



## The Genesis Of Gonzo

Exploring the life and legacy of journalist and writer Hunter S. Thompson

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## Evolution of Sport

The role of science in the longevity of sport's greatest heroes

P.21



# Nouse



Est. 1964

Mispronounced nationwide for 56 years

No. 493  
Tuesday 03 March 2020

## £5.6m in donations for Uni

Patrick Walker  
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

RESEARCH BY *NOUSE* has revealed the University's earnings from charitable donations from friends and alumni.

York received around £5.95 million last year, with large donations on the rise. This is a record figure compared to the previous four years. This will come as good news to York's over 200 societies and sports clubs, many of whom have received large donations from York's well-known support service, YuFund.

YuFund is the principle way for societies to access the funds the University receives from fundraising, and the service has benefited student media several times over the last few years.

Encouragingly, fundraising this year already totals an impressive £1.83 million, although the University did not make clear whether this figure is for the academic year, or the normal one: either would put fundraising ahead of targets.

YuFund has awarded £417,018.81 over the past five years to exactly 200 societies and other campus groups.

Donation allocation occurred over 11 rounds, and although the amount

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The York Sport Committee celebrating the College Varsity win on Sunday, which saw York beat Durham by 76-46. Varsity match reports on page 27

## MyUoLie: Uni's data breach lies exposed

"Amateur" mistakes in MyUoY app put students' personal data at risk, contrary to University's statement

Jonathan Wellington  
EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY'S MyUoY app was supposed to pilot this term and featured multiple functions, controversially including a check-in feature. The app was immediately accused of being an invasion of privacy due to the fact it required students' location to confirm they were at their contact hours using Bluetooth beacons in the room and by using satellite information.

Once the pilot was launched, students immediately set about searching the app for issues. After two key issues were reported, the app was taken down within just over a day of being live on 19 December.

The app went live again on January 06 but further issues saw the app taken back down on January 08.

When asked about the issues faced, the University reassured *Nouse* that "a small number of issues, not related to attendance data or other personal data, were identified by students during this testing process and reported to IT Services".

This statement has now been proven false by a *Nouse* investigation which has obtained the internal reports from the University through FOI requests.

The report clearly states that the second issue identified within the first day of the app being online exposed incredibly important personal information including students' and staff's full name, email address,

home address, term-time address (or work address for staff), college (as "alternative address"), birthday, phone number, department and course, Student ID number, library card number and ExLibris "people ID" identifier, alongside library information such as money owed and details on fines.

This information is directly contrary to the University's statement and shows a clear threat to students' privacy and their trust in the University to store their information securely.

Despite now being assured said issue was not exploited by anyone malicious, only those trying to prove the application was insecure, the issue and resulting cover-up raise serious questions about the security of

the University's systems. Ash Holland, the student who discovered the exploit, was asked not to share the information allowing the University to then issue an at the time unopposable false statement to both *Nouse* and, subsequently, URY.

Holland described the University's error as "trivial" to *Nouse* and described the mistake as "truly amateur". Ash describes the moment where they read the University's statement in *Nouse* by saying "at first I thought it was a mistake, that the University had misunderstood what issues *Nouse* were asking about or something".

The UoY student went on to tell *Nouse* that they "couldn't believe that the University would be trying to say

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## A NOTE FROM THE...

# Nouse

Editor



**Jonathan Wellington**  
(he/him)

To the relief of pretty much everyone involved, the 2020 YUSU Elections are over and the dust settles on an eventful campaign trail. When I first saw the massive banner hanging onto Vanbrugh's bridge embellished with this year's slogan, I was a bit offended. The initial inference of "be the voice, not the noise" was naturally, that all student media, along with everyone at the University who didn't hold a YUSU position, wasn't of any significance.

They were simply "the noise".

The slogan, however, grew on me tremendously once those few seconds of being offended were over. "Be the voice, not the noise", is now actually my biggest takeaway from the election period. "Wear a funny hat it'll make sure people listen to you" or "make sure you have the perfect surname for the role you're running for" are definitely contenders, but this particular slogan holds more weight. The elections might've had fewer candidates than previous years but each one seemed to embody the idea of striving to become "the voice".

My personal take away from the slogan however is much bigger than YUSU elections (difficult to comprehend I know). "Be the voice not the noise" is an excellent mantra to carry with you through your time at University and beyond. By being the voice, I mean holding and channeling your views in a positive and productive way instead of joining the host of internet trolls in what can very easily be described as "the noise" of society. Too often unnecessary and insensitive negativity is given too much of a platform. This is not, in my view, people using their voices, but instead simply making noise, often for selfish reasons.

Maybe Nouse is, as it's sometimes autocorrected to, the noise but I really like to think that this is not the case. In my view, this edition (and Nouse in general) provides a platform for a whole range of distinct and unique voices. Nouse is full of people using

their voice and, although some might be noisier than others, none seem overly negative or harmful. Yes, my news piece this edition holding the University to account for a lie they told us regarding the MyUoY app may show a very different way of using your voice, as does the supermarket scotch egg reviews myself and Pat did as a sidebar for MUSE's Food & Drink, but both show the way Nouse can be used as a platform for a student's voice. Even if that voice is rating scotch eggs.

Comment is full of original and interesting articles that, without Nouse, either wouldn't have been articulated or wouldn't have been anything more than a comment at the pub. Comment acts as a great platform for opinion and discussion. Politics, despite maintaining non-partisan reporting, use their voice to highlight issues perhaps not given the attention they deserve. Sport naturally use their voices to report on the week's sporting highlights, but also by interviewing the recently re-elected Maddi Cannel and hearing her views on the negative impact the noise of anonymous social media platforms can have. In News we're reporting on people like York lecturer Peter Dwyer and York central MP Rachael Maskell, collecting their voices into one stronger campaign which will hopefully have an impact on the way Universal Credit works in this country. Even MUSE is offering a unique set of voices, from Sam Campbell discussing Slowthai being the victim of 'cancel culture' in Music to Emily Harvie exploring the depiction of climate change in Film & TV.

My main takeaway from the YUSU election campaign was "be the voice, not the noise" and the takeaway message from this editor's note should hopefully be the same. Whether it's with Nouse, YUSU or one of the many Yorfesses or any other outlet, I'd encourage anyone who's managed to get this far through my note to carry with you that slogan. Stay away from dangerously negative and uniformed arguments and channel your voice into things you're passionate about, whether that's exposing the University's lies or reviewing scotch eggs.

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

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# The colleges most popular with York applicants revealed

**Patrick Walker**  
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

VANBRUGH IS THE most popular college for applicants to the University of York, a *Nouse* investigation has found.

The college received 935 first-choice preferences in accommodation applications, meaning that nearly a fifth of all applicants to the University said they would prefer to live in the college. The figure is no surprise: an investigation in 2017 showed a similar story, with the number of Vanbrugh applications dwarfing those applying to the less popular Derwent.

Rumours of asbestos have not helped Derwent, and its ageing architecture and rent price (for those that want catering included) has likely driven away prospective applicants, in spite of Derwent's many options for catered accommoda-



IMAGE: ANNIE WATSON

tion. James, another catered college, joined Derwent at the bottom of the list for York's first preferences.

Vanbrugh's variety of accommodation options have proved attractive to prospective York students: the college boasts economy and standard rooms, as well as a catered option, and several studio flats suitable for couples. Its proximity to large departments like Biology has also helped the college attract consistently high numbers of applicants year on year, in spite of its rather embarrassing college crest.

Vanbrugh's college chair, Vera Ivanova noted that the college was at the "heart" of the University, which likely helped boost interest during York's many open days. "Everyone knows where it is."

Another success story from

*Nouse* research was Alcuin. Once all preferences, including first choices, have been totalled, the college boasts quadruple the number of applicants of its nearest competitor (Halifax) and almost equals the entirety of all other college applications combined, at over 4,000 total choices. Alcuin President Olivia Furness said that the college's high placement was down to their "friendly, welcoming, and inclusive environment which prospective students feel from visiting". They also mentioned its close proximity to the library and "great facilities" like their JCR and large kitchens.

For the University, Heslington East interest will likely come as a substantial disappointment. Just 21.5 per cent of all preferences asked for rooms on the sister campus, due in part to the complications getting there on open days, and the fact that many of the larger academic departments are based on the main campus.

The University has attempted to increase interest in recent years, with dedicated shuttle services for prospective students, but past data shows that interest in Heslington East has consistently lagged behind its more attractive counterpart.

The lack of interest in newer rooms on East will also challenge the University's narrative that students are particularly interested in newer accommodation over cheaper, less glamorous offerings. With Campus West receiving nearly four fifths of all applications, questions will undoubtedly be asked about whether the construction of new colleges on the East campus will address student calls for affordable, accessible accommodation.

These calls were vindicated today by *Nouse's* research into price brackets. Students are four times as likely to place standard or economy rooms as their first choice compared to premium rooms.

This kind of demand is not reflected in the projected price bands of the newly-constructed colleges, and wasn't acknowledged in *Nouse's* interview with the Vice-Chancellor, where he said that students greatly preferred high value accommoda-

tion if given the choice.

We contacted the University, and asked them for their view on the vast differences between applications to the various colleges, their representative told *Nouse*:

"Our experience is that at application students understand and value the College system at York and it is a key reason why many students choose this university.

The collegiate system allows the University to offer students a range of rooms to suit different preferences and budgets. The University will continue to prioritise student's preferences and we are confident that students get a consistently high service.

Our system means students have the chance to develop a sense of College identity and pride whichever College they are in."



IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

# Higher Education ethnic diversity increased in 2019

**Matthew King**  
NEWS EDITOR

THE UCAS 2019 END of Year Cycle report shows that while there is optimism for more ethnic diversity in UK higher education, the diversity of students from different economic backgrounds is still far behind the times, despite the signs of some increase in the acceptance rates of students from lower economic backgrounds.

On 30 January 2020, UCAS published their End of Cycle 2019 Report. This document is an annual report which offers an analysis and overview of the demand and acceptance rates to the UK undergraduate admissions cycle. One of the most discussed topics regarding higher education acceptance rates is its link with equality, and the differences between the acceptance rates of disadvantaged groups in the UK. The End of Cycle report explores this trend, and the data for 2019 is as follows.

Last year saw some record entry rates for students coming from socially disadvantaged back-

grounds, with the report stating that this year's entry rate for black students has increased by 8.2 per cent. Equally, the report also states that entry rates for students from all ethnic groups that went to public schools have also increased.

Currently, Chinese students have the highest entry rate of any ethnic group to higher education, as their entry rate percentage is at 68 per cent. Interestingly, students coming from the white ethnic group are reported to have the lowest entry rate percentage, with 30.3 per cent. This data therefore paints an optimistic future for a more diversified higher education system in the UK, which was not the case in the past.

However, despite the optimistic news regarding the increased entry rates of students from ethnic minority backgrounds into higher education, the same cannot be said for economically disadvantaged students. The data from the report communicates the stark differences between the entry rates of students in receipt of free school meals (FSM) and students who are not. The report states that "FSM

is a means-tested benefit that can serve as an indicator of those from low income families". The report concluded that "those not in receipt of FSM are 1.88 times more likely to enter HE (Higher Education) than those who were", with the entry rate of students in receipt of FSM recorded at 18.9 per cent, and the rate of students who do not receive FSM at 35.6 per cent.

Therefore, analysis of this data suggests that while higher education is becoming more inclusive to a wider range of ethnic groups, institutions are still behind on ensuring that students from lower economic backgrounds are accepted into university.

However, while there is still a considerable gap between the entry rates of students in receipt of FSM and those who are not, the data does show that there has been a "narrowing" of this gap over the past year for students accepted into higher tariff providers. This gap has reportedly narrowed by 10.9 per cent, so that non-FSM students are now 3.36 times more likely to be accepted into higher tariff providers, which is lower than 2018's figure of 3.77

times more likely.

Despite this optimism, there is still a clear gap between the entry rates of students coming from varying economic backgrounds. This was highlighted in an article published by *Nouse* last month, where we reported that the Headmaster's and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), have been expressing concerns regarding the need to close the gap on university admissions between state and independent schools. This reinforces the potential bias within the higher education system between economically wealthy and deprived students.

It has often been stated that universities are increasingly becoming more commercialised, especially due to the increasing price of tuition; this would further evidence why there is such a staggering gap between students who receive FSM and those who do not.

Additionally, it could be argued that universities being more open to international students is based upon the commercialisation of higher education, as international students are subject to considerably higher tuition fees than British students.

This would potentially darken the optimism of the increased ethnic minority entry rates into higher education, as these could be due to the commercialisation of higher education itself, and not due to an interest in ethnic diversity.

We also questioned the University as to whether they actively strive to ensure that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are accepted into York, and they told us:

"As part of our efforts to widen participation, we have a dedicated Access and Outreach team who deliver a range of sustained programmes with pupils, families and communities from primary through to post-16 education. We also make contextual offers which promote fairness - contextual offers allow us to look at more than just exam results to assess potential and recognise achievements in context."

YUSU's Community and Well-being Officer, Steph Hayle, also commented on the findings, stating:

"It is vital that Universities continue to open themselves up to these disadvantaged groups to ensure education is open to all, regardless of their personal circumstances."

## YUSU Shop to return?

The University is developing plans for a new student hub, though these plans have not currently developed further than initial ideas. However, the UEB has agreed to the establishment of a new project group, featuring adequate student representation, to take forward the development of Heslington West campus' Market Square.

## Trees and holes

Posting on their popular Instagram page, the University's Grounds and Gardening team has posted an explanation as to why there are so many 'mole' holes surrounding the trees on campus. The post explained that these holes are man-made, not mole-made, and are used to inject compressed air into tree roots to improve the tree's growing conditions.

## YUSU ranked in top 100 companies

For the third year in a row, YUSU has been ranked in the top 100 non-profit companies to work for by *the Sunday Times*, placing at number 51 in 2020. This is, however, a lower ranking to YUSU's 21st position in 2018. Despite this, YUSU's CEO expressed on Twitter that they were "really proud of our staff for developing such a positive work culture".

## New colleges development update

A letter was delivered to local residents near Campus East last week, which outlined the current developments of the two new colleges, and advertised the University's community forum which took place on 25 February. The letter also highlighted the cost of the developments, stating that the GRAHAM contract for the colleges is priced at "£130 million".

## As blind as a cat

A recent podcast by University of York Psychology professor, Tony Morland, has revealed some interesting information regarding our feline friend's eyesight. The podcast explains that if a domestic cat was to go to an optician, they would be registered as blind, due to how extremely sophisticated human eyes are in comparison.





IMAGE: EMILY HEWAT

# The voices of staff and students rallying on campus picket lines

**Emily Hewat**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

WITH THE RECENT wave of industrial action reaching its third week, *Nouse* spoke to lecturers on the picket line to discuss their reasons for striking.

The main issues for strikers at the University are the unresolved pension debate, the gender pay gap and job security. One Biology lecturer *Nouse* spoke to pointed out that she had been on temporary contracts for eight years and in the last four years she'd spent at York, she'd been on three different contracts.

It should be noted that all lecturers *Nouse* spoke to on the picket line wished to stay anonymous in case of backlash they may face from the University, especially for those at the start of their careers.

Science lecturers in particular wish to keep politics and their jobs separate as many feel the politics of the University has no place within STEM subjects, which in the eyes of one STEM lecturer explained

why humanities students are more heavily hit by the strikes.

Student support on the picket line has been strong with every striking day, seeing students going out to support the picketers at Heslington Hall and other areas across campus. As one student stated "most students feel it is unfair that their lecturers cannot settle in one place and make a life for themselves due to the nature of their contracts".

While many students support the strikes, a key concern often raised is compensation for missed contact hours, especially as it was revealed recently that the University

gained £392,000 from withheld pay. In recent years, the University has compensated students by allowing third years free gown hire but many students across the country have created petitions demanding refunds. The general consensus amongst lecturers is that this form of compensation is insufficient as it has no effect on first and second year students and a very limited effect on final year students. Lecturers encourage students to use their rights as the University has turned itself into a business, meaning students should exercise their rights as customers. One

lecturer from the Politics department highlighted that "universities are increasing tuition fees meaning students have the right to demand money. The customer - business situation that has been created is not ideal as it changes the dynamic of the University but students should use it to try and recover their money".

The Student Room recently released an article explaining students' rights when demanding compensation from the 74 UK universities that are currently involved in industrial action. It highlights that most compensation requests are calculated through number of contact days lost as opposed to actual number of contact hours. It also goes on to explain that contacting the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) as well as the University has had positive past results.

In previous strikes, the OIA has ruled that students can receive compensation if their university failed to minimise disruption during industrial action.

This wave of industrial action is being viewed by lecturers as a success due to the amount of support it has received but all lecturers on the picket line are prepared to strike again if needed as they feel this problem must be resolved.

When asked by *Nouse* for a comment, the University stated:

"Withheld pay from the autumn term is being collected throughout January and February payroll and will be used for student facing initiatives. It is important that we give proper consideration to how best to use this money to ensure it has a positive impact on students who have been affected."

Industrial action is set to continue Monday through until Thursday of Week nine and Monday through until Friday of Week ten.

# £1m for bioeconomy

**Emma Topic**  
NEWS EDITOR

SCIENTISTS AT THE University of York have been awarded almost £1 million of funding for their bioeconomy research.

The project was in collaboration with farmers R Meadley & Sons and the University of Hull in the aim to use pea processing waste to clean water. Crop waste from pea production that is not needed to fertilise the soil will be converted into nano-celluloses and nano-carbons to clean water.

The THYME project, funded by the Connecting Capabilities Fund of Research England, is a collaboration between the Universities of Teesside, Hull and York. The project is delivered in partnership with the Biorenewables Development Centre (BDC) and BioVale in the aim to boost the bioeconomy across Yorkshire, the Humber region and the Tees Valley.

The bioeconomy is estimated to be worth £220 billion in the UK alone, and the government's industrial strategy is setting targets to double its size by 2030.

The project is one of seven that was awarded funding by THYME. Deputy Director at the Green Chemistry Centre of Excellence, Dr Avtar Matharu, said that:

"Often discarded and considered as waste, unavoidable food supply chain waste such as pea waste is a treasure trove of useful chemicals that can be utilised in many applications that impact global grand challenges."

Scientists also have plans to reuse lipids and waxes from pea biomass, as these products can be used in a range of other products in home, food and personal care.

The Director of Postgraduate Research at Hull has said: "Using clean and efficient methods, we can convert various plant wastes into nanomaterials that can be used in the treatment of waste water across many industries."

"These nanocarbons are incredibly valuable materials: non-sustainable nanocarbons are already the building blocks for electronics, energy storage and drug delivery; we have an opportunity here to create them from sustainable sources."

**£220 bn** The amount that the bioeconomy is estimated to be worth in the UK alone

The funding will help scientists at York work on a number of projects including creating a simulation of the microbial aspects of anaerobic digestion in order to develop new monitoring methods.

It will also help scientists develop specialised materials from starch that can be used in vitamin capsules.

Director of the Biorenewables Development Centre, Dr Joe Ross, said:

"The innovations kick-started by this funding will not only help boost economic growth but they will also pave the way to a more sustainable future where industry uses renewable sources."

# Lights on Lake 2020

**Emma Topic**  
NEWS EDITOR

THIS YEAR'S LIGHTS on the Lake celebration has been postponed until further notice, with more details to follow.

Despite this, St Leonard's Hospice will be hosting their annual event at Rowntree Park, where hundreds of candles will be set adrift on the lake. The event is open to friends and family in the local community who wish to come together to remember someone special. Each person can write on a water lily a handwritten, personal message of love and remembrance. The event will also include a short, non-religious service, along with choir and music by the local community.

Discussing death is something people struggle with, so the event attempts to create a space for people to come together. Reverend David Williamson said regarding this that: "bereavement can be a little like an elephant in the room in that we won't talk about the person who's died in case somebody gets upset. So this is an opportunity for

people to remember a loved one and write their name on a leaf and float it on the lake."

Dawn Clements, director of St Leonards said that:

"the blessings, the conversations and the poems is part of how we work at the hospice. It's about enabling a large number of people to get together and be part of what we do and be part of that wider hospice family."

The annual Lights on the Lake event helps St Leonards to carry out their work in the local community. Their charity has been caring for local people for over 35 years, providing specialist care and support for people with life limiting illnesses.

Their care is free of charge to patients, and so they rely heavily on the generosity of the public.

Reverend David Williamson said that:

"it takes over five million pounds to run the hospice and we are always in need of funds and so we have to do innovative and fun fundraising events that we can raise money". Last year, over two thousand people attended the event which helped to raise over £6,000 for the charity.



IMAGE: THAT'S TV YORK

IMAGE: PATRICK WALKER



# York receives £5m in donations

►► Continued from front

offered can vary wildly depending on the equipment that has been applied for; the average donation is £2,085.

With student representation a key element of YuFund's consideration for applications, large societies, or societies that benefit significant parts of University life, are given the lion's share of funds. One of such societies is CHMS (pictured below)

YuFund is the University's grant system for initiatives that benefit students. It is typically funded through small donations by alumni through cold-calling service YuCall, and other avenues.

It is a sister programme to YuStart, a crowd-funding platform designed for student groups to solicit money for projects directly from York's pool of alumni. Two of the largest allocations included annual support too. First is the Travel Bursary Awards Programme within York's Global Programmes Department (£5,000 each year for three years).

The Programme awards students looking to travel abroad with sums of up to £500 after a short application process and interview. It has also received support from Santander, the York Society, YuFund, the Nancy Richards Fund and the Beaumanoir-Hart Fund.



IMAGE: ANNIE WATSON

The second annual beneficiary from YuFund is the York Sport Union Performance Programme. The programme is allocated £10,000 on an annual basis, with a review every four years. It benefits York's most promising student athletes by providing support services that include strength and conditioning work, education on sports, science, and discounted medical sessions: all key components of preparing University teams for Roses later this year, and College Varsity against Durham last weekend.

Many of the largest contributions from YuFund have gone towards fuelling York's sporting success, in spite of Lancaster's higher sport budget.

Two investments totalling £12,405 were paid to develop the 'YorActive Trail'. The trail is a little-known 5km run route stretching between York's Campus West Sports Centre, and Heslington East's Sport Village. The trail includes a variety of resistance and cardio stations to improve user fitness along the way. Roses media received £5,296 in 2019 for coverage of the event. Additionally, the library has bagged a whopping £8,388 contribution for its 'Alumni Wall'.

The most generous contribution in 2019, alongside substantial sums allowed for Derwent squash courts, the Hockey Society, and *York Vision*, was the £5,772 allowed

to *Nouse*. Funds have allowed the society to produce several supplements, as well as completely replacing all five of our aged PCs, some of which dated back to 2008.

*Nouse* hopes that by highlighting the many contributions the service has made to student life over the past five years, more clubs will be able to benefit from its generous help. We contacted the University for a comment regarding donations and their representative told us:

"The high volume of small donations received over the last year is due to the successful public launch of our first ever institutional philanthropic campaign, York Unlimited. The Campaign has encouraged record numbers of alumni, staff, students and members of the local community giving to projects and charitable funds at the university."

"YuFund exists entirely thanks to the generosity of our alumni and friends and it is one of the oldest funds to which donors give at the university."

"YuFund provides grants to innovative and worthwhile projects run by students clubs and societies, departments and colleges. Like some of our other scholarship funds, including the Equal Access Scholarships, Opportunity Scholarships and York Futures Scholarships, the success of YuFund is down to a large group of donors collectively giving to support our students."

"Alongside YuFund we provide students with the opportunity to pursue all important extra-curricular activities through our dedicated student crowdfunding platform, YuStart".

# TEDx talks coming to York next week

Louis Mosca

DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE FAMOUS organisation TEDx will be returning to York next week for a series of discussions. The talks will be taking place in Central Hall on Wednesday 11 March between 2-5pm and will consist of discussions surrounding various topics with both announced, and yet to be announced, speakers.

The first announced speaker, Marlo Clarke, through his lens of social work, student of economics, and traveller, discusses how we can make intentional decisions, a simple but powerful model on feedback evaluation, and how to process the emotions we encounter along the way.

The second speaker, Dan Buchan, according to the event's Facebook page "assists business entrepreneurs to build up their property businesses with the aim to show how it is possible to go from a full time career to financial freedom where you have the ability to work where

you want, when you want. Over the last 10 years, Dan has grown his property investment company: Aspire Property Group, to include a bespoke property sourcing service for Yorkshire portfolio building, one of the largest deal packaging companies in the UK, a refurbishment and flip company, and a portfolio of £1.1 million by the time he turned 25".

Powell also has appeared on various podcasts, YouTube channels and a BBC One documentary. The third announced speaker, Katie Russell, is a freelance writer, feminist and national spokesperson for the charity Rape Crisis England & Wales. She has worked and volunteered in the Rape Crisis movement over the past 15 years. Russell co-founded 'Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds', where she remains an active trustee. She recently joined the board of Leeds-based charity 'Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers.'

Tickets for the events are available to purchase on the Eventbrite website or app.



IMAGE: JULIANA ROTICH

# Volunteer champions wanted

Patrick Hook-Willers  
DEPUTY EDITOR

YORK UNIVERSITY Students' Union's search for student volunteer mental health champions has nearly reached its end, with official training to take place next week.

The move to recruit volunteer champions has come at a time where campus mental health care has been placed high on the agenda of both the University and YUSU, with an extra £500,000 being invested into campus mental healthcare services by the University, as *Nouse* revealed, and almost a year after YUSU signed a three-year partnership with student mental health charity, Student Minds.

The partnership was first signed by YUSU, with six other student unions following their lead, and was intended to focus on development in three key areas. These were the creation of a Students' Union mental health and wellbe-



IMAGE: YUSU

ing network, a self-audit framework, and an in-house support programme.

The in-house element of this deal is where the volunteer mental health champions are focused. The students who take on these mental health champion roles will receive free specialised training, delivered by Student Minds, centred on understanding mental health, aggravating factors impacting upon a person's mental health, as well as on how to best support people that are struggling. The scheme is aimed at creating a supportive student community who are well-equipped and fully trained to provide advice, guidance and professional support for those in need of additional help.

*Nouse* reached out to current Community and Wellbeing officer Steph Hayle on the upcoming recruitment and training of Student Minds champions, on which she said: "The Scheme aims to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to support each other with their mental health. We want to create a supportive community at the University which ensures students feel able to

manage mental health and engage others in the conversation.

"We are training a group of Mental Health Champions who will then train larger groups of other students. This provides longevity to the scheme and also career development to the Champions."

"The Champions will begin providing training to the wider student population in summer term, and will promote this through colleges. Keep an eye out on social media and be sure to sign up for a session." Upon the announcement of the programme last year, Student Minds said that the programme as a whole "seeks to define and develop the role that SUs can play in transforming the state of student mental health on campuses across the UK".

This recruitment drive certainly indicates more steps in the right direction in the availability of mental health support for students on the University of York campus. There is also strong desire within YUSU to push this scheme forward should it prove to be as successful as expected, Hayle adding that the intention is to roll out the programme more widely than through colleges alone, saying "we [YUSU] hope to roll this out directly within sports teams and societies should this training run prove successful".

# Flood caused Viking Fest rearrangements

Matthew King  
NEWS EDITOR

THE ANNUAL AND hugely popular York Viking Festival, which is celebrating its 36th year, had to be rearranged this year due to weather threats following recent storms.

Despite the storms, however, the organisers of the event were able to rearrange most of the events, meaning that this year's festival continued with success, taking place between the dates of 15 February until the 23rd.

The events that were most heavily affected by the impact of the storms were the Viking encampment, which usually takes place on Parliament Street throughout the festival, however this year, this was moved the Merchant Adventurers Hall.

Additionally, many were disappointed with the news that the annual Jorvik Battle reenactment was cancelled completely, also due to the weather. The popular event was supposed to take place on Saturday 22. As reported by *The York Mix*, A spokesperson for the organisers of the festival stated that:

"We are sure that visitors and re-enactors alike will understand this decision ... We have been remarkably unlucky with the weather this year, but are pleased that events like our Strongest Viking Competition, our annual Best Beard competition and the March to Coppergate have been able to take place today with such fantastic audiences."

Full refunds were given to those who had purchased tickets to the Battle Spectacular.

Despite the cancellation of this event, it is particularly admirable that the organisers of the event were able to act efficiently enough to ensure that the most of the events could still move forward.



IMAGE: ALHI



# Uni research into hate speech

**Matthew King**  
NEWS EDITOR

RECENT RESEARCH completed by York Management School has found that hate speech dominates social media platforms when questions regarding terrorism are asked.

The research used community question answer site (CQA) Yahoo! Answers to explore the topic of terrorism and how online social media platforms are being used to gain information regarding terrorism.

The data used for the research included 300 questions on the CQA site, which had with it a total of 2,194 answers. These questions were broad ranging on the topic of terrorism, some of which regarded counter-terrorism queries, others delving into the specific biographies of terrorists' lives. These questions and their respective answers were analysed, and used to see what information the public is curious about regarding terrorism.

The author of this research, Dr Snehasish Banerjee, said in relation

to the questions posed on the site that: "It seems that people are really curious to know about terrorists, what terrorists think, their ideas etc.

"While portrayed as a threat to society and human civilization by mainstream media, terrorists sell terrorism as freedom fighting via social networking sites and private messaging platforms.

"However, the actual workings of terrorism are largely shrouded in secrecy. For the curious, a convenient avenue to turn to is the community question answering sites."

Dr Banerjee also added that: "Users who posted sensitive questions and answers generally tended to remain anonymous", and used names that were not traceable to themselves. In a statement by Banerjee, she states that: "This paper calls for governments and law enforcement agencies to collaborate with major social media companies, including CQAs, to develop a process for cross-platform blacklisting of users and content, as well as identifying those who are vulnerable".

The research therefore aims to

show the government that social media needs to be monitored so as to protect those who are 'vulnerable'.

The research concluded that these queries and answers regarding terrorism were often infected with Islamophobia and hate speech. On this, Dr Banerjee stated that:

"We found that answers were laden with negative emotions reflecting hate speech and Islamophobia, making claims that were rarely verifiable."

Due to the anonymous nature of the site, as mentioned earlier, people using the site were found to be able to express their islamophobic views publicly without the risk of identifying themselves.

This reinforces the wider social issue of cyber bullying and hate speech on social media in general, wherein the impersonality of the web is making users of social media platforms feel more comfortable spreading hate that they would perhaps not express in person, which is why research such as this is necessary to bring attention to the issue.

# Nouse MyUoLie report continued

▶▶▶ Continued from front

the issues were unrelated to personal data, I still have no idea why they're sticking with that statement. Every document I have read agrees that multiple vulnerabilities were discovered which exposed a range of personal data - I don't understand why anyone would say otherwise".

£29,000

The amount spent through staff time on the MyUoY project so far

Ash described the fault to *Nouse* as an "amateur" mistake. Detailing the fault, Ash told *Nouse* that "when resizing the window students noticed the app made a network request which meant it was refetching information to re-render to library tile.

"When refetching the information, as well as information about library books, it requested all of the student's personal information". This meant that by simply changing the username in the URL to someone else's username all of the personal information listed could be accessed.

The University has however said that they have "had requests for information at various points in the investigation timeline and have answered these requests honestly. The University has been open and transparent throughout the process".

The University also stated in an FOI which asked for a clarification on whether any of the issues involved personal data:

"The intention of this statement was to reassure students that there had not been any unauthorised access to students' personal or attendance data as a result of the security issues that had been discovered. This was due to the prompt and responsible approach taken by the student that reported the issues to us, for which we are very grateful."

The false statement may have therefore had the good intentions that this statement describes but the statement is far from transparent. Ash Holland told *Nouse* that the University's statement to *Nouse* that the issues were "not related to attendance data or personal data" was "indefensibly false".

When questioned how the University knew that student's personal data was secure they answered "as part of the investigation process, full log files were provided by the supplier to the University's security team. These log files recorded all accesses to data, and were analysed by the University to identify any such

access. The outcome of this assessment was that no unauthorised access requests were made."

The University however remains committed to the project also stating they are "keen to work with students to understand their needs and their vision on how this should be implemented".

Speaking to YUSU's academic officer, Giang Nguyen told *Nouse*:

"it is important for the University to be honest about if and when things go wrong, in order to build trust with the students' community. I agree with students that any breaching of our personal data is the breach of our rights, and how is it vital to protect our own personal data, and how insecure and vulnerable we must feel when our own personal data has been misused". Adding that "the University did not communicate to us about this data breach".

Speaking of behalf of YUSU the academic officer added "we are not happy with the lack of transparency and proper students' consultation on the app and the attendance monitoring tool. Further and sufficient student consultation should be carried out prior to continuation. The Union is more than happy to work with the University on a consultation plan as we have already been doing. Until then, the Union won't make any decision about supporting its implementation".

The academic officer elect Matt Johnstone has told *Nouse* that when it comes to the MyUoY app he understands the obligations the University has to monitoring attendance through the Tier 4 visa regulations but that "this monitoring should be as non-intrusive as possible, to maintain the level of respect that students deserve".

Computer science representative and outspoken critic of the MyUoY application Tom O'Neill described the University's adamancy that they had been honest and transparent throughout the process as "baffling". Stating to *Nouse* that the University's "comments about the safeguarding of students' data appear misleading when weighed against the reality of the potential data issues so I question if they can be trusted to be fully transparent in future".

The *Nouse* investigation also discovered that the University has already spent £29,000 through staff time on the project.

A further £2,500 was spent on the bluetooth beacons which are now not in use. The University refused to release the amount in total that has been spent on the project. The pilot was paused in week 4, after only 355 people downloaded the app and it was faced with widespread criticism and further technical issues.

# Universal credit reform open letter signed by York lecturer

**Jonathan Wellington**  
EDITOR

UNIVERSITY OF YORK Social Policy lecturer, Peter Dwyer, is among 12 of the UK's top lecturers who have signed an open letter demanding the government to bring in urgent universal credit reforms.

The letter, which was sent to the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, and the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, called for cuts to children's universal credit to be axed from the budget and for the waiting period to be reduced from the current five weeks. The lecturers signatures are accompanied by those of 78 Labour MPs and representatives from the Unison, Unite, Usdaw and GMB unions, and local branches of foodbanks and Citizens Advice.

The letter states "it is a basic minimum that everyone in our country should be able to feed themselves without needing emergency food parcels" but that "according to the Trussell Trust, low income, benefit delays and changes are the main reasons people need emergency food". Citing the fact that food bank usage is rising year on year and that "more than a third of emergency food parcels go to children" it argues that "the Government should be doing more to help them and their families". Specifically, the letter argues for "removing the two-child limit in Universal Credit" and reducing the waiting time for Universal Credit".

Speaking with *Nouse*, Peter Dwyer stated that universal credit in its current form and its waiting time only served to "heap hardship

on people who are poor and that's why I signed the letter." Universal credit, according to the Social Policy lecture is "not going to get people back into work any quicker and it's not going to feed the children" adding "so why are we doing it?"

"We should have rights to basic welfare but we should be enabling people into work, not saying we're not going to support you if you have another child.

"The evidence shows me it's creating hardship, and we shouldn't have a welfare system that creates hardship

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The number of top UK lecturers who have signed the open letter as well as the 78 labour MPs

"I have limited optimism, we spend a lot of time trying to push at doors and trying to convince governments to change their minds but a lot of it depends on political will. I do not think the current government is inclined to accept this sort of approach

"But that shouldn't mean you shouldn't stop trying", using the analogy of it's like water dripping on stone arguing "eventually you will see an impact and things will change slowly, "it takes time but you've just go to try and present evidence and hope."

*Nouse* also spoke to fellow signatory Rachael Maskell, York Central MP. The Labour MP told *Nouse*:

"It is clear from the work I have done that universal credit does not provide the support that people

need. Since it was first introduced I have met so many desperate families who are struggling with their universal credit. Vulnerable people are facing debt and hardship. Problems with the administration of the benefit have seen thousands of people relying on foodbanks. Universal credit is meant to be a safety net but there are huge holes in the net and too many people are falling through".

When asked about her optimism going forward Maskell seemed reasonably positive stating "I have met with the Minister on several occasions and also with Jobcentre Plus who administer universal credit and there have been some tweaks to the system which has meant that people are not having to wait so long for their benefit and can pay back any advances over longer periods." Maskell argues however, that "tweaks like this are not enough and real change needs to happen" indicating the real problem "is that the Government does not seem to understand this and they believe that tinkering around edges is enough"

"I hope the Government will listen but right now they don't seem to be". Maskell added that "The support of experts, like Peter Dwyer, is vital if we are to get anywhere". Also stating that "it is important that when we are developing policy we consult as widely as possible. I often meet with university departments who have an understanding of how policies are shaped and how they have evolved over time, what has worked, what has failed and how we can work towards creating a better system".





# Recruitment budget doubled

**Emily Hewat**  
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

AN ANNUAL REPORT has revealed that the University of York has doubled its funding on recruitment since the academic year 2014/2015 with the assumption that the majority is going abroad.

It has been projected that £3,350,000 will be spent this academic year on recruiting students as opposed to £1,400,000 being spent four years ago.

This spending by the University has steadily increased over the last few days.

The aim of this money will be to advertise the University across the world; currently more than 140 countries are represented by the student body. 4,000 students out of 18,000 originate from a different country.

The University awards over 100 international scholarships per year, with a tuition fee discount as well as scholarships for specific countries that they are looking to encourage students from.

The University has been committed to encouraging international students for some time as it has invested £3m in a joint research project with Maastricht university. 924 students from Europe are currently at York.

Professor Saul Tendler, Deputy Vice Chancellor, said: "the York Maastricht Partnership demonstrates our commitment to collaborate with one of the outstanding institutions in Europe".

China is currently the University's main source of international students with 2,065 students currently studying here. York specifically focuses on Jiangsu province of China, by being involved in the Jiangsu-UK 20:20 initiative since 2017.

**£3.35m** The amount spent on recruitment this academic year (2019/20)

The University offers two equal access scholarships for students seeking refuge in the UK of up to £15,000 and five Sharifah Sofia Albukhary Scholarships for undergraduate students in need of financial support to further their education.

Offices have been set up in Kuala Lumpur, Delhi and Beijing by the University in recent years with considerable money spent on exchanges and language courses.

The Commonwealth is also a focus of the University as the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom offers

opportunities to Commonwealth citizens to study in the UK.

In the UK, money is invested in encouraging secondary school children in Yorkshire, specifically in York, to consider higher education as a future path. Shine is one of these projects that raises students' aspirations across Yorkshire and the Humber.

Furthermore, Green Apples works directly in York's secondary schools along with York St John University to encourage British children to apply to university. The University works with colleges to encourage students to stay in this county.

Additionally, Next Step York is a project that relates directly to the University as it focuses on showing students the benefits of a research intensive university.

When *Nouse* asked how the University can justify such a large increase in spending, we were told:

"We are proud to be an outward-facing, global University that thrives on a rich mix of ideas and perspectives as a result of our 18,000-strong community of students. Spending on international recruitment reflects the University's commitment to continuing to encourage and support a diverse range of people from around the world to come to York to live and study."

# Teach-outs planned despite the strikes

**Joseph Higgins**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE UCU STRIKE action has affected many students' contact hours since they began, and disruptions are expected to continue until the strike period ends with the beginning of the spring holiday. However, some members of the faculty from certain departments, such as the departments of Archaeology and English, have decided to commit to the education of students over their right to strike and are hosting 'teach-outs' off-campus so as to not cross the picket line at the University.

These 'teach-outs' are typically informal displays of the work of some lecturers and PhD students and tend to be less rigidly structured than formal teaching in the form of seminars, lectures and workshops that would occur in regularly timetabled lessons. However, this can vary depending on the department participating. This decision to host out of university teaching made by certain faculty members shows the continued commitment by many of the University's academic staff to the furthering of their students'

education, despite their own right to strike. It also shows their commitment to their colleagues and supporting the strike action by not hosting their teaching on campus or in campus associated locations like King's Manor.

