. A 2004 government report on obesity by the Select Committee on Health states that the number of obese men (those with a Body Mass Index over 30, a healthy range being between 20 and 25) nearly doubled between 1993 and 2002, from 13.2% to 22.1%. The number of obese women also rose significantly during that period, from 16.4% to 22.8%. Nevertheless, it is not only this extreme group which has seen such growth; the report also states that what we commonly regard as 'normal' is in fact overweight; only a third of the adult population is within the healthy range. Our society has adjusted accordingly.

We are fascinated by celebrity culture; what they eat, how they look, and how they act. But do we take our idolotry too far? **Holly Thomas** explores the rag-mag world

# A culture of celebrity-worship



Clothes sizes have gradually crept up, and what would once have been a 14 is now a 10. Airlines warn that obese passengers must pay for the two seats necessary to carry their bulk, and hospitals now find they must purchase new equipment to cater for the specialist needs of obese patients. And unfortunately it's pretty much a given that no one finishes their first year of university the svelte young creature they were when they arrived.



**Magazines like Closer bombard the public with stories of star's highs and lows**

However things aren't looking good at the other end of the spectrum either. Macabre pictures of jutting ribcages, hollow eyes and skin stretched over bones barely covered by flesh haunt the pages of newspapers and magazines. The headline 'My Anorexia Hell', or its equivalent, is practically a given on the cover of at least one weekly gossip mag, and horrifically this sickness is increasingly prevalent amongst young boys, despite its common association with girls and young women.

So why, given the gallons of ink spilled on these topics, does the situation only seem to get worse? And what satisfaction is it that we derive from gawping at these stories, what voyeuristic pleasure at revelling in the misery of others, these burger-guzzling 30-stoners and tragic stick insects? We tuck in to chips, yet eagerly lap up every new celeb diet fad. It makes no sense.

In search of an answer, I return to Your:Shop and lurking next to the magazine shelves, I pounce upon the next unfortunate soul I see clutching a copy of Closer magazine.

Katie, a first year English student, said: "Well, I suppose it's always nice to think you could maybe look like that one day if you really made the effort.... although obviously no one does. And awful though it is, if you're really feeling down about yourself then a photo of a really horribly skinny celebrity makes you think that even if you are a bit bigger than you'd like to be yourself, at least you don't look that starved"

Could this be the key? Is this entire flaw-obsessed culture self-perpetuating? I grab some glossies of my own and head for the library to examine them. Settling myself in a corner, and hoping that no one notices my deviation from what might be considered more suitable study material, I unload my less weighty cargo. Not normally one to peruse such material (for cashflow reasons; I'm not that worthy), my findings are stark, to say the least.

One has a cover feature entitled "Stars getting older- winners and losers". Turning to it, I find photos of various 'aging' celebrities, the photo of each accompanied either by an approving tick for having spent the necessary \$20k per month to achieve the face/body of a 25 year old at 40, or an angry purple 'X', because the expression they were pulling at the time happened to give the impression of age lines. Ironically, the tag line begins: "Everyone knows it's hard being a woman in Hollywood..." Is it any wonder, with paparazzi ready to pounce every time you squint and get 'crow's

feet' around your eyes?

I delve deeper. Particularly astonishing are the blatant contradictions that can be found even within the same publication. One contained an article entitled "Fern: Behind the smiles". The piece claimed that although Fern Britton has lost an incredible 6st through gastric band surgery (she had previously been dangerously overweight), and is looking better than ever, "losing weight has also made her lose true confidence". Barely 50 pages later was an article about a former bulimia sufferer, whose gastric band operation, which she had undergone despite not technically being heavy enough to qualify under normal circumstances, had been "the best thing" she'd ever done. Another magazine lamented the recent weight loss of Victoria Beckham then continued with articles on how to emulate the transformation of Big Brother 'star' Imogen Thomas, who lost a stone through a strict diet and rigorous exercise routine. An article on Jordan and Peter's rumored separation included a small insert about Jordan's lipo-induced cellulite- which was doubtless of crucial relevance to her marital difficulties.

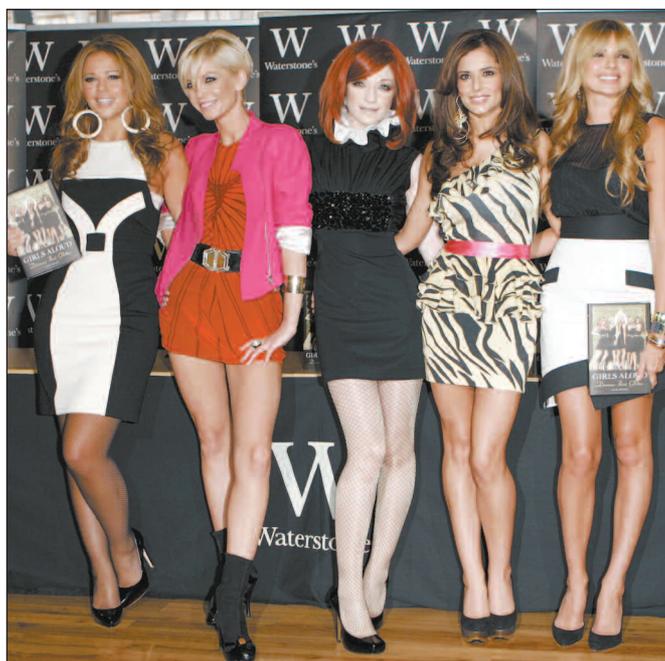
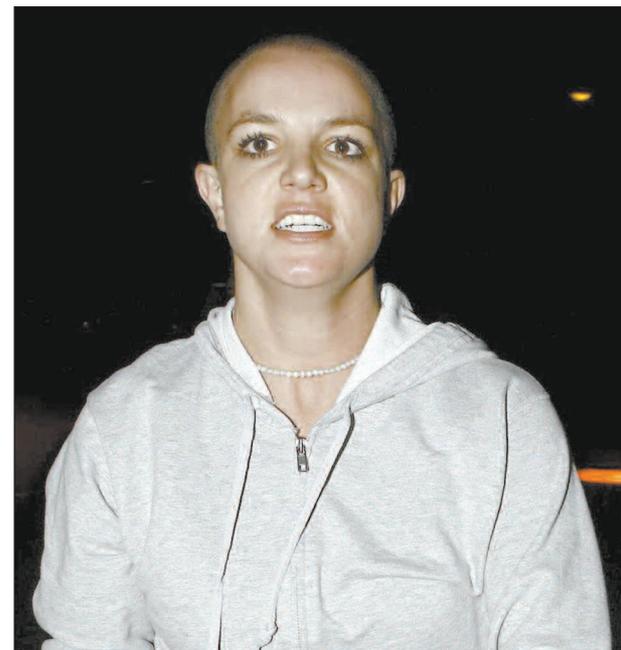
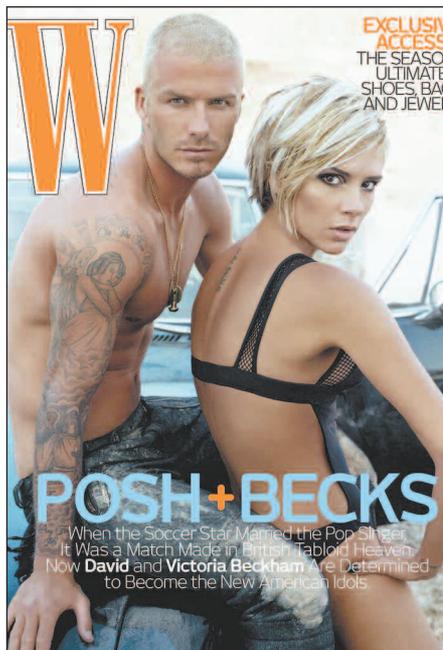
But why? Why, having turned the page on Fern's depression, do we scour articles on the 'skinny gene' diet to determine whether we are 'the hunter', 'the gatherer', 'the nomad' or 'the teacher'? Why examine our fingertips for the whorl patterns that would indicate that our diet should be rich in black beans, brussell sprouts and turmeric, and that yoga or pilates are the ideal exercises for us? Suzy Cox, features editor of Grazia magazine, says: "We want to look at pictures of celebrities because they're aspirational- people want to see how the 'other half' live, look, and how they got there, so that maybe, in some way, they can too"

Perhaps Fern is our safety net. We probably won't take up pilates, munch flaxseeds in between striking the 'sun' and 'dog' poses or swap pineapple smoothies for toast at breakfast. So hearing about Fern's 'misery' and

**"I don't think that anyone could look at pictures of Britney at her darkest moments and feel better about themselves"**

decreased confidence since her weight loss acts as a boost- 'I may not be skinny, but maybe I'm happier for it'. Likewise, the one in a thousand of us who actually fulfill their 'hunter' destiny and emerge Angelina Jolie-lean may live with the satisfaction of never again being made to feel like a galumphing prole every time they see a maybelline ad.

It is not just our appearances which we compare so scrupulously with those plastered across Closer and Heat. The culture of social drinking, one most students can relate to is another case in point. Since 24-hour drinking was introduced, reports have claimed that alcohol related hospital admission have risen as much as 300%. Again, newspapers and magazines delight in reporting every gruesome detail; the death of a student from Exeter University in February was hailed as a tragic consequence of the casual approach this generation takes towards consuming potentially lethal quantities of drink. Exeter University banned drinking games



**Clockwise from top left: the Beckhams take on America; Britney at her shaven-headed worst; Girls Aloud picture-perfect for a book signing; Amy Winehouse, dazed and confused**

(the student died after an organized bar crawl), but if the headlines reporting hospital admissions and drunken violence are anything to go by, the state we're in has remained unaltered. And once again, our famous friends match us shot for shot.

Take Kerry Katona's recent 'drunken' exhibition on GMTV. Whilst the majority may live out their less coherent moments amidst the company of friends, her slurred words sounded all the more shameful for being broadcast on national television... and in the pre-noon hours, obviously. How much less guilty we might feel about our two-for-one cocktail extravaganza the previous night, when hungover, and observed by none other than perhaps housemates (probably in a similar state), we flick on the telly to be greeted by this sorry sight. Not that our antics are exactly wholesome; University security staff have been heard to remark that this was the "worst Freshers' Week" they could remember, describing ambulance call-outs, merrymakers throwing up anywhere but in the toilet, and generally giving the impression that students don't know when to stop.

Do we really feel that as long as our behavior is 'worsted', as long as we are not quite hitting the very lowest rung of the social ladder, we can get away with it?

"I don't think it's quite that clear-cut" says Emily, a third year philoso-

phy student. "I mean, I would probably still go out, whether I was reading about Amy Winehouse, or whoever. But I suppose it does make you think that whatever I get up to, it's probably not that dire. And at least it's private."

Suzy Cox, features editor of Grazia magazine, says: "I don't think that anyone could look at the pictures of Britney at her darkest moments, and feel better about themselves. It's one thing to see a picture of one of Girls Aloud leaving a club a little the worse for wear, or Madonna with a hair out of place, and to think, 'at least they're human after all'. But when a star has more serious problems, as it seems Britney did, that's when a journalist has to be especially responsible about the way they report on that person"

Clearly then, our sensibilities have not forsaken us entirely. We recognise that, amusing though the antics of the notorious few are, there comes a point when enough really is enough; when waking up with your miniskirt around your neck, makeup everywhere but your face, might be a sign that your approach to life could use a bit of a rethink. Tempting though a diet of goji berries and avocado smoothies might sound, hopefully our willpower will crack before our lives are overtaken entirely by calorie charts. And finally we should count our blessings that should we have an off day, the paparazzi aren't about to immortalise the moment for all to see. ●

# Step into the God machine

It is by far the biggest, most expensive and most dramatic experiment in the history of mankind. **Stefan Hall** takes an insider's look at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN

There is something innate in humans; a certain inquisitiveness about ourselves and the world around us that has furthered our understanding about almost every tangible object on our small planet. We know the minutiae of the human body and other animals. We can explain and predict weather patterns. We can build structures reaching hundreds of metres into the sky, and design complex systems beneath our feet that govern our daily lives: transport, water, electricity, communications. Technology has become smaller and more efficient and continues to do so. In short, it seems there is very little left to accomplish. However, the few things that are left to understand and master remain so far away from complete comprehension that we have only really begun to deconstruct them. We are still in the first stage of understanding: discovery.

So what are these - at present - unknown entities? Metaphysics, for one, although arguably there is nothing to understand there, just a continuous debate. Secondly, the deep sea; perhaps the only place left on earth which we know relatively little about, due to the immense difficulties in exploring it. However, the most mysterious of all, and also the most vast, is the universe.

The universe has always inspired wonder and amazement, for even though it is ever-present, it remains a fascinating mystery. The more we learn about it, the more questions are thrown at it. It is infinite; unreachable and seemingly unconquerable. What we think we know about it is the result of theories and models - though space is being explored through satellites and probes, the exploration is focused on gathering information about planets, stars, and other physical entities. The universe, though, encompasses much more than this. It includes space, time, energy, momentum and, perhaps most importantly, matter.

It is matter that is being investigated in the world's biggest ever science experiment, the Large Hadron Collider, which lies around 100 metres beneath the border of France and Switzerland, at the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN). The LHC is a 27 kilometre long circular tunnel that accelerates particles to close to the speed of light, before colliding them and analysing the resulting debris. 8,000 particle

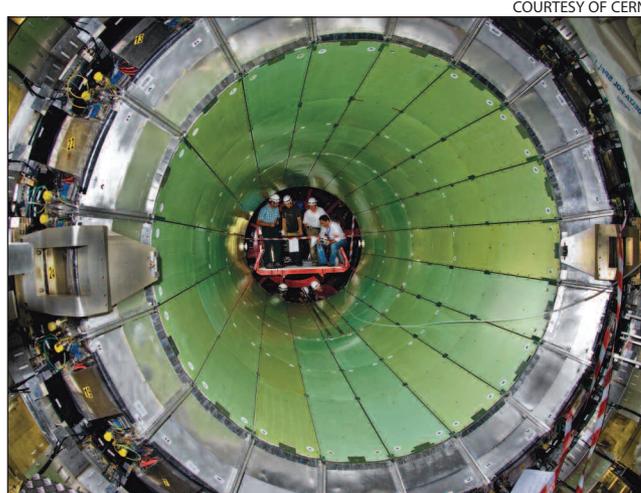
physicists, about half the total number in the world today, are working at CERN. Grand designs then, for an experiment that has an anticipated cost of €6.4 billion, has been referred to as a 'Big Bang Machine', and is reputedly in search of a 'God particle'. So, what is the purpose of the experiment?

Well, like all good stories, the LHC begins at the beginning. The beginning, in this case, of the universe. The start of time, the Big Bang; events that everyone has heard about and carries a vague understanding of, but, as I've already mentioned, lead usually to more questions than answers. And these are the questions that the scientists working at CERN hope to answer - questions including, for example: why do particles have mass?

The LHC is designed to replicate the conditions immediately after the Big Bang. It will achieve this by accelerating protons, subatomic particles (the smallest particles known to man), up to 99% of the speed of light. This is so fast that the protons will travel around the 27km ring 11,000 times every second. They are guided through the tunnel by approximately 2,000 huge magnets, cooled to -270°C, which keep the beams in specifically calculated paths. Groups of these protons are circulated in opposite directions, then, once they reach maximum speed, they are forced to collide. Several detectors are set up around the ring to examine the results of these collisions; massive digital cameras that not only take pictures, but are also able to detect momentum, charge and spin. There are four main detectors, three of which have sufficiently scientific-sounding acronyms - ATLAS, CMS and LHCb - and one which doesn't - ALICE - though the latter stands for A Large Ion Collider Experiment, which is surely scientific enough.

What will the detectors find? Nobody really knows. It's not quite needle-in-a-haystack stuff, but it isn't too far off. The theory is that the LHC will discover a particle known as the Higgs Boson, a mysterious 'missing link' particle named after British physicist Peter Higgs, nicknamed 'the God particle'.

The science behind the Higgs Boson is complicated and requires some imagination to understand it. All objects are made up of lots of smaller particles that make up the whole - atoms - and even smaller particles that make up these particles. So, if you can, imagine these 'even smaller particles' -



COURTESY OF CERN

**'8,000 particle physicists, approximately half the total number in the world today, are working at CERN on the LHC'**

protons and neutrons - are orbited by electrons, in the same way that moons might orbit a planet. How big these orbits are depend on the mass of the electron, so if we can understand the mass of electrons then we can understand the size of their orbits. If we can understand the size of these orbits, we will also be able to understand the size - and a lot else besides - of everything else around us. Over time, particle physicists have developed a theory that explains the interaction between all these tiny particles, but, says Professor Roger Cashmore of Oxford University, an expert on Experimental physics and the Higgs, "it requires all the masses of the particles to be zero".

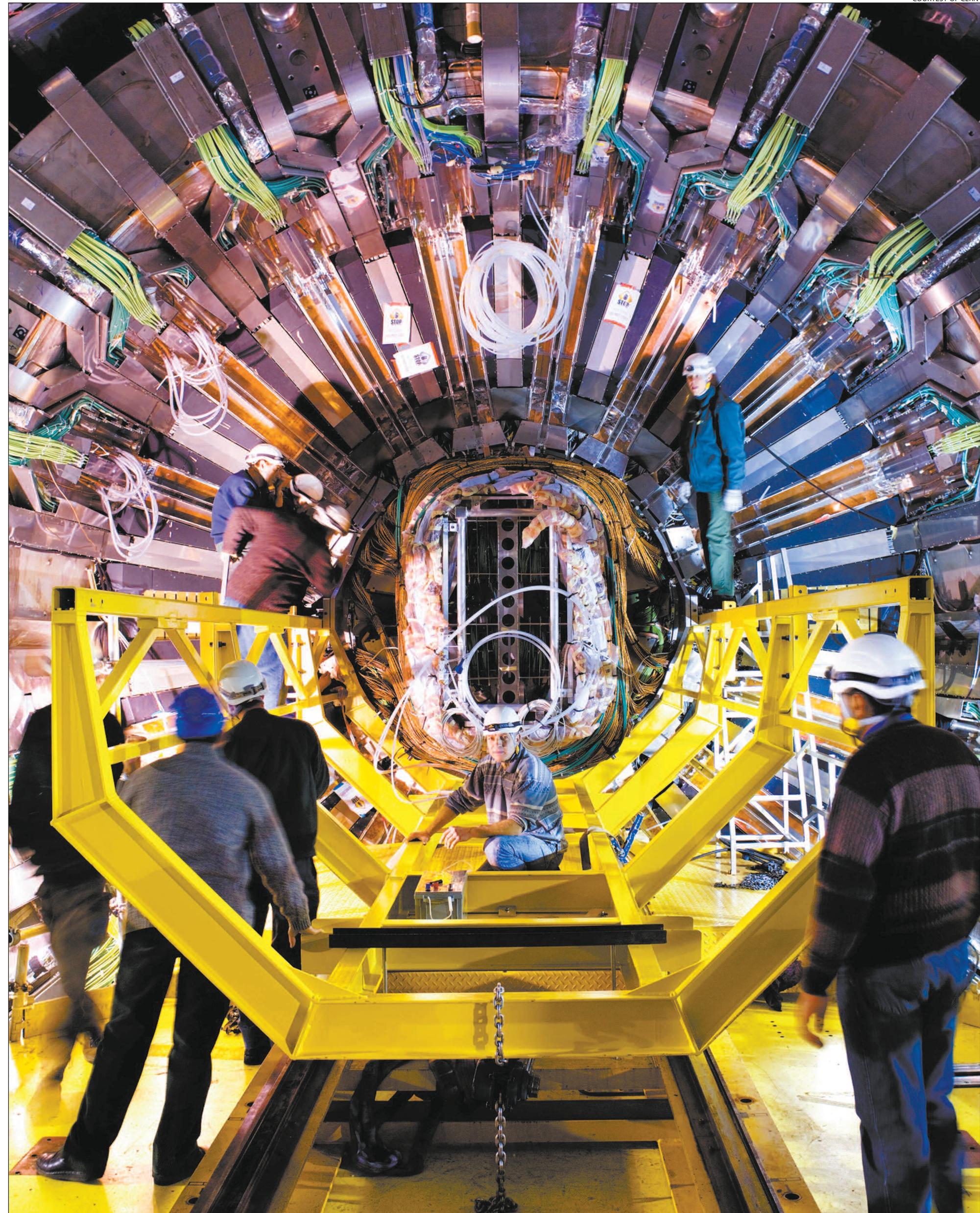
Everyone knows that everything has mass, regardless of how small it is, so a new theory was developed by Peter Higgs, who said that there is an invisible field in space that particles move through which gives them mass. To simplify this, do some more imagining. When you wade through water it's harder than just walking on the street: your legs seem heavier. The same concept applies to particles and this field: as they move through it, they appear to be given mass. The field is invisible, but it is everywhere. What Higgs said was that this field is linked to, and can therefore be investigated through, a particle. Quite modestly, he called this particle the Higgs Boson.

