

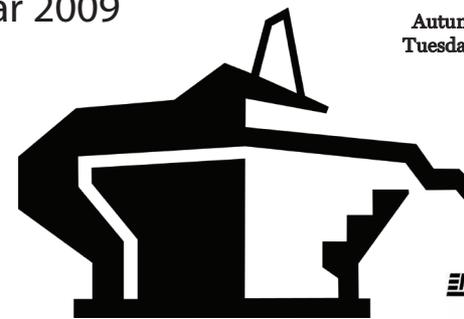
"I was considered by some to be too young and too liberal minded."

The Speaker of the House >> M6-7



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YUSU to defend student facing child porn charges

PETER IVESON



Camilla Aparcar
DEPUTY EDITOR

YUSU IS to defend a student residing at the University of York who is pleading guilty to 17 charges of child porn videography.

The student, of Goodricke College, faces the charges after creating numerous indecent photographs of children and one charge of possessing 34 indecent photographs of children.

The University will not comment on the matter until the student has been sentenced.

At a procedural disciplinary hearing which will be held to determine their academic future at the University, YUSU will represent the student in question, as a member of

the Union's student body.

The accused student's offences violate both the Protection of Children Act and the Criminal Justice Act. The children featured in the 50 offending files range from age six upwards.

At the hearing last week at Magistrates' Court, he was committed for sentencing at Crown Court, as pictured, next month.

Section 3.14 of YUSU's Constitution states that one of the Union's objectives is to "promote and defend the general interests of its members and represent them in matters affecting their interest."

Second-year student, Tara Protheroe, commented that "in principle it's good that YUSU defend their own, but when it comes to the actual case, I think

YUSU should be absolved of all responsibility."

Half of the material found on the student's computer reached four out of five on the COPINE Scale; deliberately posed pictures suggesting sexual interest.

Due to the severity of the content, magistrates deemed that their powers of sentencing would not be proportionate to the case.

Sentencing for child pornography charges can result in imprisonment, or a proportionate monetary fine. The accused has now been given bail from Magistrates' Court until the hearing at Crown Court next month to determine the length of his sentence.

"It was obviously destined for the Crown Court," said David Jackson of the Scarborough, Selby

and York Magistrates' Court.

The files were found in 2009 by the accused's flatmates - who cannot be named for legal reasons - on an open iTunes network account with an alternate username. The findings were afterwards reported using screenshots as evidence to Goodricke College Porters. Campus Security and police were alerted.

The authorities later uncovered the extent of the files after searching the flat.

A Humanities student, who wished to remain anonymous believes that "YUSU shouldn't be defending someone who is pleading guilty - if he came to university initially with those charges, he wouldn't have been let in."

COMMENT >> Page 13

University accused of racism

TWO HOME students have accused the University of racial stereotyping after being labelled as international students in the University prospectus and Biology departmental website. Many other students have since come complained about representation in the prospectus.

>> NEWS P2

Accommodation fees remain unpaid

NUMEROUS STUDENTS have been left with a greater financial burden than expected for the term after a direct debit failure at the University. As a result the University have found themselves in debt and affected students have been asked to pay by alternative methods. Other students have paid in excess of their fees.

>> NEWS P4-5

Students released after riot arrest

THE ARREST of two University of York students after the NUS anti-tuition fee rise two weeks ago, under suspicion of violent disorder, has resulted in their release pending bail. Other students involved in the march started riots around the Tory HQ.

>> NEWS P6

College football sporting analysis

NOUSE EXPLORES the rivalry and passion behind College football, with highlights and in-depth analysis of the sporting term so far and what to expect as the term's latest action unfolds.

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Student mums

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'Racial stereotyping' on University website

Hannah Ellis-Petersen
EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY of York has been accused of 'racial stereotyping' by two students used in photos on a University website departmental page.

The students, both of Asian descent, preferred to remain anonymous after agreeing to have their photos used in the Department of Biology prospectus, and on the website homepage.

However, the issue arose when after discovering that the photos had been captioned 'international students pipetting', despite the reality that both are in fact home students.

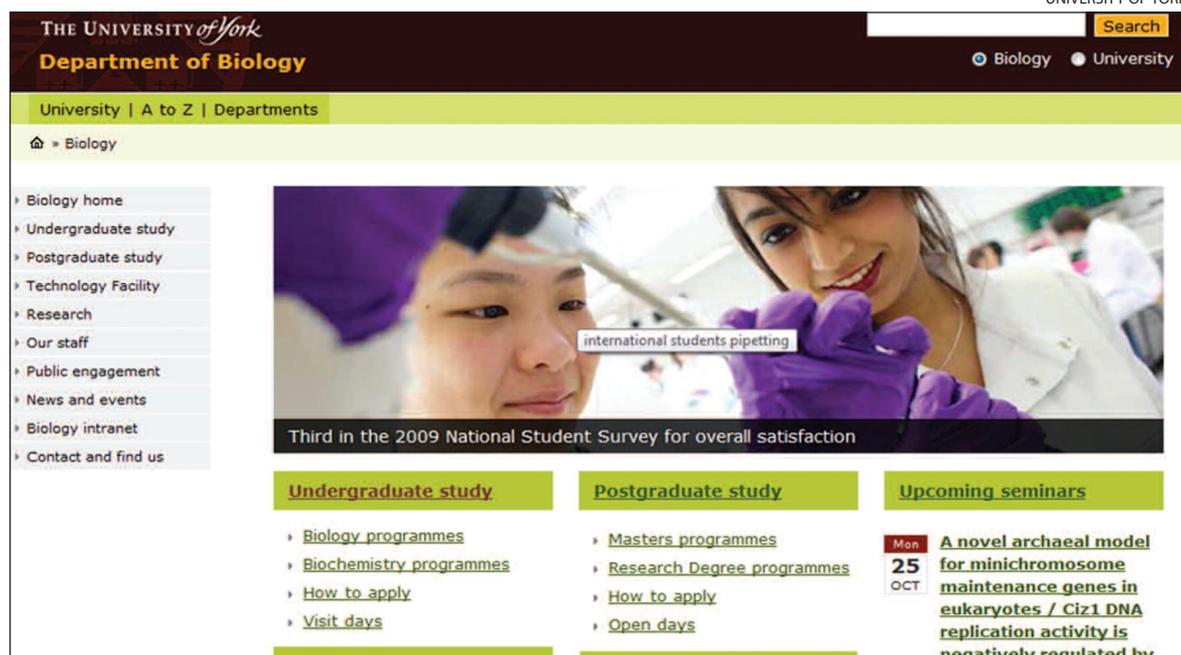
Commenting on her anger over the issue, one of the students

"I have to say I was slightly bemused, whilst also highly offended, as this seems to be a fairly blatant case of racial stereotyping"

Anonymous student

depicted said: "I have to say I was slightly bemused whilst also highly offended as this seems to be a fairly blatant case of racial stereotyping."

In an ensuing photo entitled 'mature student loading gel', the subject being genuinely an interna-



The two UK students were captioned as international on the University Biology webpage

tional student, there is no mention of this at all."

She continued to say that she found the situation "ludicrous", and she was shocked that "the university does not verify the statements it makes on a publicly available website, but also that they see it fit to tag non-white students 'international' without any verification whatsoever."

The University has faced similar problems with student representation in their promotional material in the past. Last year a

University official admitted to using YUSU President, Tim Ngwena, in a video because of his race.

Another third-year student told *Nouse* that she was approached to be photographed for the prospectus in her first year, but refused.

"I felt the only reason they were asking me was because I am Iranian so could represent the supposed multicultural face of York. I personally think it is ridiculous that they try to make students part of

the political correctness farce."

Ngwena stated: "It's important that if students agree to help promote the University, it is clearly communicated to them how they will be portrayed and where these portrayals are distributed."

In response to the allegations, the Biology Department said that it was "an honest mistake" which "was rectified immediately when it was pointed out. The action taken by the Department of Biology was communicated to the students concerned."

Funding for language programmes to be cut

Emily Hartley
NEWS REPORTER

IMPENDING CUTS likely to be made by the British Council have led to the Foreign language Assistsanship Programme being suspended, affecting around 400 students at the University of York.

Danielle Wray, a first year Language and Linguistics student at York University commented: "We are the next generation of employees and if these cuts are

made permanent, language students will never be able to enrich their studies and knowledge of other cultures like previous students were able to. I think it's a huge shame."

The Programme is funded by the Department for Education, involving language students spending their third academic year abroad to work as teaching assistants in local primary and secondary schools. The Department of Languages and Linguistics at York has a notable 400 undergraduate

and postgraduate students who may be affected, of an estimated 2,500 nationally.

Second year students across the nation have been left in turmoil regarding their limited choices for the next academic year. Students have found that gaining valuable work positions abroad is increasingly difficult due to the current economic downturn.

Gael Canales, a French and Politics student at the University of Nottingham, has voiced her indignation through a Facebook peti-

tion. "I think it is disgraceful. I understand that cuts need to be made, but the extent to which they have targeted the middle class is appalling. I can't really afford to study, and have had no luck in finding feasible work placements."

Concerns have also been raised that interest in language degrees will decrease significantly if the Council cut funding completely, as the Assistsanship Programme is said to be the most popular choice amongst students who express a passion for in this academic area.

University Lecturer receives award

David Hickman, a senior lecturer in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television, has won a prestigious Grierson award for his Channel 4 film *Race and Intelligence: Science's Last Taboo*. The Grierson Trust recognises the best British documentary film making. The judges praised the ambition of the film in tackling a difficult issue in a relevant and insightful manner. Asking difficult questions, the documentary explodes the myths surrounding race and IQ, and reveals some important truths about society, by following Rageh Omaar as he questions those who believe that genetic differences contribute to differing levels of intelligence.

Library construction continues

The handover of the library's second floor was delayed this term and further work may be needed on it over Christmas as refurbishment continues. Additionally, the southern half of the first floor will be taken over during the months from January to May, with the second half being finished in the summer term. Ground floor works are predicted not to be finished until after autumn 2011. In the mean time, noise disturbance to students continues. A recent study conducted by the library concluded students were worried about the working environment the library is supplying to the students.

Gathering of international scholars

A host of international academics gathered at the University last week to discuss the central issues in the role of education in the recovery and development of crisis-torn societies. Scholars came from the University of Oxford, NYC and Columbia University to the event organised by the University's Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit and the Department of Educational Studies. Research into this issue by these two departments investigated the specific role of UNICEF in education in emergencies.

Reporting by Rose Troup Buchanan, Becky Williams and Martin Spurr

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Law students 'prioritised' over Management peers in allocation of departmental facilities

Hannah Ellis-Petersen
 EDITOR

MANAGEMENT STUDENTS have expressed anger over the "unfair" distribution of facilities in the newly built Law and Management building.

The joint departmental building, which was newly opened in October, was built to cater equally for students studying both Law and Management.

However, while Law students are provided with a lounge and study area and several smaller conference rooms, accounting for a large proportion of the space in the building, Management students have no specific space set aside for them to work in, aside from a communal computer room available to all students.

As first year Management student James Orme-Dawson stated: "The lounge is big and could easily be split into two as there is no area in the Law and Management building where we can work, only a small communal area outside of the lecture theatres."

Further questions have been raised over the practicalities of this space and facility allocation in terms of proportionality. There are over 250 Management students in each year, whilst the overall number of Law students totals just 300.

Nathan Buss, a second year Management student, spoke to *Nouse* of his annoyance with the new building. "It is really unfair. The facilities for Law students are a lot better than those for



JUSTYN HARDCASTLE

Management students have complained that facilities have not been equally distributed in the shared building

Management students, and their needs are prioritised over ours, despite the fact that we both supposedly share this building. The computer rooms we are allowed to use are useless if we need a quiet place to read.

"It is really unfair. The facilities for Law students are a lot better than those for Management students, and their needs are prioritised over ours"

First Year Management Students
Nathan Buss

use are useless if we need a quiet

place to read. "I have a one hour gap between my lectures and there is nowhere for me to go. Heslington East is so far away from campus, or where I live, so it is just really inconvenient."

Both the Law and Management departments were given the opportunity to influence the design and extent of their own space within the building when the initial plans were being drawn up.

However, it has been suggested that due to the new and developing nature of the course, the Department of Law deliberated more carefully over the layout and quantity of the space needed for

those studying York's law course.

In response to the complaints, Elizabeth Heaps, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Estates and Strategic Projects, said: "The building was developed to support the different teaching and learning styles of the two Schools. The Law school provision reflects a very specific set of teaching needs related to firm, clinic and problem-based tuition - akin to a science laboratory or the medical school context where specialist rooms are needed."

She continued: "The atrium in the Law and Management building is designed to provide a social and learning space, with its coffee bar, primarily for Management stu-

dents who are the majority users of the teaching space in the building."

Heaps has confirmed that more furniture will be provided in the coming weeks.

Matt Martino, a second-year Law student, also commented on the superior facilities of his own department in comparison.

"Law has much better facilities," he said. "We have an open plan learning zone, with student law firm group rooms. It's an amazing facility, but only Law students have a keycard."

YUSU Academic officer, Ben Humphrys, acknowledged this was an issue.

"The beauty of Heslington East is that it's been designed collaboratively with users," he said. "It's worked really well in Law, with a specially designed space to enhance teaching in the department; we don't want to jeopardise that."

"If it isn't working out as well for Management we need to bring stakeholders together and focus on how the space can be used more effectively; moving departments to Heslington East represents a massive opportunity for the university and it can't be wasted."

Another second-year Management student, who preferred to remain unnamed, also commented on how these new facilities showed little improvement from previous provisions.

"Last year even though it was not purpose built for Management, the lecture halls were still adequate and at least if we wanted to work in a break we could go to the library."

Democracy and Services role to be put to vote

Camilla Aparc
 DEPUTY EDITOR

YUSU HAVE proposed for their Democracy and Services Sabbatical role to be removed in the next academic year.

Announcing that the change will be proposed as a by-law in their Constitutional Review, the Students' Union will launch a draft of the document for students to read over the Christmas break.

The change is to be introduced after the recent gradual increase in external staff employment at the Student's Union. Dan Walker, current Democracy and Services Sabbatical, described his role as "not that representational". Walker will, regardless of the outcome of the Review, continue in his employment for the duration of this academic year.

A third year student said "he's probably important, but I don't know why."

The Review will then be open to student consultation and put before students to vote on in Week Three or Four of the Spring term. The Review will also include a number of other amendments to

the constitution, as well as the redefinition of all YUSU Officer roles; both Sabbatical and part-time.

Second-year student, Damian Allinson, believes that "people don't know what he does or how to get through to him. There's a complacency among students not trying to work out who he is or what he does."

"Although it hasn't been passed, we don't want people considering running for a position that is quite frankly defunct," Walker explained.

"The lines are currently blurred between Democracy and Services and YUSU staff responsibilities. If the student body choose to retain six Sabbatical Officers then the role must, at the very least, undergo a high degree of change.

"Comparing the roles of these staff members to the impact of a Sabbatical officer is to be honest, fruitless, as a single Sabb could not fulfill the duties of multiple staff members to the same high standard our growing Students' Union require."

YUSU have consulted JCR Committees and YUSU part-time Officers so far about the

Constitutional Review.

Hannah Brearley, YUSU Volunteering part-time Officer, commented that "it's fine so long as the Sabbatical team are as effective as possible - you don't want them to be over burdened and it's pointless to have two people being paid to do the same job."

"Perhaps student democracy could be better looked at by some-

"Although it hasn't been passed, we don't want people running for a position that is quite frankly defunct"

YUSU Democracy and Services Officer
Dan Walker

one from the outside."

If the role is cut, decisions currently made by Walker - such coming up with the concept for key YUSU events such as Freshers and Summer Balls - would be made by the Sabbatical team as a whole.

Tahir Shetty, Vanbrugh College Chair, told *Nouse* that he thinks the Democracy and Services role is of use to the Union: "It is an under-

rated position, he actually does quite a lot."

"Nothing is exempt from the entire review," stated Tim Ngwena, YUSU President. "If students say they want to merge the Academic and Welfare Sabbatical roles, as in previous years, it is possible for a constitutional change to take effect."

Walker continued: "I now feel that in its current format - the job description in the current constitution - Democracy and Services is both outdated and, more importantly, unrepresentative. That's not to say, however, I'm not working damn hard, and will continue to do so, to ensure I'm justifying my year in office."

This is not the first time the Sabbatical positions have undergone review. In 2009, the Services and Finances role was changed to the current form of Democracy and Services Sabbatical Officer, and the Student Development and Charities Officer and Societies and Communications Officers were merged into position of Student Activities Officer.

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COMMENT >> Page 13

GEORGE LOWTHER



Dan Walker's role is to be reviewed for the start of the next year

University fees chaos creates huge

ALLY CARMICHAEL

Martin Spurr
NEWS EDITOR

THE DIRECT debit payment system set up to take first-year students' accommodation fees failed at the end of October, forcing the University to move large sums of money to cover the debts incurred in the process.

Sources from within the Fees Office have told *Nouse* that insufficient training on this issue, and a lack of time to familiarise new staff with the system were the cause of the error.

The crucial process of sending the direct debits to the banks was not fully explained; this meant that during the last few days of October, the University had to move considerable sums of money around to cope with the unexpected shortfall in cash that it received.

Accommodation fees on campus range from £81.76 to £112.42 per week meaning that for each student unable to pay, the University were out up to £1461.46. Having spoken to over 25 students, *Nouse* is still aware of many more who have still not paid these fees for the term, amounting to an estimated debt reaching into the millions.

Over the summer, students were encouraged to set up the direct debit as it would be an easier and more efficient way to pay the fees for accommodation.

However, five days after the University had originally said the money would be taken, students received emails confirming that

there had been a "technical issue" with the system.

Many students were left wondering when the money would be taken out of their bank accounts and the University has still not yet received the fees payment from all first-year students.

First-year Chemistry student, Clare Fowler, described how she expected the money to be taken automatically, saying: "It's been annoying, being told that and then not doing [paying] it until a week afterwards."

In a statement from the University, a spokesman commented: "The system for direct debit collection suffered a temporary failure at the end of October. Pending the resolution of this issue, all affected students were asked to pay the due amount by other methods."

"The issue has now been satisfactorily resolved and, thanks to the co-operation of students, the majority of the total sum outstanding was paid within two weeks, with the remainder expected to be paid by the end of the month."

Benjamin Burns, a first-year Philosophy student bemoaned the five day wait that occurred before the University contacted the affected students.

"It sounds trivial, but because the money wasn't taken out of my account, and there was no communication that this had happened, I was continuing to spend money until I heard everyone else talking about it and checked for myself. Had I spent any more, I nearly

wouldn't have been able to pay the fee."

Issues have also arisen over the system subsequently set up to rectify the payment errors, instructing students to pay their fees online.

The system allowed for some to mistakenly over-pay; the University have subsequently

"I would rather they gave me the option to have my money back now, but they didn't give me that option. The £200 was allocated for food, and essentials, and now I'm down on money"

First-year student

informed those affected that they will now not be reimbursed until the next accommodation fees instalment is due at the end of January 2011.

When applying for accommodation in August, students paid an initial booking fee of £200 which was supposed to be offset against the first instalment of fees for this term.

One first-year Computer Science student, who committed this error when putting in the figures online, described how he will now have to budget even more carefully as he has considerably less money than he was expecting to spend this term.

"I would rather that they gave



me the option to have my money back now, but they didn't give that option. That £200 was allocated for food and essentials, and now I'm down on money and have to watch what I am buying. Obviously they will make it back up, but not the way I wanted it to be."

One first-year stated how he still has not had his fees taken out

of his account, over two months after they were originally due. He described the affair as, "a bit of a disappointment, but universities are renowned for their disorganisation."

"It's been quite a while [since payment was due], but I didn't expect it to go smoothly because of all the stories I've heard."

UK banks cause difficulties for international students

Nabeeha Uddin
Hoagy Davis-Digges

STUDENTS ARRIVING in York from abroad this year have faced significant difficulties with making financial transactions and setting up UK bank accounts.

Many first-years have expressed dissatisfaction with the University's failure to provide clarification on financial matters, both before they came to university and after they had arrived on campus.

Agata Lach, an EU student from Poland, commented: "I didn't get any information about the initial payment for accommodation or about all the different banks."

The International Student Welfare Office said that they had not received any complaints from students unable to set up accounts, although they admitted that this may be because not all international students were yet aware of how to contact them.

Another student, on a term-long exchange from Germany, said that he had faced problems with setting up an HSBC bank account in York, saying: "It took over a week to set up the first appoint-

ment, where I was referred to a larger branch and forced to wait for five days before being told that they were not prepared to give me an account."

Others have faced the problem with the amount of time cash is taking to be moved; some of whom have been waiting up to three weeks for money to be transferred into UK accessible accounts. During this time they have had to rely on limited cash funds.

Lorraine Chan, an international student from Hong Kong, was dismayed to find that her Barclays credit card had still not

PETER IVESON



International students have struggled with opening accounts in UK banks

arrived four weeks after it was supposed to, while another student discovered his HSBC account had been frozen.

Laura Borisovaitė, YUSU Welfare Officer, stated: "Students staying in the UK for a short term are sometimes overlooked by the financial institutions, which may, in turn, create unfortunate circumstances in their financial dealings in the UK."

"The University's Students Support Services have Financial Advisors able to look at issues on a case by case basis and I would urge any student affected by this to contact them, YUSU's Advice and Support Centre (ASC) or myself."

While most students feel that the fault lies primarily with the banks, there is a feeling amongst some that the University could have given better and clearer information regarding common financial issues.

"Students from abroad are always going to find it harder setting up their finances in a foreign country" commented one first year, continuing, "the onus is on the university to ease that process as much as possible."

RESIDENCE FEE BREAK DOWN

> Due date for fees

2010	2011
29th October	31st January 16th May

Accommodation fees on campus each week range from:

£81.76 → £121.42

Most students have set up a **DIRECT DEBIT** enabling fees to be taken automatically

At least **TEN DAYS** before an installment is due a reminder email will be sent out

£20.00	£40.00
--------	--------

is the charge if payment is initially late

extra charge if fees remain unpaid by the end of term

financial shortfall

PETER IVESON



The majority of first-year students have still not paid their residence fees due to an administrative failure

COMMENT & ANALYSIS



Hannah Brearley

I know very few students who would complain if over a thousand pounds was casually left in their bank account.

Actually, chances are it would be a pretty good thing. However, when you are a first year student, making your foray into the world of university, faced with dealing with bank accounts, shopping bills and being away from home, financial confusion is not at all helpful. Particularly if it could be avoided.

Problems with student loan companies are commonplace enough; we're all used to desperately checking our bank accounts to see whether our much-needed finances have gone through, and more than enough of us have called said companies angrily wondering where our money is.

But we expect that from a national loan company; at least we can usually rely on our university to ensure things are sorted out, so that at least we know that we have paid for the roof over our heads. Unfortunately, not this year.

Once the usual fun surrounding student loans was sorted out, students kept an eye on their bank accounts, waiting for the inevitable day when a thousand pounds would disappear. Yet due to a lack of co-ordination and organisation on the University's part, these financial transactions were not carried out at all smoothly, and sometimes not at all.

And, as many of us know, money is an ongoing battle for students, whether we have it or

not, it's always a concern, and if the government have their way, it is only going to get worse. For most students, £20 is a lot of money. £200 is an unthinkable amount to have to live without. Those students who are suffering financially as a result of this error are likely to be in a precarious position for the rest of term, with the cliché of a frugal student life now not such a joke for these unfortunate students.

It is understandable that new staff members will experience some problems as they settle into new roles, but it is unacceptable that a university should allow such a large-scale problem as this to happen.

The first term of university is beyond stressful, and the university should be striving to ensure student security. Allowing the most vulnerable people on campus to suffer because of an administrative error is an outrageous excuse for a university of York's calibre.

Yes, people make mistakes. But the University should be aiming to make the life of students easier, not causing confusion and upset. Proper training for staff positions should be provided, and there should be provisions and back-up plans to cover any potential problems that could arise.

Ultimately, there are more than enough people who know how the system worked to ensure that these transactions were conducted as smoothly and efficiently as possible, for the benefit of everyone.

As it is, many new students' first impressions of dealing with the University of York's administrative system is tainted by this disorganisation, and the unnecessary stress for our new students could well have been avoided by a little more planning and consideration on the part of the University.

University spent over £43,000 on 'poor' website

Hailey Badger
 DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

RESEARCH HAS revealed that the University of York spent over £43,000 on its website in 2008/09. However, according to a recent survey it remains one of the worst university websites in the country.

In a Times Higher Education survey of 152 institutions' websites, the University of York was ranked last, despite this expenditure and number of overhauls.

The website, which the University spent £43,025.67 on last year, has failed to satisfy both prospective and current students.

One first-year student commented that, "the website really is very poor; I'm not surprised it's been voted one of the worst in the country."

University websites are viewed by many as a crucial portal to attract prospective students, as the amount of information which will play a part in their decision to apply to that institution.

The results of the website report, which surveyed sixth form students from three schools, awarded the University's website a mere one out of five on accessibility; the availability of contact information and insight into life on campus - whilst the 'unique selling point' of the website was only given a two out of five.

The University of Oxford spent £8,600 in 2008/09 on its website, but was voted in the top ten University websites by students. Other universities, such as the University of Edinburgh spent £6,814 and the University of Manchester which spent £25,000; this is less than the University of York spent, but they still managed to achieve a respectable score on the analysis of their websites.

Having undergone three major redesigns in the past ten years, the University's website is expecting a revamped homepage shortly.

In contrast, the University of Oxford has undergone only one major redesign in the past decade, but was still voted as one of the top

ten university websites in the country.

Universities such as Durham and Warwick have also undergone only two major redesigns and achieved notable scores in the survey.

A spokesman for the University stated: "The average annual spending on the maintenance of university websites is £60,375 per institution, whereas York spends just £43,025.67.

"The money was spent on hardware and software (including VAT), to support improvements such as the revamped Homepage which is due to be re-launched before Christmas.

"The University's website is a core channel of communication with a range of audiences including prospective students, current students, alumni, business community, Government and other universities. Prudent investment on the website is, therefore, a cost-effective use of resources."

Scott Nuckey, a first-year Politics student, agreed that the website needed updating, com-

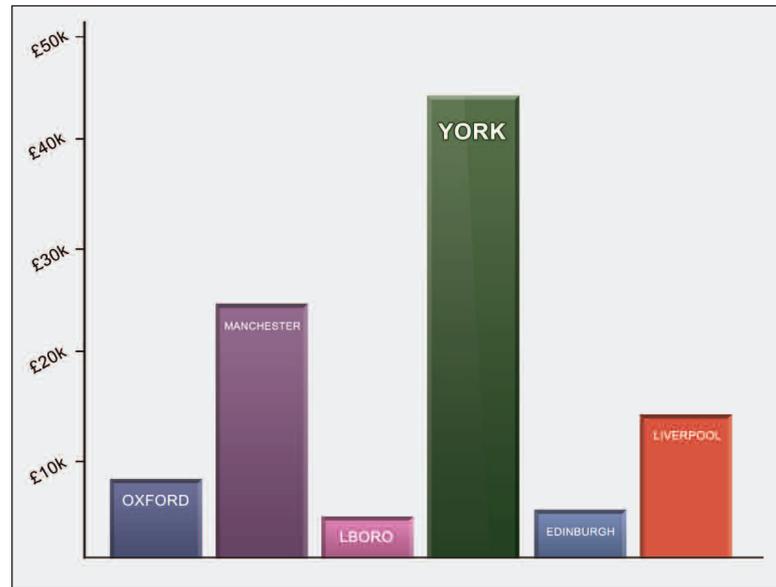
menting: "Whilst going through the application process I was decidedly unimpressed with the standard of the University of York's website.

"I found it difficult to navigate, and it gave no real indication of life on campus or what I could expect

of the University's facilities such as the library and collegiate system. Instead I was forced to gather information from other sources such as blogs and Facebook."

COMMENT >> Page 14

JONATHAN FROST



National university website spending 2008/09

Two York students arrested over tuition fee protest riots

Rose Troup Buchanan
NEWS REPORTER



SAM NEWSOME

Students protesting at the Conservative Party Headquarters

TWO UNIVERSITY of York students have been arrested in conjunction with the violence at Conservative Party Headquarters during the student protests in London two weeks ago.

The two men, both aged 19, are residents in York and students of the University. They were arrested on the 18th November under suspicion of violent disorder and have now been released pending bail.

Tim Ngwena, YUSU President, stated: "YUSU cannot comment regarding the two students from York until a decision (if any) has been reached by the prosecution service. YUSU has a duty of care to all students who seek our support."

The student march, in which the National Union of Students estimated over 50,000 protesters attended, saw students and lecturers take to the streets of London in protest over the government's proposed plan to raise tuition fees, but was overshadowed by the violence of a minority.

About 2,000 people split from the main demonstration and stormed Tory Headquarters with a considerable amount of damage being inflicted. Bonfires were lit inside the building, windows smashed and graffiti was scrawled throughout by the angry protesters.

Two men have so far been arrested about the throwing of a fire extinguisher from the seventh floor roof of the building, after protesters managed to evade Conservative security and storm the roof.

A police standoff ensued, with the protesters removed from the building four hours later after over a hundred extra officers were drafted in. The Metropolitan Police have been heavily criticised for underestimating the strength of the protest after only 225 officers were assigned to manage the demonstration.

The violence has been widely condemned across campus. David Potter, a first-year PPE student, said he felt the riots at Tory HQ

"undermined the whole march and drew attention away from the issue of tuition fees."

However, one student, who preferred to remain anonymous, felt the riots were, "more complicated than portrayed and mainstream media has hyped up their severity."

In the wake of the violence the Metropolitan Police launched Operation Malone and released thirteen images of the protesters, gathered through CCTV or by the officers themselves, in an attempt to trace the perpetrators. A total of 64 people have now been held after the riots and vandalism of Tory Headquarters.

LEADER >> Page 15

GSA election result

Hoagy Davis-Digges
DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

JOHN CALHOUN has taken the post of President of the Graduate Students Association (GSA) unopposed in this year's officer elections, which were held at Edge, the Wentworth College Bar, last Friday.

Upon being elected, Calhoun said: "Thank you to R.O.N, who ran a great campaign, may his stoic silence be an example to us all."

The other principal officer roles, the paid student positions within the GSA, were more hotly contested. The role of Finance Officer went to Adam Leadbeater, who beat Lotta Rätty by just a couple of votes, whilst Ali Bostancioglu took Welfare and Isha Arora took Academic Affairs.

The Graduate Students Association is the representative body for all postgraduate students and the University of York is one of only a handful across the country to have a student association

specifically catering for them.

This year's elections saw a much improved turn out, after the GSA General Manager, Duncan Lean, decided to postpone the elections which would normally have taken place at the end of the summer term. As it stands, the GSA Constitution states that: "Principal Officers of the GSA shall hold office from seven working days before the start of the academic year following their election," effectively preventing MA students from holding a paid officer position.

The approach of Duncan Lean and Returning Officer Kieran Alden, has been successful in getting a number of graduate students involved in student politics. All posts were filled at the election except the posts of: Distance Learning Officer, Part-time Officer and Off-campus Officer.

There was an increased interest from the candidates, who managed to fill the space booked for the announcement; a stark contrast to last year, which Alden described as "practically empty".

GSA



The new Graduate Student Association Principle Officer Team

Unknown male harassing students on campus

Martin Spurr
NEWS EDITOR

FEMALE STUDENTS have reported being approached on campus by a man in a car encouraging them to get into his vehicle on University Road.

The currently unidentified man, between thirty and forty years of age, approached several students on separate occasions, driving up alongside them and repeatedly asking them to get into his car with him.

One student told *Nouse* that she asked by the man to take him to "a naughty massage parlour".

The man, who was driving a small red car along the road, approached two female students separately on one day at the roundabout and at least one another student at 20.30 about a week later. The incident was reported to campus security, who are currently conducting an investigation.

One student described her experience as "uncomfortable" as the man in question persisted in following her in his car and suggested that the man was "preying on freshers".

Another anonymous second-year student described how the

older man would not go leave her alone, even after she had said no. "I was walking down the road from the library, around University Road and a man in a red car offered me a lift," she recounted.

"I said no, he opened the door, I walked on, he drove off but then pulled in again at me and opened

the door and said, 'are you sure you don't want a lift, I'm a really nice guy'. He just seemed really weird. It's not the first time that sort of thing has happened but I just found it a bit creepy."

YUSU Welfare Officer, Laura Borisovaite, commented on the options available to students walk-

ing home alone at night, stating: "I would encourage anyone travelling on their own late to consider using the Magic Bus or the later bus, when possible.

"On campus, the porters are available to walk you back to your accommodation if you feel unsafe and the security services can drive

PETER IVESON



The Wentworth roundabout where several students were harassed by an unidentified male in a car

you to Heslington East, so please make sure you use the 01904 32 3333 emergency number at any time of day upon any emergency

"He just seemed really weird. It's not the first time that sort of thing had happened but I just found it a bit creepy "

Second Year student

on campus, including finding yourself in a situation like this.

"I would urge anyone with any knowledge of these incidents or the man involved to please phone the security services to ensure that he can be identified and his harassment would cease."

David Garner, the University Press Officer, has said that the University have asked YUSU to ensure that students alert Campus Security to any similar instances.

"Patrols have been instructed to be on the alert for this type of incident. We have had no further reports, but would encourage students to contact us on the emergency line if anything like this occurs."

Third-years struggle to obtain vital transcripts

Hannah Ellis-Petersen
 EDITOR

UNIVERSITY AND departmental disorganisation has led to many third-year students struggling to get hold of a copy of their academic transcripts, jeopardising their places on masters and graduate schemes.

Several third-year students described the difficulties they faced when requesting an academic transcript for graduate schemes with an earlier deadline than usual. Without a copy of this document, students cannot be accepted onto the majority of graduate courses.

However, third-year History and Politics student Olivia Evans, described the long and complex process she had to go through, to ensure she received the document in time to apply for a graduate History course at other institutions.

"The whole process was ridiculous," she stated. "I emailed the History Department far in advance, at the beginning of November, requesting my transcript. However, I was told that because the Politics Department had not released one of my marks, I would not be able to get a copy until after the deadline of the graduate scheme interview. They offered me an interim department

transcript, which no graduate or masters scheme accepts, so it was useless. I had to email five different people, both inside and outside the department, to finally get hold of a copy, and it was only thanks to my continued persistence and sheer force of will that I got anywhere."

Evans continued: "It is not made clear to third-year students how far in advance they have to request their transcript. Luckily, I had done my research, so I knew that it could take over two weeks, but it would be so easy for anyone who is not so aware of the system to miss deadlines because the University just doesn't inform students."