The 'teach-outs' are not occurring for the first time either; in 2018 *The York Tab* reported on a similar initiative that occurred during an extended strike period, where lecturers and students alike joined together to share their knowledge and research in an informal educational setting at Heslington Village meeting hall. The Archaeology department offers a platform for PhD students to share their own research topics in the city centre at similar times. Overall, the upcoming teach-outs are bound to be a welcome piece of education for any students that are missing their formal teaching during the strike period and all students should keep their eyes open for emails from their lecturers in order to identify whether a teach-out is occurring in their subject.

*Nouse* contacted YUSU President Samara Jones on their stance on the teach-outs, she told us:

"We have been helping UCU promote their teach-out timetable".

# York music festival

**Emma Topic**  
NEWS EDITOR

YORK'S FIRST OUTDOOR music festival will bring acts such as Madness, Westlife and Lionel Richie to the York Sports Club in Clifton Park this summer.

The festival will take place over three days between 19-21 June and is set to become an annual event in the attempts to put the ancient city of York on the UK festivals map. A general admission three day pass is priced from £129-189, with options to buy a VIP three day garden pass for £299 which includes access to the front stage and a private bar.

So far, 17,000 tickets have been sold with over 40 per cent of those tickets sold to people living in or around York and mainly to customers who are middle aged women or "empty nesters". The event is expected to be a massive success for York. Licencing solicitor Phil Crier has said that the event could bring more than 300 jobs and up to £2m to the city's economy while also supporting local bands.

However, the event has faced some criticism over its licencing approval, as tickets went on sale as early as November 2019 even though the licence was only granted this year. Phil Crier has responded, saying that "to secure international

artists we need to be part of the programming calendar. The risk is entirely the company's - they would need to refund everyone if the licence was refused".

The council's public protection team have previously received 10 noise complaints at the sports club since 2017. This has led to a management plan that agreed that noise must be kept to a maximum of 65 decibels, as the planned noise level of 75 was too high and would severely disturb residents. Michael Golightly from the council has said that "we are not against the holding of a music festival but our approach has to remain in protecting the public from public nuisance."

On these terms, the York Council has granted the event a one year licence at 65 decibels. Phil Crier, representing the festival organisers, has expressed his frustration saying that "this is not for Iron Maiden or Motorhead - it's for Westlife, Madness and, for goodness' sake, Lionel Richie".

Some residents are also worried about parking and overcrowding. Those living in Galtres Grove are concerned that "the volume of traffic expected, which is around 20,000 visitors per day, will equate to around 8,000 to 15,000 vehicles over 3 days."



IMAGE: MATTHIAS MUEHLBRADT

# International Women's Week events set to take place in York

**Izzy Hall**  
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

INTERNATIONAL Women's Week has come to York; Monday 2nd through to Sunday 8th March events will be held all over campus to celebrate women's achievements, highlight barriers that women still face and inspire action for achieving equality. The message for international Women's Day 2020 (8 March) is that collectively, each one of us can help create a gender equal world.

YUSU's Women and Nonbinary network (WNBN) coordinates campaigns all year round for students. Recently in the run up to International Women's Week they have been shining a light on abusive relationships; the Red Flag campaign lead by Grace Clark works to highlight behaviours that often hallmark toxic relationships among university students. Details of the Red Flag campaign can be found on Instagram (@officialredflagcampaign).

*Nouse* spoke to Daisy Slate, one of the current officers at YUSU's WNBN who has just been elected for her second year in the role, about the importance of this week for students and the wider community. Daisy told us, "International Women's Week is, at its core, about celebrating and encouraging the achievements of all women while still highlighting inequalities and



IMAGE: YUSU WNBN

the work being done to tackle them. This is why we have such an array of events happening over the week, with the hope to empower and bring together the women of our university".

Events being hosted by YUSU's WNBN are as follows:

**Crafty Convos.** Monday 2 March 10am-1pm. YOURSPACE.  
**Crafty Convos 2: Return of the Tote Bag.** Tuesday 3 March 10am-1pm. P/T/005a.

**Connecting via Conversations BAME Event.** Wednesday 4 March 7-10pm. The Kitchen @ Alcuin.

**BOUNCE for International Women's Week with BOUNCE York.** Thursday 5 March 1:30-2:30pm. James Hall.

**Still I Rise: International Women's Poetry with the Department of English.** Friday 6 March 5-8pm. Treehouse, Berrick Saul Building.

**Celebrating Disabled Women.** Saturday 7 March 8:30pm. Vanbrugh Arms.

Events being hosted by colleges are as follows:

**Goodricke College: Free Sanitary Products and Free the Flow donations.** Monday 9 March Goodricke College Nucleus.

**Goodricke College: Showing of He Named Me Malala and bracelet making.** Tuesday 10 March.

**Goodricke College: Boob Cupcake sale.** Wednesday 11 March.

**Goodricke College: College Charity Changing Lives wine and painting night.** Friday 13 March.

**Halifax College: Fun Film Night (and a chat about student's experiences).** Saturday 7 March.

**Halifax College: Informal Coffee and Conversation.** Sunday 8 March.

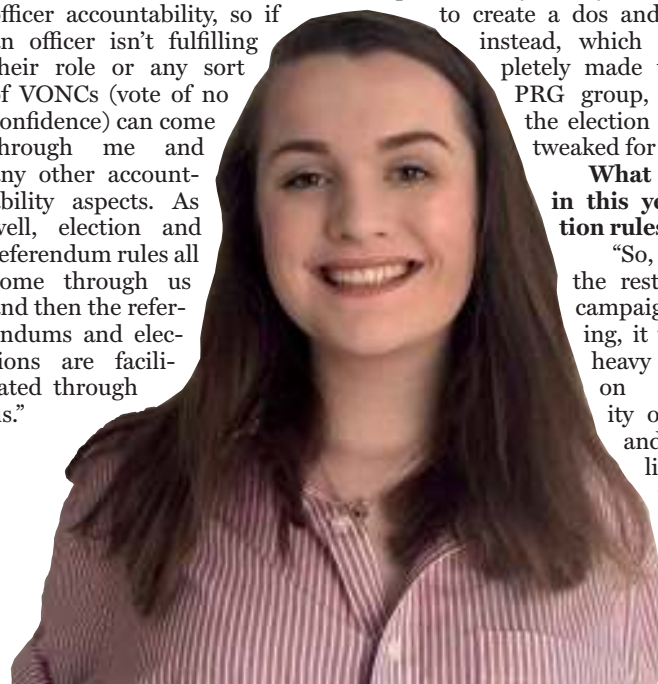


# YUSU's Policy Coordinator, Kelly Balmer, on her role, its future and the recent YUSU elections

"It's been very entertaining. Students at York never fail to entertain me, that's what I have learnt."

**For those who don't know what your role actually is, how would you describe it?**

"I'll start off by saying it is the major bit of the Union for students to come and say here's an idea that no one elected has mentioned or one I'm trying to get through a network, they can submit it to the policy cycle which the policy coordinator runs which is one of the ways students can help change things or add things onto the agenda of the Union. It also has a lot to do with officer accountability, so if an officer isn't fulfilling their role or any sort of VONCs (vote of no confidence) can come through me and any other accountability aspects. As well, election and referendum rules all come through us and then the referendums and elections are facilitated through us."



**So following from that, what was your role in terms of creating the rules for the election?**

"I chair the policy review group panel and basically election rules get given to us and we're asked about what changes we want to make. For example, this year we decided to change them a bit in terms of welfare, and we added a dos and don'ts list, as before this, the rules were very much so like 'don't use blue tac' and 'don't do this', and weren't phrased very clearly, so we decided to create a dos and don't list instead, which was completely made up by the PRG group, and then the election rules were tweaked for welfare."

**What was new in this year's election rules?**

"So, there was the restriction on campaign timing, it was also a heavy emphasis on accessibility on the dos and don't list, even though there always is accessibility, we really made it

our mission as a group to make the candidates' campaigns accessible to everyone, and making sure that all the candidates were feeling okay and weren't staying out too late in campus bars winding up students, giving themselves unnecessary stress."

**How many candidates did break the rules and what happened to them?**

"The sanctions for campaigners who break the rules are dealt with by the deputy returning officer. I don't personally have any stats on that subject."

**Do you think the punishment system in place is fair and adequate?**

"They are decided on a case-by-case basis, form what I am aware of. There are guidelines that the deputy returning officer will have followed, but I am also aware that it is a case-by-case thing, in terms of how much it has impacted and how nasty comments are for example."

**How can students get involved in the student policy process?**

"You can submit your policies and ideas at the beginning of term, so how I have been running it is that submissions are open over the first three to four weeks where any students can submit an idea, then they meet with me and we have a chat about it and I decide whether the request is viable or not. We do get a lot of good ideas from students. For instance, there was an idea from

Free the Flow York about period poverty around campus and this has now become a part of YUSU policy. There was one about clothes swaps which has just become a volunteering group. There's loads of ideas like that, so it's such an open process and any student can submit their ideas. In September, there is often the time for the new policy group to be elected, which consists of four members and me chairing it. You can always have a look on the policy group website to see how to get involved."

**What does the future of the role hold? It wasn't up for elections but surely we will still need one?**

"So it is quite an important role, especially because of the accountability aspect for YUSU officers and how much it decides and influences the agenda. But with the role, as you may know, we had an external consultant come into YUSU last academic year and she put forward quite a few proposals which have then been consulted over since November until now by students and it varies, so it's just a case of that feedback being reviewed and then a decision being made about what's going to happen in the next few months. There are options of the role being paid and appointed or paid and elected and all the information about what the policy group could become, because it can become a policy forum with more

members but then who are these members going to be, as well as lots of little bits about stuff like YUSU-gestions which is an online policy submission place where all policies can be submitted on the website, their progress can be tracked and students can vote them up or down. So, there's lots of changes going on, it's just waiting for the final say to happen, which could be by the end of this term or could be next term but I am hoping it will be in by the start of the next academic year. You can see more about this on the YUSU website."

**How have you found the role?**

"It's been entertaining. Students never fail to entertain me and that is something I have learnt during my time at YUSU. I think the role itself is very admin-heavy. For me, policy is something I'm very passionate about and is something I've done from a young age so if that's something you're interested in, you'll enjoy the role, and also you're always busy as it is a set rota of how things have to happen. It is definitely a busy, yet entertaining role."

**How can students shape the future of the policy process?**

"You can check out the survey on the YUSU website under 'YUSU Policy Development Review.'"

**Jonathan Wellington**  
EDITOR

## YSBL awarded Queen's Prize

**Emma Topic**  
NEWS EDITOR

THE STRUCTURAL Biology Laboratory at York have recently been awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize at Buckingham Palace.

The prize recognises groundbreaking work that is carried out in colleges and universities across the UK, and has awarded over 275 prizes since 1994.

The York Structural Biology Laboratory (YSBL) have been studying protein molecules over the past 40 years, developing new and innovative ways to study them.

This has led to groundbreaking research into individual proteins that has been used by scientists across the world to develop new and improved medicines, including insulin for diabetes.

The Laboratory is currently made up of 70 staff and PhD students whose research covers structural biology, chemical biology and biological chemistry as well as crystallographic methods of research.

Professor Wilkinson, the leader of York Structural Biology Laboratory explained that:

"This prize recognises the quality of the work of the many hundreds of scientists who have passed through the Laboratory over the past four decades and benefited

from the collaborative and flexible culture we have sustained."

On 20 February, Vice-Chancellor Charlie Jeffery attended Buckingham Palace and received a medal engraved with the Queen's signature on behalf of York Structural Biology Laboratory.

The prestigious award has not only been a huge honour for the Department of Chemistry, but has also been a fantastic achievement for the University of York. Chancellor Jeffery has said in a statement that:

"This award is a fantastic achievement and richly deserved. The Laboratory's work has had far-reaching impact: the benefits it brings to the global research community include not only its world-renowned methods and discoveries but also the outstanding scientists it has trained. To wider society this research contributes to the development of new medicines and also the development of new approaches in the search for novel drugs and therapies in medicine."



IMAGE: BCA

## Recent events cause York trader appeal

**Matthew King**  
NEWS EDITOR

YORK TRADERS AND business owners are issuing an appeal to York locals and tourists, stating that "your city centre needs you" following the recent impacts from both the coronavirus outbreak and the high levels of flooding.

The appeal made by the traders was reported by *The York Press* last week, they spoke to Phil Pinder, the chairman of the York Retail Forum, who stated that:

"Coronavirus has had an impact - 12 per cent of visitors to the city are Chinese tourists - but the flooding has been as much a problem. A lot of people from further afield are saying they thought we'd be underwater, but obviously that's not the case and York is open for business."

"I would say to locals to come into town and support the city centre traders. The city centre employs a lot of people and makes up a huge part of the city economy. It's vital we keep it going when times are tough."

The combined worry of the continuous rising flood levels and the news that two individuals stay-

ing at a York hotel were among the first people in Britain to be infected with the coronavirus (one of whom has been confirmed as a University of York student) seem to be deterring tourists from visiting York.

Consequently, the usually quiet months of January and February are becoming even quieter, which is having an impact on local business owners, their employees and the city as a whole.

An article written by *The Guardian* explains that flooding has now become normal for York business owners, especially those whose businesses are near the river. Owner of the Plonkers Wine Bar, located near the river, next door to The Lowther, told *The Guardian* that:

"I've had this business for 30 years, and I have flooded nearly every year. I've listened to every story and every solution and every promise, and nothing will get done, it just stays the same."

It seems, therefore, that York residents, including students at both the universities, must rally to support these local businesses and not be put off by recent events to ensure that York businesses and culture can continue to thrive, despite the floods and coronavirus.





# COMMENT



IMAGES LEFT TO RIGHT: MGM/UA COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, MARVEL COMICS, UNIVERSAL PICTURES, WARNER BROS. PICTURES, UNIVERSAL PICTURES

## Idolised or pitied, why can't disabled people just be? Living in a dichotomy of superhuman or subhuman comes with huge expectation and burden

**Ally Smith**  
(she/her)



How many times have you seen a newspaper article about how 'inspirational' a disabled person is? How they've overcome 'so much' and how every single day is a struggle, but they keep on going because they're strong. I see it all the time. Often, it's disabled people being lauded simply for just living their lives and adapting to the way abled society works. It's the girl who became a model even though she had Down syndrome. It's the boy who became a barista even though he's deaf. It's the seemingly constant stream of videos being shared on Facebook of 'inspiration porn'. Virtue signalling is not the representation or respect that disabled people deserve.

Or even better, it's the disabled person who is 'superhuman' in one aspect so they are accepted or tolerated by society. Take the real life example of Kim Peek, the man who inspired the main character in *Rain Man*. He was called a "walking GPS" and nicknamed "Kimputer" and was

the source for the autistic character Raymond Babbitt (despite Peek not having autism - because where's the fun in being accurate in your portrayal of disability). The cultural impact of the character Rain Man for autistic people cannot be understated at all. The idea that autistic people are 'impaired' in every aspect (social, emotional, mental) bar having a single savant trait is dangerous.

When society only celebrates savant disabled people, they are sending the message to non-savant disabled people that they are only a burden. It makes people feel as if there is another thing that's 'wrong'. When I got diagnosed I was frustrated as I was at a place in my life where it felt as if this was just another thing I couldn't do, I couldn't even be autistic 'right'.

This portrayal and perception of disabled people can also be seen with characters like Daredevil. Blinded when he was young by radioactive material, the material enhanced his other sense to superhuman levels. Of course, this is a superhero film and isn't meant to be accurate, but that is exactly my point. Other examples are... literally any portrayal of an amputee character who has had a limb replaced

with a super cool prosthetic (I'm looking at you, CGI Sofia Boutella in *The Kingsman: The Secret Service*).

We are celebrated, idolised and elevated when we subscribe to the norms of abled society or provide entertainment. Did you know that since Dustin Hoffman won best actor at the Oscars for his portrayal of an autistic man over half of the winners for best actor have been portrayals of disabled people? And notably, not by disabled actors.

**Only celebrating savant disabled people sends the wrong message**

Did you also know that only two disabled actors/actresses have won an Oscar? It seems that people like the spectacle of an abled person 'cripping up' but don't actually like disabled people.

When we aren't 'superhuman', we are subhuman, there seems to be no space for disabled people to just be. We're pitied, looked down

upon and seen as burdens to society. We are separate and always an add on. If you're abled you may not have noticed this - it's easy to miss when you're included by default. It's the separation in everything: students and disabled students, commuters and disabled commuters, parents and disabled parents. The argument used to defend this is often that we have different needs, and so should be treated differently and be in our own category. This doesn't take into account that while the needs may be different, they are no less important. Could you imagine how frustrated an abled person would be if every time they needed to get on a train or bus they had to call ahead in a 'reasonable amount of time' so the operators could put a chair up for them to sit on? Would they not ask, why can't they just keep a number of seats up and free for abled people to use? That would be a fair question to ask.

Putting these needs in a different category or making a completely separate solution also often just creates unnecessary work. Especially at university, so many of the adjustments that are put in place for disabled students (if they actually happen like they're meant to) would benefit all students. It doesn't make

sense to separate and ostracise disabled people at all.

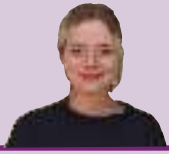
Someone might say to this, "well, if you're saying you need adjustments then you're admitting you do struggle and need help, so why is it wrong if I celebrate people that overcome these difficulties?" This is fundamentally missing my point. Disabled people do not exist for you to idolise or pity. We do not exist for you in any way - we exist for ourselves. Acknowledging that often we need adjustments to live in a society not built for us does not mean that we are agreeing that we are somehow less than, we're just accepting the fact that we live in an abled (and ablest) world. Needing adaptations to a world that's not built for you is not a bad thing (just really frustrating sometimes). When people post those inspirational videos, they're not posting them because they actually care or want to change the society we live in to make sure that these 'success' stories become the norm for disabled people, they're posting them because it makes them feel good. Disabled people should be able to exist without the expectation of being an inspiration or a burden. I do not pretend to speak on behalf of all disabled people; these views are my own.





## EDITOR'S OPINION

## “Double standards at No.10”

Izzy Hall  
(she/her)

This week I have endured the depths of academic hell (say a prayer for a third year you know) with dissertation deadlines. A stressful time for all, but nothing raised my blood pressure like the news alert that no one wanted to see. This week, Boris Johnson has announced that his fiancé, Carrie Symonds, is pregnant. And please, before you think I'm some kind of no-children-before-marriage-hater, hear me out. Boris Johnson has a long, complex and problematic relationship with the press over his personal life. Aside from family, Boris has been caught up in numerous controversies - some that he even gave to us forth right on his own: a 2002 *Telegraph* article where he called black people “piccaninnies” to name one.

Pregnancy announcements are always joyous, but Boris Johnson's history of discussing his family is not. On his Wikipedia page, under the number of children, states “5 or 6”. And no, this is not a joke. Personally, I often make the case that politicians' personal lives should be left out of politics on the grounds of protecting their families from harassment. However, as we have seen with Trump, these personal lives can be saturated with racism and sexism. The way that Boris has conducted himself publicly, and privately, over his time in politics has been full of signs that we should not trust him to run this country. When, on the radio in late 2019 with LBC, he refused to answer the question that the public has had unanswered long before he was prime minister of the UK: how many children do you have?

Johnson's paternity of a 5th child was revealed to the public

after a legal battle fought, and lost, by Helen Macintyre who the prime minister had an extramarital affair with back in 2010. Boris' refusal to comment on the matter has continued since. What confused me the most is how the public, knowing how shady Boris is about his role as a father and his problematic past, still elected him to lead this country? How we deal with our personal lives under pressure reflects how we can deal with responsibility; and this is who we have chosen? In a final blow of irony surrounding Johnson's 5th child, a 25 year old magazine article where he calls single mothers “irresponsible” came back to make him look like even more of a sexist knobhead.

My mind also considers the parallel universe where a PM, in this same situation, was a woman. Two divorces, an unknown number of children, and having a new child while being unmarried - I can just hear the writers at *The Sun* gathering their pitchforks. But at the same time, I would suggest that this fictional character would not have made it to 10 Downing Street in the first place. Cast your mind back to the Tory leadership elections of 2016 when Andrea Leadsom commented that her rival Theresa May wouldn't be fit to be PM as she didn't have any children. Women's families and personal lives have always been in the firing line, and while Theresa May not being a mother has very little to do with how she would run the country, I would argue that Boris' history of adulterous mystery children is.

Perhaps Boris' new family announcement will see the resurfacing of him avoiding questions from the media, and hopefully they will press to hold him accountable. Will good journalism prevail and strike doubt into the public's mind about his reliability? Or will double standards allow his shadiness to continue while he ‘runs’ the country? Stay tuned.



IMAGE: GORDON HATTON

## Flooding will only get worse

### Slashed council funds have left towns incredibly vulnerable

Sam Campbell  
(he/him)

On 25 February, the Ouse was recorded at 4.5 metres above its normal level – the peak of this spell of flooding, and only just shy of the highest recorded level of 5.4 metres in 2000. Now, levels are slowly but surely declining, however the disruption has already taken its toll on well-known York businesses such as Dyl's Café and the King's Arms – both of which have been forced to spend thousands of pounds on flood defences over the years. Two storms and an average rainfall of 144 per cent in England throughout February have led to this. But the problem will persist in the future, and continues to blight other parts of the UK: the Severn's flood defences have breached, causing disruption to homes, businesses and schools in Shropshire and Worcestershire; meanwhile the river Wye has reached its highest levels in 200 years.

Residents and business-owners in the areas in question are rightfully up in arms at the lack of a meaningful response from the government, as the prime minister faces criticism for failing to visit flooded areas. Affected households can apply for a hardship grant of £500, as well as tax exemptions in the recovery period and up to £5,000 to invest in flood defences in the future. But already these measures have been dismissed as inadequate by councils and the people who have been forced to pay out time and again, over a number of years.

In my own hometown of Morpeth, I have experienced firsthand just how destructive flooding can be when there are not appropriate measures in place to prevent

and stem the damage. Morpeth was blighted by flooding as a result of melting snow in 1963. The next spell was in 2008 when more than 400 residents had to be evacuated, and it was said that this was a once in a generation occurrence. When the town was flooded again in 2013 (after which my family and I had to relocate for nine months) it was clear that the problem was not going to go away. Northumberland County Council initiated a defence plan of around £25 million in 2014. Luckily, the defences were completed and have in recent times prevented what could have been more disasters in periods of heavy rainfall, but the process of completion took years and was marred by bureaucracy and largely unaccountable parties.

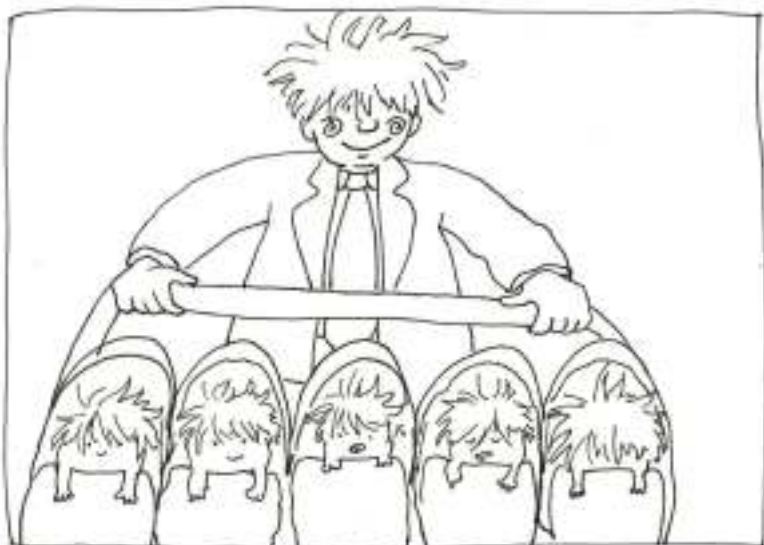
## Chronic lack of funding has left authorities with very little

Many areas still simply do not have the infrastructure to deal with the crises brought by bad weather. This is because the government does not want to spend the money, and not just in terms of dealing with the specific issue of flooding. It is also a climate change issue. The extreme hike in rainfall this February correlates with an IPCC report from 2014 which predicts that total average rainfall will increase by 10 per cent by 2100. Furthermore, the report asserts that if its predicted temperature increases are realised by the 2080s, 250,000 - 400,000 more people will be affected by river flooding across Europe, with the UK likely to be worst hit. The economic

impact of this would be a baffling 15-fold increase in the annual costs of flooding, or around 0.4 per cent of GDP.

If history and the floods this year are anything to go by, then it follows that those who will fall victim to the increasing threat will also be made to make up the gorge in funding and relief left by central government. But local council budgets are meagre, after years of chronic underfunding by Tory governments, leaving those authorities with very little to make contingency plans for current crises – let alone plan for the future. A 2018 report from the Local Government Association states that by 2025 local government will suffer from a funding gap of £7.8 billion, after a reduction of £16 billion in core funding over the last decade by 2020. Johnson's government has from the outset made appearances to be seen as empowering the non-metropolitan areas which put it in power. It will have to improve the trend of declining local government funds if this notion is to ever be credible. As the risk of natural disaster increases, it is simply not viable for councils to continue having their budgets butchered. The head of Derbyshire County Council told *The Guardian* that central government had simply ‘refused’ to contribute towards the £20 million costs of flooding in November of last year.

This must change, across the whole country, given the rising frequency of these events and the damage that has been wrought by years of underfunding. It is an issue which encompasses economic disparity, backward infrastructure, unaccountability, a flawed democracy and, vitally, the future of our planet. Future governments must commit to combating climate change and empowering local authorities to prevent what is currently a recurring disaster becoming apocalyptic.



Cartoon by Ayesha Gleed



# Redneck is just a stereotype to degrade the poor

The term Redneck and other stereotypes are used to dismiss the concerns of working people

Elie Gould  
(she/her)



The term Redneck has been around since the 1830s, with it predominantly being used to describe poor white agricultural labourers and is a term that is not only filled with stereotypes but also an unexpected history.

Coal miners first began to adopt the epithet Redneck in the early 1910s and 1920s. This was to build a new identity to distinguish miners that would go on strike as opposed to those who did not, known as “scabs”.

The miners’ strike largely lasted from 1912 to 1936 and was brought on due to lack of union recognition of the United Mine Workers (UMW). The lack of recognition was largely due to the union’s policy of an integrated workforce, an ideal that did not match the coalhouses found in Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia which still contained segregation statutes, in an effort to divide and manage the workforce.

The term Redneck was first used as a slur against striking coal miners, referring to their social status as poor labourers in an attempt to stifle the strike actions. However, many of the workers decided

to redefine this term rather than replace it. Instead, union leaders gave it the meaning of solidarity among the racially and ethnically divided working classes. The handkerchief helped to symbolise this.

Being a historic marker of union solidarity and of the labour movements in the USA and Europe, these handkerchiefs had acted as a form of protection for railroad men, miners, roughnecks, loggers and other American workingmen.

**We should not reduce anyone down to a single stereotype**

Coal miners often used the handkerchiefs to keep the gritty coal dust off their necks, from falling down their work-shirts and from entering their mouth and nostrils. The UMW even went so far as distributing red handkerchiefs during some of the organised strikes.

One such event was at the Battle of Blair Mountain in 1921, also known as The Red Neck War. This took place in southern West Virginia, when a rag-tag army consisting of an estimated 15,000-20,000 UMW

workers fought a week long labour war against an entrenched army of 2,000 sheriff’s deputies, company guards, and state militia, before federal troops had to be sent in to restore order.

This uprising marked the largest ever insurrection in American labour history. White coal miners were not the only ones to wear the red handkerchief as an unofficial uniform however, as an estimated 3,750 – 5,000 African American miners who participated in this conflict also chose to wear the handkerchief.

Unfortunately, despite some sporadic episodes of multiracial, intersectional cooperation, such as these, the history of the American labour movement especially in the South has clearly been one of overwhelming racism.

So, when did this idea of the American labour movement that was wrapped up in the red handkerchief begin to be seen as the ugly side of America?

This largely began with the coal operator’s association, a group that was set up to stifle workers’ resistance and combat the UMW. During the Red Scare of 1919-1920, the coal operators began to ‘red-bait’, result-

ing in the transformation of the term Redneck into a synonym for communist, in order to discredit the UMW and their cause. America as a whole, and especially corporate America, has never been in fa-

IMAGE: ANONMOOS



your of ionisation of the workforce. After all, a functional union would stand in the way of industrial corporate power being able to manipulate and lower one of the few cost items that exist in the business realm, namely: human labour. In this way, the negative rhetoric against working class men and women found in places like the Appalachian region and across the American South and midwest has

only been strengthened over time.

In today’s media narrative, there often seems to be a rhetoric of the white working class that is inherently convenient for those that endorse capitalism: that the poor are dangerous idiots.

Many get thrown under the same bus as rust belt Trump supporters who fall for his lies and pandering. This kind of narrative forgets that Appalachian states such as Virginia voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012, while 48.35 per cent of North Carolinians voted for Obama in 2012.

To make myself clear, the percentage of which a state votes for a Democrat presidential nominee is not, in any way at all, a marker of the overarching intelligence of its population, in fact I find that this kind of thinking plays into the negative ideas that higher class equals higher morality and enforces negative stereotypes.

The most important idea to take away from this discussion about derogatory terms, is that no stereotype or slur ever has a positive purpose; demeaning and degrading people as a way to keep them and their views down is objectively wrong and only ever results in a rise of animosity between the different classes, when in reality we should be helping one another to grow for a better future together.

# The sinister side of flaunting your rap riches

The modern culture of glorifying the wealth of rap artists is proving to have fatal consequences

Shaun Odili  
(he/him)



Like any typical day, I started my morning with a shower, and like any typical shower I spent far too long trawling through my music trying to find a suitable playlist. On this particular day, I decided to include music from the then up and coming Brooklyn rapper Pop Smoke, with ‘Get Back’ and ‘Scenario’ being my songs of choice. Roughly two hours later, news surfaced that the rapper had been shot dead in a home invasion in his West Hollywood house that he was renting at approximately 4:30am. Pop Smoke was 20.

Tributes for the rapper’s unexpected and deeply tragic death immediately came pouring in. Figureheads of the rap game such as 50 Cent, Snoop Dogg, Nicki Minaj and Travis Scott paid their condolences. The world of hip hop was in a state of immense sadness and palpable shock.

Early investigations into his death gave rise to what still remains an unanswered question. Was this merely a random attack or was it a

targeted hit? The evidence available to the Los Angeles police thus far indicates that this callous act was a targeted hit. In the days leading up to this death, Pop Smoke, whose real name was Bashar Jackson, had posted pictures of himself holding large wads of cash. The day before he died, the rapper had posted an image of a gift bag he had received in his Instagram story which visibly displayed his address. Many have been led to believe that this may have exposed his whereabouts, inadvertently making him a target to criminals. The possibility that Pop Smoke’s death may have been a consequence of him showcasing the wealth he acquired from his music leads me to question the culture of a genre that I love deeply. Is the act of flaunting the diamond encrusted fruits of your labour a harmless part of the culture, or is there a more sinister side to it which is leaving the lives of our hip hop stars at risk?

Deeply embedded within hip hop culture is the glorification of one’s wealth and the overt and boastful display of their rags to riches journey. A journey in which

many rappers have had to overcome extreme poverty, societal discrimination and the lures of gang life in order to obtain commercial success through their artistry. Throughout the history of hip hop many rappers have always worn their bank accounts on their necks and wrists. In older generations, the likes of Afrika Bambaata, Run Dmc, LL Cool J, Nas and Biggie Smalls, to name a few, made sure to let the world know just how rich they were. Slick Rick was a particular proponent of rappers displaying their

opulence, possessing arguably the flashiest array of jewelry in

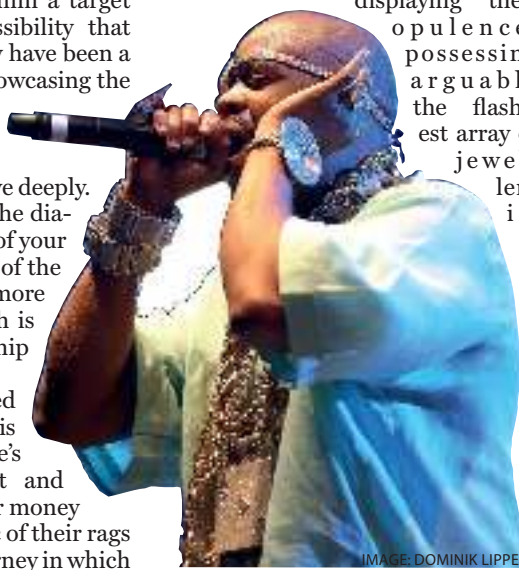


IMAGE: DOMINIK LIPPE

the history of hip hop and being one of the biggest flexers the game has ever seen. In more modern times, rappers such as the Migos, Gucci Mane, Future and Gunna have taken the mantle and perpetuated this culture. Even though the act of flaunting your wealth is so heavily integrated within hip hop, to me it appears that it is increasingly putting rappers’ lives at risk. If posting images on social media of your latest Goyard bag or buss down Patek Philippe means that more and more rappers are becoming targets, then I do not support it.

Pop Smoke is not the only young rapper to have been brutally murdered within the past few years. In 2018, the controversial rapper XXXTentacion was killed as he was robbed outside a Florida motorcycle dealership. He too was only 20. Pittsburgh born rapper Jimmy Wopo, who was seen by many as the successor to Wiz Khalifa and Mac Miller, was killed in a drive-by shooting the same day. He was only 21. Two weeks after these tragic deaths Canadian rapper and Drake’s tour mate Smoke Dawg, who was also just 21, was murdered outside a Toronto Nightclub.

Far too many young and up and coming rappers have been murdered in cold blood within the

past few years. To pin each of these deaths entirely on the fact that the rap game celebrates rappers showing their audience how wealthy they are would be unfounded; however, we mustn’t ignore the role that this could have played. In a world where social media is so omnipresent and everyone can see where you are, who you are and what you have, it is becoming easier for criminals to target the rich and wealthy. It is no mere coincidence that there has been a spike in the amount of young and successful rappers that have been robbed and murdered in recent years as it has become more widely accepted for them to showcase their money and success on social media, unwittingly exposing themselves to criminals.

In the short time that Pop Smoke rose to prominence, he bridged the gap between the UK and US drill scenes like no other. He was a rapper that was truly loved and revered on both sides of the pond. His death should serve as a warning to everyone affiliated with hip hop culture, whether you’re an artist or a fan. We must collectively do more to protect these young rappers and the first step towards doing so is to reduce how much we glorify these artists flaunting their wealth.



# Why do so many psychopaths get to the top?

Too many people talk their way to the top of their profession. How good really are 'good psychopaths'?

Dom Smith  
(he/him)



They call it 'selling your soul to the city'. And it's a great shame – the idea that to reach the top of a competitive profession, it seems you have to leave your morals at the door, bringing with you a healthy helping of arrogance.

Introducing British psychologist Kevin Dutton, who coined one of the most fascinating terms in all of psychology – 'good psychopaths'.

Good psychopaths are not necessarily people actually diagnosed as psychopaths – it's a spectrum like most of these things. They are simply people with the good traits of psychopathy, but not the bad ones. The less desirable features include narcissism, manipulation, ruthlessness and a partial or total lack of human empathy or sympathy. If I've just described you, unlucky – apparently, it's completely incurable.

The better characteristics include intense and focused determination. They are hardworking, creative, logical, charismatic, confident and natural-born schmoozers and persuaders. Know anyone like that? Well there's a chance they're a good psychopath – just don't tell them to their face. It's best to keep these people on your side;

they're highly influential, or they have the potential to be. You want their fate to be tied up in yours, so that they have no option but to treat you well.

I'd love to be consistently hardworking, creative and charismatic etc., but it's what can manifest from these traits that worries me.

There's nothing wrong with being any of these things – determined, persuasive, cutthroat and domineering – in the workplace. But here's the issue. If these character traits start to appear in your home life and in your everyday interactions, then there's a problem. Unfortunately, they almost certainly will, unless you happen to be a 'good psychopath' with understated and mellow temperament.

Yep,



IMAGE:20TH CENTURY FOX

unlikely.

In sectors like politics, neurosurgery and (unfortunately for me) journalism, to be this way inclined can offer all sorts of advantages. Politicians have to be at least a bit narcissistic to even run for office, and don't forget the Class A acting skills needed to articulately bash friends or to vocally back-up an enemy. And all this in the name of longer-term political gain.

At the very top of the industry, neurosurgeons have been known to 'get a kick out of' the more delicate, risky operations they have to carry out. Sounds strange at first, I'll admit. When you think about it though, someone that doesn't bring any emotion or anxiety with them to the surgical room is exactly the kind of person you'd want acting on you – focused, precise, optimistic. I would, anyway.

Journalists. It's a shame, because I wholeheartedly want to become one, but journalists have to be a tad arrogant in wanting their name attached to the top of the article (like mine is attached to the top of this one. I jolly well hope it is anyway). They also have to be persuasive and often damning with their words. A carefully worded interview of just five questions can end someone's career or at the very least draw considerable tears. And then the journalist goes

home, safe in their own job, but having ruined someone else's. It's very sad when you think about it – but it's all part of the job, they say. A job they're doing miles better if they can do it effectively. Cold. Manipulative.

## There must be a way to the top without forfeiting your morals

So, registering somewhat on the psychopathic scale can bring considerable rewards as you climb the career ladder, trampling on the hands of others as you overtake them. That's not to mention the benefits your employers will enjoy if you excel in these fields. I should add at this point that 4 per cent of CEOs are genuine psychopaths, while many, many more possess one or more of these 'desirable' attributes. Psychopaths at the top? You bet.

I've come to realise that the working world doesn't really reward nice, reserved, emotional people. That's because these people are squeezed out by pushy, forward, confident folk. It's becoming increasingly hard for the first group to stand out and impress in a world dominated by blaggers. That's all

they are; people that can talk themselves to the top, and who know all too well that they can.

I've got to be careful not to be too broad here, or else half the population are being branded a 'good psychopath', when they're not. The point I'm making is that these people have been given wonderful gifts – to be a determined extrovert is a very precious thing in the working world. But there's an oh-so-fine line between being an asset and being destructive.

Being a good psychopath is great. If you think that is you, enjoy it – you can go far. Just know that there's a considerable risk that things will spiral out of control. The minute you start taking credit for others' work or take on an assignment and complete it by any means necessary is the moment things have gone too far. It's too easy to go from 'good' to not so good.

One in 100 people are psychopaths. It's exceedingly likely that everyone reading this will at some point work in some capacity with a psychopath. See them for what they are. Do not get on the wrong side of them. Do not let it be you. There must be a way to the top without forfeiting your morals. It's up to you to find it. Let that be you.

If you feel yourself slipping, becoming a worse person to do better at work, ask yourself the following. What do I want more – respect for what I've achieved, or respect for who I am?

# Optimism over Sanders win shouldn't be too hasty

The Left in America, and across the world, have a lot to celebrate but they risk getting ahead of themselves

William Hart  
(he/him)



Bernie Sanders was the clear winner of the Nevada caucus with 46.8 per cent of the vote, Joe Biden was in a distant second with 20.4 per cent. The results from Nevada have put Sanders as the early frontrunner in the Democrats' contentious primary. For the left this is, of course, a great success, as they are one step closer to putting a socialist in the White House for the first time. However, the left must not let their guard down as it is not a foregone conclusion that Sanders will obtain the Democratic nomination, let alone be able to beat Trump.

Sanders' first hurdle is to gain the Democratic nomination: if Sanders remains relatively unscathed through Super Tuesday, then he is one step closer to success and this will fill the left with optimism. However, Michael Bloomberg first enters the race on Super Tuesday, so Sanders' current position as frontrunner may be challenged if Bloomberg does well there.

A benefit for Sanders in the primaries is that he has an army of young and diverse volunteers who are willing to canvas for their idol. Bloomberg, on the other hand, is not so lucky with his force of campaigners. Unlike Sanders, the former Republican mayor of New York must pay his people to canvas for him to try and get the support he will desperately need to win the nomination. He also faces a challenge attracting the youth vote because of a lack of diversity within his team.