**Above and right: construction of the LHC at CERN has taken scientists nearly twenty years**

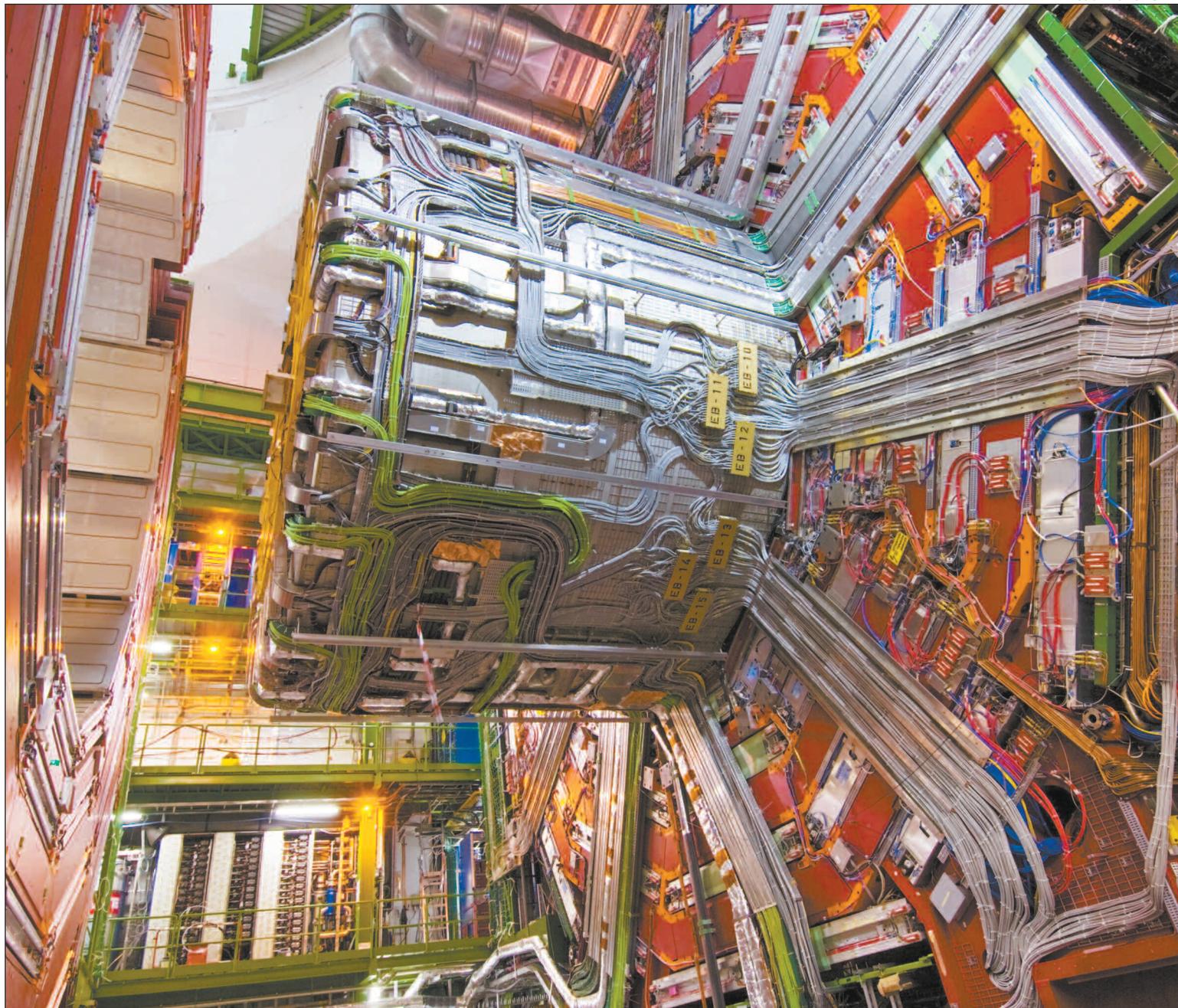
Cashmore was one of five winners of a competition set in 1993 by the then British Science Minister William Waldegrave that challenged physicists to produce a one page answer to the question: 'what is the Higgs, and why do we want to find it?' The complexity of the replies is testament to the difficulty of the concept, and Cashmore echoed the consensus of physicists when he wrote that "finding the Higgs [Boson] is the key to discovering whether the Higgs field does exist and whether our best hypothesis for the origin of mass is correct".

The particle has not yet been discovered; it is still purely theoretical. If the LHC finds it the likelihood is that the Higgs Boson will explain why elementary particles found in nature are not massless. "This is significant because this is the largest remaining problem with the current theory of particle physics, which is called the Standard Model", says the UK spokesperson for CMS (Compact Muon Solenoid, one of the detectors on the LHC), Professor Geoff Hall. He's been working on the project in various forms since 1989, and so is well-placed to explain why the Higgs Boson has caused such a fuss. Though it might not seem relevant, or important, to our everyday life, he assured me that it represents a huge gap in our theory of particle physics. I asked him where the nickname of 'God particle' came from, a strange name given that the particle doesn't actually 'create' anything. "It originates in a book by Leon Lederman [a Nobel Laureate], who is a witty and whimsical character... I think he is referring to the fact that the Higgs particle 'gives' mass to the other particles in the theory, which is an otherwise unsolved riddle". Some further probing into Lederman's account of things provides more of an explanation. "The boson is so central to the state of physics ... yet so elusive, that I have given it a nickname: the God Particle." Why? "Our publisher wouldn't let us call it the Goddamn Particle, though that would be more appropriate title, given its villainous nature and the expense it is causing."

So there we have it; a theory, an evasive particle, and now a huge machine to find it. Some readers might have caught the intense media storm surrounding CERN and the LHC on 'Big Bang Day', September 10th of this year. This was the culmination of months of preparation - the >>



COURTESY OF CERN



**Above: one of the massive detectors that scientists hope will spot new particles**

previously undiscovered particle or force that affects all objects. Years and years of what we thought we were sure about would have to be cast aside as another endeavour in the 'trial and error' theory of natural forces; in this same way the Standard Model would need to be drastically reworked, or possibly even replaced.

It seems a little disappointing to

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**‘Physicist Dr. Brian Cox made the exasperated riposte that “anyone who believes the LHC will destroy the earth is a twat”’**

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hear that the experiment, which has been so highly publicised recently, could end up throwing out nothing. But, as they say, every cloud has a silver lining – and the silver lining of the LHC will remain whether it finds anything or not. CERN has been at the forefront of technological discoveries and developments since it opened in 1954. Their method? “Get a shitload of very clever people together in one place with one common, unifying goal, give them an almost infinite supply of coffee, and stand back”, says Whyntie. The most important of the creations at CERN so far as our everyday lives are concerned is probably the World Wide Web, which has “paid for CERN many times over by the contribution of e-commerce and industry to the global

economy”. Now, media attention is closely following GRID, what could be described as ‘Internet mark two’. In the same way that the Web was originally designed at CERN for sharing physics data, the GRID shares central processing power, allowing lots of computers to perform very large tasks by working in parallel.

Another offshoot of the LHC is for treating cancer. Particle accelerators can now be used to fire proton beams at tumours, and the magnets made for the experiment at CERN are the same as those now being used in the battle against the disease. Those sceptical about the relevance of CERN and the LHC should remember that these inventions are given away free to the world. Given the recent financial turmoil, and the immense figures that have been spewed out by media concerning monetary gambling and waste, the few billion Euros spent on the experiment seem well spent.

Surely, though, for all this good there must be some bad? ‘Big Bang Day’ took place on September 10th, which some readers might recall as the day the more hysterical arms of the media declared that the world was supposed to be swallowed up by ‘micro black holes’. Particle physicist Dr. Brian Cox of Manchester University (and self-proclaimed media oracle of CERN) address such bloggers and columnists with the exasperated riposte that “anyone who believes the LHC will destroy the earth is a twat”.

The national media latched onto

this apocalyptic theory some weeks before the experiment began, but given the apocalypse-free start up, almost all well-known scientists have now given their backing to the LHC. There has been little plausible criticism of the experiment. The main opposition to the LHC is from amateur scientists. Several years ago CERN mandated an independent panel of scientists to review safety, which concluded there was no conceivable threat, but the micro black holes theory still gained media attention when Walter Wagner, a Hawaiian botanist, filed a lawsuit against CERN, hoping to have the experiment shut down. The case was dismissed before coming to trial.

It seems more appropriate to end this article on a more positive note, one which celebrates the achievements of mankind against the unknown, and looks ahead to the momentous discoveries we hope to find. Tom Whyntie summed it up nicely when he said to me: “it’s important to remember that we don’t do research like this for the spin-offs. We do it because of the physics. We do it for the same reason we landed on the moon and the same reason we want to get to Mars. We do it to find out what’s next in humankind’s exploration – not of space, but of the universe at the smallest possible scales. The LHC represents one of the most exciting paths on this journey, and we are all very much looking forward to the necessary repairs being made to the phenomenal machine that will ultimately make this possible”.●

building of the machine was actually finished several months ago, but it then had to be cooled to incredibly low temperatures before it could start operating – when the first particles were accelerated around the ring. They weren’t made to collide, but ‘injected’ into the machine and steadily given more energy until they reached the maximum speed. A few warm-up laps if you like, as Professor Hall puts it, “test out the experiment, check it all works and also to test our ability to distribute worldwide the large volumes of data we accumulate... we are still finding little things to check further and improve, and we’ve also been testing out all the software.”

The initial tests went well, perhaps a little too well for those in the science community, who have seen the project struck by countless small suspensions and technical hitches over the months and years. Lo and behold, about ten days later a magnet failure caused the experiment to be shut down until serious repairs can be made, delaying the experiment well into 2009. But considering the delays experienced in the past (the project was once in doubt when it emerged that the tunnel passed through an underground glacier), those at CERN are putting a bravely optimistic face on the latest setback. A spokesperson told the BBC: “we’ve been building the machine for 20 years. The switch-on was always going to be a long process.” Professor Hall says that the delay “gives us longer to improve our understanding of this very complex object, and a bit of frustration in awaiting data”.

What if the worst were to happen, and the LHC, after it gets going again, doesn’t find anything at all? Tom Whyntie, who works on the CMS detector at CERN on behalf of Imperial College, doesn’t see this as an option. “The physics we’ve got at the moment basically says there has to be something we can see with the LHC, so physicists are pretty optimistic that something will be found”. Optimism aside though, what if the project really discovers nothing? “A null result from the LHC would present irrefutable evidence that we really need to go back to the drawing board and fundamentally change the way we do physics and think about the universe we’re in – which one could argue would be the most exciting result of all.”

The LHC seems to become more astonishing with every revelation. The most exciting result would be... nothing? Whyntie explains that this has happened before in the history of physics, and it simply forces us to rethink our theories until we get them right. “At the turn of the last century, people believed that light had to be transmitted through a medium, but an experiment put together famously found nothing at all. Fortunately, a little-known German physicist called Albert Einstein had an idea that explained the result... a fundamental change in the way we look at the universe”. In other words, the current theory used to explain interactions between tiny particles – known as the Standard Model – might have to be totally scrapped if the Higgs remains undiscovered. Speaking to these physicists as a layperson, it is difficult to grasp the full magnitude of both the Higgs and the Standard Model. I suppose for the science community it would be the equivalent of someone telling you that it’s not actually gravity that pulls things to earth, but some

# Breast cancer: the naked truth

As Breast Cancer Awareness Month finishes, **Antonia Shaw** goes behind all the pink ribbons and statistics

**B**reast cancer is everywhere. Icons of screen, stage and music support breast cancer charities. Celebrities such as Kylie Minogue, Sheryl Crow, Cynthia Nixon and Christina Applegate have all famously battled with this life-threatening illness. Countless charities produce merchandise to raise awareness, ranging from t-shirts to jewellery to hair straighteners, with this October's Breast Cancer Awareness Month upping the ante. The reality of the situation, however, is far from glamorous. More than 46,000 cases are diagnosed every year, and one in nine women will suffer from breast cancer, the most common form of cancer in the UK, in their lifetime.

I spoke to Debbie\*, whose mother was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2003 and who died three years later. She impresses on me that, "these figures are not simply soulless numbers, but real women. Picture nine of your female friends and relatives - one of these women will have to fight breast cancer. Facts, figures and statistics are all very well, but the human element is completely lost. They aren't simply the 33,387th case that year. Their illness affects their lives and the lives of those around them entirely."

Cancer Research UK is the largest single funder of breast cancer research, spending over £45 million on groundbreaking work to understand the causes, learn how to prevent it, and improve diagnostics and treatments. They also strive to find methods of improving the quality of life for those living with the disease. Dr Lesley Walker, Cancer Information Director of the charity, said: "Cancer Research UK's groundbreaking scientists and doctors have made a huge amount of progress in improving the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, with more women surviving than ever before." Treatments for breast cancer usually start with surgery. Either a lumpectomy is performed, where the cancerous tumour is removed, or in more extreme cases, a full mastectomy, which involves the entire breast being cut away. This is usually followed by courses of chemotherapy, hormone therapy and radiotherapy.

"It's strange," remarks Debbie, "In my experience, women who have undiagnosed breast cancer don't appear ill, despite living with a disease that is slowly killing them. It's only once the treatments starts, the operations and the chemotherapy, that it really becomes apparent how sick these people really are. Even though my mum probably had breast cancer for five years before it was recognised, she seemed fine and healthy. Once she started taking her prescriptions, her hair fell out, she was constantly vomiting, skin shed from her hands until they were raw and her mouth was covered in ulcers and sores." It is the norm for cancer patients to have horrific side effects to their treatments, which is why it is imperative for research to continue. Fundraising aids progress in the improvement and creation of new

**"These are not just numbers:  
picture nine of your female  
friends and relatives - one of  
them will fight breast cancer"**

drugs and helps to achieve a better understanding of the most effective combinations of medicine.

It is also important to remember that whilst the patients are suffering, those around them may also be struggling. Debbie recalls, "I have memories of my mum that I wish I did not have. I remember trying not to physically recoil when dressing the stitching from her mastectomy; resenting her as her personality and mood changed as the cancer took over; and forever scarring me, the image of my little sister dripping water into her mouth with a sponge when she was too weak to drink." If you are struggling under the pressure of a loved one having cancer, then talk to someone. The university offers an excellent counselling service and charities such as Macmillan Cancer Support, providing practical and emotional help to both patients and their families.

How can you reduce your chances of contracting breast cancer? By far

**\*names have  
been changed  
to protect  
identities**

the most effective way to beat breast cancer is by examining your breasts and catching it early. Dr Sarah Cant, Policy Manager at Breakthrough Breast Cancer, states: "The earlier breast cancer is diagnosed, the more likely it is that treatment will be successful. Showing your breasts some TLC by regularly touching, looking for changes and checking anything unusual out with your doctor are the best ways to ensure this." Worryingly, a recent survey carried out by Breakthrough Breast Cancer indicated that nearly a quarter of women never check their breasts at all, due to the fact that they were uncertain of how to check and what to look out for.

Charlie Leyland, YUSU academic and welfare officer, has plans to address this issue: "In July I'm hoping to do a big cancer awareness day, incorporating breast cancer and testicular cancer, along the lines of the national wear pink day. It would be really nice if

we could have some nurses running workshops on breast self-examination. Before then I'm hoping to put some information on the YUSU website about breast awareness."

The box below details how to check yourself and what to look out for. Both women and men are at risk of breast cancer. The chances of someone under the age of 25 contracting breast cancer are 1 in 15,000, but the risk is quite definitely there.

Debbie ends our conversation on the same note of warning: "I can't help but think that if my mum's cancer had been detected earlier, she would still be here today. It's upsetting to think my mum will never see me graduate, help me pick out my wedding dress or be around to offer me advice and love. I would urge anyone and everyone to check their breasts and pass on the same message to their friends and family. What happened to me and my mum does not have to happen to you."●

## CHECKING YOUR BREASTS

It is vital that, once over the age of 20, you check your breasts at least every six months. Nine out of ten breast lumps are benign, which means they are not cancerous, but the risk isn't one worth taking.

It is easiest to check your breasts in the shower or bath. Run a hand over each breast and up under your arm. The NHS breast awareness five-point code says:

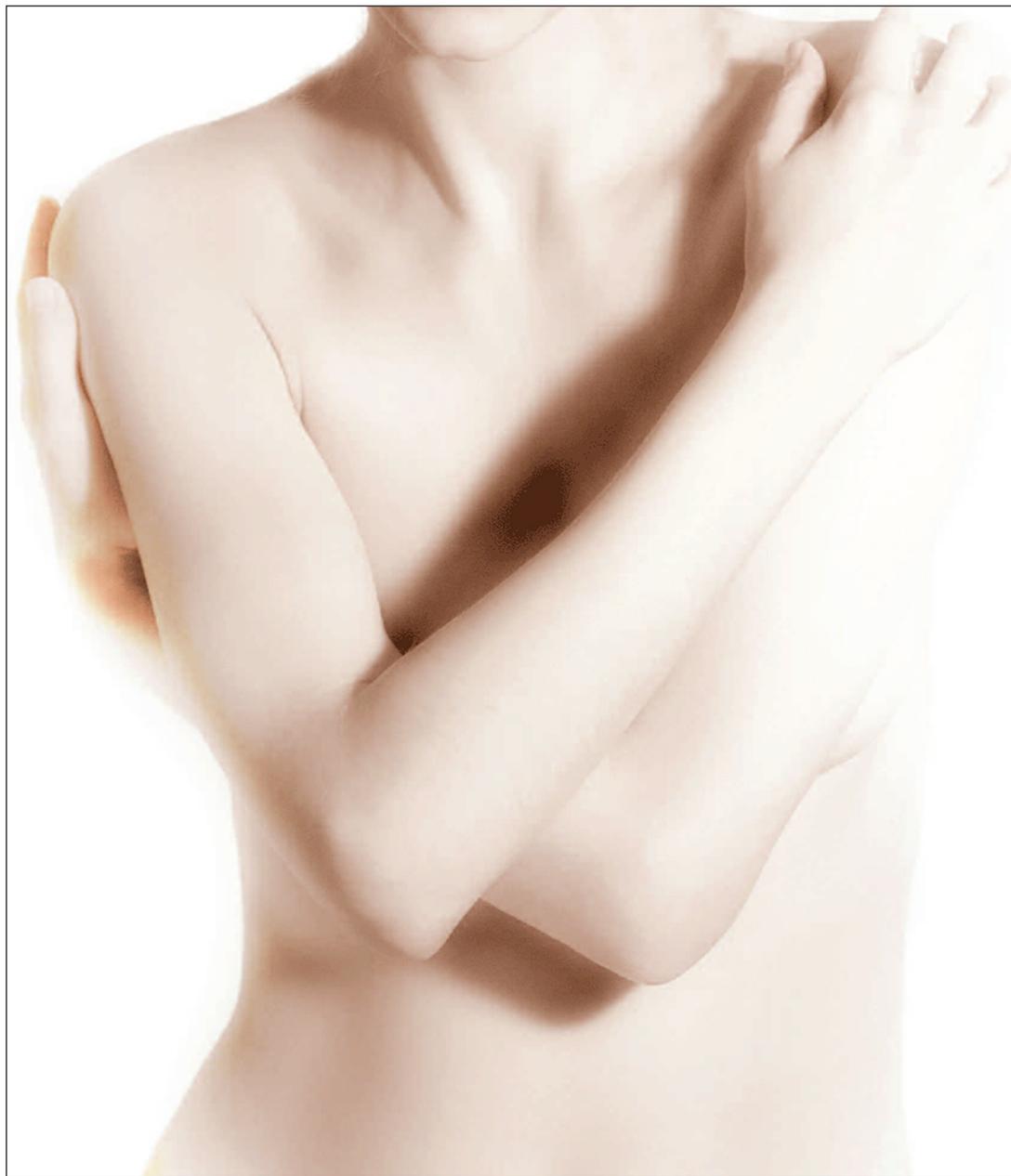
- \* Know what is normal for you
- \* Look and feel
- \* Know what changes to look for
- \* Report any changes without delay
- \* Attend a breast screening if aged over 50

You are checking for changes to the size, shape or feel of your breast.