Another third-year PPE student also expressed her anger over

"It was all so disorganised between departments and no-one really seemed to know what what going on. The system desperately changing"

Third year PPE student

the system: "Most third year students at this University request a copy of their academic transcript, both for Masters degrees and jobs, so I could not believe how difficult

Examinations Office
 Student Administration Building
 Heslington, York YO10 5DD
 Tel: (+44) 0-1904 434643
 Fax: (+44) 0-1904-434039
 E-mail: exams@york.ac.uk

THE UNIVERSITY of York

Official Transcript Request Form
 An Official Transcript takes approximately 15 working days to produce
 Once you have completed as much of the form as possible, scroll down to the end of the form and press the 'Send Form' button for this information to be emailed to exams@york.ac.uk

Your Details

Do you require an undergraduate transcript?

Do you require a postgraduate transcript?

If your exam board is about to take place, do you want to wait for a final transcript? Yes No

Forename(s)

Surname (when enrolled)

Student number(if known)

A transcript request form, which can take over a month to process

it was to get hold of, and how long it took. While I know the deadline for the course I am applying for is earlier than most, I can not be the first person to have asked for it at this point in the term. Everyone I emailed was really nice, but it was all so disorganised between departments, and no-one really seemed to know what was going on."

"The system desperately needs changing, be it in individual departments or in the central admin office" she added.

Ben Humphrys, YUSU Academic Officer called the process a "scandal", describing his own personal difficulties last year getting hold of his transcript to apply for a

masters, before he was elected as a Sabbatical officer.

"Last year I sent an email to the Graduate Recruitment Office requesting my transcript, and asking some questions" he told Nouse. "I did not get a reply till April."

He continued: "Providing transcripts quickly is one of the fundamental duties that a university has to its graduates; along with exams and student support, it is one of the key areas where failure can have a massive and immediate impact on our students and alumni, especially in a time of a highly competitive graduate job market."

Students have also put blame on their supervisors, on whom

many rely to provide them with information and advice relating to transcripts and graduate programmes.

A third-year English and History student, who preferred to remain anonymous, said: "I recently asked my supervisors for academic transcripts and references, and it took one over a week to reply. She seemed really unimpressed with my choice of masters and didn't ask me about the application process at all. She also dismissed the use of transcripts, saying that they would be 'unavailable' until I graduate, although I told her that it would be needed as an important part of my application."

"The whole thing has made me very frustrated with both departments and makes me wonder what the actual role of supervisors is when they are not there for you when you need them most."

However, in a response to the complaints, the University only gave a brief statement: "If any student has a problem they feel may be jeopardising their chances of getting places on graduate schemes or postgraduate courses then it is open to them to contact the head of department concerned who will be able to offer assistance."

COMMENT >> Page 13
LEADER >> Page 12

Gillies Fabrics

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Late loans leave students frustrated

Hoagy Davis-Digges
 DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

MANY STUDENTS have faced financial problems following the Student Finance England's failure to process a large number of loans within the first weeks of the Autumn term, despite the students having applied on time.

Students who have arranged financial provisions due to their loans not clearing on time are now beginning to worry that they will have to make further financial arrangements, such as taking out high interest emergency loans.

The delays have proven an annual problem for Student Finance England, for the past few years.

Hannah Warburton, a first-year Bio-Chemistry student, described the problem: "The employees don't seem to know what's going on. I got told something different every time I called them."

The feeling of unhappiness with how students have been treated by Student Finance is widespread. "The most irritating thing is that you have to spend about ten minutes on a 0845 number before you can talk to a real person," commented another student.

Some regard having to pay premium rates for calling the helpline as a cynical way of getting

money out of students. One student wondered why they were "charging people to talk to someone about why they haven't received the money they were supposed to" and described it as, "a bad joke."

Laura Borisovaite, YUSU Welfare Officer, stated: "Financial advice and support is available from the University's Student Support Services at Sally Baldwin D block on a case by case basis."

"I would urge students to get in touch with either these services, YUSU's Advice and Support Centre (ASC), or myself for anyone who has been affected by the delays in order to find solutions to any problems they are experiencing."

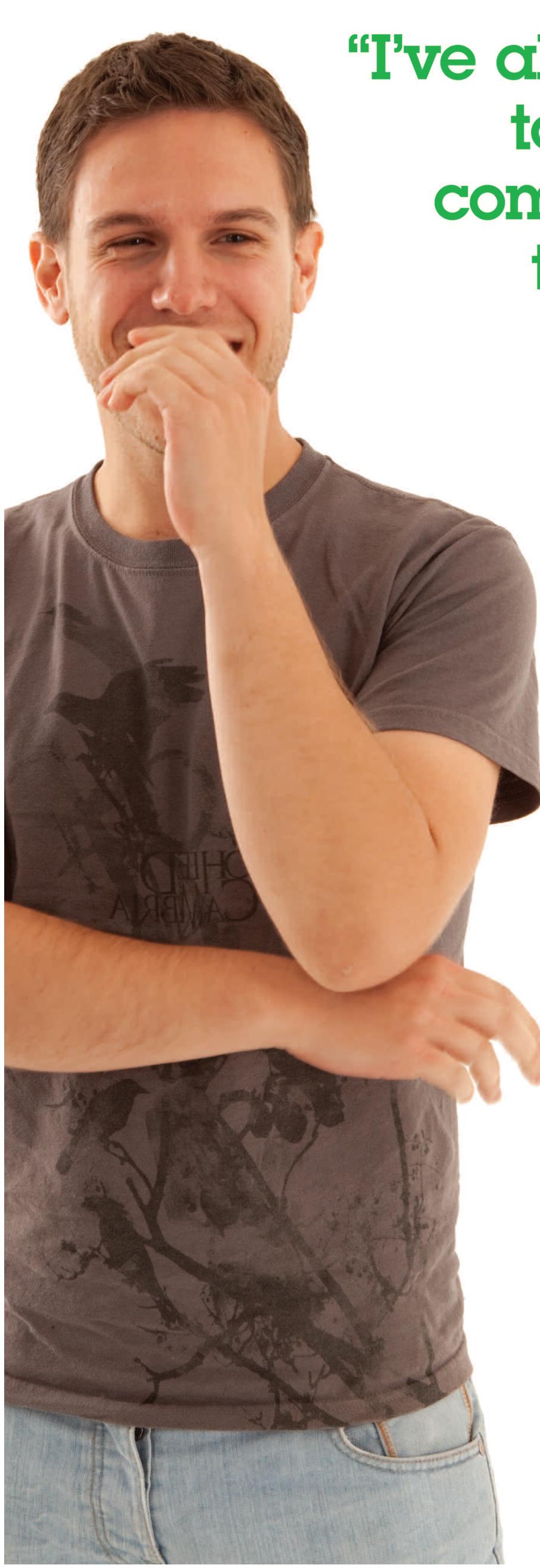
Katie Brown, a first-year Bio-Chemistry student, commented: "It's really frustrating, but I've had some savings to fall back on, so for the moment I'm okay."

Aneeb Bani also described how he has had to rely on outside funding to cover his financial shortfall.

"I have been constantly fobbed off, and just keep being told 'about another 4 weeks' when I ask for a timescale. In the meantime I have had to rely on my grandfather for money"

He described the whole student finance service as "absolutely awful".

A similar problem occurred last year, after over 175,000 students nationally were left without grants.



**“I’ve always been eager
to learn something
completely new. I get
the feeling I’m not
the only one.”**

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DEPARTMENT OF FILM, THEATRE AND TELEVISION

York lecturers threaten to strike over tuition fees rise

Hailey Badger
 DEPUTY NEWS EDITOR

THE LORD Browne Report, which recommends sweeping changes to the university funding system, has been poorly received by many University of York lecturers as well as students.

A call to strike by the University and College Union (UCU) would see most lecturers follow their union in a show of unity against the government's plans for Higher Education.

The Browne Report, which plans to remove the current cap of £3,290 for tuition fees per year and replace it with an upper limit of £9,000, caused tens of thousands of students to descend onto the streets of London two weeks ago to express their opposition.

There has been great speculation that lecturers will follow the example, should their unions determine strike action the most suitable option.

Dr Victoria Coulson, a lecturer in the English Literature Department, stated: "I belong to a union; if my union took the decision to strike I would strike. I believe in collective action and collective responsibility and would join in with my colleagues."

In May, lecturers at 11 London colleges, Westminster University, King's College London and Sussex University staged a walkout against university funding cuts.

During those walkouts, the vast majority of Union members

participated in a positive mood, with union leaders saying they were prepared for further action.

Dr Simon Parker, a lecturer in the Politics Department, stressed the importance of equal opportunity and access to education, saying that "education should be a right, including higher education." He elaborated that the raising of tuition fees does not allow "equality of opportunity" in society and it would be "turning the clock back."

Sally Hunt, General Secretary of the UCU, at the rally on the 11th November outside Tate Britain commented: "A civilised society recognises the importance of education. It's time for politicians to recognise that education is an investment in all our futures not a millstone around our necks."

Frances O'Grady, Deputy General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress, stated: "We must keep on reminding those MPs who pledged not to raise fees of what a £9,000 annual tuition bill will do to university education, show the British people that there is an alternative to austerity, and persuade the government to think again."

One first-year student was against lecturers going on strike, commenting, "it would be counter-productive because we wouldn't be getting the education we are paying for."

However, another first-year student was supportive of a strike, saying that, "if lecturers were to go on strike it would raise awareness and strengthen the voice of the student campaign."



THE THEATRE, Film and Television Department hosted a media debate on Thursday, chaired by Greg Dyke, Ex-Director of the BBC and Chancellor of the University of York, discussing freedom of speech in journalism. Other notable members of the panel included Helen Broad, current Director of News at the BBC; Ian Bloom, Head of the Reuters Institute of Journalism, and Dr David Levy, the prominent media lawyer.

Tokyo photographer criticised for degrading images

Grace O'Malley
 NEWS REPORTER

YORK NIGHTCLUB Tokyo has faced accusations of misconduct after a freelance photographer hired by the club asked girls to kiss each other for photographs he was taking.

The photographer in question, James Thompson, is said to have offered some of the girls free shots in exchange for taking the photographs.

The photographs subsequently appeared on Tokyo York's Facebook page in albums from YUSU'S Viking Raid event, watermarked by the club and James Thompson.

However, since *Nouse* contacted both parties, seven photos have now been removed from the social networking albums, including three shots of girls kissing each other.

YUSU Women's Officers, Charlotte Phillips and Janey Stephenson voiced their concerns on the issue, stating that: "the recent conduct of Tokyo Industries is clearly unacceptable".

Tokyo have released a statement in regards to the incidents: "We hire photographers to work at events on a freelance basis as is the case with most nightclubs.

"Photographers are permitted to take general shots of the entertainment and of people enjoying the club and would never be asked to secure or encourage inappropriate shots, any such behaviour contravene club policy."

One girl recalled her experience with the photographer: "We'd heard he [Thompson] was offering free drinks if girls would make out...he wouldn't leave us alone." The student described Thompson as "goading" the girls. "I guess when you're drunk, you're more open to certain propositions...and more open to being taken advantage of."

"The use of such marketing methods serves to reinforce the damaging and degrading culture of female objectification"

YUSU Women's Officers
Charlotte Phillips & Janey Stephenson

Despite the club's statement, Tokyo have not responded specifically in regards to girls being coerced into the photographs by receiving free alcoholic drinks, including shots of liquors such as

tequila and sambucca.

Girls targeted by Thompson were enjoying a night out when approached by him offering them shots, only to have the evidence subsequently broadcasted over Facebook. Many of the photographs remained untagged up until they were removed from the social networking site.

This was a view held by a second year student, who wishes to remain anonymous: "One minute I was dancing with my friend, the next minute she was kissed me. I don't mind if it's just for a laugh with friends, but not if it's going to be put all over Facebook".

The Women's Officers continued: "The use of such marketing methods serves to reinforce the damaging and degrading culture of female objectification; there are other means of advertising club nights.

"We will be working with the Democracy and Services Officer, Dan Walker, to ensure that Tokyo Industries are brought into line with the values for which YUSU stands for."

Nouse did not receive a response from the photographer, Thompson, after he was contacted concerning his photographic methods.

COMMENT >> Page 12

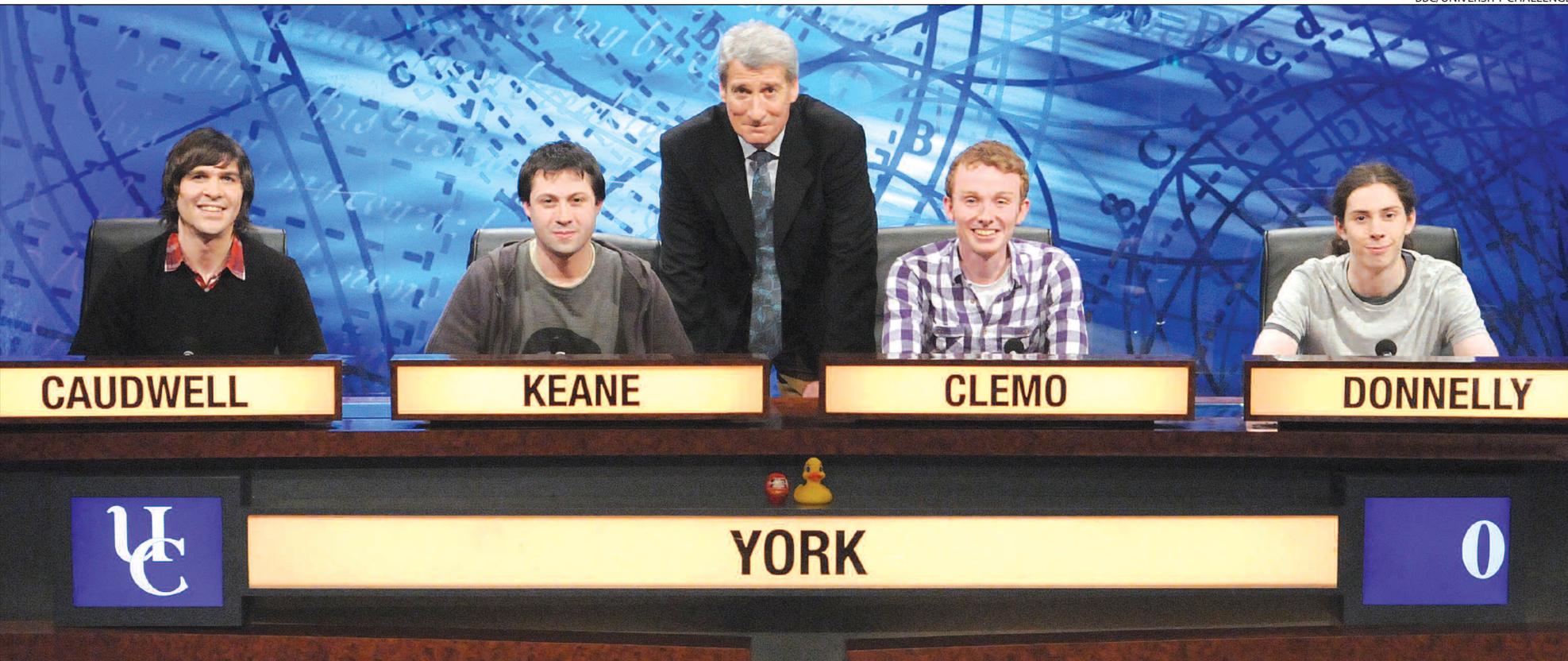
TOKYO/ FACEBOOK



And your bonus questions are...

Camilla Aparc meets York's University Challenge team, and puts them to the test.

BBC/UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE



None of the current University Challenge team had planned to try out until they heard about the trials on Facebook. A few months later, they were on television and entering the quarter finals of the competition.

Andrew Clemo, the Team Captain, recounted how most of his friends were "actually quite surprised" when he got onto the team. The selection process last year comprised of trials run by YUSU where students were invited to answer as many questions correctly within a set time frame.

The second round was a timed challenge conducted by the Union, but Caudwell was "amazed just to get through the first round of selection, the second round of selection was much tougher – because if you got a question wrong, you got negative points against you."

Another stage of interviewing at Birmingham took place where "they generally ask you a few questions, to test whether you're photogenic or not."

So far, the team have got through the first two rounds of the competition facing the Royal College of Music and the University of Exeter, and therefore will be filming another

two rounds of quarter-finals matches. "You have to win two of those two quarter final matches to get through to the next round."

"It's been fairly nerve-wracking but fun, I never realised I blinked so much on camera!" Caudwell exclaims.

"And I got away with wearing a checked shirt even though they said I couldn't," grins Clemo. "Some of the Oxbridge teams were very much in their suits and tweed kind of thing, though."

"Next year I reckon they should wear Y-O-R-K on their t-shirts. We did think about that, but it was a bit too late," they laugh.

The team didn't see much of television host Jeremy Paxman, though. "You don't get much chance to chat to him, he comes by to say hello and good luck and then at the end says goodbye, well done," says Caudwell.

"He's a bit more relaxed backstage, but you can tell it's just another job for him, he sort of breezes in and out, has a quick drink and disappears – he's done it for 15 years or something. No Paxmanisms, unfortunately."

"He usually wears a blazer, shirt, no tie...just takes his tie off basically. How you see him on screen he dresses on TV is how he

dresses in real life."

Clema does recall one memorable incident involving the presenter: "He did call the producer a bastard once, or the director or something. It wasn't during our game, but you can watch the games in the green room on the live TV feed."

"Some people were more excited to be seeing Graham from the Jeremy Kyle Show because they were filming next door to us. There was only about 70 people there for University Challenge, but a queue round the door to get into Jeremy Kyle."

The Team Captain describes the whole experience. "You can be sat backstage and watching other people's matches and get question after question right, but when it's your turn to be filmed, and under the pressure of the lights, that obviously doesn't help, but it can just be that you don't know any of the questions."

"The main thing is hoping that you'll get a set of bonuses that you can answer," Donnelly continues.

The team prepared for the competition by going to weekly pub quizzes and on the train on the way to filming, using a book

entitled *Passing Time In The Loo*, which they reassure contains a surprising number of useful facts about literature.

"A question I got right in the first round I literally had read on the train on the way up, about Italian Renaissance architecture – it's almost all useless trivia!" reveals Caudwell.

Clema, comments that "unless you're really interested in something, it's almost impossible to remember."

"The whole programme is just all about using all this stuff you wouldn't know any other way – it's not like everyone's an egghead or anything...there's some pretty normal people, and some not so normal people."

Donnelly explains that the team's easiest win so far in the competition was against the Royal College of Music, "just by the biggest margin, and it was quite helpful that we got all the music bonuses and they didn't...it can vary so wildly from game to game, that it just depends." Their next match will air in January.

The first stage of this year's trials end on Thursday. Sign up at www.yusu.org.

CAUDWELL

Studies... English Language and Linguistics, Second Year

I admit that I know nothing about... Mathematics

My special topic is... Music, and poaching eggs

The best looking University Challenge team from another University was... Royal College of Music were a very handsome bunch of gentlemen

The number of times I've been to Ziggy's since starting at York is... None

The one word I know the rest of the York University Challenge team wouldn't is... floccinaucinihilipilification.

KEANE

Studies... Biology, Third Year

I admit that I know nothing about... that would be a very long list!

My special topic is... I don't think any of us had a specialist topic, but I think I might have been the most sport orientated member

The best looking University Challenge team from another University was... no comment...

The number of times I've been to Ziggy's since starting at York is... I've been a few times. I had to stop. I seem to be allergic.

The one word I know the rest of the York University Challenge team wouldn't is... for Andrew - punctuality.

CLEMO

Studies... History, Second Year

I admit that I know nothing about... the Rugby League

My special topic is... History, it's my degree anyway

The best looking University Challenge team from another University was... Gurter - all girls, it's better than all guys...

The number of times I've been to Ziggy's since starting at York is... I've crossed the threshold once, I think...

The one word I know the rest of the York University Challenge team wouldn't is... cliometrics - it's to do with measuring economic historic!

DONNELLY

Studies... English Language and Linguistics, Second Year

I admit that I know nothing about... Football, to be honest...

My special topic is... Mathematics and maybe music as well

The best looking University Challenge team from another University was... I couldn't say, I wasn't really thinking about it!

The number of times I've been to Ziggy's since starting at York is... Yeah, once?

The one word I know the rest of the York University Challenge team wouldn't is... a semi-group. It's a set with an associate binary operation

Comment & Analysis

Supervisional support should be more than just symbolic

Laura Connor

Senior Correspondant



The University needs to invest more time in the assistance of third years' future careers and the provision of transcripts.

One of the last things you think about as a fresher is the role that your supervisor plays. While in education, academic accountability is a constant concern, but the longer you spend at University the more you realise that the only person who is going to moan at you for getting that substandard grade is you. The University of York extols itself for its high level of pastoral care – those twice-termly emails that compel you to sit in your supervisor's office whilst you talk vaguely about whether you enjoyed your seminars, or whether you actually bothered to turn up.

But I know few people who manage to achieve a teacher-like relationship with their supervisors, where a student feels comfortable enough to tell them that, no, they haven't done enough work because they have been sat in a student newspaper office or rehearsing in Central Hall for most of term. Or have been spending time at home because they don't get along with their housemates and feel isolated. But honesty with a supervisor should be crucial.

This realisation only dawns when you reach the academic abyss of third-year, when you begin to recognise that those extra-important extra-curricular activities are actually probably not going to get you a job or a degree.

But the role that your supervisor plays and their opinion of you as an individual becomes an imperative part of the application rigmarole. And somehow the news that academic departments are doing little to help ease the stress and unnecessary bureaucracy of

graduate job and Masters applications is unsurprising. The disregard academic departments have for providing transcripts is not only impeding a student population facing limited employment prospects in the current economic climate, but shows an ignorance and apathy for the care and attention students expect from their department.

A third-year friend of mine recently became upset because throughout his time here his supervisor has never once asked what he does in his free time or what he wants to do as a career. Wanting to be a journalist, he went to his supervisor armed with a portfolio and CV, only to find that as soon as a 'Journalism Masters' was mentioned, the

supervisor became disinterested and told him to write it all down on a 'personal development' form to be handed in at the departmental office. Surely the entire purpose of a supervisor is the personal one-to-one interaction and correspondence, the knowledge that in the emotional whirl-wind of University life there is someone there who you can talk to – who maybe doesn't understand, but is there regardless?

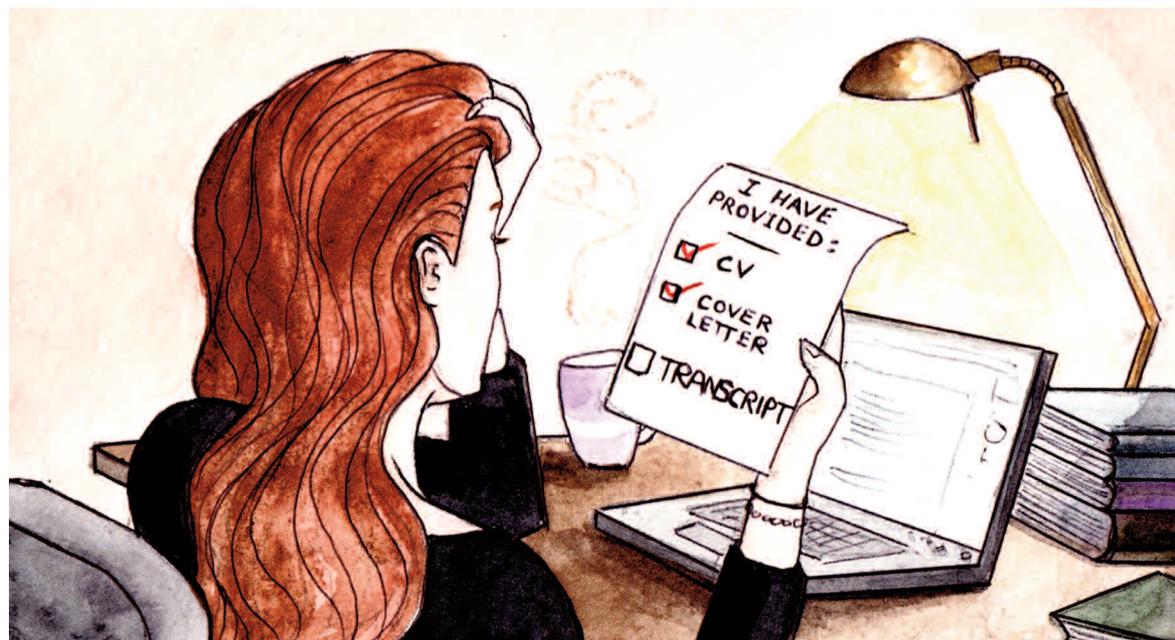
You would presume that supervisors strive to ensure that their students become the best that they can be. Student happiness and success is surely the truest reflection of their role as an academic member of the department? Assistance in the final stages of our time here, when pro-

viding something as important as an academic transcript, should be expected and standardised parts of academic supervisor practice.

For humanities students, the measly four hours of contact time we are blessed with a week shows no correspondence with the fees we pay, so the least we can ask for is organised and marginally passionate supervision.

The situation is even worse for Joint Honours students – the burden of contacting both supervisors is stressful and time-consuming. Students need assurance at a time of mounting pressure, which will help the departments in achieving academically flourishing individuals, rather than bitter and frustrated supervisees.

SARAH JILANI



Joe Williams

Deputy Comment Editor



Rehabilitation necessary for all sex offenders

So a student has pleaded guilty to 17 charges of making and having in his possession videos of child pornography. What a shining example of the things that undergraduates at the University of York can achieve. He will face trial in December and is likely to spend longer than a year in jail.

You may think I'm being blunt, but we all know the story, there are many like it and I don't intend to dwell very long on this one in particular.

The student was found with images rated at Level 4 on the Copine Scale, which categorises the severity of child pornography. Last week it was revealed that 50

year old Kevin Page of Beccles, Suffolk would not receive a jail sentence because Judge Rupert Overbury decided he needed help rather than punishment.

Page was found to have 85,772 images and videos, 5,174 of those at Level 4 and 281 at Level 5. This highest level is reserved for content that involves sadism or bestiality.

What I want to know is this: where is the line that our judicial system has drawn to dictate who needs help and who goes straight to jail? How many videos do you need to have watched to pick up the 'get out of jail free' card? I don't think you can honestly say

that anyone who has watched child pornography is not in need of help, but the real issue we must question is why that help is not offered

"it is hardly any wonder that the recidivism rates in the UK are so high"

to all.

Peterhead Prison houses 300 of the country's most dangerous

and long-term predatory male sex offenders, and in the year 09/10 only 48 of these completed the programmes put in place for character reformation. It is hardly any wonder that the recidivism rates in the United Kingdom are so high.

The new sex offenders' programme 'Good Lives' allows for prisoners to opt out of group therapy sessions if they find them too intrusive and pop pills as an alternative. Prescription drugs are being offered to prisoners as a means of lifting depression and cutting sex drives. But not to all prisoners.

While there is controversy over the definition of what is 'nor-

mal', there is certainly no debate over what is acceptable. There is something innate within us that tells us involvement in child porn, be it as a producer, hardcore fan or casual observer, is wrong.

To commit such a crime indicates psychological abnormality. I say we either need to extend a helping hand to all sex offenders and offer them rehabilitation, tackling the issue head on, or we need to lock them all away and throw away the proverbial key. This issue does not allow for shades of grey.

Furthermore, a 23 year old student is not beyond help, in fact he's the very example of someone crying out for it.



Student arrests

The violence at the Conservative Headquarters on the Demolition march two weeks ago should not be defended as the right way to protest; but the way the national media focused solely on this issue, covering it in every angle possible, detracted from the real reason and cause of the march.

Even though two York students have been arrested, we shouldn't condemn them because of this. Whilst on the march, *Nouse* saw many red and black anarchist flags and persistent attempts to sell the 'socialist worker' newspaper. It seems to be a strange coincidence that the same flags were being waved emphatically on the roof of Tory HQ.

The national media tended to brand the violence as an expected consequence of a student demonstration. Throwing a fire extinguisher over a seventh floor roof is a disgraceful act, but castigating each and every one of the protesters who made their way inside Tory HQ would be a mistake.

Many of the 'rioters' were just normal students carried away in the situation they found themselves in. The pictures of one protester smashing a window with a mass of photographers surrounding him, typifies the response that we have seen. The focus was not on the mass, walking peacefully behind, but on the student in front of the clicking cameras. This environment was the catalyst for the number of students, including two of our own, becoming involved.

The two students arrested should not be the focus of all condemnation, a large part of the blame goes to the group intent on causing and creating violence, but also the media, who, in a similar way to the organised group, escalated the atmosphere surrounding the march.

D&S

A Constitutional Review may to the majority sound dull. It is true: there are few issues within the document which could affect student life at York quite drastically. One of these, namely the possible axe to the Democracy and Services Sabbatical role, might not be such dramatic loss as it first seems.

Although we are used to the current six person strong Sabbatical team, there was a time in the not so distant past when this was not the same. The Academic and Welfare position were once merged as one, but then split to lighten the workload.

For Democracy and Services, the workload has been lightened by staff externally employed by the Union. These paid professionals have been trained to do various parts of the Services role - arguably better than any student could ever do during their year in office.

The real point within any review to consider are the effects that will result from any changes made. Whether the student population will do so is disputable, and only time will tell in the upcoming vote next term. However, as it stands, the role may not be entirely missed: widespread opinion is that of Democracy and Services translates as Elections and Events.

Important as both occasions may be, paying a student for a whole year to carry them out is perhaps neither prudent nor necessary. Funds from the Union could be better distributed in providing more society funding; sporting equipment; or even fuel for the ever-plugged 'Magic Bus'.

Careful consideration is commendable, yet those that any decision will most visibly be in fact those who were considering to run for the role in the next academic year - and they'll probably be able to get over it fairly rapidly.

Transcripts

And so it seems, yet again, the University is providing students with another impediment to our chances of getting a job; particularly helpful in the increasingly tough environment of graduate employment. Whilst we already grapple against an inferior careers service and an inconveniently remote location, students of York are now being denied access to their academic transcripts, thus preventing them from applying to outside Masters degrees or graduate schemes.

It is, to state it plainly, just ridiculous. It is in the benefit of both the University and the student population as a whole to ensure that they are provided with the basic requirements to further their education or graduate prospects; indeed, it could be argued that in denying students access to these documents, due to departmental and university disorganisation, the University is failing students in its most important role. After all, the majority of us are here, walking these hallowed halls for three years, for the key purpose of increasing our employability, and so we can leave with at least half-decent career prospects.

Yet, with such complex procedures to procure basic documents, and frankly disinterested supervisors who care for little else than their own narrow field of research, it is hardly surprising that many York has such poor graduate statistics. Students should be encouraged to explore all their graduate options and discuss their options with their supervisors, rather than spending all their spare moments chasing after department officials. The reputation of York, and the future of its students, depends on it.

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The future of humanities subjects is questionable



Jack Thacker

The recent tremors that have resounded through the world of higher education have ignited the resolution of literally thousands of students across the country.

Despite the very evident anger of those within and on the threshold of university, the coalition seem resolute in their plan to raise fees, brushing off any shards of opposition with seemingly progressive jargon.

The recent NUS Demolition rally, despite being overshadowed by scenes of criminal violence, gave students a platform on which to challenge the audacity of Lord Browne's proposals. However, there is a danger that the public outcry against rising tuition fees is eclipsing decisions that reveal a concerning tendency in the formation of university funding.

As a humanities student, I believe in the value of scholarship and the inherent good of knowledge for its own sake. Unfortunately, this is at odds with Lord Browne's standpoint on erudition. Browne's review of higher education states

that public investment should be targeted at "priority subjects", meaning mostly sciences, technological courses and medicine. The economic value of these subjects should never be understated; it is hard to argue that an English Literature undergraduate is anywhere near as valuable to society as one in medicine.

Yet is the prioritising of sub-

"Yet is the prioritising of subjects, in tone with the purpose of higher education itself?"

jects in tone with the purpose of higher education itself? The Coalition's support of Browne's proposals suggests that Cameron, alongside many others, now essentially views universities as job factories, serving society's deficit.

Where do humanities subjects,

which are not a priority according to Browne, lie within this supply and demand higher education culture?

The outlook is bleak. There is to be a phasing out of teaching grants in the humanities sector, leaving an unprecedented void of funding. Students and staff will slowly see the deterioration of their own departments. Undergraduates wishing to use their degree to enter careers in their chosen subject will find little work, and little funding for taking their interest further. Without steady funds, standards will slip, valued research will be compromised, and perhaps worst of all, the excellent global position of England's humanities will crumble.

It is up to us to make sure that those entering into this bleak cultural future continue to receive the standard of education that we enjoy at the moment. It is up to tutors to do more with less, and students to forgive shortcomings. It may take years for the humanities departments of England's universities to recover from this starvation, but recover they must.

Hannah Clugston



Comment Editor

Female beauty should not be used as a bargaining tool

Amnesty International have often used the provocative slogan 'Lap dancing is just girls having fun and being sexy, isn't it?' Presumably the expected answer is 'no'. I am pretty sure if I let a 'yes' escape from my lungs a few jaws would drop to the floor and there would be jeering from the male corner of the room. Obviously there is no straightforward answer to that question but it does induce thought.

In York, the closest experience students have of lap dancing are the barely-dressed 'Tokyo Girls'. Their job description is slightly hazy but from what I have observed it appears to be: dance erotically, pout at all times and give out free merchandise.

Since it has been transformed from Tru to Tokyo, the club has become a place of much female sexualisation. Not only do the 'Tokyo Girls' parade around in their underwear but women have also been encouraged to kiss in order to acquire free shots. At this point I could get on a pedestal and launch into a feminist rant about the errors of objectifying women. But I won't.

At the end of the day, as women, we still have a choice over how we use our bodies. If, on interview, the 'Tokyo Girls' were misinformed as to the nature of their uniform there is still plenty of opportunity for them to walk away from that job. Clearly the female students that agreed to kiss for alcohol felt that it was an equal exchange.

If we are going down the freedom of expression line, then we can't criticise anyone, male or

female, for using their bodies as they so choose. What I do find concerning, however, is the increased level of acceptance, from women, towards using their appearance as a bargaining tool.