The first challenge for Sanders is to mobilise this youth support so that he can realise his democratic socialist vision for America. If Sanders is successful in this regard, then it is quite likely that he will have rallied enough support to obtain the Democratic nomination when the primary season comes to its conclusion. However, the left will still not be able to rejoice just yet: while they might win the internal battle, it does not mean that they will win the war.

If Sanders succeeds in the primaries and becomes the man to challenge Trump for the leadership of the free world, there will doubtless be an assumption amongst his leftist

acolytes that he will inevitably win the election. Looking at our own recent general election, however, we can see that there is a precedent for failure where the disciples of a radically left-wing leader of a centre left party assume certainty that their man will defeat the pompous blonde buffoon their messiah faces. This feeling of certainty is no doubt augmented by the echo chamber effect of social media, which obscures the full picture for many supporters and prevents them from forming a logical conclusion.

Sanders faces a further battle and that is the ongoing popularity of the incumbent with sizeable parts of the electorate.

Although Trump is seen by many as unfit for office, recent polling shows that he has an approval rating of 49 per cent. This is important as history has shown that incumbents with an approval rating greater than 50 per cent going into an election are usually victorious. Those with an approval rating below 40 per cent, are likely to be defeated. The difficulty for forecasters is when the incumbent's approval rating is between 41-49 per cent, which means that the results could go either way.

Optimism within the left for Sanders will be justifiable once debates between Sanders and Trump begin. Even then optimism can only start to grow if Sanders' policy survives the litmus test of presidential debate and survives within the

pantheon of public opinion, especially that of middle America. If Sanders can win over middle America with his policies then optimism is justified among the left as that would show clear support for his policies and indicate that Sanders is not just for the educated liberal metropolitan, but that he is truly for all Americans. If he achieves this goal, then he might just stand a chance against Trump.

All this, however, is merely speculation: come November we will know what really occurred. Nevertheless, defeat for Trump would provide a welcome counterbalance to that other single term president, Jimmy Carter. Carter promised the American people that he would not tell a lie and was famously chased, and attacked, by a rabbit. Trump, in conspicuous contrast to Carter, has allegedly lied to the American public constantly throughout his presidency and has a penchant for being the one chasing bunnies. Only if Sanders beats this manifest contrast to Carter in the race to the White House can the leftists relax and have confidence that America will represent them. Until then, they cannot afford to rest on their laurels if they want to eject Trump from the White House and coronate Sanders.



IMAGE:TRUTHOUT.ORG





IMAGE: PUBLIC DOMAIN

## "Low-skilled" work is essential

### The UK cannot survive post-Brexit without EU workers

**Alice Manning**  
(she/her)



The UK government has recently outlined plans to bring in a new points-based system inspired by the Australian immigration system. Under this, workers from outside the UK would have to utilise a combination of English language knowledge, relevant qualifications and experience, potential job offers and special circumstances (such as working in a sector experiencing a worker shortage in the UK) to score the 70 points required for a visa. This new approach from January 2021 coincides with the end of free movement and aims to curb the numbers of "low-skilled" and low-salary employees entering the UK.

While addressing high levels of immigration was a key concern of many who voted to exit the EU, separating workers into "skilled" and "low-skilled" is not necessarily the best way to address this. Requiring workers from outside the UK to jump through so many hoops in order to qualify for a visa ignores the variety of circumstances that workers find themselves in – proficient care workers, for example, do not necessarily come to their profession from the standard academic route that the government appears to be promoting. Younger professionals, also, are less likely to have achieved the minimum salary or have gained the experience required; a lack of a PhD, given how expensive the qualification can be, does not constitute a lack of talent.

While the government aims to overcome this by lowering salary and qualification thresholds for skilled workers (previously degree-level, now A-level or equivalent), the question remains over whether the new requirements will deter migration to the UK in favour of other countries.

It seems that the government

believes it can simply magic up a situation whereby pre-trained workers, who already have the necessary skills and experience, will flock to the UK in favour of remaining in their current country. Unfortunately, the new immigration plans can only signal a move away from a culture where immigration is encouraged – while the government plans to lift the cap on "skilled" workers, by their own estimate, 70 per cent of EU workers will be excluded by the new plans. That the government acknowledges and supports this cannot assist the UK in seeming welcoming to outsiders post-Brexit.

Furthermore, there is a kind of arrogance in the expectation that skilled workers will naturally choose to come to the UK now it is proposing such restrictions. If Johnson's government truly believe

"Home-grown talent" will not fill the gaps Brexit has created

that Britain deserves the best, then we should be implementing the necessary training schemes in order to have the best workers. Expecting other countries to do the training for us, producing workers who tick all the boxes then expend their skills assisting Britain's economy, is hardly constitutive of international co-operation.

While focusing on decreasing the unemployment rate is clearly a good thing, the presumption that "home-grown talent" will fill the roles that workers from outside the UK previously occupied is misplaced. In the seasonal agricultural sector, for example, the labour force is frequently international, to the extent that farmers rely upon migration during these periods. The government even acknowledged

this in 2018, when a Seasonal Migrant Workers Scheme was drawn up to encourage the seasonal employment of workers from outside the EU in peak times, "alleviating labour shortages". Anxieties about finding employees post-Brexit have been well-documented in the media.

The flipside of this is that UK nationals are more likely to consider low-skilled or menial jobs as being "beneath them", making the need for outside labour all the more pressing, unless these attitudes are addressed and dispelled. A culture that encourages every child to aspire to university before "settling" for a profession that doesn't require a degree is toxic, and remains unaddressed. While some vocational professions fall under the government's definition of "skilled" labour, it excludes others such as care workers, as mentioned above. More incentives for UK nationals to take up such employment need to be put in place, but the upshot of the government's new focus on exclusionary "skilled" professions is a decreased focus on this.

Furthermore, the government's idea of drawing upon the eight million or so unemployed in this country to fill these "low-skilled" positions is unrealistic. This number includes those who either can't work full-stop, or who cannot follow a traditional 9-5 work schedule. This may be for various reasons, including having a disability or being a carer. Assuming that an absence of foreign workers will be naturally filled by UK nationals is a dangerous presumption that does not address any underlying problems with the employment structure of the UK.

With the UK having left the EU and being at the beginning of the transition period, the current government has an opportunity to show that the UK remains a welcoming and inclusive country whilst caring for its economic needs. The new visa changes fall far short of the mark.

# Sabbs in short: Accountability

Sabbatical officers need to be transparent so they are accountable for their actions

**Patrick Walker**  
(he/him)



As student journalists, we have a complicated job: to hold Sabbatical officers to account, and to ensure we have a workable relationship in order to get stories and gossip from them too. Doing this requires regular meetings with almost all the Sabb team, and it was during one such meeting that the question of their record came up: how did we think they had done their job this year?

It's a more complicated question than many people assume. As glorified lobbyists, Sabbs work almost entirely behind closed doors, in spite of repeated attempts by successive presidents to increase transparency. York's most prominent SU officials carry out a myriad of tasks, but they're mainly working behind closed doors. To student media, and to the students who elected them, that's a problem, because it means that their record is extremely hard to judge.

As lobbyists, Sabbs have the luxury of taking credit for almost anything the University, or its partners do, as long as it falls within their officer remit. Public campaigns like #RentRant are undoubtedly evidence of a good attitude towards student welfare, and of an Officer genuinely seeming to listen to student concerns about accommodation. That said, it's worth being critical about the role the public campaign had in swaying the University to reduce a few rooms to £99. Was the University responding to YUSU pressure, or was it responding to a student market that wanted cheaper accommodation, with fewer benefits than others? The answer is probably a nuanced combination of both.

The Unity Health building is the best example of this problem. Since the service's relocation to Heslington East's Kimberlow Hill in 2018, the old surgery has sat unused, a tantalising opportunity for the many student societies that are currently crammed into old buildings in Vanbrugh. This term, Sabb Facebook pages announced their "huge win": the University estates team was finally allowing student societies to store equipment there

(that is, until the building is demolished).

Unsurprisingly, the Sabbs are taking credit for a decision made by the University, for a process that was started under Finn Judge's officership. My point here is not that I think our newfound access had nothing to do with them, or that they're liars, it's that we have no way of knowing. Student media are not privy to the private negotiations between YUSU and the University.

This, in my opinion, is why YUSU is disengaged with the student population. It's not just that students don't know what their Union does, it's that they don't know how individual officers benefit them directly. Beyond the decisions that YUSU itself makes (which are also slightly in contention: Sabbs make up a minority of the YUSU trustee board), it's impossible to reduce any University reform down to the influence of Sabbatical Officer pressure alone.

For most students, then, Sabbs are simultaneously the source of all information regarding University decision-making processes, and the figures that must be criticised most for their ability to lobby effectively. By framing everything as their victory, as most Sabbs do, students are left to decide whether returning Officers should be re-elected based on their personality, whether they seem competent, and whether they're popular among YUSU employees who have the experience working with them on a daily basis. That's not ideal, and it's



IMAGE: YUSU

probably a substantial contributing factor in why elections develop into social media popularity contests.

To really fix YUSU's so-called transparency problem, we should expect Sabbs to share their notes on each meeting they have with the University in more detail. This would, give students an accountable paper trail, an opportunity to question why certain issues are prioritised above others. For now, it looks like student media will continue to resort to guesswork to hold YUSU's Sabbatical officers to account.



# CLASH OF COMMENTS

## Should Turning Point York become a ratified YUSU society?

YES.

Harrison McQueen (he/him)



Turning Point UK is the British branch of the well-established student activist group Turning Point USA. It argues for conservative values; fiscal responsibility, free markets, limited government. It also supports Trump. I'm no fan of Turning Point and certainly not a fan of Trump, but they should be allowed at York.

The group have a fondness of criticising the "left-wing bias" persecuting those right-wingers with a different view. It would naturally come as no surprise for them that the York chapter has been rejected by the YUSU Societies Committee (Socs Com) three times, denying them society-status. YUSU are doing everything they can to prove the group's message true, despite their protests that they aren't actually attempting to limit free speech.

Brian "Wally" Terry, newly elected as Student Activities Officer, expressed his support of the group's ratification during his campaign. He recently told *York Vision* that he was one of the two members on the Socs Com during the most recent rejection that actually voted for the group's ratification, only to be outvoted by four others.

In a debate on 13 February he stated that "it is important to look someone in the face and explain why they're wrong" and to "challenge their beliefs". These are wise words from a 'Wally'. YUSU's decision has merely given the group something to continue to complain about.

We must be clear; the York branch of Turning Point poses no threat to anyone. Their Twitter account features an absolutely huge total of 20 followers as I am writing - proving they have massive support for their views. They do not even have a Facebook page. You would be tremendously mistaken to believe that a successful ratification would lead to the harm of anyone or any group at the University. It wouldn't take a thorough investigation to realise that there isn't a huge amount of right-wing opinion here at York, or at any other UK university for that matter.

Admittedly, the parent group in the USA has caused a large amount of controversy, with

many individuals involved in the movement spurring what is often considered 'racist' nonsense.

Their social media accounts spew out posts which can accurately be described as the sound created from scratching fingernails against a chalkboard - cringeworthy blathering. But, as YUSU ironically protested as they shut down chances of ratification, we must protect freedom of speech. You are allowed to fundamentally disagree with what they say, but they should have the right to say it.

The best-loved British example of the benefit of allowing controversial speakers is that of Nick Griffin, the former leader of the far-right BNP, being allowed on the Question Time panel in 2009. This was someone that had expressed disgusting views, and it was an opportunity to provide proper scrutiny for these.

The result was a pile-on and Nick Griffin looked like an utterly racist buffoon, delegitimising him and his Party.

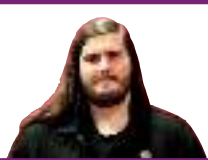
I'm certainly not saying that Turning Point York are the same as the BNP or Nick Griffin - their views are entirely different. The group, however, is being de-platformed due to its controversial nature.

I call on the Socs Com to ratify the group. This would allow for proper scrutiny from those that disagree with the group's views. It would be a much needed step in order to stop the stifling of free speech at York and prove that our University is a mature place, rather than infantilising us students.

I am with 'Wally', and you should be too.



Joseph Higgins (he/him)



Turning Point York have been attempting to gain ratification at the University for a long time now. With the election of new Activities Officer Brian Terry, who seems keen to ratify them, now seems like a good time to explain my own opinion on the issue. As Comment editor, I've personally edited a couple of articles on both sides of the debate about TPUK but I've never given my personal opinion.

I also want to make it clear that, ratified or not, members of Turning Point's opinions will be welcome in this section and this newspaper without censorship; I value the ability of this paper to give voice to a host of opinions, so here is mine. Turning Point is not an organisation I think this University should be proud of endorsing, hosting or otherwise legitimising. There is nothing wrong with organising behind conservative principles and values; no one wants to de-ratify the York Tories and many of us value the open debate that they bring with them. What makes Turning Point different is their origins and their tactics.

Turning Point USA (TPUSA) was founded in 2012 by Fox News and Conservative pundit Charlie Kirk. It was established as a non-profit organisation, meaning it doesn't have to dis-

close its funding sources. Leaked documents and journalism done by *The Lantern* and confirmed by the *International Business Times* have shown that TPUSA have been funneling their dark money into student elections across America to elect young conservative students to student office with a dramatic advantage in wealth.

That itself casts doubt on ratifying the UK branch of Turning Point, what's to stop them using the same tactics the USA branch has provably used? However, that is not why YUSU has been hesitant to ratify them in the past. Nor should it be, anyone political should have enough faith in their argument to believe their argument will beat out others no matter the tactics used.

The reason Turning Point York have yet to be ratified by the University, is their open association with the official branch of Turning Point UK across the country.

*The Tab* reported four months ago that the YUSU societies and committees meeting thought ratifying a group associated with a national organisation like Turning Point UK would cause YUSU "reputational damage" and should not be encouraged. It is for the same reason that the York branch of Stand up to Racism, a typically left wing organisation, was also not ratified.

This is not an issue of politics, it is an issue of YUSU's rules and guidelines being breached. *Nouse* reported in October 2019 that the University had no issue with the aims and goals of Turning Point York, adding they were happy to "encourage and facilitate" discussion of right wing politics and capitalism.

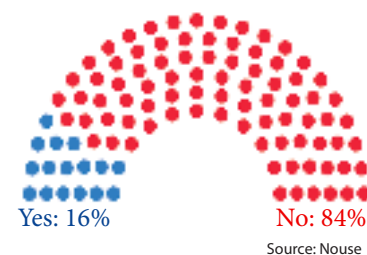
It is solely an issue of the University's reputation and code of conduct which clearly states that societies "should not undertake any action which could bring the reputation of the Club, YUSU or the University into disrepute".

Turning Point York's affiliation with Turning Point UK may cause this damage. Once again, myself and the University are both in favour of freedom of speech, I welcome the argument appearing alongside my own in favour of ratifying the organisation I believe a group that fits Turning Point's demographic should exist for people to discuss political ideas even if I disagree with them, but until they disassociate from the national and international reputation of the group they are affiliated with the University should absolutely not endorse them with ratification.

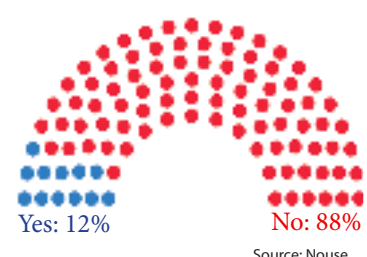
NO.

According to the polls

Should Turning Point York be ratified as a YUSU society?



Do you agree with the new immigration system?



## Comment in brief...

"SWEET TREAT TURNED SOUR"

One of the most upsetting things that has happened after moving from Newcastle to York (other than the varying quality of nightlife) is the extremely low quality of Chinese takeaways in York. Many a night I have got back from a long day of two contact hours (I love my degree), and all I have wanted is to sit down and tuck into a lovely Chinese, however York is terrible on this front. My housemates and I did find a decent quality takeaway, only to find a few weeks later that said takeaway was rated only two stars for food hygiene. The moral of this story, therefore, is that the good Chinese takeaways in York are also dirty. We cannot win. York needs better, cleaner, Chinese takeaways, and it needs them ASAP.



(he/him) Matthew King

"WE CAN DOUGH BETTER"

Library paninis have always been a last resort for me. After a long morning of slaving away at Morrell, I make the choice to invest £3.75 of my hard earned money into a panini. Every time I take a bite, it astounds me. How much drier it can possibly get? They are by far the most overhyped food item on campus. They completely lack seasoning, texture and flavour and if Gordon Ramsay was ever to try it, he would definitely call it an idiot sandwich. To make matters even worse, library staff just won't allow paninis to be taken upstairs. The least the library staff could do is let me enjoy my overpriced, flavourless, under-seasoned panini in peace.



(she/her) Emma Topic

"STOP IGNORING VARSITY"

College Varsity happened on Sunday and again it felt like a bit of a damp squib in terms of attitude from supporters. They turned out to the rugby, as always, but not much else. We have one of the best college sport set-ups here in York, so an opportunity for a piss-up on a nice spring day watching competitive sport live should not be turned down. Roses is obviously the big one, but in a year where to get the varsity feeling you have to go away, why are people not turning out to support York students on home turf in all the fixtures? I've been to four college varsities now, and every year it has been a lot of fun. YUSU have made the effort to make it a big hit, so students should turn out for all events.



(he/him) Patrick Hook-Willers



# Want to write for us?

- **PICK YOUR INTERESTS** Take a look in a copy of *Nouse*, or go to [nouse.co.uk](http://nouse.co.uk), and find out which sections best fit your writing interests. We have 14 to choose from!
- **JOIN A FACEBOOK WRITERS' GROUP** Search for 'Nouse Writers', 'Nouse Comment', 'Nouse Sport' etc. on Facebook, and click 'Join Group'. The Section Editor will then approve your request.
- **BUY NOUSE MEMBERSHIP** You must buy a £7 membership to the society in order to write for us. Go to [YUSU.org](http://YUSU.org) > Student Life > Clubs & Socs > Societies & Student Media > *Nouse*
- **GET WRITING!** Editors will post opportunities in Writers' Groups, and you can suggest ideas to them. They can give you help and feedback too. It's as simple as that!

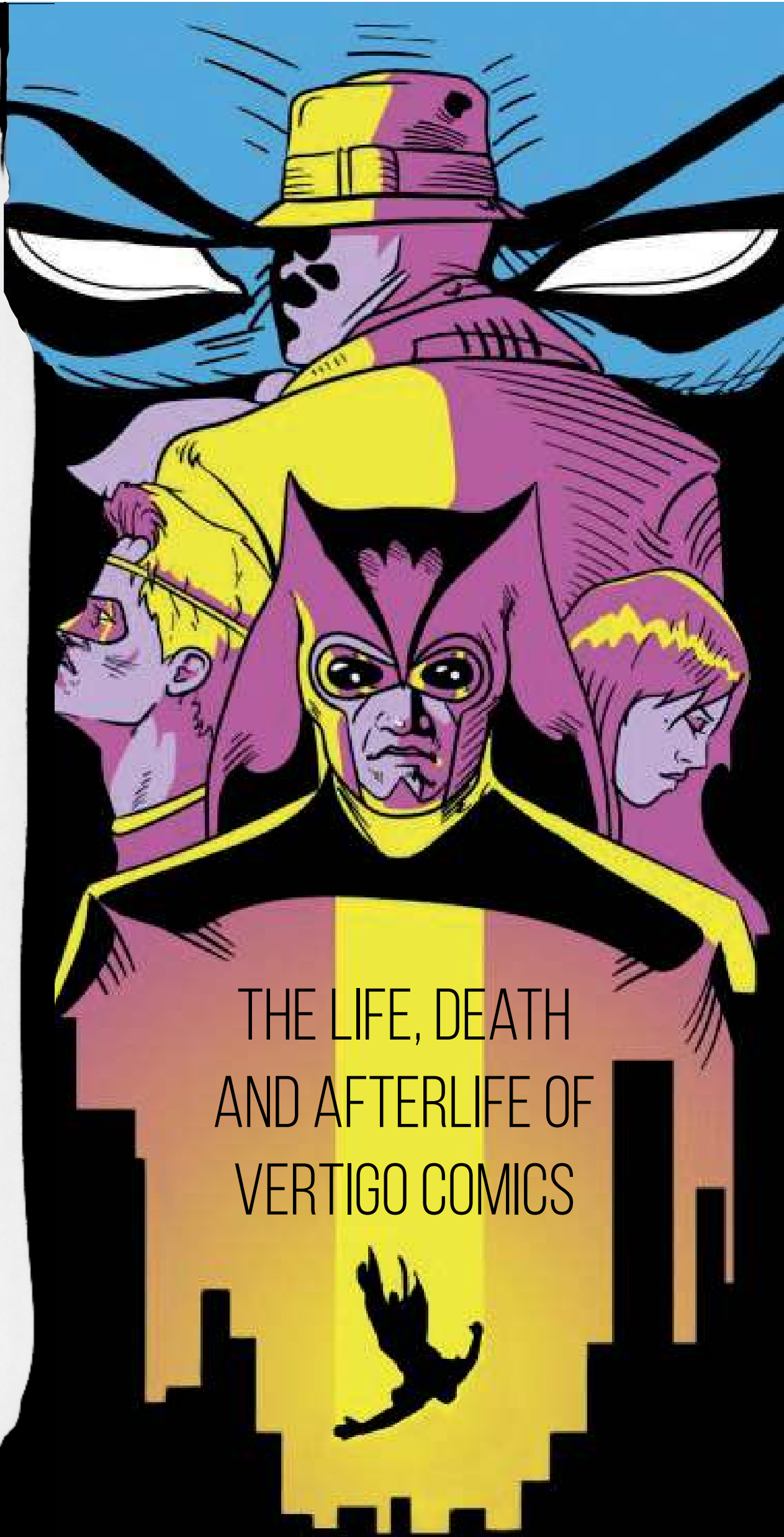
Find more info on our Facebook and Twitter pages, or email [editor@nouse.co.uk](mailto:editor@nouse.co.uk) with any questions.

Malu Deputy Muse Editor  
 Alex Muse Editor  
 Jonathan Editor  
 Patrick Deputy Editor  
 Bex Chief Sub-Editor





# THIS MIND



THE LIFE, DEATH  
AND AFTERLIFE OF  
VERTIGO COMICS



## FEATURES

**M4**  
**Hashaam Yaqoob** analyses DC Comics's recent discontinuation of its Vertigo comic imprint

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**M16**  
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Which supermarket does the best scotch eggs?





*“You will have moments where you convince yourself you’re not good enough - once you stop believing in yourself, it’s hard to work past.”*

## ALICE WEETMAN CHATS WITH UP AND COMING SINGER-SONGWRITER GEORGE WILKS ABOUT INSPIRATION, MOTIVATION AND MAKING IT IN TODAY’S INDUSTRY

### How would you describe your sound?

It’s definitely a ‘pop-y’ sound, but I’m influenced by loads of different genres so there are normally elements from a few different styles in there. I love Coldplay and how they use ambient synth instruments, but I also love funk and disco so you sometimes hear funky guitar parts and retro synth sounds.

Hip-hop also inspires me. Their use of samples that aren’t necessarily musical instruments to generate musical sounds. But my favourite artist, (I’m a fanboy), is Jamie Cullum who is jazz fusion. There are loads of different genres that I love and use in my writing and production. I guess a blend of pop, rock, and funk really.

### Which artists are inspiring you most at the moment?

Right now I’m listening to Sam Fender, James Bay, and the new Harry Styles, which has some amazing songs. Those three are my main inspiration at the moment; it changes a lot with me. Jon Bellion is another guy who I’m influenced by at the moment. He’s a very talented songwriter, if you ever hear him talk about music he’s so intense. You can’t stop listening to him when he does!

### What’s your favourite part of the songwriting process?

There are a few bits I find the most satisfying. One is when you come up with a good hook with good lyrics for the chorus or verse, the other is when you find a sound that suits the song perfectly when producing it. When those two things happen I normally waste half an hour listening to it over and over again feeling far too pleased with myself, until I realise I have the rest of the song to make interesting, which brings me back down to earth again.

### You do all your own producing and mixing, what’s the most challenging thing about this?

Initially working out how I want the song

to sound and then generating that sound in the project. Sometimes I’ll hear in my head how the song should sound, but then find it hard to transfer that onto the computer which is very frustrating. Another difficult part is that I never have anyone to bounce ideas off, so it’s all down to me to come up with musical ideas. It’s very satisfying when I come up with a good idea, but I think the process would be quicker, easier and probably more enjoyable if I had someone else there who also had ideas and influences.

### What’s the best bit of advice you could give to up and coming singer-songwriters like yourself?

I’d hardly say I’m a seasoned pro, but having been doing this for about six months I’d say the first piece of advice is to really believe in yourself. It’s cheesy, but you will have moments where you’ll start convincing yourself that you’re not good enough or the goal is too big for you to achieve. Once you stop believing, it’s hard to look past. My other bit of advice is don’t be that musician who complains about how the industry ‘isn’t about the music anymore’ and ‘it’s not fair’.

The people who say that will never ever make it today because they expect the label to do everything. You have to be willing to build your social media, post about upcoming gigs, and think about how to package your songs. The people who do that well are the people who are successful today. Lewis Capaldi is a prime example - he saw that social media was a game and he played it. He is also an incredible singer which helps, but he wouldn’t be

where he is today if he refused to put time into his presence on social media. Just be prepared to do a lot of things that aren’t music related, but are definitely important to your career

### Living in York for three years, you must have the low-down on the music scene - what’s your favourite music venue to play here?

I used to play the Fossgate Social Open mic night a bit. That was a great one because it was a small room, but it was always packed and people actually listened to you play, which is very rare at most open mic nights. The Nook has a decent open mic night too.

### What should we expect from you in the next few months?

Hopefully lots of gigs in London and Brighton (as many as I can get basically). I’m going to start filling out my YouTube channel so I’ll be spending a lot of time editing videos (an example of doing something not directly music related). I’m going to be doing a 30 day song challenge where I do a cover of a song a day, and each day I pick a song that has a certain meaning e.g a song with a colour in the title, a song that makes you want to dance etc. I also have a few songs ready/in the pipeline to be released. I’m also hoping to have four-five more songs released this year if everything goes to plan so I’m very excited about that!

### Where do you hope to be in five years?

In an ideal world, I’ll be on a stadium tour in America, off the back of many nominations (maybe a couple of wins) from award season. I’ll still be hungover from the Brits after party, and I’ll have had my second UK No.1. If I was being more realistic, I’d like to be selling out 400-500 capacity venues and have a decent sized, engaged fanbase. Maybe I’d like to be able to earn enough to live from my music as well so I don’t have to do any other work on the side.

## EDITOR’S NOTE



**MALU ROCHA**  
NICKELBACK, NOUSE  
AND NETFLIX

I don’t know whether I should be proud or sad about the fact that when I type in ‘N’ into my internet browser, the *Nouse* website comes up instead of Netflix. I don’t know when this happened, but it did; and here we are, and I love it. But enough self-proclamation.

Just in case there are any future journalists interested in joining *Nouse* while reading the paper, a fair word of warning: as soon as you step into our office, the rules of time suddenly aren’t applicable anymore. You’ll get to the office at around 11am, pop to Nisa for a quick lunch snack and before you know it, it’s 6pm and dark outside. It really is a portal that defies all laws of time space continuum, but I genuinely couldn’t ask for a better way to be spending my ‘free’ time while at university.

One of the hot topics around the office this week was how most of us will spend days writing an essay for our degrees, but somehow are able to bash out 1,200-word articles for MUSE within a couple of hours.

This just goes to show that when given a platform to talk about issues and topics that we’re passionate about, we really thrive. I mean, what better evidence do you need other than the fact I wrote an article on Nickelback? Whether the topic is which high-street lounge-wear makes the cut, procrastinating your days away on the BFI film archive, or tips on cheap Yorkshire day trips with your housemates, I’m so glad to be a part of a student media group that provides students the platform to talk about whatever tickles their fancy.

We have created our own little community of wonderful editors who dedicate hours to this paper. For this edition in particular, we have some saucy intersectional collaborations that I have to say are quite interesting. From Ellie (Deputy Features Editor) writing a Gaming article on the appeal of medieval videogames, to Annabel (Food and Drink Editor) reviewing Tame Impala’s *The Slow Rush* for Music, it’s simply amazing to see the results that come from cultivating such an open and encouraging environment.

Alex, my darling, as always, you have kept me sane during this week and I couldn’t thank you enough for being the younger big brother I never had. It is such a pleasure to help guide this crazy ship that is MUSE with you and your incredible music taste. This of course, extends to Jonny and Pat who, apart from being the backbone of this paper, have graced the world with an in-depth analysis of scotch eggs.

And to you dear reader, I hope you enjoy reading this paper as much as we enjoy making it. That’s all from me folks. Enjoy!

## IMAGE CREDITS

Cover: DC / Vertigo comics  
Left (top to bottom) : United International Pictures, Oxfamnovib, Fox Searchlight Pictures, public domain  
Right (All): George Wilks





# VERTIGO: THE PUNK ROCK OF COMICS

IN THE WAKE OF VERTIGO COMICS'S CLOSURE, HASHAAM YAQOOB LOOKS AT THE IMPRINT'S MOST CULTURALLY INFLUENTIAL COMICS

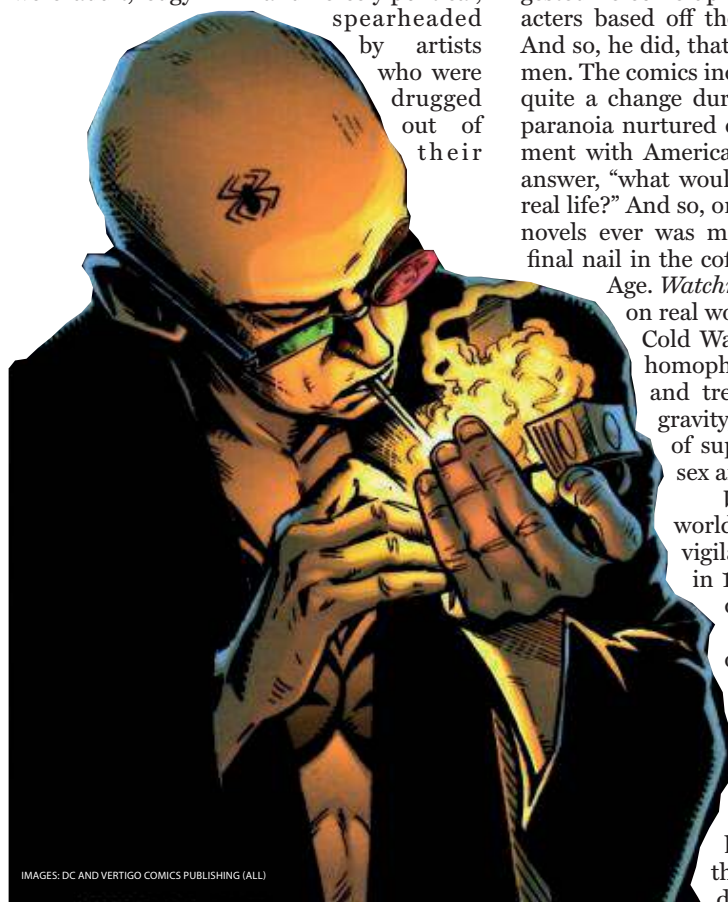
It's 1954, we're still relling in the economic boom of World War Two, and some boring old Puritan named Charles Murphy enacts the comics code of authority. This heavily censored comics in a bid to protect innocent little children. Batman was no longer a tortured, pulpy vigilante, who dressed as a bat and carried a Glock 22 to shoot small time drug dealers in the face. Now he is a whimsical old man who rejects guns and works in tandem with the police, all while secretly recruiting vulnerable young children to become borderline child soldiers against crime.

However, all this came to pass by the time the 1970s came around, when two countries found themselves in the middle of a major existential conflict, which we aptly named the Cold War. America and Russia really wanted to blow each other up but in doing so they risked apocalyptic consequences. As you can see this is a very sensitive and nuanced problem. The anxieties

“

DC were changing the opinion of what comic book storytelling was capable of

and fear of being wiped out at any moment caused society's worldview to become bleaker and more cynical, and they expressed this as they always do, through art. We had the punk movement in the 70s. And it's during this time in which a slew of underground comics and artists started to crop up, comics that were adult, edgy and fiercely political, spearheaded by artists who were drugged out of their



IMAGES: DC AND VERTIGO COMICS PUBLISHING (ALL)

minds on LSD. The result of this was the softening and eventual destruction of the comics code of authority. This allowed the Big Two (Marvel and DC) to take some more risks.

But it was DC during this time who pushed the envelope and changed opinions of what comic book storytelling was capable of. This long diatribe brings us to the creation of the Vertigo label owned by DC. What caused DC to open this brand-new label devoted solely to more adult and complex comics? Well, the answer to that is the British. In the 1980s, a group of British comic book writers flooded the American comics market, injecting a much-needed bit of British cynicism to it. The two most renowned of these individuals were Alan Moore and Neil Gaiman, who created *Watchmen* and *Sandman* respectively. These titles caught the attention of Karen Berger and inspired her to persuade DC to make more comic books like these; however, as DC still had a reputation that had to appeal to kids, Berger suggested opening a publishing label under the DC brand. This publishing label was called Vertigo comics, which was established in 1993. Unfortunately, as of January 2020, DC has announced that Vertigo comics will be closing, and their adult titles will be incorporated into the DC universe, for better or for worse. But it was worse, much worse.

I thought it would be fun to look at some of the more popular comics in the Vertigo library and analyse the legacy of this influential publishing label.

## Watchmen

In 1983, DC acquired a fresh batch of IP, from the closure of Charleston Comics. These characters went unused for a quite a bit of time, until an angry wizard (he really is a wizard) named Alan Moore showed up to the scene and asked if he could use them for a 12-issue run and have some of them killed off in the end. DC obviously declined, not happy with Moore wanting to throw away their recently acquired golden nuggets. They suggested he come up with some original characters based off the Charlton Superheroes. And so, he did, that idea became the *Watchmen*. The comics industry was going through quite a change during this time. Cold War paranoia nurtured cynicism and disillusionment with Americana. Moore's idea was to answer, "what would superheroes be like in real life?" And so, one of the greatest graphic novels ever was made. *Watchmen* was the final nail in the coffin to the jolly old Silver Age. *Watchmen* treated events based on real world scenarios such as the Cold War, McCarthyism, sexism, homophobia and mental health, and treated them with serious gravity, deconstructing the idea of superheroes with appalling sex and violence.

*Watchmen* is set in a world in which costumed vigilantes began to emerge in 1938; other than this key difference the rest of universe closely mirrors our own. The story follows a group of heroes called the Minutemen which has been disbanded for nine years because of a government Act which outlawed costumed vigilantism. The catalyst to their reunion is the murder of one of their former

members.

*Watchmen* was important and groundbreaking in the comics industry, it was so good it ruined comics for the next decade or so, even being one of the reasons the comic industry crashed in the 1990s.

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V for Vendetta is rife with fascism, white supremacism, and the horrors of a police state

Every hack began to write stories that were dark and provocative but superficial and lacked any of the nuance and careful dedication to making the idea work. *Watchmen* is also important in literary circles too: it's studied in universities, it's been the only graphic novel to have been included in *Time's* best 100 novels ever made. If you recognise some plot elements or tone from my description of the comic, you'd realise the impact it has had on superhero movies like *Captain America: Civil War* which used the same idea of monitoring or banning superheroes within its plot, the entirety of DC universe's botched attempts to bring their characters to life, or *The Incredibles*, which swapped political murder mystery for a domestic drama.

## Sandman

Neil Gaiman wanted to write a superhero comic based on the DC hero Sandman, a silly character who wore a gas mask and put bad guys to sleep. Gaiman's dream was answered when Karen Berger asked him to write his idea for DC, unfortunately he couldn't use the original characters, and with the idea of a deathly skinny man with long black hair, imprisoned and waiting for his captor to die, came a 75-issue epic fantasy published in 1989. *Sandman* jumpstarted Gaiman's career as a successful novelist of fantasy stories such as *Coraline*, *American Gods*, and *Stardust*. It was a pivotal moment for DC. After the massive success of *Watchmen*, they needed one more hit to ensure that this approach would be sustainable. And it was. Critically and commercially *Sandman* was a

hit. In a landscape dominated by superheroes, Sandman was different. It was an epic tale that mixed real world history with deep and creative fantasy. It followed Morpheus, the god of dreams and granter of wishes, after he was imprisoned for 70 years by occultist and sets out to rebuild his kingdom while undoing past sins. *Sandman* is a story about the purpose of stories. And more importantly what is the point of dreams? It deals with the consequences of desire, while introducing you to characters who are brimming with personality. It also deals with the importance of having a dream, a goal, or a wish to strive for. This series is brilliant and if you love the fantasy genre you owe it to yourself to give this a read.

## V for Vendetta

This is going to be the last time I talk about our favourite wizard, I promise. *V for Vendetta* is just as influential as *Watchmen*. Britain in the 1980s was also a bleak time. Thatcher was reigning, and austerity was at an all time high, and so Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons paired up once more to create a political tour de force of a comic. Standing up to fascism and fighting against injustice is the heart and soul. It was written by Alan Moore and David Lloyd, and is set in an alternative future history, one where the really-left wing Labour Party win the 1983 General Election (at the time they were well ahead in the polls) and cancel all nuclear weapons, a manifesto pledge. There is a nuclear war, but Britain is spared the attack and survives. However, the country is thrown into economic chaos and from it emerges Norsefire, an anti-immigration, anti-miscegenation, anti-gay, anti-Semitic party who are elected and enact a fascist state. The story follows a young girl named Evey who is saved by an anarchic terrorist named V. Alan Moore took the idea of superheroes and put them into a context of fighting against systemic oppression.

The world of *V for Vendetta* is rife with fascism, white supremacism, and the horrors of a police state. And its warnings about what Britain or any country can easily become remain relevant to this day. The impact of the story is visible, the iconic Guy Fawkes mask that V dons, has become a universal symbol of protest and revolt. It revised the historical figure Guy Fawkes from a religious nutter to a symbol of fighting for what you believe in. It also spawned the very popular film made by the Wachowski sisters.

## Hellblazer

In 1993, DC had now decided to go through with opening the Vertigo publishing label and all those previous titles I mentioned would be housed under this brand new label. The first major Vertigo success was likely *John Constantine: Hellblazer*. You might recognise the name from the *Constantine* film by the Wachowski sisters who horrifically butchered the source





material and caused Alan Moore to force the film to take his name off the credits. *Constantine* is a great story whose impact can be felt in media through shows like *Supernatural*, and pretty much those other paranormal shows with Castiel being a clear homage to the Hell-blazer.

John was originally meant to be a one issue character to be killed off in an issue of *Swamp Thing*, however the character

proved to be immensely popular and span off into his own solo series. The first run of the series was written by Jamie Delano. The story followed John Constantine, who is a chain-smoking con artist and criminal by trade and an occult detective by happenstance. Delano managed to flesh out the character and ground him reality very close to ours. The comics are rife with political satire; Delano himself despised Thatcher and you could feel through each issue even culminating with John imploring the UK is going to hell when Thatcher is elected Prime Minister. This set a precedent for the comic for each upcoming writer to use it as a way of venting their frustrations

Vertigo has helped push the envelope for comics, the industry is a completely free landscape

about society through stories that combined pulp noir with supernatural horror. John may be a bastard, but he was also a hero for social justice. He didn't solve problems through magic but instead through his quick wit and cunning personality.