Changes include:

- \* A lump or thickening
- \* A change in the size or shape
- \* Dimpling of the skin
- \* A change in the shape of the nipple; if it turns in or becomes irregular in shape
- \* A blood-stained discharge from the nipple
- \* A rash on the nipple or surrounding area
- \* A swelling or lump in the armpit

These signs can all be due to other medical conditions, but you give yourself the best chance of successful treatment by going to the doctor early.



# Ripe for exploitation: York's bursary system abused by the rich



Discovering a group of students taking full advantage of financial services, **Liam O'Brien** compares York's bursary support system to those at other universities.

Middle class guilt is a familiar feeling for lots of us at this university. Are we just that little bit too well off? Why am I reading the *Observer*? Sharp anxiety every time you hear someone say they're on a budget of £50 per week when you just spent that same amount on wine is a pointless emotion when there isn't a great deal you can do about it, but some students at York and in universities across the country have dismissed any notion of 'guilt' a little too flippantly.

The process of helping students financially is determined by a Student Finance Direct assessment based upon, amongst other factors, residual household income. Aside from the normal student loans that arrive in installments at the beginning of each term, Maintenance Grants are available of up to £2,835 for students from households earning less than £25,000 per year. Additional support comes in the form of the Special Support Grant which helps out single-parent students, student parents whose partner is also a student, and students with certain disabilities.

Most universities, York included, also have their own bursary system, separate from essay prizes and awards for academic achievement. What becomes apparent in researching the bursary system and the state of student finance in general, is that not only is the awarding of bursaries at York a less diverse enterprise than that of other universities that we consider our competitors, but that the system is ripe for exploitation by the comfortably off – to the detriment of students whose households are in real poverty.

There are two main ways of exploiting the bursary system for those



**"I think it is slightly unfair, but then no one is going to turn down free money. I might as well just extort the university."**

students whose parents' household income exceeds £40,000 or are swimming in old money: either the system can be cleverly engineered if your parents are self-employed (a status that enjoys massive benefits across a host of financial documentation), or, more easily, if your family is living largely off savings generated in former years. Of course, if someone receives a bursary because his or her family earns the requisite amount for an award, there isn't a great deal that can legally be done to prevent the often ridiculous abuse of the system. During my research, I discovered that one of the executives on the student union of a major competi-

ty university had used the system to their advantage, despite being from a family of multi-millionaires. Their taxable income for the year was close to zero, and thus the bursary was handed out, despite being intended to help the poorer end of the student spectrum. It raises the question of legal entitlement versus moral responsibility, and I probed the conscience of a student, wishing to remain anonymous, who benefits in the same way, receiving a blunt but realistic response.

"I get the full £1,400 per year in two instalments, one in February and the other in May. Strictly speaking, the bursary wasn't really designed for me. Our actual household income is below £20,000 per year but we have been living off large savings for a while now. Self-employment is just a minefield, and you can manipulate the system quite a lot. The forms you fill in paint a completely different picture to the reality. Can you really send three children to university at the same time if your total household income is £20,000 per year?" The interviewee becomes quite defensive on the suggestion that they don't have a real right to claim the cash. "I think it is slightly unfair, but then we were the first year to get top-up fees. Why should I pay £3,000 a year for my education? As a student you find any way of getting money that you can – no one is going to turn down free money. I might as well just extort the university. I don't want to have the stereotypical student lifestyle. I want to spend money on clothes, going out, cigarettes, alcohol and luxury goods – not buying basic goods and then having nothing left."

Another way to obtain a bursary is through the myriad loopholes offered through self-employment. Have any

private-schooled friends that used to get Education Maintenance Allowance every week? Anyone that owns their own small to medium sized company can make their taxable income, upon which bursaries are awarded, essentially equal their spending, with the rest of the income earned in a year remaining within the company. Using dividend payments and corporation tax to partially evade the heavy burden of income tax also means that their offspring can enjoy an easily manipulated bursary system.

Sharmila Gohil, Manager of the University of York's Student Financial Support Unit, maintains that there is no such problem at York: "We allocate our bursaries on the residual household income figure that results from the local authority or Student Finance Direct Assessment. Both Local Authorities and the Student Loans Company carry out the necessary checks into the accuracy and validity of applications." Whilst not commenting on the engineering of the system in legal ways, Ms Gohil did affirm that financial fraud would be a hard task in relation to student loans: "The Student Loans Company, as the institution that handles more loans than any other in the UK, have a fraud investigation team."

Of course there are always going to be people who use the system to their own ends, but the fact that no pragmatic checks take place within the university means that students who really deserve no subsidy, can receive a total of £4,235 per year in money that they do not have to pay back, from both governmental and University of York sources.

The bursary system at York is, in comparison to those at other universi-

ties, easy to understand, and covers a large income bracket meaning that students from poorer households can afford to study here when at other universities like Durham and St Andrews, considered our competitors in academic league tables, this would not be possible. Oxbridge offers bursaries to students from households with an income of up to £70,000, and stories of bursaries being handed out to anyone whose postcode links them to a Northern city are common, but Gohil insists that "linking the maximum bursary to the maximum Maintenance Grant is fair, and to go beyond a household income of £40,000 starts to move away from the University's primary aim [of helping poorer students]." Indeed, the idea of giving away money to those not far from the highest income tax bracket does seem a little ridiculous, and without the deep cash reserves these universities have, it would be very difficult to offer annual packages of £3,000 plus to the least financially-endowed.

Gohil elucidated upon the bursary system here at York: "Our scheme was always intended to assist students from lowest income backgrounds and encourage widening participation. It was also intended to be simple. Last year we awarded bursaries to 30% of the UK students paying £3,070 in tuition fees, a figure which easily meets the requirements originally stated by OFFA [the Office for Fair Access]. The majority of our bursaries are paid to students who receive the maximum Maintenance Grant, i.e. students who have a household income of less than £25,000 (2008/9). This means that most recipients receive our maximum bursary. Although the income threshold for the maximum Maintenance



**"There are many bursary award systems less fair than that found in York. At St Andrews it's basically non-existent."**

Grant was lower in the last 2 years, the majority of our awards still went to students in greatest financial need."

However, the student interviewed who was receiving university money gets the full bursary, and received the full bursary last year when the income bracket was lower. There is no telling how many of that 30% have obtained bursaries through morally dubious means. Gohil added "Last year the Student Financial Support Unit surveyed all of the bursary recipients and one of the questions we asked was on the basis of the award: did students think it was fair to base awards on household income levels? The response was clearly in favour of this method. Obviously this response might have been different if we had surveyed other students."

Are there any fairer ways to assess bursaries than by the government-approved method? You can't simply keep track of everyone who requires further support with the hardship fund, or award endless grants to students in dire financial need. There are many systems less fair than that at St Andrews. At St Andrews, bursaries for academic achievement are common, but the bursaries awarded based on household income are either vague, complex or simply non-existent. Students streamed from certain schools receive bursaries, but along with the systems of other universities famed for being the domain of the upper classes, like Durham, the system isn't at all helpful to poorer students, and renders York's system a bastion of magnanimity in comparison.

There are means of redressing the balance between the economically well off and the rest of the student population though, with processes of awarding money to those most in need the firm focus of University College London and York St John, neither of which come across well in the main table. By concentrating on giving larger funds to people in the lowest income brackets, these universities reduce the risk of the wealthy taking advantage of the system. What households earning a high five-figure or six figure sum are going to be able to reduce their earnings/yearly spend to £11,000 in order to benefit fully from a bursary system? By adopting a stricter approach and giving less money to those in higher income brackets, UCL and St John can afford to ensure that those in most need are able to study without large amounts of paid work. Though they will never be able to essentially write-off a student's tuition fees, like at

Oxbridge, their guidelines are a positive, progressive step in the right direction.

By limiting funds available to those with small but live-able incomes, UCL can give £2,700 per annum to those from families with a residual income of less than £11,600. York St John gives £1,570 to those students whose families' income totals less than £18,360. Perhaps using such a uniform system is wrong; though we are all assessed financially in the same way, there is clearly a gaping hole that the self-employed and those living off stable savings will take full advantage of.

## YORK BURSARIES

Taxable income	Bursary
Less than £25,000	£1,400 per year
£25,001 - £35,000	£700 per year
£35,001 - £40,000	£350 per year
£40,001+	Nil

## AWARD SYSTEMS

Bursaries available for students from households with a taxable income of £25,000.

University	Bursary
Cambridge	£3,150
Oxford	£3,150
York	£1,400
Loughborough	£1,360
Warwick	£1,100
Edinburgh	£1,000
Manchester	£1,000
Edinburgh	£1,000
Lancaster	£500
UCL	£0
York St. John	£0

# Sexual Healing

Forget going to the gym or eating a balanced diet, **Richard Lemmer** explores the most pressing student health problem

**S**crape, scrape, scrape. It's the sound I've been dreading all week; the sound of what I imagine to be a small umbrella opening inside my penis and tearing its way out. Sitting in a nurse's office in York's GUM (Genito-Urinary Medicine) clinic, cotton bud insertion imminent, I'm having second thoughts. My testicles have shrunk to the size of sultanas. Any second now, I'm expecting a Nazi-attired nurse to walk through the door, declaring: "Ve have ways of making you talk, Herr Lemmer", and begin a process too graphic for print. So what exactly am I doing here?

Following an awkward interrogation about my sexual past and orientation, I have submitted a sample of urine and blood for Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing, and I'm about to have a swab test for HIV. It's a disease I know very little about, which is precisely why I'm having the test done. We are regularly warned about the danger of tooth decay, plaque and enamel erosion and we dutifully book appointments with dentists. Very rarely are we warned of the dangers of "difficulty passing urine" or "irritation at the end of the urethra" or a "painful infection in the testicles" (to quote one NHS STI booklet), and we are often hesitant to tell anyone we're going to be tested for an STI. But would you rather lose your genitals or your teeth? Neither, of course, yet we take much more pride in our smile than our fertility. The number of recorded STIs rose by six percent this year, with roughly half of those cases occurring in people 16-24 years of age. Little wonder that Professor Peter Borriello from the Health Protection Agency said, "a shag now stands for syphilis, herpes, anal warts and gonorrhoea." These statistics shouldn't be surprising, since a recent survey showed four in ten pupils receive no sex education at school. Yet it's not just a case of children misbehaving; the BBC reported earlier this year that STIs have now doubled in people over 45 in under a decade and are rising faster than in the young. We're all at it apparently.

The University sees the subject as a personal issue, rather than an institutional problem, so there are no records on the number of students with STIs. A lack of records is something of a mixed blessing; there is no danger of an information 'leak', but the university could be infested with STI ridden students without ever knowing. YUSU is aware of the growing problem, with Academic and Welfare Officer Charlie Leyland commenting: "We're working with the York Screen programme, the York branch of a Chlamydia testing scheme. The SU has lots of Chlamydia tests available, and you can pick them up from us and then drop them off at the

health centre. We're also looking at having a GUM clinic on campus." Chlamydia is one of the most dangerous STIs, as roughly 50% of male and 80% of female Chlamydia sufferers never show any symptoms. They risk the very real chance of going infertile without realising.



**"A Health Protection Agency professor said that: "a shag now stands for syphilis, herpes, anal warts and gonorrhoea."**

York isn't the only university to appreciate the difficulties of addressing the potentially embarrassing, yet important subject. Swansea University Students' Union created a Facebook page for various STIs and began 'poking' students to raise awareness of symptoms. One of the network's first STIs introduced was "Chlamydia SUSU, which has 'poked' students who are registered on Facebook and starts its description with "I am a bacteria..." followed up with "I like meeting new people". It goes on to describe the effects of the virus and where to go for further help.

With close to half a million people with STIs in the UK, we are beginning to realise the problem we have on our hands (and in our pants). Channel 4's The Sex Education Show, which did exactly what it said on the tin, enjoyed viewing figures of 3.3 million. The same channel's Embarrassing Illnesses programme was also widely watched and helped address traditionally 'embarrassing' illnesses in a mature and sensible manner. Channel 4 is hoping to continue their successful trend by broadcasting a sex education series, KNTV Sex, aimed at teenagers on weekday mornings later this year. But the dangers of STIs is beginning to elicit a reaction not just from TV producers hungry for ratings, but organisations as well. The Scouts Association recently announced it would be for the first time

giving Explorer Scouts sexual health advice - certainly a new twist on its 'Be Prepared' motto. The government is also willing to try a bold approach in the way sex education is taught to school children, with plans being drawn up that will make sex-education a compulsory part of the curriculum and begin at the age of seven.

Not everyone is keen to see sex education brought into public forum. Ofcom received numerous complaints about The Sex Education Show's "explicit" content that appeared before the watershed time. The proposed compulsory sex-ed programme has been labelled as a move that will "encourage experimentation". Without proper, mature guidance the problem is unlikely to subside. Even in the enlightened environment of university the most common reaction when I said I was going to be tested was referencing itchy cotton wool and the noise - scrape, scrape, scrape.

So back to the sterile lights of the GUM clinic. The nurse prepares the swab. She knows about my feature and reassures me about the procedure. "Please make it clear that the swab isn't an umbrella type instrument of torture," she instructs me, "it's just this soft small loop". Still, I think, I don't really want anything down my urethra, no matter how small or soft. "Here comes the sting" Nurse Painbringer says. And that's it. One little sting - barely a pinch - that resonates for less than a second. The government says you should have a full STI screening every 12 months, and I could quite easily manage it. Post-Freshers Week, peeing in a cup is old hat. The blood test? I got a free sweet for being such a good boy about the needle. I hear the female test is only mildly more discomforting.

90% of STIs are treatable, most of them through a short course of antibiotics. Naturally, however, the best option is to avoid them in the first place. The SU gives out free condoms from its reception near Goodricke, and Nightline can send them out at request through internal mail. The NHS are also keen to give out free condoms. So after a blurred Freshers' Week, where you may not be sure what you got up to (or who you got into), an STI test might be the most important test you'll take this term. The important thing is not to ignore any suspicions you might have about things being not quite right down there, as in the end it really is like going to the dentist: nowhere near as bad as you think it's going to be.

*If you are worried about STIs you can talk to Nightline, your college's welfare rep, or visit the York NHS GUM Clinic on Monkgate Street, free of charge, open Monday to Friday. You can also visit [nhsdirect.co.uk](http://nhsdirect.co.uk).*

# Trick or Treat?



With Halloween mere days away, **Olivia Haughton** ventures into the shadows of our obsession with fear, and discovers some ghostly truths in the alleyways of York

**H**alloween is fast approaching; its arrival coincides with the official end to British - ahem- "summertime" and signals the start of our long, dark, hopefully not too grotty winter. What better reason to drop all pretense at normality, don weird and wonderful attire, and wander the streets of York demanding 'treats'. Or alternatively, head out to a party dressed in whatever you can afford. If you're a poor student you may wish to wear a black bin bag (remodelled of course), back-comb your hair and paint your face in a suitably morbid fashion. Or you may not.

Be that as it may, Halloween is far more than just an excuse for the young to roam the streets and binge on sugared morsels. An amalgamation of the Celtic festival Samhain and Christian celebration of All Saints' Eve, Halloween has its roots in ancient British and Irish traditions. Thought to be the night when dead souls return home, people wore disguises to hide themselves from any ghosts that were present. The Reformation put an end to the religious connotations of the date, but All Hallows' Eve has continued to be celebrated as a secular holiday ever since. The uneducated may be forgiven for thinking this is an American festival given the vigor with which that nation has embraced it, and the gimmicky merchandise that lines

the shelves of supermarkets from mid-summer onwards. I'll never forget the image of children in New England, USA wearing spooky getup and clasping their father's coat in one hand, and a pillowcase brimming with the night's bounty in the other. In our current social climate any excuse to commercialise an event is exploited and Halloween clearly hasn't escaped this. However, if this kind of approach to the 31st October isn't quite up your street, you might be more interested to know that York is considered by many to be the most haunted city in Britain and even, according to some, the world.

Our charming city is the professed home to the ghosts of an entire Roman legion who apparently march through the city on their knees, though it's alleged that they're actually walking at the road level of their own time. Similarly, on the site of an old orphanage near Goodramgate, the brutal murder of 56 children has left their ghosts running amok over 200 years later. These and other stories are all told on York's celebrated ghost walks, events that can gather up to 150 tourists a night.

Greg Preston, who has been running Ghost Trails of York for 15 years, tells me that "the close narrow alleyways, ginnels and snickles of the medieval centre of York resemble the synapses of a brain, so it both suits

ghosts and the things that we associate with classic ghost stories." A word of advice though, some tours are intended to cheat punters. I attended one such expedition where one woman even fainted and threw up. The leader's feigned look of concern told me that his gruesome stories had had the desired effect. Preston, on the other hand, insists his tours are for the entertainment factor only: "We get rounds of applause and happy faces, that's the reaction we're after."

What has this grand deviation got to do with Halloween? Clearly the festival is a good excuse for celebrations, but it also references the psychology of

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**'York is supposed to be home to the ghosts of an entire Roman legion who apparently march through the city on their knees'**

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fear and why we seem to relish scary situations.

Social psychologist Julian Oldmedow of the University of York explained that, based on the Terror Management Theory, because we are aware that we will die, we create various beliefs such as religious ideas that explain that when you die you're going

to go to heaven. We consequentially adopt cultural value systems that reassure us of our immortal and continued existence through our contributions to society and our children. Scaring ourselves for events such as Halloween is, therefore, actually a way of tantalising the existential fear that we constantly carry around with us.

He also talked about our love of scary movies, saying that, "We like to scare ourselves in safe contexts. The scare gives us an adrenaline rush but at the back of our minds we know nothing will happen. There's something pleasant about that rush of adrenaline."

In keeping with this, it's best to avoid being on the receiving end of 'tricks'. I speak from personal experience. My earliest memory of Halloween was traumatising. As a child of three I was intrigued by a couple of oddly dressed kids knocking on our door demanding sweets. They were ignored by my mother who was in a rush to get ready for a party, but curiosity got the better of me. Waiting until I was alone, I slowly opened the front door to peer outside, only to be confronted by a bucketful of cold water drenching me from head to toe. The moral of this story? Never return to a rejected trick-or-treater. Just to be on the safe side, make sure you are the one trick-or-treating this Friday night, and don't forget your *Scream* mask.●

# Food & Drink



## THE RECIPE

Richard Smith

### SMITH'S "SPAGI" BOLOGNESE

SERVES 3-4  
 500G BEEF MINCE  
 1-2 CLOVES OF GARLIC  
 1 ONION, 1 GREEN PEPPER  
 1 LARGE TIN OF CHOPPED TOMATOES  
 TABASCO SAUCE  
 BASIC HERBS AND SEASONINGS  
 SPAGHETTI

If, like me, you have an untold hatred of Enrico and Giuseppe infecting your TV screens with awful Italian accents and selling even worse jars-o'-sauces (whens'a your Dolmio day?), this simple, inexpensive and rewarding recipe is just the ticket.

The only downside I have experienced whilst cooking this myself is little red tomatoey blotches all over the front of my shirt, giving me the appearance of a careless surgeon... an apron is a small price to pay for a really tasty dish.

Begin by sweating the onion and garlic in a little olive oil (vegetable oil is also fine, but less authentic) and then add your mince. Whilst browning, fatty, watery stuff may begin to lurk in the bottom of your pan; dispose of it down the sink, as boiled mince is hugely undesirable.

When the mince is browned, add your chopped tomatoes and turn the heat down so the glorious Mediterranean mixture is only simmering.

This is where the dreaded 'creativity' comes in, as this base Bolognese you have just created can be given numerous different twists. A crunchy green pepper added with a dash of Tabasco gives this dish a distinctly Central American hit.

Lea and Perrins and pre-boiled carrot gives you the warming sweet and sour sensations of good old Blighty and adding courgettes and celery is not only obscenely healthy, but in keeping with the dishes Italian roots. The only thing the base mixture demands to be added is a beef stock cube for extra beefiness, and herbs such as basil and oregano (herbes de provence from the jar works perfectly) to compliment the tomato.