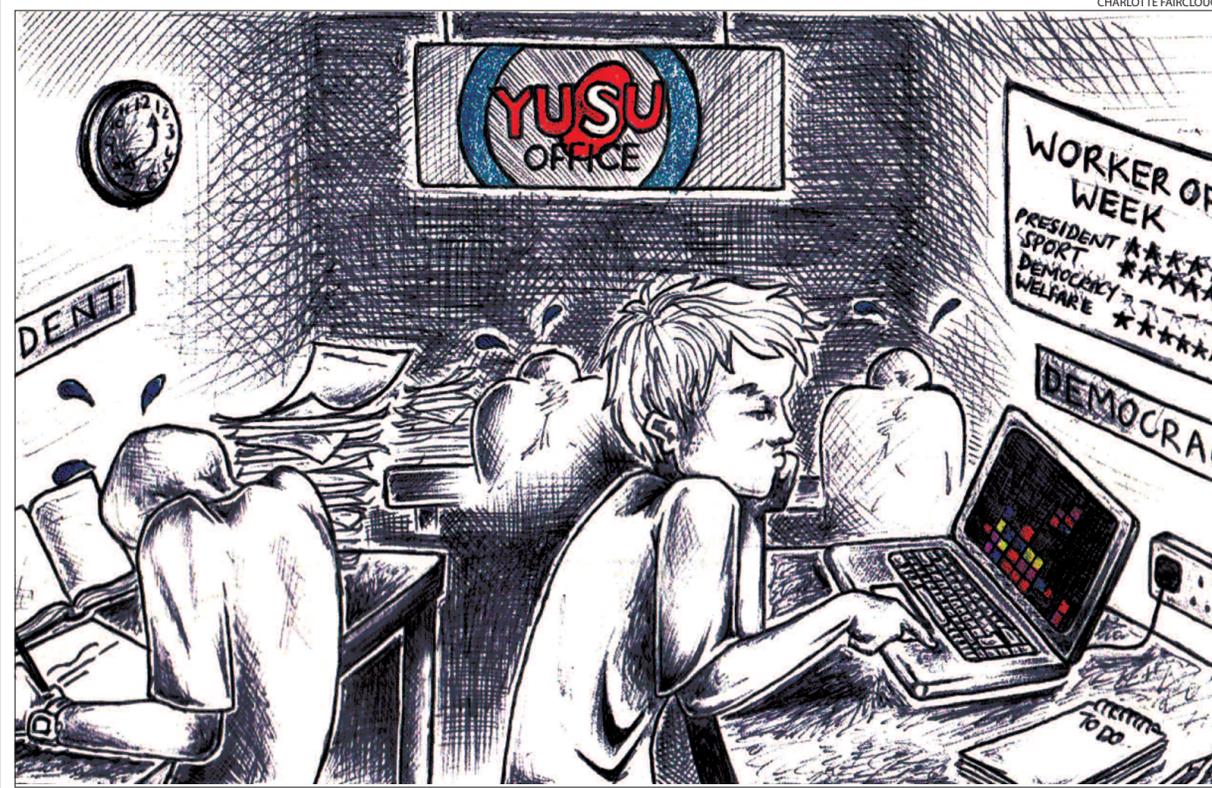
The women in Tokyo allowed themselves to be objectified by kissing for free shots, but often women rely on power dressing or layers of make-up to succeed in a job interview. In both cases women are exchanging their appearance for personal gain.

Appearance is important but they should not outshine the words on your CV. I want to know that I am employed based on my academic and applicability, not on my choice of high heels. As much as equal opportunities have helped women reach higher career paths they have also undermined women's natural ability. Women are relying on appearances and on their gender more than ever.

This system of judgement



HELEN TEZAPSIDIS



CHARLOTTE FAIRCLOUGH

Hannah Ellis-Petersen



Editor

YUSU Constitutional Review: just another layer of bureaucracy?

The Democracy and Services position is to be put to the student vote, but will countless reviews increase representation?

I hardly doubt the news that the Democracy and Services Officer is to be reviewed will cause any great ripples across campus; after all, it is a well acknowledged fact that most students are sadly disconnected from those hallowed YUSU offices.

Even I can't profess to know the intricate details of each Sabbatical position. Indeed, I have to confess, when asked to name the precise duties and provisions of the Democracy and Services role, I found I came strangely unstuck.

This is not to say that Dan Walker sits in his office each and every day twiddling his thumbs, while Tim and Co. bear most of the Sabbatical burden. However, it does reveal a lack of awareness of the roles and practices of YUSU that are at the route of their sometimes turbulent relationships with the student body.

Which is why, in some respects, I openly welcome this reform. In their preparedness to restructure their own roles, and base it around student opinion rather than the all too common financial incentives, it emphasises our Sabbatical Officers as our own representatives, rather than merely spindles in the University administrative wheel.

For once, we actually get a say, an opportunity to analyse the facts and the organisation of the Union for ourselves, and that can hardly be a bad thing.

This doesn't mean I am still without my own reservations. While on the surface, the Sabbatical

review may appear a noble policy for us all to applaud, I am still concerned it shows YUSU's increasing bureaucratisation.

After all, the main reason Walker's role is increasingly defunct is due to the growing number of administrative roles being created within our Student Union, to carry out the jobs we elected our various Officers to oversee.

While I am still undecided over whether I feel the Democracy and Services role is an integral and use-

"the review may appear a noble policy...I am still concerned it shows YUSU's increasing bureaucratisation"

ful position within the Union, I would be heavily opposed to the role being absorbed by non-elected officials, of whom the student had no choice in appointing.

As efficient and experienced as they maybe, they are not representative, and therefore not accountable to the student body as a whole. If YUSU are going to maintain the trust of the student body, they need to be seen to listen to, and to some extent abide by, majority student interest.

There is also the question of

whether the review is simply another layer of administration, a way to make more plans, and draw up more reports, without anything tangible or notably beneficial having been done for the students on campus.

As worthwhile as an overhaul of the Democracy and Services position is, it seems as if the Students' Union is fixated on making sure every position and by-law is outlined and reviewed in great deal, leaving very little time to really push for matters close to the student body's hearts.

I cannot help but think that if they spent less time reviewing documents, holed up in the YUSU towers, and more time pushing for radical change on campus, I would be writing this diatribe against the administration, sitting in a cafe in the new and swanky student union on Heslington East, complete with eight club complex and a bowling alley - perhaps.

Perhaps I am a little harsh, but I feel that this noticeable chasm that exists between YUSU and the student body needs to be rectified, though whether this new move by YUSU will help to completely absolve the problem is unlikely.

It is, however, a move in the right direction. It is vital that YUSU does not remain stuck in a rut, maintaining positions that have no place in a modernising Union and wasting both our student's time and precious money, but it cannot come at the expense of time and representation. The verdict, it seems, is still out.

Police exempt from justice



Henry Cowen

They maintain order and take control in the most unenviable of situations. Just look at the recent protests about higher education cuts; would you want to be in a situation where you have to patrol thousands of angry and embittered protestors, whilst also fending off the militant minority? The answer is probably no.

It is, therefore, very easy to undermine the police and probably quite fashionable to speak out against them. That being said, when mistakes are made the culprit in question should receive punishment appropriate to their misdemeanor, and there must be an end to this running trend allowing the police to get away with crimes that the everyday member of public would be punished for.

The actions of Sgt. Mark Andrews in July 2008 were shocking to say the least. If you haven't already seen the video then let me briefly describe what happened. Pamela Somerville had been taken into Melksham police station for refusing to take a breathalysers test and was, apparently, drunk and abusive. Andrews threw Somerville into a cell with such force that she was knocked out and would later require stitches to a deep cut above her left eye.

Andrews was originally imprisoned for six months for Actual Bodily Harm, a decision overturned yesterday by an appeal judge. Mr Justice Bean ruled that he believed Andrews had not intended to throw Somerville into the cell and that her injuries were caused by her letting go of the door frame on to which she was holding.

While the video is not completely clear-cut, it's quite obvious that Andrews manhandles Somerville with considerable force, and the image of her staggering to her feet while blood drips from her face is not a pleasant one. Regardless of intent, someone who is employed to keep the peace has caused considerable harm to a member of the public and has been completely cleared.

When we look back on the death of newspaper vendor Ian Tomlinson at the 2009 G20 protest, the idea of justice really does begin to get hazy. They say nobody is above the law and yet the situation surrounding Tomlinson's death exemplifies how police officers can escape punishment for their crimes. The police officer in question was not convicted due to disagreements between post-mortem reports.

Turn the situation around and imagine what would have happened if Pamela Somerville had knocked Sgt. Mark Andrews out and caused him to bleed profusely, one gets the impression she wouldn't have been looked upon so favourably by the law, and that is unacceptable.

MUSE.

BED - BED - IN
AT THE BLUECOAT AT THE BLUECOAT

“There are only so many DJs you can watch. It’s all good fun, but the age of the superclub is now over.” M10-11.

Muse.



M12



M22



M23

M6. Politician gone rogue?

Camilla Jenkins and Liv Evans talk to the controversial Speaker of the House of Commons.

M8. El Sistema

Sophie Walker investigates Venezuelan youth orchestra made up of musicians from the Caracas slums.

M10. Books and Babies

Young mothers are stereotypically used as an example of irresponsibility. Hannah Ellis-Petersen talks to four mothers who see it differently.

M12. In the sky with diamonds

30 years on from John Lennon's assassination, Mia de Graaf looks at his ever growing iconography

M14. Before the red curtain

Edward Grande talks to Alastair Whatley, founder and creative director of The Original Theatre Company, about the stepping stones to success

M16. Fashion

Vogue's unusual cover girl choices, where fur's at now, Kate Middleton's wedding options and a Men's special on Dolce&Gabbana's 20th anniversary.

M18. Arts

Yorkshire painting, scriptwriting debate, and the latest at the Tate alongside this week's In Pictures: erotic art.

M20. Music

The Vaccines, Abe Vigoda, and a gem of wisdom from Lil Wayne.

M22. Film

Film editors Michael Allard and Gareth Davies go to Leeds International Film Festival in this hitman-themed edition.

M23. Food and Drink.

Bettys Tea Buyers give away five secrets to making the perfect cup of tea, Will Wade warns against Cafe no. 8, and Henry Cowen gives you the pub round up.

Image Credits:

Cover. Rosa Nico de Graaf
M14. The Original Theatre Company

M18. Ashley Jackson



M10



M16



M18

Tom Killingbeck.

We students have always been revolting to our critics. We're stereotyped as soap-dodging creeps who gobble up taxpayer's money and use our ill-gotten loans to test the strength of our livers. We're known for keeping entire neighbourhoods up all night and apparently the only real skills we develop in our years of study seem to be centred around stealing traffic cones. Now, apparently, we're revolting in another way. Cries of 'vive la revolution' and 'die, Tory scum' can be heard around such anarchic squats as McQ's and B Henry's. The walkways of campus echo with the irate scribbling of flag-makers and sign-

builders. Dartboards in various common rooms are covered with David Cameron's freshly tattered visage, and the ominous stomping of protest feet resonates all the way to fair London town.

Hordes of us headed down South for the student equivalent of the Battle of Helm's Deep. Huddled up on musty buses, essay deadlines, nights out at Salvation and yoga classes were all put on hold as the capital was overrun. Ignoring the hypocrisy that almost every student I know, including my idiotic self, voted Lib Dem in the election and thereby basically nodded the Tories into power, the march seemed to be for a good cause; protesting the most exorbitant tuition fee rises in history.

The student forces seemed to be out on the march for myriad reasons. Like the Demon Headmaster, Nick Clegg transfixed me and many others with his fresh face and use of eye contact in debates - now his embittered voters bay for his blood. For many the march seemed to be a vengeance mission, as voters were incensed at being double-crossed by former cactus terrorist Clegg. Some people seemed to be heading down to punish the Tories for Thatcher, despite the fact that they weren't even born during the old bag's reign, forever saddled with a hereditary chip on their shoul-

der. Others, particularly those who could afford to be clad in the battle armour of Jack Wills, seemed to be there to get a lift down to London to do some Christmas shopping in Harrods. They were probably looking forward to the unsaturated job market of the future anyway. Hopefully, a few went down to express anger at the future studying prospects of their siblings and children as well.

The march began peacefully and successfully, with throats hoarse from shouting early on. Firing passions further was the thumping heartbeat that ignites zeal in any campus march - the Samba band. But it wasn't long before wide-eyed, hyperbolic reports came in; a bonfire had been hastily constructed outside Tory HQ and would-be guerrillas had begun smashing windows with relish. Not literally smashing them with actual relish like Piccalilli or Dill obviously, just really going for it.

I suppose those involved believed they were part of something akin to the activist violence of those hot, passionate May nights of Paris in 1968. They had romantic notions of popping daisies in guns at Vietnam protests, of anti-war skirmishes in Grosvenor Square. Sadly, it looked more like the understudies for the cast of *Skins* were having a wrap party in the street, and seemed about as radical as my aunt dancing to Rage Against The Machine at a wedding. It was also about as politically relevant as a fat kid in a cheap Che Guevara t-shirt doing a particularly long and drawn out fart.

Like so many modern

events, the storming of the Millbank tower turned into a photo opportunity for Facebook. A gang of gurning douches in hoodies filming their mates trash a couple of plates of glass and throw some eggs around with no real meaning, just action for a Youtube video. It's telling that there were more protesters gormlessly filming the violence than there were taking part in it. The kids waving flags from atop the building noticeably wore the exact same expressions as those desperately waving to the BBC cameras at the Reading Festival. As one photo circulated last week proved, there was at least one YUSU banner bashing about in the Tory hive, and it only took that banner to associate our whole institution with fraught attention-seeking and dribbling idiocy.

50,000 people turned up to the protest, a fantastic turnout which shows how much the cause means to the student population. I hope that this sense of activism and optimism isn't dampened by the events of the 10th and that future protests aren't hampered in the same way. That small minority using violence to get their point across seemed to confirm a dozen unfair student stereotypes, and managed to eradicate any pity the cause might have garnered. The entire event was quickly converted by the media into a posturing farce, an elaborate aggrandisement of the classic student trick of stealing traffic cones. Like stealing traffic cones, it was probably fun while it lasted and felt childishly like sticking it to 'The Man'. But in reality, it wasn't any more meaningful.



Champagne Charlie.

I've always had a soft spot for the Royal Family. I know that they are expensive, arguably unnecessary and at times outright bizarre, but then many of my favourite things (violet creams, cowboy boots etc) also fall into that category. Prince Phillip once asked a chubby youngster at a primary school opening what he wanted to be, and then burst out laughing, "Don't be ridiculous, you're FAR too fat to be an astronaut!". He is my favourite.

So while I am doodling birds Eskimo-kissing on my notes for a Cinderella seminar (this is embarrassingly true...), you may well think that you are above all this. Until I tell you that Kate and Wills' big day is predicted to boost the food and grocery industry by £360million. Ha. Bet you aren't scoffing into your £5 Asda coronation mug quite so much now. Can you believe that they're already out?....

The Telegraph article I got that statistic from also states that the wedding will boost the entire economy by £620m, tactfully envisaging that the nation will be rushing out to bulk buy such highbrow items as 'Champagne' and 'wine'. I'm amused to see they have also added in 'extra treats', which I take it is their way of factoring in the thousands of packets of 'yum-yum's' and cheese footballs which will surely be gracing the nations doilies too...

And if we're honest, it is the food we really care about. Google is full of people piffing on about who should design Kate's wedding dress and "what is the most divine flower in all of nature?", but what people really want to know, as always, is what they're having for tea.

Well, Charles and Diana's wedding menu was the peak of 80's sophistication - Brill in lobster sauce, chicken breasts garnished with lamb mousse, strawberries with clotted cream and a five-tiered Belgian monster cake. It's a far cry from a slice of flaccid quiche and some sweaty looking salad, and people are naturally predicting something equally decadent for next year's event.

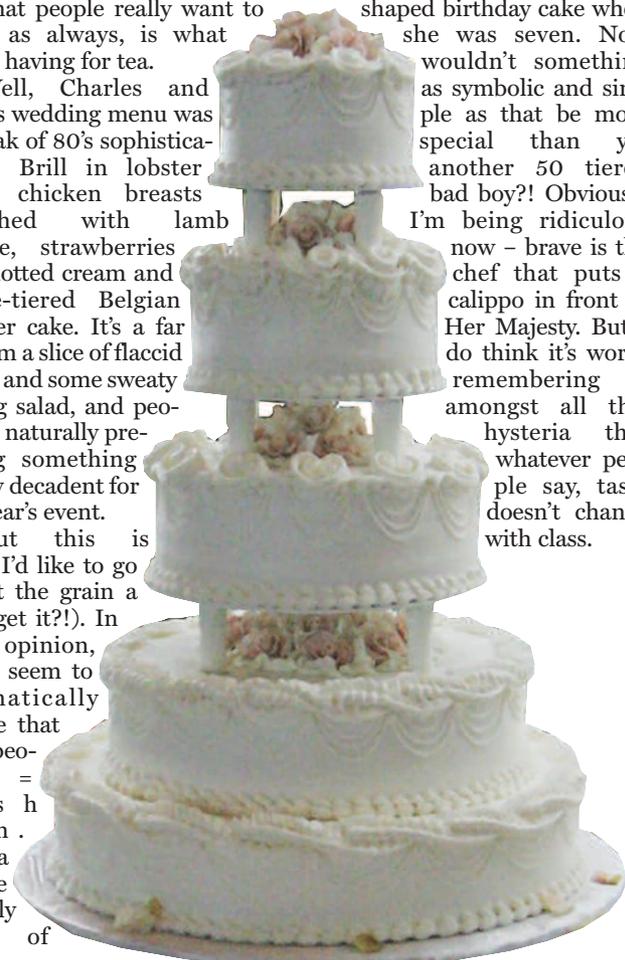
But this is where I'd like to go against the grain a little (get it?!). In my opinion, people seem to automatically assume that posh people = posh. Many a time the holy trinity of

food critics on the 'Great British Menu' have dispatched what look like perfectly tasty little snackettes with a single phrase of death and an artfully cocked eyebrow: "but would you be happy to serve this to Your Royal Highness, THE PRINCE OF WALES?".

Nowadays it seems that if food doesn't come in tiers, resemble a high level of tetris, or have some other kind of nerve-wracking structural complication, then it isn't fit for a Queen. The days when chefs are required to make a tower of soup as in *Black Books* ("where are the turrets?!"), seem worryingly close.

This is odd to me. For one thing the Royal Family, I believe, are more than accustomed to this kind of overly-grope food. It is their every day food, their fish finger buttie equivalent if you will. For another, the Royals have frequently let slip that they actually LIKE the normal, peasantry things that us mortals lust after too. The Queen asked for a Billie The Bass one Christmas and apparently eats 'tarte tatin with brandy crème' on December 24th - now if that isn't code for apple pie and custard I don't know what is...

So wouldn't it be refreshing if William and Kate just ask for what they actually want to eat this time round? Now if that's 'Chicken Liver Parfait, Oak Moss and Truffle Toast' a la Heston then so be it, but I bet you it isn't. And isn't all this 'pretending' where so many relationships go wrong from the start? One of Kate Middleton's earliest memories is apparently her bunny shaped birthday cake when she was seven. Now wouldn't something as symbolic and simple as that be more special than yet another 50 tiered bad boy?! Obviously I'm being ridiculous now - brave is the chef that puts a calippo in front of Her Majesty. But I do think it's worth remembering in amongst all this hysteria that whatever people say, taste doesn't change with class.



Ziggy's by Numbers.

70:30. The ratio of good to bad news you will receive. This varies from a relationship ending, someone puking on your shoes or the realisation that you just lost a political debate with a clown.

100%. The increase in bondage that a tactical chunder on the steps of the Ziggy's will cause. Relationship between friends, we mean. What did you think we were talking about?

33.3% The amount of *VISION* journalists who have genuinely considered applying to be a pole dancer after one too many job rejections. Don't judge - the standards are high. Didn't you see them at the dance off? Shame they didn't win.

65%. The likelihood that you will forget to remove your facepaint before your 9:15 seminar. Extra points for managing to blag that it's part of your presentation. Who says higher education doesn't teach you anything?

21 minutes. The amount of time you will be in Ziggy's before you to start to really believe the lyrics in the songs upstairs. Let's be honest, there really is no party like an S-Club party.

0 The number of people who've actually had sex in Ziggy's. Not for lack of trying but one too many sambucas and the motion in the ocean just makes you sea sick.



Camilla Jenkins Investigates: the Thanksgiving hype



right not to admit anything personal in such a public forum.

The weather outside is still grim, essay deadlines are still looming and it's entirely likely your email account is currently filling up with several things you really don't want to deal with. However, for that night, your Blackberry's upstairs and the people you love are safe, in one room, with you. And that is something to be thankful for, no matter your nationality.

So this Thursday, gather a group of people you don't hate and celebrate the fact you're in this together. You don't need turkey and, considering the state of some kitchens, Domino's pizza may be preferable. Either way, be generous with the booze and enjoy yourself.

It's a long stretch until the end of term, my friends, and this may be your last chance.



pilgrims were not a cheerful bunch, and it initially revolved around feasting, fasting and giving thanks to God.

However, the Americans are an ambitious bunch and not ones to rest on their laurels, especially if food is involved. They have since transformed this into a celebration of what is known as the Big Three - God, guns and football, said in a southern accent.

Imagine my surprise when, as a nice British girl, I was asked to a friend's house in deepest, darkest Maryland and invited to look at the gentlemen's gun collection. In his 'Liberty Chest'. Keen to advance my knowledge of semi-automatics beyond the AK-47 (which, according to a Marine friend of mine isn't a very good gun), I accepted.

A few minutes later, I was standing in his pitch black cinema room, wearing night vision goggles and holding a pretty serious killing machine. What was I thankful for at this point? The fact that it was unloaded.

I actually shot one of the guns, too. With a silencer. 'Cause I am that bad ass. A story for another time, I feel.

Who doesn't want to celebrate a day where the obligations to see extended family members are minimal and there is absolutely no reason to buy gifts? Decant a tin of cranberry sauce and you're all good. Post-meal naps are essential, as is mocking the idiots in the Macy's Day parade who let go of the giant inflatable characters and have to run along the streets of New York attempting to catch them.

Perhaps my favorite aspect of the whole shebang is when everyone, slightly tipsy - fine, drunk - goes around the table and says what they are thankful for. The Americans lap this stuff up, the British are embarrassed, and my French uncle generally refuses to participate. It's not his fault: as a lawyer, he is

Anyone who has seen 'The West Wing' knows that, every Thanksgiving, the President pardons a turkey. In fact, the President pardons two, just in case one doesn't quite make it through the holiday season, presumably after succumbing to a stress-induced illness after multiple photo-ops. It's hard work being the turkey of the Free World.

The pardoning doesn't take place for any particular reason, you see. Nor has the turkey committed any horrendous federal crime which must be dealt with in the Supreme Court. No, this is just one of the many

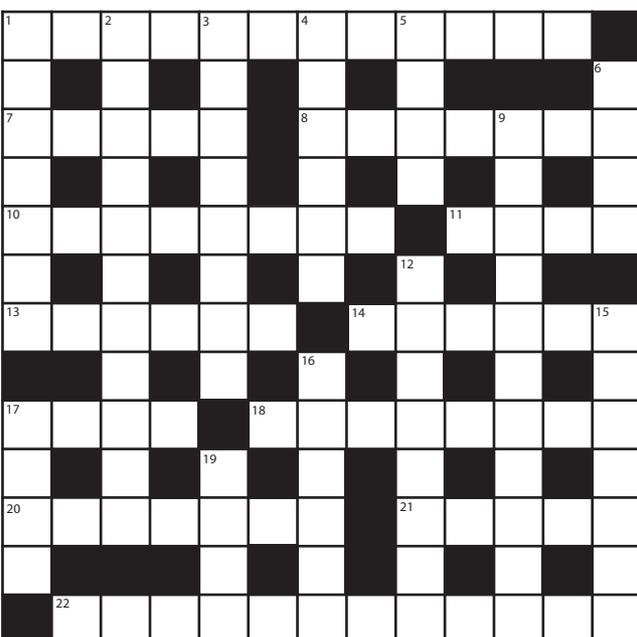
aspects surrounding the fourth Thursday in November (as decided by the U.S. Senate) which makes this day better than all others.

The ways in which Thanksgiving is celebrated have changed throughout the years. After our flighty ancestors searching for religious freedom foolishly arrived too late to plant any crops, the Indians (Native Americans to you, me and ACLU) generously donated enough food to last the winter. I imagine sat-navs weren't quite as developed in those days.

The following year, General Bradford declared it a day of celebration. However, the

"I love Thanksgiving; it's the only time in L.A. where you see real breasts on birds."

The Nouse Crossword



Across

- Neville Longbottom actor (7,5)
- Not one of these in a bungalow (5)
- Auden's first was 'W' (7)
- Satirises (8)

- Yellow pigment (4)
- Roman Harvest (6)
- Elizabeth ____ over England (6)
- Medieval name for entertainer (4)
- Validated a treaty (8)
- To burn (7)
- Predominantly Islamic people (5)
- Campaigners for women's rights (12)

Down

- Deltoids, pectorals, triceps, etc (7)
- Practitioner of magic(11)
- Prostitution (8)
- High-pitched neigh (6)
- One of the great lakes (4)
- German river (4)
- Unaware (11)
- Fragile (8)
- Group who enjoy other's pain (7)
- Photographer's best friend (6)
- The ____ stops with me (4)
- Baby elephant (4)

The Nouse Sudoku

			3			5
7		9	2			
	9	2		6		3
3				5	4	
		7			8	
		6	3			2
1		5			3	9
		4	7			1
8			1			



14, 42 or 365

However many days you're here, every day matters

Whether you join us on a two-week work experience, a six-week summer internship, or our year-long placement, every day you're here counts for a lot. Each of our placements is designed to show you what it's like to work here, and see how we can help you achieve your potential.

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Politician gone rogue?

Just when the media had him typecast as a political flipfopper, John Bercow gave up party affiliations. **Camilla Jenkins** and **Liv Evans** talk to the new Speaker of the House of Commons to find out whether he's as unpredictable as they say.



We have lost the Speaker of the House of Commons. The Right Honourable John Bercow MP has come to do a talk in York about the future of politics, in association with the Parliamentary Outreach programme, and we can't find him. How does one manage to lose one of the most controversial and outspoken Speakers Parliament has ever known?

John Bercow was elected Speaker in June of last year after the acrimonious resignation of Michael Martin over the expenses scandal. His election was not without controversy, as he received very little support from the members of his own former Party, the Conservatives and he has barely been out of the news since. Just within the last few weeks, he has hit the headlines for a variety of reasons: from the controversial decision to postpone the Oldham by-election to allow the disgraced former Labour MP Phil Woolas to mount a legal challenge, to an expenses scandal of his very own, over questionable use of private transport. He could perhaps be excused for wanting to avoid the media.

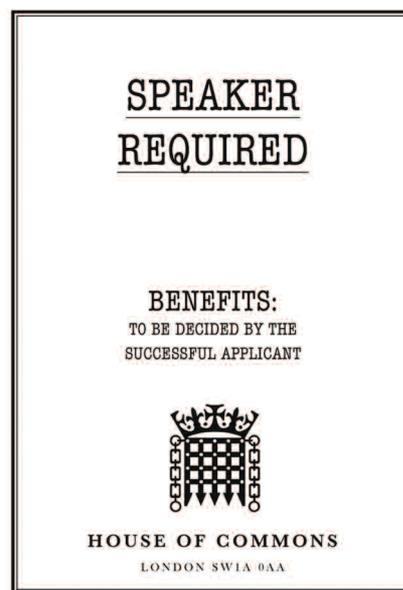
We catch a glimpse of him in the Berrick Saul building, but he is whisked away to the incongruously named 'Tree House.' We follow.

So far, not a good start. However, when we do finally get to meet him, he is welcoming and it is clear that he genuinely wants to talk to us, seeming interested in both of our university courses and respective plans for post-York life.

We are unnerved. His jokes about his height and enthusiasm for sandwiches are not congruent with the media's impression of him as a politi-

Above: The Pope makes his address to an audience of current members of both houses and members of the civil service.

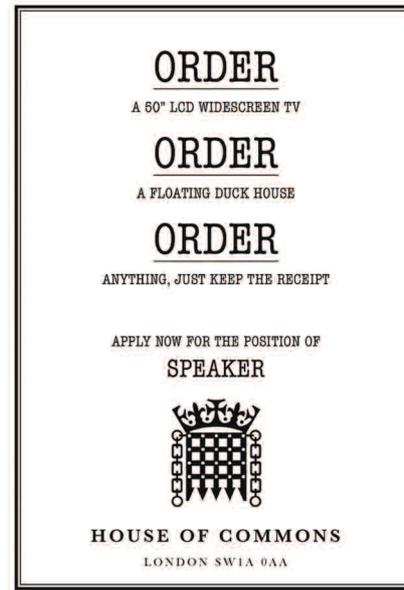
Right: Three posters published by *The Drum* magazine after Michael Martin's resignation.



cian gone rogue. He's clearly impressive but will he give us what we need?

We start off with a fairly standard opener: what first interested him in politics? "I was 15 in the winter of discontent in 1978/9. I thought it was a shocking state of affairs that public services weren't operating, and a mess was being made of it by the government. I went to school in Margaret Thatcher's constituency and I went to hear her in her 1979 election campaign and I was inspired by her speech." He proceeds to do an impression of Thatcher - which sounds rather like a subsequent impression of Tony Benn made in his speech later.

But it would be rare these days for someone of a similar age to join a political party. With membership numbers and voting percentages at an all-time low, it is thought that our generation is

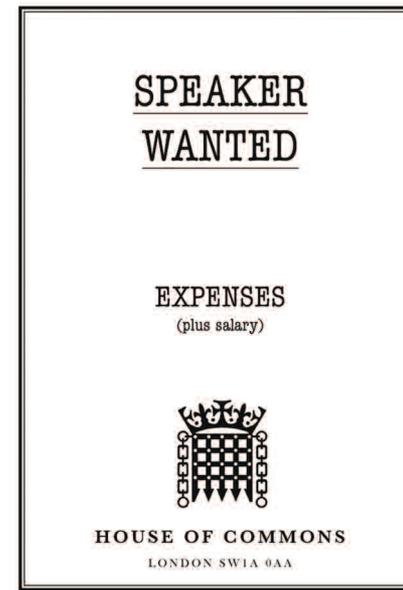


the most politically apathetic yet.

"I don't agree with that at all, and I would make a very sharp distinction between apathy and disengagement. Being disconnected from politics is not the same as having no interest. I think they're critical for the political process: they have strong views, clear ideas and would like to make a difference."

Perhaps political parties can be blamed for this disillusionment. "The political parties have got to find a way to reach out to young voters. All of them need to re-work the old model - doing things in exactly the same way as they've done for years won't work."

The role of the Speaker has always been a secretive one - until now. A unique job in British politics, it is their responsibility to chair debates in the Commons, determining which members may speak and maintaining order.



The Speaker is expected to give up all previous party affiliations after accepting the job. It used to be all pomp and circumstance, but as the first Speaker to abandon the traditional robes, he is firm in his belief that the nature of British politics is changing and needed to do so.

During his speech he gives after our interview, he frequently mentions what he calls "the three Rs: to renew, reform and reconnect". We get the impression that he is painfully aware of the intense damage caused to Parliament's reputation after the expenses scandal - "the system was a manifestation of our failure to make the transition from private club to public institution. These changes have been made independently and it is now more transparent and accountable."

When asked about his precedes-



Above:
Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow opens the first session of Youth Parliament at the House of Commons.

son's resignation, the Speaker becomes more sombre. "I think Michael was very much the sacrificial lamb for the expenses scandal. He would be the first one to say that he had made mistakes and he accepted that."

"In a sense, his resignation led to the rise in the belief that that the Speaker at the helm is a key figure and can be controversial. It increased the pressure on his successor to make a good fist of it. I feel very keenly a responsibility to do my job well."

It is clear from the outset that he is a practiced politician. Unlike most people, he offers clear, professional sound bites instead of the usual rambling explanations. His conversation is lucid and well-constructed and he is rather good at talking round the question. However, he is engaging to listen to and can be surprisingly forthright when you least expect it (and when, arguably, it is least relevant).

For example, when the question of the automatic right of bishops to sit in the House of Lords is raised, his response is as follows: "as I am now Speaker and this is hugely contentious, I of course hold no view, but when I was free to hold an opinion I was in favour of a wholly or predominantly elected second chamber. When we debated the subject of Lords reform, I spoke and made a particular point of saying in the modern age that the automatic inclusion of bishops was wrong. That was my view then and I leave it up to you to speculate if it might continue to be my private view." Perhaps this was his intention: to dangle scandal in front of the audience with little risk to his impartiality.

We choose to change the subject in our interview itself. He says he was attracted to the role of Speaker because

"I had become much less adversarial than I was and much less attracted to the ping-pong of party politics and much more focused on the work of Parliament."

Always the historian, he explains more: "in the past, the role of Speaker was a dangerous thing because you were accountable to the monarchy. People avoided it and would present disqualification speeches explaining why they weren't up to the job."

"Campaigning used to be seen as something that one just didn't do - 'terribly bad show, old boy'. It was an attitude left over from the British class system and old fashioned snobbery. I think that's bunkum ... it's a very important role and one that a lot of people want. I campaigned openly, was the first to publish a manifesto and I was the fortunate victor."

Does he think that politics can be too adversarial at the moment? "It can be. In some cases one has to accept that there is a very strong difference of opinion about something based on a real difference in principle values. But I do think that the public like adversarialism to be kept within reasonable limits. I'm not either supporting or opposing the coalition, but I think the idea that people work together and try to see each other's point of view is something that the public rather like."

But despite this rather conciliatory point of view, he is vitriolic in his opinion towards the BNP. "Thankfully, ---they have been for the most part warded off. I do believe unashamedly that the BNP is a fascist party. The major parties have got to ensure they've got credible policies to ward off the extreme right, but am I confident that we will continue to have a Parliament without a fascist presence? I am cau-

tiously optimistic."

Listening to him speak, you do genuinely get the feeling he was exasperated with the old political culture.

"MPs need to redouble their efforts within their constituencies ... otherwise we're just preaching to the converted."

He recently led a group of young people from across the country in a debate within the Chamber for a Youth Parliamentary session. It would seem that some MPs were less than thrilled about the idea of children sitting on their hallowed benches. One advised the Speaker that, at the very least, "they'll leave chewing gum all over the seats." The Speaker replied that he expected the children would behave far better than the majority of the opposition during PMQ's - this turned out to be correct.

Before the interview, it was made clear that we were not to ask about his views on politics. We test the strength of this direction with a question on tuition fees - would he have gone to university if he had had to pay £9,000? He responds saying it's not for him to comment on individual policy of the government and "it's very difficult to go back in time and imagine what one would have done". Our hearts sink.