**The Invisibles**

As you can see, Vertigo really tried to distinguish itself from superhero comics either by deconstructing them or telling different stories in the medium. The best way I can describe *The Invisibles* is that it sure is different. Written by the legend that is Grant Morrison, who is the comic industry's crazy uncle who's most likely to give you your first beer and won't stop talking about the time he was abducted by aliens. First published in 1994, the series loosely follows the doings of a single cell of The Invisible College, a secret organization battling against physical and psychic oppression using time travel, magic, meditation, guns and kung fu. The first part of the story follows a rebellious Liverpudlian named Dan McGowan who, after experienc-

ing a vision of The Beatles, is recruited by a ragtag group of leather-clad freedom fighters who use avatars of themselves to travel through time and space because reality is merely an illusion. Dan is dubbed "The One" that will free humanity from its oppression by soulless evil creatures named Archons who

invaded earth after their universe was dying. If any of these plot elements seem familiar to you, you're probably thinking of *The Matrix*. There's a lot more similarities between the two, from the leap of faith from a building, to blue substances, and a magic mirror

that will help you open your eyes. Unfortunately, the Wachowskis have always worn their influences on their sleeves but neglect to mention one of the main inspirations for their film, there's even stories of *The Invisibles* comic being given to costume designers of the film on set, showing that they were at least aware of it. But if you like trippy post modern literature give *The Invisibles* a shot.

**Transmetropolitan**

*Transmetropolitan* can probably be summed in one sentence. 'Hunter S Thompson in the future.' The series was written by Warren Ellis in 1997 and first published under Helix comics but later under Vertigo once the company closed, essentially saving it from being cancelled. This series follows popular columnist Spider Jerusalem, who, after being roped in to finish his book deal, must return to the city after his self-imposed exile.

Spider is an odd protagonist for a book, he stomps his feet and throws tantrums like a child, he's cynical and abrasive to a fault, he's often rude and demeaning to his assistants who are often young women, and he indulges in every drug imaginable on a constant basis. But in the twisted world of *Transmetropolitan*, he is the hero because you see throughout the story that he does indeed have a soul and that he cares, he cares deeply about the injustices of society and forcing people to look at the aspects of society they tend to ignore. His pretentious pursuit of the truth at all costs is as admirable as it is insane. The book is hilarious, outrageous and highly relevant. The world of *Transmet* is mean, bigoted, and accurately predicted the Trump era of politics in my view, in terms of capturing the vulgar absurdity of the current political scene. Jerusalem is pitched against two political oppo-

nents: The Beast, a physically imposing bully with an authoritarian streak and caters to nationalist populism, and The Smiler, a cunning and charming individual who represents a liberal alternative until Spider uncovers more and more sinister motivations and a person who wants to be president just because he can, or to satisfy his ego. These two individuals represent our greatest fears when it comes to the political elites. Sir Patrick Stewart is its greatest fan, and even writes the introduction to the books in the latest editions. So, if you like witty and smart political satire then give *Transmetropolitan* a read.

**Preacher**

With the comic's code of authority pretty much abolished, how far can artists go? Well, in the 1970s it was damn far in the underground world of comics. In terms of mainstream comics, things still seemed a bit more sanitised. Along came *Preacher* in 1995 written by Garth Ennis. *Preacher* is a hyper-violent, blasphemous, and foul-mouthed story about a preacher who, with his ex-girlfriend and his vampire best friend, is on a quest to find God and maybe put a bullet through his head. *Preacher* was known for its offensive and edgy nature, but it is a story with a lot of heart and pathos and unlike other comics at the time it knew how to be edgy and provocative; the racists, homophobes and bigots were all the big baddies in the books. It made fun of conservatism in America and posed surprisingly poignant philosophical questions about religion and the nature of God. Also, the comic is just balls to the walls insanity from start to finish.

**Fables**

All this talk of politics is getting boring, let's move on to something only a bit more light-hearted. What if Fairy tale creatures came to Earth as refugees and hid amongst us in plain sight? First published in 2002 and ending in 2015, written by Bill Willingham,

letown and is on a path of redemption after living a terrible life in his home world. The story is endlessly charming with a surprising amount of darkness and grit. Bill Willing-

Transmetropolitan can probably be summed up in one sentence: Hunter S. Thompson in the future.

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ham took these characters from stories, myths and legend and treated them as real people. All are multidimensional and dynamic. And any story that makes you ship Snow White and The Big Bad Wolf can't be bad. And yes, the TV show *Once Upon A Time* absolutely ripped off the concept and executed a subpar television show for it.

With all the work Vertigo has done to help push the envelope for mainstream comics, the comics industry is almost a completely free landscape, where any sort of story can be told and become popular. We have creator owned publishers like ID comics which are telling some fantastically unique stories and independent publishing is becoming popular too. The goal of Vertigo has been completed to push DC and mainstream comics in a different direction, one that isn't scared to take at least some risk. And with so many others doing what Vertigo is doing, they hardly seem relevant now. It makes sense for them to finally close production. But with DC's money-grabbing hands already foaming at the mouth to milk these cash cows, the sacredness of Vertigo comics now seems tainted. We've already got a *Watchmen* sequel with the sole intention to profit off the *Watchmen* brand in the form of *Doomsday Clock*. It's a shame because these are great stories that were driven by creators with something to say, and not some middle-aged man in editorial wondering which idea will bring in the most profits.

So, with that said, it's time to say farewell to Vertigo comics, and thanks.



IMAGES: DC AND VERTIGO COMICS PUBLISHING (ALL)



## ARTS TEAM RECOMMENDS: DYSTOPIAN NOVELS

1984

Everyone always bangs on about Big Brother and Room 101 and forgets that there's a bit where a rat chews through a guy's face.



IMAGE: HARVIL SECKER

FAHRENHEIT 451

In a world where books are burnt freely, I would bring *The Da Vinci Code* to burn *The Da Vinci Code*.



IMAGE: BALLANTINE BOOKS

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

Gangs, Violence, Torture and Beethoven. Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* is an utterly insane yet compelling near-future dystopia.



IMAGE: ANTHONY BURGESS

THE HANDMAID'S TALE

Everyone can't stop banging on about how goddamn relevant it is; now it's a critically acclaimed TV show and even more depressing.



IMAGE: MCCLELLAND & STEWART

THE HUNGER GAMES

The most depressing and bleak thing about reading *The Hunger Games* is the prose itself.



IMAGE: SCHOLASTIC CORPORATION

# ORWELLIAN THEATRE ADAPTATIONS

MALU ROCHA REVIEWS PLATFORM'S ANIMAL FARM AND LOOKS AT ORWELL'S NOVELS ON STAGE

As I was halfway through writing this article, I found myself questioning whether this will be the first time I finally admit to myself that the phrase 'the book is always better' is flawed. I have always been a big believer that the original version

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Orwell's texts are an exception to the rule that 'the book is always better'

of any story in the textual format that it was first intended to be in could never be beaten by any sort of adaptation. And I still stand by the idea that that is true almost 99 per cent of the time, but maybe George Orwell's most critically-acclaimed novels fall into that one per cent. Last year I somehow found myself spontaneously in a West End production of George Orwell's *1984*. I went in with slightly low expectations because I was absolutely adamant that nothing could even come close to beating the masterpiece that was his novel, but I was pleasantly surprised.

I read *1984* in school countless times for one of my exams and it's safe to say I now know that book like the back of my hand; and I fall more and more in love with it every time I read it. What I didn't expect though, was to be even more impressed with its theatre adaptation. When I found out that TFTI Platform was putting on a production of Orwell's *Animal Farm*, I simply had to go to test out this newly found theory of mine and see if another one of his novels would be outshined by its theatre counterpart.

*Animal Farm* tells the story of a group of farm animals who decide to rebel against their human master with the intention of creating a fairer society where all the animals are treated equally. The novel is an allegory reflecting the historical events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917 and onto the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union. Orwell himself has described his novel as a satirical tale against Stalin.

Ian Wooldridge's adaptation of *Animal Farm* was selected as Platform's spring term production to be directed by first year student Fin Avison. Platform is a society exclusive to the Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media department and its students. It puts out one production every year and they are entirely put together, cast, crewed and directed by students within the department. So, I went in knowing that this was in no way going to be a high-end production with a budget of multiple figures, but I wasn't disappointed.

Because it is a student production, it is unavoidable that some elements within the play weren't going to be wholly 'up to scratch'. Some actors did double take a couple of their lines in the show's opening night, but this did not distract from the play whatsoever. The most notable aspect of Fin Avison's direction was the undeniable attention he paid to how each character presented themselves as animals, and it completely paid off.

The animalistic qualities were embodied by the actors very graciously and in an incredibly convincing manner. I could instantly tell who the pigs, the horses and the sheep were simply by the way they held themselves. From the realistic animal noises (especially from the pig characters) to the way they stood and walked on stage, the amount of work that went into this is clearly visible. However, the make-up and articles of clothing used to distinguish between the animals were somewhat distracting and unnecessary; the same message could have been delivered in a perhaps much simpler way simply by exploring the actors' body languages more in depth.

Acting in a George Orwell play must be hard but acting as an animal in a George Orwell must be nearly impossible, and the student actors accepted that challenge to great success.

It's only fair to highlight some stellar performances, particularly from Alex Valletta playing Squealer and Char Hill playing Snowball, both of whom perfectly embodied their characters, paying attention to every minor detail. It's also worth pointing out Emily Ellerby Hunt who delivered Molly's lines hilariously, making a secondary character become one of the star performances.

Fin also added quite a few comedic elements not present in the novel that were very cleverly and smoothly integrated into the play, significantly elevating it to a higher standard. For example, just as some of the characters were reading out one of the seven commandments, one of the pig characters would sneak behind them on the stage and quietly place an amendment to it before they were able to finish their line, at which point the argument was no longer valid because the commandment had been adjusted. This in turn always played to the dictator's advantage and made the other animals seem silly and one step behind. While this plot element was present in the novel, it was nowhere near as funny compared to how it came across on stage.

The text also lends itself to a theatre

play quite well because the audience gets to actually see the characters chant and stomp their feet in unison on stage, something which they did quite often as a symbol of conformity and subordination. There was, of course, also the added benefit of hearing the whole cast hum along to 'Beasts of England', which was extremely moving. My biggest criticism would have to be that the play's ending was quite anticlimactic. I was hoping for a memorable and touching delivery of what is arguably the novel's most famous line: "all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others". This iconic phrase was somewhat merged into the rest, which made it lose some of its resonance. However, much praise should be given to Platform's adaptation of this Orwellian piece because it truly goes to show how student productions are now held to a very high standard.

When adapting Orwell's novels to the theatre, however, some aspects of his unique sense of storytelling are inevitably lost, especially when it comes to the characters. When reading the first few lines introducing a new character in a book, the reader gets to construct the character in their head bit

by bit, slowly getting to know them in their own pace. However, when watching a play, the character is already fully materialised in front of you from the very first moment that they step onto that stage.

That takes away the privilege of being able to imagine a character, with all their little quirks, in your head while reading. Each person's imaginary character will be slightly different even if they're all reading the same description from the novel, but when watching a play, the entire audience is presented with the same version of that character. They are completely laid out on the stage; there is no mystery to their physical appearance, their body language, their accent, or the way they subtly react to other characters.

On the other hand, one of the many benefits of watching theatre adaptations is that they highlight the pace and impact of certain moments to the audience. Particularly for Orwellian pieces, the repetition of phrases is a very powerful tool and theatre as a medium allows them to be even more prominent.

When the audience hears those phrases being chanted at them, it can provide for a very impactful and quite disorientating effect that fully immerses you in the story, something that the novels simply don't achieve. There is nothing quite like hearing "2 + 2 = 5" or "four legs good, two legs bad" being performed at you with such force and willpower; it's really moving. Perhaps George Orwell's novels really do lend themselves well to the theatrical form. The social realism quality of his novels combined with the surrealist aspects unique to theatre provide a combination that translates very impactfully on the stage.



IMAGE: GILL YUE



IMAGE: GILL YUE



# THEATRE REVIEW: DRAMA SOCIETY'S ROAD

ALICE MANNING REVIEWS THE DRAMA SOCIETY'S LATEST PRODUCTION, ROAD, A POIGNANT EXPLORATION OF DIVISION AND STRUGGLE

Jim Cartwright's first play, *Road* (1986), follows the impoverished residents of an unspecified Lancashire road as they conduct their everyday lives. The play addresses the representation of the working class, both through the mockery of traditional sources of public knowledge – as is seen by the social scientist (Seb Vaughan) who attempts to inveigle himself with the residents – and in portraying the characters naturally using everyday situations and colloquial speech. *Road*, however, also refers to the endless journey each character undertakes to try to find resolution and purpose in their lives – as the audience, we never see beyond this road; just as the characters never actually find their resolution.

The decision to stage a play set in and written after several years of a Thatcher government clearly plays to the times, with Boris Johnson's newly-elected government continuing the Conservative reign that is now nearly a decade old. With the precarious state of the world, for students watching, the existential doubt that plagues the characters is not too great a stretch of the imagination. *Road* is not light-hearted, with frequent swearing, references to domestic violence and suicide. Each character finds their own coping strategy – whether in alcohol, sex, imagined murder, or simply in narrating the events of *Road*, as eclectic 'tour guide' Scullery (Will Goodwin) does with glee and poignance.

While a subtext of poverty ensures that the outlook for *Road*'s residents is bleak, we

witness humour in the snapshots of their lives that are put to us, as each tries to distract themselves from an underlying sense of doom. There was some powerful acting from the student cast of this production. The stand-out performance came from Liv Maltby as Joey, who provided a harrowing portrayal of desperation in a person driven to breaking

A harrowing portrayal of desperation in a broken person

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point. The quartet (Izzy Baxter, Dom Rice, Lucy Finnighan, Alex Buckley) who enliven a final scene where alcohol inspires impassioned monologues, as each character acknowledges their personal unhappiness, approached this with zeal, humour and hope.

It was brilliant to see the dynamics of female friendship so poignantly and intelligently explored in *Road*, especially in the run-up to International Women's Day. While not ignorant of the sexist attitudes of its era, *Road* emphasised relationships where women supported and understood each other, with realistic interactions between mother and daughter,

and between young friends.

The production team did an excellent job bringing the setting to life. This community is a collection of scrap-heaps dotted with people, emphasising the state of poverty such a community would have experienced in real life. A graffiti-painted wall and tips of rubbish everywhere evoked a dismal atmosphere that was as bleak as the lives of the characters. Choosing to maintain this for indoor scenes emphasised the idea that the literal waste was an apt counterpart to the figurative waste – of human lives – as reflected upon by the characters themselves. Musical choices made the setting more realistic, relating the community to the world beyond their road through contemporary pop culture. The producers also did a good job evoking the road through sound effects, with passing cars and other forms of transport included.

Comedic sections met with rapturous laughter, while more emotionally charged moments held the audience in a trance-like state of silence.

Unfortunately, distinctions between characters became unclear at times through the doubling of actors for different roles. Adding to the confusion was the way in which the play had no traditional sense of plot; however, the meandering nature of the play accurately put across the meaningless of living felt by the characters. Though difficult to witness at times, *Road* had plenty to be experienced as the audience was almost treated as members of the community. Ending on a note of hope – “somehow, I'll escape!” – the play invites us

to view this 80s Lancashire community in more than one lens, as a place where people were not ignorant of their lot; struggling to cope, and yet struggling on, laughing along the 'road'.



IMAGE: ANNA BUNCH

# EXPLORING GRIEF AND DECEIT THROUGH THEATRE

KIRSTEN MURRAY REVIEWS DEAR EVAN HANSEN, A MUSICAL EXPLORING THE CONSEQUENCES OF GRIEF AND DECEIT IN MODERN LIFE

It had been in the calendar for almost a year, yet I went to watch *Dear Evan Hansen* not quite knowing what to expect.

I had refrained from listening to the soundtrack and only had one review from a friend who said it was amazing and incredibly emotional. Watching it not knowing what to expect, I can confirm that I was definitely not disappointed. Unlike other musical productions of the 21st century, *Dear Evan Hansen* doesn't lean on glitz or glamour to draw in audiences; it's minimalist and grounded in reality. It conveyed a story which carefully balanced tragic, comic and musical elements with a deftness not yet seen in modern theatre.

The story focuses around Evan Hansen, a teenage boy struggling with anxiety, while trying to hide the extent of his troubles from his busy single mum. Evan is an instantly endearing protagonist, not wanting to worry

his mother but feeling equally as isolated at home as he does at school. Encouraged by his therapist, Evan writes letters to himself to reflect on the day and his feelings, however on this particular occasion his letter is intercepted,

by Connor Murphy. Connor is also struggling with his mental health and a drug addiction, and when he commits suicide, the letter addressed 'Dear Evan Hansen' is all his family have to cling onto to try and figure out why he took his life.

From here the plot unfolds as Evan, with the help of his obligatory friend Jared, fabricates a whole friendship between himself and Connor. Throughout the production this lie grows and grows until Evan is trapped in a difficult situation, caught between a lie and the truth. The story perfectly captures the position of isolation that so many

of us feel growing up and demonstrates how grief brings people together in weird and wonderful ways as those bereaved search for something to cling onto. While the plot is quite dark and filled with serious issues, it is equally balanced between amazing moments of light-heartedness and comedy.

The relationship between Evan and Jared (a geeky technological whiz) grows throughout the performance and carries the main comedic elements. In 'Sincerely, Me' their teasing love-hate relationship sees Jared try to construct a gay fantasy between Evan and Connor and ridicule Evan's love of trees.

Furthermore we are invited to laugh as Evan confesses to all his worries which constantly consume him, such as his hand getting sweaty when he meets Zoe (his love interest and Connor's sister), or him becoming conscious of it not being sweaty, so that it becomes sweaty and the endless cycle that goes round in his head. Physically Evan's character is built up of many habits and ticks that convey his awkwardness throughout and show the extent to which he struggles with social situations.

The music is interlaced seamlessly as part of the plot and it is often through the songs that the characters express their true emotions and confused feelings of grief. From the most recognisable 'Waving Through a Window', where Evan first expresses his feelings of being "on the outside always looking in", to 'Requiem' where the Murphy family struggle to deal with their grief, to 'Good For You', a strong ballad from Heidi (Evan's mum) – all the songs carry huge amounts of emotion. In

my opinion the most moving song comes just before the interval, 'You Will Be Found' – this number encapsulates all the play represents, people on the outside coming together and

The story perfectly captures the position of isolation that so many of us feel

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realising that someone is always there for you.

The unique set design displays screens across the stage, highlighting the rapid spread of social media in today's society, and how even though you may feel alone, your words have the ability to reach millions. In light of recent events with the tragic death of Caroline Flack, I think the show's message of 'you will be found' is more poignant and significant than ever.

I would recommend this production to any theatre enthusiast; it has the ability to pull every emotion out of you in a way that is as exhilarating as it is emotionally draining.

It unifies its audience, forcing them to look outside themselves and remember that we are always part of something bigger than ourselves.



IMAGE: EVAN HANSEN PRESS PACK



# THIRD YEAR REFLECTIONS: NO REGRETS?

WITH ONE TERM LEFT OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR, ELLIE SMITH ASKS GRADUATES AND FINALISTS TO REVEAL THEIR BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENTS WITH UNIVERSITY LIFE

For third year students, we are four months away from graduation. With upcoming deadlines and the increasing pressure of job hunting, the reminder is probably not necessary. Regardless, the end of the spring term provides the perfect opportunity to reflect on the previous two and a half years and, if necessary, change our approach for the final semester of our undergraduate degrees. For first and second-year students, we are four months away from the end of another academic year. While perhaps less significant, it is still prime time to reflect and consider whether you have been making the most of your time at York. It is time to consider the regrets of those who have gone before you: finalists and graduates.

Instructing students to 'make the most of your time at university' is a cliché and, admittedly, many of the regrets I received in response to my questioning seem akin to an advertisement in a university prospectus – 'you should do this!' and 'you could do this as you

“ Finalists' regrets were surprisingly recurrent and predictable

study at our amazing University!' – but most of the graduates' and finalists' regrets were surprisingly recurrent and predictable. Few of the responses diverged from a typical pattern: lack of engagement with societies; not considering a career early enough; a poor work/life balance; not accessing university support systems; and finally, not having suitably recorded their time at university.

Although I only asked students from the University of York, none of the answers were particularly unique to our university. Rather, they can be summarised under two categories. First, the 'university experience' is an in-demand ideal. It's an expectation most people want to live up to and are disappointed if their experience doesn't correspond to this. Second, graduate jobs require experience alongside a degree and studying needs to be matched with some form of extracurricular that aids employability.

These regrets are not major issues regarding a wrong course or a wrong choice of

university. They are the more common regrets of those who had a generally good time at university but could have perhaps made use of their time as a student a little more usefully to prepare for graduate life.

Consequently, many of the regrets represent what the interviewee would have done in an ideal scenario. Great efforts go into living away from home and studying for three years. Nobody is constantly proactive or behaves in an ideal manner. The cliché instruction 'make the most of your opportunities!' sounds easier in theory than in reality. Nevertheless, here are graduates and finalists' greatest regrets and an attempt at solving them for either our last semester or our remaining years in York.

The most popular regret from those I queried was lack of involvement with societies. Opportunities to take up a new sport or hobby are fewer outside of the student bubble, whether because the industrial town you've moved to (surprisingly) doesn't have an Octopush movement or Taylor Swift appreciation group in the community hall, or because working eight hours a day with an hour commute each way is more exhausting than a twenty minute walk to the library. It's also more expensive to take up a new activity outside of university than pay £5 – £10 for a society membership.

While taking up a new hobby at university is easier than after graduation, lack of engagement with societies is often not caused by laziness. Term time study can be intense and mustering the energy to exercise after volunteering or meeting your committee is hard, or a long stint in the library, requiring time-management. You need to be passionate. Albeit, with hundreds of activities across campus, there must be at least one that incites some passion in you.

For first years and second years, sampling a wide range of societies seems the most sensible solution. Always attend Freshers Fair and Refreshers Fair. Try a 'Give it a Go' session. On social media, like any society that you are interested in and when elections and by-elections are promoted, attend them.

For those leaving university in June, it's still not too late to volunteer. Volunteer opportunities for summer term are currently populating the Careers Gateway, many for only a handful of hours a week. It is manageable in an exam-intense term. Engaging with other organisations requires time management, but then there's a skill to be discussed in job interviews.

Obviously, involving yourself on the committees of societies is also the perfect material for a CV.

The second most common regret by the soon to be ex-students and current graduates I queried was making the most of career advancement opportunities, or even thinking about a career early enough into their degree.

With most students sliding immediately from sixth form into university, we often haven't considered long term plans or we have changed our mind with the added three years' experience that university provides. This leaves many at graduation with the question 'what next?' rather than with purposed goals. Ideally, first years should be starting to consider what they want to do after their degrees. I personally think it's a rarely experienced ideal, but it still seems to be an ideal nonetheless.

Some third years regretted studying too little. Others regretted studying too much. Despite three years here, this shows that a well-established work-life balance seems to be an elusive phenomenon amongst final year students. Those I interviewed either were required to adopt an industrial work ethic in third year to compensate for second year, or regretted not committing to social plans.

There isn't a simple solution to this. Work hard, but not too hard. It's a difficult balance and the retrospection of graduates and finalists possibly isn't the most useful measurement because having a perfect work-life balance is an ideal that is not readily achieved.

Another frequent comment was finalists' wishing that they had kept a journal. They wished that they could remember more of their time at York. Writing a diary is an impressive achievement, but for many people, it is too difficult to maintain. Personally, regularly taking photos is more achievable.

Document as much as you can and photograph everything. If you can, do your best to get into a habit of writing down your day to day because you will want to look back on it. To quote a friend, if you want remember events that have already passed, there's always "snapchat memories innit." It's a suitably succinct summary.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, several responses included regret over not taking advantage of the Open Door team. Although health services at the University have received criticism in the past for lengthy waiting times, the University has a comprehensive support system created to help students. It is always better to seek help – whether by asking seminar tutors with essay help or seeking signposting from STYMs or college tutors. Many problems can be made into a lighter burden by accessing support systems.

There were other sets

of niche concerns. One person wished they had attended more house parties than gone clubbing. I imagine that this is more of a personal preference that developed over time and the only solution is to encourage your friends to have more house parties in your remaining time at university. This

“ This leaves many at graduation with the question 'what next?' rather than with purposed goals

does reflect that attending university is a personal experience: the reasons you attend and what you choose to take part in depends entirely on your personality and interests. There is no point participating in activities for the sake of a sentence on a job application and no point forcing yourself to attend an event for the sake of a 'university experience'.

Everyone I spoke to seems to have had a genuinely good time at university. These regrets are not grandiose problems plaguing the lives of graduates, but pertinent and somewhat repetitive reflections on how time as a student could be spent a little bit more usefully. The repetition in the answers I received to 'what are your regrets post-university?' has created two solutions: first, go outside and be passionate about something as much as you're able to; and second, consider your career goals as soon as it's feasible.

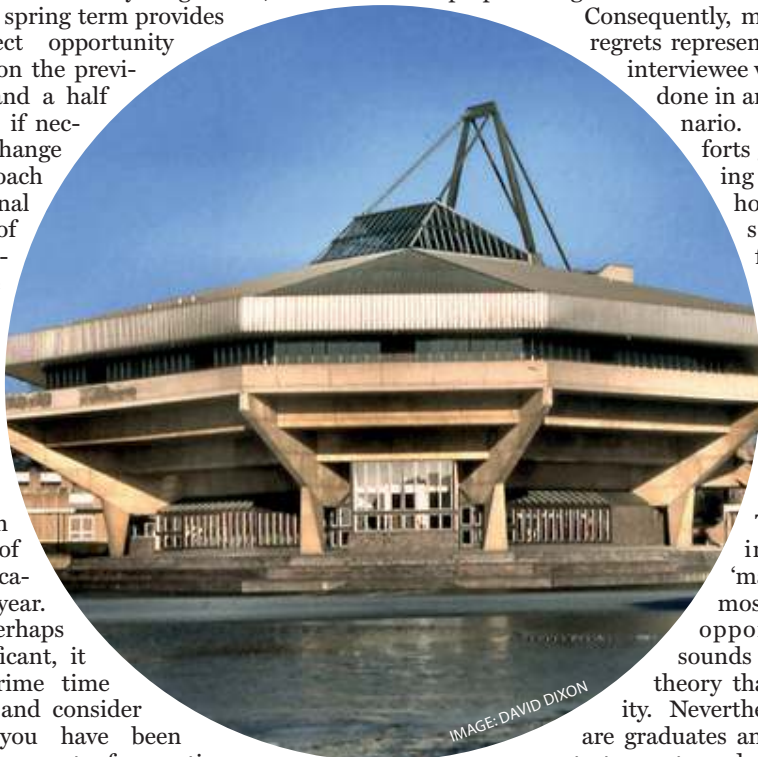


IMAGE: DAVID DIXON



IMAGE: SASKIA STARRITT



# LOUNGEWEAR: TESTING THE HIGHSTREET BRANDS

SARAH GATENBY-HOWELLS TESTS AND COMPARES WHAT THE HIGHSTREET HAS TO OFFER FOR YOUR LOUNGEWEAR REQUIREMENTS

## Primark:

The hoodies are priced at £12 for their basic longer ones but there is a cropped option available for £8. The colour selection is there but is more limited compared to some of the other highstreet stores. It contains the basics: greys, black, but if you were looking for something more colourful you may have to go in search somewhere else. In regards to the material, it is, for the most part, what you would expect from Primark prices. Unfortunately, at the lowest price point comes the lowest quality garments in the group. The cotton is not as soft as the other highstreet options but for a cheap oversized hoodie, it is definitely a good option. The joggers are priced at £8 and again the same thing applies to them as the hoodies, they are however a slimmer fitting jogger and if, like me, you prefer these ones probably aren't the ones for you.

Overall Score: 6/10

The loungewear received a still relatively high score because although the quality is not premium and neither the hoodie nor the joggers would give you much warmth they are still wearable and the ability to get a full loungewear

set for £20 is something you're not going to find anywhere else on the highstreet.

## Topshop:

Starting with the hoodies, their basic 'everyday' one is priced at £20 but they also provide a cropped version at £32 and have many different print and fabric variations going up in price to a £75 shearing hoodie. They have a wide selection encompassing both your usual colours and some more seasonal ones, including baby blue and pink. In terms of the design, they fit really nicely. However, they do have a limited size range, the only options being S, M or L which lets them down a little bit. The quality of the fabric however on these hoodies was definitely above par, they feel thick and are soft on the inside making it the perfect hoodie for both indoor and outdoor use as it would keep you warm. Their matching joggers come in at £25 and have the additional size of XS as well as a petite option. Again, the fabric is similar to the hoodie but what I especially liked with these joggers was their length and fit. They are long enough to reach to your ankles without drooping over trainers and they fit slightly oversized which tends to make them a better option than the slimmer Primark range to lounge about in.

Overall Score: 9/10

These received the highest score as they were not massively overpriced which, sometimes, Topshop items can be, yet they provided a perfect matching set that did not falter on quality.

## H&M:

The hoodies come in at £17.99, although they are lacking in darker options with the darkest colour available being what they call 'greige' a blend of grey and beige. What H&M do really well is the wide variety of sizes ranging from XXS to XXL so however baggy or tight you want your hoodie you'll certainly find your best fit in H&M. They have a large hood and the quality is pretty good, not as soft or as thick as the Topshop ones but still very good. They have three different jogger options: the cheapest being the cotton-blend joggers for £8.99 which have a good array of colours but have a slightly strange waistband that sits in that odd verge between high-waisted and low-waisted. The next option are their sweatpants which come in at £9.99 but again sit in that strange waistline area and are awkwardly tight tending to make them slightly uncomfortable. The best jogger option from H&M is their high waisted ones which have a thinner waistline but fit more oversized. Another issue with all the joggers is that they do come up quite long and so sometimes bunch at the bottom, by your ankle.

Overall Score: 5/10

They joggers really let H&M down here and although I would still recommend the hoodie if you had a discount or voucher, I think you're better off spending the £2 more

for the Topshop version

## Urban Outfitters:

This option is, of course, slightly more pricey but it has to be said that the quality, feel, and look of their hoodies and joggers are very good. They have a huge selection of printed hoodies that are great if you do not want something basic but with this choice comes a price. The best basic hoodie is their 'Skate Hoodie' which comes in at £46 so definitely more of an investment and although it is nice and has more of a slouchy look compared to the Topshop version I think taking into account the difference in price, you should still go for the Topshop version. However, the joggers, priced at £39 are slowly becoming a cult favourite as they have the perfect amount of slouch without looking messy and are good quality with pockets and thick cotton, so if you were looking for an option that was slightly more expensive these would be perfect.

Overall Score: 7/10

I gave Urban Outfitters this score as although they are very expensive for joggers and a hoodie the items are very comfortable with a nice inside fleece and thick enough to keep you warm.

My final judgement would be that Topshop comes first as they provide a perfect mix of price and quality items however if you were looking for something that tiny bit thicker then I would say invest in an Urban Outfitters set. In terms of H&M and Primark I think you would end up paying for what you get, which, depending on what you need them for may be fine but it is something to be aware of.



IMAGE: WWW.URBANOUTFITTERS.COM

# DITCH THE FOUNDATION AND BE KIND TO YOUR SKIN

SOFIA BIELLI LOOKS AT HOW MILLENNIALS ARE MOVING FROM MAKE UP TO SKINCARE AND DISCUSSES THE BEST PRODUCTS ON OFFER

Do you remember that time in high-school when you wanted to look decent but you still managed to wear a foundation with so much orange undertone that you could enter a Trump lookalike contest? Or when your eyebrows were so insanely overplucked they almost disappeared? No? Well I do, and my pictures on Facebook from 2014 are still there to haunt me (let's say I keep them for the memories and not as a morale booster to remind myself of how much better I look now).

Anyways, back then, my drawers were full of wrong shades of makeup and not a single skincare product was in sight. Thankfully, things have changed now, and although it took me a good while to get on the 12 step skincare routine train, my skin is now finally free to breathe and it's very grateful. If skincare was something that I (and many others) considered some kind of remedy our mothers used to slow down the ageing pro-

cess past their 40s, now it's instead the cornerstone of many people's beauty routines, so that most of the time it completely replaces the next step of applying make-up.

With brands like Glossier, who made their motto into 'skincare first, make up second,' millennials have realised that having healthy looking skin is more important than covering up imperfections.

From moisturisers, toners, masks and acids, the list of available products is endless. But how to get glowing skin without breaking the bank? There are many products that cost a fortune just because of their fancy packaging and branding, or because of celebrity-hype (I'm looking at you Gwyneth), but there are also many others which will give the same results without emptying your bank account, or mine for that matter, so here's my list of great stuff I use daily!

Since moisturiser isn't the first step in a beauty routine (I did mention 12 steps didn't

I? It wasn't a joke) I am going to start from the very first product I use even before stepping into the shower: the cleanser. Cleansers are great because you can lather them before taking a shower and rinse them off after you wash your hair, so that your face feels cleansed immediately after stepping out of the shower and you haven't lost any additional time. That's some serious multitasking.

Neutrogena makes great affordable cleansers for any type of skin. Next is toner, which doesn't need to burn the hell out of your face by the way. Toner gets rid of all impurities and leaves the skin soft and smooth. I normally use toners from The Body Shop and I find they do the trick without being overpriced. Serum comes next, and it's one of those finds I will never ever leave. Serums are boosters for your dehydrated or tired skin, there is one for every need your skin might have. I use a great one by The Ordinary, which costs £12 and it is worth every penny.

Because I have silly oily skin, I also use another Ordinary product that reduces the production of skin oils and keeps the shine

away while also getting rid of spots; it's called Niacinamide 10% + Zinc 1% (weird, I know, but it's awesome) and it costs £6. Next up is moisturiser, and boy have I tried many. I must admit I used to have an Aesop one that was lovely, but the price range does not match the amount of money I can spend on it. So if you're looking for something cheap and still lovely, Simple's Ultra Light Liquid Moisturiser is a great alternative, and it costs £4. I also use this as an eye cream, that way I can skip a step and an additional product.

The last steps of our routine have two. Sunscreen is probably the most important step there is, as it shields your skin from UV rays and prevents acne scars, premature ageing and even skin cancer. Ultrasun Face has SPF30 and costs £8. Finally, I never leave the house without misting some thermal water on my face. This wakes me up and makes me look fresher, or at least believe I look fresher. My go-to are La Roche-Posay, Avene or Caudalie, which can all be found under £5.

And here it is, it's not 12 steps but we're pretty close. Happy skincare shopping, and stay away from orange foundations!



IMAGE: TIMOKEFOTO



IMAGE: SKINCARE180



Images: Eilidh Hide  
& Maya Barber  
real men eat quiche



Models:  
Leon Costelloe,  
Harry Weir-McAndrew  
Make-Up:  
Emi Tomlinson





# THE SLOWTHAI PROBLEM AND INTERNET CANCEL CULTURE

SAM CAMPBELL LOOKS AT THE RESPONSE TO SLOWTHAI'S RECENT ACTIONS AND SOME ISSUES WITH CANCEL CULTURE IN MUSIC

Unless you have been living under a rock, you will by now be familiar with the slurry of controversy currently surrounding Slowthai after his appearance at the NME awards earlier this month. What interests me about the Slowthai problem is the conversations which have been struck up around it, and the wider issues implicated within it. Clearly, the subsequent responses to Slowthai's actions connect this issue to the broader cultural trend of 'cancel culture.' How does this trend affect our experience of music and musicians, and at what point does it become unhelpful?

Firstly, I think Slowthai behaved like a massive, weapons-grade bellend. But, I also believe that what he did needs to be viewed with at least a little nuance. On one level, Slowthai clearly has a problem with sexual maturity and engaging with women. This is blindingly obvious. It is fragile masculinity in someone who has clearly yet to finish growing up being literally placed under a spotlight and told to play to a crowd. Someone who took a joke too far, when really they should have stayed in their lane. The worst part of Slowthai's actions is that he made this series of mistakes in a public forum, in a space where he appeared to be normalising some of the ugliest aspects of our culture. Quite rightly, people asked the question of what he and others might do behind closed doors if instances like this occur in public. Nevertheless, Slowthai must be allowed to think about what he has done, and improve and grow as a person.

Being definitively 'cancelled' for Slowthai would not mean simply taking a year's hiatus abroad before returning to busi-

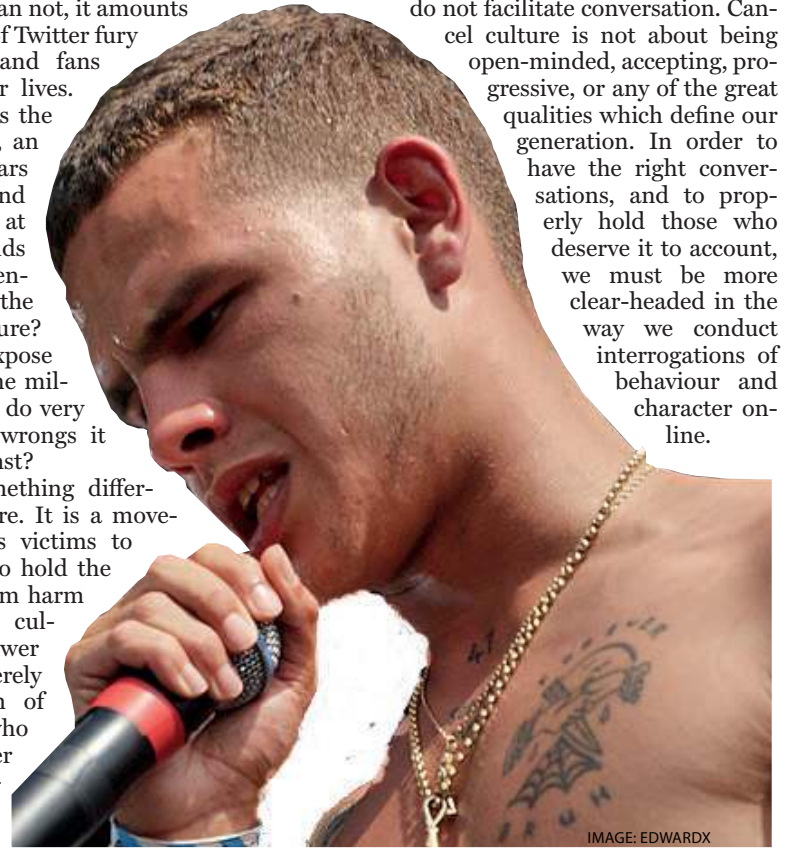
ness as usual; it wouldn't mean waiting a while before selling out a tour and joking about his misdemeanours on stage, as Louis C.K. did. For someone outside of the entertainment establishment, it could mean a return to the deprivation he writes about in his music. As such, I couldn't help but feel a little sickened by the responses of other artists, like the class-inflected sneers of Cambridge graduates Sports Team, on social media. We should think very seriously about what artists say and do in the public sphere, but this should also go for those of us critiquing the people at fault. Of course, cancel culture often gets it right. Of course people like Harvey Weinstein and Kevin Spacey deserve to be hounded from public life and spend the rest of their lives in jail. But this would have been the case without the vague and loose manner in which online cancel culture operates

Numerous music artists have been cancelled in some form over the last decade, for a variety of regrettable actions. From Tyler, the Creator (for using homophobic slurs), to Kanye (too many times to mention), to Taylor Swift (for her silence on a number of political issues), or Sticky Fingers (for their frontman's racial slur against another artist), and Matty Healy (for a transphobic joke). In all of these cases, there are arguments for and against the public derision they received in the months and years afterwards. Some of them have continued with their careers without any friction, others have withdrawn or faced persistent criticism. What all of them have in common is that people invariably still listen to their music. That is the problem with cancelling when it comes to music and art. Separating the art

from the artist is near impossible. Sometimes society is forced to have extreme conversations about this issue, as was the case last year when *Joker* used a Gary Glitter song in its most iconic scene. But, most of the time, cancel culture operates at a much more casual level. More often than not, it amounts to a couple of days of Twitter fury before the artist and fans carry on with their lives. Occasionally, as was the case with Slowthai, an entire career appears to be threatened and a tirade of abuse at times on the grounds of race and class ensues. What, then, is the point of cancel culture? Does it not just expose toxic elements of the millennial psyche, and do very little to right the wrongs it claims to fight against?