Boil your spaghetti for as long as the packet asks you to and there you have it, an authentic, inexpensive, and mighty tasty dish that will win you drinks for the undoubtedly heavy evening that's to come.

Try it, and get those bloody tragic adverts off our screens, there's Hollyoaks to be watched after all.

Recipe provided by Richard Smith. Send funny recipes to [foodanddrink@nouse.co.uk](mailto:foodanddrink@nouse.co.uk)

RESTAURANT: EL PARADISO DEL CIBO

ADDRESS: 40 WALMGATE

PIZZA/PASTA DISH: £5

REVIEW: WILL HEAVEN



By all accounts, great men seem to have 'a dream'. Not-so-great men have many, so two of mine are: to learn the Italian language, and to develop a love for football. Both remain on my 'to do' list, but always below other, more urgent, jobs - like ringing my incompetent landlord to tell him that the washing machine isn't going to fix itself, arsehole.

Lunching at Il Paradiso del Cibo, then, was a humbling experience: here were stubbly Italian men shouting and gesticulating to each other in their native language and watching football, all the while serving decent food and taking the piss out of their oblivious English custom. I wanted to join them - to slick back my hair, open a beer, and watch Juventus play while complaining loudly that women in York were all fatter than those at home. Sadly, I remained ignorant, out of touch and frustrated. It was Euro-soap without subtitles.

The restaurant is small and cheap-looking, but that's OK because the food is cheap, too. A fairly large pizza or pasta dish costs only £5, while starters - mostly salads - are around £3.50. It quickly became apparent that something was missing

from the menu - alcohol. With regards to this, I can only say codes of omertà come into play.

Most of the staff, it turns out, are from Sardinia. So they weren't speaking much Italian after all, but well done for guessing, Sardinian. They're a patriotic bunch: a Sardinian flag (four moors' heads divided by a red cross) and their football team's strip adorn the ceiling.

I had the Verde Rossa to start; rocket leaves and balsamic vinegar, shavings of parmesan, tomato and pepper. James had the Caprese salad with lots of mozzarella. It was all good and very unpretentious, which seemed appropriate, given the price. The two peaks of unpretence - which is, I know, not a real word - were when our clandestine drink was bought to us in small plastic beakers, and when the waiter took away the sugar, smiling: "Youwa don'ta need thata with your salad, eh?" (This, by the way, is the sort of borderline racism one is reduced to, without a firm grasp of Italian.)

We both went for pizzas. They were the sort you might find in the back streets of an Italian city - a bit of a soggy base but with decent toppings, and lots of parmesan. Mine was the

CAFE: LA CREMERIA

ADDRESS: 20 HIGH PETERGATE

AVERAGE SNACKING PRICE: £2 - £5

REVIEW: HUGH SALWAY & HELEN RUSSELL BROWN



At the east end of the Minster, La Cremeria offers homemade ice-cream and a unique selection of soothing drinks for chilly Yorkshire days. Perfect for a post-shop flop, the friendly service and lounge music make this a fine place to recharge.

Away from the bustle of the main shopping area, La Cremeria avoids the rushed feel of its competitors. Although fairly cramped, with tables only big enough for two, those in the know can enjoy swift and warm service, then sit a while, unpressured by waiting customers overlaid with their shopping.

The café holds true to its Yorkshire roots with local art for sale, distracting from the otherwise bland decor. Sample locally sourced cakes alongside your exotic beverage, with choices ranging from red chai and cranberry latte to white chocolate and raspberry iced mocha. La Cremeria ensures satisfaction of even the sweetest tooth.

What it can't offer, sadly, is a lunch menu to match. A small



and all-too familiar selection of sandwiches, bagels, and salads do not match up to the treats available.

While the home-made ice-cream can boast quality, more diverse flavours would be needed to capture the tired imagination of a shopper. An odd blend of trend and tradition, though, La Cremeria is a nice alternative for your afternoon tea.



El Paradiso el Cibo: the sort of food real, stubbly Italian men eat

'Pizza Italia' with huge slices of very salty Parma ham. James went for something less adventurous with olives and anchovies - I can't remember what it was, as I was pretending to be involved with the football on telly.

The whole meal in total came to £21.90. I wouldn't recommend taking a pretty girl to El Paradiso, or booking it for a 75 year-old's birthday party (the next door table), but if you're on the way out of town and want a quick, easy lunch, go for it. It's

better than a takeaway...

Here's a Sardinian parable: a fisherman goes out in the morning, gets his catch, and returns to the beach with what he needs to eat for the day. He drinks and smokes all afternoon. An American sees him and asks, "Why don't you fish in the afternoon? You'll be able to sell some and get rich". The Sardinian fisherman replies, "Why bother? I'm happy, not hungry and never tired." To avoid being too tired, the staff at Il Paradiso del Cibo close up on Sundays.

PUB: THE LAST DROP INN

ADDRESS: 27 COLLIERGATE

AVERAGE PINT PRICE: £3.00

REVIEW: HARRY DE MORAVILLE



Assuming they would have the inside track, I approached two policemen and asked which of York's three thousand and twelve pubs they recommended. By the time they had replied, I was in too deep. It would now be illegal for me not to visit the Last Drop Inn, property of the York Brewery, on Colliergate.

On first impressions I questioned the Law's advice. But having crossed the initial mustard-coloured cavern, beneath a ceiling disfigured by unnecessary beams, past a kitsch outcrop of beer-barrel tables, I reached the bar; the engine-room. Now, this is a true drinking pub. And, more specifically, a beer pub.

There are six real ales, eleven draught lagers, fourteen bottled beers and eighteen malt whiskies (all you Japanese whisky enthusiasts must try the Yanazaki). The man pulling the strings and pints is Dave, who drew my attention to the pie and pint deal. Minimal persuasion was required.

The menu nods half heart-



edly in the direction of nachos and lasagne and stuff, but is basically a jingoistic affair. Steaks, ale, mash, token peas. The gravy was unctuous.

Being a Saturday lunchtime, the place was full. An aging racist settled down to a keg of wine and the obituries; students tittled and tattled. There was not a hint of judgement in the air - if you have a minute, drop in.

# Style&Fashion

## Looking back at the Autumn/Winter collections of 2008, **Venetia Rainey** advises on the rising neo-goth trend

**T**his winter, it's all in the detail. From feathers to lace; asphyxiating necklines to clinging silhouettes; it's the finer points of an outfit that will make you stand out through the following months. The most important detail, however is the colour, or rather the lack of it. Black is nothing new in fashion, nor does it a particularly surprising trend forecast to predict the popularity of dark colours in such traditionally dark months. But this time, black is back with a twist: a neo-gothic twist.

Yves Saint Laurent's autumn/winter 2008 ready to wear collection encapsulated this new concept perfectly. Austere yet erotic, the sleek, jet-black pudding bowl haircuts complimented the sharply cut swathes of dark fabric, creating a clean but statement gothic look ideal for the season ahead.

It was a look that resonated in the details of many of the other 2008 Autumn/Winter shows. Despite having debuted last spring, for the average person, it is to these shows which we look to for our winter wardrobe. Derek Lam used black lace to create a feminine take on the visor, partially obscuring half of the face with a dominatrix aesthetic, and grungy lace gauntlets adorned the arms of Giambattista Valli's models. Lace tights, ripped or otherwise, were a staple adopted by many designers, including Rodarte, and their trend-status was further confirmed, or perhaps destroyed, by their unrestrained usage by current "It" girl, Alice Dellal. Without following Dellal's misjudged example, lace is an easily obtainable fabric to accessorize a simple ponytail or a bare neck.

Dark lace also featured heavily in the Prada collection, covering the feminine form with the heavy but irresistible design. Alexander McQueen used lace liberally to tie together and update his twist on Russian ballerina and peasant

clothing. The simultaneous sheerness and opaqueness of lace is part of its allure. Neo-goth is both revealing and disguising; sober and playful; disarming and charged, just like lace. Prada's beige, orange and powder blue undergarments lightened the mood, displaying controlled explosions of colour in an otherwise sombre affair with striking effect.

In keeping with this seamless juxtaposition of qualities, the most covetable offshoot of this winter trend is the obsession with plumage. Silky black with a bottle green iridescence, or speckled and striped; the most captivating aspect of the new gothic look is the one that flies in the face of conventional ideas of texture and pattern. Feathers were championed by Marchesa to create soft but vampish pieces, and by the grandmother of goth, Comme des Garçons' Rei Kawakubo, as glorious embellishment for the womanly figure. Mary-Kate Olsen, arguably the grand-daughter of goth, successfully channelled the raven-like spirit of the trend with her Lily et Cie dress and Aliah belt combination.

Shoes involved a bondage take on the high-heeled platform. From Ruffian's black leather gladiator style, to the patent fetish of Dior and the punky buckles and straps of Givenchy; footwear was all about the darker side of authority. New Look and Topshop sell shoes that tap into this exact aspect of neo-goth, or alternatively, searches on Ebay return a substantial number of rather more hardcore results. Tight ebony leather leggings or trousers are flattering against the exaggerated chunkiness of the foot, and are best worn matte by day, and shiny by night. Givenchy's chain laden example of urban gothica captured the attitude needed to fully embrace this way of dressing, even if the shape is undesirably thin, whilst Burberry Prorsum's oversized black beanies added a further unique, wearable detail to the style sheet.

## ONESTOWATCH

by Liam O'Brien

DESIGNER: KIRSTY WARD

Though reduced to tears by Louise Williams, course director of Central St Martins famed Fashion MA, Kirsty Ward's time at the institution nevertheless proved fruitful. Her graduate collection was inspired by Hans Bellmer's *La Poupée* photography, which showed the disassembly and reassembly of plastic body parts. Ward's designs have a more romantic air, but are etched in violent black and white. The designer is currently working for Alberta Ferretti in Italy, a tenure that one hopes will be short.



TREND: ROUGH STYLING

The 1980's brought many new influences upon fashion. Women empowered by their own disposable income were given a magazine, with Anna Wintour at the helm of Vogue, that reflected their powerful position as the audience of high fashion. At the same time, heavily stylised neo-romanticism emerged. The early 90s, trying to forge an identity of its own, had its grunge years, a concept taken too seriously by major houses to produce inspiring fashion. Prada playfully referenced this fashion misstep but with rouches and accessories more associated with couture.

MODEL: SESSILEE LOPEZ

Chosen as one of the covergirls on Vogue Italia's All Black issue, Lopez's career is littered with covers, editorials and shows, but has only recently returned to prominence. She had a brief stint as one of the world's most sought after models in the fall shows of 2005 when aged just 16. 2008 brought her first couture show, for Givenchy.

DISASTER: HYBRID SHOES

Was it the popularity of Christian Louboutin 7-inch heels or the Ghesquire-commissioned monstrosities that means every year shoes get higher and bolder. Balenciaga and McQueen riffs (shown here) are impressive, but in designers' efforts to outdo 'Meccano-shoes' and other deathtraps, Spring/Summer 09 models, including one unfortunate girl at Miu Miu, went flying. Hybrid shoes, the espadrille-stiletto and the wedge-converse (no, really) are just ugly.



From left to right: Yves Saint Laurent's austere goth; Rei Kawakubo's stunning feather creation; gothic punk at Givenchy

# Arts Reviews

BOOK: THE BOY IN STRIPED PYJAMAS  
 AUTHOR: MICHELE DE KRETZER  
 REVIEW: JOHN BOYNE

☆☆☆☆

**The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas**

JOHN BOYNE

Bruno, a nine year old boy with a newly appointed Nazi commandant father, is ripped from his home in Berlin to live near a concentration camp Poland. Here he begins a friendship with a boy of his age, Shmuel, from the other side of a fence. The boys share the same birth dates and, like Bruno, Shmuel has been taken away from his home and thrust into unfamiliar circumstances.

The two boys do not realise that their histories have sworn them as enemies, and that Shmuel is a prisoner in Auschwitz under the command of Bruno's father.

Poignant and potent, this is a novel of power, childhood innocence and war which establishes a relationship between two young boys in the throes of cruelty and conflict through a veil of naivety which would otherwise have been impossible.

On the other hand, one can't help but feel that Boyle is out of his comfort zone, as he struggles with his protagonist, over-emphasizing his youth in a way that is awkward and focusing too heavily on authenticating it. The plot is also predicatable, and this novel is in no way superior to any other of its genre.

Boyle presents a friendship uncontaminated a world that disagrees with its very concept ferociously.

BOOK: THE ALMOST NOON  
 AUTHOR: ALICE SEBOLD  
 REVIEW: CLARA HOW

☆☆☆☆



*The Almost Moon* shares a similar beginning to Alice Sebold's first fiction novel, *The Lovely Bones*: "When all is said and done, killing my mother came easily". Sebold doesn't mince words.

However, her second novel falls short of her successful debut. The book follows divorced mother Helen Knightly after she suffocates her mentally ill mother. The act of murder opens practical as well as moral dilemmas. What does she do with the body? Does she call for help? How does she feel about killing her mother, a person she both loves and hates?

Certain scenes are beautifully written, and suspense is maintained until the end. However, whenever I questioned Helen's actions, Sebold gave the weak answer "because she's mad, and mad people do mad things that we cannot understand".

*The Almost Moon* is an interesting read, though flawed in certain areas. For those who enjoy reading about bodies in the basement, sex as a form of catharsis, and human relationships, this is the book for you.

## Antonia Shaw explores art at the Norman Rae Gallery's new exhibition

Nestled within Langwith is York University's very own art space, The Norman Rea Gallery. Currently showing is an excellent exhibition, *Kaleidoscope*, featuring five local artists whose inspiration and roots lie in Yorkshire's East Riding. The works are in a variety of media, encompassing oil painting, charcoal, textured appliqué and basketry.

This show is the product of the newly formed student Langwith Arts Committee, who worked under the watchful eye of Langwith's Provost, John Issit. The team of eight students have taken on the challenge of managing the Norman Rea Gallery for the entire academic year.

Amy Milka, a committee member explains, "We are trying to make Langwith Arts into a sustainable venture so that the work can be continued by future student committees. However, we would also like to have more students coming into the gallery and looking at the art work."

John Issit stresses, "The gallery has always been a place for the celebration of art, artists and all things related. It makes a fine contribution to the University, to the College and the art world of York so whilst we need our twenty per cent on sales to move things on and steer our work to the demands of the marketplace, we actually have other, to me more interesting, artistic and community based goals which we shouldn't lose sight of."

Whilst the artworks in the *Kaleidoscope* exhibition have an

obvious aesthetic of saleability, this show has by no means surrendered quality, attraction or interest. Indeed, it is certainly of a higher standard than one would expect of a students' display of community artwork. Milka believes it is "a view of the natural splendour of the region in a truly kaleidoscopic style. It is a really great selection of art for the start of the first year, because we are using regional artists, so freshers can get a taste of local art work."

The five artists exhibiting; Sally Tebb, Anna Kirk-Smith, Joy Johnson and husband and wife, Mike and Lucy Mulkey, demonstrate the benefits of diversity and excellence when displaying group work. The art and the various media feed off each other creating a dynamic flow through the space.

Tebb's use of rich palettes, abstracted natural forms and tactile textural canvases balances against Johnson's interest in the relationship between paint, the surface and the narrative. Perhaps the most experimental and modern of the five artists is Kirk-Smith. Her works, varying in size, are beautiful, almost cellular, in their portrayal of the organic transformation of the natural world, with particular interest in geology and geography.

The Mulkeys' work provokes debate into the overlap of art and craft. Mike Mulkey's exquisite and intricate basketry uses rattan to make objects both traditional and abstract, creating aesthetically stimulating variations in shape, colour and woven texture. Lucy



Works by Mike and Lucy Mulkey and Anna Kirk-Smith

Mulkey portrays expressionistic interpretations of the environment in the medium of textiles. She uses felted wool, felted silk, hand-made paper and linen, mostly with stitching to add surface texture.

With such a successful first exhibition, what will the Langwith Arts Committee do next? It appears they have great plans, one of which is to exhibit installation

art in the gallery and across campus. Geoff Currie, another member of the committee, speaks excitedly about future projects, "personally I'd like to see more cutting edge and provocative works, there is a lot of scope for interesting and thought provoking exhibitions." So watch this space.

*Kaleidoscope* is running until 7th of November, in the Norman Rea Gallery, in Langwith's SCR.

EVENT: YORK LESBIAN ARTS FESTIVAL  
 VENUE: GRAND OPERA HOUSE  
 REVIEW: HOLLY WILLIAMS

☆☆☆☆

Some 4,000 people head to York for the York Lesbian Arts Festival, a night of comedy and music performed by lesbians, for lesbians. I was wary of an event defined by sexuality. Would the performers be good, or were they just there because they preferred sleeping with women? I needn't have worried.

First up was comedian Jen Brister, who delivered humour with a husky deadpan style and some larger-than-life impressions of drunken men and her crazy Spanish mother. Her material included an enjoyable send-up of straight girls who buy accessories for their bags, in contrast to lesbians' love for the practical rucksack (apparently a universal truth and not just a stereotype - it produced howls of laughter and I couldn't help

but notice a fair few rucksacks during the interval).

Greymatter, a five-piece girly guitar band from Berkshire, were up next, but their jangle rock and sugar-sweet vocals became tedious. Musically, it was all too average, and they looked a little uncomfortable onstage.

More self-styled "dyke humour" followed, with Clare Summerskill shining in a gold jacket and an equally bright smile. Supremely confident, Summerskill swept through amusing vignettes of lesbian life (trying to get a double bed in a hotel; awkward conversations with your girlfriend's dad) interspersed with comedy songs, which went down very well - no pun intended - with the audience.

American singer-songwriter Erin McKeown (pictured above) rounded off the



night with her imaginative and quirky numbers. Pint-sized and pigtailed, she nonetheless owned the place with her conversational vocals and jaunty presence. She had an engaging style, and even got the audience on their feet for her final song about orgasms, chanting 'oh Estelle' and pumping their fists. In the air, of course.

YLAF provides an excellent platform for lesbian arts, and with music and comedy this good, they deserve to have a few straight gate-crashers too.

### WHAT'S ON ARTS

# the FULL MONTY MUSICAL

CENTRAL HALL MUSICAL SOCIETY 2009

Auditions are on this week for: **The Full Monty** The musical by Central Hall Musical society

A full audition includes a singing, an acting audition and a dance audition on Thursday, but you can just dance

Singing and acting auditions are on the **Monday, Wednesday and Thursday**, and the **dance** audition is on **Thursday**

**The Full Monty** will be showing in Central Hall at 7:30PM on 12th, 13th and 14th of February 2009

Visit [www.thefullmontyyork.co.uk](http://www.thefullmontyyork.co.uk) to check specific audition times and sign up. If you can't make any of the times available email [director@thefullmontyyork.co.uk](mailto:director@thefullmontyyork.co.uk)

# Theatre Reviews

## Nicki Markides previews the cast of *Grease* in action three weeks before curtain up

As one of the best-known, best-loved musicals out there, *Grease* is an ambitious starting point for this newly-formed production team. Yet these fresh faces on the theatrical block are proving themselves more than up to the daunting task.

The Happily Ever Society is a group "dedicated to all things cheesy and cheerful." But while their fluffy outlook is not limited to the stage - they intend to hold "lots of fancy dress socials, movie nights, day trips and exciting things like that." - it does not get in the way of professionalism. Three weeks before their performance and the choreography is already slick enough to make you want to dance along, and at eleven o'clock on a Saturday morning the singing is impressive, if slightly tired.

Producer Sam Daunt tells me that, along with her co-producer Catrin Jones, she chose *Grease* because "everyone knows it", but stressed that she is sticking to the script of the original musical, rather than taking inspiration from the film. The famous tunes, projected across Central Hall using 20 microphones and a brand new sound system, are sure to have the audience singing under their collective breath as they tap their feet to the infectious energy of both old favourites and new songs alike.

Daunt says that, despite the need for intensive rehearsals until the first night, she



MATTHEW GRUM

### The cast have only three weeks to go, but are feeling confident about the show

is personally thrilled with the performances that the cast are giving, in particular those of her lead actors.

The cast are mostly experienced performers, although neither Sam McCormick nor Sophie Louise Brown, who play Danny and Sandy, have had the opportunity to per-

form in Central Hall before. This, however, does not seem to daunt either the cast or the production team who will have only a week to rehearse in central hall.