Then something happens. A glint comes into the Speaker's eye. Our journalistic antennas are raised. There may be something more here.

"It would have been hugely challenging. I went to university on a full grant. It would have been excruciatingly painful for me to have to repay a very large sum of money and I'm not sure my father would have been happy for me to get in a massive amount of debt. It's not for me to express a view for the government's policy or against it. But I do think it's incredibly important to

take steps to ensure that access to university is determined by ability and commitment rather than ability to pay." We can practically see the Press Secretary twitching in alarm.

Despite the heightened rhetoric, it's hard not to warm to him. "The role of Speaker is a privilege. I had strong support in the Labour party, considerable in the Lib Dems, and some from Conservatives. I was considered by some to be too young and too liberal minded. All I can do in response to criticism is to try to concentrate on doing a good job."

Our hard journalist hearts begin to melt. It's hard not to be won over by such honesty, whether real or faked. And he even kept Brian Cantor, the Vice-Chancellor, waiting in order to answer our last few questions.

"The duties of politicians are first to country, then to constituency and only then to party. I need to stick to my convictions." His speech appeals to the patriot in each of us and it is this which confirms our belief that Parliament made the right decision in electing him Speaker. The expenses scandal only confirmed what has been known for a long time: British politics needs to change.

Although only a masochist would attempt to be part of his public relations team, one can't help but admire a man so skilled in the art of chaos while remaining firmly in control of himself. Subversive? Perhaps. But in this day and age, that is no bad thing for someone leading one of the most confrontational democratic chambers.

"My relationship with the whips was characterised by trust and understanding - I didn't trust them and they didn't understand me." We wouldn't trust him to fit the mould either. **M**



Songs from the slums

Sophie Walker investigates El Sistema, the social phenomenon that has made Venezuela rich in spirit.

It may be a cliché, but music moves. It moves us to change the way we think about something or someone, and even the way an entire community thinks about things. El Sistema in Venezuela has done exactly that; they've moved their own communities, they've moved me, and they're moving the rest of the world.

Richard Holloway, Chair of Sistema Scotland, is adamant that 'music can be an agent of social change', even though schemes to steer vulnerable members of society onto the right tracks are monstrously difficult and require long-term commitment, interest and funding. And El Sistema is the scheme that *has* worked and 'inspired us to aspire'. Jose Antonio Abreu is the man, or 'Maestro' to his devoted followers, behind the stunning success of FESNOJIV (Fundación del Estado para el Sistema Nacional de las Orquestas Juveniles e Infantiles de Venezuela). Legend has it, economist Abreu taught a music class to 12 schoolchildren in a dingy car park in the capital Caracas; the next day, there were 25 kids and now, 35 years later there are 300,000 throughout Venezuela receiving a free musical education.

Abreu began workshops and orchestral practices in Caracas, for the youngest children in the slums during the 70's. Edison Ruiz, a fully fledged double bassist from the system, explained at a Southbank Centre symposium that 'they are given an instrument, and attend an intensive rehearsal schedule of 17 hours a week at the 'nucleos' (music centres) in their community to become completely immersed in the system. Once at a cer-

tain high level, they can audition for the orchestra's at the top of the programme', yet even if they don't, on average children spend ten years within the system, and at least 85% leave with excellent music skills.

The entire way the younger generations are perceiving classical music is being revolutionised, but a topic of debate is whether this can happen anywhere that doesn't have a socialist inducing tradition of radical social action. The documentary made about El Sistema 'Tocar y Luchar' {To play and to fight} written and directed by Alberto Alvero Mendoza uses the motto to describe the politically and revolutionary poignancy of what moves the music. Indeed, the mere allowance by the Chavez government to allow non-censored media to investigate their National triumph.

'Poverty in the slums is not synonymous with our communities being spiritual and cultural wastelands.'

Julian Lloyd Webber, the world-renowned classical cellist, is the Chair of In Harmony, the Sistema inspired equivalent in the UK that started in 2009. I spoke to him recently, about his opinions on socialised change through music and the potential of his project here a few months before Darren Henley's Review on all music education in the UK is published early next year

determining the future of government funding for such projects. El Sistema has been entirely government funded since it began, surviving 10 government regime changes in a notoriously politically volatile country. In 2007 however, the Inter-American Development Bank loaned \$150 million to fund more regional centres across Venezuela due to its' renowned success. 'It is just not the case' he says, 'that the real reason the project isn't destined for such success is because kids here honestly care very little about classical music. If you catch them young enough, say 4 or 5, they won't know the difference.'

On visiting El Sistema in Caracas in August this year, I was keen to find out how the magic has been created and whether the media-portrayed image of it as a sort of fairytale is a misrepresentative one. However, on meeting the members of the Teresa Carreno Orchestra, who were the same age as me, I was overwhelmingly impressed. There was no sense in which the way they talked about their involvement in the programme humbled me, moreover they were just hard-working motivated kids, who happened to have lived in tough place and been part of a unique and remarkable programme. Ellia and Miguel had started at the same

Nucleo together at the age of 6, and were rehearsing for a trip to London in October this year for a week long residency at the Southbank Centre, who held symposiums and concerts in honour of the Venezuelan phenomenon. Their elder sister orchestra, the mighty 'Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra' held this residency first in 2007.

We were watching a collaborative

rehearsal between the Simon Bolivar and the Barenboim-Said Foundation's 'West-Eastern Divan Orchestra' who are exemplary in their uniting of Israeli and Palestinian young people through music. The energy in the concert venue was charged; pregnant with anticipation as to what each orchestra's conductor (Barenboim and Dudamel) would inspire the other with. And the results were no disappointment.

The first time I heard the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra on Radio 3 at the Proms in 2007 was spine-tingling. Danzon no. 2 by Arturo Marquez is one of the most evocatively South American pieces of music I have ever heard and just oozed the passion and solidarity felt by the players- they have all been through the system together since the beginning, eventually reaching the symphony orchestras as the pinnacle of the programme, sometimes even 20 years later. They are the best musicians, those most loyal to the programme, and to each other. But why its success has spiralled to magical heights has become a matter of international interest since their '07 debut, by sociologists, psychologists, educationalists, economists and of course musicians alike.

Perhaps a testament as to why similar schemes in Europe and America have been less successful, because the nurturing of a skill, and being part of a 'special team' is not as valued as means of social cohesion. Focus on individualistic success renders a hobby being for the personal development of the child, whether it is part of a team or not.

But as I discovered on my visit, it is more than simply a part of their lives.



The orchestra becomes their family and underestimating the power of this, for the children personally, and socially is perhaps where other schemes have failed.

The shocking circumstances of the slums are habitual for the young people in them- with levels of knife and gun crime soaring high due to increased gang rivalry and territorial disputes. It is this almost clichéd breaking down of socialised divides by being part of the orchestra that seems to be more powerful and protective than the music itself. Not to mention the incredible increases seen over the last twenty years in school attendance rates, dramatic decreases in drug-related abuse and petty criminality amongst the immediate community of those involved in El Sistema.

But there is another secret to its success, and that is the people who inspire such a vulnerable youth. They are what all teachers should be, role-models, or even, in the case of Dudamel, icons. Gustavo Dudamel was a protégée product of the system itself, himself a violinist and who has now gone on to become an internationally acclaimed conductor for the LA Philharmonic. However, he still returns three times a year to rehearse and conduct the Simon Bolivar, who anticipate each return with a months' specialised rehearsal.

Having had the privilege to sit in on one of these rehearsals, I experienced just how genuine the respect for their craft is. Abreu watched quietly with an almost grandfatherly beam as Dudamel cast his spell on his subjects, his curly crown of black curls bobbing with spirit. To say they were hanging on attentively to his every word and movement would be an understatement, yet with the ease and comfort of being conducted by their elder brother. Abreu, sitting in his custom chair beneath his winter jacket even though it was 39 Degrees outside, shakes a withered fist at the young soloist with the spirit of a Dad at a Yankee Game, but with a history far more profound.

It is moments like those that

expose the nurturing and love invested in the project, which compel you to understand it. Eric Booth, Senior adviser to the USA's version of El Sistema named 'YOLA' (Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles), wrote in his article 'El Sistema: Open Secrets' that it is 'not just a music program, it's a human program that addresses the question of 'how do we love the neediest child into wholeness?' He argues that the way El Sistema has done exactly that has 'revolutionised outreach programmes' by focussing on the access being available to everyone. Although, he says, therein lies Sistema's paradox in that it is the 'elite nurturing of the gifted yet it is open to everyone'.

Booth also attributes the success to the radical idea of 'changing the rules about who is allowed to teach' by placing the focus on Peer Instruction. A well known Sistema saying goes 'a child who knows four chords teaches a child who knows three his fourth'. Children in the nucleos also learn through ensemble playing much more than they do in private lessons, which invariably harbours the solidarity amongst them from a very early age.

The department of education pledged 332 million pounds for music education, out of which 3 million was for In Harmony's first three pilot projects in underprivileged areas of Lambeth, Norwich and Liverpool. Lloyd-Webber says the scheme has 'been fantastically well received and the results in the children have been revelatory. Numeracy has risen from 32% to 84% since its' implementation over a year ago'. But it's not just the classroom that has seen a difference. The wider community appear to have recognised that 'music is just the tool, the means to an end and the phrase we have liked for this project is that it is a "social project with music at its heart". Already the social rifts between the two schools on the Landsdowne Green Estate in Lambeth have already started to subside'.

I asked Julian what many sceptics have been suggesting, namely that the cultural and sociological differences

between 'poor' parts of the UK and the slums of Caracas deem the same scheme to require significant adaptation in order for it to work. Material values, the line of poverty, democratic stability and demography of the environment ought to dictate a very different approach to social change. But Julian disagrees. He argues that 'poverty in this case is not about material wealth, it's about spiritual nourishment for those who are vulnerable, and after

'poverty in the slums is not synonymous with our communities being spiritual and cultural wastelands.'

all he says 'the problems for young kids in any rough area aren't that radically different; they want protection and safety and love'. Brazilian's from favelas have visited the UK areas that are in need of help, and been shocked by what it means to be 'poor' in the UK, 'we are poor' they said, 'but poverty in the slums is not synonymous with our communities being spiritual and cultural wastelands.' And therein lies the problem; underprivileged kids may have blackberrys but their communities seem to just completely lack spirit. Of course, this is fairly unsurprising given that many have not 'grown organically from the roots, rather, they are full of families who have been moved there, and are a mix of races, religions and cultures' says Webber.

Booth has also had to contend with this issue that society in the US is exponentially more complex and diverse, and where children have more distractions. Yet, he, and Webber remain committed to the belief that music, discipline and rigour within the context of friendship are truly powerful enough to transcend cultural and social differences. In any case, one could argue there is enough of a cultural divide between Liverpool and Lambeth. Lloyd-Webber has always had faith in the simplicity of it, and in

December 2009 wrote in an article for the Telegraph that the success is down to its' simplicity, 'music knows no boundaries of language, race or background. Music has greater scope than the individual, and that ought to be exploited to its best potential. It's a way of bringing people together that's not like other programmes which use sport- its non-competitive'.

Lloyd Webber is realistic about the future of In Harmony though. 'There is no clear definition as to where the project's going and where people want us to go. It needs a full-time leader and private funding but it really deserves such sustained commitment because it is doing more than just helping music, it's transforming communities'. The government are clearly interested in Music education 'which is why they've commissioned the Henley Review and I hope that, like the Venezuelans we can have a system that our government and country can be proud of'. However, 'in the current climate we cannot be reliant on the government to secure the future for the children of this generation'.

In June 2008 Labour Government had in fact pledged to ensure all primary pupils in England had the chance to learn a musical instrument for at least a year by 2011. Sweeping, unrealistic statements that lack commitment and funding only expose the government's fickle promises rather than their support. They may be slightly keener to pay attention to a project that would cost a lot less to invest in than the amount of money paid annually by the government for truancy, policing for petty crime and drug rehabilitation.

Of course, it is 35 years since the fruits of Abreu's genius and 3 million children's hard work over the generations has started to pay off on a National scale. In Harmony and YOLA have only just begun their journeys, but even if they are funded well, they have still got a lot to live up to. El Sistema have shed light on what is possible as a social phenomenon and continue to do so, moving the world with their music as they go. M

**Above:
The Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela in rehearsal with their conductor, Gustavo Dudamel.**

Books and Babies

Teenage pregnancy is commonly dismissed as irresponsible. **Hannah Ellis-Petersen** examines the reality behind the stereotype.



Rosie* sits across the table from me, reserved and softly spoken, leaning on her cognitive neuroscience textbook. She is indistinguishable from the many students sitting around us, and yet, at 23, she is one of numerous student parents here at York, balancing life as a mother of a five-year-old child with completing a degree in psychology.

"My pregnancy was accidental," she tells me. "I fell pregnant when I was 18 - I was halfway through my A Levels."

The issue of teenage pregnancy is certainly a controversial one. For over 20 years, governments have spent millions of pounds creating policies to "combat the issue" of young girls falling pregnant, but Britain still has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Europe. It is held up as archetypal evidence for the 'toxic' effect of poverty in our society and a drain on our increasingly vulnerable welfare state.

And yet, is there really such thing as a 'stereotypical' teenage mother as we have all convinced ourselves exists in society? Talking to four different teenage mothers, it is difficult to associate these hard-working and driven women with the lazy and irresponsible image of pregnant teenagers bran-

dished about by the media.

"I always knew I wanted to finish my A Levels and carry on my education," continues Rosie. "I had Sarah*, my daughter, in February 2006, and I originally went straight back to college in September of that year." However, she admits that it wasn't the easiest transition to make. "I found that even though I was doing very well in my classes, emotionally things weren't quite right really, so I decided to take some time out. It might sound silly, but I needed some time to get my head around having a child."

Amy Tellison, who was 19 when she fell pregnant, has a similar tale to tell. Now a third year studying Accounting, Business Finance and Management, she described how difficult life was once people knew she was pregnant.

"I got no support from my friends at the time," she said. "Most of them were at uni and they just told me I was throwing my life away. My parents were not happy at all either, because my daughter's father was a real druggie and not a good person at all. He treated me really badly."

"I started York when she was about to turn two. I knew that I wanted to do it to make her proud of me. Before I had a baby, I had never

Left: What our generation hopes to achieve?

Above: the City of London reflected in the Gherkin

planned to go to university. In fact, I had chosen not to. I didn't have any ambitions before I had my daughter, Phoebe."

Her future aim is to own her own business, and she is currently considering going into the healthcare and education sector; hardly the unambitious drain on the welfare state that the stereotype dictates.

Interestingly, I find a similar motivation in Hannah*, who had Chloe when she was just 16.

"It was a planned pregnancy," she tells me defiantly. "I never wanted to be an older parent, and you can live life

"It was my GP's view that one sort of girl would have the baby, and another sort of girl, who wants to do things with her life, would have an abortion"

how you choose, can't you?" Sitting in her confident presence, I find it difficult to disagree.

"I finished school at 16, so when Chloe* was four months old I started work at Marks and Spencer, and ended

up working there for two years.

"I'd never really thought about going to university. Sure Start just shoved me straight into work, but I would have preferred someone when I was 16 to go 'actually why don't you go to college?' It was the friends I hung around with who suggested it, so I just figured I might as well."

So is it too much to say that having a baby was the making of her? "If I hadn't had Chloe, I don't know what I would be doing with my life," she confesses openly. "Having a baby has definitely made me think about how I want to provide for my daughter, and I never want her to go without, which is why I'm working and doing a placement with my degree."

The maturity of a mother in someone still so young is quite startling, especially in someone only a few years older than myself. Even though I'd set out to find out what lay behind the teenage mother stereotype, the self-assuredness of all of these women drew my admiration. Indeed, I was quickly coming to realise that these teenage mothers, who I had originally envisioned as living in their own separate sphere, were living just as much, if not more, driven and self-dependent lives than most people their age.

Nowhere was this more evident

than with Rebecca Lambell, 21, who speaks animatedly about her dedication to creating the best life for her three-year-old daughter Yasmin.

She admits that she had never seen herself as someone who would have a baby young, and describes her discovery that she had fallen pregnant as “a bit of a shocker, really.”

“I didn’t get much support from my family at all, as they wanted me to think of my future and the things I would have to give up, so I had to do it on my own for quite a bit.

“I worked up until she was due, and went back to work quite soon after she was born, cooking in a care home. When I first got pregnant my mind was all in a mess, but I think it is important for Yasmin that she has a role model who has actually done something other than work in a kitchen. I don’t think that is anything to look up to, and I want her to be proud of me. I’m doing a degree with the Open University in Criminology and Psychology as well as my job, so she can see that I am properly trying to achieve something.”

And her future plans? “I want to be a probation officer,” she tells me. “I think having a baby has made me driven, because I’ve got someone depending on me now, and even though it has been quite hard, it has definitely been a positive for me because I messed around a lot in my teens.”

Nonetheless, despite all these women exhibiting a drive and motivation lacking in most people their age, I was surprised how much they had all been affected by the prejudice and judgement society placed on them as teenage mothers, illustrating how alarmingly deep such perceptions run throughout all sectors of society.

“The prejudice of society really did affect me when I became heavily pregnant, and as I was quite young I really struggled to even go outside.” Rebecca tells me, disarmingly honest. “I became really quite upset about it. I think I was more paranoid than anything that people were looking at me and judging me. It was only once Yasmin was born that I started to go out for her.”

It leaves you to wonder how today’s society can show so much intolerance towards teenage mothers in a way that would be unacceptable if it were gender or racially motivated. In society’s eyes they become defined by the fact that they are a ‘pregnant teenager’, and nothing else seems to count. Whatever your views on having a baby young, this appears to be unjustifiable when you meet such educated and driven women. The stereotype may ring true for some young mothers, but certainly not for all.

Rachel witnessed this small-mindedness first hand, even with her doctor. “It was even my GP’s view that one sort of girl would have the baby, and another sort of girl, who wants to go to university or do things with her life, would have an abortion. It is very difficult to escape the stereotype.”

And life at university? “When I first started York, it was quite awkward. Even though I’m not that much older, when I was talking to people when I first started, they were a bit shocked and often they didn’t want to get to know me once they knew I had a child.

“I’ve made some good friends here, but they all tend to be slightly older, those who’ve done a couple of years out or something. It is definitely harder getting to know people in more depth.”

Amy related a similar experience once starting York. “When I first started York I was 21, and everyone else on the course was 18, so when they heard me saying that I had a child who was two, I could see their faces drop. A few of them just have not spoken to me ever again, since I told them I had a child, and after three years they still don’t talk to me. They were just quite snobby about it, really.”

And it is not just difficulties from their peers that these women have encountered.



Hannah tells me of her difficulties in even sorting out basic family housing for her and Chloe when she arrived in York.

“Family and student housing at the university is really bad. They have provided me with nothing whatsoever - the minimum possible basically,” she says, showing some infuriation for the first time.

“There was only one lady who helped me out and she was only an advisor. There should be more of them to help people out with family housing. You get housing benefit when you have a child, which comes through automatically, if you ask for it or not, but lots of the housing associations don’t accept it, so if you don’t get campus accommodation, it is really difficult to get housing in the private sector. I had to meet my landlord first and practically beg her. I was on the waiting list for a year for family accommodation, so it is really difficult.”

It is interesting to consider why such hostility and deep rooted stereotypes exist even in institutions such as York. Is it evidence of a post-feminist society scorning those who chose to ‘give up’ their lives and careers before they’ve even properly begun? Or is it just a remnant of our classist society, viewing all pregnant teenagers as ignorant women just “doing it to get a council house”?

I certainly struggle to see how teenage pregnancy is considered the soft option. After all, these are some of the most hard-working women I’ve come across. “From Phoebe being six months old, I worked part-time, and then during my first term at university as well, while looking after my daughter and doing my degree. I was trying to cram it all in,” says Amy.

Rebecca’s life is similarly hectic. “It is hard balancing it all, and it can be stressful, but I’m just used to it now, and I’ve got into a routine.”

While it would be easy to assume that these women hold some disappointment for the ways their lives have panned out, missing out on the carefree days of university, I am instead struck by their universal lack of regret.

“There is nothing I would really change about how my life has gone, and if I could go back, I would still have chosen to have Sarah. Even though it’s been quite hard, I’m still doing what I want to do,” says Rosie.

Amy takes a similar tone. “I wouldn’t change anything really. I would probably change who Phoebe’s father was, but apart from that I think I’ve got everything out of the university experience I wanted.”

And, finally, I want to know how being a teenage mother has changed them? How do they now perceive other teenage mothers?

“I’m still the same person that I was before; I have just matured quite a bit more than I would have done,” says Rosie. “I’m a lot more open-minded and see things from a wider perspective. Sometimes, when I do see a young mother with three or four screaming children on the bus screaming, in the past I would have judged them or seen them as the typical stereotype. But now I look at them and admire them, and think ‘I don’t know how she does it’. It has opened my mind to differences, and how hard it is for other people.”

Amy smiles when I ask her. “If I’m honest, my life and perspective didn’t change that much after I got pregnant. It was my friends and parents who changed their minds. My friends, who had all been really down on the idea of me having a baby, as soon as she arrived said how proud they were of me, and my parents respect me for everything I’ve done. They never think about me as a young parent anymore.

“I think there is a stereotype for young teenage mothers, but I don’t think a lot of them actually live up to it. Most young mums are doing similar things to me - working or going to university - and I don’t think there are that many typical teenage mums around anymore. Not that I know of anyway.” M

In the sky with diamonds

Mia de Graaf talks to the fans, followers, and impersonators of Liverpool's lost star marking the 30th anniversary of his death.

Thursday 9th December marks the 30th anniversary of John Lennon's death. The singer's infamous assassination by Mark Chapman in New York made a sudden and irreparable impression on society globally, equated to that of JFK. Three decades on, high profile events are being held worldwide to commemorate the musician and peace activist, such as replicating the weeklong 'Bed-In' hosted by John Lennon and Yoko Ono, and the 30th Annual John Lennon Tribute concert.

However, the variety and magnitude of tributes being performed on this particular anniversary are not so out of the ordinary. While enthusiasm is rife as people 'come together' from all over in the most creative of ways, this isn't a one-off rarity. Alongside regular exhibitions and tribute performances in his native UK, and later home, New York, there are commemorative monuments in Iceland, Cuba, and numerous other countries John Lennon they commemorate him all the time: it is not something that dies down between events.

For many, he died too soon. For some, they overcome this grief through full immersion into the character of John Lennon. One such fan is American born and based Tim Biancalana, a professional John Lennon tribute act.

"John Lennon has been a hero to me ever since my older brother introduced me to the Beatles' music, when I was a small child. I actually wanted to portray Lennon as early as 5 years old." He is now an expert on Lennon's life and character, and when describing his iconography, talks as if recalling an old friend. "He was a trendsetter in all aspects, although he might be modest about it, if asked. Lennon created and was The Beatles. He was always pushing for new ideas: 'Make me voice sound like a Tibetan Monk', 'Let's do a whole song backwards.' Through his experimentation with sound, Lennon created 'loops' or 'samples', which were then extremely laborious, with the primitive recording technology of the '60s. Today it is commonplace to hear these inventions used quite arbitrarily by the pop stars who have no real message other than "buy my record". But

John did it with purposefulness."

"I have studied Lennon's character in all its aspects. The role isn't too much of a stretch in that I have very similar ideas about politics, social issues and art. I even have naturally a similar way of mixing up words, jabberwocky-style, and a punny sense of humor. In school, as the class clown, I was slapped-up numerous times from teachers who "couldn't see the joke"! Just as John was, listening intently to interviews and practicing Beatles music countless hours for concerts has allowed me to absorb Lennon's spirit in a deep way.

"He made cultural contributions of which many people are unaware, in poetry, music-video, film, fashion, religion, sexuality, and more. With the other Beatles, he brought Eastern philosophies, practices, and music to the west. This even includes yoga and meditation. The very first worldwide musical telecast happened to be the Beatles performing 'All You Need is Love'. This began the tradition of benefit concerts. We all have a lot to be grateful for, on account of his individualism and innovation.

"Above all, Lennon, who actually owned up to his violent past, and in part because of it, was a man who really stood for peace and got generations to resist powerful bullies. Some of his songs have become like religious anthems in England, the US, and all over the world: 'Imagine', 'Gimme Some Truth', 'Give Peace a Chance' and others are still performed as if they were brand new, still full of meaning. And in a way, they are fresh discoveries, to the next generation!"

Biancalana's extensive knowledge on the life of Lennon is a prime example of the Beatles following that feel such a strong affinity with the tragic event of December 8th 1980.

"Almost every major city in America has some kind of John Lennon commemoration for both his birthday and his death. Expect New York City to be the biggest, with crowds literally in the thousands. New Yorkers really adore John and think of him as their own.

"On October 9th, I was in New York performing at Lennon's 70th Birthday Celebration, and got some

amazing reactions. I always do in The City. People do double-takes, they point and gape incredulously, they nudge their friends and grin and then come over to get a picture and an autograph. Going down the street, I'll hear, 'Hey John, how are ya?' The older ladies politely try not to look like they're staring. I'm curious whether I'll get the same reaction in London and Liverpool in my upcoming trip to England!"

"Commemorating John's death is a conundrum, it's still quite a sad event. Yet I'm happy to see so many people coming together to remember a man who, like Gandhi, stood for peace, only through music and art."

"I was a kid, doing a drawing at the time, listening to the Beatles' White Album. My mother came in very upset and called me to the television set. She told me, "They just said that John Lennon has been shot." I tried to believe it was some joke, and then that it was just a wound he would recover from. I was devastated when they said he didn't even survive the trip to the hospital. On top of this, at that very moment, the song playing was 'Happiness is a Warm Gun'. I couldn't handle it, I went into total despair."

Here, however, locals of the Beatles-cluttered hometown, Liverpool, can at times feel the fascination and obsession too heavy. As one of the main sources of the city's income, it does somewhat appear to contradict Lennon's peaceful purpose. At the replica of John Lennon and Yoko Ono's Bed-In as part of Liverpool's two month long John Lennon Tribute Season, I approach three people paying a loving and heartfelt tribute to Lennon's peace protest, and, ironically they guffaw at my naive enquiry into the whereabouts of other Beatles memorials. "This city lives off the Beatles," one says as he reels off the countless sites, performances, galleries and bars you can attend to fit the bill.

Try as they may, however, you cannot escape the idolized figure Lennon holds to people today, and the tragic figure he held to our parents. Lennon has been built into a timeless icon rather than simply a commemorated historical figure, despite the fact that his lifetime precedes our own.

Talking to Andrew Christopher, a York student in 1980, describes: "it sounds like such a cliché remembering where you were when it happened, like when Diana died, but it really is one of those things. I remember I was in Wentworth B Block (it was an undergraduate college at the time) and I remember the year was 1980 because he lived from 1940 to 1980, it seemed so perfect, just 40 years."

Amongst the general public now, you cannot detect any element of boredom about the topic. Taking part in a recent tribute held the Bluecoat Art Gallery, Brad Rowbotham, 22, describes how the protest of 1969 updates to today:

"The whole essence of the 1969 protest I thought was quite relevant to today, to what's going on with Afghanistan at the moment so I wanted to try and find an interesting way to portray that in something id be quite interested in. originally I wanted to write all of the names of the soldiers who had died, but in the bluecoat programme it was ld be for p for today and I thought of drawing poppies, and I thought what a lovely idea it would be to have people come in and contribute as well.

"It's fantastic, artists from all different styles, all different art forms come down to take part. I've had a real-

ly great reaction. What I really wanted to do was to bring Afghanistan back into public interest as much as I could, and it's doing that; it's opening up discussion, which is the main thing, which fits in again with what John and Yoko did in '69, so I thought it was a really great tribute.

"The bed in protest was something that was revolutionary. It's really got a timelessness to it, and the amount of people we've had come down and take part in it now really shows what an effect they had".

At the 30th anniversary of John Lennon's death it is clear that there is no danger of us letting go of him any time soon. And with last year's Nowhere Boy in the cinemas, and now the recent release of the Beatles on

What we said then..

Nouse reports in Spring Term 1981:

"The murder of John Lennon, a pop singer, in New York on December 9th has been compared to the assassination of a President. Mark Chapman's shots made such an impact that they momentarily stunned men and women, young and old, all over the world. Perhaps we will always remember where we were, what we were doing, and how we heard the news of his death. But why?"

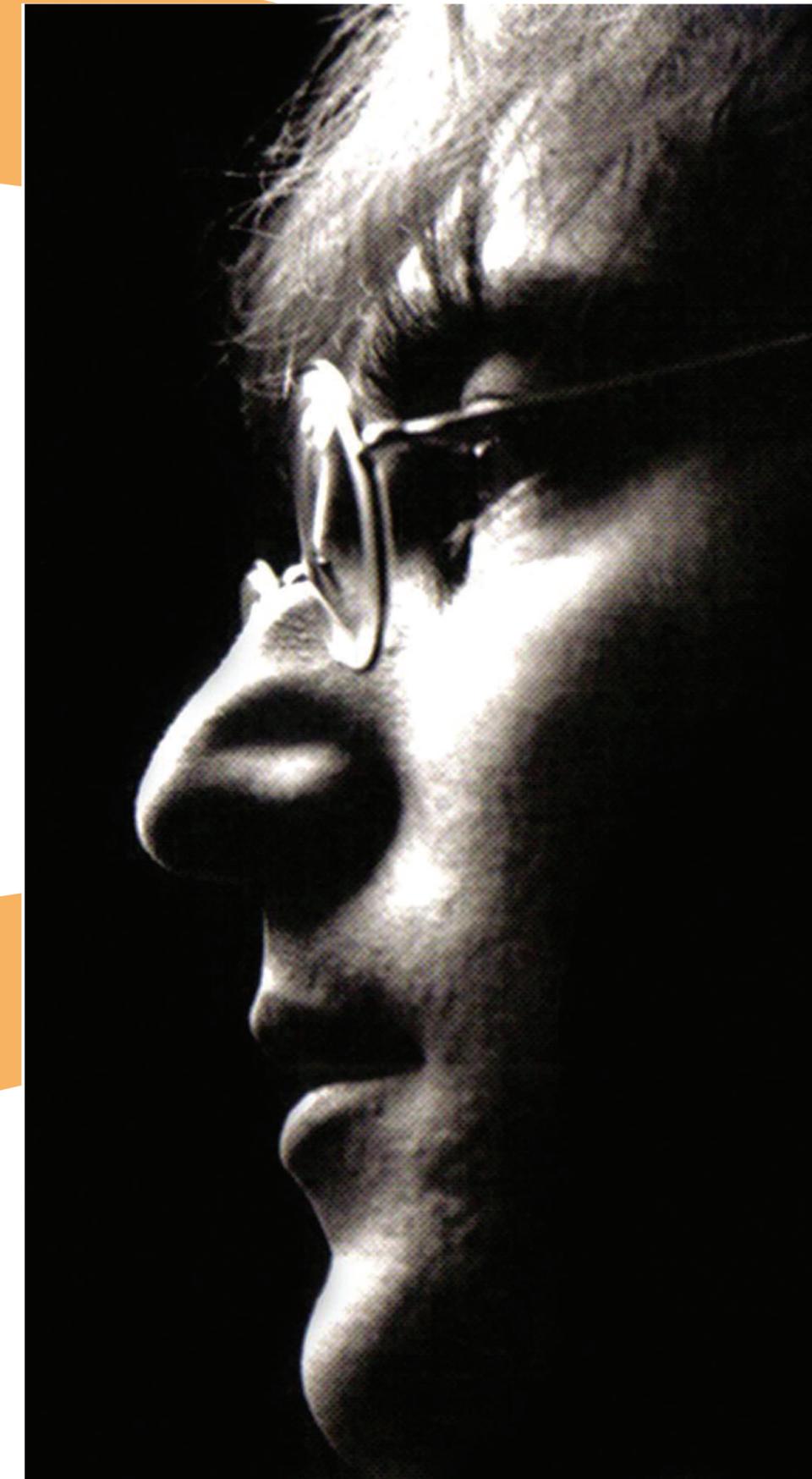
John Lennon provided us with so much entertainment, but also so much exasperation, and his death, after his lengthy domestic retreat, made us think about him for the first time in years. But it recalled a certain age of optimism and excitement - the swinging sixties when England and especially Liverpool was the place to be.

Memories slowly returned, drifting in at the end of 1980. What had Lennon done now? Had he been expelled from school, made a record or reaching number one? Had he collected his MBE from the Queen and smoked dope in a Palace lavatory? Had he sent back his MBE with a rude letter, or been photographed in a canvas bag with a Japanese artist to give peace a chance? Or had he been arrested again? No - this time he had been shot dead - murdered - to end a legend.

The Lennon record, past and present, disappeared from the shops. Was this the stereotyped morbid response only to be expected from a public high on tragedy? No - it was the only kind of tribute that people could pay; and what a tribute: only last week three separate Lennon singles were included in the top five chart placings.

The Beatles seemed so exciting and new because they were ordinary lads. They crossed previously sacred class lines and brought with them a style of flip humour which infected all levels of society. But Lennon himself went further: his childhood sorrows evoked arrogance, and a denial of compromise or pretence, even to protect the Beatles' clean image. And what the public saw at first as cheeky with, then harshness and later s just weirdness, was in fact hiding an unquenchable enthusiasm and a great originality of mind - Lennon's stunning poetic visions and inspirations have yet to be transcended."

-AFC



Behind the red curtain

Despite the presence of so many big personalities, as is inevitable in the acting world, he and the cast seem to live a collective existence. "We've just had breakfast together; last night we got back and had a big dinner together". A constant, familial life.

This existence, however, comes at a price. "We have a lot of big personalities, and, as director, you are the person they come to if they have problems or issues, sometimes it can feel like it's one thing after another after another," he explains, unable to hide a fatigue that seems to lace his otherwise youthful voice. Performance, especially at a professional and hugely intense level, must be an emotionally exhausting and draining experience; there is little surprise that emotions can run extremely high.

Yet the life on the road isn't always a shared one, something Whatley found when touring *The Importance of Being Oscar* earlier this year. A monologue performance based on the life and works of the illustrious Oscar Wilde, which he directed and starred in, left Whatley living, working and relaxing alone. Though there were no personality-politics to contend with and he only had to "weigh up my own problems", he acknowledges that "the downside was that I was pretty lonely at times".

However, in the same way that Oscar Wilde can only be presumed to have dealt with the situation, Whatley describes his finding comfort and company in the audience "When you're acting, you're sharing it with the audience. It can make up for being alone in other ways."

But, talking to Whatley, you realise that there is more to his art and lifestyle than his interaction with colleagues or even the audience. In a moment it becomes apparent that Oscar Wilde is one of Whatley's life passions. The character becomes one's life, one's work, one's respite.