#MeToo is something different to cancel culture. It is a movement which allows victims to have a voice, and to hold the people who did them harm to account. Cancel culture doesn't empower anyone: often, it merely gives a brief rush of power to those who engage in Twitter pile-ons, and creates an unhealthy atmosphere on

social media where apologies and context have virtually no currency whatsoever. I am absolutely not saying that the sentiment behind these tirades of online rage are not ever justified, and apologies shouldn't always be accepted. But if one thing is certain, they do not facilitate conversation. Cancel culture is not about being open-minded, accepting, progressive, or any of the great qualities which define our generation. In order to have the right conversations, and to properly hold those who deserve it to account, we must be more clear-headed in the way we conduct interrogations of behaviour and character online.



# WHY DOES THE INTERNET LOVE TO HATE NICKELBACK?

MALU ROCHA LOOKS AT HOW THE ARTIST HAS BECOME A COMMON TARGET OF ONLINE MEME CULTURE IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

The fact that Nickelback is somewhat of a meme has become common knowledge over the last few years. Somehow, the internet collectively agreed at one point that Nickelback has become laughingstock in the industry, and the same can be applied to those who like his music. At this point, there seems to be only two kinds of people in the world; those who unapologetically enjoy listening to Nickelback and those that fuel the collective hatred towards him. For the purposes of a non-biased article, I won't disclose which side I stand on.

While listening to his music and following his work as a teenager, I was completely oblivious to this phenomenon, only to be made aware of it once I came to university. After seeing countless memes and hearing a great amount of jokes being made about him, I decided to finally try and understand why people aren't particularly fond of Nickelback. When did this happen? Who initiated this seemingly worldwide movement singling out one particular artist? And most importantly, why?

Curiously enough, some people and even academic scholars have analysed this cultural phenomenon and narrowed it down to a few points. A PhD student from Finland concluded that hating Nickelback has become somewhat of a thing primarily because all his songs are ultimately dupes of each other.

The idea that every song from an artist sounds the same is particularly true for Nick-

elback. He has been repeatedly accused of using the same melodies over and over again and always adhering to a pre-structured layout. This in turn, has i

increased the band's image as trying to prioritise becoming a commercial success over creating genuinely good music.

This collective hate towards him has, to an extent, changed the purpose of his songs. You probably won't turn to them for a good time or passively listen to them on the way to your 9am lecture. My point is, his music belongs to the niche collection of songs that you either only listen to with the sole purpose of reminiscing about a time in the past or when you're very drunk during karaoke in Glasshouse.

This entire cultural phenomenon can perhaps be pinpointed to a specific time in the past, almost 21 years ago now to when the band signed its very first record deal. In 1999, they signed with

Roadrunner Records, a label known for being a metal cultural hub of artists, which Nickelback simply did not fit into. Be-

cause of this deal, the band came across as trying very hard to fit into the 'rock metal' genre, much to the mockery of actual metal and rock bands of the time and their large fanbase.

After that, a couple of landmark events decreased the band's credibility even more, including a Chrome extension entitled Nickelblock that completely scrubs any trace of Nickelback from your internet browser. From 2002 to 2004, a Comedy Central show entitled *Tough Crowd* with Colin Quinn played a promo of their show in almost every commercial break that featured the comedian Brian Posehn saying, "No one talks about the studies that show that bad music makes people violent, but listening to Nickelback makes me want to kill Nickelback." Fast forward to 2008 when the band licenced their hit 'Rockstar' to a marketing agency for it to be used in a sofa commercial, which understandably resulted in a new wave of ridicule.

Other critics bring attention to the fact that the lead vocalist and guitarist, Chad Kroeger, simply doesn't embody the cool rock singer vibe. In fact, he's far from it. People make fun of his spaghetti-

like blonde curly hair and some even go as far as saying that his signature goatee is 'super creepy'. He has been called out for sometimes stumbling onto the stage and having trouble getting his guitar to turn on.

The curious thing, however, is that the band accumulated all this hate while being extremely successful. They have sold over 50 million albums worldwide and accumulated a total of six Grammy awards over the years, including prizes for Album of the Year and Best Rock Album. The top comment on one of his songs on YouTube (*Far Away*) reads, 'I will never understand why this band gets so much hate.' That comment alone has 4.1 thousand likes. However, even though there are still quite a handful of faithful fans of the band, Nickelback seems to have accepted their fate and have joined in on the joke as well, reporting that they don't take themselves too seriously. Frontman Kroeger stated in an interview back in 2014: "We are one of those bands that a lot of people think take themselves seriously. And no one - no one, and I know this is hard to believe - can make as much fun of us as we make fun of ourselves. And we are harsh. If you think the Internet's rough, you should sit in a van with us."

We as a society have become extremely tolerant and accepting over the years, but somehow completely overlooked Nickelback. But then again, perhaps it's nice having a common target that unites people all over the world.





## REVIEWS

## THE SLOW RUSH

## TAME IMPALA

ANNABEL MULLINER

8/10

Loyal fans have waited long and patiently for Tame Impala's fourth studio album, which comes five years after its predecessor, *Currents*. Kevin Parker's particularly voracious fanbase have been craving new songs for far too long, but the perfectionist has held out. Parker has spoken often about the deep impact which his astounding success has had on his creative process, stating "I don't feel like I'm just making it for me anymore. I'm making it for everyone". And the public has lapped up his latest masterpiece, sending Parker's album straight to number one.

Yet *The Slow Rush* doesn't feel like it's trying to please us. Parker doesn't want to be cool any more than he did when he was crafting *Lonerism* in 2012 and refusing to learn how to record tracks "properly". Parker is entirely unapologetic about his five-year lull. If anything, in the opening track 'One More Year', Parker seems to be asking for

more time, for more "living like I'm only living for me". In 2018, he admitted that he could easily go on making an album "forever". *The Slow Rush* is the perfect title. Each track distorts time in its own way, both rhythmically and through Parker's musings on the passing of his own life.

Parker ponders his continued relevance in 'It Might Be Time', confessing "it might be time to face it, you're not as cool as you used to be". I'm struggling to imagine 'Lost In Yesterday' becoming as iconic as 'Less I Know The Better', which all of us have heard out on an indie club night (or on TikTok... which unfortunately the track owes its new platinum status to). But even though Parker muses on the importance of pleasing the crowd, he seems to conclude that it isn't that important after all. Too right - what makes his one man band so enticing is that every aspect of his music comes from him, and we've always lapped it up. This album feels authentic because Parker isn't trying to duplicate *Currents* - he's moved on.

His new sound is softer, but he doesn't let you get too com-

fortable. You can't listen casually to this album. *The Slow Rush* isn't meant to captivate the casual listener. Distanced, background listening dulls each track into a blunt, mostly indistinguishable techno-funk blur. Unless you have a state-of-the-art surround sound system, you lose out on the delicate mixing which can be felt, especially with 'On Track'. Take time to submerge yourself in the time-distorting mix of genres that Parker plays around with. Blink and you might miss the smattering of pan flutes singing across the eerie melody of 'Borderline'. Or the miniature house track 'Glimmer'.

*The Slow Rush* doesn't ease you through its various moods, by any means. It's a rollercoaster in the dark. The transition of 'Posthumous Forgiveness' from techno lament into melancholy pop beats feels both jarring and unnecessary. It lacks the subtlety of previous hits like 'Let It Happen' and feels more like Parker is jamming two tracks together; it's so abrupt, you have to check

whether the track has really ended or not. But maybe this was intentional. There's no harmony in the transition, and this leaves the track without finality or closure; the track explores Parker's struggle to reconcile his grief for his father with his negative childhood memories.

It certainly is the most upfront and raw track on the album. Parker hits hard as he laments "you could store an ocean in the holes of every explanation that you gave". The two halves of the song present two opposing faces of grief, which clash as they meet in the middle. The hushed, laid-back tones of the second half don't dampen Parker's confession that he will "never speak of the time/ that you left us alone".

Parker isn't trying to impress us with catchy new tracks; he's being truthful. He seems to admit to a creative lull when he sings "it ain't as fun as it used to be". The album as a whole is highly experimental, pulling together diverse elements, from the throbbing house piano of 'Breathe Deeper' to the techno-choral opening of 'One More Hour'. It's exhaustingly full of unexpected twists. The tunes don't stick in your head, but they do touch you. It is worth enduring the album's jarring array of moods to appreciate Parker's candid stream of consciousness and bold experimentation.



## CHANGES

## JUSTIN BIEBER

ALEX THOMPSON

2/10

Justin Bieber really loves his wife. He also loves sex. It's pretty much all he talks about on his latest album *Changes*. He and Chance the Rapper would definitely get along. *Changes* has all the vitality and life of a hospital ward, with most of the tracks sounding like

someone has sterilised one of The Weeknd's beats and added landfill-pop lyrics that ride an uncomfortable balance between saccharine and patronising. "You got that yummy yummy, you got that yummy yum" he croons on 'Yummy'. What a wordsmith. The rest of the album is equally as bland

and derivative. All this cheese is topped off with instrumentals as lacklustre and patchy as his facial hair and polished production so flat IKEA have tried to use it to make furniture. They say you can't polish a turd. You can.

*Changes* is that very shiny turd.

## MISS

## ANTHROPOCENE

## GRIMES

FENELLA JOHNSON

7/10

It seemed likely that *Miss Anthropocene's* release cycle would overshadow its arrival. A variety of think-pieces had gathered in its wake - it was initially described as a climate change concept album, for one thing - concerned with her ongoing relationship with billionaire Elon Musk. Transformed into tabloid-fodder, vilified by her left-leaning indie fan base, *Miss Anthropocene* threatened to be overshadowed by its creator's persona - after all, what music measures up to Grimes talking

on Instagram about how she got experimental surgery on her eyes so she can't see blue light? The first singles suggested that this may be the case, eclipsed first by her defence of Musk's union busting and the batshit showdown with Azealia Banks, and veered in quality between excellent and half-baked. No wonder then, that the primary emotion of the record is frustration.

This frustration morphs in the record to an overwhelming, exhausting paranoia. Grimes is restless, constantly overthinking, and unable to sleep: "I never trust the government" she chirps in 'My Name is Dark', while later admitting "I don't go to sleep anymore". There's an unsettling wistfulness in her wish for "the end of the world", and in the comedy of her

admittance that "imminent annihilation sounds so dope". There's another frustration in the album, too, a sense that if Grimes wasn't overthinking the songs so much, that a great album would emerge. The best pop music is effortless - here, the effort is palpable. It means that not everything always lands: there's too much going on sonically, gothic chants and frantic whispers and shrieks, and sections that don't quite come together or drag on too long. But there's lots to love here as well.

'Violence' smartly taps into the cultural power of the reviled woman and the can't-look-away spectacle of vilification: "you feed off hurting me" she accuses the listener. '4AM', which apes both the swirling rhythms of Bollywood and jingling video-game music,

is a late night booty call that is interrupted by a half-warning half-fear: "you're gonna get sick / you don't know when", the chorus jeers. The album is filled with this kind of fear - even in the love songs, there's something more complex emerging. The woozy 'IDORU' evolves from an expression of romantic desire into a more complex emotion directed towards herself and her art: "You cannot be sad / because you made my all time favourite music" she coos. It is a strangely moving reckoning with the terms of fandom in the internet-age, and the conflict between the personal and the public. 'Delete Forever' blatantly rips off the jangling guitars from 'Wonderwall' while managing to be a low-key devastating song about the effects of opioid crisis on her friendship circle. "You'll miss me when I'm not around" she proclaims later on in the record - she's right. It might just take you a little while longer to remember it this time around.



## THE MUSIC TEAM'S

## NEW MUSIC PLAYLIST

1. The Strokes - Bad Decisions
2. King Krule - Alone, Omen 3
3. U.S. Girls - 4 American Dollars
4. Tyler, The Creator - GROUP B
5. Denzel Curry - Pyro (Leak 2019)
6. Thundercat - Dragonball Durag
7. SWMRS - People
8. Alfa Mist - Withered
9. Jean Penne - Chicken Katsu Curry
10. The Weeknd - After Hours
11. JPEG Mafia - BALD!
12. Gary Wilson - Gary Lives in the Twilight Zone
13. The Strokes - At the Door

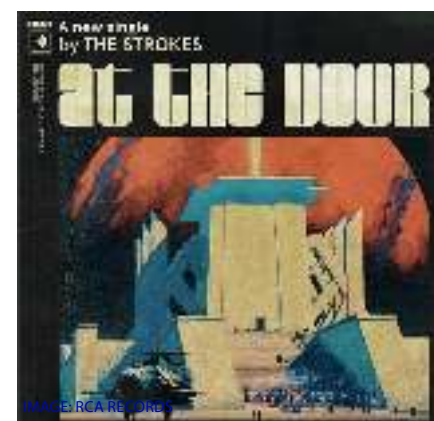


IMAGE: RCA RECORDS

## SHIT MUSICIANS SAY.

"WHO WANT ME? I MAKE MUSIC, I BE FUNNY ON TWITTER AND I HAVE A LIGHTNING MC-QUEEN TWIN BED."

- LIL NAS X



IMAGE: FABEBEK



FILM & TV TEAM RECOMMENDS:  
TOP 5 FILMS ABOUT  
CLASS

THE FLORIDA PROJECT

This film follows the antics and adventures of a mischievous six-year-old and her friends growing up in a motel on welfare.



IMAGE: ALTITUDE FILM ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY MORNING

Arthur, a factory worker, slaves away during the week but lives for the weekends.



IMAGE: BRITISH LION FILMS

STAND UP, NIGEL BARTON

A working-class kid wins a place at Oxford and begins to see what goes on behind the doors of privilege.



IMAGE: BBC

PARASITE

If you haven't seen this yet, go and see it, if you haven't even heard of it, then what are you doing with your life?



IMAGE: CURZON ARTIFICIAL EYE

THE DISCREET CHARM OF THE BOURGEOISIE

A surreal tale of dinner parties, priests, and military exercises.



IMAGE: 20TH CENTURY FOX

# CLASS ON FILM: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

MOLLY LEEMING REFLECTS ON THE BRITISH CLASS SYSTEM AND HOW WE SHOULD TAKE NOTE

In the wake of Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* storming both the box office and the awards circuit there has been much talk of the film's brilliantly fresh and insightful commentary on class in South Korea. Undoubtedly, the reason *Parasite* struck such a global chord is due to it capturing some sense of the universally recognisable experience of living in a globalised, neoliberal economy. Still, while I enthusiastically support this commercial and critical turn of events for both foreign language and socially engaged films, it did make me wonder; where are the British class commentary films? After all, as any drunken student house party pontificator will tell you, we have one of the finest vintages, by which I mean most rigid and entrenched, class systems in the world. Surely we should be constantly churning out socially engaged films of a similar calibre to *Parasite*?

However, while many of the most commercially successful British films which touch on class in recent years have been heart-warming, 'inspiring' but ultimately toothless Brit-flicks, such as 2019's *Fisherman's Friends*, there is in fact a fertile history of socially engaged British cinema. In the manner of *Parasite*, it grapples with issues of class and inequality in a way which is entertaining and accessible without flattening the class narrative into a vacantly uplifting underdog tale of a sterily aestheticised regional working-class.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, British cinema had its own 'New Wave' (see, it's not just the French that had an edgy New Wave in the sixties), which saw a surge in British filmmaking which addressed contemporary issues such as sex, gender, and of course class, in a new, exciting manner which represented a considerable break with the British film industry of the early to mid-1950s. These films are often grouped together under the labels of 'kitchen sink drama' or 'angry young man' film, yet while they have a distinct aesthetic - think rain-slicked cobbled streets, smoky pubs, cramped terrace houses - they are far from a homogenous mass.

Much has been made of *Parasite*'s straddling of genre conventions. The stereotype that immediately springs to mind of mid-century British social realism is that of an unrelentingly drab, gloomy atmosphere, with angry young factory workers storming around with no outlet for their frustration other than periodically yelling at their girlfriend and getting joylessly

sloshed with the old men at their local pub. In reality, however, this diverse group of films plays with and subverts a range of genres in order to dig into its thematic matter just as effectively as *Parasite*

would do six decades later.

For example, John Schlesinger's *Billy Liar* from 1963, which is not at all easy to pin down in terms of genre, is perhaps best described as a fantastical comedy drama, which follows the thrilling inner life and stifling outer life of Billy Fisher. Billy is a bored young clerk living in a provincial northern town, who spends his fantasy life in the marvellous land of Ambrosia, in which he is general, king, author extraordinaire, magnificent lover, or whatever role he can use to artificially bolster his downtrodden ego. *Billy Liar* draws you in with its absurd, ostensibly frivolous antics, but ultimately carries a surprisingly powerful and poignant jolt which drives home the underlying cause of Billy's escapism: his feeling of a fundamental lack of agency.

Other British New Wave films which vigorously defy preconceptions include Karel Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), a swaggering, saxophone-fuelled insight into the life of Arthur Seaton, a factory worker who lives for the weekend and who sums up his belligerent, amoral but undeniably seductive code of conduct when he says "what I'm out for is a good time - all the rest is propaganda!" There is also *A Taste of Honey* (1961), the brittle and bittersweet story of Jo, a Salford teenager who becomes pregnant after a brief, naïve fling with a black sailor, and forms her own family unit with Geoff, an early example of a homosexual character in British cinema who is also essentially the moral and empathetic heart of the film. It may be almost sixty years old, but *A Taste of Honey* is remarkably ahead of its time in its nuanced portrayal of how race, gender and sexuality intersect with class.

Another rich seam of British social commentary can be found in the form of the now essentially extinct TV play. Many of Britain's most influential socially engaged dramas of the 1960s were originally aired on *The Wednesday Play*, the BBC's anthology series of television dramas which ran from 1964 to 1970 and brought urgent contemporary issues right into the nation's living rooms.

Another *Wednesday Play* which is more overlooked but which I believe should be compulsory viewing for all university students is Dennis Potter's 1965 *Stand Up, Nigel Barton*;

although I warn you: it will swiftly reduce irredeemably middle-class undergraduates such as myself to squirming heaps of uncomfortable recognition. Potter subjects everyone to his intense scrutiny in the story of Nigel Barton, a miner's son who wins a place at the University of

Oxford and finds himself disillusioned with the meaningless world of the pretentious, blithely privileged students who surround him at Oxford, and yet unable to connect with his family back home without the university taint of condescension and exploitation creeping into his interactions with them.

All this detailing of British film's illustrious socially engaged past leads us



A voice is needed that taps into this millennium's unique air of uncertainty

to the question of where next for social commentary in British cinema? Since the days of *Billy Liar* and *Cathy Come Home* social and economic inequality and housing insecurity have sharply increased with the casualisation of the labour market, while the looming spectre of environmental catastrophe casts a dark shadow on the comparatively petty yet still deeply-felt political upheavals of Brexit. Surely now more than ever we need cinema which rigorously engages with the social issues which we face. The old master, Loach, is still making didactic, determined films attacking the structurally entrenched inequalities of British society. However, important as these films are, a new voice is needed which can tap into this millennium's unique air of uncertainty, in which class remains as entrenched as ever but is also party to vast changes in employment, housing and traditional political loyalties.

To capture this feeling of disorientation and unsure futures, I feel that modern British filmmakers could fruitfully turn for inspiration to what is probably my favourite British New Wave film; *This Sporting Life*, from 1963. In *This Sporting Life* director Lindsay Anderson forgoes conventional social realism for a woozily poetic take on the troubled life of Frank Machin, a miner turned rugby-league player. Anderson may not provide easily teachable lessons, but he conveys a haunting sense of Frank's claustrophobic, brutal world which is not easily forgotten. The recent film that most reminds me of *This Sporting Life* is *Bait* by Mark Jenkin, from 2019, which in a similarly innovative, hypnotic yet utterly distinctive style, explores the difficulties of a modern-day Cornish fisherman, forced to deal with the impact of hordes of gentrifying Londoners and a shifting economic food-chain.

With the changes facing British society a new, revitalised form of socially engaged cinema is urgent and necessary and arguably, through directors such as Jenkin, already underway. This revitalised engagement must find its own voice and style, but would be made all the richer by drawing on the vibrant tradition of British socially engaged cinema, the vast majority of which is still arrestingly engaging and relevant today.



IMAGE: CURZON ARTIFICIAL EYE



# TAKE BACK CONTROL: WASTE TIME THE BRITISH WAY

JAMES HUDSON DISCUSSES THE ODD BOX THAT IS THE BFI FREE ARCHIVE AND HOW YOU CAN USE IT TO ENHANCE PROCRASTINATION

If you often find yourself looking at the YouTube trending page, feeling slightly confused by all the bright colours and arrows: a new media scandal that you like to pretend you know (or care) about, another James Corden Carpool Karaoke or Piers Morgan rant, 'Americans react to grime' videos, or 'insert here' 24 hour challenges that make you question your decision to go to university instead of dedicating your time to making aesthetically 'cute' morning routine videos, or reacting to K-pop with enthusiasm and / or disgust, then you are not alone.

Undoubtedly, the new symbol of success will not be going to university and getting a glitzy job that our parents won't be ashamed to share with their friends as they say, "oh yes, they've really landed on their feet", but will be YouTube visibility and success. Being a lawyer, journalist or banker isn't enough by itself to make strangers raise an impressed (or disgusted) eyebrow, you must perform all this on YouTube, and it is in the performance rather than the reality where success now lies.

Anyway, with-

out going completely off-topic I will bring this depressing hyperbole somehow to the topic I want to discuss: the British Film Institute free online player. I want to discuss this archive in relation to YouTube and put forward the case that - well, for me at least - it's a much more productive way of wasting time, and much more wholesome. I know YouTube has plenty of good things on it and many people watch channels they are genuinely interested in, but for me I somehow seem to be drawn to the most alienating, colourful and populist videos. On YouTube I have the mental age of a 12-year-

old. I have let my YouTube existence be governed by the recommended algorithm, I have lost control of my YouTube identity and I often find myself, in a state of morbid procrastination, watching videos with titles like 'A day in the life of Banker in Canary Wharf, London', which in its own way is weirdly disturbing, and Jimothy Lacoste music videos on repeat.

The BFI free archive is

a way of both regaining control of my time-wasting and potentially calling this time-wasting educational, though as you shall see, this is a bit of a stretch. The collection is nicely organised into categories and has everything from full length features to 30 second news bits.

It also features a BFI Britain on film map in which you can type in an address and see all the archive videos which have been filmed around there. I spent an afternoon watching 1970s news features of Lincoln's traffic problems and pleasant travelogue videos of people picking potatoes which I can tell you is still very much hot news today.

There are public information films which will most likely terrify you, NHS films, one being titled 'Word of Mouth' from 1989 which is a public research funded hellraiser-style education film highlighting the potential fears of patients going to the dentists and ways of alleviating such fears. The

film shoots the fear of the patients in a horror style, for example, a patient doesn't know the direction to the dentist and is plunged into sheer dread while on a roundabout; to alleviate this make sure the dental practice is easily locatable on a map. It shows the before and after of him without and with a map and the change is remarkable. It is genuinely quite compelling, and you could just about justify to yourself that it's educational, you never know, you might suddenly find yourself working at a dentist.

Probably my favourite category to watch is 'WTF-A Box of Odd', which has videos such as 'Bothered by a Beard?' from 1946 and 'Frank Liptrout who talks to animals' from 1977. Of course, delving into the archive instead of YouTube might seem slightly redundant, all these old archive films can probably be found on YouTube.

My answer to this is the archive may be a way of helping you take back control of your time-wasting, and if you are patriotic or have been inspired since Brexit-day, to very literally adopt the take back control philosophy in all aspects of your life, then there is nothing more British than wasting your time the right way, the British way. Take Back Control.



IMAGE: BFI PLAYER



IMAGE: BFI PLAYER

# THE LATEST CASTING CHOICE: OUR CHANGING CLIMATE

EMILY HARVIE EXPLORES HOW CLIMATE CHANGE HAS BECOME THE NEW STAR OF HOLLYWOOD REGARDLESS OF THE GENRE IT TAKES

Climate change has been on the cover of countless newspapers and magazines in recent years. With the bushfires in Australia in recent months and the flooding and storms ripping through Britain, the catastrophes of climate change have been widely reported. The work of activists like Greta Thunberg and her School Strikes for Climate are taking over the world. It's unsurprising that discussions of our endangered habitats are causing a stir of interest in all forms of media, including cinema with the emergence of the "cli-fi" (climate fiction) genre. With stopping climate change being the motivation behind evil villains' plans in films like *Avengers: Endgame* and *Kingsman*, and global warming being the focal point in exaggerated disaster movies like *The Day After Tomorrow* and *2012*, our change-

climates are becoming the new stars of Hollywood.

Climate change is frequently explored in exaggerated ways with a strong lack of scientific fact: it is used as shock tactics for apocalyptic storylines, maybe to incite change and open the eyes of ignorant individuals but are ultimately scolded by environmentalists for fear mongering or spreading misleading information. This can be seen in films like 2017's frivolous disaster film, *Geostorm*. Set in the entirely unrealistic future where humans can control the weather, *Geostorm* attempts to explore the dangers of extreme geoengineering as a response to global warming - while completely missing its mark in the fact-checking department. *The Day After Tomorrow* follows a similar route of replacing science with fantastical special effects in a world where a catastrophic ice

age ravages the earth in the timeframe of a matter of days - and believe it or not, I was forced to watch this film in a crappy social studies lesson.

However, the environment and discussions of climate change in film are not just limited to theatrical blockbusters. *The Boy who Harnessed The Wind*, based on the autobiography of the same name, presents explorations of the environment founded more firmly in science. Rather than throwing our changing climate down the throat of consumers, it instead generates discussions of sustainable energy and thus by proxy, our reliance on the environment. Additionally, 2012's *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, while fictional, highlights the consequences of the melting of glaciers and increasingly destructive storms on a coastal town in Louisiana.

Yet, the film does not use it as the star of the film and instead as a side character to discussions of familial love and compassion. Utilising climate change in this respect, as a catalyst or an amplifier to surrounding themes, allows films to deliver their viewpoint on such topics as intended.

Documentaries must not be forgotten here when searching for climate change being depicted truthfully on screen. Documentary films like *Chasing Coral* have received critical acclaim through their emphasis on the science behind our changing environments and gorgeous cinematography and captivating narratives. The Oscar-winning *An Inconvenient Truth* and its 2017 sequel *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power* (which are in my opinion best watched together) illustrate the dangers of global warming, with the sequel offering a more hopeful outlook while still exploring what we need to do now, particularly in a Post-Trump, 'fake news' era. These documentaries highlight the fact that climate discussions don't need to be founded in toxicity and accusations, and can simply deliver truths to promote change.

Themes of climate change are a vital tool in opening discussions around the environment and exploring the possible consequences of a lack of response from governments. However, a lack of science in some depictions of this issue may simply misguide or subtract from the truths of the dangers we face. Although global warming might not be as dramatic as every Roland Emmerich film suggests, it most definitely should be a prime concern of today's world leaders. Realistic depictions thus allow a more rational exploration of the environment and promote a healthier debate on the topic. Climate change is a very real issue and the rise in appeals for discussion and change from activists across the globe illustrates how the climate change debate is not going to die down any time soon.

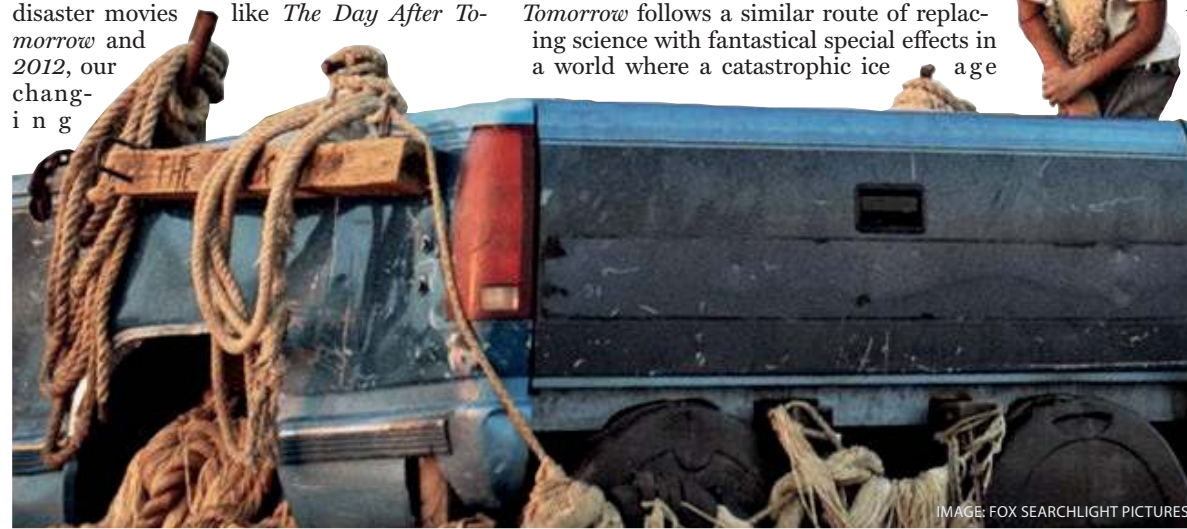


IMAGE: FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES



# HUNTER S. THOMPSON - THE GENESIS OF GONZO

ALEX THOMPSON PAYS HOMAGE TO JOURNALISTIC ICON HUNTER S. THOMPSON BY EXPLORING HIS LIFE, WORK AND THE CREATION OF A GENRE

“We were somewhere around Barstow, on the edge of the desert, when the drugs began to take hold.”

The first line of Hunter S. Thompson's legendary *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* is one of the most iconic openings of all time. As Raoul Duke and his attorney Dr Gonzo speed through the desert with a boot full of drugs and a mouth full of pills, pursued by hallucinatory bats, it's hard to see *Fear and Loathing* as anything other than pure fiction. It's hard to believe it's the opening sequence in one of the most iconic pieces of journalism ever produced. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* represented a turning point in print culture, the start of an entirely new form of journalism, one concerned less with the objective reporting of events and more with the narrative complexities of subject and subjectivity – gonzo.

“Life has become immeasurably better since I have been forced to stop taking it seriously.”

The term ‘gonzo’ was first coined in 1970 to describe Thompson's seminal work ‘The Kentucky Derby Is Decadent And Depraved’ a heavily stylised and graphic account of the journalist's time reporting on the event and his drug-addled encounters with the racegoers. Travelling back to his home-

“ These grotesque descriptions and messy caricatures became synonymous with Thompson

town of Kentucky, with Welsh illustrator and travelling companion Ralph Steadman in tow, Thompson struggled to find a unique angle to describe the event. He was too far back to witness the races and too drunk to try. He didn't care for the winners or riders in the events, nor the various controversies surrounding it or even an objective sense of reporting. What he did care about, however, was the people in the crowd surrounding him. “Thousands of raving, stumbling drunks, getting angrier and angrier as they lose more and more money,” he writes “by mid-afternoon they'll be guzzling mint juleps with both hands and vomiting on each other between races”. He captured depravity, greed and violence through extended characterisations, complete with infamous illustrations from Steadman and included his interactions with the characters, as well as his own paranoia, vices and ideology. Heightened by the sheer amount of hallucinogens and alcohol the pair consumed, the grotesque descriptions and

messy caricatures became synonymous with Thompson's style.

Painting lurid portraits of grotesque racegoers, as well as the person ideology and narrative of Thompson himself, ‘The Kentucky Derby’ would go onto form the blueprint for an entire genre of journalism, gonzo journalism.

In a word, gonzo is crazy.

In two words – batshit crazy.

“The edge. There is no honest way to explain it because the only people who really know where it is are the ones who have gone over.”

While the Kentucky Derby may be the first usage of the term ‘gonzo’, it certainly wasn't Thompson's first exploration of the genre and technique. The memoir *Hell's Angels: A Strange And Terrible Saga*, published several years prior, was where Hunter developed his unique journalistic idiosyncrasies. Documenting the writer's time on the road with the infamous biker gang, the eponymous Hell's Angels, the memoir followed Thompson as he drank, rode and fought with the Angels, taking the reader deep into a group which had previously been shrouded in mystery. What started as an investigative piece for a San Francisco publication called *The Nation* spiralled into one of the most iconic pieces of investigative journalism ever produced.

While *Hell's Angels* may not have had the profound critique and depravity of his later work, the innovative use of Thompson's narrator as a character in the account was something which would later come to define his style. Where documentarians and journalists usually act in a purely voyeuristic capacity, to observe and record events, Thompson broke the mould by making himself a sort of protagonist. Through his interactions with characters, gangs or events, the reader is given a more personal account of the subject. While it may simply seem like Thompson's unravelling trains of thought – the winding and complex tangents he digresses on function in much the same way as the narrative voice in a novel. As such, Thompson began to self-fictionalise.

Originally fascinated with the work of Fitzgerald and Hemingway, Thompson looked to

emulate the somewhat free-wheeling and loose approach to writing of his idols but in a journalistic form. This, combined with his distinct and unique world view and ideology as well as his use of narrative voice, made his work some of the most fascinating and equally disturbing non-fiction writing of the 20th century. Humour, profanity and taboo formed the framework for his style and the stream-of-consciousness style Thompson favoured supported this and birthed some truly unique work. “There is no such thing as objective journalism,” he writes, “the phrase itself is a pompous contradiction in terms.”

“Let us toast to animal pleasures, to escapism.”

Hunter S. Thompson is best known for his semi-autobiographical novel *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* – a drug fuelled dive into the depth and depravity of the American dream via a road trip across Nevada. *Rolling Stone* magazine originally commissioned Hunter to write several hundred words on a motor-cycle race in the desert however the piece spiralled into a dense and weaving exploration of the drug-addled psyche and hypocrisy of American greed – a manifesto steeped in psychedelics.

The subtitle ‘a savage journey to the heart of the American dream’ makes this abundantly clear. Much like the slow spiral to madness depicted in *Heart Of Darkness*, Thompson's characters find themselves on both a literal and metaphorical journey to the corruption and greed at the heart of post-war America.

Rooted primarily in the author's own experiences, the course of the novel is mainly skewed by fiction in the ‘roman à clef’ style – where a true account is told through the lens of fiction and interpretation becomes more important than fact.

“When The Going Gets Weird, The Weird Turns Professional.”

While the writer is probably best known for his outlandish misadventures or detailed exposés of movements and subcultures, Thompson was also a prolific political journalist and satirist, who took his natural flair for painting chaotic and grotesque images of depravity and applied it to politics. This concept formed the basis for his 1972 book *Fear and Loathing on The Campaign Trail: 72*, a brutal and scathing attack on the political establishment which saw the journalist take a i m

at politicians, journalists and the media. Thompson's complete disregard for the norms of form and feature in political journalism made his writing some of the most influential of the era.

“Too weird to live, too rare to die.”

After he soared to fame as his work and persona took on greater celebrity than he could imagine, Thompson began

“ Thompson broke the mould by making himself a protagonist in his own stories

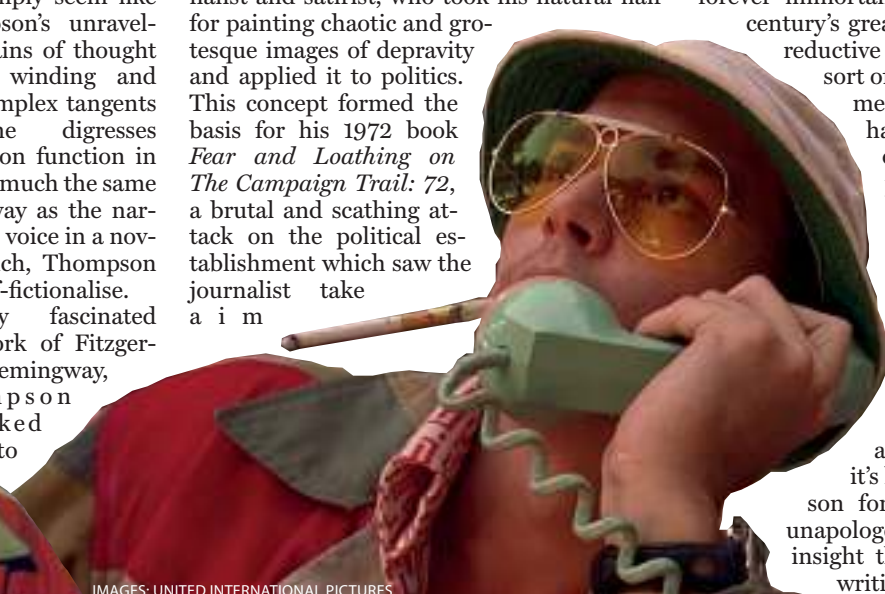
to cave to the pressure of his own self-forged identity. When reporting on a Muhammad Ali fight for *Rolling Stone*, Thompson missed the fight as he was out of his mind on drugs – floating naked in a hotel swimming pool along with several kilos of marijuana he'd thrown in. “I hate to advocate drugs, alcohol, violence, or insanity to anyone, but they've always worked for me,” he argues.

Everything that had made him an icon – the outlandish lifestyle of drugs, drink and depravity – suddenly overtook his writing all together. He became a sort of caricature, a crazy recluse with a penchant for firearms and cocaine, and as his fame steadily increased, as did the insane habits.

‘3:00 p.m. rise,’ begins his daily routine, recorded in the biography *Hunter: The Strange And Savage Life Of Hunter S. Thompson*. ‘3:05 Chivas with the morning papers, Dunhills. 3:45 cocaine. 3:50 another glass of Chivas, Dunhill. 4:05 coffee, Dunhill. 4:15 cocaine. 4:16 orange juice, Dunhill. 4:30 cocaine. 4:54 cocaine. 5:05 cocaine.’

“Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke.”

By the time Hunter S. Thompson took his own life in 2005, he had become a literary superstar. His work had sculpted an entirely unique genre of journalistic writing, his style going on to influence a whole generation of musicians, writers and poets and his exploits forever immortalised in some of the 20th century's greatest non-fiction works. It's reductive to just dismiss him as some sort of drug-addled lunatic, a tormented genius with a bucket hat and an endless supply of cigarettes. Thompson is perhaps the perfect case study for an artist whose image and identity have been co-opted by a cult following. I'm not going to argue that his work was necessarily the cleverest or most technically impressive of its kind, or anything other than enjoyable pulpy journalism, but it's hard not to admire Thompson for his sheer creative force, unapologetic weirdness and bitter insight that continues to influence writing today.



IMAGES: UNITED INTERNATIONAL PICTURES



# WHY ARE MEDIEVAL RPGS SO POPULAR?

ELLIE SMITH LOOKS AT WHY MOST RPGS IN THE FANTASY GENRE ARE SET IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The medieval setting is an established trope of fantasy RPGs. Aspects of the trope are easy to recognise: a ragged and not quite geographically feasible map; an invented but suitably-old-sounding currency; leather-clad characters with sinister looking weapons, which sometimes seem a tad unwieldy. We love it – or, at least, sales figures suggest that we do. *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* has some of the highest sales figures in the gaming industry. *Diablo III: Reaper of Souls* and *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* similarly hold respectable positions in lists of most sold games, with the latter recently awarded an equally engaging television adaptation.

Subsequently, when game designers adopt a medieval setting, they must be aware that the setting engages with the pre-established tropes of the genre. Stereotypes, or lore, surrounding maps or magical races overlap and over time, they create expectations and familiarity between ever-so-slightly



IMAGE: BETHESDA

different worlds across a range of games. This means that we can engage with games more quickly and more thoroughly because our basic understanding of the structures in the game are already present. It's also more difficult, maybe impossible, to create an entirely new world without the influences or expectations created by other games.

Notably, 'medieval' is also occasionally a synonym of 'brutal'. The medieval period, represented by fantasy settings, is often characterised as a barbaric period (it is 'the Dark Ages', after all) and most games in this setting have a strong violent element.

Although not an RPG, the creation of your own civilisation in *Age of Empires* centres on the defeat of other armies for the profit of your own. *Kingdom Come: Deliverance* is essentially a revenge quest following the massacre of the player-character's village and this game distinctly prides itself on its commitment to historical accuracy. Nevertheless, associations of barbarism with the medieval cannot be a reason for the genre's popularity; *Grand Theft Auto* is more violent than most fantasy RPGs and it is set firmly in the present day.