Sam McCormick, who plays the role of Danny, was quick to speak of how much he enjoyed the musical. He was backed up by

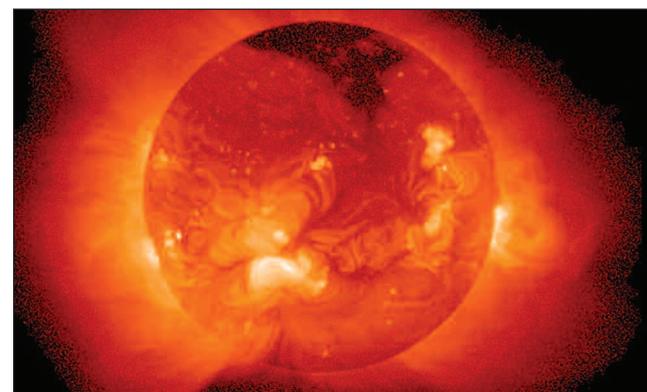
Dan Sofaer, Kenickie, who said "the cast are a really great bunch of people. I'm really enjoying all the stereotypical cheesiness, although the incessant hip thrusting is doing my back in slowly".

It is a tribute to the working relationship between cast and crew that this production is already so well oiled. It is clearly invaluable that the production team have worked on other university productions and will help ensure that the necessary polish is added to Daunt's vision without too much drama.

The rehearsals for the production started last year, but considering they were on hiatus over the summer holidays the high standard of acting is impressive. Although the choreography is not yet perfect, the rehearsals are bursting with energy: with three weeks to go until the performance there seems to be more than enough time for smoothing any rough edges, making this production truly electrifying.

Despite the pressure for the cast in doing such a well known play, it seems that that the magic of *Grease* and the talents of those involved will ensure that this performance is well worth a watch. In the words of Sam McCormick, "Grease is the word"

*Grease is being performed in Central Hall on 13, 14 and 15 December at 7.30 pm.*



PRODUCTION: SECRET SOLSTICE  
VENUE: YORK THEATRE ROYAL  
REVIEW: LAURA HORTON

☆☆☆☆

It was with apprehension that I followed a shadowy-eyed young girl into the lifts of the Piccadilly Car Park on Friday night, with only a torch to guide my way. As the doors opened onto the top storey, I saw why the torch was necessary: the car park was completely black.

One by one, lights lit up all across the concrete car park and it was then left to the audience to navigate their way around this promenade style piece performed by the York Youth Theatre Royal company.

The ten different 'sunspots' scattered around the car park each told a different story of the creation or mythology surrounding the sun, coming from different countries across the world.

The piece was fitting,

then, for its inclusion in the 'Illuminating York 2008' festival, which highlights the beauty and history of York by night. The young cast were vibrant and full of energy, embodying the vigour that young actors have the potential to express, and justifying the inclusion of youth theatre in this festival.

The production was innovative, but it seemed that some ideas struggled to be realised, particularly the use of dance in the final section.

Overall, this piece was well worth a watch. Most impressive was the ambitious use of outdoor space. The eerie, dark setting of the production served to emphasise the blazing brilliance of the element under discussion: the sun.



HELEN CITRON

PRODUCTION: WILLIAM AND OCTAVIA  
VENUE: DRAMA BARN  
REVIEW: LAURA CONNOR

☆☆☆☆

As a fresher, unaware of York's theatrical tradition, I was oblivious to what this performance would offer. Upon entering the Drama Barn, I was experiencing an entirely new theatrical experience, of which I had no preconceptions.

For my fellow freshers, equally unaware of York's student theatre, when I say a barn; I mean a barn. The play unfolded before a barren backdrop: stone washed walls, straw scattered turf, an uncanny smell of damp. But the sumptuous mysticism of the characters' adventures, and the enchanting ability of the actors to transform from props to lovers in an instant, stamped on this austerity.

The headlong pace of the action, from energetic

comedy to heightened tragedy, almost reminded me of that Luhrmann-esque maritime quality, seen in the campiness of *Moulin Rouge* and the modernity of *Romeo and Juliet*: a post-modernist fairytale that is entirely unbelievable but simultaneously poignant.

Certainly, interactive theatre is not for everyone, although I have been informed that *William and Octavia* is one of BeltUp's least interactive plays. However, it does provide one of the most memorable forms of entertainment.

Intersperses of love and comedy, war and death, additionally accentuated the captivating element of eccentricity. A fantasy, a fairytale - and we even got free biscuits.



PRODUCTION: WAITING FOR RAMALLAH  
VENUE: YORK THEATRE ROYAL  
REVIEW: LAURA COLEMAN

☆☆☆☆

Politically charged and emotionally challenging, *Welcome to Ramallah* was a compelling and unflinching production. For the latter half, that is. The audience's reaction (or lack thereof) in the initial scenes, reflected the slow and rambling start, which consisted of two sisters making unprogressive small talk.

This was soon alleviated by playfully satirical humour. Jibes such as Salim's indignant comment, "You know the English and their tea. They have it with milk!" were well-delivered and well-received. The portrayal of Nat's middle-class snobbery was perhaps a little stereotypical and the non-stop dialogue meant that action was limited.

Despite this, the han-

dling of the religious-political tension at the heart of the play should be applauded. It would have been easy to shy away from such controversial debate. However, the painful questions of whether children should be blamed for their parents' mistakes, and whether duty is always correct, were thrashed out with passion.

British-American Nat, her troubled sister Mara, victim of the Arab-Israeli conflict Salim and his fiery nephew Daoud each stressed the importance of forgiveness in the present. The play was not, to use an early line of Nat's, "wall-to-wall politics for two hours", but a balanced and open-minded discussion of a conflict which so often evokes the language of blame and revenge.

# MusicInDepth

## JAMES COUSINS

Willfully shite music, anybody?



This week's musical muse originates from a selection of unusual places - a skip, Star Trek and an obscure 1960s group called The Baja Marimba Band. Before you get worried, I'm not a Trekkie and I'm not about to discuss the intricacies of Klingon, but if you are patient, you will be rewarded with the presence of Captain Kirk himself, apparelled in his full musical glory.

The saga begins with the sheer incompetence of York Council who seem determined not to collect my household's recycling, for reasons that are so illogical that my excessively intelligent housemates just cannot understand them. Nevertheless, in order to prevent our back garden from turning into a hazardous landfill site, a trip to the dump was necessary. The Mirthmobile fully laden, we set off on our gallant environmentally-driven quest, the upshot being that somewhere along the line one of my housemates spotted a bright yellow CD festooned with men sporting excessively large moustaches and ridiculous hats. It was too good an opportunity to pass up and we soon found ourselves safely ensconced in our living room with the musical oddity that is The Baja Marimba Band, and quite an eye-opening experience it turned out to be. I have spent rather a large portion of the past decade fervently cramming new music into my ears, and I would like to think that by now I have been exposed to at least a small sample of most musical genres. This, however, was something entirely new. Sure, I recognised some of the elements, but everything that I hold sacred in music was conspicuous by its absence. Obviously, any expectations of levity must be abandoned when a band's central instrument is the innately hilarious marimba, but TBMB managed to take half-respectable songs and strip them of any possible application outside of a movie about a series of amusing escapades befalling some hapless clowns.

But this supremely terrible music set me thinking about other instances when competent people created music that was, apparently, willfully and intentionally awful. Back in the heady days of the 1980s Neil Young was sued by his record label for releasing unsellable music such as the electronic weirdness that is *Trans*. Similarly, the curmudgeonly Lou Reed released that most momentously unlistenable album *Metal Machine Music* that boasts that it contains not one recognisable riff or musical note. *MMM* can best be described as sounding like a cross between an incessant swarm of feedback and a flock of twittering birds, and the grumpy old bastard even fitted the original vinyl with a repeating groove so that the album would never finish unless you actively stopped it. But certain, admittedly minority, factions hold that such albums are in actuality works of genius that most of us lack the finesse to appreciate. Some music, however, is so shocking that surely the person who authorised its release must have been instantly beheaded when someone with even a modicum of sense spotted the gross offense. Our friend William Shatner is a case in point - Captain Kirk covering 'Common People'? Check it out, I guarantee you'll crack a smile. What were they thinking?

ARTIST: THE CURE  
ALBUM: 4:13 DREAM  
REVIEW: JAMES COUSINS  
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



The portents for this album were never good. After the ditching of their atmospheric keyboardist and long-standing lead guitarist some people hoped that this was another in a grand history of reinvigorating Cure lineup shakeups; unfortunately, this has not proven to be the case. With the release of this, their thirteenth album, Robert Smith finds himself in the unusual position of fronting a synthless Cure, and as their last series of tours and accompanying live DVD proves, something quite significant is missing. The deliciously textured sound that practically defines the band (or at least their output from the last twenty years) has been reduced to a mere sonic husk. Returning guitarist Porl Thompson, now on his third stint in The Cure, brings a substantial amount of technical flair, but this is surely not the point of the group. The Cure have always been, first and foremost, a song-driven band. Any solos present have often been the result of late-night recording sessions fuelled by excessive wine consumption or sleep deprivation - it was the emotion that counted, not the technical virtuosity. *4:13 Dream* finds tension and build-up replaced by a quickly wearisome stream of wah-guitar, incessantly wailing throughout the echo-laden tracks.

To compound these problems, the songs are mostly rehashes of songs rejected from previous album sessions, with some tracks stretching as far back as the 80s, and it



shows. There is little cohesion to the album, asides from a half-hearted attempt at maintaining an upbeat feel - relatively speaking, this is The Cure we're talking about after all.

Of course, this being a Cure album *4:13 Dream* is not entirely without its high points. Smith's trademark high-pitched and distinctly pained vocals are still the central focus and, as ever, he manages to come up with some memorable melodies. The singles, while offering dubious lyrical quality, are undoubtedly catchy, if somewhat Cure-by-numbers. Ultimately, this album rarely rises above mediocrity; as much as it pains me to say it, this is a disappointing effort.

### ON THE UP

ARTIST: PULLED APART BY HORSES  
PREVIEW: TOM KILLINGBECK

England was once a fertile birthing ground for exhilaratingly original, and sometimes bizarre, independent rock. Unfortunately, the current crop of indie bands (Arctic Monkeys, Kaiser Chiefs et al) take a leaf-too-many from the books of classic 1980s bands - there is now a lamentable lack of originality on display inside the genre. America's best new bands, Crystal Castles, TV on the Radio, HEALTH etc, all seem to be channelling their music from an altogether more interesting place, and for a long time it has seemed like England's best have no answer.

Thankfully, Leeds' Pulled Apart-By-Horse are giving the Americans a run for their money with their own breed of home-grown anti-indie madness. With tunes to blast the cobwebs from the bored and apathetic ears of this generation's indie fans, bravely battling against the tepid music of the genre's current stable, Pulled Apart-play speedy thrash-pop replete with mathcore rhythms and time signature shifts, unpredictable sonic confectionary that proves to be at once hyper, catchy and aggressive. While Myspace hit 'High Five, Swan Dive, Nose Dive' was a charming introduction, new single 'Meat Balloon' shows serious potential lurking amidst the scuzzy lo-fi production.

At the Reading Festival they destroyed their lowly 'Introducing' stage billing, proving their potential as a fiery live act before their singer vomited all over the place. With plenty of shows lined up in the UK in the near future, catch them while you can.

### IN DEPTH: MERCHANDISE MUSIC

Damian Storey

If I asked you who Lord David Dundas was, you might forgiveably have trouble answering, even if I was to tell you that he has also had a number 3 hit in the UK and saw top twenty success in the States. The thing is, that was back in 1976, and since then, he's done, well, nothing that you're likely to have heard. His song 'Jeans On', a catchy little slice of pop-rock, found itself selling Brutus Jeans. Inundated with requests for the vinyl copy, the brand politely suggested that Dundas might like to release it. Changing "Brutus Jeans" to "Blue Jeans" was enough, and neither the clothing company nor Dundas' accountant were complaining.

This wasn't the first time the world of advertising has had an impact on the charts. The Hillside Singers were formed for the express purpose of recording a song for a Coca-Cola advert and the resulting song 'I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing' shot to number 3 in the US and is still in the Top 100 sales list in the UK. More cheesy pop, to be sure, but this phenomenon is in no way genre-specific: Pianist Ludovico Einaudi gained substantial recognition from the John Lewis ad a few years back, and I'm going to hazard a guess that

you all remember Donovan's 'Mellow Yellow', even though it was released in 1966.

More recently, we've seen phone companies embracing music from bands that your average HMV customer probably knows little about. Vashti Bunyan might not ring a bell, but I can all-but guarantee that you'll instantly recognise his 'Diamond Day' from the T-Mobile ads.

But why now? And why do wealthy corporate entities use obscure songs that nobody knows? Well, by choosing a band that's quite different from anything that the general public has heard, their brand gains individuality, ensuring that the song is associated with their product alone. Mobile phones are pretty much homogenous these days, with all those snazzy features that seemed so exciting a few years back now taken for granted.

So

a catchy little tune could make all the difference between commercial success and failure.

Will all the bands whose music is used in adverts make it big? Of course not - there are a great many that have failed as well, songs from people who no longer make music, that anybody hears at any rate, but the bottom line is that television is a great way to reach a mass audience.

Perhaps for this very reason many musicians consider the commercial use of their art to be an unforgivable act of selling out. From Neil Young to the Red Hot Chili Peppers, there is a long list of vocal objectors to such crass commer-

cialism. On the other end of the spectrum we have U2 who allowed their music to be used to promote the iPod for no financial gain, just because they thought it was a great product. Admirable? Make up your own mind.

So, if you have a band and think you could sell a company's product for them, why not give it a go. After all, who needs artistic integrity?



# MusicReviews

## THE HALLOWEEN PLAYLIST

ARTIST: JEFFREY LEWIS

TRACK: IF YOU SHOOT THE HEAD YOU KILL THE GHOUL

Bobby Pickett's Halloween standard, 'Monster Mash', recklessly gave the misleading impression that things that go bump in the night are all a bit of corny fun. Fortunately for us, Jeffrey Lewis knows that when hordes of the undead inevitably rise it will be a very serious business indeed. That's why the anti-folk humanitarian gallantly produced this, less a song than a Public Service Announcement that everyone should have at the ready come October 31st. With his perennially-breaking voice he yelps the need-to-knows of how to survive the forthcoming zombie apocalypse over sparse guitar and racing drums, which help impart the urgency of his message. Feel free to ignore his advice, but if you find yourself confronted by a rotting brain-eater this Friday night with nothing but a wooden stake or string of garlic to defend yourself, don't be surprised when you end up with egg on your face. If it hasn't been chewed off already, that is.

ARTIST: THE CRAMPS

TRACK: HUMAN FLY

For the ghoulish pioneers of Psychobilly, the camp gothic thrills of October 31st come everyday. During their seemingly supernaturally extended career they've created a festering cauldron of songs, best described as providing the soundtracks to B-movies that only exist in their heads. Though they have long since fallen foul of the rule limiting the amount of times you can write tracks with names like 'There's An Eyeball In My Martini' without crossing the line into self-parody. Here however, as ludicrously monickered singer Lux Interior trembles out his lyrics with uncontrollable smugness at the thought of how thoroughly reprehensible he is and a surf-guitar riff is perverted to evil intent in the background and mixed with appropriately buzzing distortion, they created a dark gem.

ARTIST: FALL OUT BOY

TRACK: WHAT'S THIS?

I may be pandering to a stereotype here, but apparently emos love Halloween: It's their only socially acceptable opportunity to wear skeleton gloves legitimately. The *Nightmare Before Christmas* (a Halloween vibe transposed to a Christmas setting) is, as a result, a cult film for emos. Their poster boy Pete Wentz even has a Jack Skellington tattoo on his arm and his group Fall Out Boy recorded a cover of 'What's This?' on the 2006 special edition soundtrack CD. The original song is half spoken, with orchestral accompaniment, but FOB's cover is belted out over a rock arrangement. While this means some of the textural interest is gone, the driving tempo and thrash guitar make it a fantastic song to sing along to this All Hallows' Eve. Besides, singer Patrick Stump's voice is instantly memorable, and for once he enunciates all his words (youtube 'also into cats' if you don't know what I'm talking about.)

Tracks selected and reviewed by Steven Williams and Olivia Hassell

## Olivia Houghton ponders the juxtaposition of vocal polyphony and dubstep

When a concert is as obscurely named as Afro-Saxon Soundclash nobody is sure quite what to expect. But the problem is, now I've been I'm still not sure quite what I witnessed. Soundclash is a very good description of what would've happened had the two 'Afro' and 'Saxon' parts actually clashed. What happened instead was an extended concert, the first half consisting of serene sacred and secular vocal works of Saxon origin sung by four women and a harpist; the second a Zimbabwean male a cappella group followed by a bizarre but surprisingly good dub-step band. Sadly neither part came together to create a cohesive fusion of sounds, which made for a disjointed but enjoyable evening.

During the first half Canty entertained an audience cast into darkness with a lengthy program of vocal polyphony. Sweet and melodious as their voices were I found myself tiring of the soporific music, though at times the soaring clarity with which they sung sent shivers down my spine. For an event advertised as the premier of a new work by acclaimed composer Sir John Tavener it was a shame the moment was lost amidst a mass of similar music that was virtually indistinguishable; to compound matters, the lack of

LAWRENCE DUDLEY



EVENT: POPAGANDA

VENUE: THE DUCHESS

REVIEW: LAURA HULLEY

DATE: 18/10/08

★★★★☆

What is this madness? Somewhere for students to go on a Saturday night in York? It's true, and what's more, it's actually pretty good. The Duchess is York's newest venue and its club night, Popaganda, apparently has a music policy of: "Cool pop! Guilty pleasures! Indie anthems! Oh, and the odd cheesy chart smash!"

The venue is recently refurbished and offers plenty of space to sit and have a chat as well as a fairly large dance floor. However, it's the music that makes or breaks a night, and as we are well versed in grimy venues in York, the songs would be the real test of whether or not I would return. The DJs took the bizarre requests thrown at them in their stride; just as well considering that they included such disparate acts as Girls Aloud, MC Hammer and Pulp via a smattering of Blur, Queen and Hot Chip. It was a student's dirtiest fantasy; well placed cheese slotted in amongst classic pop and the odd old-school dance tune.

Unlike the ridiculous costume party which can be York's indie nights, the level of pretence at Popaganda was low. Guilty Pleasures is a term much misused: How could anyone feel guilty about loving this night? The place wasn't packed, but it won't stay that way for long; the drinks are cheap, the venue is great and the music is wonderful. Say goodbye to Saturday nights in.



BILL HEARLD

Umdumo Wesizwe groove to the chorus of 'In the Jungle'

light meant program reading was impossible.

What followed in Round Two provided a funky and uplifting contrast to the mellow opening. A solid rendition of 'In the Jungle' marked the highlight of the Zimbabwean men's choir's set while what intrigued me most was the instrumental dubstep led by conductor Tom Scratchly. The unusual setting (dubstep in the Minster?) fitted the odd output, which flowed surprisingly well between classical influences, featuring the

cathedral's organ, and heavy beats supported by a double bass, saxophone and trumpet. Improvising over the top were vocalists Beverly and Johnny, the latter of whom pulled the evening together with his informal MC-ing and full-bodied vocals.

Altogether this was a disjointed evening that didn't succeed in the merging of two cultures as intended. Nevertheless, the music was of a high quality and, as it was a free concert, I'm certainly not complaining.



ARTIST: DIZZEE RASCAL

VENUE: MANC. WAREHOUSE PROJECT

REVIEW: STEVE COLLINS

DATE: 18/10/08

★★★★☆

The only thing louder than the roaring of the trains in and out of Piccadilly station in Manchester at two o'clock in the morning is the sound emanating from beneath the tracks. Located as it is directly below the station, the Manchester Warehouse project is spacious and simple. It would take the most charismatic of performers to fill out and light up a place like this. Enter Dizzee Rascal.

Capped and adorned in bling he swaggered onto the stage to the irresistible crash and squeal of 'Sirens'. The stage-show was simple; Dizzee's mere presence makes the need for light shows and half naked dancers superfluous.

As the beat of 'Jezebel' rolled out, followed by a brilliant remix of 'Flex', I remembered why people were so excited about this man. Beyond his charisma and ability to hold a crowd without so much as a word, Dizzee is actually good. Really good. There are no signs of slurring as he boasts that he "could never watch a bu'er's girl grinding". He seems on the ball, commanding the respect of the crowd and his entourage of bass, drum and synth players. All eyes were on Dizzee as if he was going to perform a miracle as the final cords of the Calvin Harris ditty fade. Maybe there's still a glimmer of hope for hip hop beyond the formulaic slickness of Timbaland and co.