"In the six months I took learning the script I got totally obsessed with it. It's a joy to ever return to read or talk about him".

For Whatley, Wilde embodied the theatrical and aesthetic world of the fin-de-siecle. "He ended up defining a period of history. He was the first celebrity in modern terms." Wilde's own conception of fate also seems to have captivated Whatley who talks with such passion about how Wilde felt he had to pay for the hedonistic life he had led. "He saw it coming, and he embraced it. He had every option to run away but didn't."

Whatley's idolisation of Wilde's vivacity and energy seems to be one of the many facets that keep the creative director so motivated through the tougher days of the tour.

He finishes his quasi-elegy by asserting emphatically "he can't be excused for what he did, but he WAS a genius".

Regarding the direction he wishes to take the Original Theatre Company in the current dramatic world, Whatley does seem uncharacteristically uncertain. The presence of Simon Ward and Susan Penhaligon in the cast of *The Madness of King George III*, both ex-film and West End stars have attracted greater audiences, allowing bigger venues and more widespread attention. Indeed, the production was reviewed with three stars in *The Times* last month.

This commercial casting, heightening his own name and credentials undoubtedly has huge appeal. "They help sell the show, they bring great experience into the rehearsals and also great talent. Simon's performance is wonderful, sometimes it just goes beyond words," he admits, conscious of the fact that their presence will be doing him a great favour. They take him closer to the inner-ring of the dramatic world, yet it appears they may hamper the way in which he would like to direct.

Despite the allure, the financial gains and the publicity, Whatley cannot completely endorse this method of casting and production. The presence of such big names can impede the rehearsal process, and arguably force him to change his procedures and way of working. Minor faults can be created within the cast, as the likes of Ward and Penhaligon "bring their own way of working". Whatley talks of how he tries to ensure the whole cast is on an equal footing, working very much as an ensemble but that "the problem you can face is, they're both getting paid more, they're marketing more" - Ward and Penhaligon both had interviews on the same day - "an imbalance is created".

Despite the seemingly huge success that the production has been, he does admit that "the fact they're getting paid more does create a barrier".

"Having said that, I wouldn't change it for the world."

The experience has caused questions to arise about his proposed plans for the future though: "Do you embrace this commercial element, especially with the cuts; do you embrace the big characters and sacrifice working methods, or go down the ensemble route?" he questions.

It is apparent that nowadays finance and theatre are inextricably linked, and while upholding the aim of bringing high-quality drama to theatres across the UK, any director cannot ignore fiscal issues. Whatley believes this has begun to impede the creative progress of England's dramatic scene.

When questioned about the invasive arts cuts, he replies how "for me to try and search for and put on the next big script is next to impossible. The next Jez



Edward Grande talks to Alastair Whatley, Creative Director of the Original Theatre Company, about his life in a touring theatre.

Literary tradition has long involved an element of travel, from the stimulus of the *Canterbury Tales* to the passion of Jack Kerouac. Theatre today is no exception. Alastair Whatley, 24, founder and creative director of the Original Theatre Company, is all too aware of this fact. Working in the semi-professional theatre world he is a man constantly travelling between city theatres, touring different plays, operating in the dramatic niche just one small step from the West End.

Currently touring with Alan Bennett's *The Madness of King George III*, starring Simon Ward (All Creatures Great and Small) in the title role, he concedes that touring a play "is difficult, but always exciting." This dichotomy arises through the contrast of the personal and logistical glitches: the sheer exhilaration of watching a play unfold against the technical and financial responsibilities that come with it.

The process of touring; relentlessly living, working and relaxing

together, is a tough one to comprehend. His description of this communal aspect comes across in a refreshing and touchingly paternal way. Whatley jokes about how "there's all sorts of banter...some of which I appreciate." He talks gleefully of how he endures the daily struggle of ushering the cast out of the house, them all having spent the day "practising the art of doing really very little at all". Echoing the pre-school routine somewhat, he talks jestingly about "rounding them up".



Butterworth's "Jerusalem" is just round the corner, but to get support and backing for that is impossible". Through this, there is a deep sense of resentment that talent is being overlooked purely on financial grounds. Whatley goes on to say how any attempt to produce a script from an up-and-coming director would "be difficult to get any reviews, any national press, and would leave us financed up to our eyeballs".

But the potential of uncovering a modern gem does retain its element of excitement for him; a sense of boyish enthusiasm comes through as he says that "if I get hold of something I thought was that good, I might have to think again".

Aside from this, the motivation for facing the sleepless nights and the lonely days on the road is made perfectly apparent as Whatley describes watching a production from the wings, his zeal for his vocation becomes apparent.

"When a show is going happi-

ly, there is nothing better than watching it grow in front of the audience." The cooperative aspect he feels in production shines through once more as he talks of his delight in "watching actor's

"When a show is going happily, there is nothing better than watching it grow in front of the audience"

finding themselves in an author's words".

At the root of this enthusiasm and passion is the way in which theatre prevails in keeping its magic transformation and tinge of disbelief. For the words spoken by casually dressed – and probably late – actors in Bethnal Green, to



become Windsor Palace in 1788 four weeks later with their words bringing the audience almost to tears seems miraculous to Whatley, and the people who achieve it seem to make lonely nights in a Travelodge in Berkhamstead seem more than worthwhile. "Backstage, everybody is reading a book and talking about what they might eat for supper, the mundane aspects of life, yet on stage they're creating sometime absolutely amazing, and enrapture an audience".

There can be little doubt that at times touring theatre must feel like neither high romanticism nor the actual pursuit of monolithic drama that had been hoped for, yet it always seems to hold a magical quality. "After 20 hours having not slept, with everyone going on and moaning, the nether regions in the wings, watching people as they're about to go on, the cupboard into Narnia; it always gets me". As he talks, the emphasis is continually on how the cast and crew create something far greater than the sum of all their parts, and that it truly seems that in their business, without each other, they really are nothing.

Touring this level of professional theatre, however, with its limited cash flow and level of recognition, does have its laughable elements that are far from glamorous. Whatley chuckles to himself recalling the safety curtain failing two feet above the stage at the beginning of the second half of *Journey's End* and having to turf-out and refund four hundred onto the streets of Manchester.

Working in the echelon just under the full-scale London theatre scene, Whatley has the freedom to follow his own creative impulse, as long as financial needs are adhered to. Seemingly slightly disillusioned with commercial casting methods, albeit seeing the many-fold benefits, he speaks of his ultimate wish to "have my own theatre, run it my way". His imminent project after the finish of *The Madness of King George III* is to create a touring-rep company in which he is able to "experiment with the rehearsal procedure I really want", touring two plays side-by-side with a tight-knit cast before they "head off on a mad-cap tour of the UK".

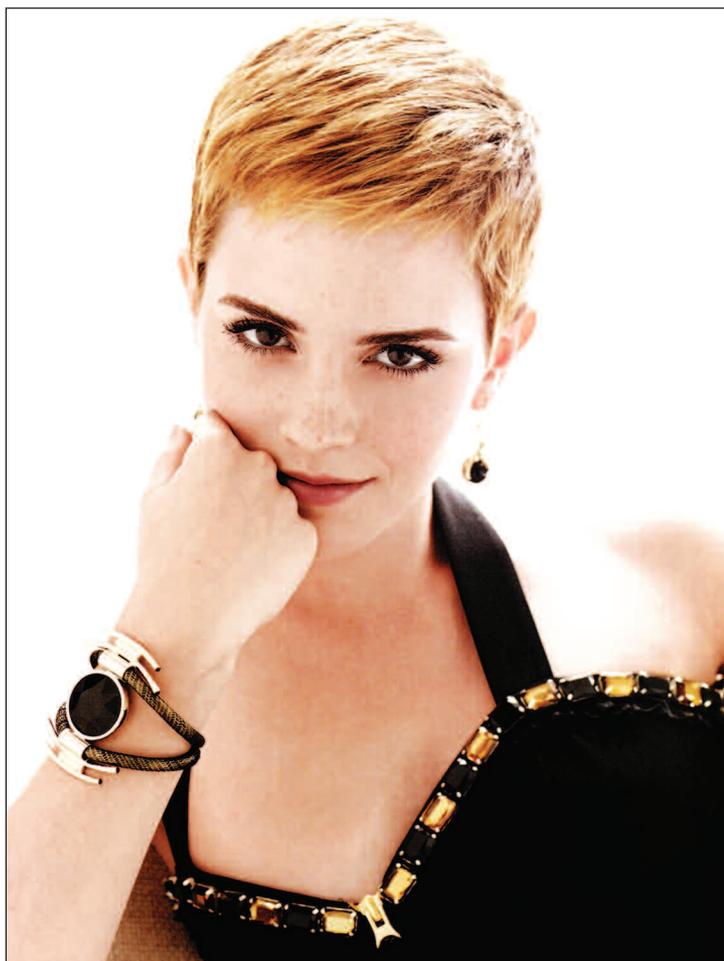
This perfectly epitomises Whatley's current existence. It is so inspiring listening to him. Touring theatre still holds the excitement that initially attracted him to the idea of taking drama to the masses.

For him, there is no stasis, no procrastination, only an indefatigable jaunt around England's theatre, on the precipice of British theatre's centre-stage. Lacking any permanent base, his cast become akin to family members as they share what can only be presumed as all their professional and private lives.

Life is a toss-up between the true integrity of theatre, and more hard-headed determination to break into the West End. Though uncertain of the details of his future, by being sure of his theatrical ideology this doesn't seem to matter.

For now, the passion, vitality and creativity are still present; the show will go on. **M**

Fashion



The December Girl

Paris Bennett explores how you can be a fashion flavour of the month

The Vogue "it" girls, and the queen bee of them all, being the December chosen one, use Vogue as a career ladder as much as Vogue uses them to boost sales. It is a win-win relationship. As Shulman recognises, for both models and stars to become bigger than the clothing they are wearing is not healthy for the industry. In previous generations the Meryl Streeps and Jane Fondas had no desire to be "glamorous clothes horses" and "wanted to be taken more seriously" she states. With the current December issue showing a relatively new actress of Harry Potter fame, Emma Watson, on the cover, many questions should be asked.

What fashion accomplishments has Emma Watson achieved to be on the front cover of Vogue? Shulman describes how she feels the fashion industry is addicted to the new face, but does Miss Watson deserve this fashion honour? Other

"Where are the models? Are they an extinct Vogue species?"

December cover stars include Kate Moss, Sienna Miller and Kylie Minogue. All of the above modern female icons have had details of their private lives put into the public focus on numerous occasions. Scandals of alleged drug use, affairs, and eating disorders are rumours that

shadow these women. Another question that should be pondered is of the quality of a few of these cover stars talents. However, can we blame Vogue for their non model cover girl choice, when in comparison, gossip magazine OK! Magazine's monthly circulation is over 500,000. Shulman, 47, is the daughter of the former theatre critic for the London Evening Standard and she had her first article published in Vogue whilst she was still a student in Brighton. Her abilities to understand the future for Vogue are unmistakably and sadly correct.

When describing Vogue, she hopes it is "a magazine of record of contemporary culture and style". She also complains that there are, in addition to too few cover stars, "too few writers". Hearing these opinions from an industry leader, we cannot help but question the quality of our fashion magazines. Fashion in many respects is as much a creative subject as an academic. From observing the visual alterations of the iconic *British Vogue*, the quality of our fashion trip is being cut with a cheaper substance.

The toxic themes of cover girls being chosen in the style of a school popularity contest, dim the sparkle of the gowns they wear. I would suggest that Alexandra Shulman place herself on the cover of the next December issue as she would filter the readership of the fashion softcore to the fashion hardcore.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. In the retail sense this is certainly accurate. The spirit of Christmas and consumerism has decked our high streets in mock snow and silhouettes of round bearded men. How can anyone not love Christmas? Especially if you have been chosen as Vogue's December front cover.

The high end fashion magazine, Vogue, is as much a glossy monthly as it is a powerful brand. Many referred to it as 'the Bible' of the London fashion industry. This is why as a model, actress or singer you can become a true diva when you see yourself on the cover.

The month in which you

are selected to represent as the cover girl, will say a lot about your position in the public eye. With all areas of fashion, seasons are a schedule one must follow. The months within these publication seasons act as a hierarchy of where your success currently hits in Vogue's opinion.

The December front cover starlet will be photographed, dressed and interviewed in a completely different style to that of say the February cover girl. The biggest selling issue of Vogue in the last 20 years was the December 1999 issue. Vogue's average monthly circulation is over 220,000, however the December issue gains

a larger readership of 241,001. Another sales boosting pattern can be noticed with who is selected and seen as 'it' enough to be put on to the front cover.

The Cheryl Cole "it" girl in February 2009 edition pushed Vogue's sales figures beyond all expectation. It was their best selling February issue ever. By now I am sure some of you are pondering the rather obvious question: where are the models? Are they an extinct Vogue cover species? *British Vogue* editor, Alexandra Shulman, has expressed that supermodels are just not connecting to the audience like they once were. She states "It's an industry problem and I think the industry is shooting itself in the foot. I feel strongly about this".

Men's Fashion



Dolce&Gabbana menswear - four words that can turn girls into a swooning mess. From George Clooney to Justin Timberlake and of course David Gandy's performance during unforgettable Dolce&Gabbana Light Blue advert, the connotations of the label embody the masculine, confident and timelessly sexy men that are so often seen wearing it.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana's launch of the legendary menswear collection. Having already established their womenswear through internationally award winning popular designs, their menswear collection exploded onto mens fashion scene in 1990.

At the end of a decade of brash, rigid styles for men, Dolce&Gabbana

offered men the chance to become involved with fashion without them having the fear of becoming the socially stereotyped "eccentric gay".

Both Gabbana and his partner Dolce have frequently been quoted saying that it had always been their aim to start up their own menswear line alongside their womenswear collection so they could create clothes for themselves to wear. It is rumoured that Dolce made the final decision to create the collection after he became fed up with having to find the black clothing that he chose to wear in peculiar shops such as priests' outfitters.

In an interview with the telegraph Gabbana states, "We already had the woman - so we were looking to dress the husband, boyfriend, fiancé, father, brother." Their first ever menswear cat-

walk presented the new age of machismo combined with faultless and perfectly chiselled tailoring; (with faces and bodies to match...) through their oversized A-line coats and 'workman' style cardigans with daring flashes of their Sicilian background in their high-waisted trousers and scarlet bandit style neckerchiefs.

In the last 20 years since, Dolce & Gabbana have continued to create menswear collections that have consistently been ahead and inspirational in style, experimenting with daring colour combinations, male knitwear, gothic patterns and even fur for men.

Everyone knows Dolce & Gabbana, but the menswear has created a whole new level of fashion - a perfect class of menswear that is timeless, glamorous and oh so attractive.

Fur

Sarah Wolfe

It looks like fur was on the menu for many designers this Autumn/ Winter 2010-11. Designers which integrated the seasonal fur trend in their collections were Mark Jacobs who focused on using fur on the lower cuffs and collars of his pieces and Anna Sui and Etro who both took an ethnic Indian stylistic approach to their designs. Designer Karl Lagerfeld, once again impressed with his collections for Chanel and Fendi, each differing in their use of fur in areas of both in quantity and quality. Fendi's signature fur pieces were encapsulated in silky fur sable coats, scarves and bags which provided a textural treat over the thin under layers of mustard yellows and warm autumnal hues.

Lagerfeld offered a contrasting collection for Chanel in his provocative yet eye stunning collection, using masses of faux fur to highlight the issue of environmentalism and global warming- the 265 ton iceberg imported from Scandinavia on the catwalk may have also been a hint to the theme to. The fact that the world's most internationally recognised designer who has previously defended his work with fur is using faux fur in his designs raises the question every fashionista this season has on their mind- will faux become the new fur?

Lagerfeld's focus on faux fur comes a year after he made a sum of claims to The Telegraph defending his use of fur in fashion stating that "In a meat eating world, wearing leather for shoes and clothes and even handbags, the discussion of fur is childish". Comments such as these naturally didn't bode well when they met the ears of animal right groups including 'People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals', PETA, who took this opportunity to highlight that it was the treatment of the animals which was the prominent issue, stating that "The vast majority of fur these days comes not from hunters as he suggests, but from Chinese fur farms, where no law protects the millions of animals who are routinely beaten and skinned alive." Lagerfeld admitted in a interview for 'www.talkasia.com' that he distances himself from the business, logistical and financial side of fashion stating that he is "just a designer", but with his powerful position in the fashion world he has a duty to take action against the blackened backdoors of the fur industry.



Luckily it appears that many designers are recognising the seriousness of the fur industry. A PETA spokesperson commented on the impact of ignoring the fight for animal rights "Lagerfeld's childish refusal to acknowledge the needless suffering behind every piece of fur and listen to public opinion means that he is being overtaken in the style stakes by an increasing number of designers who believe that cruelty has no place in fashion." It seems that other designers do indeed share the belief that there is a limit to what lengths they will take be at top of the fashion tree and are not blinded by their passion or ignorance of the truths behind the fur industry. Stella McCartney is one such maverick of fashion's fight against fur, sending a self-narrated documentary to Lagerfeld which exposes the harsh realities of fur farming. His dismissal of animal cruelty in the fur industry is truly expressed in his reaction to the fellow designer's gift declaring that he "felt he needed to return it". However, other influential anti-fur figures have not been so committed, including Naomi Campbell who once fronted PETA's late 90's campaign headed 'We'd rather go naked than wear fur', decided a decade later she would front a fur

advertisement for the designer Dennis Basso, who has his own delicate history with the campaigners, picturing the model dressed in a fur coat which rests on her bear skin.

So with top designers leading the way with faux fur and anti-fur campaigns should fashion start to prepare for the decline of 'real fur' or will the long engrained felt love of the winter fur coat be too hard to shift?



Paris Bennett

As Miss Kate Middleton's slender figure now models an exquisite sapphire and diamond ring, once belonging to style icon Princess Diana of Wales, it is certain we have a royal clotheshorse in waiting. Miss Middleton however will discover that she is now public property, in which everything she wears will be under speculation for the rest of her life. No pressure.

Regardless of one's view of the royal family, we must agree they are a fascinating bunch. The good looks of Prince William, naughty antics of Prince Harry and the obsession with Princess Diana, acts as a classy soap opera. Looking elegantly chic in a blue Daniella Helayel's Issa dress to announce engagement, all eyes are on her. The matching blue sapphire ring and understated waist defining dress were a beautiful combination. I hope William will not mind, like his father did, being supplanted in the limelight.

Looking over Kate Middleton's fashion journey, the moment in which a stylist took her taste reins is noticeable. "She dresses exactly how she should, which is wonderful," states Emilie McMeekan, *Tatler* Deputy Editor. However, I cannot help but yearn for her stylist to push Miss Middleton's royal clothing restrictions. We must remember that she is still in her twenties. If she wishes to capture the heart of the nation, her visual appeal must tick all boxes. Princess Diana was as much known for her caring nature as she was for her (cough... stylist's) dress sense.

Royal correspondent for The Mail on Sunday, Katie Nicholl, writes, "She is following in Diana's footsteps as a style icon". The relationship that Princess Diana maintained with fashion designers, such as Versace, was impressive for a woman with such a structured lifestyle. When describing Miss Middleton's engagement outfit, Nicholl states, "Kate loves the simplicity. Kate's said that Daniella's saved her from many potential wardrobe disasters."

Both Diana and Kate have been labelled "Commoners" by the press. However, in the fashion sense, they are related to the public. Princess Diana made fashion blunders, for example her cream puff wedding dress, but currently, Miss Middleton has merely made some minor fashion crimes, nothing that warrants being sent to the tower. But her fashion connection to the majority of young women in the UK is with her love for the high-street. She shops in Topshop. She has been photographed wearing high-street brands including Jigsaw, where she worked as an accessories buyer after graduating from university.

Nicholl has described her look as the "Sloane Ranger", casual country style. Whilst The Guardian's Hadley Freeman disagrees saying, "Kate Middleton has slotted herself into the Windsor world just marvelously by dressing like a 45-year-old...". It is too early to give Miss Middleton her style crown, but she has certainly earned her bridal tiara.



Clone

High street shops have been inspired by the lifestyle brand **Tommy Hilfiger** this season.

The fashion stores are taking pieces such as heavy knits and high heeled utilitarian boots and making them more affordable showing.

This shows that the demand for a casual yet American sport chic style hasn't slipped away.

For the women's winter collection it was all about smart jackets with belted waists and high boots portraying the usual Hilfiger woman as chic utilitarian IUV-league worthy.

Topshop took Tommy's high boots and scaled them down into more manageable low cut ones.

Big chunky boyfriend knits were another favorite at Topshop found in dusty pinks and navy blues.

Bookmark

'A Century of Fashion' gives an informative, chronological insight into the transitions of style in the last century in an interesting and applicable way.

On every page, the styles, models and designers of the time are beautifully displayed, giving you a realistic overview of the fashion of the past.

This book does not just look gorgeous; it gives background information about the culture of the decade, and extensive detail upon the development of style at the time from cosmetics to hair and hats, body shape and faces in *Vogue*.

The recent revival of ruffles on the catwalk, Ray Ban Wayfarers and 1940's aviator jackets are just a few examples of the influence of the past on designers today.

This suggests that this book is not just interesting, but also extremely relevant to anyone who has an interest in fashion.

Bubble Up

Rather suprisingly, a trend being reported from the Northern part of the British isles is the use of duct tape in clothing.

Despite being slightly suspicious of the legitimacy of our sources' information, we are told that the majority of these duct-alicious fashionistas are men.

They have started to use duct tape, for example, to keep up a rolled trouser leg. Many create holes in jeans, and in a highly industrial and crude manner, literally tape over the hole.

Some argue that this is the latest manifestation of the hobo trend. Personally, we blame the Labour government for ending Domestic Science lessons.

Perhaps if these chaps had been sat down with a needle and thread, they wouldn't feel such a need to go round looking like they were homeless.

Arts.

Ashley Jackson

Ashley Jackson discusses the enigmatic influence of the Yorkshire landscape on his art with **Edward Grande**



Having been dubbed as the “Turner of the twentieth century”, Ashley Jackson has the Yorkshire Moors in his blood. His works have become synonymous with the varying characters the countryside has to offer, and he views them as “transcripts of mother nature’s love letters”.

It is evident when listening to him that the moors have had a profound influence on Jackson’s life. When painting, he says he feels “some controlling force whether that be God, Mother Nature of just a spirit”, nature having become akin to a religious sentiment for him. When questioned about Percy Shelley’s belief in “some unseen Power floats through unseen among us”, Jackson replied humbly that he would paint for as long as he had the “inner feeling” within him, and spoke of how “the hair on the back of my neck stands up as a storm approaches”, inferring a similar covert power operating.

And it is these storms and darker nuances of Mother Nature that inspire Jackson so much, despite being conscious of the fact that it doesn’t neces-

sarily make his work reach as broad an audience as possible.

“I know sunshine would allow me to sell more paintings, but that is not what appeals me. Shadows from the clouds create shapes and contour the moorland while sunshine flattens the light...I wish to be like Turner and chase the light”.

Similarly, Yorkshire’s landscapes influence him not just through embodying religion, but also through

“The painter just paints pictures.

The artist puts his soul into his paintings.”

personal love. He talks of his “love affair” with the moors, and his most recent exhibition to celebrate his seventieth birthday was symbolically called “Yorkshire my mistress”. In a poem written at the tender age of sixteen, he wrote of the contrasting forces of love and nature, writing how “Women’s beauty fades with time, and equal to beauty, is companionship,

which woman has”.

For Jackson, the influence of Yorkshire’s countryside comes from its romantic volatility and temper. He says that its particular quality is in the precarious balance that means you “can have all the seasons thrown at you in one day”, and he believes the moors is the only place where this is so.

The “Passion and the Power” in his works – to take one of his own titles – often comes across through the vivid sense of movement portrayed within. The sweeping wind and rain is shown through broad brushstrokes, with intense colours. Moments captured often seem to be when the weather extremes are pivotal and there is the dramatic antithesis between sun and snow, light and dark. The sun is often caught momentarily breaking through dark clouds, or a violent storm is imminently approaching.

Through his replies, it becomes apparent that Jackson has an insightful perspective on his vocation as an artist. Telling me of a poem he noted down in his sketchbook in 1968, he believed then and still does that “To be a painter is easy. To be an artist is a great gift. The painter just paints pictures. The Artist puts his soul into his paintings”. His personal aim being “to paint paintings and not pictures”.

As with everything he does, his passionate conversational manner included, Jackson has undeniably invested his very soul into his paintings, seeing it as his ordained task to capture the fluctuating emotions of Yorkshire’s landscape, which he infers one lifetime can by no means suffice to achieve. He says of how “I have strived throughout my life to witness and portray every mood swing of nature as she takes a stand against all that the elements throw at her”. So for Jackson, the “spirit” of the moors that he senses is very much a living and breathing presence, and it could be for this reason that when painting alone, he describes it as “solitary”, but not “lonely”.

Likewise, he says that he feels “it is my role to remind others that we are only custodians, the moor is not mine alone”. For Jackson, the surrounding landscapes act as an integral part of

society, stemming from his initial artistic belief in how “art is a great communicator, requiring few words to interpret”.

More widely, Jackson has always strived to bring landscape art to the masses. Back in 2005 he joined the “40 days, 40 artists”, a collective art group – consisting of the like of cellist Steven Isserlis, novelist Malorie Blackman and contemporary artist Julian Opie – designed to creatively back London’s 2012 Olympic bid, with the aim of transforming London’s aesthetics as the hopeful result. He has also always offered a range of paint days, in which people can come along and watch the artist at his creative home on the moors. Similarly, he presented nine series of “A brush with Ashley”, in which he travelled to various locations and gave the television audience a snapshot of how we went about, mentally and physically, constructing a painting.

The artistic world may no longer be dominated by landscape greats such as Claude, Constable and Turner, yet Jackson feels nature’s importance in contemporary art has in way dwindled. Its ability to make “such an instant connection with artists and non-artists alike” means it should still be at the forefront of the art world. But he does concede that modern artists all have “differing inspirations, mediums and connections with our subject”, and in the present day and age, there can be little denying that art’s current greats don’t draw inspiration from nature in the same magnitude as two centuries ago.

Jackson can seem somewhat pre-occupied with the briefness of life, talking of how “years go by as fast as cats eyes on a motorway”, and it is this acceptance that, as a nine year old altar boy, gave him the stimulus to fully pursue his love of painting. Having reached his seventieth year, however, he seems remarkably less fazed by the issue than as a young boy. “I have always said from the age of sixteen, that what the Brontes did with a pen, I wished to do with a brush. When I am gone it will be for others to decide if I have lived up to this statement”. M

Upcoming Events.

Drama Barn

Week 7: The Magic Toyshop

Week 8: Ta-Ra Love/Bye Bye Love

Week 9: The Drunks

Undone: Making and Unmaking in Contemporary Sculpture

Henry Moore Institute, Leeds

30 September 2010 - 2 January 2011

Theatre Workshops

York Theatre Royal

13 September 2010 - 13 December 2010

Réne Daniëls: Painting on Unknown Languages

Camden Arts Centre, London

24 September 2010 - 28 November 2010

The Royal Ballet: The Tales of Beatrix Potter

The Royal Opera House, London

14 December 2010 - 10 January 2011

Made In China



Ai Wei Wei and his *Sunflower Seeds*: The Voice of Chinese Contemporary Art? Sarah Jilani investigates.

Contemporary Chinese art has had a lot of stereotypes to overcome; the art scene of the West often expects to see art about the individual resisting a repressive regime. Marko Daniel, Curator of Public Programmes at the Tate Modern, insists Western-view Chinese art was, and sometimes still is, centered on subjects such as 'Political Pop', 'The Decadent City', or 'The Amusing Countryside' - in short, neat, bundled-up little concepts that were presented from a markedly non-Chinese perspective. However, the Chinese avant-garde is actually characterised by a resistance of both US hegemony and their own cultural antecedence. It is critical and clever, addressing what it means to be an individual in today's society, the volatility of the masses, the manipulation of tradition and cultural heritage, and, above all, the worth of human life.

Beijing-born artist and activist Ai Wei Wei is doubtless one of the most prominent names among other contemporary Chinese artists today such as Zhang Dali and Zhang Xiaogang. He has even been dubbed 'China's Warhol' - of course, whether this is a compliment or an example of Western appropriation is debatable. It is hard to categorise Ai easily, but in many ways he can be considered a conceptual artist and a discerning and bold social and political commentator.

His work ranges from photo-

graphs of himself dropping priceless Hun dynasty, to an installation of children's schoolbags to commemorate the youngest victims of the Sichuan earthquake. They are definitely not for those looking for something quickly created and perfunctorily consumed, lingering in your mind long after they first dawn on you. So when he accepted a commission from the Tate, on which work started two years prior to the opening, you knew you could expect something worth experiencing.

The Tate Modern usually plays host to a thought provoking variety of art in its spacious and versatile ground floor Turbine Hall. Upon entering, one can literally feel the transition from wondering how to find that restaurant in Chinatown for dinner tonight, to the here and now.

Sculpture, installation, or audiovisual work - stay coherent in this space, therefore you would think a monochromatic, quiet piece would be lost in this space; even wasted. But Ai's new exhibition, *Sunflower Seeds*, is anything but that.

One hundred million hand-painted porcelain sunflower seeds adorn the floor of the hall, looking like some sort of 3-dimensional TV static or a field of grey pebbles. The staggering realisation that some old lady in the Chinese town of Jingdezhen pored over the 50 seeds you just scooped into your hand with a brush for hours, is soon overrid-

den by the ingenuity behind engaging with such a variety of complex issues in the form of an object that is actually very relevant, yet absurdly and purposefully displaced. It truly is an exercise in the power of subtlety.

The sunflower seed was a reliable commodity during years of famine, and carries a political statement as well as a personal one for the artist, whose father was a poet denounced during the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese people themselves were often depicted as sunflowers turning towards the red sun, Chairman Mao, in propaganda posters of the time. The seeds speak of the anonymous labourer, of Chinese products manufactured for Western consumption, of social gatherings and stolen moments of snacking and conversation... who would have thought sunflower seeds had such socio-political dimensions? That is the thing though: the unexpected, inexplicable wholeness and coherence that can be derived from something banal, displaced and multiplied, speaks louder than a more, well, loud piece may ever be able to.

However the Tate's decision to disallow touching the exhibit inhibits the experience, rising dust from the shuffling of visitors' feet on the seeds, is apparently a health hazard. For something that is all about the extraordinary in the mundane and the simple pleasure of engaging with art in a sensory way, the 'stand behind the rope' sign couldn't be more unwelcome.

However by disallowing interaction, the very questions this work is posing are highlighted. The unpredictability of human behaviour, how public spaces can actually be controlled environments, and the dehumanisation of the worker - who undoubtedly wasn't shielded from this harmful dust as the exhibition-goers will now be - are all interwoven into the very fact that it must now be contemplated at a distance.

Nevertheless, if your path takes you to London's south bank, it is definitely worth visiting and forming your own opinion of this remarkable work; made of China as much as made in China. **M**

The Unilever Series: Ai Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds*.

At Tate Modern's Turbine Hall.
12 October 2010 - 2 May 2011

Young writers: too tame?

Emily Heggadon

Debate ensued this year as playwright Athol Fugard spoke out criticising young writers for their apparent inability to write about morally weighty subjects. In his opinion the theatre world is lacking "committed playwrights who are prepared to bear witness to what is going on every bit as urgently as the old ones did." Fugard, 78, who is currently in rehearsals for his new play *The Train Driver* at Hampstead Theatre, believes he is bound by duty to continue writing about it as it is of the utmost importance and young writers today aren't taking up the slack.

Looking at the performances taking to the British stage, however, they seem to tell a different story.

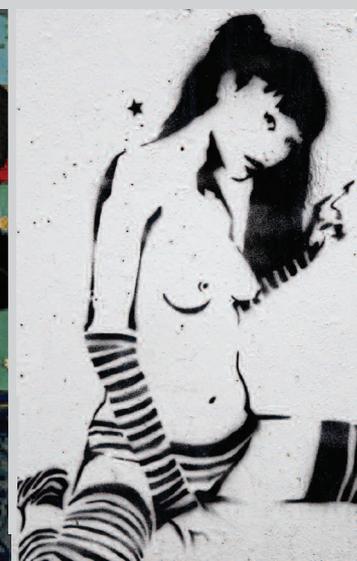
The Court runs an international exchange programme, enabling British writers to gain experience, and bring more talent across our borders. James Graham, and Lucy Kirkwood, who was interviewed by *Nouse* last year, are both British, in their twenties and tackling subjects of the utmost sensitivity. Kirkwood's *Guns or Butter* and *Bloody Wimmin* address issues such as the Iraq war, and the protests at Greenham Common in the 80's, and she is only the same age as some of us. The atomic bomb, mining strikes, and Chinese prisoner of war camps are all explored by Graham in *Albert's Boy* and *Coal Not Dole*. Although these do not directly involve Apartheid, there is no danger of writers of this distinction stepping up to the plate, and continuing to view it as worthwhile in the theatrical world.

Fugard's insinuation is that theatre has somehow deteriorated, and that it is not as hard hitting as in the 60's. His theatrical intentions in portraying the regime truthfully were often unsuccessful. Censorship laws resulted in his actors' arrest, and his passport being revoked. Surely he should therefore be relishing the times we live in now as a canvas for his challenging theatrical works. He is not warranted in claiming that we do not push the boundaries; describing itself as the 'Theatre of Violence', Badac Theatre Company is hardly shying away from controversy, showcasing pieces where 'the actors will be led to a point of physical destruction', in topics such as The Holocaust and crucifixion of Jesus. In *The March* Badac explore abuse and violence in conditions of the most extreme, during times of conflict and war, from Kosovo to Rwanda.

A large number of theatre companies are not only intent on addressing atrocities that happened in the past, but creating pieces that highlight issues of utmost relevance today. GW Theatre Company based in Lancashire, is a touring group that aim to educate their audience on 'extremism'. Their latest venture *One Extreme to the Other* tackles London bombings, racism and the rise of unemployment, all their pieces are "part of an urgent human requirement to help young people and their elders challenge extremists, and stress what we have in common rather than what divides us." It is inevitable that the arts and theatre will alter and be stimulated by political and social events. Socialist Brecht wrote *Mother Courage* as a response to Nazism in 1939, and Fugard himself in plays such as *The Island* is highly influenced politically. Today, *Fighting the Cuts* a new socialist-fuelled play from Banner Theatre Company is a frontrunner in promoting current politics through the theatre medium, and challenging the government in a passionate and provocative way. **M**

In pictures: erotic art.