Taking control of a character's life, which is probably more interesting than your own, in a fantasy setting is also

an escape from the day to day embodied most prominently in games such as *The Sims*. Fantasy RPGs, ultimately, offer escapism. From the outset, a player can often choose whether their character is an elf, dwarf, orc or another being, and choose magic or superhuman abilities to match. This makes fantasy RPGs highly replay-able, with the ability to follow the same plot multiple times through different perspectives. However, this is not unique to a medieval setting and rather a characteristic of all RPGs. Placing a game in a medieval setting creates a familiarity with the different perspectives that a repeatable game can offer. This makes the different options more engaging and require less active focus attempting to learn the different skills or traits offered at the beginning of the game. Familiarity with tropes provides a springboard to interact with new characters, new games and new ideas.

From the early publishing of *Dungeons and Dragons* to the recent PS4 revival of the creatively titled PS1 *MediEvil*, games inspired by the Middle Ages are decades old and the current popularity of fantasy games set in the medieval period are no doubt currently aided by the popularity of television shows such as *Game of Thrones* and *Vikings*. The tropes evident in gaming are drafted in from popular culture, film and television. They're not unique, but they are effective and enjoyable. Medieval, fantasy RPGs subsequently offer the most opportunity to engage with ideas we have been well acquainted with; we can specifically choose roles and characteristics that we recognise and even pursue for escapist entertainment. We don't love medieval RPGs despite the repetition between games. We love them because of the repetition.

# HOW BUNGIE RESURRECTED DESTINY 2

PATRICK WALKER LOOKS AT HOW BUNGIE ARE BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO THE BELOVED FPS GAME

In January 2018, Bungie's biggest ongoing franchise, *Destiny 2*, was in serious trouble. Following a split with their larger, wealthier partners Activision, Bungie had an uphill battle to fight in order to regain the trust (and wallets) of their players.

The developer was facing a multitude of complaints from their community. Many of the gameplay systems in the looter shooter were too geared towards hardcore players, there was a huge emphasis on *Destiny's* microtransactions store, and the main story was almost universally panned. *Destiny* was boring, it was frustrating to play, and worst of all, it was failing to retain players that enjoyed the original.

In a blog post at the end of January, Game Director Chris Barrett would announce the developer's huge 'gameplay path' to a sceptical audience: tweaks to raids, microtransactions, and powerful gear began to sow the seeds for a real success story. Change wasn't immediate, however.

The first big idea came from battle royale titles, who had been releasing content slowly over the course of 'seasons' to keep players engaged. Bungie decided that the new 'Shadow-keep' expansion would be released gradually, allowing players to complete sections of the game as a community before more content was revealed. In one case, the developer even planned to restrict access to a key service, the Forge, until a particular dungeon had been completed by a team of streamers. The new expansion was popular, re-introducing a fan favourite character in Eris Morn, and allowing players to travel to the earth's moon.

With the new story breathing life into *Destiny 2's* world, Bungie also changed the way powerful armour worked, focusing on rewarding players who completed challenging content, rather than the previous system, which had been to grind for random gear drops in order to progress their character.

Rewarding returning players also meant revamping microtransactions too. *Destiny's* best and brightest would be rewarded with ship, and character cosmetics without having to purchase them through the hated real-world money 'Eververse' shop. Eververse wasn't removed entirely, (a somewhat questionable move considering the game had already asked players to spend around £70 on expansion content) but its grip on *Destiny 2's* player development had been lessened.

A large chunk of *Destiny 2's* changes over the past two years have focused around more effectively balancing its hardcore playerbase with more casual players. Part of this included streamlining obnoxious systems like armour infusion, but it also included introducing gamemodes and challenges that meant players with less time didn't feel the constant grind. The new 'Gambit' PvP mode fused casual PvE elements with traditional player on player action, rewarding players who weren't as interested in *Des-*

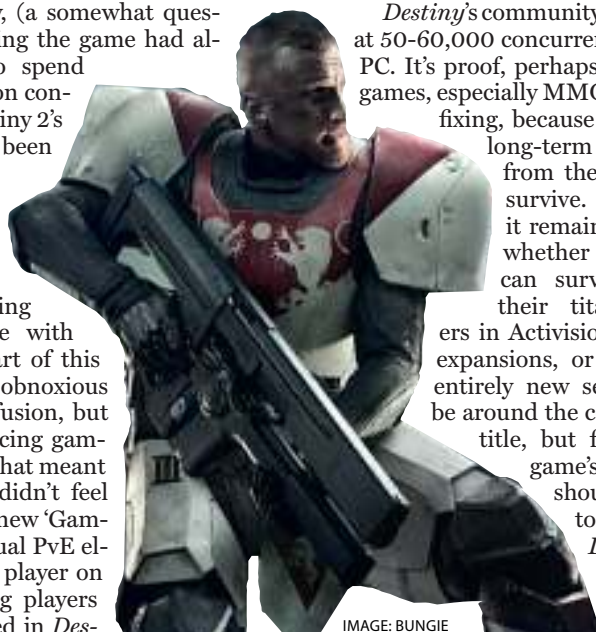


IMAGE: BUNGIE

*tiny's* competitive scene.

New modes, and the new minimum light level, mean that the path to the fabled endgame for new players is only around 10 hours long. *Destiny 2* has also made efforts to ensure that new players are guided better throughout its many activities and objectives. The accessibility changes have helped Bungie to address the giant problem that their rival, Warframe, still faces. Grindy looter-shooters are hard to attract new players, and many will bounce off the complex MMO within hours of downloading it.

*Destiny's* community is now solid, at 50-60,000 concurrent players on PC. It's proof, perhaps, that online games, especially MMOs, are worth fixing, because they rely on long-term engagement from their players to survive. For Bungie, it remains to be seen whether their vision can survive without their titan publishers in Activision. Incoming expansions, or perhaps an entirely new sequel, might be around the corner for the title, but for now, the game's developers should be able to rest easy. *Destiny 2* has been made spectacular again.

## GAMING TEAM RECOMMENDS:



## VIDEO GAME TIME-SINKS

*Destiny 2* isn't the only time-sink for bored students. If you're looking to devote a few weeks of your life to games, then these are your options. Lose yourself in a sci fi world or devote hundreds of hours to clicking heads and learning grenade throws. We're so, so sorry.

### WARFRAME

It might be free, but with many players sacrificing thousands of hours to its unique blend of looter-shooter combat and incredible third person movement, *Warframe* should probably charge YOU for your time. Beware its endgame: Warframe's fashion will suck you in.



### WORLD OF WARCRAFT

After 16 years, *WoW's* nearly 16,000 quests mean that players are continuing to come back for more. The recent release of the Classic mode means you can now return to the state the game was in when you first played it, to do the grinding all over again.



### EVE

An endless source of drama and political intrigue, *EVE's* open world and completely player-run economy brings out the worst in humanity. Ascend to the top of a large corporation, or mug off unsuspecting players mining in deep space, the choice is yours.



### ESCAPE FROM TARCOV

Bolstered by the recent rise of battle royales, *Tarkov* is an immersive, dark shooter, where every mistake can cost the player dearly. Developers Battlestate Games have bolted on a deep economy system for those that prefer less stressful experiences.



### COUNTER-STRIKE: GLOBAL OFFENSIVE

*CS:GO* remains the king of the FPS genre: a deceptively simple game with an extremely high learning curve for new players. It's also blessed with a very healthy esports ecosystem, and York's NRM (National Railway Museum) CS:GO team remains the best in the UK.



IMAGES (TOP DOWN): VALVE, DIGITAL EXTREMES, BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT, CCP GAMES, BATTLESTATEGAMES, VALVE



# MY LIFE WORKING AS AN AU PAIR IN HANGZHOU

MARY TAYLOR LEWIS SPEAKS OF HER TIME STAYING WITH A CHINESE FAMILY IN HANGZHOU AND EXPERIENCE WORKING AS AN AU PAIR

**“Y**ou will cry more than you ever have before.”

I was met with these words after disembarking from a 15-hour flight from Manchester to Shanghai and safe to say, I did not feel very reassured by the representative Justine. I was jet-lagged, culture-shocked, homesick, and desperately in need of a hot shower and a bed; but Justine was right. Over the next two months, I did cry more than I ever had before but I also had the most memorable and vitalising experience of my life.

I felt extremely unprepared for the experience, I hadn't even heard of Hangzhou until 3 months before leaving. Luckily, Hangzhou is beautiful. The city is nicknamed 'Shanghai's back garden' because it is only an hour's bullet train away from Shanghai's skyscrapers and has the huge west-lake budding of the metropolis and the longyng tea-fields roll out as far as the eye can see.

The city merges rural and urban with a population of 9.8 million, making it the 11th largest city in China and one of the greenest. I was nervously eager to begin my stay in the city and integrate into my host family to experience the Chinese lifestyle. I had always imagined culture shock to be a rapid discomfort; like being plunged into an ice bath. I would either acclimatise or jump out, but it was more like being adrift on a cultural sea. Mostly, this was plain sailing but sometimes there would be a storm. The day I met my family, the storm blew into a cyclone.



My new host family had two kids, Danny aged nine and Apple aged 11. Rich Chinese children choose to (or their parents choose to) adopt a second "English" name, probably to prevent the English-speaking tongue butchering their traditional name. Their eldest chose Apple because she believed it was unique, and in fairness, I have not met or heard of another Apple (excluding Gwyneth Paltrow's daughter). However, I did meet two other children in China whose English name was Apple, but no bananas. The family owned a brilliant cat, extremely fluffy but it looked like a pug had been thrown against a wall.

Still it was unjustifiably cute.

The Chinese have a very different ethos around family mealtimes. Unlike the western approach of plates with individual portions, the Chinese have six or more dishes in the middle of the table (the unofficial rule is the number of people eating plus one, for the number of dishes) then individual bowls of rice and broth. Eating habits are also a lot louder, with slurping, burping, open-mouth chewing and spitting bones. My most memorable meal was hotpot, a bubbling broth in which you cook strips of raw meat. I started the meal with what I believed was a particularly chewy mushroom. However, after trying a long strip of cow stomach, the host mum asked, "do you like the other cow stomach?" and I responded "what other stomach?" with mounting dread as she gestured to my 'mushroom.'

I settled into a topsy-turvy routine. Despite it being Danny and Apple's summer holiday, their days were still peppered with extra

classes and sports. I went swimming, ice-skating, to holiday clubs and dance performances; but also had plenty of free time to explore the local museums and temples. My favourite experience was meeting the extended family near the end of my trip. The grandmother spoke no English but was extremely kind, she continually gave me snacks of fruit and biscuits (a universal grandmother trait). When we picked her up from her apartment, she grabbed my hand to show me around her home. She gestured excitedly to her plants which were overtaking one wall. I felt very honoured by her kindness and our understanding without words. It was also entertaining to watch Apple's dad be kept in line by his mother, who stopped him buying sweets even though she was half his size.

Each week, we had a day off and they were a huge benefit to the programme as I could truly experience Chinese culture as an insider with my family, but still had a day to be unashamedly touristy. I travelled around with Erin and Carezza, they had arrived in China at the same time as me. We visited Lingyin Temple, which is a serene Buddhist temple (despite the floods of tourists), set back among the tea hills. It was a long and bumpy bus journey but the stone-carved Buddhas, incense infused buildings and clear pools filled with koi fish was worth it. On another day, we easily caught a bullet train (150km/h) over to

Shanghai. We explored "the bund", an infamous skyline which explodes into a myriad of colours at night. We wandered through the Yu gardens, a small paradise in the bustling and international city. We then visited Tianzifang, the French district, where shops and street sellers are crammed next to each other down the chaotically beautiful streets, providing a complete contrast to the futuristic bund. We ended the day-trip on a high at a very fancy cocktail bar, complete with champagne, a jacuzzi and a stunning panoramic view.

At the end of my six weeks of au pairing I had a special goodbye from Apple. She loved treasure hunts and I spent a lot of time coming up with different English-related hunts.

To surprise me, she had hidden little notes around my room as a goodbye present. "Hi Mary. Don't forget me. You can search your things, there are surprise!" "Mary, I write something to you, you need to write some to me."

The clues led to a lovely letter and a wooden comb. It was crazy how close I felt to Apple after just six weeks; she had a delightful way of surprising me in conversation. Once, we were playing with their cat and she called me the cat's big sister. I asked if she was also the cat's big sister. Grinning, she nodded and said that means you are also my big sister!

My summer in China was full of ups and downs, but it was continually exciting and surprising. I loved being able to live like a local and experience the wonder of Chinese life through the eyes of Apple and Danny who (when I could tear them away from their iPads) were eager to share their culture with me.



IMAGES (ALL): MARY TAYLOR LEWIS

# EXPLORING LOCAL YORKSHIRE: A STUDENT REVIEW

ELLIE SMITH DICUSSES A NUMBER OF LOCAL YORKSHIRE DAY TRIP IDEAS TO ENJOY WITH YOUR FLATMATES FOR LESS THAN £20

**A** charming, instagrammable destination doesn't need to have an unaffordable price tag. Yorkshire, our home, is both charming and instagrammable; we already know that York is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful cities in England, and scenic cliff top towns across the north eastern coastline follow in its footsteps as gorgeous spots to visit. Knaresborough, Scarborough and Whitby's sea views are well worth a wholesome day trip with close friends, as is the less coastal but equally quaint spa town of Harrogate. Visiting these towns, including travel and entrance to an attraction, can cost as little as £20. Get a rail card, aim for a sunny day and your memories of summer term with your housemates will be tinted golden.

Knaresborough is a 30-minute rail journey away and with a railcard, will only set you back around £5.20 for a return ticket. Knaresborough is a picturesque village: a river flows

beneath a grand Victorian viaduct, separating Mother Shipton's Cave – a site dedicated to preserving the magic of Mother Shipton – from a medieval-esque old town. On the river, row-boats can be hired. It is ridiculously fun. A four-person boat with two oars cost my friends and I £7 each when we visited. Amongst lovers romantically rowing downstream, we haphazardly splashed into low hanging willow trees as the ruins of a castle jutted out above us.

Scarborough is slightly more expensive, costing around £13 for a return ticket (again, with a railcard). It also takes slightly longer, with the journey lasting just under an hour. I never expected to enjoy visiting Scarborough as much as I did. There is an enormous Japanese garden, free to enter, and meticu-

lously tended. On the lake circling the park, there are brightly coloured pedal boats shaped like dragons that can be hired. At the centre of the garden, an artificial waterfall has been built into the hill. Peasholme garden, designed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and still conscientiously maintained, is a fairytale public park inspired by the Japanese interests of its architect. Roman ruins and the remains of a medieval castle also litter the hilltop landscape. Scarborough, like Knaresborough, has all the necessary components for an adventure. A train to Whitby will similarly cost around £13 with a railcard but will take you just over two and a half hours to get there from York station. Whitby Abbey overshadows the eastern half of the coastal town, sat atop the cliff where Bram Stoker envisioned his antagonist's first attacks. The ruins of the abbey, which now inspire a biannual goth festival, are still morbidly attractive to visitors: the steep steps to the abbey are bordered by graves, yet it is the main tourist

attraction. The English Heritage site, unsurprisingly stacked with *Dracula* memorabilia in its gift shop, charge just under £10 for the privilege of walking amongst the ruins, but if you're a literature buff, this is a worthy price. The views are also beautiful, the town unique and the fish and chips supposedly world famous.

Harrogate is a lot closer than Whitby, but the reason to visit is also the priciest. The return train price with railcard is around £6.20 and takes approximately 40 minutes. At off-peak times in the middle of the week, entrance is only £19 to the Turkish baths. At the weekends, the luxury saunas and pools jump to an expensive £32, but by going midweek, the techniques of Victorian relaxation are an amazing and affordable day trip in a scenic spa town adjacent to York. After weeks of rain, summer is surely around the corner. So it's definitely time to make some plans.



IMAGES (ALL): ELLIE SMITH



# THE SMASHING STORY BEHIND EASTER EGGS

ANNABEL MULLINER CRACKS OPEN THE COMPLICATED HISTORY BEHIND BELOVED CHOCOLATE EGGS

While I have certainly scoffed at least one Easter egg a year since the age of three, I'll wholeheartedly admit that I have never been to an Easter church service. This seems to be a common practice now, and why not? It can't be denied that chocolate is inexplicably tastier when it's been moulded into the shape of a hollow egg.

It is all too easy to separate this product from its supposedly 'religious' roots. I attended a Church of England primary school, where Easter eggs were never deplored as being too secular or consumerist, and yet their religious relevance was never fully explained to us either.

You may have been told as a child that Easter eggs are hollow because they represent Jesus' empty tomb, but the egg's symbolic value of new beginnings actually has its roots in Paganism. For Pagans, the rabbit is the most prominent symbol of fertility, while eggs are believed to be somewhat magical. Easter falls close to the Spring Equinox on 21 March, which is celebrated by many Pagans as a time of birth and renewal. To this day, many Pagans partake in spring traditions, like egg hunts and races.

Some say that early Christians adopted Pagan influences to avoid the prosecution of converts, by making their celebrations more acceptable. However, the adoption of egg decorating was, and still is for many Christians, an important part of Lent.

The tradition dates to the 13th century, when church leaders forbade the consumption of eggs during Holy Week, the final week of Lent. Any eggs laid that week were collected and given as gifts to children. They would be decorated and subsequently eaten on Easter Sunday. This tradition was popular across the continent, with nations developing their own variations. For example, in Greece, eggs were painted crimson.

As time went on, methods of decoration became more indulgent. The Victorians opted for lavish, satin-covered cardboard eggs filled with Easter gifts.

The move to chocolate eggs is where we break away from the practicality of religious observance, into sheer indulgence. Chocolate eggs didn't emerge until cocoa imports became common-place in Europe in the 19th century. The first eggs, made in France and Germany, were solid and rather bitter. Chocolate manufacturing techniques were rather primitive at this point. Each individual egg had to be painstakingly handmade, by individually lining molds with chocolate paste.

As time went on, a method of flowing chocolate into the molds was developed, making mass production far easier. But the taste was still an issue. In 1828, Dutch inventor Coenraad Van Houten invented a hydraulic press that separated cocoa butter from the cocoa bean. Cocoa butter was a new and exciting substance, which chocolate makers found made their final product a lot creamier.

Cadbury were the first British manufacturer to take a gamble and adopt Van Houten's press. The payoff was, as you can imagine, enormous, and set Cadbury on their path to

becoming one of the UK's most beloved chocolate companies. In 1905, the launch of Dairy Milk escalated the popularity of Easter eggs with sales soaring. So, our much-loved Easter egg was on its way to becoming the cultural symbol that it remains to this day.

Gazing across the huge variety of Easter eggs that are available on our supermarket shelves today, it's hard not to feel as if the Easter egg has strayed too far from its religious origins. As I began by saying, there's nothing wrong with enjoying a product simply because it's tasty. But there are ways that we can enjoy the Easter egg while respecting its religious significance.

After all, Jesus' arrest (according to at least three of four gospels) was provoked by his public anger at the commercialisation of sacred spaces. The original spirit of the egg was that it should be gifted, so why not treat your friend or colleague this Easter, to let them know that you appreciate them?

Not to mention that some chocolate companies are a lot kinder than others. Unless you live under a rock, you'll be aware that Nestle has come under fire for its problematic marketing and practices across the globe. Rather than opting for a mass-produced egg in an excess of non-recyclable plastic packaging, you could look out for more ethical alternatives.



IMAGE: DIVINE

## EDITORS' REVIEW: SCOTCH EGGS



The humble scotch egg is a pillar in the British culinary repertoire. Often under appreciated and sidelined by pretty much everything, including the much over-rated Easter eggs, we decided to give this classic a bit more attention - sampling all the scotch eggs we could find.

**Marks & Spencer** - When you are mid-session, the perfect snack is always a scotch egg. It isn't too heavy on the carbs to detract from the effects of your drinking, but will see you through on your walk into town. We bought and ate this one from the garage on Lawrence Street en route to Stones, and it was lush. Tightly wrapped meat around a tasty boiled egg, easy to eat on the go. Two for a quid is unrivalled value. This is not just a drunken snack - this is an M&S drunken snack. **9/10**

**Co-Op** - This one was of surprisingly high quality. Two in a packet for just over a pound and a delightful level of flavour and texture. The meat was covered well with breadcrumbs and was wrapped well around the tasty egg at the core, not many things more could be asked for from a supermarket scotch egg. Available at both campus Nisa outlets, this is a strong choice for a filling value snack for late night working. **9.5/10**

**Morrison's** - Only available in packs of 4, the quantity was about the only thing good about them. Decent sausage but the egg was flakey and messy. Unforgiveably, the third egg served as Malu's first ever scotch egg which will now most likely be her last. We weren't expecting the world from Morrison's, but what we got was barely acceptable. I still ate the second egg. **4/10**

**Waitrose** - In a word: disappointing. We had incredibly high hopes for what we expected would be a luxury standard scotch egg. We were wrong. Below standard sausage encompassed a difficult to get to egg, you had to really work to get any egg at all. The only saving grace for this below average scotch egg was that unlike its counterparts, it was actually slightly egg shaped. Regrettably however, even this proved disappointing as the shape was due to excess air not the actual boiled egg's shape. **4/10**

**Tesco** - Surprisingly delicious. Not quite the texture of the higher scorers but the taste was there and the egg was nicely boiled with a very nice yolk. It would be a good potential move to wrap the meat more tightly around the egg to improve the overall experience, but on the whole, a packet of two of these would be a good addition to any fridge or for anyone fancying a quick bus snack. **7/10**

Go and try them for yourselves.  
- **Jonny and Pat**

IMAGE: KOLFORN

## RECIPE: EASY, STICKY HOT CROSS BUNS FOR ALL

MARY TAYLOR LEWIS GIVES US HER TAKE ON THE CLASSIC HOT CROSS BUN, WITH SOME TWISTS

These buns are delicious straight out of the oven or toasted later with plenty of butter. These buns are super easy to make but do take around three to four hours to make - which is part of their charm! It also makes them perfect for essay season because you can break up your work schedule. I spent 20 minutes making the dough, then while it proved for an hour, I worked on an essay. Hot cross buns are very versatile, as once you've got your enriched dough, it is easy to switch around the spices and dried fruit and I've included some of my favourite combinations at the end of this recipe. Just remember the final coating of jam, honey or marmalade to ensure the classic sticky hot cross bun. Enjoy!

### Ingredients:

300ml milk  
50g butter  
500g strong white bread flour  
1 tsp salt  
75g sugar (soft brown/caster)  
7g yeast sachet  
1 egg beaten  
75g raisins  
Zest

1 orange  
Apple, finely chopped  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp ginger  
For the cross:  
75g plain flour + extra for dusting

**For the glaze:**  
6 tbsp orange fine cut marmalade.

**Time:** 3 hr 20 mins total. 2hr 30mins proving. 20 mins baking. 30 mins prep.

### Method:

1. Heat 300ml milk in a pan, you should be able to dip your finger in without being scalded. Add 50g butter and stir until melted. Remove from heat.  
2. Sift your bread flour, salt, sugar and yeast into a large bowl. Make a well, add the butter mixture and beaten egg. Use a wooden spoon to mix well until you have a wet sticky dough.

3. Tip dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead with the heel of your hand for five minutes. The dough will become smooth and elastic. Place dough in a bowl and cover with either a dry tea towel or lightly oiled cling film. Leave to rise in a warm place for one hour, until it has doubled in size - next to a radiator works well!  
4. Keep the dough

in the bowl and add 75g raisins, orange zest, apple, cinnamon and ginger. Knead into the dough, then tip it out onto a surface and distribute them through more kneading for two minutes. Place back in bowl, re-cover and let rise for one hour.

5. Split the dough into 12 rolled balls (you can do more/less depending on the size of hot cross buns you'd like). Arrange the buns on a parchment-lined baking tray - leaving room for them to expand. Cover with a tea towel for 30 minutes.

6. Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas. Mix 75g plain flour with seven tbsp of water to make a thick paste. This is the most difficult bit, either pipe a cross onto the buns or use a spoon to dribble it on. Bake the buns for 20 minutes on the middle shelf.

7. Heat six tbsp of marmalade and then brush/spoon over the warm buns, allow cool and enjoy!

### Tips for individualising your buns:

Instead of adding the raisins, zest of an orange, apple, cinnamon, ginger and brushing with marmalade, you can jazz them up with these variations:

**The chocoholic** - Dark chocolate chunks, cocoa powder, orange zest and peel, ginger, marmalade on the top.

**Christ's birthday buns** - Dried cranberries, mixed peel, lemon zest, raisins, nutmeg, apricot jam on the top.

**Cheeky cherry** - Dried cherries, dried cranberries, flaked almonds (save some for the top), cherry jam on the top.

**Sunny hunny** - Desiccated coconut, freeze-dried mango, nutmeg, honey on the top.



IMAGE: BAKER TOM'S BREAD



# Tough Questions

with Maddie and Pat



TWO PERSPECTIVES ON YOUR QUERIES, HOT TAKES AND DILEMMAS

## THIS WEEK: CLEANING WARS

*"I am in a bitter war with my housemates over cleaning. Any ideas for how I can make them help keep the house clean and tidy?"*

"Bitter war" suggests this situation has already gone in a direction it needn't have. I'm going to play devil's advocate here and highlight that everyone has different priorities, and to some people, cleaning isn't high up on the agenda. This is not ideal of course, but it is the fact of the matter.

How out of hand has the cleaning become? Try and realise exactly what is infuriating you: are you taking out other stresses on the mess? Is it that you're the only one tidying? Is it that people don't care that it bothers you? Approach housemates on issues like this with sensitivity and respect, then you're far more likely to get them to want to respect you by helping out more. Try having a calm conversation and then all hands on deck.

Make a rota to start, just so that people who have been doing nothing aren't overwhelmed by everything. They do say if everyone does a little bit then nobody has to do a lot. You could even just set the rule that in communal areas, any individual mess should be cleaned up by that individual right away. Living with other people isn't always a smooth ride and it is certainly a process of adaptation. Go easy on yourself and try to make others understand when something bothers you calmly, rather than entering into total warfare. - **Maddie**

If you're in a "bitter war" that each of you is aware of, then there's your first problem. You're doing it all wrong.

If, like a couple of my housemates, they are incapable of acting in a normal manner when it comes to cleaning and kitchen based maintenance, you need to begin a subtle guerrilla campaign of overaction.

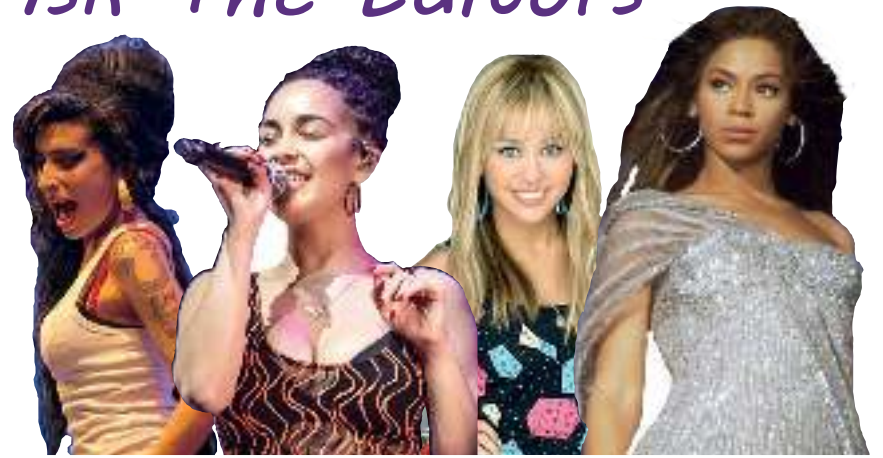
Make it widely known when you are correcting something that your housemate either hasn't done or hasn't done properly. If they leave the lid of the bin open as though it isn't seeping out its stench into the kitchen, slam that lid down hard. If they've left a saucepan unwashed with dried cheese all over the insides, crash it about in the sink and shout something like "you're 21, how the fuck do you not know how to wash up a pan?"

If there is yet another Chinese takeaway plate sitting out for a week, smash the plate and strategically place the broken bits under the dirty socks in their room and fuck their feet up.

As soon as this guerrilla campaign begins, the atmosphere will subtly darken and the fear that you instil in your filthy housemates will see them slowly begin to realise that their inaction will spark reaction from those among the house that understand what it is to live cleanly. - **Pat**

To submit your anonymous dilemmas, keep an eye out for the link on our Twitter

# Ask The Editors



IN HONOUR OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK, WE ASKED OUR EDITORS...

## WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE WOMEN IN MUSIC?

"Amy Winehouse - she's a British icon and one of the greatest songwriters of all time. Her music is timeless and endlessly enjoyable, her vocals utterly unique. A one-of-a-kind talent." - **Alex, MUSE**

"Hannah Montana because she taught me how to enjoy the best of both worlds." - **Malu, Deputy MUSE**

"Jorja Smith. If you're seriously asking me to justify this response then I have no time for you." - **Jonny, Editor**

"Taylor Swift." - **Pat, Deputy Editor**

"My dream festival lineup: Stevie Nicks, Noname, Mitski, Lorde, SZA, Lana Del Rey, Phoebe Bridges and Solange." - **Fenella, Music**

"Beyoncé because she is incredibly powerful." - **Sophie, Travel**

"After the release of her latest album in January, Halsey made her way back into my Spotify playlist." - **Emily, Film & TV**

"Ellie Rowsell because I'm going to marry her one day - jokes aside, her music could be the soundtrack to my life. Wolf Alice have tracks to chill to, to cry to, to scream to, they are brilliant and it's her vocals and guitar that really make the songs." - **Annabel, Food & Drink**

"I want to say Ariana Grande but I always say Ariana Grande. I'm so basic, wow." - **Lucy, Food & Drink**

"Lady Gaga from 'A Star Is Born' - a great performance, so different to everything she's done before." - **Hannah, Travel**

"Arykah Badu because she is quite a diverse artist, has worked on some interesting collaborations and of course, has a great voice. She was the first person who came to mind so the reasons are a bit vague but hopefully sufficiently MUSE worthy" - **James, Film & TV**

"Patti Smith, an absolute icon and brilliant musician." - **Molly, Science**

"Billie Eilish, she's a good advocate for teen mental health." - **Sarah, Fashion**

A full playlist of these artists as well as bonus picks can be found on our Twitter.

IMAGES: RAMA, JUSTIN HIGUCHI, ALACOOK, JEN KEYS

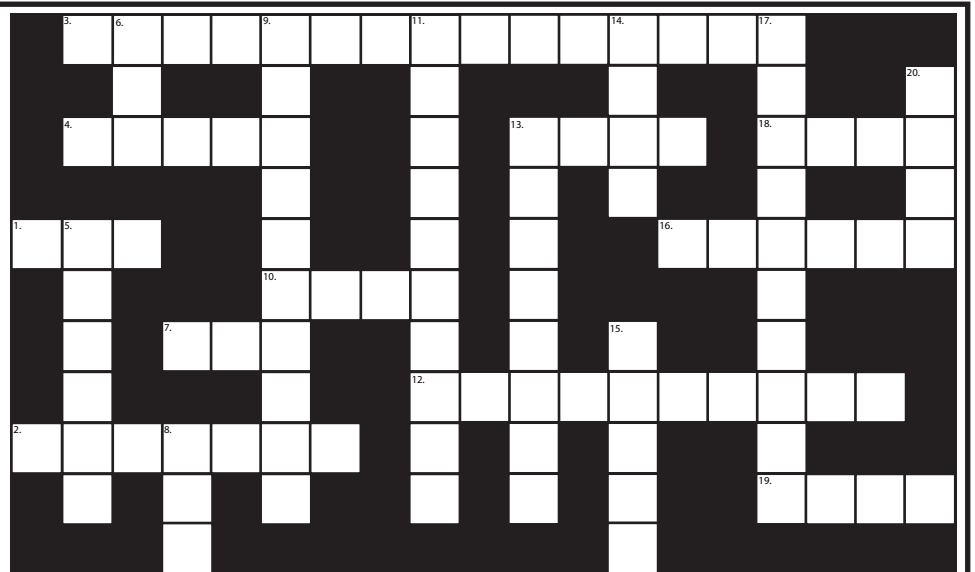
## beMUSEments

### Across:

- 1) Variations include Easter and Scotch (3)\*
- 2) Comic book label famous for *Watchmen*, *Sandman* and *V For Vendetta* (7)\*
- 3) The creator of gonzo journalism and cocaine enthusiast (6,1,8)\*
- 4) George \_\_\_\_, interviewed in this week's Q&A (5)\*
- 7) Space-based MMORPG (3)\*
- 10) Noun, a part of a building enclosed by walls, floor, and ceiling (4)
- 12) Orwell's novella, recently performed in York by TFTI Platform (6,4)\*
- 13) Verb to address God or another deity (4)
- 16) Justin \_\_\_\_, latest album *Changes* (6)\*
- 18) Soft sweet food, baked and sometimes iced or decorated (4)
- 19) \_\_\_\_ Krule, artist behind *Alone*, *Omen 3* (4)\*

### Down:

- 5) Canadian musician who released *Miss Anthropocene* (6)\*
  - 6) Contraction of 'university' (3)\*
  - 8) Beverage, associated with Britain (3)
  - 9) Chocolate based treats associated with Easter (6,4)\*
  - 10) Band known for *Currents* and *The Slow Rush* (4,6)\*
  - 11) Boon Joon Ho's 'Best Picture' (8)\*
  - 14) Dramatic work for stage or broadcast (4)
  - 15) Vertigo comic featuring fairytale characters (5)\*
  - 17) Artist the internet loves to hate (10)\*
  - 20) Lounge \_\_\_\_, in *Fashion* (4)\*
- \*Can be found in this edition of MUSE





# Civil war in SNP threatens to topple Sturgeon

**Harry Ward**  
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

SCOTTISH FIRST Minister Nicola Sturgeon has come under increasing pressure as members of her party grow frustrated at a lack of progress towards independence. Ms Sturgeon, leader of the Scottish National Party since November 2014, has been criticised for overseeing a 'tired' government. Most ominously for the 49-year-old, this discontent has led to private questions about whether she is the right person to lead the SNP forwards.

These questions come in an environment of increasing factionalism within Scotland's largest party. After a hugely successful 2019 election that gave the SNP 48 seats out of 59 contested, the absence of strong opposition has helped to facilitate infighting within the party. At the centre of this brewing political storm lies the key issue of independence.

While the SNP is unified over a desire for Scotland's secession from the United Kingdom, there is disagreement about how this is best

achieved. Some, including Joanna Cherry MP, are pressing for radical action aimed at forcing through a referendum without the consent of the Prime Minister. This course of action would be constitutionally unprecedented as well as straining the relationship between Holyrood and Westminster. Therefore, more cautious members, such as long serving MP Pete Wishart, have supported Sturgeon's slower strategy by warning against Cherry's approach.

These internal divisions come at a particularly inopportune time for Sturgeon's administration. Sturgeon's predecessor and former close political ally Alex Salmond is to stand trial next week on 14 charges including attempted rape and sexual assault. All the offences are alleged to have happened during Salmond's tenure as first minister between 2007 and 2014. In even worse news for Sturgeon, an inquiry is to be launched into her government's handling of the complaints.

In January, Salmond successfully sued the Scottish government for £500,000 after it admitted to involving an individual with a previous interest in the case. The court

defeat, which Salmond said was an "abject humiliation" for the authorities, forced Sturgeon to apologise and did little to reinforce her statesmanship. Now it threatens to further damage the legitimacy of the SNP as the party prepares to build upon its election success.

The SNP brand has been further dented by the recent loss of a rising star. Derek McKay, seen as a future leader by some in the party, resigned in early February after it was revealed he sent inappropriate social media messages to a 16-year-old boy. Within a party traditionally known for its discipline, these scandals not only call Sturgeon's personal judgement into question but also undermine her authority at a crucial time.

Sturgeon herself is under pressure to deliver on her promise of a second referendum. Despite recent polls putting support for independence at around 50 percent, organising a sequel to

the 2014 vote has proven more difficult than the SNP originally anticipated. Boris Johnson's refusal to grant formal powers to Holyrood was a considerable blow to Sturgeon's timetable, and she has subsequently been criticised for not

having a back up plan prepared for such an eventuality.

Sturgeon's inability to predict stiff resistance from Johnson has aroused particular disappointment, and her promises of a referendum this

calendar year are deemed unrealistic by many within Scotland.

Consequently, support from her party has been minimal with insiders feeling she has been consistently outmanoeuvred and fearing she is unable to engineer a solution. Regarding the leadership of the SNP, Angus MacNeil MP told the BBC: "What I'm concentrating on is not so much the personalities involved but it's the issue of independence." MacNeil's failure to endorse his leader is indicative of the problems facing Sturgeon as she attempts to simultaneously appease her own party, while presenting an acceptable proposal to a hostile Conservative government in London.

If Nicola Sturgeon is to succeed where Salmond failed, she must reunite her party, persuade or straggle Johnson into a referendum, and finally convince the electorate of her vision for Scotland outside the United Kingdom. A failure to do so could soon see her replaced by a party impatient for success. The coming weeks and months will be crucial, not only for the career of Scotland's first ever female leader, but also the nation as whole.

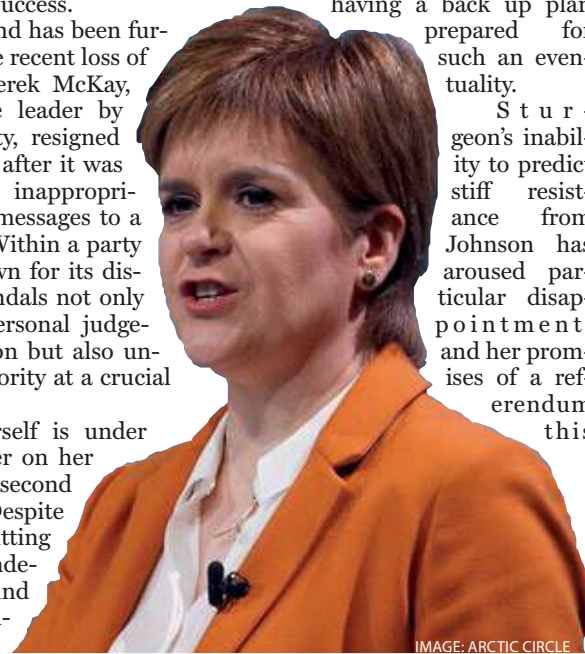


IMAGE: ARCTIC CIRCLE

# Turkish action in Idlib imminent, claims Erdogan

**Jacob Starr**  
POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

AFTER ALMOST a decade of civil war, Syria is largely under government, Kurdish or Turkish, control. Conflict has become centralised to specific regions, such as the Idlib Governorate, the last major area controlled by various rebel groups, some supported by Ankara. Turkey is wary of a Russian-backed regime offensive underway in the region.

Responding to the offensive, Turkey is deploying more forces into Idlib, with a special forces convoy deployed on 24 February. President Erdogan's fears are twofold. Firstly, the possibility of a new wave of refugees, which Turkey, already home to 3.6 million refugees, isn't equipped to handle. Turkey is 'the country most affected by the Syrian crisis' says Erdogan.

Secondly, and crucially, is his vested interest in the war's outcome. Turkey's influence as a major stakeholder in Syria could diminish if the offensive succeeds. Turkey supports the Syrian National Army, who are the self-proclaimed official opposition to the regime.

Erdogan knows reality dictates

that with Putin's continued support Assad's position is largely guaranteed, though targets the benefits of future peace negotiations. Engagement in Idlib is how he positions himself to insure this. He has committed to meeting French, German and Russian leaders at a 5 March summit to discuss the humanitarian and military situation. However, he refuses to back down from threats of imminent military intervention.

Erdogan, however, requires

dialogue with Putin, emphasising the need to "draw up our roadmap by negotiating with Russia at the highest level". Despite militarily competing in Syria, the countries have aligned interests. Both can benefit from conflict resolution, but must cement their positions in Idlib. Neither can allow military confrontation to destroy the strategic relationship. Nor can they allow the other to gain a position of prominence.