ARTIST: TOSCA, OPERA NORTH

VENUE: LEEDS GRAND THEATRE

REVIEW: FRAN GEACH

DATE: 14/10/08

★★★★☆

Opera North, never shy of pushing boundaries, has stripped Puccini's dramatic and popular opera of all beauty and elegance and has focused instead on the raw grit of the story. The Opera is your typical Italian drama about love, obsession, perversion and corruption: Tosca and Cavaradossi are star-crossed lovers who get caught in a political plot executed by the corrupt Scarpia who is obsessed with Tosca and intent on using the political blackmail to have her.

The characterisations were perfect; Tosca, sung by the lustrous-voiced Takesha Meshé Kizart, was needy, neurotic, vulnerable, raped and demented by the finale. Rafael Rojas sang Cavaradossi with a similarly apparent passion but the acting was at times lacking. The most compelling character was Scarpia, played by Robert Hayward, who created a chilling pervert who always felt the need to fiddle with his anorak or his crotch.

The ending of the opera was a bit undercooked, however. Tosca is reunited with Cavaradossi after murdering Scarpia, who falsely promised the lovers safety, and their reunion is passionately sung, but chemistry is desperately lacking - they never touch, or even look at each other. This was a shame after such a brilliantly directed opera, but overall this production would be a treat for anyone with an open mind.

# Film Reviews

## PAUL

Predictions, estimates, actuals: box office analysis post 1989



It doesn't take a genius to figure out that *The Dark Knight* and *Mamma-fucking-Mia* have dominated the UK box office this year, and it wouldn't be too taxing to imagine that *The Dark Knight* has done fairly well in the USA, the world's biggest territory for film grosses. However, the culture of predicting future box office runs of blockbuster films and oscar bait, as well as analysing the takings of current films, is a detailed enterprise, and has found its home on the web. Data on a film's performance in America very closely resembling that given to film studios is available daily on websites like [boxofficemojo.com](http://boxofficemojo.com), with expectations changing as Yahoo poll results and early Notfabio estimates are released.

Though tracing a film's trajectory and legs is, for the devoted, an interesting pursuit, fairweather followers like myself are more interested in the opening weekend, the three days (Friday-Sunday) in which the bigger-budgeted, better-advertised films generally make a large proportion of their overall lifetime total.

*The Dark Knight* broke the three-day record this year with over \$158 million, an achievement that surpassed *Spiderman 3*'s \$151 million the year before and *Pirates of the (shudder) Caribbean: Dead man's Chest* the year before that. Incidentally, it was Tim Burton's original *Batman* in 1989, along with the other major films of that year, that really set the tone for the midnight crowds and ticket rushes we see today. Prior to that year, the American population was content to see a film in their own time, in cinemas not rammed with the pestilent hordes.

The trend of endless sequels and franchising has its roots in 1989, the year of *Ghostbusters II*, *Back to the Future Part II*, *Lethal Weapon II*, and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and three successive breaks of the all-important record. Sequels that promised exactly the same as their predecessor became the norm, with the industry taking advantage of the built-in audience provided. The notion of the original idea being the most solid source of income gradually died, with original features like *Batman* and 1993's *Jurassic Park* trading on brand name and vast warehouses of accompanying merchandise. 2009 doesn't appear to have a film strong enough to beat out *The Dark Knight*. Maybe the producers of *Transformers 2* should give Shia LeBeouf some prescription meds.

FILM: GOMORRAH  
DIRECTOR: MATTEO GARRONE  
STARRING: SALVATORE ABRUZZESE, TONI SERVILLO  
REVIEW: DUNCAN PELHAM  
RUNTIME: 137 MINS



*Gomorrah* is a pressing polemic, if not an entirely comfortable viewing experience. In its depiction of a Naples suburb, tyrannised and torn apart by the Camorra, *Gomorrah* isn't the usual multi-layered mobster saga we're accustomed to. There's none of the comforting Scorsese-type storytelling: separate threads don't conveniently weave in out of one another, nor are they elegantly united in a grand finale. No such reassurances are offered to the audience. Inevitably, comparisons have been drawn with *City Of God*: both films boldly remove the customary rose-tinted glasses to reveal two vile, decaying criminal underworlds. Another striking similarity is the assemblage of impressive non-professional actors local to the area, a nice touch that (coupled with the on-location shoot) adds an authentic sense of place.

The fragmented story follows five separate characters, each faintly linked by their ties to this domineering organisation. *Gomorrah* presents the lower levels of organised crime - squalid and precarious. Some struggle against it, such as

the naïve Roberto (one of the few righteous characters, significantly named after the author of the source novel), who becomes embroiled in illegal toxic waste disposal, and the pitiable accountant who's forced to switch allegiances. Others hold a twisted admiration for the Camorra: tainted by their amoral surroundings, prepubescent kids are desperate to be initiated into this deadly world, and we watch, horrified, as thirteen year old Tito is used as a tool for assassination.

Garrone may touch on well-trodden territories within the mob genre - exploitation of the young, newcomers finding themselves in too deep, etc. - but he brings a refreshing slant. The camera's sinister close-ups and the lack of a theatrical soundtrack are powerful techniques. But most chilling of all are the performances drawn from the unknown cast, all possessing unnervingly real appearances (a bland-looking accountant; skinny pallid kids clad in tracksuits).

There's no glamour here - no cigar-chomping 'boss' calmly swiv-



elling in his velvet-padded throne, no swish shoot-outs or slickly dressed mobsters. All that this city contains is a desperate sense of hopelessness. And, riddled with the Camorra's unshakable succession of extortion, blackmail and drug-trafficking, the whole community have little choice but to be swept up by this vicious cycle. The direction and cinematography refuse to stylise this dissolute lifestyle. Grubby, emaciated hoodlums

stumble through the bleak urban landscape: the violence is messy and real. As young gang members abruptly meet their ends, the corpses mount and a steely silence hangs over these bloodied, punctured bodies as the camera lingers that little bit too long. The entire film moves from one shocking scene to the next, but none are the less potent for it. Garrone makes it clear that this is not entertainment, but a damning indictment.

FILM: LA ZONA  
DIRECTOR: RODRIGO PLÁ  
STARRING: MARIBEL VERDÚ  
DANIEL TOVAR  
CARLOS BARDEM  
REVIEW: FRED ELLIS  
RUNTIME: 97 MINS



Directorial debutant Rodrigo Plá emerges as the latest player in the burgeoning Mexican filmmaking scene with his charged thriller *La Zona*. We are met with the pristine properties and smartly uniformed school children of Mexican suburbia within 'the zone' - a gated community isolated from the slums that surround it by towering walls, a myriad of security guards and extensive CCTV.

All seems a little too flawless. The action really kickstarts when three thieves manage to infiltrate the zone. What ensues is a botched robbery leaving an old lady and two of the robbers dead. Miguel, the only surviving criminal, is trapped within the zone as a manhunt begins.

*La Zona* is a critique of a divided Mexican society, serving as a warning as to the dangers of separating different classes of people from each other. However, the director's insistence on this portrayal somewhat limits the strength and novelty of the actual story, though the intensity and sheer darkness does maintain interest



throughout. On top of this, some of the action, particularly the chase scenes, are really well done.

Alan Chávez stands out playing the fearful teenager trapped within the zone's fortifications, and the acting is strong throughout. The direction and cinematography is truly fantastic, with Plá's use of CCTV-style footage creating a sense of entrapment.

*La Zona* provides a gritty and bleak story and will certainly not suit all tastes, though the ambience evoked throughout definitely justifies a viewing. The film picked up 'Best Debut Feature' at the Venice Film Festival and has enough flourishes to suggest Plá could follow fellow Mexican Filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu (*21 grams*, *Amores Perros*) in making an impact on film internationally.

CLASSIC FILM: WALL STREET  
DIRECTOR: OLIVER STONE  
STARRING: CHARLIE SHEEN  
MICHAEL DOUGLAS  
REVIEW: JAMES GILL  
RUNTIME: 110 MINS



"Greed is good" - the motif which has guided the financial habits of the Western World for years, has finally come back to haunt us in the current credit crunch. Only fitting that it came from Oliver Stone's 1987 picture, *Wall Street*, which clearly captured the ravenous capitalism pervading the Reagan years and beyond.

It's a moral fable about an ambitious young broker, Bud Fox (Charlie Sheen), attempting to move into the lucrative big leagues with a corporate raider, the aptly named Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas). Little does Bud know, the path into the financial world is dark and lawless. Gekko's ruthless desire to maximize his profits and liquidate all obstacles in his way means that consequently he trades peace of mind for a piece of the action.

Oliver Stone's polemic strikes at the heart of the illusory image of the 'Free Market'. He presents us with a world where the international debt market holds opportunities, Fortune magazine is 'the Bible' and reading the Wall Street Journal is pecuniary sex. In his 'Greed is



Good' speech, the lizard-like Gekko speaks of firm stockholders as the owners of the company and of himself as the 'liberator of companies'; it's hard to share this vision when he later attempts to carve up an independent airline and describes trading as 'rolling the dice and playing Monopoly'.

Michael Douglas does a stellar job as the slick-haired Gordon Gekko, the corporate crook who subtly covers his illegal tracks with legal loopholes, describing his greed as a natural human evolutionary spirit. He cuts the ice as a financial Tony Montana, a big shot who doesn't want to quit, constantly absorbing all that hits him. Charlie Sheen, Martin Sheen and Daryl Hannah provide fine support as the broker led astray along with his father and girlfriend.

**WAITING  
FOR YOUR  
DINNER TO COOK**

**is fine.**

*When you're*

**52**



It's all good.

Text "chips" to 67777 to win gig tickets.



# Last Word

## A desperate appeal Moment of Zen

Hi, I'm Dame Judi Dench.  
*Snap* your fingers.  
 Now *snap* them again.  
 In the last five seconds, a member of Fragsoc's Pentium has crashed, with no hope of recovery. His family will go hungry.

*Snap.* A Medieval Battle Recreation Society member has just lost their plastic poleaxe. Her children will probably be sold, or eaten by wild dogs.

The budgetary violence being done by Yusuu on small societies across the entire Yorkian peninsula has been grabbing media headlines in the past month; but what does it really mean for the beleaguered tribespeople on the ground?

This is Colin Pertwee. Colin is from a small village in sub-Saharan Halifax. He lives peacefully among the Medieval Battle Recreation Society tribe.

This year, tragedy struck Colin's village. The army of marauding Yusuu separatists led by Sam Bayley, plundered the surrounding area, leaving the peaceful Medieval Battle Replication people without basic food, water or fake weaponry.

Colin has to walk seven-hun-

dred and fifty-seven miles every morning to fetch milk, instant coffee grounds and barely edible Ginsters pasties from the Costcutter well in the next village. In constant fear for his life, Colin is now forced to fight medieval battles twenty-three hours every day just to feed his family of fourteen Philosophy students and an American exchange student who is pretty much high all the time.

This is Shaun Bigglethrop. Shaun, like Colin, is a victim of the rabid band of Yusuu seperatist band, who came budget-slashing and money-burning through the area of social desert where his Fragsoc tribe have lived as

nomads for nearly thirty thousand years. Still a young 'noob', or junior in his tribe, Shaun, who was shamed or 'pwnsed' in his tribe's lingo is now shunned, cast out by his own people and forced to subsist on the merest diet of minesweeper and freecell. Shaun has lost over twenty-five stone in the last week and a half, and if he continues at his current weight he will be dead by 2010.

This is where you come in.

Your donation of just £2 per month can buy Colin the broadsword he so desperately *needs* to survive, or Shaun the laptop he *needs* to feed his children.

£5 per month can buy enough modems and cables to equip a small Fragsoc outpost to play Doom competitively against Korean children.

Remember, your donation can change lives. Just call 0800-123-1234 now. *Together*, we can make a *difference*.



Cycling with childish abandon down the grassy hill of current affairs with stabilisers taken off



After a summer holiday, campus is always filled with conspiracy theories about a duck cull. After all, where did they all go? Nouse's intrepid reporters are on the case. "They are killed by... predators," insists a Uni spokesperson. MoZ doesn't believe this for a second, and is sure Greg Dyke ritually sacrifices them to the BBC.

'What is Wizzgo?' cry the masses. That is, those of the masses who are in the habit of trying to park as close to YourShop as possible. Matt Burton has reserved the closest space for something called 'Wizzgo'. Why anyone



Anyone notice that our pirate President isn't being very pirate? He promised us cutlasses and swashbuckling, and those of us who believed in him hoped even for plank-walking. Instead, we've been given budget-cuts and beurocracy. THAT'S NOT CHANGE: THAT'S MORE OF THE SAME.

MoZ does not do things the easy way, which would be to set up an hilarious spot-the-difference between John McCain, Greg Dyke and Brian Cantor with the labels hilariously swapped around. So we won't. We'll just supply you with the evidence and let you make up your own minds.



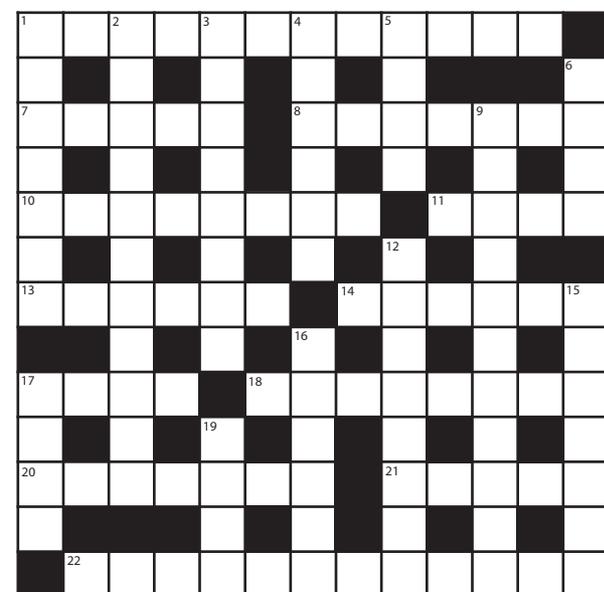
Anyone know how to stop shirts attracting fluff? Answers on a postcard to Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College, The University of York, Heslington, York, Yorkshire, YO10 5DD.



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

socs12@york.ac.uk

## Nouse Crossword



Crossword compiled by Dexter

- 21. Ring shaped coral reef (5)
- 22. Embalming fluid (12)

### Down

- 1. Climbing equipment, tussle (7)
- 2. Russian composer (11)
- 3. To be superior (8)
- 4. Go back on one's word (6)
- 5. Serious wounding (4)
- 6. Shock rock band (4)
- 9. Paranal, Hubble (examples) (11)
- 12. Japanese suicide pilot creed (8)
- 15. Tactile notation for the blind (7)
- 16. Grimm Brothers book character (6)
- 17. Incurable disease (4)
- 19. Type of soil (4)

### Across

- 1. Bad mannered TV chef (12)
- 7. Famous racecourse (5)
- 8. Kenyan capital (7)
- 10. Scientific study of fruit (8)
- 11. Egyptian goddess of fertility (4)
- 13. \_\_\_\_\_ Hemingway (6)
- 14. Croatian capital (6)
- 17. Relative (4)
- 18. Tomato based sauce (8)
- 20. Sneaky (7)



Answers available on  
[www.nouse.co.uk/crossword](http://www.nouse.co.uk/crossword)

# No need for 24 hour library service



**Charlotte Hogarth-Jones**  
Contributing Writer

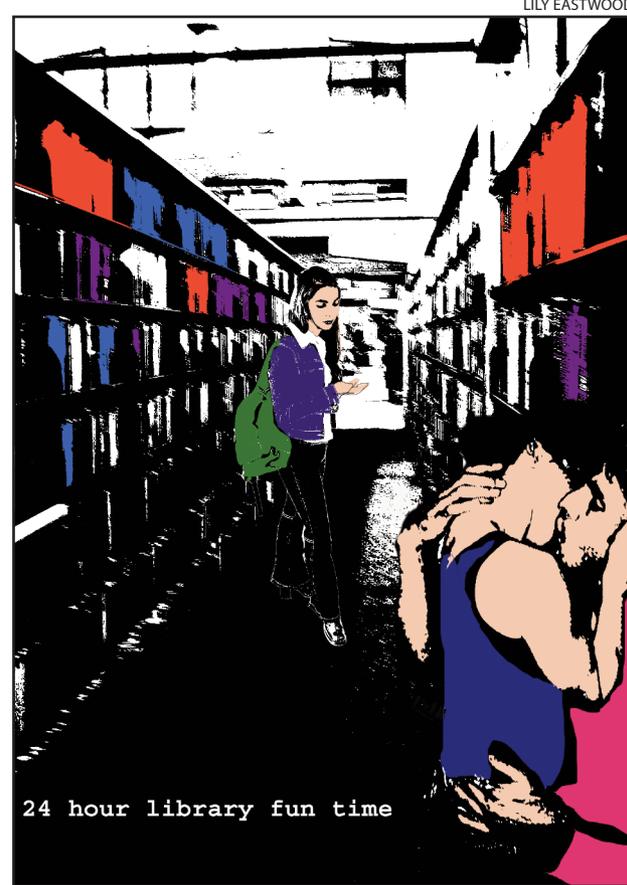
A 24 hour library service is unnecessary in view of our other facilities.

As I sit here at 3.30am, I examine my house-mates. The more studious amongst them are of course exhausted from yet another day of academic brilliance, one step closer to discovering the cure for cancer. The rest have just loudly announced their return from the pub, tripping over one another in a drunken stupor.

If I woke up the sleeping ones to suggest they hot foot it down to the library right now, I doubt they'd be impressed - they're all far too organised to ever need library access at this time in the morning. If I were to mention it to my friends downstairs, they'd probably be more than enthusiastic about the idea. In fact, they'd no doubt tramp down there right now, kebabs in hand, demanding books with rude-sounding titles. This is, of course, an extreme example, but it makes a serious point - if we did have a 24 hour library, what's the likelihood that most of us would actually go?

We'd probably go because we left our essays right until the last minute and bash out possibly the worst paper our tutor has ever seen. But actually go, on a regular basis? I don't think so.

So let us, for a second, imagine it does happen. How much will it cost the library? A lot. Whilst those campaigning for it seem to have little or no idea how much money would actually be involved, it is surely obvious to everyone that staffing and powering the library overnight would be extortionate, taking a huge chunk



24 hour library fun time

out of its budget. Would the funds not be better invested in more books? Anything other than a massive empty library, acting only as a beacon to those who manage to stumble their way into the haven of warmth and tranquillity. Furthermore, in the light of recent and increasing attacks in and around York campus, it seems foolish to be encouraging students to go there in the twilight hours, armed only with a bookmark and a biro for self defence.

All this seems more unnecessary when there is already a 24 hour online

library, 24 hour computer services available, and, wait for it, another 84 possible hours in the week in which you can get a book out.

The idea of a "24 hour library" for York is a bad one. It's expensive and encourages poor working habits. The few students who might use a 24 hour library, well frankly they'll benefit from the compulsory night off, and with stress levels at university higher than they've ever been, shouldn't we all be allowed at least a good nights sleep?

Read Sophie Ann James's argument for a 24hr library online.

# Students are not at the bottom of the food chain



**Nanki Chawla**  
Contributing Writer

The concept of "studentification" has been much talked about in recent months. Residents claim that the "ghettoes" formed by our student takeover are disruptive and dangerous. In contrast they also complain that these areas are undesirably deserted during the summer months. Whilst these claims may be valid in certain areas, it is reasonable for students to try to live near each other in an affordable area that is close to their university. Perhaps York even benefits from some quiet during the tourist season.

A report written by people at York has, surprising as it may be, defended us by condemning the stereotypical views on students. After all, we're not all noisy, dirty and drunken. They have also said that it's less than 1% of areas where the student population is more than 10% making these problems the exception and not the rule.

Some councils in the UK have previously been trying to convince the local authorities to cut down the number of Homes of Multiple Occupation in certain areas: usually student homes. Rugg and Rhodes, who wrote the report, have said that doing so is discriminatory and to do this to any other faction of society would be considered so. As

students are an important section of society, they should be offered the same respect and care as any other member of society would. This would require them to have a roof over their heads.