With the upcoming release of *Burlesque: The Movie*, we look at the history behind erotic performance.



MUSIC

Rocking Out the Media Storm

Sam Briggs talks to NME's latest cover stars The Vaccines.

Considering the last few months have seen The Vaccines create a violently buzzing hive of media excitement, frontman Justin Young looks surprisingly at ease. Sitting with his feet up in York's Stereo Venue, he looks comfortable being in the eye of the media storm surrounding the band. As well as ignoring their own press, they seem to be also slightly outdated with current affairs. Young berates his fellow bandmate Freddie Cowan for not knowing where the 2012 Olympics are being held.

Although their first single is yet to be released, the colossal buzz around the four piece band have led to them being lauded, or burdened, with the accolade of driving the future of British guitar music. When questioned whether the media's attention is a blessing or a curse, Young is aware of the band "not being judged on whether they're good or bad, but if they're the best thing since sliced bread". In the music scene of today, he admits that "only three or four alternative bands in the last decade have increasingly sold records", the pressure on the band to deliver is immense. However, Young is quick to point out that "we're not the ones who've created that buzz", and places the pressure on "the shoulders of the tastemakers". His marker of success is refreshingly detached from any emphasis on popularity, and whilst the band can consider themselves to be "continuing to have fun, and push ourselves as artists and musicians", the nature of their success remains entirely in their own ballpark.

Having previously won over audiences with the lilting melancholia of his previous folk outfit Jay Jay Pistolet, Young is no stranger to the music industry. However, his bittersweet tone now manifests itself in more of a gutsy roar, his melancholy more raucous than reflective. "Our music is steeped in nostalgia," says Young, "But then again, so is life." Indeed, The Vaccines sound draws influence from an "eclectic" range of older influences, with the front man referencing "50s rock and roll, 60s girl groups, and 80s American hardcore", as well as Cowan's love of kraut-rock's sonic landscapes when pressed for musical inspirations.

However, the defining element of the band's sound is their intensity, which elevates their 'back to basics' approach to songwriting from being merely derivative guitar fodder. That "rock and roll is never innovative, but is always fresh" is crucial to The Vaccines ethos, and their emphasis is on "simple, straight up pop songs, delivered in the



Above: The Vaccines hitting the road.

form of rock and roll".

In contrast to their name, the band are not out to cure any crisis of the current music scene, but rather attempting to reassert pop music's fundamentals than getting "caught up in trying to be clever or weird".

The band quote Mike Potter, the German artist, on their blog, calling his mantra "Nothing is wrong if it feels good...so apt we posted it twice!" Young is a firm believer that the best guitar bands make "something you've heard a million times before, feel like you've never heard it before". Forthcoming single 'Wreckin' Bar/Blow it Up' is such a song: firmly wedged somewhere between CBGBs and the laconic fuzz of Jesus and the Mary Chain, its seductive simplicity sticks with you for far longer than the brevity of the song itself, making it hard to disagree with Young. The Vaccines' longevity lies in their preference of substance over style and intensity over innovation, in their passionate delivery of finely crafted scuzzy pop gems.

Tonight they play in a packed out Stereo, to a crowd of people driven here mainly by curiosity. The band play a set that ranges from the punk rock clatter of 'Wreckin' Bar', through the Strokes-

esque drawl of 'A Lack of Understanding' to the more brooding melodies of 'Wet Suit'. Accompanied by the pulse of Anri Hjorvar's bass, and Pete Robertson's racing drum beats, Young and Cowan bump and jostle centre stage, enjoying the euphoric excitement of each increasingly familiar chorus as do much of the audience, most of whom are word-perfect by the second time they're repeated.

The live experience is the substance with which the band intends to disperse any media hyperbole. "Lots of press isn't the real way to build a band, you have to play and play and play. You get better, and win more people over - they appreciate it if you make the effort", says Young, before Cowan details the Highlands leg of their current tour, and their attempt to spread The Vaccines word to areas frequently missed off regular touring schedules.

Although they infuse their considered approach to their image with their back to basics ethos, to complete the band's sound, they resist the pressure for a new band to over expose themselves. "Nobody wants to know what you've had for breakfast", jokes Young. He believes in justifying any media attention by "doing what we do best",

and playing live, instead of "standing on a podium for a magazine cover". They've had a chance to demonstrate this dedication to live performances, by recently appearing on Later with Jools Holland. Even the mere one minute and twenty three seconds of 'Wreckin' Bar' was infinitely more exciting than the drivelling slew of country rock that Kings of Leon delivered on the same stage.

For every audience member, the camaraderie, and spirit, of the band, is obvious, and their decision to release their highly anticipated first release on their friend's label Marshall Teller is no surprise. "Community values are something we really believe in", and their repeated reference to the "sharing" of their sound in a live setting, and the breaking down of the barriers between band and audience, is highly endearing, be it in their physical involvement of the crowd onstage, or their presence at the merchandise after the gig.

With their debut record due to be completed at the end of this month, and released early next year on Columbia Records to coincide with their opening slot on the NME Awards tour The Vaccines will surely need no introduction before long. **M**

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Weed and syrup till I die"

Lil Wayne reveals the influences behind his music in a new documentary.

Tropical punks gone cold

Adam Bychawski asks Abe Vigoda about cold wave.

Whatever your given cultural interests, there are always artists who make a comfortable career from the 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' school of creativity. Recently though, there has been a trend for reinvention that has resurrected a number of bands from the pit of forgotten debuts, namely critically acclaimed follow-up albums from the Horrors and These New Puritans. Abe Vigoda is the latest band to join this list of artists who have forsaken their previous niche and taken a musical leap of faith.

Tropical punk to gothic new-wave doesn't seem like a particularly logical jump to make, but somehow Abe Vigoda have managed it over one record. Their previous album, *Skeleton*, was released in 2008, a point in which the underground punk scene, particularly in LA's Smell venue, was receiving huge amounts of attention. A number of bands such as No Age, Miko Miko and The Mae Shi have since graduated from regular performances at the Smell and found an audience much larger than its small capacity.

Abe Vigoda themselves formed out of being dedicated attendees of the many gigs at the venue. Of their life at high school, Juan Velazquez admits "that we didn't go out very much to parties, we were totally obsessed with music to a point where all we did was go to gigs." Rather than being frustrated by the constant association with the bands birthed by the Smell, Velazquez says the relationship "was educational, they mentored us in a way by doing things first, like touring Europe, they showed us it can be done, that there is a wider audience for music like ours."

Most of their earlier 7" and self-released cassettes have the chaotic no-wave sound that defined many bands from the Smell. What made them unique was an interest in more tropical music, and their sound gradually became more influenced by African sounds and rhythms. "It started with a lot of Talking Heads



and The Slits initially, then we discovered Konono N°1, which opened up a whole new world of melodies and sound for us." *Skeleton* is still a punk album at heart, but it sounds as if LA punk has been rerouted through the Congo.

Even with the success of their tropical-inflected punk, Abe Vigoda have gone from the sunny rhythms of the Congo to an icy electronic world of gloomy synths in their latest album. *Crush* owes much to the recent reappraisal of cold wave that has been brought to light by recent compilations such as Angular Record's *Cold Waves* and Minimal Electronics. Many of the tracks have a familiar aesthetic that could easily fit on the compilation; 'Dreams of my Love' and 'Throwing Shade' just their track names alone.

Velazquez explains the change as more of a steady progression than epiphany by dark synth chords. "We recorded an EP [Revival], which kind of bridges the gap [between *Skeleton* and *Crush*], but we didn't think we

would go as far as we did, it wasn't really thought out." "It's cool to challenge yourself and not do the same thing, making the same record would be redundant and pointless, well to me at least."

Surprisingly for such a melancholic dour sound, Vidal says the album was recorded in a time of fruitful relationships. Lyrics are now mostly recognisable, with Vidal's vocals, previously lost in a haze of feedback and guitar, now at the forefront of *Crush*. His voice has also morphed into a moody deep murmur just about holding its own over the synths. "That's something I almost don't realise, I guess you end up changing your voice to suit whatever sound your singing over."

Abe Vigoda are really a group of typical music fanatics, finding themselves getting edgy and impatient with familiarity and constantly seeking something 'new'. It's difficult for me to guess exactly what move they might make next, as essentially their sound seems directed by whoever has dug-up something they all love. **M**

REVIEWS

ARTIST: PANTHEON

DATE: 4 NOVEMBER

VENUE: STEREO, YORK

REVIEW: ALEX SWADLING

★★★★☆

Catching the final notes of *Lost Effect*, York seems to be the ideal location for a band that sound like a frustrated gang of vikings fronted by Amy Lee.

However it sounds like another sort of frustration tonight and rightly so, as their melodic metal have few ears to fall on.

Thankfully, the ear count improves noticeably in Stereo's backroom for the arrival of *The Aftermath*, who older, wiser and with a quality choice of band attire, will not be ignored as their groove driven riffs and shattering bass stirs up a lone head banger and an anticipation in the air; an anticipation of which Pantheon are more than worthy.

With fire shooting out a skull in each corner of the stage amid a mass of whirling hair, Pantheon



have every awe-struck member of the room in their ridiculously skilled hands. Hands which are more than capable of tearing through the unjustifiable lack of crowd (and consequent lack of pits- the only real reason to not award a five star review) and the odd technical difficulty they contend with.

Even as early as the opening shouts of 'Blood Shot,' the potential of this band is tangible and spread across every grinning face in the room, so much so that turning round to a sea of waving fists could so easily be a reality for this band and after tonight Pantheon prove themselves to be more than capable of donning any festival stage. The chances of catching them playing at Download festival next year seem high.

ARTIST: LE TRIO JOUBRAN

DATE: 27 SEPTEMBER

VENUE: NCEM

REVIEW: DANIEL BEY

★★★★☆

We were promised an evening of 'musical genius, profound ideas about history, and the beauty of art' and not only were these proclamations fulfilled, they were excelled. Le Trio Joubran, three Palestinian brothers and the sons of a master luthier have a rich, musical family tradition.

They are masters of the oud, an instrument sharing distinct similarities with the European lute. Through manipulating the oud with extraordinary skill, they blend improvisation with virtuoso quality, with emotions both elevating and sad, sounds subtle and mystical, reaching forceful crescendos instantaneously followed by the eerie sound of oppressive, echoing silence.

Le Trio Joubran, perfectly



mix traditional eastern and western Jazz traditions, whilst the percussionist complements the band superbly.

"We try not to speak about our politics much," spoke Samir Joubran, the eldest brother of the three. "But we are from Palestine, and so this is impossible". Other than a few stock comments on how hard they'd been working, how far they'd been travelling that was all. No more spoken word, no more details.

Yet in this case, music truly did speak louder than words. "Silence is important," said Samir, and it was through silence, juxtaposed with energetic, emotionally charged music that Le Trio Joubran were able to convey their message.

FUTURE SOUNDS

A band's MySpace can be deceiving, for a start, laughing off *Melody of your Demise* is too easy, especially with claims of "tearing a niche into the local scene" and song titles like 'Judi Dench Battles the Rancor'. Although, one can take some solace in that they're not a dismal tribute band of *Your Demise*, but friendly unpretentious lads who reassured me they're not "more hairspray than substance" (along with inexplicably mentioning that "Judi Dench can never stop getting them wet.")

In terms of their niche tearing, they're right to point out "metal-core isn't really big in York," but they've tried. They have two vocal-

ists (like the Blackout) singing and screams (like Alexisonfire) and guitars and drums and... Well, admittedly they've not exactly created a new genre.

However, they're an eclectic mix of influences and people, which perhaps they don't exploit enough in writing their music, but it's a hobby at least. Anyway, *Melody* seem to be made for live listening. Let's face it, there must be a reason why within their first six months of playing live they've supported bands like RSJ, Trigger the Bloodshed and Yashin, all who have gone onto bigger things, and in the words of lead guitarist Craig, "I'd get out of York." Not soon then. **Alex Swadling**



NOUSE PLAYLIST

Metalic Pop*Adam Bychawski*

Inspired by how naturally Biggie and Elton, Missy and The Doors are mixed by mash-up godfather *Girl Talk*, we have gone a step further and found the best (or is that worst) metal covers of pop songs.

Berzerker - 'All the Things She Said'

Lesbian anthem stripped of all sapphic undertones by a growling metal reinterpretation.

Limp Bizkit - 'Faith'

Another gay anthem covered, that changes the lighthearted chorus into raving paranoia.

Marilyn Manson - 'Tainted Love'

Darker, angrier and bassier - this doesn't even count as a guilty pleasure.

Justin Bieber - 'Baby' (Metal Cover)

Bieber is internet gold for cover versions and remixes, but somehow the guitar riffs balance off the sappy pre-pubescent high-pitched vocals.

Film.

Leeds Film Festival 2010

Gareth Davies & Michael Allard check out the selection on at the international film scene in Leeds this year.

The dismal grey streets, the biting November wind and an urban landscape teeming with row upon row of grotty Greggs establishments. This may not be the most glamorous of settings for a high-brow cultural event but the Leeds International Film Festival, which finished on Sunday, is nonetheless the Venice, the Sundance, the Cannes of film in the North. Being only a mere stone's throw away, Leeds is close enough for the adventurous York student to visit, and year after year the cheap tickets will leave film-lovers searching themselves for reasons not to go. As well as the plentiful supply of workshops and short film exhibitions on offer, this year, films from over 35 countries received multiple screenings over a 17-day period. The council-sponsored event expanded into the city's town hall, which was fitted out with a 35mm projector and surround sound that allowed the noise of car crashes and the humming of animal-filled forests to reverberate around the huge Victorian building to the delight of multiple audiences.

Amongst the 100+ films shown, one of LIFF's most dazzling inclusions was the George Clooney and Anton Corbijn collaboration *The American*, but the most popular star vehicles of the festival represented a triumph for British film. Festival opener *The King's Speech* – which sees Colin Firth play a stuttering George VI alongside a cast that includes Helena Bonham Carter and Geoffrey Rush – had already been a surprise hit at the London film festival last month, and was so popular in Leeds that additional screenings were arranged at short notice.

Similarly, the long-anticipated *Never Let Me Go* saw Leeds Town Hall filled to capacity. Starring Carey Mulligan and Keira Knightley, *Never Let Me Go* is based in an alternate reality where advances in science have allowed for the cultivation of clones; beings who, when fully grown, are forced to donate their vital organs. Despite the hype and expectation generated by the novel's sizeable following, the film certainly does not disappoint. Straying barely any distance from Ishiguro's original work, fans of the book will be both pleased and relieved.



For those wanting to escape from British period drama and literary adaptation, a fortnight at the festival can be well spent without having to see a single film in English. Most anticipated amongst the festival's foreign-language selection was winner of the Palme D'Or at Cannes this year, the controversial feature from Thai director Apichatpong Weerasethakul, *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*. A musing on the numerous reincarnations of an elderly man, dying from kidney failure, *Uncle Boonmee* exudes an impressively eerie primeval mysticism in its execution. The film is unconventional to say the least, with its fusion of Buddhist philosophy and surreal imagery in a non-linear and fragmented plot. Words such as enigmatic, labyrinthine, and preternatural completely fall short of describing a film so spiritually complex as to leave a bemused room of viewers asking themselves, with some concern "...what just happened?" And rightly so, for in what other 12A movie would you see a princess with major self-esteem issues receiving cunnilingus from a talking catfish?

Amongst the unexpected highlights of the festival were two European films. The first being the debut feature-length film from Norwegian director Jens Lien, *The Bothered Man*, a startlingly black comedy set in an uncanny dystopic

society where material values outweigh the emotional. The film was released in Norway in 2006, and having received little attention in the UK during the past few years, its festival screening will hopefully provide it with the acclaim it deserves. More invested in historical realism was *All That I Love*; set in the early 1980s the film's star-in-the-making Mateusz Kościukiewicz plays a rebellious young man discovering love, sex and punk in a country facing a political crisis. *All That I Love* is as much an idealistic romance as it is a believable chronicle of the relationship between the Soviet Union and Poland thirty years ago.

From the other side of the globe came David Michôd's *Animal Kingdom* (pictured above), which received its UK premiere at the festival. An Australian drama, it plays out as a traditional crime genre film. The plot follows a simple-minded teenager who is forced into living with a family of infamous criminals, becoming an essential witness to the murder of two policemen. What then follows is an unpredictable and intense experience, separating *Animal Kingdom* from conventional, endless revisions of the basic crime film premise – where the police are good and the criminals are bad or vice-versa – in a morally irreducible tale.

The sheer number of films from around the world at Leeds make the festival not just an event which showcases the newest Hollywood blockbusters, but one which allows lesser-known underground films to be seen by a mass audience. In this respect, international film festivals such as Leeds are invaluable in boosting, encouraging and keeping alive the production of independent art film. The LIFF this year quite literally had something for everyone, from pornographic musicals to brooding apocalyptic dramas to films such as *Uncle Boonmee* which completely defy classification. The breadth and quality of content at this year's festival has firmly reinforced its reputation as one of the North's most anticipated cultural events of the year.

Reviews.

FILM: THE AMERICAN

DIRECTOR: ANTON CORBIJN

STARRING: GEORGE CLOONEY,
VIOLANTE PLACIDO

RUNTIME: 103 MINS

REVIEW: CHRIS FRASER

☆☆☆☆☆

It's marketed as an action-thriller, but it's not; for a film about an assassin on his last job, there's surprisingly little action. Most of the suspenseful sequences reach an underwhelming conclusion, and the traditional American firing range is replaced with a picturesque forest clearing in Italy. Based on Martin Booth's novel *A Very Private Gentleman*, *The American* is the second film from Anton Corbijn, most famous for his photographic work and the 2007 Ian Curtis biopic *Control*. It's hardly surprising, then, that he opts to focus on the highly stylised and picturesque, rather than conventional action tropes.

George Clooney is steely and subtle, but without his usual charm. He plays the eponymous American, exiled in Sweden until an assassination attempt forces him to seek shelter in Rome. A contact (Johan Leysen) guides him towards a remote village in the mountains, where a mission begins to materialise and a romance with a prostitute (Violante Placido) develops. Clooney plays a man who lives



isolated from the rest of the world. He spends time with a local priest (Paolo Bonacelli, of the infamous *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*), but the two never really connect. Their lifestyles couldn't be more different, and rather than turn such an opposition into an assassin's attempts to corrupt a holy man or a priest's offer of redemption to a sinner, the characters in Rowan Joffe's story spend time together without undergoing any significant transformations.

The significance of the film's occasional twists and turns is never overplayed, and the ending provides partial catharsis without being ridiculous. Whilst *The American* is unspectacular, it is an enjoyable vehicle for Clooney, who can shine amongst a cast of lesser-known actors.

FILM: MACHETE

DIRECTOR: ROB RODRIGUEZ,

ETHAN MANIQUIS

STARRING: DANNY TREJO

RUNTIME: 105 MINS

REVIEW: ADRIAN CHOA

☆☆☆☆☆

Unless you have accidentally stumbled into the wrong screen, it is more than likely that you know what you're getting when you step into *Machete*. The film's satirical, Mexploitation approach makes itself abundantly lucid from faux-grainy opening shots and a deadpan Danny Trejo holding up his subtle title weapon, proclaiming, "This is the boss." And it certainly is, casually and gratuitously dismembering corporate America for 105 minutes.

Lightly sprinkled upon this beautifully cathartic violence is textbook grindhouse female nudity, from a *chica* who retrieves a mobile phone from inside herself, to a cavorting Lindsay Lohan who keeps the film within its borders (unlike the Mexicans). *Machete* is a revenge movie, but also contains a complex political plot weaved around the 'tits n' gore', necessitating the entrance of a corrupt US Senator (Robert De Niro) and his maniacal aide. Where some may criticize the twists and turns of this political subtext, it provides narrative depth whilst self-consciously parodying contemporary debate sur-



rounding Mexican immigration. Rather than attempt to suck us into an alternate reality, Rodriguez constantly reminds us of the work's form with superfluous shot changes and a brilliantly cheesy soundtrack. This aspect of the film flits between sentimental Spanish guitar for emotionally pregnant moments, high-speed Santana-esque guitar solos for the fast-paced action, and bow-chicka-wow-wow classic porn music for erotic scenes that feature Jessica Alba and Michelle Rodriguez.

If ridiculous violence, nudity and latent paedophilic incest are your cup of tea, then this film is for you. If you like fun, then this film is for you also. I would pay the entrance fee just to see Trejo rappel down a wall with a human intestine.

Top 5 Movie Assassins.

To celebrate the release of *Machete* and *The American*, we explore cinema's five most formidable hitmen.

Antonio Banderas in *Desperado*

El Mariachi's deadliness is matched only by his magnificent guitar playing.

John Cusack in *Grosse Pointe Blank*

The most lovesick gunman you could ever hope to be killed by.

Jean Reno in *Léon*

A man of few words, willing to sacrifice himself for a young Natalie Portman.

Javier Bardem in *No Country for Old Men*

A killer with a haircut which is almost scarier than his weapon of choice.

Samuel L. Jackson and John Travolta in *Pulp Fiction*

Jules and Vincent have divine intervention on their side.

Food & Drink.

RESTAURANT: CAFE NO. 8
ADDRESS: 8 GILLYGATE, YORK
PRICES: £25 - £30 - 3 COURSES
REVIEW: WILL WADE
☆☆☆☆

“I’m reminded of a prison cafeteria.”



What to do as a student on a Saturday night? ‘Salvation, Tokyo and Ziggy’s’ are full of the over thirties/lonely hearts and apparently no one (particularly YUSU) likes Gallery anymore. The alternatives nevertheless are endless; a movie night, an evening gym sesh, an evening with your favourite society, or order in with the flatmates. You could of course break with standard student convention and cruise down to one of your local York restaurants. An unconventional evening for a student I’ll agree, especially when there’s beer to drink, but then again why not? You get to eat something that’s better than beans on toast, and get to practise being vaguely posh which is always fun once in a while.

So last Saturday I set about choosing a new refectory to investigate. Upon recommendation from a lecturer I decided Café No. 8 was worth a try. Chatting socially with lecturers is not standard for the record, however, any individual who can lecture on mixed metal organometallic complexes and rave about Green Day in the same conversation is alright by me. Probably a bit of a lad as well. So I duly googled Café No. 8 for a routine check of prices and location. The prices seemed high, yet the dishes sounded well conceived. I should have taken more note of the early warning signs. The first thing I spotted on google

maps was that the restaurant was very close to York St John’s. Secondly, all of the positive food reviews they had published on their website dated back to 2006. On the phone, the only table I could get was at 6:30 and I was told I’d needed to have vacated my table by 8:00pm at the latest. An inauspicious start. As it turned out, I was delayed in arriving anyway as a pair of community police officers had clocked me cycling without any bike lights and I had to endure another lecture, this time on road safety. So I arrived ten minutes late, and for this was punished with a seat adjacent to the door, which did however give me exclusive access to the sub-zero draught from under the door. I kept my three layers on for the entire meal.

The whole place stank of somewhere that thought it was all that - and transparently wasn’t. Prices were £6.00-£8.50 for a starter and £13.00-£17.00 for a main, which is contemptible for a place with bullet sized holes in the wall. No word of lie. But holes in the wall was just where it began. The tables were each ornamented with wilting flowers in empty beer bottles, as well as ‘value’ brand salt and pepper grinders, and the floor was battered and scratched to oblivion. Prison cafeteria conditions form as a thought in my mind as I think back. Exaggeration perhaps? I reckon the unpleasant green

tinge on the side of my game terrine starter begs to differ.

Are there any saving graces? The staff were all quite beautiful, smiling amiably on a more than regular basis. Such a shame there were so far out of my league really. I digress.

The food despite any discolouration was reasonable in regards taste, but definitely overpriced. My pan roasted chicken and risotto main had a few positives. A pleasingly flavoured red wine sauce was the hero of the dish, cutting through the rich mushroom and squash risotto. But the manger should still shelve this recipe and then recheck the head chef’s references based on his serving of ‘skin on’ roasted butternut squash, and the road kill like presentation. Both main and starter were sprinkled with tasteless, brown, hair like cress, possibly harvested from the chef himself. What of dessert? An elderflower cheesecake more acrid than a tang-fastic. I would definitely recommend saving your pennies for another place. York is literally rammed with restaurants and some of them are certainly worth those government borrowed pennies - it’s just that Café No. 8 is not one of them. When face-book finally gets round to creating a dislike button I know which restaurant’s fan page is in for a disliking.

PUB Henry Cowen

Sometimes you just know you’re going to have a good night. Walking towards **The Maltings** last Thursday I bumped into none other than Brendan Sheerin, of Coach Trip fame. To say I was star struck would be an understatement.

The pub, therefore, had a lot to live up to; to be blunt, it didn’t disappoint. **The Maltings** advertises itself as a “real pub” and, despite a painted black exterior that makes it look as if it should be owned by some “lad” in Hollyoaks who is probably a criminal and has a ridiculously attractive wife, it lives up to its billing.

With five guest ales always on tap, in addition to York Brewery’s finest offerings (think Black Sheep and Guzzler), there’s plenty to choose from. The guest ales were tasty enough, Caerphilly’s Native Pride was a particular favourite, but the frankly noxious Ruby Tuesday cider was variously described as “tasting like airfix planes and glue” and “smelling like plastic”.

The décor of the pub was a joy; aged signs and authentic pieces from bygone eras. The clientele was mixed. Gnarled locals were mixing with a slightly younger generation while a group of ‘southern softies’ on a work-based course were happily



left to chat about “tickling the customer’s fancy”.

Rumour has it that students aren’t very welcome and that might be the case. Despite this my fellow quaffers and I experienced nothing but warmth, although it wouldn’t be wise to order and then down three VKs each while screaming every line from ‘Don’t Stop Believing’.

This is a real pub for people who enjoy a lively atmosphere without having to endure music being pumped out and appreciate a tasty ale as well. It might be slightly out of the way, just off Rougier Street towards the station, but it’s well worth a trip. In terms of money it’s neither cheap nor a rip-off and there aren’t many better ways to spend the hard-earned student loan than on a good ol’ pint of ale.

Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate: How to make the perfect cup of tea



At this most bleak time of year what better way to cheer yourself than tea? Bettys’ tea buyers give their top tips for making the perfect cuppa.

- 1) Let the tap run for a while before filling the kettle. This allows air to get into the water, which gives you a livelier-tasting brew.
- 2) Never re-boil the kettle as this rids the water of air and produces a rather flat taste.
- 3) Rinse the teapot out with hot water before making your brew as this helps to keep the tea piping hot. Do the same with your teacup.
- 4) Put the milk into the cup first. Research shows that adding milk to the tea after it’s poured can make the milk proteins gather into clumps. It tastes much better to have the chilled milk massed at the bottom of the cup, awaiting the stream of hot tea.
- 5) But, when making tea in a mug with a teabag, put the boiling water in first otherwise the tea will not brew properly.

Vudu Lounge

Cocktail Bar and Club

Jäger-mondäys

from 7pm - licensed till 3am
2 for 1 on cocktails all night
jagershots £1.50
jagerbombs £2.00
selected bottles £2.00
vudu shots £1.00
20% off spirits and beers

free entry

sunday to thursday 2 for 1 on cocktails all night

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Harrie Neal

Extensive website expenditure has underwhelming effect

The University website has failed to impress viewers regardless of its extortionate cost.

Despite being one of the fifteen wealthiest universities in the UK, the University of York spends a dismal amount of its income on bursaries and scholarships for underprivileged students.

This August *Nouse* revealed in the 2008/2009 academic year the University spent less than 20 per cent on the financial support of students. Now we discover that in the same year the university spent more than £43,000 on its website alone, almost three times as much as Liverpool University and almost five times as much as Oxford.

This expenditure forces us to question the financial viability of a website voted worst of 152 institutions by sixth formers in a recent survey by The Times Higher Education. Naturally one cannot compare the £2,375,000 spent on bursaries to the £43,000 spent on a website, but it is a question of having correct priorities. With the regular

polling of York as being the least cost-effective city for students, and the extortionate prices of some of the swanky new university accommodation, I'm afraid that York is getting itself a

"I'm afraid that York is getting itself a reputation as an elitist institution"

reputation as an elitist institution and not only in the academic sense.

However, ultimately the University is still a business and we can see the reason behind spending heavily where one expects to make considerable gains. The website is one of the first places potential applicants get a feel for York and assess its merits, we can fol-

low the logic in directing money in this area.

However, those of you who have perused the site will have seen the proof of the pudding for yourselves, and it tastes a little rotten.

As a non-techie myself I don't feel qualified to comment on that side of things, but the website feels distinctly average. Sure, it's fairly simple to get around it providing one dedicates enough time to the task (or is half an hour too long to find the list of electives available to first-years?), but it doesn't feel worth £43,000. Yet on visiting the Oxford site, the clean, simple layout and lack of brash colours, make the site seem worth more than £9,000.

With the fourth re-launch set to take place before Christmas, might I remind you York that it's not too late to get those clever folk in Computer Science to do it for you on the cheap; at least that way you can boast the university's talents at the same time.



Sally Granger

Campaigns overload

Post takes on a whole new role at university. Since moving in, strangers have regularly wandered, quite at their leisure, into our kitchen and provided us with a vast array of hand delivered spam.

Amongst the various drinks deals are some more serious pieces. One was colourfully disguised and we made it into a game to compliment or vaguely insult new found friends: 'What kinds of drinkers are your flatmates?' As awkward as that 'game' turned out to be, the DrinkAware poster made me realise that, as a student, I am now a member of a social group which

"it comes down to a question of relevance"

is the subject of a whole host of national campaigns.

But not just those directed at students, Public Service Announcements are everywhere encouraging us to do everything from recycling our rubbish to sneeze into a tissue. When there are so many how effective can they be?

With the number of issues clamouring for attention it's sometimes easier to just ignore them all and, in a fit of anti-government rebellion, dismiss them as modern day propaganda. Yet

as clichéd as it sounds, they are only trying to help.

National Health campaigns are attempting to reduce the pressure on the NHS, if smoking and obesity related illnesses were reduced then it would free up time and resources for use elsewhere. The Change 4 Life campaign for healthy living in kids and adults raised the age-old debate on government involvement in the upbringing of children, 'leave the parenting to the parents'. But it had a noticeable effect on how families ate and exercised and took a step towards reducing childhood obesity.

However, when faced with an advert for teaching recruitment or a reminder about self-assessment tax returns most of us immediately ignore their pleas. Does that then reduce the impact of campaigns encouraging us to recycle and 'know your limits'?

Tiresome as they are, it comes down to a question of relevance. Campaigns have an intended audience, smoke free adverts are just another to ignore for a non-smoker, but for someone looking to quit it could be their ideal answer.

Unfortunately as a student body we are the target of a whole host of public service announcements. Although I think as first year progresses it'll be nice to have a gentle reminder pinned to the kitchen wall. No one wants to be labelled the 'puker'.

The Burning Question:

This edition, *Nouse* asked:

Which bus service have you used most frequently this academic year?

180 people voted, with the majority stating

FTR



112 people voted
FTR

(62%)

68 people voted
Pullman

(38%)

To join the latest debate and read exclusive web content, go to www.nouse.co.uk/comment

Letters

Nouse welcomes your letters. Please indicate if they are not intended for publication.

Email letters@nouse.co.uk or write to:

Nouse, Grimston House, Vanbrugh College

Privacy? What privacy?

Dear *Nouse*,

I'm a citizen of Vanbrugh College and there's a question I need to ask; why is it so easy for people to walk into my block, onto my floor and into my room?

Every other day there is a representative from Tokyo or Fibbers skulking along the corridors on my floor, pinning posters on the fridge and slipping leaflets under my door. I do not want the first thing I do every morning to include sifting through the junk mail; that's why I get my post sent to the Porter's Lodge.

I could live with this invasion if that was where it stopped. However, a few days ago I was woken up by someone banging on my door, and it turns out that, unknown to me, a 50-something woman with a clipboard had come to check my inventory form.

Not only was I not notified by email that the chair I described as "broken" had to be

put outside by the bins, I was also disturbed first thing in the morning without prior warning.

I understand the necessity of staff members being able to enter blocks for health and safety reasons; after appropriate warning of course. However I don't see any reason for anyone else to have any access to the place I live except for the people who actually live there.

Quite honestly I'm longing for the day when Vanbrugh door-locks join Alcuin in the 21st century and it becomes possible for Vanbrutes to sleep safely in their beds without fear of early morning visitors eagerly filling our kitchens and hallways with more useless event paraphernalia.

Everyone is entitled to a little privacy, don't you think?

First-Year History Student

Student Cycle Danger

Dear *Nouse*,

Last week I was cycling along the stretch of road behind Wentworth and I nearly caused myself severe bodily harm. The amount of potholes I had to meander around was frankly dangerous.

It is hard enough attempting to avoid head- phone clad students, cars and small school children without the additional stress of uneven tarmac.

This is not the only problem I experience travelling on and off campus. As there are no streetlights along Heslington Road I often run the risk of hurtling into the horses' field.

It makes me nervous attempting to cycle in such perilous conditions and I genuinely think the university should invest in some solid roads for its cycling students.

Third-Year Cyclist

Freezing Reading Room

Dear *Nouse*,

What is wrong with the heating in the library reading room?

This past week I have been writing an essay and I enjoy the modern and comfortable working area available in the reading room. However I have been unable to sit in there for over an hour without putting on both my scarf and my coat.

It is true, I have bad circulation, but even the people sitting next to me were shivering. The low temperature of the library makes it increasingly difficult to work, and it irritates me that I will have to use the main library, which is full of builders and always packed with other students.

The University needs to take our needs for study spaces seriously, as some of us are here to actually do some work.

Jessica, Third-Year Economics Student

Nouse reads: Blogs of the BNOCs



A new hope for YUSU awareness on campus

Ah, readers! I guess you've been invited to my closed group then. I'll keep you up to date on my inspirational campaign for next year's Sabb spots.

If there's one thing YUSU needs, it's a leader like me, and don't you know it. You've seen me shine as a College Chair over the last year, with the students under my wing going from strength to strength, and now it's time to take my wealth of experience to the next level. We're going to revolutionise the whole of YUSU, for sure, from the top to the bottom. My critics might say that I'm too close to the current Sabbs, but you can't criticise what you don't understand, and it's hard not to be friends with such incredible people when you have meetings with them all the time.

I was uncertain of my candidacy until the cutest fresher approached me in Ziggy's.

Sometimes I lose sight of the fact that not everybody knows me, and when she asked me "are you that guy, you know, erm... Dan Walker?" I couldn't help but laugh in delight at such a naive question. It was only later, as I lay in bed with the fresher in question asleep next to me, that I thought about her words with more clarity and seriousness.