Meanwhile, on the ground, regime and Russian forces have already taken Aleppo, and the M5 highway between it and Damascus, Syria's transportation backbone. This offensive began on 21 December and despite talks between Ankara and Moscow culminating in a ceasefire, going into effect on 12 January, the offensive ultimately continued, with hostilities resuming on 15 January. As a result, the UN estimates that 400,000 have been displaced since December.

Assad aims to capture the strategic M4 highway between Aleppo and Latakia, where, uncoincidentally, Russia has a military base. At the present rate, this looks probable. Continuous successes have been achieved in recent weeks, exemplified by the capture of Maaret al-Numan along the M5 highway on 19 February. Comparatively, Turkish-backed forces are facing consistent losses, further incentivising Erdogan to send in more troops, exacerbating the conflict.

Russia has also shown support for a summit to discuss another possible ceasefire. The Kremlin has dismissed Turkish calls for a return to the 2018 Sochi agreement, which allowed Turkey to establish military

posts in Idlib.

Simultaneously, the US has been cast aside in Syria. The withdrawal of US forces from northern Syria last October has effectively given Turkey the green light to control northern Syria. This is to the detriment of America's Kurdish allies, the YPG, who Turkey view as being associated with the PKK, who they regard as a terrorist organisation. What persists through this international stand-off, is a worsening humanitarian situation.

A significant proportion of the Irbil Governorate's three million people are already displaced from conflict elsewhere. Furthermore, there is significant fear that fighting could encroach on camps in the area, leading to the potential of a "real massacre of civilians in that area" as warned by Mark Cutts, Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syrian Crisis.

Amidst the lingering prevalence of jihadists amongst rebel forces, Idlib has emerged as the epicentre of the manoeuvring between Russia and Turkey. With conflict potentially to intensify, civilians could once again become trapped in the crossfire, as Idlib becomes the new Aleppo in the ongoing civil war.



IMAGE: THE PRESIDENTIAL PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF AZERBAIJAN

## GLOBAL



## POLITICS

### High court favours Sharia Law

A high court in Pakistan has ruled that men are permitted to marry underage girls, under Sharia Law, if they have experienced their first menstrual cycle before doing so. The ruling was made last month in the Sindh High Court during the hearing for 14 year old Huma Younus who was abducted, pressured to convert to Islam and forced into child marriage against her will.

### #NoMarriage

South Korean women are fighting against their traditional role and choosing not to marry, reports *The Economist*. They spoke with Go Lee, who explained how she believed marriage could hurt her career. The trend belongs to the #NoMarriage campaign which pushed to normalise the choice to remain single against government pressures to find a husband and have children.

### It takes a village

In Columbia's bloody half century conflict, women were subject to vast amounts of violence and forced to flee their homes. In the city of Cartagena, a female community decided to combat the isolation women feel when they arrive in a new area, building the 'City of Women'. It is entirely self-sufficient and is home to its own restaurants, stores, schools and community centre.

### Get off my land

Deforestation in the Amazon rainforest has reached concerning levels. Women from the Arara-Karo indigenous group have taken a stand against this as their land is under threat from loggers, miners and farmers. The land is sacred to them, one member of the tribe explained, and they are prepared to fight to the death to protect the forest that they call "their mother".



# Trudeau struggles with the ongoing rail blockade

**Hayoung Oh**

DEPUTY POLITICS EDITOR

CANADA'S TRANSPORT system has been brought to a standstill for the past three weeks. Indigenous people and their supporters have been blocking many freight and passenger routes across the country, in protest against the Coastal GasLink pipeline. With the impacts of the rail blockades heightening concerns around the country's wider economic state, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is under increasing pressure to take action.

The Coastal GasLink pipeline will cover a total of 670km to ship natural gas from the north-eastern part of British Columbia to the coast, intruding into native lands in the process. Since the C\$6.6bn project was set in motion in 2012, it has reached deals with 20 indigenous councils, including some Wet'suwet'en councils. As part of the agreement, the company promised to provide training, employment opportunities and investments. Nonetheless, there have been ongoing tensions and disagreements be-

tween elected and hereditary chiefs.

While the elected council are responsible for implementing government legislation over the boundaries of the reserves, the hereditary chiefs are in control of the traditional lands. The indigenous protesters are not allowing the project to progress past their territory as they are concerned about its impact on their land and natural resources. Chief Na'Moks of the Tsayu clan voiced such concerns as he emphasised "you always have to put the environment first".

For years, Coastal GasLink and hereditary leaders have been unable to come to terms. While the company claimed to have consulted the hereditary leaders, the chiefs have denied such a statement. Chief Na'Moks said "we ensured that we stated at any meetings that these meetings cannot be misconstrued as 'consultation'".

The conflict is not simply about the Coastal GasLink pipeline project, it is also associated with wider issues surrounding indigenous people's rights and Canada's reconciliation with them. During his presidential campaign, Trudeau had

promised a restoration of friendly relations with indigenous groups. Therefore, despite firmly asserting that "barricades must now come down and the [court] injunctions must be obeyed and the law must be upheld", his Liberal government has been prioritising peaceful measures.

Emphasising the need for patience and consultation, he had left it for the police to decide their

approach in executing the court's orders for each of their own jurisdictions. Although the police have largely refrained from using force or violence to uphold the court's demands, stronger measures have been taken more recently.

Earlier this month, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) removed protesters and their camps from construction sites. This at-

tempt to clear some blockades has involved a few indigenous protesters being arrested by the police force. Nonetheless, blockades and protests are continuing to paralyse rail lines, ports and highways in other parts of Canada.

Over the past three weeks, Trudeau has been trying to resolve the long drawn out conflict through more dialogue. Nonetheless, it appears to be a complex issue to untangle. The two parties are looking at the other to solve the issue. While Trudeau has now put the responsibility on indigenous leaders to put an end to the protests, hereditary chief Woos of Wet'suwet'en has requested for RCMP to leave their territory and the construction works to be halted before talks can begin. He said, "if they show respect, definitely we'll start talking".

The protests have harmed thousands in the rail industry; hundreds of trains have become redundant and almost 1,500 rail workers have been laid off. As frustration and concerns about the wider economic repercussions are increasing, Trudeau is under mounting pressure to resolve the matter.



IMAGE: CBC NEWS

# Indian women subject to invasive tests at work

**Hashaam Yaqoob**

POLITICS CORRESPONDENT

IN INDIA, WHEN a woman is on her period, her life is put on hold. In the city of Surat, 100 female government employees were forced together in groups of 10 and were stripped naked as they underwent invasive "finger tests" to check if they were menstruating. This was to ensure that they were fit for work. There are claims that the test is mandatory for any female government trainee to continue working after their three-year probationary period. A few of the women have disclosed their experience of the event and described their surroundings. They noted that the door was not fully closed and the only thing blocking the view was a thin sheet of curtains. They stated that the female doctors who performed these procedures were often rude to the patients, and even questioned harshly on whether the unmarried women in the groups were pregnant, which in India is seen as a taboo.

This traumatic invasion of privacy is "highly deplorable" as quoted by their union, although worryingly the tests themselves in principle

were not objected to but rather the method used.

This is in stark contrast to the male treatment, which merely included a general fitness test, that looked at the eyes, ENT, lung and heart tests, as well as an overall check-up.

This issue was alerted by the union of a few women who were brave enough to discuss their trauma. Shaikh (the general secretary of The Surat Municipal Corporation Employee Union) alleged

that doctors performing the finger test on women in a group was demeaning. "If they [doctors] had any doubt about an employee's health, they should have got tests done in an acceptable manner. Asking even unmarried women about past pregnancies is downright insulting." He later goes on to state "we demand an immediate halt to such insulting and inhuman tests. I have never heard such a test on women employees anywhere else."



IMAGE: EKA ARISAD

In the 21st century women must still go through 'virginity tests', as it is deemed a condition that would influence their work performance. This is not a new trend in India or other countries such as Pakistan. Menstruation is often seen as taboo, and in western countries such as the UK there's still an attitude of disgust when it comes to periods. However, this is not a new trend, especially in rural parts of India where sanitary napkins or just rags of cloth were the predominant materials used by women until the early 2000s due to the high expense of sanitary pads. Muruganatham later helped women buy more affordable pads with his invention and helped destigmatise it, if only a little.

Tampon sales according to a Euro monitor survey, are at a sluggish rate of 2-3 per cent, seven times lower than sanitary napkins. Roughly, only 5 per cent of the Indian female population are aware of this facility. This can be explained by the fact that virginity is still seen as pure in most parts of the world, and is something a woman must keep sacrosanct, hence why tampons in India are so hard to come by - because of the pervasive and continuing myth that it will break a

woman's hymen, and affect her virginity. Therefore, general healthcare for women in parts of rural India remains to be scarce.

This event in Surat seems coherent to the attitudes surrounding female healthcare which is what these women have been shamed and degraded for. Considering that this happened at a government level, concerningly, shows that this is a systemic issue that is prevalent amongst the political elites in India who permitted this to happen to their own employees.

However, there are signs of change in India. In 2018, the government scrapped the tampon tax which reduced the price down 12 per cent, thus making it more affordable for women to have access. In comparison, the UK government is still waiting to do this since legislation was passed in 2016. Yet, it seems that Prime Minister Modi may be more focused on international image. His meeting with Trump, during his maiden visit to the country, focused more on issues like security and foreign trade. For now, while India may be a rising global power, domestically it remains that not all citizens will reap the benefit of this international status.



**LEFT WING  
RIGHT WING**

*Thoughts from the Politics Editor*

THIS SUNDAY, 8 March, is International Women's Day. Often met with cries for an 'International Men's Day' or confusion over the day's relevance if feminism is supposedly about equality, it is a cel-

ebration that, frustratingly, seems to be accompanied by controversy. It may be 2020, but the day is needed now more than ever.

Sadly, we have been made all too aware of the consequences when

women in the public eye are cruelly targeted by tabloid journalism. The suicide of Caroline Flack has ripped a hole in the hearts of many, and through society.

Yet, the early start to 2020 is not without hope. Greece has elected the country's first ever female president, who is set to be sworn in later this month. In Columbia, despite the vast destruction women have faced, a community have cre-

ated a safe haven for each other. Last week, Harvey Weinstein was convicted of third-degree rape and a first-degree criminal sexual act.

It is of concern, however, that even on the worst day of his life, he is able to champion the narrative. Headlines carried his name, while the names of the women who have suffered often appeared later in the body of text. We all know his name, but can we say the same for those

who have fallen victim to and survived his actions?

There is a long road that lies ahead. This is why, you may have noticed, that this edition our Global Politics section focuses on shedding light on the stories of marginalised groups of women. Voices who you may not previously have had the chance to hear. Words matter, especially the ones of those who have been silenced for far too long.





## “Alexa, please record all my private conversations”

**Jerry McMichael**  
BUSINESS EDITOR

BACK IN 2014 A HELPFUL new friend entered many of our homes; she tells you when you need to get up in the morning, what the weather is going to be like today, she picks your favourite music to relax to when you get home from work and tells you when you need to re-order groceries; she's not a home keeper or a personal assistant, in fact she's not even sentient. She's called 'Alexa', she's virtual assistant AI technology developed by Amazon which claims to ease the necessities and constraints of modern life. 100 million Alexa devices have now been sold worldwide. They appear to be everywhere and represent the future of 5G user, with device integration reducing the need for human-led commands to interact with technology. Even ten years ago such advancements in AI technology seemed inconceivable but yet the global economic pursuit of the 5G era has pushed the advancement of autonomous AI technology ever closer. But with such rapid growth of the AI market and now with the presence of 100 million Alexa devices in our homes are they just a fun time saver or is this the beginning of an Orwellian nightmare?

The Alexa device in recent years has raised several concerns about the technology giant's ability to harvest, store and analyse our data, not only are Alexa devices waiting to hear a command but they are also recording and transmitting our private audio to

Amazon's data storage bank. Then, last year, an even darker side to the Alexa devices broke, not only is the AI technology listening to what we are saying, but Amazon employees are too. A month after the scandal broke in March 2019, Amazon were forced to admit that it is within the company's ability and remit to recall private conversations of individuals within their home and that some of these conversations were even being transcribed by Amazon employees in a data storage facility in Romania.

### Private conversations are transcribed by employees

Amazon claimed in response to the scandal that “only a fraction of 1 per cent of conversations are heard by employees, these conversations are anonymised and analysed for the purpose of checking that the Alexa AI has the ability to understand the commands it is given.” Having willingly invited Alexa into our homes, we now know what senior Amazon executives have known for years, that Amazon as an organisation has the ability to harvest and analyse unprecedented amounts of our personal data.

Professor Shoshana Zuboff of the Harvard Business School now believes that Amazon is at the forefront of the way in which customers

are viewed. “Amazon have amassed so much information about us, what we know is only a pittance of the potential they have to know about us, we are no longer consumers but a source of raw material.” Only a quarter of a century ago Amazon was a book retailer based in the garage of Jeff Bezos' bungalow in Seattle, today it is the single largest retailer on the globe; in 2018

the company's value surpassed \$1 trillion. There is only one accountable reason for this unprecedented success and it is the way in which Amazon is uniquely able to analyse and predict the consumption habits of any individual anywhere in the world. Amazon's customer behaviour research team was thus born and was faced with one overriding question: 'how can we learn more about a person', the answer the team used customers' digital DNA, their clicks, to create digital profiles of them. What we buy, what we don't buy, what offers we look for, what as individuals in effect consume to make us tick. You may be quick to dismiss the process of granular data collection as merely an-

other transaction where we provide a limited amount of data about ourselves and in return receive a service that eases the necessities of modern living. This is far from what is happening today, which is far more invasive and much more manipulative. Amazon has now aggregated so much consumer data from every demographic conceivable in society that by 2007 it was even

able to predict what we might want in the future based on the shopping habits of someone like ourselves. Say for example, you're a 35 year old male living in an urban location Amazon has tens of thousands of consumers that are just like you, but maybe three months ahead of you from where you are today and Amazon has all of their search and purchase data too, they can therefore anticipate what you are likely to need next. Amazon know who we are and they present us with things that we like, things that are inherently going to meet demands but we might not even be conscious about our need for them yet. We are now in a situation where we

are unconscious of the fact we are living in a 'Big Brother consumerist system' because the process is under taken so perversely.

Amazon has a unique ability to sell to us in a way that no other retailer can, not only because of their vast size and economies of scale but also because they have an unprecedented ability to harvest, analyse and use our personal data to push us towards even greater consumption. While we might dismiss these blatant intrusions into our privacy as the cost of an exceptionally competitive service, the fact still remains that Amazon is now moving into not quite a wild west, but certainly a largely unregulated area. There now needs to be an independent review into how big data is impacting on surveillance and the tolerance of our population to the intrusion this technology poses to the private arena of our lives.

This intrusion has been personified by the roll out of Alexa technology into our homes; the invasions of privacy inherent within Alexa are extreme, the notion that a machine is listening all the time in our homes is a threat that people should take very seriously, yet all the evidence is that Alexa is a hit. Amazon's success is based on its ability to understand what we will consume before we even consciously know we want to consume it. Not just Amazon but all big data must now ask itself how far are they willing to breach basic notions of privacy? How far are Amazon willing to go in the pursuit of profit? How much are we willing to tolerate just for a cheaper price?



## A look at Amazon's main competitors in 2020

**Kezia Deakin**  
DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

AMAZON HAS A MARKET share of more than 30 per cent of the UK's e-commerce sector. In comparison, the next closest is eBay coming in at 9.8 per cent, followed by Sainsbury's at 4.6 per cent. Amazon leads the way in the e-commerce industry but still faces stiff competition. However, to put all this into perspective, e-commerce's share of chain retail was 21 per cent by the end of 2019, with the vast majority of all retail sales in the UK coming from physical stores.

The creation of Amazon Marketplace put Amazon in the relatively unique position of being both a retailer and a platform for other retailers. Essentially, small retailers pay a fee to host their products on Amazon's platform. The small retailer can access the Amazon customer and in return, Amazon can expand into new areas with very little knowledge about them. The individual retailers don't get access to the rich data about their own customers beyond simple figures. This is the very data that made Amazon thrive. In this way, Amazon defeated some of their smaller retail compe-

tion by incorporating them into the business, while giving them very little personal control over their product.

Amazon's success with third-party sellers comes largely from its careful control of the supply chain. Through its Fulfilled-by-Amazon service, Amazon can branch out into new products but also keep the supply chain tightly controlled by warehousing and shipping items for third-party sellers. This gives Amazon an edge over one of its main competitors: eBay has no fulfilment op - tion, so has to cope with the non-uniformity of quality and delivery

shopping with quicker shipping and more reliability, deterring some potential eBay customers away.

Due to Amazon operating in many retail areas, it has competition on many different fronts. Globally, Walmart offers some solid competition. Walmart has a dominant physical presence with traditional stores but has also been successful in branching out into e-commerce.

A company press release has shown that online sales are growing at 40 per cent year over year. Walmart doesn't shy away from innovation either - testing out a scheme to deliver groceries straight to customer's fridges and introducing more robots to the manufacturing process. They still lag behind Amazon in terms of their share in the e-commerce market but are showing a very promising increase.

Another global contender is Alibaba. This company was responsible for 58 per cent of all online retail sales in China in 2019. As China, along with the UK and the US, is one of the three big players in the e-commerce sector, this is not to be taken lightly. Alibaba has also taken a similar ap-

proach to Amazon in involving itself in lots of different sectors: it having created its own secure payment system: Alipay.

The Alphabet Company (The Parent Company of Google) is not generally considered the big player

### Amazon has a market share of 30% of all e-commerce

in the e-commerce industry. However, as Adam Levy points out, it has the potential to become an essential partner to any retailer trying to compete with Amazon.

When consumers don't have Amazon Prime, they are just as likely to start their shopping search on Google as they are Amazon. Amazon's key attribute which sets it apart from competitors is the sheer amount of data it has on consumers. This data can be used for an impressive range of things. The data can be used to predict patterns of what certain people will buy in the future and create targeted advertis-

ing. Google has amassed this data as well, in addition to payment information through Google Wallet. Google also have the option of incorporating a retail feature into the Google Home device which millions possess. It's still hypothetical but a partnership with another retailer could create a strong rival to Amazon by toppling its data monopoly.

Amazon has been facing critique for alleged anti-competitive practices for some time now. It has so far avoided real action in the UK because anti-competition law is more geared towards protecting the consumer against business rather than smaller businesses against more powerful businesses.

However, in the US, the idea that Amazon should be broken up because its monopoly is unfairly preventing small businesses from thriving online is gaining traction. Elizabeth Warren is promoting the idea of more stringent regulation of the competition practices of big US companies on the campaign trail. The Department of Justice similarly is launching a broad antitrust review of big companies. The EU Commission has also launched several investigations into monopolies recently, which is certainly worth watching out for in the future.



IMAGE: MIKE MOZART



# The truth behind Amazon's warehouses

**Patrick Walker**

SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

FOLLOWING A BBC *Panorama* investigation of working conditions at some of the company's key British warehouses in 2013, Amazon has faced consistent criticism over its relationship both with its supply line employees, and with the unions that are seeking to represent them.

In early February this year, 600 employees at one of Amazon's largest warehouses in Staten Island, New York, signed a letter asking management for equitable breaks and easier transport to their place of work, which Amazon plans to expand by around 450,000 square feet after its most successful Christmas period ever. The letter is the culmination of many disputes that warehouse employees have been fighting for months.

Rina Cummings, who works in Staten Island, said she had tried many times to get her employers to listen to her. Speaking to *The Guardian*, she said she struggled to get managers to treat her less "like a robot". She also insisted that the warehouse had become more dangerous as a result of staff fatigue. Accidents happen more frequently at Amazon warehouses than in those run by other companies. The Staten Island depot in question records injuries at three times the national average rate according to the US Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA).

For jobs like scanning packages, employees working the conveyor belt face hourly targets of around 1,800 packages per hour, or 30 per

minute. Employees who miss these targets are fired with little warning, and incidents such as spillages, accidents, or improperly packaged products that slow workers down are not accounted for in the target. Cummings is critical of this approach. "It just takes two or three write-ups, depending on the severity. You can get fired for anything".

## Managers are being trained to prevent unions organising

These stories are in line with those working in British outlets, too. An investigation from *The Sun* and *The Mirror* found that employees at Amazon fulfillment centres in the UK were routinely falling asleep on the job after exhausting work. The report also found that mental health problems were rife amongst employees, some of whom had suffered panic attacks and subsequent hospitalisation after they struggled to keep up with deadlines. In 2018, *The Sun* revealed that some employees had even resorted to urinating in bottles to circumvent regulations on how long their break times should be.

Amazon's response to widespread criticism seems to be two-fold: minor restructuring of its supply lines has been accompanied with an extremely well-coordinated public relations effort. In 2019, the company's 'Amazon ambassadors'

took to Twitter for the first time to explain why they enjoyed their job so much. One such account said that although they had suffered depression working for the company, she had begun to realise that it was "[her] fault, not Amazon's". Twitter users and the wider media were sceptical, arguing that tweets looked scripted and soleless. One such critic commented that the tweets "had the same energy as someone answering the door with a gun to their head".

The ambassador programme has attracted criticism, because it falls in line with another criticism of Amazon's practice, that its treatment of union members, or those proposing unions, is overly harsh. In a 2013 BBC documentary, hidden footage revealed the company had issued instructions to its managers on how to detect and bust union organisation efforts: such a policy has seemingly continued today.

Nonetheless, the Amazon ambassador programme has continued, featuring hundreds of warehouse employees who say they enjoy the work because it gets them out of the warehouse. Amazon has extended its so-called transparency efforts to tours of most of its processing plants too. For free, prospective Amazon customers are being offered the opportunity to

look around what Amazon calls its 'fulfillment centres'.

The lack of access to unions is perhaps one of the main reasons why Amazon's workers are poorly paid. Strikes have had an impact before: in Italy, Amazon recently agreed to end unfair scheduling practices after weeks of strikes and protest. Wages are a key issue too, and on this, employees have far less bargaining power than with other retailers. The company has maintained a practise of locating in rural areas with high unemployment figures to ensure wages are competitive. This in turn means that those looking beyond Amazon for employment can be left out in the cold.

Following its acquisition of upmarket American food retailer Whole Foods, Amazon is now one of the world's largest employers, with a global workforce of 566,000. Despite continued decline in the retail sector, and the rumours of an incoming financial crisis, that figure is only accelerating. It is now time that Amazon faced up to its appalling record on work place conditions both here in the UK and internationally. The continued treatment of its employees and pursuit to break up union organisation, epitomises the company's ever-growing pursuit of profit and market power.



IMAGE: MARKOSK2000

# Amazon's future markets & technologies

**Alex Thompson**

SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

**Jerry McMichael**

BUSINESS EDITOR

WHEN AMAZON FIRST announced its plans to trial a drone delivery service in 2013, it seemed laughable. Now it's almost a reality. Unveiled at a Las Vegas press conference late last year, the latest version of the Prime Air delivery drone boasts a range of 15 miles and the capacity to carry packages of around 2kg. While this limit may seem small at first, the company claim that over 75 per cent of their orders fall under the required weight limit for these vehicles. Capable of vertical take off and landing, the aircraft will be

packed with a variety of sensors capable of detecting heat, depth and sound - ensuring that they remain a safe and viable way to deliver without fear of causing injury or destroying property. "From paragliders and power lines, to the corgi in your backyard, this drone has safety covered," claimed consumer worldwide CEO Jeff Wilke at the conference, "customers will only feel comfortable receiving drone deliveries if the system is incredibly safe".

Eight covered rotors provided lift and thrust for the 'octocopters', with a tilting design to ensure maneuverability and a storage space in the centre for packages. Amazon say this is the most effective design out of "two dozen" prototypes they have previously trialled, none of which have been very good at avoiding aircraft, obstacles

or people. While it claimed at this conference that we would be seeing the use of this technology within a matter of months, so far the only evidence of the drone flight has been at proving grounds around the UK where Amazon are presumably still testing the technology. The company are still reportedly waiting on extra safety testing and federal approval in the US, but in an interview in early December Bezos claimed we'll see the drones implemented within the next four to five years. This has reportedly been made more likely with recent changes to aviation laws by the Federal Aviation Authority last month.

Whether we see delivery drones traversing the streets of York within the next few years remains to be seen but one thing is certain - Amazon are desperate to take to the sky.

Amazon's pursuit into new markets has been further personified by its acquisition of Ring a domestic security tech firm based in California, in 2018 for \$840 million. Ring represents yet another new potential source of data collection, not only does Ring offer remote visual and audio security monitoring for home owners but part of the device's patent also allows Amazon access to the

same visual and audio data. Data that can be repurposed and used for other commercial uses. Last year, three UK police forces: Suffolk, Essex and the Metropolitan police force, have admitted receiving free Ring doorbells to distribute free of charge to residents as a means of crime prevention. The new scheme has offered domestic police forces the capacity to remotely access and retrieve key evidence that has led to the successful prosecution of dozens of domestic burglaries and aggravated assaults on homeowners. An attractive and generous community programme on the part of Amazon you might think, yes, but as usual the scheme is not profitless on the part of Amazon. The roll out of Ring devices within police constabularies has also led to a significant boost of other residents purchasing Ring devices themselves, so what we are potentially witnessing here then is not an ethical community commitment campaign but is instead yet another ingenious marketing campaign on Amazon's part. Furthermore, as stated previously, Amazon are also entitled to this data, data that potentially allows Amazon further unprecedented and unwarranted domestic surveillance into our personal environments.

## AMAZON (1994 - present)

A brief climpse at Amazon throughout the ages...

1994

Jeff Bezos founds Amazon in the garage of his house as a book wholesaler



1997

Amazon goes public at \$18 dollars a share, valuing the company at \$300 million. By the ends of trading its IPO shares were trading at \$1.96

2003

Amazon launches Web hosting business by licensing its platform to other e-commerce sites, it's now the largest cloud service



2005

Amazon launches its Prime service at a price of \$79 a year, offering free two day shipping

2015

Amazon launches the Echo worldwide, accessing a vast wealth of consumer data and purchasing decisions



2018

Amazon reaches a \$1tn market cap, fueled by investor enthusiasm for rising profits, becoming only the second company in the same year





## York Science Events

**Athena SWAN gender seminar**

Held in PS/B/020 Psychology Building, Campus West, today (Tuesday 3 March) at 16:00. Professor Daphne Bavelier is delivering an open seminar in the Psychology Building about Athena SWAN - an award for gender diversity in university subjects with the theme of research into using action video games to sharpen cognition.

**The air that we breathe: An around the world tour of atmospheric chemistry**

Held in Merchant Adventurers' Hall, Fossgate, Wednesday 4 March at 18:30. Professor Lucy Carpenter describes the search for changes in atmospheric composition that affect human health and the climate, she also discusses recent scientific discoveries in air pollution.

**Natural justice and some sense of place: Some examples of how soil can be used as intelligence and evidence**

In B/T/005, Biology Building, Campus West, Thursday 5 March at 13:00. Professor Lorna Dawson is delivering a talk on the discipline of forensic soil science with examples of real and fictional case work where evidence from the earth has been important in aiding criminal investigations.

**Molecular motors and switches at surfaces**

Held in P/L/001, Physics/Electronics Building, Campus West, Thursday 12 March at 18:30. Professor Petra Rudolf, University of Groningen, delivers a talk on molecular motors and switches as the basis of crucial biological processes. The talk will involve discussions in self-assembled monolayers of switches that can be addressed with light and charge transfer and demonstrate how much systems can be employed for 'read and write' functions.

# Opportunities with York Science Conference

**Faz Kazmi**

SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT

FROM MOON EXPLORATION to bionics, the fields of science and technology are continually developing, ever-changing, and innovating at an unprecedented rate.

New fields are created and yet, the first principles behind all of this come from academia.

This creates an interesting question. How can we reconcile corporate and academic perspectives?

The York Science Conference (YSC) explores this question as we hear from those who have transitioned from academia to industry. This provides a great opportunity to learn something from their journey and understand how their studies translated into cutting edge research in a working environment.

Engaging with organisations and individuals from Amazon Web Services, The Royal Society of Chemistry, and The Yorkshire Police demonstrates a wealth of knowledge that currently exists in the industry but is unknown to the general public.

The York Science Conference

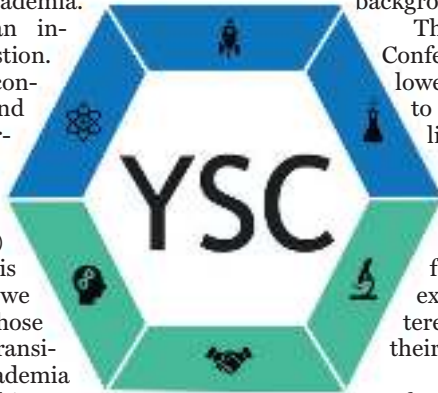
enjoys the connections and facilities of the University particularly from the STEM departments. The University of York ranks fourth in Chemistry, sixth in Biology and holds one of the top ten positions in several other STEM subjects.

A student-run initiative has thereby been of great interest to the University given how it integrates students from multidisciplinary backgrounds.

The York Science Conference has allowed the University to facilitate their links with major businesses and bring them together in an accessible format for students to explore their interests and catalyse their employability.

York Science Conference utilises the strong position York has within STEM fields and provides a platform for departments to collaborate and join forces, inspiring the next generation of students to pursue academic and corporate based research.

During the inaugural conference hosted in March 2019, York Science Conference debuted over 20 speakers, 350 registered delegates, and two simultaneous stages exploring a range of topics from gene therapy to policy-making in



science, the latter hosted by the former President of the Royal Society of Chemistry, Professor Sir John Holman.

This really demonstrates the large variety of talks and sessions on offer at the York Science Conference.

Additionally, The Expo, which is seen as a last-minute initiative, featured several of the Conference's partners including Reckitt Benckiser (the parent company of household brands Dettol and Nurofen) and *The Economist*. Competitions, panel debates, workshops, and additional keynotes covered a broad range of topics from computer programming to topical social issues such as women's participation in certain STEM fields.

Over the past year, information on the activity of the York Science Conference has been hard to come by, with YSC having been largely dormant with little insight about future events.

However, a recent spike in social media activity and the finalising of a new committee for the next year has renewed interest for their 2021 conference, which is likely to be hosted in the early stages of that same year, the most probable dates being in the months of February or March.

To find out more information about the York Science Conference, search for their social media channels or take a visit to their website, [yorkscienceconference.com](http://yorkscienceconference.com).

## Could cryonics make you immortal?

**Angelos Sofocleous**

DEPUTY SCIENCE EDITOR

HOW WOULD IT SOUND to you if you could be brought back to life decades or even centuries after you die? This refers not to the scenario of an upcoming science fiction novel, but to the science of cryonics.

Cryonics is the practice of preserving human corpses in extremely low temperatures with the hope that reviving them will be possible in the future. A corpse that is preserved in this state is said to be in cryonic suspension.

According to Alcor Life Extension Foundation, a US organisation which researches and performs cryonics, "cryonics is a belief that no one is really dead until the information content of the brain is lost, and that low temperatures can prevent this loss".

To make sure that irreversible damage is not caused to the brain, tissues, and vital organs, an emergency response team steps into action immediately after the individual is declared clinically dead. Then, their body is stabilised to ensure that enough oxygen and blood is supplied to the brain to preserve minimal function. The person's body is packed in ice and injected with heparin to protect their blood from clotting. Glycerol-based chemicals are used as cryoprotectants replacing water which is re-

moved from the person's cells, also preventing ice formation during cryopreservation. The body is then cooled on dry ice until it reaches a temperature of  $-130^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Finally, the body is placed in a large metal tank which is filled with liquid nitrogen and is preserved at a temperature of around  $-196^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

The first body to be cryogenically frozen was that of Dr James Bedford in 1967. Currently, it is estimated that around 350 people worldwide are in cryonic suspension. The current cost of cryonic preservation ranges from 28,000 to 200,000 US dollars. Some patients opt to cryogenically preserve just their brain, a process known as neuropreservation, to minimise costs.

However, cryonics has been met with scepticism from the scientific community, and some scientists have even called cryonics a pseudoscience and quackery. William T. Jarvis, the co-founder of the US-based National Council Against Health Fraud, said that "cryonics might be a suitable subject for scientific research, but marketing an unproven method to the public is quackery".

Others have said that it is too early to know whether cryonics provides room for valid scientific research and whether it will manage to bring people back to life in the future.

Dr João Pedro de Magalhães, a researcher at the University of Liverpool and co-ordinator of the UK Cryonics and Cryopreservation Research Network, argued that we should not underestimate future technological developments. "If you went back 100 years ago and told everyone that in the future you would have all of human knowledge in a small device you carry around in your pocket, no-one would believe you."

Cryonics UK, a non-profit organisation, says it has not been proven that cryopreservation can work and it remains a personal choice for people to decide what they wish to happen to their bodies after they die. However, Cryonics UK does not have the necessary facilities for cryopreservation so those looking to be cryogenically preserved must register with cryonics organisations in the US or Russia.

Various problems exist, how-

ever, which might make the revival of cryogenically preserved people impossible. Scientists must find a way to get frozen humans back up to liveable temperatures without failing their system. Even if scientists manage to prevent crystal formation during cooling, crystals will always form during the warm-up process and it must be that all parts of the human body are, at the same time, brought up to temperature.

There are also financial problems for cryonics businesses and organisations. Many cryonics organisations from the 1960s and 1970s went bankrupt. In fact, as of 2018, all but one of pre-1980s cryonics companies went out of business and had to have their stored corpses defrosted and disposed of.

The truth is, cryonics in its current form cannot work. This does not mean that cryopreservation has no place in science. Barry Fuller, a surgical science and low-temperature professor at University College London has noted that cryopreservation allows us to store living cells at ultra-low temperatures almost indefinitely, stressing its many useful applications in day-to-day medicine.

In regard to cryonics, however, he added that "at the moment, we have no objective evidence that a whole human body can survive cryopreservation with cells which will function after rearming ... At the moment, we cannot achieve that".





# Science and religion: are they totally incompatible?

**Shaun Odili**

DEPUTY SCIENCE EDITOR

GROWING UP, I WAS raised as a Christian by my family. Every Sunday I had to go to church, we'd pay our tithe, fast on occasion and even attend midweek mass from time to time.

As I grew older, I began to believe more in the teachings of science, finding its applicability to the world I live in to be far more potent. With science becoming increasingly prominent within society, I have been led to question whether science and religion are mutually compatible.

The two are diametrically opposed to one another, with science being predicated on empirical evidence and religion on faith, but does this necessarily mean that they are incompatible? I would argue that they are. What ultimately prevents

science and religion from being compatible is that although they both try to provide us with an understanding of the functions of the universe, they achieve this through different methodologies and arrive at different conclusions.

The 'truths' about the universe that we have derived from science have been verified through methods that have been refined for hundreds of years. Scientific claims about evolution, the genesis of the world and all aspects of life that we seek to understand have been tested to enable us to distinguish between fact and fiction.

Richard Feynman provides an excellent definition of science as a "way to keep you from fooling yourself, because you're the easiest person to fool". The methodologies behind religion, however, differ significantly. Religion doesn't utilise empirical evidence to test or verify its claims. It doesn't provide any

means that enable us to truly know what is fact or false. Instead it relies on the strength of our faith and ability to believe in what we can't see or explain. This has often been exploited by religious leaders who have been given the authority to spread their message through dogma, indoctrination and their sometimes skewed interpretations of scripture.

Science and religion are at conflict with each other not just based on their methods, but also the outcomes that they arrive at. Let's look at Genesis 1, chapters 1-31; this section of



the Bible details the creation story and how God created the universe in six days. Science refutes this, using the Big Bang Theory as an explanation for how the world was created (although some may still prefer the Steady State Theory as an explanation). Immediately, what do we see? Incompatibility.

John 11:25-26 illustrates Jesus's resurrection story where Jesus rises from the dead after being crucified on the cross. And science says: no, this is not possible. Once again: incompatible. The scientific progress that has been made over the years has allowed us to investigate many of the claims made by religion

about the universe and how it operates and science has managed to disprove many of these claims by empirically showing why they are not true.

Despite the fact that religion relies so heavily on faith and doesn't provide any evidence to verify its explanations of the world around us, there are still roughly 1.8 billion Muslims and approximately 2.18 billion Christians globally. This is due to the fact that the virtues and teachings of religion have helped to govern people's lives in a righteous manner.

Furthermore, it can be said that someone can be religious as well as a good scientist.

Science and religion are definitively incompatible based on their methods and outcomes, however what is most salient is that we have the freedom to choose whichever path we want to take in order to better understand the world around us.

## Evolution of science in sport

**Shaun Odili**

DEPUTY SCIENCE EDITOR

THE LOS ANGELES Lakers recently faced off against the New Orleans Pelicans in a basketball game that ended 118-109 to the Lakers. The Pelicans are a team destined for greatness with an array of prodigious young talent at their disposal in the likes of Zion Williamson, Brandon Ingram and Lonzo Ball. Despite this, one 35 year old man dominated this game as he has dominated a plethora of games during his illustrious 16 year career in the NBA.

That man is a certain LeBron James, who dropped a season high 40 points along with eight rebounds and six assists. To put that into context, I managed to drop a whopping zero points, zero rebounds and one assist against Langwith basketball during Varsity qualifiers.

LeBron James's ability to reign supreme in the NBA deep into a point in his career when most would expect him

to be on the decline can be attributed to the meticulous care that he takes of his body, spending \$1.5 million a year to remain in pristine athletic condition.

In other sports, athletes such as Lionel Messi (32), Cristiano Ronaldo (35), Manny Pacquiao (41) and Tom Brady (42) still remain at the pinnacle of their respective disciplines despite their age. A key factor behind this growing trend of sports stars remaining in near peak athletic condition beyond their prime years is the evolution of science and technology within sport and how it is being utilised to extend the careers of different athletes and develop sport as a whole.

Science and technology have become far more integrated into the training regimes that athletes undertake. In the past coaches would only be able to watch their players and practice and study the film after to analyse their performance.

Now, new technologies such as three dimensional motion capture and biometric feedback on factors such as heart and respiratory rate have provided coaches with a more detailed overview of an athlete's physical condition.

Information gathered by these technologies is enabling sports stars to better understand how to maximise their performance and minimise injury. Cryotherapy is another modern technological advancement that is used by many athletes to reduce their risk of injury and to accelerate recovery. Cryogenic chambers use low temperatures to reduce muscle pain, sprains and swelling when soft tissue

has been damaged due to intense training. Some athletes, such as Cristiano Ronaldo, have gone to the extent of installing these chambers in their homes.

Augmented reality systems are beginning to play a bigger role in basketball and American football. The University of Michigan is now using virtual reality (VR) to help recruit players and other VR systems are being utilised by college athletes to experience gameplay over and over again.

Within American football, there is the potential for football players to have a projector showing their upcoming plays on their helmets. Sports biomechanic expert and lead scientist for ESPN's *Sport Science* show, Chris Kluwe, believes that algorithms could even be used in the future to help predict what plays opposing players could run next.

Although the multitude of scientific and technological advancements that have been made within sport have helped to advance various disciplines and prolong the careers of different athletes, there is the danger that in the future it could create a division between the haves and have-nots.

The beauty of sport is that it bridges socio-economic disparities between fans and between athletes. Aficionados both poor and rich band together for a common cause and sports stars from different backgrounds are united under one team.

It is paramount that we don't allow the evolution of science and technology to restrict the ability of those that have less financial means to participate in sports in exchange for those that do have the means to take advantage of these advancements. Sport is predicated on fairness and we must ensure that there remains equal access for everyone to take part in order to avoid the risk of creating a sporting world that is dominated by the powerful.

## How complicated is reading a book?

**Molly Taylor**

SCIENCE EDITOR

MOST KNOW THE feeling of cramming through your seminar reading while you wait outside the room or a morning scroll through Facebook. For those of us fortunate enough to have learned to read from such a young age, it has become such second nature that we find it impossible to look at a word without reading it, and it's so easy to underestimate the complexity of such a seemingly automatic process.

As of last week, Bicknell and colleagues published an article about the ongoing cognitive processing influences in reading. At first glance, it is difficult to comprehend the amount of brain power that is required; humans move their eyes three to four times every second in response to visual and cognitive processing - and we are consciously oblivious to it.