This report has, thankfully, been backed by the NUS. It must be understood that students cannot always be considered as at the bottom of the food chain. They are actual, productive people: contributors to society. Students are employed, study and volunteer in the same community as other residents. Many partake in charity work, proving that they can be organised and motivated. Their contribution and dedication to various areas are not to be belittled or ignored.

It has now finally been recognised that some sort of framework needs to be set up to ensure that university students are able to live close enough to their University to not be considered commuters. The NUS Vice-President also encourages Student Unions to liaise with local councils if the university has problems with housing off campus. Apparently the government is planning to create more University provisions for students in 20 towns and cities, whether this includes York or not is yet to be seen, but we all know it needs it.

It seems to be quite rare for anybody in the country to actually defend the student population and we can only hope that this report has the necessary effect on halting studentification legislation.

To be a part of the debate and for exclusive web content go to [www.nouse.co.uk/comment](http://www.nouse.co.uk/comment)

# YUSU justified in its decision against The Yorker



**Laura Connor**  
Contributing Writer

The Yorker are independent and cannot continually rely on YUSU.

The British press is internationally seen as one of the most expansive and comprehensive in the world. This is important, because an expansive press, encompassing a range of political values, helps us to develop reasoned views of recent developments, and establish where impartiality and unreliability lie.

This may not immediately seem like the case, especially after disquieting revelations such as the notorious Piers Morgan scandal of 2004. But many, including famously anti-republican Americans Bill Hicks and Michael Moore, enthuse about the availability of a liberal press in this country.

At the University of York, we are lucky enough to have an assortment of multi-media, ranging from The

Yorker, *Nouse*, *Vision*, YSTV and URY, all with their own diverse characters. As The Yorker is the only one not part of York University Media, they are not restricted by the media charter which bind YUM members

**"The Yorker readily abuse their stance of independence."**

and YUSU.

Obviously, to The Yorker, this detachment from YUSU can place them in an advantageous position. On their 'Yorkipedia' website, they quote, "Editorially independent of the Students' Union and with no political

or campus affiliations, The Yorker's coverage comes with an independent and unique character." Thus, The Yorker has an ability to freely attack anyone individually within YUSU, and potentially create a different perspective to the media bodies affiliated with YUSU.

However, one of the advantages of the media charter is that members are guaranteed contact with YUSU executives. By preaching that their character is made "independent and unique" by private ownership, The Yorker only undermines its position and distorts its values by then employing student guises to snatch stories from YUSU, glaringly suggesting that members of The Yorker need affiliation with YUSU in order to maintain the

availability of fresh stories. By employing student guises, they are manifestly damaging their own reputation and creating an image of incompetence. It is their decision to be editorially independent, and they say they see it as beneficial.

In essence, a varied press on campus, that combines both YUSU affiliated publications and self-sufficient companies, is healthy for us as students. Thus, the executive's decision not to talk to The Yorker was both well-informed and necessary. If we are not to fall down a slippery slope that culminates in our student media being neither nuanced nor influential, we have to ensure that when The Yorker say they are independent, they remain independent.

Our scope of media is what allows more stories to be broadcast. Ultimately, no distinctions will be made between our student media if The Yorker's detachment is not maintained.

It is unfair for members of YUM to have an agreement with YUSU and respect their positions as within that contract if The Yorker can then readily abuse their stance of independence by conversing with YUSU executives. They can't still maintain the right to insult who they wish and label themselves as reflecting an 'independent attitude' in all their coverage if they equally want to have the advantages members of YUM have. We all have to sacrifice a little bit of something we want in order to achieve the ultimate goal.

## Lida Mirzaii Goes way back

Students are a sensitive and easily agitated bunch. Be it fears about the construction of a bar, moaning about existing bars, outrage at Welfare officer's punching people in the face, and so on and so on... disturbing the delicately balanced eco-system of the student will inevitably lead to a big and ineffectual moan.

Back in 2005 such remonstrations had a far more practical basis: spraying. An unfortunate affair really. Back in the day our beautiful lake also came with its own serene water feature to meet even Alain de Botton's vision of happy architectural design. However, in true York tradition it came with a foreseeable flaw. It sprayed people. And Nouse delivered its penchant for dramatic journalism: 'the spray has swamped campus walkways on windy days for years, hitting those moving between physics and central hall.' What a plight, and I thought the recent bout of hurricanes were bad.

True, being 'hit' in the face with what can only be described as water with an exciting variety of bacterial strands is unnecessary and distressing. But don't worry, the University always conjures up an expensive and overcomplicated solution to problems. What about 'changing the direction and formation of the existing fountain nozzles in order to contain the spray within the Lake surface and reduce the carry-over of the water aerosol onto the adjacent areas?' Excellent idea. Well done. An appreciated attempt to resolve one of the multitude of screw ups caused by an attraction to shiny planning designs.

Seeing as the fountain is now redundant, I guess changing the direction of the nozzles didn't work, but at least we're not being sprayed. Langwith bar I'm sure will not invade our physical space as much as previous attempts to jazz up the University did, at most you'll get a spray from a fellow inebriate trying to initiate conversation, but you'll get that at any campus event, no amount nozzle twiddling will prevent it.



# Letters

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

Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College

## Facilities needed to be ready for Freshers

Dear Nouse,

I am a student in Langwith college and I am very disappointed with the current standard of facilities available to me in my halls. I am aware of the fact that Langwith was given a facelift over the summer period, but a facelift seems to have been all that has happened. It might look a little prettier, but the problems still remain.

My main concern is about the lack of bar in Langwith. I know that this is because eventually there will be a new YUSU run bar in its place, but to not have a bar in Langwith for Freshers' Week is awful. It meant that as Langwith students we had no place to meet up and we had to resort to having our first college event in town. The JCRC did their best to make it a great night, and I think they did a good job but it's wrong to expect them

all to pull off college events without any sort of venue available for them on campus.

I know that once the YUSU bar opens the events will be amazing, but at the moment I feel that Langwith students are being slightly short changed in our college experience. Not only do we have to put up with mocking from our Derwent neighbours, it suddenly appears that most of their jeers actually have a basis in reality. In desperation I went to the Derwent event this weekend and had a great time. I know that Langwith would be capable of putting on events that would be just as much fun as this, but until we have a venue this won't be possible.

**Hannah King**  
First year Chemistry student

## A lesson in architecture

Dear Nouse,

I would like to express my disappointment in reading Henry James Foy's crass feature on our campus architecture. It was ill-timed for a Freshers' Special that should surely inspire.

I have shared several personal correspondences with the architect, Sir Andrew Derbysyshire, in recent months. He is an astute thinker that has designed these buildings with real heart and it is very demoralising to see his contributions so readily dismissed.

Finally, as an indefatigable defender of 20th Century architecture, I would like to offer Henry a wealth of information that I have collected on the original philosophies of the Founding Fathers so he might then come to a learned realisation of how wrong he is.

**Joshua Mardell**  
Chairman,  
Architecture Society

## Left out in the cold

Dear Nouse,

So when I applied to a campus university, I naturally expected to be living on campus. A logical assumption to make, but unfortunately for the University of York this seems to be far too ambitious.

Instead, I have been residing in a house near to campus since I arrived. I'm glad my plight has seen daylight in the last edition of Nouse, and that it has been registered amongst the campus community that the whole situation is completely unacceptable. The University is disorganised and foolish, to say the least.

I don't know who runs the accommodation department but they really managed to make a shambles of one of the most important social aspects of university life. Considering the cost of living isn't exactly cheap, at least you expect to have the same opportunity as the rest of the students.

**Alana Redgrave**  
First year Law student

## Best of the web

### Political correctness

**David** (October 14 2008, at 20:47)

If he was not and failed to realise that there were racist connotations to his spectacularly unfunny poster then he was, at best, extremely stupid. Of course, Craig Cox's banner would be extremely offensive and unpleasant even if racial undertones are ignored, as obviously slavery is something intrinsically wrong and particularly because it is a practice that survives to this day, in the abhorrent cases of those being trafficked into lives of sex-slavery, for example. If Craig Cox was possessed by the childish urge to wind his fellow officers up, it would have been nice if he could have done it in a way that didn't trivialise the suffering of so many people.

**Aris Catsambas** (October 16 2008, at 15:20)

It seems to me that, due to the lack of real problems to be discussed, issues like this one are being aggrandised. Tom Scott did not in any way support the comments made, and is not therefore culpable in any way. This 'joke' would not have any impact if it was not exaggerated by the media. People would not even know about it if Nouse did not feature article headlined "University hosts 'racist' NUS event". Thus, instead of blaming Tom Scott for not overreacting to the particular statement, maybe you should not create an issue out of nothing.

**Ant Orday** (October 14 2008, at 15:08)

I think you'll probably find it's not colour that divides any of us. Instead, it's this encouraging a multi-layered culture uni that creates and divides people of different colours rather than unites them. Get over your own guilt, and as for the title of your 'article', thank God PC has gone AWOL.

**From 'Political correctness gone awol'.**  
Comment at [nouse.co.uk](http://nouse.co.uk).

## Little campus: Big Mouth...

Are the University sports facilities up to scratch? We asked you whether students are expecting too much, or should we be getting better value for money?

**Name:** Rebecca Sanders  
**College:** Langwith  
**Year:** First  
**Subject:** Sociology



“ On first impressions, I think the sports facilities at York seem really good. They seem quite a good size and really modern, and there are lots of outdoor ones too. In my opinion, the gym doesn't seem too expensive for what it is - I think they have to charge a fair amount just to cover their costs. I haven't joined a gym in York, but if I did I'm pretty sure I'd join the university one. It's very convenient and I'd much rather go to the place where all my friends go than somewhere else in town. ”

**Name:** Nate Clay  
**College:** Derwent  
**Year:** Second  
**Subject:** History



“ The sports facilities here seem adequate, but they're nothing special. My university in America has far fewer students, but it still seems to have much better facilities - we have an Olympic size pool there and in general it seems much smarter. The gym here charges similar prices to the independent ones in town, but you get a lot more "bang for your buck" at places like Fitness First than here. People shouldn't have to pay over the odds for convenience and the university needs to adjust its prices accordingly. ”

**Name:** Irgaliyer Asset  
**College:** Halifax  
**Year:** First  
**Subject:** Economics



“ I think the facilities here at York are pretty good, they seem fine for what the students here need. I reckon they could still do with some improvement, but then again things can always be improved! I think the main thing we could do with is more space - the gym here seems really cramped compared to the Next Generation gym in town. Also, I was pretty surprised at how expensive membership here costs - it wasn't the price I was expecting for a student gym, especially not for very average facilities. ”

**Name:** Hin Kuan Lao  
**College:** Alcuin  
**Year:** Third  
**Subject:** Psychology



“ The facilities here are about the same as other Universities I've seen, like UCL. I can't say I really notice the improvements made recently, and to be honest I think a lot more work could still be done to make things better for students here. It seems like more and more students are coming to York but they aren't taking this into account and expanding accordingly. I do use the facilities here, but I pay one off fees when I go - I'd prefer to be a member but its just too expensive for an average student budget. ”



## Political Edge

Tom Hobohm

As a rule, Leaders of the Opposition tend to fall into one of two categories; either they find themselves pathetic and weak against a wildly popular government, or they seem to be so pragmatic and sensible that the public find themselves wondering why they didn't elect them in the first place.

David Cameron and the Conservatives have recently been falling into the latter of these categories. Their comments about Labour's lack of vision, poor leadership and terrible economic planning, all seem to be ringing true. Cameron has the look about him of a man that knows that the next election is in the bag. The only question in the minds of most Conservatives is, by how much will they win?

And yet, is it really fair to assume Labour is dead in the water? In a poll published by the Guardian newspaper last week, 43% of people trust Labour to solve the credit crunch, the largest group. Compare that to just 35% for the Tories, and their

**"Put away your false confidence friends, at least for the moment"**

lead isn't as concrete as they may think. Sure, they're still ahead overall, but for the first time in months, it's a lead that can be measured in single figures.

True, it seems that the Labour party have been having a rough time since Blair's departure. The past year has seen a plague of mistakes; data losses, unpopular counter terrorism bills, the failure of the economy, and the party's lack of vision. It all seems to have been mounting up against Brown and, in many ways, it's almost safe to assume the Conservatives could do nothing between now and the next election and still win with a huge majority.

Nevertheless, the results of the poll will be viewed as good news by the Labour leadership, particularly given that the result comes at the end of a year where public spending has nearly doubled, including a myriad of unpopular bailout packages for the private sector. Perhaps this could act as a reminder to the Conservatives - criticise if you will, but it's not all about how you deal with the crisis. Sometimes it's how decisive you seem that really counts. For the first time since taking power, Brown seems in control, informed and practical. Alarm bells are ringing in the Tory camp this autumn - put away your false confidence my friends, at least for the moment. The fight's not over yet.

# Russia's 9/11: The West failed the test



**Peter Campbell**  
DEPUTY POLITICS EDITOR

OVER THE SUMMER, what started out as a skirmish between Georgian troops and rebel factions escalated into a war which saw Russian soldiers enter Georgia.

Bridget Kendall, the BBC's diplomatic correspondent spoke to *Nouse* and likened the crisis over the summer to the events of 9/11, accusing the West of not reaching out to Russia. "Georgia has been Russia's 9/11, and the

West has failed the test."

The summer crisis involved a debate about the dependence of the Georgian separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and their relationship to Russia. While there is much speculation as to who fired first, Kendall clarifies one school of thought on the issue.

"A lot of people think that Russia laid a trap [for Georgia] by accumulating heavy arms on the border...[but] the Russian Government thinks that it's outrageous that anyone should think that [the inva-

sion] is anything more than humanitarian."

Russia faced an identity crisis following the breakup of the USSR. "It was as if Russia was a person, and their entire family had disappeared: The Soviet Union wasn't there any more. They were part of a new country called 'Russia.'"

Vladimir Putin, Russia's Ex-KGB President-turned-Prime Minister, has restored the Russians' sense of pride in their nation. "There were advantages of Putin coming in. Russia was able to pay off all its debts and make a nice fat sub-

**Georgian refugees flee with their belongings during the mid-August crisis**

sidy, so when Gordon Brown and George Bush were scratching their heads working out what to do about the financial crisis, Russia wasn't having a problem."

Under the new leadership, Russia now faces a clear choice with regards to its future, insists Kendall. "The debate in Russia is do you want to reform the economy and integrate with the world, or militarise and be the 'strong bear' that the Soviet Union was?"

Some of the changes in Russia are, however, not for the better in her view. "It's a lot more like the 1970s. There's a lot more control, there aren't many opposition parties. You have to be very powerful before you can criticise Mr Putin. A lot of journalists who try to investigate corruption in Russia all come to a sticky end."

While the Georgian crisis looked like a show of Russian military strength and aggression and was widely rebuked by the Western media, Kendall feels that, on the inside, Russia are very nervous about how they are perceived. "My sense from talking to Western diplomats is that Russia has been made to feel very vulnerable on this incident. They're a young country who have been through a very rocky last thirty years."

With all that has happened this last summer, Russia's position in relation to the West is uncertain. "It's not the sort of country you want as an enemy - it's got many nuclear warheads left over from the Cold War, it's got many natural reserves and it can turn off the tap. It's too big a chunk of the world to let go off on its own."

"I think there could be a crisis around the corner."

## The last laugh in the US Elections

**Katie McKenna**  
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

THE HUMORISTS of America have had fun in the run-up to next week's US Presidential Election.

From outright mockery to subtler mimicry, television programmes such as *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and *The Colbert Report* have shown the election period through a different light. *The Daily Show* is a faux-news comedy show which targets the inconsistencies of politicians, while *The Colbert Report* features Stephen Colbert pretending to be a 'well-intentioned, poorly-informed, high-status idiot' who loves Bush and the Republicans.

These two shows that hold an unusually high sway over young voters, collectively averaging 1.5 million viewers nightly, have allowed the systematic ridicule of politicians.



**Tina Fey's impression of Sarah Palin has been an instant success**

Although both shows have also been seen to favour the Democrats, Jon Stewart denies any journalistic responsibility within his work. Colbert justifies his angle by describing making fun of the Democrats as "like kicking a child."

Tina Fey's notorious imper-

sonations of Sarah Palin on *Saturday Night Live* emphasise Palin's 'folksy' manner. This has shaped the nation's view of the vice-presidential nominee, to the extent that the exaggerated line, "I can see Russia from my house" has been frequently, and incorrectly, attrib-

uted to Palin herself. Furthermore, the inclusions of some of Palin's genuine sayings imply that her actual words are more ridiculous than anything comedy writers could invent. While the end result appears both naive and inarticulate, it tends to distract attention from Palin's more contentious views.

While it is arguable that these comedians are merely reinforcing preconceptions of the candidates, the huge markets reached and their influence especially on younger voters, who would normally be less likely to vote, might mean that the satirists of America have a huge impact on the result of this election.

**For more debate, opinion and analysis from a wide range of writers, visit our special US Elections page. Follow the link from [www.nouse.co.uk/politics](http://www.nouse.co.uk/politics)**

# Zimbabwe's search for the right path

It may seem that Mugabe's reign will never end. In light of this, **Peter Young** talks to a community worker and two York students from Zimbabwe about their experiences, Mugabe, and the future of the nation

**"I** have never felt such demonic oppression as I did in the hours surrounding that event," recalled a Zimbabwe-based community worker, referring to an encounter with Mugabe's ZANU-PF thugs. During the incident he narrowly escaped the potential loss of both his life and lives of his family members. "As I drew alongside the two guys in fatigues, they looked directly at me and said my name. I had to swallow my stomach as it was so frightening and unnerving - they knew all about me."

These comments followed the violent seizure of a white owned farm in Harare and the evacuation of the interviewee, who wishes to remain anonymous, along with all whites from the surrounding area. "We came back about 10 days later - we expected to find a ransacked house, but everything was intact." This fortunate experience was not one shared by many of his friends, who also owned land there.

Robert Mugabe's highly controversial land 'redistribution' program is ongoing in Zimbabwe, and involves handing over once-productive farmland from the experienced white farmers to the inexperienced indigenous population.

While Mugabe would have the international community believe that his program is aimed at giving land owned by evil, white colonialists back to its 'rightful owners', what has escaped the attention of many is that many of the white land owners purchased their land legitimately, following the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980. "Their land was deeded,



their farms were productive, and many of them were extraordinarily charitable towards their local communities and their workers."

Mugabe's main opposition, the Morgan Tsvangirai led Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), has strong connections with white-owned farms, which produced 60% of Zimbabwe's GNP prior to 2000.

**Above: Mugabe sworn in for his sixth term**

**Below: Refugees trying to gain access to a shelter**

These farmers recognise the corruption of the Mugabe regime and, as such, provide funds to the MDC. By targeting the white population under the veil of post-colonial justice, Mugabe sought to hit his political opponents at their source.

Mandi Madavo, one Zimbabwean student at York, recognises Mugabe's obsession with race commenting: "He got too fixed on this idea of 'black empowerment' and ran with it way too far." Through this, Mugabe has been able to cripple the financial base of the MDC, but only at the vast expense of the economy at large. The Zimbabwean dollar is currently in a state of hyperinflation, at 231,000,000%.

Tiné Okoro, another Zimbabwean student at York, commented on the economy in her home city of Bulawayo: "The situation just keeps getting worse, nothing improves." She described how the black market prevailed as it provided the only viable source of food. "You need to have 'contacts' in order to buy even the most basic of items." Mugabe has blamed EU and US economic sanctions for the collapsing economy.

The lack of response from Western leaders on this issue causes the world to question its

position. Past actions have lost Western nations much needed credibility in the eyes of Southern Africa. It is even being argued that US and EU intervention has actually slowed action against Mugabe in Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique. Worries that their government will follow if ZANU-PF is ousted have no doubt begun to preponderate in the minds of Southern Africa's leaders. The uniting of African

**"You need to have 'contacts' in order to buy even the most basic of items"**

nations against a common enemy seems to have distracted them from the atrocities committed closer to home.

Better distribution of land, the revival of the economic system, the end of human rights violations, and the installation of a just democracy all seem like fanciful aims without the removal of ZANU-PF. With the current Mugabe-Tsvangirai power-sharing deal underway, the world looks on with waiting but pessimistic eyes. Mugabe's reputation for mitigation of

power is not one that inspires hope in the minds of those who oppose his rule. While the long-term ability of the MDC to run Zimbabwe has been questioned, their proposed setup of a democratic system, regardless of their expertise in ruling a country, will no doubt be an incredibly positive legacy. "It may not be possible to implement the ideal first time, but it is a lot easier to steer a car once it's moving. The first thing is to get the car moving, and that is to oust the Mugabe regime" commented the community worker.