Clearly, YUSU just isn't known to the masses; from inside the imaginary bubble we see it in all of its glory, from the amazing committees that look after us all to spectacular events like the Big Bang. I remain unclear on what I'm actually running for, but you can be sure that I will dedicate every day of my time if elected to making sure that every single student on campus can identify their Sabbatical Officers from a mile away.

We must strive to utilise our hard-earned

campus popularity for the best of reasons. People have to understand that YUSU acts in their interest, and that they are better off knowing it as intimately as possible. We'll use the campus media to the best of our ability of course, putting advertising through them that will surely raise the profile of our events to a another level entirely. We need to make sure they read our blogs and hear our radio shows, to understand what we will do for them.

People say that campus celebrity is real, but I don't agree. While I suppose "we" are the real stars of campus, just as the real world celebrities are the stars of the media circus, there's a big difference between the two; unlike the vacuous faces you see in *Hello!* magazine, we are the closest thing to a benevolent force campus has. That's why it's so important that I get elected, team. To really make a difference.

Hands off my moustache



November, kids? Too bad I'm already there. The lip tickler isn't just for one month of the year, the more refined amongst us (such as my good self) have been rocking it for months, and I'm sick of seeing every Tom Normal on campus flaunting it with such disregard.

I stumbled upon the awful truth last week. Every few weeks me, along with a few other friends, meet up on campus with like-minded people for an underground night somewhere away from the Po-Po.

Riding various dragons, to use a fantastic metaphor for the otherwise incriminating, we hook a soundsystem up and share our greatest finds. Nothing commercial obvs, we wouldn't want to lower the tone too far, but by the end of the night we're all far more enlightened for the experience. It's magical.

But our last meet-up went tragically wrong. As I walked through campus, wearing my best ironic wolf shirt, I was at odds to identify my co-conspirators for the night's debauchery. There were lip plumes everywhere, and all of a sudden I had no idea who I could trust with my Sleighbells vinyls. My friends and I could no more tell a lover of the fantastic from your average N-Dubz peddling moron.

It may be for charity or something like that, but it's ruining my life. The noble ironi-stache was once part of my identity; the badge that gave me exclusive entry into the supreme hilarity club. What an utter inconvenience that November is. Roll on December.



Opposing radical agendas of the campus leftists

If there's one thing that makes a man's blood boil, it's a lack of proper respect for gentlemanly behaviour in political debate. I understand that many of my student contemporaries are from the ever-so-quaint comprehensives and grammar schools, and weren't blessed with the educational insights I received at Winchester, but surely manners are the kind of thing we all pick up at some point. They're what separates us from the barbarian; the ability to engage your fellow man in debate and be able to expect a certain standard of behaviour from them.

It will come as no surprise to regular readers of my blog that yet again I'm at odds with the insufferable leftists of YUSU. Their move to introduce an unelected societies committee is surely yet another way of enforcing a

radical and Labour led agenda on the student body.

I am not one to stand down in the face of adversity though, and summoning every facet of my strength I led the charge against the awful UGM that would see the committee implemented. Messaging students as fast as I could, I overlooked the fact that I sent one message from a charity group I once set up.

And, rather than bothering to address my points, the awful cretins of YUSU set about dismantling my otherwise golden reputation.

It's hard being a Conservative as it is; people are naturally jealous creatures, and it must be tough to see me around campus. I am a successful man, and further than that, my political future looks gradiose. The last thing I need is a bunch of student leftists dragging my

name through the dirt.

Of course, YUSU won their outrageous UGM anyway. Yet again, the left wing engages in the dirtiest tactics to drag down the most successful men in our society. Had they engaged in a fair and honest debate, we would have undoubtedly picked up the 60 votes required to protect our democracy. It's that exact same thuggish behaviour that saw the beautiful party HQ in Milbank smashed up last week.

Still, they won't be laughing soon. Father assures me I'm being whispered about for a safe seat next election, and once I'm in parliament we'll soon see who the successful student politician is. Until then though, I'll just be fighting for the true Britain against the socialistic brutality of the leftists on campus.

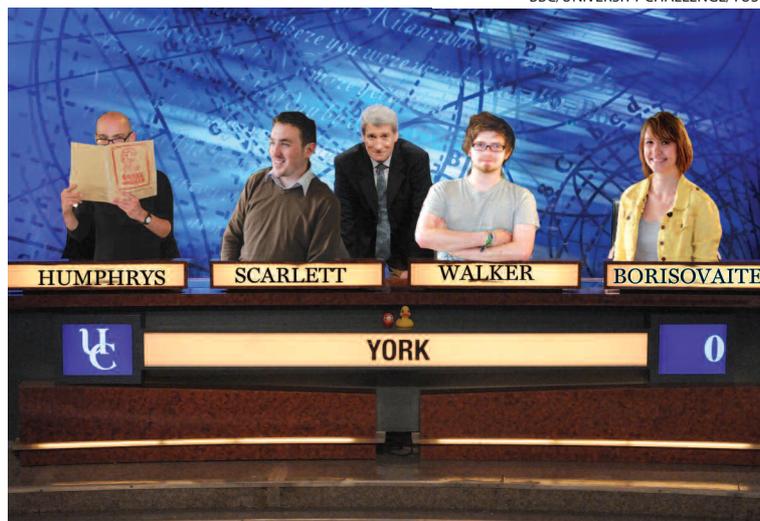
Campus Snapshots

FLICKR/FACEBOOK



'I'm flying without wings'

BBC/UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE/YUSU



FLICKR/YUSU



'Pussy Galore, you say?'

GlobalFocus

ARGENTINA. Rescuers took over 6 hours in attempts to pull three year old, Vanessa Mamani to safety after she fell down a 100 ft well in Argentina. Argentine President Cristina Kirchner described the rescue as a "miracle."



SHIVZ



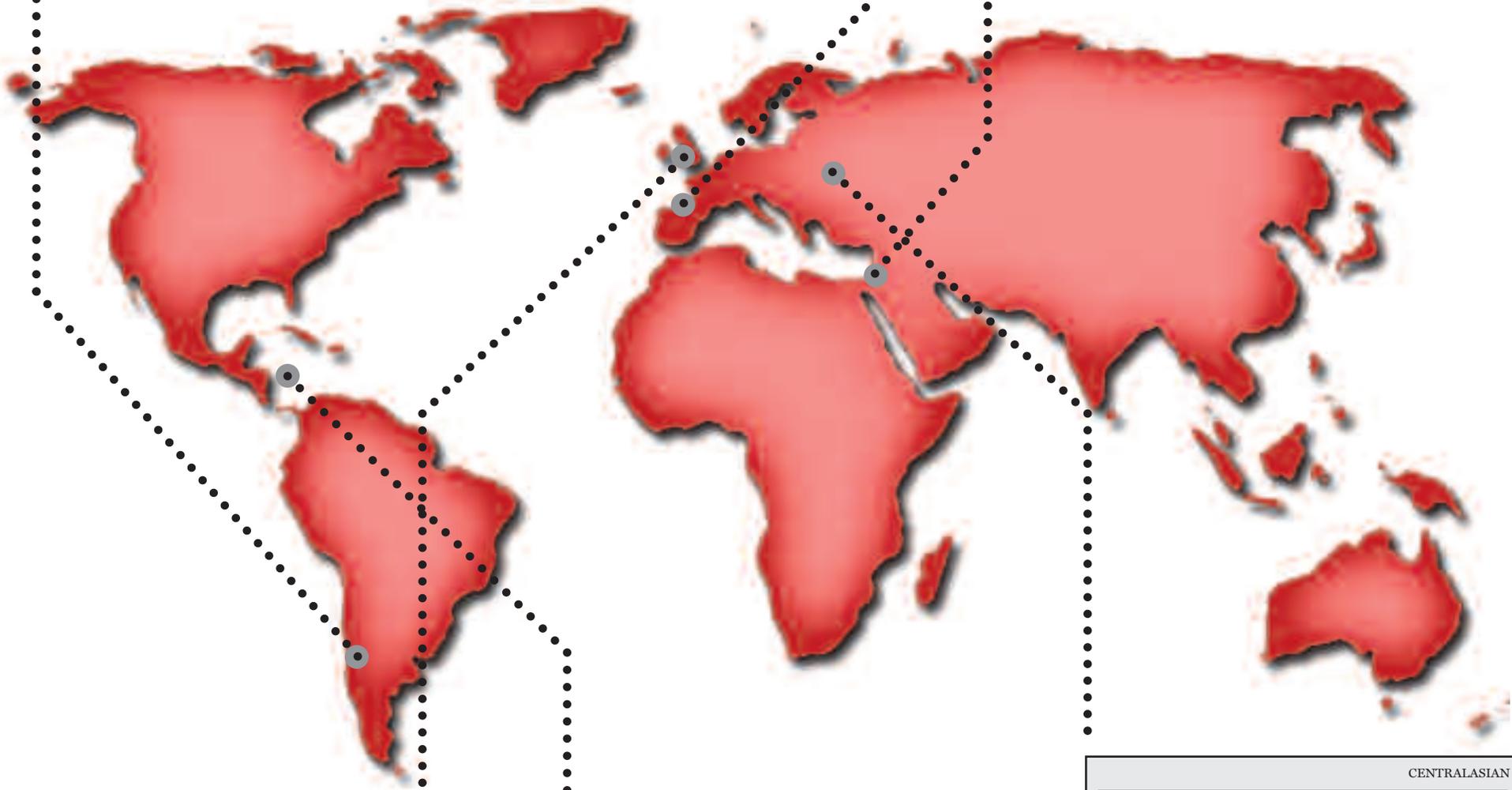
HUMBLESLOVE

GHAJAR, LEBANON. Israel has approved the withdrawal of its troops from the northern half of a village deemed by the UN to be part of Lebanon. Ghajar has been held by Israel since the 1967 six-day war.

FRANCE. A French judge has thrown out a case brought by the parents of a girl named Zoe Renault, paving the way for car making giant Renault to name their new car the "Zoe."



DMITRY VALBERG



STEVE PUNTER



BRITAIN. The Ministry of Defence has come under intense scrutiny following leaked documents, published in the Daily Telegraph, from the defence review. David Cameron has spoken out against his Defence Secretary Liam Fox, who has since denied any knowledge of the leak.

CAP-HAITIEN, HAITI. Rioting and protests erupted in Cap-Haitien as a result of anger and desperation in the aftermath of a cholera epidemic that has claimed over 1,000 lives. There has been widespread looting and burning with two protestors shot dead by security forces.



SWIATOSLAW WOJTKOWIAK

CENTRALASIAN



MOSCOW, RUSSIA. Prominent Journalist Oleg Kashin was beaten half to death outside his home in Moscow last week. The attack was shockingly brutal with Kashin's fingers, jaw and one of his legs broken.

Benefits of cutting MPs

Joe Cormack
 POLITICAL CONTRIBUTOR

THE BILL proposing a cutback of MPs from 650 to 600, and a comprehensive redrawing of the constituency boundaries in the UK was debated and passed through the House of Lords last week. Criticisms of the proposals have been fierce, including accusations that the Coalition are attempting to 'rig' the parliamentary system to their own advantage through a blatant form of Gerrymandering.

The Coalition claims the constitutional changes will improve the fairness and equality of our democratic system, achieved in one way by reducing the gaping disparity between the numbers of voters in constituencies. A comparison of two 'As' should highlight the problem: Ashford in Kent has an electorate of 81,000, whereas Aberavon in West Wales has a mere 50,000. The Government says this is an unacceptable state of affairs that disproportionately benefits Labour in urban areas, particularly in Wales and Scotland.

Whilst boundaries do need to be adjusted according to population, the Coalition seems to have conveniently forgotten about the far higher percentage of unregistered voters in urban areas. This could be seen as their attempt to eschew the balance of favour to the suburbs and shires, their traditional heartlands.

The reduction of MPs seems attractive at first glance. After all, they are only mildly less unpopular than bankers in the aftermath of the expenses scandal, and any



ANTMOOSE

move against them will get a certain amount of populist backing. Many will also praise the reduction as good economic sense in hard times, with a reported annual saving of £12m. Yet the perils of cutting back our representatives in Parliament far outweigh any reason for it.

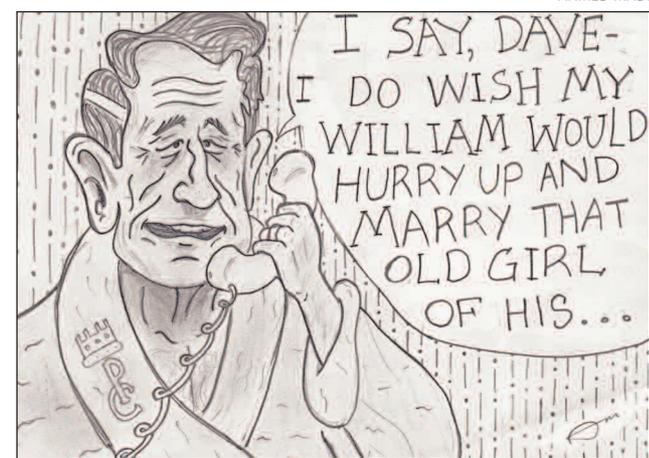
We have to understand that the proposed House of Commons will contain fewer MPs than at any time since the Second World War. With our population continuing to grow, each constituency will contain around 105,000 people, resulting in less representation for the electorate and less contact within constituencies.

Perhaps the reform should look instead at curtailing the amount of Ministers in Cabinet, which has steadily risen (Cameron has 14 more than Thatcher), whereas the amount of MPs has not. A reduction of MPs but not Ministers will further inhibit Parliament's ability to perform the

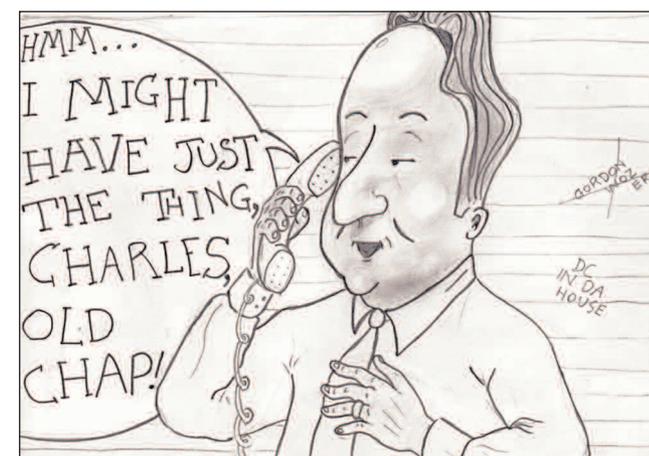
vital functions of scrutiny and checks and balances. The Commons is already a poor excuse for a legislative body in regard to these things; just think back to the way Tony Blair was able to force any bill through Parliament. With Cabinet left intact, it will be able to behave even more autocratically in response to a further emasculated House of Commons.

To put true Coalition intentions in the spotlight, simply observe the contradictions of how the Conservatives have pushed for the reduction of MPs and boundary changes, in the name of a fairer and more representative system, but a change that they stand to highly benefit from.

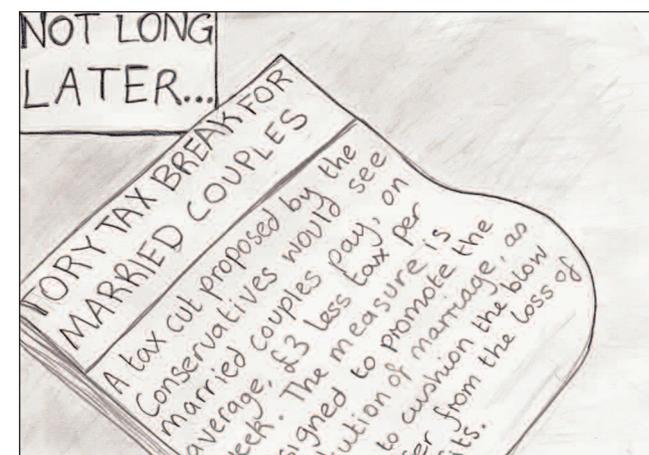
Compare this to the Conservative's decision to campaign against a change to the more proportional AV voting system and you realise they are only seeking a better future for their party, and not a stronger future for British Democracy.



AHMED MADI



GORDON GOBLE
 DC IN DA HOUSE



Final Nail in Coffin for Italian Prime Minister?

Alexander Prowse
 DEPUTY POLITICS EDITOR

THE CONTINUED political crisis in Italy has escalated once again after four coalition members resigned, in an attempt to remove Silvio Berlusconi from power. The resignation of Deputy Minister Adolfo Urso, Europe Minister Andrea Ronchi and undersecretaries Roberto Menia and Antonio Buonfiglio, leave the Prime Minister without a majority in the lower house of Parliament.

These four politicians are members of the Freedom and Future party, led by parliamentary speaker Gianfranco Fini. Fini left Berlusconi's People of Freedom party to start the Freedom and Future party this summer, and has since worked alongside the Prime Minister as a coalition. However, Fini declared earlier this month that the 73 year old should stand down in a speech at his party's first convention.

This came as a shock to the billionaire businessman, as Fini has continually supported him since his entry into Italian politics back

in 1994.

Berlusconi, who just recently had to withstand a vote of confidence in September, will have to face another vote on his leadership on December 14th. This will crucially be after the Budget, which is due within the next fortnight. If the Prime Minister loses this vote, it would most certainly trigger early elections.

Reports in Italy also state that Mara Carfagna, a former model who was hand-picked by

"[Berlusconi] has been good at winning elections, and less good at governing"

Stefano Folli
Columnist

Berlusconi to be Minister for Equal Opportunities, is strongly considering walking out of government due to the irreconcilable differences within the coalition party.

Supporters of the Prime Minister believe he can withstand



CIUPIX

The party could be over for the powerful billionaire playboy

pressure from his former ally and retain power until his third term ends in 2013. This comes at a time when recent polls show that Berlusconi's approval rating has fallen to its lowest ever level of 35%. The strength Berlusconi feels he has is in the lack of alternatives

in the fragile Italian political system. His party still maintain a healthy majority in the Senate, and Fini's opposition have been portrayed as a faction disturbing the business of government.

However the billionaire is no stranger to controversy, and this

negative publicity has continually angered politicians and the electorate alike. Roberto Menia stated that it had 'not helped [Italy's] international credibility.'

Berlusconi changed the name of his Forza Italia party to People of Freedom when it merged with the National Alliance in 2007, although the political slander has continued to dog the Italian and his party.

It has not been helped by his colourful private life, with his 19 year marriage to Veronica Lario ending in divorce earlier this year.

The most recent scandal involves the release of a 17 year old belly dancer from a police cell, allegedly after a phone call from the Prime Minister's office though Police maintain they operated within the rules.

In addition to the scandal, the Italian economy is faltering. Fini stated in his most recent website video that "the moment is serious, and Silvio Berlusconi is responsible".

It seems confidence in Italy will not recover until this prolonged political farce has been resolved once and for all.

Perspectives: is Obama a Lame Duck?

Rebecca Kinahan
POLITICS CONTRIBUTOR

JUST TWO years ago, America happily unburdened all their problems on the knight in shining armour, who was to turn the nightmare into a fairytale. Today, the stallion has ridden away and the dust is slowly settling around America's crumbling dreams. What went wrong?

Two years on, and President Obama's administration has managed to triumphantly lose the midterms. Republicans hold a 239

"The realist will look at the Republican majority, the Democrat minority, the chasm dividing the party's policies, and doubt Obama's ability to get re-elected."

seat majority in the House of Representatives, whilst the Democrats are clinging on to a 53 seat majority in the Senate. What happened to the "united" America that Obama promised? One only needs to look to the re-emergence of the Tea Party Patriots winning in the midterms, to gauge just how low opinion of the President has sunk. 58% of those polled disapprove of Obama's economic policies, whilst 53% disapprove of his handling of taxes. This is whilst unemployment has risen to 10.2 %.

The list goes on. Americans now fear the 'too liberal' President they voted in, calling for a return to the "founding values".

Somewhere between health-care reform, an ambiguous foreign policy and the economic crisis, Obama lost his followers. The optimist will look at the midterms; pat Obama's back and say "you'll do better next time". The realist will look at the Republican majority, the Democrat minority, the chasm dividing the party's policies, and doubt Obama's ability to get re-elected. Even Sarah Palin is beginning to think that her designer suits will beat Obama in 2012.

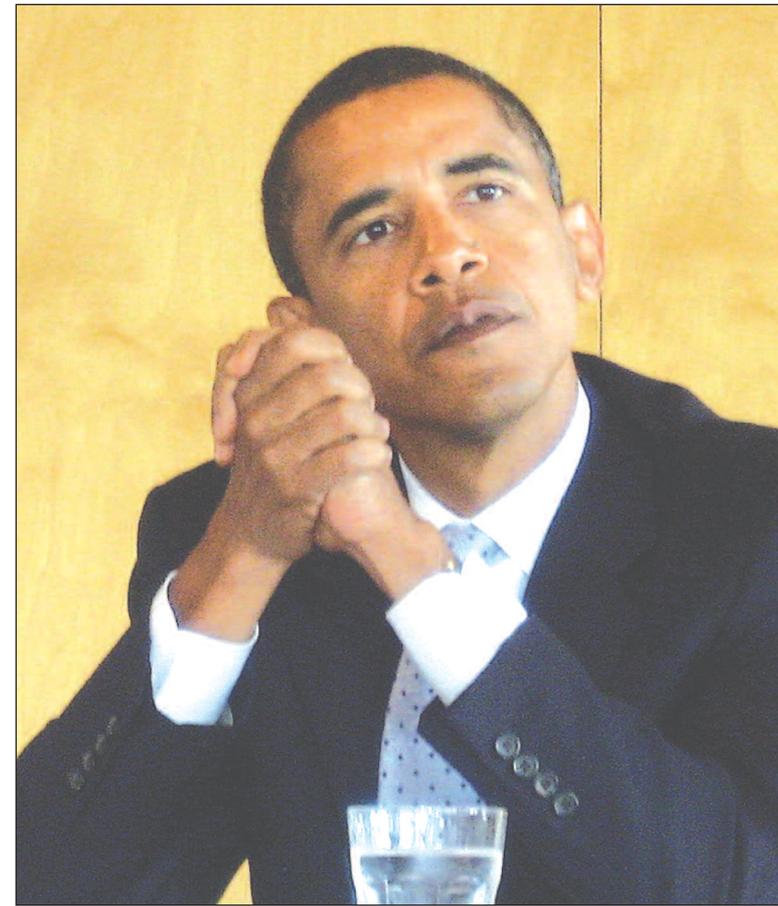
Critics suggest that Obama has lost touch with the ordinary man on the street. Ohio's John Boehner called for Obama to "change course". But they've got it wrong. Obama, thanks to the midterms, is very much aware of Joe Bloggs who wants his job back. Even if Obama changed course, cut spending, reigned government in and reversed the healthcare bill, America would still be unhappy.

Obama's greatest problem is not the economy or even his broken promises, it's the American people's inflated expectations of a man they believed would provide a cure-all to an ailing society. America's voters offloaded their problems onto him two years ago, expecting an immediate solution, but when the quick fix did not occur, they fell into discontent.

Until Americans stop viewing the President as a prince who will save the world, Obama is going to continually fail. America never elected a President, they elected a superhero. Only when Americans view Obama as the mere mortal he actually is, will he ever be able to hope for success.

Oliver Wheatley
POLITICS CONTRIBUTOR

BY HIS own admission, President Obama took a "shellacking" at the midterm elections this November. The media reaction since has been



JURVETSON

considerably shortsighted, articulating little but doom and gloom for the man who stood atop the proverbial pedestal less than two years ago. There are however, many reasons to believe that the midterm

defeats are a blessing in disguise.

Incumbents almost always lose seats at the midterms. The only recent exception to this rule occurred during the second year of George W. Bush's presidency, but that might be viewed as a post-9/11 anomaly. Ronald Reagan took a

Those who thought Obama would remain in his lofty heights forever were sadly misguided. It was only a matter of time before

"Incumbents almost always lose seats at the midterms."

Obama came crashing back down to Earth following the hype of 2008. The spread between Obama's highs and lows with the public has created an artificial response to the November midterm results. The Democratic congressional losses seem far worse than they were, especially when one considers that Congress was artificially Democrat-heavy due to Bush's incompetence and the free-rider effect many congresspersons enjoyed following the hubbub of Obama's media sensation.

It is true that significant change will now be far harder for Obama to effect, but the Republicans' refusal to enact policy will allow the President to continue to depict the Republican party as the party of 'no'. Progress requires cooperation and America cannot move forward if it is hamstrung by its own divisions.

A second term for Obama is no guarantee, by any means. If the economy continues to dive, Obama's future may be particularly bleak. However, if trends shift, he may once again be considered America's golden boy. His success will no doubt be determined by the competition he faces in 2012, but I remain convinced that we can ignore the bad press. Obama will win a second term in 2012, and he will win it decisively.

The Spectre and Spectacle of Sarah Palin



POLITICAL EDGE
Steven Hirschler

IT SHOULD be no surprise to anyone that Sarah Palin announced in a recent television interview that she is considering running for the office of President of the United States.

In the last two years, Palin has become a household name, distinguished of course from the world-travelling Monty Python comedian. In terms of global reach, though, the former governor of Alaska has Michael beat.

Palin's name appears in the headlines of newspapers as far flung as Norway and Kenya, and the global media continues to fuel the flame first ignited on 29 August 2008, the day Palin was named Senator John McCain's Vice Presidential running mate.

During the run-up to the midterm elections in November, Palin became the Tea Party's

revered figurehead and was crucial to the fledgling movement's rapid mobilisation and astonishing political success. Following what many viewed as a resounding win for Republicans in the midterms, Palin issued a one-minute advertisement celebrating the party's achievements and encouraged its support-

"I just do not think [Palin] has those leadership qualities, that intellectual curiosity, that allows for building good and great policies."

Lisa Murkowski
Senator, R-Alaska

ers to continue to "shake up" the American political system.

While Sarah Palin refers to the

media as "lamestream", she goes to great lengths to put herself, and her family, in the media spotlight. She is a contributor on Fox News and she is now starring in her own reality television show titled 'Sarah Palin's Alaska'.

While the Guardian's Michael White says this sort of common appeal will doom Palin's political chances, I am not so confident. Palin may not be paving the typical path to the White House, but her 'roguish' approach may be what voters are looking for in 2012. If the congressional midterm results are any indicator, Palin is just getting started.

In an interview with ABC's veteran anchor, Barbara Walters, Sarah Palin stated she believed she could beat Barack Obama in a future election, saying: "I'm looking at the lay of the land now, and trying to figure that out, if it's a good thing for the country, for the discourse, for my family - if it's a good thing."

Interestingly, despite Palin's



DAVID SHANKBONE

conjured self-determination, a run for presidency may not be her decision to make. The Republican Party is not as united in their love for Palin as Tea Party zealots would have us believe. Palin mustered all of her clout in supporting Joe Miller, a congressional hopeful in Alaska. When he lost by a small

margin following a count of write-in votes on 17 November, Alaska's incumbent Republican Senator, Lisa Murkowski, was quick to distance herself from Sarah Palin, stating: "Endorsements from outside may not have as much pull [in Alaska] as they do in the Lower 48".

Murkowski told CBS News that she could not support Palin for president. "She would not be my choice," Murkowski said. "I just do not think she has those leadership qualities, that intellectual curiosity, that allows for building good and great policies."

If leadership qualities were consistently the things American citizens valued when entering a voting booth, I think I could share Michael White's hopeful sentiment that Sarah Palin is "not electable". However, this is the era of Facebook and reality television and it would not be the first time America elected a movie star to the office of President. Sarah's not doomed, Michael; we are.

Release of pro-democracy leader

FRANZ PATZIG

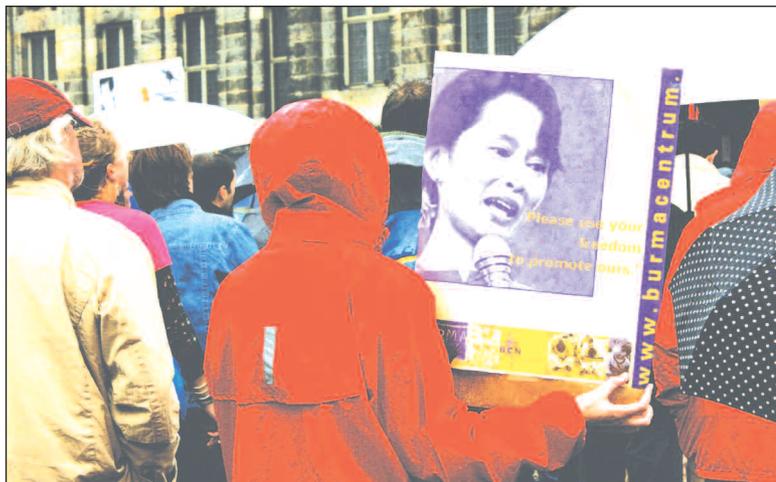
Rose Troup Buchanan
 POLITICAL CONTRIBUTOR

AUNG SAN SUU KYI, the Burmese pro-democracy leader, was released from house arrest on Saturday, 13 November. Speaking to the jubilant crowds outside her house that evening, Suu Kyi said: "There is a time to be quiet and a time to talk. People must work in unison. Only then can we achieve our goal." The Nobel Peace Prize Laureate has been frequently detained over the last 15 years due to her opposition of the ruling military junta.

Her release comes six days after Burma's first general election in 20 years handed victory to the military's State Peace and Development Council. Many have described the elections as a "sham", with Andrew Heyn, British Ambassador to Burma, labeling the elections a "complete failure".

Daughter of the revered General Aung San, Suu Kyi studied at Oxford University and has long been at the forefront of the pro-democracy movement in Burma. Adored by the Burmese people, who call her simply "the Lady", her plight captured the imagination of the international community and helped keep Burma in the global spotlight.

The scenes of jubilation greeting Suu Kyi's release are merited, but Burma's issues are by no means solved. Zoya Phan, international co-ordinator at Burma Campaign UK, said: "The release of Aung San Suu Kyi is about public relations,



Suu Kyi's supporters celebrate following her long awaited release

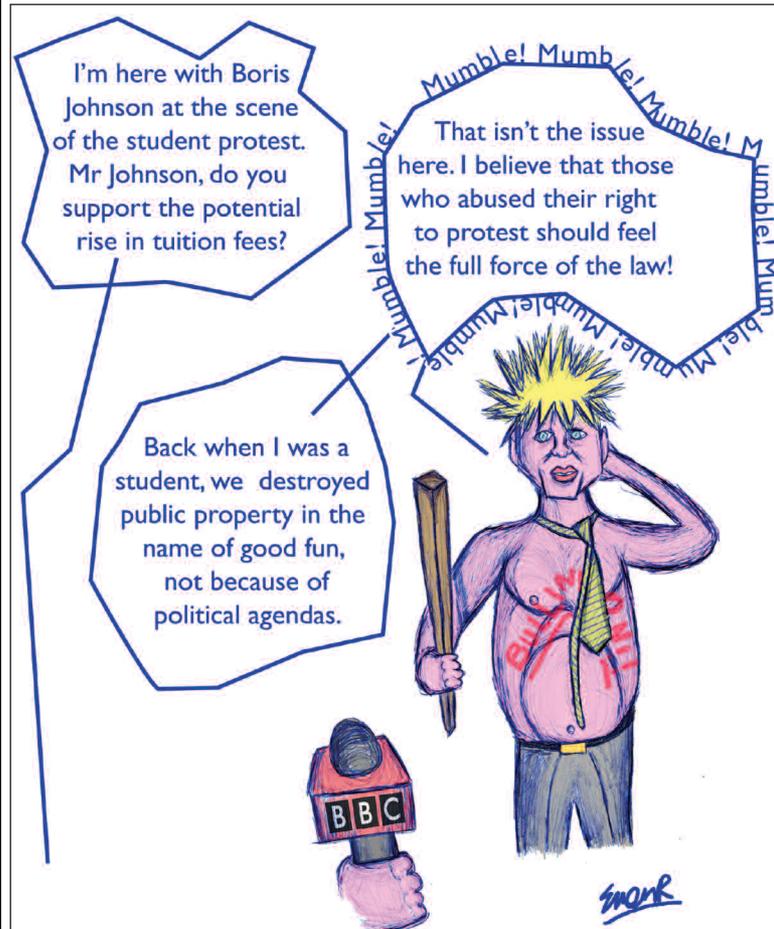
not democratic reform. I am thrilled to see our democracy leader free at last, but the release is not part of any political process. Instead, it is designed to get positive publicity for the dictatorship after the blatant rigging of elections on November 7."

Burma, renamed Myanmar by the military junta, has a dark history of human rights abuses and corruption that continue to this day. The junta, headed by General Than Shwe, responds both swiftly and harshly at the first sign of dissent. Most recently, the 2007 monks' protest resulted in thousands imprisoned and a chilling absence of robed figures on the streets of Ragoon. There are still 2,200 political prisoners today; all of them are in conditions that Suu Kyi admits are far worse than anything she endured.

With her freedom, Aung San Suu Kyi is once again in a position to implement real change. However, she must tread carefully in order to appease both the military junta, who will be looking for any excuse to remove her from the public eye again, and her grassroots supporters. The level of adoration she inspires has allowed many Burmese to dream of a better, brighter future, but with her release also comes massive expectations.

The path toward progress will be difficult. Following Suu Kyi's visit to a local AIDS clinic on Thursday, the government ordered the facility to close its doors. Suu Kyi is faced with the burden of decades of hope, and whether she can fulfill those expectations is a question no one, least of all she, can answer.

Thanks, Boris.



SIMON RAMZI

Following the student protests in London earlier this month, London Mayor Boris Johnson offered his opinion on the matter. Approaching the incident from his unique perspective as a former rebel-rousing member of Oxford's Bullingdon Club, Johnson said he was "appalled that a small minori-

ty...shamefully abused their right to protest."

"This is intolerable," Johnson exclaimed, "and all those involved will be pursued and they will face the full force of the law." Johnson's comments have fallen a bit flat for some as they find it difficult to separate the Mayor from his past.

Irish Republic expected to receive bail-out loan

MLLERUSTAD

Sam Shepherd
 POLITICAL CONTRIBUTOR

THE GOVERNOR of the Central Bank of Ireland, Patrick Honohan, has said that he expects the Irish Republic to accept a loan estimated to be in the region of tens of billions of Euros.

Mr Honohan's remarks came before talks began with representatives from the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Commission over the nation's finances.