The consensus is that the details of which part of a word to target with a saccade is determined slowly by low level oculomotor heuristics. Arguably, humans have learned simplistic strategies to focus on the most relevant aspects of a word. However, efficient saccade targeting (rapid eye movement between fixation points) should be sensitive to ongoing word identification when reading.

Bicknell and colleagues used a text-shifting paradigm to show the relationship between saccade targeting in reading and cognitive processing, and suggests that rather than relying on heuristics, the brain can optimize eye movements at the level of character targeting - sug-

gesting a fine tuned and remarkably specific visual and cognitive interaction in a remarkably simplistic everyday experience.

The heuristic account suggests that all saccades to a word from a particular launch site (the origin of a saccade into a word) are aimed at the same position, yet for Bicknell and colleagues, there are reliable differences in subsequent eye movement between saccades that land at different points in the word. Therefore, when we identify more of a word's initial letters, the eyes are directed further forward into the word.

With this relationship identified, Bicknell suggests a clear role of cognitive processing in reading due

to this interaction between saccade processing and eye movement.

They also attribute that cognitive processing might play a similar role in other fine grained targeting decisions such as face processing or scene viewing - for example how humans typically look at the eyes first when we see a face.

For this reason, they suggest their experimental method can be adapted to further studies of oculomotor control in other aspects of human behaviour that may previously have been explained by simplistic heuristics. This is at the crux of the importance of ongoing scientific discovery; at the surface it is difficult for us to comprehend the true extent to which human behaviour works.

Reading is just one example, but with such crucial pioneering research, we can really delve into the details of what our cognitive and motor systems are truly capable of.

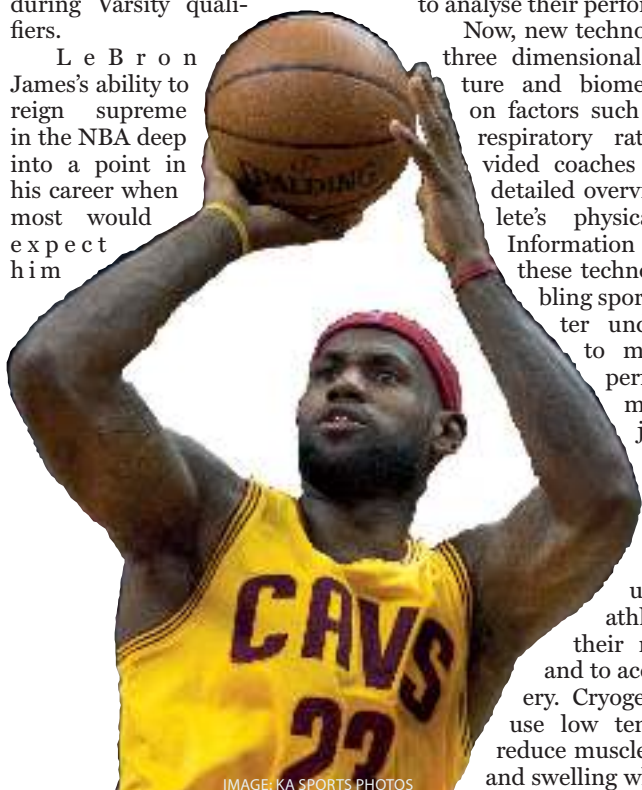


IMAGE: KA SPORTS PHOTOS



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## EDITOR'S COMMENT

**James Moultrie**  
SPORT EDITOR



SINCE THE LAST edition, a lot has happened in the world of university sport, most notably College Varsity against Durham, but also Maddi Cannell has been re-elected as York Sport Union President - congratulations to her on that.

Due to this, it would have simply been rude not to interview Maddi again in *Nouse*. She elaborates on some of her key policies such as facilities and college sport governance.

Fellow Sport Editor Dom Smith talks to York City FC Manager Steve Watson and Commercial Manager Chris Pegg. Dom spent an exclusive day at the club learning about how they operate, the great work they do for the community and their excitement about playing at the new stadium.

We then have a match report from myself on the Basketball Men's 1s side, who won a thriller against Leeds 2s. The club's Women's side have also had great success in making the Northern Conference Cup Final.

Deputy Sport Editor Lucy

Wilde covers the University of York Hockey Club Women's 3s victory over Sheffield 5s, after finally having a free Wednesday, with no BUCS fixture for the UYNC 1s.

To finish off this edition, the team has covered the term's main event, College Varsity 2020. Dom reports on Derwent Football's match against Collingwood, with Lucy covering the same teams who lined up for the Netball A match.

Both Derwent sides were unfortunate to not get a result from either fixture, but their fans were definitely winning.

Rugby was covered in both the Women's Touch format and Mens Rugby Union A match. New writer Barney Andrews contributing on the former, Derwent unfortunately lost 2-1 in a closely fought match. I also reported on a great win for JCRUFC against Van Mildert.

We round up a great day of College sport on the back page, following on from York's 76-46 win, and can now look forward to an away Roses in Lancaster.

Also, big shoutout to Watford giving us all great joy in ending Liverpool's unbeaten run.

Safe,  
**James x**

## Nouse Interviews... Maddi Cannell

James Moultrie sits down with the re-elected York Sport Union President

**What made you want to run for a second term in office as York Sport Union President?**

I have absolutely loved my first seven months in the role. However, my first term has not been without criticism, most of it mirrors frustrations that I share myself like the absolutely awful weather we seem to have experienced since last October. I would not want to walk away from the role while there is still work to be done, work that I have a passion for, and work that I feel I have some solutions to. And of course who would not want a home Roses!

**One of the key areas you focused on in the election campaign was facilities. Despite the progress you've made this year, they are still at near capacity, what do you hope to achieve to make genuine progress in this area next year?**

I would like to start by highlighting all the progress that has already been made. Regarding Campus East Lake I submitted a paper to planners which myself and student clubs are waiting to hear a decision on imminently. In Derwent Squash Court (flat floor space) myself and seven clubs were successful in securing a £5,000 grant for equipment, and are currently working with Estates to put storage facilities in on the balcony, and maintenance to improve cleaning provision.

On the York Sport Centre redevelopment we continue to have Uni and College clubs giving suggestions for redevelopment, have had a new netball court in the tennis dome surfaced to increase capacity, and are about to resurface the outdoor netball courts to stop them being slippery and increase usage. And then of course there is the big ticket item, the 22 Acres Artificial Pitches and Pavilion redevelopment. Myself and York Sport continue to talk to both the University and National Governing Bodies to secure appropriate funding to get these built. There is an acknowledgement from the University that our grass pitches have let us down heavily this year, and so I am positive I can get the funding in place to ensure development in the very near future.

**How can College sport players unable to play due to lack of facilities, particularly on the 22 Acres, be justifiably asked to pay a £30 fee when their game time cannot be guaranteed?**

The £30 fee does not go towards paying for match day facilities. The funding for this comes through a separate budget line, as all colleges take part in the College Sport leagues, not just the three

on the pilot. Things that the £30 fee goes towards are training facility hire, a College branded sports t-shirt, sports insurance, personal development opportunities, unlimited access to all sports on offer on the pilot in the college, and once minimum numbers set by the College are reached, a grants system awarded by the College chair/President and VP of Sport.

On issues with games on 22 Acres, my team have been working hard to, whenever possible, move College fixtures onto alternative artificial surfaces. For College football this has proved easier as we have the JLD and 3G, but for College rugby this requires there being availability on local alternate facilities.

**How do you think your proposed reform to college sport governance will solve the issues raised by college teams in the last year?**

I do not think that we have been using what is probably College sport's best asset to the full: the captains! Captains are hugely passionate about their teams and clubs, but they also experience the current issues with College sport first hand. My proposal would bring these individuals into decision making, allowing them to make submissions to a brand new College Sport Committee on changes or adaptations that need to be made to their leagues. The College Sport Committee would be made up of College Committee Reps to ensure that the elected College Reps still have decision making power as well. This will stop the need to rely on survey data that will be nearly three years out of date to make decisions, which clearly does not reflect the way the leagues have worked this year or indeed will work next year.

**In your most recent 'Sabbs in short' and throughout the campaign, you addressed the controversy around anonymous social media platforms such as Yorfess, how important do you think it was for you to do so, and why does it matter so much in a sporting context?**

Obviously platforms such as Yorfess are useful in allowing students to speak out and be honest about the University,

current events, or just funny things that happened to them that day. However, there is also a darker side to anonymous social media platforms and that is when clubs, societies and individuals get belittled, made fun of, and othered. Campus should be a place where everyone feels they can be themselves without fear of judgement, something we can achieve if we all make a conscious effort to think about our language and behaviour towards others. I think it is important in a sporting context because of the high pressure that competition brings.

**Both you and Jade talked a lot about mental health in the election campaign. What progress have you made this year, and how will a second year as president allow you to make further progress in this area?**

Last Thursday evening the York Sport Union held a Sport and Wellbeing Workshop in conjunction with York Student Mental Health Day (5 March) we are teaming up again to bring a day of activity in the Main Hall! A second year as president will allow me to further this work by getting welfare officers properly trained up through the new Mental Health First Aid training initiative which will begin rolling out next term.

**In a recent poll conducted by Nouse Sport on twitter, 75 per cent of respondents said they weren't happy with the service provided by Akuma, despite you saying last year that things would improve. What progress, if any has been made since last year and how will you further combat this ongoing issue?**

Last year I said that I would aim to collate feedback and send it to Akuma. This is something that I have been doing throughout the year, with many clubs being sent replacement items free of charge when the service has not been to the standard expected.

I am going to introduce an easier complaints procedure form to be hosted on the website. I have also asked Akuma to produce a better brochure with a much clearer ordering process explanation to eradicate hidden costs which some were finding when it came to purchasing. This should be with us for next term.

*Nouse Sport extends its congratulations to Maddi on another successful election campaign. Maddi has worked with the team throughout the year, ensuring key sporting news is distributed across campus. After a successful College Varsity, her focus now turns to securing a rare away Roses victory.*

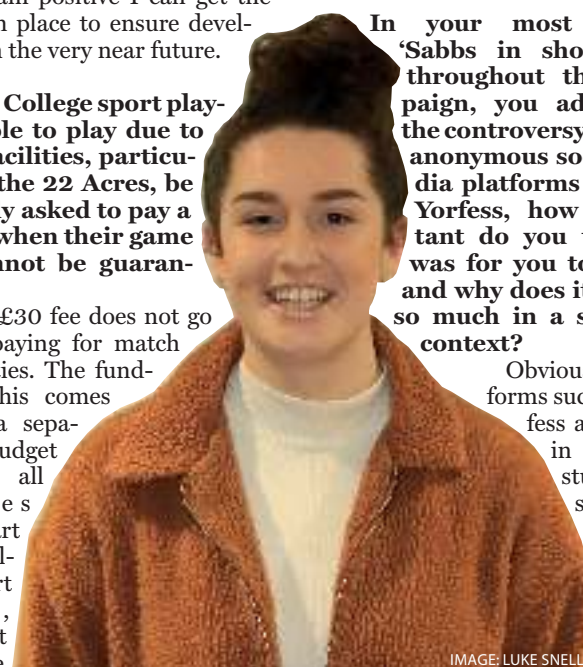


IMAGE: LUKE SNELL

## THE STAT ZONE

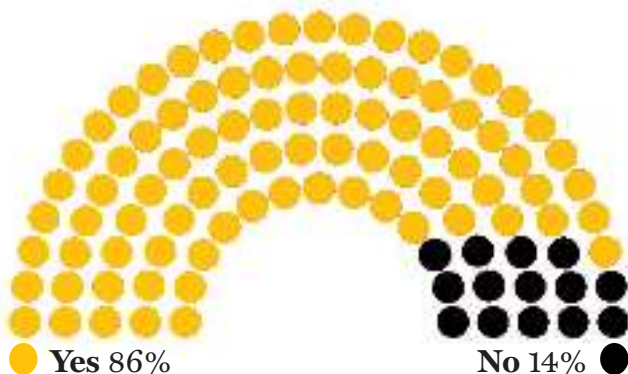
**4** The number of matches won by Derwent Badminton's Women's Doubles B in College Varsity

**30** York's College Varsity points increase compared to last year's total away in Durham.

**7** The number of teams Durham decided to not to bother bringing along to College Varsity.

**21** The number of points accumulated by UYWAF in topping the Northern 2B League

**POLL: College Varsity Darts wasn't as rowdy in the afternoon this year. Do you think it should be moved back to the evening slot?**





# Exclusive Interview... A day out at York City FC

Dom Smith talks all things York City with Manager Steve Watson and Commercial Manager Chris Pegg

**Dom Smith**  
SPORT EDITOR

YORK CITY FOOTBALL Club were due to move into their wonderful new stadium in Monk's Cross last May. The build would be done, the place would be kitted out, the club would kick on. But as is often the case with these things, that never happened.

In the light of their pending move away from creaking current home Bootham Crescent, I took the short FA Cup-style stroll through terraced housing from the station to the old ground.

There I met Commercial Manager Chris Pegg, as well as Manager Steve Watson, a former Premier League player with Newcastle United, Aston Villa and Everton back in the day. I wanted to find out how the city's biggest football club is run, its impact on the community, and what its plans are going forward. Frankly, it made me proud to be an adopted Yorkie. Some of the things I found out were astonishing.

"York City is a club that's quite small, compared to your Arsenals or your Manchester Cities," admitted Pegg. "We have five or six full-time members of staff that are here on a working day.

"My role covers all the money-generating sides of the club. We've got a few different streams. There's the club shop – a tiny little club shop in the corner of York, where you can buy merchandise from the club. When I first came in, it was a case of having to come to Bootham Crescent to buy anything for York City. So, we set up an e-commerce site, and part of my job is managing that. Everyone shops online these days,

so why shouldn't York City? We ordered the same number of shirts this year as we did last year, and we sold out in three months. We have volunteers in the club shop who run it on a daily basis.

"Another part of the role is hospitality. It's not the nicest place in the world – I'll be quite honest, I'm not proud of it. But Bootham Crescent was built [in] 1932 – you can't do much about it! We get a few comments saying it's got that feel to it of an old club, but the ones at the new stadium are much nicer – they'll definitely attract a better calibre of client. Moving to the new stadium is a whole new kettle of fish. We can fit 45 [into hospitality] here; we can fit 450 in the new place – [we're] timing the capacity by ten.

**You want to put 110 per cent into everything, but it can be difficult**

"On the other side of the building, we have the Brew York Lounge. We've got a great partnership with Brew York, the brewers in the city, and they sponsor the lounge. It's full every week. It's cheap and cheerful – you pay a fiver to get in, you get a [matchday] programme. It's fan-orientated, you get to meet the man of the match, and if York City win you get a free beer. It is really good fan engagement; where we can, we get ex-players to go in and say hello. At the new stadium, we've got a lounge for 250 people, so it was a case of 'how can we put something

in place that we can then upscale to 250?'

"The other side is sponsorship. If you go to any football club, you'll see the [advertising] boards around the ground. You get a programme on the day with adverts inside them, we do website advertising, we do all sorts of commercial and corporate opportunities for the city of York and its businesses to get involved in. You can be a match sponsor, at the new stadium [there'll be] executive boxes, and we do shirt sponsorship. We've been on TV three times this season so how can we give them exposure in the York market and beyond? We have academy sponsors. York St John [University] sponsor our academy. We know the guys at the University of York quite well, so hopefully there is scope to work with them.

"There is a fantastic company called Make It York, a branch of York Council. They do amazing stuff to promote the city of York. We have a good partnership with them to maximise how we can be forward-facing as a community club, adding value to the community. We had players gardening and getting their hands dirty just last week. You want to put 110 per cent into everything, but it can be so difficult. You have to put in those extra hours because it is bloody interesting. I definitely don't regret joining the club.

"We work quite closely with Dan [Simmonite], our media man. Dan coming into the club has been fantastic. Before he joined, we didn't have the skill set that he has – doing engaging, personality-driven social media. In the age of social media, if you're not using media you're screwed. He's got retweets off Conor McGregor and BBC Football. That's

a great selling point. We've got young fans that 'like' York City on Facebook and on Twitter, and the older fans pick up the paper. That's how we communicate with our fans.

"We have a fantastic club secretary, Lisa [Charlton]. She looks after the players and the managers. There's a fantastic management team with Steve and Mickey [Cummins]. They're very engaging, I couldn't ask for more. We have so many volunteers at the club, everyone pulls together on a matchday.

"York City should be a football league club. We get higher attendances than a lot of [EFL] League Two teams [two divisions higher]. The board of directors want to get there, they've got a plan to get there both on and off the pitch... but a huge part of that is the new stadium.

"I think they'll go up. The directors were quite adamant that Steve and Mickey can get us promoted and sustain it at the next level. [Steve] was given a mandate to build a team that can do that. We went on a fantastic run at the beginning of the season, I think we went 21 games unbeaten. I went to a couple of events in the city, and it [creates] lots of positivity around the city.

"The main hindrance has been the stadium. When I had my interviews [for this role] last February, it was 'we're going to be in the new stadium in May. We'll be in sooner rather than later – start planning for it now'. It's just been a case of waiting the whole time. You're trying to get stuff done but it's just a case of dragging it out. We're still waiting, which is quite annoying, but you've got to take these things as they come.

"Coming into the role, you see football from a different angle; you see it means so much more. When you speak to the fans here, you see it's so much more than just coming to the football on a Saturday. They have a real affiliation for the club.

"We had a fan recently with quite serious mental health problems. They've been getting lots of support from fellow fans and saying how football has helped them. He says how he was literally going to commit suicide one day. Someone who sat next to him at the

match had noticed something was wrong, went to see him on the day and talked him out of it. He's got some help because of it, and it's all done through football.

Mickey, the assistant manager, wants to get involved so much. He went to the fan to speak to him.

"We have a great foundation who do loads for dementia. Sport is a great vehicle for social change. The more we can do for the community, the better the community will be.

On the stadium's pending completion, Pegg offered an optimistic response. "Progress is

underway. It's going to be finished. It's all out of the club's hands. We can't wait to get in there; it's going to be fantastic for the city. There will be a leisure centre, a library, a York Against Cancer will shop there, more restaurants, a bowling alley, cinema, minigolf, and apparently there is a laser quest! [People] can spend money in the city and use the facilities that this fantastic stadium is going to offer."

I waited around in the hospitality box, which looked more like a Sunday school room, before Steve Watson joined us at what was, to be honest, not more than a kitchen table. There he would give the week's press conference. The wonders of the lower leagues. Classy stuff.

Eventually, the manager arrived, offering all three reporters a warm welcome before taking a seat at the table.

"There's always lots to work on," he stated, honestly. "With the squad that we've got, I'd back them against anybody in the league. They've [performed] time and time again, certainly more times than not. They've done a hell of a lot more good than bad this season.

Boldly, I asked him if his side will get promoted. "I hope we get promoted. That's what I want to do, otherwise I wouldn't be here. We're as strong as anybody.

And what he said in those eight minutes seemed to work. York would go on to win yet again at the weekend, edging past Kidderminster Harriers by a single strike.

As I clambered back up through the city towards more familiar territory, a line that Chris Pegg had said about the club's community work still resonated with me:

"We want people to support York City, but we want York City to support people."



IMAGE: MALCOLM XLS



## Sport in Brief

## UoY Student Minds and York Sport Union host mental health day

The trampolining, boxing and yoga clubs have collaborated to offer students a day to unwind and de-stress, as well as get active. Events will happen across campus on Thursday 5 March. More information can be found on the Facebook event.

## York Sport Union charity darts tournament

The University of York Darts Club have organised a fundraising event in association with the York Sport Union. The event will take place on Friday 13 March. Raising money for SASH and the British Heart Foundation, sign-up for pairs is free and entry is only a pound. All donations are gratefully received.

## University of York MMA Club present new podcast: Dogfight

Various members of the club will be running (hopefully) weekly podcasts to discuss MMA and other combat sports. The first full length episode will be launching on 1 March, and any questions you would like to be discussed can be submitted on the club's Facebook page.

## UoY Basketball Womens 1s through to Northern Conference cup final

After beating Sheffield Women's 1s 50-39 in the Northern Conference semi-final, the basketball club's Women's side are through to the final which will be on March 11 against the University of Liverpool 1s side.

## YUSU Women and Non-Binary Network launch the Red Flag Campaign alongside York Sport Union

YUSUWNB and York Sport Union have joined together in introducing the new Red Flag Campaign. It aims to offer helpful information to students who may be in toxic relationships. A number of campus sport clubs and societies have offered their full support, including UYHC.

## Disappointing day for York City FC, despite stealing late draw

York City's lead at the top of the National League North became even narrower on Saturday, as visitors Curzon Ashton, all the way down in 19th place, came seconds away from victory. York did grab a late equaliser to draw the game 1-1, but this was still a match Steve Watson's men were expected to win.

## UYBC Men's 1s beat Leeds 2s in thriller

Basketball 1s team pushing top of the league after close win in Northern 3B

James Moultrie  
SPORT EDITOR

AFTER THE 2S LOST A thrilling matchup to Leeds 3s, UYBC Men's 1s looked to level the score against Leeds Men's 2s in what would also turn out to be a hotly contested matchup. In missing a couple of big starters (in the literal sense of being 6ft6+ in height), the 1s were in for a tough afternoon.

The first quarter was dominated mainly by York, as expected given how Leeds sit second bottom of the Northern 3B and York are second only to Sunderland 1s. York took more of their chances in possession, notably Taylor Lane who hit converted easy steals from Adelakun and Ainslie to put York ahead. Some early frustration was shown by the rowdy Leeds bench when a travelling call was given instead of one for contact, and Lane hit a three from deep to round out a 14-7 lead for York in the first quarter.

York started the second quarter in similar fashion getting early control, first by Dan Hogg coveting

one out of two free throws to get the ball rolling. Good defence from Murphy and Martin off the bench kept Leeds forwards at bay near the basket, collecting rebounds and missed three point attempts. Ainslie came back on for Hogg and had an instant impact, winning the aerial battle and converting lay up after lay up to put York 19-10 up with six minutes left in the quarter.

York, however, were unable to sustain this pressure and Leeds got massively back into the game, with their physicality starting to push York into a very stagnant state in terms of scoring, their centre getting a lot of control and slowing the game down up to the mid court line. Leeds were able to get within one point at 21-20 until Adelakun converted two lay ups, the latter from a very physical steal near the mid court line, able to finish it off the backboard with little to no pressure on him. Again Leeds responded, however, levelling the scores at 27-27 to finish the half.

The third quarter was

where the Leeds crowd, their 3s team, started to have an effect on some of the York players, jeering at every opportunity they got - most notably at any free throws taken by York players. Leeds started converting on the majority of possessions, and seemed to be running away with the score, taking a 39-34 lead into the final five minutes of the third quarter. They maintained this five point lead until the end of the quarter, even after good responses from Adrian Azaharaini and Niall Murphy.

Going into the last 10 minutes of the game, York needed a big response to the now cocky Leeds crowd who were taking every chance to try get in their heads - most notably Stuart Blair, who had to cover this week, normally being a 2s player - but he responded well, getting into good scoring positions and converting from free throws and collecting rebounds off the backboard. York, however, did get stuck five points behind with six minutes left, Leeds' guards converting numerous drop back three pointers to sustain their lead in looking to see out the victory.

Time was called by York with three minutes remaining, and this stop in play slowed down Leeds' rhythm and they started missing three point attempts, giving York easy possession which Lane and

Ainslie put into easy layups off the backboard to get York within one point at 55-56. Adelakun made one of two free throws after being fouled to tie it up, and a two point shot from Lane finally gave York the lead for the first time since the second quarter. Ainslie put the nail in the coffin with a deep three pointer from the left side of the court with 15 seconds left, taking some of the pressure off. A small scare from a quick response three pointer of their own from Leeds, a foul on Ainslie gave York two free throws to see out the result, one of which was taken and the 2.2 seconds left on the clock wasn't enough time for Leeds to even get a shot off.

A great afternoon of basketball, both games going right down to the wire with York getting the better of the Leeds 2s. This puts them on equal points with Sunderland 1s, but they have a game in hand, and it will be interesting to see who out of them, York and Sheffield who sit close behind in third, will finish top of the league.

	York 1s	61
	Leeds 2s	59

## UYHC L3s secure promotion in 2-1 win

Women's Hockey 3s win close match with Sheffield to win Northern 5 title

Lucy Wilde  
DEPUTY SPORT EDITOR

THE WOMEN'S 3S TEAM showcased an excellent 2-1 winning performance against Sheffield Women's 5s to see them crowned first in their division of the League and rewarded with a much deserved promotion for next year.

Following a 23-0 win in last week's game, it seemed unlikely that the girls could continue with such a fine performance this week, but the team remained disciplined throughout Wednesday's fixture in order to secure the win.

The first half was certainly exciting, with a run of three goals, two of which saw York take the lead. The girls worked well to use all areas of the pitch, especially in the defensive half, where a diamond structure was employed to ensure the ball could be played across the back of the pitch and outlet to the wings. Defender Isabel Ringrose and goalkeeper Hannah Clayton kept the de-

fensive unit tight and maintained good communication to ensure they remained ahead, 2-1, at half-time.

The second half saw York dominate possession from the beginning, but neither team could quite execute some impressive passages of play with a decisive goal. An early short corner gave hope of a third goal for York that would secure their lead, but despite a strong push out, Sheffield's defence closed down the space at the top of the D too fast to allow an on-target straight strike. A series of short corners followed suit with a similar trend, and despite some tactical play from the York girls we just could not capitalise on the opportunities that arose to score.

The small frame of Sheffield's goalkeeper was deceiving and the girls were forced to adapt their usual short corner routine, adopting a box style set up which saw the ball played to the top of the D as if for a straight strike, and then out to the left to open up space on the penalty spot where the ball was played

back to fresher and midfielder, Alice McLeod-Scott. An agonisingly close save from the goalie prevented York from scoring but the girls remained relentless. A well-placed drag flick or bottom corner sweep might have successfully hit the backboard instead of a Sheffield defenders stick, but it was not meant to be.

7

The number of wins for UYHC Women's 3s in securing promotion from Northern

Most of the rest of play was centred around York's midfield, but the girls could not break down Sheffield's solid defensive structure to bag another goal.

Despite this, as the final whistle sounded, it was a delight for the crowd to join the girls in celebrating their victory and consequent League promotion. The game demonstrated the hard work ethic of the girls and a true whole team effort.

It was a winning Wednesday all round as the Men's 1s also dominated in their game against Sheffield Hallam, winning with an almost unbelievable 14 goals scored.

This takes them one step closer to being crowned League winners as they move forward to next week's game against Leeds Beckett Men's 2s. This will be on home turf on the JLD with

a 5pm pushback so let's hope if the supporting crowd is big enough we might be treated to another double figure scoring game.

The Women's 1s will be taking on Newcastle Women's 3s next week ahead of their cup final game at Durham in a fortnight's time. Make sure you save the date and get yourself down to show as much support as possible as the girls aim to continue their winning streak and end the season with a victory.

It's clear it's been an exceedingly successful BUCS season for the club so far, and we hope to be able to report more victories for the teams that are yet to finish their respective League and Cup runs as the term draws to a close.

Congratulations to all those who have completed their season, and best of luck to those that await their final games before Easter.

The Women's 3s will complete their season at home to Leeds Women's 5s next Wednesday 11 March. This will however have no effect on their League win and promotion.

	York 3s	2
	Sheffield 5s	1





# College Varsity 2020: the key clashes analysed

## Derwent edged out in tight Men's Football A

**Dom Smith**  
SPORT EDITOR

DERWENT WERE beaten by Durham's Collingwood College in a closely fought men's football A game. Going 2-0 up midway through the second half proved pivotal for the visitors, who held on for a slim win despite Derwent's late consolation strike.

The match started competitively, with a number of crunching early challenges. But just as the rhythm of this now even game seemed settled, Collingwood sprung into action, scoring a scrappy goal from a messy corner. Ed Main found himself in prime position to beat Derwent goalkeeper Rory Ellis and stab in after only the 15 minutes.

Full-throttle battles and tackles continued throughout the game, even extending to the referee. Unhappy with a decision, Derwent's Richard Kiy decided to shove the ref back a few yards, prompting some jeering and cheering from his college's ever-faithful fans.

The hosts came close from a freekick as they tried to haul themselves level, but they came closer again just a few minutes later.

Number 7 Tom Baucher hammered the ball over the bar following some very cute interchanges in the middle of the park.

At half-time, Collingwood had edged the first 45 - they led by a single goal.

Oscar Le Seelleur came on for Derwent at the begin-

ning of the second half, as did number 9 Cameron Collins. Le Seelleur brought a new level of calm and composure to Derwent's backline. Collins wanted to do the same in the final third, but pulled his hamstring after taking on an ambitious swivel snapshot. Off he went, five minutes into his afternoon. Shame.

This was a match of freekicks - every time you looked away a new one seemed to have been awarded. From one of Derwent's on the right wing, Brandon Moy's backspin punt forward was grazed just wide off the head of Baucher. Derwent were pushing hard.



But it was the very next freekick, Collingwood's, that bought the second goal. A sleeping Derwent defence allowed Tom Gallagher's delivery to float right to the feet of striker Eduardo Garcia. He duly tucked home to double the visitors' lead. They'd been clinical.

Collingwood fullback Will Herbert nearly increased the margin further in the closing stages, firing just wide from the edge of the box.

Crucially, he didn't, and Derwent were still in it, just.

The 88th minute saw a slightly anticlimactic Derwent pitch invasion, as Oskar Fossberg's simple finish in narrowed the deficit.

But it wouldn't be enough. Derwent had fought well throughout and their effort was not to be called into question. But Collingwood claimed all five points, in what their captain described as a "difficult game" post-match.

 Derwent	1
 Collingwood	2

### Continued from back

Vice-captain Jacob Turp was unable to convert, tying the fixture up at 5-5.

The sides were well matched, however after Tedford found space on the right wing, he got his redemption and carried the ball 30 metres smashing through his opposing winger.

Solid control from Turp and Rendell out of the halves meant James were able to convert their sustained pressure. Liam Collins was the beneficiary, running a great line angling back at the ruck to go over for the third try of the match. Turp converted to make it 12-5.

But James then got trapped in their own 22, after Van Mildert pinned them back from a poor exit strategy. The halves controlled the phases, with numer-

ous forwards offering themselves to carry and surprisingly, their full back was the eventual scorer, going in just outside of the uprights and converting his own try to tie up the fixture.

James again responded, with Turp converting this time, to go up 19-12 again the forwards benefiting off patient play. They ended the half 19-12 up, with the James College crowd now in full force, tinnies everywhere, and VM supporters barely anywhere to be seen.

Durham's representatives started the second half in much better fashion however, again setting up camp in James' 22; their second rows combining for numerous offloads in the midfield, making gainline success very easy.

This pressure was not held up by James, eventually conceding off the back of a scrum with strong carries

from the inside centre.

19-17 up, James were getting worried after big ball carrier Spencer Milton went off with a broken nose, and another forward went down injured, slowing down the game play. VM gained complete control with James not having much success in their oppositions half. Aside from this, a surprising blind side carry from Turp and support line from Davis gave the James crowd the energy they needed, spurring their side on to the victory.

The Durham side missed a gimme penalty kick which would've given them the three points they needed to secure the victory, and the decision to not kick from their next penalty led from their side to a crushing defeat in a close fixture.

James turned the ball over the ensuing battle at the breakdown and smashed the ball into touch, elation for the side and their supporters.

A great start to Varsity rugby, securing all five key points for York. Hes East however, weren't able to make it eight points for York, losing to Castle in the final minute 34-33.



## Narrow loss for women's rugby

**Barney Andrews**  
SPORT CORRESPONDENT

IN WHAT WAS A tight game throughout, Derwent Women were marginally beaten 2-1 in the women's rugby A match.

Under the touch rugby rules, quick turnovers gave the feel of a back-and-forth basketball game, rather than of traditional rugby.

The game started at a breathtaking pace with Derwent's Sophie Bulley having a try ruled out in the first minute as she planted the ball down before the line. This did little to knock Derwent spirits though, as Amy Owens darted down the left wing to score a well-taken try with only three minutes on the clock.

The first half then became somewhat cagey, with St Cuthberts (Cuths) seeing most of the ball,

and Derwent playing on the counter. Both defences were standing strong and neither side seemed able to break the defensive line, despite Cuths boasting a fleet of strong ball-carriers. Halftime. 1-0 Derwent.

Cuths came racing out the blocks, taking advantage of a disjointed Derwent, who had lost Owens and Lauren Craig, following a string of substitutions.

Cuths' early intensity in the second half paid off with a quick ball down Derwent's right flank, driving them forward. Derwent's defence, resolute until this point, could not withstand the pressure.



At 1-1, it was all to play for. Owens returned to the fray, shifting momentum back towards Derwent. After a flurry of attacks however, the York college were unable to convert pressure into a try. The quick-footed Georgia Lynch provided some

bright sparks on the right wing, though was not fed enough chances to make a difference.

Despite Derwent's good possession, Cuths hit them on the counter with a lung-busting run from their centre, resulting in a scramble across the line to make it 2-1 to the away side. An admirable solo effort.

St Cuthberts held on to claim an impressive comeback victory, turning the match on its head in the second half.

"It's great to see the women's game being promoted and becoming more popular," said referee Dylan Wallis after the match.

 Derwent	1
 St Cuthbert's	2

## JCNC hold on for dramatic victory in Netball B

**Lucy Wilde**  
DEPUTY SPORT EDITOR

JCNC FACED A TOUGH ask against St Hild and St Bede. They came out on top in a nail biting match, winning by just two goals.

The crowd were eager for the game to start and with James capitalising on the first centre to score first, the spectators erupted into applause. This atmosphere continued throughout the game and no doubt spurred the girls on to maintain pace of play.

The James attackers were patient around the circle edge and fed the ball between themselves before into the shooters which allowed them to get close to the post and

limit the chance of missed shots. The Durham shooters equally used every opportunity to shoot from long range which made the opening quarter a goal for goal chase.

One turnover from an athletic James defender secured a two goal lead. James successfully used well-timed drives to take the ball all the way up court, negating good communication from SHSB.

The final 30 seconds of the quarter were intense. In a dramatic passage of play that saw both teams fail to capitalise on intercepted balls, the quarter ended evenly, nine all. A tactical position change saw Grace Kneller in at GD and Charlotte Holleran in the mid-court, who both tenaciously defended and kept the pressure on Durham's shooters.

James moved away from man on man marking to zoning which forced the opposition to play lateral balls that James defenders intercepted. Their height advantage in the circle also allowed James' defenders to pick up crucial rebounds. This defensive effort, combined with Grace Rider's clinical efficiency in the shooting circle saw James storm ahead.

The third quarter started with a comfortable lead for James but Durham managed to narrow the gap to 21-16 after just five minutes of play. Not down to complacency on James' part, but Durham's new tactic which utilised the defence as back-up options on the third line, allowed their shooters to get closer to the post to shoot.

The Durham GA had grown in confidence as the game went on and started shooting from long range. Her newfound confidence seemed to spur her teammates on and after a series of long-balls, the score was back to a nail biting one goal difference with less than a minute to go.

It looked as though James might just hold onto the lead when defender Grace Kneller intercepted on the diagonal, but one misjudged ball gave Durham the chance to turnover play, and the quarter ended with the score tied.

The tension in the final quarter was tangible from the crowd as every pass and interception became paramount to the final score. No one would have envied the pressure the shooters from both teams must

have felt as every shot mattered.

James ensured every pass was kept safe - in such a close scoring game possession is key. Despite the Durham defenders proving game aware and picking up on the shooters passing the ball around the circle, the time was not in their favour and their chances of clawing back a win diminished as the clock ticked down.

The final whistle sounded to confirm James as winners, 34-32. Player of the Match: Holleran.

 James	34
 St Hild & St Bede	32



## Nouse Interviews

Nouse speaks to re-elected York Sport Union President Maddi Cannell  
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## York City FC

Dom Smith talks with Manager Steve Watson and Commercial Manager Chris Pegg  
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## College Varsity

Nouse Sport reports on the key fixtures from College Varsity 2020  
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# SPORT

Shortlisted for Best Sports Coverage, SPA Awards 2019

Tuesday 03 March 2020



James

19

17

Van Mildert



**James Moultrie**  
SPORT EDITOR

THE SCHEDULED COLLEGE Varsity Men's Rugby Union A game caused immediate confusion when Van Mildert College were warming up instead of Hatfield College. But the matchup still lined up for a great afternoon of rugby on 22 Acres. The James College ultras were there in large numbers to support York's best performing college rugby side.

They, however, conceded an early try with winger Tom 'Tedford' Davis unable to tackle VM's second row on the left wing, as he bundled over the try line to put the away side 5-0 up.

It however, only took James one more possession to reply; after turning the ball over from their own kickoff, great phase play and patient buildup ended with Ollie Gonzalez strolling over for their first try.

Consistent work rate shown from Captain Tom Cox and President Lewis Manning at the breakdown would be a feature of the whole fixture, not just this first try.

Continued on Page... 27

## York celebrate most successful College Varsity yet

**Dom Smith**  
SPORT EDITOR

YORK WON VARSITY by a landslide on Sunday, scoring a huge 76 points — 30 points more than last year. The hosts started with a sizeable 27 point advantage, following a number of Durham dropouts.

It narrows the gap on Durham's overall lead in the history of Varsity to just a single win. York have now won three editions of College Varsity to Durham's four. The hosting university have won the competition every year since its inception, barring Durham's away win in the very first Varsity in 2014.

The blockbuster day of events began at York Sport Arena with the Women's Badminton, where York took all eight points on offer, repre-

sented by Derwent and James. Action then moved outside to 22 Acres, with Derwent taking a third-minute lead but eventually losing the Women's Rugby clash to St Cuthbert's of Durham.

Hes West and Hes East's combined teams lost their Mixed Lacrosse matches, while Halifax A's two late goals only decreased the size of a 6-2 defeat by Collingwood.

Hes East, representing York as the Men's Rugby Union B side, put in an impressive late display to come from behind. But with victory looking likely, a converted try in the dying embers turned the match on its head once more. Castle had stolen the victory, 34-33.

A string of marginal early afternoon defeats had lugged Durham back to near-parity with York, even after the hosts' early default lead.

But James were mightily impressive in keeping out Van Mildert, snatching the Men's Rugby A match by just two points. The visitors were wasteful late on, missing a presentable late penalty which would have earned them the five points instead.

In some of the most dominant displays of the day, James found themselves in total control of the Darts and Tennis, while Langwith added five more gleaming points to York's now bulging total, winning the squash.

On the JLD, Women's Football A were in great form as Derwent thrashed Collingwood 4-1. James also won in Women's Football, beating St Cuthbert's 6-3.

James were clinical in the Netball Women's B match, able to clinch the game by 34 points to 32.

Activity quietened down as the

evening drew closer. Derwent were soon to take up their positions in the Men's Football A and Women's Netball A, facing Collingwood, who dominate sport at Durham.

The men's late goal wasn't enough in the football, as they found themselves unlucky 2-1 losers. Similarly, Collingwood kept edging ahead and Derwent pulling back level throughout the netball match. By the end, Collingwood had just been too clinical though and won 38-31, largely thanks to the composure and execution of their goal shooter and goal attack.

The netball, attended by a large and loud gathering of avid supporters, brought to an end a truly memorable edition of York-Durham College Varsity, and York's biggest ever win in the competition.

Urging supporters to remain in

the Arena, York Sport Union President Maddi Cannell took control of the mic and congratulated all that had taken part on the day, as well as those responsible for organising the whole event.

York Sport Union Committee surrounded her, posing for photos following the highly anticipated trophy lift.

It had been a brilliant day of college sport, and a very successful one for the University of York.

Speaking to Nouse after the event, Cannell stated "I'm absolutely, 100 per cent, so proud of every single one of our athletes — not just those that have competed today, but also those that have given them competition over the leagues throughout the past two terms. It's great to come away with the win; absolutely fantastic".