Unfortunately for the UK, it looks as though its options are limited. As much as modern Britons might want to act in spite of their government's past, their actions seem to be tainted by the post-colonial suspicion of Southern Africa. The UK is left largely as a spectator in this crisis, with no obvious way of speeding up the collapse of Mugabe's regime. Despite this, the community worker is optimistic that the downfall of ZANU-PF would eventually come. "Sooner or later Mugabe is going to die, and hopefully sense will prevail on both sides of the political divide at that time. When he goes I think the country will find a corrective path."



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# Matthew Jeynes

## Why we need to embrace the culture of American University Sport in York

While obviously York is a great university, one of the best in the country, I do sometimes find myself wishing it was like American universities. You know, the ones the size of a small town, in terms of facilities as well as students.

Now, I realise that this isn't possible. This country has 130-odd Universities, not to mention other higher education institutions, for only really a tiny little nation. A state of corresponding size in America will have a fraction of these institutions. That is what allows them to have enormous, sweeping campuses and populations larger than some countries.

But that isn't really why I want our Universities to be like those over the pond. What I want are their sports facilities and structure. The better games in the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) American Football games get crowds of around 80,000 people. 80,000 people, just for University sport. Our teams are likely to get a maximum 30 supporters, if they are lucky, and most of those will be other members of the club, either injured or just bored of going to training.



American Universities like Ohio have incredible attendance figures for their NCAA games through the season

Even at Roses, individual games are only watched by a few hundred at most. The fact that those big American universities have stadiums that can even house 80,000 people is just staggering. There are only a few stadiums of similar size in the whole of this country, and no university would get a sniff at playing in one of those, except for in prestigious National competitions.

Even then, the paltry crowd drawn in barely makes it worthwhile.

But most of all, what I really want is the structure of sport in America to be replicated over here. In the US, athletically gifted kids will get scholarships to high school, then get scholarships to a certain university, and then have to complete that university course before being chosen by one of the

clubs in the country to play professionally. This is the case for such sports as American Football, Baseball and Basketball, where the best university graduates are chosen by the best teams in what is known as a Draft. For other sports, such as Track and Field, the rules are bent slightly, allowing younger and younger American runners to compete nowadays.

Some may argue that sports such as American Football and Baseball can let the best players play out their University careers before turning professional, because they will never have to organise a team to play any other countries, whereas in Europe, countries are always looking for the next big thing to play on the international stage.

So this 'University then

Draft' mentality may not work for sports over here, but I think it should be given serious thought. It would prevent the exposure of youngsters to national attention before they are able to handle it, while also giving players a good qualification when their playing days are over.

However, to get into this position, we need the standard of University sport to be raised considerably. NCAA sport has a huge following in America, because it's standard isn't far short of national level and it is, some say, more entertaining than professional sport. There is also, obviously, a huge amount of money put into sport at US Universities, staggering amounts compared to even our best sport unis, Bath and Loughborough (let alone the pathetic amounts delivered by our dear University).

What I wish is that University sport had as high a profile over here as it does in America. And surely forcing all of our sportsmen through University can't be a bad thing. Ok, so there are a lot of hurdles to overcome, but why can't we have 80,000 people watching our sports games? I wish.

## Greenwood criticises College Recreational Plan

Criss Noice  
 SPORTS EDITOR

COMMERCIAL SERVICES have expressed financial concerns over the new college recreational timetable designed by Vanbrugh JCR Chair Matt Oliver.

The plan, implemented for the shorter 16 week college sport programme this year, timetables sessions in the sports centre every week for a variety of college teams. However, some sessions have been deemed impractical by college captains who cannot use the time productively due to a lack of adequate equipment.

One of the worst affected sports is hockey, who have their training sessions scheduled indoors, despite only having access to outdoor equipment.

Vanbrugh Chair Matt Oliver has defended the programme, but



The new timetable gives college teams a weekly training session

admits that it is still in the early stages of development and that there are adjustments that need to be made. He said: "I worked with the sports centre once the AU timetable had gone through and tried to find the best slots that we

possibly could. Unfortunately, we were unable to make bookings at peak times because the combination of the AU timetable and casual bookings means that the centre is completely booked out."

The timetable is funded by a

£10,000 grant from the Vice Chancellor's discretionary fund.

Despite the £10,000 injection, the sports centre is anticipating a loss of revenue from the programme, according to Director of Commercial Services Jon Greenwood.

Speaking to *Nouse*, he said that the timetable has "completely locked out external bookings" and could potentially lose the centre up to £20,000 during the financial year.

In response to the financial worries, Oliver said: "The money we've been given is guaranteed money for the sports centre that wouldn't have otherwise been there. It is a work in progress because we've never tried anything like this on such a large scale for college sport before, and there are going to be some colleges that don't have the same need for sessions that others do, but on the whole the

feedback has been positive."

Oliver also believes that the system is more beneficial for students. He said: "This money has come from the VC's discretionary fund and is new money in the system, so it's not being taken away from anything else. Obviously private bookings make a lot of money but the primary focus must be about benefiting students and that's what I believe we've done with the timetable so that everyone can get involved."

Also part of the college sport programme this year is a five pound annual administration fee for any student wanting to compete. In a meeting with Greenwood, Lacy put forward a proposal for colleges to pick up the bill for administration fees instead of individual students themselves, but was dismissed on grounds of its impracticality and that it would result in further lost revenue.

ROB BANKS



Alex  
Lacy

## AU President

LAST WEEK was horrendously busy. As the first BUCS Wednesday of the term, it was a red letter day for York Sport, and, as I'm sure is well covered on the rest of these pages, the clubs performed admirably - as they usually do.

What was most noticeable to me was how, despite the much later start we have at York compared to other Universities, we still more than held our own in the matches. This is extremely promising for the rest of the year. Where some of the teams needed to get their fitness back up I hope the free York Sport fitness sessions every week can help (shameless plug), but everyone should be very pleased with their efforts - and excited about next week's matches.

Last week was also the first York Sport Night at its new Wednesday night venue. Though the night was a success (1900 people through the doors, and £200 made for the York Sport Clubs) there were some teething problems with the provision of bar staff at Derwent and the queuing system at Club Salvation.

We are working to ensure this is all ironed out for the coming week, and working to get the capacity right so that whilst the queues are as small as possible there is space for the entertainment (and space to move). Again, that is one of the great strengths of this night: we can change things about it.

The second is that, over the year, the night will bring in £6000 to the sports clubs (put into perspective this is roughly equal to 1/7th of the total grant money given to clubs) and we're hoping to increase this amount.

Last week was an important week for York Sport clubs in other ways too. The most successful YUSU Fair on record got an astonishing number of members joining up to clubs and York Sport.

Personally, I'd like to take full credit for this, but at the end of the day all I did was sort out some balloons and wander round giving vague encouragement. Obviously, it was the clubs who made the day such a success.

The displays from trampolining and the martial arts clubs (organised by Sandy from Jiu Jitsu, who is clearly a bit of a legend) were fantastic, but Snow Sports and Rowing need a mention too.

With 180 and 150 paid members on the day of the fair respectively, applause is certainly in order.

So, between the BUCS Wednesday and the wooden horse, aircraft and DJ filled YUSU Fair, it's a strong start all round and I look forward to seeing what next week brings.

# Keele outclassed by York women in superb lacrosse performance

GEORGE LOWTHER

## WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Matthew Jeynes  
SPORTS EDITOR

York 1sts	25
Keele 1sts	0

LAST WEDNESDAY, the Lacrosse women's team opened this year's BUCS campaign with a convincing victory over a very inexperienced Keele University side.

York showed very few signs of early-season rustiness, but were never really troubled by a Keele side that contained a number of freshers who were unable to handle York in defence, or to seriously threaten York in attack.

York dominated play from the outset, opening up a three-goal lead within minutes, with goals from Helen Streeter, Emily Lingard and Kiera Linton. The third goal was something of an embarrassment for the Keele goalkeeper, as she seemed to turn her back to the ball as it was shot, giving her no chance to save it.

Keele began to battle back, but were unable to keep the ball out of their half to give their defence some respite, and York stretched their lead further with goals from Lingard and Streeter, whose pace and skill was too much for Keele.

York's early dominance was highlighted by the manner of their sixth goal. It was scored by Carina Topham, who carried the ball 60 metres from defence to attack to score a superb individual goal.

A further three more goals for York meant that they ended the first quarter 9-0 up already.

Keele managed to briefly stem the flow of goals in the second quarter, beginning to defend their area better, forcing York to the out-



York produced a sensational performance and took Keele 1sts apart with an adventurous attitude

side. It also seemed as if York already knew they would win the game, as there was not the same intensity as in the first quarter.

Despite this, York still managed another five goals, including two more for Lingard, to go into half-time at 14-0 and coasting to victory.

Keele continued to struggle after half-time, although they were able to hold York to only four more goals in the third quarter, although York's attack was slowed by the loss

of Streeter, who left the field towards the end of the first half.

There were rumours on the sidelines that York would bring on their freshers in the fourth quarter if they stayed so far ahead, as the freshers were down on the 22 acres for a practice. However, York settled for bringing on all of their reserves to give everyone some game time.

This barely slowed York's attack and they continued to pile on the goals as the Keele players' heads

dropped. The final whistle was a relief to the Keele players, and somewhat to the York supporters on the sidelines, who felt embarrassed by the ease of victory.

York's girls were just too fast and skillful for Keele, most of whom had clearly only just started lacrosse. York will face far tougher tests ahead in their BUCS schedule, especially from a Durham 3rds team who beat them last year, and who dispatched Northumbria 1sts 20-0 in their opening match.

# Tough loss for York in basketball tussle

GEORGE LOWTHER

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Dan Hyde  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

York 1sts	35
Bradford 1sts	46

THE WOMEN'S basketball team made an encouraging start to their season last Wednesday despite losing to Bradford 1sts at home.

Competing at the highest level in its history after last season's promotion to BUCS Northern Conference 2B, York put in a confident and energetic display against a team considered one of the best sides in the league.

The game started slowly, with both teams showing signs of rust after a long summer, but Bradford's rather alarming height advantage saw them begin to dominate the early proceedings.

But some well executed counter-attacking play kept York in the

game, and a flowing interchange of passes between guards Claire Dinan and Susan Robinson helped York take a well-deserved lead into the break at the end of the first quarter.

The game soon swung Bradford's way, though, as the away team's star player Nat Liang put together a run of plays that kept York on the back foot.

York's high-octane style and lack of numbers in reserve (York had two to Bradford's five) left the home team tiring quickly and they struggled to find their rhythm in the second quarter.

By the end of the third, the game was all but won with York bemoaning their lack of options from the bench. Bradford's stout defence was enough to see out the game but York's captain Maria Janssens was pleased with her team's efforts.

"We played without our freshers today so it was hard work," she said. "But the team did a great job



Bradford's height advantage made life difficult for York's women

and we hope to be very competitive this year."

Elsewhere, captain Ronan Joyce inspired the men's basketball team to a 67-59 win against Leeds

2nds in their first outing of the new BUCS season. Joyce said it was a "massive win" and hoped it would set the tone for a more successful season than last year.

# York Rugby firsts cruise to comfortable victory in BUCS season opening match

GEORGE LOWTHER

## RUGBY UNION

**ADAM SHERGOLD**  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

**York 1sts 43**  
**Northumbria 3rds 21**

YORK'S RUGBY team opened their BUCS League account for another season courtesy of this comfortable six try victory over Northumbria, in a fluent, though often feisty, match on the 22 Acres.

Outstanding performances from Ben Innes and Tom Weir, one of several first years introduced for this fixture, formed the core of a solid team showing that bodes well for the long campaign ahead.

Already handicapped by the perennial BUCS scheduling fiasco, which forced the forfeit of an early October fixture with Newcastle, it was crucial that York gained something against visitors who had shown promising early season form.

Consequently, captain Mike Callis urged guts and physicality from his team pre-match.

However, the opening minutes were anything but impressive, as Northumbria swarmed forward at will, squandering four scoring opportunities and missing a straightforward penalty.

Penned in their 22 for

the opening ten minutes, York then stunned their opponents by breaking forward with purpose and characteristic mobility; their reward an opening try when Innes squirmed through several challenges for 5-0. Moments later, right-wing Peter Spanker surged forward for another try in the corner and his pace would prove a menace for Northumbria throughout.

Shell-shocked Northumbria were forced to contemplate a 17-0 half-time deficit after Spanker's second try, again in the right corner, resulted from assured build-up from Innes. York's lively passing movement and confidence in possession proved highly effective and look set to become a hallmark of the team's play throughout the year.

Perhaps the most encouraging moment arrived at the very start of the second period, when fresher Weir extended the lead to 22 points, with Rob Grant adding the extras.

Nevertheless, for all York's slick play in possession, mental concentration still needs to be improved, as testified by a sloppy ten minute spell, in which two Northumbria scores allowed them an undeserved route back into contention. Tempers frayed on several occasions, Innes being bloodied in a nasty exchange

between the props.

Mental discipline needed restoring and a series of replacements worked wonders to secure the victory, notably when Lionel Owusu dived over to culminate an excellent, sweeping move.

As time flowed away, another score for York, this time from fresher Jack Miles added a deserved gloss to the scoreline, something which wasn't tarnished by a late Northumbria consolation.

There was disappointment for York's other teams however: the seconds lost 50-8 against Sheffield Hallam, while the thirds were defeated 56-19 by Sunderland.

### YORK LINE UP

1. Ben Innes
2. Alex Corp
3. James Ston
4. Mike Callis (C)
5. Alex Redshaw
6. Jack Wakeling
7. Tom Weir
8. James Bennett
9. Tim Walker
10. Rob Grant
11. Peter Spanker
12. Dave Lowe
13. Jack Miles
14. Nick Brown
15. Gryff Jones

**Replacements:** Mike Ager, Rupert Grant, Lionel Owusu, Tom Bugge



York's stylish running game proved too much for Northumbria thirds in this game

# Men's hockey team suffer narrow defeat

GEORGE LOWTHER

## MEN'S HOCKEY

**Chris White**  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

**FINAL SCORE**  
**York 1sts 2**  
**Northumbria Uni 1sts 3**

IT WAS A CASE of so close, yet so far for York men's first team in the Hockey. A much fitter and stronger Northumbria side managed to hold off a determined York 3-2 in the home team's opening game of the season.

From the off the "Yorkies" looked sluggish and Northumbria took advantage early on. A sloppy foul gave the visitors a short corner, Andrew Titmus drilled in the set-piece, and York were trailing after only five minutes.

York became frustrated as they struggled to keep hold of possession. A change in the front line after 20 minutes gave York the impetus to break down the stubborn team from Tyneside.

This change inspired the side immediately with Captain Billy Walsh making a fiery run, finding substitute Mark Inman who cheekily dinked the ball to debutant Dan Alder and he calmly found the target to equalise.

York soon tired and Northumbria scored five minutes before the break, as the away side sliced through the York defence to leave Harry Beaussou a simple finish.

The second half start was just as shaky for York, home keeper Sam Harriman making a fantastic double save from a short corner. The York defence was finding it hard to keep out the visitors and in the fiftieth minute Beaussou scored his second of the game from a short corner.

It seemed all over for the home side but the few dozen in the crowd managed to drive them on. An ambitious Rob Newton run from the back earned York a free hit, but the hard working Billy Walsh dragged it just wide.



Tired legs and a well-drilled Northumbria side consigned York's men to an opening game defeat

York pressed and their second goal deservedly came just before the hour when Alder turned provider from another short corner. A great injection from the forward gave Richard De-Boltz the chance

to drill the ball into the bottom right corner.

The home team continued to press, at times playing some tidy hockey, but this gave Northumbria the chance to hit them on the

counter. Harriman was forced into another top class save from a short corner, tipping over the bar. As time ran out, so did York's legs and it was quite apparent they had given everything.



# York football firsts in encouraging display against high-flying Leeds

JUSTYN HARDCASTLE

## MEN'S FOOTBALL

**Chris White**  
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

FINAL SCORE  
**York 1sts** 0  
**Leeds Uni 1sts** 0

**AN UNDER-STRENGTH** York side produced an unusually entertaining goal-less draw against a Leeds team with lofty aspirations across all competitions this season.

Leeds arrived on the back of a wholly impressive 4-0 victory against Loughborough firsts and York, who lost 6-0 in the corresponding fixture last season, certainly had a point to prove in blustery conditions.

York had opened their BUCS Northern Conference 2B campaign three days previously, sliding to a narrow 1-0 defeat at home to Leeds Met 2nds, and were understandably seeking better fortunes here.

The game got off to a pacy start, with both teams going close. The best early effort came after only five minutes as York midfielder Tom Wilson hit an audacious 25-yard strike forcing the keeper into a strong save.

The home side continued to press with York striker Anton Murphy irritating the Leeds defence with his strength and pace.

After fifteen minutes the home side almost found an opener. Ex-Darlington player Mark McLeod struck a fierce effort from outside the box that forced a fingertip save from the visiting goalkeeper.

McLeod was involved again just a minute later when a magnificent long ball managed to find Murphy but

he was unfortunately hustled out by two defenders and his shot lacked the power to trouble the keeper. Leeds tried to settle the game after the home side's flurry of chances, which only pushed York to press further; McLeod and Dan Cox both seeing decent chances go over the bar.

Forty minutes into the game and York Captain Matt Witherwick led the next attack with a strong run to find Wilson in the box, whose effort was unconvincingly saved by the Leeds' goalkeeper. Leeds did manage to threaten before the half time whistle though, with a ferocious volley that went just wide.

York remained fired up in the second half and continued to frustrate their visitors. Ten minutes after the break they developed the best chance of the game, Murphy gambling well from a Wilson long ball. The centre forward found himself one-on-one but lacked a clinical finish as he saw his shot saved by the keeper.

Leeds were becoming extremely flustered by York's quality of play and this bubbled over when York's Shaun Evans was taken down by an opposition defender, who was rightfully booked. The away team then gave away a free-kick close in, which Wilson floated onto the head of Witherwick, who could only steer it wide.

The referee then stole the spotlight during a ten minute spell. Firstly, he allowed Dan Cox to play on despite the linesman furiously flagging for offside but the Leeds keeper saved well to spare the official's blushes.

The second blunder was even more embarrassing.

The referee sent off a Leeds player for a second yellow card despite the fact that he hadn't previously been booked. Luckily both teams managed to remind him of the mistake before it was too late.

York became anxious towards the end of the game and almost conceded with five minutes left. The home defence struggled to clear a couple of troubling crosses as the Leeds pushed for a late winner. Leeds managed to steer a header onto the cross-bar but this represented a rare chance from the away side.

This much fancied Leeds side probably didn't expect such a tough game from the home team. York could have won with a brilliant blend of creativity and fight and this men's first team will look to build on a well-earned point.

In the afternoon's other fixtures, York 2nds recorded a 2-0 victory against their Leeds counterparts, courtesy of goals by Chris Grayland and Kit Edwards. In contrast, the third team disappointingly crashed to a 5-1 defeat, with Miles McDermott on the score-sheet with a consolation goal.

## YORK LINE UP

1. Andrew Emmerson
2. Shaun Evans
6. Greg Gardner
14. Laurie Swann
7. Jack Crane
3. Alex Cooper
11. Matt Witherwick (c)
10. Mark McLeod
8. Tom Wilson
12. Dan Cox
9. Anton Murphy

Sub: Joe Brennan



York captain Witherwick led his team to its first point of the season against Leeds

## Lacrosse team in record 25-0 win

York women's lacrosse team produced a dominant performance last Wednesday to destroy Keele University and open their BUCS league campaign in imperious fashion, racking up 25 unanswered goals.

LACROSSE >> P18

## Rugby men cruise to comfortable win

A confident 43-21 victory over Northumbria in their opening BUCS league outing preserved the optimism surrounding the start of the season for the rugby team, with two first years on the score-sheet.

RUGBY UNION >> P19



## Optimism in defeat for basketballers

There were many positives to be drawn from the performance of the women's basketball team, despite being edged out by Bradford in their first match following promotion in the BUCS league.

BASKETBALL >> P18

## "We should be more like the Americans"

Matthew Jeynes explores the nationwide hysteria surrounding sports matches at American universities and looks at how we can learn a thing or two from our friends on the other side of the Atlantic.

MATTHEW JEYNES >> P17