Honohan told RTE radio: "It'll be a large loan because the purpose of the amount to be advanced or to be made available to be borrowed is to show that Ireland has sufficient firepower to deal with any concerns of the market. That's the purpose of it."

This handout may be seen as a massive loss of sovereignty for the Republic, as their survival and solvency would now be solely reliant on officials from Brussels.

Dublin's borrowing costs have soared since late October as concerns about the banks' growing liabilities and EU moves to restructure Euro-zone debts has unsettled investors. Ireland has one of the



Other European Union countries may fund a bailout for the Republic

highest government deficits as a proportion of GDP in the Euro-zone.

The Irish government are now in a position where they cannot feasibly go against the advice of its Euro-zone partners and its central

bank, potentially devastating the economy should they choose to do so.

Some EU leaders are suggesting that it is ultimately up to the Irish government as to whether or not they accept the bail-out. French

Finance Minister Christine Lagarde told the BBC: "It's a matter of national sovereignty within a group that is clearly supportive, that has a joint common good which is our currency."

"British Chancellor George Osborne has pledged £7 billion in support"

However, Deputy Prime Minister Mary Coughlan hinted that few concessions on policy will be made to strike a deal. This was suggested by French and German politicians who felt the low level of corporation tax in Ireland could be raised in return for financial assistance. The government plans to announce a four year austerity plan next week.

Leading share indexes including the FTSE 100 in London were all up at least 1% after the news of a potential bail-out broke on Thursday morning.

There have, nevertheless, been concerns about the effects an Irish

bail-out could have on the UK economy. Whilst Chancellor George Osborne has pledged support of up to £7 billion to prop up Ireland's faltering banks, it is thought that this would add further to the mounting public debt. Osborne's pledge to use taxpayers' money to support the Irish economy has elicited the ire of some MPs that are less sympathetic to Ireland's woes.

However, although city analysts are expecting the UK economy to cope, many wonder if Britain should be drawn in to sustaining the Irish financial system. Allister Heath, editor of London financial paper City AM, commented that "the UK banks ought to be able to cope" but warned that UK aid "may still inflict some pain, however, and slow the recovery."

Formal talks concerning the bailout commenced in Dublin late last week and the Government is desperately hobbling together an economic plan that will bring about a total of £15 billion in savings. Severe welfare cuts are expected as well as increased water and property taxes.

The road ahead is unclear for Ireland, but the pursuit of a solution is imperative.



The Mixer

Asfahani puts Wogan to shame in pole dancing tour de force

THE MIXER is a big fan of charity. We think that uber-telethons where the world and their D-List wife turn up to promote their latest album, tour or work-out DVDs are works of unalloyed altruism not seen since they days of St Francis of Assisi.

York Sport as a body are not unused to selfless acts. Every week they bust their proverbial humps to make sure that the myriad administrative duties needed to make BUCS fixtures run smoothly are completed. Just ask the Rugby firsts.

That's why it was no surprise when York Sport President Sam Asfahani stepped up to the plate, or pole, to deliver a lesson in the innate beauty of fluid movement and grace, unmatched since the days of Darcy Bussell or Kevin Bacon in Footloose.

Not content with attempting to revolutionize Heslington's sporting micro-climate "Sam the Man", as he shall henceforth be known, has now turned his attentions to

saving the world, one sensual, American Football tinged pole dance at a time.

Sport has always played a role in charity of course. Where would the developing world be without Robbie Williams' hollow, vanity project football matches such as this year's Soccer Aid?

Those who accuse Robbie, mainly famous for pointing the microphone towards the crowd at his gigs, of using the matches as a chance to knock about on the same turf as some of his footballing idols are simply missing the point.

The point of the projects is to raise awareness. Awareness that Jonathan Wilkes should never, in the name of all that is holy, be allowed on the same patch of turf as footballing demi-god Zinedine Zidane.

TM may mock Williams' efforts but at least his self-serving nonsense actually raised some dough. If only Premiership footballers could bring themselves to do the same. In 2007 Dr Noreena

Herz launched the Mayday for Nurses campaign urging footballers to donate just a day's wages to health workers working in circumstances that were not reflected by their £19,000 starting salary.

Problems were reported in the collection of the pledges, rather like when a younger sibling comes asking for the sponsored walk money you promised them and you mumble something about not having change before making a hasty exit.

Not only that but certain clubs decided to opt out almost entirely, presumably as conscientious objectors to the hateful dogma of helping nurses. Chelsea made a cursory club donation, rather missing the point of the gimmick that made the fund such an interesting idea, and Arjan de Zeeuw, then of Wigan, was the only Latics player to contribute.

Perhaps they flung the needy public service workers some JJB merchandise instead or gave them some tickets for a home game – Jesus knows the locals don't want them. The atmosphere at the DW Stadium is akin to a particularly sombre James Blunt gig.

To try and rescue sports reputation in the domain of human kindness TM has selflessly donated this column to the cause of unashamed cynicism and bitterness. You can thank us later.



URGENT NEWSFLASH 1

Had the ball used in the Derwent Wentworth game been a shard of glass, and had it cruelly lacerated an innocent child then a real tragedy may have occurred. When will red cards end this chaos?

URGENT NEWSFLASH 2

Sales of cotton wool have trebled amongst college footballers as terrified players seek to minimise the inevitable maiming they will suffer upon entering the cauldron of fear/hate that is the 22 Acres.

Octopush extends its reach

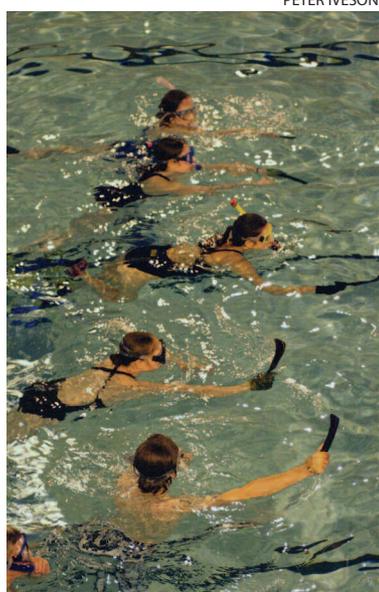
Sam Morgan
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR

SPORT CAN be the one safety net when you first come to university. It can be the guiding hand, the familiar face, the one piece of normality for freshers ousted from the sanctuary that is school or college and thrown into a world of unknowns.

All the most common sports are, of course, here at York for everyone to enjoy. But what if you fancy a change from the normal? What if you want to try something unusual, fun, challenging, and still physically demanding? If that is the case then look no further than Octopush.

Founded in 2006 the club has gained somewhat of a cult following around campus. Despite initially struggling with funding and being able to entice people to try something relatively unheard of, Octopush has developed into a fully-fledged sport in its own right.

Now, despite this claim you may still be wondering just what Octopush is. In short, it is an underwater version of the common form of hockey. Six players compete for control of the puck – known as a 'squid' – and attempt to



PETER IVESON

push or flick the puck into the opposing team's goal. Play takes place entirely underwater and each person is aided by a face mask, snorkel, fins, and Octopush's very own version of a miniature hockey stick – a 'pusher'. Apart from that the only other thing you need is the ability to hold your breath long enough to get amongst the action.

Once underway the game is

surprisingly fast-paced. While one competitor surfaces gasping for air, another duck-dives into the water. The game is intense and York take their performance seriously – they are part of the North-East One League, participate in Student Nationals each year, and compete in the Tri-Sport League on campus – but insist that their main priority is having fun and team-bonding. Social secretary Vicki Exworthy said she had never tried Octopush before university but "having done swimming and hockey saw it as a great opportunity to combine the two and meet some more people along the way". Isis Redford agreed that it is more the "welcoming spirit of the club that keeps you coming back" than the cut-throat imperative to win at all costs.

The camaraderie between players is obvious. In the sessions that take place on Monday and Saturday players arrive promptly and help stack the equipment into the transport that they arrange themselves. The team comprises of all sorts of different shapes and sizes and men and women play on the same team. No experience of the sport is necessary and you get

the sense that they all do their best to get the most from the time they spend in pool; whether it be passing on advice to a novice or securing a match-winning goal.

In my first attempt Adam Furness took time out from his own practice to teach me the basics of diving, manoeuvring, and puck control. I even got involved in one of their games and though my

"(It's the) welcoming spirit of the club that keeps you coming back"

Isis Redford

input was limited to flailing wildly on the surface of the water, I got a real sense of the excitement involved in such a little-known sport.

Following their practice session the team headed to the pub to have a few drinks and relax in the company of friends. And that is another good thing about Octopush at York: the socials.

Octopush factfile

Invented in 1954 by Portsmouth based diver Alan Blake, Octopush has been growing in stature ever since. There are roughly 95 clubs recognised by the British Octopush Association and this year will see the 52nd National Championships, with Southport Genesis the current champions.

Captain Erdi Babili was keen to point out that the emphasis is on fun – there is a distinct lack of any pretentiousness – and the bi-weekly gatherings provide an opportunity for all to get together, dress up, and have fun. The nicknames assigned to each member reinforce the close-knit structure of the team and add to the informal, friendly atmosphere. Just ask 'Pringles'.

So if you're looking for something totally different look no further than Octopush. It is a great way to get fit, have a laugh, and make some friends along the way.

The Octopush club meet 21:00 – 22:00 on Monday and 16:00 – 16:45 on Saturday. More details can be found on their website: www.uyoc.co.uk

Show me the money

RONNIE MACDONALD

SERIOUSLY SILLY

Henry Cowen
SPORTS EDITOR

A FEW weeks ago, during a press conference, Ian Holloway snapped. He was so angry he used the now legendary insult of: “you absolute person”. That anger was directed at agents. It is often suggested, by people other than Holloway as well as the affable Bristolian himself, that agents are ruining football, but is this really fair? I spoke to David Baldwin, agent for a large number international footballers around the world, about what his job as an agent entails, whether loyalty remains in the game and, crucially, whether football would be better off without the middle-man?

We hear about agents all the time. They come out and tell us that so-and-so isn't happy at this club or that Joe Bloggs wants a new contract but what do they do when their name isn't in the papers? “My job in a nutshell is very simple”, says Baldwin. “I try and take care of everything that allows my clients to only worry about what happens on the park. If all they are concerned about is their performance on the pitch then I would like to think I am doing a good job.”

So if it is all about releasing the pressure on players and allowing them to flourish on the pitch then what is the problem? “If you've got £100million a year going straight towards making agents richer, how does that help? We must stop throwing the money that we do out of the game and straight into the hands of agents. It can't be right.” Gordon Taylor, Chief Executive of the PFA, clearly disagrees.

Without being involved in football it's very hard to know the truth. Mediators that works tirelessly to improve the lot of their players or money-grabbing busi-

“Despite popular opinion we are very good for the game and in 99% of the industry are much appreciated by clubs and players.”

David Baldwin

nessmen exploiting both players and clubs for their own ends? The truth is, rather predictably, probably somewhere in the middle.

That leads to the question of power? Regardless of their motives are agents pawns in the wider world of football or are they the grand chess-masters? Baldwin thinks that the role of agents is overplayed: “I don't think that agents wield as much power as people like to believe” he says, “The player and the clubs have all the power. I try to explain to players that I simply work for them. I can advise them and give them all the advice in the world but in the end I work for them and will do what



Aaron Ramsey and Emilio Izaguirre are just two of Baldwin's many clients, but is he doing them a service or is he using them?

Sports Editor **Henry Cowen** talks to football agent David Baldwin, who represents 25 internationals around the world, about his job and whether he's ruining football. The outcome is far less cynical than one might like to believe.

they ask me to do.”

So it is, apparently, Baldwin's players, who include Arsenal's Aaron Ramsey and Celtic's Joe Ledley, who dictate the terms. It's a world away from the image of agents telling clubs that their players are fed up and then attempting to negotiate a move away from their current club in order to secure themselves a portion of the deal. Perhaps we need that image in order to restore our faith in football, we don't want to believe that the players are in the wrong; we don't want to believe that loyalty has left the game that we so dearly love.

Once again Baldwin does his best to dismiss this theory: “I think loyalty does still exist in football. I still have my first three clients from ten years ago, I would say that is very loyal.”

When asked about football's history of one-club players and the seemingly irrefutable evidence that this is going out of the game, Baldwin is quick to point out that we cannot just blame footballers for this perceived lack of loyalty: “In regards to the 'one-club player' argument then loyalty is a two-way thing.”

Baldwin continues, “for a Steven Gerrard or a Jamie Carragher and a Ryan Giggs or a Paul Scholes it is both sides - club and player - that have had to be loyal to make that relationship

work. People can't just say players aren't loyal any more when clubs cut players left, right and centre. I'm sure there are a lot of players that would like to be loyal but the clubs don't give them the opportunity anymore. It's a business - for both sides!”

Fans across the country are getting used to the idea that football is a business. It was only last week that the hugely historical and traditional club of Blackburn Rovers acquired new owners in Indian company Venky's. This was a move that was met with considerable appreciation.

Clubs have more money now and thus their players demand more, but would we be better off if agents didn't exist? Essentially, are they bad for football? “It's not a fair statement (that agents are bad for the game) for good honest agents but probably fair for the more unscrupulous ones. We are good for the game in a variety of ways. Most players just simply could not go in and deal with clubs in the way we can, it's not what they do or what they were trained to do.”

Baldwin continues, “they (players) also need that buffer between themselves and their employers. Our relationships with clubs help to find the out of work footballers jobs. We help to trade unwanted players which helps regenerate and transfer money

within the game. Despite popular opinion we are very good for the game and in 99% of the industry are much appreciated by clubs and players.”

Even if Baldwin and his fellow agents are much appreciated by the clubs and players that they

“I can only speak for myself on this one and I can say hand on heart that my players have only ever gone where they have wanted to go...I can't speak for others.”

David Baldwin

serve, it would be fair to say that they are yet to receive the same level of respect from the fans. So why do it? What are the perks to the job? Baldwin recounted some of the moments that have made him most proud to be an agent: “This summer I moved Emilio Izaguirre to Celtic and after having been to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and seeing where he comes from and the level of poverty, just to feel

that you have made a huge difference to his and his family's life forever is quite a proud moment.” He recounts similar moments of pride securing moves for Ramsey and Carl Robinson, his first client who now plies his trade for the New York Red Bulls.

Speaking to Baldwin it is very hard to view agents as the evil, money-grabbing bastards that they are so often portrayed as in the media. Paul Stretford, the now infamous agent of Wayne Rooney, has been blamed in many quarters for Rooney's apparent desire to leave Old Trafford, with some suggesting Stretford engineered the whole fiasco to fill his wallet that bit more, but Baldwin is adamant that players make all the decisions: “I can only speak for myself on this one and I can say hand on heart that my players have only ever gone where they have wanted to go. Again, I can't speak for others.”

In essence, the question remains. Would we be better off with or without agents? We'll probably never be sure but Baldwin has led me to think they aren't as malicious as we assume. As the horribly over-used phrase goes: “don't hate the player, hate the game”. As crude as that may be, it is probably correct. Agents are a necessary evil in the world of football where money now dictates terms

College Football: The

David Ambrozejczyk
Jake Farrell

EVEN IN the sheltered world of Premier League football, where players are employees rather than supporters, there exists an intense passion and rivalry. It should come as no surprise then that the college football league has a tribal quality to it as teams fight for bragging rights each Sunday.

Teams become an important part of their college, a sporting and

social outlet for everyone from Freshers to Post-graduates. The college league provides the same service offered by a society in allowing those involved an opportunity to express their talent in as serious a context as they want to. In the case of the weekly first team games, emotions can run high and sometimes spill over, but never to an extent that is out of step with the rest of the sport. The origins of football, which lie in brutality of public school games, mean that the

JUSTYN HARDCASTLE

game has developed to be extremely passionate, and we have a culture of getting stuck in and hiding few emotions; this is just as big a part our footballing identity as flair and skill is in Brazil.

Amateur football is played vociferously from Hackney Marshes in the south to Wallsend Boys Club in the north and beyond, with a mixture of styles and results. A rough and tumble culture in Sunday League football is an accepted part of the game, but after a couple of unfortunate injuries in as almost as many weeks, thoughts about the level of danger associated with stepping on to a 22 acres pitch have been driven to the fore.

Questions might stem from the way York is structured – collegiate in nature, its sporting community is close knit yet divided in a way that is difficult to explain to an outsider. Also as a proudly academic institution sport takes a back seat for many. Even for those committed minority, who actively choose to participate in sport through the running and captaincy of clubs and teams, it is a welcome distraction from the slog of academia to lace up your boots and turn out for your college on a

Wednesday or Sunday. These factors mean that accusations of a noticeable current of violence running through the league sit uneasily with players who turn out for the

“The tackling isn’t that bad - to say it is violent is jumping on the bandwagon”

**Sam Lewis
Goodricke captain**

competition inherent in football, not the chance to vent a weeks pent up aggression.

And it is that which separates college football, its spirit is distinct to York – players do put in strong challenges and tempers fray regularly but, once the game is done, players get back to what friends do, talking about the games over a beer and speculating on the week to come. In speaking with players you get a sense of what the league means to them and violence is not a part of it. Captains and players talk not of a need to curb excessive tackling or violence but a need for structure and consistency.

Problems with facilities – boggy pitches, a lack of nets or

equipment and whether referees will turn up - are all part and parcel of the weekly routine, consistently associated with how college football has been played for decades. Perhaps now, as colleges look to become more organised, the lack of refereeing provision has been highlighted and with it, the nature of tackling and sportsmanship has come into focus. The issue of disciplinary action is a question that has no easy solution; affiliation with the FA, bringing college football in line with Sunday league teams, could provide a clear framework to run the league, but is also one fraught with red tape. Each college would have to submit to the North Riding FA guidelines, meaning that they would have submit to a club structure of Chairman, Manager and registering each player every season. It would negate traditional college conventions, such as playing for your college one year after leaving, and the reach stretches even further in terms of student welfare, where players could be fined for indiscretions on the pitch, as stated in the FA guidelines.

A more bespoke system, tailored to the unique requirements of the league, would perhaps be more effective and, with a clear mutual understanding between York Sport and team captains as to



Derwent’s Xander Brinkworth shoots for goal in Sunday’s 7-0 win

Goodricke top the league as perfect record continues

JUSTYN HARDCASTLE

Simon Bromley
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

GOODRICKE CAME from a goal down to beat Vanbrugh 2-1 in college football’s top of the table clash. Despite enduring a frustrating first half, Goodricke rallied well to play some impressive attacking football and were unlucky to not have won by more.

Goodricke’s 100% win record had been in doubt in the first half as Vanbrugh captain Phil Taylor found space in the box to convert a Rory Sharpe cross with a well executed volley. Both sides then continued to create chances with James Wilson in the Vanbrugh goal producing a good display to keep his side in the lead.

With Goodricke continually unable to find a breakthrough, their player of the season so far, Jon Sharpe, began to look isolated up front. A series of speculative route one balls to the speedy striker were proving futile.

However, Goodricke came out all guns blazing after the break; an early penetrative run from Sharpe serving as a statement of intent. It was not long before they were rewarded for their efforts, a floated cross from Sam Lewis found Sharpe in the penalty area who headed in the equaliser. Goodricke then quickly added their second in a similar fashion, striker Ben Smith this time providing the cross for Sam Astbury to convert. The ease at which Goodricke took two very similar goals will have left Vanbrugh furious at their poor marking.

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pt
Goodricke	5	5	0	0	+10	15
Derwent	5	4	0	1	+13	12
Vanbrugh	5	3	0	2	+12	9
Halifax	5	3	0	2	+2	9
James	5	2	1	2	0	7
Alcuin	5	1	1	3	-5	4
Wentworth	5	1	0	4	-13	3
Langwith	5	0	0	5	-19	0

Goodricke carried on peppering Vanbrugh’s goal in a period of complete dominance, Lewis forced a goal line clearance and failed to convert a one-on-one breakaway before Smith scuffed a golden opportunity from six yards.

It was hard to believe Vanbrugh were still in the game and with just a few minutes remaining they almost claimed an unlikely draw. Goodricke failed to clear a corner and in the resulting scramble Vanbrugh claimed they had forced the ball over the line, only to be denied by the well positioned referee. Vanbrugh captain Taylor was reluctant to criticise the official, but did sum up his team’s performance as “overall unlucky”, adding they “should have scored more in the first half”.

Sam Lewis, who captains Goodricke, was delighted with the way his team responded after going a goal down, declaring his team

“had better spirit than any Goodricke team I’ve been in”. Clearly this is a Goodricke team with great character, but the way they combine this with genuine talent throughout the line-up is the reason they have cemented themselves at the top of the table.

In today’s other games, Halifax cruised to a 4-0 win over James College thanks to goals from Alex Simon, Matt Mawdesley and two from Conor Brennan. Halifax, much fancied at the start of the season, will be happy to be back on track after two disappointing defeats in recent weeks.

Elsewhere Derwent thumped Langwith 7-0 as Chris Barnett (pen), Andy Jeffries, Dom Henney (2), Josh Baines (2) and Xander Brinkworth all got on the score-sheet. The result means Derwent are still unbeaten since the first day of the season and that their hopes of the title are very much alive.



Sharpe-shooters: Goodricke celebrate victory number five

Meanwhile Wentworth edged a close game with Alcuin 2-1, despite being on the back foot for much of the match. Luke Fleet supplied both of the goals for the victors with Sam Reiss providing Alcuin’s only goal. Alcuin captain Phil Bowers, who was visibly frustrated with the result, thought his side “played well” and that “they had three chances and scored two

goals, we are very disappointed”. Wentworth captain Adam Leadbeater dismissed suggestions that his side did not deserve their victory, arguing that they “played well in patches” and that “Alcuin simply failed to take their chances”.

Additional reporting by Sam Morgan and Christopher Underwood.

case for the defence

how it would be run and enforced, provide a common sense way forward. Such a step seems inevitable as part of the gradual evolution of a system that is clearly working and improving constantly anyway. College Sport Officer Mark Lund held a meeting yesterday with both firsts and second team captains to discuss the increased proliferation of referees throughout the league. As nets and equipment improve perhaps better officiating will provide the finishing touches to a league that amongst its many attributes would not count violence as one.

"The tackling isn't that bad - to say it (college football) is violent is jumping on the bandwagon" said Sam Lewis, Goodricke Captain and third year student who has been part of college football's move

"If college is continually sensationalised, it will carry on putting people off"

Simon Mole
James captain

towards greater professionalism. Lewis shares his levelheaded take

GOAL OF THE TERM
David Kirk has taken to college football with aplomb. The pick of his four goals came against Wentworth as he unleashed a vicious, dipping volley on the half turn from fully 25 yards. There were no histrionics in celebration from the front man, just a nonchalantly raised arm. Expect to see that sight more often as the term progresses.

on the league with a number of prominent players.

Halifax firsts player Ash Daly, who has played at a number of different levels both within and outside of the University system, is unequivocal when asked if conduct on the 22 acres is more violent than elsewhere: "Not in the slightest - University football is if anything, where players there actively go out to hurt you, College is not like that"

Captains seem quite ready to defend the league and some have expressed worry that an unfounded reputation for violence could prove damaging in the long term: James Captain Simon Mole was clear cut "If College is continually sensationalised, it will carry on putting people off"

The perception of the league can be problematic, especially when serious injuries occur, but the over-riding sense is one of pride in a competitive, self run enterprise that is widely appreciated. College sport can be improved in a myriad of areas but eradicating a culture of aggression does not seem to be the major challenge: Phil Bowers, Captain of Alcuin, whose team have seen two leg breaks this year, was controlled in his assessment "Just the officiating needs sorting, but Football is Football. Bad tackles can happen, but college is no more violent than anywhere else".

GUT-WRENCHER OF THE TERM
After his side fought back into the game against Goodricke, James centre back Oscar Lynch will have watched in horror as Jon Sharpe's cross bobbed off his shins and into the back of his own net with just moments to play. Goodricke continued their 100% start to the season, Lynch and James were left ruing a nightmare moment.



Matt Hallam
DERWENT CAPTAIN

IN THE lead up to the Wentworth game Dan Horsfall offered to referee but at the same time said he'd happily step aside if any of our players were uncomfortable with having him officiate against his own college. Having been on the college football scene for over three years now I've seen Dan ref a fair few times and would say he is definitely one of, if not, the best college referees I've seen. Like all referees he won't get everything right but he gives himself the best possible opportunity by keeping up with play.

We were 2-0 up after about half an hour and the game had been played in good spirit. There had been the odd foul here and there but nothing cynical or mali-

HUMILIATION OF THE TERM
Langwith battle in every game they play but their reserves of spirit must have quailed last Sunday. With captain Callum Sheridan missing and star man Bruce Starkey stuck between the posts their ten men went down 7-0 to Derwent, compounding the 8-0 drubbing inflicted when the side's seconds counterparts met in the week. Ouch.

Two weeks ago Derwent Captain **Matt Hallam** was involved in an accidental incident in a match against Wentworth that left him with a broken nose. Does he think that college football is worryingly violent? As he runs us through the experience the answer becomes abundantly clear.

cious, nor had there been any kind of needle between the two sides.

I think one of the Wentworth defenders had attempted to clear the ball out and it bounced loose somewhere around the centre circle between waist and chest height. Wentworth midfielder Andy Suggit, unaware of how nearby I was, began to draw back his foot in an attempt to smash the ball over his shoulder.

At the same time I saw the opportunity to sneak in and head the ball, which I did. I knew then that I was going to get a blow to the head but by that point it was too late and I hit the deck. It was a complete accident. I thought I'd be fine to carry on, but as soon as I sat up there was blood everywhere, and I knew my nose was broken.

Dan dealt with the incident brilliantly and made sure I was OK before letting the game continue. Both teams displayed great sportsmanship for the remainder of the match, I don't think I've ever enjoyed a game of football so much from the sideline, it really was

played in good spirit.

The College League is brilliant and I've always loved playing in it. My Sundays wouldn't be quite the same without it. Some of the highlights of my time at university have been out on the 22 acres on cold winter mornings. It's always been a very competitive league with some very decent teams throughout the years, and I've been lucky to always have a group of players I enjoy playing with.

The college rivalries help to make it what it is and it's always good to have bragging rights over mates from other colleges come lectures on Monday morning. It's all a bit of friendly competition at the end of the day.

I don't think any real hatred exists between teams, and I can't think of any overly physical or dirty games that I've played in. There'll be the odd incident here and there but you shake hands at the end of the game and will probably end up chatting at some point in Ziggy's the following Wednesday.

SURPRISE OF THE TERM
Any team losing the likes of Miles McDermott, Dan Cox and Joe Cooper will struggle but how the mighty Alcuin have fallen is still a surprise. A 2-1 defeat to Wentworth, their first inflicted by the post-grads in five years, further dented their previously formidable reputation. It could be a long term for the College Cup holders.

CAPTAIN OF THE TERM
Sam Lewis has been a constant inspiration to his Goodricke side. He has been bullish about his side's title chances and who could disagree with him. The established order is changing in college football, with Vanbrugh, Halifax and Alcuin still good sides but also eminently beatable. Lewis is at the forefront of the new order.

Half-term report: The Nouse Sport form XI

DAVID AMBROZEJCZYK
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

Ed Foster (Goodricke) - College football's best goalkeeper on recent performances. His form is vital if Goodricke are to maintain their current league position.

Joe Boughtflower (Derwent) - Diminutive he may be, but is producing huge performances for Derwent and is a deserved inclusion; your classic full-back, never stops running.

Will Dodgson (Alcuin) - While Alcuin might be sliding down the table; they have unearthed a gem in the uncompromising and consistent Dodgson, unflappable at the back and a menace going forward.

Josh Baines (Derwent) - Commanding presence at the back and has been a threat at the other end of the pitch as well. Solid and dependable.

Dom Petschak (Halifax) - While 'Fax may have faltered, Petschak has quietly been going about making himself one of the best defenders at college level; imperious against Goodricke despite their 3-1 loss.

Ben Stanier (Vanbrugh) - The assured midfielder has been a class apart, great awareness and touch and always threatening opposition's defences.

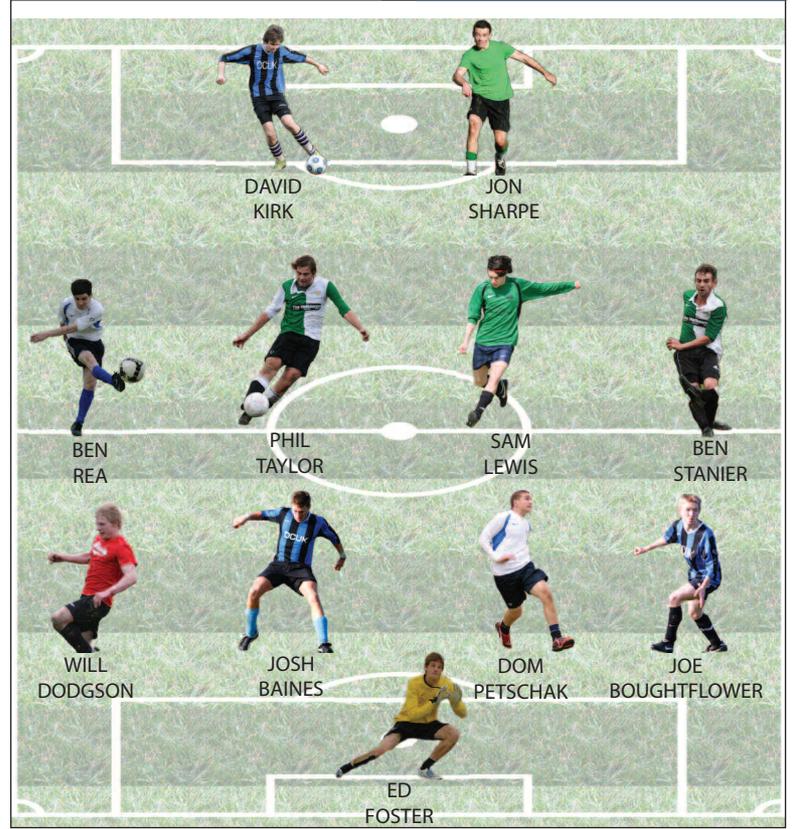
Ben Rea (Halifax) - While Halifax seem to have a revolving door policy in their midfield, Rea is making his mark and is making a lot of noise in a midfield littered with talent. Has chipped in with his share of goals as well.

Sam Lewis (Goodricke) - El Capitan has led from the front, industrious, committed and invaluable to his team. Not bad over a dead ball either.

Phil Taylor (Vanbrugh) - Is simply a cut above at college level and is very difficult to stop when he is playing at his peak, his versatility adds another dimension to his side and he is the beating heart of the Vanbrugh midfield.

Jon Sharpe (Goodricke) - Sharpe simply can't stop scoring for table-topping Goodricke, an absolute certainty for this list, his form has been terrific all term long, whether he lines up on the wing or up front, his link-up play with Sam Lewis continues to flourish. His pace is electric and he is the stuff of defenders' nightmares.

David Kirk (Derwent) - He has had a brilliant term so far and has gone a long way to keeping Derwent in the hunt. Has already bagged a hat-trick, against Vanbrugh, and is now being talked up as one of college football's most dangerous players.



A history of violence?

Nouse picks a team of the term and summarises the ups and downs of the past six weeks.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL >> P22-23



Women's fencers narrowly fail to beat reigning champions Edinburgh

JUSTYN HARDCASTLE

George Bouras
DEPUTY SPORTS EDITOR



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118

YORK WOMEN'S fencing team took on reigning Northern Premier League champions Edinburgh on Saturday in arguably the toughest challenge the York team has faced yet in this their maiden BUCS Northern Premier League season.

York's specialist épéistes Louise Highton and Katharine Gracey were able to engineer a home win in the final weapon but their efforts with the Epée were always going to be in vain after Edinburgh's earlier superiority in the other two weapons.

The team appeared to be in their usual good spirits before the match, but that seemed to be more a product of their modest ambitions rather than assured confidence in their ability to compete with an Edinburgh team containing two international fencers.

The match began with the Sabre and the York fencers' self-doubt initially appeared to be well-placed. Highton and Gracey looked uncomfortable with their least-favourite weapon in hand and failed to register a point between them in the opening two bouts. Becky Ellis was somewhat more successful than her team-mates but still lost her first bout 5-4 before Highton returned to the Piste to beat Edinburgh captain Lisa McKenzie 6-5 and win York's first bout of the match.

It was, however, to be the only bout of the weapon to go York's way and Edinburgh took a huge 45-22 lead into the second weapon, the Foil.

Edinburgh's calibre in the Foil is well-documented, with McKenzie and Catrina Sibert having represented Scotland and England respectively in the weapon at the Commonwealth Fencing Open Championships earlier this year. York, though, appeared to

have put their earlier misgivings aside and battled well to keep pace with Edinburgh's scoring, the highlight being a six-point winning streak for Gracey in a 10-4 fifth bout victory over Amy Burdon, and the weapon ended with Edinburgh sneaking a 45-37 win.

Going into the third and final weapon, York's strongest, the Epée, Edinburgh's early dominance meant they required just 14 points to secure the win. The York trio's performances in the face of defeat were expectedly impressive, though – with Highton and Gracey ranked 34th and 46th in Britain respectively – and the York fencers defeated Edinburgh in seven of the nine bouts.

It took five bouts for Edinburgh, through Lisa McKenzie, to grab the winning points and end the match as a contest, and once the remaining bouts were played out, York had completed a 45-28 victory in the weapon, taking the final score to 118-104.

Edinburgh's prowess in the competition should not be underestimated: the women's team have not failed to win their BUCS league since 2004, and have lost only four times in 40 league matches over six and a half seasons, so although dreams of a York victory to round off a superb calendar year for the team were to be dashed, for the margin of Edinburgh's victory to have been kept as low as 14 points should go down as a great achievement in itself.

Despite the positive aspects of the York side's forays into Premier



The women's fencers have competed manfully, but still sit second bottom in the Northern Premier League

League fencing this season, it is only the University of Manchester, still without a win, who separate York from the bottom of the table at the season's mid-point.

Highton and her team will

contest their third match in seven days away at Birmingham on Wednesday before travelling to Manchester a week later in a crucial run of matches. A win in one of those fixtures could be vital to the

team retaining their Premier League place before they approach the toughest of run-ins away at Edinburgh and home to league leaders Durham.

Octopushing the boundaries

If you think hockey played on astroturf lacks a certain something then maybe try Octopush. Sam Morgan dons his trunks and tries his hand at underwater hockey. OCTOPUSH FEATURE >> P20



Secret Agents?

"I don't think that agents wield as much power as people like to believe. The player and the clubs have all the power." David Baldwin, agent for 25 international footballers, tells us about his job and dispels some popular misconceptions.

MONEY TALKS >> P21



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